GUIDE TO THE NQ13 GROS VENTRE FILE

[This file is concerned with the Algonquian-speaking Gros Ventre (Atsina) Indians of Montana. During their cultural apogee in the nineteenth century they were nomadic bison-hunters like the neighboring Blackfeet and their own close relatives, the Arapaho. They now live principally on the Fort Belknap Reservation in Montana, the locale of most of the field work in this file. There are eight sources in the file, all of them in English, and written by three American anthropologists. The basic sources are three: 1: Kroeber is based on fieldwork in 1901 and is a general ethnographic study, with many regional comparisons, but not containing information in depth in many important cultural categories; 2: Flannery, based on fieldwork at Fort Belknap between 1940 and 1948, is a reconstruction of Gros Ventre social life as of around 1880; and 3: Cooper is a similar analysis of Gros Ventre religion and ritual based on field work between 1931 to 1940. The other sources in the file, all by Flannery and Cooper, are short ones which examine various aspects of Gros Ventre culture, e.g., gambling, the grass dance, the shaking tent rite, and the range of behavior allowed to females.

There is material in most of the cultural categories in this file, although there is none in any great depth. The Gros Ventre are a relatively small tribe, so there is no great problem of cultural focus; however, the time depth and the ethnographic present of the works should be noted by researchers. There were no special marking decisions made for the Gros Ventre file, which was processed between 1961 and 1964.]

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

INTRODUCTION.

The following information on the Gros Ventre was collected in the winter and early spring of 1901, at the Fort Belknap Reservation in northern Montana, as part of the Mrs. Morris K. Jesup Expedition. Very few of the statements made, unless such is obviously the case, are based on observation. In general, where nothing is said to the contrary, they are founded on statements made by the Indians. The introductory explanations that have been made in regard to the Arapaho[1] apply also to the following material. The alphabet used for rendering Gros Ventre words is the same as that employed for Arapaho. Additional sounds are ö and ü, which are open, and k', a palatal k.

TRIBAL ORGANIZATION.

The Gros Ventre call themselves "Haäninin." The meaning of this term is sometimes given as "lime-men" or "chalk-men," from haä'a"tyi ("lime" or "soft white stone"). This etymology is, however, doubtful. In literature they have often been known as the "Atsina." They declare this to be the Piegan name for themselves, atsöna". Historically the Gros Ventre are known to have formed an independent tribe closely associated with the Blackfeet during the nineteenth century. Their dialect is similar to the Arapaho, and certainly intelligible to the Arapaho for at least the greater part. The two dialects are, however, sufficiently differentiated to make it certain that the tribes have been more or less distinct for a longer period than two centuries. The Arapaho regard the Gros Ventre as the northernmost one of a group of five closely affiliated or related tribes of which they themselves form the largest. Three of these tribes have long been extinct as separate bodies, and only the dialects of one or two survive among a few individuals with the Arapaho. The Gros Ventre, perhaps

[1] A. L. Kroeber, The Arapaho (Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Parts I, II, and IV. New York, 1902, 1904, and 1907). A series of Gros Ventre myths and tales has been published in Anthropological Papers of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. I, Part III. New York, 1907.

[P. 144 Contains no Text]

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

101 because they have among them no such remnants of perishing tribes, appear
to know nothing of this fivefold group, but they recognize their close rela-
648 tionship to the Arapaho. There is no very great amount of intercourse
between them and the Arapaho at present, nor does there appear to have
been any unusual amount of communication during the greater part of the
nineteenth century; but on both sides there is a mutual recognition as of
separated relatives. The Arapaho are now and apparently have been for
a long time considerably the larger tribe, the Gros Ventre having always in
[161] historical times been regarded as a small body. Their present number is
about 550.

According to Hayden, the Gros Ventre, about 1800, were south of the
131 Saskatchewan; about 1820 they united with the Arapaho for a few years,
648 and then, following a quarrel, journeyed north, had a disastrous encounter
with the Crow, and became neighbors and allies of the Blackfeet.[1] In spite
of the usually close association of the Gros Ventre with the three Blackfoot
tribes since that time, they became hostile to them for a time, about forty
years ago, and united against them with their own long-standing enemies the
Crow. In the course of this hostility the Gros Ventre sustained their heavi-
est reverse in war within their memory; the greater part of an unusually
large war-party, including many Crow, being killed after an attack on a
Piegan camp. This happened in 1867, according to Grinnell. The usual
enemies of the Gros Ventre, besides the Crow, were other Siouan tribes,
such as the Dakota and especially the Assiniboine. They also fought more
or less with the Shoshone, and no doubt in alliance with the Blackfeet against
the Salish Flathead. They were on the whole friendly with the tribes of
their own stock of speech, the Arapaho, Cheyenne, Blackfeet, and Cree.
The habitat of the Gros Ventre in recent times has been the Milk River
territory, in which is situated their present reservation, which they occupy
jointly with the Assiniboine.

The Gros Ventre have also been called Fall, Rapid, and Paunch Indians.
101 The term "Gros Ventre" has also been applied to the Minitari, a Siouan
village tribe on the Missouri; and the two tribes have been distinguished as
"Gros Ventre of the Prairie" and "Gros Ventre of the Missouri."

174 Gros Ventre tradition brings the tribe from the north; but their story of
131 the division of the tribe while crossing the ice on a great river is found also
[173] among the Blackfeet and the Cheyenne, and is worthless as historical evi-
dence. While their earliest habitat known is north of their present territory,
acquaintance of them goes back little more than a century, and there is

[1] See the excellent article by H. L. Scott on The Early History and the Names of the Arapaho, in the American Anthropologist, N.S., IX, 545. 1907. From this it appears that, at least from the middle of the eighteenth century on, except for about five years' association with the Arapaho (from 1818 to 1823), the habitat of the Gros Ventre was in the Blackfoot country, between the Saskatchewan and the Missouri.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

nothing to show that they had long been in the Saskatchewan region. All that is certain of their previous past is their closer relationship to the Arapaho than to any other tribe; and the origin of the Arapaho is equally obscure, except that it is certain that, if they came from the north and east, it was a long time ago. Of the Gros Ventre it can only be said that, while related to the Arapaho and regarded by them as almost politically a part of themselves, they were far separated from them when first known, with them for a short time later, and again separated, and in contact and alliance with another much more distantly related Algonkin branch. Their habitat in a hundred years has been successively near the Saskatchewan, the Platte, and the Missouri. There is nothing to show that such variability of affiliation and location within the culture region of the Plains has not been characteristic of their previous history. 131 N4 [648]

The Gros Ventre call the tribes near them by the following names: Arapaho, hinan'än (in Arapaho, hinanaei-na"); Cheyenne, itisön, "scars" (itisö", "a scar;" Arapaho name of the Cheyenne, hitaciina"); Cree, na"tsa", "rabbits;" Ojibwa, djinhuna"tsa", "Lower Cree;" the three Blackfoot tribes, waotä"nixtääts, "black-feet" (a Blackfoot, waotä"nixtänin, "black-foot-man;" a Piegan, tsä"t'; the Bloods, ka"winähää"); Assiniboine, na"djineihin; Sioux, na"wina"djinei, "Below-Assiniboine" (in Arapaho, na"tinei, "a Sioux"); Crow, hounen, "crow-men;" Minitari, wuxnokayän, "—lodges;" Shoshone, sösöuyänin, "snake-men;" Bannock, waotä"nixiinin, "black-men" (in Arapaho the Ute are called waotänähiçi, "black"); Flathead Salish, kaakaäänin, "flathead-man;" Nezpercé, taniibats, "pierced-nose" (Arapaho taniibääçi is the Caddo). Two tribes to the southwest or perhaps west, which have not been identified, are the wasöi"hiiyeihits, "grass-dwellers," who live in houses of grass or brush; and the na"wuxa-antibiina"ts, "fish-eaters." 101 648

The Gros Ventre were divided into groups similar to those of the Blackfeet and Sioux. The names of these bands were nicknames, and in no way totemic. As there was prohibition of marriage within the band, the name "clan" is, however, applicable to them. Descent was paternal and a man belonged to his father's band; but the prohibition of marriage extended also to his mother's clan, all the members of both the father's and mother's clan being considered relatives. Each band seems to have had a recognized head or chief. During the winter the tribe broke into smaller groups, consisting of one or perhaps more clans, which followed the buffalo, and camped chiefly in the timber. There corrals were made for the horses at night to prevent their being stolen by war-parties. When summer came, the clans joined and camped together in the large camp-circle. In this, the opening of which was toward the east, the different bands had definite 621 614 [61] [582] 221 361 621 614

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

INTRODUCTION

The Algonquian-speaking Gros Ventres live on the Fort Belknap Reservation in North Central Montana. The Reservation is a small part of the land claimed by this tribe in 1887, when the boundaries were finally fixed. At present, the Gros Ventres number between a thousand and eleven hundred, and they share their territory with almost as many Assiniboine. The latter tribe was included in the settlement of the Reservation although it did not participate with the Gros Ventres and Blackfoot tribes in the Treaty of 1855. In spite of some intermarriage, the two groups have never really blended and the Gros Ventres tend to center at the village of Hays at the southern part of the Reservation while the Assinboine are clustered around Lodge Pole, a settlement some ten miles east of Hays. The Indian Agency is approximately forty miles north of Hays at the northern boundary of the Reservation and close to the town of Harlem on the Great Northern Railroad. Of importance to the Gros Ventres, who are predominantly Roman Catholic, is St. Paul's Mission and School which lie at the foot of the Little Rockies only a mile south of Hays. David Rodnick has given an excellent description of the geographical setting of the Reservation for his study of modern conditions and of acculturation among the Fort Belknap Assiniboine.

131 657 [197] [161] [648] [797] [114]

Of the several tribes in the Northern Plains region, the Gros Ventres are perhaps the least known. Although they maintained intact their tribal identity, and were recognized as fierce warriors, they were often mistakenly identified with the Blackfoot tribes, with whom they were frequently allied. Moreover, little was known of the Gros Ventre language except that it was an exceedingly difficult one; practically every independent observer during the nineteenth century remarks on this fact. Since, however, many Gros Ventre men knew Blackfoot, the linguistic difference was often overlooked and the Gros Ventres tended to be counted as one of the Blackfoot tribes. As part of the so-called "Blackfoot Nation," leaders of the Gros Ventres signed the Treaty of 1855.

101 [648] 197 [648]

[P. viii contains no text]

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

CHAPTER I

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Location in the Eighteenth Century

The earliest available sources show that in the eighteenth century the Gros Ventres were in the Canadian plains region, far removed from their Arapaho kinsmen. Just where or when the Gros Ventres and Arapaho parted cannot be determined. As Kroeber has pointed out, their tradition of separating while crossing a large frozen body of water on which the ice broke, is not reliable, especially in view of similar traditions of tribal separations current among other peoples.[1] It is possible that there may be some truth in the tradition which Father De Smet had from the Gros Ventres in 1846, namely, that they had become separated from the Arapaho a hundred and fifty years before that date.[2] This would allow, however, only the bare minimum of time which Kroeber has suggested as necessary to account for the linguistic differentiation between Arapaho and Gros Ventre. It would seem a little late also should Morton be correct in identifying as Gros Ventres the tribe, in the region of the Saskatchewan River to the west of the Assiniboine, whom Kelsey mentions in 1691.[3]

131 174

The difficulty of exactly locating the Gros Ventres during the first half of the eighteenth century is all the greater in view of the fact that the observers often used general terms, rather than tribal designations, for the plains peoples as distinct from the Cree and Assiniboine. Among such terms are "equestrian natives," "slaves," and various renditions of the Cree word *ayatchiyiniw*,[4] literally "foreign man, stranger"—the generic Cree term by which all hostile peoples are called. The Cree were closely as-

101 174

[1] Kroeber, 1908, p. 146.
[2] De Smet, p. 265, note.
[3] Kroeber, 1908, p. 145; Morton, p. 113; Kelsey Papers, p. 16, mentions a nation who "knew not ye use of Canoes and were resolved to go to wars."
[4] Cf. LaCombe, p. 325.

101 sociated with the western expansion of the fur trade by both the
174 English and the French, being dependent upon white goods and acting as middlemen and interpreters. Consequently Cree words were used often by the traders. Mandelbaum explains, in regard to the generic term, that, since the Blackfoot in particular were the enemy tribe, this term came to be especially applied to them.[6] Nevertheless to interpret it as always and exclusively referring to the Blackfoot is misleading.

175 Isham, writing in 1743, after having been for a decade on the west coast of Hudson's Bay, used the generic term in a widely inclusive sense. He was anxious to get the "Earchthinue" to come to the English forts on the Bay to trade. He had never seen any of them except "a Slave, which was brought down by the Southwd. Indians,—their country lies on the back of this Land and to the Westward of the Churchill River where the Spaniards frequent those seas, at the same time does not traffick with that nation,—I have heard from the mouth of the said Slave concerning that country, by which I understood it was situated much as York Fort Hays's River with a fine Navigable River that op'ns into the sea, and with great plenty of the best and finest fur's, which is their Chiefest Commodity's. The Sinnepoets and other Indians Going to war with them, is a hinderance to their Coming to to the English Settlements to trade. . . ."[6] It was presumably from this Indian that Isham recorded two different ways to count ten. One such list he designated as being the "Earchithinu Language," and the other as "Earchethinue Language in another part of the Country."[7] The first can be identified as Blackfoot, in the general sense of the term,[8] but the second is apparently neither Blackfoot nor Gros Ventre.

Le Gardeur de Saint Pierre, successor of La Verendrye and the last of those who tried to find "the way to the sea" for the French, rendered the generic Cree term as "Iactchejlini" but in addition mentions the Gros Ventres by name. He spent the winter of 1751

[6] Mandelbaum, p. 166.
[6] Isham, p. 113.
[7] Idem, p. 35 and p. 36.
[8] Identification by my colleague, Prof. James A. Geary, personal communication, September 17, 1949.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

175 Cocking's party was friendly, these two indicated that they would persuade the rest of their group to come and meet with them. Bad weather delayed the arrival of the larger group, and meanwhile Cocking's companions tried, without avail, to fix and use a buffalo pound which the "archithinue" natives had built the previous spring. Finally, on December 1st,

> "Our Archithinue friends came to us and pitched a small distance from us; on one side of the pound 21 tents of them, the other seven are pitched another way. One of the Leaders talks the Asinepoet language well, so that we shall understand each other, as my Leader understands it also. This tribe is named Powestic-Athinuewuck (i.e.) Water-fall Indians. There are 4 Tribes, or Nations, more, which are all Equestrians Indians, Viz. Mithco-Athinuwuck or Bloody Indians, Koskitow-Wathesitock or Blackfooted Indians,—Pegonow or Muddy-water Indians & Sassewuck or Woody Country Indians."[14]

175 Thus Cocking gives a very good approximation of the Cree
●101 terms, applied even today to the Blood, Blackfoot, Piegan and Sarsi, as well as the designation used by the Cree for the Indians whom we call Gros Ventres.[15] Wissler, and, more recently Ewers, refer to this passage in Cocking and suggest that the Waterfall Indians are the Gros Ventres.[16] Any remaining doubts regarding the identification are dispelled by the following quotation from Umfreville who was with the Northwest Company in the area for four years from 1784–88 and who knew the various groups. He states regarding the "Fall Indians":

> "This nation is named by us and by the Nehethawa [Cree] Indians, from their inhabiting a country on the Southern branch of the river [Saskatchewan], where the rapids are frequent. As they are not very numerous, and have a harsh gutteral language peculiar to themselves, I am inclined to think they are a tribe that has detached itself from some distant nation, with which we are not as

[14] Cocking, pp. 110–11.

[15] Cf. Mandelbaum, p. 166. For an early and quite independent list and explanation of the same Cree terms, see Richardson's Journal of 1819–20, quoted verbatim by Franklin, pp. 99–100.

[16] Wissler, 1936, p. 6; Ewers, 1945, p. 289–99.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

> yet acquainted. In this people another instance occurs of the impropriety with which the Canadian-French name the Indians. They call them *gros ventres* or big bellies; and that without any reason, as they are as comely and as well made as any tribe whatever; and are very far from being remarkable for their corpulency."[17]

175
101

It so happens that the French name, "Gros Ventres," has been retained and at present is the most widely used designation for the tribe, although the Blackfoot term for them, "Atsina," is occasionally employed in recent ethnological sources. In the past, however, in addition to the French, translations of that term such as "Big Bellies," "Paunch Indians," and so on, occurred, as well as those derived from the Cree appellation,—"Falls," "Water-falls," or "Rapids Indians." To distinguish them from the village-dwelling Hidatsa, also known as Gros Ventres, sometimes they were called "Gros Ventres of the Prairies," or "Gros Ventres of Montana," in recognition of their later habitat.

Something of intertribal relations on the northern plains can be gleaned from the record Cocking has left us. It seems significant that he does not rate among the "equestrian natives" the Assiniboine whom he knew. Then, as later, the Assiniboine were apparently relatively poor in horses compared to the Gros Ventres and Blackfoot. Cocking mentions in regard to the Gros Ventres, whom he had opportunity to observe from December 1st to the 16th, 1772, that, not only at hunting buffalo but in all their actions, they excel his companions. He notes that the Gros Ventres are mounted on light sprightly animals and that they likewise use packhorses, which give their women great advantage over the Cree and Assiniboine women "who are either carrying, or hauling on sledges, every day in the year." They impress Cocking as being more like Europeans and he remarks that they are more cleanly in clothing and food than his companions.[18]

175

[492]

The Assiniboine were, however, on account of their close association with the Cree, better armed; and the Gros Ventres were wary enough to ascertain the friendly intentions of Cocking's party

[17] Umfreville, p. 197.

[18] Cocking, p. 111. At this time too, Cocking says, the Gros Ventres used pottery of their own manufacture and tobacco which they themselves planted.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Feathers, especially eagle feathers, were highly prized, and red paint, prepared from ochre, as well as other paints obtained through the trader, played their part in bodily decoration. 292 237 386

The younger men thought a great deal of their appearance. One of the things they made for themselves was fancy painted sunshade-hats of rawhide. The designs painted thereon had a yellow background against which various other colors stood out. Coming Daylight remarked: "These sunshades looked so fine that the other tribes copied them, just like the whites get their styles from Paris." Long thick hair was the ideal both for men and for women. The tail of the porcupine made an admirable comb. A number of perfumes were used by the young men. The castor of the beaver, for instance, was put in the paint bag so that the material for daily painting would be sweet smelling. Again, young men crushed "Piegan berries," chewed them, and rubbed them on hair, horses, and bedding, as perfume. 292 751 531 302 [237]

Incidentally, according to Coming Daylight, in order to clean their buckskin clothing, the Gros Ventres would wear it into the water, getting it completely wet, and then rub it thoroughly with a certain kind of white clay.[14] She said that the tribe was spoken of by other tribes as always having such nice white clothes, and to this habit of rubbing them with clay she attributes the name by which the Gros Ventres call themselves, *a'aninin*, "white clay people." 296 [101]

Ear-rings, worn both by men and women, were made from imported abalone shell, which they cut up and shaped; they also used a certain type of imported white shell. Many other kinds of necklaces, armlets, and so on were apparently used, but on these we failed to get details. 301 [439]

Household and Transportation

The lodges of the Gros Ventres were made from buffalo hides, the number used in each depending on the size of the lodge. They 342

[14] This custom is mentioned in the sources of the early 19th century. Cf. Harmon, p. 277; Henry, v. 2, p. 734. The latter adds, as a further distinguishing characteristic, that when the Gros Ventres use red "it is always of a light color, inclining to pale vermillion. The dark red or Spanish brown, so much in vogue among the other Meadow tribes, does not suit their taste." [822]

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

102
131
133
657

FORT BELKNAP RESERVATION AND SURROUNDING AREA

[p. ii]

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

INTRODUCTION.

The following information on the Gros Ventre was collected in the winter and early spring of 1901, at the Fort Belknap Reservation in northern Montana, as part of the Mrs. Morris K. Jesup Expedition. Very few of the statements made, unless such is obviously the case, are based on observation. In general, where nothing is said to the contrary, they are founded on statements made by the Indians. The introductory explanations that have been made in regard to the Arapaho[1] apply also to the following material. The alphabet used for rendering Gros Ventre words is the same as that employed for Arapaho. Additional sounds are ö and ü, which are open, and k', a palatal k.

TRIBAL ORGANIZATION.

The Gros Ventre call themselves "Haäninin." The meaning of this term is sometimes given as "lime-men" or "chalk-men," from haä'a"tyi ("lime" or "soft white stone"). This etymology is, however, doubtful. In literature they have often been known as the "Atsina." They declare this to be the Piegan name for themselves, atsöna". Historically the Gros Ventre are known to have formed an independent tribe closely associated with the Blackfeet during the nineteenth century. Their dialect is similar to the Arapaho, and certainly intelligible to the Arapaho for at least the greater part. The two dialects are, however, sufficiently differentiated to make it certain that the tribes have been more or less distinct for a longer period than two centuries. The Arapaho regard the Gros Ventre as the northernmost one of a group of five closely affiliated or related tribes of which they themselves form the largest. Three of these tribes have long been extinct as separate bodies, and only the dialects of one or two survive among a few individuals with the Arapaho. The Gros Ventre, perhaps

[1] A. L. Kroeber, The Arapaho (Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Parts I, II, and IV. New York, 1902, 1904, and 1907). A series of Gros Ventre myths and tales has been published in Anthropological Papers of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. I, Part III. New York, 1907.

[P. 144 Contains no Text]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

CHAPTER I

SUPERNATURAL BEINGS

Before beginning our description of Gros Ventre ritual observances, it seems desirable, in the interests of order and clarity, to give some account one by one of the various Gros Ventre supernatural beings. These beings may be divided for our purposes into three categories: first, those to whom cult in the form of prayer or sacrifice was offered; second, those to whom no cult proper is offered but who enter in one form or another into ritual or who are conceived as actually helpful or harmful to the living Gros Ventres of modern times; third, those to whom no cult is rendered, who do not enter into ritual at all, and who, while conceived as helpful or harmful to the Gros Ventres at some time in the remoter or archaic past, are not so and have not been so in more recent or modern times. Beings of our third category belong rather to the realm of folklore or traditional history than to that of religion and will be given only passing attention here. 776 128

The chief beings of our first category are: the Supreme Being, the storm being, the sun, the earth, the Four Holy Men, Broken Knife, He-who-starved-to-death, the Last Child, the water monster(s), Little Spirit, He-who-dreams-of-Bha'a, the ghost helpers, the beings who gave power, the petroglyph beings. We shall now take these up in order, giving for each their names, nature, attributes and functions. The rites connected with them will be described in later chapters. 776

The Supreme Being

The most common name by which the Supreme Being was called or addressed was Ixteibəni:hohat (Above Ni:hohat).[1] The

[1] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, p. 275. In our transcription, a, e, i, o, u, have continental values: ä is flat as in English "bat"; ē is close to French "feu"; vowels are lengthened by a colon, as a:; ə is the unstressed indeterminate vowel; θ is th as in English "thing"; tc is a single sound as ch in English "church"; tc' is the same sound but glottalized and occurs only terminally; apostrophe indicates glottal stop. [104 194]

1:Kroeber, Alfred Louis. Ethnology of the Gros Ventre. Anthropological Papers of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. 1, pp. 141-281. New York, 1908.

Yale: Nk10. Am 45e. v. 1.

/The data for this source were collected by the author, a distinguished American anthropologist, during one of the very early field trips made in his professional career.

The article presented here is lacking in over-all ethnographic coverage with little if any attention being given to kinship, kin groups, food processing, community structure, marriage, and various other aspects of human society customarily found in an ethnographic report of this type. Special emphasis is given, however, to decorative art, games, war and war experiences of individuals, personal supernatural powers, medicines and plants, tribal ceremonial organization, and intricate details of some of the more important Gros Ventre ceremonies (e.g., the Crazy-Dance, the Kit Fox Dance, the Dog Dance, etc.).

1: Kroeber, Alfred Louis.

The author constantly employs culture element comparisons throughout the text, primarily in relationship to the Arapaho, and secondarily to other Plains tribes. --Analyst/

Field date: 1901
Analyst: John Beierle

Evaluation: Ethnologist-5
Processed in 1961

2: Flannery, Regina. The Gros Ventres of Montana: Part 1, Social Life. Anthropological Series. The Catholic University of America, No. 15. Washington, D. C., 1953.

Pp. xiii, 221; preface; introduction; 1 map; 3 end plates; bibliography; appendix; index.

Yale: Nk10. C 28. 15-16

[This source, dealing with the social aspects of Gros Ventre ethnography, is the result of field work undertaken in 1940, 1945 and 1948 at the invitation of Dr. John M. Cooper, whose work on the religious and ritualistic aspects of Gros Ventre life appears elsewhere in this file (see 3: Cooper).

In general, the author attempts to reconstruct through the use of several informants, Gros Ventre social life as it existed prior to the disappearance of the buffalo herds around the year 1884. Abundant data may be found in this source on the historical background of the Gros Ventre, their tribal organization,

2:Flannery, Regina.

methods and techniques of obtaining food and clothing, use of domesticated animals, transportation, economic aspects of life, war and prestige, kinship behavior, birth,infancy, childhood, marriage, and old age and death. The appendix gives a brief biography of each of the author's informants.

The author is a professional anthropologist, with a special interest in North American Indian ethnography. --Analyst]

Field date: 1940-1948
Analyst: John Beierle

Evaluation: Ethnologist-5
Processed in 1961

3: Cooper, John M. The Gros Ventres of Montana: Part 2, Religion and Ritual. Anthropological Series, The Catholic University of America, No. 16. Washington, D. C.: 1956.

Pp. x, 491; 4 text plates; appendix.

Yale: Nk10 C28 15-16

[This source is a posthumously published manuscript of Cooper's, based on original field notes, with some additions and minor editing by Regina Flannery. Various aspects of the religious system of the Gros Ventre are covered, beginning with a description of the supernatural beings. The Flat Pipe and Feathered Pipe Rituals are described in great detail, as are less important religious observances. A discussion is also given of curing practices and of various private rites. An appendix contains the texts of a number of myths, tales, and traditions. The author was a professor of anthropology at Catholic University at the time of his death. -- Analyst]

Field date: 1938-1940 Evaluation: Ethnologist-5

Analyst: James R. Leary Processed in 1961

4: Flannery, Regina and John M. Cooper. Social Mechanism in Gros Ventre Gambling. Southwestern Journal of Anthropology, Vol. 2, pp. 391-419. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1946.

HRAF copy

[The co authors of this work, both professional anthropologists, have attempted in this source to present a picture of the gambling complex as it existed during the second half of the 19th century among the Gros Ventre of Montana, with special emphasis on its social implications. The data was collected at the Fort Belknap Reservation in Montana during the summers of 1939, 1940 and 1945 from native informants.

In addition to information on the actual gambling games and their method of play, data may also be found on gambling regulations (e.g., between certain kin groups), supernatural gambling powers, magic "thought wishes" used to influence the outcome of the game, wages and betting procedure, the relationship between "War Friends" in gambling, and native attitudes towards gambling. --Analyst]

Field Date: 1939 1945 Evaluation: Ethnologists -5

Analyst: John Beierle Processed in 1962

5: Flannery, Regina. The Gros Ventre Shaking Tent. Primitive Man, Vol. 17, pp. 54 59. Washington: Catholic Anthropological Conference, 1944.

Columbia University: 302.05 P93

[This brief article, written by a noted professional anthropologist, gives two accounts of the Shaking Tent ceremony as witnessed by Gros Ventre informants in their youth. The data presented here was collected by the author from the Gros Ventre of Montana in 1940.

The ceremony itself consists of the invocation of the spirit of a deceased relative by a diviner or "spiritualist" in order to obtain information on the whereabouts of a missing person, the location of the enemy, etc. The presence of the spirit was made known to the audience by the shaking of the structure in which the ceremony took place. --Analyst]

Field date: 1940
Analyst: John Beierle

Evaluation: Ethnologist 5
Processed in 1962

6: Cooper, John M. The Shaking Tent Rite among Plains and Forest Algonquians. Primitive Man, Vol. 17, pp. 60-84. Washington: Catholic Anthropological Conference, 1944.

Columbia University: 302.05 P93

[This source adds additional information to that already contained in source number 5: Flannery of this file on the Shaking Tent ritual of the Gros Ventre, and also provides additional data on the distribution of this rite among other Algonquian groups, notably the Cree, Montagnais, Ojibwa, Blackfoot, and Assiniboine. The text is further supplemented by four narratives depicting the various aspects of the Shaking Tent ritual in Gros Ventre society, as told to the author by his principal informants. --Analyst]

Field date: 1931-1940
Analyst: John Beierle

Evaluation: Ethnologist-5
Processed in 1962

7: Flannery, Regina. The Changing Form and Functions of the Gros Ventre Grass Dance. Primitive Man, Vol. 20, pp. 39-70. Washington: Catholic Anthropological Conference, 1947.

Yale: Nk10.C27F. 16-20

[This source is a study of the changing structure and function of the Grass Dance in Gros Ventre society from the time of its introduction between 1875 and 1880 up to about 1920 when for all practical reasons it had ceased to exist.

The author, a well known professional anthropologist, discusses in detail the introduction of this ceremony from the Assiniboine, its adoption by one of the Gros Ventre "secret" societies (i.e., the Wolves or Wolfmen), the composition of the ceremony itself up to about 1890, and the many changes that resulted in this ceremony after that year. The function of the Grass Dance in Gros Ventre society is also fully discussed both prior to and following this date, when, as the result of the extinction of the buffalo herds around the year 1884, and the resulting gradual break-down of social organization, the ceremony

7: Flannery, Regina.

itself underwent vast modifications in order to fit into the new pattern of social structure.--Analyst]

Field date: 1940, 1945
Analyst: John Beierle

Evaluation: Ethnologist-5
Processed in 1962

8. Flannery, Regina. Individual Variation in Culture. In, Anthony F. C. Wallace, ed., Selected Papers of the Fifth International Congress of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences, Men and Cultures, 1956, pp. 87-92. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1960.

HRAF copy

/This is a short discussion on the range of behavior allowed among females in Gros Ventre society. Two sample individuals are used, one representing the negative and the other, the positive extremes of the cultural norm. The author concludes that each still fulfilled the other requirements of the ideal for women; they were therefore not seen as misfits in their society. -- Analyst/

Field Date: 1940-1948
Analyst: Millicent Kim

Evaluation: Ethnologist-5
Processed in 1964

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Bradley, James H., *Affairs at Fort Benton from 1831 to 1869 from Lieutenant Bradley's Journal*, in Contribution to the History of Montana, 3:201–287, Helena, 1900. 113

Catlin, George, *North American Indians*, 2 vols., Edinburgh, 1926.

Chittenden, Hiram Martin, *The American Fur Trade of the Far West*, 3 vols., New York, 1902.

Clark, W. P., *The Indian Sign Language*, Philadelphia, 1885.

Cocking, Matthew, *Journal of Matthew Cocking, from York Factory to the Blackfeet Country, 1772–73*, Burpee, L. J., ed., Transactions of The Royal Society of Canada, 3rd series, section 2, vol. 2, Ottawa, 1909.

Cooper, John M., *The Gros Ventres of Montana, Part II, Religious Life*, Manuscript, 1949.

Curtis, Edward S., *The North American Indian*, vol. 5, Plates 167–183, 1928.

Denig, Edwin Thompson, *Indian Tribes of the Upper Missouri*, Bureau of American Ethnology, Annual Report 46, Washington, 1930.

De Smet, Rev. P. J., Letter 18 to the editor of the Précis historiques, Brussels, in *Western Missions and Missionaries: A series of Letters*, pp. 253–61, New York, 1859.

Ewers, John C., *Were the Blackfoot Rich in Horses?* in American Anthropologist, 45: 602–10, 1943.

——*The Case for Blackfoot Pottery*, in American Anthropologist, 47: 289–99, 1945.

Flannery, Regina, *The Dearly-loved Child among the Gros Ventres of Montana*, in Primitive Man, 14:33–37, 1941.

——*The Gros Ventre Shaking Tent*, in Primitive Man, 17:54–60, 1944.

——*Men's and Women's Speech in Gros Ventre*, International Journal of American Linguistics, 12:133–35, 1946.

——*The Changing Form and Functions of the Gros Ventre Grass Dance*, in Primitive Man, 20:39–70, 1947.

——and Cooper, John M., *Social Mechanisms in Gros Ventre Gambling*, in Southwestern Journal of Anthropology, 2:391–419, 1946.

Franchère, *Franchère's Narrative of a Voyage to the Northwest Coast, 1811–1814*, Huntington, J. V., tr. and ed., in Early Western Travels, Thwaites, ed., vol. 6, pp. 167–410, New York, 1904.

Franklin, John, *Narrative of a Journey to the Shores of the Polar Sea in the Years 1819–20–21–22*, London, New York, 1924.

[Graham, Andrew, 1775], *Extract from Observations on Hudson's Bay*, in Isham's Observations, Appendix B.

Gregg, Josiah, *Commerce of the Prairies, or The Journal of a Santa Fé Trader, 1831–37*, in Early Western Travels, Thwaites, ed., vol. 19, pp. 155–349. New York, 1924.

[P. 208 contains no text]

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

113

Harmon, D. W., *A Journal of Voyages and Travels in the Interior of North America*, Haskell, ed., New York, 1922.

Hayden, F. V., *Contributions to the Ethnography and Philology of the Indian Tribes of the Missouri Valley*, Philadelphia, 1862.

Hendry, Anthony, *The Journal of Anthony Hendry, 1754–55*, Burpee, ed., Proc. and Trans of Royal Society of Canada, series 3, vol. 1, 1907, pp. 307–54.

Henry, Alexander, *New Light on the Early History of the Greater Northwest.* The Manuscript Journals of Alexander Henry and David Thompson, E. Coues, ed., 3 vols., New York, 1897.

Hoopes, Alban W., *Indian Affairs and Their Administration with Special Reference to the Far West, 1849–1860*, Philadelphia, 1932.

Hornaday, William T., *The Extermination of the American Bison*, in Report of the United States National Museum, Smithsonian Institution, for 1887, pp. 367–548, Washington, 1889.

Isham, James, *Observations on Hudson's Bay 1743*, and Notes and Observations on a book entitled *A Voyage to Hundson's Bay in the Dobbs Gallery 1749*, Rich, E. E. ed., Champlain Society, Toronto, 1949.

Kelsey, *The Kelsey Papers*, Public Archives of Canada and The Public Record Office of Northern Ireland, Ottawa, 1929.

Kroeber, A. L., *The Arapaho*, American Museum of Natural History, Bulletin 18, pp. 1–299; 279–454, 1902–07.

———*Gros Ventre Myths and Tales*, American Museum of Natural History, Anthropological Papers, vol. 1, 55–139, 1907.

———*Ethnology of the Gros Ventre*, American Museum of Natural History, Anthropological Papers, vol. 1, 145–281, 1908.

———*Arapaho Dialects*, University of California Publications in American Archaeology and Ethnology, vol. 12, pp. 71–138, 1916.

La Combe, A., *Dictionnaire de la Langue des Cris*, Montréal, 1874.

Larocque, *Journal of Francois Antoine Larocque from the Assiniboine River to the Yellowstone—1805*, Hazlitt, tr. and ed., Sources of Northwest History No. 20, State University of Montana, 1934.

Lewis, Oscar, *The Effects of White Contact upon Blackfoot Culture*, American Ethnological Society, Memoir 6, 1942.

Mackenzie, Alexander, *Voyages from Montreal through the Continent of North America to the Frozen and Pacific Oceans in 1789 and 1793*, 2 vols., New York, 1902.

Mandelbaum, D., *The Plains Cree*, American Museum of Natural History, Anthropological Papers, vol. 37, pp. 155–316, 1940.

Maximilian, *Prince of Wied's Travels in the Interior of North America*, pt. 2, in Thwaites, ed., Early Western Travels, vol. 23.

McClintock, Walter, *The Old North Trail*, London, 1910.

Mengarini, *Father Mengarini's Narrative*, in Partoll, ed., Sources of Northwest History, No. 25, State University of Montana.

Morton, Arthur S., *A History of the Canadian West to 1870–71*, Toronto and New York, n. d. [1939].

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

113

Palladino, L. B., *Indian and White in the Northwest; A History of Catholicity in Montana 1831 to 1891*, rev. and enl. ed., Lancaster, 1922.

Report, Commissioners of Indian Affairs 1838–1915, Washington, D. C.

Richardson's Journal quoted in Franklin, John, Narrative, pp. 99–100.

Rodnick, David, *The Fort Belknap Assiniboine of Montana*, New Haven, 1938.

Saint-Pierre, Jacques Le Gardeur de, *Memoire ou Journal du Voyage*, in Margry, vol. 6.

Schultz, J. W., *My Life as an Indian*, New York, 1907.

Scott, Hugh Lenox, *The Early History and Names of the Arapaho*, in American Anthropologist, 9:545–60, 1907.

Seton, Ernest Thompson, *Lives of Game Animals*, 4 vols., New York, 1937.

Thompson, David, *David Thompson's Narrative of His Explorations in Western America 1784–1812*, J. B. Tyrell, ed., The Champlain Society Publications, Toronto, 1916.

Umfreville, Edward, *The Present State of Hudson's Bay*, London, 1790.

Voorhis, E., *Historic Forts and Trading Posts of the French Regime and of the English Trading Posts*, Ottawa, 1930.

Wissler, C., *Population Changes among the Northern Plains Indians*, Yale University Publications in Anthropology No. 1, 1936.

——*Changes in Population Profiles Among the North Plains Indians*, American Museum of Natural History, Anthropological Papers, vol. 36, pp. 1–67, 1936(a).

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Cooper, John M., *The Northern Algonquian Supreme Being*, Catholic University of America Anthropological Series No. 2, pp. 78, Washington, D. C., 1934. 113

——, *The Religion of the Gros Ventres of Montana*, in Annali Lateranensi, 4:97-115, Rome, 1940.

——, *The Shaking Tent Rite among Plains and Forest Algonquians*, in Primitive Man, 17:54-82, 1944.

Flannery, Regina, *The Dearly-loved Child among the Gros Ventres of Montana*, in Primitive Man, 14:33-37, 1941.

——, *The Gros Ventre Shaking Tent*, in Primitive Man, 17:54-60, 1944.

——, *The Gros Ventres of Montana, Part I: Social Life*, Catholic University of America Anthropological Series No. 15, pp. 205, Washington, D. C., 1953.

——, and Cooper, John M., *Social Mechanisms in Gros Ventre Gambling*, in Southwestern Journal of Anthropology, 2:391-419, 1946.

Hagener, Louis W., Personal communications to Regina Herzfeld, January 18 and August 8, 1954.

Kroeber, A. L., *Gros Ventre Myths and Tales*, American Museum of Natural History Anthropological Papers, Vol. I, 55-139, 1907.

——, *Ethnology of the Gros Ventre*, American Museum of Natural History Anthropological Papers, Vol. I, 145-281, 1908.

Mooney, James, *The Ghost Dance Religion and the Sioux Outbreak of 1890*, Bureau of American Ethnology 14th Annual Report, 1892-93, Part 2, 641-1136, Washington, D. C., 1896.

[School Sisters of St. Francis], Unveiling of the Sacred Pipe, February 6, 1946 [Hectograph, St. Paul's High School, Hays, Montana, 1946].

[Father Sifton, S.J.], *An English-Atsina Dictionary*, and *A Grammar of the Atsina or Gros-Ventres Language* [Mss. ca. 1910], photostatic copy, Department of Anthropology, Catholic University of America, Washington, D. C.

8:Flannery E-5 (1940-1948)1960 NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Notes

113

1. Ralph Linton, *The Cultural Background of Personality*, New York, 1945, p. 51.
2. John J. Honigman, *Culture and Personality*, New York, 1954, pp. 211–212.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

293 used in this way. The owner twice dreamed of a weasel, which told him to
726 use its skin. Thereupon he first wore a weasel-skin in dances, and later
751 carried it to war. Subsequently he lent it to his son and to other men who
778 went to war, and they always returned successfully.

A man to whom a fisher had appeared in a dream or vision used a fish-
[787] skin medicine-bag, and on going to war carried this with him.

A renowned warrior, dead for some time, received his personal medicine from the bears, and was forbidden to scalp, count coup on the enemy, or take away a gun. He could only kill. He once killed two Sioux with one shot, at a place which received its name from the event.

[492] A simple riding-whip (specimen Museum No. 50-1821) has on its wooden handle four red marks, each of which is said to represent an enemy struck in the face with a whip in battle.

Representations, used in the modern "war-dance," of the weapons of
532 Black-Wolf, a well-known Gros Ventre warrior, part of whose experiences
726 in war are told below, consist of a shield and spear. The shield, which is made of painted white cloth, represents the shield carried by him on an occasion when he rushed to battle with no other weapon. The shield is decorated with a blue crescent along the lower edge, representing the sun, and bordered by a wavy red line denoting lightning. The wooden spear and spear-point
[822] represent a spear with which the owner stabbed a Piegan in battle. The spear-point is painted blue and red; the blue representing iron, the red blood. Red marks on the handle of the spear represent coups.

A pair of beaded and painted moccasins executed by a woman, but
[292] designed by an old man, symbolize his exploits in war. An outside rim of beading represents the enemy's camp-circle. In the middle of the camp-circle is beaded the figure of a tent belonging to a chief. To this tent was tied a horse, which the wearer of the moccasins cut loose. This feat is represented by an outline painting of a horse and halter. Three U-shaped figures, also painted, are horse-tracks, and represent the capture of horses. On the other moccasin there are again three such figures in a row, which here were said to indicate a charge on horseback on the camp; while two other such figures, facing each other, indicate a face-to-face fight.

Curtains hanging behind the bed in front of the tent-wall were sometimes painted to illustrate the owner's achievements in war.

WAR-EXPERIENCES OF INDIVIDUALS.

114 The following narratives give an entirely personal account of the war-
115 experiences of three individuals, two of them men of about sixty years of

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

age, and the third a woman probably a little older. They are not in any 114
sense historical, but were obtained for the picture they give of the war-life 115
of the Plains Indians. Both the men were renowned warriors. Bull-Robe, the older, has since died. In the case of neither was a complete account of all their achievements in war obtained; but both narratives probably refer to every war party or engagement in which they took part down to the point at which the narratives are broken off. All three narratives bear the stamp of naïve truthfulness; which, in view of the importance played in the life of the Plains tribes by the telling of war-exploits and the recounting of coups, is not surprising. It must be remembered that the narrators were not asked to describe the engagements and expeditions in which they were involved, but to narrate their personal share in them. This will account for the frequency with which an insignificant personal experience is told in detail and the general result of a war-party slurred over or ignored. The story told by the woman Watches-All has reference to the great disastrous expedition against the Piegans in 1867.

Black-Wolf's Narrative.

When I was a boy I heard about great deeds in war, and resolved to 159
follow in the tracks of such men. When I was a young man I started out 726
alone. I travelled, and reached the camp of another band of Gros Ventre on the Missouri. I ate there and went on to the Bear Paw Mountains. There I slept at the foot of Eagle Butte. I started again before sunrise and crossed the mountains, following Beaver Creek to the end of the mountains. I saw buffalo, and shot at them. Some one else was hunting these buffalo, and heard the shot. After shooting, I had left my horse tied at the foot of the butte, which I climbed in order to look over the country. Then I saw some one below me coming up the butte. A moment later he saw me. I raised my gun, but he dodged and ran off. Thinking he was one of a party, I ran off also, reached my horse, and rode into the timber. When I could hear and see no one, I rode to where there was a trading-post on Milk River. At night all the horses there ran off into the timber. In the morning an Assiniboine was about to go to get them, when I told him that I would go after them, and started with my gun and a rope. Then I saw what looked like a flock of blackbirds flying over a hill. Soon I saw they were people. At first I had seen only their heads. They were coming over the hill towards me, but on one side, in order to ambush me. Suddenly they were riding at me. At first I was as if dazzled, and it looked like a fog to me. Then I recovered my senses. I was some distance from the post. I did not run, but waited for them. Two of them with long whips were in the lead. I

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 successful and happy in this world, in acquiring wealth and in living a long life. Then the old man pointed the pipe east, south, west, north, and up, lit it, and smoked it. Then wiping it, and dropping the ashes out of it, he held the pipe up toward the sky, and prayed for his "grand-daughter," then laid it on the ground. The woman was naked, except for her robe. She then begged the old man to give her the medicine called tawaanasöö (the Arapaho hiiçawaanaxu). It is said that sometimes the old man gave her none, but undoubtedly it was customary for him to give it to her. Only a small piece was used.

After this the women returned to the dancing-lodge, where their husbands were waiting for them. They did not go together, but singly. A boy or young man had been selected to stand outside the door, and watch for the women returning. As a woman came near enough to be recognized, he called into the lodge that she was coming, whereupon the dancers came out. Her husband and all the others kissed her. Her husband [576] kissed the "grandfather" also. One by one the other women came back, and were received in the same way. If the woman had received medicine, she gave half to her husband. He chewed it up, and then rubbed himself over his body with it.

For four nights this appears to have been done. On all but the last night, it is said, that, on the return of the women, they and their husbands left the lodge and returned to their tents to sleep, to be painted again next morning. The last night, after the women and their "grandfathers" had returned, the old men picked out from the row of bows their "grandsons'," and, standing north and south of the fire, danced, holding the bows; their "grandsons" meanwhile dancing with them, but the women sitting in their places.

These observances connected with the giving of medicine by the "grandfathers" to the dancers' wives are found, without essential modification, in the three following dances, as well as in this. It will be seen that they are considerably more developed than the corresponding practices among the Arapaho.[1]

[1] In the Arapaho crazy and dog dances the procedure is not carried quite so far. Dorsey has described almost the same practice as occurring in the Arapaho sun-dance. What takes place on this occasion in the Arapaho crazy and dog dances has been summarized in Vol. XVIII, pp. 193, 200, of the Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History. The following somewhat more precise account is appended for comparison with the Gros Ventre. The "grandfather" and the dancer's wife (who is naked, except, presumably, for a robe) go off. As or before they go it is said aloud, "He gives his wife away." She is given, theoretically, not to her husband's ceremonial "grandfather," but to "the four old men" that play a part in esoteric Arapaho ritual. The woman prays, asking the old man for life. He spits medicine on the ground four times, once for each of the four old men. She lies down before him, stretching her legs and arms, facing him. He asks "the grandfather above" — apparently "our father" — to look, and puts away his desire. Restraining himself, he covers her with a robe, draws her up, and leads her back, pushing her gently before him. When she rejoins her husband, the latter says, "Hahô'u" ("thanks") four times. That this custom of the Arapaho and Gros Ventre is not confined to them, is evident from a well-known passage in Lewis and Clark. [114 171]

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 hand, according as they belonged to one division or the other. Vessels of water were ready to pour on the racers in order to cool them. The four 526 "brothers," the dancers previously separate from the rest at the eastern end of the lodge, did not run with the crowd, but started out slowly together, their faces covered with their robes. They trotted at a slow pace over the same course as the other dancers. As they returned, long after the crowd, 796 the boys, young men, and young women of the camp, had gathered on both sides, and pelted them with buffalo-chips until they reached the dancing-lodge. There is, in this slow following of the pledger and his three companions, a reminiscence of the white-fool, the dancer of highest degree in the Arapaho crazy-lodge, who on all occasions contrasts by his slow movements with the other dancers.[1] After the return of all the dancers, [431] they presented horses loaded with property to their "grandfathers," and these made similar presents to them. These gifts seem to have been payments to the old men for their instruction and painting, and to have been made at the conclusion of the part of the ceremony which was under their control. From this time on, the dancers' wives returned to their tents, and took no further part in the ceremony.

After this followed two observances. It is not certain which of the two came first. A crowd of people were waiting for the dancers in the open. The dancers, wearing their best moccasins put on loosely without being tied, left the lodge; and the waiting people, mostly women and children, ran after them, pulling off their moccasins, and, when they could not succeed in doing so otherwise, seizing their feet, and tripping them as they went. The dancers did not try to escape, or save their moccasins, but [888] allowed them to be taken. Or, again, an old man who was poor was selected, and, having been given a pipe to smoke in order that he might 796 accept, he went to the east of the camp-circle. A buffalo robe was brought, 431 incensed four times with sweet-grass placed on burning charcoal or buffalo-chips, and then placed over the old man, with the hair side out, as, bent over, he knelt on the ground. The dancers gathered about him, and

[1] According to an Arapaho account obtained, somewhat different from those previously utilized, there are two white-fools, not one. It is not clear which information is more correct. The white-fools always follow the dancers. If one of the ordinary dancers should be behind [114] them, he would become unable to move. This is the result of any violation of a rule of the ceremony by a participant. In such cases the white-fools have the power to cure them by [171] taking off their owl-feather head-bands, and rubbing them over the body with them. The white-fools are addressed as heiçâbîbin ("sisters-in-law," strictly, "brother or sister-in-law" of opposite sex from the speaker). The dancers, to look at a person, put their head to the ground, and pretend to look with their rump. They throw dung into tents, calling it "food." If people look at them through awl-holes in a tent, they at once shoot the tent in that place. Going out on the prairie, they say, "Let us not shoot into the air," and shoot up. When the arrows fall in plain sight, they cannot find them: if they fall into brush or tall grass, they find them at once. They imitate, often with obscene renderings, anything that they hear, such as a person's speech, or a dog's bark. They paralyze dogs by pointing at them an arrow to which tetrâtâted is attached. They give the dogs they kill to their "grandfathers" to eat. As soon as they take off their head-bands, they become rational. Mooney's account of the Cheyenne and Arapaho crazy-dance, which seems to refer chiefly to the former, mentions two white-fools; compare Ghost-Dance Religion, op. cit., 1033.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

aho sun-dance paint. Usually the Arapaho paint only two diamonds on each limb; but four have been seen on the northern Arapaho pledger, as in this picture. Another drawing repeats this painting, and adds a head-band, anklets, and wristlets apparently corresponding to the sage ornaments of the Arapaho. In a third drawing a dancer is painted with lightning symbols down his legs and arms. 796 532

The Gros Ventre and Arapaho sun-dances differ about as much as their respective age-company ceremonies. The principal discrepancies seem to be the following. 796 171

The Gros Ventre accumulation of buffalo-tongues by the pledger after the making of the vow and before the ceremony. This feature is found among the Blackfoot, but not among the Arapaho.

The prairie-chicken lodge with its four-nights' singing apparently corresponds somewhat to the Arapaho rabbit-tent; but its daily removal, accompanied by the camp-circle, is not found among the Arapaho. The prairie-chicken singing recalls a feature in the Arapaho hinanaha^{n}wu, the fifth of the age-ceremonies.

According to the account obtained, the public ceremonies relating to the erection of the lodge do not take place until after the four-nights' singing in the prairie-chicken tent. Among the Arapaho, they occur while the rabbit-tent is in use, and are in large part connected with the rites within it. It is also not clear how long a time these public ceremonies — the scouting for the trees, the bringing-in of the centre pole, the killing of the buffalo, and the painting of the lodge-poles and erection of the lodge — occupy. They are described as if they occurred in the space of a day. This would not be impossible; but it is likely that this impression is due to indefiniteness of narration. It is, however, distinctly stated that the buffalo is shot while the people are bringing in the centre pole. Among the Arapaho, the centre pole is brought in two days after the buffalo has been shot. The skin of this buffalo is kept entire and taken into the dancing-lodge; by the Gros Ventre it is cut into thongs for fastening the lodge-beams to the upright forks. [114]

The "altars" of the two ceremonies cannot be definitely compared, owing to the indefiniteness of information from the Gros Ventre. The screen corresponds to the seven small trees of the Arapaho; the skull and the wheel on the stick are common to the two ceremonies; the red and the black upright stick have no Arapaho equivalents. The Arapaho trench, red and black logs, seven red and seven black sticks, seven wickets, and two sods with bushes, have not been mentioned among the Gros Ventre.

The miraculous raising of the centre pole does not seem to exist among the Arapaho.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

INTRODUCTION

The Algonquian-speaking Gros Ventres live on the Fort Belknap Reservation in North Central Montana. The Reservation is a small part of the land claimed by this tribe in 1887, when the boundaries were finally fixed. At present, the Gros Ventres number between a thousand and eleven hundred, and they share their territory with almost as many Assiniboine. The latter tribe was included in the settlement of the Reservation although it did not participate with the Gros Ventres and Blackfoot tribes in the Treaty of 1855. In spite of some intermarriage, the two groups have never really blended and the Gros Ventres tend to center at the village of Hays at the southern part of the Reservation while the Assinboine are clustered around Lodge Pole, a settlement some ten miles east of Hays. The Indian Agency is approximately forty miles north of Hays at the northern boundary of the Reservation and close to the town of Harlem on the Great Northern Railroad. Of importance to the Gros Ventres, who are predominantly Roman Catholic, is St. Paul's Mission and School which lie at the foot of the Little Rockies only a mile south of Hays. David Rodnick has given an excellent description of the geographical setting of the Reservation for his study of modern conditions and of acculturation among the Fort Belknap Assiniboine.

131 657 [197] [161] [648] [797] [114]

Of the several tribes in the Northern Plains region, the Gros Ventres are perhaps the least known. Although they maintained intact their tribal identity, and were recognized as fierce warriors, they were often mistakenly identified with the Blackfoot tribes, with whom they were frequently allied. Moreover, little was known of the Gros Ventre language except that it was an exceedingly difficult one; practically every independent observer during the nineteenth century remarks on this fact. Since, however, many Gros Ventre men knew Blackfoot, the linguistic difference was often overlooked and the Gros Ventres tended to be counted as one of the Blackfoot tribes. As part of the so-called "Blackfoot Nation," leaders of the Gros Ventres signed the Treaty of 1855.

101 [648] 197 [648]

[P. viii contains no text]

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

114 Although the Gros Ventres are mentioned with sufficient frequency in the late eighteenth and in the nineteenth century sources to enable us to trace some of their movements and history, information on their culture is disappointingly meager. There is nothing in the sources on the Gros Ventres, for instance, that is in any way comparable with the richness of Thompson's account of the Piegan. The only real knowledge we have had of Gros Ventre culture is from the pioneer ethnological investigations of Professor Kroeber. In his Ethnology of the Gros Ventre, published in 1908, Dr. Kroeber deals with material culture and outlines the political, social and religious organization. He gives excellent illustrations of such objects pertaining to industries, to recreative, and to ceremonial life, as were still in the hands of the Gros Ventres at the turn of the century. He devotes considerable time to a detailed comparative treatment of decorative art, and in a separate paper deals with Gros Ventre Myths and Tales. Dr. Kroeber's major field work in 1900–03 was devoted to the Arapaho and in his monograph on this people he refers occasionally to his Gros Ventre data, especially, for instance, in the section on kinship terminology.

128 While the present ethnographical account deals primarily with Gros Ventre culture of the nineteenth century, as does Dr. Kroeber's Ethnology, the emphases are somewhat different. In Part I, for instance, we have found it possible to extend what Dr. Kroeber dealt with in several pages on social customs into a number of chapters dealing with aspects of the life cycle and kinship behavior. We have attempted to inject a chronological aspect through our detailed treatment of Gros Ventre history, but our sections on political organization and on war lack the lengthy firsthand statements by individuals which makes Dr. Kroeber's account so valuable. In Part II, we have been able to add vastly more detail on religious life than that presented by Dr. Kroeber. In our material, the Flat and Feathered Pipe rites are emphasized as well as personal supernatural powers. Furthermore we have presented the versions as told by our informants of the tales and myths pertinent to a given area of religious life. Some of these show variations on those published by Dr. Kroeber, and some are new.

124 Dr. Cooper worked with the Gros Ventres in the summers of

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

175
648

were said to have reached the Stag (Red Deer) River when both they and the Snake were decimated by a smallpox epidemic,[23] which would seem to have been that of 1780. For the next three years there were no wars, as the remnants of both tribes were occupied in merely sustaining life—parties of young Snake men were left unmolested by the Piegan. It was then decided that in future warfare, instead of looking only for the honor of taking scalps, that the Piegan should capture women and young men and adopt them in order to augment their depleted numbers. Apparently the Piegan gradually advanced to the Bow River as the Snake withdrew. Thompson, then among the Piegan at the Bow River, states: "The country where the Snake now [i.e. 1786] are is far away and little known to the Peeagan." Scouts were out five days but saw no Snake. "Affairs were in this state when we arrived."[24] A few days later a war chief with fifty warriors was sent out to examine the country. This party returned after about twenty days with five horses and fifteen mules which they had captured from the Snake, and old Saukamapee's son gave an account of the expedition. If this chronology is correct, Cocking's companions in 1772 had every reason to fear the Snake and to suspect their presence, as the power of the latter would not have been broken in the northern plains until 1780.

Cocking, as others before him, failed in his mission to persuade the "equestrian Indians" to come to Hudson's Bay.[25] During the last two decades of the 18th century, the Hudson's Bay Company, as well as the rival Northwest Company, established trading

[23] Thompson, p. 336. We know nothing of the wider effects of the smallpox epidemic which affected the Cree in 1736. Cf. Mandelbaum, p. 182.

[24] Thompson, p. 340. The author, pp. 328–47, in giving the account of old Saukamapee, often quotes the latter directly. But inasmuch as he usually omits important diacritical marks, and intersperses comments of his own, care must be exercised in reading these pages which recount events extending in time from about 1730 up to include a few weeks after Thompson's arrival among the Piegan in 1786. Furthermore, he wrote his whole Narrative about 1839, at the age of 70, following his notebooks it is true, but also making generalizations regarding the Piegan which do not necessarily refer to the year 1786–87 he spent among them, but may indicate a later date. See p. 348 where he describes boundaries of the Piegan, Blood and Blackfoot territory.

[114]

[25] Cocking p. 111. Cf. Graham's Observations in Isham, p. 312.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

robes,—that the Gros Ventres were industrious and were as good skin-dressers as the Mandan and better than the Blackfoot. He further mentions that they were formerly numerous and dreaded but that since the smallpox, and the depredations by the tribes with whom they have been at variance, they had diminished. Although they formerly had bloody wars with the Blackfoot tribes, in 1808 they were at peace with them. 175 648

Henry's estimate, however, that at this time the Gros Ventres numbered but 80 tents or 240 men, seems very low.[38] He was probably basing his figures on those who came that far north to trade, because in 1805 Laroque, while with the Crow on an island in the Missouri River near the confluence of the Big Horn, met a delegation of the Gros Ventres who were camped on the Big Horn River behind the mountain. He states that they occupied 275–300 "huts" and that it was with friendly sentiments that they came to this region. They brought words of peace and said that they came to procure some horses from the Crow. Laroque referred to them as "Big bellies of the fort de prairie" and mentioned that they and the Crow communicated with each other by means of the sign language, not being able to understand each other in speech.[39] This makes it quite certain that these Indians were not the Hidatsa. 161 175 648

It would seem, then, from the above as well as from the figures obtained in the same year, 1805, by Lewis and Clark, viz. 260 tents or 660 men,[40] that the estimates of both Thompson and Henry, observing as they were from the Canadian area from which the Gros Ventres had been driven, refer to only part of the main group of Gros Ventres. Henry himself remarks in 1811 that the Gros Ventres are increasing very fast and that he had always noticed a greater percentage of young men among them than among the neighboring tribes. He admits further: "I have not been able to obtain their exact number but am fully confident they exceed 100 tents."[41] Richardson, moreover, in his journal of 1818–19, identifies the Gros Ventres and claims that they have about 450 to 500 tents.[42] [114]

[38] Henry, v. 2, pp. 530–31.
[39] Laroque, p. 20.
[40] Cf. Wissler, 1936, p. 4.
[41] Henry, v. 2, p. 733.
[42] Richardson, quoted in Franklin, pp. 99–100.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

seemingly after the pillaging of this fort about 1826 that part of the Gros Ventres fled to the headwaters of the Missouri, wintered there, and then proceeded south to join their Arapaho kinsmen. According to Hayden, the Gros Ventres spent about five years hunting with the Arapaho and joined them in trading with the Mexicans.[46] During this sojourn, the Gros Ventres suffered a devastating attack of smallpox which was said to have reduced their number by half. 175 648 [731]

From sources independent of Hayden we know that a large group of Gros Ventres was actually in the Cimarron area during the late 1820's. Gregg, with a party of independent traders, was traveling in the Cimarron Valley when on June 21, 1831, they met a very large group of Indians,—he estimates about a thousand including men, women and children,—who followed them for a day or two in order to pilfer what they could and to receive presents if possible. They were finally bought off with about sixty dollars worth of trade goods contributed by various members of the party. It was thought at first that these Indians were Comanche and Arapaho. "But," states Gregg, "they were principally if not altogether Blackfoot and Gros Ventres." A few days later Gregg received intelligence that Captain Sublette and his party, on their way from St. Louis to Santa Fe, had met "an immense horde of Blackfeet and Gros Ventres," and that although the Indians had assumed a menacing attitude, the party had passed without serious molestation. That same evening, however, Gregg camped near a place called the "Battle Ground," famous for a skirmish which a caravan of traders in the company of Mexican troops had in 1829 with the Gros Ventres. Gregg was told that on that occasion, the traders and troops, under Col. Vizcarra, were camped on the Cimarron when a party of 120 Gros Ventres approached on foot. The traders did not welcome the Indians, but seeing that they were disposed to remain until morning, Col. Vizcarra promised to disarm them. Nevertheless he failed to do so, and all of a sudden the Indians sprang to their feet, gave a yell and fired on the party. A Taos Indian, by giving his own life, saved that of the Colonel. The Mexican troops pursued the Gros

[46] Hayden, 341. The gist of what Hayden gives for this period is correct, though his dates are inaccurate. [114]

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

CHAPTER II

TRIBAL ORGANIZATION

The greater bulk of our material on the Gros Ventres covers the fifty year span from about 1835 to 1885. During that period, the tribal territory centered about the Milk River. The present Reservation, the boundaries of which were finally fixed in 1888, represents only a small part of the land claimed and held by the Gros Ventres as their own. 131 [648]

Band Names and Affiliation

619 621

The political organization of the Gros Ventres was simple. The division into fairly autonomous bands was basic, and apparently the number of bands was twelve. Our informants, both those who were adult and those who were children, at the time when the whole tribe still encamped as a unit, agreed on that point. The list of band names given by our two oldest informants, Coming Daylight (b. 1854) and Singer (b. ca. 1856), is as follows: Coffees, Same as Assiniboine, Plenty Bad, Greys, Fast Travelers, Water Horses Once a Day, Upper Quarters, Frozens, Buffalo Overloaded, Tendons, Bloods, Night Hawks. These two old women maintained that, in their own experience, the bands camped in this order, and in a circle, when the whole tribe was together. [115]

Quite independently of the above list, another was obtained from The Boy (b. 1870). As a child he witnessed the formation of the camp circle, and he knows many details of previous decades from his father, Lame Bull (b. ca. 1825, d. 1890) and from other old men. The Boy's list agrees with that given by the two women, except in regard to one band. He includes a group called Poor Greys and omits Night Hawks. All of our informants insisted that the Greys and Night Hawks were distinct bands, but there was a difference of opinion as to whether or not the Greys and Poor Greys were in reality the same band. 621 115 114

Seven of the band names can be identified with Kroeber's num- 621

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

621 bered list: Same as Assiniboine (No. 5); Fast Travelers (No. 6); Water Horses Once a Day (No. 2); Upper Quarters (No. 4); Frozens (No. 1); Tendons (No. 3); Bloods (No. 7). Furthermore in Kroeber's supplementary list we find the Coffees and Night Hawks mentioned; we are probably correct in assuming that Kroeber's Dusty Ones in that same supplementary list correspond to our Greys. Kroeber does not refer, however, to either Plenty Bad nor Buffalo Overloaded; whereas our informants could not identify Kroeber's Fighting Alone (No. 8).[1]

621 The fact that there is as much agreement, namely, in ten band
114 names, between Kroeber's information and our own, is quite remarkable since the band names were nicknames, the explanations for which were quite trivial. Not only were variations used to designate the same band by different informants, but also apparently the band names were frequently changed altogether.

For example, Kroeber's Smooth-worn-tent-people were designated variously by our informants as Slick Runners, Slippery Travois Poles and Fast Travelers—all of these taken from the little explanatory anecdote that this band was supposed to travel so far and so fast that the ends of the travois poles which dragged on the ground quickly became smooth and worn.

Similarly the Dusty-ones of Kroeber were termed by our informants Greys (proper) and Those Who Do Not Wash Their Faces, playing around the theme that the members of this band did not paint up as did other Gros Ventres and that they thus looked unkempt and dirty.

Those-who-do-not-give-away, or Buffalo humps, mentioned by Kroeber were consistently identified by our informants as Upper Quarters, the explanation lying in the reputation for stinginess acquired one time when members of the band were asked for meat, and gave the upper quarters or hump of the buffalo instead of the more desirable parts.

The Opposite-Assiniboine or Same-as-Assiniboine were also called Poor Ones because they, like the Assiniboine tribe in general, possessed few horses.

Our informants said that Water Horses Once A Day were so

[1] Kroeber, 1908, p. 148.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

called because the band members were too lazy to water their horses more often. 621 114●

The story regarding the Frozens is that one winter people were hungry and the members of this band killed buffalo; when they were asked for meat, they replied: "The meat is frozen and we can't cut it." The alternative name for this band, given by Kroeber and by one of our informants, as Plumes or Those-who-wear-feathers-on-the-head, is probably an older name for the band, but one for which neither Kroeber nor we received an explanation.

The Coffees and Bloods were so known on account of their going to extremes in the consumption of these two foods respectively.

Plenty Bad refers to the fact that this band was numerous but were all "bad" people, that is, that there were few with good reputations as warriors.

Buffalo Overloaded were supposed to have been very foolish people. Their name derives from the story that on one occasion, when hunting, they saw a small herd of buffalo, one of which sat down. A band member said: "That buffalo is overloaded (i.e., he has eaten too much and has died)." The others said: "Let's wait till all the buffalo get overloaded, then we will go and get our meat." One by one the buffalo sat down and when the hunters thought they were all dead, they walked toward them, but the buffalo, catching the scent, ran away.

The Tendons were so named because they were said to have expressed a preference for the neck tendons of the buffalo as food.

The Night Hawks received their name from the habit of the band members of breaking wind audibly, the sound suggesting the noise the night hawk makes as it flies.

Only one of our informants mentioned Berry Men as the name of a band, whose place in the camp circle was said to have been next to Water Horses. Although this name is likewise listed by Kroeber, none of our informants could say to which band the term referred. Several other names of bands which various informants mentioned as having been heard by them to have existed in the past were Black Horns, Yellow Tail Feathers, Saw-whet Owls, Red Eagles, Torn Leggings, and Traders. One informant,

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

621 The Boy, ventured the following tentative indentification, saying
114 that these may have been earlier names respectively for Same As Assiniboine, Upper Quarters, Water Horses, Night Hawks, Coffees, Frozens. A few informants had heard of Breech Cloths and Weasel Skin Headdresses as band names but didn't know which modern bands they might have been, always assuming that the number of bands had been twelve.

361 As to the exact order of the bands in the camp circle, there was
621 no real agreement. The order given by Singer and Coming Day-
114 light differs from that given by Kroeber. Furthermore, while the two old women were emphatic that the places within the camp circle were permanent—"otherwise we could not remember all this!"—some of the men informants were under the impression that the band from which a new Flat Pipe Keeper was chosen moved to the center position opposite the opening of the camp
361 circle, and that the others shifted accordingly.

621 In any case, the circle, with opening toward the rising sun, was the formation employed when the whole tribe was together. When bands were separated from the main group they might or might not camp in this way, depending somewhat on the length of time they expected to remain in one spot, and on the nature of the terrain. Sometimes, for instance, the lodges of the various families of the band were strung out along a watercourse.

According to The Boy, there was a tendency for bands which camped in proximity within the big camp circle to go off together when the tribe split up. The Upper Quarters and Frozens were often together and, along with them, the Same As Assiniboine or occasionally the Greys (proper) and Buffalo Overloaded, usually staying more or less in the vicinity of the Milk River, the center of the territory claimed by the Gros Ventres. Whereas the Tendons, followed by the Poor Greys and Bad Plenty, moved for winter quarters to the country bounded by the Big Sandy, the Marias River (at Ft. Benton), and the Bear Paws; while the Fast Travelers as a rule sought out the country south of the Missouri toward the Yellowstone River and Crow country, accompanied by perhaps the Coffees. Water Horses and Bloods were friendly
554 with each other and joined now one group and now another.

621 A band which was thus followed by two or three others had

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

PREFACE

This second part of the record of the "old way of life" of the Gros Ventres of Montana was written by Rt. Rev. John M. Cooper, late Professor and Head of the Department of Anthropology of The Catholic University of America. The manuscript had been all but completed by him at the time of his death in 1949. Dr. Cooper had intended to incorporate changes that might be suggested in view of my 1948 field check-up of the contents of the volume and then to critically edit the manuscript,—as only he could have done. I have thought it best to publish the manuscript essentially as Dr. Cooper had written it and to give additional information, obtained in 1948 and subsequently, in footnotes identified as my own. I have also added the cross-references to The Gros Ventres of Montana: Part I, Social Life, which appeared in 1953 and which was intended as a background for the present volume. 114 128

The general plan of the joint undertaking by Dr. Cooper and myself, and the procedure followed by us, have been outlined in the Preface and the Introduction to Part I, Social Life. Data on the principal informants have been given in the Appendix to that volume. These will not be repeated. We must note, however, with profound regret that Thomas Main died in November, 1952, and that The Boy died in January, 1956. 128 115

The Boy, a man of distinct philosophical turn of mind, as mentioned several times by Dr. Cooper in the present volume, is responsible for the greater part of the material on ritual and ceremonial aspects of Gros Ventre life. The Boy, to a greater degree than his contemporaries, had been interested in ritual and its meaning since his early youth. From his father, Lame Bull, a keeper of the sacred Flat Pipe and an outstanding man, The Boy had acquired a rich store of knowledge which his enquiring mind enlarged in adult life. He was constantly discussing the past of his people with many other men, older than himself, who had participated more fully than was possible for him to do in the Gros Ventre way of life before the disappearance of the buffalo in 1887.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

● 114 The Boy and the other Gros Ventres who cooperated with Dr. Cooper were most anxious to have preserved for the future the religious phases of their culture. The term "religious" is of course to be taken in a very broad sense. In comparing the present account with that published by Dr. Kroeber in 1907 differing emphases emerge. In the early years of the century some of the magico-religious beliefs and practices were still operative among the Gros Ventres and were not willingly explained by their practitioners. On the one hand, therefore, our account is much fuller and more explicit than is Dr. Kroeber's concerning the sacred Pipes, the meaning of the various rituals and of the personal supernatural powers,—all illustrated by our informants through reference to identifiable individuals no longer living. On the other hand Dr. Kroeber's treatment of the ceremonial dances is more complete. Inasmuch, however, as details given by our informants supplement his description, it was decided to publish ours in full despite some overlapping. Similarly it was thought worthwhile to present such myths and tales as were volunteered by our informants since some of these show variations upon those in the much more complete collection by Dr. Kroeber, and a couple of myths obtained by us do not appear in his series. One of these latter confirms his earlier prediction that certain of the more widespread motifs, which did not occur in the tales obtained by him, should be found among the Gros Ventres.

114 123 Because neither Doctor Cooper nor I had witnessed any of the latter day ceremonies in connection with the sacred Pipes, such as the opening of the Flat Pipe bundle in 1946, The Boy initiated the holding of a ceremony when I was on the Fort Belknap Reservation in 1948. In it he enacted the role of keeper of the Flat Pipe and went through some of the ritual, though the Pipe was not unwrapped at that time. The photos in Plates 1 and 2A were taken on this occasion. For Plate 1 A-B we are indebted to Mr. Duke Wellington, Agent of the Fort Belknap Reservation, who received his Gros Ventre name just after the Flat Pipe ceremony was completed. I took those on Plates 1C and 2A.

000 We are grateful to Dr. Louis W. Hagener, Professor of Biology, Northern Montana College, for information regarding the 1951

776 beings as Little Spirit and ghosts, but not such major ones as the Supreme Being and Bha'a.

The following story, as told by The Boy, gives nearly all that 224 is known about Little Spirit, etcibətä:t (ètc,sä, it is little, bettêtô, 776 spirit [Sifton]).

"Long ago, how far back I do not know, Little Spirit made himself the guardian spirit helper of a certain man, saying: 'Whenever there is going to be a famine, call me.' 'What are you?' the man asked, 'Where do you come from?' 'I am Little Spirit, I am from the western wind.' The man who had Little Spirit never called him except when game was scarce and there was danger of famine among the people. Then he would call Little Spirit who would tell them where game was. When this man was dying, he said to the people: 'Whenever you go out hunting, pray to Little Spirit to show you where game is and when you have killed game and gutted it, take a piece of the liver and some of the fat, put in on the west side of the game killed, and say: "Here, Little Spirit, is liver and fat for you."' It was just that one man of long ago, no other, who had Little Spirit as a personal helper. When Little Spirit came, he came as a little whirlwind."[19]

Little Spirit was, in accordance with this man's instruction, ordinarily appealed to by the Gros Ventres for success in hunting particularly at times when game was hard to get, and the abovementioned first fruits sacrifice of liver and fat made to him after game was killed. He was not appealed to on any other occasion.

776 At a number of places in and around Gros Ventres territory are cliffs with incised pictographs on them made by a certain class [172] of "false persons" called tciya:tsine:n "ghost men" or "little men." They were never seen but according to Singer were dwarfish, about 3 feet tall. The Gros Ventres distinguish clearly between such pictographs made by these beings on the one hand and on the other those made by Indians or else tracks of animals in flat rocks. The first are temporary, and change from time to time; the other two kinds are permanent. Gros Ventres have tried to get

[114] [19] He did not, however, come into the shaking tent as the ghost helper did. The statement by Cooper, 1940, based on 1939 field notes, was an error corrected 1940 in the field.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

and as long as you live see that they do not sell it or part with it." 793 174

So at Curly Head's death the Pipe fell to Iron Man II (Tall Jack), a relative of Curly Head, who since 1937 (1938) has looked after it. In 1948 it was still being kept in Curly Head's house.[8]

The normal term of keepership of the Feathered Pipe was 793 four years. The very first keeper held the office 80 years, according to the origin story given by Garter Snake, and some later ones, according to tradition, up to 20 years, but the usual limit was supposed to be at most two or three terms, that is eight or twelve years.

There was always a Pipe woman or co-keeper, wife of the keeper. She handled the Pipe bundle and in general had about the same ritual and other duties toward it as had the co-keeper of the Flat Pipe toward the Flat Pipe bundle. The Feathered Pipe keeper [841 had to have at least two wives, for during her menses the co-keeper 595] could not handle the bundle and had to sleep and live outside the keeper's lodge and another wife of the keeper had to substitute for her in the handling and care of the bundle.

There was always, too, a Pipe child,—a girl, unless the keeper had no daughters, in which case a son could be selected by him as Pipe child. Thus the oldest son of Sitting High, who had no daughters, became Pipe child. The Pipe child was not necessarily appointed at once by the keeper on assuming the keepership. Garter Snake was not made Pipe child until she was about six years old. Iron Necklace who had been Feathered Pipe keeper some

[8] In the summer of 1951, Iron Man, assisted by The Boy, had a ceremonial opening of the Feathered Pipe bundle. Dr. Louis B. Hagener, Professor of Biology of Northern Montana College, accompanied by his wife, and Dr. Otto Nitz, Professor of Chemistry, now at Stout Institute of Technology, Menominie, Wisconsin, were among the spectators. The pictures in Plates 2 B-C, 3 A-D, were taken by Dr. Nitz at that time. Dr. Hagener has kindly supplied information regarding the 1951 ceremonial. He writes under date of Aug. 8, 1954, as to final disposal of the Feathered Pipe bundle: "Since the young people were so apathetic over the bundle, its significance, and the ceremony, Iron Man and his wife had resolved not to open it again. They were debating as to whether it should be given to a museum or whether the tribe would outfit Iron Man and his wife for a journey and permit them to dispose of it somewhere in the mountains." [R.F.] [114 796 186]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

769
787

was given. Two such songs, victory songs, given during war raids, were recorded by us.

A great many Gros Ventre men and women had power acquired by quest or otherwise from non-ancestral beings, but far fewer had [184] ancestral helpers such as we are describing. Our informants, in fact, whose combined memories carried back to the early 1860's, could recall only five or at most six, seven or eight: Good Singer, Woman (or Bear Old Woman), Morning Star Appears (probably the same as Rising Cross), Bird Child, Bull Head, and perhaps two or three others.[6] Persons with ghost helpers had prestige, not greater however than outstanding doctors had.

[425] Power acquired from non-ancestral beings could be transferred by the possessor to another person through gift or sale. But a ghost helper was not transferable; such power was owned property; a ghost helper was not. A given person never had more than one ghost helper, so far as we could discover. In the shaking tent rite, only this one ghost helper had part,—no other being, neither the Supreme Being, nor Bha'a, nor Little Spirit,[6] nor any power-giving being.

At the time the ghost helper was accepted by its surviving relative, it promised him (or her) to come when summoned with the summoning song, but, in sharp contrast to the practice of non-ancestral power-bestowing beings, it imparted no power to him whatever, whether in war, medicine, gambling or love, except the "power," if it can be called such, to summon the ghost and except by sheer coincidence as in the case of Bad Bad Bull mentioned above. The ghost helper imparted not power, but knowledge; not any power of clairvoyance, prophecy or wisdom, but knowledge itself; not once and for all at the time of being accepted by the person, as did the power-bestowing beings but from time to time if and when summoned. The sole function of the ghost helper as

[6] Cf. Flannery, 1944, pp. 55-58; Cooper, 1944, pp. 62-77 passim. Rising Cross of Flannery, p. 56, was pretty surely the same person as Morning-Star-Appears or Morning-Star-Is-Up, of Cooper, p. 71; probably the same person as mentioned in Watches-All's narrative by Kroeber, 1908, pp. 216-17.

[6] That Little Spirit could function in the shaking tent rite in place of an [114] ancestral spirit, as stated reservedly by Cooper, 1940, p. 112, is an error, corrected by field data gotten by him later.

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

SOCIAL MECHANISMS IN GROS VENTRE GAMBLING

REGINA FLANNERY AND JOHN M. COOPER

INTRODUCTION

THE PRESENT PAPER is offered as a modest start toward opening up 121
what looks like a promising field, namely, the social implications of gambling. 114

Our anthropological sources yield a fairly generous amount of information 525
on the world distribution of gambling,[1] the games and sports gambled on, the valuables wagered, the payment of gambling debts, and the ritual accompaniments of gambling. On the other hand, the same sources yield extremely meager information, and for most gambling peoples none at all, on such social aspects of gambling as: its mode of meshing into the prevalent social organization (who gambles, with whom, and for what); its effectiveness in fulfilling or thwarting the wishes of the individual gambler and in meeting or blocking the needs of integral and fractional social groups; individual differences in participation and the motivations responsible for them; native attitudes toward gambling; the economic and other factors that are favorable or unfavorable to the rise and persistence of gambling in culture as such or in given cultures. Field and library studies of these and most other social aspects of gambling have been almost entirely neglected by anthropologists.[2] And, so far as the present writers have been able to discover from rapid search among the sociological sources and from random inquiries among their sociological friends, such studies have also been almost entirely neglected by the sociologists, even by those specializing in the area of delinquency.

The following pages are an attempt to present the gambling complex, with 121
emphasis on certain of its social aspects, as it existed during the second half of 525
the last century among the Gros Ventre of Montana. Most of the complex is now a thing of the past. New gambling games, particularly playing cards, have superseded the old, and gambling itself, on the reservation and among the [178]
Gros Ventre in general, is not the tense and meaningful activity it used to be.

The data on which this paper is based were gathered, incidentally to a gen- 121

1 World distribution is spotty and far from universal. A summarized world distribution, based on several hundred sources, is given in J. M. Cooper, *Temporal Sequence and the Marginal Cultures* (Anthropological Series, Catholic University of America, no. 10, 1941), pp. 67-68.

2 Father Gerald Desmond's *Gambling among the Yakima*, from his field study of 1944, a manuscript now being prepared for publication, is devoted largely to the social aspects.

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

THE SHAKING TENT RITE AMONG PLAINS AND FOREST ALGONQUIANS

JOHN M. COOPER
The Catholic University of America

121 114 THE purpose of the present paper is to bring together and make available some scattered field notes on the conjuring and "shaking tent" complex of northern North America, a subject that has recently evoked a good deal of discussion, particularly in the valuable interpretative monographs of Ray and Hallowell.[1] The data to be presented are from the Algonquian-speaking Montagnais, Cree, Oteipwe, Blood-Blackfoot, and Gros Ventres (of Montana), and the Siouan-speaking Assiniboine. Only certain high-light features of the Montagnais, Cree, and Oteipwe rite will be mentioned; the complete field data gathered by the writer will be given in monographs to be published later. On the Blood-Blackfoot, Gros Ventres, and Assiniboine, my field data will be given here in full. Information obtained on the Blood-Blackfoot and Assiniboine shaking tent rite is very fragmentary. It was gotten under conditions that did not leave time or opportunity for detailed investigation. Leisurely field work on this item among these people would in all probability net a much ampler yield. Information on the Gros Ventre rite is much fuller, but, even so, is probably not exhaustive.

GROS VENTRE RITE

114 787 It was in 1931 during a very brief one-day reconnaissance visit to the Fort Belknap Reservation that the writer first heard of the shaking tent rite among the Gros Ventres, from a group

[1] V. F. Ray, Historic backgrounds of the conjuring complex in the Plateau and the Plains, in L. Spier et al., ed., Language, culture, and personality: Essays in memory of Edward Sapir, Menasha, Wis., 1941, 204–16, bibl. 215–16; A. L. Hallowell, The role of conjuring in Saulteaux society Publ., Philadelphia anthropological society, v. 2, Phila., 1942, incl. bibl. pp. 89–96.

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13 ●

of men, including Stiff Arm, a noted Gros Ventre medicine 114 ●
man, who has since died. Only a few details were obtained: the 787
rite within a regular tepee with spectators present; the tying of the performer with ropes, his escape therefrom, and after his escape the ropes in a ball which could not be untied; the summoning of the spirit of the deceased relative by the performer; the shaking of the tent "as in a cyclone" when the spirit came; talking "from above" by the spirit; singing by the performer and by the others in the tepee.

Later in August-September, 1939 and 1940, fuller information on the shaking tent rite was secured in connection with a general study of Gros Ventre society and religion, from The Boy and Thick, two of the older and best informed men among the Gros Ventres. These fuller data here follow.

Spiritual helpers among the Gros Ventres were of two kinds, ghosts of deceased persons and beings who had never been men. [776]
The latter, the ordinary guardian spirits, by far the more common, do not concern us here as they do not enter at all into the Gros Ventre shaking tent rite. Only ghosts so enter.

A ghost helper, tsatsawâ·'ª (-â- and superior a nasalized), 776
was usually acquired in the following way. It was not sought by 787
fasting and crying out on the hills, the customary procedure for acquiring non-ghostly guardian spirits and power. In fact there was either no quest of any kind or at most a somewhat indirect one. The usual sequence was as follows. A surviving relative would keep in his or her possession some memento or keepsake—something the deceased had prized greatly, some belonging such [765
as a whip, or a tooth or bit of hair of the departed one. The 768]
keepsake was kept, not worn. It was kept not for the purpose of acquiring the ghost of the deceased relative (a father or other close relative), but solely or at least chiefly, so far as I could gather, out of regard for the departed.

In most cases where such mementos were kept nothing happened. In some few cases, however, the keeping led to the acquisition of a ghost helper by the keeper. The first intimations the keeper had of the intentions of the deceased relative were knockings, or whistlings, or other kinds of disturbance around

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13
Assiniboine NF4 Montagnais NH6
Blackfoot NF6 Ojibwa NG6
Cree NG4

BCMOCA 787 171

Cree-Otcipwe, the power to summon the shaking tent spirit(s) is not thrust upon the person by any spirit, as in a great measure it is among the Gros Ventres.

In general, the shaking tent rite appears to have much more relative importance and to play a much more preponderant role in the total magico-religious life of the Montagnais-Cree-Otcipwe than of the Gros Ventres, Blackfoot-Blood and Assiniboine.

BCMOCA [177]

That there is a historical relationship between the two above contrasted shaking tent complexes appears very probable from the many specific and distinctive elements they share in common and from the almost continuous geographical distribution of the complexes, a distribution moreover predominantly among the main body of Algonquian-speaking peoples of the taiga and adjacent open country and the aberrant-Algonquian-speaking groups of the Plains, the Gros Ventres, the Blackfoot, and the Cheyenne.

Addendum on Wider Distribution

G 787 171 [114]

It has not been the purpose of the present paper to deal with the total distribution of the shaking tent rite and with the historical problems connected with such distribution. The following summary notes are added merely to contribute a mite toward filling out the picture of distribution as given in Ray's historical study and Hallowell's socio-psychological one.[8]

In the east, the shaking tent is not reported in our published sources, to my knowledge, south of the St. Lawrence. The record by Maurault for the Abnaki does not mention shaking of the conjurer's tent.[9] Inquiries by the writer in the field in 1931 among the Chipewyan and Dogrib of the Mackenzie-Slave watershed brought consistently negative results; in fact informants who knew well and gave many details of the rite as practised among the Cree of Ft. McMurray (Athabaska R.) and Ft. Chipewyan (L. Athabaska), on the Cree-Chipewyan borderline, and who were equally familiar with both Cree and Chipewyan

[8] Ray, 1941; Hallowell, 1942. See footnote 1.

[9] J. A. Maurault, Histoire des Abenakis depuis 1605 jusqu'à nos jours, Québec, 1866, 30.

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

[P.39] PRIMITIVE MAN

Quarterly Bulletin
of the
Catholic Anthropological Conference

Vol. 20 Washington 17, D. C., July, 1947 No. 3

THE CHANGING FORM AND FUNCTIONS OF THE GROS VENTRE GRASS DANCE

REGINA FLANNERY
Catholic University of America

THE purpose of the present paper is to discuss the changing 121
form, and to show as far as possible the changing functions, of the Grass dance in Gros Ventre culture from the time of its introduction between 1875 and 1880 up to about 1920 when it had paled off to relative insignificance.

The Gros Ventre tribe of Montana was one of the many which 796
adopted the Grass dance, sometimes called the Omaha dance, as 177
it spread rapidly over the northern plains in relatively recent times. Wissler studied the distribution and diffusion of the Grass dance as a trait-complex,[1] basing his interpretation upon his own 796
observations, especially among the Blackfeet, and on the de- 114
scriptions of this dance as published for other tribes. For the Gros Ventres he depended mainly on Kroeber's data,[2] the only source available, but he himself had visited that tribe and collected, among other specimens, regalia used by them in the Grass

[1] Wissler, C., General discussion of shamanistic and dancing societies, AMNH-AP 11, pt. 12 1916, pp. 862–71.

[2] Kroeber, A. L., Ethnology of the Gros Ventre, AMNH-AP 1, pt. 4, 1908, pp. 234, 238–39.

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 dance.[3] Wissler was well aware of the importance of the Grass
114 dance in the transition period of Plains culture from the old to the new, and suggested further studies be made. Nevertheless, no one has given us a close-up, so far as I know, of its dynamic aspects in the life of any one of the tribes who shared the phenomenon.

796 In 1901 Kroeber noted that the Grass dance as then performed
114 by the Gros Ventres differed considerably in form from that
177 which was described to him as having been the case when it was first adopted. He gives us a brief description of the earlier procedure, but naturally enough no details regarding the then current method of carrying out the Grass dance, since his concern was with the older tribal culture. He merely states: "It is no longer a young man's dance, nor confined to a certain group. All the people in the tribe take part in it. It is very similar in character to the present-day Arapaho crow-dance, as well as in the place it occupies in the life of the people. Among the Gros Ventre it is now the only dance held."[4] Our data, gathered during two visits to the Fort Belknap Reservation in 1940 and 1945, confirm Kroeber's and supplement them to a considerable extent.

121 In treating of the Grass dance then, we shall distinguish be-
128 tween an earlier period extending from between 1875 to 1880 up to about 1890, and a later period comprising the years from roughly 1890 to 1916. We shall first describe the form of the Grass dance as it was in the earlier period, then the changes which were later introduced, and finally we shall discuss the varying functions during both periods.

The Form: Earlier Period

796 According to Wissler the dance originated with the Dakota
177 about 1860 and is traceable as a development of the older Pawnee
171

[3] These specimens are in the American Museum of Natural History. Some of those used in the Gros Ventre Grass dance have been described by Kroeber, loc. cit.: fork, pp. 270–71; spoon, p. 271; whip, p. 271; crow-belt, pp. 271–72.

[4] Kroeber, loc. cit., p. 238.

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 Bear Paw Mountains. It was there that the Gros Ventres had their first Grass dance alone. I don't know why they did things like this, but all those who had been given regalia walked instead of riding horseback. But the drum was packed on a special horse by itself and when they came to a stream, four men who owned the drumsticks carried the drum across, wading in without taking off their moccasins or other clothing. Furthermore those who owned the regalia were not supposed to help feed the crowd. They were not allowed to serve food and if they did, they had to give something away. Nor were these men supposed to borrow. They were supposed to have their own cup or dish and when it [415] was time to eat, if they didn't have any receptacle, they spread out their robes and the servers poured the coffee or soup or whatever was being served right in the robes."

114 The above account is the only explicit record of the actual 174 transfer which was obtainable in the field. From details supplied 796 by this same informant, however, as well as by others not so old as she, but who have accurate traditional knowledge of Gros Ventre culture, we have considerable information on the Grass dance as practiced from the time it was adopted.[7] Let us proceed then to the general description, first as the dance was carried out in the earlier period.

575 *Personnel and equipment.* At the time of adoption the Grass 796 dance came into the possession of a society, the Wolves or Wolfmen. Only members of the society actually danced, wearing the distinctive headdress of deer hair, although the rest of their costume varied with the individual. The special regalia which went with the dance were: 2 crow-belts; a large drum and 4 fancy drumsticks; a spear or fork; a spoon; 2 wands representing swords; a whistle.[8] Each item was owned by an individual member of the society who was, by virtue of this ownership, an officer

[115] [7] I wish to thank all of my Gros Ventre friends for their assistance, especially The Boy, Thick, Thomas Main, Charles Buckman, Al and Cora Chandler, Mary Ereaux, Mathilda Cuts-the-Rope, but above all, my old "grandmothers," Coming Daylight and Singer.

[8] For reference to description of some of these, see footnote 3.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

293 used in this way. The owner twice dreamed of a weasel, which told him to
726 use its skin. Thereupon he first wore a weasel-skin in dances, and later
751 carried it to war. Subsequently he lent it to his son and to other men who
778 went to war, and they always returned successfully.

A man to whom a fisher had appeared in a dream or vision used a fish-
[787] skin medicine-bag, and on going to war carried this with him.

A renowned warrior, dead for some time, received his personal medicine from the bears, and was forbidden to scalp, count coup on the enemy, or take away a gun. He could only kill. He once killed two Sioux with one shot, at a place which received its name from the event.

[492] A simple riding-whip (specimen Museum No. 50-1821) has on its wooden handle four red marks, each of which is said to represent an enemy struck in the face with a whip in battle.

Representations, used in the modern "war-dance," of the weapons of
532 Black-Wolf, a well-known Gros Ventre warrior, part of whose experiences
726 in war are told below, consist of a shield and spear. The shield, which is made of painted white cloth, represents the shield carried by him on an occasion when he rushed to battle with no other weapon. The shield is decorated with a blue crescent along the lower edge, representing the sun, and bordered by a wavy red line denoting lightning. The wooden spear and spear-point represent a spear with which the owner stabbed a Piegan in battle. The
[822] spear-point is painted blue and red; the blue represe[illegible] iron, the red blood. Red marks on the handle of the spear represent [illegible]

A pair of beaded and painted moccasins executed [illegible] woman, but
[292] designed by an old man, symbolize his exploits in war. [illegible] outside rim of beading represents the enemy's camp-circle. In the middle of the camp-circle is beaded the figure of a tent belonging to a chief. To this tent was tied a horse, which the wearer of the moccasins cut loose. This feat is represented by an outline painting of a horse and halter. Three U-shaped figures, also painted, are horse-tracks, and represent the capture of horses. On the other moccasin there are again three such figures in a row, which here were said to indicate a charge on horseback on the camp; while two other such figures, facing each other, indicate a face-to-face fight.

Curtains hanging behind the bed in front of the tent-wall were sometimes painted to illustrate the owner's achievements in war.

WAR-EXPERIENCES OF INDIVIDUALS.

114 The following narratives give an entirely personal account of the war-
115 experiences of three individuals, two of them men of about sixty years of

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

age, and the third a woman probably a little older. They are not in any 114
sense historical, but were obtained for the picture they give of the war-life 115
of the Plains Indians. Both the men were renowned warriors. Bull-Robe, the older, has since died. In the case of neither was a complete account of all their achievements in war obtained; but both narratives probably refer to every war party or engagement in which they took part down to the point at which the narratives are broken off. All three narratives bear the stamp of naïve truthfulness; which, in view of the importance played in the life of the Plains tribes by the telling of war-exploits and the recounting of coups, is not surprising. It must be remembered that the narrators were not asked to describe the engagements and expeditions in which they were involved, but to narrate their personal share in them. This will account for the frequency with which an insignificant personal experience is told in detail and the general result of a war-party slurred over or ignored. The story told by the woman Watches-All has reference to the great disastrous expedition against the Piegans in 1867.

Black-Wolf's Narrative.

When I was a boy I heard about great deeds in war, and resolved to 159
follow in the tracks of such men. When I was a young man I started out 726
alone. I travelled, and reached the camp of another band of Gros Ventre on the Missouri. I ate there and went on to the Bear Paw Mountains. There I slept at the foot of Eagle Butte. I started again before sunrise and crossed the mountains, following Beaver Creek to the end of the mountains. I saw buffalo, and shot at them. Some one else was hunting these buffalo, and heard the shot. After shooting, I had left my horse tied at the foot of the butte; which I climbed in order to look over the country. Then I saw some one below me coming up the butte. A moment later he saw me. I raised my gun, but he dodged and ran off. Thinking he was one of a party, I ran off also, reached my horse, and rode into the timber. When I could hear and see no one, I rode to where there was a trading-post on Milk River. At night all the horses there ran off into the timber. In the morning an Assiniboine was about to go to get them, when I told him that I would go after them, and started with my gun and a rope. Then I saw what looked like a flock of blackbirds flying over a hill. Soon I saw they were people. At first I had seen only their heads. They were coming over the hill towards me, but on one side, in order to ambush me. Suddenly they were riding at me. At first I was as if dazzled, and it looked like a fog to me. Then I recovered my senses. I was some distance from the post. I did not run, but waited for them. Two of them with long whips were in the lead. I

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

1938, 1939, and 1940. The group of older men, who wanted a 124
record of their old way of life taken down, emphasized the religious aspects of their culture. The Boy gave the largest portion
of information on this subject. He is now about eighty years old 115
and had been interested ever since he was a young boy in the 124
native culture of his people. His father, Lame Bull, was a deeply religious man and had been a Keeper of the Flat Pipe. From him and from other old men The Boy acquired an enormous body of knowledge which his excellent memory retains. Thick, who died in 1951, and (John) Charles Buckman, who died in 1949, were contemporaries of The Boy and made substantial contributions to the record. Among still older men than these three were Stiffarm, Iron Man I, Joe Assiniboine, Turn Toes, Jim and Philip Shortman, all of whom gave additional information. Charles Buckman spoke English well and sometimes acted as interpreter for the others. Tom Main, a younger man, was, however, the chief interpreter for the men. Moreover, both he and Al Chandler were able to independently contribute valuable information. Biographical details on the chief informants are appended to the present volume.

With all of these men, Dr. Cooper was on excellent terms. 123
They have told me that they realized from their first meeting with him that Dr. Cooper, being a man of deep religious conviction himself, would understand what they could tell him of Gros Ventre beliefs as they had been taught to them or to their fathers before Catholicism had any hold upon the Gros Ventres. The friendship which developed between Dr. Cooper on the one hand and Thick, Charles Buckman, Tom Main, and above all, The Boy, on the other, was a lasting one founded on the deepest mutual respect.

Dr. Cooper usually had the men come to his quarters at the 124
priest's residence of the Mission for regularly scheduled sessions, especially in 1940 when he was able to take phonograph records [126]
of over a hundred Gros Ventre songs. The Boy, who accepted me as a substitute for Dr. Cooper in the years when the latter was unable, on account of ill health, to get out to Montana, remarked on a difference in our methods. Dr. Cooper tended to guide the interviews more closely than I and, since we both had the habit of recording the questions we asked, our field notes confirm The Boy's observation. Inasmuch as those who were engaged in making the record were detained from attending to their other duties, Dr.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

124 Cooper felt that compensation was due them. It may be stated however that the money paid was looked upon as in the nature of a gift, and the generosity displayed in the form of counter-gifts, both to Dr. Cooper and to me, was truly touching.

●115 I was invited to the Fort Belknap Reservation in 1940 to work
123 exclusively with the women and to deal mainly with matters other than religion. The two oldest women at Hays, Coming Daylight
[609 and Singer, accepted me as their "granddaughter" which was
603] fortunate in view of the freedom allowed between grandparents and grandchildren in Gros Ventre society. Although these two old women did not speak English, I was happy in having as interpreters women who were well liked by them and who were themselves interested in "the old ways of doing things." Thus they proved valuable informants on their own account. Mary Ereaux and the late Cora Chandler were two who served admirably in both capacities in 1940; Mathilda Cuts The Rope and Mae Main aided me most ably in 1945 and 1948. Garter Snake, a valuable informant, was the only woman for whom a man, Charles Buckman, interpreted.

123 While on the Reservation, I enjoyed the hospitality of the
124 School Sisters of Saint Francis at their convent. I went out, however, before nine and returned at five or six, spending each day visiting the women in their homes. There we smoked and chatted and worked in an atmosphere of easy informality. Much of the material given by the women might be classified under the heading of "expressive interviews." The older women were interested in the fact that I could take down so quickly in shorthand what the interpreter said, but occasionally checked on my accuracy, and the interpreter's as well, by asking me to read back for translation to them something they had said hours or days before!

In 1945 and 1948 when I worked with the men, who had previously cooperated with Dr. Cooper, the situation was naturally somewhat more formal than that which obtained with the women. We met in the Community Hall at Hays. As our business-like sessions proceeded, various Gros Ventre men dropped in and sat on the sidelines. Many of these, including some who were not regular informants or interpreters, such as Tom Bad Road, Steve Bradly, Rufus Warrior and others, helped by freely joining in

CHAPTER II

TRIBAL ORGANIZATION

The greater bulk of our material on the Gros Ventres covers the fifty year span from about 1835 to 1885. During that period, the tribal territory centered about the Milk River. The present Reservation, the boundaries of which were finally fixed in 1888, represents only a small part of the land claimed and held by the Gros Ventres as their own. 131 [648]

Band Names and Affiliation

The political organization of the Gros Ventres was simple. The division into fairly autonomous bands was basic, and apparently the number of bands was twelve. Our informants, both those who were adult and those who were children, at the time when the whole tribe still encamped as a unit, agreed on that point. The list of band names given by our two oldest informants, Coming Daylight (b. 1854) and Singer (b. ca. 1856), is as follows: Coffees, Same as Assiniboine, Plenty Bad, Greys, Fast Travelers, Water Horses Once a Day, Upper Quarters, Frozens, Buffalo Overloaded, Tendons, Bloods, Night Hawks. These two old women maintained that, in their own experience, the bands camped in this order, and in a circle, when the whole tribe was together. 619 621 [115]

Quite independently of the above list, another was obtained from The Boy (b. 1870). As a child he witnessed the formation of the camp circle, and he knows many details of previous decades from his father, Lame Bull (b. ca. 1825, d. 1890) and from other old men. The Boy's list agrees with that given by the two women, except in regard to one band. He includes a group called Poor Greys and omits Night Hawks. All of our informants insisted that the Greys and Night Hawks were distinct bands, but there was a difference of opinion as to whether or not the Greys and Poor Greys were in reality the same band. 621 115 114

Seven of the band names can be identified with Kroeber's num- 621

PLATES

142 The original photograph of Plate 1 was taken in 1887 and
291 belongs to The Boy. Shown in it are Lame Bull, The Boy's
301 father, and Crow Bull, maternal uncle of Coming Daylight. Both
302 of these men were born around 1825 and their personal experiences were often referred to by our informants as we took down the record of the old way of life. Each had been Keeper of the sacred Flat Pipe.

115 The photographs composing Plate 2, except for the one of The
133 Boy, were taken in 1940 by Dr. Karl F. Herzfeld. The first three
142 show the nature of the country around Hays on the Fort Belknap
291 Reservation; the other three show some of our informants and
292 interpreters whose biographical sketches follow.

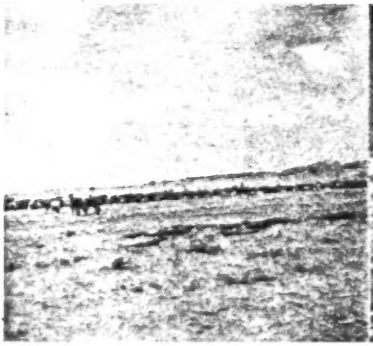
531 In Plate 3, the shield and war medicines of Bull Lodge, father
797 of our informant, Garter Snake, represent only a few of the specimens of Gros Ventre culture collected in 1937 by Mr.
778 Richard Pohrt, of Flint, Michigan.
293
714
721

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

115
133
142
291
292
531

IN THE LITTLE ROCKIES

THE BOY



PLAINS NEAR HAYS

MARY, SINGER, AND COMING DAYLIGHT

[342]
[797]

ST. PAUL'S MISSION AND SCHOOL

COMING DAYLIGHT'S TIPI

PLATE II

[p.212 (8)]

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

APPENDIX

THE CHIEF INFORMANTS

The Boy gave the greater bulk of information on religious and political aspects of Gros Ventre culture. He was born in 1870, one of the younger sons of Lame Bull (b. ca. 1825—d. 1908), and grandson of Crow Moccasin (whose other name was Bird Chief, b. ca. 1795—d. 1865), a signer of the 1855 Treaty. When The Boy was a very young child his father, a prominent warrior and well-to-do man, became Keeper of one of the sacred pipes—the Flat Pipe. As a boy and young man, The Boy, who was very much interested in the ceremonial and other aspects of his culture, spent as much time as possible with his father and his father's friends, listening to their discussions. In private he questioned his father repeatedly and thus he acquired a wide and deep knowledge of the Gros Ventre way of life as it was before the buffalo disappeared. Although he did well during the one year of boarding school he had at St. Peter's, he was very unhappy there, and did not enter the newly opened Mission School of St. Paul's although his father wished him to do so. He is an extremely intelligent man with marked philosophical trend of mind. In spite of his unwillingness to speak English, he became a natural leader among the Gros Ventres and served his people in many different capacities. At present he is the "grand old man" of the Gros Ventres and is appealed to when any question regarding the past arises. His statement in regard to his knowledge of the 1855 Treaty, for instance, is acknowledged as weighty evidence in the present Gros Ventre claims against the Government which are now awaiting settlement. Without The Boy's drive to have the old way of life recorded, this work could not have been accomplished. 115 159

Thick (b. ca. 1870—d. 1951) was well-versed in the old culture. It was his father who was responsible for putting on the last Sacrifice Dance (Sun Dance) held by the Gros Ventres in 1884. Thick's maternal uncle took advantage of his prerogative to raise his sister's children and removed Thick from his parental home at about the age of seven and kept him under supervision until Thick was a young man. Compared to his elder brother, Horse Capture, Thick was somewhat shy and retiring, entering into the public social life of the Gros Ventres only after his brother finally persuaded him to do so. A considerable amount of the material given to Dr. Cooper was related by The Boy in Thick's presence, and Thick either agreed with what had been said, or, if he disagreed, he did not hesitate to speak up. Since he and The Boy were brothers-in-law and maintained their respectful relationship, there were a number of topics which they could not discuss in each other's presence. Consequently there were many occasions when Thick worked independently of The Boy, both with Father Cooper and with me. Thick never attended school, and, like The Boy, did not speak English.

115
159

Charles Buckman (b. ca. 1875—d. 1949), whose nickname was John, was brought up by his mother's people. He had considerable knowledge of the old way of life and his childhood training and experience remained vivid in his memory in spite of the fact that he was educated at the boarding school at St. Paul's Mission on the Reservation. He enjoyed reading the newspapers and listening to the radio and was equally interested in discussing the old way of life of the Gros Ventres and the latest developments in world politics. His services as interpreter and informant were utilized especially in many of the sessions that Dr. Cooper had jointly with Thick and The Boy. Thick found him an especially congenial interpreter. He was prominent in the public life of the Reservation and held several different offices.

Thomas Main (b. 1890) made a very extensive contribution to the record of Gros Ventre way of life in his capacity as chief interpreter. He, like Charles Buckman, was a half-orphan and was raised by his mother's people. The Boy is his maternal uncle and has exerted a considerable influence on Tom. His knowledge of the old way of life comes, too, through his old "grandmothers" for whom as a child he ran errands and who rewarded him by long stories of the "old times." He was educated at St. Paul's Mission School and has always been a great reader—for years he has kept in touch with current developments not only through the usual media, but also through daily reading of the Congressional Record. His unusually good command of English, coupled with a real linguistic sense, makes him an ideal interpreter. He has been extremely patient with our efforts to take down Gros Ventre texts, and was never too hurried to explain the metaphorical expressions in which the Gros Ventre language abounds. He has taken an active part in tribal affairs and is often selected as spokesman for the Gros Ventres at the local, state, and national levels.

Al Chandler (b. ca. 1870) gave valuable information, especially in view of the fact that his relatives participated more fully in the rites connected with the Feathered Pipe rather than with those of the Flat Pipe. This helped very much to round out the picture of ceremonial aspects of Gros Ventre life. He was educated at St. Paul's Mission School and, like Tom Main, was able to convey in English some of the finer nuances of the Gros Ventre language. Ill health prevented his giving us as many interviews as we should have liked to have had with him.

Coming Daylight (b. 1854—d. 1949) was also known by another of her names, Taken A Prisoner, and her childhood nickname had been Yellow Hair. In spite of her advanced age in 1940, she was a vigorous old woman in full possession of her faculties and had her own house independently of any of her many relatives. She maintained throughout the years her reputation for industry, generosity and hospitality and was highly respected. She was very much interested in the taking of the record of the old way of life and gave most freely of her personal experiences, and referred as well to what she had heard from her uncle, her grandmother and other older people whose experiences extended further into the past than her own. She had been orphaned at an early age and was brought up by a strict old

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

grandmother under the protection of her mother's brother, Crow Bull, (b. ca. 1825—d. 1887) a prosperous and prominent warrior, who for a number of years was Keeper of the Flat Pipe. She was married as a child-bride to Dressed in White, whom she loved and respected and who later also acquired as wife her younger sister. She was still a young woman when her husband died. Her following two marriages were each of short duration, but with her next husband, Little Man, she lived many years until she was again widowed. It was during this marriage that the drastic change in Gros Ventre culture occurred with the disappearance of the buffalo. Her last husband, Warrior, pre-deceased her by many years. By 1945 her health had begun to fail although her memory was still good. In 1948, however, she was very ill and was not able to work. To Coming Daylight we owe the bulk of the material on the life cycle and the woman's point of view on social and religious activities. 115 ● 159

Singer (b. ca. 1855—d. 1947) was often present when her friend, Coming Daylight, was talking about the old ways of doing things. On these occasions as well as when she was interviewed alone, she volunteered a great deal of information independently. Her lot had not been as fortunate as that of Coming Daylight. Her first marriage at the age of ten or eleven was to join her sister as co-wife. She was soon sent home to her father and her next marriage, which lasted for some time, was an unhappy one. She was mistreated by the senior wife, who was not related to her, and their husband not only permitted this but was cruel to her himself. Her next two marriages, first to Iron Bucket and later to Ax Handle, turned out more successfully. In her old age she married her last husband, Sleeping Bear, whom she outlived by some years. She seems to have been less inclined towards domesticity than was Coming Daylight, and enjoyed to the full such activities as gambling, counting coups, and rough and tumble games and jests with her brothers-in-law and her enemy-friends.

Garter Snake (b. ca. 1860) has been blind for a number of years and consequently was not able to enter into the giving of the record with the same spirit and interest as either Coming Daylight or Singer. Nevertheless she gave valuable information. She is the daughter of Bull Lodge, (b. ca. 1825—d. ca. 1900?) who had been not only Keeper of the sacred Feathered Pipe but also was a famous medicine man. She had been selected as Pipe Child at the time her father became Keeper and thus remained in the same lodge as her parents while the other children, including her brother, Otter Robe, were sent to live with relatives. Although Garter Snake volunteered practically no information on her personal experiences, except those of early childhood, she gave a considerable amount of material and independently corroborated a number of points which had been given by others. She is at present the wife of Jim Shortman.

Cora Chandler, late wife of Al Chandler, referred to above, acted as interpreter for Coming Daylight and Singer in 1940. She attended St. Paul's School but was raised by relatives who spoke only Gros Ventre. In many friendly chats with me she elaborated upon various topics which had been

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

115
159

discussed by the old women during our regular sessions, drawing on her knowledge of the old way of life she had acquired from her mother and other old women she had known. Not infrequently she referred to the contrast between the type of behavior that had been expected of her and that which is characteristic of the younger generation today.

Mary Ereaux, at present living off the Reservation at Dodson, was also an interpreter for the oldest informants in 1940. Like Cora, she too kindly supplemented their information from what she had seen and heard in her youth among relatives who conserved the old ways. She volunteered many comments on the change of culture she is witnessing and thus threw much light on the past.

Mathilda Cuts The Rope interpreted for the two oldest women in 1945. Her mother, though younger than Coming Daylight, had been very friendly with the latter and Mathilda was able to add some information on her own regarding social customs of former times.

Mae Main, wife of Thomas Main, like other women of her age, attended school but was brought up among conservative relatives. In 1945 and in 1946 she read those portions of the preliminary draft of this manuscript which dealt with the life cycle and informally gave additional valuable information which has subsequently been incorporated.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

PREFACE

This second part of the record of the "old way of life" of the Gros Ventres of Montana was written by Rt. Rev. John M. Cooper, late Professor and Head of the Department of Anthropology of The Catholic University of America. The manuscript had been all but completed by him at the time of his death in 1949. Dr. Cooper had intended to incorporate changes that might be suggested in view of my 1948 field check-up of the contents of the volume and then to critically edit the manuscript,—as only he could have done. I have thought it best to publish the manuscript essentially as Dr. Cooper had written it and to give additional information, obtained in 1948 and subsequently, in footnotes identified as my own. I have also added the cross-references to The Gros Ventres of Montana: Part I, Social Life, which appeared in 1953 and which was intended as a background for the present volume. 114 128

The general plan of the joint undertaking by Dr. Cooper and myself, and the procedure followed by us, have been outlined in the Preface and the Introduction to Part I, Social Life. Data on the principal informants have been given in the Appendix to that volume. These will not be repeated. We must note, however, with profound regret that Thomas Main died in November, 1952, and that The Boy died in January, 1956. 128 115

The Boy, a man of distinct philosophical turn of mind, as mentioned several times by Dr. Cooper in the present volume, is responsible for the greater part of the material on ritual and ceremonial aspects of Gros Ventre life. The Boy, to a greater degree than his contemporaries, had been interested in ritual and its meaning since his early youth. From his father, Lame Bull, a keeper of the sacred Flat Pipe and an outstanding man, The Boy had acquired a rich store of knowledge which his enquiring mind enlarged in adult life. He was constantly discussing the past of his people with many other men, older than himself, who had participated more fully than was possible for him to do in the Gros Ventre way of life before the disappearance of the buffalo in 1887.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

CHAPTER IV

THE FEATHERED PIPE AND OTHER PIPES

115 Our information is less full and more fragmentary on the Feathered Pipe than on the Flat Pipe, especially regarding ritual details. Our chief informants were Al Chandler, Garter Snake, Jim Shortman, Charles Buckman, The Boy, Thick, Thomas Main and Turn Toes. Additional information was given by Cora Chandler, Singer, and Mary Ereaux. The Boy, our main informant on the Flat Pipe, had never been intimately associated with the Feathered Pipe, as he had been with the Flat Pipe, but he gave us many details, and especially six of the Feathered Pipe songs recorded (Nos. 45-46, 126-129). Al Chandler had been chosen as attendant at one of the more important rites; Garter Snake had been Pipe child, beginning at the age of six or seven, during part of the keepership of her father, Bull Lodge; Jim Shortman recalled much from the time when his father had been keeper. Garter Snake, blind, of keen memory and now a practicing Catholic, before giving her account knelt down, blessed herself and prayed to Ixtcibani:hahat; for, she said, this Pipe was given from heaven. (For her own and other versions of the origin of the Feathered Pipe, see No. 6 in Appendix.) She was particularly concerned to tell truthfully what and only what her father had told her or what she had herself seen and experienced. All of the above informants had witnessed or participated in some of the Feathered Pipe rites. So far as we could discover, however, no one Gros Ventre at the time of our field work was familiar with the whole cycle of rites or with all the details of any of the more important ones. Much is lost for good. Our task has been to salvage what we could and to put together the scattered fragments, leaving many lacunae. In presenting the data we have, we shall follow the same order as has been followed in describing the Flat Pipe.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

CHAPTER V

THE SACRED DANCES

General Features

In the Gros Ventre public cult, as contrasted with more or less private cult concepts and observances, next after the sacred Pipe ceremonies, in order of rank and importance in the native view, were the Sacred Dances or Lodges,—the terms are used interchangeably, and while etymologically "Lodge" is correct, our informants preferred usually "Dance." 796* 771 794

There were eight of these Sacred Dances: the Sacrifice Dance (commonly but incorrectly called the Sun Dance), the "Law Enforcers" or Old Man's Dance, the Drum Dance, the Kit-Fox Dance, the Dog Dance, the Crazy Dance, the Fly Dance, and the Old Women's Dance.[1] Of these eight, the Sacrifice Dance was more generally regarded as the "greatest," ranking first in order of importance and dignity, but somewhat outside of the others which have been mentioned in descending order. All eight were regarded as sacred rites, not merely social or good-time occasions, although such elements entered into them or were associated with them.

Ordinarily a person participated in or vowed during his life first the Fly Dance; only after this the Crazy, Kit-fox, Dog, Drum and Sacrifice Dances, and finally the Old Man's Dance. 796*

Our chief informants on the Sacred Dances were The Boy, Turn Toes, Thick, Charles Buckman, Coming Daylight, and Singer. Lame Bull, from whom The Boy got most of his information on the Dances, had gone through all of them except the Drum Dance. He had even been selected as one of the two outstanding [115]

[1] Kroeber, 1908, pp. 227-268, gives an excellent account of these Dances, gotten at a time, nearly half a century ago, when tribal memory was fresher Our data may help to fill out some of the picture.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 Sacrifice Dance center pole, the sacred Pipes did not enter at all
[276] into the Sacred Lodges.

[801] In all the Sacred Dances, the ritual number was four and movement was clockwise.

A sweat-lodge rite was held in connection with the Sacrifice and Crazy Dances, but we could obtain no details on it; whether also in connection with the others our informants could not say.

The Sacrifice, Drum, Kit-fox, Dog and Crazy Dances regularly lasted four nights and days; the Fly and probably the Old Men's and Old Women's just one day.

The sacred Dances were not held in the winter time when the bands were usually widely scattered, but in the period from about May or June when the bands foregathered to September after which the bands tended to scatter for the fall buffalo hunt.

[361] The lodges for the Old Men's and Old Women's Dances were very simple and were put up outside the camp circle toward the south thereof. The lodges for the other Dances were erected inside the camp circle, near the center.

Feasting daily during the four-day dances was customary, except during the Sacrifice Dance which entailed much fasting on the part of the participants.

The alternation of reverent tension and pleasurable free release that characterized the sacred Pipe rites was even more characteristic of the Sacred Dances.

Sacrifice Dance

*796 The proper name of the Gros Ventre dance commonly referred to by whites and by many English-speaking Gros Ventres as the Sun Dance is aθe:hao'wə (literally, "sacrifice lodge"—aθe:'atc "sacrifice" and -ao'wə "sacred [not common] lodge"; cf. Sifton "sacrifice," athéyach and "Sun Dance," athéihawh'). We are therefore using the term Sacrifice Dance for it. The sun does not enter at all into it. The name apparently has references to the tortures undergone around the center pole by the main participants.

●115 Our chief informants on the Sacrifice Dance were The Boy and Thick, who had witnessed the rite as boys and who had learned much about it from their elders: Coming Daylight, who had wit-

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

nessed the rite about ten times, Singer who had taken part in it by giving presents, by singing, and by riding double with the men going out to look for the center pole; Mathilda Cuts-the-rope; Al Chandler, and Thomas Main. Thick's father made the last Sacrifice Dance in 1884.[10] 115

The origin Story of the Sacrifice Dance as told by The Boy is as follows: 773 539

"In the days when Ni:hohat was still around, a Gros Ventre man went out hunting in the timberland where there was a lot of trees and brush. While he was hunting he heard a noise. He listened to find the direction from which the noise was coming and then went in that direction. He sneaked around and looked from under cover. He saw a dance going on. A bunch of buffalo were dancing in a circle. He looked on a long time unseen by them. He heard the songs they were singing and learned them, and saw how everything was done. He saw a buffalo bring the other buffalo and set them in a semi-circle, and saw them sit down in a semi-circle.

"He made up his mind to approach them. So he walked over to where they were. When the leader of the buffalo, at the back of the lodge opposite the door, saw him, he invited him to come in and sit down beside him: 'Do like we are doing. Look around and see how the lodge is made. Study it and try to remember it and all the things here.' The man saw a buffalo skull alongside the center pole.

"The chief buffalo then said to him: 'I give you this lodge (dance). Use it. If in sickness or in danger the people promise they will make a Sacrifice Dance I will help them. When you implore the help of the Sacrifice Dance, it will be a powerful means to avert sickness or danger.' So the man left and went back home and related what he had seen and experienced. He is

[10] In 1948 The Boy, Charles Buckman and Steve Bradley among them were able to name 15 of the 23 Dancers whose flesh was pierced at this last Dance, as follows: Bull Head, Horse Capture (Thick's brother), Stiffarm, Wolf, Stiff Wings, Grebe Child (The Boy's brother), Arrowhead, Peter Capture, Boy Capture, Strikes On Top, Dan Sleeping Bear, Skinner, Many Capture, Stabber, Fluttering Eagle. Dan Sleeping Bear had told Charles Buckman that there had been 23 altogether. [R.F.]

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

121 eral study of the social organization and religion of the Gros Ventre, at the Fort Belknap Reservation, Montana, in about equal proportions by Flannery in the summers of 1940 and 1945 and by Cooper in the summers of 1939 and 1940, from Gros Ventre informants, mostly of the older generation. In most cases we
● 115 used interpreters; in some, we communicated in English. Our chief informants on gambling were: The Boy (b.1872, our most important source, who had gotten a good deal of his information from his father, Lame Bull, b.1825, d.1908), Thick (b. ca. 1870-71), Charles John Buckman (b.1872), Mrs Takes-a-Prisoner Warrior (b. ca. 1850-55) and Mrs Singer Sleeping-Bear (b. ca. 1860). These informants were exceptionally intelligent and dependable, and were not only willing to give us the information they had but anxious to do so. In spite of this, not all the past could, of course, be recaptured, and in certain parts the picture we got is far from complete, particularly regarding individual differences and motivations. However, we have had extremely little reconstruction proper to do, as most of the older gambling complex survived up to near the turn of the century, and had been actively participated in and/or witnessed and was vividly remembered by our informants, while some parts of it, especially many of the social aspects thereof, have persisted down to the present.

WAGERS AND BETTING PROCEDURE

525 Stakes wagered by the Gros Ventre may be divided into small or trivial ones and big or valuable ones. Small stakes consisted of such things as arrows, bows, bags, beads, pipes, knives, handkerchiefs, dishes, and so forth; big ones, of such things as guns, saddles, lodges, and especially horses (the chief wealth in the old days). Wives were never wagered. Two teams might play mostly for fun, the losers being merely expected or obligated to provide a smoke, or, as more commonly, refreshments or a meal—"to cook," as the current expression goes—for the winners. This last was seemingly the only type of non-dyadic wagering in vogue among the Gros Ventre, if it can be called wagering at all, for such provision of smokes or food for relatives and friends was an everyday custom. Mrs Sleeping-Bear stated that in a gambling game she once played with her husband's brother, she forfeited her eyebrows, which he pulled out, but whether this was an exceptional occurrence or a customary one within the prevalent pattern of rough familiarity between brother-in-law and sister-in-law we could not discover.

Betting was typically dyadic, a given individual matching the wager of another individual, and the stakes going to the winning individual. The dyadic system was kept to even where, as was common, betting was by sides, each side,

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

525 *Narrative 1.* In 1893 two Gros Ventre, enemy friends to each other, Red Whip
572 who died in 1912 and Many Tail Feathers, got into a gambling game with the wheel.
578 Many Tail Feathers was losing and he got angry. He grabbed Red Whip and they
538 had a rought-and-tumble tussle. They fell to the ground, with Red Whip on top, astraddle Many Tail Feathers. Red Whip drew his knife, cut off all of the other's hair, at which loss the latter cried while the people cheered a cheer of contempt. Red Whip acting as if he had scalped an enemy, threw the hair in the air, and said in the hearing of all: "What's the matter with you, my friend? You must have a weak heart. Look at me. This is what I did to my enemy [such and such a time]. You know all about it. I just wanted to show you that I am your superior in matters of this kind. But anyhow you can have that good horse of mine."

[115] *Narrative 2.* Lame Bull, father of The Boy, our chief informant on gambling, died in 1908 at the age of 83 or 84 years. Lame Bull, when still a fairly young man, a rising one with prospects of rising higher and higher in the prestige scale, had been chosen as an enemy friend by White Owl, an older man, and Lame Bull had, according to custom, accepted the offer. An offer of enemy friendship was on the one hand almost mandatory, and on the other, where it came from an outstanding man of great experience and ability, as in this case, it was a real honor to the recipient and would rarely be refused.

When Lame Bull and White Owl became enemy friends, they "started to act like two roosters" and were saying to themselves: "I am going to get you when you are off your guard." Both knew that at some time or another, sooner or later, they would have to do something to put their enemy friendship to the greatest test. After much sparring around, the two men engaged in a wheel game as just such a climactic test. At this game White Owl had a big reputation (besides all his other accomplishments), while Lame Bull had no reputation at all at it.

On this occasion Lame Bull wagered everything he owned, and all his wife's property, including their lodge. As it was customary at such events for the kinsmen of the respective players to bet on their kinsman, Lame Bull's father, together with other relatives wagered large stakes on him, although the father was strongly opposed on principle to such betting and had always counseled Lame Bull strenuously against it. More, however, than large amounts of property was at stake; the players' relative and absolute standing in the tribe hung upon the outcome. In the case of Lame Bull and White Owl, the former a younger man of great promise, the latter an older one of recognized prominence, the rivalry was keen and, in a very true sense, ruthless. The older man was jealous of his great reputation and did not want any one to get near him in prestige. He was trying to crush Lame Bull's rising career betimes lest later Lame Bull might outdo him. At the same time, White Owl stood to profit even if he lost, for he would still be attached as enemy friend to Lame Bull and would have reflected prestige from being the enemy friend of this rising man. He would thus profit inevitably by the latter's prestige.

Lame Bull lost everything in the contest, and, of course, his father and relatives lost heavily. White Owl's people tore down Lame Bull's lodge and took it away as winnings and took everything in it, even down to the dishes of Lame Bull's wife. At the end of the playing, Lame Bull was an object of charity and a laughing stock.

525 did not want to lose it,"[7] and her grandmother used to advise her against gambling lest she lose valued things. All in all it looks as if economic considerations had little to do with such disapproval of gambling as was current among the Gros Ventre; if anything, economic considerations and concepts of property use and disposal would in the main have reinforced approval.

To sum up, Gros Ventre attitudes on gambling appear to have been influenced very much by concern for altruism and accord, very little by economic values.

PAST AND PRESENT

525 To round out the picture we have tried to give of Gros Ventre gambling,
773 we are adding a brief sketch of its history.

Gros Ventre myth, folk lore, and tradition have little to say on gambling. According to one folk story, given by Mrs Sleeping Bear, but unknown to Mrs Warrior, the hand game was first gotten from the thunder by a certain Tsē·ganis (Little Short Horns). There is no reference to gambling in the fairly complete cycle of sacred myths we gathered or in the trickster (Nihāt'ⁿ) cycle.[8] This absence, particularly from the trickster cycle, may give some slight ground for suspecting that gambling may not go back very far in Gros Ventre culture history.

525 Apart, however, from such speculative surmise, what is clear is that gambling was in full vigor among the Gros Ventre in the second half of the last century, and had been since at least around the early part of the century. It was in full swing from at least the early boyhood days of Lame Bull who was born in 1825.

525 Gros Ventre gambling, especially with the wheel and hand games, suffered
182 a severe shock after the disappearance of the buffalo in 1884, as did the main structure of Gros Ventre culture and society. With the rapid collapse of the broad framework into which gambling had so trimly fitted, gambling itself, especially with the older games, rapidly toppled down. The last big wheel game remembered by five older informants—The Boy, Thick, Charles Buckman, Steven Bradley, Philip Shortman—occurred in 1893; the last big hand game in 1891.[9] Around the turn of the century not much of the older complex was

8 Gambling does however occur in the Found-in-the-Grass Gros Ventre folk story, according to The Boy. Gambling at the wheel game between Clotted-Blood and the Bull is recorded in the Clotted-Blood tale, by A. L. Kroeber, *Gros Ventre Myths and Tales* (Anthropological Papers, American Museum of Natural History, vol. 1, pt. 3, 1907), p. 86.

[115] 9 When in the field we failed to obtain these exact dates. We are indebted for them to our conscientious, high-minded and exceptionally able interpreter, Thomas Main, who procured them for us from the above five elder informants and forwarded them to us with some other supplementary information by letter of September 25, 1946.

5: Flannery E-5 (1940)1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

THE GROS VENTRE SHAKING TENT

REGINA FLANNERY
The Catholic University of America

121 ALTHOUGH the concept of the shaking tent is now known to be a widespread one, relatively few details are available on this rite as it was practiced in the Plains area. The following [115] data, gathered among the Gros Ventres of Montana in 1940 from old and middle-aged informants who had often witnessed the performance, are offered in an attempt to fill in the picture as regards this one tribe.

787 When speaking English, the Gros Ventres refer to the rite as a "seance" and to the performer as a "spiritualist" inasmuch as it was carried out by a person who had access to the spirit of a deceased relative. The Gros Ventre word for spirit is *tsatsuwaa*, which, incidentally, is the same word they now use for radio. The voice of the spirit can be heard, and, while the spirit cannot be seen, its presence is otherwise manifest by the noise of its activities. Among the latter we note especially the shaking of the tent as the spirit enters and leaves.

[791] When information was desired regarding missing persons, the whereabouts of the enemy, etc., a spiritualist, who might be either a man or a woman, was asked to invoke the spirit over which he or she had control. The pertinent questions were asked and the spirit would supply the answers. There were two general methods of procedure. The so-called seance could be held either in the big dwelling lodge or in a small structure built for the occasion. Furthermore the performance was more or less elaborate, details differing according to circumstances, the individual spiritualist, and even the "personality" of the spirit invoked. But one invariable feature was the shaking of the tent.

The two accounts which follow will illustrate the general pattern as well as the differences in procedure. The first concerns a seance held in the winter at a time when this particular family

5: Flannery E-5 (1940)1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787 tain. When the spirit finished smoking he put the pipe outside
539 the curtain and my uncle said: 'Well, I want you to hunt my brother-in-law to see where he is or what became of him.' Immediately the spirit made a noise and we could hear it going out of the top of the lodge which shook violently again. The people all sat quietly smoking and listening. Then old Good Singer called from behind the curtain: 'Sing again four times.' So they began to sing and I joined in. After the fourth repetition the spirit came back in the same way as it entered the first time, dropping down behind the curtain and landing with a thump. Every time the spirit goes in or out the top of the lodge shakes. Then the spirit made the exclamation which the Gros Ventres use to indicate that something terrible has happened, and continued: 'You should have told him [Holy Weasel] to stay at home. He and his party were killed. They were raiding the enemy and came across some Piegan. The latter made believe they were meeting the Gros Ventre in a friendly way, but when they got close they killed all the party except one who escaped.'

"Just before the spirit made this last speech, two little boys in the lodge had been playing during that ceremony and the spirit told them: 'Be quiet because I am going to tell you what happened.' And before they knew what happened to them these two little boys landed outside the lodge. The spirit must have pushed them out! And everybody was certainly quiet after that."

The second account will illustrate some differences in procedure when a spiritualist was consulted while a party was on
[115] the move and on the look-out for enemies. It was told to me by another old woman informant, Singer Sleeping Bear, incidentally to a long story of one of the journeys made by members of her father's group when she was a small girl.

"The party got as far as Canada and stayed all night. One of the men filled his pipe and took it over to another man, Rising Cross, and said: 'Now here. I am giving you the pipe. I want you to invite your spirit. I want you to ask your spirit if the road is clear (that is, if there is no enemy in sight).' Rising Cross took the pipe and prayed a few moments. The other men

5: Flannery E-5 (1940)1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

made a small rounded lodge of willows, just like a sweat lodge. 787
A few of them went in there with the spiritualist who just sat 539
there with them as one of the group. He did, however, smoke the pipe and sing his song. Finally this little lodge shook so hard it almost fell over. It was like a terrible wind. Then a voice said: 'Yes, yes, what do you want?' Rising Cross said: 'Well, we want to know if the way is clear. We are looking for the enemy. How will the way be near where they are?' So the spirit said: 'Well, if you do as I say you are going to kill the chief (the father of a captive Piegan who had married among the Gros Ventres). Go up over the hill and you will see the plain just covered with lodges. If you don't turn back immediately after you kill that one man, you are going to have bad luck.'

"So the young fellows jumped on their fastest horses and went off. They found the situation as described by the spirit. The man whom the spirit mentioned was riding up the trail along the coulee accompanied only by a woman on horseback. When these two had gotten some distance from the lodges in the plain, the young Gros Ventre took after them and killed the man, but the woman wheeled her horse and sped back to the camp to give the alarm. The Gros Ventres said to one another: 'Now you know what the spirit told us. It told us to run just as soon as we killed him.' And the majority was in favor, but one man was obstinate. While they were arguing the enemies approached and were able to overtake most of them. Only a few escaped. It is always someone who doesn't believe the spirit who ruins the party."

That there might occasionally have been some room for 787
doubting the validity of the information received through a par- [15]
ticular spirit is suggested by a comment made by another informant, Al Chandler, a middle-aged man. He had mentioned an old woman spiritualist, David Man's grandmother, and said that she was honest about it and her spirit could be depended upon for the truth. He added, however: "But a man I knew used to hold seances and had his own brother as his spirit. This spirit always lied. When this brother was living he was a liar, so you couldn't expect his spirit to tell the truth!"

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Other songs, distinct from this summoning or shaking tent rite 776 song, were also given and taught at times by ghost helpers. Two 787 of them, both victory songs, were recorded as sung by The Boy [533] in 1940. These two were given on occasions other than that on which the surviving relative initially acquired his ghost helper.

After all the above teaching was concluded, the ghost of the deceased relative belonged to the survivor and was supposed to come whenever summoned by the latter in the manner the ghost told him while in trance to do. A great many Gros Ventre men and women had guardian spirits and "power" acquired by fasting and crying or otherwise. But fewer individuals, men and women, had ghost helpers. My informants in 1939 and 1940 could recall only four persons in the last two generations or last 70 years or so who had had ghost helpers.

In one case (see first of the two appended stories by Thick) two spirits tried to come to the shaking tent rite conducted by Woman, one bad and the other good, but whether the bad one was one of her deceased relatives or not, she never knew. The people were under the impression that the bad one was an intruder who used to come first and try to "horn in" on the proceedings. No case of a given person clearly having more than one ghost helper was recalled by my informants.

Ordinary "power" could be and often was transferred by the [424] possessor to another person by donation or bequeathment. But a ghost helper never was so transferred and could not be.

It may be added that neither my informants, The Boy and Thick, nor my interpreter, Thomas Main, all highly intelligent [115] and informed men, were at all sure of the etymology of the word tsatsawâ·'ᵃ. The Boy thought it might connote the meaning of "slave," "some one who is forced to do things." Thomas Main suggested a possible relationship to tsatsa—"coming, flight"; plus—wa, an old Gros Ventre word, meaning unknown. The two words for ordinary ghosts as such are tsa·k'ᵃ (sing.; pl., tsa·k'an: a's as u in English but), and bie'te'ᵉ (sing.; pl. bi'eten). Tsatsawâ·'ᵃ is used exclusively for ghost helpers, not for an ordinary ghost, or ghosts in general. An ordinary medicine man was 791 called nata'nhehi (a's as u in but), but there was no special name 787

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 Bear Paw Mountains. It was there that the Gros Ventres had their first Grass dance alone. I don't know why they did things like this, but all those who had been given regalia walked instead of riding horseback. But the drum was packed on a special horse by itself and when they came to a stream, four men who owned the drumsticks carried the drum across, wading in without taking off their moccasins or other clothing. Furthermore those who owned the regalia were not supposed to help feed the crowd. They were not allowed to serve food and if they did, they had to give something away. Nor were these men supposed to borrow. They were supposed to have their own cup or dish and when it [415] was time to eat, if they didn't have any receptacle, they spread out their robes and the servers poured the coffee or soup or whatever was being served right in the robes."

114 The above account is the only explicit record of the actual 174 transfer which was obtainable in the field. From details supplied 796 by this same informant, however, as well as by others not so old as she, but who have accurate traditional knowledge of Gros Ventre culture, we have considerable information on the Grass dance as practiced from the time it was adopted.[7] Let us proceed then to the general description, first as the dance was carried out in the earlier period.

575 *Personnel and equipment.* At the time of adoption the Grass 796 dance came into the possession of a society, the Wolves or Wolf-men. Only members of the society actually danced, wearing the distinctive headdress of deer hair, although the rest of their costume varied with the individual. The special regalia which went with the dance were: 2 crow-belts; a large drum and 4 fancy drumsticks; a spear or fork; a spoon; 2 wands representing swords; a whistle.[8] Each item was owned by an individual member of the society who was, by virtue of this ownership, an officer

[115] [7] I wish to thank all of my Gros Ventre friends for their assistance, especially The Boy, Thick, Thomas Main, Charles Buckman, Al and Cora Chandler, Mary Ereaux, Mathilda Cuts-the-Rope, but above all, my old "grandmothers," Coming Daylight and Singer.

[8] For reference to description of some of these, see footnote 3.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

ANTHROPOLOGICAL PAPERS

OF THE

American Museum of Natural History.

Vol. I, Part IV.

ETHNOLOGY OF THE GROS VENTRE.

BY

A. L. KROEBER.

[Title Page]

NEW YORK:
Published by Order of the Trustees.
April, 1908.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

ANTHROPOLOGICAL PAPERS
OF THE
AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY
VOL. I, PART IV.

ETHNOLOGY OF THE GROS VENTRE.

BY A. L. KROEBER.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION	145
TRIBAL ORGANIZATION	145
FOOD AND HUNTING	148
INDUSTRIES AND IMPLEMENTS	150
DECORATIVE ART	151
SOCIAL CUSTOMS	180
GAMES	182
WAR	191
WAR-EXPERIENCES OF INDIVIDUALS	196
Black-Wolf's Narrative	197
Bull-Robe's Narrative	204
Watches-All's Narrative	216
PERSONAL SUPERNATURAL POWERS	221
MEDICINES AND PLANTS	224
TRIBAL CEREMONIAL ORGANIZATION	227
Star and War Dances	234
The Fly-Dance	239
The Crazy-Dance	241
The Kit-Fox Dance	250
The Dog-Dance	252
The Nanâ'nahawⁿ	258
The Bitahawⁿ	259
The Women's Dance	260
The Sun-Dance	261
MODERN CEREMONIAL OBJECTS	268
CUSTOMS CONNECTED WITH RELIGION	272
BELIEFS ABOUT THE DEAD	276
MYTHOLOGICAL BELIEFS	278

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Plates.

VIII. Moccasins. Fig. 1 (Museum No. 50–4304 *a*), length 27 cm.; Fig. 2 (50–4317 *a*), length 27 cm.; Fig. 3 (50–4200 *a*), length 28 cm.

IX. Navel-Amulets. Fig. 1 (Museum No. 50–1928), length 48 cm.; Fig. 2 (50–1921), length 39 cm.; Fig. 3 (50–1756), length 29 cm.

X. Shoshone, Ute, Kootenay, and Blackfoot Ornamentation of Parfleches. Fig. 1, Museum No. 50–2294; Fig. 2, 50–2346; Fig. 3, 50–1306; Fig. 4, 50–1362; Fig. 5, 50–4341; Fig. 6, 50–3836.

XI. Ornamentation of Gros Ventre Parfleches. Fig. 1, Museum No. 50–1726; Fig. 2, 50–1831; Fig. 3, 50–4295; Fig. 4, 50–4300; Fig. 5, 50–1810; Fig. 6, 50–1743.

XII. Crazy-Dance Bow and Paraphernalia, Museum Nos. 50–1935 *a–p*. Length of bow, 1 m.

XIII. Head-dress for the Dog-dance, Museum No. 50–1789 *c*.

Text Figures.

		Page
1.	Design Elements, Bead and Quill Embroidery	152
2.	Types of Designs on Moccasins	157
3.	Moccasin	158
4.	Tent-ornaments	163
5.	Soft-skin Bag	164
6.	Soft-skin Bag	165
7.	Ornamented Food-bag of Bladder	167
8.	Triangular Designs on Parfleches and Bags	168
9.	Square-and-triangular Designs on Parfleches and Bags	169
10.	Square Designs on Parfleches and Bags	170
11.	Design on Bag	177
12.	Designs on Cylindrical Medicine-cases	178
13.	Ute Medicine-case Designs	178
14.	Dice	184
15.	Dice	184
16.	Set of Dice	185
17.	Dice	185
18.	Dice	186
19.	Hiding-buttons	186
20.	Hiding-button	186
21.	Grass Target	187
22.	Gaming-wheel	188
23.	Women's Football	188
24.	Ghost-dance Ball	189
25.	Embroidered and Painted Ball	190
26.	Ball-rotater	190

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

		Page
27.	Medicine-case for War Paraphernalia	193
28.	War Paraphernalia	194
29.	War Paraphernalia	195
30.	Doctor's Charm	223
31.	Star-dance Rattle	237
32.	Fly-dance Horn	240
33.	Fly-dance Hoop	240
34.	Crazy-dance Regalia	248
35.	Crazy-dance Regalia	248
36.	Crazy-dance Regalia	249
37.	Crazy-dance Regalia	249
38.	Dog-dance Shirt, Highest Degree	255
39.	Rattle of Dog-dancer, Highest Degree	256
40.	Whistle of Dog-dancer, Highest Degree	257
41.	Wheel Head-dress	270
42.	Matted Hair	273
43.	Sweat-house Tail	274
44.	Thunder-stone Necklace	275

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

INTRODUCTION.

The following information on the Gros Ventre was collected in the winter and early spring of 1901, at the Fort Belknap Reservation in northern Montana, as part of the Mrs. Morris K. Jesup Expedition. Very few of the statements made, unless such is obviously the case, are based on observation. In general, where nothing is said to the contrary, they are founded on statements made by the Indians. The introductory explanations that have been made in regard to the Arapaho[1] apply also to the following material. The alphabet used for rendering Gros Ventre words is the same as that employed for Arapaho. Additional sounds are ö and ü, which are open, and k', a palatal k.

TRIBAL ORGANIZATION.

The Gros Ventre call themselves "Haäninin." The meaning of this term is sometimes given as "lime-men" or "chalk-men," from haä'a"tyi ("lime" or "soft white stone"). This etymology is, however, doubtful. In literature they have often been known as the "Atsina." They declare this to be the Piegan name for themselves, atsöna". Historically the Gros Ventre are known to have formed an independent tribe closely associated with the Blackfeet during the nineteenth century. Their dialect is similar to the Arapaho, and certainly intelligible to the Arapaho for at least the greater part. The two dialects are, however, sufficiently differentiated to make it certain that the tribes have been more or less distinct for a longer period than two centuries. The Arapaho regard the Gros Ventre as the northernmost one of a group of five closely affiliated or related tribes of which they themselves form the largest. Three of these tribes have long been extinct as separate bodies, and only the dialects of one or two survive among a few individuals with the Arapaho. The Gros Ventre, perhaps

[1] A. L. Kroeber, The Arapaho (Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Parts I, II, and IV. New York, 1902, 1904, and 1907). A series of Gros Ventre myths and tales has been published in Anthropological Papers of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. I, Part III. New York, 1907.

[P. 144 Contains no Text]

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

101 because they have among them no such remnants of perishing tribes, appear
to know nothing of this fivefold group, but they recognize their close rela-
648 tionship to the Arapaho. There is no very great amount of intercourse between them and the Arapaho at present, nor does there appear to have been any unusual amount of communication during the greater part of the nineteenth century; but on both sides there is a mutual recognition as of separated relatives. The Arapaho are now and apparently have been for a long time considerably the larger tribe, the Gros Ventre having always in historical times been regarded as a small body. Their present number is
[161] about 550.

According to Hayden, the Gros Ventre, about 1800, were south of the
131 Saskatchewan; about 1820 they united with the Arapaho for a few years,
648 and then, following a quarrel, journeyed north, had a disastrous encounter with the Crow, and became neighbors and allies of the Blackfeet.[1] In spite of the usually close association of the Gros Ventre with the three Blackfoot tribes since that time, they became hostile to them for a time, about forty years ago, and united against them with their own long-standing enemies the Crow. In the course of this hostility the Gros Ventre sustained their heaviest reverse in war within their memory; the greater part of an unusually large war-party, including many Crow, being killed after an attack on a Piegan camp. This happened in 1867, according to Grinnell. The usual enemies of the Gros Ventre, besides the Crow, were other Siouan tribes, such as the Dakota and especially the Assiniboine. They also fought more or less with the Shoshone, and no doubt in alliance with the Blackfeet against the Salish Flathead. They were on the whole friendly with the tribes of their own stock of speech, the Arapaho, Cheyenne, Blackfeet, and Cree. The habitat of the Gros Ventre in recent times has been the Milk River territory, in which is situated their present reservation, which they occupy jointly with the Assiniboine.

The Gros Ventre have also been called Fall, Rapid, and Paunch Indians.
101 The term "Gros Ventre" has also been applied to the Minitari, a Siouan village tribe on the Missouri; and the two tribes have been distinguished as "Gros Ventre of the Prairie" and "Gros Ventre of the Missouri."

174 Gros Ventre tradition brings the tribe from the north; but their story of
131 the division of the tribe while crossing the ice on a great river is found also
[173] among the Blackfeet and the Cheyenne, and is worthless as historical evidence. While their earliest habitat known is north of their present territory, acquaintance of them goes back little more than a century, and there is

[1] See the excellent article by H. L. Scott on The Early History and the Names of the Arapaho, in the American Anthropologist, N.S., IX. 545. 1907. From this it appears that, at least from the middle of the eighteenth century on, except for about five years' association with the Arapaho (from 1818 to 1823), the habitat of the Gros Ventre was in the Blackfoot country, between the Saskatchewan and the Missouri.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

nothing to show that they had long been in the Saskatchewan region. All that is certain of their previous past is their closer relationship to the Arapaho than to any other tribe; and the origin of the Arapaho is equally obscure, except that it is certain that, if they came from the north and east, it was a long time ago. Of the Gros Ventre it can only be said that, while related to the Arapaho and regarded by them as almost politically a part of themselves, they were far separated from them when first known, with them for a short time later, and again separated, and in contact and alliance with another much more distantly related Algonkin branch. Their habitat in a hundred years has been successively near the Saskatchewan, the Platte, and the Missouri. There is nothing to show that such variability of affiliation and location within the culture region of the Plains has not been characteristic of their previous history. 131 N4 [648]

The Gros Ventre call the tribes near them by the following names: Arapaho, hinan'än (in Arapaho, hinanaei-na"); Cheyenne, itisön, "scars" (itisö", "a scar;" Arapaho name of the Cheyenne, hitaciina"); Cree, na"tsa", "rabbits;" Ojibwa, djinhuna"tsa", "Lower Cree;" the three Blackfoot tribes, waotä"nixtäats, "black-feet" (a Blackfoot, waotä"nixtänin, "black-foot-man;" a Piegan, tsä"t'; the Bloods, ka"winähää"); Assiniboine, na"djineihin; Sioux, na"wina"djinei, "Below-Assiniboine" (in Arapaho, na"tinei, "a Sioux"); Crow, hounen, "crow-men;" Minitari, wuxnokayan, "—lodges;" Shoshone, sösöuyänin, "snake-men;" Bannock, waotä"nixiinin, "black-men" (in Arapaho the Ute are called waotänähiçi, "black"); Flathead Salish, kaakaäänin, "flathead-man;" Nezpercé, taniibäts, "pierced-nose" (Arapaho taniibäaçi is the C'addo). Two tribes to the southwest or perhaps west, which have not been identified, are the wasöi"hiiyeihits, "grass-dwellers," who live in houses of grass or brush; and the na"wuxaantibiina"ts, "fish-eaters." 101 648

The Gros Ventre were divided into groups similar to those of the Blackfeet and Sioux. The names of these bands were nicknames, and in no way totemic. As there was prohibition of marriage within the band, the name "clan" is, however, applicable to them. Descent was paternal and a man belonged to his father's band; but the prohibition of marriage extended also to his mother's clan, all the members of both the father's and mother's clan being considered relatives. Each band seems to have had a recognized head or chief. During the winter the tribe broke into smaller groups, consisting of one or perhaps more clans, which followed the buffalo, and camped chiefly in the timber. There corrals were made for the horses at night to prevent their being stolen by war-parties. When summer came, the clans joined and camped together in the large camp-circle. In this, the opening of which was toward the east, the different bands had definite 621 614 [611] [582] 221 361 621 614

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

361 places. Beginning at the eastern opening of the circle, and going south-
621 ward, westward, northward, and eastward again, the order in which the
614 clans camped was as follows: —

1. Frozen, or plumes.
2. Those-who-water-their-horses-once-a-day.
3. Tendons.
4. Those-who-do-not-give-away, or buffalo-humps.
5. Opposite (or middle) Assiniboine.
6. Ugly-ones, or tent-poles worn smooth (from travel).
7. Bloods.
8. Fighting-alone.

Other names of clans, whose location in the camp-circle was not ascertained, and some of which, perhaps, are second names of clans enumerated above, are: —

Dusty-ones.
Coffee.
Weasel-skin head-dress.
Ka'hutyi (the name of a chief).
Poor-ones.
Berry-eaters.
Torn-trousers.
Gray-ones, or ash-colored.
Breech-cloths.
Night-hawks.

Anecdotes referring to incidents that are usually ridiculous accompany these names. The Smooth-worn-tent-pole people were so called, because the ends of their tent-poles, used as travois, were worn smooth from much travelling. The Tendon clan was so called, because one of this band had said that the tendons in the neck of a buffalo were good eating. The Frozen-people were so called, because, when they had hungry visitors in winter, they gave them frozen meat. Those-who-water-their-horses-once-a-day are said to have followed this practice so that their horses would gain flesh more quickly. The Opposite-Assiniboine, like the Assiniboine, were said to have had few horses, and the Fighting-alone were very warlike people. Those-who-do-not-give-away-without-return were considered stingy, and the Ugly-people were said not to have painted their faces.

FOOD AND HUNTING.

224 Like most of the other tribes of the Plains, the Gros Ventre subsisted
[262] almost entirely on the buffalo, and their culture depended to the usual degree upon this animal. The following scattering notes were obtained regarding the hunting of buffalo and other animals.

Buffalo enclosures used to be made of trees and forked limbs set in the ground in a half or three-quarter circle below a vertical bank. Extending over the country above the bank, a long chute of two rows of stone monuments was erected, behind which sat men. Other hunters drove the buffalo into the chute. Those behind the piles of stone rose up as the buffalo

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

passed, and so drove them forward over the bank into the enclosure. After horses were secured, the buffalo were generally run down. It is said that a buffalo shot with an arrow fell to the other side, never breaking the arrow by falling upon it. 224

The meat of an entire buffalo would be carried on a horse. It was cut [492] in small pieces, which were tied to the ends of strips of the skin and then slung over the horse's back so as to balance. If necessary, the hunter would mount above. It is said that sometimes as many as four deer were carried on one horse.

When a buffalo was killed, half the skin was sometimes stitched or tied [482] into a sack, the meat put into it, and the bundle dragged home by a rope around the shoulders of a person. In other cases the meat would be tied into bundles and carried home on the shoulders. The buffalo were usually cut up by men. Women were said to have taken part in this work when luck was unusually good and many buffalo had been killed. After a man had brought home meat, the women cut it into thin slices, which were hung [251] on racks to dry. The dried meat was either packed in parfleches, or pounded fine and made into pemmican by mixture with berries. Meat, whether fresh or dried, was usually eaten after having been boiled in water; but [252] when one was hungry or in haste a piece would be put on a stick and turned over the fire.

Traps for foxes and other animals, even bears, were constructed by making an enclosure, over the opening of which a heavy log, sliding between four sticks to keep it in place, was supported on a single slender upright stick resting on another stick attached to the bait. Other logs might be leaned against the first one to give it additional weight.

Birds such as sage-hens, ducks, and geese, were formerly not hunted 223 extensively. The eggs, however, formed favorite food. When a camp was pitched near a lake, the young men would strip and go out into the water [226] looking for duck-eggs. Fish were not caught except by children, for amusement.

When a camp was broken, small brush tents with windows of grass were built. Fat and meat were strewed about the place and a man entered the ambush before daylight. He could look and shoot through the grass, but he could not be seen inside. Birds as large as eagles were secured in this way.

Crows and magpies were caught with sinew snares attached to a willow hoop. Meat was laid in the middle of the hoop. Walking about inside of this, the birds caught their feet in the snares and were unable to fly away.

Gophers were caught by means of a horsehair loop fastened to the end of 224 a rope and laid around a gopher-hole. A person lay down, and when the gopher raised its head he jerked the rope.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

INDUSTRIES AND IMPLEMENTS.

281 When a skin was brought in, it was hung on a sort of tripod, and with a chisel-like flesher of buffalo-leg bone the meat was removed. Then the hide was stretched on the ground to dry. When dried, the hair and thin coat of skin on the same side were cut off with the familiar implement of bent elk-horn, always provided, in recent times, with a metal blade. To make rawhide, nothing more was done. To make dressed skin, liver, grease, and brains, boiled and mixed in the proper proportion, were rubbed [177] or soaked into the skin and then removed with an ordinary scraper, now usually of sheet-iron or tin. Finally the skin was worked over with a rough stone or a bone. In preparing buffalo-skins for a tent, four steps were recognized: first, drying the skins; next, removing the hair; third, soaking them; and, last, scraping and working them over. Skins were softened by being drawn over a rope of buffalo-sinew.

281 When a woman had prepared enough buffalo-skins for a tent, she made a feast and invited other women who were skilful at making tents. The most 342 expert of these fitted and tacked the skins together loosely, and the others 476 sewed them fast. When a robe was to be embroidered, the woman who wanted to make it prepared food and invited other women to help her in her work. When the robe was finished, the man who was to receive it was called in, and it was given to him.

281 Caps of buffalo-skin were worn in winter. They were provided with flaps that were pulled down over the ears and held by a string fastened under the chin. Mittens of buffalo-skin were also used, tied together by a string which passed behind the neck. When the hunter was ready to shoot, he slipped his hands out of the mittens.

282 Simple flat unbraided ropes of rawhide were cut out of the skin in a long spiral. After having been cut, they were stretched between two sticks. In order to soften them, they were covered with manure, or tied to a horse that dragged them over the ground until they became pliable.

323 Pottery is declared to have been made formerly of clay mixed with crushed rock. Rawhide bags, drawn together at the top with a string, were 252 also used for cooking by means of hot rocks. The often described Plains method of cooking in holes in the ground lined with rawhide was also followed.

372 When fire was struck with flint and steel, dry mushrooms were sometimes used as tinder.

411 Bows were most frequently made of cherry-wood, but sometimes of ash. Ash was harder and more elastic, but more brittle. Sinew backing was

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

sometimes put on the bow with glue made from boiled skin from the head of a buffalo. Sometimes the bow was without sinew backing and sometimes ornamented by being covered on the back with snake-skin. Bows are said to have been held either horizontally or vertically, according to individual habit. Arrows for war and hunting are said to have been alike. 41

Shields were made of the thickest part of buffalo-bull skin, which was laid into a hole in the ground and made hard by being scorched with hot rocks placed upon it. It was then provided with a cover of white buckskin fringed with feathers. A man who carried a shield in war sometimes had no other weapon. 74

It is declared that no tobacco was raised, and that none growing wild was gathered, but that it was obtained from other tribes and from the whites. This is contrary to the practice of the equally non-agricultural Blackfoot, who planted tobacco; but it would seem to accord with the lack of any information obtained from the Arapaho as to tobacco-raising. 17 249 [439]

DECORATIVE ART.

The present day decorative art of the Gros Ventre is not nearly as strongly developed as that of the Arapaho. There is much less bead-work made, and this hardly ever equals the better work of the Arapaho either in technical or artistic excellence. Quill-embroidery is also found less frequently than among the Arapaho. How far this greater poverty and inferiority of Gros Ventre decorative art are matters of some standing in time is not certain; but it seems probable that there was a difference between the two tribes in this respect, even when they first came into contact with the whites. 53 171

It is in accord with this difference that inquiry as to the symbolic or conventional significance of the decorative designs used by the Gros Ventre has been practically without result. While the failure of the Gros Ventre to render such interpretations is due perhaps in large measure to change of mode of life under the influence of civilization, yet it seems that in this respect too there must have been a temperamental difference between the Arapaho and Gros Ventre, even in earlier times; for the Arapaho preserve at least distinguished wrecks of their symbolism, ceremonies, and religious life, while among the Gros Ventre, who are in much less intimate contact with the Americans, these things have vanished, leaving often scarcely a trace, and rarely more than a memory.

Partly on account of comparative scarcity of material, and also by reason of greater artistic poverty, the decoration of the Gros Ventre does not present as many typical characteristics as that of the Arapaho, the Blackfeet, the

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

531
171

Ute, and other tribes. It bears certain partial resemblances to Arapaho, Blackfoot, and Sioux decoration, and probably has been subject to their influences; but a clear determination of its special qualities is rather difficult. A consideration of some of the more prominent features of the bead and quill embroidery of the northern and western Plains tribes — especially the Cheyenne, Arapaho, Blackfeet, Sioux, Assiniboine, Ute, and Shoshone — will, however, bring out by comparison some of the leanings of the art of the Gros Ventre.

Fig. 1 (*a–n*) presents some of the more conspicuous decorative design elements among the Plains Indians.

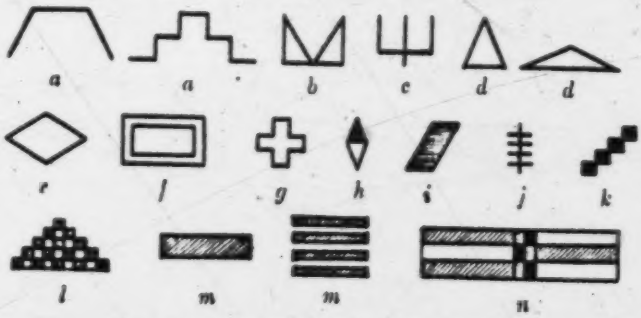


Fig. 1. Design Elements, Bead and Quill Embroidery.

Design *a* shows two schematized forms of a type of pattern that varies greatly in detail, but is always characterized by a horizontal line or bar connecting two spreading arms. The whole figure is usually worked in lines or small areas; it scarcely ever shows any heavy masses. Like the other designs considered, it is frequently only an element in patterns. It is often paired, two figures being arranged back to back, connected by a line, a diamond, acute triangles, or other design elements. This design is conspicuous in Ute bead-work. It may be called the "spreading design."

Design *b* is familiar from the Arapaho specimens that have been illustrated.[1] It may be called the "forked design." Design *c*, the "pronged design," needs no comment. The type of design *d* is the isosceles triangle. Design *e* shows the rhombus; and *f*, a square or rectangle, usually with border and centre of different colors. Element *g* is a square cross; element *h*, a well-known design called "feather" by the Sioux. Elements *i*, *j*, the slanting bar and crossed line, need no comment. Design *k*, the

[1] See Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part III, p. 237.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

531
171

checker-diagonal, may be a single diagonal row of squares, as here shown, or several rows arranged in checker-pattern. In design *l* the fundamental idea seems to be not so much the effect of checkered color as of steps, analogous to that of design *k*, since the Blackfeet, the great exponents of this type, sometimes make this design in a solid mass, but rarely depart from the exterior step contour which distinguishes this form from the virtually straight-lined element *d*. Design *m* is a wide short stripe or long rectangle, either standing alone, or, if in contact with other stripes, decoratively separated from them by containing an internal design. Very similar in one respect is the solid stripe of one color, the unit-element of design *n*, but entirely different in being developed into a drawn-out checker-pattern by combination with analogous stripes of other colors, as in the soft bag bead-patterns of the Arapaho.

Other important design elements — such as, for instance, the simple right-angled triangle, the leaf-design of the Sioux — are not considered here, because they seem at present of less consequence for comparative determinations.

The spreading pattern (*a*) is most developed by the Ute. It is also common among the Arapaho and Shoshone. The Gros Ventre and Sioux use it less; the Blackfeet apparently not at all.

The forked pattern (*b*) is possibly most used by the Arapaho, but occurs among the Ute, Shoshone, and Sioux, and apparently less frequently among the Gros Ventre. The Blackfeet use this design as little as the last.

The pronged design (*c*) is a third that the Blackfeet lack. It finds its greatest development among the Sioux and Assiniboine. It is rare or lacking among the Gros Ventre.

The triangle designs, both acute and obtuse (*d*), are found among all the tribes under consideration, but seem to be most characteristic of the Sioux and Arapaho.

The diamond (*e*) is apparently most frequent among the Arapaho, the Ute, and the Sioux. The two latter use it chiefly as a centre for more elaborate designs; the Arapaho, also as a separate design.

The square or box design (*f*) is most characteristic of the Sioux and Assiniboine, from whom the Gros Ventre and Crow have perhaps chiefly derived it. With the Arapaho the nearest approach usually is the small solid square the hiiteni symbol.

The square cross (*g*) has a wide distribution. It is very frequent among the Sioux. The Arapaho also use it, but less often alone, and a maltese cross, or some variation, is the form more characteristic of them.

The feather design (*h*) is most typically Sioux and Assiniboine. It is not rare among the Gros Ventre. It occurs but little among the Ute, Sho-

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

531
171

shone, and Blackfeet; and there is not a single example known from the Arapaho. It is frequent among the Crow, and occurs among the Comanche and probably other southern Plains tribes.

The slanting bar (*i*) is characteristic of the Ute and Shoshone, though it never appears with great frequency. It occurs also among the Arapaho as a small design in borders.

The crossed line (*j*) is uncommon as a distinct design unit. The Gros Ventre use it more or less.

The diagonal checker-row (*k*) is pre-eminently Shoshone and Blackfoot.

The triangular step or checker pattern (*l*), often doubled to form a rhombus, is the most distinctive design in Blackfoot ornamentation. Its use by the Gros Ventre is to be attributed to Blackfoot influence. It crops out occasionally elsewhere, as among the Arapaho, but is probably mostly a modification of the simple triangle (*d*), as it shows no tendency toward an interior checker-work pattern accompanying the steps on its outline.

The stripe (*m*), as the main design of a decorative area, is also distinctive of the Blackfeet. Several stripes are usually found parallel but separate, and are internally elaborated, as by transverse bars. A form occurs among the Gros Ventre as a border design. The general outline of this pattern is similar to that of the next design, the drawn-out checker, as its constituent stripes are three abreast, in contact, and succeed each other end to end; but there is a total dissimilarity of decorative effect from the checker-pattern, brought about by the division of the stripe elements into right-angled triangles of different colors; so that to the eye the contained triangles, rather than the including rectangles, stand out.

The lengthened checker-pattern (*n*) is regularly used for the top and sides of Arapaho soft bags. The Gros Ventre and other tribes employ it for the same purpose. The occurrence of this pattern is therefore determined functionally as much as tribally.

The following, accordingly, are the chief characteristics of the several tribes as regards the use of these decorative elements in bead-embroidery.

The Arapaho frequently use the forked design, the triangle, and diamond, also, in certain cases, the lengthened checker-pattern. The spreading and pronged designs, the cross, and the slanting bar, occur. The Sioux feather design, the Gros Ventre crossed-line design, and the three most characteristic Blackfoot designs, — the diagonal checker-row, the checker or step triangle, and the short or separate stripe, — are as good as wanting.

The southern tribes — such as the Kiowa, Comanche, Wichita, and to a certain extent the eastern Apache — have little solid bead-work: they employ simple and small designs as isolated figures to give variety to the

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

narrow white stripes and edgings that characterize their embroidery. Among these subsidiary designs are the feather, the square, the cross, the triangle, and the slanting bar. 531 171

The Blackfeet use especially the three designs mentioned,— the diagonal checker-row, the checker or step triangle, and the stripe. A few others, such as the cross and the feather, occasionally occur: still others, such as the spreading and forked designs, are lacking.

The Ute and Shoshone designs are much alike. The Ute have especially developed and varied the spreading design; but simple forms of this are not rare among the Shoshone. Both tribes frequently use the forked design. The pronged design, the triangle, the slanting bar, and occasionally the diamond, are found among both. The Shoshone sometimes employ the diagonal checker-row Otherwise both tribes lack the typical Blackfoot designs, as well as the characteristically Sioux square, cross, and feather.

The Sioux and Assiniboine perhaps employ the square, cross, and feather no more frequently than the pronged, forked, and triangle designs, but they share the latter with other tribes, such as the Arapaho; whereas the square and feather, and perhaps the wide rectangular cross, are much less frequent among the other tribes. The Sioux, for the most part, lack the characteristic designs of the western tribes,— the diagonal checker and the stripe of the Blackfeet, the crossed line of the Gros Ventre, the spreading design of the Ute.

The Crow resemble both the Sioux and the Blackfeet. Typical designs are the feather, the square, the slanting bar, and the separate stripe.

The Gros Ventre use the forked design, the triangle, the box-square, the feather, the stripe, and the Arapaho pattern-stripe. The spreading design and the cross are not very common. Their form of the stripe has been mentioned as being usually a complex of colored right triangles. The diamond, the slanting bar, and the prongs are rare among them. The crossed line, which is practically absent among other tribes, must not be regarded as the characteristic Gros Ventre figure. It occurs only occasionally, almost always alternating with a step-triangle of the Blackfoot type.

As regards the color of the background of bead-work on which these designs are made, there are certain well-marked tribal habits. White is the most common color, and is at least frequent among every tribe. The Arapaho, however, are alone, among those here considered, in using it almost exclusively. The Cheyenne use much white, but show also a distinct leaning toward yellow. The Ute use various backgrounds, but white is the most frequent. Among the Shoshone a light grayish blue is much used besides white. The Sioux use various colors, but chiefly white, light blue, and yellow. The Crow use colored backgrounds considerably. The Blackfeet 171 531 822

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

171 use much less white than any of the other tribes: their characteristic back-
531 grounds are light red, yellow, and blue. The Kiowa, Comanche, Wichita,
822 and Apache use white very predominatingly; but they show very few solid backgrounds of embroidery, their bead-work rarely consisting of more than stripes and borders. The Gros Ventre type is as indeterminate as their designs. It is only possible to say that besides various colors, such as red and light blue, white is considerably used.

It appears from this examination that the tribes under consideration
171 form at least four groups as regards their bead-embroidery. The Blackfeet
531 stand alone. The Sioux and Assiniboine form a second unit. The Arapaho, Ute, and Shoshone are a third; the more southerly tribes using outline embroidery, the fourth. Within their group the Arapaho show closer resemblance to the Ute than to the Shoshone. The Arapaho also have a good deal in common with the Sioux. The position of the Cheyenne is not certain: they certainly have partial resemblances to both Arapaho and Sioux, as their historical and ethnographical situation would lead one to infer. The Crow appear to be intermediate between the Blackfeet and the Sioux. The Gros Ventre show distinct approximations to all three of the northern groups, in the third, of course, especially to the Arapaho. Neither their Blackfoot nor their Sioux characteristics seem fundamental. Their present art shows little character of its own.

It is not probable that the groups here distinguished will stand without modification. With fuller knowledge regarding the Bannock, Crow, Cheyenne, Kiowa, Comanche, and the village and eastern and southern tribes, as well as those of the Columbia drainage, new and wider groups are almost certain to be determined. In this event the Arapaho, for instance, may appear more properly to belong with the Sioux than with the Shoshone; but their relations to the latter, and the similarities among the several tribes as they are here indicated, whether they prove finally to be fundamental or only subsidiary, are already quite clear.

The types of designs discussed occur more or less on all classes of objects decorated with embroidery, but are especially characteristic of larger areas of decoration, as on pouches, leggings, and tobacco-bags. Where there are special forms or limited areas, there is usually a more restricted type of ornamentation. Thus the quill-wound, close-set fringe of tobacco-bags lends itself best to heavy rectilinear designs, and squares and crosses are the result. Moccasins also furnish a special decorative field, in which the decoration is in great measure directly dependent on the form of the object; so that the distribution of the designs already discussed applies to moccasins only in part, and their ornamentation needs some separate consideration.

Some of the chief types of moccasin ornamentation are shown in Fig. 2

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

(*a–o*). The first four forms have been discussed in connection with the description of Arapaho moccasins.[1] They may all be considered as consisting of one of two simple elements (the longitudinal dividing stripe and the sub-border), or of combinations and developments of these two elements. Subsidiary designs usual within these stripes and borders need not be considered here, as they do not affect the ornamentation of the moccasin as a whole.

171
531

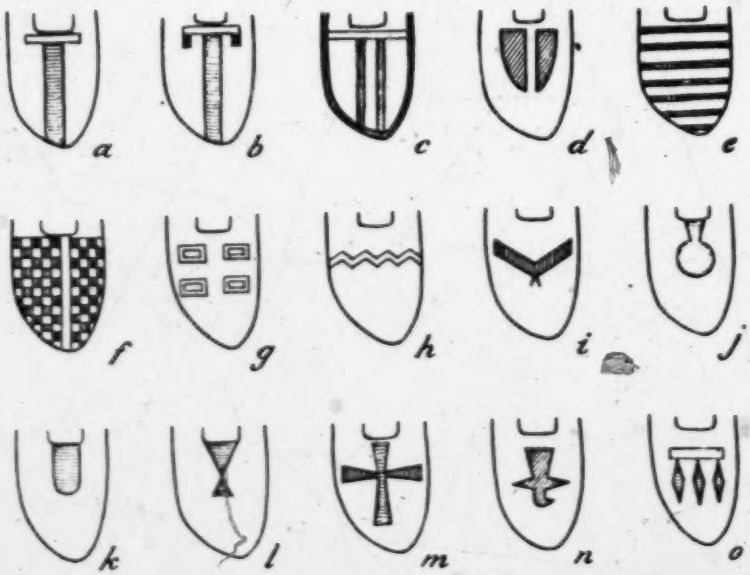


Fig. 2. Types of Designs on Moccasins.

The forms shown in *e* and *f* — the red-line and checker designs, the former usually executed in red quill-work, the latter in beads — may be regarded as forming a second class, in which the entire front of the moccasin is covered with one geometric pattern. All the remaining types can be grouped into a third class, consisting of forms having a figure in the middle of the decorable space on the front of the moccasin, this figure neither filling the entire space nor bearing any exact relation to its outline. Simple forms of some of the more frequent designs of this middle-figure class are here given, such as the four-squares (*g*), the transverse-zigzag (*h*), the crossing angle (*i*), the circle or head (*j*), the oval or U (*k*), the tent (*l*), the cross (*m*), the bird (*n*). A

[1] See Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part I, pp. 38–46.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

M1
531

fifteenth type may be regarded as comprising the moccasins in which a single figure of very variable shape, but always comparatively small, occupies the centre of the otherwise unbroken front area. The U-figure is sometimes symmetrically angular. The cross can also be regarded as a development of the stripe; but, as its shape is almost invariably maltese and not rectangular, it is perhaps usually an independently developed figure.[1]

The Gros Ventre moccasins shown belong to types *d* (Fig. 3), *i* (Plate VIII, Fig. 3), and *j* (Plate VIII, Fig. 2). The moccasin in Plate VIII, Fig. 1, does not belong clearly to any of the typical forms.

[291]

Fig. 3 (50-1824 a). Moccasin: Length, 19 cm.

The stripe-border figures constitute a majority of Arapaho moccasin designs. They occur on Cheyenne moccasins in at least a considerable number of cases. All forms of these designs are found on Sioux and Assiniboine moccasins, but all together on only one among every three or four pieces. Among the Kiowa and Comanche, many moccasins depend for ornamentation on fringes and painting as much as on bead-work: the latter in such cases consists of narrow white edging, which usually follows the stripe and border designs. Among the Ute the proportion of stripe and border designs reaches a very high proportion, even the majority of solidly beaded moccasins being of this type. Of nearly twenty Ute moccasins in the Museum, all but two are of the stripe-border pattern.[2] The related and neighboring Shoshone, however, use this pattern rarely; and the same is true of the Gros Ventre. The Crow use the stripe considerably, but usually with some modification or addition (such as the feather-design element), and only rarely in combination with the border. The Blackfeet lack stripe-border designs almost entirely.

[1] Sioux and Arapaho moccasins with the three types of designs have been illustrated in Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII. Examples of the stripe-border class of moccasins are shown in Plate I, 1–8; Fig. 5, b–f; Plate II, 3; Plate III, 1, 3, 4; Plate IV, 1; Fig. 6; Plates XXXVIII, 2, 4, 6, and XXXIX, 6; and Figs. 96 and 98. Moccasins of the second class are shown in Fig. 5, a; Plates III, 2, and XXXVIII, 1 (red-line pattern); Fig. 5, e; and Plate LIV, 2 (checker-pattern). Moccasins with the third type of ornamentation are shown as follows: Four-squares, Plates XXXVIII, 1, and LII, 2; transverse-zigzag, Plates III, 5, and XXXVIII, 5; angle-across, Plates II, 2, XXXIX, 2, and Fig. 97; round-head, Plates LII, 1, and LIV, 1; cross, Plates I, 8, and XXXIX, 5; bird, Plate XXXIX, 4; a small figure in the centre, Plates II, 4, 5, LII, 3, and LIV, 3.

[2] These two show the round-head and the angle-across designs, which reach great frequency among the Shoshone and Gros Ventre.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Designs of the second class, the red-line and checker-patterns, are most frequent among the Sioux and Arapaho. There are a few Shoshone and Gros Ventre examples. The Blackfeet largely lack designs of this class. 171 531

Of the several designs of the third class, the squares and the transverse-zigzag (*g*, *h*) are not very common. They are frequent among the Sioux and Assiniboine, especially the former pattern, as is to be expected from the prevalence of the square-box design in the bead-work of these two tribes.

The angle-across design (*i*) and the round-head or circle design (*j*) are the most persistent of the designs of the third class, and the former especially has a wide distribution. The angle is found least among the Arapaho, Sioux, and Ute. Among these tribes it is usually also light or open in pattern, so as not to dominate the decoration. The Cheyenne have this pattern, and it is one of the few designs used by the Blackfeet that are untypical of them. Among both Shoshone and Gros Ventre it is common, and the Crow use it. It is interesting that two Ojibwa moccasins in the Museum also show this pattern. The round-head design occurs most frequently among tribes where the angle design is abundant, especially the Shoshone and Gros Ventre, less among the Sioux and Blackfeet. No Arapaho moccasin with this design has yet been seen. The symbolism of this figure varies. It is interpreted as a head, a spoon, feathers, or the sun.

The semi-oval or U-shaped figure (*k*) belongs more distinctly to the north and east than to the Plains. In certain regions it is the typical moccasin pattern. This figure is probably closely related to the simple stripe. It may be regarded as a wide stripe not reaching to the end of the moccasin, and rounded in front; or perhaps as an inner concentric area, slightly altered so as to be symmetrical, determined by the outline of the moccasin. In its occurrence among the Plains tribes under consideration, it does not, however, show any transitions to stripe and border patterns; and it accordingly belongs, so far as the Plains are concerned, in the class of designs bearing no specific relation to the shape of the moccasin. A few occurrences, chiefly among the Blackfeet, of angular forms having the appearance of being modifications of this U-shaped figure, can be included with it.

This design is the characteristic one of the Blackfeet, as noted by Dr. Clark Wissler.[1] It is also nearly confined to the Blackfeet within the Plains region. The Museum has a few scattering Sioux and Shoshone examples, and one from the Ojibwa; and the Field Columbian Museum exhibits a number of specimens from the Crow, though usually with the addition of the feather or pronged design element at the end of the U-figure. The U-form has not been met with among the Arapaho or the Gros Ventre, nor among

[1] Clark Wissler, Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part III, p. 270.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the tribe in many ways nearest to the Arapaho in decorative art,— the Ute. That the Gros Ventre in their century of contact with the Blackfeet have not taken up the design is of interest, and is due, possibly, to its being at bottom of so different a decorative type that it is scarcely compatible with the established style of Gros Ventre decoration.

The tent figure (*l*) is infrequent. It has been found among the Sioux and Gros Ventre.

The cross (*m*) is most common on children's moccasins. It has so far been found on Sioux, Cheyenne, and Arapaho moccasins. It may prove to be most typically Sioux-Cheyenne.

The bird-figured moccasin (*n*) is infrequent. There are three examples in the Museum, all Sioux or Assiniboine. This design is one of the few — really the only one of those considered, besides the red-line pattern — that is usually executed in quills. It seems to go back to an old type independent of the stylistic influences of bead-work. A quill-embroidered bird moccasin is mentioned in an Arapaho myth.[1]

Type *o*, in which any small figure occupies the centre of the main decorative field on the moccasin, occurs chiefly among the Sioux, Cheyenne, and Arapaho. The figure may be the pronged design, the feather design, a triangle, a form of the forked design, or any other figure. A few Blackfoot moccasins can be included in this type, but as yet none from the Ute or Shoshone.

The chief tribal characteristics of moccasin ornamentation can be summarized as follows:—

The Ute use stripe-border designs almost exclusively. The few exceptions found are of the round-head and angle-across types, and are due perhaps to Shoshone influence.

The Arapaho use stripe-border designs in the majority of cases. They show no special predilection for any of the other designs. They lack the round-head, and their angle-across figures are not well marked.

The Kiowa and Comanche, and other southern tribes, confine themselves practically to stripe-border designs; but the bead-work of their moccasins is used mainly for outlining or edging, and solid beading is little practised, so that a turn is given to their style which sets them apart from the other tribes considered.

Cheyenne moccasins are more or less similar to those of the Arapaho, but probably show some leaning toward Sioux types.

The Sioux and Assiniboine moccasins show every type of figure discussed. All forms of the stripe-border class occur, but with less frequency than among the Ute and Arapaho. The round-head and angle-across

[1] See Traditions of the Arapaho (Field Columbian Publication No. 81, p. 291).

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

occur, but less than among other tribes, and the latter shows the light forms that characterize it among the Arapaho. On the whole, the Sioux type is apparently the most mixed and inclusive of those discussed. 171 53

Among the Shoshone the designs are more frequently the round-head and angle-across than any other. They use a number of other forms, such as the red-line, checker, and transverse-zigzag. Stripe-border patterns are little developed among them.

The Crow use designs of all classes, including the stripe, the round-head, the angle-across, the red-line, and the characteristic Blackfoot U-figure, and, as in other bead-work, resemble both Blackfeet and Sioux.

The Blackfeet show by far the most specialized type, not only in the dominance of the U-shaped design, but in the absence of stripe-border patterns, which all the other tribes agree in using at least to a certain extent.[1] The chief designs that have obtained a hold among them, other than the U-figure, are the round-head and angle-across.

The Gros Ventre use a comparatively small proportion of stripe-border patterns, perhaps about in the degree of the Sioux and Shoshone. They use the Sioux-Arapaho red-line figure. Of designs of the third class, the round-head and angle-across are the most frequent.

It is evident that the distribution of these moccasin designs is primarily dependent upon geography, not upon tribal relations. The southern tribes — the Kiowa, Comanche, Ute, and Arapaho — use mainly stripe and border patterns. The northern tribes — the Shoshone, Gros Ventre, Sioux and Assiniboine, and Blackfeet — use chiefly middle-figure designs. Of these figures the most strongly developed are the round-head and angle-across. Approximation of the Shoshone and Gros Ventre proportional frequencies of these designs is to be attributed to the fact that these two tribes are situated in the same northern region of the Plains, rather than to any special cultural relations between them. The Sioux and Arapaho show certain resemblances which may be due to direct relations or to transmission by the Cheyenne. The Blackfeet alone are tribally specialized, at least if regarded as part of the Plains group of tribes. They have been somewhat influenced by the northern Plains type of design, but have not affected it. Even the inter-influence of the Blackfeet and Gros Ventre upon each other has been insignificant. The Ojibwa are not altogether out of the influence of the Plains.

Nothing was learned about the typical tribal ornamentation of Gros

[1] A series of Blackfoot, Blood, and Piegan moccasins in the Museum of the Anthropological Department of the University of California, shows many more moccasins with stripe-border and middle-figure ornamentation than of the U-type, which is contrary to the ornamentation of those in the American Museum of Natural History, of which fully half, omitting the modern leaf-figured specimens, show the U-design; and contrary also to the statements of Dr. Wissler and of Clark (Indian Sign Language, p. 60).

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

[171] 531 Ventre robes. A child's quilled robe (Museum specimen 50-1751) agrees in general with the Arapaho style of ornamentation,[1] and is probably more or less representative of the Gros Ventre type. The style is similar to that of the quill-work on the Arapaho bag shown in the "Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History" (Vol. XVIII, Plate XVI). Seventeen red quilled lines pass across this robe. Four spaces, two on the lines and two at the ends, are green instead of red on each line. Originally, small green-dyed plumes seem to have been attached here also; these have now almost disappeared. At the four green spaces on the lowest line, pendants are attached. These each consist of a small loop wound with green quills, and of two thongs wound with red quills. At the ends of the thongs are small cylinders of tin from out of which issues a tuft of dyed horsehair. The seventeen embroidered lines do not stretch entirely across the robe to its edge, but occupy a rectangular area including the greater part of its somewhat irregular surface. Certain Arapaho robes are described as having been embroidered with seventeen such parallel lines, to which a group of three was added at the lower edge, where pendants were attached. An Arapaho child's robe in the Museum collections is almost identical with this in style. The ornamental spaces on the red quilled lines differ somewhat, and there are eighteen instead of seventeen lines; but the general construction and appearance are strikingly similar, even to the pendant attachments. Dr. Clark Wissler's illustration[2] of a small Sioux robe serves to give a very close idea of the present piece. Like the Arapaho robe, this Sioux one has eighteen lines. Dr. Wissler makes the point that among the Sioux such red-line embroidered robes were distinctive of women and girls; but among the Arapaho the typical robe of men is said to have been embroidered with yellow or white lines. The Field Columbian Museum has on exhibition Cree, Crow, and Sioux children's robes ornamented with from seventeen to twenty lines and with hoof pendants at the bottom.

[178] 342 531 171 The Gros Ventre have now entirely abandoned the use of embroidered tent-ornaments such as are still quite common among the Arapaho. A single dilapidated partial specimen was obtained, shown in Fig. 4. This is very similar to the Arapaho tent-ornaments.[3] The full set consisted of a larger, round quill-embroidered piece of skin sewed to the back of the top of a tent and called kaä"biir" ("round embroidery"), four similar but smaller ornaments put on the sides of the tent lower down, and pendants attached to the upper flaps or ears of the tent. The circular embroidered ornaments had buffalo-tails or strips of buffalo-fur, and quill-wound pendant thongs with hoofs and loops at their ends, hanging from the middle.

[1] Compare Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part I, pp. 29, 33, 55.
[2] Ibid., Vol. XVIII, Part III, Fig. 81.
[3] Ibid., Vol. XVIII, Part I, pp. 61-63.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

171
531
342

Of the pieces illustrated, the larger contains four black concentric circles interrupted by four black-bordered sectors. Quills, not plant fibres, have been used for this black embroidery. The lighter portions of the embroidery adjacent to the black circles seem to have been originally yellow, as the underlying protected quills are of this color, while those on the surface are

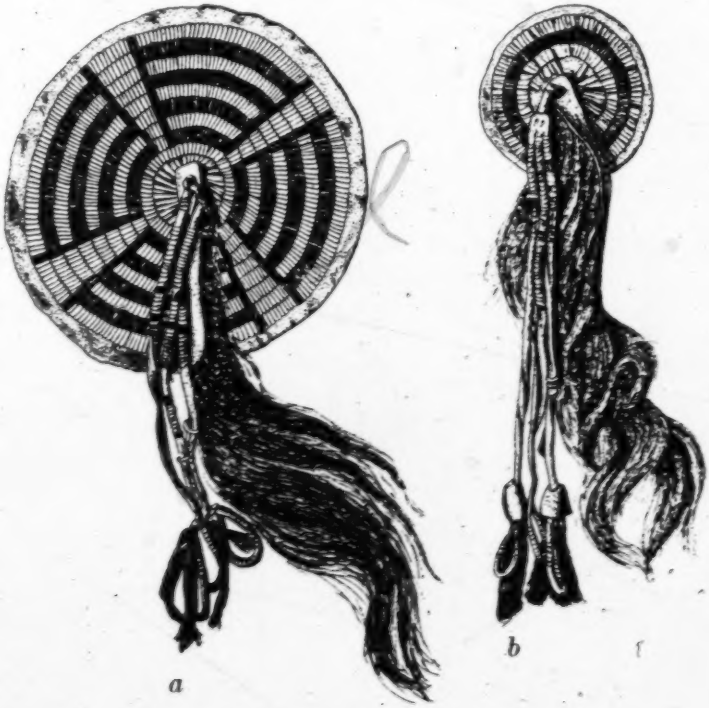


Fig. 4 (50-1829 a, b). Tent-ornaments. Diameters, 17 cm., 8 cm.

weathered white. The quills within the sectors, however, appear to have been always white. The pendants, three in number, are very much destroyed: it is evident, however, that they were wound with orange-yellow, red, white, and black quills in exactly the pattern used by the Arapaho.[1] The loops at the ends of the pendants contained red, yellow, and black quills,

[1] For description and illustration of pattern, see Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part I, pp. 35, 65, Figs. 12, 13.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

171
342
531

and probably white also. The pendants on the smaller ornament are identical, and still show the hoofs at their ends. It thus appears that, whereas the main ornament has only the three colors, namely, white, yellow, and black, — found also in an Arapaho ornament [1] with which it is virtually identical, — yet the peculiar line-pattern combination of red, yellow, white, and black, characteristic of the Arapaho "tribal" style of quill embroidery, also occurs in this Gros Ventre set of ornaments.

171
415
531

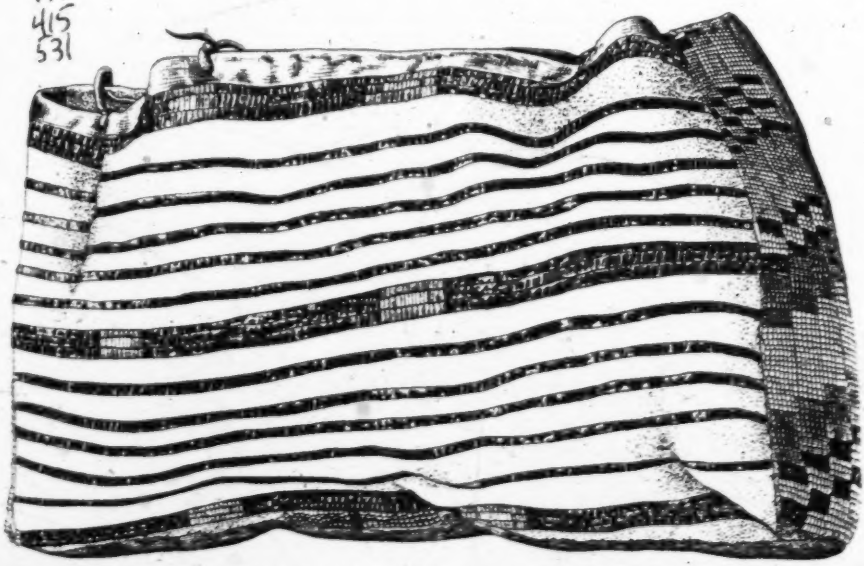


Fig. 5 (50-1738). Soft-skin Bag. Length, 21 cm.

Bags of soft skin, used chiefly for keeping and transporting clothing and small household articles, are made by the Gros Ventre very much as by the Arapaho and other Plains tribes. The ornamentation is also of the same character, consisting of red quill-embroidered lines across the front of the bag, and a pattern of bead-work (generally of alternately colored bars with cross spaces, augmented by tin and horsehair or other pendants) along the top and two side edges of the bag. This style has been illustrated for the Arapaho.[2] About half the Gros Ventre bags show the same ornamentation,

[1] Compare Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part I, p. 60, Fig. 9, a.
[2] Ibid., Vol. XVIII, Plate xvi.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

varied only in inessential details. The remainder introduce a characteristic variation, though the fundamental type of decoration is the same. Such a bag is shown in Fig. 5. The red quilled lines are present, but are in part grouped in threes, so as to form stripes of three times the width of the lines. In consequence of this, the small differently colored spaces on the lines become rectangles, which usually assume the box form shown in the figure,

171
45
531

Fig. 6 (50-4299). Soft-skin Bag. Length, 35 cm.

and more characteristic of Sioux than of Arapaho ornamentation. The number of single lines between the compound stripes varies; in some specimens it is only two or three. Sometimes the box design of the stripes is represented on the lines by an end-bordered bar, as is customary on the bags with lines only, and as appears in the bag in Fig. 6. Even the small down-feathers of the line-embroidered bags may be present on the wider stripes of this variant Gros Ventre type. The bead-work along the two ends of the bag shown in Fig. 5 is very different from that on Arapaho

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

171 bags, recalling the typical checker and diagonal step design of Blackfoot
415 beading. This type is, however, unusual among the Gros Ventre.
531 The fine bag shown in Fig. 6, collected by Dr. Clark Wissler, presents unusual quill-embroidery on its front, suggestive perhaps of Sioux influence or origin; but the bead-work on its cover and sides, and the attached tin and horsehair ornaments, are typically Arapaho, except for the fact that this tribe would be very unlikely to make any pattern without at least some proportion of white. The transverse lines of quill-work on this bag might be regarded as nothing but a further five-line development of the three-line grouping illustrated by the last figure, with an alternating bar-pattern for its chief ornamentation instead of the box figure, which in element is identical. The central figure, however, is the typical Sioux spider-web pattern described by Dr. Clark Wissler,[1] and so far without any parallel among either Arapaho or Gros Ventre, or any approach nearer than that shown in an instance of blanket painting.[2] The two parallel bars in the centre of this concave quadrilateral figure, and the diamond-shaped feather symbols at its corners, are also typically Siouan: only the last-named element is occasionally used by the Gros Ventre.

237 Buffalo paunches, the mouth being drawn up by a string, like a sack,
415 were used for carrying and holding water, a paunchful being hung up in
505 the tent. If buffalo had been killed, and it was desired to transport the meat across the Missouri, the paunches were filled with meat, blown up, tied together at the mouth, and floated. The well-known circular skin
[501] boats of the Missouri tribes were also used by the Gros Ventre for transporting clothing and property across streams.

171 Fig. 7 shows an ornamented food-bag of bladder. At the top is a strip
415 of skin covered with red quill-embroidery, with square star designs in blue
531 and white. From this strip of skin hangs a red quill-wound fringe. The thong handle of the bag is partly quilled, and has quilled thong pendants hanging from it. At the bottom of the bag a round piece of skin, covered with green-and-white quartered bead-work, is sewed on.

171 The navel-amulets of the Gros Ventre, which resemble those of the
532 Arapaho in their use, are in form of a somewhat different type, as they approach more nearly to an animal's shape. They usually represent
751 çaniwa", the "horned toad" (southern Arapaho, sániwa", a "lizard"), or sometimes a person. Their general shape is, as everywhere on the Plains, a rhomboid on end. To this the Gros Ventre add at the upper end a small rhomboid, forming the head of the animal represented. This augmented shape has not been found among the Arapaho, with whom the typical form

[1] See Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part III, p. 248.
[2] Ibid., Vol. XIII, p. 85, Fig. 138.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

is a narrow simple rhomboid.[1] The Blackfeet and Sioux make figures resembling those of the Gros Ventre, but carry the realism farther. The Sioux most frequently represent an entire animal with head, legs, and tail, much like Fig. 1 in Plate VIII of Vol. XVIII of the "Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History," but broader, in the shape of a turtle.[2] The Arapaho, Gros Ventre, and Blackfeet use ornamented strings hanging from the corners of the rhomboid to represent limbs and tail. The Blackfeet make realistic snake amulets for their boys, and more conventional turtle or lizard-like figures, resembling those of the Gros Ventre, for their girls. Among the Assiniboine, and west of the Rockies among the Bannock and Ute, a reduced form of navel-amulets occurs, though perhaps it is not the only one used. It is usually small and flat, with the acute angles of the rhomboid cut off transversely, rendering the whole piece hexagonal rather than quadrilateral. Sometimes the entire edges are fringed. The relative distribution of this small form and of the other forms is not yet clear. A Shoshone amulet in the Museum is a pointed rhomboid resembling the Arapaho type, even to being quartered in its bead-ornamentation. A Kiowa specimen in the Anthropological Museum of the University of California is a plain rhombus, of Arapaho type, except in being smaller and more nearly square. The following distribution of types is at least partly correct: realistic, Sioux, Blackfoot, occasionally Arapaho; semi-realistic, Blackfoot, Gros Ventre; conventional rhomboid, Arapaho, Kiowa, Shoshone; reduced hexagonal, Assiniboine, Ute, Bannock, and perhaps Shoshone.

Fig. 7 (59-1801). Ornamented Food-bag of Bladder. Length, 29 cm.

On Plate IX are shown three Gros Ventre navel-amulets. Fig. 3 was said to represent a horned toad, and Fig. 2, a person. It will be seen that the mouth in the former is near the end of the head; in the latter, in the lower part of the face. Both these specimens have quilled or beaded appendages at the two side corners and at the lower end. Fig. 1 has a distinct

[1] See Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part I, Plate VIII.
[2] Ibid., Vol. XVIII, Part III, p. 242, Fig. 70.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

171 tail as well as head, a cross instead of an attempt at representative ornamen-
532 tation in the bead-work on the head, and unornamented yellowed thongs as
751 sole attachments. Another specimen (Museum No. 50–4278), not figured, is much smaller than any of the others. It resembles Fig. 3 of Plate IX in that the bead-work on its upper surface is quartered, and that there is a distinct attempt to represent eyes in the head. The attachments are short unpainted thongs with tin cones at their ends.

Of these four pieces, Fig. 1 of Plate IX and Museum No. 50–4278 are unbeaded on the lower side; Fig. 3 of Plate IX has a few curvilinear leaf-ornaments on the lower side; and Fig. 2 of Plate IX is entirely beaded on both sides, showing on the reverse a simple quartering in blue and yellow without attempted representation of animal form. It thus appears that all the pieces are ornamented with bead-work in quartering, a design found also among the Arapaho, although transverse or diagonal parallel lines, or a crossed longitudinal line, are more common among them. The specimen figured

[531]

Fig. 8. Triangular Designs on Parfleches and Bags.

in Fig. 1 of Plate IX is quartered asymmetrically. The greater flatness of Fig. 3, same plate, is due to the contents of the amulet-pouch having been removed, no doubt for preservation.

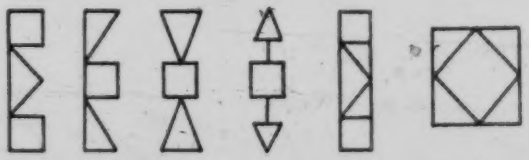
The principal form of Gros Ventre decorative art other than embroidery
531 is painting, mainly on skin and rawhide. As to the symbolism of this paint-
171 ing, as little was learned as of the symbolism of embroidered designs. The style of decoration itself, however, offers some points of interest when compared with the forms of decoration typical of other Plains tribes.

Outside of robe-painting, tent-painting, and semi-realistic painting of a more directly symbolic or religious nature, the principal form of this branch of Plains decorative art is the painting of parfleches and rawhide bags. In these the decorative field is invariably rectangular, usually nearly square. Within this rectangular field, which may be merely outlined or may be heavily bordered, three principal types of design elements and combinations of elements can be distinguished. These can be called respectively the "triangular," the "square-and-triangular," and the "square."

The triangular type of design is by far the most common, taking the Plains as a whole, and among some tribes is used almost exclusively. The

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

fundamental element of this form may be taken to be the right-angled triangle with one side considerably longer than the other. Two such triangles placed together give either a long and flat or a narrow and high isosceles triangle. Two such isosceles triangles placed base to base give a rhombus or diamond. From these elements, — the right-angled triangle, the isosceles triangle, and the diamond, — the designs of this first form are built up. Some of the most frequent combinations are shown in Fig. 8 (*a-j*). It is common to find combinations of an isosceles triangle flanked by two right-angled triangles (*e, f*), this pattern being disposed along the inside of the longer edges of the rectangular decorative field; while in the middle there will be either one or two, or sometimes three, figures, each of which is the double of those at the edges, consisting, accordingly, of a diamond flanked by two isosceles triangles (*g, h*). If there are half-patterns on the side, they usually agree with the full patterns in the middle. Sometimes diamonds are lacking, and two isosceles triangles form either a long rhomboid (*d*), or an



a *b* *c* *d* *e* *f*

Fig. 9. Square-and-triangular Designs on Parfleches and Bags.

hourglass-shaped figure (*c*), according as their bases or apices are in contact. In the same way, two rectangular triangles are combined along the edges of the decorative field (*a, b*). Diamonds and isosceles triangles are sometimes bisected, and occasionally the two halves are colored differently, thus emphasizing the inherent relation of these figures to right-angled triangles.

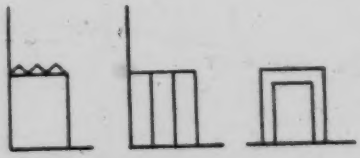
There are many subsidiary features of ornamentation accompanying those here outlined, such as borders of different colors, small triangles at the base or at the apex of isosceles triangles, reduced figures within designs, and so on. In essence, however, this first or triangular type of parfleche paintings can be considered as being built up out of right-angled triangles and combinations of right-angled triangles.

The second, or square-and-triangular, type is less common. It uses triangles much as does the first type, except that in part it replaces them by rectangles, usually squares. These squares may be placed along the edges of the decorative field, especially in the corners or in the middle. When in the middle of the field, they are of considerable size, and contain other

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

531
12

figures, especially diamonds. Various characteristic forms of this type are shown in Fig. 9 (*a–f*). It will be seen that full forms, such as a square with two adjacent isosceles triangles directed toward it (*c*), are paralleled by half-forms, such as a rectangle flanked by two right-angled triangles with their apices in contact with it (*b*). A variation of this latter form may be regarded as an inversion, the two right-angled triangles being placed together in the middle to form an isosceles triangle, and this being flanked by two squares (*a*). Not infrequently this form is further developed by being combined into a continuous stripe (*e*); the ends of this stripe being squares, and the middle portion three or more triangles distinguished by color. When full figures consist of a square flanked by two triangles, with their bases instead of their apices directed toward it, these triangles are separated from the square, but the decorative unity of the pattern is retained by means of connecting lines (*d*). No perfect illustrations of this square-and-triangular type have been published in the "Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History," either from among Arapaho or Sioux specimens, but an approximation is shown there in Plate XVIII, Fig. 2, of Vol. XVIII. Plate XIX, Fig. 3, of the same volume, while containing scarcely any square elements, also bears some general resemblance to designs of this type. Nearly all the illustrations of rawhide painting in that volume belong to the first type, the few exceptions belonging to the third.



a *b* *c*

Fig. 10. Square Designs on Parfleches and Bags.

The third, or square, type of parfleche ornamentation either lacks triangular design elements altogether, or employs them as subsidiary to, or at least distinct from, the square design elements. Most frequently this type of design shows squares in the corners. It is frequently elaborated by rows of small triangles within, or adjacent to, the squares. Elementary forms are indicated in Fig. 10 (*a–c*). This is not a common type of design among any tribe, but appears to be found to some extent among all, or nearly all, Plains tribes. Two instances of its most developed form are shown in the "Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History," in Vol. XVIII, Plate XVIII, Fig. 5, and Plate XIX, Fig. 5; while less distinctive forms are given in Fig. 34 of the same volume. Among the Arapaho there is some tendency to interpret this type of design as the bear-foot, especially when combined with rows of pointed triangles. A similar interpretation has been obtained among the Bannock. There are, of course, easy and natural

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

531
171

transitions from this square type of design to the preceding, or square-and-triangular type. But there seems to be an essential difference between the two types in general character and decorative purpose; and this is made the more probable by the fact that the entirely square type is less frequent among the tribes that have developed patterns of the second, or square-and-triangular, type, than among the tribes that lack this second type. The difference between the two types is not so much in their individual design elements as in the disposition of these in the decorative field.

The tribal distribution of these three types is as follows. The first, or triangular, type is found among all tribes from which material is available. It is used, nearly to the exclusion of other types, by the Arapaho, the Sioux, and probably the Cheyenne and the Kootenay; and it predominates among all other tribes except the Shoshone. The second, or square-and-triangular, type reaches its greatest known development among the Shoshone. It is more or less employed by the Ute, and to some extent by the Blackfeet and Sahaptin. It will be seen that the Gros Ventre also employ this form. The third, or entirely square, type appears to occur somewhat sporadically among almost all tribes.

The rawhide painting of the Arapaho, besides employing design elements of the triangular type almost exclusively, is characterized by a certain lightness and openness of patterns, due to the comparatively large amount of background left white and unpainted. The patterns of right-angled and isosceles triangles and diamonds are usually narrow and long. The patterns in the middle of the field are sometimes separated from one another and from those along the edges by stripes; and in other cases full designs in the middle are split into two half-designs by such stripes. The general pattern arrangement is thus approximately one of stripes or longitudinal figures, usually from three to five in number, and consisting in element of right-angled triangles. The half-designs at the edge of the decorative field are usually directly or inversely symmetrical with those in the middle. Characteristic subsidiary features are rows of black dots, especially within white stripes, rows of small triangles at the bases of acute triangles, small black inverted single triangles at the apices of obtuse isosceles triangles, and small figures enclosed in larger design elements. These enclosed figures are usually triangles and pentagons respectively in acute and obtuse isosceles triangles. The outlines of Arapaho parfleche paintings are generally made in narrow lines of a faint black or brown. There is often some difference in pattern between stitched rawhide bags and folded parfleches; the former showing a greater tendency toward a heavy border or frame, consisting usually of a double stripe filled in with alternating triangles of two colors. The backs of bags, and occasionally of parfleches, may be striped across.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

531
171

Sioux ornamentation of rawhide is more difficult to characterize than Arapaho, although the Museum contains a good representation of specimens, a number of which have been figured.[1] The design elements of the Sioux are as preponderatingly of the first, or triangular, type as among the Arapaho. Their disposition and their relation to the decorative field are, however, less open, and it is not uncommon to find Sioux bags which are covered so completely with painting that no white background remains within the decorative field, or only so little that it becomes equivalent in function to one of the colors used. Many Sioux parfleches are heavily bordered, the wide outside design frame being as common on them as it is rare in Arapaho parfleches. Not infrequently the decorative field is divided longitudinally by a heavy stripe similar to those which frame the field. A subsidiary feature that is characteristic is the occurrence of large diamonds containing one or two longitudinal bars. Most of the typical subsidiary features of the Arapaho are either wanting or are much less common. The Arapaho parfleche design shown in the "Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History" (Vol. XVIII, Plate xx, Fig. 5) is typically Sioux. The one in Fig. 3 of the same plate has Sioux reminiscences. On the whole, the differences between the styles of the two tribes are not very great.

There is too little Cheyenne parfleche material available to allow a characterization; but it appears in general that the painting is similar to that of the Arapaho and Sioux, as is to be expected.

With the Shoshone[2] a new style of rawhide painting is encountered, characterized by a predominance of designs of the second, or square-and-triangular type. There are many triangular designs and design combinations, but the square-and-triangular type is so strongly impressed on Shoshone art that there are very few parfleches that do not show at least some rectangular forms. Very common is a broad stripe consisting of triangles in its middle portion and ending off in squares (Fig. 9, *c*). These squares fill the corners of the decorative field. Such border-stripes may be found occurring transversely as well as longitudinally, in which case, by forming a heavy frame, they leave a rectangular area considerably smaller than the decorative field. This area, in turn, contains designs — usually a diamond or two half-diamonds, that is to say, isosceles triangles — set point to point into an hourglass figure. In other cases the central rectangular area is more prominently developed than the border-stripes. It is in such cases that types result resembling the sporadic Arapaho forms mentioned.[3] Al-

[1] See Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part III, Figs. 75, 82, 87–94.

[2] The Shoshone parfleches in the Museum are from Wind River and Fort Hall Reservations.

[3] See Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part I, Plate XVIII, Fig. 2.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

gether it may be said that there is scarcely a Shoshone parfleche which does not contain either the central rectangle, squares in the corners of the decorative field in combination with triangles, or the heavy square-containing border-stripe. The open border-figures of the Arapaho, consisting of an obtuse isosceles triangle with or without flanking right-angled triangles, are scarcely ever found. The Shoshone show a fondness, as compared with the Arapaho, for heavy black or dark-blue outlines for their figures. They lack the Arapaho rows of black dots and small black apex triangles, but show the row of small acute triangles in several instances.

Ute[1] parfleche painting shows some approximation to that of the Shoshone in using the square-and-triangular patterns, but also has distinct resemblances to Arapaho. It is more open than Shoshone painting, and shows some tendency towards the Arapaho longitudinal arrangement. The square-and-triangular type of design is also much less common than among the Shoshone. Ute painting differs even more than does Arapaho from both Sioux and Shoshone in lacking the heavy frame to the decorative field found among these two tribes. In fact there are a number of Ute parfleches in the Museum that show a total absence of any framing: even the half-designs along the border, which among the Arapaho duplicate the full designs in the middle, are omitted. This is practically never done by the Arapaho. It may be estimated that a third of all Ute parfleches lack a border of any kind entirely, and that in another third only the two longitudinal sides of the decorative field are partially edged by isolated figures. A special form of Ute design, which needs no comment other than that it is quite evidently a form of the square-and-triangular type, is shown in Fig. 3 of Plate x. Although an isolated occurrence, it is not uncharacteristic, as is shown by certain approximations in parfleches and by similar forms in medicine-cases (Fig. 13). In its subsidiary features, Ute parfleche-painting resembles Arapaho rather surprisingly; the small apex triangle, the row of small basal triangles, and the small triangle, rectangle, or pentagon enclosed in a larger triangle, all being found.

Half a dozen parfleches and several bags obtained among the Bannock of Fort Hall Reservation give some idea of the position of this tribe in relation to the others. The second, or square-and-triangular, type of design elements is found, but is not so prominent as among the Shoshone. There is a well-marked tendency toward large diamonds occupying the greater part of the central area, or at least the entire length, of the decorative field. As among the Shoshone, the decorative area is well filled with designs; but it cannot be said to be crowded, because the figures are generally large and

[1] Uintah and Uncompahgre Reservations.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

simple. While there is considerable general resemblance to Shoshone designs, elements of the specifically triangular type much outweigh those of the square-and-triangular type.

The Blackfoot style of painting is rather distinctive. The elements are very predominatingly of the purely triangular type; but the decorative field as a whole is quite different from that of the Arapaho and Sioux. It is more open than the latter, and lacks the general longitudinal disposition of figures of the former. There is very frequently a light border containing triangles or diagonal bars; or the design as a whole may be regarded as consisting of a design (of acute isosceles triangles and diamonds) within a central square area around which is placed a light border containing triangles. When this frame and defined central square area are absent, there are usually no bordering figures such as characterize the Arapaho style. It is not uncommon for a figure or two figures to stand free, as it were, in the decorative field. In this respect there is a leaning toward the Ute style. The resemblances that there are to Shoshone are not so much in the occurrence of the square-and-triangular designs, for these are not numerous, as in the tendency to group smaller designs within a central square. Most of the figures employed by the Blackfeet are small relatively to the decorative field, thus differing from those of the Shoshone, Ute, and Bannock. The subsidiary decorative features characteristic of the Arapaho are wanting, except for occasional rows of small triangles. A considerable proportion of specimens, approximately one-half, show V-shaped designs on the side of the parfleche. This characteristic is also found among the Kootenay and Sahaptin, but (with the exception of sporadic cases from the Assiniboine, Sioux, Gros Ventre, and Ute) is not known to occur among other tribes. This painting on the sides of parfleches must therefore be considered distinctively western, and as more characteristic of the Pacific than of the Atlantic drainage in the Plains culture.

Two Blackfoot bags collected by Dr. Clark Wissler are shown in Plate x, Figs. 5 and 6. These are perhaps extreme cases of the typical Blackfoot tendency toward an open frame and a large central square area.

Half a dozen Kootenay parfleches and painted bags collected by the author in 1900 in northern Idaho are very uniform in style of ornamentation. They show no trace of the typical Shoshone square-and-triangular type of design, but use triangular elements exclusively. A simple but typical design is shown in Plate x, Fig. 4. It will be seen that in the general pattern there is nothing that might not well be Arapaho. Two other specimens show fundamentally the same pattern. Two others are longitudinally bisected by a wide stripe, the two resulting rectangles being internally bordered along their long sides with isosceles or right-angled triangles. Another

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

specimen has two hourglass-shaped figures stretched longitudinally across the field; between these is a diamond, and on each side there are two isosceles triangles. The figures in all the specimens show the convex roundness visible in the one chosen for illustration, so that actually triangles often approach more nearly to being segments of circles than polygons. 531 171

A special subsidiary characteristic of Kootenay painting is the development of rows of small black triangles set upon the outer edges of the main figures. These were said by the Kootenay to represent the trees which, in their heavily timbered and hilly country, everywhere form the limit of vision. As just mentioned, the Kootenay also frequently use side designs on their parfleches.

A valuable collection of parfleches and some bags was made for the Museum by Dr. L. Farrand among the Sahaptin. Considering that the habitat of these people is in Oregon, the general similarity of their art, as of most sides of their material culture, to that of the Plains Indians of for instance Dakota and Kansas, is very remarkable. In their rawhide painting the Sahaptin show a somewhat greater tendency to use designs of the square-and-triangular type than do the Kootenay, although such designs are neither very frequent nor very prominent among them. It is probable that the occurrence of this type of design among the Sahaptin is due to direct contact with Shoshoneans, principally of Idaho. It is interesting to observe that the wide border-stripe consisting of triangles with squares at the ends, which is so typical of the Shoshone, is found among the Sahaptin as frequently in the form of a transverse end-stripe as it is as a longitudinal border. Central squares of no great size occur several times in combination with adjacent acute isosceles triangles. Wide stripes, sometimes longitudinal and sometimes transverse, are not uncommon. When longitudinal, they occur also in the middle of the decorative field. In this case the two resulting halves of the decorative area are usually occupied mainly by diamonds or hourglass figures. There is very little tendency toward a distinct enclosing frame, as among the Sioux and Blackfeet. There are also very few cases of a repetition, along the longitudinal borders, of the designs in the middle, such as is so characteristic of the Arapaho; but there are cases even of this. Altogether there is hardly any characteristic tribal type which has not some representation among the Sahaptin. The figures are generally large. They are, however, so placed that the white background is comparatively prominent; and the close effect found, for instance, in most Bannock parfleches, where large design elements are also favorites, is wanting. The outlines of the figures are usually marked quite heavily in black or dark blue, much as among the Shoshone and Bannock. About half the parfleches have paintings on the side, similar to those of the Blackfeet and

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

53 171

Kootenay. The typical form of these side-paintings seems to be a row of angles or V's with the apices directed upward; that is to say, more or less inward as the flattened parfleche is viewed from above. Usually each angle or V contains one or two smaller parallel ones. In a few cases among the Sahaptin, the V-shaped angles are replaced by square U-shaped figures or by diagonal stripes.

The characteristics of Gros Ventre rawhide painting, in spite of some fifteen pieces in the Museum, are difficult to define. There is certainly very little stylistic tendency peculiar to the tribe. A considerable proportion both of parfleches and bags resembles typical Arapaho ones, though on the whole with the difference that there is a less marked longitudinal arrangement of figures, and not quite so much openness of the decorative field. On the other hand, there is visible some tendency toward the use of the Shoshone square-and-triangular type of design, though with an inclination rather toward a central square with acute triangles directed toward it, such as is found among the Ute and Blackfeet, than toward the heavy diamond-filled central square and the square-and-triangular stripe of the Shoshone.

Of specimens which have more or less close Arapaho analogues, there may be mentioned Fig. 5 of Plate XI[1] and specimens Museum Nos. 50–1734,[2] 50–1929 and 50–1776,[3] and 50–1830.[4] A specimen (Museum No. 50–4327) collected by Dr. Clark Wissler may be described as approximately the equivalent of double that part of an Arapaho design which appears on the front of the bag.[5]

Several forms that are quite distinct from anything found among the Arapaho are illustrated in Plate XI. The design shown in Fig. 1 consists in essence of four squares, each containing two inturned obtuse triangles, and is without close parallel among any of the tribes from which there is material. Fig. 2 suggests the entirely-painted-over Sioux decorative field divided longitudinally by a wide stripe which is flanked by two long diamonds. It will be seen, however, that transverse divisions give a marked square effect to this pattern as a whole. Fig. 3 is a parfleche collected by Dr. Clark Wissler. It is in typical Shoshone style, showing the square-ended wide stripes and the general square effect of the central portion of the decorative field. Fig. 4 was also collected by Dr. Wissler, and is in many respects unique. Figs. 5 and 6 are two designs of the square-and-triangular type, but rather of the form used by the Ute than that typical of

[1] Compare Bulletin American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part I, Plate XXII, Fig. 2.
[2] Ibid., Vol. XVIII, Part I, Plate XX, Fig. 5.
[3] Ibid., Vol. XVIII, Part I, Plate XVIII, Figs. 3 and 4.
[4] Ibid., Vol. XVIII, Part I, Fig. 36.
[5] Ibid., Vol. XVIII, Part I, Fig. 33.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the Shoshone. Specimen Museum No. 50-1741 (not shown in the plate) is similar to Fig. 6, but contains two central figures instead of one, and lacks the symmetrical half-designs along the edges. 531 171

A curious design on a bag is shown in Fig. 11. This, while much specialized, seems to show Blackfoot influence.

While these Gros Ventre pieces show resemblances here and there to the work of a number of tribes, yet they seem distinctly impressed with the tendencies of none. Perhaps fundamentally Gros Ventre rawhide painting is most similar to that of the Arapaho; but there are many departures from the Arapaho type, without corresponding development of any characteristically tribal style. There are some approaches to the art of both the Sioux and the Blackfeet, the two principal large tribes to the east and west; but these resemblances are not very marked. It is not unlikely that there may have been closer correspondences with the Crow. While the Blackfeet, according to Dr. Clark Wissler,[1] called their regular parfleche paintings "Gros Ventre painting," it is quite evident that the influence suggested by this name has actually had very little to do with the origin and development of the present style of Blackfoot painting. Not only do the Blackfeet appear to be in possession of a more distinctive style of rawhide painting than the Gros Ventre, but it is generally evident that any inter-influence of the two tribes on each other in respect to rawhide ornamentation has been inconsiderable.

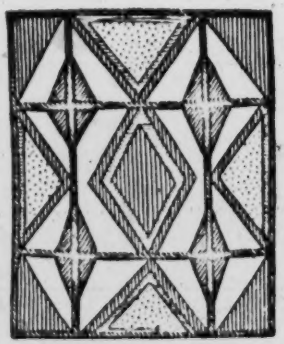


Fig. 11 (50-1805). Design on Bag. Length, 29 cm.

The cylindrical rawhide cases used by most Plains tribes, generally for holding medicine, are painted, on the whole, in styles resembling those of parfleches; but as the shape of the object and the portion of the decorative field visible at one time are quite different from those of parfleches, there are certain differences of design. At least four types of designs can be made out on medicine-cases; and, as more material becomes available for study, the tribal distribution of these, and especially the transition forms between the pure types, promise to be interesting. [415]

These four types, which have already been partly described in connection with the Arapaho,[2] are shown in Fig. 12 (*a–d*), and may be characterized as

[1] Clark Wissler, Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part III, p. 276.
[2] See Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part I, p. 132.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

53
17

follows. The first type (*a*) consists of a pattern of inverted tents.[1] The second type (*b*) consists of a pattern of stemmed crescents and forked upright fishtail figures.[2] The third type (*c*) has for its principal or central design a single figure, one of the characteristic elements of the pure triangular type

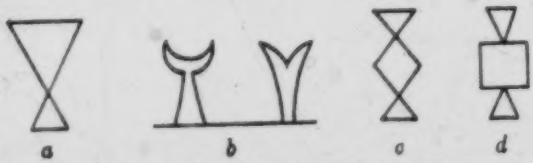


Fig. 12. Designs on Cylindrical Medicine-cases.

of parfleche designs, — a rhombus between two triangles directed toward it. As in parfleches, this figure may be flanked by symmetrical half-figures.[3] The fourth type (*d*) is similar, but substitutes in its principal figure the square-and-triangular type for the purely triangular one. The two Ute medicine-cases shown in Fig. 13 are illustrations.

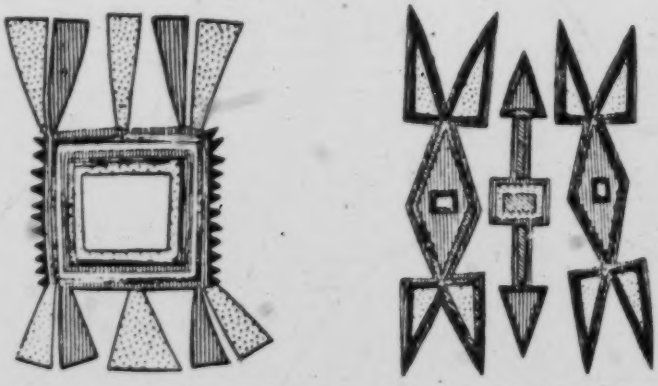


Fig. 13 (50-1255, 50-1276). Ute Medicine-case Designs. Lengths, 40 cm., 71 cm.

Among the Arapaho the tent-pattern seems most common, and next to this the crescent-and-fishtail design. One case of the third type has been found, and none of the fourth. The interesting specimen painted with bear-feet, in the Field Columbian Museum, may also be recalled.

Of Sioux medicine-cases little is known. A specimen in the Museum

[1] See Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part I, Plate xxv, Fig. 1.
[2] Ibid., Vol. XVIII, Part I, Plate xxv Figs. 2 and 3.
[3] Ibid., Vol. XVIII, Part I, Fig. 43.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

has a design the most prominent figure in which is the spider-web symbol,[1] a concave quadrilateral. Superficially this design resembles those of the fourth type. A specimen in the Museum of the Department of Anthropology of the University of California shows an asymmetrical design, which in some respects approaches each of the four fundamental types here distinguished.

531
171

The Ute, to judge from four or five examples in the American Museum of Natural History, employ chiefly the third and fourth types; but their designs of the third or triangular type are almost always tinged with elements of the fourth, or square-and-triangular type.

The Shoshone cases, also represented by several examples, show some variation of pattern; but all are of the triangular type, and generally approach the design illustrated as most elemental. While in parfleches the Shoshone incline more than the Ute to square-and-triangular patterns, they appear to favor them less than the Ute on medicine-cases.

The Blackfoot tribes, also represented in the Museum by several specimens, show the third type, with but little variation from the illustration, quite regularly.

A single Sahaptin case in the Museum is also of this third type.

The only Gros Ventre case obtained is shown in Fig. 27, and the design is of the third type.

A Kiowa case in the Field Columbian Museum, the only specimen from this tribe known to the writer, and previously commented upon,[2] is intermediate between the first and second types.

The Arapaho being the southernmost of the tribes represented, it seems, especially in connection with this Kiowa case, that the first two types of medicine-case designs, the tent and the crescent-and-fishtail patterns, are probably characteristic of the southern Plains. Among the northern, or at least the northwestern, tribes belonging to the Plains culture, designs of the third and fourth types, more closely related to parfleche figures than are the first and second, are clearly prevalent. These are normally of the third or purely triangular form; but among the Ute a special form of the square-and-triangular type of design, found also on the parfleches of this tribe, has strongly influenced the medicine-case designs. Among the Shoshone the fundamentally square-and-triangular tendency of their parfleche-painting is without appreciable effect on their medicine-case style. The position of the Sioux in this classification, although geographically they belong to the northern tribes, remains to be more exactly determined.

[1] Compare Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part III, p. 248.
[2] Ibid., Vol. XVIII, Part I, p. 134.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

SOCIAL CUSTOMS.

000 The Gros Ventre system of terms of relationship has been given in a
605 former publication.[1]

601 Cousins, so far as the relationship was known, were called brothers and sisters, and they called each other's children son or daughter if the cousin
[582] was of the same sex as the speaker, or nephew or niece if the cousin was of the opposite sex. Any known relationship was a bar to marriage. The
[587] brother of a dead man sometimes married his widow, but this was not always the case.

583 Large amounts of property, especially horses, were given away for wives for the honor of the act, but there was no rule or definite custom covering the quantity of property so given. The horses might be given not only to the father, but to the brothers, uncles, and other relatives of the girl. Sometimes, without having received any gifts and apparently without any previous understanding, a man would give his daughter to a young man, who thereupon would give him horses, or distribute them among his wife's other relatives. Old men practised this custom in order to obtain the aid and services of a young man in caring for their horses and in other ways, and no doubt
585 sometimes also to insure a more certain food-supply. A young man on
431 marrying received a tent with all the proper furniture, usually from his prospective parents-in-law, but sometimes from his own parents, if they were the wealthier.

606 Although a young married man often lived with his father-in-law, the
[591] well-known taboo custom between mother-in-law and son-in-law — which forbade their speaking, looking at each other, or being in the same tent — existed among the Gros Ventre. There was, however, no father-in-law taboo. The mother-in-law taboo extended to the son-in-law's brother.

584 If a woman did not wish a man for her lover, she might send him to do a
721 certain act of bravery. If he returned successfully from war, having accomplished the deed, he was then accepted. This custom is said to have led to the death of many young men.

428 At a person's death his property was inherited generally by his relatives. His father and mother, brothers, sisters, and children would receive part. His father and mother received the most. A man often disposed of his property before his death. If he died suddenly, as on being killed in war, his parents divided his property. It was not customary for a man on going to war to divide his property among his relatives in the contingency of his
[764] death. Property particularly valued by the dead person was buried with him.

[1] Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part I, pp. 9, 150.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

A wife inherited practically nothing from her husband. If she had been faithful to him and had been of a good disposition, her parents-in-law might give her a certain number of horses or other property. The tent was considered the woman's possession while she lived with her husband; but on his death, even this was no longer her property. If the tent was worth keeping at all, it generally went to the dead man's sister, if she was newly married. A man, on the contrary, inherited his wife's property, though he generally gave back part of it to her relatives. 428 562 [422]

A woman, on her husband's death, went back to live with her parents, or, if these were dead, with her brother, uncle, or other relative. An old woman, on the death of her husband, generally went to live with her children, most frequently with a daughter. 768

On the death of a brother, especially a beloved one, or of his father or his son, a man cut his hair and went out naked (with only a buffalo robe) on the prairie to cry from morning until late at night. Women, besides cutting their hair, and cutting themselves (especially on the leg) until they bled, would also go out to cry, naked from the waist up. A sister cut herself for a brother, but a mother mourning for a child underwent the most pain. Of course the mourning was greatest for an only child. In such a case, parents might give away everything in their tent and nearly all their horses, stripping themselves of property so thoroughly as almost to go naked. Some mourners fasted for a number of days. If, while a person was crying on the prairie, one should in joke attempt to scare him, he might kill the disturber. Mourners were the bravest people in war, caring about no danger whatever. 765 [304] [431]

Burial was in trees, on high rocks, or in caves inaccessible to wolves and coyotes. The corpse was wrapped in a burial robe. 764

A menstruating woman was called niniitixtj. It is said that she did not retire to a separate lodge, or eat separately from her family; but she did not approach a sick patient, because of the evil effect she would have on his condition by her presence. Some women were said to wear a breech-cloth during their menstruation. 841 [291]

In childbirth, women either lay or knelt. They grasped a stick supported in a horizontal position by two upright forked sticks set in the ground. After the umbilical cord had been severed, the end was left on the child. It was thought to fall off on the fourth day. The woman who had cut the umbilical cord received as a gift the knife she had used. A woman who washed a new-born child was given the vessel in which it was washed. The afterbirth was hung in a tree. If it were left lying to be handled, the child would be afflicted with sores. For three or four days after birth, the child was given suck by other women than its mother. This statement apparently refers chiefly to a woman's first child. 844 [846]

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

551 Names were given to children very soon after birth. Names were fre-
553 quently changed and given away. A man would receive his father's name from the latter, or would take it after his death. If a child were sickly, a relative, such as a grandfather, sometimes gave him another name. A sick person sometimes also took a new name in order to recover. Renowned warriors sometimes gave away their names to young men. They might retain the same name for themselves, or take a new one. One very aged man gave away his name to a young man, telling him, "I give you my name in order that you may have as long a life as I." This was done without the occasion or accompaniment of a ceremony.

There seems to have been no prohibition against mentioning the name of the dead, nor even any reluctance on the matter. Some people, however, were ashamed to speak their own names.

551 Twins, called niiçan, were named, if boys, respectively Kaaen and Niiça^{n}.
845 The latter name, however, was not always used, an ordinary name being given instead. Girl twins were not called by these names.

302 The hair was formerly worn in braids, as at present customary among the Plains tribes, but also erect over the forehead. The women wore their
[765] hair either in braids or sometimes loose. In mourning, the hair, especially of the women, was cut about halfway across the cheek.

304 Ear-piercing, which among the Arapaho is performed on ceremonial occasions, and is itself accompanied with ceremony and giving of presents, was said among the Gros Ventre to be unaccompanied by special ceremonial actions. A woman or any one else does the piercing.

857 Boys who were herding horses sometimes took off their clothes and daubed themselves with mud until they were unrecognizable. They painted
673 their horses, and made shields of willow. Then they came to the camp,
868 mounted or on foot, to steal meat. Approaching the camp like a war-party, they would select the best meat hanging outdoors, charge on it, take it, and run. The old men and women and children chased them with clubs, but of course without success. The boys would go back to where they were herding, and have a feast.

576 The Gros Ventre say that both hand-shaking and kissing are aboriginal with them.

GAMES.

524 A common cup-and-ball game called tsöötskuutja^{n} ("throw in") consisted of four hollow deer or antelope leg bones, each about two inches long, attached to a string passing through them, at the end of which there was a needle eight or ten inches long. This game appears to be identical with

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the Arapaho type shown in the "Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History" (Vol. XVIII, p. 397, Fig. 154). In place of the needle, grease-wood or bone was formerly used. The bones usually had small holes bored through their sides, but these, if caught on the needle, scored only one point. The bones were usually swung with the needle pointing away from the body, in such a manner, that, when they were horizontal, a sudden motion backward of the needle drew them over its point. An expert player usually caught all, or at least several, of the bones at each throw. There were usually small loops of beads at the end of the string. Each of these, when caught on the needle, scored as much as had been agreed upon. The four bones also counted variously. In one set they are marked respectively 2, 3, 4, and 5 in parallel notches; but the owner of the game was in the habit of counting them as 6, 7, 8, and 9, the one with the highest value being farthest from the needle. It seems that other values — such as 10, 20, 30, and 40 — were sometimes given the four bones, if the players wished to play rapidly. It is said by some that, whereas a single bone or loop when caught counted as many points as had been agreed upon, if two or three bones or loops were caught, they counted only two or three points instead of the sum of the scores that each was worth individually. A considerable number of sticks were used for counters, a hundred or more according as there were two or more players. As is customary in Indian games, the counters were not divided between the players to begin with, but were in a neutral pile, from which the players took as many as their score entitled them to, until the heap was divided between them. Only after this did they begin to win from each other. Usually a man swung until he had missed three times, when his opponent was handed the game. When there were four players, they formed two sides. It is said that when the original heap of counters is exhausted, the player who is then throwing must hand over the bones to his opponent, even without having missed. The game's stakes, of course, are won when one player or one side has all the counters.

The dice of the Gros Ventre differ from those of the Arapaho. The latter have both small flat dice and long stick dice. The former may have a small form of the game; but long dice are certainly the prevailing type, as all sets seen were of this kind. The Gros Ventre dice are much flatter than the Arapaho stick dice, though of about equal length, and sometimes are made of bone. Thus they form in themselves something of a transition between the two types of Arapaho dice. The Arapaho long dice are essentially split sticks. One side is convex. The flat side may have the pith removed. The Gros Ventre dice are small boards, or similarly proportioned pieces of bone, rounded or pointed at the ends, and ornamented on one side with carving. The Arapaho use two sets of four sticks; the Gros Ventre,

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

525 171 four in all, in two pairs. The Gros Ventre dice are marked with incised lines on one side only. The Arapaho burn marks on the back or convex side in order to distinguish the two sets of dice they use together. The usual Gros Ventre markings consist of diagonal crosses and zigzag lines. 525 531 A single die is usually specially marked in the middle. By this means the scoring or the playing is elaborated. The number of counters among the Gros Ventre is twelve. Sticks are used for this purpose. The methods

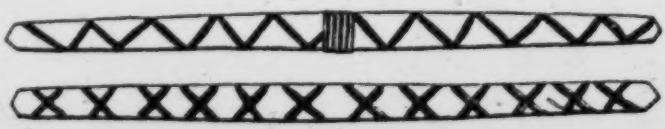


Fig. 14 (50-1768 a, b). Dice. Length, 24 cm.

of counting points are given somewhat differently by various individuals. For this reason the explanations obtained with each set of dice are here presented.

The set of dice one of each of whose pairs is shown in Fig. 14 has one die marked with a bit of string. There are twelve counters. The three unmarked sticks were thrown first. If they fell alike, the other one was thrown separately; but, if one of the first three fell differently from the other two, the marked stick was thrown at it in the hope of turning it over, so that all four sticks might rest alike. If this were the case, whether they were all face up or face down, four points were scored. If two were face up and two face down, two points were scored. If three faced one way and a single one was opposite, nothing was scored.

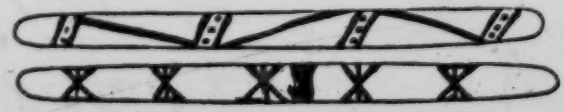


Fig. 15 (50-1812 b, d). Dice. Lengths, 20 cm., 20½ cm.

The set of dice of which the two kinds are shown in Fig. 15 is also accompanied by twelve counters. One of the sticks in this set is also marked by being tied around. This set was used somewhat differently, the four sticks being thrown together. If the marked stick fell one way, and the remainder opposite, six points were scored. If all four sticks fell alike, four were scored. If two sticks fell face up and two face down, two were scored; but three sticks one way and one the other, unless this single one happened to be the marked one, counted nothing.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The four dice shown in Fig. 16 are white on the face and green on the back. One of the plainer pair of sticks is marked on the face with a cross. If this stick fell up while the other three turned face down, six points were counted. If all the dice fell one way, the score was four points; if they fell in pairs, — two green and two banded, or two plain and two green, — two points were scored; while any other combination did not count. A player

525
531

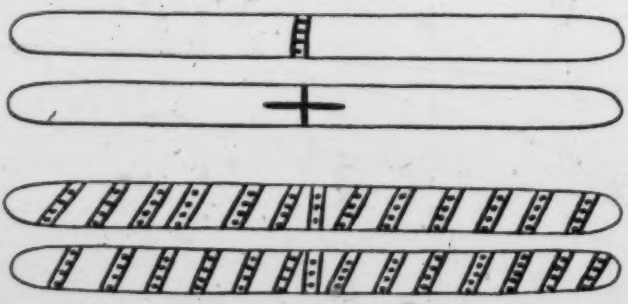


Fig. 16 (50-1869 a, b, c, d). Set of Dice. Length, 23 cm.

that scored was entitled to another throw, but should he fail, his opponent took the dice.

Fig. 17 shows a model of a fourth set of dice, made of bone instead of wood, painted red, and accompanied by twelve counters of grease-wood, pointed at one end to be stuck in the ground. The two pairs of dice are marked respectively with transverse and zigzag incised lines. One of the latter is cut with three parallel lines on the back also. The owner of this

Fig. 17 (50-1900 a, d). Dice. Length, 21 cm.

set scored as follows. Six points were won, if all the dice fell plain side up; and six, if the odd one fell plain side up and the three others marked side up. For all four marked sides up, four points were made; for one pair marked, the other plain, two points; for other combinations there was no score.

A fifth set, Fig. 18, obtained by Dr. Clark Wissler, is of bone. The ornamentation is by small pits. One of the dice with the long single row of dots is marked on the middle of the back with several small holes to set it off from the rest.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

524 A form of the widely spread guessing-game occurred among the Gros
531 Ventre. Two buttons, which were enclosed in the hand, were used. At the beginning each player held one button. One of them guessed in which hand the other held the button. If he guessed wrong, his opponent got four counters; but if he guessed right, his opponent must yield the button to him. When he held two, his opponent guessed in which hand each of them was. If his opponent guessed wrong, the player received two counters; but if his opponent was right, the player must hand over both buttons and himself guess. The game was played for twelve stick counters. These at the beginning were in a pile belonging to neither of the players. This neutral pile was drawn upon until exhausted, before either player gave counters to the other. This method of using counters was customary in Arapaho and Gros Ventre games.

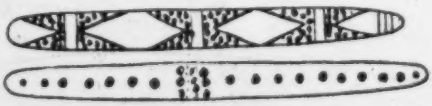


Fig. 18 (50 4325, 50–4325 a). Dice. Lengths, 15 cm., 16 cm.

[m] The buttons used in this game are different from those the Arapaho have had in recent years. They lack symbolism altogether, and are even without the red-black color-dualism obvious in the Arapaho game. The elaborate counters, food-sticks, pointers, and head-dresses of the Arapaho are also not found among the Gros Ventre. Of one pair of buttons, one was of brass beads, the other of green glass beads. They were called respectively "long" and "short." Another pair, made of bone, are illustrated in Fig. 19. A single button made of bone, apparently from a tooth-brush-handle, is shown in Fig. 20.

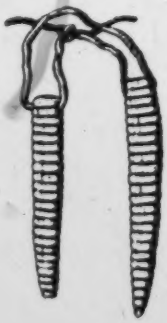


Fig. 19.

Fig. 20.

Fig. 19 (50 1931 a, b). Hiding-buttons. Length, 7 cm.
Fig. 20 (50 1917). Hiding-button. Length, 6 cm.

Boys shot arrows or threw sticks
526 at a netted hoop, apparently identical
857 with the Arapaho hoop except for nomenclature. The central mesh, called the "crow" or "crow's heart," won the game for whoever hit it. If the "crow's heart" was not pierced, a point was scored by the arrow nearest to it. An arrow passing through the netting without being held in it counted nothing. If one of the hoops rolled within reach, a player was at liberty to

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

526
857

spear and catch it on his stick, or, if it was flying through the air, he was allowed to do the same. On winning, he put the wheel on top of his head, keeping it there as long as he could. When it fell down, the others all threw their wheels at him while he cowered under his robe. The wheel was usually thrown overhand, as were the sticks.

Another game was played with bow and arrows. The bow was rested in a diagonal position or held in the hand, while an arrow was several times tapped against the string and then suddenly released so that it was thrown several feet. Another player then followed, trying to cause his arrow to be thrown so as to rest on the first. If none of the players succeeded in hitting the others' arrows, all the arrows used were put aside in a pile as stakes, and the game recommenced.

Fig. 21 (50 1859). Grass Target. Length, 23 cm.

Still another game played by boys consisted of five sticks or arrows. The smallest, a white stick, was thrown ahead, and the longer sticks were thrown after it. The stick that came nearest the short piece won as many points as agreed upon, but a stick resting on the short piece won the game. This game, like others of boys, was played for arrows.

Another game played by boys was to throw sticks at a forked stick stood up in the ground. A player whose stick rested in the fork won the other sticks played with. If all the players missed, they laid their sticks into the fork as stakes. They continued to do this after each throw, until a player, by dropping his stick into the fork, won all those that were there. The sticks were thrown from a mark in the ground made at a certain distance from the fork.

Boys played still another game by throwing sticks so as to strike the ground, bounce, and slide; the one throwing farthest winning the sticks of the others. These sticks were held at the very end, and thrown underhand. Like all sticks or arrows used in games, they were called "kanii." Sometimes longer darts were used, which were slid over the instep of the foot.

Boys also played by setting up three sticks or arrows in a row, and shooting at them. The one whose arrow rested nearest the middle upright stick won. In case of doubt, a small stick was used to measure the distance. This game seems to have been played indoors. Outdoors the shooting would be from a greater distance. Whoever came nearest to the mark then threw up and shot at a bunch of grass, exts'ta". If he hit the bunch while

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

526 it was in the air, he won. This game was played customarily for arrows as
857 stakes. Such a bunch of grass which was shot at is shown in Fig. 21. It is curved, and tapers to one end, and it is wound with sinew.

526

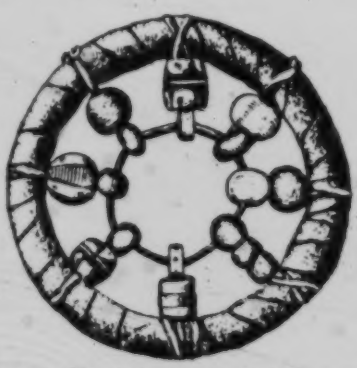


Fig. 22 (50-1954). Gaming-wheel. Diameter, 8 cm.

Adults — instead of throwing sticks, or shooting arrows at a netted hoop — rolled a small hoop in a carefully cleared and smoothed place towards a log or obstruction, while they threw at it with arrows or sticks, trying to have the hoop and the arrow in contact when at rest. The hoops were ornamented with beads or other small objects of different colors or shapes, and certain values in counters were given to each of these ornaments (Fig. 22). Usually there were two small banks or logs, one at each end of the course, a hoop being rolled alternately back and forth. It is said that, in order to score, it was necessary for some part of the hoop to rest on the point of the arrow, the shaft not counting. If several of the sets of beads on the hoop touched the arrowhead, the score was the sum of the points of the several ornaments.

Shinny was played with bent sticks and a ball by young men against girls. In driving the ball towards the goal, each player tried to keep it to himself as long as he could. The balls were stuffed with deer-hair. The goal at each end of the field was marked by a pair of monuments of stone. It is said that the young women often won from the young men.

Fig. 23 (50-1896). Women's Football. Diameter, 14 cm.

Ball was played by women or girls standing in a circle and striking the ball back and forth with the open palm until one missed it, whereupon all rushed for it. Whoever secured the ball started throwing it again. Sometimes it was thrown from one to another around a circle. When one failed to catch it, the others scattered. Picking up the ball, she pursued them with it while they looked for buffalo-chips on which to stand. There they were safe. Some, how-

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

ever, could find none to stand on, and this was what gave rise to the excitement and amusement. 526

Girls sometimes kicked a football upward, as if juggling with it. Such a football was kicked with the instep, either while free or while held by a string. Fig. 23 shows such a football about six inches in diameter. It is said to be made of the skin of an unborn buffalo-calf, and to be stuffed with fur. It is covered with an unknotted network of sinew strands.

The ordinary balls are much smaller than this one, and lack the sinew network. They are made of soft-dressed skin, and painted. In construction and appearance they are not to be distinguished from Arapaho ghost-dance balls, except that none have yet been seen with a plume on the attached thong, as is customary with the Arapaho. One, approaching the last in size, was said to have been struck with a stick, and is therefore probably a shinny-ball. It lacks a thong. The others are smaller, usually with a double thong, and are said to be stuffed with hair. [171]

Fig. 24 (50-1981). Ghost-dance Ball. Diameter, 9 cm. [531]

Specimen Museum No. 50-1729 is the thongless ball mentioned as used with a stick. It is painted red. One side has been lightly gone over with a dark paint, blue or black. In the middle of the red side is a small dark cross.

Specimen Museum No. 50-1728 is painted yellow. Along the seam where the two hemispheres are joined, it is red. On one side a hand is outlined in green; on the other side, in red. An Arapaho ball described[1] had a smaller hand painted on it, because, it is said, the hand threw the ball.

The ball one side of which is shown in Fig. 24 was said to have been made in connection with the ghost-dance. One side is primarily dark blue or green; the other, yellow. Each side has on it a central spot and a ring of the opposite color. The symbolism of this painting is not quite consistent, but recalls that of the Arapaho. On the dark side three concentric circles were distinguished, representing three successive existences of the world; the fourth was still to come. On the yellow side the central spot represented the entrance to the sky. It thus seems that the two sides of the ball represent heaven and earth, the future life and this.

[1] See Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part IV, Fig. 130.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

526 Fig. 25 shows one side of a small ball painted yellow, on which is a rude embroidery in red, yellow, and green quills, representing a bird. On the 532 opposite side is a red quilled cross. The bird-embroidery recalls the quill-ornamentation of an Arapaho ghost-dance drumstick and hand implement, both of them with stuffed heads of painted skin; also the painting of a crow on an Arapaho ghost-dance ball.[1]

526

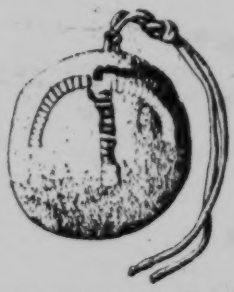


Fig. 25 (50-1731). Embroidered and Painted Ball. Diameter, 7 cm.

A game of throwing willow sticks on the ice, to see who could slide them farthest, was played by women. These sticks were sometimes tipped with buffalo-calves' horns. Young men, as well as women, sometimes threw horn-pointed sticks on the ice. It is said that women used long sticks, young men short sticks.

Children slid on the ice at a place they had made smooth. A boy and then a girl would slide alternately. When the whole party had slid one way, they would return, sliding in the opposite direction.

A toy made to slide on the ice consists of a bone to which two feathered sticks are attached at a diverging angle. It is called "tataxtsiteebyu^{n}." The object is to bounce or slide the implement over the ice as far as possible. This type of object is found among a number of Plains tribes.

Fig. 26 (50-1788). Bull-roarer. Length, 56 cm.

493 Boys' sleds for coasting on hillsides were made of 526 several buffalo-ribs held together at each end by a long 857 thong winding in and out around the two halves of a split stick. A buffalo-tail was tied behind. These sleds were called "sö^{n}w^{u}haana^{n}." When a man presented such a sled to another man's boy, he received presents from the boy's parents. In early summer, when the grass was green, toboggans of rawhide were used on the hillsides. The front was [illegible] up and bent over, and the bottom soon became [illegible] smooth.

224 Slings were used by bo[illegible] killing birds and small animals. The entire 411 sling was made of skin. [illegible] thongs were passed through holes near the 857

[1] See Bulletin of the Am[illegible]eum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part IV, p. 395, Fig. 151.

1; Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

 224 411

ends of the main portion of the sling, and then looped on themselves through a slit near one end. 857

The bull-roarer and buzzer were both well known to the Gros Ventre, but seem to be only children's toys. They were both called **nakaa"ta"** ("making cold," a name given also to the thermometer), probably from the widespread Indian idea that the bull-roarer breeds wind. The buzzer was made of a foot-bone of a buffalo, with a sinew string on each side, by which it was twirled, and then drawn so as to hum. The Arapaho type of buzzer is the same. The Gros Ventre bull-roarer seems to differ from the Arapaho form. Fig. 26 shows one of two very similar models, both of wood. The small, well-marked head, the long taper and point, and the numerous small notches, mark a distinct form. The sinew string is of about the length of the stick handle. 534 857 524 [821]

WAR.

Men generally went to war on foot, carrying food and moccasins on their backs. While on the trip they did not boil meat, but roasted it. Scouts, called "wolves," were sent out ahead. When these returned, running in a zigzag course, and shouting, it was a sign that they had seen something. If they had seen lodges, they barked like wolves. While they came, the women in the party stood in a row and sang, having made a pile of buffalo-chips. The "wolves" stopped a short distance away, and the leader of the party went to them. They came with him back to the pile of buffalo-chips, where he stopped, and, facing the party, recounted coups. After this, one of the scouts came before them and reported what he had seen. Upon this, all rushed at the pile of buffalo-chips, and kicked them about. If the enemy were near, they would now take off their heavier clothing, such as their robes, and dress and paint for war. 726 [252]

On returning to their camp victorious, the party approached stealthily, and made a charge upon it, often shooting; and sometimes the people in the tents jumped up out of their sleep in the early morning, thinking they had been attacked. The man who had killed an enemy, the one who had struck him first (whether dead or alive), and the one who had taken his gun, were held in about the same esteem. After the return to camp, a dance was made. Drums were beaten; and the women, who were standing in a curved row, danced in a circle toward the men, who stood in a row, and back again. The women carried the new scalps on sticks. If an enemy were killed near the home camp, his feet and hands might be cut off and carried on sticks, like the scalps. During this dance the man who first 727 [554] [554]

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

counted coup on the enemy filled a pipe, and held it for the rest of the party to smoke as they stood in a row. The returning war-party, if successful, always painted black, but if a member of their own party had been killed, they returned without rejoicing; unless sometimes, when the loss of the enemy had been greater than their own, and a relative of the dead was in the party, he might say, "One of the enemy pays for my relative. On account of the others, let us enjoy ourselves." Then the party would paint black, and celebrate. Wounds received by members of the war-party would not prevent celebration, unless, of course, they resulted fatally; and they were always regarded as an honor.

Some war-parties started off publicly in broad daylight, having made it known that they were going; and any one who wished joined. Sometimes, perhaps, two men would agree to go, and invited such others to accompany them as they wished. Women not infrequently went with the war-parties. If a man was killed in war, his relatives, especially his parents, mourned for him. His father might go to the tent of a renowned warrior, and cry until this man became angry and announced a day for a party to start out to obtain revenge. On the day set, the party left publicly, usually on horseback.

A man's supernatural war paraphernalia are shown in Figs. 27, 28, and 29. They were obtained from a middle-aged man who had them from his grandfather, who first dreamed of the magpie and the other animals connected with the paraphernalia, and made the objects. A cylindrical raw-hide case (Fig. 27), such as is found used for holding feathers and medicine among most Plains tribes, is painted with a yellow, green, and blue design resembling parfleche designs. These colors represent the various colors of the birds that were dreamed of by the original owner, and whose feathers are kept in the case. The case is called the "house" of these objects. A wing-bone is attached to the outside of the case to make another whistle from in case of loss of the finished whistle included in the outfit. A small bag containing a necklace is kept in the case. The bag (Fig. 28, *a*) is ornamented with bead-work representing a frog (kaka"). This frog was part of the original owner's dream. The necklace (Fig. 28, *b*) has various wasóo ("medicine-roots") on it. These are said to be neither eaten nor otherwise used, except as they are worn on the necklace. The bone whistle (Fig. 28, *c*) alluded to is attached to a necklace of otter-skin. It is blown during the fighting to prevent injury. A magpie's skin (Fig. 28, *d*) and the skin of a smaller bird (Fig. 29, *a*) are also contained in the case. The white magpie-feathers are dyed yellow. The two skins are worn at the back of the head, and prevent the wearer being injured even in a hand-to-hand fight. A head-dress of ten magpie-feathers and of a white plume on red-painted

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

237
726
293
778
751

thongs, tied together at the ends with a medicine-bag, and four brass bells (Fig. 29, *b*), is tied to the hair over the front of the head. When the warriors sing before dressing for battle, this head-dress is also used as a rattle. The medicine attached to it is chewed, and rubbed over the owner's body, as well

[531]

Fig. 27. (50-1952 a) Medicine-case for War Paraphernalia. Length, 40 cm.

as over his horse's, after he has painted himself. Two plumes of eagle-down (Fig. 29, *c*) are tied to the horse. One is tied to its fore-leg, the other to its tail. Then it will not be shot, and, if it falls, will not be hurt. In case of flight and pursuit, a little medicine that is attached to these plumes in a small

[text continues on p. 195]

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

293
726
778
[532]

Fig. 28 (50-1952 b, c, d, e). War Paraphernalia. Lengths, 15 cm., 9 cm., 45 cm., 40 cm.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

bag is given to the horse to prevent its becoming exhausted. A cloth to wrap the various feathers and the whistle completes the outfit.

A warrior's outfit that was obtained for the Museum (specimen Museum No. 50–1862 a–c) consists of a beaded knife-scabbard, carried because the owner has cut loose horses that were tied by a rope leading into a tent; of a man's awl-case, carried presumably for mending moccasins and for

[237]

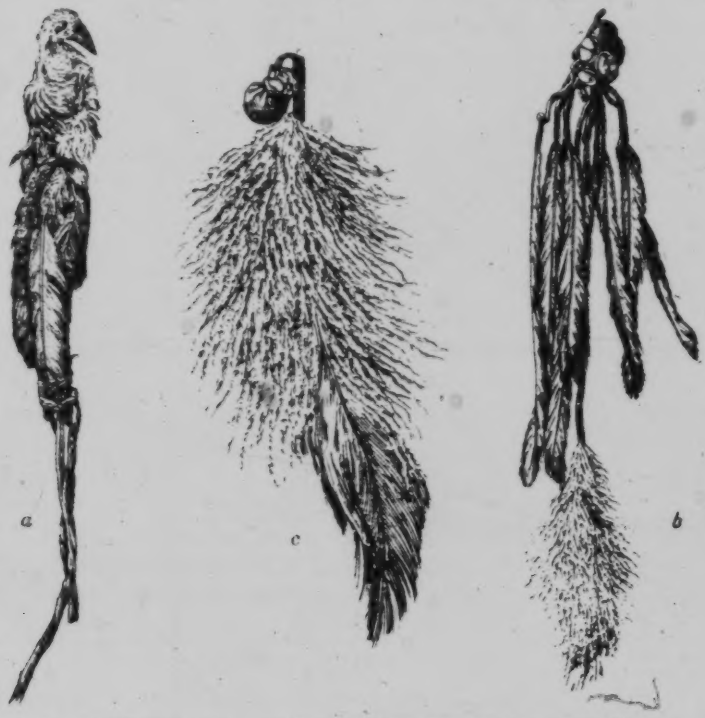


Fig. 29 (50–1952, f, g, h). War Paraphernalia. Lengths, 32 cm., 20 cm., 20 cm.

similar purposes; and of a piece of a scalp ornamented with beads, and worn attached to the shoulder of his shirt. The scabbard is ornamented with rectangular U-shaped bead-work designs similar to those in Fig. 3, and representing horse-tracks.

[787] Sometimes in dreaming, a man saw a person in battle wearing the skin of a certain animal, and fighting very successfully. He would then wear the skin of that animal. Specimen Museum No. 50–1901 is a weasel-skin

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

293 used in this way. The owner twice dreamed of a weasel, which told him to
726 use its skin. Thereupon he first wore a weasel-skin in dances, and later
751 carried it to war. Subsequently he lent it to his son and to other men who
778 went to war, and they always returned successfully.

A man to whom a fisher had appeared in a dream or vision used a fish-
[787] skin medicine-bag, and on going to war carried this with him.

A renowned warrior, dead for some time, received his personal medicine from the bears, and was forbidden to scalp, count coup on the enemy, or take away a gun. He could only kill. He once killed two Sioux with one shot, at a place which received its name from the event.

A simple riding-whip (specimen Museum No. 50-1821) has on its wooden
[492] handle four red marks, each of which is said to represent an enemy struck in the face with a whip in battle.

Representations, used in the modern "war-dance," of the weapons of
532 Black-Wolf, a well-known Gros Ventre warrior, part of whose experiences
726 in war are told below, consist of a shield and spear. The shield, which is made of painted white cloth, represents the shield carried by him on an occasion when he rushed to battle with no other weapon. The shield is decorated with a blue crescent along the lower edge, representing the sun, and bordered by a wavy red line denoting lightning. The wooden spear and spear-point
[822] represent a spear with which the owner stabbed a Piegan in battle. The spear-point is painted blue and red; the blue representing iron, the red blood. Red marks on the handle of the spear represent coups.

A pair of beaded and painted moccasins executed by a woman, but
[292] designed by an old man, symbolize his exploits in war. An outside rim of beading represents the enemy's camp-circle. In the middle of the camp-circle is beaded the figure of a tent belonging to a chief. To this tent was tied a horse, which the wearer of the moccasins cut loose. This feat is represented by an outline painting of a horse and halter. Three U-shaped figures, also painted, are horse-tracks, and represent the capture of horses. On the other moccasin there are again three such figures in a row, which here were said to indicate a charge on horseback on the camp; while two other such figures, facing each other, indicate a face-to-face fight.

Curtains hanging behind the bed in front of the tent-wall were sometimes painted to illustrate the owner's achievements in war.

WAR-EXPERIENCES OF INDIVIDUALS.

114 The following narratives give an entirely personal account of the war-
115 experiences of three individuals, two of them men of about sixty years of

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

age, and the third a woman probably a little older. They are not in any 114
sense historical, but were obtained for the picture they give of the war-life 115
of the Plains Indians. Both the men were renowned warriors. Bull-Robe, the older, has since died. In the case of neither was a complete account of all their achievements in war obtained; but both narratives probably refer to every war party or engagement in which they took part down to the point at which the narratives are broken off. All three narratives bear the stamp of naïve truthfulness; which, in view of the importance played in the life of the Plains tribes by the telling of war-exploits and the recounting of coups, is not surprising. It must be remembered that the narrators were not asked to describe the engagements and expeditions in which they were involved, but to narrate their personal share in them. This will account for the frequency with which an insignificant personal experience is told in detail and the general result of a war-party slurred over or ignored. The story told by the woman Watches-All has reference to the great disastrous expedition against the Piegans in 1867.

Black-Wolf's Narrative.

When I was a boy I heard about great deeds in war, and resolved to 159
follow in the tracks of such men. When I was a young man I started out 726
alone. I travelled, and reached the camp of another band of Gros Ventre on the Missouri. I ate there and went on to the Bear Paw Mountains. There I slept at the foot of Eagle Butte. I started again before sunrise and crossed the mountains, following Beaver Creek to the end of the mountains. I saw buffalo, and shot at them. Some one else was hunting these buffalo, and heard the shot. After shooting, I had left my horse tied at the foot of the butte, which I climbed in order to look over the country. Then I saw some one below me coming up the butte. A moment later he saw me. I raised my gun, but he dodged and ran off. Thinking he was one of a party, I ran off also, reached my horse, and rode into the timber. When I could hear and see no one, I rode to where there was a trading-post on Milk River. At night all the horses there ran off into the timber. In the morning an Assiniboine was about to go to get them, when I told him that I would go after them, and started with my gun and a rope. Then I saw what looked like a flock of blackbirds flying over a hill. Soon I saw they were people. At first I had seen only their heads. They were coming over the hill towards me, but on one side, in order to ambush me. Suddenly they were riding at me. At first I was as if dazzled, and it looked like a fog to me. Then I recovered my senses. I was some distance from the post. I did not run, but waited for them. Two of them with long whips were in the lead. I

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

159
726

stood there until they had gone by me. Then I ran. One of them shot at me, and I turned and took a shot at the leaders. Then I ran on again and they pursued me, and soon the entire party was all about me, all of them shooting. Bullets struck the ground all about me, and there was no noise but that of shooting. But I was never even scratched. Suddenly the attacking party split. A white man was running fr..a the store with a gun to help me. I ran to him, and reached him almost exhausted. He took my hand and we ran back to the house. The enemy, however, captured all our horses, including those of the trader.

My father had sent word to the trader to keep me there if I should come, so I staid there some time; but I did not return to the camp. One day I had gone out to hobble my horse. Then the same party that had attacked me before came again. They crept up to the house, charged on it, and looked for me everywhere. An Indian woman who was there ran out on the prairie and motioned to me to go away. I cut the hobbles of my horse, jumped on it, and rode away. Looking back, I saw the party of the enemy at the house. I dismounted and lay down on the ground to hide. The woman came to me and told me that they were a party of Yanktons and other Sioux, looking for me; but by this time I knew it without being told. The Sioux looked for me all through the trader's cellar, but I was in the timber in a sort of breastwork I had dug. This was the second time I escaped from this party. Some of them said that they were trying to get the Assiniboine that was there, and some the Gros Ventre, myself. After their first failure to kill me, they had determined to come back; but I escaped them the second time also.

We were camped north of Milk River. A party of us went to where the agency then was on Milk River, and slept there. We were getting ready to start, and I was sent by the leader to saddle my horse and go ahead while they ate. A little boy was crying to go outdoors, and I opened the door for him, when I saw a Sioux a short distance outside. I shut the door and ran back to my companions in the next room. We went out with our guns, but the Sioux was gone. We watched the way he went, and saw him going over a hill westward. Then a band began to come in sight, more and more of them. They were a large party, mostly on foot. Seven or eight were mounted. There were only eight of us. It was a very windy day. The agent commanded us not to shoot, threatening to shoot us if we began fighting, and ordered us to wait until we were shot at. We went up on top of a house to watch. A man put tobacco into a blanket to take to the Sioux, and he had just got out of the door when a dog barked at the Sioux, and they shot. Then the firing began. Those of us who were on the roof sheltered ourselves behind chimneys. Two women were with us. As they hurried

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

down the ladder below, the wind blew their dresses over their heads. When the man with the tobacco was shot at, he jumped back into the house, spilling his tobacco. We were shooting at them, and the whites also were shooting. The Sioux began to retire. Then I thought I would do a brave deed. I went out into the open space before the house, wearing a conspicuous red robe and black trousers. There I jumped about while they shot at me without hitting me. Then I went back behind the house again. Soon the Gros Ventre mounted their horses and attacked the Sioux, and kept driving them before them until they drove them into the timber at the river. One of our horses was killed, and one man was creased in the leg. There were very many of them, but only eight of us. 159 726

A small Gros Ventre camp of four tents had been living with the Crow. We were on our way back to the Gros Ventre, when at night a party of Sioux stole our horses. A company of soldiers was camped near us. In the morning, when we went out for our horses, we could not find them. One of our men saw the Sioux preparing to shoot a buffalo, but he acted as if he did not see them. When the Sioux saw him, they crouched down and hid. He looked over the country with his telescope in directions other than the one they were in. Then after a while he looked at them and counted seven of them. He had miscounted, for there were eight. Then he mounted his horse and rode slowly in another direction, but when he was behind the hill he hastened back to the camp. Two of us Gros Ventre knew English, and told the soldiers of the presence of the Sioux. The soldiers started after them. A mule followed them, and when he saw the soldiers' horses, which the Sioux were keeping hobbled in a gully, he ran to join them, so that the Sioux got possession of the mule also in broad daylight. I had gone to the hill where the Gros Ventre had first seen the Sioux, and was looking for them. From there I went on to the next hill, still looking for them. Another Gros Ventre came to me and said that the soldiers wanted us to go to the next butte beyond, which was across a flat, deep gully strewn with large bowlders. A third Gros Ventre was below us and started to join us. The Sioux were behind these bowlders, and this man below us was almost among them without knowing it. Seeing them raising their heads, he shot. Then, jumping off his horse, he ran; but the Sioux shot him through both thighs. He fell, but sat up again, whereupon they shot him through the head. He was the brother of my companion and of my wife. His brother began to cry, and started to revenge him on the Sioux. Not knowing where to cross the stream before us, we jumped into it anywhere, on our horses. The stream happened not to be deep, and we crossed it safely. Then the Sioux began to shoot. My brother-in-law jumped off his horse, but I turned mine until I was out of their sight. My brother-in-law remained there fighting the

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

159
726

Sioux, while I rode around behind them towards the butte for which they were heading. There I tied my horse and then went up to watch them. Seeing them coming, I withdrew from sight, thinking they would soon stop to fight my brother-in-law, who was still pursuing them. When I thought it probable that they had stopped, I looked out again, and saw that they had indeed made a halt, and had their backs toward me. I had my two sticks for a gun-rest all ready, and raising my gun I shot. I hit one of them in the back and he fell over. He slid down the hill on his hands until he stopped, while the others shot at me, but missed. Then the soldiers approached, coming at a walk. I thought it ridiculous to go to war in that fashion. The wounded Sioux began to shoot at them. That was what they wanted, for they did not want to open hostilities; and they all dismounted and began to shoot back at him. About the last shot of the company knocked him over. Then three of us Gros Ventre made a rush to him. The two others reached him first. One of them took his gun. Another struck him, and I was the second to strike him. He was a fine-looking Sioux, with black blanket, and leggings of black flannel, with long hair tied with otter-skin, brass beads around his neck, and a beaded bag. His gun was a Sharp's rifle. We now missed one of our own men, not knowing that he had meanwhile followed the seven remaining Sioux, and headed them off. He drove them back to the high-banked gully from which they had come, and from which now they could not well come out. Now this man motioned to us to come. The soldiers said, "Let them be. They killed one of you, and you killed one of them to even matters up." But we Gros Ventre wanted more, and persuaded the soldiers to go with us. I went close up to where the Sioux were. The soldiers began to lie down and shoot into the air. They were afraid. A sergeant came up as near the Sioux as I was, but on the other side of them. Just as he was going to shoot, a Sioux shot struck close by his head. He shook his head, cursed, and took aim again. Another shot knocked off his cap. Then he ran to where I was, and I laughed at him. Now the body of the soldiers came up, shooting as they went along, so that the Sioux could not even venture to raise their heads to look. One of the Sioux was in advance of the rest, protecting them. He had two guns. I stood up to look for this man, and he raised his gun behind a sage-bush. I jumped aside, so that he lost his aim and did not shoot. Then I got behind something else and looked for him again. This time I saw the Sioux aiming at the place where I had been last. I aimed at him; he saw me and pointed his gun at me, but I shot him through the head. Then I started to go to the other side, but, as the soldiers were now coming up in formation, I went back in order to get the two guns of the man I had killed; but another Gros Ventre had already taken them both. Thereupon I went up on the bank

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

overlooking the ravine, and looking down saw a Sioux crawling. The Sioux looked back and saw my head above the bank. He lay on his belly and attempted no resistance. Perhaps he was frightened to death. I shot him, went to him, struck him, and took his gun. Then I came to where two Sioux were lying, one on top of the other. By this time all the Sioux had been killed. I had killed three of them. One Gros Ventre jumped down into the ravine to reach the Sioux, while the soldiers were still shooting, and a ball went through his foot from the root of his little toe to his big toe. Then we scalped and despoiled the Sioux. The soldiers standing by would ask us for scalps, and we would toss them bits. We got much spoil, and all of us rode back home with scalps on our bridles. We came back to our camp, and the dead Gros Ventre was buried with a military funeral by the soldiers. The soldiers cooked a great feast for us, but we, being in mourning, would not eat. The soldiers started to go back to their post, and wanted us to go with them. We set out with them, but the wounded man became so ill that we had to return. Perhaps, if we had gone on with the soldiers, we should have been treated to a good time by them. We had distinguished ourselves on that day, and I had done brave deeds. The wounded man's leg swelled to the hip, and he died.

We were camped with the Crow. Then a man told me to go with him the next morning to cut up a buffalo that he had killed. In the morning we went out while it was still dark. We passed a Crow who was herding horses, and crying in mourning. We had gone only a little distance beyond him when we heard shots, and the Crow stopped crying. Five Sioux charged on him; but he ran among the horses and escaped, while the Sioux drove off the horses. The Crow had other horses tied about their tents, and now came out. My companion and I came across two Sioux who had been left by the five who had attacked the mourner. All together there had been seven in the party. We heard these two men talking Sioux. They took us for some of their own party, and came up to us. Then they shook hands with us. We could see the flashing of the guns where the Crow were fighting the other five Sioux. Then some Crow came out to us. A Sioux who was living among the Crow also came, one of the two men we had found being his relative. He took his relative's horse by the bridle and brought him to his own tent. The other Sioux, who wore a war-bonnet, was kept by the Crow from following his companion. The Crow pursued the five other Sioux, and killed four; but one of them was mounted on a swift horse, and escaped. The Crow with us held the one Sioux's horse until a large crowd had come up. There was a Crow one of whose relatives had been killed by the Sioux, and who was determined on revenge; and he killed the Sioux who was among us. One of them took away his war-bonnet while

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

159
726

he was still alive, and another his six-shooter. Thus five of the seven had been killed. The Sioux who had been brought into his relative's tent sat with his gun leaning against his breast and a large knife in front of him. They tried to take his gun away from him, but he would not allow it. A great crowd was in the tent and around him. At last a chief came, and cried out, "You have had a long time to kill this man and have not killed him. Now go away from the tent, and let him go." Then the Sioux who lived among the Crow took this man, and accompanied him out of the camp for some distance on his way, after which he returned. Then we rejoiced over our victory. I received credit for having shaken hands with the two Sioux before a crowd had come up and surrounded us.

The Crow, Assiniboine, and Gros Ventre were all camped together. Some men were off from the camp hunting buffalo, when a Piegan war-party attacked them. The hunters fled to the camp, and the Piegan threw up breastworks by digging holes in the ground in a large flat. A large crowd of people was there fighting them, each man trying to outdo the others so as to receive the most honor. Then I determined to be as brave as I could, so that the two other tribes would think highly of me. When I came to the place and saw where the Piegan were, I rode right on without stopping my horse. The Piegan were in their holes, and I rode between two of them, so that I was exposed to the firing of those on both sides, as well as to the shooting of my own people. Then I jumped from my horse. I saw a number of brave young men from our tribe come toward the holes, jumping from side to side so as not to be hit. When they were near, the Piegan opened fire on them, and an Assiniboine was hit, being shot through both hips. I heard another shot, and at the very moment saw a horse fall with its neck broken. I saw another man riding in front of the enemy, and heard a shot; and this man fell, shot through both his forearms. He was a chief. Another man was shot in the belly; the ball went in and came out just under the skin. Then we all made a charge on the holes from all sides. There were three holes altogether. In two of them were two men each; the other contained a great many. I charged against one of the holes, and found two men lying in this with their heads against the breastwork. I stabbed one of them in the neck with my spear. The spear struck bone, and stuck fast. I tried to pull it out, and the man backed away from the spear across the hole to the other side, when the spear came out. Then the other Piegan jumped out of the hole with a long double-edged knife, but without a gun. Every one ran off, except myself. I backed away a little. Then the Piegan called to me to come on, and ran out to me. I advanced, holding my spear out. The Piegan ran straight on to this, piercing his breast about at the base of the sternum. Then he backed off, pulling the knife out of

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

my hand. For a while it stuck in him, the end bobbing up and down; then it dropped on the ground and I picked it up again. The Piegan fled. I did not pursue him, but ran to the hole where he and his companion had been. The Piegan I had stabbed first was lying on his face with a gun in his arms. Dashing over him at a run, I caught the gun-barrel, and, without stopping, ran on, turned, and ran back. This was one of my earliest deeds of distinction in war, and was highly thought of. Such a deed was what I had been wishing to do ever since I had been old enough to go to war, and now I had done it. When a dance was held afterwards, the people could be heard calling out my name. All the Piegan, twenty in number, were killed. Later on, three more were found and also killed; so that the whole party was exterminated, only one of them escaping. At the time we did not know it; but he reached the Piegan, and informed them of the fate of the party, so that they came against us to obtain revenge. Our tribes were moving and had just made camp. An Assiniboine left it to hunt buffalo. The Piegan war-party came across him, killed him, and secured his horses. No one knew that the Assiniboine had been killed, and no pursuit of the attackers was undertaken. The Piegan then went on a high ridge and threw reflections from a mirror on the camp, as a challenge. When this was seen, everybody mounted and dashed off towards the enemy in haste. I took nothing with me but my shield. The Piegan were found on the other side of a ravine. A Piegan was killed; but the others escaped with his body. All that we secured was his rifle, which he dropped when he was shot. For a long distance we pursued the Piegan; but finally they swung us back, and drove us just as hard as the horses could run. At last we stopped running, and fought. One Gros Ventre was killed, and another was shot through the hand, the bullet striking the sternum and being stopped. That was all that happened in this fight. It was considered something of a distinction to carry a shield in battle; a man with a shield being more shot at than others, because he was more conspicuous, and because shields were always desired for capture. I also rode a pinto horse, which made me more conspicuous.

Once we were challenged by the Sioux. The Sioux sent word by the Assiniboine that they would come and exterminate our camp. We were only one band, a small part of the tribe. We made our camp near a black butte, above where Havre now is. The Sioux camped at Three Buttes on this reservation. At this time we already had many rifles. When we received the challenge, we went to the trading-post and bought large quantities of ammunition and new guns, until we were fully prepared. A few nights later the enemy came. It was dark, so that we knew nothing of their approach. A young man was off from the camp crying. It was early in the

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

159
726

morning, and still dark. The Sioux tried to approach him, but he saw them and ran back. The camp was within the semicircle of a high bluff; but the bluff was not very steep. On top of the bluff we had been making intrenchments. It was now about daybreak. My family had already started a fire. I was lying on my side, when I heard a strange noise, like wind but different. It was the enemy coming, and the sound of their approach travelled through the air from above and into the lodges. An old woman came into our tent to get fire. She took coals and went out. She had gone only a few steps when I heard a shot. I jumped up, and there was a war-yell. I started out with my gun, but my father told me to lie down: so I lay until the shooting was over. On all sides I could hear horses falling; some being shot, and some trying to escape and being thrown when they reached the end of their ropes. When the first volley of shooting was over, I jumped up, and ran up the bluff to the edge and looked over. A solid mass of Sioux was there. A solid flame extended all along the edge of the semicircular bluff, so many were shooting. All the horses in the camp were exceedingly wild, but finally we all mounted. Then we charged the enemy and drove them. Most of our horses that had broken loose ran in the direction of the enemy, so that they captured many of them. Some of the Sioux were on foot. On their right, one man was running somewhat behind the rest. I pursued him, shot, and killed him. Then I ran toward him. The enemy turned and fired at me; but without stopping I jumped on my horse, ran to the dead man, struck him with my whip, and took his gun and his powder-horn. The Sioux shot at me in vain. So many shot, that it looked as if they were throwing quantities of fire at me; for it was yet not quite light. Soon it was broad daylight and the fight went on, but the Sioux retreated fighting. Two Gros Ventre were wounded. A girl had been wounded in the camp while lying asleep. The bullet entered her knee and travelled up the thigh. On this occasion, also, I earned distinction. There were more Sioux than Gros Ventre; but they fled. Some in their flight threw away their clothing, and returned home naked. A woman who was with them threw away her dress, and reached her camp naked. Some of the Gros Ventre families did not have a single horse left, as the Sioux had captured the stampeded horses. This was about 1875.

Bull-Robe's Narrative.

I was a young man when I went on my first war-trip. We started out from the Little Rocky Mountains, crossed the Missouri, and went to where the Yellowstone comes out of the mountains. There we came on a Crow camp. We made preparations, and at night stole eighty horses. I myself

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

took five. Going back to where our party had camped last, we found a Blackfoot war-party. We went on by them, and the Blackfeet went against the Crow. After sleeping a little, we went on for the remainder of the night and all next day. We ate at the Mussel-shell, and continued running our horses until we reached the Little Rockies. One of our party took two shields hanging on poles at the back of a tent, and one of us cut loose a horse which was tied by a rope passing into the door of a tent. After I returned I was at the camp for some time. Then I started out again. The same night that we had left we were overtaken by another party from our camp, who told us that a camp of Flatheads were in the vicinity. At that time the Piegan were with the Gros Ventre. A number of Gros Ventre and Piegan had already gone to the Flatheads and established peace with them, and were now among them. Accordingly, when we came to a Flathead who was herding horses, he made no attempt to escape. We did not understand this, but went up to him as if without intention to hurt him, and then one of our party, drawing a revolver, shot him through the breast. Then we immediately stampeded his horses. The Gros Ventre and Piegan who were visiting the Flatheads still had their horses saddled, and, joining the Flatheads, pursued us. We took refuge in the timber, and the pursuers set it on fire. It was very hot in the smoke and fire, with the tied horses bucking and trying to break loose. Then one of the Piegan with the Flatheads called to us who we were. Answering in Gros Ventre, one of us asked them if the people there were Gros Ventre, and they said, "Yes." Then they called us to come out of the timber, and we came and went to the Flathead camp all together. We passed by the man who had been shot, who was lying wounded, not yet dead. I had not yet dismounted, riding a horse that belonged to another man, and was afraid they would try to take my horse. My party soon left, and hardly were we gone when the Flatheads began to attack the friendly party of Gros Ventre, and drove them out of the camp. These people were of another band from ourselves, which was the reason that we did not know of their being with the Piegan. When the Flatheads attacked them, we all ran, and I was the first to return to camp, so that I know nothing that happened further.

After some time a war-party started again. There were four of us. Near the mountains we saw a Crow camp. We stole horses. I took two. We wanted more horses; so, turning those we had captured loose where they would not be seen, we went up into the mountains, and camped there that day. At night we went down to the Crow camp again. This time I stole five horses, and each of the others two. Then we returned with our horses to the camp of our people. But we did not sleep even one night there. We returned the very day we came, with another party starting out against

I: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

159
726

the Crow. This time I took three horses. One of our party took a shield, and three each cut loose a horse from a tent. When we returned, we found that our people had moved to Teton, where we finally overtook them with our captured horses.

I started on another trip. Following the Missouri down, we saw the buffalo leaving the river on both sides, showing that some one was coming. We sent out four men to scout, and waited until they came back. They said that whites were coming up the river, dragging a boat. We went to their camp at the mouth of a creek, and were treated well, being given ammunition and tobacco. A Gros Ventre woman captured by the Crow was with the whites on her way back to the Gros Ventre. From her we learned where the Crow were. Some of our party went back up the stream with the whites, but the rest of us crossed the river and went on. We came to where there was a small creek and a high rocky cliff. We stopped there and ate, and rested at night. We were smoking, when one of us said, "A herd of buffalo is coming. I will go and kill one." Another of us said, "First see what it is." He looked, and saw that it was a large party of Crow. We withdrew into the shade of the cliff. The Crow came extremely near, and sat down. They had seen our tracks, and said very little, and that in whispers. One of us said, "I think that it is the Piegan;" for we knew that a party of Piegan were in the neighborhood. Two of the horses of the Crow came so near us that we could have picked up their ropes. Then two men came up to their horses, and, feeling around in the little creek with their whip-handles for water, stooped to drink. One of our men said in Piegan, "Friends." The Crow jumped, ran, and their horses stampeded; we yelled, shot, and pursued, wounding one man. It was bright moonlight; but in the shadow of the cliff we had been invisible to the Crow. Soon the Crow turned and charged us, driving us before them. Then we turned, and drove them; and so on, back and forth. Whenever we got under the cliff and gave our war-yell, the echo strengthened it, and we frightened the Crow back; but the Crow would not leave us, so that we had to put up breastworks to defend ourselves. We fought all night, and at daybreak the Crow left us. Seeing a rocky butte, we said, "We will go up there. This is a bad place. Day is coming on, and if they charge us again, they might kill us." So we went up on the butte, taking with us a number of articles we had captured when the Crow ran the first time. Then we called to the Crow to come on; but they were leaving and went off. So we took charcoal, and made paint of it to put on our faces, and began to dance as a trial; but one of us said, "This does not satisfy me. I am going on." Then the rest of us all decided to go on too. We left what we had captured, taking only the best pieces. We went on to where we had been

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

159
726

told the Crow were, and found them there. But first we met a party of Gros Ventre and Piegan. They were coming away from the Crow, but now went back with us against them. At night three of us, including myself, tried to get away their horses from two men who were herding, while the rest of the party went into the camp. They captured many horses there; but we three got none, because the herders were watching too closely. Now it was nearly daylight and the rest of our party had gone, and the Crow had discovered the theft. Then we three knew that we could not escape with the rest of the party, for we were unmounted. So we went into the timber not very far from the Crow camp, and hid. During the day a Crow came near us with a large bunch of horses to water them. We said to each other, "When he has watered them, let us each catch a horse, and flee into the mountains." The Crow went back, leaving his horses, and we each took one, — I, a white one; one of the other men, a painted one; and the third, a mouse-colored one. Then we escaped into the mountains without having been seen. We came across another bunch of horses and started to drive them off. Two were hobbled, and I dismounted to cut them loose. A Crow came out of the timber and shouted. He had a gun, but was too frightened to shoot. Thinking there might be others, I jumped on my horse, and we all rode off back on the mountain, leaving the horses we had just found. From the mountain we could see how, when the Crow came to the camp, there was a stir all over it. That night we stole eleven horses. We killed a buffalo, ate, and then went back, with these eleven horses and the three we were riding, to our camp in the mountain. At night we went to get more. Crossing the river, we came to a herd of twenty-three horses, and began to drive them off. Then one of us said, "Something comes up in my mouth that tastes like blood." He had a hemorrhage. Then we ran our horses all night and all the next day, for we were riding good animals. Coming to buffalo, we killed one, and ate. Then we saw the buffalo coming towards us. Watching, we saw that Crow were coming in pursuit of us. They were perhaps a mile away. We fled, and the Crow pursued. Once they would gain, and then we. If we had not had good horses, we should have been killed. Turning suddenly, we went up into a mountain, so that the Crow lost our track. All the next day, however, we fled, and at night came across a camp where a Gros Ventre and a Piegan, on the war-path, were snoring. We waked them, told them that the Crow were pursuing us, and all five of us fled. We fled during the next day. Then we stopped running. These two men had captured a number of horses, so that we had sixty-two in all. I myself had two; my two companions, one each. When we returned, we did not go out for a time. It was now winter.

Then a party started and I went with them. We met five Gros Ventre

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

159
726

who were bringing ninety horses they had taken from the Crow. From them we learned their location. After about ten days, the Chinook blew, so that the snow was all gone. As we were travelling, we heard a shot in the air above, and said that it must have been Above-Nix'a^{n}t. Some of the five men we had met were going with us. When we came near the Crow camp, we saw the Crow coming out for buffalo, so we returned to our last camp. At night we came again, and took one hundred and eighty-seven horses. I took six fast ones. Then some of our party took this herd home; but I and some others staid there, not yet having had enough. We stole thirty horses, and, sending these back by some of the party, staid to get more. The next time we took forty-one, which we also sent back. The next time we got nine. These we sent back too, and then took seven more. Then we took successively eleven and twelve, and nine more,—all from the same camp. After this we went there four times, but could get no more. Then we came the thirteenth time, and stole ninety. All this was in one trip. Then the Crow found us out, and we had to flee.

I went on another trip against the same band of Crow. A horse stood with his rope leading into a tent. I do not know whether it was tied inside, or held by some one. I cut it loose, jumped on it, and rode off. That was all I took on that trip.

I started out again in autumn. We fought with the Crow, and a Gros Ventre was wounded, being shot through both hips. Nothing else came of that fight.

Then I went out again, and this time stole three horses.

I started out again, and while we were travelling we saw an elk. I went to head it off, but as I could not shoot it I went back. Returning, I could not find my party. It was a large flat, and, hearing shots, I thought my party were shooting elk, when a party of Snakes on horses came towards me. I fled, but being on foot they soon caught up with me and surrounded me. They all shot, and I do not know how it is that they did not hit me. I was numb, and did not think of my gun. Coming to my senses, I seized my gun, and raising it drove them all about. Then I ran to the timber, and, jumping into the brush, stopped short. A Snake with a tomahawk and shield was pursuing me. He saw me as I was raising my gun, and held up his shield before him. I lowered my gun, aimed at his belly, shot, and hit him. Then I ran without stopping, and escaped. Thirteen in our party were killed by the Snakes; but I, though I was alone, escaped. Most of those in our party who were not killed were children, young boys who had gone along.

Again I went out. We were all mounted. Crossing the Yellowstone, we came to the Crow, and about noon charged on the horses that were near

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

159
726

the camp. The Crow began to shoot, and our party turned; but I continued riding straight on between the Crow camp and the herd of horses, paying no attention to the shots, and succeeded in driving off the entire herd. I had thirteen shots in my shirt, and seven of the eagle-feathers on my shield were cut off by bullets, and my horse was shot through the neck. I was wounded, being creased on the hip. When our party saw me riding on, two of them followed me. One of these was shot in the belly so that his intestines hung out; the other was shot in the arm. So three of our party were wounded, but I only slightly.

I started out again. We were all on horseback. Just north of where the Yellowstone comes into the Missouri, the Crow were about to camp. We killed three, and then went into the timber. The Crow came and made a charge on us, and we fled. So far, I had only led my best horse, but now I rode him. The entire Crow camp pursued us. We also were a large party. As we fled, two of our men on slow horses called to me to come and protect them, for they would be killed. Becoming angry, I turned and rode straight at the Crow. Turning them, I rode among them, scattering them on all sides. The noise of the guns was one continuous roar. I had only a sword with which I slashed and cut. Then I rode back, and the Crow followed me. Two or three times I turned them back. Then a Crow dismounted, aimed, and shot as I swerved my horse. The horse was shot in the ribs. By this time those Gros Ventre who had been the first to flee, had selected a good place to fight, and had thrown up breastworks. Then I went out ahead of the others on foot. The Gros Ventre shot a Crow, and I ran forward and took his gun. I was jumping about constantly, so much did they shoot at me. The Crow charged me, but were not brave enough to drive me back. Two of our men came to me, and we stood below a little ridge. The Crow women shouted, and some of them cried for the dead; but it did them no good. About sunset they stopped fighting, and retreated. Then we got up, put the scalps on a pole, and danced, taunting the Crow. All the Crow women and some of the men cried. At night we started back, and, as we were travelling, two men of the party secretly left us, and went back to steal horses. We waited for them. One of them came back bringing horses, and after a while we saw the other also coming along the edge of the river. He had succeeded in stealing a robe and a shield.

I went out again with a mounted party. Two men went ahead to scout. They went in the wrong direction, and finally saw an Assiniboine camp behind us, not far from where we were camped. Then we turned our attention to it. Two Assiniboine came out from the camp for buffalo, and, looking over the hill, saw us and returned. We now went so near the camp

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

that we could see the children playing. Then I said to the man in the party that had the swiftest horse, "Lend me your horse, and I will charge on the camp and carry off one of the children." So he gave me his horse; but the others in the party said to him, "You ought not to give it to him. He is crazy and will do anything, and will surely be killed." So the man took his horse away from me again. Then we lay in a gully, waiting for an opportunity. Seeing two horses coming from the tents, we made a charge, and captured them. The Assiniboine did not offer to fight. Ours was a large party, and they were afraid. So we captured these two horses in broad daylight. And that was all that happened on that trip.

The Gros Ventre camp moved to the mouth of Milk River, on a point of land. I was sitting in my tent smoking, and decided to look after my horses. When I went out from the camp, some one came running, asking, "Is that you?" When I said, "Yes," he said, "I have seen some one coming." Knowing that he meant strangers, I ran to my tent and got my gun. Going out with my companion, we saw four of the enemy. He shot, but I pursued them without shooting. I separated one from the three others and pursued him, driving him straight towards our camp. He became so frightened that he ran into a tent. Women were inside doctoring. He went behind the doctoring woman and held her around in his arms. I followed him in, and ordered the women to go out, as I wanted to kill the man. Some of them held me; but I said, "He is an enemy, and I will kill him. He may hurt some of you." So they went out, and the man huddled against the wall of the tent. I fired two shots into him. He jumped up and yelled, and I took a double-edged knife and stabbed him. He took a long time to die, lying groaning. I cut off his entire scalp; then the people began to come in. One man cut off the long hair from the knee of the buffalo-skin lying on the bed, thinking it was the man's scalp. The stranger proved to be an Assiniboine. The Crow and Gros Ventre were camped together at the time.

The camp was moving eastward, hunting buffalo. Two companies of soldiers were seen coming, and everybody went to meet them, hoping to get something to eat from them. When the soldiers left, one man with his wife staid with them for the night. In the morning he left the company of soldiers he was with to go to the other one that was camped near by. While going, he was attacked by Piegan, shot and wounded, and only escaped through the nearness of the soldiers. His wife informed the Gros Ventre that her husband had been shot by Piegan. All the Gros Ventre and Crow started out, and soon saw the Piegan going over the hill. They pursued them over a flat. They thought the Piegan a war-party, and did not suspect that they came from a camp near by. They came suddenly on their

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

159
726

camp, from which all the Piegan now issued, whereupon the Gros Ventre and Crow fled. Their horses were already tired and were becoming exhausted. So some half-Piegan who were with the Crow said that they would make peace. Four of them stopped, motioned, and spoke in Piegan. Then they shook hands with the Piegan. The Gros Ventre meanwhile told those of their men whose horses were most exhausted to continue on, and they did so. The Piegan chief asked if Many-Birds were among the Gros Ventre. He said, "I want to see him. He once saved my life." Then they called back among those who were still fleeing for Many-Birds, and he answered that he was there. A Piegan chief rode up to him and asked him whether his horse was tired. Many-Birds said, "Yes." The Piegan told him, "Take mine. It is fresh. You helped me, and I want to save your life, for the Piegan might still attack you. But they are my children, and I do not think they will." So he exchanged horses with Many-Birds, and gave him his gun and powder-horn also. Then they parted, and all returned except the four half-Piegan, who went with the Piegan. In the evening three of these returned to the Crow, but the fourth one staid with the Piegan over night. In the morning, when he started to return, he met one of the other three. This man (who was really a Crow that had been captured by the Piegan, but had gone back and lived again with the Crow) now had stolen a herd of horses, and was fleeing once more to the Piegan. The one who was returning to the Crow suspected what he had done, and thought that he might try to shoot himself. The traitor did suddenly shoot; but the other was prepared, saw him, and ducked behind his horse. After the shot, he pursued the other man, who fled; but, his horse stumbling, he fell, and the pursuer shot him. Thereupon he drove the stolen horses back to the Crow camp and told that he had killed the traitor. Then the man's relatives went out, buried him, and mourned over him; but the rest of the camp celebrated over his death. That night, after the dance was over, all agreed that it would be well to watch for the Piegan. So the men all watched. I sat by my hobbled horse. Suddenly close by me I saw the flame of a gun and heard a shot. I ran toward the place, but three or four were already upon the man and had struck him. When I reached him, he kicked me in the breast. Seizing his foot, I cut it off with my knife. So we killed him. We never knew of what tribe he was. He was dressed very poorly, with ragged leggings.

We were moving down along Milk River, and made the crazy-dance. A party of Gros Ventre went to war together with some Bloods. Very soon after they started, one of each tribe in the party was killed. The others returned, and the parents of the dead men mourned. I still had the paint of the crazy-dance on me. Then an old man called to me, "Why do you sit still? You ought to pity your mourning grandfather. Go in advance

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

159
726

of the camp to scout." So I went ahead of the camp as it moved. At the mouth of People's Creek I crossed the river with two companions. Then we saw buffalo. I sent one man to drive them towards myself and my other companion. He drove them, and we ran the buffalo and killed one. We began to cut it up. Then I started to go on with one of my companions while the other finished cutting up the meat. Then he followed us. Looking back as we rode over a ridge, we saw two men on foot approaching him. We motioned and shouted to him, and when he came up asked him, "Did you see nothing?" He said that he had not, and we told him that two men had nearly succeeded in killing him. He had had no cause for suspicion, since the buffalo all about him were still and unalarmed. Then I said, "These are the men that did the killing a few days ago. Now we will take revenge. We have the advantage, for we are three to two. Each of you will take a powder-horn, but I will take both their guns." Then the two men came towards us without offering to fight, and I went to meet them. I shook hands with one and took away his gun, shook hands with the other and took his gun too. Then I said to my companions, "Now is your chance to kill them." But they would not do so. They did not want me to have both guns. So I said, "If you will not kill them, let us take them to the camp and feed them to the dogs." So I took one on my horse, and one of my companions took the other, and we rode double. I made the one with me shoot off his gun. I thought that when he came to be killed, he might hurt some one in the camp. And I told my companion to make the one with him shoot off his gun also, which he did. Now both their guns were empty. We came near the camp, called out, and at once the whole camp became lit up. It was night. The chief came, and asked, "What is it?" I said, "I have your enemies. I bring your food." Then the chief called out, "Bull-Robe has brought your enemies. Do with them as you please." Then the man mourning for the killed Gros Ventre came out, and I told him, "Take your revenge;" but he would not kill them. They took the two men into the camp and set them free. They were Assiniboine.

I started again to go to war. There were Crow and Cree and Assiniboine and Gros Ventre in our party. We saw the Piegan camp. We dressed in our war-ornaments, and I tied up my horse's tail. Then the leader of the party called me a coward, and said I only fought when I was drunk. Taking my whip, I held it to my mouth like a bottle, as if drinking. "Well, now I am drunk," I said. "I will show you what I will do. You will go your way, and I will go mine." Accompanied by a Crow, I went toward the Piegan camp. The remainder of the party approached the camp from all directions. A Piegan came out, and when he was some distance from the camp we two charged on him. I was in the lead, but my horse stepped

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

159
726

into a hole, stumbled, and lost his gait; and the Crow passed me, struck the Piegan, and shot him. The Piegan fell, started to get up again, and I jumped on him astride his body, cut his head and took his scalp. Then we fled. Seeing some of our party, I called to them, "This is the way to do. That chief is nothing." As we fled we saw the Piegan sitting up, holding the skin of his forehead with his hand in order to raise his eyebrows from his eyes so that he could see. The blood was spurting from him the length of this room. So I said, "You had better kill the poor fellow. He is still sitting up." Then some of us went back and killed him. We returned, and celebrated our victory.

I went with another war-party to Sweet-grass Hills, in the Piegan country. In the morning, as we were going, I smelled something like distant fire. "I smell something like fire," I said. They said to me, "You smell something in your nose." So we joked one another until all of them smelled it. Then we sent out a scout. He came back, and reported that a hunting-party was off to the left of our route, and that they were packing up to move. Then I said, "Let us go ahead of them to a place where they will pass, and charge on them." We went down a ravine until we came to where it spread out and was flat. There we lay down, and one of us watched if the Piegan were coming. When we asked him if the Piegan had come, he said, "No." Some of them had already passed by. Either he had not seen them, or he did not want to announce it. Then hearing something like talking, and thinking, "That sounds like talking," I raised my head, looked, and saw part of them already gone by. So saying, "Only dogs stand and watch their food," I charged and the rest followed. The Piegan had their horses loaded with meat. As we came, the women ran, scattering and screaming. Seeing fifteen loaded horses, some of them painted horses, I went to drive them back. The Piegan men who were in advance now came back, charging us, surrounding me, shooting, and trying to drive me away from the horses; but I would not leave them, however much they shot, and kept driving the horses into the ravine. Then Many-Birds came to me, saying, "I am with you to stand by you." Taking the rope of one of the horses I was driving, I gave it to him, telling him not to let it go. This was in the morning, and we fought all day. The Piegan made their camp near by. It was a hot day, and having no water we suffered much from thirst. We unloaded meat from the horses, cooked some of it, and ate. We tied some of the horses fast, but some of them we could not tie; and part of these the Piegan recaptured. We killed three Piegan, but the Piegan secured their bodies. Two Gros Ventre were wounded; one of them low in the leg, the other creased in the back. In the evening we went to a rocky hill, having taken what meat we wanted and left the rest on the ground. Instead of

l: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

159 726 going on, we stopped behind the hill. When the Piegan rode up to the meat in order to recover it, we gave them a volley, shooting several of them off their horses. They fled; but we rode on, looking for water, until we came to a creek, where we sat drinking a little at a time, quenching our thirst. Then we went home.

I started to go to war again. We found a Piegan camp, and approached it. The others did not want to charge, as the distance to the camp and back again to a place of safety was too great. Then I was going to make the charge alone. Some of our party happened to see five Piegan hunting a buffalo, and called to me what they had seen, telling me to come. So I rode in that direction, but did not see the Piegan. When I came near, I saw them riding toward the timber, and at once rode after them. The Piegan jumped off their horses and abandoned them, making for the timber; but I headed them off just before they reached it. One Piegan was in the brush on the ground, and I tried to ride him over. The brush was in the way, and my horse jumped over him. As I passed, I struck at him with my lance, and he shot up at me; but we missed. Then I went at him again. The Piegan had his gun aimed at me; but I rode straight on and pierced him in the breast, so that he shot to one side. Another one came for me with an arrow on his bow. I pierced him in the breast also, so that he dropped his bow. Then my party reached the place and killed the other three, I having killed the first two. We took the scalps of the five men and everything that they had.

When I went out again we saw smoke of a camp. Then we prepared ourselves and painted. A Crow in the party had his little boy with him, who was old enough to ride his horse well. The man took a large shell gorget from his throat, which he wore as an amulet, and now gave it to his son. Then the boy said, "You want me to do something great. I am only a little boy, but I will do something. You must not mourn for me if I am killed. Tell my mother not to cut her hair except a little, for I do not like it if people cut their hair." Then his father gave him a crooked lance; and the boy ripped and tore off his leggings and his shirt, and they put him on a horse. Suddenly the boy hit his father's hand with the whip, so that he let go the bridle, and then shot ahead. I was leading, but the boy went past me. I did not try to keep ahead of him, but let him go to see what he would do. Then we saw that the people were whites; but the boy kept riding straight on. He charged a shelter and rode right over it; but the men who had been in it had already started, and were on their way. The boy kept on and rode up to them, and, as they stepped aside for him, he struck one of them across the back with his crook. Then we staid with these whites over night. In the morning we went on, and soon saw what looked like a party with wagons.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

159
726

We went to see. They were Indians on horseback, riding so close together that they looked like wagons. They went into a place where we could not well attack them, and we went on. Then we came near Fort Benton. To avoid being seen, we had to ride along a bank near the river, sometimes in the water. A companion and I raised bunches of sage-brush, and lay behind them on the top of a bluff, watching. We saw two mounted men leaving the trading-post. We went back and told the party, and I said, "I will charge on them." All wanted to be with me. I told them, "You do not know your hearts, but you say you want to charge." I went ahead, and, when we came on the ridge, saw the two men riding slowly along. I signed to the party to be quiet; but when they came up on the ridge they gave a war-yell, and the two men fled. I was already near them, and gained on them. Riding up, I struck one across the face with my whip. He had drawn his gun on me, but it was too late to shoot. After I had struck him, I wrenched his gun from him and stuck it through my belt. Seizing him by the hair, I swung my horse against his, and threw him off, then let him fall. Then I pursued the other. Him also I whipped in the face twice. He too was going to shoot, but when I struck him he could not see anything. I could have wrenched his gun away also, but did not do so. I seized his hair, and dragged him off his horse by swerving mine into his. Following up the horse, I caught it and led it back. Then I saw a great fight in the flat below. Giving my captured horse to one of my men, I went straight at the enemy, who were unmounted Bloods. They were in a line, and I went to ride past their front. I galloped down the middle towards them, and they all fired at me. Then, knowing that their guns were empty, I rode straight into them, knocking them in all directions. Perhaps my horse did it. I counted that I struck seven. Then I rode for my life. We were still fighting, when a white man came and told us to stop. He said to us Gros Ventre, "You have already beaten them enough." So we stopped, and all went to the fort. On our way, I alone charged on the Bloods, and struck an elderly man and his wife. We started to go into the enclosure at the fort, when the gates were shut on us while most of our party were still outside. They had the captured Bloods' horses, and among them, unknown to us, some horses belonging to the whites. Then they let me go out to bring back our men with the whites' horses. Two of our party had already gone off with two mules, but we drove the remainder into a corral. There were so many horses that it could hardly be told to whom they belonged. Then we all camped together, Crow and Gros Ventre and Bloods. There was a Crow woman with the party. A young good-looking Blood became enamoured of her, and made advances to her. She told the Crow, who said to her, "Proceed with him, and we will kill him." Then she went out on the

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

159 726 prairie, and he followed and met her. This she did three or four times, until he was very much in love with her and wanted to marry her. She said that if he would go with her, she would marry him. He was afraid of the Gros Ventre. Then the Crow told us to go in advance, in order that he might go with them. The whites distributed food, guns, ammunition, and blankets among us all. Then we Gros Ventre went off, but lay down behind a ridge. The Crow gave the Blood four horses for himself and his wife, and they started to go to the Missouri. The man whose wife this woman was pretended that she was not his wife. He rode alongside, and, when the Blood's attention was directed elsewhere, killed him. Then we Gros Ventre and those of the Crow with us came out from where we had been hiding behind the hill, and danced, while the remaining Crow brought his scalp. From there we went home. We crossed the Missouri at a place called Magpie Tail, where there are steep hills. We came on a Crow camp, and made a charge on it. One of the Crow charged into it, striking and whipping every one, as if out of his senses. One of the men in camp became angry, pulled him off his horse, hit him, kicked him, and pulled his hair. The man who had charged got up laughing.

Watches-All's Narrative.

Once I gambled with a Crow woman and lost my beads, and my mother made me cry. The next day a war-party started out, and, because my mother had made me cry, I went with them. All of the party were on foot, except two (women?) on horseback. After we had stopped for the night twice, my mother came after me with a horse for me to ride. We went northward against the Piegan. When we came to mountains, all the women in the party went out to pick choke-cherries. The road was impassable from mud, and it was stormy. Some young men climbed the mountain to look for camps. It was snowing hard and they could not see far; but in the afternoon it cleared, and with a telescope they could see a camp in the distance. They measured it with a ramrod. They went back to the party howling like coyotes, and zigzagging in their course. The women in the party stood in line, and sang. When they came near, the scouts rode about in a circle until one of the party went to them and brought them. Then they reported what they had seen. Then the whole party painted and danced and sang, preparing for the fight. In the evening we started, and travelled all night. One man had a ghost-bone (a human femur). [787] While I was asleep, he summoned the ghost. "What is it?" said the ghost. "Are there many people in the Piegan camp?" asked the man. The ghost said, "There are as many as grass. I give you two persons, also some horses

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13
Blackfoot NF6.

G 159 726 [787]

to steal. Let those who are on foot go back from here, and let the few who are mounted go on against the camp. They will do well, and kill two people, and capture horses. But if all go, a great many will be killed." The next morning my mother told me this. The party, however, were not influenced at all by what the ghost said, and went on. When we came near, two young men killed a Piegan called Sits-in-the-Middle and his wife. Then our party killed two more Piegan close by their camp, but, as one of the men stooped to strike the fallen Piegan, the Piegan stabbed him in the back over the kidney, making a hole large enough to breathe through. We tied him around with gunny sacks. Thus we killed three men and a woman. Then all the Piegan attacked us. I saw more people than ever before. They came like ants, and the smoke hung as over a smelter. Two of the Gros Ventre drove all of our party, even the women, against the Piegan to make them fight. A Gros Ventre was shot through the thigh-bone, and fell from his horse. He stuck his crooked lance in the ground and sat there; and all his brothers went to help him so that he would not be killed soon. And all the Piegan attacked him. Just as one of them dashed up to strike him, he raised his gun and shot him. Another and another came up, until he had killed six. Then he himself was killed. Then some of the Gros Ventre said, "Let us lead them after us from their camp." The Gros Ventre started to run, and the Piegan pursued. The Gros Ventre who were mounted ran their horses as hard as they could. They never stopped running, and a great many of those who were on foot were killed. I was riding behind another woman. Our horse stepped into a hole, and pitched forward. The woman was thrown off, but I was thrown into the saddle. The horse started up again, but stepped on his bridle, which checked him. A Piegan rode up and struck me with his gun. Then he took my wrist, and I dismounted as he did. Another one came, and, after striking me too, took off my bead necklace. The one who had captured me took me back as far as it is from here to the river (about thirty miles). We saw bodies of Gros Ventre as we went back to camp. We came to the camp about noon. Everybody struck me. All day they came and hit me, and one man hit me on the forehead and nearly killed me. A Piegan woman tied up my head. I wore a fine dress covered with elk-teeth. I took it off, and a Piegan woman took it away. Then the Piegan directed their people to gather all the captives. They asked them if the Gros Ventre had done anything to Sits-in-the-Middle, who had been found in an indecent position with his wife. The captives all said that the Gros Ventre would not do such a thing, and the Piegan were satisfied. Eight Piegan, all prominent men, had been killed.

G 159 726 B 727

When our party returned, my father asked where I was. Some one told him that a Piegan had taken me back to his camp. Then my father said

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13
Blackfoot NF6

G
159
726
B
727

to my mother, who had returned safely, "Go and bring my daughter, or I will kill you." So my mother came alone to the Piegan. When she arrived, there was a big noise. Then a chief came out of his tent with only his knife, and called out, "Do not kill that woman!" Then she went to where the captives were. The man who had captured me, No-Chief, said aloud, "I pity this woman. I will treat her well. Every one all over the world hears it. I will take good care of her." Another Piegan took my mother. Then they brought me to a tent where there were a pipe, a pipe-stem, a knife, and a gun, and two men sitting, who both claimed me. I was told to say which of them had captured me. I held up my hand and told how my horse had stumbled, and how this one, who was No-Chief, had captured me, and how the other one had taken my beads. Then the other one tried to kill me. Some Piegan women hid me. In the morning the Piegan broke camp. I had no moccasins, no robe, and only one dress. No-Chief always rode around me, and protected me from the many people who wanted to kill me. He had taken me for his wife, and would not allow it. When we were camped, he rode over to the tent where my mother was, and told her to come at night to his tent. He would give her and me horses to ride, in order to flee, and would give us clothing and a piece of tobacco, which we were to cut in two, and each of us to give half to her husband. My mother agreed, and he came back; but that night my mother did not come. In the morning a man rode around the camp, crying, "Bring out all the captives. I will put them on my son's grave." Then the women hid me. The other Gros Ventre captives were also hidden. Fourteen of them were saved, but four were killed. Then they brought all the spoils to the middle of the camp, and counted them. They counted how many pieces had been captured, how many horses had been taken, and how many Gros Ventre had been killed. They who had done most became chiefs.

Then No-Chief, my husband, said to me, "If any one wants to buy you from me, I will sell you." Then my mother persuaded a Piegan to buy me. I was angry when No-Chief sold me for two horses. I staid with this other man. Sometimes people still tried to kill me, and he kept them from me. Then we came to Elk River, where there was an encampment of soldiers. The soldiers tried to persuade the Piegan to sell them all their slaves. One Piegan rode around the camp, crying, "Sell all the slaves. They will run off anyway. We cannot keep them." But at night all moved away, and none sold their captives. I always took care of my husband's little boy, and did my work, and got along well. A white man tried to buy me; but my husband did not sell me. I asked the white man not to try to buy me, as I wanted to return home. Another Gros Ventre woman who had been captured persuaded her husband's little boy to ask him to let her go. The

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13
Blackfoot NF6

G 159 726 B 727

boy asked his father, and the man told her that she could go after tanning ten hides. She prepared the skins, made herself moccasins, took pemmican with her, and went. Her husband did not give her a horse, because many Piegans were then scattered through the country, and would more readily see her if mounted. That winter I staid with the Piegan. We went to the Sweet-grass Hills and killed all the buffalo we needed. About the time the snow thawed, we went back to the former place. Once a Piegan came to get men to reinforce his party, who were attacking a Gros Ventre camp; but the same night the Gros Ventre fled, leaving a dead man and one who had been shot through the leg. These were all that the Piegan found next morning. Two Piegan had also been killed.

Then I went with my husband hunting buffalo. A shot was heard from the top of a mountain, and our party went back. It was a rainy day. Then Bear-Head, a Piegan, took two Gros Ventre women to the foot of the mountain and made them call out, "Come down! Here is something to eat." He wanted to find out of what tribe those on the mountain were; but there was no answer. That night the people on the mountain, who were Gros Ventre, came and stole horses from the camp. The Bloods also stole horses. The Piegan followed their tracks, and killed two of them; but they did not follow the Gros Ventre. Then we went to a place called Needle-Nest, then to Large-Rock, then to White-Wolf, where a Gros Ventre had once made the sun-dance lodge. Then two Gros Ventre women ran away and escaped. From there we went to another place. When we made camp I went for wood with my sister, a Piegan co-wife. Then my sister sent me to my mother, whose husband had just killed a buffalo. I went there; and my mother's sister (co-wife) told her, "Cook something for your daughter." Then I brought back meat to my husband; but my mother's husband was stingy with his meat, and scolded her. Then his Piegan wife said to my mother, "You and your daughter are living poorly. You had better run off." So when I brought back the plates (on which the meat had been carried), my mother said she would escape with me that night. She said she would wait for me all night. She told me to leave my moccasins with her, and I left them. Then my husband whipped me because he thought that I would run off. He told me not to sleep all night, but to sit up straight. Toward morning, while my two sisters slept, I ran out. My mother was waiting for me, and we ran to the creek, over the hills and down again. It stopped raining, and soon it became day. We dug a hole and got into it, and hid all day. At night we ran on again. It was cloudy and dark. We were near Cow Creek. An owl called in the woods. My mother said the owl was calling us, so we went there. It became day, but we went on. We were out of the timber when we saw people coming, so we ran back and

G 159

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

159 hid. At night it rained again, and was so dark that we could see only by the lightning. I was walking with two sticks. We came to the mouth of Cow Creek, where the banks were high and steep, and slid down. I was thirsty, but could not reach the water: so my mother held my wrist while I scooped downward with the other hand and thus got a little water. We heard the beavers working. Then a steamboat came by up the river (the Missouri). My mother was asleep, but I was awake. Then we crossed Cow Creek at the very mouth, and on the other side of the stream found a piece of gunny sack. I took this for a robe, and gave mine to my mother. We saw another boat going up the river, and my mother wanted us to get on it and go back to Fort Benton, as she wanted to sell me to the whites. Then I held my mother fast in the brush, for I did not want to go, and said, "There are many Piegan women there, and we will be known and taken back." I got out my knife and tried to kill my mother, because I did not want to go. Then we followed the Missouri down along the north side during that day. Soon we saw a bear asleep. We made a circuit around him, came back into the timber, and went on. We saw smoke down the river, and another steamboat came, and we hid in the brush. The boat stopped and unloaded near where we were. Being thirsty, we had gone to the river to drink and wash, and saw the boat. Then we started to run to it. I threw away my gunny-sack robe. Our moccasins were gone. Then we saw Crow and a Gros Ventre woman on the boat. It had started before we reached it, but we called out to it and it came back for us. The boat took us across the river at a bend of the Missouri, where there was a store and a saloon and a camp of Crow. The Crow women pitied us and cried over us because we were so poor, and laid down many robes for us to sit on, and felt the sores on our feet. The storekeeper had a Gros Ventre wife. She had been down the river visiting, and was the woman on the boat. This man opened a keg, and gave us whiskey. We drank some and then more. My mother became unconscious, but I was still drinking, sitting up and telling of our escape.

There was an officer (soldier-chief) at the Bend whose Piegan wife had run off to Fort Benton. He was leaving to go after her, and gave us sugar, cloth, blankets, and a sack full of meat, which he told us to get from the root-house. While we were staying here, my mother asked the trader's Gros Ventre wife to go with us to scrape juice from the inside of cottonwood-bark. The woman refused, being afraid of the Sioux, but we urged her, and at last she went. We were scraping, and the trader's wife was bending down. When she looked up, she saw Sioux on the hill. "Didn't I tell you the Sioux would come? Let us run back," she said. We ran. The woman fell. We raised her up and ran on. Again she fell, being frightened nearly

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

to death. We turned and ran back and picked her up, and ran on until we reached the store. The Sioux and the white man exchanged shots, but they were too far apart. The Sioux went on and killed a white man who was employed in cutting wood for the steamboats, and who had just shot a bear. They laid this man in the fire and burned him up, so that only his legs were found. After this we women were afraid to go even a very short distance from the store. Then the Crow swam their horses to the north side of the river. In the river a white horse stopped, went down, came up again, and went down; a baxan[1] took it. 159

Then my mother said that she was tired of staying there, and with a Gros Ventre, Bull-Lodge (there being ten of us in all, six men and four women), we went down the river on the boat. Then the boat stuck and had to back. The buffalo crossed the Missouri, and the whites on board caught them by the horns, cut their throats, and dragged them ashore. Then we had a big feast of ribs and paunches and the best parts. We went on, and stopped at the mouth of Milk River. There Bull-Lodge set up his tent, but I and my mother slept on the boat. The next day we all went up Milk River on foot; only Bull-Lodge and his wife were on horses. We kept on the trail, and came to a recent camp-site. The Gros Ventre and Assiniboine were then at war. One of our party, looking back and seeing some persons coming, asked Bull-Lodge for his horse to scout. Riding back, he saw that six buffalo were coming towards us. That evening Bull-Lodge and his wife went on, while the rest of us went to sleep where we were. Bull-Lodge travelled during the night and reached the Gros Ventre camp, where the old men were still awake smoking. He told my brother that my mother and I were behind and that he had better bring us and the others horses. Then the people came and brought us, and all were glad to see us again.

PERSONAL SUPERNATURAL POWERS.

Men went out to fast with the intention of becoming doctors, or receiving miraculous powers. They did not go as boys, but after they had reached manhood. Not all men tried to acquire such powers, and some of those that did failed. They went to hills and high places, usually high up on mountains, among the rocks above the timber. In such a place they would make a shelter in which to sleep. Then they remained fasting and without drinking water for one or two or more often four or five nights. A Crow who staid seven nights and nearly died, being extremely thin when he returned, was regarded as extremely powerful. It was thought that he could accomplish almost any wish by merely expressing it. Besides fasting, a man cried 787

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787 incessantly. After a time a spirit might appear to him. Perhaps this
would be on the first or second night, perhaps later. Sometimes it was in
776 full daylight, and the man really saw the spirit like a true person; but more
usually he saw him in his sleep. It might be a person that appeared, that
is to say, an untrue person (spirit), or an animal, or the spirit of a rock or
of the brush. Some men went to islands and rivers instead of to mountain-
peaks. These might receive the otter, or the beaver, or the muskrat, or
the water-monster (bax'aa^{n}) as their guardian spirit. Sometimes when a
man was crying on a mountain-top in a thunderstorm, the thunder (bax'aa^{n})
appeared to him. The lightning shot straight towards him, as if to hit him,
and the bird was so near above his head that the man sometimes became
afraid and ran away. If he staid, the thunder-bird became his spirit, and
gave him medicine that was unusually powerful. Generally, it seems, the
man cried incessantly, until he was exhausted and fell asleep. Then the
spirit appeared to him, saying, "I pity you. What do you want?" The
man said that he wished to be wealthy, or successful in war or love, or to
756 become a medicine-man. If he was to be a doctor, the spirit showed him
776 roots and plants, telling him to note their appearance, and informing him
787 of the diseases for which they were a cure. Those plants that he had seen
in his dream or vision, the new doctor looked for until he found them. His
spirit told him, "In so many years (naming the number) you will begin to
doctor." After that time had elapsed, he began doctoring. The spirit or
animal told him that the place where he was was its own home. From this
time on, the man never killed the animal that had appeared to him (except,
apparently, for the purpose of obtaining parts of it as a fetish or amulet);
nor did he eat of it under any circumstances. He used a part of the animal,
especially the claws or the fur, in his doctoring. If the spirit of a rock had
appeared to him, he used a stone.

755 Medicine-men cured the sick by sucking the body and by brushing it.
As is customary among Indians, they were believed to suck through the
skin without biting, cutting, or puncturing it. They might suck blood,
pebbles, cloth, human finger-nails, bunches of hair, and many other things.
If they sucked out old pus, it was evidence that the disease was of long
standing. If they brushed or rubbed the patient, they used owl-feathers,
skunk-skin, prairie-dog fur, or similar parts of animals. Some used bells
as rattles, some whistles, and some drums; and all sang, each doctor having
his own songs. After sucking the patient, the doctor chewed up medicine,
which he then applied to the patient's body. He often also gave him medi-
cine boiled in water to drink. The powers of doctors varied. Different men
were able to cure different diseases. It is said, however, that none could do
much for affections of the ear.

l: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Doctors were paid a horse or more for their services. Sometimes several, in turn, doctored a patient, each one blaming those that had failed before. Often they laid the sickness to spirits, or to other doctors. This last occurred especially if in their sucking they extracted human finger-nails or similar objects. In such a case the doctor got his patient to sleep. The patient might then in his dream see the person that had made him sick, and on awaking would denounce him. If the sick man died, his relatives might kill the doctor whom he had named as the cause of his sickness. 756

There were not so many women doctors as men. They appear not to have gone out to the mountains with the intention of acquiring supernatural power, but to have received guardian spirits when they were away from the camp, mourning.

The jugular and femoral arteries and the aorta were called ts'niinotanoudj[1] ("having no ears"), because, when severed, they did not heed any remedies.

In order to save the life of a sick relative, the joint of the little finger was sometimes cut off in sacrifice to the sun.

There were some medicine-men who, having had their fingers tied, then had their knees fastened together and their hands secured behind their back. After this they were wrapped in a robe and the robe was wound about with a rope. Then such a medicine-man called his spirit. When it appeared, he was loosened instantaneously, and the robe and the rope were thrown at the man that tied him.

Fig. 30 (50/1937). Doctor's Charm. Length, 22 cm.

[778]

826

755
304
782

756

A charm used by a doctor is shown in Fig. 30. It consists of a deer-tail with beaded base, and of two black feathers and a bunch of down feathers. All parts of the object are reddened. This piece was used to brush patients. At other times during the doctoring it was worn on the medicine-man's clothing.[2] 756 778

A man unsuccessful in winning a woman's love sometimes fasted on a 787 832

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787 mountain and asked the spirit that appeared to him for a love-medicine
832 which would bring him the woman. Soon after, she would come to him and try to obtain his love, but usually he would reject her, for a time at least, by way of revenge.

A young middle-aged man of the present time is noted for his love-medicine. He tells the following. He was once in love with a woman who only reviled him. For a long time this was on his mind. Constantly thinking of her harsh treatment of him, he fasted in a number of places, and finally received supernatural power. Then the woman came to him. She kissed him on the cheek; but he said, "You have abused me," and he made her go away. Four times she came to him; only the fourth time did he consent to gratify her wishes. Since that time, he has frequently used his medicine. His present wife was living with a white trader, where she had every comfort and great abundance; but by his medicine he made her leave the trader for him. His wife, it would appear, looks upon his powers without jealousy. He sells the use of his medicine to young men for two horses. His young son is crippled, so that he would have difficulty in winning women; but his father is keeping the medicine for him, so that he will be able to possess any woman he desires. The objects used include several medicine-plants. Some of these appear to be used to incense the man who is making the
[824] medicine. When a woman is unusually obdurate, wild parsnip (the root supposed to produce the peculiar state of mind of the crazy-dance) is employed by this man. When he begins to exert his influence on a woman, she becomes restless and sexually excited. She leaves the tent frequently, and will cohabit with any man. When the influence of the medicine is removed, she remains faithful to her lover.

MEDICINES AND PLANTS.

278 The following medicines, consisting chiefly of plants, are almost wholly
757 family remedies, and, while no doubt also used by medicine-men, their supposed effects are generally known, and not connected with any personal supernatural experiences of the person using them. As the specimens were secured in winter, it was impossible to obtain material for botanical identification.

Wanouwasóó ("wart-medicine"), a root, is used for stomach-ache (specimen Museum No. 50-1800).

A root called ahaa"tjiniça" ("wood-like") is used for colic. This seems to be the root of a species of Asclepias (specimen Museum No. 50-1836).

A root called baaso ("red medicine," because it is reddish when fresh) is used for diarrhœa (specimen Museum No. 50-1914).

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

A plant called häyaa"t[a] is used both as a perfume and as a medicine. Pieces of it tied by a string to the shoulder of the shirt give a pleasant smell. It is also laid in warm water without being boiled, and the water is then used as medicine for sore eyes (specimen Museum No. 50-1883). 278 757

In case of snow-blindness, charcoal is put around the eyes, and believed to be very efficacious.

The green stems of a plant containing a white juice are used for women who have no milk. The Arapaho use the same plant for a similar purpose, and call it "milk liquid."[1]

A root called bäetset ("hand," on account of the peculiar conformation of the roots) is laid in very small quantity into cold water, which is drunk by women to insure easy child-birth (specimen Museum No. 50-1946). [844]

The flowers of a composita called niba"äñnou ("yellow-head") or tjitjixta"sibyiisöö are put on coals for a woman who has given birth. She stands above the fire to incense herself (specimen Museum No. 50-1944).

Another plant called niba"näñnou ("yellow-head"), which grows close to the water, is boiled, and drunk for pain in the back or in the body (specimen Museum No. 50-1945).

A root called niitasou ("sharp") is pulverized, and then applied to sores in the mouth and on the tongue (specimen Museum No. 50-1838).

A rock lichen called benaatsön is chewed for a sore mouth (specimen Museum No. 50-1874).

The root of tyätyäniçä is obtained from swampy land far to the north of the Gros Ventre habitat. The roots are soaked in water and the black portions removed. Then they are grated, mixed with water, and applied to the neck for sores (specimen Museum No. 50-1907).

A root called kouh'ya" is chewed until a sticky paste results, which is applied to sores (specimen Museum No. 50-1919).

A fungus called tsäädjina" is set on fire, and when glowing is applied to wounds or sores. It is also pulverized, and put on the gums of children when they are teething. It is said to grow on birch-trees, near the root (specimen Museum No. 50-1837). [752]

The roots of iniitsöö are boiled and the water used to wash the part of the body which has been burned by the application of the glowing fungus tsäädjina" (specimen Museum No. 50-1856). [752]

Ibyaa"tou-leaves, which are also used as incense, are boiled in water. This is then applied to the body to allay pain (specimen Museum No. 50-1790). This medicine is the Arapaho niibaa"tou or ibaa"tou (fir or similar leaves), used both as incense[2] and as medicine.[3]

[1] See Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part IV, p. 438.
[2] Ibid., Vol. XVIII, Part I, p. 32.
[3] Ibid., Part IV, p. 420.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

278
757

Na^{n}kasö ("white medicine") is a fungus growing high on pine-trees. It has a general use for any disease (specimen Museum No. 50–1796).

The leaves of ka^{n}kadyikou, growing in the mountains, are boiled, and the tea used as medicine for various purposes (specimen Museum No. 50–1897).

[752]

The bark of iinaa^{n}söönicou is either chewed in the native state, or boiled and drunk, for hemorrhages and pain in the back. The plant is said not to grow in the Gros Ventre country (specimen Museum No. 50–1943).

Tawaa^{n}nasöö-root is used for pleurisy and heart-sickness. It is said to taste sweet. The root is either chewed, or boiled and drunk. This is the Arapaho häçawaanaxu, and is much used in the age-ceremonies of both tribes (specimen Museum No. 50–1855).

Juniper-berries (çää^{n}touwun) are a cure for asthma. They are either eaten entire, or they are pulverized and boiled, and the water drunk. The leaves, called "çää^{n}touwuusöö," are mixed with the root, and then used as a remedy for hemorrhage. The leaves are also used by the doctors to incense themselves before they begin to doctor (specimen Museum No. 50–1854).

The root called niäätä^{n}, used by the Arapaho ceremonially and as an ingredient for incense, is employed by the Gros Ventre as a remedy for tuberculosis and hemorrhages. It is said not to be used as incense. The root is boiled before being used. It is eaten in the solid state, or a decoction of it is drunk (specimen Museum No. 50–1793).

The root of naw'asöö ("fish medicine") is eaten for colds (specimen Museum No. 50–1794).

Niitsiça^{n} ("hollow root") is primarily a horse-medicine. It is given to horses to strengthen and refresh them. People also use a decoction of it as a remedy for colds (specimen Museum No. 50–1795).

Niha^{n}nisö ("yellow medicine") is used for colds. Either the root is eaten, or water in which it has been boiled is drunk (specimen Museum No. 50–1799).

A plant which grows north of the Gros Ventre country, and for which they appear to have no name, is used for colds and sore throat, a small quantity of the root being chewed (specimen Museum No. 50–1848).

A root called taw'haa^{n} is obtained from other tribes. The plant is said not to grow in the Gros Ventre country. It is pounded and used as snuff in order to clear the head in case of cold or headache (specimen Museum No. 50–1797).

The stems and leaves of waasöwahaa^{n}, a sweet peppermint, are used for headache. The plant is also drunk as tea (specimen Museum No. 50–1791).

The root called wanaa^{n}sübyaa^{n} ("smelling loud") is smoked in the pipe against headache (specimen Museum No. 50–1798).

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

A plant called tyäänou is used as perfume, as a wash for the hair, and as a minor medicine. Bunches of the plant were used as perfume. A tea boiled of it is thought to make the hair grow while perfuming it. Such a tea is also poured into the nostrils as a remedy for headache (specimen Museum No. 50-1920). 278 757 [302]

Niibyouäxtjin is used as perfume. The stems and leaves are chewed, and applied to the body (specimen Museum No. 50-1853). [302]

Tsaa"sübin is used as perfume. It is chewed, and rubbed on the hair (specimen Museum No. 50-1792).

One ingredient of incense is the callosity from the leg of a horse above the knee. This is cut up fine, and burned with sweet-grass. It is also worn on the body on a string.

Pine-nuts or other conifer-seeds are used for pemmican (specimen Museum No. 50-1913). [562] 824

For embroidery, dark fibrous water-plants, at"hin (the Arapaho atahina"), are used (specimen Museum No. 50-1891).

Quills are dyed yellow with a solution from a conifer-lichen, no doubt the widely used *Evernia vulpina*, called otsahaa" (specimen Museum No. 50-1873). [386]

TRIBAL CEREMONIAL ORGANIZATION.

The Gros Ventre ceremonial organization is akin to that of the Arapaho with such differences as would be expected from the differences in language and the period of separation of the two tribes. The fundamental feature of this organization, the grouping of men by ages and the observance of a series of a half-dozen ceremonies in order according to age, is common to the two tribes. The ceremonies vary somewhat, and in a few cases their names or order have been changed; but among both tribes there are about six regular consecutive men's ceremonies, one or two that are preliminary or somewhat outside of this series, a single ceremony for women corresponding to those for men, and the sun-dance, which is included by the Indians in the enumeration of their grouped ceremonies, but differs from the others in not being connected with age, or with any society-like association of individuals. 561 796

Among the Gros Ventre the dancing-lodge for these ceremonies — which is erected in the centre of the camp-circle, and, like this, opens to the east — is constructed of two large tents. The lodge is open above, and appears to be oval or round in shape. The dancers, before beginning the ceremony, secure old men, who are called their "grandfathers," and are their instruct- 346 796

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 ors and directors through the dance. By these old men the dancers are painted in the dancing-lodge every morning during the ceremony. The dancers' wives take a more prominent part in the ceremonies among the Gros Ventre than among the Arapaho. They are painted at the same time as their husbands by his "grandfather." Every night during the ceremony there are certain observances between the "grandfathers" and the dancers' wives, who leave the camp-circle together in order that the women may receive medicine from the old men. This practice is much more developed among the Gros Ventre than among the Arapaho.

Whether there is in each dance a preparatory period in which the dancers' regalia are made and they are instructed in the ceremony by their "grandfathers," as among the Arapaho, is not clear in the case of the Gros Ventre. The dancing itself in all of the age-ceremonies goes on for four days,[1] and, in some cases, nights. On the last day the dancers leave the lodge, and [361] dance for gifts before the tents of prominent men at different places in the camp-circle. Immediately upon this the camp breaks. The dancers, with the property they have received in gifts, go in advance, and lay the presents on the ground. The camp comes up in a body and makes a rush; the property is seized and divided. The dancers form in a circle, and at the conclusion of four dances rush off to race. On their return the ceremony is ended. Only in the case of the crazy-dance do these ceremonies of the fourth day appear to take place without the camp-circle having been broken; [786] and for four days thereafter the camp remains in position, giving the participants in the ceremony opportunity for the license which is a part of this dance.

All the ceremonies, including the sun-dance and the women's dance, are made as the result of the pledge of an individual in the hope of deliverance from death or danger, either of himself or of a relative. If a member of a company of men who are of the proper age to make the crazy-dance has a relative whom he loves, and whose death from sickness is feared, he may say, "Such and such an old man (naming him) shall put up the crazy-lodge for me this summer." If the sick person dies, the dance is not held. Sometimes a person who is ill himself pledges to make the dance on his recovery. The pledger of any dance is called ye'nouhuxtj[1] (Arapaho, ya'nahût[1]). A man in danger in war, or one who has been wounded, may also pledge the dance. The time for the dances is apparently summer. For the sun-dance, spring or early summer, when the trees are full leaved, is specified; and it is added that sometimes, after the pledge is given, the [616] people have to wait all winter to make the ceremony. In the case of the crazy-dance, it is stated that two divisions of the young men of the tribe,

[1] Probably to be interpreted as three nights and three days.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

each of which has a ceremony of its own rivalling that of the other (respectively the war-dance and the star-dance), compete in a horse-race, with the agreement that the beaten party is to put up the crazy-lodge. It does not seem that this is a common procedure. 796 616

The Gros Ventre abandoned their dances much earlier than the Arapaho, and almost nothing of the organization remains now, except a memory. It is somewhat difficult to procure precise details of the procedure, especially in the older dances. In great part, the regalia used have also perished, and it has been possible to secure only a very few pieces. These show, as do the descriptions given by the Indians, that the objects and decorations used are quite similar to those of the Arapaho. The distinction of several degrees purely of honor within each ceremony, which is so characteristic of the Arapaho age-dances, is also found in the Gros Ventre, though it seems that the distinctions made and the number of degrees are not quite so elaborate. This is evidenced, not only by the fact that few degrees are described by the Gros Ventre, a fact which might be due to their longer disuse of the ceremonies, but also by circumstances such as the one that certain regalia, which in the Arapaho dog-dance are worn only by the members of the second and third highest degrees, are among the Gros Ventre the common regalia of all participants; only the highest degree of the Arapaho being retained by the Gros Ventre as distinct. 796 178 [171]

The Gros Ventre call their entire ceremonial organizations benaa"wu, a dialectic form of the Arapaho bayaa"wu, and, like it, probably meaning "all the lodges." The members of the age-societies are called beniinen, commonly translated at the present day as "soldiers," etymologically probably "all-men," or "all-(?)-men." 796 561

The ceremonies of the Gros Ventre benaa"wu, with the age-dances given in order from youth to old age, are the following:—

Açeiha"w"	Sacrifice-lodge,[1] sun-dance
	Star-dance, partial preliminary
Nōuhā"w"	Fly-lodge, first dance
Haha"tyā"w"	Crazy-lodge, second dance
Nōuhā"w"	Kit-fox lodge, third dance
Hotibyā"w"	Dog-lodge, fourth dance
Nanā"nahā"w"	Tomahawk-lodge, fifth dance
Bitahā"wu"	Drum (?) lodge, sixth (?) dance
Benuxteā"w"	Buffalo(?) dance, women's dance.

The members of these successive age-ceremonies are called respectively

[1] Once translated "looked-at-lodge."

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796
561

hotohuūu, nōubān, hahā^{n}tyānen, nōuhunen, hotibyī, nanā^{n}nāhā^{n}ts or perhaps hiityaāa^{n}sūts, biitaxāānen; or "stars," "flies," "crazy-men," "kit-fox men," "dogs," "soldiers" or "having-war-spikes," and "drum (?) men."

171
796

Aside from changes in the order of the ceremonies, of which there are several, the chief known differences between this progressive dance-series of the Gros Ventre and that of the Arapaho are two. One of these differences is, that the first dance of the Gros Ventre is the fly-dance, which the Arapaho lack altogether. The second difference is, that the fifth dance of the Gros Ventre, the nana^{n}naha^{n}w^{n}, seems to combine the characteristics of the corresponding Arapaho dance (the hinanaha^{n}wu or fifth) and of the first dance (the Arapaho hiiteeāoxa^{n}wu). In its name, its place in the series, and the age of its dancers, the Gros Ventre fifth ceremony agrees with the similarly named Arapaho fifth ceremony; but in the use of war-club-like implements carried by the dancers, and in the symbolic connection of the dance with the buffalo, there is an agreement with the Arapaho first dance. This first dance of the Arapaho is not represented by a separate ceremony among the Gros Ventre. A third possible difference between the two systems is, that no information was obtained regarding any Gros Ventre lodge corresponding to the oldest men's sweat-house among the Arapaho; but it is not unlikely that something similar formerly existed.

The several changes in order of the dances between the two tribes imply something more than mere change of position in the series. For instance, the displacing of the kit-fox lodge and of the biitaha^{n}wu, both of which are early ceremonies in the Arapaho and late ones among the Gros Ventre, involves a change of the age of the participants, and therefore necessarily, in some degree, of the character of the ceremony itself, since, the greater the age of the participants in the ceremony, the more sacred it is.

The following comparison shows the respective places of each ceremony in the Arapaho and Gros Ventre ceremonial series.

Ceremony.	Arapaho.	Gros Ventre.
Sun-dance	Men of any age	Men of any age
Kit-fox lodge	First preliminary	Third dance
Star-dance	Second preliminary	Outside of regular series
Fly-lodge	Lacking	First dance
Hiiteeāoxa^{n}wu	First dance	Lacking (see Hinanaha^{n}wu)
Biitaha^{n}w^{n}	Second dance	Probably sixth dance
Crazy-lodge	Third dance	Second dance
Dog-lodge	Fourth dance	Fourth dance
Hinanaha^{n}wu	Fifth dance	Fifth dance
Seven old men	Sixth ceremony	Lacking?
Bānuxta^{n}wu	Women's dance	Women's dance

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The place of the biitaha^{n}wu is not certain, as no informants were found who would positively express themselves on this matter. It is universally regarded as having been the most sacred and most dangerous of all the ceremonies, these qualities being thought to have led to its abandonment before any of the other dances. It can probably be concluded from this that it was last in the series, and performed by the oldest men. 171 796

As among the Arapaho, but somewhat more clearly, each dance refers symbolically to a certain animal. This symbolism is as follows. 171

The fly-dance takes its name from flies or mosquitoes, and was given or instituted by a mosquito. During part of the ceremony the dancers imitate the actions of mosquitoes. 796 825

The crazy-dance has comparatively little reference to any animal. The participants, however, wear anklets of badger-skin, and an entire badger-skin is used in ceremonies at the time of starting the dancing.

The kit-fox lodge was given by the kit-foxes, and a kit-fox skin is used somewhat analogously to the badger-skin in the crazy-dance.

In the dog-dance the dancers of highest degree represent shaggy dogs. It is also said that the participants in the ceremony largely eat dogs during its course. Among the Arapaho a dog is said to have instituted this lodge, and the Gros Ventre have a similar myth. [262]

In the nana^{n}naha^{n}w^{u} the dancers sing for the buffalo, and it is said that they always succeed in causing them to appear near the camp. Among the Arapaho the dancers represent both buffalo and prairie-chickens. The symbolic reference to prairie-chickens among the Gros Ventre is found in their sun-dance; their equivalent of the Arapaho rabbit-tent in this ceremony being called "prairie-chicken tent," and the singers in it "prairie-chickens" and "prairie-hens."

The biitaha^{n}w^{u}, as among the Arapaho, has connection with thunder. The dancers are painted over the body with dots which represent hail. If one of them violates the regulations of the dance, it is thought that it will begin to rain and that the offender may be struck by lightning. The Gros Ventre have an additional symbolic connection of their sun-dance with thunder, which is not strictly paralleled among the Arapaho. [302] [821]

The women in their dance among both tribes represent buffalo, and the actions gone through in this ceremony are in both tribes probably more directly imitative of the animals symbolized than in any of the men's ceremonies.

What has been said about the Arapaho in regard to the relation of the entire ceremonial organization to the lives of the men of the tribe, and in regard to the relative importance of the religious, military, and social functions of the age-companies constituting the organization, appears to apply 171 796 561

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

171 equally to the Gros Ventre. The Gros Ventre, however, used a method of
796 organization as regards the performance of the age-ceremonies of which nothing was heard among the Arapaho. The men of the tribe of age to
561 make any one ceremony were not all in one society or company, but in several; the total number of the companies being three or four times as great as the number of ceremonies. Each of these companies had a name, which it retained throughout its existence, irrespective of the dance it had last performed; and each held its ceremonies without participating in those of any other company. It seems that, when one of these companies had made all the dances, the surviving old men grouped together the available young men in the tribe, and formed them into a new company of the same name. With this organization it was possible for each ceremony to be performed in the tribe much more frequently than if all those of an age and previous ceremonial experience entitling them to make a certain dance had performed this together, as appears to have been the case among the Arapaho; or the ceremony could be given at short intervals without involving the repetition of it for a considerable number of times by the same body of men. The Gros Ventre companies could and did repeat the ceremonies, especially the earlier ones, but do not seem to have done so more than once or twice.

561 The names of these companies resembled nicknames, and for the most
796 part had a character not very different from the clan names in use among the Gros Ventre and other Plains tribes, in which a certain humorous or derisive element prevails. The following are the companies whose names were obtained:

Green-grass, wanoçetyi
Young-sheep, wnotei
Small-horses, tsaâaçibyi
Rosebushes, yaaniiséo
Calves (of leg), itsiitsûn
Sleeping-on-the-breast-of-a-woman, bitemmaakataâaabei
Grass-in-their-pockets, wasóón timâyhuts
Big-bellies, tjiitââts
White-horns, nanâatsóenitäats
White-backs, nanâatsetäats
Men-across-the-river, haasóitjänen
Different-from-benilnen, kaasóbenilnen
Ugly-dogs, wasaatibyi
Seed-necklaces, hity'lisûtyäa
Having-back-fat, hiinanlihits
White-noses, nanaatsóóbäats
Eat-enough-to-last-over-night, äteinotäats
Holding-dogs'-tails, hotibyi naninaanäats
White-blankets, nanaatsóubänts
Fur-wrapped-wands, hiibliçóuts
Bad-horns, wanaasónitäats
(? Stars, hotohufu)
(? Feathered-sword-wands, iikokóuuts)
(? Having-spikes, hiitjaâaaûts)

The list is probably not complete, as, with the disuse of the ceremonies, the formation of these companies has been discontinued for some time.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

It seems impossible to tell at present whether these and the additional ones that there may have been, all existed contemporaneously, or whether some grew up as others died out. The last few named are doubtful as true companies. The Indians sometimes include the dances themselves among these companies, calling their members "flies," "dogs," "kit-fox men," and so on. This is, of course, a cross-division, as each of the numerous companies in turn makes, for instance, the fly-dance. During and after the ceremony its members are called "flies," as well as by the name of their company. As there is a star-dance, it is therefore possible that there was no true star company. The sword-wands and war-spikes are also somewhat doubtful. These names refer to objects used as regalia in the Arapaho first dance and in part in the Gros Ventre fifth dance. The participants in the Gros Ventre fifth dance, it seems, were also called by the latter name. It is therefore probable that these two names refer to dances and not to real companies. 561 796

The companies held together, to a certain extent, outside of their dances. They were likely to act together in war, and there was a spirit of rivalry between them. In the sun-dance, and possibly on other ceremonial occasions, the younger men of the tribe took part in certain actions by companies.

The following specific statements of the ceremonial experiences of a few of the old men of the tribe alive in 1901 will make the general scheme of the organization more concrete.

A man known as Bill Jones, reputed to be the oldest man in the tribe, belonged to the "big-belly" company. Of this, only one other member survived at that date. He himself had been keeper of one of the sacred pipes; and he and his "big-belly" companion, together with the five survivors of the next oldest company, were spoken of as the seven oldest men of the tribe. As all the Gros Ventre ceremonies have been discontinued, it is not possible to deduce from this statement with certainty that these seven men would in former times have constituted a definite body with distinct ceremonial powers and observances, like the Arapaho water-sprinkling old men. This man had made the fly-dance, the crazy-dance twice, the kit-fox dance twice, the dog-dance, and the nana"naha"w". He had not made the biitaha"w". Younger men than himself have seen this; but it appears to have been abandoned some time before he became of age to take part in it. He had made the star-dance before the fly-dance. He had also taken the part of the man who shoots a buffalo (in the women's dance?). 159 561 796

Bull-Robe, now dead, a renowned warrior, belonged to the next age-company, "those-who-eat-to-last-all-night." He had made the fly-dance, the crazy-dance, the kit-fox dance, and the dog-dance. The nana"naha"w" seems to have been discontinued before he reached it. In the first three of his dances he was one of the leaders, or recipients of special degrees.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

159 561 796 Subsequently he was a "grandfather" in the crazy-dance, but in none of the other ceremonies. He never participated in the sun-dance, having had no occasion to do so, he said. Nevertheless he once was the man selected during the sun-dance to kill a buffalo with one arrow, the buffalo's skin being cut up into thongs with which the rafters of the lodge are fastened. He succeeded in killing the buffalo with one arrow.

Another man, now middle-aged, belonged to the "holding-to-a-dog's-tail" company. He made successively the fly-dance, the star-dance, and then the crazy-dance.

Star and War Dances.

171 561 796 575 [177] At present the organization into comparatively small companies is no longer maintained. In its place there is a division of the young men of the tribe into two groups, one of which practises, or did until recently, the star-dance; the other, the grass or war dance. The latter is universally stated to be a recent importation from the Sioux, apparently within the present generation. The star-dance, however, is an old ceremony, it is claimed; and this assertion is borne out by the occurrence among the Arapaho of the analogous star-dance. Among the Arapaho the star-dance, like the kit-fox dance, is a preliminary which appears to be gone through by all the men of the tribe, but has neither the standing, the organization, nor the definite observances and regalia of the subsequent ceremonies. Among the Gros Ventre the star-dance was formerly also outside the regular series of dances. It is generally spoken of as having been a warrior dance, made at any time and on any suitable occasion, and without the rigorously prescribed course of other dances. Some men seem to have made it before the fly-dance, and others afterward. Even in former times, however, before the war-dance had come among the Gros Ventre, the star-dance included only part of the young men of the tribe. The old men surviving from certain companies have never taken part in the star-dance, and explain this by the fact that there was rivalry between their company and the star-dancers. It might thus, perhaps, seem that a star company had a ceremony of its own, the star-dance, from which the members of rival companies naturally held aloof; but it is very improbable that only one age-company parallel to the others, and none of these others, should have had a distinctive ceremony. It is also improbable that this company, being one of many, should have been so large as to include about half of the men of the tribe, for it appears that some such large proportion took part in the star-dance. This makes it almost impossible to believe that there existed a star company exactly

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

analogous to the "green-grass" and "young-sheep" and other companies, 171
but having an additional ceremony confined to itself. On the other hand, 561
if the "stars" were not one of the age-companies, it is hard to see with what 575
groups of men they competed. It is therefore not improbable that there 796
formerly existed among the Gros Ventre a star-society, which had a ceremony of its own, and which, while based partly on age in being constituted of young men, was outside and independent of the scheme of the benaa"wu, with which it had no, or only indirect, relation, and with whose working out it must in some measure have conflicted. Such a society, which would be a true society in being based on a membership determined by choice, purchase, initiation, or supernatural experience, — in other words, by selection, would be of a type of organization quite distinct from the ordinary Gros Ventre or Arapaho age-company performing in the course of its existence an entire series of tribal ceremonies, but would have abundant parallels in other ceremonial societies on the Plains and elsewhere. Its presence would therefore be readily explainable as an incipient intrusion due to the cultural influence of some other tribe, the chief objection to such an explanation being the occurrence of the star-dance also among the Arapaho, but without a known association with a special society. This suggested character of the Gros Ventre star-society and star-dance fits the facts, but is after all only hypothetical; and altogether the relation of the ceremony to the remainder of the Gros Ventre ceremonial organizations is not yet clear.

The star-dance as formerly held is said to have lasted four days and 796
nights. There might be further subsequent dancing. At the beginning of the ceremony, the dancers went to four places at the camp-circle facing or representing the four cardinal directions, and at each place danced before the tent of a prominent man. The owner of the tent gave away property and filled a pipe for the dancers, after smoking which they proceeded to the next one. After having danced in the four places, they danced in the middle of the camp-circle. This might be in the open air, or in a lodge made of two large tents combined. The singers were four old men, who accompanied themselves on small hand drums. The dancers' wives sat behind these four old men and sang with them. The dancer's relatives at times went to them and danced with them, taking their rattles and temporarily using [302]
them. The dancers' bodies seem to have been variously decorated; but they [534]
had no distinctive regalia except rattles. These were alike in general character, being loop-shaped, and decorated with gaudy paint and attachments, but there seems to have been no attempt at making them uniform. The dancing-lodge was elliptical, with the door towards the east and a fire near the western end. The singers were at this end, and the dancers near them, in two lines, along the sides of the lodge, facing each other. In dancing

l: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 they did not stay in one place, but at times moved about. They shook their rattles constantly. They did not sing, but uttered a pressed-out "Hah." Two atsaan (assistants or servants of the dance) attended near the door. [624] They brought back such of the dancers as became exhausted from lack of sleep and left the ceremony. Two men who had fought and struck a mounted enemy while they themselves were mounted, rode on horseback. When they went to dance, the assistants went to them and helped them dismount. If the dancers were inactive, these two men went about among them to make them arise. If the dancers remained on the ground, they struck them with their whips. The spectators outside lifted up the bottom of the tent and looked underneath; or, as the tent was not very high (the lodge being roofless), those who were on horseback looked over it.

534 293 The Gros Ventre star-rattles consist of a tube of rawhide, an inch or less in diameter, bent on itself into a hoop three or four inches across, and attached to a stick handle half a foot or more in length. Apparently one end of the tube projects out from the hoop forming the head of the rattle, sufficiently to allow the stick to be inserted. The rawhide is painted, and ornamented with three or five bunches of feathers. The handle is wrapped with cloth, the upper end of which usually is cut into a small fringe at the base of the head of the rattle, while the lower end hangs free beyond the handle. The general outline of the rattle is similar to the Arapaho star-rattle, this having a round or kite-shaped flat head at the end of the handle. The hoop feature is, however, wanting in the Arapaho rattles, which [531] are without a perforation. The Gros Ventre decorations of their rattles — whether feathers, cloth attachments, or painting — are usually crude and gaudy. It seems that the rattles now in use are a degenerate modern form. [177] In the majority of cases the feathers attached are dyed: some are cut from the quill. This indicates a recent modifying influence. Many of the feathers are cut off transversely. This may or may not be an old feature. The piece shown in Fig. 31 has least of the base qualities of these rattles, and is a probable approximation to the older type.

Of some of the specimens to be seen in the Museum, descriptions are here given.

Fig. 31 (50-1783). Handle covered with red flannel, which hangs below the handle about two feet. Fringe of same at base of head, and same forms periphery of head. Rawhide of head painted blue, red on inside of hoop. A string appears to have been wound around the head while the hide was fresh, and removed after the painting, leaving radiating white depressions. Head ornamented at top and sides with three bunches of four black-and-white, squarish, half-downy feathers attached by thongs. At the top there is also an eagle-feather. Handle wound with thong, forming at the end a loop to pass over the wrist. The head of this rattle was said to represent a star.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Specimen Museum No. 50-1767 has a small rough head and a crooked handle: Handle wound with blue cotton cloth. Two strips of green cloth hang from the end of the handle. No fringe at the base of the head. Head painted yellow-green; on this, eight red spots centred with yellow and bordered with green; on the opposite side, five green spots bordered by red. Three bunches of feathers. Feathers at top, — one eagle; several smaller, dyed violet-blue and yellow, cut off or slit from quill. Two bunches at sides, yellow-dyed and chicken feathers. Places at periphery for the attachment of other bunches. 534 293

Specimen Museum No. 50-1806. Handle short, scarcely six inches; head forming a large even circle nearly four inches across. Handle wrapped with blue woollen cloth, chiefly covered by the winding of a red-painted thong; free end of blue cloth more than a foot long. Fringe of three or four pieces of the same cloth at base of head. Head painted over red. Feathers attached in three places, all cut off across, and dyed violet. Two are attached at top, one on each side.

Specimen Museum No. 50-1807. Handle about six inches, head scarcely three. Rawhide covers the stick nearly to end. Two upper inches of covering exposed; below this, handle covered over rawhide with dark-blue cloth; short fringe above; fringe of several strips, about one foot long, below. All rawhide painted yellow; on each side of head, a red line; inside of hoop, about eight blue spots; periphery, blue. Feathers in five places. Top, eagle-feather, white portion reddened, yellow-green stripe on black along quill; three green-dyed cut-off feathers. At each side, below, one or two yellow-dyed cut-off feathers. On each side, still farther below, two or three similar feathers dyed green.

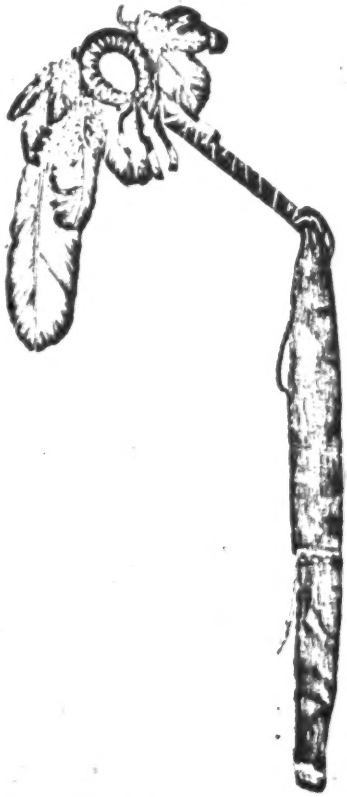


Fig. 31 (50-1783). Star-dance Rattle. Length of hoop and handle, 30 cm.

Specimen Museum No. 50-1808 is similar to the last in several details, and was obtained from the same person. Size a little larger than last. Extent and painting of rawhide the same. Handle completely covered with winding of red cotton cloth; no fringe above, two short ends below. At top, bunch of fifteen yellow-dyed feathers cut off very short; on each side, bunch of four (in one case, two) feathers dyed green; the upper portions of quills cut out, the vanes more complete.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

534 The large amount of individual variation within the limits of the general type characterizing these rattles occurs apparently also among the Arapaho star-rattles.

746 In the war-dance as it was held when first introduced, there were two men who had wands representing swords, and several wearing the familiar [293] belts of crow-feathers with tails falling behind and projections at the lower part of the back. As among the Arapaho, these belts are referred to the crow. A drum was used, made of a cottonwood board or slab bent into [534] a circle, covered both above and below with horse-skin, and hung on four sticks. Four drumsticks went with it, one of which belonged to the owner of the drum, the three others to three different individuals. The sides of the drum were covered, half with red cloth and half with blue, and the skin was painted half blue and half yellow. When the men who owned the swords, the crow-belts, and the drum, gave these away, which they generally did at [431] the same time, a dance was held. The new owners, in turn, by giving the objects to their successors, would furnish the occasion for another performance of the dance.

The war-dancers dressed quite variously. Some wore skunk-skin strips around the leg below the knee, beaded, and with small bells attached. Some wore similar strips around the head. Others had the well-known upright head-dress of deer-tail hair. Some carried fans of eagle-tails; some, whips; some, painted sticks with attached feathers. The dancing went on in a lodge similar to that of the star-dancers. The owner of the drum had his tent near this lodge in the middle of the camp-circle, and the members of the dance went to him to eat. If the head man of the star-dancers was popular, he was asked by the rival war-company to pitch his tent in the middle of the camp-circle, near the owner of the war-dance drum. There are said to have been no assistants in this ceremony, nor any old men as singers; but four of the wives of the dancers were selected to sing. The two men [624 with swords (kakaat) had functions similar to those of the two mounted men 626] with whips in the star-dance. They urged the laggard dancers to get up, and, if they fell down, struck them with their wands. If the man thus struck bore the blow like a man, as the Indians call it, the sword-bearer made him a present; but if he became angry he received nothing, and appears to have been looked upon with ridicule or contempt.

The war-dance as at present given is different from the form described. It is no longer a young men's dance, nor confined to a certain group. All the people of the tribe take part in it. It is very similar in general character to the present-day Arapaho crow-dance, as well as in the place it occupies in the life of the people. Among the Gros Ventre it is now the only dance held.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Recently these two bodies of young men performing respectively the star-dance and the war-dance have supplanted entirely the older, more numerous age-companies. In late years they have taken the place of the age-companies in the ceremonies connected with the erection of the sun-dance lodge. There was then considerable rivalry between them, and it is said that a member of either company who should take part with the other would be abused by his companions, and perhaps have his clothes torn. Recently also the two groups have had certain social functions, which among most Plains tribes are in the hands of tribal bodies or societies. They had charge of the moving of the camp-circle and of locating it. If a man disapproved of their selection, or pitched his tent elsewhere than they directed, they overturned it, and perhaps destroyed his property or killed his horses. If buffalo were seen and others than themselves went ahead and killed them, these two companies cut both the meat and the skin of such game into small pieces. 178 561 796 [625]

The Fly-Dance.

The fly-dance (nouba^{n}w^{n}), the first of the dances, seems to have been regarded in some ways as preliminary to the series, rather than part of it, somewhat like the Arapaho kit-fox and star dances. The dancers were called noubän ("flies"). They were young men, sometimes described as boys. Apparently they were of an age where many or all of them were still unmarried, for no mention of their wives participating in the ceremony is made. The duration of the dance is not quite sure. It is said, like all the other ceremonies, to have continued four days; but another informant gave one day as the length of the ceremony. It is not clear whether or not a lodge was erected for the ceremony. In any case, however, the dance was performed outside of the camp-circle. A prominent feature seems to have been the food cooked by the relatives of the young dancers, and brought to the dancing-place. In distinction from what occurred in the other dances, "grandfathers" were secured very easily for this ceremony, which goes to show the light regard in which it was held by the elder men. The old men of the tribe are said to have gone out to the dancing-place, and, on being selected by groups of dancers as "grandfathers," to have accepted at once. 796

The dancing went on during the day. The dancers were practically naked; and their entire body, as customary in Arapaho and Gros Ventre ceremonies, was painted over. A common style of painting, or perhaps the characteristic one of the dance, was red, with a white stripe on the face and another on the belly. The pledger of the dance (yenouhuxtj^{i}; Arapaho, yanahut^{i}) was painted yellow, with corresponding black stripes. After the [291 302]

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 painting, an old man took the lead, followed by the pledger, and he by the dancers in file. All the dancers carried small hoops ornamented with quill-embroidery and with small feathers. These hoops were carried on sticks. When the old man stopped, the dancers gathered in a circle about him to dance. They took hold of the corners of their robes, and flapped them like wings, buzzing and humming like mosquitoes. After they had done this four times, they lay on the ground on their faces. Beyond the small hoops there seem to have been no regalia. There were also neither whistles, rattles, nor drums used, except that the "grandfathers" each had a leafy branch (as of willow, cottonwood, or cherry), which they shook, rustling it in time to the singing.

[293] [534]

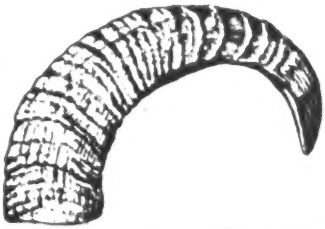


Fig. 32 (50-1839). Fly-dance Horn. Length, 18 cm.

Towards evening the dancers went to one side of the camp-circle, but still outside of it. There they danced. Going west of the camp-circle, they danced there, then to the side opposite to that where they had begun, and finally to the east or opening of the camp. When they had danced four times here, all the people had retired to their tents for the night, and all outdoor work had been done. The dancers immediately started out in all directions, looking for people. If they saw any one, they pursued him until they overtook him. They carried cactus-spines and sharp claws, with which they pricked him. If he succeeded in reaching a tent, they walked around outside, pelting the tent with pebbles. It is said that if the person attacked fanned himself, as he would for flies, the dancers would not sting him. In all their actions in this part of the ceremony, the dancers seem to have imitated flies or mosquitoes. Going about among the tents, they also took meat hanging outside, cooked it, and ate their fill. They also played and ran races until they were tired.

[293]

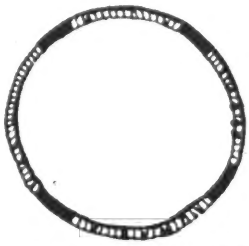


Fig. 33 (50-1936 a). Fly-dance Hoop. Diameter, 8 cm.

[787] As to the origin of the dance, it is said that once an old man was asleep, when he dreamed this dance. The fly that gave him the ceremony was a mosquito. It directed him to institute the dance, and showed him how it should be conducted.

[293] Fig. 32 shows a small mountain-goat horn, painted over red, used in this dance as one of the implements for pricking or scratching.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Fig. 33 shows one of the small quill-wrapped hoops carried on a stick in the fly-dance. It is about three inches across, and lacks the feathers once attached to it. The hoop is *not continuous, but consists of four* slightly curved sticks. Each of these is wound with yellow quills, and in the middle with black (really dark-brown) fibres. The quill-wrapping encloses a sinew strand, which passes from one stick to the other, holding them together into a flexible, somewhat four-cornered hoop. At each of the four dark marks an eagle-plume was formerly attached, and in addition an eagle-feather (specimen Museum No. 50 1936b) was hung from the hoop. This hoop was made, for the man from whom it was obtained, at the time he took part in the fly-dance. 796 293

The Crazy-Dance.

The second ceremony, the crazy-dance, corresponds pretty closely to the Arapaho crazy-dance. When it was summer, and the time came to make the ceremony in fulfilment of the pledge previously given, the different bands of the tribe gathered in a single camp-circle. Certain men, leaving this camp, then went out to select a suitable site for the dance. When they had found this, the camp started for the place, while they made piles of buffalo-chips in a circle, indicating the place for the camp. The company about to make the ceremony gathered at night, and, taking a pipe of black stone, went stealthily to the tent of an old man whom they had selected to put up the lodge (that is, direct the ceremony) for them. They entered his tent while he was sleeping, woke him, and handed him the pipe. When he signified his acceptance by taking it, they kissed him in thanks, and made him presents. After he had smoked the pipe, he told them to obtain "grandfathers," which they did. 796

When the preparations had begun to be made, crows and owls were killed by the dancers, because they used their feathers. The dancers' regalia consisted of anklets of badger-skin and of quill-embroidered leg-lets, to both of which four crow-feathers and buffalo-fetlocks, or antelope-hoofs, were attached as ornaments and rattles. Around the head they wore a narrow strip of skin embroidered with quill-work, to which an owl's head was tied on one side. Around their necks hung another quill-embroidered thong, at the end of which was a whistle of eagle-wing bone. A buffalo robe painted red was worn. A round hole was cut in this through which the head was put, so that the dancers did not have to hold the garment in place. The piece cut out for the head was not entirely detached, but left hanging down the back. Two long streamers of skin hung down the back [825] [292] [534]

1; Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 from this part of the robe. At the end of each of these, a bunch of owl-feathers, or rather a piece of owl-skin, was attached. The dancers carried bows, to each end of which seven crow-feathers were tied. Down was [411] fastened to the bowstring at several places. At the handle of the bow a strip of bear-skin, owl-feathers, and some sage were fastened with a buck-skin thong. Four arrows accompanied each bow. One had a metal point, which subsequently was made more effective by medicine. The three other arrows were blunt, or had wooden points that had been chewed soft so as to be harmless.

The pledger, and three other men called "brothers" (hinähäbyiitou), who sat apart from the other dancers in the lodge and acted somewhat differently on certain occasions, had bows that were unornamented, except for the down on the string. These four men wore their robes turned so that the hair was outside, whereas the other dancers wore the dressed side out.

[302] All the dancers were painted entirely red. Their hair was daubed with [824] white paint. They stopped the left ear with a mushroom, such as was used for tinder, and put paint (apparently white) over the ear and the entire left side of the face.

Four young men who would be good workers were selected to be the assistants or servants (atsaan) of this company. They brought wood and water, and performed other services.

[346] The lodge for this dance is described as having been made of travois or tent poles about which tent-skins were drawn. It was open to the east. There was a fire about in the centre. Facing the opening of the lodge was a small partial enclosure or screen constructed on dog-travois. In this were the pledger and his three companions, the "brothers." The dancers are said to have occupied the northern half of the wall in the dancing-lodge; the "grandfathers," behind whom sat the dancers' wives, the southern half. As among the Arapaho, the dancers were divided into two sections; the tall men toward the rear and the short men toward the front, of the lodge. These two divisions competed against each other in the races to follow. The dancers' bows were stood up in the ground in a row just beyond the fire.

During the four days of the dance, the dancers, every morning before sunrise, went to their "grandfathers" to be painted. Apparently they went to their "grandfathers'" tents, and not to the dancing-lodge, for this [302] purpose. The dancers' wives went with them. They were naked, and [824] were painted too. No one but the "grandfather" looked at them. Before 788 being painted, the dancers made incense of sage-leaves on burning charcoal. They also rubbed their bodies with fragrant fir or balsam leaves

Crushed and mixed with fat.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

crushed and mixed with fat. When the painting was completed, food from the young men's parents was brought to the old men. The old men also presented their "grandsons" with food. The food was then eaten. During the day the dancers and their "grandfathers" were in the dancing-lodge. In connection with the beginning of the dancing, a badger-skin was used. This was entirely wrapped, except at the head, in a flat rope of rawhide, half of which (one side?) was painted red, the other half black. This skin lay on the ground before the pledger of the dance, in or in front of his small enclosure, with the head toward the east. Glowing charcoal was laid before the row of bows, and sweet-grass (niasö; Arapaho, niox") was put on the coals to incense the bows. The pledger, rising, took the badger-skin, and, holding it with the head pointing forward, walked slowly around the inside of the lodge, and then to the smouldering incense, over which he made four passes with the skin; then returning to his enclosure, he laid the badger-skin on the ground. Taking out a stick tied in with the skin, he struck the skin as hard as he could. At this, a singer at the middle of the back or western end of the lodge — who held a stick as high as a man, wrapped with buckskin, and with buffalo or antelope hoofs hanging along its length — struck the end on the ground, thus beginning the rattling that accompanied the singing. The old men began to sing, while the dancers simultaneously blew their whistles, and cried "Yaa!" The old men stood up and sang, and the dancers went to them, each of them to his "grandfather," usually three or four to one old man. The old men then drilled them, showing them how to dance and how to handle their bows and their robes. It seems that the dancers stood at the opening of the lodge, somewhat on the south. After dancing to four songs, during which they whistled and at the end of each of which they cried "Yaa," they dashed off in a race around a monument that had been erected at some distance to the southeast. If one of the division of tall men returned to the lodge first and thus won the race for his side, the short men filled pipes for the tall men and presented them to them to smoke, and, of course, *vice versâ*.

After the cessation of the dancing, and when it was dark, old men cried out to the people to retire to their tents, the dancers' wives being about to go out with the "grandfathers." As the women went out, the dancers stood in the lodge in a circle, singing loudly and shouting in conclusion. The "grandfathers" went to the north of the camp-circle, where they stood in a row. Their "grand-daughters," that is to say, the dancers' wives, each carrying a pipe, followed them, and stood behind them. They addressed their "grandfathers," praying them to take the pipe and smoke it. After much persuasion, the old man accepted the pipe. Then the woman prayed to him again, asking him to pray in her behalf, that she might be

I: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 successful and happy in this world, in acquiring wealth and in living a long life. Then the old man pointed the pipe east, south, west, north, and up, lit it, and smoked it. Then wiping it, and dropping the ashes out of it, he held the pipe up toward the sky, and prayed for his "grand-daughter," then laid it on the ground. The woman was naked, except for her robe. She then begged the old man to give her the medicine called tawaanaséó (the Arapaho hâcawaanaxu). It is said that sometimes the old man gave her none, but undoubtedly it was customary for him to give it to her. Only a small piece was used.

After this the women returned to the dancing-lodge, where their husbands were waiting for them. They did not go together, but singly. A boy or young man had been selected to stand outside the door, and watch for the women returning. As a woman came near enough to be recognized, he called into the lodge that she was coming, whereupon the dancers came out. Her husband and all the others kissed her. Her husband [576] kissed the "grandfather" also. One by one the other women came back, and were received in the same way. If the woman had received medicine, she gave half to her husband. He chewed it up, and then rubbed himself over his body with it.

For four nights this appears to have been done. On all but the last night, it is said, that, on the return of the women, they and their husbands left the lodge and returned to their tents to sleep, to be painted again next morning. The last night, after the women and their "grandfathers" had returned, the old men picked out from the row of bows their "grandsons'," and, standing north and south of the fire, danced, holding the bows; their "grandsons" meanwhile dancing with them, but the women sitting in their places.

These observances connected with the giving of medicine by the "grandfathers" to the dancers' wives are found, without essential modification, in the three following dances, as well as in this. It will be seen that they are considerably more developed than the corresponding practices among the Arapaho.[1]

[1] In the Arapaho crazy and dog dances the procedure is not carried quite so far. Dorsey has described almost the same practice as occurring in the Arapaho sun-dance. What takes place on this occasion in the Arapaho crazy and dog dances has been summarized in Vol. XVIII, pp. 193, 200, of the Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History. The following somewhat more precise account is appended for comparison with the Gros Ventre. The "grandfather" and the dancer's wife (who is naked, except, presumably, for a robe) go off. As or before they go it is said aloud, "He gives his wife away." She is given, theoretically, not to her husband's ceremonial "grandfather," but to "the four old men" that play a part in esoteric Arapaho ritual. The woman prays, asking the old man for life. He spits medicine on the ground four times, once for each of the four old men. She lies down before him, stretching her legs and arms, facing him. He asks "the grandfather above" — apparently "our father" — to look, and puts away his desire. Restraining himself, he covers her with a robe, draws her up, and leads her back, pushing her gently before him. When she rejoins her husband, the latter says, "Hahó'u" ("thanks") four times. That this custom of the Arapaho and Gros Ventre is not confined to them, is evident from a well-known passage in Lewis and Clark.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

All that has been described took place for four successive days. While it is not clearly so stated, it seems likely that the four nights on which medicine was given to the dancers' wives constituted the four-days' period of painting and dancing. On the fourth day, after the dancing, certain special spectacular ceremonies were gone through, analogous to those which in all the succeeding dances terminated the ceremony. In this dance, however, a second period of four days, in which the dancers acted in their assumed capacity of being crazy or foolish, followed these spectacular ceremonies of the fourth day. 796

On this fourth day, two prominent chiefs, noted for their success in war, were selected. They held bared knives, and two tent-poles were brought to them. Each of them recounted four of his most distinguished coups. They then cut up the tent-poles into small pieces, and piled them up at the fireplace of the lodge and set them on fire. The flames blazed up high, while the dancers stood north and south of the fire with their "grandfathers" and danced. The fire was kept up and tended so that all the wood would be simultaneously consumed. The dancers' relatives held them by the hair or body, wherever they could seize them, while the dancers stood like horses trying to break loose, and blew their whistles. Each tried to be the first to rush into the fire. They seem to have moved toward the fire four times without entering it. The fourth time, at a signal, they were released, and rushed into the fire, dancing and stamping it with their bare feet until they had put it out. Medicine was put on the skin, and no one is said to have been burned; but men have fainted in the fire. One informant, who said that he had been the first to jump into the fire, stated that the soles of his feet became very hot, but that his skin was not burned. [554] [789]

After the fire had been put out, the dancers went to their "grandfathers," who prayed over their bows, put medicine on them, and gave them to the young men. The old men then sang and the dancers marched around in a circle for four songs. At the end of the last song, they ran out of the lodge, racing to a monument, which had been erected by the young men of other companies, at some distance to the southeast, and back again to the lodge. As they returned, each passed between two men standing near the entrance of the lodge, to whom he gave his bow as he ran between them. One of these two men was the tallest man that could be secured; the other was as short as possible. One of them took the bows of the tall division of dancers; the other, of the short division. It is said that these two men received bows until they had a large armful, but that they never made a mistake in taking a bow from a man of the other division. It appears, however, that the racers carried their bows in their right or left 796 526

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

hand, according as they belonged to one division or the other. Vessels of water were ready to pour on the racers in order to cool them. The four "brothers," the dancers previously separate from the rest at the eastern end of the lodge, did not run with the crowd, but started out slowly together, their faces covered with their robes. They trotted at a slow pace over the same course as the other dancers. As they returned, long after the crowd, the boys, young men, and young women of the camp, had gathered on both sides, and pelted them with buffalo-chips until they reached the dancing-lodge. There is, in this slow following of the pledger and his three companions, a reminiscence of the white-fool, the dancer of highest degree in the Arapaho crazy-lodge, who on all occasions contrasts by his slow movements with the other dancers.[1] After the return of all the dancers, they presented horses loaded with property to their "grandfathers," and these made similar presents to them. These gifts seem to have been payments to the old men for their instruction and painting, and to have been made at the conclusion of the part of the ceremony which was under their control. From this time on, the dancers' wives returned to their tents, and took no further part in the ceremony.

After this followed two observances. It is not certain which of the two came first. A crowd of people were waiting for the dancers in the open. The dancers, wearing their best moccasins put on loosely without being tied, left the lodge; and the waiting people, mostly women and children, ran after them, pulling off their moccasins, and, when they could not succeed in doing so otherwise, seizing their feet, and tripping them as they went. The dancers did not try to escape, or save their moccasins, but allowed them to be taken. Or, again, an old man who was poor was selected, and, having been given a pipe to smoke in order that he might accept, he went to the east of the camp-circle. A buffalo robe was brought, incensed four times with sweet-grass placed on burning charcoal or buffalo-chips, and then placed over the old man, with the hair side out, as, bent over, he knelt on the ground. The dancers gathered about him, and

[1] According to an Arapaho account obtained, somewhat different from those previously utilized, there are two white-fools, not one. It is not clear which information is more correct. The White-fools always follow the dancers. If one of the ordinary dancers should be behind them, he would become unable to move. This is the result of any violation of a rule of the ceremony by a participant. In such cases the white-fools have the power to cure them by taking off their owl-feather head-bands, and rubbing them over the body with them. The white-fools are addressed as heiçâbihin ("sisters-in-law," strictly, "brother or sister-in-law" of opposite sex from the speaker). The dancers, to look at a person, put their head to the ground, and pretend to look with their rump. They throw dung into tents, calling it "food." If people look at them through awl-holes in a tent, they at once shoot the tent in that place. Going out on the prairie, they say, "Let us not shoot into the air," and shoot up. When the arrows fall in plain sight, they cannot find them: if they fall into brush or tall grass, they find them at once. They imitate, often with obscene renderings, anything that they hear, such as a person's speech, or a dog's bark. They paralyze dogs by pointing at them an arrow to which tcetcâtcet is attached. They give the dogs they kill to their "grandfathers" to eat. As soon as they take off their head-bands, they become rational. Mooney's account of the Cheyenne and Arapaho crazy-dance, which seems to refer chiefly to the former, mentions two white-fools; compare Ghost-Dance Religion, op. cit., 1033.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the old man who had directed the ceremony stood by him. Until this time, the dancers' bows, which were to play so prominent a part in the dance of the next four days, had been unstrung. Each of the dancers carried a pair of moccasins in his belt, or perhaps some other property. The pledger now came up to have his bow stretched. The old man in charge of the dance, receiving the bow from him, rested it on the back of the crouching old man. Four times he bent it, and the fourth time slipped the string into its notch. Then he untied the three arrows from the bow and gave them to the young man, who put his moccasins or other gift under the croucher's robe. Another and another dancer came up with his bow, until all their bows had been strung on the back of the old man, and his robe swelled out from the accumulating gifts. 796 431

While the bows were being strung, the people took down the dancing-lodge, which, by the time of the return of the dancers to the centre of the camp-circle, was completely gone. The dancers now stood in a circle while the old man in charge of the dance, or, according to another account, two of the "grandfathers," sang for them. The long stick with rattling hoofs was shaken, and the young men danced for four songs. At the end of each song, they aimed an arrow at the sky, making a motion of shooting, and crying "Yaa!" At the end of the fourth song, all shot as high up as they could. As the arrows fell back they did not try to avoid them, and, it is said, were never hit. By this time the people had watered their horses and done whatever outdoor work was necessary, and retired to their tents, for, immediately after shooting into the air, the dancers rushed in all directions; and from this moment they had full liberty about the camp, except indoors, for four days. Any one seen outside of a tent was shot with the soft blunt arrows. He was pursued amid shots and blowing of whistles. If a man was caught, he was made to sit down, and all the dancers, seeing what was happening, gathered. If he rode, he was pursued on horseback until he was overtaken, whereupon he would say, "Do not wait: I will not give you a dance," meaning "Wait: I will give you a dance." Then they stood about him, and he sang and they danced. At the end of his song, every one shouted "Yaa!" and kicked him until he was knocked over. Perhaps he would say, "Kick me hard." Then they would barely touch him. Sometimes he said, "Now you must kill me." If, however, he said, "Do not hurt me," he would be hurt severely. Scarcely any one went out during these four days, except, of course, the dancers' "grandfathers," who were exempt from annoyance. 796 786

The pointed arrow tied to each bow, and ordinarily not loosened, was prayed over for each young man by his "grandfather;" and a piece of root esteemed as exceedingly powerful, and called tjitjäätsä" (Arapaho, tee- 411 796

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

441 tcäätcei), was attached to the shaft just behind the point. This root is the
796 well-known poisonous wild parsnip. The arrow-point seems to have been painted blue. Even a slight scratch with this arrow was, on account of the power of the medicine, supposed to cause fits and death. The theory was, that if any one became angry under the unbridled annoyances of the crazy-dancers, and attempted to resist, he would be shot with this arrow. It is, of course, extremely unlikely that this ever actually occurred, or, if it did, the offender was, as among the Arapaho, no doubt immediately cured by the dancers from his imaginary convulsions or paralysis. If buffalo were driven among the tents of the camp-

[293]

Fig. 34.

Fig. 35.

Fig. 34 (50-1884 b). Crazy-dance Regalia. Length, 29 cm.
Fig. 35 (50-1884 c). Crazy-dance Regalia. Length, 23 cm.

circle, they were shot with these arrows, and are believed to have been killed, even if only very slightly wounded. Dogs were also killed in this way.

796 After four days of this playing, the ceremony ended. At its conclusion
431 the bows were given away to boys who were relatives of the dancers; but the other regalia were kept, as the dance was not infrequently repeated.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

293
796
191

More regalia of the crazy-dance than of any other ceremony were obtained for the Museum; but not a single set secured is complete. The Arapaho do not keep their crazy-dance bows after the ceremony, so that, under the present much more complete disappearance of Gros Ventre regalia, the preservation of a bow (see Plate XII) is very fortunate, though it lacks string, arrows, the sage for the handle, and the buckskin thong for wrapping the handle. The remaining ornaments of the bow have been re-attached to it. None of the peculiar crazy-dance robes or capes seem to be any longer in existence. Descriptions and drawings by the Indians show

[293]

Fig. 36.

Fig. 37.

Fig. 36 (50 1884 c). Crazy-dance Regalia. Length, 37 cm.
Fig. 37 (50 1884 b). Crazy-dance Regalia. Length, 25 cm.

that they must have been very similar to those of the Arapaho. The Gros Ventre, however, declare theirs to have been painted entirely red; those of the Arapaho are part red and part white. Two pieces of feathered owl-skin

293
796

1: Kroeber .E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 for the ends of the streamers of this robe have been preserved in a few sets
293 of these regalia. The head-band, leglets, anklets, and feather and fur attachments of the bow, also exist in two or more sets in the Museum. They agree entirely, so that only the set shown in Figs. 34, 35, 36, and 37, need be described. This set lacks only the whistle and whistle necklace, which have been supplied from another set (see Plate XII).

[411] The bow (see Plate XII) is three feet long, an inch wide, nearly rectangular in cross-section, unbacked, and slightly reddened. At each end is tied a piece of skin slit into seven fringes, to the end of each of which is wrapped a crow-wing feather. At the middle of the bow is tied a strip of bear-skin a foot long and an inch or less wide. With this are six owl-feathers, — all to be held to the bow, it will be remembered, together with some sage, by a thong. The pieces of owl-skin for the streamers on the robe (Fig. 34) need no comment. The anklets of badger-skin are (Fig. 35) a foot long, an inch or more wide, tied together by two thongs, and near one end have four small hoofs attached. The head, leg, and neck bands differ from one another only in length and in attachments. They consist of a strip of skin a quarter of an inch wide, completely wrapped with yellow porcupine-quills. In four places are areas extending about half an inch, that are covered with dark-brown fibres. Attached to the head-band (Fig. 36) is part of a small owl-skin, including one of the mandibles. The whistle on the neck-band (Plate XII) is made of the wing-bone of an eagle or similar bird, and appears to be unornamented. It has been broken. At one end of the leg-bands (Fig. 37) are four small crow-feathers, attached by red-painted thongs.

The Kit-Fox Dance.

796 The kit-fox dance, the next in order after the crazy-dance, was called nouha"wu; and the dancers, nouhunen ("kit-fox men"). In its general course this ceremony was exactly analogous to the first part of the crazy-dance. For four nights, the dancers' wives went out with their "grandfathers" to receive medicine, and for four days, the dancers themselves danced in the lodge erected in the centre of the camp-circle. On the fourth day of the ceremony, or "after four days," as the Indians say, the dancers went to the tent of a prominent chief and danced at his door, which was
[431] equivalent to asking him for gifts. The chief would give them horses and other property. Three other chiefs were accorded the same distinction. The camp thereupon broke, and the dancers, going ahead, put the property which they had received down on the ground in a row. The camp coming up, the brave men of the tribe made a charge on these things, as if they were

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

an enemy; and each took from among the property as nearly as possible such objects as he had actually captured in war. One who had stolen horses would take a horse; one who had taken a gun from an enemy would pick out a gun. While this was being done, or soon after, the dancers were dancing, concluding with a race similar to that in the crazy-dance. This marked the end of the ceremony. 796

There were several degrees of distinction in this dance. Two men had crooked lances wrapped with otter-skin. In four places these lances were tied about with small strips of white fur from which a pair of eagle-feathers hung. These lances were called nouçä^{n}ts'ta^{n}. Two other lances were straight, and wrapped with jack-rabbit skin. These also bore feathers. A single dancer had a rattle of the globular shape common on the Plains. Half of the rattle was painted red, and half blue; and feathers were attached both to the top of the rattle and to the bottom of its handle. These regalia of honor were given to men renowned in war. A pipe was brought such a man, and if he thought himself entitled to the honor, and was ready to accept it, he took the pipe. If a man felt that others were really braver than himself, or had some other reason, he refused to take the pipe. One informant stated that he had declined the proffered honor because his wife's brother had recently died. The rank and file of the kit-fox dancers are said to have worn belts of prairie-dog skin. How far these corresponded with the biitaha^{n}wu belts of the Arapaho is uncertain. The fur-wrapped crooked and straight lances are certainly similar to the crooked and straight lances indicating the second and third degrees in the Arapaho biitaha^{n}wu. 796 554 293 [534]

Two girls took part in this ceremony. They were girls who were much thought of and beloved by their relatives. One of the dancers carried a kit-fox skin, the inside of which was painted blue. His companion had the rattle that has been described. While he rattled, the other, holding the skin by the neck and the tail, pointed it at the other dancers. These ran off, and this seems to have been the signal for the beginning of the dance. The two girls followed these two men everywhere. Their parents and relatives gave away great quantities of property in the dancing-lodge. Something similar is found in one of the Cheyenne society-dances, in which four young women accompanied the dancers from place to place. 796 857 593 [171]

Nothing was learned about the origin of the kit-fox dance, except that it is said to have been given by the kit-foxes, which is like what the Cheyenne tell of their analogous society. 796

A neck-band of badger-skin is the only object secured said to have been used in the kit-fox dance. To the end of it a tip of whitish rabbit-fur is attached. The lower part of the piece, which bears this rabbit-fur, hangs down the dancer's back. The upper portion, which is about four inches wide, is slit for a distance of a foot. Through this slit the head is inserted. [292]

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The Dog-Dance.

796 Next after the kit-fox dance is the dog-dance, hotibya"wu. The dancers were called hotibyi ("dogs"). What has been said about the general course of the kit-fox ceremony applies also to this. On the last day, the dancers danced before the tents of several prominent men of the tribe for gifts. Then, going ahead of the route which the camp would take, they spread out this property and waited. When the camp arrived, a stick with rattles attached, similar to that used for the same purpose in the crazy-dance, was struck on the ground by one of the old men, whereupon the singing commenced, and the dancers danced four times. At the end of the fourth song, they raced, during which time, if not before, the people of the camp, it appears, seized the property.

The dog-dance is said to have been given by a dog. A long-haired dog was left behind when the camp left. An old man going into the hills to acquire supernatural power saw the dog following the trail, and, wondering, went to see, and pitied him. He went to sleep by him; and the dog, knowing the old man's pity for him, pitied him, and, appearing to him in a dream, said he would give him a dance, the dog-dance. He especially described to him the highest degree of the dance, the tsööyanchi, which seems to be a representation of himself.

796 The dancers wore a strip of skin or red cloth on which four round figures
292 were embroidered in quills, and which passed over one shoulder and under the other, the lower end dragging on the ground. At this end there was a hole, through which, in time of war, a stick was stuck. The wearers then did not flee, even if to remain resulted in their being killed. These scarfs appear to have resembled closely the scarfs worn by the Arapaho dancers of the second and third degree in the same ceremony. They were called naa"tsöiya". In addition the dancers wore bunchy head-dresses of owl feathers and of two eagle-feathers. They also carried rattles of a stick on which hoofs were hung.

796 Two men were of higher degree, that is to say, honored on account of
554 bravery. These were the "shaggy dogs," and were called tsööyanchin, the
292 dialectic equivalent of the Arapaho teiiyanchina". Among the Arapaho, however, there is only one dancer of this highest degree. As among the Arapaho, these men did not get up, or take part in the dancing, unless they were struck, or driven to it. They wore a shirt all over which circles were fastened in *appliqué*. To the centre of each circle, feathers were attached. On their heads they had owl-feather bunches like those of the rank and file of the dancers; and around their necks were long strings of bear-claws.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

They also had rattles similar to those of the rank and file of dog-dancers,— a row of small hoofs attached to a stick, — except that the rattles of the tsööyanehin were forked instead of single. In addition they each had a long wooden whistle. 796 554 292

Some of the "grandfathers" are said also to have worn scarfs, like the dancers; but as these were made of pieces of old tent-skins, undecorated and ugly, it is probable that this action was intended to be ridiculous.

The "shaggy dog" took his whistle, forked rattle, and head-dress with him when he went to the lodge, but left his crow-feather-covered shirt behind. When he was in the lodge, a woman was sent for the shirt. She put it on, and went to the lodge, wearing it. Standing before the "shaggy dog," she pulled it off, and, holding it open at the bottom, moved four times as if to put it on him. The fourth time, she drew it over and on him. The place of the two "shaggy dogs" in the lodge was at the western end, the middle of the back.

The dog-lodge is described as having been constructed like the crazy-lodge, and to have had the same small screen or partial enclosure at the eastern end, facing the entrance of the lodge. 796 [346]

The beginning of the dancing was as follows. One of the old men who would sing, went in a circle four times. He was followed by the two "shaggy dogs." The old man began to sing and dance, and the two "shaggy dogs" whistled. When they moved to any distance away from him, the old man motioned and clicked to them, as one does to a dog. Then they danced toward him. After this, the rank and file of the dancers stood up and danced. Four servants of the dance, said to have been chiefs, sat in front of the small enclosure at the east. When they thought that the dancers had danced long enough, one of these went among them and said, "Friends, rest." Thereupon they all stopped dancing, standing in their places. Then this man told a war story. When the singers thought that the dancers had rested sufficiently, they began to sing and the members of the company took up their dancing again. Altogether they danced four times, being made to rest each time by the exhortation of an old man who told a war story. This dancing took place four days, during which period the dancers were supposed not to sleep.

When at night the dancers left the lodge and danced before the tents of chiefs, begging for gifts, the two "shaggy dogs" are said to have stood by the door of the tent. It is therefore probable that the body of the dancers formed a circle in front of the tent, as they do among the Arapaho on this occasion. When the owner of the tent had given them property, he pulled at the flaps hanging at the sides of the feather-covered shirts of the "shaggy dogs," whereupon they sat down and the dancing ceased. This dancing for gifts is said to have continued for four entire nights. [431]

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 As in the other ceremonies, the dancers were painted over the entire
302 body. It does not seem that the long-continued painting of the Arapaho
562 dog-dance, in connection with which the relationship between the dancers' wives and "grandfathers" found its chief expression in this tribe, existed among the Gros Ventre. The women, however, took considerable part in the ceremony as in the others, being painted with their husbands, sitting in the lodge and singing, and at times putting on their regalia; whereupon the men took hold of the ends of the regalia, and their wives led them about.

796 The complete disintegration and disuse of the old ceremonial life of
178 the Gros Ventre is shown by the fact that not a single dog-dance object belonging to an ordinary dancer has been collected. It is therefore the more fortunate that the Museum has been able to complete, through Dr. Clark Wissler, a valuable set of the regalia of the highest degree of this dance. This unique group of specimens is shown in Figs. 38, 39, and 40, and Plate XIII.

796 The coat (Fig. 38) is in shape an ordinary deer-skin shirt. At the neck
292 is an edging of red flannel. On the upper arms are two short, transverse bars of white quill-embroidery, the quills laid on in diagonal zigzag stitch. At each of the sides, at the bottom of the shirt, hang two long, pointed strips, as customary on men's shirts, — the legs of the animal decoratively used. Under the armpits are similar shorter flaps. The two sides of the shirt are open from the bottom to under the arms. These open edges, the hanging strips, the lower border, and the ends of the sleeves, are ornamented with a fringe about an inch long. The lower portion of the shirt for a width of about half a foot, and the hanging strips, are painted yellow. All the remainder of the shirt has been stained brown, apparently over yellow paint. On the two sides there are in this brown area a total of 225 yellow circles about an inch and a half in diameter, which have not been painted over with the brown stain. Each of these circles is edged by white quill-work, and from its centre hangs a mutilated crow-feather by a thong. The edging of the circles is produced by using single quills as threads in an in-and-out rotary stitch. The crow-feathers have the quill broken, in from one to four places, without being severed. The vanes are for the most part considerably disarranged, as if intentionally. At the lower end the feathers are cut off square and the quill is flattened by cutting on two sides, as if to get rid of the lowest part of the vane. The quill is cut in this way so far from its natural base that it is entirely solid. The feathers are simply wrapped against a thong with sinew. The end of the thong projects a little beyond the sinew. The thongs on the outside of the skin average half an inch in length, and are painted yellow. Each passes through a hole in the centre of a yellow circle. Behind this, that is, on the inner side of the shirt, it is

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 knotted on itself sufficiently to keep from being pulled out. Of the circles,
292 forty-two are on one sleeve, forty-three on the other; on the two sides of the shirt there are sixty-three and seventy-seven, in seven and eight rows of from six to thirteen.

The owl-feather head-dress of this set of regalia (see Plate XIII) contains

Fig. 38 (50–4277). Dog-dance Shirt, Highest Degree. Length, 70 cm.

several hundred feathers mounted on a skin cap. This cap is of heavy skin, circular, somewhat over a foot in diameter, and surrounded by a short fringe. The inner ends of this fringe are wound with white porcupine-quills. The upper surface of the cap is painted yellow, the under side is unpainted. Two thongs hanging from the edge of the cap serve to tie it.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The feathers on this cap all have the quill split nearly as far down as the vanes extend. They are attached to one or perhaps more thongs painted yellow, which form a continuous, or at least virtually continuous, expanding spiral of six or more turns from the centre of the head-dress to about one-third of the distance to the edge. This thong gathers several feathers, then passes for a short stitch through the skin of the cap, not penetrating to the under side. Thus it continues its spiral course, lying for almost its whole length on the upper surface of the cap. The feathers are all attached to it in one fundamental manner, the thong passing through a loop formed by the turning-back on itself of the cut-down end of the quill. But three variations

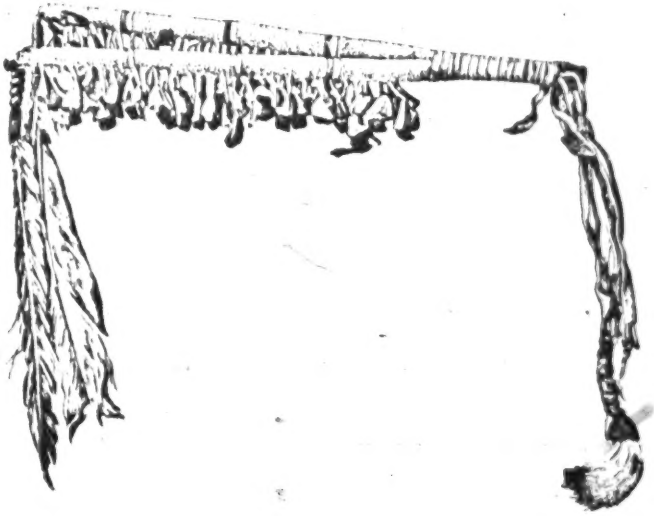


Fig. 39 (50–1789 a). Rattle of Dog-dancer, Highest Degree. Length, 47 cm.

of this method appear. Sometimes the end of the quill is turned into itself. In other cases the end is bent forward in the same way, but laid over the outside of the quill, and lashed to it with wrapping of sinew. This sinew wrapping, however, is used also with the first method, though it is not absolutely essential. In other cases the end of the quill is bent backward on itself so that its inner side is out, and fastened in the same way. When this is done, a smaller feather has its quill inserted in the sinew wrapping holding the loop of the main feather. Why the quill should be looped backward whenever a small feather is included, and only then, is not clear. The area encircled by the thong with its hundreds of feathers strung on it is only a

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

small part of the surface of the cap. The feathers are long enough to extend beyond the outer edge of the skin as they fall. Two special, slightly longer wing-feathers of the same species of owl are separately attached near the top of the head-dress, on opposite sides, like horns, by thongs passing through the skin where their ends hang loose. These evidently correspond to the two eagle-feathers once mentioned as occurring on the owl-feather caps of the rank and file of the dog-dancers. 796 292

The rattle of the Gros Ventre tsôôyanchin (Fig. 39) is very similar to the Arapaho dog-dance rattles, its most prominent peculiarity being that it is 796 534

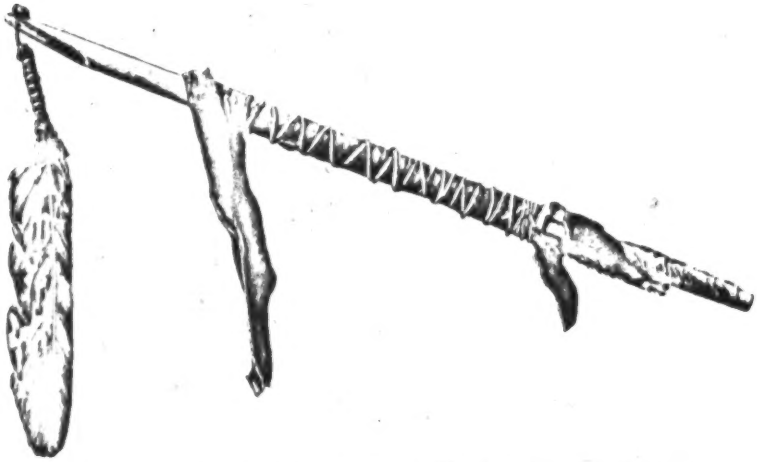


Fig. 40 (50-1789 b). Whistle of Dog-dancer, Highest Degree. Length, 60 cm.

bifurcated. Two sticks appear to have been joined at the handle so as to spread slightly. The sticks, where separate, are incased in skin painted yellow; at the handle they are wrapped together with a flat thong. Across each stick pass three stripes of quill-embroidery, each consisting of a red row of quills bordered on each side by white. At the end of each fork hangs an eagle-wing feather, the base of its quill covered with red cloth. Along the lower side of each fork are the small hoofs that rattle. There are on each stick about thirty-three pairs of these hoofs. Each pair is attached to a yellow-painted thong passing through the skin casing of the stick where this is joined in a sinew-sewn seam. The ends of these thongs pass through holes at the upper ends of the irregularly pyramidal-shaped hoofs. Inside the hoof, the end of thong is knotted around the middle of a little strip of red flannel or blanketing. This prevents the thong from being pulled out

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 of the hoof; at the same time the two ends of the red cloth hang out of the hoof, giving a decorative effect. At the end of the handle the skin casing 534 of the sticks emerges from under its thong wrapping, and hangs down free about two-thirds of a foot. Part of this loose strip is cut out, so as to make of the remainder a loop to pass over the wrist. In this cut-out portion are four narrow thongs,— two wound with white quills, two with red. The end of this loop-strip is fringed and quill-wound; a deer-tail, its base covered with red cloth, hangs from it.

The whistle (Fig. 40) is of wood, in which it differs from all Arapaho bäyaa^{n}wu whistles, painted yellow, and two feet long. The end farthest from the mouth is cut off diagonally almost to a point. Here is hung an eagle-feather, its base covered with red cloth. Along the middle portion of the whistle are laid two strips of red cloth, held by two sinew bands and by a long doubly wound thong wrapped with white porcupine-quills. These red strips are not quite wide enough to entirely cover the whistle. The two ends of both pieces hang free. Where the cloth ends on the whistle, toward the mouthpiece, two magpie-feathers are laid along the wood, nearly to the end, their bases being held by the last wrappings of the cloth. One or more small yellowhammer-feathers are also held by these wrappings.

Another dog-dance whistle secured (specimen Museum No. 50-1899) was [822] said also to have been used by a tsööyanehi. Its only essential difference from the piece just described is that it is painted red, whereas the previous one, like all the regalia which it accompanied, was yellow. The present whistle is one-third shorter, has the yellowhammer-feathers displayed more conspicuously, has a plain instead of a quill-wound thong to hold the red cloth, lacks the red cloth at the base of its end eagle-feather, and has this feather painted over red. All these differences, except that of general color, are either insignificant or matters of proportion.

The Nanā^{n}naha^{n}w^{u}.

796 The fifth dance is known, nearly as among the Arapaho, by the name of nanā^{n}naha^{n}w^{u}. The exact meaning of this term is not known. It is generally translated "soldiers' lodge." The dancers are called nanā^{n}nähä^{n}ts, or hiityaäa^{n}süts, which means "those who have war-sticks," the teäa^{n}sö or Arapaho teeäox. The lodge was made, as for the other dances, of the two largest tents available, in the middle of the camp-circle, with the door towards the east. The dancers obtained medicine from their "grandfathers" through their wives at night, were painted in the morning, and danced during the day, or, according to another account, at night. In the songs of this dance the buffalo were called, and it is said that the ceremony always resulted

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

in the approach of the buffalo, even if previously there had been none in the vicinity of the camp. 796

The dancers carried representations of war-spikes or tomahawks, which apparently resembled the buffalo-shaped sticks of the first dance of the Arapaho. The sticks are described as being about as long as women's digging-sticks, and, like them, sharpened at one end. The other end, however, was bent. The stick was painted red, and a quill-embroidered strip of skin was wound around it as a handle. A buffalo-calf's tail and a bunch of buffalo-fetlocks, and no doubt other objects, were also attached. [534] The stick was used as a rattle. 796 293

The conclusion of this ceremony presented a feature not found in the two preceding ones. According to one account, the gifts obtained by these dancers were received in payment from the spectators looking in at the lodge. [431] After four days the camp broke, and followed the dancers. On reaching a place where the property had been laid on the ground, the people of the tribe stood in a long row, facing the east. One of the dancers filled a pipe, and selecting one of the poorest men in the camp offered it to him. When the old man took the pipe, the dancer prayed him to allow that all of his company should strike him (count coup on him). A bed of sage was then made for the old man in front of the assembled tribe. Along the edges of this bed, buffalo-chips were laid. The old man crouched on his hands and knees with his head toward the east, and, like the old man undergoing a similar humiliation in the crazy-dance, was covered with a buffalo robe the hair-side of which was turned out. The dancers faced him in a row and danced, rattling. After four songs they ran to the old man, and one after another struck him lightly, each placing beside him a moccasin or some other object, which the old man, on getting up, kept for himself. Then the dancers' "grandfathers" each picked up one of the buffalo-chips from the edges of the sage, and, when they had prepared them, one of the dancers squatted over each. Then his "grandfather," taking him by the shoulders, motioned with him four times, and the fourth time pushed him down. When they had all sat down, each "grandfather" spoke to his "grandson," telling him, "From now on, you need not be afraid to interrupt a sacred performance. You can talk obscenely to a chief, and no one will say anything to you." The people had been watching this performance, which marked the end of the dance. 888 796

The Bitahaⁿwᵘ.

As stated, this dance has been abandoned a long time, and very little information was obtained regarding it. Men are alive who have seen it, 796

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 but none are living who have taken part in it. The meaning of the term, as among the Arapaho, is unknown. One informant gave the etymology "drum-dance" (from biitaxäänaⁿ, "drum"). The dancers were called biitaxäänen. As in the preceding ceremonies, a man took part in this dance accompanied by his wife, or, if it happened to be held while he was at war, his wife took part as if he were present. Nothing is known as to the conduct of the ceremony nor as to the regalia, except that the dancers, or certain of them, carried crooked sticks wrapped with white fur. The dancers were [302] painted over their body with dots resembling hail. The dance is looked upon as having been very dangerous, as a mistake in painting or in other observances would result in death from the thunder.

It is not impossible, that, if the present Arapaho series of dances represents a more original order of arrangement than the Gros Ventre, in the development of the Gros Ventre series the biitahaⁿwᵘ was displaced by the kit-fox dance, which grew in importance from a dance of the youngest men to one of older men. This would account for the use of crooked fur-wrapped sticks in the Gros Ventre kit-fox dance as well as in their biitahaⁿwᵘ. If this was the course of events, it does not follow that the biitahaⁿwᵘ became the sixth dance of the series. It may simply have been displaced, and fallen into disuse. Lack of knowledge of the proper conduct of the ceremony would be sufficient to make the Indians afraid to undertake it. It has been stated that no informants could be found who professed to know the place of this dance in the series, and it is possible that its dangerous qualities were not due to its greater sacredness through being the dance of the oldest men, but to such lack of knowledge. On the whole it is very difficult to see how such differentiations in the order of dances as exist in the Arapaho and Gros Ventre schemes of ceremonial organization may have taken place.

The Women's Dance.

[171] The women's dance — called benuxteaⁿwᵘ, the dancers being named 796 benuxteiiçäⁿ[1] — resembles the Arapaho women's dance quite closely. The 292 dancers had on their ordinary clothing, but wore belts to which four buffalo-tails were fastened, and head-dresses which fell down the back of their heads and from which horns rose. These head-dresses are said to have been covered with feathers; but it seems possible that this statement refers only to the dancers of certain degrees, as among the Arapaho only the dancer of highest degree wears such a feather-covered head-dress. Four of the dancers wore [171] no horned head-dress, but "war-bonnets." These may have been equivalent

[1] The Gros Ventre declare that they do not know the significance of the word element benux-tc-.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

171 796

to the Arapaho "white-stand" and "red-stand" head-dresses of upright feathers surrounding the head. The dancers are described as all old or [292] elderly women, which among the Arapaho was not the case. The exceptions were two participants called "calves" (nihanou, "yellow calves"), who [887] were middle-aged, or, at any rate, adults. Among the Arapaho the "calves" were children. There is a further difference, that, whereas among the [554] Arapaho the "calves" were of high degree in the dance and for the greater part of the time were not allowed to stir, the Gros Ventre "calves" took the place of the atsaan or servants in the men's dances. They are said to have worn no regalia. The dancers were painted with the symbol of a pipe on [302] each cheek, close under the eye. Old men sang for them, rattling but not using a drum. The women in dancing shifted their weight from one side of the body to the other, and cried like crows. Two tent-poles, two pegs, and two ropes belonging to the dancing-lodge, were painted respectively one black and one red. On the fourth day of the ceremony there were observances outside of the dancing-lodge. A prominent chief was selected to take a burning stick. The dancers, moving and running about like a herd of buffalo, pretended to scent the smoke of his fire from windward, and stampeded. Another distinguished warrior pretended to shoot at the herd as if they were buffalo. Both of these features of the ceremony are found among the Arapaho. A third distinguished man (or perhaps several) was honored by being offered a pipe to smoke, and on his acceptance was given a vessel of water containing berries. He then gave away property. [431]

The Sun-Dance.

796

As stated before, the Gros Ventre sun-dance, haçeiha^{n}w^{u}, is not restricted to men belonging to certain age-companies, but, as among the Arapaho, can be made by any man.[1] Like the other dances, however, it is made as the result of the pledge of an individual for deliverance from sickness or danger. As soon as the pledge has been publicly announced, or as soon thereafter as the buffalo begin to get fat in spring, the pledger and his relatives begin to accumulate buffalo-tongues, which they slice and dry like buffalo-meat. They also save a buffalo-skin, which is packed with the tongues, two sticks being wrapped up in it. When the time comes, a large lodge made of two tent-covers is set up in the middle of the camp-circle. Into this many women enter at night to sing. This marks the beginning of the ceremony. The tent is called tjinaa^{n}w^{u} ("prairie-chicken lodge"); and the participants, "prairie-chickens" and "prairie-chicken women." The pledger brings his buffalo-skin to this lodge. He incenses it four times.

[1] See Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part II, p. 152.

I: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 Entering the tent very slowly while the people are singing, he stops four times at the end of a song, and motions with the skin. The fourth time he throws the skin among the singers, who shout, and seize it, spread it out, and commence to beat it with their sticks and sing the songs of the night. They go through all the sun-dance songs this night. In the morning the entire camp breaks, and moves to another place not far away. That night the entire ritual is gone through again, and this is repeated altogether four times. The pledger provides food for the singers in the prairie-chicken lodge. The singing in this lodge is called "singing-for-it" (niinibyaa^{n}tou).

After the four nights of the prairie-chicken lodge, seven chiefs are selected to go out as scouts looking for trees to be used in the dancing-lodge. The trees should be straight, and the largest one, for the middle, forked. These men scout for the trees as they would for an enemy. They are painted as [302] if for war, and wear what they would in war. When the people in the camp see them returning, they rush to the centre of the camp-circle, carrying hand-drums. The scouts go circling and dancing, and crying like wolves or coyotes, whereupon the people cry out that the scouts are returning successfully. Those who bear drums stand in a line abreast; in front of them is a pile of rocks. The scouts, still circling, and crying each time they face the direction from which they have come, approach nearer and nearer. Then one by one they circle about the heap of stones, and, stepping forward a short distance, stop and stand abreast, facing the drums. A prominent man who has been selected steps out from the people and recounts his most distinguished coups. Thereupon he goes up to one of the seven scouts, and leads his horse forward by the bridle. The scout then recounts four coups. Then the chief leads forward the horse of the next scout, who also tells four stories; and so on until all seven have spoken. Thereupon the first of the seven addresses the people, and reports that they have found good-looking people and a chief, meaning the smaller poles and the central fork of the lodge.

Some time after this the people go to the trees. The young men especially dress and paint themselves as well as they can, and ride their best horses. They go first to what is to be the central pole. One man dismounts, and places coals and fir-needle incense on the ground on four sides of the tree, thus incensing it. Then all dismount, and, standing about and having shouted, begin to sing. After they have sung, two men stand by the tree and swing axes four times, as if to strike it. Then they begin to chop it. When the tree begins to lean, every one shoots at it; and when it falls, all dash up to it and strip it of branches and leaves. Thereupon they scatter in the timber, cutting the smaller forks and poles, and as each one of these falls it is shot. There are many small parties getting these smaller forks,

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

and there is much noise in the timber. Many young men tie ropes to the centre post, and, riding their horses, drag the tree to the camp, while others follow shooting it. The smaller trees are brought back in the same way. 796

While the people are bringing the trees, four distinguished warriors have been selected to go out on the prairie to kill a buffalo-bull, which one of them is to kill with a single shot. Theoretically the four men have only a single bow and arrow, or a gun with only one cartridge. As soon as they see the buffalo, they stop, and each of them recounts coups. Then they attack the bull. It is said that, if the designated man kills the bull with one shot, the coups which he has counted have been told truly; but, if more than one shot is required, he has lied. It is said that they are almost always successful. They skin the bull, and leave the body.

Meanwhile the old people of the tribe have been digging the holes in which the upright forks of the lodge are to be set. When the young people return with the trees, and the four chiefs with the buffalo-skin, these holes are completed. Two prominent men are selected, and, after each has counted four coups, they cut the fresh hide into thongs. These are used to tie the horizontal rafter-poles of the lodge fast to the upright forks in which they rest. The two men who have done the cutting then give away property to old people.

After this the members of the age-companies gather. In more recent times the war-dancers assemble on one side of the lodge, the star-dancers on the other. They carry tent-poles, which are tied in pairs by a short rope near the top. Each man holds one pole of such a pair. The poles are used to lift the centre fork, which will rest on the thongs connecting the tops of the poles. The pledger now goes around the lodge very slowly, painting the poles as they lie on the ground, rubbing each with the palm of his hand in four places. It is probable that, as among the Arapaho, he does not go alone in this painting. The people who are to raise the centre fork are standing where the outer wall of the lodge will later be, singing. At the end of the song they shout. Then they proceed to the centre pole, which is lying with the top toward the east. The pledger and the old men stand in a row at the eastern end. The old man keeping the sacred flat pipe incenses this four times, and sings the songs that relate to the pipe. The hole into which the butt of the tree is to be set is incensed with sweet-grass. Then the keeper of the pipe touches the head of the tree with his pipe, and motions to it four times. The motion of the pipe is supposed to raise the tree. The joined poles have been placed under the tree, and other people support it with their hands. Four times the tree moves under their efforts and the influence of the pipe. The fourth time, the keeper of the pipe says "Now," and the tree is entirely raised up, and set in its hole. As soon as the centre

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Grös Ventre NQ13

796 fork is upright, the young men all compete, trying to raise their rafters into position in the centre fork and in a fork at the periphery, before the others. After the tree has been raised, or possibly before, the young men go out, apparently by age-companies, to cut willows to form the walls of the lodge. More recently the star-dancers and war-dancers have done this, those of each company taking the wives of the men of the other company on their horses behind them. As they go, they shoot up in the air, and when in the timber each man cuts a willow-branch. They return holding the branches and singing, ride around the lodge, and then deposit them. After the outside rafter-poles of the lodge have been tied fast in the forks, these branches are leaned in position, forming an enclosure of the lodge.

The centre fork has a buffalo-tail attached to it. A bundle of brush, called a "nest," is also fastened in the fork. A lightning symbol is made on the western side of the tree down to the ground. Inside the lodge a low screen, said to be about waist high, is erected at the western end, opposite the entrance. Behind this is the pledger of the dance. In front of the screen is a painted buffalo-skull. Two sticks of cherry-wood, one red and one black, stand on each side of the skull. A wheel or ceremonial hoop made of a stick bent in a circle, wrapped with skin, and with feathers attached, is hung on one of these sticks. Just as clothing is hung at the ends of the horizontal rafters of the lodge, or possibly on the centre fork itself, as an offering to the sun, objects are said to be hung on this brush screen at the western end of the lodge.

[171] Apparently the general course of the main portion of the dance, which follows the erection of the lodge, is similar to that of the Arapaho sun-dance, though there are certain features entirely without parallel among the Arapaho. The pledger and the other dancers neither eat nor drink during the ceremony. Women join in the fasting, but do not dance. The dancers stand whistling, and looking up at the "nest" in the tree.

796 The self-torture characterizing the sun-dance among most tribes is found
304 with the Gros Ventre in its usual form. Four knotted thongs hang from the
785 centre fork. Two sticks are passed under the skin of the dancers' breasts, one on each side, to which the thongs are fastened. The dancers try to tear the sticks out of their skin. Some whose skin is tough do not succeed. In that case a medicine-man comes to them and makes them unconscious of pain, so that they break loose easily. When they have fallen, he restores them to consciousness. One after the other, the dancers go through this ordeal. While the dancers are thus tied to the tree, they move back and forth, apparently dancing. This is called niina^{n}tsöia^{n}. Some dancers also fasten shields in a similar way to the skin of their back, and pull these out. Others are attached by the breast to a post located outside of the dancing-

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

lodge. Other men go up into the hills near the camp, where they are fastened to a post, and fast from sunrise to sunset. In the evening their ceremonial "grandfather" comes and cuts them loose. Young men who want to meet with success in war pierce the skin over their shoulder-blade, and, having inserted sticks, hang two guns to these on each side. Sometimes a crooked-hoofed horse is fastened to the sticks. Thereupon they go about outside of the camp-circle, crying constantly, hoping that some supernatural being will pity them. Still others tie four or five buffalo-skulls in a row, which they fasten in the same way to their backs. They also go around the camp-circle. 796 304 785

If it is thought possible that the enemy may be near at the time of the dance, a man brings a filled pipe to the pledger of the dance and offers it to him, asking about the enemy. The pledger takes out his medicine-bag, which is the skin of the animal he saw in his vision, incenses it, and performs the acts which this guardian animal commanded. Every one is quiet, and the fire is put out so that the lodge is completely dark. The pledger blows his whistle, and the people sing for him as loudly as they can. He makes motions around his head with his medicine, thereby asking his guardian spirit to enable him to see supernaturally. He continues his motions until he is able to see the enemy. Thereupon he sits down. After this, another man offers him a pipe, saying, "We wish you to tell us what you have seen. Therefore take this pipe and smoke it." After he has smoked, the pledger tells the people how many people he has seen, and where they are. He says, "I saw so many buffalo-bulls (men). They are coming from there. Take [822] charcoal for successful battle" (black being the paint of victory). 796 787

The dancers also have the power to see the enemy. If, as they look at the "nest" day and night, they see legs hanging down, or a headless body in the tree, it is the sign that an enemy will be killed by the tribe. If, on the other hand, they see blood on the poles overhead or running down the central tree, a member of the tribe will be killed. Sometimes they see a man whom they can recognize as a member of the tribe, black as coal and very thin, hanging from the poles above them. Then he will die soon.

Each day certain men, who seem to be young men, are selected, and their names called out. These men dress as if for war. When they enter, it seems that they sit in a row at the left of the entrance. The bravest of them are then selected, and taken to the back of the lodge, where a bed and head-rest have been prepared, on which they sit. One of these men counts a coup, and picking up a stick puts it into the fire. One after another they do this until a large fire is blazing. These men are called tsöötaxwuhuu ("inside dancers"). Thereupon two old men, going to the centre of the lodge and conferring in whispers, select six or eight warriors. As soon as these 796 729

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 men are named, their female relatives return to their tents, and cook. When
729 they have prepared food, they all together bring a large quantity of it to the lodge. The men selected carry weapons, and are dressed for war. They are usually mounted. Where they themselves or their horses were wounded, [302] they paint themselves. If they have ridden over an enemy, a man is painted on the breast of the horse. When the food which has been brought by their female relatives has been eaten, these men, two at a time, go through numerous performances of their achievements in battle. This is done each day of the dance.

796 A group of men and women, called, like those in the preliminary singing-tent, "prairie-chickens," and therefore probably the same persons, seem [534] to be the singers for the dance. They beat a rawhide in place of a drum, and hold branches, which, at the end of each song, they shake, shouting.

[271] The dancers may not drink water, no matter how great the heat. If [821] one of them is unable to endure, and a pitying relative gives him even only a drop, a thunderstorm follows, and the offender may be struck by lightning, or one of his horses may be killed by lightning. In case it seems necessary for the dancers to drink, a pipe is taken to one of the old men. If he accepts it and smokes it, he goes to the central tree. He wears a robe with the hair-side out. He has a whistle in his mouth, feathers in one hand, and a crow-skin in the other. He strikes the bill of the crow four [789] times, with a downward motion, against the lightning symbol on the tree. A vessel is held against the tree at the bottom of the symbol, and, after the fourth blow, water is said to run out until the vessel is filled, when it stops. This water is given to the dancers, each of whom drinks a very small quan- [787] tity. The actions of the man producing this water are said to be determined by his personal supernatural vision.

After the four days of the ceremony are completed, the lodge is left standing. All the cloth and clothing that have been attached to it remain [789] in place, and it appears that other clothes, especially of children, are left at the lodge. This is done in order that the children may live a long life.

796 From drawings made by a Gros Ventre, it appears that the buffalo-
532 skull is painted with spots, and has its nose and eyes stuffed. Behind it is represented a dancer holding the wheel. He is presumably the pledger of the ceremony. The wheel is bisected by two strings, and has eagle-feathers and down-feathers attached to it. The dancer blows a whistle at the end of which is a plume. The whistle hangs from his neck. At the back of the head is a plume. Lines of paint proceed from his breast to his wrists and ankles. On each of these are four diamonds, two on each upper and lower arm, thigh, and calf. If this is a correct representation, the Gros Ventre use at least one style of painting that is like the most typical Arap-

l; Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

aho sun-dance paint. Usually the Arapaho paint only two diamonds on each limb; but four have been seen on the northern Arapaho pledger, as in this picture. Another drawing repeats this painting, and adds a head-band, anklets, and wristlets apparently corresponding to the sage ornaments of the Arapaho. In a third drawing a dancer is painted with lightning symbols down his legs and arms. 796 532

The Gros Ventre and Arapaho sun-dances differ about as much as their respective age-company ceremonies. The principal discrepancies seem to be the following. 796 171

The Gros Ventre accumulation of buffalo-tongues by the pledger after the making of the vow and before the ceremony. This feature is found among the Blackfoot, but not among the Arapaho.

The prairie-chicken lodge with its four-nights' singing apparently corresponds somewhat to the Arapaho rabbit-tent; but its daily removal, accompanied by the camp-circle, is not found among the Arapaho. The prairie-chicken singing recalls a feature in the Arapaho hinanaha^{n}wu, the fifth of the age-ceremonies.

According to the account obtained, the public ceremonies relating to the erection of the lodge do not take place until after the four-nights' singing in the prairie-chicken tent. Among the Arapaho, they occur while the rabbit-tent is in use, and are in large part connected with the rites within it. It is also not clear how long a time these public ceremonies — the scouting for the trees, the bringing-in of the centre pole, the killing of the buffalo, and the painting of the lodge-poles and erection of the lodge — occupy. They are described as if they occurred in the space of a day. [114] This would not be impossible; but it is likely that this impression is due to indefiniteness of narration. It is, however, distinctly stated that the buffalo is shot while the people are bringing in the centre pole. Among the Arapaho, the centre pole is brought in two days after the buffalo has been shot. The skin of this buffalo is kept entire and taken into the dancing-lodge; by the Gros Ventre it is cut into thongs for fastening the lodge-beams to the upright forks.

The "altars" of the two ceremonies cannot be definitely compared, owing to the indefiniteness of information from the Gros Ventre. The screen corresponds to the seven small trees of the Arapaho; the skull and the wheel on the stick are common to the two ceremonies; the red and the black upright stick have no Arapaho equivalents. The Arapaho trench, red and black logs, seven red and seven black sticks, seven wickets, and two sods with bushes, have not been mentioned among the Gros Ventre.

The miraculous raising of the centre pole does not seem to exist among the Arapaho.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 171 The Gros Ventre also introduce into the ceremony a thunder symbolism that the Arapaho lack, or have in a much less developed form. The lightning symbol on the centre pole, from which water can be drawn, and the power of the thunder to strike with lightning any dancer who drinks other water than this, evidence this.

Another element special to the Gros Ventre is the introduction of ceremonies relating to war, such as the dramatic performances and the seeing of the approach of the enemy by the pledger.

Features introducing miraculous and sometimes purely personal supernatural powers are apparently quite lacking from the Arapaho ceremony. Among the Gros Ventre there are the raising of the centre pole, the production of water from the centre pole with the crow, the clairvoyance of the pledger as regards the enemy, and the visions of some of the dancers.

In summary, the exact duration and sequence of all events in the Gros Ventre ceremony are not yet clear; the preliminary prairie-chicken tent does not correspond very closely to the Arapaho rabbit-tent; and the connection of the ceremony with the thunder, the introduction of warlike elements, and that of miraculous or personal features, are peculiar, or nearly so, to the Gros Ventre as compared with the Arapaho.

MODERN CEREMONIAL OBJECTS.

778 171 The recent ceremonial objects of the Gros Ventre are somewhat different from those of the Arapaho. The Arapaho were deeply affected by the ghost-dance movement, more, it is said, than any other tribe; and many of their modern religious regalia have a distinct character of their own. [668 177] The Gros Ventre received the ghost-dance from the Arapaho, but it seems to have taken little hold of them. The only distinctive ghost-dance objects seen or obtained were two small hoops and a few balls, all of which resemble Arapaho types. 177 The chief modern dance-ceremony of the Gros Ventre, the only one performed at present, is the grass or war dance obtained from the Sioux, 778 and evidently a modification of the widespread 796 Omaha dance upon which the Arapaho crow-dance is also based. This dance has in recent years been still further modified, until its character now is very similar to that of the crow-dance. The regalia used in this [178] dance at present are very individual, usually crude, and almost always stylistically degenerate. The delicate character and distinct style of the majority of modern Arapaho dance-objects are lacking.

171 The treatment of feathers in such objects is quite different among the 778 Gros Ventre and Arapaho. The Gros Ventre rarely ornament their feathers 287

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

with dyed plumes or tufts of horsehair, as the Arapaho so frequently do both at the base and top of the feather. Feathers with the vanes cut from the quill, except at the very top, are also scarcely used by the Gros Ventre. Instead, they usually cut the feather squarely off across its end, or split the quill, from the end down, for the greater part of its length. Sometimes the uppermost part of the quill is entirely removed, with its attached portions of the vanes, leaving the top of the feather forked. Plume-feathers are also much less used by the Gros Ventre than by the Arapaho. In dyeing, the Gros Ventre generally used cruder colors; a blue-violet, a pink-red, a light-bluish green, and yellow, all of them aniline colors, being the most common. The Arapaho use true red and green more frequently, and in most cases employ the dyes more lightly, thus obtaining endurable or delicate effects where the Gros Ventre are garish. 178 237 171 [386]

The Gros Ventre methods of feather-treatment, both the cutting-off and the splitting of the end of the feather, go back, at least in part, to their older tribal ceremonies. Both these processes are found employed on the dog-dance regalia described.

As regards other differences, the Gros Ventre probably employ more weasel-skin in ornaments than the Arapaho, though far less than their neighbors the Blackfeet. They use cloth (both cotton and woollen goods), red, green, or blue, without reluctance; whereas the Arapaho have clung very tenaciously to skin in all ceremonial objects. Skin thongs and sinew for binding are, however, very rarely replaced by strings and thread, even with the Gros Ventre.

The few objects obtained belonging to the ghost-dance movement are the following. 668 178

Fig. 41 shows an imitation of a netted playing-wheel. The piece is about two inches in diameter. The stitch of the meshes seems to be correct, though there are fewer meshes than in the full-sized wheels. The "crow," the centre mesh, is painted red; the rest of the thong, yellow. To the centre mesh are attached four magpie-feathers cut off across. This object was worn tied to the hair on the side of the head, or hanging from the little finger when the people joined hands to dance. Several very similar objects, lacking the feathers, are attached to the girl's painted dress shown in "Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History" (Vol. XVIII, Plate LXXV). [301]

A head-dress consisting of a hoop of about the same size, quill-wound and bisected by two quill-wound strings, and of three long, blue-and-white quill-wound pendant thongs with plume-feathers at the ends, was collected by Dr. Clark Wissler. It is not known whether it belongs to the war-dance or the ghost-dance: its general similarity to certain Arapaho head-dresses [292]

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

668 makes the latter seem possible. It differs from Arapaho objects chiefly in
778 that the color-ornamentation of the quill-wrapping divides the hoop into three instead of four parts. At the upper end of the hoop is attached a bunch of seven small strips of whitish rabbit-fur, resembling the weasel-skin style of ornamentation characteristic of the Blackfoot.

Two balls (Figs. 24 and 25) are identical in character with Arapaho ghost-dance objects, and the latter was made in connection with the movement. These balls are described above.

778
293
171

[292]

Fig. 41 (50-1922). Wheel Head-dress. Length, 21 cm.

The following objects, many of which were obtained by Dr. Clark Wissler and which were probably not connected with the ghost-dance, are of a character that does not seem to make it worth while to represent them in illustrations; but they resemble Arapaho or other pieces sufficiently for a brief description. They all appear to have been used in the war or grass dance.

Specimen Museum No. 50-1742 is a feathered crook modelled on the familiar type of curved lance that is common on the Plains, and to which the otterskin-wrapped lances of the second degree of the second Arapaho tribal ceremony belong.[1] The Gros Ventre too had such crooked lances in probably two of their tribal ceremonies. The present piece is about four feet long, and made of a stick painted yellow. There is no blade, or representation of it, at the lower end. At the end of the crook hangs a single eagle-feather. The greater portion of the shaft is covered by a casing of green cloth from which hang, attached by thongs and sinew wrapping painted yellow, a row of eighteen eagle-feathers.

A forked stick (specimen Museum No. 50-4328) resembles the Arapaho pieces of this kind described in the "Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History" (Vol. XVIII, p. 358). It is about six feet long, quite slender, and painted red. Some distance in the fork a quill-covered hoop is attached to the two spreading sticks. This hoop is red, with four white, blue-bordered areas on it. The ends of the fork are ornamented with a short green-cloth fringe, tufts of yellow-dyed hair, and feathers notched at the top. From the junction of the two arms downward,

[1] Compare Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part II, Plate xxxii.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the stick is first covered with green cloth, then with skin covered with red and blue quill-work, and at the pointed end is bare, except for its red paint. 778 293

A feathered wheel a foot or a foot and a half across (specimen Museum No. 50–4292) is covered with red, blue, green, yellow, white, and black feathers and plumes, many of them dyed, and tied to the hoop without any attempt at color-pattern or other arrangement. Most of the feathers have the quill split. 171

Another hoop (specimen Museum No. 50–1745) is a little smaller, and is covered with brown buffalo-fur instead of feathers. At one point, five split owl-feathers and six black unsplit feathers are attached; at a place opposite, two small yellowed feathers, one with a green plume at the base.

Other specimens secured by Dr. Clark Wissler are a ceremonial spoon with long, thin, decorated handle, and a quirt. The latter (specimen Museum No. 50–4305) is similar to Arapaho ceremonial quirts.[1] A heavy wooden handle consists of two parts, — the handle proper and a longer portion with five deep notches in the lower edge. The upper edge is straight. The part of the handle that is notched is ornamented with brass tacks. From the end of the stick hang two ends of thong, the whip. At the handle is attached a skin of a fox or similar animal, ornamented with eagle-feathers. 171 415 778

A feather shield consists essentially of a circle of radiating feathers, worn on the back. 171 293

A crow-belt, also secured by Dr. Clark Wissler, is quite similar to the Arapaho one described in the "Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History" (Vol. XVIII, p. 345). It is interesting that of the five Arapaho pieces in the Museum, this is at once the crudest in construction, and the most perverted by white influence from aboriginal style. In the present Gros Ventre belt, a rectangular piece of rawhide is bent over a stick as a support for the remainder of the specimen. The two hanging "tail" strips are of yellow cloth, quite narrow, hanging apart. Eagle-feathers, some dyed red, are attached to them. The belt proper is formed by two pieces of woven yarn. In the middle of the piece are attached the head and breast of an eagle. Below this, between the two hanging strips, is an ornament of a row of eagle-feathers pointing downward. These are attached in the folded edge of a squarish piece of rawhide, thus resembling the analogous piece in the Arapaho crow-belt referred to and the Arapaho biitaha"wu head-dresses. The ornament, however, is fastened to the remainder of the piece, so that it cannot have been worn as a head-dress. The two usual projecting arms consist each of a black eagle-wing feather, with a strip of quill-embroidery laid along the quill of the feather, and with several small bells, 778 [237]

[1] Mooney, Ghost-Dance Religion (Fourteenth Annual Report, Bureau of American Ethnology, Vol. XIV, p. 987, Fig. 94), shows a very similar quirt attributed to the dog-dance.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

171 whitish fur, and dyed horsehair tufts at the ends. At the base of each arm
293 are red, yellow, and violet feathers. These are either cut off across the end,
778 or have the uppermost part of the quill with its attached vanes removed.

CUSTOMS CONNECTED WITH RELIGION.

171 Sacred pipes were important in the religion of the Gros Ventre. The
276 beliefs and practices connected with these differ somewhat from those of
778 the Arapaho. The Arapaho recognize only one sacred pipe, which is pre-eminent over all others. Its worship is entirely tribal, though it is in the keeping of an individual. It occupies much the place in tribal life that the sacred pole did among the Omaha. While there are other sacred objects, such as the wheels and bundles, none of them equal the pipe in the regard in which they are held. Among the Gros Ventre there is an analogue of the Arapaho pipe, but also several others. This multiplicity distinctly differentiates the character of the Gros Ventre pipes from that of the Arapaho. The Gros Ventre pipes are not all primarily connected with the origin of the world; they are in part obtained from other tribes. They thus resemble the inter-tribal peace-pipes of the eastern and northern Plains.

[888] The sacred pipes were kept by old men. Their keepers could retain them as long as they wanted. They transferred their pipe to another keeper or owner whenever they wished, especially if some one prayed on their behalf. At present the Gros Ventre have three pipes. It is said that formerly they had more, some of which have been buried with their last owners. The most sacred of these pipes is called "flat-pipe" (çäčitsa"). This is described as being made of catlinite, with the bowl in the shape of a person (initä"). The Arapaho sacred pipe is also called "flat-pipe," and also is not flat; but it differs from the Gros Ventre pipe in being cylindrical and tubular. About the centre of the stem of this Gros Ventre flat-pipe is tied a string. A person in the tent where the pipe is kept should not tell myths. If through forgetfulness he begins to do so, it is necessary for him to continue all night.

276 A sick man sometimes pledged to smoke one of the sacred pipes for his
755 recovery. Then he provided food, and distinguished warriors were invited.
778 Each of these had to recount four coups before the pipe could be lighted. A green cherry-branch was then taken, greased, and put into the fire to light the pipe with. If it burnt well, the man would recover; if it burnt poorly, they were afraid that he would not become well, or that something would happen. Then the pipe was smoked in the greatest silence. Cloth or calico was "given" to it, the wrapping last given being the one on the out-

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

276
755
778

side of the bundle, it is said. Except at such ceremonies as this, only the keeper could touch the pipe.

276
778
[648]
[728]

Pipes were sometimes given to other tribes, and were sometimes received from them. Sometimes they were carried by war-parties. One of the three pipes still in existence is said to have been given by the Cheyenne to the Crow, and by the latter to the Gros Ventre, when peace was made between the two tribes. The stem is ornamented with feathers, weasel-skins, and at the end with a bunch of eagle-feathers. The sacred pipes were kept wrapped in many pieces of skin or cloth, and hung up in the tent. In good weather they were hung on a stand of three or four sticks, behind the tent. The keepers of the sacred pipes observed stringent rules. They could not eat of the head or back of any animal, nor of any part of the white-tailed deer, nor any eggs. They were not allowed to bathe, or to paint (except red), or to take the ashes out of the tent. They had to smoke in certain ways. They did not eat dogs, or allow them in the tent; nor did they let dogs touch them, or walk over their legs, or walk before them, while they were smoking. The keepers of the sacred pipes wore their hair uncut and uncombed. They could not cut it until they had given the pipe to another keeper. The hair was worn tied in a bunch just above the forehead. Fig. 42 shows such a bunch of matted hair, said to have been that of the grandfather of the father of the man who was the oldest in the tribe in 1901. This former keeper of the pipe became so old that he lost most of his hair, and the bunch shown was cut off by him before it should drop off. To this hair the later owner of the pipe, his present great-grandson, tied the first of his own teeth to fall out from old age: they are contained in a small cloth sack.

Fig. 42 (50/1902). Matted Hair. Length, 41 cm.

276
778
784

[825]

[302]

l: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

276 778 The sacred flat-pipe was also used in the sun-dance. It was once captured in war. Then the man who took it had bad dreams, until the pipe spoke to him in his dream and said, "Return me, or your tribe will be [728] destroyed." Then this man brought back the pipe, and his tribe made peace with the Gros Ventre.

343 782 The making of a sweat-house was not restricted to certain persons. A man wishing success in war would make a sweat-house for another person, in order that he might accomplish the deed he had in mind. Or, if a person was sick, one of his relatives might pledge to make a sweat-house for him, just as he would a dance. In this case the sick person himself would not necessarily use the sweat-house. On the other hand, a doctor might prescribe sweating for a patient, and in this case the sick person would enter the sweat-house.

[757]

Fig. 43 (50-4355). Sweat-house Tail. Length, 36 cm.

343 515 [237]

About twelve or fourteen willow poles were cut for the sweat-house. The entrance always faced the sunrise, and a small cottonwood-tree was erected in front of it. To this, calico or other property was tied by an old man as a gift to the sun. The cloth was partly blackened, the corners being rubbed with charcoal.

When all the participants were inside, the blankets were pulled down and the house closed tight. Water was poured on hot stones, at first five times. Thereupon the lodge was opened at the entrance and at the opposite west end, and the people cooled. It was then closed again, and this time water was poured on the rocks seven times. After cooling once more, water was poured on the rocks nine times. The fourth time, the man that poured the water could put as much or as little on the stones as he wished. After the fourth time, the participants came out and bathed. [757] If they were suffering from pain, they whipped that part of the body with buffalo or horse tails. This practice made the heat greatest at that point, much as if it were beaten into the body.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

343 757

A man who pledges and erects a sweat-house does not participate in the sweating. He makes the fire, heats the rocks and passes them into the house, raises and lowers the blankets, and performs other services.

[237]

In sweating, animal tails were sometimes used to beat the body with. Fig. 43 shows such an implement, made of the tail of a buffalo, on a stick handle cased in the skin of the tail. This object is similar to the Arapaho specimens described in the "Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History" (Vol. XVIII, p. 316), but is noticeable for the shortness of the hair on the tail.

343 757 776

When people were called to come to sweat, hixtcib'nix'a"t ("Above-Nix'a"t") was first called to sweat with them. Then the people were called. This personage, whose name also means "Above-white-man," is said to have been prayed to before the whites were known; but the Gros Ventre, like the Arapaho, state that they do not know whether he is identical with the Nix'a"t of their myths. Ordinary prayers were always addressed first to hixtcib'nix'a"t or to iiçanãnin ("our father"), then the sun and moon would be mentioned, next the sacred pipes, and then the earth. After these had been mentioned, anything else could be prayed to.

[301]

778

A charm tied on horses to make them run fast consists of rabbit-feet painted red and tied together. The Arapaho used rabbits' feet for the same purpose.

Specimen Museum No. 50 1804 is a pair of wild-cat-tails worn by young men at the shoulder, or at the heel of a moccasin. They were also tied to children's belts, next to the skin, in order to keep them from wetting the bed.

[751]

Specimen Museum No. 50 1903 is a gorget (commonly called by the Indians in English "moon-shell") said to have been made in the old way from an intervertebral disk of a buffalo. At present these objects are usually slightly concave, and are made of china.

Fig. 44 (50-4280). Thunder-stone Necklace. Length, 21 cm.

[301 237]

The Gros Ventre, according to Dr. Clark Wissler, call certain corrugated fossil stones "thunder-stones."[1] The Assiniboine seem to use the same name. The Blackfeet, who perhaps have most developed the cult of these objects, call them "buffalo-stones." A specimen from the Northern Arapaho is shown in the "Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural

[1] [These are probably Ammonite septa. - Analyst]

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

778 History" (Vol. XVIII, p. 443, Fig. 176). Fig. 44 shows a small Gros Ventre specimen attached to a thong, for wear around the neck. The entire stone is tightly incased in a piece of skin which preserves the form so closely as to be scarcely noticeable. At the lower end of the stone is a small fringe of skin. Skin and thong are painted over red.

BELIEFS ABOUT THE DEAD.

775 Dead people go to a barren region in the north. People have been there, but the ghosts are invisible. The dead are often heard whistling, speaking, and calling about human habitations; houses and tents may be closed, but still they are heard. They speak as a living person would, and people in return ask them questions. When at war, people often ask the ghosts what luck they will have, or where the enemy are. The dead always tell the truth, and, if they say one of the party will be injured, it always happens. The ghosts are never seen, but only heard. Sometimes, if a medicine-man asks one of his spirits to bring him a dead relative, the door is heard moving, and after a time the spirit returns with the dead person, who, when he is asked questions, answers. Every one who is present can hear him plainly. Sometimes, on the arrival of the person, a noise like the whirring of wings is heard. Then there is a tapping at the top of the tent-poles. Then the tapping moves about the tent. Now it may be at the door, now at the back of the tent. When a ghost or spirit is seen, as occasionally happens, it is only for a glimpse.

If a man keeps a tooth or a bone of a dead person, after a time the spirit of that person appears to him. Some ghosts lie, but some are truthful. A man who controls a ghost, or a medicine-man who has a spirit, can see it; but it is invisible to other people. It is summoned only in the dark. People who have lost horses bring a pipe to a man that has a spirit, and pay him. Then he calls his spirit, and it tells where the horses are. If people try to ascertain by the help of a medicine-man where they have lost a small valued object, the spirit may throw it at them. Stolen property is found in the same way. A ghost or spirit is called "untrue person."

159 An old man who has been several times quoted tells the following: "I
775 once died. I think that Above-Nix'a"t pitied me, and let me live to be an old man. I was very sick with cramps and fits. The camp was moving, and the last I remember was that the tents were being pitched. Then I knew nothing about it; but the people were mourning for me and had put paint and my best clothes on me. I was travelling. I went north until I came to the Cypress Hills. There on the hills I saw two bears going into

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

their holes, in which they had fires. I started to go around where they were, but when I came abreast of their holes one of the bears pursued me and caught me by the leg. I turned and seized it by the ear, and saw that it was a very small bear. Then I continued on my way, the bear clinging to my thigh, and I holding its ear. I went on until I came to a creek where there was an enormous camp, the largest I have ever seen, stretched as far as I could look up the creek. Those in advance were just setting up their tents. I went to the first tent I came to, which was a large one. A number of naked men were sitting there, each of them with some weapon. By the door a woman sat cooking. The men called out to her to catch me, that they would eat me. I ran out, and she after me. She caught me by the robe, but I loosened myself and ran back. Then my relatives, who were kissing me, noticed that I was breathing, and said, 'He is alive.' Then I recovered my speech, but I was still out of my senses. They told me later that I argued with my relatives, insisting that I had brought a bear, and asking them where it was. The next day, when my senses returned, the back of my thigh itched where the bear had been. Still later, when I had more nearly recovered, I saw the tent in which I was, full of people that I could not recognize. Then I lost my senses once more, and became so strong that they could not hold me. It was a long time before I entirely recovered. All this happened to me while I was still a young man, soon after I was married." 159 775

An old man tells that once he was going from one camp to another at night, when suddenly he heard a humming of a stone like a bullet, which struck in front of him. He was frightened, but did not run. Another stone flew over his head so close that he felt the wind it made. Then he ran. 775

On another occasion he was mourning for one of his sons. In the evening he went to one of his friends. It was already dark, and he had to pass through the brush. Then he heard a noise as of canvas being dragged over the brush, and there was loud whistling. He was not frightened, but stopped and said, "You should pity me. I am mourning." Then it shouted "Yes" loudly, and the noise stopped.

At another time he saw a ghost's light. An old man who had died had been buried in a tree. The narrator with six other men was driving horses past that they had captured, when they saw a flame on the dead body.

A man tells how he was once in an isolated tent, far from any camp. He was leaning against a tent-pole listening to those in the tent who were talking and smoking. Suddenly, close by his ear, there was a loud whistle which made him jump to his feet. The others all heard it also, and asked, "Who was that?" Going outside, they could find no one, and knew that it had been a spirit.

lt Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

775 An old man relates that he once saw something that he thought was a spirit. In full daylight he was hunting horses, and came on a ridge where there were a few pines, while below there was a flat and a stream. Down there he saw a dead cottonwood aflame and a person by the tree who was burning it. Limbs fell down burned off. He thought that it was some one from his own camp who was burning the tree; but he lay down and watched. The person took a fallen limb, carried it to the stream and threw it in, and he could hear it splash and hiss. He saw this a second time and a third time, but, happening to turn his head, when he looked back there was no one there. He waited for some time, but the person did not reappear. Going to the stream, he saw the burned branches and the tree still afire.

[821] The Milky Way is called tsöökanibyaa^{n} ("ghost road"). The dead travel by it.

MYTHOLOGICAL BELIEFS.

776 Bax'aa^{n} is the name of the water-monsters inhabiting rivers, as well as of the thunder. The water-monster is also called byiiça^{n}. It is the enemy of the thunder. This idea is common in the Plains tribes, and it seems probable that the relation into which the thunder and the water-monster were brought through this general idea of the opposition between them, is what has resulted in one name being applied to both of them by this tribe. The description of the water-monster is the usual one. It is long, snake-like, and black, with a long head and turned-up nose and horns. It causes the death of all persons who drown.

That persons drowned are taken by a bax'aa^{n} is believed the more because the monsters are said to have hands like a person. As they have long, sharp teeth, and are known in one recent instance to have eaten a buffalo, it is supposed that they eat the persons whom they drown.

773 776 A hunting-party once saw a water-bax'aa^{n} being carried away through the air by a cloud which extended downward toward the earth. They saw the monster writhing, and turning its tail.

A hunting-party once killed a buffalo at the edge of a river. They were cutting the meat when they saw waves approaching the buffalo. The water rose and was pushed toward the buffalo until it covered it. Then the water receded, and they saw a water-monster lying eating the buffalo. One of the men said he would kill it. The others urged him to desist; but he shot, and struck the animal between the eyes. Then, as it writhed, he declared he would despatch it with his knife. Again they tried to dissuade him; but he said, "I have come to seek death, and am not afraid." Taking his double-edged knife, he killed the monster, and dragged its tail out of the

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

water. He was regarded as having done one of the bravest deeds imagi- 773
nable. This animal had crooked horns, a body and tail like a snake, long 776
teeth, short legs, and hands like a person. According to another version of this incident, the warrior approached the monster, which thereupon retreated into the water. Then he hid behind the buffalo, and when the monster reappeared, shot it, and then despatched it with his knife.

When one of the present old men of the tribe was a young man, a party, all of whom he knew, went to war. They came to a dry lake to the south of the present reservation, in the centre of which there was a small pool of water. Not having seen any buffalo on the way, they were very hungry. So when they found a bull standing by this pool, they killed him. Thereupon they saw that his legs were quite short and his hair long. One of the party said, "He is something strange. Let us not eat him." But another said, "We are too hungry. We will eat anything." And he stuck his knife into the bull's belly. Water immediately spurted out, and came in enormous quantities. The lake rose rapidly, and the men fled with the water at their heels. The lake-bed was a large one, and when they finally came to the bank enclosing it, and jumped up and crawled above, the water dashed against the bank.

The father of the same narrator was with a war-party when they came to a dry lake. They saw three stones in a row, and from the traces left on the ground saw that the stones were moving and that they were something wonderful. The whole party stripped naked and made sacrifices to them, and began to cry before them. Thereupon the water began to rise in the dry lake, and approach. All became afraid and ran off, except one man, who remained by the stones. When the stones were covered with water, they saw that the offerings that they had made moved toward the centre of the lake, although the water was flowing from the centre toward the edges. The one man who had remained continued to cry without fear, until the water reached his neck, when it stopped.

Some women once saw a bax'aa" in a spring from which they were getting water. For some time they were unable to move. When they finally succeeded in escaping, no one would any longer approach the spring. The women had seen only the monster's head.

An old man tells that once the camp moved, and at dusk came to the edge of a lake. The tents were not put up, but the people slept in the open air. It was winter and the lake was frozen. At night the narrator was awakened by a terrible roaring and crashing, as if the ice were breaking up. He did not need to wake any one else, for every one had been aroused by the noise. He told every one, "It is the water-monster. Be still." Early in the morning he went to look, and where the noise had been heard there

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

773 was a clean cut through the ice, about two feet wide, the path of the monster.
It had moved about in the lake until it reached the bank above which the
776 people were sleeping. The monster had struck this bank, the impression of its head and two curved horns being visible. Then it had turned and gone back to the centre of the lake, and there disappeared, making another path, on each side of which the ice was piled up. The narrator gave to it several pieces of property.

It is said that it is not known whether thunders have ever been seen; but
[821] old men say that they have seen marks on the ground where one is thought to have alighted. The grass about was scorched, and two zigzag lightning-marks, each forking at the end, extended in opposite directions along the ground.

The people were once camped east of the present reservation. A terrific rainstorm came and passed over them. When they thought it had gone by, there was a fierce clap of thunder, and a man and his wife and their boy were struck by lightning. The man and boy were killed, but the woman is still alive. There were two small holes in the tent, and through the bedding into the ground there extended two small holes of the size of a small calibre bullet-hole. On another occasion, a woman was untying a curtain at the back of the tent in order to keep a bed dry, when lightning struck the tent-pole, and she was killed. The other people in the tent were merely stunned.

Not many years ago a strange thing happened to a man and a woman still living. During a thunderstorm the woman, who had been sitting at the door, went to the back of the tent and sat beside her husband. Lightning struck the tent, and shot a hole through every metal plate, cup, or dish on the ground. Where it entered the tent, it left a mark like a sword. The people then painted the tent dark-blue.

A woman out mourning for her mother on the prairie saw a small thunder-stone (bax'aa^{n}ayäa^{n}). It was creeping slowly, leaving a trail or mark. The woman thought she would leave it, and pick it up later. When she came to the place again in the evening, the stone had vanished. Its trail was still visible, but ended where she had seen it last.

821 The rainbow is called bax'aanäyaa^{n}t ("thunder's fishing-line"). Näyaa^{n}t seems to mean any fishing-implement.

The whirlwind is called inääçitä^{n}. This is also the name of a red legless water-worm (not a leech).

The three stars of Orion are called "buffalo-bulls." The two below them, to one side, are hunters who were going to shoot them and suddenly found themselves in the sky.

773 The Gros Ventre once lived far north of where they are now, where there
778 were nothing but forests. There they found a metallic object. The object
823

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

was like the flat rocks on which women pound berries, perfectly round, rough above, and perfectly smooth on the under side. Many men lifting together could not move it; but when offerings were made to it, and it was asked to rise, one man was able to lift it easily. Several people tried to sleep near it in order to dream about it, but none of them ever staid the whole night through. They would dream that it was a large metal kettle coming toward them on legs, and filled with boiling water, whereupon they jumped up and fled. 773 778 823 [787]

West of the present Gros Ventre Reservation there was, until the whites took it away, a stone shaped like a person, except that it lacked the face. This was once a Snake Indian. A war-party saw him sitting on a hill, and pursued him into a flat. They had nearly caught him when he turned to stone and has been there ever since. Once, as a camp went by and the people made offerings of calico and other property, a man said, "Why do you do that?" Taking a club, he knocked off the head of the figure. The man died the same summer.

A complete buffalo of stone, with hump, horns, ribs, and other parts, half of it underground, has been seen by the Gros Ventre, and many offerings and prayers have been made to it. 823 778

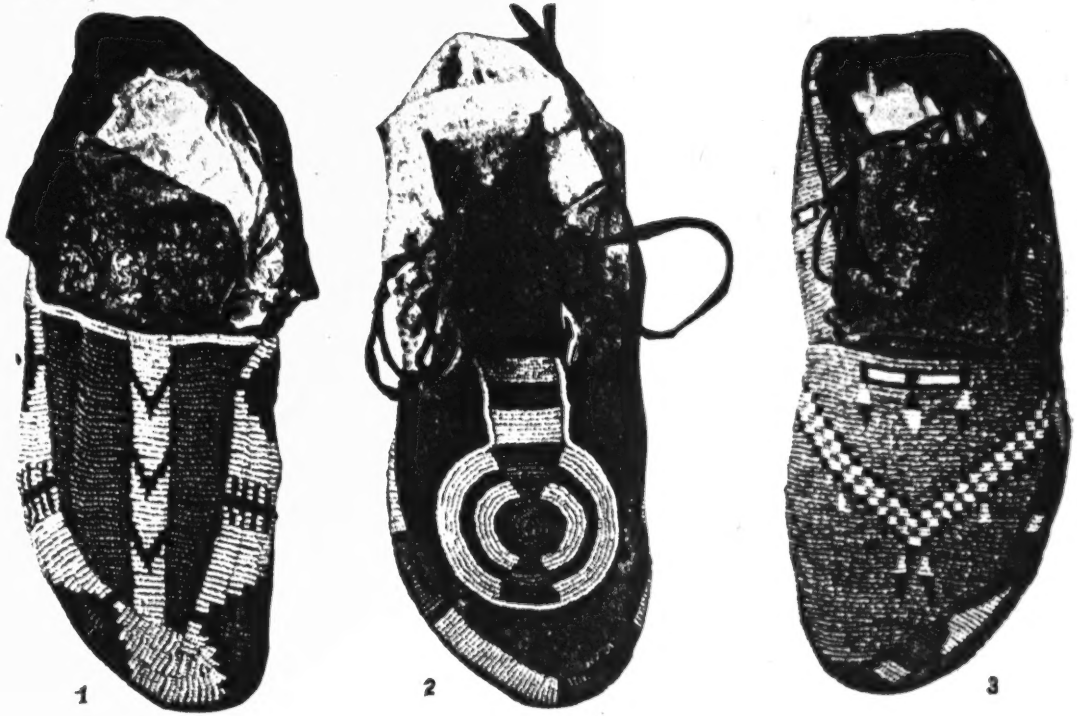
To the north of the Gros Ventre Reservation is a lake shaped like a buffalo, with legs and all parts complete. The tail runs out into a river, the hoofs are patches of brush, and the horns are streaks of timber of the shape of horns.

Lizards are thought to bite persons and then to hang fast to the wound, sucking the flesh into themselves. It is said that a certain man was bitten and the lizard could not be pulled off. The man's flesh had to be cut off around the lizard's mouth. 825

There is believed to be a kind of bear with one white fore-leg, which is fiercer than the grizzly. The jack-rabbit is called "white rabbit;" and the cottontail, "left-hand rabbit." The prairie-dog is called "large gopher" (?); and the mink, "prairie-dog weasel." The bat's bite is thought to be exceedingly poisonous.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

291
531



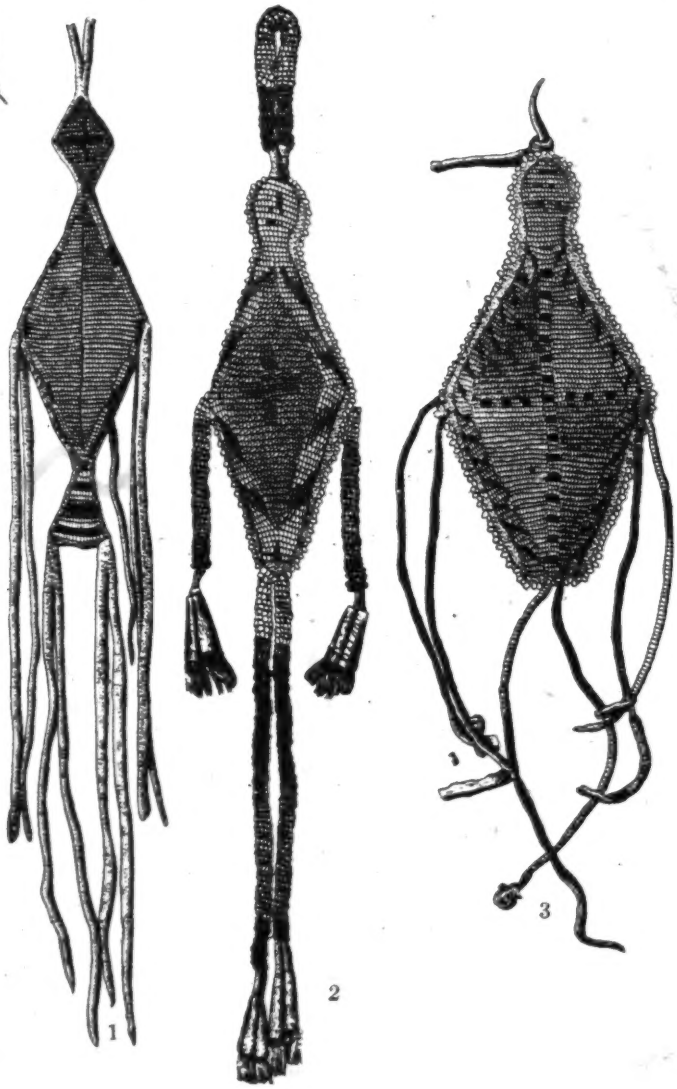
1 2 3

MOCCASINS.

[End plate 1]

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

778
751
532

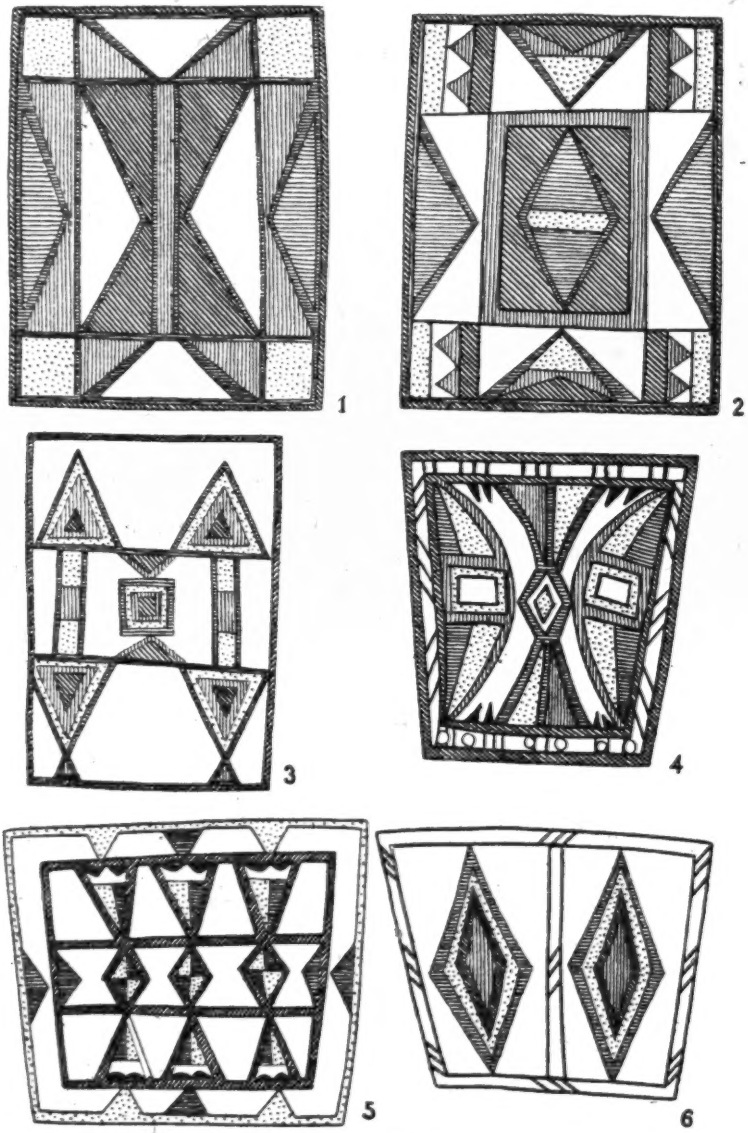


NAVEL-AMULETS.

[End plate 2]

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908 Blackfoot NF6
NQ13 Gros Ventre
Wind River NQ19
Ute NT19
Kutenai NF8

/
B
K
U
WR
531

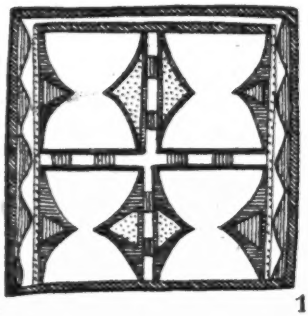


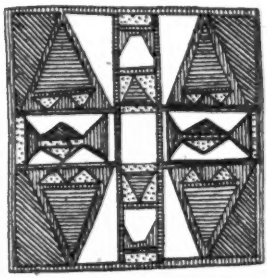
SHOSHONE, UTE, KOOTENAY, AND BLACKFOOT ORNAMENTATION OF PARFLECHES.

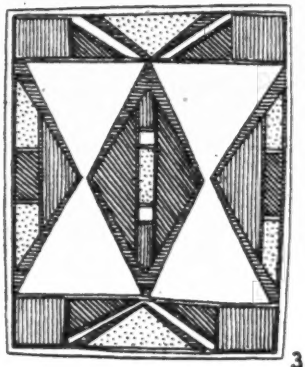
[End Plate 3]

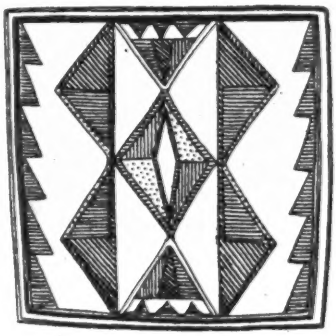
1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

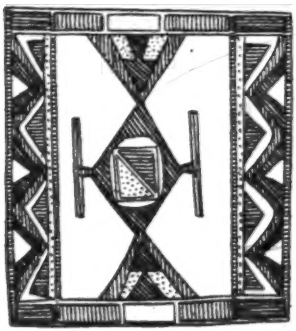
531

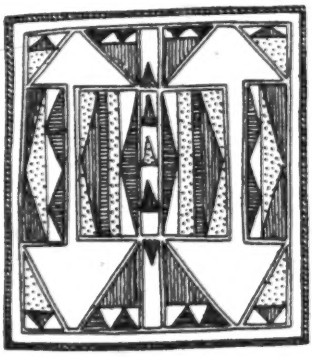

1


2


3


4


5


6

Ornamentation of Gros Ventre Parfleches.

[End Plate 4]

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

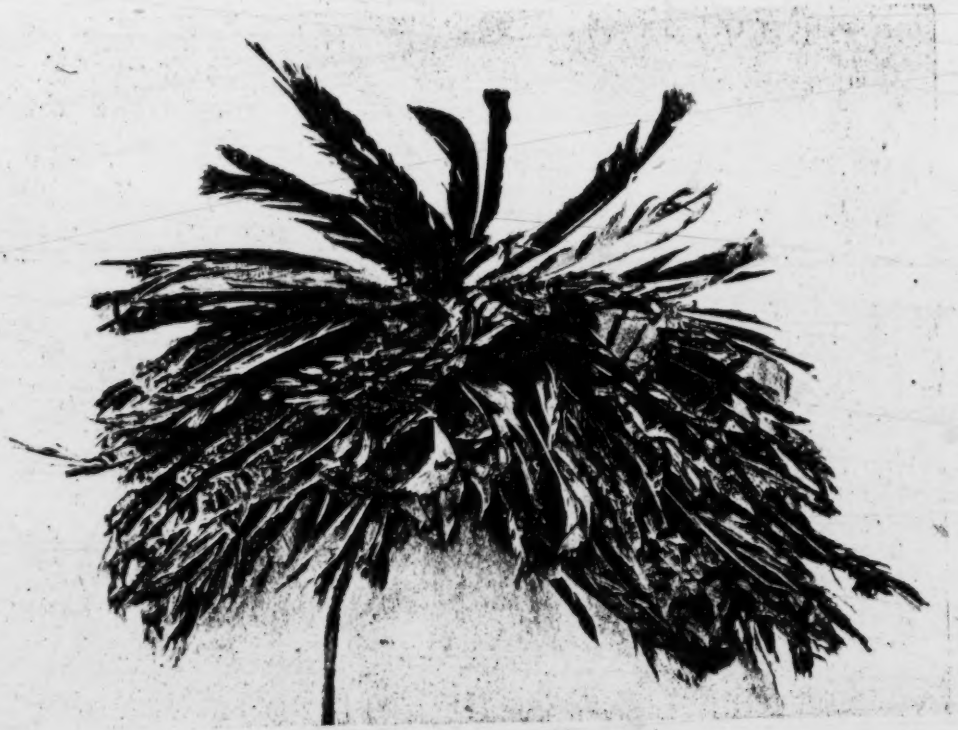
293
411
796

Crazy-Dance Bow and Paraphernalia.

[End Plate 5]

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

237
292
796



Head-Dress for the Dog-Dance.

[End Plate 6]

/For a distribution study of certain Plains Indian design type, including the Bannock and the Fort Hall Shoshone, see 1:Kroeber in the NQ13 Gros Ventre file, Category 116, pp. 151-179. --Analyst/

/For a distribution study of certain Plains Indian design types, including Ute, see 1:Kroeber in the NQ13 Gros Ventre file, Category 116, pp. 151-179. - Analyst/

/For a distribution study of certain Plains Indian design types, including Sahaptin, see 1:Kroeber in the NQ13 Gros Ventre file, Category 116, pp. 151-179. --Analyst/

/For a distribution study of certain Plains Indian design types, including Kiowa, see 1:Kroeber in the NQ13 Gros Ventre file, Category 116, pp. 151-179. - - Analyst/

/For a distribution study of certain Plains Indian design types, including Cheyenne, see 1:Kroeber in the NQ13 Gros Ventre file, Category 116, pp. 151-179. --Analyst/

/For a distribution study of certain Plains Indian design types, including Blackfoot, see 1:Kroeber in the NQ13 Gros Ventre file, Category 116, pp. 151-179. --Analyst/

/For a distribution study of certain Plains Indian design types, including the Kutenai, see 1:Kroeber in the NQ13 Gros Ventre file, Category 116, pp. 151-179. --Analyst/

/For a distribution study of certain Plains Indian design types, including Sioux, see 1:Kroeber in the NQ13 Gros Ventre file, Category 116, pp. 151-179. -- Analyst/

/For a distribution study of certain Plains Indian design types, including Arapaho, see 1:Kroeber in the NQ13 Gros Ventre file, Category 116, pp. 151-179. --Analyst/

/For a distribution study of certain Plains Indian design types, including Assiniboine, see 1:Kroeber in the NQ13 Gros Ventre file, Category 116, pp. 151-179. --Analyst/

/For a distribution study of certain Plains Indian design types, including Wind River, see 1:Kroeber in the NQ13 Gros Ventre file, Category 116, pp. 151-179. --Analyst/

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA
ANTHROPOLOGICAL SERIES No. 15

THE GROS VENTRES OF MONTANA:
Part I
SOCIAL LIFE

BY
REGINA FLANNERY

THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA PRESS
WASHINGTON, D. C.
1953

[Title Page]

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

000

THE GROS VENTRES OF MONTANA:

Part I

SOCIAL LIFE

[P. i]

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

102
131
133
657

FORT BELKNAP RESERVATION AND SURROUNDING AREA

[p. ii]

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA
ANTHROPOLOGICAL SERIES No. 15

THE GROS VENTRES OF MONTANA:

Part I

SOCIAL LIFE

BY
REGINA FLANNERY

THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA PRESS
WASHINGTON, D. C.
1953

[P. iii]

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

COPYRIGHT, 1953
THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA PRESS

[P. IV]

NK10
C28
15-16

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

PREFACE

This reconstruction of Gros Ventre life as it had been lived before the disappearance of the buffalo around 1884 is the result of a joint undertaking. When the late Dr. John M. Cooper visited the Fort Belknap Reservation in 1938, he met there a group of older men who were interested in having him cooperate with them in the making of a record of their "old way of life." The project was then undertaken and continued by Dr. Cooper in the summers of 1939 and 1940. It was upon the invitation of the Gros Ventres that I went to the Reservation in 1940 to work with the women and to deal mainly with matters other than the religious aspects of their culture. Pressure of other duties, combined with ill-health, prevented Dr. Cooper's return to the field after 1940, but the taking of the record was subsequently continued by me in the summers of 1945 and 1948. 121

The results are presented in two parts, Part I on Social Life is the more general, giving a background for Part II which deals exclusively with Religion. The writing of Part II had been practically completed by Dr. Cooper at the time of his death in 1949; it will appear as a separate volume under his name. 128

It is my privilege to thank all of the Gros Ventres who cooperated in the taking of the record. In 1945 and in 1948 preliminary drafts of the material were checked and revised in the field. In spite of all precautions it is not unlikely that some errors may remain. For these the Gros Ventres themselves are in no way responsible. The onus, especially for any misrepresentation of the Gros Ventre point of view, must rest entirely on us.

While Dr. Cooper financed his own field work, I am indebted to the Charles and Grace E. Lastner Fund for part of my field expense in 1940 and in 1945, and to the Research Fund of The Catholic University of America, for the grant which enabled me to return to the Fort Belknap Reservation for the summer of 1948. 122

To the School Sisters of St. Francis, who at no small inconvenience to themselves accommodated my husband and me at St. Paul's School, we are deeply grateful. We wish likewise to

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

acknowledge the kind hospitality of the Jesuit Fathers who invited Dr. Cooper to stay with them at St. Paul's Mission.

Permission was granted for us to print a portion of Dr. Erwin Raisz' map, Landforms of the United States, which accompanies W. W. Atwood, Physiographic Provinces of North America, Ginn and Company, 1940. Mr. Richard Pohrt kindly provided photographs of Gros Ventre specimens in his private collection, reproduced here as Plate 3. The picture reproduced as Plate 1 was loaned by The Boy.

Regina Flannery

THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA
June, 1952

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

CONTENTS

	PAGE
Preface	v
Introduction	ix
I. Historical Background	1
II. Tribal Organization	25
III. Necessities of Life	53
IV. Economic Aspects	69
V. War and Prestige	88
VI. Kinship Behavior	107
VII. Birth and Infancy	127
VIII. Childhood	150
IX. Marriage	171
X. Old Age and Death	195
Bibliography	209
Plates	212
Appendix	213
Index	217

Map

Fort Belknap Reservation and Surrounding Area	ii

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

INTRODUCTION

The Algonquian-speaking Gros Ventres live on the Fort Belknap Reservation in North Central Montana. The Reservation is a small part of the land claimed by this tribe in 1887, when the boundaries were finally fixed. At present, the Gros Ventres number between a thousand and eleven hundred, and they share their territory with almost as many Assiniboine. The latter tribe was included in the settlement of the Reservation although it did not participate with the Gros Ventres and Blackfoot tribes in the Treaty of 1855. In spite of some intermarriage, the two groups have never really blended and the Gros Ventres tend to center at the village of Hays at the southern part of the Reservation while the Assinboine are clustered around Lodge Pole, a settlement some ten miles east of Hays. The Indian Agency is approximately forty miles north of Hays at the northern boundary of the Reservation and close to the town of Harlem on the Great Northern Railroad. Of importance to the Gros Ventres, who are predominantly Roman Catholic, is St. Paul's Mission and School which lie at the foot of the Little Rockies only a mile south of Hays. David Rodnick has given an excellent description of the geographical setting of the Reservation for his study of modern conditions and of acculturation among the Fort Belknap Assiniboine.

131 657 [197] [161] [648] [797] [114]

Of the several tribes in the Northern Plains region, the Gros Ventres are perhaps the least known. Although they maintained intact their tribal identity, and were recognized as fierce warriors, they were often mistakenly identified with the Blackfoot tribes, with whom they were frequently allied. Moreover, little was known of the Gros Ventre language except that it was an exceedingly difficult one; practically every independent observer during the nineteenth century remarks on this fact. Since, however, many Gros Ventre men knew Blackfoot, the linguistic difference was often overlooked and the Gros Ventres tended to be counted as one of the Blackfoot tribes. As part of the so-called "Blackfoot Nation," leaders of the Gros Ventres signed the Treaty of 1855.

101 [648] 197 [648]

[P. viii contains no text]

114 Although the Gros Ventres are mentioned with sufficient frequency in the late eighteenth and in the nineteenth century sources to enable us to trace some of their movements and history, information on their culture is disappointingly meager. There is nothing in the sources on the Gros Ventres, for instance, that is in any way comparable with the richness of Thompson's account of the Piegan. The only real knowledge we have had of Gros Ventre culture is from the pioneer ethnological investigations of Professor Kroeber. In his Ethnology of the Gros Ventre, published in 1908, Dr. Kroeber deals with material culture and outlines the political, social and religious organization. He gives excellent illustrations of such objects pertaining to industries, to recreative, and to ceremonial life, as were still in the hands of the Gros Ventres at the turn of the century. He devotes considerable time to a detailed comparative treatment of decorative art, and in a separate paper deals with Gros Ventre Myths and Tales. Dr. Kroeber's major field work in 1900-03 was devoted to the Arapaho and in his monograph on this people he refers occasionally to his Gros Ventre data, especially, for instance, in the section on kinship terminology.

128 While the present ethnographical account deals primarily with Gros Ventre culture of the nineteenth century, as does Dr. Kroeber's Ethnology, the emphases are somewhat different. In Part I, for instance, we have found it possible to extend what Dr. Kroeber dealt with in several pages on social customs into a number of chapters dealing with aspects of the life cycle and kinship behavior. We have attempted to inject a chronological aspect through our detailed treatment of Gros Ventre history, but our sections on political organization and on war lack the lengthy firsthand statements by individuals which makes Dr. Kroeber's account so valuable. In Part II, we have been able to add vastly more detail on religious life than that presented by Dr. Kroeber. In our material, the Flat and Feathered Pipe rites are emphasized as well as personal supernatural powers. Furthermore we have presented the versions as told by our informants of the tales and myths pertinent to a given area of religious life. Some of these show variations on those published by Dr. Kroeber, and some are new.

124 Dr. Cooper worked with the Gros Ventres in the summers of

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

1938, 1939, and 1940. The group of older men, who wanted a 124
record of their old way of life taken down, emphasized the religious aspects of their culture. The Boy gave the largest portion 115
of information on this subject. He is now about eighty years old
and had been interested ever since he was a young boy in the 124
native culture of his people. His father, Lame Bull, was a deeply religious man and had been a Keeper of the Flat Pipe. From him and from other old men The Boy acquired an enormous body of knowledge which his excellent memory retains. Thick, who died in 1951, and (John) Charles Buckman, who died in 1949, were contemporaries of The Boy and made substantial contributions to the record. Among still older men than these three were Stiffarm, Iron Man I, Joe Assiniboine, Turn Toes, Jim and Philip Shortman, all of whom gave additional information. Charles Buckman spoke English well and sometimes acted as interpreter for the others. Tom Main, a younger man, was, however, the chief interpreter for the men. Moreover, both he and Al Chandler were able to independently contribute valuable information. Biographical details on the chief informants are appended to the present volume.

With all of these men, Dr. Cooper was on excellent terms. 123
They have told me that they realized from their first meeting with him that Dr. Cooper, being a man of deep religious conviction himself, would understand what they could tell him of Gros Ventre beliefs as they had been taught to them or to their fathers before Catholicism had any hold upon the Gros Ventres. The friendship which developed between Dr. Cooper on the one hand and Thick, Charles Buckman, Tom Main, and above all, The Boy, on the other, was a lasting one founded on the deepest mutual respect.

Dr. Cooper usually had the men come to his quarters at the 124
priest's residence of the Mission for regularly scheduled sessions, especially in 1940 when he was able to take phonograph records [126]
of over a hundred Gros Ventre songs. The Boy, who accepted me as a substitute for Dr. Cooper in the years when the latter was unable, on account of ill health, to get out to Montana, remarked on a difference in our methods. Dr. Cooper tended to guide the interviews more closely than I and, since we both had the habit of recording the questions we asked, our field notes confirm The Boy's observation. Inasmuch as those who were engaged in making the record were detained from attending to their other duties, Dr.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

124 Cooper felt that compensation was due them. It may be stated however that the money paid was looked upon as in the nature of a gift, and the generosity displayed in the form of counter-gifts, both to Dr. Cooper and to me, was truly touching.

115 I was invited to the Fort Belknap Reservation in 1940 to work
123 exclusively with the women and to deal mainly with matters other than religion. The two oldest women at Hays, Coming Daylight
[609 and Singer, accepted me as their "granddaughter" which was
603] fortunate in view of the freedom allowed between grandparents and grandchildren in Gros Ventre society. Although these two old women did not speak English, I was happy in having as interpreters women who were well liked by them and who were themselves interested in "the old ways of doing things." Thus they proved valuable informants on their own account. Mary Ereaux and the late Cora Chandler were two who served admirably in both capacities in 1940; Mathilda Cuts The Rope and Mae Main aided me most ably in 1945 and 1948. Garter Snake, a valuable informant, was the only woman for whom a man, Charles Buckman, interpreted.

123 While on the Reservation, I enjoyed the hospitality of the
124 School Sisters of Saint Francis at their convent. I went out, however, before nine and returned at five or six, spending each day visiting the women in their homes. There we smoked and chatted and worked in an atmosphere of easy informality. Much of the material given by the women might be classified under the heading of "expressive interviews." The older women were interested in the fact that I could take down so quickly in shorthand what the interpreter said, but occasionally checked on my accuracy, and the interpreter's as well, by asking me to read back for translation to them something they had said hours or days before!

In 1945 and 1948 when I worked with the men, who had previously cooperated with Dr. Cooper, the situation was naturally somewhat more formal than that which obtained with the women. We met in the Community Hall at Hays. As our business-like sessions proceeded, various Gros Ventre men dropped in and sat on the sidelines. Many of these, including some who were not regular informants or interpreters, such as Tom Bad Road, Steve Bradly, Rufus Warrior and others, helped by freely joining in

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the discussion when some problem arose or additional information was needed. 123 124

The material as presented in Part I, Social Life, is somewhat uneven due in some measure at least to the coincidence of age and sex differences in our chief informants. The two women,—Coming Daylight and Singer,—who gave the bulk of the material on the life cycle, on kinship behavior and on economic activities, came of a generation earlier than that of The Boy, Thick and Charles Buckman who supplied most of the information on political structure and war. The old women were able to draw on their personal experiences of Gros Ventre life as it was lived before the buffalo disappeared. They themselves had been child-brides, had lived in polygynous households, had worked innumerable buffalo skins, and so on. The men, however, had not yet attained adult status when the most radical change was inaugurated in their culture and thus were denied participation in the former type of culture to the same degree as that enjoyed by the women. Men and women alike, nevertheless, were careful to separate what they knew at first hand from what they had been told. Further, they indicated from whom they had acquired information, and the men especially estimated as accurately as they could to what decade a given event which they were describing might be attributed. 128 124

Although a considerable amount of linguistic data was gathered and drawn upon, all but a few of the native words have been eliminated from Part I. We hope to present the linguistic material in the future when it may be possible to publish as Part III a transcription of music and texts of the songs which we have recorded. The phonograph records of the 130 Gros Ventre songs are on deposit in the Department of Anthropology of The Catholic University of America, along with the musical notation of songs nos. 1–10, 12–15, 17–19, 23–24, which have very kindly been transcribed by Mrs. Marianne Arden. Songs nos. 24, 34, 37, 42, 43, 65, 89, 91, and 130, have been transcribed and analyzed by Mr. Jack Kilpatrick under the title, The Possible Relationship of Content to Form in Certain Gros Ventres Songs, a dissertation for the degree Master of Music, July 1946, manuscript copies of which are on deposit at the Library of The Catholic University of America. 128 126

[p. xiv is blank]

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

CHAPTER I

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Location in the Eighteenth Century

The earliest available sources show that in the eighteenth century the Gros Ventres were in the Canadian plains region, far removed from their Arapaho kinsmen. Just where or when the Gros Ventres and Arapaho parted cannot be determined. As Kroeber has pointed out, their tradition of separating while crossing a large frozen body of water on which the ice broke, is not reliable, especially in view of similar traditions of tribal separations current among other peoples.[1] It is possible that there may be some truth in the tradition which Father De Smet had from the Gros Ventres in 1846, namely, that they had become separated from the Arapaho a hundred and fifty years before that date.[2] This would allow, however, only the bare minimum of time which Kroeber has suggested as necessary to account for the linguistic differentiation between Arapaho and Gros Ventre. It would seem a little late also should Morton be correct in identifying as Gros Ventres the tribe, in the region of the Saskatchewan River to the west of the Assiniboine, whom Kelsey mentions in 1691.[3]

The difficulty of exactly locating the Gros Ventres during the first half of the eighteenth century is all the greater in view of the fact that the observers often used general terms, rather than tribal designations, for the plains peoples as distinct from the Cree and Assiniboine. Among such terms are "equestrian natives," "slaves," and various renditions of the Cree word *ayatchiyiniw*,[4] literally "foreign man, stranger"—the generic Cree term by which all hostile peoples are called. The Cree were closely as-

[1] Kroeber, 1908, p. 146.
[2] De Smet, p. 265, note.
[3] Kroeber, 1908, p. 145; Morton, p. 113; Kelsey Papers, p. 16, mentions a nation who "knew not ye use of Canoes and were resolved to go to wars."
[4] Cf. LaCombe, p. 325.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

101 sociated with the western expansion of the fur trade by both the
174 English and the French, being dependent upon white goods and acting as middlemen and interpreters. Consequently Cree words were used often by the traders. Mandelbaum explains, in regard to the generic term, that, since the Blackfoot in particular were the enemy tribe, this term came to be especially applied to them.[6] Nevertheless to interpret it as always and exclusively referring to the Blackfoot is misleading.

175 Isham, writing in 1743, after having been for a decade on the west coast of Hudson's Bay, used the generic term in a widely inclusive sense. He was anxious to get the "Earchthinue" to come to the English forts on the Bay to trade. He had never seen any of them except "a Slave, which was brought down by the Southwd. Indians,—their country lies on the back of this Land and to the Westward of the Churchill River where the Spaniards frequent those seas, at the same time does not traffick with that nation,—I have heard from the mouth of the said Slave concerning that country, by which I understood it was situated much as York Fort Hays's River with a fine Navigable River that op'ns into the sea, and with great plenty of the best and finest fur's, which is their Chiefest Commodity's. The Sinnepoets and other Indians Going to war with them, is a hinderance to their Coming to to the English Settlements to trade. . . ."[6] It was presumably from this Indian that Isham recorded two different ways to count ten. One such list he designated as being the "Earchithinu Language," and the other as "Earchethinue Language in another part of the Country."[7] The first can be identified as Blackfoot, in the general sense of the term,[8] but the second is apparently neither Blackfoot nor Gros Ventre.

Le Gardeur de Saint Pierre, successor of La Verendrye and the last of those who tried to find "the way to the sea" for the French, rendered the generic Cree term as "Iactchejlini" but in addition mentions the Gros Ventres by name. He spent the winter of 1751

[6] Mandelbaum, p. 166.
[6] Isham, p. 113.
[7] Idem, p. 35 and p. 36.
[8] Identification by my colleague, Prof. James A. Geary, personal communication, September 17, 1949.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

at fort de la Rayne on the Assiniboine River, and remarks that the wars which the natives of this area have with the Iactchejlini, the Brochets, and the Gros Ventres, would be an insurmountable obstacle to his plans.[9] It is possible, of course, that the Gros Ventres here referred to are the Hidatsa of the Missouri, since some confusion between the two occurs in the later sources, but this is unlikely.[10] 175

A few years later, the English-speaking Hendry (or Henday) gave the general Cree term as "archithinues," and Wissler was convinced that the people so designated by Hendry, and met by him in 1754–55, constituted the main body of the Gros Ventres, who were then occupying the area between the branches of the Saskatchewan River.[11] Lewis, however, in his recent reconstruction of Blackfoot history, has preferred to follow Burpee in identifying these people as Blackfoot.[12] Whichever interpretation may be the correct one, in 1772 we have our first absolutely unquestionable description of the Gros Ventres by Cocking. He uses the term "archithinue" but gives evidence that it includes not only the Blackfoot groups and Sarsi, but the Gros Ventres as well.

Cocking was sent by the Hudson's Bay Company, as Hendry had been, to try to persuade the "equestrian natives" to come to the Bay to trade. Like Hendry, Cocking too was accompanied by some Cree and Assiniboine in his search out into the northern plains. Though he had started in summer, 1772, by November 4th he had not actually met any of those whom he sought, and in his journal on that date records: "I shall be sorry not to see the Equestrian natives who are a brave people and superior to any who visit our Forts. They have dealings with no Europeans. They live in a southwest westerly direction and draw toward the northeast in March to meet our natives who traffic with them."[13] On November 21st, however, things looked better, as "two Archithinue natives" arrived from the south. Upon being assured that

[9] Le Gardeur de Saint-Pierre in Margry, v. 6, p. 640.

[10] Scott, p. 547, in his review of the early history of the Arapaho, states that this was the first mention of the Gros Ventres by name.

[11] Hendry, pp. 328–51; Wissler, 1936, p. 5, and personal communication, July 24, 1947.

[12] O. Lewis, p. 16.

[13] Cocking, p. 110.

Z: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

175 Cocking's party was friendly, these two indicated that they would persuade the rest of their group to come and meet with them. Bad weather delayed the arrival of the larger group, and meanwhile Cocking's companions tried, without avail, to fix and use a buffalo pound which the "archithinue" natives had built the previous spring. Finally, on December 1st,

> "Our Archithinue friends came to us and pitched a small distance from us; on one side of the pound 21 tents of them, the other seven are pitched another way. One of the Leaders talks the Asinepoet language well, so that we shall understand each other, as my Leader understands it also. This tribe is named Powestic-Athinuewuck (i.e.) Water-fall Indians. There are 4 Tribes, or Nations, more, which are all Equestrians Indians, Viz. Mithco-Athinuwuck or Bloody Indians, Koskitow-Wathesitock or Blackfooted Indians,—Pegonow or Muddy-water Indians & Sassewuck or Woody Country Indians." [14]

175 101 Thus Cocking gives a very good approximation of the Cree terms, applied even today to the Blood, Blackfoot, Piegan and Sarsi, as well as the designation used by the Cree for the Indians whom we call Gros Ventres.[15] Wissler, and, more recently Ewers, refer to this passage in Cocking and suggest that the Waterfall Indians are the Gros Ventres.[16] Any remaining doubts regarding the identification are dispelled by the following quotation from Umfreville who was with the Northwest Company in the area for four years from 1784–88 and who knew the various groups. He states regarding the "Fall Indians":

> "This nation is named by us and by the Nehethawa [Cree] Indians, from their inhabiting a country on the Southern branch of the river [Saskatchewan], where the rapids are frequent. As they are not very numerous, and have a harsh gutteral language peculiar to themselves, I am inclined to think they are a tribe that has detached itself from some distant nation, with which we are not as

[14] Cocking, pp. 110–11.

[15] Cf. Mandelbaum, p. 166. For an early and quite independent list and explanation of the same Cree terms, see Richardson's Journal of 1819–20, quoted verbatim by Franklin, pp. 99–100.

[16] Wissler, 1936, p. 6; Ewers, 1945, p. 289–99.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

> yet acquainted. In this people another instance occurs of the impropriety with which the Canadian-French name the Indians. They call them *gros ventres* or big bellies; and that without any reason, as they are as comely and as well made as any tribe whatever; and are very far from being remarkable for their corpulency."[17]

175
101

It so happens that the French name, "Gros Ventres," has been retained and at present is the most widely used designation for the tribe, although the Blackfoot term for them, "Atsina," is occasionally employed in recent ethnological sources. In the past, however, in addition to the French, translations of that term such as "Big Bellies," "Paunch Indians," and so on, occurred, as well as those derived from the Cree appellation,—"Falls," "Water-falls," or "Rapids Indians." To distinguish them from the village-dwelling Hidatsa, also known as Gros Ventres, sometimes they were called "Gros Ventres of the Prairies," or "Gros Ventres of Montana," in recognition of their later habitat.

Something of intertribal relations on the northern plains can be gleaned from the record Cocking has left us. It seems significant that he does not rate among the "equestrian natives" the Assiniboine whom he knew. Then, as later, the Assiniboine were apparently relatively poor in horses compared to the Gros Ventres and Blackfoot. Cocking mentions in regard to the Gros Ventres, whom he had opportunity to observe from December 1st to the 16th, 1772, that, not only at hunting buffalo but in all their actions, they excel his companions. He notes that the Gros Ventres are mounted on light sprightly animals and that they likewise use pack-horses, which give their women great advantage over the Cree and Assiniboine women "who are either carrying, or hauling on sledges, every day in the year." They impress Cocking as being more like Europeans and he remarks that they are more cleanly in clothing and food than his companions.[18]

175

[492]

The Assiniboine were, however, on account of their close association with the Cree, better armed; and the Gros Ventres were wary enough to ascertain the friendly intentions of Cocking's party

[17] Umfreville, p. 197.

[18] Cocking, p. 111. At this time too, Cocking says, the Gros Ventres used pottery of their own manufacture and tobacco which they themselves planted.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

175 before approaching. It is true that peaceful relations of some Assiniboine, with "Archithinue natives (their friends) two days journey beyond Manitow-Sakahegan," are mentioned.[19] From the location of Manitou Lake it is probable that these were Blackfoot, although Cocking does not specify the tribe in this instance. Then, as later, peace on the northern plains was of short duration. Graham, for instance, in 1775 writes regarding the Assiniboine: [648] "War is their delight and the Archithenues the objects of their inveterate enemity, from these poor creatures they take the fine Horses so frequent among them and which serve to convey their baggage about the country."[20]

175 648 It is significant, too, for intertribal relations that the Indians whom the Cree-Assiniboine dreaded to meet, as they accompanied Cocking out into the plains, were the Snake. On August 24th, 1772, the hunters of his party on the South Saskatchewan River, reported having seen several horses up the branch on the other side, and Cocking remarks: "They are all in general afraid, supposing the horses to belong to the Snake Indians with whom they are always at variance." Again, on September 16th, they saw a strange horse and "supposed it to belong to the Snake, their enemies." Finally, on the last day on which the Water-falls Indians were with Cocking's party, "three Archithinue natives of the same tribe" came from the westward to say that buffalo were scarce and that their countrymen were going to war with the Snake Indians.[21] This bears out the very definite tradition current among the Gros Ventres today that they had to drive the Snake from the territory which they occupied.

Lewis, in his reconstruction of the early history of the Blackfoot, maintains that the Piegan had driven the Kutenai and Snake across the mountains by about 1750.[22] A careful reading of Thompson's account of Piegan history, as given to him in 1786–87 by the old Cree Saukamapee, indicates that while the Piegan had been gaining ground from the Snake since the 1730's, their advance may not have been as rapid as Lewis has suggested. The Piegan

[19] Cocking, p. 106.
[20] Graham's Observations of 1775, in Isham, p. 311.
[21] Cocking, pp. 103, 106, 112.
[22] O. Lewis, pp. 13, 15, and Map B.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

175
648

were said to have reached the Stag (Red Deer) River when both they and the Snake were decimated by a smallpox epidemic,[33] which would seem to have been that of 1780. For the next three years there were no wars, as the remnants of both tribes were occupied in merely sustaining life—parties of young Snake men were left unmolested by the Piegan. It was then decided that in future warfare, instead of looking only for the honor of taking scalps, that the Piegan should capture women and young men and adopt them in order to augment their depleted numbers. Apparently the Piegan gradually advanced to the Bow River as the Snake withdrew. Thompson, then among the Piegan at the Bow River, states: "The country where the Snake now [i.e. 1786] are is far away and little known to the Peeagan." Scouts were out five days but saw no Snake. "Affairs were in this state when we arrived."[34] A few days later a war chief with fifty warriors was sent out to examine the country. This party returned after about twenty days with five horses and fifteen mules which they had captured from the Snake, and old Saukamapee's son gave an account of the expedition. If this chronology is correct, Cocking's companions in 1772 had every reason to fear the Snake and to suspect their presence, as the power of the latter would not have been broken in the northern plains until 1780.

Cocking, as others before him, failed in his mission to persuade the "equestrian Indians" to come to Hudson's Bay.[35] During the last two decades of the 18th century, the Hudson's Bay Company, as well as the rival Northwest Company, established trading

[33] Thompson, p. 336. We know nothing of the wider effects of the smallpox epidemic which affected the Cree in 1736. Cf. Mandelbaum, p. 182.

[34] Thompson, p. 340. The author, pp. 328–47, in giving the account of old Saukamapee, often quotes the latter directly. But inasmuch as he usually omits important diacritical marks, and intersperses comments of his own, care must be exercised in reading these pages which recount events extending in time from about 1730 up to include a few weeks after Thompson's arrival among the Piegan in 1786. Furthermore, he wrote his whole Narrative about 1839, at the age of 70, following his notebooks it is true, but also making generalizations regarding the Piegan which do not necessarily refer to the year 1786–87 he spent among them, but may indicate a later date. See p. 348 where he describes boundaries of the Piegan, Blood and Blackfoot territory.

[114]

[35] Cocking p. 111. Cf. Graham's Observations in Isham, p. 312.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

175 posts accessible to the Blackfoot and to the Gros Ventres. So long as the Cree and the friendly Assiniboine were appreciably 648 better armed than the other tribes on the northern plains, the traders had little to fear. But now, with the acquisition of more guns by the buffalo hunters, and with the increasing appetite of the latter, not only for still more firearms but for other items, especially spiritous liquors, they became more and more troublesome and it was necessary to fortify the trading posts.

Since the demand was mainly for beaver, and the Cree were the real trappers, they were particularly favored by the traders. Umfreville (1784–88) complains that both the Gros Ventres and the Blackfoot tribes bring in by far too many wolf skins, and says specifically of the Gros Ventres that they seem not yet initiated into the manner of hunting and killing beaver, dressing skins and killing small peltry.[36] Mackenzie from his observations in 1789 gives the impression that the buffalo hunters were little interested in trading at the posts, and states that the part of the Gros Ventres, who were with the Assiniboine on the plains near the central portion of the Assiniboine River, prepared fresh and dried buffalo meat and tallow, along with a few buffalo robes and wolf skins, to exchange for "arms and ammunition, rum, tobacco, knives and various baubles," with those who go to traffic with them.[37]

175 Mackenzie gives also the relative position and size of the northern plains groups. Some Cree-Assiniboine are mentioned by him as being at Nepawi and South Branch House, and whose territory extends upward about to the Eagle Hills. Next to them are the Cree about eighty tents and on the other side of the river their number may be 200. Mandelbaum cites this evidence to show that at this time the Cree were along the north Saskatchewan, but had not yet consolidated their position there.[38] Mackenzie goes on to say that at the southern headwaters of the North Saskatchewan dwell the Sarsi, 35 tents, 120 men; opposite to those [161] eastward on the headwaters of the South Branch are the Piegan, 1200–1500 men; next to them on the same water, are the Blood,

[36] Umfreville, p. 198.
[37] Mackenzie, v. 1, pp. cxi, cili.
[38] Mandelbaum, pp. 181–82.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

50 tents or 250 men; next to them downward extend the Blackfeet, their number may be 800 men; next to them and who extend to the confluence of the South and North branch, are the Fall or Big Bellied Indians, who may amount to about 600 warriors.[29] 175 161

Dislocation and Warfare (1790–1830)

Within a decade of the time of Mackenzie's observations, however, the Gros Ventres were being ousted from between the forks of the Saskatchewan where they had been apparently well established since at least 1772, when Cocking met them.[30] Undoubtedly the Gros Ventres were greatly weakened by the smallpox epidemic of 1780, as Wissler has suggested.[31] In any case they were subsequently pushed south and east by the allied Assiniboine and Cree, who had the great advantage of being relatively well-armed with guns. Thus the Gros Ventres were launched on the most turbulent period of their career, with enmity toward the whites as an important factor. 175 648 [731]

We know from Harmon how bitterly the Gros Ventres resented the more favorable treatment accorded the Cree-Assiniboine by the traders. He was at Alexandria, a Northwest Company post on the Assiniboine River, and records on June 10, 1801, the following: "It is currently reported and believed that the Rapid Indians are forming a war party to come against the Indians of this quarter, whom they consider, and I think with sufficient reason, as their enemies. If they come this way they will fall on us as upon the natives themselves, for they say that we furnish the Cree and Assiniboine with what firearms they want, while they get few."[32] Although this particular attack on the post did not materialize, there was real reason to have feared it. In the summer of 1793 the Gros Ventres attacked old fort Brulé (South Branch House) and killed all but one of the twenty or so inhabitants; in 1794 they pillaged Manchester House. These two

[29] Mackenzie, v. 1, p. cx.

[30] O. Lewis p. 12, places them East of the South Branch prior to about 1750.

[31] Wissler, 1936, p. 18. Cf. interesting tradition of the ravages of the epidemic, pp. 34–36.

[32] Harmon, p. 51.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

175 acts of depredation were long remembered and formed the basis for the bad reputation the Gros Ventres sustained among the 648 traders. Henry, speaking of them in 1808 as an audacious and turbulent race, says that they have repeatedly attempted to massacre the traders.[83]

During the early part of the nineteenth century the Gros Ventres continued losing ground to the Assiniboine and Cree. Harmon, again in 1801, mentions, for instance, that a party of Cree-Assiniboine had left Fort Alexandria in June against the Rapid Indians and were bringing a number of women and children for "slaves."[84] In 1803 he records that 40 lodges of Cree-Assiniboine went out on a war party with 40 lodges of "others," apparently against both the Blackfoot and Rapid Indians.[85] Incidentally, as the Gros Ventres were pushed out of the Saskatchewan basin, they no longer formed a buffer between the Cree-Assiniboine and Blackfoot, and these latter came into more direct and deadly conflict. Having rebuilt South Branch House in 1805, Harmon was there in April 1806 when the Cree-Assiniboine in that region went to war against the Rapid Indians, "their inveterate enemies, with whom they frequently patch up peace which is generally short endurance."[86] In August of that same year some Assiniboine reported to Harmon that about 80 tents of Cree-Assiniboine, with about as many of the Blackfoot, were on their way to war against the Gros Ventres. Nothing came of this expedition, however, inasmuch as the temporary allies began quarreling over a horse which each claimed and ended in an all-day fight between them.[87]

And so it went. By 1808 the Gros Ventres had been replaced in [131] the area between the forks of the Saskatchewan and now roamed the territory between the South Branch and the Missouri, although some of them at least went to the posts to trade. Henry remarks that at this time they were bringing to Fort Vermillion a good trade in dried provisions, beaver skins, and grizzly bear and buffalo

[83] Henry, v. 2, p. 530.
[84] Harmon, p. 55.
[85] *Idem*, p. 78.
[86] *Idem*, p. 119.
[87] *Idem*, p. 120.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

robes,—that the Gros Ventres were industrious and were as good skin-dressers as the Mandan and better than the Blackfoot. He further mentions that they were formerly numerous and dreaded but that since the smallpox, and the depredations by the tribes with whom they have been at variance, they had diminished. Although they formerly had bloody wars with the Blackfoot tribes, in 1808 they were at peace with them. 175 648

Henry's estimate, however, that at this time the Gros Ventres numbered but 80 tents or 240 men, seems very low.[38] He was probably basing his figures on those who came that far north to trade, because in 1805 Laroque, while with the Crow on an island in the Missouri River near the confluence of the Big Horn, met a delegation of the Gros Ventres who were camped on the Big Horn River behind the mountain. He states that they occupied 275–300 "huts" and that it was with friendly sentiments that they came to this region. They brought words of peace and said that they came to procure some horses from the Crow. Laroque referred to them as "Big bellies of the fort de prairie" and mentioned that they and the Crow communicated with each other by means of the sign language, not being able to understand each other in speech.[39] This makes it quite certain that these Indians were not the Hidatsa. 161 175 648

It would seem, then, from the above as well as from the figures obtained in the same year, 1805, by Lewis and Clark, viz. 260 tents or 660 men,[40] that the estimates of both Thompson and Henry, observing as they were from the Canadian area from which the Gros Ventres had been driven, refer to only part of the main group of Gros Ventres. Henry himself remarks in 1811 that the Gros Ventres are increasing very fast and that he had always noticed a greater percentage of young men among them than among the neighboring tribes. He admits further: "I have not been able to obtain their exact number but am fully confident they exceed 100 tents."[41] Richardson, moreover, in his journal of 1818–19, identifies the Gros Ventres and claims that they have about 450 to 500 tents.[42] [114]

[38] Henry, v. 2, pp. 530–31.
[39] Laroque, p. 20.
[40] Cf. Wissler, 1936, p. 4.
[41] Henry, v. 2, p. 733.
[42] Richardson, quoted in Franklin, pp. 99–100.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

175
648

During the second decade of the nineteenth century the American fur companies were beginning to show an active interest in the upper Missouri region. As Lewis has pointed out, there were certain differences between the methods used by the companies in Canada and those in the United States.[43] The Americans sent out trappers to hunt the streams for beaver rather than depending on the Indians to bring the pelts to the posts, as did the Canadian companies. The Gros Ventres as well as the Blackfoot resented the invasion of white trappers. To give but a single instance, in the summer of 1810 the Gros Ventres fell on a party of American freemen from Illinois whom they murdered and plundered of their possessions, including beaver skins which were marked and numbered. The Bloods were at war at the same time on the Missouri and murdered a party of Americans. Henry states: "The Bloods in general bear fully as bad reputation as the Fall Indians. They are fully as vicious, bloodthirsty, and turbulent, but, I believe, not so brave."[44]

Still another element which added appreciably to the difficulties of the Gros Ventres, in these first decades of the 19th century, was their increasing conflict with the numerous and powerful Crow. As they continually lost territory to the Cree-Assiniboine, it was not long before they were encroaching on the Crow, who promptly retaliated. It was largely the threat of the Crow to ally themselves with the Americans, in an offensive against the Gros Ventres, that fed the determination of the latter to again raid the Canadian posts. They were desperate for guns and ammunition and felt themselves unable to obtain them through regular trade. The Piegan, in order to protect their own trading interests, promised aid to the Gros Ventres, in case of attack by the Crow, and succeeded in temporarily pacifying them.[45]

In any case, the Gros Ventres were probably responsible for the abandonment of Chesterfield House, which had been rebuilt, after the amalgamation in 1822 of the Hudson's Bay Company and the Northwest Company, at the mouth of the Red Deer River which empties into the South Branch of the Saskatchewan. It was

[43] O. Lewis, pp. 23–31.
[44] Henry, v. 2, 735–36.
[45] Henry, v. 2, 718–21.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

seemingly after the pillaging of this fort about 1826 that part of the Gros Ventres fled to the headwaters of the Missouri, wintered there, and then proceeded south to join their Arapaho kinsmen. According to Hayden, the Gros Ventres spent about five years hunting with the Arapaho and joined them in trading with the Mexicans.[46] During this sojourn, the Gros Ventres suffered a devastating attack of smallpox which was said to have reduced their number by half. 175 648 [731]

From sources independent of Hayden we know that a large group of Gros Ventres was actually in the Cimarron area during the late 1820's. Gregg, with a party of independent traders, was traveling in the Cimarron Valley when on June 21, 1831, they met a very large group of Indians,—he estimates about a thousand including men, women and children,—who followed them for a day or two in order to pilfer what they could and to receive presents if possible. They were finally bought off with about sixty dollars worth of trade goods contributed by various members of the party. It was thought at first that these Indians were Comanche and Arapaho. "But," states Gregg, "they were principally if not altogether Blackfoot and Gros Ventres." A few days later Gregg received intelligence that Captain Sublette and his party, on their way from St. Louis to Santa Fe, had met "an immense horde of Blackfeet and Gros Ventres," and that although the Indians had assumed a menacing attitude, the party had passed without serious molestation. That same evening, however, Gregg camped near a place called the "Battle Ground," famous for a skirmish which a caravan of traders in the company of Mexican troups had in 1829 with the Gros Ventres. Gregg was told that on that occasion, the traders and troops, under Col. Vizcarra, were camped on the Cimarron when a party of 120 Gros Ventres approached on foot. The traders did not welcome the Indians, but seeing that they were disposed to remain until morning, Col. Vizcarra promised to disarm them. Nevertheless he failed to do so, and all of a sudden the Indians sprang to their feet, gave a yell and fired on the party. A Taos Indian, by giving his own life, saved that of the Colonel. The Mexican troops pursued the Gros

[46] Hayden, 341. The gist of what Hayden gives for this period is correct, though his dates are inaccurate. [114]

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

175
648

Ventres, killing and wounding a considerable number of them, but losing a captain and two or three privates.[47]

An interesting version of why the Gros Ventres parted with the Arapaho was related to Hayden by an Arapaho, named Friday, at Fort Laramie when the former was there in 1859–60. Friday stated that the Arapaho and Gros Ventres were camped together on the Cimarron where the Mexicans usually came to trade with them. On this particular occasion the chief of the Gros Ventres wanted all of the trade, whereas the chief of the Arapaho suggested that half of the traders should go to the Gros Ventres and the other half should trade with the Arapaho. An altercation between the two chiefs followed during which the chief of the Gros Ventres stabbed the chief of the Arapaho. The brothers and sons of the latter promptly retaliated by killing the Gros Ventre chief. Whereupon a battle ensued, but peace was made before many were killed. So the two tribes decided to separate, the Arapaho ranging along the S. Platte and Arkansas, the Gros Ventres passing through North Park to Bridger's Pass and thence along the west side of the Rockies to the region of the Three Tetons.[48]

Whether or not this was the actual cause for the separation,—and it sounds reasonable enough,—it is certain that the Gros Ventres did go north giving trouble to the whites along the headwaters of the Snake and Greene Rivers, and engaging some trappers who had met at a trading rendezvous at Pierre's Hole in the summer of 1832. Hayden has given an account of the battle and others refer to it, but Chittenden presents the most detailed description, having gathered together contemporary newspaper accounts, and so on. His version, with which Hayden's in general agrees, is that The Rocky Mountain traders under William L. Sublette, and those of the American Fur Company under Fontanelle, met at Pierre's Hole in the Teton Basin in July 1832. There were many hundreds of Indians in the valley, mostly Flathead and Nez Percé. When the business of the rendezvous was almost finished, a group under M. G. Sublette set out toward the main Snake River and camped for the night not far from the place of the rendezvous. The next morning a band of Gros

[47] Gregg, pp. 227–28, 231–32, 239.
[48] Hayden, p. 322.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Ventres approached in two parties, about 150 men, carrying with them a Hudson's Bay Company flag which they had taken from a party of Hudson Bay Company trappers whom they had recently defeated. The Gros Ventres made signs of truce, but the whites did not trust them and, as a Gros Ventre chief approached the party alone, a Flathead, by prearranged signal, shot him. The Gros Ventres withdrew to a copse and entrenched themselves, the women doing the work while the men held the firing line. 175 648

Sublette sent for reinforcements and his brother, William L. Sublette, came with Campbell and others. William Sublette and Campbell led a direct attack on the Gros Ventres entrenchments. The former was wounded and two of the others were killed. Finally Sublette decided, against the wishes of the friendly Indians, to burn the Gros Ventres out. One of the Flathead, who had communicated with the Gros Ventres, informed the whites that the Gros Ventres had 600-800 warriors who would arrive soon. The whites understood the Flathead to say that these warriors were attacking the main rendezvous camp at that moment, and so withdrew. The Gros Ventres fled. This was rated as one of the worst encounters of Indians and traders in the west. Five whites were killed and Sublette wounded; the Gros Ventres casualties are not exactly known, but they were said to have left nine dead warriors and 25 horses together with nearly all of their baggage in the "fort." Later on, when leaving the rendezvous, a party of whites was attacked, two being killed and one wounded. Sublette saw the large body of whom the Gros Ventres had spoken, but they did not attack, and the Gros Ventres finally left the country via the Wind River.[49]

This was not the end of difficulties for the Gros Ventres, however. Chittenden merely states that they then had a serious encounter with the Crow and were scattered over Crow territory. Hayden gives us more details which he apparently had from the Gros Ventres themselves as well as from traders.[50] It seems that the Crow were in the habit of visiting the Flathead to trade for horses and this summer of 1832 they were returning to their country in two groups. The Gros Ventres, without realizing that

[49] Chittenden, v. 2, pp. 657-62.
[50] Hayden, p. 342.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

175 648 Crow were in the vicinity, camped at a place through which the first contingent of Crow had already passed. Four young men from the second division of Crow were attempting to catch up with the first when they came across the Gros Ventres camp, thinking they had reached their goal. The Gros Ventres seized and killed three of these young men, but the fourth escaped to warn his people, who laid in ambush at a narrow pass through which the Gros Ventres would go. Taking the Gros Ventres by surprise, they completely demoralized them, killing 67 and capturing twice that many women and children. The remainder fled and reached safety with the Blackfoot, leaving the wounded where they lay.

Readjustment (1830–1870)

174 That the whole Gros Ventres tribe could have gone south to the Arapaho, remained a few years, and suffered such disasters in 1832, is highly improbable. First of all, it is unlikely that if the whole tribe disappeared from their usual habitat they would have been able to regain their territory from encroachments by Assiniboine from the east and northeast, by Crow from the south, and by Piegan and Blackfoot from the west and northwest. Furthermore it is equally unlikely that such absence would have been unnoted by Catlin who in 1832, at the American Fur Company Post [161] at the mouth of the Yellowstone, gives a reasonable estimate of the Gros Ventre population (430 lodges) and notes the common error of traders in counting that tribe indiscriminately with the Blackfoot groups, in spite of the difference between the Blackfoot and Gros Ventre language.[51] Moreover, according to Maximilian, Mitchell of the American Fur Company affirmed in 1833 that he had always done business with the Gros Ventres with pleasure, and had never had any proof of the treachery imputed to them. Had there been no Gros Ventres around for five years, Mitchell would no doubt have mentioned that fact. The entire feeling of Maximilian's account is that the Gros Ventres were well known to American Fur Company traders—as compared to some Blackfoot proper, who arrived at the fort and were unknown.[52]

Finally, native tradition gives some negative evidence. Our

[51] Catlin, v. 1, pp. 59–60.
[52] Maximilian, pp. 73, 154.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

older informants at the present time belong to the bands known as the Frozens, the Tendons, and the Upper Quarters. If the entire tribe had gone on such a visit to the Arapaho, it is almost certain that some tradition of this travel would have been passed on, as it would have occurred in the lifetime of Coming Daylight's grandmother and of The Boy's father, from both of whom these informants had much reliable material. It thus seems more likely that several bands—perhaps in population amounting to as much as half the total tribe—went on the expedition together. It was customary for the Gros Ventres to split into smaller groups and for several bands to winter together. It would seem probable that one or two such smaller groups pillaged the Hudson's Bay Company post in the late 1820's, wintered together on the upper Missouri, and then traveled south to the Arapaho. 174 [361]

While part of the Gros Ventres tribe was with the Arapaho, the remainder,—roaming the strip of plains between the Blackfoot groups on the west, the Assiniboine on the east, and the Crow on the south,—managed to improve their situation somewhat. Although the whole tribe was probably reunited by 1833, when Maximilian gives us an account of his meeting with them, they were fairly prosperous in spite of the losses sustained by those who had fought at Pierre's Hole and had then been ambushed by the Crow. Maximilian states specifically that " these Indians were formerly very poor, had bad tents and could not buy firearms; they have, however, recovered of late and supplied their wants." [88] One of our informants told us that she had heard often, when she was a child, that in her grandmother's young days,—which we estimate as the early years of the 19th century—the Gros Ventres were very badly off and had so few horses that they used dog transport almost exclusively, but that the situation gradually improved, and, by the time our informant was born (ca. 1855), they again had many horses, a sign of prosperity. From Maximilian's description and from Bradley's estimate of the situation in the early 1830's, it would seem that there was no dearth of either horses or firearms among the Gros Ventres at that time. Maximilian states, however, that they showed the effect of their encounters with the Crow by a noticeable disproportion of the sexes, and that 175 648

[88] Maximilian, p. 75.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

175 648 they had been hard put to it recently to ransom thirty warriors from the Crow—probably the wounded who had been abandoned in the panic following the ambush of 1832.[54]

So far as relations with the American traders go, in 1833 and subsequently the Gros Ventres were on their best behavior. Maximilian notes that the very large group of Gros Ventres, whom he met at the Judith River as he traveled with Mitchell of the American Fur Company on their way to Fort McKenzie, were surprisingly well-behaved. He adds, rightly enough, that it was to their self-interest to be so, in the light of the fact that formerly they had suffered with the traders on account of their bad reputation. He further remarks that the Gros Ventres were now known as dressing buffalo robes better than most of the other tribes. After trading a bit with the Gros Ventres where they met them, Mitchell invited them to meet him at Fort McKenzie. When the Gros Ventres arrived there, their chief men were received at the [439] Fort with the same pomp and ceremony as were accorded the [431] Piegan chiefs in the preliminaries to actual trading. The Gros Ventres, too, upheld their end by bringing the usual presents—a horse and some beaver skins—to present to the trader.[55]

This Fort had been established at the mouth of the Marias, very close to the later site of Ft. Benton, and was known first as Fort Piekann and the next year was renamed Fort McKenzie. It had been established at this point for dealing with the Blackfoot groups, especially the Piegan, and the surrounding tribes. At that time the American Fur Company was particularly interested in obtaining beaver skins, and one beaver skin was worth two buffalo robes. Later, as the market for buffalo robes opened up, the beaver gradually lessened in value so that finally two or three beaver skins became the equivalent of one buffalo robe.[56] Lewis has emphasized what the change in market meant for the Blackfoot groups.[57] Relations of the Gros Ventres with the whites improved, and there was a tendency for the Gros Ventres to become more and

[54] Cf. Ewers, 1943, p. 603: Maximilian, pp. 71, 75, 76.
[55] Maximilian, pp. 75–76, 126, 165.
[56] Bradley, p. 203, note on 204.
[57] O. Lewis, pp. 34–59.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

more dependent on trading as their thirst for liquor became greater and greater. 175

At the time of which we are speaking, 1833, the Gros Ventres and Piegan were at least temporarily at peace. The Assiniboine, however, were strong and, with the Cree, were raiding deep into Gros Ventres territory. They were likewise at enmity with the Piegan. Poorly mounted as they were, they were bold enough to attack Fort McKenzie in 1833, and were driven off by the whites, with very little assistance from the Piegan who were there at the time. The next fall apparently this same band of Cree-Assiniboine cut off sixty lodges of Gros Ventres in the Sweet Grass Hills and the Gros Ventres lost 400, only one escaping to tell the tale.[58] 648

The Crow, too, were being very troublesome and Bradley describes their siege of Fort McKenzie in 1834.[59] The traders on this occasion finally resorted to firing a cannon which frightened the Crow. To wipe out their disgrace in running away, the Crow rallied under their leader Rotten Belly, and resolved to make an expedition against the Blackfoot. They came across a dozen Gros Ventres warriors, however, ~~near~~ the Fort and satisfied their honor by killing them instead of the Blackfoot. Nevertheless the Gros Ventres had fought bravely and inflicted losses upon the Crow, including their chief who, when he was dying from the wounds, told his people never to attack the whites again. Bradley tells us that the Crow kept to this advice. Nevertheless they continued giving trouble to the Gros Ventres. Bradley says in 1835 that war continued to rage as fiercely as ever. For example, the Gros Ventres killed 40 Crow who had tried to steal their horses near the Fort; some months later they again got the best of a raiding expedition of Crow.[60]

In building up to the position they maintained in 1855, the Gros Ventres were undoubtedly able to profit from the effects of the great smallpox epidemic of 1837–38 which wreaked such havoc among all the Blackfoot groups and the Assiniboine, but which left the Gros Ventres and Crow relatively untouched. Bradley gives 175 648 731

[58] Bradley, 219.
[59] Bradley, p. 216.
[60] Bradley, p. 219. For an account of present Gros Ventre tradition of the first of these two battles, see pp. 94–96.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

175 648 731 an account of the terrible number of deaths among the Blackfoot in 1838 and states that the northern Assiniboine lost two-thirds of their number. He says of the Gros Ventres however that they escaped very lightly, their entire loss being less than 200. "This is to be attributed to their being in a measure innoculated by previous experience with the disease communicated by the Arapahoes in a visit to the south."[61] It may be recalled that Hayden mentions the epidemic which struck the Gros Ventres when they were among the Arapaho. Both are probably referring to the severe, but more or less localized, epidemic which hit the Indians of the Kansas Territory in 1829. Hayden, referring to the five year period during which the Gros Ventres hunted and traded along with the Arapahos—says that during this time: "Smallpox passed among them, having been communicated to them through other tribes with whom they were at peace or carried on a traffic. This disease, at that time, destroyed about half their number, but secured the remainder from the next attack which occurred in 1838. At this later period the smallpox only acted on the young, and destroyed a number of them, but the chiefs and elderly men escaped so that the tribe was not reduced to the disorderly and helpless condition of the Blackfoot and other surrounding nations."[62] That the Blackfoot groups were disorganized to a large extent is borne out by a completely independent source. Father Mengarini in 1841 notes the troublesome raids by the Blackfoot, around St. Mary's Mission among the Flatheads on the Bitter Root River, and adds: "Had not pestilence decimated the tribe the year before our arrival, our mission at St. Mary's would have been impossible."[63]

175 648 In the 1840's, then, the Gros Ventres had only one full-strength enemy to contend with, namely, the Crow. Presumably, they took advantage of the opportunity to raid extensively both the Blackfoot groups and the Assiniboine. Nevertheless they evidently continued to keep up their good relations with the whites. Father Point, S.J., who spent the fall and winter of 1846–47 among the Blackfoot and Gros Ventres wrote to Father de Smet regarding

[61] Bradley, p. 226.
[62] Hayden, p. 341.
[63] Mengarini, p. 8.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the latter tribe that they appeared to him "to have the advantage of the others in being more adroit, more docile, and more courageous; but they are more attached to their old superstitions and are terrible *demanders*, as the Canadian employees here call shameless beggars; happily they are not offended when refused." In addition, he stated that if the Gros Ventres were less importunate he would willingly entitle them the Flatheads of the Missouri "as they have something of their simplicity and bravery." He considered that "the Piegans are the most civilized but the most noted thieves; the Blood well made and generally less dirty; while the Blackfeet proper are, it is said, the most hospitable." Among all four tribes Father Point found the disproportion of sexes great, and attributed to warfare the preponderance of women over men.[64] 175 648 [162]

The heart of the area held by the Gros Ventres at that time, and claimed by them subsequently at least until the establishment of the Fort Belknap Reservation in 1873, and probably until 1888, was described by Hayden as follows: "At present [1862] and for many years past, they range along the Milk River, on the east side of the Missouri, extending as far as the Cypress Mountains. From this line to the Marias River stretches a beautiful level country well covered with grass and adapted to pasturage of buffalo. Here the Indians under consideration may be found at all seasons—in the winter along the banks of the Milk River where wood may be obtained and in summer on the plains where fuel is not so necessary."[65] As the Gros Ventres were by no means confined to this area they were in intermittent conflict with surrounding tribes. 131 175 648

With a view to settling the quarrels of the Blackfoot, Piegan and Gros Ventres east of the mountains, and of the Flathead, Kootenais and Nez Percé and others west of the mountains, Governor Stevens held a council with the Gros Ventres on the Milk River in August, 1853, and with the Blackfoot and Piegan at Fort Benton in September.[66] In 1854, he ordered a thousand dollars worth of goods from Culbertson of the American Fur Company, for distribution to the Piegan and Gros Ventres. These goods, consisting mainly of foodstuffs with which they were un- 175 648

[64] Father Point's letter of 1847, in De Smet, pp. 254, 256.
[65] Hayden, p. 340.
[66] Hoopes, p. 101.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

175 648 familiar, were given to the Gros Ventres at the Milk River. In spite of warnings, the Indians ate the food uncooked, with the result that many became sick and several died. A creole Frenchman, living among them at the time, persuaded the Gros Ventres that they had been poisoned deliberately, and some of the warriors wanted to go after Culbertson with the intention of killing him. Fortunately, however, Culbertson was so well known to and liked by most of the Gros Ventres that the rasher members of the tribe were restrained from carrying out this project.[67]

Stevens concluded in 1855 a treaty at the Judith River whereby the Blackfoot Nation (including the Gros Ventres) agreed that their territory should be a common hunting territory for all signatories. The United States agreed to spend $20,000 each year for 10 years in provisions for the Gros Ventres, Blackfoot, Piegan and Blood, and $15,000 a year for ten years in instructing them in agriculture and mechanical pursuits, educating their children, and so on. The non-signatory tribes were the Crow, Assiniboine and Sioux.[68]

Although it was reported that the good will among the tribes was remarkable, and that peace was sincerely desired, raiding parties continued very much as before. In addition, more and more whites were encroaching on the territory supposed to have been reserved for the use of the Blackfoot tribes and Gros Ventres. Gold was discovered within the area about 1862, and Lewis has given a cogent summary of events which led up to Piegan enmity toward both Gros Ventres and whites, and which culminated in war, 1866–70.[69]

The End of the Buffalo Days (1870–1890).

136 175 648 The end of the buffalo days was now rapidly approaching. The completion of the Union Pacific railroad in 1869 split the northern and southern herds of buffalo. With the presence of increasing numbers of commercial white hunters, armed with long-range repeating rifles, the end of the great north herd was beginning in 1876. It was not, however, until 1880 that slaughter was universal

[67] Bradley, p. 271.
[68] Hoopes, pp. 113–15.
[69] O. Lewis, pp. 62–66.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

over the area. The Gros Ventres had the benefit of buffalo hunting 136
a trifle longer than the other groups. All the buffalo in Montana 175
were in February, 1882, in their territory, between the Milk River
and the Bear Paw Mountains. The hunting season, of October 648
1882 to February 1883, finished the annihilation of the great northern herd and left only stragglers, merely a few thousands.[70] By August, 1883, both the Blackfoot and the Crow Agencies reported that all game was gone from their respective reservations, and a letter from the Fort Belknap Agency stated that game there "was practically exhausted."[71] In 1884 the Blackfoot and Crow agencies reported that the buffalo was extinct.[72] After ceding [657]
more land, in 1888 the limits of the Fort Belknap Reservation, which the Gros Ventres share with the Assiniboine, were finally fixed.[73]

Missionary endeavors, carried on by the Jesuit Fathers, had 175
begun in earnest only in 1885. Prior to that time contact with
missionaries had been sporadic. Father Point in 1846–47 had 797
been well received and sent in a good report of this tribe. When Father Giorda attempted to go among them in 1862, however, Bull Lodge took him prisoner and stripped him of his possessions. Since his captivity did not last longer than a few weeks, and his property was restored to him, several months later he made another attempt. This time, while there was some opposition at first, he was permitted to baptize over a hundred children. Subsequently Fathers Rappagliosi and Grassi made several visits respectively, and at considerable intervals. Finally, after some preliminary negotiations, Father Ebershweiler established permanent residence in 1885, and the school at St. Paul's was opened in 1887. The mission and school flourished. In 1891 the founder was replaced by Father Flusi, assisted by Father Sansome.[74]

The Gros Ventres population—always small, relative to that of 175
surrounding tribes—was steadily declining. Hayden's estimate
of 1853 placed the total at 2520.[75] In 1883, at the time of the 161

[70] Hornaday, pp. 492, 506, 510–11.
[71] Report of Commissioner of Indian Affairs 1883–1915, pp. lx, 98.
[72] *Ibid.*, pp. 107, 109.
[73] *Ibid.*, p. 295.
[74] Palladino, pp. 187, 195–96, 230, 232, 235.
[75] Hayden, p. 344. Gros Ventres today claim their number was then 10,000.

175 disappearance of the buffalo, the population was officially recorded
161 as being 970. By 1895 it had been reduced to 596.[18] At this low
ebb, in the last decade of the nineteenth century, there was still a
[554] strong feeling among the Gros Ventres against the white man's
dress; as of old, a man's wealth and standing still was measured
[178] by the number of horses he owned. Nevertheless the ceremonial
aspects of their culture, already on the wane before that decade,
had practically disappeared.

[18] *Report of Commissioner of Indian Affairs 1883–1915*, pp. 101, 188.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

CHAPTER II

TRIBAL ORGANIZATION

The greater bulk of our material on the Gros Ventres covers the fifty year span from about 1835 to 1885. During that period, the tribal territory centered about the Milk River. The present Reservation, the boundaries of which were finally fixed in 1888, represents only a small part of the land claimed and held by the Gros Ventres as their own. 131 [648]

Band Names and Affiliation

The political organization of the Gros Ventres was simple. The division into fairly autonomous bands was basic, and apparently the number of bands was twelve. Our informants, both those who were adult and those who were children, at the time when the whole tribe still encamped as a unit, agreed on that point. The list of band names given by our two oldest informants, Coming Daylight (b. 1854) and Singer (b. ca. 1856), is as follows: Coffees, Same as Assiniboine, Plenty Bad, Greys, Fast Travelers, Water Horses Once a Day, Upper Quarters, Frozens, Buffalo Overloaded, Tendons, Bloods, Night Hawks. These two old women maintained that, in their own experience, the bands camped in this order, and in a circle, when the whole tribe was together. 619 621 [115]

Quite independently of the above list, another was obtained from The Boy (b. 1870). As a child he witnessed the formation of the camp circle, and he knows many details of previous decades from his father, Lame Bull (b. ca. 1825, d. 1890) and from other old men. The Boy's list agrees with that given by the two women, except in regard to one band. He includes a group called Poor Greys and omits Night Hawks. All of our informants insisted that the Greys and Night Hawks were distinct bands, but there was a difference of opinion as to whether or not the Greys and Poor Greys were in reality the same band. 621 115 114

Seven of the band names can be identified with Kroeber's num- 621

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

621 bered list: Same as Assiniboine (No. 5); Fast Travelers (No. 6); Water Horses Once a Day (No. 2); Upper Quarters (No. 4); Frozens (No. 1); Tendons (No. 3); Bloods (No. 7). Furthermore in Kroeber's supplementary list we find the Coffees and Night Hawks mentioned; we are probably correct in assuming that Kroeber's Dusty Ones in that same supplementary list correspond to our Greys. Kroeber does not refer, however, to either Plenty Bad nor Buffalo Overloaded; whereas our informants could not identify Kroeber's Fighting Alone (No. 8).[1]

621 114 The fact that there is as much agreement, namely, in ten band names, between Kroeber's information and our own, is quite remarkable since the band names were nicknames, the explanations for which were quite trivial. Not only were variations used to designate the same band by different informants, but also apparently the band names were frequently changed altogether.

For example, Kroeber's Smooth-worn-tent-people were designated variously by our informants as Slick Runners, Slippery Travois Poles and Fast Travelers—all of these taken from the little explanatory anecdote that this band was supposed to travel so far and so fast that the ends of the travois poles which dragged on the ground quickly became smooth and worn.

Similarly the Dusty-ones of Kroeber were termed by our informants Greys (proper) and Those Who Do Not Wash Their Faces, playing around the theme that the members of this band did not paint up as did other Gros Ventres and that they thus looked unkempt and dirty.

Those-who-do-not-give-away, or Buffalo humps, mentioned by Kroeber were consistently identified by our informants as Upper Quarters, the explanation lying in the reputation for stinginess acquired one time when members of the band were asked for meat, and gave the upper quarters or hump of the buffalo instead of the more desirable parts.

The Opposite-Assiniboine or Same-as-Assiniboine were also called Poor Ones because they, like the Assiniboine tribe in general, possessed few horses.

Our informants said that Water Horses Once A Day were so

[1] Kroeber, 1908, p. 148.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

called because the band members were too lazy to water their horses more often. 621 114

The story regarding the Frozens is that one winter people were hungry and the members of this band killed buffalo; when they were asked for meat, they replied: "The meat is frozen and we can't cut it." The alternative name for this band, given by Kroeber and by one of our informants, as Plumes or Those-who-wear-feathers-on-the-head, is probably an older name for the band, but one for which neither Kroeber nor we received an explanation.

The Coffees and Bloods were so known on account of their going to extremes in the consumption of these two foods respectively.

Plenty Bad refers to the fact that this band was numerous but were all "bad" people, that is, that there were few with good reputations as warriors.

Buffalo Overloaded were supposed to have been very foolish people. Their name derives from the story that on one occasion, when hunting, they saw a small herd of buffalo, one of which sat down. A band member said: "That buffalo is overloaded (i.e., he has eaten too much and has died)." The others said: "Let's wait till all the buffalo get overloaded, then we will go and get our meat." One by one the buffalo sat down and when the hunters thought they were all dead, they walked toward them, but the buffalo, catching the scent, ran away.

The Tendons were so named because they were said to have expressed a preference for the neck tendons of the buffalo as food.

The Night Hawks received their name from the habit of the band members of breaking wind audibly, the sound suggesting the noise the night hawk makes as it flies.

Only one of our informants mentioned Berry Men as the name of a band, whose place in the camp circle was said to have been next to Water Horses. Although this name is likewise listed by Kroeber, none of our informants could say to which band the term referred. Several other names of bands which various informants mentioned as having been heard by them to have existed in the past were Black Horns, Yellow Tail Feathers, Saw-whet Owls, Red Eagles, Torn Leggings, and Traders. One informant,

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

621 The Boy, ventured the following tentative indentification, saying
114 that these may have been earlier names respectively for Same As Assiniboine, Upper Quarters, Water Horses, Night Hawks, Coffees, Frozens. A few informants had heard of Breech Cloths and Weasel Skin Headdresses as band names but didn't know which modern bands they might have been, always assuming that the number of bands had been twelve.

361 As to the exact order of the bands in the camp circle, there was
621 no real agreement. The order given by Singer and Coming Day-
114 light differs from that given by Kroeber. Furthermore, while the two old women were emphatic that the places within the camp circle were permanent—"otherwise we could not remember all this!"—some of the men informants were under the impression that the band from which a new Flat Pipe Keeper was chosen moved to the center position opposite the opening of the camp
361 circle, and that the others shifted accordingly.

621 In any case, the circle, with opening toward the rising sun, was the formation employed when the whole tribe was together. When bands were separated from the main group they might or might not camp in this way, depending somewhat on the length of time they expected to remain in one spot, and on the nature of the terrain. Sometimes, for instance, the lodges of the various families of the band were strung out along a watercourse.

According to The Boy, there was a tendency for bands which camped in proximity within the big camp circle to go off together when the tribe split up. The Upper Quarters and Frozens were often together and, along with them, the Same As Assiniboine or occasionally the Greys (proper) and Buffalo Overloaded, usually staying more or less in the vicinity of the Milk River, the center of the territory claimed by the Gros Ventres. Whereas the Tendons, followed by the Poor Greys and Bad Plenty, moved for winter quarters to the country bounded by the Big Sandy, the Marias River (at Ft. Benton), and the Bear Paws; while the Fast Travelers as a rule sought out the country south of the Missouri toward the Yellowstone River and Crow country, accompanied by perhaps the Coffees. Water Horses and Bloods were friendly
554 with each other and joined now one group and now another.

621 A band which was thus followed by two or three others had

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

added prestige. Those mentioned as leading bands above were seemingly the most numerous and most prominent in the recent past, and their representatives are more numerous at the present time. While the Frozens, Upper Quarters and Bad Plenty have the most living descendants, apparently there are no Poor Greys or Coffees today, only one Night Hawk, and a few each of the others. 621 554

Although Coming Daylight and Singer claimed membership in the Frozen band, they had no false modesty in proclaiming: "The Frozens were the best workers, had the biggest lodges, the prettiest women and the best-looking men. In fact they were the 'aristocratic' families, being the best-dressed and having the most horses." This was confirmed voluntarily by Cora who stated that she belonged to the Same As Assiniboines, but had heard all her life that the Frozens were the most distinguished band along the lines the old women mentioned. The men informants admitted that some bands were considered better in some respects than others, but failed to be more specific, and added that regardless of the reputation of the whole band, an individual man had to make his own way. [565]

It is somewhat difficult to arrive at the exact situation as to band affiliation and exogamy inasmuch as the band ceased to function not long after our oldest male informants were born. Our oldest female informants, whose memory includes the 1860's, stated in regard to this individual or that, whom they mentioned, that they could not remember to which band he had belonged. In fact the old women became quite impatient when questioned on this subject since from their point of view it was not important. To them the question of marriage regulations was a practical one of avoiding as mate any person to whom blood relationship could be traced, no matter how remotely, and any affinal relative not of the same generation. 621 [582]

There was general agreement among all informants, however, that under normal circumstances children were of the same band as their father.[8] Nevertheless, residence was an important factor, and not a few persons claimed affiliation with bands other than those into which they had been born. Coming Daylight, for instance, said she was a Frozen, the band to which her mother had [591] 621 597

[8] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, p. 147.

621 belonged. She was orphaned at an early age and was raised by
597 her maternal grandmother under the protection of her mother's brother, Crow Bull, a prominent member of the Frozen band. Garter Snake claimed to be a Tendon, likewise the band into which her mother had been born, although her father, Bull Lodge, a so-called "Hudson Bay Company breed," was classed as a Frozen. If a child were adopted by, and remained during his childhood days with, a family of another band than that into which his real father had been born, he became a member of the adopting band. For instance, Lame Bull adopted a boy whose father belonged to a different band, but the boy was always known as a member of Lame Bull's band, the Upper Quarters.

[591] One informant stated that when a woman married she became a
621 member of her husband's band, but this statement refers in all probability merely to the fact that patrilocal residence was often practiced. Each of our older women informants stated as her band the one in which she grew up. When speaking of their husbands, these women, each of whom had survived several mates, seldom mentioned their band affiliations, unless asked specifically, nor did they mention to which of the soldier societies their several husbands had belonged. One gathers the very distinct impression
[602] that the kinship bonds were the all-important social relationships so far as Gros Ventres women were concerned, and that the wider political and social groupings did not impinge very directly on their lives.

621 All informants stated that one should not marry into the band
582 in which he claimed membership and in which he was brought up. There was a difference of opinion among them, however, as to whether one might marry into his mother's band providing he had not been raised therein and no blood relationship could be traced.[3] The Boy stated positively that a man who would so much as flirt with a young woman of his mother's band would be disliked. Charles Buckman differed, holding that any marriage would be proper, providing the far-reaching incest taboos based on blood and affinal relationship be observed. The Boy admitted that, because of changes which occurred in band affiliation, occasionally a person would take a wife from some other band than that of either

[3] Kroeber, 1908, p. 147, prohibition of marriage extended to mother's clan.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

his father or mother and still discover later that she was related to him. The Boy's own experience illustrates this. The Boy is an Upper Quarters as was his father, and his mother was a Frozen. It so happened that his mother's father was one of three brothers who were Frozens. The grandson of one of these three brothers married a Bad Plenty and stayed with his wife's band so long a time that he was known as a member of the Bad Plenty and his children took that affiliation. The Boy married one of the daughters of this family, a woman known as a member of the Bad Plenty. Only after several years of married life did they one day discover that The Boy had married his maternal grandfather's brother's great-granddaughter! Charles Buckman, whose father was a white man, and whose mother, a Bad Plenty, later married a Water Horses man, took Charles there to live, and he claimed affiliation with the latter band. He married a Bad Plenty woman, however, and discovered years later that his wife was remotely related to him on his mother's side. It seems certain that in former times, when the bands were functioning, an Upper Quarters would not marry an Upper Quarters, that is, that an individual would not marry into his own band; but beyond this, apparently only known blood and most types of affinal relationship were bars to marriage. 621 582

Within the band, close relatives usually camped in proximity, whether residence was matrilocal or patrilocal. The general consensus of opinion among our informants was that most of the persons within a band were related to each other. Band members would not wager against each other for high stakes in gambling, and sometimes the whole band might become involved as a unit in case of blood revenge. 621 [628]

Chief or Leader

The term "chief" was employed to designate any man who had distinguished himself in war.[4] Each band then might have several or many such "chiefs," but among them would be one recognized as leader, "he who takes us around," that is, the one who directed the band when it moved from place to place.[5] This function seems 622

[4] The Gros Ventre term is *nätcä* (m. s.) *näkyä* (w. s.). For linguistic shift between men's and women's speech, see Flannery, 1946, pp. 133–34.

[5] The Gros Ventre term is *ninä'ninänä:titc* (m. s.). Kroeber, 1908,

622 to have been the primary one of the leader. He decided where to go and when, in order to hunt, to seek lodge covers, to gather berries, to cut new tent- and travois-poles, and so on. He invited people, prominent men of his own band and of other bands, and fed [574] people every day. He would have provisions on hand and was prepared to carry out extensive hospitality. He would be one who had plenty of buffalo horses which younger men—his sons and nephews—would use on the hunt, and numerous pack horses which returned from the hunt laden with meat. His wives would invite old women, and especially needy ones, to help slice meat, prepare it for storage, to render grease and extract marrow, all of which these old women were glad to do in return for some fresh meat.

As explained by The Boy, a man had to work up from the ranks, 622 so to speak, to be recognized as chief and as leader. "It paid to 555 be prosperous and a good man. In the course of time people would look up to him as leader and other bands would be told that he is the leader. He does not ask for this distinction but, if he is prosperous and good, people recognize him. The band gets together and tells him: 'You are our leader.' He holds 'office' for life. As he grows old he might tell the people to select someone else, but, even so, they would continue to look up to him and to ask his advice and consult him. There are obstacles in the path of life, and one who would rise must walk around or over them. To be an acknowledged leader a man must have distinguished himself at war, but many who were known for their brave deeds were not necessarily in line for leadership.[6] The kinds of things which would have prevented a man from receiving this type of recognition were the following. First of all, murder of one of his own band. For instance there was a well-known character who had

p. 147, mentions that "Each band seems to have had a recognized chief or leader."

[6] Denig, whose experience with the northern plains tribes extended from 1832 to 1854, expresses, p. 403, the concept as follows: "In fact the rank or standing of each Indian be he chief or warrior is so well known and his character so well judged by the vox populi that he takes his place spontaneously. A higher step than his acts and past conduct confer, imprudently taken, would have the effect of injuring him in their eyes as a leader. Every chief, warrior or brave carves his own way to fame, and if recognized as one by the general voice becomes popular and is supported; if not he mixes with hundreds of others in similar situation and waiting opportunity to rise."

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

an outstanding war record, was known to be courageous and not afraid to die, yet, because he was quick-tempered and murdered a member of his own band, he forfeited what would have been a very good chance of becoming leader of his band. Second, a man who had the reputation of being woman-crazy, of bothering other men's wives, or who was guilty of rape or incest, would not be selected as leader. Furthermore, a man who wished to rise should control his temper, be good to others and avoid lying, back-biting and jealousy in regard to other prominent men. If he had these qualities, and was eminent at war, he would rise high in public esteem and be in the running not only as a leader of a band, or of the whole tribe, but also as Keeper of one of the Sacred Pipes."[1]

It was further explained by this same informant, The Boy, that if the leader died, there was a lot of talk both by members and non-members as to who was qualified to succeed. Those outside the band speculated on whom the choice would fall and said: "It ought to be so-and-so," and in this way attempt to influence the opinion as to which of the outstanding men of the band had the best qualifications. Soon a certain man became the leader, and once he was invited to a meeting of other band leaders he was "full-fledged."

In carrying out his duties, that is, in deciding when and where to move, the leader consulted with others and proceeded in a democratic fashion. If two or more bands were camped together, for instance, the leaders would consult among themselves and come to a decision as to whether or not the bands should remain together and as to where they should go. Other men would be present and any one of them apparently had the privilege of speaking his mind. "Suppose that the leader had decided that his band should leave the other and go to some particular spot. Someone in his band who disagreed with the decision would speak up and raise the question of, say, danger from the enemy. He would suggest a different place free from such danger and where game would be plentiful, where there was a good camping ground and sufficient water for the horses, etc. He would give his reasons in detail, and, if it

[1] The role of the Keepers of the Flat and Feathered Pipes is discussed in detail in Cooper, Ms. 1949.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

622 seemed that the others present agreed with him, the leader would
[623] give in and have the crier announce the revised decision."

On the march, the leader went at the head of his band and
[484] showed the way. When several bands were together, the leader of one would have decided where he intended to go, and, if the other bands had decided to go along with this one, they followed, but were free to break away at any time.

[621 The band to which either the Keeper of the Flat Pipe or the
793] Keeper of the Feathered Pipe belonged had a certain distinction as there was a tendency when the tribe split for each to have a considerable following.

173 According to tradition, as related by The Boy, the Gros Ventres
643 had had in the fairly remote past a formally selected chief or leader of the whole tribe. It was said that he functioned when the whole tribe was together and that his decisions in important matters were made in consultation with the chief men, including the leaders of all the bands. There was no regular council and anyone
[623 present might express his opinion. Often the Keepers of the
793] Sacred Pipes were present at such meetings called by the tribal chief, but if they were not present they were supposed to be kept advised.

The last regularly selected leader of the whole tribe was said to have been White Eagle, who held this position in the last decades of the eighteenth century. It was said further that White Eagle was preceded by White Shield, of whom there are many stories extant, and that White Shield was preceded by Elk Going Against The Wind. The Boy gave the following information regarding the "election" of White Eagle. The account was given to The Boy by his father, Lame Bull, who had it from Old Man Gopher, a cousin of Lame Bull's paternal grandfather. "The Gros Ventres had been badly decimated by smallpox and only about 30 lodges were left.[8] Old Man Gopher and his sister, both of them very young children at the time, were the only survivors of their family. The old men among the survivors of the tribe got together and proceeded to choose a chief. White Eagle was then a young man

[931] [8] A reasonable chronological estimate would identify this as a tradition referring to the devastating smallpox epidemic of 1780. For historical data, see p. 9.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

and he knew that the old men were meeting. When he was called in he wondered 'Why do they call a man so young as I?' But after White Eagle accepted the pipe and prayed with it,—thus accepting the office,—all said 'Ai-e-e-e-.' Then White Eagle called one of the attendants: 'I am through praying. Come and get this pipe.' The attendant got up and took it to the first band chief to the left of the door as one entered the lodge. The band chief lit the pipe, said prayers to White Man Above, passed it to the next man on his left who likewise smoked, prayed and passed the pipe on until it reached the last man to the right of the door. Then the pipe was passed back, with no smoking except by the two Keepers of the two Sacred Pipes who were present, and then the two attendants and the announcer smoked. After that, they smoked socially and told stories until White Eagle got up to talk and told what he thought should be done, what would be for the good of the people. 173 643.

"When White Eagle accepted the pipe he said, addressing the old man who had gathered the others together: 'Old man, I accept the pipe. I accept it with my whole heart. I am a young man, I am rather backward about everything. But since you chose me to be your head chief I take it with good will. Since I've done what you have asked me, in return I'm going to ask you to do everything I request. Don't refuse me. Don't think because I'm a young man what I say may be taken lightly. Now we've had smallpox and there are many dead. Among the living are many single men and single women. This very night I want each man to select a wife or each woman to select a husband—this very night I want *every* man and woman to marry. If this is done in a few years our old numbers will be restored. After the men and women get together we'll move to where there are buffalo. We will kill buffalo and tan the hides for lodges and bedding for these couples and, after this is done, we'll cut poles for the lodges, so each new married couple will have a home of their own. If we do this our population will increase fast.' After this speech White Eagle told the announcer to tell the people what he had just said and to tell the women not to refuse the men who ask them, and the men not to refuse the women who ask them. So the announcer told all this in the name of White Eagle, the head chief from then on. All was carried out as he had ordered and in a few years the population had 168 173 643

very much increased. White Eagle governed the people very wisely and he governed until he died."

It was The Boy's impression that following White Eagle, the chief of the whole tribe was no longer formally selected and simply attained his position through gradual recognition of his merits.[9] Sits Like A Woman succeeded White Eagle and was tribal chief in the first decades of the 19th century. He was followed by his son of the same name who was a signer of the 1855 treaty, and was still recognized as tribal head when he died suddenly about 1870. Coming Daylight claimed that this Sits Like a Woman II was certainly the greatest chief of her time and that, when he died, people were forbidden to light their camp fires as a sign of mourning. During the subsequent period Lame Bull was outstanding among the leading men, but he witnessed the dissolution of the band system and the camp circle. The Fort Belknap Reservation had been set up in 1873, encompassing much more territory than at present, and the first houses were built in 1882.

In spite of the fact that a tribal chief was recognized, band autonomy was apparently preserved. The ceremonial organization cut across band organization, however, and band autonomy was relinquished at the times during which the Sacred Dances were held. The movements and activities of the tribe as a whole were then in the hands of the company to which the vower of a particular Dance belonged.[10]

The Companies

Kroeber notes that "men of the tribe of age to make any one ceremony were not all in one society or company but in several, the total number of companies being three or four times as great as the number of ceremonies. Each company had a name which it

[9] So far as it goes, this would seem to confirm O. Lewis' interpretation, pp. 42–43, that the earlier Hudson's Bay Company policy on the northern plains reinforced tribal chieftaincy, but that with the development of competition in the fur trade, authority was weakened.

[10] For a discussion of the Sacred Dances, see Kroeber, 1908, pp. 239–68. Other details are given in Cooper, Ms. 1949. The following discussion is concerned only with the composition of the ceremonial organization so far as it can be reconstructed.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

retained throughout its existence and held its ceremonies without participating in those of any other company." He gives the list of company names. He is aware that the Stars are not quite comparable to the other companies but is not clear as to the position of that organization.[11] 561

Our information from The Boy, whose father, Lame Bull, was the contemporary of Bill Jones, mentioned by Kroeber, and whose ceremonial experiences were the same as Bill Jones', throws some light on the subject. Furthermore we have useful material from Turn Toes, who was a member of another one of the companies. Incidental information was obtained from our other informants as well.

According to The Boy: "When a bunch of young men of somewhat similar age grew up, they were old enough to take the place of another group or company. There were a number of these companies. These young men began to have meetings and these meetings had names, although not organized as yet. Let us say 'Rosebushes' would be the name by which they were called. Another group of boys grew up and these would be called 'Hang-onto-a-dog's-tail-and-run-or-be-dragged-by-it.' Other groups would come along and be called by such names as 'Many-little-horses,' 'Potbellies,' 'Calves (of the leg),' and so on." Incidentally The Boy recognized 21 out of the 25 names listed by Kroeber as those of companies, although he gave the names above quoted quite independently of Kroeber's list.

The young men who so met and acquired names were 15–17 years of age, according to one informant, and 16–19 or 20, according to another. In any case, they decided as a body to join either of the two societies known as the Stars and the Wolf-men. We know from Kroeber's data, as well as from The Boy, that Bill Jones and Lame Bull were members of the group of young men who banded together under the name of "Bigbellies" or "Potbellies" and who subsequently joined the Stars. Lame Bull was born about 1825, so this company must have joined the Stars some time in the early 1840's. One of our informants, Charles Buckman, a contemporary of The Boy, remembers having heard that the Potbellies at one time numbered about a hundred. 561 575

[11] Kroeber, 1908, pp. 232–33.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

561 Turn Toes (b. 1860) was one with 30 or 40 other young men who, in a group known as Calves (of leg) joined the Wolf-men about 1877. Turn Toes was certain that "Having-the-breast-of-a-woman-as-pillow" and "Holding-onto-dog's-tail" were companies which had joined the Stars. According to Turn Toes' account, when his company, the Calves, joined the Wolf-men, four men from the company which had just preceded them in entry were asked by the present company to act as "elder brothers." These four considered themselves honored to instruct the new company before they would appear publicly at the next Wolf-men's dance. Lame Bull had been one of the four so selected from among the Potbellies to initiate the next incoming Star group, but we failed to obtain the name of that company.

It apparently was permissible, either before or after the company was so initiated into the society, that any one of its members could vow the least important and simplest of the Sacred Dances, namely, the Fly Dance. When a member of the company so vowed, all the members of that company, and they alone, went through the ceremony, after which they were eligible as "soldiers," [12] i.e., when one of their number subsequently vowed any of the other Sacred Dances in the regular series, the company not only participated but also was in complete charge for the duration of the ceremony and had the authority to enforce whatever "laws" might be enacted. Inasmuch as the Sacrifice Dance was outside the regular [625] series, if that Dance were vowed, the members of the vower's company could participate if they wished, but in any case those not actually dancing acted as police.

561 An hypothesis which reconciles Kroeber's and our own data on the companies and age societies is the following. All or most of 575 the young men of the whole tribe, between the ages of 16 and 19, formed a company which met informally for some time before it joined either the Stars or the Wolf-men, and, after having gone through the Fly Dance, acted as police force during the Sacred Dances vowed by any of their number. When not participating in a Sacred Dance, the members joined in the purely social activi-

[12] Kroeber, 1908, p. 229, "The members of the age-societies are called beniinen, commonly translated at the present day as 'soldiers,' etymologically probably 'all-men,' or 'all-(?)-men.'"

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

ties of the larger society which the company had joined. Meanwhile another group was meeting informally before it was admitted into one or other of the Societies. Since the Stars and Wolf-men were approximately even in number, there probably was a regular alternation. According to reasonable estimate, the Potbellies joined the Stars about 1840; the next group of young men would then have joined the Wolves, say in 1843 or 1844; the following company joining the Stars in about 1849–50. 561 575

If the Sacred Dances, except the Sacrifice Dance, were gone through in order, there would thus be several companies each year whose members were eligible to vow any one of the Dances, and our informants were all under the impression that one or more of the Dances was given each summer. It seems quite clear that the Law Enforcer Dance was vowed only by the older levels of the active warriors. After having gone through this rite, these men more or less retired as "old men," and, having "sat on the sage," acquired certain privileges and freedom denied to their fellow tribesmen who had not yet gone through this Dance. These "old men" acted as ceremonial grandfathers, i.e. sponsors and teachers, for others going through the various lodges, but were no longer active as Stars or Wolf-men. They became members of an undifferentiated group of elders, the ranks of their original company having no doubt been drastically thinned out by the time they would have arrived at this status. 796 561 [886] [888]

If the above interpretation be correct, there would be three age divisions: the "young men," those meeting in companies; the "middle-aged, mature men," whose companies had joined either the Stars or the Wolf-men, and, having gone through the Fly Dance, were eligible to vow the other Dances; the "old men" who had gone through the Law Enforcer's Dance and were no longer active in the Star and Wolf-men societies, except two of their number, one of whom served as announcer in each. 561

The young men, who together formed the company, being of approximately the same age, were tied together by bonds of friendship and there were apparently not a few pairs of "inseparable friends" in each company. One of our informants, Cora Chandler, indicated that the bonds holding together the members of a company were so intimate that marriage between their children was [572] 561 582

561 582 taboo. This was the case regarding the children of "inseparable friends," but whether or not it was so regarding the children of all members of the company, mutual hospitality was frequently extended among the members—"a man would most often invite the members of his age group." Further, it was not unusual for members of the same company to go hunting and on raiding and revenge parties together. If a young man were killed at war and his body brought home, the members of his company were said to have assembled and danced around his bier, sometimes sobbing and crying as they danced. [727 764]

561 575 As members of either one or other of the two larger societies they joined with members of other companies, in the Stars and Wolf-men respectively, to perform their proper social dance and to participate in activities such as gambling, horse-racing, "bragging contests," and so on, wherein they could compete with members of the opposite moiety. An individual seemingly tended to choose his serious enemy-friends from among those of the rival organization and thus is explained the spirit of competition which Kroeber notes between the Stars and "other companies."[18] [616]

The Societies

575 The Stars and Wolf-men societies were organized along identical lines and were distinguished from each other only in details of procedure.

Each society included approximately half the total number of able-bodied warriors in the tribe. They each had two renowned men as leaders—two Star leaders of relatively recent times having been Comes A-flying and Crazy Bull; two Wolf-men leaders, Skinner and Strikes On Top. The leaders remained mounted when the others of the society were marching on foot in preparation for their dance, and carried whips at the dance as insignia. These men were supposed to have been outstanding warriors who had while mounted actually counted coup against the enemy. Two members of the last-admitted company served as *atsa'an* (waiters, messengers) at the dances, and each society had an announcer, presumably chosen from among the "old men" who had gone through the Law Enforcer Dance.

[18] Kroeber, 1908, p. 234.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Each society had its distinctive songs which would be used by its component companies in carrying out their police duties during the Sacred Dances. Both had their "begging songs," as well as their marching and dance songs. Everyone in camp would know from the songs which of the societies was performing. 575 533

In connection with the distinctive dance of either society was first the preliminary "begging." This meant that the members of the society, dressed in their best and mounted on their finest horses, would select the lodges of prominent men belonging to the opposite society in front of which they would sing.[14] The leaders of the society were supposed to be present on these begging expeditions, otherwise their enemy-friends could take advantage of their absence and twit them by singing a special song.[15] The members of the society might be accompanied by their wives, who helped out in the singing, and usually a member of the society would suggest that they sing in front of the lodge belonging to his enemy-friend of the opposite society. If, while they were singing, the owner of the lodge failed to appear, his enemy-friend would peep into the lodge and at this the owner, assisted by his relatives, would get busy and give food to be used in the feast of the society which was doing the begging. If the owner of the lodge were a prominent man, who wished to take this occasion to enhance further his reputation, he might give something really valuable to the singers and would have the opportunity later of bragging: "On such-and-such an occasion, this is what I gave you Wolf-men (or Star men)." If he were a really good sport, our informants said, he would even send his wife out to sing with the others. After something had been given to the society, the singers sang other special songs,[16] while the rest danced. 533 575 796 572

After obtaining in this fashion the wherewithal for the feast, the society members lined up two-by-two at the entrance of the camp circle. The two noted men carrying whips remained mounted, while the column stepped in time to the music provided by the singers who were carrying the drum at the end of the procession. They wove in and out, snake-dance fashion, while 575 796

[14] A begging song of the Wolf-men was recorded as No. 98; two such songs of the Stars, as No. 96 and 97.

[15] Recorded as No. 101.

[16] Recorded as No. 95 and No. 100.

575 the marching song was sung.[17] Upon reaching the entrance of
796 the enclosure, which had been constructed in the middle of the camp circle, the double column parted, and filed around the inside of the enclosure and took their places. The noted men bearing whips, having been helped in dismounting, took up their positions at either side of the entrance, and the musicians carried the drum to the center of the enclosure where they provided the music for the dancing.

The dance of each society was distinctive. The Stars carried
[293] rattles, each designed by its owner,[18] which they waved about, as they danced. The Wolf-men did not have rattles or any special paraphernalia of the kind, but symbolized wolves as they stepped about, one hand at the forehead, and the other held behind to represent the tail.

575 These dances with their preliminary "begging" expeditions
535 were not put on regularly, but at the discretion of the societies. A time would be chosen when the whole tribe, or most of the bands thereof, were together, when there were no Sacred Dances in immediate prospect, and when there was no apparent danger from the enemy. If these conditions prevailed, one of the societies might proceed, singing loudly: "Harden your hearts, Wolf-men (or Stars)," meaning, "be prepared to give."[19] Not immediately, but some time later, when auspicious conditions again prevailed, the other society would "retaliate."

These dances were purely social. In between times members belonging to one would compete with members of the other in horse-racing, hand-game gambling, "bragging contests" recounting conquests in love and war—each trying to out-do his opposite number.

[177] Sometime between 1875 and 1880 the Wolf-men adopted the Grass Dance from the Assiniboine. Thereafter this Society was sometimes called the Grass dancers.[20]

575 The Boy was under the impression that the Stars and Wolf-men

[17] Recorded as No. 102.

[18] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, pp. 236–37, with illustration.

[19] These songs were recorded as Nos. 93, 94 for the Stars.

[20] Kroeber, 1908, p. 238 describes this dance as the "war-dance." For the adoption of the Grass Dance and subsequent history of the two societies, see Flannery, 1946, pp. 39–70.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

had probably had different names before his father's time but that 575
the division into two big groups of "mature, middle-aged" men was always characteristic of Gros Ventre organization. This same informant was likewise under the impression that a man would have to stay with whichever of the two societies he, with his company, had originally joined. Turn Toes said however that he had known a few cases of men who had originally been Stars later joining with the Wolf-men, and of one Wolf-man who afterwards joined the Stars. These known cases, however, occurred fairly late in Gros Ventre history, and probably after the formation of new companies had ceased.

Sanctions of Force

Social sanctions were seemingly the most important means of 626
control. Public opinion was effective in all aspects of conduct. Public disapproval meant loss of prestige and in more severe cases made itself felt by "shunning." It was brought to bear upon the individual in an especially effective way through ridicule, as exercised particularly in the enemy-friendship.[21]

A considerable number of misdeeds, like theft or failure to observe the rules in ceremonial life, were believed to result automatically in supernatural punishment ("bad luck"). Fear of retaliation through witchcraft also exerted a restraining influence.[22]

There were only three situations in which sanction through 681
physical force was applicable. These were, first, failure to obey the rules of behavior promulgated by the society in charge while any one of the Sacred Dances was in progress; second, murder; third, adultery on the part of the wife.[23]

In regard to the first, it is quite clear that in case one of the 688
Sacred Dances had been vowed, the whole tribe had to come together and remain united until the rite was finished. "If the bands happened to be scattered at the time a Sacred Dance was to

[21] For a discussion of the enemy-friendship, see pp. 102–06.

[22] Cf. also pp. 169–70 for a discussion of social and other types of motivation proposed to children. Witchcraft is dealt with in detail in Cooper, Ms., 1949.

[23] A detailed treatment of punishment for adultery is given in pp. 183–90, and will not be discussed in this section.

688 be held, runners were sent by the company of the vower and all were obliged to attend. If, in preparation for the Dance, the vower and the members of his company made a ruling, for example that a hunt was necessary, this would be announced. It would be stated that no one should go out alone to kill buffalo because they wanted everybody to kill some, and it was added: 'This is the order of the Wolves (or Stars). If anyone disobeys this rule, the Wolves (or Stars) will attend to them!' Should anyone have disobeyed the order, when they all returned from the hunt it would be announced: 'So-and-so disobeyed our rule.' The company of the vower would then go in a body to the delinquent's lodge, singing a special song.[24] The people would know that someone was going to be raided and all would go out to see who the culprit might have been." The delinquent knew that if he showed anger and resisted, he was in danger of being hurt or even killed. The company confiscated the culprit's meat, taking all of it that was there, and in addition would usually tear up his lodge. Should the delinquent have an enemy-friend among the "soldiers," that one took the lead in punishing and might even go so far as to cut the ears off of the delinquent's finest horse—a deep humiliation for its owner.

688 625 Thus during a Sacred Dance, from the time the vow was publicly announced until the Dance was over, the company of the vower was in complete authority and could apply sanctions of force if the various rulings were not obeyed. They actually constituted a police for the duration of the Dance. As soon as the Dance was over, however, the vower's company had no further power and the police function inherent in the soldier societies apparently remained in abeyance until some other Sacred Dance was performed.

688 625 224 There is some little question as to whether or not attendance of all bands was compulsory at the first spring hunt for buffalo and, if so, whether the Star and Wolf societies exercised their authority at this time. On one occasion in 1939, one informant, speaking in general terms, stated that the chief of the tribe had the possibility of calling on either the Stars or the Wolves to punish an offender who hunted alone after it had been announced that the buffalo had been sighted and all were to hunt together; and on another

[24] Song recorded as No. 103.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

occasion he stated that it was the "law" of the spring hunt that no one should hunt buffalo alone or in a small group, violation of which invoked the sanctions applied by the Wolf-men or Stars. However, in 1940, this same informant stated twice, explicitly, that there was no police power except at the Sacred Dances and on a third occasion in that year said: "After the Sacred Dance the company disbanded, and the chief resumed control, but he did not punish anybody for hunting buffalo alone." 224 688 625

In any case, authority was delegated to the companies only temporarily. Otherwise there was no agency beyond that of the family which could apply sanctions of force, and then, on only two counts. A husband had the right to take the life of an unfaithful wife; the family had the right of blood revenge in case of murder. In both, however, less extreme modes of behavior were approved and bloodshed could honorably be avoided. 688 625 684 682

When murder occurred, if the family of the murdered person could be persuaded to accept a payment of goods as restitution, further spilling of blood was prevented. It was said that the lodge of the band chief offered temporary refuge to a murderer and that sanctuary was likewise available in the lodge of the Keeper either of the Flat or of the Feathered Pipe. It was thought that if the murderer and his family, who collectively shared responsibility for the crime, could flee the scene, time would be gained for negotiating the blood-price. If one blood relative killed another, there was no retaliation, but the murderer was shunned. 682 [778] [672]

While there was a considerable amount of fighting and quarreling among the Gros Ventres, especially under the influence of liquor, disputes were usually settled without bloodshed. Outright murder, as distinct from deaths attributed to witchcraft, was seemingly relatively infrequent. The following seven cases, arranged chronologically, illustrate actual behavior. Each of these was referred to independently by several different informants with a high level of agreement among them on details. The total represents all the murders that were known to have occurred in the period from about 1850 to 1885. 689

Case No. 1. These events took place about 1847. Two young men, who were related by blood, went on foot to steal horses from the enemy. One had obtained a fine horse, but the other had been 682

682 unsuccessful. The latter, who was walking on the return journey, asked the other to lend him his horse. The owner of the horse didn't see why he should do so and the two got in a heated argument. When one reached for his knife, the other beat him to the draw and killed him. When the survivor was asked on his arrival home as to the whereabouts of his partner, he said: "I don't know where he is. I haven't seen him since we separated at such-and-such a place." Not long after that, however, when the group was traveling, they came upon the body of the murdered man. Only then did the survivor confess, but nothing was done to the murderer under the circumstances.

682 688 *Case No. 2.* Although the details leading up to this case are missing, it is known that a few years prior to 1860 a certain man stabbed and killed his son-in-law, shot his horses and burned his possessions, leaving only the lodge standing. The murdered man's brother shot and killed the murderer in retaliation. Unfortunately, however, this was not the end of the matter. The one who had avenged his brother's death was participating in a Kitfox Dance and was in the ceremonial lodge in the center of the camp circle just about to receive the pipe. At that moment, one of the company which was policing the Dance—a relative of the original murderer—shot and killed him on the spot. There was of course great confusion, and one of the chief performers in the Dance protested this act of violence which, regardless of other considerations, should never have been perpetrated during a Sacred Dance. The policing company, however, presented a united front and rode around the Kitfox lodge in the center of the circle singing: "No one say anything to us or we will shoot right now." Nevertheless the wife of the man who had just been killed ran out of her lodge, when she heard them singing, and said: "Oh I am not afraid of them. I am going to give them a tongue-lashing!" People warned her not to do so, but she called out insults at them and added, among other things: "Look at their dirty buttocks!" Several members of the company said: "Let's go over there and beat her to death," to which she boldly replied: "If you want to do it, it is all right." The chief performer in the Dance, who had protested before, spoke up again: "Now you want to do something wrong again. Why kill an old woman who is through with her life any-

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

way? I warned you not to do anything. If you kill her we will 682
not proceed with this Dance. It is a serious thing to interfere 688
with a Sacred Dance, but if you persist we will all scatter." This appeal was effective and the Kitfox Dance was carried out without further mishap.

Case No. 3. On one occasion in about 1862, some men were 682
drinking and two of them got in a tussle. The one who got the worse of the fight went to his brother and said: "Kill your wife. Her son [by another marriage] almost killed me. If you kill your wife, you can have one of mine." The husband took his brother at his word and went to his lodge and killed his wife, put her corpse on the fire, and heaped coals on top of it. The wife's two brothers, hearing of their sister's unjustified murder, went that night to where the men were still drinking. When the man who had originally instigated the murder saw the brothers coming closer and closer, he called out: "I don't want anyone to come any nearer or I might shoot him by mistake." But the brothers were not deterred and, approaching closer, shot and killed the man who had called out. Thus the one who had encouraged his brother in murder paid for the crime with his own life. Nevertheless his relatives mourned for him as they would have had he died under different circumstances, but they made no attempt to retaliate for his loss.

Case No. 4. The following incident occurred about 1865. Practically the whole tribe was camped together and there was a lot of drinking going on. A woman, crying, came in the lodge of her sister's husband. When they asked her the cause of her tears she told them that a certain man had beaten up her son and herself. Her sister's husband immediately took up his gun and went out into the night looking for that man. When he met up with him, without asking any questions except to be sure he had the right one, he shot him dead. When he returned to his lodge, his wife urged him to flee, but he refused to do so, saying: "I don't think his people will take up for him since he was in the wrong." Nevertheless several riders dashed by, shooting at the lodge but not doing any damage. The women were frightened and started running toward the chief's lodge. There was snow on the ground [778]
and they had a hard time locating it, but at last they got there and

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

682
[178]

called out: "Our home is in trouble, we have come for protection." The chief invited them in and assured them that, while they were there, no one could harm them. But they could hear the relatives of the murdered man mourning for him. The man who had killed him continued to remain in his lodge. Evidently the male relatives of the murdered man refused to act further than merely shooting at the lodge, but finally the mother of the dead man and his father's sister, accompanied by his nephew, a boy of about ten who carried a loaded gun, came to the lodge. The women called out: "Come out here, if you are a man." They repeated this several times, but when the man failed to appear, a woman in a neighboring lodge invited them to come with her. She fed them well and eventually persuaded them to let the matter drop.

Case No. 5. These events occurred about a decade later than the preceding and details are fuller. It seems that a young man had captured a very fine horse under dangerous circumstances. He proved the horse's quality while enhancing his own prestige during subsequent encounters with the enemy. An older man, jealous of this young man who was making such a noteworthy reputation, kept pestering the young man to give his horse to him. Had the older man asked in the proper way, the younger might have acceded to his request. But the request had been made in a bullying fashion, and the older man had treated the younger as though he considered him still a child, yet the latter behaved well in simply ignoring the bully rather than answering him back.

One day, however, the older man was drunk and came up to the other, gun in hand, and said: "I am going to kill you." To which the younger man replied: "Well, be sure you do a good job of it. Be sure you don't miss me. Hit me with a bullet, because if you don't kill me, I'm going to kill you!" The older man pushed against the other's chest with his gun saying: "Well, you aren't made of rock, I can kill you," and then moving the gun near the other's head, he shot wide, intending merely to frighten him. The young man, however, did not so much as flinch, and said: "Why don't you kill me? I guess you don't want to—but be sure I'm going to kill you!" The older man said: "Oh, you are just talking!" and went into his lodge. But the young man got his gun and when his companions tried to stop him he said: "I don't want

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

to do like he did and just bluff!" They let him go because they were convinced that he wouldn't go through with it. Nevertheless, he went to the older man's lodge and walked boldly up to that man and put the gun at his head. The other men in the lodge were drunk and neither they nor their host believed the younger man was really serious. The young man said: "You are not made of iron. That is the only thing a bullet will not penetrate. I am going to kill you now!" Whereupon he blew the other man's brains out. 682

Because that older man had been a bully and had threatened the other's life, public opinion was apparently more or less on the side of the younger man, and the relatives of the man who had been killed made no immediate move to avenge the life of their kinsman. One day, however, after a long time had elapsed, a relative of the man who had been killed was wandering around the camp circle, gun in hand and quite drunk. A companion took advantage of the situation by attempting to get rid of the young man, who had killed the older man, and whom he suspected of playing around with one of his wives. The companion reminded the drunken man that he should avenge the death of his relative, and shoot into the young man's lodge. He shot once and missed; so the companion told him to aim lower, which he did. On this second shot he hit and killed, not the young man whom they had hoped to kill, but that young man's father. Whereupon, the young man reached for his gun and was about to pursue the killer, but he was restrained by his sister and a man, who had rushed to the lodge when he heard the shots. His sister was loath to let him risk his life inasmuch as their younger brother had been killed shortly before that in an encounter with the Crow, and on that occasion the young man had had to be held forcibly to prevent his pursuing the Crow single-handed. Meantime the one who had fired into the lodge dropped his gun, and escaped on the already saddled horse of someone who had just come into camp. The companion who had incited the shots stood his ground and would almost certainly have been killed unless the sister and the other relatives of the young man had persuaded him that enough lives had been lost and to let the matter drop.

Case No. 6. On one occasion, sometime between about 1875 and 1880, a number of the bands camped together and there was a

682 big drinking party. One man decided to quit and go to bed, so he left the others, taking a little liquor intending to save it for another time. A little later his father-in-law came to the lodge and asked him for a drink. He let him have what he had been saving and went back to bed. Soon his father-in-law returned and asked for more liquor, but the man told him quite truthfully that he had no more. His father-in-law was not satisfied but kept insisting and at last grabbed the man by the hair of the head and dragged him from his bedding. The man, who had been holding in his temper, finally lost control at this manhandling and, grabbing a knife, stabbed his father-in-law in the stomach. His father-in-law belonged to a powerful band and had many relatives who would avenge his death, so the son-in-law fled and escaped punishment.

Some time passed until this man, who had killed his father-in-law, was one evening invited to perform a cure. Before he started, the father of the sick child gave him a drink of liquor. He was just about to begin the curing ceremony when a relative of his late father-in-law entered the lodge asking for a drink. The host invited him in, but the murderer, who was a little drunk by this time, resented the intrusion and gathered up his medicines and went out. As he left, the intruder said: "Who is that leaving as I come in? You cannot budge a slick rock! (meaning that if the other were not afraid of retaliation, he would not have left)." But the murderer was insulted at this taunt. He got his gun and, sticking it in the entrance of the lodge he had just left, shot at the intruder and killed him. There was a great commotion during which the murderer's father was shot but not killed. The older brother of the intruder swore he would kill the murderer in revenge and, gun in hand, sought him out. The murderer, however, heard him coming and hid behind a tree. When the brother of the murdered man came abreast, he shot and killed him too.

The Frozens, the band to which both the recently killed men and the father-in-law had belonged, were furious at this triple loss. The murderer's band were afraid of their wrath and nearly all of them fled with him. So the Frozens killed all of the murderer's horses, tore up his lodge, and burned all of his belongings including the medicines. They were about to pursue the band which had fled and kill all of them, when Lame Bull and Big Beaver, members

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

of the Upper Quarters who were not involved in this fight, stopped them and reminded them that this was a drunken fight and that the members of the two bands concerned were not really enemies. By their bravery in confronting these angry and drunken men who were armed, while they themselves were not, these two peacemakers prevented what might have turned into a "civil war." 682

Although outwardly calm reigned, tension remained high and the bands scattered in the attempt to maintain peace. A few weeks later, however, messengers were sent to all the bands to inform them that a Crazy Dance had been vowed and that all the bands must meet at a given spot and together prepare for the Dance, moving as a unit to the locale selected for the Dance. All did as directed, but the band of the medicine man, feeling the mounting tension, decided to break away from the others and left the main body the night before the tribe reached the place where the Dance was to be performed. When the company which was policing the Dance heard about the defection, they went after the band to force its return. The company caught up with this band and found the murderer sitting in the semicircle and smoking with his fellow band-members. The police called out to these men: "Don't you know it has been announced that we have to move to such-and-such a place for the Dance? That is the law. Hurry and move back!" But the recalcitrant band members paid no attention and sat with heads bowed. It so happened that a son of one of the Frozens who had been murdered was a member of the policing company. He rode up behind the murderer and shot him through the head. The other members of the police company shouted: "Let's kill them all!" and fired above their heads to further frighten them. This forced them to move back to the main body in double quick time, leaving the body of the murderer lying there. The Dance proceeded, and after it had concluded one of the Crazy Men was found with his head bashed in, but no one knew who was guilty of this crime and in any case the company had no more authority once the Dance was finished. The Frozen who had used his position as a member of the policing company to avenge his father's murder was killed in action against the enemy shortly thereafter, and so further feuding was prevented.

Case No. 7. During a drinking spree toward the end of the 682 684

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

682
684

buffalo days, a certain man left his lodge to join other drinkers. When he returned he saw his wife in the arms of another man and heard her say: "I love you more than I love him." Whereupon he picked up his gun and killed the lover who happened to be the chief of his own band. He spared his wife. No attempt at revenge was made, but the murderer was looked down upon for having killed one of his own relatives.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

CHAPTER III

NECESSITIES OF LIFE

The dominant technique by which the Gros Ventres met their needs was that of hunting, especially of the buffalo. The yearly round of productive activities was geared to the quest of that animal, with hunting of other animals, collecting, and the processing of raw materials subordinated thereto. 224

The Seasonal Round

The Gros Ventres state that buffalo were plentiful in their territory, at least in the area claimed from the 1830's on. This is borne out by studies of the habits and migrations of the buffalo in the northern plains.[1] In the exploitation of this abundant resource there were two regular peaks of intensive hunting—a concerted effort on the part of the tribe as a whole—in the spring and in the fall. During the summer the amount of hunting was fairly consistent, being stepped up occasionally in view of any Sacred Dances which might have been vowed. During the dead of winter the hunting of buffalo was said to have been only sporadic and not on so large a scale. 221 224

Some time in April the whole tribe foregathered to organize the first spring hunt which lasted about a month. This coincided with the northward migration of the buffalo which had wintered on the Montana ranges. The smaller herds formed in great masses as they sought their summer pastures on the plains of the Saskatchewan, where they again scattered into smaller herds. During this time the whole Gros Ventre tribe camped together and the hunters worked out from the camp as often as necessary, there being plenty of game within easy distance as the millions of buffalo passed a given spot. Apparently after this big hunt was over, the spring Pipe Rite was held and then everyone was free to move where he pleased. Usually the main body of the tribe stayed fairly

[1] Hornaday, pp. 388–89, 425.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

221 224 well together during the ensuing summer months, a band or two moving off by themselves to rejoin the tribe in time to prepare for whatever Sacred Dances might have been scheduled, and parties of 10, 20, 30 or more men would go off to raid the enemy. Precautions had to be taken, too, against the ever-present danger of being raided by the enemy, especially by smaller groups separated from the main tribe as they went further and further from the center of their territory in quest of game.[8]

[251] The hides of buffalo killed during the spring and summer were used to make parfleshes, moccasin soles, lodge covers, ropes and the like. Fresh meat was usually plentiful although it was necessary to move six or eight times a summer to keep up with the buffalo, some smaller herds of which apparently remained in [222] Montana in spite of the migration of the vast majority to the north. Meantime as the various berries, wild fruits and wild roots ripened, collecting was done whenever opportunity offered, neither tribal nor band movements being determined, so far as we are aware, by that objective, but depending almost entirely on the whereabouts of the buffalo. During August and September, the rutting season, the buffalo joined in great milling masses leaving bare the surrounding range for many miles. The buffalo then separated into smaller herds again and by October, when the Gros Ventres started their concerted fall hunt, the buffalo were in prime condition, their coats sleek and fine.

The best time for robe hunting was approximately from October [251] 15 to November 15, but the hunt continued until all had sufficient meat dried and stored to see them through the winter. It was said that as many robes as possible were dressed with the fur on, and

[8] In this connection it is interesting to note that the old Cree, quoted by Thompson, pp. 329–30, after describing a drawn battle between the Snake and Piegan about 1730 concludes: ". . . night put an end to the battle without a scalp being taken on either side, and in those days such was the result, unless one party was more numerous than the other. The great mischief of war then, was as now [1786], by attacking and destroying small camps of 10–30 tents which are obliged to separate for hunting." Such was evidently still the case in the middle of the 19th century. Denig writes in 1854, pp. 548–50, that when the contending parties are nearly equal, little damage is done. The worst damage occurs, however, when 200 to 400 warriors surprise a camp of 20 to 30 lodges.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

meat was dried "in wholesale quantities." This was the time of 221
year when lodge covers and furnishings were replaced where 224
necessary, new lodge poles cut, paint gathered from the mountains, and everything was done to prepare for winter quarters.

The tribe then split into groups of several bands each to seek places along watercourses where they would be protected as much as possible from the rigors of the weather as well as from depredations by their enemies. Trapping of fur-bearing animals and hunting of deer, elk and antelope by individual methods, such as stalking with the gun as weapon, were done during this season, with only an occasional buffalo being killed. The Gros Ventres placed the greatest emphasis on ability to hunt and recognized their limitations in trapping as compared with the Cree. It was considered most important for a man to be a good shot, whether with bow and arrow or gun. Nevertheless some fur-bearing animals were trapped. For beaver they usually used the steel trap or, when that was not available, they broke the dam and grabbed the beaver. Often they would smoke out an animal like the kit-fox, for example, and then shoot it. They knew a deadfall[3] for the fox and wolf, whose pelts they never used themselves but traded with the whites, and there was one trapping song which was sung to give luck in that pursuit.[4] But all in all hunting of the buffalo and to a lesser extent of the elk, deer and antelope, was a major occupation, while other animals were sought for only sporadically.

Buffalo Hunting and the Horse

The general procedure in hunting buffalo was about as follows. 224
First, scouts, sent out to locate the herd, reported its whereabouts. Then the group of hunters, varying in size according to whether the whole tribe or only a band or two were camped together, would depart from camp in order to reach the herd by dawn. The swift buffalo horses to be used in the actual chase were led unburdened so as to keep them fresh. When the herd was spotted, the hunters mounted their swiftest horses and, at a given signal, all dashed into the herd at once, each man then killing as many as he could

[3] Kroeber, 1908, p. 149, describes the deadfall, and mentions also snaring and other methods of hunting birds.

[4] The song was recorded as Nos. 89, 90, 91.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

224 before the buffalo got out of range. Only one such run a day was made and, although all hunters had an equal opportunity, so to speak, since no one of them started before the others, the greatest chance of success lay with the man mounted on the fastest horse. Incidentally the gun never supplanted the bow and arrow as a weapon of the chase because, for a mounted hunter riding close to the game, the bow and arrow was just as effective and even easier to use than the gun which had to be reloaded and which was difficult to aim accurately when traveling at a fast pace. Succeeding generations of Gros Ventre boys were trained in archery right up to, and including, the time of the disappearance of the buffalo.

Our informants stated that while the surround was sometimes resorted to, the chase or run, as described above, was the method [178] preferred by the Gros Ventres. The old-fashioned methods of impounding and driving over the cliff were seemingly abandoned by the Gros Ventres in the 1830's. It was stated that an old man, who died at the age of 98 in 1920, witnessed the last big impounding at the head of the Teton River when he was twelve years old.[8] Our oldest informant (b. 1854) knew of these methods only because her grandmother and other older people had told her stories of what they had witnessed. She put it as follows: "When my grandmother was a young woman, the Gros Ventres were very badly off. Only a person here and there would have a horse, and these horses were not the fast kind that can be used in hunting. In fact they did better by building a row of rocks to lead the buffalo into a big corral;[9] or else by having a man covered with a buffalo robe to act as decoy. This man would run forward toward a steep precipice and just at the edge would jump aside while the buffalo following him would go over. The animals which were not crippled in the fall would be shot with bow and arrow. Every- [492] body had to use dogs to drag their stuff as the people moved around; and they cut the lodges in two so the load would not be too heavy for a dog to draw."

231 The possession of an adequate number of horses, then, seems

[8] Denig, p. 532, confirms this, holding that all the northern plains tribes, except the Assiniboine and Cree, are so well supplied with horses that they do not need to resort to the corral.

[9] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, pp. 148–49.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

to have been the key factor in the abandonment of the earlier methods of hunting buffalo. The situation of the Gros Ventres in regard to horses, which had apparently been so bad in approximately the first two decades of the 19th century, gradually improved, according to our informants, by natural increase of the few horses they had and by successful raiding of the enemy, especially for the fast buffalo horse. If Bradley's figures are correct, the Gros Ventres averaged five horses per family in 1830. According to our informants, by about 1850 they had "lots of horses," but we know that, even so, the number of horses fluctuated considerably after that date. Coming Daylight, for instance, remembered clearly several times prior to 1880 when the whole tribe was relatively poor in horses. During these periods people were forced to cache as much as possible so they wouldn't be too heavily burdened as they traveled about on foot. No doubt the same factors were operative in the Gros Ventre area as obtained in Blackfoot territory—severe winters and skin diseases among the horses.[7]

In any case, even in relatively prosperous times, seldom if ever did an individual possess great herds such as are described for the Kiowa. The Boy stated that his father, Lame Bull, who was an outstanding man, had a herd of about 60 horses. Coming Daylight explained: "Each family kept its own little bunch of horses. In early morning they would be taken out to pasture, usually by the older boys; around the middle of the day they would be watered and driven out again; in the evening they would be brought back and the more valuable ones, the swift buffalo horses, were always kept tied close by at night in case of raid by the enemy."

Such a family-owned herd would be differentiated and would ideally include pack horses, riding horses, and a few buffalo horses. The right of disposal over his own horses was, however, recognized for each individual man, woman and child. A man had the possibility of augmenting his own holdings directly by raiding the enemy. Because of the social recognition attendant upon successful raiding, as well as the economic necessity for controlling the means of production, the individual might actually devote in the course of a year more time and energy in pursuing this objective

[7] For an excellent discussion of the whole problem, see Ewers, 1943.

231 556 than in the actual production of raw materials. This was especially true of the young unmarried man who, though his ability to hunt was important, was even more anxious to establish his reputation for bravery.

Food

262 The Gros Ventres met their need for food very largely, but not exclusively, through a meat diet. Flesh of the buffalo was the meat par excellence and was considered by the Gros Ventres their "real food." To those who had been brought up on buffalo meat, beef was a poor substitute. It was said, by those who experienced the change of diet after the disappearance of the buffalo in 1884, that many of the older people "died of starvation" when deprived of buffalo meat. The Gros Ventres refused for a long time to accustom themselves to beef because "beef, even when fresh, smells so badly, and when we would see oxen slobber it turned our stomachs."

Buffalo meat, either fresh or dried, formed a major part of the dietary the year round. Each man had his own preference as to various parts of the buffalo. Charles Buckman, for instance, liked best the flanks, if fat, but some preferred the brisket. The tenderest part was the hump (withers) and the tenderloin was also a delicacy. Roast ribs, a whole rib for each person, were considered a most succulent feast and the embryo was highly appreciated. It was customary to eat raw the liver and manifolds dipped in blood and to drink some of the fresh blood. Nothing of the buffalo was wasted and every possible part was eaten even to the predigested vegetable food from the stomach and the soft inner part of the hoofs. The coagulated milk from a buffalo cow carrying young or nursing a calf was enjoyed by most, although it was [251] reported that some individuals did not care particularly for it. The guts were cleaned, dried, cooked and put away, and the lungs were sliced and dried. To be eaten with dried meat the back fat was cooked, and tallow was used in like manner. The bones were broken and boiled, and, after the grease was skimmed off and 252 stored, the bone broth was used plain or with either blood or 262 berries therein.

Pemmican was made from the base of the tenderloin, a long

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

strip on each side of the backbone. The meat was jerked, roasted 252
a little and pounded. Then bone grease was kneaded into the 262
pounded meat and occasionally berries, especially saskatoon berries, were put in. No further cooking was necessary and this preparation was very useful when they had to eat in a hurry, as, for example, at the Sacrifice Dance, when they didn't know at what moment some order might be given by the crier.

Rated next in the scale of foods valued by the Gros Ventres was 262
the flesh of puppies. Although the flesh of grown dogs was con- 231
sumed only in times of "famine," nursing pups were always considered a great delicacy. "These young pups are to us like chicken is for the whites, and that is why you see so many Indians with female dogs." In fact in former times the following method was used to assist a bitch which was having difficulty in bearing her litter: "One person would tie a rope around the bitch's neck and lead her around the lodge, while another would follow and, as they reached each of the four points of the compass, hit her on both hind-quarters with a moccasin filled with charcoal; by the time she reached the door again, the litter would come!"

The flesh and other edible parts of most of the animals hunted 262
by the Gros Ventres were appreciated if there happened to be a dearth of buffalo, or as a welcome change during the winter months from the dried buffalo meat. As a rule these animals would be exploited for purposes other than for food. So far as additional meat diet is concerned, however, elk, deer, and antelope were the most important. Beaver probably came next. Prairie dogs, gophers, and several kinds of rabbit—cottontail, snowshoe, and jackrabbit—all were eaten in case of extremity, but these were ordinarily considered suitable trapping for children. Bear—black, brown and grizzly—were not sought, but should a hunter come across one, he killed it and the flesh was eaten, the grease being the only part that was to them worth storing. Some birds and their eggs were edible, such as duck, goose, grouse, prairie-chicken, and curlew.[8] There was a special use for meadowlark eggs.[9] Badger and porcupine were eaten, as also occasionally the young of wolves and coyote. The full-grown wolf and coyote, as well as fox,

[8] Eggs were a favorite food, according to Kroeber, 1908, p. 149.
[9] See p. 143.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

262 mountain lion, lynx, bobcat, and otter, never served as food.

Of vegetable foods there was a variety, especially of berries and [251] roots, many of which were gathered in large amounts and dried for winter use, either as seasoning in broths and soups, or to be mixed with grease. Currents, strawberries and raspberries were picked when ripe and only in sufficient quantities to meet daily needs. Juneberries, or service-berries, and gooseberries were dried and stored away in parfleshes. Bitterroot, wild onions and wild carrots were likewise preserved for winter use, as well as wild rhubarb stems. In July larb-berries, another name for which is bear-berries, and "plums" were ripe; and in August the choke-cherries and wild turnips were dried and pounded. In late August rose-berries were ready to eat, but were better after a touch of frost. There was no need of storing too many of these since they did not freeze and could be garnered all winter long. It is said that of all the berries and roots available, service-berries and choke-cherries, wild turnips and bitterroot, were the most important More of these were put up than of the others.

The yield of thorn-, rose- and larb-berries, of wild carrots and of wild rhubarb was always dependable. Other plants, however, were more erratic. For instance, one year there would be no chokecherries at all around Hays but plenty of them at Lodgepole, only ten miles distant; the next year the situation was as likely as not to be reversed. Moreover some plants grew only in a few localities at best. Red turnips or beet turnips, described as something like a radish, was one of those which was to be found only sporadically and in sandy places; the wild potato, another of the less common plants, grew only in the Sweet Grass Hills and in the Moccasin Mountains south of the Little Rockies, and around Billings.

262 Such additional foods were evidently of sufficient importance
222 that the women occasionally ventured quite far from camp for berry-picking and root-digging expeditions, disregarding the very real danger of surprise by the enemy. That these edibles were not despised is suggested, too, by the fact that the digging-stick had a prominent place at the center pole in the Women's Lodge, although it is true that the principal concern in the rite centered about the buffalo.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

In April, when the sap rises, the Gros Ventres scraped the juice from the inner bark peeled from cottonwood and sometimes even from box-elder. They also chewed the gum from pines. Infusions of cherry bark or roots and peppermint were said to have been drunk as tea, but such concoctions were considered usually more in the nature of medicines. 262 272

So long as the Gros Ventres had the buffalo, relatively little in the way of foodstuffs from the white man were imported. Sugar, flour, occasional fresh fruits, coffee and tea were known and used to some extent after about 1855.[10] The possibility of obtaining whiskey, was, however, one of the items which determined the popularity of a given trading place. Incidentally, tobacco was an important item of trade after 1800, although prior to that time the Gros Ventres had raised their own.[11] 262 439 [273] [276]

Clothing and Adornment

The importance of the buffalo in the economy of the Gros Ventres was as obvious in clothing and in shelter as it was in food. The buffalo robe, dressed with the hair on, was perhaps the most valuable article inasmuch as it was not only a regular part of their garb, but also was the main article of trade with the whites after about 1830. When decorated, it had high prestige value as a gift. 291 [439] [431]

Seldom was the hide of a buffalo older than two years used for robes since the fur of those of greater age was usually scabby even in the fall when the coats were in best condition. It required the skin of a yearling to make a robe for a twelve-year-old, and the skins of calves made robes for smaller children. When the demand of the trade for robes was very great, the large wool blanket sometimes replaced the robe for wearing apparel and for bedding.

Most of the other articles of clothing were made from well-dressed deer, elk and antelope skins.[12] Deer and elk were more 281 291

[10] See p. 22.

[11] This tradition is confirmed by Cocking in 1772, who writes, p. 111, "The tobacco they use is their own planting which hath disagreeable flavor. I have preserved a specimen." Kroeber's informants denied knowledge of the tradition.

[12] In 1854 Denig, pp. 464-65, describes the cloth bought for clothing for summer and fall wear, but states that a real hunter must have a buffalo robe, moccasins, mittens, cap, skin leggings and an extra buffalo robe.

successfully hunted than antelope. While the finest clothing was made from deer, elk was preferred for some purposes such as moccasins and warm shirts and coats—it being more durable but not equally as flexible.

For winter wear, caps and mittens of beaver or otter were made for men and boys. Beaver skin served as a breech clout for the men in winter, although antelope was preferred for this purpose the rest of the year, unless cloth were available, since the latter was more comfortable than hide which chafed the skin so badly.

Ordinarily unornamented clothing was worn, but for special events, particularly when the whole tribe was together, everyone dressed in his best. Being well-dressed was as important to the Gros Ventres as being well-mounted on ceremonial and social occasions. The effect on both the eye and the ear was taken into account in the ornamentation. Dyed porcupine quill embroidery lent color, and mica—first heated, then powdered and rubbed over a robe—glistened beautifully. Polished deer-hoofs as edging for a robe or dangling from leggings or garters "made such a nice sound when one walked." This feeling both for color and sound was carried over when material from the whites was at hand, beadwork tending to supplant the quill embroidery and scraps of bright colored cloth and of metal serving as "dangles."[13]

Elk teeth, however, were said to be "the greatest decoration of the Gros Ventres." They were used principally for girls' and women's dresses. Not so long ago there was a man at Hays who wore a vest trimmed with elk teeth, and people would say to him: "You crazy thing, only women have that kind of decoration!" But he was unconventional and would retort: "Well, I dance, too, and I want to look nice." Everyone would laugh, but he persisted in wearing that vest. Human hair as fringe and on moccasins was proudly worn by men who had taken scalps.

Mink, otter, weasel, muskrat and kit-fox were all used as trimmings, and occasionally the whole pelt of mink, otter or muskrat was made into a bag, or tobacco pouch, or other small container. Feathers, especially eagle feathers, were highly prized, and red

[13] For the detailed comparative analysis of Decorative Art of the Gros Ventres and other plains tribes, see Kroeber, 1908, pp. 151–79.

Feathers, especially eagle feathers, were highly prized, and red 292
paint, prepared from ochre, as well as other paints obtained through 237
the trader, played their part in bodily decoration. 386

The younger men thought a great deal of their appearance. One 292
of the things they made for themselves was fancy painted sunshade- 751
hats of rawhide. The designs painted thereon had a yellow back- 531
ground against which various other colors stood out. Coming Daylight remarked: "These sunshades looked so fine that the other tribes copied them, just like the whites get their styles from Paris." Long thick hair was the ideal both for men and for 302
women. The tail of the porcupine made an admirable comb. A [237]
number of perfumes were used by the young men. The castor of the beaver, for instance, was put in the paint bag so that the material for daily painting would be sweet smelling. Again, young men crushed "Piegan berries," chewed them, and rubbed them on hair, horses, and bedding, as perfume.

Incidentally, according to Coming Daylight, in order to clean 296
their buckskin clothing, the Gros Ventres would wear it into the water, getting it completely wet, and then rub it thoroughly with a certain kind of white clay.[14] She said that the tribe was spoken of by other tribes as always having such nice white clothes, and to this habit of rubbing them with clay she attributes the name by which the Gros Ventres call themselves, *a'aninin*, "white clay [101]
people."

Ear-rings, worn both by men and women, were made from 301
imported abalone shell, which they cut up and shaped; they also [439]
used a certain type of imported white shell. Many other kinds of necklaces, armlets, and so on were apparently used, but on these we failed to get details.

Household and Transportation

The lodges of the Gros Ventres were made from buffalo hides, 342
the number used in each depending on the size of the lodge. They

[14] This custom is mentioned in the sources of the early 19th century. Cf. Harmon, p. 277; Henry, v. 2, p. 734. The latter adds, as a further distinguishing characteristic, that when the Gros Ventres use red "it is always of a light color, inclining to pale vermillion. The dark red or Spanish [822]
brown, so much in vogue among the other Meadow tribes, does not suit their taste."

342 were sewn together with sinew. The women selected the poles for the lodge, as well as for the travois, and were responsible for [484] erecting and taking down the lodge, for the arrangement of the interior, for the making of the travois, and for the packing and moving of impedimenta.

The foundation of three poles for the lodge was tied together and then raised as a unit. The other poles were arranged one by one, starting with those of the front. The cover of buffalo hides was tied to one pole, the "backbone," which was placed at the center-back, the cover then being drawn into place and fastened securely at the front, with small wooden pins usually made of cherry-tree wood. The ordinary Gros Ventre lodge stakes were shaped like a pin with a relatively small head. One informant, [184 however, stated that this form of stake often came loose where 177] the cover became taut with the wind, and that she had found the forked type, first observed by her many years ago when visiting another tribe to the south, far more satisfactory.

342 Old lodge covers were saved and cut up to make a sort of lining at the bottom of the lodge in winter, and the snow scraped away 353 to make place for the lodge was piled up on the outside thereof for extra warmth. In summer the ground inside the lodge was covered with willows, sagebrush or rye grass. Decorated robes as windbreaks were sometimes suspended in the lodge behind the fancy backrests, which were made by the women from slender willow rods. The women gathered and peeled the rods, although the young men helped straighten them by pulling them through their teeth. A willow ring encircled the fireplace and a broom of buckbrush was always kept handy. Personal belongings were neatly disposed against the wall of the lodge and in front of these were placed the skins which served as bedding by night and as seats by day. The painted parfleshes were given prominence to lend colorful touches. Dishes, utensils, and stored food were suspended 412 from poles well off the floor.

415 Among the articles of household equipment may be mentioned knives, both of bone and of metal, kettles, horn spoons, fleshing tools, etc., and food containers of various sorts. For the latter, [237] the membrane protecting the heart of the buffalo, the paunch, the bladder, and the intestines of the buffalo, as well as those of the

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

elk and deer, served very well, and the first three were often used for carrying water. It was said that water kept cooler and fresher much longer in these than in other types of container such as those of metal. 42 415 237

Pottery had been made by the Gros Ventres in earlier times[18] but the only information we were able to gather thereon is contained in the following statements. Coming Daylight volunteered the most details: "They used some clay to boil their meat in. My grandmother worked it. She made a pot and told me how she did it. It was made of black mud of some kind. My grandmother took this mud and mixed some kind of grease or tallow with it and shaped the pot. While mixing the clay with the grease, she would shape it. It was smooth then. When finished it was about 18 in. high, 9 in. in diameter, the same at the top as at the bottom (straight-sided). The bottom was flat because it was put right on the fire and the coals were kind of heaped up around it when cooking with it. When my grandmother finished shaping it, she put it close to the camp fire and turned it around once in awhile so it would dry out. Then, when it was dry, she put water in it and put it on the fire to see whether it would crack. This pot didn't crack. I don't know what became of it. I never used it myself. It was undecorated. This one belonging to my grandmother is the only one I know the history of, and the only one in our family. We used the wooden dishes more than the pot. The pot was used only to cook in. Each family might have had one or two to cook in." 323 45

Singer, who was present when Coming Daylight told about this, said she had heard of such pots, but had never used one herself. Mary Ereaux, the interpreter, commented, "In the Missouri River where they are making the dam, the mud taken out of the River, when it dries, is just like cement." When asked regarding pottery, Charles Buckman stated that he doubted that the Missouri River mud could have been used for this purpose. There is a blue clay near Hays that would be suitable for making pots—he had heard that pots were used "in the old days" but did not know how they 323

[18] Cocking, in 1772, writes of the Gros Ventres, p. 111: "Victuals are dressed in earthen pots of their own manufacturing much in the same form as Newcastle pots, but without feet."

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

323 were made. Several days later he reported that he had asked around about how pots were made, and some old-timers said that they braided sinew to the shape of pot they wished; heated white flint and pulverized it, and mixed with the blue clay from around the neighborhood of Hays. This mixture was about 6 per cent pulverized flint. The clay and pulverized rock were mixed in a mortar, pasted over the woven sinew, and baked. "It gets so hard you can't break it." Tom Bad Road, now (1948) about 70 years old told Mary Ereaux that once when he was a young boy he saw an old, old woman making a pot of "sand." The pot had dried hard, but some young fellows used it as a target for throwing stones and broke it to pieces.

554 The place of honor was at the back of the lodge, opposite the door. Here at night slept the "man of the house" and his senior
513 wife, if he were a polygynist, the other wives and children on either
595 side. Coming Daylight described the arrangement of her father's lodge as it was before she was sent to live with her grandmother. Her father and one wife slept at the rear, the bedding placed parallel to the door; she and her mother had their bedding to the left as one entered the lodge, and perpendicular in regard to the opening, sleeping with their heads to the rear and feet to the door; while her father's unmarried brothers were similarly placed as she and her mother, but on the opposite side of the lodge.

484 When on the move, the women were in charge of the children and impedimenta and usually traveled in a group considerably be-
492 hind the men. Horses or dogs were used to draw the travois, and sometimes younger children or the sick and disabled were carried thereon. Mae Main remarked that her memory of riding on a horse travois was not a very pleasant one as she was often annoyed by the horse's tail brushing over her. Horses had to be broken to the travois and a horse owned by a man would never be so used. The horse can draw a far heavier load than a dog, but seemingly the Gros Ventres at no time had so many horses that the dog could be dispensed with altogether and the dog travois survived until very recently. At such times that horses for one reason or another were scarce, the people would be forced to cache a great deal of their surplus and to cut their lodges in half so the load would not be too great for a dog to draw.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

To cross a deep river such as the Missouri was quite an undertaking. When they reached the bank, they would spread out in family groups, while the men and women worked together to convert the lodges into round boats. Coming Daylight gave the following description. "The lodge cover was folded in half lengthwise over a rope of sufficient length that the ends protruded somewhat. Mud was then smeared as a layer between the two halves of the cover and on the outside of that half which would ultimately be in the water. The next step was to take the loose edges together, to form the rim of the boat by bunching up a considerable bit of the material and tying securely; leaving a free space, bunching up another bit of the material, leaving another free space, and repeating this operation at intervals, shaping the receptacle to the proper diameter by running a rope taut from 'tuft' to 'tuft'; then they packed in very carefully as much as the round boat would safely hold, and finally the portion of the rim which was formed by the fold—as distinct from the now 'tufted' free edges—was gathered into place by manipulating the ends of the rope which had been placed originally in the fold, the rope being now tied securely. A lead rope was attached to one 'tuft' at each side of the gathered portion of the rim. Two young men on horseback then dragged the boat into the water and took it across the river, dragging it safely up on the opposite bank." [16] 484 501 396

The boat was watertight and safe to transport any of their belongings, and even children or disabled adults. When the water transporting was finished the mud was washed off and the lodge cover spread on the ground to dry. This didn't take long and the lodge cover was soon as good as new. 484 501

The lodge poles had to be transported separately from the cover. The poles were cut when needed, and a hole was burned about four inches from the top of each. When the lodge was up, the free ends of the short strings of buckskin, run through these holes, fluttered in the breeze, making a fine decoration. The more practical purpose of the holes, however, was to allow a number of poles to be strung together for moving. For water transport not more 484 342 484 492

[16] Maximilian, who met the Gros Ventres on the Missouri in 1833, mentions, p. 73, their round boats made of buffalo skin, filled with articles for barter, "drawn by one swimmer and pushed by another."

484 than six poles would be so tied together, a strong line running
through the holes, leaving a loop to go about the horses' neck.
492 Another line was tied around the six, about in the middle, to hold the poles together as the horse dragged them through the water. A mounted horse could draw two sets of six poles across the river at one time, one set on each side, but could not take all the poles for a lodge on a single trip. Meat packed in skin bags was often lashed to the poles and did not suffer in transit. Occasionally older children rode across the river on these poles, and some people paddled across straddling a single log.

782 The same goods which we have described as used by the Gros Ventre to meet their needs for food, clothing, shelter and transportation were likewise used to meet many other needs. Cloth and clothing, feathers, ornaments, and so forth, were used as religious sacrifices and offerings. Food was used as payment or part-pay-
262 ment for services of those who helped in production of economic
436 goods, or of those who cured diseases, acted in ceremonial capacity of one kind or another, as well as in meeting certain specific kin-
342 ship obligations. Lodges might be painted in accordance with a
531 supernatural vision, and, with the associated songs, were transferrable to others as ritual objects. Horses were used as payments of various kinds,—in connection with the bride price, to ceremonial
436 grandfathers, and so on. There was thus no medium of exchange within the group and no strict classification into producer's goods as contrasted with consumer's goods is possible.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

CHAPTER IV

ECONOMIC ASPECTS

Labor

In the production of economic goods the man supplied the great bulk of raw materials by means of hunting, doing relatively little collecting and processing. He was responsible, however, for the supply and care of the major means of production, the horse. The chief objects manufactured by him were bows, arrows, clubs, shields, and ceremonial equipment.[1] The woman, on the other hand, supplied only a small part of the raw materials, through collecting, but did most of the processing of raw materials and manufacturing. 462

Cooperation within the household was necessary for production, and the household was practically a self-sufficient unit with relatively little reliance on the cooperative work of others. In actuality there was quite a bit of mutual help, especially among relatives. There was, of course, a certain amount of dependence of the man on his fellows in hunting in the sense that men usually hunted buffalo in groups and, in view of the common welfare, an individual was restrained from selfishly hunting alone and scattering the herd on which his fellows were depending. Nevertheless the operation was a collective rather than a truly cooperative one because, once the chase started, each man was on his own and had the right of disposal over whatever game he killed. It was stated that in any given run the most a man could kill would be seven or eight buffalo and that almost inevitably some would get none. No one went home empty-handed, however, for the more fortunate 476 592 224 476 [431]

[1] Maximilian noted in 1833 that men make only arms and smoking equipment (p. 103), and that among the Gros Ventres were many war clubs "made of the long end of an elk's horn" and "daggers" of jaws and teeth of a bear (p. 75). For other details of materials and manufacture, see Kroeber, 1908, pp. 150–51. For illustration of a shield, see photograph, courtesy of Richard Pohrt, pl. 3. [411]

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

224 would share at least the meat, if not the hides, with the less for-
476 tunate, which latter would contribute by helping skin and butcher.
[431] Butchering was quite an art and was considered the man's work, although occasionally women accompanied the hunting party if there were a shortage of men, as was liable to be the case especially in winter. Should the party have crossed a river to hunt, the meat was prepared for transportation on a raft by being cut into large chunks, and each two chunks skewered and joined by a thong of sufficient length to hang on the poles forming the raft. The raft was built by crossing two long poles at one end, the other ends
[396] free and forming an angle of about thirty degrees. Three or four shorter poles were placed crosswise and lashed firmly in place with rawhide. The paunch of the buffalo, after being washed out, was used as a container for the many leftover bits of meat and was tied to the middle of the lower rung of the raft. A whole beef could thus be loaded on such a raft and towed across by one horse-
[492] man. When, as was more usually the case, the meat was to be packed back to camp by horses, the butchering was done differently but in such a way that a whole buffalo could be packed on a single
[251] horse.[8] Sometimes in winter when a small party went out and they could not pack all the meat back in one trip, the remainder was buried in the snow and called for the following day.

462 Once the proceeds of the hunt were turned over to the house-
281 holds of the individual hunters, it was the woman's task to cook the food for immediate consumption and to prepare the surplus for storage. Her most arduous and time-consuming task was the dressing of skins and the manufacture of these into finished articles of clothing, containers, lodge-covers, and so on. It was stated that skins in one stage of preparation or another were nearly always at hand.[9] "They didn't do things in a haphazard way because there was a certain time to do this and a certain time to do that." From the hides of buffalo killed during the spring and early summer, when the hair was not thick, they made the parfleshes and bags, soles for moccasins, rawhide ropes, and lodge-covers. In the fall, when the hide was furry, robes were made.

The older women informants described how, when they were

[8] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, p. 149.

[9] For some details on skin dressing, see Kroeber, 1908, p. 150.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The older women informants described, when they were young, they would work at scraping skins pegged to the ground, by leaning over from the waist, feet well apart and knees unbent, swinging sideways from the hips. They could keep up this rhythmical steady motion, with the short-handled scraper usually tipped with metal, for hours at a time, one day after another. Sometimes, too, a woman would spend a whole day softening ropes of rawhide by rubbing the rope which had been run through the eye and ear apertures of a buffalo skull upon which the horns had been left so that she, sitting on the ground with legs extended, could rest her feet against the horns as she pulled the rope back and forth, making it soft and white.[4] Nevertheless the tedium of these operations was often relieved by the fact that occasionally other women, who had at the moment some leisure, would hear the work going on and would volunteer to help. 462 281 [516] [412] [283 237] 462 476 281

It was customary for women to do much of their work in groups. If a young woman, for instance, wished to make a fine robe, she would call in some other women, including an older experienced "hand." The latter would mark the robe where the embroidery should go, and the younger women did the fancy work. The hostess would cook for all present and so, in a pleasant atmosphere of sociability and "woman talk," the work would progress. A similar type of gathering would be held when a sufficient number of hides had been saved to make a lodge cover. [531]

In size the lodges ranged from six skins up to twenty-four or twenty-five, with the average of about fourteen to seventeen.[5] Much skill was needed for cutting and fitting the skins and an experienced woman would be called in to do that part, while the others helped with the task of sewing the skins together. Our informants stated that a woman would have to "save and save" skins towards a new lodge, which was a necessity about every three years. [342]

Women went out in groups to pick berries and wild fruits as well as to dig roots, but each one had right of disposal over what 462 476

[4] Another method for softening ropes is given by Kroeber, 1908, p. 150.

[5] The largest lodge remembered by the Gros Ventres is said to have been that of the Blood Chief, Father of All, who had, at the time of the 1855 treaty, a lodge with two fires, poles 65 ft. long, and the cover consisting of more than 25 skins.

462 476 [251] she herself had picked or dug. In preparing the material for storage, too, the women would sit in a big circle, pounding cherries for instance, one woman helping to crush the cherries brought in by another. But, again, while it lightened the work of an individual woman who might have gathered more than the others, there was no pooling of resources. Sociability and friendship were apparently the chief motives for joining such a work group.

463 While there was a slight amount of occupational specialization, there was no real division of labor in the sense that persons with, say, supernatural power to cure, and who were well paid for their services, would be supported by this means alone. Nor could a man live, for instance, by specializing in raiding and raising horses. Every man, whatever else he might do, would have to make at least an attempt to hunt. Similarly, regardless of the temporary division of tasks which might be assigned among the women of the household, no individual woman could profit sufficiently through her ability to cut and fit lodge covers or through her ability to embroider well. Some, who were more skilled at one task than another, might perhaps devote more time and energy to that pursuit, but the rewards therefor were more in the nature of prestige than of direct economic advantage. An old woman for instance might be adept at making buffalo-hair rope. Men desiring to have it, would give her things in exchange for it, but it is doubtful if she would receive sufficient from this one type of manufacture to make her independent of relatives, even so far as food was concerned.

464 [582] [162] 461 The potential supply of labor consisted in all able-bodied men of the tribe from the age of about 17 or 18, at which time a young man was sufficiently skilled to hunt seriously, and of all able-bodied females from about the age of twelve, the time at which the average girl was married and was supposed to have been trained to woman's work. The unbalance of the sexes in favor of females, a marked feature in the population of the northern plains tribes,[6] plus the fact that the tasks allotted to women could be begun at a much earlier age than those undertaken by men, meant that the amount of labor contributed by the woman, in manufacturing economic goods, was greater than the amount of labor available

[6] Cf. Wissler, 1936 (a), p. 38.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

on the part of the men for supplying the raw materials. This, however, was more than offset by the fact that the time consumed in producing the raw materials was less than that required to process and complete the manufacture thereof. The following calculation will give at least a rough approximation of the situation. It was estimated by our Gros Ventre informants that one woman would be able to dress about twenty robes a season, i.e., robes taken in the fall hunt and dressed with the fur on. This means she had to devote the equivalent of 60 full days' time to this task alone.[7] Actually she would not be free to work on robes exclusively, as she had to dress other kinds of skins, carry on her ordinary daily routine of procuring fuel and water, care of children, preparation of the daily meals, and in addition cut the enormous quantities of meat to be dried for winter consumption.[8] In contrast, if we can rely on Hornaday's figures, 15–25 men killed about a thousand buffalo in a fall season,[9] which means, taking the higher figure, one man alone would average more than two women could handle.

Value

Given the abundant supply of game, especially of buffalo, and the methods of exploiting it, the individual who controlled the relatively scarce means of production was in a position to command a larger labor supply and consequently to produce a larger surplus. The Boy summed up the situation thus: "The Gros Ventres in their old way of life used to want a lot of horses because they knew from experience that if a man had a lot of horses he could acquire a little wealth and position in life. If, for instance, a family had a lot of horses, the man might have three or four or five buffalo horses with which to chase game and would bring in lots of skins and meat and could afford more wives, and the more wives he had the bigger and wealthier he would be. He could have

[7] Denig, pp. 540–41, estimates three days' work to prepare one robe for market and states that the preparation of 25 to 30 robes was an excellent winter's work for one woman, with the average at 18 to 20 robes.

[8] Hornaday, p 436, states that a whole buffalo cow, if economically worked up, yields about 55 lbs. of pemmican and 45 lbs. of dried meat.

[9] Hornaday, p. 465.

556 a great big lodge and all the other things that were required. But
231 some men might have only one horse and therefore only one wife. Such men wouldn't amount to much; they would be by-passed all the time and couldn't get anywhere. Therefore men did really desperate things in order to obtain horses."[50]

556 Horses were thus the most valuable item in Gros Ventre economy. Other informants illustrated this attitude. Garter
231 Snake, for instance, stated: "As a little girl I didn't know poverty.
735 My parents were rich. They had everything they wanted for their lodge, and clothing, and all kinds of horses so I was never in want at any time. Nevertheless, my father, when he was a little fellow, was very poor and had no horse to ride. Possibly somebody would put his mother, who was a widow, on a horse, but he would have to walk. He had hardly any clothes, he was so poor. One time when he was about 12, the camp was moving and they were going to go quite a distance. He was way behind because he would wait until everybody had gone, and then would follow as best he could. This day he went up on a hill to see where the people were camping next, and then he just lay there crying because he pitied himself for being so poor. It was at this time that he was granted his first experience [with the supernatural]. Later on, having made an offering of a black shirt and some feathers, which he had begged from someone at the camp, and having cut
556 off the first joint of the little finger of his left hand, he was told
231 in a vision: 'Son, I invited you here and I am glad you came.
735 Look over that way (the direction in which the camps lay). You
787 are poor now, but see those camps? You are going to be noted there. Everyone there is going to respect you and depend on you. And look this way (the opposite direction). See that big band of horses? Those are your horses. Of course you won't get them right away, but that is what you are going to have.' He was granted many powers later on, among them how to operate with a woodpecker feather; how to check hemorrhage; how to cure stoppage of the male urinary tract; how to cure consumption; how to revive a horse which was 'played out'; how to make raiders invisible so they could successfully steal horses. And he finally attained those horses he had been shown."

[50] Cf. Denig, p. 505, "An Indian with one wife cannot amass property."

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The above case illustrates how it was possible for a man, in spite of a poor start in life, to rise. Children were instructed by their elders, as was Thick by his maternal uncle: "Above all things try to have horses. Try to have property and whatever you have, take care of it. By having lots of horses and property, people will respect you and look upon you as somebody." 556 867

Again Coming Daylight stated: "They used to think more of horses than of anything else. They were sure proud of owning a pinto pony. In telling stories when they wanted to describe the best they could think of they would say: 'You should have seen her horse—it was a big pinto pony.'" And in telling of a relative of hers, Woman Chief, Coming Daylight said: "Her husband was not very handsome, but they were well-to-do and she always rode top horses." 554 231

While all horses were as a rule well cared for, special attention was devoted to the buffalo horses. On the hunt, for instance, these horses would be led along unburdened by pack or rider to keep them fresh. They were ridden only for the actual chase and after the kill were turned loose to roll around and graze like young colts. When the butchering was completed the meat was packed on other horses and the swift buffalo horses were then led home again. These horses were ridden on social and ceremonial occasions, when their owners wished to show off, and of course the soldier societies were well mounted, but such use amounted to no more than a good work-out, and these valuable horses were never abused nor wilfully exhausted. 231

Children were exhorted to take care of their property, especially of horses, and the girls were advised that "a mare is worth everything—it increases—treat her well." It was stated that some attention was given to breeding. A man might judge that a colt showed possibilities of becoming a fast horse. If it fulfilled the early promise the colts it sired would be watched. The less likely of these would be castrated. Likewise, a good mare would, if possible, be retained by the owner for breeding. A man who owned a particularly good buffalo horse might, on his deathbed, either order that it be killed at his grave or give it to some relative he knew cared well for horses, with instructions never to abuse it nor give it away. [867] 763 768 431

426 231 The lending of horses, especially in an emergency, was not uncommon especially among relatives. The owner however retained full rights and could dictate to the borrower the use to which the horse might be put. "One time, for instance," according to Singer whose husband Iron Bucket was an eye-witness, 231 "there were four lodges or families of Gros Ventres who 426 happened to be traveling along separated from the larger group. 734 Bear Nose's mother was taking care of a young man who was exceedingly ill. She didn't own the horse which was drawing the travois upon which the young man was lying. As the party climbed a steep hill the lines tying the travois to the horse broke and the travois dropped to the ground. The woman who owned the horse was already at the top and called down: 'Just leave him. Just leave him. You are always hauling him around with my horse.' The others told this woman owner: 'Let us pack him once more and wherever we stop we will make a sweatbath house for him and leave him in there and leave food for him.' But the owner didn't want it that way. The others told her again: 'Just pack him once more. You should think of the time when he was a Scout [at Ft. Assiniboine] and he used to get a lot of grub for you [with his pay].' But she said: 'No. I won't be packing him any more.' He was pretty far gone—his body already covered with flies—but the one who had been caring for him finally was forced to abandon him there with his few belongings and without any shelter or anything else. When they left him he had a sheet over his head and he started to cry. But the owner of the horse was adamant. The others of the party could argue with her, but could take no further action. They moved quite a distance and that very night a terrible storm came up and probably finished the young man. The woman who had been caring for him died shortly thereafter, and the others thought this was a consequence of their having abandoned him so callously, but they all said: 'It should have been the owner of the horse who died instead of the one who cared for him."

231 721 Because the real competition among the northern plains tribes was for horses, it was not uncommon that a relatively well-to-do family might lose their entire pack of horses through a single raid by the enemy. The following experience of Coming Daylight illustrates the point.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

"The Gros Ventres moved camp again to new grounds across the Missouri. They were camped on a bluff overlooking the River, and there was a nice valley full of hay behind them. Her grandmother suggested that their family tie all their horses down in that nice valley. The men in the group had, however, obtained whiskey and a lot of them were drunk—even her uncle—and after they camped they kept on 'celebrating.' That night she was feeling very sick as it was almost time for her first child to be born. She couldn't sleep and would go out and sit leaning back against another lodge. While she was sitting there it was very dark, but she thought she saw two figures on horseback moving along the edge of the bluff, very, very, slowly, as though they were sneaking. So she went to her lodge and awakened her husband and told him she had seen strange men around. Of course it was very dark and she couldn't describe them so her husband didn't get excited and said: 'Oh, it is just some of our people.' She was still uneasy, however, and returned a couple of more times and told her husband what she had seen, but he didn't believe her nor pay any attention. A little later as she was lying fully dressed in her lodge, very uncomfortable—raising up, lying down, raising up again—not sleeping, she heard leaves rattling as someone walked slowly from the brush towards her lodge. Her uncle called her by name. She recognized his voice. He told her: 'All our horses are gone!' He had sobered up and had gone to see where the horses were. She just felt sick over it. They had lost all their beautiful horses.

"She was so mad at her husband, because he had been stubborn and hadn't given chase to the enemy, that she went out and walked and walked. She doesn't know how far she traveled in the dim moonlight when she heard a horse neighing and, since everyone knows his own horses when he hears them, she realized that it was the light buckskin horse, her husband's principal horse for hunting buffalo and for war. It was his best horse. She went in the direction she heard the neighing and the horse came towards her. It was all wet and had a short rope around its neck. She caught the horse and supposed that the enemy must have taken the stolen horses across the river and that this one must have been doing something that made them cut it loose. As she was leading the horse back to camp she saw something white lying there. She

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

231 721 got scared and ran to the other side of the horse. Finally she took a big stick and threw it at the white thing and still it didn't move so she went closer and found it to be a Hudson's Bay blanket just soaking wet. The enemy must have used it when they crossed the river. So she dragged it home to her lodge. When she got there she called to her grandmother: 'Is he there?' Her grandmother said: 'He is.' She was still furious at her husband and called to him: 'Come out! I am giving you this,' and she said it in the way people speak when they are giving something on return from war. She was giving her husband his own buffalo horse! He however didn't say anything or make any exclamation. This so enraged her that she took the blanket and rolled it up as small as she could and threw it at him, hitting him on the chest saying: 'Here is another thing I brought you!' Then he laughed. But she had at least saved one of the most valuable horses.

[431] "The next morning the rest of the Gros Ventres in the party moved on, leaving this family behind. But fortunately some others came along and seeing their plight gave them horses, for example, Pemmican gave one to Coming Daylight, Little Shields gave her uncle one, and Sleeping Bear gave her husband one."

231 436 The importance of various transactions could be gauged by whether or not a horse were included, other things such as fancy clothing, ornaments, guns, etc. being mentioned as "thrown in."

[554] A person who gave a horse in whatever connection accrued prestige for himself and at the same time showed in what esteem the donor

[583] held the recipient. Horses were generally included in the bride price; in inaugurating the more serious type of enemy-friendship; in payment for services of the medicine man in curing certain types of illness, and in payment to the ceremonial grandfather as well as in payment to the namer or ear-piercer of a child; in settling disputes; in gambling; in gifts to others in honor of relatives, and in meeting certain other kinship obligations.

231 556 Horses could be acquired by a man through raiding the enemy; by gift from relatives and from non-relatives in honor of someone else or in instituting the enemy-friendship; in the bride price of a sister, daughter, or maternal niece; in payment for services rendered; in gambling; through inheritance; in trading with the whites. A woman might share in the bride price of her brother's

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

daughter, and might receive gifts from relatives, but would otherwise have few opportunities of obtaining horses. 231 556

In former times the rules regarding inheritance were fairly simple. If a man died, his relatives took the more valuable livestock, while anyone was free to come into the lodge and take any other personal property of the deceased which was not to be buried with him. The man's relatives would not, however, take the horses which belonged to his wife or wives, or which had been given before his death to his children. When a woman died she usually would have little valuable property in any case, but, again, any other woman might rush in and strip the lodge of whatever personal property might be therein, including food. The close family of the deceased were "so grief-stricken that they wouldn't notice who takes what," and "a husband would never keep anything of his wife's." It was said, too, that "women were braver than men in disposing of their property before death, and often gave gifts of personal property to those they wished to have them." 428 768 [431]

In objects derived from the white man, the value put upon them was mainly utilitarian. For example, in matching wagers on one occasion a man put up a gold watch. There was no one on the other side who had a watch to offer, but a spy-glass was considered the equivalent. It was explained that the value of the watch in dollars—whether it had a fine gold case or not—would not be taken into consideration. The question in matching was to find things of equal value to the Indian in his way of life. To illustrate this The Boy told of a gift to his father, Lame Bull, from a white trader on the Saskatchewan, of a hobble which locked. "Perhaps this didn't have a high value in dollars, but it was considered extremely valuable by Lame Bull because it saved him many a race horse. Even though the enemy might sneak a horse out of camp, being unable to unfasten the hobble, he would have to abandon the valuable horse before getting very far away." 177 435

On the other hand, while utility was certainly an important consideration in the Gros Ventres' evaluation of goods produced by themselves, various other elements were taken into account. A horse procured from the enemy was perhaps the most valuable of all things to the Gros Ventres; aside from other considerations, a man would have risked his life to obtain it and that in itself lent 435 554 231

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

435 value. Thus any object captured from the enemy, no matter how
554 trivial it might be, was more valuable than a duplicate of that same
231 thing obtained in any other way, and could be used to initiate an enemy-friendship, one of the most important of Gros Ventre transactions. A man who gave a horse, rather than or in addition to other items—to establish the enemy-friendship, to pay for the curing of a relative, to someone in honor of his relative, to his ceremonial grandfather for guiding him through the Sacred Dance, to wager in gambling, to show how much he thought of his brother-in-law in return for so simple a gift as the flesh of a puppy—would gain in prestige, for he thus established for himself a reputation for "being somebody."

435 The amount of labor that went into the making of an object, such as the polished deer-hoof trimming on a robe, was an element in its value. When the robe was old and worn the recipient thereof [431] would remove the fringe and return to the donor "so she could use them again." Scarcity, too, entered into evaluation of goods. Eagle feathers were, for instance, more valuable than other kinds of feathers. Again, as to elk teeth, it was explained: "The elk has only two teeth that are like ivory,[11] and so it takes a long time to [237 accumulate them. They are to us Gros Ventres like pearls are to 301] the whites. They were our greatest decoration. They are valuable even today, and, while imitations are sometimes used, you can always tell the difference."

Exchange and Distribution

439 There was actually no need for economic exchange within the tribe, with the object of obtaining the necessities of life, but a need had developed for exchange with the fur traders to obtain guns, whiskey, metal objects—kettles, scraper-blades, etc.—cloth, tobacco, beads, paints, and so on. After about 1830, the medium of exchange with traders was the buffalo robe, which rapidly increased in value at the expense of beaver.[12] Traders on the Missouri accepted other items produced by the Indians, but everything was equated in terms of robes.[13]

[11] These are the rudimentary canines. Cf. Seton, v. 3, p. 5.

[12] Bradley, pp. 203–04.

[13] According to Denig, p. 421, an Assiniboine chief on Jan. 8, 1852, was

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

At this late date it was difficult to obtain in the field details of exchange between the Gros Ventres and the white traders. One such transaction was recalled clearly by Coming Daylight, who remembered it because the amount given in return was relatively large. On this occasion, for 12 buffalo robes, the Gros Ventres received 2 striped blankets, 1 whole sack of sugar, 1 horse. If we compare with Denig's figures for a typical exchange in the 1850's where a horse was worth 10 robes, and 1 white, 3-point blanket was the equivalent of 3 robes,[14] we can agree that this was a good bargain. The same informant, however, remembers another occasion on which she herself gave the robe off her back to a trader in return for some apples which her little daughter craved. We have no figures on the relative value of robes as compared with whiskey, but our data show that whiskey was highly valued by the Gros Ventres.[15] 439 [273]

So far as we have been able to find out, while the trade with the whites was carried on at every possible opportunity, the amount of intertribal exchange was relatively slight. Perhaps intertribal gambling contests would account for most of it. Coming Daylight remembers, however, one case where a Crow friend of her maternal uncle's offered him a race horse in exchange for elk teeth sufficient to trim a woman's dress. We lack details on other outside exchanges, but our informants mentioned that the Gros Ventres used to obtain abalone shells from the Nez Percé and also occasionally camas roots, but this latter was very rare. Denig mentions the abalone shell was earlier worth $20 (i.e. 6-7 robes), but that when the traders brought in so many their value dropped to $10.[16]

The head of the household was the one who bargained with the trader, but the materials he took in exchange were supposed to have been decided upon in view of the needs of the household as well as his own personal needs. If, for instance, one of his

credited as follows: 30 lbs. of dried meat, 1 robe; 2 red fox skins, 1 robe; 1 large raw elk skin, 1 robe; 12 wolf skins, 4 robes.

[14] Denig, p. 420.

[15] Several of the traders remark that the Gros Ventres did not beg for whiskey as did the Piegan and others, but they were willing to pay for it. See Henry, v. 2, p. 734.

[16] Denig, pp. 590-91.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

439 wives had vowed to cover a Pipe, undoubtedly he would try to include in his purchases the requisite length of black cloth. Individuals of course differed. In view of their labor, the wives would expect to share in the return therefor which the husband was able to secure from the trader, but this expectation was not always met.[17]

The items thus obtained were consumed by the Gros Ventres in the same ways as those goods of their own manufacture—some being directly consumed, some entering into further production, and some being exchanged on the principle of gifts and of payments for services, and in gambling.

554 A man would accumulate a surplus only to expend it as
431 generously as possible in order to attain prestige. The person with
439 a reputation for generosity rose in public esteem, and was in turn the recipient of many gifts, whereas the man with only one horse and only one wife could not afford to meet the demands for hospitality and for generosity in other transactions, and thus could not profit by the system of indirect and deferred exchange.

262 Sharing of food was an important element in attaining prestige
574 through generosity. A person known to be stingy with food would
554 lack status. The ideal was often preached to children embodied in
867 such statements as the following: "If you have visitors, even though you don't have much food, give the last of it to them."

574 Should a male visitor drop in unexpectedly, the first thing a man did was to tell his wife to cook and she was expected to comply. How seriously this was regarded may be seen from the following case told by Singer: "One time my husband, Iron Bucket, went with a friend to visit the latter's brother. The sister-in-law was naturally a stingy woman and made no move to feed them. Her husband was sitting there fixing arrows and he told her: 'Hurry and cook. If you have nothing, ask for meat at one of the lodges.' This woman had a big shaggy head and sat there with her head bowed and her husband couldn't make her move. After a while, however, some meat was brought in from hunting, and this woman went out, got it and threw it down hard inside her lodge. She was mad. And instead of giving them in a nice way the manifolds and liver that they ordinarily eat first, she slung

[17] For a case in point, see p. 178.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

some liver at them and then put on the meanest part of the meat to boil. Her husband didn't like it, and his brother who had brought the visitor didn't like it either. Her husband picked up the manifold and said: 'Some day I will see about this.' Her brother-in-law said to her: 'Some day I might hear something about you (meaning that she had a lover), and you will find out that I am as mean as you are.' So it seems that not long after that someone saw this woman with a lover and told her brother-in-law, who immediately filled his gun and went over to her and said: 'So I find you aren't as mean as you pretend to be. You are generous about some things. I heard things about you. I came to kill you.' The woman replied, very sassily: 'Well, kill me then!' and he shot her. When they told her husband she had been killed, he said: 'Well, it is all right. I would have done the same.'"

574 574 684

Etiquette was not so formal with women visitors as with men. If a woman were hungry she would not hesitate to go to the lodge of a very good friend or relative and ask for food, with the reasonable expectation that the hostess would get busy and prepare something for her. Singer, herself, however, had the following experience, where hospitality was lacking. "One day a little dog came into my lodge carrying a piece of meat. I said: 'I am going to take the meat from that dog. I am hungry.' But my husband said: 'No, let the poor little thing have it, he is hungry.' I took it away from the dog anyway and then I said: 'Wait, I am going to beg some meat,' and I went over to a certain lodge. Two of that man's wives were out gathering wood and one was home. This one didn't even greet me but sat with her head bowed. I told her: 'I have come because I am hungry.' But still this woman didn't say anything at all. I sat there a long time. Finally a neighboring woman, who happened to be the man's daughter-in-law, came home with wood and looked in. She called me over to her lodge and said: 'What were you doing there?' I told her: 'I just went there because I was hungry and she never even talked to me.' So this woman cooked for me, fed me and gave me a piece of meat to carry home. When I was leaving she told me: 'They really have lots of meat, but they give me only the shoulder. As you leave you must hide this meat I am giving you up under

574

574 your arm because they always get after me if I feed any one.' So as I was going along the other two wives were coming back with the wood and saw me. They asked this third wife what I had wanted and she said: 'She came here to beg.' They asked her: 'Did you feed her?' and when she said no, the other two scolded her saying: 'You should have fed her at least a little bit' and continued to bawl her out for being so stingy."

While not all individuals lived up to the standard of casual hospitality, the majority seemingly did so, and business negotiations were usually transacted while visiting.[18] The individual who [554] dispensed food liberally could expect a return from others, although not necessarily the ones whom he had fed. Furthermore, if a man wished to sustain a good reputation he was expected to entertain well. It was customary, therefore, when fresh meat had been brought in for a man to tell his wife to cook and then he called out: "So-and-so, come and smoke," to as many as he wished to [554] invite. When the guests arrived he greeted each and assigned him to a place in the lodge, the most honored guests being seated in the back opposite the opening. After the guests had eaten, the host filled the pipe from a plentiful supply of "mixture," and the smok- [276] ing continued until the host gave the sign for dispersal by knocking the ashes from the pipe.

553 On more formal occasions, such as a naming feast, the host 574 would ask some older man with a strong voice to act as announcer, and in such case the latter would call out by name each guest and say who was inviting him. Ordinarily a man would invite his own age group, his close friends, but it was not customary for the wives of the guests to come. If a woman wished to invite others, she would go to the various lodges and invite them personally. In this type of planned hospitality there was more in the nature of direct exchange although it might be considerably deferred.

574 In addition to hospitality, ostentatious liberality accomplished 431 circulation of goods within the tribe. From the Gros Ventre point of view: "Presents were usually given with the intention of doing good and if no return were made, nothing was said or done. But often it turned out that at some later time the recipient would say

[18] Cf. Denig, pp. 514–15.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

to himself: 'He gave to me, so I'll give to him.' But no one was in duty bound to give the equivalent in return." 574 431

Within the network of kinship obligations, exchange was more often indirect than reciprocal. A man could expect help from his father and from his mother's brother without being under obligation to return goods in like amount—he was supposed to repay them by conducting himself in such a way that they could be proud of him. This meant that the man in his turn would be especially generous toward his sister and her children, that he would adequately fulfill his duties toward his wife's people and provide goods in sufficient amount that his wife could fulfill her own obligations especially those toward her own brother's wife and children. 602 431

When others saw fit to honor an individual, say for bravery in warfare, that person was supposed to give away goods in large amounts to show that he appreciated the honor; and his relatives would join with him in giving, thereby increasing his, as well as their own, prestige. Likewise in paying for services, such as those of a medicine man, relatives would "chip in" to the best of their ability, the one assuming the largest part of the burden receiving the greatest boost in public esteem. A person who impoverished himself by giving generously at such times would be sure that, with his reputation thus established, he would soon be the recipient of gifts dispensed by others in like liberality. Meantime, however, he could not afford to sit back awaiting the presents from others. He would soon lose his coveted reputation and be referred to as lazy, an epithet strong enough to bring tears to the eyes of a man who entertained any ambitions whatsoever. 554 431 [602] [461]

If a person were in need, it was possible for him to request what was necessary, preferably from some relative who was well-to-do, and usually his request would be met. But a continual borrower lost status and a limit was thus put upon indiscriminate "begging." One woman stated: "If your sister asked you for something you would not refuse her, but it was to your brother's wife you would give things voluntarily. A woman had great pride in keeping her brother's wife well-dressed, and if you had an extra supply of dried berries she is the one you would think of first." 426 558 [607]

Thus we have the basis for the generalizations the Gros Ventres 431

Thus we have the basis for the generalizations the Gros Ventres
183 make about their own culture. The principle seemed to be that
the more one gives, the more he gets. Coming Daylight explained:
431 "Those who are stingy don't come up, they just go back, back, back. Those who are generous gets lots of things. My maternal uncle was very generous and I try to follow his example. I feed everybody—old men, children and everybody—and people give me lots of things. Stingy people would eat all by themselves and nobody would give things to anyone like that."

The attitude is further illustrated by the following statement by Singer in explaining that the one selected as Feather Pipe Keeper had to give up everything he owned and would be sitting naked and bereft of all property: "Then his relatives and friends bring him things to live on. It is a great thing to give to someone like that. But these people kind of share everything and it holds back the ones that are prosperous. Our belief was that in a little while the ones who give have everything again. This didn't mean that a person could be lazy since it was 'thrown up' to anyone if he sat around and didn't work."

183 Again, according to Coming Daylight, "Formerly they all
seemed to work in a bunch and work hard for a living. It seemed
431 like they were all one, and always helped one another and treated
476 one another to things, especially to something they thought the other person didn't have. If a bunch of women went out to pick berries, they helped one another with pounding. If they had hides to tan, others seeing the work going on came and helped and in no time the work was done. Even if they dug turnips, which are hard to get, should they have brought in a lot, they passed them around. If someone had no horse to use in hunting, someone loaned him one."

Mary Ereaux mentioned: "The Gros Ventres are great ones for sharing and that keeps the more industrious ones down. They are not as present as generous as they used to be because they would be entirely out. But even today if a woman brings you some berries, later on you give her some sugar or something she needs. That is the way they always lived and still do."

In payment for services there is no set "price," so to speak, but there was a gradation according to the kind of service rendered. If an older experienced woman were called in to design a new

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

lodge cover, the hostess provided food and there was no other direct remuneration. If one sought knowledge as to how to use an ordinary medicinal root, something was given in exchange, but in a relatively small amount. On the other hand in compensation for the services of a medicine man, not only was food prepared, but in addition a much greater amount of property was given to the doctor, who in turn would see that those who had accompanied him to help in singing at the cure, would receive some goods as well. The amount offered to the doctor by the one paying for the services was governed by the reputation of the medicine man as well as by the individual's regard for his own reputation for generosity. People would say: "Look how much so-and-so thinks of his relative who was sick—he gave so much to the one who cured him." If the patient were very ill a whole family might really impoverish itself in paying doctors, were it necessary to call in one specialist after another, as sometimes happened. 183 431 476 [956]

Although apparently there was a tendency to call on relatives to perform services—such as naming a child, telling a war story at the erection of a new lodge, and so on—remuneration was forthcoming, although perhaps on not so large a scale as if a non-relative were called on to perform the same offices. [602]

In addition to exchange of goods effected through generous hospitality and the prestige-requirements of ostentatious liberality, including payment for services, the distribution of goods within the tribe was aided by gambling. Wagers were matched by two competing individuals and bet on an all-or-nothing basis. Considerable amounts of property changed hands at a single match.[19] [525]

[19] For a discussion of gambling among the Gros Ventres, see Flannery and Cooper, 1946.

CHAPTER V

WAR AND PRESTIGE

Organization and Conduct of the Party

721 Recognition was granted for any accomplishment that involved
554 risk of life at the hands of the enemy. The constantly recurring attacks upon the Gros Ventres by one neighboring tribe or another offered many opportunities for the display of bravery, but those who joined in taking the initiative against the enemy had the greatest chances of accumulating impressive war records. Consequently parties set out at frequent intervals with the avowed purpose either of stealing horses or of avenging loss of Gros Ventre life.

721 Although it was not uncommon for two or three men to go off quietly together when raiding for horses, if a larger number was involved, some formalities were observed. The man who decided to lead a war party had his intention publicly announced around the camp circle by a crier and any who wished might volunteer to join him. A young man, untried in war, would hardly set himself up as leader in this way, but would be anxious to follow someone whose reputation for bravery was already well established.[1]

Ordinarily, when the group was composed of ten or more men,
533 there were some preliminaries the night before the party set off.
721 The members gathered and sang in front of lodges of those they hoped would be able to help them. Each man so selected at
[782] least prayed for the success of the party as he gave them a smoke and fed them. In addition, if he had ammunition or clothing or something of the kind that would be useful on the expedition, he donated these to the party. It was said that an occasional man would "be so pleased with what the party was about to do" that he sent his wife out to sing with them. Thus the party sang around the camp circle in front of various lodges and, after agreeing on

[1] Sometimes young men were restless and sang around the camp circle to indicate their willingness to go on a raid if someone would lead them. Such a song was recorded as No. 70.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

what time they should meet the next morning to start off, they dispersed. 721

Before leaving camp the next day, the party again sang in front of the lodges which they had approached the night before. This same tune was also sung while the party was en route, words being composed to suit various occasions. This tune was known as the "men's song" and was said to have been given to the Gros Ventres by Nihiatu, the culture-hero. Other songs were also sung while the party was away from camp as, for example, on the first night out when they lamented their absence from friends and loved ones. 533

Various duties were assigned by the leader, and all, but especially the youngest members of the party, were expected to do their part. If a young fellow were "lazy" on a raiding expedition, the leader would see to it that he was punished. An accepted way of accomplishing this end was on the sly to substitute strips of rawhide for the usual strips of meat in the container used by the young man. When the party started to eat, all would watch this particular young man and, as he pulled out the rawhide, they would laugh at him. It was said that young men in this predicament would be so humiliated that they would actually cry. It was a serious matter at the time, and also offered good material to be used later by potential enemy-friends who might have witnessed this embarrassing situation. 726 [626]

Along this line, it is interesting to note the detailed procedure of one man, which may or may not be typical of the behavior of leaders in disciplining members of their party. "This particular leader, known as Eater, a contemporary of Running Bear, was highly respected and feared because it was known that when he led a war party he expected the other members to live up to the high standard he set by his own actions. If, however, he found that someone in the party was not doing his duty, in the evening he would start singing a song which he had acquired through a dream. All the young men would be apprehensive, wondering which of them was to be humiliated. The others would take up the song while Eater alone would dance, imitating a wolf by placing one hand on the forehead and the other behind him to represent the tail. He would circle around, dancing in this manner, until he came to the victim. Whereupon he would stop in front of the 726 626

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

726 626 latter and raise his leg in imitation of a urinating dog. All would know then on whom Eater's displeasure had fallen, and the young man in question would break down and sob. That would cure him of laziness."

726 312 Among the important duties on a war party were those of the water-carrier. If the mission were to be performed under more than ordinarily dangerous circumstances, young men might volunteer for the job, but usually the leader chose someone for it. A water-carrier had to have courage and resourcefulness because in order to fetch water it might be necessary that he be sent long distances without guard, and then have to catch up with the group [482] in case the rest had to move. When the members of the party [534] sighted the water-carrier returning successfully bearing the skin [533] water-container attached to a pole, a song was sung by the war party as they marked time by beating two sticks together.[2]

726 Scouting was another important aspect of a war party. The leader selected two well-qualified men for this job. "They had to have courage and endurance for, while scouting, they would run instead of walk and not eat until their mission was completed." Scouts were called "wolves" and wore wolf-skins as insignia and [714] sometimes, at least, would stick brush on their heads so they could not be so easily spotted against the horizon.[3] They went to high [533] places to look around. If the enemy were not in sight, they might sing, making up words to the tune mentioned as having been sung before the party left camp.[4]

If the scouts saw indications of the enemy, such as smoke rising from a coulee, but without actually seeing the enemy sufficiently clearly to identify them, on their return to the party they gave a wolf howl as they approached and proceeded in a sharp zigzag path. If, however, they had more definite information, they gave the wolf howl and approached in a circular path; that is, advanced, turned in a circle, advanced again, turned in a circle, advanced again, turned in a circle and halted. They were then met by two older men who had been successful scouts in their day. While the [533] scouts were approaching—occasionally looking back over their

[2] Recorded as No. 130.
[3] For illustrations, see Curtis, v. 5, p. 176.
[4] Samples of this kind of song were recorded as No. 23 and No. 24.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

shoulders and barking like wolves—the party sang three songs, one to accompany the scouts as they made each circle.[5] 926 [533]

The two older men who met the scouts were told by them privately what they had seen. The four then went to a mound of buffalo chips which had been piled up, the rest of the party awaiting the scouts standing in a semicircle—the women, if present, behind the men—and all facing the direction from which the scouts had come. They sang while the two warriors and two scouts circled the mound of chips four times.[6] After each of the two [533] older men had recited his war deeds in scouting for and locating the enemy, they called upon the scouts to relate to the whole party the results of their expedition.[7]

It sometimes happened of course that there would be no time to go through the above ceremony if the enemy were approaching. But if time allowed it was done in that fashion.[8] Then the leader laid out plans to steal horses and/or get scalps, according to the news which the scouts had brought in. The leader would instruct the rest of the party where to meet after the raid, how long to wait there before starting for home, what signals he would use to indicate the moment of attack, and what signals of identification were to be used between members of the party should it be dark when they closed in on the enemy. It was stated that the Gros Ventres usually attacked in the evening after dark, whereas the Sioux were more apt to attack in the early dawn. Should the plans of the leader not seem satisfactory, some of the party might offer objections. The leader, feeling himself responsible for the safety of all members of the party, put forth his case, but the others were not bound to follow him and, if no agreement could be reached, the party might split. One consideration which tended to keep the party [681] together was, however, the fact that there was a fine paid to the rest of the party by one returning to camp ahead of the others.

[5] A song without words, recorded as No. 14, accompanied the first circling. Songs at the second and third circling had words, composed by enemy-friends of the scouts, the words usually being both derisive and vulgar.

[6] This was recorded as No. 15.

[7] Kroeber's account, p. 191, differs slightly. Cf. also Curtis, v. 5, pp. 181–82.

[8] The formalities of scouting were carried out in detail during the ceremonies of the Sacrifice Dance. See Cooper Ms. 1949.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

726 533 When close to the enemy, each member of the party unwrapped his war medicine in preparation for the real battle. While painting themselves and putting on their charms and other regalia, the warriors sang.[9] Lame Bull, for instance, had a "medicine" war bonnet and there was a special song without words which he sang as he donned it; if there was time, the rest of the party danced while he sang and drummed.[10] Other songs might be sung immediately before going into battle.[11] The words of one such song imply: "If I am killed it doesn't matter; women will bear other children to take my place; I am ready to die." Some individuals, too, had special songs of their own to be sung as they made the charge against the enemy.[12]

726 762 The most daring men in battle were said to have been those who wished to die. Men who were grieving over the loss of loved ones were believed to have been especially prone to this indirect method of suicide. Others took this way of gloriously ending their lives out of a sense of pique, or in order to vindicate their honor. In this latter case it was customary for a man who had something discreditable to account for, either on his own part or on the part of some member of his family, to publicly announce that he was [533] about to die by singing the "brave-song" or "death-song" as he rode around the camp circle. This indicated that he would seek the earliest opportunity of losing his life at the hands of the enemy while accomplishing some particularly outstanding war-deed.[13]

726 It was recognized that even the bravest of men might experience acute fear during battle. "Their souls kind of left them on [774] account of the danger. They looked different from normal and their minds seemed not quite clear. Lame Bull used to say that the effect was quite similar to that of drinking too much whiskey—

[9] Kroeber, 1908, pp. 192–93 gives details and illustrations of supernatural paraphernalia for war. War medicines, illustrating those which had belonged to Bull Lodge, are presented here, Plate 3, courtesy of Richard Pohrt.

[10] The song recorded as No. 76 is Lame Bull's and is said to be typical of this class of songs.

[11] Two were recorded as No. 16 and No. 17.

[12] Lame Bull's song was recorded as No. 77.

[13] Two such "brave-songs" were recorded as No. 111 and No. 112. See also p. 191.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the mind was clouded for a while and a man could not remember so well afterwards all that happened in the battle."[14] 726

The leader was constantly on the alert and tended to interpret anything out of the ordinary as having a bearing on the success or ill fate of his party. As a case in point we have the following account of an expedition in the 1860's. "Lame Bull was on a war party of which Big Beaver was the leader. They went to the Crow country hoping to find some hunters in the mountains. At the timber on the river not far from Crow Mountain, the party stopped near a big tree. It was during a thaw in the spring and after they had eaten, they took off their moccasins and hung them on the tree. Then they sat around and smoked and told stories. All of a sudden they heard an owl in the tree above them calling out: 'Where you are sitting under this tree, you are going to be killed.' The owl called again and said the same thing. Big Beaver said to his party: 'I've lived a long time. But never have I heard anything like this owl talking. Let's put on our moccasins and go fast. I think the owl is telling the truth. I think he knows what is going on and people must be near.' All quickly put on their moccasins, and, as they were putting out the fire and preparing to leave, they heard people yelling. Big Beaver gave instructions: 'Scatter. Don't go in file and don't step in the snow, but keep to the bare places so our tracks won't be seen.' So they ran away and soon reached the mountain. When they got to the top of the mountain, daylight had come. They looked down and saw people at the big tree where they had been, searching around for tracks. The Gros Ventres called at the other Indians to invite attack, but the others only stood and looked up, without trying to catch them." 726 787

If the war party happened to be near certain petroglyphs, believed by the Gros Ventres to reveal the future, they went there to read the omens. If they could not then interpret the markings, an offering was left there and the next morning they went again. The markings on the rock were believed to change, and the predictions interpreted therefrom to be accurate. If the omens thus appeared too unfavorable, the whole party might even turn back. 726 787 531

[14] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, pp. 201, 208, for remarks relating to war experiences of individuals.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

726 Greatest reliance, however, seemed to be placed on the information that could be obtained through a "ghost-helper."[18] If a member of the party was known to have the power to command the spirit of a deceased member of his family, he was requested to exercise it. It was said that more often than not the predictions were extremely accurate, as in the following two cases, recounted by The Boy. The first one is estimated to have occurred sometime between 1835 and 1840 and The Boy's grandfather was one of the participants.

"The Gros Ventres were camped near the forks of the Teton and Marias Rivers. Practically all the men had agreed to go on the war path. So they left camp and on the first day arrived at the place where Crow Coulee or Creek empties into the Missouri. When it was dark someone said: 'Let's offer the pipe to that man and ask him to find what our prospects on this venture may be, good or bad.' They filled a pipe and presented it to the man, whose deceased father was proven to be his ghost-helper. He accepted willingly. Soon after they smoked, they made a shelter where he was to call his helper. Then they tied up the man and filled the pipe again and put it in the shelter along with him. He sang a song in which the others joined and on the fourth repetition they heard a voice up in the air. The ghost-helper arrived and the shelter shook. When he hit the ground, the ground shook. The ghost-helper was seemingly excited and kept repeating: 'What do you want, my children?' And he said also: 'If you were in my place and old as I am, and as feeble, you wouldn't like to be disturbed. But here I am. What do you want?' They said: 'We want to know how this trip is going to be—what luck we will have—what are our prospects?'

"They lit a pipe and offered it to the ancestral spirit. They could see from the flaring of the pipe that he was smoking it. Then the spirit said: 'Well, I don't know offhand. I'll have to look around. While I'm gone you smoke, and after a little while sing again. And I'll come back.' So they followed his instructions. When he came back they could hear the spirit catching its breath as an old man does and it said: 'My children, there are

[18] For discussion of ghost-helper concept among the Gros Ventres see Flannery, 1944, also Cooper Ms. 1949.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Crow Indians without number invading the camp you just left. They are so bold, knowing you men are away, that they are peeping in the lodges watching your women as they are playing the hand game. Your women are in happy mood.' Then the spirit said: 'These Crow Indians seem to be preparing to take all the Gros Ventre horses. I'll go back again and watch the Crows to see what they will do.' So they did as before, and when the spirit returned he said: 'The Crows have taken practically all of your horses and will arrive where you now are about sun-up. Don't be afraid of them, provided you do one thing: be sure to kill the Crow with the blue blanket coat. He is the only brave man in the crowd. Kill him first and you'll kill all the others. None of the Gros Ventres will be killed, but two will be wounded. In case you do not kill the Crow with the blue coat, the outcome of the battle will be doubtful.'

726
787
769

"It was nearing dawn by the time the spirit had made his final report, so the men decided to sit up and not sleep the rest of the night. At daylight, the leader sent two good men to the knoll about a half-mile away to look around. The scouts took a look, crawled back out of sight, got to their feet and ran toward the waiting men as fast as they could. The group had gathered buffalo chips in preparation of the usual ceremony of receiving scouts but the scouts yelled: 'Kick the pile of chips apart. There is no time for formality. Get ready to fight as quickly as you can—the Crows are right over that hill!' The Gros Ventres prepared hurriedly for battle and started for the knoll.

"One old man only was mounted, all the rest were a-foot. This old man was the one who threw the Crows into a panic because he had ridden to a high hill to watch the fight, and the Crows believed that they were going to be surrounded by mounted Gros Ventres. The Crows decided to dismount, make a stand, and let go the horses they had captured from the Gros Ventres. They selected high ground, one side sloping away with soft dirt, the other side grassy. The Gros Ventres were on the flat ground and so the fight started.

"While the main group of Gros Ventres engaged the enemy, a few followed a coulee until they got inside the Crow group and were able to kill a good many. The Crows decided to run, when

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

726 the man with a blue coat tried to hold them: 'If you run you'll
787 suffer a big loss. If you make a stand, the loss won't be so bad.'
769 But they ran right toward the thick mass of Gros Ventres, who received them by opening up a lane for them. The Gros Ventres were afraid then to shoot on account of hitting their own men in cross fire. The man in the blue coat saw the situation and started to run shouting: 'I have no doubt I shall save myself, for I am a good runner. Do your best to try to get away now.' So he ran into the midst of the Gros Ventres, and right through them, passing his fellow-tribesmen until he was leading the fleeing Crows.

"Suddenly one Crow got brave and decided to make a stand and stem the pursuit by the Gros Ventres. He dropped back and pointed a gun at Bear Robe, but another Gros Ventre decided to attack him and the Crow was so terrified that he failed to pull the trigger until the Gros Ventre hit the gun. The shot tore Bear Robe's arm from the elbow to wrist and threw him off balance. When he recovered, the Crow was still there with his gun so Bear Robe ran up and snatched the gun and spear from the Crow and threw them away.

"The Gros Ventres were still pursuing the Crow, and another one made a stand. A Gros Ventre, Crow Moccasin, armed only with a tomahawk, struck him. The Crow staggered and dropped his gun, but grabbed Crow Moccasin's arm to which the tomahawk was fastened with a string. In the struggle the Crow reached for his knife and jerked Crow Moccasin toward himself and slashed his wrist, but he had jerked so hard that the string holding the tomahawk gave way and the Crow lost balance, then ran. Another Gros Ventre shot him down. The fight went on until the older men thought they should stop and let the Crows go. The one with the blue coat got away along with nineteen others. Forty Crow were, however, killed, and the only casualties suffered by the Gros Ventres were two wounded. It would seem that from what the ghost helper had told them, if they would have killed the man in the blue coat, they would have killed all of the Crow."

This second illustration refers to events of much later date, about 1875. "A Gros Ventre war party was camped east of Lewiston, across the Missouri River. Morning Star Arises was asked to consult his ghost-helper who reported: 'All right. I am

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

ready to tell you. First, here's the scalp of the Sioux you will kill tomorrow. . [This was one strand of hair wrapped around a piece of sage brush, symbolic of the scalp.] I've found a big Sioux camp on Beaver Creek (east of the Little Rocky Mountains). The Sioux are having a big Grass Dance and the one you are to kill tomorrow is having the most fun. He has a sword. You'll capture that sword when you kill him. Don't be afraid. There will be no Gros Ventres killed, but two of you don't look good to me.' The Gros Ventres asked that he name the two, but he refused, saying: 'Just don't be afraid. Go ahead to the place where the Sioux are and attack them. Choose what kind of weather you want to make your escape after the fight, and I'll see that the weather will be that way.' They failed to make a choice, but the spirit said: 'Take a look at the sun every once in a while tomorrow. There will be all kinds of sundogs tomorrow, changing every little while. If they appear, you'll know that I have told the truth.'

"The next morning they decided that only those with good horses should cross the Missouri and attack the Sioux. They approached the camp where the Sioux had spent the night. The Sioux had failed to extinguish their former camp fires, and the embers were blown into flame and the fire was extending toward their new camp. The Sioux decided to fight the prairie fire, laying down their arms, not realizing the Gros Ventres were watching them. The Gros Ventres then attacked. The Sioux were in utter confusion and ran, all of them except a man with a sword who made a stand. Two Gros Ventres, Comes A-Flying and Owl Old Man, tried to ride over this Sioux who, however, sidestepped them and struck both their horses with his sword; meanwhile the Gros Ventres struck the Sioux with their whips, thus counting coups. A third Gros Ventre, Crazy Bear, however, killed him, took his scalp and claimed his sword. Since they had gotten this one scalp—which was sufficient for them to celebrate with a victory dance,—they returned. They saw the sundogs changing as the spirit had foretold. In order to evade the pursuit by the Sioux, they called on the man, whose ghost-helper had given the information, to change the weather. The man sang a song, using his robe as a cover to enclose himself, and said he

726 wanted a downpour of rain. At once a cloud appeared and in no
787 time it was a big black storm cloud. Then there was a wind and
769 a very heavy storm and thus the Gros Ventres got safely back to camp. The only loss on this occasion was that of two fine horses, one played out and the other foundered from drinking when overheated."

Return of the War Party

727 After a successful encounter with the enemy, the homecoming was a joyful one, provided no Gros Ventre lives had been lost. As they approached the camp, appropriate songs were said to have been sung by the victorious party. If, for instance, they had stolen horses there was one type of song. On the other hand
[302] when scalps had been taken, they sang other kinds of songs and painted themselves with charcoal. Incidentally, the Gros Ventres had a saying that "women and children do not make good charcoal." Women and children should be captured but not killed and scalped.[16]

When the victorious party arrived, they circled the outside of the encampment before entering. "Then the party broke, each member surrounded by his womenfolk who crowded around, kissing him and taking the scalps or other trophies which had been won. After a reasonable interval, the crier called all to come to
[302] the center of the circle and dance. Men and women alike blackened their faces with charcoal, and the women, carrying scalps attached to poles, or weapons captured from the enemy, danced as innumerable victory songs were sung. Only members of the war party were allowed to join with the women in dancing. Many husbands, who had to stand on the sidelines, were jealous of the brave warriors at a time like this."

727 Most of the songs sung during the victory celebration had
533 words which referred to encounters wherein the Gros Ventres had been successful. New words were often made up to commemorate a particular incident. One of these songs had the following words: "Where are you going? I've been here all the

[16] Cocking, p. 112, mentions in 1772 that the Gros Ventres adopted "slaves" of both sexes into families who had lost their children either by war or sickness.
[567]

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

time, thou with grey hair."[17] It refers to a particular Crow who had long grey braids. This man had captured some Gros Ventre women who were out picking berries and had returned to the Crow without having killed a man or stolen horses. His fellow-tribesmen taunted him with his "weakness" and in order to vindicate his honor he again sought out the Gros Ventres and was killed by them. The song was composed by the husband of one of the captured Gros Ventre women. 727 533

Another song, classed as a victory song, was composed by an old man whose faith in a younger man was justified. The young man had had a supernatural vision and, although he was as yet untried, he successfully led a war party.[18] Still another song was composed on the occasion on which a Piegan, who had survived a partial scalping, was killed by the Gros Ventres.[19] [787]

Even though the party might have succeeded in taking scalps, if any of their number had been killed, the return was a sad one. Whenever feasible they brought back the bodies of the slain from the field of battle. In any case, there was no circling of the camp nor singing. Nor was there a victory dance unless close relatives of the deceased warriors gave permission. An example to illustrate the procedure may be taken from the description of a serious encounter between the Gros Ventres and Sioux, known as the Battle of Black Butte which occurred in 1871 or 1872, upstream from the present site of Havre.[20] "There were approximately 30 lodges of Gros Ventres who were greatly outnumbered by the Sioux. Nevertheless, about 30 Sioux were killed and only one Gros Ventre lost his life. On the return of the party, the father of this one victim said: 'I give you charcoal. My son is lying on many.' So they were able to celebrate that victory in a big way."[21] 727

More often, however, when Gros Ventres were killed in battle, an outstanding relative of one of the deceased volunteered to or-

[17] Song recorded as No. 19.

[18] This was recorded as No. 22.

[19] Song recorded as No. 106. Other songs used at the victory dances were recorded as No. 117, No. 118, No. 119, No. 123, No. 124.

[20] His own part in this encounter is described by Black Wolf in Kroeber, 1908, pp. 203–04.

[21] A song recorded as No. 91 was said to have been composed to commemorate this occasion.

727 ganize a revenge party. The Boy gave the following account of the circumstances under which one such party was announced and carried out. "The brother of Lame Bull's mother had been killed in war by the Piegan. This woman took it very hard because it 726 was her youngest brother of whom she was particularly fond. 787 None of her relatives had taken any action and she was out on the 727 hills mourning. While she was out there she fell asleep and an 'old man' appeared to her and said: 'If you make an effort, you will forget your grief. I will teach you a song that you will use when they dance at the victory celebration after your people have avenged his death. This song will be used when they bring back the scalps of the enemies who have killed your brother.' So she went home but didn't say anything about her experience for some time. Finally, however, she told her husband. He then decided to organize a war party to get revenge for his brother-in-law's death. He had a big following as he went against the Piegan. On the way, however, they came across some Blood Indians and killed five of them, which was considered as fulfilling his duty to bring backs scalps in retaliation. When the party returned, the woman of course joined in the victory dance and sang that song, which was then used many times after that when the Gros Ventres were successful."

726 If no prominent relative led the revenge party, the parents of a man killed in war could request some noted chief to do so. In 727 that case the one selected prayed for the success of the party himself and made a sweatlodge, inviting many old men who would likewise pray. The large number of offerings requisite for the occasion were supplied, however, by the man who had made the request. Should he not have the wherewithal to formally approach a prominent warrior, there was still the possibility that revenge might be volunteered by someone who pitied parents as they grieved for their son. This would afford an opportunity for some lesser man to legitimately set himself up as leader of a raiding party for the first time.

Status Through War-Deeds

554 Any action that involved risk of life at the hands of the enemy was counted as a war-deed. Raiding for horses, especially for

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

those which were valuable enough to be tethered near lodges at night, was considered practically on a par with killing, scalping and counting coups. Capturing weapons and other trophies, as well as taking women and children prisoner, were likewise deserving of praise. Helping fellow-tribesmen in danger and many other types of action such as successful scouting for a war party, or acting as water-carrier under dangerous circumstances, were taken into account in assessing the war record of the individual. 554

An ambitious man grasped every opportunity for distinguishing himself in as many of these ways as possible, for prestige depended primarily on a reputation for bravery, and competition between warriors was keen.[23] The ideal man was one who had so many war-deeds to his credit that "his wrist would be made slim from being pulled up to recite them." So great was the variety of circumstances under which a recitation of war-deeds was required, that a man who had accomplished little was of necessity ignored and doomed to remain a nonentity.

Furthermore there were many occasions on which those who had given a good account of themselves in battle were singled out for public recognition. During the victory dance, for instance, a warrior, who had remained at home, chose one of the returning party to whom he would offer a ceremonial smoke while singing his praises. Again, the relatives of a man who had behaved with particular heroism might decide to formally bestow a new name upon him. In such a case, a group of men and women would approach the lodge where the naming ceremony was held, calling attention to the hero by loudly singing there. To show his appreciation of the honor the hero gave valuable presents to the singers. If a group approached a second time, the honor was doubled and so were the presents. In illustration, the story was told of a woman who was on one occasion so outstandingly brave during battle that she was accorded the same honor a man would have been under the same circumstances,—she was given a new name, that of Woman Chief, and her praises were sung by three groups. Moreover, it was customary at the social dances of the Stars and of the Wolf-men, to compose songs referring to specific deeds of their members respectively, and to sing these over and over again. [553] [562]

[23] For this and other aspects of status, see also pp. 32-33.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

555 The more war-deeds a man performed, the more frequently was
342 he the center of attention. Gradually he began to rise above
others and finally he achieved recognition as an outstanding war-
532 rior. Only when a man reached this enviable height was he justified in having his war record painted on his lodge for all the world to admire. When a newly painted lodge of this kind was first erected, the owner initiated its use by giving a feast to which other prominent warriors were invited. From among the guests, the host "pulled up" one who was able to tell four brave exploits, each connected in some way with a different lodge belonging to the enemy. At the conclusion of each separate account, the warrior who was reciting hit the taut new lodge a resounding blow, thus attracting attention. Then while the guests were feasting and smoking with the host, crowds gathered around to examine the lodge and to discuss the record depicted thereon. It was said, too, that similar discussions took place when the Gros Ventres met on friendly terms with other tribes. The reputation of the owner was thereby enhanced as his prowess was ever more widely acknowledged.

Enemy-Friends

572 In accordance with the general prestige pattern, an outstanding warrior, or one who had aspirations toward that end, was expected to be generous as well as brave. Particular significance attached, however, to the disposition of horses stolen from the enemy or of weapons or other trophies obtained from the enemy at risk of life. [602] The giving of such presents initiated a particular relationship between recipient and donor known as the enemy-friendship. This was a kind of "joking relationship" and involved the greatest amount of freedom between the two both in word and action. Whatever one enemy-friend said or did to the other had to be borne with equanimity. Loss of temper involved loss of prestige, and it was said that in some cases one enemy-friend had to suffer patiently audacity which would have led him to murder another not in that relationship. Each tried to out-do the other by kinds of speech and action ranging all the way from the most harmless teasing and jokes to the most humiliating exposition of foibles and misdemeanors.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

A man who was ambitious selected his enemy-friends with care so as to ensure opponents worthy of his efforts. It was said that often an older man whose reputation was already well established chose a spunky youngster. As The Boy phrased it, "This was an honor for the younger man and the older had nothing to lose. If the older continually won out over the younger in a fair 'fight' he ruined the younger man's reputation and thus eliminated a possible rival. On the other hand, if the younger man showed that he could take 'abuse' as well as give it, the older man could go along with him as an enemy-friend of long standing." 572

Everyone watched with interest the contest between well-matched enemy-friends whether they indulged in good-natured razzing of one another or whether they were concerned with more serious matters. When each tried to out-do the other in bragging of conquests both in love and at war, a large audience was attracted. Practical jokes were expected between them and the more vulgar and obscene their nature, the greater the enjoyment. Whenever one enemy-friend thought he "had something" on the other, he hastened to expose him publicly, so that the enemy-friendship often functioned as an effective means of social control. [522] [626]

When a man publicly taunted his enemy-friend, however, it was well for him to have ample grounds for the accusation lest the tables be turned against him as the case of Bull Lodge and Sits Like A Woman. This was told by The Boy.

"Sits Like A Woman was leading a war party out of camp as his enemy-friend, Bull Lodge, was returning from a hunt. Bull Lodge inquired of some members of the party as to who their leader might be. When he was told that Sits Like A Woman was the leader, Bull Lodge remarked: 'I'd hesitate to meet such warriors as yourselves were I the enemy, but Sits Like A Woman has no shame to lead such great men as you are!' Sits Like A Woman heard this and didn't forget it. The party was a very successful one, returning with 'charcoal' (scalps) and none of the Gros Ventres was even hurt. When they got home they sang around the camp circle here and there as usual. Bull Lodge at the time was entertaining many guests including his brothers-in-law who were seated near the entrance of the tipi. After Sits Like A

572 Woman had sung around the circle once, he led his party to Bull Lodge's tipi. The latter was suspicious and thought: 'I'm in for it now!' Sits Like A Woman went up to Bull Lodge, took him by the arm and said: 'Come, my friend.' He led him to the middle of the group of returned warriors. He then faced Bull Lodge and said in a jesting way: 'Stand still or I'll kill you.' Bull Lodge stood there and Sits Like A Woman took his rifle and, drumming with the stock on Bull Lodge's back, sang the following song: 'He who poisons (i.e., a medicine man with power to kill) has no penis.' Bull Lodge and his brothers-in-law realized that Sits Like A Woman was in earnest because not only was the song a great insult, but the victim's brothers-in-law were present,—which they should not have been when any reference to private parts was made.[23] The war party took up the song with enthusiasm as Sits Like A Woman told Bull Lodge again: 'Don't move yet—I'll kill you anyway.' He took Bull Lodge's new Hudson Bay blanket and slit it in two; he slashed Bull Lodge's shirt and took it off him; he slashed his leggings and removed them; and finally he cut the belt so that the breech-cloth fell to the ground. Bull Lodge was standing there naked. By that time the brothers-in-law had stolen away, one by one. Bull Lodge knew better than to run away, and Sits Like A Woman said: 'Perhaps you have power to poison people. If you have a mind to poison me, go ahead and try. I'm *not afraid of you. If* you choose to pay me back that way, you might just as well try it on the sun. Or, if you choose to pay me back in the way I have treated you, go ahead. But first lead a successful war party. If you then do to me what I have done to you, I won't be mad. But I'll lead still another war party and do far worse to you that second time than I have done this time.'

[602 834]

"After thinking it over, Bull Lodge decided to buy off his enemy-friend and the next morning he got together an armful of valuable things, filled a pipe and went to Sits Like A Woman. 'My friend,' he said, 'here's a pipe I am offering to you. You take this pipe so you will stop doing things like this to me. While I don't mind it, my brothers-in-law were there. And here are some things you can have.' Sits Like A Woman laughed, but ac-

[607]

[23] Relationship between brothers-in-law precluded any reference to sex and bodily exposure in each other's presence. See pp. 118–19.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

cepted the pipe and gifts. Two days later Sits Like A Woman told his wives to cook and had the announcer call out: 'Bull Lodge, your friend Sits Like A Woman is inviting you to his lodge to smoke.' Others were likewise invited and when Bull Lodge arrived he was put in the place of honor. After they had eaten a good meal and had started to smoke, Sits Like A Woman said to Bull Lodge: 'My friend, you can rest assured that I'll never do that to you again. I went to that extreme because you told some of my party I was not fit to lead them. But I showed you what kind of a man I am. You are intelligent and I don't think you'll make a mistake like that again. Also its good you didn't get mad but took what I handed out to you. You probably regret the blanket and clothes I cut up. So here are my best clothes—you can have them.' Then, indicating his best race horse, he added: 'Lead that horse home and keep it.' Thus Sits Like A Woman publicly absolved Bull Lodge, but by heaping gifts upon him so generously he exposed him too." 572

If enemy-friends were relatives, usually they were of opposite sex and the joking aspects, rather than the spirit of rivalry, were predominant. Should the enemy-friendship be inaugurated between two relatives who otherwise were expected to be reserved in each other's presence, somewhat more freedom between them was permitted, although the taboo on reference to sex was said to have been strictly maintained.[24] Among other examples of this type of enemy-friendship, Coming Daylight gave the following from her own experience. "My husband's nephew, Crazy Bull, one time presented to me a horse he had captured from the enemy. Before that time we had always properly avoided speaking to each other unless it was necessary, but now we were enemy-friends and we could play jokes on each other and he would tease me, too. One time, for instance, during the night he piled up a big load of firewood just in front of the entrance to my lodge. He had hoped that when I went out in the morning I would open the flap and go out head foremost into the wood and lose my temper. He was there watching to see what would happen, but unfortunately for him, my grandmother was the first to venture forth and so the trick miscarried and counted for me rather than for him. I never liked 572 602 522

[24] For details on kinship behavior, see pp. 107–26.

572 to play jokes, but I would get even with him by going over to his
602 lodge when I would hear him abusing his wife. He had to stop
522 when I came in there because if I actually caught him at it, I could dub him a wife-beater or worse in public."

While in most instances the enemy-friendship was initiated by
562 men, women occasionally obtained war trophies on their own, and
572 had the same privilege. The following, told by Singer, illustrates
602 how she herself came by some war trophies and the manner in which she disposed of them. "One time, when the Piegan had attacked us and the Gros Ventres were pursuing them, I dashed out with some of my women relatives. We came upon three Piegan who had just been killed. Those other women stopped to hit them but I rode by more slowly and spotted some booty near one of the bodies. I dismounted and picked up a nail-studded belt to which was attached a scabbard containing a knife and a nicely beaded gun case. I didn't want to show these to the others, but when they taunted me because I failed to count coups as they had done, I showed them this belt. One of them grabbed the scabbard, which I had intended to give to my own husband, saying: 'You are giving me this. Now we are enemy-friends!' To my nephew I later gave the gun case, saying as I threw it down in front of him: 'Here. You could have this for your gun. This is what I took in war.' The knife I threw down in front of my grandmother and, because we were now enemy-friends, I used a 'bad' name for her —I called her 'you who don't wipe your behind.'"

CHAPTER VI

KINSHIP BEHAVIOR

Much of the more formalized behavior expected between particular categories of relatives among the Gros Ventres has survived the many changes in their economic, political, and religious structure. It is one of the few aspects of their older culture which can be observed as functioning at least partially. Although the economic side of the obligations has had to be reduced markedly under modern conditions, the attitudes accompanying avoidance and joking are still deeply ingrained in those of middle age and in older persons. 602 [178]

All in all, the type of behavior which indicated respect was extended to include by far the greatest number of relationships,—freedom being allowed only between those individuals considered to be related as grandparents and grandchildren, as siblings of the same sex, and as in-laws of opposite sex but of the same generation.

Parents

The parent-child relationship was characterized by a kind of reserve that tabooed any light talk, especially joking about sex or marriage. If the subject were approached in a serious way, however, it could be discussed between parent and child of like sex. A woman could, for instance, go to her divorced or widowed mother and tell her: "So-and-so wants you, will you not go and live with that man?" But she would not think of acting as intermediary in such a proposal to her father. 593

Throughout life children were supposed to address and to refer to their parents only by relationship terms,[1] never by personal name. Further, a son would be shamed by any incident even remotely connected with sex, in which he was involved, should it be [60 55]

[1] The kinship terminology given by our informants agrees in detail with that in Kroeber, 1902, p. 9.

593 alluded to or occur in the presence of either his father or mother.
To appear unclothed in each other's presence would be embarass-
[291] ing to father and son alike. A woman refrained from any conversation or action that would call the attention of her father to the fact that she was menstruating or pregnant. An example of the
[845] attitude in this regard came to attention recently. "A woman, who was walking along the road near her house one evening, suffered a miscarriage. Instead of being taken to her own house nearby she insisted on being taken to a neighbor's, her reason being that her father and a few of his friends had been at her home when she had left and she would be 'ashamed' to appear in front of him in her condition."

It would seem that in some ways mothers had closer ties with their daughters and fathers with their sons. If, for example, parents disagreed about something their children did, each took up for the child of like sex. A man said to his wife: "You leave the boy alone, he's *my* boy," and a woman would say the same regarding the daughter. Or had a child done something to disgrace the parents, the wife was likely to upbraid her husband, if a boy were the culprit, by telling him: "Your son did so-and-so!" Should
[597] the daughter have been at fault, her father would speak in similar vein to his wife. In cases of adoption, too, a woman claimed a girl and a man, a boy.

On the other hand, in circumstances where parents could publicly show pride in their children, it often happened that a woman gave presents away in honor of her son and a man in honor of his daughter. It was customary, too, that if a young man had done something especially noteworthy at war, anyone could approach his mother and ask for whatever was wanted, and she would give it. Middle-aged women, whose sons were in World War II, joked with each other along these lines when news of their sons came from the front. Unfortunately, however, adverse economic circumstances precluded the full carrying out of the custom.

604 Attitudes of respect and reserve between parents and children
601 are extended to include all of parents' siblings and their spouses, special emphasis being put on father's sister and mother's brother. Kinship terms reflect this situation. The term "father" includes father's brother, male cousin, mother's sister's husband; "mo-

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

ther" includes mother's sister, female cousin, father's brother's wife. This was neatly illustrated in an instance given by Mary Ereaux. "My mother's cousin's husband came to my house a few weeks ago and wanted to ask me something about arrangements for the pop concession at the Fair. It was a matter of serious business and he and I stood, each looking in a different direction, talking only about the matter in hand. After he had left, my son-in-law, who is not an Indian, and who does not understand the Gros Ventre language, said: 'Mother, you looked as though you were mad at that man.' So I told him: 'In the Indian way, that man would be the same as my father, because his wife would be in the same relation to me as my mother, so we never talk unless necessary and never look at each other while talking.'" 604 601 [582]

The term "aunt" is reserved for father's sister and female cousins, and "uncle" for mother's brother and male cousins. Here, too, heightened reserve characterized the cross-sex relationship. "A man would not address his 'aunt' directly unless by chance she would be the only one there and he needed information. He would under no circumstances linger to make conversation with her. The same for a woman and her 'uncle.'"

Parents-in-law

The respect between members of the opposite sex who are of contiguous generations was most apparent in the avoidance between mother-in-law and son-in-law. This required that the two neither look at nor speak to each other at any time. It was stated that some men disregarded these rules after the death of the wife, "but most used to keep them all the time." There was one case mentioned in which the son-in-law of a very old woman told his wife: "Your mother is getting very old now. We won't see each other much longer anyway. It would be all right for your mother to come in to our lodge." Both Coming Daylight and Singer insisted nevertheless that, should such a proposal be made, the son-in-law would be the one to make the initiative, never the mother-in-law. 606

The avoidance between father-in-law and daughter-in-law was almost as strictly observed, in that a woman could not look directly at her father-in-law when she spoke to him, and she did not

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

606 even speak to him if it could be avoided. A man showed about the same degree of reserve to his father-in-law as he would to his own father, and a woman to her mother-in-law as to her own mother. Traditionally, a son-in-law was supposed to treat his parents-in-law well in the sense that he would send them a large proportion of the proceeds of his hunt. A woman would take the meat to her mother saying: "This is what your son-in-law sends you." Frequently the mother of the woman selected the choicest parts of this game to send as a return gift to her son-in-law. Parents-in-law were expected to publicly show pride in the achievements of their sons-in-law to about the same extent they would in those of their own sons. One especially nice way of showing appreciation of a good son-in-law was for his mother-in-law to make for and formally present to him a fancy robe and decorated moccasins to "dress him up" for dancing and for other occasions when finery was displayed. It was not uncommon, too, that shortly after marriage the bride's father would give a feast to which he invited his son-in-law, along with a number of his own friends, in order to "show his son-in-law how to observe the laws of hospitality and generosity in food." Later on, of course, a man would then once in a while include his father-in-law among those whom he invited.

Furthermore, a woman was supposed to be very generous to her son's wife in the way of keeping her supplied with berries and so on. Yet reciprocity was not expected, as illustrated by Cora's remark: "Most of the time it is the mother-in-law's place to do a lot for her son's wife. But I used to give berries and other nice things to my husband's mother, and she would laugh, because in the old days it would have been the other way around." And Coming Daylight's experience with her own daughter-in-law reveals something of the attitude in former times. Coming Daylight said: "I like my sons' wives just as much as I do my sons themselves. In fact I love them just as dearly as I do my own children. One time when I returned from working near the present Fort Belknap, the wife of my eldest son brought me some berry soup along with a big sackful of berries she had just gathered. I was so touched I said: 'You kill me but you don't kill me,' which is the equivalent of saying it was wonderful for a daughter-

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

in-law to do anything of the kind for her mother-in-law. So I 606
gave that daughter-in-law two horses."

Although economic obligations were not incumbent, the relationship terms were used, and avoidances practiced, between parents-in-law and the brothers and sisters of the man and wife respectively. It was explained: "The brothers of a man respected his mother-in-law because in the old days it could happen that if 587
a man died his brother might take the wife. And the same with a woman, because they had the custom of giving all the girls in a family to the same man if they liked him."

Siblings of Opposite Sex

Among members of the same generation, the most marked re- 593
spect was exhibited between siblings of opposite sex, and was ex- 605
tended to include all cousins. There was no relationship term for 601
"cousin," all using sibling terms of address and without distinguishing between parallel- and cross-cousins.

Since a girl was removed from her own family at an early age and was brought up in a different household, actual face-to-face contact between brothers and sisters was slight. Nevertheless, their attitudes toward each other had important consequences with many ramifications. As interpreted by the Gros Ventres, the basic relationship between siblings of opposite sex gave clues to understanding expected behavior in several other categories of kinship, —in the avunculate and amitate, as well as in the relations between in-laws of the same sex and generation.

If it could possibly be avoided, brother and sister did not speak to nor look directly at each other. They communicated through a third person. Gros Ventres, who are today in middle age, explained how embarrassed they were as children when the authorities did not understand "the proper way of doing things." For instance, the good sisters and priests in charge of St Paul's, which at that time was a boarding-school, insisted as a privilege for the boys that they visit their sisters on Sunday afternoons in the girls' part of the school! How deeply this feeling of respect penetrates was brought home to the present author by the following incident. "One day she was with Mary and Coming Daylight, while waiting for Charles Buckman, who was to drive her to another part of the

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

605 Reservation. She heard the car drive up and, without thinking
593 how it might be interpreted by the other two women, exclaimed: 'Oh, there is my man! I must go!' Since in that neighborhood 'my man' is commonly used to indicate husband or lover, Mary laughed. Almost immediately, however, she caught herself and straightened her face, remarking: 'I shouldn't have even thought that or laughed like I did. That man is my cousin and I should be ashamed of him.' Furthermore when Mary went out with her to get in the car, Charles insisted that Mary sit in the back seat so that everybody could see that they rode in the same car only to accommodate the white woman. Mary remarked later on: 'It is funny, but I just can't bring myself to sit down and have a conversation with my men-relatives, like white brothers and sisters do. I still have a feeling it is an awful thing to talk to my brothers, male cousins, father-in-law and Indian sons-in-law,—although I don't mind in the least talking to my white son-in-law.'"

Brother and sister were expected to grant each other's requests whenever it was in their power to do so and without complaint, regardless of the inconvenience which might be involved. The following incident illustrates how sensitive the Gros Ventres were on this point. "When the present Mrs. Takes-the-Bow was a small girl, she often was sick. One time her father's sister came into the lodge and muttered to herself: 'Oh you are just using up all my medicine in doctoring you—what is wrong with you!' Unfortunately the child's father overheard this impatient comment and was deeply hurt, because very seldom would a woman say anything like that in front of her brother. So he decided: 'My sister considers me a lot of trouble, and if that is the way she feels about it I shall never request her services again.' He meant exactly what he said. He left immediately to go on a war party. Careless of his life, he recklessly rode into the midst of the enemy and was killed."

593 One way of showing how much a woman thought of her brother
782 was for her to make offerings in his behalf. When young men were going off on a war party, the sister of one of them might go
721 outside the lodge and make a promise along the following lines: "I will give my finger as offering if my brother will come back a great warrior." It was considered a great honor, of course, to

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

have someone come back a real hero, and, although such a promise to torture oneself could be made in regard to other relatives, "it was usually a sister who thought so much of her brother who did that." Other forms of sacrifice which a girl might practice on her brother's behalf would be to take a fine robe, or something else of value, and stick it on top of the lodge saying: "I offer this that my brother may come back with good luck, bringing something fine from war." This could be even more specific in that a girl could offer, say, the tip of her finger, if her brother would bring back a particular thing, such as a scalp or a horse or a weapon. Again, should her brother be ill or wounded, a woman would be exceedingly concerned and might go so far, as in one case recorded, of promising that if he should recover she would join the Women's Lodge—"which was considered a great thing to do for your brother." 593 728 721

Usually a man would have some voice in regard to his sister's marriage and, if he were the one who made the arrangements, he received the larger share of the bride-price. It was said, too, that a brother would be especially concerned regarding his younger sister's moral conduct and might take it upon himself to keep her in line. Although parents would feel the disgrace of an erring daughter, a brother was expected to react violently. If her husband failed to punish his wife for adultery, her brother could kill her. Some instances were given, too, in which the man took his own life indirectly, by riding into the midst of the enemy without taking any precautions, because he felt so keenly the dishonor his sister who was unfaithful had imposed on him. 593 [584] [684]

Maternal Uncle and Paternal Aunt

"Because a brother and a sister thought so much of each other, they were expected to be good to each other's children." If a woman had several brothers, it was the eldest who assumed the duties of the maternal uncle and his relationship with his nephews was a direct one. Should the eldest brother be unable to undertake the responsibility another brother or male cousin was expected to do so. 604

The maternal uncle was supposed to watch his sister's children closely even though her husband was on the scene. If he did not 604 861

604 861 approve of the way they were being raised, he could remove a sister's son from the parental home and keep him. The parents would have to let him go. Thick told of his own experience in this regard. One day at the time when he was nine or ten years old, his mother's brother came and told his brother-in-law: "I am taking my nephew. You folks are not training him to be a man." So his uncle took Thick away and raised him very strictly. He was made to work very hard and his uncle did not hesitate to lecture him and to administer severe tongue-lashings. His uncle's wife would occasionally intervene in the attempt to bring about a more lenient attitude toward the boy, especially as Thick got older, but all to no avail. Finally, when Thick had become a young man, he could not stand it any longer and rebelled. He has never forgotten that after all those years of what amounted practically to servitude, his uncle did not give him a single horse nor any other presents, although he showered Thick's elder brother with good things, especially with horses.

604 In case the maternal uncle was well-off, and his sister and her husband in bad straits, the uncle was more or less obliged to take the responsibility for his nephew. If he did not do so, people would say he had neglected his duty. Furthermore, if a boy were [855] lazy and consistently refused to obey his own father, he might be ejected from his home, and it would be up to his maternal uncle to take him in. One case was cited, too, of a boy who was neglected by his parents, and whose uncle not only took him in, but acted as though he thought more of his nephew than he did of his own sons.

Whether or not the maternal uncle insisted on taking full charge, he had the right of disciplining his nephew, reprimanding him when he failed to measure up, but at the same time he had the obligation of protecting and shielding him in public. While a father could, and sometimes did, disown his son, the boy could be sure of a refuge with his mother's brother, although he faced severe punishment in private at his uncle's hands. Thus a young man who was in difficulties, over say a love affair, would seek out his uncle. Should he be threatened by a husband who suspected the young man of fooling around his wife, the uncle could be counted upon to invite the irate husband, smooth over the situation, and in

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

case of necessity pay the indemnity. Other people might say to a man that it was of no use to help that nephew, that he was no good. Yet the uncle did not give up trying to save face for the nephew, and to do his best to shield or rehabilitate him—but at the same time he "talked turkey to him." 604

Even after a man was married, his maternal uncle had the right of disciplining him. If a husband mistreated his wife undeservedly it was said that his maternal uncle could step in and take the wife temporarily away from his nephew, letting him shift for himself, doing his own cooking and so on, "until he came to his senses." A man would have to take such treatment from his uncle, it was said, because public opinion condemned the husband and backed up the uncle, who was considered within his rights. [684] [626]

Furthermore the maternal uncle would feel duty-bound to protect his nephew from danger. An extreme case was cited in illustration. "A Gros Ventre boy was captured by the Crow when fairly young and he remained among them after he grew up although he could have returned. On one occasion the Gros Ventres surrounded a war party of Crow among whom was this young Gros Ventre man. The young man appealed to his mother's brother to save his life, and the uncle responded by using every argument he could think of. The other Gros Ventres in the party [illegible] the plea, however, on the grounds that the boy had previously had the opportunity to return to his own people, and asked: 'Why didn't he think of his uncle then?'"

On the other side of the picture, if a young man were successful and "on the way up," as the saying goes, his maternal uncle had priority over the boy's father or older brother in helping him by giving generously to him in private and by giving away publicly in his honor as lavishly as possible. It was stated, for instance, that if a young man was ready to go to war, his uncle might go to him and give him a horse, encouraging him to face the enemy bravely and to show courage under fire. He would tell his nephew: "I'm going to watch you. Here is your chance to show what you can do." Thus he might "steal the show" from a father or older brother who themselves might have intended to help the boy off to a good start. Because it was the uncle who did this, nothing would be said. All his relatives would be proud of a successful young [431]

604 man, but his maternal uncle would be given the greatest amount of credit for his nephew's prowess, and he would rejoice more than the others in his nephew's successes.

426 A nephew could, if he wished, use his uncle's property without asking permission. If he damaged the property so borrowed, how-
604 ever, the uncle might reprimand him severely. Sometimes an uncle took the initiative and told one of his nephews: "All that I have is yours." In such a case, not only would the nephew be free to use the property without asking, but even if it were damaged—say a borrowed horse was carelessly injured or lost,—nothing would be said by the uncle nor any punishment inflicted. A nephew was supposed to be very respectful toward his uncle, but was freer with him than he could be with his own father. He could, for instance, joke with his uncle about being a lady's man, but he
[834] could not go too far in referring to sexual matters. He would not
[291] feel quite so embarrassed if his uncle should happen to see him unclothed, as would be the case with his father or his brother-in-law, but he would be far from comfortable in that situation.

604 The relationship between a man and his sister's daughter was not as direct as that between him and his sister's son. If a woman died, leaving orphan girls, it was not unusual that the wife of her brother would say: "I am going to take these girls so that I can have a son-in-law through them." This is what happened to Coming Daylight and her sister, whose maternal uncle took responsibility for them, although they were actually trained by his mother. It was he who arranged their marriages and it was to him they returned when widowed or divorced. His sons took the place of brothers to these two orphans.

While he did not take on the role of disciplinarian to his sister's daughters, whether or not their parents were living, the maternal uncle was expected to be generous to his nieces and to show his regard by giving things away in their honor. If a maternal uncle asked a niece for anything she possessed, she was supposed to give it to him without question, even though at considerable cost to herself. "Coming Daylight was asked by her uncle for the elk teeth she owned, to exchange with a Crow who had offered him an excellent race horse in return. She gave up these valuables without a word, though she hated to part with them since she did not know

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

at the time whether she would ever have a chance to acquire more of these highly desirable decorations." On the other hand, a maternal uncle would not refuse his niece or her husband anything it was in his power to give, and would always lend them horses or other kinds of property when requested. 604

Compared with the responsibilities of the maternal uncle, a paternal aunt had relatively few obligations to her nephews and nieces but correspondingly more to their mother, her brother's wife. Nevertheless it was she who took particular interest in her brother's children when they were infants. She showed regard for her brother by providing, if possible, the sack for the newborn baby and the goods to pay the medicine man in case it were necessary to call one to the child-bed of her sister-in-law. If the child became ill she, too, usually paid for the necessary doctoring and it was not unusual for her and her husband to assume the expense of a formal naming feast for the infant. [854] [553]

The paternal aunt had the duty of "bawling out" her brother's daughters if they misbehaved. In regard to property, a niece would have to ask permission before using anything of her aunt, but the request was always granted. The aunt would tell her niece in an offhand way: "Well, why don't you go get it!". Whereas if someone not in that relationship had made the request, she would have gotten the object and handed it to her. A woman was expected to be as reserved with her aunt as she would be with her own mother and with her mother-in-law. A man was even more respectful to his aunt in the sense that he would not speak to her unnecessarily nor look directly at her. [861]

When a girl married, the paternal aunt sometimes participated in the bride-price, and claimed her niece's husband as "son-in-law." According to Garter Snake: "When Otter Robe's oldest sister married, the groom gave three horses, one of which went to the bride's father, one to her brother, and the third to her father's sister. The latter made for her niece's husband a fine fancy robe, treating him with the same consideration she would have accorded her own daughter's husband. Then, when this 'son-in-law' returned successfully from a raiding party, he gave his 'mother-in-law' one of the horses he had captured." It is interesting to note [583]

604 that the wife of a maternal uncle may likewise claim his nephew as "son-in-law."[8]

Brothers-in-law and Sisters-in-law

607 The mutual regard between brother and sister is said to have been reflected not only through the carrying out of the obligations of the avunculate and amitate in the spirit of "showing how much brothers and sisters thought of each other." It could also be seen in the type of behavior expected between brothers-in-law on the one hand, and sisters-in-law on the other. Brothers-in-law were generous to each other and could joke lightly with each other, but nothing even remotely connected with sex could be so much as mentioned in each other's presence. A man was circumspect in regard to his sister's husband out of respect for his sister, and to his wife's brother because the latter, out of respect for his own sister, had similar obligations toward him. Sisters-in-law behaved toward each other in like fashion. These attitudes were extended to include wife's brother's wife as "sister," rather than "sister-in-law," and husband's sister's husband as "brother."

[522] [831]

Unmarried brothers of a man and wife likewise regarded themselves as brothers-in-law. A case which well illustrates the attitudes between them is the following as told by The Boy. "My older brother was married to Thick's older sister and we two young unmarried brothers-in-law experienced a most embarrassing situation. One of us was visiting a woman at night and the other came to the same woman, not realizing in the dark that his brother-in-law was already there. We recognized each other's voices, however, and the one who arrived last beat a hasty retreat. The matter has never, even to this day, been discussed nor so much as indirectly alluded to between us, and the embarrassment over this event led us to avoid each other for a considerable time thereafter. Eventually our relationship was deepened inasmuch as Thick married my sister. Even though my sister should die, Thick and I would continue to be brothers-in-law on the same plane."

[835]

[8] Kroeber, 1902, p. 10, calls attention to the identity of terms for "niece" and "daughter-in-law." Apparently a woman used the term "son-in-law" for her niece's husband or for her husband's nephew only if presents were given.

[601]

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Traditionally, all reference to sex was forbidden between brothers-in-law in private as well as in public. They would be embarrassed at bodily exposure in each other's presence and consequently did not go swimming together, nor relieve their bodily necessities in sight of each other, nor indeed break wind. They were, however, allowed and even expected to joke with one another, or, better, to mildly tease each other in public. This sort of "joking" was of a very different kind from that expected between brother- and sister-in-law or between enemy-friends. As an example, it was stated that a man might say to a prospective employer, when his brother-in-law was present: "I'm the best logger around here. My brother-in-law can't cut logs as well as I can. Why hire him?" The other was supposed to take such ribbing without losing his temper, but try to get even at some later date. 607 834

Among the younger generation of today, brothers-in-law still "josh" at each other's expense and in good nature, but they tend to disregard the respectful attitudes and to discuss tabooed subjects. Deploring this state of affairs, Coming Daylight commented: "These young men around here now are 'tough' just like the Assiniboine men always were. The Assiniboine never were ashamed in front of their sisters' husbands, whereas the Gros Ventres were different and knew better than to behave in such a way." 607

Even at the present time, nevertheless, just as in the past, brothers-in-law are supposed to be generous with each other. They would advise each other in regard to a good business proposition, give each other the benefit in anything along that line, help each other in such ways as in building a house, in giving presents away in public, and so on.

Reticence on matters connected with sex was practiced between sisters-in-law, a woman being careful what she said both to her brother's wife and to her husband's sister. It was stated, for example, that "a woman can tease her sister-in-law, but not in a bad way because she would be her brother's wife." The stock joke between sisters-in-law hinges upon stinginess. A woman could say to her brother's wife: "Oh, you stingy thing. You hid your knife," which would indicate that she is fond of her food and doesn't wish to share it. But sisters-in-law do not josh each other to the same extent as do brothers-in-law.

607 A woman was, however, expected to be especially generous to her brother's wife. Coming Daylight gave, as example, her own experience at the time of her first marriage. "One day, shortly after I had arrived at my husband's home, his sister, Watches All, brought me a couple of skins saying: 'Now you take the flesh off these hides. You are known to do a good job, and since my eyesight is poor I might cut the skin.' So I did what was asked, never dreaming that one of these skins was to be a robe for me. Some time later Watches All invited me and another young woman who was married to my husband's cousin, to a lodge. When I arrived I found the lodge full of old women. I was told to go around to the place of honor in the rear, where two robes were placed. When the other young woman arrived, they told her to take her place beside me. We were both to sit beside the robes and not to rise until they were all through. Watches All had invited, among the others, the woman who had 'initiated' her and who acted as a sort of teacher. Watches All said to this woman: 'You are going to initiate my sister-in-law with this robe.' So they made a smudge and Watches All held one side of the robe and the woman held the other, as they stood behind me. Then they held the robe toward the fire three times, making the motion as though to put it about my shoulders, and on the fourth time they actually put it around me, tying it at the breast and telling me not to hold it on with my hands. Each of the four times the motion was made, the woman blew on the robe spraying it with a powdered root which she had in her mouth. Then they went through the same procedure for the other bride. Finally, we were told to walk out without picking up our old robes, which we had left by the door when we entered, and which were to be given to two of the oldest women present. The new robes were beautiful. They were embroidered with porcupine quills, fringed with deer-hoofs, and sprinkled with mica, which glittered in the firelight as we moved. It was certainly fine to have such a beautiful new robe; and right away, my husband gave his sister a horse because she had been so good to me. Later on, I made her some moccasins."

607 431

[292]

In addition to the special honor a woman might show her brother's wife by a ceremony such as described above, she would in general take pride in keeping her well-dressed. For instance Mary

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

explained: "Mrs. Curly Head was the best-dressed woman I knew. Her husband's sister kept her well-dressed. A woman has a lot of pride in the appearance of her brother's wife, and the old women tell us that it was the same in the old days." Cora corroborated this by stating: "My sister and I would load my brother's wife with presents. And if he had more than one wife, it would be the same,—a woman is good to her brother's wife no matter how many times he might be married." Coming Daylight mentioned that she made it a point to bring her cousin's wife—she had no blood brother—especially nice gifts whenever she made a trip and added that in former times, just as today, when a woman distributed berries she had picked, the first one she would think of would be either her brother's wife or her son's wife.

About all that a woman did for her husband's sister was to make her occasional gifts of moccasins. The giving of moccasins, however, had a significance far beyond what their extrinsic value suggests. Mary illustrated this by the following incident: "Flat Head is my cousin. He has three half-brothers, all of them having the same father but different mothers. I treat these three in the same way I treat Flat Head, namely, as a brother. One of these men died last spring, and his wife, who is of course my sister-in-law, came and brought me a pair of moccasins. So when she was leaving I gave her a woolen shawl which I had just bought, and a dress which I had made and intended to display in the bazaar. My husband's niece, who is young and doesn't understand the old ways, said reproachfully to me: 'Why, Aunt Mary, you gave up that nice shawl you wanted so badly.' So I told her: 'Surely—I couldn't let my sister-in-law go out of here without giving her something! You should know that when anyone gives you a pair of moccasins it is a big thing. It is as much as anything I can think of—as much as a bottle of whiskey or of brandy!'"

Grandparents

The relationship between grandparents and grandchildren was a free-and-easy one, unmarked by the reticence which characterized the parent-child relationship, or by the feeling of restraint which obtains between so many relatives of opposite sex. "A grandfather can say anything he likes to his granddaughter, and vice

603 versa. Grandparents, for instance, can tell folk-tales and stories, the subject-matter and details of which no parents would mention in the hearing of their children." A woman would think nothing of teasing her grandmother about men. The following is typical of the milder sort of joking which is customary, but which would be considered highly improper toward parents. "Coming Daylight's granddaughter came into her house to borrow a knife. The old woman told her: 'Don't lose that knife. I have had it for a long time and I love that knife.' Whereupon the granddaughter replied: 'Yes, you love that knife just like you love your sweethearts!' and the several women present had a good laugh over this joke." Again, Coming Daylight herself told of an old man who was grandfather to her maternal uncle and thus also her "grandfather." She said: "One day when I was still a young woman, this old man asked me why I didn't come to him to obtain medicine power from him. I replied: 'Oh, I wouldn't come to you because I know that you are one of those medicine men who includes sexual intercourse as payment, and if I came to you, you would try to have me too!' Of course I could never have said that to anyone in my parents' generation."

[831]

Grandparents are said to have been indulgent toward their grandchildren. They might occasionally give advice, and indeed it was expected that a grandmother would train her granddaughter not only in skills and techniques, but also prepare her for what to expect on the physical side of marriage, warn her not to arouse her husband's jealousy, etc. When in trouble, however, a grandchild could discuss any matter with his grandparents. They would give counsel, but never scold. A man would usually not count on material aid from his grandparents, but, on the other hand, he was not expected to contribute to their support to any greater degree than he would to that of any old persons were they in need—namely, by giving an occasional present of food or clothing.

[868]

[431]

Siblings of the Same Sex

593 The relationship between brothers on the one hand and between sisters on the other was a more or less casual one. Family loyalty and ordinary generosity were expected, but formality was lacking. "A girl and her sisters could, of course, laugh and joke and tease

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

about sweethearts or any other topic they wish, always providing that there is no other person present whom they must 'respect,' just as they can laugh and joke with women who are not related to them at all." Women who are on good terms tease and joke with each other a good deal. Coming Daylight and Singer for instance made remarks relating to sex whenever opportunity afforded. As an example, when one of them was telling of her marital experiences she said: "I was willing enough to get married, but I didn't like that particular old man to whom they gave me. I wrapped myself up in a separate blanket and wouldn't let him get near me." Whereupon the other old woman remarked: "I wish I had been there, I would have held you down!"—and this was considered a great joke. Again, while talking about modesty, or rather the lack of it among Crow women, Singer said: "That was in the old days and Gros Ventre women were very careful. These Gros Ventre girls at the present time—I don't think they even wear breech-cloths!" And Coming Daylight retorted: "If you were young now, you wouldn't wear one either!" In this vein then the two old grandmothers teased the present author as their granddaughter, saying to her: "We thought you had a husband. Why didn't you bring him with you to see us? Is it because you are afraid that we would take him away from you?"

593 831 593

Brothers can discuss any matters they choose, love affairs included, but they usually do not josh and tease each other in public as do brothers-in-law, nor is the spirit of rivalry between them exhibited as it was with their enemy-friends.

593

Older brothers and sisters assumed a protective attitude toward younger siblings of like sex, and when in a position to do so would sometimes exhibit extreme generosity, although in this regard there was not the same sense of obligation which characterized the relationship with some other relatives. "It was considered unusual, for example, that Horse Capture, who had been urging his younger brother to be more sociable, gave away in his honor a horse and buggy on the occasion when the brother finally decided to join in the Grass Dance. But it was in line with the ordinary way of doing things that Horse Capture, who had been highly favored by his maternal uncle, privately gave to this young brother horses, as a start in life, when the maternal uncle failed to do

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

593 so." Brothers could borrow from each other without asking beforehand. Futhermore, an older man, who was married, might allow a younger unmarried brother to join the Crazy Lodge, lending his wife to stand in the place of a wife to him for ceremonial purposes.

Brothers- and Sisters-in-law

607 522 The greatest freedom was exhibited between a man and his brother's wife, on the one hand, and his wife's sister on the other. Likewise a woman could say anything she chose to her husband's brother and to her sister's husband. Teasing and horseplay between brother-in-law and sister-in-law were not only permitted but expected. A favorite joke was for one to conceal in a strategic place within the lodge an "air cushion" consisting of a buffalo cow bladder, blown up and tied. When the other came in he was shown to the appointed place and his weight on the cushion caused a most embarrassing noise, much to the hilarity of all present. Taking it in apparent good nature, the victim would, however, bide his time to get even.

Another accepted type of trick was for one to make a laughing stock of the other by heavily blackening the eyebrows of the victim, while he or she was asleep. A rougher kind of play was also indulged in. Singer, for instance, said: "I was once thrown in the creek by my brother-in-law. It took me a long time to find opportunity for retaliation, because he was wary and stayed away from the creek when I was around. On one occasion though, when he started for his bath, I followed him, and, when he was on the brink of the creek, I sneaked up behind him and shoved him in yelling as I ran away: 'It took me a long time to get even with you!'" On another occasion she and her brother-in-law were partners in a game he made up. "The Gros Ventres had won in battle and this man said he was going to give a 'Victory Dance.' My sister and I joined the group, and, as we arrived, this brother-in-law of ours was singing all kinds of songs,—silly songs with the words all mixed up. Then he said: 'Each man take a partner. We are going to stand up all night. The first one who sits has to pay a fine!' So he chose me as his partner. Finally, after some time, he said: 'Wait a minute, I have to get a drink.'

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

So he rushed into his father's lodge, but another of his sisters-in-law went in and saw him sitting down, and said to me: 'You two have lost, and we have won, because your partner sat down first.' Since I didn't have anything to put up as fine, my husband's brother pulled my eyebrows out, as was customary when a person couldn't pay a debt of this kind. My partner, however, gave a feast prepared by his mother as payment, but failed to include me. I got even with him by coming up behind him one day shortly thereafter and emptying a pail of water over his head." 607 522 [686]

Whether he liked it or not, a man had to take without complaint whatever kind of speech or action his own brother directed towards his wife, and likewise a woman had to put up with whatever her sister said or did to her husband. Men who were married to sisters considered each other as "brothers" rather than as brothers-in-law, just as women married to brothers were "sisters" and not sisters-in-law.

Inseparable-friends

As broadly as kinship bonds were conceived among the Gros Ventres in both consanguineal and affinal relationships, kinship behavior and obligations were extended even more widely through the institution of "inseparable-friends." Coming Daylight explained this as follows: "If two men are *inithiho* this means that they have grown up together and are the same as brothers although they are not really kin to each other. The children of these two men would be the same as brothers and sisters to each other and could not marry. All relatives of 'inseparable-friends' were considered as own relatives. Crow's Bull's 'inseparable-friend' was Truth. He knew all the songs that belonged to the Flat Pipe because Crow Bull was Keeper and the two were so much together. Truth always called Crow Bull's son 'son,' and he called me 'niece' because Crow Bull was my mother's brother. A woman could tease the 'inseparable-friend' of her husband in just the same way she could tease her brother-in-law." 572 608

Cora illustrated how complicated relationships could become through the inseparable-friendship. "My brother and Arthur Skinner were such friends, which made Arthur my 'brother.' When Arthur married I should normally have taken his wife as 'sister-

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

572
608

in-law.' The difficulty was that this woman Arthur married was already my 'aunt' because her father and my own were 'inseparable-friends.' Maybe in the old days Arthur couldn't have married her. But anyway we solved the situation by letting the older relationship take precedence over the newer one, so I called her 'aunt' rather than 'sister-in-law.'"

Some other pairs of "inseparable-friends," who were mentioned, were Cora's maternal grandfather and Consume It; Dressed In White and Ibe; Curley Head and Eagle Child. It was stated that while one friend was supposed to offer his life for the other in case of necessity, it did not always work out this way and at least one example was given to prove the point.

Regarding the same type of institutionalized friendship between women, the evidence is not clear. Singer stated: "When they use the word *itóhaha* it means that the two women concerned were friends from early childhood to the end of their lives. I had a friend like that. The father of that girl considered me as his own daughter and I had to respect her brother all my life. This girl was a cousin of Coming Daylight and we two were closer than sisters because we were the same age. We played together, worked together and did everything together. We used to eat at each other's homes, and we kept in touch after marriage by visiting back and forth." Coming Daylight suggested that these two were such close friends because their fathers may have been "inseparable-friends" and she denied that two women would participate in a relationship of the kind which would bind their families together independently of formalized friendship between men. No further information was obtained on this aspect of the subject.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

CHAPTER VII

BIRTH AND INFANCY

Conception and Contraception

It was a common belief among the Gros Ventres that for conception to occur, sex relations must continue over a period of time, conception could not occur as the result of one copulation. The fact that a girl would be given in marriage before she reached physiological maturity tended to confirm this belief, which is also linked with another one, namely, that a girl would not menstruate unless and until she had experienced sex relations. This latter belief is reflected in comments made by old women concerning the young unmarried girls of the present day. Coming Daylight and Singer remarked on several occasions: "Nowadays girls are 'terrible.' They menstruate and have well-developed figures before they are married." These signs of physical maturity the old women take as absolute evidence of loose conduct on the part of the girl, regardless of what the facts in the individual case may be. 842 [582] 841 856

The Gros Ventres apparently recognized some relationship between conception and lactation. Coming Daylight, for instance, said: "The Indian women claim that they didn't become pregnant so soon if they nursed their babies. They always used to carry their infants about with them because, if they went far away and left them, their milk might spoil. The old-timers used to say that if a woman took good care of her children and kept them close to her, her family would not increase so rapidly. It is the young ones nowadays who have the bottle-fed babies!" 842

There were certain precautions, too, that a woman should take to keep her offspring properly spaced. "If you sit in the place from which a pregnant woman has just risen, you will conceive immediately. Dispose of the afterbirth quickly. Destroy all clothing worn during pregnancy, even moccasins, or give them to some woman past child-bearing age. If a woman put these clothes on again she would soon become pregnant. Nowadays though mo-

842 thers wash such clothes and wear them again right after delivery—and they have a lot more babies now than they used to have, too."

[163] Coming Daylight said that formerly most women had only two or three children,—at most five,—and that some had none at all. Yet in the "old days" the population was large. Singer mentioned that although a man with several wives might have one as favorite, this would not make any difference. Each wife would have one or two children; no one of them would have a great many.[1]

These two old women, and our older men informants as well, were firmly convinced that "medicinal" contraceptives accounted for the small families. The old woman said: "Lots of women took medicine. There are roots for that [contraception]. Women who do not want children say, as an excuse, that one cannot keep things in order if there are children about. Not everybody had this kind of medicine, and one had to pay a high price for it—sometimes two or three horses. If a man were the owner of this type of medicine, he might demand in payment one of the other wives of the husband who obtained the medicine from him. If you take this kind of medicine you have to abide by certain rules. You must not let anyone who has children wear your robe; never sit on the bare ground; never hold an infant; don't sit on anyone's else bedding; above all, don't have intercourse with anyone other than your husband. If you break any of these rules you will conceive right away."

To illustrate this point, one woman told about her cousin's wife who had taken medicine to prevent her having children. While [837] her husband was away, she "threw in" with another man and became pregnant. Some women hesitated to take this kind of medicine because if a woman then became pregnant her husband would suspect infidelity, even though the wife had remained chaste but had "broken one of the other rules." Singer said that she would

[145] [1] This is confirmed by Denig, who was among the northern plains tribes for 20 years and was himself married to an Assiniboine. He makes the following observations, p. 513: (1) Not more than two out of five children live till youth is passed; (2) two to five children is the average and seven or eight of rare occurrence; (3) a woman is old at 35 and seldom healthy, menopause occurs at 40 or earlier, the usual period of child-bearing is 18 to 35, although a few start bearing at 15.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

have had good reason to have taken contraceptive medicine, since she had lost several children immediately after birth, but she was afraid to take it because her husband was "such a suspicious man." 842

A case was cited in which a man, who had this medicine, allowed only one of his nine wives to have a child, though he adopted at least one other child. It was believed that it was possible for a man to take contraceptive medicine, in which case it was not necessary for the wife to do so. Coming Daylight gave as an illustration the fact that her grandmother had no children by her first husband. Another example was given concerning a man who was known to have taken contraceptive medicine and none of whose wives had any children, although he adopted the son of one of them by a former marriage. Unfortunately he gave this adoptive son the medicine to drink and made the young man exceedingly unhappy, because he was very fond of children and none of his wives had any.

There were other medicines known which were said to prevent the birth of females and to permit males to be born. "If the wife of a man known to have this type of medicine gave birth to a daughter, the man would know it was not his child."

Contraceptive medicines might be offered to an individual direct by some supernatural being, but they could also be handed down in a family. Either a man or a woman could inherit this kind of medicine, use it personally, and treat others. It was said that many of these contraceptive medicines have been lost since for some time past it has been customary to bury the medicine with the individual owning it. The Boy was offered the knowledge of such medicine by a man, but he refused it.

Coming Daylight was offered this "power to know children" in a dream—that is, the power to avoid having children herself and to be able to administer the medicine to others. "The 'person' who wanted to give me the power told me, in my dream, to face the rising sun and he was just about to show me how to make a smudge from moss that grows on logs, when I told him: 'No: I would rather not have it.' Many a time 'they' tried to show me powers, but I would not be tricked into anything like that." As a matter of fact she loved children and wanted to have them. She ex- 842 787

842 pressed this desire early in life and volunteered the following story
[787] of her experience.

"My first husband, Dressed in White, went out hunting and
[587] brought back a lot of buffalo meat. I had my robe spread out just inside the door and he threw all the meat on it. Being hungry, I sat down there and was just about to eat the raw liver when he said: 'Wait! Don't eat that.' When I asked why not, he countered with the query: 'Do you like children?' To which I replied: 'You know I love children. I go wherever there is a baby—I love to have them on my lap.' So he said: 'Well, it is your fault that this is going to happen.' He took the oval piece of meat from the upper front quarter and roasted it in the coals. He then threw it to me in a careless way, instead of passing it to me as usual, and said: 'Here, you can have that for your son. You eat this plain—don't eat any tallow with it.' although they usually ate tallow with such lean meat. I said in disgust: 'E:ka:kya! I have always liked children,' and flung the meat out of the door. He said: 'Now that you have done this, you are going to have children from now on.' So, as he predicted, not long after that I became pregnant with my firstborn who was a boy. Unfortunately this boy died and I often wondered if it happened because I threw the meat too violently on that occasion when my husband had offered me the opportunity to choose whether or not I wished to bear children." Incidentally she remarked many times that she is happy she chose as she did,—otherwise now she would be all alone and her children have been so good to her.

The telling of the above incident brought to Coming Daylight's mind another, which confirms her belief in the relation between
[595] "medicine" and conception. "Crow Bull, my mother's brother, had four wives. His first wife did not have any children. Then
[582] he married an Assiniboine woman and still later took a third wife. Neither of the latter had children either until one time Crow Bull got mad. His third wife wanted to leave him for another man, but her relatives sent her back to Crow Bull. He, however, slept across from her bed and did not have intercourse with her. Shortly after this the Assiniboine woman did something to dis-
[789] please him and so he made up his mind: 'These two wives of mine are going to have children and settle down!' He had an old-fash-

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

ioned doll which he wrapped up like a sack-baby and, one night without letting her know what he was doing, he raised up the covers on his third wife's bed and put this doll under her. He did the same with the Assiniboine woman and said: 'She will have a boy, too.' As he had predicted, each bore him a son, and these two are the only children Crow Bull had. He later gave this doll to one of his niece's daughters, having 'sterilized' the doll first, however, so that the girl was not affected and subsequently gave birth to five children." 842 789

Natural sterility was apparently not recognized by the Gros Ventres. If a couple was childless it was assumed that contraceptive medicines were used. While many individuals did not approve of the use of these medicines, each family had the right to do as it pleased in this matter without outside interference. Nevertheless, The Boy, alarmed at the falling birthrate which he attributed to the widespread use of these old-fashioned medicines, on two occasions in 1921 and 1922 spoke out boldly in public about the matter. He feels he was justified in doing so since he thinks there has been an improvement in the situation. 842 [163]

Although the use of these medicines was rated by our informants as the major factor in accounting for the small number of children per family, infant mortality was said to have been high, and infanticide was known. [847]

For premature infants nothing could be done in the days before hospital care was known. Furthermore, where marked physical defects were obvious at birth, the chances that the infant would live were slight. It was stated, for instance, in regard to one woman who gave birth to a "little dog," that "had she been alone she would have done away with it, but her husband prevented her from doing so and everybody thought it was awful." Coming Daylight and Singer knew of two other actual instances of deformity,—one child who "looked like a beaver," and another who had "ears like a rabbit"—and both of these died shortly after birth. Coming Daylight remarked: "It seems as though we are so foolish the way we are ashamed of being deformed. One time when we were in town a white woman, whose face was quite disfigured, came into a restaurant where we were. My daughter told me: 'They [the whites] don't think anything of it. It can't be 845

845 helped.' But we Gros Ventres think so much of anything like that and if one of our own is deformed we almost want to die over it."[8]

847 Instances were known in which a normal infant, abandoned by
597 its parents, was picked up and raised by someone else. Cora, for instance, had been told that when the third successive daughter was born to her maternal grandparents, the father was angry because he had badly wanted a son. He ordered that the infant be abandoned to die. She was saved, however, when the father's "inseparable-friend" found and adopted her. Again, Charles Buckman had heard that his great-grandfather one morning very early was attracted by the sound of an infant crying in the bush. He found the newborn baby and took it to his lodge, telling his wife to find a woman to nurse it. He raised this infant as his daughter.

847 The case of infanticide that stands out most clearly in the minds
845 of Singer and Coming Daylight is that of twins born to the latter's sister. Coming Daylight was present at the birth and saw that her sister felt terrible about having borne twins. "My sister said: 'I won't nurse them anyway, so just take them away.' So they were both taken off in the bush; the boy was already dead and the girl froze to death. My sister was a terribly proud woman and was afraid people would think she was over-sexed. Besides she hadn't wanted any more children, since her two other sons were fairly well grown, and she maintained that a woman couldn't keep as neat with infants about. I had been waiting for my sister's husband to speak up, but he didn't say a word. I, however, told my sister: 'It is a bad thing to get rid of those babies, something will happen as a consequence.' As I had predicted, the next baby my sister had took her life. When trying to persuade her not to do away with the infants, I had used as one argument that white people have twins more often than Indians, but she persisted in maintaining that it was a disgrace." Mary remarked while Coming Daylight was telling this story of her sister: "My mother used to think it was so funny that white people are proud of twins!"

845 The attitude towards twins seems to have changed, as younger informants did not indicate that twins were considered a disgrace. For instance both The Boy and Thick insisted that twins were, on

[8] Cf. Denig, p. 403.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the contrary, held to be holy and given special care.[8] They mentioned nevertheless that women of child-bearing age refrained from eating the two strips of flesh along the anterior of the backbone of buffalo lest twins result. 845 [262]

Coming Daylight said that she had heard of cases in the old days where twins would be separated,—one kept by the parents and the other adopted by someone else. Personally, however, she did not approve of this policy and when her daughter-in-law gave birth to twins she told her: "Be proud of them. Dress them alike and they will grow up well. Don't think more of one than of the other." She gave the same advice to her granddaughter when she in turn bore twins. The advice was not heeded in this instance and both the granddaughter and her husband adored one and neglected the other so that Coming Daylight herself took the neglected one. These twins were not quite a year old when the one loved by its parents died.

A middle-aged woman said that she had always heard regarding twins that they should be treated just alike and that the mother should always take both wherever she went and never leave one behind. Her own experience was a sad one. When her twins were about seven months old, one of them got sick and she had to take it to the hospital. The people at Hays told her: "You shouldn't leave one twin here." She, however, wanted to stay with the sick one, but the doctors sent her home. The twin left in the hospital died and people told her: "You shouldn't have left one there without the other."

Pregnancy and Childbirth

The only indication from these two oldest women informants of belief in prenatal impression was the remark of Coming Daylight when telling the story of a young man who opened the belly of a deer he had killed and found therein two young, each of which had "human faces." She said: "So they concluded that even animals get afraid and the young are marked." A younger woman mentioned that she had heard that if a pregnant woman looks at some- 843 825 843

[8] Kroeber, 1908, p. 182, gives the special names by which twins were called.

843 thing unusual it will affect her child and, further, that a woman in that condition should not look upon a corpse.

[845] Coming Daylight could not remember any cases of stillborn children, but finally Singer recalled that a woman, whom they both had known, had borne triplets which were dead at birth. Incidentally, this was the only case of triplets of which either had ever heard.

Certain prenatal care was taken to ensure easy delivery and healthy offspring. It was often mentioned that in the old days pregnant women were well taken care of. Coming Daylight explained it thus: " In those days a man usually had several wives so that the one who happened to be pregnant was looked after by the others and didn't have to work hard. She was not supposed to do any cooking, and, if it were absolutely necessary that she cook, she must wear something like a heavy apron to protect her lest the afterbirth stick. During hot weather she was supposed to wear a robe on her back, because they claimed that the heat was hard on the breasts. She was not allowed to pack heavy loads. They believed that she should work, but not enough to wear herself out. She was taught to take certain precautions. My grandmother, especially, would tell me, when I was pregnant, such things as: 'If you have to change sides while lying in bed, sit up first and then lie down on the other side. Don't just roll over, or the cord will wrap around the infant's head. If you leave your lodge, you mustn't stand in the door, you must go right through, so the baby will come quickly. Never back into a lodge because that will make the infant come the wrong way.' "

Coming Daylight claimed that she always got along well in childbirth because her infants were small and she followed the advice given her. Her firstborn was the most difficult, as is usual for most women, but her husband was a very fine, mature man who hadn't let her do anything to injure herself during pregnancy. Furthermore he followed the customary Gros Ventre abstention, being " very careful especially during the last month, when Gros Ventre men refrain absolutely from intercourse with their pregnant wives lest, when the infant is born, it be covered with a lot of ' white lard-like stuff.' "

[805] [211] The length of gestation was counted by moons. If, for in-

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

stance, it was the dark of the moon when a woman ceased menstruation, she kept track of the months by marking with charcoal on a piece of wood, or by notching a stick, each successive time the moon was in that phase and "she would usually estimate it right." 843 805 211

Childbirth usually took place right in the woman's own lodge. Should someone there be sick, he would be moved to another lodge if possible, for while it was considered bad for the sick person to be in the same lodge with a woman in her menses, it was much worse were the woman in labor, for the odor of the blood at delivery would affect the sick person adversely. In fact, a person who had only been near the place where a woman was being delivered was not allowed to come near a person who was ill. If the patient could not be moved, the woman in labor would go to another lodge, preferably to that of her grandmother or of her widowed aunt. She would avoid her own mother's lodge as her father or brothers might be around and she would be "ashamed" to go where they might be. 844 [841]

Although the attitude has somewhat changed now, in former times, according to Coming Daylight and Singer, a pregnant woman was supposed to be reticent regarding her condition right up to the last moment. She might suffer intensely, but "you would never know there was a thing wrong with her." Only when she seemed to be very close to term did they send for a midwife and for some old man or woman who would give her medicine. A male doctor did not touch a woman in labor, but would give her medicine to alleviate the pains. Mary told of her own experience. "There was a well-known doctor of this kind who died about ten years ago. He was blind and, when called on a case, would sit with a pot of medicine beside him. He attended me and when he heard me say I was in pain he would just touch me with the end of the stick and the cramps would go away. Finally I complained that I was tired. The midwife said that it would soon be over, but the old doctor told them: 'No. It hasn't turned yet.' I thought this was strange that he should know this as not only was he blind but he had not touched me. Later on he said: 'It will be about a half hour more.' And he was right." 844 756

Different practitioners have different methods. Singer witnessed the following case. "A man had received power from

844 756 'someone' [a supernatural agent] to relieve women in labor. His wife was assisting a woman who was experiencing great difficulty. She went to her husband and said: 'What are you made of that you don't pity and help us?' He paid no attention at first but finally gave in to her pleas. He said: 'All right. I will pity you folks. You blow this powdered medicine root on the nape of that woman's neck. Then boil a bit of this other medicine and give it to her with this horn spoon. Make her drink from this very spoon.' The treatment was successful and the child was born very shortly thereafter."

[842] 844 Sometimes such doctors would predict the sex of the expected child, but a common saying was that a woman herself could tell because "a boy will lie in the womb with his knees up, whereas a girl will lie flat."

It was not necessary to have both a midwife and a doctor if the midwife herself knew medicines. For instance, Coming Daylight's grandmother had medicines for childbirth and always looked after women without calling in anyone else. After Coming Daylight had borne her first child, her grandmother taught her all these medicines so that she in turn could assist her female relatives. They had to pay each one who helped at childbirth. The doctor, or the midwife who administered medicines, would receive as much as a horse, while the others who assisted were paid by gifts of lengths of cloth, blankets, or other articles of that sort.

The woman assumed a kneeling position and grasped a crossbar. "They won't let you lie down unless you are so weak you can't help yourself."[4] If a woman were slow in childbirth, the midwife tried to manipulate the foetus in the right place in order to speed the delivery. She massaged the woman gently and talked to her, telling her: "Take it easy. Don't think that you are going to have a hard time. Think of pleasant things. Make it easier for yourself."

Most women were very quiet even when the pains were bad. They always said that if a woman cries out she drives the child back. Furthermore, they said that it is bad if a woman turns and twists in pain as the cord will get all tangled up around the child.

Anyone assisting at the birth could cut the umbilical cord.

[4] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, p. 181.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

"They usually cut the cord long, say four to six inches, because they were afraid the infant would bleed to death if they cut it short. You kind of drain it and get it cleaned out and tie it once. Apply a powdered root and then put a band around the body. It usually takes four days before it drops off." Since the cord is part of the body and they wanted to keep it close to its owner, when the cord came off, they placed it in a small fancy bag filled with sweetgrass or tobacco and pinned the bag to the clothing right at the back of the neck. Singer said that she had heard that boys used to wear this little bag tied to the wrist rather than at the back of the neck as girls did. Good care was taken of the bag until adulthood. The bag was usually in the shape of a turtle, with a little head. Although Coming Daylight had made two such bags, she didn't know why they used this shape except that it had been done thus for generations.[5] Mary's grandmother, however, made a little container for Mary's own son and it was in the shape of a snake with a head. Mary added: "And the Gros Ventres don't like snakes either. But my grandmother made that one in the shape of a snake on account of a dream she had." 844 [415 532] [825]

The afterbirth was disposed of just as soon as possible, preferably by having someone place it good and high in the branches of a tree.[6] The person who disposed of the afterbirth was not supposed to let anyone see him do so, although the informants did not know the reason for the secrecy. It is more customary at present to burn the afterbirth as the whites do, but Coming Daylight remarked that she had done that only once,—on the occasion when she was caught out in the open all alone and had to deliver herself.

A mother rested quite a while after her child was born because it was said that working would make her sweat and that would hurt her milk. The child of a woman who worked a great deal immediately after its birth would not grow up to be so healthy as the child of one who took it easy. In the opinion of Coming Daylight and of Singer a woman should sit up only after four days and get up and be walking around in about ten days. Coming Daylight her- 846

[5] For discussion of these navel amulets and illustrations thereof, see Kroeber, 1908, pp. 166–67, and plate IX.

[6] "If it were left lying to be handled, the child would be afflicted with sores." Kroeber, 1908, p. 181.

846 self had to get up sooner and help with cooking because she was an only wife, except for the short time during her first marriage when her sister was co-wife. The midwife usually stayed and looked after the infant for a few days, at least until the cord came off.

Coming Daylight always put on a belt of rawhide about a foot wide immediately after delivery and laced it up tighter each day. She said the Gros Ventre women were strict about this practice as it "put the figure back into place."

If a woman were able to rest quietly after childbirth the flow should stop in about two weeks. If she worked, it was longer, perhaps a month. At any rate, after the flow stopped, a woman wrapped a blanket around herself and someone then held under the blanket a pan of live coals on which medicine had been sprinkled. Woman claimed they felt much better after this "fumigation." [757] There was also another medicine which Coming Daylight described as "good to clean you out after childbirth." This was made from a powdered root, a little pinch of which was put in a couple of quarts of water and turned the water about the color of tea. There was no bitter taste and the patient drank it like tea and instead of water.

[834] It was said that Gros Ventre men did not resume marital relations until at least a month after the baby was born,—often they deferred the resumption of relations even longer.

853 There was medicine given to make the mother's milk come. It was made from the same root as that used in the Crazy Dance. [278] The infant was not put to the breast immediately, as someone else drew out the "first milk" (colostrum) and spit it out. "After [825] that, the milk would be the right blue color. Should a woman be all alone when her child was born, she might have puppies draw out that 'first milk.'" Cora believes it is absolutely necessary to follow this rule. When her own daughter, for example, delivered her firstborn, an old woman offered to draw off this "first milk," but the daughter refused—so now she can give milk only from one breast and has to supplement her infant's feeding with milk from a bottle. No water or oil was given the infant before its first nursing. They started the baby to nurse after the colostrum had been drawn off "because there is something in the mother's milk that cleans the baby out."

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

If a mother could not feed her child well, they used to supplement the mother's milk by broth from meat. Occasionally some woman could be found who would help out.[1] Coming Daylight, for instance, used to allow a son of her mother's brother to nurse, as his own mother was very thin and her milk was insufficient. Another time she nursed the infant son of her cousin whose wife, after he had deserted her, brought their baby to her husband and refused to take it back. Again, Mae's mother nursed several children not her own. When she was an old woman she would complain because she was not invited by these persons. She would fuss along these lines: "They never even invited me once. If it hadn't been for me, they would have starved when they were infants." 853

Early Disciplines

The child was usually not weaned until it was two years old or more. Sometimes a child would be allowed to nurse until six or so, provided his mother did not become pregnant again. There was a boy who had started to school at six, and who would still run up to his mother to nurse when he had the opportunity. Many children would even run in from playing to get at the mother's breast. "It didn't seem to hurt them any!" 862

Definite effort was made to wean the child when the mother became pregnant. "If a woman didn't realize she was in this condition and allowed the child her breast, the child would have a bad stomach and diarrhea." One way of weaning the child was to put nicotine from a pipe on the nipples. The sight of this so frightened the child that he would not try to nurse. If it was dark and he didn't see it and happened to taste it, he would raise an awful cry, but he would be cured. Pepper was also used in the same way. They would give the child as a "pacifier" a piece of meat, pounded soft, sweetened and tied in a soft white rag. The child would suck on this until he fell asleep.

It was when the new baby was born that they would have the most trouble with the child who had just been weaned. Many children were jealous of a new arrival. Coming Daylight said that they had to watch carefully lest an attempt be made to harm the 593

[1] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, p. 181.

593 infant. Some siblings, for example, would try to plug the infant's mouth with a rag or some other object. An occasional child would be unusually jealous and resent all younger siblings. One of Coming Daylight's own boys was like that. He would try persistently to get ahead of his little brother. The mother would be lying down with the infant at her side, and this little boy would try to snuggle in between her and the infant. He stuck close to her and wanted to accompany her everywhere, even when she left the lodge at night to attend to her necessities,— and this was after he was old enough to know he should not follow her at such a time. One of Cora's children was like that at the time the information was being gathered, jealous of the other children in the family and following her everywhere.

853 One of the first solid foods a baby was fed was a ball of cooked rose-berries mixed with grease. This was put on the end of a stick in lollypop fashion. Marrow, guts and rose-berry soup were considered the best food for growing, healthy children.

854 A newborn infant is called a "sack-baby." The sack was made of fine buckskin, or of buffalo calfskin with the fur left on one side, and was laced up the front. It was made just the same way for a girl as for a boy. A piece of rawhide was put inside the sack to stiffen it, and some rags were placed between it and the child's body to stuff it up and prevent chafing. The board was rectangular, rounded at the top, and reached only to the baby's neck. They made a little round cap out of calfskin, with little fur earmuffs that tied under the chin. They used to decorate their baby sacks nicely and sewed little deerhoofs thereon,—"They liked to have something rattle on their clothing."

When placing the infant in the sack they were very careful that its feet and legs should be properly placed. Singer remarked that in the old days everybody's legs were nice and straight and that it is only these "diaper babies" around here now who are bow-legged.

854 Small children, including infants, were washed each morning, —in winter rubbed with snow,—and then powdered. As a powder, 278 buffalo chips were pounded on rawhide and then, "to sort of ster- 237 ilize," hot stones were placed thereon. When the powdered chips were warmed, but not too hot, the stones were removed and the

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

baby was laid in the powder and rubbed under its arms, between its legs, under the toes, between the fingers,—wherever the baby might chafe. "The baby feels fine then and goes right to sleep." When no buffalo chips were available horse manure treated the same way was an adequate substitute. Fresh powder was put in the sack each day, and in the winter it was first heated. 854 278 234

Sometimes accidents happened. One time when a man named Fork (of a tree) was a baby, his grandmother was tending to him. She had heated the powdered chips in the sack with a hot stone and forgot to remove it. The baby cried and cried. Finally they unbound him and found that his toe was right against the hot rock. This injured his toe and he always walked with a peculiar gait. Cora has a scar on her buttocks which she thinks came from a similar accident.

If the father's sister failed to provide a sack and none was forthcoming from any other relative, the mother would wrap the infant in a skin and tie it with straps. Coming Daylight said that before her time they used a cradleboard. If they had a travois they would carry the baby on that. "Some, if they didn't have a cradleboard, used a piece of stiffened leather hooked over the saddle horn." 854

When the infant was old enough to move its arms, the arms were left free of wrappings. The infant was kept in the sack day and night. When not being carried about, it was hung either from one of the lodge poles inside the lodge, or swinging from the travois placed upright against the lodge. Lullabies were sometimes sung.* At night, the infant was right beside its mother, and the father usually slept in separate bedding so as not to crowd the child. When the powder in the sack was changed, they let the baby play around and stretch "because babies must have gotten tired staying in those sacks." [533]

Toilet training was started when the infant was between six and twelve months old. "The baby is more alert and easier to handle then. You just guessed at the time and opened the sack and held the baby out, supporting it under the knees and thighs. The child would usually respond. If there were a delay, then you talked to him and made a hissing noise to encourage him. You 863

* Unfortunately no lullabies were recorded.

863 might even 'fuss' a little with him, saying something like: 'Look at you! I thought I told you to urinate. I'm trying to make you do it at the right time, and you want to hold back!' But we were not harsh with infants because we knew they have to learn. Anyway, if you misjudged the time, all you had to do was to throw out the powdered chips and put in fresh ones. The old way was much better. These diaper-babies around here now are much more trouble."

[755] If a child developed enuresis, a tiny bit of the tail of a fox or of a beaver tied to his belt, or a piece of badger skin for him to sit on, was thought to guarantee a cure.

854 To help the child who had trouble teething, it was considered wise to kill a mouse, skin it, take the back thigh and, after cooking [825 it well, rub on the gums. It is said by Coming Daylight that 757] the Crow used fish for this purpose. Some children have such a difficult time that their gums are very sore and their tongues even swell. Coming Daylight's grandmother and others knew how to [757] remedy that condition. The doctor, using a sharp-pointed bone, would lance the gums here and there where the teeth were coming, after allowing the gums to bleed, they would rub some powdered [751] root on the gums. As a preventive, old folks said to catch tiny baby mice and, after roasting them on the coals, feed them to the child. Coming Daylight, for instance, did that for her children, and none of them had any trouble with teething.

856 They would let babies crawl when they showed the inclination to do so, but the old women were sure that they always watched their babies more closely than mothers do today. They used to encourage them to walk by holding them up and helping them. It has been Coming Daylight's experience that boys learn to walk more quickly than girls. It may be, however, that more attention was given to boys.

198 The only expression the old women, or the younger ones for 856 that matter, could think of that could be considered "baby talk" was that babies, when very small and just beginning to talk, say: "I" (prolonged and with strong glottal stop) if they do not like something or do not wish to take what is offered. This, together with *na'a* 'mother' and *ni'a* 'father,'[9]—which babies say properly

[9] These are vocative forms rather than descriptive forms.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

right off,—are about the first words a baby says. When a child is [198] backward in learning to talk, the remedy is to feed him meadow- 856 lark eggs, hard-boiled. Cora says this treatment was very effective for one of her sons, and Coming Daylight fed them to one of her daughters. They all agreed, however, that the treatment may sometimes be too effective. If anyone is very talkative even today the favorite saying is: "His mother must have fed him meadow-lark eggs."

The care of her baby was the first duty of a mother. Of course, 854 if she were a co-wife, the other wives might help her, and in any case the grandmother might take a hand. But Coming Daylight often had no one upon whom she could depend, so she had to be extremely careful. For example, when she was married to Little Man and had an infant in the toddling stage, she would drape a blanket loosely about her hips and while she sat and did beadwork, the infant could play safely at her left hip inside the blanket. The old-timers, moreover, never left a baby alone. When her first 854 child was born Coming Daylight was told by her grandmother 751 never to leave a baby alone; that if it were absolutely necessary she should leave him even for a minute, she should take a small stick, blacken the tip with nicotine, and leave it in the swing or alongside where the infant lay. This was done to keep the "spirits" away. Even Mary feels strongly about leaving a child alone. She tells her daughter about it, but the daughter is very modern. The result is that frequently Mary stays home from a dance rather than leave a grandchild by itself.

If the mother of a young infant was going on a trip, for in- [774] stance, to pick berries, she invited the baby's *bitd"tao* 'shadow, spirit, soul' saying: "Come on with us or we might leave you. We are going now." If one failed to do this, it would be like leaving part of the baby behind and the baby would be cross all evening.

Sometimes other children in the family would be called upon to 854 look after the infant. They were apt to get tired quickly however 857 and tell their mother: "Hurry up and take your baby or I will 593 drop it." Girls were depended upon more than boys to look after younger siblings, and girls more or less were expected to do so "right from the beginning." The old women felt that formerly

854 857 men were much more interested in children than they seem to be at present.

855 515 857 Just as soon as a child was old enough to look after himself—say from about the age of three or four years—he would be compelled to bathe every morning before eating. An older boy would supervise his younger brothers and see to it that they complied with the regulation—even in winter when it was sometimes necessary to cut a hole in the ice. Al says: "This is what makes one tough." Charles gave as illustration an incident which occurred one morning when there was ice on the edge of the river and snow was floating on the surface. "An older brother said to his three younger brothers: 'Go and take a plunge.' The wind was blowing and the three boys sat on the bank, each one encouraging the other to be the first one in. The older brother came behind them yelling: 'I didn't say to you boys to stay on the edge—I said to take a plunge!' Whereupon he threw each of them in the icy water telling them to wash their faces, hair and hands. He then sent them home to water the horses while he took his plunge." In case the lodge might be too far from a stream in winter, the boys and men rolled in the snow and rubbed their bodies with it. Everyone, young and old alike, bathed every day.

515 751 That the daily dip was looked upon as a health measure is shown by the statement of Cora who remarked that when she was small she used to bathe daily in the creek and she has never been sick up to the present. Coming Daylight, too, said that she had kept up the practice until a few years ago and complains that she has been sickly ever since giving it up.

271 751 It was considered important for health's sake to drink a lot of water too. The relatives who raised Coming Daylight used to tell her to wash her mouth out with water immediately upon arising. Further she was instructed to drink water right after eating, even though she might not feel thirsty, and to walk about after finishing a meal. She claims she followed these rules all her life and that for this reason she is not troubled, as so many of the aged are, with difficulty in controlling urination, and so on.

302 After the morning bath, all would have their faces painted all over with red paint "in order to keep their faces clean and light-skinned." Coming Daylight complained that since this practice

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

has been given up, the Gros Ventres are so sunburned that their 302
skin looks almost "black." Singer showed a small bag of red
paint which she still had. She kept a piece of beaver castor in the [237]
bag so the paint would be sweet-smelling.

In the old days the Gros Ventres were early risers. Everyone 512
got up while it was still dark, perhaps about three o'clock in summer and before seven in winter. It didn't make any difference whether a child might otherwise be favored, the rule was iron-clad that all must rise early and that no one should lie abed. This applied to all—old people as well as to children.

One method of making sure that children would be strong was 856
to take a beaver tail and slap the child on the hand and on the back
while saying: "You will be good and strong." Mary, for instance, 825
has seen her mother do this to all her grandchildren, hitting them so hard they almost cried. The beaver is considered a very strong animal since he cuts down big trees and drags them about.

Naming and Ear-piercing

Every individaul received a name shortly after birth. Many 551
Gros Ventres, however, were, and are, known by names other than the original one. Names were changed for particular reasons, and in addition nicknames were frequently employed. Sometimes the first name was bestowed with considerable formality, but naming could be carried out in a variety of ways,[10] as the following examples show. 553

"Shortly after Coming Daylight was born, her father sent for 852
his sister's husband and told him: 'Now I invited you to name your niece. I am giving you such-and-such kind of horse' (a bay, or a pinto, or whatnot). There was a big feast on this occasion and the lodge was full of people. The namer sat in the place of honor at the back of the lodge. He held the infant in his arms, told a war deed and said: 'Now I name her 'Taken A Prisoner.' Then he said a long prayer, starting with the usual formula, and wishing the infant a long life. He then handed the infant to the person to his left saying: 'Take Taken A Prisoner'; and so the infant was passed all around the lodge, each repeating the same to

[10] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, p. 182.

553 his neighbor. The reason that her father did all this was because
she was the first-born and so she was kind of expensive to her
852 family. If a man thought he could afford it, he would make a big feast for his first-born, and then give less at the naming of his other children, although it was not always the case that the first-born got the best. It apparently depended on what the man could afford at the time."

"When Coming Daylight's sister was born, her father's sister told her husband that she wanted him to name this niece. So she came to her brother's lodge and said: 'Well, I have come for my niece, I am going to have her named by the same person who named her older sister.' This woman, then, invited a lot of people to her place and put up the feast. She gave her husband a small keg of whiskey, when he named the infant Kills One. She laid the present down in front of him and said: 'This is what I give you for naming this child—and you seem very pleased with it, too!'"

Coming Daylight's eldest daughter, however, was named "Plumes in the Hair" by her own father. This was just a private naming, that is, no invited guests or big feast. Iron Bucket, husband of Singer, named their first daughter, too. He gave her the name of "Kills Last."

Coming Daylight was offered the choice of two names for one of her little boys, by his father who dreamed of them while he was out on the hills torturing himself by the Sacrifice Dance technique.

Another of Coming Daylight's children was named by an old blind doctor. "Her sister-in-law, wife of her brother-cousin, brought in this doctor. She told him: 'I brought you here to give my sister-in-law something to drink [to hasten delivery].' The old man said: 'This child that is to be born will be a girl and I am going to name her "Earth Woman." She will grow up and live to be an old woman." Cora, too, mentioned that her sister-in-law (a relative of her husband's) came to her and said: "If I can, I will come and attend you when your child is born, and I will name it too." She was not able to attend the birth, but she did come later and fetch the infant. Standing in the center of the dancing space she named him "Runs on Top," after one of her relatives, and gave away lots of things in his honor.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Names may be bestowed on account of dreams. Coming Daylight named one of her grandchildren that way. "She dreamed that there was a big gathering and that she was looking for this little grandson. In reality of course he was an infant, but in the dream he was three or four years old. There was an old man, a very old man, dressed all in white, who said to her: 'Why, there goes "White Skunk" up that way.' As she looked she saw her grandson running in the distance and he seemed to be now a tall young man. Upon waking, she told her dream to her daughter. The daughter in turn told her husband: 'My mother had a dream and "White Skunk" is what the old man called him.' The husband said: 'Fine. We will call him that. Now he will reach old age.'" 553 787

If the name is from a dream, the person tells the dream at the time of the naming. This is the way Singer was named by Old Man Sitting High. Occasionally a person might volunteer to name a child on account of a dream, although not always because he had dreamed of a name. "Before one of Cora's children was born, Stiff Arm came to her and told her he had had a bad dream about her. He said: 'In order to prevent my bad dream coming true, I will name the child.' Cora was scared because he was a medicine man. So she had to have a big feast and invite lots of people and give Stiff Arm a horse. There was the formal ceremony. Stiff Arm had given Cora and her husband the choice of three names, derived from his medicine powers: 'White Eagle,' 'Rides Down Hill,' and 'Sailing Eagle.' They chose the last, but the boy was sickly and they had a hard time rearing him. Her relatives thought she should change his name, but she never bothered to do so. He is a young man now."

It was customary that "when a child gets sick through the given name," the name be changed. The Skinners, for instance, hired Stiff Arm to name their boy. He called him "White Eagle" but he was sickly, so his grandmother, Ghost Calf, and Coming Daylight were the ones that changed his name to that of his grandfather, "Big Man." Ghost Calf told the boy's father to give away two dollars at the dance when she announced the new name. It was stated that in any case the namer should be a healthy person. 553 [431]

Old folks sometimes gave away their own names to children, as in the case of a man nicknamed Iron Bucket, whose grand-

553 father had given him his own name, "Bear Teeth"; and in that of Ragged Robe's wife who gave her name to a little girl. In this latter case, at least, the woman continued using her own name.

Except in those cases where the name of a relative is given, as is seemingly the rule nowadays, the name must have some specific relation to either the war deeds or the medicine powers of the namer. Singer remarked that one time, when she had been very lucky in locating some weapons abandoned by the enemy, she was looking forward very much to naming a little relative "Finder" in connection with this exploit. Unfortunately, however, the child's father had already had a name for her so Singer was disappointed. A Pipe-Keeper, too, might name a child from something connected with the Pipe. Rufus Warrior, for instance, was named from the rawhide with which the Flat Pipe is wrapped; another child was called "Red Woman" from the fact that the wife of the Flat Pipe Keeper was always painted red,—even her hair. Al Chandler knows of two people his grandfather had named from objects in the Feather Pipe bundle.

The more formal the occasion, the more expensive the naming was for the family involved. If, for instance, advantage was taken of a public ceremony, not only was the one who gave the name recompensed by a valuable gift, such as a horse, but many other gifts would be given to various persons in the audience in order to honor the recipient of the name and to give prestige to his family. The expense was particularly heavy when a name was publicly bestowed upon an adult in recognition of bravery at war.[11]

[431 727 554]

551 Nearly everyone had a nickname. One of the most common was, and is, simply "Girl" or "Boy." Such a nickname often was acquired in early childhood because the name which had been bestowed was not liked,—and those names given through medicine often fell in that category. Coming Daylight said that she had not cared for the name given by a medicine man to her first-born son, so she had called him "Boy." The child died very young, and she now wonders if he would have lived longer had they used his real name. Nicknames may be acquired at any time of life and sometimes they are far from complimentary, especially those bestowed later in life by enemy-friends. If the nickname "takes" there is

[11] Cf. Chapter 5, p. 101.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

nothing the person can do about it. One of Singer's friends was called "Matter in the Ear" and another "Ugly or Homely." Another woman harped so much on an event which took place at Turtle River, that "Turtle River" became the name by which she was known, and most people forgot that her actual name was "Spotted Calf." 551

The piercing of the ears may be done at the same time as the naming, as apparently was done in the case of Coming Daylight, or might be done shortly thereafter. Singer, for instance, was named by Sitting High, but her grandmother on a different occasion pierced her ears. The parents might pay someone to do this, or a relative might volunteer. The sooner the ear-piercing is done the better, because the older the child is the more it may hurt. Singer said: "That ear-piercing goes either through a dream or through war deeds." In the former case, the dream is told and then the ears are pierced. In the latter case the person must relate a war story: "This is what I have done. . . ." The story has to be a true one concerning an incident wherein the enemy did not retaliate so the ears will heal up without any trouble.[12] The actual procedure, regardless of whether there is much formality or not, is as follows. An awl is used to pierce the ear and into the hole is inserted either a small splinter of rose-wood sharpened to a pin-point, or a porcupine quill. Whichever is used, it is greased before inserting and is left in until it falls out when the ear is healed. At this time is then inserted a small ring merely to keep the hole open. Fancy earrings are not worn by small children. Formerly boys' ears were pierced as well as girls'. The number of holes in each ear seems more or less arbitrary, but all are made on the same occasion. Coming Daylight has one in each ear; Singer has two; Coming Daylight's eldest son has three. The custom is now dying out as the present generation of mothers does not believe in it. Coming Daylight wanted to pierce the ears of her great-granddaughter but the child's mother said: "No. You will hurt her." 304 [852] [987] [301]

[12] Kroeber, 1908, p. 182 states that ear-piercing was said to be unaccompanied by special ceremonial actions.

CHAPTER VIII

CHILDHOOD

858 In the days before the buffalo disappeared and before formal schooling was available, childhood, it was said, for girls was shorter and for boys was longer than at present. A girl was ordinarily [582] given in marriage before she was twelve years old—certainly before she attained physiological maturity. A boy on the other hand, though seemingly anxious to participate in hunting and in war as soon as he was able, was not forced to bear the full responsibilities of adulthood until the end of adolescence. While there was considerable variation from family to family in the amount of time required of children in training for practical tasks, all enjoyed a considerable amount of "free time."

Play

857 Singer and Coming Daylight, the two oldest of our informants,
526 in recalling the amusements and pastimes of their youth, decided that sliding down hills was one of the most pleasurable as it could be done at any time of the year. In winter, when there was snow, [493] the boys used a kind of sled made by lashing buffalo rib-bones together. Girls managed just as well by simply sitting on their robes and holding between their legs the end which usually hung free. In summer a stiff buffalo hide was used for sliding down the grassy slopes.[1] When the water was frozen, boys and girls alike [524] skated with their feet on the ice, thus clearing a slick surface on which to spin their tops made of horn.

857 Swimming, however, was the great sport in summer. Girls left their dresses close to the bank, those of the older girls in a neat
526 row closest to the edge and those of the smaller girls in the next
481 row. Beginners used the dog-paddle, but the boys developed profi-

[1] For this and some other types of amusement, see Kroeber, 1908, pp. 190-91.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

ciency with the overhand stroke and girls with the breast stroke.[8] 857
Sometimes the children amused themselves by rolling down the 526
bank so that their bodies made a loud smack as they hit the water. 481
At other times they held contests to see who could dive and stay under the longest time, or who could make the biggest bubble by exhaling under water. Follow-the-leader was played even in big rivers like the Missouri, but only the more courageous participated in this game. The one who had the reputation as bravest was the leader, and Coming Daylight claimed that she, herself, often led off, one of her accomplishments being the ability to swim quite far under water.

There was no adult supervision of children at play and they 857
spent much time at the water's edge, even when not intending to 524
swim. Modelling in clay was done by boys as well as by girls. The latter liked especially to form wet clay into "parflesches" and incise marks to represent beaded and painted designs.

Walking on stilts, teetering on logs, swinging by standing in a [481]
loop of rawhide, all were considered enjoyable activities for little girls. Nevertheless some of their games were quite rough and-tumble. In one such game, girls formed a circle, each pinching the flesh on the back of her neighbor's left hand; while standing thus they sang a song which was repeated as many times as necessary until someone let go of her neighbor's hand; whereupon this girl was jumped on and mauled by all the others. In another game, one girl, with her eyes closed, would try to find the others who were seated in a row on the ground. Different ones would call out: "This way! This way!" Each was anxious to be the first discovered. As soon as the girl who was "it" touched one of the others, she picked her up and, carrying her upside-down on her back to the spot from which she had originally started, she dumped her burden on the ground. This procedure was repeated until "it" had carried each girl, but the last one to be dumped was tickled unmercifully by all the others.

Girls played with two kinds of balls. One type was of buck- 857
skin stuffed with deer-hair. This they would toss to one another. 526
The other type of ball was large and made from the bladder of a [232]
buffalo cow dried and stuffed.

[8] The marked ability of the Gros Ventres in swimming was noted in 1833 [149]
by Maximilian, p. 72.

857 buffalo cow, dried and stuffed. This type they would bounce and
526 kick. A popular game played among girls in spring was as follows. The girls holding hands formed a big ring. One girl in the center would have a ball. She would throw it at anyone in the ring. When she hit her chosen victim on the chest with the ball, the girls let go of each other's hands and each ran for a piece of buffalo chip where she would be "safe."[8]

A game played by boys and girls together in the evening was as follows. The children would line up according to size behind the tallest boy who would have in his hand a stick which was smouldering at the end. Each child held on tightly to the one in front of him. The boy holding the stick would try to touch the smallest child at the end of the line. The line would writhe as big sparks would fly and sometimes hair got singed. One old woman, recalling this game, remarked: "I don't know when we would get to bed, we had such a good time!"

Sometimes the children would send one of the group on an er-
857 rand. Those who stayed behind would wet their hands with their
524 tongues and say: "We will watch this to see if it takes you a long time or not." If their hands were still wet when the member of the group returned, they decided that he had done the errand very quickly.

When there were pretty clouds in the sky a little girl might point one out to the other children and tell them to watch it. Then she would stand at the bank of the river, bending over at the waist and violently flinging her arms from side to side while sing-
[821 ing. The others would watch the cloud and tell her that it was dis-
789 appearing and soon it would be gone. "They used to think they could make the cloud disappear by singing that song."

If a group of girls were playing together and some one boy, say
[526] from seven to nine years old, would butt in, the girls would all sit down to show that they resented the intrusion. If the boy did not leave, the girls would then form a circle around him and sing a derisive song. Thus the boy would be shamed and run off. The opportunity for this did not occur very often, since boys from about the age of seven usually went off to be by themselves

[8] For description of ball games and illustration of type of football, see Kroeber, 1908, fig. 23.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

at play. It was said that a girl, of course, would never think of attempting to break into a group of boys. 857 524

Sometimes a group of boys tried to break up the girls' play. One way they pestered them was to wait until they were about to slide down a hill. Just as a girl would be ready to start, one of the boys would grab one of her legs and spin her around so that she would go down the hill backwards.

A favorite sport among boys involved skill in shooting arrows.[4] One game was to plant a marked arrow as a target. Then two boys would shoot two arrows each, and the one whose arrow came closest to the marker would take the arrows of his opponent. Sometimes they would see who could shoot the greatest distance. An interesting variation was to fasten a bow to upright sticks, one stick shorter than the other, so that the bow slanted with the string up. The player would stand on one side of the bow and tap the arrow against the bowstring to get the string vibrating, and when he judged the vibration sufficient to send the arrow toward the marker about 35-40 feet distant, he would release the arrow. Then another player would try his luck. The one who came closer to the marker would take the arrow of the one who lost. 857 526

Boys played a variant of the hoop and pole game. The hoop was larger than that used in the game as played by adults and a split stick was used as lance. The thrower aimed at the center of the wheel and, if he hit it, the shot was called "the crow." Another wheel game played by boys was rolling hoops made of green willow wrapped with willow bark. There were no cross-pieces in this wheel which was about 16 inches in diameter. Two teams lined up and the hoop was rolled as swiftly as possible by a member of one team while the members of the opposing team by shooting arrows tried to hit the rim of the hoop. If one succeeded and thus stopped the wheel, he retrieved his arrow, placed the hoop against a rock and had a chance to hit the rim while the hoop was at rest.

Occasionally there was trouble between boys who were contesting. Thick told of one occasion when he and his partner were betting against two other boys. Thick himself happened to make the winning point by splitting the upright arrow at which they 857 526 578

[4] Some boys' games are described by Kroeber, 1908, pp. 186–87.

857 were shooting. "Just as I leaned down to pick up the arrows
526 which had been bet and fairly won, one of the other boys got mad
578 and shot at me. The arrow hit my hand and I bear the scar to this day. On another occasion at the same kind of game, my partner and I won, and one of the boys of the opposing couple hit both of us over the head with his bow. My people always discouraged me from fighting—I was a shy boy in any case—but my partner took the bow away from one of our opponents and in turn hit him over the head. The opponent ran home and reported to his parents. His mother was the kind who took up for her sons and so she came toward my partner and me. My partner was still angry and called out to the woman: 'We are going to shoot you with our arrows if you come any closer!' Whereupon the woman turned
[861] around and went back without saying anything. When our parents heard of this, however, both my partner and I were given a good tongue-lashing for having threatened a woman."

857 In summer, boys of the same band playing together as a group
578 expected a fight if they came in contact with a group from another band. While sometimes they used bows and arrows in this type of fighting, more often they used mud balls propelled from the end of a willow stick about three feet long. Thick gave the following account of one of these battles in which he participated as a boy.

"One summer day I was with my band group, the Frozens. We expected we might be raided, so we had already prepared mud balls and were modeling clay figures—horses, buffalo, men, and so on—when the Upper Quarters gang attacked. We Frozens grabbed our sticks and mud balls and ran into a coulee and then turned on the Upper Quarters. As the latter approached they protected themselves by holding their robes up in front of their faces, since the mud balls were aimed at their heads. Jim Shortman happened to be the member of the Upper Quarters who was 'bravest' and in the lead. I aimed at him and Jim put up his robe and warded off the shot; but Dwarf, who was right beside me, threw a mud ball immediately after I had and hit Jim right in the eye, breaking the skin and knocking him down. When they saw the blood, Jim ran home and the others, especially Dwarf, were scared. When Dwarf saw Jim's father coming toward

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

them, he was afraid to go to his own home, so he ran to a neighbor's. Jim's father found him there half-crying. He took Dwarf by the wrist and said: 'Come my friend.' He led him to his home and Dwarf thought he was going to be killed. On the contrary, however, Jim's father led him into his lodge and said: 'My friend, I am glad you made my boy cry. I have never laid a hand on him nor did I ever make him cry, and I'm glad you have done this.' He then gave Dwarf a big pile of meat and told him to eat as much as he liked and to take the rest home. As Dwarf was leaving Jim's father took a valuable Hudson's Bay blanket and cut it in two and gave him half saying: 'Here is this, use it for your blanket.' Then he took another half-blanket and said: 'Have your mother make leggins for you. Friend, I am glad you made my boy cry. I thank you for it. Now you can go home.' It just so happened, fortunately for Dwarf, that Jim Shortman was a beloved-child." [8] 857 578

Occasionally girls, or sometimes boys and girls together, formed a group in the evening to sing in front of the lodge of a rich family who they knew had such a specially loved child. The group danced and sang and then the woman of the lodge would invite them in. She would feed them and say that she was doing so in the name of that beloved-child. 857 533 [593]

Coming Daylight described how she joined groups who were going around the camp circle singing in front of the lodges of those who had returned successfully from a war party. This was before she was married and so she had to get permission from her grandmother. Mounted on a horse with a girl friend her own age, whose brother was supposed to keep an eye on them, they rode with the others. Singer admitted she had not participated in such singing parties when she was a child because she never had a horse to ride upon.

Much of the leisure time of children was seemingly spent in play which reflected the daily routine of adult life as well as many aspects of the life cycle. A group went quite far outside the camp circle, for instance, to play they were "married folk." If little boys went along with the girls, some would be "husbands," some "sons" and "sons-in-law." The "women" would tell their 857 524

[8] For details on the concept of the beloved-child, see Flannery, 1941.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

857 "husbands": "Go out and hunt buffalo." The boys would go off
524 and stay a little while and on their way back made noises like neighing horses. This would be a sign for the girls to come to meet them and make comments such as: "Oh, what a lot of meat you are bringing!" Then they would pretend to slice, cook, and eat this imaginary meat. Once in a while the children actually
[224] snared a gopher, the skin of which served very well in their play as a food sack.

In order to lend excitement to this kind of play, they might divide into two groups and one "tribe" would attack the other. When their "husbands" or loved ones were "killed," the girls mourned, crying just as they had observed grown-ups do, even going so far as to make marks on their legs with mud to represent cuts. A "corpse" would be prepared for "burial," as they had seen the dead wrapped, with the exception that in play they failed to wrap the head.

Sometimes girls would take the foreleg of a buffalo, for example, and wrap it up to serve as a "baby." After having gotten from the river a certain kind of reed to serve as their hair, when the baby "died" they cut off their "hair" as a sign of mourning.

Many women described the lodges they, as children, built which
[492] were large enough to play in. Garter Snake used a big yellow dog that belonged to her grandmother as a horse, and when her lodge moved she packed everything on a travois which the dog drew. When it was not convenient to have the lodges built large enough to actually accommodate the children inside, the formation of the camp circle was copied by making large leaves into the shape of tipis. Sticks then represented horses and other sticks attached thereto were travois. These little wooden horses might be fitted out like real ones, with miniature beaded horse blankets, and so on. Occasionally, too, a little boy might pretend he was a horse and drag the travois while being led by a girl as he held a line in his mouth. When this type of horse was out grazing, the owner would have a difficult time catching it.

Sometimes the girls pretended that they cut off their little fingers as a sacrifice, even holding sage to the "wound" as in real life. Coming Daylight and Garter Snake, both of whom as children were associated with one of the Sacred Pipes, mentioned that

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

many girls liked to pretend that they had one of these Pipes at 857
their play-lodge. They used a certain kind of flower to represent 524
the Pipe and would put it outside the play-lodge in the same position as the real Pipe was placed. They smudged and sang Pipe songs just as their elders did. Once in a while they would pretend they were going to transfer the Pipe. Mud was smeared on their foreheads just as the Keeper used paint. The others would seize the new "Keeper," paint him, go through an imitation of the ceremonies, sing songs, and so on. At the end of the game, however, the rest of the children finally took the "Keeper" and dumped him in the water head foremost,—an indignity that would have been out of the question in regard to a real Keeper.

Thus it was evident how much children learned by observation. 857
It was specifically stated in regard to the learning of songs that 868
no one ever sat down with a child to teach him a special song or dance, that he would pick up songs and dances by hearing and seeing them performed at the various ceremonies. Similarly, according to both Coming Daylight and to Singer, there was no special teaching in regard to a knowledge of the Supreme Being. [869]
Children would know about Him because they would from infancy have heard older people mention Him. In the old days people never did anything without first saying a prayer. The prayers [782]
always started out by mentioning the name of the "One above the White Man," and then names of other beings followed.[4]

Training

Formal training, in skills necessary for women's work, was begun for little girls at an early age. This was usually in the hands 868
of a female relative,—a grandmother or perhaps a widowed aunt, —to whom the child would be sent at about the age of seven years. The reason for removing a girl from her immediate family circle was said to have been to protect her virginity. Her parents wanted to send her "where no men were living, as they didn't want a girl around home with her father, brother, male cousins." Should there not be a suitable relative, however, the girls' parents would keep her at home and she would receive training in domestic duties from her own mother. In any case, the girl was sup-

[4] Religion is treated in full in Cooper Ms. 1949.

868 posed to be watched over and kept under close supervision. For [562] her there was much less freedom than for a boy of like age.

As a rare treat, a girl of eight or nine might have been allowed 857 to stay with a friend of her own age overnight, providing her guardian knew exactly where she was and that there was some responsible party to look after her. Boys of the same age and even younger could come and go more or less as they pleased. In [564] illustration Al Chandler told of an incident in his childhood. "At the death of my uncle, the corpse was placed in a lodge removed at some distance from where he resided. I was only a little fellow at the time and I wandered over to that lodge. Not realizing my uncle was dead, I crawled under the covers. I was not missed from home and was not discovered until the next morning when my grandfather came to the lodge to mourn. Thereafter for a week or so my grandmother watched me when I set off from home, but when she saw I was steering clear of that particular lodge, she allowed me to go without saying anything. She knew I could take care of myself so she didn't care where I went or when I came home."

857 In spite of strict supervision of girls, sometimes they evaded 868 their guardians. Coming Daylight told of one of the "tricks" that she had used. "One night I heard there was dancing and my sister and I wanted to sneak out to enjoy the fun while my grandmother was sleeping. We rolled up our blankets and put them beside her. Fortunately she didn't awaken even when we came in. If she had known we were out she would have come after us and given us a good lecture when we got home."

So far as training in domestic tasks is concerned, it was consid- 868 ered an important part of a girl's duty to gather berries and to dig roots. Some older woman went with a group of girls to show them what to collect, pointing out at the same time the things that were not edible. Each girl worked and whatever she garnered would be given by her to her mother or grandmother. What was not used immediately would then be stored for winter use.

Learning to slice meat very thin for drying seemed to have been picked up easily by girls at playing "house." Skinning and butchering were much more difficult tasks which had to be learned carefully. These were considered mainly work for men, but it

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

was useful if a woman knew how to do them, and only those who had mastered these skills were taken on hunting parties. Coming Daylight acquired this type of knowledge only after she was married, at which time she was only about eleven or twelve years old, and before she had borne any children. She gradually learned the names for each cut of meat and the certain ways of butchering each type of animal. 868

There were individual differences in the kinds and amount of work which a girl would learn. Some were more proficient than others, due mainly it would seem to the type of training received. Coming Daylight was an orphan and was raised by an extremely strict maternal grandmother, who made her stay by her side for hours as she worked along with her, correcting her mistakes and demonstrating the proper ways of doing things. Coming Daylight heard the other girls and boys outside playing and would sometimes cry because she had to learn a woman's work instead of joining in the fun. Singer, although raised by a grandmother, was allowed to play out much more than was Coming Daylight, and admittedly never mastered as many techniques as the latter. Garter Snake, who was chosen by her parents as Pipe Child when her father was Keeper of the Feathered Pipe, was well-trained by her mother, but apparently did not begin formal instruction at such an early age as did Coming Daylight.

Regardless of individual differences, however, one of the first acquired and most essential tasks was that of working hides. The first step was learning how to scrape buffalo hides. Apparently all women knew how to do this and, in the times before the buffalo disappeared, were kept constantly busy at it. After becoming proficient at scraping, the next process learned was that of tanning. There were various ways of preparing hides depending on the different uses to which they would be put, whether for lodge covers, clothing, parfleshes, and so on. Then came the important steps of cutting out and of sewing. Usually girls began by cutting out moccasins and finishing them off. Later came dresses and leggings. Knowing how to make parfleshes and to paint them was likewise considered an essential part of this early training for girls. It was only considerably later that the ability to fit together a lodge covering of buffalo skins was acquired. This was consid-

868 ered the most difficult of all tasks allotted to women and not every one was able to do it.

183 The whole training of the girl was oriented toward marriage. A girl was supposed to have been ignorant in sex matters until 864 informed by an older person, presumably in most cases by a grand- 867 mother. Coming Daylight, for example, remembers very distinctly that when she was about ten years old and the man who became her first husband had asked her uncle for her, her grandmother warned her: "Don't be 'ashamed' of your husband." The old woman then told Coming Daylight what to expect as to the physical side of marriage. Her grandmother also told her many other things, as was usual for a girl about to be married. "Now you are going to be married. You be true to your man. If some young fellow comes to you and wants to 'throw in with you,' you tell him no. But refuse him in a nice way and don't say bad things. Try to get out of it nicely. Then go right to your husband and tell him what happened, because if he sees you talking to another man he might get the wrong impression and think you have consented. Moreover, never become jealous of your husband nor should you ever fight back at any woman who might attack you on account of wanting him. Just pity such a woman. Always remember you are the wife; the other woman is not married to him but you are."

Just before she went with her husband to his home, an uncle of hers came to Coming Daylight and told her to tend to her house well, to make clothes for her husband and to see to it that he was always nice and clean. Then he added that she should not get mad or pout if her husband should go out and stay away longer than she thought he should. He said: "When a woman gets mad from this cause, she wants to make her own life bad. When her husband goes around visiting other women, and his wife finds out, then she wants to run around with men. If she retaliates in this way she only gets herself in bad. What you should do when your husband goes out and stays late is to say nothing when he comes in. He will always come back to you. You just say to yourself that he is your man and that he won't leave you permanently for any other woman."

It would seem that girls, as part of their training, were con-

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

stantly admonished to stay at home after they were married and not to go visiting and gossiping with other women. Mothers told their daughters to be respectful to their husbands. When still very young, a girl was taught to "always make a lot over a man." She started with her father and was responsible, for instance, for seeing to it that in the morning when he awakened there was water beside him so he could wash his face before going for his morning bath, and that his breakfast would be ready for him when he came back therefrom. These are the kinds of things girls would be expected to do later for their husbands. 183 864 867

All during the time they were learning domestic skills, girls were told that they should keep everything that they own nicely and to have on hand everything they may need. It was not good to run around and borrow. "Keep your house clean and keep everything in good order, then your husband will like to stay at home." Again, "Don't let your husband's moccasins wear out before you make another pair. Always have things prepared ahead of time." Girls were told, too, that good wives took their husband's moccasins off for them when they came home tired, and so on. 183 867

Coming Daylight always admonished her daughters: "Never talk back to your husband. Women have fiery tongues when they get mad, and that is bad." It was nearly always taken for granted by others that the wife was to blame if her husband beat her. Since it was customary for very young girls to marry men very much older than they, such husbands took upon themselves the role of disciplinarian. [582]

While marriage was taken for granted, apparently a girl was free to accept or to reject medicine power. Neither girls nor women went on power quests, but some individuals were vouchsafed some kinds of supernatural power in dreams. While the experience of Coming Daylight may be unique, it is illuminating. "Even before I was married, I had a particular kind of dream which indicated power to extract illness from the body of a patient. This dream occurred four nights in succession. Each morning I would tell my grandmother about it. The old woman got angry each time and told me not to talk about it, to keep it to myself so that I would become a great doctor. But I had already 787 [562]

787 made up my mind that I did not want such power, the immediate reason for my refusal being that I had seen doctors who swallowed what they had sucked from the weak spot in patients whom they cured, and I just couldn't bring myself to have to do likewise."

857 562 Although boys had much more freedom than had girls, they too were assigned tasks at a fairly early age. One of the responsibilities of boys was to water the horses during the day. At about the age of fourteen, however, a boy would be required to take the horses out to graze immediately after taking his morning plunge. He would be gone perhaps three or four hours and would eat only after he returned.

857 868 852 The play of younger boys with bow and arrow was training for later life. The older boys accompanied the men on hunting parties and by the time they were about 18 most were skilled hunters. Some families, it was said, took advantage of the fact that a boy would have killed his first big game,—antelope, deer, buffalo, [431] —by making a feast at which this game was served. On such an occasion the boy stood at the center and gave away property, such as horses and blankets provided by his father or uncle, in [421] order to mark the event. This was considered training for the way he should behave in later life in regard to his own property.

857 868 Boys were trained in trapping as well as hunting. There were certain songs which were sung by grandparents as the boys danced around in the lodge both before and after trapping. These songs [533] were supposed to bring luck in finding game.

[777] Sometimes when older boys were out taking care of horses, they would band together, daub their faces and bodies with mud as "war paint," and make a "raid" on the camp in order to steal meat which was drying on racks. The women who had worked so hard to prepare the meat got angry and sometimes fought the boys with sticks. Usually, the boys were successful, and would then cook the meat and have a wonderful feast,[1] far outside the camp circle.

[554] Men encouraged their sons to be brave, and a boy would be anxious to go along on a real raiding party just as soon as possible because a young man had no standing until he had risked his life. An adolescent boy who accompanied a war party had to be a man

[1] This type of raiding is also described by Kroeber, 1908, p. 182.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

among men. It was a severe ordeal and the older men had no mercy on these youngsters. 857 868

Occasionally as training in bravery, the heart of a bear was taken raw and cut into small bits. After calling together the older boys and young men and lining them up, each one in turn was given a bit of the heart dipped in fresh blood and asked: "Well, are you going to have a brave heart?" Some were able to swallow it easily, but others could not stomach it. Those who were able to swallow and retain it were said to be the really brave ones.[8] [262]

It was indicated by many informants that in the old days a man would almost have to have had supernatural powers in order to be outstandingly successful in war or to achieve fame as a medicine man. In fact it was thought that supernatural powers could be helpful in many aspects of life including gambling and love. Guardians, however, used to warn the boys and young men under their care that "you can't get something for nothing." By this was meant that a person who accepted supernatural power would not live out his full span of life. Thus, according to The Boy, parents emphasized in training their sons that, rather than going on power quests, they should be ambitious to acquire fame and respect by developing their natural abilities. Nevertheless many sought and obtained supernatural powers, visions apparently often being vouchsafed in youth, although the power might not have been used until later in life. It was believed that those who accepted and used such supernatural powers died prematurely.[9] 787 798

Methods of Instruction

Oral instruction, or "lecturing," stands out in the Gros Ventre mind as the most important method of child training. All of our middle-aged and older informants agreed that some relative, often either the mother or the father, lectured their children almost every day, telling them what was right and what was wrong and "how to live." If boys and girls were present together, there were some subjects which could not be touched upon and would be reserved for fathers to speak about to their sons and for mothers 861

[8] It was said that, in the distant past, the heart of an enemy was so devoured by warriors. For historical confirmation, see Henry, v. 2, p. 734. [266]

[9] Full discussion of supernatural powers is given in Cooper Ms., 1949.

861 to their daughters.[10] The lecturing of the child started when he was an infant and continued until adulthood had been attained. Those charged with the training of children felt it to be a duty. As Coming Daylight put it: "They talked to their children right from the start, and before the babies themselves were able to talk, they seemed to understand." Singer remarked that, because modern parents do not talk to infants as the old-fashioned ones used to do, present-day infants do not respond by trying to "talk back." Nowadays, the two old women insisted, even infants pay no attention to instruction, and as for older children, some go so far as to tell their elders to shut up!

Under the old regime, however, a child had to listen, whether he wanted to or not, and he had to retain, at least outwardly, a respectful attitude. Cora, for instance, said that she hated this being talked to. Her father was the one who did the lecturing in her family and he used to require that she stand in one spot and not move "while he preached about being good and the ways of doing everything." Singer and Coming Daylight admitted that it was tiresome for the child to be continuously lectured, but they insisted that this is the best way for children to learn. Children [856] are supposed to really grasp what is being said to them from about the age of four.

867 Thick remembers the general content of the lectures he heard from his mother to have run along these lines: "If you get a 183 mare, treat it well because mares will increase. Take good care of her. If you get a saddle, hang on to it. Robes, bridles, whips, are needed useful articles, keep them, don't give them away. If you don't keep these things you will have to go and borrow from someone else. That is bad. If you have to borrow a horse from some other boy, his family might become suspicious of you; yet if they refuse, there are hard feelings over it. Therefore when you get something, take good care of it.

"When you go out to play with your own things, your bow and arrows or hoop, others will want you to play with them and to bet with them. If you join in such games, somebody is likely to get mad because you have won and so he may beat you up. If

[10] For details on kinship behavior, see pp. 107–08.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

he should, don't fight back. Let him take it out on you and don't fight back. 183 867

"When you are out playing, if you are hungry and you want to eat, come home. Don't go to any other family to eat because people are fond of their food and might resent it. If a boy, some friend of yours, invites you to his home, don't go."

Garter Snake's father was the one who lectured his children,—three sons and three daughters. Since she was Pipe Child, when her father was Keeper of the Feathered Pipe, Garter Snake was talked to by him more often perhaps than were her siblings. Long after she was married, her mother used to remind her of the things her father told her. Some of these admonitions were as follows: "I want you to be an upright, honest and straight woman. If you listen to everything I tell you and do as I tell you, in the future you will thank me for it. Now don't think you are alone in this world because the One above the White Man sees everything that we do. Don't steal, don't lie, don't be tricky. Be honest about everything.

"When you grow up and finally have your own home, pity the old men and pity the old women, pity the poor. If you see an old woman with a ragged dress, give her a blanket. Make moccasins for these old women. The same holds for these old men. If you see an old man whose leggings are torn, make leggings for him. If you see a poor person who needs clothes, give him some if you have any. If you do that the One Above who watches and looks at you doing those things, He is going to reward you. [888]

"When you are married and have your own home, take care of it well. If you have horses, take care of them; try to have good property and take care of it. If you do that you will always have something. If you have horses of your own that will help your husband. He may not have any and you can help him along.

"Be good to everybody. If a man or woman comes to visit, welcome them. Tell them: 'Come in and sit down.' Then feed them well regardless of whether they are poor or rich, young or old, or even children. [574]

"Above all, don't you ever quarrel with anyone. Don't you ever fight. Try to be friendly with everybody." [865]

Charles Buckman's uncle, who, like Garter Snake's father,

183 was not a Christian, used to tell him: "You have eyes to see, a
867 heart to think, and ears to hear. Listen to what I will tell you. You are a poor boy. As such, be faithful. Believe in the One Above the White Man. Pray to Him, ask Him to have pity on you and so make you a good man some day. Try to be good to all, especially when you become a man. Be good to the poor, be good to the old. Never take anything not belonging to you. Never
[865] speak evil of other people. Try to be patient. If a man says anything wrong to you, and hurts your feelings, say nothing because if folks talk back it causes quarreling or fighting, which is not good. If a poor man asks you for anything, if you have it, be ready to hand it over to him. If you see anybody hungry and
[888] you have it, feed him. If an old man or woman is in need and wants anything done, do it for him or her. If you do these things, the One Above will have pity on you."

685 All informants agreed that in addition to having been told to
867 take care of whatever property they might have, they were instructed to regard the property rights of others. It was believed
183 that, though the theft remained undiscovered, the thief would be punished by automatic supernatural sanction. "Something terrible would happen to anybody who stole something." Mary's grandmother, for instance, had told her time and again never to take anything that did not belong to her. To illustrate how well this had been instilled into her, she gave the following example. "On one occasion when I was a child, I found a really beautiful string of beads, but I did not take it. After I got to bed that night, however, I told my grandmother about it. When asked why I had failed to bring home the beads, I replied: 'I was afraid you would tell me that I had taken them from someone.' My grandmother merely remarked: 'Well, you should have brought them to me, or better, you should have taken me to where they were lying.' But when I took her to the spot the next day the beads were gone."

This reminded Coming Daylight of an incident in her own
[764] childhood. "I was walking near a grove of trees where several corpses had been placed (in the traditional manner of disposing of the dead). I noticed a considerable amount of bear excrement and mixed in it were a number of elk teeth—the most valuable

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

trimming for women's clothing. I knew that the body of a girl had been among those left in the branches of the trees at this place, so I decided that the bear had disturbed the bodies and must have eaten the cloth along with everything else. I stood there quite a while wondering whether I should take those elk teeth. Finally I took them and having strung them on a piece of sinew laid them in the stream-bed with a rock covering them. When I went home I opened the matter with my grandmother by stating: 'A bear ate that girl who was buried in the elk tooth dress.' When my grandmother asked how I knew this, I told her about the elk teeth in the excrement. Whereupon my grandmother asked: 'Why didn't you take those teeth? They are valuable.' Feeling easier in my mind, I said: 'I was afraid you would accuse me of stealing them—but I did take them anyway!' My grandmother was glad and so I brought them from the creek and I was happy, too, since there were enough teeth to make two rows on my dress." 183 685 867

The usual procedure of careful parents when a child reported he had found some article was to first question him as to whether or not he had taken it from someone. Then the parent would go around and ask people if they had lost this certain article. If a child had stolen it he would thus be found out and it was believed that he would never steal anything again.

The rights of children to their own property were recognized by elders and, while they admonished children to take good care of their things, if a child wished to dispose of what belonged to him no one would reprimand him for having done so. After all, generosity is a trait that was much admired among the Gros Ventres. Informants said that if, for instance, a man had given a horse to his daughter and she gave it away, he would say nothing to her about it. Should she ask him for another he might, however, tell her: "Well, I don't know—you might give it away." But he would never scold her about it. 183 858 867 421

Even if a child were flagrantly disobedient he would ordinarily be punished only by a scolding rather than by whipping or deprivation. Singer and Coming Daylight both were shocked at the idea that a child might be punished by depriving him of something. They said: "Indians love their children and we don't think they would deprive them of anything. They just talk to their children 861

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

861 and tell them what is right." Coming Daylight gave an account of an occasion on which she was disobedient. "One of my relatives was very ill and my grandmother thought that if I would sacrifice a finger joint, he would get well. But I was a small girl, and I dreaded the idea of having part of my finger cut off, so I ran away. My uncle chased after me and told me never to come back. I yelled at him: 'I won't come back, but I am not going to have my finger cut off!' So I went far off and stayed out in the hills until my uncle came looking for me and brought me home again. Two nights after they had asked me to give up my finger, the relative died, but they didn't punish me."

If a child were really lazy or "pouted too much," he might be [858] "thrown out"—cases were mentioned where this had actually happened. The theory was that the child would then have to work much harder than he would have at home for whoever would take him in.

In the case of temper tantrums on the part of a very young child, he was first simply told to stop. Should he continue, his guardian would say: "Oh well, he doesn't know any better" and then douse him with cold water. It was said that he would get up immediately after that type of treatment, and would soon be cured.

If a child were naughty or made a mistake, his guardian would usually not reprimand him in public. He would wait for an opportunity to get him alone. As an example, in training for proper attitudes and behavior between brother and sister, the boy was told: "Be careful what you say in front of your sister." If the boy then made some remark he should not have made in the presence of his sister, his mother waited until the sister had gone out and then talked to him in a gentle way. Cora expanded on this by stating: "The Gros Ventres never bawl out anybody in front [648] of a third party. This is where the white social workers make their biggest mistake. They get everybody together in a central place and then proceed to reprimand the various ones in front of all the others. That is the worst thing that can happen—it hurts these Gros Ventres so badly."

Nevertheless, those in authority may give a severe "tongue lashing" to the culprit in private. As The Boy said when discussing discipline: "The Indian, when he was living the old life, had a

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

system of discipline, but it was not like that of the white man. The Indian used his roaring voice and stinging words. When I was a boy there was one old man who had a crippled hand. On various occasions when we were told to keep quiet and we disregarded that appeal, that old man would sneak up to us and roar at us. Sometimes he would bluff mischievous boys by telling them: 'Come over here. I am going to work you over with this crippled hand,' but nobody would dare go near him. Then he would say: 'Well, give me one arrow apiece. I won't work you over this time—but next time I will surely do so!" 861

The bugaboo was used to threaten small children when they misbehaved. They were told that "someone" would come and take them away in a big sack. The story told by Singer and Coming Daylight regarding the bugaboo was that of a woman who put her disobedient son outside her lodge and this "someone" came along with a sack, put the child in it and hung the sack in a tree. Aside from this bugaboo, Coming Daylight could recall only one instance from her childhood where she was threatened through reference to "spirits." This was after she had swam the whole width of the Missouri River and back. She was, and still is, very proud of this feat, but her grandmother was angry with her for having been too bold in going so far. She scolded her saying: "Why did you do that? Don't you know there are all kinds of 'animals' in the deep water? They always grab what they want!" Sometimes, however, punishment in the form of "something awful will happen" was indicated for the wrong doer.

One point on which Coming Daylight and the other old women were extremely emphatic was that in the old days the Gros Ventre never tried to scare children by mentioning the Supreme Being in connection with punishment. These old women recalled that in the lectures they heard, and in the scoldings they received, the emphasis was much more on social motivation. Children were told: "Nobody will like you if you do so and so." Or: "People don't like anyone who is onery. They like those who are generous and kind." Self-regarding motives were stressed in some situations. "Don't gamble lest you lose something we value," "Do what is right so as to keep your man," "Be industrious so as to show off what a good worker you are," "Don't run around with 183 861 776

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

183 other men so you will avoid your husband's suspicion," and so on.
861 Sometimes the appeal was made by a parent: "If you do such and such a thing well, I will be proud of you." In general it would seem that the positive side rather than the negative, was stressed.

777 It was more often the men informants who mentioned super-
867 natural motives proposed for proper conduct. They remembered that they were told that the Supreme Being would "have pity" on
888 them if they followed the proper code of behavior. Both men and women mentioned, however, that respect for the aged was instilled because "people didn't become old for nothing. They had a blessing from the Supreme Being to live long lives. Whenever you see old people attempting to do something and are having difficulties, you should go right in and do it for them. Help old people out and then ask them to intercede for you that you will have good health, a long life and success in all your undertakings."

867 The example of others was recognized as effective in child-
574 training. Al feels that the Gros Ventres were well brought up in the old days "because children were taught to stick to the rules and they had the good example of adults to follow." In describing the duty of hospitality, Coming Daylight said: "My grandmother was a great one to have a lot of visitors because she was generous, and so I got a good example at home." It was said by others of Coming Daylight: "She feeds everyone who comes along just as she used to see her uncle (mother's brother) do. She takes after her uncle in lots of ways."

In lecturing to the young, examples of actual behavior of persons, both good and bad, were often given. For instance, in warning boys of the evils of gambling, reference would be made to men who would otherwise have had promising careers but who ruined their chances by too heavy stakes which they lost. Fear
[754] of offending those who had supernatural power lest they retaliate by means of black magic was implicit in at least some of the admonitions. This was so, for instance, in instructing young men to stay away from the wives of "powerful" men, as well as in warning girls to decline improper proposals "in a nice way."

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

CHAPTER IX

MARRIAGE

Polygyny and the Child-bride

The institution of the child-bride, combined with polygyny, was 595
characteristic of Gros Ventre marriage up to about 1880. How 582
far back it was practiced is difficult to say. Our informants who
themselves were married off as children of ten or eleven to their
first husbands about the year 1865, took the custom for granted
and so far as they knew "it had always been that way."[1]

All girls were given in marriage before puberty, and usually
as wives to older men with independent households. Because of
the disparity in age between husband and child-bride, many of
these girls were widowed early and remarriage was quickly ar-
ranged for them, even if the widow were not claimed by her hus-
band's brother. Moreover, divorce or separation initiated by the [586]
husband was relatively easy and frequent. Consequently the ma-
jority of Gros Ventre women knew at least three or four different [587]
husbands, and often in fairly rapid succession. Upon successive
remarriages the wife's age came to approximate more closely that 582
of her husband.

Young men were not eligible for marriage until about twenty.
By that time a young man would have attained proficiency in
hunting and have taken the first steps in ceremonial life, being a
member of one or other of the two adult men's societies, either
the Wolf-men or the Stars. In addition he should have war-deeds
to his credit and some property of his own, especially horses stolen
from the enemy, in order to qualify as husband. In view of the 582
fact, however, that very young girls were given more often to 587
older already-married men, most young men marrying for the
first time had as wife "an older experienced woman." Actually

[1] It was believed that a girl could not menstruate until after she had [841]
experienced sexual intercourse. If, therefore, a girl had her first menses
before she had been given in marriage, her family would be disgraced.

582 587 this meant that a young man's first wife was not necessarily "older" in years than he, but that she was "experienced" in marriage, having been either widowed or divorced, perhaps several times.

Only as an exception was a bachelor married to a child-bride. [543] One case of the kind which was recalled concerned a young man who was a "beloved-child" and consequently highly favored by his parents. He however refused to "settle down" when his parents suggested various marriage partners to him, and acceded to their request only when they obtained for him the hand of a young girl who had not previously been married.

582 595 587 Young men just starting their careers were urged to seek as wives among the "older" women, those who were known as "good workers" and who had acquired some property of their own. A wife of this kind could help him become established, and "if he amounted to anything" it would not be long before he could take a second wife, perhaps a younger sister of his first one. Then, as he became more prominent, he would acquire one or two additional wives.[2] To this type of man child-brides usually were given. It was said that an outstanding man had three or four wives at the same time, but conditions were such that he would have had a dozen different ones in the course of his career.

587 595 A man was considered fortunate if he obtained as wife the oldest of several sisters as the chances were great that these others might be offered to him. "If a man married the oldest girl in a family, and her folks liked him and saw that he was a good provider and that he was trying to live right, they would give him the two or three others as they came of age." Many instances were given wherein several sisters were married to the same man. On the other hand it was said that, if a man, who was already married to one or more sisters, asked for another, he might be refused and that "there was nothing he could do about it."

Since the levirate was permitted, it was possible that a man could claim the wife or wives of his deceased brother. This was seemingly carried out infrequently, however, since only two instances could be recalled.[3] Of these two, one involved Coming

[2] For a discussion of the economic basis of polygyny, see pp. 73–74.

[3] "The brother of a dead man sometimes married his widow, but this was not always the case." Kroeber, 1908, p. 180.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Daylight and her sister, who were married, for a short while after their first husband died, to his classificatory brother. The other concerned an outstanding woman, Woman Chief, who was said to have been so highly valued by her husband's people that "she was kept in his family by marrying her to three brothers [successively]." 587 595

Regulations

Marriage was prohibited for those related by blood, no matter how remote the tie. If, however, a couple were in "good faith," so to speak, and it was discovered later on that they were distant kin, it was not considered necessary for them to separate on that account.[4] Affinal relatives were likewise barred as possible marriage partners, except those who were classified as in-laws of the same generation.[5] In other words, the levirate and sororate were permitted, so that any who addressed each other as brother-in-law and sister-in-law respectively were possible mates, but relatives-by-marriage in any other category were prohibited from contracting marriage. The far-reaching effects of this latter regulation can be seen from the following case. "Not so many years ago, a Gros Ventre woman was the subject of a great deal of gossip because she married late in life a man who, many years previously, had for a time been married to a widow of her maternal uncle. People didn't like it and thought she shouldn't have married that man, even though times had changed and the whites wouldn't count them as being related to each other at all." 582 [587]

Arrangements

As a rule, marriage arrangements were made between the husband-to-be and one or other of the bride's male kinsmen,—father, uncle or brother. Either side could take the initiative, but the bride herself was not consulted. Coming Daylight summed up the prevailing attitude in this way: "When I was young, a girl's life was not her own. When a girl was about seven she was sent away from her home to a grandmother or widowed aunt to be trained to do a woman's work. 584 562 [868]

[4] See also the discussion of band affiliation and exogamy, pp. 29–31.

[5] For kinship classification, see pp. 124–25.

584 trained to do a woman's work. Then when she was ten or eleven
562 she was handed over to some man. They thought that if they gave her to her husband when she was so young she would get attached to him and make him a good wife. The Gros Ventres didn't
[587] want a woman to get in the habit of running around with different men, so a woman's folks worried if she was unmarried too long [after being divorced or widowed] because she might do something bad."

587 There is some evidence that as a woman became older, if she had occasion to remarry, she was somewhat more free to express her choice, although presumably a male relative would still be in the position of making the actual decision. It was said that
584 younger men, especially those seeking to marry "older" women,
832 "were afraid of their tongues" and felt more confident of success in possession of "love medicine." Al Chandler, for instance, was offered a love charm which he refused, but the speech of his uncle on that occasion throws some light on a situation of this kind. His uncle had told him: "Now you are a young man and you will be thinking about women. Maybe you want to get married and have picked out a woman and she doesn't want you. Maybe you are not good enough for her and, when you ask her, she will run you down plenty. Some women are swell-heads and can make a man feel cheap. It hurts a fellow to hear things like that—but that is what this charm is for. You take this and keep it in your pocket safely and do not show it to anyone or let anyone know you have it. Now if this woman hurts your feelings, go at night to where she lives and watch carefully, being sure you have the right one. Then when she goes out of the lodge to relieve herself, watch her so you can locate the exact spot. Then open this little packet and dip in it the tip of a little sliver of wood. Go over to the spot and stick the sliver right in the ground on the spot where she urinated and walk away. That is all you have to do, and in a very short time this woman will come running after you. You tell her: 'What are you doing that for? I don't want you.' She will get so anxious that she will beg you to have her."

585 Regardless of whether the man were the suitor, or whether the woman's relatives offered her in marriage, the marriage was validated through presents given by the groom. Traditionally at

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

least one horse was included, but no given amount of property was specified nor did bargaining enter into the negotiations.[6] Following the pattern of ostentatious liberality, a man could reflect honor upon himself by giving generously, and one with such a reputation was preferred over a poor or stingy one. Whatever the groom offered was divided among the bride's relatives. As one woman said: "A husband always gave something for his wife, no matter how many wives he acquired, because this is what makes it 'legal.' Then the girl's father and brother divided the presents. If the brother arranged the marriage, he would say to the father 'Here is a horse for you.' And if the father or uncle had been approached by the husband, then they did the same way. Sometimes even the father's sister was given a horse or something else when her niece married."

587 [554]

Although it was not obligatory, a bride's family often provided her with goods to take to her marriage, especially if it were her first one. Singer explained in regard to Coming Daylight: "Her family was well-to-do and showed how much they thought of themselves by giving her a good send-off. You should have seen her going off to her first husband. She was only about ten years old and she looked so tiny leading that big horse. On the horse was a fine fringed saddle and the travois was just piled up with painted parfleshes and other things."

The following account of the marriage of Coming Daylight's daughter shows how the pattern was carried out under changed conditions: "One night when the family returned from a dance they found a letter addressed to the oldest son, Ed, from a man whom he liked, asking for Ed's sister, Gertrude. When his father came in from tending the horses they told him about the proposal and he agreed right away, saying: 'We are still keeping her and she is a big girl. I'm glad this offer has been made.' So a week later they loaded a new buggy with Gertrude's things,—bedding, beds, trunk, sewing machine, etc.,—and her father drove this to the creek where the dance hall was located. Meanwhile Coming Daylight took her daughter to the house of the man who had asked for her and left her there sitting on this man's bed. The groom did not appear at the Grass Dance that evening, even though he

585 170

[6] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, p. 180.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

585 178 was Keeper of the Crow Belt, as he had taken Gertrude and camped at the Mission. The next morning the couple was married by the priest and Gertrude's father brought the buggy full of goods and gave them all that, including the team of horses. Everybody could see that this couple started off with a lot."

585 Instead of making arrangements, a man might simply send his daughter to become the wife of another man without forewarning him. The recipient of such a bride could not well refuse her and was supposed to act as though he were happy to have her, regardless of how many other wives he might have or his real feelings in the matter. He, too, would normally give some kind of present to her father, the amount depending somewhat on the previous reputation of the bride. On the one side, she might have been given merely to get her off her father's hands, on the other, she might have been highly desirable as a wife and her father would have taken this means to show generosity on his own part and to honor the husband he had selected.

583 Sometimes elopements occurred, but this was very rarely if ever the case, so far as the girl was concerned, until she had been given at least once in marriage arranged by her relatives. Should (584) a married woman run off with another man, it was up to her husband to deal with the situation. If, however, she had been widowed or divorced, and eloped before another marriage had been arranged, her relatives would be angry, but the affair could be patched up if the usual presents to them were forthcoming from the man.

59 There was no hard and fast rule in regard to residence. Matrilocal residence in the same lodge was incompatible with the observance of the mother-in-law taboo and it was said that if a man wished his son-in-law to remain with him, he provided the separate lodge and all the equipment.[7] The tendency seems to have been toward patrilocal residence in general, although it was not unusual for a couple to move back and forth. Coming Daylight lived most of her married life with her husband's people. As a child-bride she first lived in the lodge with her husband's parents; later on she and her husband went to her people, living with her

[7] Obligations between kin are discussed pp. 109–10. Kroeber, 1908, p. 180, states that a young married man often lived with his father-in-law.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

grandmother while her uncle's wives were making a lodge which they gave to her; then they went back and her new lodge was the sixth in a row, the five others being those of her husband's relatives who habitually camped together. When this husband died, she was claimed by a classificatory brother of her husband's and remained with the same people. This marriage did not last very long and, when her uncle arranged another marriage, again she lived near the man's relatives rather than her own. Since this too was of short duration, she remarried another time and lived in the same lodge as her husband's mother and unmarried brothers, until, at the time the Gros Ventre settled down (after 1883), her husband got a farm of his own and his mother went to live with one of her daughters.

Relations between Co-Wives

Subsidiary wives were known as "helpers" to the senior wife and co-wives addressed each other as "rival," unless they were related to each other and employed the ordinary form of address as "sister."[8] The senior wife distributed the household tasks and the "helpers" were allotted the heavier work, which usually included the procuring of fuel and water. Nevertheless all women were expected to be industrious and the senior wife as a rule enjoyed no more leisure or freedom than the others. In explaining the situation, Cora referred to her mother's experience. "My mother was always that kind of 'helper' but she didn't seem to mind it. After all, there were so many women who were 'helpers' and, as long as they got their work done, it didn't seem to matter who was 'boss' and who was 'helper.' They used to say in fact that some women preferred to be 'helpers' because while doing their jobs like going after water, they would have a chance to get away by themselves for a while—their husbands couldn't keep such close watch over them."

One of the advantages of living in a polygynous household was

[8] The Gros Ventre word for subsidiary wives, *atsd'onhiniya*, although at present sometimes translated as "slaves" as well as "helpers," is etymologically the same as the term applied to younger men who were appointed on ceremonial occasions to act as "waiters" for the principal performers. The term *inf'isag*, "rival," was used between co-wives who were not kin.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

595 said to have been that the wife who was pregnant, whether senior or subsidiary, could be well cared for and was relieved of the heavier domestic tasks until a considerable time after the child [858] was born. Furthermore, the children of all wives were considered equal in status. "As long as a man claimed the children as his own, he treated them all the same way, whether they were the children of older or younger wives." That differential treatment was sometimes accorded children by their father can be seen from the following case, although it is doubtful whether the father distinguished between his daughters simply on account of the relative position of their mothers. Singer, however, implied that it was so in giving the account of her experience: "When I was married as a younger wife to a certain man, he certainly made a difference between my child and that of his older wife. Both of us had girls, but one time, for instance, when I was out getting wood, they threw my little girl right out of the lodge. A neighbor took her in and when I returned this neighbor said to me: 'I notice they don't seem to care much for this little girl.' So after that I would have to take her with me, carrying a heavy pack on my back and dragging my little one along by the arm. Although my husband never let me use a horse, he would put the child of his other wife on the saddle when he was riding, and often he would hold her in his arms when he was around the camp. One of the worst things I had to endure was that when my husband would return from trading at Fort Benton with goodies like candy and fruit, my little girl was never given any and had to stand by and watch the other child eating. Finally it got so bad that my father took his grandchild and raised her. But I must say that this husband of mine was a really mean man."

587 The general feeling prevailed that sisters got along together more peaceably as co-wives than did "rivals." In any case the 595 sororate was preferred and it was said that parents were better satisfied to send a child-bride into the household of her sister. This attitude was exemplified by Singer's father in the following account which she gave; "I had been given to my sister's husband when I was just a child. It wasn't a real marriage because I didn't stay long enough. I was sent home by him because he thought I would rather play than work, and my sister took up for

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

me and he didn't send for me to come back. Not long after that though, my sister died, and her husband's other two wives came after me. I was playing out on the ice when they came and told me they were going to take me back with them. Ignorant as I was, I said I would go, and that I would have to tell my father first. But my father said: 'No. You shouldn't go with them. Those two women are not related to you and they might be mean to you. If your sister were still living, I would see to it that you went back to that man.' So those women said nothing more and I never heard from them or their husband again." 587 595

It was also thought that if the older wife were the sister of a child-bride she might be more willing to "protect" her. The husband of so young a wife was supposed to "wait a while" before claiming the marital right, and some men actually did so. Dressed-in-White for instance deferred the consummation of his marriage for over two years after Coming Daylight had been given to him at about the age of ten. Other men were not so considerate, however, and if an older wife tried to delay the procedure it was interpreted as being done not out of jealousy but through fear of consequences to so young a child. The husband alone determined the use of the marital right and such interference as another wife could offer would be only indirect. This is shown in the following account which concerns a woman well-known to both Singer and Coming Daylight. "One night soon after her little sister had been sent to their husband, this woman overheard him say to the girl: 'Make your bed wider, I am going to sleep with you.' Her own bedding was on the opposite side of the fire from that of her sister and she decided to try to discourage her husband from this undertaking. As she had expected, the husband that night covered up the fire so the lodge would be dark. On the sly, however, she was able to poke the fire so it flared out brightly. He got up and dimmed it once more, but again she made it flare. This was repeated several times and once she heard him say angrily; 'Oh, this is such good wood, it burns too well—I wish I could kill it!" Finally to her dismay she heard him whisper to the girl: 'I will take you outside because I can't seem to make it dark in here. You must not scream or cry out though because 585 587 595

587 your sister is alseep.' She was unhappy that her efforts had failed,
595 but of course she didn't dare do anything more."

In confirmation of the theory that sisters lived in harmony as co-wives, Coming Daylight said that she and her younger sister
595 had gotten along well together, but the two had some difficulties with a "rival" in one of their marriages. She added that whether wives were kin or not was less important than "the kind of women they were who lived in the same lodge." Cora gave an interesting illustration of the personality factor involved. Her mother once was married to the same husband of both her older and younger sisters. The youngest of the trio knew that their father had rejected her when she was born. The order to abandon the infant had been carried out, and she was found and adopted by a friend of her father's who raised her as his own. Cora said: "My mother and her older sister got along just fine. But the younger one never hit it off with these other two. It seemed like she was always jealous of them and took every chance she could find to get them in bad with their husband. She was kind of 'tricky.' Although as usual they lived in the same lodge, with their husband, she had her meals separately from the other two, she fetched water only for her own use, and on nice days when they sat outside the lodge she put up her shelter apart from theirs. Things were so bad between her and the other two, even after this common marriage was finished and they had separate husbands, that I grew up without realizing that she was my mother's sister. So that is the reason I feel no responsibility for her now."

Sometimes a senior wife of bad disposition made it very hard for a very young "rival," especially if she were in her husband's favor and the subsidiary wife were not. Singer told of one of her experiences with such a "rival." "I was much younger than this woman and she treated me abominably and sometimes she even beat me. One time my father found me crying after this woman had hit me, and he told me: 'You are getting to be a big girl now. You ought not to let her treat you like that. You should fight for yourself.' So the next time this woman pulled my hair, I grabbed her just as though I had turned into a bear, and held her to the ground and almost killed her. Those outside the lodge heard the commotion and someone yelled: 'Tie them together! Tie them

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

together!' so I jumped up and ran as hard as I could. Finally after wandering around a long time, not caring whether I lived or died, a man on horseback caught up with me. Telling me how dangerous it was to be out alone on account of possible capture by the enemy, he persuaded me to go back. Nobody said anything to me directly, but one of my husband's relatives did take up for me by saying insultingly to my husband: 'You would have such a one for a boss wife. She is ugly, and has a shaggy head, and she doesn't even know how to do a woman's work properly—blood runs out of the meat she prepares!' The older wife left me alone after that incident." 595

Nevertheless Singer admitted that in spite of her unhappy life with co-wives in two or three of her marriages, when she was married to Iron Bucket, she and her "rival" cooperated very nicely and were never jealous of each other or quarrelsome. All the women too agreed that, while the husband did not approve of hair-pulling and "jaw-fights" among his wives, and could resort to stern measures to prevent it, there were many polygynous households where peace and harmony reigned.

Authority of the Husband

The husband was expected to assume complete responsibility for his wife and had the right to enforce obedience. It was perhaps inevitable that some men used their authority in an arbitrary manner. The following was one among many examples offered in proof of this point. "There was a man who was known to be very stingy. On one occasion his wife cooked more meat than he thought she should have prepared. He was very angry with her and, in order to punish her, he made a big pile of the meat and forced her to eat every scrap of it. It made her very sick and she had to vomit a couple of times before she could get it all down. But she preferred to be sick rather than to get a beating." 593 562

It was said that wife-beating was very common and that in many cases it was unjustified. Singer gave part of her own experience as a sample. "My husband wouldn't allow me to go anywhere away from the lodge except to do the necessary jobs of getting wood and water. The whole time I was married to him I attended only one celebration. That time he more or less had to let

S93 me go because by mother's brother was in the Sacrifice Dance and
S62 I was supposed to be there to give things away in his honor. He was mean about it, but I got to that one thing. Another time though, I was scraping hides and I heard it announced in the camp circle that a relative of mine had been killed at war. Of course I went right away to mourn for him. But when I got back, my husband was furious. He yelled at me: 'You ought to stay home and attend to your work!' and then gave me an awful beating."

It was usually of little avail for a woman to return home with grievances against her husband because it was assumed that a wife deserved the type of treatment she received. Generally her
S93 family would send her back to her husband promptly and often
S86 with a present for him to show their good will. Only under exceptional circumstances was the wife allowed to initiate separation from her husband. If he grossly neglected her and showed his indifference openly, she might be permitted to remain with her family. Should the husband not send for her, they were then free to arrange for her another marriage. Coming Daylight gave as an example her own experience, which was considered as somewhat unusual. "My uncle had arranged as our third marriage for my younger sister and me to go to a man who later turned out to be a poor provider. He seldom got buffalo meat, and he didn't water the horses, or do the other things he was supposed to. He was so busy chasing other women he didn't have time for anything else! One day, however, a friend of his came and told us that our husband was planning to publicly throw us away. His uncle came to see our husband that same day and tried to persuade him not to do it. Among other things he told him: 'You have such nice quiet industrious women. Just think of all the robes they have dressed for you!' But our husband just sat there with his head bowed and didn't say anything, and we knew then that he was going to do it. So I told my sister when he went out: 'We will get ready and throw him away before he has a chance.' I had a horse of my own, and we packed all our belongings as quickly as possible and went back to our uncle. When he found out what that man was going to do, of course he didn't make us go back. Our husband was in the wrong. He didn't

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

 593

have any reason to suspect us [of infidelity] so he shouldn't have been planning to get rid of us." 586

It was said that in case a husband abused his wife without reason his relatives remonstrated with him, reminding him, for instance, that if he acquired a reputation for ill-treating his wife he might have difficulty in obtaining additional wives of good reputation. Some claimed that his maternal uncle could go so far as to remove the wife from her husband's household "until he came to his senses." Such interference was however seemingly rare. A wife was seldom given the benefit of any doubt.

The husband had the right to punish, even with death, any departure from the standard of chastity set for women. [684]

Most of the harsh treatment accorded to wives was believed to have been the result of just suspicion of their infidelity, where sufficient evidence was lacking to prove it. Girls were warned before marriage to so conduct themselves as to avoid their husbands' jealousy at all costs. They were told, for instance, that when visiting other women it was well to be chaperoned since otherwise a jealous husband could magnify an innocent visit into an incipient affair with the woman's husband. While it was considered within the proprieties for women to go out and count coups on the enemy fallen near camp, "they didn't approve of women chasing off on horseback to 'hit the enemy' because their husbands were sure to suspect they were off to meet some man." A girl was instructed by her relatives to yield willingly to her husband when he claimed his marital rights lest he interpret her reluctance as preference for another. 593 [726]

On the other hand, when there was reasonable proof of the wife's infidelity, the husband was more or less forced by public opinion to take some action against her. He was, however, allowed considerable latitude in choosing among several equally honorable alternatives. 593 684

The extreme punishment was that of death, and apparently it was not uncommonly applied. Among the cases described was the following which concerned a contemporary of Singer and Coming Daylight. "On one occasion a man discovered that one of his wives was missing. As usual in such circumstances, he inquired whether any man in the camp was unaccounted for. He soon

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

593
684

learned that his wife had gone off with a certain one and set out in pursuit. He was in a rage as he met the lovers, who had turned back toward the camp. The man fled, leaving the wife to face her husband's fury. He commanded her to dismount and then tore her robe from her. After cutting off her breasts and her arms, he abandoned the body and returned home."

According to our informants, however, not all cases were so clearly defined. Some women lost their lives merely because their husbands were suspicious. A man who acted without sufficient evidence ran some slight risk that his wife's family would avenge her death, but it was usually assumed that the wife must have been guilty. This was the situation in regard to a cousin of Singer's about whom she gave the following account. "This cousin of mine was a very beautiful woman. Her husband's lodge was close to that of Sits Like A Woman, one of the most famous chiefs the Gros Ventres ever had. This woman was fleshing a buffalo hide one day, and the chief saw her there outside her lodge. He said to Coming Daylight, then a very small girl, 'Run over to that woman who is tanning and see what she says to you.' So, childlike, she ran over there and told the woman: 'Sits Like A Woman told me to come over to the woman who is tanning and see what she tells me.' The woman said: 'Sh-h, you mustn't talk like that.' Being young and innocent Coming Daylight didn't realize the situation, and reported to the chief that she had been hushed up. The chief said: 'Well, who would be afraid of him [the husband]. What is she afraid of him for?' Now the husband was inside his lodge at the time, and overhearing this, he imagined his wife was running with this great chief. He bided his time and it so happened that the woman, who was a friend of the chief's wife, went one day to that lodge and asked her friend for something to eat. She was really hungry, and while she was sitting there eating, her husband came to the lodge. The chief said: 'Come in. I will give you a drink.' But the man did not accept the invitation, and merely said to his wife: 'You needn't come back!' This boded no good, so the frightened woman went to her mother's lodge. Her mother was very much upset, and was calling for protection for her daughter, when the husband came with his gun and shot his wife six times. No one retaliated."

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Instead of killing an adulterous wife, or one so suspected, the husband might disfigure her and send her away. Coming Daylight witnessed the following scene when she was a child. "She had been sent on an errand by her grandmother to a lodge at some distance from her own. About half-way to her destination as she approached a clump of trees she heard a woman screaming. She then saw that this woman was standing there with her hair tied to the limb of a tree. The woman's husband cut off her nose, and left her tied there and bleeding. Coming Daylight was so frightened that she ran, and on her way back went around the other way to avoid passing that spot again. She doesn't know who released the woman, but she does recall that the woman was so ashamed that she hardly ever went outside her lodge, and if anyone came in she would hold her hand over her face. Ever after that, whenever Coming Daylight met that man, she would make a gesture toward him [double hand into fist, then force fingers out, spreading them wide apart], which means 'I hate you.' Her grandmother used to tell her not to do that lest that man harm her through supernatural means, but she would answer: 'I don't care if he has power. He is cruel and I hate him. We all have to die sometime.'" 684 [20]

The cutting off of the nose was said to be rather a Piegan than a Gros Ventre practice. Cutting off the ears was perhaps a more common form of punishment inasmuch as there is a word designating a woman known to have been unfaithful, and which refers to having the ears cut off.

The adulterous woman whose hair was cut by her husband was not marked permanently as were the others, but it was a severe punishment nonetheless because long thick hair was one of the chief criteria of beauty in women as well as in men. But whatever the form of disfigurement inflicted by the husband, the woman would be cast aside by him and would have to seek refuge with some of her relatives. The family, especially her brothers, would feel keenly the disgrace, but as Singer put it, "Mothers would feel sorry for their daughters and could not refuse to take them in, and they would take their children, too, should they have any. It was very seldom a man would keep the children of a wife sent away for adultery." [832]

Finally, a wronged husband could satisfy his honor by accept-

684 ing indemnity from his wife's lover and allowing her unharmed to go to him. This solution was often resorted to and in fact was the one that was urged upon both parties concerned. It was customary for the paramour to offer compensation, although an occasional individual tried to dispose of an unwanted wife with profit to himself by taking the initiative in demanding indemnity. If there were no real evidence of wrong-doing, or if the man in question wished to brave the consequences, he might refuse. One instance was given by Singer concerning a man who, returning home one night, saw a young man crouched beside the lodge. "Although he took after the young man when he ran away, he could not catch him. The next day he told one of his wives—the sister of the one whom he pretended to suspect—to take her younger sister to the young man and demand in return a gun and a horse. The elder sister took up for the younger one and refused. So the husband told his oldest wife, unrelated to the other two, to carry out his orders. This one did as she was told. When confronted by the demand, however, the young man said: 'There is no truth in it. The old man did see something that made it look bad for me, but it wasn't what he thought.' The husband did not care to force the issue, since real evidence was lacking, and that was an end to the matter." Another example shows that even when the husband had evidence of his wife's infidelity he could not always collect indemnity. The husband in question sent his wife to her lover with a long list of things which he requested in return. The paramour, who did not want the woman as his wife, refused to pay the indemnity. "Perhaps another man would have killed his wife's lover when he refused, but this one took the easier [682] way by cutting off his wife's hair and turning her loose." In case the husband killed the paramour, it was interpreted as murder and he was subject to retaliation.

[554] A man who kept as wife a woman known to be unfaithful to him lost status. He would be considered weak and was subject to 684 humiliating taunts by his enemy-friends. Nevertheless some men 558 braved adverse public opinion out of deep affection for their erring wives. While not all went so far as Sits Like A Woman, his case is an interesting one. It was related by The Boy as follows.

"The famous chief Sits Like A Woman was at the height of

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

his popularity and power when he caught *in flagrante delicto* the youngest of his four current wives. He failed to act immediately, so the father of the young man with whom she had been discovered began to think of a way to save his son [fearing that Sits Like A Woman planned to injure him]. He decided to approach one of the ceremonial grandfathers of the chief and ask him to intercede. The ceremonial grandfather accepted the mission. He told Sits Like A Woman that the young man's father had such a high regard for him that he would not like to see his household disturbed any further and that, if he would consider this request, he should name the price. The chief listened very attentively and finally replied: 'Grandfather, I will do as you say. I have been thinking what I should do about this, and I have not punished my unfaithful wife nor even scolded her. Since it is you who came here to make this request of me, I will solve the situation in this way. Go back and tell the old man who sent you that I want his son's racehorse and eight other well-broken horses, and I want that old man to come over here and escort his new daughter-in-law back to his home. She is just as she always was. I have not disfigured her nor punished her, so he can make use of her in his household. When he carries out this demand, I will forget the whole matter.' The ceremonial grandfather was highly pleased and praised the chief for removing the stigma from his home by relinquishing his unfaithful wife. The father of the young man immediately set about getting the required horses and he and his wife loaded some of them with clothing and other articles. Together they led the horses toward the lodge of the chief, ostentatiously singing in his praise as they went. The old man even danced as he approached the lodge. After handing over the goods, the couple, followed by their new daughter-in-law, went back to their own lodge, all three singing as they went.

"This should conclude the story of how a great chief received indemnity. There was a sequel, however, which illustrates that even the greatest and bravest warriors may succumb to the weakness of love and affection for their wives. On that very same day, about dusk, the chief's 'heart failed him.' He ordered the nine horses to be turned loose so that they could return to the camp from which they had come, although he kept the clothes and other

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

684
558

articles which had been given him. Then he told two of his wives to go to the camp and call from outside the lodge the name of that youngest wife, and, when she came out, to bring her back to him without offering any explanation. This placed Sits Like a Woman in a difficult position, giving his enemy-friends plenty of ammunition since they could justly taunt him that a woman had gotten the better of him. He was eventually able to live it down, however, so that although it was a temporary set-back to his colorful career, it did not mar it completely as might have been the case for a lesser man."

The above case was exceptional in that no others could be recalled wherein a man who had accepted indemnity actually took back his wife. Nevertheless other instances were given of men who disregarded public opinion to the extent that they ignored flagrant infidelity on the part of their wives. Usually however if the wife in question did not mend her ways, even the most tolerant husband lost patience. By giving her away quite casually and without compensation, he retrieved his reputation since he thus indicated that it was indifference toward her rather than the weakness of love which had caused him to overlook her infidelity.

One instance was given by Coming Daylight. "One of my uncle's wives was continually running away with different men and he allowed her to return each time without punishment. I was still a child and one day, for instance, I went with this woman for water rather far from camp. When we got to the creek, one of her lovers grabbed her and wouldn't let her go. Finally I got tired of waiting and called out that I was going home and would tell on them. Still she didn't come, so I left. My uncle asked me why I had come alone, so I told him what had happened. But when that woman showed up, my uncle said nothing to her. A long time went by. Then on one occasion when we were camped near the Bear Paws, there was a crowd of people, all more or less drunk, in my uncle's lodge. They called me in because I did not drink and, since my uncle was Keeper, they had to have someone to look after the Flat Pipe. So I was there and saw my uncle staggering around. His nose was running and he called a man by name and said: 'Come and clean my nose!' The man obliged him and my uncle said, pointing to that unfaithful wife of his:

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953-
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

'It is a good thing you cleaned my nose, because for that I am giving you that woman over there.'" 684 558

A husband who had harbored an unfaithful wife was likewise within his rights in "throwing her away." This was accomplished by his going to a public gathering and simply throwing down a stick to indicate that he was through with her. Whoever wished might pick up the stick and claim her as his wife without giving any compensation. 684 586

It was said, too, that if a man was "big enough" to allow his wife to go unpunished for adultery he usually would not refuse to eventually let her go to some lesser man who demeaned himself by asking for her. Thick related details of several transactions of this kind which occurred when he was a young boy. One of these was as follows:

"There was a man who had several wives, perhaps four. One day another man came to his lodge. He invited him in and said: 'This is the first time you ever came into my lodge, my friend. You must have a reason to come now, after all this time.' Then he said to his wife: 'Woman, get up and cook for my friend.' So the visitor spoke up: 'Well, my friend, the purpose of my coming here is to ask you for that Arapaho woman. I am not married now, I haven't a wife at present and I need a wife.' The host replied: 'All right, my friend, she is yours. After you eat, you could take her home.' When he had finished eating, the visitor said: 'Well, my friend, I have to go a little further. I want that boy of hers too.' The host answered: 'I hate to let my children go, but since he is so small you could take him, but don't ask for any of the others.' So the visitor, happy that he had gotten this woman without much talk and a boy as well, said: 'Well, my friend, since you are so good to me and give me your boy, I will give you a horse, my last horse.' It turned out that he was as good to this boy, whom he had attained in this way, as he would have been to his own son." It should be noted that the horse was given voluntarily and because of the child rather than in compensation for the wife.

It was the opinion of those women who had lived under this system, wherein the authority of the husband was so great, that all in all it worked well. They admi[illegible] that an occasional woman 595 562

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

595 562 suffered injustice, but they insisted that the disciplinary power of the husband "made good wives of many women." In spite of the fact that many cases were given in illustration of harsh treatment, not a few were mentioned in which husband and wife lived happily together in an atmosphere of mutual esteem and deep affection. Coming Daylight herself, for instance, experienced what could be considered an ideal marriage with her first husband, Dressed in White.

Extra-marital Affairs

837 Girls were instructed before marriage to expect and condone infidelity on the part of the husband. An ambivalent attitude prevailed in that a man's reputation was said to have suffered if he were known as one who was "always fooling around with other men's wives"; yet brave young men were expected to make as many conquests as possible.

There were few women who escaped their husband's suspicion at one time or another. The reasons why the suspicion was often justified were given by Singer to have been the following. "Too often young girls were given in marriage to old men for whom they did not care and to whom they never got attached; so when younger men more to their liking came along, lots of these girls gave in to them and took chances of getting caught by their husbands. But even if a woman liked her husband and he was real good to her, when she saw that he was running around with other women, she might be jealous and want to 'make her life bad' just to get even with him."

While a woman could not count on her mother, or aunt, or sister-in-law to help along her illicit love affair, in some cases a grandmother, or sister, or friend might assist her in making assignations with the lover and would do their best to shield her from her husband. It was said that others were sympathetic especially if the lover were known as a brave man. In fact there were two sets of circumstances in which public opinion was lenient almost to the point of approval, although great discretion was necessary to avoid the husband's suspicion, since he still had the right of punishing his wife if he found her out. One kind of situation concerned the woman who sent a man out to accomplish some specific

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

and spectacular war deed before she granted her favors to him.[9] 837
If he returned, she was supposed to keep her word, accepting him as her lover. In the other type of situation, it was taken for granted that a woman would succumb to the pleas of a man who [762] had publicly announced his intention of virtually committing suicide. Such a man, by singing the "brave-song" as he circled [533] the camp, indicated that he would seize the first opportunity thereafter to encounter the enemy but make no effort to defend [726] himself.[10]

According to a number of stories that are told, it was not uncommon that a woman committed suicide when her lover failed 837 to return from war. That this actually happened, in some cases 762 at least, is vouched for by the following factual account given by Singer. "White people, on one occasion, invited some Gros Ventres to visit them. All of the people, whose lodges were near to that of my grandmother, went, except one woman. This woman was scraping a skin when word was announced that a certain young man had been killed at war. My grandmother, noticing that the sound of scraping had stopped, thought that this woman was resting, and after a little while started over to visit her. On the way, however, she heard a shot, and when she got to that lodge she found that this woman was dead. She had first dressed herself nicely in her best clothes and had then shot herself, pulling the trigger of the gun by means of a string attached to her toe. My grandmother had suspected an affair between this woman and the young man who had lost his life at war, but she hadn't known for sure until this woman committed suicide. In those days a woman would have kept such an affair secret. (Now since women have the law to protect them from their husbands, wives just don't care and boldly run around with anybody they fancy and talk back to their husbands, and everybody knows all about it.) But anyway, that woman was a good worker,—she was working for her husband when that bad news came about the death of her lover,—and of course her husband mourned for her."

It was said that women who had been cast aside by their hus- 837

[9] "This custom is said to have led to the death of many young men," Kroeber, 1908, p. 180. 578

[10] For further details on the "brave-song," see p. 92.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

837 bands, and whose families were indifferent to their conduct, were
578 easy conquests for men, but sometimes caused a great deal of trouble. A woman like that usually had more difficulty in acquiring a good husband, and was jealous if her lover refused to take her as wife, yet married some other woman. Coming Daylight had an experience with one such woman. "My husband and I were living in a lodge with his mother and her husband and his two brothers, really cousins. My husband was a very handsome man and shortly after we were married, a woman whose lover he had been, came to that lodge and tried to get him to marry her too. When I saw that she was running after him I told him: 'You ought to take that woman. I can just make my bed on the other side of the fire [with the two cousins]!' But, knowing that she was the promiscuous kind, he didn't want her and refused her. She made her bed in our lodge anyway though and kept after him, but still he wouldn't have her. His mother told him one day: 'You might just as well marry her because she is a good worker and besides she had friends among the whites, so we could all eat!' My husband got mad then and told his mother what he thought of his former sweetheart. He even threatened to go off to war again if she didn't go away. The woman was right outside the lodge and heard what they said about her. She was so furious that she rushed in and dragged me out feet first so that all my clothes went up over my head. When I got up, she grabbed at my ear and pulled off my ear-ring—you can still see where she tore the flesh. Then she ran in the lodge again and started pounding on my husband. Finally, one of those unmarried relatives, who was not as particular as my husband, told her: 'Well, take your things over to that other lodge and I will move my things over there too.' So they lived as man and wife. I never tried to hit back at that woman and I didn't even talk about her, but I got even with her in a quiet way. One night at a dance, I took my husband by the arm and told him to dance with her. When she said: 'Oh, I have no use for him now—he is old,' I said in a loud voice: 'You would change your mind quick enough if I had asked him to sleep with you!' And everybody laughed and laughed at that woman because they knew how anxious she had been to have him."

837 It was said that when virtuous women refused improper ad-

2; Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

It was said that when virtuous women refused improper advances, some men overcame their resistance by threat of using love charms or witchcraft against them. There was one man, for instance, described as having been handsome, but who was said to have gotten his way with many women by intimidating them. Coming Daylight said: "One day that man approached me saying: 'If you don't let me have you, your life will be short.' I told him: 'Well, you better take a gun and finish me right now. Maybe that would make you feel good.' I called his bluff, but nothing ever happened to me." 837 [832]

Other men were said to have resorted to trickery and actually deceived women whom they could not get by approaching them openly. There was one individual, for example, a contemporary of Coming Daylight and Singer, who had a well-deserved reputation for "getting the better of women" whose husbands were away from camp. Singer told the following story as typical of the kind of thing this man did. "One certain night this man went to a lodge and crept in beside a woman whose husband was away on a war party. He whispered to her, pretending to be her husband: 'I came home ahead of the others. They don't know it.' Then he added: 'Put our little girl on the other side of the lodge.' The woman did as he told her and they laid together. After a while he asked her: 'How are the children?' But this time she remarked: 'Your voice sounds different.' He allayed her suspicions, however, by saying that he had caught a bad cold. He then quickly made his escape by claiming that he would have to get back to his comrades before they would awaken in order to avoid paying a fine should they discover he had come into camp ahead of the rest of the war party. So in the morning this woman told her mother and her mother-in-law that the war party was returning that day. She went out singing war songs so that everyone in the camp heard her. But after a while, when the war party failed to come in, the people realized that some man must have deceived her. It was later found out who he was and this man's name is used at the present time to indicate any man who tricks a woman into believing he is someone for whom she had been waiting."

There was a considerable discussion of whether or not it had been a Gros Ventre custom in the past to periodically have a public confession of chastity by women. Coming Daylight, Singer,

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

837 and the younger women as well, all emphatically maintained that the practice was a Piegan one and not Gros Ventre. On the other hand, The Boy claimed that it was a Gros Ventre practice in his father's time, which extends further back than the actual experience of Singer and Coming Daylight. Mary's statement throws some light on the attitudes in the very recent past. "I have heard that the Piegans did that. My mother-in-law lived among them a long time and told me what their life was like. Once a man here wanted to try that public type of confession. He told everybody: 'We are going to have a big gathering to show off some of our Gros Ventre women. Now remember that this is a sacred thing and you have to swear to it. You don't dare get up there and lie, because if you do you will have bad luck.' I went to that party, but that part of the proceedings didn't come off. Someone had said to the man who was running it: 'You don't want to start this thing because it will cause a lot of trouble.' I guess that is why the host didn't go through with it, although he had the prize—a big quarter of beef—all ready to be given to the one who could honestly make that claim."

In commenting on what Mary had said, Singer and Coming Daylight gave two reasons why this public confession of chastity could not have been a Gros Ventre custom, and would have not been feasible in their day. First, in a gathering of that kind there would have been too many relatives before whom a woman had to be "ashamed"—brothers, cousins, uncles and father; therefore if a woman could justly claim to be chaste she couldn't have gotten up in public and said so. Secondly, it would have exposed too many women; every husband whose wife could not rise to the occasion would have been embarrassed and there would have been too much suspicion and jealousy engendered.

[171] This of course does not disprove the point made by The Boy that the public confession of chastity was in the more remote past a Gros Ventre as well as a Piegan custom, but it does imply that such a ceremony was in all likelihood not held by the Gros Ventres subsequently to 1855 or thereabouts.[11]

[11] Clark, who visited the Fort Belknap Agency for a few days in 1881 mentions, p. 198, that among other dances they have a Strong Dance for women,—intended as a support to their chastity.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

CHAPTER X

OLD AGE AND DEATH

It is the opinion of the now aged Gros Ventres that the proportion of old persons was much greater in the past than it has been since they have taken up the white man's ways; and further, that the aged then retained their health and vigor to a greater degree.[1] One old woman stated that when she was young, there used to be many old people, but that they died off when there were no more buffalo. She added: "People lived to a good old age on the things that the Supreme Being provided,—roots, wild vegetables and fruits, dried meats and berries. In those days, too, they drank broth instead of tea and coffee. Old folks didn't lose their teeth then, although even young girls do nowadays. Their teeth eventually got worn down, but they seldom pulled them. In fact, if an old person should lose a tooth, he thought it was awful and was sure that he was ready for the grave. Furthermore, people didn't get white hair until they were ready for 'old age sleep'—very old people sleep most of the time—yet now one sees middle-aged and even younger people with gray hair like the whites have."

Status and Treatment of the Aged

It was believed that a person who had lived to a ripe old age had been privileged to do so by the Supreme Being. Therefore, they reasoned, if you are good to old people, these in turn will pray to the Supreme Being for your health, long life, and success. Children were instructed explicitly to be good to the aged,—to feed them, to clothe them, and to help them in difficulties,—as well as to seek out those so blessed and ask for their prayers. It was

[1] Allowance should of course be made for the fact that "old age" is a relative term. When it was said that young men were urged to marry "older experienced women," this referred to a woman of perhaps twenty to twenty-five. See pp. 171–72. A woman on the northern plains was "old" at forty, according to Denig, p. 513.

It was
888 thought well, too, to name a child after someone who had attained advanced age. Thus it was that youths of 16 or 17 years of age
[551] would go out in a storm and stand before the lodge of some old man or woman and cry, begging the prayers of that person. Again, on a hunting party, should there be some old man along,
[431] unable to hunt, one member of the group might give a whole buf-
782] falo carcass to him; whereupon the grateful elder would offer a spontaneous prayer on the donor's behalf. Similarly, it was not at all unusual for successful young hunters to seek out old people to share in some of the spoils,—just as in these later times a bottle of whiskey was occasionally given to old persons by the young. Once in a while, too, some married man would have his wife cook
[782] a quantity of food and publicly invite old people, one of whom, in appreciation of this attention, would offer the expected prayer for the long life, health and success of the host and all the members of his household.

Dignity was, however, not necessarily an attribute of old age. With advancing years the conventions were somewhat relaxed. It was stated by one informant: "When a man had lived long enough to have participated in all the Sacred Dances, he had acquired the right to do almost as he pleased, including not having to observe so strictly the relationship taboos. It seemed to throw the bars down and he could have even more fun than ever at the expense of his enemy-friends and become still more vulgar and obscene." Relations between old women living together were not always harmonious and noisy quarreling was not unusual. Sometimes young boys played pranks on such old women, as in the following case.

888 "Two old women who were sisters shared a lodge. One day they were in there, seated back to back, warming themselves by
522 the fire. They didn't have any clothes on and were feeling good, scratching their skins with sticks. Two young boys peeped in. They took a long willow and quietly heated the end of it in the fire. When the end of the willow was glowing, they touched one of the old women with it. She yelled at the other: 'You burned me,' and of course the other denied it. After a little while, the boys did the same thing to the other old woman. They heard her call out: 'What did you do to me? You burned me!' The boys

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

repeated this stunt twice more, but this was too much for these old women, who then started fighting and shouting recriminations, blaming each other. The boys of course were in high glee as the old women hit each other and grunted. Finally, however, they called the daughter of one of the old women, saying: 'Come and see these old ones fighting. Try and stop them. They will kill each other.' So as the boys ran away, the younger woman restored peace." 888 522

Care of the aged devolved upon close kin. Whereas old men customarily lived directly with the households to which they were attached, old windows usually lived in lodges separate from, but located near, those of relatives who provided most of their food. To old women was often relegated the care of their grandchildren, especially of their granddaughters, whom they were supposed to train from the age of about seven until such time as they were given in marriage. The young girls in turn supplied the water and fuel for their grandmothers. In case the aged person had children of his own, he was reasonably secure. Those whose dependence was on more remote relatives were less assured of good care. The aged who had special skills which could be exercised in spite of debility, especially those who possessed "medicine power," were better off than the others.[8] 888 [542] [887]

In dealing with old people it was said that much patience and forbearance were often necessary. For instance, one old woman, now deceased, was described by a relative in the following terms: "She was a hardboiled old jane, rough and tough, who didn't hesitate to tell you what she thought of things. But she had many friends and when visitors came she would swell up and be proud when they sat beside her rather than beside one of the several other old women who lived in the same place. Usually during the visit, however, she would get mad and threaten all kinds of things, and people would have to humor her. One day she really blew up and said: 'I'm going to save my relatives the job of hauling my carcass out, so I'm going out on the hills right now and lie out there and die!' So one of her relatives had to pretend to take her

[8] Denig, pp. 576–77, states that only such old persons who possess medicine powers are exempt from the petty tricks and other annoyances to which the aged in general are subject among northern plains tribes.

888 seriously and he grabbed her by the arm and yelled: 'Come back here! What are you going to do?' The old woman was taken by surprise,—her bluff was called,—and she meekly came back."

More than one Gros Ventre used the phrase regarding old women in general that they were "great ones to pout." An example of sulking on the part of one old woman, which resulted in more than ordinarily serious consequences, is the following told by Singer. "One time when I was young, the group was about to move camp. There was an old woman whose granddaughter was looking after her, but she was 'pouting' and refused to get on either the travois or the horse. When the party was leaving, her granddaughter urged her: 'Hurry. Everybody is leaving us and it is dangerous to travel alone!' But the old woman just pouted and pouted, and finally in desperation the girl left. When they camped again, the girl kept worrying about her grandmother, so she asked a man to go back with her. They were mounted. The rest of the party waited a long time, but when they didn't return, the whole group went back to hunt for them. They found that the girl and the man had been killed and scalped, but the old woman lay dead in a sweatlodge.

"Years later they heard the details from the Assiniboine, who had swooped down on the three of them just as the girl and her companion met the old woman who was slowly following the trail on foot. They first killed the man and tried to capture the girl. When she resisted, they killed her and scalped them both. They didn't harm the old woman, but she begged them to build a sweatlodge for her and leave her there. She told them: 'Seal it up tightly. I just as much as killed my grandchild, and I will die with her.'"

In the days when the Gros Ventres were nomadic, abandonment of the ill and aged was not unknown. Sometimes it was done with great regret, when the responsible parties did not have the equipment to enable them to carry the old person along. On other occasions the old person was quite callously left to his fate. Singer recalled the following instance." On one occasion the group was moving camp, and one family went off and left an old helpless woman sitting there without so much as having prepared a shelter for her. My younger brother kept saying: 'You are leaving an old

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

woman! You are leaving an old woman!' Finally our mother couldn't stand it any longer and, although she was not responsible for that old woman, she turned back and got the old woman to camp by letting her hang onto the travois. But we didn't have to carry her because she died shortly after that." 888

Takes The Bow mentioned that in the dim past, rather than to go off and leave an aged relative, the Gros Ventres used to ask some outstanding warrior to kill this old person—a father, or mother, or grandparent. This was done in order to get those who were suffering "out of their misery." The relative who took this responsibility would authorize the killer to count coup on the one whom he killed and thus score another mark of distinction for his record.[8] Other Gros Ventres were of the opinion that this type of "mercy killing" was adopted from the Blackfoot and that it was rarely carried out by the Gros Ventres, although admittedly abandonment of the aged to starvation was sometimes forced upon them.

Death

The Gros Ventres valued life highly and prayed for long lives, but when a person knew he was about to die, it was said that he resigned himself and appreciated the efforts on the part of others to ease his last moments. There was a desire to die surrounded by one's family and friends who would see to it that the proper last steps were taken. In view of this, if a man were wounded in an encounter with the enemy, every effort would be made by his companions—even at great personal risk—to get him back to his family before he would die. 761 763 [727]

When all hope for life had been abandoned, the dying person was dressed in the best clothes available, his hair combed, and his face painted "as though he were going to a party." Frequently last minute instructions would be given by the dying concerning his preference as to method of final disposal. He might also include advice to his survivors, and make occasional bequests of 763

[8] It is interesting to note in this connection that Cocking, 1772, p. 112, writes of the Gros Ventres: "They torture all the aged of both sexes in a most shocking and deliberate manner." The context is not clear, however, and he may have been referring to treatment of prisoners of war.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

763 property.[6] Although in the following case ideal conditions did not obtain, the account as given by an old woman illustrates something of the attitudes which prevailed even after the Gros Ventres had settled down. "My husband had been ill. We were very badly off, having nothing to eat and no light, but worst of all my husband had no suitable clothes in which to pass his last moments. A friend of his fortunately came to the rescue, bringing new clothes, food, a fancy new lamp and fuel. A short time after this my husband called to me to come to him and said: 'I have lost life long ago. The only thing I have left is my eyesight. I can see, but I will be leaving you soon. Bring me the bundle my friend has given me.' I did so and as he examined the new clothing piece by piece he said: 'Now I am glad I shall have something to wear. I want you to listen carefully. I don't want you to mourn—we have too many children for that, and they must be cared for. Don't go to your relatives nor to mine. We have been very poor since I have been sick and none of them has even come to see us. I want you to go straight to the home of this man who has given me these clothes. Now I am ready to go.' After my husband [587] died, I did just as he had requested. In spite of all the gossip, I married that man. People were talking about me because that man had at one time been married to a wife of my mother's brother."

764 If circumstances did not permit arrangements to be made before death, as soon as possible after death the corpse was washed and dressed. This office was performed preferably by friends of the [572] deceased since it was not expected of near relatives because "they felt too bad." Should the deceased not own a proper outfit, one was usually somehow provided. Coming Daylight remembered that one time when a small boy was drowned, the child's distracted mother came running to her lodge saying: "I am very poor and my little boy has no good clothes to wear. Will you let me have your little boy's clothes?" Coming Daylight felt so sorry for this woman that she let her have her own son's nicely beaded clothes and moccasins, and gave her a blanket as well. After the body was dressed, they laid it on this blanket in the place of honor at the back of the parents' lodge.

[6] Kroeber, 1908, p. 180, notes that "A man often disposed of his property before death."

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Another instance was given by The Boy regarding his father. 764
"Lame Bull was on a buffalo-hunting party when his brother-in-law was killed during an encounter with the enemy. They brought the body as it was back to camp, where it lay for quite a while. [727]
Lame Bull finally went to his tipi and got leggings and a shirt of his own, although he was Flat Pipe Keeper at the time and it was [784]
taboo for one holding this office to give his clothes to the dead. Nevertheless Lame Bull removed the bloody clothes from the body of his brother-in-law, washed the body and dressed it in his own clothes. He paid for this kindness, however, because for nine years thereafter he had such pains in his legs he was not able to walk,—this being the punishment he suffered for breaking the rules, by which the Keeper of a sacred pipe should live."

Before finally disposing of the body "something very expensive," like a big silk handkerchief, was placed over the face. The whole body, including the head, was then wrapped securely in a blanket or robe and tied "like a mummy." The body was placed on a stretcher and put in a forked tree, if practicable, the head to the setting sun. Otherwise the corpse might be laid on a knoll and a structure like a sweatlodge built over it to protect it from the wild beasts; or it might be laid in the cleft of a cliff and covered with rocks.[8] For a particularly prominent man, however, his own 766
lodge might serve as his last resting place. In that case holes would be dug in which the lodge-poles were placed, in order that the structure would be more permanent. The body was laid in the lodge amidst rich furnishings. The ears of the lodge were closed, the cover pegged down, and the whole secured as well as possible. This was done, for instance, for The Boy's maternal grandfather and for one of his maternal uncles. Al Chandler remembers that when he himself was a small boy upon the death of his uncle, Rises Again, the body was placed on a bedstead in a big lodge erected about a half-mile from his house.

Even in times of great stress, such as in a smallpox epidemic 764
when so many died that "the trees along the Milk River were just [765
loaded with bodies," as much care as possible was taken to place 737]
the bodies properly in their last resting place. When there was no more space on the trees, a large number of bodies were put in a

[8] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, p. 181.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

764 lodge at some little distance from the camp. As exceptions to the rule, however, Coming Daylight told of a couple of instances which came within her experience in the first epidemic which she remembers. One case concerned a man who simply left the body of one of his wives where she had fallen and Coming Daylight [766 731] came across the bones of that woman stripped of flesh by wild animals during the night. The other case was that of a man who mercilessly covered with stones the body of his infected sister, in spite of the fact that she was still alive.

[178] Only in relatively recent times has burial in the ground been common. This is illustrated by the comments of Coming Daylight in connection with a long story about a visit to a relative who was married to a white trader. "On this occasion my father's father was killed and scalped by the Piegan just outside of the white man's stockade. The white men brought in the body. He had been scalped and was bloody all over. These whites washed him, bound up his head, and dressed his body in their own clothes,—even to putting shoes on his feet. We thought that peculiar and some of our relatives wanted instead to put on him the best pair of beaded moccasins we had. My father said, however, that he wouldn't interfere as long as they were fixing him up in their way. So the whites buried him just like they do their own. The Gros Ventres never did that—they put the corpse up high somewhere, usually in a tree. We thought it was bad enough for our relatives to die, much less covering them up with earth. My maternal grandmother, who was there at the time, said: 'When I leave you, I don't want you to mourn for me because I have lived to be just as old as anyone should be. All I ask is that you see to it that I am fixed up the right way. Don't let them dig any hole for me. I want you to lay me up in a cliff in a nice quiet place, just make a bed for me and lay me there.' When she died, that is just what was done for her."

It was customary, prior to the time that the Gros Ventres settled down, to place some of the personal belongings of the deceased with the body.[6] When a beloved son died, for instance, his favorite horse might be taken along and killed at the place where the body was laid away. Similarly a minor pipe might have been

[6] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, p. 180.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

buried with its owner. For a woman, her clothing, and sometimes even her pots and pans, were put with her body. It was stated explicitly, however, that food was never placed with the body by the Gros Ventres, although it was recognized that the Assiniboine did so: 764

A widow would burn the things of her husband which were not placed with his body nor taken by his relatives. She would then be smudged with sage and, should she have kissed the corpse, her mouth was smudged four times and she was made to spit each time. 768 783

These practices were seemingly tied up with two beliefs,—the first being that if objects were not placed with the body, the deceased would return to look for the things valued in life; the second, that the recently deceased try to lure the living to join them. The first point was explained by Mary, whose mother had told her: "Everyone likes his own things and some hate to leave them when they die. That is why we used to put personal belongings with the corpse. It might be that there is some one thing that a person wants which has been 'left behind,' so he will come back to seek it. Sometimes when you are alone you might hear a rattling of the dishes or a whistling sound, and you would know that it was some loved one who had died and who was looking for something." 764 795

As proof of the second point, the following experience was offered by Singer. "When I was ill during a smallpox epidemic, I had a dream. I dreamed that my sister, who had died in this same epidemic, appeared to me and said: 'Our mother wants you. Come with me.' My father, who was actually nursing me, seemed to be standing to one side. He told my sister: 'You have had no pity on us. You didn't fight for life. What are you coming after her for? You go by yourself.' But pretty soon my sister came again and said: 'Now this time I want you to come because our mother wants you.' So I agreed: 'All right. I will go with you.' My sister took me to a shabby-looking little old lodge and I didn't feel right about going in there but I thought: 'Well, to please them I will look in there anyway.' There was someone there in bed and my sister was toward the back of the lodge and my mother was on the other side. My mother told me: 'Here, sit by your sister.' She 795 787

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

began to dig around behind her bedding and brought out a bowl such as that in which buffalo chips are pounded into powder. She said: 'Here. I want you to eat this.' It didn't look good to me and I just kind of felt it with my fingers. Instead of having sat by my sister as my mother had directed, I had remained by the door, because I felt kind of scared in some way. So I told them: 'Wait. I guess I will go out a minute. I will be right back.' But I got out of there and ran home as fast as I could go—back to my own bed, back to myself. If I had eaten what they had given me that would have been the last of me! After this dream I got well."

Mourning

As soon as word was circulated that someone had died, all relatives of that person, especially the women, were supposed to gather as soon as possible to cry and mourn for the deceased. Very close kin were expected to show their sorrow at the death of a loved one not only by crying and wailing, but also by casting off their good clothes and donning old ones,—robes, for instance, consisting of pieces of old discarded lodge covers, or ordinary robes that were rough and worn,—and by cutting the hair.[7] This latter was truly a great sacrifice, for to the Gros Ventres one of the chief criteria of beauty, in men and women alike, was extreme length of hair. The hair of younger children in a family was spared, even at the death of parents, but should, say, a father die, the hair of the older daughters was shorn, though not cut so short as that of the widow. An elderly woman was usually called upon to do the cutting and the widow, guided by the strength of her emotional reaction, would indicate how short she wished her hair to be. It was said that some widows would leave their hair relatively long, just free of the shoulders, while others "when they felt too badly, had all their hair cut off, almost as men now wear their hair."

Close kin were accustomed to further show grief by going off to the hills and fasting, crying aloud as they wandered about alone, and sleeping out without shelter. A parent would have done so at the loss of a son, one spouse at the death of the other, or a sister for her deceased brother. Such mourners would stay out

[7] For this and other practices in mourning, see Kroeber, 1908, p. 181.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

765 152

until someone went after them and talked to them and persuaded them to eat and drink some water.

The most extravagant expressions of grief were expected on the part of close relatives of men killed at war. It was under such circumstances that the mourners tore off their clothes and gashed their arms and legs. The blood was not washed off and the wounds were allowed to fester, often leaving ugly scars. It was maintained that in mourning the Gros Ventres did not cut off fingers,—that was done only in fulfilment of a vow. [304]

If a brave young man were killed by the enemy, his parents went even further in the expression of their grief, and sometimes had to be restrained from committing suicide. The father could show additional sorrow by cutting the manes and tails of his son's horses, which he then led about as he wandered on the hills for four days and nights, crying and mourning. The following case illustrates the behavior of an elder brother in mourning for a younger one, but may be somewhat exceptional in that the former felt responsible for the latter's death. [062] 765 787

"Little Man, also known as Deafie, was on his way home with his younger brother. They had been on a friendly visit to the Crow. There were others in the party and one evening while they were camped, the younger brother had a dream. The next morning he told them: 'I had a bad dream. I dreamed I got killed.' One of the older men said: 'All right. We will stop here awhile so we can make a sweat-lodge and we will smudge.' (That is what they did when they wanted to prevent something bad from happening.) But Little Man told them that, although the rest of them might believe in dreams, he did not, and he insisted that they move on. The old man couldn't say anything more. As they were going along that same day, Little Man was scouting ahead and sighted the enemy. The Gros Ventre party separated, Little Man going with one group, his brother with the other. The brother happened to go right into the midst of the Assiniboine and was killed. The others heard the shots, but when they got there, Little Man found his brother lying dead. He then tore off all his clothes and would have committed suicide by dashing singlehanded after the enemy had not his brother-in-law grabbed him and held him back. When they got home, Little Man felt so badly that he cut off his beautiful

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

765
787

long hair. All this happened just a year before he married Coming Daylight."

It was said that not infrequently those out mourning on the hills experienced visions of supernatural significance. It seemed that women were especially favored at times like that since they never went out in quest of power as did men. When Lame Bull's wife was mourning for her younger brother after he was killed at war, "someone" came to her and taught her a special song which she should sing when the party returned from avenging his death. Coming Daylight, when crying out on the hills after one of her sons died, was "shown a cane" which she took to mean that she would live to be an old woman. Another of her visions is given in detail as it involves a substitution for the more violent expressions of grief.

"When I was out in the hills after my favorite son died, I dreamed that I was in a big lodge full of people and I was sitting right by the door. At the back of this lodge was a big pile of tobacco mixture and a pipe lying alongside. The owner of the lodge, after he filled the pipe, got up and walked toward me. I was scared, because I didn't smoke. This one told me: 'Look at these people.' I did so and noticed that many of them had their hair cut and that their bodies were bleeding. Then he said: 'That kind of mourning is in the past. Nowadays your only consolation is in smoking this pipe.' He gave me the pipe and I started to smoke. I smoked until the tobacco was finished, emptied the pipe and put it down. Then the owner of the lodge told the other people there: 'Go ahead.' All the people in there took turns coming up to me, each rubbing red paint on his hands and painting me, starting at the top of my head and proceeding right down to the tip of my moccasins. I was facing the door and when the last one finished, the man told me: 'Now go home. Don't ever go on the hills and mourn again. But always smoke if you want to.'

"That was my dream. When I got home I sat down and started to cry. When my husband asked me what was the matter, I told him that I wanted a smoke, related my dream to him. He said: 'I will take you to your sister.' When we got to her house my husband said to her: 'Your sister is crying for a smoke.' My sister laughed and said: 'Well, I have no pinto ponies to give her!

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

I have always heard her say that she would never smoke, even if someone gave her a pinto pony.' But when my husband told her about my dream, she said: 'Oh. It is great to have a dream like that. Many of us fast and pray and we are never shown anything!' So she fixed a smoke for me and gave it to me. I have been smoking ever since." 765 787

Whenever close relatives happened to be in the vicinity where lay the remains of one of their number, some at least went there to cry. Coming Daylight remarked that she remembers well where each and every one of her relatives had been "left," and feels the country, over which the Gros Ventres had control in the 1860's and 1870's, to be "fenced in" by their remains. 765

At present when a Gros Ventre dies, no "feasting and smoking" is done for four days thereafter. If, however, an important date has been set and it is seriously inconvenient to postpone a big gathering, at least one of the chief mourners would be invited "too soon," and has no choice but to accept. Before eating, the host or someone in his place "talked" to the mourner and commanded him to cease mourning, to paint his face, and henceforth to join in all amusements, dances, and social affairs of the people. 765 178

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Bradley, James H., *Affairs at Fort Benton from 1831 to 1869 from Lieutenant Bradley's Journal*, in Contribution to the History of Montana, 3:201–287, Helena, 1900. 113

Catlin, George, *North American Indians*, 2 vols., Edinburgh, 1926.

Chittenden, Hiram Martin, *The American Fur Trade of the Far West*, 3 vols., New York, 1902.

Clark, W. P., *The Indian Sign Language*, Philadelphia, 1885.

Cocking, Matthew, *Journal of Matthew Cocking, from York Factory to the Blackfeet Country, 1772–73*, Burpee, L. J., ed., Transactions of The Royal Society of Canada, 3rd series, section 2, vol. 2, Ottawa, 1909.

Cooper, John M., *The Gros Ventres of Montana, Part II, Religious Life*, Manuscript, 1949.

Curtis, Edward S., *The North American Indian*, vol. 5, Plates 167–183, 1928.

Denig, Edwin Thompson, *Indian Tribes of the Upper Missouri*, Bureau of American Ethnology, Annual Report 46, Washington, 1930.

De Smet, Rev. P. J., Letter 18 to the editor of the Précis historiques, Brussels, in *Western Missions and Missionaries: A series of Letters*, pp. 253–61, New York, 1859.

Ewers, John C., *Were the Blackfoot Rich in Horses?* in American Anthropologist, 45: 602–10, 1943.

——*The Case for Blackfoot Pottery*, in American Anthropologist, 47: 289–99, 1945.

Flannery, Regina, *The Dearly-loved Child among the Gros Ventres of Montana*, in Primitive Man, 14:33–37, 1941.

——*The Gros Ventre Shaking Tent*, in Primitive Man, 17:54–60, 1944.

——*Men's and Women's Speech in Gros Ventre*, International Journal of American Linguistics, 12:133–35, 1946.

——*The Changing Form and Functions of the Gros Ventre Grass Dance*, in Primitive Man, 20:39–70, 1947.

——and Cooper, John M., *Social Mechanisms in Gros Ventre Gambling*, in Southwestern Journal of Anthropology, 2:391–419, 1946.

Franchère, *Franchère's Narrative of a Voyage to the Northwest Coast, 1811–1814*, Huntington, J. V., tr. and ed., in Early Western Travels, Thwaites, ed., vol. 6, pp. 167–410, New York, 1904.

Franklin, John, *Narrative of a Journey to the Shores of the Polar Sea in the Years 1819–20–21–22*, London, New York, 1924.

[Graham, Andrew, 1775], *Extract from Observations on Hudson's Bay*, in Isham's Observations, Appendix B.

Gregg, Josiah, *Commerce of the Prairies, or The Journal of a Santa Fé Trader, 1831–37*, in Early Western Travels, Thwaites, ed., vol. 19, pp. 155–349. New York, 1924.

[P. 208 contains no text]

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

113 Harmon, D. W., *A Journal of Voyages and Travels in the Interior of North America*, Haskell, ed., New York, 1922.

Hayden, F. V., *Contributions to the Ethnography and Philology of the Indian Tribes of the Missouri Valley*, Philadelphia, 1862.

Hendry, Anthony, *The Journal of Anthony Hendry, 1754–55*, Burpee, ed., Proc. and Trans of Royal Society of Canada, series 3, vol. 1, 1907, pp. 307–54.

Henry, Alexander, *New Light on the Early History of the Greater Northwest.* The Manuscript Journals of Alexander Henry and David Thompson, E. Coues, ed., 3 vols., New York, 1897.

Hoopes, Alban W., *Indian Affairs and Their Administration with Special Reference to the Far West, 1849–1860*, Philadelphia, 1932.

Hornaday, William T., *The Extermination of the American Bison*, in Report of the United States National Museum, Smithsonian Institution, for 1887, pp. 367–548, Washington, 1889.

Isham, James, *Observations on Hudson's Bay 1743*, and Notes and Observations on a book entitled *A Voyage to Hundson's Bay in the Dobbs Gallery 1749*, Rich, E. E. ed., Champlain Society, Toronto, 1949.

Kelsey, *The Kelsey Papers*, Public Archives of Canada and The Public Record Office of Northern Ireland, Ottawa, 1929.

Kroeber, A. L., *The Arapaho*, American Museum of Natural History, Bulletin 18, pp. 1–299; 279–454, 1902–07.

———*Gros Ventre Myths and Tales*, American Museum of Natural History, Anthropological Papers, vol. 1, 55–139, 1907.

———*Ethnology of the Gros Ventre*, American Museum of Natural History, Anthropological Papers, vol. 1, 145–281, 1908.

———*Arapaho Dialects*, University of California Publications in American Archaeology and Ethnology, vol. 12, pp. 71–138, 1916.

La Combe, A., *Dictionnaire de la Langue des Cris*, Montréal, 1874.

Larocque, *Journal of Francois Antoine Larocque from the Assiniboine River to the Yellowstone—1805*, Hazlitt, tr. and ed., Sources of Northwest History No. 20, State University of Montana, 1934.

Lewis, Oscar, *The Effects of White Contact upon Blackfoot Culture*, American Ethnological Society, Memoir 6, 1942.

Mackenzie, Alexander, *Voyages from Montreal through the Continent of North America to the Frozen and Pacific Oceans in 1789 and 1793*, 2 vols., New York, 1902.

Mandelbaum, D., *The Plains Cree*, American Museum of Natural History, Anthropological Papers, vol. 37, pp. 155–316, 1940.

Maximilian, *Prince of Wied's Travels in the Interior of North America*, pt. 2, in Thwaites, ed., Early Western Travels, vol. 23.

McClintock, Walter, *The Old North Trail*, London, 1910.

Mengarini, *Father Mengarini's Narrative*, in Partoll, ed., Sources of Northwest History, No. 25, State University of Montana.

Morton, Arthur S., *A History of the Canadian West to 1870–71*, Toronto and New York, n. d. [1939].

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

113

Palladino, L. B., *Indian and White in the Northwest; A History of Catholicity in Montana 1831 to 1891*, rev. and enl. ed., Lancaster, 1922.

Report, Commissioners of Indian Affairs 1838–1915, Washington, D. C.

Richardson's Journal quoted in Franklin, John, Narrative, pp. 99–100.

Rodnick, David, *The Fort Belknap Assiniboine of Montana*, New Haven, 1938.

Saint-Pierre, Jacques Le Gardeur de, *Memoire ou Journal du Voyage*, in Margry, vol. 6.

Schultz, J. W., *My Life as an Indian*, New York, 1907.

Scott, Hugh Lenox, *The Early History and Names of the Arapaho*, in American Anthropologist, 9:545–60, 1907.

Seton, Ernest Thompson, *Lives of Game Animals*, 4 vols., New York, 1937.

Thompson, David, *David Thompson's Narrative of His Explorations in Western America 1784–1812*, J. B. Tyrell, ed., The Champlain Society Publications, Toronto, 1916.

Umfreville, Edward, *The Present State of Hudson's Bay*, London, 1790.

Voorhis, E., *Historic Forts and Trading Posts of the French Regime and of the English Trading Posts*, Ottawa, 1930.

Wissler, C., *Population Changes among the Northern Plains Indians*, Yale University Publications in Anthropology No. 1, 1936.

——*Changes in Population Profiles Among the North Plains Indians*, American Museum of Natural History, Anthropological Papers, vol. 36, pp. 1–67, 1936(a).

PLATES

142 The original photograph of Plate 1 was taken in 1887 and
291 belongs to The Boy. Shown in it are Lame Bull, The Boy's
301 father, and Crow Bull, maternal uncle of Coming Daylight. Both
302 of these men were born around 1825 and their personal experiences were often referred to by our informants as we took down the record of the old way of life. Each had been Keeper of the sacred Flat Pipe.

115 The photographs composing Plate 2, except for the one of The
133 Boy, were taken in 1940 by Dr. Karl F. Herzfeld. The first three
142 show the nature of the country around Hays on the Fort Belknap
291 Reservation; the other three show some of our informants and
292 interpreters whose biographical sketches follow.

531 In Plate 3, the shield and war medicines of Bull Lodge, father
797 of our informant, Garter Snake, represent only a few of the specimens of Gros Ventre culture collected in 1937 by Mr.
778 Richard Pohrt, of Flint, Michigan.
293
714
724

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

142
291
301
302

PLATE I

LEFT TO RIGHT: LAME BULL, BIRD SITTING, BLACK BIRD AND CROW BULL

(Photo by Don Dutro, Fort Benton, Montana, 1887)

[p. 212 (A)]

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

115
133
142
291
292
531

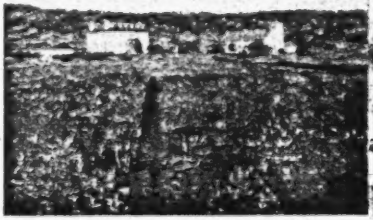
IN THE LITTLE ROCKIES

THE BOY

PLAINS NEAR HAYS

MARY, SINGER, AND COMING DAYLIGHT

[342]
[797]



ST. PAUL'S MISSION AND SCHOOL

COMING DAYLIGHT'S TIPI

PLATE II

[p. 212 (8)]

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

293
1778
721
714

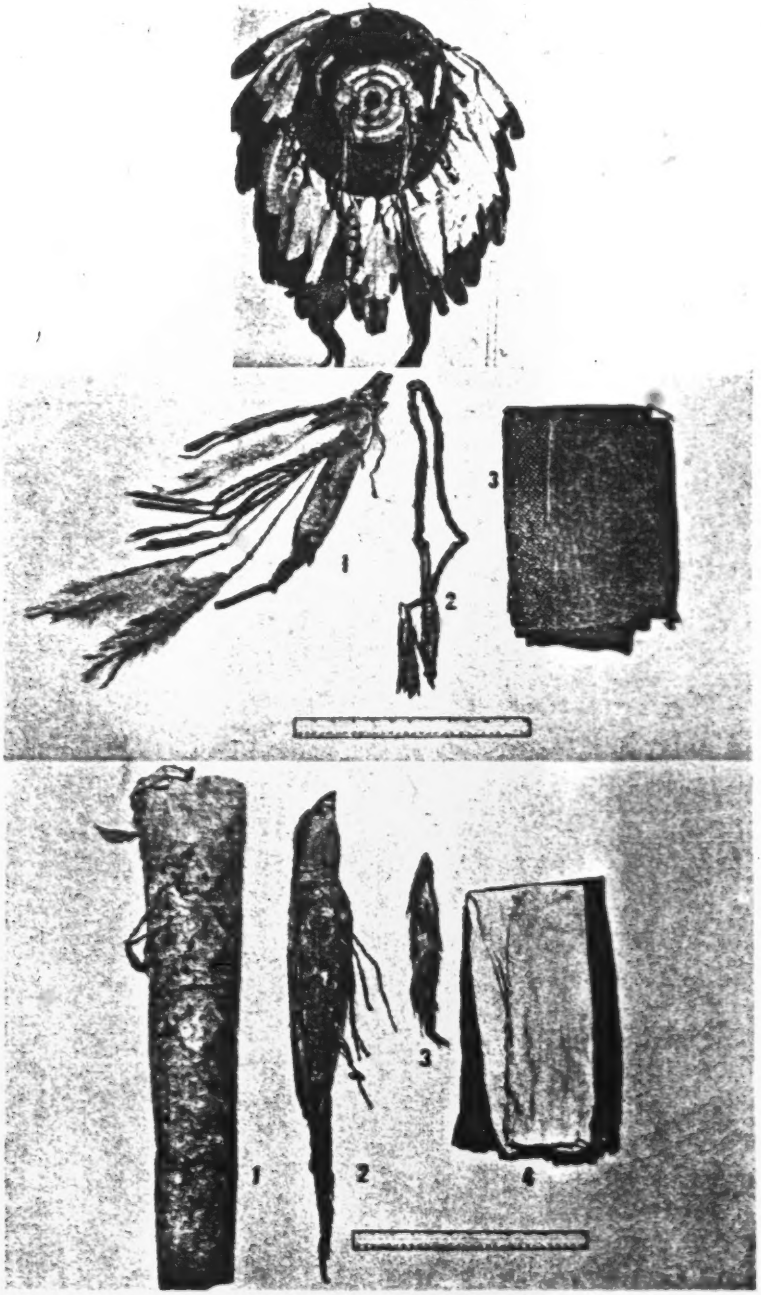


PLATE III

SHIELD AND WAR MEDICINES MADE
AND USED BY BULL LODGE

[p. 212(C)]

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

APPENDIX

THE CHIEF INFORMANTS

The Boy gave the greater bulk of information on religious and political aspects of Gros Ventre culture. He was born in 1870, one of the younger sons of Lame Bull (b. ca. 1825—d. 1908), and grandson of Crow Moccasin (whose other name was Bird Chief, b. ca. 1795—d. 1865), a signer of the 1855 Treaty. When The Boy was a very young child his father, a prominent warrior and well-to-do man, became Keeper of one of the sacred pipes—the Flat Pipe. As a boy and young man, The Boy, who was very much interested in the ceremonial and other aspects of his culture, spent as much time as possible with his father and his father's friends, listening to their discussions. In private he questioned his father repeatedly and thus he acquired a wide and deep knowledge of the Gros Ventre way of life as it was before the buffalo disappeared. Although he did well during the one year of boarding school he had at St. Peter's, he was very unhappy there, and did not enter the newly opened Mission School of St. Paul's although his father wished him to do so. He is an extremely intelligent man with marked philosophical trend of mind. In spite of his unwillingness to speak English, he became a natural leader among the Gros Ventres and served his people in many different capacities. At present he is the "grand old man" of the Gros Ventres and is appealed to when any question regarding the past arises. His statement in regard to his knowledge of the 1855 Treaty, for instance, is acknowledged as weighty evidence in the present Gros Ventre claims against the Government which are now awaiting settlement. Without The Boy's drive to have the old way of life recorded, this work could not have been accomplished.

115
159

Thick (b. ca. 1870—d. 1951) was well-versed in the old culture. It was his father who was responsible for putting on the last Sacrifice Dance (Sun Dance) held by the Gros Ventres in 1884. Thick's maternal uncle took advantage of his prerogative to raise his sister's children and removed Thick from his parental home at about the age of seven and kept him under supervision until Thick was a young man. Compared to his elder brother, Horse Capture, Thick was somewhat shy and retiring, entering into the public social life of the Gros Ventres only after his brother finally persuaded him to do so. A considerable amount of the material given to Dr. Cooper was related by The Boy in Thick's presence, and Thick either agreed with what had been said, or, if he disagreed, he did not hesitate to speak up. Since he and The Boy were brothers-in-law and maintained their respectful relationship, there were a number of topics which they could not discuss in each other's presence. Consequently there were many occasions when Thick worked independently of The Boy, both with Father Cooper and with me. Thick never attended school, and, like The Boy, did not speak English.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

115
159

Charles Buckman (b. ca. 1875—d. 1949), whose nickname was John, was brought up by his mother's people. He had considerable knowledge of the old way of life and his childhood training and experience remained vivid in his memory in spite of the fact that he was educated at the boarding school at St. Paul's Mission on the Reservation. He enjoyed reading the newspapers and listening to the radio and was equally interested in discussing the old way of life of the Gros Ventres and the latest developments in world politics. His services as interpreter and informant were utilized especially in many of the sessions that Dr. Cooper had jointly with Thick and The Boy. Thick found him an especially congenial interpreter. He was prominent in the public life of the Reservation and held several different offices.

Thomas Main (b. 1890) made a very extensive contribution to the record of Gros Ventre way of life in his capacity as chief interpreter. He, like Charles Buckman, was a half-orphan and was raised by his mother's people. The Boy is his maternal uncle and has exerted a considerable influence on Tom. His knowledge of the old way of life comes, too, through his old "grandmothers" for whom as a child he ran errands and who rewarded him by long stories of the "old times." He was educated at St. Paul's Mission School and has always been a great reader—for years he has kept in touch with current developments not only through the usual media, but also through daily reading of the Congressional Record. His unusually good command of English, coupled with a real linguistic sense, makes him an ideal interpreter. He has been extremely patient with our efforts to take down Gros Ventre texts, and was never too hurried to explain the metaphorical expressions in which the Gros Ventre language abounds. He has taken an active part in tribal affairs and is often selected as spokesman for the Gros Ventres at the local, state, and national levels.

Al Chandler (b. ca. 1870) gave valuable information, especially in view of the fact that his relatives participated more fully in the rites connected with the Feathered Pipe rather than with those of the Flat Pipe. This helped very much to round out the picture of ceremonial aspects of Gros Ventre life. He was educated at St. Paul's Mission School and, like Tom Main, was able to convey in English some of the finer nuances of the Gros Ventre language. Ill health prevented his giving us as many interviews as we should have liked to have had with him.

Coming Daylight (b. 1854—d. 1949) was also known by another of her names, Taken A Prisoner, and her childhood nickname had been Yellow Hair. In spite of her advanced age in 1940, she was a vigorous old woman in full possession of her faculties and had her own house independently of any of her many relatives. She maintained throughout the years her reputation for industry, generosity and hospitality and was highly respected. She was very much interested in the taking of the record of the old way of life and gave most freely of her personal experiences, and referred as well to what she had heard from her uncle, her grandmother and other older people whose experiences extended further into the past than her own. She had been orphaned at an early age and was brought up by a strict old

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

grandmother under the protection of her mother's brother, Crow Bull, (b. ca. 1825—d. 1887) a prosperous and prominent warrior, who for a number of years was Keeper of the Flat Pipe. She was married as a child-bride to Dressed in White, whom she loved and respected and who later also acquired as wife her younger sister. She was still a young woman when her husband died. Her following two marriages were each of short duration, but with her next husband, Little Man, she lived many years until she was again widowed. It was during this marriage that the drastic change in Gros Ventre culture occurred with the disappearance of the buffalo. Her last husband, Warrior, pre-deceased her by many years. By 1945 her health had begun to fail although her memory was still good. In 1948, however, she was very ill and was not able to work. To Coming Daylight we owe the bulk of the material on the life cycle and the woman's point of view on social and religious activities. 115 159

Singer (b. ca. 1855—d. 1947) was often present when her friend, Coming Daylight, was talking about the old ways of doing things. On these occasions as well as when she was interviewed alone, she volunteered a great deal of information independently. Her lot had not been as fortunate as that of Coming Daylight. Her first marriage at the age of ten or eleven was to join her sister as co-wife. She was soon sent home to her father and her next marriage, which lasted for some time, was an unhappy one. She was mistreated by the senior wife, who was not related to her, and their husband not only permitted this but was cruel to her himself. Her next two marriages, first to Iron Bucket and later to Ax Handle, turned out more successfully. In her old age she married her last husband, Sleeping Bear, whom she outlived by some years. She seems to have been less inclined towards domesticity than was Coming Daylight, and enjoyed to the full such activities as gambling, counting coups, and rough and tumble games and jests with her brothers-in-law and her enemy-friends.

Garter Snake (b. ca. 1860) has been blind for a number of years and consequently was not able to enter into the giving of the record with the same spirit and interest as either Coming Daylight or Singer. Nevertheless she gave valuable information. She is the daughter of Bull Lodge, (b. ca. 1825—d. ca. 1900?) who had been not only Keeper of the sacred Feathered Pipe but also was a famous medicine man. She had been selected as Pipe Child at the time her father became Keeper and thus remained in the same lodge as her parents while the other children, including her brother, Otter Robe, were sent to live with relatives. Although Garter Snake volunteered practically no information on her personal experiences, except those of early childhood, she gave a considerable amount of material and independently corroborated a number of points which had been given by others. She is at present the wife of Jim Shortman.

Cora Chandler, late wife of Al Chandler, referred to above, acted as interpreter for Coming Daylight and Singer in 1940. She attended St. Paul's School but was raised by relatives who spoke only Gros Ventre. In many friendly chats with me she elaborated upon various topics which had been

2: Flannery.E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

115 discussed by the old women during our regular sessions, drawing on her knowledge of the old way of life she had acquired from her mother and
159 other old women she had known. Not infrequently she referred to the contrast between the type of behavior that had been expected of her and that which is characteristic of the younger generation today.

Mary Ereaux, at present living off the Reservation at Dodson, was also an interpreter for the oldest informants in 1940. Like Cora, she too kindly supplemented their information from what she had seen and heard in her youth among relatives who conserved the old ways. She volunteered many comments on the change of culture she is witnessing and thus threw much light on the past.

Mathilda Cuts The Rope interpreted for the two oldest women in 1945. Her mother, though younger than Coming Daylight, had been very friendly with the latter and Mathilda was able to add some information on her own regarding social customs of former times.

Mae Main, wife of Thomas Main, like other women of her age, attended school but was brought up among conservative relatives. In 1945 and in 1946 she read those portions of the preliminary draft of this manuscript which dealt with the life cycle and informally gave additional valuable information which has subsequently been incorporated.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

INDEX

Abandonment, of ill and aged, 76, 198–99; of infants, 132, 180.
Adoption, 7, 10, 31, 108, 116, 129, 132, 180, 189.
Adornment, 61, see Ornamentation.
Adultery, 43, 45, 83, 52, 113, 185, see also Infidelity.
Age societies, 38, 39, see Soldier societies.
Aged, treatment of, 32, 39, 46–47, 165, 170, 195–99, 202.
Amusements, 150ss.
Announcer, 29, 35, 40, 44, 84, 98, 105.
Arapaho, x, 1, 13, 14, 16, 17, 20.
Assiniboine, ix, 1–22 passim, 42, 57, 80, 119, 198, 203.
Authority, 36, 44–45, 48, 51, 181–90.
Avoidances, 105, 107, 109, 111, 115, see also Respect.

Bands, 17, 25–36, 50–51, 55, 154.
Bathing, 140, 144.
Begging, 21, 81–85 passim, 103, 189–90.
Beloved-child, 155, 172.
Birth and infancy, 127–49.
Blackfoot Indians, ix, 2–21 passim, 199.
Blood Indians, 4, 7, 8–9, 12, 21, 71, 100.
Blood revenge, 14, 31, 45–50 passim, 184, see also Revenge parties.
Borrowing, 76, 85, 116, 124, 161, 164.
Bradley, J., 17–18, 19–20, 22, 80.
Bragging, 40, 41, 42.
Bravery, 12, 21, 32, 51, 79, 85, 92, 101, 102, 115, 148, 154, 162, 163, 190, 205.
Brave-song, 92, 191.
Bride-price, 68, 78, 79, 113, 117, 174–75.
Buffalo, extinction of, xiii, 22–24, 51–52, 56, 58, 159, 219; hunting, 4, 5, 27, 32, 35, 44–45, 53, 55–57, 69, 70, 73, 155–56; rite, 60; robes, 54–55, 61, 64, 71, 73, 80, 81, 120; use as food, 26, 27, 54, 48–59; use of hides, 54, 61, 64, 70, 71, 159.
Butchering, 70, 75, 158–59.
Burial, 79, 156, 158, 166, 200-02.

Catlin, G., 16.
Ceremonial grandfather, 39, 68, 78, 80, 187.
Ceremonial organization, 36, 43.
Chastity, 128, 183, 192–93, 193–94.
Chief, 31–36, 44, 45, 48; see also Leader.
Childbirth, 133, 135–38.
Child-bride, 150, 171–73, 179, 215.
Childhood, 150–70.
Chittenden, H. M., 14–15.
Clark, W. P., 194.
Clothing, 5, 24, 54, 61–63, 70, 71, 78, 80, 120, 140, 199.
Cocking, M., 3–7 passim, 61, 65, 98, 199.
Companies, 36–40, 44, 46, 51.
Competition, 42, 76, 101, 153–54; see also Rivalry.
Conception and contraception, 127–33.
Cooper, J. M., v, vi, x, xi, xii, 33, 36, 43, 87, 91, 94, 157, 163, 213.
Cooperation, 69, 71, 71–72, 86, 177, 181.
Coups, 46, 97, 101, 106, 183, 199, 219, see also War-deeds.
Co-wives, 84, 138, 143, 177–81, 215.
Cree, 1–19 passim, 55, 57.
Crow, 11–28 passim, 28, 49, 81, 93, 95–96, 99, 115, 116, 123, 142, 205.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Curtis, E. S., 90, 91.

Death, 33, 35, 36, 58, 75, 76, 79, 158, 199–203.
Denig, E. T., 32, 54, 56, 61, 73, 74, 81–82, 84, 128, 132, 195, 197.
DeSmet, P. J., 1.
Discipline, 89–90, 114, 115, 116, 117, 139–45, 159, 161, 168–69, 190.
Disfigurement, 131–32, 185.
Distribution of goods, see Exchange, Trade.
Division of labor, 5, 15, 64, 69–73 passim, 157, 158–59, 162–63, 177.
Divorce, 116, 171, 176, 182, 185, 191–92.
Dreams, 129, 137, 146, 147, 149, 161–62, 203–04, 205, 206–07.
Drinking, 45–51 passim, 77, 188.

Ear-piercing, 78, 145, 149.
Economic aspects, 57–58, 69–87.
Education 22, 213–16, see also Training, Instruction.
Elk-teeth, 62, 80, 81, 116, 166–67.
Enemy-friends, 40, 41, 43, 44, 78, 80, 89, 102–06, 115, 123, 148, 188, 196, 215.
Ewers, J. C., 4, 18, 57.
Exchange, 68, 80–87.
Exogamy, 30–31, 39–40, see also Marriage regulations.

Feast, 40, 41, 84, 102, see also Hospitality.
Feathered Pipe, 34, 148, 159, 165, 214, 215.
Fines, 91, 124–25, 193.
Flathead Indians, 14, 20.
Flat Pipe, 28, 34, 53, 125, 148, 188, 201, 212, 215.
Food, 5, 21–22, 26, 27, 32, 54–55, 58–61, 70, 73, 79–87 passim, 140, 156.
Fort Belknap Reservation, ii, v, ix, xii, 21, 25, 194, 214.
Frozens (band), 17, 25, 27, 28, 29–30, 50, 51, 154.

Games, see Play.
Gambling, 31, 40, 42, 78, 79, 87, 169, 213.
Geary, J. A., 2.
Generosity, 82–87 passim, 102, 110, 120, 123, 165, 167, 169, 170, 176.
Ghost-helper, 84–98.
Gifts, 13, 18, 48, 61, 78, 79, 82–88 passim, 101–23 passim, 146–47, 162, 175–76, 182.
Graham, A., 6.
Grass Dance, 42, 97, 123, 175.
Gregg, J., 13–14.

Harmon, D. W., 9, 10, 62.
Hayden, F. V., 13, 14, 21, 23.
Hendry, A., 3.
Henry, A., 10, 11, 12, 62, 82, 163.
Historical background, 1–24.
Hoopes, A. W., 21–22.
Hornaday, W. T., 23, 53, 73.
Horses, 5, 6, 15, 17, 19, 27, 29, 32, 33, 44, 49, 50, 66–67, 105; in hunting, 55–58, 78, 86; medicine for, 74; in trade, 11, 15; value of, 24, 57, 68, 69, 73–76, 78–82 passim, 148, 164, 175, 186, 187.
Horse raiding, 6, 19, 45, 48, 57, 76–78, 79, 88, 91, 95, 100–01, 102.
Hospitality, 32, 40, 48, 50, 82–84, 110, 165.
Household, 63–67, 69, 70, 72, 81, 181.
Hunting, 32, 40, 44–45, 53, 55–58, 69–70, 162.
Husband-wife relations, 41, 45, 77–78, 82, 84, 88, 106, 113, 124, 128, 132, 134, 145, 160–61, 165, 181–90, 199–200.

Incest, 30, 33, 157.
Indemnity, 45, 115, 186–88.
Infant care, 117, 127, 132, 138–39, 140–41; mortality, 131.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Infanticide, 131–32.
Infidelity, 49, 128, 183–94 passim.
Informants, biographical sketches of, 213–16.
Inheritance, 78, 79, 129.
Inseparable-friends, 39–40, 125–26, 132.
Instruction, 38, 39, 82, 114, 117, 127, 129, 131–32, 160–70 passim, 183, 190, 195–96. See also Training.
Intercourse, sexual, 122, 127, 128, 130, 134, 160; see also Marital relations.
Intertribal relations, 5–22; see also Warfare.
Isham, 2.
Jealousy, 33, 48, 139–40, 160, 179, 180, 181, 183, 190–93.
Joking, 102, 103, 107, 118, 119, 122, 123, 124–25, 215.

Keeper of Sacred Pipe, 33, 34, 45, 157. See also Flat Pipe, Feathered Pipe.
Kinship, behavior, xii, 30, 78–85 passim, 99–100, 103, 104, 107–26, 141–46, 175–80, 185, 196, 199–200, 204–07, 214–15, see also Obligations; terminology, x, 107–09, 111, 118, 125–27, 173.
Kroeber, A. L., x, 1, 25–26, 27–31, 36–38, 40, 42, 55–56, 59, 61–62, 69, 70–71, 91–93, 99, 107, 118, 133, 136–37, 139, 145, 149, 150–52, 162, 172, 175–76, 191, 200–02, 204.
Kutenai, 6, 21.

Laroque, F. A., 11.
Laziness, 27, 85–86, 89–90, 114, 168.
Leader, of band and tribe, 31–36, 85, 217; of war party, 88–104 passim.
Lending, 46, 76, 86, 117.
Lewis, O., 3, 6, 9, 12, 18, 22, 36.
Liberality, 84, 85, 175, see also Generosity, Prestige.
Lodges, 54, 55, 63–64, 66, 71–72, 86, 159; painted, 68, 102.

Mackenzie, A., 8–9.
Mandelbaum, D., 2, 4, 7, 8.
Marital relations, 123, 138, 179–80, 183.
Marriage, vii, 35, 107, 113, 116, 117, 127, 150, 160, 165, 171–93, 197; regulations, 30, 39, 126, 173–77, 200, see Exogamy.
Maximilian, 16–18, 67, 69, 151.
Medicines, 61, 74, 75, 112, 128–38 passim, 148, 161–62, 197; love, 174, 193; war, 92.
Medicine man, 50–51, 68, 72, 78, 85, 87, 117, 135–36, 147, 148, 163, 215.
Menstruation, 108, 127, 135, 171.
Missionaries, v–vi, 20–21, 23–24, 111.
Mourning, 36, 47, 48, 100, 156, 182, 191, 204–07.
Murder, 32–33, 43, 45–52, 102, 186.

Naming, 78, 87, 101, 117, 146–49, 195–96, 214.
Nez Percé, 14, 21, 81.

Obedience, 114, 168.
Obligations, kinship, 68, 85, 111, 114, 117, 118, 123, 125, 176, 197, see also Generosity.
Offerings, 68, 93, 100, 112–13.
Ornamentation, 61, 62–63, 71, 78, 120, 149.

Paint, 26, 55, 92, 98, 144–45, 157, 159, 207.
Palladino, L. B., 23.
Parent-child relationship, 81, 107–09, 121, 154, 161, 185, 203–04.
Parfleshes, 54, 64, 70, 151, 159.
Payment for services, 32, 68, 72, 78, 85, 86–87, 117, 128, 146, 148–49.
Perfumes, 63, 145.
Piegan Indians, 4, 6–7, 8, 12, 16, 18, 21, 99, 100, 106, 194, 202.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Play, 150–57, 162, 164–65.
Pohrt, R., 69, 92, 212.
Police, 38, 44, 46, 51.
Polygyny, 32, 66, 73–74, 81–82, 83, 171–94 passim.
Population, 8–9, 11, 16, 17, 20, 21, 23–24, 34–36, 72, 128, 195.
Pottery, 65–66.
Prayer, 35, 88, 100, 145, 157, 166, 195, 207.
Pregnancy, 77, 108, 127, 128, 133–35, 178.
Prenatal care, 133–34.
Prestige, 29, 34, 43, 48, 57–58, 61, 73–74, 78, 82, 85, 87, 88, 101–03, 148, see also Status.
Prisoners, 16, 98, 101, 199, see also Adoption.
Property, 57, 64, 72, 75–76, 79, 86–87, 116, 117, 166, 167, 171–72, 199–200, 202–03.
Public opinion, 30, 33, 35, 43, 49, 52, 82, 85, 115, 168, 173, 183, 186, 188, 190–91.
Punishment, 43–44, 50, 83, 89, 113, 114, 167–68, 181–90, see also Discipline.

Quarreling, 14, 45, 47, 78, 196–97.

Raiding parties, 22, 40, 54, 72, 76, 88, 117, 162.
Residence, 29, 30–31, 176–77.
Respect and reserve, 105, 107–08, 111, 115, 117, 118–19, 123, 161, 163–64, 194.
Responsibility, 45, 47, 50, 73, 87, 116–17, 144, 158, 180, 181, 199.
Revenge parties, 40, 88, 99–100.
Richardson, 4, 11.
Ridicule, 41, 43, 63, 192.
Rivalry, 40, 42, 103, 105, 123, 180–81.
Rodnick, D., vii.

Sacred Dances, 36, 38–47 passim, 53, 54, 196; Crazy Dance, 51, 124; Fly Dance, 38; Kitfox Dance, 46–47; Law Enforcer Dance, 39–40; Sacrifice Dance, 38, 39, 59, 146, 182, 213; Women's Dance, 60, 113.
Sacrifice, 68, 113, 156, 205.
Sanctions, 43–52, 76, 166, 169, 201, see Public opinion.
Sanctuary, 45, 48.
Sarsi Indians, 4, 8.
Scalps, 7, 62, 91, 97–103 passim, 198, 202.
Scott, H. L., 3.
Scouts, 7, 55, 90–91, 95, 101.
Seton, E. T., 80.
Sharing, 69–70, 78, 82, 86, 116, 119, 196.
Skin-dressing, 8, 11, 18, 35, 54–55, 70–71, 120, 159, 182, 184, 191.
Smallpox, 7, 9, 13, 19, 34, 35, 201–02, 203–04.
Smoking, 35, 84, 101, 206.
Soldier societies, 30, 37, 40–43, 44, 75, 171.
Songs, xiii, 41–42, 55, 68, 88–104 passim, 124–25, 152, 157, 162, 187, 191, 193.
Star society, 37–44 passim, 101, 171.
Status, 27, 33, 36, 41, 55, 57, 58, 73–74, 82, 100–02, 178, 186, see also Prestige.
Stinginess, 26, 82, 83–84, 86, 119, 181–82.
Suicide, 92, 191, 197, 205.
Supreme Being, 35, 157, 165, 166, 169, 170, 195.

Territory claimed, 6, 16, 19, 21–28 passim.
Thompson, D., x, 7, 54.
Tobacco, 61, 80, 84.
Trade, with whites, 1, 7–22 passim, 61, 63, 78–79, 80–81, 198, 202.
Training, 43, 55, 122, 141–42, 150, 157–63, 197.
Transportation, 17, 26, 57, 64–70, 141, 156.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Trapping, 8, 12, 14, 55, 162.

Umfreville, E., 4–5, 8.
Upper Quarters (band), 17, 25–31 passim, 51, 154.

Value, 73–87, 116–17, 121.
Victory dance, 97, 100–01, 124.
Vision, supernatural, 68, 74, 99, 100, 163, 206–07, see also Dreams.
Vows, 36, 38–39, 43, 51, 53, 82.

War-deeds, 33, 42, 87, 91–92, 100–02, 145, 148–49, 171, 190–91.
Warfare, 3, 6, 9–22 passim, 54–55, 88–100 passim, 112, 115, 154–55, 162–63, 193.
Whiskey, 8, 19, 61, 81, 92–93, 131, 146, 195.
Wissler, C., 3, 4, 9, 11, 72.
Witchcraft, 43, 45, 193.
Wolf-men society, 37–44 passim, 101, 171.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA
ANTHROPOLOGICAL SERIES No. 16

THE GROS VENTRES OF MONTANA.

Part II

RELIGION AND RITUAL

BY

JOHN M. COOPER

EDITED BY

REGINA FLANNERY

THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA PRESS
WASHINGTON, D. C.
1957

[title page]
[p. i]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

THE GROS VENTRES OF MONTANA:

Part II

RELIGION AND RITUAL

[p.iii]
[p.ii is blank]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

COPYRIGHT, 1957
THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA PRESS,
INC.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

PREFACE

This second part of the record of the "old way of life" of the Gros Ventres of Montana was written by Rt. Rev. John M. Cooper, late Professor and Head of the Department of Anthropology of The Catholic University of America. The manuscript had been all but completed by him at the time of his death in 1949. Dr. Cooper had intended to incorporate changes that might be suggested in view of my 1948 field check-up of the contents of the volume and then to critically edit the manuscript,—as only he could have done. I have thought it best to publish the manuscript essentially as Dr. Cooper had written it and to give additional information, obtained in 1948 and subsequently, in footnotes identified as my own. I have also added the cross-references to The Gros Ventres of Montana: Part I, Social Life, which appeared in 1953 and which was intended as a background for the present volume. 114 128

The general plan of the joint undertaking by Dr. Cooper and myself, and the procedure followed by us, have been outlined in the Preface and the Introduction to Part I, Social Life. Data on the principal informants have been given in the Appendix to that volume. These will not be repeated. We must note, however, with profound regret that Thomas Main died in November, 1952, and that The Boy died in January, 1956. 128 115

The Boy, a man of distinct philosophical turn of mind, as mentioned several times by Dr. Cooper in the present volume, is responsible for the greater part of the material on ritual and ceremonial aspects of Gros Ventre life. The Boy, to a greater degree than his contemporaries, had been interested in ritual and its meaning since his early youth. From his father, Lame Bull, a keeper of the sacred Flat Pipe and an outstanding man, The Boy had acquired a rich store of knowledge which his enquiring mind enlarged in adult life. He was constantly discussing the past of his people with many other men, older than himself, who had participated more fully than was possible for him to do in the Gros Ventre way of life before the disappearance of the buffalo in 1887.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

114 The Boy and the other Gros Ventres who cooperated with Dr. Cooper were most anxious to have preserved for the future the religious phases of their culture. The term "religious" is of course to be taken in a very broad sense. In comparing the present account with that published by Dr. Kroeber in 1907 differing emphases emerge. In the early years of the century some of the magico-religious beliefs and practices were still operative among the Gros Ventres and were not willingly explained by their practitioners. On the one hand, therefore, our account is much fuller and more explicit than is Dr. Kroeber's concerning the sacred Pipes, the meaning of the various rituals and of the personal supernatural powers,—all illustrated by our informants through reference to identifiable individuals no longer living. On the other hand Dr. Kroeber's treatment of the ceremonial dances is more complete. Inasmuch, however, as details given by our informants supplement his description, it was decided to publish ours in full despite some overlapping. Similarly it was thought worthwhile to present such myths and tales as were volunteered by our informants since some of these show variations upon those in the much more complete collection by Dr. Kroeber, and a couple of myths obtained by us do not appear in his series. One of these latter confirms his earlier prediction that certain of the more widespread motifs, which did not occur in the tales obtained by him, should be found among the Gros Ventres.

114 123 Because neither Doctor Cooper nor I had witnessed any of the latter day ceremonies in connection with the sacred Pipes, such as the opening of the Flat Pipe bundle in 1946, The Boy initiated the holding of a ceremony when I was on the Fort Belknap Reservation in 1948. In it he enacted the role of keeper of the Flat Pipe and went through some of the ritual, though the Pipe was not unwrapped at that time. The photos in Plates 1 and 2A were taken on this occasion. For Plate 1 A-B we are indebted to Mr. Duke Wellington, Agent of the Fort Belknap Reservation, who received his Gros Ventre name just after the Flat Pipe ceremony was completed. I took those on Plates 1C and 2A.

000 We are grateful to Dr. Louis W. Hagener, Professor of Biology, Northern Montana College, for information regarding the 1951

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

opening of the Feathered Pipe bundle and to Dr. Otto Nitz, Professor of Chemistry, Stout Institute, Menomonie, Wisconsin, for permission to reproduce his photographs which make up Plates 2 B-C and 3 A-D. For the pictures of the painted lodges we are indebted to The Boy (Plate 4A) and to Dr. Karl Herzfeld (Plate 4 B-C). Miss Chiye Sano very kindly made the pen drawing of the Flat Pipe (Figure 1) from a sketch given to us by Thomas Main at the time of the opening of the bundle in 1946. ooo

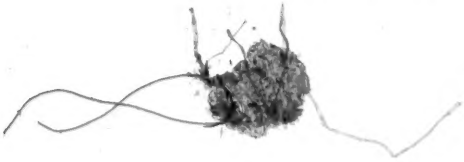
I know that Dr. Cooper would have wished to indorse to the full my own expression of gratitude to all who have cooperated in any way with us in making the record of the Gros Ventre old way of life.

Regina Flannery

THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA
June, 1956

[p. viii is blank]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13



CONTENTS

		PAGE
PREFACE		v 000
CHAPTER		
I.	SUPERNATURAL BEINGS	1
II.	THE FLAT PIPE	33
III.	THE FLAT PIPE RITUAL	77
IV.	THE FEATHERED PIPE AND OTHER PIPES	130
V.	THE SACRED DANCES	173
VI.	SUPERNATURAL POWERS	257
VII.	CURING PRACTICES	310
VIII.	MISCELLANEOUS PRIVATE RITES AND OBSERVANCES	364
BIBLIOGRAPHY		423
PLATES		424
APPENDIX		429
INDEX		488

[p. x is blank]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

CHAPTER I

SUPERNATURAL BEINGS

Before beginning our description of Gros Ventre ritual observances, it seems desirable, in the interests of order and clarity, to give some account one by one of the various Gros Ventre supernatural beings. These beings may be divided for our purposes into three categories: first, those to whom cult in the form of prayer or sacrifice was offered; second, those to whom no cult proper is offered but who enter in one form or another into ritual or who are conceived as actually helpful or harmful to the living Gros Ventres of modern times; third, those to whom no cult is rendered, who do not enter into ritual at all, and who, while conceived as helpful or harmful to the Gros Ventres at some time in the remoter or archaic past, are not so and have not been so in more recent or modern times. Beings of our third category belong rather to the realm of folklore or traditional history than to that of religion and will be given only passing attention here. 776 128

The chief beings of our first category are: the Supreme Being, the storm being, the sun, the earth, the Four Holy Men, Broken Knife, He-who-starved-to-death, the Last Child, the water monster(s), Little Spirit, He-who-dreams-of-Bha'a, the ghost helpers, the beings who gave power, the petroglyph beings. We shall now take these up in order, giving for each their names, nature, attributes and functions. The rites connected with them will be described in later chapters. 776

The Supreme Being

The most common name by which the Supreme Being was called or addressed was Ixtcibəni:bəhat (Above Ni:bəhat).[1] The

[1] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, p. 275. In our transcription, a, e, i, o, u, have continental values: ä is flat as in English "bat"; ə is close to French "feu"; vowels are lengthened by a colon, as a:; ə is the unstressed indeterminate vowel; θ is th as in English "thing"; tc is a single sound as ch in English "church"; tc̓ is the same sound but glottalized and occurs only terminally; apostrophe indicates glottal stop. [104 194]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

776 second element in the word is the name of the culture hero and trickster, who in the early mythical period taught the Gros Ventres how to pray to the Supreme Being, and how to make a living. The present-day Gros Ventres can give no clue to the etymological meaning of the word ni:hohat, nor can the writer analyze it. The word is also used for spider. The spider is in a certain sense sacred and, if it is killed, rain comes. The spider, the Gros Ventres say, can in spite of its small size do wonderful things with its web, can make it stay anywhere, can climb up and down it, and, in general, is usually master of the situation. The name of the trickster Ni:hohat is ordinarily translated as "white man" by English-speaking Gros Ventres and the translation is derived from a folktale concerning an escapade of Ni:hohat in which he had his hair cut off.[2] Thus it was that when the Gros Ventres first saw the white man with his hair cut short, in contrast to the Gros Ventres' long hair, they called him by the name of the trickster. Consequently, the name for the Supreme Being Ixtcibəni:hohat is often rendered in English as "The One Above the White Man" or, in abbreviated form, "The One Above."

[778 821 835]

The second name for the Supreme Being is Behä:tixtč. The meaning, "the master, boss, head, leader of all" is quite clear (be:-, be:hi, "all"; änä:tixtč, "he is master, boss, head, of group or organization).[3]

The third name Ni:nänä'ätč, is said to be an older form which was still in use in the lifetime of The Boy and Thick, and it was felt that it had the meaning of "study, think, meditate," and that the whole might signify "the being who has control over everything by thought or will,"—a concept which, it may be added, would be quite in keeping with the Gros Ventre idea of the power of sheer thought or thought-wish by human beings. But this

[2] Kroeber, 1907, pp. 72-73, gives a version of this episode which is substantially the same as the one obtained by me.

[782] [3] In 1948 The Boy stated that the Gros Ventres addressed the Supreme Being by this term "when they wanted something big, e.g. when they prayed for a good harvest of all the things the earth produced. Thus we are saying a kind of mass prayer indicating that the Supreme Being owns everything. He made it and he owns it, and it was recognized that they depended on him." [R.F.]

analysis was given by our informants with a good deal of hesitation. The form of direct address, Ni:nänä'än, was not used at the sacred pipe rites nor in trivial matters, but in grave emergencies, —in very solemn oaths or vows, extreme danger in battle, critical illness,—which concern the life or welfare of human beings. 776

The fourth form of address used for the Supreme Being was Iθəna'an "our (inclusive) father."[4] This name was in use as far back as our oldest informants, Coming Daylight and Singer, could remember. The Gros Ventres are quite aware that their close linguistic and cultural kin, the Arapaho, use the name "father" for the Supreme Being. The Gros Ventres, however, unlike the Arapaho, never call him "grandfather."

Finally, the Supreme Being is also spoken of as initci:t nihəne:-[171] hənixtè (life, he owns) "owner, or master of life," a common expression to or of the Supreme Being among other Algonquian-speaking peoples.[5]

The Supreme Being, unlike the culture-hero, had no wife or children. He does not figure at all in the Gros Ventre folklore, nor even in the origin myths to be given later, except insofar as the culture-hero taught the people to worship him. The Supreme Being's appearance was completely unknown; the culture hero who taught the people to pray to him did not describe how he looked; and in all the folklore and sacred stories of the Gros Ventres there is no record of the Supreme Being having a body or taking material form or appearing in dream or vision in material form. As The Boy put it: "If anyone had ever seen the Supreme Being, he would have described how he looked, and this story would have been handed down as the biggest one in all the Gros Ventre tales."

The nearest to such is a story regarding the first Catholic priest[6] who came to the Gros Ventres when The Boy's father, Lame Bull (born 1824) was a young man old enough to remember the event well. At first the Gros Ventres said: "The Supreme Being has come down from above. He is the priest." The Supreme Being 776 797

[4] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, p. 275.
[5] Cf. Cooper, 1934, p. 71.
[6] Cf. Flannery, 1953, p. 20.

776 was supposed to have come on earth far up north, and to have made the rounds of all the tribes, finally reaching the Gros Ventres. 797 The Gros Ventres at first so called the priest, but when they discovered that he ate and slept like themselves, they ceased calling him by this name.

776 In the sweatlodge rite, to be described later, the first of those invited to sweat was the Supreme Being.[1] In how far such an invitation was anthropomorphically conceived is hard to say; it need not, of course, necessarily have implied anything beyond symbolic deference.

The Boy and Thick stated: "He is not a 'false person.' He is entirely in a class by himself. We think so much of him that we do not dare to try to learn what he looks like. We class him as a kind of shadow. He is the most wonderful and powerful of all beings who have no bodies."

[778] No statues or images or pictographs of any kind were ever made of the Supreme Being, nor were there any symbolic representations of him.

The Supreme Being was alone and one, and, as compared with other sacred or superhuman beings of religion, myth, and folklore, [782] he ranked first. Where prayers included invocation of more beings than one, the Supreme Being's name always came first; in ritual invitations before sweating or partaking of food, he was always invited first. He was, however, much more than *primus inter pares*. He was in a class by himself as not only the most powerful but as the ultimate source of the power possessed by other beings and as the ultimate ruler and controller of these others. Bha'a, [821] the Storm Being, who ranked next in importance to the Supreme Being, was controller of storms, thunder and lightning, and exercised a certain limited autonomy. He had this power and office, however, not of himself, but by delegation from the Supreme Being, and exercised it as the agent of the Supreme Being, as will be explained more fully later. Then, too, while the Gros Ventres through fasting and crying on the hills or prairie sought supernatural power, not directly from the Supreme Being, but from other beings—animals and others—it was the Supreme Being who

[1] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, p. 275.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

had given to these beings the power which they in turn gave to humans. 776

The Supreme Being resides up above but he is in no sense identified with the sky or firmament or with any heavenly body. He is quite distinct therefrom, and in particular, quite distinct from the sun. "The sun is his work, his property like," according to Singer. Al Chandler stated, "If he did not want the sun to shine or to perform whatever duties it has, it couldn't do these things." While he resided up above, he could be prayed to from anywhere. In this sense he was not localized, whereas many other beings such as power-bestowing ones, were sought out in their particular dwelling places and there prayed to. [782]

Children were taught that the Supreme Being looked down on them from above and saw and heard all that they did, both good deeds such as charity to the needy, and evil ones such as stealing, even when the children thought they were quite alone and unobserved.[8]

The Supreme Being was emphatically the owner and master of all things, of the universe, the supernatural beings, as above stated, human beings (not merely the Gros Ventres), the animals, the earth, the heavenly bodies. All informants fully agreed on this. As The Boy reasoned it out: "He was master of everything on the earth and above, even of the spirit world, and not merely of the Gros Ventres, but of everybody."

Whether he was conceived of as the maker or creator of all things is not altogether clear. Three or four of our best informants stated categorically that "He made all things." He was "the creator of all things," "the ruler of all and creator of everything." "He made the earth," "He created us." There is some confusion, however, partly at least on account of the role of Earthmaker (see below, p. 23).

The Supreme Being was actively interested in the welfare of human beings, first of all as the giver, protector and master of life, and as the donor of food, but also as the source of supernatural power and of wealth.

---

[8] For a discussion of difference in point of view between men and women informants, see Flannery, 1953, pp. 169-70.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

776 He was the "master of life" as previously mentioned. Long life was the result of something more than conformity to "health rules," such as daily morning cold baths to harden the body.[9] "The Supreme Being allows people to live long. If he wanted, he cut off their lives." "When people die, it is the Supreme Being who cuts off their lives." "Very old people lived a long life because they were pitied by the Supreme Being." The Boy's father, Lame Bull, said that "a man lives, not his own life, but according to what is given him and wished by Ixtcibani:hahat. A man has what he has by the wish of the One Above."

776 888 The Gros Ventres understood by that that the aged had survived to old age not by accident, but by the permission and wish of the Supreme Being. It was common for young men to approach in tears a very old man or woman, offer a pipe, and request him or her to ask the Supreme Being to grant him long life, to make him a good warrior who would be immune to arrows or bullets when he was shot at.[10]

776 721 782 [755] In grave illness the Supreme Being would be appealed to to spare the sick person's life. It was a common belief that the Supreme Being would not permit a large attacking force of enemies to slaughter a smaller number at home in its own camp. When a group of young Gros Ventre recruits was leaving for World War II, the Supreme Being was prayed to in an old song that he would watch over them and let them come back home unharmed; although there were some casualties among Gros Ventre soldiers in World War II, not one of the above particular group was even wounded.

776 [171] The Supreme Being as the one who "owns everything" was the provider of food. He was not called "master of food," as was common among the northeastern Algonquians,[11] living closer than the Gros Ventres to a scarcity economy; food, it was felt, was "too little" a thing, and the title undignified. But all good things to eat, including "wild" food such as berries, fruits, roots and tubers, came from the Supreme Being and were given by him.

---

[9] Cf. Flannery, 1953, p. 144.
[10] Cf. Flannery, 1953, pp. 195-96.
[11] Cooper, 1934, p. 71.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Supernatural power too, while gotten immediately from animals, mountains (mountain spirits), and other creatures, through fasting and sleeping out on the hills, came ultimately from the Supreme Being, as mentioned previously. A person going out on a power quest, would pray first to the Supreme Being to command or compel the lesser being to give the power being sought. Power to doctor and to achieve war success and even to acquire wealth thus in the last analysis came from the Supreme Being. So too did the (supernatural?) power inherent in earnest wishes or thought wishes. 776 [782 787]

The Supreme Being also imparted knowledge and warnings to human beings through dreams and through his messenger, the crow. The crow on account of his relationship to the Supreme Being was a sort of sacred bird.[12] To illustrate the point the Boy told the following incident in the life of his father, Lame Bull. "Lame Bull on one occasion was sitting out on a hill and no one could get him to come back to camp. So some of his family got one of Lame Bull's wives, The Boy's mother, to go out and tell Lame Bull to come home right away as the camp was moving. As Lame Bull saw her coming, a crow flew over to him and said, 'This person who is coming is going to tell you something that is not true. Don't pay any attention to her.' Then the crow flew away. When The Boy's mother came within hearing distance of Lame Bull, the latter said to her: 'Don't say what you are going to say. Turn back.' But she kept on coming and told him her message, for which she got a scolding from him." 776 787 [825]

In general the Supreme Being was, as regards his interest in human welfare, the reverse of an otiose deity. His interest was a most active one. 776

Equally active was his interest in man's moral and social behavior. He was pleased at such moral or social acts as respect and help to the aged and care of the orphans, and was offended by grave breaches of the moral or social order. He bestowed [888 736]

[12] In 1948 The Boy explained: "The crow is not the kind you see around here now, but a raven,—a bird that is smaller and more streamlined than the crow. The crow here in the fields cry like they are wounded, but this other bird has a shrill but melodious call more like a human being." [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

776 reward and punishment for such human behavior exclusively or almost exclusively in this life. At death the souls of all except [775] murderers went to the same spirit habitat, not to the Supreme Being.[13]

The extensive cultural and ethico-social activities of man towards the Supreme Being will form the subject of succeeding chapters. We may merely state here that the Supreme Being easily held the first place in cult, as compared with other beings, and that he bulked large in the Gros Ventre ethico-social conscience.

776 That the foregoing concept of the Supreme Being was aboriginal with the Gros Ventres and not the result of borrowing from white 194 sources seems clear beyond reasonable doubt from both the external and internal evidence.

First the external evidence. While the Gros Ventres have been known in our literature since 1751, their contacts with the whites before the middle of the last century were relatively slight. They met traders and trappers and an occasional intermarriage with [797] whites occurred, but active missionary work among the Gros Ventres did not begin until 1884.[14]

Of about twenty different informants from whom we gathered our account of the Gros Ventre Supreme Being concept, most were older people, men and women, between the ages of 60 and 90 (in 1938-40) and all of them were positive, from their own memory of pre-missionary days and/or from what they had always heard from their parents or grandparents or other elders, that the belief was part of ancient native tradition and not one derived from the whites or from missionaries. For instance, Bull Head, about 80 years old in 1940, then the oldest living Gros Ventre man, stated that he had known about the Supreme Being as far back as he could remember. Coming Daylight, then about 85, and of

---

[13] The older name for the abode of the dead was tsətci:tän (etymology unknown to informants) but described as "toward the sunset." The more [821] common name was ba:snabe (big sand) which was described as a place "to the north." The Milky Way was called Ghost Trail according to another tradition. No non-human supernatural being was conceived of as in charge of the future abode or as rewarder or punisher of the dead for earthly deeds.

[14] Cf. Flannery, 1953, p. 23.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

keen intelligence and memory, stated the same, adding that her old grandmother was also familiar with the name of Ixtciboni:hohat for him. Furthermore the names for the Supreme Being as believed in by the Gros Ventres are commonly used for him among the Arapaho. Finally, the Gros Ventre concept itself of the Supreme Being tallies well in its main elements with the concept that is of universal or almost universal occurrence among the Algonquian-speaking peoples, to whom the Gros Ventres belong linguistically and, in spite of their dominantly Plains culture, in not a few important respects culturally as well.

The internal evidence corroborates the external. The whole Gros Ventre complex is quite lacking in distinctive Christian elements,—such as prayer to the Supreme Being for forgiveness, reward and punishment by him in the future life, going to the Supreme Being after death, the Trinity, a supreme evil spirit, and so forth,—elements which would be emphasized in most evangelization by Catholic missionaries. On the contrary, the complex has a distinctly aboriginal coloring. Mastery, including mastery of life, is to the fore, with making or creating hazy or in the background. The Supreme Being's names, apart from that of Father, seem clearly native, not white. It is certainly most unlikely that missionaries would have invented a term such as Ixtciboni:hohat by compounding the name of the trickster, whose vulgar and obscene escapades were matters of such common knowledge.

Finally, the Supreme Being concept is tied intimately into the whole ritual of the Gros Ventre, a ritual which itself is obviously aboriginal, with only the faintest traces, if any, of Christian infiltration.

Other Cult Beings

Next to the Supreme Being, the supernatural being most frequently mentioned by our informants was Bha'a,[15] the storm ruler or the thunderbird. He was also called, less commonly: etcitane:

[15] Informants insisted on the aspiration in the name of the thunderbird, bha'a. Without aspiration the term ba'a means "it is red," and the term ba'ats, means "blood."

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

776 bätč, "he (who) has gristle (tendon from back of neck of animal) nose," and "black hawk," a certain very large black-feathered hawk known also locally as "bullet hawk" (*Buteo sp.?*). Another name for Bha'a was "old man four parts of the earth." Bha'a, the thunderbird, as was appropriate, had dark or black feathers, and was a swift flier; his bill and feet were of the same material as back tendon (see Blood-Clot Story, No. 11 in Appendix).

778 776 796 In the Gros Ventre Sacrifice Lodge, or "Sun dance," Bha'a was represented near the top of the center pole as a bird, painted black, with a buffalo tail fastened to his head as a sort of plume, with a zigzag line descending from the bird almost to the ground and ending in a fork, and with a bunch of branches stuck in the fork of the center pole of the lodge to represent Bha'a's nest. Each [302] of the dancers painted all over in white had a bird representing Bha'a, painted in black with charcoal or paint on his upper center breast, with black zigzag lines ending in a fork from the bird's wings down each arm and forearm and from the bird's feet down each thigh and leg to his ankle, with a black zigzag line forked at each end across the forehead, and with a vertical red zigzag line forked at the lower end extending down from each eye. The drum-head used in the Feathered Pipe rite had a red background [534] on which the Thunderbird was represented in blue, with a yellow zigzag line on either side from the head to the wings. Bha'a entered prominently into both the Sacrifice Lodge and the Feathered Pipe rite.

776 325 Any large strange animal might in the olden days be called Bha'a or even be looked upon as an embodiment or theophany of Bha'a.

One supposed theophany over which the present day Gros Ventres laugh heartily, is recorded on the occasion of their seeing their first mule. The story as told with verve and intense amusement by The Boy was as follows:

"The Gros Ventres used to move around a great deal. Once a mule, the first one the Gros Ventres had ever seen, got lost somehow, struck the Gros Ventres' trail, came to their camp and stopped. A Gros Ventre crier spied it and came back to camp

announcing 'A something has come to camp. Come and look at it.' 776
Everybody turned out. They sized up the mule and considered 825
that it must be a Bha'a. They said: 'He must have come here for a purpose. Let's offer him things.' So they ran back, got things to offer him, returned bringing the children, and walked up and surrounded him. They prayed to the mule and laid one offering on him. Soon he was loaded down, he just stood there. After a while he brayed, at which all the people scattered and ran away. After they came to a stop, however, they decided: 'He must be pleased. That's why he made that noise. He will grant our request. We'll leave him here and move camp.' So they moved at once. But the mule followed them. Then they became afraid and ran away from him. This happened several times. At last they succeeded in hiding from him and losing him."

Bha'a's residence or nest, as described in the story of Blood- 776
Clot, was on the top of a high mountain, where he dwelt with his 821
mate and their two offspring, the young thunders (bha'a:niθan; -iθan, offspring, children). In the Blood-Clot story the sign of Bha'a's return to the nest was the appearance of a dark heavy cloud toward the sunset (west); of his mate's return, a white cloud in the west, and the arrival of each was marked by a blinding flash of lightning. The Thunderbird sometimes breaks wind and leaves a very bad odor. Two instances of this were recorded,—one when lightning struck Thick's house and left such a smell.

Bha'a had jurisdiction and control over storms, thunder and lightning, but as previously stated under the paramount rule and control of the Supreme Being, for whom he served as a sort of agent or subordinate, although with a considerable degree of freedom of action.

According to The Boy: "Bha'a has control of lightning and thunder, rules it, and releases it at will. He controls it, he is a sort of general manager; some one still higher controls Bha'a. While Bha'a rules the storm, he does so by a sort of delegated power; he has not the power himself.

"Bha'a's particular job is the storm, thunder and lightning. That is all he does. The Supreme Being is the ruler and uses Bha'a to run this part of the situation and manage it. Bha'a

776 executes the direction or will of the Supreme Being. He is the
821 medium or means by which the Supreme Being works. When a big storm is about to break, a pipe is filled and the Supreme Being
[782] is prayed to in the direction from which the storm is coming and is asked to spare the people during this storm, to direct Bha'a not to kill them, to say a word or two to Bha'a himself not to shoot around too close to camp. The people are afraid of Bha'a since he does his job in such a violent way. Even though Bha'a is held in high esteem and is considered an extraordinary being, he is a creature [under control] of the Supreme Being."

776 Bha'a was closely associated with the Feathered Pipe, not at all with the Flat Pipe.

Bha'a too entered into the Sacrifice Lodge ("Sun dance") as the being who could cause rain and so bring a good season for the food quest and bring coolness and shade in hot weather. While supernatural power was not explicitly sought from Bha'a he might occasionally on his own initiative have pity on a man and give him power to be a great warrior and even to make storms.
[726] But on a war expedition the participants would pray to the Supreme Being to be saved from wounds and death; not the slightest thought of Bha'a would enter their minds unless they were overtaken by a bad storm.

[165] It may be added here that, while violent thunderstorms are common in Gros Ventre territory, deaths from lightning are not frequent. The Boy could recall only three such deaths, occurring in Gros Ventre territory during his experience, two on one occasion when he was a young boy and one on a later occasion around 1930.

The word Bha'a is used not only for the Thunderbird but enters into the term also for the water and earth monsters, bha'anbi:'iθän.[16]

The water monster,—or monsters as there appear to be a number of them, for they are reported from various large rivers, and springs where they bathe,—is usually envisioned as a huge,

[16] The Boy explained in 1948: "The word bi:'iθän includes water bugs, crawling bugs, bugs of all kinds; but a snake is never called bi:'iθä, nor will a snake ever be called bha'a. Water monster, no manner how many horns he has, or however much he resemble a snake, is always called bha'anbi:'iθä." [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

long, more or less serpent-shaped, being with pointed snout and tail, and with a horn or two horns in its forehead. It lives in its lodge under water, is occasionally seen, snatches bathers or swimmers, and carries them down to its underwater dwelling. Drowned persons are supposed to go to or to be captured and held by the water monster in the after-life. The people made offerings to the water monster or to its youngest offspring, the Last Child (see p. 15), when crossing rivers and on other occasions.

There is a close connection between Bha'a the Thunderbird on the one hand, and these water and earth monsters on the other, but they are quite distinct. During storms the Thunderbird may strike a monster and carry it away as game food up into the clouds to its own mountain-top nest. There is no explicit note of hostility toward the monster.

The following story may illustrate ways of the water monster and the Thunderbird's habit of preying on the water or earth monsters.[17]

When The Boy's father, Lame Bull, was a young man, in the 1840's, three young Gros Ventre younger than Lame Bull,—two of them relatives of Lame Bull,—had gone on a war party down toward the Yellowstone River. The Boy told the story: "They ran before the oncoming storm to take refuge among the rocks on a knoll. When they got within about 100-150 yards of the knoll, lightning struck. All three lost consciousness for a moment and, when they came to, were facing the opposite way. They turned around to go to the rocks on the knoll. As they did so, they saw a cloud right over the knoll and heard a noise as of a struggle going on in the clouds. The cloud started to rise and as it left the ground they could see something hanging down from the cloud, with its head in the cloud. As the cloud went up higher, they could see that the something was some kind of monster, with colors like a snake and striped. The cloud rose higher and higher, seeming to be taking a great monster out of the knoll. Finally the lower end of the monster came into view, struggling as it were. The struggling monster was immense, snake-like in build

[17] Cf. also Kroeber, 1908, pp. 278-80.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

776
539

with a tapering tail. The cloud kept going straight up, the three young men waited until it had disappeared from sight up in the sky and wondered where it was taking the monster. Then they looked toward the spot out of which the monster had been pulled and they saw smoke and blue flame there and smelt a bad odor. They tried to coax themselves to walk up close to the spot and get a good look at it. But one of them said: 'Don't go. Something might happen to you. You can go if you wish. I'm going way round this spot.' He left and the others later joined him without going close to the spot."

Singer had heard the following story and knew the principal actor. "Some men on a war party went to a stream and noticed that the water was disturbed by something rolling,—a water monster with a horn in the middle of its head. All were scared except one, who said: 'I am scared of nothing. That is why I came on a war party.' He shot the monster right in the forehead and it whirled like a top. They took it out of the water. It had one horn. They thought it was the being who owned the stream. The others in the party thought this deed would shorten the brave killer's life. But he lived to be a real old man."

Cora mentioned the following incident: "My uncle on one occasion went out hunting for game in the Sweet Grass Hills. A violent storm arose and while he was loading the meat on the horses, lightning struck close by. The people say that the thunder pulls big 'bugs' called thunder bugs out of the earth or water. My uncle saw this bug as it came out and went wriggling up and up, until finally he could not see it any longer. You can see the holes in the earth from which the thunder bugs come."

Coming Daylight told of her own experience: "After a storm, the people used to go out and look for traces and I once saw one of these ditches. The thunder is supposed to be some kind of a big bird and it goes way up on top of the highest peak to eat these bugs it pulls out of the ground. The old-timers saw one place where the thunderbird had eaten one of these 'worms' and there was nothing but the bones of a great big 'bug' lying there [fossil vertebrate remains?]."

"A water monster was once seen in the Milk River by a small

boy. He was so scared, he went insane and died in a few days," 776
according to The Boy. 539

One story we gathered is about a very big rattlesnake, "as big as a person," big enough to eat a human being and leave only the skeleton. It had a large shining horn. Where it traveled it made a great bare trail like a modern road. It was horned, but was not of the water or earth monster "species." It was shot dead by a young man whom it had molested with murderous design while he was out in the hills crying and sleeping to obtain supernatural power.

In one story, the following, told by Singer, it is not clear whether there is question of a gigantic horned snake or of an earth monster proper.

"Near the head of Snake Butte there is a big cleft which runs all the way to the bottom. The cleft is said to have been made by [823] lightning striking there. My husband Ax Handle [Assiniboine] was there and looked. He thought he saw something and looked again. It was a great big snake with a horn on the top of its head. He was scared and ran away."

A somewhat conspicuous, though very human, role in Gros 776
Ventre ritual and thought was played by the Last Child, idaːsθa, (itasé, "lastly," itasünna, "last;" -tha, "child" [Sifton]; apparently meaning "last child born in a family"). He was the little water snake, offspring of the water monster who figured in the story of He-who-starved-to-death (see No. 5 in Appendix). The Last Child had power in water, sharing to an undefined subordinate degree in the power of his father, the water monster, who was ruler under the water. He, alone or together with his father, was prayed 776
to or given offerings, when the Gros Ventres had to cross rivers 782
or lakes or when they swam or bathed in rivers or pools, lest they [484]
drown or be snatched down by the water monster. Early in World War II when a batch of Gros Ventre recruits was about to leave for overseas duty in the Pacific he was prayed to to protect them in crossing the ocean. In praying with a pipe, the Gros Ventres always held it up first to the Supreme Being, but lastly down to the Last Child. In food offerings, the Last Child was invited, 776
last in order, to partake. In the sweat lodge he was mentioned

776 but not invited to sweat, as he was not considered important enough. In general, while he very frequently enters into ritual, he always enters as the last and least. The water monster was rather feared, but the Last Child was conceived as benevolent and kindly disposed, and both in and outside of ritual observances ran a marked undercurrent of indulgent affectionate amusement, such as the adult male might have toward a liked small child, especially where the Last Child was ritually or otherwise associated with the Supreme Being. The Boy said: "The Gros Ventres all but laugh when the pipe is offered to the Last Child. He suggests something sort of funny to them, while they have only deep reverence for the Supreme Being." As Tom Main put it: "The Last Child [comparatively] does not amount to much. He is [782] always mentioned last [in prayers], but he gets the benefit of tobacco put in the ground [when medicinal herbs are gathered] and food put there [in food offerings]. As far back as I can remember, the people used to laugh when the Last Child was mentioned, but nevertheless he was included in rites." This by no means signifies however that he was laughed *at* or made fun of. The Last Child was, it would seem, a sort of intercessor with his father, to temper the latter's rather maleficent and predatory tendencies.

The Last Child was also associated in some manner with the earth or perhaps with the earth monster(s), as food and offerings [782] were put into the ground for him,[18] but the nature of the relationship is not clear. One statement given earlier, that he had a kind of keepership of the earth, looked after it, saw that the grass and trees grew, that the rivers flowed, and so forth, while not contradicted, was not confirmed, by later evidence.

776-823 Regarding the earth, that is, the land or ground, rather than the terrestrial globe as such, there appear to have been differences in ritual usage and perhaps in belief. Some of the Gros Ventres did not mention earth in their prayers. Others habitually did so, naming in order the Supreme Being, the sun, earth, and the Last

[18] In 1948 The Boy added: "Nowadays when they smoke, they offer him one too; and also with whiskey, they spill a little on the ground and say: 'Ida:s0a for a drink.'" [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Child, and made offering of tobacco and food to earth. Al Chandler explained: "The earth is put in because that is where your living is. You get everything from the earth, fruit, animals, everything to live on, and get everything you eat from there," although ultimately it is the Supreme Being who owns and gives everything. We got one passing casual reference to "mother earth" by Mary Ereaux, and another by Tom Main to earth as being a "spirit" and having a "special keeper," but obtained no later confirmation of or detailed information on these points. In general, earth seems to have played a quite subordinate role in Gros Ventre religious thought and ritual. 776 823

The sun was appreciably more prominent, ranking according to some informants next to the Supreme Being, and mentioned as "The One Traveling," or "Passing or Traveling Man" immediately after him in prayers. Another current seems to have assigned a much lower relative rank to the sun, and mentioned sun and moon together, as "Those-who-follow-each-other," and after the Supreme Being and the Four Holy Old Men. In any case the sun was in no sense identified with the Supreme Being, but was his property, work and servant, far below him in dignity, and had not anything like the religious predominance it had in such tribes as the neighboring Blackfoot. The sun did not enter at all into the so-called "Sun Dance" of the Gros Ventres, nor into the Feathered Pipe rite. Prayers and food were offered to the sun, and the sun was invited to sweat in the sweat lodge rite along with but subordinately to the Supreme Being. Individuals would offer a finger joint or bits of their flesh to the sun on such occasions as the grave illness of a relative. While the sun "sees everything, that's why the Supreme Being put it there," the Supreme Being, not the sun, was appealed to as witness in oaths; the widespread American Indian oath formula, "The sun sees me," was not used. 776 821 [755] [695]

The sun and moon were, according to myth, brothers from the same mother, but were never human beings proper, though they married, the one a frog woman and the other a human female. According to one story, the sun regularly appeared in battle as a man riding a white horse who scared and helped either the Gros [773] 776 821 539

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

776 Ventres or the enemy. According to another, the sun on one
821 occasion delivered seven Gros Ventre men, to be killed by the
[539] Crow, into the hands of a Gros Ventre woman captured by the Crow, so the woman claimed. Apart from the incidental inclusion of the moon, bracketed with the sun, in prayers and in invitations to sweat as above stated, there was no specific independent moon cult and in no case, according to our informants, were sacrifices ever made to the moon. Nor, so far as we could discover, was there any star cult, though the stars, or some of them such as those constituting the Great Dipper, the Pleiades, the Bear were seemingly looked upon as in some sense "spirits" or personal beings. In the archaic era, before the flood and Ni:hohat, people used to go in the morning to get fire from the morning star, "the cross," just as in modern times the old people
[372] used to go in the morning to get a live coal from a neighbor's hearth instead of using matches. The morning star served also as a "clock." When people were planning to get up unusually
[805] early in the morning they would be guided by its position in the heavens. Someone in the lodge would be told: "Go out and see if the cross is up yet."

776 Among the beings involved in prayers and invited to sweat, after the Supreme Being, were the "Four Old Men," currently referred to by English-speaking Gros Ventres as the "Four Holy Old Men." According to Singer and Coming Daylight there were also, it appears, "Four Old Women," but this statement was not independently confirmed by other informants.

Very little is known about these Four Old Men. The Boy had more than once asked his father about them, but Lame Bull could only say that the Gros Ventres were taught by Ni:hohat to call on them in praying and sweating but that the people did not know who they are. They lived in the very beginning of things, but whether before or after the flood, is not quite clear. They were
776 not human beings. Gros Ventre belief does not associate them with the four winds or cardinal directions, but, vaguely, with the
801 sacred number four, the four "ridges" or stages of full human life, and the four great floods or other great catastrophes or revolutions, of which the first was the primeval flood, that are to occur,

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

according to one tradition, in the career of humanity. Some thought World War II was one of these four. The Gros Ventres do not recognize any beings connected or identified with the four winds or four cardinal directions. 776 801 [823]

Sometimes another being "Broken Knife" was appealed to in prayers. Little too, is known of him, except that he was, some time in the distant past, a renowned Keeper of the Flat Pipe. According to Al Chandler, Broken Knife was the name of the young man who was first given the Feathered Pipe. (For details, No. 6d in Appendix.) He was asked to pray for the supplicants, just as it was customary for the people to ask living pipe keepers or ex-keepers to pray and intercede for them, "much as Catholics ask the saints to intercede for them." 776 782

Much more is known of He-Who-Starved-To-Death who is associated with the Flat Pipe rite. He was a human being, a Pipe child, second son of a certain keeper of the Flat Pipe in the days when the Gros Ventres dwelt in a land of plenty. It was he who in the course of his adventures encountered and befriended the Last Child, offspring of the water monster, and who on his return home taught the people to pray to the Last Child, and introduced three songs into the Flat Pipe rite. He was also the man who first brought horses to the Gros Ventres. His name was given him by the water monster. (For details see No. 5 in Appendix.) In one Flat Pipe rite he was mentioned in prayers, and in the sweat lodge was invited to sweat. 776

Well known too is He-who-dreams-of-Bha'a, likewise a human being and a Pipe child, the son of the couple who were first given the Feathered Pipe by Bha'a, and who lived when the Gros Ventres had already gotten horses and had reached their historic habitat, but before the advent of the whites. He got power from Bha'a to be a great warrior, and he gave himself his name. (For details see No. 7 in Appendix.) While closely associated with the Feathered Pipe, he was not, so far as we could discover, prayed to.

In general, lesser beings that had no human body were called tciya:tawu:nitä (sing., lit., "false person": tciyattawu, false [Sifton], initä, human being). This category included such minor

776 beings as Little Spirit and ghosts, but not such major ones as the Supreme Being and Bha'a.

The following story, as told by The Boy, gives nearly all that 224 is known about Little Spirit, etcibətä:t (ètc,sä, it is little, bettêtô, 776 spirit [Sifton]).

"Long ago, how far back I do not know, Little Spirit made himself the guardian spirit helper of a certain man, saying: 'Whenever there is going to be a famine, call me.' 'What are you?' the man asked, 'Where do you come from?' 'I am Little Spirit, I am from the western wind.' The man who had Little Spirit never called him except when game was scarce and there was danger of famine among the people. Then he would call Little Spirit who would tell them where game was. When this man was dying, he said to the people: 'Whenever you go out hunting, pray to Little Spirit to show you where game is and when you have killed game and gutted it, take a piece of the liver and some of the fat, put in on the west side of the game killed, and say: "Here, Little Spirit, is liver and fat for you."' It was just that one man of long ago, no other, who had Little Spirit as a personal helper. When Little Spirit came, he came as a little whirlwind."[19]

Little Spirit was, in accordance with this man's instruction, ordinarily appealed to by the Gros Ventres for success in hunting particularly at times when game was hard to get, and the above-mentioned first fruits sacrifice of liver and fat made to him after game was killed. He was not appealed to on any other occasion.

776 At a number of places in and around Gros Ventres territory are cliffs with incised pictographs on them made by a certain class [172] of "false persons" called tciya:tsine:n "ghost men" or "little men." They were never seen but according to Singer were dwarfish, about 3 feet tall. The Gros Ventres distinguish clearly between such pictographs made by these beings on the one hand and on the other those made by Indians or else tracks of animals in flat rocks. The first are temporary, and change from time to time; the other two kinds are permanent. Gros Ventres have tried to get

[114] [19] He did not, however, come into the shaking tent as the ghost helper did. The statement by Cooper, 1940, based on 1939 field notes, was an error corrected 1940 in the field.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

power from the "ghost men" by sleeping near their pictographs, but never with any success. One young man, however, once without quest got power in childbirth cases from a boss of little children who appear to him in a dream, and Singer thought these "little children" were "ghost men," but the identification is doubtful. The only message they ever got from the "ghost men" was a request or demand that the Gros Ventres go away at once as they smelt bad or made the place smell bad. On war parties or other occasions, offerings were made at the pictograph cliff to the "ghost men," who would then during the night make new pictographs on the morrow from which the future in the form of good or bad fortune could be easily foreseen by the members of the party.[20]

Supernatural power was gotten either by quest or otherwise from ghosts or, as more commonly, from non-human beings, such as mountains (or the spirit who inhabited or owned the mountains), rocks, mammals (bear, wolf, weasel, mink, coyote, rat, prairie dog and others), birds (crow, prairie chicken), snakes, spiders and so forth. "These lesser beings, while ranking a little above human beings and possessing certain superhuman powers, were under the leadership and control of the Supreme Being, from whom they had received such powers to be imparted in turn to human beings. Like Bha'a, they were, so to speak, delegated agents and underlings of the Supreme Being, put by him in charge of "the details of the whole situation," as The Boy expressed it. The powers so imparted were of many kinds, to cure, to poison or otherwise harm, to foretell, to become a great warrior, to acquire wealth, to succeed in love and gambling, et cetera, as will be described in detail later.

Non-Cult Beings

So much for the beings to whom cult was rendered in the form of prayer or sacrifice. We shall now describe the supernatural beings,—human, "humanoid" and non-human,—to whom no cult was rendered but who entered in one form or other into ritual

[20] Cf. Flannery, 1953, p. 93.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

776 or who were in some manner actively helpful or harmful in modern times to the Gros Ventres. The chief beings of this second category are: Ni:hohat, Earthmaker, ghosts and owls, Atsa:, the Little People.

The name of the trickster and culture hero, Ni:hohat, has already been dealt with in the section on the Supreme Being. Ni:hohat was also referred to sometimes as "our grandfather." He had a human body but no detailed description of his appearance is current. He had a wife and children. No one knows how he came into existence. He lived before the flood and it is to this antediluvian period that his colorful exploits, largely Rabelaisian, are ascribed.

There is considerable uncertainty and speculation regarding the respective roles of Ni:hohat and Earthmaker in the origin of human beings or of the Gros Ventres, and of Gros Ventre religion, especially the Flat Pipe rite. We shall here give the account from the Ni:hohat tradition, and later that from the Earthmaker one, without attempting a complete reconciliation, which does not seem possible from the available evidence.

773 According to the Ni:hohat folktale cycle, human beings lived before the flood, as is clear from the trickster's exploits.[21] Accord-
776 ing to the Ni:hohat origin story, it was he who obtained from a man and woman, of whose origin nothing is known, the magic bladder, and who liberated from the bladder the already existing human beings, the ancestors of the Gros Ventres. Still other human beings existed than the ones who killed the trickster and who in turn were completely exterminated by the liberated people. Ni:hohat taught these ancestors to pray to the Supreme Being. He also instructed them in the sweat lodge ritual, and so in at least this element of the Flat Pipe rite, and also in the rite of sacrificing bits of their flesh. He likewise taught the liberated bladder people the art of war. (See No. 1 in Appendix for full story.)

He was killed and came to life again. After this he disappeared, and no one knows what became of him. The Boy personally wonders whether it was Ni:hohat himself who was Earthmaker

[21] Cf. Kroeber, 1907, pp. 59-75.

and who was floating on the raft with the Flat Pipe, whether he may then have gone to the whites and taught them, too, how to pray; but all this he considers speculation only. 776 [773]

It should be emphasized that as previously noted, no sacrifices or prayers were ever offered by the Gros Ventres to Ni:hahat himself, nor, it may be here added, to Earthmaker. The Boy once said to his father, Lame Bull: "You talk so much about Ni:hahat. He was a superhuman. He should have been prayed to." "No," Lame Bull replied, "he never told the people to pray to him, but told them to pray to the Supreme Being. He was a man and not worthy to be prayed to." [782]

Earthmaker was the human being, apparently a or the primeval keeper of the Flat Pipe, who knowing the earth was to be covered with water made a raft of logs on which he and the Flat Pipe floated during the great flood.[22] (See full story, No. 3 in Appendix.) Where he came from is unknown. Landing on a mountain top he there made dry land (not *the* earth, the terrestrial globe as such which already existed), and also made a man and woman. He gave the Flat Pipe into the keeping of the man he had made, and taught him the Flat Pipe rite, instructed him how to carry out the rite and to plant tobacco, and told the people how to worship the Supreme Being. The Flat Pipe rite has been known ever since that time. Earthmaker is mentioned only in the Flat Pipe rite. After giving the pipe and the above instructions, he disappeared, and what became of him, whether he died or not, is not known. 776 773

Ghosts were called tsë:k. Another name for ghosts was byi'te:' a word that "gives the impression like a hollow-eyed bleached-out skull." An occasional ancestral ghost became the guardian helper of a surviving relative.[23] Gambling power might also be gotten from a ghost. Most ghosts were in their own future abode and did not have any contact at all with the living. In general, apart 774 775

[22] He was not floating in the Pipe bowl; this is the Arapaho version.

[23] In 1948 The Boy explained: "Tciya:təwu:nitän (see p. 19) are not tsë:k; tsë:k is the opposite of everything good—you can cuss by calling someone tsë:k. Byi'te:' is even worse. The ancestral ghost is tsätsuwa'a, not tsë:k. Shadow, soul, spirit, echo is bətäto:u. [R.F.] [578]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

In general, apart
774 from the ghost helper and gambling power complexes, to be
775 described later, no cult of ghosts existed, and no prayers or food
[769] or other offerings were made to them. Ghosts of those who had committed unjustified murder, as defined by the Gros Ventre code, did not go where the other souls went, but stayed where their bodies lay or wandered around and "bothered" the living.
[753] If a person suffered a stroke, a ghost, apparently of a murderer, was thought to have caused it and to have twisted the victim's face or mouth and pulled the eyelid down.

Ghosts "bothered" the living in less serious ways, appearing
775 in the shadow and disappearing, whistling, playing tricks, in more
539 recent times rapping on windows, and so forth. The two following stories, told by The Boy in light vein and laughingly, illustrate ghostly ways.

"A war party of brave Gros Ventres started out.[24] Toward evening they came to a timbered stream and made a lodge of willows near a good-sized tree, not knowing that a couple had been buried there. After a good meal, they were singing and enjoying themselves, when they heard someone hollering far off. The hollering kept coming closer and closer to their camp until it got very near. One of the men said: 'We had better start up a fire.' Before anyone got up to fetch wood, wood began being thrown into the tepee. This kept up until the tepee was so loaded up with wood that they were crowded out. They then started to carry the wood out of the tepee. One man remarked: 'I never heard of a ghost killing anybody.' Then they heard the ghost laughing a little distance off. One of the men shot toward the spot from which the laughing was coming, but the ghost laughed all the more. All the men then got back inside the tepee, and one of them said: 'I'll get some wood and we'll make some tea.' A good fire was started, and the old fellows prayed with the pipe. The ghost was meanwhile moving the embers away to keep the fire from burning. Before the snow was fetched to be melted, snow fell from the open center top of the tepee and put the fire out. At this they got scared and said: 'Let's move from here.'

[24] In 1948 The Boy remarked that this happened in Lame Bull's life time; and that the ghost referred to in the story is the kind known as tsë:k. [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

All of them, bunched close together, ran away, and they could hear the ghost laughing. They shot at it but it laughed all the more. When they got a good distance from their camping spot, they could still hear the ghost laughing behind them, and it only quit bothering them when they got far away. Whenever a war party came close to this spot, it would be bothered by that ghost, whose name was 'Hole-through-his-penis.' So the Gros Ventres quit camping there."

The second illustration was given as follows: "On one occasion, during the lifetime of Lame Bull (The Boy's father), a number of Gros Ventres went off on a war party and camped at an old abandoned winter camp on the Missouri River. They made a shelter frame of old tent and travois poles. One of the men went out some distance, gathered wood and lit a fire and started to cook meat. The night was very dark. Something started throwing sticks at him every now and then. He thought to himself: 'My friends are trying to test my courage,' and paid no attention. The sticks began coming too frequently. He said to them: 'You better quit throwing at me. You might hurt me. You can't scare me.' They said: 'We're not throwing at you.' The sticks came faster. So he ran back to the shelter where the others were, rushed in and hid behind the leader of the war party. They all got scared then and piled up in a struggling heap close to the leader until he was pinned under them. 'Let me up,' he said, 'I'll see what is scaring you and deal with that thing.' The ghost poked in a cross piece of a travois and scattered their fire. While still piled up in a heap they heard a voice laughing outside and seeming to go away. They at last got straightened out and fixed up the fire, but still could hear the ghost laughing. One of the men, Chief Grass, said: 'I'm going to kill that ghost.' He then rolled some buffalo hair around the head of an arrow, singed it a little and spat on it,—his way, it was believed, of using his power. He then shot the arrow in the direction where the laughing could still be heard. The voice was at once silenced, and they were not bothered any more that night. 'I believe I killed that ghost.' Chief Grass said, 'at daylight, I'll look around.' The next morning they looked around and found a bleached human skull with the arrow of

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

775
[539]

Chief Grass in one of the eye sockets. So it was always thought that he had killed that ghost."

There was a considerable fear of these bad ghosts who "bothered" or even seriously harmed human beings. Certain other ghosts were merely "earthbound," that is, they lingered around or came back because they were fond of their belongings—clothing, footwear, and so forth—which were buried with them. Such earthbound ghosts did no harm to human beings and were not supposed to be feared.[38]

Singer, then married to Crooked Arm, told of an occasion on which she ran away from her home. She wandered around at random and happened to stop at the spot where her sister was buried, and heard a voice [presumably her sister's] saying: "Just lie quiet. They are all looking for you." She did so, apparently without fear.

One informant, Al Chandler, narrated certain experiences of his early childhood and boyhood that suggest a somewhat deviant attitude toward ghosts. When he was about four years old, his mother died, and the morning after her burial he went to the grave and lay there, falling into a profound sleep. Not long after this, when his uncle died, and the body was laid on a bed in a lodge some distance off, he went to the lodge and crept under the blanket covering the body and went to sleep. Another time, while still very young, he got lost and around dark found himself at a place where there were a number of old graves. He lay down and slept the night there. These incidents were early childhood ones, when he hardly realized the meaning of death. At a later age, during his boyhood, everybody was afraid to go along a certain bit of woodland lest the ghosts bother them. Al wanted to find out for himself. So against advice of his father, and feeling a little "spooky," one night just after midnight he went through the stretch of brush and as he did so heard a sound behind him as of someone dragging a robe over gravel. Mustering up his courage he turned around quickly and saw a big old owl dragging its feathers and scarcely able to fly. When he got back home, he told his venture, and the old man [his father] laughed and said: "Owls

[825]

[38] For illustration, see Flannery, 1953, p. 203.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

sure will do that; they bother people and mock you when you talk or laugh." After that there was no ghost in that piece of brush. 775

On another occasion, Al was coming back on horseback with a group after a hand game. In a gap through which their route would take them, the others saw a yellow or blue light, like a lamp in the dark, moving this way and that. But Al could see nothing. The others went home by a roundabout way, but Al went alone through the gap, saw nothing, and met the others farther on. [825]

Many, though not all, ghosts had the habit of whistling, and some talked in a whistling language.

Ghosts were apt to appear as owls or to hoot like owls, both in the shaking tent rite, to be described later, and on other occasions as illustrated in the following story which had been told The Boy by his father, Lame Bull.

"Lame Bull went on a war expedition. Seven Sioux were killed. Their bodies were left laying where the killing took place. A few years later Lame Bull and some comrades came near this place. As they reached it, seven owls flew from it. The owls did not fly away but just milled around the spot. They were the seven Sioux turned into owls." [825]

Children used to be told: "If you do not obey, the owls will catch you." If owls alighted on a lodge or house or hooted around very near on bush, tree or hill, this presaged the death of some one. Owls also gave warnings.[26] In these instances however we got no evidence that the owls were conceived of as ghosts. 825 775

Besides the ghosts there were other bad spirits, who "shot" people by projecting some small object into the body of a person and so causing illness.[27] This belief, we were told, was very widespread but we did not obtain many details regarding it. The following incident, narrated by Coming Daylight, may serve as illustration. 776 753

On one occasion when Coming Daylight was living where Fort Belknap now is and when her daughter was still a sack baby, the latter would not quit screaming. She would hold her head to one side and would not nurse, and they could not satisfy her with

[26] An example is given in Flannery, 1953, p. 93.
[27] Very probably connected with practice of witchcraft. [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

776 anything. So Coming Daylight took her infant to her aunt who
753 was a kind of "spiritualist" (one having a ghost helper). The aunt took the baby in her arms and told Coming Daylight: "You get me a piece of charcoal." The aunt took the charcoal and rubbed it on the baby's neck at the back, bent over as if she were going to bite the infant, drew out (apparently by sucking) a little sliver from the baby's neck, and said: "This is what caused her to have a stiff neck." They said a spirit had shot her, although they did not have the baby outside when this happened to her. You were not supposed to take an infant outside in the dark without covering its head. Actually Coming Daylight's infant was inside the tent during the night and they heard something hit a lodge pole and it seemed to frighten the baby, who continued to cry until the aunt removed the sliver.

[158] Mental abnormality could also be caused by such bad spirits, ghostly or other, whether by "shooting" the victim or getting into
751 him is not known. To keep the bad spirits at bay, a stick, with its
776 tip blackened with "nicotine," was left near a baby whenever the baby had to be left alone. Whenever adults went out in the dark, they picked up and carried a stick, of any kind; it was believed that the spirits were afraid of the sticks and would not come near. Beyond such protective observances there appears to have been no cult proper of these bad spirits in the way of propitiatory prayers or offerings.

Much, though not all sickness was ascribed to a malevolent
753 being called Atsa:. When illness recently took off a mother and
776 child in a family, the people said, "Atsa: has visited so-and-so's family." Atsa: did not himself put sickness-causing objects in his victims' bodies, but he was responsible indirectly for other kinds of illness, that is, he had something to do with them. To him
[731] were attributed particularly epidemics, especially smallpox, chicken pox and measles. He was an ugly, hideous being, unkempt, with scaly skin and bushy hair who never washed his face. He was thin and starved-looking and his nails were long. He was thoroughly disliked. No food or pipe was ever offered to him. When serious
776 sickness visited the camp, the Supreme Being was prayed to: "Take Atsa: away. He is causing a lot of trouble." Atsa: was

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

"nothing compared to the Supreme Being." At an eclipse of the sun the Gros Ventres were much afraid; for they thought that the sun was covering himself and that Atsa: would come around. To ward him off on the occasion of a solar eclipse, the Gros Ventres in recent times would load their guns and shoot up in the air, and so make so much noise that he would be scared away. Then they would all laugh, feeling that they had gotten the best of him. Atsa: also functioned as a bugaboo. When Thomas Main was a boy his parents used to tell him: "If you don't behave, Atsa: will get you." Atsa: was afraid of skunks, as the Gros Ventres of several generations ago learned from the following incident, related by The Boy.[28]

776
776
821
539
731
776

"In the days of Gopher and Prairie Dog Old Man, Atsa: declared war. At that time the Gros Ventres were very numerous. There were only twelve bands but they were so big and there were so many people that when the children played around they would get lost and could not find their way home. When the crier walked around and made his announcements, after only one circle around the camp he was hoarse and was tired from walking. A large part of Gros Ventres went off on a war raid to the east to fight the Shoshoni, Assiniboine and Sioux. They got a little below the confluence of the Milk and Missouri Rivers, and saw two corpses wrapped in good blankets up in a tree. So they cut the bundles loose and dropped the bodies to the ground. The blankets, of white-man make, were a novelty to the Gros Ventres at the time. The men unwrapped the blankets and cut them up for leggings.

"That same night one of the Gros Ventres took ill. As the night wore on he got worse and worse. The men began to suspect: 'These two must have died of smallpox.' The sick man died after sun-up in the morning. They became panic-stricken. 'Sure enough,' they said, 'that's smallpox.' They decided to rush back to the main camp.

"On the way back every night one or more men died. Only a few got back alive. Most of the party died on the way back. When

[28] The incident probably is part of the tradition of the smallpox epidemic of 1780. Cf. Flannery, 1953, p. 34.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539 the survivors reached home and told their story, the people were excited. The old people said: 'That is a bad sickness. It all but kills off the tribe once it starts.' The criers announced to the people: 'Scatter in all directions. That is the only way to combat this sickness.' So the bands scattered in all directions. A lot of the people died, some even before camp was broken.

"One band went up Milk River. One man of this band who had a big family studied what he should do. He decided to go off secretly from his band. He had plenty of meat, as it was in the fall. So he sneaked away unnoticed with his family, went up the Milk River looking for the thickest patch of brush and trees he could find, and there pitched his camp. The next spring, the survivors of this man's band, which had wintered around the Sweet Grass Hills, decided that the sickness was over, and that Atsa: must be in a good humor again and had left them. The survivors went looking for the rest of the Gros Ventres, so they packed up and left their camp, where in many lodges all the inmates were dead. They made their way toward the place where the Marias and Teton Rivers empty into the Missouri. As they went along they found some whole camps wiped out by smallpox, other camps with just a few lodges with some survivors. These survivors would then join them. At last they reached the Marias and decided to camp there and send scouts around to look for the other survivors.

"A group of young men acting as scouts went down the river to its confluence with the Missouri and ran onto a camp where they saw someone walking around in front of a lodge. As soon as this person saw them he disappeared. They approached and looked into the lodge, but could at first see only a bunch of dead bodies in it, though the fire was burning. They then went in to investigate and found a small boy and small girl there, each living with the dead body of his and her mother. The boy and girl fought and bit like animals not to be taken away. The young men saw the places where the boy and girl had been sleeping beside the bodies of the dead mothers. They saw also a bear that lived in this lodge and fed on the corpses. They looked in other lodges and found that the bear must have lived there too on the dead bodies. It had not eaten of the supply of meat which was still untouched.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

"The young men then took the boy and girl back to camp where some families took them and tamed them down. The young men kept scouting for survivors along the Missouri River and on both sides of the Bear Paw Mountains but could find none. All the living then moved to the north end of the Bear Paws and camped. They decided to stay there and wait. Most of the Gros Ventre camps had been entirely wiped out. The survivors felt bad about it, but there was plenty to eat. They had taken along with them the meat supplies of the deceased victims. It was now far along in spring and they thought the danger was over. 539 731 776

"The man who had spent the winter in the thick timber now decided to move around and look for his people. He started toward Marias River and found the other Gros Ventre survivors' camp north of the Bear Paws. The man, his wives and all their children had come through the epidemic without sickness. The people asked the father: 'How did you escape getting sick?' He replied: 'Just by accident. I happened to kill a skunk, to windward of our camp, and just left the carcass at the spot, as I had no use for it. We were forced to smell it. In time we all got used to the stench. In the timber we felt safe from enemies and we dared not go far from camp. So we stayed there in spite of the skunk. But we were all the time worried lest the children or myself should die. As time went on and no one got sick, I laid our good fortune to the skunk carcass. I thought that Atsa: must be afraid of skunks. So I started to kill as many as I could and I hung them around in every direction, so that no matter from what quarter the wind blew we always had skunk smell. I honestly believe skunks are too much for him.' The people agreed with him, for he proved his belief by the fact that he and all his family had come back safe. Since then the Gros Ventres have known that Atsa: is afraid of skunks."[39]

Both giants and dwarfs were believed to exist. The giants were as tall as trees. When one of these got a buffalo he would stick it on his belt just as the Indian did with rabbits. The giants were 776

[39] The Gros Ventres know that the Cree of the Ft. Belknap area use skunk fluid for many medical purposes; the Gros Ventres however do not. In Gros Ventres lore the animal kingdom calls the skunk "Chief Stripe."

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

not cannibals; the dwarfs or little people were. Of the latter, who were distinct from the dwarfish pictograph beings previously mentioned, the Gros Ventres were afraid, for these dwarfs in spite of their small size were very powerful. They were not "false persons," but had bodies and lived on earth. The Gros Ventres when traveling around or out hunting were always on the watch for them; for the dwarfs, while very stupid, were very strong physically, could not be killed,[10] and were fast runners. Once they sighted a man there was no escaping them. Some of their characteristics are illustrated in a folk tale. (See No. 9 in Appendix.)

Besides the beings to whom some sort of cult was rendered or who at least were in modern times actively helpful or harmful in some manner to the living Gros Ventres, there were a number of others to whom no cult was rendered and who had only in the past been helpful or harmful. These last, such as Blood-Clot and Found-in-the-Grass, belong purely to the realm of folklore. Few myths and tales of this type were volunteered by our informants but two are given in the Appendix (Nos. 10 and 11). We made no attempt, however, to record the folklore as such.

---

[10] In 1948 The Boy explained: "In one way these little fellows were not so stupid after all, because they left their hearts at home in their lodges when they went off and so they were hard to kill. You should add, too, that they were all left-handed." [R.F.]

CHAPTER II

THE FLAT PIPE

Keepership

The Flat Pipe was ordinarily in the custody of an official keeper called nätcä:ta' (nätcä, chief) with his head wife as co-keeper, nä:tciθä (chief woman) and one of their young children as pipe child, nätcəta:niθə'. 793 [578]

In olden times before the coming of the whites according to the tradition as handed down to The Boy and Thick, the Flat Pipe was hereditary in one of the families or bands—which one is unknown. The man and wife chosen, from within the family or band, to be keeper and co-keeper were usually a couple in the prime of life, not an old man married to a young woman or an old woman married to a very young man. A couple in the prime of life were chosen so that, even though they already had children, they could still have more. For it was the tribal law that they should designate out of their children, a boy or girl, born after they had entered upon their keepership to remain with them and to succeed to the keepership should both the keeper and his wife die by accident or sickness. Nearly always they designated a boy, rarely a girl, as the keeper had ordinarily to be a man. The Boy and Thick thought that this system of hereditary keepership came to an end long ago as a result perhaps of the fact that a keeper might have had no children or children died off, or the complete dying out of the family or band in which the Pipe was then hereditary. 793 428

In historic times, that is, as far back as definite tribal memory goes, non-hereditary succession has prevailed. It took two forms, elective and volunteer. In the first case, the initiative was taken by others than the prospective keeper; in the second, by the prospective keeper himself. To become an official keeper a man had to be formally inaugurated with a rite which will be described later. In certain emergencies the Pipe was temporarily without 793

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

793 such an official keeper and was merely held by someone for the time being.

From data supplied mostly by The Boy and Coming Daylight, it is possible to trace the fortunes of the Flat Pipe during the last hundred years. Somewhere about 1850 the Flat Pipe keeper was Deer, who was succeeded by "Bear-going-along-side-of-hill," from whom it was ceremonially transferred about 1860-65 to The Boy's father, Lame Bull. One or two of Lame Bull's successors died before completing the customary four-year term, and Lame Bull took the Pipe back. About 1873-75 it was ritually transferred to Crow Bull, Coming Daylight's mother's brother and a good friend of Lame Bull, as a result of a vow made by Crow Bull to take the keepership if the wife, who had been captured by the Piegan, should get back safely to him, which she did.

Coming Daylight gave the story as follows:

793 "In the 1869 battle between the Gros Ventres and the Piegan,
727 a wife of my uncle, Crow Bull, was captured by the Piegan. After some time the man who captured her and who had taken her as wife saw her crying and asked her: 'Why are you crying?' She replied: 'I am lonesome for my children.' She had borne no children during her stay with the Piegan. So he told her: 'All right. I am a man, a real chief. I will let you go back to your children. But it would be dangerous for you to go on horseback. You must walk.'

793 "So on the sly he fixed up a big traveling dog to pack food and she made moccasins for the journey. He told her which way to go, this is, by way of Fort Benton where there were some Piegan
[582] and Gros Ventre women married to whites. He also told her she must travel by night lest the Piegan capture her again, and he accompanied her quite a way on her journey.

"After two days on the road, traveling by night and hiding in the day, she reached Fort Benton safely just at daybreak on the third. When she got there she did not know where to go. She saw someone emptying water, who looked like an Indian woman, so she went up to her. The woman said: 'Oh, where did you come from?' 'I came from the Piegan,' she replied, 'my Piegan husband there let me go.' The woman said: 'After you have eaten I will

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

take you to a camp of Gros Ventres.' 'Who are they?' she asked, 'What is their name?' The woman told her: 'A little short man called Warrior Man,' who was a brother of the returned woman through marriage. 793

"So the woman took the returned Gros Ventre woman to this camp and said: 'I have brought you a Gros Ventre woman. Come and see who it is.' As soon as they saw who it was, they were glad and took her and kissed her and gave her everything good.

"One evening a few days later Warrior Man and his wife got ready and before sunup started off for the big Gros Ventre camp. He walked while Crow Bull's wife rode horseback. It was springtime with wet snow still on the ground. The big camp was at Big Sandy, on the north side of Milk River at the place where the trees stop. They arrived there early in the morning and did not know where to go. I, Coming Daylight, saw the man and the two women approaching and went out to see who they were. The man asked: 'Where is Crow Bull's lodge?' I then saw them go to Crow Bull's lodge. All at his lodge were glad to see the returned captive and kissed her. 131 221 361

"Later when the ground got dry, the whole tribe moved to their usual place here at what is now Hays. Crow Bull made good his vow to take the Flat Pipe if his wife got back safe to him, and I witnessed the transfer, by the keeper of the time, Lame Bull. The rite took place just about a half mile north of where St. Paul's Mission now is." 131 221 361

Crow Bull kept the Pipe a long time, until his death in 1887, upon which it fell to his widow, an Assiniboine woman named Coming Day. This woman neglected the Pipe. Coming Daylight told her: "Now, this Pipe is just like your father. Why is he always left alone? He was never left alone before. Now I have a mare and this Pipe has a saddle. Put the Pipe on the saddle and take it to White Bird. He will take care of it." So they went to White Bird and talked to him first. He agreed to take it over without rite or vow. On the request of a young man, Bird Sits High, the Pipe was transferred to him. This young man died soon after and his father, Otter Robe, took it upon himself to harbor the Pipe. When Otter Robe died, sometime prior to 1908,

743 Horse Capture, the brother of Thick and the Assiniboine woman, Coming Day, who was still living—who had married Horse Capture and in her latter days had come to realize her duties toward the Pipe,—were ritually inaugurated as Pipe keeper and Pipe woman by Lame Bull. Then Coming Day died, as did also in 1908 Lame Bull, and Horse Capture was left alone with the Pipe. He married again and The Boy's mother, who had earlier been Pipe woman, instructed Horse Capture's second wife in her ritual duties. Horse Capture was the last ritual keeper of the Pipe. When Horse Capture died, his widow took the Pipe over. Thick wanted to bury the Pipe with Horse Capture, but was dissuaded from doing so, and agreed to keep it. Later Horse Capture's widow, who lived successively with Thick's family, the Birdtail family, and The Boy's family, willed the Pipe to The Boy, to dispose of it as he saw fit. On her death, The Boy wanted to take it over but his wife as a Catholic objected. The Boy finally got [745] her consent on the ground that "we are both Catholics; I want to keep the Pipe as a keepsake, not to pray to as it used to be prayed to," but it was arranged that the Pipe would remain in the keeping of Thick (married to The Boy's sister) until The Boy and his wife were ready to take it.

[755] The last ritual opening of the Pipe bundle occurred in 1937 as a prayer for cure, when Joe Assiniboine's small son was affected with bad sores on his face. The rite was only partially and negligently carried out at the time. The final formal uncovering of the Pipe took place on February 6, 1946, after the return of [727] the Gros Ventre members of the armed forces from World War II. On this occasion the full rite, as far as recalled, was enacted, and the Pipe and Pipe bundle given a thorough cleaning and renovating. The bundle with the Pipe is now (1955) carefully kept at The Boy's ranch at Lodge Pole.

The elective system rather than the voluntary vow was the more common one. Under this system, where the actual keeper decided to give up and transfer the Flat Pipe, he would confidentially summon the surviving ex-keepers and ex-co-keepers (not the other wives) of both the Flat and Feathered Pipes to come secretly without a word to anybody, to meet at his lodge,

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

on a given night after everybody was asleep lest the matter became known and the prospective electee take flight. When a rumor would spread that a new election was imminent, those who thought they might be elected used commonly to go away and sleep elsewhere than in their own lodges, as almost all were reluctant to become keepers. Those invited to the election meeting had to keep absolute secrecy beforehand, and at the meeting itself no one else than the keeper and co-keeper and the above invitees was present except two attendants, sons of keepers or ex-keepers. 793

The actual keeper might open the discussion by proposing a name. Discussion was free but dignified. Agreement would be finally reached, perhaps well after midnight or towards morning, on the keeper's first choice or on some other man. Knowing how onerous the keepership was, the keeper out of the regard for the ex-keepers would not be apt to nominate one of their sons, and ordinarily did not nominate one of his own.

The proposed keeper had to be a prominent member of the tribe, a man of great ability and renown, with a record of recognized achievement and with very considerable wealth in horses, in the size and furnishings of his lodge, and so forth. He had to be of the cream of the tribe, or "the best among many." And he had "to be good" as the Gros Ventre ethical code conceived goodness. He had to be generous; a stingy man, even though a great warrior, and even though he had vowed to become keeper, would never get the Pipe, for the keeper had to feed people and to be good to them and have pity on them. A murderer of a fellow tribesman could not become keeper, nor could a "professional" gambler, that is, one who is known to have supernatural gambling power. In general one guilty of grave crime such as rape or theft from fellow tribesman, or of habitual marked moral delinquency or defect, such as lying, backbiting, felony, disbelief in or disrespect for holy things, was barred from the keepership as he was barred from rising high in the prestige scale. 793 577 [778] [554]

After the choice was finally decided upon, the whole party with others of their kin proceeded secretively before or toward daybreak to the lodge of the electee to seize him bodily by surprise before he could escape. Once seized or even only elected he had practically 793

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

743 no choice but to accept. If he did not accept, there was no legal punishment inflicted such as physical violence, killing or banish-
[681] ment, but rather a supernatural one. It was thought that some grave evil would befall the person chosen if he did not accept the office.

The two following episodes, narrated by The Boy, from his father's and his own life throw some further light on the elective system and prevalent attitudes of reluctance to being elected as keeper. While the keepership carried with it great prestige, the reluctance is quite understandable in view of the severe restrictions and taboos that went with the keepership.

"When Lame Bull was a young man, just having reached maturity, he had a very close good friend, Kitfox Head. The two solemnly agreed that they would never become keepers of either the Flat or the Feathered Pipe, as being a keeper meant having a hard life. They agreed to avoid this office but to work hard in order to become outstanding men, warriors, with a life of freedom. They so grew up and married, remaining fast friends all the time.

"When Lame Bull was in his thirties, before reaching middle age, the Gros Ventres were on one occasion camped at the eastern end of the brush nearest to where St. Paul's Mission now is. Lame Bull, who then had three wives, was sleeping soundly one night when an old woman came to the door of his tent, woke him up and warned him: 'They are perhaps going to make you keeper. A big crowd is on its way, making for your lodge.' Lame Bull said to one of his wives: "Look out and see if the old woman is right.' She did and said: 'Yes. They are here close.'

"The crowd was too close for him to escape through the door, so he pushed his way out through the back of his lodge. Once out he gave one look back, saw the crowd and dashed for liberty. He ran round west and north to the right of the canyon up from where the Mission now is and into the mountains, leaving his wives.

"The first two wives made their way out through the door. The keeper stood at the door but could not prevent their escape as his hands were engaged in holding a pipe. The 'strong man' of the crowd was too busy looking for Lame Bull to think of the wives.

[i.e., the elatee as Keeper of the Flat Pipe, -Analyst]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The keeper knew Lame Bull had only three wives and when he saw that two had gotten away and that the third and last was coming out, he said: 'Be sure to get this one. She is the last.' She was the youngest of the three, the mother of The Boy. Somebody did seize her. 793

"Then the members of the crowd pulled out all the picket pins and grabbed everything they could find. But they did not get everything belonging to Lame Bull and his wives, for the brother of the oldest wife had stolen into the crowd in order to protect his sister's property, and he was a good fighter, a man to be reckoned with. When the crowd started raiding, he threw the people right and left, fighting, hitting and pushing them, and so saved his sister's bed and some of her things.

"The crowd had gotten one of Lame Bull's wives but could not find him, and were undecided what to do. They finally agreed to take Lame Bull's wife back with them. They put a robe down and said to her: 'Sit on this. We are going to carry you back on that robe.' But when they lifted her up and put her on it she jumped off, saying: 'I don't want to be carried. I would rather walk.' One of the men, a cousin of hers, said: 'Get on to it, or else we will whip you.' So she got on it and they carried her over (to the keeper's lodge, apparently). When they arrived there they all sat down and took their places just as if Lame Bull were there, with the wife seated next to the keeper's wife. [482]

"Then the ex-keeper, who had transferred the Pipe to the keeper from whom Lame Bull had just run, said, 'I will try to call my friend (Lame Bull). Maybe he does not want to be keeper.' So the keeper gave his place to this ex-keeper who then started to perform the rite for summoning unwilling persons.

"All this time Lame Bull was hiding up in the mountains, and it so happened that his horses were grazing nearby. As he looked at them he was more than ever determined never to become a keeper, for he did not want to give his horses away as he would have to do as keeper. So while he was listening to the singing and rattling of the rite, he said to himself: 'Sing all you want. I'll never go down there.'

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

793 "As, however, the singing continued, Lame Bull started to think seriously. He could hear the singing clearly as he was quite close. The rite went on. At last he looked at his horses again and thought to himself: 'I have many horses. I believe I'll surely have some of them left. I think I'll go down and become keeper. Probably they have my wives anyhow, and my children will be hungry and lonesome.'

"So Lame Bull came down off the mountain and half ran all the way back to camp. But he did not go straight to the keeper's lodge. He went instead to the lodge of some of his old women relatives with the idea of getting something to eat first, because he was hungry and he knew the rite of installation would take a long time. On reaching the old women's lodge he was given a good scolding by them, and they told him: 'The party has your youngest wife. She is over there.' 'I'm going over,' he said, 'but first give me something to eat.' They did so, but he could not eat much. Meanwhile the singing started again. As soon as he was through eating he went straight to the keeper's lodge, entered, and walked clockwise to the keeper. The ex-keeper still had the Flat Pipe in his hands. Lame Bull took hold of the Pipe, and the ex-keeper was glad. So Lame Bull went through the whole installation rite and became keeper. The rite cost him, among other things, 20 horses of his own, 3 from Kitfox Head, and others from his relatives, a total of 30. All through his life, Lame Bull thought that his being summoned with the Flat Pipe by the ex-keeper from a distance of a couple of miles was one of his greatest experiences."

The foregoing account of Lame Bull's reluctance to accept, but final acceptance of, the Flat Pipe had been gotten by The Boy from his father. The following account of The Boy's reluctance is from himself.

"At one period in my early life I had a dream that the Flat Pipe wished me to be keeper. A second time I had the dream. I mentioned the dreams to nobody. A third time I had a dream in which the Pipe said to me: 'If you refuse the request I make of you, something will change the prosperity you are now enjoying.' At this time I was in the prime of life, in good health, very

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

successful with plenty of money and with large herds of cattle and horses. 793

"I worried about the dreams, so I told my father who was still alive then. He made no reply at first; he was apparently in deep thought. After a while he said to me: 'I have decided that it is best for you not to be keeper. You are young, entering the prime of life.' My father did not think I should throw my life away, in view of the restrictions imposed on the keeper. I was willing to become keeper but I respected my father's advice and I followed it. My father said: 'Make a sweat lodge and we will make an offering instead of your being made keeper.' And this we did. Someone else then became keeper, namely, Thick's brother, Horse Capture.

"Then Lame Bull died, and not many years after I met adversity in my ranching and all my worldly affairs went wrong. Since then I have never been able to reach the height of prosperity that I had previously enjoyed. But I am not angry over this. I still keep my respect for the Flat Pipe because it is one of the chief things in the life of my ancestors."

A variant of the elective procedure above described occurred where the electee was close kin to the keeper. Thus around 1873, just before Crow Bull fulfilled his vow of taking the Flat Pipe, Big Beaver was keeper of the Feathered Pipe and Lame Bull keeper of the Flat Pipe, and one of Bull Lodge's sisters was the wife of Big Beaver and another the wife of Lame Bull. Both keepers at about the same time planned to make the transfer of their respective Pipes to Bull Lodge, brother-in-law of both. The two sisters came one right after the other to Bull Lodge to notify him of the decisions. Since the two women were his sisters he could not well refuse. He agreed: "All right. I am glad. Only one thing I ask. Tell my brothers-in-law not to make a raid on my lodge. Come after I make my new lodge (in the fall), and I will accept whichever Pipe is brought me first." Actually the Feathered Pipe party came first and Bull Lodge became Feathered Pipe keeper.

The new keeper chose one of his wives, often the chief or oldest one, to be co-keeper with him. The keeper's other wives were not

793 co-keepers with her, but they or one of them would substitute for her in such minor duties as taking the Pipe out of the lodge in the morning and bringing it back in the evening when she was sick abed, or busy, or during her menses. During menses the [841] co-keeper was not allowed to handle the Pipe. After Crow Bull, 784] during his keepership, gave away his head wife and co-keeper, Digger, to Small White Cow in a drunken spree and Digger went away as wife to Small White Cow, Crow Bull's second oldest wife, Coming Day became co-keeper in Digger's place. If a man at the [784] time of becoming keeper had a young wife with an infant, she and the infant were sent away to another lodge as infant-crying was not allowed in the keeper's lodge where the Pipe was.

The Flat Pipe keeper, if he had two or more children, chose one and one only of his children, more commonly a boy, to be Pipe Child. It was a strict rule that he could keep only one of his children with him; all his other children had to live elsewhere than in their father's lodge, because, for one important reason, the Pipe was jealous. Some keepers were such rigorists in the matter that they practically forgot all their other children.

793 The children that were put out of their father's lodge naturally found this hard and rebelled, but they were trained to take it as 784 a matter of course. A special interest was taken by others in such 543 children as they were felt to be unfortunate in being deprived of the care and affection of their own parents. These children were permitted to visit their father and mother but they were under restrictions when they did so. Their grandmothers or foster parents would instruct them how to behave on such visits. They could not stay long, much less sleep there. They had to sit quiet in a special place in their parents' lodge and not roam around in it freely. They had to stay mostly near the door and not go near where the Pipe was. They were strictly forbidden to play in their father's lodge when visiting there. If their mother gave them something to eat they could eat it. They could sit on her lap. [781] But they could not talk loud or shout. When so visiting they were not at ease and felt sort of foreign and awestricken. The Boy 793 thought that these children may have been jealous of their sibling, 543 the Pipe Child, but in such case they would have had to keep

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

their feelings to themselves, for any show of such feelings would be contrary to the deep veneration due to the Pipe and its official personnel. They had to be resigned to have that particular sibling as the Pipe Child. When the keeper gave up his keepership, some of his children might go back to their father's lodge but not necessarily all of them. Some had gotten used to living elsewhere and just remained there. 793 593

The Boy's own experience may further illustrate the foregoing situation. 793

He was born while his father, Lame Bull, was keeper of the Flat Pipe, and consequently he was born not in his father's lodge but in that of one of his grandmothers. His mother went back to his father's lodge, but she used to come to his grandmother's lodge to nurse and look after him. In his earliest years he had four or five "grandmothers" or great-grandmothers [real and classificatory] living, one of them his mother's mother. He stayed most of the time with his maternal grandmother and with her mother. It was from these grandmothers that he got most of the affectionate attention he craved and most of his early training and instruction. Every night, too, one or other of the grandmothers would tell old-time stories and Ni:hohat tales. After a while he was permitted to go to his father's lodge but only for a little while at a time, but he was not allowed to live or sleep there. He never addressed his parents as "father" or "mother," but only by their given names, although there was no taboo in the matter, and his younger brother Andrew Lame Bull used the former manner of address. The Boy as a child did not feel much inclined to "play baby" and sit alongside his father and mother, as other Gros Ventre children did, to get special attention, but he did act so elsewhere, around his grandmothers and great-grandmothers. He did not go to live in his father's lodge until he was about nine (or eleven?) years old, after his father had ceased being Pipe keeper, and by this time he was able to take pretty good care of himself, to ride horseback, and so forth. 793 603 593

All of The Boy's eight brothers and sisters—he was the ninth—who survived infancy were reared outside their father's lodge, except the one who was Pipe child. After Lame Bull's keepership 793 593

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

793 ended, all of them just invaded their father's lodge. The Pipe
593 child did not measure up to Lame Bull's expectations, so the latter's attention slowly centered on The Boy. Lame Bull, as an ex-keeper, still practiced some of the Pipe ceremonies, and The Boy came to act the part of "Pipe child" in these for his father.

Rite of Transfer

793 When the keeper of the Flat Pipe was about to transfer it to a successor he would invite to his lodge for a secret night meeting
*796 the surviving ex-keepers with their ex-co-keeper wives of both the Flat and the Feathered Pipes. The Feathered Pipe ex-keepers and ex-co-keepers were present purely as invited guests. They did not have any voice in decisions nor did they do any prompting. The first task of the assembled Flat Pipe group was to choose the new keeper, as previously described. The Flat Pipe ex-keepers and ex-co-keepers, further, remained with the transferring keeper and his co-keeper wife throughout the rite of transfer, to prompt and correct them in case they should forget, be in doubt about, or incorrectly perform some part of the rite. Two young men attendants, usually sons of keeper or ex-keepers, were present throughout the election transfer.

After the group had decided who should be next keeper, they quietly scattered and gathered together their relatives and reassembled outside the actual keeper's lodge. The whole party then proceeded quietly, at night before dawn when the camp was asleep, to the selectee's lodge, the keeper in the lead holding the bared Flat Pipe stem forward and slanting upward, with the bowl in his cupped left hand and the stem in his upturned right palm, at about breast height. One of the party, an ex-keeper or one of his sons or other kin, a physically powerful man, had been designated as the person to grab and hold the selectee in case he tried to run away.

The party usually succeeded in reaching the selectee's lodge without arousing anyone. On arrival thereat they all shouted noisily. This was the signal for the strong man to dash into the selectee's lodge and seize him. Any other member of the party could grab the selectee's wife who was to be co-keeper pipe

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

woman. Once grabbed she ceased to struggle, took a blanket or robe, sat down and covered her head so she could not see anything. She so remained with head covered until the transfer ceremony began. After the two were seized and held fast, the members of the party raided the belongings of the selected couple, grabbing everything in sight, and no matter how valuable, keeping it for their own. When the raid was over the selectee was "penniless." All his property was gone. He had nothing left but his wife. 793 796*

The selectee then had a good fire made to give light, and sent his other wives and his children away from the lodge. All the raiding party, too, left except the selectee and co-selectee wife, the keeper and his co-keeper wife, the ex-keepers and their ex-co-keeper wives and the two young men attendants. From then on the rite was secret and no one else was allowed to be present or to peek in.

The elite group then marched into the selectee's lodge, the keeper in the lead still holding the Flat Pipe. The keeper next went to the selectee, holding the stem toward him and handed him the Pipe. The selectee took hold of it with both hands wherever there was room next to the keeper's hands. With both men holding the Pipe, the keeper said: "Here, my grandson, is your Pipe." To this he replied: "My grandfather, I am glad to receive this Pipe."

With both still holding the Pipe, the keeper now touched first the right and then the left shoulder or side of chest of the selectee with the Pipe and released his hold of the Pipe. From this moment the selectee was keeper, and the transferring keeper became an ex-keeper.

Next the new keeper, holding the Pipe, and his co-keeper wife, were both carried, on robes or blankets in procession while the marchers sang, to the transferring ex-keeper's lodge. By this procession and its accompanying singing it became known publicly that a transfer of the Pipe had taken place. On arrival the new keeper deposited the Pipe in its place on its wrappings. Here the first teaching of the new keeper and co-keeper began, and lasted throughout the following day. Here they remained throughout the same day and until the morning of the day after, obliged to

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

793 fast from both food and water until the feast on the second day.
*796 The Pipe remained in the transferring keeper's lodge all the rest of this first night, and throughout the next day and night, not fully wrapped, but loosely covered.

The first day, at the transferring keeper's lodge, was devoted mostly to teaching the new keeper and co-keeper the various rites as well as the obligations, prerogatives, powers, taboos and etiquette observances connected with the keepership. All this was done secretly, with no one present except the new keeper and co-keeper, the co-keepers and ex-co-keepers and the two attendants. The new keeper and co-keeper were coached chiefly by the retiring keeper and co-keeper respectively, who however would where necessary, be assisted, prompted, corrected or even in some matters superseded by some of the other better informed Flat Pipe ex-keepers and ex-co-keepers. Whenever the instructing last keeper was in doubt he would ask the other ex-keepers present. For giving such coaching the instructors had to be paid well by the new keeper, in horses or any other property which he may still have had left after the previous night's raid and which his relatives, coming to his aid, would provide. By the end of the instruction, which continued through to the third day of the transfer rite, the man's relatives might themselves be "penniless." For each segment of instruction a payment had to be made. The payments were generally made to the retiring keeper and co-keeper, who would keep part and distribute the remainder to the other ex-keepers and ex-co-keepers and also to his relatives who had helped him out when he had become keeper.

Instruction continued through this first day until sundown. That night the new keeper and co-keeper slept in the lodge of the retiring keeper where the Pipe was.

The second day of the transfer ceremony was given over chiefly to further instruction and to the double-lodge rite.

This double lodge was made right in the middle of the camp circle by taking down two big lodges and setting them up in figure-8 ground plan to form one large interior without obstruction or "veil" between and with the long double-axis running north and south. The Pipe was carried to the double lodge and de-

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

posited in the north section thereof, which was reserved for the Pipe and for new keeper and co-keeper, who walked there from the retiring keeper's lodge, and for the ex-keepers, ex-co-keepers and two attendants. The cover of this northern section was down, but that of the southern was lifted up to let the people look in and watch. Into the southern section went a group of Sacrifice Lodge men and another of Stars, and each group sat in its own circle on either side of the interior. Other people would also come in till all space was occupied. Children were not allowed to fool around the double lodge and dogs were kept away, but the general public was welcome. During the following song contest the new keeper and co-keeper sat with heads covered and faces hidden.

793
1796*

793
1796*
533

When all was ready, at the word from the ex-keeper's party, the Sacrifice Dancers and Stars shouted and beat their drums, then stopped. After that the retiring keeper started singing the Flat Pipe song "My holiness, have pity on me," all the other ex-keepers and ex-co-keepers joining in. At the same time the Sacrifice Dancer and Star groups each started one of its own songs. The singing recalled the gladness that followed upon the first making of dry land, the increase and welfare of the succeeding generations under fidelity to the old beliefs and under good leadership, and the wish that the new keeper would perpetuate all this and that his leadership would be successful.

The simultaneous singing of the three distinct songs was also a sort of contest to see which group was "stronger," which group or individual would amidst this bedlam of conflicting choruses first sing false. Rivalry was keen but good-natured between the three groups of singers. The moment any one member of any of the three groups began to sing false, that is, if a Star sang the Sacrifice Dancer's song or an ex-keeper sang the Star's song, the singing stopped. Everybody knew at once which group had made the mistake, but not which individual. He had to confess. This was made public and everybody including the onlookers, laughed at and bantered the one who sang false and his group. Then a recess was taken and they sat around and chatted and smoked. After the recess, the same procedure was repeated; then came another recess, followed by a third contest and recess.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

793
*796

At the end of the recess after the third "crazy singing," the boisterous hilarity gave place to sober seriousness, and the solemn secret instruction and consecration of the new keeper and co-keeper were resumed in the northern section of the double lodge. About this time, too, the new Pipe child came into the lodge, and the heads and faces of the new keeper and co-keeper were uncovered. In general when, during their training, the two were learning by hearing, their heads were covered so they could concentrate their attention on what they heard; while, when learning by seeing, their heads were uncovered. The covering of the head at certain times, as on the march to the keeper's lodge immediately after the previous night's notification and raid and as during the "crazy singing," seems also to have had an "ascetic" purpose, just as the abstention from food and smoking throughout most of this first day had.

The instruction after the "crazy singing" concerned primarily the ritual of smoking the Flat Pipe. Right after the uncovering of the heads of the keeper and co-keeper, the retiring keeper took peppermint leaves and gave some to the new keeper, while the retiring co-keeper did the same, giving some to the new co-keeper. Then each of the four chewed the leaves, spat three times on his or her own hands, rubbed the hands [illegible] then with the right palm rubbed his or her own left fore[illegible] up to the shoulder and with left palm the right forearm up to the shoulder, and finally with right palm from the mouth up over the face and hair to the occiput,—three rubbing or laving motions in all. This was done three times in succession.

[824]

After this peppermint laving came the fumigation or smudging rite. At the word of the retiring keeper the first of the two attendants, to the west of the door, with two sticks as tongs took a lighted buffalo chip from the fire in the center of the lodge and placed it on the incense mound (to be described later), and went back to his place, proceeding clockwise throughout. The retiring keeper then took from the supply alongside him a pinch of dried peppermint leaves in the tips of his five right-hand fingers and crawled on his knees to the incense hearth. There, kneeling squatted on his heels, and facing east, he held his hand, finger tips

[392]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

down, at shoulder height and sang the incense song while the other members of his party joined in, and at the conclusion of the song said: "Yo!" Then he lowered his hand a little, sang with the others the same song, and ended with the recited "Yo!" Finally he further lowered his hand close to the hearth, sang with the others the same song, and at the end made three circles clockwise with his hand around the burning chip saying at each circle: "Yo'ho ho ho" (Yo followed by glottal stop; ho ho ho, in lower pitch, not emphatic), and after the third circle released the peppermint on the chip. Then he turned toward the south, and the same triple rite was repeated, and finally toward the west, with repetition of the rite. 793 796* [533]

Immediately after this, the retiring keeper, the new keeper, the retiring co-keeper, and the new co-keeper, in this order, fumigated themselves. Each put his (or her) hands palm down, in the peppermint incense smoke, rubbed his hands together, rubbed the left arm from the tips of fingers up to the shoulder with the right palm and the right arm likewise with the left palm. This was done three times. Then three times in succession he put his right palm over the incense, lifted his palm to his mouth, and inhaled. Then he held both palms over the incense and passed them from his mouth up over his face and hair to his occiput. [788]

The Pipe child also went through both the peppermint laving and the fumigating rite in each case after the other four participants.

The retiring keeper next filled the Flat Pipe with tobacco. He took a little tobacco in the five fingers of his right hand, finger tips down, while holding the Pipe by the bowl in his left hand. Poising his right hand about a foot above the bowl, he spat a little. Then he made a pass with the tobacco down a little nearer to the bowl and spat. Next he repeated the pass still nearer, and spat, and put the tobacco in the bowl. Then he filled the bowl with tobacco. Then laid the Pipe down with stem to the east on sage brush between the hearth and the pipe bed. After this a recess was taken. The party chatted and smoked socially or left the lodge.

After the recess, the retiring keeper would say to all: "Let

793 us begin again. Keep quiet," and to the first attendant: "Bring a live buffalo chip." The attendant did so, put it on the hearth, *796 and returned to his place. The retiring keeper then took a pinch of dried peppermint leaves, and after the triple successive lowering and three clockwise circles above described, but without song or spoken word, released the peppermint, dropping it on the smoldering chip.

[516] Squatting on his knees and heels instead of cross-legged, so that he could move around more easily, he took up the Flat Pipe, grasping it by the stem, palms up, with his left hand nearer the bowl. Then he circled the stem through the incense and upward until it pointed *east* and held it steady a moment at this point. He repeated the circling and pointing at a lower level, again at a still lower one, and finally made three clockwise circles with the bowl around the incense. Next he repeated the same smudging but toward the *south;* finally, toward the *west.*

After the smudging came the solemn prayer (to be described later) said by the retiring keeper, kneeling upright and holding the Pipe with the stem pointing, not to any point of the compass, [516] but vertically upward. At the end of the prayer he let himself down on his heels, still kneeling, and held the Pipe in position to smoke. He ordered the first attendant: "Bring a live buffalo chip." The [412] attendant thereupon took a chip from the lodge hearth with a forked stick and applied it to the tobacco in the Pipe. The keeper [276] puffed the Pipe until the tobacco was lit, and then took three distinct puffs, blowing the smoke upward around and downward around. Then he passed the Pipe to the new keeper, first swinging it upward. The new keeper, after taking three puffs and blowing the smoke up and down in the same manner, took a real full smoke with the Pipe. Then he passed it clockwise to the nearest ex-keeper to the east, who smoked it, but without swinging it upward. Then it was passed in turn clockwise to the other ex-keepers, if there were others, to be smoked but not swung, till it reached the last nearest the door. The ex-co-keepers did not smoke the Pipe in this or in any other Flat Pipe rite. Then the lighted Pipe was passed back anti-clockwise, without smoking, and without swinging upward except by the new keeper (this honor

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

was reserved to the new keeper), and with tamping by the retiring keeper as it passed him, till it reached the last ex-keeper on the west side of the lodge. Then it was passed clockwise back toward the new keeper, each ex-keeper on the west side smoking it in turn, till it reached the retiring keeper. By this time the tobacco would probably be all smoked up, so he would dump it out by lifting up the Pipe, horizontal and bowl up, to head height, then lowering it still horizontal and bowl up, and finally turning the bowl over,—all this being done very slowly. 793 796*

Another important part of the transfer rite was the blessing of the person and clothing of the new keeper and co-keeper, but when it occurred, before or after the Pipe smoking, was not cleared up. According to The Boy, "Every part of the new keeper was blessed, even his mouth, that is, his talk was blessed," but we obtained only the following details. The new keeper and co-keeper (and Pipe child) were painted by the retiring keeper on the forehead and under the jawbone and chin as signifying the world above and the earth respectively. The retiring keeper also chewed peppermint leaves and spat upon the two, to signify that they must "quiet down and be good." [302]

The moccasins and feet of the new keeper, co-keeper and Pipe child were treated as follows. The retiring keeper took peppermint leaves in his mouth, chewed them, spat three times on the sole of one moccasin (moccasined foot) of the new keeper, lowered it down in three stages over the smudge of the sacred hearth, and circled it three times around the hearth. Then he took a pinch of poisonous wild parsley (see infra), spat three times on his palms, rubbed the palms together and rubbed the sole of the moccasin with his palm three times from toe to heel. The same treatment was given to the keeper's other moccasin by the retiring keeper, then to the new co-keeper's moccasins by the retiring co-keeper, and lastly to the new Pipe child's moccasins by the retiring keeper. At the end of the whole transfer these blessed moccasins were taken off and put in the Flat Pipe bundle, and were worn only during rites, not as everyday footwear. Every other piece of clothing of the new keeper, co-keeper and Pipe child was blessed with peppermint and fumigation, apparently with a similar rite [824]

although without the wild parsley, but we did not obtain details.

After ritual treatment of their wearing apparel, the new keeper and co-keeper had to take off any ring, necklace or other personal adornment made of copper, iron or other metal, as the wearing of metal adornments was forbidden them, apparently because such were from the whites. The two, but not the Pipe child, were each ritually invested with a necklace consisting of a large single shell on a string of twisted, not plaited, buckskin. The investure was done with three motions as if putting the necklace on, and at the third it was actually put on. Further the keeper, but not the co-keeper, had to frame his hair over his forehead with a large pompadour, as a sign of distinction.[1]

The new co-keeper also put some dried peppermint leaves mixed with poisonous wild parsley in a little buckskin sack which she then wore on her belt. This had a double purpose. First, the mixture being poisonous, she commanded respect. She must not be molested or even be bodily touched. Whoever molested or even touched her would suffer fits or spasms or a paralytic stroke. Second, she must live a virtuous life and not run around with other men. The co-keeper and keeper, as also the ex-co-keepers and ex-keepers, since they had all been consecrated with peppermint and fumigation could handle the wild parsley without danger, but the common people were not immune to its supposedly highly toxic effects.

On this second day a big feast was given. Most of the food was provided by the new keeper and his relatives. That eaten by the new keeper and co-keeper, who had been fasting from food and water since the time they were first siezed a good thirty or more hours previously, was provided by the ex-keepers.

At sundown the day's instruction ended. That night the new keeper and co-keeper, the ex-keepers and ex-co-keepers and two attendants slept in the double lodge, where the Pipe also remained.

Very early the next morning (or less probably late on the

[1] In 1948 The Boy added: "When a man became keeper, he ceased to comb his hair and it would get in all kinds of shapes and hang down. So he would take a bunch from the center and wind it round and round and tied that knot of hair around with a string. Whenever the keeper took off that string the people would be afraid!" [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

second day; our field information is not clear) the Flat Pipe which had been kept only loosely covered most of the time since the first night was ritually wrapped up in its bundle and the new keeper was told to observe carefully so he would know how the re-wrapping was done. 793 796*

Meanwhile a regulation Flat Pipe sweat-lodge was put up, outside the camp circle as always and near the new keeper's lodge, for the new keeper and ex-keepers to sweat. In this sweat the women co-keepers did not join. The first after the Supreme Being (and other supernatural beings?) in the list of invitees to sweat was the new keeper, after him the ex-keepers. After all had taken their places inside the sweat-lodge, the retiring co-keeper carried the Flat Pipe, wrapped in its bundle, walking clockwise if necessary around the sweat-lodge, to the door thereof as the last. She entered by the east door, deposited the bundle in the place of honor at the west, and went out through the small west door. When it was time to take the Pipe out, she, accompanied by the new co-keeper, came to the west door, reached in and grasped the Pipe bundle, at once handed over the bundle to the new co-keeper and escorted her to the latter's lodge.

Then the new keeper and the ex-keepers sweated. When through, they put on their clothes and scattered to their lodges, the new keeper going back to his own, a new one which the retiring keeper and his relatives provided for him if his old one had been lost in the first night's raid. For every pin put in to hold the new lodge down he had to make a gift to the retiring keeper and the latter's relatives. So too even when they tied the door and showed the new keeper and his wife how to start their fire, make their bed, mount a horse, and so forth. [431]

So ended the transfer rite proper. The new keeper and co-keeper were now consecrated, and had to live by the keepership code, no matter how they had previously lived.

So ended, too, the preliminary instruction. But further instruction was given from time to time later. When the new keeper, with the help of his relatives, would gather together sufficient property, he would seek further instruction from the Flat Pipe ex-keepers especially the last keeper or some particularly well-

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

informed one, feasting them and also, *de regueur*, giving payment in valuable goods for each bit of instruction received. In these instruction sessions, the last keeper usually played the leading role, but the others would coach and correct when necessary or one of them if better informed on this or that point might teach while the last keeper took a back seat. The retiring co-keeper did most of the instruction of the new co-keeper. The Feathered Pipe keeper co-keeper, ex-keepers, and ex-co-keepers would commonly sit in at these sessions, but only as guests, without taking part in the instruction. Lame Bull, when first made keeper, got a great deal of his instruction from Deer, an earlier exceptionally well informed keeper.

A ritual relationship was contracted between the new keeper and co-keeper on the one hand and the ex-keeper and ex-co-keepers on the other. All the ex-keepers become "grandfathers" to the new keeper and co-keeper; all the ex-co-keepers, "grandmothers" to them; and are so addressed by these names respectively. The retiring keeper and co-keeper became, as it were, principal "grandfather" and "grandmother" respectively. This sacred relationship was looked upon as very like that between grandparents and grandchildren by blood. Privileged familiarity in the way of vulgar talk and banter, between these ritual grandparents and grandchildren, obtained, but not quite the large degree of freedom that obtained between grandparents and grandchildren by blood.[8] The ritual "grandfathers" and "grandmothers" also had certain recognized powers of control over their "grandchildren": if, for instance, one of these "grandsons" went on a berserk rampage and was about to kill a fellow-tribesman, and his own father and mother could not bring him to reason, one of the ritual grandfathers might be called in to reason with his grandson and the latter would have to abandon his angry murderous design.

Keeper's Lodge

The Flat Pipe keeper's lodge was a large one, undecorated on the outside except for a portion painted red around the door.

[8] Cf. Flannery, 1953, pp. 121-22.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The lodges of the other people faced toward the east-southeast, from utilitarian consideration, since the prevailing and strongest winds were from the northwest in winter and west in summer. But the door of the keeper's lodge was toward the south, an orientation determined by the ritual position of the Pipe inside the lodge, namely, in the place of honor opposite the door with the stem pointing toward the rising sun. 342 346 [36]

The interior of the keeper's lodge was arranged as follows. In the center was the family hearth. About midway between this and the north segment was the square incense hearth, with the west half of black sand and the east of red. At the north, close to the wall, was the Pipe bed and place for the Pipe tripod. The bed, oriented east and west, was made of a buffalo robe over sage brush. At each end was a willow back rest, and over each rest a robe of summer-pelage (after winter coat completely shed) buffalo skin. The tripod, of three legs, was a little over five feet high. The Pipe bundle was either laid on the bed close to the wall or else hung on the tripod, always with the stem to the rising sun. The northern part of the lodge, including the incense hearth and Pipe bed and adjacent area, in all about one-third of the interior, constituted a sort of "sanctuary." 342 346 353 778

The keeper's sleeping bed, with its back rest toward the north, was a little removed from the Pipe bed, toward the west; the co-keeper's in a corresponding position toward the east. The Pipe child commonly slept on the Pipe bed, alongside of and to the south of the Pipe bundle, with his head to the east. If however the keeper or co-keeper wanted to sleep on the Pipe bed in order to dream, the Pipe child would then give place and sleep in his father's or mother's bed as the case might be. When any of the three slept on the Pipe bed, the Pipe bundle might hang on the tripod over them or else rest on the northern edge of the bed nearest the wall. In the latter case, the tripod was folded up and leaned between the Pipe bed and the co-keeper's bed. According to Thick the sleepers had to lie flat on their backs all night. According, however, to The Boy they were forbidden to do so and had instead to lie on their sides, because the turtle was closely associated with the Flat Pipe and if a turtle gets on its back it cannot right itself. 342 346 513 [784] [825]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

341 The triangular space between the foot of the Pipe bed and the
346 head of the keeper's bed served the keeper as a place to keep such
353 of his personal and ritual belongings as his peppermint, sage brush, personal smoking pipe, and so forth.

In good weather, the Pipe bundle was taken outside by the co-
778 keeper in the morning (rite to be described later) and hung up,
788 stem to east, on the outside of the keeper's lodge just above the door, the thong handle of the bundle being looped around a pin of the lodge. About sundown the bundle was brought inside again by the co-keeper to its ritual place. At night the opening of the keeper's lodge was securely closed with a piece of rawhide, shaped like the door, covered with a sort of lattice work of rawhide, and fastened from the inside.

778 The keeper's lodge, as the depository of the Flat Pipe and the dwelling of the consecrated custodians thereof, had to be treated with great respect. This respect was formalized in a number of ritual and other observances.

784 No one was permitted to step over the incense hearth, under penalty of being inflicted with fits.

When the keeper, co-keeper and Pipe child took off their moccasins for the night, these had to be deposited, not alongside the beds or under the pillows or anywhere in the "sanctuary," but near the lodge door,—the keeper's to the west of the door, the co-keeper's to the east, the Pipe child's to either the west or the east *ad libitum*. If this were not done, severe headaches would result.

Anyone entering the keeper's lodge or leaving it or passing from one part of it to another, always had to walk clockwise.

784 When anything was going on therein, with men and women both
present, the men had to sit on the western side, the women on the
516 eastern. When they sat down, they could not sit with legs stretched out in front; the men squatted on their heels with knees touching the ground and legs parallel, while the women sat on their buttocks with their legs to the right side one leg under the other.

No one, adult or child, could throw stones or sticks at the
784 keeper's lodge. Children were not allowed to play or fool or romp

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

around it, but were taught and trained to be quiet around it and to observe reverence toward it. 784

No whistling or crying was permitted in the keeper's lodge. The keeper and co-keeper were forbidden to cry in the presence of the Pipe, if, for instance, they had lost a relative. A crying baby was never allowed in the lodge with the Pipe. As soon as the infant started to cry it was taken out. If, as previously noted, a man who had a young wife with a baby took the Pipe, she and the infant would be sent out of the Pipe lodge to a nearby lodge. [854]

Dogs were never allowed to enter the lodge where the Pipe was. If the keeper or co-keeper owned a dogskin robe, the rules forbade their using it. [231]

The people were not allowed to go to the keeper's lodge to get fire, as they used to go to other lodges in the early morning.

Breaking bones to extract marrow was prohibited in the keeper's lodge. If this were done, some accident, such as the breaking of a leg or arm, would happen to some relative of the keeper [or of the delinquent?]. [264]

The door of the keeper's lodge had to be kept closed, and the back cover of the lodge could not be lifted up in the warm summer-time to get air.

A war party before starting off would sing at the door of each clan chief's lodge, but not at the door of the keeper's. [726]

When people went to the keeper's lodge for a social smoke and feast, they had to keep their wits about them and watch their speech carefully lest they should unthinkingly tell lies, vulgar or obscene stories, or start a war-deed contest.

There was a very strict prohibition against telling lies in the keeper's lodge.

If two men, while in the keeper's lodge, forgot themselves and started a war-deed contest, the keeper would remind them: "You are mistaken in talking so in here. Now you will have to continue for three days and nights." During this time all who were present when the slip was first made had to stay day and night in the lodge of the keeper, who would provide them with food and tobacco. These listeners would egg on and laughingly banter the two contestants and decide on the winner. After a while the pair's 784 517

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

784 fund of war exploits would be apt to give out, and the two would
517 begin talking about trifling occurrences in camp, personal reminiscences about their marriages, and so forth. Everybody had a good time at such a three-day session.

Neither the keeper nor others were permitted to tell folk-tales of the vulgar or obscene Ni:hahat type in the former's lodge. If a member of a visiting group inadvertently broke the rule, a three-day session similar to the war-deed one above was prescribed, during which he had to continue telling such tales.

798 If a murder of a fellow-tribesman had been committed in camp, and the murdered person's relatives were about to kill the murderer
696 in revenge, the latter could run to and take refuge in the keeper's lodge and was safe so long, but only so long, as he stayed there. The avengers dared not enter it to kill, but immunity ceased so soon as the murderer left the lodge.

624 There is general agreement among our informants that the keeper's lodge was pitched in a prominent place, but exactly where
361 in the camp circle is a controverted point we did not succeed in clearing up. According to one tradition, it occupied the place of honor in the circle, toward the northwest—opposite the circle's opening which was toward the southeast or the rising sun,—regardless of where the keeper's band camped in the circle. Three, however, of our oldest informants, Coming Daylight, Takes-the-Bow, and Turn-Toes, held that the keeper remained with his band, the first two of the three stating that his lodge was pitched a little in front of his band toward the center of the circle.

Prerogatives and Restrictions of Keepership

793 The office of keepership carried with it on the one hand a great many special rights, privileges, prerogatives and powers and on the other a great many restrictions, obligations, responsibilities and sacrifices. The following list is undoubtedly incomplete, as new ones were still being revealed when our field work came to an end,[8] but it probably includes most of them. They functionally accord with sacred and high dignity of the keepership, the supernatural power attached to it, the lofty ethical behavior and "as-

[8] Kroeber, 1908, p. 273, has some we did not get.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13.

ceticism" expected of the keeper, his status as one set apart from his fellows, and his political and civil role in the Gros Ventre theocracy. We shall classify and treat them in this order, although some of them do not fit too neatly into any one of the five or six categories, and some straddle two or more of them. Incidentally, in many cases these refer to the co-keeper as well, although our field notes mention only the keeper. 793

The keeper and co-keeper of the Flat Pipe held a very sacred office of great eminence, and their persons and everything on or about them were considered holy. They themselves were expected always to behave in a dignified manner becoming their exalted and sacred position, and others were obliged to show them due respect. [778]

The keeper and co-keeper were not permitted "to do foolish things like other people." They could not, for instance, take part in gossip or other petty meanness. They were obligated as well to many ethical, "ascetic" and ritual observances to be described presently. [784] [577]

Marked respect was due them from their fellow-tribesmen. As The Boy put it, the Gros Ventres, now all Catholics, "had just the same great respect for the keeper and his wife as they now have for the priests and nuns." [795]

People had to keep their distance from the keeper and co-keeper, and could not sit close to them, or touch, grab or wrestle with them. Apparently, however, they could shake hands with them. If the keeper asked anyone to hand him something, the object had to be passed by hand, not thrown to him; if it were thrown toward the keeper on the ground and he had to pick it up, some accident would befall either the keeper or the thrower. 793 784

If anyone stepped over the outstretched feet or legs of the sitting keeper or co-keeper, the guilty party would at once fall in a fit, or get cramps and could be cured only by the offended keeper or co-keeper. Likewise, if the keeper, intentionally or unintentionally, stepped over the outstretched legs of a sitting person, the person would get fits or cramps and could be cured only by the keeper.

If the keeper or an ex-keeper had the Flat Pipe or even a com-

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

793 mon pipe in his hands, it was forbidden for anyone to pass in front
784 of him, under penalty of some evil befalling the culprit.

If a person, wanting something in a hurry from the keeper, such as meat or a bit of tobacco, just poked his (or her) head in the door of the keeper's lodge and made his request, no one inside would answer him. He would have to go all the way in, proceeding clockwise, make his request, and go out clockwise, not back out.

When the co-keeper gave a visitor something to eat in the Pipe lodge, the receiver had to eat it there and not take it out, unless someone told war stories. No one was allowed to take or grab anything seen in the Pipe lodge.

The keeper and co-keeper were by virtue of their office "holy"
778 persons, that is, endowed with supernatural powers. Some of these
782 powers were related directly to their main task as custodians of the Pipe, leaders in its ritual, and intercessors with the supernatural world, and will be described under the ritual of the Pipe. Others were conferred on them at or subsequent to the transfer rite, partly to enable them to command the respect due them, partly to give them supernatural efficiency for their own or their people's advantage,—the former being mostly powers to harm, the latter mostly powers to help.

793 If anyone were guilty of disrespect to the keeper or co-keeper,
754 there were several avenging procedures to which they could resort.

During the transfer rite, the keeper and co-keeper were taught some form of cursing, so they would be properly respected. If they wished evil on anyone, the evil would come to pass. Deer, an ex-keeper who gave Lame Bull much of the latter's coaching for the keepership, told him after his mouth had been consecrated: "Be careful what you say. For if you utter an evil wish on anybody, the wish will come true." This power, it may be added, is more or less of a piece with the commonly possessed efficacy attributed in Gros Ventre idealogy to serious good or evil wish-thought. (See pp. 364-370.)

Deer also taught Lame Bull in his early keepership another harming power, but cautioned him not to use it unless someone failed to show proper respect to him as keeper. This power worked by "sympathetic" magic. Deer asked for a little pup and a piece of sinew. When these were brought he said: "Leave the pup near

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the door." Deer then in both hands held the sinew stretched taut horizontally over a smoldering chip and sang a song special to this rite, ending it with a recitative "Yo!" Then he lowered the sinew and repeated the song and "Yo," then lowered still more and repeated, concluding with "Yo, ho, ho, ho!" and finally put the sinew on the burning chip. As the sinew burned and buckled, the pup doubled up with cramps and died. 793 754

Another power, conferred for use by the keeper in case of disrespect committed against him, worked by "contagious" magic. The keeper watched the offender closely and made sure to locate his tracks, and then took out of the pipe bundle and put on his ritual moccasins the soles of which had been rubbed during the transfer rite with the poisonous wild parsley. Then, wearing the moccasins he stepped in the offender's tracks. As soon as he did so, the offender got a fit and then his legs and feet became weak and wobbly and nobody but the keeper could cure him. [789]

The co-keeper for the same punitive purpose in case of disrespect or molestation carried wild parsley mixed with peppermint leaves in the sack attached to her belt, but we obtained no information on the precise procedure she used.

Two punitive procedures were told The Boy by his father but without full details. These "vulgar" powers were not broadcast but were kept more or less secret within the inner circle of the Flat Pipe.

If a woman disrespected a keeper or caused him great embarrassment, he carried out a special rite over or toward her, obliged her to submit to sex intercourse with him, and afterwards carried out a concluding rite. If some young man went so far as to flirt with her, make advances and touch her, he would get ill, and she alone could doctor him back to health. If he went so far as to have sexual intercourse with her, he would probably die. [833 786]

As regards all the foregoing punitive and harming powers, it was strictly understood that the keeper and co-keeper were given them to use only to enforce respect, and that if used for other and evil purposes the users would pay dearly and would be punished in some way, through the death of their children or through other misfortune.

Besides these supernatural powers to command respect, other 793 755

783 powers, intended more for the positive advantage of the keeper or
755 his people, were customarily acquired during or after the transfer rite.

In the transfer rite the new keeper was taught how to doctor, especially in cases of fits, spasms and cramps. The peppermint
[278] beverage, now used by everybody for these maladies, was formerly a monopoly of the Flat Pipe keeper in his curing practice. Other doctoring powers were also conferred on him and he could use the hair rope from the Flat Pipe bundle as a potent medicine to cure with, but we could obtain no details on these points.

The keeper would pray to have good dreams and might sleep
[787] on the Pipe bed for the same purpose. His dreams, when told, were important news for his fellows, as through them the future could be foretold.

789 The keeper was also given power to summon, call or "snare"
783 from a distance, enemies or reluctant friends. The Boy gave two instances of the use of this power, both from the lips of his father, Lame Bull. When Lame Bull, on learning of his election as Flat Pipe keeper fled to the hills, the ex-keeper so summoned him, using the Flat Pipe itself in the rite. The nine Flat Pipe songs were sung and at the end of each, the ex-keeper holding the Pipe at arm's length in both hands with the stem pointed upward and outward, sang the Hair Rope song, then twisted the stem tip in a vertical near-circle first upward and outward and then inward and downward in a sort of beckoning motion as if drawing something toward him, then downward and finally lowered the bowl toward (or to?) the ground.

On a later occasion during Lame Bull's keepership, on a war
[726] expedition against the Piegan he learned in a dream where they were located and was told that five of them would be killed. The night before the attack on the Piegan, using a common pipe and the above calling rite, thrice performed, with the pipe stem pointed toward the distant Piegan camp, invisible at the time to the Gros Ventre party, and singing the Hair Rope song, he "called" five of the Piegan, who, separated from the main Piegan body, were killed by the Gros Ventres.

793 The keeper and co-keeper also were given power to use in hunt-
220 ing buffalo, but we were able to obtain no details on the rite. The

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

793
one occasion for which we obtained the account of Lame Bull's 224
resort to this power, it failed to work.

The keeper likewise received power to use in case his horse 793
played out during a war raid. In the 1868 battle with the Piegan, 726
Lame Bull's horse stepped into a hole and fell at a moment when 789
he was surrounded by Piegan. Two young Gros Ventre warriors, sons-in-law of Lame Bull, came to him. His horse got up but could not run, and in fact fell again. One of the young warriors said to him: "I thought the Flat Pipe was everything. Why don't you save yourself. The Piegan will kill all three of us." Lame Bull, keeper at the time, took some peppermint from the small bag tied to his whip, put it in his mouth, sang a certain song, spat on his hands, stroked his whip handle three times with his palm, made motions three times as if striking his horse, and the third time actually struck the horse. At this, the horse came to life as if fresh and started running, and Lame Bull got home safely.

Still another power conferred on the keeper was that of get- 793
ting possession of a horse by obtaining a single hair thereof. 789
Horses entered into the Feathered Pipe complex, not into the Flat Pipe one. But the Flat Pipe keeper could not be refused a request for a horse or horses made by him of anyone. Moreover, even though he did not directly make such a request, if he wanted a certain good horse, he could ask one of his relatives or good friends, surreptitiously and preferably by night, to pluck one hair from the horse's tail and bring it to him. The keeper would then perform some rite (details not obtainable by us) over the hair and put the hair in the Flat Pipe bundle, and pretty soon he would acquire the desired horse. It may be added that when the keeper walked near or around anybody's horse, he was watched suspiciously for fear that unobserved he would pluck a hair from the horse's tail.

In addition to these specific supernatural powers, the keeper and 793
co-keeper were given a great number of ritual powers, the right and duty to carry out certain ceremonies directly or indirectly related to the Pipe and its keepership. These will be described later under "Ritual."

In accordance with their sacred office and eminent dignity, with their role as benevolent intercessors for the people with the super-

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

793 natural world and as beneficent helpers of their people, and the lofty ethical behavior and magnanimity demanded by the Gros Ventres' code in individuals of prominence in secular as well as in sacred activities, the Flat Pipe keeper and co-keeper were expected in general to live lives strictly conformed to the Gros
793 Ventre ethical code and in particular to be generous and to repress
431 aggressive impulses. The people would ordinarily be generous to them. For instance, after a successful buffalo hunt the killer or killers would share the spoils with them. But they themselves were under special obligations of generosity. If, for example, a person came to the keeper's lodge and, observing the rule above mentioned of going all the way inside, asked the keeper for something, the latter had to comply with the request and could not refuse it, and in actuality hardly ever refused. If the keeper lacked what was requested, he had to give the petitioner something else, for the latter would not be sent away empty-handed. This custom did not, it seems, lead to abuse and the keeper was not imposed upon. The keeper and his wife were required to be especially generous in providing feasts from time to time and in giving food to callers. Whenever any one came to the keeper's lodge to make an offering to the Pipe, the donor was fed.

When a man became keeper all grudges held by or toward him
793 and the co-keeper were wiped away. They could no longer make
785 their enemies the target of abuse or revenge, and vice versa.

As mentioned above, to command respect they could use the powers previously described, although at the risk of ensuing penalties. But for the rest, they were strictly forbidden to lose their tempers with, or show anger toward, anyone and particularly to strike anyone. If they wished evil on anyone, the evil would come to pass. If in a fit of anger they forgot themselves and hit or whipped a person, or even a dog or horse, the victim would be paralyzed. Nor could they talk badly about people.

The keepership imposed many major and minor hardships, austerities, privations and inconveniences upon the keeper and co-keeper. These had not, so far as we can judge, an ascetic purpose proper, that is, spiritual or moral self-control and achievement through self-denial. They did however serve, not only to set apart the keeper and co-keeper from the rest of the tribe but

also to enhance their sacredness and intercessory role as well as their prestige in the eyes of the people. Gros Ventre character-ideals have a high rating to "strong-heartedness," ability to bear and forego, readiness to do without, "asceticism" in its looser sense of voluntary self-punishment. Making one's self "pitiful" through hardships and privations in order to excite the sympathy of and to obtain blessings from the supernatural beings was a basic procedure in Gros Ventre religious practice. The keeper and co-keeper were expected to be sacred and powerful intercessors and to be individuals of high character. 793 785

In general the keeper and co-keeper had to lead very restricted lives, largely cut off from free association with their tribesmen, most of the time kept within or close to their lodge where the Pipe hung, and occupied with their official duties.

In particular they were under many specific privations and prohibitions. Perhaps the most severe of these was the obligation of sending away and thus practically giving up all their children, even their favorite one, except the one chosen as Pipe child. And ordinarily Gros Ventre parents were extremely fond of and attached to their children.

The keeper and co-keeper could not eat birds or bird eggs of any kind, nor any part of the head, such as the tongue or brains, of any quadruped. According to one tradition they could eat the body but not the head of dogs; according to another, not even the body. On the occasion however of feasts connected with the Flat Pipe they could eat buffalo tongue. They apparently did not eat fish, but the eating of fish was uncommon anyhow among the Gros Ventres and some Gros Ventres did not eat it at all. There were other minor food taboos, according to The Boy, but he could not recall what they were. 793 262

The co-keeper was obliged to wear a robe or blanket all the time, no small inconvenience during the Montana summer when the temperature not infrequently rises to the 90's Fahrenheit in the shade around midday and the afternoon. The prohibition against the wearing of metal personal adornments by the keeper and co-keeper was previously noted. 793 785 784

The keeper and co-keeper were not allowed to comb their hair, nor to scratch their heads except with a scratching-stick. The

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

793 keeper (and probably the co-keeper too) could not cut his hair, but had to wear it tangled and disheveled.

785 The keeper and co-keeper were not permitted to bathe and
784 swim in the creeks,—this in contrast to the Gros Ventre custom of daily early morning bathing and swimming by both sexes the
[515] year round when not prevented by ice, as a cleansing, body-hardening and recreative practice. In fact, the two were not allowed to wash even their hands and face with water, but, according to The Boy, had to use instead fat, grease or oil, and to wipe them with the same muskrat skin they used in face painting.

[304] The keeper could not draw blood on his own person by cutting, as was done by others in the sweat lodge rite, in mourning, and on other occasions.

793 The keeper and co-keeper were not supposed to cry or to cut
784 their hair in case of the death of a relative, nor to go where any one lay dead, nor to have anything at all to do with a corpse. In particular they were not allowed to give clothes, at least their own, to put on a dead person. It was a breach of this last prohibition, in fact, that resulted in Lame Bull's lameness, and his subsequent sobriquet, Lame Bull, his proper name being Under Bull.[4]

The keeper and co-keeper could not gamble or be gambled with. If the keeper nevertheless did so and won, he won not only the wager, but also the life of his opponent. The latter would meet with some fatality unless the keeper agreed to avert the evil by performing the proper rite over him. The keeper would direct the
[755] man to build a sweat-lodge and would enter it with him. The man would fumigate himself and inhale the smudge. The keeper would rub the man all over from head to feet with sage.

The keeper was not allowed just to throw off his saddle or blankets onto the ground but had to take good care of them.

According to Coming Daylight, a keeper during his term of office "could not sing the songs he was supposed to sing," but we secured no clarification of this statement. The reference may be to songs previously gotten in quests for supernatural power.

In addition to the foregoing more or less restrictive or "ascetic" observances that served to set the keeper and co-keeper apart from

---

[4] Cf. Flannery, 1953, p. 201.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

their fellows, there were many other ones that fulfilled the same 793
function. Of these latter, some, more distinctively ritual, will be 784
dealt with later passim under "Flat Pipe Ritual"; others, more secular, may be mentioned now.

The keeper and co-keeper were not supposed to carry a pack [482]
on their own backs, except that on the march the Pipe bundle might be packed by the co-keeper.

They could not mount and dismount a horse on the same side, but mounted from the right side and dismounted from the left.

If you handed something to the keeper it became his property, and if he handed something to you it became yours. If you thoughtlessly left anything with the keeper or co-keeper to keep for you, —if, for instance, you said: "Here, hold my horse (or my gun)," —the object became the property of the keeper or co-keeper and could not be gotten back. The keeper and co-keeper never loaned [426]
their robes, dresses, moccasins or other belongings, unless asked, and they were not supposed to be asked to loan. If you thoughtlessly broke the code and asked to borrow something from them, they were obliged to give it to you to own.

Neither the keeper nor co-keeper was allowed to handle ashes, nor could the Pipe bundle remain in the keeper's lodge when ashes were taken out. Were this rule violated, the keeper or co-keeper or both would lose eyesight. When ashes were to be removed from the keeper's lodge, the Pipe bundle was taken outside the lodge by the co-keeper, and both the keeper and the co-keeper stayed outside, while another of the keeper's wives removed the ashes.

When a group of men were seated in a crescent or near-circle 276
enjoying a purely social smoke together, each took a puff from 793
the lighted pipe and passed it clockwise to the man on his left until it reached the end of the line. Then the pipe would be passed back anti-clockwise from hand to hand to the other end without anyone puffing from it. But if the keeper were in the group, he could take a puff not only when the pipe was passing him clockwise but also on its anti-clockwise return. The man passing the pipe to the keeper from either left or right had to raise it upward a little toward his own right before doing so. The first time the pipe reached the keeper, he would take a big puff, and point

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

276
793 the pipe stem and blow the smoke first upward and then downward, and after that would smoke like anyone else.

793 In general, religious and political life were closely interwoven
624 in the Gros Ventre theocracy. "The Pipes [both the Flat and The Feathered]," as The Boy expressed it, "seemed to hold the tribe together more or less." They were the most sacred and revered possessions of the tribe. The keepers were men of eminence, by virtue of their personal qualities and achievements as well as of their office. In view of these and other facts, it is to be expected that the keeper of the Flat Pipe played a role in Gros Ventre political life, a role however not shared except in a minimal de-
[562] gree by the co-keeper, a woman in a man-dominated sphere of action. The keeper's role in Gros Ventre political life was fairly clearly defined and delimited. Here we shall summarize the main points.

When camp was to be moved, the decision as to time and destination was mainly in the hands of the head men, although the keeper would participate. In some cases, it seems, he might initiate the move by calling the head men together, usually at night. The whole decision was not ordinarily announced by the crier or criers. He would be sent around to notify the people that all would move camp the next morning. They by looking toward the keeper's lodge in the morning would learn the direction in which the camp would move, for the Flat Pipe bundle would be taken out of the lodge, to the north thereof, and hung on its tripod, with the stem end pointing in the agreed upon direction of the trek. On the trek itself, the co-worker with the bundle led the cavalcade.

When the bands scattered for the winter after the fall hunt and for the late spring after the first spring hunts, usually both the Flat and Feathered Pipes attracted a large following.

The keeper could be invited to sit in important council meetings, and to participate in elections and in decisions involving policy or action and had a certain veto prerogative thereon. He could, on occasions at least, intercede with considerable power, to resolve conflicts and avert bloodshed. He could accompany war-parties and might even have a voice in strategy and tactics, but he was not *ex officio* a fighter or war-leader. He could, as

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

previously mentioned, afford asylum in his lodge to criminals. All in all, he wielded very considerable influence in the political life of his people, but he was in no sense a dictator. 793 624

While a good many of the prerogatives and restrictions attaching to the keeper and co-keeper ceased when their term of office ended, others automatically continued, beyond the period of keepership or, as regards restrictions, could be and often were voluntarily continued by the ex-keepers. Most of such cessations and continuances on which we obtained specific information have been explicitly or inexplicitly noted in the preceding pages.

Flat Pipe and Bundle: Description

The proper name of the Flat Pipe was θe:tsa. It was also called bä'ɔno (turtle), the turtle having played such an important role in the first making of dry land after the flood (for story see No. 3 in Appendix), and a turtle shell ranking next in dignity to the Flat Pipe itself in the Flat Pipe bundle. Bä'ɔno was used in an appealing, pleading or begging way. 778 276

The Flat Pipe bundle containing the Flat Pipe and other sacred objects could not be unwrapped and opened except on solemn ceremonial occasions and with the appropriate elaborate rites. The last such occasion was on February 6, 1946, when it was impossible for us to be present and when photographs taken turned out badly. Our description, therefore, of the Pipe and of the other contents of the bundle has to rest on detailed accounts given us by our various informants who had witnessed one or more openings, upon sketches of the Pipe drawn by The Boy in 1939, by Thomas Main in 1938 or 1939 (after an opening in 1938) and by a young high school student, Frank Cuts The Rope in 1946 (after the above 1946 opening), and upon dimensions given by Thomas Main (See fig. 1).

The Flat Pipe itself is of wood, in a perfect state of preservation, carved in one piece, light brown or almost tan in color, very smooth as if polished from long and frequent wrapping, and about 18½ inches long. The bowl is round, low or squat, and flaring, 3⅛ inches in diameter on top with the hole for the tobacco about ½ inch in diameter, 2½ inches in diameter at its

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

778 base, and 2½ inches in depth from top to bottom. The stem is
276 roundish in section, about 1½ inches in diameter at the distal end, tapering slightly to about 1⅛ toward the proximal. The stem is "humped a bit toward the middle," with a ring carved all round to which is attached a small tasseled string ornament believed to represent the hair rope with which He-who-starved-to-death snared the Red Bird. (For story see No. 5 in Appendix.) The
[283] Gros Ventre women used to make an adornment from "a growth looking like hair" which they gathered from the water and twisted into a strong thread, and The Boy thinks that this tasseled ornament on the Pipe is of the same material.

There is another ring carved around and the proximal end of the Pipe is carved in the shape of a "duck" head. Into the "duck's" bill is fitted a small stem,—about 1⅛ inches long and ¾ inch in diameter, projecting about ½ inch beyond the tip of the bill, encased in copper,—from which the Pipe was smoked.*

[532]

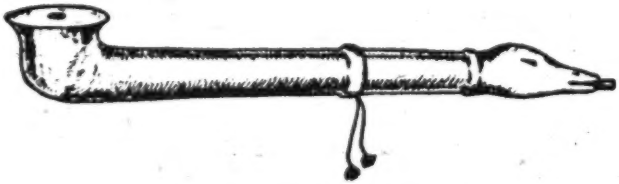


FIGURE 1. THE FLAT PIPE.

The whole Pipe is enclosed in its own numerous wrappings which form a separate case with its own three thong ties within the larger Pipe bundle. No one, it may be added, seems to know how the Flat Pipe got its name; there is nothing markedly "flat" about it, except the somewhat squat bowl.

778 The whole Pipe bundle contains many other sacred objects

* Kroeber, 1908, p. 272, gives a description of the Flat Pipe as being made of catlinite with the bowl in the shape of a person. Actually this sounds more like one of the objects in the Feathered Pipe bundle,—the so-called Image or Human Face. See p. 142. Kroeber's mention of a string around the center of the stem of the Flat Pipe, however, matches the description given us. [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

besides the Pipe itself. The most important of these is a turtle shell, next in rank a "duck" pelt, and third a muskrat skin.* These represent the animals sent down by Earthmaker at the time of the great flood to dive for earth. The turtle and "duck" are more important than the muskrat as they were the only two who brought back earth. There is no beaver skin in the bundle; either it was barred or discarded, or, as The Boy put it, "the beaver must have gotten mad and started his own pipe and pipe rite." (Cf. under "Other Pipes," pp. 166-168.) 778

The turtle shell is kept enclosed in its own special case. Neither The Boy nor his father Lame Bull had ever seen this shell, which is said not to have been taken from its case and exposed since the early nineteenth century.

The "duck" is apparently, from the detailed description given us of plumage and habits, a grebe. This bird has a special sacredness in Gross Ventre thought on account of its part not only in the primeval making of dry land but also in present-day bird migration.

According to tradition, when the birds, who in the fall have gone where there is no winter, want in the spring to come back they talk the matter over and plan the flight to the north. On the migration flight the grebes, who are poor flyers, are carried on the backs of the larger birds such as the ducks, geese and cranes. The big bird is careful not to drop the little bird; if he does, he will have bad luck. If the small bird is killed by the fall, the big bird does not live long. When in migration one of the big birds breaks rank and flies around alone, the Gros Ventres know that he has lost his passenger, and it is up to him alone to find the dropped bird. Sometimes you can see a big bird hovering round the spot where he has dropped his small passenger, looking for him in order to pick him up again, and catch up with the 825

* In 1948 The Boy explained: "The muskrat and the beaver tried to bring back earth but failed. Beaver was banished from any connection with the Pipe. The keeper would not let anyone who used the beaver-castor perfume come near him or his lodge. But muskrat was taken back without ceremonial significance for no other purpose than to wipe the keeper's face, as well as faces of others, before the keeper painted them. So muskrat is still in the bundle and shares indirectly in the great Pipe ceremonies." [R.F.] [302]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

825 migrating flock. When you hear the cries of the migrating geese, if you listen closely you can hear also the calls of the little birds. The big birds are very willing to carry the little ones, as the former get "holy things" and "are taught holy [powerful] ways" by the latter in payment for the ride, for the grebe is known to be a "big shot" who has extraordinary powers. The grebe in the Flat Pipe bundle is one of these little birds that are carried by the large ones on the fall and spring migration flight. In the 778 bundle too are some feathers of the big birds. "Probably because they treat the grebe to a free ride, they bought their way into the bundle and so have a place of honor."

In the bundle, besides the turtle shell and grebe skin, are the dried pelts (not stuffed) of many other kinds of birds,—some of which The Boy cannot identify. These represent the birds who sang with joy at the first making of dry land after the flood. These bird pelts lie loose, not enclosed in a bag. In the olden times, Lame Bull told The Boy, the tobacco raised by the Pipe keeper was stored in these pelts for safe-keeping.

When the bundle is being wrapped, the Pipe enclosed and tied in its own case, is laid on these bird pelts as on a bed, with the turtle shell to the left of the Pipe "as you face the stem," and the grebe skin to the right. Turtle shell, grebe skin and bird pelts are all placed with the head toward the stem end of the Pipe, and are wrapped together with the Pipe in a special covering within the larger Pipe bundle proper.

The large bundle also contains a good-sized bag, rectangular and closed on three sides, in which are kept all or most of them in their own particular small cases or coverings, the following ritual articles: a muskrat skin representing the muskrat that dived unsuccessfully for earth at the flood, and used in the face-painting rite; paint and a painting stamp; supplies of peppermint and tobacco; rattles; the ritual moccasins of the keeper, co-keeper and Pipe child; a thunderstone;[1] the "official" shell necklace of the

---

[1] In the bundle there was a thunderstone encased in its own small bundle or [755] sack. If, for instance, a person were suffering from stomach-ache, the co-keeper would reach into the Pipe bundle, without unwrapping it, take out the thunderstone, smudge it, make motions with or bite it, spit on the

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

keeper and co-keeper; a rope made of hair from the head and legs of buffalo, either the actual snare with which He-Who-Starved-To-Death captured the evil Red Bird or a substitute therefor. 778

This rectangular bag with its contents has its own prescribed place in the whole Pipe bundle, namely, to the right of the case containing the Pipe, turtle, grebe and bird skins as you look from the stem and toward the bowl end.

Finally, in the large Pipe bundle, are or were two sticks of about the length of the bundle, covered with two pieces of cloth. These are about the last outermost things set in place when the whole bundle is wrapped. The ends of the cloths in which the sticks are tied project out of the bundle as a decoration. They could be extracted from the bundle and taken along on war expeditions as a substitute for it and the Pipe, and used in a simplified ritual in place of the Pipe. The Pipe bundle itself was not taken on a war raid, as the co-keeper was the only one who was allowed to carry it, as it was rather heavy and bulky, and as there was danger it might be captured by the enemy. [726]

All the articles that have been listed are finally enclosed in the outermost cover of the whole Pipe bundle. This cover is nearly round when laid flat made of a whole elk skin with the legs cut off. The bundle is more or less cylindrical, cigar or blimp-shaped, about 1½ feet in diameter at the center and about 3 feet long. The bundle is secured with three ties of thong, one in the middle and one at either end, and has a thong handle on it, like the handle of a traveling bag. (See Plate 2A.)

Over the whole bundle was laid a robe of albino or "beaver" buffalo skin. When the bundle was to be untied this robe was spread out and the bundle was laid on it. The albino-buffalo tail, used by the keeper in the sweat-lodge rite, was kept outside, not inside, the bundle, so it could be easily gotten.

In modern times, from about 1870 to 1932, a human scalp was

---

person's stomach, and so forth, with a very simple ritual. A retiring keeper had the right to select something out of the Pipe bundle and keep it. Lame Bull, on retiring, selected a thunderstone of animal-like shape. Cf. Kroeber, 1908, pp. 275-76. [755]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

778 attached to the outside of the Flat Pipe bundle. In the late 1860's the Gros Ventres were at war with the Piegan and Blood Indians. During the war, a party of Gros Ventres were massacred on Judith River, including the husband of Lame Bull's sister, and her
778 small son was badly wounded. Lame Bull, then keeper of the
726 Flat Pipe, said: "I'll make the Piegan pay for what they have done to my nephew." So shortly after this, he got together a party of warriors and, taking with him the above-mentioned double-stick substitute for the Flat Pipe, led them to the Piegan country, to the other side of the Cypress Hills on or near Belly River. It was on this expedition that Lame Bull had the three sweat lodges made (to be described later) and used his snaring or summoning power as keeper to call the five enemy victims promised him in a dream. One of the young Gros Ventre warriors, Fur Moccasin, said to the substitute for the Flat Pipe: "Little Turtle, in this fight I want to do something great. If you will see to it that I count coup by getting a scalp I will turn it over to you." This was equivalent to a vow, for he would have to risk his life to get a scalp. Another young warrior said: "Flat Pipe, in this fight I want to do something great. If I get a horse I will turn it over to you."

After the summoning rite, Lame Bull detailed two young warriors to go out as scouts the next morning, before daybreak so they would not be observed on the way by the enemy, to a certain butte, and to watch and wait. Shortly after daybreak the two scouts saw five of the enemy who were out hunting buffalo, and returned to give their report. Near the Gros Ventre camp, to the west, was a small herd of buffalo. So Lame Bull said: "The Piegan will spy the buffalo and make for them. We will wait till they make their kill and are dressing the meat." The Piegan went past the Gros Ventre without observing them and killed the buffalo. The Gros Ventres then sneaked up toward the Piegan as close as the level open country would permit, without their being seen. Lame Bull said: "Don't yell. Take after them as though you are racing." As the Gros Ventres came rushing on they came up first to one of the Piegan who had tied his horse to the leg of a killed buffalo and who, in the excitement forgetting this, jumped on his

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

horse and started off but at the end of the rope was stopped and thrown. Fur Moccasin killed and scalped him then and there. Then the Gros Ventres took after the other four Piegan. The second Piegan was killed and his horse captured by the young warrior who had promised a horse to the Flat Pipe. The other three Piegan were also killed. The Gros Ventre suffered no casualties in the fight. 778 726

When the battle was over, Fur Moccasin turned over the Piegan scalp to Lame Bull: "Here's the scalp which I promised for the Flat Pipe." The other young warrior who had promised the horse likewise turned it over: "Here's the horse which I promised for the Flat Pipe."

Some time after this fight, peace was made between the Gros Ventres and the Piegan, and the Gros Ventres learned the Piegan side of the incident. The Piegan (or Blood) had planned to hold a Sun Dance. So they selected four men to go out and kill a bull buffalo for the dance. One old man of his own volition went along in order to get some of the internal organs for himself. After the five had set out, the Piegan waited in vain all the next day till nightfall for them to return and finally concluded that they must have met with misfortune. The next morning the Piegan set out in the direction in which the five had gone and, judging by the actions of carrion crows and buzzards, discovered the five corpses. The Gros Ventres by this time were a long way off. The Sun Dance was given up. The four younger Piegan killed were noted men.

The Piegan scalp was tied to the outside of the Flat Pipe bundle. The donor, Fur Moccasin, by giving the scalp, became an enemy-friend of the Flat Pipe, which role gave him the right to go pretty far in taunting and saying things about it, as was the wont between enemy-friends.[8] But only he, and no one else could take such liberties. 727. 778

The scalp remained attached to the outside of the bundle. The Boy, who knew this, always felt that this was not right, because the bundle had great religious significance whereas the scalp was something of an entirely different order and did not belong with 778

[8] For details on enemy-friends, see Flannery, 1953, pp. 102-06.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the bundle. He wanted to take the scalp off and throw it away. But Lame Bull held that it should stay where it was, for since it was given by Fur Moccasin to the Flat Pipe in fulfillment of a vow and since Fur Moccasin and the Flat Pipe were enemy-friends, its presence involved no real lack of respect to the Pipe.

When, however, in later years the Flat Pipe came into unofficial possession of The Boy, his prejudice against it had not abated. Since he had authority in the matter, he gave the scalp in about 1932 to John Galen Carter who, The Boy was told, finally turned it over to Columbia University or to the American Museum of Natural History. The Boy laughingly remarked that if he had foreseen that he would be giving us the whole record of Gros Ventre history and culture he would have saved the scalp and given it to Cooper and so Cooper would have become the enemy-friend of Fur Moccasin!

The Flat Pipe always, as in the above case, had its own horse on which it was packed and which was not used for any other purpose or ridden by the keeper or anyone else, except, it appears, once in a while by the co-keeper who would take the bundle on her back and ride the horse. The Flat Pipe's horse was painted red on its forehead and down to the end of its mane, and also on the top of its rump at the base of the tail, as were also all things used to transport the Pipe,—its special saddle, blanket, outfit, tripod and so forth.*

* In 1948 The Boy added that the keeper could use in addition to red paint another kind "of a dirty slate color and no one else in the tribe used it." [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

CHAPTER III

THE FLAT PIPE RITUAL

General Features

Before describing the Flat Pipe rituals in detail, we shall in the interest of clarity take up certain more general features. Some of these are distinctive of the Flat Pipe ritual; others are shared in common with the Feathered Pipe ritual. 788

Distinctive of the Flat Pipe ritual are earth and water or flood association, peppermint, the number three, and rattles. 788 821

As The Boy put it: "The Flat Pipe belongs on the ground, on the surface of the earth, while the Feathered Pipe belongs up above the earth." Or in Coming Daylight's words: "The Flat Pipe comes from the water." The reference here is to the respective origin stories of the two pipes, the Flat Pipe having been given by Earth-maker at the great flood after dry land was made, the Feathered Pipe by Bha'a, the thunder being, during a storm and from the sky. (For details see Nos. 3 and 6 in Appendix.) When the Flat Pipe ceremony was carried out in 1938, the ritual was badly garbled, and the proper offerings were not made. A very destructive flood which shortly after this occurred at Hays where the ceremony was held was attributed to the ill treatment to which the Flat Pipe had just been submitted. The Feathered Pipe is associated with thunderstorms rather than with floods. 823

In conformity with this ground and water association, the ritual plant used for laving, chewing and incensing in the Flat Pipe ritual was peppermint which "comes from the lowlands down on the ground," "from right along the water," in contrast to the use in the Feathered Pipe and other pipe rituals of sweet-pine needles which "come from up in the hills," "from high altitudes." The peppermint used was not "just every peppermint," not that which grows along streams but that which grows around springs. Coming Daylight used to pick it for her uncle when he was keeper of the 788 824

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

783 824 Flat Pipe. It was dried before being used for ritual purposes. In the olden days the Flat Pipe keeper and co-keeper had monopolistic control of it in curing. But nowadays a peppermint beverage, good for fits, spasms, and stomach disorder, is used by everybody.

788 801 The ritual number of the Flat Pipe is three, whereas that of the Feathered Pipe and the Sacred Lodges is four. Songs are sung three times, ritual gestures are in threes, and so forth. The old people when sitting around smoking socially used often to discuss the reason for this. Some held that Earthmaker sent only three animals down to dive for earth, because, for one reason at least, there were only three animals in the Flat Pipe bundle. Others held he sent four. But regardless of these opposing views on this point in the earthmaking, there was always complete agreement that the Flat Pipe ritual number itself was three, while that in the Feathered Pipe and Sacred Lodge rituals was four.

788 534 The musical instrument proper to the Flat Pipe ritual was the rattle (see Plate 1C). The drum, proper to the Feathered Pipe ritual, was not used. In the Flat Pipe ritual, the rattle was shaken clockwise in a sort of circle at breast height, whereas medicine men shook their rattles anti-clockwise and Star Dancers alternately back and forth.[1]

788 276 It may be added here that while the Flat Pipe was actually smoked only when it was being ritually transferred to a new keeper and when some individual had vowed to smoke it, and was never danced with, smoking the Feathered Pipe and dancing with it were common.

788 Among the more significant and more commonly recurring features shared by both the Flat Pipe and Feathered Pipe rituals were clockwise movements, singing, and the use of paint, buffalo chips, and of sage, tobacco, larb, and wild parsley.

Entering and leaving the keeper's lodge, ritual gestures, and so forth were consistently clockwise.

788 533 Singing bulked large in the Flat Pipe rite, and, for that matter, in nearly every phase of Gros Ventre religious and social life. As Thomas Main put it speaking for himself and The Boy: "We cannot describe how much singing means in the lives of the Gros

[1] For description of Star Dance, see Flannery, 1953, p. 42.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

788
533

Ventres. They *sing!* This subject is one you cannot exhaust. You cannot put in words how they feel about it."

773
533

Singing, according to The Boy, had its origin at the time of the flood when Earthmaker was floating around on the raft with the Flat Pipe. He was being blown around by the wind, at the mercy of the elements. He was tired and utterly lonely. So he started to think: "I must do something about this. It is too hard. I have had enough of it." And thus he planned the making of dry land by sending the animals diving down for earth. He had all the power to make land from the bits of earth brought up by the turtle and hell-diver, but he decided to do the making solemnly and with dignity. So he composed the earthmaking song: "My holiness (or my power) respond to me (pity me)." He did not whisper or talk it, but sang it, and sang it loud, so that he could be heard all over, so that this first act would last forever, so that it would "be elaborate and have dignity" and would be respected and honored for all time. Up to the moment of the singing of this first song, he had been mute, silent; he had only thought, this was the first utterance. This was the origin of Gros Ventre singing. This song, taught them by Earthmaker, was the first their primeval ancestors ever sang. This first song was sung by Earthmaker four times in succession, to the east, south, west and north. But after this he discarded one of the four animals, the beaver, keeping the other three, and ordained that thenceforth, not four as in the very beginning, but three, should be the Flat Pipe sacred number, and its songs should be sung in threes and multiples thereof, and that ritual movements should be to east, south and west, leaving out the north as he had left out the beaver ("let the beaver stay there where it is cold").

[788]

So Earthmaker planned and taught the system of the Flat Pipe ritual, with songs proper to it that could not be sung on other occasions.

788
533

Singing was thus originally religious and sacred only. As time went on, songs were sung for other functions, social and political. Singing degenerated among the Gros Ventres and they fell farther and farther down until they made and sang songs for the most trivial things in their lives, and even unworthy things. On their

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

788 first contact with whites they found that among these latter too
533 singing had in similar fashion degenerated.

Among the birds and animals it was otherwise. They continued to sing as they had done at the earthmaking. They held fast to the privilege given them and did not abuse it or let their singing degenerate. So it was that the Gros Ventres used to go to the tops of buttes, hills and high mountains and to streams and forests, begging these animals and birds to give them songs, and in this measure to restore singing to its former purpose and dignity. But later the Gros Ventres sometimes prevailed even upon the animals and birds to teach them "no-good songs."

Nevertheless in spite of all this badness and degeneration the Gros Ventres never lost sight of the fact that they depended on the Supreme Being for everything. So whenever they had occasion to pray and perform their ceremonies, they sang. And with such sacred singing was so intimately associated the use of the pipe
[276 and tobacco that "one could hardly separate singing and pipe-
782] smoking." In nearly all rites they entered in as a means of imploring the Supreme Being to grant the people's requests. The Gros Ventres learned by experience that if they sang and smoked and followed faithfully the rest of the Flat Pipe ritual, they could at least hope for a hearing by the Supreme Being. Smoking too, it may be added, like singing, later degenerated, a point to which we shall come presently.

533 Practically every Gros Ventre ceremony or social event began or was accompanied with song. And each of the many Gros Ventre songs had to be used on certain and only certain specified occasions. Thus, for example, it would not do at all to sing Pipe songs during social dances or in a hand game or at "good-time" gatherings. Each religious or secular occasion had its own song or set of songs. Very commonly a story teller would in the course of his or her narrative sing the song or songs the characters in the story were supposed to have sung.

Many Gros Ventre songs were wordless. In most of the worded ones, the words consisted of short pregnant phrases or sentences preceded and followed by wordless singing.

Two kinds of singers were recognized and distinguished: those who had good voices, and those who had knowledge of the

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

melodies, wording, purpose, place, and meaning of many songs 533
and could put the right feeling into their singing. The latter kind of singers were often the ones who taught the former how to sing correctly. One singer might be recognized as competent in religious or certain religious songs only, another for social songs only, and so forth. In each of the categories there were usually "one or several who were by far the best in bringing out this something in the song." Among the qualities of a good singer were and are: volume, clearness, wide range, sense of rhythm and ability to put life and feeling into the singing. Much too depended on "body motions, gestures, bodily interpretation, whole demeanor." Beating time too was an art; "anyone can take a stick and beat a drum but not everyone can beat it just right."

Many of the songs, both ritual and secular, contain words or [192]
expressions the meaning of which is not known today, or, although the meaning is known, the words or expressions are no longer in secular use or else differ appreciably in form from those in use. For some songs, such as solemn religious ones, it was relatively unimportant whether the singer had a good melodious voice or not. In sacred songs the all-important thing was the ability to put the proper feeling into the singing, "to get the hearers to concentrate ears, eyes, mind and heart," whereas the singer who had only a good voice reached only the ears of the hearers.

"The old time songs," The Boy explained, "are very hard. You cannot learn them overnight. It is hard for the Gros Ventres today to learn the old, old songs, and most of the songs I sang for your records are from the old times. Especially difficult are the Flat Pipe songs. They just consume your breath, so to speak. You have to sing them very solemnly and it would not do to shake your voice. They are supposed to be serious. You can notice the difference in singers when several sing together; they [some of them] get out of breath. When Horse Capture was Flat Pipe keeper, at one ceremony he and I sang together, and the old fellow would get tired."

Among the most accomplished Gros Ventre singers of recent times are first of all The Boy himself, to whom we are indebted for 102 of the songs we recorded, and Charles Buckman, who sang 6 for us. The Boy mentioned, too, certain other renowned living

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13
Blackfoot NF6

G 533 singers: Tom Bad Road, Charlie Arms, Mrs. Katie Matt Croft, and Mrs. Albert Perry. Apropos of the last two, it may be added that women frequently sang and sing with the men, and the latter "like it when the women join in because this makes the singing colorful and nice."[3]

G 386 The Gros Ventres used many kinds of paint; some of Indian, some of white man origin; some in secular, some only in ritual uses. Powdered paints of different colors were gotten from traders G and were used to paint parfleches and, by the men, alone, never [439] by the women, to paint their bodies. A yellow paint was also gotten from the Cheyenne or from Cheyenne territory. On one occasion Coming Daylight brought a lot of this yellow paint which she had gathered there and gave enough of it to a Gros Ventre man to paint his big lodge with it. These paints were not sacred. A black paint, obtained from the Standing Rock region, was used in making fine lines on parfleches. Only the old women who made and painted the parfleches were the ones that gathered it, but it G was not so sacred as the red paint used in face painting.

788 This sacred red face paint was in a class by itself, and was used 386 in the Flat and Feathered Pipe rites, by the "grandfathers" in [778] painting the wives during the Sacred Lodge rites, and apparently by the women in everyday painting of their own and the children's faces.[4] This special red paint was called, as also the yellow clay

---

[3] About 1900 The Boy went along with the Gros Ventres on a 4th of July visit to the Piegan at Browning. All four groups, the Piegan, Blood, Blackfeet proper, and northern Piegan, were gathered there. In all the four there B was only one man, a famous singer, who knew all the ceremonial dance [527] songs, although some of the other Indians knew some of them, and he was 533 imported by the Browning Piegan for the reason. The Boy heard him sing. The man did not have a nice clear voice, but he lived up to his reputation, for he knew the songs and their order for all the many rites and was kept busy all the time. And he cashed in handsomely with horses, blankets and money. He was able to make a living from his singing. The Boy learned some of the songs this man sang, and he sang one of them for us, that had the words: "You who are the ruler of all sacred (powerful) things having to do with all life, give me all of that so that I may use it all my life." The Blackfeet, The Boy added, think more of the Sun than do the Gros Ventres: it is their deity.

[4] See Flannery, 1953, pp. 144-45.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

from which it was made, inao:, a term not used for white traders' paint. 386 [788]

The Gros Ventres used to get it out in the hills on Stiffarm Creek at Curly Head's place. It occurs as a yellow clay or dirt, as a yellow strip or streak in whitish banks or hillsides, or sometimes it was dug up from the ground. Not everyone could gather it; never men even in the old days, although in recent times Little Man used to do so; but only old women, and only certain ones at that. Coming Daylight's grandmother used to gather it and so did Coming Daylight herself who learned the method and ritual of gathering and preparing it from her grandmother. Singer's grandmother used to gather and prepare it, but she herself did not want to do it, although she had the chance to learn from her grandmother. The art and rite were "kind of handed down."

When about to gather the yellow clay, the woman would sit by the deposit, smoke, and while smoking pray that the clay she was about to gather would be abundant and good. An offering, usually of tobacco, was left at the spot. Both in gathering and in baking the clay the woman had to be alone. [782]

The baking of the clay was done at night by the woman who had gathered it. The children could not be around making a noise, and she herself had to be very quiet. She would make a sort of batter of the clay by mixing it with water, and would knead it into flat round cakes with a round hole in the center. A fire, formerly of buffalo chips, more recently of cow manure, was made, and when it died down to coals, the cakes were put at the bottom, covered up with live coals, and a fire built on top. The woman baking did not blow the fire and she shut everything up. If you blew on the fire the whole paint would disappear. The baking had to be done very skillfully to turn out just right. The baking was fraught with some danger, and some fear went with it. If the cakes baked too brown, this was a bad omen. When the cakes were baked sufficiently all the coals were removed and the cakes, blackened on the surface, were taken out and allowed to cool. The black surface was scraped away, leaving the clay now burnt red. This red clay was then pounded to fine powder on a piece of rawhide. [372] [787]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

372 The Flat (and Feathered) Pipe keepers had to keep on hand a good supply of buffalo chips, the proper ritual fuel, as also the common fuel of the people especially when traveling out on the woodless plains. The Boy once asked his father: "Why are buffalo chips used in rites? This does not seem proper." "Buffalo chips," Lame Bull replied, "are plentiful everywhere and burn longest. And they are cleanest: the ashes do not stick to your hands; wood ashes do and are hard to rub off." After the buffalo were exterminated, cattle chips were substituted, but these, as Coming Daylight stated, "have an awful odor when burned, while buffalo chips have none." She used to gather buffalo chips for her uncle when he was Flat Pipe keeper; Cora Chandler used to gather cattle chips when her uncle Curly Head was Feathered Pipe keeper. On one occasion, after the disappearance of the buffalo, Coming Daylight went south with her husband, coming back by way of Yellowstone Park where some buffalo were kept. Here she found some buffalo chips, put them in a sack, and brought them all the way back home to give to Horse Capture, then the Flat Pipe keeper. On arriving home she went to his lodge, "covered the Pipe" with a new robe, and laid the chips at the head of the Pipe.

824 The other plants [besides peppermint] that entered into the Flat Pipe and Feathered Pipe rites were sage, tobacco, larb and wild parsley.

Sage was used for the Pipe bed and for other ritual purposes. For the spring Flat Pipe rite at least, only a certain kind of sage (artemisia sp.) was used. Sage was gathered by the co-keeper or one of her children, and could be gotten all the year round, even if in winter only the sticks. According to tradition, the gathering and use of sage for medicinal purposes were in the old days confined to keepers; but in more recent times the people in general have used it, by rubbing themselves with it and smelling it for headache, and by boiling the leaves, especially the top ones, and drinking the infusion for coughs, colds and tuberculosis.

824 773 276 According to the traditional story as told by The Boy, tobacco and tobacco planting came originally to the Gros Ventres from Earthmaker who taught the first man how to plant tobacco, and its cultivation and use have come down in an unbroken line since

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

that time. In the olden days it was only the keeper of the Flat Pipe who planted and harvested it; and for ritual use only.[4] As time went on, the keeper thought to himself: "These older men should have something to pray with when the tribe breaks camp and each band goes its own way." So he said to these older men, each a chief in his own band: "When your bands go their own way you have nothing to use in your prayers. So I am going to distribute some tobacco to each of you for you and your band to use." This he did, and so the use of tobacco began to spread. After this some bands broke away entirely from the Gros Ventres, the original planters and users of tobacco, and became separate tribes and the language changed. The probable order, The Boy thinks, in which they broke away was: first, the Gros Ventres of Dakota,[5] next the Cree, then the Piegan, after this the Crow, and last the Arapaho. He thinks too that the keeper who first distributed tobacco to the bands must have distributed the seed too, for in later years all these people raised their own tobacco.

824 773 276

In the course of time the use of tobacco among the Gros Ventres underwent two important developments, from ritual to recreative and from male to female use.

276

In earliest days only the keeper and a few old men used tobacco, and used it only ritually. When somebody got sick, the keeper

[4] In 1948 The Boy elaborated on the original planting of tobacco which he had heard Lame Bull discuss many times. "It was virgin soil deep in the forest and they made a woven fence around it so nothing could get in. After the planting, they moved off for hunting and every once in a while the keeper made a ceremonial smoke and prayed to the Supreme Being that the tobacco would grow. After the vegetation began to mature they returned to the plot and the keeper went to look and thanked the Supreme Being in a loud voice that the crop had matured. The tobacco was picked ceremoniously and three plants were always left standing in the plot." There was a plot of ground in the forested area of Canada on which nothing grew and which the Gros Ventres called "Broken Grass." In Lame Bull's time they used to leave offerings there whenever they passed nearby. The Boy and other old men and women believe that this was the site on which the original tobacco was planted under instruction from the Supreme Being. [R.F.]

[778]

[5] The original Gros Ventres, according to the same tradition, had no corn. Corn originated among the Gros Ventres of Dakota. [For confirmation of tradition regarding raising of tobacco, see Flannery, 1953, p. 61, n. 12.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

276 would use tobacco in his prayers for the patient. If the patient survived but was still weak, the keeper made him smoke to get back his strength. So some of the other tribesmen learned to smoke. Gradually social (and recreative) smoking took its place together with ceremonial smoking.

In earlier times, the women never smoked either ritually or socially. Even in rites where they had an important role, such as [562] the inauguration of a new pipe keeper, they did not smoke, as women were considered secondary, not equal to men. Even as late as The Boy's and Thick's early boyhood in the decade before the last buffalo disappeared (1884), only the old women smoked, never the young girls. The spread of the custom among these old women was probably due to their discovery by experience that the smoking prescribed for maladies, such as, chronic headache, was good for the body. But even today, although women smoke non-ritually when alone or among themselves, they are not allowed to smoke at a Pipe rite, and, if wives are present when a man invites a group of men for a social visit or meal and he fills up his pipe to give his guests a smoke, he does not offer the pipe to the wives.

Tobacco was used only in pipe smoking. It was sometimes smoked straight by old men and old women, and by the sick as [17 824] a cure. But ordinarily the Gros Ventres smoked it mixed either with red willow, as did the Cree and Assiniboine, or preferably, and in the Flat Pipe rites always, with larb.

Larb is "a ground plant that grows on hills and mountains." We could get no specimen for identification. After the tobacco and larb were mixed, a little more larb than tobacco, fat was worked into the mixture to season it. On taking leave from his Gros Ventre [431 609] friends in 1940 the present author was given a small bag of this mixture as a token of peace and good will and found the mixture a very pleasant aromatic smoke.

The wild parsley, associated with the Flat and Feathered Pipe 278 and with the Crazy Lodge, was used as a powerful poison. It was greatly feared and was spoken of in undertones. Its preparation is a lost art. The whole plant was and is considered poisonous, but poison was prepared principally from the root, which was first

dried and seasoned, then pulverized, and used in a liquid. It was also used mixed with other things. 278

The Pipe keepers, and co-keepers, ex-keepers and ex-co-keepers, were immune and could handle it. But if others touched the plant or powder they would be seized at once with fits which only an actual or retired keeper or co-keeper could cure by working on him and blowing some of the powder on him. Some Gros Ventres, however, such as old Deafie, did not believe that wild parsley caused fits, but many cases are reported. One man, for instance, in recent times carried some in his hands to a dance, and during the dance got a fit and it took one of the ex-co-keepers to bring him out of it. Another man used wild parsley as a medicine in doctoring. Each participant in the Crazy Lodge used it. But originally its use was confined to Pipe keepers and co-keepers (see p. 52).

If one were scratched with an arrow that had been dipped in wild parsley infusion he would suffer spasms, fits and acute agony and would not live till morning. Such a poisoned arrow was tied by each Crazy Lodge dancer to his bow, apparently as a silent threat to enforce obedience and respect by the people during the lodge rites, but was thrown away after the dance was over.* These poisoned arrows were not used at any other time than the Crazy Lodge; never for instance, in Gros Ventre wars or raids on enemies. 411 278

Seasonal Rites

The three annual seasonal rites were in the olden days the major ceremonial events in Gros Ventre life according to The Boy, Thick and older informants. No vow was necessary to hold them. They were never omitted. They had to be performed. The seasonal rites have long since been given up. They were last carried out sometime in the late 1860's or early 1870's, while The Boy's father, Lame Bull, was keeper. 796* 178

The three seasonal rites were held in the spring, fall and winter respectively. About April the various Gros Ventre bands, which 796* 221 361

*Cf. Kroeber, 1908, pp. 207-08 regarding poisoned arrow.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 had been scattered during the winter, would foregather at a designated place for the spring buffalo hunt, and when the trees were
221 in leaf and the grass up and everything growing and in blossom
361 and a certain kind of sage about 10 inches high, long enough to pluck, the spring rite was held. During the summer months the bands kept more or less together, largely engaged in hunting the buffalo and holding the Sacred Lodges. Around October occurred the larger fall hunt to get in supplies of meat, skin, fur, sinew and so forth for the winter, and, before the bands scattered, the fall rite took place. After the fall rite, the bands scattered for the winter months. The winter rite was performed about the middle of the winter season and was participated in only by the members of the band or bands which had elected to stay the winter with the Pipe and its keeper.

*796 The three rites were fundamentally the same, with some differences to be noted, but had each its own purpose. All three were dominantly theistic in the sense of being directed chiefly toward the Supreme Being. Spring time, when all nature was coming again to life, was in general Gros Ventre religious belief, the most propitious time for prayer. The spring Pipe rite was primarily a rite of hope and petition, a prayer that all things would grow well, that there would be plenty of game and of plant food, that the people would have abundance of all things they needed for living well, that they would be successful in all their worthwhile undertakings such as the hunt, that there would be no sickness, and that all would live happily. The fall rite, held after the winter supply had been killed and dried and berries had been gathered, new lodge coverings made, and perhaps new lodge poles, new bedding, clothes cleaned, etc., was primarily a rite of gladness and thanksgiving. To "make a sort of report" to the Supreme Being that they were still living, that their spring prayers to him had been answered in the way they had asked, and to give thanks to him for these good things which ultimately had come from him. The purpose of
[801] the winter rite was less clear cut. For one thing, the rite was required to round out the cycle of three, the Pipe number. Thanksgiving was one purpose, thanksgiving "and a sort of singing of praises," "a sort of adoration," because the people were at leisure, without hardship, sickness or anxiety, glad to be still alive in the

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

severe winter, enjoying the things they had asked for and gotten. 796*
Petition was another, prayer that they would have good health and be spared visitation by Asta: [the epidemic being], and that they would go on living happily till spring.

The seasonal rite lasted three days if the keeper was able and willing to supply the necessary food, but could be concluded all in one day. In either case the sweat-lodge rite preceded the various ceremonies carried out in the keeper's lodge. The Pipe bundle was always opened, but the Pipe itself was not uncovered to view or smoked unless the seasonal rite was combined with the Pipe smoking rite vowed by some individual. In the vowed and transfer rites the Pipe was uncovered and smoked. At the spring and fall rites all the bands and their members were expected to be on hand, but at the winter rite only the band or bands which had elected to stay with the keeper after the scattering of the tribe in the late fall. In nearly all major Gros Ventre rites, both the Pipe (Flat [781]
and Feathered) and Sacred Lodge rites, there was an alternation or contrast of "grave and gay," of reverent tension and pleasurable release. The release in the Sacred Lodges was very apt to take the form of boisterous amusement, of ritually countenanced horse-play and at times vulgarity. The release in the Pipe rites was of a less ebullient type, consisting mostly of recesses for friendly smoking and chatting and of a terminal feast. The nearest approach to boisterousness or horse play was the mixed singing contest (previously described) which was common to the transfer rite (but not the seasonal or vowed Pipe rites) and to the Crazy Lodge.

The seasonal rites consisted of two main ceremonial sequences: the preliminary or opening ceremony of the sweat-lodge and the main ceremony in the keeper's lodge. We shall now take up these in turn.

The sweat-lodge ritual, according to the Gros Ventre origin story, was first taught by Ni:hohat to the bladder people shortly before he was killed and was first practiced by them just as he came to life again. (See No. 1 in Appendix.) The ritual as thus originally taught was carried out with an ordinary pipe. It was only afterwards that the Flat Pipe itself appeared, either shortly

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 afterwards according to the Ni:hohat story or after the great deluge according to the flood story.

Ritual sweating and use of the sweat-lodge, tsë:bätc, were resorted to by the Gros Ventres on many occasions not connected [515 721] with the sacred pipe rites,—skin and finger-joint sacrifices, war expeditions, and dreamed-of impending evils. Sweating in such cases will be dealt with in the proper places, as also sweating at the Feathered Pipe rites and Sacred lodges. The sweat-lodge rite was obligatory at the following Flat Pipe ceremonies: the three seasonal rites, the transfer rite (previously described), rites in fulfillment of a vow to smoke the Pipe or to paint its bowl, or to make a sweat-lodge for the keeper or for the Pipe, and at the disposal of offerings to the Pipe.

726 Before a war party started out, among other ceremonial observances a sweat-lodge rite was commonly gone through. A Flat *796 Pipe Keeper might on such an occasion take pity on the leader and members of the departing war party, build his own 31-stick sweat-lodge, and go through the sweating rite. If, furthermore, the keeper accompanied the war party, he might do the same from time to time during the course of the expedition.

*796 For the present we shall confine our attention chiefly to the sweat-lodge as used in the three seasonal rites, dealing first with the sweat-lodge itself, and after that with the sweating rite. We merely reiterate in passing that the sweating rite, while obligatory in a seasonal rite, was somewhat distinct from the ceremonial which followed it and which was carried out in the keeper's lodge.

346 The Flat Pipe sweat-lodge was constructed as follows. In ground plan it was more or less circular about 7 to 9 feet in diameter, with *796 two openings, the main larger entrance at the east and the smaller exit opening at the west. The general form was nearly semi-spherical. On each side, the northern and southern, 15 willows [802] were stuck in the ground. The number 30 may represent a multiple of the sacred number three, and one of our informants conjectured, with particular reference to the 30 poles of lodge where He-who-starved-to-death slept fasting on the 30 successive nights. These 30 willows were arched over and woven fast into a ridge willow that ran the east-west axis of the structure. Thus the sweat-lodge was constructed of 31 willows in all.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The ridge willow was painted all black with charcoal. Each of the other 30 lateral willows was painted black around its whole circumference just at the point where the upright section began to bend or arch. This "painting" was done by grasping the willow at this point with the blacked palm. Each willow was also painted black at the very top where the arched willows met, this painting being done by simultaneously grasping each two willows at the top. The whole framework was covered with robes when the sweating was about to take place. 346 796*

Inside the sweat-lodge at about its centre, was dug a pit, about 2 feet square by about 15-16 inches deep, as a deposit hearth for the heated rocks. Around the four sides of the square pit at near ground level there was a beveled groove of earth, with the bevel slanting outward and downward from the edge of the pit. The surfaces of the bevel and the bottom of the pit were covered with powdered charcoal.

From near the two corners of the eastern beveling to the two first willows flanking the main entrance, the ground space was cleared of grass and smoothed even, and this space was covered with powdered charcoal.

Sage brush was laid around the inside of the sweat-lodge next to the wall.

At three spots on the east-west axis of the sweat-lodge,—on the surface of the west bevel, on the bottom of the pit at its centre, and just doorward of the east bevel on the cleared charcoaled space,—incense places, pi-shaped with the open side toward the east, were made with powdered red paint.

Near to and east of the main entrance on a line with the east-west axis of the lodge were the hearth and fire for heating the rocks. Still farther removed, about 25 feet from the main entrance and on the same axis, was the pipe mound, circular in ground plan, about 2 feet in diameter more or less conical in shape, made with the earth that had been taken out to form the sweat-lodge pit. [482] The dirt so dug out had to be carried, not in the hands, but on a choice piece of buffalo hide with the fur on. The ordinary pipe (not the Flat Pipe), used to pray and smoke with in the sweating ritual, was placed on the west slope of this mound, with stem up

C

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

346 toward the east and bowl filled down toward the west. At sweating
*796 rites on certain occasions as when a man was fulfilling a vow to make a sweat-house for the Pipe or when a participant offered bits of his flesh, a buffalo skull was placed on top of the mound, but not at seasonal rites.

Close to the mound, eastward thereof, on the east-west axis, was erected the pole on which offerings were hung. The pole was a small straight tree trunk, not too big, with the limbs trimmed off but the bark left on, well imbedded upright in the ground. It was colored black all the way round by grasping it with a blackened palm, in three places,—about head high, about half way between this point and the top, and at the very top.

[361] The Pipe sweat-lodge was erected near the keeper's tent, outside the camp circle. A new one was built for each seasonal rite.

*796 The chief components of the sweat-lodge ceremony of the Flat Pipe seasonal rite were: the preparation, presentation and disposal of gifts; the invitation to the sweaters; the smudging; the prayer with and smoking of a common pipe; the sweating proper; the three series of songs. Of these components the principal one was the offering of the gifts or sacrifices. The sweat-lodge and sweating were necessary, "to make the offering complete." In other words, the whole rite was essentially a sacrificial one. The offerings were given voluntarily by members of the tribe, including commonly the keeper himself. The gifts or sacrifices were offered to the Supreme Being through the inferior beings who entered into the rite and in a sense through the Flat Pipe.

The sweat-lodge rite had three main divisions with three songs sung at each: the preparation of the offerings, the hanging of them on the offerings pole, and the sweating and associated observances within the sweat-lodge.

The sweat-lodge rite began with the preparation of the offerings. If the whole seasonal rite was a three-day one, this preparation took place on the first night and day, the rite at and in the sweat-lodge on the second day, and the separate Pipe rite in the keeper's lodge on the third; if a one-day one, the preparation of the offerings took place the night before, the rite at or in the sweat-lodge early on the following morning, and rite in the keeper's lodge during the day. The whole order and content of the rites

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

were quite the same in both cases. The decision as to length was apparently optional with the keeper, and depended on his ability and willingness to cover the heavy costs of providing food and other necessaries. We shall describe the one-night one-day rite. 796*

The day before the sweating, the keeper would direct his assistants,—one of his brothers or grown sons or friends,—to get the 31 willows, the pole and other raw material for the sweat-lodge, and the sticks to tie the offerings, and would have his wives gather the required wood and uniform stones for the heating, pulverize charcoal, and tidy up the Pipe lodge.

After sundown the keeper had his wives take their children away from his lodge. All the people would know what was to take place in the keeper's lodge that evening and would keep quiet. Then, when in the keeper's judgment, all was quiet in camp and practically everyone had retired for the night, the keeper and a chosen assistant began preparing the offerings in the former's lodge, the Pipe lodge.

The keeper and his assistant began by laving themselves three times with chewed peppermint. Then the keeper filled his common pipe with tobacco, sang thrice the solemn smudge or incense song (No. 81) and dropped peppermint leaves on the sacred hearth, smudged himself (the assistant doing the same), smudged the common pipe, and prayed with it,—all with the same rites as at the Transfer Ceremony (pp. 44-54). Then after a good smoke with the common pipe, the two took a little rest. The incense song, like all others in the sweat-lodge rite, was sung without rattle or other accompaniment. [533]

After this, a fresh live buffalo chip was put on the sacred hearth, another peppermint smudge was made with the triple east, south and west orientation, and all the offerings were smudged by him and laid down. Then he sang another song (No. 79?) three times and started the actual tying of the offerings.

While the keeper was sorting out the offerings and selecting the one he considered the greatest and most valuable, the assistant blackened the sticks to which they were to be tied. This blackening was done by taking a bit of tallow in the palm of the hand, putting charcoal on it, rubbing the palms together, and then rubbing the palms on the stick. [386]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 The assistant then held one of the sticks while the keeper wrapped the chosen offering around it. The keeper then put an awl in his assistant's right hand and holding the hand with his own right sang a song (No. 79?), at the same time pushing the assistant's hand toward the left end of the offering. This he did three times, after each time spitting a little peppermint on the spot where the hole was to be made with the awl in the offering. The last time, with their right hands still held together, they made the hole. In the same manner two other holes were made, one at the right end of the offering, the other in the middle. The awl was then laid aside, and three buckskin thongs (the middle one longer than the other two as it served also to tie the offering to the sweat-lodge sacrifice pole) were put in the holes, a triple motion or pass being made with each before actual insertion. And so the keeper and assistant together tied up the first and most valuable offering. After this, the assistant alone tied up the other offerings, each with three thongs on a separate stick, without ceremony, while the keeper sat back and sang till all were tied. Then followed another recess and smoke.

Next the keeper made another smudge, simply and without the smudge song, rubbed tallow and charcoal between his palms and smudged the charcoal paint on his palm, and sang the charcoal smudging song (No. 81). Then he took the chief offering, made three passes at each of the three places on it where it was tied, finally daubing the three places with the black paint in his palm. The other offerings were then likewise daubed black at each of the three tying-spots, but hurriedly and without ceremony.

All the offerings were then tied to a single small pole such as children used in their play lodges, the most valuable one at the top, the next valuable next, and so on, with the least valuable at the bottom. The whole thing was then tied in a neat bundle, and the assistant was directed to take the bundle outside the lodge and lean it against the lodge cover to the near center, that is, the north, carefully upright lest some dog get close and foul it,—there to remain all night. So ended, late in the evening or night, the preparation of the offerings.

Early the next morning the keeper, with an assistant or two, went to the spot where the sweating was to take place, and the

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

assistants cleared the ground and erected the sweat-lodge as directed by the keeper. The fire for heating the rocks was built, the pipe mound made, and the hole for the offerings pole dug. The keeper filled his common pipe with tobacco mixture and had an assistant lean it on the west slope of the mound, stem upward and pointing to the east. Meanwhile the ex-keepers and other older prominent men (no women), who had been previously agreed upon and notified as selectees to sweat, gathered on the scene and sat waiting in a half circle to the south of the lodge. There was no face painting by the participants before or during the sweat-lodge rite, as they were going to sweat profusely. 796*

When the keeper saw that all was ready he sent an assistant to fetch the small pole of offerings from behind the keeper's lodge. On returning the assistant held this pole in his hands while the keeper untied one by one the offerings and tied them crosswise by the middle longer thong to the larger sweat-lodge pole, one below the other,—at the top the most valuable one distinguished by a bundle of feathers tied to it, and the others below in order of value. The small pole was then just discarded.

Next an assistant brought a live buffalo chip and placed it in the bottom of the pole hole. Peppermint was then dropped on the chip and the large pole with the offerings was set upright in the hole. This transfer of the offerings, the peppermint smudging, and the erection of the pole were apparently accompanied with ritual and singing (the smudge song and two or three others it seems), but we obtained only the most meager details.

Next came the chanted invitation to sweat (record No. 86). This was given by some particularly prominent and respected elderly man. At a word from the keeper, he took the filled common pipe from the mound, and standing close to the mound and holding the pipe upward, prayed and in a loud voice chanted the names of those who were invited to sweat: first the Supreme Being, then in order, the Four Holy Old Men, Those-who-follow-each-other (Sun and Moon), He-who-starved-to-death (not however the Last Child, he is not important enough), and finally the human invitees present, each by name three times.

All the invited men, the keeper in the lead, then filed into the sweat-lodge entering by the left side of the east door and proceed-

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 ing clockwise each to his place with the keeper in the place of honor opposite the east door, and sat cross-legged on their buttocks, not squatted on their heels. The man who had chanted the invitations then followed them, after placing the pipe on the mound, and took his place at the left of the east door.

At this juncture the keeper's wife at his direction, brought the Flat Pipe bundle to the sweat-lodge, gave it to the keeper who smudged it three times at each of the three incense places. Then she took the bundle and went out through the west door,—all with the same ceremonial observance as at the Transfer Rite.

A live buffalo chip was put on each pi-shaped hearth by one of the attendants. Next the keeper made the smudge or incense by dropping peppermint on these three hearths,—the eastern, middle, and western in order,—with the smudge song and ritual as described for the Transfer Rite. Then followed the fumigation of the keeper's person and of the common pipe, as *mutatis mutandis* in the same Transfer Rite. Then the keeper with closed eyes prayed with the common pipe extended upward in his hands, after which the pipe was passed clockwise till it reached the man nearest the east door who passed it across the door to the inviter seated next the door. The latter with the help of the assistants who brought a live buffalo chip, lit the pipe, puffed it, passed it to the man on his left to puff, and so on clockwise until it reached the man nearest the east door on the north side. Then it was passed back anti-clockwise, without being puffed, till it reached the inviter. So the smoking continued until all the tobacco was smoked up, when it was passed to the keeper who emptied it slowly with the usual ceremony and cleaned it out with the regular stick. Then the pipe was passed clockwise to the attendant at the north side of the door, who deposited it on the slope of the mound outside in its ritual position of bowl to west and stem to east.

*796 Now the sweaters disrobed, passing their clothing to the two
515 attendants who piled them up outside to the north and the south of the sweat-lodge respectively. The heated rocks were then brought in and deposited in the sweat-lodge pit and the door coverings were lowered. The two attendants then stretched out, just outside the east door face down, head resting on the folded

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

arms and so propped up a little (a common sleeping posture, with ears exposed to hear well and mouth free to breathe easily), and so remained during the ensuing songs and until summoned to open up the sweat-lodge coverings for breathing spells.

796*
515

The keeper then began singing a song (No. 83) in which all present in the sweat-lodge joined. This was sung three times. During the singing any who wished would pray, each by himself out loud, for the two attendants outside, who were gladdened to hear this. Several could pray aloud at the same time without being distracted as they were accustomed so to pray.

Just before the actual sweating another song (No. 84) was sung in like manner.

Next the hot rocks were sprinkled by the man who had chanted the initial invitations to sweat. While he and the others sang the "hell-diver's song" (No. 84), he dipped his right hand fingers, tips joined, into the water, stirred the water with his fingers, and at the end of the song snapped his finger tips open over the rocks and sprinkled them, at the same time making a sort of grunted "uh! uh! uh!" (three times), an imitation of the hell-diver's call. Then plenty of water was splashed on the hot rocks. The same ritual and song were gone through three times.

It was during this sprinkling that they used to hear a woman's voice singing. Both The Boy and Thick have heard this voice—the former long ago when his father then an ex-keeper put up a sweat-lodge, both when a few years ago Thick's brother, then a keeper, put up one. The old people thought this woman was some holy being, but beyond that knew nothing more about her. The Boy and Thick conjectured that she may possibly have been the first woman made after the flood by Earthmaker.

The hell-diver entered into the sprinkling rite and at this point because both in actual habit and in the origin story of the flood he is associated with water. He was prayed to, "Hell-diver, help me! Come!" in the sweat-lodge rite, probably at this juncture. The hell-diver song was never sung outside of the sweat-lodge rite.

After the third singing, sprinkling, and splashing, all those inside the sweat-lodge had a good sweat, during which the sweaters

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 515 whipped themselves, especially on any part of their bodies where they felt sick, with buffalo tails attached to a handle. The keeper used a distinctive whip of a white or beaver buffalo tail. After the men inside had sweated a while, the two attendants, who had meanwhile remained lying face down outside, one at each side of the east door, raised the covers first of the east door and then of the west. After a little breathing spell, the covers were lowered again by the attendants, the west door cover first, water was splashed afresh, without song or ritual, on the hot rocks, and a second sweating period ensued. After this, a third one followed. Then those of the sweaters who wished took a plunge in the river, and all donned their clothing.

*796 The offerings were then taken down from the offerings pole, and one of the assistants or some other good upright man was deputed by the keeper to take them away from camp to some knoll or mountain top or near some big rock, pray with them, and weight them down well with stones, or else, as a less common alternative, to carry them down to some stream and sink them in the water. Some of the offerings had been selected however for distribution to needy children.

[262] No food of any kind was eaten by the participants during the seasonal sweat-lodge rite. When the whole seasonal rite itself was carried out on the three-day plan, the sweating ceremony lasted from early morning until near sundown, and was followed by a big meal.

After the sweating rite was over, the sweat-lodge was not torn down but was just left standing. Children were admonished by their elders not to play around it, and especially not to go inside it, lest they should grow slowly and be dwarfs for a long time. Even though such an abandoned sweat-lodge was still in good condition when a later seasonal rite happened to be held at the same camp site, neither the lodge or any part of it would be used again. An entirely new one would be erected.

In a three-day seasonal rite, the second part of it with the terminal feast occupied the whole or most of the third day; in the one-day rite, what remained of the day after the sweating was over. All of this second part of the rite took place in the keeper's lodge where the Flat Pipe was.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Before the rite began all things were made ready. Ordinarily the sacred incense-hearth, so important a feature of the rite, was already built. It was customarily made by the keeper immediately after his lodge was erected on arrival at a new camp site and he had to have such a hearth in his lodge at all times. By way of exception, when the seasonal rite took place at once on the arrival of the tribe at a new camp and in the rush the keeper had not gotten around to making the hearth, he would begin the preparation of the offerings by so doing. 796*

This sacred hearth was quite distinct from the keeper's ordinary lodge hearth. The latter was made without ceremony, in the center of his lodge, and without an encompassing circle of rocks. Such rock circles were made only when fires were kindled on the march, to prevent prairie fires, and on hearths built outside the lodge for boiling bones and so forth. 796* 354 778

The sacred incense or smudge hearth was built with a special solemn rite of its own, a rite in no way connected with seasonal or other ones, in the following manner.

The keeper himself made the hearth, assisted by the co-keeper and Pipe child, or in some cases by an attendant or vow-maker. First the grass was cut on an oblong space, about the length of the Flat Pipe bed, between the ordinary family hearth in the center of the lodge and the Flat Pipe bed at the rear (north) side thereof. The keeper, co-keeper and Pipe child, if all three were to participate, chewed peppermint, spat on their hands, and rubbed their hands together as if washing them, but did not rub their arms or head. 796*

The keeper, facing south (as also his wife) and holding an axe in his right hand, lowered the axe three times, spitting at each lowering, and then chopped in the ground the outline of the oblong space, beginning at the southeast corner and proceeding clockwise. Then with a knife he cut off all the grass in this space, smoothing it but not digging out a sunken one. The co-keeper, who had previously placed a choice piece of buffalo robe, about 3′ to 4′ square from a buffalo that had completely shed its winter coat, to the east of the oblong space, then spat three times on the cut grass and removed dirt and placed it on the robe, carried the blanket of grass and dirt out clockwise, turned to the east, walked a good

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 distance away, spilled the grass and dirt slowly and reverently on the ground, returned, re-entered the lodge, proceeded clockwise to her place between the sacred hearth and the lodge hearth.

The keeper or another (The Boy himself used to help his father in this detail) next made in the center of the oblong space a smaller square mound of earth about an inch in height, as a base for the sacred hearth. (See Plate 1C.) Then the keeper himself (no other) sitting facing south took a pinch of red powdered paint, held it up toward the south, and while singing alone the solemn hearth song (No. 35), lowered it in three stages, and sprinkled it clockwise to form a rectangular ouline in red on the east half of the dirt mound. Then taking a pinch of charcoal, he did the same to form the outline on the west half. Finally while the keeper sang the hearth song the third time, the Pipe child filled in the two outlined spaces, the red one first, with a covering of red paint and charcoal respectively. And so the smudge hearth was made. The live buffalo chip for smudging was placed in the center straddling the red and black halves.

The hearth song was sung only at the hearth-making rite, not at seasonal or other rites as such. It was first sung by Ni:hohat and by Earthmaker. The red paint symbolized the earth; the charcoal, the above, the sky, the heavens; the two together, the universe. In making the hearth the keeper was symbolically making the world, reenacting the making of the dry land after the flood. When the seasonal rite was to be held, he had already "created the world," no new hearth was made for it, and the hearth song was not sung in it.

Like the incense hearth, the Flat Pipe bed had to be ritually made at once on arrival at a new camp site, was always in place in the keeper's lodge, and hence was in readiness before the start of the seasonal rite. The bed-making ceremonies were as follows.

On arrival at a new camping place, after the keeper's lodge was set up, the co-keeper or Pipe child or one of her other children would gather the sage. The co-keeper would carry the bundle of sage into the lodge, proceed clockwise and deposit it on the ground. Then she would take a bit of dried peppermint from the bag in her belt, chew it, spit on her hands and rub them together, take the bunch of sage in her hand, spit on it three times, lower it

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

in three stages and then neatly arrange the sprigs on the bare ground at the north wall of the lodge, with their stems to the north and tips to the south. Then she took hold of the beaver buffalo robe, spat on it three times, lowered it in three stages, and so arranged it on top of the sage so that the sage tips projected out from under the south edge of the robe. 796*

After the Pipe bed had been so made, the keeper made incense on the smudge hearth with the usual smudge song and rite, and the keeper, co-keeper and Pipe child smudged their persons (hands, arms, mouth, and head) as at the Transfer Rite. Then the keeper directed the co-keeper to fetch the Flat Pipe bundle from the tripod, outside the lodge, on which it had been hanging from first arrival at the new camp with its stem end to the east. She walked out clockwise, went to the bundle, halted, spat on it three times, took it from the tripod, held it with her left arm over it and her right arm under it, walked clockwise to the lodge door, entered, proceeded clockwise to the incense hearth, dipped the stem end three times in the smudge, moved to the Pipe bed, spat three times, and gently deposited the bundle, stem end to the east, on the farthest north edge of the bed. Later the Pipe was hung up on the tripod.

In ordinary times the Pipe bundle when inside the keeper's lodge was on either the bed or the tripod. Just before the beginning of the seasonal rite it hung on the tripod, bowl end to west and stem end to east (See Plate 2A).

Those privileged to be present in the keeper's lodge during the seasonal rite were: the keeper, co-keeper and Pipe child; the surviving ex-keepers and ex-co-keepers [of both the Flat and Feathered Pipes?]; two young men who served as attendants; tribespeople who knowing the seasonal rite was to be held had waited therefor to make offerings "to cover the Pipe;" sometimes others, admitted on account of their prominence or of their knowledge of the songs. Those, who through offerings had paid their way in and acquired the right of being present, just sat there and listened, without playing an active part in the ceremony.

At the beginning of the rite the keeper and co-keeper knelt squatting on their heels, the former to the west of the Pipe bed

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 and incense hearth, the latter to the east. The others sat in order of dignity and rank on the west and east sides of the lodge, the two attendants at either side of the door, the attendant whom we shall call "attendant number one" at the west side, number two at the east. These attendants were chosen for their intelligence and integrity and to be chosen for the task was looked upon as a great honor.

Before the rite started, those inside the lodge or at least the [302] ex-keepers and ex-co-keepers would have painted themselves, without ritual, for the occasion.

The rite in the keeper's lodge was made up of the following elements:

Peppermint laving
Smudging and smoking
    Making incense (with song)
    Smudging, praying with and smoking common pipe
        Recess
Untying and unwrapping Flat Pipe bundle
    (with 3 songs and origin narrative)
        Recess
Painting of
    People
    Sacred objects
    (with 3 songs and origin narrative)
        Recess
Rewrapping and re-tying bundle
    (with 3 songs and origin narrative)
        Recess
Terminal feast
    Praying with food offering
    Consuming of meal
    Reciting war-deeds.

Our chief informant on the rite was The Boy. Even in the old buffalo days before 1884 when the seasonal rites were regularly carried out, questions and debates used to arise at times regarding this or that minor point, such as sequence of some songs. It is quite understandable therefore that The Boy, although clear regarding the main ritual features, most details, and main sequence, was uncertain regarding some minor points, especially regarding

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

sequence. The above broad pattern and sequence are substantially correct. The broad pattern is clear enough: the laving, smudging and smoking; next the unfolding and refolding, with the three triads of songs, each of the nine songs sung three times; the terminal feast with the prayer and recital of war-deeds. Certain doubtful details, particularly of sequence, will be noted as we go along, especially the order of the songs and the concurrent ritual details, and the point at which the painting of the faces occurred. 796*

At the very beginning the keeper distributed dried peppermint leaves to all present in the lodge, who chewed the leaves and spat on and rubbed their hands together, palms and backs, with ordinary hand-washing movements. The keeper, co-keeper, the two attendants and, if another than the keeper had been designated to pray with the common pipe, he too, spat ritually three times on their hands for the laving. The chewing of the peppermint leaves [which continued after the hand laving?] also sanctified the mouths for singing later the sacred songs.

The keeper then put peppermint leaves on the sacred hearth, thrice in succession with the same ceremonies as at the Transfer Rite (pp. 44-54), and with the same triple singing of the smudge song (No. 82) in which all present joined. When from time to time later during the rite in the keeper's lodge, he dropped peppermint leaves on the hearth, he did so without singing the smudge song.

Next the keeper, co-keeper, and the two attendants, in this order, smudged their arms, mouth and head (with ceremonies as in Transfer Rite).

Then the keeper's common pipe (not the Flat Pipe), was filled with tobacco and larb, smudged by him, stem and bowl (same ceremony as in Transfer Rite). After this the keeper or his ritual grandfather the last co-keeper, prayed holding the common pipe stem pointed upward, toward the Supreme Being to whom first and chiefly his prayer was addressed (See Plate 1B). Usually at least, the prayer was also addressed, secondarily, to the Four Holy Beings, Those-who-follow-each-other (Sun and Moon), and He-who-starved-to-death. During the prayer he held the pipe with the bowl in his right hand between thumb and index finger and with the stem in his left, the left thumb on the upper surface of the stem.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 The prayer ended, the pipe was lit, smoked and emptied with the same ceremonies as for the Flat Pipe itself at the Transfer Rite (q.v.) At the end the pipe was just put back among the keeper's belongings to the west of the Flat Pipe bed. The common pipe in this as in other rites served as a representative of or surrogate for the Flat Pipe itself.

After this, there came a brief recess during which some might fill their own pipes and smoke and chat together or step out of the lodge for a short while.

After this brief recess began the major ceremony in three stages of unfolding the bundle, painting, and refolding. Each of the three stages marked by the triple singing of three distinct series of songs (9 songs each sung 3 times, a total of 27 singings).

The first stage consisted of untying and unwrapping the Flat Pipe bundle. When after the recess everybody was back in place in the lodge, the co-keeper brought the Flat Pipe bundle from the tripod in the lodge to the sage bed at the north side thereof. Getting up on her feet she went to the tripod, took from the top of the bundle any offerings that were there and hung them somewhere else, facing the bundle posed her right hand palm down and finger tips joined and pointing away from her at shoulder height, made motion or pass with her hand toward the bundle while at the same time sort of spitting on the bundle a bit of the peppermint she had been chewing, and brought her hand back into the posed position. The motion or pass and spitting were done twice more. Then she took hold of the bundle, released with her left hand the thong by which the bundle hung on the tripod, and with both hands lifted off the bundle.

Holding the bundle with her right hand under it and her left arm over it encircling it, stem end forward, she turned clockwise to the pipe bed, posed a moment with the stem end to the south, then lowered the bundle a little and posed a moment more, and gently set the bundle down on the sage and buffalo-robe bed with the stem end pointing north. The keeper now squatted on his heels to the west of the bundle; the co-keeper squatted to the east thereof facing him across the bundle.

Either at this point, or perhaps a little later after the ritual

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

face-painting, the rattles were taken out of the bundle, smudged and distributed. The keeper reached into the bundle and into the smaller bag containing the rattles, took them out, held them all in both hands facing toward the east, raised them up in the smudge rising from the sacred hearth (see Plate 1C), lowered them in three stages, circled them three times clockwise around the live buffalo chip on the hearth and rattled them all together. Then he did the same, toward the south, and the same toward the west,—all this squatting on his heels so as to be able to turn around easily.

796*.

The smudging over, he distributed the rattles one by one to each man, not to the women. The recipient walked up to the keeper and held his hands up to receive the rattle, while the keeper first spat three times on it reaching it three times toward the recipient, then shook it, and finally handed it over to him. The keeper kept one for himself. As previously noted, the rattles were shaken in a circle clockwise at breast height during Flat Pipe rites.

Now the keeper, closing his eyes tightly and shaking his rattle, started the solemn "Creation" or hearth song (No. 35) and then handed his rattle to the man on his right, at which all present, men and women, joined in and sang it in chorus to the end. Then they sang it a second and third time. The participants were here figuratively reenacting "creation," the making of land which Earthmaker had formed "by thinking, without any exertion," and they too while singing the song were supposed to "be thinking that way."

The keeper and co-keeper, squatting to the west and east of the bundle respectively and facing each other, then began the actual unfolding of the bundle. While the keeper held his right arm outstretched at shoulder height, his right hand palm down with the tips of the thumb, index and middle fingers joined and pointing outward, he started the wordless untying song (No. 37) in which all present then joined. This song was sung three times and at the end of the first two singings the keeper said: Yo! and at the end of the third Yo-ho-ho-ho! three times.

The three thongs around the outer elkskin covering of the

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

**796 bundle were untied, after the third singing was ended (or perhaps one thong after each of the three singings). The keeper and co-keeper both together made three successive passes at the bundle with their right hands (3 finger tips still joined), spitting on the bundle at each pass. The keeper then untied the stem-end thong to the south, the co-keeper the middle one, and finally the keeper the bowl-end one.

Then both held their hands, three tips joined, breast height before them, made three passes, spitting at each pass. Then the keeper slowly unfolded the flap on his side and laid it flat. Next, after the same joint ceremony, the co-keeper unfolded and laid flat the flaps on her side. The same was repeated with other outer wrappings apparently if they existed. The outer cover of the bundle was then taken off leaving the objects within it exposed, not however the Flat Pipe itself which remained wrapped in its own special case.

The keeper would then hold up one by one the sacred objects in the bundle,—the turtle shell, the hell-diver skin, the muskrat pelt, the bird skins and so forth,—and narrate in full detail the flood and dry-land-making stories and the part played in it by each of the actors. Explanatory narratives of this kind were a very important feature of the seasonal and other more solemn [211] Flat Pipe rites. A primary purpose of them was to freshen the memory of the participants, and to make sure they had an intelligent understanding of what the Flat Pipe stood for. The narratives also included an almost complete ritual of the Flat Pipe as first taught and carried out in the beginning and so served to authenticate the modern rituals. The narratives were recited during this first of the three triads of songs, and also during the following two. They consisted exclusively of sacred traditions regarding the origin and earlier fortunes of the Pipe. War stories and war-deeds, Ni:hohat's secular adventures and escapades, secular folk-tales proper, even more serious ones like the Found-in-the-Grass and Blood-Clot cycles were rigidly excluded.

The narratives and explanations during this first triad of songs, like the songs themselves, revolve around the theme of the making of dry land and of the first human couple; those of the next two

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

triads to the later early fortunes of the people after they started to live and multiply. 796*

After the narratives were over, the third song (No. 38), the unwrapping song, was sung three times. This was properly the song for unwrapping the Flat Pipe case and so exposing the Flat Pipe to view. Inasmuch however as the Flat Pipe itself remained in its own proper case and was not exposed in the seasonal rites, but only at the Transfer Rite and the rite in fulfillment of a vow to smoke it, the keeper would explain: "This is the song we sing when we unwrap the Pipe itself," and the song would then be sung. At the end of the third singing of this song, a good recess was taken.

After the recess all reassembled in the keeper's lodge for the painting and second triad of songs, sung to the accompaniment of the rattles. The painting of the sacred objects came at this point; more probably too the painting of the people's faces, although it is just possible that this took place earlier in the rite, between the smoking of the common pipe and the singing of the first song of the first triad.

The face painting began with the triple singing of its own wordless proper song (No. 38). The people filed in proceeding clockwise. Each person fumigated his or her hands, arms, mouth and head in the accustomed ritual manner (cf. Transfer Rite), the keeper from time to time dropping peppermint leaves on the sacred hearth to make incense with the customary three motions, at shoulder height, lower, then close to the hearth, but without singing the smudge song. The keeper prayed for them and they themselves prayed. The keeper, co-keeper, Pipe child, ex-keepers and ex-co-keepers had already painted themselves—the keeper and co-keeper with slate-colored paint—and were not included among those to be painted at this time. The keeper painted the men and boys; the co-keeper, the women and girls. If any of those to be painted already had "good-time" paint on their faces, this was wiped off with the muskrat skin.

The paint was first applied to the faces with a little piece of wood, 3 or 4 inches long, dipped in the sacred red paint. A streak or solid band was made across the forehead from temple to temple, 796* 302

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 narrow at one temple, broader in front, and narrow at the other temple, to represent the sky and the region above; another under 302 the jawbones and chin, from ear to ear likewise narrow near the ear, broader under the chin, and narrow at the other ear, to represent the earth or dry land. Then with a stamp, made of a stick having a cross of four equal-length arms carved in relief on its end, and dipped into the paint, crosses in red were imprinted on each cheek bone of the adults, on the bridge of the nose according to The Boy, or on the forehead according to [821 Thick, and on both cheeks. This cross-shaped imprint represented the morning star (called simply "the cross" [not "the 531] cross star"] in Gros Ventre), so The Boy and Thick conjectured on their own, but this they never heard from the old people. This painting meant much, it seems, to the people; as Coming Daylight expressed it: "It was a great thing to get painted at Flat Pipe ceremonies." As the people were painted they filed out clockwise. The rite ordinarily took a long time and only ended when the last of the people quit coming in. During it the strict silence was not observed by the ex-keepers and other privileged persons in the lodge; they chatted and smoked freely.

*796 Two other songs (No. 40 and No. 41), both wordless, were now sung by the keeper and the small groups in the lodge. After the first of these two songs the keeper painted with red paint the sacred objects kept in the Pipe bundle: the Pipe case proper, the bird skins, the rattles, and so forth. After the second, the co-keeper painted the sacred objects connected with the Pipe but not kept in the bundle: the tripod, pipe saddle and so forth. Meanwhile or at the end of the painting, the keeper told further details regarding the history and significance of the Flat Pipe and the sacred objects associated with it. After all this a long recess was taken with free smoking and chatting.

After the recess came the third triad of songs and the re-wrapping and re-tying of the Pipe bundle. The order of the songs, as well as The Boy could remember was: The Last Child Song (No. 42), The Rope Song (No. 43), The Horse Song (No. 44), all three, wordless except for short sentences in the middle, of these were brought back by He-who-starved-to-death

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

and introduced by him into the Flat Pipe rite (cf. No. 5 in Appendix). 796*

While these three songs were sung, each three times, the re-wrapping of the bundle and its contents and the re-tying of the outer covering of the bundle were done by the keeper and co-keeper, in reverse order from that followed in the unfolding. The co-keeper re-wrapping first and the keeper after her alternately, and the bowl-end knot of the outer covering of the bundle then the middle knot, and last the stem-end knot. The Boy thought that the re-wrapping and re-tying of the Pipe itself occurred during the Last Child Song in a vowed rite where the Pipe was exposed, not however in the seasonal rite where it was not exposed; and that in the seasonal rite the re-wrapping of the bird skins and other objects occurred during the Rope Song, the re-wrapping and re-tying of the outer covering of the whole bundle during the Horse Song.

At intervals during the re-folding or at the end thereof the keeper gave further details on the history and meaning of the rite, songs, and sacred objects, to impress on the minds of his hearers what had already been told, to bring up details he had forgotten to mention earlier, and to narrate the story of He-who-starved-to-death. (For story, see No. 5 in Appendix.)

After the re-wrapping and re-tying ceremony with its songs and narratives was over, the Pipe bundle was left lying in its place on its bed with the stem end to the south, and a good long rest was taken before the beginning of the feast with which the whole seasonal rite terminated.

After all the prepared food, in plenty and of choice quality, was made ready for the feast, and before the eating began the keeper would ask some good highly respected man, maybe an ex-keeper man, to pray—never a woman "as the women were subordinate and accountable to the men and the men were the heads and bosses." The man selected would get up on his feet, go up to the cooked food, take a small bit of the choicest food,—maybe asking the people "Is this the choicest?" and getting their agreement, —and proceed clockwise to a spot just inside the lodge at the west door-post. There he would stand, not slouching, but posed erect

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 on both feet, hold up the bit of food in the air, and pray. In starting to pray he would say the first two or three words looking upward with open eyes, then he would lower his head and say the rest of the prayer with bowed head and closed eyes. While he prayed aloud, the others present sat immobile in complete silence listening reverently with bowed heads and prayed "inside in their hearts, not aloud" along with him. From time to time during the voiced prayer and at the end thereof, they interjected aloud e:: ! an exclamation of assent something like the Christian "Amen."

In his prayer he addressed first the Supreme Being, then in order the Four Old Men, You-who-follow-each-other, and You-who-starved-to-death. While the above order of address was *de rigueur*, the one who prayed aloud could and did use his own words and ideas. Short appeals might be made to the Four Old Men, Sun and Moon, and He-who-starved-to-death, but the prayer was addressed chiefly to the Supreme Being, to render thanks for the food and other good things he had given them and to ask his continued beneficence in general and such particular favors as the person praying chose to mention. The prayer was said three times. At the end of each saying thereof a bit of the food the man had been holding was pushed by him in the ground, and sort of covered over with dirt, near the wall of the lodge inside at the due east, south and west points respectively, for the Last Child and with mention of his name. (On occasion other than Flat Pipe rites, such as ordinary social feasts, the bit of food for the Last Child was deposited after the prayer at all four cardinal points.)

After the prayer and food offering, the feast broke open. Ordinarily the day would by this time be far spent, and the people had not eaten since breakfast. Before actually starting to eat each person would take a small bit of food, the choicest, hold it up and then bury it in the ground where he or she was sitting. Likewise before drinking any beverage, each would hold it up and then spill a little on the ground. Then "everybody would eat and eat and talk," and at the end those inside the lodge would go out clockwise.

Usually there was more food than could be eaten on the spot. But the feast was an eat-all one, and food could not be taken out

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

of the lodge. A dispensation from this strict rule could, and always or at least commonly was, given by the recital of war-deeds. Just before the people were ready to leave and scatter, the keeper would call on some eminent warrior: "You must tell three war-deeds. Then these people can carry home what they cannot eat here and now." To be called upon was considered a signal honor. He recited the deeds in a loud voice. One of the three war-deeds had, it seems, to be one in which he had captured food in a raid. 796*

At the (non-seasonal) Flat Pipe rite in 1938, carried out at the instance of the late Joe Assiniboine, there were practically no offerings, and at the end, without recital of war-deeds, everybody was going out carrying food home. Coming Daylight at this sight "just sat there with bowed head saying to the Pipe: 'Have pity on these people. They do not know any better. These people are fussing with you apparently, offending you, treating you badly!'"

A dispensation to take food out was also, it seems, granted if one of those present who had helped him very appreciably to cover the expenses incurred at the time of entering upon his keepership arose and said: "I helped him to become keeper." So we were told in 1938 but we neglected to check up the point later.

With the departure of the people after the feast and war-deeds recital, the seasonal rite came to an end. Those of the people who had not gotten into the keeper's lodge for the whole rite, because they had not made offerings, would gather about those who had gotten in to hear what had gone on. Those who had gotten in were full of enthusiasm. But with the old ex-keepers and ex-co-keepers all the happenings, while sacred, were just routine for them.

Vowed Rites

The rite of smoking the Flat Pipe in fulfillment of a vow was, in The Boy's estimation, not only "the biggest and most elaborate rite with the Flat Pipe" but also "the greatest rite in all the Gros Ventre worship." Coming Daylight could recall only one full performance of the rite, the one vowed by Runner, in her long life. (b. ca. 1855). A partial performance occurred not many years ago. No other specific cases were learned of by us.

A vow to smoke the Flat Pipe would be made only in extreme

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 emergency, such as eminent danger of death from enemy attack, illness or drowning. Runner so vowed after he had accidentally shot himself in the stomach with a pistol while out hunting. Another, apparently more important, reason for the rarity of the rite was the cost. The vower had to provide valuable offerings for the Pipe, generous presents in payment for the keeper, and abundant food for all the people who participated. All this cost could ordinarily be met only with the help of well-to-do relatives and friends.

After making the vow, the vower would tell everybody about it and he and his relatives and friends would start getting together the necessary offerings, presents and food. Meanwhile he would consult with the keeper regarding the time and other details. The rite could be carried out either separately from or combined with a spring or fall seasonal rite, not however with the winter seasonal rite. If the next seasonal rite were too far off, the vowed rite might be held separately. If the vow had been made shortly after the fall seasonal rite, the fulfillment would be deferred until spring or until the spring seasonal rite. Under no circumstances was the unwrapping, exposing and smoking of the Flat Pipe itself permitted during the winter time. Incidentally, we may add, the Flat Pipe itself (as distinct from the bundle) could never be unwrapped and exposed just to be looked at, but only when, as at the vowed or Transfer Rite, it was to be smoked.

In general the ritual in fulfillment of the vow to smoke the Flat Pipe was identical with the full seasonal Flat Pipe ritual, except for the variations to be noted presently. It was a three-day ceremony, with the full ritual of the sweat-lodge (including bringing of Flat Pipe bundle to sweat-lodge) and of the smudging, smoking, 9-song singing, praying and terminal feasting as previously described in detail for the seasonal rite. Although the "greatest rite in all the Gros Ventre worship," it can, therefore be described here briefly, with notation only of the variations, from the seasonal rite.

For the sweat-lodge ceremony, the vower himself with the help of his relatives and friends provided the offerings which had to be of great value. The keeper, however, did the tying of them. The vower himself with the aid of a relative or friend of known

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796*

integrity built the sweat-lodge, or, if the vowed rite was combined with a seasonal one, the keeper or his assistant might join the vower in building it.

At the rite in the keeper's lodge certain more marked variations entered in. The vower's place was the lowest, at the door, on the west side, to the left of the attendant, even though the vower were a very prominent man. The Flat Pipe itself was unwrapped from its special case by the keeper and co-keeper just after the singing of the third song of the first triad, and with the same ritual observances with which they had unwrapped the Pipe bundle.

The Pipe case was unwrapped after the third song (No. 37) of the first triad. The keeper [and co-keeper] held out his right hand at about breast height with his elbow crooked, the tips of the thumb, index and middle fingers joined and the other two fingers folded, and thus posed he started the unwrapping song (No. 37), the others joining in, and at the end of the song made a pass with his right hand toward the Pipe case, spat and said: "Yo!" He repeated all this, bending his upper body and face nearer to the case, with the terminal: "Yo!" He did the same the third time, bending still near, with a terminal: "Yo-ho-ho-ho-ho-ho!" said three times. Then the keeper untied the stem-end cord, the co-keeper the middle one, and the keeper the bowl-end one, and with the preliminary motions of the hands the two took off the wrappings alternately,—all as in the unwrapping of the bundle,—until the Pipe lay exposed.

The Flat Pipe itself was then filled and smudged with the same ceremonies as at the Transfer Rite or as for the ordinary pipe at the seasonal rite.

The last ex-keeper took a little tobacco in all five fingers, tips down, of his right hand, and, holding the Flat Pipe by the bowl in his left palm, raised the tobacco about 10" above the bowl, made a pass with it toward the bowl and spat a little, then a second pass nearer the bowl and spat, then a third still nearer and spat, then put a little of the tobacco in the bowl, and finally filled the bowl.

Both bowl and stem were smudged—not stem alone—as follows: Stem by 3 stages toward incense, then 3 circles round

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

to E—same to S—same to W, then bowl by 3 stages down to incense, then 3 circles—this 3 times [E, S, W.].

After this the keeper summoned the vower: "N . . . . . , come here," at which the vower would proceed clockwise and sit on his buttocks with his legs crossed tailor-fashion under him between the sacred hearth and the Pipe bundle, facing the keeper. The keeper, who had been holding the Pipe with both hands by the stem (not by the bowl or lip end), with stem end pointing toward himself, now turned the Pipe clockwise until the stem pointed toward the vower, touched the vower with the stem first on the right shoulder, then on the left, and last on top of the head.

Next the keeper reached the as yet unlit Pipe to the vower saying: "Puff it three times." The vower, after so puffing three times with the stem in his mouth, was told by the keeper: "Go back to your place." This he did, leaving the Pipe in the keeper's hands.

Either just after the three puffs or after the vower had returned to his place, the keeper turned the Pipe clockwise till the stem end pointed east and slanted upward, and said: "Supreme Being, N. . [name of vower] promised to smoke with this Flat Pipe. Now he is going to smoke with it. He is carrying out his promise." Then still holding the Pipe with stem toward the east and slanting upward the keeper prayed, beginning as he always did in Flat Pipe ritual prayers, with the fourfold invocation of the Supreme Being, the Four Old Men. You-who-follow-each-other and You-who-starved-to-death, and asking the Supreme Being to have pity on the vower, to grant him good health and long life, and so forth. Then the keeper did the same with the Pipe stem pointing to the south, and finally the same to the west.

Then he summoned attendant one: "Here, give this Pipe to that man." Assistant one then went clockwise to the keeper, got the Pipe, and proceeded clockwise holding it in both hands by the stem (not by the bowl or lip end), handed it to the vower, who grasped it in both hands in the same way, with the stem end pointing to himself. Then the keeper directed attendant two, at the east of door: "Come and take a live buffalo chip and light the Pipe for that man." Attendant two, with a forked stick, went to the lodge fire (not the sacred hearth), got a live chip, and, being

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796*

careful not to drop it, carried it to the vower and put it on the tobacco in the Pipe bowl. The vower started his smoke with three puffs, and after that had a good smoke.

When he had finished his good smoke, he handed the lit Pipe to the man on his left, and so the Pipe passed round the circle clockwise, each person, including the keeper, taking three and only three puffs, as the vower alone had the privilege of taking a good smoke, that is, more than three puffs. While the Pipe was being passed, no one except the keeper could tamp it. When the Pipe reached the last person nearest the door on the east side of the lodge, it was not passed back from hand to hand as it could go around only once to be smoked, but attendant two took it, proceeding counter-clockwise (because the smoked Pipe could not cross the door), to the keeper, who emptied it,—first holding it up high above his head by the stem and spitting a little, then lower and spitting, then lower still and spitting, finally dumping out the ashes gently just outside (not on) the red half of the sacred hearth, without striking the bowl on anything.

The re-wrapping and re-tying of the Pipe and its case were done by the keeper and his wife, with the same ceremony as for the Pipe bundle.

Then came the feast, the food for which was provided by the vower and his relatives and friends. The man chosen to offer prayer before the eating began could pray to the Supreme Being, and to some or all of the other beings, the Four Old Men, Those-who-follow-each-other and He-who-starved-to-death, but if he chose to pray to only one, he had to offer his prayer to the Supreme Being. He prayed, not for the vower alone (as the keeper had done earlier in the rite just before the Pipe was smoked), but for the whole tribe, for all the people whether present or not, in his own words, that they all might have good health, long life, plenty of food, success in all worthy undertakings, and so forth. He would end his prayer with words such as: "I am through, Supreme Being," and those present would respond by saying: "e::." When through praying with the small bowl of choice food held up, he broke off three bits of food and gave these to the vower, saying: "You deposit one each of these

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 in the ground to the east, south and west." The vower then got up, and facing east and holding up one piece at arm length, prayed, aloud or silently, lowered the bit of food in three stages, and put it in the earth, saying: "Last Child, there's your food." Then he did likewise to the south, and west.

Throughout this vowed rite, as throughout other Flat Pipe rites, the Pipe itself was not prayed to, but served only as a medium or symbol through which prayer was made directly or ultimately to the Supreme Being, "very much," as The Boy explained, "like pictures or Crucifixes used in the Catholic religion."

After the eating got under way, the vower would bring to the keeper the clothing, weapons, skins and other valuables presented in payment. Usually the keeper and co-keeper would distribute these, or most of them, to the ex-keepers, ex-co-keepers and other "holy" people who were present and who had helped him on this or previous occasions.

[787] If a man had had a dream in which a request was made of him to make a sweat-lodge for the Flat Pipe or if he had other grave reason, he might vow: "I will make a sweat-lodge for the Flat Pipe." If the vow were made in the winter time, the keeper would reserve the right to determine when it would be fulfilled, and might defer the fulfillment until some day in spring, perhaps at the time the spring seasonal rite was to be held. The vower besides building the sweat-lodge with the help of some relative or friend was obligated also to bring offerings, as valuable ones as he and his relatives and friends could afford. Not everyone would be well enough off to give offerings suitable in quantity and quality for this solemn occasion, and in such case the keeper might take some of the offerings that had previously been made by others to "cover" the Pipe (see infra) and tie them to the offerings-stick and sweat-lodge offerings pole to make up for the deficiency.

The whole sweat-lodge ritual was carried out, including the tying rite the night before, the offering and tying at the sweat-lodge pole, the praying, smudging and singing, the bringing of the Flat Pipe bundle to the sweat-lodge, and so forth, just as in the seasonal and vowed Flat Pipe smoking rites, with only minor variations. The vower assisted the keeper the night before in preparing the offerings, took the offerings-stick outside, and the next

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

morning put up the sweat-lodge, took the offering thereto, and so forth. He was specially prayed over and ritually brushed with sage (see infra) by the keeper. The sweat-lodge rite was not, however, followed by the 9-song rite in the keeper's lodge. 796*

After the abandonment of the seasonal rites in the late '60's or early '70's of the last century, this vowed sweat-lodge rite was still carried out from time to time, but it too was finally given up.

This vowed sweat-lodge-for-keeper rite was distinct from and less solemn than the vowed sweat-lodge-for-Flat-Pipe rite, but was carried out with the same ritual observances, except that the Flat Pipe bundle was not brought to the sweat lodge, and consequently the smudge song was sung immediately after the common pipe was passed to and laid down by him. The sweat-lodge was, of course, made by the vower. The Flat Pipe sweat-lodge rites in general were fundamentally sacrificial rites, the sweating itself being more or less subordinate and complementary to the gift-making. So in this vowed sweat-lodge-for-keeper rite, "a vower would not be much if he did not have offerings to offer besides making the sweat-lodge for the keeper; offerings were next to compulsory."

Other Rites and Observances

The Sacrifice Dance [Sundance] was the only one of the Sacred Dances or Lodges into which the Flat Pipe entered. In the Sacrifice Dance it was not unwrapped or smoked, nor was it brought inside the Dance lodge. When all was ready for raising the Sacrifice Dance center-pole, the man who had vowed the Dance brought presents to the Flat Pipe keeper. The co-keeper then carried the Flat Pipe bundle to the spot where the center-pole was to be erected, making three halts on the way, and finally stopping at the third halt a little distance from the spot, with the stem-end of the bundle pointing to the spot. The keeper made a smudge in the hole where the center-pole was to be put and then prayed. Each time the men heaved with the pole to erect it, the co-keeper motioned the stem-end of the bundle toward the pole. After the pole was raised and solidly embedded, the co-keeper

3: Cooper E•5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 took the bundle back to the keeper's lodge, and the Flat Pipe did not figure further in the Sacrifice Dance rite.

When the keeper wished to make offerings on his own account, because of having been told to do so in a dream or on other occasions, he would assemble the most valuable goods available, and would offer them with the full Flat Pipe sweat-lodge ceremony, as previously described for the seasonal rite.

If the keeper had been asked by the Flat Pipe in a dream to paint it, he would likewise make offerings and go through the full sweat-lodge ceremony. The Pipe itself in this case was not unwrapped and exposed, but red paint was put on the outer wrapping of the large bundle, on the legs of the Pipe tripod, and so forth. On this occasion he might also paint the offerings which had previously been made by tribe members to "cover" the Pipe and which had accumulated. After the rite was over, the offerings would be disposed of by depositing them up in the hills, or by distributing them to the needy.

From time to time, quite outside and independent of the seasonal and other elaborate rites, the faces of the children were painted ritually by the Flat Pipe keeper and co-keeper. The children would be summoned by the keeper and would file into the keeper's lodge in a steady stream and squat on their heels on the west side, and would have their faces painted, the boys by the keeper and the girls by the co-keeper, in the manner previously described (pp. 107-108), with the sacred red paint, not trader's vermilion, to the singing of the face-painting song (No. 39). During the rite the Flat Pipe bundle was on the ground, not on the tripod, with the keeper and co-keeper squatting on their heels to the west and east thereof respectively. Before the painting started a peppermint smudge was made. The children after being painted filed out clockwise by the east side of the lodge. The Boy and Thick remembered the rite from their own early personal experience, but not all the details. Coming Daylight's uncle, Crow Bull, when keeper of the Flat Pipe, around 1873, used to call in the children and paint their faces "because he wanted them to be strong men and women."

While this face-painting rite was intended more for the chil-

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

dren, grown-ups too who would accompany the children to escort them and to see that they behaved properly would take advantage of the occasion to be painted. 796*

The painting might be done as the result of a suggestion or direction given the keeper in a dream, to paint the faces of the children and, apparently, of the adults too.

A person might also make a vow to have himself painted. The keeper would then call the ex-keepers together, make a smudge, and sing the face painting song (No. 39). In this simple rite, the keeper and/or co-keeper painted the vower and others who came in.

The making of offerings to the Flat Pipe, called "covering" or "wrapping" the Pipe, was a major aspect of the Flat Pipe cult, the most important private or personal aspect of it, as distinct from the more elaborate public Pipe ceremonies participated in by considerable numbers of all of the people. Such "covering" could be done by anybody at any time, with or without previous vow or notification of keeper. Sometimes, as noted earlier (p. 101), such offerings were made just before a seasonal rite and entitled the giver to a seat in the keeper's lodge during the rite. As a rule, however, "covering" the Pipe was a ceremony to itself, a simple one independent of all others.

"Covering" the Pipe was done, commonly in fulfillment of a promise or vow, in case of illness, danger, or other emergency affecting the giver or a relative or friend, or, apart from any emergency, to obtain good health and long life. Covering was a sacrifice of petition or thanksgiving or both. Forgiveness and atonement purposes were quite absent, so far as we could discover. 782 796*

The offerings more commonly consisted of skin robes, later of textiles. Sometimes tobacco was given, and after a buffalo hunt choice bits of the meat. The textiles offered were such goods as flannel, calico, percale, shawls, blankets. (Some of the offerings can be seen on tripod of Flat Pipe, Plate 1B.) When Singer covered the Pipe she usually offered a robe made of three yards of black flannel, costing about $2.00 a yard. Mary Eraux' mother used also to give three yards of goods as a covering. Black was the preferred color for textile "coverings" because this was the color the Pipe liked best.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

782 *796 [262] [795]

Hunters returning from a successful buffalo chase would select pieces of kidney (a special delicacy) and ribs, and put them on top of the Pipe bundle. In recent times, money offerings occur. Offerings for the Pipe have become increasingly infrequent; offerings are now usually made instead by the Gros Ventres, all of whom are Catholics, to the Mission Church or at the Shrine of Our Lady of the Little Rockies on the Mission grounds.

A promise or vow to cover the Pipe, made silently or aloud, would be worded, "I vow to cover (or wrap) the Flat Pipe," rather than "I vow to give something to the Flat Pipe."

During our field work in 1940, when Coming Daylight was telling among other things what she knew of the Flat Pipe and its ritual, one evening (Aug. 16) she heard that her grandchild was seriously ill. Thereupon she went outside a little distance and holding both arms up, palms out, looking up and facing toward where the Flat Pipe was she spoke and prayed: "I am telling about you. I am telling everything straight. I suppose you hear everything, and must know that I am telling everything straight. I am telling the truth and nothing but the truth. Look at me. Have pity on me and upon all the rest of the people. Take away all bad things that go around here on earth. Have pity so my grandchild may get well. I promise to put a robe on you. I hear you value black more than anything, and that is what I shall get you. I hear my grandchild though still sick is better." In this case, as Coming Daylight explained, she was "talking right to the Pipe."

In a long discussion, a couple of days later (Aug. 20, 1940), with The Boy, he emphasized that while a person covering the Flat Pipe had great reverence for it and would address it by its own two names, Flat Pipe and Little Turtle, the Pipe itself was only a medium by which the Supreme Being was petitioned or thanked. A man, for instance, in sudden imminent danger would perhaps, praying in his heart and mind, mention only the Pipe, but he would know what the Pipe represented, namely, only a powerful means used so that his prayer would be hearkened to by the Supreme Being. We may add incidentally that mention in the course of this discussion of the Sinkaetk custom of praying to the sweat-lodge caused hearty laughter by The Boy and Thomas Main.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The man or woman about to cover the Pipe would bring the offering to the keeper's lodge, enter it and proceeding clockwise put the offering on top of the bundle, draped or wrapped lengthwise if a robe or textile with the ends hanging loose, and saying: "Here's your wrapping, Flat Pipe (or Little Turtle). This is what I promised you. I have carried out my vow." Meanwhile the keeper would have put peppermint on the sacred hearth to make a smudge. The coverer would touch the Pipe bundle, put his or her arms around it, and might pray at length, asking and thanking for favors. 782 796*

The keeper, too, might pray, and might paint the face of the coverer with red bands across the forehead, and under the jaws and chin, and three dots, one on each cheek bone and one on the bridge of the nose,—the band on the forehead representing the above; that under the jaws and chin, the earth; the dots on the cheeks, sundogs.

It was a common custom for the keeper or his wife to provide a meal for the coverer. When Mary Eraux' mother used to cover the Pipe, the co-keeper would say: "Whenever anybody gives my Pipe a robe, I always feed them." So her mother would come back after a little while and eat. If the coverer had just eaten and when so offered food could not eat it, in order to take it home to eat he would have to pay a small "fine," e.g., a pocketknife or handkerchief, or to tell the required number of personal war-deeds, or else the keeper might volunteer to tell his own.

When some years ago Coming Daylight returned from Yellowstone Park with a sack of real buffalo chips, she went to the house of Horse Capture, the Flat Pipe keeper at the time. He at once made a smudge. She removed the "coverings" from off the Pipe bundle, put a new robe on the outside case of the bundle, put her arms around the bundle, and said to the Pipe: "I want you to have mercy [pity] on me. I am looking for good health, and good health for my children so they will grow up to be strong." Then she went on and made quite a long prayer, and at the end put all the "coverings" back on the bundle. Then she left the house, returned entering the house by the kitchen to observe the clockwise rule, gave Horse Capture and his wife the precious

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 782 buffalo chips she had brought back, and sat down. They then heard a "terrible groan" from the room where the Pipe was kept. Horse Capture and his wife seemed surprised and did not know what to make of it. The groan sounded to Coming Daylight more as if it said "Yes." After this all sat down to dinner. Afterwards Horse Capture's wife gave Coming Daylight a big buggy-parasol, a very expensive present. "They never say: 'I give you this for that,' but any little thing you do for the Pipe, like picking mint for it, the co-keeper would give you something for it."

When a number of "coverings" would accumulate on the Pipe bundle they would be hung elsewhere in the keeper's lodge, and from time to time the "coverings" would have to be ritually disposed of by the keeper with the full sweat-lodge rite. The keeper would detail a couple of young men to help him prepare the "coverings" and to make the sweat-lodge. The "coverings" might be tied to the sweat-lodge pole, as in the seasonal rite, or might just be brought as such by the co-keeper or an attendant to the sweat-lodge. Here, in the latter case, before the sweating proper began, they were brought in clockwise and given to the keeper. He would dip his right hand in the black charcoal paint, and touch each covering three times in three different places. Then he would gather up all the coverings, lift them up over the ascending smudge, lower them in three stages, move them around in three clockwise circles, and hand the whole bunch to the first man on his left, from whom it was successively passed till it reached the door. Here attendant two took the bunch of coverings and deposited it on the top of the mound in front of the sweat-lodge.

The coverings were finally taken by one of the attendants way out on the hills or elsewhere, as was done with other offerings. [43] Or else the keeper could call together the orphans and other 736 poorer children and distribute the coverings to them, for it was believed that being good to children, especially needy and orphaned ones, was pleasing to the Supreme Being. Coming Daylight's uncle, Crow Bull, when keeper of the Flat Pipe, used to distribute the coverings to the very poor and needy old folks. If among the coverings there was tobacco, this was not deposited out on the hills but was given to the old people. The buffalo

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796*
[782]

kidneys and ribs offered as "coverings" after a hunt were left all day on the bundle and late in the evening given to some of the very poor children to eat.

Moving, carrying and handling the Flat Pipe bundle in camp and on the march were the exclusive responsibility and privilege of the Flat Pipe co-keeper. Whenever the bundle was to be transferred from its tripod to its bed or vice versa, to be hung up over the door of the keeper's lodge, to be carried to and from the sweat lodge or Sacrifice Dance, or to be transported from camp site to camp site, she was the one to do it. 482 778

Exceptions to the rule, in emergency, were rare. One such exceptional instance was reported by Coming Daylight. On one occasion the Flat Pipe bundle was still outside the keeper's lodge when darkness set in, and both the keeper and co-keeper were away. In such a case an ex-co-keeper would usually substitute for the co-keeper, but there was none around. It was not customary to leave the Pipe out at night, or even to leave it alone. So Coming Daylight's maternal aunt said to her: "We will put this poor thing [the Pipe] in. Your father once owned a pipe [not the Flat Pipe], so you should not be afraid to handle it." So the two went out and gathering sage rubbed themselves all over with it. Then together they unloosed the bundle and started to carry it in, all the time praying: "We are children of an ex-keeper and this is just the same as if our fathers owned this Pipe. We have the right to handle it. We hate to see you stay out over night. It would be bad if you stayed out. We are bringing you in because we pity you. We hope you will have pity on us, and that we will have long life." And Coming Daylight, about 86 years old in 1940, ended her account by remarking that her prayer was heard because she had lived so long, even though in these last years her legs were unsteady and every little while she fell down on her buttocks!

Coming Daylight also mentioned one other old woman, Mouse, who, although not the co-keeper, used to volunteer to carry the Pipe bundle on her back when the people were on the march from camp site to camp site. This was apparently at a period when horses were very scarce, only one or two to several families, and [492]
dog travois had to be resorted to.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

482 dog travois had to be resorted to. The old woman thought that
778 she was doing the Pipe a great favor and that her packing it would bring her good fortune.

The co-keeper when afoot and carrying the Pipe bundle in her arms held it under her left armpit with her left arm encircling it and her right arm and hand supporting it from beneath, and with the stem-end of the bundle pointing forward.

482 The co-keeper was usually very careful to observe the stem-end-
778 forward rule. But if through forgetfulness or absent-mindedness she had carried the bundle bowl-end forward or had hung it on
783 its tripod with the bowl end to the east, she would be to blame. The keeper, co-keeper or Pipe child would be told by the Pipe in a dream about the error while sleeping [that night] on the Pipe bed, and she would have to be ritually cleansed. The keeper and co-keeper would sit on their haunches on the Pipe bed facing each other, he facing east and she west. Peppermint was put on the incense hearth to make a smudge. The keeper then took a bunch of sage brush, some of which he usually kept ready, held it up in his right hand, and prayed to the Supreme Being to release his wife, to take away her mistake, and not to be angry over it. Then he lowered the large brush by three stages, circled it three times around the incense, and "sort of brushed" her with it three times from her head down her right arm and from her head down her left arm, and three times from her chin up over her face to her occiput. Then he laid down the bunch of sage brush between the incense hearth and south edge of the Pipe bed, and said to his wife: "Take this sage brush out." She took it, walked out with it clockwise, turned to her left, that is, in the east, walked a good way off, and lowering it in the usual three stages deposited reverently on the ground.

778 Grasping and depositing the Flat Pipe bundle were regularly
788 done by the co-keeper in a ritually prescribed manner. Before actually taking hold of it, she would face it, and three times pose at shoulder height her empty right hand, palm down with fingertips joined and pointing away from her, make a motion or pass with her hand toward the bundle while at the same time spitting a bit of chewed peppermint on it, and then bring her hand back to

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

position. In depositing the bundle on its bed, she would lower it gently in three stages, spitting at each one. 778 [788]

When the people were staying for any length of time at a given camp site, the Flat Pipe bundle, which was always kept inside the keeper's lodge during the night time, would regularly in good weather be taken out early in the morning at breakfast time by the co-keeper, with the customary grasping and carrying ritual, and hung up, stem-end pointing east just over the door of the keeper's lodge, not on its tripod. The outside of the keeper's lodge around the door up to full reaching height, about 6 or 7 feet, was painted red. The thong handle of the bundle was looped over, the two projecting ends of a stout pin, skewered horizontally in the tent cover, on the immediate line above the door at the upper edge of the red-painted area.

The bundle would hang over the door all day until about sundown when it would be brought back into the lodge for the night. In bringing it back, the co-keeper walked out of the lodge, unhooked and grasped the bundle, turned clockwise, walked all around the lodge clockwise, entered the lodge, proceeded clockwise to the incense hearth, dipped the stem end of the bundle three times in the smudge, and deposited the bundle in the usual ritual manner, as above described, at the far north end of the Pipe bed. 482 778 778

The final decision as to when and whether the camp, in which the Flat Pipe chanced to be, was to be moved was made by the head man especially the band chiefs and in the olden days the tribal chief too, the keepers having perhaps taken the initiative in calling them together. They would notify the Pipe keeper. Early the next morning the co-keeper with the usual ritual observances would take the Pipe bundle from its bed and carry it and its tripod outside the lodge a little to the north thereof, set up the tripod and hang the bundle on it. The tripod would be set up with two of its legs closer together, and with the third leg stretched out farther, its upper end projecting a little beyond the junction of the three legs. On this projecting end the bundle was hung by the thong handle looped over the end. On other occasions the bundle was hung on the tripod stem-end pointing east. But on this occasion the rule was superseded by another, namely, the third leg [622 623 361]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

778 had to point in the direction in which the camp was to move. This orientation could be discerned from a considerable distance. The people would already know that camp was to be broken that day and early in the morning would go out to see how the bundle hung and which direction the third leg of the tripod was pointing.

778 When the camp families were packed and all ready to start off, the Flat Pipe's own special horse was led up to the tripod where 492 the bundle hung. The co-keeper, before taking hold of the bundle 484 made the customary three passes at it spitting chewed peppermint at the bundle with each pass, lifted it off the tripod, turned around clockwise, made three motions with the bundle, stem-end forward, as if putting it on the saddle (note saddle of Flat Pipe in Plate 2A), and at the third actually put it there where it rested crosswise, held taut with thongs to both sides of the saddle and under the horse's belly. Then she mounted from the right side her own horse, and started off leading the horse that carried the Pipe bundle, the latter horse coming behind her own, not abreast.

[482] Sometimes the co-keeper, *ad libertum*, would carry the bundle herself on her own back, putting it on her back before mounting her horse and carrying the bundle with the thong handle resting over her upper arm just below the bend of the shoulder and the bundle itself at her back. To help her mount so burdened they would lead her to a side hill. The Boy's mother, when co-keeper, at times on the march used to say that the bundle so carried felt heavy at the start, but after a while felt light. When the co-keeper so carried the bundle, leading the Pipe's own horse, she followed the keeper. Occasionally the Pipe bundle was carried on a travois, but we obtained no details on this point.

484 On the march, while scouts were not uncommonly sent out ahead to find the best route or watch for enemies, the co-keeper with 778 the Pipe-bundle led the cavalcade itself. No one could go in front of her: if any one did, bad luck would befall him. If both the Flat and Feathered Pipes were with the caravan, the Flat Pipe was in the lead, next the Feathered Pipe, then the chief or chiefs, finally the body of the group. The keepers rode immediately behind the respective co-keepers, never before. If the caravan were on the way to one celebration or a Sacred Dance, the group giv-

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

ing the Dance came right after the Pipe or Pipes. If there were no sacred pipe with the caravan, the chief or head man rode first in the line of march. 484 778

On the march, which was ordinarily at a slow pace, no one stopped to smoke or for other reason unless the co-keeper halted. When they stopped, usually about half-way, she would hang the bundle on the tripod, all by itself away from and well forward of the crowd in the direction of the trek. All stopped behind it; they did not surround it; it was always ahead of them in the direction they were heading. No one moved to re-start ahead until the co-keeper did so.

If the route of march necessitated crossing a big river, such as the Missouri River, the procedure in Coming Daylight's words, was as follows. "They put the Flat Pipe bundle in a bullboat. Of course there was no child in the bullboat. They chose two young men, popular and heroes, to lead that bullboat across. These two would be all painted red. They had robes rolled up and when they got midway across the river they put the robes in the water as offerings. As soon as they started across my grandmother up on the cliff at the river's edge would start cheering and singing the victory song. This song is a strong-heart song. When there was something hard to do they sang this song. They would say the names of the two young men and sing this song to encourage them. They all moved the bullboat into the water and different people would put into it various things to be thrown into the middle of the river. The keeper and co-keeper who owned the Pipe were not supposed to swim or bathe in water. Both could ride in this bullboat with the Pipe, but the woman always did. The two young men [on horseback apparently] held the robes [offering mentioned above] in one hand and pulled the bullboat with the other. The Pipe in the bullboat was the first of the caravan to cross the river. After all the people had gotten across the old women had a victory dance and sang for the crossing." [505] [782]

On arrival at the new camp site the co-keeper would hang the Pipe bundle on the tripod at a spot just to the north of where the keeper's lodge was to be erected. Then the new sage bed and sacred hearth were made, and the bundle brought into the lodge,

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

484
778 with the rites previously described. On a day's journey it may be noted, the bundle would have been placed on the tripod in the open three times: before starting out, about half-way, and on arrival at the new camp.

782 The killing of a pure white buffalo, a pure albino,—always a cow never a bull, according to Gros Ventre tradition,—was an extremely [224] rare occurrence. The killer could keep it himself, give it to the Flat Pipe keeper, or offer it as a sacrifice. This sacrificial rite was last held when the Boy's father, Lame Bull was a young man, probably in the 1850's, and served as a calendrical date: "at the time the white buffalo skin was offered as a sacrifice." The Boy, our sole informant on this rite, could give only fragmentary data on it, gotten from his father who had witnessed only that one time in his life.

If the killer chose to offer the albino skin as a sacrifice, he had to vow, and then had formally to notify the keeper of the Flat Pipe. Carrying it he went clockwise round the camp circle on the inside and brought it to the keeper's lodge. The keeper painted [302] the man's face with charcoal paint (not red), the ritual color for sacrifices, with a circular band around his face, on the forehead, the sides of the cheeks near the ears, and under the jawbones and chin, and with also a star on the bridge of his nose. The circle, Lame Bull told the Boy, represented the sundog; the star, the sun. A procession in which the keeper, co-keeper, Pipe child, ex-keepers, ex-co-keepers, the two attendants, and all the people took part started at the keeper's lodge and marched clockwise all around the camp circle, very slowly, with three stops (probably at the west, east and south) for prayer, till they reached the sweat-lodge near the keeper's lodge. The albino skin was given a touch of charcoal paint, as in other sacrifices, but The Boy did not know other details of the special rite used in preparing the skin, nor did he know who carried it in the procession. On arrival of the procession at the sweat lodge, the main body of the people went away, but the small group who were to sweat remained and went through the whole sweat-lodge rite at which the albino skin was hung up on the sweat-lodge pole and after which, in accord-

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros. Ventre NQ13

ance with given practice it must have been carried away on a hill or elsewhere.[1] 782

[1] In 1948 The Boy gave a detailed description of the rite should the killer of an albino or "beaver" buffalo present the skin to the Pipe, rather than offer it as a sacrifice. He said that in this case, the man presented the green hide to the Pipe with a ritual directed by the keeper and included the painting of the donor. The keeper then called in two young women known to be expert tanners, received them ritually, and instructed them in procedures to be followed in tanning this particular hide. He made a crown, bracelets and anklets of twisted sage for each woman while singing a special song (not recorded by Cooper). When the hide was dressed there was a big feast at the keeper's lodge at which the keeper ritually painted the skin red. The keeper gave the donor of the skin the choice of any horse from all except one of his herd; to each of the women tanners he gave three valuable presents. [R.F.] [28] 30 [431]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

CHAPTER IV

THE FEATHERED PIPE AND OTHER PIPES

115
78

Our information is less full and more fragmentary on the Feathered Pipe than on the Flat Pipe, especially regarding ritual details. Our chief informants were Al Chandler, Garter Snake, Jim Shortman, Charles Buckman, The Boy, Thick, Thomas Main and Turn Toes. Additional information was given by Cora Chandler, Singer, and Mary Ereaux. The Boy, our main informant on the Flat Pipe, had never been intimately associated with the Feathered Pipe, as he had been with the Flat Pipe, but he gave us many details, and especially six of the Feathered Pipe songs recorded (Nos. 45-46, 126-129). Al Chandler had been chosen as attendant at one of the more important rites; Garter Snake had been Pipe child, beginning at the age of six or seven, during part of the keepership of her father, Bull Lodge; Jim Shortman recalled much from the time when his father had been keeper. Garter Snake, blind, of keen memory and now a practicing Catholic, before giving her account knelt down, blessed herself and prayed to Ixteiboni:hahat; for, she said, this Pipe was given from heaven. (For her own and other versions of the origin of the Feathered Pipe, see No. 6 in Appendix.) She was particularly concerned to tell truthfully what and only what her father had told her or what she had herself seen and experienced. All of the above informants had witnessed or participated in some of the Feathered Pipe rites. So far as we could discover, however, no one Gros Ventre at the time of our field work was familiar with the whole cycle of rites or with all the details of any of the more important ones. Much is lost for good. Our task has been to salvage what we could and to put together the scattered fragments, leaving many lacunae. In presenting the data we have, we shall follow the same order as has been followed in describing the Flat Pipe.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Keeper of the Feathered Pipe

The terms for the keeper, co-keeper and Pipe child of the Feathered Pipe were the same as those for the keeper, co-keeper and Pipe child of the Flat Pipe. 793

Apparently the same high qualifications were required in the keeper of the Feathered as in the keeper of the Flat Pipe. Those specifically recorded by us were: "he had to be some good man and wealthy and noted"; "he had to be a man of intelligence to learn and know the rites and traditions and to maintain the dignity of the ceremonial." In actuality, not all keepers measured up to these lofty standards, as some of our informants emphasized, with ample supporting evidence.

As with the Flat Pipe, succession to the keepership could be either appointive or elective or else volunteer. According to the origin story of the Feathered Pipe, the man to whom the Pipe was first given, appointed, apparently on his sole authority, his uncle as keeper and turned over the Pipe to him. [428]

The recent history of the Feathered Pipe for about the last 100 years can be pieced together from data furnished by Garter Snake, Al Chandler, The Boy, and Thick. 793 174

Iron Necklace was keeper somewhere around 1850.[1] He was succeeded by Big Beaver. Bull Lodge succeeded Big Beaver, his sister's husband as keeper. Garter Snake, daughter of Bull Lodge, became Pipe child at the age of six or seven. Bull Lodge had wanted to keep the Pipe until his son, Otter Robe, came of age and then to transfer it to him. But in 1879 or 1880 Bull Lodge was asked for it, asked four times for the Pipe by Sitting High, so he had to give in and transfer it to the latter. Sitting High held the keepership a long time, in fact until his death in 1905. This break with the traditional rule of a maximum 12 years is probably accounted for by the cultural disintegration which set in after the disappearance of the buffalo. As Garter Snake expressed it: "The new life had come in and there was no one to transfer the Pipe to." Little Man, Al Chandler's adoptive father, was Sitting High's son, and Al lived as a boy with Sitting High in the

[1] The Boy in 1948 told a long story about his grandfather, Crow Moccasin, who was keeper of the Feathered Pipe probably around 1830-1840. [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

793 174 latter's lodge where the Feathered Pipe was kept. When Sitting High died in 1908, at the age of 92, his only surviving widow, Kills in the Night, moved over with the Pipe to her uncle, old Sleeping Bear, who took charge of the Pipe. In 1910 Sleeping Bear gave the Pipe to Curly Head, the last keeper of it, who kept it until his death in 1937 (or 1938).

About 1930, during Curly Head's keepership, a certain young Gros Ventre, a cowboy (son of Bradley), had to pass through Curly Head's place at Lodge Pole. Curly Head gave him something to eat. The young man was looking at the Feathered Pipe bundle and noted that the wrapping of Hudson's Bay Company cloth was old. "That wrapping is old," he said, "I'll buy another for you." "All right," said Curly Head, "I am glad. We will discard the old wrapping."

The young fellow forgot all about the matter until the following summer, when in a dream someone said to him: "When are you going to buy that new wrapping for the Feathered Pipe?" This happened far from here. The young man was worried and made a special trip back to Curly Head, told him about his dream, and asked: "What shall I do?" "You better buy the wrapping you promised," said Curly Head. "This Pipe is no ordinary thing. Even though you were perhaps not serious when you made the promise, you better be on the safe side." "Where can I buy this kind of cloth?" he asked. "At Browning," said Curly Head, "You better go there or else send for it." "I will," said the young man. [165] The latter went away, and shortly after, while herding sheep, he was killed by lightning. And the Gros Ventres wonder today (1939) if this young man's death was a punishment for his failure to keep his promise.

Before his death Curly Head, knowing that his health was failing, came to Garter Snake and said: "Sister, you will be surprised some day. I'll keel over and quit. You were raised with the Feathered Pipe. Keep it as a keepsake." "I am blind," she said, "I cannot see. How can I take care of it? You better leave it in care of some one else." "All right," said Curly Head, "I'll leave it with Iron Man. But you see that it is not disposed of in any way. This Pipe has to remain with the Gros Ventres forever. Remember that the Feathered Pipe is the main hope of the Gros Ventres,

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

and as long as you live see that they do not sell it or part with it." 793 174

So at Curly Head's death the Pipe fell to Iron Man II (Tall Jack), a relative of Curly Head, who since 1937 (1938) has looked after it. In 1948 it was still being kept in Curly Head's house.[8]

The normal term of keepership of the Feathered Pipe was four years. The very first keeper held the office 80 years, according to the origin story given by Garter Snake, and some later ones, according to tradition, up to 20 years, but the usual limit was supposed to be at most two or three terms, that is eight or twelve years. 793

There was always a Pipe woman or co-keeper, wife of the keeper. She handled the Pipe bundle and in general had about the same ritual and other duties toward it as had the co-keeper of the Flat Pipe toward the Flat Pipe bundle. The Feathered Pipe keeper had to have at least two wives, for during her menses the co-keeper could not handle the bundle and had to sleep and live outside the keeper's lodge and another wife of the keeper had to substitute for her in the handling and care of the bundle. [841 595]

There was always, too, a Pipe child,—a girl, unless the keeper had no daughters, in which case a son could be selected by him as Pipe child. Thus the oldest son of Sitting High, who had no daughters, became Pipe child. The Pipe child was not necessarily appointed at once by the keeper on assuming the keepership. Garter Snake was not made Pipe child until she was about six years old. Iron Necklace who had been Feathered Pipe keeper some

[8] In the summer of 1951, Iron Man, assisted by The Boy, had a ceremonial opening of the Feathered Pipe bundle. Dr. Louis B. Hagener, Professor of Biology of Northern Montana College, accompanied by his wife, and Dr. Otto Nitz, Professor of Chemistry, now at Stout Institute of Technology, Menominie, Wisconsin, were among the spectators. The pictures in Plates 2 B-C, 3 A-D, were taken by Dr. Nitz at that time. Dr. Hagener has kindly supplied information regarding the 1951 ceremonial. He writes under date of Aug. 8, 1954, as to final disposal of the Feathered Pipe bundle: "Since the young people were so apathetic over the bundle, its significance, and the ceremony, Iron Man and his wife had resolved not to open it again. They were debating as to whether it should be given to a museum or whether the tribe would outfit Iron Man and his wife for a journey and permit them to dispose of it somewhere in the mountains." [R.F.] [114 796 186]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

[793] years before her father's keepership was the one who was asked to "confirm" the appointment of Garter Snake [ritual details not obtainable by us] and was given a good horse for performing the ceremony.

The Pipe was addressed and spoken of as the child of the keeper and co-keeper, and they looked upon themselves as the father and mother of the Pipe. When the Pipe talked to them in their dreams it addressed them as "father" and "mother" respectively. To the Pipe child, the Pipe was brother. The Pipe was very jealous, and wanted to be the lone child and so all the keeper's children except the Pipe child were supposed to be put out of the keeper's lodge. According to Garter Snake, however, her father's other children slept in his lodge, not however with the keeper and co-keeper but in separate beds. Garter Snake herself when very young slept with her parents, but later on a separate bed near the foot of theirs. Al Chandler when he was a little boy used to stay with his grandfather, Sitting High, then keeper. The latter would make a bed for the boy right under the Pipe—"which usually was not allowed, [782] but he did it because I was an orphan, and he would pray that I would be healthy, live to old age, and everything like that. He did that every night as long as I was there."

If a new keeper happened to have a young wife with an infant, they were sent to another lodge.

Some of the activities, duties, and attitudes of a Pipe child can be gathered from the following account by Garter Snake of her own experiences.

"When I was the Pipe child, whenever my mother took the Pipe bundle outside of the lodge, I took the tripod out after her. I was told how to set the tripod when the camp was about to move, with two of the legs close together and the third far out. Whenever my father made smudge with pine needles, he would give me some and I would chew them and would hold my hands over the smudge. Then I would rub my left palm up my right arm, my right palm up my left arm, then both palms from the top of my head down the sides of my neck and down my breast.

"I did not have any duties beyond helping my mother when she brought the Pipe bundle out and brought it in.

[784] "I was forbidden to pick peppermint. If peppermint was mixed

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

in dried pounded meat, I was not allowed to eat the meat. If a coyote or wolf were killed, I was not supposed to touch it. These were the only two prohibitions I was under. 793 784

"If anybody vowed to be painted by the keeper, I would be present at the rite next to my mother and sit there through the ceremony. 793

"Whenever while I was Pipe child I got sick my father would put pine needles on me, and then he would take down the bundle and put it on my parents' bed, and would say to me: 'Put your arms around your brother [the Pipe] and pray to your brother so you may get well.' The Pipe keeper and his wife claim the Feathered Pipe as their son and tell their children that the Pipe is their brother. When I put my arms around the Pipe I was told to say to the Pipe: 'My dear brother, have pity on me, that I may get well of my illness.' [785]

"Of course the Pipe was not human but because I was a baby when my father got it I grew up with it and thought just as much of it as of my own blood relatives. When my father transferred the Pipe to Sitting High I was outside playing. When I was coming home I saw the bundle at Sitting High's door, and when I saw it I started to cry, and when I saw my father I said to him: 'Why did you give my Pipe away?' It was just like a person leaving. I was lonesome for it, and felt just as if I had lost a relative or friend. And all through my life I have felt the same toward it. All through my life I have made it a point to be present at any Feathered Pipe ceremony. And whenever I went to any ceremony, I would bring something for it. Since I joined the Catholic Church I stopped doing this, but even now I feel: 'It's all alone. I pity it.' [795]

"When while I was Pipe child I had been out playing and in the evening would come home and see the Pipe bundle over the door, I would stand and look at it a long time and would say: 'Feathered Pipe, I am going into our lodge now.' Once when I was sitting on the bed in the lodge I got to thinking, and all the folks were there, and I said: 'Feathered Pipe, my dear brother, look down on me and watch over me.' I was not told to say this, and I do not know what made me say this prayer to the Feathered Pipe. [782]

"My father used to tell me: 'This Pipe was given by the Su-

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

793 preme Being through Bha'a, the Supreme Being is the father of the Pipe.' "

In the cases where the new keeper was elected in secret conclave and not told or asked beforehand, at night after the camp was asleep a group sneaked up to the electee's lodge, and one of the group carrying the feathered stick from the Pipe bundle entered the lodge. If the electee tried to escape, the watchers outside would grab and hold him. The electee was raided and lost everything, his lodge and horses and other belongings,—just as the man to whom the Pipe had first been given from above lost everything. Afterwards, however, the relatives and friends of the electee, anybody that could, would give a new lodge, new bedding and other lodge equipment, and horses,—as was done to the first owner and keeper.

After being grabbed, the new keeper and his wife were carried —they did not walk—to the lodge of the retiring keeper who put a cloth over their heads. They were thus in the dark and didn't know what was going on until a special song was sung and the cloth removed. We were unable to secure many details of the transfer rite. The rite included, of course, ritual and other instruction of the new keeper, and co-keeper for which he had to pay handsomely,—for instance, a horse for a ritual song taught him. For [431] these payments he had to count on his relatives and friends who, later in the course of his keepership, would receive equivalent presents in return. A central feature of the transfer rite was the new keeper's dance with the Pipe. In earlier times, in fact up to about 1905, it was only the keeper, we were informed, who could dance with the Pipe and this only at the transfer rite.

346 Apparently the lodge of the Feathered Pipe keeper was very like that of the Flat Pipe keeper, and under similar respect taboos, 353 but we were able to obtain only fragmentary specific information.

[784] At the back of the lodge, in the place of honor opposite the door, was the Pipe bed of sage brush, laid down with the tip ends pointed toward the lodge center, and covered with a white buffalo robe. When the group was camping at the same site for any length of time, in good weather the Pipe bundle was hung up during the daytime over the lodge door.

346 All movement within the lodge was clockwise. There could be
784

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

no crying by children in the lodge; if a child started to cry it was taken out at once. Dogs were not allowed in the lodge, nor could the keeper use a dog robe. Bones could not be broken in the lodge to extract marrow, as in the case of the Flat Pipe lodge and under the same penalty. War-deed contests in the Feathered Pipe lodge were prohibited and penalized, as in the Flat Pipe lodge,—with a four-day penalty. The right of asylum was recognized exactly as in the case of the Flat Pipe keeper's lodge.

The lodge occupied a place of honor in the camp circle, but whether opposite the opening of the circle or just in front of the keeper's band is controverted, as in the case of the Flat Pipe keeper's lodge (see p. 58).

The prerogatives and restrictions attaching to the keepership of the Feathered Pipe appear to have been quite similar in number and kind to those attaching to the keepership of the Flat Pipe, although we did not obtain as full details regarding them as we did for the Flat Pipe. We shall mention only those prerogatives and restrictions for which we obtained specific information. The functional relation of the various prerogatives and restrictions to the sacredness and dignity of the keepership was quite the same for both Pipes.

In accord with the dignity of their office, the keeper and co-keeper were expected to comport themselves respectably on all occasions and to conform to the strict ethical norms to be mentioned presently.

The people were in turn expected to treat them with great respect. Things asked for by the keeper had to be handed to him, not thrown, exactly as with the Flat Pipe keeper, and under the same penalty. If someone absent-mindedly stepped over the outstretched feet or legs of the keeper, the latter would keel over in a faint and the co-keeper would have to smudge him ritually to bring him to, or the offender would fall down with a "cramp." Coming Daylight once saw a woman in a crowded place step over the feet of the Feathered Pipe co-keeper. The woman "fell in a cramp." Her mother got angry and upbraided the co-keeper: "You ought to know better than to leave your feet sticking out." But her sister went over and kissed the co-keeper and begged her in a nice way to doctor the stricken woman. So the co-keeper got up and

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

793
784 blew medicine on the woman who then recovered. If you even passed in front of the keeper, you would "drop in a cramp."

Food offered in the keeper's lodge, even on a purely social and informal occasion, had to be eaten there and could not be taken out unless some one told a personal war-deed. This taboo applied even to an ex-keeper guest, although not to the actual keeper's [576] children. The keeper could break up the gathering by emptying his own pipe—a recognized Gros Ventre convention for hosts.

[821] If anybody threw water at the keeper or hit him with water, this would cause rain.

Where a group of men were seated in a row or crescent having a purely social smoke, the general procedure was as previously described. If the Pipe keeper were one of the group, the man passing the pipe to him on either the clockwise or return circuit would first make a gesture with it "to the rear between himself and the keeper," if you didn't do that the keeper would not accept it.

The powers of the Feathered Pipe keeper and co-keeper specifically recorded by us were similar, apart from control of storm, rain and flood and, as far as they went, to those of the Flat Pipe keeper and co-keeper. The weather control powers will be described later under Feathered Pipe ritual.

[753] Anyone who stepped in the track of the keeper or co-keeper got a fit, for the soles of their moccasins were kept treated with wild parsley.

The keeper and co-keeper acquired by reason of their office certain doctoring powers.

787 The keeper had marked dreaming and forecasting powers, just as the Flat Pipe keeper had, and his dreams when told to the 793 people were "big news." In a dream he would, for instance, see animals fighting the Gros Ventres and this would be a warning to a war-raiding party to act discreetly. He would foretell from his dreams who would win in a prospective battle and how many would be killed. At the time the Flat Pipe was captured by the Assiniboine (see No. 8 in Appendix), the Feathered Pipe owner was fore-warned by the Pipe in a dream and he and his party escaped. If the keeper had a dream that foreboded evil fortune he would on waking talk to the Pipe and ask it not to let the evil

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

793.
787

happen. If told in a dream, perhaps by the owl, of an impending epidemic, he might call all the people to his lodge and ritually paint them. If he dreamed of bad luck about to befall some individual in camp, he would tell him: "I dreamed that something was going to happen to you. You better make an offering. I will pray for you and try to avert the misfortune, but you must help."

793
577

In general the keeper and co-keeper of the Feathered Pipe were expected to live strictly in conformity with Gros Ventre ethical norms. Specifically recorded by us as unbecoming and forbidden to the keeper were: stealing, fighting, quarreling, losing temper, wife-beating, talking evil of fellow-tribesman, "talking dirty," threatening to kill, and, for more recent times, cursing and swearing like the whites.

793
784

The Feathered Pipe keepership seems to have involved for the keeper and co-keeper about the same privations and restrictions as did the Flat Pipe, although we obtained explicit information only regarding the following ones.

"The keeper of the Feathered Pipe was not supposed to comb his hair. It was all matted and made him look different from other men. You see him and you know at once he is a Pipe man. Sitting High's hair was that way. The locks were stuck together in the back. It made him look like a holy man. He never cut his hair and was not supposed to put water on it. His wife [the co-keeper] could comb her hair, but I do not think she could put water on it."[1]

The keeper could not bathe or swim in a stream; if he did, there would be rain. He could not wash his face but wiped it off with a cloth. He could not cut himself as a sacrifice or as a sign of mourning. He could not cry at mourning, not in the presence of the Pipe. Gambling by or with the keeper was forbidden, under the same penalty of life and with the same rite of absolution as described for the Flat Pipe keeper.

According to Al Chandler, the Feathered Pipe keeper and co-keeper, in contrast to the Flat Pipe keeper and co-keeper and

[1] In 1948 Al Chandler added: "The keeper cannot eat eggs, chicken, the head of any animal, nor dogs. In fact nothing about dogs was allowed near the keeper. Wherever they were, no one could walk in front of the keeper or co-keeper." [R.F.]

793 also to the whites, both mounted and dismounted their horses from
784 the right side, just as all other Gros Ventres did.

"You could not lend the Feathered Pipe keeper a horse, because if you loaned it to him this was just the same as giving it to him. You could not take it back once the rope was in his hands. The keeper never borrowed anything. If someone thought the keeper was short of something and without thinking said to him, 'Here is one you can use,' that was just too bad because that was really giving it to him."

[201] Apparently the keeper could not point at a person with his index finger, but would instead use his thumb.

793 The role of the Feathered Pipe keeper in the political life of
624 the Gros Ventre was quite similar to that of the Flat Pipe keeper, as regards such things as decision when and whether to move camp, matters of public policy, and veto power thereupon.

Feathered Pipe and Bundle

773 The Feathered Pipe was first given, as noted in the origin
778 stories (see No. 6 in Appendix), from above by Bha'a, the thunder and storm being. Garter Snake's father, Bull Lodge, used to tell her that it was really given by Ixtcibani:hohat, the Supreme Being, through Bha'a; that the Supreme Being was the father of the Pipe; and that it was to remain forever with the Gros Ventres and never under any condition to be transferred to any other tribe. According to Gros Ventre tradition, while the Feathered Pipe is very old, it is not as old as the Flat Pipe; when the Feathered Pipe was first given to the Gros Ventres, they were already in the possession of horses. According to The Boy, the Feathered Pipe was first given after the Gros Ventres came to their present territory which had previously been Snake Indian country, but before the coming of the whites thereto. With the Pipe itself were given in the beginning the stone image or face, the whistle, and the staff, to be described presently.

778 The proper name of the Feathered Pipe was ana:θanitč (it has feathers).

276 We were unable to attend any unwrapping rite and to see the Pipe. It was described to us as being in one piece, of "smooth,"

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

"glistening" [no doubt, highly polished], very dark grey or greyish brown stone, with three or four humps on the upper surface of the stone stem part. Our informants, who had seen the Pipe, disagreed as to whether there are feathers on the Pipe itself, and one of them stated that it had looked different to him on the two occasions he had seen it. 778 276

In the Pipe bundle were many other sacred objects besides the Pipe itself. Most of these had their separate wrappings or cases, the Pipe itself being wrapped in buffalo hair. The first keeper, according to Garter Snake, wrapped the Pipe itself in a bit of white buffalo skin. The outermost wrapping of the Pipe bundle was, originally at least, of tanned elkskin, tied around with four strings. There was also, again originally at least, a bear robe cover for the bundle.[4] 778

The Pipe bundle would shake and quiver when there was going to be an earthquake. The keeper could then predict that the earthquake would occur soon, although he could not predict the exact time. Not so long ago Cora Chandler's old aunt saw the bundle quiver, and sure enough that summer an earthquake occurred. [782 823]

Informants consistently agreed that there were four main things in the bundle, and that two of the four were the Pipe itself and the carved stone face.[5] Most of them included the feathered stick among the four. As to whether the fourth was the whistle, the owl, or the crane, there was considerable conflict of opinion, a conflict we were unable to clear up.

The feathered stick, from which the Pipe itself derived its name,

---

[4] Dr. Hagener noted at the 1951 opening that the innermost wrapping of the whole bundle was of "old bison leather" and the outer wrapping of modern cloth." [R.F.]

[5] Dr. Hagener stated in letter of Jan. 18, 1954, "The pipe displayed in the pictures [Plate 3, C and D] was not the chief pipe of the bundle (that having mysteriously disappeared). It was however made of the red stone commonly traded from the Minnesota area. Although there were other pipes in the bundle this was the only one we were permitted to see. Iron Man checked on the presence of other pipes by feeling inside the leather casings, but did not bring them out." Under date of Aug. 8, 1954, Dr. Hagener remarked: "Dr. Nitz was of the opinion that there were two somewhat similar pipes in the bundle, one of which had disappeared. The picture . . . is of the remaining one." [R.F.] [439 276]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

778 was a wooden staff about three or four feet long, to which were attached feathers from "all kinds of birds," including the eagle, the feathers literally covering the staff. The staff itself was given the first keeper in the beginning from above, but tradition is not consistent as to whether it was already feathered or was later feathered by this keeper. At any rate the feathers still on the staff are believed to be the original ones, are not broken off and are perfectly preserved. According to one report the staff has porcupine quill work on it; according to another, it is undecorated. The first keeper wrapped the stick in smoked skin, for which a wrapping of black and white cotton flannel was later substituted.

The image, called inite:até (it is a person) translated "human [532] face," was described to us as about eight inches long, of stone, "with a trace of faded red in it" and looking like the "brown pottery of a teapot," of human shape, male according to one informant, female according to another. It was wrapped in buffalo hair and until Curly Head's keepership was rarely unwrapped, and even when unwrapped only the face was supposed to be exposed, by raising a bit of the cover, although Curly Head exposed the whole figure.[6] Formerly, according to Garter Snake, nobody was allowed to look at the face, except the keeper and even he could do so only now and then. Garter Snake, although Pipe child for six or seven years while her father Bull Lodge was keeper, had never seen it. Sitting High, who succeeded Bull Lodge, showed the face of the image very rarely, only once or twice so far as Al Chandler, his grandson, had heard, and even old-timers wondered what it looked like. Sitting High would take the wrapped image out of the large bundle and let you hold it and pray to it, and this oftener than he would the Pipe, but without un-

---

[6] Although this has not been confirmed, it is highly possible that the pipe shown at the 1951 unwrapping and pictured in Plate 3 C-D may actually be this "human face" or image. The stone and color of the pipe meet the specifications (cf. Dr. Hegener's comment as given in footnote 5), the plat- [123] form of the pipe is of about the right dimension, and one end thereof is carved in the form of a human face as can be seen in Dr. Nitz' photographs. Dr. Hagener noted on the back of the photograph in Plate 3 C that Iron Man allowed the picture to be taken only after long consultation with others and much hesitation. [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

covering it. When they talked to the image, they prayed for whatever they wanted, but did not mention Bha'a. Whom the image represented is not known: probably Bha'a, but this is uncertain. 778

In recent times, the last real keeper, Curly Head, had danced with the image, contrary to all the ritual rules. Curly Head is consistently reported by informants to have been very careless as well as poorly informed about the ritual and other observances connected with the Feathered Pipe keepership.

The face when exposed was apt to look different to different people on any one occasion as well as to the same person on different occasions. To one man the face seemed not to want to look at him; it "kind of turned away and sweated." To another observer, a woman, it appeared as "a rock that had two shining eyes." Al Chandler had seen the face three times. On each occasion it had a different expression: on the first it looked as if it were "smiling, sort of bashful;" on the second, "kind of sad;" on the third, "sad." On the one occasion on which his wife, Cora Chandler, had seen the face, it "seemed like it was looking away, and wouldn't look at her." 778 532

According to Al Chandler, if the face smiled, this was an omen that "everything was going to be good;" if it "looked in the opposite direction, something not good" would happen. According to Garter Snake, if when the keeper saw the face, it had paint on it, there would be plenty of food, no sickness, and so forth; if it had no paint on it, there would be sickness or other misfortune. 778 787

The whistle, of wood ("of an unknown kind of wood," according to Garter Snake), was given the first keeper from above. It was kept without wrapping in the Pipe bundle. 778 [534]

The owl in the bundle was the skin of a big owl, painted up, with few of the feathers still attached. The body was wrapped leaving the head and neck sticking out. This owl skin was apparently of modern introduction. According to Al Chandler, when a new keeper took over the Pipe, he could add to the bundle whatever he was told "by a voice" to add; Sitting High said he was told by God Himself to put that owl in the bundle. Sitting High used to talk a great deal to the owl. The owl's duty, accord-

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

778 ing to Garter Snake and Jim Shortman was to foretell epidemics or sickness of any kind by telling the keeper in his sleep.

In the bundle, put there by the first keeper, were the dried skins of all kinds of birds, "all the birds there are." He was told to collect and place there as many different kinds as he could find. These skins have been preserved to the present, the smaller ones not wrapped separately.[1] The bundle contained the skin of no four-footed land animal "of the earth" except the muskrat (and a gopher-like animal), but only skins of birds "of the air," for the Feathered Pipe came from above. Among the birds specifically mentioned to us as being in the bundle were: the crane, wrapped separately with only the head showing, and included by one informant, Al Chandler, among the four main things in the bundle; "a big white swan, one bird called Big Bird, a duck and grebes," were put in the bundle, according to Garter Snake, by the first keeper in obedience to directions gotten from above in dreams after the Pipe had been given him; what Al Chandler described as a "bird that is like two-in-one . . . a black speckled bird with two heads on it but only two legs . . . a water bird . . . but it does not fly." He had never heard Sitting High talk to this two-headed bird, but had heard others do so when "covering" the Pipe.

In the bundle was a little animal, almost as big as a gopher. Al Chandler had heard his grandfather mention it, but had never seen it, so did not know of what species it was. Curly Head, when keeper, would take this out of the bundle and rub little children with it from head to foot, four times, and would say the child would live to old age.

Other objects mentioned as being in the bundle were: wild parsley, and, originally at least, the black head-covering the first keeper had on after the storm; moccasins of "animal fur," given the first keeper and still preserved; some sticks for notching (purpose of notching not known by informant, Al Chandler). When Sitting

[1] Dr. Hagener wrote under date of Jan. 18, 1954: "We were particularly puzzled by the various preserved birds. One very definitely looked like a parrot and yet they were not native to any of the area and not common as pets or items of trade so far as I have been able to discern. When questioned about it the Indians just said it was of great age." [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

High was keeper, he told Al Chandler that one of the sticks in the bundle was already notched on two edges. 778

Like the Flat Pipe, the Feathered Pipe also had its own horse, saddle, robe and blankets. The saddle, like a woman's saddle of old times, had two horns from which fringes hung, and a beaded crupper, and was painted red. The horse had to be the best available; no one could ride it, and if it died or was stolen, another had to be provided. The horse had to be very gentle. 778 492

Feathered Pipe Ritual

Certain general features characteristically recur throughout the Feathered Pipe rites, some contrasting with those of the Flat Pipe rites, others common to both cycles. 788

The following are distinctive of the Feathered Pipe rites: association with air, sky, cloud, rain and storm; sweet pine for smudge; ritual number four; the drum accompaniment for songs; dancing with the Pipe.

The Feathered Pipe, as previously noted, "belongs up above the earth," having been given by Bha'a the storm being and during a violent thunderstorm. In prayer and other ritual [illegible] ularly associated with the sky and stor[illegible] nd storms.

For ritual smudge or incense [illegible] an evergreen, the "sweet pine," nibiya:to, were [illegible] in accordance with directions given the original first keeper of the Pipe,—in accordance too with the origin of the Pipe from "up above the earth," for the "sweet pine" tree grows only in high altitudes, up on the hills and mountains. The tree grows in the Rocky Mountains, the Sweet Grass Hills, and Eagle Butte, nearer to the present location of the Gros Ventres. The Boy has seen it growing in only about two places, to about 10 feet high on top of Bird Tail Butte in the Bear Paw Mountains, and to about five feet high with a trunk about four inches in diameter on the top of Mission Peak in the Little Rockies. We were unable to secure specimens for botanical identification. The tree was described as "like a fir," or "special kind of pine." It is presumably *Abies sp.* Ritually the needles were mostly used to make incense, and, only 788 824

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

788 exceptionally chewed in contrast to the Flat Pipe peppermint. A
824 bag, painted red all over, about a foot square, and fringed on three sides but with no beading or other decoration, now hangs with the
[415] bundle and served, Al Chandler thought, as a container for the dried sweet pine needles.

802 The ritual number of the Feathered Pipe, running all through the songs and ceremonies, was four, from the days of the first keeper down to most recent times.

534 The musical instrument used to accompany the songs was, likewise from the time of the first keeper, the drum. According to
778 Garter Snake, the first keeper's drum was painted half black to represent black [storm] clouds and half red to represent the earth. According to Al Chandler, the present drum, about 16 inches in diameter and two inches deep, has a figure of a thunderbird
[532] painted in blue on the drumhead against a red background, to represent Bha'a, with zigzag yellow lines from either side of the head to the wings, to represent lightning. A long string is tied to the drum. The drumstick is painted red, the distal end being covered with buckskin "stuffed with something like cotton." Curly Head, when keeper, never used the drum, or even took it out of its covering in which it hung next to the bundle, but Sitting High used it regularly with the songs.*

788 According to Garter Snake, the first keeper had somebody make him a wooden bowl, which still hangs with, not in, the Pipe bundle,
778 but we obtained no information on its type or use. She also stated that the first keeper had a "gourd rattle" or four rattles, but Al Chandler never saw any rattle kept or used with the Feathered Pipe, and no other informant mentioned such.

[782] The Feathered Pipe, like the Flat Pipe, was smoked, in fulfillment of vows, but very rarely. More commonly, in contrast with the Flat Pipe, it was danced with, earlier only by the keeper, in recent decades by others.

788 General ritual features common to the Feathered Pipe and Flat Pipe,—clockwise movement, singing, the use of paint, of buffalo chips, and of sage, tobacco, larb and wild parsley,—have

* The drum used in the 1951 rite was apparently undecorated. See Plate 2 C. [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

been previously described. Some additional data on tobacco and wild parsley as associated with the Feathered Pipe help fill out the picture. 788

The keeper of the Feathered Pipe raised tobacco, as did the very first keeper, whose tobacco patch was raided by the people after the great war exploit of his son, He-Who-Dreams-of-Bha'a. 793 249

If anyone but the keeper [or co-keeper] touched the "wild parsley" root the delinquent would get fits, out of which he could be brought only by the keeper working on him and "blowing this same stuff on him." Old Deafie did not believe all this and there were other skeptics, some of whom, even small boys, would touch "wild parsley" to test out the belief and would immediately have fits. Al Chandler had heard of many such cases, although he had never seen any himself. 793 278

Sitting High used always to carry a couple of pinches of wild parsley in a little buckskin pouch in his pocket to use against rattlesnakes. On one occasion when Al Chandler was about 18 years old he and his grandfather (Sitting High) were at Henry Martin's place on the Hays side of the Bear Paws. Al was eating cherries at the creek bank, saw a big rattlesnake, and shouted to his grandfather. The latter imitated the snake's angry rattle, wet the end of a six-foot willow stick and stuck it in a small bit of wild parsley, then touched the snake with this end, and so "knocked the snake stiff." Some time later Al went to the spot to look and there he found the rattler dead, "bloated and stinking." Al Chandler, on another occasion, near Snake Butte, saw his grandfather kill a rattler in the same manner, merely touching it with the wet parsley-treated end of a stick. 278

Among the skeptics was Little Man, son of Sitting High and Al's adoptive father. He would even eat "wild parsley." On one occasion, Little Man took Jimmy, Al's three or four-year-old son, with him to the creek to wash, and while there was about to give Jimmy a bit of the wild parsley to eat, "to give him the power to use," when Al happened to see what was going on and told Jimmy: "Don't, that is poison." Little Man laughed and said: "It won't hurt him. I am giving it to him. I was going to give him this power. What is the matter with you? Why don't you eat it?" But Al said:

278 "No, I might get fits." Little Man said: "I will eat it." This he then did. Al was worried about him and did not go to work, for he thought the old man would have fits, but actually nothing happened to him.

778 The Feathered Pipe was given originally by Bha'a or by the
782 Supreme Being through Bha'a, who had control of thunderstorms. While individual petitioners in simpler rites such as covering the Pipe often addressed the Pipe itself in their prayers, and while in even more formal rites Bha'a was addressed, it appears to have been generally understood that the final word lay with the Supreme Being. The Pipe was given to pray through rather than to pray to, and Bha'a while exercising a certain autonomy in his office as ruler of thunderstorms exercised it as agent of and subordinate to the Supreme Being, and in the more formal ritual prayers of the Feathered Pipe, the Supreme Being's name always came first.

782 Feathered Pipe rites were carried out mostly and mainly, al-
[821] though not exclusively, to ask for rain and for protection against threatening thunderstorms or against lightning and destructive high winds during them, and sometimes for cessation of floods and rains. Often however major or minor rites were carried out, with or without previous promise or vow, for ends not connected with weather, to ask for cure in illness, escape from grave danger, safe return from a war expedition, and so forth. In times of drought, Bha'a would be asked for rain. In the more elaborate rites commonly held each spring, petition would be made "To have rain and [in recent decades] good crops and grass, . . . to bless the earth so everybody will be happy and healthy and no bad luck for anybody all summer, so they [all the people] will live 'till next spring,' that is, so when this time of the year comes around again they will be here."

*796 The more solemn Feathered Pipe rites, those at least which involved the sweat-lodge ceremony and the unwrapping of the Pipe bundle, were performed only during the period of the year when thunderstorms could be expected, namely from spring through to fall, and never during the winter months. The Pipe could, however be "covered" at any time of the year. In contrast to the Flat Pipe cycle, seasonal rites proper did not occur, although some rite was

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796

commonly held in the spring, about June, at which rite the keeper would paint and fix up the Pipe bundle and its contents, and, if asked, might also paint the people. This spring rite was commonly carried out even though no one had vowed to dance with, see, or smoke the Pipe, but might be replaced by or combined with such a vowed rite.

In most cases, the most solemn Feathered Pipe rites were carried out in fulfillment of vows. When such rites were to be carried out young men would be sent out to the scattered camps to give notice of the approved time and place. All the people would be expected to be present at a transfer or vowed rite, but there was no rigid obligation in the matter and no penalty for voluntary absence. Garter Snake, for instance, specifically emphasized that she always attended Feathered Pipe rites, while Coming Daylight stated she "never used to go to them." According to one informant, children were not allowed to be present at such rites; according to another, they were allowed to be present when the Pipe was danced with, if they kept quiet, but if they became noisy, they were put out.

Feathered Pipe Rites

The more solemn of the Feathered Pipe ceremonies on which we obtained information were: the spring rite and rites carried out in fulfillment of vows to dance with the Pipe, to smoke it, to see it, to be painted, to pray with the Human Face, and to make a sweat-lodge for the Pipe. In most at least of these the general ritual pattern was similar to that of the more solemn Flat Pipe rites: the sweat-lodge ceremony and offerings, usually the first day; and on the second day unwrapping and rewrapping of the Pipe bundle, face-painting, the song cycle, and according to the vow, dancing, smoking, or observing,—all these second day rites in the keeper's lodge or a specially erected double lodge,—and the terminal feast. Given the somewhat sketchy and fragmentary nature of our data on the several more solemn ceremonies listed at the beginning of the present paragraph, we shall first describe the ritual components common to most or all of these

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 ceremonies before taking up the ceremonies themselves one by one. And first of all the sweat-lodge and its ritual.

The Feathered Pipe sweat-lodge and sweating ritual came in when the Pipe itself was given by Bha'a to the first keeper.

*796 346 The sweat-lodge, large enough to accommodate several people, and with crowding up to ten or twelve, was constructed like the Flat Pipe sweat-lodge,—with the framework of willows about an inch in diameter tied to a ridge willow, with main entrance to the east, and with slanting cleared space from pit to door. According to Garter Snake, 23 willows were used, 11 on each side, plus the ridge willow; according to Jim Shortman, 24; according to Al Chandler, 26. The interior pit was circular, with a circular cleared bevel and groove around it, and about one to one-and-a-half feet deep. The three pi-shaped incense hearths of the Flat Pipe sweat-lodge were apparently lacking. The willows forming the door-posts were painted red "about half-way down." To the east of the lodge, on the east-west axis line, were, in order, the hearth for heating the stones, the mound (made of the dirt dug out to make the pit), the buffalo skull, and the offerings pole, just as in the Flat Pipe layout.

*796 The sweating rite corresponded, so far as our data go, with the Flat Pipe sweating rite. Presumably the offerings were ritually wrapped and tied, for they were later hung on the offerings pole, but we obtained no information on the wrapping ceremony. The offerings were tied onto the offerings pole; a special song was sung for this tying. A large pipe filled with tobacco, which rested slanting on the west side of the mound, bowl down, was taken, as in the Flat Pipe sweating ceremony, by an old man chosen for the purpose. Standing by the mound and holding the Pipe, stem up, in both hands, he gave the invitations to sweat. He invited by name first the Supreme Being, calling his name four times; next and finally each of the old men who were to sweat, calling each name only once. According to Jim Shortman, the Four Holy Beings, and four Pipe keepers (the original first one and three others) were also invited, with fourfold calling of the names. After all the invitees had entered the sweat-lodge, they smoked the common pipe.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

According to Al Chandler, the Pipe bundle was not brought into the sweat-lodge. According, however, to Garter Snake, it was so brought, unwrapped, when a vow to make a sweat-lodge for the Pipe was being fulfilled. 796*

During the sweating the keeper whipped himself with his buffalo-tail whip; the others, with whips of horse or other hair. [785]

At some time during the sweating rite, presumably when the ordinary pipe was smoked, the Supreme Being was prayed to to grant the petitions of the people. Prayers might also be made to Bha'a for rain, change of weather, and so forth. The Feathered Pipe keeper however, according to Garter Snake, "prayed to nothing on earth, and all prayers and offerings were made [ultimately at least] to the Supreme Being. . . . In prayers [where both appealed to] the Supreme Being came first, and Bha'a came after him."

After the sweating rite was over, the offerings were taken down off the pole and disposed of as in the case of the Flat Pipe offerings.

Where a large crowd was expected to attend, the singing and associated ceremonies might take place, not in the keeper's lodge, but in a double lodge, facing east, like that used in the Flat Pipe transfer rite.

Smudging in Feathered Pipe ceremonies* conformed to the ritual number four. The keeper, or if he was busy, the co-keeper, held a bit of dried sweet pine needles, "first straight up for God, then to the left, then to the right, then down to the hearth," and put the needles right on the live buffalo chip, all but a very small pinch of the needles which he then put on the top of his head. To smudge her person, Garter Snake, when she was Pipe child, would be given a bit of pine needles to chew; then she would hold her hands over the smudge ascending from the hearth, rub her left palm up her right arm, then her right palm up her left arm, then both palms from the top of her head down the sides of her

* Plate 3 A shows a round hearth used for smudging in the 1951 rite. Dr. Hagener under date of Aug. 8, 1954, writes: "I do remember that at least two colors were present in it and also that the fire was built on top of it. The fire was strictly a ceremonial one made with just a few sticks. Iron Man and his wife washed their hands in the smoke of it before opening the bundle." [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 neck and down her breast. According to Al Chandler, first they would rub the left arm, then the right, then twice on the head. According to him, too, the co-keeper, before taking hold of the Pipe bundle to carry it, would smudge herself by putting first one foot and then the other over the ascending smudge, then rub her arms [and head?] as above.

The unwrapping and re-wrapping of the Pipe bundle at a rite in fulfillment of a vow to dance with the Pipe, and presumably at other rites, was carried out, according to Al Chandler in the following manner where the rite took place in the special double lodge. The co-keeper, when about to take hold of the heavy Pipe bundle in the keeper's lodge, would talk to it: "I am going to take you over there [to the double lodge]. Make yourself light." In carrying the bundle to the double lodge she would walk very slowly, making three stops on the way and a fourth just in front of the double lodge. This she entered on the left, proceeded clockwise, and deposited the bundle on a sage brush bed in the place of honor at the back of the lodge opposite the door. Before starting to unwrap the bundle, the keeper chewed a little sweet pine, spat on his fingers with it, made four motions or passes toward the bundle, and at the fourth touched and started untying the string at one end. We obtained no details on the unwrapping as distinct from the untying, or on the re-wrapping and re-tying. The bundle was re-tied after the dancing but before the terminal feast. After the whole dancing rite and terminal feast were over, the co-keeper took the bundle out of the double lodge and back to the keeper's lodge, without making the four stops on the way.

*796 533 The songs of the Feathered Pipe ritual were sung to the accompaniment of the drum and were less solemn, faster and more lively, than those of the Flat Pipe ritual. Informants agreed that there were many songs peculiar to the Feathered Pipe. According to The Boy at the more elaborate rites, sixteen different songs were sung, in four series of four each, each of the sixteen songs being sung four times. The total singings were thus 64 (4 x 4 x 4 x 4) as compared with the Flat Pipe 27 (3 x 3 x 3). We recorded six of these (Nos. 45-46, 126-29) as sung by The Boy, all six of them wordless. Number 45 was the song heard up in the air,

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

with drumming, by the first keeper of the Pipe; number 46, the song sung when the feathered stick was danced with; numbers 126-29, the songs sung while He-who-dreams-of-Bha'a painted his shield. According to Jim Shortman there was a "song for everything" [of importance in the Pipe bundle], "even the owl." The Boy had heard one such song, containing the words: "owl he is telling me." According to the origin story of the Feathered Pipe, the first keeper at the very start was given and sang four songs; the others would thus have been added later, some at least during his life time. 796* 533

The terminal feast with which the more elaborate Feathered Pipe rites ended differed it seems, only in minor details, from that of the Flat Pipe. According to Al Chandler, just before the eating began, a tiny piece of each kind of food prepared was given to the keeper. He then took one such piece, touched all the other pieces with it, held it up and prayed. He held it up to the Supreme Being, and prayed first of all to him, then to the Pipe, and sometimes to the Human Face and the owl. Sitting High used to talk to all four. But in all cases the Supreme Being was included and was addressed first. The Last Child was not mentioned. After the prayer was over, the keeper put the bit of food in the ground and left it there, not however for the Last Child. After the eating was over, if there was any food left which the people wanted to take out, some old man had first to tell one [or four?] of his war-deeds. 796*

The paint on the bundle would wear off, and the bundle would need repainting at least once a year. While there was no seasonal spring rite proper, this repainting was usually done, by the keeper, in the spring time, about June, around the beginning of the thunderstorm season. This repainting rite was performed whether or not anyone had vowed a Feathered Pipe rite, but might be combined with such a vowed rite. In the course of this repainting rite, put on by the keeper and held in his lodge or in a specially erected double lodge, the keeper painted "the bundle red all over" and everything that belonged to the Pipe, including the Feathered Pipe drum and tripod, but did not dance with it. During the rite he would pray for rain and other blessings. If asked to do so, he would also paint the people. Everyone was free to attend the repainting rite, and big crowds would ordinarily come.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 In earlier times, well within the memory of older people now living, no one but the keeper could dance with the Feathered Pipe, and even he, according to Garter Snake and Charles Buckman, did so only at the transfer rite through which he received the Pipe.

The first exception to this rule was made in the case of Jim Snow, senior, about 1905. The story, as told to Charles Buckman by Jim Snow, Senior, himself was given us in detail by Charles Buckman and confirmed independently in part by Al Chandler.

Jim Snow was going blind, and neither Indian nor white doctors were successful in curing him. He then vowed that if he got his eyesight back he would dance with the Feathered Pipe. He did recover his sight. Then he went to Lame Bull and asked him what he thought about the vow. "Well," said Lame Bull, "I don't know whether this can be done or not. I will talk to the keeper to see what he will say." So Lame Bull laid the matter before Sitting High, the keeper at the time. "This is impossible," said Sitting High. "You know the rule that the only time you can dance with the Pipe is when you transfer it. Jim Snow could make a sweat-lodge for the Pipe or be painted, but he cannot dance with it."

Lame Bull and Sitting High, then, invited Bill Jones, White Bird, Black Bird and other old ex-keepers to meet with them to see what could be done. When they had all assembled, Sitting High addressed them: "Men, I have called you here to decide this matter for me. A young man has made a vow to dance with the Feathered Pipe. This, you all know, has never been done except at a transfer rite when the new keeper has to dance with the Pipe. Unless I transfer the Pipe to this young man, he cannot dance with it. I cannot allow this." They argued the case back and forth. Finally Bill Jones, who had once been a Feathered Pipe keeper, said: "You are right. But remember, times are changing. They are not like they used to be. The young man who made the vow did not know any better. If he had known that he could not dance with the Pipe unless it were transferred to him, he would not have done what he did. In the first place he is not old enough to be keeper of the Pipe. But since he made the vow and now can see and is ready to fulfill his vow, why not overlook the rule and

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796

permit him to dance with the Pipe?" The other old men said: "He [Bill Jones] speaks well. Let it be done that way." So Sitting High had to agree.

After this first exception was made to the traditional ritual rule, other people, men and women, non-keepers, were allowed to dance with the Feathered Pipe. Both Charles Buckman (b. 1874) and Thomas Main (b. 1890) have seen non-keepers dance with the Pipe, the latter when he was a young man about 17-18 years old. During the flu epidemic in 1918 the Pipe was danced with in fulfillment of a vow. And apparently it has been danced with from time to time, as a vow fulfillment, up to quite recent years, although some or much of the ritual has been lost to memory.

The following very incomplete ceremonial details are all we were able to gather from our older and middle-aged informants on this rite,—Al Chandler, Garter Snake, Coming Daylight, The Boy, Thick, Charles Buckman, Thomas Main, and Mary Ereaux.

The dancing rite after its introduction around the turn of the century was carried out only in fulfillment of a vow and only in the summer [or thunderstorm] time, not in winter. First came the sweat-lodge ceremony, with offerings provided by the vower. For the dancing proper and its concomitant ceremonies a capacious double lodge was erected, as large numbers of people, including women and even children, attended and participated. The poles of the lodge did not have to be painted. The vower's place was close by the keeper.

After the Pipe bundle had been brought in by the co-keeper and deposited on the sage bed at the far west opposite the door, the keeper smudged himself, and sang while the others present joined in. The bundle was then untied and unwrapped by the keeper and co-keeper, and the keeper painted the face of the vower first, and afterwards of the vower's relatives who had helped pay for the rite. Next the keeper, after smudging his own person, picked up the Pipe and smudged it,—bowl, middle part twice, and stem, in this order. Then he would pray, mentioning the Supreme Being first and the Pipe afterwards, but not the owl or other sacred objects in the bundle, asking that the rite would be carried out correctly without ceremonial mistake, and praying first for the

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

+796 vower and then for everybody. Next he smudged the drum four times,—the head, the rim twice, and the inside grip, in this order. Beating the drum he started to sing, and, as the others joined in the singing, he passed it to one of them.

Now the dancing began. The keeper himself danced first, at the far west end of the lodge in the place of honor, holding the Pipe stem up. Men and women, mostly relatives of the vower, would range themselves in a sort of half circle and dance with him, he alone holding the Pipe. The keeper continued dancing through the singing of four songs, and then passed the Pipe to the vower to dance with. The latter then danced with it through the singing of four songs. On the occasion of Jim Snow's vow fulfillment, after him danced Spotted Raven, no kin to Jim Snow, who for some reason had "thrown in" for the rite, and after Spotted Raven some of Jim's relatives, "maybe three or four" in turn,—in each case continuously dancing through the singing of four songs. In general, anyone, whether a relative of the vower or not, could dance with the Pipe if he or she paid to do so. Between each separate dancing and singing of four songs the Pipe was placed resting on its sage bed, and during these interim periods the participants and onlookers could chat, joke and have a social smoke, and, if they wished, go outside the lodge and walk around. Smudging [of Pipe? or of dancer?] preceded each dance.

[834] According to Coming Daylight, a woman who took part in the Feathered Pipe dance had to abstain from sexual intercourse beforehand, apparently for two or three nights. "If you break that rule, not long after you dance it, something happens to you, some kind of hard luck, and it really never fails." When the Pipe dance was held in 1918, "one woman danced it after she had seen her man and she almost burned up and the same happened to her son and lightning struck his horse." Presumably this taboo held for men too, but we failed to make inquiries on the point.

Not only the vower but also all others who wanted to dance with the Pipe had to make payment for the privilege. As Al Chandler explained: "Jim Snow [after his vow and cure] came to see the keeper first and told him how many horses he would give and then during the dance Jim Snow himself started putting

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

down blankets and whatever he had to give and then his relatives 796*
and friends started putting down things to help him out. All those who are going to dance have to put things down. Nobody has to pay who is not going to dance. It cost Jim and his relatives plenty. Old Sitting High, the keeper, wouldn't keep all that stuff. He would give it out to his relatives and friends. I got a horse. The keeper is cleared out. His relatives have to help him lots when he gets the Pipe and then when he has the ceremonies he gets paid and then gives that stuff to his relatives to kind of pay back and in the long run they are not out anything. The more ceremonies the quicker they get their stuff back. Of course they don't figure on it, how much they will get, but that is the way it looks."

According to Al Chandler, our chief informant on the ritual of the Feathered Pipe dance, only the Pipe itself was danced with. According to other informants, other objects in the bundle—the feathered stick and owl—were danced with. We could not clear up the point. Perhaps dancing with the feathered stick or owl was a separate rite, or else a latter (after ca. 1905) development of the Pipe dance rite.

According to Rufus Warrior, the dancing consisted in swaying [535]
of the body, rather, or more, than in movement of the feet.

After the dancing was over, the bundle was re-wrapped and re-tied. Then came the terminal feast with food provided by the vower and his relatives and served by the "waiters." Lastly, the co-keeper took back the bundle to the keeper's lodge.

Our informants were in clear agreement that a person could vow to smoke the Feathered Pipe, but Garter Snake could recall no instance of such smoking, and Al Chandler had never witnessed such, although he had been told by Sitting High that it had been lone. Coming Daylight, our oldest informant, stated that "lots of people" had smoked the Feathered Pipe, and that it was smoked much oftener than the Flat Pipe. Seemingly the rite, not so infrequent prior to the 1870's, was later given up. We could obtain no details on the ceremony, but no doubt the rite followed the general pattern: offerings and sweat-lodge; unwrapping, songs, re-wrapping; and terminal feast.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

782 Vows could be made just to see the Pipe. The vower would give money or a blanket or horse in payment: Everybody else who wanted to take a look had likewise to make some payment, putting down the payment after coming into the lodge. The men had to leave their hats outside the lodge. The observers were not painted during the rite. The co-keeper, as usual, handled the bundle itself, and the untying and unwrapping of the bundle and Pipe case were carried out with the usual ceremonies and songs. The sacred objects were spread out and the Pipe itself exposed. None of the observers was permitted to touch or pick up the Pipe or the sacred objects, under penalty of "getting fits" from the protective wild parsley. If requested by one of the observers, the co-keeper would lift the cover of the Human Face sufficiently to allow a glimpse. The rite ended with the usual terminal feast.

Anyone could vow to pray with the Human Face which was in the Feathered Pipe bundle. The payment,—maybe a horse and a little money,—was not so great as the payment for dancing with the Pipe. A double lodge was erected for the rite. The Human Face was not danced with, and, during Sitting High's keepership was not exposed for this rite. The vower was merely allowed to hold the Face in its thick wrappings and to pray to it for anything he wanted. At a later date, Curly Head when keeper exposed the Face often, a practice that ran counter to the older tradition and that was criticized as commercialization. Sitting High had exposed the Face to view only once or twice, so far as Al Chandler had heard, in the course of his three decades or more of keepership. Whether such exposure of the Face as occurred was part of the vowed praying with it or a separate function was not made clear to us.

A vow to make a sweat-lodge for the Feathered Pipe, similar *mutatis mutandis* to the corresponding Flat Pipe one, was carried out in fulfillment of a request made to a man in a dream, or of a vow made, for example, by a young man going off on a war party to ask good luck and a safe return,—the young man in the case, providing the requisite offerings.

Our very incomplete information on the Feathered Pipe rite carried out in fulfillment of a vow to be painted comes from Al Chandler, Garter Snake and Charles Buckman.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

According to Al Chandler, if some one were ill a near relative would vow to be painted and would go to the keeper. The sweat-lodge rite was first gone through. After this, in the keeper's lodge, the keeper would take the paint from the Pipe bundle, make a smudge as usual, sing the songs, dip his finger in the paint, and hold it up while addressing the Supreme Being and add: "This man vowed to you that he wanted to be painted with your paint so that his child might live," or similar words. Then he repeated the same thing to the Pipe. Then he painted first the vower, and afterwards he painted the men and male children present and the co-keeper, the women and female children,—the males with a curved band on the forehead near the hair line, the females with dots, one on the forehead and one on each cheek. This painting could take place any time in the year. 782 302

According to Garter Snake, in case of dangerous or critical illness, the vower would promise to cook up lots of food and have the keeper open up the Pipe bundle and paint the vower. If the vower were a man he was painted with the sacred red paint by the keeper; if a woman, by the co-keeper. The Pipe child would sit with the co-keeper during the rite. All the men, women and children who could attend would come to the keeper's lodge and be painted. Any ex-keepers and ex-co-keepers present would not be painted by the keeper and co-keeper as they would paint themselves. 782 755

According to Charles Buckman, it was customary to unwrap the Pipe bundle at this vowed painting rite.

Apart from this vowed rite, ritual face painting was also, as previously noted, a common feature of the Feathered Pipe dancing ceremony. In addition, according to Jim Shortman, if the Feathered Pipe keeper were told in a dream by the owl that sickness was coming to the camp, he would call all the children and infants together with the grown-ups to his lodge and would paint every individual. 302 751 782

Offerings to cover the Feathered Pipe could be made by anyone, at any time of the year, winter included, more frequently with, but often without, previous vow. They were commonly made for cure in cases of illness. The original first owner of the Pipe had told the people: "If you are sick, you can make a vow to cover the Pipe, and thus get well." But covering occurred also on other 782

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

782 occasions. Whenever, for instance, Garter Snake went to a Feathered Pipe ceremony, she would bring some offering for the Pipe; and if the keeper, as previously noted, dreamed of ill luck about to befall somebody in camp, he would counsel the person to make some offering.

In the olden days dressed skins of deer, antelope or other animal were the most common offerings; in more recent times, flannel or other textiles,[10] preferably black, the Pipe's favorite color. The Feathered and Flat Pipes appear to have received about equal numbers of offerings. Some devotees, such as Singer and Mary Ereaux' mother, would as a rule make it a point to cover both Pipes whenever they made Pipe offerings, with three yards of cloth for each. Mary Ereaux' mother felt that both Pipes were "the same" and she did not want to be "partial."

When the giver laid the offering on the Pipe bundle, he or she would talk first to the Supreme Being, then to the Pipe, and afterwards *ad libitum* to the two-headed bird or any other sacred object or objects in the bundle.

When the offerings accumulated, the keeper would have a sweat-lodge made and they would be hung up on the pole in front of the lodge. After the sweating was over, the offerings would be disposed of in the usual way, by deposition on a high hill with prayers by the selected depositor. Sitting High, at least, used sometimes to distribute them, or some of them, after the sweating rite, to poor and needy children.

* 796 Most of the rites we have been describing were carried out in fulfillment of vows. Two other series of rites and observances, non-vowed ordinarily, may now be dealt with: The one series, distinctly religious rites, performed as occasion demanded or suggested, which we are calling rites of occasion; the other series, in which the religious element was in most cases only marginal, which we are calling observances. The rites of occasion may be classified into rain, flood, storm, and doctoring ceremonies. In passing we may mention that the Feathered Pipe, unlike the Flat Pipe, did not enter in any manner into the sacred Sacrifice Dance.

The more solemn Feathered Pipe rite usually held in the spring

[10] See Plate 2 B. Note cloth offerings behind Feathered Pipe tripod. [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796*

was, primarily though not exclusively, a prayer for rain and for protection against storms. Many other simpler rites were, however, carried out for the same purposes.

789

Rain could be caused by sprinkling the Feathered Pipe keeper with water or by throwing water on him, and if the keeper, contrary to rule, bathed in a stream rain would follow. The keeper could also cause rain by prayer (details not known to our informant, The Boy) and then taking water in his mouth and, facing to the northwest (from which storms usually come) or against the wind, blowing the water out of his mouth in a spray. The keeper could also, according to Al Chandler, bring rain by spurting water out of his mouth or by sprinkling water from a cup, in each case in the four cardinal directions.

The keeper might have power, too, to cause rain by going to a creek, with prayers on the way, and wading in it with his moccasins on. But not all keepers had this power. On one occasion while Curly Head was keeper, a big prairie fire was spreading close to his place and Al Chandler, Al's father-in-law, and Curly Head were fighting the fire. Al's father-in-law saw Curly Head wade in the water and said to Al: "I guess he is trying to make rain. I see him walking in the water with moccasins on." But the old man "thought Curly Head did not have the power and sure enough he could not make it rain."

There were ways of stopping as well as causing rain. Al Chandler gave the following account. "The Feathered Pipe was used mainly to get rain. But it was also used to stop rain when there was danger that it would ruin crops or otherwise harm the people, and they would ask the keeper to stop it. He would not do this alone but would get some of the old men who understood about the Pipe to help him. They all sang and smudged themselves, but did not unwrap the Pipe or do anything else but sing and pray. The ceremony lasted quite long. I remember once, when Logan was agent, we were going down to a Fourth of July celebration and were camped over at Three Mile Coulee. While on our way to the coulee it started to rain and by the time we reached it, it was raining very, very hard. The horses were shaking with cold, lightning was flashing and thunder was sounding. Somebody asked Sitting High, then keeper, to do something, else their fun would

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

789 be spoiled. Sitting High told him to summon the other old men. I could not stay in the tent with them although I was living with Sitting High at the time. Sitting High and his wife were there; so were the other old men, but not their wives. They started singing about three or four o'clock in the afternoon and kept it up all night. I woke up very early next morning and could hear them still singing. They were then just about breaking up. They had to see the ceremony through. They would sing four songs and smudge and smoke and talk. Then they would sing four more and rest between each four until they had sung 44 songs. Sure enough it cleared up the next day."

[361] A rite for stopping floods was described as follows by Jim Shortman: "One whole winter the Gros Ventres camped on the Musselshell River until spring. When the ice would go out the water would flood the valley from hill to hill, and all the camps, set up in the timber along the river for shelter, would move. My father, then Feathered Pipe keeper, did not move, and his wife said to him: "We will be flooded. What will you do?" "We will stay here," he said. "It is too much trouble to move." She told him: "We will be drowned." But he said: "No." That night he took down one of his little bags, which contained a hand-made wooden bowl. He took out the bowl, made a smudge, smudged the bowl and sang and talked to him, and after that went outside the lodge. I followed him out to see what he would do. He walked right out to the river which was rising and stopped about 8 or 10 feet from the water. He held the bowl up towards heaven, sang and talked [prayed, evidently], then lowered it first in the three stages, and at the fourth set it on the ground face down. Then he went back to his lodge. And, don't you know, the water was all around everywhere else, but did not come any closer to the spot where he put the bowl. Gosh, I was scared. I thought we would all drown. But when I got up the next morning the water was all around us, but we were all right."

Various ritual procedures were used by the Feathered Pipe keeper to avert or to stop thunderstorms. He would go out and stand, facing the oncoming storm. He would then stretch out his arms straight from the shoulder with his palms together. Then he would move his arms outward at the same time turning his

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

palms outward (about as in the breast stroke for swimming), and while doing so would say: "We don't need you now. Go this way. Go this way." And the thunderclouds would spread and separate, and miss the camp. 789

Once when Thick's brother, Horse Capture, had vowed a Crazy Dance and it was about to start, a big electric storm threatened. So Horse Capture filled a pipe and went to Bull Lodge and said: "Here, old man, is a pipe." "What is it for?" asked Bull Lodge. "I want you to break up this storm," Horse Capture replied. "We don't want a storm when we start on our doings." "Well," said Bull Lodge, as he took the pipe, "That is easy." The storm was then coming pretty close. Bull Lodge did nothing but smoke the pipe, and when through smoking handed it back to Horse Capture, saying: "There is not going to be a drop of rain and you are not going to have any rain for four days." And just at this instant, the thundercloud split in two and went around, by-passing the camp. Whether Bull Lodge averted this storm by reason of his keeper or ex-keeper powers or of special personal ones is not however clear from our informant on the incident, Thick.

Charles Buckman gave us another illustration of Bull Lodge's power over storms, a power associated with the keepership. The story was told Buckman by his present wife's father, old Spotted Bird. There was a very severe and prolonged rain storm, it was cold, and the horses were dying. The Gros Ventres were camped with the Crow. The Crow offered Bull Lodge a pipe to stop the storm and he agreed: "All right, I will see what I can do." So he got his Feathered Pipe drum, fixed a smudge, and started to sing a certain song, saying: "After I sing the third song, go and see how the weather looks." So they began singing and by the time he sang the fourth song, the storm was over and the sun was shining. [648]

When a big thunderstorm came, or too much rain, the people would appeal to the keeper to stop it. He would make a smudge and talk to the Pipe and, without mentioning the Last Child or the sun, ask that the storm or rain cease, and it would stop. The smudging consisted of or included taking a pinch of sweet pine, motioning with it, dropping all but a little of it in the fire, and putting this remaining bit on the top of his head. The weather

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

789 song had also to be sung, apparently to the accompaniment of the drum.

755 Putting sweet pine needles on the sick person's head, blowing wild parsley on him, and smudging him as doctoring practices have been previously described. According to Singer, if some one were so sick that his life was despaired of, the keeper would take the Feathered Pipe [the bundle, probably] and lay it on him and pray over him, and the sick person would recover, and, she added, "it cured a lot of them." Doctoring power was regularly acquired by reason of acquiring the keepership.

793 302 The keeper and co-keeper painted their own faces every morning after breakfast, like the men, in two bands, but broader ones three or four fingers wide, one on the forehead near the hair line and the other from one jaw across the chin to the other jaw.

778 The Pipe bundle was smudged by the keeper every morning and evening with sweet pine needles. During Curly Head's keepership Cora Chandler and her children were kept busy collecting dried cow dung for the daily smudging ceremony. The keeper made it a practice to "talk" or pray often to the Pipe in his lodge. According to The Boy, the keeper was fearful lest otherwise he might make ritual mistakes, at which the Pipe would be angry. According to Al Chandler, the Pipe being jealous, the keeper "had to talk to it to let it know it was not forgotten or put away; he treated it just like a person."

788 778 Customary observances on the occasions of feasts or ordinary meals to guests in the keeper's lodge have been previously described.

When the keeper and the people were camped for any length of time in a given place, the Feathered Pipe bundle was ordinarily taken in the morning from its place of honor opposite the entrance inside the keeper's lodge, hung up outside over the entrance, and brought back inside at eventide.

[361 624] 778 484 When the camp was to be moved, the Feathered Pipe keeper, like the Flat Pipe keeper, had, it seems, a consultative voice in the decision and perhaps even veto power at times, although ordinarily the final decision was made by the head men. The decision once made, early in the morning when camp was to be broken, the Feathered Pipe bundle was hung out on its tripod back of the

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

keeper's lodge, with two tripod legs close together and the third pointing in the direction of march, as a signal to the people. 484 778

On the march, the Pipe bundle was ordinarily packed on Pipe's own horse. Two stuffed parfleches were placed, one on either side of the saddle; blanket robes were thrown over them and the saddle; the bundle, with its covers, was then put thereon and securely lashed down with specially tied rawhide thongs.

On breaking camp, the two Pipe keepers with their Pipes might decide to stay together, or else to separate. "Most of the people [usually] hung around the Pipes." If the Pipe keepers decided to separate, some of the bands or other groups or families might choose to go with one Pipe, others with the other, others still with neither. "Both Pipes had certain bunches who followed them, and when the Pipes split certain ones went with each. Each band suited itself and followed the Pipe it liked best." This, for example, is what happened on the occasion when the Assiniboine captured the Flat Pipe. 621 484 778

If both Pipes stayed together, then according to The Boy, Turn Toes, and Takes the Bow, the Flat Pipe took the lead, the Feathered Pipe coming second in line. Garter Snake could not recall the order of precedence. We did not obtain further clarification of Al Chandler's statement: "The two keepers moved out first side by side and if the tribe was going to split, it was up to the people which Pipe they would follow." The statement may refer to those occasions when the Pipes were going to separate. On such occasions, all informants were fully agreed that the Flat Pipe and Feathered Pipe each came first in the line of march of its respective followers. The order on the march, for the Feathered as for the Flat Pipe was: the keeper in the lead, next to him the co-keeper leading the Pipe horse behind her, then the Pipe child alongside or just behind the horse. In this connection the original first co-keeper of the Feathered Pipe was called, in Garter Snake's version of the origin story, "Woman-takes-the-lead."

Other Sacred Pipes

In recent years the Gros Ventres have had only the Flat and Feathered Pipes, but earlier there were others. The Boy listed 778

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

778 five others known to him. In Turn Toes' early days—he was about 80 years old in 1940—there were two others besides the Flat and Feathered Pipes, and before his time there were still others. A pipe of which his father had been keeper was buried with his father.

778 Only scattered details, to be given presently, on the origin and ritual of these minor pipes were obtainable. In general the rites
*796 and observances followed, to some degree, the broad pattern of those of the two major ones. Each pipe had its own songs. Sweet pine was used, as in the Feathered Pipe ceremonies, for making smudge. The pipes had to be kept "quiet and clean," each in its own bundle in the owner's lodge. An important difference was that ordinarily the pipe was buried with its keeper unless he had during his lifetime transferred it to someone else.

Of the five pipes, other than the Flat and Feathered Pipes known to The Boy, three,—the Beaver Pipe, the one gotten from Bird Tail Butte, and the one given to the Piegan,—were classed by him as "great pipes," although not nearly so great as the Flat and Feathered Pipes; two—the ones gotten from the Gros Ventres of the lower Missouri and from the Crow respectively,—were classed as not so important. We shall first give what information we obtained on these five pipes, and later take up some of the other pipes mentioned to us.[11]

Whether "Beaver Pipe" was a specific name for just one particular historic pipe or a general name for several or all these minor pipes is not clear from our field data.[12]

---

[11] Kroeber, 1908, p. 272, mentions that this multiplicity of pipes distinctly differentiates the character of the Gros Ventre pipes from that of the Arapaho.

[12] In 1948 The Boy stated: "The Beaver bundle religion started with the Gros Ventres and was transferred to the Piegan. The difference from the Flat and Feathered Pipes is that when the Beaver Pipe is transferred they give a copy, so that the Beaver Pipe rapidly multiplied while the Flat and Feathered Pipe remained one. The last Gros Ventre to have a Beaver Pipe proper was Weasel Bear,—his two sons, Stiffarm and Mouse, were called Beaver children. The beaver is a showy animal and the Beaver rites as carried out by the Piegan, among whom they were important, were showy

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The origin of it (or them) was attributed, somewhat tentatively and speculatively, by The Boy to pique on the part of the beaver for being left out of the Flat Pipe bundle or for other reason and hence the desire to start his own pipe and pipe rite. 773 539

The traditional origin story of the first Beaver Pipe was given as follows by Coming Daylight. "A certain man had two wives. He went out hunting and took one of his wives along. The other stayed at camp and about noon as she went to fetch water from the creek, she saw there a young man. 'I am going to marry you,' he told her. 'Where you are is not a good place, with two women to one man.' 'Let me first take this water home,' said she. 'Oh,' he said, 'don't take it all the way home, but only half way.' This she did and then followed him to his house. When he took her into his house, he turned into a beaver and told her to go into his beaver lodge.

"When the husband returned home from his hunt, he saw the filled water bucket half way to the creek, but the woman was missing. 'Somebody must have taken her,' he thought. He looked all over for her and called her, but in vain. So he went back home and told her father and mother the story that she was gone. They searched for her in different tribes but could not find her. They even checked on all the young men to see if any of them were away from home, but all were accounted for.

"After her husband and parents had searched a long time and had not found her, they began to mourn for her. The husband was crying all around on the hills. At last a spirit told him: 'Quit crying. She is not dead. Go back and camp at the same spot where she disappeared.' So he came in from the hills and invited some old men and told them what the spirit said. The old men advised him: 'Go back to the spot. This spirit may be telling the truth.'

"So he and his other wife went back to that same spot and camped. In the evening while supper was cooking they heard a

---

and kind of boisterous compared to the Flat and Feathered Pipe rites of the Gros Ventres, and this appeals to many people."

In 1948 Al Chandler mentioned that Old Man Blackbird was keeper of a Beaver Pipe which had been given him by the Crow. "It was a small bundle, but they used to hang it just like the Flat and Feathered Pipes were hung, and they had a smudge and some kind of dance to go with it." [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

773
539

noise coming into the lodge. The lost woman was looking in the door. Her husband seeing her jumped. 'Go back,' she said, 'and sit down. Don't come near me. Don't eat supper. Clean up and get sage brush and fix it nicely all around the lodge and close up all the holes. I am coming back. I just came first to tell you to clean up and fix the lodge.' So the two did as they were told and sat waiting, he at the back of the lodge and she on the east side, for the lost wife to come back.

"After a while they heard in the distance drumming and singing which kept coming closer. Then they saw the beaver husband's father coming first with the Pipe, after him the beaver husband and the woman, and last four [beaver?] beating the drum. All entered the lodge. The father then gave the Pipe to the man who had lost the one of his wives, saying: 'Here is a Pipe. Smoke it.' So the man took it and smoked it. The beaver husband's father also took this man as a son.

"The father then told two of the drummers: 'Invite the people to come into the lodge.' This they did and soon the lodge was filled with all the different animals, frog and snake and others, that live in the water. The old father then said: 'I invite you to give my son a song.'

"The frog then began to sing and as he began, a storm came with hail and the creek ran full. Next came the snake's turn, but the snake said: 'I don't know how to sing.' And the snake crawled out of the lodge, so he does not belong to this Pipe.

"The man was taught how to sing and to make smudge with sweet grass [sweet pine?], and was given back his lost wife with the admonition not to beat her and was told to go back home with her. Then the old father and the beaver husband went away, leaving the lost wife with her human husband.

"When the man got back home with his two wives and with the Pipe he had been given, everybody came to visit him. The re-found woman's brothers gave her husband two horses. They called that Pipe, Beaver Pipe, and when the man died they buried it with him. And this is why they buried owners of such pipes unless the owners when still living had transferred the pipes to someone else. This is the story we have heard from way back."

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Other pipes, some at least of them "Beaver" Pipes apparently, were specifically mentioned by our informants. There may be some duplications in the following listing. 778

The pipe owned by Roasted-in-the-coals, or Roasted-under-the-fire was called asti:θibie:tsa (meaning not obtainable). It was buried with him. It had two big rattles with it about 6 to 8 inches in diameter. After he died, these rattles were brought to Crow Bull, Coming Daylight's maternal uncle. He kept them quite a while, but, perhaps because they did not belong to the Flat Pipe which he owned or because he had had a dream about them, he decided to put them away, and had his wife Iron Woman and his niece Coming Daylight dispose of them. They were camping on the Missouri River at the time. The two women dug a kind of tunnel in the bank just big enough to hold them. Coming Daylight pitied these rattles because they were not even wrapped. So she took her robe and wrapped them in it and prayed to them: "Have pity on us. I pity you because you are not even wrapped up. I take my robe to wrap you. You are poor like orphans." And so the two women put them away. [534]

Coming Daylight's father also was keeper of a pipe, but only for a short time as he was killed in war, not long after getting it. When her father first received this pipe, he was not grabbed without warning, as new keepers of the Flat and Feathered Pipes were. The wives of her uncle, Crow Bull, made a big lodge for her father and put this pipe on a tripod in front of it. Then Crow Bull went to his sister, Coming Daylight's mother, and said: "Go in your lodge. This lodge is yours." So her father and his two wives moved in. Her mother had children at the time and so was not co-keeper, and when the babies cried she would take them out of the lodge. Instead her father's other wife, who never had any children to Coming Daylight's knowledge, was co-keeper. The pipe's place in the big lodge was opposite the door. When Coming Daylight's father died, her mother's brother, Crow Bull, took over the pipe. This pipe, with most of the wrappings removed to lessen the weight, and wrapped in a small bundle with rawhide, lashed around near either end and with a thong handle, was taken by Crow Bull to the war called by the Gros Ventres "When [602]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

778 they wiped us out." After this war in which so many of the Gros Ventres were killed, the survivors moved off leaving this pipe, and Cut-Away's pipe (see below), and "the remains of a third one" (Small Drum's apparently, see below), in a lodge all nicely fixed up.

In Coming Daylight's father's big lodge were two other pipes, one owned by Stabber's father, Small Drums, the other by Cut-Away, or All-Cut-Off. The place of Small Drums' pipe was to the west of her father's pipe, that of Cut Away's to the east. No further details on these two pipes were obtainable, apart from their final disposition mentioned above.

The last Gros Ventre Beaver Pipe of which we obtained record was buried with its last keeper, Weasel Bear, the father of Stiffarm.

778 648 On the two other "great" pipes previously mentioned as known to The Boy, only the most meager information was obtainable. One of these two was gotten by a Gros Ventre man from Bird Tail Butte in the Bear Paw Mountains. The other, of unknown origin, was in the possession of the Gros Ventres long ago when Lame Bull was a boy and was given, he told The Boy, to the Piegan. The Boy one Fourth of July saw the Piegan "having doings with this pipe."

On the two pipes rated by The Boy as of "less importance," our data are likewise meager. One of these, "a common pipe," was a gift from the Crow. At one time at least it was in the possession of Black Bird. It was procured a few years ago, from one of the sons of the last keeper, by Richard Pohrt, hailing from Flint, Michigan.

The other of the two was a gift from the Hidatsa (called "Lower Gross Ventres" by the present-day Gros Ventres of Montana) or the Mandan. It was called watä:nuta (some kind of black bird) and is generally spoken of as "the pipe of Big Beaver" who was its last [and only?] keeper and with whom it was buried. According to Takes the Bow, the Gros Ventres, not so long ago, had gone east beyond their own territory and encountered these "Lower Gros Ventres." The two parties stopped some distance apart and by use of the sign language discovered who each were. The "Lower Gros Ventres" were glad to meet the Gros Ventres, for

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the two tribes had never been at war. In token of this, the "Lower Gros Ventres" gave the Gros Ventres a pipe to bind the two tribes together, the principal men of each tribe having met together in the middle ground between the parties. In late years some "Lower Gros Ventres" came on a visit to the Fort Belknap agency to inquire about the pipe and to take it back. But the pipe could not be found in the grave of Big Beaver with whom it had been buried. 778 648

According to Singer, her father, Bird Chief, had a pipe given by the Sioux or Assiniboine. On a war expedition against the Piegan on which he had taken it, when the Piegan were pressing the Gros Ventres badly, he gave the pipe to his youngest brother who was captured with it, but let go. The pipe however was kept by the Piegan. This happened when Singer was a very small girl.

Relative Dignity and Popularity of the Sacred Pipes

All our informants were fully agreed that the Flat and Feathered Pipes far outranked in sacredness, dignity, power and popularity any and all of the other Gros Ventre sacred pipes. 778 771

There were, however, some differences of view among our informants as to the relative status of the Flat and Feathered Pipes themselves. These differences of view, traceable in part to informants' respective affiliations and preferences, were comparatively minor, and are largely reconcilable if we distinguish between what we may call "popular devotion" on the one hand and "liturgico-dogmatic" order of dignity on the other,—a distinction commonly discernible in religious life of other peoples of the world.

As regards "popular devotion," the two Pipes appear to have received about the same number of offerings, vowed and unvowed, from the people, and some Gros Ventres made it a practice rarely or never to cover or robe one of the two Pipes without at the same time covering the other. Some Gros Ventres, while holding both Pipes as superlatively sacred, thought the Feathered Pipe to be in certain respects more powerful, since it, unlike the Flat Pipe, had never been captured by the enemy and since, they held, those bands or groups who, when the tribe separated, followed the Flat

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Pipe met with more accidents and misfortune than those who followed the Feathered Pipe.[18]

As regards "liturgico-dogmatic" order of dignity, the Flat Pipe appears to have had premier rank. It was the older of the two Pipes, having been given at the very time of "creation." On the march, most informants agreed that the Flat Pipe took the lead. The Flat Pipe alone had solemn seasonal rites proper, and these to obtain from the Supreme Being all things necessary for living long and happily, whereas the Feathered Pipe rites were mostly more particularistic in purpose, namely, to ask for rain and for protection against thunderstorms. Finally the Flat Pipe alone was brought to the sacred Sacrifice Dance ceremony to lend added solemnity thereto.

Regardless however of such differences in popularity and dignity and of certain differences of view among our informants, both Pipes were most deeply venerated by all the people, as gifts given in the last analysis by the Supreme Being himself, for the protection and well-being of all the Gros Ventres forever.

---

[18] In 1948 The Boy while discussing the relative merits of the two, told a long story of a dream given to his paternal grandfather, Crow Moccasin, keeper of the Feathered Pipe, through which he was able to save the people of his band from an attack by the enemy, although the rest of the Gros Ventres suffered great disaster. Impressed with the fact that the Feathered Pipe avoided capture, nevertheless The Boy still feels that the Flat Pipe is the greater, one argument being: "When the Flat Pipe was captured it found its way back to the Gros Ventres under its own power." For details of story on Loss and Recovery of the Flat Pipe, see No. 8 in Appendix. [R.F.]

CHAPTER V

THE SACRED DANCES

General Features

In the Gros Ventre public cult, as contrasted with more or less private cult concepts and observances, next after the sacred Pipe ceremonies, in order of rank and importance in the native view, were the Sacred Dances or Lodges,—the terms are used interchangeably, and while etymologically "Lodge" is correct, our informants preferred usually "Dance." 796* 771 794

There were eight of these Sacred Dances: the Sacrifice Dance (commonly but incorrectly called the Sun Dance), the "Law Enforcers" or Old Man's Dance, the Drum Dance, the Kit-Fox Dance, the Dog Dance, the Crazy Dance, the Fly Dance, and the Old Women's Dance.[1] Of these eight, the Sacrifice Dance was more generally regarded as the "greatest," ranking first in order of importance and dignity, but somewhat outside of the others which have been mentioned in descending order. All eight were regarded as sacred rites, not merely social or good-time occasions, although such elements entered into them or were associated with them.

Ordinarily a person participated in or vowed during his life first the Fly Dance; only after this the Crazy, Kit-fox, Dog, Drum and Sacrifice Dances, and finally the Old Man's Dance. 796*

Our chief informants on the Sacred Dances were The Boy, Turn Toes, Thick, Charles Buckman, Coming Daylight, and Singer. Lame Bull, from whom The Boy got most of his information on the Dances, had gone through all of them except the Drum Dance. He had even been selected as one of the two outstanding [115]

[1] Kroeber, 1908, pp. 227-268, gives an excellent account of these Dances, gotten at a time, nearly half a century ago, when tribal memory was fresher Our data may help to fill out some of the picture.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

x796

men who had roles to play in the Old Women's Dance. Turn Toes (b. ca. 1860) had taken part in the Sacrifice Dance (about four times) and in the Crazy, Dog, Fly, and Old Men's Dances, having joined the Crazy Dance first and participated in the Fly Dance when he was already an old man. The Boy had witnessed the Sacrifice, Fly, Crazy, Old Men's and Old Women's Dances, and his contemporaries, Thick and Charles Buckman, knew something of them too. The others had disappeared before their time. Coming Daylight and Singer (b. ca. 1854) witnessed some of the Dances. Coming Daylight as a small girl participated as one of the "calves" in the Old Woman's Dance. Our other informants were able to supplement accounts as given by these from what they had heard from their relatives and others of the older generations.

Today the Sacred Dances survive only in memory. Dates when the respective Dances were last held are: Drum Dance, when Lame Bull (b. 1824 or 1825) was a boy, hence probably in the 1830's; Kit-fox, ca. 1870, when Turn Toes was a small boy; Dog Dance, after the last Kit-fox, apparently in the late 1870's because Turn Toes had gone through it; Turn Toes did the Old Men's Dance, at which time he was only about 20 years old, therefore about 1880, at the junction of Beaver Creek and Bear Gulch on the east side of the Little Rockies; Sacrifice Dance, 1884; Crazy Dance, twice after the establishment of the Fort Belknap Agency, —the last time right after the Sacrifice Dance of 1884; Fly Dance, about 1907 (the one in which Turn Toes as an old man participated). Since that date none of the Sacred Dances has been held.

The Sacred Dances were held, not as part of a seasonal cycle, but only (with one exception to be noted later) in fulfillment of a vow by some individual. The vow itself, even in the case of the Fly Dance, was made to the Supreme Being, not to any other being. Which of the dances an individual chose to vow would depend on circumstances. If, for instance, he were in sore straits, surrounded by the enemy and in imminent danger of being killed, he would vow the Sacrifice Dance which cost greatly in suffering and goods, or else the Crazy, Dog, Kit-fox, or Drum Dance. Usually, however, a boy was supposed to go first through the Fly Dance, and only the aged could go through the Old Man's

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Dance.[3] Women could vow the Old Women's Dance, but no other Dance could be vowed by women of any age. 796*

The vower would call upon his company or age-society to help him fulfill his vow. As elsewhere explained, when the young boy was about 15 to 17 years old he together with others of his age joined in a body one or other of the two Soldier Societies, the Stars of the Wolves. Each such newly joining group of youths would be incorporated in the larger society of Stars or Wolves, but would keep its own identity through life as a subdivision of the Stars or Wolves, would have its own name (such as Potbellies, Calves, Holding-On-to-Dogs-Tail), and would hang together in common loyalty, protection and helpfulness.[3] 575 701 796*

The vower's company, not all the Stars of Wolves, would help him make provision for the Dance, would be in charge of the affair and, during it and only during it, could exercise certain definite authority over other members of the tribe. If the tribe were on the march toward the spot where the dance was about to be held, that company came immediately after the Flat Pipe, according to The Boy, and during the Dance the band chiefs and Pipe keepers stepped aside and yielded to the company the authority to run the camp, compel attendance, give orders, and punish disobedience. If during a Sacred Lodge an individual hunted buffalo out of turn, before the communal hunt began, his lodge would be destroyed, his clothes cut up, and so forth. A like punishment might be meted out to any who might refuse to come into camp, at the time the dance was held.[4] [624] [689]

The two Soldier Societies, the Stars and Wolves, and their respective constituent companies were permanent organizations. The specific individuals who vowed or joined in any given Dance

---

[3] In 1948, The Boy indicated that probably the Crazy, Dog, Kit-fox and Drum Dances would have been vowed in order, that is, that a man would vow a Dog Dance only if he had been previously a Crazy Dancer, and so on. He was none too sure on this point. He was quite emphatic, however, that any man who belonged to either the Stars or Wolf Men could vow the Sacrifice Dance. [R.F.]

[3] For a description of the whole ceremonial organization, so far as it can be reconstructed, see Flannery, 1953, pp. 36-43.

[4] See Flannery, 1953, pp. 43-44.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

575 did not constitute such. Their grouping was a purely temporary
701 one, lasting only for the duration of the Dance. During, for in-
*796 stance, the Crazy Dance, all who joined in it, both members of the vower's company and others, were called Crazy Dancers, but once the Dance was over, they ceased to be such; there was no permanent organization or society of Crazy Dancers.

608 A first step which a man who had vowed a Sacred Dance had to take was to fill an ordinary pipe, go to a man who had gone
*796 through the rite in fulfillment of a vow and who knew the rite well, and offer him the pipe, saying: "Here is the pipe. You will be my 'grandfather.'" By accepting the pipe,—and he could hardly refuse,—the latter became the vower's ritual "grandfather." At the same time the "grandfather's" wife became the vower's "grandmother," and both the vower and his wife (or wives) became "grandchildren" of the "grandfather" and his wife, and they addressed one another respectively by these names. The vower himself was in charge of the Dance and of the preparations therefor. The "grandfather's" role was that of liturgist, to instruct the vower in the ceremonies and observances proper to the given Lodge, and to see that they were carried out correctly. By way of exception, for the Old Women's Dance there were "grandmothers," but no "grandfathers."

When a given individual vowed one of the Sacred Lodges, other individuals could join with him in the rite, and each of these others would also choose a "grandfather,"—one who had participated in the given Dance,—with whom he (and his wife) would contract the same sacred relationship and who would perform the same offices. No person could be "grandfather" to more than one vower or associate on the occasion of any one dance.[8] The "grandfathers" would usually be older than the participants but not by any means necessarily very old men.

If, however, a younger man offered a pipe to a very feeble old man whose memory of the rites was poor, the old man might accept the pipe and so become the younger man's "grandfather."

---

[8] In 1948, The Boy indicated that for the Crazy Dance at least two younger men might together approach an older man and have him act as their ritual grandfather if he accepted them. [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The old man, however, might and commonly would appeal to another old man, who knew the Dance rites well even though he might never have vowed the dance, to double for him in seeing that the rite was properly carried out. 608 796 *

A keeper of one of the sacred Pipes, or at least of the Flat or Feathered Pipe, could not, during his term of office, function as "grandfather" at a sacred Lodge, but an ex-keeper could.

The relationship between ceremonial grandfather or grandmother and grandchild was a sacred one. Between such grandparent and grandchild a certain respect behavior had to be observed, and either was obligated not to refuse a request of the other. 608

Gambling, for instance, between them, or apparently even playing on opposite sides in a non-gambling hand game, was improper. [525] Between blood grandparents and grandchildren a distinct joking relationship obtained,* not however between ritual grandparents and grandchildren, although our field evidence is not entirely consistent. According to one good informant, between these latter, telling vulgar jokes and stories, teasing about lovers, and so forth, were taboo; according to another, a little freedom in such matters was allowed, but not as much as was allowed and practiced between blood grandparents and grandchildren. [603]

As regards, however, the much more significant mutual obligation of ceremonial grandparents not to refuse requests of grandchildren, our field data are entirely consistent and clear. This mutual obligation was rigidly lived up to and played a very important role in Gros Ventre social life. This role may best be illustrated by the following actual case.

Once Iron Woman, Crow Bull's wife, ran away with Kitfox. When people noticed she was gone, they said: "Oh, she must have run away again with somebody." Before she ran away this time, Crow Bull had said: "If she runs away again, there will be trouble." So people went to Black Raven, Kitfox's father, to tell him that his son was suspected and that there would probably be trouble. When Iron Woman and Kitfox came back, Crow Bull seized his loaded gun and dashed out as if he were going to kill

* See Flannery, 1953, pp. 121-22.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

608 them. Crow Bull's ceremonial grandson, whom he had instructed during the Crazy Dance and who was a relative of Black Raven, heard about this and ran in front of Crow Bull, saying: "Grandfather, don't do anything," and grabbed him just when he was about to fire. So Crow Bull said: "All right, because my grandchild stopped me." Then the relatives of Black Raven collected horses and blankets and other valuables, the young man himself contributing a blanket, and they all marched to Crow Bull's lodge carrying the goods and leading the horses. On arrival at the lodge, the guilty lover went in first with the fine blanket he was giving and did a great thing. He covered White Skunk, Crow Bull's "dearly-loved child"[7] with this blanket. So Crow Bull could hardly do or say anything. He just said, "Well, I will leave it up to my son White Skunk, whatever he says, I will do." White Skunk then said: "Just give her (Iron Woman) to that man (Kitfox). Just let her go," and that is what Crow Bull did. He got all these horses and blankets and other things in payment.[8] Thus even though Crow Bull was so angry, his "grandchild" could stop him.

[586] If a woman left her husband, and her "grandfather" went to her and told her to go back to her husband for she had nothing to get mad about, she would have to do so no matter how much she dreaded it.

608 If one Gros Ventre had murdered another, and the relatives of the murdered person were afraid to approach the victim's father 682 to offer indemnity, they could offer a pipe to any one of the father's ceremonial grandfathers. If the grandfather accepted it, he prayed with it and smoked it. When the murderer's relatives were ready with horses and clothing for payment, the grandfather would lead the relatives to his grandson, the murdered person's father, and say to him: "I have brought these people who ask your forgiveness. They are bringing these horses and blankets to you. I am asking you as my 'grandchild' to accept." The father could not refuse, for if he refused, some evil would overtake him. Actually refusals to such requests by a "grandfather" did not occur, to our informants' knowledge.

---

[7] For details on the dearly-loved child, see Flannery, 1941, pp. 33-37.

[8] For a discussion of indemnity in case of adultery see Flannery, 1953, pp. 185-88; for indemnity in case of murder, idem, p. 45.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Two general aspects of this socio-ceremonial relationship were discussed in detail with The Boy: the obligation not to refuse requests, and the possibility of abuses arising under the system which for the rest had obvious social values in solving conflicts and preventing bloodshed. 608

What lay back of the sense of obligation to grant requests? The offered pipe was the central symbol, whether offered once for all at the time the ceremonial relationship was first contracted or offered on a specific occasion to a "grandfather" or "grandson" not the offerer's own. The ordinary pipe as offered in either case was looked upon as a sacred thing, as symbolic or representative of the sacrosanct Flat Pipe and/or Feathered Pipe which had been given by the Supreme Being as the most powerful media to pray with, as the most assured means of getting a hearing from the Supreme Being. The offered common pipe was a sort of substitute in the case for the sacred Pipes themselves. The "grandfather" or prospective "grandfather" on accepting the offered pipe, would always pray reverently with it to the Supreme Being before smoking it. If he once accepted the office of "grandfather" to another, he realized that he was assuming all the responsibilities that went with it, among them that of never refusing a request made by his "grandson" without a pipe, or by another with a pipe to intercede with his grandson. It was a sort of implicit sacred pledge into which the Supreme Being himself entered, at least indirectly. He knew that if he ever refused such a request, harm would come to him in some form: he would have to pay the price of his refusal, to suffer the consequences. Whether such consequences would follow automatically or by action of the Supreme Being or other beings is not clear from our field data, but in any case they were in some sense "supernaturally" caused. If people heard that a "grandfather" had refused a request made to him by his "grandson," they would say: "He (the 'grandfather') has sealed his fate." They would immediately lose their good opinion of him,—a social sanction added to the supernatural one,—and would look for some misfortune to befall him sooner or later. If soon after the refusal, evil did befall him, death or other grave mishap, they would say: "That's because he refused his grandson." 626

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

608 The problem of possible abuses of the system was explained by The Boy along the following lines. "First of all if an old man had become my 'grandfather' only recently, say just last week and I were a young man, no one would ordinarily ask me to appeal for him to my 'grandfather.' By strict right I could do so, and if no one else were available, I might be asked, but as an 'amateur,' as one lacking in experience, I would not be a good person to ask. An older, more experienced 'grandson' would be asked."

*.796 Besides choosing a "grandfather" the vower also selected, as a herald or crier for the Dance, some intelligent old man gifted as an 203 orator. The crier's chief task was to walk or ride around the camp before and during the Dance announcing to the people whether the group would move and other decisions and agreements covering preparations for and procedure during the dance.

If the bands happened to be scattered at the time a sacred Dance was to be held, runners were sent by the vower to bid them foregather for the Dance. All members of the tribe were obliged to attend the Sacrifice and Crazy Dances, and pretty surely the Drum, Kit-fox and Dog Dances. As regards the Fly Dance, this was ordinarily held in connection with one of the other Dances, so everybody would be present anyhow. As regards the Old Men's and Old Women's Dances, they were not so lively or colorful, and were held a little apart and the people did not take much interest in them and "did not go much" to them; attendance was apparently not required.

.796 If any individual or group failed to come when summoned, the vower would request the soldiers of the Stars or Wolves as the 626 case might be, compel attendance. Even a war party could not start out if some one had vowed a dance and it was about ready 701 to begin. So much for the types or personnel,—vower, associates, age-groups, ceremonial "grandfathers," criers, police, and "congregation,"—more or less common to all the Sacred Lodges. Personnel peculiar to particular Dances will be taken up later when each is described. Before describing the Dances one by one, some ritual observances common to all or many of them may be noted.

*.796 After the vower of a Dance had chosen his ritual grandfather

*For a detailed illustration of this point, see Flannery, 1953, pp. 49-51.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

and before any further ritual step toward fulfillment of his vow had been taken, he arranged to have formal and public announcement of his vow to the people, even though he had already told some of his relatives or friends quickly or confidentially of it. In some instances the actual making of the vow took place at the public announcement rite. In either case the vower would call together in his own lodge all the "holy" men and women, such as ex-keepers but looked upon as holy, powerful, great. When all had gathered and were properly and solemnly seated, the vower filled a common pipe, offered it to one of the men present to have him pray with it and announce the vow. The one to whom it was offered could not refuse. If he were already in the place of honor in the circle he would remain there; else he would take it, and the occupant would vacate it. The chosen announcer would next make a smudge with sweet grass, and smudge the pipe in it. Then carrying the pipe he would go outside the lodge, stand in front of it, and in a loud voice call for order and command attention. After all was quiet, he would hold up the pipe and say: "So-and-so (the vower's name) has made a vow to do such-and-such (the content of the vow), you, Ixteibani:hohat," ending with a prolonged "Yo ho ho ho." Then he prayed, addressing first as always, the Supreme Being and next to the other supernatural beings such as the Four Holy Beings, Those-who-follow-each-other, but not the Last Child, that the vow might be carried out well, that its purpose might be attained (if not already attained), and that no sickness or other misfortune might come to the tribe during or after the ritual fulfillment of the vow. During the prayer, the announcer would mention the name of the person whom the vower had chosen as ritual grandfather. After ending the prayer, the announcer re-entered the lodge, and gave the pipe to this grandfather, and the latter took the place of honor which the announcer had momentarily occupied. Before or after the handing over of the pipe, all would smoke it, and some of those present would, of their own choice and without being invited, say a short prayer for themselves or for the vower.

Throughout the Sacred Dances, any ritual praying and smoking to be done with a pipe was done with an ordinary black stone pipe. Apart from the bringing of the Flat Pipe to the erection of the

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 Sacrifice Dance center pole, the sacred Pipes did not enter at all
[276] into the Sacred Lodges.

[801] In all the Sacred Dances, the ritual number was four and movement was clockwise.

A sweat-lodge rite was held in connection with the Sacrifice and Crazy Dances, but we could obtain no details on it; whether also in connection with the others our informants could not say.

The Sacrifice, Drum, Kit-fox, Dog and Crazy Dances regularly lasted four nights and days; the Fly and probably the Old Men's and Old Women's just one day.

The sacred Dances were not held in the winter time when the bands were usually widely scattered, but in the period from about May or June when the bands foregathered to September after which the bands tended to scatter for the fall buffalo hunt.

[361] The lodges for the Old Men's and Old Women's Dances were very simple and were put up outside the camp circle toward the south thereof. The lodges for the other Dances were erected inside the camp circle, near the center.

Feasting daily during the four-day dances was customary, except during the Sacrifice Dance which entailed much fasting on the part of the participants.

The alternation of reverent tension and pleasurable free release that characterized the sacred Pipe rites was even more characteristic of the Sacred Dances.

Sacrifice Dance

*796 The proper name of the Gros Ventre dance commonly referred to by whites and by many English-speaking Gros Ventres as the Sun Dance is aθe:hao'wə (literally, "sacrifice lodge"—aθe:'atc "sacrifice" and -ao'wə "sacred [not common] lodge"; cf. Sifton "sacrifice," athêyach and "Sun Dance," athéihawh'). We are therefore using the term Sacrifice Dance for it. The sun does not enter at all into it. The name apparently has references to the tortures undergone around the center pole by the main participants.

115 Our chief informants on the Sacrifice Dance were The Boy and Thick, who had witnessed the rite as boys and who had learned much about it from their elders: Coming Daylight, who had wit-

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

nessed the rite about ten times, Singer who had taken part in it 115
by giving presents, by singing, and by riding double with the men going out to look for the center pole; Mathilda Cuts-the-rope; Al Chandler, and Thomas Main. Thick's father made the last Sacrifice Dance in 1884.[10]

The origin Story of the Sacrifice Dance as told by The Boy is 773
as follows:

"In the days when Ni:hohat was still around, a Gros Ventre 539
man went out hunting in the timberland where there was a lot of trees and brush. While he was hunting he heard a noise. He listened to find the direction from which the noise was coming and then went in that direction. He sneaked around and looked from under cover. He saw a dance going on. A bunch of buffalo were dancing in a circle. He looked on a long time unseen by them. He heard the songs they were singing and learned them, and saw how everything was done. He saw a buffalo bring the other buffalo and set them in a semi-circle, and saw them sit down in a semi-circle.

"He made up his mind to approach them. So he walked over to where they were. When the leader of the buffalo, at the back of the lodge opposite the door, saw him, he invited him to come in and sit down beside him: 'Do like we are doing. Look around and see how the lodge is made. Study it and try to remember it and all the things here.' The man saw a buffalo skull alongside the center pole.

"The chief buffalo then said to him: 'I give you this lodge (dance). Use it. If in sickness or in danger the people promise they will make a Sacrifice Dance I will help them. When you implore the help of the Sacrifice Dance, it will be a powerful means to avert sickness or danger.' So the man left and went back home and related what he had seen and experienced. He is

[10] In 1948 The Boy, Charles Buckman and Steve Bradley among them were able to name 15 of the 23 Dancers whose flesh was pierced at this last Dance, as follows: Bull Head, Horse Capture (Thick's brother), Stiffarm, Wolf, Stiff Wings, Grebe Child (The Boy's brother), Arrowhead, Peter Capture, Boy Capture, Strikes On Top, Dan Sleeping Bear, Skinner, Many Capture, Stabber, Fluttering Eagle. Dan Sleeping Bear had told Charles Buckman that there had been 23 altogether. [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

793
539 the one who introduced the Sacrifice Dance among the Gros Ventre people."

*796 Although in the origin story, it was the chief buffalo who
171 promised to give aid to those who would perform the Sacrifice Dance, actually the chief buffalo was not prayed to during it, nor was the sun or any other being except the Supreme Being and Bha'a. Our chief informants have considerable knowledge of the Piegan (Blackfoot), Assiniboine and Crow Sun Dances, and emphasized various important differences, as they understood them, between these dances and their own Sacrifice Dance. "These sacrifices [in the Sacrifice Dance]," Al Chandler remarked, "were made to God, not to the Sun. I have always wondered why people call our Sacrifice Dance the Sun Dance. Anything the Blackfeet cannot understand they call the Sun and think he must be something." According to The Boy and Thick, while the Blackfeet pray to the Sun and while the Assiniboine in their Sun Dance pray and sing to the Thunder Bird (corresponding to the Gros Ventre Bha'a), the Gros Ventres in their own Sacrifice Dance prayed chiefly to Ixtcibani:hohat, secondarily, as will be explained later, to Bha'a, and with some incidental mention of or appeal to the Four Holy Beings and Those-who-follow-each-other (Sun and Moon) when praying with a pipe. Vows to carry out the Sacrifice Dance were made by the Gros Ventres only to the Supreme Being; the sacrifices of property, the prayer-"sacrifices" of self-torture and fasting, and the chief verbalized and gesture prayers during the rite were likewise directed to him. Our informants consistently and insistently emphasized that the Gros Ventre Sacrifice Dance was, in this sense, a predominantly theistic ceremony.

*796 While more generally the Sacrifice Dance was regarded as of
lower ritual rank than the Flat and Feathered Pipe rites and as
794 of higher rank than any of the other seven sacred Dances, there
791 was some difference of view on the point among our informants. The Boy, who himself emphatically ranked Flat Pipe rite as far and away first in dignity of all Gros Ventre ceremonies, with the Feathered Pipe rite, Sacrifice Dance, and other dances following in this order of dignity, summed up the situation as follows:

"While the supreme religion of the Gros Ventres was the Flat

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Pipe, some individuals or whole bands would consider the Sacrifice Dance as greatest, would give first preference to the Sacrifice Dance as a means of worshiping the Supreme Being, or would think of the Sacrifice Dance and other Sacred Dances as supreme. Then there were other individuals and bands who would prefer to worship through the Pipe *and* the Sacrifice Dance, or through the Pipe *and* some other Sacred Lodge." 796* 794 771

Among the reasons he and other informants gave for ranking the Flat Pipe rite above the Sacrifice Dance were the connection of the Pipe with the creation and history of the world and man, the donation of the Pipe by the Supreme Being, the rigidly determined and scrupulously observed ritual, the absence of all vulgar elements from the Pipe celebrations (as contrasted with some at least of the Sacred Dances). Reasons given for ranking the Sacrifice Dance above the other dances were that the Flat Pipe entered into active participation in the Sacrifice Dance and it alone entailed dire hardships in the way of self-torture, hunger and thirst.

The Sacrifice Dance was held only when some man had vowed it. A woman could not vow it, but, to judge from the story of First Singer, could vow to request a man to hold the Dance. A given man could vow to hold the dance as principal actor in it only once in his lifetime, but he could join the dance as an active associate participant a number of times. Once he had gone through it in fulfillment of a vow, he could serve as ceremonial grandfather on a later occasion to another who wanted to go through it. 796* 782

The vow was made to the Supreme Being. In the story of First Singer, however, whether her vow was made to the Supreme Being or to the sun or to both is not clear.

If the vow were made in, say, midwinter, its fulfillment would be deferred until about June or when the spring vegetation was well advanced. In the meantime the vower might choose his grandfather and a crier, the formal public announcement of the vow might be made, and the preliminary four nights of singing might be gone through. Before the dance began this good-time singing, by men and women jointly, took place on four separate nights, not necessarily successive ones, but any nights during the preceding month or year. The fourth of these, however, had to

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 782 be on the night immediately preceding the beginning of the Dance rite proper.

[785] Usually others besides the principal vower would vow to join the dance and to pierce their breasts with skewers. These associate vowers would also choose each his own grandfather and, with the help of his own crier, have the same formal public announcement made of his vow as in the case of the principal vower.

As proximate preparation for the Dance, if the bands were scattered at the time, the principal vower would send out young men as runners to summon the bands to foregather for the dance. Attendance was obligatory for all.

The principal vower set up his lodge in the center of the camp circle, and here headquarters were established where conferences of the vower and his assistants were held and whence pro tem laws and regulations, decisions when and whether to move camp, and so forth, were issued.

The vower's chief assistants in these matters were his own age-group or company, a component sub-group of either the Wolves or the Stars. Whether all the Wolves or Stars respectively, and not merely the vower's own age-group, were divided into "talls" and "shorts" (see below), and served as soldiers or "police" during the dance, to enforce attendance, order in the buffalo hunt and so forth, is a point we could not clear up, but more probably only the members of his own age-group.

[561 707] For either the vower's age-group, or perhaps, as just noted, all the Stars or Wolves respectively of which his age-group was a component sub-group, four head officers or "generals" or "lieutenants" were chosen, and also two subordinate officers or "servants" or attendants. The two tallest of the four head officers took the taller men of the age-group (or of the larger society, Stars or Wolves) as their soldiers, and one of the two subordinate officers; the two shortest, the shorter men, and the other subordinate officer. The two divisions, the "talls" and the "shorts," constituted the "soldiers" or "police" for the dance. Each division also had an outstanding old man as herald or crier.

[224] After the people had all been gathered together, the first task was that of gathering food supplies, buffalo meat and particularly

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

buffalo tongues, for the celebration. The vower and his assistants would through their crier announce to the people whether the camp would move for good hunting. On the march, the vower and his company took their place in line immediately after the sacred Pipes. No one was allowed to hunt or run the buffalo until the signal was given. 796* 782 224

During the hunt there would be foot and horse races, shooting contests and gambling matches between the "talls" and "shorts." The losers in the gambling would have to "cook," that is, to provide a meal for the winners, a feast at which the rest of the people, including the children, would horn in. Each one of the losers had to furnish some food or clothing and a smoke (not the pipe itself) to the winners. If one of the losers failed to bring a filled pipe along with the food or clothing wager, the wager was rejected, but he was given a chance to go get one. The winners kept track of the losers, and if any of the latter failed to pay up, they would not do anything to him at once while they were sitting around eating. But afterwards, the winners, followed by the rest of the people, would go to the lodge of the delinquent loser, who usually did not and dared not run away. Here the enemy-friend of the loser would take the latter out of his lodge, and lay him on a spread robe or blanket. The winners would then carry him to the stream or river, give him a good swing and throw him into the water. All the people would follow to see the fun, and the young boys would pelt him with buffalo chips. The victim had to take it all good naturedly and not lose his temper, and the crowd had a good laugh. If the loser were not in his lodge when the winners arrived, they would fetch water, and his enemy-friend would give the loser's bed a good drenching. 792 796* 525 527 522

The hunt continued, the group moving here and there, until enough tongues and other meat was collected, the tongues having been turned over to the vower to be jerked by his wife or wives. Then came the earlier-mentioned four whole nights of singing, done either on successive nights, or from time to time as the tribe moved toward the spot selected for the Sacrifice Dance. After arrival there the fourth of the four all-night singings took place, marking the first night or beginning of the Dance proper, which 782 796* [224 251]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

782 *796 occupied a continuous four-day (or three-day and four-night) period.

782 *796 778 At some time during the preparatory period, prior to the start of the dance proper, the principal vower's ceremonial grandfather taught him how to dance with the sacred wheel which was in one sense the main ritual object used in the Sacrifice Dance. One such wheel, we were told, is still in existence, in the possession of Mrs. Grace Stevens, but we did not have an opportunity to see it. It was vaguely described to us as being not a "woven wheel" but only a "hoop" with some down feathers attached to it. In dancing with the wheel, the dancer sang and with his right arm hanging down held the wheel in his right hand and swung it back and forth. When he tired of swinging it in his right hand he changed it behind his back to his left and swung it. When the Sacrifice Dance proper began, the principal vower was given possession of it for the duration, with the full right to carry and swing it whenever during the rite he danced and to otherwise use it. If one of the other dancers weakened and fainted from hunger, thirst, fatigue or pain, the principal vower would go to him and pass the wheel back and forth in front of the unconscious man's face, and would so revive him. Whether other vowers than the principal one could ever dance with the wheel we did not discover.

*796 [834] Those who "joined" the dance, at least the principal and associate vowers, had to refrain from sexual intercourse for a while, say two or three nights, before the dance proper began.

The morning after the last of the four nights of singing began the ceremonial "scouting" for felling and fetching of the center pole of the dance lodge.

Early that morning, four prominent warriors, men who had been successful as scouts in sighting the enemy and bringing back information, were selected to go look for a center pole. Each had to put on his war accoutrements as if he were setting out on a war expedition. While the four were gone, those who had sent them gathered buffalo chips and put them in a pile. The four scouts on returning announced their approach by giving a special yell, and the people would say: "The scouts are coming." As the four approached closer to the waiting crowd who were ranged in a half-

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

circle facing south with the pile of buffalo chips a little in front of them, they moved single file clockwise in four circles, to signify that their "scouting" had been successful and stopped just before reaching the pile of chips. Then some outstanding warrior who had made his mark in a particular battle in which no Gros Ventre had been killed walked out to meet the four, and they gave him a report of what they had seen on their scouting. Leaving them standing there, he then went back to the crowd. 796*

Meanwhile the crowd had been singing, a first song when they first sighted the returning scouts, a second when they approached nearer, a third when they were about completing their fourth circle. A fourth and last one was sung as the above outstanding warrior was coming back to them.

At the end of this fourth song, this warrior danced and told four of his war exploits, all four performed in battles in which no Gros Ventre blood had been shed. After this he said to the four scouts: "All right, now tell your story." The four then after walking four times around the pile of chips, gave their report to the crowd: "Over there at such-and-such a spot we found a center pole." [203]

This whole ritual "scouting" for and reporting on the pole followed closely the similar procedure in actual war-time scouting. One difference is that in the latter, scouts returning unsuccessfully would approach in a winding snake fashion instead of in the four circles.[11]

Next came the felling rite. The crowd, on being told the location of the tree selected for the center pole, went thither and the principal vower, his ritual grandfather and the four scouts went with them, the grandfather taking along a filled pipe. When they had all reached the spot, the grandfather made a smudge alongside the tree, smudged the pipe in it, and prayed with the pipe to the Supreme Being. Then each of the four scouts in turn stepped up to the tree and told four of his war exploits performed in engagements in which no Gros Ventre blood had been shed. This made 16 exploits in all. At the end of each of the 16 narratives, the respective narrating scout made a motion toward the tree as if going to chop it down. The narratives over, the four scouts went

[11] For procedure in war scouting, see Flannery, 1953, pp. 90-91.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 over and sat down with the principal vower and his grandfather and all six of them smoked the grandfather's filled pipe. When they had finished smoking, two young men selected for the purpose started to actually fell the tree. As soon as the tree began to totter, the four scouts shot at it and yelled, just as was done at the killing of an enemy in real warfare.

After the tree was "shot down," it was dragged in by the young men "soldiers," with much yelling and shooting, and was deposited at the spot where the Sacrifice Dance was to be held.

Then a recess was taken and those not obliged to fast ate. The [262] chief food eaten at the Sacrifice Dance was buffalo tongues and pemmican, both already prepared, which could be eaten in a hurry, for no one knew at what moment some order to be obeyed would be announced by the crier.

After the recess the "soldiers" went out to get the other poles [503] and the brush needed for the dance lodge. Each "soldier" would choose a woman, not his own wife, but "his sister-in-law, or any other woman of whom he was not bashful" to ride double with and accompany him. The women would dress up and stand outside their lodges waiting for the men to come along and put them on their horses. The woman sat on the saddle, the man riding behind her. Some women would run away so as to avoid going out with the men, "probably," Coming Daylight stated, "because these ones were afraid of their husbands." Coming Daylight herself had never so gone, but Singer had. "Some husbands," Singer commented, "were too jealous to allow their wives to go with other men to get branches for the Sacrifice Dance lodge."

*796 The poles and brush were brought in, and a number of hoisting 346 props were made. These props were made each of two tent poles; to one end of each pole a single short transverse connecting thong was fastened. The two divisions of "soldiers" the "talls" and the "shorts," each then split up into two subdivisions making four subdivisions in all. At the call of the crier, "Get ready," these four subdivisions began to march toward the hole, previously dug, for the center pole which lay alongside, all singing their parade song. On the way toward the spot, each of the four subdivisions had a number of the double-pole hoisting props, each prop being carried

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

vertically by two men, and the subdivisions all made four stops or halts, the last one right where center pole lay. Here they recessed a bit, waiting for the Flat Pipe. 796* 346

"The man who was going to put up the center pole," apparently the principal vower, would then take some goods as presents to the Flat Pipe keeper and ask that the Pipe be brought over for the raising of the center pole. The Flat Pipe was then brought to the spot by the co-keeper, with the ritual observances previously described (supra, p. 117), the prayer on the occasion being said by the Flat Pipe keeper, not by the vower or his grandfather or anyone else, and after the pole was up the co-keeper took the Pipe back. The bringing of the Pipe was intended, according to The Boy, to add solemnity and prestige by such participation to the Sacrifice Dance and to "sort of bless the dance and ask that good would come of it."

The center pole was forked at the top and was decorated, as described in detail on page 10, with symbols of Bha'a. At the base of the erected pole was an old bleached buffalo skull, placed facing the lodge door.

Before the center pole was raised, the principal vower's wife was taken over to the pole by his (and her) ceremonial grandfather who then "blew medicine" on it four times, the wife putting a band around it, and also the other poles of the dance lodge, with red paint.

The center pole was quickly raised, with the mechanical help of the hoisting props and apparently with the supernatural help of the Flat Pipe. Everybody cheered when the pole was finally raised upright in its hole. After it was firmly embedded, the upper ends of the rafters were placed in the center pole fork, the lower ends, seemingly, in other forked upright posts, and lashed on with rawhide. The sides of the circular dance lodge were then filled in with willows. The lodge was located near the center of the camp circle and faced south. According to Singer, "only great warriors went out to get sticks to keep the lodge lighted at night."

Clothing, dry goods and other offerings were tied on to the rafters, not on to the center pole, either before the lodge was erected or afterwards by a young man who climbed up the structure to tie 796*

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 them and these offerings "hung thick up there." The offerings were made to the Supreme Being to ask long life and happiness.

After the lodge was up, all who were to "join" the Sacrifice Dance went inside. Dancing continued for the three (or two?) succeeding nights, we were informed, but we obtained no further details on the ritual followed during this preparatory interim period, except as regards fasting. Those at least who were to go [785 through self-torture on the fourth day and apparently some of the 834] other active participants had to observe a strict fast from food and drink during this four-day period as well as to abstain from sexual intercourse. Those so submitting themselves to this regime would be further tested out by singers. Songs might be sung, for instance, about water, with words such as, "all the rivers and creeks have run dry," or about love and women, all just to put the young men to the test. People who were not fasting would conspicuously display and eat food right under the eyes of the faster. One or other of the young men might weaken under these temptations and "sneak out and give up." If he did so the people would banter him: "You are no man. You can't stand it," and his father or uncle would "give him the dickens about it."

785 Back of the fasting and sex abstinence as well as of the self-torture was a concept that was a basic theme of Gros Ventre *796 religious culture in general, and that one of our informants, Al Chandler, expressed as follows: "The sacrifice [fasting, sex abstinence, self-torture] those men [of the Sacrifice Dance] made was like penance because they thought you could not get anything unless you punished yourself, for God was not going to give you anything if you went out there laughing and full of good food. He won't help you that way." Making one's self "pitiful" when seeking power of or answer to prayer is a part of this concept or closely related to it.

*796 During the whole Sacrifice Dance the vowers were supposed to keep their minds on their praying, to concentrate their thoughts —another basic Gros Ventre religious theme—and the "tempting" behavior of those around them was seemingly a test of the vower's power of concentration, his ability to insulate himself mentally against external distractions.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The rite of self-torture, carried out on the day after the third (or second)[12] night of singing was the dramatic climax of the Sacrifice Dance. Either during the three-day singing and dancing or, more probably, on the morning of the day of torture occurred the painting and decorating of the dancers, those who had vowed to undergo self-torture.[13] By their respective grandfathers or others substituting as sort of "secondary grandfathers," each dancer was first painted over his entire body with white clay. On his upper chest, near the neck, was painted in black with charcoal or paint the figure of a bird (evidently representing Bha'a, the Thunder Bird), and a black zigzag line ending in a fork from each of the bird's wings across the chest and down either arm of the dancer to the forearm, and a similar black zigzag fork-ended line from each of the bird's feet down either leg and thigh to the ankle. Another black zigzag line, forked at both ends, was painted across the dancer's forehead, and under each eye, a vertical zigzag line, ending at the bottom in a fork, but painted in red, not in black. Sprigs of sage-brush were put on as wristlets and anklets, and around the head "so that they met over the eyes." "Common dancers" and other active participants such as the ceremonial grandfathers were painted all over with red paint instead of white clay, and were apparently decorated with over-painted designs similar to those of the self-torturers, the "dancers" proper. 785 796* 302 532

The self-torture rite, on the last day of the Sacrifice Dance, began with the skin-piercing, the insertion of the skewers, and the attachment of the thongs and shield. The skin-piercing was done by the respective grandfathers to whom the respective vowers, their grandchildren, gave generous presents of horses, robes and 785 796*

[12] Our informants agreed that the Sacrifice Dance lasted through four nights, but whether the night of singing just before the "scouting" for the center pole counted as one of these four or not, and hence whether the skin piercing took place on the second or third day after the "scouting" was not made fully clear to us,—more probably the third day.

[13] In 1948 The Boy stated that the dancers were painted with white clay and their faces painted differently each morning. "On the first day each dancer has a red dot on each cheek, the second day two dots, the third day, three,—these are their tears and indicated that the dancers are crying." [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

785 so forth for this service.[14] The one who originally vowed to put on the Dance was not pierced.

*796 A best robe or blanket was spread on the ground and the vower lay down on it. Three skewers in all were inserted, one on either side of the chest, and a third in the back at the left shoulderblade. The skewers were smooth wooden sticks "about as thick as a man's little finger," of flattish oval section, and "about as long as a cigarette" (ca. 3 in.). To insert the skewer, first an awl was plunged into and under the skin (apparently vertically), and with the awl the skin was raised up. Then with a knife the grandfather cut two holes in the raised skin, one on either side of the awl, at right angles thereto. The skewer was at once inserted, and then the awl was taken out. Thus for the insertion of each of the three skewers, three incisions were made, one with the awl and two with the knife. During this piercing and skewer insertion, song No. 48 was sung, a song sung only at this time.

After the skewers had been inserted, the vower stood up. To each of the skewers in his chest was securely attached one end of a stout buckskin thong, the other end of which was tied to the center pole. On the body end of the thong had been sewn a piece of buckskin with a short longitudinal slash in it, and the sides of the slash were looped under the projecting ends of the skewer (between the ends and the skin). To the skewer in the vower's back a shield was firmly fastened.

After this, each vower's grandfather would then put one hand on his grandson's chest and with the other would give the two thongs a hard pull and would jerk the thongs and push his "grandson" around,—this "to deaden his nerves," to kind of deaden the hurt and wound, and "to give him a sample of what was coming." Now the vowers were ready to "dance."

The vowers "danced," only one at a time. As each vower finished his "dance," he did not leave the scene, but waited until all had finished. While the vowers "danced" the old women sat around in

[14] In 1948 The Boy emphasized that while the grandchildren paid the grandfather handsomely for his services during the Sacred Dance, the grandfather on the other hand "nursed his children" by feeding them well during the preliminary steps of instruction. [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

a circle and sang a wordless song, while "other men and women danced up and down in one place behind the old women singers." 785 796*

The vower would start his "dance" by reaching back and tearing off his shield, and in doing so, of course tearing the skin over the skewer in his back. Then with the bone whistle he carried round his neck he blew "a rapid whistle," "a sort of trill," "as if he were blowing on a flute,"—this as a sign he was ready to go through the rest of the ordeal. Then while the singers "sang hard for him," he danced with both feet, pumped up and down, and swung around, pulling and jerking and backing on the taut thongs attached to the center pole in order to tear the skewered flesh of his chest and to free himself. Sometimes the flesh would not break, or the flesh on one side of his chest would while that on the other would not. When the ordeal would go on very long, and the suffering would be extreme, and the dancer might be exhausting himself, some one of the onlookers might have pity on him and say to a bystander: "You go and tear him loose." He would then go and push and throw the "dancer" hard so the skin would break off. The Boy and Thick knew one case where the skin on one side of the "dancer's" chest would not break off even by such pushing and throwing; so they had to cut it with a knife. People thought that the darker a man's skin was the tougher it was and this last man had very dark skin. "Sometimes the dancer's skin was so tough it would stretch way out like a shirt." When a "dancer's" skin would finally break under the pulling and backing he would just fall over to the ground and the thong would spring back round the pole. Then he would be taken back and laid down and the loose skin would be trimmed off. These trimmed off pieces of skin would be gotten together by the ritual grandfathers who would take them to the buffalo skull (at the base of the center pole), hold them up, and then lay them on top of the skull, "as an offering of the very body itself." [534]

"Some 'dancers' did not have much nerve and would wince and flinch. Some didn't bat an eye." At one dance, Coming Daylight told us, one young man after the thongs were attached and pulled "just burst out crying, it was so painful. After that he went to the center pole and put his arms around it and cried there. I [152]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

785 couldn't stand it. I ran home to my grandmother and cried too
*796 because I pitied that young man." On another occasion, Thick
too, then a young boy, "cried from the pitiful scene," as he ex-
[152] pressed it. "Big Thunder," according to Coming Daylight, "had very long thick hair. When he was dancing around the pole in the Sacrifice Dance his hair swept the ground. It looked just awful. I screamed and ran home." From what was told The Boy by his brother who underwent this self-torture once in the Sacrifice Dance and twice alone on a knoll (see details of latter rite, pp. 393-398), "The beginning was hardest; as you went along, you got sort of numbed and the pain was not so bad." His brother had felt very acute pain at the trimming of the lacerated flesh. That night the pain was so intense that he could not sleep: "it was as if two red hot coals were there."

According to Al Chandler the Gros Ventres considered their Sacrifice Dance a much more severe ordeal in the way of self-torture and fasting than were the Sun Dances of neighboring tribes and to this severity they attributed the early abandonment of the rite.

After all the "dancers" had in turn gone through their self-torture, they left the scene together, and were through with their participation in the Sacrifice Dance and could break their fast. But, through the succeeding fourth night, some of the other participants (which ones we could not discover) continued their fast, and the others danced and sang.

*796 Certain important features of the Sacrifice Dance have not been mentioned so far, as we could not learn just where they fitted into the ritual sequence. We shall describe them now.

The Boy was quite positive that a sweat-lodge rite was held in connection with the Sacrifice Dance, on the fourth night of singing and just prior to the beginning of the Dance proper. In all likelihood the rite followed in general pattern that of the Sacred Pipe sweat-lodge. Sweet grass was the proper ritual material smudge throughout the Sacrifice Dance including this preliminary sweating.

787 Some of the participants in the Sacrifice Dance,—"not necessarily
*796 the one or ones who had made vows, but dancers trying their

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

utmost to be fervent and sincere,"—would, at some time or times (not specified by our informants) during the rite, keep staring fixedly for a long time at the "nest" in the fork of the center pole. The purpose was mostly "to see things that related to war." "If the gazer saw the forms of headless human beings, that meant that the Gros Ventres were going to be given an enemy to kill." Sometimes was seen a human form, healthy, all painted up and dressed in good clothes: This meant that the favors being sought through the Sacrifice Dance would be granted. In the Assiniboine and Cree Sun Dances, our Gros Ventre informants said, the staring is done in contrast to the Gros Ventre custom, at the knots in the center pole, but for what purpose our informants did not know. 787 796* [171]

This divination gazing to foreknow martial fortunes, taken together with the markedly martial symbolism underlying the scouting for and felling of the center pole, lend a definitely, although by no means exclusively or even predominantly, war coloring to the Sacrifice Dance,—a coloring almost entirely absent from the Sacred Pipe rites, which are concerned dominantly though not exclusively, with long life, food and health.

The gazing, at "Bha'a's nest," brought Bha'a, the Thunder Bird and ruler of the storm, prominently into the Sacrifice Dance, as did also the thunder bird and lightning symbols painted on the bodies of the dancers and carved on the center pole as well as certain reliances on and prayers to him during the Dance. "If the dancers had danced a long time," according to Al Chandler, "and were getting weak, Bha'a, it was claimed, could make it cool and shady or even make it rain." Bha'a, too, was mentioned, after the Supreme Being, in some at least of the prayers with the common pipe. In all cases however, where Bha'a entered into prayers, he was either given subordinate second-place mention or was appealed to as a subordinate agent, with limited autonomy, of the Supreme Being. The vows, the sacrifices of goods and flesh, the tortures, and predominantly the prayers and rites were to the Supreme Being. As one informant put it, "all the things done in the Sacrifice Dance,—the tortures and so forth,—were one great mass prayer to the Supreme Being." 796*

We recorded five of the Sacrifice Dance songs, but there were

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 We Recorded five of the Sacrifice Dance songs, but there were
533 others, apparently many others. The skin-piercing song has been mentioned above. Another song recorded, a wordless one, number 49, as rendered by The Boy, was sung "when the old man [the grandfather] put the young fellow [his grandson, a 'dancer'] to sleep,"—a reference not clear to us. We also recorded another song, a wordless one, No. 51, as sung by The Boy. Another song, not recorded by us, but known to Singer, contained the words: "I soaked them with water."

The story back of one of the Sacrifice Dance songs, number 109, a wordless one, recorded by us as sung by Charles Buckman, was given us by him as follows:

"On one occasion the Gros Ventres held a Sacrifice Dance. Just then a new Sacrifice Dance song sprang up and was sung often during the four days and nights of the Dance. After the Dance was over, the people broke camp and moved to a site five or six miles down the creek. That evening a woman disappeared and no one knew what had become of her. The next day a searching party was sent out to find her. Some of the young fellows rode back toward where the Dance had been and when they got close they thought they heard someone singing. So they stopped and listened. Someone was singing this new song. 'It's a woman,' they said. 'Let's go and see.' So they rode up to the abandoned Dance lodge and inside it they saw the woman all alone shaking leaves (as was the custom) and singing this song. They took her and carried her back to the camp. There she had to be hobbled in order to be kept from running away. She died soon after."

Another Sacrifice Dance song, number 50, recorded by us as sung by The Boy, has the words: "The Fur Cap (an older Gros Ventre name for The Little Rockies) on the side (side hill or slope) of it. There is frivolity (sexual cutting up or looseness)." [836] This song was composed on the Hays side of the big brush between what are now Hays and St. Paul's Mission. Ritual sex license did not enter into the Sacrifice Dance, but during the Dance when the leading people and their helpers were busy and all the tribe was gathered together some of the younger people might seize the opportunity to "play a little," as The Boy euphemistically put it. Mothers would be anxious about their daughters. At any

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

rate it was apparently a well-known song, as Singer also, who knew some of the Sacrifice Dance songs, knew it and spoke of it. 796* [533]

Besides the sacrifice offerings, previously mentioned, of the trimmed pieces of flesh, and the self-torture looked upon itself as a sort of "sacrifice," other offerings of clothing, dry goods and so forth were made at the Sacrifice Dance. These offerings were made, Coming Daylight stated, "to ask the Supreme Being to give them a long happy life," and both she and Singer on another occasion affirmed that the "sacrifice" in the Sacrifice Dance was offered to the Supreme Being.

Further, apart from the gifts made by vowers to their ritual grandfathers for the skin piercing and to the Flat Pipe keeper by the principal vower, presents were commonly given away by relatives of the self-torturers to third parties,—old people, visitors from neighboring tribes, or others,—in honor of the self-torturers, or perhaps of others, too. At one Sacrifice Dance, Singer was allowed by her husband, Crooked Arm, to be present because her mother's brother was to participate (apparently as a self-torturer) in it. "I gave," she said, "a dress and a blanket in my uncle's honor. I put them down and a woman grabbed them immediately. When nobody grabbed the things, someone would go around and give them to old people. Most of the stuff was just piled up and then all of it was given away. If there were visitors present from another tribe, they would be given some of the stuff. Someone told that woman right there that she should not have grabbed those things, but they were not taken away from her. People used to give away even horses at a Sacrifice Dance." Coming Daylight's uncle, Crow Bull, gave an Assiniboine, Old Man Pigeon Toes, a horse at a Sacrifice Dance in which her husband, Little Man, took part in the "sham Battle." "Through these presents," she added, "Old Man Pigeon Toes claimed relationship with Crow Bull and called me 'grandchild.' The Assiniboine are worse than the Gros Ventres for claiming relationships!" 796* 431

As is obvious, it cost a vower, particularly the principal vower, a great deal to put up a Sacrifice Dance, and the occasion was also a considerable drain upon the resources of his relatives. Perhaps this, rather than any ritual prohibition, was the reason why, 796*

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 ordinarily at least, a man would be principal vower of a Sacrifice Dance only once in his life, although he might "join" a number of times.

Crazy Dance

This dance was called haha:tcau'wə "crazy or silly lodge" (cf. Sifton, hahachena, adj. "crazy, silly"). The dance was also called in common parlance the "miller dance," and the dancers, "millers," —the reference being to the origin of the rite and to the fire ceremony of the fourth day, to be described presently. Millers or moths are also called by the Gros Ventres "Crazy Men."

The Crazy Dance was last held immediately or shortly after the last performance, in 1884, of the Sacrifice Dance. Our chief informants on the Crazy Dance were: The Boy and Thick who had witnessed it three times and participated once respectively in the role of "little Crazy Dancers"; Turn Toes who had taken part as a regular "dancer"; Coming Daylight and Singer, both of whom had witnessed the dance, the former several times, although neither had actually joined it. Our information on the Crazy Dance is considerably more extensive than on the Drum, Dog, and Kit-fox dances, but is still far from complete. It confirms many details of Kroeber's account,[18] and adds a number of others.

*796 We did not obtain the full origin story of the Crazy Dance. The Boy stated that this rite had been first given (to the Gros Ventres) 773 by a miller (moth), that the Crazy Dancers when they jumped in the fire on the fourth day, were imitating the millers who fly around (and go into) the fire at night,—an interpretation confirmed by Coming Daylight,—and that the old cloak donned in the bow rites on the fourth day was "in imitation of millers," but neither he nor Thick knew any origin story of the dance, nor did they know why the badger and owl (see infra) entered into the rite.

*796 The Crazy Dance was, like the other Sacred Dances, held in fulfillment of a vow made by a man in case of his own, or a relative's serious illness or other grave emergency. Unlike any of the other Sacred Dances, it was also held under the following circumstances, without previous vow proper.

[18] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, pp. 241-50.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Between times, during the summer months, that is, when no sacred dance was in progress, the two soldier societies, the Stars and the Grass dancers (Wolves), would compete with each other in foot races or other sports or in gambling bouts.[16] The losers would have to "cook" or to do other things for the winners. The losers in formation, with one of them in front carrying the Crazy Dance badger pelt trimmed and fixed up and tied to one end of a stick, might go to where the winners were sitting in a sort of semi-circle. On arrival there, the man carrying the pelt would say: "We are also bringing the badger pelt. It, too, we lost in the bet,"—although actually the pelt itself had not been wagered. This was a dare or challenge to the winners to put up the Crazy Lodge, a challenge which they were "compelled" to accept. Some great man among the winners would then get up, take the badger pelt from the man who brought it, and make an exclamation meaning that he was glad and that he accepted the challenge. He and his fellow-winners of the same age-group would then at once send criers to announce their acceptance of the challenge and, to give notice that they would without fail carry through their acceptance, would get in formation and sing. When the Crazy Dance was so carried out it had the same prestige and it was performed with the same rites and observances, as when carried out to fulfill a vow.

796* [70] 517

Each of those men who joined the Crazy Dance joined with one of his wives or with a substitute for her. The chief although not the only role of these women was participation in the ritual grandfather sex-test to be described later. Some husbands were so jealous of their wives that they would do all possible to avoid joining the dance or having their wives join. This appears to have been the case with the husbands of Coming Daylight, who was a belle in her day. In other cases, as The Boy remarked, "the husband knew his wife's character and disposition, and if she were weak he did not put her to this test as he would be pretty sure that she would fail." Singer had never joined although some wanted her to do so at the time. "My husband," she said, "was advised not to let me do so because I was too young and I might make

796* 593

[16] Cf. Flannery, 1953, p. 42.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*D96 593 a mistake [ritual?] and besides it was a hard thing to do. I was too crazy yet, they said. At the time my husband's other wife was about to have a baby, and some wanted me to join so she would have a safe delivery, but the others did not let me do it." Then, too, if a wife were in her menses at the time of the dance, she to her embarrassment would have to say so and she would have to be substituted for. If a Crazy Dancer did not have a wife of his own he could borrow one, a sister-in-law or other woman with whom an avoidance or respect relationship did not obtain. Thus Little Man, Coming Daylight's husband, once gave permission to his unmarried younger brother, Spotted Bird, to join the Crazy Dance with her, but Spotted Bird declined on the ground of his being too young, although actually Spotted Bird took part in that Dance as an attendant, which made Little Man so angry that he would not give anything away during the Dance for Spotted Bird. "A man," said The Boy, "who loaned his wife to another man for the Crazy Dance had to be a strong man. And before he would lend any of his women he was pretty sure he was lending away the right one who had strong character because it was tough."

When a man made a vow or accepted a challenge to perform the Crazy Dance all and only the members of his own company such as Calves, Holding-on-to-dog's-tail, Having-breast-for-a-pillow, or other,—within the Stars or Wolves as the case might be, joined or were expected to join the dance with him. Actually, on at least some later Crazy Dance occasions, not all the members of the given age-group joined. When the crier announced the coming Dance, some of the men of the age-group involved might make remarks such as: "Well, these old men [the ritual grandfathers] are getting hungry for good times again! They want to play around! They are agitating for the Crazy Dance." And some might bypass that particular dance even though at the risk of being looked upon as jealous weaklings. "If," said The Boy "a man belonging to the age-group to which the vower of the Crazy Dance belonged failed to join the dance, without good excuse, he and [626] his wife would catch it; this would be published, because he did not want to have his wife go through this [the ritual grandfather sex-test]."

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

For the duration of a Crazy Dance, political as well as ritual authority was vested in the age-group giving the Dance, and the ordinary personnel of government ceased for the time being to function. The Crazy Dancers ran everything; their word was law; they decided what was and was not to be done, even regarding the hunt. 796* [561 621]

The vower himself was for the time being in supreme command. He selected, as his councilors, however, four outstanding men, of middle age, older than the actual participant dancers, but not too old, men of prestige who had won recognition through merit, who had made their mark and were known as "chiefs," "successful and with good homes, good men." These four, according to Turn Toes, were chosen from among the next older age-group of the society, Stars or Wolves, to which the participant dancers age-group belonged, and were "elder brothers" of the dancers. Turn Toes emphasized more the ritual functions of these four "elder brothers." While the dancers themselves were in authority during the dance, and paid the expenses thereof, they would be helpless without knowledge of the proper rites and observances. The four "elder brothers" who had previously gone through the Crazy Dance, would be instructors in procedure to the group of younger dancers and would give the decisions thereon. The Boy emphasized more the political functions of the four "elder brothers." The vower together with these four constituted a sort of council or governing body. The five consulted and advised together on arrangements preparatory to and during the Dance, the "balance of power" resting with the vower in case of a deadlock among the four "elder brothers."

After these five got together they selected as their crier an intelligent old man who was known for his command of language. [203] He sat in on their meetings, but without vote, so to speak. It was his duty to listen carefully and keep abreast of proceedings, and when decisions were made by the council of five he was told: "Go around the whole camp and announce that such-and-such shall be done." The five also chose as attendants or servants two young men, apparently two who had not previously joined the Crazy Dance. These two had no initiative; their task was to do what

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 the council told them to do. Before the Dance actually started, the participant age-group split up into two divisions, the "talls" and the "shorts," probably organized as in the Sacrifice Dance but we did not obtain details, except that the "talls" and "shorts" each selected a "tall" and a "short" old man respectively to be older brother to them and assistant to the above-mentioned chief crier. 789 The two groups competed and on one occasion in connection with *796 a Crazy Dance indulged in a contest of supernatural power, according to the following story narrated by The Boy.

"On one occasion, while preparing for a Crazy Dance, the 'talls' and 'shorts' besides engaging in games and sports against one another, played a game of magic, of exhibition of power. They put up a double lodge, like the one used in the Flat Pipe transfer rite, and started in to show their power, the 'talls' were against the 'shorts.' The contest went on and on, and a big crowd of spectators was attracted. The 'shorts' were losing and got mad. One of the 'shorts' made a snake, and it crawled around. At this the 'shorts' all cheered for their side, and said: 'You "talls" can't match that.' But the 'shorts' did not reckon with their opponents. 'All right,' said the 'talls,' 'We'll show you.'

"One of the 'talls' then stepped out in the middle. He used to wear in his hair a piece of rawhide cut out in the figure of an elk. He said to his comrades, 'Sing this song,' and he taught them a song to sing. Then he said: 'I'll lie down. You cover me up with a robe. Continue singing, and after a while uncover me. After everybody has seen what you uncover, cover me up again. Then sing again, and after a while uncover me again.' They proceeded to do as he told them. Meanwhile news of the making of the snake by the 'short' had traveled fast, and some of the principal men of the tribe had come over to the double lodge.

"The 'tall' then lay down and his comrades covered him, sang a while and uncovered him. When they lifted the cover, there sat an elk. The 'talls' cheered loudly. Then they covered him, sang a while, and uncovered him, and he got up smiling.

"But the 'shorts' said: 'That's nothing. We too can do things like that.' So one of the 'shorts' did just as the 'tall' had done. He told his comrade to sing a certain song, cover him, sing, un-

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

cover him and so forth. This they did. When they uncovered him, there lay a human skeleton. They then covered, sang, and uncovered, and there was the 'short' himself. And all the 'shorts' cheered and shouted. 796* 789

"At this point the principal men present stepped in: 'There is danger in this kind of contest. After a while there may be a fight.' So the contest came to an end.

"The Gros Ventres talked for a long time about this contest, and they still talk about it and wonder what would have happened if the principal men had not stepped in and stopped it."

The Crazy Dancers had to be, or by age or custom were, younger men, married or unmarried, fully adult but not yet middle-aged, "mature." They chose their ceremonial grandfathers from among those who had previously been through the Dance. From one to four,—but not more than four,—dancers could choose the same ceremonial grandfather, lest they should run out of grandfathers. Only those could be grandfathers who had never had sex relations with the wives or substitute women joining the dance with the respective grandson or group of two to four grandsons, and an actual shortage of grandfathers meeting this requirement was apt to be more than a theoretic one, at least in the later days when the Dance was given. In one case, in fact, still well remembered, the prospective Crazy Dancer had to hunt all over the tribe to get his ceremonial grandfather. According to Coming Daylight a man who joined the Crazy Dance a second time had to have the same grandfather whom he had had on the first occasion. Where two to four men combined to choose the same grandfather, one of one group served as a sort of leader for it. Apparently if the age-group putting on the dance belonged to the Stars, the grandfathers and grandfathers' helpers were chosen from the Wolves, and vice versa. 608 796*

There was great reluctance on the part of older men to serve as Crazy Dance grandfathers, although, to judge from the previously quoted remarks of some of the younger men, there were probably exceptions to this rule. The reluctance shown was real, not make-believe, as the older men approached to be grandfathers might have to make embarrassing confessions and refuse, or if they accepted had to undergo a severe test of character, failure in which entailed grave penalty, as will be explained infra.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 608 When, consequently, a Crazy Dance was in the offing, older men who learned that they might be asked to be ritual grandfathers were very apt to run away and hide. But they could not sleep forever out on the hills, and when they came home, they would be stalked and caught by surprise, by day or night, and offered a pipe by an individual or group of two to four who intended to participate in the coming Dance. The group had secretly convened and decided on their grandfather. Finally bringing a filled pipe with them they would go to his lodge and walk in. The older man would then be practically trapped, for in ac- [576] cordance with the general Gros Ventre pattern an offered pipe could hardly be refused. He might wilt and long hesitate, sitting with bowed head while the visitors entreated him to accept and to help them carry out their part in the Dance.

If on any occasion in the past he had had sex relations with any of these men's wives, either before or after their marriage to them, he would, when offered the pipe, be sacredly obligated to make indirect confession of the fact by refusing the pipe and saying to them (or to the individual young man, if the latter was alone), "My grandchildren, you are stillborn. I cannot serve as your grandfather," or "Go to somebody else. She is not your wife," or using some similar circumlocution. Such a reply might cause great embarrassment and worry to the young man, who perhaps had never suspected his wife.[11] Failure to confess would be "something wrong, a violation of belief or important custom" and would be followed by misfortune, even early death.

If when offered the pipe, stem first, the older man accepted it, and with it the office of grandfather, he would get up and say to the offerer: "All right, we will go outside." After they got outside the lodge the old man would say: "Now, young man, face east." The older man would stand behind him, holding the pipe stem up, and pronounce the vow, "A woman is being offered so that such-and-such a person will recover from sickness and get well. We are going to have a Crazy Dance. He [the young man]

[171] [11] The Arapaho custom in this matter was quite similar, we were told by an Arapaho woman, the widow of a Gros Ventre, who was present while we were discussing the point.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

says this to You [Supreme Being]," and at the end would say four times, "Yo-o-o-o-o-o." Then (or perhaps before this pronouncement rite) the older man smoked the pipe. The grandfather was free to recruit an assistant, usually a younger man than himself, to help him paint the vower and the vower's wife. The several functions of the grandfather,—instructing, painting, feeding, gift-making, and especially the sex test,—will be described as we go along. 796* 608

If the chief vower or any members of the groups of two to four dancers had younger brothers of, say, about 7 to 10 years of age, these latter could be brought into the dance as "Little Crazy Boys." These young boys were painted, were present all through the rite, and served as pages or messengers. If, for instance, a grandfather did not know exactly how body painting at a particular juncture should be done, the Little Crazy Boys would be sent around to get the information. They did not, however, participate in major features of the rite, such as jumping in the fire and so forth. 796*

The making of the vow to hold the Crazy Dance and the securing of the ceremonial grandfathers were done quietly and privately. The public phase of the dance began with the formal announcement.

A crier (or criers) would go around the camp advertising the dance and talking it up, with exhortations such as: "Now you young men who are going to dance, fix up your hearts, be men, be strong, be men and join the dance, go through with it. Be men, don't be weaklings. But think it all over well before you join. This red paint is rough (said figuratively to imply: your wife is involved, you will have to give her away, to expose her to a severe test.)" As previously mentioned there was apt to be a certain resistance on the part of the younger men, to this "sales pressure," and a touch of cynicism as well.

The Crazy Dance was usually held about June when the buffalo had fattened up well, or else a little later, about August. In case the people happened to be scattered at the time, runners were sent out to bid them foregather. The chief vower or the one who accepted the challenge put up his lodge in the center of the camp circle, and this served as executive headquarters of his council and age-group until and during the dance. [361]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 The main rites of the Crazy Dance extended over four days and four nights, and were followed by a period of "talking backward" and other "crazy" behavior by the dancers. Dancers did not fast during the dance, as did vowers during the Sacrifice Dance, but [262] ate heartily. Large quantities of food were procured beforehand, [784] and many puppies were killed and cooked to provide the delicacy, dog meat. The dancers, however, were not allowed to swim, bathe, or "touch water" during the Dance. If any dancer did so, Bha'a would get angry and there would be a big storm. On each of the four nights of the dance, the dancers slept in the Crazy Dance lodge, but after each night they went back home in the morning to paint up.

*796 The Crazy Dance lodge was erected in the center of the camp circle, not far from the chief vower's tipi and executive head-346 quarters. The "lodge" was an open roofless circular corral made of upright poles about 6 or 7 feet high stuck in the ground, with a wide opening to the south according to Coming Daylight, to the southeast according to The Boy and Thick. To the top of the poles were lashed tipi poles to make a railing. Over this railing were hung tipi covers, which lapped over on the ground inside the corral as a place on which to rest and sleep. The tipi covers needed—two, or three, or more, depending on the number of the vower's age-group who participated and hence on the size of the corral—were taken, without asking permission, by the dancers from enemy-friends belonging to the next older age-group of the dancers' own society, Stars or Wolves as the case might be.

*796 Inside the corral, at the place of honor immediately to the right of the opening, according to The Boy, or opposite the opening according to Coming Daylight, a little sort of wickiup was put up. Here, as the ceremony started, sat the chief vower and here was kept the ritual badger skin. The crier(s) (and council of four?) also were in the wickiup, according to The Boy and Thick. Very little of what went on inside the wickiup was known to our informants.

The participant dancers sat in the corral on either side, the "talls" on the west, the "shorts" on the east, with their respective ritual grandfathers and wives,—the dancers in front, the grand-

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

fathers back of them and the wives back of the grandfathers, according to one statement by Coming Daylight; the grandfathers in front, and the dancers and their wives back of them according to another by her. The bows of the "talls" and "shorts" were stuck upright in the ground in two crescents in front of the two respective divisions; the bows of the ritual "elder brothers" (the four councilors?), a little apart near the south or southeast ends of these two crescents.[18] 796*

The chief ritual paraphernalia used in the Crazy Dance were the badger pelt, hoof rattles, whistles, bows, and poisoned arrows. The stuffed badger hide, "trimmed and fixed up," figured prominently in the rites. The bone whistles, hung on the neck of the dancers, were blown by them when dancing. The rattles, θaθanas, sticks about five feet long, with deer hoofs attached in a row along the upper third, were used by the grandfathers who sang, sitting in a row and pounding the ends of the rattles on the ground to beat time. 293 796*

Each Crazy Dancer treated one of his arrows with poisonous wild parsley, and tied the poisoned arrow to his bow. If the dancer "got mad or any serious situation arose" he would unfasten the arrow and shoot to kill. If the arrow penetrated the skin of the victim or even scratched him, he died. This extreme measure was very rarely resorted to. We were told of no actual instance. When the dance was over these poisoned arrows were carried away to a spot where no one could find them and were buried. 796* [626]

The ceremonies on each of the four days of the Crazy Dance began with the painting of the bodies of the dancers and their wives, the pattern of the painting differing each day. The painting was done in the respective lodges of the leaders of the groups of two to four dancers. Here they gathered with their respective ceremonial grandfathers and "Little Crazy Dancers." The dancer and his wife, or borrowed surrogate, would sit there naked, the woman with legs close together and stretched out in front. This was a source of serious embarrassment to all concerned. The bodies 796* 302 [834 546]

[18] Kroeber, 1908, p. 242, gives a different arrangement, with which still another statement by Coming Daylight that "the women sat on the west side" insofar agrees.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 302 of the two, even the soles of their feet, were painted all over,—in red, at least on the first day. Coming Daylight, although she herself had never joined the Crazy Dance, used to hear that the women would say: "Grandfather, I cannot paint my back. Now you paint my back." The grandfather, according to The Boy, commonly recruited a younger man than himself as helper in the painting and would direct him how to paint the various parts of the couple's bodies. At some time in this painting rite, the grandfather prayed in a short quick way with a pipe for those being painted.

*796 After the couples were painted, all proceeded to the Crazy Dance lodge or corral, the dancers whistling on the way with their bone whistles in their mouths. On arrival at the lodge, the chief vower and the 4 councilors took their places inside the smaller wickiup, or enclosure within the corral, and the rite proper began.

[824] A smudge was made,—according to The Boy, of a certain large flat or bulbous semispherical mushroom the "fuzz" of which "flies out when it is stepped on,"—a smudge song was sung (but The Boy did not remember the melody), and a solemn prayer was said.

After the prayer came the "feeding" of the badger. Someone would suggest: "Sing the feeding song, so the badger can eat." Then someone would take the badger skin and walk with it clockwise around the lodge, inside between the bows and the outer wall. He walked very very slowly, barely moving, and while he did so song No. 59 was sung. He made the complete circuit four times, and the song was sung once at each circuit. If at any time he were not holding pelt down low enough to the ground, he would be told in backward talk (see infra): "Raise him up!" When at the end of the fourth round he reached the wickiup, he would lay the pelt down. Then song No. 60 was sung, four times in succession, and at the end of each singing the pelt was given a hard blow with a stick by "the old man" (the chief vower's grandfather?). All this singing and striking was done seriously and reverently, without levity. The Boy had asked his father, Lame Bull, the meaning of the blows, but the latter had answered: "I do not know." The two above songs, both wordless, were sung without accompaniment of rattle or drum. The drum note in song No. 60 was introduced by The Boy in his recording merely to represent

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the blow struck on the badger. Both songs were sung by The Boy for the recordings. Apparently at other times during the Crazy Dance rites,—about 10:00 a.m., 2:00 p.m. and 5:00 p.m. according to Coming Daylight,—the badger skin was given a blow, but clear details were not obtained by us. 796*

Between whiles during the Crazy Dance, when no specific ceremony or observance was going on, there was very lively good-time dancing, the dancers "jumping up and down" to the accompaniment of the above-mentioned deer-hoof rattlers. One such song, No. 61, was recorded as sung by The Boy, it has just one word in it: meaning: "I poured water all over him." The song is supposed to have been composed by the enemy-friend of some Crazy Dancer and sung about him. The reference in the case is to the prohibition against bathing and "touching water" by Crazy Dancers.

What rites, if any, were peculiar to the second day of the Crazy Dance we did not discover. The third day, according to The Boy and Thick, was the day on which payment of horses, robes, clothes and so forth, "the best of everything" was made and in generous quantity, to the grandfathers. The goods would be piled up and the horses picketed nearby, for all to see. Participants who "brought no presents then were looked down upon as no good." Singer mentioned only the presents given to the grandfathers, but The Boy and Thick stated that the grandfathers on their part also gave "presents" to the Crazy Dancers and that the transaction was "really a trade." In accord with the general Gros Ventre pattern of trade and gambling as well as of remuneration for ritual services rendered, payment to the grandfathers was expected to be made on the spot and in full; promises to pay at some future time and payment by installment were barred. 431 796*

Before we take up the rites and observances peculiar to the fourth and last day of the Crazy Dance, it seems advisable to cover certain ones whose exact place in the ceremonial sequence we are unable to determine from our field evidence. These are: the ceremonial feeding of the dancers, the giving of presents in honor of the dancers, the sweat-lodge rite, talking backward, and the sex-test. 796*

There was no fasting during the Crazy Dance; on the contrary

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 all ate plenty. Both the dancers and the grandfathers, and the latters' helpers, brought food. When the grandfathers brought food each would say to his respective grandson or team of two to four grandsons: "All right, my grandson(s), here is your milk." The grandsons or one of them would then get up, give the exclamation of thanks (according to Coming Daylight), and would kiss the "grandfather" and would "nurse."

In the course of the Crazy Dance, as at most other social and ritual large gatherings, it was customary for relatives of the dancers to give away presents in their honor, not to the dancers themselves, but to third parties.[10]

According to The Boy, a sweat-lodge rite was held in connection with the Crazy Dance, but we obtained no details. Presumably it followed the general pattern of the rite as carried out for the sacred Pipes.

*796 "Talking backward" was characteristic of the dancers' behavior during the day or days immediately following the four day rite, 195 but also, according to our informants, during the four-day rite itself. If the dancer said "Hit me real hard," he would be barely touched; if he said, "Don't hit me hard," he would be hit very hard. "Go away" meant "Come here"; and vice versa. An answer "yes" meant "no." "Raise it up," meant "Lo[illegible] down." "All right," a dancer would say "you fellows will [illegible]"; then he would sing and they would dance.

*796 The sex-test calls for more extensive explanation. It was a major, in a sense the major, feature of the Crazy Dance, the 837 "sacrifice" about which the dance centered. The dancers were in a sense "throwing away," offering as a quasi-sacrifice, their wives or substitute women. In the sacred Pipe rites, the costly offerings were in material things, sacrifices in the strict sense of the term, in the Sacrifice Dance, the main offerings were the physical sufferings of the participants, "sacrifices" in an extended sense of the term; in the Crazy Dance, the "sacrifice" consisted more in the mental suffering of the dancers who submitted their wives or substitute women to a severe sex-test, a test which at best brought acute anxiety and embarrassment to all concerned. From the

[10] For example, see Flannery, 1953, p. 108.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

content,—the announcement and other prayers,—it seems fairly clear that the "sacrifice" by the Crazy Dance chief vower and his associates was offered to the Supreme Being. 796* 837

Just on what night or nights in the rite the test or tests took place was a point we did not clear up. Information regarding the form of this test was not revealed by elders to children, and actual happenings when given grandfathers and granddaughters were alone were commonly kept more or less secret by the two parties concerned, though the facts might leak out and founded or unfounded rumors were apparently often topics of gossip. The test itself took the following form.

Late at night the crier would go around the camp and bid all the people to go inside and shut their lodges and stay in, and not even stick their heads out because the grandfathers were going to come out. Anybody who disobeyed this order would be chased, caught, made to dance, kicked, and apparently hit with cactus-armed sticks. When all was quiet and all the people were indoors, the ceremonial grandfathers would go out beyond the camp circle, halting four times on the way, and would sit down in the dark scattered here and there, each a distance from the others. The men dancers stayed in camp, in the Crazy Dance lodge, and "sang brave songs" until their wives returned. Their wives or substitute women,—whether one for each individual dancer or successively one for each team of two to four is not clear—then went out to the grandfathers, one woman to each respective grandfather. The women were naked, except for a blanket or robe covering their bodies and leaving only their heads sticking out. Each carried with her a filled common pipe.

If at the last moment a dancer would not allow his wife to go out and meet his and her grandfather, or if she failed to do so, or if after going out she did not submit to the body-to-body test, the fact would be published and tongues would wag, and there might be other consequences. On one occasion, the story runs, among the women going out to the grandfathers was a pretty one who had a lover. The lover intercepted her on her way out, took her home, and eloped with her. He died soon after, his body having just shriveled and wasted away. On another occasion, a certain woman,

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 a noted singer well known to Coming Daylight, appears to have declined to submit, after she had gone out, to the body-to-body 837 test, or at least to have resisted advances. On the way out she was heard to say: "Oh, I won't have this old man just for this little root [see infra]. If I wanted to own some medicine I could go and dig it out of the ground."

Each woman, when she had located her particular grandfather in the dark, would say: "Here, my grandfather, is a pipe." The grandfather would act as if hesitating to accept. He would not accept it right away. After he finally had accepted it, he would rub his palms on the ground and rub the pipe itself, "sort of cleansing it." Then he would pray with the pipe to the Supreme Being, for the woman, after which he smoked it alone. Then he rubbed his hands again on the ground and "felt (rubbed?) her all over, and cleansed her body."

After this she would lie down on the ground, supine and naked, and the "grandfather," likewise naked, would lie on her. In this position the ritual grandfather who had been chewing the powdered blackish medicine or sacred root, of a plant (unidentifiable by us) growing in the Rocky Mountains and not found in Gros Ventre territory proper, touched his lips to hers, and passed the chewed root from his mouth to hers. All this, as Coming Daylight put it, was considered "something holy" and "no sin whatever." Either the act or the root or both—we did not clear up this point—was supposed to impart what she called "life everlasting" (she probably meant "long life") to the woman. This root was chewed by the Crazy Dancers.

The ritual code which prescribed this body-to-body ceremony for the wife and her ceremonial grandfather, at the same time rigidly prescribed sexual intercourse between them. By code, the [786] ceremony was not ritual license but on the contrary a test, one set for the husband, the wife, and the ritual grandfather. "The husband," as The Boy put it, "was sending his wife to his ceremonial grandfather and giving her to him. It was figurative. It was giving but it [intercourse] was not supposed to happen but if it did, well it just did." As Mathilda Cuts-the-rope expressed it, "the test was for the husband to allow his wife to go out with the grandfather.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The husband would have to be a man of strong heart." The husband would be gravely anxious, and in a sense deeply embarrassed and humiliated, but could not show temper or "get mad"; "he would however have gotten mad," said Coming Daylight, "if his wife actually had had intercourse with the grandfather." 796* 837

The character test of the wife and grandfather was equally severe or even more so, but was, as is obvious, of a different nature. "These women [the wives or substitutes]," The Boy commented, "were usually young women, just enjoying life to the fullest measure. They were of that age, and to make the test more severe their husbands kept away from them before it so that the temptation would be greater, more intense. And the 'grandfathers' were not harmless old men." Apropos of this test, The Boy remarked: "It was known by the Gros Ventres that the female sex is the weaker one, but in such matters it is the stronger one . . . of old the Gros Ventres held this [sex] a great weakness of mankind."

Penalties for failure in the sex-test were either supernatural or social or both. One ritual grandfather, who on one occasion could not stand the test and who had intercourse with his granddaughter, was found dead in his bed before four nights had passed. If the couple succumbed, the fact was very apt to become known. "The woman," said The Boy, "would sometimes tell, or else the couple would give themselves away afterwards by their actions. . . . They would naturally brood over it [their failure]. . . . It would prey on their minds and they would blunder and make mistakes, and it would drive them downward, afraid to join in social life. People would begin to comment: 'What is the matter with these two?' The Gros Ventres were very inquisitive and would want to know what was the matter. The couple would be driven to make a confession and get it over with. Or something would happen anyway to confirm the suspicion that people had of them. . . . Even if the two were lovers, it would have been hard to do this [fail in the ritual] test and yet keep it quiet." [684]

There was, as would under the circumstances be suspected, appreciable differences of attitude toward this feature of the Crazy Dance on the part of husbands, wives and grandfathers. Some husbands, as we have seen, would not, for jealousy or for fear of

*796 sexual mishap, join the Dance at all or permit their wives to join, even though such refusal was apt to entail a certain loss of face 837 or status, to subject those who refused to the charge of being over-jealous weaklings, of not having "strong hearts," of not being able to take it. Most at least, perhaps all, who joined, suffered grave anxiety or humiliation or both. Some of the wives and ritual grandfathers, probably the majority, were, it is clear, very reluctant to submit themselves to the test, for fear of the penalties for failure, and, so far at least as these wives were concerned, for dislike of the anxiety, embarrassment and humiliation involved. Some other wives and grandfathers, probably a majority, were, it seems equally clear, quite the reverse of reluctant.

A certain air of secrecy surrounded this whole matter of the sex-test, and actual occurrences connected with it and, when the test and occurrences were talked about, they were commonly discussed in hushed tones. It was consequently very difficult for us to discover what proportion of failures occurred. The Boy seemed to think that failures were somewhat less frequent than did Coming Daylight and Singer, but all agreed that some failures did occur. Many stories and rumors ran the round of gossip. A younger, middle-aged informant, Cora Chandler, used to hear these stories. One of them, heard by Coming Daylight and told us, was that one couple said: "Let's lie here longer. There is nothing to worry about." "Some of the women," she stated, "liked it all right, but some of them didn't. . . . Some returned (from their grandfathers to their husbands) quickly and others would take a long time."

*796 After the test the ceremonial grandfathers and the women would get up and the latter would go back to their husbands in the Crazy 842 Dance lodge. The attendants on watch at the door thereof would announce their arrival. Each husband would go to meet his wife who would give him back the pipe that she had taken with her and would give him the root (or some of it) that she had gotten from her grandfather. Then she went home to her lodge.

The purpose for which the root was used was not known to The Boy. To judge from a short dialogue recorded from Coming Daylight, it may have had something to do with fertility, child-

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

bearing, or child begetting. She had said to her husband on one occasion: "If I had joined it [the Crazy Dance] and had been given it [this root], I would use it." To this her husband replied: "You should not talk that way. You already have children. You should pray to the Supreme Being." In this connection it may be recalled that some once wanted Singer to join the Crazy Dance in order that her husband's other wife, pregnant at the time, would have a safe delivery. The root may also have been a medium through or by which long life was imparted to the woman. 796* 842

The chief events of the fourth and last day of the Crazy Dance proper were, after the preliminary body painting, the fire dance and the bow rites. 796*

According to The Boy and Thick, on this last day in their respective lodges the Crazy Dancers were painted up to represent owls,—why, we could not discover. Their bodies were painted yellow all over, to the elbows and knees; the forearms, and the legs from the knees down, solid black. On the chest was painted an owl, with wings spread, the wings represented by black strips extending along the arms. The dancers' left ears were daubed and plugged with white clay (and apparently a mushroom), so that hearing was blocked on that side. From the left side of the head-band there hung an owl head (not a skull) over the left ear. 796* 302

In preparation for the fire dance, the ritual grandfathers treated the soles of the dancers' feet, according to The Boy and Thick,—their whole bodies, according to Coming Daylight,—with medicine. The dancers also, Coming Daylight implied, chewed this root during the fire dance. 796*

A prominent warrior "chief," from an age-group other than the one giving the dance, was then asked to make shavings out of a lodge pole for the fire. He would tell four of his outstanding war-deeds, and at each would make a motion as if starting to cut the shavings. After the fourth deed was told, he actually began making the shavings, continuing until he judged he had a pile big enough for the fire. Then he would light them. The fire was made in the middle of the Crazy Dance corral or lodge.

After the fire was started, there were four songs and four dances. One of these four, or else a song sung to the accompaniment

3; Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 of the deer-hoof rattles as the dancers jumped in the fire, was recorded, number 62, as sung by The Boy. It contains just one word meaning: "I wonder what makes me so crazy" (i.e., so crazy that I will jump in the fire). After the singing of the four songs, when the fire was blazing well, the Crazy Dancers said "Ya" and leaped barefooted into the fire and trampled it out with their bare feet. No case is on record of a dancer's feet being burned. As noted previously, the dancers in some way represented millers (moths).

It was a common custom for enemy-friends, male or female, of the dancers to rope them just as the latter were about to jump in the blazing fire and to release them only after the fire had died down or been stamped out. On release, the dancers would step only in the coals or ashes. Coming Daylight had so held back an enemy-friend on one occasion. Some women were quite strong enough to so hold men dancers back. At other times the men would [522] break loose from the women. All this was done as a practical joke on the enemy-friend. Sometimes a wife would so hold back or try to hold back her husband, with a rawhide rope tied to his belt, apparently out of fear for his safety.

After the fire dance came a series of rites or observances which we are calling the bow rites, as the bow enters prominently into them. They consist of a dance, a race, bow-tightening, arrow-shooting, and moccasin plundering.

*796 Before the dance began the Crazy Dancers selected two prom-
526 inent men from another age-group than their own to act as referees for the race that followed the Dance. These two, one for the "talls" and one for the "shorts," took their places on either side of the dance lodge door. Then the grandfathers took the bows of their respective grandsons and, to the accompaniment of the deer-hoof rattles, sang four times a wordless song, number 63,—sung by The Boy and recorded by us. The dancers did not join in the singing as they had their whistles in their mouths. During the singing, the Crazy Dancers, in a mass, "talls" and "shorts" mingled, but with each team of two to four led by its grandfather carrying its bows, moved clockwise in a sort of dancing walk around the inside of the dance lodge, beginning at the left of the entrance. The singing and dancing were so synchronized that the

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

mass of dancers would reach the right entrance at the ending of the fourth singing. On arrival there, the dancers said "Ya" and grabbed their bows from the hands of their grandfathers and started their race. 796* 526

They ran pell-mell toward a mound far outside the camp circle, rounded the mound clockwise, raced back to the dance lodge. All the dancers, "talls" and "shorts," had to take part in the race. Their grandfathers did not accompany them, but the two old men criers, of the "talls" and "shorts" respectively, ran along with them.

Each of the "talls" and "shorts" on reaching the dance lodge gave his bow to the respective referee at one entrance. The losing side, "talls" or "shorts," had to give a smoke to the winners.

While the dancers were racing, the two old criers were having a race of their own, a race which provided "lots of fun" for the spectators. Along the way the boys would in fun pick up buffalo chips and throw them at the two old men. At one Crazy Dance, the two racing criers were The Boy's father, Lame Bull, and another old man, both crippled. The latter was outdistancing Lame Bull, but the boys bothered him so much that he left off the race to chase them, while Lame Bull kept going and came in the winner. The other old man accused Lame Bull of framing him. According to Turn Toes, the four "elder brothers" or councilors were the ones who raced and were pelted with buffalo chips, but we did not have opportunity to discuss the point in detail with him.

After the race and the subsequent smoke to the winners, came the bow-tightening rite, for which some poor old man was chosen. The referees re-distributed the bows to the dancers. The dancers then each put on their best moccasins and an old robe with a hole in the middle to be worn like a poncho, the old robe being "in imitation of millers."[20] The old man would get ready well away from camp, lying face down on the ground with his head covered with a robe. Each dancer would tighten his bowstring, bracing 796*

[20] In 1948 The Boy stated that this robe made from discarded lodge covers hung down the back, with only enough in front to hold it on. It was painted red at the four corners and at the neck; owl "pelts" were attached between the shoulders, the large feathers having been removed, and hung down the back. When the garment was worn it looked as though the dancer's shoulders were painted. [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 the bow on the old man's back, and would push in under the old man's robe moccasins or other goods, as presents or payment. "The old man's back," Coming Daylight remarked, "would get higher and higher and he would go home with a pack [of these presents] on his back."

After this, each of the dancers moved away from where the old man had been lying, mounted an arrow, and danced four times. At each of the four dances, they motioned as if to shoot the arrow. At the end of the fourth song, they said "Ya," and released their arrows. The boys then grabbed the arrows; whoever grabbed one could keep it as his own.

Then the dancers started running back to camp, with men, women and children chasing them. Any pursuer who succeeded in grabbing a dancer—and throwing him down, according to Coming Daylight—would take the moccasins of the latter, who would submit without struggle. On one occasion Coming Daylight chased a dancer who was "kind of queer" but who "could run like an antelope." He made for a high hill, calling back at her repeatedly: "Why don't you make your own moccasins if you want them?" She could not overtake him.

This moccasin-plundering apparently marked the end of the Crazy Dance rite proper. After it the dancers would mingle barefooted with the people throughout the camp and "talk backward," and the whole camp would move, if only a little way off.

*796 But for some time after the end of the rites proper,[21] the dancers would go around giving orders in "backward talk" to any one they 522 met to dance or sing, chasing and "shooting" members of other age-groups as "imaginary enemies," and indulging in other forms of horseplay. If any victim was commanded "I suggest that you don't dance," he would have to dance. If told, "Don't sing," he would have to sing four times any Crazy Dance song he remembered. If the victim said, "Don't kick me hard," he would be kicked hard, and vice versa. The "imaginary enemies," especially enemy-friends and members (and their wives) of the opposite society, Stars or Wolves as the case might be, were shot with arrows the ends of which had been chewed to blunt them, as there

[21] Four days, according to Kroeber, 1908, p. 247.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

was no intention to really hurt the "enemies." Dogs, too, would be shot at. The poisoned arrow was of course never used in such good-natured shooting. The horseplay could, however, at times be pretty rough. On one occasion, a Crazy Dancer put his foot on the chest of an old man returning from berry-picking in the mountains, and pushed him over the edge of a cutbank. The old man fell over and also spilled all his berries. The Crazy Dancer was avenging the old man's inordinate boasting against "imaginary enemies" in an earlier Dance in which the latter had been a crier. On another occasion, when Coming Daylight's husband, Deafie, was coming back from hunting with deer meat piled on his horse, Crazy Dancers chased him clear to his lodge, although he had been their ritual grandfather. Coming Daylight at risk of being herself "shot" by them, went out of the lodge and upbraided them roundly, throwing in to boot a coarse remark, and making an insulting noise. They went off without "shooting" her but with the parting remark: "My, we have a crazy grandmother!" 796* 522

Drum Dance

This Sacred Dance got its name bie:təhao'wə, "drum lodge" (cf. Sifton, "drum," biitáhê) from the single very big drum used in it. The members of the dance or lodge were called Drum Lodge men. 796*

The Dance died out very early, either shortly before Lame Bull's birth in 1824, or too soon thereafter for him to have witnessed it. Our information on it, derived mostly from The Boy, with stray bits from Coming Daylight, and Singer, is extremely fragmentary. The Boy had learned the origin story, four of the songs, and a few ritual details from Lame Bull. The latter knew a married couple who had taken part in the dance; the wife used to show a crooked stick that had been used in it. Coming Daylight had been told a little about it by one of her very aged "mothers"; Singer, by her husband, Iron Bucket. Neither of the two old women liked to talk about it as, they thought, they did not know enough about it to do so. Some features of the rite, in addition to those explicitly mentioned by our informants, may be reasonably inferred from parts of two stories narrated by The Boy.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

773
539

One of these, the origin story of the Drum Dance, was told by him as follows:

"A long time ago the Gros Ventres (or a party of Gros Ventres) made a long journey toward the Black Hills (in South Dakota). One of the Gros Ventre men became separated from his friends, and could not find his way back to them, and so got lost on an endless plain somewhere northwest of the Black Hills. He must have had no weapons with him, for in his wanderings he had nothing to eat and was near starving to death. So he made up his mind to seek a place where he could lie down and die.

"So he came to the bed of an old dry lake and said: 'Here I will die.' He decided to die crying. So he walked around the lake bed crying. He spent four nights there. The morning after the fourth night he was still crying but was very weak. Every once in a while he lay down. On one such rest, he fell into a light slumber, not a deep sleep, and heard a crier under the lake bed announcing: 'W-e-e-e-e. What is the matter with you drum men who belong to the Drum Dance? When are you going to pity that poor man up there? Come here together.'

"Then the sleeping man heard drumming and singing. The drumming and singing seemed to be coming in his direction and when it got to where he was lying a voice said to him: 'Get up and look at the drum men.' Then he sat up. It was broad daylight and as he looked toward the direction whence the voice and drumming and singing had come, he saw two lances (or sticks), curved (crooked) around on the upper end (like a shepherd's crook), come up from the ground of the dry lake bed. Three times they came up and after each time disappeared in the ground. The fourth time they came up, there were two men carrying them. A crowd of men, walking two by two, streamed out after the two lance carriers, and two other lance bearers brought up the rear end of the line. They all marched in this formation round the dry lake bed once, clockwise, and then stopped. The one who seemed to be leader of the group then spoke to the starving man: 'Take a good look at me and us. We have pitied you. You are going to be saved and to get back home. Also we will transfer to you our drum, our lodge (dance), our power.'

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

"The Gros Ventre man looked around and he saw that the two crooked sticks carried at the front of the line were wrapped around with otter skin, around which skin were tied four pieces of white rabbit skin, and at each place two eagle feathers were hanging. The sticks carried by the two rear carriers were wrapped with rabbit skin, with four pieces of otter skin tied around, and with two eagle feathers at each place where the otter skin was tied. 773 539

"Then the group started to sing and dance and to go round in a circle. This they did four times, with a rest after each circling. Then said the leader to the Gros Ventre man: 'I have told you that we have pitied you. Now I will show you the rite that belongs to our dance. You will be saved and will get home. This dance of ours can be called upon (that is, vowed) in times of great emergency, especially in times of great fear. We give you the whole thing. When you get home you can make known what you have seen and heard here. Tell the people that when they are in fear, they can call on us, on our dance, and we will help them. Besides giving you our dance, I am giving you my horses so you can get home quickly. Soon after you get home you must put up this lodge.'

"Then they danced and they taught him the rite. The leader then said to him: 'Wait here. I will go back after the horses I promised you.' Then he and the others of his group disappeared under the ground. Pretty soon the leader reappeared coming up at the same spot where he had gone under. This time he was alone, leading a big black stallion. He brought the horse to the Gros Ventre and said: 'Here is your horse. You can ride him, or else sometimes lead him. You will get home quickly and safely. This stallion has many colts. They will follow him. Do not abuse the stallion or any of his colts.[32] Ride them. You can go now.'

"So the Gros Ventre took the horse and mounted it and rode off. As he looked back he saw a big herd of horses following him. It was not long, only a few nights, before he got home, bringing the big herd of horses with him. To each Gros Ventre of the whole tribe he gave a horse. After he had rested up he did what he had

[32] That horses should never be abused or badly treated was part of the general code.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

773 been told to do and put up the Drum Dance. Thus was the Drum
539 Dance introduced among the Gros Ventres into their sacred dance system."

When Lame Bull told The Boy this story, the father asked him: "Who was it who gave this dance and these horses?" And his
[825] father answered: "The killdeer." So the Drum Dance is owned by the killdeer (*Oxyechus vociferus*).

The Drum Dance ranked high in dignity among the Sacred
*796 dances. Lame Bull ranked it next after the Sacrifice Dance, and first in importance in the Drum-Dog-Kitfox-Crazy group, because, he told The Boy, the Drum Dance was "most difficult and complicated to carry out," and through it "more horses had come to the Gros Ventre tribe."

The Drum Dance was held only in fulfillment of a vow. The
[801] rite lasted the customary four days and nights, with a big feast each day. The Boy was uncertain whether a sweat-lodge ceremony was held during the Drum Dance.

The chief sacred objects used in the Drum Dance were, so far
[778] as we could learn, the very large drum, and the fur-wrapped crooked sticks which were carried by the dancers and which to judge from the origin story were four in number and were decorated as therein described. The dancers themselves were
[302] painted yellow all over their bodies, with black dots, representing hail, from the waist up.

Four of the Drum Dance songs, numbers 52-55, were recorded,
*796 as sung by The Boy, who had learned them from his father, Lame
533 Bull. There were others which The Boy did not remember, nor did he know the ritual order in which they were sung.

Two of these four songs, numbers 52 and 53, are wordless, and were sung at good-time dances during the Drum Dance. Number 53 is the song that was sung by the men marching out of the dry lake-bed when the Drum Dance was first given to the starving Gros Ventre man by the killdeer. These dancing songs were lively ones, sung to fast time.

Song number 54 is difficult to translate as the meaning of two of one of the words was unknown. The Boy ventured the conjecture that the whole wording might possibly mean: "There are

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

so many other people (besides the Drum Dance men) whom I am carrying that I don't care about the rest of them." He recalled in this connection a Gros Ventre children's game in which they split into two groups and one child from one group goes over to the other group and carries the members thereof one by one to his side. At any rate, this was the first song sung by the Drum Dance men at the first stop they made when going to fight the Piegan (in the story to be given presently). 796* 533

The words of song number 55 refer to the place of the future life where the lodge of the Drum Dance men is all ready to receive them if they die in the battle. They were supposed to be ready to sacrifice their lives, feeling they would go to the Big Sand where they would be better off than here. As these words were sung, the men would point with their thumbs toward where the Big Sand was located, in the north, and would face in that direction. In the sign language pointing is done only with the index finger. Pointing in this special way, with the thumb, was done to signify that the men so pointing were doing a brave thing, were courageous and not chicken-hearted, and were ready for the worst. Some further light upon the meaning and context of this song, as well as upon certain other aspects of the Drum Dance, is shed by the following story narrated by The Boy, and confirmed in part by a less detailed version of it by Coming Daylight who added somewhat cryptically that "these (Drum Dance) men never stood back [retreated?], they always made an attack on the enemy." Singer also stated, likewise rather cryptically, "Iron Bucket [her husband] told me they (the Drum Dancers) would go away off on a war path and stay four days and spy on their own camp and go back to war." The Boy's story was as follows:

"On one occasion during a Drum Dance which had been put on in fulfillment of a vow, a group of Gros Ventre men went out to hunt buffalo. While they were out they were attacked by some Piegan. The Piegan were on foot, while the Gros Ventres were on horseback, so it was easy for the latter to get away. It occurred to the Gros Ventres that they might play a trick on the Piegan and make a lot of sport for the occasion of the Drum Dance. So they detailed one of their number to go back and notify their camp 726 796*

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

726 that some Piegan were where they (the Gros Ventre hunters) were. This one went and did as directed.
*796

"The Drum Dancers decided to take the matter into their own hands, as during the Drum Dance their word was law. They sent the crier around camp to notify the people that they, the Drum Dancers, were taking over the situation, and that everybody else should step aside and let them handle it.

"All the Gros Ventres then struck out from camp, with the Drum Dancers in the lead. When the crowd reached the place where the Gros Ventre hunters were holding the Piegan at bay, it stopped, and the Drum men said: 'Let us do the fighting. The others will just look on at us.' And so it was agreed.

"The Drum Dance men then all got in formation, just as the underground people (killdeer) had been at the dry lake bed, with two men in front carrying the crooked sticks, the others in line two by two, and two likewise at the rear carrying crooked sticks.

"The Piegan started to make trenches. The Drum Dancers marched in formation toward the Piegan, then halted, and sang a certain song [No. 54] three times and danced. The Piegan came out of their trenches to see this unusual thing that was going on. They thought that perhaps the Gros Ventres wanted to make peace, and stood there watching the show, not knowing it was the killdeer (Drum Dancers). The Drum Dancers next marched toward the Piegan a second time, halted as before, sang a second song four times and danced. All this they did a third time, singing a third song four times.

"After marching forward a fourth time, which brought them very close to the Piegan, they halted and sang a fourth song four times (song No. 55), but did not dance. Instead of dancing, while they sang they faced toward basnable (the place of the dead), stretched their right arms out to the limit[28] to show that they meant unreservedly what they were doing, and held their right hands up with four fingers clenched and with thumbs up (or pointing toward basnabe). The leader of the Drum Dancers had meanwhile told them: 'When you finish the fourth singing of this fourth song, charge!'

[28] If they had not stretched their arms out *to the limit* and *fully*, this would have meant that they were not *fully* meaning to carry through.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

"As soon as they had so finished the fourth singing, one of the two forward crooked-lance carriers threw his lance into the Piegan trench and followed in after it, and the Piegan slashed him to pieces. Next the drummer, who had been carrying the drum slung over his right shoulder, threw the drum into the Piegan trench, followed in after it, and was likewise slashed to pieces. Then all the other Drum Dancers followed the two into the trench. All the Piegan were killed, while the Gros Ventres lost only two men, a lance-carrier and the drummer." 726 796*

Coming Daylight's account of this battle, less detailed and considerably generalized, enables us to date it as somewhere around the early nineteenth century. She was told it by one of her "old, old 'mothers'" whose husband had taken part in it. This "mother's" husband had joined the Drum Dance and she had to go along with him. The dancers would go way off and look for the enemy. If they spied him and were themselves unseen, they would go back to their camp, get their drum and return to where the enemy was. They would creep up on the enemy and when close enough to prevent escape would beat the drum and rush to the attack. The drummers (Coming Daylight used the plural, though mentioning only the one drum) in the battle with the Piegan dismounted from their horses, marched drumming toward the enemy, and jumped down into where they were. Some of the dancers who had guns marched with them and also jumped down among the Piegan enemy. Others attacked on horseback. It seems to have been the code of the Drum Dancers, never to "stand back" [retreat?] but always to attack.

Kit-fox Dance

This dance was called no:hao'wə, "Kit-fox lodge" (cf. Sifton, nóuhê, "fox, smaller kind"). 796*

We were able to gather only scattered data on this dance, which partly corroborated, partly added to, Kroeber's description.[24] Our data came from: The Boy,—whose father, Lame Bull, had gone through the dance,—Thick, Turn Toes, Coming Daylight,—whose

[24] Kroeber, 1908, pp. 250-51.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*1796 uncle, Crow Bull, had joined it,—and Singer. According to Turn Toes the dance was probably last performed when he (born about 1860) was a little boy, too young to take part in it.

The following is the Kit-fox Dance origin story as told by The 773 Boy:

539 "Long ago a Gros Ventre man was hunting kit-foxes to get their pelts for use as clothing. He sighted a kit-fox but before he could kill it it ran into its hole. The man made up his mind to nevertheless get the kit-fox. So he gathered sage and other brush and made a smudge. When the brush was smoking well, he shoved it into the kit-fox's hole and closed up the hole, in order to smoke out the kit-fox.

"Then waiting around he lay down and dozed, and while he dozed he heard singing under the ground. When the singing stopped, he woke up, and heard the kit-fox grunting. So he opened up the hole. At this the kit-fox came out, sat down at the opening of the hole, facing the Gros Ventre, and said to him: 'I am glad you have spared my children and me. You were just about to kill all of us. I am glad you pitied us. So in turn I will pity you. I will give you my lodge and you can have it ever after this. If you or anyone in the tribe is sick, make a vow to put up my lodge, and you or the other sick person will get well.'

"Then the kit-fox sang a song, one different from the song the man had heard when he was dozing. When the kit-fox had finished singing this second song it said to the Gros Ventre: 'Look at me. See how I am painted. In my lodge (dance) paint yourself the same way. When you put up this lodge, use my body.' Then the kit-fox told the man how to dress and paint in the dance and what songs to sing, and taught him all these songs. Then 'Go back,' said the kit-fox, 'to your tribe and put up this lodge. I give you this right, so you may introduce this dance into your tribe. In order to put up my lodge, a vow must first be made. But I give you the right to put up the first one, and then you can tell the story!'

"Then after the kit-fox had fully instructed the man, he did not kill that particular kit-fox but let it go and he himself went back to camp. When he got back home he told what had happened and started to get ready for the dance, gathering clothes and other

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

things together, and making ready a kit-fox skin stuffed to look like a live kit-fox. This last was used in the dance. The Gros Ventre made a great impression on his tribe and his dance was accepted and recognized as a Sacred Dance, and a vow was made to perform it." 773 539

The Kit-fox Dance was held, like the other dances, in the summer time,—about August, so Charles Buckman thought,—and everyone was obliged to be on hand for it. Preliminaries might however begin far back in the preceding winter, particularly the painting and taking out of the joiner's wives by the ritual grandfathers. This latter preliminary phase of the dance seems, from Coming Daylight's report (infra), to have been very similar to a corresponding phase of the Crazy Dance, but we were able to secure only the following, rather vague, account of it as described by Coming Daylight: 796*

"In the Kit-fox Dance the wives had to go out with their 'grandfathers' just as in the Crazy Dance. My uncle, Crow Bull, once joined it with his Assiniboine wife, Coming Day, and it took a long time. The 'grandfathers' used to take extra long [in preparation for] for this dance and, if the [preparatory] time was winter, they made nice places, brushing the snow away, where they would lie down with their ceremonial grandfathers. The 'granddaughters' would go to their 'grandfathers' ' lodges and then the 'grandfathers' would take them out, and the 'grandsons' would be painted. The 'grandsons' would have so to go for a long time, from winter to spring, to their 'grandfathers,' before actually joining the dance. So Crow Bull would go with his wife to his 'grandfather's' lodge to get instructions and each time he would be painted and the 'grandfather' would take Crow Bull's wife out and brush away the snow and lie with her." 796* 837

Besides the stuffed kit-fox skin mentioned in the origin story above, the Kit-fox Dance paraphernalia included two crooked sticks, used when dancing. These were shaped like a shepherd's crook or hockey stick, with strips of little otter skin carefully wrapped around them "all the way down" and with eagle-tail feathers tied to them here and there. The wrapping had to be done in a certain way, and only by a brave warrior. These sticks 796* 778

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

* 796 778 were owned only by fearless great "chiefs." At one time, Bushy Head owned one, and Singer's husband, Iron Bucket, another. A third man would own the Kit-fox Dance rattle. Buffalo Run (or Chase) was one such rattle owner.

*796 In addition to these owners of the two sticks and the rattle, numbers of other men would join the Kit-fox Dance, but according to Singer, "only chiefs." The male joiners chose a little girl "as a little kit-fox" to dance with them. She had to be a biθa:sθa, a "dearly-loved" child,[28] and to be so chosen was looked upon as a great honor. The "little kit-fox" danced a *pas seul* in the rite. Her father would be there with her, in the background, just as a mother would be present for her son in the Fly Dance. As "dearly-loved" children, especially female, were not numerous, it was difficult for Kit-fox Dancers to obtain one for their ceremony. Coming Daylight's father had intended to offer her to dance therein, but he died while she was still a small child. She recalled seeing a girl, whom she knew, dance at one Kit-fox rite, and seeing "the girl's father dance for her in the back of the lodge."

We recorded two of the Kit-fox Dance songs, numbers 56 and 57, as sung by The Boy. The first of these two, a wordless one, was the one the kit-fox sang while the Gros Ventre of the origin story slumbered. The second also was wordless, as originally sung by the kit-fox when giving this man the dance, but the following words, later added to it, have a double reference: to kit-foxes who run into their burrows when they see human beings, and to the following traditional incident:

"Some time after the Kit-fox Dance had become known to the Gros Ventres, a young man, Little Weasel, vowed to hold it. In it he used the stuffed kit-fox. After the dance was over, a war party started out. Little Weasel went along, bringing the stuffed kit-fox with him. The party encountered a big party of Crow (or Sioux). The enemy attacked and made the Gros Ventres run. Then Little Weasel who was packing the stuffed kit-fox set it down, making a sort of mound, and walked around it singing this song (No. 57) and adding the somewhat ironic and poetic words, 'Run your best. You will (not) get into your lodge(s).' He him-

[28] Flannery, 1941, pp. 33-37.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

self was practically committing suicide, so in one sense he meant himself. But in another, he meant that the case of the others, or many of them, was hopeless. He was telling them that if they did not run they would not escape home, but that even if they did run he was doubtful if they would make home safely. They saw and heard him, and a few escaped and survived, but many, including Little Weasel himself, were killed. When the survivors got back to camp they told what had happened. 796*

"Little Weasel, himself unmarried, had been engaged at the time in a love affair with a certain young married woman, the most beautiful in the tribe, and her husband knew about it. After the survivors returned, her husband said to her: 'I knew all about your affair with that young man but I did not scold or punish you. Now you should do what I tell you. You can mourn and cry for your lover, but do not do anything else. Think of our little boy (then four years old).' After saying this, he left their lodge to go hear details of the news of the battle.

"After he had left, his wife put on her best clothes, and combed her hair, and fixed herself up. Then taking with her a stout tough rope of sinew she went to the brow of a cliff where two trees stood, one leaning over the brink. She fastened one end of the rope around her neck and tied the other end to the leaning tree. Then she sang the same song her lover had sung around the mound, and with the same words. After finishing the song, she rattled her tongue and yelled as a woman used to do when celebrating the first coup her son had made. 727

"All the people, including her husband, ran out and he pleaded with her, but she did not listen to him. 'So sang,' she said, 'Little Weasel,' and rattling her tongue she jumped down, her head going one way and her body another." 762

According to The Boy, "the climax of the last important phase of the Kit-fox Dance came when the dancers paid their ceremonial grandfathers, and they paid them well, with many horses, etc." "On one occasion," he added, "one young Kit-fox Dancer did not have anything to give, and it just so happened that all his relatives were poor and did not come to his rescue. Therefore he did not pay his grandfather anything, and he was terribly embarrassed and

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 ashamed. When the dance was over, the people moved to old haunts north of the Bear Paws, and then to the west of Three Buttes, and camped. The young man dressed, got on his horse and rode completely around the camp circle, singing the death-song.[26] A little later they moved to right near the Bear Paws. Here they camped and met a large Piegan war party, and had a fight. The pitched battle took place in the open plain. This young fellow fixed up and got on his horse, and was among the last arrivals. He rode headlong into the thick of the battle and all the Piegan shot at him, but they all missed and he came out unharmed to their rear. At this he wheeled his horse around, and charged right back. This time the Piegan got him and knocked him off his horse. A big crowd of them surrounded him and when the Gros Ventres got to him only his torso remained. The Gros Ventres afterwards said that he should not have ridden back the second time, that once would have been enough to satisfy for the death-song he had sung. But he had done it out of disgrace and shame he felt for not having anything to give his grandfather at the Kit-fox Dance. All this was in recent times."

Dog Dance

The name of this dance was hotəbyao'wə, "dog lodge." The dance had disappeared before 1874, the date of The Boy's birth. But his father had joined it and both Coming Daylight and Singer had witnessed it, the latter when still a little girl. The last Gros Ventre celebration of it took place in Canada, according to Coming Daylight,—sometime between about 1865 and 1874. Our information on it, derived mostly from The Boy, who got his knowledge of it from his father, Lame Bull, with a few sparse data from Coming Daylight and Singer, is even more fragmentary than that on the Drum Dance. The origin story of the Dog Dance was given us by The Boy as follows:

*796 "A long time ago the Gros Ventres were camped at a certain
703 spot and a young Gros Ventre man fell asleep some distance away
539 from the camp. When he woke up the camp had moved. The young

[26] See Flannery, 1953, p. 92.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796*
773
539

man followed their trail. After a while he saw something ahead of him also following the trail. When he got near it he saw it was a dog, and when he caught up with the dog he saw that it was an old, toothless, lame, sorefooted dog, and it whined as he caught up with it.

"The young man pitied the poor old dog and said to it: 'All right. You follow me. I'll travel with you.' So they went along. But the dog could not walk fast enough to keep up with the young man. He then lifted it up on his back and carried it, and whenever he got tired he unloaded the dog and they both rested. Finally he got to the Gros Ventre camp and there he brought the dog to his lodge and fed and took care of it.

"Then the Gros Ventres moved camp again when the young fellow was away and asleep, and he let them move and then followed carrying the dog, and he rested from time to time as he had done the first time. Then a third time all this happened, and a fourth time.

"This last and fourth time, as the young man was carrying the dog he came to a high ridge and when he got up on top of it he saw the Gros Ventre camp some distance away, and he thought: 'Here is a good place to rest.' So the young man let the dog down, rested and fell asleep. The dog slept near the young man's head, instead of near his feet.

"While the young man was asleep he heard the dog singing. The dog when it had finished singing spoke to him: 'You have done me a great favor. I am very grateful to you for pitying me and taking care of me. So I am going to repay you and pity you by giving you my lodge (dance). Look at me. I am an old dog. I will give you age. You will live long and get to look old, as I look. You will be a renowned outstanding man among your own Gros Ventre people and among all other peoples around them. I give you my coat. You must wear it when you put up my lodge. This will be part of my rite. When my lodge is put up one man shall wear my coat and he must be the most renowned man in the tribe.'

"The dog then sang a song and at the end of it howled, and then said to the young man: 'When in war you get in a tight situation,

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796
773
539

if you sing this song, you will be saved.' After that the dog taught the young man other songs which ended with a bark instead of a howl. And then the dog after having taught him all about the rite, said to him: 'Put up the lodge, just as I have told you, as soon as possible and introduce it into the Gros Ventre tribe. When anybody gets scared or sick or in any other emergency, make a vow and put up my lodge.'

"And so the Dog Lodge (Dance) was accepted by the Gros Ventre tribe and every once in a while would be put up in fulfillment of a vow."[27]

*796

We could obtain very little information on the Dog Dance rite beyond that contained in or hinted at in the origin story. Our meager data add only few minor items to Kroeber's much fuller account of the Dog Dance.[28]

The coat or shirt referred to therein was "made from curly-haired dogs" and was given to an outstanding warrior—whether as a more or less permanent possession, or only for the duration of the rite, is not clear. The one who wore it during the dance was called tsëtcane:hi, a word having reference to "curly."[29] Coming Daylight readily recognized the shirt figured by Kroeber[30] and stated that its owner was Ice, also called Bill Jones. According to The Boy, Bull Robe[31] too, "the greatest warrior by far of his day," once owned a [or the] Dog Dance shirt, sang the first Dog Dance song (with the howl at the end) wearing the shirt, and on one occasion of extreme emergency had it with him and was the only one of his party who was saved.[32]

Of the various songs proper to the Dog Dance we could record only one, a wordless one, number 58, sung by The Boy. In the Dog Dance the first song sung was the one ending in a howl, and

---

[27] Cf. shorter version in Kroeber, 1907, p. 111; also idem, 1908, p. 252.

[28] Kroeber, 1908, pp. 252-58.

[29] Kroeber, 1908, p. 252, mentions two such dancers referred to as "shaggy dogs."

[30] Kroeber, 1908, p. 255, fig. 38.

[31] Kroeber, 1908, pp. 204-16, Bull Robe's narrative.

[32] In 1948 The Boy stated that the shirt was worn by the principal vower of the Dance and kept by him until the Dance was vowed by another, in which case the shirt would be "transferred" to the new vower. [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

when the singers howled at the end of the song all the dogs in the whole camp would start howling. At the end of the other songs, the singers would bark. 796*

According to Singer: "When a man was in the Dog Dance, his wife or daughter would give away something in his honor and would dance for him. At one Dog Dance, I was going to do that for someone and I made a move to do it when just at that moment they all quit. Everybody saw me and laughed at me. I was too ashamed to get up in the first place, and here I was even more ashamed. I was a little girl at the time." Coming Daylight was also present on the occasion of this particular Dog Dance and danced in it for her maternal uncle, Crow Bull.

Law Enforcers' or Old Men's Dance

This dance was called nana:nəhao'wə. The term denoted, according to The Boy, the act of inflicting punishment, as, for example, was done by the police on those who failed to pay their wagers in the Sacrifice Dance. (Cf. Sifton, "punish" nanáazhéttin [z = ts].) Coming Daylight and Singer stated that a whole group of members of this Dance would go to the lodge of a man whom they wanted to join the Dance and, if he refused to join, they would "tear up all his things and raise cain around his place." On one occasion they were just about to do this to the property of Singer's father, who did not want to join the dance, when his mother intervened promising to make berry soup for them for their feast, as a fine or forfeit, and they let him off. According to Coming Daylight the word means that "if somebody does not want to join they tear up all his things." In view of these facts it could be designated as the Punishers' Dance. Our informants thought it could equally well be called the Old Men's Dance or Law Enforcers' Dance, and since the latter term is the more acceptable to The Boy, we have employed it.

This Dance was last held when The Boy and Thick were small boys,—hence in the late 1870's or perhaps the early 1880's—at the junction of Beaver Creek and Bear Gulch on the east side of the Little Rockies. Our chief sources on the Punishers' Dance were The Boy, Thick, Coming Daylight, and Singer. Our information

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 is far from complete. It does, however, help to fill out some details of the picture given by Kroeber.[33]

According to The Boy the Dance and the following one, the Old Women's Dance, were originally gifts from the buffalo. But the circumstances under which they were given were unknown even to the old men living in The Boy's lifetime. These two Dances were closely associated with the buffalo. In both, the dancers im-
[324] personated buffalo, and the performance of both Dances was efficacious in bringing buffalo for the hunters to kill.

The Old Men's Dance, like the other Sacred Dances, was held only in the summer time, and only in fulfillment of a vow. The Boy was of the opinion that it lasted only one day.[34]

To be eligible to vow or to join the Law Enforcer's Dance, a man had to be well advanced in age, presumably having gone through the other Lodges, at least the Fly, Crazy, Kit-fox and Dog. The Drum Dance was dropped out of the series at the beginning of the nineteenth century, as noted above, and the Sacrifice Dance was regarded as outside of the series. While the participants were older men, somewhat beyond the prime of life, "they were still active and could get around." Since they would
[88] still be eligible to vow and carry out the Sacrifice Dance they had not yet completed their society and dance career. So far as we could gather, their age range was seemingly from about the late forties or early fifties to the early or middle sixties.

Those who went through the Dance with the vower thereof were, according to The Boy, the men of about the same age-group who had gone through the other sacred Dances together,—seemingly therefore those who had been members of the same age-group of the Star or Wolves. Such a fellow member, who when invited by the others refused to join, was "punished."

The ritual grandfathers of the chief vower and of his associates were chosen from the ranks of the "retired old men" who had already gone through the Dance. According to The Boy, the chief vower's grandfather had to be a man who had himself previously gone through it as chief vower.

---

[33] Kroeber, 1908, pp. 258-59.

[34] It was a four day rite according to information given to Kroeber, 1908, p. 259.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Two young men attendants were chosen, but there was no police force, according to The Boy who said none was needed in the case of these "harmless" and "venerable" old men dancers. In general, The Boy had the impression that people had not cared much what these old men did in their Dance and did not go to it much, for it had "no color to it, nothing lively about it." 796* 888

The dance lodge,—a "very simple little hut" according to The Boy and Thick; a "big round camp" according to Coming Daylight, —was put up outside the camp circle, toward the south thereof. The dancers carried out their rites "sort of secretly." They could be heard singing and dancing inside their lodge, but they did not go around much in public view afterwards as the women did in their Dance. The rattles used to accompany the singing were sticks about a foot or foot-and-a-half long with big buffalo calf hoofs on one end, and were very noisy. The leader's stick was larger and its butt end was pounded on the ground to keep time. 796* [534] [533]

Two of the Dance songs, numbers 67 and 68, were recorded as sung by The Boy. Number 68 was sung while the old men were dancing and contains their particular yell.

The other song, number 67, has the words meaning: "You first (or leading) (buffalo) bull, come in this direction (come streaming in)." This song was a "half-prayer." The singers while singing it were wishing as hard as they could, so there would be plenty of buffalo and thus the people would not have to go far to hunt successfully. The very first original buffalo procreated other buffalo and singers wanted him to lead the other buffalo, his progeny, to the Gros Ventres. The wish-thought or "half-prayer" was directed, however, according to The Boy, not to the first buffalo, but to the Supreme Being so that the latter would provide buffalo.

The primary purpose of the Dance was pretty clearly that of bringing success in buffalo hunting. After the dance was over, the camp would move to another site, and then the people "would always run into a lot of buffalo and have good hunting luck." "Even if there were no buffalo nearby when this Dance had been going on, in some mysterious way many buffalo would come and even run around in the camp." Right after the very last time the Dance was performed, the people ran into a great many buffalo. [224]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 888 182 The Dance must have helped appreciably to enhance the status of the elderly participants, a little old to take active part in the actual hunting and game-food providing, and to have given them a feeling of still being economically useful members of the tribe. The same *mutatis mutandis* would be true of the old women in connection with their own Dance.

After the more or less secret rites inside the lodge of the Dance were over, the dancers ran a race. After the close of the dance, the camp moved.

888 561 The elderly men who as chief vowers or associates had gone once through the Dance had reached the end of the ritual trail and became members of the unorganized "retired old men," of equal rank in this respect with their ceremonial grandfathers. After the dance the grandfathers could not control their grandsons, as grandfathers could after other Dances. After going through this Dance, the dancer though entering in a sense the "inactive" ranks could still be called on to function as a ceremonial grandfather. He moreover was allowed very considerable freedom and latitude previously denied him. With his Punishers' Dance grandfather he [571] contracted a relationship somewhat similar to the enemy-friend one. In general, while of course he was given no leave to commit grave crimes, he was allowed much freedom in talking or acting vulgarly or obscenely in public and in the presence of consanguineal or actual relatives toward whom respect and avoidance observances had been strictly required of him prior to his graduation into the class of "retired old men."[88]

He could, for instance, talk pretty freely with his own brother-in-law who was also a "retired old man" about matters concerning elimination and reproduction, and could indulge in a large degree of vulgarity and obscenity before a group which included even his own mother-in-law, and no one had the right to criticize him for this or protest against his behavior.

If, for example, he took off his breechcloth in the presence of a group that included such relatives, someone might say to him: "That's going too far." But the old man might answer: "I have sat on the sage brush. I have the right to do this."

[88] Cf. Flannery, 1953, p. 196.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

At big social or Grass Dances, the people used to be good to these "retired old men" and gave them good seats inside the hall or enclosure where the dance was held. At one such gathering, probably around 1905, a lot of these old men were present sitting in a semi-circle in front of the four chief men. One "retired old man," Fire Steel, Thomas Main's father-in-law and Lame Bull's brother-in-law, a witty old man who liked to talk, came late. Even though Lame Bull was present, Fire Steel said aloud, in a voice that could be heard by everyone: "What is the matter with you old men sitting there? You ought to sing songs of praise. Instead you are sitting there and playing 'it' so women can admire you. But your behinds are all pretty black now!" And everybody laughed. Fire Steel used to get to a dance late and in a tone loud enough for everyone present to hear used to expose these old men's past behavior,—things that they would not want said in public. 888 561 626 522

Fly Dance

This dance was called no:bao'wə "fly lodge." The word no:bä is at present used for "house fly." Our informants were not sure if the word, as used for the dance itself, referred to flies or to mosquitoes. 796*

The dance was last performed about 1907. Our chief sources were The Boy, Thick and Coming Daylight; some stray data were gotten from Turn Toes, Charles Buckman, Thomas Main and Cora Chandler. Our information confirms Kroeber's description, and supplements it in only a few minor details.

No origin story was known to our informants, beyond the item that the dance "belongs to the flies [or mosquitoes]."

The Fly Dance, like other Sacred Dances, was held only in fulfillment of a vow, a vow usually made in less grave emergencies. In dignity the Fly Dance ranked lowest among the seven Sacred Dances carried out by men.

It was held in the summer, usually around the time when one of other Sacred Dances was being performed. Consequently there was no necessity of sending runners to assemble the people, as

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 they would all be in camp anyhow. Our informants made no mention of criers or police in connection with the Fly Dance.

Ordinarily the Fly Dance was supposed to be gone through first, before any of the other sacred dances, but there were exceptions, as in the case of Turn Toes who joined the Crazy Dance first when he was a young man and the Fly Dance only after he was an old man. Coming Daylight's husband, Little Man, never joined the Fly Dance.[56]

[561] [883] The Fly Dance was usually performed by youths, mostly young unmarried fellows of the age range of about 16 to 20 years as nearly as we could determine. With the chief vower would be associated in the dance all the members of his own age-group or company (e.g., all the "Potbellies"), and apparently no others. They would carry it out in a body.

No women joined the dance. But, according to Coming Daylight, if a woman's son was participating as a dancer "she might go way to be back of the tent [apparently the dance lodge] and dance just like her son was doing, not making fun."

*796 608 The Fly Dancers would choose their ceremonial grandfathers from among the older men. The young fellow wishing to join the dance would fill a pipe, go with it to an old timer, and offer it to him saying: "Here is the pipe. You will be my grandfather." If the old man accepted, he would instruct the candidate in all the rites and observances of the dance and would perform the other functions therein to be noted presently. At the last Fly Dance held [circa 1907] two young fellows, Mark Black Crow and Jerry Bear, came together to Coming Daylight's husband, Warrior, and offered him a pipe, which he accepted, thereby agreeing to act as their grandfather.[57] Cora Chandler's uncle, Sits-in-the-middle, had been "boss" of a Fly Dance which she had witnessed one Fourth of July when she was still of school age, probably this last one held.

*796 According to The Boy, the Fly Dance lasted only one day. As our informants had been eye-witnesses of this dance, it is probable

[178]

[56] These exceptions occurred after the breakdown of the ceremonial cycle. [R.F.]

[57] In 1948 The Boy explained that in this Dance a group of boys—even more than four—could have the same ritual grandfather. [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

that the rites and observances to be described include all or at least the main features of it, although many details may be lacking. In general, the pattern was a comparatively simple one, and, while certain sacred elements were present, recreative elements, fun-making, and a sort of Halloween spirit were decidedly to the fore. 796*

The young fellows had a dance lodge of their own, apparently outside the camp circle. To this they brought plenty of food to provide a feast for their ritual grandfathers. After the grandfathers, or one of them, had made a smudge and offered a prayer, they painted the youths. The painting was done privately, without spectators. The smudging and praying, including perhaps the painting, were sacred. From then on the dance was secular.

After this religious part of the dance was over, the grandfather [probably of the chief vower] left the dance lodge with the young fellows, and, choosing a proper spot, started the first dance and song. The Flies formed in a circle with the grandfather in the center. He held his robe spread out, like insect wings, with his outstretched arms, and started chanting "Yo ho." The Flies then chanted "Yo ho, yo ho, yo ho," a number of times, and, crouching over danced in a circle jumping up and down on both feet together. The "song," number 65, recorded as sung by The Boy, was wordless, and more a sort of chant than a song proper, and ending with a buzzing sound. There was no accompaniment of drum or rattle. At the end of the dance the Flies all of a sudden fell over, lay on the ground face down, and hummed and buzzed like a swarm of flies (or mosquitoes). 535

This whole dance performance was gone through at four spots around the camp circle, to the north, east, south and west in succession.

According to Coming Daylight the ceremonial grandfather, standing in the middle of ring of dancers, would play jokes on them, throwing buffalo chips at them. According to The Boy and Thick, the Dancers themselves, either then or after breaking up, would throw buffalo chips at one another. [522]

After the fourth dance, to the west, the dancers would disperse and would with sticks, to the end of which cactus spines were attached, stick anyone they could reach.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

535 Then they all went back to their lodge. And so the Fly Dance ended.

Women's Dance

*796 This dance was called benohtcao'wa. None of our informants knew the meaning of the first element of the term. The Boy thought it might possibly be related to an "old-time" Gros Ventre word for "smudge making."

The Dance was held at least twice, and perhaps oftener, during the childhood of Coming Daylight, and was last held when The Boy and Thick were small boys, too young to remember much of what they saw. Our chief informants on it were: Coming Daylight who had participated in it on two occasions as a "calf" and whose memory of many details was quite clear; The Boy and Thick who had learned something about it through personal observation, and from their elders; and Singer, a contemporary of Coming Daylight, who had witnessed it more than once. Our information supplements Kroeber's account considerably, agreeing with it in most details, but differing in some others, especially regarding personnel and regalia.[88]

As previously noted, the Dance was originally a gift from the buffalo but no origin story is known; the dancers impersonated buffalo and their performance brought buffalo for the hunters to kill.

Coming Daylight was quite positive that the Dance lasted four days or four "nights." Like the other Sacred Dances it was held in the warm weather period. According to Coming Daylight it was held once every summer.

This Sacred Dance was the only one which women could vow and only women, older or elderly ones at that, could vow it or participate in it as dancers proper. The Women's Dance was performed only in fulfillment of a vow to the Supreme Being, made by a woman. One such Women's Dance in which Coming Daylight had played the role of "calf" had been vowed by a woman "for her husband so that he would not get killed in war." He did

[88] Kroeber, 1908, pp. 260-61.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

get killed but she was told to go ahead anyway and have the Dance,—which she did. Other women would join the Dance with the chief vower, but under what general conditions and procedures we did not ascertain except that to qualify either as associates or as chief vower, women had to be "old" or "very old," to be "women who had seen all of life" and were "beyond their prime," not "young women." This would probably mean in Gros Ventre age terminology women beyond the age of about forty-five or fifty. On one occasion, while a Women's Dance was in progress a very old woman, whose brother had just been very badly wounded by some Sioux and who was hovering between life and death, came to the dance lodge where the dancers were gathered and said, "Well, I came in here of my own accord without anyone asking me to join. I promised to join so that my brother may get well." She was told to choose her side, "talls" or "shorts," her face was painted the ritual way, and so she joined. The wounded brother, it may be added, did not recover. The Women's Dance was not put up, as were the men's Sacred Dances, by age-groups proper since women had no such age group organizations corresponding to the men's Star and Wolf societies and companies.

796* [886] [561 562]

The women dancers had no crier and no police force, but were divided, as in the men's dances, into tall slender ones and short ones. Two young women were chosen to serve during the rite as ātsa'an, attendants or waiters. "Those who were not ashamed to do things," Coming Daylight explained, "and who were quick, were chosen [as waiters]. These were not bashful or backward. They had to do whatever they were told and to wait on people. They had a lot of work to do. When there was going to be a Women's Dance, they would have to call on the members on each side of the camp circle, starting at the center opening. They would go to each lodge where there was a member." They also had to dance hard, but did not wear any caps. Their places in the dance lodge were at the door, one on the side where the "talls" sat, the other on the side of the "shorts." On both occasions when Coming Daylight served as a "calf" the two young women attendants were Woman Chief for the "talls" and Perfume (or Sweet Perfume) for the "shorts."

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 608 The chief vower and her associate dancers had no ceremonial grandfathers but each one had a ceremonial grandmother, an old woman "who had retired and reached end of the road."

The chief vower would take a pipe filled with tobacco, offer it to an old woman, so requesting her to be grandmother and to be the "boss" and "manager" of the dance. This latter woman was in charge of the dance and told the others what to do, and was said to "make the dance for" the chief vower. The dance was held so often that all the dancers knew what was to come next, but nevertheless they would await instructions from the "boss." On one occasion when Coming Daylight was a "calf," the chief vower was a very old woman, Digger, at one time married to Crow Bull, and the "boss" was Matter-in-the-ear. After the latter had "made the dance for" Digger, the latter could "make it for" some other [845] woman. On another occasion, a woman named Hairy Woman (born with lanugo) was "boss." According to Coming Daylight, the "boss" was called "grandmother" by all the women dancers.

*796 The women dancers were considered as buffalo "cows," and as "mothers" to the "calves." One of the old women dancers played the role of buffalo "bull."

The "calves" were very young girls, not necessarily "dearly-loved" children, although there was a certain preference for them. There could be more than one girl "calf" for each dance. In one of the two dances in which Coming Daylight was a "calf," there were four girl "calves," all of them associated with the "shorts," and one boy "bull calf." The "talls" on this occasion could get no "calf" as they were too poor to give things away, as was *de rigueur*, for the "calves." "Dearly-loved" children were preferred for the reason that their people would usually be in a position to make such presents.

When Coming Daylight was asked to take the part of a "calf" in the Women's Dance, she was a very little girl, then living with her grandmother. Two women, apparently the two waiters or attendants, came into her grandmother's lodge. One of the two at once offered Coming Daylight a big pipe, stem first, filled with tobacco mixture. She did not take it right away as she did not know what the action meant. The woman said to her: "Take it. We

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

just want you to join and be a little calf in this dance." "I don't smoke," Coming Daylight replied. Her grandmother then spoke up. "My grandchild, take that pipe. There isn't anything bad about it. Just take it. If you take it it might give you long life . . . and luck in receiving gifts and things. . . . We don't like to turn it down because it belongs to life. . . . This dance all comes like concerning life, and when you get painted [in it] you have a long life. . . . You are going to be asked to dance with these women. You must try to do everything well they want you to do. You must dance good." And so she accepted, for there was nothing else to do, and when she was being painted in the dance, she prayed for the things her grandmother used to tell her to pray for,—a long life and easy acquisition of food. And she concluded: "Here, I have gotten a long enough life, so long I stagger around when I try to show how they danced!" 796*

In addition to the girl "calf" or "calves," there was also a "bull calf" (or "bull calves?"), a small boy chosen to take this part.

No men entered the ceremonial lodge during most of the dance, except two (or perhaps only one) old men singers who sat with the chief vower and the "boss" at the back of the lodge and sang. The two had no drums, but instead each of them had a deer-claw rattle, similar to the Crazy Dance rattle, but "taller and with larger trimmings." The two men and two women sang, all four together, while the other participants danced. The task of these men was solely that of singing.[39] 534

Two other men, younger men chosen from among the most prominent and most handsome of the Stars or Wolves, served as "hunters" of the women on the last day of the dance.

Each of the "cows" had her own headdress made like a war bonnet, but smaller, with feathers of all colors,—yellow, blue, red and so forth,—and with a bunch of feathers hanging at the nape of the neck. Coming Daylight's grandmother had belonged to the Women's Dance; when she got too old to dance herself she let her daughter-in-law use her headdress to dance with and when 292

[39] In 1948 The Boy said that no men sang, and that the only male participants were the two "hunters." Lame Bull acted one time in that capacity. [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the grandmother died she was buried with it. Coming Daylight and Singer had never heard in their grandmothers' time of the "cows" wearing belts with four buffalo tails attached, or being painted with a pipe symbol on the cheeks, or calling like crows when dancing.[40] The "cows" would don their good buckskin dresses for the dance, and, according to Singer, wore "for their belts a little calf robe tied around."

The "bull" wore as a headdress the shaggy skin of a buffalo head with the horns attached. Coming Daylight emphatically insisted that only one woman, the "bull," had horns on her headdress.[41]

The two attendants danced during the rite, but had no feathered or horned headdresses. Coming Daylight mentioned wearing her elk-tooth dress when functioning as a "calf," but spoke of no specific ritual costume for "calves" or for the "bull calf."

The dance lodge, a big one, was, according to The Boy, set up outside the camp circle. The men used to put it up for them. The center pole, not so big as the Sacrifice Dance one, was erected without ceremony, and was painted red by the "boss." Each dancer had her own [ceremonial?] digging-stick made of a stout cherry or Juneberry branch about 2" to 3" in diameter, with the distal end pointed and curved. These digging sticks were tied to the center pole all around, with the handle end resting on the ground and the curved end pointing outward. Both sticks and ties were painted [red?] by the "boss." Coming Daylight remarked *apropos* of this: "I was small then, but I certainly looked to see how that pole was fixed. It is a good thing I did. Most children would be too crazy to observe how things were." She had never heard of two tent-poles, two pegs and two ropes of the dance lodge being painted respectively one black and one red.[42] A fire burned in or close to the middle of the lodge.

The two (or one) men singers sat in the place of honor in the

[40] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, pp. 260-61.

[41] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, p. 260. Coming Daylight had seen the Blood Indians' Women's Dance, with the women wearing headdresses like those of the Gros Ventre women and with the "bull" sitting over on the west side.

[42] Kroeber, 1908, p. 261.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796*

dance lodge opposite the door, with the chief vower and "boss." The place of the "talls" was on the west side (to the left of the entrance as one entered), of the "shorts" on the east side; of the "calves," near the entrance, on their respective sides with the "talls" and/or "shorts" as the case might be; of the "bull" and "bull calf" just inside the entrance, to the left thereof; of the two attendants, on either side of the entrance, one for the "talls" and the other for the "shorts."

According to The Boy and Thick, the Women's Dance ranked lowest in order of dignity among the eight Sacred Dances. This view was in a measure concurred in by Coming Daylight: "At the Crazy Dance, Kit-fox Dance and others, they had many more holy things to do. But this Women's Dance was not so holy. They did not have so many things to do." Like the Law Enforcers' Dance of the older men, it was less colorful, and the people did not care much what the old women did. Most of the rite, too, like the old men's, was more or less private.

The rite was in the main a mimetic enactment or representation of the buffalo hunt, especially the ceremonies of the fourth day. It was primarily a prayer to the Supreme Being for success in hunting the buffalo.

Our informants were able to give us fairly clear data on the ritual sequence of the last day of the four-day rite, but not on that of the first three days or "nights." The main ceremonial and social episodes, apart from the fourth-day sequence, were: Praying with the pipe, offering of sacrifices, painting of lodge and persons, singing and dancing, recreational smoking, feasting, fun-making and practical joking, gift-making in honor of participants.

The women participants stayed inside the dance lodge throughout the duration of the Dance and slept there at night, not going near their husbands. The latter did not come into the lodge, though they might look on when the women went out for water on the last day.

At some point or points in the rite one old woman (the "boss?") prayed with a pipe, just as a man would, asking the Supreme Being that the buffalo hunting would be successful.

Offerings of goods were made "like at the Sacrifice Dance."

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 These were fastened to the center pole "at the top," so that it was "full of goods that they offered." The offerings were made by "those who made the dance." Such an offering was made, for instance, by the woman above-mentioned who joined the dance for the recovery of her wounded brother. As at the Sacrifice Dance, too, when the Women's Dance was over and camp was moved, the lodge, center pole and attached offerings were all left just standing there.

*796 302 The dancers, the two attendants and the "calf" or "calves," were painted, by the "boss" (and perhaps by others),—the dancers at least, "all over the face, then on top of the hair and down the hair hanging to the shoulders." During the painting the one painting would pray for the other being painted, and the latter might pray on her own account for whatever she desired, such as long life, medicine power, or other favors.

*796 533 Of the songs sung during the Women's Dance we recorded only one, number 66, a wordless one, sung by The Boy. The singing was done or at least led by the old man (or two old men) who sat at the back of the lodge, and was apparently (the point was not cleared up by us) joined in by the chief vower and "boss," and also by the "cows." The singing was done to the accompaniment of the deer-claw rattles mentioned previously, and without the drum. Those dancing did not sing while dancing. "The singing in the Women's Dance," The Boy remarked, "sounded 'old,' quite different from the way a young woman sings." To Coming Daylight's ear "it sounded fine."

*796 535 The dancing went on, not continuously, but intermittently, with intervals in between. Dancing was done by the "cows," attendants, and "calves," not by the "bull" who just sat in her place near the door with her horned headdress on and her head bowed down. The participants danced toward the back of the lodge, "kind of bouncing up and down in one place and shaking their heads from side to side." Coming Daylight, as a "calf," danced with the rest, near the door. According to Singer, the dances were done in series of four, as told her by one or two of her grandmothers who [522 had been through the Women's Dance, and, if any of the "cows" 831] did not get up to dance, the "bull" would "get busy" and "start

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

535
796*
522
831

to jump on them," simulating copulation, to the amusement apparently of the other "cows." Whether the chief vower and the "boss" took part in the dancing is not clear,—more probably they did not.

796*

Intervals between the dancing were given over to smoking, chatting, feasting, and fun-making. In more modern times at least the women smoked for pleasure. The dancers were each expected to bring food to the dance, and feasting was an important element, the singers at the back of the lodge faring particularly well. During these intervals, too, the women would play all kinds of tricks on one another, such as taking some woman's belongings and hiding them. They would have "lots of fun," "laughing all the time" and "making lots of racket."

[276]

[522]

Apparently it was customary for relatives of dancers in the Women's Dance, as in other sacred Dances, to give away presents to third parties in honor of the dancers.

[431]

The more public and more spectacular episodes of the Women's Dance, as of the Sacrifice and Crazy Dances, occurred on the fourth and last day. To these features we now turn.

The "cows" and the "bull," all wearing their headdresses and accompanied by the "calves," left the dance lodge and went in a bunch to look for water in the creek and to drink. The "bull" followed to the rear, herding the "cows," and if one of the latter started to stray she would be punched back with the herd. Part of the time at least, the "cows" were "bent over, dancing like animals, and going on hands and knees." The "bull" would run after different "cows" and "jump on them," in mimic copulation. Coming Daylight, as a "calf" was told to follow one of the "cows" as her "mother" and try to nurse, but the "bull" chased her away when she approached her mother. In general, the "calves" were supposed to keep to the side, out of the way of the "bull."

796*
535
831

After the drink at the creek, came the pantomime buffalo drive. The two "hunters" (cf. supra, p. 245) would make a fire outside the camp circle up-wind from the women, and as the women got the smell of the smoke, the "hunters" on horseback drove them, as in a real buffalo drive, and shot the "cows" or some of them with blunt arrows that did not hurt. The "cows" who had before-

796*

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 hand hidden fresh kidney, with the fat on, under their dresses would on being struck fall over, "killed," and the "hunters" would pretend to cut open the dead "cows" and extract the kidney fat. The "bull," too, would be shot down with blunt arrows and "butchered," the kidney extracted first and a bit of it (and presumably of the fat taken from the "cows") offered to each person present and eaten.

The "cows," "bull" and "calves" made their way quickly back to the dance lodge, in a mimic stampede. After re-entering, the "cows" kept walking round and round the center pole, "puffing and puffing" as if winded,—representing, we may reasonably infer, buffalo milling around in a corral at the end of a drive. After a while they all sat down and partook of a good feast, and after the feast was over danced.

*796 It was apparently at the time of this terminal feast (possibly at
272 some other time or times in the four-day rite,—our information
554 is not quite clear on the point) that prominent men would come into the dance lodge for a drink of "berry water." Near the center pole was a big wooden bowl containing berries crushed to a juice "something like syrup fixed real sweet," and having a cup attached. Prominent men, "all the great big chiefs," "only big men, warriors," were invited to come in and take a drink. "They did not come in any old way. They would come in nice through the door, to the left side, drink, and then go out around the right side." They had to leave something as pay, such as a bridle, a rifle, or a horse, "because it was a great honor to be invited to drink." During this drinking by the "chiefs," the "bull" had to sit in her place silently with her horned headdress on and her head hanging down. Coming Daylight, at this juncture in one of the dances in which she was a "calf," remarked to her grandmother: "Well, that 'bull' does not even move. She just sits there." Her grandmother admonished her: "Don't say that. You are not supposed to 'tease' about it." "Well," Coming Daylight said, "'he' pushed me away when I went to my 'mother.'" After the whole dance was over, Coming Daylight used to tell all about it, but her grandmother would caution her: "Don't talk about it. You are not supposed to laugh over it."

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

After the Women's Dance was ended, the women participants broke up and each went back to her own lodge where she went through a final private ceremony. This,—and some other phases of Gros Ventre culture,—may be illustrated in the following story from real life, told by The Boy with hilarious laughter and with consummate histrionic artistry of intonation, gesture, facial expression and mimicry. Would that we could have gotten a sound-movie of it. 796*

"It was the custom among all the tribes around here that when the old women had their Dance and it had ended they would go back to their tents and rest. Before they took a drink they would do like the buffalo does on going to water.

"Not long ago there died here a Gros Ventre man, named Hill (or Butte), who was famous for his ability to break wind, loud or soft, at will. He had a friend, a Blood Indian. On one occasion the Gros Ventres and Bloods got together, and a Women's Dance was held. Hill went to visit his Blood friend in the latter's lodge. 514 522 796*

"After a while, when the dance was over, the Blood's wife came home, squatted down, said 'Phew' from fatigue, took off her dance regalia, and wiped the sweat off her face. Then she took an unborn-calf robe and laid it on her head, and put on her horned ritual headdress. She next gave her husband a wooden dish to fill with water and place in the lodge opposite the entrance. Hill, a spectator of all this, was a brother-in-law of the Blood's wife and hence had a right to joke with her. [602]

"The old woman, then, in her dance regalia, got down on all fours, crawled up to the bowl of water sort of roaring like a buffalo going to drink, and as she reached the bowl suddenly shied away. This she did three times. After the fourth time she would have taken a drink, but just as she was about to drink, after the fourth approach, Hill broke wind loudly. At this the old woman just fell backwards, her headdress fell off, and she did not drink.

"Another Blood Indian present fell backwards laughing. Hill did not crack a smile. The woman's husband put his hand over his face and kept a stern demeanor until Hill said to him: 'My younger brother, don't get mad. All the tribes all over the

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

514 country do what I did. When buffalo go to drink, Indians just
522 shoot them. I was just re-enacting this. What I did was proper.'
*796 To this the husband replied: 'My elder brother, that's true.'

"When the people heard the laughing, they came flocking around. The other Blood was still laughing, in fact was in a laughing spell. His relatives carried him out and took him home and there dashed water on him and revived him."

Peyote Cult and Ghost Dance

668 What little we were able to gather on the peyote cult and Ghost
795 Dance among the Gros Ventres, is here presented.

Peyotism is entirely lacking among the present-day Gros Ventres and appears never to have gained a foothold among them in the past. Some individuals, we were told by The Boy and Thick, had tried to introduce it, but without success as the Gros Ventres were "a little afraid of it." The fact that the Gros Ventres have been under fairly intensive Catholic missionary influence since the middle 1880's may partly account for the resistance.[43] Some young Gros Ventres, who were on a visit to the Crows, were invited to take part in Peyote observances, but declined.

On the fortunes of the Ghost Dance among the Gros Ventres, our chief informants were Cora Chandler and her husband Al Chandler, Coming Daylight, The Boy, Thick, Charles Buckman and Thomas Main. Singer had joined the movement but though perfectly willing to speak freely about other subjects was somewhat reluctant to talk about this one. Our other informants had not joined the Ghost Dance, but Cora Chandler's people "were strong for it." Coming Daylight was, as will be explained, in close contact with certain phases of it, and The Boy had been present as a spectator at many Ghost Dance gatherings.

The Ghost Dance was called among the Gros Ventres, not "Ghost Dance," but "Little Round Dances." It was first introduced
[192] among them in 1891 by a Gros Ventre from the Hays area who had lived among the Arapaho of Wyoming a number of years, had

[43] Coming Daylight came in contact with the Peyote Cult on a visit some years ago to Oklahoma, but, she remarked, "the Catholic Indians in Oklahoma were against peyote."

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

668
745

attended the Ghost Dance there, and had returned to Hays in that year. As introducer and leader of the cult he preached wa:hatcan (lit. "reunion of all together," cf. wahanichina "unite" [Sifton]), signifying the rising of the dead Indians either in the near future or at the end of the world, and predicted the return of the buffalo, and into his message wove something of both Christ and the Flat Pipe. Big gatherings of Gros Ventres listened to him. Some few became converts, but most remained spectators and hearers only and declined to join. Further, the Gros Ventres did not join at all in the Ghost Dance political uprising. They had previously given their word not to go to war with the whites. The movement lasted just two years and then died out.[44]

The factors accounting for the resistance to and decline of the Ghost Dance among the Gros Ventres were, according to The Boy and Charles Buckman, the following. The older men and women did not believe Returns-to-war and the other promoters because "they had to be shown, and they felt that it was impossible for the dead, to rise again and for the buffalo to come back." The younger fellows, of the age of The Boy and Charles Buckman at the time, that is, around twenty years, did not believe because "the younger generation was then going to the Catholic missionaries and had learned different." Moreover, in 1893, some Wyoming Arapaho visited Hays and from them the Gros Ventres found that Returns-to-war had "exaggerated the story," so they all quit the Ghost Dance.

From Cora Chandler, Coming Daylight and Al Chandler we gathered the following information that sheds additional light on the rise of the Gros Ventre Ghost Dance and especially on the causes believed to have led to its rejection and decline.

During the rites, there would be round dances; the dancers would be painted after which they would sing and sing; the songs

---

[44] Mooney, 1896, p. 817 in his exhaustive study of the situation states that a Gros Ventre had been visiting in 1889 among the Arapaho and "heard the story and brought back the wonderful news to the Gros Ventres and Assiniboine of Fort Belknap, but although his account was received by some with unquestioning faith, the excitement had in it nothing of a dangerous character."

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

668
1795

themselves were very lively ones; preaching of the content of the Ghost Dance message was a prominent feature.

Among those who took over leadership in the movement, along with Returns-to-war, was an outstanding medicine man who died a Catholic many years later, but who at the time of the Ghost Dance movement was bitterly anti-Catholic.

For one Ghost Dance gathering on a certain moonlight night, he had called the people to his place outside and a great many came, among them Coming Daylight and Cora Chandler's father's brother, Black Wolf, who was "one of the strong believers." After some singing and dancing, the leader said: "Wait, I am going out on that little hill over there. You all watch. I will stand there. When you see little sparks you will know the spirit has come." So he went up on the hill alone while the people stayed behind, singing, dancing and watching. Coming Daylight watched him and saw him "take a lot of matches, wet them so that they glowed in the dark, and hold his hands so that those dancing saw this fire glow." The people rushed over to him, glad that the spirit had come. The leader then took them back to the spot where they had been dancing and said to them: "Wait until tomorrow, and I will tell you what the spirit told me."

Each one who joined the Ghost Dance was supposed to have a feather of eagle down. The next morning, the leader told Black Wolf: "Your (deceased) son says you should go to where he is buried and he will bring you a feather." In the course of this day Coming Daylight happened to go over to the leader's house and there she found him sitting with all kinds of feathers around him and fixing one especially. She observed it closely to be sure she would recognize it if she should see it again. When she went back to her lodge, she said to her husband, Little Man, "That crazy thing is still fixing feathers. He is certainly up to something." She told her husband what she had seen and said: "I think he must be up to something crazy."

So when night came, Black Wolf and his wife went up to their son's grave, out on the hills near Old Hays. Sure enough there on the grave was a stick with eagle down on it. They were glad, for they thought their son's spirit had brought it to them,

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

and they went back to their house where a crowd was waiting to see if the feather would really be found as the leader had predicted. The leader, Coming Daylight, and her husband Little Man, were in the crowd. The leader took the feathered stick and handed it to Coming Daylight, who said right out: "Oh, that is the very same one I saw him fixing. . . . How could a ghost hand fix these feathers the way they are fixed?" 668 715

Notwithstanding this public exposure, the leader [no doubt later and privately] told Black Wolf's wife that because she had gotten this feather from the dead she could get anything she wanted, but that he (the leader) would have to have [sexual intercourse with] her first. She told her husband and "when he found out it was a trick, he sure was mad and he went over and was going to murder that man." [83]

Cora Chandler added that a lot of women were gotten through this trick, that there were many such Ghost Dance bosses, or leaders, and that they used to get cattle, horses, and anything they wanted, including the women.

Singer said that although she joined the Ghost Dance, she did not have to pay anything, but that her husband, when they brought him a message from one of his dead relatives, cried and gave what they asked, a buckskin horse, to the old woman boss. "They used to have women bosses as well as men bosses in the Ghost Dance."

Returns-to-war once came to Coming Daylight's husband, Little Man, and told him: "Your young brother, who got killed in the war, wants a horse, bridle and saddle." Little Man, who was a good deal of a skeptic in things religious, declined with the retort: "What is a ghost going to do with a horse and saddle?"

According to Al Chandler, "Jack Wilson got away with all kinds of things. Before he died he brought his son here to Hays and his son eloped with one girl, and that cooked his goose. They found out he was a fraud." According to Coming Daylight, "he [Jack Wilson] had a lot of women through that [the Ghost Dance]. He would choose the prettiest and best looking woman to make his smudge for him. He would have a little hut." At this point in the conversation, Singer broke in and would not let Coming Daylight continue along this line. We have come across no other

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

668
745

record of the original Jack Wilson (Wovoka) visiting the Gros Ventres. Could the Jack Wilson above mentioned be some other Indian who was an impostor or one who in good faith took Wovoka's white-man's name?

In addition, the causes listed by The Boy and Thick for the failure of the Ghost Dance to take real root among the Gros Ventre, the chicanery, racketeering and sexual episodes, attributed by many of the Gros Ventres to the leaders of the movement, must have contributed appreciably to the same result.

At any rate, the movement lasted only two years, 1891-1893, and appears to have left no permanent impression on Gros Ventre life. At or shortly after these dates, however the modern non-gambling hand game was introduced from Ghost Dance sources.

[177
524]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

CHAPTER VI

SUPERNATURAL POWERS

Most of the Gros Ventre rites and observances thus far dealt with in the present volume were intended to fulfill the wishes and needs of the whole tribe or of larger segments thereof and were actively participated in by all or many members of the tribe. In this sense these rites and observances constituted collectivistic public cult, and leaned toward cooperative altruism. The chief wishes they sought to satisfy were for continued long life for all, with abundance of food and other material necessities, and with freedom from epidemics, storms and tribal enemies, and for continued concord and solidarity among the tribal members. Ritual reliance was upon the petition, mostly to the major deities, the Supreme Being and Bha'a, through prayer expressed in word and in act. 771

Most of the rites and observances to be dealt with from here on were intended to fulfill the wishes and needs of specific individuals and were participated in by very small groups. In this sense these rites and observances constituted individualistic private cult, and leaned toward egoism, often a competitive egoism. The chief wishes they sought to satisfy were for knowledge of distant or future events, prestige through war prowess and wealth, cure of individual illness, and success in gambling or in sex affairs. Ritual reliance was upon the immediate help given in each case of appeal by an ancestral spirit or upon supernatural power imparted once for all by some non-ancestral superhuman being.

In the present section we shall take up first the personal ancestral helpers, and after that the personal supernatural powers. 787

Separate treatment of personal ancestral helpers and of personal powers seems advisable in view of certain rather fundamental differences between the two cultural patterns involved. The spiritual helper was appealed to for knowledge of distant or future events; other lesser beings for supernatural power in matters of 769

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

769
787

war, wealth, curing, gambling, and sex. The helper imparted no power of clairvoyance or prophecy; the other lesser beings did impart one or other of the specific powers above listed. The helper had to be summoned to come in person on each occasion when needed; the other beings gave power once for all to the receiver and were not, at least not ordinarily, summoned to come in person when the imparted power was exercised. The helper was always a deceased relative of the helped; the power-giver was a non-ancestral being. The helper was not acquired by quest, he more or less forced his services on the recipient, and was not transferable; personal power was commonly (although not always) acquired by quest, was accepted or refused freely, and was more commonly transferable.

Our chief sources of information upon personal ancestral helpers and personal supernatural powers were: among the men, The Boy, Thick, Al Chandler, Thomas Main, Turn Toes; among the women, Coming Daylight, Singer, Garter Snake, Mary Ereaux, Cora Chandler. Their competence will, we believe, become clear from the circumstances to be noted passim in the present section.

Ancestral Helpers

The ancestral helper complex among the Gros Ventres has been recorded in detail by us in two papers published in 1944,[1] to which the reader is referred. The following account is a summarized version of these two papers.

The ancestral or ghost helper was called tsätsuwa'a,[2] of uncertain etymology. The word was used exclusively for such ancestral helpers, as distinct from other ghosts (see p. 23).

Such a ghost helper was acquired, not by quest through fasting or crying, as power was more commonly acquired. Acquisition usually came about as follows. A man or woman would keep some momento of a deceased close relative, such as some prized possession or else a rib or tooth[3] or lock of hair of the deceased,—either in

[1] Flannery, 1944, pp. 54-59; Cooper, 1944, pp. 80-84.

[2] This same word is used by the Gros Ventres at present for "radio."

[3] After the body had decomposed. Formerly the Gros Ventres did not bury the dead in the ground, cf. Flannery, 1953, p. 211.

L178
764

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

order to acquire the ghost of the deceased as a helper, or else solely out of regard for the departed. In most cases nothing happened; in a few, however, the ghost of the deceased became the survivor's supernatural helper. In these exceptional cases, the survivor would be apt to hear knocking, whistling or other disturbances around the spot where the memento was kept. Then the ghost would appear to the survivor, perhaps first putting him in a deep sleep, and would offer to become his helper, or ask him if he would wish this. An offer made by the ghost could not easily be refused.

The survivor had some leeway—Al Chandler's adoptive father, Little Man, accepted such an offer only on condition that he would call upon the ghost for his personal use and not for public use—but more commonly the ghost not only took the initiative in offering its services but more or less forced its services upon the survivor.

While the survivor was still in deep sleep or trance, he or she —women as well as men could have a ghost helper—would be taught by the ancestral spirit the proper rites, including always and particularly a song, to be used by the survivor in summoning and making use of the spirit. One such ghost-summoning song (number 27), a wordless one, recorded as sung by The Boy, had been given to Woman, nicknamed Bear Old Woman, who died around 1907, by her deceased husband (or brother?), Bad Bad Bull. It had been his doctoring song when he was alive and his ghost gave it to her to use both in summoning him and in curing people.[4] It should be emphasized, however, that a person could have an ancestral helper without having doctoring power, and vice versa. A person who lacked a ghost helper could not conduct the ghost-summoning tent-shaking rite, no matter how great power of other kinds he had acquired by quest or otherwise.

Songs other than those given for use in summoning the ancestral helper and conducting the shaking tent rite were sometimes given and taught by the helper to the person who had the helper, on occasions other than that on which the summoning song itself

[4] Cf. Cooper, 1944, 62, 72-75.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

769
787 was given. Two such songs, victory songs, given during war raids, were recorded by us.

A great many Gros Ventre men and women had power acquired by quest or otherwise from non-ancestral beings, but far fewer had [184] ancestral helpers such as we are describing. Our informants, in fact, whose combined memories carried back to the early 1860's, could recall only five or at most six, seven or eight: Good Singer, Woman (or Bear Old Woman), Morning Star Appears (probably the same as Rising Cross), Bird Child, Bull Head, and perhaps two or three others.[5] Persons with ghost helpers had prestige, not greater however than outstanding doctors had.

[425] Power acquired from non-ancestral beings could be transferred by the possessor to another person through gift or sale. But a ghost helper was not transferable; such power was owned property; a ghost helper was not. A given person never had more than one ghost helper, so far as we could discover. In the shaking tent rite, only this one ghost helper had part,—no other being, neither the Supreme Being, nor Bhaia, nor Little Spirit,[6] nor any power-giving being.

At the time the ghost helper was accepted by its surviving relative, it promised him (or her) to come when summoned with the summoning song, but, in sharp contrast to the practice of non-ancestral power-bestowing beings, it imparted no power to him whatever, whether in war, medicine, gambling or love, except the "power," if it can be called such, to summon the ghost and except by sheer coincidence as in the case of Bad Bad Bull mentioned above. The ghost helper imparted not power, but knowledge; not any power of clairvoyance, prophecy or wisdom, but knowledge itself; not once and for all at the time of being accepted by the person, as did the power-bestowing beings but from time to time if and when summoned. The sole function of the ghost helper as

---

[5] Cf. Flannery, 1944, pp. 55-58; Cooper, 1944, pp. 62-77 passim. Rising Cross of Flannery, p. 56, was pretty surely the same person as Morning-Star-Appears or Morning-Star-Is-Up, of Cooper, p. 71; probably the same person as mentioned in Watches-All's narrative by Kroeber, 1908, pp. 216-17.

[6] That Little Spirit could function in the shaking tent rite in place of an [114] ancestral spirit, as stated reservedly by Cooper, 1940, p. 112, is an error, corrected by field data gotten by him later.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

such was, in answer to questions asked it on each separate occasion when summoned, to reveal knowledge about past, present, future or distant happenings or to impart counsel and directions on what to do in given cases of illness or danger. The ghost helper rarely if ever came unsummoned and only exceptionally volunteered information. As a rule it gave information in response to specific questions asked. The helper was never questioned about trivial or silly matters, or about such things as the fidelity or infidelity of a wife. Questions would be asked, for example, regarding missing persons, the whereabouts and plans of the enemy, the fortunes of a distant war party,[7] the outcome of an impending battle or of an illness, the location of a stolen article and the identity of the thief, the best place to go for good buffalo-hunting.

769
787

The ghost helper did not hover around the person habitually. When need for its services arose it had to be summoned from afar, from the distant abode of the dead.

When the services of a person with a ghost helper were desired, he (or she) was approached with an offer of a pipe to smoke. He was often reluctant or afraid to accept, but could not easily refuse.

The summoning rite was held at night, with the fire out, in darkness,—ordinarily in the performer's lodge, but, if the party were away from camp, in a small emergency shelter or sweat-lodge. If the rite were held in the performer's lodge in camp, a blanket-curtain was hung up across part of the back of the lodge, and the performer stayed hidden behind this out of sight of the clients or spectators.

Commonly, although not always, the performer was first wrapped in a blanket and then securely bound with thongs, the binding often being done by some skeptic present who was challenged by the performer to do it.

After being tied, the ghost-possessor sang his summoning song, those present joining in. As the ghost helper approached, whistling, humming, and other noises, sometimes an owl call, would be heard. As the ghost entered the lodge, always through the top, the top of the lodge and often the whole lodge would shake violently, and

[7] For an example of use of ancestral helper on a war party, see Flannery, 1953, pp. 94-98.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

769 something (presumably the ghost) would sometimes be heard
sliding down the side of the tent—behind the curtain where the
787 performance was and landing with a thump. Soon after the thongs
with which the performer had been bound would be thrown out,
rolled in a tangled ball over the curtain at the spectators.

Next a pipe would be lit and offered to the ghost to smoke, and in the darkness the tobacco would be seen to glow up rhythmically each time the ghost drew on it. The ghost itself, however, at this juncture and throughout the rite remained invisible. The people present would finish smoking this pipe, after which the ghost would ask why he had been summoned. Most ghost helpers talked a whistling talk; some just in a natural voice.

If the ghost could answer offhand the question or questions asked it would do so. Otherwise it would tell the questioners to wait while it went away to get the information requested. As it departed through the top, the tent shook. While the ghost was away the people in the lodge would light the fire, have a smoke, put out the fire and sing the ghost song. On returning through the top with the usual shaking thereof the ghost would give the information asked. Usually such information was dependable, but not always; one such ghost we were told of had been a liar when living—"so you couldn't expect his spirit to tell the truth!"

After the ghost had given the desired information (or perhaps earlier in the rite, after it had had its smoke), food, especially puppy meat was offered it, and in the dark the spectators could hear the ghost eating. Finally the ghost would depart through the top of the lodge, which would shake violently as the ghost left.

After the ghost's departure, the performer would come out from behind the curtain, the fire would be re-lighted, the customary prayer before eating would be offered by the performer to the Supreme Being and other beings, all present would eat the food left over from the ghost's repast, and, after smoking and chatting a while together, all would depart.

In the ghost helper calling-rite carried out under emergency conditions, as on war expeditions, certain supplications and omissions could be and were sometimes made. The several detailed accounts of seances recorded by us indicate moreover that quite

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

apart from emergency conditions, ritual variations from the above-described pattern occurred, perhaps in accord with varying ritual instructions received by different individuals from their respective ghost helpers. 769 787

Before leaving the ghost helper complex and taking up the power complex, we may mention here one case, given us by Al Chandler, the only one of its kind we recorded, which shares certain elements peculiar to each. Al Chandler's adoptive father, Little Man, was keeping a rib bone of his deceased uncle, who had been "a kind of medicine man." His uncle's spirit came and asked Little Man: "Why do you do this? What are you going to do with me?" "This is just for myself," Little Man replied. "I don't want to be that kind who have spirits. If I need you I am going to call on you and I want you to help me. I am not going to make you a popular servant (not going to use the rib in general practice). But if I need you, you can come and help me." 755 769 787

Little Man, Al told us, made use of that rib one time when he cured his brother-in-law, old Turn Toes, of facial paralysis (caused by ghosts: cf. supra, p. 23). Brothers-in-law like to tease each other. So when Turn Toes came to Little Man to be treated, the latter took the rib, rubbed it four times, and in fun twisted Turn Toes' mouth way around on the other side. At this, Little Man's wife got angry and said: "You shouldn't do that to him." Little Man said: "I just want to make sure that the next time his mouth won't go crooked on this other side." So then Little Man put his brother-in-law's mouth straight and shoved his eyes up in place. And Al added: "You can see that old man [Turn Toes] today [1940] and he is all right." [Turn Toes has since died, in 1942 or 1943]. 801

Whether in the above case curing power was in the rib itself or whether the ghost of Little Man's uncle came and cured on occasions of use of the rib, is not clear. If the latter, as implied in Little Man's words to his uncle, at the beginning, we have a curing differing materially from the one to be described in the following on supernatural power, and much more akin to the Woodland Algonquian concept of the guardian spirit proper,—the guardian spirit who comes on call to cure and otherwise to help the possessor, 769 787

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

769 —rather than the power-giving being who bestows upon the
787 recipient power the latter can use at will without having recourse to or summoning the original donor. No historical interpretation is here being suggested. It looks, instead, that Little Man's deviant power in the case was merely an idiosyncratic variant of the ghost helper concept to which, not wishing to assume the normal public offices of persons with ghost helpers, he attached to curing functions not for all ailments but for ailments caused by ghosts.

Personal Supernatural Powers

787 Supernatural power was acquired by an individual mostly for
778 success in war, accumulation of wealth, doctoring, gambling or love. It was obtained more commonly by quest, although often without quest, and could be transferred by sale, gift or bequest. It was bestowed by many different kinds of beings,—mostly quadrupeds, birds, snakes, rocks; in some cases, ghosts, indeterminate "persons" or "spirits." How and from whom power was acquired differed appreciably in accordance with the several above-listed kinds of power. These differences we shall describe later in detail under these several categories: war, wealth, doctoring, gambling and love. Before doing so, we shall deal with certain characteristics more or less common to all the above five categories.

782 In general, the Gros Ventres distinguished between three chief
869 methods of fulfilling their desires and wants: natural ability, prayer and power. A person was supposed to make best use of his native physical and mental endowments to acquire skills, to use his wits, to develop his capacities and personality,—in a word, to rely on himself and to stand on his own feet, whether as food-getter, craftsman, warrior, gambler, or what not. His second recourse, where his inborn and acquired abilities fell short or threatened to fall short of enabling him to fulfill his wishes and needs, was prayer, primarily although by no means exclusively to the Supreme Being. The third choice, in the ideal order, was resort to power.

Turn Toes, for instance, as an orphaned boy used to be advised

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

by his grandfather: "Do not seek doctoring power, but pray to the Supreme Being. This is enough." 782 869

According to The Boy, "Parents in advising their children how to conduct their lives would counsel them: 'Do not have ambition to have power like medicine men, else you will not live long. A medicine man forfeits his prospects of a long life and dies soon [a point to which we shall return presently]. It is far better and safer to just pray, that is, pray to the Supreme Being, and pray all the time. Make prayer the guiding rule in your lives.' Some people acquire power either by sleeping out on the hills or without seeking it. In either case they have to pay the price in shortened, restricted, danger-beset lives. The most important thing of all is to pray, beg, plead. This makes by far for the most happy and good life. This is far above seeking power."

On another occasion, The Boy explained the situation as follows: "However great or renowned these men and women with powers were in the old days, and however much they enjoyed the powers sought by and conferred upon them, they (the powers) were all right only while they lasted. The old-time Gros Ventres knew definitely that people who had these various powers would not live out their full span of life. Parents when raising their children would tell them to avoid that kind of life. They would exert all the influence in instructing their children not to go out on hills and seek power, but to have ambition to acquire fame and respect from exercise of natural ability. They tried to school their children along these lines and [to teach them] that it was considered weak to have the powers from these sources,—from rat, mountain, prairie chicken, and so forth. This my father, Lame Bull, told me all the time, and all the rest of the people told their sons and daughters this same rule of life. And the criers with the chiefs of the tribe, when they walked around on a nice calm day, would surely go into this matter, making it perhaps the main subject of their lecture. But still it [power seeking] was done, against such advice and against better judgment and better experience. All of these fellows who had these powers died prematurely." [203]

Thomas Main had many times heard his grandfather, Lame Bull,

782 869 [761] say: "It is not good to ask that kind of a career [from powers]. It would be a life misspent and would be dearly paid for. Man's dearest possession is life, and this would be cut off."

787 869 761 Charles Buckman had heard old men say that, although they had fasted and prayed over and over again for power, they had never had even a dream, and that this may have been why they had lived to old age.

According to The Boy, his father Lame Bull, when a young man, dreamed that the being who lived on Baldy Butte in the Bear Paw Mountains called him. So on one occasion when the Gros Ventres were camped near this butte, Lame Bull thought this was a good time to accept the invitation and go up on this butte and sleep. He was getting ready to do so, when his father gave him a sound scolding: "I always told you not to try to be a holy man, a man with power of that kind. Those who have such power do not live long. Forget about sleeping on the mountain and attend to the horses and lodge poles. We need you at home. Mind your own business. So Lame Bull did not get to sleep on the mountain. His father was boss."

Coming Daylight came back repeatedly to the same theme. "I am not a medicine woman [with power] and that is why I have lived to be such an old woman." "I am not sorry I refused the medicine power offered me in a dream. Medicine people die soon. It seems like they have a certain time to die and they don't live to be old like myself and Singer. These medicine people are not strong like others." "I never accepted any kind of power. Those who have power die too soon." "They [the beings] used to trick people into taking all these things [powers] because they wanted them to die. The holy dreams are very tricky."

787 778 Singer gave her own experience. "I used to take a blanket or other offering and put it in deep water and pray that they [apparently the water monsters] would have pity on me. One night after I had just done this I dreamed that a person was standing there and that nearby lay the emaciated body of one who was very very sick. This person told me: 'I give you my body.' This is the way a being puts it in a dream when going to bestow power. Then the person showed me how to doctor, he used a pipe-stem which

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

was full of 'nicotine,' and showed me how to draw out sickness through the stem. But I told him: 'I don't care to have any power, because people who accept power have only a certain length of time to live and it is always too soon [short].'" 787 778

Those who possessed gambling power in particular always became afflicted with some serious ailment of their legs and/or arms. There would be pain in and swelling of the joints, and the possessors would die before their time. This happened to Lone Bear, The Boy's wife's father, who had gambling power; while still in his prime his legs went bad, and even though he quit gambling to escape the penalty, he died prematurely. Red Whip, too, one of the greatest of those with gambling power, who died in 1912, died, the Gros Ventres believed, before his time. 753 787 778

It was believed that Bull Lodge, a great medicine man, did not live his life out.

A person, however, who had acquired power and later transferred all of it by gift or sale to another person or persons could thereby escape the penalty and live his life out. In this case the penalty would be transferred, along with the power, to the transferee or transferees.

Doctoring power was sometimes avoided or refused for other reasons than fear of or unwillingness to accept the penalty of illness or shortened life. Doctors, somewhat like keepers of the sacred Pipes, had to live restricted lives, abstain from certain foods, and avoid certain actions. Personal liberty was thus curtailed. Coming Daylight, when a young girl, was offered medicine power by a man four successive times in dreams, but she refused: "I did not want to be a medicine woman. I did not like it because medicine people suck on the affected part of the patient and have to swallow what they extract,—even though that man was showing me that I would have to extract with my hands, and not by sucking." Bad Bad Bull had power to cure the powerful "stomach-eating sickness" [cancer?] and used to suck out the small animal that caused it. In his old age he wanted to give this power to his sister, but she would say: "Oh, I am bashful. I would not be able to doctor that sickness. I would like to have the power so I could cure the pains but I would not like the part [or the curing pro- 787 756

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787 cedure] where you pull [suck] it [the animal] out." When she
756 would say that people would tell her: "You should have taken the power and so gotten a lot of things [in payment] for curing that disease."

[831] Some women would refrain from asking power, particularly love power, from men who had it, because payment included allowing sex relations with the man.

787 While, then, the possession of powers brought the possessor
778 some very worthwhile advantages, advantages differing in kind according to the specific power acquired, it had its drawbacks—chiefly illness and shortened life, but also restrictions on freedom and other obligations distasteful to at least some individuals. The advice, therefore, given by parents and councilors to avoid seeking power is understandable. So, too, is the fact that many neither sought power nor accepted it when it was offered by supernatural beings or by fellow-tribesman. Many thus clung more to what appears to The Boy and others to have been the ideal Gros Ventre philosophy of life: For the fulfillment of your wishes rely on yourself and on prayer, rather than on magical power.

We recorded a number of cases of refusal of power, some of them already cited above in passing. In no case of refusal except one did the person refusing suffer any evil consequences therefor, and two of our informants, Coming Daylight and Singer explicitly stated that such refusal curtailed no penalty. A person was quite free to accept or decline an offer of power whether made by a power-giving being or a power-possessing fellow-tribesman. Neither of the latter would take offense if the offer were declined.

756 Coming Daylight in various free chats volunteered many details
778 of her own personal refusals of power. Her earliest experience
787 came when she was a very young girl, only about eight years old, and was living with her grandmother. "I used to sleep in a big lodge [with her grandmother]. While I was sleeping, a man came and wakened me. He had a bag of medicine on his back and told me, 'You can be a medicine woman.' The third time he appeared to me [in dreams], there was a person lying there, just skin and bones. The man [with the medicines] said to me, 'You could cure such persons as this one. You can take all these medicines,'

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

and he spread out, all the medicines and told her what each was for and said, 'Do everything I tell you to do. Lay your hands on the sick and you will have it [medicine? cause of illness?] on your hands.' But I never wanted to take this and I would tell the man so. In the morning I would tell my dream to my grandmother, although I was not supposed to do so until after the fourth dream, and my grandmother would say to me: 'Do not say anything. You will be a great medicine woman.' But I did not want this power. I kept refusing it and for this reason after the man had appeared to me in dreams the fourth time he quit coming. I would have been great if I had accepted the power but I did not want it.—Maybe if this dream had come to me later I might have accepted the power and then I would have been like Good Singer [Coming Daylight's father's sister, a famous medicine woman of Coming Daylight's earlier years]." 787 756 778

On later occasions, too, she was offered power in dreams, but she always refused and does not regret having so refused. "But," she said, "all I wanted was to live a peaceful life and get food easily. I have always been well fixed with things to eat and have gotten things easily, because I prayed for these things instead of taking medicine power . . . besides I had too many children to be a medicine woman. . . . My children were all Catholics. I too joined the Church, and I will be a good Catholic until I die."

Coming Daylight was also offered in a dream the power to "know children," that is, power to doctor women who did not want children and likewise refused it.[8]

On other occasions, an old medicine man, who had cured her infant daughter would offer to transfer curing power to her, at the implicitly understood common price of granting sex relations with him. "If you want that power," he would say, "you can come crying to me." But she used to answer: "Oh, I wouldn't do that because you are one of those who like to have women and you would try to have me."

One instance of refusal of power by Singer was noted previously. Another was described by her as follows. "Once when we had gone to Rocky Boy Reservation, I went quite a distance to fetch

[8] Cf. Flannery, 1953, p. 129.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

756 wood. Something in my sleeve kept biting me. I would sort of
work my sleeve but it kept biting me. Finally I took off my dress
787 and found it was a big spider with long legs. I did not kill it but
778 just brushed it off. That night in a dream the spider told me:
'Because you had pity on me, I will have pity on you.' But I told
the spider: 'I do not care for any powers from a bug or spider.'
Afterwards people told me I should have accepted the offered
power so that I could doctor spider bites. If you accept a power
like that you are shown in your dream how to doctor. Nothing
happens if you refuse such power." Every once in a while people
[165] were bitten by spiders. Cora Chandler had heard of one such case:
"One fourth of July at Lodge Pole a woman got bitten while fix-
ing her tent and died the same evening. Had Singer accepted the
power offered her, she could have doctored that woman."

Little Man, Al Chandler's adoptive father, once refused power from a rattlesnake to cure snake bites, but acquired power to cure seven dying persons. He had cured people and wanted to pass on what remained of his power to Al. But the latter in recounting the matter stated: "I did not want this power on account of the Catholic Church. I was afraid I might poison somebody. But the old man [Little Man] said: 'You will know all about it and what to do. All you have to do is to accept it. The rest will come to you. I am getting old and you might need it for your children. You could doctor your own children.' But the Catholics did not want you to do such things." So Al declined the old man's offer.

787 By three different men, who possessed love power, The Boy
was offered this power, but in all cases he refused. His accounts
832 follow.

778 "One old man lived near Bear Paws and when he came to my place, then on the Milk River, I used to accommodate him, although he would eat with my father, Lame Bull. He appreciated this and wanted to do something to repay the favor. So he said to me: 'I am going to give you my woman's medicine in payment for consideration of your service to me. I haven't anything of adequate value to pay you back.' He had a looking glass he used to do his stuff with. But I diplomatically refused. I told him: 'I do not like that kind of thing and never have, although I appreciate the fact

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

that you are grateful and what you are offering to do for me.' The old man did not get mad or insulted, and he said to me: 'It is well you refuse this thing anyhow.' He did not tell me all the details (about the power and its manner of use), because I refused it. 778 787 832

"Another old man offered me that kind of medicine [love power] out of my appreciation of my good treatment of him, and did not get mad when I refused it."

One other old man, who liked his liquor, was on one occasion given a treat of it by The Boy and another man. Soon the old man was feeling pretty good and started to get generous and said to The Boy: "Now, my son, I am an old man now and I appreciate your giving me this drink, so much so that I am going to give you something worth something." It was this love medicine. But The Boy "refused him nicely" and did not take it.

One final illustration of refusal,—"just an old time story," Coming Daylight called it who related it,—may be given, the only case we recorded of penalty believed to follow refusal. Perhaps even in this case the refusal was not so much of power as of a request to hold a Sacrifice Lodge. 787 778

"A man was hunting north of the canyon [near the present St. Paul's mission in the Little Rockies] and was shown [by whom?] a nice clean big cave. In this cave were big strings, like a spider puts before he makes a whole web, that is one strand crossing the other at right angles. Right in the middle [at the intersection] was a medicine wheel, of the kind always used at the Sacrifice Lodge. The man just stood and gazed at it. He saw it good and it belonged to the Sacrifice Lodge. He camped in the mountains overnight. That night this wheel told him in his dream: 'You ought to take me so you can make this Sacrifice Lodge.' But the man did not take it. He went back to camp and told his dream and his refusal to take the wheel. After that he began to waste away with a sickness called 'cut away,' in which the flesh starts to disappear in a small place and just sinews show and then it spreads. It was a quick sickness and he died of it. They say this happened to him because he did not take that medicine wheel." [164]

From what has been recorded on the preceding pages it seems quite clear that the individual was under little or no supernatural

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787 or social compulsion to seek power, and was subject to no penalty
778 if he refused it when offered to him by supernatural beings or by fellow-tribesmen. In fact, a certain amount of social pressure was brought to bear upon him to avoid and refuse it. Each individual had to make his own free choice, weighing the advantages against the disadvantages, the profit against the cost. The decision to seek or refrain from seeking, to accept when offered or to refuse, was entirely up to him.

554 We have listed the disadvantages, the cost. What were the ad-
778 vantages, the profit? Chiefly prestige, material gains or wealth, and sex favors, depending on the type of power sought or accepted. The great warrior and the great doctor who attained eminence through power both enjoyed high prestige. Which of the two, warrior or doctor, ranked higher is hard to say. Both had very high standing and both were deeply respected. The Boy and Coming Daylight inclined to rank the great warrior a bit higher than the great doctor. In The Boy's word, "both had high standing, each in his own field. The warrior perhaps rated higher. The medicine man had standing, but only on certain occasions was he thought of. But a renowned warrior had the admiration of the tribe because he had risked his life and was a strategist and by his own efforts." According to Coming Daylight "it was the greatest thing to be a warrior and look for the enemy." Al Chandler leaned more to the view that "if a man was honest about his medicine,—so many times they [medicine men] faked and tried to got everything a person owned,—and was known to be honest, he was respected to the same degree as a warrior." All informants were however fully agreed that both warriors and doctors ranked high. Doctors who had power to kill and who were suspected of using it were more feared than respected. Men who had gambling powers ranked far below warriors and doctors in the prestige scale. Of one the most famous recent Gros Ventre possessors of gambling power The Boy remarked: "He was just a little fellow. He was just a gambler," and a man known to have gambler power could not be selected to the high office of Pipe-keeper. Likewise those who had love power were usually rather chary of advertising widely the fact as well as the source of their power.

Power thus in varying degrees conferred prestige, a much sought

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

after good in Gros Ventre competitive life. Most types of power,— and not only power to acquire wealth directly,—brought material rewards. War raids had largely the purpose of acquiring horses, the main Gros Ventre wealth in earlier days, from the enemy.* Doctoring brought the practitioner large emoluments; gambling power netted the owner rich winnings. Love power, in addition to securing sex favors for its possessor, could also be a source of good profit through transfer by sale to others. Wealth among the Gros Ventres gave prestige on its own account as well as material ease and security. Further, wealth was inextricably tied up with prestige as goals sought through military, medicinal, gambling and love powers. 554 778 [721]

These were the chief advantages and profit or power which the individual had to weight against the disadvantages and cost thereof.

Many individuals, in view of the cost, neither sought nor accepted power, as we have seen.

Many others, however, men and women and even some young boys and girls, sought or accepted power, and such power was by no means confined to professional medicine men but was widely distributed among the laity. A few, but very few, children had power: the several cases recorded will be given later. But many women as well as men acquired it; what exact proportion of whole adult population is hard to say. The Boy, Thick concurring, stated: "Only a few men and women had ancestral helpers, but it was the usual thing for grownups, men and women, to have some kind of power." On another occasion, they said: "Not everyone tried to get power [by fasting on mountains] but only certain individuals. For instance, of three men only one might try, the other two might not care to try." On still another occasion, The Boy remarked: "Not all who slept on mountains got power. Lots got nothing; they didn't even dream. Only a few got power from such a quest. Some tried over and over again but never got anything. A man might spend five to seven days on the mountains and yet not even dream. If, say 30 or 40 slept on the mountains, only three or four of them might get power. Only a few Gros 778 787

* For discussion of Gros Ventres concept of wealth, see Flannery, 1953, pp. 73-79.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

778 Ventres, not many, had power. Males would start questing when
787 young, but older men would also go out to seek power. After a man got to be really old, he no longer tried." Charles Buckman had heard old men say that they had fasted and prayed (on the hills) over and over again but that in spite of the sufferings they thus endured "they never had even a dream," and, in another chat, he remarked that "few fasted and prayed."

[184] It seems, therefore, that many men did not go out on hills to seek power (women never did so), and that relatively few even of those who did go were successful. At least, very few were successful in acquiring really significant or great power. On the other hand, many, the majority perhaps of both men and women, had minor power or powers of one kind or another, gotten initially otherwise than by quest or by transfer. Thus for example, Coming Daylight, who had repeatedly refused curing powers offered her in dreams and who insisted she was in no sense a medicine woman or "holy," this is, power-possessing, woman, had certain herbal curatives, for family use, given her by her maternal grandmother and by her mother's sister, Good Singer, a noted medicine woman of earlier days. Or, to use just one other example, many women and men had bought love medicine from other men or women. These minor powers, of many different kinds not always distinguishable from non-magical knowledge and ability, were apparently very common,—"the usual thing," as The Boy expressed it above, "for grown-ups, men and women."

The Power Quest

787 The favorite time of the year for going out to seek war, wealth
827 and doctor power was spring. In The Boy's words: "It was known to be easier to get doctor power in spring. Everybody used to say that the young bear cubs used to wash their feet with the first rain of the spring. Bears were easy to get power from in spring. They were eager to give their power at this season. All nature is alive in spring. Grass, trees and leaves wake up. Hibernating animals used to sing before coming out of their winter dens. Bears come out of their hibernating dens after the first rain of spring. The body of even a human being is sort of stationary in winter

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

time. All we can do in winter time is to look after our bodies. But in spring the body feels good, and when we look around we see the grass and leaves and animals appearing. There is a revolutionary change. They get power at that time. They take advantage of the newness of all nature. Everything is in blossom. Most animals then have their young. It is the most 'affectionate' season of the year. Nature smiles on all living creatures. Food and all that man uses in his life are easier to get then. Doctoring power was gotten more easily then than at other time—most who went out in spring did so principally and most frequently to seek war power, so some being or animal or something would give them power to be great warriors; or to acquire wealth in horses and not to be poor, or to get things easily without much effort. Some however went out chiefly to get doctoring power." While however spring was the favorite season for the power quest, it was not the only one. 787 827

Women never went out on the hills to seek power. This was done only by males. The latter would ordinarily begin to do so around the age of seventeen or eighteen years, or before twenty-one, just before reaching full manhood, most of them to get power to be great warriors. Young boys did not go out on the mountains. Only one case of a young boy going out to seek power was recalled by The Boy and Thick. He was about twelve or fourteen years old. He did not go far out, but did his crying a little way from camp and would return every night and sleep outside the tent where he and his people lived. Another such exceptional case was that of Bull Lodge, Garter Snake's father, who started his quest sleeping out in the mountains when he was only about twelve years old. 787

The place for those to go who sought war, wealth, or doctor power was the top of buttes, hills or mountains, some distance from camp. Certain of these elevated spots seem to have been preferred localities. 787 823

McCann Butte, the first butte of the Bear Paws, was specifically mentioned by informants as having been frequented by Stiff-arm, by Bear Nose, and earlier by Coming Daylight's grandmother's brother, the first Crow Bull, in their quest. Bull Lodge, Garter Snake's father, got doctoring power on Baldy Butte, the

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787 highest of the Bear Paws, and it was to Baldy Butte that The
823 Boy's father, Lame Bull, was called in a dream. Another Gros Ventre, still living, sought power on Eagle Child Butte at the west end of the Little Rockies.

At three other spots mentioned by our informants quest for power was always a failure. According to Coming Daylight, "There was a rock [location not specified by her] that looked like a buffalo sitting. Many young men tried to fast and sleep there, but they claimed they never could because there was always something to scare them away. It was a spirit that looked like a person. They could hear people talking and there would be a light just like a camp fire. With all that they just could not stand it. No one ever stayed there."

Cora Chandler stated that "not far from Hays there is a steep hill called by the Indians, Electric Butte. Stiffarm used to tell all kinds of stories about that place and used to say that no one could sleep there for power because electricity came out of the rock(s) there." Stiffarm tried many times to sleep there but always had to run away. Coming Daylight's husband, Warrior, used to try to have thunder dreams and thunder power. She and he once went together [not questing] to Electric Butte. "There were," she said, "marks of electricity on the rock like at night when it storms." The rock had rolled down. "We did not touch it, except when Warrior put it back in place—During electric storms flashes come out of it."

The third place,—this one by exception not a mountain top,—was a hot spring somewhere south of the Missouri River. "Across the Missouri River," Singer said, "there was a big spring with no trees or anything [near it]. The stream goes away from this place in a curve. In the old days they [power questers] used to sleep there to get power from that spirit. But no one could ever stay because they were frightened when they would hear someone who had a big pot of boiling water say: 'I am going to have the legs,' or 'I am going to have the arms.' So the one who was trying to sleep there [for power] would run away. Long afterwards I went with some old women to see the place. It looked different than in the old days. The water used to go up and down, and once in a

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

while shells like those I wore for earrings would show. But the place was grown over with weeds and white settlers were there. The old women said: 'It is funny that they [the whites] do not hear the spirit getting [ready] a pot of boiling water for them.' They thought it strange that the white people could stay there." 787 823

Those few men who sought gambling power—it was never sought or possessed by women, we were told—sought it not on hill tops but in the lowlands, in the brush and timber along streams, from prairie chickens or ghosts there. The quester chose by preference a place where wild morning-glories formed a sort of bower or "tipi." The seeker would cry and when he got sleepy would crawl into the bower and sleep. In his sleep a prairie chicken or ghost would give him a song, certain rules to live by, procedures and rites to use in the hand game,—the only game in which gambling power was used,—and perhaps some powers of the legerdemain order. The person who acquired gambling power by quest would be very chary of revealing his quest experiences.[10]

Seemingly still more secretive and tight lipped were persons who acquired love power through quest. According to The Boy, our only informant on this point, "these fellows [who had it] were careful never to tell who gave this power. Sometimes they would say a 'person' gave it, but it was generally known that it came from bird or animal on the ground or in the water." On other occasions he stated: "Usually some animal gave love power," and questers "did not ask for success in gambling or love on the mountains, but on the prairies or in the brush along rivers." The being would give the quester a root to use in exercising love power.

A person before starting out for a chosen mountain top to seek major powers would, The Boy put it, "take a good bath and clean up his body well and put perfume on his body so he would smell good—those who did not use perfume would be told by the being on the mountain: 'Go away. You smell bad.'" He would also unbraid his hair and would wear no clothing except his moccasins and under his blanket his breechcloth. He took no weapons with him. "He took a lot of chances," Al Chandler commented, "because enemies might be close-by. But no enemy ever seemed to [302 515]

[10] For fuller details, see Flannery and Cooper, 1946, pp. 405-09, 416.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787 [823] disturb such young men. Everybody wonders how it was that none of the enemy ever ran on to a man in that state [that is, on quest]." The quester also took with him a pipe with tobacco mixture.

On the way out to the hill top, the young man was often accompanied to the spot by some older man, but only to help get the quester settled as it were. Once the quester was settled, the helper departed, and the young man had to carry on his quest strictly alone and in isolation. The quester's stay night and day alone on the mountain top was distinctly a test, not only of fasting endurance but of both physical and moral courage and stamina. There was danger of the known,—such as human enemies, snakes, or bears. Still more, there was danger from contact with the unknown, the supernatural. Questers often had fearsome and uncanny experiences while out on the hills. A concrete example, the experience of a Gros Ventre still living, as told by Thomas Main who had heard the story several times from Gambler, may illustrate the point. The incident occurred around 1900.

"The Gros Ventre [whom we shall call X] was with Gambler, an old Arapaho, on the Mission ranch near Hays. X wanted to sleep on a mountain top to acquire power. Gambler told him: 'Don't do it. You don't hold your mouth right. Your heart is small and your mind is narrow. You haven't nerve enough. You are physically courageous, but not morally so.' X replied: 'I'll show you. Sleeping on a mountain is easy. It is easier than riding a bucking horse that can kill me (and I'm not afraid to do the latter).' So Gambler said: 'I'll go with you and bring your horse home and attend to your chores while you are away.' So they went off together to Eagle Child Butte at the western extremity of the Little Rockies, taking with them a pipe, mixture, and blanket. On their arrival, Gambler built a little shelter for X to sleep in, and just before he left him said to him: 'All right, you've gone this far. Now carry it through. But I bet you that you will be back in your bed at the ranch before morning.' Gambler now left him to himself and went back home. X then started to walk around and cry, and after this to rest and smoke. Sometime during this very first night something happened. X would not reveal what it

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

was, but he told Gambler afterwards: 'I could not stand that kind of thing!' X went home as Gambler had predicted and when Gambler went to X's house the next morning for the milk bucket, there was X. X would never tell what really happened that night." The Boy commented, "X was not the only one [quester on mountain top] who ran away; others did;" and added parenthetically, "No one has ever been able to spend the first night on Chief Mountain in Glacier National Park." 787

One legendary narrative we gathered,—"just an old time story" the narrator, Coming Daylight, called it,—was well calculated to put fear into questers. 787 539

"A certain young man slept out on the hills and he cried and cried. He had a shelter and went to sleep in it. While he slept a big snake came from the south to west all around where he slept. The snake ate up the young man and left only the bones. Where the snake had come from it had made a bald path with no grass at all, just like a rock.

"This young man had told his friend: 'Come tomorrow and bring me a pipe.' The next afternoon his friend came and saw the snake track and got scared. From outside the shelter he called to his friend. Getting no answer he went in. There he saw the skeleton. So he called out yelling for the young man's people. Everybody came, and the young man's folks especially were scared when they saw the snake's track. When the young man's folks saw the skeleton they started to mourn. His friend took a quilt, wrapped up the bones in it, and carried them home. The people had a hard time to quiet the parents.

"So the friend said: 'I will go and sleep there tonight and I'll carry a gun.' So he went to the place, and in the evening he started to cry and cry. At night when he was crying and crying, he lay in the bed but did not go to sleep. He had his gun ready.

"After a while he heard a great big noise, like a big rattle. It sounded scary. The snake came in the same track. When it got to the door, it kind of lifted up the rock and threw it aside. It had a big shiny horn and sort of blinded the friend, and its eyes were yellow shiny, and it was a great big snake. It was as big as a human being and its rattler was great big. When it knocked the

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787 539 door down, the man shot it. It just writhed and he emptied his whole gun on it.

"He stayed there until the morning. In the morning he started to holler for the people. They saw this big snake and burned it up. They thought this man very brave."

787 Of equal importance with isolation was concentration of thought. "If," said The Boy, "while on the mountain top the quester was thinking about his wife or about other affairs, he would get nothing [no power] for he did not have his mind on it —If a person is playing cards he must keep his mind on playing else he will not win. In like manner, when a man was fasting out on a mountain he had to concentrate his mind on what he was after—He went there to pray, to ask for help for something above the human."

787 782 The first ritual act after arrival at the mountain top was the prayer with the pipe. This rite was described by The Boy and Thick as follows: "When a Gros Ventre went out in the mountains to seek power he always took along a pipe to use in prayer. He asked from above that the being who owned the mountain or hilltop would be commanded to grant this power. He took the pipe along to pray to the Supreme Being,—it was the idea that the Supreme Being ruled everything but his ruling was systematic or by plans. He seemed to believe that there were lesser beings who sort of managed [ruled] details of the whole situation. He [the quester] would start out, in his very first prayer [by praying] to the Supreme Being asking the granting of his petition, so that the one to whom he went, the one who owned or lived in the hill would be sort of forced or commanded to grant the power that was being requested. The pipe was first offered, with the stem pointing upward to the Supreme Being. Then the quester lit it and blew the smoke upward [toward the Supreme Being] and afterwards downward to the Last Child. But there was no comparison between the up and the down prayer. He held the stem pointing downward to the Last Child to give him a smoke. The Last Child was of the order of the killdeer [vastly inferior to the Supreme Being]. After giving the smoke to the Last Child in a sort of important way, he would offer the pipe to the hill, with the stem pointing not

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

upward or downward but to the hill, with a ritual gesture and would make his request direct to the one or ones inhabiting the hill or mountain top and tell this one or these ones what [power] he actually wanted." 787 [782]

In all the above the quester was following the general ritual and social Gros Ventre pattern for making requests. Such was the ritual pattern in prayer with a pipe. And whenever a pipe was offered to a fellow-tribesman it was offered with the stem toward him. The offering of a pipe to another when asking something of him was an "emphatic way of pleading." Thomas Main here remarked: "If I wanted to borrow money of another and were afraid my request would not be granted, I might offer him a pipe when asking for the loan and so reinforce my request." 787 576 276

Bull Lodge, when seeking power on a butte, made offerings of material goods and of the first joint of his left little finger. Little Man made offerings of a bit or bits of his flesh. 787 [582 304]

While up on the mountains the quester, alone and praying and concentrating his thoughts on his quest, would fast, neither eating or drinking, and would walk around crying, shedding real tears. He, or the man who had first accompanied him to the spot and then left him, would make a rude sleeping place of rocks and twigs and branches. This sort of "nest" was called his "call-for-power lodge." When the quester got weak or fatigued or sleepy, he would lie down in this "nest" and doze or sleep. Al Chandler stated: "Their [the quester's] sleep is not sound, any little thing wakens them. They are expecting something all the time and they look for it." Usually power was given during such sleep, although in some instances when the quester was wide awake. The power-giving being would speak to the quester and, usually at least, appear to him.

Sometimes a quester would be told by the being whose "house" was the mountain on which the man was questing: "Here is the kind of power I have. This is all I have. That other one [being] has the kind of power you wish. Go over there." And the being would name some other butte or mountain. Thus, for instance, a man going to a given mountain to seek wealth or war power might be offered doctoring power, and if he did not take this

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787 latter he would be told by the offerer to go to some other designated mountain to get what he was seeking.

The length of time a man would stay out on the mountain varied, the range being apparently from one to seven days, and of course the nights too. Power might be given in full daylight as well as at night. Various informants mentioned one to seven days, five to seven days, seven days, two to four days, four days. Sometimes questers were given power the very first day or night; others, only on a later day or night; others still not on the first quest at all, even though they remained five or seven days, but only on a following quest or after repeated quests; others, finally, never got power, not even a dream, even though they went out over and over again on the hills to seek power. Great medicine men got their full powers as a rule only after a number of years of repeated sleeping around on high buttes.

The recipient of power ordinarily got three things from the donor: a song, instructions on the rites to be observed in using the power, and some material object which was a symbol, and/or instrument vehicle of the power.

535 778 Singing, as we noted earlier (supra, p. 79), was originally gotten by the Gros Ventres from Earthmaker at the time of the great flood and was confined to sacred occasions. Later it degenerated and became secular as well. But among the birds and animals it did not degenerate; it kept its pristine sacredness. And these birds and animals and other beings would give their songs to questers for power, to each successful quester a specific song for his own use in exercising the particular power given at the time.

As The Boy explained it: "From time immemorial every Gros Ventre rite or ceremony began with song. . . . And when the Gros Ventres went out on the hills or to the forests to seek power and were granted a hearing and were going to be given power by rock, forest, animal or other creature, the granting always began by a song. . . . It was remarkable how they [the questers] could memorize these songs that were sung [to them] by these several creatures, and the recipients never forgot these songs and always had them foremost in their minds and never altered them in any

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

way. Others of course, learned them from the one to whom they were first given, but always sang them the same unaltered way." 533 778

An individual might have more than one kind of power, and hence more than one song. A doctor might have more than one doctoring song; Stiffarm, for example, had many. At any given time a great number of doctoring songs were in use by the many doctors. The four doctoring songs we recorded are only samplings. Only the person who acquired a power by quest or transfer had the right to sing the song or songs connected therewith except when requested to help sing with the owner at say a curing rite. A person who had acquired power songs could, if he desired, sing them in his lodge as bedtime songs.

The recipient of power was given and taught by the power-donor not only a song but also detailed instructions on other ritual procedures to be followed in exercising the specific power. These procedures will be described presently, in our section on power use and ritual.

At the time when power was bestowed, the recipient also got some power object. Sometimes they were given to him directly by the supernatural donor; sometimes the donor instructed the recipient where to find or how to make the power object, or just told him what kind of object to use. This object was often spoken of as the medicine or power of the possessor. So far as we could discover, the object was conceived of as more or less identical with the power or as the tangible embodiment, vehicle or instrument of it. The power object was consistently brought into play when the possessor made use of his power, as will be described later. A recipient might obtain at any given quest more than one such object from the donor. 787 778

These objects,—such as a weasel skin, otter skin, root, and so forth,—were commonly kept by the possessor in a skin bag as the possessor's medicine bundle. The Boy made a gift to us of the badger-skin medicine bag of his father, Lame Bull, who used to keep peppermint and a thunder-stone in it.

In many cases power objects were swallowed by the power-recipient when first given to him and were so retained within his body until he forfeited his power through breach of code or in-

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

778
787

struction or until just before his death. In the latter case, these objects would come out of his body, usually his mouth, and if they were living things would shortly thereafter die, after which the person himself or herself died.

Thick's sister-in-law, an Assiniboine, whose Gros Ventre husband had been a sacred Pipe keeper, violated the rules by joining the Ghost Dance religion. Thick witnessed her death. "Just before she died, she said to her husband: 'Get me a dish.' She spat into it. We looked and found there a living (?) thunder-stone she had spat out. She spat again, and this time a little round rock. She spat a third time, a stem of fresh green peppermint. 'Now,' she said, 'I'll die. I have violated the rule laid down for me.' And so she died."

A coyote had given Al Chandler's adoptive father, Little Man, yellow paint to swallow. "I saw it," Al stated, "when Little Man was dying because it came out then. . . . It was about 2½ inches long and about 2½ inches around. It was pure white clay on the outside. It was like you make a dough of the white clay and put the yellow inside and roll the white over the yellow."

Stiffarm and Little Man's brother were also present when Little Man was dying and knew this paint would come out when he died. They said: "We will see what made this old fellow so powerful." So they took this roll of white clay and broke it open, and the yellow paint poured out. "The brother was one of those who did not believe in such things," Al added, "and he certainly was surprised."

In the course of the curing procedure as carried out by Sits Holy, a miniature bear would stick its paw out of his mouth and would growl loudly enough to be heard all around; as carried out by White Weasel, he pulled a little animal, his medicine, out of himself; as carried out by Good Singer, she hit herself on the chest and a bead, her medicine, came out of her mouth, and at the end of the rite she swallowed it; as carried out by Little Man, a hail-stone, given him to swallow when he received child-birth power, was later disgorged and given to his patient to swallow.[11]

Lame Bull had been given doctoring power, to be used only

[11] The Crow Indians, The Boy stated, likewise swallow power objects.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

after a certain period of probation. He, however, broke the rule and doctored before his time was up. A night or so after he had doctored a spider came out of his ears and a thunder-rock out of his mouth, and so he lost his doctoring power.

Occasionally in connection with the power quest the right would be given to the quester to paint his lodge in a particular manner.[12] Among the Gros Ventre such sacred or holy painted lodges were relatively rare and were thought of very highly. We recorded one song (No. 88), a wordless one, which belonged with Bull Lodge's sacred lodge. Bull Lodge had been "invited" to quest for power at Baldy Butte, the highest peak in the Bear Paws. The being who gave him other powers also bestowed upon him his own lodge, with instructions how to paint it and the song to sing while it was being painted. Coming Daylight's father had a sacred lodge around the bottom of which were painted the figures of men, each figure the same and each with a feather in the head. The upper part was painted red. "At the tip of the ears of the lodge were things hanging, and feathers in back. The back part had a cross (morning star) and the sun."[13]

What has been said in the preceding pages about the circumstances of Gros Ventre quest may be illustrated by the following account given by Al Chandler of that of Little Man, his adoptive father:

"When Little Man first went out to seek power, the old medicine man (his tutor in the matter) told him: 'I am going with you.' So when they got out in the hills, maybe a whole day's travel to this place where he wanted to go, this old man asked Little Man where he wanted to go to fast and Little Man chose a place not very far away. So they went together. This old man cut his (Little Man's) flesh, took a pinch,—(some did it 3, 6, or 9 pinches), and prayed each time he cut a bit of flesh off. He told Little Man: 'Nobody is going to come after you until your time is up. If I tell you three days, nobody is coming after you until this time is up. In the meantime use your whole heart and don't get

[12] There was a distinction between the sacred painted lodges and the lodges painted with war deeds. Cf. Flannery, 1953, pp. 68, 102.

[13] For illustrations of sacred painted lodges, see Plate 4.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787 scared. Don't let anything scare you away. Don't try to come down before that. Somebody will then come after you.'

"They get pretty weak from fasting and somebody has to come with a horse. They just pray and pray and cry and cry and sleep a little,—but their sleep is not sound, any little thing wakens them. They are expecting something all the time and they look for it.

"So Little Man stayed there for two days and two nights as he was instructed to do for this first time. They had gone up there pretty early in the morning and he stayed all the first day and towards evening he was kind of tired and his voice was kind of hoarse so he laid down and was lying on his back with his eyes shut and praying while he rested. After a while he got rested and got up and walked around and prayed and cried. He kept that up all night and didn't see anything or hear anything.

"Next day the same thing. Towards noon, not quite noon next day, he was lying face down and he heard something, just like something puffing, coming towards him. He said he knew right away what it was because from what he heard old people say, the bear when it travels puffs a whole lot as if it is out of breath. So he knew it was a bear. He didn't pay any attention. He just lay there and kept praying and praying. The bear went in a circle right around him. Pretty soon the bear came over. Little Man had a little oblong nest outlined with rocks piled up about two to three feet high, and open toward his feet. This is called his "call-for-power lodge." After the bear had come around several times it must have sat down because Little Man didn't hear him any more. He wasn't supposed to look up to see what it was that came to him, because if he did he might get cold feet. You just have to take whatever it is and just think hard about the power you want.

"So when the bear came over he put his paw right on Little Man's head. He went away again and soon after he came back again and put his paw on Little Man's back just at the level where his heart was. The bear went off again and Little Man noticed that he went straight back from his head. The third time when he came back he touched the soles of Little Man's feet. He went off again the same way and not so very long after he came back and this time he sat down towards the opening of the nest about 10 or 12 feet

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787

away from it. The bear told him: 'Get up now. Sit up.' So Little Man did and the bear said: 'I heard you. I have been listening to you why you are here. I pity you and I know what you want and it is just me. I will give you this power. This medicine I am going to give you, this root is for the sickness caused by a gut getting plugged with a seed or something you eat.'

"Little Man thought: 'I wonder how I will know what this medicine is, and how I can get it.' The bear knew what he was thinking and told him: 'No. It will be like this. You look around and see all these hills and landmarks and all, but it is not like this. But some day you will be at the place. I don't know when or where, but when you are there you will recognize the place and you will get this root. I will show it to you when you are asleep. I will show you the place where the root is, the lay of the ground, and how the plant of that root looks. I will come to you in a dream.' The bear held his paws out in front and said: 'One of these (pointing to his claws) I will give you.' So he told him just what he could use this claw for: 'If you think this root medicine won't work by making beverages, you can use this claw to kind of operate with." So he got all that from the bear. First when he saw this bear sitting, the bear was painted from his brows over the forehead and head and the bear said: 'That is where you should paint when you doctor anybody, and this claw you must wear on a buckskin string over your shoulder and you should always have the point out.'

"Little Man was honest. He never faked and everybody liked him. If he couldn't cure you he wouldn't want anything. He would wait before he took what a person paid because he wanted to see if the patient was really well.

"A year after this in the summer he got this same old man again and told him what he was going to do, that is that he wanted to go out again and asked him how many days he would advise him to go this time. This old man told him: 'Well, I will tell you. It all depends. You know there are many ways to get this medicine power. You are old enough to know that. Lots of times these young men, when big clouds come before an electric storm, go out in different directions and cry out there and pray. Well that is one

787 way. If you want to try that, do it one day and that is enough.' So the old man told him: 'Let me know this evening what you think of it, or if you have already made up your mind what you want to do.'

"The old timers could pretty well tell you what kind of weather
787 you are going to have. Little Man said: 'Well I would like to go
821 our right away today. But I don't think there is any chance of an electric storm. I would like to try that.' So the old man said: 'Well, I will see if I can find any signs of a storm or not.' He looked all around everywhere like he was looking for something. The sky looked clear. He stood there for a long time and looked around. Pretty soon there was a small cloud coming up and he said: 'You are a lucky man. You watch that cloud. I think there is going to be a big electric storm and maybe hail too. Do you think you want to try it?' Little Man said: 'Yes, I will try it.' So the old man told him: 'Now you want to be very brave. Don't let anything bluff you, because there are very few who can go through with it. It is something harder to bear.' Then he said: 'You have to be perfectly naked. You go anywhere on those hills you want. Take off your clothes and go now because the storm is coming now and it won't take long for it to get here.'

"So Little Man went home and took off all his clothes except
787 his moccasins and put on a blanket or robe. He then went out, and the electric storm started from the distance with rumblings and lightning. There were a couple of other young fellows out there and he could hear them crying in different directions from him. Just as he got up there, it was just like lightning right over his head and thunder all around. He cried all the harder and didn't think of getting scared. He took off his moccasins and blanket and walked around crying and praying.

"While he was doing that, all at once great big hailstones came and it certainly hurt him. He had bruises all over him. When the hail was just over he laid down, kind of tired, and just a little while after that somebody told him: 'Take that hailstone there right by you and swallow it.' He looked and sure enough there was a big hailstone right by him. He was not to chew it but to swallow it whole. He took it and thought: 'Well, if you tell me

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

to do that I guess it will be all right.' He did it and it went down easily. Then he was told: 'You go to sleep. I will tell you what this is for.' 787

"So he stayed out there and fell asleep. He saw an old fellow, grey-haired, coming who could hardly walk he was so old. This old man told him: 'That which I gave you is going to be all in your line. You are going to be a medicine man. This medicine is for those women or girls who should not have children for some reason; they are afraid or don't like to go through that and they always want help from somebody if anybody can do anything for them to keep them from having children. You will have to use your own judgment on that. If you think that a woman shouldn't want to do anything like that, if she is strong and young and should have children, you should not help her. You just tell her that you haven't got anything. But there are some who really need that kind of help. They are weak and won't make good mothers. Those are the ones you should help. That is what I give it to you for. I give you just one [hailstone] but every time you use it there is always another one. All you have to do is to sing the proper song (this person taught him the song, but I do not know it) and just take that hailstone from your body, that same one you swallowed, and give it to this woman to swallow and she won't have any children after that.'

"Little Man used this medicine twice and he said he didn't know where it came from but each time he used it [the hailstone] there was another one there for use the next time. My mother's sister's first child pretty near killed her and she was one he worked on. Another woman came to him who was in the same situation and he gave it to her and she never had more children. Lots of times women came to him, but he knew it was not because they were too weak to have children, but were just women who liked to run around and he didn't want to help that kind. This person who gave him that power had told him: 'When you are giving that thing to the women whom you help, paint yourself red from half your eyes up your forehead and head; below that paint all yellow.' If he would not have painted, the power would not have worked. If he omitted anything it would have been no good,—like if he didn't sing the song, it would be no good. [302]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787 "The following summer when the real hot days, probably July, came, he went out and fasted and prayed and cried. He had gone to the same old man and asked him and the old man gave him three days and three nights this time. So he went out and took one of his friends with him to help fix the rocks and to take his clothes home. They don't have a thing there, even any weapons. They wear the g-string, but no clothes.

"Anyway, Little Man went for this three-day and three-night crying. After they got everything ready, his partner went back home and had been told to return on the fourth day in the morning. So Little Man started in the same thing and all that day nothing happened. Of course he had little short dreams, but he didn't think anything of those.

"The second day in the morning when it started to get hot he was lying on his back resting, with his eyes shut and he was praying. He felt something crawling over him. He felt it ice-cold and rough right across his breast, but he didn't move. He just kept on praying. He knew what it was from the feel of it, it was a snake. So he started to tell that snake: 'Old Man, don't feel bad because I am not going to accept you. It isn't because I don't want any of your power, or I don't like you, or I don't want you to bother me, but there is something else that I am here for.' So this thing went over on the other side and Little Man opened his eyes a bit and sure enough the snake was coiled up about three feet from him. It was a big rattlesnake and he kept on talking to him and pretty soon the snake went away. After a while he got up to see if it really did go away. Of course he was scared of it, but he didn't let on.

"So he started in again crying and crying but nothing happened all day until that night. It was kind of moonlight and he could see that either a coyote or a wolf kept coming around him but it didn't come very close, only just close enough for him to see it. Along toward dawn of the third day this coyote started to howl close by him and it would go around and howl at four different places in the circle. He got up again and started praying and crying and when he got tired he laid down and fell right asleep. He was all in. Way in the afternoon this animal woke him up.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

He was just all in by this time and couldn't talk or cry. When he tried to cry he made only a weak, faint noise. This animal told him: 'My name is Mountain Coyote. That is what my friends call me. Well, I heard you. I have been around here. Maybe you didn't notice me but I have been here. What is it you want? Although you have said what you want, I want to hear you talk. What is it that you want?' 787

"So Little Man said: 'There is one thing I am working for. I want to be an honest medicine man. I don't want to take anything that would fool people. If you want to give me anything I want it to be honest.' The coyote said: 'That is me. I want to be honest. If I give anybody anything I will give it to them in an honest way. I am not going to cheat people or fool them.' Then he told Little Man: 'Stand up.' And the coyote sort of sat on his hind legs and he said: 'Take a good look at me.' Little Man looked at him and the coyote would put his paw to his mouth and blow and he started painting himself all over, first the right paw, then the left, and was painting himself all over a bright yellow, with real yellow paint. When he got through he blew on his paw again and rubbed from side of his eye back towards his ear, first on the right side and then on the left, with white clay. So he said: 'There is lots that I am going to give you. You have been here going on three days now and I will give you all I have. Now first I am not going to tell you what medicines you are going to use because you will see them yourself what to get and where to get them and you will know for what sickness they will be. I will give you seven persons to cure. Even if the sick person is just toward the end of his life, and is taking his last breath, maybe an hour or two before he dies, you are going to bring him back. You can cure him. You have to have a lot of pity for them before you can do that. You cannot say just because that person over there is dying I will go cure him. No. It is not like that. They have to come and ask your help.' So he told Little Man just what to do: 'You have to paint like you see me. I give you this song' (he taught him a song). Then the coyote gave him what he was supposed to keep and Little Man had to swallow that."

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Other Means of Acquiring Power

787
778

While in the majority of instances power, as initially acquired direct from power-giving beings, was gotten by quest, in a considerable minority of cases, it was so gotten in first instance without quest.

A man might be offered power, without quest on his part, when away hunting, or war raiding as in the following given us by Singer.

"A bunch of young men went afoot on the warpath. One of them had a pain in his leg, and it was so bad he could not travel further with the party. So they fixed him a shelter of wood, like they used to make, so he would be warm, and gathered some water in little paunch bags and hung them there, and piled up a lot of wood and dried meat, and left him there.

"He got so bad he couldn't even move his legs. As he slept he dreamed that a lot of little children came in and they had a boss. So the young man said: 'Where are you going? I am having a hard time with my leg-ache.' 'I had pity on you,' said the boss, 'so I came,' and then the boss added: 'I will give you my body [that is, Singer explained, I will give you some power]. As long as you live you will never have children, but I give you this,' and he gave the young man a little horn spoon and showed him a root, and said: 'When a woman is going to have a child you can always doctor her. Just one drink and the baby will be born.'

"When he woke up he found he was cured, so he hurried and caught up with his friends. They were surprised.

"This young man called his dream visitors 'little children,' but they were really 'ghost men.'" This is the only instance these beings were ever known by either Singer or Coming Daylight to have helped anybody.

Powers of various kinds were acquired without quest by keepers and co-keepers of the Flat Pipe and Feathered Pipe, as previously described. Not the least of these was doctoring power. Bull Lodge, for instance, was a medicine man before he got the Feathered Pipe; "But," Al Chandler added, "even if you were not a medicine man before you got the Pipe, you would be after you got it."

We recorded no instance of women going out in the hills to

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

fast and cry for power. Coming Daylight, when asked about the matter, just laughed, and said: "they [women] never go out like men do." Commonly women were offered doctoring power in dreams at home, as in the several instances already noted. Singer was once offered power after she had made a sacrifice. Sometimes a woman was offered unsought power when wandering around outside camp or on the hills during mourning or in anger at her husband. 787 778

"Sometimes," said The Boy, "a woman would get angry at her husband and would go away and wander around alone, not fasting but eating when she could and drinking. Sometimes such a woman would get power. Something or some animal would take pity on her and give her power. . . . Sometimes too a woman who had been captured by the enemy would make her escape and on her way back home would sleep out alone and would acquire power . . . a woman does not ask [by questing on mountains] for power. Power comes to her. When mourning for relatives and sleeping out [away from camp] and suffering without food, somebody might take pity on her and give her power without her asking." "Women," remarked Singer, "When they lost a loved one, would go up into the mountains and cry themselves to sleep, and that is when a lot of them would get power."[14]

Like women, very young children did not go out on the hills to fast for power. The occasional very young boy or girl who got power got it without formal quest. Coming Daylight's offer and refusal of power at the early age of eight years has been previously recorded. The Boy mentioned one case in which during a smallpox epidemic all the members of a certain family died except two children, a boy and a girl. The two children continued to stay alone at the spot. A bear came. The girl, after the two returned, became a "holy" woman.

Keg, the boyhood friend of Lame Bull, The Boy's father, was given power, without his seeking it, one early morning while he was out looking after the family horses. The boy, then only about ten years old fell asleep and dreamed he saw a big hand game going on for high stakes and one fellow taking all the winnings. On

[14] For examples, see Flannery, 1953, p. 206.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787 778 looking more closely Keg saw that the fellow was he, Keg, himself. The fellow said: "Do as you see me doing here. Use my throat as an object (button) to hide." Then Keg woke up and saw nearby a covey of prairie chickens at their mating dance. Keg was so given gambling power by the prairie chicken(s), and was a very successful gambler, from that time on.[18]

778 424 425 Acquisition of power directly and in first instance from a power-giving being gave the acquirer right of exclusive ownership and use of the power. The power was a gift from the being to the human individual, and became the latter's property to be exclusively held and used by him, as would any gift given him outright by a fellow Gros Ventre. The owner could however transfer it, in most cases, by sale or gift. The Boy and Thick explained the main features of the system as follows: "The individual who acquired the power, and he alone, would use it. He would not part with it unless someone bought it from him. . . . In case of purchase he would teach the buyer the secret of how to use the power. Then too the owner of the power might transfer it without remuneration to one of his children if the owner lived to old age and had [living] children; he might do this rather than have the secret of the power die with him and do no one any good." On other occasions The Boy, speaking particularly of doctoring power, further explained: "While a doctor had many power songs, no other doctor had a right to sing these songs, unless the doctor-owner transferred his power to the other. . . . If someone else knew what plant a given doctor used and tried himself to use it, he could not get results, because he would not know the songs and rites to use with it. . . . Even though he should know the songs and rites as well as the plants, it would have been very wrong to try to use them. . . . Only the one who had [acquired] the power had the right to practice it. If everybody had been free to practice it, there would have been no use for the doctor to have gone through such hardship [fasting, etc.] to acquire it."

Power acquired in first instance as a gift from a power-bestowing being, although exclusively owned by the recipient, could be under

[18] For further details, see Flannery and Cooper, 1946, pp. 407-08.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

certain conditions, to be described as we go along, transferred by gift or sale, loaned, or delegated. 778

Individuals who had personal ancestral helpers practiced no kind of transfer, loan or delegation. After all, such helpers were in no sense "owned" by or the property of these individuals. The concept of the ancestral helper is fundamentally different from that of power in this as in most other respects. 424 425

While we obtained records of many instances of transfer, by sale or gift, of war, doctor, and love power, we obtained none of transfer of gambling power. Whether it was transferable at all is a point we could not fully clear up; more probably it was not, but at any rate actual transfer either did not occur or must have been excessively rare. According to The Boy: "Nobody wanted their [gamblers'] power. It became so that it was non-transferable. . . . There were some [possessors of power], and among these was the gambler, who would not transfer."

A transferee could not, so far as we could discover, retransfer power by sale or gift to a third party, except perhaps power to be lucky, especially invulnerable, in warfare. Our field data on this point are slim.

While women sometimes, as we have seen, got power direct from power-giving beings, very commonly,—"mostly" The Boy stated,—the powers they possessed were acquired by transfer from men, or from women.

Initiative in transfer could be taken either by the owner of a given power or by the party wishing to purchase it.

When power was transferred either by sale or by gift, the transferrer carefully taught the transferee all the songs, rites, objects and taboos that pertained to the power in question.

So much for transfer in general. We now turn to certain aspects, first of transfer by sale, and after that of transfer by gift.

Transfer by sale of doctoring power, at least of major doctoring power, was, according to The Boy and Thick, uncommon; that of love power, rather common.

A man who had by quest acquired doctoring power could transfer it by sale to a maximum of four people. After the fourth transfer, he, according to The Boy, "would have exhausted it so far as he 778 425

31 Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

778 425 himself was concerned, he had transferred it all away," and "had made himself negative again," that is no longer subject to the penalties of power possession. This first possessor was, so long as he kept his power, "a big fellow, but after he had transferred it to the four other people [men and/or women], there were now four big people, and he was such no more, so far as power was concerned and had no right even to sing the songs [proper to this power]. He was right where he had started [before acquiring this power]. The four could then go on and do just what he did when he alone possessed the power and they could [each, apparently] scatter it in four other different directions transfer it to four others." Such multiple diffusion by transfer did not, it seems, proceed far in actuality. "Scholars," as The Boy explained, "may all go through the same school under one great teacher, but seldom if ever do they all equal the teacher,—maybe only one, if any, will. So not all who got power by transfer were successful with the power because maybe they did not do or avoid doing all that the transferrer told them to do and avoid doing. So after a while the transferred power just died out."

832 778 425 Love power, or love medicine serving as the vehicle of power, could, however, in contrast to doctoring power, be transferred by the owner, at least the original one, to any number of people. It could be "transferred without limit and sold. The things," The Boy added by way of comment, "that were better for social life were limited. Love medicine [or power] was limitless, unless the possessor stopped gathering the root or bark or whatever it was he used to do his stuff."

Whether in cases of transfer by sale of doctoring power by a man to a woman the granting of sex intercourse by the woman was always and *de rigueur* the payment or part of the payment, is not quite clear from our field data. But that it was not uncommonly required is beyond question; in cases of man-to-woman sale transfer of love power, it was very common, in fact the usual thing, and seemingly more or less *de rigueur* to validate the transfer. When a woman sought such love power from a man who possessed it, she would watch her chance when his wife was not around and secretly carry out this part of the bargain. If the transferrer were

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

832
778
425

a woman, one of her adult male kin might be chosen by her to have sexual intercourse with the woman transferee.

To judge from the many anecdotes in circulation about this sex element in transfer payment, anecdotes dating mostly from quite recent decades in the memory of informants, it was a very common topic of gossip and of grapevine communication.

431
778

Transfer of power by gift, appears on the whole to have been much more common than transfer by sale. This accords with the general Gros Ventre pattern of transfer of other kinds of property. The Gros Ventre sold little; he gave much. Property changed hands within the tribe much more by donation than by barter.[16]

Gifts of power were made either to relatives or to friends, and while the giver still had his or her health, though perhaps of advanced age, and not ordinarily at least, on his death bed. A number of cases of offer to transfer by gift doctoring and love power during the possessor's lifetime have been previously given. War power, according to The Boy, "was commonly given, without payment, to a son or brother." "War medicine," according to Al Chandler, "was passed down from generation to generation; Bull Lodge gave his sons (Curly Head and Otter Robe) their war powers. Curly Head was a medicine man but Otter Robe was more of a warrior. Little Man, my adopted father, had some kind of war medicine from his brother, when his brother got killed Little Man took this medicine (a sparrow-hawk and a shirt) from him to keep it, and to use it."[17] While war power might pass down in a family, we obtained no clear instance of such transmission by inheritance proper, in the sense of transfer to take effect only upon the death of the transferrer. [428]

778
426

Our data, all from The Boy, on loan and delegation of power, as distinct from outright transfer, are meager. "An owner of power to be lucky in warfare so as not to be shot could lend this to somebody, and if the owner were going to die he could tell the borrower to keep it." "Sometimes, when a man with medicine power was appealed to come and doctor somebody, he could say to his wife:

[16] For details, see Flannery, 1953, pp. 80-87.

[17] Some of Bull Lodge's war medicines are illustrated in Flannery, 1953, Plate 3; cf. also p. 92.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

778 'Wife, I transfer this power to you. You go and doctor this time. I don't feel like doctoring today.' But before this she would have
426 always accompanied him in his curing practice and knew exactly what to do and sing." Such a "transfer" was purely an *ad hoc* delegation, not a surrender of his power.

Power could be completely lost by the owner either during his lifetime or at death. During the owner's lifetime it could be lost by persistent disuse, by complete and final transfer through sale or gift, by "using it up," and as a result of breach of the rules. Where, for instance, a man had power to cure only a limited number of people, say four, with the conclusion of his fourth cure, the power was "used up" and so ceased. A certain Gros Ventre who had power to cause rain and storms made much use of it in a battle with the Crow but finally used it up and was killed by them.

If a person with power had not transferred it, on his deathbed the power embodied in or associated with some material object or living thing within him would come out of him, usually out of his mouth, and so his power would die with him. Even though the root or medicine he had used but had not transferred was known to others, they would not be allowed after his death to use it in curing. Thus lots of good medicines were not used, even though they were known to be efficacious.

Use of Powers

778 We now come to rites and procedures followed in the exercise of powers for war, gambling, love and various miscellaneous purposes, including legerdemain. A consideration of the use of the very important doctoring power is reserved for separate treatment in a subsequent chapter.

The great majority of those who went out in quest of power sought power to be great warriors and to become wealthy. The two aims were ordinarily closely related. A major goal of most
[721 war parties was the acquisition of horses,—the chief wealth of
556] the Gros Ventres in the old days. Both success in war and possession of wealth brought prestige, and such prestige in the individualistic competitive culture of the Gros Ventre was eagerly sought after.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

War power usually included both a positive aspect, outstanding success in killing, wounding and capturing enemies and in taking booty, especially horses, and a negative one, luck in escaping injury. Little Man's brother had power to make his horse run so fast in war that no other horse could overtake it. 778 721

Those who sought wealth power asked mostly to have many horses, not to be poor, and "to get things easy without much effort." 778

"My grandmother's brother," Coming Daylight related, "the first Crow Bull went to McCann Butte in the Bear Paws to sleep. The people were camped at the bottom near the lake, and from an opening in the mountains on the other side of the lake they saw a lot of white horses come to the lake. Crow Bull was told in his dream: 'These are all your horses.' It is claimed that everybody else saw them too. After that Crow Bull always had white horses. People gave him white horses and he brought white horses home from war." 556 787

Cora Chandler had heard a similar story about Bear Nose who slept at the same spot. He saw (in a dream, probably) a lot of prairie dogs and was told: "These are your horses." Cora commented: "I knew the day when Bear Nose had only buckskin horses,"—of the color of prairie dogs.

On both the preceding cases, the two men who got power only to own all these horses, although, Cora thought, Bear Nose also had lots of other powers.

As regards war-power ritual we gathered only a few details, mostly from Al Chandler regarding his adoptive father, Little Man, and from Garter Snake regarding her father, Bull Lodge. 778 721

Little Man got from his brother who was killed in battle the latter's war medicine. The brother's power objects were: the dried skin of a sparrow hawk [Flaco Sparverius] with the head, claws and feathers; a shirt, tailored like an ordinary shirt, but kept painted yellow all the time and with "little holes all over it even on the sleeves and with hawk feathers on the shoulders and some on the back." The yellow paint and holes presumably symbolized the predominant rufous and buff coloring and spotted belly and sides of this fast flier. When the brother went to war, he would put this dried hawk skin on his back, and take a "little fuzzy feather" from the wing and tie it on his horse's tail, and the power

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

778 would make his horse go so fast that no other horse could catch
721 up with it. Little Man himself did not go out war-raiding, but once when he and some of his people while on a journey were waylaid by Piegans, he used the hawk medicine as his brother had done, and in the fight no Gros Ventre casualties occurred but three Piegan were killed. In later days, Little Man put a feather from this hawk on the horse Smokey, an entrant in the two-mile [525] and mile races at the Fair, and the horse came in first in both races within less than an hour, while Little Man won $75.00.

Al Chandler added that "every man's war medicine was different" but gave no further details.

Garter Snake told the following story of Bull Lodge's power in the war-wealth field. "Otter Robe, his son, once came in, there being a lot of young men in there, and said to his father: 'Father, we are going out on a war party and we want to steal horses from the enemy. Could you help us so the enemy will not be able to see us and we will have luck to get these horses?' Bull Lodge replied: 'All right. I will try to see if I can. If I can I will tell you.' So he told his wife: 'Get that wooden bowl and that colt hide [objects he used in his practice]'. He smudged them four times, then set the bowl down and covered it with the colt hide, and they put out the fire. I was sitting there beside my mother. . . . When my father got through, we heard nicks and neighs of horses in that bowl. We did not see anything [any horses] but only heard them, and Bull Lodge said to his son: 'You are going to be lucky. You will get the horses.' Then he removed the colt hide and there [in the bowl] was horse manure. This he took and gave to Otter Robe and said: 'Take and dry this. And when you go out [on the raid] and get to the enemy's camp, make a smudge of a certain thing, take the manure, pulverize it, and sprinkle the powder all around the smudge. If you do this and go into that camp, the enemy are not going to see you. You can steal all the horses you want. And after you leave with the horses, there will be a big fog in that camp, so that the enemy cannot see you or follow you.' And that is what happened. The raiders got horses and brought them home, and the fog protected them."

778 Gambling power was gotten only for use in the old two-button
525 hand games. So far as our evidence goes, the possessor could use

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

his power only when he was an active participant in the game. Keg, who had gotten gambling power from a prairie chicken, would, when using this power in a hand game, imitate the hissing, swishing noise made by the prairie chickens when they ruffle their tail feathers. He had been given by the prairie chicken its windpipe to use in the hand game, and for this he made use of a small metal spring resembling the windpipe. Red Whip, famous for his great gambling power, used a weasel skin in exercising this power. A player with power who was losing in a game might half seriously voice an appeal: "What is the matter with you, prairie chicken (or ghost)? You are failing me."

Only certain songs could be sung in a two-button hand game; others, such as doctors' songs or medicine lodge songs, could not then be sung. If one of the players had a gambling power song, gotten in a dream from a prairie chicken or ghost, he would start singing it and others would join in. Gambling songs were sung in fast time to the accompaniment usually of small hand drums, the players marked time by striking with sticks the logs that lay stretched in front of each team. After a game was well under way, in the excitement, grunts would often take the place of songs.

We recorded two gambling songs for the old hand game, numbers 107 and 108, as sung by The Boy.

Love power, more common than gambling power, was acquired, by quest or transfer, to attain various ends: by a man to secure sex favors from women who were reluctant to grant them, or who had not only rejected his advances but had privately or publicly met them with insult;[18] by a jilted lover to win back the jilting man or woman; by a man or woman to win over a desired but unwilling prospective marital mate; by a wife to win back the affections and fidelity of a husband who was running around with other women.

We could obtain very little information on the rites carried out when love power was used. Our chief informant on love power, The Boy, had been offered it on various occasions but had never accepted it, so had not been told the ritual procedures to use, procedures about which the possessors of love power were ap-

[18] See Flannery, 1953, pp. 174–193.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

778 parently rather secretive. A root or bark designated by the being
832 that bestowed the power was commonly used, and in some cases a looking glass. A very little bit, just a pinch, of one root or bark was used at a time, and seemingly might be rubbed on a looking glass that was "all painted up and decorated."

778 Before concluding this section on rituals and procedures followed when the major powers—war, wealth, gambling and love—were used, some scattered data may be given on rituals and procedures used with other powers.

Lame Bull, The Boy's father, had clairaudience power from a crow. To use it he would rub his ears with earth, as the crow had told him to do.

Mary Ereaux related the following incident. "My brother-in-law, White Weasel, a great medicine man, once came with his wife in a wagon to visit me. I was busy in the kitchen and after supper came in to the front room, the bedroom, to visit with my guests. White Weasel would kind of groan and say how tired he was, but I didn't think anything of this. Finally, he said: 'My, I have been just dropping and throwing hints and I find I have a hard-hearted sister-in-law. I pretend like I am so tired and here she has three bottles of whiskey in her bedroom and she never offers me a drink. There is one flask that is half empty, a second with the seal unbroken, another in a black leather case.' I was so surprised that he knew all that. My mother told me he could see it but I knew he had not left that corner of the room. . . . This was really a proof of his medicine power." She added: "When White Weasel had a few drinks he would start singing tea dance songs. My mother could then hear a woman's voice singing with him. She said it was a good sweet voice. It was not his wife singing. She could not hear the voice nor could I. Once in a while you would come across someone who, like my mother, could hear it. It was like a vision which some see but which others present cannot see."

Chief Grass on one occasion, when a war party he was with was bothered by a poltergeist, took an arrow, rolled buffalo hair around the arrowhead, singed it a little and spat on it. Then he shot the arrow and subdued the ghost. "Chief Grass had power and this, it was believed, was his way of using it."

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

In two of the battles described by The Boy weather power was used. In one, when seven Gros Ventre warriors were surrounded in a piece of brush by a body of Crows and the latter set fire to the brush to rout the Gros Ventres out, one Gros Ventre, a quiet and unassuming man, "used a bone whistle and did other things," and shortly rain came and put out the fire. This man's war-charm, an otter skin, was captured by the Crows in this battle, and the Gros Ventres learned later from the Crows that whenever the latter mounted this otter skin trophy on a pole, as at a scalp dance, rain came with thunder and lightning. Finally the Crows got scared, carried the otter skin over on the hills and left it there, "and the thunder left them alone." 778 821 726

In another battle, this time with a party of Sioux, the Gros Ventres had taken a scalp, and were retreating, with the Sioux in pursuit. Morning-Star-Appears (Rising Cross), a Gros Ventre warrior who had a ghost helper, "sang a song, used a robe as cover to enclose himself and said, 'We wish rain.' " In no time a heavy cloudburst, with thunder and lightning broke, and the Gros Ventres,—among them Stiffarm, then a very young man,—escaped under cover of the rain and semi-darkness.[10]

Garter Snake, daughter of Bull Lodge, gave us the following story: 778 821

"The Crows were camping on the north bank of the Yellowstone when a May snowstorm came. It snowed four days and four nights, and the snow drifted far up the lodge sides and horse-high, except where blown clear on elevated exposed spots. On the fourth day, at noon, the Crows came to Bull Lodge with a pipe and some things. They offered him the pipe and of course he didn't take it right away, but said: 'What is this for?' They said: 'We know you are a holy man [one with power]. You [can] do almost anything and we are asking you to make this storm quit. If you don't we shall all perish.' He told them: 'All right, that is easy.' And they gave him that stuff: 'Here are the things we give you.'

"So he told his wife: 'Stand up a pole good and solid in the back of the lodge.' She did so. Then he said: 'Take down that shield.' This was the shield he had dreamed about. He then

[10] See Cooper, 1944, p. 72.

778 821 smudged the shield and hung it up on the pole, then he got his Feather Pipe drum and started to sing. As he sang the third time, and of course prayed and went through the [ritual] motions, and a sun ray showed right on the shield. The Crows were in the lodge and they all saw this and they prayed. And he said: 'I have one more song.' So he sang the fourth one and after he got through he said to one of the men: 'You go out and see what has happened.' The man went out and it was still snowing but right in the heavens was a little round hole [clear spot] which gradually enlarged and the sun shone. That is how Bull Lodge cleared the weather."

789 We now come to use of powers of legerdemain. Such powers were ordinarily looked upon as "supernatural" in origin and nature. We have already given many illustrations of such legerdemain as integral elements in ritual power-use, we shall now give the illustrations of it as used in purely or predominantly secular contexts.

Such feats are attributed to various individuals. According to Mary Ereaux, Sits-in-the-Midddle on one occasion when the party was out of tea, "made tea for them and they thought that was great." An unnamed medicine man was reputed to be able to swallow a "chunk of coal" [probably hot embers].

The two most outstanding masters of legerdemain known to our informants were Bull Lodge (d. ca. 1886) and Stiffarm (d. ca. 1935). According to Al Chandler, Stiffarm got his legerdemain power from Bull Lodge, and actually his feats and procedures (such as use of a handkerchief) duplicate almost exactly Bull Lodge's so far as they go.

Here follows our fullest account of Bull Lodge's feats, as given us by his daughter, Garter Snake, with some details interpolated in parentheses, from Charles Buckman (CB) and Al Chandler (AC).

"When my father slept at Baldy [Baldy Butte, in the Bear Paws] . . . he was given the power of doctoring, and he was given wealth, and the power then to make tobacco, matches, sugar, tea, and even coffee. These are the articles he made. In winter time his sons would go out and get cherry brush. He would put

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

that black cloth over it four times and then he would say: 'Take the rag off. There will be ripe cherries.' 789

("I heard stories about Bull Lodge. A storekeeper invited Bull Lodge one day in the dead of winter and said to him: 'I invite you for one purpose, I will give you tobacco, tea, sugar, blanket and so forth, but I want you to do something for me.' Bull Lodge said: 'If I can, I will. If I cannot, I cannot. If you ask me for something impossible, I won't be able to accommodate you.' The storekeeper said: 'All right, I am hungry for fresh cherries.' Bull Lodge laughed and said: 'I guess I can. You go out and bring me a cherry branch.' So he went out and got it and Bull Lodge said: 'All right, my friend, set it right there.' He then took that black handkerchief and covered this branch with it and talked and sang to himself and made motions and said: 'All right.' And he took it off and there were cherries!" CB)

(Little Man, my adopted father, once went with Bull Lodge to a store at Chinook. They were hard up that winter and wanted sugar, lard and so forth. He said to Bull Lodge: 'Let's go over to that storekeeper and get something out of him.' So Bull Lodge said: 'Yes, that is right. Let's go.' So they went and sure enough this fellow knew them well and they sat round a while and pretty soon he said to Bull Lodge: 'I am sure hungry for cherries.' Bull Lodge said: 'I won't make them for nothing.' The man said: 'Help yourself. Anything you want.' So Bull Lodge told Little Man to get the brush, a big bundle of it. So Bull Lodge sat down on the floor and did as I just described. So they were smoking and in the meantime Bull Lodge whistled the tune and said to the storekeeper: 'John, go get your cherries.' The man said: 'What do you want me to do?' He raised the handkerchief and his eyes almost popped out. Bull Lodge told him to take them and the storekeeper acted like he was afraid. He made Bull Lodge and Little Man eat some of them first. Bull Lodge," Al added, "was a goodhearted man who helped the poor and all that." AC)

("Bull Lodge could make fresh chokeberries for you in winter time. You would ask him: 'Could you make me some cherries? I am hungry for cherries.' He would say: 'Yes.' Then you would go get branches that were frozen and with no leaves on them and bring them to where he was. He would take them and rub his

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

789 hand maybe four or several times and put them down about four feet from him. He always wore a black silk handkerchief and he would put this over the branches. He would then tell you: 'All right, make smoke and talk.' He would hum a song under his breath when he wasn't talking. You would smoke three or four times and he would say to you: 'All right. Get your cherries.'

("You know that in those days the whites used to make plug tobacco, either chewing or smoking tobacco. And that is what Bull Lodge used to make. He would go out and get a cutting of thick wood bark and whittle it to the size of a plug of tobacco and then he would make a smudge and smudge it four times and put it on his tobacco board. He would then spread over it the black handkerchief and light his pipe and blew on the handkerchief four times with one smoke. He would then take the handkerchief away and there would be tobacco."

("The same winter that Bull Lodge made the cherries, Little Man said to him: 'This is a poor winter, nobody has any tobacco. I have been all over but nobody has any, not even the store.' So Little Man told Bull Lodge he should make some: 'All right. Go out and get some cottonwood bark, [to make] whatever amount of tobacco you want.' So Little Man got the thickest piece he could find, of pretty good size. So Bull Lodge started to whittle it, cutting it like [a plug of] tobacco. After he had it all trimmed up he sized it up. It was about two fingers thick, three fingers broad, and two feet long. After he had whittled it all in shape, he put it at a distance of four feet from him and placed one handkerchief over it. They did not have any smoke, so they just talked while Bull Lodge hummed a tune on the sly. After a while, Bull Lodge said: 'Get your tobacco.' And there it was, Chinax tobacco, bags and everything. Little Man gave Bull Lodge some of it and divided it with his neighbor and then they all had a big smoke." AC)

"When Bull Lodge made matches, he would send kids to get him fall rye grass in a bunch. They would bring it and break it to the size of matches. Then he would tie these together with sinew. After this would make a smudge and sing and pray to himself and make a pass in the smudge four times. Then he would take these sticks and tap them in ashes four times, and when he

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

was through he had those 'telegraph' matches. Everything was done openly [apparently without use of the handkerchief]." ("Bull Lodge could make candles out of rye grass, and this power and the power to make tobacco too, he gave to Stiffarm." AC) 789

"When Bull Lodge made sugar, sugar was high-priced and scarce. One day he asked his wife to make soup and she told him: 'We haven't any sugar.' He said: 'I will get some.' She asked him: 'Where will you get it?' He said: 'Never mind where I am going to get it. I'll get it.' So he got up and took down that bag that belongs to his Pipe and also a wooden bowl, made smudge twice face up and twice face down (sic), but did not put anything in the bowl. He just set that thing down, put that black handkerchief over it, took the pipe and smoked and blew smoke towards it four times, and the fourth time he blew smoke he took that cloth off and there was white sugar.

"Bull Lodge could take any kind of dish and smudge it and set it on the ground and he would cover it with this black handkerchief, and in this case [when he made green coffee berries] he was talking and making signs and the fourth time he came down and removed the handkerchief, and there were berries. 'In telling all this,' Garter Snake, now a practical Catholic, interpolated, 'I have been telling you what my father told me about himself and in addition what I have seen him do. May the Lord have mercy on my soul!'

"One year in the spring when there were still snowbanks on the hillside, he told one of his sons: 'Go get me a ball of snow.' I did not know what he was going to do with the snow. So the boy rode horseback and brought back a ball of snow and said: 'Here is your snow, whatever you are going to do with it?' My father, after he got the snow, made a smudge and smudged his hands four times, flattened the snow with the palms of his hands, kind of made signs over it and talked. After that he put the black handkerchief over his hand and worked the other hand, rubbing it, and took the handkerchief off, and there was one of those pretty sea-shells, and he gave it to one of the boys.

"This is about hail. Bull Lodge took that wooden bowl and made a smudge and did [sic] with his hands and inhaled the smudge with his mouth four times and smudged his arms four times. He

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

789 then told his wife to put the bowl under his mouth, and he grabbed himself by the waist and shook himself, and out of his mouth came hail and filled the bowl."

Information on Stiffarm's feats was given us by The Boy, a close friend of Stiffarm, and was corroborated in part by Al Chandler.

"Stiffarm," said The Boy, "used to make needles out of blades of grass, tobacco out of bark of trees, and candles out of pigweeds, the stems of which are hollow." "Stiffarm could take a blade of grass, break it in two, and strike it like a match. . . . I saw him turn sand into brown sugar. . . . Once at the old Agency south of Chinook, he visited our home. My mother gave him something to eat but he said: 'Get a half cup full of sand.' She did, and brought it in. Stiffarm said: 'Give it to me.' She did. He had on a black muffler. He untied it, folded it in a narrow strip, and put it on his lap. Then he poured the sand along the muffler and covered the sand with the flaps of the muffler. On his hat he had a yellow painted down feather. He untied the feather and passed it over his mouth horizontally four times, then horizontally over the sand four times. Then he said to my mother: 'Use this to sweeten your tea.' She unfolded the muffler and there in it was brown sugar."

Some who had gambling power were also skillful at legerdemain. According to The Boy, in the course of a hand game, such a one would make an object "go in his hands, through the veins of his arm and come out somewhere else, or go through his skull and come out of his mouth . . . or he swallowed it and drew it out of his body . . . or he blew it to nothing." Red Whip (d. 1912) in a game played about 1873-75 between some Gros Ventres and Flathead, took a button, threw it in the air, and challenged the Flathead champion, Crazy Child, to find it. Crazy Child failed to locate it. Then Red Whip showed him the button embedded in one of the lodge poles and told him to pull it out. Crazy Child tried to do so but without success. Then Red Whip pulled it out easily.[20]

Contests between possessors of legerdemain power sometimes occurred, although it would seem, not often nor at any set times. The Boy told the following story of Stiffarm:

---

[20] See Flannery and Cooper, 1946, 108-09.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

"Stiffarm used to be accused of doing harm to people through his power. He would never defend himself or say anything about this. On one occasion a group were drinking whiskey and some of Stiffarm's brothers-in-law were there. Brothers-in-law joke [banter] each other. They said: 'Let's have a contest of power. The one who has the least power will buy the drinks.' But Stiffarm said: 'No. I'd rather not.' The others thought Stiffarm was a little scared. They insisted. Finally Stiffarm said: 'All right.' So he took a piece of otter skin in his fingers, held it up, sang four times, and blew on it four times. The fourth time, he blew hard and the piece of otter skin disappeared. Then he said: 'Where is that otter skin? Look for it.' They could not find it. Then Stiffarm got up, walked to the iron stove in the middle of the room, and there was the otter skin half buried in the side of the stove. Stiffarm said: 'Here it is. Come and get it.' But no one dared to do so. They were all afraid. Stiffarm then took it without effort, and said: 'Now, the Gros Ventres have blamed me for causing some deaths by using my power. That is not true. But if I really wanted to do so, I would use this otter skin, and the one I used it on would not live long.'" 789 754

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

CHAPTER VII

CURING PRACTICES

880 A good many Gros Ventres through quest or otherwise acquired doctoring power. To give a better idea of it we shall need to see it against the larger background of native concepts of the cause and cure of illness.

Causes of Illness

753 Some illnesses were ascribed to solely or mainly natural agents or agential causes, others to supernatural ones. The line between the two types of causation is not, however, always clear.

753 Sometimes supernaturally caused ailments followed automatically from the breach of taboos, others were inflicted intentionally
784 by non-human or by human agents.

Marrow bones were not supposed to be broken inside a lodge or house, and a person who transgressed this taboo would suffer from sore legs. The penalty of fits, cramps and paralysis from certain actions to or by keepers of the Flat and Feathered Pipes has been previously noted.

753 The chief sender of sickness, particularly of epidemics such as
776 smallpox and measles, was the being, Atsa:. This being appears likewise to have had something to do indirectly with other ailments, but exactly what part he had in causing such ailments could not be cleared up by us. The intrusion of pathogenic objects into the body to cause illness was not attributed to Atsa: personally.

Malevolent spirits,—whether ghostly or other is not clear,—would cause illness by "shooting" people, that is, by projecting some small object into the body of the victim. To the maleficent
753 activity of these spirits was also ascribed mental derangement, at
158 least in some cases. One such mentally deranged woman was once seen by Coming Daylight. This woman who was getting along in years became deranged all of a sudden. Coming Daylight, with the consent of the woman's husband, went to her lodge and peered in.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13·

"The woman had everything, like blankets and dishes and so forth, 753
stuffed in between the poles and covering of the lodge. The woman 158
herself was on the ground, crawling around and making motions with her hands as if she were working at something on the ground." Coming Daylight did not know if or how the woman recovered from her derangement because shortly after camp was moved and the people scattered.

Coming Daylight gave details of another mental case, that of a young man who wandered off from camp, tore off his clothing, cut his hair off short, and came running back fast to camp. The people noticed his wild look, grabbed him, and picketed him. He was "raving mad." Later he used to go into the brush, cut sticks until he had a large bundle, and carry the bundle around with him until his death. Some people were afraid of him, but most were not. Coming Daylight did not recall his ever scaring her or her children. He would ask in a kind of pitiful way for something to eat. He would visit a while and then just rush out of the lodge or house.

Thick gave us details of one case of illness of doubtful origin. 753
The illness had started one night when Thick and an inseparable boyhood friend of his were coming back to camp together. They were walking on a flat together, and heard behind them a sound "like somebody dragging a robe or something stiff." They thought it was a ghost and started to run. After a bit they stopped and looked back but could not see anything. They decided it must be a ghost. So they started walking again, and pretty soon they heard the same sound. Of course they then ran. Thick's friend then had a feeling as if somebody were grabbing the hair up on his head, and looked back and said: "Stop! Here is the fellow who is chasing us."

It was a great big owl dragging its wings. From that time on he got worse, and died soon after in 1889. Thick thought that the [754]
scare got that night brought on the illness. The doctors who treated the boy claimed he had been "doped" [bewitched] by someone.

Grave or fatal illness could also be brought on by human beings, 754
usually those with doctor power, through sheer wishing or through other procedures, or even, it seems, by human without supernaturally acquired power through concentrated wishing, as will be explained in detail later.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

753 So much for what we have called the agential causes of disease, the impersonal forces and personal agents, external to the victim, which were thought to be responsible for illness. In addition, some illnesses at least were believed to be due to specific proximate instrumental or physiological causes, internal to the victim.

One disease, apparently appendicitis, was thought, in recent days, to be caused by a "gut getting plugged by a seed or by food,"[2]—a theory most probably taken over from the whites. One case of tuberculosis was ascribed to the permanent cessation of menses after the woman had borne her third child.

Various diseases were attributed to some small object, such as a sliver of wood or a finger nail, that had been projected with malicious intent into the victim's body by some human or preterhuman being or that had otherwise found entrance therein. In particular the disease called "cut away," wano:'wa, probably cancer, was caused by the presence in the victim of a kind of "bug" or "animal," roundish in shape, and with a big mouth. This "animal" would move around within a person and "eat his insides." Bad Bull, a medicine man who had power to cure "cut away," used to extract from his patient such an "animal" of green, yellow or black color. "The black ones were not so bad," according to Singer. According to The Boy, Bull Lodge whom he knew well, in his doctoring for "cut away" would take out such an animal from the belly of his patient. The animal on one occasion at least was about four inches long, seagreen on top and whitish on the belly (or green on one side and white on the other, according to Garter Snake) and without legs or eyes. About one half the animal was mouth, with no teeth, however, in the mouth. In one cure, Bull Lodge ripped open the animal after extracting it and showed the onlookers what was inside it. "It was full of blood, with some things floating around in this blood." Bull Lodge claimed that this animal, unless extracted, would "eat up the sick person's liver or some other part of his insides" and so kill him. He used to say that this animal caused all stomach troubles.

Garter Snake described one case of a woman suffering from rectal hemorrhage caused, as was revealed at the time of her cure "by a blue thing inside her that 'looked like a rock and was as big as a man's fist.' When put on the fire it broke open and

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

was just a shell. It must have been some kind of animal with a thin shell." 753

The concept of soul-loss as resulting from or accompanying sickness in certain cases was present. "It was held by the old people," The Boy said, "that a person's 'soul' was not inside his body or any organ thereof, but was near or around him. As a sick person got worse, his 'soul' kept getting farther and farther away. If it got too far away, he died. When a person was very sick, people would say: 'His soul is leaving (going away from) him farther and farther."[1] In brief, soul wandering or "soul-loss" was a preliminary to death rather than a cause of disease. We obtained no evidence that the concept of soul-stealing entered at all into Gros Ventre pathology. 753 774

Treatment of Illness

From the causes of disease we now pass to the treatment thereof. While some ailments and cases of illness were thought to be due to natural causes, and others to supernatural causes, the line of demarcation cannot always be sharply drawn. Likewise as regards the prevention and treatment, in some instances they were clearly looked upon by the Gros Ventres as of the purely natural or "rational" order, in others equally clearly of the supernatural order, in some few seemingly of both orders combined, in a few others of uncertain order. While the Gros Ventres quite explicitly distinguished in general theory and in certain specific cases between natural and supernatural prevention and treatment, in actual practice at times, and in many specific cases, they drew no sharp line between the two orders. In the following pages we shall take up first natural or "rational" prevention and treatment, secondly combined or doubtful types of treatment and lastly supernatural types. In general remedies and preventives fall into three more or less corresponding classes: "domestic" remedies known to and freely used by everybody; certain remedies more or less "rational," exclusively owned and used by particular non-profes- 755 757

[1] The soul was believed to "kind of leave" a person under stress of great fear. Cf. Flannery, 1953, 92.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

755
757 sional individuals; supernatural remedies used only by professional medicine men or women with power.

Natural Remedies

751 515 Both preventive and curative measures of the natural or rational order were numerous.

The most common preventive measure was the daily early morning plunge in the stream or roll in the snow by men, a practice carried out for hardening the body as well as for cleaning [731] it. In small epidemics scattering and isolation were regularly resorted to in order to check the spread of the disease. The use of skunk fluid as a curative was more a Cree than a Gros Ventre procedure, but there was a Gros Ventre belief that skunk fluid diluted with water and put into the eyes of a person was a preventive and cure of snow-blindness. A mother, on knowing herself [862] pregnant again, would cease nursing her infant lest it suffer from "bad stomach and diarrhea." Drinking the blood of a freshly butchered buffalo was looked upon as a preventive of tuberculosis.

757 Curative measures of the rational order were of many kinds. We recorded the following, but our list is far from exhaustive. All of them may best be classified as "domestic remedies," measures of common knowledge, resorted to by everybody who wished to use them, and not considered proprietary right of particular individuals.

757 278 Many herbal curatives came under this category.[8] The roots of "sweetheart briars," so called because the burrs stuck so tightly, were used for colds, and the deeper the root the stronger was the medicine.[9]

An infusion of peppermint is now used as a beverage by everybody for "fits, spasms and stomach disorders," although the medicinal use of peppermint was formerly the monopoly of Flat Pipe keepers. A very strong drink was made by boiling a certain root and just a little of it drunk as a cure for difficulty in urination.

---

[8] Cf. list in Kroeber, 1908, pp. 224-27. We made no attempt in the field to get a full list of such herbal and other curatives.

[171] [9] The Piegan, according to Coming Daylight and Singer, used these as "blood medicine."

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

"Many people," The Boy remarked, "had died of this ailment as they were ashamed to tell they had it." According to Mary Ereaux, "a lot of times children were born with poor eyesight. If a fellow [adult] in those days had sore eyes he would be ashamed of it. It would have been a kind of disgrace. They had a kind of tea which they used as an eyewash." 757 278

For colds, the root of a briar, a plant with burrs smaller than "sand burrs," perhaps the "sweetheart briar" mentioned above, was chewed and the saliva swallowed. For "colds and sore throat, and teeth and bones," a bit of the root of a plant called "tastes-like-pepper" is broken off and kept in the mouth.

For head colds and headaches a snuff is made of the root of a large plant called "sneezer or pacifier,"[4] which grows up in the Rocky Mountains, and when snuffed up "it clears your head and mucus comes out. Every time you sneeze it kind of brings your cold out in a sweat."

Several plants used as fumigants or infusions for or by the mother before or after childbirth are described elsewhere.[5]

For children's dysentery (usually occurring in summer) and piles, Coming Daylight used a root called "stomach ache medicine," a root "which runs close to the surface of the ground." When one of her grandchildren "had piles from this summer dysentery" she heated a flat rock, saturated a cloth with water, sprinkled the medicine thereon, put the cloth on the hot rock to make steam, and held the child over it with its buttocks close to the steam. She also made a "tea" of the root and gave it to the child to drink. One treatment cured the piles. Coming Daylight remarked that she "wouldn't be without this medicine." This particular herbal curative is perhaps peculiar to her, and not in general use.

A curative called "fish medicine,"[6] "an old, old medicine," is a plant that grows in the water and is brought in from Minnesota.

"White medicine" has many curative uses. It is made from a "sort of sponge" [fungus] growing rarely on pine trees. When people find it, they throw stones at it and, being "kind of soft,"

---

[4] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, 226.
[5] See Flannery, 1953, pp. 136, 138.
[6] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, 226, naw'asoo—for colds.

757 it drops off. It is powdered before use. Mary Ereaux' mother used
278 it, on a warm rag, for chickenpox. It was first gotten by a man who saw it in a dream and it said to him: "I am good for everything, to drink and to use externally too." It was this man who spread the knowledge of this medicine.[1]

For diarrhea a tea was made from the boiled roots of rose bush or cherry bush and drunk. For asthma and hay fever the vapor from juniper berries put in a pot of boiling water was considered helpful. Sage, in the very early days gathered and used only by sacred Pipe keepers, was later used by everybody: being rubbed and smelled for headache; the leaves especially the top ones, boiled and drunk for colds, coughs and tuberculosis.

The little daughter of Singer's husband, Iron Bucket, was "poisoned" [bewitched] on one occasion, when Singer was present, from some meat broth she had taken. After taking some of the broth, the little girl remarked "M-m-m this tastes funny." While Iron Bucket was telling stories, the little girl would interject from time to time the single word "moose." Finally she had a fit. They then gave her a lot of warm water as an emetic, and after she had vomited several times she recovered.

Raw liver and blood from a freshly butchered buffalo were considered as a cure for tuberculosis. Mary Ereaux' grandmother had told her that people would go after a man who had just butchered a buffalo to have him dip bits of the manifold in the warm blood and to have the children eat it as a delicacy.

Beaver oil from the oil sacs was used as medicine but we obtained no details.

[841] When a woman in her menses, or one who had been with a man the night before, entered the lodge of a sick person, the latter grew weaker. To protect the sick person fumigation was resorted to. Powdered beaver castor (always kept on hand if available, for this purpose) was put on live coals in a pan, and the patient without any clothing on, huddled beneath a blanket over the smoke so that it went all over the sick person's body.

757 Blood-letting was a common procedure, purely "rational" with no magic-religious element at all in it and calling for no "power"

[1] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, 226.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

in the operator. It was resorted to for various ailments; tuberculosis, dizziness and "logginess" were specifically mentioned by our informants. "If the ailment were located somewhere above the waist the patient was bled at the elbow joint on the upper surface of the arm; if somewhere below the waist, on top of the instep." One arm might be opened in spring, the other in the fall. In the procedure described by the Boy, before the incision was made, the patient would put his hand on the ground and hold his arm rather rigid, while the operator squeezed and at the same time rubbed down the upper arm until the blood vessel at the bend of the arm bulged. In a slightly different procedure described by Singer, the patient's upper arm was tied very tight and "the blood was worked down;" then the large blood vessel on the upper side of the elbow joint was pierced with a very sharp chip off an "onyx stone,"* and the blood would spurt out; when the patient was sufficiently bled, a bit of buffalo fur was scorched, put over the incision, and kept in place without any dressing. By bedtime everything would be "okay." 757 [752]

Certain individuals, such as Thick's wife, and Woman Chief, were more skillful than others at bloodletting. On one occasion Singer's husband said to her: "Come on now. I want you to bleed me." She started to do so but "just had to yell," at which he said: "Why anyone would think that it was you who were going to bleed." Coming Daylight was still more reluctant to perform the operation. "In fact, I could never do it," she said, "because I cannot stand the sight of blood."

A tattoo-like surgical treatment was described by Coming Daylight, although Gros Ventres did not practice decorative tattooing. "For a while," she said, "it seemed like my hand would come unjointed and I could not use it very well. They took a bunch of needles and pierced my hand where it was hurting me. They told me: 'Now if you don't eat anything fried, it won't turn blue.' After piercing my hand they put some root on it, and it never got sore." She added: "They do that to the head, too." [304] [262]

Lancing of the gums of children when teething, elsewhere de-

* Singer showed the stone she owned from which the chip is struck. It was a shiny black one, but we did not identify it.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

757 scribed was, so far as we could gather, done by non-professionals as well as by professional doctors.*

752 According to Coming Daylight, one old woman whom she had apparently known in her earlier years and who was suffering severely from "cut-away" gave herself successful surgical treatment. She was in great pain and sometimes could not pass water or food, and besides her grown son had just been killed in battle. In her suffering and bereavement, she went out in the hills, taking with her a big heavy sewing needle, and saying: "Well, my son did not come back. Why should I keep on living." While out in the hills, she pierced herself in the stomach with the big needle, drew out the "bug" that was causing her illness, and pounded it on a rock. After that she got well.

Other surgical or quasi-surgical treatments were resorted to in case of bites by snakes, ticks, lizards, muskrats and wolves.

If you have been bitten by a rattlesnake, the procedure, according to Thick, is to take a horse hair, hold it taut in both hands, run it back and forth to locate the teeth [sic] left by the snake in your flesh, and then pluck out the teeth. If this is done at once after you are bitten, you will suffer no harm.

When Coming Daylight was a little girl, something big, thought by her to be perhaps a large tick, attached itself to her head behind the ear. The other children with whom she was playing held her and just knocked it off with a stick, and then her grandmother put medicine on the spot and the bite gave her no further trouble.

Singer described the case of a woman to whose left arm a little lizard had attached itself and was "sucking the skin." They just cut the lizard off. Coming Daylight was once bitten on a finger by a muskrat which kept its hold and nearly bit her finger off. Finally she poked a stick in the animal's nostril and gave a jab, and it wriggled its legs and let go. She still feels pain in the finger when she holds it in a certain position. According to her, too, people say that a wolf would sometimes "turn crazy" and enter the camp. All the people would then shut themselves up tightly in their lodges, but sometimes a person would be caught and bitten, and would go around as if "drunk or crazy, wild like the

* Cf. Flannery, 1953, p. 142.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

wolf." One woman, whom she knew, was so bitten, right on the mouth by such a "crazy wolf." The people held the woman tight, and when the wind was from the north faced her into it. Then they made a smudge of wolf fur and made her smell it, and so cured her. This was the customary treatment for such cases, after it, "the patient is not crazy any more." 752

The enema syringe was not known to The Boy. A smooth stick and/or grease might however be introduced into the rectum, when other curative measures failed. 757

For various ailments massaging was used by non-professionals as well as doctors with power. When Thomas Main was a boy, suffering from growing pains, he would lie down near the old women who were smoking and they would spit on their hands and rub them on his legs. A sick person, into whose lodge a woman in her menses had accidentally entered, would be massaged all over with beaver castor to keep from growing worse.

Two kinds of thermotherapy were recorded, warm wrappings and the sweat bath. When Coming Daylight's sister was recovering from smallpox, she was "one solid scab." To hasten recovery, her grandmother used to heat dry cloths and wrap them all around the girl.

While the sweat-bath was predominantly a magico-religious rite among the Gros Ventre, and often used or prescribed by professional doctors, it was sometimes—how commonly we could not determine—used by the laity as a purely rational curative procedure. Mary Ereaux' mother "always used to go in" to the sweat-lodge, keeping her head out. Other old women would keep head as well as body closed in. Coming Daylight used to go into a sweat-lodge and sweat when she "had rheumatism so bad I [she] couldn't move." Singer had built many sweat-lodges for her ailing husband, but she added: "they did not seem to make him feel any better."

On one occasion four Gros Ventre warriors, on their way up north, got into a swamp, shot down a queer-looking animal, like a buffalo or a "water-animal" [a moose?]. They ate the liver and it made them faint. When they came to, they built a sweat-lodge and sweated four times—perhaps in this case as a magico-religious procedure, our field data are not decisive.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

757 Thomas Main's grandfather would, from time to time when not feeling well, drink a large quantity of fairly warm water, perhaps two or three quarts, before eating breakfast. He would then go outside, put his finger in his throat, and vomit. This means, instead of a physic, was resorted to as a laxative.

As soon as the first thunder of spring was heard, a person with warts would blow on them and they would come off. This was apparently looked upon as a "rational" treatment, though it was possibly of the magical order.

158 726 755 The following cure, related by Coming Daylight and Singer, was of the natural order, but came about without intentional treatment. A young unmarried man, inseparable friend of Dressed In White, Coming Daylight's husband, had become mentally deranged. He would tear off his clothes and when they would catch him and put clothes on him he would run till he ran into the water. He would run everywhere, and would climb up the sides of lodges to the top. This condition lasted not very long before his cure in battle. Some Gros Ventres, including Dressed In White, Coming Daylight and the young man, while camped at Black Butte (now Havre, Mont.), were attacked by some Assiniboine. With all the noise and shooting, the Gros Ventre horses stampeded. Dressed In White ran with his gun toward the stampeding horses, and, as he did so, saw one of the enemy fall in their midst, try to get up, and fall again. Dressed In White shot at him three times and then his gun would not go off and in his anger at it he smashed it on the ground. At this juncture, the young man came along, and Dressed In White said to him: "Hurry and grab that enemy. He is trying to get on a horse." The young man ran over, grabbed the enemy by the hair on either side of the head, threw him to the ground, and held him there. The Assiniboine had a knife but no gun and was trying to get up, buttocks first. Another Gros Ventre, Cuts The Rope, now ran over and shot the Assiniboine, and all then hit him, counting coup on him. From that time on, the young man was quite cured of his mental derangement, or at least showed no more symptoms of it, but he was shot to death not long after by another Gros Ventre. "By getting an enemy single-handed this young man had become a big chief and could have lots of lovers."[10]

[10] Women admired brave young men. See Flannery, 1953, pp. 190-91.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Before closing this section on rational treatment of disease certain points on care of the sick may be added which have an indirect bearing on curative measures proper. 758

As a rule, the sick were well looked after by their relatives and friends. Encouraging words and hopeful good wishes were expressed to an ill person and these helped recovery. If the patient voiced a desire for any particular food this would be procured if possible. When on one occasion Singer's very ill husband expressed a wish for roseberries, an old man visiting him at the time rushed out, picked a big bunch of them and brought them back at once. Singer seeded, mashed them up and mixed them with tallow and set before her husband a bowlful of them which "he went after as if he were starved." The next day when some friends were visiting him he remarked: "I can't get enough of that roseberry soup." At this, one of them hastened out at once and brought back a large quantity. A little before this another friend had prayed at his bedside and wished him good luck. "Those prayers and that soup," added Singer, "seemed to bring him out of his illness. They made him strong." When Al Chandler's boy, Jimmy, had typhoid fever, and said he was hungry for plums, Mrs. Stevens went a long distance to procure them for him.

According to Al Chandler, "no matter how sick a person may be, there is always one rallying point, just before the end, when he wants to eat. When a person had no more chance to live, the Gros Ventres would fix him (or her) up, put on his best robes, and paint him up ready to die." [763]

Occasionally, in the old days, a sick person might be abandoned. 734
"The Gros Ventres," Coming Daylight recalled, "were moving southward across the Missouri River. Before crossing it they left behind a Gros Ventre woman and her two- or three-year-old girl baby. The woman was very ill. They left her and the baby in a little shelter. They sort of threw her away.

"Some time after that the Crow happened to travel that way and crossed the Missouri from the south at the same place. There they saw the baby walking around in the bush . . . she would eat roseberries and pick up grasshoppers and eat them after breaking off their legs. The woman in the shelter had died and was beginning to smell.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

734 "The Crow knew the child was a Gros Ventre, so they took her along and caught up with the Gros Ventre camp. After they had eaten, they called all the Gros Ventres to listen. One of the Crow was standing there with the child. I was small then. I went and listened. Using the sign language he said: 'You folks were very mean to this child and her mother. The child was pitiful and somebody took pity on her. We picked her up and are going to keep her. We won't give her to you.'

"So this girl grew up with the Crow . . . . she did not like the Gros Ventres and she took her mother's name . . . I do not know to this day why the mother was abandoned. She had no husband at the time they left her. The Gros Ventres," Coming Daylight added, "abandoned old people and babies."[11]

[847 888]

Proprietary Remedies

757 So far we have been dealing with preventive or curative measures of the "rational" order known to and freely used by anybody and everybody. We now come to those exclusively owned and used by particular individuals only. These proprietary remedies fall into two main classes,—although the dividing line was not always sharply drawn,—accordingly as they were owned and used by non-professionals with little or no supernatural power or by professional medicine men and women with well recognized supernatural power. Such proprietary remedies, as owned and used by non-professionals, seemed to have been looked upon as of either the "rational" or supernatural order. Those owned and used by professional doctors as, in the main, of the supernatural order. We shall now take up these two classes, first, proprietary remedies used by non-professionals.

Coming Daylight emphatically insisted that she was not a medicine woman, not a "holy" person. "Some people try to pray through me, they lay their hands on my head and pray for something, as if I were a 'holy' person. But I am not. I do not claim to be a medicine woman. I never go around doctoring others. I just keep

[11] For other cases of abandonment, see Flannery, 1953, pp. 76, 132, 189, 198-99.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

them (remedies, as infra) in the family." Her mother's sister, Good Singer, had a ghost helper and was also a "real" doctor or medicine woman. Coming Daylight was given by Good Singer three kinds of medicine, including headache and stomach ache medicine to use for her own children and grandchildren. Coming Daylight also was given by her maternal grandmother who "knew all kinds of medicines," three medicines to hasten childbirth, to bring the mother's milk, and to cure stomach ache. Coming Daylight has used these within the family to doctor her children and grandchildren, still had them, and, in accordance with her grandmother's wish that they be passed on, was going to pass them on to her granddaughter whom she reared. If she should use any of these medicines for patients not of her family they would have to pay her, else the medicine would not be effective. 757

One of The Boy's daughters, without quest, perhaps in a dream, was given curing power which she used only within the family. She would treat her mother and the children for pains and aches by pressing and massaging.

Possession of such proprietary herbal and other remedies gotten by gift or dream, with or without quest, and used by non-professionals within the family or other limited circle may have been much more widespread than the above meager field evidence might imply.

Before we pass on to the consideration of curative powers possessed by professional medicine men and women, it may be well at this point to record the ritual observed in the gathering of plants for medicine, whether or not the gatherer possessed supernatural curing power proper. 757 824

This ritual was observed in the gathering of medicinal plants only, not of berries, wild turnips and other plant foods. The proper time to gather medicinal plants, or least some of them, was the fall. Coming Daylight's grandmother told her: "You don't want to pick anything [any herbal curative] until the seeds drop, because it would be like destroying a body." Not everyone had the right to gather medicinal plants, at least not all kinds. Certain herbal curatives at least could be picked only by those who had been given power, through quest or dream or through transfer.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

757 824 Some evil such as sickness or death would befall an unauthorized gatherer. When the right to gather a particular medicinal plant was transferred, the transferrer would take the transferee out and show him or her the growing plant and tell the name.

When a medicinal root was dug, some offering, such as a bit of tobacco or a necklace of beads, was put in the ground in its place, or in the case of gathering "white medicine" [fungus?], was placed alongside the tree. In making this offering a short prayer was said. The content and wording of the prayer differed from individual to individual. According to The Boy the gatherer would take the bit of tobacco and pray with it, saying, "I am going to use your medicine." "Your" would have reference to the Gros Ventre concept that the medicines while gotten immediately from a bear or rock or other inferior creature came ultimately from the Supreme Being. His name would be mentioned first in the prayer and so acknowledged as the one to whom all things, even these roots, ultimately belonged. The Last Child would be mentioned last and would get some share in the tobacco offered.

According to Singer, "When we take a [medicinal] root, we say: 'I give you this. I am putting something in your place. I didn't take you for nothing!' We talk like we are talking to a person. Most Indians have the same way." Coming Daylight who was present explained: "We are talking to Our Lord and we never leave out the Sun," and apparently the Last Child was included. She further explained on another occasion: "When they dig the [medicinal] root, they have something to put in place of it and they say: 'I am taking this. Have pity on us. Whatever way I may use this [root], may I be successful in my work.' Then they cover over the hole made by extracting the root. It is kind of buying it like." "Then when you have some of this medicine and pass it on, the receiver gives you something for it."

Doctoring Power

756 What kinds of power did professional medicine men and women possess? In attempting to answer it, we wish to emphasize that while certain individuals (such as Stiffarm) who effected cures, were definitely recognized as professional doctors with super-

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

756

natural power, and certain others (such as Coming Daylight) at the other end of the range as non-professional, the one type graded imperceptibly into the other, no sharp dividing lines existed, and many individuals who effected cure could on equally good grounds be classed with either the professionals or the non-professionals. We could discover no recognized criteria by which the two classes could be clearly and in all cases be distinguished.

A professional doctor was called nätaːnhehi, and this word was used only for professional doctors, or beːtänhehi, used for a "very powerful" medicine man or one with a painted lodge. This last term was a generic one for "holy" or "sacred persons," including Pipe keepers, persons with ghost helpers, medicine men, and "everyone who had any kind of supernatural power."

Professional medicine men and women were not organized into any kind of society or guild. Each operated singly and on his or her own.

Some medicine men and women, such as Black Raven (a cousin of Coming Daylight) and his wife, were general practitioners for "any kind of sickness like common colds," without any specialty. But most doctors, however, were specialists, with power to cure only certain diseases or in certain circumstances. There were many different kinds of doctors, each a specialist in only certain specific fields. One, for instance, could cure facial paralysis; another, rattlesnake bites; another, venereal disease. Some got special power to foretell the sex of unborn children or to prevent or promote conception. Thus Bear Nose had gotten to be such a doctor and also to have many horses by sleeping out on the mountains. He was told that he himself would have no offspring. One young man got power to help women who were going to give birth, but was told at the same time that he would never have any children of his own. Coming Daylight herself was offered in a dream the power to "know children," that is, to give medicine to women to prevent conception, but she refused the power. Some had power to help prevent or promote conception at will.[13] Another doctor had

[13] For further details on powers connected with childbirth and contraception, see Flannery, 1953, pp. 128-29.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

756 power to cure "some kind of gland trouble;" others, to treat "a bursting blood vessel."

A professional doctor was under certain limitations, restrictions and taboos, and liabilities.

756 The being or beings who gave doctoring power would at the same time warn the recipient not to begin practice at once. "If,"
787 The Boy stated, "a person accepted the offer of medicine power, he would be told not to begin doctoring for so many years, but to keep his power a secret for the time being. . . . It would be known that a given man was sleeping around on high buttes. After a number of years he would declare his time was up, would keep his secret no more, and would start to practice. But even then very powerful doctors would usually not reveal who gave them their power." Coming Daylight, it is true, thought the recipient could start practicing at once, but Singer and Al Chandler were quite positive that deferment was required. According to Singer, "the one who gave the power for medicine would tell the receiver when he or she could start curing. It would usually be after at least four years." According to Al Chandler, "they [power-giving beings] give them [recipients] so many years to pass before they can do medicine work."

Lame Bull lost his doctoring power as a result of doctoring before his years of "probation" were up. The wife of the brother of his "best wife" was ill, and this wife threatened to leave Lame Bull unless he doctored that woman. Under such duress, Lame Bull agreed to doctor her, and he cured her. After he did so he was told in a dream that he had lost out and would not be a doctor because he had doctored before his time of probation or deferment was over. A night or two after, a spider came out of his ear and a thunder-rock out of his mouth. Lame Bull was not keeper of the Flat Pipe at this time.

In some instances, at least according to Coming Daylight, "when a man got some doctoring power he would tell his wife. . . . She would be the one to call her husband's power to the attention of others."

756 Supernatural power to cure very grave illness was often bestowed under limitations as to number of cases. Thus White

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Weasel was given power to cure only a limited number of cases; 756
Goes Back, a medicine woman, was granted power to cure only one case and she used it to cure Coming Daylight's husband, Little Man; Al Chandler's adoptive father, also called Little Man, got power [from a coyote] to cure seven persons at the point of death, but used it in only three cases. There were no limitations ordinarily, it appears, on power to cure minor ailments; a professional doctor, Cora Chandler stated, "could do other little doctoring as often as called."

Doctors, as The Boy expressed it, "had to live restricted lives, 756
to avoid doing certain things or eating certain foods, somewhat 784
like keepers of sacred Pipes." According to Al Chandler, one was forbidden to eat buffalo heart under penalty of death, and "certain medicine men people tell about were vulnerable only in one certain spot,"—in one case the man's big toe, in another, a spot on his shoulder. This latter doctor always wore a little circle of willow wrapped with weasel skin over this spot; he was wounded badly but, until that spot on his shoulder was hit, was not killed. The donor of power might warn the recipient never to let anyone do some specific thing to him. Thus Little Man, Al Chandler's adoptive father, when he got power was warned by the supernatural donor: "Never let anyone pull your hair. Here however, is the remedy. If there is anyone present when your hair is pulled tell him to make a smudge of sweet pine, then put it near your nose, and if you can sniff it you will come through safe, otherwise you are a goner." Actually Little Man's death, as Al Chandler told it in detail, occurred shortly after a quarrel with his wife in the course of which she pulled his hair. Little Man quit fighting and sat quiet. Two or three days later he was down sick. White and Indian doctors were called in but none could do anything for him. Al Chandler went to stay with him but he did not want Al there. He wanted to die and did not want Al to talk him out of it. In a little while he was dead.

Doctors, or at least some of them, got power not only to cure 754
but also to cause sickness and to kill, poison or otherwise harm people. Some other doctors were believed to have used such lethal power, although such use was definitely looked upon as a crime

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

754 to be avenged and also entailed supernatural punishment. As The Boy put it, if a medicine man were not "a strong man, an ideal man, he might resort to this killing power he had. But he would pay dearly for doing so, because for everyone he killed in this way he would pay by the death of one of his children or relatives, and finally by his own life." According to Singer, "if a person knew who had 'shot' him, he would want to get even with him. If someone put medicine on another, he [the killer] would have to pay for this deed by losing one of his relatives, such as a child or grandchild, through death. It was not good to do that [kill by medicine] because he [the killer] always had so to pay."

Good Singer, when on one occasion she cured Singer's husband, named the person who had caused his illness. Singer herself was once cured of an illness by White Weasel. The latter told her that "it was not a spirit that had shot her but it was a living human being, but he did not mention the person's name." Coming Daylight's husband, Little Man, at one time suffered severely, until cured by a medicine woman, Goes Back, from pain near the heart and from hemorrhages. "He and everybody knew that a certain bad man had caused the illness by putting medicine on him. Goes Back told him that this man had done so because he thought Little Man was going after his [this man's] wife or going with her."

Mary Ereaux recalled and reported one such case involving a cousin of hers whom a medicine man wanted to marry. The girl's great-grandmother would not let the girl go. The girl died, "poisoned," it was believed, by the medicine man, and he himself died soon after.

There was a good deal of fear among the people of such evil supernatural power but so far as we could gather, not the pervading widespread ever-present dread and suspicion of witchcraft that are found, say, among some of the Indian peoples of the southwest. Apparently most doctors who had power to harm seldom or never used it. Various instances of such use were told us, but they all were attributed to only two or three of the many doctors known to our informants. And one of these two or three was specifically described as "a goodhearted man who helped the poor and all that even though he would harm you on the sly but always in some way the truth would leak out."

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

A doctor with power to harm might use it if he were "jealous of someone better at medicine than himself," or if he "didn't like someone," or if "a woman refused to live with him." 754

We got very little information, and this from only two informants, The Boy and Thomas Main, on how and from whom power to do evil was obtained. According to Thomas Main "bad medicine could be acquired sleeping up on the hills, and was used to do evil." The Boy gave a few more details. "Most of the time power to do evil was gotten by fasting and sleeping on the hills and mountains. It was gotten from some animal or other creature. The animal would teach the recipient how to exercise the power and would also tell him: 'If anyone makes you mad and does not respect you, do so and so and harm him.' It was hard to tell who had evil power, until they exercised it." In at least some cases, then, power to harm was given the recipient of other power, as in the case of keepers and co-keepers of sacred Pipes (cf. pp. 52, 60-61), to enforce respect for the recipient. Whether power to harm was always given for this purpose incidentally to the giving of other power, we were not sure. If we assume that this was not the case, and if sheer power to bewitch could be gotten independently, a logical conflict with the fundamental Gros Ventre conception of supernatural power emerges. For all power was conceived as coming ultimately from the benevolent Supreme Being (cf. supra, pp. 5, 7). We do not, however, press the point. While the Gros Ventre magico-religious belief system was a remarkably consistent one, especially as described by The Boy, one hundred per cent consistency is another matter. After all, gifts of power, even though ultimately from the Supreme Being, were gifts with a string, namely, shortened life to the recipients. The Supreme Being preferred prayer to power-quest (supra, pp. 264-266). The problem is here presented and discussed; it has not been solved by us.

Most doctors had to have some mastery of legerdemain. In the everyday exercise of their curing powers an integral feature, for example, was extracting from the patient's body the object that was causing the disease. Some doctors, in addition, quite independently of their medical practice, had special abilities of clair- 789

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

789 voyance and prophecy, and particularly of wonder working, such as making sugar from sand, matches from grass, and so forth. Some feats of legerdemain, integral and non-integral to curing procedures, have been described in detail. While skill at legerdemain was possessed, as we have seen, by individuals with ancestral helpers, by at least one famous gambler, and probably by other non-medical men, it was especially common among professional doctors. It was, in most cases and by most of the laity believed to be a supernatural gift and, of course, served to give corroborative evidence to the laity of the genuineness of the curing powers of the practitioner, to enhance his (or her) prestige, and to keep and extend his clientele.

Exercise of Powers

756 Each doctor in curing practice used his or her own distinctive rites. Certain rites and observances however were commonly followed by many or all doctors. These more common rites and observances will be described first, after that, some examples of distinctive ones.

The ordinary procedure to engage the services of a doctor for a given case was to go to him (or her) and offer him a pipe filled with tobacco or tobacco mixture. Acceptance and smoking of the pipe by the doctor,—and in accord with the general Gros Ventre pattern, the request with offer of a pipe could hardly be refused,—meant that he agreed to take the case. Sometimes just tobacco was sent or brought to him. In certain instances, too, where petitioner and doctor were related the pipe offering could be dispensed with. Thus in view of their relationship, Al Chandler related that he asked his adoptive father, Little Man, on a given occasion to accept a case without the pipe offering. "I did not have to have a pipe. My father would do anything for me, pipe or no pipe."

"It was important," The Boy explained, "how you handed the pipe to the doctor before calling him. Before approaching him, you would ask around: 'How do you hand the pipe to so-and-so?' A number of doctors might have the same way, but not all had. If no one knew [for a given doctor], then you would ask the doctor

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

himself and he would say: 'Hand me the pipe stem first,' or 'bowl first,' or 'sideways,' or 'lay it on the ground.' Some doctors did not require a pipe, but only tobacco, when they were asked to treat a case." 756

Lame Bull did not require a pipe, but he had to be called four times. Each time the petitioner would start from the patient's lodge, go to Lame Bull's lodge, open the flap of the door, and, without going inside, say to him: "I am calling you to doctor." This was a procedure peculiar to Lame Bull, who at the time was not a Pipe keeper.

The doctor commonly had a helper or helpers to assist at or in the doctoring,—his wife often, or certain men and women specified by the doctor. Not infrequently these latter were relatives of his.

The rite itself was "sort of private." Only the doctor, the appointed helpers, the patient and the patient's immediate family were allowed to be present. "People would not be allowed just to drop in" during the curing rite. Two guards were (or might be) stationed outside the lodge to keep people away. Intrusion by anyone during a curing rite might render the rite futile, and lead to grave consequences as illustrated in the following cases reported by The Boy. 755 756

"A young man was about to be doctored. Just as the rite started a man came to the lodge and said to the two guards outside: 'I have the right to go inside. I want to see this great doctor.' They let him enter. As he did so, blood gushed out of the doctor's mouth, and the doctor said: 'Carry me back to my lodge as quick as possible.' When he got there he said: 'Fill up a pipe quickly and give it to me.' He then took a few puffs, fumigated his hand and 'rubbed' himself with the smoke, and got all right. The intruder had purposely come in to spoil the doctor's medicine, for he suspected that the young man patient was in love with his wife and he wanted him to die. And the young man did die." 756

In another case while a doctor was treating a patient, a band chief who was drinking heavily at the time and who had recently killed a relative of the doctor came into the lodge without leave and asked the master of the lodge for whiskey. The doctor packed

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

756 up his medicines at once, went home, got his rifle, came back and shot the band chief dead on the spot.[18]

755 Sometimes the doctor, just before actually beginning treatment of his patient, would test out, or make a show of testing out, his power to know beforehand whether his treatment would be successful. One doctor, Sits Holy, for instance, just about to treat a wounded man in whose spine an arrowhead was lodged, said: "I'll test my power first to see if I can extract the arrowhead." The season was late fall. The doctor sang and made incense, and then a young bear stuck its paws out of the doctor's mouth and growled loud enough to be heard over the camp. Then the doctor "got" [made appear] ripe service-berries and choke-berries. Then he took a bear claw, dug in the ground right where he was sitting, and pulled out a fresh wild turnip. Then he said, "I'll be successful." And so he was; he extracted the arrowhead. In another case, a doctor, when just about to start treatment, picked up a piece of wood carved in the shape of an arrowhead, and turned it into an iron arrowhead, and so went forward confidently to begin treatment.

Commonly, perhaps always, the doctor's first ritual act in actual curing was praying with and smoking a pipe. The doctor would hold up the pipe and pray, first, as usual, to the Supreme Being, and then to his or her particular power-bestower,—animal, rock, or whatever it was.

While curing rites were apt to be rather noisy, tense and thrilling experiences for all present, the doctor did not go into trance or lose consciousness during them.

The more common elements in the curing ritual and procedure were singing, drumming, rattling, incensing, and searching out the cause of the ailment. "The people," said Coming Daylight, "who are in there [the lodge where rite was performed] always have to sing when the medicine man doctors." The doctor would ordinarily, it seems, start the singing and drumming, and then the others present would join in or take over entirely while the doctor carried through his or her treatment.

According to The Boy, "when a medicine man started off he

[18] Cf. Flannery, 1953, pp. 49-51.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

beat a rapid tattoo on the drum while he prayed, and when he 755
started to sing he beat a much slower, even time." Little Man, Al Chandler's adoptive father, in one case at least, followed a somewhat different procedure. He hit the drum just a little, that is, lightly, while he prayed. Then he sang and beat the drum harder, and sang until those present caught on to the song. Then he gave the drum to one of the men, and the others present sang to the latter's drumming while Little Man doctored the patient. If, according to The Boy, a medicine man used a rattle, he shook it in circles anti-clockwise—in contrast to the clockwise circling of the Flat Pipe keeper and the fanning back and forth of Star dancers.

Disease-causing objects within the patient's body were ordinarily extracted by suction. The object extracted was swallowed by the doctor, burned, or otherwise disposed of or destroyed, as will be given later in describing the curing procedures of individual doctors. A pipe stem might be used, in exceptional instances at least, for sucking out the object, to judge from the offer, with this provision, of power once made to Singer in a dream.

Tobacco smoking was sometimes prescribed for the sick by a Pipe keeper when doctoring and apparently by other doctors. Ac- [276]
cording to The Boy, tobacco in such use was often pure, unmixed with other plant.

In curing rites, sometimes—how commonly, we could not determine—sweating in a sweat-lodge was prescribed for the patient by male doctors, in one instance to be described later, by a female doctor. Singer described an experience of her own as follows. "I was once thrown from a horse and hurt pretty badly. I was afraid I could not stand the sweating, for I could never stand heat. Sure enough, although the medicine man told me to crawl in and lie down so he could work on my back, as soon as they put the water on the stones, I got out in a hurry."

We now pass on, from more general curing practices to those of individual doctors, and may well start with an account from Coming Daylight which illustrates both sickness experience and curing ritual.

"I am going to tell about the time I almost died. We were living

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

755 down about six miles from here [from Hays], where the windmill is now. There is quite a flat there along the creek. Little Man [her husband] plowed up the flat and was ready to sow the grain, and he went over to Hays [many times] to try to borrow a seeder. Finally he said: 'I have made so many trips and they are always using it. I don't think I will get the use of it. So I am going to give up. I will sow this grain by hand.' So I make a sack for him out of canvas and he put it around his neck. I said: 'I will help you.' He said: 'Well, we will hitch the team to the harrow.' He started in ahead of me throwing grain, and said: 'You may get tired, so ride on the harrow.' I said: 'No. The team might get scared and I might get tangled up. They might kill me.' So he said: 'Well, it is up to you. But we have a long way to go.'

"The ground was so soft that it was just like walking in mud. All our children were off at school, so the two of us had no help and did the sowing alone. This was about fifty years ago [about 1890]. My limbs just seem to ache me all the time. I used to crawl down to an old spring to get water for the day. I think this [the strenuous labor during that sowing] is why today my limbs ache me. For seven days I could not eat a thing, and, by this time, the harder I tried to work, the worse I got. I almost killed myself that time.

"On the fifth day I could not feel anything. It was like my flesh was dead and I could hardly move my head. My feet were along the west wall and my husband slept in the other room. When he saw I was so low, he told me: 'When your sister comes over, see if she won't get her man [her husband, Stiffarm] to doctor you. Tell him I will give him a cow for it.' So my sister came and I said to her: 'Your brother-in-law told me to tell you to get Stiffarm to doctor me and he will give him a cow for it.' But my sister said: 'Why should he doctor you when you have no faith in him.' My sister must have heard something that I had said about him. So I said to her: 'All right, you know he is not the only doctor.'

"So my husband came in after my sister left. He said: 'Did you tell her?' I said: 'I told her but she got mad. She said you had no faith in him anyway.' He said: 'Well, that is all right.' He

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

thought a few minutes and then added: 'Well can you think of someone you would like to doctor you?' I said: 'Yes, I would like to get Naka:ninen (looking-for-an-enemy-warrior-in-war).' He said: 'All right,' and he rushed and asked that one: 'Come, as my wife has been sick for some time.' So that man and his wife came. 755

"Our house was large enough, so I had them move right in. Then they made a bed on the east side just across from my bed. Pretty soon they said: 'Let us move her.' They put me on the north side in the place of honor, and I said to myself: 'I believe I must be going to die, else they would not put me at the back of the lodge.' This man boiled my medicine just as soon as he could. This was the sixth day. Of course they always put your head to the west when you are in the place of honor. The room was a big one and they made my bed toward the center. I could not even use my hands. They had to feed me. [823]

"On the seventh day just about sunset. I asked to be turned over; I had been lying on my side so long. They did this for me and I faced the wall. While I lay so, a man's voice said, in a kind of scolding way: 'How could he [the doctor] have so much medicine to doctor you?' It meant he did not have enough to doctor me in the condition I was in. And all at once I answered the voice, saying: 'Why, of course, they have enough medicines. Look what a big bundle she (or he) has hanging there.' The medicine man thought I was delirious and said: 'Daughter, who are you talking to?' And I said: 'Didn't you hear that voice say he did not think you have enough medicine to doctor me?'

"Of course as soon as the sun went down it got dark. They had no lamp and had to sit in the dark. Just before they went to sleep, I told them: 'Now turn me over again.' They then went to their beds and in no time were snoring, especially my man [husband]. He always got up early and whenever he hit the bed it seemed like he was dead and he would go to snoring. I could not sleep a wink but just lay there and heard them snore. They were sleeping two rooms away from where I was.

"I could not tell what time it was but it was quite late when I saw a hand with something in it and a forearm. Then I saw a foot and at last I could see that a man had come in and was standing

755 by the door. His lips were just white. His mouth was half closed on one side and it looked like he had something in his mouth. He made one step toward me and blew like they do with roots when curing, and this made me kind of flinch. He made another step and kind of worked his mouth like he was getting it [the root] all together in his mouth to blow again. He blew at me again and my feet went up. Then he took another step and all this time he was working this root around in his mouth. He blew again and it seemed like my nerves just shook all over.

"Pretty soon then he spoke and said: 'Now I brought this to you.' It was pemmican with a little tallow on top of it. It looked so good, because I had been without eating all these days. So he said: 'I will lay it here,' and he put it by my pillow. I thought he was ready to turn away and leave me, but he blew hard once more [this the fourth time] by my head, and this time he just made me rise to a sitting position.

"I started looking for this meat he had left for me. I was so hungry that I was whining, and I knew the meat was there because he had put it there and had told me he would leave it. I was just tearing my bed apart, saying: 'I know he left that pemmican.' By this time my husband had not awakened but the other man [the doctor] said: 'Daughter, do you know what you are talking about? You had your bed all torn up.' I said: 'This man came in and gave me something to eat and I cannot find it.' He told his wife: 'You should have a little piece of candle.' They lit matches and tried to help me find the pemmican. I was sure he had left the pemmican for me. So he [the doctor] said: 'I believe she is delirious. She couldn't move a hand and yet now she is up and around.' So they woke my husband and he was just frightened because he thought I was delirious.

"The third time the man had blown on me I kind of knew what he had blown at me, and the fourth time I was sure what it was. It was what they call 'white medicine' (cf. supra, p. 315). That is why that man's lips were white and I could smell when he got close that it was this 'white madicine.'

"In the morning I was just hungry. I told them: 'I am terribly hungry this morning.' My man [husband] said: 'I will go out and get a calf.' Later on he would butcher a bigger one for the

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

old doctor. He went out in the hills to look for the calf but could not find it any place. He was near my cousin's and thought he would go over. My cousin's people had just butchered that same morning and they made signs to my husband: 'You are just in time. Now you can come in and eat.' But he said: 'I am in a hurry. I am looking for a calf to butcher for my wife. She is awfully hungry. She has not eaten since she was taken sick.' My cousin said: 'I will give you some [meat].' So she put liver and tripe and different things in a sack. My husband came back and threw the sack of meat on the floor and said: 'Your sister [cousin] sent this to you. They have just butchered.' 755

"I lost no time and rushed over to this sack of meat: I saw a piece of liver in there and took a knife and went to slice off a piece. The old medicine man said: 'Slow now. You should cook it first.' But I said: 'I just cannot. I am going to eat it this way.' I ate it raw like that with some tallow. It seemed like from then on I was just myself again.

"All I know about this person who appeared to me was that he was a man, but I did not recognize him. He was a bitä:tao (soul, spirit shadow).

"It was the medicine man's wife who did the doctoring for me in the case. She did a kind of quiet doctoring. She boiled roots and rubbed me all over with them. They called that woman Nätsiθä ('Cree woman') and she really was a Cree. They say those Cree medicines are good." [582]

Coming Daylight gave two accounts, in 1940 and 1945, of another personal experience in being cured. The two accounts supplement each other. Here follows the 1945 account with some detailed interpolated in parentheses from the 1940 one.

"When my first little boy (by my husband, Dressed In White) died, he died, I think because my breasts were bad. Then I had a girl baby. When this girl baby was getting older and already learning to sit up, I was still nursing her of course, and my breasts went bad again, that is, the milk was bad. (They were tight and full and hard . . . the infant had diarrhea and got very weak.) I was suffering with my breasts and my husband thought he should get a doctor to do something for me. So he got a certain man, a great doctor, but one of whom the women were afraid and whom

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

755 they avoided when possible, because he always had to include the woman patient's genitals in some way.

"My husband said: 'I am going to try him. I don't want to lose this little girl. I lost that other child.' So I thought to myself, 'Why do you want to call *that man*,' and I was afraid of this man because everybody was. But my husband called him, and butchered and brought in a whole buffalo, and told me: 'You can pay that man's wife with half of this buffalo. I will give that man a whole clothing outfit, down to moccasins.'

"We had the lodge all prepared for him and the place prepared for him at the back of the lodge. He sat there with his wife on his right and my husband on his left. I was opposite him. My husband filled his pipe and offered it to the doctor. The doctor smoked it and said: 'You will be glad you called me and were not afraid of me like the rest of the people are.' Even though I thought to myself, 'I am scared anyhow,' I did not say anything.

("After he smoked he started to get ready to doctor. He took off all his clothes. He was just stark naked. He went and felt the little infant. . . . So he boiled the medicine herbs in water and let them boil on the coals. He came to me and I was just scared of him, the way he looked. He felt my breasts all over. They were hard and he gave them a good going over, squeezing them and massaging them. Then he told me to take down my dress so he could see my breasts. Next he put the pail of medicine beside me and told me to drink a little of the medicine.)

"Then he told me to sit where my husband had been sitting, next to himself. I did not want to sit next to him, but he fixed himself up and knelt down a certain way and told me to kneel the same way and to do whatever he asked me to do. He got ready to doctor me and made me kneel, and then he started to sing a song. He finished the song and then told me, 'Watch close,' and told my husband too, 'Watch close.' Then he prayed to the one from whom he had gotten his doctoring power, and then said: 'I never used this way of doctoring before. This is the first time. People are always afraid of me but you (addressing my husband) must watch close and see all that I do.' After that he sang, and told me. 'Spit twice on each of your hands,' and he did the same to each of his

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

own hands. (He put his hands to the ground, palms down, then put his palms to his own breasts and shook them up and down. He repeated this action three times, making four times in all. After the fourth time, his own breasts were big like a woman's.) 755

"Then just that quick,—and you won't believe it but it is true,—although he was a man and it seemed funny to me then, his own breasts started spurting milk which just poured down, and mine did, too, though he did not lay a hand on me [at this juncture]. He let this go on for a long time, and then told me: 'You want to watch to see all the bad milk is gone. Right now it is pure flour water and when all that bad stuff is gone it is going to be a bluish color.' And sure enough I then watched it and it began to get a bluish color and kept on gradually until it got completely good. Finally the nipples were just dripping a little with blue milk, and he told me: 'Raise your breasts from underneath with your hands.' His breasts now became flat and normal, and I was cured. After that I had all the rest of my children and my milk was never bad. I always nursed my own children.

"He told me: 'You should be thankful that you were not afraid of me because I made your little girl live.' I told him: 'I was afraid.' The reason the women were afraid of him was because he used to lance glands down in the loin and would run his hand down in the vagina. I told him why I was afraid: 'They say that when you lance, your finger will all of a sudden slip down there.'

"After he got through doctoring me, he doctored my baby, every joint of the little girl. He then told me: 'The girl was already full of that stuff, but I have drawn it all out.'

("This old medicine man was a grandfather to Crow Bull, so he was my grandfather too. My husband used to tell me: 'Always treat that man good and feed him, because he cured our little girl.' Long after the cure, when he used to come to visit, I would tell him how wonderful it was that he had been able to effect the cure. He used to tell me: 'If you want that power, you can come crying to me.' And I used to answer: 'Oh, I wouldn't do that because you are one of those who like to have women [for sexual purposes] and you would try to have me.' ")

Four other cures recalled and described by Coming Daylight

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

755 were those of her husband, her daughter, and her grandfather, and her maternal uncle, Crow Bull, respectively.

"My husband, Little Man, did not believe in Indian doctors. He had never been sick, but once somebody put [bad] medicine on him. There was a bad man among the Indians at that time. . . . My husband knew and everybody knew that this bad man had done this to him. My husband had a pain all the time right near his heart and sometimes he could not move on account of this pain. Occasionally, too, he had a hemorrhage. He used to be in such pain through this thing that he knew it was some work of a medicine man. So he had a dream and in it he was told that he should go out on the hills and swing round and round on a pole, as they do (cf. infra, pp. 393-394), and that he would then get well.

"I called a woman doctor named Goes Back. I got a nice horse and hitched it at this woman's place as payment. This woman doctor said: 'I am just going to doctor you [Little Man] once.' Other doctors had been trying to cure Little Man but they could not succeed because the one who had put the medicine on him was extremely powerful. Goes Back talked to the one who had given her her power and said: 'You told me that I could use this medicine work just once, and that then I would get a particular person well.' This is what had been promised to this woman.

"So she said: 'I will ask for a sweat-lodge, like a man.' Only medicine men used to ask for a sweat-lodge. She said: 'I am going to doctor in this sweat-lodge.' Several people went into the sweat-lodge. I attended to the opening and shutting [of the door thereof]. There were only certain rocks that they used and these were heated until red. Someone else attended to this. The patient was inside the sweat-lodge and the medicine woman invited some others to go in there. Except for the medicine woman, only men went in. I sat beside the door, but on the outside.

"They sang, and I heard the woman praying: 'My nephew has suffered a long time. Please listen to me. You promised that I would get some one person well by doctoring just once, and I want this to be that one time.' When she got through doctoring, that is, sucking, she said: 'Lift up the curtain.' So I lifted it up and opened the sweat-lodge, and one of the men there said: 'I too never be-

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

lieved things. I am going outside to see for myself.' He asked the old woman doctor for the thing she had drawn out of the patient. 755

"So she gave it to him in his palm. It was just a little round thing. He took it, fingering it and smoothing it out. It turned out to be a little piece of white rag. It had been all balled up. On that little piece of white rag were seven marks, like needle-pointed writing, and at the end right in that rag was a piece of blood clot. The man saw this and said: 'Now I have seen something for myself with my own eyes.'

"They handed this around so that everybody could see it. Then they handed it back to the medicine woman. She said to this rag: 'I don't want you to ever come back again. You go out to where you belong.' So she wrinkled it up again and threw it in the flaming hot fire. As soon as she did that it burned up quickly.

"As soon as she had drawn it out of Little Man he felt much better. He got well because he knew that this thing was out of his system, and he quit having hemorrhages.

"In the beginning she had told what this man had put medicine on him for. This man thought that Little Man was going after his woman [the man's wife] or going with her. Little Man's sickness was not a natural one. This man had put medicine on him. Little Man had to go through with his promise [of self torture on the hill] because he got well."

"I was awfully curious when I was a child. Whenever I saw a gathering of people, I always ran to see what was happening. Crow Bull [her uncle] had been wounded in a battle. His scalp had been grazed by a bullet. They sent for a doctor whose name was Drops In The Fire. My mother and grandmother and my uncle with his wives were sitting on the west side in the lodge. The four men singers were on the opposite side. Crow Bull, to be doctored, was at the place opposite the door, with the doctor there too. 752 755

"The doctor started to sing and then he gave two drums there to the singers. He said: 'You all look at me. You all look at me. You all look at me good.' Then he said: 'Give me a gun. This thing [the gun] is the main thing. Look at it. If I don't make this work, he

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

752 [Crow Bull] is going to leave you [to die], and if it works as I want
755 it to work he is going to get well.' There is a wild rhubarb which is called 'gun' and when a person is going to eat it he runs his thumb up the stalk to eat the inside of the rhubarb stalk. The doctor said: 'Now you see this gun [the real gun].' And he ran his thumb up the barrel, and it made a sound like that made when a person opens a wild rhubarb stalk. And it looked as if the real gun was laid apart. They all looked at it. And the doctor said: 'We are going to have good luck.' Then they all cheered like they were thanking him. Then he ran his hand along the gun [barrel] and when they looked again the gun was just as good as ever. Then he laid the gun up. I used to think he was a wonderful man because I saw him do this with a real gun.

"After this, the doctor took the bandage off Crow Bull and started doctoring him. He took a snake-skin which was just flat and wrapped it around the wound. All this time he was talking and praying. All this time he held the tail and head of the snake-skin together at the back of Crow Bull's head. He would kind of move his hand, quivering it at the back of Crow Bull's head where he was holding the two ends of the snake-skin together. The bullet had lodged there. The head of the snake was inside [nearest the scalp] and the tail was laid over it. He just quivered his hand about four times and at the same time told the singers: 'Not yet. Keep singing.' He was trying to work the bullet out. Finally he grasped the snake-skin by the middle and shook it, and the bullet dropped out. That is why I thought he was wonderful. That is one experience I had.

"They had a horse tied outside to give to the doctor, and of course they had a big feed. When they got through eating, all the women folks came and kissed the medicine man. My grandmother said to me: 'What are you sitting there for, not paying any attention?' I said: 'Oh, grandmother, I am scared of him.'

755 "In later years, too, at various gatherings when I was visiting with the women folks I would say to that medicine man's daughter: 'My, I used to be afraid of your father. He was so powerful.' And then that woman would jump at me for a joke."

"There is always," Coming Daylight added, "a way for those

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

powerful men to die. That particular man Drops In The Fire, however, always claimed to be bullet proof." 755

When, on one occasion, one of Coming Daylight's daughters was very ill, the wife of Buffalo Run finally cured the girl. "I called in Stiffarm," Coming Daylight said, "who demanded a large amount of things for payment, because he said the girl had this stomach diseasse [cancer?]. He wanted my husband, Little Man, to make him a lodge and he would doctor the girl. But I said: 'No. My daughter hasn't got that disease. I don't want you to make that lodge.' Then we got another medicine man, whose daughter had died at the Mission. Finally I said: 'I am going to take my daughter to someone who can cure her.'

"So I told my husband to load food and wood. I took my daughter down below Stiffarm's place, to where Buffalo Run (or Chase) used to live with his wife. There was the woman who was the medicine woman. When I got there, she said to me, just teasing: 'Where is this mean woman going?' I handed her the pipe and told her to smoke it, and she took it, which meant she would do what I was asking her to do. I said to her: 'I want you to get my daughter well.' And I gave her the grub to eat and some wood. She said to me, just teasing like: 'So you had to come to me, this mean woman!' Then she said: 'If you do what I tell you to do, I will get your daughter well. You are to leave her here with me and I will give her medicine every day and tend to her (that is, put medicine all over her, make her drink it, and draw the thing out).' So I and my husband left my daughter there and we went home alone. Every now and then I took grub and wood to the medicine woman. Sure enough, not long after that my daughter got well. Soon after that she married, and she is alive and well today." 757 755

Good Singer, Coming Daylight's mother's sister, had an ancestral helper[14] and was also a practicing doctor. We recorded her doctoring song, as sung by The Boy, song number 28, and by Coming Daylight, song number 122.

A cure by Good Singer was described by Singer. "Once the man I was living with was very ill, almost dead. One of his wives—he had several besides myself,—called in this medicine woman, 755 [595] Good Singer.

[14] Cf. Flannery, 1944, pp. 55-56.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

755 Good Singer. The one that called her in made a smudge, with fire of buffalo chips on which some kind of medicine—sweet pine, or sweet grass,—was sprinkled. Good Singer then smudged herself, putting the smoke up to her face four times and then rubbing it on her breast. Then she sang her song [Singer here sang it], the burden of which was: 'My pipe is lying here!' Then she was ready to doctor.

"She hit herself on the chest, and a bead came out of her mouth. She put the bead on the top of her foot and extracted it from the sole thereof. She next smudged the head four times by putting it to her mouth, and then laid the bead down.

"Next she went to the patient and worked on him, sucked at the spot where his pain was, and after showing the people what she extracted from him swallowed it, and named the one who had caused his sickness. Then she swallowed her own medicine [the bead] and smudged at her mouth four times. They gave her a lot of things for doing that,—horses and blankets and such things."

Singer also gave details on two other cures, one by White Weasel, the other by Bad Bad Bull.

"Once I hooked up the wagon and went for wood. We were living at the time down the Milk River Valley. While getting the wood, all of a sudden I was struck with a sharp pain in the back of my neck. It was like a sharp pinch. I went back with my load [582] of wood. I was married at the time to an Assiniboine named Axe Handle. I told him: 'The Assiniboines have shot me [with medicine].' He told me: 'No, I guess you haven't had that happen to you.'

"This was a little before the Fourth of July and I went to the celebration suffering with that pain in the neck. After that they began to call all kinds of Indian doctors for me—Stiffarm, Bill Jones, Ragged Robe. Each pulled out something, a piece of skin or something. And they had to give a lot of things away to each doctor. But none of them did me any good.

"We were living close to a friend who told me: 'The only one who can cure you is my brother [White Weasel, a Gros Ventre].' So I called him and they gave him a lot of things,—about seven

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

big things, including horses. He is the one who cured me. He pulled out a little animal from himself. That was his medicine. He showed it to the people present and its tail just shook. Then he doctored me by sucking on my cheek and on the nape of my neck. He extracted from me a fingernail. It was just all green, it had been in there so long. I had not called White Weasel until the fall. . . . 755

"White Weasel said that it was not a spirit that had shot me but that it had been done by somebody living although he did not mention the person's name. I never knew who did it."

"There was a man," Singer said on another occasion, "who had power to cure this stomach-eating sickness. His name was Bad Bad Bull. In his lodge he had little willow back-rests with fringes along each side, and on each piece of fringe he had these little animals that cause this sickness. When anyone was in that lodge and would, for instance, be helping his wife to find something and would come across one of these little animals and would draw away frightened. Bad Bad Bull would say; 'What are you scared of? They won't do anything to you.' [352]

"Bad Bad Bull's nephew's wife had this stomach-eating sickness. It was making her poorly and she was sick all the time. The old fellow said: 'Oh I will pity my nephew. If his wife dies and he has to go out and cry. I guess I will pity him and doctor his wife.'

"So they fixed the lodge in readiness for the doctoring. Iron Bucket, my husband, was present there for the doctoring. They all sat around, and Bad Bad Bull told them to sing and said: 'When you get through singing I will pick away all the stuff that the animal has eaten. And then I am going to suck this thing out. I want you to catch hold of my back locks of hair and hold my head up.'

"He had them heat two rocks and these rocks were still in the fire while he was doctoring. So they watched him when he was throwing that bad stuff out. When he had his mouth ready to suck, they pulled his head up, and he had that animal in his mouth. So, as they always do, they all looked at it. When Iron Bucket saw it, it was round and most of it was mouth. After they had all seen it, Bad Bad Bull had them pull the two red-hot rocks out of the fire, and he put the animal on them and burned it up. The woman

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

755 got well. She came out of her sickness and lived a long time. Bad Bad Bull's animals used to be of all different colors,—green, yellow and black, the black ones were not quite so bad."

Lame Bull, The Boy's father, who got doctoring power when keeper of the Flat Pipe, used a thunder-rock and peppermint in his curing, and a song, number 29 as sung by The Boy and recorded by us. The words of the song may be freely translated, "there is nothing impossible," or "I wonder if there is anything impossible."[18]

We recorded also the wordless doctoring song number 30 sung by The Boy, but obtained no data on the rest of his ritual, apart from his preliminary test (cf. supra, p. 332), except that he spat out the paint with which he painted his body and that on one occasion he dug out an arrow lodged in the spine of a wounded man.

Stiffarm's doctoring song, number 32, was recorded as sung by The Boy. "Stiffarm had a weasel skin to live by," as The Boy put it, "and to do his doctoring with." As expressed by The Boy on another occasion. "He had as his helper a big weasel, the larger of the two weasels. The weasel would do Stiffarm's doctoring for him. It would take out tapeworms."

Thomas Main was told the following incident about Stiffarm (d. ca. 1934) by Brocky, another Gros Ventre. "Stiffarm was doctoring a sick woman. He had a weasel skin. This he placed on the ground and covered with a black handkerchief. Then he took away the handkerchief and there was a live weasel. The weasel ran to the woman, bored its way half way into the woman's stomach, and came out with half of its body bloody and with something in its mouth. This object was taken by Stiffarm and shown to all present as the cause of the illness, and was then thrown into the fire outside the lodge. Then the weasel was covered with the handkerchief, the handkerchief was next taken away, and there was only the weasel skin."

Coming Daylight, who distrusted a particular medicine man, related the following instance of his curing. "After my husband

[18] On doctoring powers of keepers of the sacred Pipes, cf. p. 62. The Flat Pipe keeper could use the hair rope in the bundle as a powerful doctoring medicine.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

'Little Man,' had been bewitched and cured, he fell sick again. A man was called in to doctor him. He did his medicine work and drew out a small rattlesnake with shining eyes from Little Man's forehead. Meanwhile I had built a fire. I asked the man to let me look at that snake and he told me: 'When you have finished, hand it back to me.' But I threw it in the fire. He did not say anything but gathered up his medicines, jammed them in his bag, and went out. He took the mare given in payment and gave it away at once to another person. . . . Little Man did not know what to make of my action. I told him: 'I burned up his old rotten medicine.' 755

"I know I could not escape death [some time] so I was not afraid of him (the man). Some others would be scared of a medicine man like him, but not I. He did not put medicine on me. He was my neighbor, however, and after that he avoided me like he was ashamed. . . . Little Man really had kidney trouble and that man fooled around his head!"

"Stiffarm," Coming Daylight also said, "had some power concerning children, for he wore a bracelet from which hung little dolls, one on each side thereof. . . . My husband, Little Man, used to make fun of Stiffarm for wearing this bracelet, but he would never tease him outright [in his presence]. After Stiffarm would leave, Little Man would say: 'What is that crazy thing doing with such a bracelet?' " [778]

Bull Lodge, Garter Snake's father, a great medicine man, who died about 1886, had gotten power to cure various ailments. From Garter Snake were obtained some details, many of them confirmed independently by The Boy, of the ritual procedures used by Bull Lodge. His chief operating instrument was a woodpecker feather.

"Now I will tell how my father doctored," Garter Snake volunteered. "On one occasion his granddaughter was ill and called him. His wife and I went along with him. On our arrival this granddaughter said: 'Grandfather, I would make coffee for you but I haven't any sugar.' But he got mad and said: 'Everytime you ask me here you ask me to make sugar. I am tired of this. If you had the power I have, would you like to be making it all the time?' Well, instead of quitting asking, she took a pack (?) and threw it to him and said: 'make that sugar.' So he went through [789]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

755
[789]

the performance, and they had sweet coffee. And after we ate and smoked, we went back home.

"Sometime during that night the woman [Bull Lodge's granddaughter] had an attack of some kind of sickness and blood just poured out from underneath. Her sister ran [to our lodge] and said [to Bull Lodge]: 'Grandfather, your granddaughter is having an awful hemorrhage. If you think a lot of your children I pray that you will come, and if you love Garter Snake, your daughter, I pray in her name that you come.' And the old man said: 'All right. I am coming. Run home and get her ready. I will be there. I will do what I can.'

"So I and my mother and father went, and one of the boys, Curly Head, went along too. And of course the sick woman's children were in there [her lodge].

"The old man got there and felt around and said: 'Oh there is a big lump in there that busted your blood. Instead of cutting you open I am going to work it the other way. I will give you the medicine I use to help a woman in labor. I will work it off that way. I don't know what it is but it is a big lump.' So he told his wife: 'Take that frying pan, heat water quick.' So she did. He put three or four kinds of medicine in this water and told her: 'Boil it quick.' Of course it didn't take long, and he said: 'Take two cups [of the infusion] and put it in there and cool it quick, so she can drink it.'

"They did this, and after the medicine was cool enough, the patient's husband raised her up so she could drink this medicine. She took it, and Bull Lodge said: 'All right. Just hold her up like that.' Bull Lodge took the black handkerchief [another ritual object he used in curing] and balled it up, prayed and sang, and put it right on top of the patient's head and shook it back and forth quick, and when he did that, she said: 'Grandfather, something dropped.'

"When she said that, he lifted her to another place, and here [where she had been] was what looked like a rock, as big as a man's fist and it was blue. What it was I do not know, but that it was what this woman had in her and it must have busted that blood. The blood was just running all over. The blood was still coming, and Bull Lodge said: "Well, I will have to heal that

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

wound inside.' So he told Curly Head: 'Run to the creek and take a cup with you, and when you dip it in the water, dip it upstream.' So Curly Head did that and brought the water and said: 'Here is your water.' Bull Lodge put some medicine in it, stirred it up, and said to the patient: 'Drink this. This is going to heal that wound inside and is going to make blood. You lost too much blood.' So she drank that, the whole cupful, and when she got through drinking it the blood quit flowing. 755

"After Bull Lodge cured her, of course they took that thing that came out of her and built a great fire outside of buffalo chips. He said: 'Make a big fire and put it [the rock-like lump from the patient] in and see what is going to happen.' So they put it in the fire, and it rolled out. They would throw it in again, and it would roll out, the other way. It was a long time before they could stop it [from rolling out], but finally they got it to stay in the fire, and it broke open and was just like a shell. It must have been some kind of an animal with a thin shell. I did not see this fire myself but that is what they told me. This woman whom Bull Lodge doctored lived to be an old, old woman.

"Now I will tell of Bull Lodge's first experience of operating with a feather. The sick woman was named Wind Woman, and she had trouble with her stomach, as if something were traveling around in there, and she was awfully sick. Her man went and gave a pipe to Bull Lodge to come and doctor this woman. She was just skin and bones and ready to give up the ghost. So Bull Lodge said: 'I will operate on her. I will have to cut her open and in that case I have to have seven men singers and six women to sing.' The men sat on one side of the lodge and the women on the other. The sick woman was the niece of old Bull Lodge and therefore he was her father-in-law in the Indian way. They all got in there seated and she said: 'Father-in-law, I am about to die anyway, so don't be ashamed to doctor me. If you doctor me I know you will cure me and I want to live.' Bull Lodge said: 'All right. I will do what I can.'

"So this woman of course was stripped from her waist up and when she was lying on her back they could see this thing beating like in her abdomen. Bull Lodge called: 'Son, Otter Robe, come

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

755 and give me charcoal.' And after Otter Robe had given him just a little piece of charcoal, he said: 'Son, put your hand on where the most pain is.' Otter Robe said: 'I don't know anything about it.' But anyway Otter Robe put his hand there and you could see his hand jumping, and right from there downward Bull Lodge made a mark with the charcoal.

"Then Bull Lodge took his woodpecker feather and prayed and talked and passed it sideways from each corner of his mouth twice, four times in all. I (Garter Snake) was looking to see what he was going to do. I was curious to know all about it. So he smudged the feather, spat on it, and at the upper end of the charcoal mark wiggled it as if working it in, and after he got it half way in he started to cut right along that charcoal line he had made, and at the lower end of the line he took the feather out and the skin opened up. Bull Lodge smudged his hand and he put his hand in that cut, and he pulled something out and put it on the ground. It was as big as a fist and green on one side and white on the other. It was a wano:'wɔ, a kind of bug that grows in a person, or a stone. So Bull Lodge said: 'Well, light that pipe,' and he put the handkerchief over that cut. So Otter Robe took the pipe and brought it around and gave it to his father and the old man lit it. After he lit it he smoked and blew that smoke on the handkerchief, and the fourth time he took away the handkerchief and the cut was gone,—there was nothing but a little scar. And the woman got well and lived to be an old woman."

Charles Buckman who was interpreting for us with Garter Snake added that his uncle had been operated on by Bull Lodge who ran his feather along a y-shaped mark down on the uncle's body and took out the cause of the illness. When the cut healed, it was just like a scar. The Boy, who in boyhood, knew Bull Lodge well, likewise stated that, after such a cut was made by Bull Lodge with his woodpecker feather in curing, the wound would heal up without any sewing and leave only the trace of a scar.

Al Chandler gave us considerable information on the curing powers used by his adopted father, Little Man, who had received curing powers from a bear, an old man, and a coyote respectively

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

755

A good many details on the objects and procedures used by Little Man and on his manner of painting himself when doctoring have already been given (supra, pp. 285-291, passim) in the description of Little Man's several experiences when acquiring doctor power. We here add descriptions of four specific cases of cure as given by Al Chandler from his own memory and personal observation. These were crucial cases of which he had the power to cure seven, but he only used it four times, as follows.

"Little Man said that long ago when he first started out in medicine work there was a woman who was already given up for dead. My aunt, who was a very good friend of this dying woman and was good-hearted and helped people whenever she could, told her husband, Little Man: 'Don't you pity that woman who has been so good to us? She will die if you don't do something. She has little children and you know how little children are pitiful when they have no mother or father. Won't you help?' He said: 'All right. I will do it.'

"So they went over there and he took his medicine bag. He looked at the sick woman and she was still breathing but was pretty close to the edge. He told her folks who were all sitting around ready to see her go any time: 'I pity this woman. I am going to try my medicine the first time. I guess you heard about my story. Now I am going to try it. All get out of the way, sit back. Just four men and three women stay in here. The men sit on the left coming in and the women on the right.' So he fixed up like he was shown (by coyote) and started in. He kind of felt this woman to see how far gone she was and told them: 'Well, I am going to doctor her three times today, and the third time we will know for sure whether I fail or whether I succeed.' He hit the drum just lightly while he prayed. Then he sang and beat the drum harder. He sang the song until the men got on to it. Then he gave one of them the drum and the others sang to his drumming while Little Man was doctoring the woman.

"He had a powdered root and chewed it and blew it on the patient like they do for one who is this far gone, that is, they blow it here and there over the body because being so far gone they couldn't tell where the sickness was. He went through that. He

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

755 was going to doctor at intervals twice more that night. At the third doctoring when it was just coming daylight he would know whether she would live or not. That was a long time to allow until the third doctoring because that woman could have easily died before then. He didn't rush or get excited but did according to what he had been told when out crying and praying. So the third time he doctored her, the woman started to fuss and look around at everybody. Her folks were glad because it looked like she was coming out of it. They started to talk and tell stories. He told them: 'She is going to be all right. In the morning if she wants to eat, feed her, give her anything she wants. She will be hungry.' He had boiled medicine for her and asked: 'Can you sit up and drink this?' She sat up and drank it and he said: 'She is going to be all right. She will be thirsty after this. In the morning give her all she wants to drink.'

"So Little Man and his wife went home, and close to noon, say about ten o'clock, they went back to the patient and he said: 'I am going to doctor her four more times. I have to do it seven times in all. You don't have to do anything else. If these other medicine men want to give her something to drink, it is all right. It will help her that much more to take medicine, whatever they give her.' So he doctored her again and said: 'This afternoon I will come and that will be the fifth time.' He came and did the same thing as before. In the evening just before sundown he did it again and that was the sixth time. He told them he wouldn't be back until midnight for the seventh and last time.

"These folks asked him if they needed him could they call him in the meantime. He said: 'I don't know. I don't think you need worry about that. After I have done it seven times I am through. Just let her do what she pleases. Leave it to her. She is all right. She is cured.' And sure enough, in a few days she was up and around.

"The second case of critical illness he cured was Al Plumage, then a boy. He is the son of Paul Plumage. He had t.b. of the stomach and was just black and had a big bloated belly.

"Paul, the boy's father, had come to get Little Man and didn't like it when the latter said: 'You people don't think of me until

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

755

somebody is about dead. When the others fail you think about me instead of calling me earlier.' So Paul told him: 'Well, it is your son who sent me over here and I sure appreciate it because he sent me here. I believe you could do something. I cannot get those others any more. They have all given up. I should have come long ago, but I didn't know. Most of those others are supposed to be our relatives.' So Little Man went down there and cured this boy just the same as he had cured the woman, telling them the number of times they should expect to hear news and so on.

"Little Man didn't go around and brag and say he could have cured this or that. He had told the story of his power and if any wanted to call on him it was up to them. He was young when he got his power and old when he died. He only used this power four times. The other two cures he made with this medicine were Cora's mother and my son Jimmy, who was Little Man's pet.

"The mother of my wife, Cora, had pneumonia. They had already covered her up but I went to see the old woman and sized up her situation. I saw that she was still breathing and I said I was going to call my father. I told him just how things were. Little Man had just got back from some place and had his wagon still loaded. I didn't have a pipe, but my father would do anything for me, pipe or no pipe. I said to him: "My mother-in-law is just about a goner. Can you do anything for her?' So he told me to get the horses and I went over home and pretty soon he came along. They just stopped by the house and didn't unhook the team but went in to see how the old woman was. He came back out and got his medicine bag and told these folks just how he was going to doctor. The third time he doctored her she wanted to eat. They were kind of scared because no matter how sick a person is he or she always has one time they want to eat before dying. Little Man said, 'Let her eat if she wants to eat. It won't hurt her. She will be well.' So they did. She got well and lived a long time after that.

"Jimmy was the fourth one cured. At first he had summer complaint. Neither the agency doctors nor Indian doctors could do a thing for him. The only thing Jimmy lived on was soda crackers and Little Man was away. I waited and waited for him to get back and as soon as I knew he was back, I went to him

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

755 and told him to come. They hooked up the team and brought bedding with them. Jimmy was just skin and bones and was getting black. He was only about two and Cora had another little baby at that time. They had given him up for sure.

"This is a sample of the way Little Man would do. He doctored Jimmy just a little at first. There was nobody there to sing then. Little Man said: 'Up there where I live there are some plants we call shoestrings in the brush.' I said in excitement: 'Yes.' So he said: 'You go up there and pick a good handful.' I rushed up there like a fool and looked around for what 'shoestring' was. Little Man's brother came along just then in a wagon and asked: 'What are you looking for?' I said: 'Shoestrings, but I don't know what they are!' He laughed and said: 'You big fool. You are stepping all over them.' So I got busy and then rushed back over there. In the meantime Little Man had picked seven purple flowers, —just the flower part.

"So when I got there, he said to put on water in a big dishpan to warm it, not to boil it. When the water got warm he broke the flowers and the shoestrings up in it and stirred and stirred the water. Then he got his wife to hold Jimmy standing in that water and bathed him all over from head to foot, especially his stomach, but didn't give him any to drink. Then he said: 'That is all. Put him in bed and cover him up.' And he told Cora: 'Watch what he passes and let me know.' So she looked every little while. Finally he passed and Cora told me so I told the old man who came and looked himself. They beheld a wonderful sight to see. They saw these shoestrings were whole, just like I had picked them, and they were covered with excrement. Now you might be able to understand it if he had given the child these things to drink. But he didn't and besides they had been all broken up in the water and not whole like that. After that Jimmy wanted to eat. He ate from then on and began to pick up.

"The next time Jimmy got sick he had typhoid. We had all been invited to Lewiston to a Fair. We went over there to make a little money and Little Man wasn't around when Jimmy got sick. Jimmy was pretty sick and said he was hungry for plums. I didn't know where to get any and Jimmy got mad and said: 'Flea (an old man) brought me some.' But I said: 'Flea went to town.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventré NQ13

He borrowed a saddle from us and he isn't here.' Mrs. Stevens had a store at Old Hays and they had come over and she said she had plums canned. So she went right home to get them for him. It didn't take long in an auto and she brought a jar of them. He certainly enjoyed them. 755

"So Little Man got back and I came after him and told him that Jimmy was sick again. He came over and looked at him and doctored a little bit like he does at first. He doctored him twice that same day and the next morning was when he used that bear claw. He told Jimmy: 'Tell me wherever it hurts and I will work on it.' Jimmy said: 'Here on my right side.' The old man said: 'That's a bad place. I don't like to suck there because it might hurt your guts. But I will do something else. I will use this bear claw now.' So he asked the boy, showing him the bear claw, 'Do you think you can stand this?' Jimmy said he could and Little Man said: 'Well make sure you can stand it.' He told the old lady to hold Jimmy's hands down and me to hold his feet down. But first he told me to get hot coals and just put a little of the sweet pine on the coals and smudge the end of the bear claw. He took some paint and painted himself like the bear had showed him that time when he was out crying. So after he did that, I held Jimmy and the old man sang first himself. He sang that song four times and then got busy. He put the claw right where it should be, and you could just see the claw going in. The boy wriggled and made faces. The claw went right in at the side and he jerked it out and you could hear something drop. I saw where it dropped and said: 'Where did it fall?' Little Man told me: 'Pick it up. Let us see it.' I took it and gave it to him. He worked it around in his palm. It was a whole cherry seed and Jimmy's gut, kind of rotten, was stuck on it and that is what was blocking his gut. Right after that he was well.

"The claw was a big one but it didn't even make a scar because I looked to see if there was any blood coming out. As soon as he jerked the claw out, he rubbed his hand just a little bit over the place and that is all there was to it."

Al Chandler also gave a short account of his own treatment as a boy by Black Bird.

"I was four years old when my mother died and I knew in what direction they had taken the corpse. The next morning I went over [764]

755 there and saw two fresh graves. They dig a hole about three or
[764] four feet deep and put sticks across, cover that with canvas and cover the canvas with dirt. I laid down on one of the graves and that is where they found me. When I did not come back my father started looking for me. I was just like dead and they got an old medicine man to work on me, for at that time my adopted father, Little Man, had not yet gotten doctoring power.

"When I woke up, my father, my stepfather (the man married to my real mother), a woman and the old doctor, Black Bird, were there in this big lodge. I did not know what had happened to me but when I woke up I saw old Black Bird sitting by me. He had a china saucer with medicine in it and with four little brass bells [sic] in the medicine. He told me to drink up the medicine. I took the medicine but tried to balk at the bells. But the old man said: 'No, no drink the bells and all. The bells will be your protection. You will never get sick and ghosts will no longer be able to harm you. You could go to sleep with them and sit up with them [without harm to you from them]."

In a long narrative of a battle between the Gros Ventres and the Crow, The Boy described, very briefly, the manner in which one of the Gros Ventres was cured. After the fighting was over this man was found unconscious, bleeding from a wound in the arm. One of the Gros Ventres knew how to staunch the flow of blood He had an otter-skin with medicine tied on the nose thereof. With this he treated the wounded man's arm. The flow of blood stopped at once and the man regained consciousness. A travois was made and they had the man's relatives haul him back to the main camp on it.

756 A number of other individuals with doctoring power were mentioned by name at various times by our informants—Sleeping Bear, He Steals, Bill Jones, Ragged Robe (d. about 1935), Otter Robe, Joe Assiniboine—but we obtained no information on their
[745] curing procedures. We knew Joe Assiniboine, who alone of the surviving Gros Ventres refused to the last to become a Catholic and who died only recently in 1942 or 1943, but unfortunately, though not patently unfriendly to us, was consistently reluctant to give information.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

In the preceding pages we have been concerned with the ritual procedures used in the exercise of curing power, of "good" doctoring power. We now turn to procedures used for working "bad" power, for doing harm to people putting spells on them, "shooting" them, in a word, for practicing witchcraft. Our information on such procedures is much less detailed than we would desire, for those who resorted to the use of such "bad" power did so secretly as a rule and were very reticent about their procedures. Furthermore, so far as we could judge, "bad" power was less frequently used than "good" power. 754

Bad medicine could be put on the victim by sheer wishing. Singer referred to one very powerful medicine man as "being able to just wish somebody dead." The victim would be "poisoned" at a distance by the medicine man. As Al Chandler explained the matter:

"There were some bad medicine men who had medicine that could poison you without their touching you or associating with you, no matter how far away they might be from you, even two miles. They wanted to do something to you or to somebody you loved. Then you or your loved one got sick all of a sudden. That was considered a crime. This medicine man may have had it in for you for some reason, jealousy or something like that, and he would poison you. He would just sit in his lodge and perform there and say whom he was doing this to, and this person would get sick or something would happen to him. . . . Some medicine man could poison you without touching you."

The bad medicine man would commonly operate by "shooting" the victim, that is, by projecting some object into the victim's body. Singer was once so "shot" with a finger nail, Coming Daylight's husband, Little Man, with a bit of rag (supra, p. 341). "One man's medicine," according to Thomas Main, "was a sand burr. He could wish it to go a long way off and lodge in a man's throat, and the man would die after a while."

Failures and Skepticism

Failures by doctors to cure were apparently quite common. We were told incidentally of a number of cases. We obtained no in- 756

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

756 formation, however, on the causes to which doctors attributed failure to cure.

Some doctors were believed by some at least of the people to resort to deliberate deceit and trickery. Al Chandler remarked that "so many times doctors fake and try to get everything a person owns." An implication to this effect is also contained in his account of the acquisition of doctoring power by his adoptive father, Little Man, and in his direct statement regarding him: "Little Man was honest. He never faked and everybody like him. If he couldn't cure, he wouldn't want anything. He would wait before he took what a person paid because he wanted to see if the patient was really well." Faking by medicine men to get something from a person, he stated, was looked upon as a crime.

Coming Daylight gave a detailed account of her catching one medicine man, in the act of deception.

755 "At one time a Gros Ventre man named Strong Man was mar-
756 ried to a Piegan woman. She was suffering with something in her stomach. It is something that moves in the stomach and causes great suffering. The English name for it, I think, is cancer, but it might be something else. So Strong Man sent someone to call a particular medicine man who, instead of coming right away, said: 'Wait until tomorrow. In the meantime make a lodge and make it well and clean with nothing dirty in it, and have everything ready you intend to give me.'

"I could see this medicine man's house from where I lived. My corral was some distance away around a bend. During the day I saw this man and his wife walking together straight ahead without looking back. When I saw them do so the third time I began to think they were up to something. So I waited and watched, and when they went the fourth time and had gotten as far as my corral, I ran over to their house.

"Sure enough by their bed was a bowl, covered. I ran over and uncovered it. The bag from the end of the guts was in water in this bowl and I said to myself: 'Sure enough. That is just what I thought. He is up to something. He is preparing this 'cancer' or whatever it is that he is going to pull out of that sick woman.' So I ran back quickly to my own house, and when that man and

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

his wife returned home they did not know I had been at their house. 755

"My husband, Little Man, was out hunting horses. When he came back I told him: 'This crazy thing has already prepared what he is going to pull out.' I told him of my visit to the house and of that thing that was in the bowl. That medicine man had told me and my husband to come with him and his wife when he would go to doctor the woman, so we could get something [as payment]. So I told my husband: 'You are going to see that the thing he pulls out is the same thing that is in the bowl.' 756

"So the next day we all went over the hills to Strong Man's place. The others all went into the nice lodge that had been prepared for the doctoring. But I did not go, I just stayed in Strong Man's house, but I could hear them singing. The people who are in there always had to sing when the medicine man is doctoring.

"Little Man sat by the door of the lodge. The man did his medicine work. He always had a white handkerchief and a black one. This time he used the black one. He would kind of do things under that black handkerchief. Of course he did it so quickly that you could hardly see what he was doing. Sure enough, however, he had that thing I had told my husband about and he pretended that he had taken it out of the woman.

"He showed it first to all the men, and one of them said: 'Oh, that is the way this animal looks that eats on a person!' So Little Man looked at it and it was the very same thing I had seen in the bowl. Little Man clasped his hands in the gesture that indicated you think to yourself something is awful or powerful. Then all the women had to look at it and they especially make all kinds of exclamations about that thing. Then they handed it back to the doctor and he cut it up and ate it, and he drank all the water it was soaked in. Little Man was thinking to himself: 'Of all the dirty things he eats!' "

Attention may be called to Little Man's gesture of admiration or awe made in spite of his inner conviction of trickery. This behavior contrasts with Coming Daylight's open flaunting, on another occasion, of her disbelief in the same medicine man. It may be recalled, too (supra, p. 347), that while Little Man used to make fun of Stiffarm for wearing a special bracelet, he was careful not 756

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

756 to do so in Stiffarm's presence. Making fun to their face of powerful medicine men or so expressing skepticism of their power was evidently not considered prudent.

Skepticism, or at least profession of skepticism, regarding the powers of medicine men or regarding some powers of some medicine man, was not confined to Coming Daylight and her husband, their own skepticism centered mostly on one doctor. We recorded a number of professions of skepticism, but what weight and interpretation should be put on them is not easy to say. Even though Little Man, Coming Daylight's husband, "did not," she said, "believe in Indian doctors," at one time at least, he submitted to treatmenet by Goes Back and became convinced she had extracted the cause of his illness. Another man present at Little Man's cure said, "I too never believed things," but he likewise was convinced when he saw the rag that Goes Back extracted.

In general, our evidence on doctoring points definitely toward the conclusion that the powers of medicine men, both for curing and for causing illness, were all but universally believed in. Such skepticism as prevailed was confirmed to certain individual skeptics and even in these cases or in most of them as regards not doctors in general but only certain individual doctors, and not all powers and procedures of the doctor but only certain ones. Furthermore profession of skepticism need not in all cases of course have been indicative of actual skepticism, and even actual skepticism would give place to belief when the skeptic witnessed cures, or profession of skepticism to profession of belief when the doctor was present. Some of such skepticism as prevailed may well have been a compensation reaction to the size and kind of payment demanded by some doctors. To this matter of payment we now turn.

Payment for Services

756 Some payment or gift was commonly, perhaps always, made to
465 even the non-professional individual who gathered a medicine for you or gave one to you or who treated you, unless he or she was your very close relative. One who wanted "fish medicine" from a person who had brought it back from Minnesota would buy it from him. Singer remarked: "My mother always taught me: 'If

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

you are not feeling well and someone brings you medicine, say, medicine to clear you out after childbirth, and you have nothing else to give the person, just give a dish of food.'" Coming Daylight, who was not a professional doctor, was called about 1928 to attend a childbirth and, when ready to leave after looking after the mother in every way, was given a big sack of flour, a small sack of sugar, and five dollars in cash. Mary Ereaux, in speaking of the two roots given to Coming Daylight by the latter's grandmother to hasten childbirth and to bring the mother's milk quickly, remarked: "They say that if it [either of these roots] is given to an outsider [not a close relative of Coming Daylight], the recipient must pay, else it wouldn't be any good." "Last winter [1939-40]," Mary Ereaux said on another occasion, "I had a cold. An old lady picked some roots for me and I gave her potatoes and eggs in place of this medicine. They believe such medicine does not work if you don't pay for it, no matter how easy it is to gather the particular medicine."

A payment or fee was always expected by the professional doctor for his or her services, unless again the patient was a close relative. The doctor had commonly "paid" well in hardship or goods to acquire his power; he expected to be paid well in turn. And even though he had acquired ownership of it, not the hard way by quest or purchase, but by spontaneous offer from some being or by free gift from some relative, he still "paid" in shortened life and in restrictions on freedom. Doctors did not make their whole living from their practice but the fees received by them, especially by "great" doctors, were substantial additions to income and wealth. This economic goal loomed large in the consciousness of the people and of the professional doctor. When, for instance, Bad Bad Bull's sister refused his offer to her of power to cure stomach sickness, people said to her: "You should have accepted this power and so have gotten a lot of things for curing this disease." Doctoring was an avenue to wealth and to the ease and prestige that came with wealth, but in general was not practiced by the young. It was, however, a form of "old age insurance."

Sometimes professional doctors named their fee before accepting a case. "Give me this or that, and I'll doctor you." At other times

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

756 the person cured, or his relatives, gave what they thought equitable. "Sometimes," Mary Ereaux said, "doctors set a price and other times they say 'just what you want to pay.' Ragged Robe, who doctored me, never set a price, because I used to keep him and his wife during the winter. I would just give them, over and above that, whatever I could afford at the time." Coming Daylight, when asked if the doctors set a price, thought this funny. "People," she said, "pay the doctor they call what they think his services are worth,"—a remark which might suggest that the amount of payment was commonly left to the patient or his relatives. When Singer's husband was cured by Good Singer, the latter was given "the best of what they had."

Usually the objects to be given in payment were gathered together and put in view before treatment began and were turned over to the doctor just before or just after treatment, whether cure was actually effected or not. What Al Chandler reported of his adopted father,—"if Little Man couldn't cure you, he wouldn't want anything; he would wait before he took what a person paid, because he wanted to see if the patient was really well,"—was seemingly an exceptional practice.

The doctor would commonly share some of his fee with the men and women designated by him to be present at the rite and to help him.

Sometimes the payment made to a doctor was a modest one. Coming Daylight "every now and then took grub and wood to the medicine woman" who brought her daughter back to health. Ordinarily, however, at least in cases of serious or critical illness, the fee paid was a substantial one, such as horses, blankets, clothing, and large amounts of food.[16]

In Coming Daylight's earlier days, before money came in, clothing or a horse would be given to the main doctor who assisted at childbirth, and additional fees to helpers. One medicine man was paid a whole outfit of clothing, down to the moccasins, and his wife a half buffalo (or elk), for curing Coming Daylight when her "milk was bad" and she feared she would lose her infant daughter. Goes Back received a "nice horse" for curing Coming Daylight's hus-

[16] Cf. Flannery, 1953, p. 87.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

band, Little Man; Drops In The Fire, a horse for curing Crow Bull; 756
Stiffarm, lots of things, horses and so forth, including "one lovely mare," for treating—unsuccessfully—Little Man. Good Singer received "horses, blankets and such things," for curing Singer herself. Bull Lodge was given "the best horses" for treating Al Chandler's uncle. All the foregoing payments were for cases of serious illness. Mae Main stated that a person who wanted to procure a certain contraceptive root would have to "pay a big price for this, sometimes two or three horses."

Sometimes, how commonly or rarely it is hard to say, a medicine 837
man would stipulate sex relations as his payment or part thereof. 756
Cora Chandler had heard "that some medicine men take women afterwards as part of the payment for curing." "This," she explained, "is why Coming Daylight was afraid of that medicine man when he was stark naked," having disrobed before starting to treat her (supra, p. 338). "Occasionally," Thomas Main had heard, "in very serious circumstances a man, to save the life of a brother or of someone dear to him, would pay the fee of giving his wife [allowing the doctor sex relations with her]."

The relative decline of native doctoring is due in part to the 177
influence of the missionaries and of the civil authorities, in part no 795
doubt to educational and other accultural factors. All the 756
Gros Ventres today are members of the Catholic Church. "Joe Assiniboine," said Coming Daylight, "a good medicine man, still living [in 1940: he died in 1942 or 1943], never joined the Church; joining would take his power away from him." Stiffarm, one of the last of the great doctors, who died in 1932, on becoming a Catholic and later a catechist, is reported by one informant to have renounced his doctoring powers. One reason Coming Daylight gave for not accepting doctoring power herself was, "my children were all Catholics and I joined the Church and I will be a good Catholic till I die." Little Man, Al Chandler's adopted father, wanted to pass on some of his curing power to him, but Al did not want it, because, he said, he was afraid he would "poison someone" but also on account of the Catholic Church. . . . "The Catholics didn't want you to do such things."

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

CHAPTER VIII

MISCELLANEOUS PRIVATE RITES AND OBSERVANCES

782 789 Besides the ancestral-helper and power rites and observances, there were a great many other private ones,—private in the sense that they were mostly carried out by lone individuals or by small and often exclusive groups. Most of these other private rites and observances expressed, by word and/or act, either petition or gratitude or both to supernatural beings, and hence most were, in the sense in which we are using the term, "religious" rather than "magical." A smaller proportion of them were of the "magical" order, being concerned exclusively with purely impersonal forces or phenomena. In some cases both "religious" and "magical" concepts and attitudes appear to be present; in most cases, either the former or the latter are exclusively present or at least clearly predominant; in a few cases, it is hard to say whether, from the Gros Ventre point of view, we are dealing with the "religious" or the "magical."

In our field work among other Algonquian peoples we have often found that phenomena, which at first looked "magical," turned out later, on deeper penetration into meaning, to be clearly "religious." We suspect that some of the phenomena to be described in the present section as seemingly "magical" would likewise, with fuller knowledge, turn out to be "religious."

That certain given rites and observances may have a dominantly or exclusively "religious" or "magical" coloring undoubtedly depends on different meanings attached to them by different individuals. For instance, The Boy has a more philosophic mind; he seeks unity, systematization, synthesis, meaning; Singer was more pragmatic in her attitude to the supernatural, and little concerned with synthesis and meaning. In more cases than one, what was religious to The Boy may well have been "magical" to Singer. So at least we strongly suspect, although conclusive evidence for our inference cannot be adduced. We may merely add that in our own

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Occidental culture, what some individuals conceive and practice as "religious" is not infrequently conceived and practiced by others as "magical." 782 789

Apart however from all such questions and qualifications, by far the greater proportion of the miscellaneous private rites and observances, to the detailed description of which we now turn, are exclusively or predominantly "religious" rather than "magical." We shall take up in order: wish (or wish-thought), prayer, sacrifice, vows, oaths, dreams and visions, omens, divination, taboos. In general, under the first half dozen captions we shall be dealing more with "religious" phenomena, in the remainder more with "magical" ones, but there are certain overlaps and combinations of the two which will be apparent as we go along.

Wish and Thought: Blessing and Curse

That the Gros Ventres believed in the efficacy, more or less "supernatural," of certain wishes and thoughts about others, of benevolent and malevolent thinking, of—in this sense—blessings and curses, is clear. Exactly how the good or evil wish or thought wrought its effects is not too clear from our field data. 828

The Gros Ventres in general attach great significance to thought and wish. This theme recurs over and over again in their culture. Here are some illustrations. One of the names of the Supreme Being apparently meant: He who rules all by the power of thought. Some medicine men had special power to harm and kill by sheer wish. The Boy, in discussing the question, "Who among the beings, apart from the Supreme Being, known to the Gros Ventres was the most powerful?" finally narrowed his choice down to two, a certain boy and his sister as the most powerful of all. "The boy had power to do things with his eyes. He would only look and the thing happened as he wished, but that was only in combination with his sister. She would do the thinking and then he would do the looking," and the thing would happen, especially as a result of the girl's thinking.[1] The Boy thought long and intensively

[1] See Kroeber, 1907, No. 26, The Deserted Children, especially pp. 104-05. This may be the myth to which The Boy referred. Unfortunately we did not get a complete version from him.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

828 through the winter what to put in the letter (quoted infra, pp. 380-381) sent in the spring of 1943 to Cooper that would do something big toward restoring the latter to health. "'I think,'" remarked Thomas Main, "is commonly used by the Gros Ventres in speaking. When I am interpreting, a man will often say to me: 'Tell them this is what I *think* of him (or it).' There is an emphasis on thinking and on the power of thought."

We come now to the more specific data on good and bad wishing and thinking.

754 In 1939 while we were chatting about approbrious and insulting
828 terms, such as tsë:k (you ghost), in common use, The Boy distinguished these from malevolent thinking or wishing or cursing proper. "As a curse [proper] a person might say to another: 'You are not going to live long.' If a thing were serious enough, almost anyone might worry another with such cursing." On another occasion, the same summer, while speaking of the kinds of advice given children by their father, The Boy quoted his father, Lame Bull, as having said: "If a man were offended by his son and put a curse on his son, the curse would remain on the child."

828 Between our 1939 and 1940 visits to the Gros Ventres, The Boy had suffered a severe stroke (facial paralysis). At our first talk
[123] with him in 1940, Cooper expressed to him the very sincere wish that he would get well and live long. The Boy was visibly affected by this expression and spoke at some length as follows:

[626] "If a man does something of which the people disapprove very much, their *thought* is against him. They *think* badly of him. Against this mass thinking his own thinking cannot stand. Two people may have a battle of thinking. The outcome will depend on how each is developed in thinking, on their respective powers of thought. If all the people think badly of a man he becomes a sort of outcast.

"If someone has had some terrible misfortune and is beyond human aid and this becomes known, people will say: 'That is his sentence from above. Someone above thought that out. That is why he is in such desperate straits.' This would be something supernatural, something beyond the human.

"When you said you wished and thought I would live many years

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

I was glad. Now your wish and thought are added to my own. 828
The human being can think and reason because somebody supernatural has endowed him with the right [ability] to think. The wishing itself helps."

A few minutes later, after he had told a recent dream he had had, he voluntarily returned to the wish topic. "When a little while ago you wished that I would get well and live long, I believe that at that moment in which you wished this the Supreme Being was listening to you and saw your thought and knew all about it. In my opinion besides your thinking that way as just a human being, your so thinking calls for some action from above.

"Take another example. Suppose I did something good to an old man, and the old man valued and appreciated it. I would not know he was pleased until he said: 'You have made my heart glad. I appreciate what you have done for me. Stand in front of me. I am going to ask in your behalf from the power above that allowed me to live this long. I am asking with my words, my prayer, my thought, my wish, for all I am worth. And all this wish has to be transferred to you."

In 1945 Thomas Main after a long and serious discussion with 626
The Boy and Thick on this matter of mass thinking and public 754
opinion, summarized the situation as follows: 828

"The Indian people, at least the Gros Ventres, thought the psychological effect of public opinion is so great and intense on the one on whom it was trained that it shortened his life . . and made him a nobody. If he had a long, long life it was certainly a miserable one. It was definitely known by the Gros Ventres that they actually thought people to death. Even today public opinion is difficult to cope with. The Boy says that if public opinion held anyone in high esteem, this would have the opposite effect and would help the person to climb the heights he wanted to attain. One who was not held in high esteem by public opinion never got anywhere in any endeavor." We may comment in passing that while there is question here of the ordinary operation of public opinion, mass thinking also seems to enter in: "They actually thought people to death."

In the following account by Charles Buckman the wish appears

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

828 pretty clearly to be operative on its own although along with the
[754 "natural" morale-building effect of cheering words.
626] "There is an old Gros Ventre saying that if a man is ailing and some relative or friend of his comes in and says pleasant things to him or tells him he is going to get well, such a talk helps him. When someone gives the sick person a good talk and sincerely wishes he will get well, then the patient will do his best and get well. If you say unpleasant things to a sick man you will help to kill him. Don't hurt a sick man's feelings. The wish in the case is looked upon as something like a prayer. It has to be really meant. When a person talks that way to you when you are sick, [782] the Supreme Being will look down upon you and help you to get well. If a person is visiting a sick Indian, he will say good things to you, even though he knows you are going to die. A white doctor might say: 'There is not much hope.'

"When 32 years ago I was thought to be dying of appendicitis and had been given up by the doctors, old fellows came in and talked hopefully to me and put new life in me.

"In 1918, when I was ill with the flu, I overheard the doctor say: 'It is only a question of a half-hour. You better get a coffin for him.' Then another fellow, an Indian, came in and said to me: 'Well, what did the doctor tell you?' I said: 'Nothing.' He then said: 'He told that fellow over there that you are going to die. But he is not the governor of death. You are not going to die. You are going to live. You want to live for these children of yours. You are going to get well, and for the sake of these children. And think of the One Above [Supreme Being]. He's going to keep you. That's all I want to say to you. I wish you will be up in a few days.' And he walked out. It took me two years to recover fully."

In one of the songs, No. 67, sung in the Law Enforcers' Dance, the words, "The lead bull, comes in this direction," were explained [782] to us by The Boy as being a "half prayer." The singer was "wishing as hard as he could, so there would be plenty of game, especially buffalo, so the people would not have to go far to hunt."

525 The Gros Ventre, The Boy stated in 1939, "did not pray for
828 success in gambling," but just before a wheel game started, the player would take the wheel in his hand and hold one of the

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

arrows to some part of the wheel and say something silently, "regarding for example, a horse he had captured in a raid: He had to make sure that what he so said was not a lie, all this 'was not a prayer,' but it brought good fortune in the game." 828 525

In a big gambling contest, The Boy told us in 1940, between two opponents in the wheel game, one of them might take up the wheel and his arrow and "think of a war-deed" he had done. "He would use that as a sort of prayer for better luck in the game and would then win. . . . He here used the supernatural. He used words in his mind. He did not talk out loud. . . . He was sort of taking an oath indirectly. In an indirect way he would think: 'I am not telling a lie [about this war-deed]. The powers know I am not telling a lie.' He actually did the deed, otherwise he could not hope to have better luck in the game. It was a sort of indirect prayer. If he were really praying, he would do differently. He was not actually asking any being for anything. He was not appealing to or asking any one particular being, any single being or animal, but was just thinking of everything supernatural."

The Boy further explained in 1945: "The gamblers 'prayed' over the wheel silently. But they were not exactly praying. They were appealing against fate. They were wishing for good fortune and good luck in the game, and they were debating [sic] that thought by thinking of a particular time, when for instance, they brought back a good-looking horse from a war raid. . . . They made that wish silently. . . . They did not swear or take an oath or hold up a pipe. . . . The onlookers would wonder which one of his great deeds the gambler was going to hit his opponent with . . . [later in the game] he could tell what [the war-deed] he had been concentrating on. . . . He had to tell the truth. . . . So practically he had nearly taken an oath."

When a new name was solemnly conferred on a person, the namer while brushing the person with sage would pray for the person after saying to him: "I am going to pray for you. And you yourself at the same time pray and wish for good things." 828 553

So much for the raw field data. What do they mean? Quite clearly, wishing and thinking under such conditions as indicated, while at times associated with and blending into prayer, into mere 828

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

828 morale-building or morale-destroying remarks, and into public opinion operating on a purely secular or social level, were conceived of as distinct from these, as having a certain efficacy of their own. Quite clearly, too, such wishing and thinking could be either "good" or "bad," beneficent or maleficent, and mass-wishing or mass-thinking by many or all the people had a particularly powerful effect on the beneficiary or victim. Further, it seems reasonably clear that the more sincere and more fervent the wish, the more it came from the heart, the longer and more intensely it had been thought over and pondered and concentrated upon, the more efficacious it was.

Prayer

782 Prayer is here understood as the expression of position, gratitude, homage, or atonement to suprahuman beings. The expression may be made by word of by act or by both together; if by word, it may be vocal or purely mental. Petitions may be direct or indirect, in the latter case being expressed in an indicative rather than in an imperative form. In all cases the response on the part of the superhuman being or beings addressed is conceived as voluntary, not coerced. Prayer, unlike magic in the sense we have used the latter term, does not have automatic efficacy of its own, and does not force the superhuman being to act as the petitioner desires.

Understood in this broad sense, prayer, by word or act, vocal or mental, direct or indirect, enters into and in fact is the core of all the "religious" as distinct from the "magical" (and "social"), rites described in the preceding chapters and to be described in this present one. For instance, the wish, reported in the immediately preceding pages, may be looked upon as an indirect vocal or mental prayer; sacrifice, to be dealt with presently, as prayer by act, in this case by gift.

Praying had none of the drawbacks of power-seeking or power-possessing. It was urged unreservedly on and practiced by everyone. Its efficacy was universally believed in; at least we recorded no instance or hint of skepticism in the hundreds of references to it made by our informants.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Sincerity and reverence in praying were *de rigueur*. Deep sincerity and reverence were manifest in all the prayers at which we were present. And praying was never talked about jokingly by our informants. The Boy, on one occasion remarked: "If the Indian was praying he put so much reverence, veneration and faith into it that he would make you cry." Levity or irreverence at prayer were distinctly disapproved, as illustrated by the following incident told us by Singer, which occurred during a severe smallpox epidemic when she was a young girl: 782 781

"I was at my grandmother's. She had a big string of beads, and she said to me: 'Now, my grandchild, take this bucket and put these beads in, and you go too,' she said to my (female) cousin. 'Then you must both go to the top of this hill and dig a hole and put the beads in it and bury them. And of course you pray. Tell the Last Born (Last Child), 'I give you this so that I will not get the sickness (smallpox) and so that I will live to a good old age. You both pray!' So I did as I was told. But my cousin got to giggling and laughing, although I was sincere and meant every word I said. I don't know why my cousin thought it was funny, but that is the way she acted. When I got back I told the old woman: 'Grandmother, all the time I was praying and doing what you told me to do, this one here was just giggling as if she were making fun of me.' The old woman said: 'Oh, she should not have done that. I told you both to pray. Now you have spoiled everything. Always be sincere in your prayers. Mean every word you say.' So my cousin got smallpox and died from it. But I am still on earth."

The ritual object most commonly used with prayer was the pipe. A great many examples have been given. No less important than pipe smoking as a medium of prayer was singing. According to Gros Ventre tradition singing was, like smoking, originally sacred. It held a premier place in prayer rites, most of which began with song, each rite having its own song or songs sung only in this rite and in no other. 782

Three questions regarding prayer remain. Who was prayed to? What was asked for or expressed? When were prayers offered?

As has been emphasized, most prayers were directed first of

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

782 all to the Supreme Being, in the sense that he was mentioned first in them, and many were directed exclusively to him. Underlying this custom was the belief that all or most of the "good" things humans wished for came immediately or ultimately from him. As Coming Daylight said: "We always start everything with a prayer to Ixtcibni:hohat, then the sun is mentioned and the Last Child. The old timers still pray but the younger ones who have been to school are rather slack about it."

On Sept. 10, 1939, we had a meal and after it general conference with about ten of the oldest men and a couple of the oldest women present, and with The Boy presiding. Three of these older men, in the course of the long conference lasting all afternoon, spoke on the point as follows:

Spotted Bull: "I have always heard the Gros Ventre speak of Ixtcibni:hohat. I have heard the Four Old Men mentioned in prayer, and also Broken Knife, and also the four ridges or periods of the human life span."

Bull Head, about 80 years old in 1939, and though feeble mentally from age, was explicit enough on this matter: "As far back as I can remember, when the Gros Ventres prayed they began their prayer with Ixtcibni:hohat. They mentioned the Four Old Men, too."

Iron Man I: "The Gros Ventres prayed to Ixtcibni:hohat. They did not pray to or worship the sun as did some of the tribes to the north and west of us."

Thomas Main described as follows the way his old grandfather, still a pagan, used to pray, with use of a pipe when a small group of men would gather "to smoke religiously." He had time and again watched his grandfather praying.

782 "He would hold the pipe in both hands, with his left hand palm
788 up under the bowl and his right grasping the stem, and with the stem pointing up, nearly vertical. He would look upward first, and then bow his head and close his eyes. Then he would call on the Supreme Being for whatever he was praying for. He would relate what he wanted, with stress on good health, lots of food, no sickness, then [the same] for his immediate relatives, and last for everybody. . . . He would tell his prayer to the Supreme Being,

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

saying, 'I am going to ask for these things,' and then mention them, but he would not dwell very long on them. He would get away as quick as he could and do all his talking farther down [to the beings farther down in the scale] out of awe and reverence. 782 788

"After his prayer to the Supreme Being, he would lower the stem of the pipe a little and would pray to the Four Old Men in a body, and ask them for what was needed. This was the main body of his prayer. He would ask them to obtain these things from the Supreme Being. This was the longest part of the prayer.

"Finally he would reverse the pipe bowl with the stem pointing downward and with the tip of the stem as near to touching the ground as possible, without touching it, and would say just a short prayer to the Last Child, who is the least of all the beings. This prayer was shorter than the one to the Many Sacred Beings.

"Then he would straighten up. And all the others who during the pipe prayer had sat with heads bowed, reverent, without looking around, would straighten up too and would say: 'Ei:' (except the one who prayed), which means, in a general sense, may it be so, may it turn out so, we hope thus."

After this the pipe was lit and passed around. Thomas Main added: "The person [his grandfather] would say in his prayer, 'I am not worthy to pray, but I have been called upon to do it,' and would add, 'My being a poor unfortunate old man is all the more reason why my prayer should be heard.' "

Many other beings besides the Supreme Being were prayed to as is evident from the many examples already given. Certain prayers as recorded by us were directed to sacred objects. When Coming Daylight, for example, was disposing of the two rattles belonging to Roasted In Coals' sacred pipe, she prayed to them: "Have pity on us. I pity you because you are not even wrapped up. I take my robe to wrap you in. You are poor like orphans." 782

Thus we have prayers of petition directed to creatures, in this case material though sacred objects, with no mention of the Supreme Being. Was this merely a sort of verbal short cut? Catholics, for instance, frequently word prayers by such short cuts, to the Saints or even to sacred objects, without mention of God,

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

782 and commonly use the expression "praying to the Saints," although they explicitly believe as a fundamental sense of their faith that God alone can answer prayers and Saints however exalted cannot do so. What is idiomatically expressed as "praying to the Saints" actually means "asking the saints to pray to and intercede with God" for the petitioner. Objects however sacred cannot answer prayers but are only symbols and material media of prayer. Have we something similar here, a sort of mental or verbal corner-cutting, in Gros Ventre practice? The question is more easily asked than answered. On the one hand, there is the basic Gros Ventre concept that ultimately all good things come from the Supreme Being. And we would feel sure that from our numerous free interviews with men like The Boy, these men would look upon the prayers we are talking about as "short cuts" only. On the other hand, in the case of the two old women, Coming Daylight and Singer, with their habitual pragmatic concreteness, for the time being at least the lower-order being or the sacred object may have been thought of as able directly to answer prayer. Perhaps different concepts prevailed among different individuals, with some of the concepts not logically consistent with basic Gros Ventre concept above-mentioned which was seemingly shared by everyone.[2]

What did the Gros Ventres pray for? Mostly, it is clear from the numerous prayers we recorded and from explicit statements by informants, for continued and long life, for abundance of food and for good health—and these for the petitioner, for his children and relatives, and for the whole tribe. These petitions recur again and again, in general terms or else, a little less frequently, in more specific ones.

Some typical petitions under the above rubric occurring as parts of prayers recorded are as given in informants' statements: "That there may be no sorrow or suffering in the entire family [of the young man being prayed for by an elder], that they may have life

[2] In our other ethnological sources for many or most other peoples of the world we have very little detailed and dependable information on the subject of native conceptions of the dependent or independent power in sacred objects for answering prayers proper (as distinct from magical use) addressed to them. The subject is wide open for investigation in the field.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

long, that the household would stand firm and right, that the children would be healthy and good and successful;" "that you won't be sick, that you will be successful in all your undertakings, including hunting and everything;" "good health, lots of food, no sickness," for the petitioner, his immediate relatives, and everybody; "good health [for myself] and good health for my children so they will grow up to be strong;" "long life;" "long life and to get things-food-easy;" "that he [a boy in this case] would be healthy, live to old age, and everything like that." 782

Blessings of the material and physical order, to ensure long life and abundance, seemed to be most frequently sought. Some of the social order, especially those connected with warfare, came next. Thus, to cite some typical petitions: "that he [a boy in the case] will be a big chief, that he will get the best of his enemy, bring big horses;" "getting a gun, success in war, that they may not get shot."

Absent so far as we could discover were two kinds of prayer common in Christian practice: prayer for a happy future life and prayer for moral strength, for help from the Supreme Being to live up to ethical ideals and to overcome temptation. Nor was forgiveness for moral delinquencies asked in prayer. We did, however, record an occasional instance of atonement rite and forgiveness prayer for purely ritual error, neglect or failing in connection with the Flat Pipe. A co-keeper who carried the Pipe bundle forward instead of stem forward or who hung the wrong way on its tripod had to be ritually cleansed, so too a man who gambled with the keeper. Coming Daylight recently prayed the Flat Pipe to forgive the people attending a Pipe-opening rite that was incorrectly carried out.

Before passing on to the question as to when were prayers offered, we may here give some examples of longer prayers said on more important occasions. Such prayers tended to take a certain flexible pattern,[8] beginning always with an invocation of the Supreme

[8] The use of the term "stock prayer" by Cooper, 1940, p. 103, to designate these prayers was not so happy, as it may have given the impression to others, as it did to some of our Gros Ventre informants, that the prayer always conformed to a rigid and inflexible pattern.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

782 Being. The things asked for in the prayer would differ according to the occasion.

782 At the elaborate naming feast at which Flannery was adopted and given her name the following two prayers offered by The Boy 553 who was in charge of the ceremony may serve as examples of [123] these longer solemn prayers of which we are here speaking. As The Boy makes it a practice to plan carefully whatever he intends to utter in public, we may be reasonably sure that he had given much thought ahead of time to the form and content of these two prayers.

Before partaking of the lunch which was an integral feature of the naming rite, The Boy took a piece of bread and standing held it aloft while he prayed as follows before depositing a bit of the bread in each of the four corners of the stage of the community hall where the rite was held:

553 "Supreme Being, look down upon us as we sit here today. We are going to eat of the food which you gave to us. We are glad. 782 We are thankful for this gift of food that we are going to eat. 539 Whenever we, your children, displease you and do things contrary to your law, forgive us for these, we pray you. Also look down upon us here today as we sit together and help us to successfully portray our poor life which you have allowed us to live by for so many ages. We have reached the end of that long trail of life that you have allowed us to live by, and [illegible] to your will we accept the conditions of today, different as [illegible] may be from yesterday, because this is your will. And in your mercy and consideration for our conducted [sic] life and assistance, give us food, give us breath, so that we may live out our lives according to your plan. And protect, watch over our loved ones who are participating and fighting in a terrible war,[4] so that they may come back to us safe and unhurt, so that once more they may set their feet upon the soil of their birthplace. This is their heritage."

After lunch and some smoking and chatting The Boy called all to order. Then, seated, he held a pipe stem pointed upward and finally downward and prayed:

"Master of All, of the above and of the below and of the entire

[4] This refers to the many Gros Ventre young men then, 1945, in the armed forces while World War II was still going on.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

universe, and you the Four Old Men, here is a pipe that we are inviting you to place [take? accept?] and look upon our gathering here today. We, your poor creatures, are desperately trying to carry on and preserve, as one of our traditions, this way [with a pipe] of drawing your attention and your ear. Even though we are old and are reaching and going rapidly towards the sunset of our lives, help us to finish our lives so that we may die of old age. We ask you to look down upon White Shield [Cooper]. In your mercy have consideration for his welfare. Restore him to full health, so that he too may live out his life in good health and peace of heart and mind with us and that he may complete the great work of recording the history of the life of the Gros Ventres and that it may be a true record of that former life and that it may be worthy to be taken in as an annal of history. Then we ask you too to look down upon this white woman [Flannery] who is the representative of White Shield. They together have made possible one portion [of the food] so necessary to make this gathering a success. We ask that these two, White Shield and this woman, may live out their lives with us, and that this white woman in particular may successfully record that portion of the history of the old Gros Ventres that she has been assigned to do and that during her stay [here] so far from her home she may enjoy health, happiness and peace and that she may arrive back safe to her home. And you, the Last Child, of whom it is said to be revealed to us that you have control of the water, look upon our sons and grandsons [those in the armed services in World War II] who are far from home today and who are going to the far corners of the earth over water, fighting to maintain this way of life, protect them when they go over the water so that they may come back home safe."

553 782 539

After this prayer the pipe was passed around ceremonially. Thomas Main, who translated the prayer, which like the preceding one was said by The Boy in Gros Ventre, explained that after mentioning the Four Old Men The Boy had left out He Who Starved To Death who ordinarily was addressed after the Four in Flat Pipe rites. "He, while a great human being, was only a human being and so on a history-making occasion like this one his name was not invoked."

553 782

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

782 This last prayer was said while World War II was still in progress. After it was over and the Gros Ventre young men had returned from service in the armed forces, a very solemn ritual opening of the Flat Pipe was held, on February 6, 1946,—at which unfortunately neither of us could be present. The School Sisters of St. Francis, however, who teach the elementary and secondary grades at the Mission of St. Paul, Hays, were present and took [126] careful notes of the proceedings which they afterwards wrote up and hectographed. Early in the rite, before actually opening the Flat Pipe bundle, The Boy, who had charge of the ceremony, held up a pipe and prayed in Gros Ventre as follows, the prayer being translated for the Sisters by Thomas Main and being preceded by a brief explanatory word by The Boy:

782 539 "I will now speak in the first person and give you a prayer [such as] our Gros Ventre forefathers prayed in times of distress to the Turtle who reposes in this [Flat Pipe] bundle and to the Maker of the earth:

"Supreme Being, look down upon me, a poor mortal person, as I pray to You, and appeal to You, in this time of great distress and disturbance among your children, the peoples of this earth.

"I pray to You, a poor and lowly Indian, in the spirit and way that my ancestors prayed to You. I ask that the fires of hatred subside among all men, and that they may now love one another and understand that they are all brothers and must share the handiwork of Your hand, creation, the universe, and all nature. I ask that You may inspire the representatives of the peoples of the earth who are now engaged in a most difficult task, the framing of the terms of peace, so that it may be just and lasting.

"Supreme Being, I asked You to watch over and take care of my grandchildren, the young men of the Indian people, as they went off to all the corners of the earth to fight in the greatest war and conflict of all time for the cause of freedom and liberty, and now that they are back safe to those near and dear to them I feel that You have listened to and granted my prayer. Now, My Father, I ask you again to give to my grandchildren, the veterans of the great war just ended, peace of mind, happiness, good health, and a long life. And that they enjoy the soil of their birth and the land

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

of our ancestors, and that they may gain inspiration from our legends, traditions and heritages and the history of the world that repose in this bundle of the Flat Pipe as the Indian race understands your creation of the world. So that my grandchildren may learn to have that strong character possessed by our ancestors and their utmost sincerity of purpose of [and?] the true philosophy of life on earth. And that they may merge this sterling character into the life of this day and age. 782 539

"As I stand here today, I am fully conscious and fully realize that the White man is here to stay. And that we, the Indians, must live according to his way of life.

"I pray that White Shield [Cooper] may be restored back to good health. And I pray that Chief Woman [Flannery] may live a long, and a healthy, happy life. I pray that the Black-Robed missionaries of St. Paul's Mission [the Jesuit Fathers] may succeed in their efforts to teach us the true way of life. I pray that our leaders of the Indian people may be inspired to do good work for their people.

"My Father, I talk to you today with all of my person, and with all my heart and my mind. I give You thanksgiving for hearing my weak and mortal voice, and from my heart I ask You to again listen to my prayer, which I am making most devoutly and which is my most earnest wish."[8]

The question as to when the Gros Ventres prayed has been partly answered passim in the treatment of the sacred Pipe rituals, the sacred Dances, ghost helpers, and power. We shall here include other occasions and situations calling for or accompanied by prayer: spring time, mealtime, bedtime, hunting, river crossing, storms, the aged. 782

The Gros Ventres prayed, as occasion arose, at all seasons of the year, but spring time was looked upon as a particularly propitious time not only for seeking power, but also for other kinds of praying. The point of view may be illustrated by excerpts from a letter of March 24, 1945, from The Boy to Cooper. The letter was not just dashed off hurriedly or without previous thought. For composing it, The Boy explained orally the following summer to 782 123

[8] School Sisters of St. Francis, 1946, pp. 3-4.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

782 123 Flannery: "I tried to be well prepared by a long period of study as to what to tell him [Cooper] so that I could do something big for his health, that his health might be restored. I sort of prepared for this all winter long and then decided I would write this letter to him in the Spring of the year when everyone seems to feel good and [to be] glad that they are still living and that they survived the hardships of the winter and that it is time for rejoicing and that even the animals are glad that spring had come around again. They then woke up from their long sleep of hibernation when they bored underground or under a pile of rocks or whichever way they could get away from . . . winter. I tried to get him [Cooper] the full benefit of it. I am glad to hear he liked it. I tried hard to put into words what I wanted for my friend [Cooper], and so that he would get more I chose that time of the year [spring]. That is when all the animals wake up and talk and sing and move around and let the whole world know: 'I am still around too.' . . . They have made a real effort to live that long. . . . They try to keep themselves in existence as long as they can by growing and singing and running and so forth. . . . If I made my friend feel better and was able to master the great distance between us [Montana to Washington, D. C.] with those few words, I am exceedingly glad and will always feel good when I recall that letter and those words because they made him feel good. Besides my words written down, everything that I had went with them."

The Boy's message in the letter, as translated very carefully [191] [212] from his dictation in Gros Ventre and written down by his nephew, Thomas Main, was in part as follows:

123 539 782 "Dear friend—As winter is over and spring is on in its place, it makes one feel good. And as I listen to the talking song of the meadow larks they bring back pleasant memories of my association with you. So I am writing this letter to bring my thoughts into expression.

"I hope I can infuse and saturate into this paper my feelings for you and my concern for your welfare and doctor you with the tidings and blessings which the season of spring always brings, when all nature arises from a long sleep, so that you too may enjoy the healing winds and sunshine which abound at this time.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
782
123

"I have heard that your health [has not been good] . . . and it is my earnest hope that you may get back your health. I shall never forget nor cease to appreciate the encouragement you gave me when I was losing my health rapidly, and your promise to pray for me so that my health might be restored back to me.[6] I sincerely believe that your prayer was heard, as my health seems to be improving, even in my advancing age.

"So now it is my turn to pray that your life span may be extended, and among other good things to which you apply your mind that you may further contribute to the great study of the races and peoples of the earth.

"I have told you in my story of the Gros Ventres before the days of the white man, which includes the belief of my ancestors, that in the spring of the year is when one's prayers are more readily heard, and that was the time that the Indians in the long ago went to the hills, streams and mountain tops to fast and pray.

"We, the Gros Ventres, pray and implore the Supreme Being to protect our boys fighting on the various fronts in this great war, and so far only one Gros Ventre boy has been killed, out of many who are in the service. And we also pray that this terrible war and this mass killing may soon stop and that a just and lasting peace may be declared, so that the great family of nations may be true brothers again and go on with life in harmony and prosperity.

. . .

"I will now close and I am very glad to have spoke to you on this paper and it is my sincere hope that you can feel my words, so that they will do you good and doctor you.[7] With a good and hearty handshake, I am

Your friend
The Boy"

782
511

In the spring, The Boy's father, Lame Bull, would at bedtime after all were lying down, sing certain songs after first praying for himself, his household and all the people. Whether this bedtime

---

[6] See p. 366, in references to The Boy's illness in 1940. In 1948, The Boy again mentioned gratefully Cooper's prayer for him. [R.F.]

[7] Some of the expressions used in this letter seem to be implicit references to the efficacy of the sincere wish as well as of prayer.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

782 [511] praying and singing were done at other seasons of the year and how far as a more general custom by other fathers of families were points we did not clear up.

[264] Before eating food, at least in any more or less formal gathering, a portion of the food was offered up with prayer.

[224] Prayer rites and observances for good hunting were few and simple—as compared, for example, with the numerous and complicated ones practiced by the Algonquian-speaking tribes of the taiga. Abundance of food, which principally meant game food, was commonly prayed for. Two of the Sacred Dances, the Law Enforcers' and the Woman's, had as a purpose success in buffalo hunting. But beyond this, hunting entered little into ritual, and we may recall hunting was conspicuously absent from the power quest. We recorded no rites or observances whatever in connection with the gathering of berries, roots or other plant food.

[484] It was customary on crossing rivers to pray to the Last Child for protection, and to throw into the water offerings, especially shells and eagle-tail feathers, for the Last Child, or the water monster, or both, with some words such as, "I give you this." Sometimes, too, some prayer and offering would be made by a person going to swim, or on other occasions of water hazard.

During or just before severe thunderstorms, various prayer and other procedures were resorted to, many of them directed to Bha'a, the storm being.

Seeking indirectly or asking directly the prayers of the aged, especially for long life, took several different forms, and played an important role in Gros Ventre life, as we have explained elsewhere.

There were many different ways of seeking the prayers of the aged. We recorded the following, which may or may not exhaust the list: crying before a lodge, offering a pipe, promising a sweat-lodge, "holy boiling," providing a feast, doing favors of various kinds.

782 888 "Holy boiling," to which we have not as yet referred, was an observance distinct both from the preceding ones and from feasting a group of aged people. It was intended primarily for some one person, man or woman, although others partook of the meal, and

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

could be offered by women as well as men. The person doing the "holy boiling" would have in mind the attainment of success in life. To be chosen as the person for whom the "holy boiling" was done was looked upon as a "great compliment" by the old man or old woman—it was always a very old person—so chosen. 782 888

The Boy described one such holy boiling, done by a woman in fulfillment of a vow (men too could make such a vow). The following is a summary:

The vowing woman (the hostess) chose a particular old woman (the guest of honor) to do the praying for her at this holy boiling, and after cooking a lot of food notified the old woman of the choice and invited a number of women friends. No men participated. On arrival, all sat down,—with the chosen old woman in the place of honor and the others in their places, and with food placed before each. The old woman took some cooked dog, held it up, and prayed in four directions. Then she gave four little pieces to the hostess and told her: 'Bury these in four spots, north, east, south, and west, inside the lodge.' The hostess did so, and then prayed, mentioning the Last Child, and buried a bit of food where she was. Then the other women present, on being invited, prayed each a short prayer and buried a bit of food, pushing it under the dirt, and included the Last Child in the prayer. Then all ate.

Very like "holy boiling" was offering a feast to a *group* of old men and old women. (In "holy boiling" some one old man or woman was *the* guest of honor.) The custom is still observed among the Gros Ventres. "A young man," The Boy said, who had witnessed such feasts, "would tell his wife to cook a lot of choice things and then would invite a number of people to the feast, old men and old women. He would send the crier to shout out loud: 'So-and-So [the host] invites you, So-and-So [names of the invited guests]. Come to his lodge.' The people would understand: 'That fellow is inviting old people.' These very old people, some perhaps blind or with canes, would come and sit down, without any religious rite. They would realize what the host was doing, appreciate his inviting them and not looking down on them, and would say: 'This man is pitying us. He is giving us a good meal and smoke and treating us well. Let us pray for him.' . . . Then

782 one of the old men would take a plate or cup of some choice food
488 and hold it up (not praying with a pipe) and pray, before the food was distributed to the various guests, to the Supreme Being (but not mentioning the Last Child) for the young man host's entire family or household, . . . that there would be no sorrow or suffering in the family, that they would have long life, that the household would stand firm and tight, and that the children would be healthy and good and successful. Then the old man would set the plate of food down and food would be distributed to all the old people. . . . Some old person would then suggest: 'Let us all pray.' Then each, including the old man who had prayed, would take a little bit of food, hold it up to the Supreme Being . . . and all would pray audibly but in a low voice, so there was a sort of humming there, each using his or her own words . . . and each would wind up by mentioning the Last Child and pushing the bit of food in the earth. . . . All this praying by the old people was done spontaneously [not requested by the host] . . . and voluntarily . . . , but the young man would be disappointed if the old men and old women did not pray for him and his family. . . . If the old people prayed they always did so before they ate. After they ate would have been too late to pray."

Sacrifices

782 Sacrifice, in the more restricted sense of the term, may be defined as the giving or offering of some material possession, usually prized as of intrinsic or of symbolic worth, to a supernatural being or beings, the giving itself being signified by expropriation of the object through destruction, segregation, or other process. In a more inclusive sense, the offering may be of something non-material, such as privation or pain or self-torture voluntarily undergone. In this section on sacrifice we feel that we shall be closer to the Gros Ventre point of view if, under the caption sacrifice we include both offerings that come under either the restricted or the inclusive sense of the term. The Gros Ventres draw no sharp line between, offerings of, for instance, a blanket, a little finger, a minute bit of one's flesh, and some of the types of self-torture to be described. All are things offered to supernatural beings.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The filled pipe offered with prayers comes clearly within our definition of sacrifice; incense and invitations to supernatural beings to sweat in sweat-lodge rites, probably so. On the other hand, wearing apparel and other objects buried with the dead were not sacrifices as they were not intended as offerings. When a person was going off to where he would have good food and drink, a stay-at-home relative or friend might laughingly say to him: "Don't forget me. Give me some food (or whiskey)." The one who went off would at the time of the meal hold up some food or drink in the direction of the stay-at-home and say: "Here's your food (or whiskey)," and would dip his finger tips in the whiskey and sprinkle it with his finger tips in the direction of the stay-at-home. The custom shares part of the pattern of certain first-fruit-sacrifices to be described presently, without of course being a sacrifice. 782

Expropriation was symbolized or effected in many ways: by holding up the object, burying it, pouring it on the ground, sinking it in water, hanging it on trees or poles or lodges, positing it on the Sacred Pipes ("covering" them), laying it away up on the hills, giving it away to the needy,—never, so far as we recorded, by burning or other type of intentional destruction proper. Things buried or sunk in the water were not in the Gros Ventres concept "destroyed," but thereby given to the Last Child or water monster whose home was beneath the earth surface or under water.

In general, sacrifices were offered to nearly the same beings to whom prayers were addressed. Most frequently mentioned among the beings to whom offerings were made were, first and foremost the Supreme Being, then the Sun, the Earth, Bha'a, the Last Child, the water monster(s), the power-bestowing-beings, ghost helpers, Little Spirit, the Pictograph Beings, and certain sacred rocks and other natural objects, and, last but not least, the Sacred Pipes.

Among the more common objects offered were: food, usually in the form of "first-fruits," puppy meat and delicacies having symbolic value; tobacco; sweat-lodges and sweatbaths; articles of apparel and other daily use, especially robes, blankets, necklaces, earrings, beads, "pearls," eagle tail feathers; scalps; bits of flesh,

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

782 finger joints; self-inflicted privations and sufferings; in one case to be mentioned (p. 388), life itself. All in all, food offerings, though common, seem to have been less prominent in the Gros Ventre sacrificial complex than were offerings of other things. Tobacco was the only offering drawn from the native flora. Bits of meat were offered as first fruit sacrifices, and puppy meat was offered ghost helpers. But there were no blood animal sacrifices proper, that is, no ritual sacrificial killing of animals. Such ritual sacrificial killing is, in other parts of the world,—with rare exceptions of domesticated animals, of which the Gros Ventres had only two, dogs and horses, until very recent times. While the Gros Ventres prized puppy meat as a delicacy, they never ate horse meat. The horse entered in no way into the Gros Ventre sacrificial pattern, not even as a food offering. Puppy meat was essentially a food offering; puppies were not as such ritually killed as sacrifices.

Sacrifices were offered for about the same ends for which prayers were offered. They were made mostly to obtain blessings of the material and physical order: long life, abundance of the necessities of life, cure of illness, and so forth; not for gambling success, for moral strength, or for happiness in the future life. Thanksgiving was commonly expressed in sacrifices; likewise, implicitly at least, homage, recognition of dominion, reverence and affection, particularly but not exclusively in first-fruits food offerings. Among the scores of sacrifices we recorded we came across none made to ask forgiveness or offer atonement for moral, or even ritual, transgressions.

So much for generalizations. A great many specific types of sacrifice have been given passim in preceding pages on the Sacred Pipes, Sacred Dance, Ghost Helpers and Power. We are here adding some types of sacrifice not previously dealt with: first, some scattered types; then, in order, sacrifices of food (first fruits and puppy meat), and of person (flesh, finger, self-torture); and finally, the sweat-lodge, as commonly associated with sacrifice.

Offerings,—blankets, "pearls," and so forth,—were commonly thrown in water; regularly when crossing large rivers such as the Missouri, sometimes, ad libitum, when going swimming. These were more commonly made to the Last Child, or to the water

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

monster(s) living under water by whom it may be recalled drowned persons are grabbed or taken. The offerings were made to pacify the water monster, apparently appease his greed and so avoid being captured and dragged down by him. Coming Daylight was always afraid of boats [bull boats] and when crossing a river would do so riding lodge poles or a log. Everybody used to laugh at her for this "because it looked more like the man's place to hang on the log" and her grandmother told her: "Don't ride on a log again, because this water bug [water monster] is certainly choicy about whom he picks on!" Cora Chandler explained: "Everybody says that when they put an offering in the water it disappears right away like somebody grabs it. And they say this water animal,—a bug that is supposed to have a kind of horn,—likes these 'pearls' such as Singer gave. Even nowadays people always want pearls to offer in the springs where they bathe. When anyone bathes in hot springs in Wyoming he always put in an offering just like in the old days."

782

When a young fellow was going off on a war party a sister or other relative might take a robe or other valuable object and put it on top of the lodge saying: "I offer this that my brother (or other relative) may come back with good luck and bring something."[a]

A young man, asking the prayers of an aged person, might be told by the latter to take eagle tail feathers or some other object out on the hills, hold up the object, to the Supreme Being and then to the sun, and pray for what was desired.

The offering of earrings to "Walking Rock" is mentioned infra. Mary Ereaux' grandmother, before smoking, would "offer tobacco to Mother Earth and the Sun."

Mary Ereaux also related the following experience, involving the offering of human lives: "I had just gotten out of the hospital after an operation and there were ten small lodges there and I stopped to talk to the people. An old man named Magpie jumped up and said: 'Here is Kills All [M. E.] back from the hospital.' I shook hands with him and his wife. He said: 'When we heard you had gone to the hospital for an operation we told Ixteibni :hohat

[a] Cf. Flannery, 1953, pp. 112-13.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

782 [white man above, Our Father] in our prayer, so you would return safe: 'Oh, White Man Above, Our Father, spare her life. If you are going to take anybody, we are willing that you should take us in her place. She is young and has children and lives happy. But we two are old and starved anyway, so if you want to take anybody, take us.'

"I told him: 'An operation is not dangerous if you have it in time.' Strangely enough both he and his wife died within a month. It was just like he had bought my life. I feel badly even now when I think of it. Their one son married one of my daughters. . . . Old man Magpie was one of the old timers."

782 264 Food offerings, except perhaps the puppy meat given the ancestral spirit helper, were typical "first-fruits" sacrifices, made before eating. These offerings were regularly made, as we have seen, before any more or less formal, festive or ritual meal partaken of by a group, and at least very commonly before even everyday family meals at home. The latter everyday usage is explained in the following statement of informants:

Charles Buckman: "Before eating, a piece of meat is held up and so offered to the Master of All, and then is put on the ground."

Coming Daylight: "Whenever they [the Gros Ventres] eat and in their ceremonies, they never eat right away, but have a prayer, like this [here she held up her right hand]: 'Now here it is, I promised you, Our Father, the One Traveling [sun], and the Last Child.' "

The little chunks of food given in this first-fruits sacrifice rite to the Last Child were "pushed in the dirt or ground and sort of covered up with a little dirt,"—in the indoor modern rite previously described, deposited in cracks in the plank flooring.

782 As appears from the foregoing accounts considerable minor variations occurred in this first-fruits rite at meals.

The only first-fruits sacrifice connected with hunting proper, as distinct from eating, was the piece of liver and bit of fat deposited, as a thank offering to Little Spirit, on the west side of killed game.

[252 261] Puppy meat was looked upon by the Gros Ventres as a delicacy. Cooked puppy meat was commonly offered as food to ghost helpers on their visits. After the puppy was killed, the hair was

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

782
252
262

singed off at a fire, and the insides taken out without skinning the animal; then it was quartered up and boiled.

In addition, Charles Buckman stated: "If a party went out to war and met the enemy, before the actual fighting began a man might promise to give grub and a feast to old people, and as part of the feast there had to be a dog,—a pup, of any color. After the party got back home [at the feast, before eating] four pieces of the dog meat were taken and held up and then set on [in] the ground, one each to the north, east, south and west. The pieces were held up as offered to God—in thanksgiving and as a prayer for future favors. Then the young man served the grub to the old people. Before eating they would say, 'O God, this young man has fulfilled the promise he made to you,' and they would pray for him."

782
785
304
[765]

What we may call, for want of a better name, sacrifices of person or somatic sacrifices, took three main forms: offerings of flesh, of finger joints, and of self-inflicted suffering and/or privation. Each of the first two is a sacrifice in the strict sense of the term; the third, in the broader sense. The gashing of arms, legs or face as a mourning custom was quite distinct in the Gros Ventre mind from the above flesh offering: it expressed sorrow, it was not in any sense a sacrifice or offering to the deceased. No sacrifices at all were connected with mourning. Nor were finger joints ever cut off as a mourning observance.*

In most instances recorded by us, these somatic sacrifices were made in fulfillment of vows for the cure or safety of a close relative of the vower,—as, it may be recalled, was the case with self-torturers in the Sacrifice Dance. There were exceptions however: in their respective quests for power, Bull Lodge cut off a finger joint, and Little Man, Al Chandler's adopted father, cut off bits of flesh; the other Little Man, Coming Daylight's husband, when suffering from hemorrhages and pains around the heart was told in dream that he would get well if he underwent solitary self-torture.

Women as well as men would make offerings of their flesh and finger joints. To judge from the records we obtained, the finger joint sacrifice was more frequently made by women than by men,

*Cf. Flannery, 1953, p. 205.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

782 the flesh sacrifice with about equal frequency by the two sexes.
785 Ordinarily only a little of the woman's flesh was cut, small bits,
304 as against the large bits or strips not infrequently cut from the man. Only men underwent solitary self-torture out in the hills.

With these generalizations on somatic sacrifices covered, we shall now take up specific features of the flesh, finger and self-torture sacrifices in order.

In the early archaic times Ni:hahat, as we have seen, gave detailed instructions on cutting off bits of flesh when explaining about the Flat Pipe sweat-lodge.

The rite was described by The Boy (Thick present and concurring) and, with some differences, by Singer, as follows:

The Boy (and Thick). "The cutting off of bits of flesh was a rite all to itself. A round hole was made in the ground for the heated rocks; a common sweat-lodge was erected; a mound was made of the dirt excavated to make the hole; a buffalo skull was put on the mound; and a pole was put up for offerings. . . . The one to be cut would get as an operator someone who had gone through the rite himself. . . . The cut off flesh was offered to the Supreme Being. . . . Usually the rite was undergone so that some sick person who was near and dear to the undergoer would get well. . . . The skin was not pierced but a piece of green branch was split in two, and the two pieces were pressed hard, parallel and not quite touching each other, on the skin making it rise up, and these raised strips were then cut off. . . . One of my grandfathers was all cut up, with two half circles on his chest, one half circle on the outer side of each shoulder, a double row of cuts—not little bits, but strips cut right down—on both his upper arms and forearms and legs from hip to ankle. All these cuts were made on a single occasion. It was thought he would die of this sacrifice but he did not. . . . I myself had four bits of flesh cut from my arm, and others [farther] up my arm. [He here bared his arm and showed the scars: they were not crescent shaped.] The first cutting was done when I was a child. I was told to look away when it was being done. Sometimes children would run away and hide when told it was to be done to them. . . . Only three or four years ago [this would be about 1935-36] an old man so cut off

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

a young man's skin back of Thomas Main's house." (The cut off pieces of skin were, as at the Sacrifice Lodge, placed on the buffalo skull, "as an offering of the [person's] very body.") 782 785 304

Singer. "For cutting offerings of flesh from the arms they usually tried to get the same doctor who cut off my finger joint (see infra). He would take the flesh, put a needle through it and cut the flesh off. . . . He would then put the cut-off flesh in one of the bags from around the buffalo or cow heart which were used to carry water, and would hang it up or bury it. Women could not do the flesh cutting for themselves; they had to have a man doctor to do it. You promise so to torture yourself for some reason such as the wish to save the life of your sister or brother or other relative. For instance, if some young fellows were going off on a war party, the sisters would get out and make some such promise as: 'I will give part of my flesh or my finger if my brother comes back a great warrior.' It was great to have somebody [some relative] come back a hero, a brave man, or, as they called it, a big chief. . . . A wife could do this for her husband but usually it was a sister who thought that much of her brother. . . .

"I have a scar on my left upper arm [which she showed]. I had made this promise for the recovery of one of my daughters who was ill. A sick person is doctored, but such a promise is made as a last resort. Lame Bull told me they were going to make a big cut, like the ones they made on men. The cutting was done in a sweat-lodge where they all sat and prayed. They blackened the spot on my arm with charcoal,[10] then clipped the flesh off and held it up to the sun and said: 'This is what we offered you.' He cut me in four places on each arm. My husband was mad because it was too much. The one place on my left arm where the scar is was cut deeper than the others. After I made that promise I had the cutting done right away. [Mary Ereaux, our interpreter, here interrupted: "Goodness, you might just as well have done like the Sacrifice Dancers. You tortured yourself just as badly."] I held myself in but they certainly hurt me. They did not put anything on the wounds, only the charcoal beforehand. People try to [191]

[10] Blackening sacrifices was a common (perhaps *the* regular) Gros Ventre procedure.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

782
785 take anything like that very patiently" ["Like our Lord being
304 crucified," Mary Ereaux commented].

Very much the same procedure as regards the sweat-lodge, buffalo skull and so forth was ordinarily followed when a finger joint was amputated. The cut-off joint was offered commonly to the sun, or to the Supreme Being. The operation regularly took place inside a sweat-lodge. "A joint from any finger could be offered up, but usually it was the first joint of the little finger of the left hand. The offerer would put his or her finger on a log or stone; the operator, someone skilled in the matter, would then place a knife on the joint and hit the knife with something heavy. [752] Sage was put on the wound, to stanch the flow of blood and help healing. Children in their play, it may be added, would in make-believe cut off little fingers, apply sage and so forth.

The finger amputation complex may be illustrated by Singer's experience:

"My infant daughter [one of her three children by Iron Bucket] had been ill. I sacrificed [in a delayed fulfillment of her vow] the end joint of the little finger of my left hand. . . . I said: 'I give you this. This is what I sacrifice to save my child's life.' This I said to the sun which is God's work, His property like. . . . I held the baby and my husband prayed: 'Sun, she has given you her finger so our child's life will be saved.' . . .

"The rite was private, not a big ceremony. We went out of the lodge and the sun was about half way up and he [apparently the operator] held up my whole left hand and said: 'Now, Passing or Traveling Man, this is what she is going to give you.' There was just one old man who cut off fingers. They claimed he had [this power from] a dream. . . . He was the father of Dwarf; Dwarf died just recently.

"They had me lie face down and the others held me so I would not move. The old man [Dwarf's father] . . . told me to relax, . . . felt around, found the joint, put my finger over the lodge pole and chopped it [the end joint only] off. I did not see it but I heard when he hit the lodge pole. But there was no pain. Then they let me sit up.

"The old man said: 'Do you want it to bleed, or shall I close

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

it up right away?' My husband said, 'Let it bleed,' because he was afraid it would be sore if it didn't bleed. So when the old man thought it had bled enough, he chewed some big-leaf sage, made a poultice, and put it on my finger (and/or "sprinkled powdered root on my finger," she added later). It healed quickly and never troubled me. . . . We had to give the old man something for doing that. . . . My daughter lived to be a young woman." 782 785 304 [752]

Self-torture out on the hills,—"sacrifice alone on hills," as it was called,—had much in common with self-torture at the Sacrifice Dance. The chief difference was that, unlike the Sacrifice Dance torture rite, it was done in solitude. The self-torturer had to have a ritual grandfather, a man who himself had previously undergone this solitary self-torture—this in contrast to flesh and finger cutting in which there were no ritual grandfathers. The "grandfather-grandson" relationship so contracted persisted after the rite was over. Coming Daylight and The Boy were in agreement that the solitary self-torture was a more severe ordeal than self-torture at the Sacrifice Dance. [608]

Those mentioned by our informants as having gone through "sacrifice alone on the hills" were: Stiffarm; Running Crow (Stiffarm as his "grandfather" for this rite); Coming Daylight's husband Little Man (Running Crow as his "grandfather"); her cousin White Skunk, son of Crow Bull; The Boy's brother; Jim Shortman; and perhaps Sits-in-the-Middle. On Stiffarm's, Running Crow's, and Sits-in-the-Middle's experience we obtained no details; on White Skunk's, no details beyond the fact that he underwent it "because my [Coming Daylight's] son was sick at the mission school: that son died anyway," and that he did "right on this hill here [at Hays]." The detailed accounts of Little Man's experience as narrated by Coming Daylight, of The Boy's brother's as narrated by The Boy, and of Jim Shortman's as narrated by himself, to be given now, will help to fill out the generalized picture of the rite in the preceding paragraph.

Coming Daylight's account of Little Man's "sacrifice alone on the hills," given in separate fragments on four different days, is here presented just as she gave it.

"My husband Little Man [Deafie] went out to the hills. When

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

782 anyone so goes to be tortured someone else goes along. It was
785 awful when they so went to pray and cry and sacrifice themselves.
304 Running Crow went with Little Man, as the latter's grandfather, to pierce his breast and insert the skewers whereby he was attached to the pole by a thong. [After that was done] Running Crow gave Little Man a push and Little Man danced round and round the pole. Running Crow and Stiffarm, who went out with him [just as helper, not as grandfather], left Little Man, as was customary, alone. Then sometime during the day the two returned and gave Little Man a smoke, but the latter did not eat or drink anything. He would be hungry and thirsty and would run around without even moccasins on his feet. It is an awful sacrifice. He would dance until the skewer pulled out of his flesh. Then he would be tired and would sleep and dream.

"Little Man went through this rite on account of a dream. He had been sick [heart pains and hemorrhages] and had dreamed he was going through the rite, and in consequence did later actually carry it out. He carried it out at Chinook where we were all living at the time. During the rite his mother sang war songs in her camp.

"Little Man had not tortured himself in any big celebration [Sacrifice Dance]. He did this only alone on the hills. It is hardest this latter way. It takes longer to break off [for the skewer to tear through the flesh] in the heat [sic]. It is awfully hot out in the hills and the self-torturer goes barefoot, without moccasins. He dances west to east, counter clockwise, from sun up to sun down. It is not so hot in the lodge at the big celebrations [Sacrifice Dances]. It is a greater thing to do it alone.

"The time my husband, Little Man, did this I too was away on the hills. I pitied my old man [husband] and did not eat. I came home in the evening to cook for him. We always help a relative when he fasts like that. My husband's mother and sister were at home together with another woman relative, Ed Blackbird's wife."

[787] After Little Man's self-torture was over, he was told in a dream the exact kind of leaf (or root) to use for curing his hemorrhages and just where it was to be found, Coming Daylight was able to find it, and Little Man was cured.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The Boy's narrative of his older brother's experience gives insight into the brother's feelings during the ordeal as well as detailed information on the rite itself. His brother had undergone self-torture once at a Sacrifice Dance and twice alone on a hill. The occasion of one of the two solitary rites was the following. Lame Bull had adopted a young boy who grew up as one of the family and proved himself worthy. The adopted boy and The Boy's older brother, both now dead, were sort of favorite sons of Lame Bull. The adopted son suddenly became mentally unbalanced. It was for his cure that The Boy's older brother vowed solitary self-torture. After the fulfillment of the vow the adopted son recovered.

782
785
304

The older brother, before the solitary rite, gave a pipe to a man to pray with and to announce out loud the coming rite and the name of the "grandfather" selected. At the end of the prayer the announcer released the pipe to the ritual grandfather who then took charge of the rite, piercing the vower and later cutting him loose.

The skewer punctures were made by first plunging a big awl into the skin on the side of the chest, the vower lying on his back. Then with the awl the skin was raised up, and a knife plunged point first right through the skin at right angles to the awl,—making in all three perforations of the skin, one by the awl and two by the knife point. Then the knife was withdrawn, the stick or skewer was pushed through at once while the holes were fresh, and finally the awl was withdrawn. One end, slashed, of a buckskin thong was put over the two projecting ends of the skewer, and the other end attached to the top of the pole anchored on the hill or knoll.

With the thongs so attached to the pole and the skewers [in the vower's chest, right and left side], the vower walked and ran, from sunrise to sunset, clockwise, starting at the south and ending there, then counter-clockwise, all through the day. He would go around so often that he would make a trail there.

The brother's feelings, as described by him to The Boy, are here given in The Boy's words:

"Out on the hill was the most severe [as compared with the Sacrifice Dance] for the reason that he had to do it all alone. From time to time he would rest, exhausted and crying. [When going]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

782
785
304

he would stretch himself good and tight [the thongs taut, his body weight pulling on them]. When he rested and wanted to relax and let the thongs go slack, the pain was worse than when they were taut. The skin over the skewer would dry up (and would work toward the living skin). . . . At sundown my brother's 'grandfather' came to him, and the toughest part of all occurred. My brother had not during the day tried to break loose [by body pull to make the skewer sever the skin], as at the Sacrifice Dance, for his 'grandfather' was to cut his skin loose. My brother all but died when he was cut loose. It was as if his heart was being cut. And at night, after both the Sacrifice Dance and the solitary ordeal, the pain was so intense, as if there were two red hot coals there [where the flesh was cut], that he could not sleep."

Jim Shortman (died 1948), probably the last Gros Ventre living who had gone through the solitary self-torture rite, gave the following account of his experience:

"The sticks [skewers for thongs] were about three inches long. (Here Jim undid his shirt to show the scars which were still visible on his chest.) My helper [ritual grandfather] was Running Crow. He was the man who fixed me up, pierced my flesh and fastened the thongs. My self-torture alone took place on a hill way out.

"My first struggle and ordeal in all that I was to do was to follow a command by Running Crow for me to go to the stream and break off a quaking aspen tree, but not to cut it with knife or axe,—to break it off in some way and bring to where I was going to do the fasting. So I went and twisted and worked and wore the ground just smooth around the tree with my efforts, and finally I got it down and twisted it off. I put a rope around it and dragged it to the scene of the fasting, and I had to accomplish this before sun-up of that day.

"So Running Crow went with me on my way to the scene of the fasting, which was a little west of where I and Paul Shortman now live. Just to the right of it is a little ridge. That is where I did it. The reason I vowed to do this was because my mother was at the point of death. She was very sick and I carried out my vow and she got well

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

"Paddy Skinner came along to help Running Crow dig a hole and fix in it the pole I had twisted off and tamp it in the ground securely. After they put up that pole or tree, Running Crow tied all of my offerings up there on top and also fastened the rope that was to be secured to the sticks in my chest. 782 785 304

"After this tree was made secure in the ground, Running Crow told me to take my clothes off, which I did, and he made a paste of white clay and painted my body with it. So these two men told me to lie down on my back and face my head towards the rising sun. Then they took a knife, and a big needle in the other hand, and lifted the skin on my upper arm and cut off seven pieces of my skin. Then they did that to my other arm. This made fourteen pieces in all. They put these pieces they had cut off at the foot of this tree. Then they cut off seven more pieces on the outside of each of my thighs, and by that time it began to hurt.

"Then last they cut my chest, the right side first. They pierced me there with the blade of a pocket knife and pushed the stick [skewer] in as soon as he released the blade. Then they repeated this on my left side. They told me to stand up so they fastened the thongs onto these sticks. Running Crow did that.

"Then after these things were securely fastened, Running Crow put the palm of his hand on my chest and pushed me four times to make the ropes tight. He stepped to my right side and pushed me four times too, and at the same time he told me: 'Now you begin your fasting and your actual performance of your vow and you must begin by crying.' And I did all that. And Running Crow told me: 'Go around this pole, round and round clockwise, and when you get tired you can lie down or sit down anyway you find restful, but always keep the ropes tight and do not loosen them, much less take them off.'

"Finally I got tired and I thought I would lie down and rest, and I did lie down but I did not rest well. In fact it seemed to be worse. Even the wind making the thongs sway hurt me. I had started out without eating or drinking anything. I was fasting. I had a terrible ordeal, to say the least, but I found that when I pulled tight [pulled the body away from the pole and kept the thongs taut] I suffered less.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

782 785 304 "Just before the sun went down that day, all at once I felt something touching me on my left side. It was Running Crow and the other man who stopped me. This meant that my fasting and chastizing myself were about over.

"They took off those thongs and told me to lie down in the same position that they had told me to lie in at the beginning. That is when I suffered the most. They did not take the sticks out, but just cut those thongs off and it seemed to me as if they were cutting my heart. Those fellows took those pieces that my skin was still clinging to and buried them at the foot of the post. And that is my experience. They told me to put on my clothes and I did so. I did not experience or perceive anything out of the ordinary. I just suffered. That is all.

"After I put on my clothes I found out that the skin of my feet was worn off and blistered and sore, and they sure hurt me. And to add to my aches, on the soles of my feet I was awfully sore the next morning and couldn't walk. And that is the end of my experience."

Sweat-Bath

782 515 In Gros Ventre ritual, sweating and sacrificing were quite closely associated. Invitations to sweat extended to the Supreme Being and other beings in certain sweat-lodge rites,[11] such as those connected with the Flat and Feathered Pipe ceremonies, were of the nature of gifts or offerings, and hence sacrifices in the broader sense of the term. Then, too, the sweat-lodge and sweat-bath were a chosen medium for making offerings or consummating the sacrificial rite: the pole erected in front of the sweat-lodge and the buffalo skull on the adjacent mound were intended particularly for the attachment to and disposition of respectively sacrificial objects,—offerings of robes, bits of flesh, and so forth. Furthermore, the sweat-lodge was a preferred place in which to make sacrifices of flesh and of finger joints.

On other occasions too sweat-lodge and sacrifice went together. For instance, a man whose son had been killed by the enemy might

[11] Kroeber, 1908, pp. 274-75, gives an account of sweating and mentions that "Above-white-man" was called first.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

offer a pipe to a band chief and ask him to avenge the son's death. The chief would accept the pipe and pray to the Supreme Being for success in the revenge expedition. Then the father would erect a sweat-lodge and make offerings in connection therewith, inviting a lot of "holy" old men to sweat and likewise to pray to the Supreme Being for success in the expedition. 782 515

Al Chandler gave the following account: "A young fellow would go and tell some old medicine man that he was going to make a sweat-bath for him so that the old man would pray for him, and would ask him what he [the young man] should do, whether there was a certain special way of performing the ceremony, and how the sweat-lodge should be fixed. The medicine men had all different ways. Some medicine men would have, say, 18 willows at least for the sweat-lodge framework, or others 26, or 30 at the most, with four willows called the 'head frame' oriented toward the sunrise, or the north, or other direction. A hole about six inches deep was dug inside for the heated rocks and the surface cleared about an inch down from the hole to the door. On this cleared space, shaped more or less like a truncated triangle, some design in red paint might be drawn—such as a circle, or figure of a bird or man. A dozen different men might follow one particular set of specifications in case they had all gotten the right to do so from the same [medicine] man. 346 515 782

"The fire for heating the rocks was made about 8 to 10 feet from the door of the sweat-lodge, and the dirt dug to make the hole in the lodge was put in a nice pile about 4 to 5 feet beyond the fireplace on the same axis therewith. The offerings made by the young fellow—such as calico or feathers—were tied on a willow stick about 6 or 7 feet long. He had also to get the rocks, to no specified number.

"When all was ready the old fellow would tell the young man to get, say, 7 to 9 old men to come and join them. When they arrived, the rocks were all heated. The young man then gave the old man [the one he had first approached] the willow stick with the offerings tied to it. The old man then went to the dirt pile, faced in the direction in which the lodge faced, and holding the offerings on [over?] the pile prayed as loud as he could: 'God, 515 782

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

515
782

come and listen to me. God, come and get in the sweat-bath with me. Here is what X [naming the young man] gives you as an offering!' Then he would go on to pray for the young fellow and would tell who had given him [the old man] power to make the sweat-bath this particular way: 'You gave me this for some purpose, so you must come and help me now. This young man has gone to a lot of trouble to do this for me and you. So listen to me and help this young man, whatever his wish is.' Then he stuck the offering in the dirt pile, to remain there while they were all inside the lodge sweating.

"After he and the invited old men got inside the lodge, he would appoint one of them to pour the water on the heated rocks. The appointee would ask, 'How much for the start,' and would be told, [801] 'Four times' or maybe 'Seven times,' either four or seven. The appointee would then pour, the required number of times, just enough, say about one third of or a whole cupful, to make a little steam. Then the leading old fellow would say: 'Now it is up to you. Pour any amount you want.'

"Then all those old men prayed inside for the young man, who remained outside and had to look after the rocks and the opening up of the sweat-lodge. Every so often he had to open it up in front and back and so kind of cooled the sweaters off. It was so opened maybe four successive times, and then the sweating was over.

"The young fellow might then be told to come in, and the old fellows would kind of clean him by first blowing on their hands and then rubbing him, and when they were through they would twiddle their fingers as one does to get rid of dirt.

"This young man hired all these people and he would think that these old men prayed hard, and that he would get what he asked for, and that he would not be afraid, and that regardless of odds he would come out on top because of this faith."

The ritual cleansing effected by sweating as well as the sacrificial aspect of the rite is definitely referred to in the foregoing account, but here as in most other cases the sacrificial aspect is the more prominent. The cleansing effect was also hinted at in Sitting High's remark quoted by Al Chandler: "You have to clean yourself through this sweating."

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The sweat-bath was resorted ritually on many occasions other than those mentioned in the immediately preceding pages and passim in preceding sections. Coming Daylight spoke of it in a general way as "the thing they [the Gros Ventres] go through with when they don't want something to happen." On some of these many occasions reported by our informants there was no mention of accompanying offerings,—for instance the many sweat-baths Singer made for her sick husband (or were these purely "rational" curative measures, as may have been the sweating Coming Daylight went through for her rheumatism?). The sweat-lodge was commonly used, especially as we have seen, in connection with professional doctoring. 515 782

The sweat-bath was resorted to rather commonly—how commonly we cannot say—for pleasure, as a purely rational hygienic and curative measure, and for cleanliness. In such cases, no ceremony at all was connected with it. The keepers of the Flat and Feathered Pipes, if known to like sweating,—but not otherwise,—could be invited, but without ritual accompaniment. There was no mixed-sex sweating; men sweated with men, women with women. Sweating was a little hard on novices unused to the heat and steam. The white man who asked to learn about the Feathered Pipe was told: "The first night in a sweat-bath is pretty hard and beginners are allowed to lie down close to the ground." Singer, once when being washed by a medicine man, had to leave the lodge as soon as the water was poured on the stones; she could not stand the heat. Mary Ereaux' mother used to keep her head outside the sweat-lodge when sweating. Those, however, habituated to sweating, found the after-effect pleasant and soothing. As Al Chandler expressed it: "After you are all through sweating you sure feel good. You could go right to sleep." 515

The sweaters during the sweating whipped themselves,—"to make them even hotter" (Al Chandler), "to dry themselves" (Coming Daylight)—with formerly a whip made of a buffalo tail attached to a handle, or later of "a horse tail or any old thing." [412]

The sweat-lodge for secular use was always beehived shaped, of bent willows framework, but no special number of willows was required. 343

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Vows

782 Vows—here understood as promises of objects or acts made to supernatural beings—were prominent features of Gros Ventre religious life. They were distinguished in Gros Ventre thinking from promises, however serious, made to human beings. Thus, for example, a promise by a woman to make a decorated robe for her son-in-law, a quite serious promise, was specifically stated to be a promise only, not a vow.

Most of the numerous specific vows we recorded were made directly or indirectly to the Supreme Being; some, to the sacred Pipes; others, especially many of those involving physical pain,—flesh cutting, finger amputation, self-torture alone or in a Sacrifice Dance,—to the sun.

The most common occasion of vows was illness or other danger to life of one of the vower's close relatives or of the vower himself or herself. Other occasions specifically mentioned were success in a revenge expedition, achievement in battle, the return of a captured wife.

The things—object and/or acts—most frequently mentioned as vowed were: covering, opening, smoking, dancing with, making a sweat-lodge for, accepting the keepership of, or rendering other homage to the Flat or Feathered Pipe; holding one of the sacred Dances; cutting one's flesh, amputating one's finger joint, or undergoing self-torture alone or in a Sacrifice Dance; "holy boiling," or feeding a group of the poor, old men and old women; more recently, giving a 4-button handgame (a social affair with food).

Certain vows—those of a more solemn kind, such as one to hold a Sacred Dance or, in some cases at least, to undergo solitary self-torture—were announced publicly. The exact rule—if there was one—in this matter we could not determine. Apparently such announcement was regularly made when the act vowed called for the help of a ritual grandfather.

In general breach of vow brought misfortune. "The Gros Ventres," said Singer, "believe in keeping the vows they make to get a sick person well. They think that [otherwise] they have bad luck." This "bad luck" did not automatically follow breach of vow, but came as a punishment inflicted by the being to whom the vow had been made.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Singer's own guilt feeling at her delay in fulfilling her vow to amputate her finger joint is clear from her dream (infra under "Dreams"). The more recent case of the death by lightning of the young man who put off buying the Feathered Pipe cloth wrapping he had promised, as mentioned earlier (supra, p. 132), was popularly interpreted as perhaps a punishment. Another case told us by The Boy illustrated the same belief in punishment for breach of vow. 782

"Not long ago [in The Boy's lifetime] a certain man's relative was sick, and he vowed to the Supreme Being to undergo solitary self-torture out on the hills all day so the relative would recover. The relative did recover. But time went on, and the vower did not carry out his vow that summer or that year. Next summer he had a dream and in the dream someone asked him: 'When are you going to carry out your vow?' Still the vower let the matter go. He had the same dream four times and each time was asked the same question. 782 821

"After the fourth time, he began to think. He was on the spot. He decided to invite some of the principal men,—the keepers of the sacred Pipes, some ex-keepers, and some others,—among them, my father, Lame Bull. He told the assembled group about his dream. They studied it, and finally Lame Bull took it on himself to interpret it. 'I am afraid,' he said, 'This is not good that you dreamed that four times and that you waited so long to carry out your vow. This means you will not be called [warned] any more. I advise you to put up a sweat-lodge for me [Lame Bull was apparently Flat Pipe keeper at the time] and I will see what I can do for you to appease someone you have made angry. Get busy right away and cut willows and get rocks and wood for a sweat-lodge rite tomorrow. I will pray for you at the sweat-lodge rite so that you may be released and absolved from any punishment that might [otherwise] come to you.'

"The vower was glad and agreed, and glad that the invitees would help. . . . But before the sweat-lodge was put up a violent thunderstorm arose. There were abundant berries around the camp and a lot of women and children out picking them were caught in the storm. I was a little boy at the time and was along

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

782 on the berry picking. The storm spoiled the berry picking and as
821 soon as it was over we started back to camp. The berry pickers who were in the lead on the way back stopped on a ridge in view of the camp and at once saw that something was wrong there. When they got to camp they found that the vower and his boy had been killed and his wife stunned by lightning. She was put in rain water and came to. The vower had just come back from getting the things for the sweat-lodge and was eating with his wife and boy when the storm passed over the camp.

"Another man had gone out on horseback . . . and cried all through the storm . . . after the storm had passed and the sun was shining . . . a cloud was seen to come back and stop right over the camp circle and he saw lightning and heard thunder at the same time, and he passed out, but only for a moment. When he came to, his ears were ringing and he was facing in the opposite direction. So he turned around again and looked and saw this cloud going back toward the rest of the storm [clouds]. . . .

"The people all ran to the vower and found him and his wife and boy lying there. . . . The boy's head [hair] was all curly and singed, and there was some little sage brush in his hair and they wondered how it got there. The people there always believed that the man and his boy were killed because the former did not carry out his vow. His wife is still living. This man was not given the chance to make up for his neglect. . . ."

"The man," The Boy added, "had made the vow, not to Bha'a, the storm being, but to someone else, the Supreme Being. In this case the Supreme Being employed or delegated Bha'a to mete out punishment to the man who failed to fulfill his vow."

Oaths

782 By oaths we here understand solemn appeals to the supernatural world in witness to the truth of a statement or to the binding character of a promise,—the first being assertory oaths, the second promissory ones. Whether promissory oaths were taken by the Gros Ventres is not clear. A possible instance was Good Singer's promise, after being captured and made to dance over her husband's body, of a Sacrifice Dance, the promise itself having been

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

preceded by her words: "As the power above and the sun sees what these people [her captors] have made me do." Assertory oaths clearly were taken, but were not common. 782

The Boy, with Thick concurring, stated: "Oaths were taken only in serious situations and only on rare occasions, chiefly when some one was accused publicly of some grave crime and was compelled to prove himself innocent. He would not use the expression, 'the sun sees me,' but would just point upward and say, Ixteibni :bahat (the Supreme Being) is listening to me and is witnessing what I say, and I say that what you are saying [about me] is not true."

On another occasion The Boy explained: "The Gros Ventres did not take oaths very often but only in extreme cases. They took explicit oaths, but usually only implicit ones through pipe, or knife, or wetting the skin between the collarbones. This last could be done just in fun. A listener would wet his finger with his tongue and say: 'All right, I'll wet my finger and touch your skin, and if what you say is true and you act before your skin dries, I will believe you.' "

Al Chandler gave the following details: "An Indian is supposed to tell whatever he says like black and white. Especially if he takes an oath that he will tell the truth, he is supposed never to break that. The liars will even take that oath and then lie anyway. A person takes an oath by running the blade of a sharp knife right along next to his lips, wetting the blade and saying: 'If I lie, God will punish me (or something will happen to me),' then stabs the knife in the earth. The oath is taken when somebody does not believe a person and says to him: 'Swear that you are not lying.' Sometimes if a man takes an oath like that but is really lying, something actually happens to him: maybe he might break a leg. The punishment comes right away. This is what makes them afraid, because it [the truth] will come right out."

The women's chastity test, regarding which our informants were not fully agreed, was essentially an oath. We did not succeed in clearing up the problem, in spite of long conferences in the field on it.[12] In any case, however, considerable light is thrown on the nature of Gros Ventre assertory oaths.

[12] Cf. Flannery, 1953, pp. 193-94.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

782 837 Following is The Boy's account gotten from his father, Lame Bull, and given to us in 1939, with slight additions, in parentheses, from his quite similar account given us in 1945:

"This custom disappeared when Lame Bull was a small boy [hence, about 1832-35]. He remembered it distinctly, although he had seen it only once, in his early boyhood. The crier went around saying to everybody: 'Get ready everybody, after sunrise tomorrow morning, to see who is the woman most faithful to her husband.' The custom was carried out only once in a great while. A group of older men, not real old ones but those still active, would get together and agree that the test should be carried out.

"The very first thing the next morning, the crier went around and announced: 'This is meant for *every* married couple, old and young. Put on your best clothes. Start right away.' Then two of the biggest lodges in the camp circle were put together to make a two-lodge tent. After it was put up, the crier announced: 'Everyone come from every direction to the center-lodge.' All came, dressed up, especially the unmarried young men. (The young men before the test witnessed by Lame Bull had made it up among themselves, to get up and say publicly, 'That woman is lying,' should any woman get up and dance whom they knew to be lying about her fidelity.) (They had a brush shed at the front of the double-lodge, and the flaps of the lodge were raised so that more people could fit in and look on. The women had to sit inside. The only men inside were the singers and musicians, some standing and beating drums, others seated with their hands under the elkskin in front of them.) The singers sat in a circle with a big [534] tanned elkskin in the middle, and each singer had two human shin-bones, one in each hand, and both shin-bones were notched saw-like with a series of notches. There were several pairs of these bones. When the singing began and the drum holders beat their drums, the bone holders sawed with the bones under the elkskin. A weird noise was made by the sawing together of these bones invisible to the onlookers.

"Before the singing began, one man got up and told the women what the affair was about and the procedure in it, so that they would understand: 'The men are going to sing four times. If not a single woman gets up and dances and uncovers the human bones

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

under the elkskin, then there is not a woman in the entire Gros Ventre tribe who is faithful to her husband. And it would even look bad if one does exist but does not get up until the fourth singing.' Then he impressed on the women's minds that getting up and uncovering the human bones under the elkskin was like taking an oath. The older women might know that the things to be uncovered were human bones, but the younger ones might not. 782 837

"After this man was through talking, some of the older women got up and encouraged the younger women: 'Surely there ought to be one in this whole group who has been faithful to her husband. Don't fear. Be proud of the fact. Get up and dance.' When the singers started to sing [the song, number 69, was sung by The Boy and recorded by us], they started off with a bang, shouting and yelling and beating the drums fast. They sang the song once and then the second time, and then began making remarks: 'We have sung twice. There are no dancers yet. Only two more times are left.'

"They sang it the third time and still there were no dancers. A lot of the old women were now walking around and pleading with the young wives: 'Don't let this pass without at least one wife getting up.' Before the last song started, several of the leading men, too, said: 'This is the last time. If no married young woman dances and uncovers the scraping here, then not one Gros Ventre woman in the entire tribe is faithful to her husband.'

"Finally from about the center of the crowd of sitting women, a young woman got up and stepped out, amid much applause, for she was perhaps the comeliest young woman in the tribe. She sort of tucked up her skirts on both sides under her belt and started to dance [illegible]d the drumbeating and scraping. She danced fast, vigorously, like a man. She made four rounds, and on each of the first three made a pass with her hand toward the covered scraping. The fourth time she lifted the elkskin. The singing and the scraping with the bones stopped at once.

The young woman had to pause to catch her breath, saying: 'When I catch my breath I will tell you something.' When she had caught her breath, pointing around to all the men with a sweeping gesture she said: 'Plenty of nice young men are here but not one of them knows me [in the sense of sex relations]. The only man

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

782 who knows me and whom I know is my husband. But many of
837 you have tried to [seduce me] but did not succeed. Njnä:nä'ak is listening to me and he knows I am telling the truth. Sunshine gives the most light, and what I have to say has nothing hidden in it. It is as true as the light of day which sunshine gives. My husband is off on a war party and he will distinguish himself during it, and this will be another mark that I am telling the truth.'

"Then the old men and old women drowned out one another singing her praises. All thought her a wonderful woman, being alone at night and so beautiful and yet withstanding all advances. Her name was Speaks Holy, and her husband's, Sun Old Man.

"After the bones had been uncovered a dance was held, including a contest between a man and a woman. A woman and a man
[524] got up and danced toward each other, each making faces at the other, pulling noses, and so forth. The one who laughed first lost and was pushed back into his or her seat. The winner remained on the floor and challenged. Another, of the opposite sex, then got up from the side of the loser and contested with the previous winner. And so the contest went on until one, a man or woman, won in four successive bouts. When this happened he or she was the winner. All the people then threw them [each successive loser?] down and covered them up with their robes. Then there was food and feasting and the affair ended.

"There was no prayer or smudging or other rite, except the oath the woman took on the spot to the Supreme Being, Ninänä'äte. The young woman in the case had taken upon herself a serious thing. She took an oath. . . . She was glad of the opportunity to declare her fidelity. . . .

"At the end the double lodge was torn down. Early in the morning, after the third night, the war party returned. . . . Sun Old Man had counted coup, he had struck an enemy and had returned with something. So his wife must have told the truth, for nothing had been prearranged. All this added to the fury of other husbands against their wives. The women denied and said: 'We did not want to do this publicly. What that woman did in uncovering the bones was just a bid for notoriety. We can be faithful without doing that. We are humble.'

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

"Lame Bull said that the old men had told him that the Gros Ventres used to hold this test once in a while, but the only one he witnessed was the one described. He also said that they were going to hold this test again when he was a middle-aged man and were all ready to do so, when a war party came back, some of whose members had been killed in battle. So that spoiled the occasion. And after that, the test was never held." 782 837

Dreams, Visions and Auditions

Gros Ventre for "a dream" is kana:tĕ; for "a vision," and apparition seen while you are awake or "even while you are sleeping and somebody comes to you," be:tänohatsä:na', "something sacred I saw." In the following pages we are for clarity's sake distinguishing between dreams occurring in sleep and visions and auditions occurring in waking hours. What, if any, importance the Gros Ventres themselves attached to the distinction is not clear, although they of course were fully aware of it, as is obvious from their explicit statements in the cases recorded by us. It is quite clear, however, that such dreams, visions, and auditions played a major role in their magico-religious culture, and entered into it in numerous ways and on numerous occasions. Illustrative cases will be given presently. 787

Especially in the spring time older men, after going to bed at night, would command silence in the lodge and would sing and pray, informally without ritual observances, and would pray among other things for some good dream and for deep sleep[19] so that they would not wake up before the dream was over.

Dreams in which power was offered or imparted were supposed to be kept more or less secret. Such secrecy was not, however, called for, it seems, regarding other dreams.

Dreams as recorded by us fall into two categories, those in which gifts or messages were imparted to the dreamer by some being, and those in which interpretation of the meaning of the dreams

[19] The Arapaho, we were told, call this kind of sleep "thick sleep." In 1948 Tom Main said that the literal translation of the Gros Ventre word for "deep sleep" is actually "thick sleep." [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787 had to be made by the dreamer. We shall take up these two categories in turn.

In the first category fall power-bestowing dreams and many of those connected with name-giving and ear-piercing. Power was usually bestowed during a dream, in some cases however while the recipient was awake. In other dreams, songs, information, instructions, warnings, invitations, commands or permissions were given by supernatural beings.

Two wordless songs, numbers 33 and 34, sung without accompaniment of drum or rattle, and gotten by The Boy's father, Lame Bull, in dreams were recorded by us as sung by The Boy. Lame Bull had many songs of this kind, but these were the two he used to sing most frequently. In the records the song is repeated only once; in the full rendering it would be sung four times. These are bedtime songs.

It was in a dream that Lame Bull was told the war party he led would kill five of the enemy and that he saw just where the enemy were located. In another dream he was told that he had forfeited and would lose his doctoring power (supra, pp. 284-285). As the result of a dream the grandmother of Mary Ereaux made a special kind of bag, snake-shaped, in which to keep the navel cord of the latter's son.

Singer on one occasion, when her daughter was ill and she [Singer] had promised to amputate the end joint of her little finger as a sacrifice to save the girl, had a significant dream.

"I had promised," Singer said, "to do this but my husband, Iron Bucket, had kept putting it off. 'Leave it for a while,' he would say. So one night I had a dream. So I woke my husband and told him immediately: 'Now look. I saw this old man coming and he said: "You promised me that finger a long time ago. You are going to look like this," and I saw a person with white hair painted red (a sign of old age, she explained to us). This old man got after me and told me what I would look like, if I didn't keep my promise.' So we got kind of scared. . . . The old man was representing the sun because it was to the sun that I had made the promise."

In quite recent years, shortly before her death, Thick's wife, The

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Boy's sister, could hear the Flat Pipe. "It bothered her to think it was alone [and relatively neglected] and in her sleep it would call her." 787

During our earlier contacts with The Boy, 1938 to 1940, he was considerably concerned as to whether he "was doing right in telling about the Flat Pipe to the white man" and he "thought hard" on the matter. In the summer of 1939, after receiving a letter from one of us, regarding the Flat Pipe, he had a dream.

"I saw," he said, "a big crowd of people gathered. I stood by a lodge where the crowd was. I went into the lodge and saw there my father and old Curly Head. I sat facing them. My father said: 'Are you telling the history of these Pipes to the white man?' I said: 'Yes.' I waited for further questions from my father, but then I woke up."

The above version of this dream was given us in the summer of 1939. A fuller one was given, as follows, in August, 1940.

"I came from about a southerly point to a big crowd out in the open. On arrival I at once pushed people out of the way and elbowed my way into the heart of the crowd. I wanted to know what was going on there. The crowd was not in a circle but in a sort of oval. When I got inside the crowd—I saw my father, Lame Bull [d. 1908], and Curly Head [d. 1937] sitting together in the place of honor [opposite the lodge door]. Lame Bull was sitting to the right of Curly Head. So I walked up to them and sat down facing them. Lame Bull said to me: 'Is it true that you are telling the story of the Pipes to white men?' 'Yes,' I said 'That's true. I am doing so now.' I felt a terrible silence there and got scared. I felt that Lame Bull would scold me. Before any further word was spoken, I woke up, and then tried to interpret the dream. Other dreams did not impress me as much as this one. I thought much, and wondered if it was proper to tell the story of the Pipe, if it was against the dignity of the Pipe and reverence for the Pipes, if it was against Gros Ventre principles."

"In the old days," said Coming Daylight, "we used to paint ourselves every morning [a custom of which now little remains]. . . . I painted myself when I was going to pray to the Flat Pipe for my grandchild, and when I went to sleep that night I dreamed

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787 I saw that paint and a voice told me: 'Why don't you pay any attention to me any more?' So that is why I have started painting again. I used always to paint and would like to do so now, but I am afraid my children might be ashamed of me."

In some dreams, a being communicated to the dreamer commands, summonses, requests, invitations, or permissions. Coming Daylight's husband, Little Man, when someone had put medicine on him and he was having hemorrhages, was told in a dream that if he would torture himself he would get well. He was also told what kind of root or leaf to drink for the hemorrhages at the time he tortured himself, and exactly where it was to be found. Coming Daylight went for it and found it. Then he took it and got well. At this time, too, "he got the name," she said, "for our little boy, Skinner.[14] He used never to believe in such things and here this came to him like that. When he told me about the names for our little boy, I threw this up at him and said: 'I thought you never believed in such things!' But he just laughed, and I told him: 'That is just the way you know things. You ought to start now and practice things for the children's sake.' "

Lame Bull, it may be recalled, was called in dreams by the being who lived on Baldy Butte in the Bear Paws, to go up there and quest for power.

One of The Boy's dreams, experienced in the winter of 1939-40, straddles our two dream categories. It contained an invitation; it also called for interpretation.

"I had a dream," The Boy said. "In it a person came to me wrapped up in a white man's blanket. The blanket covered even his face and extended way up over his head and the top of the blanket was blowing round as if by the wind, and was all covered with snow as if the wearer had come in out of a snowstorm. He came in and stood by my bed, and said: 'Well, I have been sent here to come and get you, because where you are living now everything is bad and out of order. You are not enjoying your life here. Where I came from is a good place.' I recognized this person as John Baptist, my deceased nephew, the son of my sister, Mrs. Thick. John Baptist scolded me, but I said: 'No. I don't

[14] Cf. Flannery, 1953, p. 146.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787

want to go where you want me to go. I still have small children to look after. I still have business here. I have not finished giving [to Flannery and Cooper] the record of Gros Ventre life. There are many other things to tell [them]. What is the matter with you? You are shivering and cold. It is warm in here. It is not proper for a ghost to be cold.' John Baptist said: 'It is very cold. That is why I am covered up and shivering.' At this he uncovered his head. But I knew all along who it was. I recognized his voice. He looked just the same as when he was living. Then I woke up.

"The third night after this I took sick. I woke up at night with pains around my nipples as if there were two sticks there and as if the veins under my lower jaw were big. I got up and rubbed my face and neck and the back of my head. I was in great pain. I did not want to disturb anybody. I lay down and slept. When I woke up my face was twisted [facial paralysis].

"I thought a lot about the dream I have just told you. I nearly concluded that it might mean my time to die would come in the winter season. I am not afraid. I am resigned. If I live through next winter, I feel I will go past the crisis and live longer."

Dreams were often interpreted as having prophetic or other meaning. Singer, on one occasion, dreamed, she said, that "we were all traveling and that my little brother fell off the travois and got killed. I was screaming in my dream: 'Oh, my brother! Oh, my brother!' My mother woke me up and asked me: 'What is the matter?' I said: 'Oh, I was just scared in my dream about my little brother.' My mother was worried for fear this was a bad sign. The next morning when we moved camp that is where someone we knew got killed by the raiding enemy."

Certain other dreams were variously interpreted. On one occasion when Coming Daylight and her young grandson went with Snake Woman to gather bitterroot, a fellow driving a cow waved to them. The next morning Snake Woman said: "I dreamed I was married to that fellow who waved at me." And actually he did try later to live with her.

Singer gave the following account:

"I and Axe Handle, my Assiniboine husband, once went swimming down the Milk River Valley. After we got home and went

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787

to bed I dreamed that a little short man with shaggy hair all pushed back came out of the water where we had been bathing. He made a motion as if to grab me and said: 'I am going to take you.' He was grabbing at me to take me into the water and I was just hollering in my dream and calling my husband by name. He wakened me and asked: 'What is the matter?' I replied: 'This little man is trying to take me.' So in the morning my husband said: 'I am going to put some offerings in the water.' I had a nice silk handkerchief and a pair of 'pearl' earrings. So we sewed the earrings in the handkerchief and then we went and prayed and prayed, and my husband said: 'We give you these so you won't take her.' We held on to the offering until the praying was finished and then put it in the water, and it disappeared quick, as if somebody had grabbed it."

Once when Axe Handle, Singer's husband, was ill and was expecting to die, "he saw someone," she told us, "in his sleep, come down from the sky and walk in, holding in his palm four little red objects. He held his hand before Axe Handle and said, 'Here. Eat this up.' And Axe Handle took them like pills." After this Axe Handle recovered.

Waking visions and auditions were common, not however too common, it seems, as meaningful dreams. Sometimes as we have seen, power was bestowed on the recipient when awake, although more frequently in a dream.

"Once," said Coming Daylight, "we were camped along the Milk River where the woods stops Everybody in those days used to get up early, when the sun was just peeping above the horizon. So one morning my grandmother went for water, very early, just before dawn. She looked up and down the river. She saw something right down in the water. She looked more closely. It was a buffalo fawn, the small yellow-brown kind. It stood in the middle of the water. This was a vision (be:tānəhatsa'). She started to pray to this fawn and while she prayed the fawn looked at her. She prayed and prayed that the fawn would have pity on her. And then the fawn looked at her. She wasn't mourning or anything at that time. She was just going about her ordinary routine. It was good when anyone had a vision like that. My grandmother told this vision to those in her lodge but she did not tell everybody

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

You were not supposed to tell everybody. I think that the vision is what made my grandmother live so long [to the age of 101 years it is claimed]. I think the fawn gave her 'grace' to live that long." 787

We recorded two instances of mass vision. One, of white horses coming down through an opening in the mountains, has been previously described. The other was related by Singer.

"The Gros Ventres were traveling and they got to a place where there is a mountain on both sides. They were going to look for buffalo. The men went out and then heard a man hollering for all the others. They all looked and saw a herd of buffalo coming from the sky. Iron Bucket [Singer's husband] was one of that party. The herd dropped close by. When people see anything like that they say it is a holy thing. The men chased these buffalo and killed one. It was bigger and fatter than the real kind and that is how they knew. They talked about this a whole lot. They had not prayed for this. It just happened. The man who first saw these buffalo gave a war whoop and then yelled: 'Come see!' The others all looked and here the buffalo were. When the buffalo landed, the earth shook and the dust just came up."

Auditions occurred, as well as visions. The woman's voice heard in the sweat-lodge rite and during White Weasel's singing has been mentioned previously (supra, p. 97). In the latter case, Mary Ereaux' mother and an occasional other person could hear the woman's voice, but others, such as Mary herself and White Weasel's wife, could not.

"The Gros Ventres," according to Singer, "used to come across a big lake toward the southwest. It was a holy lake because in its deep waters they used to hear sounds of dogs barking, and horses neighing, and young men giving a whoop, and drums beating, like they were singing. The people used even to see visions in this lake. Since the whites came around the Gros Ventres do not know what has become of this lake." [823]

Omens and Divination

Through both omens and divination, knowledge of the future or of hidden or distant things is believed to be gotten, and both

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787

have at least some touch of the "supernatural" about them. In the senses in which we are here using the terms, omens are more or less conventional interpretations of casual events, of happenings that occur independently of activity, or effective initiative, on the part of the interpreter; divination, an interpretation of means specifically resorted to and set up by the interpreter.

The line between omen and divination cannot always be sharply drawn, nor can it always be sharply drawn from the Gros Ventre point of view between natural and "supernatural" interpretation of casual events or of set up means. We shall deal first with omens, and after that with divination.

Some portents of the future are quite clearly of the purely natural order in Gros Ventre thought. Examples of such natural Gros Ventre portents are weather signs like the following. The aurora borealis is a sign of impending bad weather or storm; if it occurs a given night, on the second night after there will be a change of weather. A lot of rain, in summer, or a lot of service-berries, choke-cherries and so forth, means much snow the following winter. If the blackbirds, crows, and other birds leave early, cold weather may be expected early in the fall. Whether the winter would be severe or mild, could be told from the condition of animals' fur in the fall. Old fellows, in the olden days, are said to have been able to foretell the day when a storm or the Chinook wind would arrive.

Whether the following are conceived as of the natural or supernatural order is doubtful. A big shooting star portends sickness to come; of a little one, nothing is thought. When Singer was a little girl she had one or two grey hairs; her grandmother wanted to pull them out and told her they were a sign she was going to live to old age.

The following seem more suggestive of the supernatural, so far as we would judge the native attitude. If you hear someone saying your name, especially if there be added the call, "Come on!" and you look around and see nobody, this is a sign of your death. "If a dog comes and whines around and kind of cries, or if it raises its hind leg and urinates on a lodge, clothing or a person, this is unlucky." "If a family dog whines around the door and

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

howls at the moon, someone is going to die; the dog will be killed to head off the misfortune." It is also unlucky if a dog and a coyote "kind of quarrel, the one howling frequently and the other answering back." Hoot owls were thought to be ghosts (supra, p. 27). If an owl alighted on the tent or house, or hooted nearby on a bush, this portended the death of someone. If one or more crows flew across one's path and cawed when one was going out hunting, this meant good luck. 787

Of the supernatural order were also many of the intimations imparted in dreams, and many gotten in connection with the sacred Pipes, such as those from the quivering of the pipe bundle, the look of the human face in the Feathered Pipe bundle, and so forth.

An eclipse of the sun was an omen of some coming sickness, some epidemic like smallpox. Coming Daylight stated that her old grandmother "always noticed that an eclipse [of the sun] was followed by smallpox." Coming Daylight described her own personal reaction during an eclipse. 787 821

"I had been sent after water. . . . All of a sudden it got dark. The first thing I did was to grab on to a bunch of willows. I did not know what had happened and just kept hidden there. It was so dark I could not see to go anywhere. I heard people hollering: 'Come this way. Where are you?' But I was so frightened I just hung on to the willows as though someone were going to take me away. Finally it got to be lighter, and I took the water home."

Singer's account of her experience during an eclipse [the same one?] gives some details also on tribal belief and practice. She and another young woman were the only ones at home.

"We noticed it was getting darker and darker, although it was in the afternoon about this time of the year [mid-August]. We began to scream and cry and we did not know what was going to happen. It was really an eclipse of the sun. The men, and everyone left in camp at the time, just lay down on the ground. Finally they got up and said: 'That is a sign we are going to have smallpox.' Everybody who had a gun just shot at the sun. The reason for shooting was that it [the eclipse] was going to bring some kind of disease. They thought it was a warning." Coming Daylight here explained: "When they shoot they are trying to scare it to get rid of the sickness."

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787 172 At a number of spots in and around the territory of the Gros Ventre are cliffs on which the pictograph beings (supra, p. 20) made designs that could be interpreted as omens. The Boy enumerated the following localities where such picture cliffs were or are: one near Clagett on the Missouri River; another around Sun River; another southeast of the Sweet Grass Hills; another far up north in the forested country; another around the mouth of the Musselshell River; another north of the Musselshell; another north of the Yellowstone (north of where the Crow now are). Singer also mentioned one not far from Hays. Unfortunately our time schedule did not permit us to visit any of these spots.

The Gros Ventres explicitly distinguished these drawings from those recognized as made by Indians and from other somewhat similar things. Some such designs made by Indians in caves and on cliffs can be seen today: two, for example, in the Little Rockies, one on the south side and another on the southeast. Tracks of animals, "right in the stone," may also be seen: at one place on top of one end of Snake Butte, some miles east of St. Paul's Mission. The Gros Ventres do not know what these are.

Likewise, at one end of the Larb Hills, there is a big flat rock described as about 5 feet by 10, the upper surface of which is about waist high from the ground. The rock itself is not limestone, sandstone, or granite, but of a rarer mineral seen only once in a great while; of light color, and looking something like cement, and looking to be "artificial." It was discovered by the Gros Ventres only in recent times, apparently from the Assiniboine, who found it on directions given them by some Cree half-breeds. On the surface of this flat rock are seen tracks in the stone of a child, of hoofed animals, wolves and dogs, and of animals the Gros Ventres cannot identify. On one of the vertical sides of the rock is a dent, shaped like a lodge. The lodge is painted in colors, and in front of it, at the door side, is the figure of a man standing with a pipe extended upward. Some young Gros Ventre men have spit on their hands and tried to rub these lodge colors off, but without success. On the opposite vertical side of the flat rock are represented the sun and moon, the Dipper, and some other stars. The present-day Gros Ventres have tried to divine the meaning

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

of this rock with its designs, but to no avail. They just say of it "it is something holy." They do not know what if anything the pictograph beings may have had to do with it. 787 172

Before the death by lightning of a certain young man, a drawing was seen, on a pictograph being cliff, of a lodge, and inside a headless man, and a zigzag line to the top of the lodge. In another case some Gros Ventre hunters, recently, when out hunting, were wondering if the pictograph beings still predicted, and so they went to one of their cliffs and there saw so depicted a train, and in front of it a headless man. On their return after their hunting was over, they went to the Agency and there heard that a certain man had been killed by a train. Just in recent times, too, a Gros Ventre band was traveling (not as a war party) to the Crow reservation and being near the pictograph beings cliff at the mouth of the Musselshell, went and looked, and there saw pictured a water monster with long horns and a human being riding on its neck. (One on its head and another on its snout, according to Singer.) They interpreted this to mean: "Someone is going to be drowned." When they reached the Crow, they learned that a Gros Ventre young man had drowned crossing the Yellowstone somewhere near Billings, and the place where the river comes out of the mountains. Singer once saw on one of these cliffs a picture of their camp, with a gun pointing right at the middle of the camp; afterwards a person in the camp did actually get killed.

In general, if someone died from war or drowning or other cause, and a group were discussing the death, it would be said: "The pictograph beings drew and predicted this long ago."

There was relatively little divination among the Gros Ventres as compared with the many kinds of it among their Algonquian linguistic kin of the taiga. Scapulimancy was absent; none of a half-dozen or more of our informants to whom we broached the subject had ever heard of it. Scrying occurred in the form of peering into badger blood. When a war party had gone out on the trail, they would kill a badger, lay it on its back, slit it from throat to crotch, and leave the blood to gather in a pool around the belly. Those of the party who wished to peer into the pool of blood did so: but there was no obligation to do so; if some did not wish 787

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787 to do so they did not do it. They peered one by one. If the scryer, on peering into the surface of the blood, saw himself headless or scalped, this meant he would get killed, and he would not go on the expedition but would turn back and go home. If he saw himself reflected clearly, this meant good luck. "Usually," said Thomas Main, "the scryers did not tell what they saw." "It was claimed," Charles Buckman remarked, "that the skeptic [one who saw himself scalped or headless, but nevertheless continued on the expedition] actually got killed."

Bear heart divination was described by The Boy, Charles Buckman, and Coming Daylight as a well-known practice.[14] Apparently badger blood divination was taken much more gravely and seriously by the Gros Ventres than bear heart divination.

A final type of divination is from Coming Daylight. The grandson of her old grandmother with whom, as a girl, she and her sister were living, killed a female porcupine in which were two embryos. "The old woman said to us two girls: 'Come here both of you.' So she held my dress open at the neck and loosened my belt, and threw the foetus down the neck of my dress. It went through without stopping, and my grandmother said: 'When you have children you will have an easy time. See how quick it went through.' Then she did the same to my sister, but in some way the foetus got caught, and the old woman said: 'Now, you see. You are going to have a hard time. You are going to have slow childbirth.' And sure enough, these are the ways it turned out for us [respectively]."

Things to Do and to Avoid Doing

784 Under this somewhat loose caption we are grouping certain acts
789 done in order to bring about desirable effect or avoided lest undesirable ones follow. How far they were in Gross Ventre thought considered "supernatural" it is hard to say. Most of these observances and avoidances were seemingly viewed as of the non-sacred work-a-day order. At least, in most of them there appears to have been no explicit or even implicit appeal to a supernatural being or resort to supernatural power. The few in which a suggestion of

[14] Cf. Flannery, 1953, p. 163.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

supernatural power is present would, in so far, be positive 784
"magical" practices, or else negative ones, "taboo" proper. The 789
great number of such observances and avoidances, treated elsewhere—are here omitted or else touched upon only summarily. We shall list first acts done, and after that acts avoided.

To bring cold or a cold wind in winter time, a bull-roarer was [534]
whirled, or a buzzer, made of a dew claw with two holes in it, on a string, was revolved. Children were not allowed to use the buzzer. Plucking a bird to bring a north wind was not known to informants.

As soon as the first thunder of spring is heard, blow on any warts you have and they will come off.

The Gros Ventres, when aware someone was trying to bewitch or poison them or when they were going to visit another tribe, especially the Cree, would rub themselves with sweet pine needles and these would make them proof against witchcraft, poison, or other harm.

The shoulder-blade of an unborn buffalo-calf was hung up "so that buffalo would continue to exist."

Many acts were to be avoided lest undesirable consequences should follow.

If you touch a mole, a rash like poison ivy will result. The wide- [797]
spread belief among northeastern Algonquians that seeing a dead mole brings bad luck is however, lacking. If you touch a toad, you will get warts [European influence?] If a spider is killed, rain comes.

Do not eat the meat of the rare albino buffalo, else your hair will turn white. Children should not eat buffalo testicle, raw or cooked, lest they wet the bed; infants not yet able to talk should not eat puppy meat, lest they be a long time learning to talk. Young women of childbearing age should not eat the two strips of flesh, called the "twins," running along the backbone [tenderloins], lest they have twins, nor the colon of buffalo, for the same reason.

Horses should never be abused: such was the caution given to the founder of the Drum Dance by the drum men leader when the latter presented him with the stallion and other horses.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

784 789 [834] Sex abstinence was generally observed before hunting, and particularly before and all during golden eagle trapping. Eagle trappers "had to have a special religious character, to observe certain food taboos, and a special way of handling [being handed?] a pipe." The leader of a war party, but not other members thereof, also observed sex abstinence.

Do not break leg bones or ribs to extract the marrow or for other purpose, inside the lodge or house; go outside to do it, else you will get sore legs, or your horses may break their legs. Cora Chandler stated in 1940 that she still observed this latter, as her folks had always made her do. If an embryo calf were to be taken out of the belly of a buffalo, the embryo's eyes had to be extracted before it was brought into the lodge to be cooked; if the eyes were taken out inside the lodge, a member of the family would go blind, —"and this has been proven." Likewise it was forbidden to butcher and extract the brains from a buffalo head inside a lodge, and also break off the "soft end" of roast buffalo ribs. "Never use a knife to fuss with ashes or coals because you might cut yourself if you did so."

After blood-letting, the subject abstained from eating anything fried so the cut would not turn blue.

[651] There does not seem to have been any prohibition against mentioning the name of a deceased relative or other person.

777 801 Coming Daylight and Mary Ereaux had never heard of lucky or unlucky numbers. The Boy, however, stated: "According to the old law, the people were forbidden to use seven. For instance, a war party was not to have seven members, but either more or fewer. Cases are known in which young fellows disobeyed this rule and ran into trouble. In one case of this kind six of the party got killed and only one escaped with his life."

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Cooper, John M., *The Northern Algonquian Supreme Being*, Catholic University of America Anthropological Series No. 2, pp. 78, Washington, D. C., 1934. 113

——, *The Religion of the Gros Ventres of Montana*, in Annali Lateranensi, 4:97-115, Rome, 1940.

——, *The Shaking Tent Rite among Plains and Forest Algonquians*, in Primitive Man, 17:54-82, 1944.

Flannery, Regina, *The Dearly-loved Child among the Gros Ventres of Montana*, in Primitive Man, 14:33-37, 1941.

——, *The Gros Ventre Shaking Tent*, in Primitive Man, 17:54-60, 1944.

——, *The Gros Ventres of Montana, Part I: Social Life*, Catholic University of America Anthropological Series No. 15, pp. 205, Washington, D. C., 1953.

——, and Cooper, John M., *Social Mechanisms in Gros Ventre Gambling*, in Southwestern Journal of Anthropology, 2:391-419, 1946.

Hagener, Louis W., Personal communications to Regina Flannery Herzfeld, January 18 and August 8, 1954.

Kroeber, A. L., *Gros Ventre Myths and Tales*, American Museum of Natural History Anthropological Papers, Vol. 1, 55-139, 1907.

——, *Ethnology of the Gros Ventre*, American Museum of Natural History Anthropological Papers, Vol. 1, 145-281, 1908.

Mooney, James, *The Ghost Dance Religion and the Sioux Outbreak of 1890*, Bureau of American Ethnology 14th Annual Report, 1892-93, Part 2, 641-1136, Washington, D. C., 1896.

[School Sisters of St. Francis], Unveiling of the Sacred Pipe, February 6, 1946 [Hectograph, St. Paul's High School, Hays, Montana, 1946].

[Father Sifton, S.J.], *An English-Adni Dictionary*, and *A Grammar of the Adni or Gros-Ventres Language* [Mss. ca. 1910], photostatic copy, Department of Anthropology, Catholic University of America, Washington, D. C.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

PLATES

123 All of the photographs making up these plates were taken in the vicinity of Hays, on the Fort Belknap Reservation, Montana.

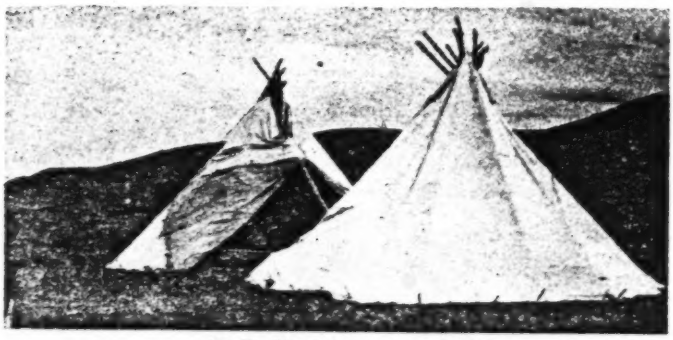
The pictures of the Flat Pipe ceremony were taken in 1948, Plates 1A and 1B, by Mr. Duke Wellington, Plates 1C and 2A, by Regina Flannery.

Dr. Otto Nitz took in 1951 the pictures of the Feathered Pipe ceremony on Plates 2B, 2C, and the four on Plate 3.

The Boy gave to Dr. Cooper the picture taken in the early 1900's of the painted lodge shown as Plate 4A. The other two lodges shown on Plate 4 were photographed by Dr. Karl Herzfeld in 1940.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

346
796

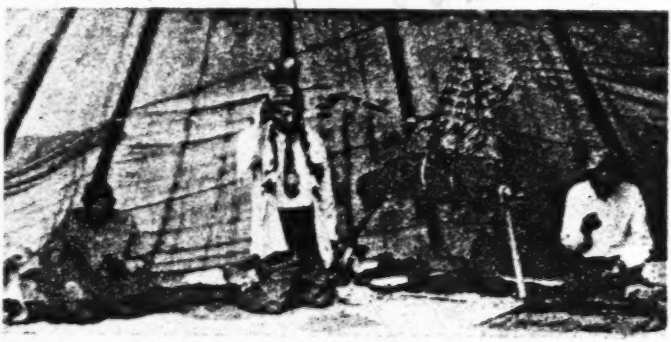


A. *Double tipi for ceremony.*

[301
782]

B. *The Boy prays with ordinary pipe.*

[516
534
778]



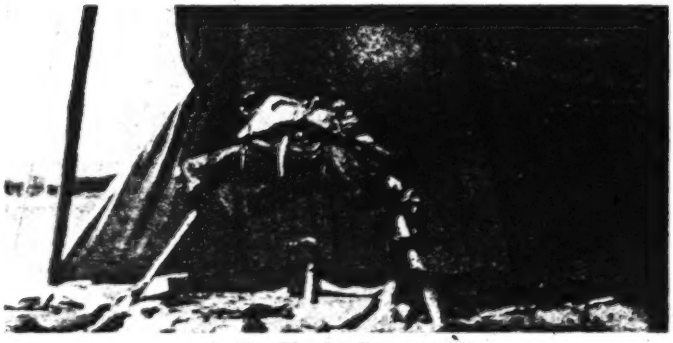
C. *The Boy smudges rattles over Flat Pipe hearth.*

PLATE 1

[p.425]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796
778
[401]



A. *Flat Pipe bundle on tripod.*

B. *Setting at opening of Feathered Pipe ceremonial.*

C. *Drum hung on tripod.*

PLATE 2

[p. 426]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

276
778
796

A. *Unwrapping Feathered Pipe bundle at hearth.*

B. *Contents of bundle.*

C. *One of the pipes in the bundle.*

D. *Iron Man II holding a pipe from bundle.*

PLATE 3

[p.427]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

346

A. *Sacred painted lodge.*

B. *Sacred lodge of Iron Man I.*

C. *Another painted lodge.*

PLATE 4

[p.428]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

APPENDIX

The following myths, tales, and traditions are given as told us mostly by The Boy, who in turn learned them in large part from his father. Variants from other informants are noted in passing and reference is made to Kroeber's earlier and more complete collection where appropriate. 128

1. Ni:hahat Liberates the Bladder People[1]

White Man started out and wandered around. At last he saw a single lodge and went over to it and entered. A man and woman were sitting there. They welcomed White Man and told him to sit down. Right away White Man thought: "I am tired and hungry. But they have nothing to eat." He wondered what to do next. The man said to the woman: "My friend has caught me unawares. He is hungry and tired and I have no food to give him." So the man called out: "My children, go and hunt so that we may eat and our guest may eat." This was good news to White Man. So he waited. It was now night. During the night something was bringing meat. You could hear something laying down meat outside. White Man thought this queer that meat should be brought at night instead of in the day time, but he just waited. After a while something stopped bringing these things to eat. The man then said to the woman: "Go out and fetch these things to eat so we and our guest can eat." So she went out and brought in all sorts of meat. So they ate liver, kidneys, tripe, and manifolds, eating them raw. There was plenty to eat so they ate and ate until they were full. 539 773

White Man began to wonder how all this was done. He had it on the tip of his tongue to ask but he didn't do so as this would have been impolite. So after a while he was so full that he fell asleep.

White Man woke up the next day and spent the day with the couple. When night came the man gave the same order in a loud voice: "My children, go and hunt and bring things to eat so that our guest may eat." Then this second night the same thing happened as on the night before.

This time White Man, after he had eaten until he was filled, made up his mind to ask the man how it was all done: "How do they get these good things to eat? Who are your children? I haven't seen any of them." The man replied: "Do you really want to know?" White Man answered: "Yes." The man said to him: "All right. Come with me to this rising ground here. I will show you." As they left the man's lodge he said: "Look up and you

[1] For explanation of the term "White Man" as used for the trickster, see p. 2. This story does not appear in Kroeber's collection.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
773

will see the thing I use." White Man looked up and saw a bladder* up above the door. The man said: "That is what I use." White Man said: "I see it."

The man took the bag from where it hung and he and White Man went to the rising ground. When they reached there the man said: "What I use to hunt with and make a living with and do all things with is in this bag. You will see. Make your heart strong." So the man untied the bag. As he did so adult people began to come out of the bag. The crowd got bigger and bigger around them. The man then said: "This is enough." So he closed the opening of the bag and tied it up again.

After he had tied it up the man said to White Man: "Here are the people I use when I want to do anything. They are the ones who hunt." The man said to the people: "Go hunt and bring the choicest things to eat to my lodge. Myself and my guest want to eat some more."

So the man and White Man went back to the lodge and stayed there all day. That night the same thing happened that had happened on the first and second night previously. They ate and ate until they had enough and were filled and then they slept.

The next day White Man moved on and went his way. Then White Man began to study and think how he could acquire from the man the man's way of living and of getting a living. So White Man studied how to get the man to let him have this bladder. So he hit upon a plan. He decided to cut himself, as the Indians do in mourning, and to cry. So he cut himself and came crying loud to the man's lodge. When he got to the lodge he walked around it crying and crying. The man and woman heard White Man but they knew that White Man was a tricky fellow and they paid no attention to him. But White Man just kept on crying. They heard White Man crying until they went to sleep.

When they woke up the next morning the man wondered what had become of White Man. He said to the woman: "Go out and see if White Man is around." She went and there was White Man asleep outside. The man woke White Man up and invited him into the lodge. White Man went in and sat down, and in the course of time the man said to him: "What do you want? Why have you cut yourself and made yourself suffer and cried?" White Man said: "I did so for a very serious reason. My enemies have killed my whole family, my wife and children, and have destroyed my home. I am destitute and do not know how I am going to live. So I thought I would come to you and ask you to share the bladder with me and tell me how to use it, so I may make ready to take revenge on the people who destroyed my family and home." The man, knowing White Man to be what he was, refused at once: "No. You will go to extremes. You will abuse it. You are crazy." White Man begged all the more. The man and woman were silent for a long time. But White Man kept talking and talked so

[25]
415

* A gall bladder sack, attached to the liver. Such gall bladders were used by the Gros Ventres to store grease prepared and mixed with berries and were kept closed to keep bugs out.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

much and so piteously that the man and woman were moved. The woman said to the man: "You ought to pity him. He has suffered a lot. I think he is serious and not up to his tricks this time." So the man said to her: "All right." Then he said to White Man; "Do not use the bladder and the people in it except on rare occasions, such as taking revenge on the enemies who killed your family, or as hunting when in need of food." White Man said: "I promise." White Man embraced the man and was glad. Now White Man had the bladder with instructions how to use it. The man just loaned the bladder to White Man. The man said to him: "There is one very strict rule to be followed by the person who has the bladder. You must sleep with your head toward the place to which you are going. You must observe this rule strictly to the letter." White Man said: "I shall." The man said to him again: "Remember to use the bladder only when you have to."

539
773

So White Man went off. And when night came he stopped. He was wondering if the whole thing would work. He couldn't stand it any longer so he said: "My children, go, I am hungry and want to eat." So they went and brought all kinds of meat. So he ate and ate, and then slept. When he woke up there was nothing there, no meat but only the bladder. So White Man picked up the bladder and went away again. He did in like manner each night, and each time the plan was successful and there was always something to eat.

White Man told his people what they should do in case he got killed: "Make a sweat house and a mound of earth in front of it. Someone should have a filled pipe and should stand at the mound of earth and should invite the Supreme Being four separate times with a stop after each invitation. Then a second invitation should be given, this time to 'You that follow one another' [Sun and Moon], and this invitation too should be given four separate times. Then you should give an invitation, likewise four separate times, to the 'Four holy old men.' Next you should give an invitation, also four separate times to 'You that starve to death.' Then you should give one invitation only to all of those who are to take part in the sweat, naming each one and saying: 'Come and join the sweat.'" White Man was here telling the people what to do if he should lose his life. They were to do this four days after White Man's death and then quit and wait and White Man would appear and come to join them.

White Man traveled four nights and slept four times after leaving the man's lodge with the bladder. On the morning after the fourth night there appeared signs of a habitation. And White Man said to his followers: "Stay right here." White Man went slyly to a little hill and pecked and pecked and saw a big camp with lots and lots of people. So absorbed was he in the sight that he did not notice some hunters coming in between him and his people. The hunters sneaked up and killed White Man. White Man had with him at the time the bladder. The hunters captured the bladder and brought it to camp and wondered what it was and why White Man carried

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
M3

it. It was still tied up. Out of curiosity they untied it and at once people began to come out of the bladder. So they lost control of the bladder, were overrun with these bladder people, were hopelessly outnumbered, and were destroyed and killed by them.

The bladder people were now without a leader but they remembered what White Man had told them to do if he were killed. So they built a sweat house and made a mound of earth in front of it and all who were going to sweat assembled there. One of them then took a pipe and filled it and stood at the mound and did just what White Man had told them to do. In a loud voice he invited the Supreme Being to come and sweat with them and did this four times. At once after the fourth invitation someone appeared in the direction the inviter was facing and walked toward them. The inviter went on to the next invitation as White Man had instructed. Meanwhile this person kept approaching. By the time the inviter had finished all the invitations, this person arrived where the people were. It was White Man. He said to them: "My children, I came back. I am going to sweat with you." Then they all went into the sweat house except the man with the pipe who remained standing where he was. After all, including White Man, were seated inside the sweat-lodge where they were going to sweat, White Man said to the man standing outside at the mound with the pipe: "Come in. Hand me the pipe." He handed the pipe to White Man who received it and said to him, "Go and get that [dry] buffalo chip out of the fire and put it down in front of me." The man did so. White Man took dry peppermint leaves and put them down on the chip and made incense and passed the as yet unlit pipe around and up and down in the smoke three times.

White Man in receiving the pipe grasped it with his left hand around the pipe stem just next to the bowl and his right hand around the pipe stem further toward the mouth. At first he held the pipe, bowl up and level, towards the smoke of the incense, then he raised the stem end of the pipe upwards until the pipe was nearly vertical and held it toward the rising sun, next toward due south, and finally towards the setting sun. Finally he reversed the stem towards his mouth. After this White Man said to the people: "Now you are free. You won't have to go back in the bladder again."

White Man while still holding the pipe prayed to the Supreme Being to bless his liberation of the people. After he had finished praying he told his people to do all the things which he himself had done since he had been with them. He told them to stand at the mound and put a buffalo skull on top of the mound in such wise that the forehead of the skull would rest level. He told them to have the children come around and to get some good old man to cut off a little of the flesh of the children's arms and to offer it to the Supreme Being by putting it on top of the skull. He told the older people to cut bits of flesh in the shape of the new moon from off their arms from between shoulder and elbow, from between elbow and wrist, from off

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

their thighs to the knee and from off their legs between the knee and the ankle and from off their chest (sternum),—to cut off as much as they could stand and not to fail to do this, and to put the cut-off bits on top of the buffalo skull. [Thick showed the writer the crescent-shaped scars on the outer side of his upper arm.] 539 773

Inside the sweat house White Man instructed them too in all the details of how to make the sweat house and the mound and how to heat the rocks and how to place the pipe on the mound.

White Man sat just inside the east entrance of the sweat house on the left as you enter. He had two assistants who remained outside. He told one of them to take two sticks tied together and get a live coal with them. With this coal he lit the pipe. Then all the people sitting in the sweat-lodge smoked. When all were through smoking White Man handed the pipe to one of his assistants who put it on the mound. Then he told the two assistants to close the doors of the sweat-lodge and one of them closed the front eastern opening and the other closed the rear western opening. Then White Man sang a song. Some of the people learned this song right away and sang it with White Man. Some of the people prayed while White Man and the others were singing. Then they heard a woman's voice, a very beautiful voice singing the same song that they were singing. Two songs had words that are translated as follows:[a]

First song: "My holiness have pity on me." (White Man was here really speaking to himself. He had great power to do things.)

Second song: "Something long (string, rope) have pity on me."

By this time the openings of the sweat-lodge had been closed and the water was ready. Each of these first two songs were sung three times. After this the third song was sung, a song without words. Then the water was stirred up and the people imitated the sound of the helldiver. Each time they got through singing the third song water was sprinkled on the rocks. The third song was sung three times and water was sprinkled on the rocks three times.

Ever since that time the Indians have done in just this way.

After White Man had told the people all about the pipe and how to use it, all at once the real Flat Pipe appeared. It was a pipe made all of wood in one piece bowl and all, with no detachable stem. This pipe was the main thing with the people after that.

Its real name is the Flat Pipe. The name Little Turtle is also used for it. The Pipe that is now kept is the same one that was given to the people by White Man.

---

[a] These songs were recorded as No. 35 and No. 43. For the latter see also story No. 5.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
773

The same Flat Pipe survived with the one man who survived the Deluge (see No. 3).

2. Ni:hahat Obtains the Buffalo[4]

At one time a certain man owned all the buffalo. At this time White Man was living and used to wander around. In his wanderings he came upon a camp of Gros Ventres and learned that they were always short of meat, because the man who owned all the buffalo kept them in a cave (or tunnel) in the ground.

White Man started to think up some plan to help the people. When he had decided on his plan, he said to the people: "Leave this camping ground and move away." They did so. But White Man stayed behind and turned himself into a little mangy pup.

Soon a little girl, the daughter of the man who kept the buffalo, came to the deserted camping ground, looked around, and found the pup. She was glad and took it back home. When she got back home she showed the pup to her parents. They said: "That's not a real dog, but White Man. Let him go. Kick him out and let him die." But the little girl insisted on keeping and raising the pup, and had her own way. The pup remained inside the lodge and was well fed and cared for.

The keeper of the buffalo had his camp just outside the cave where he kept them. He used to pass out the buffalo for the Gros Ventres in only limited numbers. That is why the Gros Ventres were always short of meat and hungry. Every day the man would let one buffalo out of the cave to water and graze, and each evening he would call them and they would come back in the cave.

White Man, the pup, studied the situation. When the keeper got back home from caring for the buffalo, he would scratch and howl and act like a real pup. The man would scold him and say to him: "You are not a real pup; you are White Man." But the pup would work on the affections of the little girl and the man would quiet down.

White Man watched how the man let the buffalo out of the cave and got them back, and awaited his chance. One evening as the man was putting the buffalo in the cave for the night, the pup ran out among them and decided to hide on the scrotum of an old bull. He took a good hold of the scrotum. The old bull went by the man who failed to notice the pup hanging on the bull's scrotum. So the pup got inside the cave, and did not let go his hold until the bull was far inside. Then the pup let go his hold and turned himself into a great big ferocious dog and started to bark.

This was strange to the buffalo, and caused commotion among them. They started milling around and finally stampeded toward the opening of the

---

[4] Cf. Kroeber, 1907, pp. 65-67. Kroeber's informant, Flea, was of the same generation as our narrator, The Boy.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

cave. The keeper heard the commotion and suspected that White Man had gotten inside the cave. The keeper tried to hold the buffalo back, but they dashed madly through the cave opening, ran over the man and trampled him to death. 539 773

White Man kept barking till he had driven all the buffalo out of the cave and scattered them in all directions so they would not return to the cave. Then White Man assumed his own body again, went back to the dead keeper's camp, and raped the keeper's wife and daughter. Then he left to go in search of the camp of the main body of the Gros Ventres. When he arrived there he announced to them that he had driven all the buffalo out of the cave and that the keeper was dead and told them all he had done, and foretold that they would never more have trouble in getting buffalo. Since that time the buffalo have remained on top of the ground and the Gros Ventres have had plenty of meat and have been hungry no longer.

3. Earthmaker and the Deluge[5]

The (primeval) keeper of the Flat Pipe, known as Earthmaker, knew in some way that the earth was going to be covered with water. It must have been that he was the only one who knew it for he was the only one who got ready to survive the flood. The Keeper made a big raft of logs and took the Pipe and put it on the raft. In the course of time the whole earth was under water. The Keeper just floated around everywhere on the raft, only himself and the Pipe with no other human beings or animals.[6] After a long time the Keeper saw a mountain top sticking up out of the water. He drifted toward it and landed there. When he landed he saw lots of birds and some animals. Right away he was glad that he had struck land and had some company in the way of animals and birds. He knew that the helldiver (mud hen), turtle, beaver, and muskrat were water beings. So he had them dive to get some earth from the bottom and to bring it back to where he was. First he sent Helldiver who after a while came up drowned. The

[5] Cf. Kroeber, 1907, pp. 59-61 (Nos. 1 and 2). Our version of the deluge story seems to correspond with Kroeber's No. 1 in which the person who sends the animals to dive is not identified directly with the trickster. The incidents in our version correspond, however, somewhat to those in Kroeber's No. 2, including the importance of the pipe and the making of man and woman. The Boy, our narrator, had thought that the latter might show Christian influence but stated that when he questioned older men, like Bushy Head, they emphatically declared that the incident was included in the old Gros Ventre tradition. [R.F.]

[6] Charles Buckman's version of this myth differed in that he claimed that "Earthmaker was floating in a pipe bowl,—the sacred pipe [Flat Pipe] represents this." Floating in the pipe bowl corresponds to the Arapaho version. [171]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
773

Keeper examined him and found some mud in the folds of his feet. He took the mud off and put it away on the raft. Then the Keeper sent Turtle to dive. Turtle also came up drowned, and the Keeper found some mud on the fold of his neck and put it where the other mud was. Next the Keeper sent Beaver to dive. Beaver came up drowned but without any mud. Last he sent Muskrat to dive. Muskrat came up drowned, but like Beaver without any mud. Then the Keeper spread the mud out to dry in the sun. When it was dried out the Keeper took a pinch of the dry dust between thumb and index finger, faced east, held up the pinch of dry dust towards the east then back towards his shoulder and sang Ni:hahat's first song: "My holiness have pity on me" (No. 35). Then he held the pinch of dry dust again towards the east and brought it back to his shoulder and sang the same song again. Again the third time he did the same and at the end of the third singing of this first song released the dry dust from between his thumb and index finger and said: "Go as far as the eyes can reach," and immediately ground appeared on top of the water.

Then he took another pinch of dry dust, turnd to the south and went through the whole procedure that he had gone through when turning towards the east, singing likewise in each case the same song. Then he took the last pinch, the remainder of the dust, and turning to the west went through the same procedure, still singing White Man's first song. And each time more ground appeared. After this last turning to the west all the birds and animals gave their own special calls. They rejoiced for there was ground again.

Then the Keeper with his Pipe was on dry earth, and he went around all alone, the only human survivor. Wherever he wandered from one place to another he always took the Pipe. After a while he became tired of being alone. So he decided to make another man like himself. He took mud and moulded it into the shape of a human being and held it in his hand and breathed on it three times. After the third breathing the man appeared, like himself. And now he had a male partner. So the three, the Keeper, the man and the Pipe went around together. After a while the Keeper said: "We have no way to increase unless we have a female." So when the man was asleep, the Keeper took out the last lowest rib on the man's left side and breathed on it three times and the last time he breathed a woman appeared. The Keeper said to the man and woman: "Get married and live together and multiply mankind."

So the man and woman lived together and the Keeper continued to stay with them. The couple bore children and after a while there were again a lot of people. The Keeper decided to teach the man and woman all about the Pipe, the Keeper's lodge, and so forth. "Whenever the Pipe is transferred from one Keeper to another, all the societies in the tribe,—age societies, soldiers, Stars, Grass Dancers, Crazy Dancers, and so on,—should sit in and sing their songs and imitate the calls which the birds and animals gave when I made the land again. If any of these societies should get mixed

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

up and one should sing the other's song then they must say: 'We have lost track of our song,' and must stop singing. But this must happen three times before they quit singing for good on such an occasion." And so all the societies imitate the calls of animals and birds. 539 773

Then the people multiplied more and more and followed strictly all the teaching about the Flat Pipe. This was the one and only sacred pipe they had until the time when the other sacred pipe, the Feathered Pipe, appeared on the scene. And it was the Ruler of the Storm who gave the Gros Ventre the Feathered Pipe.

What became of Keeper is not known, whether he died a natural death or not, nor is anything known of what became of White Man.

4. Origin of Death

When Earthmaker had made man and woman, and everything was finished, Earthmaker, man, woman and the animals were all sitting around admiring how beautiful everything was and talking together. Earthmaker put the question to humans and animals: "Now, how do you want things to run? You are going to multiply. If you die, shall you stay dead, or shall you come back to life again?" So the man and woman and animals had to decide, with Earthmaker as the judge.

The man took a buffalo chip and threw it in the water, saying: "Here's the way I want our lives to run." The chip sank and then came up to the surface. "I want life to be like that. We shall die but we shall come back to life again."

But the bear said: "No, that way won't do. Soon the earth would be full and there would be no room, and not enough for everyone to eat. There will be more pleasure and happiness in life if all die. Then there will always be new generations to succeed them." So the bear took a rock and threw it in the water, saying: "Here is the way I want life to be." The rock sank and remained down.

So Earthmaker decided: "This is the way it shall be, like this rock."

5. He-who-starved-to-death[1]

A long time ago the Gros Ventre lived in a land that was good, with plenty of game and of other things needed and used in their way of life.

---

[1] This story is not recorded by Kroeber. It contains the incident of a person crossing a body of water on the legs of a bird and shaken off, which was mentioned by Kroeber (1907, p. 58) as one of the motifs widespread in central N. America which to that date had not been recorded for the Gros Ventres or Arapaho. It also contains another common motif, that of the magically replenished food, which does not occur in Kroeber's Gros Ventre collection. [R.F.] [171]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
773

At that time there lived a man who was then the Keeper of the Flat Pipe. When the man's first son was born the child was beloved and was declared to be the Pipe Son according to custom. The boy was very happy as his parents showered all their affections on him. This went on until another son was born to the Keeper and his wife. For some unaccountable reason this second son won the affections of his parents over those of his older brother and so became the Pipe Son and he instead of his older brother got everything in the way of affection, attention and favors from his parents. This caused a break in the harmony and happiness which had prevailed in the family up to that time. The older brother became violently jealous of his younger brother.

One day while the older brother was out hunting buffalo, the enemy attacked the Gros Ventre camp. The younger brother wished to distinguish himself and so prove himself worthy of the esteem which his parents and all the people had for him. And so he decided to join the fight which took place. In the absence of his brother he took a red otter skin belonging to his brother and went out and joined in the fight. This red otter skin was very rare and was used by the older brother as his war medicine and when he wore it on his person he never failed to distinguish himself in battle.

While the fight was still on, the older brother came home from his hunting. On being told by his parents that a fight was going on, he immediately got ready to take part in it. He went to look for his red otter skin but could not find it. So he asked his parents: "What has become of my otter skin?" They told him: "Your brother took it and went to the fight."

The older brother was very angry at his younger brother and vowed that upon the latter's return from the fight he would give him a sound upbraiding. As soon as his brother got back from the fight he upbraided him severely and said to him: "If you wish to own a red otter skin go to the place where they are found and get one for yourself." The younger brother took this violent scolding of his brother very seriously and felt it deeply in his heart. After that he grieved and pined and hardly ever remained around the lodge, but stayed out alone away from the camp and was very sad and cried most of the time. He rarely came home. When he did so his parents would try their best by constantly talking to him to pacify him, but it was of no avail. He said to his parents: "I cannot get out of my mind the matter of the red otter skin. I am resolved to go where they can be acquired." In spite of the warnings and entreaties of his parents and the other people to discourage the young man from this very dangerous undertaking, he struck out towards the rising of the sun and the habitat of the red otter.

After traveling for many days and nights and crying most of the way, he came in sight of a large camp of lodges. He did not hesitate to enter the camp and was not afraid, as he was resolved to acquire a red otter skin even at the risk of his life. The people welcomed him warmly and said to him: "What are you doing so far from home and from your parents?"

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

They knew how his parents loved him most dearly because he was the Pipe Child. He answered them: "I am going to the place where the red otter was gotten." They were horror-struck and said to him: "By all means turn back from going there, as no one who has gone there has ever returned, but has lost his life." The young man however was determined to go on and did not lend an ear to the advice and warnings given him by the people. Disregarding all they said he went on his way toward the rising sun. 539 773

After many days of traveling he came upon another large camp. Here too he was known as the Pipe Child and was given a warm welcome and good treatment. They too warned him but he went on. Finally he arrived at a third camp and was likewise well received and fully warned. When however the people saw that he was determined to go on and was not going to listen to their counsel to go back, they said to him: "All right. But at least listen carefully while we tell you what lies in store for you on this final and fourth leg of your journey and quest. When you leave this camp go toward the rising of the sun. After many days of travel you will come upon a lone lodge on the edge of a large body of water and facing toward the rising of the sun. When you get to the lodge you should do nothing else but start to cry and to walk around the lodge. When night comes lie down and sleep at the foot of the first pole to the left of the lodge door. The next night sleep at the foot of the second pole, and so on each night at the succeeding pole until you reach the last of the thirty poles. When you succeed in doing this then the man to whom the lodge belongs will invite you inside and will ask you what is your reason for inflicting so much punishment on yourself. You will tell him about the red otter. Then the man will grant your request as you will practically have gained the red otter by being able to sleep at each of the thirty lodge poles without having taken anything to eat or drink. But by all means do whatever the man tells you to do, following every instruction exactly. Another danger however awaits you. For besides giving you the red otter the man at the lodge will offer you a gift of one of his many birds that live there with him. Among them is a certain red bird who is very evil and tricky. Those who have picked him as a gift have been exposed to great danger as the red bird flies up into air with anyone that takes hold of his legs and after flying around a long while deposits him on an island in the middle of the large body of water. Every time without fail such men have died from starving or exposure or drowning."

So the young man after listening carefully to all this friendly counsel and warning, struck out toward the rising of the sun. After traveling many days and just when he was weary and tired out, as he came over a high ridge he saw a large body of water and on the shore a lodge pitched. He was glad that he had now reached his goal. On arriving at the lodge he did what he was told to do. He began walking around the lodge crying at the same time. When night came on he lay down at the foot of the

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
773

first pole to the left of the lodge and slept there. The next morning he got up, and all day long he walked around the lodge and cried. When night came he lay down at the next pole and slept there. He did this day after day, always moving to the next pole each night and sleeping there.

When he came to the pole straight back from and opposite the door he was unable any longer to stand up on his feet but had to crawl from one pole to the next one. When he reached the pole half way between the back of the lodge and the door he was unable to crawl any more and so he rolled from one pole to the next one. He was now so weak from lack of food and drink that he could not cry out loud any more but just shed tears. He went on from pole to pole. Mustering up his last energy he rolled to the 30th and last pole and fainted. This was the last he remembered.

When he awoke he heard talking inside the lodge, and soon he heard the man say to his wife: "Go out and bring our son inside our lodge, so we can care for him and ask him why he is punishing himself so much." The woman went out and exclaimed: "He is near death, being a mere skeleton." The young man was unable to walk or even to move. So she dragged him inside and laid him gently on a soft bed of robes. The man said to his wife: "Give the young man a drink of water." She dipped a small shell into the water and handed it to the young man to drink. The young man thought to himself: "This small shellful of water is not enough to quench my great thirst." But the man spoke kindly to him and told him: "Go ahead and drink. You will get enough." So he drank his fill and the shell was still full of water as before he began to drink.

Then the man said to his wife: "Give the young man food to eat." She gave him on the shell four pieces of meat already cut. He thought to himself: "These four small pieces of meat are not enough to satisfy my great hunger." But the man told him: "Do not worry. Go ahead and eat the meat." So he began eating the meat, and, each time after he took a piece, there remained four pieces of meat, and when he had eaten his fill there were still four pieces of meat left.

The young man then slept four nights in the man's lodge. At the end of this time he was fully recovered from his experience. The man then asked him: "Why have you come here and why have you done all these things to yourself?" The young man replied: "My older brother saddened me most grievously by scolding me for using his red otter skin war medicine. I felt so bad that I left my home and came toward the rising of the sun to acquire a red otter skin to have for my own. I have been told this is the place to come." The man said: "Yes I will give you what you ask. It is a request easily complied with. And also besides giving you the otter skin I am giving you one of my many birds that are along the shore of the water. Pick out any bird from the flock and then come back to my lodge to get your red otter skin along with full and final instructions."

So the young man went along the shore and soon came upon a large flock of most beautiful birds in many different colors and plumages. He

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
773

walked among them and they did not run away from him. He was undecided as to which bird he would pick, for it was hard to tell which was the most beautiful. He finally decided on a certain one, and, as he stooped down to pick it up, the red bird that he had been warned not to pick as a gift, got in the way. But knowing the red bird was evil and without pity he would not take it. Every time however he was about to catch the bird of his choice, the red bird got in his way. Then the young man began to study the red bird. He looked him over carefully and saw that he was a very beautiful bird after all, being all pure red in color and with a bunch of red feathers forming a beautiful arch on his head. He decided then to choose the red bird as after all it measured up to all the requirements of beauty.

So disregarding the advice he had gotten from the people he took hold of the bird's legs. As soon as he closed his hands on them, the red bird took wing and soared up in the air with him, and he could not relax his grip on the legs of the bird. After flying around a long time the bird made for the island in the middle of the great body of water and dropped the young man there.

The young man walked around on the island, and found there many skeletons of human beings who had met the same fate, death, which now faced him. There was nothing to eat there except a few berries and some frogs and moss that had washed ashore, and white clay. He ate these the best he could. He fully realized that it was impossible to swim back to the mainland as the distance was too great. He cried all of his spare time in the hope that something would take pity on him and rescue him.

Every once in a while the red bird would fly over the island and would say: "Oh, the one who eats rosebush berries is still alive," and then would fly away. One day as the young man was crying along the shore of the island he came across a little water snake. He picked it up and looked at it. Then he took a small ornament off his person and tied it around the neck of the little water snake and laid down the snake again unharmed.

After having spent more than thirty nights on the island he was getting very weak again and was reduced to skin and bones. This time as he was walking around crying he heard singing behind him. He stopped and listened. Finding that the singing was coming toward him, he stood there and waited. Then as he listened he heard these words: "I am here and I am coming." The singing stopped and then a voice said: "Man, my father sent me here to call you to our lodge." The young man thought it best not to move at once, but to wait until the voice invited him four times. After the fourth invitation he looked all around and saw no one. Then looking down he saw the little water snake on whom he had tied the ornament. The snake said to him: "Follow me to my father's lodge." So saying the snake went into the water and the man followed it under the water.

After a long walk under the water they came to a large lodge with two big water monsters painted on it, their heads meeting at the door. The little water snake said to him: "Go inside. This is my father's lodge." So

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
773

he went in. A big water monster lay at the back of the lodge and welcomed him in. So he sat down near the water monster's head. The water monster said: "You have done something which must be rewarded. You are the man who tied the ornament around the neck of the little water snake. This little water snake is my last child and his name is 'The Last Child.' Now listen to me and you will see your parents and all things which you hold dear. For I have pitied you and I am going to rescue you from your desperate plight and also reward you for what you have done for The Last Child."

The water monster then sang a song with these words in it: "Hair Rope, have pity on me." After the monster sang this song he gave the young man a Hair Rope made of the long hair from the forelegs of the buffalo and from the back of the neck of buffalo bulls. And he told the young man: "Use this Hair Rope to get revenge on the red bird who so ruthlessly carried you away and left you alone on the island to die. Lay the Hair Rope in a circle on the ground as if setting a trap and say: 'I want a fat young buffalo to be here.' And immediately you will turn into a young buffalo. After some time birds of all kinds will come around and eat you and if the red bird even so much as steps inside the ring of Rope you will have him trapped and completely at your mercy. If that plan does not lure him into the trap, wish for a fat elk; if that fails, then for a fat deer; if that fails, then for a fat white-tailed deer; if that fails, finally for a fat young wolf and this will not fail. The red bird is very powerful, above all on top of the ground. I am the ruler under the water. I transfer my power to you and ordain that for all time to come this power shall be used by all generations of men, and shall be used for the purpose of revenge." So saying the monster told the young man: "Get on my neck and I will take you to the mainland. But do not open your eyes until I say to you: 'Now get off.'"

So the young man got on the water monster's neck and they started for the mainland. They went on and on, and after a long time the young man heard a sound as of scraping on rocks. Thinking they had reached the shore of the mainland he opened his eyes and at that instant he was again on the island where he had been before. The monster rebuked him for his disobedience in opening his eyes before it was time and said to him: "That was the one and only power I had to help you. There is nothing further I can do for you."

So the young man was back on the island as far as ever from home and from the fulfillment of his desire to have the red otter skin. So he began crying again, and he did this daily for a long time. One day he was walking along and crying. He went near a big tree and as he went under it he heard a voice saying: "Stop your crying and look up at me. I am the bald eagle and I am very powerful. I am taking pity on you and am going to help you." Looking up the young man saw a bald eagle perched on a limb.

The eagle said to the young man: "I am transferring my lodge to you and you are to have my body as a flag when you put up my lodge. I am going to take you to the mainland. You must do what I say and I will succeed.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
773

But if you do not do as I say, as you did with the water monster, I will not succeed. Take hold of my tail feathers with both hands, and close your eyes and you are not to open them until you touch ground with your feet."

The young man did as he was told and took a firm hold of the eagle's tail feathers and closed his eyes. Then the eagle let out his loud whistle, took wing, and sailed up in the air. The young man could feel that he was being carried through space and he was determined that this time he was not going to open his eyes until he touched ground with his feet, as the eagle had told him. He could feel the eagle sailing as it were in a circle and after a time he felt the ground under his feet. Upon opening his eyes he found that the eagle had deposited him in front of the lodge where he had slept and suffered so much for thirty nights.

He stood there not knowing what to do. Then the man whose lodge it was invited him inside. He went inside and sat down. The man said to him: "I am very sorry for you. The red bird is very evil and without pity. But now that you have gone through all these things required and are still alive, I will give you the red otter skin, and also horses and a bunch of leg hoofs of buffalo to use for a bell [rattle] on the horses' necks." The man took down the hoof bell from its place on one of the poles of the lodge and told the young man to follow him to the shore. On arriving at the shore the man shook the hoof bell violently and a beautiful black stallion with a bob tail came out from the water. The man now told him: "This is your horse and he is the father of all the horses that I am going to give you. And here is what you must do to get back home with these horses. These horses must not be abused or ill-treated and must not be killed. Whoever of your people so maltreats them will not own any horses for in a mysterious way he will lose his ownership. When I transfer this hoof bell from my hand to yours, shake it as you saw me do, turn around, and go back to where you came from toward the setting sun. When night comes you must lay your head forward when you sleep, and for four nights you are not to look back or around, but walk with your head down and your eyes on the ground. If you do not do as I say, the horses will disappear and you will have gone through all this suffering in vain. But if you carry out what I say, you will have wealth, happiness, long-life, and a renown that shall last for all time to come.[8] Finally I impart to you all my power and my whole being, under one other condition, namely, that you are not to give a single thing, a horse or anything else, to your older brother who caused you all the suffering and privation which you have gone through this long time. At each of the Gros Ventre camps which you will pass you will give to each man, woman, and child a horse, and in the following manner. Halt a good distance away from the camp with your horses and call one man from the camp, and tell him to go and announce to the other people to

[8] Cf. Kroeber, 1907, p. 128, incident of water monster giving horses to young man.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
N13

bring all of their ropes, that 'He-who-starved-to-death' would give them each a horse. Now go back toward the setting sun and do as I have told you."

So as soon as the man put the hoof bell in the hand of He-who-starved-to-death, the latter turned around shaking the bell and started out toward the setting sun. As he went along it was all he could do not to look back, for he could hear the tramping of the horses behind him, sometimes nearly running over him in their frolicking and play. But he had made up his mind firmly to do as he was told for he had had bitter experiences. Each night he lay down with his head toward the setting sun as he had been told. And at each of the three camps on the way he gave a horse to each person there. He successfully arrived back at the fourth camp, his home, and there gave a horse to each person except to his older brother. To him he would not give a single horse or anything else. His brother wept almost continually and was rarely seen in camp after that. And now the younger son of the Keeper of the Flat Pipe was back home and safe and was known as He-who-starved-to-death.

After he was fully rested and recovered from his experiences and travels he began to lay plans as to how to get revenge on the red bird who had caused him so much suffering. So as he had been instructed to do by the water monster he sweated on four different days and in the sweat-lodge told his story to his people. The first of the four sweatings was just for the purpose of getting ready for his revenge on the red bird.

After having gone through the ceremonies four times on four different days, he went away from the camp to a knoll and there laid down his Hair Rope trap. Standing in the middle of the circle of Rope he said: "I want a fat young buffalo to lie here," and immediately he himself turned into a buffalo. Soon a great number of birds flew to the spot from every direction, there to eat of the fat buffalo. After a considerable time the red bird appeared there. He alighted some distance from where the buffalo lay and down windward and asked one of the birds to toss him a piece of fat of the buffalo. He hopped to the fat tossed to him and inspected it carefully. Then he flew up and circled over the buffalo and said: "The one who eats rosebush berries cannot trap or outwit me, he is not powerful or clever enough," and the red bird flew away. So He-who-starved-to-death gave up and went back to camp.

After quite a long time he again went away from camp, but to a different spot, and again set his Hair Rope trap. This time he said: "I want a fat young elk to lie here," and at that instant he turned into a fat elk. As at the first setting of the trap, many birds came there to eat the fat meat. Soon the red bird came again and asked one of the birds to toss him a piece of fat. He inspected it as he had done before and on finding that it was that of his enemy he flew away saying: "You are not smart enough to trap me."

And so in turn He-who-starved-to-death set his Hair Rope trap for the red bird as he had been told to do and in the order prescribed,—the third

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

time by turning into a fat deer, the fourth into a fat white-tailed deer and the fifth into a fat wolf. The last time He-who-starved-to-death put perfume on himself, and the red bird, failing until too late to discern that it was his enemy and not a real wolf, was fooled. Before he found out his mistake he had already stepped inside the circle of the Hair Rope and was trapped. But not knowing that he was trapped he flew away taunting He-who-starved-to-death and calling him names.

539
773

So He-who-starved-to-death proceeded to do the thing he had been told to do by the water monster, by the bald eagle and by the man at the lodge by the water's edge. Since he was a Pipe Child he felt that he had the hereditary right to use some of the rites of the Flat Pipe in order to war against and totally destroy the red bird who had great power and who made life on top of the ground almost unbearable for anyone who wished to advance and get along better.

When the red bird flew away out of sight into the clouds, He-who-starved-to-death collected himself, fixed himself up, brushed down his hair, sat down facing the rising sun, and began to sing the song of the water monster at his home under the water. He moved his hands as if pulling something down from above with a rope, and at the end of each song he uttered the sacred refrain of the Pipe songs: "Yo-ho-ho-ho." He sang the song a number of times and before long the red bird appeared in the sky coming down toward him. When he saw this he was encouraged and sang with renewed fervor, and after he finished singing he jerked his hands down violently with all his might. And the red bird hit the earth in a cloud of dust at his feet, with one leg securely snared in the Hair Rope trap. "Now, red bird," said He-who-starved-to-death, "I have gotten you at last and I am going to mete out to you a far worse and more cruel punishment than you inflicted on me. In the end I am going to destroy you completely and the human race will hear of this for all time. In a short time from now you will be no more." So saying he proceeded to pluck the feathers off the red bird until there remained only a few down feathers around the bird's beak. The proud red bird was now a sorry sight, and realizing it closed his eyes and hung his head in shame. He-who-starved-to-death taunted the bird and twisted his beak around: "Now if you are as powerful as you claim to be, do something for yourself, for you have no feathers on your body and winter will soon be here and you will freeze to death." So he tormented the red bird for some time until finally the bird got angry, raised up his head, opened his eyes and said to He-who-starved-to-death: "Yes, I am the most powerful one on top of the ground, and now I will prove it. You cannot get the best of me. You are less powerful than I am." So saying the bird shook himself violently and after he ceased to shake all his feathers came back on his body again. He became whole and entire and with a few more cutting and final remarks to his enemy he flew up and disappeared in the clouds.

He-who-starved-to-death sat there for a while sort of bewildered. But recovering himself soon, he began to sing the song belonging to the Hair

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
773

Rope trap as he had been taught to do by the water monster under the water and repeated the same pulling-down motions he had made before. He succeeded in pulling down the red bird and plucking him as he had done the first time, but the red bird was able to get his feathers back again.

Four times in all he did all this and each time the bird got his feathers back again. But He-who-starved-to-death did not give up. For the fifth time he began singing, believing that the red bird had exhausted his power the fourth time. Sure enough on this fifth trial after he had sung the song a number of times, the red bird appeared, came toward him and landed at his feet with the Hair Rope trap still attached to one of his legs. He plucked all the bird's feathers off again. Again the red bird shook himself violently as he had done the other four times, but all his efforts failed and his feathers did not come back again.

So He-who-starved-to-death tormented the bird to his heart's content until he tired of doing so. Then he said to the bird: "Now since you did not pity me on that island where you put me against my will, and since you do not even now respect me nor my present true name 'He-who-starved-to-death,' but you alone still call me 'He-who-eats-rosebush-berries,' I will not be moved by any prayer or entreaty you might make. I doubt whether you will even attempt to pray, for you are too proud and think too much of yourself, having the idea that you do not need anyone's help. It took me all summer to trap you and to get revenge on you. But now I have conquered you completely and will leave you to your fate. You will starve and freeze to death after winter sets in."

So He-who-starved-to-death, the Flat Pipe Child and the second son of the Keeper of the Flat Pipe at that time, now became ruler of all the people who lived on top of the ground. He added many rites to the Flat Pipe rite,—the invocation of the Last Child, the Hair Rope, the song of the water monster. He did so much and so well for his people that after he died his name was invoked when the Gros Ventres prayed in earnest and has been so invoked down to this present day.[9]

6. Origin of the Feathered Pipe[10]

a. *Version of The Boy*

All the people after the flood were living the life of the Flat Pipe as they

---

[9] The horse does not enter into the Flat Pipe rite although He-who-starved-to-death was the one who brought horses to the Gros Ventres. There are, however, certain associations between the keeper of the Flat Pipe and horses (see p. 63).

[10] Kroeber, 1907, p. 112 (No. 23), gives a short version of origin of the "chief Pipe" which undoubtedly refers to the Feathered Pipe. See also our No. 7, in which young man dies, is placed in Feathered Pipe lodge, and storm comes.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

had been taught to live by White Man. There were many people then who lived happily and multiplied. 539 773

All were camped in a circle in a certain place. Quite a distance away there was high ground with a steep bank on one end of it. A certain childless couple decided to move up to this high ground. The man was very successful in his hunting there in that isolated place and spent most of his time hunting. Towards sundown one day they saw coming a big storm with lightning and rain. It looked as if it would be an unusually severe storm so they got everything ready, tightening the lodge and so forth. The man and woman then sat in the lodge. When the storm was within hearing distance they heard some men singing right in the storm. When the storm reached them it turned out to be a very severe one with high wind, though of short duration. During the storm the Ruler of the Storm spoke to the man and his wife: "You have been selected by the Ruler of the Storm to be Keepers of the Pipe and of that carved rock. Whenever a storm like this comes, use this pipe and rock to pray to the Ruler of the Storm not to be too hard on you." The Ruler of the Storm taught them the four different songs of the Pipe and the ritual of it.

When the storm was over the tent and everything the couple owned had been taken away by the storm. They looked around and saw a pipe and a rock with a human face carved in profile on it.

So now the Gros Ventre people had two pipes and bundles, the Flat Pipe and the Feathered Pipe. And they prospered and lived long and were happy and always had good luck. They had great reverence for both of the pipes, but greater reverence for the Flat Pipe. All the people lived together in one camp. And whenever they moved camping sites, the Flat Pipe as the senior pipe took the lead while the Feathered Pipe came next. If the people separated into two camps, so that one half had the Flat Pipe and the other the Feathered Pipe, the Feathered Pipe took the lead in this other party.

b. *Version by Thick*

A certain couple who lived at a time after the great Flood had a boy and this boy from the time he was a child never went out and played or joined with other children; he stayed by himself. He was a good boy, a very modest boy. This boy was like that up to about the age of 17 or 18. There was another family of another band, a member of which was a girl of the same nature,—a quiet, stay-at-home girl. Since neither went out and played they wouldn't have known one another; they must have been told through a dream. The boy said: "Well, my father and my mother, you go to this family. They have a girl. You go there and ask the parents of that girl if I can have her for my wife." And the father of course was glad to do it.

So he and his old woman went over to this family. When they got over there this man who had the daughter was glad to see these folks visit. "Well, old man, you have never come into my lodge before and I am glad you have come. Sit down." And he told his wife: "Cook for them." So they cooked

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
793

and after they had eaten this man said: "Well, my friend, what I came for today is this. My son sent me over here to ask for your daughter. He wants to marry her." The girl's father said: "Thanks, thanks, I am glad somebody has asked for my daughter. All right. Now, you tell your son not to be in a big hurry because we want to make a lodge and when we are ready we will let you know."

So they went home and told their son and he said: "That is all right." So the girl's parents got busy and got hides and robes and made a big lodge all furnished. So when it was ready they pitched it and put everything in it and horses were tied by the lodge. Then they cooked a lot of food and brought it in there. Then they sent word to this other family: "Now we are ready for your son." So this man took his son over there. When they got there the girl's father came out and said: "Son-in-law, that is your lodge. Go right in." The girl went in. Then the man said: "Son-in-law, there is a lot of food in there and you have to invite old men." So the father-in-law called out and invited several old men to feast with this young couple. So the young couple stayed with the girl's parents for a long time.

After a while the young man said to his wife: "Well, we have stayed with your parents long enough. We will now stay with my parents." So they camped by his father.

One midsummer day it was very hot and they raised the lodge cover to let air in. In the evening the young fellow told his father: "Father, early in the morning I want you folks to move my lodge. You see that flat out there (away from the camp on the west side)? I want you to set my lodge there early in the morning." So the next morning the old people got busy and moved the lodge to where he wanted it. They did it without asking any questions and he didn't tell them why he asked this. After they moved it he said: "Now, father, you get a couple of old men (criers) to tell the people to fix up their lodges tight, so they won't blow over. There is to be a terrible wind."

So his father went back and got the men to announce what his son had said. And you know how it is, there are always many people who don't believe. "Why should I try to fix my lodge tight when it is a hot day and there is no wind?" But of course a lot of them fixed up their lodges tight. So the young fellow told his father: "You bring all my horses and picket them right here in front of the lodge." And the old man, without asking any questions, did everything his son told him. So he brought up all the horses, quite a lot, because both families had given the young couple horses. And after they did that the young man said: "Well, you go home." And after the young man's father went home they saw a little cloud in the west and it soon spread, and when it was coming there was lightning and thunder, and when it came to the camp, the wind and rain came together. It was like a cloudburst and where the young man's lodge was that thunder was just rolling.

After the storm had passed over very few lodges were left standing. They never did find the lodges of those who disobeyed. The old man went out

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

and saw that his son's lodge, horses and belongings were all gone. He found only the two young persons sitting on the flat where the lodge had been. And then the old man walked out there, his son saw him coming and called to him at a distance: "Stop! Now go right back and tell the people I want all of them, young and old, to come, I want to show them something." So the old man turned and walked back and got the crier to announce that. So the whole tribe came and the young man told them: "Tell all the people to come in single file, coming from the west, my parents first, then my wife's parents, and then all the rest." So they did that. They came in single file. They came slowly and the young man had on only his robe. He put his robe back and held out both his hands touching and his wife did the same. And in his hands he had the Pipe and this woman had the Image. Neither the Pipe nor the Image had been made by the couple, but had been given them from heaven. Everybody went by and looked.

After everyone was gone, they got up and went home. Then people got busy and they got another lodge and everything that goes with it and set it up for this young couple again—horses and everything. And after he got his lodge and everything back, the young man and his wife went in and he told his father: "You call the old men, the noted men, call all of them." So they called all the old and noted men and they came in and the young man said: "All right. This thing has been done and I am going to tell you about it. From the time I was old enough to know I began to dream. And everything about the Pipe, how it is to be handled and what to do with it, I used to be told in my dreams. And that is why I had to be by myself and never go out and play. When I got to be a young man, I was told that the Pipe was ready. That is why I then asked for this girl. She was the same. And after that you know what happened. Well, here it is. From now on, whenever this Pipe is passed to another hand they will have to do the same. When this Pipe has to be passed on, you will have to make a raid on the one who gets it and take everything he has, the same as they did with me. You see they took my lodge and horses and everything, and they went up in the clouds. But this other, he will lose everything but it will remain among the people. I am going to bundle this Pipe and these other things have to go in (the feather stem, the Pipe, the Image, the owl and the whistle). When I pass this Pipe on there will be six persons that will keep the Pipe in turn and carry on the work, but every seventh keeper is going to become a holy man, and he will get all the power. He will have control of the weather, with power to cause and stop rain and storms." And the Gros Ventres claim that it has worked out just this way. Every seventh keeper became a great man, holy. In recent years old Bull Lodge got the Pipe and he must have been a seventh one in the series, and he became a holy man (bitä:nehi) with weather power.

c. *Version by Singer*

A certain young man was sleeping and in his dream a person came to him and said: "Don't camp in this circle. Camp off by yourself. You are going

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
773

to get something." He did so. There was just a huge rain cloud and the thunder was terrible, and that is when Bha'a gave him the Feathered Pipe. He didn't have a horse or anything else left, but only the clothing he had on. He and his wife just sat there like that. When he was given the Pipe, this person said: "When this Pipe is given away the people receiving it want to do just as you did." So when the Pipe is transferred the new owner and his wife give away everything he has to the old owner and just sit there with nothing but the clothes they have on.

d. *Version by Al Chandler*[21]

This Feathered Pipe was gotten from a young fellow who was a very poor man. He didn't have any father or mother. They had died when he was young and he was staying with his grandmother. He used to have dreams that something was going to be given to him, something very important. He figured that people always have to pay something to get anything, so he thought he had better go out and rustle some horses to pay for what he was going to get. He went out two or three times and brought back quite a bunch of horses.

One summer he was sitting around in the daytime and something told him: "Well, you are going to get something now. You better get ready for it. The first thing you want to do is to get a big lodge. If you haven't got one, get it some way, buy it or ask for one." He went around and told people and they helped him out, they just gave him the lodge. After he got the lodge, he was told to put it up somewhere by itself. "Now after you do that," he was told, "you rustle good things like beadwork and what Indians have, blankets and things inside the lodge and fix your lodge up good. And you must have a horse tied to every one of the lodge pins. When you have finished with that, you go in there (in the lodge) and be there all alone." So after he got everything ready, he did this, just as he was told. Whoever this was who told him what to do knew that he was ready.

It was toward the middle of the day and he was in there all by himself. All at once it started to get cloudy and an electric storm and a strong wind came. After all the storm had passed, the people wondered what had happened. They looked over where the lodge had been, and nothing was there except a man sitting on the ground. The lodge, the horses, everything was gone. He was sitting there by himself with this Feathered Pipe and some kind of moccasins of animal fur (these are in the Pipe bundle now). Some old fellows came very close and asked him: "What happened?" "Well," he said, "you can all come now, all those who want to hear."

So the old men and old women came. They kept the youngsters and the young women away. This young man's name was Broken Knife. He told

[21] When Al Chandler was a child he lived with Sitting High, who at that time was keeper of the Feathered Pipe.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

what had happened, and of course they were afraid to touch the Pipe. They had never seen anything like it. It was just glittering with different colors. They had never seen a Pipe like that. The stem is porcupine quill work with eagle feathers all along the stem. The young man knew all the songs that belong to the Feathered Pipe. The Pipe was given by Bha'a.

539
773

e. *Version by Garter Snake*[18]

A long time ago there lived a man named First Man, with two wives and two children. He used to have dreams, and in one of them he was told he was to be given something from above (heaven). After he had been told this the third time in dreams he called the old men together and said to them: "Three times I have dreamed that I am to be given something from above. I do not know what to do. I have called you together to tell you my dream and to get your advice." One old man as spokesman advised him: "If you dream this again, accept the gift, for the good of all the people." After this the First Man had the same dream again (the fourth time). He did not see anybody but he said: "All right, I'll accept it." He was then told in his dream to get ready four nights after that.

On the fourth afternoon after, he told his father: "You and some of the old men, criers, go around and tell the people to make their lodges fast so they will not blow down. There is going to be a big storm with great wind and much rain." The criers went around and warned the people. Some obeyed and some made light of the warning. First Man then took his own lodge and set it up some distance from the camp. He then picketed his horses near his lodge and sent his younger wife back to the main camp to stay there that night. But First Man and his older wife, First Woman, with one of his two children, remained in his lodge.

About dusk that evening a heavy black cloud with lightning came from the west. That night a terrific storm, with very sharp lightning and thunder, violent wind and torrents of rain, started and lasted all night until about daybreak. During it, people could hear a whistling from a whistle. The next morning the sun came out warm, and there was water all over the place.

First Man's father was worried about his son and went out to look toward's his son's lodge. The lodge and horses were gone. He saw only First Man, First Woman and the child, sitting out there on the flat. So he called to his people: "Come out and look. Everything my son owned is gone. He

[18] In early life Garter Snake had been Pipe Child to the Feathered Pipe. Her version came from her father, Bull Lodge, a former keeper. She emphasized that she was giving us what and only what her father had told and that he had not told her everything. She mentioned that when her father was about to tell her the story of the Pipe he said: "Listen very closely to what I am going to tell you; you can tell it to your grandchildren when you get old."

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539 773 is sitting out on the flat." So everybody came out and looked. The man and his wife and child were sitting there on sage with their heads and faces covered with some kind of covering sent down from heaven. The people were afraid to go near them. Up above a man and woman singing was heard (by First Man? or by the people?).

At last about noon the young man uncovered his head and his father came closer: "Son, we don't know what to do. What do you want us to do?" He replied: "First, put up a lodge with all its furnishings close to where my lodge was which was taken from me. Then get sage and put it inside the lodge at the back, with the heads of the sage pointing to the center, and put some down on the ground from where we are to the door of the lodge." After all this was done, the three walked over to the lodge and went in.

During the storm First Man had been given four things from above: The Pipe, a feathered thing, an image and a whistle. The Pipe had been given by the Supreme Being through Bha'a. The Supreme Being was father of the Pipe. He was also told what names he and his first wife should thenceforth be known by: Whistling Man and Woman-takes-the-lead because she had to take the lead in all wanderings.

She became the main Pipe Woman who would carry the Pipe when the people were on the march and who would take it in and out of the Keeper's lodge. The man's younger wife became second Pipe Woman whose duty it was to handle the Pipe when the main Pipe Woman was in her menses, for at such times the latter was not allowed to handle the Pipe.

The night after the storm Whistling Man asked to have a drum (or four drums?) brought over to his lodge. He called the old men over and sang four songs (no doubt the four Feathered Pipe songs). He put the four gifts each in a separate covering, placed them all together in a black-bear robe, tied the bundle, and put it in the back of his lodge on the sage that had been spread there. After he had wrapped the Pipe and sung the four songs, he told the story of his dreams and gave instructions about the Pipe and its ritual.

Every night after this he was told in his dreams what other things should be put in the bundle with the Pipe. These were various birds of the air,—for the Pipe came from above,—except one thing from a ground animal, a muskrat skin. He also had somebody make a drum and a wooden bowl, which still hang with, not in, the Pipe bundle. It took him several years to get all these things together. The last thing he got for the bundle was a tanned elk hide.

When all these things were ready, he took a white-buffalo robe, cut it to size, and wrapped the Pipe itself in this. The other things too he wrapped separately, the feathered thing in smoked skin, the image in hair of buffalo fur, but the whistle was just put unwrapped in the bundle.

He was told too (in his dreams) about the ritual of the Pipe. The boughs or needles of sweet pine were to be used as incense. At the time they were camped far from the mountains where sweet pine grows, but in Whistling

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
773

Man's lodge was a whole branch of sweet pine. Where it came from, the people did not know. The people in case of sickness would come to Whistling Man with offerings of tanned deer or antelope skin to "cover" the Pipe. After the offerings had accumulated he had some of the men make a sweat-lodge, with pile of dirt outside (from the excavation inside the lodge), and a buffalo skull on top of it, and with a long pole on which the offerings were hung. When all was ready and the stones were heated, an old man prayed, inviting four times, first the Supreme Being, and afterwards the old men present, to sweat.

Whistling Man also told the people that the Feathered Pipe had been given them for their well-being and protection, that it should remain with the Gros Ventres as long as the world would last, and that it should never be transferred to any other tribe, no matter what should happen.

So Whistling Man kept the Pipe for forty years. Then he was told in his dream of a coming great flood. Forty years after the flood, when he was so old and feeble that he could hardly dance at all, he was told in a dream to transfer it to some other Keeper. He then made a drum and a gourd rattle. The drum was painted half black and half red, black to represent black (storm) clouds and red to represent the earth. He was told, too, from time to time to add to the Pipe bundle certain specified things: the whole skin of a muskrat, a crane, a big white swan, a duck, helldivers, and an unidentified bird called Big Bird. After all these things were finally gathered together, he wrapped each one separately. He was further told to collect one feather from each of all kinds of birds and tie these feathers on the stick to make the feathered thing. All these objects were then put in the Pipe bundle which had its cover of black-bear robe and an outside cover of tanned elk hide.

When all was ready, he was told in a dream: "You are now ready to turn over this Pipe. But wait until you are told." The man chosen to receive it had to be a good, noted and wealthy man. Finally, after a time, Whistling Man gave it to his uncle who meanwhile had been told in a dream that it was to be given to him. Whistling Man said to the people: "Now, my children, I am going to give you my son (the Pipe)." And he said to his uncle: "After you keep it four years, transfer it to somebody else. If you cannot find a worthy man, keep it four more years. If at the end of your second term (eight years) you cannot find a worthy successor, keep it four more years. But at the end of twelve years you have to transfer it." When Whistling Man actually turned over the Pipe it was night time. He did what had been done to him in the storm when he first got the Pipe: He took the same black cloth and put it over the heads of his uncle and the latter's wife. Then the people raided his uncle and took his lodge, belongings, horses, everything, as Whistling Man's property had been taken in the storm. The next day the people clubbed together and gave the uncle and his wife a lodge, bedding, horses and everything they needed, and gave them horses to give to the nephew who had given his uncle the Pipe.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
773

And so as time went on the Pipe passed from Keeper to Keeper at least every twelve years. Later the new Keeper was appointed, not by the previous one acting alone from instructions in a dream, but by consultation and agreement with the old men called together by the Keeper to elect the successor. Since the days of the first Keeper, Whistling Man, up to the time Bull Lodge became keeper, there had been 200 keepers.

7. He-who-dreams-of-Bha'a

The man and woman who were given the Feathered Pipe by the Ruler of the Storm had at the time no children. They were a young couple still in the prime of life. After they got the Feathered Pipe a boy was born to them. This boy grew up like any other boy. For a while he was called Pipe Child. After he got to be a good sized boy (about 14 years old) he used to leave his father's lodge, go away from the camp, and cry. Pipe Child used to do this every once in a while. Sometimes he would come back sooner than usual and would walk around his father's lodge and cry; after a while he would get tired and would go stay to the back of the lodge on the outside on the place of honor and would sit reclining against the lodge just where the Feathered Pipe was kept and would sleep there. At other times he would go inside the lodge to the Feathered Pipe bundle and embrace it and cry; and when he got sleepy he would lie down on the bed right under the tripod where the Feathered Pipe was kept.

Pipe Child did all this over and over again. He would go out away from camp and cry or he would come and cry around his father's lodge. His father and mother would be glad at this, for they knew that the boy was in this way forming his character. They did not tell the boy this in so many words, but silently they approved.

While the boy was doing this the people were camped near a steep coulee with water at the bottom of it. This was where the people went to fetch water. One day the enemy sneaked up to them at a time when a lot of women had gone down together to the stream for water. Here the enemy attacked them. The banks were steep and the Gros Ventre women could not easily make their escape. So a lot of the women were killed and some were scalped alive. The alarm spread rapidly and the Gros Ventre then got their horses ready and put on their war regalia and prepared to pursue the enemy and to give battle. Pipe Child's father said to him: "My boy, you are old enough now. You are nearly grown up (the boy was about 16 or 17 years old at the time, which was about the age at which fathers let their sons go to battle). So you will have to live like the rest of the people. You might as well start now. You go along on this fighting expedition." The father dressed up Pipe Child, tied his own war medicine on the boy (war medicines were tied on the head or elsewhere), gave him a spear but no other weapons, mounted the boy on his own (the father's) horse, the fastest and best horse in the Gros Ventre tribe. The name of the horse was

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Crooked Leg. The father said to Pipe Child: "Give chase to the enemy, and when you overtake them ride right into their midst, get on the right-hand side of one of the enemy and spear him, and after you have done that wheel your horse around and come back to camp. Do not do anything else. Do not spare the horse; he is a good fast horse. Let him run for all he is worth." The man took quite a while to get Pipe Child ready. When Pipe Child was ready he rode off and rode as fast as he could. By the time he reached the battleground, a pitched battle was already under way. Pipe Child used his own judgment since there was only one single thing he had to do, to pick out one of the enemy worth attacking. So he saw one of the enemy mounted on an "aplouse" horse (white with black spots on the rump) with bloody withers. Pipe Child thought to himself: "This is one of the enemy who scalped the women alive." So Pipe Child made for him. He was a great warrior, one of the most prominent men of the enemy tribe. Pipe Child waited until this man was riding away from him. The boy then rode after him, got to the right side of him and when just opposite him speared him, piercing his body through and through. He couldn't pull the spear out, so he just left it in the man's body and wheeled his horse about and rode back to camp. His father was waiting for him and said to him: "Son, what did you do?" The boy replied: "I did just what you told me to do." Then he related all he had done. His father was glad.

By this time all the other Gros Ventre warriors had come back. They had killed many of the enemy and inflicted on them a crushing defeat. There was great rejoicing. They were singing all over the camp. Finally the celebration centered in front of the Feathered Pipe Keeper's lodge, for it was the custom to celebrate the victory in front of the lodge of the person who had done the greatest deed, and in that battle Pipe Child had performed the greatest feat. The people danced and sang and the father gave away all his belongings in honor of Pipe Child, his friends helping him to give the things away. At last he had nothing left but the Feathered Pipe and his own horse, Crooked Leg.

When the dancing was over, one old couple still remained around dancing and singing. They went toward the father's lodge, saying the name of Pipe Child and of his parents. When they got in front of the lodge, they stopped and sang and danced there, still saying the name of the boy and his father. Finally the father and his wife were moved and he said to her: "Invite them in." The old couple came in and the father said to them: "Why are you still celebrating and why do you come to my lodge?" The old man replied: "The reason is that I want your horse, Crooked Leg. I want you to give it to me. I am a poor man. It would do me a lot of service in my hunting and other work." The Keeper of the Feathered Pipe said to him: "That is easy. I thought you would ask something hard. If that is all you want, you shall have the horse." So the Keeper said to his wife: "Go out and unpicket Crooked Leg and give him to this old man." So the woman went out and unpicketed Crooked Leg and gave him to the old man. The

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539 773

old man and his wife had the more reason to celebrate, and they shouted louder and louder and attracted the attention of the whole camp. Everybody knew that the old man had gotten this great horse from the Keeper.

The Keeper had planted tobacco for that season. Without waiting for the customary harvesting of the tobacco, all the people took advantage of the occasion and raided the tobacco patch and the man couldn't say anything for his son had performed the greatest deed in battle. Such was the custom. That was the way renown was acquired, doing such things as that.

Pipe Child grew up and went on in his way. Whenever there was a battle or other event, he did like everyone else. Every time there was a battle he distinguished himself among the best of the warriors. He was brave, capable, and intelligent, and in a short time he acquired a place in the inside circle of the leading men. When Pipe Child observed this he said to his father: "You tell the people that when they go out for the buffalo hunt they should get a buffalo skin from around the forehead, and I will use that for my shield. Tell the people to get good elk skin. I am going to use that for my shield case. Then after they have gotten us these two skins, dry and prepare them. Then just the three of us, you, my mother and myself, will go apart secretly and cut ourselves off from the rest of the people. Then I will paint my shield. While I am painting my shield you will sing for me, singing the songs used in the Feathered Pipe rite."

So they got the two skins, prepared them in the ordinary way. The buffalo head skin was prepared stiff as rawhide; the elk skin was tanned soft and pliable. When everything was ready the father and mother and Pipe Child shut themselves in the Feathered Pipe lodge and started in, the father singing the Feathered Pipe songs while Pipe Child painted the shield. The round buffalo-head rawhide was covered with the elk skin, and it was the elk skin that was painted. A smudge was made and the paints used were fumigated in the smudge from time to time. The background of the shield was left in its natural color. Pipe Child, with black charcoal paint, painted on the shield in profile facing each other the two birds representing the Ruler of the Storm, Bha'a. Just above them he painted two zigzag lines nearly horizontal, crossing each other and pointing in opposite directions to represent the lightning. All this was painted in black with charcoal paint. Just above the lightning lines he tied to the shield a dead bird,—a small coal black bird (a little bigger than a swallow, with forked tail, white breast with a little yellow on the breast). Then he trimmed the periphery of the shield with eagle tail feathers attached all around at intervals but not touching one another. Then he put a thong on by which the shield could be suspended from his neck or elsewhere. All this is what came from Pipe Child's crying. He had waited all these years to prove himself worthy before making such a shield. Then Pipe Child said to his father and mother: "Now I am through. I have made my shield. Send for the crier and tell him to come over here."

When the crier got to the lodge Pipe Child said to him: "Go around the

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

camp and tell the people: 'He-who-dreams-of-Bha'a has finished making his shield and is going to put it outside on a tripod. Fasten your lodges down solidly and gather wood and drive your horses to shelter and get ready for a storm." A good many of the people thought this ridiculous for it was about August, the hottest time of the year, the time when the berries and chokecherries were ripe, and the day was a hot sultry one with not a cloud in the sky and with no sign of a storm. A lot of the people had the lower parts of their lodges raised up to let in the breeze and were sitting inside in the shade. A good many of the people however got ready their tents as they were warned to do.

539
773

He-who-dreams-of-Bha'a, for Pipe Child had given himself that name and was henceforth to be known by it, took out his shield and got the tripod on which the Feathered Pipe hung and hung his shield thereon a good distance back of his father's lodge. Almost at once a speck of cloud appeared in the west. In no time it grew bigger and bigger. Very soon after there were signs of an approaching storm. The people hurried to get ready, but before they were ready the storm struck with a violent wind that blew over a number of the lodges. Rain poured in torrents and there was severe lightning as if just over head. So it stormed and stormed day and night for four nights. On the morning after the fourth night there was a deep snow. One of the Gros Ventre got up early that morning, looked toward the Feathered Pipe lodge and saw that there was no snow around the lodge for a good distance. And he said to the people: "Look over there. Not a flake has fallen in a circle a good distance around the Feathered Pipe lodge."

He-who-dreams-of-Bha'a always wore his shield when he went to battle. He also made four round wheels of willow, each wrapped around with buckskin and with little feathers on them. These he used to tie on his head, one on his forehead and the other three in the same row back to his occiput. He also wore as a cuff on his right wrist a tanned badger face with the mouth towards his hand. He said to the people: "Unless I am struck on the head within one of the four wheels I will not be hurt." He wore the badger face on his wrist because he was right-handed and used this right hand for everything and hence everything he did while wearing it would be supernaturally easy for him.

And so He-who-dreams enjoyed great reputation and became a renowned war chief while he was still young. He lived on and was getting to be a grown man. Many offers of marriage were made to him from other prominent families, but he always refused saying: "I am not ready yet to get married."

He-who-dreams had a specially good friend. There was a big battle and for some reason He-who-dreams was among the last to start out for it. When he arrived at the scene of battle the fighting was about over and the two contending parties were at a standstill. The Gros Ventre said to him: "You are late. The fighting is now practically over. Your friend got killed." He-who-dreams felt very bad and said: "Let me go fight

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
773

those who killed my friend." But his relatives would not let him go. They held his horse. They were afraid for him. They felt the odds were too great against him to go alone, great warrior though he was. So he couldn't get away and was angry. Then he jumped off his horse and jerked his shield off himself, bent it out of shape across his knee and threw it to the ground in anger. It rolled away and as it rolled the ground burned, so that a burnt trail was left.

Then He-who-dreams went back home and he felt bad. His friend had been killed. The enemy had departed. All the Gros Ventre came back and went to bed. That night he dreamed that he had done a wrong thing, that he had violated something great in the way he had treated his shield, that his career was threatened with coming to an end and that he was practically done for. When he woke up he felt bad and told his father and mother about his dream. They became worried over their son.

After a while He-who-dreams began to sicken; his skin turned black; he got thinner and thinner and he lost his good looks and appearance. His father got the best medicine men to doctor him paying them big fees. Finally He-who-dreams got so weak that he had to be raised from the bed. Then he said to his father: "It is of no use to doctor me as I cannot be cured. I am going to die unless just one thing can be done." The father was glad and said to him: "What is this thing?" The son replied: "Someone must cut my hair, cutting off a little bunch on my forehead, over each ear and straight back of the head, and then I will recover." So the father was glad and he tried to get someone to do the cutting this way. But one after another refused because the father and mother and boy were special persons and everybody was afraid. So nobody would do it. The boy's father and mother were desperate because it was not permitted by their belief for the father and mother to do it for their own son and they couldn't get anybody else to do it.

After this He-who-dreams was bedridden and finally dying. He said: "I am going to die but not right away. There are four things inside my body. When they have come out I am going to die. Do not worry. Do not mourn for me. Do not shed a tear. For if certain things are done I will come back to life again. The four things inside me are: a small petrified animal with four legs (about as long as a middle finger, a thunder stone), which will come out first; a sucker; a water snake; a bird, the one I have sewed on my shield. After all four are out I shall die." Then all these four things came out: first, the thunder stone; then the fish came out alive, wriggled and died; then the water snake wriggled around a while and died; last the little bird looked out of his mouth and made a squeaking noise and died; and at this moment He-who-dreams breathed his last.

Before he died He-who-dreams had given instructions to his father and mother what to do after he died: "Leave the lodge where it is facing to the south. Lay my body on the Feathered Pipe bed with my head towards the east, the rising sun. Cover me up as if I were asleep. Fill a black pipe (but

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
773

not the Feathered Pipe) and lay it alongside of the incense hearth with the stem to the east and the bowl to the west. Close the lodge tight, including the top-opening and the ears. You two and everyone else move away out of sight of the Feathered Pipe lodge and when you get to the new camp ground go through the smudging, smoking and singing rite gone through when I made my shield. I have one doubt, because my father, the Ruler of the Storm, will be gone. (It was the fall of the year with the leaves and the birds gone and past the season for thunderstorms.) But do not lose courage. Do what I tell you. For four nights no one shall come to look in where my body is lying. On the morning after the fourth night come. If you do all the things I tell you to do and if you hear a rumble a long ways off, this is a sign that I will come back alive again."

The father and mother did as their son had told them. They shed no tears, carried out no mourning and kept their heads and followed his other instructions. Everyone moved away from the Feathered Pipe lodge. When they reached the new camp site it was late in the evening. The father started at once to sing, smoke, and make a smudge. Just before sundown he heard thunder rumbling somewhere. He grunted the grunt of gladness: "Now my boy will come back." By nightfall the sky was overcast with clouds all over, rain came, and with it thunder and lightning as if just overhead and especially in the direction where the tent with the body of the dead son lay. The storm kept up as long as they stayed awake. The next day it continued with thunder and lightning the whole day long and into the second night so long as they stayed awake. On the third morning the storm was still on and lasted through the day and the third night. But a little after noon on the third day the sun appeared. The storm had spent itself and there was still some dripping, but it was no longer raging.

He-who-dreams had a married brother. The brother knew the orders that had been left by He-who-dreams but he was jealous of him, even to the point of stealing his wife (paramour?). So the brother got on his horse to go over to where the dead body was lying although he was not supposed to do so. When he came in sight of the Feathered Pipe lodge, from afar he saw a man standing in front of it. After taking a good look and surmising it was his brother he wheeled his horse and rode fast back to his father's camp and told his father what he had seen and done. His father rebuked him: "You should not have done this. You have killed my son, your brother."

Then a lot of people went over to look. When they reached the lodge they found the lodge door open and there lying just over the threshold with his head inside He-who-dreams, stripped except for his breech-cloth, dead. He had come to life again but because his brother had looked before it was time, he had died again. The people looked all around the lodge and they found due east from the head of He-who-dreams a spot where the grass was trampled and where lightning had struck and had run in a crooked line toward where the dead man's head was. Due south they found another like spot with a crooked chain leading toward his side. Due west a like spot and

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
993

a chain leading toward his feet and due north another similar spot and a chain leading toward his side. The Gros Ventre always believed that the Ruler of the Storm had doctored (revived?) him and that if it had not been for what his brother had done, He-who-dreams would have come back to life as he had said. This is the only story the Gros Ventre know in which somebody who was dead came back to life. He-who-dreams was a truly great man.

(All the above happened in recent times since the Gros Ventre came to this part of the country which was previously Snake Indian country, the Snakes using rocks for pickets instead of sticks. Since that time which was, however, before the white people appeared, the Gros Ventre have believed that the Feathered Pipe was given them from above by the Bha'a because everything narrated in the preceding story happened before their very eyes.)

8. Loss and Recovery of the Flat Pipe[10]

The Gros Ventre went on and lived around this country, fighting with all the surrounding tribes, especially the Sioux and the Assiniboine. On one occasion they were camped on the White River (which empties into the Missouri R. from the south), south of the Missouri R. from the end of Bear Paw Mountains. All at once they were attacked by a great body of Sioux, Assiniboine and Cree from the east, who were determined to exterminate the Gros Ventre. The Gros Ventre were hopelessly outnumbered. A great battle was fought. For once the Gros Ventre lost the battle and with it the Flat Pipe. The Flat Pipe was captured by these enemies who took it away with them. It was the Assiniboine who had captured the Pipe. The Assiniboine who had captured the Pipe was an outstanding respectable and very wise man. He did not molest the bundle, but kept it in a prominent place in his lodge and treated it with respect. During the early part of the winter following the capture he had a dream one night. In the dream he heard the Flat Pipe talking to him and telling him it wanted to go back to its father and mother, and telling the man to bring the Pipe back to the Gros Ventre. The man paid no attention to the dream. He told nobody: He thought it was just a dream and nothing more. After a while he had another dream in which the Flat Pipe said to him: "Bring me back to my father and mother. If you do not, some grave evil will happen to your tribe,—famine, suffering, a great calamity." Still the man told nobody. In the dead of winter it kept snowing and snowing. The snow got so deep that no one could travel around in it. The people were without food and were suffering. The man had a dream again in which the Flat Pipe said to him: "If you do not bring me back to my father and mother (the Keepers) I will wipe you off the face of the earth."

Now the Assiniboine man was really alarmed. The next morning he invited all the principal Indians to his lodge to tell them about his dreams.

---

[10] Cf. passing reference to the incident in Kroeber, 1908, p. 274.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

His wife cooked food for them and after they had eaten and smoked, he told them about his dreams. They discussed the matter and decided that the pipe might be the cause of their suffering. It was still snowing and they could not travel. They decided that it was best to return the Flat Pipe to the Gros Ventre although they were at war with them. They felt that the Flat Pipe must be powerful otherwise it could not cause such hard times. So they told the Flat Pipe: "We are going to bring you back to your father and mother, your Keepers, so soon as the grass grows in the spring." The meeting broke up, and they all went away. 539 773

The following night the same Assiniboine man had a fourth dream in which the Flat Pipe told him: "I am glad I am going back home. The threat I made will be withdrawn for you have granted my request. Go to the top of the hills from where you are camped, and you will find four buffalo there and they will be easy to get. In three nights from the time you get them, I will send you warm winds to melt the snow so that you can get around and will not suffer so much."

The next morning the man told the people about his fourth dream. He told them he thought that the best way to get the four buffalo was to send two good men out to scout for them and to come back and report. The two men went out and came back and reported: "There are four buffalo there, a little way off." But the snow was deep and it was hard to get around, so they decided to send out enough good hunters to surround the buffalo so that whichever way the buffalo ran, they would run into armed hunters. And so they got all four buffalo and had fresh meat to eat. After three days the warm winds came and the snow left the ground. And there were plenty of other buffalo killed. Soon the people were strong again. The grass came up a little later. It was an unusually early season.

So the Assiniboine got ready and started for the Gros Ventre country. The Assinoboine man who had captured the Flat Pipe took the lead, carrying the Flat Pipe on his back. The Assiniboine found the Gros Ventre somewhere around where the latter now are. When the Gros Ventre saw the Assiniboine coming they made ready for battle, but seeing the bundle on the Assiniboine man's back, they just surrounded him without attacking. The Gros Ventre made peace with the Assiniboine on the spot. The most remarkable thing was that this peace was a lasting one, the Gros Ventre and Assiniboine never fought one another again. All this happened a long time ago and peace has lasted down to the present day. The country of the Assiniboine is to the east of the present Gros Ventre country. They have no real right here where the Gros Ventre are, but are allowed to remain here because of their returning the Flat Pipe to the Gros Ventre. The Assiniboine used to be poor, ragged, leading a miserable life with no horses and besides they had no morals and had evil ways. But the Gros Ventre saved them from the condition they were in, gave them horses and other things and made them what they are, bringing them out of their low moral condition. All this was done on account of their bringing back the Flat Pipe.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

9. Man Escapes From a Cannibal Dwarf

539 773 One day a man was out hunting. He spied a dwarf first. So he hid as best he could and hoped to escape the notice of the dwarf. The dwarf came to where the man was hiding and discovered him. The man played dead. The dwarf was undecided what to do. "I wonder," he thought, "what has happened to this man. I wonder if he is dead." So he walked up close to the man, examined him, and concluded he was dead. Said the dwarf to himself: "I'll bring his body home and eat it."

So the dwarf put the body on his back and went off. On the way the man was trying to think up some way of escaping. From time to time the dwarf's trail led through brush. The man knew that the dwarf was not very intelligent, so took a chance and his one arm being free, with his fist he hit the dwarf in the face, hoping the dwarf would think himself hit by the brush. This the man did every time the trail led through the brush, until the dwarf became much annoyed. So the dwarf put the man down saying: "I'll break his arm. It swings and hits me catching in the brush." So the dwarf stopped and pulled on the arm. The man let his arm bend and the dwarf thought he had broken it.

The dwarf then packed the man on his shoulders and went on again. The man kept hitting the dwarf in the face as before, until soon the dwarf's eyes were closed and he could not see. So the dwarf decided to cache his load. He laid the man on top of a stump and made for home. As soon as the dwarf was out of sight, the man jumped off the stump and made his escape.

When the dwarf reached home, he said to his children: "My children, I have very good food. I cached a man back yonder. Go fetch him and we'll eat him." The children were glad and got ready. "Wait," said the father, "I'll go with you and show you the spot. We're so glad to have something to eat, we'll dance all the way over." So they danced all the way to the stump. When they got to it, there was nothing there. The dwarf was puzzled, for he thought the man was dead. They examined the stump and looked all around it. On the stump they saw some fluid (probably sap), and concluded that the man had just rotted away. So they all went back home empty-handed.

10. Found-in-the-Grass[14]

In the long ago the Gros Ventres lived in a land of many mysterious and terrible dangers. They lived in villages separated by great distances, and it

[14] This tale seems to be the most complete of any told by The Boy, probably because it was told at leisure, translated and written out by Tom Main and sent to us by mail. The first part corresponds with Kroeber, 1907, pp. 77-82, No. 19, but in our version The Boy goes on to add a number of incidents which are attributed by Kroeber's informant, Flea, to Blood-Clot (pp. 82-90, No. 20). Both of Kroeber's informants, Flea (for No. 20) and Paul Plummage (for No. 19) were of the same generations as The Boy, though of course they were young men when they gave their versions.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

was dangerous for anyone to venture out of any of the villages to get food or wood, to hunt, and especially to visit from one village to another. 539 773

During this period, there lived a Gros Ventre man and his wife who had no children. This man was a great hunter and good provider. Because he was a hunter, he was absent from his village most of the time. On one of these hunting expeditions, he was camped in a most dangerous part of the country, but game was abundant. At the time of this particular hunt, his wife was pregnant, and he took special care of her for their joy was great that now they were going to have a child. He hunted every day and sometimes was gone several days from his camp while his wife stayed alone. He cautioned and advised his wife very earnestly: "Do not answer any calls, or voices, or knocks on the lodge, even if they are cries for help, nor under any circumstances, while I am absent from home."

One day he told his wife, "I am going away to hunt in the most dangerous part of the land, but where furbearing animals are abundant. Winter is approaching and we need warm clothing for ourselves and our expected child. I shall be gone a long time. There are dangers. Remain inside of the lodge and be absolutely quiet if you hear any voices or calls, whether they be from humans or animals. If only you carry out my instructions, if you close the lodge and make it appear as if no one is at home and stay inside and be perfectly silent when you hear voices of any kind, nothing will harm or molest you".

So he got ready all the things needed for this his greatest hunt and went to the land of the furbearing animals. As soon as he was out of sight his wife immediately proceeded to fix the lodge and camp for a long siege and as she went inside she fixed the door so it would appear that no one was home.

As she sat at work on some handiwork, she heard a moaning cry for help of some one in great distress. It seemed to her that it was from a human being, but she was not sure, and she immediately put away her work and sat perfectly still. As she sat listening, the cry for help was repeated and this time it was closer to the camp. She suddenly felt a great urge to go outside and see who was in such distress and offer her help, but remembering what her husband had said about remaining inside the lodge and being perfectly silent she gave up the idea and sat and listened.

As the cry for help came ever closer to the lodge she was positive now that it was that of a human being hopelessly lost. She sat perfectly still and made up her mind that in the event that this person forced his way into the lodge and tried to harm or molest her she would struggle, fight, and defend herself even if it cost her her life. By this time the person who was lost and crying for help, stumbled onto her lodge and was groping around it as if trying to find the door. The intruder went around the lodge several times, and on each round he made he hesitated at the door and could be heard as if fumbling with it.

Finally the woman, notwithstanding her husband's command and the fact that she was alone and not in a physically fit condition to defend herself,

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
773

out of compassion and pity for the one in great distress, threw all caution aside and spoke to this person, and directed him where the door could be found. She heard the person cry out for joy when invited by her from inside the lodge. The person removed the barriers that she had placed at the door to make it secure from intrusion, and came in the lodge.

She looked at the person as he straightened up, and saw that he was a blind and very old man. She led him to the place of honor to sit, this being the spot straight opposite the door. The blind man spoke to her kindly, and thanked her for having admitted him into her lodge. All her fears were removed as she thought that even in her condition she could handle this blind old man. Besides he seemed very kind and probably would not try to harm or molest her.

According to the custom of the Gros Ventres at that time, she immediately prepared food for him as he was very hungry and on the verge of starvation, having wandered around for a long time.

When the food was ready to be served, she put it on one of her best bowls and placed it in front of him and told him to eat it. She thought it would be wise to treat him as nicely as possible, even if he was a blind old man, because in those times no one could tell who possessed great power. The old man felt for his food and when he found that it was in this bowl, he said: "This is not the kind of bowl that I eat my food out of."

The woman now sensed that the old man was no ordinary person, so did not question his complaint, but proceeded to put the food in another bowl that she rarely used, and again placed it in front of him. He felt the bowl and said: "This is not the kind yet."

The woman then put the food in her most precious bowl made of shell. But still the old man would not eat the food, saying: "Until the food is placed on the right thing, I cannot eat it."

Then the woman in desperation wondered what she should do. So she took off one of her moccasins and put the food on it, and the old man said: "You are nearer the thing to put the food on than ever, but not yet." So being encouraged she took off one of her leggings, and placed the food on it, then gave it to the old man, but he still refused to eat saying: "You are closer than ever to placing the food on the thing that I use for a bowl."

She then took off her dress and laid it in front of the old man and put the food on it. The old man felt for his meal, and found what it was placed on and told the woman: "I am sure you will comply with my custom." He pushed the dress away with the food on it saying: "If you will only try once more to put my food on the thing that I use for a bowl, I am sure you will succeed."

So the woman pondered a long moment reviewing everything she had tried to do to please the old man. She came to the conclusion that there was one more thing she could do to please him and that was for her to place the food on her body. She then laid down on her back and placed the food he was to eat on her stomach and told him to eat. The old man exclaimed in

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
773

a loud voice: "You have guessed what I use for a bowl, when I eat my food." The old man used his big knife to cut up the meat that was given him and she could see him slashing away.

When the old man had finished eating he told her: "Lie still a moment while I pronounce a prophecy. You are a great, courageous, and wise woman. Your renown will be heard by posterity for all time. Your descendants are destined to be among the greatest of men. Now that you have done all things well I will proceed to carry out my part in the events to come, according to my prophecy."

The woman being nude, the old man took his knife and slashed her abdomen open and felt for her womb. Finding it he found twin boys in it. He took hold of one of them and said to him: "Your name shall be Twin," and threw him to one side of the door. Then taking the other one, he said: "Your name shall be Guyahnôô," and threw him to the other side of the door.

The old man after having done this terrible job, wiped his big knife and went his way, leaving the woman lying dead.

The husband of the woman after a long but successful hunt arrived loaded down with the skins and pelts of furbearing animals. He had some on his back, and a great many on a kind of sleigh which he pulled by hand. He stopped at the door of his lodge, having a premonition that all was not well, as he had seen no sign of his wife when he came in sight, and had heard no noise inside the lodge. Having relieved himself of his great load, he called out to his wife: "Come out and see the great number of fur skins which I have brought for ourselves and our expected child."

Hearing no response, a great fear came over him. However, hoping for the best, he entered the lodge. The sight that met his eyes was not what he had expected. Everything was in utter confusion, and worst of all, his wife lay dead, slashed wide open, and nude.

His sorrow was great, and thoughts raced through his mind reviewing the events which had led up to the death of his wife. He upbraided himself for being so selfish in his desire for hunting, which had caused him to come to the most wild and dangerous regions. And now he was all alone.

Collecting himself, he tenderly lifted the body of his wife and laid it on a bed of robes and furs, the best and most rare of the land. He rearranged everything in the lodge the best he could and sat down to think things out, and try to find a way out of the situation.

After having sat a long time in deep and serious thought, he decided to remain in the same place for an indefinite time in the hope that he might avenge the brutal and shameful killing of his beloved wife. So it was his wont to go out every morning away from the lodge and cry all day long, always on the alert for some human being or animal to come within range so that he could inquire of them who it was that had killed his wife. He came back to the lodge at every sundown, and spent the night there. As time went on, this became a fixed routine which he followed every day.

One evening as he came home after having cried all day some distance

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539 773 from the lodge, he found that some of his arrows and other things were scattered around. Not giving this any serious thought, he put things back into place. This happened several times and he began to wonder who or what was taking his things, and leaving them lying around that way. He then decided to match wits with whatever was bothering his lodge and see if he could catch the one.

One day as he stepped out of his lodge he began to cry, and when he got a little way, he cupped his hands over his mouth to make his crying sound as if he were far away. Then he rushed back inside the lodge in time to see two small boys just starting to play with his arrows and things. The boys taken by surprise stood still a moment, but as he reached to get hold of them, they dashed toward the door, and one disappeared at the bottom of the pole on one side of the door and the other at the pole on the other side of the door.

He stood there very much bewildered, but he at least found out who it was that was taking his things, and he determined to catch the boys in one way or another.

The next day he did as he had done before. He cupped his hands over his mouth when he cried, and remained very close to the lodge. In a little while he heard one boy tell the other: "Our father is far away. Come out of your hiding place so that we may play."

The man made his crying as if he were far away and finally stopped, and tiptoed back to the lodge, and rushed in. This time he succeeded in catching hold of one of the boys, who fought desperately to get away, but he held him fast. The boy finally submitted to his kindness, and agreed to stay and live with him, promising not to disappear under the pole again.

After a while when he saw that the boy was used to him, he got him to promise to trick the other boy out of his hiding place so that he might also catch him. The boy agreed and the next day the man went on with his crying as usual and cupped his hands over his mouth to sound like he was far away. He gradually stopped crying and he could hear the boy he had caught coaxing the other boy out from his hiding place, but the boy in hiding refused to come out saying to his brother: "Since my father has handled you, you smell bad." But he kept on coaxing him until he finally came out, and they had just started to play when their father rushed in and caught him holding him fast till he ceased to struggle and promised to live on top of the ground with his father and twin brother.

The father was glad that now he had company, and that the twin boys were his own, they ~~having~~ told him so. He remained in the same place hoping that in some way the one who killed his wife would show up so that he could get revenge.

He made bows and arrows for each of his boys and told them: "When you shoot at anything do not pick up the arrows again. I will always make you new ones." He allowed them only two arrows each. The boys grew up rapidly, and they were very skillful with the bow and arrow.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

One day the boys told their father: "Make a sweat-lodge. Face it toward the east, and leave a little opening at the top. Dig a little pit directly in front of the sweat lodge, and gather some stones to heat them there. Then dig another small pit inside the lodge exactly in the center of it. After having heated the stones, cover the sweat-lodge and carry the body of your wife and lay it down with the head to the north, on the west side of the lodge." 539 773

The man hastily did all these things and when he had done everything as told, he announced to his boys: "Everything is ready." They came each carrying the bow and arrow that he had made for them. The boys told their father: "Transfer the stones from the pit outside to the one inside the lodge and leave the flap open while we pray." He did as told, and the boys standing one on each side of the door of the lodge facing east, raised up their eyes toward the sky, and in a loud voice invited the Supreme Being to come and join in the sweating ceremony, so that what they wanted to do might be successful.

After having prayed, they told their father: "Pour water on the hot stones and close the lodge."

Then after this one of the boys took one of his arrows, and shot it straight up in the air, at the same time saying: "Look out, my mother, the arrow is coming down and it might fall on and hurt you if you do not move."

The boys then told their father: "Open the sweat-lodge, and pour more water on the stones, and then close it again." After the lodge was closed the boy shot his other arrow up in the air repeating the words he said when he shot his first arrow, and this time, they all saw the lodge moving.

Again the father was told: "Open the lodge and pour more water on the stones then after having done so, close it."

The other boy then shot one of his arrows in the air saying the same words that his brother had said, and this time, the lodge shook violently.

The fourth and last time the lodge was opened by the father, and more water was poured on the stones and the lodge was closed again. The boy shot his second arrow in the air saying the same words as before, and as the arrow hit the ground very near the lodge, their mother rushed out alive from the west side of the lodge and came to her husband and the twin boys greeting them.

Now they were all together and happy, and they continued to stay where they were, while the father went on with his hunting.

One day while their father was out on a hunt, the boys wandered away from the lodge to try their skill with the bow and arrow. They saw a prairie chicken, and they shot at it missing all of their shots. The chicken would not fly away and one of the boys in his eagerness to shoot again, ran to pick up one of the arrows which they had already shot, for the time being forgetting the rule laid down by their father not to pick an arrow up again, and before his brother could stop him he shot at the chicken again. Immediately there arose a mighty wind, and the boys, frightened, rushed back to the lodge for shelter. One boy succeeded in getting inside, but the other boy was blown up in the air with the door of the lodge held fast in his hands.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
773

He blew around in the sky for a long time, and finally came back to earth and landed in a spot thick with tall grass. Not knowing what else to do he settled down in the grass, and covered himself with the door flap of the lodge, which he still had in his hands. He laid there many days not daring to venture around, for he was in a strange land.

One day as he lay in the grass languishing he heard voices coming in his direction. He crouched down motionless and listened. He now heard talking and it was Gros Ventre. These people were from a big village which was nearby, and they were out cutting grass for their horses. An old woman came nearer and nearer to where he was lying, finally finding him. She was very glad to have found a boy and talked most kindly to him, and invited him to live in her lodge saying: "I will adopt you and be your grandmother."

So the boy went along with the old woman to the village and lived there with her.

He eventually grew up to young manhood amidst many hardships and dangers, for the Gros Ventres in this village were poor due to the many dangers which existed and which prevented them from hunting at will and from moving around to follow the game.

It came to pass that a beautiful black fox was frequently seen near and around the village. Since its appearance, the people began to miss their hard-earned meat and other things such as raw hides, ropes, and sinew with which their travois were bound together.

The people tried in every way to catch the black fox, setting out snares and traps, but the fox was too cunning for them.

The fox stole meat and chewed up rawhide and sinew to such an extent, that he was a real menace to them and to everything that was left outside for the night. It even went inside the lodges and stole meat.

Finally the chief of the tribe called one of the criers of the village, and told him: "Announce to the people that I am offering a great reward for the man who will catch the fox. The reward is my oldest daughter." She was the most beautiful girl in the village. "Whoever catches and kills the fox is to bring it to my lodge immediately, and on the spot he will take my daughter and have her for a wife."

Most all the young men began trying to catch the fox, but failed.

After a time, the boy who was found in the grass told his grandmother he wished to try for the reward, telling her: "Make a trap as I shall direct."

The old woman, being much attached to the boy, did not raise any question, but proceeded to make a trap according to his instructions. When she finished it, he told her: "Set it just outside the door of our lodge." She did as told and went to sleep for the night.

The boy, who was now a young man, remained awake most of the night, and went to see the trap a number of times. Toward daylight, he became sleepy and lay down to sleep until his grandmother woke him, saying: "The trap is sprung, but there is no fox in it."

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

He went out, and examined the trap closely, and found some black hair stuck onto it in places. He told his grandmother: "I am sure I caught the fox in my trap, but it must have been stolen by someone while we slept." The old woman shared his opinion, and they discussed it for some time. 539 773

The young man at length told his grandmother: "Go to the chief's lodge, and inquire whether or not anyone has brought the fox."

His grandmother agreed, and upon inquiry was told: "Crow [a bird] brought the fox at daylight, and he claimed the reward, and was given the chief's oldest daughter."

The old woman returned, and told her grandson all about this. After some thought he sent her back to the chief telling her to insist and demand that rightfully the reward was his, as he was positive now that he had trapped the fox, but that it had been stolen by Crow. Then the old woman went back to the chief's lodge, and told him what her grandson had said.

The chief believed the old woman and her grandson, and said: "Since Crow has already taken my oldest daughter and has her in his lodge, I cannot take her back. But I am willing to let the young man have my second oldest daughter. She is beautiful like her sister and is old enough to be married."

The old woman once more returned to her own lodge, and told her grandson what the chief had said. The young man considered it at some length and asked his grandmother's advice. She advised him to take the second reward and told him that in order to keep peace it would be well to do so.

The young man agreed and they got ready to receive the chief's second daughter and the old woman went after her and brought her to her lodge. So the matter of rewarding the one that killed the fox was settled.

It came to pass that all the members of the tribe were out of meat and other food and were on the verge of starvation on account of the dangers that existed which kept the people from hunting freely. The chief, fearing that his tribe would starve, sent his wife, the mother of the wife of Crow, to tell him to go out and stalk and run buffalo into the buffalo run so that the people could have meat to eat.

The wife of the chief did as told, and Crow sent word back by her for the chief to announce to the people: "I am going out at daybreak to run buffalo." The people hearing this announced by the crier were glad and made ready to help Crow run buffalo, and various ones were detailed by the chief to sit at each mound and scare the game into the buffalo run.

At daylight, those who were detailed sat at the mounds. They sat there all day and when it was evening, they went back home, and heard that Crow had not succeeded in driving the buffalo into the run. The people were very much disappointed, and Crow said: "I will try again next day," but he failed the same as he had done the first day.

All this time the young man, who was married to the second daughter of the chief, was not heard of, and he was very ugly and unkempt. But since Crow had failed to run the buffalo and had given up, the young man sent

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
773

his grandmother to the chief for him to detail men to sit at the mounds while he would run the buffalo. The old woman did as told, and the chief complied with the order and sent men to the mounds.

The young man struck out at daylight to run the buffalo and when he got away out from the village and in line with the buffalo run and the mounds, he gathered together some buffalo chips and said to them: "You turn into live buffalo and go into the runs so that my people may eat," and immediately the chips became buffalo. Then plucking a certain kind of grass he said to it: "You turn into a live but mangy and poor buffalo and join in the run and when you get to the pitfall you manage so that one of your hind legs gets caught in the corral." And the grass became a live but mangy buffalo and joined in the run.

The young man after having started the buffalo into the run between the mounds, followed behind. When he arrived at the pitfall and corral, he found that the hunt was very successful and that the people were busy skinning the animals and were happy but were inquiring among themselves who it was that had run the buffalo in.

The young man stood listening to them and after a while told them that it was he who had done it, and that henceforth they were to call him Found-in-the-Grass.

After the people were all through, he went after his grandmother to come and get some of the meat. When she arrived at the pitfall, he told her to look for a buffalo caught on the corral. The old woman looking around, saw an old and mangy bull and remarked that it was very poor. Found-in-the-Grass loosened the bull and gave it a good kick on the rump and immediately it became a fat buffalo in its prime. They both skinned the bull and cut up the meat in pieces so that it could be brought to their lodge easily.

Found-in-the-Grass sought out a certain intestine and filled it with the blood of the bull, tying both ends securely so that the blood would not spill. Then he fixed the intestine with thongs ready to pack. He and his grandmother then packed the meat to their lodge, but he forbade his wife to help, telling her: "On the last trip you are to help carry the intestine filled with blood and the three of us are to walk in single file, my grandmother first, you next, and I last."

While they were packing the meat home the wife waited at the pitfall as she had been told, and as she turned around she saw Crow perched on the corral, and she noticed her sister, the wife of Crow, struggling with many heads of buffalo and putting them in a pile. She asked her sister the meaning of this and was told: "Since Crow is a scavenger and is not particular what he eats and since the people no longer have respect for him as having failed to run the buffalo, I am giving him only the heads as his share."

Found-in-the-Grass and his grandmother came back to the pitfall and were getting ready for the last trip when his wife remarked about Crow's share of the hunt. Crow, hearing this, was very angry and flew around up in the air scolding his tormentors, and his wife was very much ashamed.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957

NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Found-in-the-Grass and his grandmother and his wife stood in single file ready to go, and his wife took up the intestine and loaded it on her back as he had told her. Crow and his wife watched in admiration as the party went on the march. They were still watching and saw Found-in-the-Grass punch a hole in the intestine with an arrow and the blood spilled all out and over his wife and she immediately became most beautiful and fully matured.

The wife of Crow became very jealous over the good fortune of her sister, and also very sad because of the way in which she had become the wife of Crow.

Every family of the entire village had all the meat they wanted, and was happy that now they were saved from starvation, and the women were busy slicing and jerking the meat. This required many days to do, as the run and hunt was the greatest ever known to the Gros Ventres.

During this time the wife of Found-in-the-Grass confided to her mother that sometimes her husband was most handsome and smelled like the rarest of perfumes. She was very much worried about this, as just when she was about to get a hold of her handsome husband, he would turn to the same ugly and unkempt man that he always was. The mother advised her daughter: "Say nothing of this to anyone, but have confidence in your husband. He has just managed the greatest hunt and run ever known. All will be well if only you have perseverance."

The mother of the wife of Crow overheard this conversation and told her daughter about it, and it was soon known by all the people in the village. One day the wife of Found-in-the-Grass was visiting her sister, and the conversation soon turned to Found-in-the-Grass, how he would turn into a most handsome man, but when the sun rose again, he would still be the ugly and unkempt man he always was. The wife of Crow doubted this, saying: "My sister is very young. Maybe she had a nightmare or imagined it." So saying she got up and went to the lodge of her brother-in-law to see for herself.

She arrived there and finding Found-in-the-Grass to be the same ugly and unkempt man, she proceeded to call him all kinds of names and to make fun of him. After having shown all her scorn, she added: "It is most shameful of you to fool my young and innocent sister and for that matter all the rest of the people. It is a shame to acquire cheap notoriety and renown. But you will never succeed as you are not powerful enough to do it." Found-in-the-Grass said nothing, but bore all this tongue lashing from his sister-in-law.

The wife of Crow went back to her lodge and finding her sister still there, advised her: "Leave and separate from your husband, as there is nothing to all this talk about him being a most handsome man at times. In the event he is successful in his attempt to be powerful, in all probability he will be an evil one and will perhaps try to destroy the whole Gros Ventre tribe." But the wife of Found-in-the-Grass went back to her husband and resolved to stay with him, no matter what the cost or how ugly he was and notwithstanding her sister's advice to leave him.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
773

At this time the meat was all being jerked and was partly dry, and Found-in-the-Grass sent his wife to her father, the chief, to tell him to detail men to sit at the mounds and help him run the buffalo again the next day. The chief when told this by his daughter was glad and proceeded to place men at the mounds to run the buffalo. Found-in-the-Grass did as before, going out at daybreak and gathering buffalo chips and commanding them to turn into buffalo and also the certain kind of grass to turn into a mangy and poor buffalo and join in the run. As at the first run he followed the buffalo and arrived at the pitfall finding the people busy skinning the animals. And as before he called his grandmother to come and help him to skin the mangy buffalo caught in the corral by a hind leg. And as before, he sought out the certain intestine and filled it with blood and fixed it up to pack.

Crow and his wife were gathering the heads together as before, and as his wife looked with contempt on her brother-in-law, the latter suddenly turned into the most handsome man she ever saw. Then and there she made up her mind to woo him away from her sister and to have him for her husband.

By this time Found-in-the-Grass and his grandmother and wife were getting ready to make the last trip packing meat to his lodge and were forming in single file. Not being able to stand it any longer, the older sister rushed to his side and implored him to allow her to pack the intestine filled with blood instead of her sister, so that she too would become most beautiful when the blood spilled out over her as he punched it with his arrow. Found-in-the-Grass granted her request and ordered her to get in line, behind her sister, and loaded the intestine on her back. After they had gone a little way, he punched the intestine and the blood spilled out all over his sister-in-law, but instead of her becoming beautiful as she had expected, she became most ugly and loathsome and was horrible to look at.

When she fully recovered from what had happened to her, she was most ashamed and did not know what to do. She appealed to her husband Crow for him to show his power, but all in vain for he had no power, but was instead hopping around picking up scraps of meat and blood and paid no attention to his wife. Found-in-the-Grass then told his sister-in-law: "Go your way and out of sight, and mind your own business hereafter."

So it was that Found-in-the-Grass came to the rescue of the desperate situation that this village of Gros Ventres was in and in fact saved them from extermination as now there was no immediate need to hunt or run the buffalo as they were supplied with a great quantity of meat, sinew, bones, and other things needed, and the people were most happy.

After a time Found-in-the-Grass told his wife and grandmother: "I am going visiting at the next village of Gros Ventres." The grandmother was worried and told him: "It is most dangerous for any one to visit or be out alone, as between the two villages and on the only trail which must be followed, there is a big and powerful wolf that no one can escape once the wolf sees him. The wolf once it sights anyone opens his powerful jaws and draws him into his open mouth with a mysterious power the person is unable

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

to get away from, and swallows him up. Besides, in the event that the person escapes from the big wolf and arrives at the next village, there is there a man, whom every stranger is forced to listen to telling myths and when he falls asleep listening to him, this man puts a flat stone under his head and hits him on the head with a stone hammer, killing him. Therefore you must not leave this village, as you are now married, and besides, you should have no further ambition, as you are now the most renowned one of the entire village. Then too, I am greatly attached to you, having reared you up from childhood since the time I found you in the grass."

537
773

Found-in-the-Grass gently told his wife and grandmother: "Calm down and do not worry about me. I am now a full grown man and am not afraid of anything. I am determined to make this visit in spite of the dangers you tell about."

So, unable to discourage him, the women made much pemmican and fat for him to take along and eat on the way as the village was very far away and it took many days to reach it. So everything being ready for his use, weapons, food, clothing,—Found-in-the-Grass struck out on his visit to the next village.

After he was gone many days from his village, he came to a rise of ground and in a clearing in the trail, he saw a great wolf, and remembering what his grandmother had said about the wolf, he cautiously approached, and when the wolf saw him, he opened his jaws and big mouth and at that instant Found-in-the-Grass felt the power of the wolf and was d[illegible] his mouth: and swallowed up. But he had prepared for th[illegible] he found himself in the stomach of the wolf, he s[illegible] and soon the wolf fell down dead. Found-in-[illegible]med and upon examination found many huma[illegible] the wolf. He took all the bones out and put them [illegible] them: "Get up, you weaklings, and go back to the villa[illegible] which you came," and immediately several persons appeared whole and alive, and each went his way.

Found-in-the-Grass continued on his way and after a time came in sight of a large village of Gros Ventres. He circled the camp several times and finally decided to enter an old woman's lodge. She welcomed him and invited him to sit in the place of honor, also telling him that she had heard of his fame and she called him by name and seemed to know all about him.

He told her: "I have come a long way and have run out of food. I am very hungry. Give me something to eat."

She told him: "I am glad that you have escaped the big wolf on the trail. But it is not safe for strangers to be in the village as there is a man here who forces them to listen to him tell myths, and when they fall asleep he kills them with his stone hammer. Besides, the people in this village are very poor and do not have much to eat, as it is most dangerous to leave the village and hunt on account of the many dangers which exist here." And she urged him to leave and go his way after she fed him her only piece of meat, which she took out from under her bed and cooked for him.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
773

He told the old woman: "Do not worry about me. I am a man and can take care of myself at all times." He ate only a small portion of the meat given him and told the old woman to eat the rest of it.

Soon the sun went down and night came on, and as was expected, the man who told myths by night invited Found-in-the-Grass: "Come to my lodge. I will tell you myths and put you to sleep. You have come a long way and must be tired out." After the man had the crier make his invitation several times, Found-in-the-Grass went to his lodge, and was invited to sit in the place of honor, and the man began to tell him myths. The man told him myths far into the night and several times asked him: "Are you sleepy?" "I am," he said, "but I am trying to remain awake, as the myths are very interesting."

The man told him: "Go to sleep whenever you wish. I shall tell myths until you go to sleep. Then I will put you to bed and cover you with robes so you will not be cold."

Found-in-the-Grass pretended to be very sleepy, closing his eyes, but watched the man through slits to see what he was going to do. After a time, he pretended to be sleeping and snoring. The man touched him to make sure, and then got his flat stone putting it under his head, and was just taking hold of the stone hammer, when Found-in-the-Grass suddenly jumped up and asked the man: "What are you doing?" The man, taken completely by surprise, lost his balance and before he could regain it, Found-in-the-Grass shot him full of arrows and killed him.

Then he looked around in the lodge and noticed a pile of something covered with robes. Throwing them back he discovered that the pile was a mass of human bones, some of them old and bleached and others not so old but showing that it was of ones recently killed by the man.

Found-in-the-Grass had great compassion on the ones whose bones lay there and thought how unfortunate they had been to be forced to listen to the man who told myths and falling asleep to be killed by him. He then spoke thus: "Get up and come alive, you weaklings and cowards. Go back to your various villages," and immediately they were whole and alive again and went their way.

He then went back to the lodge of the old woman and remained there for the night.

The next day he sent the old woman to the chief of the village, to tell him to place men at the mounds, that he would run the buffalo. The old woman came back, saying: "The chief is glad and will tell the criers to announce to the people about the run." The criers were heard in every direction, announcing about the run and the people were glad.

Found-in-the-Grass left the old woman's lodge at daybreak to run the buffalo. He repeated the procedure in running the buffalo as at his own village, using chips and the certain grass for the mangy one. He ran the buffalo twice as before and the old woman got the mangy one as her share, and the people were saying: "This is the greatest run we have ever known."

After a while he told the old woman: "I am going on to the next village."

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The old woman said: "The trail is dangerous, as on the only crossing at the big river which cannot be avoided, there is a water monster, that is used for a bridge. Travelers get on his head, holding themselves on by his horns, and when the monster gets to midstream, he dives into deep water drowning those who ride on his head. Besides, in the event that one escapes the monster and succeeds in getting to the next village, there is a gambler there, whose name is Crooked Bull who forces strangers and travelers to play with him, shooting arrows at the wheel. Crooked Bull has a bad temper and when anyone beats him at this game too much, he suddenly turns into a buffalo bull and gores his victim to death."

Found-in-the-Grass told the old woman: "Do not worry about me. I can take care of myself at all times. I am a grown man now and am not afraid of anything."

So, in spite of the entreaties and warnings of the old woman, Found-in-the-Grass struck out on the trail leading to the next village of Gros Ventres.

After traveling many days through the forest he came to a big river and remembering what the old woman said about the monster, approached the shore cautiously, and sure enough a big water monster was there, asleep. He got up on his head and got a hold of the big horns and the monster turned around and began to swim across the river. Before the monster dived to deep water, Found-in-the-Grass stabbed him to death and he sank down, making the water red with his blood, while Found-in-the-Grass swam to the opposite shore safe.

He stood on the shore and in a loud voice said: "All those who were drowned by the monster and who hear my voice shall come alive." As he said this, a great number of persons came out of the water, alive, saying: "We are the ones who have been tricked by the monster and drowned." He told them: "Go back to your villages," and he went on his way. He picked up a knotty limb of a tree on the trail and used it for a cane.

After some time he came in sight of a large village and entering it found and heard the Gros Ventre language spoken there. He sought and found an old woman's lodge and entered it. The old woman invited him to sit in the place of honor and said: "My grandson, Found-in-the-Grass, I am glad to see you, and I have heard many good things about you and you are welcome in my lodge, but how did you escape the water monster on the way? And why did you come here to this village, for we are very poor and are at the point of starvation, and besides, there is a man here whose name is Crooked Bull with whom strangers must shoot at the wheel and gamble. His temper is bad and he kills at the slightest provocation when angered."

He told the old woman how he had stabbed the monster to death and how he brought back all those who had been drowned at the river, and said: "I am not afraid of Crooked Bull, the gambler, nor of anyone else. Give me something to eat, for I am hungry, not having eaten for several days."

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

So, she reached under her bed of robes and got the only piece of meat she had, and cooked it for him to eat. He ate only a small piece of it and gave the rest back to the woman, telling her to eat it.

Soon a crier was heard summoning Found-in-the-Grass to go to the lodge of Crooked Bull the gambler and shoot the wheel and test his skill with arrows. After a while, he went to Crooked Bull's lodge and found that a crowd had gathered there to watch the game of shooting arrows at the wheel, that was to take place between them.

So they started to shoot arrows at the wheel and Crooked Bull was winning all bets put up by Found-in-the-Grass, until the latter was almost naked, having lost nearly everything of his, including the clothes he had on. Crooked Bull taunted him to the merriment of the crowd, until the game seemed to turn in the favor of Found-in-the-Grass, and then Crooked Bull began to get mad and to roar like distant thunder. Found-in-the-Grass was winning steadily now, and in turn Crooked Bull had lost nearly everything, and when they were rolling the wheel for the finals, Crooked Bull suddenly turned into a young and powerful buffalo and was pawing the earth, letting out bellows that sent the onlookers to cover. The bull suddenly rushed at Found-in-the-Grass to gore him to death, but at the same instant the latter disappeared.

A down feather was seen by the people floating in the air, while the bull was raging, bellowing and pawing the ground, having missed its victim. The feather landed close by the bull and it was Found-in-the-Grass who had turned into a feather. He told the bull: "Your end has come. Your taking of human lives is at an end. I am going to wipe you off the face of the earth." So saying he sent many arrows into the bull before he had time to change again, and killed him.

He went into the lodge of Crooked Bull and found a heap of human bones there. He commanded the ones whose bones they were: "Come back to life and go back to the villages from which you came." Immediately many humans came alive and went to their several villages.

Found-in-the-Grass went back to the lodge of the old woman and told her to go tell the chief of the village to send men to the mounds as on the morrow he would run the buffalo. The old woman did as told, and soon criers were heard announcing to the people that Found-in-the-Grass, the man who had killed Crooked Bull, was to run the buffalo next day.

Found-in-the-Grass struck out at daybreak for the mounds to run the buffalo. This he did two times as at the two previous villages, always using chips which turned into buffalo at his bidding and the certain grass for the mangy one which the old woman with whom he stayed got for herself alone.

The people were very glad that he had come to their village as in the nick of time he had saved them from extermination by starvation and had rid the country of the undesirables, the water monster, the Crooked Bull, the gambler. The chief of the village offered him his oldest and very beautiful daughter in marriage, also his office as chief, but he refused all

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

saying: "In the first place, I have a wife in a village far away, and moreover I have no desire to be a chief." 539 773

After a while, he told the old woman: "Now since the people in this village have all the meat they need, and all dangers are gone and they can hunt and run the buffalo in peace, I am going on my way to the next village of Gros Ventres."

The old woman was alarmed at this and told him: "This is a dangerous and fatal thing to do, as on the only trail to the next village and one which can not be avoided, there is a big tree, which falls on and crushes to death anyone who goes under it. Besides if one succeeds in passing this tree unharmed and arrives at the next village, there is a man there with whom travelers and strangers must play football by force. And if the man is beaten at this game by anyone, he kicks him to death with a sharp iron into which one of his legs turns when he is angered."

He told the old woman: "Do not worry over me. I am a grown man and can take care of myself in any situation."

So saying, Found-in-the-Grass made ready for travel and left the village for the trail to the other village, taking with him the knotty tree limb, which he had picked up on the way.

After traveling many days, he came upon a place on the trail that was very narrow and a big tree stood along side, by which one had to pass to go on the trail. He approached the tree cautiously and when he came directly under it, he jumped back to safety, as the tree crashed to the ground and was broken up to pieces, not having anything to fall on. The tree tried to get itself together again, but failed, as it was broken up into too many pieces, and besides Found-in-the-Grass threw the pieces in every direction and they were unable to come back together.

After the big tree died, Found-in-the-Grass called out in a loud voice and commanded: "All you who lie dead under the ground and who were killed by the tree, come back to life." Many dead humans heard him and stood there alive and well again. He told them: "Go back to your villages," and they went their several ways.

He continued on the trail many more days and finally came in sight of a large village. He entered it and looked for an old woman's lodge. Finding one, he entered it, and was welcomed by the old woman and invited by her to sit in the place of honor.

The old woman wondered how he had escaped the big tree on the trail and was worried that although he escaped the tree, there was another evil element to which he was exposed and that was to play football by force with a man in the village who when beaten killed people to death with a large iron, into which one of his legs turned when he was angered.

He told the old woman: "Do not worry as I mean to take care of myself. Give me some food as I am hungry."

The old woman said that the people in this village were at the point of starvation not being able to hunt nor run the buffalo on account of the dan-

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539 773 gers which existed in their land, but she reached under her bed and produced a little piece of meat and cooked it and gave it to him to eat. He ate only a little of it and gave the rest back to her and told her to eat it.

Soon a crier was heard calling him to the place where football was played and telling him to go there and play with the man. He went after a while, taking with him the knotty tree limb he had carried.

The game was a lively one and many people were there to watch. After a while Found-in-the-Grass was winning the game and the people began to laugh at the man whose leg turned into a sharp iron when he was angered. Now, the game was approaching its end, and Found-in-the-Grass was winner by far over the man, who suddenly flew into a rage, and made for him to kick him to death with his sharp iron leg. As the man kicked at him, Found-in-the-Grass threw the knotty tree limb in the way and the man's iron leg plunged into it and was securely fastened to it. The man could not remove his iron leg from the limb, and this angered him very much, while the people were having a good laugh at his misfortune. Found-in-the-Grass blew his breath on him and he raised in the air, sailing around and finally lighting on top of a large tree.

The man could not untangle himself and was furious but helpless. Found-in-the-Grass finally shot him to death with many arrows and the man's relatives did not bother about removing him from the tree top but left him there where his body withered away.

Found-in-the-Grass asked the people to direct him to the lodge of the man he just killed. On being shown the lodge, he entered it and to his amazement found it about filled with human bones. He commanded those whose bones lay there: "Come back to life," and as he said that, many humans came to life. He told them: "Go back to your villages," and they went their way.

He went back to the lodge of the old woman and told her to go and tell the chief of the village to send men to the mounds, that he was going to run the buffalo. The old woman went as told and soon criers were heard telling the people that Found-in-the-Grass was running buffalo the next day.

This he did two times and used buffalo chips and the certain kind of grass for the mangy buffalo, which the old woman got as her share each time, the same as before.

The people were now very happy, having plenty of meat and material for their various tools, weapons, and travois. They made new bow strings from the fresh sinew and also mended the feathers on their arrows.

Found-in-the-Grass stayed with the old woman and helped her with some of her work, hanging jerked meat, mashing bone to be boiled for grease and to be used in making pemmican.

When all this was done, he told the old woman: "I am going on to the next village to visit there." She told him: "You had better not, as on the way over there, and on the only trail and crossing at the river, a buffalo head is used for a ferry and most times this head sinks in the middle of the river, drowning those who ride on it, and even if one manages to avoid the

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

buffalo head and get to the village, there is a big bear there with one white forearm, who dominates the people there and she has great power. If anyone dares to interfere with the bear, she points her white forearm at them at any distance and they drop dead on the spot." He told her: "Do not worry about me, for I am a grown man and am not afraid of anybody or anything." 539 773

So saying he took the trail leading to the next village of Gros Ventres. After many days traveling, he came to a big river, and on the shore and half in the water lay a bleached buffalo head. He said to himself: "This must be the head the old woman mentioned that is used as a ferry." He stepped on the head and it immediately moved into the water. As he felt the head sinking, he leaped off of it as quickly as he could and saw the head sink into deep water and it did not come up. He was satisfied that, as the head reached bottom without any human load on it, the water monster who lived under the water was angry and destroyed the head, for it did not appear on the surface any more.

He then faced toward the sunrise and said in a loud voice: "Come out from the bottom of the water and out of the stomach of the water monster, all you who have been tricked by the buffalo head." As he finished talking thus, a great many human beings, young and old, male and female, came up from the bottom of the water and out of the stomach of the water monster, until they were almost enough to make a tribe. He then commanded them: "Go back to the villages from which you came," and continued on his way.

After many more days of traveling, he came in sight of a large village. Circling it, he saw an old lodge pitched on the edge of the circle. He entered and found an old woman sitting there scraping the inside of a buffalo hide. She looked up and greeted him and invited him to sit in the place of honor. Calling him by his name she asked him: "Where are you going and how did you escape from all the dangers on the trail?" He told her: "I have come a long way. I have taken many moons to get here from where I started. I have killed all the evil ones along the way."

He asked her: "Why are you scraping the hide?" She said: "I was so hungry, I was trying to get enough off of the hide to boil and eat." He said to her: "If that is all you have to eat, go on scraping and get enough for two, as I am very hungry myself, not having eaten for a long time."

The old woman scraped enough of the hide for both of them and they ate and drank the soup she made from the scrapings.

After they had eaten, he told her to go and tell the chief of the village to place men at the mounds and help him run the buffalo. The old woman protested, saying: "It will do no good to run the buffalo, as the bear with the white forearm will take all the meat and bones, as is her wont when game and meat are brought in. And if anyone has enough courage to interfere with her, she points the white forearm at him and he dies immediately." Found-in-the-Grass told the old woman to go tell the chief what he said and not mind the bear.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
773

Finally the old woman went to the lodge of the chief to tell him what Found-in-the-Grass had ordered but she had little belief that it would do any good. The chief upon hearing this was glad and directed the criers to announce to the people this matter, and he also detailed men to sit at the mounds and help run the buffalo. The people upon hearing this announcement were very glad but at the same time very fearful that the bear would be angered, as it was the order at this village for the bear to say when game was to be gotten.

The bear upon hearing the criers flew into a rage and she growled, roared and rolled around, saying: "Whoever gave the order to run the buffalo before time will pay for it with his life. Besides, I and my cubs will take all the meat and bones as usual."

This being an exceptionally large village and hence requiring a great number of animals to supply all with meat and bones, Found-in-the-Grass left at midnight, instead of at daylight as he had done at the other villages, for the mounds and run. He gathered a great amount of buffalo chips and commanded them to turn into buffalo and they did as told and went into the run between the mounds and toward the pitfall. Then he took the special kind of grass for the mangy bull and ordered it to join in the run and fall last into the corral and manage so that one hind leg would be caught there and wait till he came.

He followed behind as usual and arriving at the pitfall and corral noticed that some of the people were packing the meat to a large lodge while others were skinning and cutting and putting thongs through the meat to pack. He gave this no serious thought but wondered, and as usual he went after the old woman to come and get her share. She protested, saying: "The bear will surely kill me if I take meat before I am told by the bear." He urged her to come and not be afraid of the bear or anyone else, as he would be with her all the time and would protect her.

So, with great fear, she went with him to the pitfall and corral to skin the mangy bull. Arriving there, he loosened the bull from where its hind leg was caught on the corral and gave it a good kick on the rump, and it became a fat bull in its prime. The old woman, notwithstanding her fear of the bear, was glad and helped him skin and fix up the meat to pack to her lodge. The pitfall and corral were deserted by the people, save for the two of them and the two cubs of the bear who were chewing up and licking up the scraps and blood left there.

They noticed that one of the cubs disappeared for a while, and when it came back, said: "My mother, the big bear, orders that you two bring the meat to her lodge." Found-in-the-Grass sent the old woman to the lodge of the bear to tell the bear that he did not intend to carry out or obey her order. The old woman protested saying: "The bear will surely point her white forearm at me and kill me."

Found-in-the-Grass told her: "Do not worry or be afraid, but go tell the bear what I said. If you refuse to do as I say, I will kill you anyway." So,

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the old woman went to tell the bear what he said, realizing there was no use to refuse, as it meant instant death from the hands of Found-in-the-Grass and there might be some escape from the bear.

539
773

When the bear heard from the old woman what he had said, she was very angry and told the old woman: "Go back and tell him to do as I wish before I go myself to enforce my rule."

The poor old woman went back and forth between the pitfall and corral four times and the last time the bear came with her to the scene to see for herself who it was that was defying her. As she approached the corral, she saw a pile of meat at the feet of Found-in-the-Grass. She stopped some distance away, and called out to him: "Pack the meat to my lodge. I have come out to see that my rule is carried out."

He paid no heed to her demand and she said: "If you refuse me four times in succession, I will be forced to treat you like all others who interfered with me." But he paid no attention to her. The fourth and last time she ordered him to pack the meat to her lodge and he still paid no attention. She then called out to him and as he straightened up from his work, she raised her white forearm and pointed it at him, but instead of killing him as it had killed all others before him, the arm of the bear broke off from her body.

She howled and growled so loud that she was heard all over the great village. She then raised up her other forearm and pointed it at him but it broke off the same as her other arm had done.

Found-in-the-Grass then took one of the kidneys of the bull and spoke to the bear who was rolling in rage and pain, and he said to her: "Look at me. I will show you how to kill by pointing but you will not live to use it on anything." So saying he pointed the kidney at the bear as she looked, and she rolled over dead.

The cubs ran around whimpering, and he said to them: "Go back to the forest and the animal world. That is where you belong, not among human beings." The cubs ran away and disappeared into the deep forest and were seen no more.

Found-in-the-Grass and the old woman packed the meat of the bull to her lodge amidst great rejoicing. Then the meat that was in the lodge of the bear was divided up among the people, and the slaves who worked for the bear were freed and told to go back to the clans from which they had been drafted. The people were most happy, as they were saved from sure starvation by Found-in-the-Grass; besides he had killed the bear and had run her cubs out to the forest and had freed the slaves.

When the meat was partly dry, he sent the old woman to the chief again, to tell him: "Send men to the mounds and help me run buffalo once more. This time nothing will interfere with or bother the people. They will have all the meat to themselves hereafter." The old woman told the chief and he told the criers to announce that to the people.

Found-in-the-Grass followed the same procedure as before in running the

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
773

buffalo. The chief offered him his oldest and very beautiful daughter and his office as chief, but he refused all, saying: "I have a wife far away. I have been absent from her for a long time. I am going back to live with her."

So Found-in-the-Grass marched back in great triumph, through the villages to the village of his adoption, to his wife and his grandmother. He had destroyed all the things both human and animal which made traveling unsafe. He also taught all the people the art of running the buffalo, and he invented the trap which caught the black fox. (This trap was, according to tradition, a samson-post deadfall.) He ruled his village with great wisdom for many years. Thus, the prophecy pronounced by the blind old man who cut open and killed his mother came to pass.

11. Blood-Clot[14]

A long time ago when the Gros Ventres used still to make earthen dishes, there was an old couple who had three or four daughters. All the daughters were married to one man. Their husband used to leave the rest of the people and go hunting to accumulate meat and would take his father-in-law and mother-in-law along. He was a good hunter. The old father-in-law used to help him skin the game, carry the meat and so forth. But the man would never give his parents-in-law any but one little piece of meat. So the old people lived on the verge of starvation all the time. Their youngest daughter used to steal meat for them from her husband occasionally, she and they concealing the fact, and so things went along.

Once while the old father-in-law was helping his son-in-law to skin, he had his eye on quite a pool of blood and made up his mind to take it home and eat it. By the time they were ready to leave, the pool of blood had so hardened that it could be picked up. The old man let his son-in-law go ahead but the son-in-law saw the old man putting something away and asked him: "What did you pick up?" "Nothing" the old man answered. "I was only fixing up my belt."

So the old man brought the blood clot home and said to his old woman [his wife]: "Fix up the earthen pot and the fire and cook this clot." As the clot came to a boil he heard a baby crying in the pot. "There is a baby," said the man. "Get him out and we will have him for our own." They took him out of the pot of boiling water. He was a little boy and they were very glad.

When the son-in-law heard the baby crying he sent his youngest wife to see if it was a boy or girl. "If it is a girl," he said, "I will take her for my wife." So she went to her parents and asked them: "Is the baby a boy or a girl?" The old couple were not afraid of this daughter, for she treated them well while the other daughters treated them badly. They were not

[14] This version is shorter than Kroeber, 1907, pp. 82-90, No. 20. See our footnote 14.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

afraid to tell her the truth, so they said to her: "It is a boy. But tell your husband it is a girl" This they did so the son-in-law would not kill the boy. The daughter did as she was told and her husband said: "All right. We will treat your parents a little better. Take these scraps of meat over to your mother so she will have milk for the baby." 539 773

After the boy was a few days old and all cleaned up he spoke to the old man: "Swing me four places inside this lodge, going clockwise, once first at the left of the door, then twice straight back from the door, then once at the right of the door." When he was swung the first time he was already getting sense. At the second swing, the boy smiled and laughed. At the third, he acted as if he wanted to jump out of the swing. At the fourth he actually did jump out of it. Then he said to the old man: "My father, make me a bow and four arrows. Make the bow from the last rib of the buffalo and the arrows with tendons from the back of the buffalo."

The old man then made the bows and arrows as he was told. The boy asked him: "What usually happens when your son-in-law goes hunting?" "Sometimes," the old man said, "he comes back to camp and leaves me out there where he made his kill, to skin and cut the meat ready for packing. Then his wives come for the meat." "When the next time comes," said the boy, "I will go along but don't tell your son-in-law that I have gone along or that I am around. Just do as you always do."

When time to hunt came again, the son-in-law said to the old man: "Get ready. I am going hunting." The old man got ready. The boy followed behind them staying in the background and hoping that the son-in-law would go away for his wives and leave the old man to do the skinning. The son-in-law killed the buffalo and the old man went over to him. "Butcher the buffalo," said the son-in-law. "I am going back to camp and send my wives to help carry the meat."

After the son-in law had gotten out of sight the boy came from hiding and went to where the old man was still butchering. By the time the boy got there, practically all the butchering was done except cutting the ribs off the backbone. "Stop butchering," said the boy, "and listen to me carefully. When the son-in-law comes back, take the kidney of the buffalo and hold it in your hand and face him. When he comes near enough to see what you have in your hand and what you are going to do, take a bite out of the kidney." "I dare not do that," said the old man. "He will kill me." "No," said the boy. "You must do as I tell you." While the boy was insisting and the old man was protesting, the son-in-law with his wives got back. The boy then hid behind the buffalo's ribs which were still on the carcass and said to the old man: "Stand at attention and do what I said." In great fear, thinking he would be killed, the old man took the buffalo kidney in his hand and faced his son-in-law. "If you don't do as I say," said the boy, "I will kill you." When the son-in-law was close enough to see clearly, the old man took a bite out of the kidney. "Put down what you are biting" said the son-in-law in a rage. This, he said once, twice, three times and after the third added:

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
773

"I will tell you only once more. That will be the last time. If after that you still bite the kidney, I will manhandle you." After each warning, the son-in-law said, "Drop that," at the same time making a gesture with his right arm from up to his right, down to his left. As he said and did this for the fourth time, his right arm dropped off. So he tried to finish the sign with his left arm and it too dropped off.

Then the boy came out from hiding and took over the situation and said to the son-in-law: "Is that the way you have been treating this old man and his wife? Your hour has arrived. You are going to die." The son-in-law tried to run away but the boy put an arrow through him and also killed two of the man's wives. Then the old man and the boy went back to camp and on the way back the boy said to him: "Which of your four daughters pities you? Are they all on the side of your son-in-law or has any one of them shown affection for you?" "Yes," said the old man, "the youngest one is good to me." When they got back to camp the boy killed the next to youngest wife of the son-in-law. The youngest then started to run away but the boy said to her: "Don't run. I won't kill you." Then the old man, his wife, the boy and the youngest daughter took possession of all the meat in the camp and ate plenty.

Blood-Clot went to four big camps. There was always something dangerous on the road and when he got to camp something else to overcome. As Blood-Clot left the third camp the people said: "Don't go any further. At the next camp is the greatest of all dangers. If you insist and get there, you will be in extreme danger because there is a man there with a number of daughters and when a stranger comes he offers his daughters in marriage to the stranger. You can't get out of it. After you become his son-in-law he will send you after water saying, 'Go to a certain mountain for water,' but that is just to lure you to the place where his pet water monster will eat you. If by any chance you escape the water monster and get back to camp then he will send you after feathers saying, 'Go to a certain mountain top and get feathers off young birds up there and bring the feathers home as I want to use them for my arrows.' That is the supreme test because that is where Bha'a lives. Be very, very careful. We are not telling you this just for fun."

When Blood-Clot left the third camp he went on his way to the fourth. On arrival the man with the several daughters offered them to Blood-Clot as wives and Blood-Clot married all of them. Blood-Clot was well treated there and happy. One day his wives said to him: "Our father wants you to get water at a certain spring at the foot of this mountain." "Yes," said Blood-Clot, "I will fetch it." So he went. Being forewarned he went cautiously. When he got to a bit of rising ground he saw from there a body of water and a water monster half out of the water facing his trail. As soon as the water monster saw Blood-Clot the water monster opened his mouth and Blood-Clot felt that he was being pulled in from the suction. But he jerked out an arrow, mounted it and shot it his hardest into the water

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

monster's mouth. The water monster in its death struggle churned up the water and then lay still, dead. 539 773

Blood-Clot opened up the water monster and found a lot of human bones inside—some of the bones without any flesh on them, some with the flesh on them and the skeleton still together. Blood-Clot pulled all the bones out of the water monster's stomach and said to them: "You are not children. Get up and go back where you belong." All of them got up alive and went off. Blood-Clot then got the water he went after and came back and said to his wives: "Here is the water. I killed a water monster over there." When they told the father this he said: "My son-in-law has killed my pet and my power." (Not a power gotten through sleeping; it was the father who controlled the water monster and made him act the way he did.)

After this the man sent his daughters to tell Blood-Clot: "Go after feathers on the top of a certain high mountain a good way from camp." When his wives gave this message to Blood-Clot he said to them: "Yes, I'll go." He got ready and very early in the morning he went off taking his bow and arrows with him.

When he got to the mountain he climbed and climbed and climbed and finally got to the top of it and here he found a large nest with two big, young birds in it. Blood-Clot said to himself: "These must be the young thunders." He looked them over good. They had many feathers. He lifted up the wing of one of them and he heard a rumbling, so he dropped it and the noise stopped. Blood-Clot asked the birds: "Where are your father and mother?" The birds answered: "They are off way up somewhere in the air." "When," asked Blood-Clot, "do your father and mother come back to your nest?" "Usually," they replied, "in the evening toward sundown." "Is there any particular sign announcing the approach of your father and mother and any different sign for one or the other?" "Yes," said the birds, "there is." "What is the sign," asked Blood-Clot, "if your father is coming back to the nest?" "A dark, heavy cloud toward the sunset [west]." "What," asked Blood-Clot, "is the sign when it is your mother coming back?" "Clouds in the west," said the birds, "but white clouds." So Blood-Clot got this information from the birds.

The birds then said to him: "Our father and mother are both powerful. You better not stay here. You better escape. If they find you here they will kill you as they have always done to anybody they find at this nest." "All right," said Blood-Clot, "but don't tell your father and mother I came here." They promised not to give Blood-Clot away and promised that "by the love of our mother." So Blood-Clot crawled into a nearby cave.

After a bit a white cloud appeared in the distance, got to the spot on the mountain close to the cave, and the mother herself arrived. "Has anyone," she asked the young birds, "come here while I have been away?" "No," said they. "No one has come." "It smells like human here," said the mother. "Some human must have been here." "No," said the young birds. "We saw no human." Blood-Clot heard them talking and while they were still talking

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539 773 he came out of the cave. As soon as the mother saw Blood-Clot she took wing and sailed into the air. There was a blinding flash of lightning and this was the last thing that Blood-Clot remembered. When he came to he found himself at the base of the mountain with his hair all singed up. He then collected himself and went back up to the top of the mountain. All this,—the flash of lightning, the becoming unconscious, finding himself at the base of the mountain, climbing it again,—took place four different times. The last time that Blood-Clot climbed the mountain he twisted the beaks of the young birds and taunted them with the words: "Tell your mother about this."

The next time, however, a big, black cloud appeared and came to the mountain. The father of the birds came. So soon as the father saw Blood-Clot there was a flash of lightning but after it Blood-Clot still stood there and said to the father: "You can't do anything with me. You can't kill me. You better leave me alone. It is useless for you to shoot at me. I will show you how powerful I am."

So Blood-Clot took an arrow and mounted it and shot at a big, flat stone on top of the mountain. The arrow pierced the stone and was buried in it, all but a bit of it that stuck out. "Look at that arrow there," said Blood-Clot to the father bird. "If you can pull it out from that rock then you can do something to me that will harm me. If you can't pull it out then it is useless for you, as I told you, to try to harm me." "All right," said the father. "I can do that. That is easy." So the bird sailed up in the air. As he did so, a flash of lightning struck at this rock. Then he tried to get hold of the arrow and pull it out. He took hold and flew up to pull it out and the arrow stretched and as it contracted it pulled the bird back as the father was caught fast by it.[16] Blood-Clot saw that the bills and feet of the father thunderbird and the other thunderbirds were of buffalo neck tendon. Thus Blood-Clot trapped the father. But he released the father saying to him: "Here is how powerful I am." And with that he pulled the arrow out with ease. Then he said to the bird: "Leave me alone. You can't do anything with me."

After that he came down from the mountain, went back home and told his wives what had happened. "No wonder," he said, "your father kills off the young men as he does. Tell your father that those birds up there could not do anything with me. You probably heard the thunder and lightning and disturbance up there while I was away. The birds were trying to kill me but they did not succeed." The girls then went back and told their father.

---

[237] [283] [16] Blood-Clot's arrow, The Boy explained, was made of buffalo tendon from the upper neck of the animal—the tendon that holds the neck to the body. This is very tough and stretches like rubber when it is taken out. This tendon had many uses, for instance, for mending the broken handle of a knife. When it was wrapped around anything it was stretched as much as possible and when it dried it held very tightly. The travois basket was tied on with the same tendon.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

After a while Blood-Clot took his bow and arrow and went into his father-in-law's lodge and said to him: "What you have been doing you will do no more. I am going to kill you." So Blood-Clot shot his arrows into his father-in-law and killed him. 539 773

Thus it is that Bha'a was known to be a bird. He and Blood-Clot fought but neither killed the other. Blood-Clot destroyed other evil things but Bha'a was a little too much for him to destroy. This Bha'a is the same who was associated with the Feathered Pipe.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

INDEX

Abandonment of sick, 321-322
Abnormality, 28, 310-311, 320
Abstention, sex, 156, 188, 192, 214, 247, 422
After-life, 13, 23, 225
Age-society, 175, 186, 202, 217, 240
Ancestral spirit, 257-264, 273, 295, 325, 330, 379, 388
Atsa:, 22, 28-31, 310

Bands, 29, 30, 58, 68, 87-88, 89, 165, 175, 180, 182
Banter, 47, 57, 192, 241, 247, 249, 387
Beaver Pipe, 166-168; origin of, 167-168; other beaver pipes, 168-170
Bha'a, 4, 9-13, 19-21 passim, 77, 136, 140, 145, 148, 150, 151, 184, 191, 197, 257, 260, 382, 385
Blood-clot story, 11, 32, 482-487
Broken Knife, 1, 19, 372
Buffalo, 55, 62-63, 73, 74, 88, 91, 92, 102, 119, 128-129, 141, 150, 175, 182-183, 186-187, 195, 207, 236, 237, 242, 244-252, 253, 316, 368, 382, 390, 421, 422
Bundle, sacred Pipe, vi, 51-55 passim, 62, 67, 68, 69-76, 123-126, 133, 137, 140-145, 149, 151, 152, 155, 164-170 passim, 379
Burial, 24, 26, 29, 36, 169, 170-171, 246, 385

Catholics, 19, 36, 59, 116, 120, 130, 135, 252, 253, 269, 363, 372-373
Chastity-test, 405-409
Chiefs, 175, 203, 217, 230, 234, 250
Childbirth, 21, 202, 217, 230, 234, 250
Children, 7, 27-34 passim, 42-43, 57, 65, 98, 118-119, 121, 123, 134, 149, 155, 160-169 passim, 225, 230, 244-245, 265, 269, 273, 293, 317-318, 366, 421
Christian influence, 9, 363, 375
Clairvoyance, 258, 260, 329-330
Co-keeper, sacred Pipe, see Keeper, also Feathered Pipe, Flat Pipe
Competition, 47, 57, 89, 186, 201, 204-205, 219, 238, 298, 308-309
Crazy Dance, 87, 89, 173, 178, 180, 182, 200-221, 247; origin of, 200
Crier, 30, 68, 180, 181, 186, 202-204, 213, 265
Cult, 1, 8, 18, 173, 257
Culture hero, see Trickster
Curing, 21, 59, 61, 62, 87, 147, 154, 257, 259, 263-264, 310-363, 389, 394; by extraction, 28, 267, 333-356 passim; individual practices, 333-356. See Doctoring

Dancing, 78, 87, 136, 143, 144, 149, 152, 154-159 passim, 188, 211, 218-219, 230, 235, 240, 248
Death, 8, 12, 27-30, 66, 112, 209, 225, 265, 266, 309, 321
Divination, 419-426
Doctoring, 7, 62, 87, 138, 160, 164, 259, 273, 298, 313, 319, 324-357, 401. See Curing
Doctors, 260, 272, 325, 361-362. See Medicine men, and Power quest
Dog Dance, 173, 174, 180, 182, 232-235; origin of, 232-234
Dogs, 57, 60-61, 124, 137, 208, 262, 283-289 passim, 421
Double-lodge, 46, 47, 48, 52, 149-158 passim, 402
Dream, 21, 40-41, 55, 90, 116, 118, 119, 124, 132, 138-139, 158, 159, 160, 169, 266-269, 271, 292, 323, 367, 389, 392, 394, 402, 409-415. See Power quest
Drum Dance, 173, 174, 180, 182, 221-227, 236, 421; origin of, 222-223
Dwarfs, 32, 462

Earthmaker, 5, 22, 23, 71, 79, 99, 282, 435-437
Eclipse, 29, 417-418
Enemy-friends, 75, 187, 211, 218, 238
Epidemics, 28-31, 257, 310, 371

Fasting, 46, 48, 52, 98, 182, 184, 192, 196, 208, 211-212, 265, 273
Feast, 52, 57, 65, 89, 98, 109, 115, 153, 157, 159, 182, 224, 235, 241, 249, 382-383
Feathered Pipe, vi, 10, 17, 36, 38, 41, 44, 54, 68, 77, 82, 89, 90, 126, 130-165, 179, 184; ceremonies,

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

149-168; description, 140-145; keepership, 131-140; origin, 446-454; relative dignity of, 171-172; ritual, 145-149
Flat Pipe, v, vii, 19, 22, 23, 33-129, 130, 137, 140, 145-169 passim, 175, 179, 184-185, 191; 375-379, 390, 411-412; description, 69-76; keepership, 33-44; loss and recovery, 460-461; other observances, 117-129; relative dignity of, 171-172; rite of transfer, 44-54; ritual, 77-129; seasonal rites, 87-111, 112, 117, 118, 119, 148, 173; vowed rites, 111-117
Flesh offerings, 17, 22, 90, 92, 139, 195, 281, 285, 384-386, 389-393. See Sacrifices
Fly Dance, 173-174, 180, 182, 230, 239-242
Folklore, 1, 2, 3, 17, 22-32, 58, 71-72, 106, 424-487
Food, 6, 12, 13, 17, 30, 34, 57, 60, 64, 88, 89, 109-110, 112, 115, 121, 138, 186, 190, 197, 208, 211-212, 241, 245, 249, 257, 262, 269, 375, 377, 382, 385, 386, 388
Forewarnings, 7, 26, 27, 138-139, 141. See Omens
Found-in-grass story, 32, 462-482
Four Holy Men, 1, 18-19, 95, 103, 109, 114, 150, 181, 184, 372, 377
Fumigating, 49, 51, 52, 124, 134, 316, 332. See Smudging

Gambling, 21, 23, 66, 139, 186, 256, 257, 267, 272, 293-294, 368-369
Generosity, 64, 122, 160, 199
Ghost Dance, 252-256
Ghost-helper, 1, 23, 28, 257, 386. See Ancestral Spirit
Ghosts, 20, 21, 22-27, 259, 366, 417
Giants, 31
Grandfather, ceremonial, 54, 103, 175-180, 185-215 passim; 229, 236, 238, 240, 393, 395
Grandmother, ceremonial, 176, 244

Health, 6, 40, 119, 121, 148, 197, 375-384 passim
Hearth, 18, 49, 50, 55, 90, 93, 99-100, 115, 121, 132, 151
He-who-dreams-of-Bha'a, 19, 147, 153, 454-460
He-who-starved-to-death, 1, 19, 95, 103, 114, 377, 437-446
Horses, 14, 19, 40, 41-46, 63, 67, 74, 76, 123, 126, 136, 139-140, 145, 156, 157, 161, 165, 178, 190, 193, 223-224, 231, 255, 298, 299, 362, 375, 386, 415, 421-422
Human Face, 149, 153, 158. See Image
Hunting, 20, 32, 62, 68, 74, 88, 175, 182, 187, 228, 237, 261, 383, 388-389; mimetic, 247-250

Illness, 6, 17, 27, 112, 119, 120, 135, 148, 154-155, 159, 181, 206, 228, 271, 334, 367-369, 386, 401, 404, 410; causes of, 310-313; treatment of, 313-357
Image, 140, 141, 142-143. See Human Face
Incense, see Smudging
Informants, v-vi, 8, 87, 130, 141, 155, 158, 173, 182-183, 200, 221, 227-228, 232, 235-236, 239, 242, 252, 258, 260, 393
Instruction, ordinary, 265, 366; ritual, 46-54 passim, 81, 83, 136, 188, 203, 283

Keeper, sacred Pipe, v, vi, 19, 33-44, 131-140, 145, 150, 154, 155, 175, 272, 292, 310, 325, 333, 401; characteristics of, 37, 65, 131, 137, 139; coiffure, 52, 65-66, 139; prerogatives and restrictions of, 58-69; role in political life, 68-69, 125, 137, 164-165; succession, 34-36, 131-133
Kit-fox Dance, 173, 174, 180, 182, 227-232, 247, 401; origin of, 228-229

Last Child, 1, 13, 15-17, 19, 95, 109, 116, 153, 181, 280, 324, 371, 372, 377, 382, 387, 388
Laving, 48, 99, 102; see Smudging
Legerdemain, 304-308, 329-330
Lodge, Pipe keeper's, 36-44 passim, 54-58, 60, 67, 89, 98, 100-101, 125, 136-137, 159
Lodges, sacred, see Sacred Dances
Love medicine, 21, 270

Magic, 60, 364
Medicine, 62, 78, 138, 214, 216-217, 268. See Curing, Doctoring, Remedies

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Medicine man, 78, 254, 265-267, 282, 322, 324, 399; woman, 269, 273, 293, 322-324. See Doctoring, Doctors
Menstrual taboo, 202
Missionary, 8, 9, 252, 363
Moon, 17, 18, 95, 103, 109, 114, 181, 184
Moral order, 7, 24, 64, 139, 386
Mourning, 139, 231, 293, 389
Murder, 24, 54, 58, 178, 332

Ni:hahat, 22, 390; stories, 429-435. See Trickster

Oath, 3, 17, 404
Observances, miscellaneous, 420-422
Offerings, 11-17 passim, 41, 64, 83, 90-101 passim, 112-121 passim, 132, 149, 155, 158, 159-160, 171, 191, 199, 206-207, 247-248, 266, 281, 324, 382, 385-387, 399, 401. See Sacrifices
Old age, 6, 115, 122-123, 144, 197, 217, 233, 236, 238, 244, 245, 257, 266, 375, 376, 379, 381-383, 386
Old Men's Dance, 173-175, 180, 182, 235-239, 247, 368, 382
Old Women's Dance, 173-175, 180, 182, 236-238, 242-252
Omens, 83, 415-417
Opening of Pipe bundle, 36, 69, 77, 89, 105-109, 112-117, 133, 140-159 passim, 378-379
Owl, 22, 26-27, 139, 141, 153-159, 217, 219, 311, 417. See Ghost

Painted Lodge, 54, 285, 325
Painting, ceremonial, 51, 72, 76, 82-108 passim, 118-128 passim, 138, 145-159 passim, 164, 191, 193, 207-210, 217, 224, 228, 241, 243-253 passim, 411-412
Payments, 46, 53-54, 101, 111, 112, 116, 122, 155-158, 178, 187, 193-194, 199, 207, 211, 219, 231, 235, 241, 250, 255, 294, 297, 324, 343, 360-363
Peppermint, 48-56 passim, 61-63, 72, 77, 84, 93, 99, 121, 124, 134-135, 146, 314
Petroglyph beings, 1, 20-21, 385, 418-419
Pine needles, 134-135, 145-146, 151, 164, 166, 421. See Smudging
Pipe, ordinary in ritual, 6, 12, 15, 60, 62, 89, 91, 138, 150, 166, 176, 178, 181, 206, 213, 216, 244, 261, 262, 281, 330-331, 372, 376-377, 384, 385, 404; sacred, vi, 69-70, 165-171, 182, 187, 213, 372, 385, 386, 398, 417. See also Feathered Pipe and Flat Pipe
Pipe Child, 19, 33, 42-55 passim, 99, 130-134, 151, 159
Poison, 21, 51, 52, 61, 78, 86-87, 138, 143, 146-148, 158, 209
Power object, 283-285, 291, 298, 332. See Supernatural power
Power quest, 4, 7, 21, 24, 192, 260, 264, 265, 273-291, 323, 370, 382, 412
Prayer, 1, 4, 5, 12-22 passim, 50, 80, 83-88, 102-111, 114, 115, 120, 123, 124, 148, 151-159 passim, 164, 169, 181, 184, 192, 197, 210, 237, 241, 247, 257, 280, 332, 370-384
Prerogatives, 38, 46, 58-69 passim, 137, 238-239
Presents, 199, 211, 212, 235, 244, 247, 249
Property, 39, 40, 45, 46, 53, 67, 136, 174, 184, 235, 260, 294, 322
Punishment, 8, 38, 52, 57, 59-61, 77, 132, 139, 156, 175, 179, 187, 205, 215, 235, 236, 267, 310, 324, 327, 402

Rain ceremony, 160, 161-162, 172
Rattles, 39, 72, 78, 105, 146, 169, 209, 218, 230, 237, 245, 248, 332-333, 373
Remedies, 274, 313; natural, 314-321; proprietary, 322-324. See also Curing, Doctoring
Respect observances, 56-61 passim, 137, 147, 158, 166, 169, 177, 331-332
Restrictions, on doctors, 326-327; on Pipe keepers, 38, 41, 42, 46, 52-69 passim, 137, 139-140; on power possessors, 268
Reward, 8, 233, 271, 273
Ritual numbers, 78, 79, 145, 146, 151, 182, 400, 422

Sacred Dances, 88, 89, 126, 173-256, 379, 386
Sacrifices, 1, 20, 21, 90, 92-98 passim, 184, 192, 212, 247, 293, 384-398
Sacrifice Dance, 10, 47, 117, 160, 172,

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

173, 180-200, 208, 212, 224, 236, 247-248, 271, 389, 393, 395; origin of, 183-184
Scouts, 30, 74, 126, 188-190
Self-torture, 65, 184, 193-196, 384, 389, 393-398
Sex relations, 98, 205, 206, 229, 255-257, 268, 269, 296-297, 339; test, 201-216 passim
Singing, 39, 40, 45, 47, 61, 78-82, 161-163, 185, 218-219, 228, 237, 245, 248, 282, 332, 415
Skepticism, 147, 254-255, 340, 357-360, 412
Smoking, 47-51, 57, 67, 83-89 passim, 96-111 passim, 126, 138, 146, 149, 157, 181, 247, 249, 332, 385
Smudging, 48-49, 92-119 passim, 124, 134, 145, 151, 155, 156, 161-162, 165, 166, 181, 210, 219, 241, 255
Soldier societies, 175, 176, 180, 186, 201-208, 236, 243, 245
Songs, 19, 47, 49, 62, 63, 66, 78-111 passim, 113-117, 118, 136, 146, 150-166 passim, 189-237 passim, 241, 248, 253, 259-260, 261, 282-283, 285, 346, 368, 381-382, 410
Spirits, minor, 19-20
Stars, 18
Star society, 47, 78, 175, 333. See Soldier societies
Suffering, 185, 195, 274, 386
Suicide, 231
Sun, 5, 16, 17-18, 82, 95, 103, 109, 114, 181, 185, 324
Sun Dance, 184, 196, 197. See Sacrifice Dance
Supernatural beings, 1-32, 65; powers, 5, 12, 21, 25, 60-66 passim, 72, 163, 171-172, 204-205, 254, 257-309, 322, 325, 379
Supreme Being, 1-9, 11-23 passim, 53, 80, 88, 92, 95, 103, 109, 114-199 passim, 217, 237, 242, 247, 257, 260, 264, 280, 324, 329, 332, 365, 372-389 passim, 398, 399, 404, 405
Sweat-lodge, 4, 15, 18, 19, 22, 41, 53, 73, 74, 89-92, 120, 182, 196, 211, 212, 224, 261, 319, 333, 382, 384, 386, 390, 398
Symbolism, 10, 116, 146, 151, 179, 191, 193, 217, 219, 224, 236, 241-242, 244, 299

Tciyatawuni:tan, 4, 19-21, 32
Thought, power of, 2, 192, 237, 280, 379. See Wish-thought
Thunderbird, 9, 146, 184, 193. See Bha'a
Tobacco, 16, 23, 49, 57, 60, 72, 78, 83, 84-86, 113, 119, 147, 324, 330, 333, 385, 386
Transfer, of Sacred Pipe, 33, 36-37, 39, 41, 44-54, 60, 89, 90, 101, 112, 131, 135, 136, 140, 149, 151, 154; of power, 258, 260, 264, 269, 294-298, 323
Trickster, 2, 9, 18, 22-23, 43, 58, 89, 90, 99, 106

Visions, 197, 222-223, 228-229, 233. See also Dreams
Vow, 3, 35, 41, 74-76, 78, 87, 90, 91, 99, 111-117, 119, 120, 121, 132-146, 148, 149, 151-160 passim, 173, 174, 181, 184, 200, 224, 228, 230-242 passim, 383, 389, 402-404

War, 6, 12-27 passim, 34, 57-68 passim, 74-75, 90, 103, 106, 111, 131, 137, 148, 158, 169-170, 171, 180, 188-190, 217, 225-233 passim, 243, 257-263 passim, 273, 292, 297, 298-304, 320, 369, 375, 387, 389
Warrior, 272, see Chief
Water-monsters, 1, 12, 13-17, 266, 385, 386-387
Wealth, 5, 21, 41, 257, 272, 273, 298-299
Wild parsley, 84. See Poison
Wish-thought, 2, 7, 60, 311, 365-370
Witchcraft, 27, 28, 272, 309, 311, 312, 327-329, 341, 344-345, 347, 357, 363, 412, 421
Wolf society, 175. See Soldier societies

3: Cooper
796

NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

[For information on organized religious ceremonial, see also category 116, pp. 44-54, 87-123, 148-157, 159-161, 173-177, 180-182, 184-221, and 224-252. -- Analyst]

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

SOUTHWESTERN JOURNAL OF ANTHROPOLOGY

Published by the University of New Mexico
and the Laboratory of Anthropology, Santa Fe
in the interest of general Anthropology

VOLUME 2
1946

UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO PRESS
ALBUQUERQUE

[Title page]

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

SOCIAL MECHANISMS IN GROS VENTRE GAMBLING

REGINA FLANNERY AND JOHN M. COOPER

INTRODUCTION

THE PRESENT PAPER is offered as a modest start toward opening up 121
what looks like a promising field, namely, the social implications of gambling. 114

Our anthropological sources yield a fairly generous amount of information 525
on the world distribution of gambling,[1] the games and sports gambled on, the valuables wagered, the payment of gambling debts, and the ritual accompaniments of gambling. On the other hand, the same sources yield extremely meager information, and for most gambling peoples none at all, on such social aspects of gambling as: its mode of meshing into the prevalent social organization (who gambles, with whom, and for what); its effectiveness in fulfilling or thwarting the wishes of the individual gambler and in meeting or blocking the needs of integral and fractional social groups; individual differences in participation and the motivations responsible for them; native attitudes toward gambling; the economic and other factors that are favorable or unfavorable to the rise and persistence of gambling in culture as such or in given cultures. Field and library studies of these and most other social aspects of gambling have been almost entirely neglected by anthropologists.[2] And, so far as the present writers have been able to discover from rapid search among the sociological sources and from random inquiries among their sociological friends, such studies have also been almost entirely neglected by the sociologists, even by those specializing in the area of delinquency.

The following pages are an attempt to present the gambling complex, with 121
emphasis on certain of its social aspects, as it existed during the second half of 525
the last century among the Gros Ventre of Montana. Most of the complex is now a thing of the past. New gambling games, particularly playing cards, have superseded the old, and gambling itself, on the reservation and among the [178]
Gros Ventre in general, is not the tense and meaningful activity it used to be.

The data on which this paper is based were gathered, incidentally to a gen- 121

1 World distribution is spotty and far from universal. A summarized world distribution, based on several hundred sources, is given in J. M. Cooper, *Temporal Sequence and the Marginal Cultures* (Anthropological Series, Catholic University of America, no. 10, 1941), pp. 67-68.

2 Father Gerald Desmond's *Gambling among the Yakima*, from his field study of 1944, a manuscript now being prepared for publication, is devoted largely to the social aspects.

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

121 eral study of the social organization and religion of the Gros Ventre, at the Fort Belknap Reservation, Montana, in about equal proportions by Flannery in the summers of 1940 and 1945 and by Cooper in the summers of 1939 and 1940, from Gros Ventre informants, mostly of the older generation. In most cases we 115 used interpreters; in some, we communicated in English. Our chief informants on gambling were: The Boy (b.1872, our most important source, who had gotten a good deal of his information from his father, Lame Bull, b.1825, d.1908), Thick (b. ca. 1870-71), Charles John Buckman (b.1872), Mrs Takes-a-Prisoner Warrior (b. ca. 1850-55) and Mrs Singer Sleeping-Bear (b. ca. 1860). These informants were exceptionally intelligent and dependable, and were not only willing to give us the information they had but anxious to do so. In spite of this, not all the past could, of course, be recaptured, and in certain parts the picture we got is far from complete, particularly regarding individual differences and motivations. However, we have had extremely little reconstruction proper to do, as most of the older gambling complex survived up to near the turn of the century, and had been actively participated in and/or witnessed and was vividly remembered by our informants, while some parts of it, especially many of the social aspects thereof, have persisted down to the present.

WAGERS AND BETTING PROCEDURE

525 Stakes wagered by the Gros Ventre may be divided into small or trivial ones and big or valuable ones. Small stakes consisted of such things as arrows, bows, bags, beads, pipes, knives, handkerchiefs, dishes, and so forth; big ones, of such things as guns, saddles, lodges, and especially horses (the chief wealth in the old days). Wives were never wagered. Two teams might play mostly for fun, the losers being merely expected or obligated to provide a smoke, or, as more commonly, refreshments or a meal—"to cook," as the current expression goes—for the winners. This last was seemingly the only type of non-dyadic wagering in vogue among the Gros Ventre, if it can be called wagering at all, for such provision of smokes or food for relatives and friends was an everyday custom. Mrs Sleeping-Bear stated that in a gambling game she once played with her husband's brother, she forfeited her eyebrows, which he pulled out, but whether this was an exceptional occurrence or a customary one within the prevalent pattern of rough familiarity between brother-in-law and sister-in-law we could not discover.

Betting was typically dyadic, a given individual matching the wager of another individual, and the stakes going to the winning individual. The dyadic system was kept to even where, as was common, betting was by sides, each side,

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

composed of several or many participants, betting on its favorite player or team. 525 There was no pooling of bets by groups, with equal division of gains among the winners, apart from the "stakes" of food or smokes above mentioned. A given person could put up two or more wagers in a given contest with two or more other persons, but any one wager laid by any one person had to be matched by a single individual. Thus a handkerchief might be matched by another one of equal value, a good horse by another good horse, and so forth. In one case we recorded, a watch was matched against a pair of field glasses, the matching being calculated more by use-value to the respective owners than by money-value or "store-value." Finally there was seemingly no gambling on the promissory principle. Bettors had to have the stakes on hand and to put them up on the spot in full sight of players and onlookers, except of course where a man's lodge or perhaps a given horse at pasture was wagered. Consequently gambling debts proper were not incurred; at most a man lost all he actually possessed at the time. If in the course of a game, he had lost all he had actually at hand and wanted to bet more, he would send for or fetch the articles he wanted to put up.

In gambling activities, certain rather elaborate rules obtained as to who could gamble and could not gamble, with whom, and for what—rules which will be explained later in connection with the wheel game and especially with the hand game.

GAMBLING GAMES AND SPORTS

The Gros Ventre gambled, or gamble, chiefly at the following games and sports: 2-button hand game, wheel (hoop-and-pole) game, horse and foot races, dice, ring-and-pin, bow and arrow contests, and, more recently, playing cards. Of these the more important, as judged by size of wagers, by degree of participation, and by intensity of interest, were the 2-button hand game, the wheel game, and the races. We shall take up, first and briefly, the minor gambling games and sports, and get them out of the way, and after that, in more detail, the above three major ones.

Minor Gambling Games and Sports

The dice game, played with four dice having marks carved or painted on them, was a woman's game.[3] The dice were rubbed in the hands and then thrown down. Ordinarily the wagers were small, but sometimes even horses were lost and won by the women.

3 Illustrations of Gros Ventre dice are given in S. Culin, *Games of the North American Indians* (Twenty-Fourth Annual Report, Bureau of American Ethnology, 1907), figs. 54-55, p. 71, and A. L. Kroeber, *Ethnology of the Gros Ventre* (Anthropological Papers, American Museum of Natural History, vol. 1, pt. 4, 1908), figs. 14-18, pp. 184-186.

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

525 Women (and men?) also gambled at ring-and-pin, the "ring" being made of four bones from deer feet.[4] The contest was mostly just for fun; the losers would have to "cook" for the winners.

Several types of bow and arrow contests, serving as archery practice as well as gambling sports, were indulged in by boys, young men, and sometimes older men, not, however, by girls or women. Both distance and accuracy contests occurred. In the latter, the target was a stick or arrow stuck upright in a small mound, or an arrow shot by one contestant a desired distance, say, 100 or 150 yards. In another kind of contest, a bow was set slanting, string upward; the string was vibrated by an arrow and the arrow on release flew toward the target about 35 or 40 feet away. In these bow and arrow contests, the wagers were small, usually arrows, sometimes a bow. Wagers were made by the players, and at times by onlookers too.

The modern 4-button hand game, distinct from the earlier 2-button one, is played more for fun than for winnings. At most the losers may be expected to [177] "cook" for the winners. This modern non-gambling hand game came to the Gros Ventre through an Arapaho, Dances All Night, in 1897, shortly after the [668] time the Ghost Dance was introduced among them (in 1891). The Ghost Dance itself had little popularity among the Gros Ventre and after a couple of years died out among them, but the non-gambling hand game took root and survived. At first, we were informed, it was played with two buttons, but after 1903 with four.

525 178 Gambling at playing cards, sometimes for large stakes, occurs today, but usually at the nearby white settlements, between Gros Ventre and white males. Some of the older Gros Ventre are shrewd poker players, and the younger ones play poker among themselves, but we obtained no record of ruinous stakes at cards among the Gros Ventre themselves on the reservation.

Major Gambling Games and Sports

525 The three more important gambling games and sports of half a century or more ago were races, the wheel game, and the 2-button hand game.

1. *Races*

[575] On horse races, usually between the two soldier-police societies, the Stars and Wolves (the latter became later the "Grass Dancers"), or between the [648] Gros Ventre and other tribes, such as the Piegan, at intertribal gatherings, were placed large bets—horses, saddles, and so forth—by the men, not however by

4 Illustration in Culin, *op. cit.*, fig. 706, p. 537.

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

women or children. The winners would twit the losers with such remarks as: 525
"Don't use that horse to race with. Use it to pack meat." Horse races for prizes, as distinct from wagers, did not occur.

Bets, often large ones, of horses and so forth, were laid on foot races, particularly on foot races between champions of the two above-mentioned soldier-police societies.

2. *The Wheel Game*

While large bets were often laid on horse and foot races, the most intense gambling interest of the Gros Ventre appears to have centered on the wheel game and the 2-button hand game.

The wheel game, as the present-day English-speaking Gros Ventre call it, was a variety of the hoop-and-pole game. The implements used in it were: a small buckskin-wrapped hoop about 3-5 inches in diameter, with variously colored large trade beads strung within the rim,[5] a "pole" consisting of an arrow or a stick, and a set of short sticks serving as tallies or counters. The court was about 25-30 feet long with, at each end, a log or other obstruction against which the wheel bumped and then fell. One of the two players would roll the wheel underhand with his right hand, and the two players, each with his pole, would trot on toes, sideways or backwards, stooped over somewhat, alongside the rolling wheel. As the wheel bumped against the obstruction, each would hurriedly but deftly throw down his pole for the wheel to fall upon. If according to the count of beads the roller lost the throw, the other player then rolled. The wheel was rolled back and forth in the court alternately. The roller had a slight advantage over his opponent, but he had to play fairly and roll the wheel vertically, for if he rolled it slanting so that it fell toward him too often he was not considered a good sport.

Before the game started the two players agreed upon the number of counters (say ten for each player) that would constitute a game, upon the value in counters of each bead, and upon one particular bright- or odd-colored bead which would win all the counters and with them the game and the stakes. The counters were not put in one single pile, as they were in the 2-button hand game. They were "bought" with the wagers in equal numbers by the two players from a man widely known for his honesty and integrity who functioned in the game as keeper of these wheel-game counters. This man sat all through the course of the game and "sold" counters to the two players. Each player had a second or representative who looked after his counters, receiving or giving

5 Illustration in Kroeber, *op. cit.*, fig. 22, p. 188.

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

525 according to the fortunes of play on orders from the principals. Each player also selected a watcher who had to see that the game was played straight.

If the wheel after falling came to rest on neither player's pole, no counters were won by either player, but the player towards whose pole the wheel came to rest closer won the right to roll the wheel next. Whether counters were won by relative closeness of pole to bead or by actual contact only, is a minor point we could not clear up.

Once a player had thrown his pole, touching it was strictly forbidden: "You could not even blow on it," as one informant expressed the matter. At times there were close decisions and arguments would arise over the lay. If the two opponents could not come to an agreement, each would look over the spectators and each would pick out some man of known fairness and probity to act as referee. To be chosen as referee in a big game was looked upon as a high honor. The two referees might have to lie down flat on the ground in order to get as close view as possible, and each might argue his case for his chooser. An agreement reached by the two referees was supposed to be final and without appeal. Sometimes, however, the argument would end in blows.

The wheel game was ordinarily played outside the camp circle, not as the result of any strict prohibition, but merely to be out of people's way. For a big game would attract a large number of spectators and backers, and interest was intense, so intense in fact that in an all-day series of games neither player nor onlookers might go back to their lodges to cook and eat, but might forego eating or else have the food brought to them by the women. Relatives and other partisans of the winning player might provide food for all present, with boasting comments, such as: "Our 'race-horse' here is not just a young fellow. He can feed this whole crowd here too. We will show you how this is done, just as he is showing his opponent how to play."

The onlookers had to keep from getting in the way of players, and could not interfere in any way. Nor was there any rooting by them. In fact, while the game was all-absorbing for players and for spectators, it was played tensely, quietly, and gravely, without the noise and hubbub that characterized the 2-button hand game. And no songs were sung by any one during it; the winner would merely give a yell at the end. Should the winner's pole touch the "joker" bead, he would just walk away, and some one or more of the crowd would walk up to the spot where the wheel lay and would say: "Yes, that's the 'joker' bead." The winner, however, might twit the loser, with some such remark as: "My friend, haven't you any better sense than to gamble with me. You know or ought to know that you don't amount to much."

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The wheel game, too, in contrast to the 2-button hand game, was accompanied with no legerdemain and no grace or fancy movements. The players might run or trot in a rather awkward or ridiculous fashion, "awfully funny, like a chicken walking backwards," as one informant put it; but they did not care what the crowd might think of their queer or clumsy gait; they were out to win; they would await some other occasion "to show off handsome." 525 [789]

Likewise, in the wheel game, no prayers to any being were said and there was no resort to supernatural power gotten from prairie chickens or ghosts (see *infra* under hand game). Even if a given wheel-game player had such power, it was of no avail in the wheel game and was not called upon. In the gambling-for-scalps story, to be mentioned presently, the Gros Ventre prayed to the Supreme Being to win, but here there was question not so much of winning material goods as of preserving physical wholeness and life itself, things within the peculiar keeping of the Supreme Being in Gros Ventre theology. [782]

Success in the wheel game depended on two things: skill and what may be called thought-wish power. In the play all effort was concentrated by the players on the utmost exercise of skill and adroitness acquired through long practice and of judgment, in following the rolling wheel and in throwing the pole at just the precise moment and in just the right manner. But, in at least some of the big wheel games, a sort of thought power or thought-wish power was used by the players. In how far such power can be considered "supernatural" is hard to say; it seems to have been more "natural" than "supernatural," as judged by most definitions of "supernatural." At any rate, it was not a power gained, as most other Gros Ventre supernatural powers were gained, from some being by crying, fasting, and dreaming on mountain tops or along timbered water courses. 525 789

Its efficacy was derived ultimately from the player's previous war exploits. Its exercise was along the following pattern. There being no set time for wheel games, one might get under way any time, with relatively small stakes, and develop in the course of play into a really big game, or the game could be a big one from the start. In such a big game, between outstanding opponents, for large stakes and for status (see *infra*), before starting to roll the wheel, each player would in turn take the wheel in one hand and with the other touch his pole (arrow or stick) under the wheel on a particular bead. While doing so he would think with intense concentration of one of his past war deeds—e.g., a horse he took from the very door of his enemy's lodge at great risk of life—and would say in his mind, silently and not audibly: "I am not telling a lie [about this deed]. The powers know I am not telling a lie." He would rehearse the event in his mind, and probably (the point was not fully cleared up by us) would think of

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

525 some object connected with the deed, which was of the same color as the bead
789 he was touching.

This thought-wish was a sort of indirect or implicit oath, not a formal audibly uttered one. If he actually had done no such deed, he could not hope to have good fortune from such intense concentration of thought and wish. But it was not a prayer proper; he was not asking anything directly of any being. The act was called beta´c"et". It may be added here parenthetically that a highly abstract concept of effective power from deeply sincere wish or intense thought or from both combined plays an important part in many phases of Gros Ventre life even today.

While the player was making this silent wish, the spectators would speculate a lot about which of his great war deeds he was thinking. Later the winner would recite publicly the great deed he had been thinking about. In doing so he had to keep scrupulously to the facts, facts well known to the people, for he was looked upon as a man of character and high standing with a reputation gained by merit, sacrifice, and risk of life.

525 If a player were losing, one of his kinsmen, friends, or backers might volunteer to take his place playing, and also (apparently: our field evidence is not fully clear) to use his own war deeds power.

The main gambling at the wheel game was for stakes wagered by the two players themselves, a given piece of property against an equivalent piece for each game of any agreed number, say 10, of counters won. But the spectators, too, often bet on the game, although not so generally, it appears, as they did at the 2-button hand game. The wagers by players or spectators could be small or large. Two given players might keep at play many hours in succession, playing game after game. In some instances the betting between the two players would result in the loss by one of the last bit of his property—horses, blankets, clothing, household utensils, even his lodge itself. A comparatively wealthy man could thus become a "pauper" in a day. Often, too, the relatives of the players would win or lose almost as heavily in backing their respective kinsmen.

554 In some of the big wheel games the "social" stakes were as important as or
525 more important than the property ones, as illustrated in the case of Lame Bull given below. Two prominent men, enemy friends to each other and at the same time rivals for prestige and status in the tribe, would on a given day play the game *à outrance*. The winner's status and prestige would be greatly exalted; the loser's proportionately lowered. A man's whole career of advancement to prominence in the tribe—a basic ambition among Gros Ventre men—could be brought to ruin in a single day's gaming at the wheel game. He might lose not

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

only his property and so have to begin accumulating again from scratch, but might at the same time lose as well his standing in the tribe and become a defeated and disgraced nobody, of a low standing from which it was very difficult to rise in the scale. 557 525

The wheel game was not played by women or children, nor apparently by the very young men, but only by fully adult or middle-aged men and older ones, and by only two players at a time. The really big games with large stakes were in most cases, it seems—almost all, according to our informants—played by two "enemy friends" or "war friends." Such enemy friends or war friends were very different from ordinary friends or "true" pledged friends. An "enemy friendship" was a war-related compact entered into in the following manner. A member of a returning war party would give some trophy or booty he had taken from the enemy—e.g., a scalp, or horse, or weapon—to one of his own compatriots of the same or opposite sex, who had little choice but to accept. Acceptance made "enemy friends" or "war friends" of the two. War friends, particularly if unrelated and both males, could go the limit in twitting and insulting each other and in playing practical jokes, even rather outrageous ones, on each other, and the victim had to take such behavior in good part, at least externally. However, along with the privilege of taking such liberties ran the accepted obligation to stand by each other in real need or hazard of grave nature. 525 572 [835] [522]

The two war friends could gamble with each other. In fact, gambling among the Gros Ventre reached at times its climax in contests between two war friends. A wheel game between war friends commonly arose out of a "bragging match" between them; one would challenge the other to play the wheel game. If the one challenged declined to accept the challenge, his war friend who challenged him, and his other war friends, would ever after take occasion to deride him publicly for it at the least provocation. So the challenge could not easily be declined. The game often became one in which each enemy friend would go out to strip the other of practically everything he owned—horses, gun, blankets, lodge—and at which the most eager interest was aroused among the relatives, fellow-clansmen, and friends of the respective players and, for that matter, among the whole camp population. Such enemy-friend contests were commonly protracted sessions, often all-day ones, at the wheel game.

The following three narratives of particular wheel-game gambling contests—the first two of which are matters of well-remembered recent history, the third an older traditional story paralleled elsewhere on the Plains—throw some further light on the social role of the Gros Ventre wheel game.

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

525 572 578 538 *Narrative 1.* In 1893 two Gros Ventre, enemy friends to each other, Red Whip who died in 1912 and Many Tail Feathers, got into a gambling game with the wheel. Many Tail Feathers was losing and he got angry. He grabbed Red Whip and they had a rought-and-tumble tussle. They fell to the ground, with Red Whip on top, astraddle Many Tail Feathers. Red Whip drew his knife, cut off all of the other's hair, at which loss the latter cried while the people cheered a cheer of contempt. Red Whip acting as if he had scalped an enemy, threw the hair in the air, and said in the hearing of all: "What's the matter with you, my friend? You must have a weak heart. Look at me. This is what I did to my enemy [such and such a time]. You know all about it. I just wanted to show you that I am your superior in matters of this kind. But anyhow you can have that good horse of mine."

[115] *Narrative 2.* Lame Bull, father of The Boy, our chief informant on gambling, died in 1908 at the age of 83 or 84 years. Lame Bull, when still a fairly young man, a rising one with prospects of rising higher and higher in the prestige scale, had been chosen as an enemy friend by White Owl, an older man, and Lame Bull had, according to custom, accepted the offer. An offer of enemy friendship was on the one hand almost mandatory, and on the other, where it came from an outstanding man of great experience and ability, as in this case, it was a real honor to the recipient and would rarely be refused.

When Lame Bull and White Owl became enemy friends, they "started to act like two roosters" and were saying to themselves: "I am going to get you when you are off your guard." Both knew that at some time or another, sooner or later, they would have to do something to put their enemy friendship to the greatest test. After much sparring around, the two men engaged in a wheel game as just such a climactic test. At this game White Owl had a big reputation (besides all his other accomplishments), while Lame Bull had no reputation at all at it.

On this occasion Lame Bull wagered everything he owned, and all his wife's property, including their lodge. As it was customary at such events for the kinsmen of the respective players to bet on their kinsman, Lame Bull's father, together with other relatives wagered large stakes on him, although the father was strongly opposed on principle to such betting and had always counseled Lame Bull strenuously against it. More, however, than large amounts of property was at stake; the players' relative and absolute standing in the tribe hung upon the outcome. In the case of Lame Bull and White Owl, the former a younger man of great promise, the latter an older one of recognized prominence, the rivalry was keen and, in a very true sense, ruthless. The older man was jealous of his great reputation and did not want any one to get near him in prestige. He was trying to crush Lame Bull's rising career betimes lest later Lame Bull might outdo him. At the same time, White Owl stood to profit even if he lost, for he would still be attached as enemy friend to Lame Bull and would have reflected prestige from being the enemy friend of this rising man. He would thus profit inevitably by the latter's prestige.

Lame Bull lost everything in the contest, and, of course, his father and relatives lost heavily. White Owl's people tore down Lame Bull's lodge and took it away as winnings and took everything in it, even down to the dishes of Lame Bull's wife. At the end of the playing, Lame Bull was an object of charity and a laughing stock.

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

About the only thing that earned him a bit of recognition was the fact that in spite 525
of his loss of property and of status—to have recognition at all you had to have some 572
possessions to hold and to give away in presents—and in spite of the strutting and 578
crowing and twitting by the winner and his followers after the playing was over, 538
Lame Bull did not lose his temper.

When the playing ended, Lame Bull had nothing of his own except his wife. So his father and mother invited them to eat. Downcast, embarrassed, ashamed, "feeling like a small potato," he ate. When he had finished, his father gave him such a tongue lashing that Lame Bull, who was very fond of his father, cried, and Lame Bull was a strong man who did not easily cry. He felt so bad that he went out on the hills and cried and cried, and slept out there, and came back a pretty sorry young man. And for a long time after, his wife, who also was one of his enemy friends, would throw this up to him: "Oh, you are nothing. You were always weak. Look what your enemy friend did to you. You will never amount to anything." And she would say such things to him especially when others were present. So she set about training him. At any rate Lame Bull was cured of gambling by his great loss to White Owl.

As time went on, Lame Bull recovered from the defeat which might have wrecked for good the career of another. His people had given him enough property to make a new start in life. He would invite White Owl to his lodge and give him big feasts and would make valuable presents of horses and such things to him. And White Owl would make a mental note of these things and would say to himself: "All right, my friend, you wait and see what I will do for you", awaiting the proper time to reciprocate, as was Gros Ventre custom. So a long time afterwards White Owl made very valuable presents to Lame Bull. And they were very good friends.

Narrative 3. Long ago, the story runs, a young Gros Ventre warrior went off 525
alone on a war raid. He got to a mountain, and after nightfall went into a cave 648
to camp overnight. On feeling around in the darkness he found some one else 538
there, and said to himself: "An enemy." To make sure he asked by touching the skin of the other's forearm. The other by wiggling his finger on the Gros Ventre's chest signified: "I am a Snake Indian." So the Gros Ventre took the Snake's hand and made the sign of "big belly" to signify: "I am a Gros Ventre."

The Gros Ventre then said to the Snake: "Let's not fight tonight. You go to sleep and I'll go to sleep. Tomorrow morning we'll see what we'll do." But being afraid of each other, neither slept at all during the night.

The next morning the Gros Ventre asked the Snake: "Friend, where were you going?" He replied: "On the war path." "Alone?" "Yes, all alone." The Snake then asked the same questions and got the same answers. Then the Gros Ventre said: "We are both alone. Instead of killing each other, let's gamble with the wheel. The loser loses his scalp to the winner."

So they started to play, with such things as bow and arrows and clothing for stakes, and the Snake won everything from the Gros Ventre. Then the Gros Ventre proposed: "Friend, you stake all you have won, in a lump, against my scalp," and this was agreed upon. At this point the Gros Ventre got afraid he would lose, so

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

525 he prayed to I^{x}tcibiniąt'a, the Supreme Being: "Have pity on me, so I may beat
648 this man. I'll make a Medicine Dance when I get back home." And as he prayed,
538 he took his arrow and the wheel, and put the arrow on the winning bead of the wheel, and prayed to the Supreme Being that when the wheel was rolled it would fall just that way on the arrow. So when the Gros Ventre rolled the wheel, it fell as he had prayed it would, and he won back all that he had lost.

Then the two men started all over again, and this time the Gros Ventre won everything from the Snake. So the Snake in turn proposed: "Friend, you stake all you have won, in a lump, against my scalp." They played again and the Gros Ventre won.

The Snake then said: "Now you have won my scalp. Tie my head around [at the level of the forehead], then take your knife and cut, and pull off my scalp. And after my scalp is off, go to that hill yonder and wave it at me and sing. Then you go back home and I'll go back home." All this the Gros Ventre did. But before leaving, he said to the Snake: "My friend, you came from a long way off. So did I. It is bad enough that you have lost your scalp. So I am going to give you back some of your things that you'll need on your way back home." So the Gros Ventre gave him back his robe, moccasins, bow and arrow, and knife, saying: "You'll need these."

3. *The 2-Button Hand Game*

525 The wheel game, as played and gambled on in really big contests by outstanding enemy friends, was in some respects the supreme gambling game of the Gros Ventre. It was supreme at least in the intensity of interest it aroused as a spectacle and supreme in the value of what was won and lost, not merely the great amounts of property wagered, but, still more, such prestige and status or loss thereof as could make or break the contestants' careers. On the other hand, as regards everyday popularity, frequency of use, and range of participation, first rank in the gambling complex was held, it clearly appears, by the old 2-button hand game, the predecessor of the modern non-gambling 4-button hand game. In the following pages we shall use the term "hand game" without qualification to designate this earlier pre-Ghost-Dance hand game proper.

The hand game could be played at nearly any time. There were no set occasions for it, though some were more favorable than others, especially intertribal gatherings. Commonly a game started just with some one proposing: "Let's gamble." So somebody would go to the nearest bush and cut the required twelve sticks, each about a foot in length, for counters. Sometimes the bark would then be peeled off the sticks and the ends thereof squared, but this was not necessary. Then agreement was reached on what would serve to hide as the two required "buttons"—such as a bit of "sun-shell" off an earring for the "short" button, and an end of horn off a bracelet for the "long" button. There

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

had to be two buttons, a "short" and a "long" one.[6] Very commonly the game 525
was played inside a lodge, with the main center of interest opposite the door, but outdoor playing also occurred frequently.

When the game took place inside a lodge the arrangement and line up were about as follows. The twelve counters were in one pile at the rear opposite the door. The two teams, of any number each, were lined up from rear to door facing each other, with a tent pole or sections of one before each team to beat time upon and with the wagers placed in view of all between the teams. Each team had its own tally keeper, guesser, hider, assistant hider, and other teammates, ranged in the foregoing order from the counter pile toward the door. We shall call these teams A and B with their respective A and B tally keepers, guessers, and so forth.

The game began with a gambling song, sung, to the measure of a small hand 525
drum and/or beats with sticks on the tent poles lying in front of the teams, by 533
all present, team members and spectators. In 1940 we recorded, as part of a series of 116 Gros Ventre songs, two such gambling songs, sung by The Boy. These two songs are wordless, except for a short sentence or phrase in the middle of each. The wording of one is: ą́niti be´taną (general sense: "It's no use you trying to guess me; I'm 'holy'"). The wording of the other, incomplete (as The Boy could not recall the full native text) is: ą̃´tibdjĩ nǫ´nǫ'tsǫnen ("dogs" "wet legs": allusion not known to The Boy; the full wording was literally: "dogs wet-legs little-legs"). The tunes are lively ones sung in fast time. Only certain songs could be sung in a gambling game; doctors' songs or Medicine Dance songs were taboo therein. If one of the players had his own gambling song gotten from a prairie chicken or ghost (see *infra*), he would start it and the others (only of his own team or side ?) would sing it with him. In the excitement of a game well under way, grunts would often take the place of songs proper.

Each team selected its best player. One held the short button, the other 525
the long one. Player A (of and for team A) hid his button in one of his hands, putting on a show with motions, feints, and so forth. Player B (of and for team B) went through his own show, and finally guessed by pointing. Then B hid and A guessed him. If both guessed correctly or both incorrectly, they each hid and guessed again, and they kept this up until one had guessed correctly and the other incorrectly. So one won the preliminary, and the tally keeper of the winner's side, let us say team A, took four counters from the pile and laid them on his side. The preliminary win also gave the winner's team the right to hide.

6 Illustrations of buttons and counters in Culin, *op. cit.*, figs. 345-348, p. 271.

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

525 Next, hider A and assistant hider A each took one of the two buttons and put on their show together, while team A and only team A sang, this time a song different from the one sung by everybody together at the very start of the game. The rule was that after the opening song before the preliminary round, only the team whose turn it was to hold the buttons to hide could sing. Guesser B watched the two hiders closely, scrutinizing their motions, eyes, expression of countenance, everything, for clues. If he came to the conclusion that hider A had one button hidden in his left hand and assistant hider A the other button in his right hand, guesser B so indicated by pointing with his thumb to hider A and at the same time with his index finger to assistant hider A. Suppose he guessed incorrectly in both cases Tally keeper A would then take two more counters from the pile and team A would cheer, shout, and get up and dance around. Team B would begin to get scared, as team A would then have won six of the twelve counters.

If in the next play, guesser B indicated one of the two hiders A correctly and the other incorrectly, team A got another counter, thus leaving five counters in the pile. The hider A (hider or assistant hider) who had not been guessed this last time then took both buttons and worked with them; if guesser B pointing with his index finger for the long one and at the same with his thumb for the short one, guessed wrong, team A won one more counter, and then both hiders A would hide. By this time guesser B would be getting more and more worried, and the supporters of team A might be booing and twitting him: "Those [of team A] are winning and winning."

Let us say guesser B lost again on the double guess; then team A won two more counters (it would now have ten of the twelve). Guesser B might here appeal half-seriously to his supernatural helper, if he had one: "What is the matter with you, prairie chicken (or ghost)? You are failing me."

As neither had been guessed in the last play, the two hiders A would both hide again—interchanging the buttons perhaps, signaling between themselves, making quick motions, and so forth. Suppose hider A was then guessed correctly, but assistant hider A incorrectly, then team A would win another counter, and only one would be left in the pile. Excitement would here reach a climax. Assistant hider A, who had not been guessed just before, would then take both buttons. Let us assume that guesser B finally guessed him right and thus saved the day at the last minute. His side B would cheer and cheer. The one last counter would remain in the center between the two tally keepers, but now B got a chance to win counters.

If team B then won two counters on the next play, in which guesser A did

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the guessing, tally keeper B would take the one counter remaining in the center 525
and also draw one counter from team A's won counters. And so the game went back and forth, one or two hiding at a time according to rule, until one team won all the twelve counters.

A session of hand games might go on for many hours; starting, say, in the morning it might continue throughout the whole day and through the night until the next morning. When any of the players or supporters got hungry, they would go home and eat and then return to the game. After a game in which the twelve counters and stakes were won, and before the next one, there would usually be a little time out for a rest and smoke, and for the placing of bets on the next game.

The atmosphere of the hand game was a holiday one. Raillery was a little rough at times. But for players and spectators, the game was a major source of enjoyment, relaxation, and pleasurable excitement. What with the singing, the drumming, the twitting, the shouting, the often loud and uproarious cheering, the hand game—in rather sharp contrast to the quiet, grave wheel game—was apt to be decidedly noisy, not to say boisterous. Not the least appreciated feature of the hand game was the showmanship, the grace and virtuosity of the players, who played to an appreciative and discriminating house. The victors gloated conspicuously over the losers and bantered them unmercifully, but the losers were expected to keep their tempers, an expectation, however, not always realized.

For success in hand game gambling, most players, it seems clear from our evidence, relied on chance and skill—an occasional one on sleight-of-hand proper—rather than on supernatural power or aid. So far as we could determine, the drumming and singing that accompanied the playing were not of the magico-religious order, at least ordinarily and apart from the exceptional games in which individuals with supernatural power (see *infra*) participated. Certain individuals were, from native keenness or from practice and experience, particularly adept at hiding and guessing, and these were apt to play the role of hiders and guessers for their teammates and backers.

Some few men, however—never women, we were informed—had supernat- 525
ural gambling power. This power might come unsought, as in the case of Keg 789
to be given presently, or, more commonly, was sought. Not many sought it or possessed it. The young were strongly advised against seeking it by their parents and by the tribal counsellors, for the man who sought and obtained it had to pay a heavy penalty. He would be affected with some serious ailment of the limbs, such as pains in and swelling of the joints, and would die before his

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

525 789 time. This latter aspect of the belief accorded with the larger Gros Ventre pattern: any acquisition of special supernatural power sought by quest would be apt to lead to shortening of life.

Nevertheless, against the reiterated advice of parents and elders who would so lecture the growing children and of the chiefs and counsellors who would walk around the camp so warning the people, a good many individuals would seek supernatural power, and a few would go out in quest of supernatural gambling power. In some cases such gambling power was sought by a man who had lost heavily or lost his all at the wheel or hand game, as a desperate measure to recoup his losses and to get a new start in his career.

Gambling power was not sought from the Supreme Being, who apparently did not enter at all into the gambling cycle. The appeal to him in the previously given traditional story of gambling for scalps is more a confirmation of than an exception to the rule. Nor was it sought as other power—to be a great warrior or doctor or to acquire wealth or to live long—was sought, by fasting and dreaming on the hill tops. The seeker for gambling power resorted to the brush and timber along watercourses to obtain it from the prairie chickens, [776] or from a ghost. It was more commonly gotten from prairie chickens; but not infrequently from a ghost, not an ancestor of the candidate, at least not necessarily, but, as The Boy put it laughingly, from "any good-natured ghost." This power was gotten for use only in the hand game, not in any other gambling game or sport.

[824] Usually the seeker looked for a place where wild morning glories formed a sort of bower, "like a little lodge or tipi." It was in there that a ghost was believed to live; the morning glory was called tzek'unθänädzu, "ghost rope" (tzek'ⁿ or tsä·k'ⁿ, "ghost"). The seeker would cry and cry, and when he got sleepy he would crawl into the bower and sleep. Pretty soon a ghost or prairie chicken might ask him: "Why are you punishing yourself so much?" He might answer: "Because I have lost all my belongings." "Is that all? Well, I will help you out," the being or beings would say, and then would give the seeker a song and tell him what rules he must live by and how he must act in the hand game. The person who got such power would not afterwards reveal the details told him by the giver. From the prairie chicken or ghost the person might also get at the same time the power to do marvelous things, such as making an object disappear, swallowing it and then drawing it out of some part of his body, making it go into his skull and come out of his mouth into his hand or go through his veins and come out somewhere else on his person, and so forth (cf. Red Whip story *infra.*)

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Gambling power was of a lower order of dignity and solemnity than power obtained by fasting on the mountains and hill tops. It was taken less seriously, more lightly, and, if we may judge from attitudes today, with an undercurrent of amused jocoseness. It was not, as was power gotten on mountains, transferrable by the original possessor to another, or at least it was not transferred. For one reason others did not usually want it, on account of the ailments and shortened life its possession entailed. A man who was known to have such power was further handicapped: his fellow tribesmen would not ordinarily gamble against him and so his opportunities for participation were few, being limited mostly to games played by the Gros Ventre with other tribes. In such intertribal games, however, he would become a popular champion, and would derive therefrom a certain prestige as well as material gains. The possession then of gambling power, while to a certain limited extent an asset to its owner, was in more respects than one a decided liability. 525 789

It may be added here that while those who possessed supernatural gambling power are spoken of today by English-speaking Gros Ventre as "professional gamblers," in reality there were no professional gamblers among the Gros Ventre even in the old days, professional, that is, in the sense of making their living or most of their living at gambling.

The following three narratives, related by The Boy, illustrate various aspects of gambling power.

Narrative 1. Lone Bear, The Boy's wife's father, had gambling power. While he was still in his prime, his legs started hurting him. To escape the penalty he quit gambling. But in vain. His legs went bad, and he died before his time. 525 789 539

Narrative 2. When Lame Bull, The Boy's father, was a young boy about ten years of age he had a friend of about the same age, called Keg, to whom he was much attached. Keg, like other boys of his age, had the daily chore of rising long before daylight and driving out the family horses away from camp to graze. One morning he was awakened very early and was told to drive the horses out. He did so, but when he got out to the grazing ground he decided to steal a few winks lying face down. So he fell asleep, and all at once he started to dream. He dreamed that he saw a big hand game going on with high stakes and one fellow winning everything. Keg looked at this fellow closely and saw it was he, Keg, himself. This man spoke to Keg saying: "Do as you see me doing here. Use my throat as an object [button] to hide." [857] [787]

Then Keg woke up and looked around, and there right near where he lay he saw a covey of prairie chickens doing their mating dance and making a whirring noise with their tails. When he got back he said to Lame Bull: "Let's play and see whether what I dreamed is true. I'll put my helper to the test." Lame Bull tried to guess Keg, but Keg would make a noise like a prairie chicken and thereupon

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

525 would switch the button to the other hand without Lame Bull perceiving it, and
789 Lame Bull could not guess him.

So as the two grew up, Lame Bull always bet when Keg was playing and won
539 a lot of stuff that way. Keg started gambling from his boyhood and always had luck. After he grew up, however, he did not have many chances to play, because everybody, knowing his power, shied away from gambling against him. But when he did play, he would win. When he was resorting to his power in a game, he would imitate the hissing, swishing noise made by the prairie chickens when they ruffle their tail feathers. The prairie chicken had also given Keg its windpipe to use (apparently as a button) in the hand game, and for it Keg used a little metal spring resembling the windpipe.

525 *Narrative 3.* During the lifetime of Red Whip (d. 1912), the Gros Ventre on
789 one occasion, about 1873-75, met the Flathead where Lewistown (Montana) now is
539 and camped close together. The latter asked the former to gamble at the hand
648 game. So when night came, they all assembled in a big lodge. The Flathead had a great gambler, nicknamed Crazy Child, who had gambling power and had never been beaten by anyone on the west side of the Rockies. Outside the lodge the young men of both tribes were visiting in a friendly fashion together, and the Flathead young men told the Gros Ventre young men: "Don't get into that game. Our man cannot be beaten," and some of the latter on that account refrained from betting. But the Gros Ventre had a man of their own, Red Whip, who had gambling power from a ghost, greater gambling power than Crazy Child had.

So the hand game started, with big stakes wagered on both sides. Neither champion showed his prowess right away; they just let themselves run along easily for a while. At last Red Whip decided to cut loose: "This Flathead makes me mad. He has hand game power. So I'll have to use mine. Give me a piece of weasel skin and I'll stop his power." They gave him a piece and he rubbed off a small bit of it and put it on the ground and knelt on it with one knee.

Crazy Child, whose hand-game helper was the owl, used every trick his helper had taught him, to hide the button and battle Red Whip, but to no avail, for Red Whip's ghost helper was more powerful than Crazy Child's owl helper. Then Red Whip, when his turn came to hide, said to the Gros Ventre, "I have this Flathead beaten and I know his helper, the owl, has abandoned him; so sing good and loud and beat time fast and lively," and to the Flathead, "Watch closely, and I will let you hunt for the button after I have hidden it." Red Whip then put on a big show, exhibited the button to the Flathead, threw it into the air, and told him to look for it. Crazy Child hooted like an owl and did all sorts of other things like an owl, but finally gave up: "I can't find the button," at which the Gros Ventre cheered uproariously. Then Red Whip got up, showed the Flathead the button, which was embedded in the lodge pole to the left of the door as you go out, and asked him to pull it out. Crazy Child tried to pull it out but failed, but Red Whip pulled it out easily, and said to Crazy Child: "You are nothing. You are just a little fellow. You don't amount to much. I didn't have to try hard to beat you. But I just wanted to show you this."

This great game lasted one whole night; daylight was breaking when the two

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

 525 789 539 648

men called on their helpers. The Gros Ventres won many things of value: many best horses, guns, and clothes; and no Gros Ventre ever gambled against Red Whip after that.

Men, women, and children could participate in a hand game played by men. 525 All, with an exception or two to be noted, could bet thereon, and men and women could bet on both sides. In a game where the men were players, the women would be present and would join in the singing as well as in the betting, but they could not be guessers, hiders, or tally keepers; only men could be such. Women, however, could so function in hand games among themselves.

Actual participation in hand game gambling was high. One of our women informants, Mrs Warrior, never went in for betting, she emphasized; but she seems to have been rather exceptional in this regard. Our other woman informant on gambling, Mrs Sleeping Bear, was much devoted to gambling, for relatively small stakes. Nearly every one, so far as we could make out from our evidence, seems to have gambled, either frequently and habitually or at least from time to time.

Participation, however, followed a well-defined and established pattern as regards who could or should bet with or against whom and for what kind of stakes. For convenience we are calling this the "bettor-wager pattern."

Some persons or classes of persons could not gamble at all or could not gamble against certain others; others could or would gamble against certain others only for refreshments or a meal; others, for small stakes of little value; others still, for big stakes. The Gros Ventre bettor-wager pattern at first glimpse looks complicated, but actually it conforms to a few very simple principles. We shall look first at the pattern itself; afterwards at the principles.

Blood relatives could not gamble against each other either for large or for 602 small stakes. Such blood relatives included parents and children, grandparents 525 and grandchildren, brothers and sisters, uncles and aunts and nephews and nieces, and also all classificatory relatives of the same categories. At most a group of blood relatives might engage in a hand game with the half-serious half-playful agreement that the losing side would "cook" for the winning side. A given gambling team would commonly be composed chiefly of members who were kin to one another, but non-relatives could also be on the team; the opposing team would likewise be commonly composed chiefly of another kinship group. Where blood relatives gambled in the same game for small or large stakes, they always gambled and bet, not against one another, but on the same side, and in wagering they bet on and backed their own kinsman or kinsmen, wagering dyadically against fellow tribesmen or aliens not related to them.

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

602 525 Gambling between blood relatives for property the loss of which would hurt or would entail even small hardship on the loser was evidently looked upon as conflicting with the common loyalty and mutual helpfulness among all blood relatives that were expected by the Gros Ventre social code. The Gros Ventre felt, furthermore, that such gambling might easily give rise to quarreling and ill-will among relatives, whereas the code expected harmony and good will.

As regards affinal relatives, the rules were more complicated and less uniform. Loyalty, helpfulness, and harmony were desired and expected among close relatives by marriage, but the avoidance, respect, and familiarity conventions differed.

606 525 A son-in-law could not gamble at all against his mother-in-law, even on different sides for "cooking" for the winners. On the one hand the rule of respect and avoidance was the most rigid and absolute within the avoidance regulations: they could not look at or speak directly to each other, and could not be in the same lodge together. On the other hand they were expected to be very good and generous to each other. It may be added that these restrictions on the son-in-law applied also to his brothers, presumably too to the mother-in-law's sisters, although we failed to inquire about this last point.

[602] As regards all other relatives by marriage, they, even those prohibited from gambling even for small stakes, were permitted, it seems, to gamble as members of groups against one another where the stakes, if they can really be called such, were merely the above-mentioned "cooking" by the losing side for the winners. Some affinal relatives, however, such as father-in-law and daughter-in-law could not engage in a non-group twosome game, even for fun, just as brother and sister could not do so.

A son-in-law and father-in-law could not gamble against each other even for small wagers; the former could not gamble with the latter's brothers or even his close friends—and presumably vice versa, the father-in-law could not with the son-in-law's. Nor, as mentioned, could daughter-in-law with father-in-law. A son-in-law and father-in-law were under certain restrictions of respect and avoidance but not so absolute as those between son-in-law and mother-in-law; the two men could discuss "business" matters with each other, but could not just sit down and chat together about trivial things and especially about anything concerning sex or the eliminative functions. And about the same rule held for daughter-in-law and father-in-law in their personal relations.

Two brothers-in-law, two sisters-in-law, or a brother-in-law and his sister-in-law (wife's sister or brother's wife) could gamble against each other for small

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

stakes, but not for really large ones. A gambling game between two brothers-in- 606
law, small though the stakes had to be, was a good show for the onlookers— 525
not, however, nearly so good as one between two prominent enemy friends. Two sisters-in-law were also "just right" for gambling against each other.

Through all these three relationships run two currents: one of mutual goodwill and helpfulness, the other of familiarity, "teasing" and twitting. Between two brothers-in-law and two sisters-in-law there is relatively more of the first and less of the second; between brother-in-law and sister-in-law relatively more of the second and less of the first.

Two brothers-in-law could not discuss sex or vulgarity and could not go to the toilet together. They would be helpful to each other in giving presents, in a building project, in business matters, and so forth. But on the other hand [522] they could go quite far in "humiliating" each other, in indulging in practical jokes and horse play at the other's expense, and in rivaling each other in war and in war-deed matching contests—but not to the limit, not so far as enemy friends could go. Two sisters-in-law could likewise "tease" each other, but could not go to the same length that brothers-in-law could go.

To her brother-in-law (sister's husband or husband's brother) a woman could go nearly any length in "teasing" and freedom in the way of crude horse play and of vulgar and obscene talk, and vice versa.

The gambling rule that prevailed, and still prevails largely, between these three types of siblings-in-law, namely, gambling for small stakes permitted and encouraged, but not for large stakes, appears to be genetically related to the two currents we have been discussing: the goodwill one prohibiting stakes whose loss would really hurt, the familiarity one permitting and provoking small-stake 619
gambling. 525

The Gros Ventre, with a population range of between about 800 and 2,000 621
in the second half of the last century, were divided into about a dozen bands. These bands were not sibs proper, but each was composed largely of kin [161] related by blood or marriage. Members of a given band, whether related or not, would not gamble against one another. There was a well-marked we-feeling among the members of a band, somewhat distinct from and additional to the kinship feeling proper. Actually this was almost equivalent to "tribal" we-feeling, for each band was for the greater part of the year, particularly in the winter months when the bands scattered to separate quarters within the tribal territory, an almost completely autonomous economico-political unit, and any band was free if it wished to secede from the tribe at any time, temporarily or permanently.

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

621 Members of one band could and not infrequently did gamble both for small
525 and for big stakes against members of other bands, just as one kinship group used to gamble against others. Tribal we-feeling certainly existed, but seemingly not as intense as band we-feeling, just as, in turn, the latter was not as intense as kin we-feeling. In inter-band, as in inter-kin, gambling, spectators, if they bet at all, would lay their wagers on the players of their own band, as required by band loyalty, regardless of the relative skill and reputation of the contesting players or teams.

575 For Gros Ventre men who had reached full adulthood and were still in the
[885] prime of life, there were two age-societies, called the Stars and the Wolves (or
525 Wolf-men). These two groups, with soldier-police functions, would join forces when necessary in keeping order, in fighting fires, and in defending the whole tribe against enemies, but for the rest rivalry between them was pretty keen. Stars would gamble against Wolves in big games for large stakes, but ordinarily a Star would not gamble against a Star or a Wolf against a Wolf, except for refreshments or a smoke or similar trifling "stakes." Inasmuch as membership in the two societies cut across the lines of kinship and band membership, inter-society gambling suffered an important restriction: if a Star were gambling in a given game, his relatives among the Wolves would not play or bet against him in that particular game. Kinship ties took precedence over society ties.

525 Gros Ventre would of course gamble for big stakes against members of other
648 tribes with whom they happened to be at the time on sufficiently good terms, or at least not bitterly and actively hostile, to meet and foregather peacefully, such as the Piegan, Flathead, Nez Percé, and Cree. In such intertribal contests they would often go out to win every possession of their opponents.

572 The Gros Ventre distinguished three kinds of friends: ordinary friends,
525 true or pledged friends, and enemy or war friends. As a rule ordinary close friends would not take opposite sides in a big gambling game. This was all the more true of pledged friends. Two boys, for instance, who liked each other
[608] and who had perhaps grown up together would, though belonging to different bands, enter into a sort of "sworn brotherhood," give each other presents, exchange intimate confidences, and promise, without religious rite of any kind, to stand by each other always, even to death if necessary. Two girls could also enter into a similar pact. Such "true" or pledged friends never gambled against each other either as players or as backers, at least never for stakes of value.

Of enemy or war friends we have previously spoken when describing the wheel game. Two enemy friends would gamble against each other for small stakes or big, the bigger the better. In fact a hand game for big stakes between

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

two enemy friends to strip the loser bare of everything he owned, down to his 572
very lodge, was, like a wheel game of the same order of magnitude, a crowning 525
event in Gros Ventre gambling, one arousing most intense popular interest. One of our informants was, in view of this fact, of the opinion that gambling among the Gros Ventre may have been first invented by enemy friends.

The keepers of the two most sacred pipes, the Flat Pipe and the Feathered 792
Pipe, were not allowed to gamble with any one, nor were their wives, nor (prob- 525
ably: our chief informant was not sure) ex-keepers. Rare exceptions may have occurred in practice. Should an enemy friend of a keeper taunt him into betting and should the challenger lose, he would lose not only his wager but also in a sense his life. For his life would in consequence be shortened, unless the keeper took pity on him and through submitting him to the appropriate ritual procedure averted the penalty. It was believed too that the keeper could not lose if, against the rules, he really did gamble. Gamblers, at least notorious ones, were not selected as pipe keepers.

Keepers and their wives were subject to a great many other restrictions. They had to maintain a high degree of dignity, to practise many kinds of abstention and "asceticism," and to be benefactors to and intercessors for all [784] the people. It seems probably that the taboo on their gambling was related to one or more of these aspects of the keepership.

Ritual "grandfathers" among the Gros Ventre were of two kinds. A retiring sacred-pipe keeper became automatically "grandfather" to the incoming keeper and instructed him in the ritual, prerogatives and duties of the keepership; a candidate for a sacred lodge chose an older man who had been through the rite as a ritual "grandfather" who would instruct him in the ceremonies and observances of the lodge in question. A person would never gamble against his ritual grandfather. The relationship established between grandfather and grandchild in both cases was predominantly a respectful and sacred one. Against his ritual grandfather a man would not even play in the modern non-gambling 4-button [524] hand game.

The foregoing rather intricate "bettor-wager" gambling pattern appears to 525
be the result of the orderly interplay of five chief determinants or conditioning 571
factors.

The most important and most basic determinant was that of in-group altruism, cohesion, and loyalty, decreasing in intensity from closer and smaller circle to more distant and larger circle, from biological family, to kinship group, to band, to lodge and society, to tribe as such, to more or less friendly alien tribe, and stopping short of hostile alien tribe. In general, the less intense the

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

525 we-group altruism, cohesion, and loyalty, the more gambling and the greater the
571 stakes and vice versa.

Two less important, secondary determinants were the rules of avoidance and respect on the one hand and those of familiarity and license on the other. In general, the greater the degree of avoidance and respect demanded between two persons or classes, the less gambling and the smaller the stakes; the greater the degree of familiarity and license permitted, the more gambling and the bigger the stakes.

A fourth determinant was the element of the sacred (and/or ascetic) associated with certain offices and with the persons occupying them, an element which barred gambling by and/or against these persons, namely, pipe keepers and ritual grandfathers.

A fifth determinant was obviously in operation, although the field evidence therefor is not abundant. We got no record, however, of Gros Ventre gambling with their ancient, hereditary and bitter enemies, the Sioux. Gambling, even to
[648] strip opponents completely, presupposes a minimum of friendliness between the players, or at least the absence of deadly and unqualified hostility.

If we diagram along a horizontal belt the full range of human relationships from unqualified friendliness and altruism on the extreme left through the various gradations to unqualified hostility and malevolence on the extreme right, Gros Ventre gambling may be represented on this belt as absent from the extreme left end, gradually increasing in frequency and in size of stakes as we pass along the central section toward the right, and then suddenly dropping and completely disappearing near the extreme right end.

Besides these five determinants or conditioning factors in Gros Ventre gambling, there were perhaps others, but this is as far as our evidence and our analysis thereof have gone. Of course, one cannot have gambling without some kind of close-range or long-range contact between the gamblers, without some kind of property or other valued thing to wager, and so forth, but working out a list of such requisites would be labor lost.

Before leaving this subject, we should emphasize that, while the preceding pages have referred particularly to the bettor-wager pattern as holding for the hand game, the same pattern held as well for all other Gros Ventre gambling games and contests.[7]

[171
525] 7 In our world sources on gambling we have noted only two explicit references, and these extremely brief, to the bettor-wager pattern: G. Goodwin, *The Social Organization of the Western Apache* (Chicago, 1942), p. 375, "certain types of gambling" are prevented "between members of the same clan," for it would be "like winning it [property] from yourself"; R.

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

NATIVE ATTITUDES

The attitude of the Gros Ventre toward their own gambling was a somewhat ambivalent one. Toward gambling practised within the limitations of the bettor-wager pattern, there was, by and large, no strong disapproval. Such gambling was in the main taken for granted. Yet such approval as was given, even as regards much of the gambling that conformed to the bettor-wager pattern, was in certain respects qualified and circumscribed. 525

Pretty near everyone gambled who had anything to wager. Boys and girls, men and women participated. We recorded only one specific exception, in the person of Mrs Warrior, although there may have been others. There appears to have been no disapproval at all of gambling for "cooking," and very little of gambling for takes of trivial or small value, within of course the bettor-wager pattern. There was a good deal of disapproval of gambling for big or ruinous stakes—how widely shared, how serious, and how "intolerant," it is hard to say.

Parents, however—some at least—commonly counseled their children against

---

Landes, *The Ojibwa Woman* (Columbia University Contributions to Anthropology, vol. 31, 1938), p. 28, differences between gambling by members of same household and by persons from different households. Under date of September 9, 1939, Father Herbert Prueher wrote to Cooper that among the Wachaga of Tanganyika Territory, East Africa, gambling is [only] by non-relatives, distant friends and strangers; under date of June 30, 1944, Father Berard Haile wrote that among the Navaho no gambling occurred between relatives or between members of same clan. 171 525

In short reconnaissance field studies among the Sinkaetku (Southern Okanagon) of Washington, the Kalispel of St Ignatius Mission, Montana, and the Blackfoot of Browning, Montana, in 1938, and the Assiniboine of Ft. Belknap Reservation, Montana, in 1939, Cooper gathered the following fragmentary data on the respective patterns:

Sinkaetku: No gambling against one's brother, sister or cousin: "If my brother wants anything I have, I say to him, 'Take it,' without any question." No gambling between members of same family, nor between members of a group wintering together. Not right to gamble except with "strangers." Intertribal gambling for big stakes customary.

Kalispel: No gambling between brothers. No twosome gambling between cousins, but cousins might gamble as members of opposing teams. Two teams from same village might gamble sometimes, but not often. Gambling is mostly between teams from different villages or tribes.

Blackfoot: Two brothers or two members of same band could gamble against each other only for small stakes; two members of different societies, such as the Brave Dogs and the Doves, could gamble against each other for big stakes, such as horses.

Assiniboine: Blood relatives, such as brothers and other close relatives, would not gamble on opposite sides against one another; they would gamble on same side always. Two brothers-in-law or two sisters-in-law could gamble against each other, but a son-in-law could not gamble against his father-in-law or his mother-in-law on account of current avoidance and respect conventions. Intertribal gambling is customary.

In our own American white culture there are clear indications of a bettor-wager pattern in gambling. No systematic field study thereof has, however, been made, so far as the present writers can discover.

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

525 gambling, even for the small stakes, mostly arrows, which children could put up. Further, advice against gambling was commonly given by tribal leaders as well as by relatives and friends, presumably with more particular reference to gambling for high stakes.

[558] Excessive or inveterate high-stake gamblers easily lost the respect of the people and were looked down upon. Such were not likely to be chosen as "chiefs," and could not be chosen as keepers of the sacred pipes. The possession of gambling power from prairie chickens or ghosts netted the possessor a certain prestige, but not nearly the prestige that came from achievements in war or medicine, or even from skill in hunting. Keg, whose story we have given above, had little real prestige, we were told. Red Whip had more, it seems, but this or much of it may well have been the result of his outstanding war record.

The foregoing ambivalent attitude can, we believe, be accounted for, in large part at least, by the data we have, incomplete though these data are. It is pretty clear from the prevalent bettor-wager pattern that the Gros Ventre recognized two more or less conflicting aspects of their gambling: a recreative one and a predatory one. Certain kinds of gambling were indulged in predominantly for friendly recreation, to have a good time together. The minor wagering therein merely added a little spice and zest to play, while the losers suffered no appreciable loss or hurt. Other kinds, the common games for large stakes and the occasional ones for career prestige, were indulged in predominantly for gain and this at the expense of the losers, for acquisition in which the losers suffered losses that were grievously felt and that seriously hurt. As the bettor-wager pattern shows, gambling of the first kinds was recognized as consistent with the accepted canons of in-group altruism and benevolence; that of the second, as inconsistent therewith.

Actually gambling contributed both to social concord and solidarity and to social discord and disunion. It must have contributed in some measure to social concord and solidarity inasmuch as it provided a large measure of pleasurable recreation and excitement shared in common and a relatively innocuous outlet for aggression and dominance. The Gros Ventre were consciously concerned with fomenting solidarity within their ranks: for one thing they were a fighting people beset with powerful enemies. But whether they were aware of the role their gambling played in positively and constructively promoting solidarity is not possible to say on the evidence we have and at this distance of time.

As regards, however, discord resulting from gambling, this was common and they were keenly aware of it. The code demanded that losers should take their losses, together with the associated twitting and strutting by the winners, in good

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

part and as good sports, but actual behavior not infrequently fell short of 558
the code's demands. Bad feeling was at times engendered and could and did
end in blows and violence, as was noted earlier in our account of the wheel game. 525
Quarrels among gambling boys must have been fairly common. One of our 578
informants, Thick, recounted three different bow and arrow contests for arrows, in which contests he had engaged as a boy with other boys. All three ended in violence started by the losers. In one of the three set-tos, Thick, the winner, was shot in the hand with an arrow by the other boy who lost his temper, and Thick still, at the age of 75, carries the scar. That the Gros Ventre were perfectly aware, as of course they must have been, of the discord hazard in gambling, is clear from such counsel as, for example, Thick's mother used to give him when he was a boy: "If you join in those gambling games somebody is going to get mad on account of getting beaten and he may pound you up." Further, that gambling often led to bad feeling was given to us by The Boy as the reason why the Gros Ventre disapproved of gambling between relatives.

So far as we could make out, Gros Ventre attitudes on gambling were 525
determined in only minor measure by economic considerations. In the days 183
before the disappearance of the buffalo in 1883-84, the Gros Ventre lived under a normal economy of abundance. Moreover, generosity in parting with their possessions, through gift and sharing, was focal in code and practice. Criers around the camp would counsel the people in words such as: "Men and women, don't love your property. You will always acquire other property. Only life never comes back, but property you can have back any time." In the long run for most individuals winnings would balance losses, just as gifts tended to balance gifts—a system of exchange which incidentally must have served to prevent unhealthy accumulation of wealth in the hands of any individual or small group. The cases of really ruinous loss of property through gambling, of reduction to "pauperism," appear to have been rare, and even in these cases the losers would ordinarily be looked after temporarily and tided over by their kin or friends. At any rate we got no record of individuals or their dependents suffering grave [735]
privation of the necessities of life as a result of gambling losses.

How far such facts entered into the Gros Ventre attitude toward gambling 525
cannot be determined confidently from such evidence as we have. In our hours of free discussion with informants, there was almost no intimation of economic considerations leading to disapproval. One of the themes in the tongue-lashing Lame Bull got from his father after the disastrous contest with White Owl may have been the economic, but this was not expressly stated by The Boy. Mrs Warrior kept away from gambling because, she said: "I liked what I had and

525 did not want to lose it," and her grandmother used to advise her against gambling lest she lose valued things. All in all it looks as if economic considerations had little to do with such disapproval of gambling as was current among the Gros Ventre; if anything, economic considerations and concepts of property use and disposal would in the main have reinforced approval.

To sum up, Gros Ventre attitudes on gambling appear to have been influenced very much by concern for altruism and accord, very little by economic values.

PAST AND PRESENT

525 773 To round out the picture we have tried to give of Gros Ventre gambling, we are adding a brief sketch of its history.

Gros Ventre myth, folk lore, and tradition have little to say on gambling. According to one folk story, given by Mrs Sleeping Bear, but unknown to Mrs Warrior, the hand game was first gotten from the thunder by a certain Tsē·ganis (Little Short Horns). There is no reference to gambling in the fairly complete cycle of sacred myths we gathered or in the trickster (Nihāt'ᵃ) cycle.[8] This absence, particularly from the trickster cycle, may give some slight ground for suspecting that gambling may not go back very far in Gros Ventre culture history.

525 Apart, however, from such speculative surmise, what is clear is that gambling was in full vigor among the Gros Ventre in the second half of the last century, and had been since at least around the early part of the century. It was in full swing from at least the early boyhood days of Lame Bull who was born in 1825.

525 182 Gros Ventre gambling, especially with the wheel and hand games, suffered a severe shock after the disappearance of the buffalo in 1884, as did the main structure of Gros Ventre culture and society. With the rapid collapse of the broad framework into which gambling had so trimly fitted, gambling itself, especially with the older games, rapidly toppled down. The last big wheel game remembered by five older informants—The Boy, Thick, Charles Buckman, Steven Bradley, Philip Shortman—occurred in 1893; the last big hand game in 1891.[9] Around the turn of the century not much of the older complex was

8 Gambling does however occur in the Found-in-the-Grass Gros Ventre folk story, according to The Boy. Gambling at the wheel game between Clotted-Blood and the Bull is recorded in the Clotted-Blood tale, by A. L. Kroeber, *Gros Ventre Myths and Tales* (Anthropological Papers, American Museum of Natural History, vol. 1, pt. 3, 1907), p. 86.

[115] 9 When in the field we failed to obtain these exact dates. We are indebted for them to our conscientious, high-minded and exceptionally able interpreter, Thomas Main, who procured them for us from the above five elder informants and forwarded them to us with some other supplementary information by letter of September 25, 1946.

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

left, although we still have reports of a hand game between the Gros Ventre 525
and the Flathead, staged at Glacier Park, Montana, as late as 1922, in which 182
Joe Assiniboine represented the Gros Ventre. Today neither the wheel game nor the 2-button hand game is played.

Hard times, for a short period near-famine conditions, prevailed for a while after 1884; an economy of abundance gave place to an economy of scarcity. [735] While a world survey of gambling reveals, so far as we can discern, no significant correlation between gambling and abundance or scarcity economies, extreme and sudden economic shock and shift, such as occurred among the Gros Ventre in the years immediately following 1884, may well have slowed up the gambling pace.

Around 1897 the non-gambling hand game was introduced, won favor, and [177] persists down to the present. Today there is little gambling among the Gros Ventre on the reservation. Most of what occurs among them takes place off [178] the reservation, at nearby white villages and towns, in the form of poker or other card games for money, between Gros Ventre and whites.

Catholic University of America
Washington, D. C.

5: Flannery E-5 (1940)1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Vol. XVII, Nos. 3 and 4 July and October, 1944

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
LIBRARY
OCT 8 1945

PRIMITIVE MAN

CONTENTS

PAGE
Conjuring among the Hopi 46
Donald Collier
The Spirit Weapon as Described by Tunnale Moen, Pueblo Shaman 50
J. Allan Bartlett
The Gros Ventre Sacking Tent 54
Regina Flannery
The Sacred Tent of Chief Philip and Other Apachians 60
John M. Corbett
Nineteenth Annual Meeting of the Indians 55
Index: Volume XVII 56

[Title Page]

PUBLISHED BY THE
CATHOLIC ANTHROPOLOGICAL CONFERENCE
WASHINGTON, D. C.

5: Flannery E-5 (1940)1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

THE GROS VENTRE SHAKING TENT

REGINA FLANNERY
The Catholic University of America

121 ALTHOUGH the concept of the shaking tent is now known to be a widespread one, relatively few details are available on this rite as it was practiced in the Plains area. The following [115] data, gathered among the Gros Ventres of Montana in 1940 from old and middle-aged informants who had often witnessed the performance, are offered in an attempt to fill in the picture as regards this one tribe.

787 When speaking English, the Gros Ventres refer to the rite as a "seance" and to the performer as a "spiritualist" inasmuch as it was carried out by a person who had access to the spirit of a deceased relative. The Gros Ventre word for spirit is *tsatsuwaa*, which, incidentally, is the same word they now use for radio. The voice of the spirit can be heard, and, while the spirit cannot be seen, its presence is otherwise manifest by the noise of its activities. Among the latter we note especially the shaking of the tent as the spirit enters and leaves.

[791] When information was desired regarding missing persons, the whereabouts of the enemy, etc., a spiritualist, who might be either a man or a woman, was asked to invoke the spirit over which he or she had control. The pertinent questions were asked and the spirit would supply the answers. There were two general methods of procedure. The so-called seance could be held either in the big dwelling lodge or in a small structure built for the occasion. Furthermore the performance was more or less elaborate, details differing according to circumstances, the individual spiritualist, and even the "personality" of the spirit invoked. But one invariable feature was the shaking of the tent.

The two accounts which follow will illustrate the general pattern as well as the differences in procedure. The first concerns a seance held in the winter at a time when this particular family

5: Flannery E-5 (1940)1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

group was more or less permanently encamped. It was told by 787
Mrs. Warrior, now a very old woman, as one of her childhood [124]
memories and was not elicited by questioning.

"Many, many years ago when I was a small girl, my father 787
had gone on the warpath with several other men. When winter 539
came they hadn't returned. So my uncle (mother's brother) went to an old woman, Good Singer, who was known to be a spiritualist, although she was famous for other medicine powers as well. She consented and the seance was held in the lodge. My sister and I and our aunts and relatives were all there.

"A curtain was hung across the back part of the lodge and Good Singer was bound with ropes tightly knotted, then wrapped in a blanket so that only her head stuck out. She was behind the curtain and began to sing a certain song. She told us all to sing that song four times. I joined in the singing. When we finished we heard a humming sound and scraping and all kinds of noise through the opening at the top of the lodge. The top of the lodge began to shake and all at once we heard something slide from the top down behind the curtain where the old woman was, and land with a thump. That was her spirit, that is, the spirit of her son who had died long, long before.

"As soon as they heard the thump my uncle said: 'Here is the offering,' as he handed behind the curtain the pot containing a pup they had killed and cooked. We could hear the dishes rattling as the spirit ate. Soon all of the bones were picked clean and the spirit tossed them over the curtain so that they landed in our midst. The spirit then complained that they had tied his mother so tightly, and as he untied her we could hear the sound of the ropes as he worked at them. Then the ropes too came sailing over the top of the curtain. They were all knotted up in one bunch, and, try as they would, they couldn't unravel it.

"The spirit then complained again: 'Why did you tie my mother up so tightly?' and then asked: 'What did you call me for?' My uncle said: 'Well, I called you because these men went out on a war party and some, including Holy Weasel, didn't return. I want to know where they are and what became of them.' Then my uncle lighted a pipe and put it under the cur-

5: Flannery E-5 (1940)1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787 tain. When the spirit finished smoking he put the pipe outside
539 the curtain and my uncle said: 'Well, I want you to hunt my brother-in-law to see where he is or what became of him.' Immediately the spirit made a noise and we could hear it going out of the top of the lodge which shook violently again. The people all sat quietly smoking and listening. Then old Good Singer called from behind the curtain: 'Sing again four times.' So they began to sing and I joined in. After the fourth repetition the spirit came back in the same way as it entered the first time, dropping down behind the curtain and landing with a thump. Every time the spirit goes in or out the top of the lodge shakes. Then the spirit made the exclamation which the Gros Ventres use to indicate that something terrible has happened, and continued: 'You should have told him [Holy Weasel] to stay at home. He and his party were killed. They were raiding the enemy and came across some Piegan. The latter made believe they were meeting the Gros Ventre in a friendly way, but when they got close they killed all the party except one who escaped.'

"Just before the spirit made this last speech, two little boys in the lodge had been playing during that ceremony and the spirit told them: 'Be quiet because I am going to tell you what happened.' And before they knew what happened to them these two little boys landed outside the lodge. The spirit must have pushed them out! And everybody was certainly quiet after that."

The second account will illustrate some differences in procedure when a spiritualist was consulted while a party was on
[115] the move and on the look-out for enemies. It was told to me by another old woman informant, Singer Sleeping Bear, incidentally to a long story of one of the journeys made by members of her father's group when she was a small girl.

"The party got as far as Canada and stayed all night. One of the men filled his pipe and took it over to another man, Rising Cross, and said: 'Now here. I am giving you the pipe. I want you to invite your spirit. I want you to ask your spirit if the road is clear (that is, if there is no enemy in sight).' Rising Cross took the pipe and prayed a few moments. The other men

5: Flannery E-5 (1940)1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

made a small rounded lodge of willows, just like a sweat lodge. 787
A few of them went in there with the spiritualist who just sat 539
there with them as one of the group. He did, however, smoke the pipe and sing his song. Finally this little lodge shook so hard it almost fell over. It was like a terrible wind. Then a voice said: 'Yes, yes, what do you want?' Rising Cross said: 'Well, we want to know if the way is clear. We are looking for the enemy. How will the way be near where they are?' So the spirit said: 'Well, if you do as I say you are going to kill the chief (the father of a captive Piegan who had married among the Gros Ventres). Go up over the hill and you will see the plain just covered with lodges. If you don't turn back immediately after you kill that one man, you are going to have bad luck.'

"So the young fellows jumped on their fastest horses and went off. They found the situation as described by the spirit. The man whom the spirit mentioned was riding up the trail along the coulee accompanied only by a woman on horseback. When these two had gotten some distance from the lodges in the plain, the young Gros Ventre took after them and killed the man, but the woman wheeled her horse and sped back to the camp to give the alarm. The Gros Ventres said to one another: 'Now you know what the spirit told us. It told us to run just as soon as we killed him.' And the majority was in favor, but one man was obstinate. While they were arguing the enemies approached and were able to overtake most of them. Only a few escaped. It is always someone who doesn't believe the spirit who ruins the party."

That there might occasionally have been some room for 787
doubting the validity of the information received through a par- [15]
ticular spirit is suggested by a comment made by another informant, Al Chandler, a middle-aged man. He had mentioned an old woman spiritualist, David Man's grandmother, and said that she was honest about it and her spirit could be depended upon for the truth. He added, however: "But a man I knew used to hold seances and had his own brother as his spirit. This spirit always lied. When this brother was living he was a liar, so you couldn't expect his spirit to tell the truth!"

5: Flannery E-5 (1940)1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787 As to the way in which the power was acquired, Al Chandler
791 explained as follows: "It was customary to take some hair or a
[764] relic of a deceased relative after the body decays. (The Gros Ventres did not use to bury their dead like they do now.) Some would have a bone, others a whole lock of hair, and so on. Now if a person happens to take something the spirit likes, the spirit appears and asks: 'Why do you want that rib (or whatever part one takes)?' The man or woman might answer: 'I want you real near me and I want you to help me whenever I ask you.' That person gets in a kind of trance while the spirit talks to him that first time, and the spirit gives him a particular song which he must sing when he wants to invite the spirit."

Apparently some leeway was allowed the individual in accepting the power, if the following information from Al Chandler can be taken as an indication.

"My adoptive father had the rib of an uncle of his who had been a medicine man of some kind. The spirit appeared to my father and asked: 'Why did you take that? What are you going to do with me?' My father replied: 'This is just for myself. I don't want to be the kind of person who owns spirits. If I need you myself I am going to call on you and I want you to help me, but I am not going to make you a public servant.' And that spirit did help him, personally, once or twice, but my father never got tied up in the ropes [as in the case reported by Mrs. Warrior]. By the way, the person who wants to find out something is the one that ties the spiritualist. He can tie the ropes as tight as he wants to and make as many knots as he pleases. The funny part of it is that it is just like the showmen with handcuffs,—the knots sometimes are still tied just like the person who wanted the information tied them originally,—although sometimes the spirit bunched the ropes all up in a mess. The whole tent shakes, too, and the skeptics look real hard, but the spirit will mock them by saying: 'Well, you need not look because you can't see anything anyway!'"

787 In conclusion I think we can say that the rite fits into the general ceremonial pattern of the Gros Ventres, but it was the only ceremony in which the shaking tent was involved. The

5: Flannery E-5 (1940)1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787

spiritualist, either man or woman, was approached in the same way as any other " medicine " or " holy " person when it was desired that they exercise their power. For this particular type of clairvoyance the power consisted in control over the spirit of a deceased relative, rather than some other kind of supernatural being. The spirit was invoked by a song learned from the spirit at the time the power was acquired, just as in other cases among the Gros Ventres the being bestowing power gave instructions as to procedure to the recipient. It is characteristic of the seance, however, that there was no set formula beyond the song and the questions could be framed by either the spiritualist or the seeker after information; while the answers were given by the spirit in ordinary language, understood by all, and the spirit made comments appropriate to the particular situation. Whether the regular lodge or a small separate structure were used, whether the Houdini trick was involved, and whether the spirit chose to eat or smoke, seem to be variable features which were employed according to circumstances, and perhaps according to instructions for carrying out the rite received by the individual spiritualist from the spirit along with the song.

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Vol. XVII, Nos. 3 and 4 July and October, 1944

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
LIBRARIES

OCT 8 1945

PRIMITIVE MAN

CONTENTS

PAGE

Courting among the Klawa 45
ETHNAH GILLIN

The Stiny Wigwam as Described by Tommie Moon, Points Bleus 50
J. ALLAN BUTCHESE

The Gros Ventre Sharing Tent 54
REGINA FLANNERY

The Sharing Tent Rite among Plains and Forest Algonquians 60
JOHN M. COOPER

Nineteenth Annual Meeting of the Conference 65

Index to Volume XVII 66

[Title Page]

PUBLISHED BY THE
CATHOLIC ANTHROPOLOGICAL CONFERENCE
WASHINGTON 17, D. C.

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

THE SHAKING TENT RITE AMONG PLAINS AND FOREST ALGONQUIANS

JOHN M. COOPER
The Catholic University of America

121 114 THE purpose of the present paper is to bring together and make available some scattered field notes on the conjuring and "shaking tent" complex of northern North America, a subject that has recently evoked a good deal of discussion, particularly in the valuable interpretative monographs of Ray and Hallowell.[1] The data to be presented are from the Algonquian-speaking Montagnais, Cree, Oteipwe, Blood-Blackfoot, and Gros Ventres (of Montana), and the Siouan-speaking Assiniboine. Only certain high-light features of the Montagnais, Cree, and Oteipwe rite will be mentioned; the complete field data gathered by the writer will be given in monographs to be published later. On the Blood-Blackfoot, Gros Ventres, and Assiniboine, my field data will be given here in full. Information obtained on the Blood-Blackfoot and Assiniboine shaking tent rite is very fragmentary. It was gotten under conditions that did not leave time or opportunity for detailed investigation. Leisurely field work on this item among these people would in all probability net a much ampler yield. Information on the Gros Ventre rite is much fuller, but, even so, is probably not exhaustive.

GROS VENTRE RITE

114 787 It was in 1931 during a very brief one-day reconnaissance visit to the Fort Belknap Reservation that the writer first heard of the shaking tent rite among the Gros Ventres, from a group

[1] V. F. Ray, Historic backgrounds of the conjuring complex in the Plateau and the Plains, in L. Spier et al., ed., Language, culture, and personality: Essays in memory of Edward Sapir, Menasha, Wis., 1941, 204–16, bibl. 215–16; A. I. Hallowell, The role of conjuring in Saulteaux society (Publ., Philadelphia anthropological society, v. 2, Phila., 1942, incl. bibl. pp. 89–96.

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

of men, including Stiff Arm, a noted Gros Ventre medicine 114
man, who has since died. Only a few details were obtained: the 787
rite within a regular tepee with spectators present; the tying of the performer with ropes, his escape therefrom, and after his escape the ropes in a ball which could not be untied; the summoning of the spirit of the deceased relative by the performer; the shaking of the tent "as in a cyclone" when the spirit came; talking "from above" by the spirit; singing by the performer and by the others in the tepee.

Later in August-September, 1939 and 1940, fuller information on the shaking tent rite was secured in connection with a general study of Gros Ventre society and religion, from The Boy and Thick, two of the older and best informed men among the Gros Ventres. These fuller data here follow.

Spiritual helpers among the Gros Ventres were of two kinds, ghosts of deceased persons and beings who had never been men. [776] The latter, the ordinary guardian spirits, by far the more common, do not concern us here as they do not enter at all into the Gros Ventre shaking tent rite. Only ghosts so enter.

A ghost helper, tsatsawâ·'a (–â– and superior a nasalized), 776
was usually acquired in the following way. It was not sought by 787
fasting and crying out on the hills, the customary procedure for acquiring non-ghostly guardian spirits and power. In fact there was either no quest of any kind or at most a somewhat indirect one. The usual sequence was as follows. A surviving relative would keep in his or her possession some memento or keepsake—something the deceased had prized greatly, some belonging such [765
as a whip, or a tooth or bit of hair of the departed one. The 768]
keepsake was kept, not worn. It was kept not for the purpose of acquiring the ghost of the deceased relative (a father or other close relative), but solely or at least chiefly, so far as I could gather, out of regard for the departed.

In most cases where such mementos were kept nothing happened. In some few cases, however, the keeping led to the acquisition of a ghost helper by the keeper. The first intimations the keeper had of the intentions of the deceased relative were knockings, or whistlings, or other kinds of disturbance around

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787 where the memento was kept. After a while the ghost would
776 come to the keeper, the surviving relative, on successive visits and talk to him (or her), telling him its intention of becoming his ghost helper, and finally putting him in a deep sleep ("killing" him) and saying to him: "I shall be your tsatsawâ·'a." In other words, it was the ghost, not the surviving relative, who regularly took the initiative and broke the ice. In fact, the latter had little or no freedom to accept or refuse.

By the ghost the survivor in trance would be taught the procedure to use for summoning and dealing with the ghost, how to put incense in the smudge place in the person's own lodge, how to lay the pipe, the direction of stem and bowl, what kind of food to put out, and so forth. A key element in such teaching was a special song, given by the ghost to be sung in said rite. One
776 such song, recorded by me in 1940 as sung by The Boy but not
787 yet transcribed, a wordless song sung to the accompaniment of a
791 drum, had belonged to a woman named "Woman." She had
[533] been taught it by the ghost of her deceased husband (or brother), *Wawathana'tca* * (*a*'s nasalized) "Bad-bad Bull." He had been a medicine man when still living, and this had been his "power" song. His ghost gave it to her both as the song to summon his ghost with and as a doctoring song. She had therefore both ghost-summoning and doctoring power. While that old woman had both a ghost helper and doctoring power, the two things did not necessarily go together in the same person. One could have a ghost helper without having doctoring power, and vice versa. No one lacking a ghost helper could conduct the shaking tent rite, no matter how great power he had received by fasting and crying, and no matter what guardian spirit or spirits he had acquired. After her husband's death the above old woman had not married. People were a little afraid of her because she had this ghost helper. She was a capable old woman, with lots of horses; some of her breed of horses are still (1940) around. She died around 1907.

* Owing to delays and difficulties under present war conditions in obtaining symbols not in our printer's stock a and e with a stroke above them are here printed in italic.

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Other songs, distinct from this summoning or shaking tent rite 776
song, were also given and taught at times by ghost helpers. Two 787
of them, both victory songs, were recorded as sung by The Boy [533]
in 1940. These two were given on occasions other than that on which the surviving relative initially acquired his ghost helper.

After all the above teaching was concluded, the ghost of the deceased relative belonged to the survivor and was supposed to come whenever summoned by the latter in the manner the ghost told him while in trance to do. A great many Gros Ventre men and women had guardian spirits and " power " acquired by fasting and crying or otherwise. But fewer individuals, men and women, had ghost helpers. My informants in 1939 and 1940 could recall only four persons in the last two generations or last 70 years or so who had had ghost helpers.

In one case (see first of the two appended stories by Thick) two spirits tried to come to the shaking tent rite conducted by Woman, one bad and the other good, but whether the bad one was one of her deceased relatives or not, she never knew. The people were under the impression that the bad one was an intruder who used to come first and try to " horn in " on the proceedings. No case of a given person clearly having more than one ghost helper was recalled by my informants.

Ordinary " power " could be and often was transferred by the [424]
possessor to another person by donation or bequeathment. But a ghost helper never was so transferred and could not be.

It may be added that neither my informants, The Boy and
Thick, nor my interpreter, Thomas Main, all highly intelligent [115]
and informed men, were at all sure of the etymology of the word tsatsawâ·'ª. The Boy thought it might connote the meaning of " slave," " some one who is forced to do things." Thomas Main suggested a possible relationship to tsatsa—" coming, flight "; plus—wa, an old Gros Ventre word, meaning unknown. The two words for ordinary ghosts as such are tsa·k'ª (sing.; pl., tsa·k'an: a's as u in English but), and bie'te'ᵉ (sing.; pl. bi'eten). Tsatsawâ·'ª is used exclusively for ghost helpers, not for an ordinary ghost, or ghosts in general. An ordinary medicine man was 791
called nata'nhehi (a's as u in but), but there was no special name 787

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

791 in use to designate those who had a ghost helper: of him or her
787 it was merely said: "He (or she) has a tsatsawâ·'ª."

Persons who had a ghost helper commanded great respect, and were bothered by no one. But capable medicine men on whom the people depended to doctor their sick were also greatly respected. My informants did not feel that either class of practitioners as such had greater prestige than the other.

787 In the shaking tent rite, no other spirits than the given ghost
776 had any part, and only the one ghost ever had part in a given performance. Neither guardian spirits, nor the "Little Spirit," nor Ba'a', nor the Supreme Being (Iˣtcibⁱnⁱ'a't'ª; the a before t nasalized) enters into it in any manner. The summoned ghost came not from any of these or their abodes, but from Basna'ªbe'ᵉ,
[775] the Big Sand, whither the souls of all Gros Ventres, except murderers of their own tribesmen, went after death and lived.

The function of the ghost helper was to give knowledge about past, present, future, or distant happenings, and counsel and direction in illness or danger. He imparted information. He did not as such grant power. Some of the many things he would be questioned about were: How a war expedition under way or an impending battle, or an illness, would come out? Where were the enemy located and what were their plans? Who had stolen a certain valuable article and where was it? He was not asked questions about trivial or silly matters, or about the fidelity or infidelity of a wife, although he sometimes volunteered information on such things. If some noted or loved person were critically ill, the ghost helper might be summoned and if it said: "His (the sick person's) soul is already over there," this meant he was going to die.

787 Where the services of one who had a ghost helper were desired,
791 the usual procedure was for the client or clients to go to him (or her) and offer him a pipe to smoke—this in accordance with general Gros Ventre practice in enlisting the aid of anyone with any kind of power. Those who had ghost helpers were commonly reluctant or even afraid to summon their helper: after the performance they felt tired and sore. But if given a pipe to call the

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

ghost, they could not refuse, at least not easily. And if they accepted the pipe, they committed themselves definitely. 787 791

The summoning rite was performed only at night, with the fire out, regardless of the severity of the weather, and in darkness. In the two narratives by The Boy appended infra the ghost helper spoke in the daytime, but had been summoned the preceding night. The rite was ordinarily performed in the performer's lodge, he being hidden out of sight of the clients or spectators behind a blanket-curtain hung up for this purpose to partition off a segment of the lodge. Away from the camp, the rite was sometimes performed in an emergency shelter or a sweat lodge. Before the rite, the clients got ready a pipe and tobacco, a dish of puppy meat (an earlier Gros Ventre delicacy), and other food, [262] and at the appointed time for the rite brought these to the lodge of the ghost-possessor.

The performer was then bound with thongs. The four fingers (thumb too?) of each hand were tied tightly together by interlacing them (somewhat after the technique of wrapped or twined basketry), the hands were tied behind the back, he was rolled in his blanket and tied around securely with thongs, with only his head protruding, and then was deposited behind the blanket partition out of sight of the spectators.

It appears to have been a common practice for the performer to challenge the most skeptical member of the party, and ask him to do the tying. Various stories of skeptics were narrated to me.

On one occasion when the main body of the Gros Ventres, then 787 at war with the Piegan (or Blackfoot), were camped on the east 776 side of Judas River and a small band of them on the west side, the ghost helper of one of the Gros Ventres in the small band told them: "Tell the people to leave this small camp and go across the river to the big one, for the enemy is going to raid tonight." But many of the Gros Ventres of the small band said: "Ghosts are big liars. We are not cowards to run." Of the skeptics many remained, while about half crossed back to the big camp. About dawn, the enemy came as the ghost had predicted and nearly all who had remained at the small camp were massacred.

On another occasion when the Gros Ventres had (or were

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787 about to have) a big battle with the Crows at Marias (at the
776 junction of the Marias with the Missouri), a young man who was present at a ghost helper rite, with the fires out and pitch-darkness in the lodge, and who doubted that a ghost could come back, decided to experiment. When the ghost helper came and the noise was heard, the young man, who was sitting near the door in the darkness where no one else could see he was exposed, pushed his breechclout aside and exposed his genitals, saying to himself: "If this is really a ghost, he will see me and do something about it." All of a sudden the young man let out a yell as if hit by someone, and ran out of the lodge. "You had better run. What is being done here is the real thing," said the ghost to the young fellow, and added to the crowd: "I hit that young fellow's genitals sharply with a stick; that is why he dashed out of the lodge." They then asked the young man: "Is that what happened?" And he replied: "Yes. He hit me good and hard there," and he became a believer.

This emphasis on skeptics in non-narrative and narrative accounts of the Gros Ventre shaking tent rite would suggest that the rope-escaping feat, which we may call for short the "Houdini trick," had the purpose, overt or covert, of creating or confirming faith in the authenticity of the ghostly visitation.

The Houdini trick ordinarily formed part of the Gros Ventre shaking tent rite, but to judge from a couple of the stories appended to this paper, was not absolutely indispensable and could, in emergency, be omitted.

791 Right after being tied, the ghost-possessor to the accompani-
787 ment of his drum sang his summoning song which the ghost had
776 given him. As the ghost helper approached the lodge, a whistling as of wind could be heard, and sometimes at least an owl call,—owls and ghosts are closely associated in Gros Ventre thought, ghosts appearing or speaking as owls. As the ghost came through the top of the lodge, the top would shake violently, and then the whole lodge would shake.

The ghost would then go to the performer and blow on him, and all the sinews and thongs with which he was tied would become untied, and they would be rolled in a ball so knotted and

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

tangled that it could not itself be easily unravelled and would so be thrown out at the spectators, or at the one who had done the tying, especially if he were a skeptic, with some such challenge to him from the ghost as: "You tied up this person. Now see if you can untangle this ball of thong." 791 787 776

Next the pipe would be lit and held up in the darkness in the direction where the ghost was supposed to be, for the ghost to smoke, and the spectators would see the pipe glow up rhythmically every time the ghost drew on it. The people in the lodge would finish smoking this pipe. After this the ghost would ask: "People, why did you send for me?" They would tell him what they wanted to know. If the ghost knew the answer offhand, he would answer at once. If he did not know, he would say: "I don't know. I'll go and find out. You sing that song again [the one the ghost taught the performer when he first chose the latter; no other song was sung] and I'll come back and tell you."

As soon as the ghost went out, a little fire would be made, and the spectators had a smoke. Then they put out the fire and sang the ghost song. They would not have to wait long, "for a ghost travels just about as fast as a man thinks." On returning it would give the information that had been sought of it.

Most ghosts talked a whistling talk. But some—those possessed by Plenty-dry-meat-old-man and by Morning-star, two old men whose ghost helpers were among the greatest ones remembered and whose prophecies always came true—talked just in a natural voice.

After the ghost helper had given the information desired (or perhaps earlier, after his smoke at the beginning; I could not clear up the point) he was offered the food that had been prepared. And the spectators, still in the dark, would hear the tapping of the ghost's fingernails on the plate or other sound of eating as the ghost partook of some of the food.

When he had finished eating, he would say something like: "If you are done with me, I shall go," and he would depart by way of the top of the tent, which would shake violently as it had done when the ghost first arrived in it. After the ghost helper had taken his final departure, the performer would come out

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

791
787
776 from behind the blanketed enclosure, the fire would be re-lighted,
the performer would say the prayer customary among the Gros
[782] Ventres before all meals to the Supreme Being and other beings,
then he or she and the others present would eat the food that had
remained from the ghost's repast. Finally they would all sit
around smoking and chatting a while before dispersing. I failed
to gather any information on whether the performer receives any
payment or not for his or her services in the rite.

Certain simplifications of the above procedure under emergency conditions as on war expeditions are noted or intimated in a couple of the following four narratives, the first two given by The Boy, the last two by Thick.

NARRATIVE 1

787 The following story was told by The Boy.
776 "A certain man had his deceased father as his ghost helper.
539 The ghost helper used to speak Gros Ventre just like living people but in a bass voice. Everybody understood him when they heard him.

"On one occasion the Gros Ventre tribe were camped near the forks of the Teton and Marias Rivers. While there a large group of the men decided to go on the warpath. So they left the main camp, went up the Missouri River and camped that first night at the mouth of Crow Creek where it empties into the Missouri River. When it was dark that night some of the men said: 'Let's offer the pipe to X [the one mentioned above who had the ghost helper; name not given] and ask him to find out whether our prospects on this war party are good or bad.' So they filled up a pipe and went to X, held out the pipe to him and asked him: 'Accept the pipe and call your spirit.'

[791] "X accepted willingly and soon after they had smoked the pipe together they made a shelter where X was to do the spirit-rite. So they tied up X, filled the pipe again, put it there and sang a song four times. When they were singing it the fourth time they heard a voice in the air. The ghost helper arrived and the shelter shook as a lodge would have done in the same rite. When the spirit hit the ground, the ground shook too. The spirit

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

seemed excited and kept repeating: 'What do you want, my children?' and added: 'If you were in my place and were as old and feeble as I am, you wouldn't like to be disturbed. But here I am. What do you want?' They answered: 'We want to know how this venture of ours is going to turn out,—well or badly.' Then they lit the pipe and offered it to the spirit and they could see from the rhythmic glaring of the pipe that the ghost helper was smoking. After he had smoked he replied: 'Well, I don't know offhand. I'll have to look around and investigate. I am going away to look around. While I am gone you smoke and after a while sing again and I'll come back.' The ghost helper went away with a noise and commotion as always. 787 776 539

"They sat around and smoked and after a while sang again. The ghost helper came back blowing as if catching his breath, as an old man does, and said: 'My children, Crow Indians without number are invading the camp you just left. Knowing you men are away they are so bold that they are peeping into the lodges at your women and watching them playing the hand game. Your women are in happy mood. These Crow Indians seem to be preparing to take all the Gros Ventre horses. I shall go back and watch to see what they will do. Meanwhile you do as you did before: sit around and smoke and then sing. I'll come back and make a final report.' And so they talked and smoked and sang.

"Then the ghost helper came back bringing with him one hair from the head of a Crow. This was not a scalp but was only a hair representing a scalp and was wrapped around a piece of sagebrush. It was brought to convince the Gros Ventres there was no danger. Then the ghost helper reported: 'The Crows have taken practically all your horses and about sun-up will arrive where you now are. You need have no fear of the Crows provided you do just one thing. Be sure to kill the Crow with the blue blanket coat (with hood). He is the one brave man in the crowd. Kill him first and you will kill all the others. None of the Gros Ventres will be actually killed, but two of them will be wounded. In case you do not kill the Crow with the blue coat the outcome of the battle will be doubtful. But if you kill the

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787 Crow with the blue coat you will kill all the Crows and get your
776 horses back.' The Gros Ventres asked the ghost helper which
539 two of their party would be wounded, but were not told by the ghost helper. If they had been told they would not have let these two go into battle.

"By the time they were through with the spirit it was near daylight. So they decided not to go to sleep but to wait up the rest of the night. [Here followed a long detailed description of the battle with the Crows beginning around daylight.] The Crow with the blue coat escaped. Of the sixty Crows in all, forty were killed. No Gros Ventres were killed, but two were wounded—two members of my own [The Boy's] clan. While the party was still at the war camp, some distance from the main camp, the ghost helper came and said: 'I came to hear the news. Did you kill the man with the blue coat?' They answered: 'No.' The ghost helper said: 'It is your own fault. If you had, you would have killed all the Crows. But anyhow you did well and have done yourselves credit. I am going to teach
[727] you a victory song so you can sing it when you get back to camp.' So he taught them this victory song[2] and they learned it and he said to them: 'Well, my children, I am going home. When I get back to my place of abode I will celebrate that victory too. I will give you charcoal [it was the custom for returning victors to paint themselves black] and I'll bring charcoal to my own land and celebrate.'

"The foregoing incident happened in the time of my [The Boy's] grandfather, Crow Moccasin."

Narrative 2

The story which here follows was also told by The Boy.

"The Gros Ventres were camped east of (the site of) Lewistown (south of the Missouri River). A party of Gros Ventre warriors left the camp to go on the warpath against the Sioux. One of this Gros Ventre party was known to have a ghost helper.

[2] This song as sung by The Boy was recorded in the field in 1940, together with about 120 other Gros Ventre songs, but I have not found it possible, as yet, to get any of the records transcribed for publication.

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The party traveled north and when they arrived at the river 787
they camped there. Some of the men said: 'Morning-star-ap- 776
pears (or Morning-star-is-up: the man with the ghost helper) 539
should be approached to find out what our prospects are on this expedition.' It was agreed among themselves that they would make a sweat lodge.

"Among those invited to sweat was Morning-star-appears. While they were sweating they offered the pipe to him to get him to call his helper. He agreed. Then they all smoked and got [79] ready in the sweat lodge.

"The ghost helper came to the sweat lodge for the possessor was right there. Just before the helper alighted he whistled violently and rapidly. Then the sweat lodge shook and they heard the ghost helper say: 'What do you want? Why did you call me?' They said: 'We are going on the warpath after the Sioux. What success will we have? Is there any danger?' So they offered the lighted pipe to the ghost helper and saw it smoked by him. After smoking, the ghost helper said: 'I'll go and see first before I answer. You go ahead and smoke and after a while sing again.' This they did.

"The ghost helper came back in the usual way, and highly elated, and said: 'All right, I am ready to tell you. First here is a strand of hair of a man (a Sioux) whom you will kill tomorrow. This represents his scalp.' It was wrapped around sagebrush. He continued: 'I have found a big Sioux camp on Beaver Creek [east of the Little Rocky Mountains]. The Sioux are having a big Grass Dance. The one who is having the most fun is the one you are to kill tomorrow. He is a handsome man and has a sword. You will capture that sword when you kill him. Don't be afraid. No Gros Ventre will be killed but two of you Gros Ventres don't look good to me.' They said to the ghost helper: 'Name the two.' But he refused to do so, saying: 'Just don't be afraid. Go ahead to the place where the Sioux are and attack them. Choose now what kind of weather you wish after the fight tomorrow, and I will see that the weather will be that way.' They failed, however, to make a choice. The ghost helper also said: 'Every once in a while tomorrow take

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787 a look at the sun. There will be all kinds of sundogs tomorrow,
776 changing every little while. When they appear you will know
539 that I have told you the truth.'

"Then the ghost helper left and the Gros Ventres slept until early morning. [Here followed a long description by The Boy of the battle.] Just one Sioux was killed in the battle, a very handsome man with a sword, as the ghost helper had predicted. Likewise they saw the sundogs changing. The Gros Ventres, however, after this first skirmish realized that the Sioux would soon get reorganized and that their own situation was perilous. So they called on Morning-star-appears to cause such weather that the Sioux could not catch them. He sang his song, using his robe as a cover in which to enclose himself, and said: 'We wish rain.' At once a cloud appeared and in a short time grew into a great black storm cloud: then came a perfect cloudburst, with thunder and lightning, in which you couldn't see any distance. Under this cover the Gros Ventres escaped from the pursuing Sioux and got back to camp safely with no loss of life, although two of their number had had narrow escapes, just as the ghost helper had said: 'Two of you do not look good to me.'

"The above occurred in Stiff Arm's time, when he was a young man. The man who killed the Sioux was Crazy Bull. I do not recall the name of the ghost helper, but this same ghost helper on this occasion taught the Gros Ventres a song to use in their celebration after the victory."[3]

Narrative 3

787 The following two stories were told me by Thick.
539 "A certain old woman (her great-great-grandchild is still living) had a ghost helper. Her name was 'Woman' but for various reasons she was nicknamed 'Bear Old Woman.' When I was about ten years old a party of Gros Ventres was camped at Lodge Pole, about two miles from the Little Rocky Mountains. One night Cree enemies came and stole all the Gros

[3] This song as sung by The Boy was recorded in 1940.

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Ventres' horses except those belonging to one man. This man 787
loaned out his horses as far as they would go around to four of 539
the Gros Ventres who went in pursuit of the Cree.

"Then that evening two of the other men, one of them my 787
father, approached Bear Old Woman. They filled up a pipe just 539
as you do when you go to someone to doctor you, offered it to the 791
old woman, and asked her to find out from her ghost helper who stole the horses and where they were. Bear Old Woman, who had quite a temper, got angry right away as usual and pushed the pipe away as a sign of refusal. Finally one of the young fellows there, a relative of hers, said: 'Well, let me smoke it,' to force her to accept. She angrily grabbed the pipe and had to go through with the rite. When she took the pipe she rubbed her [782]
hands on the ground and rubbed dust on the pipe and offered a prayer before smoking. The pipe was then smoked by her and by the two men who had approached her.

"Then they began to get things ready. They killed a puppy, singed its hair off at a fire, took its insides out without skinning. [262
quartered it up and boiled it. They put the boiled meat on a 252]
plate and got ready some other kinds of food to give to the old woman. Then the two men filled up a pipe and they together with two other men and with a 'servant' went to Bear Old Woman's lodge. On arriving there they set down the plate of dog meat near the head of her bed, the pipe between the incense hearth and the lodge fire, and the other dishes between the lodge fire and the door.

"When everything was arranged and Bear Old Woman was still sitting on her bed, she said: 'Whoever is the greatest unbeliever among you, come and tie me up.' One of the four volunteered. Then the old woman got up and went to a place just south of the head of the bed, to a little enclosure made by hanging up a blanket. He hobbled her four fingers (thumb too?) with sinew, interlacing it in and out of the four fingers of each hand. Then he tied her hands together behind her back and also hobbled her feet. She was lying on a robe. He gathered the robe around her and tied her with rawhide thongs until only her head stuck out of the robe. And so he left her lying on her

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787 back. He returned to his place to the southeast of the old
539 woman and sat down.
791 "Then Bear Old Woman said: 'All right. Start to sing now.' They sang four times without stopping, the song belonging to the old woman's ghost helper. As they were singing the third time they heard an owl and the old woman said: 'Don't receive *that* spirit. He is bad. Continue singing.' So they continued and just as they finished the fourth time the old woman said: 'That is the one. Receive *that* spirit.' The people around heard these two owls.

787 "When the second owl lighted on top of the lodge, the top
539 shook and the ghost helper spoke: 'What do you want me for?'
776 They said: 'We want you to tell us where our horses are and who has them so we can find them.' The ghost helper answered: 'All right. I'll have to go look for them, but you go ahead and smoke this pipe [the one lying near the incense hearth]. When you have smoked up what is in the pipe, refill it and put it back in the same place and wait.'

"They had barely started smoking when the ghost helper was back again. So they just dumped out what was left in the pipe and refilled it. The helper said: 'Never mind. I am hungry and want to eat.' But they didn't mind him. The spirit then said: 'Your horses are not very far away from here. Your four friends have already recaptured your horses and are bringing them back.' He also said to my father: 'One of your horses has a thick broad rawhide rope around his neck and is dragging it, and that other man's mare's colt will play out on the trip back home.'

"After the helper had said all this, the four men judged that he was through, so they took the pipe and lit it and offered the helper a smoke. The inside of the old woman's lodge was dark as there was no fire. The helper took the pipe from their hands and then they saw it light up rhythmically as a pipe does when it is puffed, and after taking a few puffs the helper said to the men: 'You smoke the rest. I am hungry and want to eat.' They could hear him chewing on the dog meat inside where the woman was. After a while the helper said to the men: 'Here.

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

You can eat the rest of this pup.' The meat had been eaten off 787
of one hind leg of the pup so that just the bones were left. Then 539
the ghost helper said: 'I see this foolish old woman lying here 776
helpless.' Then they heard a noise as if the helper had struck the old woman with the flat of his hand and he was heard blowing. The next instant the ghost helper said: 'Here, try to untie this,' and the knotted sinew and rawhide thong hit the chest of the man who had tied her up.

"Then they heard the old woman give a long sigh. She had [791]
been in a trance all this time and was just coming out of it. Next the ghost helper said: 'Now I am going to leave you.' And they heard the same racket at the top of the lodge they had heard when he first came in and there was a violent shaking of the whole lodge, especially at the top of it.

"After the ghost helper was gone they kindled the fire again
and there was light. Bear Old Woman came out of the enclosure [791]
and sat down on the bed and prayed with the bowls of food in her hand. Then she and the men ate and afterwards sat around and smoked and chatted. Then the men went home and told what the spirit had said.

"Next morning all the people in the camp, including the chil- 787
dren, got up early and went up on the highest nearby ground to 539
look for the four men coming back with the horses. Towards evening of the day the four Gros Ventres who had gone in pursuit of the thieves brought all the horses back, except the one which, as the spirit had said, had played out and could not stand the trip back. And one of my father's horses had a rope around its neck as the ghost helper had said it had. The pursuers had caught up with the Cree and surprised them asleep in a little swamp covered with grass and brush and so took the horses back home. On the return trip they got lost in a bad storm, went in the wrong direction and not until daylight did they discover their mistake and so had to circle their way back. They had neither eaten nor slept during all the two days and night they had been gone.

"The above incident occurred just at about the time when the buffalo disappeared from this part of the country [1880's]."

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

NARRATIVE 4

787 Here is the second story told me by Thick.

539 "There was a man by the name of Bird Child who had a ghost
791 helper. Bird Child's wife had four brothers, one of them my father. One evening they filled a pipe and went to Bird Child's lodge to get him to find out from his ghost helper where there would be lots of buffalo and no danger, so they could go there and hunt. When they arrived at Bird Child's lodge they found him absent and only his wife in the lodge. Without invitation they made themselves at home and asked their sister where Bird Child was. She answered: 'I don't know where he is nor when he will be back.'

787 "Being Bird Child's brothers-in-law they decided to take the
776 liberty of using Bird Child's power and ghost helper, and of hav-
539 ing a seance in his absence. They asked their sister where Bird
[607] Child's bundle was. She showed them. One of the four brothers took it down. They then agreed who was to be tied up and to represent Bird Child. The one of the four designated agreed. They had him lie down and two of them tied him up tight and laid him in an enclosure made along the side of the tent [as in preceding story]. They were half-fooling, not quite serious, Their sister couldn't say anything: they imposed on her. They even attached the man's hair to the ropes with which they bound him in the robe until only his mouth was visible.

"Then they started to sing and sang the same song four times without stopping. At the end they heard yelling in the air and said: 'There he is. He has come for us.' As the ghost helper arrived the tent shook and the helper said: 'Who's that lying back there?" and answered himself: 'Some crazy man or someone with no regard for anybody's rights.' Then they heard a commotion behind the enclosure. The bound brother started to hollow for mercy. Next one of the brothers who had done the tying got hit with all the ropes tangled in a knot.

"Then they heard the bound man being thrown towards the door, and saying: 'Hurry up and make a light before this ghost helper kills me.' The spirit had picked him up and was trying

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13
Blackfoot NF6

G 787 539 776

to wedge him between the poles in the lodge. By this time, however, the other brothers had kindled a fire and of course as soon as the flame flared up the spirit was gone. The ghost helper was good and mad, but anyhow had come."

Blackfoot-Blood Rite

B 787 791

On a casual visit to Browning, Montana, in August, 1931, the writer was given some information by Mrs. Frances (Joseph) Brown of Browning on the Blackfoot shaking tent rite. The rite is performed by a woman who is a sort of "spiritualist" or "medium," as Mrs. Brown put it. She summons the dead-spirits [spirit?] and they come and answer questions. Only she can understand the language of the dead spirits and can converse with them. She tells their answers to the other people who are around. During the rite, people are all around in the tipi. A curtain is put over a part of the interior of the tipi, and the "medium" sits behind the curtain. The lights are extinguished. Food is put on a plate. During the rite noises are heard "inside" [apparently behind the curtain], and everything moves, including the tent itself. It was emphasized to me that this rite is an old Indian one, not a modern intrusion of white spiritualistic seances.

B 787 776

While talking with The Boy (Gros Ventre) in August 1940 about the Gros Ventre ghost helper complex, he told me the following story that his friend, Platted Hair, a Blood from Canada, had told him on a visit to him some time before:

A long time ago, before the Gros Ventres came and when the Snakes still occupied this part of the country, a large party of Bloods came over toward the Little Rockies and never returned to their home country. Their people at home did not know what to make of it. One of the Bloods in the home camp had a ghost helper. So they gave this Blood a pipe to summon his ghost helper. When the ghost arrived, he asked: "Why did you send for me?" They said: "Our young men went on a war party and did not return. What has happened to them?" The ghost said: "I'll go and see. You may sing the song. I'll come back and I may be able to tell you what has happened." So the

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944

NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13
Blackfoot NF6 Assiniboine NF4
Montagnais NH6
Ojibwa NG6
Cree NG4

B 787 776 ghost went away. They waited and sang the song. When the ghost came back, they asked him: "What did you find out?" He replied: "I went clear to the Little Rockies and the Bear Paws. Between the two ranges, a creek makes a big bend, and in the middle of the big bend is a ridge. There your young men got killed."

When some years ago, The Boy told me, the road between Hays (at the foot of the Little Rockies) and Three Buttes was being built, on a ridge several holes were found in the rocks, and in one of the holes five skulls, as if a fight had occurred there. Platted Hair believed this to have been the scene of the above fight.

G B [177] We may add that there has been a great deal of close association between the Gros Ventres and the Blackfoot-Blood-Piegan, especially in recent generations.

Assiniboine Rite

The writer's first information on the shaking tent rite among the Assiniboine of Fort Belknap Reservation (which they have long shared with the Gros Ventres) came as a casual afterthought from a Gros Ventre informant in 1931. After giving the summary account of the Gros Ventre rite recorded earlier in this article, he added that the same rite is also found among the Fort Belknap Assiniboine.

G A [71] In the summer of 1940, my chief Gros Ventre informant, The Boy, stated that the Fort Belknap Assiniboine also had the ghost helper concept. In the case of one ghost-possessor at least, there were bells on top [or at the top] of his lodge, and when the ghost helper came, the bells would shake and the whole top of the lodge would shake. This possessor's name was "Standing Dog," or "Dog Rises," or a similar name. One ghost is credited with having thrown a performer on top of the lodge frame. Further details were not known by The Boy, and I had no good opportunity to consult the Assiniboine themselves.

A [791]

Montagnais-Cree-Otcipwe Rite

C M O [171] The "shaking tent" rite is universal or practically so among

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre
Cree NG4 Montagnais NH6
Ojibwa NG6

CMO 787 171

the Montagnais, Cree and Otcipwe. Most of the frequent records in the literature have been assembled by Ray and Hallowell.[4] I have field records of its occurrence among the following:

(a) Montagnais: Whale River, Fort George, Eastmain, Nemiskaw, Neoskweskaw, Rupert House, Waswanipi, Mistassini; (b) Cree: (1) Eastern forest Cree: Têtes de Boule, Kesagami, Moose Factory, Albany, Cape Henrietta; (2) Western forest Cree: Ft. Chipewyan (Lake Athabaska), Ft. McMurray (Athabaska River); (3) Plains Cree: Rocky Boy (Mont.); (c) Otcipwe(-Algonkin): L.Abitibi, Wikwemikong (Manitoulin Island), Rainy Lake, Lake of the Woods, English River (affluent of Albany R.), Ft. Hope (upper Albany R.), Osnaburgh (ibid.).

In the 16 of the above 23 bands for which dependable data were secured regarding the type of tent used in the rite (relevant data on this point were not secured for Whale River, Eastmain, Mistassini, Wikwemikong, English River, Rainy Lake, McMurray), the tent was one specially constructed, not a regular dwelling lodge or a partitioned section thereof. In all 16 cases this tent was cylindrical or barrel-shaped or "vertical,"—not beehive or low-domed shaped as sweat lodges usually are, nor strictly conical like tipis.

CMO [346]

CMO 787 776

The chief spirit informant or spokesman among the many spirits or beings who customarily come into the tent during the rite was: (a) Mista'beo (Mieta'beo), among the Montagnais of Eastmain, Rupert House, Waswanipi and Mistassini; (b) Mi'kenak, the turtle, among the Cree of Albany, Moose Factory, Kesagami, and Ft. Chipewyan (at this last place, Mi'skenak), and among the Otcipwe(-Algonkin) of English River, Lake of the Woods and Rainy Lake; Oki'jiko, among the Cree-speaking Têtes-de-Boule (also pl. okijikouk), and the Otcipwe(-Algonkin) Abitibi (as pl. kijikuki).[5] Mikenak was definitely denied among both

[4] Ray, 1941; Hallowell, 1942. See footnote 1.

[5] Cf. Paul Le Jeune, Relation of 1634 Thwaites JR, 6: 162, khichikouai, "genii of the air" or "genii of light," who came into the Montagnais' shaking tent; ibid., 7: 100, khichicouakhi; same, Relation of 1637, JR, 11: 254, ka-khichigou khetikhi, "those who make the light," and khichikouekhi.

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13
Assiniboine NF4 Montagnais NH6
Blackfoot NF6 Ojibwa NG6
Cree NG4

CMO 787 776

the Têtes-de-Boule and the Abitibi. Mikenak, an Otcipwe (-Algonkin) form, among the above listed Cree groups points to diffusion of the name,—not necessarily of this particular spokesman, as is evidenced by the Ft. Chipewyan Mi'skenak. Mistabeo, as spokesman among the above-listed Montagnais bands, is an independent non-human being or spirit, not a man's "other self" or kind of soul.

CMO 787 171

The "Houdini trick," in which the shaking tent performer escapes from the thongs with which he is tied, was found among the Cree of Ft. Chipewyan, McMurray, and Rocky Boy, the Otcipwe of Lake of the Woods, and the Otcipwe(-Algonkin) of Abitibi. This Abitibi occurrence marks the farthest eastern extension found by me of the trick in connection with the shaking tent.[6] I did not learn of its use among the Otcipwe of the upper Albany River at Ft. Hope and Osnaburgh, though fairly extensive information on the shaking tent rite was obtained at these two localities in 1927. The "Houdini trick" is definitely lacking among the James Bay Cree, the Têtes-de-Boule, and the Montagnais groups studied.[7]

Some further general and specific characteristics of the Montagnais-Cree-Otcipwe shaking tent rite will be given in the next section of the present paper.

Generalizations

CMO [114] GMOCAB 787 171

The following generalizations are based partly on the foregoing data, partly on the writer's still unpublished fuller field notes on the Montagnais, Cree, and Otcipwe(-Algonkin).

Certain characters are common to the rite as practised both among the forest Montagnais-Cree-Otcipwe and Plains Cree and among the Gros Ventres and—so far as our fragmentary infor-

[6] Father R. Déléage, O.M.I., Letter of Nov. 1, 1863, in Rapport sur les missions du diocèse de Québec, Mar., 1864, no. 16, pp. 74–75, reported the "Houdini trick" in connection with the shaking tent rite among, apparently, the Grand Lake Victoria Otcipwe(-Algonkin)-speaking Indians.

[7] It was earlier reported among the Cree of York Factory, by Thomas M'Keevor, A voyage to Hudson's Bay during the summer of 1812, London 1819, 58.

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13
Assiniboine NF4 Cree NG4 Montaanais NH6
Blackfoot NF6 Ojibwa NG6

GMOCA B 787 171

mation goes—the Blackfoot-Blood and Ft. Belknap Assiniboine. These common features are: shaking of the top of the tent or lodge at entrance and departure of spirit; entrance and departure of spirit by way of top of lodge; departure, during rite, of spirit after being questioned, to find facts, and subsequent return to tent with desired answer; performer not possessed by spirit, but spirit(s) speak(s) to or in presence of performer; performer concealed from sight of spectators and clients during visitation by spirit(s); no trance or ecstasy by performer, and performers not of psychopathic personality as such; spirits summoned primarily to obtain through them knowledge, chiefly knowledge hidden by barriers of time (future) and space (distance), or counsel on practical problems; a smoke given the spirit(s), and spectators smoke; absence of direct participation of Supreme Being in rite (apart from a minor exception or two); rite as such concerned with personal beings, not with impersonal forces, and thus a religious, not a magical rite (as many define religion and magic).

In certain features, the rite among the forest Montagnais-Cree-Otcipwe and Plains Cree consistently differs from that among the Gros Ventre, Blackfoot-Blood and Ft. Belknap Assiniboine. In the rite as found among the former: while one of the spirits is usually the chief informant or spokesman, other spirits and beings ordinarily come into the tent during the rite; all these spirits and beings are animistic, not manistic—never ghosts; humor, joking, trivial banter by the visiting spirit common; the "Houdini trick" absent from Montagnais and eastern Cree rite; food is not offered to the visiting beings.

On the other hand, in the rite as found among the Gros Ventres and, so far as our limited information goes, the Blackfoot-Blood and Ft. Belknap Assiniboine: one spirit only comes into the tent; the spirit that is summoned is exclusively a ghost, a deceased relative of the performer; humor, joking, trivial banter by the ghost are lacking; the "Houdini trick" is customary, except in emergency; food, especially the delicacy, puppy meat, is offered to and partaken of by visiting ghost.

So far as my information goes, among the above Montagnais-

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13
Assiniboine NF4 Montagnais NH6
Blackfoot NF6 Ojibwa NG6
Cree NG4

BGMOCA 787 171

Cree-Otcipwe, the power to summon the shaking tent spirit(s) is not thrust upon the person by any spirit, as in a great measure it is among the Gros Ventres.

In general, the shaking tent rite appears to have much more relative importance and to play a much more preponderant role in the total magico-religious life of the Montagnais-Cree-Otcipwe than of the Gros Ventres, Blackfoot-Blood and Assiniboine.

BGMOCA [177]

That there is a historical relationship between the two above contrasted shaking tent complexes appears very probable from the many specific and distinctive elements they share in common and from the almost continuous geographical distribution of the complexes, a distribution moreover predominantly among the main body of Algonquian-speaking peoples of the taiga and adjacent open country and the aberrant-Algonquian-speaking groups of the Plains, the Gros Ventres, the Blackfoot, and the Cheyenne.

Addendum on Wider Distribution

G 787 171 [114]

It has not been the purpose of the present paper to deal with the total distribution of the shaking tent rite and with the historical problems connected with such distribution. The following summary notes are added merely to contribute a mite toward filling out the picture of distribution as given in Ray's historical study and Hallowell's socio-psychological one.[8]

In the east, the shaking tent is not reported in our published sources, to my knowledge, south of the St. Lawrence. The record by Maurault for the Abnaki does not mention shaking of the conjurer's tent.[9] Inquiries by the writer in the field in 1931 among the Chipewyan and Dogrib of the Mackenzie-Slave watershed brought consistently negative results; in fact informants who knew well and gave many details of the rite as practised among the Cree of Ft. McMurray (Athabaska R.) and Ft. Chipewyan (L. Athabaska), on the Cree-Chipewyan borderline, and who were equally familiar with both Cree and Chipewyan

[8] Ray, 1941; Hallowell, 1942. See footnote 1.

[9] J. A. Maurault, Histoire des Abenakis depuis 1605 jusqu'à nos jours, Québec, 1866, 30.

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

culture, emphasized that the shaking tent rite was practised by the Cree only, and not by the Chipewyan, even in these border areas when the two peoples were in very close contact and association. 787 171

To the far north, however, the "Houdini trick" and the shaking of the conjurer's hut on the arrival of his spiritual helper was earlier reported by Boas among the Central Eskimos.[10] Lowie has also recorded among the Crow a tent-shaking rite very like that of the Gros Ventres and Cheyenne.[11] The first report and discussion, by Donald Collier, of the Kiowa occurrence is published in the present issue of Primitive Man. Regina Flannery has called my attention to the occurrence of the shaking-of-the-tent motif among the early Creek.[12]

Still farther afield, I have come across no reference to a shaking tent element in the many accounts of northern Asiatic and Lapp shamanism, but have made no thorough systematic search. In South America, I know of only one instance of a somewhat similar rite, that earlier reported among the Chiquitoan Manasi of eastern Bolivia. Part of the large public assembly hall was curtained off with mats, which part was reserved for the "high priest" alone and the visiting spirits. As the gods or spirits came down, a sound filled the air and shook the roof of the building and the mats. Chicha and food were offered the spirits. The people sang. The gods were consulted by the "high priest" about future events such as rains, harvests, fishing and hunting, whereabouts of game, outcome of prospective war raids.—the conversation being audible to the crowd outside the curtained compartment. The gods on departing shook the whole building as they ascended.[13]

[10] F. Boas, The central Eskimo, BAE-R 6 for 1884–85, Washington, 1888, 593–94.

[11] R. H. Lowie, The religion of the Crow Indians, AMNH-AP, v. 25, pt. 2 1922, 380–81; same, The Crow Indians, New York, 1935, 70–71.

[12] Captain Bossu, Travels through . . . Louisiana, tr., London, 1771, 1: 264–65, among the Allibamon (Alabama).

[13] A. Métraux, The social organization and religion of the Mojo and Manasi, in Primitive Man, 1943, 16: 22–23.

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787
171

The more distant of the above instances, those from the Eskimo and Creek and from the Manasi of South America are merely set down here as of record. We are not justified—as yet—in assuming historical relationship. The distances seem too great, and the resemblances too vague and generic. What future more complete descriptive and distributional information may suggest remains to be seen.

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

[P.39] PRIMITIVE MAN

Quarterly Bulletin
of the
Catholic Anthropological Conference

Vol. 20 Washington 17, D. C., July, 1947 No. 3

THE CHANGING FORM AND FUNCTIONS OF THE GROS VENTRE GRASS DANCE

REGINA FLANNERY
Catholic University of America

THE purpose of the present paper is to discuss the changing 121 form, and to show as far as possible the changing functions, of the Grass dance in Gros Ventre culture from the time of its introduction between 1875 and 1880 up to about 1920 when it had paled off to relative insignificance.

The Gros Ventre tribe of Montana was one of the many which 796 adopted the Grass dance, sometimes called the Omaha dance, as 177 it spread rapidly over the northern plains in relatively recent times. Wissler studied the distribution and diffusion of the Grass dance as a trait-complex,[1] basing his interpretation upon his own 796 observations, especially among the Blackfeet, and on the de- 114 scriptions of this dance as published for other tribes. For the Gros Ventres he depended mainly on Kroeber's data,[2] the only source available, but he himself had visited that tribe and collected, among other specimens, regalia used by them in the Grass

[1] Wissler, C., General discussion of shamanistic and dancing societies, AMNH-AP 11, pt. 12 1916, pp. 862–71.

[2] Kroeber, A. L., Ethnology of the Gros Ventre, AMNH-AP 1, pt. 4, 1908, pp. 234, 238–39.

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 dance.[3] Wissler was well aware of the importance of the Grass
114 dance in the transition period of Plains culture from the old to the new, and suggested further studies be made. Nevertheless, no one has given us a close-up, so far as I know, of its dynamic aspects in the life of any one of the tribes who shared the phenomenon.

796 In 1901 Kroeber noted that the Grass dance as then performed
114 by the Gros Ventres differed considerably in form from that
177 which was described to him as having been the case when it was first adopted. He gives us a brief description of the earlier procedure, but naturally enough no details regarding the then current method of carrying out the Grass dance, since his concern was with the older tribal culture. He merely states: "It is no longer a young man's dance, nor confined to a certain group. All the people in the tribe take part in it. It is very similar in character to the present-day Arapaho crow-dance, as well as in the place it occupies in the life of the people. Among the Gros Ventre it is now the only dance held."[4] Our data, gathered during two visits to the Fort Belknap Reservation in 1940 and 1945, confirm Kroeber's and supplement them to a considerable extent.

121 In treating of the Grass dance then, we shall distinguish be-
128 tween an earlier period extending from between 1875 to 1880 up to about 1890, and a later period comprising the years from roughly 1890 to 1916. We shall first describe the form of the Grass dance as it was in the earlier period, then the changes which were later introduced, and finally we shall discuss the varying functions during both periods.

The Form: Earlier Period

796 According to Wissler the dance originated with the Dakota
177 about 1860 and is traceable as a development of the older Pawnee
171

[3] These specimens are in the American Museum of Natural History. Some of those used in the Gros Ventre Grass dance have been described by Kroeber, loc. cit.: fork, pp. 270–71; spoon, p. 271; whip, p. 271; crow-belt, pp. 271–72.

[4] Kroeber, loc. cit., p. 238.

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Iruska.[5] In its diffusion it reached the Assiniboine from the Sioux, 796
—Rodnick places the date at 1872,[6]—and the Assiniboine in turn 177
passed it on to the Gros Ventres, sometime between the years 171
1875 and 1880. We arrive at this approximate dating by reckoning the age of a now venerable old Gros Ventre woman informant [174]
who witnessed the actual transfer when she herself was in her later twenties or possibly early thirties. From all the evidence at our command it is fairly certain that she was born between 1850 and 1855. This informant not only was an eye-witness of the adoption of the ceremony by the Gros Ventres but also participated actively, so far as a woman could, in both the earlier and later phases of the dance. Before giving details of the regalia, personnel, and procedures it might be well to insert at this point her account of the actual transfer.

"The Gros Ventres were camped on the Milk River. They 648
were joined there by the Assiniboine and the two tribes remained 177
together while the Assiniboine taught the Gros Ventres the Grass 796
dance. The Gros Ventres had never had any dancing of that kind before and called it jokingly *inaetenin* (moving-buttocks) referring to the way they danced. The Assiniboine gave crow-belts (feather bustles) to each of two men, and likewise swords to two others. They needed one man as spear (fork) man and two as *atsa'an* (waiters, servants). They also gave the Gros Ventres a big drum and everything that goes with the dance. The visitors showed the different individuals how to use these various things and taught the songs and dances that went with each. But they didn't do all that for nothing! Of all the things they had to give away to the Assiniboine! Even food was included in the exchange. The Gros Ventres had an enormous quantity of food prepared and you should have seen the number of puppies we [262]
cooked. The Assiniboine surely liked those pups. That was the first Grass dance we ever had.

"Then we moved camp from the Milk River over toward the 796

[5] Wissler, loc. cit., cf. table opp. p. 868.

[6] Rodnick, David, The Fort Belknap Assiniboine of Montana, A study in culture change, New Haven, Conn., 1938, pp. 123–24.

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 Bear Paw Mountains. It was there that the Gros Ventres had their first Grass dance alone. I don't know why they did things like this, but all those who had been given regalia walked instead of riding horseback. But the drum was packed on a special horse by itself and when they came to a stream, four men who owned the drumsticks carried the drum across, wading in without taking off their moccasins or other clothing. Furthermore those who owned the regalia were not supposed to help feed the crowd. They were not allowed to serve food and if they did, they had to give something away. Nor were these men supposed to borrow. They were supposed to have their own cup or dish and when it [415] was time to eat, if they didn't have any receptacle, they spread out their robes and the servers poured the coffee or soup or whatever was being served right in the robes."

114 The above account is the only explicit record of the actual 174 transfer which was obtainable in the field. From details supplied 796 by this same informant, however, as well as by others not so old as she, but who have accurate traditional knowledge of Gros Ventre culture, we have considerable information on the Grass dance as practiced from the time it was adopted.[7] Let us proceed then to the general description, first as the dance was carried out in the earlier period.

575 *Personnel and equipment.* At the time of adoption the Grass 796 dance came into the possession of a society, the Wolves or Wolf-men. Only members of the society actually danced, wearing the distinctive headdress of deer hair, although the rest of their costume varied with the individual. The special regalia which went with the dance were: 2 crow-belts; a large drum and 4 fancy drumsticks; a spear or fork; a spoon; 2 wands representing swords; a whistle.[8] Each item was owned by an individual member of the society who was, by virtue of this ownership, an officer

[115] [7] I wish to thank all of my Gros Ventre friends for their assistance, especially The Boy, Thick, Thomas Main, Charles Buckman, Al and Cora Chandler, Mary Ereaux, Mathilda Cuts-the-Rope, but above all, my old "grandmothers," Coming Daylight and Singer.

[8] For reference to description of some of these, see footnote 3.

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

of the society. The officers were free to transfer their ceremonial 575
equipment to other members whom they would select. Following 796
the typical Gros Ventre pattern of transfer of ownership, the
recipient would present as lavish gifts as he could afford to the [431]
donor while the relatives of the recipient showed their appreciation of the favor to their kinsman by giving away expensive gifts in his honor. All of this took place publicly at the dance.

Particular dances and songs were attached to each office and the owners of the ceremonial drumsticks were required to know in correct order all the numerous songs and to provide the musical [533]
accompaniment for the whole ceremony. These four drumstick owners were joined in certain of the songs by four women singers selected from among the wives of the Wolf-men. The owners of the various objects were responsible for the proper care thereof, the crow-belts and the drum receiving most respect. When not in use, the crow-belts were kept wrapped in special bundles in the [841
lodges of their respective owners, but were hung outside when the [784
owner's wife was in her menstrual period. Moreover, those who [833
danced wearing the crow-belts were obliged to refrain from sexual 782]
relations for two or three days previous to the dancing and, before donning the belts, to make a smudge of sweet-grass to incense themselves and the crow-belts. The drum, too, received special attention. One informant speaks of it as having been "nicely [534]
decorated," and we know from Kroeber's description[9] that the trimming was very similar to that of the Assiniboine Grass dance drum.[10]

Procedure. The actual dancing took place in a special circular 346
dancing-place in the center of the camp circle. This "corral," as 796
it was sometimes referred to, was constructed from several lodge covers, but was open at the top and the entrance thereto was at the east. The tipi of the drum-keeper was put up nearby. Opposite the opening of the "corral" was the place of honor where [554]
sat the officials,—with the exception of the sword owners, who with their assistants were at either side of the entrance. The 000

[9] Kroeber, loc. cit., p. 238.
[10] Lowie, R. H., The Assiniboine, AMNH-AP 4, pt. 1, 1909, p. 67.

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The
796 regalia were placed in front of their owners. Lay members sat around the sides.

[354] The fire was near the center of the dancing-place and beside
252 it the essential pot containing cooked dog flesh. The meat was
262 prepared by first rolling the carcass in very hot ashes to singe off
796 the hair and until the flesh was almost black, after which the entrails were removed and the meat boiled. Incidentally, the Gros Ventres were very fond of the flesh of puppies and used it in large quantities to supplement other types of food for feasts at various gatherings, including the Grass dance. The food for the feast, of which all present at the Grass dance partook, was heaped to the east of the fire.

796 In this setting the ceremonial eating of dog flesh, which involved the preliminary dancing with crow-belts, and so on, was carried out. We shall refer hereafter to this whole performance as the dog ritual because this is the core of the Grass dance proper wherever found and, so far as the Gros Ventres are concerned, remained essentially unchanged from the earlier through the later period. We use the term "ritual" without implying that there was any religious significance attached to the performance in the minds of the Gros Ventres. Connected therewith were a few sex prescriptions the violation of which were believed to be punished by vague misfortune, but that it had any deeper meaning for the Gros Ventres there is no evidence. On the contrary, their indifference toward possible symbolism, for instance, is illustrated by their acceptance at face value of the statement as to origin and meaning by an old Sioux from Fort Peck, Black Prairie Chicken, who claimed that he personally had created the Grass Dance, saying that he had "gotten his instructions" from a rooster; that the headdress of upstanding red-dyed deer hair
796 represented the rooster's comb and that the so-called crow-belt
177 was in reality a rooster's tail. My older informants knew this old man when he visited the Reservation many years ago, and they assured me that although the validity of his story was not questioned, it had had no effect. They maintained that when the dance was transferred to them, the Assiniboine had not mentioned

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

where it had come from or anything about its origin, so the Gros 796
Ventres simply performed it in the way it had been taught. They 177
continued to dance in the same way, and never at any time did they feel that the dance was connected with the white man's rooster, or that they were supposed to be imitating that type of fowl.

The ceremonial involved the donning of the crow-belts by their 796
respective owners, preceded by the incensing of the owners and of the regalia. The song connected with the crow-belt had four stanzas, each repeated four times while the owners danced. One of the owners then lifted the pot containing the already prepared dog flesh and, walking clockwise, placed it in the proper position to the north of the fire. The two crow-belt owners and the owners of the fork and spoon then knelt to the west of the fire while the owners of the swords and their two *atsa'an* (servants, assistants) knelt opposite them on the other side of the fire. These eight, as they knelt, danced by raising their bodies up and down to the rhythm of a special song which was sung once by the four male singers, repeated "like a chorus" during which the drum was beaten slowly and the four women singers joined in. As the chorus was sung the dancers raised their arms as though in salute. This song, with chorus, was repeated four times. After this the eight rose and, to the accompaniment of another song, danced in single file, the owners of the crow-belts in the lead and second place. They circled the fire four times, at the beginning of each circuit hesitating for a moment at the pot and making a gesture toward it. The dancing became more violent with each round and, on the fourth, the dancers "put on quite a show," stamping harder than before and using great exertion. On this fourth round each one touched the pot and the last one in line, one of the *atsa'an*, grabbed it up and put it to the west of the fire. The eight dancers would be panting and tired by this time.

The second crow-belt owner, however, transferred his belt to the fork owner who then danced alone. He followed the same pattern of first dancing slowly, and, at the beginning of each round making merely a gesture toward the pot. On the fourth

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 circuit, when the tempo and vigor of the dance had appreciably increased, he finally speared the dog flesh, leaving his fork in the pot while he stood there resting for a few moments.

When the fork owner had somewhat recovered his breath, he took the dog flesh from the pot and put it in a big dish nearby. He then went to an outstanding warrior and, taking him by the hand, invited him to come up to the dish. In the same way he selected two other prominent warriors. One of these then asked some member of the society to select a fourth warrior, but this one must have been wounded at war. When he had been named, the fork owner invited him and led him to join the other three who were sitting in a semicircle facing the fire.

The owner of the crow-belt removed the feather-bustle from the fork man and tied it around the spoon owner. Then another song was started and the spoon owner went to the space between the fire and entrance to begin his circuit of the fire. He exhibited his graceful body with his best steps as he made three motions with the spoon over the heads of the seated warriors. On the fourth time he touched the meat with the spoon. After a short pause and when he was breathing more normally after his strenuous dancing, he touched the meat with the spoon and, having raised the spoon first upward and then downward, laid it on the tongue of each of the first three warriors. The warrior who had asked for the selection of the wounded warrior took the spoon and laid it on the tongue of that one.

796 688 Had any one of the four warriors indulged a short time previously in sexual intercourse, he was supposed not to allow the spoon to touch his tongue and refused by turning aside his head, thereby making a public confession. It would have done him no good to have refused to come to the center of the dancing-place when first invited because his hanging back would have caused even more attention and he would have been subjected to vulgar jeers. It was said by informants that occasionally one or another warrior would ignore the rule but that this was a dangerous thing to do. As a case in point it was related that one man, known to my informants, tried to get by with it and allowed the

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

spoon to touch his tongue regardless of consequences. Some hours 796
later in the excitement accompanying the end of the dance, this 688
man's horse was jumping around and broke loose, was chased by a dog and ran against a log projecting from the corner of a corral. The horse was killed. The owner then admitted that this bad luck had befallen him because he had falsely allowed himself to be honored at the dance.

Following upon the performance with the spoon, the dog meat 796
was next distributed to the four warriors, the wounded warrior receiving the head. When the meat was eaten the skull was put down to the west of the fire. The four warriors remained seated while the other members danced for some time. So soon, however, as the singers switched to the appropriate music, the spoon owner dashed to the dog skull and pointed the skull in four directions, and the four warriors danced around, everybody else rising to dance at his place, yelling and calling out, while this song with chorus was sung once. All were then seated except the warriors who pranced around the fire four times. After this each of the four warriors in turn picked up the dog skull, pointed it in the direction in which he had accomplished the particular war deed he was to recount, and related his story. If one of them had been forced to refuse the spoon, the owner of the spoon would have to point the dog skull for him while the warrior talked and gestured. The warrior who had been wounded spoke last, and when he finished he tossed the dog skull outside of the dancing-place.

The owner of the whistle had a particular dance. When the accompaniment started, it was stated, " for some reason he did not dance alone. It seemed that all the members were glad and danced with him and kind of helped him. The song was repeated three more times. At the end of each ' stanza ' the owner of the whistle would dance at the edge of the circle, apart from and very much faster than the other dancers." It was his privilege, too, to " punish " the dancers. At a signal from the owner of the whistle, the singers would switch to the " punishing songs " of which there [533]
were said to have been ten in all. No one could drop out of the dancing while these were being sung. Each of the ten songs could

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13-Gros Ventre NQ13

796 be repeated so that it was something of an ordeal. The sword owners would see to it that the dancers kept up, prodding the laggards until the series of songs had been completed.

[533 177] The singers themselves had a smoking song, one of the few songs of the Grass dance for which words were adopted along with the tunes [11] from the Assiniboine. This song indicated a period of rest and relaxation for all but it was required that one of the officers provide the pipe and mixture for the singers.

Any member who left the dancing-place was obliged to surrender some piece of personal property as insurance that he would return. If he did not come back, the property was forfeit.

796 [43] 586 Another distinctive feature of the earlier Grass dance was the throwing away of property and especially of wives. The term "throwing away" is appropriate because a stick was held in the hand and after the holder publicly announced what the stick represented he would throw it to the ground. If, for instance, a member of the society had decided to give away his wife he would take a stick and say: "Here is so-and-so (naming the woman)" and throw the stick down. Sometimes another member would pick up the stick, thus indicating that he was taking this woman, but occasionally it happened that no one grabbed her and in such case the wife in question would return to live with her own relatives. The man who so renounced his wife was supposed to be through with her for good. It was said by informants, however, that once in a while, provided the wife had not been claimed 522 by another, the husband would want her back again. An in- 796 stance in illustration of this point was told to me. A man who 586 stood to my informant in the relation of enemy-friend [12] had so 572 disposed of his wife at a Grass dance. Some time later my informant saw the couple together again. My informant took ad-

[533] [11] Most of the Gros Ventre Grass dance songs have no words proper. This contrasts with the Arapaho Grass dance songs, as my informants are [177] well aware. The difference is perhaps due to the influence on the Atapaho of the Ghost Dance religion (cf. Kroeber, A. L., The Arapaho, AMNH-B 18, pt. 4, 1907, p. 320), which scarcely affected the Gros Ventres.

[572] [12] This was a joking and rivalry relationship entered into by presenting to a fellow tribesman an object captured from the enemy.

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

vantage of the occasion, as she had the right to do, to make fun 522 796
of her enemy-friend without his being able to retaliate. She 586
took a handful of horse manure and rubbed it all over his face 572
saying, "Oh! All of us at the Grass dance saw you throw her away, why are you going with her again?" and in this way called attention to the fact that he was not so "brave" as he had pretended to be.

Another informant stated that she and her sister were just able 796
to escape the embarrassing experience of so being given away. 586
They were both living with a man who was a prominent member of the Wolf society. One of his fellow-members, however, came to the two women and told them that their husband planned on throwing them both away at the forthcoming Grass dance. My informant was very angry to get this news and said to her sister: "We will get ready and get rid of him first!". Whereupon they packed their belongings and taking their own horses went quickly to their mother's brother. My informant said that this man who was going to throw them away tried many times to speak to her thereafter but she always turned away and refused to listen, thinking to herself: "Well, there are plenty of other men."

As a final point in the discussion of the earlier form of the 796
Grass dance, the custom of members giving away presents in 431
honor of their loved ones should be mentioned. This was a purely voluntary procedure and could be done by any member who wished to do so at any performance of the Grass dance. The following is a typical example of how this was carried out. The same informant last mentioned, married another member of the Wolf society not long after the incident she described above, and had been selected as one of the four women singers for the Grass dance. At one performance she was holding her infant daughter. her first child by this marriage, as she sang. Her husband, wishing to honor his little daughter, told a war story, went to his wife and took the child in his arms and, going to the center of the dancing-place, gave away a horse to one of the Assiniboine who happened to be visiting at the time of the dance.

Such was the form of the Grass dance as carried out by the 000

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 Such was the form of the Grass dance as carried out by the Gros Ventres from the time of its adoption from the Assiniboine up to about 1890 when changes began creeping in.

The Form: Later Period

796 178 It should perhaps be emphasized at this point that the changes which characterized the Grass dance after 1890 were mostly in the nature of accretions around the nucleus as originally adopted, so that, although in 1901 the form of the Grass dance differed somewhat from the earlier form, as Kroeber noted,[13] the whole was still distinctly recognizable as an expansion thereof.

Changes in personnel and equipment. At the turn of the century participation in the Grass dance was no longer restricted to members of a particular society. Everybody was free to join in. The Grass dance was, however, in charge of four officials, the "chiefs" who sat in the place of honor opposite the door and presided over the ceremony (Fig. 1). They were consulted on any matters pertaining to the performance, made rules, sometimes arbitrarily, during the dance, and were custodians of any fines collected. They were responsible for seeing to it that provisions were on hand when a dance was to be held. There were, moreover, two women officials, whose rank was said to be equal to that of the "chiefs" and whose insignia were ceremonial dresses of black cloth. These two sat to the right of the four chiefs.

[625] The orders of the "chiefs" were enforced by two men who sat, one on either side of the door, holding whips with ornamental handles. These whips were apparently a simple substitution for the wands representing swords in the original Grass dance. The whip owners each had an assistant who ran errands and attended to getting water, keeping up the fire and so on. An entirely new feature was, however, the addition of two women who owned whips and their two female assistants. They likewise sat on each side of the door but behind the men. When it was time for the women to dance,—another innovation to which we shall refer later,—the women whip owners rose and danced in opposite di-

[13] Kroeber, A. L., Ethnology of the Gros Ventre, AMNH-AP 1, pt. 4, 1908, p. 238.

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

rections around the circle. It was understood that if any woman had not risen to dance by the time those holding whips reached her, she would be lashed. These four women had the additional duty of helping serve when it was time for the general feast.

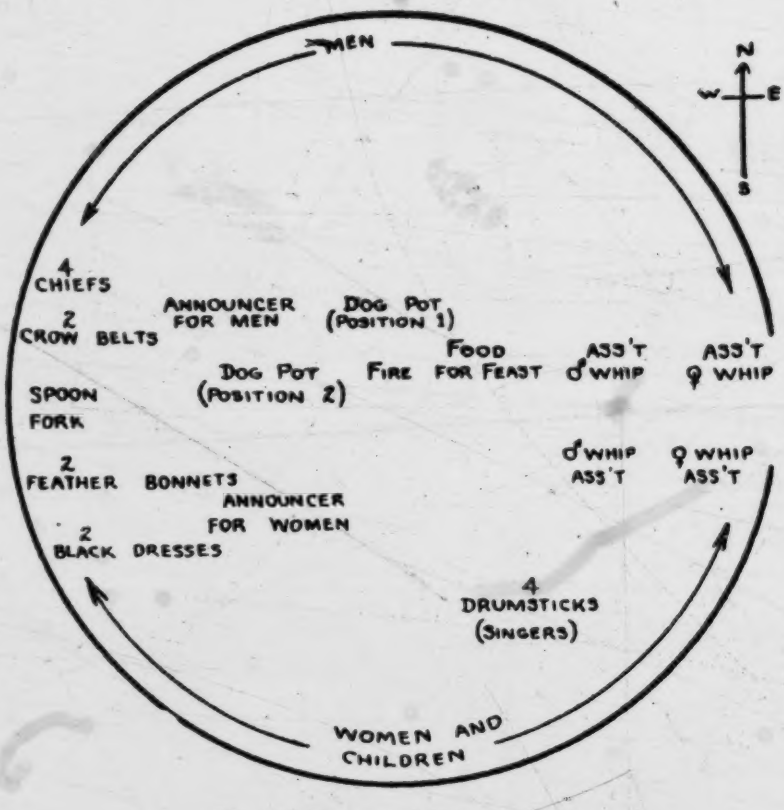


Fig. 1. Diagram of Dance Ground.

Considered as next in rank to the four " chiefs " were the four male singers, who, as in former times, owned the special drumsticks " decorated and official-looking, like emblems." They were expected to know faultlessly all of the many songs connected with the Grass dance as first adopted. If they should, for instance,

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 178 [688] sing a song out of the prescribed order, the "chiefs" would stop them at once, announce the mistake and what fine was to be demanded of the singers. Were the four women singers performing at that time, they too were penalized.

[534] The owners of the drumsticks cooperated with the owner of the drum whose special duty it was to care for this instrument and to have it in repair and ready for use at any time it was needed.

The concepts pertaining to the crow-belts, spoon, fork and whistle remained unchanged. The owners of these regalia treated them with the same respect as of old. Additional ceremonial equipment had been introduced in the form of four feathered war-bonnets, two of which were owned by men and two by women. There was a special little ceremony connected with the two bonnets owned by women. Early in the dance two outstanding warriors were selected to take these bonnets from their owners, dance four times around the rack where they were hung in front of their owners, and then hand them to the first two women sitting at the left of the door. When it was time to dance these women would don them and wear them throughout that dance, then pass them on to the next two, and so on, until everyone had had a chance to wear them.

796 178 624 Finally, there were two announcers, one who called out what he was directed to say by any of the men, and the other who publicized any statement to be made on behalf of the women.

All of these individuals were considered as office-holders in the Grass dance and, as formerly, each was free to transfer the office [622] to anyone he considered suitable to succeed himself. There was no regular term of office even for the "chiefs" and the transfer was described as purely voluntary. Apparently, however, there was a certain amount of consultation among the officers, when one of them decided to transfer his office, in order to agree on a well-qualified successor. Among other things it was necessary to consider the financial status of the individual, especially for those to take over the higher offices. Not only did the recipient heap property upon the donor, but according to the older pattern too, [431] the relatives of the recipient would give away horses and so on

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

in his honor, and there were certain obligations connected with 796 178 some of the offices in the newer form of the Grass dance, such as 624 payment for the privilege by the black-dress wearers of being in- [431] vited to come near the fire in the center and eat dog flesh. Furthermore a new "chief" would almost without exception provide [622] the wherewithal for a whole dance to show that he was worthy of the office.

The procedure of transfer was similar for each office. If, for instance, one of the four "chiefs" had decided he had held this position long enough, at one of the dances he would order the transferring song to be sung. He, together, with the other three, would rise and dance around more or less deliberately and in a dignified manner. When these four reached the man who was to receive the office, each of the other three would make a motion toward the recipient as though helping him to his feet, while the donor himself would actually take his hand and assist him to arise. They then led him around the dancing place and finally installed the new officer in the place of honor vacated by the donor. It was customary, as the donor approached the region where the recipient was sitting, for everyone in the vicinity to bow his head as though making himself inconspicuous. None of them was supposed to know ahead of time on whom the choice would fall and, according to Gros Ventre etiquette, it would be very bad form for anyone to seem eager to receive an office, or [576] any kind of honor for that matter.

Changes in procedure. In this later period the Grass dance 796 was held sometimes out of doors in a circular space enclosed by 178 wagons, at other times in a large log building, the ground plan of which was as nearly round as it could be made. It was remarked in this connection that the modern rectangular community hall at Hays, on the Reservation, was no good for Gros Ventre ceremonies, including the Grass dance, "because everything we did was in a circle." The present almost circular community hall at Lodge Pole is considered much more satisfactory. The seating arrangements were very similar to those described for

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 the original Grass dance, the number participating, however, both
178 as officers and as general audience, being very much larger.

Although the dog ritual, carried out as described for the earlier period, remained the highlight and climax of the Grass dance, the general program had been enlarged to include other features. Not only were procedures introduced in connection with the newer offices, as indicated above, but other items such as the Owl dance and the Ringtail dance were introduced. The order of events was apparently determined by the "chiefs" at each performance of the Grass dance, but the general program did not vary markedly. The Ringtail dance, for instance, was always included at some time.

When the order for the Ringtail dance was given, any who wished to participate formed a circle facing inward and both men and women were free to choose partners of the opposite sex. The man placed his arm over the shoulders of his partner while she placed her arm around his back. The whole group moved in a circle clockwise in rhythm to the music provided by a group of singers other than those who sang and drummed for the dog ritual and other ceremonies in which officers as such participated.
[887] Any middle-aged or older woman who wished to do so might join the singers for any of the round dances. If none volunteered then they were sometimes drafted simply by being invited and led over to the spot where the male singers were performing.

796 It occasionally happened that during this dance, when the sing-
533 ers had "hit the spot,"—aroused the spirit of the crowd and the
178 floor was full,—the singers would stop all of a sudden, but without giving the usual signal to disperse. Then, without advance notice, they would start singing again, but a different song, a "punishing song." This was a feature obviously based on the "punishing songs" of the original Grass dance, but the tunes were different and it was carried out in the following way.

There were only two of these newer "punishing songs" but as soon as the dancers heard the singers start one of them they knew what it meant: "Now we are in for it. We will have to dance and dance!" The singers could sing the first of these

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

songs as many times as they pleased, and when tired of that one 796
switched to the others. There was no intermission and the 533
dancers got no rest, even the old women would stand up and 178
dance in one place and the old men would be yelling and calling out from where they sat. It was evidently a very lively scene. The dancers would sweat and get tired, but still there would be no let up. Finally the four wearers of the feathered war bonnets, —two men and two women,—would begin voicing appeals to the four "chiefs": "Please do something to stop this dance!" But the "chiefs" did not act right away. At last one of them would get up and walk around until he approached the wearer of a war-bonnet. He would then remove the bonnet and the people were glad and would cheer and yell, but this was not yet the end. They kept on dancing until a second of the "chiefs" got up and removed a war-bonnet from another of the wearers, which finally brought the Ringtail dance to a close.

It was said that while the women who wore black dresses could have answered the appeal to stop the dance, as a rule they would have hesitated to do so because the ones who took upon themselves this privilege would have to pay heavily for it. When the people had quieted down after the strenuous dance, those who had removed the war-bonnets would get up and announce what they were paying for having done so. One might have said, for instance: "All right. I will kill a beef for the next dance," or "I will give money" and name the sum. He could donate whatever [431]
he wished, but it was understood that it would be something really substantial. My informants explained that although the Ringtail dance was a regular feature of the Grass dance program, the "punishing songs" were not sung every time because "the reason for singing them was that the people hoped to have a Grass dance again soon and wanted an elaborate affair and so the singers had to use discretion; if the 'chiefs' happened to be in a good financial condition at the time, they made them 'shell out' in that way."

The owners of the ceremonial drumsticks retained the smoking song as described for the earlier period. It was the "chiefs" who

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 178 533 [625 681] were supposed to come prepared with pipe, tobacco, and matches in anticipation of this song. If, for some reason, one of the four was unable to furnish at least a pipeful of mixture, and could not borrow one, he was immediately arrested by the owners of the whips and punished by the singers who might tear his shirt at the neck so everyone could see it, or, perhaps, pour over him a good cupful of broth made from dog flesh. This broth has a strong and lasting odor. The female officers were likewise expected to give the women singers a smoke. The smoking song marked an intermission. No one danced to this song and all sat around smoking and taking it easy.

796 178 If things got too dull, however, one of the owners of the whips might get up, call the announcer, and say: "Tell my friends that I am going to whip them if they don't dance. I will have the right to whip them because I am going to pay for it," and he would present a bridle, or perhaps five dollars, or something of that order of magnitude, to anyone he wished. It was understood, then, that the next time the singing started this man might hit any person,—even one of the "chiefs,"—who failed to dance.

Another feature reminiscent of the original Grass dance but showing some slight change, was the provision that anyone who wished might have it announced that he was going to "lock the door," which meant that nobody could go home until the dance was over. For doing this however he had to provide all the necessary food for another Grass dance to be held on the night immediately following. It was up to the owners of the whips to enforce the regulation by taking something valuable, say a hat [689] or a blanket, from anyone who left the dance and the article was forfeit if he failed to return.

796 178 626 Based on the same concept, the practice grew up of forcing attendance in the following way. Once in a while the owners of the whips might order their assistants to go from door to door in the whole community and take something belonging to each householder, say a bridle, or a valuable belt, or a gun, and bring it to the dancing-place. If the owner of the object were not at the dance, his property was returned to him only if he promised

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

to provide food for the next dance. If he failed to redeem it by such promise, he had one more chance to do so by appearing at the following dance. If he did not show up on that occasion the announcer was told to call out: "The one who owns this bridle (or belt, or gun, etc.) does not want it." Whereupon the article would be thrown in the fire and destroyed. 796 178 626

Although the custom of "throwing away" wives gradually died out, the giving away of valuable property to honor loved ones continued and was elaborated. The following is only one example from many which might be cited as illustrative of attitudes. The informant is now a man in his early seventies. He stated: "When I was a young man I never went to these social affairs. After I married my wife would go with my older brother every time there was a Grass dance, but I would stay at home. This brother of mine used to get after me for not taking part. He would say: 'It is bad to be the way you are. When there is a dance or anything going on, go and look on. You don't necessarily have to dance, but at least be present.' One time in later years the Cheyenne came to visit and of course the Gros Ventres put on a dance for them. I decided to go and for the first time I joined in. When my brother saw me he got up and said: 'Well, my friends, I have been asking my brother to look on and to take part in these dances, and I have never succeeded. But today I see him at this dance and I am glad he is here. I am glad he is joining with us.' Then my brother went out and brought to the dancing-place a new yellow-wheeled buggy and a set of harness he had just purchased, and announced: 'Now, because my brother has joined the dance I am proud he did, and in his honor I am giving away this buggy and harness to the visitors.' Then my brother's wife announced: 'I am happy that my brother-in-law is joining the dance. I will give a beef to the visitors so they will kill it and have meat to eat.' Of course I felt embarrassed. It was hard on me because I thought everybody was looking at me and I sweated. Afterwards I told my brother: 'I didn't go in there for the purpose of having you give away all that stuff in my honor!' But he replied: 'Well, that is the way of our people 796 178 431 [586]

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 and we follow that. But don't stop going. You went once, so
178 keep going.' And so I did go and when I noticed that at nearly
431 every dance my brother gave away beef or horses—he was certainly a generous man—I started to follow his example. It got so that whenever there was a dance I was the first one there and I used to give away all kinds of things. For my adopted daughter, for instance, I gave beef, horses, and money at different times."

796 The final event of the program of the Grass dance during the
178 later period was a dance by one of the owners of the feathered war-bonnets who, to the accompaniment of a special song, stepped toward the door, made three passes towards the latch and on the fourth actually opened the door, took off the bonnet and went out. Everyone by that time would be standing up ready to go with their bundles and babies. It was remarked that since they usually started the Grass dance about one in the afternoon and stopped only well after midnight, they had plenty of time for all these things.

796 In this section we have dealt only with the main differences
178 between the earlier and later forms of the Grass dance as prac-
858 tised by the Gros Ventres. Other minor changes were introduced from time to time, one being that of allowing children on the dancing floor. This will be briefly described merely to indicate the latitude allowed to the individual in the later period during which the Gros Ventre Grass dance flourished, and to illustrate the mechanism by which some, at least, of the changes could have been actually accomplished. My informant, who had held important offices in the Grass dance and who is a man of prominence, said that, up to the time he acted in this matter, it had been the duty of the owners of the whips to take children bold enough to mingle with the dancers and drag them off the floor by force. It was obvious to my informant that the children were anxious to dance so at one of the performances he tied a bunch of paper money to the amount of $50 on the end of a buggy whip and had the announcer call out that he was going to buy for the children the privilege of joining in the dancing; that he was not only paying for this by giving the money toward the next per-

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

formance of the Grass dance, but that he was also paying for this 796
by cancelling debts owed him at his store by four specific indi- 178
viduals whom he named; that anyone who objected to the chil- 858
dren having the privilege would have to raise the ante; and that finally he would inaugurate this new feature of the Grass dance by having all of his own children dance first. No one disputed the point, and from that day to this children have had the freedom of the floor at any of the social gatherings.

The innovation described above was probably one of the last changes made in the form of the Grass dance before it began to disintegrate about 1916. Once the dog ritual was abandoned,—seemingly just prior to 1920,—the Grass dance as such disappeared, leaving only the round dances, one or two of which survive today and are performed at annual fairs, at celebrations of the Fourth of July, and so on.

Let us now turn to a consideration of the functions of the Grass dance in Gros Ventre culture in each of the two periods.

Functions

Earlier period. When the Grass dance was first adopted by the 796
Gros Ventres its function was a relatively minor one of replacing 575
the dance belonging to one of the two "soldier" societies, the Wolves, or Wolf-men as the members were called. The members of the parallel society were known as Stars. These two societies were approximately equal numerically and included between them the whole Gros Ventres population of able-bodied warriors. At the age of 18 or 19 the individual Gros Ventre young man who, together with say 30-50 of his age-mates, already belonged to one of several "companies"—the Rosebushes, or Calves, or Resting-on-the-breast-of-a-woman, or Holding-dogs'-tails, and so forth,—would enter either the Wolf society or the Star society, whichever one was selected by the "company." The individual would then be either a Wolf-dancer or a Star-dancer, although he retained close personal association with the members of his "company" which would have entered one society or the other as a body. With the mates of his "company" he would then go through the

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 preliminary to the series of Sacred Dances, namely the Fly Dance.
575 After this ceremony was over he was eligible as a "soldier." That is, should one of the members of his "company" vow to give any one of the Sacred Dances in the series, he and other members of the society to which he belonged—either Wolf or Star—would act as police for the time during which the Dance was being held. Thus it was that Stars might police the hunt
[625] and keep order in the camp circle during one such Sacred Dance while Wolves might perform the same duties at another time, depending on which moiety the vower belonged to.

When not engaged as soldiers in connection with one of the Dances, the two societies exhibited the keenest rivalry, particularly in war-deeds, but also in gambling, in foot-racing, and whenever else opportunity offered. One aspect of this rivalry was apparent when each put on its own dance. The general procedure of both was identical but there were a few distinctive features. When the whole tribe was together and there was no serious threat of war, one society or the other would decide the time was ripe to hold its dance. Let us assume that the Star society had so decided.

The members of the Star society would then don their best clothes and, mounted on their finest horses, go around the camp circle accompanied by two especially prominent members who had counted coup against the enemy while on horseback. They would
[533] sing special begging songs in front of the lodges of several well-to-do members of the opposite society. It was a challenge to the Wolf-men and they usually responded in the accepted fashion by giving large quantities of food, in which their relatives would help them out. This would provide the feast at the dance. The Stars then proceeded to the opening of the camp circle and all dismounting except the two very prominent warriors, formed in a line by twos, the four singers with their hand drums last. To the accompaniment of a marching song the line moved "snake-dance" fashion weaving back and forth, to the dancing lodge which had been erected in the center of the camp circle. At the entrance to the lodge the line divided, some going to the right,

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

others to the left forming a circle inside the dancing-place where 796
they sat. The two prominent warriors, having been assisted in 575
dismounting, took up their places, one on each side of the entrance, holding whips in their hands. It was their duty to rouse any lagging dancers, whipping them if necessary. Each member had his own rattle, of peculiar shape but painted with individual designs, which he waved about as he danced. The wives of some of the dancers joined the four singers in singing certain of the dance songs. Two of the youngest members acted as *atsa'an* (waiters) tending to the fire, getting water, and so on. Occasionally during the dance a woman relative of one of the partici- [43]
pants would rush up to him, throw down a blanket or some other gift in his honor, grab his rattle and dance for a short time. Members of the other society did not join in the festivities or partake of the feast, in spite of the fact that most of the provisions for the latter had been donated by some of them.

At some future date, however, the Wolf-men would agree that the time was auspicious for them to have a dance and "get even" with the Stars. They would of course have their own songs, sung in front of the lodges of prominent members of the Star society, but otherwise the procedure was identical, including their accompaniment by two outstanding warriors, the "snake-dance," the arrangement of the lodge in the center of the camp-circle, and so on. The Wolf-men differed from the Stars in their actual dance [534]
in that they did not have rattles and in dancing seemingly intended to portray wolves, placing one hand on the forehead and the other at the back to represent the animal's tail.[14]

The adoption of the Grass dance meant merely that the more 796
elaborate dog ritual, with its regalia and greater degree of organi- 575
zation, replaced the dance of the Wolf-men although the begging 178
preliminary and so on remained the same. So far as we can see, at the time of its adoption, the Grass dance was a case of pure substitution and one that fitted readily into the cultural situation. First of all, according to Lowie's information, the Assini-

[14] I am deeply grateful to my colleague, John M. Cooper, who generously placed at my disposal his field notes on the Wolf society.

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 boine themselves considered the Grass dance as a modern form
575 of one of their own older soldier society dances.[15] Secondly there
178 were certain similarities between the original Star and Wolf dances on the one hand and the Grass dance on the other. In both types there was dancing to exhaustion and the employment of special officers to rouse the laggards,—the whip men in the first instance, the sword men in the other. Again women singers helped out occasionally in both. Still another feature in common was the custom of giving presents away, not to a relative who was a member, but in honor of that relative. Thus, the Grass dance became a part of Gros Ventres culture.

182 So long as Gros Ventre culture continued on its traditional eco-
178 nomic basis, the hunting of buffalo, the Grass dance fulfilled its function as the dance of the Wolf soldier society and was simply parallel to the dance of the rival Star society. The disappearance of the buffalo, however, wrought many changes in Gros Ventre life as it did in that of all of the Plains tribes. The Gros Ventres were fortunate in that the last large herd of buffalo happened to be in their hunting territory and thus they could benefit a little longer than most of their neighbors from this mainstay of their old way of life. This is not to say that prior to the extinction of the buffalo Gros Ventre culture was flourishing in pristine glory. Far from it. For one thing, at the time of the adoption of the
[177] Grass dance between 1875 and 1880, intertribal warfare, with which many aspects of their culture were interrelated, was at a minimum and was itself soon to disappear. Again, certain aspects of their ceremonial life had fallen into disuse, some of the Sacred Dances not having been given for years previously. Nevertheless, although the religious culture was dwindling, much was still left and the social side was relatively intact.

182 *Later period.* The break in economic life with the killing of
796 the last of the buffalo in 1884 was accompanied by the virtual disappearance of the Gros Ventre ceremonial organization. The public rites of a religious nature, which had formerly made for social solidarity as well, were abandoned. The last Sacrifice

[15] Lowie, loc. cit. p. 66.

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Dance (Sun Dance), for example, was given in that very year 182
and, so far as our data go, but one Crazy Dance was held after 796
that. The seasonal Flat Pipe rite was discontinued. Furthermore there was a breakdown in the socio-political life. The necessity for nomadic life had disappeared and as a consequence there was no longer need of policing the hunt or keeping order in [575]
the camp circle when the whole tribe gathered so that, with the further establishment of peace, the raison d'être for two rival soldier societies was gone.

In the transition period the missionaries were trying valiantly to fill the gap in religious life but did not offer a satisfactory [797]
solution for the social situation; nor did the Agency which had become the center of the new economic life. It was the Grass dance, which as we have seen survived in a somewhat changed form, that seems to have filled the void left in social life.

In its earlier form the Grass dance was purely social in nature, 796
as was the Star dance, but the latter faded away while the [535]
former attained a position of heightened importance. One of the factors accounting for this fact seems to be that the Grass dance "had more to it," as our informants put it. The performance of the dog ritual was certainly far more spectacular than the simpler dance of the Star society and, in addition, it had semi-ceremonial connotations reminiscent of other features of the older Gros Ventre culture which were lacking from the Star dance. For example, the owners of the regalia in the Grass dance were likewise officers of several degrees of importance therein, as was the case in the performance of the Sacred Dances. Again, sex abstinence was required before dancing with the crow-belts as it was [784]
before participating in the Sacrifice Dance (Sun Dance) and before dancing with the Feathered Pipe. Ceremonial incensing of persons and equipment had been a marked characteristic of Gros [783]
Ventre religious life. The formal transfer of office and regalia duplicates the pattern of transfer of office of Pipe Keeper, transfer of painted lodges, and so on. Recounting of war deeds was frequently demanded in connection with many aspects of Gros Ventre life,—to validate the giving of a name, the erection of a

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 new lodge, certain practices in connection with the Flat Pipe, as well as in the dog ritual of the Grass dance. All in all the Grass dance was so much more colorful that, with choice left strictly to the individual, as it was after the "companies" were no longer formed, it seems probable that greater and greater numbers elected to join the Grass dancers. In time the Star society consequently lacked sufficient recruits to maintain its identity.

796 178 The addition of the round dances, such as the Ringtail, around the dog ritual nucleus, allowed all to actively participate. In this way the Grass dance provided occasion for group recreational outlets, while at the same time fulfilling another function formerly carried out by the public religious rites, namely, that of enhancing the feeling of social solidarity. One aspect of the public religious rites had been a nice balance in their performance between periods of ritual solemnity and those of secular gaiety and relaxation. The Grass dance now approximated this situation to some degree in the reserve which the audience maintained during the performance of the ceremonial parts of the dog ritual, and the verve with which it entered into the other parts of the program, especially the round dances. If one may judge from the enthusiasm expressed by informants who knew the Grass dance between 1900 and 1916, it was a most stimulating and enjoyable affair. Each performance drew in a large proportion of the tribe, even those from the far corners of the Reservation.

In spite of its ceremonial features, the Grass dance was always looked upon as social rather than religious, and it could be given at any time. It thus became the accepted manner of entertaining the frequent visitors from other tribes and furthermore was emi-
[574] nently adapted to form the central part of Fourth of July celebrations and the like.

We have seen that in its later phase the Grass dance became more highly organized with the addition of new offices and a few new items of equipment. The expansion of offices meant retaining and underlining the recognition of types of ability formerly premiated while allowing for shifting emphases to different types of ability.

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The addition of the four "chiefs" of the Grass dance gave 796
scope for public recognition of the middle-aged men of substance 178
esteemed for their wisdom and judgment to whom office-holding 622
proportionate for their dignity was otherwise denied. Although [888]
there was no longer opportunity for the ranks of warriors to swell,
those who had in the past performed brave deeds could still gain
status by being called upon to publicly recount them at the cere- [554]
monial eating of dog flesh and by being selected to handle the
feathered bonnets.

As the younger men had no chance to show their prowess in 796
warfare and hunting, there was a change of emphasis to recogni- 178
tion of superior singing and dancing ability as one of the roads 555
to public approval. This latter was brought out clearly by our
informants when explaining the qualifications of those sought for
the various officers of the Grass dance as it was performed around
the turn of the century.

They stated that much of the success of the performance of the Grass dance depended particularly on the singers of the dog ritual songs. The four singers who owned the ceremonial drumsticks were chosen for their good voices and from among the "lively men who liked to do things." The candidates did not have to know the songs in advance because they could be trained. Two noted teachers were The Boy and Joe Big Beaver. The Boy said he used to "campaign against himself" when it was time for a drumstick to be transferred because "he didn't want to get tied down. He enjoyed dancing and the singers never got a chance to participate." Our informants told us of two men who are remembered especially as being outstanding singers and drummers, Ed Rider and Breath. The latter was described as a top-ranking singer who, so far as they knew, had never been surpassed. They said: "It was something worth listening to when Breath started those Grass dance songs. He had a voice adapted to that kind of singing and his sense of rhythm was superb. He could hold a big crowd of people spellbound. He was a real genius. Many others tried to copy him and learn from him, but none ever succeeded in equalling him. Regardless of his fine voice no one

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 even acquired his technique for beating the drum, that is, of be-
178 ginning lightly and then, in an inimitable manner, of increasing
555 the volume. Sometimes the other three singers would let him begin a song and sing it through once just to listen to him. He was left-handed, but he sure could beat the drum! He was a man of whom you could say he had a real personality as far as the Grass dance was concerned but who was not so noticeable outside this one field. He was always deliberate but as soon as he approached the dancing-place he seemed to come alive. He was good at that office in the Grass dance and he knew it. He would sit up at the drum as straight as a lord and never attempted to be inconspicuous as, for instance, by putting his hat down over his eyes. Many of the young fellows who usually didn't join in the dancing and liked to play around on the outside would nevertheless rush from every direction to get to the floor when they saw him coming."

796 While singing had always held an important place in Gros Ventre religious culture, in the past the emphasis had been on the meaning of the song far more than on the quality of the voice and the manner of performing as it was in the Grass dance. Similarly in times gone by what dancing there was in the various rites was more or less perfunctory, whereas in the Grass dance the ownership of the two crow-belts, the fork, the spoon, and the whistle was transferred to those among the younger men who had
[554] physical vigor and endurance as well as grace. For these offices "it took a good-looking young man in good physical condition to perform properly."

796 A still greater innovation was the inclusion of women as officers
178 of the Grass dance. The two ceremonial black dresses were
562 seemingly symbolic of the black paint used in the Victory dance of former years, especially in view of the fact that this was one of the few dances performed by women in the old culture. It should be mentioned, however, that in connection with the Victory dance there had been no formal office nor had the participants therein been under economic obligations. We might hazard the guess that the ownership by women of two of the war-bonnets in

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the Grass dance may have seemed appropriate to the Gros Ventres as reminiscent of the feather headdress worn by the participants in the Women's Dance belonging to the series of vowed Sacred Dances. But regardless of the possible symbolism, these four offices, plus the four others allotted to women,—two whip owners and their two assistants,—gave the female sex a fair degree of recognition, and probably reflect the newer economic status of women which came about with the changing concept of inheritance. Formerly women, of course, had a right to their own property, but acquisition thereof was mainly through their own manufacture, such as clothing, or through the relatively rare gift of a horse or so. They did not come in for any valuable property through inheritance and a widow in those days was not even entitled to any of her deceased husband's belongings.

The holding of office in the Grass dance thus offered one of the very few means remaining for acquisition of status by the individual. The frequent transfer of offices meant that there was opportunity for many individuals within each category,—mature men, older warriors, young men, women,—to enjoy such public recognition.

Public display of generosity in giving away property to honor a loved one, which became such a marked feature of the Grass dance in its later phase, carried on and accentuated the method most common in older Gros Ventre culture for the gaining of individual prestige. Formerly there were many opportunities for this kind of ostentatious liberality,—when a pipe or a painted lodge was transferred, when a warrior returned from accomplishing brave deeds, when a person was participating in one of the Sacred Dances, when a person was named, when a child's ears were pierced, and so on. At such times the relatives publicly gave away as much of their property as they possibly could,—not to the recipient of the pipe, the brave warrior, the participant in the Sacred Dance, et al.,—but to someone else in his honor. Everybody would know what was given and by whom; people would make such comments as: "So-and-so is a fine man. He surely must think a lot of his relative—look at all the things he

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 gave away in his honor." When first adopted the Grass dance
178 offered only one such opportunity—and a relatively minor one.
431 As times changed, however, the Grass dance provided practically
156 the sole occasion for gaining prestige while at the same time
554 carrying out the old pattern of kinship obligation by enhancing the prestige of relatives.

The possibility in the later form of the Grass dance of paying for privileges, such as locking the door, or whipping those who did not get up to dance, gave further scope for the acquisition of prestige through liberality, as did also, of course, payments at transfer of office.

It was estimated by our informants that around 1900 as much as a thousand dollars in goods and cash changed hands at a single performance of the Grass dance. At that time it was not uncommon for the dance to be held at weekly intervals. So long as the Gros Ventre were relatively prosperous and had property to display and exchange according to the older patterns, the Grass dance continued to function. With increasing poverty, however, along
[735] with other factors such as the changing points of view and interests on the part of the younger generation, and the dying out of
[182] the older warriors, the Grass dance, the core of which was the dog ritual, gradually paled off leaving but the remnants of some of the round dances which had been added to the Grass dance as originally adopted from the Assiniboine.

Summary

796 Between 1875 and 1880 the Gros Ventres received the Grass
177 dance from the Assiniboine. From the date of adoption up to
575 about 1890 the Grass dance was performed only by members of one of the two soldier societies and the custodians of the ceremonial equipment were the officers. Offices were transferred among members according to the old Gros Ventre pattern.

796 The essential core of the Grass dance was the dog ritual, a
[262] ceremonial eating of dog flesh, carried out by the owners of the equipment with the assistance of four warriors selected from among the lay members. Other features of the program at each

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Other features of the program at each performance of the Grass dance included the "punishing" dance, the smoking song, the forfeiture of property, the "throwing away" of property represented by sticks, gift-giving in honor of loved ones. 796 [533 431]

In 1890 changes in the form of the Grass dance began to be noticeable. By 1900 the Grass dance included all in the tribe who wished to participate. The official personnel had been expanded to include four "chiefs," four war-bonnet owners, two owners of ceremonial black dresses, two women whip-owners and two female assistants. Transfer of all offices was, however, carried out as before. 796 178

The dog ritual continued unchanged to be the highlight of the program. Perhaps the most obvious change in procedure was the inclusion of round dances, especially the Ringtail dance, in which both men and women participated and for which "punishing" songs had been devised. The smoking song and the forfeiture of property were retained, but with some elaborations. Although the "throwing away" of property gradually disappeared, the gift-giving in honor of relatives was very much emphasized. Other very minor changes were inaugurated at intervals up until about 1916. [533]

The changing functions of the Grass dance coincide with the changing form and can likewise be considered as of two periods, —the first from 1875–80 to 1890; the second from 1890 to 1916.

In the first period the function of the Grass dance was a relatively minor one. It was adopted, and fitted into place, as a substitute for the simpler and less colorful dance of the Wolf soldier society, and paralleled the dance of the other soldier society, the Star society. In view especially of the preliminary "begging" songs, the Grass dance seemingly was the expression of but one phase of the intense rivalry between the two soldier societies. [575]

With the extinction of the buffalo in 1884 came the breakdown of the older culture. By 1890 not only had most of the public religious rites disappeared, but the social organization was greatly altered. As the economic basis was changed, the nomadic life and the camp circle were abandoned, and the two soldier societies no [182]

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 longer existed. The dance of one of them, the Grass dance, how-
178 ever, survived. In its changed form the Grass dance filled the void in social life during the transition from old to new.

With the admission of all to membership and through the addition of round dances in which all could actively participate, the Grass dance met the needs for group recreational outlets and for expression of social solidarity.

796 As the sole surviving institution which carried the concept of
178 graded offices and their transfer, the Grass dance met the need of
554 the individual for status along traditional lines. The expansion of offices allowed for the recognition of types of ability formerly premiated and opened the way for younger men as well as for women in emphasizing different kinds of ability.

Finally, the Grass dance met the need of the individual for prestige in accordance with the older pattern by offering opportunity for ostentatious liberality. By bestowing gifts publicly
[431] at the Grass dance, one could gain the coveted reputation for generosity, while at the same time fulfilling a substantial part of one's obligation to kinsmen.

796 The Grass dance continued to function in this way up to about
182 1916, after which time it began gradually to pale off, and to practically disappear by 1920. The few round dances carried on at present under the name "Grass dance" bear no appreciable relationship to the lively and colorful performances that are remembered by the older Gros Ventres as having been so stimulating and enjoyable.

8:Flannery E-5 (1940-1948)1960 NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Selected Papers of the Fifth International Congress of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences

Philadelphia, September 1–9, 1956

MEN AND CULTURES

Edited under the Chairmanship of
Anthony F. C. Wallace

PHILADELPHIA
UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA PRESS

[title page]

8:Flannery E-5 (1940-1948)1960 NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

INDIVIDUAL VARIATION IN CULTURE

Regina Flannery

It is generally accepted that what Benedict called the Dionysian configuration of Plains culture represents a dominant, if not the only trend. By definition a configuration is a generalization lying behind and explaining a number of cultural patterns. A pattern itself is of course an abstraction from the behavior of a number of individuals. The behavior of any one person may vary at different times in respect to a particular type of situation, but it is unlikely that the individual will show the whole range of possible behavior within a pattern; it will cover only a portion thereof. As Linton pointed out, the difference between the individual mode within this segment, and the mode of the behaviors on which the pattern is based, reflects the compromise which every individual has to make between the culture patterns of his society and his own inclinations. It would seem further, then, that if the modes of an individual's behavior-ranges show a consistent displacement with respect to a large series of patterns, it is safe to assume that the direction of this displacement reflects some quality of the individual.[1] The question we wish to raise is this: If the aspect of personality thus revealed runs counter to a dominant trend of his culture, is the individual a misfit in that society?

In attempting an answer, let us examine some individual variations within those patterns of Plains culture in which expression of emotional excess, and dangerous experience were expected of women in one Plains society, that of the Gros Ventres of Montana. We shall outline in some detail the behavior of one Gros Ventre woman in respect of these selected patterns—from which the Dionysian configuration was abstracted—and contrast her behavior with that of others of approximately the same age. All had participated as adults in the old way of life before the disappearance of the buffalo in 1887.

In Gros Ventre culture, as in all the Plains, there was high valuation placed on direct contact of the individual with the supernatural through dreams and visions. Men could actively seek such contact by employing dangerous means, and did so in order to obtain many kinds of power. While women did not go on the actual power quest, they might acquire medicine powers and less frequently, perhaps, powers of clairvoyance. Medicine powers were considered dangerous in that, it was believed, by accepting them a limitation was put upon the life span of the practitioner. But the rewards in terms of prestige for successful performance and of payment for services were high for women as well as for men. Not every individual man was successful in his quest, nor of course was every woman vouchsafed the kinds of dreams which were requisite. Coming Daylight, the woman whose behavior we are examining in particular, was what her contemporaries considered fortunate indeed in having been offered curing powers of several kinds. Nevertheless she rejected the possibility each time, in spite of the fact that she had a living example in the person of her father's sister of what it could mean in prestige to a woman who accepted. As the reasons for her refusal seem significant I shall describe her experience in her own words.

[p.87]

159 "My experience was by dreaming. One time before I was married—I must
756 have been about eight years old—I was sleeping in a big lodge and a 'person'
787 came and wakened me. He had a bag of medicines on his back. He came to me on four successive nights and laid out these medicines and told me what each was for. On the third of these nights there was a man lying there—he was just skin and bones. The 'person' who had awakened me told me: 'You could take all these medicines and you could cure people like that one lying there' [i.e., a person in the last extremity]. In my dream I would do everything he told me, manipulate my hands to draw out the sickness, and do everything. But I didn't want that power and would tell him so. Each morning too I would relate to my grandmother exactly what had happened in the night but she would try to hush me up, telling me: 'Don't say anything; don't tell anyone. You will be a great medicine woman.' But I didn't want that power. I didn't like it because
[755] when medicine people suck on the weak part of the sick person they have to swallow what they extract. I had decided I would rather be quiet and not do anything like that, or sacrifice my flesh, or things of that kind. Perhaps if it had come later I might have taken that power and become great."

Nevertheless when later in life she had other dreams indicating supernatural power, she likewise refused. She explained in regard to one of these experiences, for instance: "The one who awakened me this time had told me to face the rising sun and was showing me how to make a smudge from the moss that grows close on logs; but I told him. 'No. I would rather not have it.' Those who have power die too soon."

159 Incidentally, still in connection with curing, bleeding was an operation
757 which was performed purely as a natural remedy for a person who felt dizzy or sluggish. Anyone could do it—no supernatural validation was needed. Other women described quite casually how it was done and discussed the various times they had actually performed the operation. Coming Daylight, however, insisted that while there was really nothing to such an operation, she could never bring herself to perform it, nor would she allow anyone else to bleed her; she could not stand the sight of blood.

The aversion to the sight of blood and to self-mutilation was evidently deep-seated and showed itself in a marked manner early in her life. On one occasion a close relative was very ill. In such a situation it was expected that every member of the family would rally around and do whatever he could toward the recovery. Among the things that fell within the scope of activity for female relatives was
[602] that of vowing to sacrifice something valuable, including perhaps the blood from one's arm or a finger-joint, if the person recovered. At this particular
[787] time, Coming Daylight was a young child, and her grandmother decided that it would be appropriate for the little girl to offer that her finger-tip be removed
[826] if the relative regained his health. When it was suggested to her, Coming Daylight refused, even though her grandmother took after her with a stick.
[304] She actually ran away and wandered alone, until two nights later the relative died and an uncle finally found her.

159 On another occasion in her early youth, too, she defied a convention con-
183 nected with kinship by refusing to join in mourning for an uncle who had been
765 killed in revenge for having instigated the murder of his brother's wife. When her grandmother upbraided Coming Daylight for not expressing grief in the tradi-
[602] tional manner, the latter defied her by saying: "I am not going to cry for that man. I don't know why you are crying for him. I have worked for that woman
[627] and she has fed me, and has even given me meat to bring home to you. I heard

8:Flannery E-5 (1940-1948)1960 NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the shots and went later to see what happened, and there I saw her lying across the fire; her dress had burned off and her body was all shriveled. They weren't satisfied to kill her, but they burned her too!" She maintained her attitude and all the scolding from her relatives was of no avail.

Before turning to her adult life, we may refer to another instance which illustrates Coming Daylight's sensitivity to the suffering of others. In the Sacrifice Lodge, which is the Gros Ventre version of the well-known Plains Sun Dance, one of the important features was the spectacular self-torture which the active participants underwent. Each one had a sliver of wood embedded in the flesh of his chest. To the wood was tied a line, the other end of which was fastened high on the center-pole of the lodge. The man, leaning back so that the line was taut, went back and forth until finally the sliver was torn from his flesh. Meanwhile the women cheered on their relatives by "rattling their tongues," singing war songs, and the like, by way of encouraging the men to be brave and see the thing through. Coming Daylight was quite a young child when she first witnessed this performance. She remembered vividly her reaction when one of the young men, in his exhaustion, went to the center-pole and, putting his arms around it, wept aloud. She was not able to stand it any longer and rushed home crying. Her grandmother was very angry with her for leaving in the middle of the performance, but all the little girl could say was: "Oh, I just pitied that young man," and she could not be induced to return to the dance lodge. We may add here that actually in later years she did not participate in the Sacrifice Lodge even so far as women were allowed to do so.

The examples we have given are sufficient to show, I believe, that Coming Daylight had developed as a child a very strong set against violence, against painful and dangerous experiences. She refused medicine power from supernatural sources not only because it was dangerous but also because it involved a kind of physical activity which was repugnant to her. She refused to mutilate herself and was extremely sensitive to painful experiences in others. Her actual deviations from the patterns of accepted or approved behavior all tended in this same direction against violence. Her adult behavior likewise was consistent with this trend in her personality.

In consonance with her feeling against physical violence Coming Daylight avoided as far as possible the rough-and-tumble play in which brother-in-law and sister-in-law were free to, and indeed expected to, indulge. Other women told with glee how they enjoyed "getting even" with their brothers-in-law by, for instance, pushing them when fully clothed into the river, or dumping bucketfuls of water over their heads when they least expected it, and so on; but Coming Daylight admitted without hesitation that she didn't like that sort of thing and never attempted to retaliate even when her brothers-in-law succeeded in playing jokes on her. Similarly while it was not unusual for women rivals to actively fight over a man, she refrained from such undignified behavior, although it must be admitted that she had enough provocation on at least one occasion of which she told me. She had just married a man who was described by others as something of a gay Lothario. A woman who had been trying to force her attentions on him was furious when she heard of the marriage. She rushed to the lodge and pulled Coming Daylight out feet first, yelling insults the while. When the latter regained her feet she made no attempt to hit back even though the other slapped her and pulled off an earring, tearing the lobe of the ear. Coming Daylight, however, bided her time and soon was able to make an opportunity for an exchange of words with the woman at a big social dance.

8:Flannery E-5 (1940-1948)1960 NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Her final rejoinder was such a witty and pointed one that everyone laughed heartily at her rival's expense. In this culture, of course, public ridicule was a far more effective retaliation than the biting and scratching that other women said frankly they would have indulged in when attacked.

Expression of emotional excess was institutionalized for the Gros Ventres, as for the rest of the Plains, in the bereavement situation. Upon the death of a husband, son, or father, a woman was expected to start wailing as soon as she heard the news, have her hair cut off, discard good clothes for old ragged ones, gash her arms and legs, go to the hills to mourn and cry, resisting for a time the pleas of her relatives to return, and being watched lest she attempt suicide. Coming Daylight was only a young woman when she was first widowed and the mourning pattern was still in full vogue. It is certain from other evidence than Coming Dayling had a deep affection for this husband to whom she had been given as a child-bride and in whose kindly and indulgent treatment she had found a pleasant escape from the rigorous discipline of her grandmother. Nevertheless the public expression of her grief was minimal—no abandonment for her. Although her sister was sent on the hills with her to keep watch over her in the usual way, Coming Daylight was easily persuaded to return shortly though she herself was proud of the fact that she had stayed out so long that she actually had got a frozen toe! In later years when all that was left of the ritual was the wailing out on the hills, she lost the son whom she herself, and everybody else, acknowledged as her favorite. She had not been on the hills very long when she experienced a significant dream, as follows. She was in a lodge at the rear of which was a big pile of tobacco mixture and a pipe. The owner of the lodge filled the pipe and approached her. She was frightened because she didn't smoke. The owner of the lodge however told her: "Look at these people." She looked and saw many with their hair cut and their bodies bleeding from the gashes inflicted in grief. The man then told her: "That is in the past. Nowadays your only consolation is in smoking." So she accepted the pipe and, after smoking it, she was painted in ceremonial fashion by each of those other mourners. Then the owner of the lodge dismissed her saying: "Now, go home and don't ever go on the hills and mourn again. But always smoke if you want to." She went home right after this dream and when she told her husband of it he accepted it as valid and persuaded her sister to prepare for Coming Daylight her first real smoke. She maintained that the habit subsequently developed was actually a great comfort to her.

The final area with which we shall be concerned here is the war complex—a vital aspect of the old Plains culture. Gros Ventre women were allowed direct but limited participation in these activities in the sense that, while they would not join a party of men who were going on horse-raiding or revenge expeditions, if opportunity offered they might exhibit the same kind of bravery that a man should show and derive considerable status therefrom. For instance, if one of the enemy fell nearby, the women rushed out from camp to count coup, and to grab trophies with which to inaugurate the relationship known as "enemy-friends." Coming Daylight, however, was never one to indulge in this sport. She told of the one—and to her extremely distasteful—occasion on which her hand literally was forced. It seems that during a raid on their camp one of the enemy was shot and her husband scalped him. The victim was lying not far from her lodge and, as her husband dashed off to pursue the rest of the Assiniboine, he shouted for her to come out and see what was going on. Coming Daylight saw the man lying there, face down, covered with blood. He was not dead

8:Flannery E-5 (1940-1948)1960 NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

and, each time he attempted to get to his knees, one of two women who had already reached the scene would strike him on the buttocks with the flat side of a hatchet, making an insulting remark, and both would laugh. Coming Daylight hesitated at some distance from where the other two were gloating over the fallen enemy. When one of them, Woman Chief by name, saw her she ran to her saying: "Why are you standing so far off?" She grabbed her by the arm and pushed a big club into her hand, saying: "He is still alive—you will do a great thing. *Ahe:ya'!*" Woman Chief forced Coming Daylight to strike him.

While both Woman Chief and Coming Daylight closely approximated the ideal for women as faithful wives and efficient workers who gave generously of their material goods to and on behalf of their relatives, they seemingly differed in temperament. Woman Chief was known as a very brave woman, and Coming Daylight was frank in admitting she would never have dreamed of doing the kinds of things for which Woman Chief was renowned. One of the latter's exploits, for example, was as follows. The Gros Ventres and Crow were allies in an encounter with the Piegan. The battle was in full force, but one Crow had withdrawn and was sitting motionless astride his horse at some distance from the melee. Woman Chief, who in contrast to most women was always well mounted, dashed up to the Crow, grabbed his wand from his hand, and rode pellmell into the thick of the battle, counting coups right and left. So brave was she considered in having really risked her life that she was accorded the distinction, most unusual for a woman, of being led around the camp circle with the victorious warriors. Furthermore, so many people came to sing in front of her lodge that she and her relatives, to show their appreciation of the honor, were forced to give away as much property as though she were a man. Judging on the basis of other biographical material, there can be no doubt that she gloried in her reputation and took every opportunity to enhance it. She was one to whom the more violent aspects of Gros Ventre culture were exceedingly congenial.

If we compare and contrast these two women we can say that insofar as the patterns of Dionysian configuration are the basis of the comparison, their behavior exhibits opposite extremes, the one going beyond the average in the direction of the configuration, the other running counter to and participating less than the average therein. Both might be termed deviant personalities in Honigmàn's sense of the term,[2] one overplaying and the other underplaying modal behavior in these selected patterns. Nevertheless, neither seems to have been a misfit insofar as each represents an extreme of socially accepted or sanctioned behavior within those patterns. If, for instance, Coming Daylight had been completely negative, and refused, say, to carry out at least the culturally defined minimum for mourning, had she, in addition to refusing to mutilate herself for the recovery of her ill relatives, neglected as an adult even the safe and less strenuous means to that end, she would have fallen without the pale, so to speak, and have been a misfit. If, at the opposite end of the scale, Woman Chief had gone further in the direction of masculinity, had she actually gone on raiding expeditions and herself stolen horses from the camp of the enemy, had she learned to shoot the bow and arrow or gun, or had she so much as adopted the vocabulary and/or pronunciation proper for males in the Gros Ventres language, she would have been carrying things too far. She, too, would have been dubbed a misfit.

The Catholic University of America,
Washington, D.C.

8:Flannery E-5 (1940-1948)1960 NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Notes

113

1. Ralph Linton, *The Cultural Background of Personality*, New York, 1945, p. 51.
2. John J. Honigman, *Culture and Personality*, New York, 1954, pp. 211–212.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

INTRODUCTION.

The following information on the Gros Ventre was collected in the winter [2] and early spring of 1901, at the Fort Belknap Reservation in northern Montana, as part of the Mrs. Morris K. Jesup Expedition. Very few of the statements made, unless such is obviously the case, are based on observation. In general, where nothing is said to the contrary, they are founded on statements made by the Indians. The introductory explanations that have been made in regard to the Arapaho[1] apply also to the following material. The alphabet used for rendering Gros Ventre words is the same as that employed [104] for Arapaho. Additional sounds are ö and ü, which are open, and k', a palatal k.

TRIBAL ORGANIZATION.

The Gros Ventre call themselves "Haäninin." The meaning of this [101] term is sometimes given as "lime-men" or "chalk-men," from haä'a"tyi ("lime" or "soft white stone"). This etymology is, however, doubtful. In literature they have often been known as the "Atsina." They declare this to be the Piegan name for themselves, atsöna". Historically the Gros Ventre are known to have formed an independent tribe closely associated with the Blackfeet during the nineteenth century. Their dialect is similar [197] to the Arapaho, and certainly intelligible to the Arapaho for at least the greater part. The two dialects are, however, sufficiently differentiated to make it certain that the tribes have been more or less distinct for a longer period than two centuries. The Arapaho regard the Gros Ventre as the [101] northernmost one of a group of five closely affiliated or related tribes of which they themselves form the largest. Three of these tribes have long [648] been extinct as separate bodies, and only the dialects of one or two survive among a few individuals with the Arapaho. The Gros Ventre, perhaps

[1] A. L. Kroeber, The Arapaho (Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Parts I, II, and IV. New York, 1902, 1904, and 1907). A series of Gros Ventre myths and tales has been published in Anthropological Papers of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. I, Part III. New York, 1907.

[P. 144 Contains no Text]

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

PREFACE

This reconstruction of Gros Ventre life as it had been lived before the disappearance of the buffalo around 1884 is the result of a joint undertaking. When the late Dr. John M. Cooper visited the Fort Belknap Reservation in 1938, he met there a group of older men who were interested in having him cooperate with them in the making of a record of their "old way of life." The project was then undertaken and continued by Dr. Cooper in the summers of 1939 and 1940. It was upon the invitation of the Gros Ventres that I went to the Reservation in 1940 to work with the women and to deal mainly with matters other than the religious aspects of their culture. Pressure of other duties, combined with ill-health, prevented Dr. Cooper's return to the field after 1940, but the taking of the record was subsequently continued by me in the summers of 1945 and 1948. 121

The results are presented in two parts, Part I on Social Life is the more general, giving a background for Part II which deals exclusively with Religion. The writing of Part II had been practically completed by Dr. Cooper at the time of his death in 1949; it will appear as a separate volume under his name. 128

It is my privilege to thank all of the Gros Ventres who cooperated in the taking of the record. In 1945 and in 1948 preliminary drafts of the material were checked and revised in the field. In spite of all precautions it is not unlikely that some errors may remain. For these the Gros Ventres themselves are in no way responsible. The onus, especially for any misrepresentation of the Gros Ventre point of view, must rest entirely on us.

While Dr. Cooper financed his own field work, I am indebted to the Charles and Grace E. Lastner Fund for part of my field expense in 1940 and in 1945, and to the Research Fund of The Catholic University of America, for the grant which enabled me to return to the Fort Belknap Reservation for the summer of 1948. 122

To the School Sisters of St. Francis, who at no small inconvenience to themselves accommodated my husband and me at St. Paul's School, we are deeply grateful. We wish likewise to

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

SOCIAL MECHANISMS IN GROS VENTRE GAMBLING

REGINA FLANNERY AND JOHN M. COOPER

INTRODUCTION

THE PRESENT PAPER is offered as a modest start toward opening up what looks like a promising field, namely, the social implications of gambling. 121 114

Our anthropological sources yield a fairly generous amount of information on the world distribution of gambling,[1] the games and sports gambled on, the valuables wagered, the payment of gambling debts, and the ritual accompaniments of gambling. On the other hand, the same sources yield extremely meager information, and for most gambling peoples none at all, on such social aspects of gambling as: its mode of meshing into the prevalent social organization (who gambles, with whom, and for what); its effectiveness in fulfilling or thwarting the wishes of the individual gambler and in meeting or blocking the needs of integral and fractional social groups; individual differences in participation and the motivations responsible for them; native attitudes toward gambling; the economic and other factors that are favorable or unfavorable to the rise and persistence of gambling in culture as such or in given cultures. Field and library studies of these and most other social aspects of gambling have been almost entirely neglected by anthropologists.[2] And, so far as the present writers have been able to discover from rapid search among the sociological sources and from random inquiries among their sociological friends, such studies have also been almost entirely neglected by the sociologists, even by those specializing in the area of delinquency. 525

The following pages are an attempt to present the gambling complex, with emphasis on certain of its social aspects, as it existed during the second half of the last century among the Gros Ventre of Montana. Most of the complex is now a thing of the past. New gambling games, particularly playing cards, have superseded the old, and gambling itself, on the reservation and among the Gros Ventre in general, is not the tense and meaningful activity it used to be. 121 525 [178]

The data on which this paper is based were gathered, incidentally to a gen- 121

1 World distribution is spotty and far from universal. A summarized world distribution, based on several hundred sources, is given in J. M. Cooper, *Temporal Sequence and the Marginal Cultures* (Anthropological Series, Catholic University of America, no. 10, 1941), pp. 67-68.

2 Father Gerald Desmond's *Gambling among the Yakima*, from his field study of 1944, a manuscript now being prepared for publication, is devoted largely to the social aspects.

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

121 eral study of the social organization and religion of the Gros Ventre, at the Fort Belknap Reservation, Montana, in about equal proportions by Flannery in the summers of 1940 and 1945 and by Cooper in the summers of 1939 and 1940, from Gros Ventre informants, mostly of the older generation. In most cases we
115 used interpreters; in some, we communicated in English. Our chief informants on gambling were: The Boy (b.1872, our most important source, who had gotten a good deal of his information from his father, Lame Bull, b.1825, d.1908), Thick (b. ca. 1870-71), Charles John Buckman (b.1872), Mrs Takes-a-Prisoner Warrior (b. ca. 1850-55) and Mrs Singer Sleeping-Bear (b. ca. 1860). These informants were exceptionally intelligent and dependable, and were not only willing to give us the information they had but anxious to do so. In spite of this, not all the past could, of course, be recaptured, and in certain parts the picture we got is far from complete, particularly regarding individual differences and motivations. However, we have had extremely little reconstruction proper to do, as most of the older gambling complex survived up to near the turn of the century, and had been actively participated in and/or witnessed and was vividly remembered by our informants, while some parts of it, especially many of the social aspects thereof, have persisted down to the present.

WAGERS AND BETTING PROCEDURE

525 Stakes wagered by the Gros Ventre may be divided into small or trivial ones and big or valuable ones. Small stakes consisted of such things as arrows, bows, bags, beads, pipes, knives, handkerchiefs, dishes, and so forth; big ones, of such things as guns, saddles, lodges, and especially horses (the chief wealth in the old days). Wives were never wagered. Two teams might play mostly for fun, the losers being merely expected or obligated to provide a smoke, or, as more commonly, refreshments or a meal—"to cook," as the current expression goes—for the winners. This last was seemingly the only type of non-dyadic wagering in vogue among the Gros Ventre, if it can be called wagering at all, for such provision of smokes or food for relatives and friends was an everyday custom. Mrs Sleeping-Bear stated that in a gambling game she once played with her husband's brother, she forfeited her eyebrows, which he pulled out, but whether this was an exceptional occurrence or a customary one within the prevalent pattern of rough familiarity between brother-in-law and sister-in-law we could not discover.

Betting was typically dyadic, a given individual matching the wager of another individual, and the stakes going to the winning individual. The dyadic system was kept to even where, as was common, betting was by sides, each side,

5: Flannery E-5 (1940)1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

THE GROS VENTRE SHAKING TENT

REGINA FLANNERY
The Catholic University of America

121 ALTHOUGH the concept of the shaking tent is now known to be a widespread one, relatively few details are available on this rite as it was practiced in the Plains area. The following [115] data, gathered among the Gros Ventres of Montana in 1940 from old and middle-aged informants who had often witnessed the performance, are offered in an attempt to fill in the picture as regards this one tribe.

787 When speaking English, the Gros Ventres refer to the rite as a "seance" and to the performer as a "spiritualist" inasmuch as it was carried out by a person who had access to the spirit of a deceased relative. The Gros Ventre word for spirit is *tsatsuwaa*, which, incidentally, is the same word they now use for radio. The voice of the spirit can be heard, and, while the spirit cannot be seen, its presence is otherwise manifest by the noise of its activities. Among the latter we note especially the shaking of the tent as the spirit enters and leaves.

[791] When information was desired regarding missing persons, the whereabouts of the enemy, etc., a spiritualist, who might be either a man or a woman, was asked to invoke the spirit over which he or she had control. The pertinent questions were asked and the spirit would supply the answers. There were two general methods of procedure. The so-called seance could be held either in the big dwelling lodge or in a small structure built for the occasion. Furthermore the performance was more or less elaborate, details differing according to circumstances, the individual spiritualist, and even the "personality" of the spirit invoked. But one invariable feature was the shaking of the tent.

The two accounts which follow will illustrate the general pattern as well as the differences in procedure. The first concerns a seance held in the winter at a time when this particular family

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

THE SHAKING TENT RITE AMONG PLAINS AND FOREST ALGONQUIANS

JOHN M. COOPER
The Catholic University of America

121
114 THE purpose of the present paper is to bring together and make available some scattered field notes on the conjuring and "shaking tent" complex of northern North America, a subject that has recently evoked a good deal of discussion, particularly in the valuable interpretative monographs of Ray and Hallowell.[1] The data to be presented are from the Algonquian-speaking Montagnais, Cree, Otcipwe, Blood-Blackfoot, and Gros Ventres (of Montana), and the Siouan-speaking Assiniboine. Only certain high-light features of the Montagnais, Cree, and Otcipwe rite will be mentioned; the complete field data gathered by the writer will be given in monographs to be published later. On the Blood-Blackfoot, Gros Ventres, and Assiniboine, my field data will be given here in full. Information obtained on the Blood-Blackfoot and Assiniboine shaking tent rite is very fragmentary. It was gotten under conditions that did not leave time or opportunity for detailed investigation. Leisurely field work on this item among these people would in all probability net a much ampler yield. Information on the Gros Ventre rite is much fuller, but, even so, is probably not exhaustive.

GROS VENTRE RITE

114
787 It was in 1931 during a very brief one-day reconnaissance visit to the Fort Belknap Reservation that the writer first heard of the shaking tent rite among the Gros Ventres, from a group

[1] V. F. Ray, Historic backgrounds of the conjuring complex in the Plateau and the Plains, in L. Spier et al., ed., Language, culture, and personality: Essays in memory of Edward Sapir, Menasha, Wis., 1941, 204–16, bibl. 215–16; A. L. Hallowell, The role of conjuring in Saulteaux society, Publ., Philadelphia anthropological society, v. 2, Phila., 1942, incl. bibl. pp. 89–96.

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

[P.39] PRIMITIVE MAN

Quarterly Bulletin
of the
Catholic Anthropological Conference

Vol. 20 Washington 17, D. C., July, 1947 No. 3

THE CHANGING FORM AND FUNCTIONS OF THE GROS VENTRE GRASS DANCE

REGINA FLANNERY
Catholic University of America

THE purpose of the present paper is to discuss the changing form, and to show as far as possible the changing functions, of the Grass dance in Gros Ventre culture from the time of its introduction between 1875 and 1880 up to about 1920 when it had paled off to relative insignificance. 121

The Gros Ventre tribe of Montana was one of the many which adopted the Grass dance, sometimes called the Omaha dance, as it spread rapidly over the northern plains in relatively recent times. Wissler studied the distribution and diffusion of the Grass dance as a trait-complex,[1] basing his interpretation upon his own observations, especially among the Blackfeet, and on the descriptions of this dance as published for other tribes. For the Gros Ventres he depended mainly on Kroeber's data,[2] the only source available, but he himself had visited that tribe and collected, among other specimens, regalia used by them in the Grass 796 177 796 114

[1] Wissler, C., General discussion of shamanistic and dancing societies, AMNH-AP 11, pt. 12 1916, pp. 862–71.

[2] Kroeber, A. L., Ethnology of the Gros Ventre, AMNH-AP 1, pt. 4, 1908, pp. 234, 238–39.

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 dance.[3] Wissler was well aware of the importance of the Grass
114 dance in the transition period of Plains culture from the old to the new, and suggested further studies be made. Nevertheless, no one has given us a close-up, so far as I know, of its dynamic aspects in the life of any one of the tribes who shared the phenomenon.

796 In 1901 Kroeber noted that the Grass dance as then performed
114 by the Gros Ventres differed considerably in form from that
177 which was described to him as having been the case when it was first adopted. He gives us a brief description of the earlier procedure, but naturally enough no details regarding the then current method of carrying out the Grass dance, since his concern was with the older tribal culture. He merely states: "It is no longer a young man's dance, nor confined to a certain group. All the people in the tribe take part in it. It is very similar in character to the present-day Arapaho crow-dance, as well as in the place it occupies in the life of the people. Among the Gros Ventre it is now the only dance held."[4] Our data, gathered during two visits to the Fort Belknap Reservation in 1940 and 1945, confirm Kroeber's and supplement them to a considerable extent.

121 In treating of the Grass dance then, we shall distinguish be-
128 tween an earlier period extending from between 1875 to 1880 up to about 1890, and a later period comprising the years from roughly 1890 to 1916. We shall first describe the form of the Grass dance as it was in the earlier period, then the changes which were later introduced, and finally we shall discuss the varying functions during both periods.

The Form: Earlier Period

796 According to Wissler the dance originated with the Dakota
177 about 1860 and is traceable as a development of the older Pawnee
171

[3] These specimens are in the American Museum of Natural History. Some of those used in the Gros Ventre Grass dance have been described by Kroeber, loc. cit.: fork, pp. 270–71; spoon, p. 271; whip, p. 271; crow-belt, pp. 271–72.

[4] Kroeber, loc. cit., p. 238.

8:Flannery E-5 (1940-1948)1960 NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

INDIVIDUAL VARIATION IN CULTURE

Regina Flannery

It is generally accepted that what Benedict called the Dionysian configuration of Plains culture represents a dominant, if not the only trend. By definition a configuration is a generalization lying behind and explaining a number of cultural patterns. A pattern itself is of course an abstraction from the behavior of a number of individuals. The behavior of any one person may vary at different times in respect to a particular type of situation, but it is unlikely that the individual will show the whole range of possible behavior within a pattern; it will cover only a portion thereof. As Linton pointed out, the difference between the individual mode within this segment, and the mode of the behaviors on which the pattern is based, reflects the compromise which every individual has to make between the culture patterns of his society and his own inclinations. It would seem further, then, that if the modes of an individual's behavior-ranges show a consistent displacement with respect to a large series of patterns, it is safe to assume that the direction of this displacement reflects some quality of the individual.[1] The question we wish to raise is this: If the aspect of personality thus revealed runs counter to a dominant trend of his culture, is the individual a misfit in that society?

In attempting an answer, let us examine some individual variations within those patterns of Plains culture in which expression of emotional excess, and dangerous experience were expected of women in one Plains society, that of the Gros Ventres of Montana. We shall outline in some detail the behavior of one Gros Ventre woman in respect of these selected patterns—from which the Dionysian configuration was abstracted—and contrast her behavior with that of others of approximately the same age. All had participated as adults in the old way of life before the disappearance of the buffalo in 1887.

In Gros Ventre culture, as in all the Plains, there was high valuation placed on direct contact of the individual with the supernatural through dreams and visions. Men could actively seek such contact by employing dangerous means, and did so in order to obtain many kinds of power. While women did not go on the actual power quest, they might acquire medicine powers and less frequently, perhaps, powers of clairvoyance. Medicine powers were considered dangerous in that, it was believed, by accepting them a limitation was put upon the life span of the practitioner. But the rewards in terms of prestige for successful performance and of payment for services were high for women as well as for men. Not every individual man was successful in his quest, nor of course was every woman vouchsafed the kinds of dreams which were requisite. Coming Daylight, the woman whose behavior we are examining in particular, was what her contemporaries considered fortunate indeed in having been offered curing powers of several kinds. Nevertheless she rejected the possibility each time, in spite of the fact that she had a living example in the person of her father's sister of what it could mean in prestige to a woman who accepted. As the reasons for her refusal seem significant I shall describe her experience in her own words.

8:Flannery E-5 (1940-1948)1960 NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

and, each time he attempted to get to his knees, one of two women who had already reached the scene would strike him on the buttocks with the flat side of a hatchet, making an insulting remark, and both would laugh. Coming Daylight hesitated at some distance from where the other two were gloating over the fallen enemy. When one of them, Woman Chief by name, saw her she ran to her saying: "Why are you standing so far off?" She grabbed her by the arm and pushed a big club into her hand, saying: "He is still alive—you will do a great thing. *Ahe:ya'!*" Woman Chief forced Coming Daylight to strike him.

While both Woman Chief and Coming Daylight closely approximated the ideal for women as faithful wives and efficient workers who gave generously of their material goods to and on behalf of their relatives, they seemingly differed in temperament. Woman Chief was known as a very brave woman, and Coming Daylight was frank in admitting she would never have dreamed of doing the kinds of things for which Woman Chief was renowned. One of the latter's exploits, for example, was as follows. The Gros Ventres and Crow were allies in an encounter with the Piegan. The battle was in full force, but one Crow had withdrawn and was sitting motionless astride his horse at some distance from the melee. Woman Chief, who in contrast to most women was always well mounted, dashed up to the Crow, grabbed his wand from his hand, and rode pellmell into the thick of the battle, counting coups right and left. So brave was she considered in having really risked her life that she was accorded the distinction, most unusual for a woman, of being led around the camp circle with the victorious warriors. Furthermore, so many people came to sing in front of her lodge that she and her relatives, to show their appreciation of the honor, were forced to give away as much property as though she were a man. Judging on the basis of other biographical material, there can be no doubt that she gloried in her reputation and took every opportunity to enhance it. She was one to whom the more violent aspects of Gros Ventre culture were exceedingly congenial.

If we compare and contrast these two women we can say that insofar as the patterns of Dionysian configuration are the basis of the comparison, their behavior exhibits opposite extremes, the one going beyond the average in the direction of the configuration, the other running counter to and participating less than the average therein. Both might be termed deviant personalities in Honigman's sense of the term,[2] one overplaying and the other underplaying modal behavior in these selected patterns. Nevertheless, neither seems to have been a misfit insofar as each represents an extreme of socially accepted or sanctioned behavior within those patterns. If, for instance, Coming Daylight had been completely negative, and refused, say, to carry out at least the culturally defined minimum for mourning, had she, in addition to refusing to mutilate herself for the recovery of her ill relatives, neglected as an adult even the safe and less strenuous means to that end, she would have fallen without the pale, so to speak, and have been a misfit. If, at the opposite end of the scale, Woman Chief had gone further in the direction of masculinity, had she actually gone on raiding expeditions and herself stolen horses from the camp of the enemy, had she learned to shoot the bow and arrow or gun, or had she so much as adopted the vocabulary and/or pronunciation proper for males in the Gros Ventres language, she would have been carrying things too far. She, too, would have been dubbed a misfit.

The Catholic University of America,
Washington, D.C.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

PREFACE

This reconstruction of Gros Ventre life as it had been lived before the disappearance of the buffalo around 1884 is the result of a joint undertaking. When the late Dr. John M. Cooper visited the Fort Belknap Reservation in 1938, he met there a group of older men who were interested in having him cooperate with them in the making of a record of their "old way of life." The project was then undertaken and continued by Dr. Cooper in the summers of 1939 and 1940. It was upon the invitation of the Gros Ventres that I went to the Reservation in 1940 to work with the women and to deal mainly with matters other than the religious aspects of their culture. Pressure of other duties, combined with ill-health, prevented Dr. Cooper's return to the field after 1940, but the taking of the record was subsequently continued by me in the summers of 1945 and 1948. 121

The results are presented in two parts, Part I on Social Life is the more general, giving a background for Part II which deals exclusively with Religion. The writing of Part II had been practically completed by Dr. Cooper at the time of his death in 1949; it will appear as a separate volume under his name. 128

It is my privilege to thank all of the Gros Ventres who cooperated in the taking of the record. In 1945 and in 1948 preliminary drafts of the material were checked and revised in the field. In spite of all precautions it is not unlikely that some errors may remain. For these the Gros Ventres themselves are in no way responsible. The onus, especially for any misrepresentation of the Gros Ventre point of view, must rest entirely on us.

While Dr. Cooper financed his own field work, I am indebted to the Charles and Grace E. Lastner Fund for part of my field expense in 1940 and in 1945, and to the Research Fund of The Catholic University of America, for the grant which enabled me to return to the Fort Belknap Reservation for the summer of 1948. 122

To the School Sisters of St. Francis, who at no small inconvenience to themselves accommodated my husband and me at St. Paul's School, we are deeply grateful. We wish likewise to

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

1938, 1939, and 1940. The group of older men, who wanted a 124
record of their old way of life taken down, emphasized the religious aspects of their culture. The Boy gave the largest portion 115
of information on this subject. He is now about eighty years old 124
and had been interested ever since he was a young boy in the native culture of his people. His father, Lame Bull, was a deeply religious man and had been a Keeper of the Flat Pipe. From him and from other old men The Boy acquired an enormous body of knowledge which his excellent memory retains. Thick, who died in 1951, and (John) Charles Buckman, who died in 1949, were contemporaries of The Boy and made substantial contributions to the record. Among still older men than these three were Stiffarm, Iron Man I, Joe Assiniboine, Turn Toes, Jim and Philip Shortman, all of whom gave additional information. Charles Buckman spoke English well and sometimes acted as interpreter for the others. Tom Main, a younger man, was, however, the chief interpreter for the men. Moreover, both he and Al Chandler were able to independently contribute valuable information. Biographical details on the chief informants are appended to the present volume.

With all of these men, Dr. Cooper was on excellent terms. 123
They have told me that they realized from their first meeting with him that Dr. Cooper, being a man of deep religious conviction himself, would understand what they could tell him of Gros Ventre beliefs as they had been taught to them or to their fathers before Catholicism had any hold upon the Gros Ventres. The friendship which developed between Dr. Cooper on the one hand and Thick, Charles Buckman, Tom Main, and above all, The Boy, on the other, was a lasting one founded on the deepest mutual respect.

Dr. Cooper usually had the men come to his quarters at the 124
priest's residence of the Mission for regularly scheduled sessions, especially in 1940 when he was able to take phonograph records [126]
of over a hundred Gros Ventre songs. The Boy, who accepted me as a substitute for Dr. Cooper in the years when the latter was unable, on account of ill health, to get out to Montana, remarked on a difference in our methods. Dr. Cooper tended to guide the interviews more closely than I and, since we both had the habit of recording the questions we asked, our field notes confirm The Boy's observation. Inasmuch as those who were engaged in making the record were detained from attending to their other duties, Dr.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

124 Cooper felt that compensation was due them. It may be stated however that the money paid was looked upon as in the nature of a gift, and the generosity displayed in the form of counter-gifts, both to Dr. Cooper and to me, was truly touching.

115 I was invited to the Fort Belknap Reservation in 1940 to work
● 123 exclusively with the women and to deal mainly with matters other than religion. The two oldest women at Hays, Coming Daylight
[609 and Singer, accepted me as their "granddaughter" which was
603] fortunate in view of the freedom allowed between grandparents and grandchildren in Gros Ventre society. Although these two old women did not speak English, I was happy in having as interpreters women who were well liked by them and who were themselves interested in "the old ways of doing things." Thus they proved valuable informants on their own account. Mary Ereaux and the late Cora Chandler were two who served admirably in both capacities in 1940; Mathilda Cuts The Rope and Mae Main aided me most ably in 1945 and 1948. Garter Snake, a valuable informant, was the only woman for whom a man, Charles Buckman, interpreted.

123 While on the Reservation, I enjoyed the hospitality of the
124 School Sisters of Saint Francis at their convent. I went out, however, before nine and returned at five or six, spending each day visiting the women in their homes. There we smoked and chatted and worked in an atmosphere of easy informality. Much of the material given by the women might be classified under the heading of "expressive interviews." The older women were interested in the fact that I could take down so quickly in shorthand what the interpreter said, but occasionally checked on my accuracy, and the interpreter's as well, by asking me to read back for translation to them something they had said hours or days before!

In 1945 and 1948 when I worked with the men, who had previously cooperated with Dr. Cooper, the situation was naturally somewhat more formal than that which obtained with the women. We met in the Community Hall at Hays. As our business-like sessions proceeded, various Gros Ventre men dropped in and sat on the sidelines. Many of these, including some who were not regular informants or interpreters, such as Tom Bad Road, Steve Bradly, Rufus Warrior and others, helped by freely joining in

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the discussion when some problem arose or additional information was needed. 123 124

The material as presented in Part I, Social Life, is somewhat uneven due in some measure at least to the coincidence of age and sex differences in our chief informants. The two women,—Coming Daylight and Singer,—who gave the bulk of the material on the life cycle, on kinship behavior and on economic activities, came of a generation earlier than that of The Boy, Thick and Charles Buckman who supplied most of the information on political structure and war. The old women were able to draw on their personal experiences of Gros Ventre life as it was lived before the buffalo disappeared. They themselves had been child-brides, had lived in polygynous households, had worked innumerable buffalo skins, and so on. The men, however, had not yet attained adult status when the most radical change was inaugurated in their culture and thus were denied participation in the former type of culture to the same degree as that enjoyed by the women. Men and women alike, nevertheless, were careful to separate what they knew at first hand from what they had been told. Further, they indicated from whom they had acquired information, and the men especially estimated as accurately as they could to what decade a given event which they were describing might be attributed. 128 124

Although a considerable amount of linguistic data was gathered and drawn upon, all but a few of the native words have been eliminated from Part I. We hope to present the linguistic material in the future when it may be possible to publish as Part III a transcription of music and texts of the songs which we have recorded. The phonograph records of the 130 Gros Ventre songs are on deposit in the Department of Anthropology of The Catholic University of America, along with the musical notation of songs nos. 1–10, 12–15, 17–19, 23–24, which have very kindly been transcribed by Mrs. Marianne Arden. Songs nos. 24, 34, 37, 42, 43, 65, 89, 91, and 130, have been transcribed and analyzed by Mr. Jack Kilpatrick under the title, The Possible Relationship of Content to Form in Certain Gros Ventres Songs, a dissertation for the degree Master of Music, July 1946, manuscript copies of which are on deposit at the Library of The Catholic University of America. 128 126

[p. xiv is blank]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

114 The Boy and the other Gros Ventres who cooperated with Dr. Cooper were most anxious to have preserved for the future the religious phases of their culture. The term "religious" is of course to be taken in a very broad sense. In comparing the present account with that published by Dr. Kroeber in 1907 differing emphases emerge. In the early years of the century some of the magico-religious beliefs and practices were still operative among the Gros Ventres and were not willingly explained by their practitioners. On the one hand, therefore, our account is much fuller and more explicit than is Dr. Kroeber's concerning the sacred Pipes, the meaning of the various rituals and of the personal supernatural powers,—all illustrated by our informants through reference to identifiable individuals no longer living. On the other hand Dr. Kroeber's treatment of the ceremonial dances is more complete. Inasmuch, however, as details given by our informants supplement his description, it was decided to publish ours in full despite some overlapping. Similarly it was thought worthwhile to present such myths and tales as were volunteered by our informants since some of these show variations upon those in the much more complete collection by Dr. Kroeber, and a couple of myths obtained by us do not appear in his series. One of these latter confirms his earlier prediction that certain of the more widespread motifs, which did not occur in the tales obtained by him, should be found among the Gros Ventres.

114 Because neither Doctor Cooper nor I had witnessed any of the latter day ceremonies in connection with the sacred Pipes, such
● 123 as the opening of the Flat Pipe bundle in 1946, The Boy initiated the holding of a ceremony when I was on the Fort Belknap Reservation in 1948. In it he enacted the role of keeper of the Flat Pipe and went through some of the ritual, though the Pipe was not unwrapped at that time. The photos in Plates 1 and 2A were taken on this occasion. For Plate 1 A-B we are indebted to Mr. Duke Wellington, Agent of the Fort Belknap Reservation, who received his Gros Ventre name just after the Flat Pipe ceremony was completed. I took those on Plates 1C and 2A.

000 We are grateful to Dr. Louis W. Hagener, Professor of Biology, Northern Montana College, for information regarding the 1951

778 was a wooden staff about three or four feet long, to which were attached feathers from "all kinds of birds," including the eagle, the feathers literally covering the staff. The staff itself was given the first keeper in the beginning from above, but tradition is not consistent as to whether it was already feathered or was later feathered by this keeper. At any rate the feathers still on the staff are believed to be the original ones, are not broken off and are perfectly preserved. According to one report the staff has porcupine quill work on it; according to another, it is undecorated. The first keeper wrapped the stick in smoked skin, for which a wrapping of black and white cotton flannel was later substituted.

The image, called inite:atĕ (it is a person) translated "human [532] face," was described to us as about eight inches long, of stone, "with a trace of faded red in it" and looking like the "brown pottery of a teapot," of human shape, male according to one informant, female according to another. It was wrapped in buffalo hair and until Curly Head's keepership was rarely unwrapped, and even when unwrapped only the face was supposed to be exposed, by raising a bit of the cover, although Curly Head exposed the whole figure.[6] Formerly, according to Garter Snake, nobody was allowed to look at the face, except the keeper and even he could do so only now and then. Garter Snake, although Pipe child for six or seven years while her father Bull Lodge was keeper, had never seen it. Sitting High, who succeeded Bull Lodge, showed the face of the image very rarely, only once or twice so far as Al Chandler, his grandson, had heard, and even old-timers wondered what it looked like. Sitting High would take the wrapped image out of the large bundle and let you hold it and pray to it, and this oftener than he would the Pipe, but without un-

[6] Although this has not been confirmed, it is highly possible that the pipe shown at the 1951 unwrapping and pictured in Plate 3 C-D may actually be this "human face" or image. The stone and color of the pipe meet the specifications (cf. Dr. Hegener's comment as given in footnote 5), the plat- [23] form of the pipe is of about the right dimension, and one end thereof is carved in the form of a human face as can be seen in Dr. Nitz' photographs. Dr. Hagener noted on the back of the photograph in Plate 3 C that Iron Man allowed the picture to be taken only after long consultation with others and much hesitation. [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

828 through the winter what to put in the letter (quoted infra, pp. 380-381) sent in the spring of 1943 to Cooper that would do something big toward restoring the latter to health. "'I think,'" remarked Thomas Main, "is commonly used by the Gros Ventres in speaking. When I am interpreting, a man will often say to me: 'Tell them this is what I *think* of him (or it).' There is an emphasis on thinking and on the power of thought."

We come now to the more specific data on good and bad wishing and thinking.

754 In 1939 while we were chatting about approbrious and insulting terms, such as tsë:k (you ghost), in common use, The Boy dis-
828 tinguished these from malevolent thinking or wishing or cursing proper. "As a curse [proper] a person might say to another: 'You are not going to live long.' If a thing were serious enough, almost anyone might worry another with such cursing." On another occasion, the same summer, while speaking of the kinds of advice given children by their father, The Boy quoted his father, Lame Bull, as having said: "If a man were offended by his son and put a curse on his son, the curse would remain on the child."

828 Between our 1939 and 1940 visits to the Gros Ventres, The Boy had suffered a severe stroke (facial paralysis). At our first talk
[123] with him in 1940, Cooper expressed to him the very sincere wish that he would get well and live long. The Boy was visibly affected by this expression and spoke at some length as follows:

[626] "If a man does something of which the people disapprove very much, their *thought* is against him. They *think* badly of him. Against this mass thinking his own thinking cannot stand. Two people may have a battle of thinking. The outcome will depend on how each is developed in thinking, on their respective powers of thought. If all the people think badly of a man he becomes a sort of outcast.

"If someone has had some terrible misfortune and is beyond human aid and this becomes known, people will say: 'That is his sentence from above. Someone above thought that out. That is why he is in such desperate straits.' This would be something supernatural, something beyond the human.

"When you said you wished and thought I would live many years

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

782 Being. The things asked for in the prayer would differ according to the occasion.

782 At the elaborate naming feast at which Flannery was adopted and given her name the following two prayers offered by The Boy 553 who was in charge of the ceremony may serve as examples of [123] these longer solemn prayers of which we are here speaking. As The Boy makes it a practice to plan carefully whatever he intends to utter in public, we may be reasonably sure that he had given much thought ahead of time to the form and content of these two prayers.

Before partaking of the lunch which was an integral feature of the naming rite, The Boy took a piece of bread and standing held it aloft while he prayed as follows before depositing a bit of the bread in each of the four corners of the stage of the community hall where the rite was held:

553 "Supreme Being, look down upon us as we sit here today. We are going to eat of the food which you gave to us. We are glad. 782 We are thankful for this gift of food that we are going to eat. 539 Whenever we, your children, displease you and do things contrary to your law, forgive us for these, we pray you. Also look down upon us here today as we sit together and help us to successfully portray our poor life which you have allowed us to live by for so many ages. We have reached the end of that long trail of life that you have allowed us to live by, and bowing to your will we accept the conditions of today, different as they may be from yesterday, because this is your will. And in your mercy and consideration for our conducted [sic] life and assistance, give us food, give us breath, so that we may live out our lives according to your plan. And protect, watch over our loved ones who are participating and fighting in a terrible war,[4] so that they may come back to us safe and unhurt, so that once more they may set their feet upon the soil of their birthplace. This is their heritage."

After lunch and some smoking and chatting The Boy called all to order. Then, seated, he held a pipe stem pointed upward and finally downward and prayed:

"Master of All, of the above and of the below and of the entire

[4] This refers to the many Gros Ventre young men then, 1945, in the armed forces while World War II was still going on.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

of our ancestors, and that they may gain inspiration from our legends, traditions and heritages and the history of the world that repose in this bundle of the Flat Pipe as the Indian race understands your creation of the world. So that my grandchildren may learn to have that strong character possessed by our ancestors and their utmost sincerity of purpose of [and?] the true philosophy of life on earth. And that they may merge this sterling character into the life of this day and age. 782 539

"As I stand here today, I am fully conscious and fully realize that the White man is here to stay. And that we, the Indians, must live according to his way of life.

"I pray that White Shield [Cooper] may be restored back to good health. And I pray that Chief Woman [Flannery] may live a long, and a healthy, happy life. I pray that the Black-Robed missionaries of St. Paul's Mission [the Jesuit Fathers] may succeed in their efforts to teach us the true way of life. I pray that our leaders of the Indian people may be inspired to do good work for their people.

"My Father, I talk to you today with all of my person, and with all my heart and my mind. I give You thanksgiving for hearing my weak and mortal voice, and from my heart I ask You to again listen to my prayer, which I am making most devoutly and which is my most earnest wish."[a]

The question as to when the Gros Ventres prayed has been partly answered passim in the treatment of the sacred Pipe rituals, the sacred Dances, ghost helpers, and power. We shall here include other occasions and situations calling for or accompanied by prayer: spring time, mealtime, bedtime, hunting, river crossing, storms, the aged. 782

The Gros Ventres prayed, as occasion arose, at all seasons of the year, but spring time was looked upon as a particularly propitious time not only for seeking power, but also for other kinds of praying. The point of view may be illustrated by excerpts from a letter of March 24, 1945, from The Boy to Cooper. The letter was not just dashed off hurriedly or without previous thought. For composing it, The Boy explained orally the following summer to 782 123

[a] School Sisters of St. Francis, 1946, pp. 3-4.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

782 Flannery: "I tried to be well prepared by a long period of study
● 123 as to what to tell him [Cooper] so that I could do something big for his health, that his health might be restored. I sort of prepared for this all winter long and then decided I would write this letter to him in the Spring of the year when everyone seems to feel good and [to be] glad that they are still living and that they survived the hardships of the winter and that it is time for rejoicing and that even the animals are glad that spring had come around again. They then woke up from their long sleep of hibernation when they bored underground or under a pile of rocks or whichever way they could get away from . . . winter. I tried to get him [Cooper] the full benefit of it. I am glad to hear he liked it. I tried hard to put into words what I wanted for my friend [Cooper], and so that he would get more I chose that time of the year [spring]. That is when all the animals wake up and talk and sing and move around and let the whole world know: 'I am still around too.' . . . They have made a real effort to live that long. . . . They try to keep themselves in existence as long as they can by growing and singing and running and so forth. . . . If I made my friend feel better and was able to master the great distance between us [Montana to Washington, D. C.] with those few words, I am exceedingly glad and will always feel good when I recall that letter and those words because they made him feel good. Besides my words written down, everything that I had went with them."

The Boy's message in the letter, as translated very carefully
[191] from his dictation in Gros Ventre and written down by his nephew,
[212] Thomas Main, was in part as follows:

"Dear friend—As winter is over and spring is on in its place,
123 it makes one feel good. And as I listen to the talking song of the
539 meadow larks they bring back pleasant memories of my association
782 with you. So I am writing this letter to bring my thoughts into expression.

"I hope I can infuse and saturate into this paper my feelings for you and my concern for your welfare and doctor you with the tidings and blessings which the season of spring always brings, when all nature arises from a long sleep, so that you too may enjoy the healing winds and sunshine which abound at this time.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
782
123

"I have heard that your health [has not been good] . . . and it is my earnest hope that you may get back your health. I shall never forget nor cease to appreciate the encouragement you gave me when I was losing my health rapidly, and your promise to pray for me so that my health might be restored back to me.[6] I sincerely believe that your prayer was heard, as my health seems to be improving, even in my advancing age.

"So now it is my turn to pray that your life span may be extended, and among other good things to which you apply your mind that you may further contribute to the great study of the races and peoples of the earth.

"I have told you in my story of the Gros Ventres before the days of the white man, which includes the belief of my ancestors, that in the spring of the year is when one's prayers are more readily heard, and that was the time that the Indians in the long ago went to the hills, streams and mountain tops to fast and pray.

"We, the Gros Ventres, pray and implore the Supreme Being to protect our boys fighting on the various fronts in this great war, and so far only one Gros Ventre boy has been killed, out of many who are in the service. And we also pray that this terrible war and this mass killing may soon stop and that a just and lasting peace may be declared, so that the great family of nations may be true brothers again and go on with life in harmony and prosperity.

. . .

"I will now close and I am very glad to have spoke to you on this paper and it is my sincere hope that you can feel my words, so that they will do you good and doctor you.[7] With a good and hearty handshake, I am

Your friend
The Boy"

782
514

In the spring, The Boy's father, Lame Bull, would at bedtime after all were lying down, sing certain songs after first praying for himself, his household and all the people. Whether this bedtime

---

[6] See p. 366, in references to The Boy's illness in 1940. In 1948, The Boy again mentioned gratefully Cooper's prayer for him. [R.F.]

[7] Some of the expressions used in this letter seem to be implicit references to the efficacy of the sincere wish as well as of prayer.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

PLATES

123 All of the photographs making up these plates were taken in the vicinity of Hays, on the Fort Belknap Reservation, Montana.

The pictures of the Flat Pipe ceremony were taken in 1948, Plates 1A and 1B, by Mr. Duke Wellington, Plates 1C and 2A, by Regina Flannery.

Dr. Otto Nitz took in 1951 the pictures of the Feathered Pipe ceremony on Plates 2B, 2C, and the four on Plate 3.

The Boy gave to Dr. Cooper the picture taken in the early 1900's, of the painted lodge shown as Plate 4A. The other two lodges shown on Plate 4 were photographed by Dr. Karl Herzfeld in 1940.

114 Although the Gros Ventres are mentioned with sufficient frequency in the late eighteenth and in the nineteenth century sources to enable us to trace some of their movements and history, information on their culture is disappointingly meager. There is nothing in the sources on the Gros Ventres, for instance, that is in any way comparable with the richness of Thompson's account of the Piegan. The only real knowledge we have had of Gros Ventre culture is from the pioneer ethnological investigations of Professor Kroeber. In his Ethnology of the Gros Ventre, published in 1908, Dr. Kroeber deals with material culture and outlines the political, social and religious organization. He gives excellent illustrations of such objects pertaining to industries, to recreative, and to ceremonial life, as were still in the hands of the Gros Ventres at the turn of the century. He devotes considerable time to a detailed comparative treatment of decorative art, and in a separate paper deals with Gros Ventre Myths and Tales. Dr. Kroeber's major field work in 1900–03 was devoted to the Arapaho and in his monograph on this people he refers occasionally to his Gros Ventre data, especially, for instance, in the section on kinship terminology.

128 While the present ethnographical account deals primarily with Gros Ventre culture of the nineteenth century, as does Dr. Kroeber's Ethnology, the emphases are somewhat different. In Part I, for instance, we have found it possible to extend what Dr. Kroeber dealt with in several pages on social customs into a number of chapters dealing with aspects of the life cycle and kinship behavior. We have attempted to inject a chronological aspect through our detailed treatment of Gros Ventre history, but our sections on political organization and on war lack the lengthy firsthand statements by individuals which makes Dr. Kroeber's account so valuable. In Part II, we have been able to add vastly more detail on religious life than that presented by Dr. Kroeber. In our material, the Flat and Feathered Pipe rites are emphasized as well as personal supernatural powers. Furthermore we have presented the versions as told by our informants of the tales and myths pertinent to a given area of religious life. Some of these show variations on those published by Dr. Kroeber, and some are new.

124 Dr. Cooper worked with the Gros Ventres in the summers of

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

1938, 1939, and 1940. The group of older men, who wanted a 124
record of their old way of life taken down, emphasized the religious aspects of their culture. The Boy gave the largest portion
of information on this subject. He is now about eighty years old 115
and had been interested ever since he was a young boy in the 124
native culture of his people. His father, Lame Bull, was a deeply religious man and had been a Keeper of the Flat Pipe. From him and from other old men The Boy acquired an enormous body of knowledge which his excellent memory retains. Thick, who died in 1951, and (John) Charles Buckman, who died in 1949, were contemporaries of The Boy and made substantial contributions to the record. Among still older men than these three were Stiffarm, Iron Man I, Joe Assiniboine, Turn Toes, Jim and Philip Shortman, all of whom gave additional information. Charles Buckman spoke English well and sometimes acted as interpreter for the others. Tom Main, a younger man, was, however, the chief interpreter for the men. Moreover, both he and Al Chandler were able to independently contribute valuable information. Biographical details on the chief informants are appended to the present volume.

With all of these men, Dr. Cooper was on excellent terms. 123
They have told me that they realized from their first meeting with him that Dr. Cooper, being a man of deep religious conviction himself, would understand what they could tell him of Gros Ventre beliefs as they had been taught to them or to their fathers before Catholicism had any hold upon the Gros Ventres. The friendship which developed between Dr. Cooper on the one hand and Thick, Charles Buckman, Tom Main, and above all, The Boy, on the other, was a lasting one founded on the deepest mutual respect.

Dr. Cooper usually had the men come to his quarters at the 124
priest's residence of the Mission for regularly scheduled sessions, especially in 1940 when he was able to take phonograph records [126]
of over a hundred Gros Ventre songs. The Boy, who accepted me as a substitute for Dr. Cooper in the years when the latter was unable, on account of ill health, to get out to Montana, remarked on a difference in our methods. Dr. Cooper tended to guide the interviews more closely than I and, since we both had the habit of recording the questions we asked, our field notes confirm The Boy's observation. Inasmuch as those who were engaged in making the record were detained from attending to their other duties, Dr.

124 Cooper felt that compensation was due them. It may be stated however that the money paid was looked upon as in the nature of a gift, and the generosity displayed in the form of counter-gifts, both to Dr. Cooper and to me, was truly touching.

115 I was invited to the Fort Belknap Reservation in 1940 to work exclusively with the women and to deal mainly with matters other than religion. The two oldest women at Hays, Coming Daylight and Singer, accepted me as their "granddaughter" which was fortunate in view of the freedom allowed between grandparents and grandchildren in Gros Ventre society. Although these two old women did not speak English, I was happy in having as interpreters women who were well liked by them and who were themselves interested in "the old ways of doing things." Thus they proved valuable informants on their own account. Mary Ereaux and the late Cora Chandler were two who served admirably in both capacities in 1940; Mathilda Cuts The Rope and Mae Main aided me most ably in 1945 and 1948. Garter Snake, a valuable informant, was the only woman for whom a man, Charles Buckman, interpreted.

While on the Reservation, I enjoyed the hospitality of the School Sisters of Saint Francis at their convent. I went out, however, before nine and returned at five or six, spending each day visiting the women in their homes. There we smoked and chatted and worked in an atmosphere of easy informality. Much of the material given by the women might be classified under the heading of "expressive interviews." The older women were interested in the fact that I could take down so quickly in shorthand what the interpreter said, but occasionally checked on my accuracy, and the interpreter's as well, by asking me to read back for translation to them something they had said hours or days before!

In 1945 and 1948 when I worked with the men, who had previously cooperated with Dr. Cooper, the situation was naturally somewhat more formal than that which obtained with the women. We met in the Community Hall at Hays. As our business-like sessions proceeded, various Gros Ventre men dropped in and sat on the sidelines. Many of these, including some who were not regular informants or interpreters, such as Tom Bad Road, Steve Bradly, Rufus Warrior and others, helped by freely joining in

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the discussion when some problem arose or additional information was needed. 123 124

The material as presented in Part I, Social Life, is somewhat uneven due in some measure at least to the coincidence of age and sex differences in our chief informants. The two women,—Coming Daylight and Singer,—who gave the bulk of the material on the life cycle, on kinship behavior and on economic activities, came of a generation earlier than that of The Boy, Thick and Charles Buckman who supplied most of the information on political structure and war. The old women were able to draw on their personal experiences of Gros Ventre life as it was lived before the buffalo disappeared. They themselves had been child-brides, had lived in polygynous households, had worked innumerable buffalo skins, and so on. The men, however, had not yet attained adult status when the most radical change was inaugurated in their culture and thus were denied participation in the former type of culture to the same degree as that enjoyed by the women. Men and women alike, nevertheless, were careful to separate what they knew at first hand from what they had been told. Further, they indicated from whom they had acquired information, and the men especially estimated as accurately as they could to what decade a given event which they were describing might be attributed. 128 124

Although a considerable amount of linguistic data was gathered and drawn upon, all but a few of the native words have been eliminated from Part I. We hope to present the linguistic material in the future when it may be possible to publish as Part III a transcription of music and texts of the songs which we have recorded. The phonograph records of the 130 Gros Ventre songs are on deposit in the Department of Anthropology of The Catholic University of America, along with the musical notation of songs nos. 1–10, 12–15, 17–19, 23–24, which have very kindly been transcribed by Mrs. Marianne Arden. Songs nos. 24, 34, 37, 42, 43, 65, 89, 91, and 130, have been transcribed and analyzed by Mr. Jack Kilpatrick under the title, The Possible Relationship of Content to Form in Certain Gros Ventres Songs, a dissertation for the degree Master of Music, July 1946, manuscript copies of which are on deposit at the Library of The Catholic University of America. 128 126

[p. xiv is blank]

5: Flannery E-5 (1940)1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

group was more or less permanently encamped. It was told by Mrs. Warrior, now a very old woman, as one of her childhood memories and was not elicited by questioning. 787 [124]

"Many, many years ago when I was a small girl, my father had gone on the warpath with several other men. When winter came they hadn't returned. So my uncle (mother's brother) went to an old woman, Good Singer, who was known to be a spiritualist, although she was famous for other medicine powers as well. She consented and the seance was held in the lodge. My sister and I and our aunts and relatives were all there. 787 539

"A curtain was hung across the back part of the lodge and Good Singer was bound with ropes tightly knotted, then wrapped in a blanket so that only her head stuck out. She was behind the curtain and began to sing a certain song. She told us all to sing that song four times. I joined in the singing. When we finished we heard a humming sound and scraping and all kinds of noise through the opening at the top of the lodge. The top of the lodge began to shake and all at once we heard something slide from the top down behind the curtain where the old woman was, and land with a thump. That was her spirit, that is, the spirit of her son who had died long, long before.

"As soon as they heard the thump my uncle said: 'Here is the offering,' as he handed behind the curtain the pot containing a pup they had killed and cooked. We could hear the dishes rattling as the spirit ate. Soon all of the bones were picked clean and the spirit tossed them over the curtain so that they landed in our midst. The spirit then complained that they had tied his mother so tightly, and as he untied her we could hear the sound of the ropes as he worked at them. Then the ropes too came sailing over the top of the curtain. They were all knotted up in one bunch, and, try as they would, they couldn't unravel it.

"The spirit then complained again: 'Why did you tie my mother up so tightly?' and then asked: 'What did you call me for?' My uncle said: 'Well, I called you because these men went out on a war party and some, including Holy Weasel, didn't return. I want to know where they are and what became of them.' Then my uncle lighted a pipe and put it under the cur-

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

1938, 1939, and 1940. The group of older men, who wanted a 124
record of their old way of life taken down, emphasized the religious aspects of their culture. The Boy gave the largest portion 115
of information on this subject. He is now about eighty years old
and had been interested ever since he was a young boy in the 124
native culture of his people. His father, Lame Bull, was a deeply religious man and had been a Keeper of the Flat Pipe. From him and from other old men The Boy acquired an enormous body of knowledge which his excellent memory retains. Thick, who died in 1951, and (John) Charles Buckman, who died in 1949, were contemporaries of The Boy and made substantial contributions to the record. Among still older men than these three were Stiffarm, Iron Man I, Joe Assiniboine, Turn Toes, Jim and Philip Shortman, all of whom gave additional information. Charles Buckman spoke English well and sometimes acted as interpreter for the others. Tom Main, a younger man, was, however, the chief interpreter for the men. Moreover, both he and Al Chandler were able to independently contribute valuable information. Biographical details on the chief informants are appended to the present volume.

With all of these men, Dr. Cooper was on excellent terms. 123
They have told me that they realized from their first meeting with him that Dr. Cooper, being a man of deep religious conviction himself, would understand what they could tell him of Gros Ventre beliefs as they had been taught to them or to their fathers before Catholicism had any hold upon the Gros Ventres. The friendship which developed between Dr. Cooper on the one hand and Thick, Charles Buckman, Tom Main, and above all, The Boy, on the other, was a lasting one founded on the deepest mutual respect.

Dr. Cooper usually had the men come to his quarters at the 124
priest's residence of the Mission for regularly scheduled sessions, especially in 1940 when he was able to take phonograph records [126]
of over a hundred Gros Ventre songs. The Boy, who accepted me as a substitute for Dr. Cooper in the years when the latter was unable, on account of ill health, to get out to Montana, remarked on a difference in our methods. Dr. Cooper tended to guide the interviews more closely than I and, since we both had the habit of recording the questions we asked, our field notes confirm The Boy's observation. Inasmuch as those who were engaged in making the record were detained from attending to their other duties, Dr.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the discussion when some problem arose or additional information was needed. 123 124

The material as presented in Part I, Social Life, is somewhat uneven due in some measure at least to the coincidence of age and sex differences in our chief informants. The two women,—Coming Daylight and Singer,—who gave the bulk of the material on the life cycle, on kinship behavior and on economic activities, came of a generation earlier than that of The Boy, Thick and Charles Buckman who supplied most of the information on political structure and war. The old women were able to draw on their personal experiences of Gros Ventre life as it was lived before the buffalo disappeared. They themselves had been child-brides, had lived in polygynous households, had worked innumerable buffalo skins, and so on. The men, however, had not yet attained adult status when the most radical change was inaugurated in their culture and thus were denied participation in the former type of culture to the same degree as that enjoyed by the women. Men and women alike, nevertheless, were careful to separate what they knew at first hand from what they had been told. Further, they indicated from whom they had acquired information, and the men especially estimated as accurately as they could to what decade a given event which they were describing might be attributed. 128 124

Although a considerable amount of linguistic data was gathered and drawn upon, all but a few of the native words have been eliminated from Part I. We hope to present the linguistic material in the future when it may be possible to publish as Part III a transcription of music and texts of the songs which we have recorded. The phonograph records of the 130 Gros Ventre songs are on deposit in the Department of Anthropology of The Catholic University of America, along with the musical notation of songs nos. 1–10, 12–15, 17–19, 23–24, which have very kindly been transcribed by Mrs. Marianne Arden. Songs nos. 24, 34, 37, 42, 43, 65, 89, 91, and 130, have been transcribed and analyzed by Mr. Jack Kilpatrick under the title, The Possible Relationship of Content to Form in Certain Gros Ventres Songs, a dissertation for the degree Master of Music, July 1946, manuscript copies of which are on deposit at the Library of The Catholic University of America. 128 126

[p. xiv is blank]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

782 This last prayer was said while World War II was still in progress. After it was over and the Gros Ventre young men had returned from service in the armed forces, a very solemn ritual opening of the Flat Pipe was held, on February 6, 1946,—at which unfortunately neither of us could be present. The School Sisters of St. Francis, however, who teach the elementary and secondary grades at the Mission of St. Paul, Hays, were present and took [126] careful notes of the proceedings which they afterwards wrote up and hectographed. Early in the rite, before actually opening the Flat Pipe bundle, The Boy, who had charge of the ceremony, held up a pipe and prayed in Gros Ventre as follows, the prayer being translated for the Sisters by Thomas Main and being preceded by a brief explanatory word by The Boy:

782 539 "I will now speak in the first person and give you a prayer [such as] our Gros Ventre forefathers prayed in times of distress to the Turtle who reposes in this [Flat Pipe] bundle and to the Maker of the earth:

"Supreme Being, look down upon me, a poor mortal person, as I pray to You, and appeal to You, in this time of great distress and disturbance among your children, the peoples of this earth.

"I pray to You, a poor and lowly Indian, in the spirit and way that my ancestors prayed to You. I ask that the fires of hatred subside among all men, and that they may now love one another and understand that they are all brothers and must share the handiwork of Your hand, creation, the universe, and all nature. I ask that You may inspire the representatives of the peoples of the earth who are now engaged in a most difficult task, the framing of the terms of peace, so that it may be just and lasting.

"Supreme Being, I asked You to watch over and take care of my grandchildren, the young men of the Indian people, as they went off to all the corners of the earth to fight in the greatest war and conflict of all time for the cause of freedom and liberty, and now that they are back safe to those near and dear to them I feel that You have listened to and granted my prayer. Now, My Father, I ask you again to give to my grandchildren, the veterans of the great war just ended, peace of mind, happiness, good health, and a long life. And that they enjoy the soil of their birth and the land

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

PREFACE

This reconstruction of Gros Ventre life as it had been lived before the disappearance of the buffalo around 1884 is the result of a joint undertaking. When the late Dr. John M. Cooper visited the Fort Belknap Reservation in 1938, he met there a group of older men who were interested in having him cooperate with them in the making of a record of their "old way of life." The project was then undertaken and continued by Dr. Cooper in the summers of 1939 and 1940. It was upon the invitation of the Gros Ventres that I went to the Reservation in 1940 to work with the women and to deal mainly with matters other than the religious aspects of their culture. Pressure of other duties, combined with ill-health, prevented Dr. Cooper's return to the field after 1940, but the taking of the record was subsequently continued by me in the summers of 1945 and 1948. 121

The results are presented in two parts, Part I on Social Life is the more general, giving a background for Part II which deals exclusively with Religion. The writing of Part II had been practically completed by Dr. Cooper at the time of his death in 1949; it will appear as a separate volume under his name. 128

It is my privilege to thank all of the Gros Ventres who cooperated in the taking of the record. In 1945 and in 1948 preliminary drafts of the material were checked and revised in the field. In spite of all precautions it is not unlikely that some errors may remain. For these the Gros Ventres themselves are in no way responsible. The onus, especially for any misrepresentation of the Gros Ventre point of view, must rest entirely on us.

While Dr. Cooper financed his own field work, I am indebted to the Charles and Grace E. Lastner Fund for part of my field expense in 1940 and in 1945, and to the Research Fund of The Catholic University of America, for the grant which enabled me to return to the Fort Belknap Reservation for the summer of 1948. 122

To the School Sisters of St. Francis, who at no small inconvenience to themselves accommodated my husband and me at St. Paul's School, we are deeply grateful. We wish likewise to

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

114 Although the Gros Ventres are mentioned with sufficient frequency in the late eighteenth and in the nineteenth century sources to enable us to trace some of their movements and history, information on their culture is disappointingly meager. There is nothing in the sources on the Gros Ventres, for instance, that is in any way comparable with the richness of Thompson's account of the Piegan. The only real knowledge we have had of Gros Ventre culture is from the pioneer ethnological investigations of Professor Kroeber. In his Ethnology of the Gros Ventre, published in 1908, Dr. Kroeber deals with material culture and outlines the political, social and religious organization. He gives excellent illustrations of such objects pertaining to industries, to recreative, and to ceremonial life, as were still in the hands of the Gros Ventres at the turn of the century. He devotes considerable time to a detailed comparative treatment of decorative art, and in a separate paper deals with Gros Ventre Myths and Tales. Dr. Kroeber's major field work in 1900–03 was devoted to the Arapaho and in his monograph on this people he refers occasionally to his Gros Ventre data, especially, for instance, in the section on kinship terminology.

128 While the present ethnographical account deals primarily with Gros Ventre culture of the nineteenth century, as does Dr. Kroeber's Ethnology, the emphases are somewhat different. In Part I, for instance, we have found it possible to extend what Dr. Kroeber dealt with in several pages on social customs into a number of chapters dealing with aspects of the life cycle and kinship behavior. We have attempted to inject a chronological aspect through our detailed treatment of Gros Ventre history, but our sections on political organization and on war lack the lengthy firsthand statements by individuals which makes Dr. Kroeber's account so valuable. In Part II, we have been able to add vastly more detail on religious life than that presented by Dr. Kroeber. In our material, the Flat and Feathered Pipe rites are emphasized as well as personal supernatural powers. Furthermore we have presented the versions as told by our informants of the tales and myths pertinent to a given area of religious life. Some of these show variations on those published by Dr. Kroeber, and some are new.

124 Dr. Cooper worked with the Gros Ventres in the summers of

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the discussion when some problem arose or additional information was needed. 123 124

The material as presented in Part I, Social Life, is somewhat uneven due in some measure at least to the coincidence of age and sex differences in our chief informants. The two women,—Coming Daylight and Singer,—who gave the bulk of the material on the life cycle, on kinship behavior and on economic activities, came of a generation earlier than that of The Boy, Thick and Charles Buckman who supplied most of the information on political structure and war. The old women were able to draw on their personal experiences of Gros Ventre life as it was lived before the buffalo disappeared. They themselves had been child-brides, had lived in polygynous households, had worked innumerable buffalo skins, and so on. The men, however, had not yet attained adult status when the most radical change was inaugurated in their culture and thus were denied participation in the former type of culture to the same degree as that enjoyed by the women. Men and women alike, nevertheless, were careful to separate what they knew at first hand from what they had been told. Further, they indicated from whom they had acquired information, and the men especially estimated as accurately as they could to what decade a given event which they were describing might be attributed. 128 124

Although a considerable amount of linguistic data was gathered and drawn upon, all but a few of the native words have been eliminated from Part I. We hope to present the linguistic material in the future when it may be possible to publish as Part III a transcription of music and texts of the songs which we have recorded. The phonograph records of the 130 Gros Ventre songs are on deposit in the Department of Anthropology of The Catholic University of America, along with the musical notation of songs nos. 1–10, 12–15, 17–19, 23–24, which have very kindly been transcribed by Mrs. Marianne Arden. Songs nos. 24, 34, 37, 42, 43, 65, 89, 91, and 130, have been transcribed and analyzed by Mr. Jack Kilpatrick under the title, The Possible Relationship of Content to Form in Certain Gros Ventres Songs, a dissertation for the degree Master of Music, July 1946, manuscript copies of which are on deposit at the Library of The Catholic University of America. 128 126

[p. xiv is blank]

PREFACE

This second part of the record of the "old way of life" of the Gros Ventres of Montana was written by Rt. Rev. John M. Cooper, late Professor and Head of the Department of Anthropology of The Catholic University of America. The manuscript had been all but completed by him at the time of his death in 1949. Dr. Cooper had intended to incorporate changes that might be suggested in view of my 1948 field check-up of the contents of the volume and then to critically edit the manuscript,—as only he could have done. I have thought it best to publish the manuscript essentially as Dr. Cooper had written it and to give additional information, obtained in 1948 and subsequently, in footnotes identified as my own. I have also added the cross-references to The Gros Ventres of Montana: Part I, Social Life, which appeared in 1953 and which was intended as a background for the present volume. 114 128

The general plan of the joint undertaking by Dr. Cooper and myself, and the procedure followed by us, have been outlined in the Preface and the Introduction to Part I, Social Life. Data on the principal informants have been given in the A[redacted] volume. These will not be repeated. We [redacted] with profound regret that Thomas Main [redacted] 52, and that The Boy died in January [redacted] 128 115

The Boy, a man of distinct p[redacted] of mind, as mentioned several times by Dr. Cooper in the present volume, is responsible for the greater part of the material on ritual and ceremonial aspects of Gros Ventre life. The Boy, to a greater degree than his contemporaries, had been interested in ritual and its meaning since his early youth. From his father, Lame Bull, a keeper of the sacred Flat Pipe and an outstanding man, The Boy had acquired a rich store of knowledge which his enquiring mind enlarged in adult life. He was constantly discussing the past of his people with many other men, older than himself, who had participated more fully than was possible for him to do in the Gros Ventre way of life before the disappearance of the buffalo in 1887.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

CHAPTER I

SUPERNATURAL BEINGS

Before beginning our description of Gros Ventre ritual observances, it seems desirable, in the interests of order and clarity, to give some account one by one of the various Gros Ventre supernatural beings. These beings may be divided for our purposes into three categories: first, those to whom cult in the form of prayer or sacrifice was offered; second, those to whom no cult proper is offered but who enter in one form or another into ritual or who are conceived as actually helpful or harmful to the living Gros Ventres of modern times; third, those to whom no cult is rendered, who do not enter into ritual at all, and who, while conceived as helpful or harmful to the Gros Ventres at some time in the remoter or archaic past, are not so and have not been so in more recent or modern times. Beings of our third category belong rather to the realm of folklore or traditional history than to that of religion and will be given only passing attention here. 776 128

The chief beings of our first category are: the Supreme Being, the storm being, the sun, the earth, the Four Holy Men, Broken Knife, He-who-starved-to-death, the Last Child, the water monster(s), Little Spirit, He-who-dreams-of-Bha'a, the ghost helpers, the beings who gave power, the petroglyph beings. We shall now take these up in order, giving for each their names, nature, attributes and functions. The rites connected with them will be described in later chapters. 776

The Supreme Being

The most common name by which the Supreme Being was called or addressed was Ixtcibəni:hohat (Above Ni:hohat).[1] The

[1] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, p. 275. In our transcription, a, e, i, o, u, have continental values: ä is flat as in English "bat"; ë is close to French "feu"; vowels are lengthened by a colon, as a:; ə is the unstressed indeterminate vowel; θ is th as in English "thing"; tc is a single sound as ch in English "church"; tc' is the same sound but glottalized and occurs only terminally; apostrophe indicates glottal stop. [104 194]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

APPENDIX

The following myths, tales, and traditions are given as told us mostly by The Boy, who in turn learned them in large part from his father. Variants from other informants are noted in passing and reference is made to Kroeber's earlier and more complete collection where appropriate. 128

1. Ni:hohat Liberates the Bladder People[1]

White Man started out and wandered around. At last he saw a single lodge and went over to it and entered. A man and woman were sitting there. They welcomed White Man and told him to sit down. Right away White Man thought: "I am tired and hungry. But they have nothing to eat." He wondered what to do next. The man said to the woman: "My friend has caught me unawares. He is hungry and tired and I have no food to give him." So the man called out: "My children, go and hunt so that we may eat and our guest may eat." This was good news to White Man. So he waited. It was now night. During the night something was bringing meat. You could hear something laying down meat outside. White Man thought this queer that meat should be brought at night instead of in the day time, but he just waited. After a while something stopped bringing these things to eat. The man then said to the woman: "Go out and fetch these things to eat so we and our guest can eat." So she went out and brought in all sorts of meat. So they ate liver, kidneys, tripe, and manifolds, eating them raw. There was plenty to eat so they ate and ate until they were full. 539 773

White Man began to wonder how all this was done. He had it on the tip of his tongue to ask but he didn't do so as this would have been impolite. So after a while he was so full that he fell asleep.

White Man woke up the next day and spent the day with the couple. When night came the man gave the same order in a loud voice: "My children, go and hunt and bring things to eat so that our guest may eat." Then this second night the same thing happened as on the night before.

This time White Man, after he had eaten until he was filled, made up his mind to ask the man how it was all done: "How do they get these good things to eat? Who are your children? I haven't seen any of them." The man replied: "Do you really want to know?" White Man answered: "Yes." The man said to him: "All right. Come with me to this rising ground here. I will show you." As they left the man's lodge he said: "Look up and you

[1] For explanation of the term "White Man" as used for the trickster, see p. 2. This story does not appear in Kroeber's collection.

7: Flannery-E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 dance.[3] Wissler was well aware of the importance of the Grass
114 dance in the transition period of Plains culture from the old to the new, and suggested further studies be made. Nevertheless, no one has given us a close-up, so far as I know, of its dynamic aspects in the life of any one of the tribes who shared the phenomenon.

796 In 1901 Kroeber noted that the Grass dance as then performed
114 by the Gros Ventres differed considerably in form from that
177 which was described to him as having been the case when it was first adopted. He gives us a brief description of the earlier procedure, but naturally enough no details regarding the then current method of carrying out the Grass dance, since his concern was with the older tribal culture. He merely states: "It is no longer a young man's dance, nor confined to a certain group. All the people in the tribe take part in it. It is very similar in character to the present-day Arapaho crow-dance, as well as in the place it occupies in the life of the people. Among the Gros Ventre it is now the only dance held."[4] Our data, gathered during two visits to the Fort Belknap Reservation in 1940 and 1945, confirm Kroeber's and supplement them to a considerable extent.

121 In treating of the Grass dance then, we shall distinguish be-
128 tween an earlier period extending from between 1875 to 1880 up to about 1890, and a later period comprising the years from roughly 1890 to 1916. We shall first describe the form of the Grass dance as it was in the earlier period, then the changes which were later introduced, and finally we shall discuss the varying functions during both periods.

The Form: Earlier Period

796 According to Wissler the dance originated with the Dakota
177 about 1860 and is traceable as a development of the older Pawnee
171

[3] These specimens are in the American Museum of Natural History. Some of those used in the Gros Ventre Grass dance have been described by Kroeber, loc. cit.: fork, pp. 270–71; spoon, p. 271; whip, p. 271; crow-belt, pp. 271–72.

[4] Kroeber, loc. cit., p. 238.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

101 because they have among them no such remnants of perishing tribes, appear
to know nothing of this fivefold group, but they recognize their close rela-
648 tionship to the Arapaho. There is no very great amount of intercourse
between them and the Arapaho at present, nor does there appear to have
been any unusual amount of communication during the greater part of the
nineteenth century; but on both sides there is a mutual recognition as of
separated relatives. The Arapaho are now and apparently have been for
a long time considerably the larger tribe, the Gros Ventre having always in
[161] historical times been regarded as a small body. Their present number is
about 550.

According to Hayden, the Gros Ventre, about 1800, were south of the
131 Saskatchewan; about 1820 they united with the Arapaho for a few years,
648 and then, following a quarrel, journeyed north, had a disastrous encounter
with the Crow, and became neighbors and allies of the Blackfeet.[1] In spite
of the usually close association of the Gros Ventre with the three Blackfoot
tribes since that time, they became hostile to them for a time, about forty
years ago, and united against them with their own long-standing enemies the
Crow. In the course of this hostility the Gros Ventre sustained their heavi-
est reverse in war within their memory; the greater part of an unusually
large war-party, including many Crow, being killed after an attack on a
Piegan camp. This happened in 1867, according to Grinnell. The usual
enemies of the Gros Ventre, besides the Crow, were other Siouan tribes,
such as the Dakota and especially the Assiniboine. They also fought more
or less with the Shoshone, and no doubt in alliance with the Blackfeet against
the Salish Flathead. They were on the whole friendly with the tribes of
their own stock of speech, the Arapaho, Cheyenne, Blackfeet, and Cree.
The habitat of the Gros Ventre in recent times has been the Milk River
territory, in which is situated their present reservation, which they occupy
jointly with the Assiniboine.

The Gros Ventre have also been called Fall, Rapid, and Paunch Indians.
101 The term "Gros Ventre" has also been applied to the Minitari, a Siouan
village tribe on the Missouri; and the two tribes have been distinguished as
"Gros Ventre of the Prairie" and "Gros Ventre of the Missouri."

174 Gros Ventre tradition brings the tribe from the north; but their story of
131 the division of the tribe while crossing the ice on a great river is found also
[173] among the Blackfeet and the Cheyenne, and is worthless as historical evi-
dence. While their earliest habitat known is north of their present territory,
acquaintance of them goes back little more than a century, and there is

[1] See the excellent article by H. L. Scott on The Early History and the Names of the Arapaho, in the American Anthropologist, N.S., IX, 545. 1907. From this it appears that, at least from the middle of the eighteenth century on, except for about five years' association with the Arapaho (from 1818 to 1823), the habitat of the Gros Ventre was in the Blackfoot country, between the Saskatchewan and the Missouri.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

nothing to show that they had long been in the Saskatchewan region. All that is certain of their previous past is their closer relationship to the Arapaho than to any other tribe; and the origin of the Arapaho is equally obscure, except that it is certain that, if they came from the north and east, it was a long time ago. Of the Gros Ventre it can only be said that, while related to the Arapaho and regarded by them as almost politically a part of themselves, they were far separated from them when first known, with them for a short time later, and again separated, and in contact and alliance with another much more distantly related Algonkin branch. Their habitat in a hundred years has been successively near the Saskatchewan, the Platte, and the Missouri. There is nothing to show that such variability of affiliation and location within the culture region of the Plains has not been characteristic of their previous history. 131 ● N4 [648]

The Gros Ventre call the tribes near them by the following names: Arapaho, hinan'ăn (in Arapaho, hinanaei-na"); Cheyenne, itisŏn, "scars" (itisŏ", "a scar;" Arapaho name of the Cheyenne, hitaciina"); Cree, na"tsa", "rabbits;" Ojibwa, djinhuna"tsa", "Lower Cree;" the three Blackfoot tribes, waotä"nixtäats, "black-feet" (a Blackfoot, waotä"nixtänin, "black-foot-man;" a Piegan, tsä"t'; the Bloods, ka"winähaä"); Assiniboine, na"djineihin; Sioux, na"wina"djinei, "Below-Assiniboine" (in Arapaho, na"tinei, "a Sioux"); Crow, hounen, "crow-men;" Minitari, wuxnokayan, "—lodges;" Shoshone, sosŏuyănin, "snake-men;" Bannock, waotä"nixiinin, "black-men" (in Arapaho the Ute are called waotänahiçi, "black"); Flathead Salish, kaakaäänin, "flathead-man;" Nezpercé, taniibats, "pierced-nose" (Arapaho taniibaäçi is the Caddo). Two tribes to the southwest or perhaps west, which have not been identified, are the wasä"hiiyeihits, "grass-dwellers," who live in houses of grass or brush; and the na"wuxaanibiina"ts, "fish-eaters." 101 648

The Gros Ventre were divided into groups similar to those of the Blackfeet and Sioux. The names of these bands were nicknames, and in no way totemic. As there was prohibition of marriage within the band, the name "clan" is, however, applicable to them. Descent was paternal and a man belonged to his father's band; but the prohibition of marriage extended also to his mother's clan, all the members of both the father's and mother's clan being considered relatives. Each band seems to have had a recognized head or chief. During the winter the tribe broke into smaller groups, consisting of one or perhaps more clans, which followed the buffalo, and camped chiefly in the timber. There corrals were made for the horses at night to prevent their being stolen by war-parties. When summer came, the clans joined and camped together in the large camp-circle. In this, the opening of which was toward the east, the different bands had definite 621 614 [614] [582] 221 361 621 614

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

102
131
133
657

FORT BELKNAP RESERVATION AND SURROUNDING AREA

[p. 11]

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

INTRODUCTION

The Algonquian-speaking Gros Ventres live on the Fort Belknap Reservation in North Central Montana. The Reservation is a small part of the land claimed by this tribe in 1887, when the boundaries were finally fixed. At present, the Gros Ventres number between a thousand and eleven hundred, and they share their territory with almost as many Assiniboine. The latter tribe was included in the settlement of the Reservation although it did not participate with the Gros Ventres and Blackfoot tribes in the Treaty of 1855. In spite of some intermarriage, the two groups have never really blended and the Gros Ventres tend to center at the village of Hays at the southern part of the Reservation while the Assinboine are clustered around Lodge Pole, a settlement some ten miles east of Hays. The Indian Agency is approximately forty miles north of Hays at the northern boundary of the Reservation and close to the town of Harlem on the Great Northern Railroad. Of importance to the Gros Ventres, who are predominantly Roman Catholic, is St. Paul's Mission and School which lie at the foot of the Little Rockies only a mile south of Hays. David Rodnick has given an excellent description of the geographical setting of the Reservation for his study of modern conditions and of acculturation among the Fort Belknap Assiniboine.

131 657 [197] [161] [648] [797] [114]

Of the several tribes in the Northern Plains region, the Gros Ventres are perhaps the least known. Although they maintained intact their tribal identity, and were recognized as fierce warriors, they were often mistakenly identified with the Blackfoot tribes, with whom they were frequently allied. Moreover, little was known of the Gros Ventre language except that it was an exceedingly difficult one; practically every independent observer during the nineteenth century remarks on this fact. Since, however, many Gros Ventre men knew Blackfoot, the linguistic difference was often overlooked and the Gros Ventres tended to be counted as one of the Blackfoot tribes. As part of the so-called "Blackfoot Nation," leaders of the Gros Ventres signed the Treaty of 1855.

101 [648] 197 [648]

[P. viii contains no text]

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

CHAPTER I

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Location in the Eighteenth Century

The earliest available sources show that in the eighteenth century the Gros Ventres were in the Canadian plains region, far removed from their Arapaho kinsmen. Just where or when the Gros Ventres and Arapaho parted cannot be determined. As Kroeber has pointed out, their tradition of separating while crossing a large frozen body of water on which the ice broke, is not reliable, especially in view of similar traditions of tribal separations current among other peoples.[1] It is possible that there may be some truth in the tradition which Father De Smet had from the Gros Ventres in 1846, namely, that they had become separated from the Arapaho a hundred and fifty years before that date.[2] This would allow, however, only the bare minimum of time which Kroeber has suggested as necessary to account for the linguistic differentiation between Arapaho and Gros Ventre. It would seem a little late also should Morton be correct in identifying as Gros Ventres the tribe, in the region of the Saskatchewan River to the west of the Assiniboine, whom Kelsey mentions in 1691.[3]

The difficulty of exactly locating the Gros Ventres during the first half of the eighteenth century is all the greater in view of the fact that the observers often used general terms, rather than tribal designations, for the plains peoples as distinct from the Cree and Assiniboine. Among such terms are "equestrian natives," "slaves," and various renditions of the Cree word *ayatchiyiniw*,[4] literally "foreign man, stranger"—the generic Cree term by which all hostile peoples are called. The Cree were closely as-

[1] Kroeber, 1908, p. 146.
[2] De Smet, p. 265, note.
[3] Kroeber, 1908, p. 145; Morton, p. 113; Kelsey Papers, p. 16, mentions a nation who "knew not ye use of Canoes and were resolved to go to wars."
[4] Cf. LaCombe, p. 325.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

175 acts of depredation were long remembered and formed the basis for the bad reputation the Gros Ventres sustained among the 648 traders. Henry, speaking of them in 1808 as an audacious and turbulent race, says that they have repeatedly attempted to massacre the traders.[33]

During the early part of the nineteenth century the Gros Ventres continued losing ground to the Assiniboine and Cree. Harmon, again in 1801, mentions, for instance, that a party of Cree-Assiniboine had left Fort Alexandria in June against the Rapid Indians and were bringing a number of women and children for "slaves."[34] In 1803 he records that 40 lodges of Cree-Assiniboine went out on a war party with 40 lodges of "others," apparently against both the Blackfoot and Rapid Indians.[35] Incidentally, as the Gros Ventres were pushed out of the Saskatchewan basin, they no longer formed a buffer between the Cree-Assiniboine and Blackfoot, and these latter came into more direct and deadly conflict. Having rebuilt South Branch House in 1805, Harmon was there in April 1806 when the Cree-Assiniboine in that region went to war against the Rapid Indians, "their inveterate enemies, with whom they frequently patch up peace which is generally short endurance."[36] In August of that same year some Assiniboine reported to Harmon that about 80 tents of Cree-Assiniboine, with about as many of the Blackfoot, were on their way to war against the Gros Ventres. Nothing came of this expedition, however, inasmuch as the temporary allies began quarreling over a horse which each claimed and ended in an all-day fight between them.[37]

And so it went. By 1808 the Gros Ventres had been replaced in the area between the forks of the Saskatchewan and now roamed [131] the territory between the South Branch and the Missouri, although some of them at least went to the posts to trade. Henry remarks that at this time they were bringing to Fort Vermillion a good trade in dried provisions, beaver skins, and grizzly bear and buffalo

[33] Henry, v. 2, p. 530.
[34] Harmon, p. 55.
[35] *Idem*, p. 78.
[36] *Idem*, p. 119.
[37] *Idem*, p. 120.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the latter tribe that they appeared to him "to have the advantage of the others in being more adroit, more docile, and more courageous; but they are more attached to their old superstitions and are terrible *demanders*, as the Canadian employees here call shameless beggars; happily they are not offended when refused." In addition, he stated that if the Gros Ventres were less importunate he would willingly entitle them the Flatheads of the Missouri "as they have something of their simplicity and bravery." He considered that "the Piegans are the most civilized but the most noted thieves; the Blood well made and generally less dirty; while the Blackfeet proper are, it is said, the most hospitable." Among all four tribes Father Point found the disproportion of sexes great, and attributed to warfare the preponderance of women over men.[64]

175 648 [162]

The heart of the area held by the Gros Ventres at that time, and claimed by them subsequently at least until the establishment of the Fort Belknap Reservation in 1873, and probably until 1888, was described by Hayden as follows: "At present [1862] and for many years past, they range along the Milk River, on the east side of the Missouri, extending as far as the Cypress Mountains. From this line to the Marias River stretches a beautiful level country well covered with grass and adapted to pasturage of buffalo. Here the Indians under consideration may be found at all seasons—in the winter along the banks of the Milk River where wood may be obtained and in summer on the plains where fuel is not so necessary."[65] As the Gros Ventres were by no means confined to this area they were in intermittent conflict with surrounding tribes.

131 175 648

With a view to settling the quarrels of the Blackfoot, Piegan and Gros Ventres east of the mountains, and of the Flathead, Kootenais and Nez Percé and others west of the mountains, Governor Stevens held a council with the Gros Ventres on the Milk River in August, 1853, and with the Blackfoot and Piegan at Fort Benton in September.[66] In 1854, he ordered a thousand dollars worth of goods from Culbertson of the American Fur Company, for distribution to the Piegan and Gros Ventres. These goods, consisting mainly of foodstuffs with which they were un-

175 648

[64] Father Point's letter of 1847, in De Smet, pp. 254, 256.
[65] Hayden, p. 340.
[66] Hoopes, p. 101.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

CHAPTER II

TRIBAL ORGANIZATION

The greater bulk of our material on the Gros Ventres covers the fifty year span from about 1835 to 1885. During that period, the tribal territory centered about the Milk River. The present Reservation, the boundaries of which were finally fixed in 1888, represents only a small part of the land claimed and held by the Gros Ventres as their own. 131 [648]

Band Names and Affiliation

619 The political organization of the Gros Ventres was simple. The division into fairly autonomous bands was basic, and apparently the number of bands was twelve. Our informants, both those who were adult and those who were children, at the time when the whole tribe still encamped as a unit, agreed on that point. The list of band names given by our two oldest informants, Coming Daylight (b. 1854) and Singer (b. ca. 1856), is as follows: Coffees, Same as Assiniboine, Plenty Bad, Greys, Fast Travelers, Water Horses Once a Day, Upper Quarters, Frozens, Buffalo Overloaded, Tendons, Bloods, Night Hawks. These two old women maintained that, in their own experience, the bands camped in this order, and in a circle, when the whole tribe was together. 621 [115]

Quite independently of the above list, another was obtained from The Boy (b. 1870). As a child he witnessed the formation of the camp circle, and he knows many details of previous decades from his father, Lame Bull (b. ca. 1825, d. 1890) and from other old men. The Boy's list agrees with that given by the two women, except in regard to one band. He includes a group called Poor Greys and omits Night Hawks. All of our informants insisted that the Greys and Night Hawks were distinct bands, but there was a difference of opinion as to whether or not the Greys and Poor Greys were in reality the same band. 621 115 114

Seven of the band names can be identified with Kroeber's num- 621

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

take you to a camp of Gros Ventres.' 'Who are they?' she asked, 'What is their name?' The woman told her: 'A little short man called Warrior Man,' who was a brother of the returned woman through marriage. 793

"So the woman took the returned Gros Ventre woman to this camp and said: 'I have brought you a Gros Ventre woman. Come and see who it is.' As soon as they saw who it was, they were glad and took her and kissed her and gave her everything good.

"One evening a few days later Warrior Man and his wife got ready and before sunup started off for the big Gros Ventre camp. He walked while Crow Bull's wife rode horseback. It was springtime with wet snow still on the ground. The big camp was at Big Sandy, on the north side of Milk River at the place where the trees stop. They arrived there early in the morning and did not know where to go. I, Coming Daylight, saw the man and the two women approaching and went out to see who they were. The man asked: 'Where is Crow Bull's lodge?' I then saw them go to Crow Bull's lodge. All at his lodge were glad to see the returned captive and kissed her. 131 221 361

"Later when the ground got dry, the whole tribe moved to their usual place here at what is now Hays. Crow Bull made good his vow to take the Flat Pipe if his wife got back safe to him, and I witnessed the transfer, by the keeper of the time, Lame Bull. The rite took place just about a half mile north of where St. Paul's Mission now is." 131 221 361

Crow Bull kept the Pipe a long time, until his death in 1887, upon which it fell to his widow, an Assiniboine woman named Coming Day. This woman neglected the Pipe. Coming Daylight told her: "Now, this Pipe is just like your father. Why is he always left alone? He was never left alone before. Now I have a mare and this Pipe has a saddle. Put the Pipe on the saddle and take it to White Bird. He will take care of it." So they went to White Bird and talked to him first. He agreed to take it over without rite or vow. On the request of a young man, Bird Sits High, the Pipe was transferred to him. This young man died soon after and his father, Otter Robe, took it upon himself to harbor the Pipe. When Otter Robe died, sometime prior to 1908,

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

102
131
133
657

FORT BELKNAP RESERVATION AND SURROUNDING AREA

[p. ii]

PLATES

142 The original photograph of Plate 1 was taken in 1887 and
291 belongs to The Boy. Shown in it are Lame Bull, The Boy's
301 father, and Crow Bull, maternal uncle of Coming Daylight. Both
302 of these men were born around 1825 and their personal experiences were often referred to by our informants as we took down the record of the old way of life. Each had been Keeper of the sacred Flat Pipe.

115 The photographs composing Plate 2, except for the one of The
133 Boy, were taken in 1940 by Dr. Karl F. Herzfeld. The first three
142 show the nature of the country around Hays on the Fort Belknap
291 Reservation; the other three show some of our informants and
292 interpreters whose biographical sketches follow.

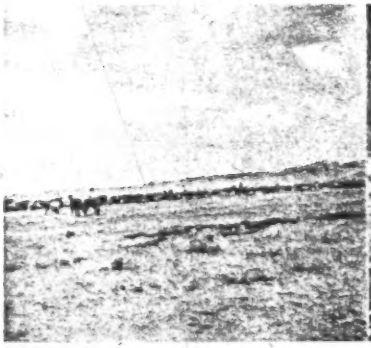
531 In Plate 3, the shield and war medicines of Bull Lodge, father
797 of our informant, Garter Snake, represent only a few of the specimens of Gros Ventre culture collected in 1937 by Mr.
778 Richard Pohrt, of Flint, Michigan.
293
714
721

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

115
133
142
291
292
531

IN THE LITTLE ROCKIES

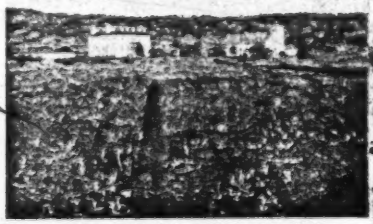
THE BOY



PLAINS NEAR HAYS

MARY, SINGER, AND COMING DAYLIGHT

[342]
[797]



ST. PAUL'S MISSION AND SCHOOL

COMING DAYLIGHT'S TIPI

PLATE II

[p. 212 (B)]

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

175 648 familiar, were given to the Gros Ventres at the Milk River. In spite of warnings, the Indians ate the food uncooked, with the result that many became sick and several died. A creole Frenchman, living among them at the time, persuaded the Gros Ventres that they had been poisoned deliberately, and some of the warriors wanted to go after Culbertson with the intention of killing him. Fortunately, however, Culbertson was so well known to and liked by most of the Gros Ventres that the rasher members of the tribe were restrained from carrying out this project.[67]

Stevens concluded in 1855 a treaty at the Judith River whereby the Blackfoot Nation (including the Gros Ventres) agreed that their territory should be a common hunting territory for all signatories. The United States agreed to spend $20,000 each year for 10 years in provisions for the Gros Ventres, Blackfoot, Piegan and Blood, and $15,000 a year for ten years in instructing them in agriculture and mechanical pursuits, educating their children, and so on. The non-signatory tribes were the Crow, Assiniboine and Sioux.[68]

Although it was reported that the good will among the tribes was remarkable, and that peace was sincerely desired, raiding parties continued very much as before. In addition, more and more whites were encroaching on the territory supposed to have been reserved for the use of the Blackfoot tribes and Gros Ventres. Gold was discovered within the area about 1862, and Lewis has given a cogent summary of events which led up to Piegan enmity toward both Gros Ventres and whites, and which culminated in war, 1866–70.[69]

The End of the Buffalo Days (1870–1890).

136 175 648 The end of the buffalo days was now rapidly approaching. The completion of the Union Pacific railroad in 1869 split the northern and southern herds of buffalo. With the presence of increasing numbers of commercial white hunters, armed with long-range repeating rifles, the end of the great north herd was beginning in 1876. It was not, however, until 1880 that slaughter was universal

[67] Bradley, p. 271.
[68] Hoopes, pp. 113–15.
[69] O. Lewis, pp. 62–66.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

over the area. The Gros Ventres had the benefit of buffalo hunting a trifle longer than the other groups. All the buffalo in Montana were in February, 1882, in their territory, between the Milk River and the Bear Paw Mountains. The hunting season, of October 1882 to February 1883, finished the annihilation of the great northern herd and left only stragglers, merely a few thousands.[70] By August, 1883, both the Blackfoot and the Crow Agencies reported that all game was gone from their respective reservations, and a letter from the Fort Belknap Agency stated that game there "was practically exhausted."[71] In 1884 the Blackfoot and Crow agencies reported that the buffalo was extinct.[72] After ceding more land, in 1888 the limits of the Fort Belknap Reservation, which the Gros Ventres share with the Assiniboine, were finally fixed.[73]

136 175 648 [657]

Missionary endeavors, carried on by the Jesuit Fathers, had begun in earnest only in 1885. Prior to that time contact with missionaries had been sporadic. Father Point in 1846–47 had been well received and sent in a good report of this tribe. When Father Giorda attempted to go among them in 1862, however, Bull Lodge took him prisoner and stripped him of his possessions. Since his captivity did not last longer than a few weeks, and his property was restored to him, several months later he made another attempt. This time, while there was some opposition at first, he was permitted to baptize over a hundred children. Subsequently Fathers Rappagliosi and Grassi made several visits respectively, and at considerable intervals. Finally, after some preliminary negotiations, Father Ebershweiler established permanent residence in 1885, and the school at St. Paul's was opened in 1887. The mission and school flourished. In 1891 the founder was replaced by Father Flusi, assisted by Father Sansome.[74]

175 797

The Gros Ventres population—always small, relative to that of surrounding tribes—was steadily declining. Hayden's estimate of 1853 placed the total at 2520.[75] In 1883, at the time of the

175 161

[70] Hornaday, pp. 492, 506, 510–11.
[71] Report of Commissioner of Indian Affairs 1883–1915, pp. lx, 98.
[72] *Ibid.*, pp. 107, 109.
[73] *Ibid.*, p. 295.
[74] Palladino, pp. 187, 195–96, 230, 232, 235.
[75] Hayden, p. 344. Gros Ventres today claim their number was then 10,000.

PLATES

142 The original photograph of Plate 1 was taken in 1887 and
291 belongs to The Boy. Shown in it are Lame Bull, The Boy's
301 father, and Crow Bull, maternal uncle of Coming Daylight. Both
302 of these men were born around 1825 and their personal experiences were often referred to by our informants as we took down the record of the old way of life. Each had been Keeper of the sacred Flat Pipe.

115 The photographs composing Plate 2, except for the one of The
133 Boy, were taken in 1940 by Dr. Karl F. Herzfeld. The first three
142 show the nature of the country around Hays on the Fort Belknap
291 Reservation; the other three show some of our informants and
292 interpreters whose biographical sketches follow.

531 In Plate 3, the shield and war medicines of Bull Lodge, father
797 of our informant, Garter Snake, represent only a few of the specimens of Gros Ventre culture collected in 1937 by Mr.
778 Richard Pohrt, of Flint, Michigan.
293
714
721

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

142
291
301
302

PLATE I

LEFT TO RIGHT: LAME BULL, BIRD SITTING, BLACK BIRD AND CROW BULL

(Photo by Dan Dutro, Fort Benton, Montana, 1887)

[p. 212 (A)]

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

115
133
142
291
292
531

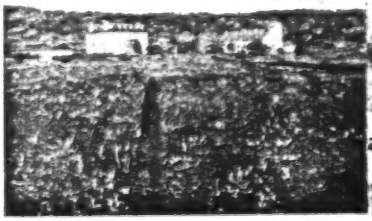
IN THE LITTLE ROCKIES

THE BOY

PLAINS NEAR HAYS

MARY, SINGER, AND COMING DAYLIGHT

[342]
[797]



ST. PAUL'S MISSION AND SCHOOL

COMING DAYLIGHT'S TIPI

PLATE II

[p. 212 (B)]

842 thers wash such clothes and wear them again right after delivery—and they have a lot more babies now than they used to have, too."

Coming Daylight said that formerly most women had only two [163] or three children,—at most five,—and that some had none at all. Yet in the "old days" the population was large. Singer mentioned that although a man with several wives might have one as favorite, this would not make any difference. Each wife would have one or two children; no one of them would have a great many.[1]

These two old women, and our older men informants as well, were firmly convinced that "medicinal" contraceptives accounted for the small families. The old woman said: "Lots of women took medicine. There are roots for that [contraception]. Women who do not want children say, as an excuse, that one cannot keep things in order if there are children about. Not everybody had this kind of medicine, and one had to pay a high price for it—sometimes two or three horses. If a man were the owner of this type of medicine, he might demand in payment one of the other wives of the husband who obtained the medicine from him. If you take this kind of medicine you have to abide by certain rules. You must not let anyone who has children wear your robe; never sit on the bare ground; never hold an infant; don't sit on anyone's else bedding; above all, don't have intercourse with anyone other than your husband. If you break any of these rules you will conceive right away."

To illustrate this point, one woman told about her cousin's wife who had taken medicine to prevent her having children. While [837] her husband was away, she "threw in" with another man and became pregnant. Some women hesitated to take this kind of medicine because if a woman then became pregnant her husband would suspect infidelity, even though the wife had remained chaste but had "broken one of the other rules." Singer said that she would

[145] [1] This is confirmed by Denig, who was among the northern plains tribes for 20 years and was himself married to an Assiniboine. He makes the following observations, p. 513: (1) Not more than two out of five children live till youth is passed; (2) two to five children is the average and seven or eight of rare occurrence; (3) a woman is old at 35 and seldom healthy, menopause occurs at 40 or earlier, the usual period of child-bearing is 18 to 35, although a few start bearing at 15.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros. Ventre NQ13

CHAPTER X

OLD AGE AND DEATH

It is the opinion of the now aged Gros Ventres that the proportion of old persons was much greater in the past than it has been since they have taken up the white man's ways; and further, that the aged then retained their health and vigor to a greater degree.[1] One old woman stated that when she was young, there used to be many old people, but that they died off when there were no more buffalo. She added: "People lived to a good old age on the things that the Supreme Being provided,—roots, wild vegetables and fruits, dried meats and berries. In those days, too, they drank broth instead of tea and coffee. Old folks didn't lose their teeth then, although even young girls do nowadays. Their teeth eventually got worn down, but they seldom pulled them. In fact, if an old person should lose a tooth, he thought it was awful and was sure that he was ready for the grave. Furthermore, people didn't get white hair until they were ready for 'old age sleep'—very old people sleep most of the time—yet now one sees middle-aged and even younger people with gray hair like the whites have."

Status and Treatment of the Aged

It was believed that a person who had lived to a ripe old age had been privileged to do so by the Supreme Being. Therefore, they reasoned, if you are good to old people, these in turn will pray to the Supreme Being for your health, long life, and success. Children were instructed explicitly to be good to the aged,—to feed them, to clothe them, and to help them in difficulties,—as well as to seek out those so blessed and ask for their prayers. It was

[1] Allowance should of course be made for the fact that "old age" is a relative term. When it was said that young men were urged to marry "older experienced women," this referred to a woman of perhaps twenty to twenty-five. See pp. 171–72. A woman on the northern plains was "old" at forty, according to Denig, p. 513.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

ciency with the overhand stroke and girls with the breast stroke.[8] 857
Sometimes the children amused themselves by rolling down the 526
bank so that their bodies made a loud smack as they hit the water. 481
At other times they held contests to see who could dive and stay under the longest time, or who could make the biggest bubble by exhaling under water. Follow-the-leader was played even in big rivers like the Missouri, but only the more courageous participated in this game. The one who had the reputation as bravest was the leader, and Coming Daylight claimed that she, herself, often led off, one of her accomplishments being the ability to swim quite far under water.

There was no adult supervision of children at play and they 857
spent much time at the water's edge, even when not intending to 524
swim. Modelling in clay was done by boys as well as by girls. The latter liked especially to form wet clay into "parflesches" and incise marks to represent beaded and painted designs.

Walking on stilts, teetering on logs, swinging by standing in a [481]
loop of rawhide, all were considered enjoyable activities for little girls. Nevertheless some of their games were quite rough and-tumble. In one such game, girls formed a circle, each pinching the flesh on the back of her neighbor's left hand; while standing thus they sang a song which was repeated as many times as necessary until someone let go of her neighbor's hand; whereupon this girl was jumped on and mauled by all the others. In another game, one girl, with her eyes closed, would try to find the others who were seated in a row on the ground. Different ones would call out: "This way! This way!" Each was anxious to be the first discovered. As soon as the girl who was "it" touched one of the others, she picked her up and, carrying her upside-down on her back to the spot from which she had originally started, she dumped her burden on the ground. This procedure was repeated until "it" had carried each girl, but the last one to be dumped was tickled unmercifully by all the others.

Girls played with two kinds of balls. One type was of buck- 857
skin stuffed with deer-hair. This they would toss to one another. 526
The other type of ball was large and made from the bladder of a [232]
buffalo cow, dried and stuffed.

[8] The marked ability of the Gros Ventres in swimming was noted in 1833 [147]
by Maximilian, p. 72.

787 began to dig around behind her bedding and brought out a bowl
775 such as that in which buffalo chips are pounded into powder. She said: 'Here. I want you to eat this.' It didn't look good to me and I just kind of felt it with my fingers. Instead of having sat by my sister as my mother had directed, I had remained by the door, because I felt kind of scared in some way. So I told them: 'Wait. I guess I will go out a minute. I will be right back.' But I got out of there and ran home as fast as I could go—back to my own bed, back to myself. If I had eaten what they had given me that would have been the last of me! After this dream I got well."

Mourning

765 As soon as word was circulated that someone had died, all rela-
152 tives of that person, especially the women, were supposed to gather as soon as possible to cry and mourn for the deceased. Very close kin were expected to show their sorrow at the death of a loved one not only by crying and wailing, but also by casting off their good clothes and donning old ones,—robes, for instance, consisting of pieces of old discarded lodge covers, or ordinary robes that were rough and worn,—and by cutting the hair.[7] This latter was truly
[832] a great sacrifice, for to the Gros Ventres one of the chief criteria
[302] of beauty, in men and women alike, was extreme length of hair. The hair of younger children in a family was spared, even at the death of parents, but should, say, a father die, the hair of the older daughters was shorn, though not cut so short as that of the widow.
[887] An elderly woman was usually called upon to do the cutting and the widow, guided by the strength of her emotional reaction, would indicate how short she wished her hair to be. It was said that some widows would leave their hair relatively long, just free of the shoulders, while others "when they felt too badly, had all their hair cut off, almost as men now wear their hair."

Close kin were accustomed to further show grief by going off to the hills and fasting, crying aloud as they wandered about alone, and sleeping out without shelter. A parent would have done so at the loss of a son, one spouse at the death of the other, or a sister for her deceased brother. Such mourners would stay out

[7] For this and other practices in mourning, see Kroeber, 1908, p. 181.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

765 152

until someone went after them and talked to them and persuaded them to eat and drink some water.

The most extravagant expressions of grief were expected on the part of close relatives of men killed at war. It was under such circumstances that the mourners tore off their clothes and gashed their arms and legs. The blood was not washed off and the wounds were allowed to fester, often leaving ugly scars. It was maintained that in mourning the Gros Ventres did not cut off fingers,—that was done only in fulfilment of a vow. [304]

If a brave young man were killed by the enemy, his parents went even further in the expression of their grief, and sometimes had to be restrained from committing suicide. The father could show additional sorrow by cutting the manes and tails of his son's horses, which he then led about as he wandered on the hills for four days and nights, crying and mourning. The following case illustrates the behavior of an elder brother in mourning for a younger one, but may be somewhat exceptional in that the former felt responsible for the latter's death. [562] 765 787

"Little Man, also known as Deafie, was on his way home with his younger brother. They had been on a friendly visit to the Crow. There were others in the party and one evening while they were camped, the younger brother had a dream. The next morning he told them: 'I had a bad dream. I dreamed I got killed.' One of the older men said: 'All right. We will stop here awhile so we can make a sweat-lodge and we will smudge.' (That is what they did when they wanted to prevent something bad from happening.) But Little Man told them that, although the rest of them might believe in dreams, he did not, and he insisted that they move on. The old man couldn't say anything more. As they were going along that same day, Little Man was scouting ahead and sighted the enemy. The Gros Ventre party separated, Little Man going with one group, his brother with the other. The brother happened to go right into the midst of the Assiniboine and was killed. The others heard the shots, but when they got there, Little Man found his brother lying dead. He then tore off all his clothes and would have committed suicide by dashing singlehanded after the enemy had not his brother-in-law grabbed him and held him back. When they got home, Little Man felt so badly that he cut off his beautiful

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

a circle and sang a wordless song, while "other men and women danced up and down in one place behind the old women singers." 785 796*

The vower would start his "dance" by reaching back and tearing off his shield, and in doing so, of course tearing the skin over the skewer in his back. Then with the bone whistle he carried round his neck he blew "a rapid whistle," "a sort of trill," "as if he were blowing on a flute,"—this as a sign he was ready to go through the rest of the ordeal. Then while the singers "sang hard for him," he danced with both feet, pumped up and down, and swung around, pulling and jerking and backing on the taut thongs attached to the center pole in order to tear the skewered flesh of his chest and to free himself. Sometimes the flesh would not break, or the flesh on one side of his chest would while that on the other would not. When the ordeal would go on very long, and the suffering would be extreme, and the dancer might be exhausting himself, some one of the onlookers might have pity on him and say to a bystander: "You go and tear him loose." He would then go and push and throw the "dancer" hard so the skin would break off. The Boy and Thick knew one case where the skin on one side of the "dancer's" chest would not break off even by such pushing and throwing; so they had to cut it with a knife. People thought that the darker a man's skin was the tougher it was and this last man had very dark skin. "Sometimes the dancer's skin was so tough it would stretch way out like a shirt." When a "dancer's" skin would finally break under the pulling and backing he would just fall over to the ground and the thong would spring back round the pole. Then he would be taken back and laid down and the loose skin would be trimmed off. These trimmed off pieces of skin would be gotten together by the ritual grandfathers who would take them to the buffalo skull (at the base of the center pole), hold them up, and then lay them on top of the skull, "as an offering of the very body itself." [534]

"Some 'dancers' did not have much nerve and would wince and flinch. Some didn't bat an eye." At one dance, Coming Daylight told us, one young man after the thongs were attached and pulled "just burst out crying, it was so painful. After that he went to the center pole and put his arms around it and cried there. I [152]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

785 couldn't stand it. I ran home to my grandmother and cried too
*796 because I pitied that young man." On another occasion, Thick
too, then a young boy, "cried from the pitiful scene," as he ex-
[152] pressed it. "Big Thunder," according to Coming Daylight, "had very long thick hair. When he was dancing around the pole in the Sacrifice Dance his hair swept the ground. It looked just awful. I screamed and ran home." From what was told The Boy by his brother who underwent this self-torture once in the Sacrifice Dance and twice alone on a knoll (see details of latter rite, pp. 393-398), "The beginning was hardest; as you went along, you got sort of numbed and the pain was not so bad." His brother had felt very acute pain at the trimming of the lacerated flesh. That night the pain was so intense that he could not sleep: "it was as if two red hot coals were there."

According to Al Chandler the Gros Ventres considered their Sacrifice Dance a much more severe ordeal in the way of self-torture and fasting than were the Sun Dances of neighboring tribes and to this severity they attributed the early abandonment of the rite.

After all the "dancers" had in turn gone through their self-torture, they left the scene together, and were through with their participation in the Sacrifice Dance and could break their fast. But, through the succeeding fourth night, some of the other participants (which ones we could not discover) continued their fast, and the others danced and sang.

*796 Certain important features of the Sacrifice Dance have not been mentioned so far, as we could not learn just where they fitted into the ritual sequence. We shall describe them now.

The Boy was quite positive that a sweat-lodge rite was held in connection with the Sacrifice Dance, on the fourth night of singing and just prior to the beginning of the Dance proper. In all likelihood the rite followed in general pattern that of the Sacred Pipe sweat-lodge. Sweet grass was the proper ritual material smudge throughout the Sacrifice Dance including this preliminary sweating.

787 Some of the participants in the Sacrifice Dance,—"not necessarily
*796 the one or ones who had made vows, but dancers trying their

8:Flannery E-5 (1940-1948)1960 NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

159 Her final rejoinder was such a witty and pointed one that everyone laughed
578 heartily at her rival's expense. In this culture, of course, public ridicule was a
626 far more effective retaliation than the biting and scratching that other women said frankly they would have indulged in when attacked.

Expression of emotional excess was institutionalized for the Gros Ventres, as
152 for the rest of the Plains, in the bereavement situation. Upon the death of a
765 husband, son, or father, a woman was expected to start wailing as soon as she
183 heard the news, have her hair cut off, discard good clothes for old ragged ones,
[762] gash her arms and legs, go to the hills to mourn and cry, resisting for a time the pleas of her relatives to return, and being watched lest she attempt suicide. Coming Daylight was only a young woman when she was first widowed and
159 the mourning pattern was still in full vogue. It is certain from other evidence
765 than Coming Dayling had a deep affection for this husband to whom she had
183 been given as a child-bride and in whose kindly and indulgent treatment she had found a pleasant escape from the rigorous discipline of her grandmother.
152 Nevertheless the public expression of her grief was minimal—no abandonment
[603] for her. Although her sister was sent on the hills with her to keep watch over her in the usual way, Coming Daylight was easily persuaded to return shortly though she herself was proud of the fact that she had stayed out so long that she actually had got a frozen toe! In later years when all that was left of the
159 ritual was the wailing out on the hills, she lost the son whom she herself, and
182 everybody else, acknowledged as her favorite. She had not been on the hills
765 very long when she experienced a significant dream, as follows. She was in a lodge at the rear of which was a big pile of tobacco mixture and a pipe. The
787 owner of the lodge filled the pipe and approached her. She was frightened
276 because she didn't smoke. The owner of the lodge however told her: "Look at these people." She looked and saw many with their hair cut and their bodies bleeding from the gashes inflicted in grief. The man then told her: "That is in the past. Nowadays your only consolation is in smoking." So she accepted the pipe and, after smoking it, she was painted in ceremonial fashion by each of those other mourners. Then the owner of the lodge dismissed her saying: "Now, go home and don't ever go on the hills and mourn again. But always smoke if you want to." She went home right after this dream and when she told her husband of it he accepted it as valid and persuaded her sister to prepare for Coming Daylight her first real smoke. She maintained that the habit subsequently developed was actually a great comfort to her.

The final area with which we shall be concerned here is the war complex—a
726 vital aspect of the old Plains culture. Gros Ventre women were allowed direct
562 but limited participation in these activities in the sense that, while they would
182 not join a party of men who were going on horse-raiding or revenge expeditions,
[554] if opportunity offered they might exhibit the same kind of bravery that a man should show and derive considerable status therefrom. For instance, if one of the enemy fell nearby, the women rushed out from camp to count coup, and to grab trophies with which to inaugurate the relationship known as "enemy-friends." Coming Daylight, however, was never one to indulge in this sport.
159 She told of the one—and to her extremely distasteful—occasion on which her
726 hand literally was forced. It seems that during a raid on their camp one of the
562 enemy was shot and her husband scalped him. The victim was lying not far from her lodge and, as her husband dashed off to pursue the rest of the Assiniboine, he shouted for her to come out and see what was going on. Coming Daylight saw the man lying there, face down, covered with blood. He was not dead

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the Grass dance may have seemed appropriate to the Gros 796
Ventres as reminiscent of the feather headdress worn by the par- 178
ticipants in the Women's Dance belonging to the series of vowed 562
Sacred Dances. But regardless of the possible symbolism, these four offices, plus the four others allotted to women,—two whip owners and their two assistants,—gave the female sex a fair degree of recognition, and probably reflect the newer economic status of women which came about with the changing concept of inheritance. Formerly women, of course, had a right to their own property, but acquisition thereof was mainly through their [425]
own manufacture, such as clothing, or through the relatively rare gift of a horse or so. They did not come in for any valuable [428
property through inheritance and a widow in those days was not 589]
even entitled to any of her deceased husband's belongings.

The holding of office in the Grass dance thus offered one of the 796
very few means remaining for acquisition of status by the indi- 554
vidual. The frequent transfer of offices meant that there was opportunity for many individuals within each category,—mature men, older warriors, young men, women,—to enjoy such public recognition.

Public display of generosity in giving away property to honor 796
a loved one, which became such a marked feature of the Grass 178
dance in its later phase, carried on and accentuated the method 431
most common in older Gros Ventre culture for the gaining of in- 156
dividual prestige. Formerly there were many opportunities for 554
this kind of ostentatious liberality,—when a pipe or a painted lodge was transferred, when a warrior returned from accomplishing brave deeds, when a person was participating in one of the Sacred Dances, when a person was named, when a child's ears were pierced, and so on. At such times the relatives publicly gave away as much of their property as they possibly could,—not to the recipient of the pipe, the brave warrior, the participant in the Sacred Dance, et al.,—but to someone else in his honor. Everybody would know what was given and by whom; people would make such comments as: "So-and-so is a fine man. He surely must think a lot of his relative—look at all the things he

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 gave away in his honor." When first adopted the Grass dance
178 offered only one such opportunity—and a relatively minor one.
431 As times changed, however, the Grass dance provided practically
156 the sole occasion for gaining prestige while at the same time
554 carrying out the old pattern of kinship obligation by enhancing the prestige of relatives.

The possibility in the later form of the Grass dance of paying for privileges, such as locking the door, or whipping those who did not get up to dance, gave further scope for the acquisition of prestige through liberality, as did also, of course, payments at transfer of office.

It was estimated by our informants that around 1900 as much as a thousand dollars in goods and cash changed hands at a single performance of the Grass dance. At that time it was not uncommon for the dance to be held at weekly intervals. So long as the Gros Ventre were relatively prosperous and had property to display and exchange according to the older patterns, the Grass dance continued to function. With increasing poverty, however, along
[735] with other factors such as the changing points of view and interests on the part of the younger generation, and the dying out of
[182] the older warriors, the Grass dance, the core of which was the dog ritual, gradually paled off leaving but the remnants of some of the round dances which had been added to the Grass dance as originally adopted from the Assiniboine.

Summary

796 Between 1875 and 1880 the Gros Ventres received the Grass
177 dance from the Assiniboine. From the date of adoption up to
575 about 1890 the Grass dance was performed only by members of one of the two soldier societies and the custodians of the ceremonial equipment were the officers. Offices were transferred among members according to the old Gros Ventre pattern.

796 The essential core of the Grass dance was the dog ritual, a
[262] ceremonial eating of dog flesh, carried out by the owners of the equipment with the assistance of four warriors selected from among the lay members. Other features of the program at each

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

776 anything. So Coming Daylight took her infant to her aunt who
753 was a kind of "spiritualist" (one having a ghost helper). The aunt took the baby in her arms and told Coming Daylight: "You get me a piece of charcoal." The aunt took the charcoal and rubbed it on the baby's neck at the back, bent over as if she were going to bite the infant, drew out (apparently by sucking) a little sliver from the baby's neck, and said: "This is what caused her to have a stiff neck." They said a spirit had shot her, although they did not have the baby outside when this happened to her. You were not supposed to take an infant outside in the dark without covering its head. Actually Coming Daylight's infant was inside the tent during the night and they heard something hit a lodge pole and it seemed to frighten the baby, who continued to cry until the aunt removed the sliver.

[158] Mental abnormality could also be caused by such bad spirits, ghostly or other, whether by "shooting" the victim or getting into
751 him is not known. To keep the bad spirits at bay, a stick, with its
776 tip blackened with "nicotine," was left near a baby whenever the baby had to be left alone. Whenever adults went out in the dark, they picked up and carried a stick, of any kind; it was believed that the spirits were afraid of the sticks and would not come near. Beyond such protective observances there appears to have been no cult proper of these bad spirits in the way of propitiatory prayers or offerings.

Much, though not all sickness was ascribed to a malevolent
753 being called Atsa:. When illness recently took off a mother and
776 child in a family, the people said, "Atsa: has visited so-and-so's family." Atsa: did not himself put sickness-causing objects in his victims' bodies, but he was responsible indirectly for other kinds of illness, that is, he had something to do with them. To him
[731] were attributed particularly epidemics, especially smallpox, chicken pox and measles. He was an ugly, hideous being, unkempt, with scaly skin and bushy hair who never washed his face. He was thin and starved-looking and his nails were long. He was thoroughly disliked. No food or pipe was ever offered to him. When serious
776 sickness visited the camp, the Supreme Being was prayed to: "Take Atsa: away. He is causing a lot of trouble." Atsa: was

CHAPTER VII

CURING PRACTICES

880 A good many Gros Ventres through quest or otherwise acquired doctoring power. To give a better idea of it we shall need to see it against the larger background of native concepts of the cause and cure of illness.

Causes of Illness

753 Some illnesses were ascribed to solely or mainly natural agents or agential causes, others to supernatural ones. The line between the two types of causation is not, however, always clear.

753 Sometimes supernaturally caused ailments followed automat-
984 ically from the breach of taboos, others were inflicted intentionally by non-human or by human agents.

Marrow bones were not supposed to be broken inside a lodge or house, and a person who transgressed this taboo would suffer from sore legs. The penalty of fits, cramps and paralysis from certain actions to or by keepers of the Flat and Feathered Pipes has been previously noted.

753 The chief sender of sickness, particularly of epidemics such as
776 smallpox and measles, was the being, Atsa:. This being appears likewise to have had something to do indirectly with other ailments, but exactly what part he had in causing such ailments could not be cleared up by us. The intrusion of pathogenic objects into the body to cause illness was not attributed to Atsa: personally.

Malevolent spirits,—whether ghostly or other is not clear,—would cause illness by "shooting" people, that is, by projecting some small object into the body of the victim. To the maleficent
753 activity of these spirits was also ascribed mental derangement, at
● 158 least in some cases. One such mentally deranged woman was once seen by Coming Daylight. This woman who was getting along in years became deranged all of a sudden. Coming Daylight, with the consent of the woman's husband, went to her lodge and peered in.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13·

"The woman had everything, like blankets and dishes and so forth, stuffed in between the poles and covering of the lodge. The woman herself was on the ground, crawling around and making motions with her hands as if she were working at something on the ground." Coming Daylight did not know if or how the woman recovered from her derangement because shortly after camp was moved and the people scattered. 753 158

Coming Daylight gave details of another mental case, that of a young man who wandered off from camp, tore off his clothing, cut his hair off short, and came running back fast to camp. The people noticed his wild look, grabbed him, and picketed him. He was "raving mad." Later he used to go into the brush, cut sticks until he had a large bundle, and carry the bundle around with him until his death. Some people were afraid of him, but most were not. Coming Daylight did not recall his ever scaring her or her children. He would ask in a kind of pitiful way for something to eat. He would visit a while and then just rush out of the lodge or house.

Thick gave us details of one case of illness of doubtful origin. The illness had started one night when Thick and an inseparable boyhood friend of his were coming back to camp together. They were walking on a flat together, and heard behind them a sound "like somebody dragging a robe or something stiff." They thought it was a ghost and started to run. After a bit they stopped and looked back but could not see anything. They decided it must be a ghost. So they started walking again, and pretty soon they heard the same sound. Of course they then ran. Thick's friend then had a feeling as if somebody were grabbing the hair up on his head, and looked back and said: "Stop! Here is the fellow who is chasing us." 753

It was a great big owl dragging its wings. From that time on he got worse, and died soon after in 1889. Thick thought that the scare got that night brought on the illness. The doctors who treated the boy claimed he had been "doped" [bewitched] by someone. [754]

Grave or fatal illness could also be brought on by human beings, usually those with doctor power, through sheer wishing or through other procedures, or even, it seems, by human without supernaturally acquired power through concentrated wishing, as will be explained in detail later. 754

757 Thomas Main's grandfather would, from time to time when not feeling well, drink a large quantity of fairly warm water, perhaps two or three quarts, before eating breakfast. He would then go outside, put his finger in his throat, and vomit. This means, instead of a physic, was resorted to as a laxative.

As soon as the first thunder of spring was heard, a person with warts would blow on them and they would come off. This was apparently looked upon as a "rational" treatment, though it was possibly of the magical order.

158 726 755 The following cure, related by Coming Daylight and Singer, was of the natural order, but came about without intentional treatment. A young unmarried man, inseparable friend of Dressed In White, Coming Daylight's husband, had become mentally deranged. He would tear off his clothes and when they would catch him and put clothes on him he would run till he ran into the water. He would run everywhere, and would climb up the sides of lodges to the top. This condition lasted not very long before his cure in battle. Some Gros Ventres, including Dressed In White, Coming Daylight and the young man, while camped at Black Butte (now Havre, Mont.), were attacked by some Assiniboine. With all the noise and shooting, the Gros Ventre horses stampeded. Dressed In White ran with his gun toward the stampeding horses, and, as he did so, saw one of the enemy fall in their midst, try to get up, and fall again. Dressed In White shot at him three times and then his gun would not go off and in his anger at it he smashed it on the ground. At this juncture, the young man came along, and Dressed In White said to him: "Hurry and grab that enemy. He is trying to get on a horse." The young man ran over, grabbed the enemy by the hair on either side of the head, threw him to the ground, and held him there. The Assiniboine had a knife but no gun and was trying to get up, buttocks first. Another Gros Ventre, Cuts The Rope, now ran over and shot the Assiniboine, and all then hit him, counting coup on him. From that time on, the young man was quite cured of his mental derangement, or at least showed no more symptoms of it, but he was shot to death not long after by another Gros Ventre. "By getting an enemy single-handed this young man had become a big chief and could have lots of lovers."[10]

---

[10] Women admired brave young men. See Flannery, 1953, pp. 190-91.

l: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

age, and the third a woman probably a little older. They are not in any 114
sense historical, but were obtained for the picture they give of the war-life 115
of the Plains Indians. Both the men were renowned warriors. Bull-Robe, the older, has since died. In the case of neither was a complete account of all their achievements in war obtained; but both narratives probably refer to every war party or engagement in which they took part down to the point at which the narratives are broken off. All three narratives bear the stamp of naïve truthfulness; which, in view of the importance played in the life of the Plains tribes by the telling of war-exploits and the recounting of coups, is not surprising. It must be remembered that the narrators were not asked to describe the engagements and expeditions in which they were involved, but to narrate their personal share in them. This will account for the frequency with which an insignificant personal experience is told in detail and the general result of a war-party slurred over or ignored. The story told by the woman Watches-All has reference to the great disastrous expedition against the Piegans in 1867.

Black Wolf's Narrative.

When I was a boy I heard about great deeds in war, and resolved to 159
follow in the tracks of such men. When I was a young man I started out 726
alone. I travelled, and reached the camp of another band of Gros Ventre on the Missouri. I ate there and went on to the Bear Paw Mountains. There I slept at the foot of Eagle Butte. I started again before sunrise and crossed the mountains, following Beaver Creek to the end of the mountains. I saw buffalo, and shot at them. Some one else was hunting these buffalo, and heard the shot. After shooting, I had left my horse tied at the foot of the butte; which I climbed in order to look over the country. Then I saw some one below me coming up the butte. A moment later he saw me. I raised my gun, but he dodged and ran off. Thinking he was one of a party, I ran off also, reached my horse, and rode into the timber. When I could hear and see no one, I rode to where there was a trading-post on Milk River. At night all the horses there ran off into the timber. In the morning an Assiniboine was about to go to get them, when I told him that I would go after them, and started with my gun and a rope. Then I saw what looked like a flock of blackbirds flying over a hill. Soon I saw they were people. At first I had seen only their heads. They were coming over the hill towards me, but on one side, in order to ambush me. Suddenly they were riding at me. At first I was as if dazzled, and it looked like a fog to me. Then I recovered my senses. I was some distance from the post. I did not run, but waited for them. Two of them with long whips were in the lead. I

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

159
726

stood there until they had gone by me. Then I ran. One of them shot at me, and I turned and took a shot at the leaders. Then I ran on again and they pursued me, and soon the entire party was all about me, all of them shooting. Bullets struck the ground all about me, and there was no noise but that of shooting. But I was never even scratched. Suddenly the attacking party split. A white man was running from the store with a gun to help me. I ran to him, and reached him almost exhausted. He took my hand and we ran back to the house. The enemy, however, captured all our horses, including those of the trader.

My father had sent word to the trader to keep me there if I should come, so I staid there some time; but I did not return to the camp. One day I had gone out to hobble my horse. Then the same party that had attacked me before came again. They crept up to the house, charged on it, and looked for me everywhere. An Indian woman who was there ran out on the prairie and motioned to me to go away. I cut the hobbles of my horse, jumped on it, and rode away. Looking back, I saw the party of the enemy at the house. I dismounted and lay down on the ground to hide. The woman came to me and told me that they were a party of Yanktons and other Sioux, looking for me; but by this time I knew it without being told. The Sioux looked for me all through the trader's cellar, but I was in the timber in a sort of breastwork I had dug. This was the second time I escaped from this party. Some of them said that they were trying to get the Assiniboine that was there, and some the Gros Ventre, myself. After their first failure to kill me, they had determined to come back; but I escaped them the second time also.

We were camped north of Milk River. A party of us went to where the agency then was on Milk River, and slept there. We were getting ready to start, and I was sent by the leader to saddle my horse and go ahead while they ate. A little boy was crying to go outdoors, and I opened the door for him, when I saw a Sioux a short distance outside. I shut the door and ran back to my companions in the next room. We went out with our guns, but the Sioux was gone. We watched the way he went, and saw him going over a hill westward. Then a band began to come in sight, more and more of them. They were a large party, mostly on foot. Seven or eight were mounted. There were only eight of us. It was a very windy day. The agent commanded us not to shoot, threatening to shoot us if we began fighting, and ordered us to wait until we were shot at. We went up on top of a house to watch. A man put tobacco into a blanket to take to the Sioux, and he had just got out of the door when a dog barked at the Sioux, and they shot. Then the firing began. Those of us who were on the roof sheltered ourselves behind chimneys. Two women were with us. As they hurried

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

down the ladder below, the wind blew their dresses over their heads. When 159 726
the man with the tobacco was shot at, he jumped back into the house, spilling his tobacco. We were shooting at them, and the whites also were shooting. The Sioux began to retire. Then I thought I would do a brave deed. I went out into the open space before the house, wearing a conspicuous red robe and black trousers. There I jumped about while they shot at me without hitting me. Then I went back behind the house again. Soon the Gros Ventre mounted their horses and attacked the Sioux, and kept driving them before them until they drove them into the timber at the river. One of our horses was killed, and one man was creased in the leg. There were very many of them, but only eight of us.

A small Gros Ventre camp of four tents had been living with the Crow. We were on our way back to the Gros Ventre, when at night a party of Sioux stole our horses. A company of soldiers was camped near us. In the morning, when we went out for our horses, we could not find them. One of our men saw the Sioux preparing to shoot a buffalo, but he acted as if he did not see them. When the Sioux saw him, they crouched down and hid. He looked over the country with his telescope in directions other than the one they were in. Then after a while he looked at them and counted seven of them. He had miscounted, for there were eight. Then he mounted his horse and rode slowly in another direction, but when he was behind the hill he hastened back to the camp. Two of us Gros Ventre knew English, and told the soldiers of the presence of the Sioux. The soldiers started after them. A mule followed them, and when he saw the soldiers' horses, which the Sioux were keeping hobbled in a gully, he ran to join them, so that the Sioux got possession of the mule also in broad daylight. I had gone to the hill where the Gros Ventre had first seen the Sioux, and was looking for them. From there I went on to the next hill, still looking for them. Another Gros Ventre came to me and said that the soldiers wanted us to go to the next butte beyond, which was across a flat, deep gully strewn with large bowlders. A third Gros Ventre was below us and started to join us. The Sioux were behind these bowlders, and this man below us was almost among them without knowing it. Seeing them raising their heads, he shot. Then, jumping off his horse, he ran; but the Sioux shot him through both thighs. He fell, but sat up again, whereupon they shot him through the head. He was the brother of my companion and of my wife. His brother began to cry, and started to revenge him on the Sioux. Not knowing where to cross the stream before us, we jumped into it anywhere, on our horses. The stream happened not to be deep, and we crossed it safely. Then the Sioux began to shoot. My brother-in-law jumped off his horse, but I turned mine until I was out of their sight. My brother-in-law remained there fighting the

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

159
726

Sioux, while I rode around behind them towards the butte for which they were heading. There I tied my horse and then went up to watch them. Seeing them coming, I withdrew from sight, thinking they would soon stop to fight my brother-in-law, who was still pursuing them. When I thought it probable that they had stopped, I looked out again, and saw that they had indeed made a halt, and had their backs toward me. I had my two sticks for a gun-rest all ready, and raising my gun I shot. I hit one of them in the back and he fell over. He slid down the hill on his hands until he stopped, while the others shot at me, but missed. Then the soldiers approached, coming at a walk. I thought it ridiculous to go to war in that fashion. The wounded Sioux began to shoot at them. That was what they wanted, for they did not want to open hostilities; and they all dismounted and began to shoot back at him. About the last shot of the company knocked him over. Then three of us Gros Ventre made a rush to him. The two others reached him first. One of them took his gun. Another struck him, and I was the second to strike him. He was a fine-looking Sioux, with black blanket, and leggings of black flannel, with long hair tied with otter-skin, brass beads around his neck, and a beaded bag. His gun was a Sharp's rifle. We now missed one of our own men, not knowing that he had meanwhile followed the seven remaining Sioux, and headed them off. He drove them back to the high-banked gully from which they had come, and from which now they could not well come out. Now this man motioned to us to come. The soldiers said, "Let them be. They killed one of you, and you killed one of them to even matters up." But we Gros Ventre wanted more, and persuaded the soldiers to go with us. I went close up to where the Sioux were. The soldiers began to lie down and shoot into the air. They were afraid. A sergeant came up as near the Sioux as I was, but on the other side of them. Just as he was going to shoot, a Sioux shot struck close by his head. He shook his head, cursed, and took aim again. Another shot knocked off his cap. Then he ran to where I was, and I laughed at him. Now the body of the soldiers came up, shooting as they went along, so that the Sioux could not even venture to raise their heads to look. One of the Sioux was in advance of the rest, protecting them. He had two guns. I stood up to look for this man, and he raised his gun behind a sage-bush. I jumped aside, so that he lost his aim and did not shoot. Then I got behind something else and looked for him again. This time I saw the Sioux aiming at the place where I had been last. I aimed at him; he saw me and pointed his gun at me, but I shot him through the head. Then I started to go to the other side, but, as the soldiers were now coming up in formation, I went back in order to get the two guns of the man I had killed; but another Gros Ventre had already taken them both. Thereupon I went up on the bank

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

overlooking the ravine, and looking down saw a Sioux crawling. The Sioux looked back and saw my head above the bank. He lay on his belly and attempted no resistance. Perhaps he was frightened to death. I shot him, went to him, struck him, and took his gun. Then I came to where two Sioux were lying, one on top of the other. By this time all the Sioux had been killed. I had killed three of them. One Gros Ventre jumped down into the ravine to reach the Sioux, while the soldiers were still shooting, and a ball went through his foot from the root of his little toe to his big toe. Then we scalped and despoiled the Sioux. The soldiers standing by would ask us for scalps, and we would toss them bits. We got much spoil, and all of us rode back home with scalps on our bridles. We came back to our camp, and the dead Gros Ventre was buried with a military funeral by the soldiers. The soldiers cooked a great feast for us, but we, being in mourning, would not eat. The soldiers started to go back to their post, and wanted us to go with them. We set out with them, but the wounded man became so ill that we had to return. Perhaps, if we had gone on with the soldiers, we should have been treated to a good time by them. We had distinguished ourselves on that day, and I had done brave deeds. The wounded man's leg swelled to the hip, and he died.

159 726

We were camped with the Crow. Then a man told me to go with him the next morning to cut up a buffalo that he had killed. In the morning we went out while it was still dark. We passed a Crow who was herding horses, and crying in mourning. We had gone only a little distance beyond him when we heard shots, and the Crow stopped crying. Five Sioux charged on him; but he ran among the horses and escaped, while the Sioux drove off the horses. The Crow had other horses tied about their tents, and now came out. My companion and I came across two Sioux who had been left by the five who had attacked the mourner. All together there had been seven in the party. We heard these two men talking Sioux. They took us for some of their own party, and came up to us. Then they shook hands with us. We could see the flashing of the guns where the Crow were fighting the other five Sioux. Then some Crow came out to us. A Sioux who was living among the Crow also came, one of the two men we had found being his relative. He took his relative's horse by the bridle and brought him to his own tent. The other Sioux, who wore a war-bonnet, was kept by the Crow from following his companion. The Crow pursued the five other Sioux, and killed four; but one of them was mounted on a swift horse, and escaped. The Crow with us held the one Sioux's horse until a large crowd had come up. There was a Crow one of whose relatives had been killed by the Sioux, and who was determined on revenge; and he killed the Sioux who was among us. One of them took away his war-bonnet while

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

159
726

he was still alive, and another his six-shooter. Thus five of the seven had been killed. The Sioux who had been brought into his relative's tent sat with his gun leaning against his breast and a large knife in front of him. They tried to take his gun away from him, but he would not allow it. A great crowd was in the tent and around him. At last a chief came, and cried out, "You have had a long time to kill this man and have not killed him. Now go away from the tent, and let him go." Then the Sioux who lived among the Crow took this man, and accompanied him out of the camp for some distance on his way, after which he returned. Then we rejoiced over our victory. I received credit for having shaken hands with the two Sioux before a crowd had come up and surrounded us.

The Crow, Assiniboine, and Gros Ventre were all camped together. Some men were off from the camp hunting buffalo, when a Piegan war-party attacked them. The hunters fled to the camp, and the Piegan threw up breastworks by digging holes in the ground in a large flat. A large crowd of people was there fighting them, each man trying to outdo the others so as to receive the most honor. Then I determined to be as brave as I could, so that the two other tribes would think highly of me. When I came to the place and saw where the Piegan were, I rode right on without stopping my horse. The Piegan were in their holes, and I rode between two of them, so that I was exposed to the firing of those on both sides, as well as to the shooting of my own people. Then I jumped from my horse. I saw a number of brave young men from our tribe come toward the holes, jumping from side to side so as not to be hit. When they were near, the Piegan opened fire on them, and an Assiniboine was hit, being shot through both hips. I heard another shot, and at the very moment saw a horse fall with its neck broken. I saw another man riding in front of the enemy, and heard a shot; and this man fell, shot through both his forearms. He was a chief. Another man was shot in the belly; the ball went in and came out just under the skin. Then we all made a charge on the holes from all sides. There were three holes altogether. In two of them were two men each; the other contained a great many. I charged against one of the holes, and found two men lying in this with their heads against the breastwork. I stabbed one of them in the neck with my spear. The spear struck bone, and stuck fast. I tried to pull it out, and the man backed away from the spear across the hole to the other side, when the spear came out. Then the other Piegan jumped out of the hole with a long double-edged knife, but without a gun. Every one ran off, except myself. I backed away a little. Then the Piegan called to me to come on, and ran out to me. I advanced, holding my spear out. The Piegan ran straight on to this, piercing his breast about at the base of the sternum. Then he backed off, pulling the lance out of

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

159
726

my hand. For a while it stuck in him, the end bobbing up and down; then it dropped on the ground and I picked it up again. The Piegan fled. I did not pursue him, but ran to the hole where he and his companion had been. The Piegan I had stabbed first was lying on his face with a gun in his arms. Dashing over him at a run, I caught the gun-barrel, and, without stopping, ran on, turned, and ran back. This was one of my earliest deeds of distinction in war, and was highly thought of. Such a deed was what I had been wishing to do ever since I had been old enough to go to war, and now I had done it. When a dance was held afterwards, the people could be heard calling out my name. All the Piegan, twenty in number, were killed. Later on, three more were found and also killed; so that the whole party was exterminated, only one of them escaping. At the time we did not know it; but he reached the Piegan, and informed them of the fate of the party, so that they came against us to obtain revenge. Our tribes were moving and had just made camp. An Assiniboine left it to hunt buffalo. The Piegan war-party came across him, killed him, and secured his horses. No one knew that the Assiniboine had been killed, and no pursuit of the attackers was undertaken. The Piegan then went on a high ridge and threw reflections from a mirror on the camp, as a challenge. When this was seen, everybody mounted and dashed off towards the enemy in haste. I took nothing with me but my shield. The Piegan were found on the other side of a ravine. A Piegan was killed; but the others escaped with his body. All that we secured was his rifle, which he dropped when he was shot. For a long distance we pursued the Piegan; but finally they swung us back, and drove us just as hard as the horses could run. At last we stopped running, and fought. One Gros Ventre was killed, and another was shot through the hand, the bullet striking the sternum and being stopped. That was all that happened in this fight. It was considered something of a distinction to carry a shield in battle; a man with a shield being more shot at than others, because he was more conspicuous, and because shields were always desired for capture. I also rode a pinto horse, which made me more conspicuous.

Once we were challenged by the Sioux. The Sioux sent word by the Assiniboine that they would come and exterminate our camp. We were only one band, a small part of the tribe. We made our camp near a black butte, above where Havre now is. The Sioux camped at Three Buttes on this reservation. At this time we already had many rifles. When we received the challenge, we went to the trading-post and bought large quantities of ammunition and new guns, until we were fully prepared. A few nights later the enemy came. It was dark, so that we knew nothing of their approach. A young man was off from the camp crying. It was early in the

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

159
726

morning, and still dark. The Sioux tried to approach him, but he saw them and ran back. The camp was within the semicircle of a high bluff; but the bluff was not very steep. On top of the bluff we had been making intrenchments. It was now about daybreak. My family had already started a fire. I was lying on my side, when I heard a strange noise, like wind but different. It was the enemy coming, and the sound of their approach travelled through the air from above and into the lodges. An old woman came into our tent to get fire. She took coals and went out. She had gone only a few steps when I heard a shot. I jumped up, and there was a war-yell. I started out with my gun, but my father told me to lie down: so I lay until the shooting was over. On all sides I could hear horses falling; some being shot, and some trying to escape and being thrown when they reached the end of their ropes. When the first volley of shooting was over, I jumped up, and ran up the bluff to the edge and looked over. A solid mass of Sioux was there. A solid flame extended all along the edge of the semicircular bluff, so many were shooting. All the horses in the camp were exceedingly wild, but finally we all mounted. Then we charged the enemy and drove them. Most of our horses that had broken loose ran in the direction of the enemy, so that they captured many of them. Some of the Sioux were on foot. On their right, one man was running somewhat behind the rest. I pursued him, shot, and killed him. Then I ran toward him. The enemy turned and fired at me; but without stopping I jumped on my horse, ran to the dead man, struck him with my whip, and took his gun and his powder-horn. The Sioux shot at me in vain. So many shot, that it looked as if they were throwing quantities of fire at me; for it was yet not quite light. Soon it was broad daylight and the fight went on, but the Sioux retreated fighting. Two Gros Ventre were wounded. A girl had been wounded in the camp while lying asleep. The bullet entered her knee and travelled up the thigh. On this occasion, also, I earned distinction. There were more Sioux than Gros Ventre; but they fled. Some in their flight threw away their clothing, and returned home naked. A woman who was with them threw away her dress, and reached her camp naked. Some of the Gros Ventre families did not have a single horse left, as the Sioux had captured the stampeded horses. This was about 1875.

Bull-Robe's Narrative.

I was a young man when I went on my first war-trip. We started out from the Little Rocky Mountains, crossed the Missouri, and went to where the Yellowstone comes out of the mountains. There we came on a Crow camp. We made preparations, and at night stole eighty horses. I myself

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

159
726

took five. Going back to where our party had camped last, we found a Blackfoot war-party. We went on by them, and the Blackfeet went against the Crow. After sleeping a little, we went on for the remainder of the night and all next day. We ate at the Mussel-shell, and continued running our horses until we reached the Little Rockies. One of our party took two shields hanging on poles at the back of a tent, and one of us cut loose a horse which was tied by a rope passing into the door of a tent. After I returned I was at the camp for some time. Then I started out again. The same night that we had left we were overtaken by another party from our camp, who told us that a camp of Flatheads were in the vicinity. At that time the Piegan were with the Gros Ventre. A number of Gros Ventre and Piegan had already gone to the Flatheads and established peace with them, and were now among them. Accordingly, when we came to a Flathead who was herding horses, he made no attempt to escape. We did not understand this, but went up to him as if without intention to hurt him, and then one of our party, drawing a revolver, shot him through the breast. Then we immediately stampeded his horses. The Gros Ventre and Piegan who were visiting the Flatheads still had their horses saddled, and, joining the Flatheads, pursued us. We took refuge in the timber, and the pursuers set it on fire. It was very hot in the smoke and fire, with the tied horses bucking and trying to break loose. Then one of the Piegan with the Flatheads called to us who we were. Answering in Gros Ventre, one of us asked them if the people there were Gros Ventre, and they said, "Yes." Then they called us to come out of the timber, and we came and went to the Flathead camp all together. We passed by the man who had been shot, who was lying wounded, not yet dead. I had not yet dismounted, riding a horse that belonged to another man, and was afraid they would try to take my horse. My party soon left, and hardly were we gone when the Flatheads began to attack the friendly party of Gros Ventre, and drove them out of the camp. These people were of another band from ourselves, which was the reason that we did not know of their being with the Piegan. When the Flatheads attacked them, we all ran, and I was the first to return to camp, so that I know nothing that happened further.

After some time a war-party started again. There were four of us. Near the mountains we saw a Crow camp. We stole horses. I took two. We wanted more horses; so, turning those we had captured loose where they would not be seen, we went up into the mountains, and camped there that day. At night we went down to the Crow camp again. This time I stole five horses, and each of the others two. Then we returned with our horses to the camp of our people. But we did not sleep even one night there. We returned the very day we came, with another party starting out against

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

159
726

the Crow. This time I took three horses. One of our party took a shield, and three each cut loose a horse from a tent. When we returned, we found that our people had moved to Teton, where we finally overtook them with our captured horses.

I started on another trip. Following the Missouri down, we saw the buffalo leaving the river on both sides, showing that some one was coming. We sent out four men to scout, and waited until they came back. They said that whites were coming up the river, dragging a boat. We went to their camp at the mouth of a creek, and were treated well, being given ammunition and tobacco. A Gros Ventre woman captured by the Crow was with the whites on her way back to the Gros Ventre. From her we learned where the Crow were. Some of our party went back up the stream with the whites, but the rest of us crossed the river and went on. We came to where there was a small creek and a high rocky cliff. We stopped there and ate, and rested at night. We were smoking, when one of us said, "A herd of buffalo is coming. I will go and kill one." Another of us said, "First see what it is." He looked, and saw that it was a large party of Crow. We withdrew into the shade of the cliff. The Crow came extremely near, and sat down. They had seen our tracks, and said very little, and that in whispers. One of us said, "I think that it is the Piegan;" for we knew that a party of Piegan were in the neighborhood. Two of the horses of the Crow came so near us that we could have picked up their ropes. Then two men came up to their horses, and, feeling around in the little creek with their whip-handles for water, stooped to drink. One of our men said in Piegan, "Friends." The Crow jumped, ran, and their horses stampeded; we yelled, shot, and pursued, wounding one man. It was bright moonlight; but in the shadow of the cliff we had been invisible to the Crow. Soon the Crow turned and charged us, driving us before them. Then we turned, and drove them; and so on, back and forth. Whenever we got under the cliff and gave our war-yell, the echo strengthened it, and we frightened the Crow back; but the Crow would not leave us, so that we had to put up breastworks to defend ourselves. We fought all night, and at daybreak the Crow left us. Seeing a rocky butte, we said, "We will go up there. This is a bad place. Day is coming on, and if they charge us again, they might kill us." So we went up on the butte, taking with us a number of articles we had captured when the Crow ran the first time. Then we called to the Crow to come on; but they were leaving and went off. So we took charcoal, and made paint of it to put on our faces, and began to dance as a trial; but one of us said, "This does not satisfy me. I am going on." Then the rest of us all decided to go on too. We left what we had captured, taking only the best pieces. We went on to where we had been

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

159 ●
726

told the Crow were, and found them there. But first we met a party of Gros Ventre and Piegan. They were coming away from the Crow, but now went back with us against them. At night three of us, including myself, tried to get away their horses from two men who were herding, while the rest of the party went into the camp. They captured many horses there; but we three got none, because the herders were watching too closely. Now it was nearly daylight and the rest of our party had gone, and the Crow had discovered the theft. Then we three knew that we could not escape with the rest of the party, for we were unmounted. So we went into the timber not very far from the Crow camp, and hid. During the day a Crow came near us with a large bunch of horses to water them. We said to each other, "When he has watered them, let us each catch a horse, and flee into the mountains." The Crow went back, leaving his horses, and we each took one, — I, a white one; one of the other men, a painted one; and the third, a mouse-colored one. Then we escaped into the mountains without having been seen. We came across another bunch of horses and started to drive them off. Two were hobbled, and I dismounted to cut them loose. A Crow came out of the timber and shouted. He had a gun, but was too frightened to shoot. Thinking there might be others, I jumped on my horse, and we all rode off back on the mountain, leaving the horses we had just found. From the mountain we could see how, when the Crow came to the camp, there was a stir all over it. That night we stole eleven horses. We killed a buffalo, ate, and then went back, with these eleven horses and the three we were riding, to our camp in the mountain. At night we went to get more. Crossing the river, we came to a herd of twenty-three horses, and began to drive them off. Then one of us said, "Something comes up in my mouth that tastes like blood." He had a hemorrhage. Then we ran our horses all night and all the next day, for we were riding good animals. Coming to buffalo, we killed one, and ate. Then we saw the buffalo coming towards us. Watching, we saw that Crow were coming in pursuit of us. They were perhaps a mile away. We fled, and the Crow pursued. Once they would gain, and then we. If we had not had good horses, we should have been killed. Turning suddenly, we went up into a mountain, so that the Crow lost our track. All the next day, however, we fled, and at night came across a camp where a Gros Ventre and a Piegan, on the war-path, were snoring. We waked them, told them that the Crow were pursuing us, and all five of us fled. We fled during the next day. Then we stopped running. These two men had captured a number of horses, so that we had sixty-two in all. I myself had two; my two companions, one each. When we returned, we did not go out for a time. It was now winter.

Then a party started and I went with them. We met five Gros Ventre

L: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

159
726

who were bringing ninety horses they had taken from the Crow. From them we learned their location. After about ten days, the Chinook blew, so that the snow was all gone. As we were travelling, we heard a shot in the air above, and said that it must have been Above-Nix'a^{n}t. Some of the five men we had met were going with us. When we came near the Crow camp, we saw the Crow coming out for buffalo, so we returned to our last camp. At night we came again, and took one hundred and eighty-seven horses. I took six fast ones. Then some of our party took this herd home; but I and some others staid there, not yet having had enough. We stole thirty horses, and, sending these back by some of the party, staid to get more. The next time we took forty-one, which we also sent back. The next time we got nine. These we sent back too, and then took seven more. Then we took successively eleven and twelve, and nine more,— all from the same camp. After this we went there four times, but could get no more. Then we came the thirteenth time, and stole ninety. All this was in one trip. Then the Crow found us out, and we had to flee.

I went on another trip against the same band of Crow. A horse stood with his rope leading into a tent. I do not know whether it was tied inside, or held by some one. I cut it loose, jumped on it, and rode off. That was all I took on that trip.

I started out again in autumn. We fought with the Crow, and a Gros Ventre was wounded, being shot through both hips. Nothing else came of that fight.

Then I went out again, and this time stole three horses.

I started out again, and while we were travelling we saw an elk. I went to head it off, but as I could not shoot it I went back. Returning, I could not find my party. It was a large flat, and, hearing shots, I thought my party were shooting elk, when a party of Snakes on horses came towards me. I fled, but being on foot they soon caught up with me and surrounded me. They all shot, and I do not know how it is that they did not hit me. I was numb, and did not think of my gun. Coming to my senses, I seized my gun, and raising it drove them all about. Then I ran to the timber, and, jumping into the brush, stopped short. A Snake with a tomahawk and shield was pursuing me. He saw me as I was raising my gun, and held up his shield before him. I lowered my gun, aimed at his belly, shot, and hit him. Then I ran without stopping, and escaped. Thirteen in our party were killed by the Snakes; but I, though I was alone, escaped. Most of those in our party who were not killed were children, young boys who had gone along.

Again I went out. We were all mounted. Crossing the Yellowstone, we came to the Crow, and about noon charged on the horses that were near

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

159
726

the camp. The Crow began to shoot, and our party turned; but I continued riding straight on between the Crow camp and the herd of horses, paying no attention to the shots, and succeeded in driving off the entire herd. I had thirteen shots in my shirt, and seven of the eagle-feathers on my shield were cut off by bullets, and my horse was shot through the neck. I was wounded, being creased on the hip. When our party saw me riding on, two of them followed me. One of these was shot in the belly so that his intestines hung out; the other was shot in the arm. So three of our party were wounded, but I only slightly.

I started out again. We were all on horseback. Just north of where the Yellowstone comes into the Missouri, the Crow were about to camp. We killed three, and then went into the timber. The Crow came and made a charge on us, and we fled. So far, I had only led my best horse, but now I rode him. The entire Crow camp pursued us. We also were a large party. As we fled, two of our men on slow horses called to me to come and protect them, for they would be killed. Becoming angry, I turned and rode straight at the Crow. Turning them, I rode among them, scattering them on all sides. The noise of the guns was one continuous roar. I had only a sword with which I slashed and cut. Then I rode back, and the Crow followed me. Two or three times I turned them back. Then a Crow dismounted, aimed, and shot as I swerved my horse. The horse was shot in the ribs. By this time those Gros Ventre who had been the first to flee, had selected a good place to fight, and had thrown up breastworks. Then I went out ahead of the others on foot. The Gros Ventre shot a Crow, and I ran forward and took his gun. I was jumping about constantly, so much did they shoot at me. The Crow charged me, but were not brave enough to drive me back. Two of our men came to me, and we stood below a little ridge. The Crow women shouted, and some of them cried for the dead; but it did them no good. About sunset they stopped fighting, and retreated. Then we got up, put the scalps on a pole, and danced, taunting the Crow. All the Crow women and some of the men cried. At night we started back, and, as we were travelling, two men of the party secretly left us, and went back to steal horses. We waited for them. One of them came back bringing horses, and after a while we saw the other also coming along the edge of the river. He had succeeded in stealing a robe and a shield.

I went out again with a mounted party. Two men went ahead to scout. They went in the wrong direction, and finally saw an Assiniboine camp behind us, not far from where we were camped. Then we turned our attention to it. Two Assiniboine came out from the camp for buffalo, and, looking over the hill, saw us and returned. We now went so near the camp

l: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

159 726 that we could see the children playing. Then I said to the man in the party that had the swiftest horse, "Lend me your horse, and I will charge on the camp and carry off one of the children." So he gave me his horse; but the others in the party said to him, "You ought not to give it to him. He is crazy and will do anything, and will surely be killed." So the man took his horse away from me again. Then we lay in a gully, waiting for an opportunity. Seeing two horses coming from the tents, we made a charge, and captured them. The Assiniboine did not offer to fight. Ours was a large party, and they were afraid. So we captured these two horses in broad daylight. And that was all that happened on that trip.

The Gros Ventre camp moved to the mouth of Milk River, on a point of land. I was sitting in my tent smoking, and decided to look after my horses. When I went out from the camp, some one came running, asking, "Is that you?" When I said, "Yes," he said, "I have seen some one coming." Knowing that he meant strangers, I ran to my tent and got my gun. Going out with my companion, we saw four of the enemy. He shot, but I pursued them without shooting. I separated one from the three others and pursued him, driving him straight towards our camp. He became so frightened that he ran into a tent. Women were inside doctoring. He went behind the doctoring woman and held her around in his arms. I followed him in, and ordered the women to go out, as I wanted to kill the man. Some of them held me; but I said, "He is an enemy, and I will kill him. He may hurt some of you." So they went out, and the man huddled against the wall of the tent. I fired two shots into him. He jumped up and yelled, and I took a double-edged knife and stabbed him. He took a long time to die, lying groaning. I cut off his entire scalp; then the people began to come in. One man cut off the long hair from the knee of the buffalo-skin lying on the bed, thinking it was the man's scalp. The stranger proved to be an Assiniboine. The Crow and Gros Ventre were camped together at the time.

The camp was moving eastward, hunting buffalo. Two companies of soldiers were seen coming, and everybody went to meet them, hoping to get something to eat from them. When the soldiers left, one man with his wife staid with them for the night. In the morning he left the company of soldiers he was with to go to the other one that was camped near by. While going, he was attacked by Piegan, shot and wounded, and only escaped through the nearness of the soldiers. His wife informed the Gros Ventre that her husband had been shot by Piegan. All the Gros Ventre and Crow started out, and soon saw the Piegan going over the hill. They pursued them over a flat. They thought the Piegan a war-party, and did not suspect that they came from a camp near by. They came suddenly on their

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

159
726

camp, from which all the Piegan now issued, whereupon the Gros Ventre and Crow fled. Their horses were already tired and were becoming exhausted. So some half-Piegan who were with the Crow said that they would make peace. Four of them stopped, motioned, and spoke in Piegan. Then they shook hands with the Piegan. The Gros Ventre meanwhile told those of their men whose horses were most exhausted to continue on, and they did so. The Piegan chief asked if Many-Birds were among the Gros Ventre. He said, "I want to see him. He once saved my life." Then they called back among those who were still fleeing for Many-Birds, and he answered that he was there. A Piegan chief rode up to him and asked him whether his horse was tired. Many-Birds said, "Yes." The Piegan told him, "Take mine. It is fresh. You helped me, and I want to save your life, for the Piegan might still attack you. But they are my children, and I do not think they will." So he exchanged horses with Many-Birds, and gave him his gun and powder-horn also. Then they parted, and all returned except the four half-Piegan, who went with the Piegan. In the evening three of these returned to the Crow, but the fourth one staid with the Piegan over night. In the morning, when he started to return, he met one of the other three. This man (who was really a Crow that had been captured by the Piegan, but had gone back and lived again with the Crow) now had stolen a herd of horses, and was fleeing once more to the Piegan. The one who was returning to the Crow suspected what he had done, and thought that he might try to shoot himself. The traitor did suddenly shoot; but the other was prepared, saw him, and ducked behind his horse. After the shot, he pursued the other man, who fled; but, his horse stumbling, he fell, and the pursuer shot him. Thereupon he drove the stolen horses back to the Crow camp and told that he had killed the traitor. Then the man's relatives went out, buried him, and mourned over him; but the rest of the camp celebrated over his death. That night, after the dance was over, all agreed that it would be well to watch for the Piegan. So the men all watched. I sat by my hobbled horse. Suddenly close by me I saw the flame of a gun and heard a shot. I ran toward the place, but three or four were already upon the man and had struck him. When I reached him, he kicked me in the breast. Seizing his foot, I cut it off with my knife. So we killed him. We never knew of what tribe he was. He was dressed very poorly, with ragged leggings.

We were moving down along Milk River, and made the crazy-dance. A party of Gros Ventre went to war together with some Bloods. Very soon after they started, one of each tribe in the party was killed. The others returned, and the parents of the dead men mourned. I still had the paint of the crazy-dance on me. Then an old man called to me, "Why do you sit still? You ought to pity your mourning grandfather. Go in advance

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

159
726

of the camp to scout." So I went ahead of the camp as it moved At the mouth of People's Creek I crossed the river with two companions. Then we saw buffalo. I sent one man to drive them towards myself and my other companion. He drove them, and we ran the buffalo and killed one. We began to cut it up. Then I started to go on with one of my companions while the other finished cutting up the meat. Then he followed us. Looking back as we rode over a ridge, we saw two men on foot approaching him. We motioned and shouted to him, and when he came up asked him, "Did you see nothing?" He said that he had not, and we told him that two men had nearly succeeded in killing him. He had had no cause for suspicion, since the buffalo all about him were still and unalarmed. Then I said, "These are the men that did the killing a few days ago. Now we will take revenge. We have the advantage, for we are three to two. Each of you will take a powder-horn, but I will take both their guns." Then the two men came towards us without offering to fight, and I went to meet them. I shook hands with one and took away his gun, shook hands with the other and took his gun too. Then I said to my companions, "Now is your chance to kill them." But they would not do so. They did not want me to have both guns. So I said, "If you will not kill them, let us take them to the camp and feed them to the dogs." So I took one on my horse, and one of my companions took the other, and we rode double. I made the one with me shoot off his gun. I thought that when he came to be killed, he might hurt some one in the camp. And I told my companion to make the one with him shoot off his gun also, which he did. Now both their guns were empty. We came near the camp, called out, and at once the whole camp became lit up. It was night. The chief came, and asked, "What is it?" I said, "I have your enemies. I bring your food." Then the chief called out, "Bull-Robe has brought your enemies. Do with them as you please." Then the man mourning for the killed Gros Ventre came out, and I told him, "Take your revenge;" but he would not kill them. They took the two men into the camp and set them free. They were Assiniboine.

I started again to go to war. There were Crow and Cree and Assiniboine and Gros Ventre in our party. We saw the Piegan camp. We dressed in our war-ornaments, and I tied up my horse's tail. Then the leader of the party called me a coward, and said I only fought when I was drunk. Taking my whip, I held it to my mouth like a bottle, as if drinking. "Well, now I am drunk," I said. "I will show you what I will do. You will go your way, and I will go mine." Accompanied by a Crow, I went toward the Piegan camp. The remainder of the party approached the camp from all directions. A Piegan came out, and when he was some distance from the camp we two charged on him. I was in the lead, but my horse stepped

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

159 ●
726

into a hole, stumbled, and lost his gait; and the Crow passed me, struck the Piegan, and shot him. The Piegan fell, started to get up again, and I jumped on him astride his body, cut his head and took his scalp. Then we fled. Seeing some of our party, I called to them, "This is the way to do. That chief is nothing." As we fled we saw the Piegan sitting up, holding the skin of his forehead with his hand in order to raise his eyebrows from his eyes so that he could see. The blood was spurting from him the length of this room. So I said, "You had better kill the poor fellow. He is still sitting up." Then some of us went back and killed him. We returned, and celebrated our victory.

I went with another war-party to Sweet-grass Hills, in the Piegan country. In the morning, as we were going, I smelled something like distant fire. "I smell something like fire," I said. They said to me, "You smell something in your nose." So we joked one another until all of them smelled it. Then we sent out a scout. He came back, and reported that a hunting-party was off to the left of our route, and that they were packing up to move. Then I said, "Let us go ahead of them to a place where they will pass, and charge on them." We went down a ravine until we came to where it spread out and was flat. There we lay down, and one of us watched if the Piegan were coming. When we asked him if the Piegan had come, he said, "No." Some of them had already passed by. Either he had not seen them, or he did not want to announce it. Then hearing something like talking, and thinking, "That sounds like talking," I raised my head, looked, and saw part of them already gone by. So saying, "Only dogs stand and watch their food," I charged and the rest followed. The Piegan had their horses loaded with meat. As we came, the women ran, scattering and screaming. Seeing fifteen loaded horses, some of them painted horses, I went to drive them back. The Piegan men who were in advance now came back, charging us, surrounding me, shooting, and trying to drive me away from the horses; but I would not leave them, however much they shot, and kept driving the horses into the ravine. Then Many-Birds came to me, saying, "I am with you to stand by you." Taking the rope of one of the horses I was driving, I gave it to him, telling him not to let it go. This was in the morning, and we fought all day. The Piegan made their camp near by. It was a hot day, and having no water we suffered much from thirst. We unloaded meat from the horses, cooked some of it, and ate. We tied some of the horses fast, but some of them we could not tie; and part of these the Piegan recaptured. We killed three Piegan, but the Piegan secured their bodies. Two Gros Ventre were wounded; one of them low in the leg, the other creased in the back. In the evening we went to a rocky hill, having taken what meat we wanted and left the rest on the ground. Instead of

l: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

159 26 going on, we stopped behind the hill. When the Piegan rode up to the meat in order to recover it, we gave them a volley, shooting several of them off their horses. They fled; but we rode on, looking for water, until we came to a creek, where we sat drinking a little at a time, quenching our thirst. Then we went home.

I started to go to war again. We found a Piegan camp, and approached it. The others did not want to charge, as the distance to the camp and back again to a place of safety was too great. Then I was going to make the charge alone. Some of our party happened to see five Piegan hunting a buffalo, and called to me what they had seen, telling me to come. So I rode in that direction, but did not see the Piegan. When I came near, I saw them riding toward the timber, and at once rode after them. The Piegan jumped off their horses and abandoned them, making for the timber; but I headed them off just before they reached it. One Piegan was in the brush on the ground, and I tried to ride him over. The brush was in the way, and my horse jumped over him. As I passed, I struck at him with my lance, and he shot up at me; but we missed. Then I went at him again. The Piegan had his gun aimed at me; but I rode straight on and pierced him in the breast, so that he shot to one side. Another one came for me with an arrow on his bow. I pierced him in the breast also, so that he dropped his bow. Then my party reached the place and killed the other three, I having killed the first two. We took the scalps of the five men and everything that they had.

When I went out again we saw smoke of a camp. Then we prepared ourselves and painted. A Crow in the party had his little boy with him, who was old enough to ride his horse well. The man took a large shell gorget from his throat, which he wore as an amulet, and now gave it to his son. Then the boy said, "You want me to do something great. I am only a little boy, but I will do something. You must not mourn for me if I am killed. Tell my mother not to cut her hair except a little, for I do not like it if people cut their hair." Then his father gave him a crooked lance; and the boy ripped and tore off his leggings and his shirt, and they put him on a horse. Suddenly the boy hit his father's hand with the whip, so that he let go the bridle, and then shot ahead. I was leading, but the boy went past me. I did not try to keep ahead of him, but let him go to see what he would do. Then we saw that the people were whites; but the boy kept riding straight on. He charged a shelter and rode right over it; but the men who had been in it had already started, and were on their way. The boy kept on and rode up to them, and, as they stepped aside for him, he struck one of them across the back with his crook. Then we staid with these whites over night. In the morning we went on, and soon saw what looked like a party with wagons.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

159
726

We went to see. They were Indians on horseback, riding so close together that they looked like wagons. They went into a place where we could not well attack them, and we went on. Then we came near Fort Benton. To avoid being seen, we had to ride along a bank near the river, sometimes in the water. A companion and I raised bunches of sage-brush, and lay behind them on the top of a bluff, watching. We saw two mounted men leaving the trading-post. We went back and told the party, and I said, "I will charge on them." All wanted to be with me. I told them, "You do not know your hearts, but you say you want to charge." I went ahead, and, when we came on the ridge, saw the two men riding slowly along. I signed to the party to be quiet; but when they came up on the ridge they gave a war-yell, and the two men fled. I was already near them, and gained on them. Riding up, I struck one across the face with my whip. He had drawn his gun on me, but it was too late to shoot. After I had struck him, I wrenched his gun from him and stuck it through my belt. Seizing him by the hair, I swung my horse against his, and threw him off, then let him fall. Then I pursued the other. Him also I whipped in the face twice. He too was going to shoot, but when I struck him he could not see anything. I could have wrenched his gun away also, but did not do so. I seized his hair, and dragged him off his horse by swerving mine into his. Following up the horse, I caught it and led it back. Then I saw a great fight in the flat below. Giving my captured horse to one of my men, I went straight at the enemy, who were unmounted Bloods. They were in a line, and I went to ride past their front. I galloped down the middle towards them, and they all fired at me. Then, knowing that their guns were empty, I rode straight into them, knocking them in all directions. Perhaps my horse did it. I counted that I struck seven. Then I rode for my life. We were still fighting, when a white man came and told us to stop. He said to us Gros Ventre, "You have already beaten them enough." So we stopped, and all went to the fort. On our way, I alone charged on the Bloods, and struck an elderly man and his wife. We started to go into the enclosure at the fort, when the gates were shut on us while most of our party were still outside. They had the captured Bloods' horses, and among them, unknown to us, some horses belonging to the whites. Then they let me go out to bring back our men with the whites' horses. Two of our party had already gone off with two mules, but we drove the remainder into a corral. There were so many horses that it could hardly be told to whom they belonged. Then we all camped together, Crow and Gros Ventre and Bloods. There was a Crow woman with the party. A young good-looking Blood became enamoured of her, and made advances to her. She told the Crow, who said to her, "Proceed with him, and we will kill him." Then she went out on the

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

159 726 prairie, and he followed and met her. This she did three or four times, until he was very much in love with her and wanted to marry her. She said that if he would go with her, she would marry him. He was afraid of the Gros Ventre. Then the Crow told us to go in advance, in order that he might go with them. The whites distributed food, guns, ammunition, and blankets among us all. Then we Gros Ventre went off, but lay down behind a ridge. The Crow gave the Blood four horses for himself and his wife, and they started to go to the Missouri. The man whose wife this woman was pretended that she was not his wife. He rode alongside, and, when the Blood's attention was directed elsewhere, killed him. Then we Gros Ventre and those of the Crow with us came out from where we had been hiding behind the hill, and danced, while the remaining Crow brought his scalp. From there we went home. We crossed the Missouri at a place called Magpie Tail, where there are steep hills. We came on a Crow camp, and made a charge on it. One of the Crow charged into it, striking and whipping every one, as if out of his senses. One of the men in camp became angry, pulled him off his horse, hit him, kicked him, and pulled his hair. The man who had charged got up laughing.

Watches-All's Narrative.

Once I gambled with a Crow woman and lost my beads, and my mother made me cry. The next day a war-party started out, and, because my mother had made me cry, I went with them. All of the party were on foot, except two (women?) on horseback. After we had stopped for the night twice, my mother came after me with a horse for me to ride. We went northward against the Piegan. When we came to mountains, all the women in the party went out to pick choke-cherries. The road was impassable from mud, and it was stormy. Some young men climbed the mountain to look for camps. It was snowing hard and they could not see far; but in the afternoon it cleared, and with a telescope they could see a camp in the distance. They measured it with a ramrod. They went back to the party howling like coyotes, and zigzagging in their course. The women in the party stood in line, and sang. When they came near, the scouts rode about in a circle until one of the party went to them and brought them. Then they reported what they had seen. Then the whole party painted and danced and sang, preparing for the fight. In the evening we started, and travelled all night. One man had a ghost-bone (a human femur). [787] While I was asleep, he summoned the ghost. "What is it?" said the ghost. "Are there many people in the Piegan camp?" asked the man. The ghost said, "There are as many as grass. I give you two persons, also some horses

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13
Blackfoot NF6

G 159 726 [787]

to steal. Let those who are on foot go back from here, and let the few who are mounted go on against the camp. They will do well, and kill two people, and capture horses. But if all go, a great many will be killed." The next morning my mother told me this. The party, however, were not influenced at all by what the ghost said, and went on. When we came near, two young men killed a Piegan called Sits-in-the-Middle and his wife. Then our party killed two more Piegan close by their camp, but, as one of the men stooped to strike the fallen Piegan, the Piegan stabbed him in the back over the kidney, making a hole large enough to breathe through. We tied him around with gunny sacks. Thus we killed three men and a woman. Then all the Piegan attacked us. I saw more people than ever before. They came like ants, and the smoke hung as over a smelter. Two of the Gros Ventre drove all of our party, even the women, against the Piegan to make them fight. A Gros Ventre was shot through the thigh-bone, and fell from his horse. He stuck his crooked lance in the ground and sat there; and all his brothers went to help him so that he would not be killed soon. And all the Piegan attacked him. Just as one of them dashed up to strike him, he raised his gun and shot him. Another and another came up, until he had killed six. Then he himself was killed. Then some of the Gros Ventre said, "Let us lead them after us from their camp." The Gros Ventre started to run, and the Piegan pursued. The Gros Ventre who were mounted ran their horses as hard as they could. They never stopped running, and a great many of those who were on foot were killed. I was riding behind another woman. Our horse stepped into a hole, and pitched forward. The woman was thrown off, but I was thrown into the saddle. The horse started up again, but stepped on his bridle, which checked him. A Piegan rode up and struck me with his gun. Then he took my wrist, and I dismounted as he did. Another one came, and, after striking me too, took off my bead necklace. The one who had captured me took me back as far as it is from here to the river (about thirty miles). We saw bodies of Gros Ventre as we went back to camp. We came to the camp about noon. Everybody struck me. All day they came and hit me, and one man hit me on the forehead and nearly killed me. A Piegan woman tied up my head. I wore a fine dress covered with elk-teeth. I took it off, and a Piegan woman took it away. Then the Piegan directed their people to gather all the captives. They asked them if the Gros Ventre had done anything to Sits-in-the-Middle, who had been found in an indecent position with his wife. The captives all said that the Gros Ventre would not do such a thing, and the Piegan were satisfied. Eight Piegan, all prominent men, had been killed.

G 159 726 B 727

When our party returned, my father asked where I was. Some one told him that a Piegan had taken me back to his camp. Then my father said

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13
Blackfoot NF6

G
159
726
B
727

to my mother, who had returned safely, "Go and bring my daughter, or I will kill you." So my mother came alone to the Piegan. When she arrived, there was a big noise. Then a chief came out of his tent with only his knife, and called out, "Do not kill that woman!" Then she went to where the captives were. The man who had captured me, No-Chief, said aloud, "I pity this woman. I will treat her well. Every one all over the world hears it. I will take good care of her." Another Piegan took my mother. Then they brought me to a tent where there were a pipe, a pipe-stem, a knife, and a gun, and two men sitting, who both claimed me. I was told to say which of them had captured me. I held up my hand and told how my horse had stumbled, and how this one, who was No-Chief, had captured me, and how the other one had taken my beads. Then the other one tried to kill me. Some Piegan women hid me. In the morning the Piegan broke camp. I had no moccasins, no robe, and only one dress. No-Chief always rode around me, and protected me from the many people who wanted to kill me. He had taken me for his wife, and would not allow it. When we were camped, he rode over to the tent where my mother was, and told her to come at night to his tent. He would give her and me horses to ride, in order to flee, and would give us clothing and a piece of tobacco, which we were to cut in two, and each of us to give half to her husband. My mother agreed, and he came back; but that night my mother did not come. In the morning a man rode around the camp, crying, "Bring out all the captives. I will put them on my son's grave." Then the women hid me. The other Gros Ventre captives were also hidden. Fourteen of them were saved, but four were killed. Then they brought all the spoils to the middle of the camp, and counted them. They counted how many pieces had been captured, how many horses had been taken, and how many Gros Ventre had been killed. They who had done most became chiefs.

Then No-Chief, my husband, said to me, "If any one wants to buy you from me, I will sell you." Then my mother persuaded a Piegan to buy me. I was angry when No-Chief sold me for two horses. I staid with this other man. Sometimes people still tried to kill me, and he kept them from me. Then we came to Elk River, where there was an encampment of soldiers. The soldiers tried to persuade the Piegan to sell them all their slaves. One Piegan rode around the camp, crying, "Sell all the slaves. They will run off anyway. We cannot keep them." But at night all moved away, and none sold their captives. I always took care of my husband's little boy, and did my work, and got along well. A white man tried to buy me; but my husband did not sell me. I asked the white man not to try to buy me, as I wanted to return home. Another Gros Ventre woman who had been captured persuaded her husband's little boy to ask him to let her go. The

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13
Blackfoot NF6

G 159 726 B 727

boy asked his father, and the man told her that she could go after tanning ten hides. She prepared the skins, made herself moccasins, took pemmican with her, and went. Her husband did not give her a horse, because many Piegans were then scattered through the country, and would more readily see her if mounted. That winter I staid with the Piegan. We went to the Sweet-grass Hills and killed all the buffalo we needed. About the time the snow thawed, we went back to the former place. Once a Piegan came to get men to reinforce his party, who were attacking a Gros Ventre camp; but the same night the Gros Ventre fled, leaving a dead man and one who had been shot through the leg. These were all that the Piegan found next morning. Two Piegan had also been killed.

Then I went with my husband hunting buffalo. A shot was heard from the top of a mountain, and our party went back. It was a rainy day. Then Bear-Head, a Piegan, took two Gros Ventre women to the foot of the mountain and made them call out, "Come down! Here is something to eat." He wanted to find out of what tribe those on the mountain were; but there was no answer. That night the people on the mountain, who were Gros Ventre, came and stole horses from the camp. The Bloods also stole horses. The Piegan followed their tracks, and killed two of them; but they did not follow the Gros Ventre. Then we went to a place called Needle-Nest, then to Large-Rock, then to White-Wolf, where a Gros Ventre had once made the sun-dance lodge. Then two Gros Ventre women ran away and escaped. From there we went to another place. When we made camp I went for wood with my sister, a Piegan co-wife. Then my sister sent me to my mother, whose husband had just killed a [illegible]. I went there; and my mother's sister (co-wife) told her, "Cook some [illegible] for your daughter." Then I brought back meat to my husband; but my mother's husband was stingy with his meat, and scolded her. Then his Piegan wife said to my mother, "You and your daughter are living poorly. You had better run off." So when I brought back the plates (on which the meat had been carried), my mother said she would escape with me that night. She said she would wait for me all night. She told me to leave my moccasins with her, and I left them. Then my husband whipped me because he thought that I would run off. He told me not to sleep all night, but to sit up straight. Toward morning, while my two sisters slept, I ran out. My mother was waiting for me, and we ran to the creek, over the hills and down again. It stopped raining, and soon it became day. We dug a hole and got into it, and hid all day. At night we ran on again. It was cloudy and dark. We were near Cow Creek. An owl called in the woods. My mother said the owl was calling us, so we went there. It became day, but we went on. We were out of the timber when we saw people coming, so we ran back and

G 159

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

159 hid. At night it rained again, and was so dark that we could see only by the lightning. I was walking with two sticks. We came to the mouth of Cow Creek, where the banks were high and steep, and slid down. I was thirsty, but could not reach the water: so my mother held my wrist while I scooped downward with the other hand and thus got a little water. We heard the beavers working. Then a steamboat came by up the river (the Missouri). My mother was asleep, but I was awake. Then we crossed Cow Creek at the very mouth, and on the other side of the stream found a piece of gunny sack. I took this for a robe, and gave mine to my mother. We saw another boat going up the river, and my mother wanted us to get on it and go back to Fort Benton, as she wanted to sell me to the whites. Then I held my mother fast in the brush, for I did not want to go, and said, "There are many Piegan women there, and we will be known and taken back." I got out my knife and tried to kill my mother, because I did not want to go. Then we followed the Missouri down along the north side during that day. Soon we saw a bear asleep. We made a circuit around him, came back into the timber, and went on. We saw smoke down the river, and another steamboat came, and we hid in the brush. The boat stopped and unloaded near where we were. Being thirsty, we had gone to the river to drink and wash, and saw the boat. Then we started to run to it. I threw away my gunny-sack robe. Our moccasins were gone. Then we saw Crow and a Gros Ventre woman on the boat. It had started before we reached it, but we called out to it and it came back for us. The boat took us across the river at a bend of the Missouri, where there was a store and a saloon and a camp of Crow. The Crow women pitied us and cried over us because we were so poor, and laid down many robes for us to sit on, and felt the sores on our feet. The storekeeper had a Gros Ventre wife. She had been down the river visiting, and was the woman on the boat. This man opened a keg, and gave us whiskey. We drank some and then more. My mother became unconscious, but I was still drinking, sitting up and telling of our escape.

There was an officer (soldier-chief) at the Bend whose Piegan wife had run off to Fort Benton. He was leaving to go after her, and gave us sugar, cloth, blankets, and a sack full of meat, which he told us to get from the root-house. While we were staying here, my mother asked the trader's Gros Ventre wife to go with us to scrape juice from the inside of cottonwood-bark. The woman refused, being afraid of the Sioux, but we urged her, and at last she went. We were scraping, and the trader's wife was bending down. When she looked up, she saw Sioux on the hill. "Didn't I tell you the Sioux would come? Let us run back," she said. We ran. The woman fell. We raised her up and ran on. Again she fell, being frightened nearly

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

to death. We turned and ran back and picked her up, and ran on until we reached the store. The Sioux and the white man exchanged shots, but they were too far apart. The Sioux went on and killed a white man who was employed in cutting wood for the steamboats, and who had just shot a bear. They laid this man in the fire and burned him up, so that only his legs were found. After this we women were afraid to go even a very short distance from the store. Then the Crow swam their horses to the north side of the river. In the river a white horse stopped, went down, came up again, and went down; a baxau[11] took it. 159

Then my mother said that she was tired of staying there, and with a Gros Ventre, Bull-Lodge (there being ten of us in all, six men and four women), we went down the river on the boat. Then the boat stuck and had to back. The buffalo crossed the Missouri, and the whites on board caught them by the horns, cut their throats, and dragged them ashore. Then we had a big feast of ribs and paunches and the best parts. We went on, and stopped at the mouth of Milk River. There Bull-Lodge set up his tent, but I and my mother slept on the boat. The next day we all went up Milk River on foot; only Bull-Lodge and his wife were on horses. We kept on the trail, and came to a recent camp-site. The Gros Ventre and Assiniboine were then at war. One of our party, looking back and seeing some persons coming, asked Bull-Lodge for his horse to scout. Riding back, he saw that six buffalo were coming towards us. That evening Bull-Lodge and his wife went on, while the rest of us went to sleep where we were. Bull-Lodge travelled during the night and reached the Gros Ventre camp, where the old men were still awake smoking. He told my brother that my mother and I were behind and that he had better bring us and the others horses. Then the people came and brought us, and all were glad to see us again.

PERSONAL SUPERNATURAL POWERS.

Men went out to fast with the intention of becoming doctors, or receiving miraculous powers. They did not go as boys, but after they had reached manhood. Not all men tried to acquire such powers, and some of those that did failed. They went to hills and high places, usually high up on mountains, among the rocks above the timber. In such a place they would make a shelter in which to sleep. Then they remained fasting and without drinking water for one or two or more often four or five nights. A Crow who staid seven nights and nearly died, being extremely thin when he returned, was regarded as extremely powerful. It was thought that he could accomplish almost any wish by merely expressing it. Besides fasting, a man cried 787

1; Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

It seems impossible to tell at present whether these and the additional ones that there may have been, all existed contemporaneously, or whether some grew up as others died out. The last few named are doubtful as true companies. The Indians sometimes include the dances themselves among these companies, calling their members "flies," "dogs," "kit-fox men," and so on. This is, of course, a cross-division, as each of the numerous companies in turn makes, for instance, the fly-dance. During and after the ceremony its members are called "flies," as well as by the name of their company. As there is a star-dance, it is therefore possible that there was no true star company. The sword-wands and war-spikes are also somewhat doubtful. These names refer to objects used as regalia in the Arapaho first dance and in part in the Gros Ventre fifth dance. The participants in the Gros Ventre fifth dance, it seems, were also called by the latter name. It is therefore probable that these two names refer to dances and not to real companies. 561 796

The companies held together, to a certain extent, outside of their dances. They were likely to act together in war, and there was a spirit of rivalry between them. In the sun-dance, and possibly on other ceremonial occasions, the younger men of the tribe took part in certain actions by companies.

The following specific statements of the ceremonial experiences of a few of the old men of the tribe alive in 1901 will make the general scheme of the organization more concrete.

A man known as Bill Jones, reputed to be the oldest man in the tribe, belonged to the "big-belly" company. Of this, only one other member survived at that date. He himself had been keeper of one of the sacred pipes; and he and his "big-belly" companion, together with the five survivors of the next oldest company, were spoken of as the seven oldest men of the tribe. As all the Gros Ventre ceremonies have been discontinued, it is not possible to deduce from this statement with certainty that these seven men would in former times have constituted a definite body with distinct ceremonial powers and observances, like the Arapaho water-sprinkling old men. This man had made the fly-dance, the crazy-dance twice, the kit-fox dance twice, the dog-dance, and the nana"naha"w". He had not made the biitaha"w". Younger men than himself have seen this; but it appears to have been abandoned some time before he became of age to take part in it. He had made the star-dance before the fly-dance. He had also taken the part of the man who shoots a buffalo (in the women's dance?). 159 561 796

Bull-Robe, now dead, a renowned warrior, belonged to the next age-company, "those-who-eat-to-last-all-night." He had made the fly-dance, the crazy-dance, the kit-fox dance, and the dog-dance. The nana"naha"w" seems to have been discontinued before he reached it. In the first three of his dances he was one of the leaders, or recipients of special degrees.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

159 561 796 Subsequently he was a "grandfather" in the crazy-dance, but in none of the other ceremonies. He never participated in the sun-dance, having had no occasion to do so, he said. Nevertheless he once was the man selected during the sun-dance to kill a buffalo with one arrow, the buffalo's skin being cut up into thongs with which the rafters of the lodge are fastened. He succeeded in killing the buffalo with one arrow.

Another man, now middle-aged, belonged to the "holding-to-a-dog's-tail" company. He made successively the fly-dance, the star-dance, and then the crazy-dance.

Star and War Dances.

171 561 796 575 [177] At present the organization into comparatively small companies is no longer maintained. In its place there is a division of the young men of the tribe into two groups, one of which practises, or did until recently, the star-dance; the other, the grass or war dance. The latter is universally stated to be a recent importation from the Sioux, apparently within the present generation. The star-dance, however, is an old ceremony, it is claimed; and this assertion is borne out by the occurrence among the Arapaho of the analogous star-dance. Among the Arapaho the star-dance, like the kit-fox dance, is a preliminary which appears to be gone through by all the men of the tribe, but has neither the standing, the organization, nor the definite observances and regalia of the subsequent ceremonies. Among the Gros Ventre the star-dance was formerly also outside the regular series of dances. It is generally spoken of as having been a warrior dance, made at any time and on any suitable occasion, and without the rigorously prescribed course of other dances. Some men seem to have made it before the fly-dance, and others afterward. Even in former times, however, before the war-dance had come among the Gros Ventre, the star-dance included only part of the young men of the tribe. The old men surviving from certain companies have never taken part in the star-dance, and explain this by the fact that there was rivalry between their company and the star-dancers. It might thus, perhaps, seem that a star company had a ceremony of its own, the star-dance, from which the members of rival companies naturally held aloof; but it is very improbable that only one age-company parallel to the others, and none of these others, should have had a distinctive ceremony. It is also improbable that this company, being one of many, should have been so large as to include about half of the men of the tribe, for it appears that some such large proportion took part in the star-dance. This makes it almost impossible to believe that there existed a star company exactly

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

778 History" (Vol. XVIII, p. 443, Fig. 176). Fig. 44 shows a small Gros Ventre specimen attached to a thong, for wear around the neck. The entire stone is tightly incased in a piece of skin which preserves the form so closely as to be scarcely noticeable. At the lower end of the stone is a small fringe of skin. Skin and thong are painted over red.

BELIEFS ABOUT THE DEAD.

775 Dead people go to a barren region in the north. People have been there, but the ghosts are invisible. The dead are often heard whistling, speaking, and calling about human habitations; houses and tents may be closed, but still they are heard. They speak as a living person would, and people in return ask them questions. When at war, people often ask the ghosts what luck they will have, or where the enemy are. The dead always tell the truth, and, if they say one of the party will be injured, it always happens. The ghosts are never seen, but only heard. Sometimes, if a medicine-man asks one of his spirits to bring him a dead relative, the door is heard moving, and after a time the spirit returns with the dead person, who, when he is asked questions, answers. Every one who is present can hear him plainly. Sometimes, on the arrival of the person, a noise like the whirring of wings is heard. Then there is a tapping at the top of the tent-poles. Then the tapping moves about the tent. Now it may be at the door, now at the back of the tent. When a ghost or spirit is seen, as occasionally happens, it is only for a glimpse.

If a man keeps a tooth or a bone of a dead person, after a time the spirit of that person appears to him. Some ghosts lie, but some are truthful. A man who controls a ghost, or a medicine-man who has a spirit, can see it; but it is invisible to other people. It is summoned only in the dark. People who have lost horses bring a pipe to a man that has a spirit, and pay him. Then he calls his spirit, and it tells where the horses are. If people try to ascertain by the help of a medicine-man where they have lost a small valued object, the spirit may throw it at them. Stolen property is found in the same way. A ghost or spirit is called "untrue person."

159 An old man who has been several times quoted tells the following: "I
775 once died. I think that Above-Nix'a"t pitied me, and let me live to be an old man. I was very sick with cramps and fits. The camp was moving, and the last I remember was that the tents were being pitched. Then I knew nothing about it; but the people were mourning for me and had put paint and my best clothes on me. I was travelling. I went north until I came to the Cypress Hills. There on the hills I saw two bears going into

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

their holes, in which they had fires. I started to go around where they were, but when I came abreast of their holes one of the bears pursued me and caught me by the leg. I turned and seized it by the ear, and saw that it was a very small bear. Then I continued on my way, the bear clinging to my thigh, and I holding its ear. I went on until I came to a creek where there was an enormous camp, the largest I have ever seen, stretched as far as I could look up the creek. Those in advance were just setting up their tents. I went to the first tent I came to, which was a large one. A number of naked men were sitting there, each of them with some weapon. By the door a woman sat cooking. The men called out to her to catch me, that they would eat me. I ran out, and she after me. She caught me by the robe, but I loosened myself and ran back. Then my relatives, who were kissing me, noticed that I was breathing, and said, 'He is alive.' Then I recovered my speech, but I was still out of my senses. They told me later that I argued with my relatives, insisting that I had brought a bear, and asking them where it was. The next day, when my senses returned, the back of my thigh itched where the bear had been. Still later, when I had more nearly recovered, I saw the tent in which I was, full of people that I could not recognize. Then I lost my senses once more, and became so strong that they could not hold me. It was a long time before I entirely recovered. All this happened to me while I was still a young man, soon after I was married." 159 775

An old man tells that once he was going from one camp to another at night, when suddenly he heard a humming of a stone like a bullet, which struck in front of him. He was frightened, but did not run. Another stone flew over his head so close that he felt the wind it made. Then he ran. 775

On another occasion he was mourning for one of his sons. In the evening he went to one of his friends. It was already dark, and he had to pass through the brush. Then he heard a noise as of canvas being dragged over the brush, and there was loud whistling. He was not frightened, but stopped and said, "You should pity me. I am mourning." Then it shouted "Yes" loudly, and the noise stopped.

At another time he saw a ghost's light. An old man who had died had been buried in a tree. The narrator with six other men was driving horses past that they had captured, when they saw a flame on the dead body.

A man tells how he was once in an isolated tent, far from any camp. He was leaning against a tent-pole listening to those in the tent who were talking and smoking. Suddenly, close by his ear, there was a loud whistle which made him jump to his feet. The others all heard it also, and asked, "Who was that?" Going outside, they could find no one, and knew that it had been a spirit.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

APPENDIX

THE CHIEF INFORMANTS

The Boy gave the greater bulk of information on religious and political aspects of Gros Ventre culture. He was born in 1870, one of the younger sons of Lame Bull (b. ca. 1825—d. 1908), and grandson of Crow Moccasin (whose other name was Bird Chief, b. ca. 1795—d. 1865), a signer of the 1855 Treaty. When The Boy was a very young child his father, a prominent warrior and well-to-do man, became Keeper of one of the sacred pipes—the Flat Pipe. As a boy and young man, The Boy, who was very much interested in the ceremonial and other aspects of his culture, spent as much time as possible with his father and his father's friends, listening to their discussions. In private he questioned his father repeatedly and thus he acquired a wide and deep knowledge of the Gros Ventre way of life as it was before the buffalo disappeared. Although he did well during the one year of boarding school he had at St. Peter's, he was very unhappy there, and did not enter the newly opened Mission School of St. Paul's although his father wished him to do so. He is an extremely intelligent man with marked philosophical trend of mind. In spite of his unwillingness to speak English, he became a natural leader among the Gros Ventres and served his people in many different capacities. At present he is the "grand old man" of the Gros Ventres and is appealed to when any question regarding the past arises. His statement in regard to his knowledge of the 1855 Treaty, for instance, is acknowledged as weighty evidence in the present Gros Ventre claims against the Government which are now awaiting settlement. Without The Boy's drive to have the old way of life recorded, this work could not have been accomplished. 115 159

Thick (b. ca. 1870—d. 1951) was well-versed in the old culture. It was his father who was responsible for putting on the last Sacrifice Dance (Sun Dance) held by the Gros Ventres in 1884. Thick's maternal uncle took advantage of his prerogative to raise his sister's children and removed Thick from his parental home at about the age of seven and kept him under supervision until Thick was a young man. Compared to his elder brother, Horse Capture, Thick was somewhat shy and retiring, entering into the public social life of the Gros Ventres only after his brother finally persuaded him to do so. A considerable amount of the material given to Dr. Cooper was related by The Boy in Thick's presence, and Thick either agreed with what had been said, or, if he disagreed, he did not hesitate to speak up. Since he and The Boy were brothers-in-law and maintained their respectful relationship, there were a number of topics which they could not discuss in each other's presence. Consequently there were many occasions when Thick worked independently of The Boy, both with Father Cooper and with me. Thick never attended school, and, like The Boy, did not speak English.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

115
159

Charles Buckman (b. ca. 1875—d. 1949), whose nickname was John, was brought up by his mother's people. He had considerable knowledge of the old way of life and his childhood training and experience remained vivid in his memory in spite of the fact that he was educated at the boarding school at St. Paul's Mission on the Reservation. He enjoyed reading the newspapers and listening to the radio and was equally interested in discussing the old way of life of the Gros Ventres and the latest developments in world politics. His services as interpreter and informant were utilized especially in many of the sessions that Dr. Cooper had jointly with Thick and The Boy. Thick found him an especially congenial interpreter. He was prominent in the public life of the Reservation and held several different offices.

Thomas Main (b. 1890) made a very extensive contribution to the record of Gros Ventre way of life in his capacity as chief interpreter. He, like Charles Buckman, was a half-orphan and was raised by his mother's people. The Boy is his maternal uncle and has exerted a considerable influence on Tom. His knowledge of the old way of life comes, too, through his old "grandmothers" for whom as a child he ran errands and who rewarded him by long stories of the "old times." He was educated at St. Paul's Mission School and has always been a great reader—for years he has kept in touch with current developments not only through the usual media, but also through daily reading of the Congressional Record. His unusually good command of English, coupled with a real linguistic sense, makes him an ideal interpreter. He has been extremely patient with our efforts to take down Gros Ventre texts, and was never too hurried to explain the metaphorical expressions in which the Gros Ventre language abounds. He has taken an active part in tribal affairs and is often selected as spokesman for the Gros Ventres at the local, state, and national levels.

Al Chandler (b. ca. 1870) gave valuable information, especially in view of the fact that his relatives participated more fully in the rites connected with the Feathered Pipe rather than with those of the Flat Pipe. This helped very much to round out the picture of ceremonial aspects of Gros Ventre life. He was educated at St. Paul's Mission School and, like Tom Main, was able to convey in English some of the finer nuances of the Gros Ventre language. Ill health prevented his giving us as many interviews as we should have liked to have had with him.

Coming Daylight (b. 1854—d. 1949) was also known by another of her names, Taken A Prisoner, and her childhood nickname had been Yellow Hair. In spite of her advanced age in 1940, she was a vigorous old woman in full possession of her faculties and had her own house independently of any of her many relatives. She maintained throughout the years her reputation for industry, generosity and hospitality and was highly respected. She was very much interested in the taking of the record of the old way of life and gave most freely of her personal experiences, and referred as well to what she had heard from her uncle, her grandmother and other older people whose experiences extended further into the past than her own. She had been orphaned at an early age and was brought up by a strict old

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

grandmother under the protection of her mother's brother, Crow Bull, (b. ca. 1825—d. 1887) a prosperous and prominent warrior, who for a number of years was Keeper of the Flat Pipe. She was married as a child-bride to Dressed in White, whom she loved and respected and who later also acquired as wife her younger sister. She was still a young woman when her husband died. Her following two marriages were each of short duration, but with her next husband, Little Man, she lived many years until she was again widowed. It was during this marriage that the drastic change in Gros Ventre culture occurred with the disappearance of the buffalo. Her last husband, Warrior, pre-deceased her by many years. By 1945 her health had begun to fail although her memory was still good. In 1948, however, she was very ill and was not able to work. To Coming Daylight we owe the bulk of the material on the life cycle and the woman's point of view on social and religious activities. 115 159

Singer (b. ca. 1855—d. 1947) was often present when her friend, Coming Daylight, was talking about the old ways of doing things. On these occasions as well as when she was interviewed alone, she volunteered a great deal of information independently. Her lot had not been as fortunate as that of Coming Daylight. Her first marriage at the age of ten or eleven was to join her sister as co-wife. She was soon sent home to her father and her next marriage, which lasted for some time, was an unhappy one. She was mistreated by the senior wife, who was not related to her, and their husband not only permitted this but was cruel to her himself. Her next two marriages, first to Iron Bucket and later to Ax Handle, turned out more successfully. In her old age she married her last husband, Sleeping Bear, whom she outlived by some years. She seems to have been less inclined towards domesticity than was Coming Daylight, and enjoyed to the full such activities as gambling, counting coups, and rough and tumble games and jests with her brothers-in-law and her enemy-friends.

Garter Snake (b. ca. 1860) has been blind for a number of years and consequently was not able to enter into the giving of the record with the same spirit and interest as either Coming Daylight or Singer. Nevertheless she gave valuable information. She is the daughter of Bull Lodge, (b. ca. 1825—d. ca. 1900?) who had been not only Keeper of the sacred Feathered Pipe but also was a famous medicine man. She had been selected as Pipe Child at the time her father became Keeper and thus remained in the same lodge as her parents while the other children, including her brother, Otter Robe, were sent to live with relatives. Although Garter Snake volunteered practically no information on her personal experiences, except those of early childhood, she gave a considerable amount of material and independently corroborated a number of points which had been given by others. She is at present the wife of Jim Shortman.

Cora Chandler, late wife of Al Chandler, referred to above, acted as interpreter for Coming Daylight and Singer in 1940. She attended St. Paul's School but was raised by relatives who spoke only Gros Ventre. In many friendly chats with me she elaborated upon various topics which had been

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

115
159

discussed by the old women during our regular sessions, drawing on her knowledge of the old way of life she had acquired from her mother and other old women she had known. Not infrequently she referred to the contrast between the type of behavior that had been expected of her and that which is characteristic of the younger generation today.

Mary Ereaux, at present living off the Reservation at Dodson, was also an interpreter for the oldest informants in 1940. Like Cora, she too kindly supplemented their information from what she had seen and heard in her youth among relatives who conserved the old ways. She volunteered many comments on the change of culture she is witnessing and thus threw much light on the past.

Mathilda Cuts The Rope interpreted for the two oldest women in 1945. Her mother, though younger than Coming Daylight, had been very friendly with the latter and Mathilda was able to add some information on her own regarding social customs of former times.

Mae Main, wife of Thomas Main, like other women of her age, attended school but was brought up among conservative relatives. In 1945 and in 1946 she read those portions of the preliminary draft of this manuscript which dealt with the life cycle and informally gave additional valuable information which has subsequently been incorporated.

8:Flannery E-5 (1940-1948)1960 NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

INDIVIDUAL VARIATION IN CULTURE

Regina Flannery

It is generally accepted that what Benedict called the Dionysian configuration of Plains culture represents a dominant, if not the only trend. By definition a configuration is a generalization lying behind and explaining a number of cultural patterns. A pattern itself is of course an abstraction from the behavior of a number of individuals. The behavior of any one person may vary at different times in respect to a particular type of situation, but it is unlikely that the individual will show the whole range of possible behavior within a pattern; it will cover only a portion thereof. As Linton pointed out, the difference between the individual mode within this segment, and the mode of the behaviors on which the pattern is based, reflects the compromise which every individual has to make between the culture patterns of his society and his own inclinations. It would seem further, then, that if the modes of an individual's behavior-ranges show a consistent displacement with respect to a large series of patterns, it is safe to assume that the direction of this displacement reflects some quality of the individual.[1] The question we wish to raise is this: If the aspect of personality thus revealed runs counter to a dominant trend of his culture, is the individual a misfit in that society?

In attempting an answer, let us examine some individual variations within those patterns of Plains culture in which expression of emotional excess, and dangerous experience were expected of women in one Plains society, that of the Gros Ventres of Montana. We shall outline in some detail the behavior of one Gros Ventre woman in respect of these selected patterns—from which the Dionysian configuration was abstracted—and contrast her behavior with that of others of approximately the same age. All had participated as adults in the old way of life before the disappearance of the buffalo in 1887.

In Gros Ventre culture, as in all the Plains, there was high valuation placed on direct contact of the individual with the supernatural through dreams and visions. Men could actively seek such contact by employing dangerous means, and did so in order to obtain many kinds of power. While women did not go on the actual power quest, they might acquire medicine powers and less frequently, perhaps, powers of clairvoyance. Medicine powers were considered dangerous in that, it was believed, by accepting them a limitation was put upon the life span of the practitioner. But the rewards in terms of prestige for successful performance and of payment for services were high for women as well as for men. Not every individual man was successful in his quest, nor of course was every woman vouchsafed the kinds of dreams which were requisite. Coming Daylight, the woman whose behavior we are examining in particular, was what her contemporaries considered fortunate indeed in having been offered curing powers of several kinds. Nevertheless she rejected the possibility each time, in spite of the fact that she had a living example in the person of her father's sister of what it could mean in prestige to a woman who accepted. As the reasons for her refusal seem significant I shall describe her experience in her own words.

8:Flannery E-5 (1940-1948)1960 NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

"My experience was by dreaming. One time before I was married—I must have been about eight years old—I was sleeping in a big lodge and a 'person' came and wakened me. He had a bag of medicines on his back. He came to me on four successive nights and laid out these medicines and told me what each was for. On the third of these nights there was a man lying there—he was just skin and bones. The 'person' who had awakened me told me: 'You could take all these medicines and you could cure people like that one lying there' [i.e., a person in the last extremity]. In my dream I would do everything he told me, manipulate my hands to draw out the sickness, and do everything. But I didn't want that power and would tell him so. Each morning too I would relate to my grandmother exactly what had happened in the night but she would try to hush me up, telling me: 'Don't say anything; don't tell anyone. You will be a great medicine woman.' But I didn't want that power. I didn't like it because when medicine people suck on the weak part of the sick person they have to swallow what they extract. I had decided I would rather be quiet and not do anything like that, or sacrifice my flesh, or things of that kind. Perhaps if it had come later I might have taken that power and become great."

Nevertheless when later in life she had other dreams indicating supernatural power, she likewise refused. She explained in regard to one of these experiences, for instance: "The one who awakened me this time had told me to face the rising sun and was showing me how to make a smudge from the moss that grows close on logs; but I told him. 'No. I would rather not have it.' Those who have power die too soon."

Incidentally, still in connection with curing, bleeding was an operation which was performed purely as a natural remedy for a person who felt dizzy or sluggish. Anyone could do it—no supernatural validation was needed. Other women described quite casually how it was done and discussed the various times they had actually performed the operation. Coming Daylight, however, insisted that while there was really nothing to such an operation, she could never bring herself to perform it, nor would she allow anyone else to bleed her; she could not stand the sight of blood.

The aversion to the sight of blood and to self-mutilation was evidently deep-seated and showed itself in a marked manner early in her life. On one occasion a close relative was very ill. In such a situation it was expected that every member of the family would rally around and do whatever he could toward the recovery. Among the things that fell within the scope of activity for female relatives was that of vowing to sacrifice something valuable, including perhaps the blood from one's arm or a finger-joint, if the person recovered. At this particular time, Coming Daylight was a young child, and her grandmother decided that it would be appropriate for the little girl to offer that her finger-tip be removed if the relative regained his health. When it was suggested to her, Coming Daylight refused, even though her grandmother took after her with a stick. She actually ran away and wandered alone, until two nights later the relative died and an uncle finally found her.

On another occasion in her early youth, too, she defied a convention connected with kinship by refusing to join in mourning for an uncle who had been killed in revenge for having instigated the murder of his brother's wife. When her grandmother upbraided Coming Daylight for not expressing grief in the traditional manner, the latter defied her by saying: "I am not going to cry for that man. I don't know why you are crying for him. I have worked for that woman and she has fed me, and has even given me meat to bring home to you. I heard

8:Flannery E-5 (1940-1948)1960 NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the shots and went later to see what happened, and there I saw her lying across the fire; her dress had burned off and her body was all shriveled. They weren't satisfied to kill her, but they burned her too!" She maintained her attitude and all the scolding from her relatives was of no avail.

Before turning to her adult life, we may refer to another instance which illustrates Coming Daylight's sensitivity to the suffering of others. In the Sacrifice Lodge, which is the Gros Ventre version of the well-known Plains Sun Dance, one of the important features was the spectacular self-torture which the active participants underwent. Each one had a sliver of wood embedded in the flesh of his chest. To the wood was tied a line, the other end of which was fastened high on the center-pole of the lodge. The man, leaning back so that the line was taut, went back and forth until finally the sliver was torn from his flesh. Meanwhile the women cheered on their relatives by "rattling their tongues," singing war songs, and the like, by way of encouraging the men to be brave and see the thing through. Coming Daylight was quite a young child when she first witnessed this performance. She remembered vividly her reaction when one of the young men, in his exhaustion, went to the center-pole and, putting his arms around it, wept aloud. She was not able to stand it any longer and rushed home crying. Her grandmother was very angry with her for leaving in the middle of the performance, but all the little girl could say was: "Oh, I just pitied that young man," and she could not be induced to return to the dance lodge. We may add here that actually in later years she did not participate in the Sacrifice Lodge even so far as women were allowed to do so.

The examples we have given are sufficient to show, I believe, that Coming Daylight had developed as a child a very strong set against violence, against painful and dangerous experiences. She refused medicine power from supernatural sources not only because it was dangerous but also because it involved a kind of physical activity which was repugnant to her. She refused to mutilate herself and was extremely sensitive to painful experiences in others. Her actual deviations from the patterns of accepted or approved behavior all tended in this same direction against violence. Her adult behavior likewise was consistent with this trend in her personality.

In consonance with her feeling against physical violence Coming Daylight avoided as far as possible the rough-and-tumble play in which brother-in-law and sister-in-law were free to, and indeed expected to, indulge. Other women told with glee how they enjoyed "getting even" with their brothers-in-law by, for instance, pushing them when fully clothed into the river, or dumping bucketfuls of water over their heads when they least expected it, and so on; but Coming Daylight admitted without hesitation that she didn't like that sort of thing and never attempted to retaliate even when her brothers-in-law succeeded in playing jokes on her. Similarly while it was not unusual for women rivals to actively fight over a man, she refrained from such undignified behavior, although it must be admitted that she had enough provocation on at least one occasion of which she told me. She had just married a man who was described by others as something of a gay Lothario. A woman who had been trying to force her attentions on him was furious when she heard of the marriage. She rushed to the lodge and pulled Coming Daylight out feet first, yelling insults the while. When the latter regained her feet she made no attempt to hit back even though the other slapped her and pulled off an earring, tearing the lobe of the ear. Coming Daylight, however, bided her time and soon was able to make an opportunity for an exchange of words with the woman at a big social dance.

8:Flannery E-5 (1940-1948)1960 NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

159 578 626 Her final rejoinder was such a witty and pointed one that everyone laughed heartily at her rival's expense. In this culture, of course, public ridicule was a far more effective retaliation than the biting and scratching that other women said frankly they would have indulged in when attacked.

152 765 183 [762] Expression of emotional excess was institutionalized for the Gros Ventres, as for the rest of the Plains, in the bereavement situation. Upon the death of a husband, son, or father, a woman was expected to start wailing as soon as she heard the news, have her hair cut off, discard good clothes for old ragged ones, gash her arms and legs, go to the hills to mourn and cry, resisting for a time the pleas of her relatives to return, and being watched lest she attempt suicide. Coming Daylight was only a young woman when she was first widowed and 159 765 183 152 [603] the mourning pattern was still in full vogue. It is certain from other evidence than Coming Dayling had a deep affection for this husband to whom she had been given as a child-bride and in whose kindly and indulgent treatment she had found a pleasant escape from the rigorous discipline of her grandmother. Nevertheless the public expression of her grief was minimal—no abandonment for her. Although her sister was sent on the hills with her to keep watch over her in the usual way, Coming Daylight was easily persuaded to return shortly though she herself was proud of the fact that she had stayed out so long that she actually had got a frozen toe! In later years when all that was left of the 159 182 765 787 276 ritual was the wailing out on the hills, she lost the son whom she herself, and everybody else, acknowledged as her favorite. She had not been on the hills very long when she experienced a significant dream, as follows. She was in a lodge at the rear of which was a big pile of tobacco mixture and a pipe. The owner of the lodge filled the pipe and approached her. She was frightened because she didn't smoke. The owner of the lodge however told her: "Look at these people." She looked and saw many with their hair cut and their bodies bleeding from the gashes inflicted in grief. The man then told her: "That is in the past. Nowadays your only consolation is in smoking." So she accepted the pipe and, after smoking it, she was painted in ceremonial fashion by each of those other mourners. Then the owner of the lodge dismissed her saying: "Now, go home and don't ever go on the hills and mourn again. But always smoke if you want to." She went home right after this dream and when she told her husband of it he accepted it as valid and persuaded her sister to prepare for Coming Daylight her first real smoke. She maintained that the habit subsequently developed was actually a great comfort to her.

726 562 182 [554] The final area with which we shall be concerned here is the war complex—a vital aspect of the old Plains culture. Gros Ventre women were allowed direct but limited participation in these activities in the sense that, while they would not join a party of men who were going on horse-raiding or revenge expeditions, if opportunity offered they might exhibit the same kind of bravery that a man should show and derive considerable status therefrom. For instance, if one of the enemy fell nearby, the women rushed out from camp to count coup, and to grab trophies with which to inaugurate the relationship known as "enemy-friends." Coming Daylight, however, was never one to indulge in this sport. 159 726 562 She told of the one—and to her extremely distasteful—occasion on which her hand literally was forced. It seems that during a raid on their camp one of the enemy was shot and her husband scalped him. The victim was lying not far from her lodge and, as her husband dashed off to pursue the rest of the Assiniboine, he shouted for her to come out and see what was going on. Coming Daylight saw the man lying there, face down, covered with blood. He was not dead

8:Flannery E-5 (1940-1948)1960 NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

and, each time he attempted to get to his knees, one of two women who had already reached the scene would strike him on the buttocks with the flat side of a hatchet, making an insulting remark, and both would laugh. Coming Daylight hesitated at some distance from where the other two were gloating over the fallen enemy. When one of them, Woman Chief by name, saw her she ran to her saying: "Why are you standing so far off?" She grabbed her by the arm and pushed a big club into her hand, saying: "He is still alive—you will do a great thing. *Ahe:ya'!*" Woman Chief forced Coming Daylight to strike him.

While both Woman Chief and Coming Daylight closely approximated the ideal for women as faithful wives and efficient workers who gave generously of their material goods to and on behalf of their relatives, they seemingly differed in temperament. Woman Chief was known as a very brave woman, and Coming Daylight was frank in admitting she would never have dreamed of doing the kinds of things for which Woman Chief was renowned. One of the latter's exploits, for example, was as follows. The Gros Ventres and Crow were allies in an encounter with the Piegan. The battle was in full force, but one Crow had withdrawn and was sitting motionless astride his horse at some distance from the melee. Woman Chief, who in contrast to most women was always well mounted, dashed up to the Crow, grabbed his wand from his hand, and rode pellmell into the thick of the battle, counting coups right and left. So brave was she considered in having really risked her life that she was accorded the distinction, most unusual for a woman, of being led around the camp circle with the victorious warriors. Furthermore, so many people came to sing in front of her lodge that she and her relatives, to show their appreciation of the honor, were forced to give away as much property as though she were a man. Judging on the basis of other biographical material, there can be no doubt that she gloried in her reputation and took every opportunity to enhance it. She was one to whom the more violent aspects of Gros Ventre culture were exceedingly congenial.

If we compare and contrast these two women we can say that insofar as the patterns of Dionysian configuration are the basis of the comparison, their behavior exhibits opposite extremes, the one going beyond the average in the direction of the configuration, the other running counter to and participating less than the average therein. Both might be termed deviant personalities in Honigmàn's sense of the term,[2] one overplaying and the other underplaying modal behavior in these selected patterns. Nevertheless, neither seems to have been a misfit insofar as each represents an extreme of socially accepted or sanctioned behavior within those patterns. If, for instance, Coming Daylight had been completely negative, and refused, say, to carry out at least the culturally defined minimum for mourning, had she, in addition to refusing to mutilate herself for the recovery of her ill relatives, neglected as an adult even the safe and less strenuous means to that end, she would have fallen without the pale, so to speak, and have been a misfit. If, at the opposite end of the scale, Woman Chief had gone further in the direction of masculinity, had she actually gone on raiding expeditions and herself stolen horses from the camp of the enemy, had she learned to shoot the bow and arrow or gun, or had she so much as adopted the vocabulary and/or pronunciation proper for males in the Gros Ventres language, she would have been carrying things too far. She, too, would have been dubbed a misfit.

The Catholic University of America,
Washington, D.C.

I: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

101 because they have among them no such remnants of perishing tribes, appear
to know nothing of this fivefold group, but they recognize their close rela-
648 tionship to the Arapaho. There is no very great amount of intercourse
between them and the Arapaho at present, nor does there appear to have
been any unusual amount of communication during the greater part of the
nineteenth century; but on both sides there is a mutual recognition as of
separated relatives. The Arapaho are now and apparently have been for
a long time considerably the larger tribe, the Gros Ventre having always in
[161] historical times been regarded as a small body. Their present number is
about 550.

According to Hayden, the Gros Ventre, about 1800, were south of the
131 Saskatchewan; about 1820 they united with the Arapaho for a few years,
648 and then, following a quarrel, journeyed north, had a disastrous encounter
with the Crow, and became neighbors and allies of the Blackfeet.[1] In spite
of the usually close association of the Gros Ventre with the three Blackfoot
tribes since that time, they became hostile to them for a time, about forty
years ago, and united against them with their own long-standing enemies the
Crow. In the course of this hostility the Gros Ventre sustained their heavi-
est reverse in war within their memory; the greater part of an unusually
large war-party, including many Crow, being killed after an attack on a
Piegan camp. This happened in 1867, according to Grinnell. The usual
enemies of the Gros Ventre, besides the Crow, were other Siouan tribes,
such as the Dakota and especially the Assiniboine. They also fought more
or less with the Shoshone, and no doubt in alliance with the Blackfeet against
the Salish Flathead. They were on the whole friendly with the tribes of
their own stock of speech, the Arapaho, Cheyenne, Blackfeet, and Cree.
The habitat of the Gros Ventre in recent times has been the Milk River
territory, in which is situated their present reservation, which they occupy
jointly with the Assiniboine.

The Gros Ventre have also been called Fall, Rapid, and Paunch Indians.
101 The term "Gros Ventre" has also been applied to the Minitari, a Siouan
village tribe on the Missouri; and the two tribes have been distinguished as
"Gros Ventre of the Prairie" and "Gros Ventre of the Missouri."

174 Gros Ventre tradition brings the tribe from the north; but their story of
131 the division of the tribe while crossing the ice on a great river is found also
[173] among the Blackfeet and the Cheyenne, and is worthless as historical evi-
dence. While their earliest habitat known is north of their present territory,
acquaintance of them goes back little more than a century, and there is

[1] See the excellent article by H. L. Scott on The Early History and the Names of the Arapaho, in the American Anthropologist, N.S., IX, 545. 1907. From this it appears that, at least from the middle of the eighteenth century on, except for about five years' association with the Arapaho (from 1818 to 1823), the habitat of the Gros Ventre was in the Blackfoot country, between the Saskatchewan and the Missouri.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

INTRODUCTION

The Algonquian-speaking Gros Ventres live on the Fort Belknap Reservation in North Central Montana. The Reservation is a small part of the land claimed by this tribe in 1887, when the boundaries were finally fixed. At present, the Gros Ventres number between a thousand and eleven hundred, and they share their territory with almost as many Assiniboine. The latter tribe was included in the settlement of the Reservation although it did not participate with the Gros Ventres and Blackfoot tribes in the Treaty of 1855. In spite of some intermarriage, the two groups have never really blended and the Gros Ventres tend to center at the village of Hays at the southern part of the Reservation while the Assinboine are clustered around Lodge Pole, a settlement some ten miles east of Hays. The Indian Agency is approximately forty miles north of Hays at the northern boundary of the Reservation and close to the town of Harlem on the Great Northern Railroad. Of importance to the Gros Ventres, who are predominantly Roman Catholic, is St. Paul's Mission and School which lie at the foot of the Little Rockies only a mile south of Hays. David Rodnick has given an excellent description of the geographical setting of the Reservation for his study of modern conditions and of acculturation among the Fort Belknap Assiniboine.

131 657 [197] [161] [648] [797] [114]

Of the several tribes in the Northern Plains region, the Gros Ventres are perhaps the least known. Although they maintained intact their tribal identity, and were recognized as fierce warriors, they were often mistakenly identified with the Blackfoot tribes, with whom they were frequently allied. Moreover, little was known of the Gros Ventre language except that it was an exceedingly difficult one; practically every independent observer during the nineteenth century remarks on this fact. Since, however, many Gros Ventre men knew Blackfoot, the linguistic difference was often overlooked and the Gros Ventres tended to be counted as one of the Blackfoot tribes. As part of the so-called "Blackfoot Nation," leaders of the Gros Ventres signed the Treaty of 1855.

101 [648] 197 [648]

[P. viii contains no text]

175 posts accessible to the Blackfoot and to the Gros Ventres. So long as the Cree and the friendly Assiniboine were appreciably 648 better armed than the other tribes on the northern plains, the traders had little to fear. But now, with the acquisition of more guns by the buffalo hunters, and with the increasing appetite of the latter, not only for still more firearms but for other items, especially spiritous liquors, they became more and more troublesome and it was necessary to fortify the trading posts.

Since the demand was mainly for beaver, and the Cree were the real trappers, they were particularly favored by the traders. Umfreville (1784–88) complains that both the Gros Ventres and the Blackfoot tribes bring in by far too many wolf skins, and says specifically of the Gros Ventres that they seem not yet initiated into the manner of hunting and killing beaver, dressing skins and killing small peltry.[26] Mackenzie from his observations in 1789 gives the impression that the buffalo hunters were little interested in trading at the posts, and states that the part of the Gros Ventres, who were with the Assiniboine on the plains near the central portion of the Assiniboine River, prepared fresh and dried buffalo meat and tallow, along with a few buffalo robes and wolf skins, to exchange for "arms and ammunition, rum, tobacco, knives and various baubles," with those who go to traffic with them.[27]

175 Mackenzie gives also the relative position and size of the northern plains groups. Some Cree-Assiniboine are mentioned by him as being at Nepawi and South Branch House, and whose territory extends upward about to the Eagle Hills. Next to them are the Cree about eighty tents and on the other side of the river their number may be 200. Mandelbaum cites this evidence to show that at this time the Cree were along the north Saskatchewan, but had not yet consolidated their position there.[28] Mackenzie goes on to say that at the southern headwaters of the North Saskatchewan dwell the Sarsi, 35 tents, 120 men; opposite to those [161] eastward on the headwaters of the South Branch are the Piegan, 1200–1500 men; next to them on the same water, are the Blood,

[26] Umfreville, p. 198.
[27] Mackenzie, v. 1, pp. cxi, ciii.
[28] Mandelbaum, pp. 181–82.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

50 tents or 250 men; next to them downward extend the Blackfeet, their number may be 800 men; next to them and who extend to the confluence of the South and North branch, are the Fall or Big Bellied Indians, who may amount to about 600 warriors.[29] 175 161

Dislocation and Warfare (1790–1830)

Within a decade of the time of Mackenzie's observations, however, the Gros Ventres were being ousted from between the forks of the Saskatchewan where they had been apparently well established since at least 1772, when Cocking met them.[30] Undoubtedly the Gros Ventres were greatly weakened by the smallpox epidemic of 1780, as Wissler has suggested.[31] In any case they were subsequently pushed south and east by the allied Assiniboine and Cree, who had the great advantage of being relatively well-armed with guns. Thus the Gros Ventres were launched on the most turbulent period of their career, with enmity toward the whites as an important factor. 175 648 [731]

We know from Harmon how bitterly the Gros Ventres resented the more favorable treatment accorded the Cree-Assiniboine by the traders. He was at Alexandria, a Northwest Company post on the Assiniboine River, and records on June 10, 1801, the following: "It is currently reported and believed that the Rapid Indians are forming a war party to come against the Indians of this quarter, whom they consider, and I think with sufficient reason, as their enemies. If they come this way they will fall on us as upon the natives themselves, for they say that we furnish the Cree and Assiniboine with what firearms they want, while they get few."[32] Although this particular attack on the post did not materialize, there was real reason to have feared it. In the summer of 1793 the Gros Ventres attacked old fort Brulé (South Branch House) and killed all but one of the twenty or so inhabitants; in 1794 they pillaged Manchester House. These two

[29] Mackenzie, v. 1, p. cx.

[30] O. Lewis p. 12, places them East of the South Branch prior to about 1750.

[31] Wissler, 1936, p. 18. Cf. interesting tradition of the ravages of the epidemic, pp. 34–36.

[32] Harmon, p. 51.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

robes,—that the Gros Ventres were industrious and were as good skin-dressers as the Mandan and better than the Blackfoot. He further mentions that they were formerly numerous and dreaded but that since the smallpox, and the depredations by the tribes with whom they have been at variance, they had diminished. Although they formerly had bloody wars with the Blackfoot tribes, in 1808 they were at peace with them. 175 648

Henry's estimate, however, that at this time the Gros Ventres numbered but 80 tents or 240 men, seems very low.[38] He was probably basing his figures on those who came that far north to trade, because in 1805 Laroque, while with the Crow on an island in the Missouri River near the confluence of the Big Horn, met a delegation of the Gros Ventres who were camped on the Big Horn River behind the mountain. He states that they occupied 275–300 "huts" and that it was with friendly sentiments that they came to this region. They brought words of peace and said that they came to procure some horses from the Crow. Laroque referred to them as "Big bellies of the fort de prairie" and mentioned that they and the Crow communicated with each other by means of the sign language, not being able to understand each other in speech.[39] This makes it quite certain that these Indians were not the Hidatsa. 161 175 648

It would seem, then, from the above as well as from the figures obtained in the same year, 1805, by Lewis and Clark, viz. 260 tents or 660 men,[40] that the estimates of both Thompson and Henry, observing as they were from the Canadian area from which the Gros Ventres had been driven, refer to only part of the main group of Gros Ventres. Henry himself remarks in 1811 that the Gros Ventres are increasing very fast and that he had always noticed a greater percentage of young men among them than among the neighboring tribes. He admits further: "I have not been able to obtain their exact number but am fully confident they exceed 100 tents."[41] Richardson, moreover, in his journal of 1818–19, identifies the Gros Ventres and claims that they have about 450 to 500 tents.[42] [114]

[38] Henry, v. 2, pp. 530–31.
[39] Laroque, p. 20.
[40] Cf. Wissler, 1936, p. 4.
[41] Henry, v. 2, p. 733.
[42] Richardson, quoted in Franklin, pp. 99–100.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

175 648 Crow were in the vicinity, camped at a place through which the first contingent of Crow had already passed. Four young men from the second division of Crow were attempting to catch up with the first when they came across the Gros Ventres camp, thinking they had reached their goal. The Gros Ventres seized and killed three of these young men, but the fourth escaped to warn his people, who laid in ambush at a narrow pass through which the Gros Ventres would go. Taking the Gros Ventres by surprise, they completely demoralized them, killing 67 and capturing twice that many women and children. The remainder fled and reached safety with the Blackfoot, leaving the wounded where they lay.

Readjustment (1830–1870)

174 That the whole Gros Ventres tribe could have gone south to the Arapaho, remained a few years, and suffered such disasters in 1832, is highly improbable. First of all, it is unlikely that if the whole tribe disappeared from their usual habitat they would have been able to regain their territory from encroachments by Assiniboine from the east and northeast, by Crow from the south, and by Piegan and Blackfoot from the west and northwest. Furthermore it is equally unlikely that such absence would have been unnoted by Catlin who in 1832, at the American Fur Company Post [161] at the mouth of the Yellowstone, gives a reasonable estimate of the Gros Ventre population (430 lodges) and notes the common error of traders in counting that tribe indiscriminately with the Blackfoot groups, in spite of the difference between the Blackfoot and Gros Ventre language.[51] Moreover, according to Maximilian, Mitchell of the American Fur Company affirmed in 1833 that he had always done business with the Gros Ventres with pleasure, and had never had any proof of the treachery imputed to them. Had there been no Gros Ventres around for five years, Mitchell would no doubt have mentioned that fact. The entire feeling of Maximilian's account is that the Gros Ventres were well known to American Fur Company traders—as compared to some Blackfoot proper, who arrived at the fort and were unknown.[52]

Finally, native tradition gives some negative evidence. Our

[51] Catlin, v. 1, pp. 59–60.
[52] Maximilian, pp. 73, 154.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

over the area. The Gros Ventres had the benefit of buffalo hunting 136
a trifle longer than the other groups. All the buffalo in Montana 175
were in February, 1882, in their territory, between the Milk River
and the Bear Paw Mountains. The hunting season, of October 648
1882 to February 1883, finished the annihilation of the great northern herd and left only stragglers, merely a few thousands.[70] By August, 1883, both the Blackfoot and the Crow Agencies reported that all game was gone from their respective reservations, and a letter from the Fort Belknap Agency stated that game there "was practically exhausted."[71] In 1884 the Blackfoot and Crow agencies reported that the buffalo was extinct.[72] After ceding [657]
more land, in 1888 the limits of the Fort Belknap Reservation, which the Gros Ventres share with the Assiniboine, were finally fixed.[73]

Missionary endeavors, carried on by the Jesuit Fathers, had 175
begun in earnest only in 1885. Prior to that time contact with
missionaries had been sporadic. Father Point in 1846–47 had 797
been well received and sent in a good report of this tribe. When Father Giorda attempted to go among them in 1862, however, Bull Lodge took him prisoner and stripped him of his possessions. Since his captivity did not last longer than a few weeks, and his property was restored to him, several months later he made another attempt. This time, while there was some opposition at first, he was permitted to baptize over a hundred children. Subsequently Fathers Rappagliosi and Grassi made several visits respectively, and at considerable intervals. Finally, after some preliminary negotiations, Father Ebershweiler established permanent residence in 1885, and the school at St. Paul's was opened in 1887. The mission and school flourished. In 1891 the founder was replaced by Father Flusi, assisted by Father Sansome.[74]

The Gros Ventres population—always small, relative to that of 175
surrounding tribes—was steadily declining. Hayden's estimate
of 1853 placed the total at 2520.[75] In 1883, at the time of the 161

[70] Hornaday, pp. 492, 506, 510–11.
[71] Report of Commissioner of Indian Affairs 1883–1915, pp. lx, 98.
[72] *Ibid.*, pp. 107, 109.
[73] *Ibid.*, p. 295.
[74] Palladino, pp. 187, 195–96, 230, 232, 235.
[75] Hayden, p. 344. Gros Ventres today claim their number was then 10,000.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

175 disappearance of the buffalo, the population was officially recorded
161 as being 970. By 1895 it had been reduced to 596.[78] At this low
[554] ebb, in the last decade of the nineteenth century, there was still a strong feeling among the Gros Ventres against the white man's dress; as of old, a man's wealth and standing still was measured
[178] by the number of horses he owned. Nevertheless the ceremonial aspects of their culture, already on the wane before that decade, had practically disappeared.

[78] Report of Commissioner of Indian Affairs 1883-1915, pp. 101, 188.

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

stakes, but not for really large ones. A gambling game between two brothers-in- 606
law, small though the stakes had to be, was a good show for the onlookers— 525
not, however, nearly so good as one between two prominent enemy friends. Two sisters-in-law were also "just right" for gambling against each other.

Through all these three relationships run two currents: one of mutual goodwill and helpfulness, the other of familiarity, "teasing" and twitting. Between two brothers-in-law and two sisters-in-law there is relatively more of the first and less of the second; between brother-in-law and sister-in-law relatively more of the second and less of the first.

Two brothers-in-law could not discuss sex or vulgarity and could not go to the toilet together. They would be helpful to each other in giving presents, in a building project, in business matters, and so forth. But on the other hand [522] they could go quite far in "humiliating" each other, in indulging in practical jokes and horse play at the other's expense, and in rivaling each other in war and in war-deed matching contests—but not to the limit, not so far as enemy friends could go. Two sisters-in-law could likewise "tease" each other, but could not go to the same length that brothers-in-law could go.

To her brother-in-law (sister's husband or husband's brother) a woman could go nearly any length in "teasing" and freedom in the way of crude horse play and of vulgar and obscene talk, and vice versa.

The gambling rule that prevailed, and still prevails largely, between these three types of siblings-in-law, namely, gambling for small stakes permitted and encouraged, but not for large stakes, appears to be genetically related to the two currents we have been discussing: the goodwill one prohibiting stakes whose loss would really hurt, the familiarity one permitting and provoking small-stake 619
gambling. 525

The Gros Ventre, with a population range of between about 800 and 2,000 621
in the second half of the last century, were divided into about a dozen bands. [161]
These bands were not sibs proper, but each was composed largely of kin related by blood or marriage. Members of a given band, whether related or not, would not gamble against one another. There was a well-marked we-feeling among the members of a band, somewhat distinct from and additional to the kinship feeling proper. Actually this was almost equivalent to "tribal" we-feeling, for each band was for the greater part of the year, particularly in the winter months when the bands scattered to separate quarters within the tribal territory, an almost completely autonomous economico-political unit, and any band was free if it wished to secede from the tribe at any time, temporarily or permanently.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the latter tribe that they appeared to him "to have the advantage of the others in being more adroit, more docile, and more courageous; but they are more attached to their old superstitions and are terrible *demanders*, as the Canadian employees here call shameless beggars; happily they are not offended when refused." In addition, he stated that if the Gros Ventres were less importunate he would willingly entitle them the Flatheads of the Missouri "as they have something of their simplicity and bravery." He considered that "the Piegans are the most civilized but the most noted thieves; the Blood well made and generally less dirty; while the Blackfeet proper are, it is said, the most hospitable." Among all four tribes Father Point found the disproportion of sexes great, and attributed to warfare the preponderance of women over men.[64]

The heart of the area held by the Gros Ventres at that time, and claimed by them subsequently at least until the establishment of the Fort Belknap Reservation in 1873, and probably until 1888, was described by Hayden as follows: "At present [1862] and for many years past, they range along the Milk River, on the east side of the Missouri, extending as far as the Cypress Mountains. From this line to the Marias River stretches a beautiful level country well covered with grass and adapted to pasturage of buffalo. Here the Indians under consideration may be found at all seasons—in the winter along the banks of the Milk River where wood may be obtained and in summer on the plains where fuel is not so necessary."[65] As the Gros Ventres were by no means confined to this area they were in intermittent conflict with surrounding tribes.

With a view to settling the quarrels of the Blackfoot, Piegan and Gros Ventres east of the mountains, and of the Flathead, Kootenais and Nez Percé and others west of the mountains, Governor Stevens held a council with the Gros Ventres on the Milk River in August, 1853, and with the Blackfoot and Piegan at Fort Benton in September.[66] In 1854, he ordered a thousand dollars worth of goods from Culbertson of the American Fur Company, for distribution to the Piegan and Gros Ventres. These goods, consisting mainly of foodstuffs with which they were un-

[64] Father Point's letter of 1847, in De Smet, pp. 254, 256.
[65] Hayden, p. 340.
[66] Hoopes, p. 101.

462 she herself had picked or dug. In preparing the material for
476 storage, too, the women would sit in a big circle, pounding cherries
[251] for instance, one woman helping to crush the cherries brought in by another. But, again, while it lightened the work of an individual woman who might have gathered more than the others, there was no pooling of resources. Sociability and friendship were apparently the chief motives for joining such a work group.

463 While there was a slight amount of occupational specialization, there was no real division of labor in the sense that persons with, say, supernatural power to cure, and who were well paid for their services, would be supported by this means alone. Nor could a man live, for instance, by specializing in raiding and raising horses. Every man, whatever else he might do, would have to make at least an attempt to hunt. Similarly, regardless of the temporary division of tasks which might be assigned among the women of the household, no individual woman could profit sufficiently through her ability to cut and fit lodge covers or through her ability to embroider well. Some, who were more skilled at one task than another, might perhaps devote more time and energy to that pursuit, but the rewards therefor were more in the nature of prestige than of direct economic advantage. An old woman for instance might be adept at making buffalo-hair rope. Men desiring to have it, would give her things in exchange for it, but it is doubtful if she would receive sufficient from this one type of manufacture to make her independent of relatives, even so far as food was concerned.

464 The potential supply of labor consisted in all able-bodied men of the tribe from the age of about 17 or 18, at which time a young
[582] man was sufficiently skilled to hunt seriously, and of all able-bodied females from about the age of twelve, the time at which the average girl was married and was supposed to have been trained
[162] to woman's work. The unbalance of the sexes in favor of females, a marked feature in the population of the northern plains tribes,[6]
461 plus the fact that the tasks allotted to women could be begun at a much earlier age than those undertaken by men, meant that the amount of labor contributed by the woman, in manufacturing economic goods, was greater than the amount of labor available

[6] Cf. Wissler, 1936 (a), p. 38.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

842 thers wash such clothes and wear them again right after delivery—and they have a lot more babies now than they used to have, too."

[163] Coming Daylight said that formerly most women had only two or three children,—at most five,—and that some had none at all. Yet in the "old days" the population was large. Singer mentioned that although a man with several wives might have one as favorite, this would not make any difference. Each wife would have one or two children; no one of them would have a great many.[1]

These two old women, and our older men informants as well, were firmly convinced that "medicinal" contraceptives accounted for the small families. The old woman said: "Lots of women took medicine. There are roots for that [contraception]. Women who do not want children say, as an excuse, that one cannot keep things in order if there are children about. Not everybody had this kind of medicine, and one had to pay a high price for it—sometimes two or three horses. If a man were the owner of this type of medicine, he might demand in payment one of the other wives of the husband who obtained the medicine from him. If you take this kind of medicine you have to abide by certain rules. You must not let anyone who has children wear your robe; never sit on the bare ground; never hold an infant; don't sit on anyone's else bedding; above all, don't have intercourse with anyone other than your husband. If you break any of these rules you will conceive right away."

To illustrate this point, one woman told about her cousin's wife who had taken medicine to prevent her having children. While [837] her husband was away, she "threw in" with another man and became pregnant. Some women hesitated to take this kind of medicine because if a woman then became pregnant her husband would suspect infidelity, even though the wife had remained chaste but had "broken one of the other rules." Singer said that she would

[145] [1] This is confirmed by Denig, who was among the northern plains tribes for 20 years and was himself married to an Assiniboine. He makes the following observations, p. 513: (1) Not more than two out of five children live till youth is passed; (2) two to five children is the average and seven or eight of rare occurrence; (3) a woman is old at 35 and seldom healthy, menopause occurs at 40 or earlier, the usual period of child-bearing is 18 to 35, although a few start bearing at 15.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

ioned doll which he wrapped up like a sack-baby and, one night without letting her know what he was doing, he raised up the covers on his third wife's bed and put this doll under her. He did the same with the Assiniboine woman and said: 'She will have a boy, too.' As he had predicted, each bore him a son, and these two are the only children Crow Bull had. He later gave this doll to one of his niece's daughters, having 'sterilized' the doll first, however, so that the girl was not affected and subsequently gave birth to five children." 842 789

Natural sterility was apparently not recognized by the Gros Ventres. If a couple was childless it was assumed that contraceptive medicines were used. While many individuals did not approve of the use of these medicines, each family had the right to do as it pleased in this matter without outside interference. Nevertheless, The Boy, alarmed at the falling birthrate which he attributed to the widespread use of these old-fashioned medicines, on two occasions in 1921 and 1922 spoke out boldly in public about the matter. He feels he was justified in doing so since he thinks there has been an improvement in the situation. 842 [163]

Although the use of these medicines was rated by our informants as the major factor in accounting for the small number of children per family, infant mortality was said to have been high, and infanticide was known. [847]

For premature infants nothing could be done in the days before hospital care was known. Furthermore, where marked physical defects were obvious at birth, the chances that the infant would live were slight. It was stated, for instance, in regard to one woman who gave birth to a "little dog," that "had she been alone she would have done away with it, but her husband prevented her from doing so and everybody thought it was awful." Coming Daylight and Singer knew of two other actual instances of deformity,—one child who "looked like a beaver," and another who had "ears like a rabbit"—and both of these died shortly after birth. Coming Daylight remarked: "It seems as though we are so foolish the way we are ashamed of being deformed. One time when we were in town a white woman, whose face was quite disfigured, came into a restaurant where we were. My daughter told me: 'They [the whites] don't think anything of it. It can't be 845

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

that you are grateful and what you are offering to do for me.' The old man did not get mad or insulted, and he said to me: 'It is well you refuse this thing anyhow.' He did not tell me all the details (about the power and its manner of use), because I refused it. 778 787 832

"Another old man offered me that kind of medicine [love power] out of my appreciation of my good treatment of him, and did not get mad when I refused it."

One other old man, who liked his liquor, was on one occasion given a treat of it by The Boy and another man. Soon the old man was feeling pretty good and started to get generous and said to The Boy: "Now, my son, I am an old man now and I appreciate your giving me this drink, so much so that I am going to give you something worth something." It was this love medicine. But The Boy "refused him nicely" and did not take it.

One final illustration of refusal,—"just an old time story," Coming Daylight called it who related it,—may be given, the only case we recorded of penalty believed to follow refusal. Perhaps even in this case the refusal was not so much of power as of a request to hold a Sacrifice Lodge. 787 778

"A man was hunting north of the canyon [near the present St. Paul's mission in the Little Rockies] and was shown [by whom?] a nice clean big cave. In this cave were big strings, like a spider puts before he makes a whole web, that is one strand crossing the other at right angles. Right in the middle [at the intersection] was a medicine wheel, of the kind always used at the Sacrifice Lodge. The man just stood and gazed at it. He saw it good and it belonged to the Sacrifice Lodge. He camped in the mountains overnight. That night this wheel told him in his dream: 'You ought to take me so you can make this Sacrifice Lodge.' But the man did not take it. He went back to camp and told his dream and his refusal to take the wheel. After that he began to waste away with a sickness called 'cut away,' in which the flesh starts to disappear in a small place and just sinews show and then it spreads. It was a quick sickness and he died of it. They say this happened to him because he did not take that medicine wheel." [164]

From what has been recorded on the preceding pages it seems quite clear that the individual was under little or no supernatural

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Another instance was given by The Boy regarding his father. "Lame Bull was on a buffalo-hunting party when his brother-in-law was killed during an encounter with the enemy. They brought the body as it was back to camp, where it lay for quite a while. Lame Bull finally went to his tipi and got leggings and a shirt of his own, although he was Flat Pipe Keeper at the time and it was taboo for one holding this office to give his clothes to the dead. Nevertheless Lame Bull removed the bloody clothes from the body of his brother-in-law, washed the body and dressed it in his own clothes. He paid for this kindness, however, because for nine years thereafter he had such pains in his legs he was not able to walk,—this being the punishment he suffered for breaking the rules by which the Keeper of a sacred pipe should live."

Before finally disposing of the body "something very expensive," like a big silk handkerchief, was placed over the face. The whole body, including the head, was then wrapped securely in a blanket or robe and tied "like a mummy." The body was placed on a stretcher and put in a forked tree, if practicable, the head to the setting sun. Otherwise the corpse might be laid on a knoll and a structure like a sweatlodge built over it to protect it from the wild beasts; or it might be laid in the cleft of a cliff and covered with rocks.[4] For a particularly prominent man, however, his own lodge might serve as his last resting place. In that case holes would be dug in which the lodge-poles were placed, in order that the structure would be more permanent. The body was laid in the lodge amidst rich furnishings. The ears of the lodge were closed, the cover pegged down, and the whole secured as well as possible. This was done, for instance, for The Boy's maternal grandfather and for one of his maternal uncles. Al Chandler remembers that when he himself was a small boy upon the death of his uncle, Rises Again, the body was placed on a bedstead in a big lodge erected about a half-mile from his house.

Even in times of great stress, such as in a smallpox epidemic when so many died that "the trees along the Milk River were just loaded with bodies," as much care as possible was taken to place the bodies properly in their last resting place. When there was no more space on the trees, a large number of bodies were put in a

[4] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, p. 181.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

776 executes the direction or will of the Supreme Being. He is the
821 medium or means by which the Supreme Being works. When a big storm is about to break, a pipe is filled and the Supreme Being
[782] is prayed to in the direction from which the storm is coming and is asked to spare the people during this storm, to direct Bha'a not to kill them, to say a word or two to Bha'a himself not to shoot around too close to camp. The people are afraid of Bha'a since he does his job in such a violent way. Even though Bha'a is held in high esteem and is considered an extraordinary being, he is a creature [under control] of the Supreme Being."

776 Bha'a was closely associated with the Feathered Pipe, not at all with the Flat Pipe.

Bha'a too entered into the Sacrifice Lodge ("Sun dance") as the being who could cause rain and so bring a good season for the food quest and bring coolness and shade in hot weather. While supernatural power was not explicitly sought from Bha'a he might occasionally on his own initiative have pity on a man and give him power to be a great warrior and even to make storms.
[726] But on a war expedition the participants would pray to the Supreme Being to be saved from wounds and death; not the slightest thought of Bha'a would enter their minds unless they were overtaken by a bad storm.

[165] It may be added here that, while violent thunderstorms are common in Gros Ventre territory, deaths from lightning are not frequent. The Boy could recall only three such deaths, occurring in Gros Ventre territory during his experience, two on one occasion when he was a young boy and one on a later occasion around 1930.

The word Bha'a is used not only for the Thunderbird but enters into the term also for the water and earth monsters, bha'anbi:'iθãn.[16]

The water monster,—or monsters as there appear to be a number of them, for they are reported from various large rivers, and springs where they bathe,—is usually envisioned as a huge,

[16] The Boy explained in 1948: "The word bi:'iθãn includes water bugs, crawling bugs, bugs of all kinds; but a snake is never called bi:'iθã, nor will a snake ever be called bha'a. Water monster, no manner how many horns he has, or however much he resemble a snake, is always called bha'anbi:'iθã." [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

793 174 latter's lodge where the Feathered Pipe was kept. When Sitting High died in 1908, at the age of 92, his only surviving widow, Kills in the Night, moved over with the Pipe to her uncle, old Sleeping Bear, who took charge of the Pipe. In 1910 Sleeping Bear gave the Pipe to Curly Head, the last keeper of it, who kept it until his death in 1937 (or 1938).

About 1930, during Curly Head's keepership, a certain young Gros Ventre, a cowboy (son of Bradley), had to pass through Curly Head's place at Lodge Pole. Curly Head gave him something to eat. The young man was looking at the Feathered Pipe bundle and noted that the wrapping of Hudson's Bay Company cloth was old. "That wrapping is old," he said, "I'll buy another for you." "All right," said Curly Head, "I am glad. We will discard the old wrapping."

The young fellow forgot all about the matter until the following summer, when in a dream someone said to him: "When are you going to buy that new wrapping for the Feathered Pipe?" This happened far from here. The young man was worried and made a special trip back to Curly Head, told him about his dream, and asked: "What shall I do?" "You better buy the wrapping you promised," said Curly Head. "This Pipe is no ordinary thing. Even though you were perhaps not serious when you made the promise, you better be on the safe side." "Where can I buy this kind of cloth?" he asked. "At Browning," said Curly Head, "You better go there or else send for it." "I will," said the young man. [165] The latter went away, and shortly after, while herding sheep, he was killed by lightning. And the Gros Ventres wonder today (1939) if this young man's death was a punishment for his failure to keep his promise.

Before his death Curly Head, knowing that his health was failing, came to Garter Snake and said: "Sister, you will be surprised some day. I'll keel over and quit. You were raised with the Feathered Pipe. Keep it as a keepsake." "I am blind," she said, "I cannot see. How can I take care of it? You better leave it in care of some one else." "All right," said Curly Head, "I'll leave it with Iron Man. But you see that it is not disposed of in any way. This Pipe has to remain with the Gros Ventres forever. Remember that the Feathered Pipe is the main hope of the Gros Ventres,

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

756 wood. Something in my sleeve kept biting me. I would sort of
787 work my sleeve but it kept biting me. Finally I took off my dress
778 and found it was a big spider with long legs. I did not kill it but just brushed it off. That night in a dream the spider told me: 'Because you had pity on me, I will have pity on you.' But I told the spider: 'I do not care for any powers from a bug or spider.' Afterwards people told me I should have accepted the offered power so that I could doctor spider bites. If you accept a power like that you are shown in your dream how to doctor. Nothing happens if you refuse such power." Every once in a while people were bitten by spiders. Cora Chandler had heard of one such case: "One fourth of July at Lodge Pole a woman got bitten while fixing her tent and died the same evening. Had Singer accepted the power offered her, she could have doctored that woman."

[165]

Little Man, Al Chandler's adoptive father, once refused power from a rattlesnake to cure snake bites, but acquired power to cure seven dying persons. He had cured people and wanted to pass on what remained of his power to Al. But the latter in recounting the matter stated: "I did not want this power on account of the Catholic Church. I was afraid I might poison somebody. But the old man [Little Man] said: 'You will know all about it and what to do. All you have to do is to accept it. The rest will come to you. I am getting old and you might need it for your children. You could doctor your own children.' But the Catholics did not want you to do such things." So Al declined the old man's offer.

787 By three different men, who possessed love power, The Boy
832 was offered this power, but in all cases he refused. His accounts
778 follow.

"One old man lived near Bear Paws and when he came to my place, then on the Milk River, I used to accommodate him, although he would eat with my father, Lame Bull. He appreciated this and wanted to do something to repay the favor. So he said to me: 'I am going to give you my woman's medicine in payment for consideration of your service to me. I haven't anything of adequate value to pay you back.' He had a looking glass he used to do his stuff with. But I diplomatically refused. I told him: 'I do not like that kind of thing and never have, although I appreciate the fact

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

and he knew that the old men were meeting. When he was called in he wondered 'Why do they call a man so young as I?' But after White Eagle accepted the pipe and prayed with it,—thus accepting the office,—all said 'Ai-e-e-e-.' Then White Eagle called one of the attendants: 'I am through praying. Come and get this pipe.' The attendant got up and took it to the first band chief to the left of the door as one entered the lodge. The band chief lit the pipe, said prayers to White Man Above, passed it to the next man on his left who likewise smoked, prayed and passed the pipe on until it reached the last man to the right of the door. Then the pipe was passed back, with no smoking except by the two Keepers of the two Sacred Pipes who were present, and then the two attendants and the announcer smoked. After that, they smoked socially and told stories until White Eagle got up to talk and told what he thought should be done, what would be for the good of the people. 173 643

"When White Eagle accepted the pipe he said, addressing the old man who had gathered the others together: 'Old man, I accept the pipe. I accept it with my whole heart. I am a young man, I am rather backward about everything. But since you chose me to be your head chief I take it with good will. Since I've done what you have asked me, in return I'm going to ask you to do everything I request. Don't refuse me. Don't think because I'm a young man what I say may be taken lightly. Now we've had smallpox and there are many dead. Among the living are many single men and single women. This very night I want each man to select a wife or each woman to select a husband—this very night I want *every* man and woman to marry. If this is done in a few years our old numbers will be restored. After the men and women get together we'll move to where there are buffalo. We will kill buffalo and tan the hides for lodges and bedding for these couples and, after this is done, we'll cut poles for the lodges, so each new married couple will have a home of their own. If we do this our population will increase fast.' After this speech White Eagle told the announcer to tell the people what he had just said and to tell the women not to refuse the men who ask them, and the men not to refuse the women who ask them. So the announcer told all this in the name of White Eagle, the head chief from then on. All was carried out as he had ordered and in a few years the population had 168 173 643

173 very much increased. White Eagle governed the people very
643 wisely and he governed until he died."

643 It was The Boy's impression that following White Eagle, the chief of the whole tribe was no longer formally selected and simply attained his position through gradual recognition of his merits.[9] Sits Like A Woman succeeded White Eagle and was tribal chief in the first decades of the 19th century. He was followed by his son of the same name who was a signer of the 1855 treaty, and was still recognized as tribal head when he died suddenly about 1870. Coming Daylight claimed that this Sits Like a Woman II was certainly the greatest chief of her time and that, when he died, people were forbidden to light their camp fires as a sign of mourning. During the subsequent period Lame Bull was outstanding among the leading men, but he witnessed the dissolution of the
[657] band system and the camp circle. The Fort Belknap Reservation had been set up in 1873, encompassing much more territory than at present, and the first houses were built in 1882.

619 In spite of the fact that a tribal chief was recognized, band autonomy was apparently preserved. The ceremonial organization
621 cut across band organization, however, and band autonomy was
796 relinquished at the times during which the Sacred Dances were held. The movements and activities of the tribe as a whole were then in the hands of the company to which the vower of a particular Dance belonged.[10]

The Companies

561 Kroeber notes that "men of the tribe of age to make any one ceremony were not all in one society or company but in several, the total number of companies being three or four times as great as the number of ceremonies. Each company had a name which it

[9] So far as it goes, this would seem to confirm O. Lewis' interpretation, pp. 42–43, that the earlier Hudson's Bay Company policy on the northern plains reinforced tribal chieftaincy, but that with the development of competition in the fur trade, authority was weakened.

[10] For a discussion of the Sacred Dances, see Kroeber, 1908, pp. 239–68. Other details are given in Cooper, Ms. 1949. The following discussion is concerned only with the composition of the ceremonial organization so far as it can be reconstructed.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

sometimes put on the bow with glue made from boiled skin from the head of a buffalo. Sometimes the bow was without sinew backing and sometimes ornamented by being covered on the back with snake-skin. Bows are said to have been held either horizontally or vertically, according to individual habit. Arrows for war and hunting are said to have been alike. 411

Shields were made of the thickest part of buffalo-bull skin, which was laid into a hole in the ground and made hard by being scorched with hot rocks placed upon it. It was then provided with a cover of white buckskin fringed with feathers. A man who carried a shield in war sometimes had no other weapon. 714

It is declared that no tobacco was raised, and that none growing wild was gathered, but that it was obtained from other tribes and from the whites. This is contrary to the practice of the equally non-agricultural Blackfoot, who planted tobacco; but it would seem to accord with the lack of any information obtained from the Arapaho as to tobacco-raising. 171 249 [439]

DECORATIVE ART.

The present day decorative art of the Gros Ventre is not nearly as strongly developed as that of the Arapaho. There is much less bead-work made, and this hardly ever equals the better work of the Arapaho either in technical or artistic excellence. Quill-embroidery is also found less frequently than among the Arapaho. How far this greater poverty and inferiority of Gros Ventre decorative art are matters of some standing in time is not certain; but it seems probable that there was a difference between the two tribes in this respect, even when they first came into contact with the whites. 531 171

It is in accord with this difference that inquiry as to the symbolic or conventional significance of the decorative designs used by the Gros Ventre has been practically without result. While the failure of the Gros Ventre to render such interpretations is due perhaps in large measure to change of mode of life under the influence of civilization, yet it seems that in this respect too there must have been a temperamental difference between the Arapaho and Gros Ventre, even in earlier times; for the Arapaho preserve at least distinguished wrecks of their symbolism, ceremonies, and religious life, while among the Gros Ventre, who are in much less intimate contact with the Americans, these things have vanished, leaving often scarcely a trace, and rarely more than a memory.

Partly on account of comparative scarcity of material, and also by reason of greater artistic poverty, the decoration of the Gros Ventre does not present as many typical characteristics as that of the Arapaho, the Blackfeet, the

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

531
171

Ute, and other tribes. It bears certain partial resemblances to Arapaho, Blackfoot, and Sioux decoration, and probably has been subject to their influences; but a clear determination of its special qualities is rather difficult. A consideration of some of the more prominent features of the bead and quill embroidery of the northern and western Plains tribes — especially the Cheyenne, Arapaho, Blackfeet, Sioux, Assiniboine, Ute, and Shoshone — will, however, bring out by comparison some of the leanings of the art of the Gros Ventre.

Fig. 1 (*a–n*) presents some of the more conspicuous decorative design elements among the Plains Indians.

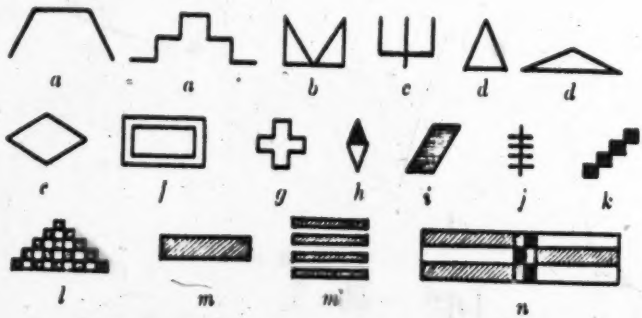


Fig. 1. Design Elements, Bead and Quill Embroidery.

Design *a* shows two schematized forms of a type of pattern that varies greatly in detail, but is always characterized by a horizontal line or bar connecting two spreading arms. The whole figure is usually worked in lines or small areas; it scarcely ever shows any heavy masses. Like the other designs considered, it is frequently only an element in patterns. It is often paired, two figures being arranged back to back, connected by a line, a diamond, acute triangles, or other design elements. This design is conspicuous in Ute bead-work. It may be called the "spreading design."

Design *b* is familiar from the Arapaho specimens that have been illustrated.[1] It may be called the "forked design." Design *c*, the "pronged design," needs no comment. The type of design *d* is the isosceles triangle. Design *e* shows the rhombus; and *f*, a square or rectangle, usually with border and centre of different colors. Element *g* is a square cross; element *h*, a well-known design called "feather" by the Sioux. Elements *i*, *j*, the slanting bar and crossed line, need no comment. Design *k*, the

[1] See Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part III, p. 237.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

checker-diagonal, may be a single diagonal row of squares, as here shown, or several rows arranged in checker-pattern. In design *l* the fundamental idea seems to be not so much the effect of checkered color as of steps, analogous to that of design *k*, since the Blackfeet, the great exponents of this type, sometimes make this design in a solid mass, but rarely depart from the exterior step contour which distinguishes this form from the virtually straight-lined element *d*. Design *m* is a wide short stripe or long rectangle, either standing alone, or, if in contact with other stripes, decoratively separated from them by containing an internal design. Very similar in one respect is the solid stripe of one color, the unit-element of design *n*, but entirely different in being developed into a drawn-out checker-pattern by combination with analogous stripes of other colors, as in the soft bag bead-patterns of the Arapaho.

531
171

Other important design elements — such as, for instance, the simple right-angled triangle, the leaf-design of the Sioux — are not considered here, because they seem at present of less consequence for comparative determinations.

The spreading pattern (*a*) is most developed by the Ute. It is also common among the Arapaho and Shoshone. The Gros Ventre and Sioux use it less; the Blackfeet apparently not at all.

The forked pattern (*b*) is possibly most used by the Arapaho, but occurs among the Ute, Shoshone, and Sioux, and apparently less frequently among the Gros Ventre. The Blackfeet use this design as little as the last.

The pronged design (*c*) is a third that the Blackfeet lack. It finds its greatest development among the Sioux and Assiniboine. It is rare or lacking among the Gros Ventre.

The triangle designs, both acute and obtuse (*d*), are found among all the tribes under consideration, but seem to be most characteristic of the Sioux and Arapaho.

The diamond (*e*) is apparently most frequent among the Arapaho, the Ute, and the Sioux. The two latter use it chiefly as a centre for more elaborate designs; the Arapaho, also as a separate design.

The square or box design (*f*) is most characteristic of the Sioux and Assiniboine, from whom the Gros Ventre and Crow have perhaps chiefly derived it. With the Arapaho the nearest approach usually is the small solid square the hiiteni symbol.

The square cross (*g*) has a wide distribution. It is very frequent among the Sioux. The Arapaho also use it, but less often alone, and a maltese cross, or some variation, is the form more characteristic of them.

The feather design (*h*) is most typically Sioux and Assiniboine. It is not rare among the Gros Ventre. It occurs but little among the Ute, Sho-

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

531
171

shone, and Blackfeet; and there is not a single example known from the Arapaho. It is frequent among the Crow, and occurs among the Comanche and probably other southern Plains tribes.

The slanting bar (*i*) is characteristic of the Ute and Shoshone, though it never appears with great frequency. It occurs also among the Arapaho as a small design in borders.

The crossed line (*j*) is uncommon as a distinct design unit. The Gros Ventre use it more or less.

The diagonal checker-row (*k*) is pre-eminently Shoshone and Blackfoot.

The triangular step or checker pattern (*l*), often doubled to form a rhombus, is the most distinctive design in Blackfoot ornamentation. Its use by the Gros Ventre is to be attributed to Blackfoot influence. It crops out occasionally elsewhere, as among the Arapaho, but is probably mostly a modification of the simple triangle (*d*), as it shows no tendency toward an interior checker-work pattern accompanying the steps on its outline.

The stripe (*m*), as the main design of a decorative area, is also distinctive of the Blackfeet. Several stripes are usually found parallel but separate, and are internally elaborated, as by transverse bars. A form occurs among the Gros Ventre as a border design. The general outline of this pattern is similar to that of the next design, the drawn-out checker, as its constituent stripes are three abreast, in contact, and succeed each other end to end; but there is a total dissimilarity of decorative effect from the checker-pattern, brought about by the division of the stripe elements into right-angled triangles of different colors; so that to the eye the contained triangles, rather than the including rectangles, stand out.

The lengthened checker-pattern (*n*) is regularly used for the top and sides of Arapaho soft bags. The Gros Ventre and other tribes employ it for the same purpose. The occurrence of this pattern is therefore determined functionally as much as tribally.

The following, accordingly, are the chief characteristics of the several tribes as regards the use of these decorative elements in bead-embroidery.

The Arapaho frequently use the forked design, the triangle, and diamond, also, in certain cases, the lengthened checker-pattern. The spreading and pronged designs, the cross, and the slanting bar, occur. The Sioux feather design, the Gros Ventre crossed-line design, and the three most characteristic Blackfoot designs, — the diagonal checker-row, the checker or step triangle, and the short or separate stripe, — are as good as wanting.

The southern tribes — such as the Kiowa, Comanche, Wichita, and to a certain extent the eastern Apache — have little solid bead-work: they employ simple and small designs as isolated figures to give variety to the

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

narrow white stripes and edgings that characterize their embroidery. Among these subsidiary designs are the feather, the square, the cross, the triangle, and the slanting bar. 531 171

The Blackfeet use especially the three designs mentioned,— the diagonal checker-row, the checker or step triangle, and the stripe. A few others, such as the cross and the feather, occasionally occur: still others, such as the spreading and forked designs, are lacking.

The Ute and Shoshone designs are much alike. The Ute have especially developed and varied the spreading design; but simple forms of this are not rare among the Shoshone. Both tribes frequently use the forked design. The pronged design, the triangle, the slanting bar, and occasionally the diamond, are found among both. The Shoshone sometimes employ the diagonal checker-row Otherwise both tribes lack the typical Blackfoot designs, as well as the characteristically Sioux square, cross, and feather.

The Sioux and Assiniboine perhaps employ the square, cross, and feather no more frequently than the pronged, forked, and triangle designs, but they share the latter with other tribes, such as the Arapaho; whereas the square and feather, and perhaps the wide rectangular cross, are much less frequent among the other tribes. The Sioux, for the most part, lack the characteristic designs of the western tribes,— the diagonal checker and the stripe of the Blackfeet, the crossed line of the Gros Ventre, the spreading design of the Ute.

The Crow resemble both the Sioux and the Blackfeet. Typical designs are the feather, the square, the slanting bar, and the separate stripe.

The Gros Ventre use the forked design, the triangle, the box-square, the feather, the stripe, and the Arapaho pattern-stripe. The spreading design and the cross are not very common. Their form of the stripe has been mentioned as being usually a complex of colored right triangles. The diamond, the slanting bar, and the prongs are rare among them. The crossed line, which is practically absent among other tribes, must not be regarded as the characteristic Gros Ventre figure. It occurs only occasionally, almost always alternating with a step-triangle of the Blackfoot type.

As regards the color of the background of bead-work on which these designs are made, there are certain well-marked tribal habits. White is the most common color, and is at least frequent among every tribe. The Arapaho, however, are alone, among those here considered, in using it almost exclusively. The Cheyenne use much white, but show also a distinct leaning toward yellow. The Ute use various backgrounds, but white is the most frequent. Among the Shoshone a light grayish blue is much used besides white. The Sioux use various colors, but chiefly white, light blue, and yellow. The Crow use colored backgrounds considerably. The Blackfeet 171 531 822

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

171 use much less white than any of the other tribes: their characteristic back-
531 grounds are light red, yellow, and blue. The Kiowa, Comanche, Wichita,
and Apache use white very predominatingly; but they show very few solid
822 backgrounds of embroidery, their bead-work rarely consisting of more than
stripes and borders. The Gros Ventre type is as indeterminate as their
designs. It is only possible to say that besides various colors, such as red
and light blue, white is considerably used.

It appears from this examination that the tribes under consideration
171 form at least four groups as regards their bead-embroidery. The Blackfeet
531 stand alone. The Sioux and Assiniboine form a second unit. The Arapaho, Ute, and Shoshone are a third; the more southerly tribes using outline embroidery, the fourth. Within their group the Arapaho show closer resemblance to the Ute than to the Shoshone. The Arapaho also have a good deal in common with the Sioux. The position of the Cheyenne is not certain: they certainly have partial resemblances to both Arapaho and Sioux, as their historical and ethnographical situation would lead one to infer. The Crow appear to be intermediate between the Blackfeet and the Sioux. The Gros Ventre show distinct approximations to all three of the northern groups, in the third, of course, especially to the Arapaho. Neither their Blackfoot nor their Sioux characteristics seem fundamental. Their present art shows little character of its own.

It is not probable that the groups here distinguished will stand without modification. With fuller knowledge regarding the Bannock, Crow, Cheyenne, Kiowa, Comanche, and the village and eastern and southern tribes, as well as those of the Columbia drainage, new and wider groups are almost certain to be determined. In this event the Arapaho, for instance, may appear more properly to belong with the Sioux than with the Shoshone; but their relations to the latter, and the similarities among the several tribes as they are here indicated, whether they prove finally to be fundamental or only subsidiary, are already quite clear.

The types of designs discussed occur more or less on all classes of objects decorated with embroidery, but are especially characteristic of larger areas of decoration, as on pouches, leggings, and tobacco-bags. Where there are special forms or limited areas, there is usually a more restricted type of ornamentation. Thus the quill-wound, close-set fringe of tobacco-bags lends itself best to heavy rectilinear designs, and squares and crosses are the result. Moccasins also furnish a special decorative field, in which the decoration is in great measure directly dependent on the form of the object; so that the distribution of the designs already discussed applies to moccasins only in part, and their ornamentation needs some separate consideration.

Some of the chief types of moccasin ornamentation are shown in Fig. 2

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

171
531

(*a–o*). The first four forms have been discussed in connection with the description of Arapaho moccasins.[1] They may all be considered as consisting of one of two simple elements (the longitudinal dividing stripe and the sub-border), or of combinations and developments of these two elements. Subsidiary designs usual within these stripes and borders need not be considered here, as they do not affect the ornamentation of the moccasin as a whole.

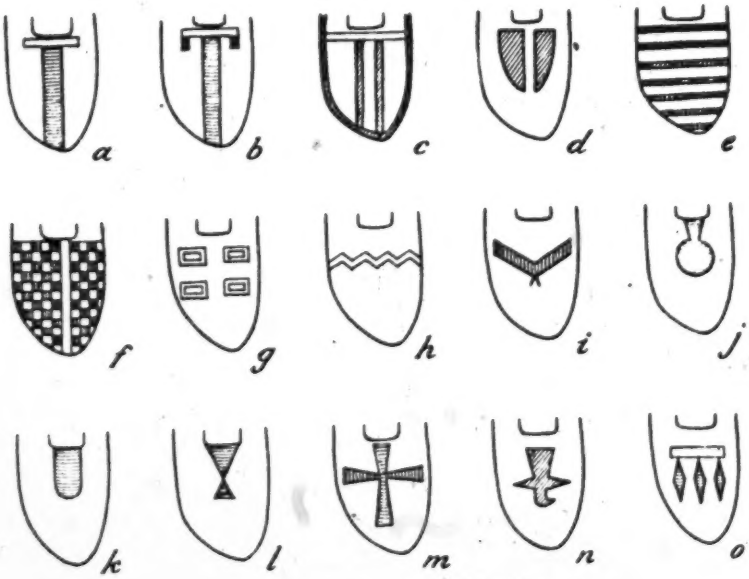


Fig. 2. Types of Designs on Moccasins.

The forms shown in *e* and *f* — the red-line and checker designs, the former usually executed in red quill-work, the latter in beads — may be regarded as forming a second class, in which the entire front of the moccasin is covered with one geometric pattern. All the remaining types can be grouped into a third class, consisting of forms having a figure in the middle of the decorable space on the front of the moccasin, this figure neither filling the entire space nor bearing any exact relation to its outline. Simple forms of some of the more frequent designs of this middle-figure class are here given, such as the four-squares (*g*), the transverse-zigzag (*h*), the crossing angle (*i*), the circle or head (*j*), the oval or U (*k*), the tent (*l*), the cross (*m*), the bird (*n*). A

[1] See Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part I, pp. 36–46.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

M1
531

fifteenth type may be regarded as comprising the moccasins in which a single figure of very variable shape, but always comparatively small, occupies the centre of the otherwise unbroken front area. The U-figure is sometimes symmetrically angular. The cross can also be regarded as a development of the stripe; but, as its shape is almost invariably maltese and not rectangular, it is perhaps usually an independently developed figure.

The Gros Ventre moccasins shown belong to types *d* (Fig. 3), *i* (Plate VIII, Fig. 3), and *j* (Plate VIII, Fig. 2). The moccasin in Plate VIII, Fig. 1, does not belong clearly to any of the typical forms.

[291]

Fig. 3 (50-1824 a). Moccasin. Length, 19 cm.

The stripe-border figures constitute a majority of Arapaho moccasin designs. They occur on Cheyenne moccasins in at least a considerable number of cases. All forms of these designs are found on Sioux and Assiniboine moccasins, but all together on only one among every three or four pieces. Among the Kiowa and Comanche, many moccasins depend for ornamentation on fringes and painting as much as on bead-work: the latter in such cases consists of narrow white edging, which usually follows the stripe and border designs. Among the Ute the proportion of stripe and border designs reaches a very high proportion, even the majority of solidly beaded moccasins being of this type. Of nearly twenty Ute moccasins in the Museum, all but two are of the stripe-border pattern.[2] The related and neighboring Shoshone, however, use this pattern rarely; and the same is true of the Gros Ventre. The Crow use the stripe considerably, but usually with some modification or addition (such as the feather-design element), and only rarely in combination with the border. The Blackfeet lack stripe-border designs almost entirely.

[1] Sioux and Arapaho moccasins with the three types of designs have been illustrated in Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII. Examples of the stripe-border class of moccasins are shown in Plate I, 1–8; Fig. 5, b–f; Plate II, 3; Plate III, 1, 3, 4; Plate IV, 1; Fig. 6; Plates XXXVIII, 2, 4, 6, and XXXIX, 6; and Figs. 96 and 98. Moccasins of the second class are shown in Fig. 5, a; Plates III, 2, and XXXVIII, 1 (red-line pattern); Fig. 5, e; and Plate LIV, 2 (checker-pattern). Moccasins with the third type of ornamentation are shown as follows: Four-squares, Plates XXXVIII, 1, and LII, 2; transverse-zigzag, Plates III, 5, and XXXVIII, 5; angle-across, Plates II, 2, XXXIX, 2, and Fig. 97; round-head, Plates LII, 1, and LIV, 1; cross, Plates I, 8, and XXXIX, 5; bird, Plate XXXIX, 4; a small figure in the centre, Plates II, 4, 5, LII, 3, and LIV, 3.

[2] These two show the round-head and the angle-across designs, which reach great frequency among the Shoshone and Gros Ventre.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Designs of the second class, the red-line and checker-patterns, are most frequent among the Sioux and Arapaho. There are a few Shoshone and Gros Ventre examples. The Blackfeet largely lack designs of this class. 171 531

Of the several designs of the third class, the squares and the transverse-zigzag (*g*, *h*) are not very common. They are frequent among the Sioux and Assiniboine, especially the former pattern, as is to be expected from the prevalence of the square-box design in the bead-work of these two tribes.

The angle-across design (*i*) and the round-head or circle design (*j*) are the most persistent of the designs of the third class, and the former especially has a wide distribution. The angle is found least among the Arapaho, Sioux, and Ute. Among these tribes it is usually also light or open in pattern, so as not to dominate the decoration. The Cheyenne have this pattern, and it is one of the few designs used by the Blackfeet that are untypical of them. Among both Shoshone and Gros Ventre it is common, and the Crow use it. It is interesting that two Ojibwa moccasins in the Museum also show this pattern. The round-head design occurs most frequently among tribes where the angle-design is abundant, especially the Shoshone and Gros Ventre, less among the Sioux and Blackfeet. No Arapaho moccasin with this design has yet been seen. The symbolism of this figure varies. It is interpreted as a head, a spoon, feathers, or the sun.

The semi-oval or U-shaped figure (*k*) belongs more distinctly to the north and east than to the Plains. In certain regions it is the typical moccasin pattern. This figure is probably closely related to the simple stripe. It may be regarded as a wide stripe not reaching to the end of the moccasin, and rounded in front; or perhaps as an inner concentric area, slightly altered so as to be symmetrical, determined by the outline of the moccasin. In its occurrence among the Plains tribes under consideration, it does not, however, show any transitions to stripe and border patterns; and it accordingly belongs, so far as the Plains are concerned, in the class of designs bearing no specific relation to the shape of the moccasin. A few occurrences, chiefly among the Blackfeet, of angular forms having the appearance of being modifications of this U-shaped figure, can be included with it.

This design is the characteristic one of the Blackfeet, as noted by Dr. Clark Wissler.[1] It is also nearly confined to the Blackfeet within the Plains region. The Museum has a few scattering Sioux and Shoshone examples, and one from the Ojibwa; and the Field Columbian Museum exhibits a number of specimens from the Crow, though usually with the addition of the feather or pronged design element at the end of the U-figure. The U-form has not been met with among the Arapaho or the Gros Ventre, nor among

[1] Clark Wissler, Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part III, p. 276.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the tribe in many ways nearest to the Arapaho in decorative art,— the Ute. That the Gros Ventre in their century of contact with the Blackfeet have not taken up the design is of interest, and is due, possibly, to its being at bottom of so different a decorative type that it is scarcely compatible with the established style of Gros Ventre decoration.

The tent figure (*l*) is infrequent. It has been found among the Sioux and Gros Ventre.

The cross (*m*) is most common on children's moccasins. It has so far been found on Sioux, Cheyenne, and Arapaho moccasins. It may prove to be most typically Sioux-Cheyenne.

The bird-figured moccasin (*n*) is infrequent. There are three examples in the Museum, all Sioux or Assiniboine. This design is one of the few — really the only one of those considered, besides the red-line pattern — that is usually executed in quills. It seems to go back to an old type independent of the stylistic influences of bead-work. A quill-embroidered bird moccasin is mentioned in an Arapaho myth.[1]

Type *o*, in which any small figure occupies the centre of the main decorative field on the moccasin, occurs chiefly among the Sioux, Cheyenne, and Arapaho. The figure may be the pronged design, the feather design, a triangle, a form of the forked design, or any other figure. A few Blackfoot moccasins can be included in this type, but as yet none from the Ute or Shoshone.

The chief tribal characteristics of moccasin ornamentation can be summarized as follows:—

The Ute use stripe-border designs almost exclusively. The few exceptions found are of the round-head and angle-across types, and are due perhaps to Shoshone influence.

The Arapaho use stripe-border designs in the majority of cases. They show no special predilection for any of the other designs. They lack the round-head, and their angle-across figures are not well marked.

The Kiowa and Comanche, and other southern tribes, confine themselves practically to stripe-border designs; but the bead-work of their moccasins is used mainly for outlining or edging, and solid beading is little practised, so that a turn is given to their style which sets them apart from the other tribes considered.

Cheyenne moccasins are more or less similar to those of the Arapaho, but probably show some leaning toward Sioux types.

The Sioux and Assiniboine moccasins show every type of figure discussed. All forms of the stripe-border class occur, but with less frequency than among the Ute and Arapaho. The round-head and angle-across

[1] See Traditions of the Arapaho (Field Columbian Publication No. 81, p. 291).

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

occur, but less than among other tribes, and the latter shows the light forms that characterize it among the Arapaho. On the whole, the Sioux type is apparently the most mixed and inclusive of those discussed. 171 531

Among the Shoshone the designs are more frequently the round-head and angle-across than any other. They use a number of other forms, such as the red-line, checker, and transverse-zigzag. Stripe-border patterns are little developed among them.

The Crow use designs of all classes, including the stripe, the round-head, the angle-across, the red-line, and the characteristic Blackfoot U-figure, and, as in other bead-work, resemble both Blackfeet and Sioux.

The Blackfeet show by far the most specialized type, not only in the dominance of the U-shaped design, but in the absence of stripe-border patterns, which all the other tribes agree in using at least to a certain extent.[1] The chief designs that have obtained a hold among them, other than the U-figure, are the round-head and angle-across.

The Gros Ventre use a comparatively small proportion of stripe-border patterns, perhaps about in the degree of the Sioux and Shoshone. They use the Sioux-Arapaho red-line figure. Of designs of the third class, the round-head and angle-across are the most frequent.

It is evident that the distribution of these moccasin designs is primarily dependent upon geography, not upon tribal relations. The southern tribes — the Kiowa, Comanche, Ute, and Arapaho — use mainly stripe and border patterns. The northern tribes — the Shoshone, Gros Ventre, Sioux and Assiniboine, and Blackfeet — use chiefly middle-figure designs. Of these figures the most strongly developed are the round-head and angle-across. Approximation of the Shoshone and Gros Ventre proportional frequencies of these designs is to be attributed to the fact that these two tribes are situated in the same northern region of the Plains, rather than to any special cultural relations between them. The Sioux and Arapaho show certain resemblances which may be due to direct relations or to transmission by the Cheyenne. The Blackfeet alone are tribally specialized, at least if regarded as part of the Plains group of tribes. They have been somewhat influenced by the northern Plains type of design, but have not affected it. Even the inter-influence of the Blackfeet and Gros Ventre upon each other has been insignificant. The Ojibwa are not altogether out of the influence of the Plains.

Nothing was learned about the typical tribal ornamentation of Gros

[1] A series of Blackfoot, Blood, and Piegan moccasins in the Museum of the Anthropological Department of the University of California, shows many more moccasins with stripe-border and middle-figure ornamentation than of the U-type, which is contrary to the ornamentation of those in the American Museum of Natural History, of which fully half, omitting the modern leaf-figured specimens, show the U-design; and contrary also to the statements of Dr. Wissler and of Clark (Indian Sign Language, p. 69).

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

171 531 Ventre robes. A child's quilled robe (Museum specimen 50-1751) agrees in general with the Arapaho style of ornamentation,[1] and is probably more or less representative of the Gros Ventre type. The style is similar to that of the quill-work on the Arapaho bag shown in the "Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History" (Vol. XVIII, Plate xvi). Seventeen red quilled lines pass across this robe. Four spaces, two on the lines and two at the ends, are green instead of red on each line. Originally, small green-dyed plumes seem to have been attached here also; these have now almost disappeared. At the four green spaces on the lowest line, pendants are attached. These each consist of a small loop wound with green quills, and of two thongs wound with red quills. At the ends of the thongs are small cylinders of tin from out of which issues a tuft of dyed horsehair. The seventeen embroidered lines do not stretch entirely across the robe to its edge, but occupy a rectangular area including the greater part of its somewhat irregular surface. Certain Arapaho robes are described as having been embroidered with seventeen such parallel lines, to which a group of three was added at the lower edge, where pendants were attached. An Arapaho child's robe in the Museum collections is almost identical with this in style. The ornamental spaces on the red quilled lines differ somewhat, and there are eighteen instead of seventeen lines; but the general construction and appearance are strikingly similar, even to the pendant attachments. Dr. Clark Wissler's illustration[2] of a small Sioux robe serves to give a very close idea of the present piece. Like the Arapaho robe, this Sioux one has eighteen lines. Dr. Wissler makes the point that among the Sioux such red-line embroidered robes were distinctive of women and girls; but among the Arapaho the typical robe of men is said to have been embroidered with yellow or white lines. The Field Columbian Museum has on exhibition Cree, Crow, and Sioux children's robes ornamented with from seventeen to twenty lines and with hoof pendants at the bottom.

[178] 342 531 171 The Gros Ventre have now entirely abandoned the use of embroidered tent-ornaments such as are still quite common among the Arapaho. A single dilapidated partial specimen was obtained, shown in Fig. 4. This is very similar to the Arapaho tent-ornaments.[3] The full set consisted of a larger, round quill-embroidered piece of skin sewed to the back of the top of a tent and called kaä^{n}biit^{an} ("round embroidery"), four similar but smaller ornaments put on the sides of the tent lower down, and pendants attached to the upper flaps or ears of the tent. The circular embroidered ornaments had buffalo-tails or strips of buffalo-fur, and quill-wound pendant thongs with hoofs and loops at their ends, hanging from the middle.

[1] Compare Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part I, pp. 29, 33, 65.
[2] Ibid., Vol. XVIII, Part III, Fig. 81.
[3] Ibid., Vol. XVIII, Part I, pp. 61-63.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

171
531
342

Of the pieces illustrated, the larger contains four black concentric circles interrupted by four black-bordered sectors. Quills, not plant fibres, have been used for this black embroidery. The lighter portions of the embroidery adjacent to the black circles seem to have been originally yellow, as the underlying protected quills are of this color, while those on the surface are

Fig. 4 (50-1829 a, b). Tent-ornaments. Diameters, 17 cm., 8 cm.

weathered white. The quills within the sectors, however, appear to have been always white. The pendants, three in number, are very much destroyed: it is evident, however, that they were wound with orange-yellow, red, white, and black quills in exactly the pattern used by the Arapaho.[1] The loops at the ends of the pendants contained red, yellow, and black quills,

[1] For description and illustration of pattern, see Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part I, pp. 35, 65, Figs. 12, 13.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

171
342
531

and probably white also. The pendants on the smaller ornament are identical, and still show the hoofs at their ends. It thus appears that, whereas the main ornament has only the three colors, namely, white, yellow, and black, — found also in an Arapaho ornament[1] with which it is virtually identical, — yet the peculiar line-pattern combination of red, yellow, white, and black, characteristic of the Arapaho "tribal" style of quill embroidery, also occurs in this Gros Ventre set of ornaments.

171
415
531

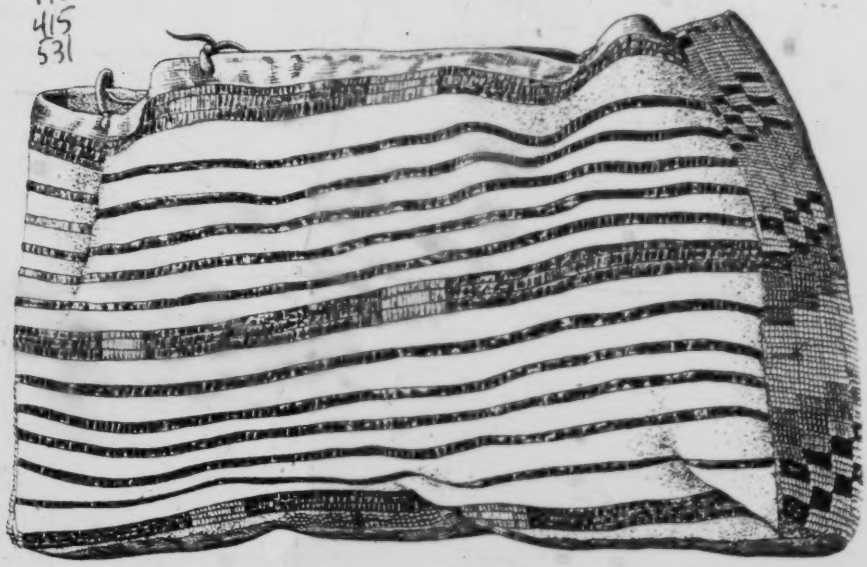


Fig. 5 (50-1738). Soft-skin Bag. Length, 21 cm.

Bags of soft skin, used chiefly for keeping and transporting clothing and small household articles, are made by the Gros Ventre very much as by the Arapaho and other Plains tribes. The ornamentation is also of the same character, consisting of red quill-embroidered lines across the front of the bag, and a pattern of bead-work (generally of alternately colored bars with cross spaces, augmented by tin and horsehair or other pendants) along the top and two side edges of the bag. This style has been illustrated for the Arapaho.[2] About half the Gros Ventre bags show the same ornamentation,

[1] Compare Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part I, p. 60, Fig. 9, a.
[2] Ibid., Vol. XVIII, Plate xvi.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

varied only in inessential details. The remainder introduce a characteristic variation, though the fundamental type of decoration is the same. Such a bag is shown in Fig. 5. The red quilled lines are present, but are in part grouped in threes, so as to form stripes of three times the width of the lines. In consequence of this, the small differently colored spaces on the lines become rectangles, which usually assume the box form shown in the figure,

171 ●
415
531

Fig. 6 (50-4299). Soft-skin Bag. Length, 35 cm.

and more characteristic of Sioux than of Arapaho ornamentation. The number of single lines between the compound stripes varies; in some specimens it is only two or three. Sometimes the box design of the stripes is represented on the lines by an end-bordered bar, as is customary on the bags with lines only, and as appears in the bag in Fig. 6. Even the small down-feathers of the line-embroidered bags may be present on the wider stripes of this variant Gros Ventre type. The bead-work along the two ends of the bag shown in Fig. 5 is very different from that on Arapaho

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

171 bags, recalling the typical checker and diagonal step design of Blackfoot
415 beading. This type is, however, unusual among the Gros Ventre.

531 The fine bag shown in Fig. 6, collected by Dr. Clark Wissler, presents unusual quill-embroidery on its front, suggestive perhaps of Sioux influence or origin; but the bead-work on its cover and sides, and the attached tin and horsehair ornaments, are typically Arapaho, except for the fact that this tribe would be very unlikely to make any pattern without at least some proportion of white. The transverse lines of quill-work on this bag might be regarded as nothing but a further five-line development of the three-line grouping illustrated by the last figure, with an alternating bar-pattern for its chief ornamentation instead of the box figure, which in element is identical. The central figure, however, is the typical Sioux spider-web pattern described by Dr. Clark Wissler,[1] and so far without any parallel among either Arapaho or Gros Ventre, or any approach nearer than that shown in an instance of blanket painting.[2] The two parallel bars in the centre of this concave quadrilateral figure, and the diamond-shaped feather symbols at its corners, are also typically Siouan: only the last-named element is occasionally used by the Gros Ventre.

237 Buffalo paunches, the mouth being drawn up by a string, like a sack,
415 were used for carrying and holding water, a paunchful being hung up in
505 the tent. If buffalo had been killed, and it was desired to transport the meat across the Missouri, the paunches were filled with meat, blown up, tied together at the mouth, and floated. The well-known circular skin
[501] boats of the Missouri tribes were also used by the Gros Ventre for transporting clothing and property across streams.

171 Fig. 7 shows an ornamented food-bag of bladder. At the top is a strip
415 of skin covered with red quill-embroidery, with square star designs in blue
531 and white. From this strip of skin hangs a red quill-wound fringe. The thong handle of the bag is partly quilled, and has quilled thong pendants hanging from it. At the bottom of the bag a round piece of skin, covered with green-and-white quartered bead-work, is sewed on.

171 The navel-amulets of the Gros Ventre, which resemble those of the
532 Arapaho in their use, are in form of a somewhat different type, as they approach more nearly to an animal's shape. They usually represent
751 çaniwa", the "horned toad" (southern Arapaho, säniwa", a "lizard"), or sometimes a person. Their general shape is, as everywhere on the Plains, a rhomboid on end. To this the Gros Ventre add at the upper end a small rhomboid, forming the head of the animal represented. This augmented shape has not been found among the Arapaho, with whom the typical form

[1] See Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part III, p. 248.
[2] Ibid., Vol. XIII, p. 85, Fig. 138.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

is a narrow simple rhomboid.[1] The Blackfeet and Sioux make figures resembling those of the Gros Ventre, but carry the realism farther. The Sioux most frequently represent an entire animal with head, legs, and tail, much like Fig. 1 in Plate VIII of Vol. XVIII of the "Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History," but broader, in the shape of a turtle.[2] The Arapaho, Gros Ventre, and Blackfeet use ornamented strings hanging from the corners of the rhomboid to represent limbs and tail. The Blackfeet make realistic snake amulets for their boys, and more conventional turtle or lizard-like figures, resembling those of the Gros Ventre, for their girls. Among the Assiniboine, and west of the Rockies among the Bannock and Ute, a reduced form of navel-amulets occurs, though perhaps it is not the only one used. It is usually small and flat, with the acute angles of the rhomboid cut off transversely, rendering the whole piece hexagonal rather than quadrilateral. Sometimes the entire edges are fringed. The relative distribution of this small form and of the other forms is not yet clear. A Shoshone amulet in the Museum is a pointed rhomboid resembling the Arapaho type, even to being quartered in its bead-ornamentation. A Kiowa specimen in the Anthropological Museum of the University of California is a plain rhombus, of Arapaho type, except in being smaller and more nearly square. The following distribution of types is at least partly correct: realistic, Sioux, Blackfoot, occasionally Arapaho; semi-realistic, Blackfoot, Gros Ventre; conventional rhomboid, Arapaho, Kiowa, Shoshone; reduced hexagonal, Assiniboine, Ute, Bannock, and perhaps Shoshone.

Fig. 7 (50-1801). Ornamented Food-bag of Bladder. Length, 29 cm.

On Plate IX are shown three Gros Ventre navel-amulets. Fig. 3 was said to represent a horned toad, and Fig. 2, a person. It will be seen that the mouth in the former is near the end of the head; in the latter, in the lower part of the face. Both these specimens have quilled or beaded appendages at the two side corners and at the lower end. Fig. 1 has a distinct

[1] See Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part I, Plate VIII.
[2] Ibid., Vol. XVIII, Part III, p. 242, Fig. 76.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

171 tail as well as head, a cross instead of an attempt at representative ornamen-
532 tation in the bead-work on the head, and unornamented yellowed thongs as
751 sole attachments. Another specimen (Museum No. 50–4278), not figured, is much smaller than any of the others. It resembles Fig. 3 of Plate IX in that the bead-work on its upper surface is quartered, and that there is a distinct attempt to represent eyes in the head. The attachments are short unpainted thongs with tin cones at their ends.

Of these four pieces, Fig. 1 of Plate IX and Museum No. 50–4278 are unbeaded on the lower side; Fig. 3 of Plate IX has a few curvilinear leaf-ornaments on the lower side; and Fig. 2 of Plate IX is entirely beaded on both sides, showing on the reverse a simple quartering in blue and yellow without attempted representation of animal form. It thus appears that all the pieces are ornamented with bead-work in quartering, a design found also among the Arapaho, although transverse or diagonal parallel lines, or a crossed longitudinal line, are more common among them. The specimen figured

[531]

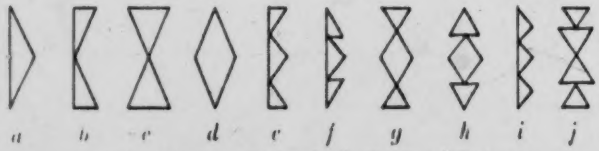


Fig. 8. Triangular Designs on Parfleches and Bags.

in Fig. 1 of Plate IX is quartered asymmetrically. The greater flatness of Fig. 3, same plate, is due to the contents of the amulet-pouch having been removed, no doubt for preservation.

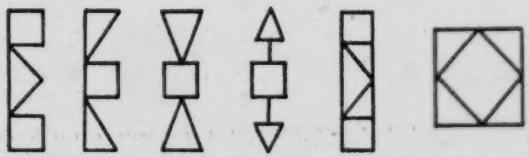
The principal form of Gros Ventre decorative art other than embroidery
531 is painting, mainly on skin and rawhide. As to the symbolism of this paint-
171 ing, as little was learned as of the symbolism of embroidered designs. The style of decoration itself, however, offers some points of interest when compared with the forms of decoration typical of other Plains tribes.

Outside of robe-painting, tent-painting, and semi-realistic painting of a more directly symbolic or religious nature, the principal form of this branch of Plains decorative art is the painting of parfleches and rawhide bags. In these the decorative field is invariably rectangular, usually nearly square. Within this rectangular field, which may be merely outlined or may be heavily bordered, three principal types of design elements and combinations of elements can be distinguished. These can be called respectively the "triangular," the "square-and-triangular," and the "square."

The triangular type of design is by far the most common, taking the Plains as a whole, and among some tribes is used almost exclusively. The

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

fundamental element of this form may be taken to be the right-angled triangle with one side considerably longer than the other. Two such triangles placed together give either a long and flat or a narrow and high isosceles triangle. Two such isosceles triangles placed base to base give a rhombus or diamond. From these elements, — the right-angled triangle, the isosceles triangle, and the diamond, — the designs of this first form are built up. Some of the most frequent combinations are shown in Fig. 8 (*a-j*). It is common to find combinations of an isosceles triangle flanked by two right-angled triangles (*e, f*), this pattern being disposed along the inside of the longer edges of the rectangular decorative field; while in the middle there will be either one or two, or sometimes three, figures, each of which is the double of those at the edges, consisting, accordingly, of a diamond flanked by two isosceles triangles (*g, h*). If there are half-patterns on the side, they usually agree with the full patterns in the middle. Sometimes diamonds are lacking, and two isosceles triangles form either a long rhomboid (*d*), or an



a *b* *c* *d* *e* *f*

Fig. 9. Square-and-triangular Designs on Parfleches and Bags.

hourglass-shaped figure (*c*), according as their bases or apices are in contact. In the same way, two rectangular triangles are combined along the edges of the decorative field (*a, b*). Diamonds and isosceles triangles are sometimes bisected, and occasionally the two halves are colored differently, thus emphasizing the inherent relation of these figures to right-angled triangles.

There are many subsidiary features of ornamentation accompanying those here outlined, such as borders of different colors, small triangles at the base or at the apex of isosceles triangles, reduced figures within designs, and so on. In essence, however, this first or triangular type of parfleche paintings can be considered as being built up out of right-angled triangles and combinations of right-angled triangles.

The second, or square-and-triangular, type is less common. It uses triangles much as does the first type, except that in part it replaces them by rectangles, usually squares. These squares may be placed along the edges of the decorative field, especially in the corners or in the middle. When in the middle of the field, they are of considerable size, and contain other

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

531
171

figures, especially diamonds. Various characteristic forms of this type are shown in Fig. 9 (*a f*). It will be seen that full forms, such as a square with two adjacent isosceles triangles directed toward it (*e*), are paralleled by half-forms, such as a rectangle flanked by two right-angled triangles with their apices in contact with it (*b*). A variation of this latter form may be regarded as an inversion, the two right-angled triangles being placed together in the middle to form an isosceles triangle, and this being flanked by two squares (*a*). Not infrequently this form is further developed by being combined into a continuous stripe (*e*); the ends of this stripe being squares, and the middle portion three or more triangles distinguished by color. When full figures consist of a square flanked by two triangles, with their bases instead of their apices directed toward it, these triangles are separated from the square, but the decorative unity of the pattern is retained by means of connecting lines (*d*). No perfect illustrations of this square-and-triangular type have been published in the "Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History," either from among Arapaho or Sioux specimens, but an approximation is shown there in Plate XVIII, Fig. 2, of Vol. XVIII. Plate XIX, Fig. 3, of the same volume, while containing scarcely any square elements, also bears some general resemblance to designs of this type. Nearly all the illustrations of rawhide painting in that volume belong to the first type, the few exceptions belonging to the third.

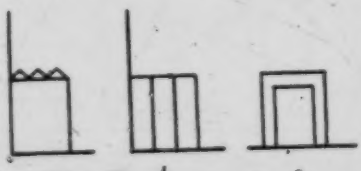


Fig. 10. Square Designs on Parfleches and Bags.

The third, or square, type of parfleche ornamentation either lacks triangular design elements altogether, or employs them as subsidiary to, or at least distinct from, the square design elements. Most frequently this type of design shows squares in the corners. It is frequently elaborated by rows of small triangles within, or adjacent to, the squares. Elementary forms are indicated in Fig. 10 (*a–c*). This is not a common type of design among any tribe, but appears to be found to some extent among all, or nearly all, Plains tribes. Two instances of its most developed form are shown in the "Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History," in Vol. XVIII, Plate XVIII, Fig. 5, and Plate XIX, Fig. 5; while less distinctive forms are given in Fig. 34 of the same volume. Among the Arapaho there is some tendency to interpret this type of design as the bear-foot, especially when combined with rows of pointed triangles. A similar interpretation has been obtained among the Bannock. There are, of course, easy and natural

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

531
171

transitions from this square type of design to the preceding, or square-and-triangular type. But there seems to be an essential difference between the two types in general character and decorative purpose; and this is made the more probable by the fact that the entirely square type is less frequent among the tribes that have developed patterns of the second, or square-and-triangular, type, than among the tribes that lack this second type. The difference between the two types is not so much in their individual design elements as in the disposition of these in the decorative field.

The tribal distribution of these three types is as follows. The first, or triangular, type is found among all tribes from which material is available. It is used, nearly to the exclusion of other types, by the Arapaho, the Sioux, and probably the Cheyenne and the Kootenay; and it predominates among all other tribes except the Shoshone. The second, or square-and-triangular, type reaches its greatest known development among the Shoshone. It is more or less employed by the Ute, and to some extent by the Blackfeet and Sahaptin. It will be seen that the Gros Ventre also employ this form. The third, or entirely square, type appears to occur somewhat sporadically among almost all tribes.

The rawhide painting of the Arapaho, besides employing design elements of the triangular type almost exclusively, is characterized by a certain lightness and openness of patterns, due to the comparatively large amount of background left white and unpainted. The patterns of right-angled and isosceles triangles and diamonds are usually narrow and long. The patterns in the middle of the field are sometimes separated from one another and from those along the edges by stripes; and in other cases full designs in the middle are split into two half-designs by such stripes. The general pattern arrangement is thus approximately one of stripes or longitudinal figures, usually from three to five in number, and consisting in element of right-angled triangles. The half-designs at the edge of the decorative field are usually directly or inversely symmetrical with those in the middle. Characteristic subsidiary features are rows of black dots, especially within white stripes, rows of small triangles at the bases of acute triangles, small black inverted single triangles at the apices of obtuse isosceles triangles, and small figures enclosed in larger design elements. These enclosed figures are usually triangles and pentagons respectively in acute and obtuse isosceles triangles. The outlines of Arapaho parfleche paintings are generally made in narrow lines of a faint black or brown. There is often some difference in pattern between stitched rawhide bags and folded parfleches; the former showing a greater tendency toward a heavy border or frame, consisting usually of a double stripe filled in with alternating triangles of two colors. The backs of bags, and occasionally of parfleches, may be striped across.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

53
171

Sioux ornamentation of rawhide is more difficult to characterize than Arapaho, although the Museum contains a good representation of specimens, a number of which have been figured.[1] The design elements of the Sioux are as preponderatingly of the first, or triangular, type as among the Arapaho. Their disposition and their relation to the decorative field are, however, less open, and it is not uncommon to find Sioux bags which are covered so completely with painting that no white background remains within the decorative field, or only so little that it becomes equivalent in function to one of the colors used. Many Sioux parfleches are heavily bordered, the wide outside design frame being as common on them as it is rare in Arapaho parfleches. Not infrequently the decorative field is divided longitudinally by a heavy stripe similar to those which frame the field. A subsidiary feature that is characteristic is the occurrence of large diamonds containing one or two longitudinal bars. Most of the typical subsidiary features of the Arapaho are either wanting or are much less common. The Arapaho parfleche design shown in the "Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History" (Vol. XVIII, Plate xx, Fig. 5) is typically Sioux. The one in Fig. 3 of the same plate has Sioux reminiscences. On the whole, the differences between the styles of the two tribes are not very great.

There is too little Cheyenne parfleche material available to allow a characterization; but it appears in general that the painting is similar to that of the Arapaho and Sioux, as is to be expected.

With the Shoshone[2] a new style of rawhide painting is encountered, characterized by a predominance of designs of the second, or square-and-triangular type. There are many triangular designs and design combinations, but the square-and-triangular type is so strongly impressed on Shoshone art that there are very few parfleches that do not show at least some rectangular forms. Very common is a broad stripe consisting of triangles in its middle portion and ending off in squares (Fig. 9, *e*). These squares fill the corners of the decorative field. Such border-stripes may be found occurring transversely as well as longitudinally, in which case, by forming a heavy frame, they leave a rectangular area considerably smaller than the decorative field. This area, in turn, contains designs — usually a diamond or two half-diamonds, that is to say, isosceles triangles — set point to point into an hourglass figure. In other cases the central rectangular area is more prominently developed than the border-stripes. It is in such cases that types result resembling the sporadic Arapaho forms mentioned.[3] Al-

[1] See Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part III, Figs. 75, 82, 87–94.
[2] The Shoshone parfleches in the Museum are from Wind River and Fort Hall Reservations.
[3] See Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part I, Plate XVIII, Fig. 2.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

gether it may be said that there is scarcely a Shoshone parfleche which does not contain either the central rectangle, squares in the corners of the decorative field in combination with triangles, or the heavy square-containing border-stripe. The open border-figures of the Arapaho, consisting of an obtuse isosceles triangle with or without flanking right-angled triangles, are scarcely ever found. The Shoshone show a fondness, as compared with the Arapaho, for heavy black or dark-blue outlines for their figures. They lack the Arapaho rows of black dots and small black apex triangles, but show the row of small acute triangles in several instances.

531
171

Ute[1] parfleche painting shows some approximation to that of the Shoshone in using the square-and-triangular patterns, but also has distinct resemblances to Arapaho. It is more open than Shoshone painting, and shows some tendency towards the Arapaho longitudinal arrangement. The square-and-triangular type of design is also much less common than among the Shoshone. Ute painting differs even more than does Arapaho from both Sioux and Shoshone in lacking the heavy frame to the decorative field found among these two tribes. In fact there are a number of Ute parfleches in the Museum that show a total absence of any framing: even the half-designs along the border, which among the Arapaho duplicate the full designs in the middle, are omitted. This is practically never done by the Arapaho. It may be estimated that a third of all Ute parfleches lack a border of any kind entirely, and that in another third only the two longitudinal sides of the decorative field are partially edged by isolated figures. A special form of Ute design, which needs no comment other than that it is quite evidently a form of the square-and-triangular type, is shown in Fig. 3 of Plate x. Although an isolated occurrence, it is not uncharacteristic, as is shown by certain approximations in parfleches and by similar forms in medicine-cases (Fig. 13). In its subsidiary features, Ute parfleche-painting resembles Arapaho rather surprisingly; the small apex triangle, the row of small basal triangles, and the small triangle, rectangle, or pentagon enclosed in a larger triangle, all being found.

Half a dozen parfleches and several bags obtained among the Bannock of Fort Hall Reservation give some idea of the position of this tribe in relation to the others. The second, or square-and-triangular, type of design elements is found, but is not so prominent as among the Shoshone. There is a well-marked tendency toward large diamonds occupying the greater part of the central area, or at least the entire length, of the decorative field. As among the Shoshone, the decorative area is well filled with designs; but it cannot be said to be crowded, because the figures are generally large and

[1] Uintah and Uncompahgre Reservations.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

53
171

simple. While there is considerable general resemblance to Shoshone designs, elements of the specifically triangular type much outweigh those of the square-and-triangular type.

The Blackfoot style of painting is rather distinctive. The elements are very predominatingly of the purely triangular type; but the decorative field as a whole is quite different from that of the Arapaho and Sioux. It is more open than the latter, and lacks the general longitudinal disposition of figures of the former. There is very frequently a light border containing triangles or diagonal bars; or the design as a whole may be regarded as consisting of a design (of acute isosceles triangles and diamonds) within a central square area around which is placed a light border containing triangles. When this frame and defined central square area are absent, there are usually no bordering figures such as characterize the Arapaho style. It is not uncommon for a figure or two figures to stand free, as it were, in the decorative field. In this respect there is a leaning toward the Ute style. The resemblances that there are to Shoshone are not so much in the occurrence of the square-and-triangular designs, for these are not numerous, as in the tendency to group smaller designs within a central square. Most of the figures employed by the Blackfeet are small relatively to the decorative field, thus differing from those of the Shoshone, Ute, and Bannock. The subsidiary decorative features characteristic of the Arapaho are wanting, except for occasional rows of small triangles. A considerable proportion of specimens, approximately one-half, show V-shaped designs on the side of the parfleche. This characteristic is also found among the Kootenay and Sahaptin, but (with the exception of sporadic cases from the Assiniboine, Sioux, Gros Ventre, and Ute) is not known to occur among other tribes. This painting on the sides of parfleches must therefore be considered distinctively western, and as more characteristic of the Pacific than of the Atlantic drainage in the Plains culture.

Two Blackfoot bags collected by Dr. Clark Wissler are shown in Plate x, Figs. 5 and 6. These are perhaps extreme cases of the typical Blackfoot tendency toward an open frame and a large central square area.

Half a dozen Kootenay parfleches and painted bags collected by the author in 1900 in northern Idaho are very uniform in style of ornamentation. They show no trace of the typical Shoshone square-and-triangular type of design, but use triangular elements exclusively. A simple but typical design is shown in Plate x, Fig. 4. It will be seen that in the general pattern there is nothing that might not well be Arapaho. Two other specimens show fundamentally the same pattern. Two others are longitudinally bisected by a wide stripe, the two resulting rectangles being internally bordered along their long sides with isosceles or right-angled triangles. Another

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

specimen has two hourglass-shaped figures stretched longitudinally across the field; between these is a diamond, and on each side there are two isosceles triangles. The figures in all the specimens show the convex roundness visible in the one chosen for illustration, so that actually triangles often approach more nearly to being segments of circles than polygons.

531
171

A special subsidiary characteristic of Kootenay painting is the development of rows of small black triangles set upon the outer edges of the main figures. These were said by the Kootenay to represent the trees which, in their heavily timbered and hilly country, everywhere form the limit of vision. As just mentioned, the Kootenay also frequently use side designs on their parfleches.

A valuable collection of parfleches and some bags was made for the Museum by Dr. L. Farrand among the Sahaptin. Considering that the habitat of these people is in Oregon, the general similarity of their art, as of most sides of their material culture, to that of the Plains Indians of for instance Dakota and Kansas, is very remarkable. In their rawhide painting the Sahaptin show a somewhat greater tendency to use designs of the square-and-triangular type than do the Kootenay, although such designs are neither very frequent nor very prominent among them. It is probable that the occurrence of this type of design among the Sahaptin is due to direct contact with Shoshoneans, principally of Idaho. It is interesting to observe that the wide border-stripe consisting of triangles with squares at the ends, which is so typical of the Shoshone, is found among the Sahaptin as frequently in the form of a transverse end-stripe as it is as a longitudinal border. Central squares of no great size occur several times in combination with adjacent acute isosceles triangles. Wide stripes, sometimes longitudinal and sometimes transverse, are not uncommon. When longitudinal, they occur also in the middle of the decorative field. In this case the two resulting halves of the decorative area are usually occupied mainly by diamonds or hourglass figures. There is very little tendency toward a distinct enclosing frame, as among the Sioux and Blackfeet. There are also very few cases of a repetition, along the longitudinal borders, of the designs in the middle, such as is so characteristic of the Arapaho; but there are cases even of this. Altogether there is hardly any characteristic tribal type which has not some representation among the Sahaptin. The figures are generally large. They are, however, so placed that the white background is comparatively prominent; and the close effect found, for instance, in most Bannock parfleches, where large design elements are also favorites, is wanting. The outlines of the figures are usually marked quite heavily in black or dark blue, much as among the Shoshone and Bannock. About half the parfleches have paintings on the side, similar to those of the Blackfeet and

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

531
171

Kootenay. The typical form of these side-paintings seems to be a row of angles or V's with the apices directed upward; that is to say, more or less inward as the flattened parfleche is viewed from above. Usually each angle or V contains one or two smaller parallel ones. In a few cases among the Sahaptin, the V-shaped angles are replaced by square U-shaped figures or by diagonal stripes.

The characteristics of Gros Ventre rawhide painting, in spite of some fifteen pieces in the Museum, are difficult to define. There is certainly very little stylistic tendency peculiar to the tribe. A considerable proportion both of parfleches and bags resembles typical Arapaho ones, though on the whole with the difference that there is a less marked longitudinal arrangement of figures, and not quite so much openness of the decorative field. On the other hand, there is visible some tendency toward the use of the Shoshone square-and-triangular type of design, though with an inclination rather toward a central square with acute triangles directed toward it, such as is found among the Ute and Blackfeet, than toward the heavy diamond-filled central square and the square-and-triangular stripe of the Shoshone.

Of specimens which have more or less close Arapaho analogues, there may be mentioned Fig. 5 of Plate XI[1] and specimens Museum Nos. 50–1734,[2] 50–1929 and 50–1776,[3] and 50–1830.[4] A specimen (Museum No. 50–4327) collected by Dr. Clark Wissler may be described as approximately the equivalent of double that part of an Arapaho design which appears on the front of the bag.[5]

Several forms that are quite distinct from anything found among the Arapaho are illustrated in Plate XI. The design shown in Fig. 1 consists in essence of four squares, each containing two inturned obtuse triangles, and is without close parallel among any of the tribes from which there is material. Fig. 2 suggests the entirely-painted-over Sioux decorative field divided longitudinally by a wide stripe which is flanked by two long diamonds. It will be seen, however, that transverse divisions give a marked square effect to this pattern as a whole. Fig. 3 is a parfleche collected by Dr. Clark Wissler. It is in typical Shoshone style, showing the square-ended wide stripes and the general square effect of the central portion of the decorative field. Fig. 4 was also collected by Dr. Wissler, and is in many respects unique. Figs. 5 and 6 are two designs of the square-and-triangular type, but rather of the form used by the Ute than that typical of

[1] Compare Bulletin American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part I, Plate XXII, Fig. 2.
[2] Ibid., Vol. XVIII, Part I, Plate XX, Fig. 5.
[3] Ibid., Vol. XVIII, Part I, Plate XVIII, Figs. 3 and 4.
[4] Ibid., Vol. XVIII, Part I, Fig. 36.
[5] Ibid., Vol. XVIII, Part I, Fig. 33.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the Shoshone. Specimen Museum No. 50-1741 (not shown in the plate) is similar to Fig. 6, but contains two central figures instead of one, and lacks the symmetrical half-designs along the edges. 531 171

A curious design on a bag is shown in Fig. 11. This, while much specialized, seems to show Blackfoot influence.

While these Gros Ventre pieces show resemblances here and there to the work of a number of tribes, yet they seem distinctly impressed with the tendencies of none. Perhaps fundamentally Gros Ventre rawhide painting is most similar to that of the Arapaho; but there are many departures from the Arapaho type, without corresponding development of any characteristically tribal style. There are some approaches to the art of both the Sioux and the Blackfeet, the two principal large tribes to the east and west; but these resemblances are not very marked. It is not unlikely that there may have been closer correspondences with the Crow. While the Blackfeet, according to Dr. Clark Wissler,[1] called their regular parfleche paintings "Gros Ventre painting," it is quite evident that the influence suggested by this name has actually had very little to do with the origin and development of the present style of Blackfoot painting. Not only do the Blackfeet appear to be in possession of a more distinctive style of rawhide painting than the Gros Ventre, but it is generally evident that any inter-influence of the two tribes on each other in respect to rawhide ornamentation has been inconsiderable.

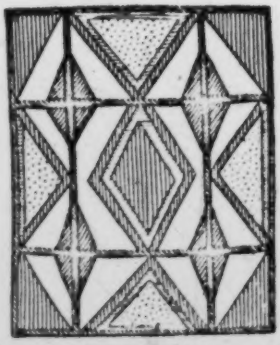


Fig. 11 (50-1805). Design on Bag. Length, 29 cm.

The cylindrical rawhide cases used by most Plains tribes, generally for holding medicine, are painted, on the whole, in styles resembling those of parfleches; but as the shape of the object and the portion of the decorative field visible at one time are quite different from those of parfleches, there are certain differences of design. At least four types of designs can be made out on medicine-cases; and, as more material becomes available for study, the tribal distribution of these, and especially the transition forms between the pure types, promise to be interesting. [415]

These four types, which have already been partly described in connection with the Arapaho,[2] are shown in Fig. 12 (*a–d*), and may be characterized as

[1] Clark Wissler, Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part III, p. 276.
[2] See Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part I, p. 132.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

53
171

follows. The first type (*a*) consists of a pattern of inverted tents.[1] The second type (*b*) consists of a pattern of stemmed crescents and forked upright fishtail figures.[2] The third type (*c*) has for its principal or central design a single figure, one of the characteristic elements of the pure triangular type

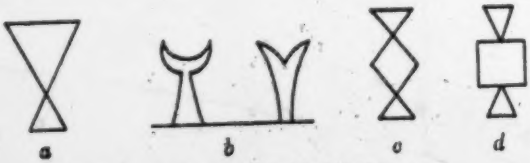


Fig. 12. Designs on Cylindrical Medicine-cases.

of parfleche designs, — a rhombus between two triangles directed toward it. As in parfleches, this figure may be flanked by symmetrical half-figures.[3] The fourth type (*d*) is similar, but substitutes in its principal figure the square-and-triangular type for the purely triangular one. The two Ute medicine-cases shown in Fig. 13 are illustrations.

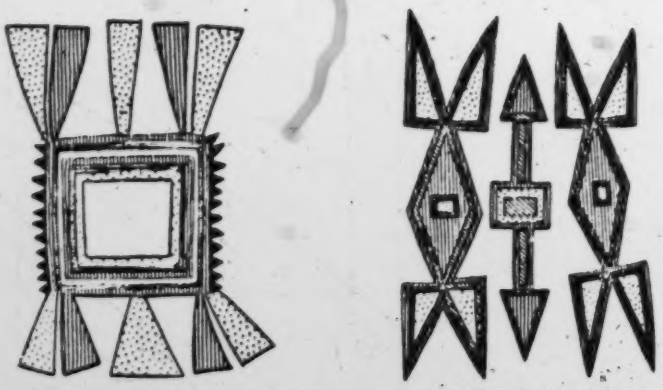


Fig. 13 (50-1255, 50-1276). Ute Medicine-case Designs. Lengths, 40 cm., 71 cm.

Among the Arapaho the tent-pattern seems most common, and next to this the crescent-and-fishtail design. One case of the third type has been found, and none of the fourth. The interesting specimen painted with bear-feet, in the Field Columbian Museum, may also be recalled.

Of Sioux medicine-cases little is known. A specimen in the Museum

[1] See Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part I, Plate xxv, Fig. 1.
[2] Ibid., Vol. XVIII, Part I, Plate xxv, Figs. 2 and 3.
[3] Ibid., Vol. XVIII, Part I, Fig. 43.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

has a design the most prominent figure in which is the spider-web symbol,[1] a concave quadrilateral. Superficially this design resembles those of the fourth type. A specimen in the Museum of the Department of Anthropology of the University of California shows an asymmetrical design, which in some respects approaches each of the four fundamental types here distinguished.

531
171

The Ute, to judge from four or five examples in the American Museum of Natural History, employ chiefly the third and fourth types; but their designs of the third or triangular type are almost always tinged with elements of the fourth, or square-and-triangular type.

The Shoshone cases, also represented by several examples, show some variation of pattern; but all are of the triangular type, and generally approach the design illustrated as most elemental. While in parfleches the Shoshone incline more than the Ute to square-and-triangular patterns, they appear to favor them less than the Ute on medicine-cases.

The Blackfoot tribes, also represented in the Museum by several specimens, show the third type, with but little variation from the illustration, quite regularly.

A single Sahaptin case in the Museum is also of this third type.

The only Gros Ventre case obtained is shown in Fig. 27, and the design is of the third type.

A Kiowa case in the Field Columbian Museum, the only specimen from this tribe known to the writer, and previously commented upon,[2] is intermediate between the first and second types.

The Arapaho being the southernmost of the tribes represented, it seems, especially in connection with this Kiowa case, that the first two types of medicine-case designs, the tent and the crescent-and-fishtail patterns, are probably characteristic of the southern Plains. Among the northern, or at least the northwestern, tribes belonging to the Plains culture, designs of the third and fourth types, more closely related to parfleche figures than are the first and second, are clearly prevalent. These are normally of the third or purely triangular form; but among the Ute a special form of the square-and-triangular type of design, found also on the parfleches of this tribe, has strongly influenced the medicine-case designs. Among the Shoshone the fundamentally square-and-triangular tendency of their parfleche-painting is without appreciable effect on their medicine-case style. The position of the Sioux in this classification, although geographically they belong to the northern tribes, remains to be more exactly determined.

[1] Compare Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part III, p. 248.
[2] Ibid., Vol. XVIII, Part I, p. 134.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the Arapaho type shown in the "Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History" (Vol. XVIII, p. 397, Fig. 154). In place of the needle, grease-wood or bone was formerly used. The bones usually had small holes bored through their sides, but these, if caught on the needle, scored only one point. The bones were usually swung with the needle pointing away from the body, in such a manner, that, when they were horizontal, a sudden motion backward of the needle drew them over its point. An expert player usually caught all, or at least several, of the bones at each throw. There were usually small loops of beads at the end of the string. Each of these, when caught on the needle, scored as much as had been agreed upon. The four bones also counted variously. In one set they are marked respectively 2, 3, 4, and 5 in parallel notches; but the owner of the game was in the habit of counting them as 6, 7, 8, and 9, the one with the highest value being farthest from the needle. It seems that other values — such as 10, 20, 30, and 40 — were sometimes given the four bones, if the players wished to play rapidly. It is said by some that, whereas a single bone or loop when caught counted as many points as had been agreed upon, if two or three bones or loops were caught, they counted only two or three points instead of the sum of the scores that each was worth individually. A considerable number of sticks were used for counters, a hundred or more according as there were two or more players. As is customary in Indian games, the counters were not divided between the players to begin with, but were in a neutral pile, from which the players took as many as their score entitled them to, until the heap was divided between them. Only after this did they begin to win from each other. Usually a man swung until he had missed three times, when his opponent was handed the game. When there were four players, they formed two sides. It is said that when the original heap of counters is exhausted, the player who is then throwing must hand over the bones to his opponent, even without having missed. The game's stakes, of course, are won when one player or one side has all the counters.

The dice of the Gros Ventre differ from those of the Arapaho. The latter have both small flat dice and long stick dice. The former may have a small form of the game; but long dice are certainly the prevailing type, as all sets seen were of this kind. The Gros Ventre dice are much flatter than the Arapaho stick dice, though of about equal length, and sometimes are made of bone. Thus they form in themselves something of a transition between the two types of Arapaho dice. The Arapaho long dice are essentially split sticks. One side is convex. The flat side may have the pith removed. The Gros Ventre dice are small boards, or similarly proportioned pieces of bone, rounded or pointed at the ends, and ornamented on one side with carving. The Arapaho use two sets of four sticks; the Gros Ventre,

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

525 171 four in all, in two pairs. The Gros Ventre dice are marked with incised lines on one side only. The Arapaho burn marks on the back or convex side in order to distinguish the two sets of dice they use together. The usual Gros Ventre markings consist of diagonal crosses and zigzag lines. 525 A single die is usually specially marked in the middle. By this means the scoring or the playing is elaborated. The number of counters among the 531 Gros Ventre is twelve. Sticks are used for this purpose. The methods

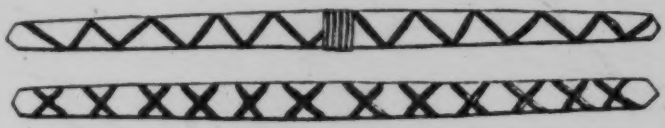


Fig. 14 (50-1768 a, b). Dice. Length, 24 cm.

of counting points are given somewhat differently by various individuals. For this reason the explanations obtained with each set of dice are here presented.

The set of dice one of each of whose pairs is shown in Fig. 14 has one die marked with a bit of string. There are twelve counters. The three unmarked sticks were thrown first. If they fell alike, the other one was thrown separately; but, if one of the first three fell differently from the other two, the marked stick was thrown at it in the hope of turning it over, so that all four sticks might rest alike. If this were the case, whether they were all face up or face down, four points were scored. If two were face up and two face down, two points were scored. If three faced one way and a single one was opposite, nothing was scored.

Fig. 15 (50-1812 b, d). Dice. Lengths, 20 cm., 20½ cm.

The set of dice of which the two kinds are shown in Fig. 15 is also accompanied by twelve counters. One of the sticks in this set is also marked by being tied around. This set was used somewhat differently, the four sticks being thrown together. If the marked stick fell one way, and the remainder opposite, six points were scored. If all four sticks fell alike, four were scored. If two sticks fell face up and two face down, two were scored; but three sticks one way and one the other, unless this single one happened to be the marked one, counted nothing.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

524 A form of the widely spread guessing-game occurred among the Gros
531 Ventre. Two buttons, which were enclosed in the hand, were used. At the beginning each player held one button. One of them guessed in which hand the other held the button. If he guessed wrong, his opponent got four counters; but if he guessed right, his opponent must yield the button to him. When he held two, his opponent guessed in which hand each of them was. If his opponent guessed wrong, the player received two counters; but if his opponent was right, the player must hand over both buttons, and himself guess. The game was played for twelve stick counters. These at the beginning were in a pile belonging to neither of the players. This neutral pile was drawn upon until exhausted, before either player gave counters to the other. This method of using counters was customary in Arapaho and Gros Ventre games.

Fig. 18 (50-4325, 50-4325 a). Dice. Lengths, 15 cm., 16 cm.

[71]

The buttons used in this game are different from those the Arapaho have had in recent years. They lack symbolism altogether, and are even without the red-black color-dualism obvious in the Arapaho game. The elaborate counters, food-sticks, pointers, and head-dresses of the Arapaho are also not found among the Gros Ventre. Of one pair of buttons, one was of brass beads, the other of green glass beads. They were called respectively "long" and "short." Another pair, made of bone, are illustrated in Fig. 19. A single button made of bone, apparently from a tooth-brush-handle, is shown in Fig. 20.

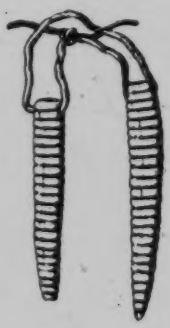


Fig. 19.

Fig. 20.

Fig. 19 (50-1931 a, b). Hiding-buttons. Length, 7 cm.
Fig. 20 (50-1917). Hiding-button. Length, 6 cm.

Boys shot arrows or threw sticks
526 at a netted hoop, apparently identical
857 with the Arapaho hoop except for nomenclature. The central mesh, called the "crow" or "crow's heart," won the game for whoever hit it. If the "crow's heart" was not pierced, a point was scored by the arrow nearest to it. An arrow passing through the netting without being held in it counted nothing. If one of the hoops rolled within reach, a player was at liberty to

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

ever, could find none to stand on, and this was what gave rise to the excitement and amusement. 526

Girls sometimes kicked a football upward, as if juggling with it. Such a football was kicked with the instep, either while free or while held by a string. Fig. 23 shows such a football about six inches in diameter. It is said to be made of the skin of an unborn buffalo-calf, and to be stuffed with fur. It is covered with an unknotted network of sinew strands.

The ordinary balls are much smaller than this one, and lack the sinew network. They are made of soft-dressed skin, and painted. In construction and appearance they are not to be distinguished from Arapaho ghost-dance balls, except that none have yet been seen with a plume on the attached thong, as is customary with the Arapaho. One, approaching the last in size, was said to have been struck with a stick, and is therefore probably a shinny-ball. It lacks a thong. The others are smaller, usually with a double thong, and are said to be stuffed with hair. [171]

Fig. 24 (50-1981). Ghost-dance Ball. Diameter, 9 cm.

[531]

Specimen Museum No. 50-1729 is the thongless ball mentioned as used with a stick. It is painted red. One side has been lightly gone over with a dark paint, blue or black. In the middle of the red side is a small dark cross.

Specimen Museum No. 50-1728 is painted yellow. Along the seam where the two hemispheres are joined, it is red. On one side a hand is outlined in green; on the other side, in red. An Arapaho ball described[1] had a smaller hand painted on it, because, it is said, the hand threw the ball.

The ball one side of which is shown in Fig. 24 was said to have been made in connection with the ghost-dance. One side is primarily dark blue or green; the other, yellow. Each side has on it a central spot and a ring of the opposite color. The symbolism of this painting is not quite consistent, but recalls that of the Arapaho. On the dark side three concentric circles were distinguished, representing three successive existences of the world; the fourth was still to come. On the yellow side the central spot represented the entrance to the sky. It thus seems that the two sides of the ball represent heaven and earth, the future life and this.

[1] See Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part IV, Fig. 150.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

each of which has a ceremony of its own rivalling that of the other (respectively the war-dance and the star-dance), compete in a horse-race, with the agreement that the beaten party is to put up the crazy-lodge. It does not seem that this is a common procedure. 796 616

The Gros Ventre abandoned their dances much earlier than the Arapaho, and almost nothing of the organization remains now, except a memory. It is somewhat difficult to procure precise details of the procedure, especially in the older dances. In great part, the regalia used have also perished, and it has been possible to secure only a very few pieces. These show, as do the descriptions given by the Indians, that the objects and decorations used are quite similar to those of the Arapaho. The distinction of several degrees purely of honor within each ceremony, which is so characteristic of the Arapaho age-dances, is also found in the Gros Ventre, though it seems that the distinctions made and the number of degrees are not quite so elaborate. This is evidenced, not only by the fact that few degrees are described by the Gros Ventre, a fact which might be due to their longer disuse of the ceremonies, but also by circumstances such as the one that certain regalia, which in the Arapaho dog-dance are worn only by the members of the second and third highest degrees, are among the Gros Ventre the common regalia of all participants; only the highest degree of the Arapaho being retained by the Gros Ventre as distinct. 796 178 [171]

The Gros Ventre call their entire ceremonial organizations benaa"wu, a dialectic form of the Arapaho ł ayaa"wu, and, like it, probably meaning "all the lodges." The members of the age-societies are called beniimen, commonly translated at the present day as "soldiers," etymologically probably "all-men," or "all-(?)-men." 796 561

The ceremonies of the Gros Ventre benaa"wu, with the age-dances given in order from youth to old age, are the following:—

Açeiha"w"	Sacrifice-lodge,[1] sun-dance
	Star-dance, partial preliminary
Nôuhā"w"	Fly-lodge, first dance
Haha"tyā"w"	Crazy-lodge, second dance
Nônhā"w"	Kit-fox lodge, third dance
Hotibyā"w"	Dog-lodge, fourth dance
Nanā"nahā"w"	Tomahawk-lodge, fifth dance
Bîitahā"wu"	Drum (?) lodge, sixth (?) dance
Benuxteā"w"	Buffalo(?) dance, women's dance.

The members of these successive age-ceremonies are called respectively

[1] Once translated "looked-at-lodge."

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796
561

hotohuūu, nōubän, hahā^{n}tyänen, nōuhunen, hotibyī, nanā^{n}nähä^{n}ts or perhaps hiityäa^{n}sūts, biitaxäänen; or "stars," "flies," "crazy-men," "kit-fox men," "dogs," "soldiers" or "having-war-spikes," and "drum (?) men."

171
796

Aside from changes in the order of the ceremonies, of which there are several, the chief known differences between this progressive dance-series of the Gros Ventre and that of the Arapaho are two. One of these differences is, that the first dance of the Gros Ventre is the fly-dance, which the Arapaho lack altogether. The second difference is, that the fifth dance of the Gros Ventre, the nana^{n}naha^{n}w^{u}, seems to combine the characteristics of the corresponding Arapaho dance (the hinanaha^{n}wu or fifth) and of the first dance (the Arapaho hiitceäoxa^{n}wu). In its name, its place in the series, and the age of its dancers, the Gros Ventre fifth ceremony agrees with the similarly named Arapaho fifth ceremony; but in the use of war-club-like implements carried by the dancers, and in the symbolic connection of the dance with the buffalo, there is an agreement with the Arapaho first dance. This first dance of the Arapaho is not represented by a separate ceremony among the Gros Ventre. A third possible difference between the two systems is, that no information was obtained regarding any Gros Ventre lodge corresponding to the oldest men's sweat-house among the Arapaho; but it is not unlikely that something similar formerly existed.

The several changes in order of the dances between the two tribes imply something more than mere change of position in the series. For instance, the displacing of the kit-fox lodge and of the biitaha^{n}wu, both of which are early ceremonies in the Arapaho and late ones among the Gros Ventre, involves a change of the age of the participants, and therefore necessarily, in some degree, of the character of the ceremony itself, since, the greater the age of the participants in the ceremony, the more sacred it is.

The following comparison shows the respective places of each ceremony in the Arapaho and Gros Ventre ceremonial series.

Ceremony.	Arapaho.	Gros Ventre.
Sun-dance	Men of any age	Men of any age
Kit-fox lodge	First preliminary	Third dance
Star-dance	Second preliminary	Outside of regular series
Fly-lodge	Lacking	First dance
Hiitceäoxa^{n}wu	First dance	Lacking (see Hinanaha^{n}wu)
Biitaha^{n}wu	Second dance	Probably sixth dance
Crazy-lodge	Third dance	Second dance
Dog-lodge	Fourth dance	Fourth dance
Hinanaha^{n}wu	Fifth dance	Fifth dance
Seven old men	Sixth ceremony	Lacking?
Bänuxta^{n}wu	Women's dance	Women's dance

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The place of the biitaha^{n}wu is not certain, as no informants were found who would positively express themselves on this matter. It is universally regarded as having been the most sacred and most dangerous of all the ceremonies, these qualities being thought to have led to its abandonment before any of the other dances. It can probably be concluded from this that it was last in the series, and performed by the oldest men. 171 796

As among the Arapaho, but somewhat more clearly, each dance refers symbolically to a certain animal. This symbolism is as follows. 171 796

The fly-dance takes its name from flies or mosquitoes, and was given or instituted by a mosquito. During part of the ceremony the dancers imitate the actions of mosquitoes. 825

The crazy-dance has comparatively little reference to any animal. The participants, however, wear anklets of badger-skin, and an entire badger-skin is used in ceremonies at the time of starting the dancing.

The kit-fox lodge was given by the kit-foxes, and a kit-fox skin is used somewhat analogously to the badger-skin in the crazy-dance.

In the dog-dance the dancers of highest degree represent shaggy dogs. It is also said that the participants in the ceremony largely eat dogs during its course. Among the Arapaho a dog is said to have instituted this lodge, and the Gros Ventre have a similar myth. [262]

In the nana^{n}naha^{n}w^{n} the dancers sing for the buffalo, and it is said that they always succeed in causing them to appear near the camp. Among the Arapaho the dancers represent both buffalo and prairie-chickens. The symbolic reference to prairie-chickens among the Gros Ventre is found in their sun-dance; their equivalent of the Arapaho rabbit-tent in this ceremony being called "prairie-chicken tent," and the singers in it "prairie-chickens" and "prairie-hens."

The biitaha^{n}w^{n}, as among the Arapaho, has connection with thunder. The dancers are painted over the body with dots which represent hail. If one of them violates the regulations of the dance, it is thought that it will begin to rain and that the offender may be struck by lightning. The Gros Ventre have an additional symbolic connection of their sun-dance with thunder, which is not strictly paralleled among the Arapaho. [302] [821]

The women in their dance among both tribes represent buffalo, and the actions gone through in this ceremony are in both tribes probably more directly imitative of the animals symbolized than in any of the men's ceremonies.

What has been said about the Arapaho in regard to the relation of the entire ceremonial organization to the lives of the men of the tribe, and in regard to the relative importance of the religious, military, and social functions of the age-companies constituting the organization, appears to apply 171 796 561

l: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

171 796 561 equally to the Gros Ventre. The Gros Ventre, however, used a method of organization as regards the performance of the age-ceremonies of which nothing was heard among the Arapaho. The men of the tribe of age to make any one ceremony were not all in one society or company, but in several; the total number of the companies being three or four times as great as the number of ceremonies. Each of these companies had a name, which it retained throughout its existence, irrespective of the dance it had last performed; and each held its ceremonies without participating in those of any other company. It seems that, when one of these companies had made all the dances, the surviving old men grouped together the available young men in the tribe, and formed them into a new company of the same name. With this organization it was possible for each ceremony to be performed in the tribe much more frequently than if all those of an age and previous ceremonial experience entitling them to make a certain dance had performed this together, as appears to have been the case among the Arapaho; or the ceremony could be given at short intervals without involving the repetition of it for a considerable number of times by the same body of men. The Gros Ventre companies could and did repeat the ceremonies, especially the earlier ones, but do not seem to have done so more than once or twice.

561 796 The names of these companies resembled nicknames, and for the most part had a character not very different from the clan names in use among the Gros Ventre and other Plains tribes, in which a certain humorous or derisive element prevails. The following are the companies whose names were obtained:

Green-grass, wanoçetyi
Young-sheep, wnotei
Small-horses, tsuãaçibyi
Rosebushes, yaaniisé
Calves (of leg), itsiitsõn
Sleeping-on-the-breast-of-a-woman, bitenamaakatuãabei
Grass-in-their-pockets, wasoontinaãyhuts
Big-bellies, tjiitaãets
White-horns, nanãetsóenitãets
White-backs, nanãetsetãets
Men-across-the-river, haesóitjanen
Different-from-beniinen, kaaesóbeniinen
Ugly-dogs, wasaatibyi
Seed-necklaces, hity'iisõtyãe
Having-back-fat, hiinanihits
White-noses, nanaatsóóbiãets
Eat-enough-to-last-over-night, ãteinutãets
Holding-dogs'-tails, hotibyi naãnaãnãets
White-blankets, nanaatsõubãnts
Fur-wrapped-wands, hiibiçõuts
Bad-horns, wanaasõnitãets
(? Stars, hotohuũu)
(? Feathered-sword-wands, iikokõuuts)
(? Having-spikes, hiitjaãasũts)

The list is probably not complete, as, with the disuse of the ceremonies, the formation of these companies has been discontinued for some time.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

159 561 796 Subsequently he was a "grandfather" in the crazy-dance, but in none of the other ceremonies. He never participated in the sun-dance, having had no occasion to do so, he said. Nevertheless he once was the man selected during the sun-dance to kill a buffalo with one arrow, the buffalo's skin being cut up into thongs with which the rafters of the lodge are fastened. He succeeded in killing the buffalo with one arrow.

Another man, now middle-aged, belonged to the "holding-to-a-dog's-tail" company. He made successively the fly-dance, the star-dance, and then the crazy-dance.

Star and War Dances.

171 561 796 575 [177] At present the organization into comparatively small companies is no longer maintained. In its place there is a division of the young men of the tribe into two groups, one of which practises, or did until recently, the star-dance; the other, the grass or war dance. The latter is universally stated to be a recent importation from the Sioux, apparently within the present generation. The star-dance, however, is an old ceremony, it is claimed; and this assertion is borne out by the occurrence among the Arapaho of the analogous star-dance. Among the Arapaho the star-dance, like the kit-fox dance, is a preliminary which appears to be gone through by all the men of the tribe, but has neither the standing, the organization, nor the definite observances and regalia of the subsequent ceremonies. Among the Gros Ventre the star-dance was formerly also outside the regular series of dances. It is generally spoken of as having been a warrior dance, made at any time and on any suitable occasion, and without the rigorously prescribed course of other dances. Some men seem to have made it before the fly-dance, and others afterward. Even in former times, however, before the war-dance had come among the Gros Ventre, the star-dance included only part of the young men of the tribe. The old men surviving from certain companies have never taken part in the star-dance, and explain this by the fact that there was rivalry between their company and the star-dancers. It might thus, perhaps, seem that a star company had a ceremony of its own, the star-dance, from which the members of rival companies naturally held aloof; but it is very improbable that only one age-company parallel to the others, and none of these others, should have had a distinctive ceremony. It is also improbable that this company, being one of many, should have been so large as to include about half of the men of the tribe, for it appears that some such large proportion took part in the star-dance. This makes it almost impossible to believe that there existed a star company exactly

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

analogous to the "green-grass" and "young-sheep" and other companies, but having an additional ceremony confined to itself. On the other hand, if the "stars" were not one of the age-companies, it is hard to see with what groups of men they competed. It is therefore not improbable that there formerly existed among the Gros Ventre a star-society, which had a ceremony of its own, and which, while based partly on age in being constituted of young men, was outside and independent of the scheme of the benan"wu, with which it had no, or only indirect, relation, and with whose working out it must in some measure have conflicted. Such a society, which would be a true society in being based on a membership determined by choice, purchase, initiation, or supernatural experience, — in other words, by selection, would be of a type of organization quite distinct from the ordinary Gros Ventre or Arapaho age-company performing in the course of its existence an entire series of tribal ceremonies, but would have abundant parallels in other ceremonial societies on the Plains and elsewhere. Its presence would therefore be readily explainable as an incipient intrusion due to the cultural influence of some other tribe, the chief objection to such an explanation being the occurrence of the star-dance also among the Arapaho, but without a known association with a special society. This suggested character of the Gros Ventre star-society and star-dance fits the facts, but is after all only hypothetical; and altogether the relation of the ceremony to the remainder of the Gros Ventre ceremonial organizations is not yet clear. 171 561 595 796

The star-dance as formerly held is said to have lasted four days and nights. There might be further subsequent dancing. At the beginning of the ceremony, the dancers went to four places at the camp-circle facing or representing the four cardinal directions, and at each place danced before the tent of a prominent man. The owner of the tent gave away property and filled a pipe for the dancers, after smoking which they proceeded to the next one. After having danced in the four places, they danced in the middle of the camp-circle. This might be in the open air, or in a lodge made of two large tents combined. The singers were four old men, who accompanied themselves on small hand drums. The dancers' wives sat behind these four old men and sang with them. The dancer's relatives at times went to them and danced with them, taking their rattles and temporarily using them. The dancers' bodies seem to have been variously decorated; but they had no distinctive regalia except rattles. These were alike in general character, being loop-shaped, and decorated with gaudy paint and attachments, but there seems to have been no attempt at making them uniform. The dancing-lodge was elliptical, with the door towards the east and a fire near the western end. The singers were at this end, and the dancers near them, in two lines, along the sides of the lodge, facing each other. In dancing 796 [302] [534]

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 successful and happy in this world, in acquiring wealth and in living a long life. Then the old man pointed the pipe east, south, west, north, and up, lit it, and smoked it. Then wiping it, and dropping the ashes out of it, he held the pipe up toward the sky, and prayed for his "grand-daughter," then laid it on the ground. The woman was naked, except for her robe. She then begged the old man to give her the medicine called tawaanas66 (the Arapaho hăcawaanaxu). It is said that sometimes the old man gave her none, but undoubtedly it was customary for him to give it to her. Only a small piece was used.

After this the women returned to the dancing-lodge, where their husbands were waiting for them. They did not go together, but singly. A boy or young man had been selected to stand outside the door, and watch for the women returning. As a woman came near enough to be recognized, he called into the lodge that she was coming, whereupon the dancers came out. Her husband and all the others kissed her. Her husband [576] kissed the "grandfather" also. One by one the other women came back, and were received in the same way. If the woman had received medicine, she gave half to her husband. He chewed it up, and then rubbed himself over his body with it.

For four nights this appears to have been done. On all but the last night, it is said, that, on the return of the women, they and their husbands left the lodge and returned to their tents to sleep, to be painted again next morning. The last night, after the women and their "grandfathers" had returned, the old men picked out from the row of bows their "grandsons'," and, standing north and south of the fire, danced, holding the bows; their "grandsons" meanwhile dancing with them, but the women sitting in their places.

These observances connected with the giving of medicine by the "grandfathers" to the dancers' wives are found, without essential modification, in the three following dances, as well as in this. It will be seen that they are considerably more developed than the corresponding practices among the Arapaho.[1]

[114] 171

[1] In the Arapaho crazy and dog dances the procedure is not carried quite so far. Dorsey has described almost the same practice as occurring in the Arapaho sun-dance. What takes place on this occasion in the Arapaho crazy and dog dances has been summarized in Vol. XVIII, pp. 193, 200, of the Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History. The following somewhat more precise account is appended for comparison with the Gros Ventre. The "grandfather" and the dancer's wife (who is naked, except, presumably, for a robe) go off. As or before they go it is said aloud, "He gives his wife away." She is given, theoretically, not to her husband's ceremonial "grandfather," but to "the four old men" that play a part in esoteric Arapaho ritual. The woman prays, asking the old man for life. He spits medicine on the ground four times, once for each of the four old men. She lies down before him, stretching her legs and arms, facing him. He asks "the grandfather above" — apparently "our father" — to look, and puts away his desire. Restraining himself, he covers her with a robe, draws her up, and leads her back, pushing her gently before him. When she rejoins her husband, the latter says, "Hahô'u" ("thanks") four times. That this custom of the Arapaho and Gros Ventre is not confined to them, is evident from a well-known passage in Lewis and Clark.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 hand, according as they belonged to one division or the other. Vessels of water were ready to pour on the racers in order to cool them. The four 526 "brothers," the dancers previously separate from the rest at the eastern end of the lodge, did not run with the crowd, but started out slowly together, their faces covered with their robes. They trotted at a slow pace over the same course as the other dancers. As they returned, long after the crowd, 796 the boys, young men, and young women of the camp, had gathered on both sides, and pelted them with buffalo-chips until they reached the dancing-lodge. There is, in this slow following of the pledger and his three companions, a reminiscence of the white-fool, the dancer of highest degree in the Arapaho crazy-lodge, who on all occasions contrasts by his slow [431] movements with the other dancers.[1] After the return of all the dancers, they presented horses loaded with property to their "grandfathers," and these made similar presents to them. These gifts seem to have been payments to the old men for their instruction and painting, and to have been made at the conclusion of the part of the ceremony which was under their control. From this time on, the dancers' wives returned to their tents, and took no further part in the ceremony.

After this followed two observances. It is not certain which of the two came first. A crowd of people were waiting for the dancers in the open. The dancers, wearing their best moccasins put on loosely without being tied, left the lodge; and the waiting people, mostly women and children, ran after them, pulling off their moccasins, and, when they could not succeed in doing so otherwise, seizing their feet, and tripping them as they went. The dancers did not try to escape, or save their moccasins, but [888] allowed them to be taken. Or, again, an old man who was poor was selected, and, having been given a pipe to smoke in order that he might 796 accept, he went to the east of the camp-circle. A buffalo robe was brought, 431 incensed four times with sweet-grass placed on burning charcoal or buffalo-chips, and then placed over the old man, with the hair side out, as, bent over, he knelt on the ground. The dancers gathered about him, and

[1] According to an Arapaho account obtained, somewhat different from those previously utilized, there are two white-fools, not one. It is not clear which information is more correct. [114 The white-fools always follow the dancers. If one of the ordinary dancers should be behind them, he would become unable to move. This is the result of any violation of a rule of the ceremony by a participant. In such cases the white-fools have the power to cure them by 171 taking off their owl-feather head-bands, and rubbing them over the body with them. The white-fools are addressed as heiçâbîhin ("sisters-in-law," strictly, "brother or sister-in-law" of opposite sex from the speaker). The dancers, to look at a person, put their head to the ground, and pretend to look with their rump. They throw dung into tents, calling it "food." If people look at them through awl-holes in a tent, they at once shoot the tent in that place. Going out on the prairie, they say, "Let us not shoot into the air," and shoot up. When the arrows fail in plain sight, they cannot find them: if they fall into brush or tall grass, they find them at once. They imitate, often with obscene renderings, anything that they hear, such as a person's speech, or a dog's bark. They paralyze dogs by pointing at them an arrow to which a testeaatcet is attached. They give the dogs they kill to their "grandfathers" to eat. As soon as they take off their head-bands, they become rational. Mooney's account of the Cheyenne and Arapaho crazy-dance, which seems to refer chiefly to the former, mentions two white-fools; compare Ghost-Dance Religion, op. cit., 1033.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

293
796
171

More regalia of the crazy-dance than of any other ceremony were obtained for the Museum; but not a single set secured is complete. The Arapaho do not keep their crazy-dance bows after the ceremony, so that, under the present much more complete disappearance of Gros Ventre regalia, the preservation of a bow (see Plate XII) is very fortunate, though it lacks string, arrows, the sage for the handle, and the buckskin thong for wrapping the handle. The remaining ornaments of the bow have been re-attached to it. None of the peculiar crazy-dance robes or capes seem to be any longer in existence. Descriptions and drawings by the Indians show

[293]

Fig. 36.

Fig. 37.

Fig. 36 (50-1884 c). Crazy-dance Regalia. Length, 37 cm.
Fig. 37 (50-1884 b). Crazy-dance Regalia. Length, 25 cm.

that they must have been very similar to those of the Arapaho. The Gros Ventre, however, declare theirs to have been painted entirely red; those of the Arapaho are part red and part white. Two pieces of feathered owl-skin

293
796

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

an enemy; and each took from among the property as nearly as possible such objects as he had actually captured in war. One who had stolen horses would take a horse; one who had taken a gun from an enemy would pick out a gun. While this was being done, or soon after, the dancers were dancing, concluding with a race similar to that in the crazy-dance. This marked the end of the ceremony. 796

There were several degrees of distinction in this dance. Two men had crooked lances wrapped with otter-skin. In four places these lances were tied about with small strips of white fur from which a pair of eagle-feathers hung. These lances were called nouçä"ts'ta". Two other lances were straight, and wrapped with jack-rabbit skin. These also bore feathers. A single dancer had a rattle of the globular shape common on the Plains. Half of the rattle was painted red, and half blue; and feathers were attached both to the top of the rattle and to the bottom of its handle. These regalia of honor were given to men renowned in war. A pipe was brought such a man, and if he thought himself entitled to the honor, and was ready to accept it, he took the pipe. If a man felt that others were really braver than himself, or had some other reason, he refused to take the pipe. One informant stated that he had declined the proffered honor because his wife's brother had recently died. The rank and file of the kit-fox dancers are said to have worn belts of prairie-dog skin. How far these corresponded with the biitaha"wu belts of the Arapaho is uncertain. The fur-wrapped crooked and straight lances are certainly similar to the crooked and straight lances indicating the second and third degrees in the Arapaho-biitaha"wu. 796 554 293 [534]

Two girls took part in this ceremony. They were girls who were much thought of and beloved by their relatives. One of the dancers carried a kit-fox skin, the inside of which was painted blue. His companion had the rattle that has been described. While he rattled, the other, holding the skin by the neck and the tail, pointed it at the other dancers. These ran off, and this seems to have been the signal for the beginning of the dance. The two girls followed these two men everywhere. Their parents and relatives gave away great quantities of property in the dancing-lodge. Something similar is found in one of the Cheyenne society-dances, in which four young women accompanied the dancers from place to place. 796 857 593 [171]

Nothing was learned about the origin of the kit-fox dance, except that it is said to have been given by the kit-foxes, which is like what the Cheyenne tell of their analogous society. 796

A neck-band of badger-skin is the only object secured said to have been used in the kit-fox dance. To the end of it a tip of whitish rabbit-fur is attached. The lower part of the piece, which bears this rabbit-fur, hangs down the dancer's back. The upper portion, which is about four inches wide, is slit for a distance of a foot. Through this slit the head is inserted. [292]

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 but none are living who have taken part in it. The meaning of the term, as among the Arapaho, is unknown. One informant gave the etymology "drum-dance" (from biitaxäänaⁿ, "drum"). The dancers were called biitaxäänen. As in the preceding ceremonies, a man took part in this dance accompanied by his wife, or, if it happened to be held while he was at war, his wife took part as if he were present. Nothing is known as to the conduct of the ceremony nor as to the regalia, except that the dancers, or certain of them, carried crooked sticks wrapped with white fur. The dancers were [302] painted over their body with dots resembling hail. The dance is looked upon as having been very dangerous, as a mistake in painting or in other observances would result in death from the thunder.

It is not impossible, that, if the present Arapaho series of dances represents a more original order of arrangement than the Gros Ventre, in the development of the Gros Ventre series the biitahaⁿwᵘ was displaced by the kit-fox dance, which grew in importance from a dance of the youngest men to one of older men. This would account for the use of crooked fur-wrapped sticks in the Gros Ventre kit-fox dance as well as in their biitahaⁿwᵘ. If this was the course of events, it does not follow that the biitahaⁿwᵘ became the sixth dance of the series. It may simply have been displaced, and fallen into disuse. Lack of knowledge of the proper conduct of the ceremony would be sufficient to make the Indians afraid to undertake it. It has been stated that no informants could be found who professed to know the place of this dance in the series, and it is possible that its dangerous qualities were not due to its greater sacredness through being the dance of the oldest men, but to such lack of knowledge. On the whole it is very difficult to see how such differentiations in the order of dances as exist in the Arapaho and Gros Ventre schemes of ceremonial organization may have taken place.

The Women's Dance.

[171] The women's dance — called benuxteaⁿwᵘ, the dancers being named benuxteiiçᵃⁿ[1] — resembles the Arapaho women's dance quite closely. The 796 dancers had on their ordinary clothing, but wore belts to which four buffalo-292 tails were fastened, and head-dresses which fell down the back of their heads and from which horns rose. These head-dresses are said to have been covered with feathers; but it seems possible that this statement refers only to the dancers of certain degrees, as among the Arapaho only the dancer of highest degree wears such a feather-covered head-dress. Four of the dancers wore [171] no horned head-dress, but "war-bonnets." These may have been equivalent

[1] The Gros Ventre declare that they do not know the significance of the word element benux-te-.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

171 796 [292] [887] [554] [302] [431]

to the Arapaho "white-stand" and "red-stand" head-dresses of upright feathers surrounding the head. The dancers are described as all old or elderly women, which among the Arapaho was not the case. The exceptions were two participants called "calves" (nihanou, "yellow calves"), who were middle-aged, or, at any rate, adults. Among the Arapaho the "calves" were children. There is a further difference, that, whereas among the Arapaho the "calves" were of high degree in the dance and for the greater part of the time were not allowed to stir, the Gros Ventre "calves" took the place of the atsaan or servants in the men's dances. They are said to have worn no regalia. The dancers were painted with the symbol of a pipe on each cheek, close under the eye. Old men sang for them, rattling but not using a drum. The women in dancing shifted their weight from one side of the body to the other, and cried like crows. Two tent-poles, two pegs, and two ropes belonging to the dancing-lodge, were painted respectively one black and one red. On the fourth day of the ceremony there were observances outside of the dancing-lodge. A prominent chief was selected to take a burning stick. The dancers, moving and running about like a herd of buffalo, pretended to scent the smoke of his fire from windward, and stampeded. Another distinguished warrior pretended to shoot at the herd as if they were buffalo. Both of these features of the ceremony are found among the Arapaho. A third distinguished man (or perhaps several) was honored by being offered a pipe to smoke, and on his acceptance was given a vessel of water containing berries. He then gave away property.

The Sun-Dance.

796

As stated before, the Gros Ventre sun-dance, haçeiha"w", is not restricted to men belonging to certain age-companies, but, as among the Arapaho, can be made by any man.[1] Like the other dances, however, it is made as the result of the pledge of an individual for deliverance from sickness or danger. As soon as the pledge has been publicly announced, or as soon thereafter as the buffalo begin to get fat in spring, the pledger and his relatives begin to accumulate buffalo-tongues, which they slice and dry like buffalo-meat. They also save a buffalo-skin, which is packed with the tongues, two sticks being wrapped up in it. When the time comes, a large lodge made of two tent-covers is set up in the middle of the camp-circle. Into this many women enter at night to sing. This marks the beginning of the ceremony. The tent is called tjinaa"w" ("prairie-chicken lodge"); and the participants, "prairie-chickens" and "prairie-chicken women." The pledger brings his buffalo-skin to this lodge. He incenses it four times.

[1] See Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part II, p. 152.

li Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 fork is upright, the young men all compete, trying to raise their rafters into position in the centre fork and in a fork at the periphery, before the others. After the tree has been raised, or possibly before, the young men go out, apparently by age-companies, to cut willows to form the walls of the lodge. More recently the star-dancers and war-dancers have done this, those of each company taking the wives of the men of the other company on their horses behind them. As they go, they shoot up in the air, and when in the timber each man cuts a willow-branch. They return holding the branches and singing, ride around the lodge, and then deposit them. After the outside rafter-poles of the lodge have been tied fast in the forks, these branches are leaned in position, forming an enclosure of the lodge.

The centre fork has a buffalo-tail attached to it. A bundle of brush, called a "nest," is also fastened in the fork. A lightning symbol is made on the western side of the tree down to the ground. Inside the lodge a low screen, said to be about waist high, is erected at the western end, opposite the entrance. Behind this is the pledger of the dance. In front of the screen is a painted buffalo-skull. Two sticks of cherry-wood, one red and one black, stand on each side of the skull. A wheel or ceremonial hoop made of a stick bent in a circle, wrapped with skin, and with feathers attached, is hung on one of these sticks. Just as clothing is hung at the ends of the horizontal rafters of the lodge, or possibly on the centre fork itself, as an offering to the sun, objects are said to be hung on this brush screen at the western end of the lodge.

[197] Apparently the general course of the main portion of the dance, which follows the erection of the lodge, is similar to that of the Arapaho sun-dance, though there are certain features entirely without parallel among the Arapaho. The pledger and the other dancers neither eat nor drink during the ceremony. Women join in the fasting, but do not dance. The dancers stand whistling, and looking up at the "nest" in the tree.

796 The self-torture characterizing the sun-dance among most tribes is found
364 with the Gros Ventre in its usual form. Four knotted thongs hang from the
785 centre fork. Two sticks are passed under the skin of the dancers' breasts, one on each side, to which the thongs are fastened. The dancers try to tear the sticks out of their skin. Some whose skin is tough do not succeed. In that case a medicine-man comes to them and makes them unconscious of pain, so that they break loose easily. When they have fallen, he restores them to consciousness. One after the other, the dancers go through this ordeal. While the dancers are thus tied to the tree, they move back and forth, apparently dancing. This is called niinaⁿtsöiaⁿ. Some dancers also fasten shields in a similar way to the skin of their back, and pull these out. Others are attached by the breast to a post located outside of the dancing-

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

aho sun-dance paint. Usually the Arapaho paint only two diamonds on each limb; but four have been seen on the northern Arapaho pledger, as in this picture. Another drawing repeats this painting, and adds a head-band, anklets, and wristlets apparently corresponding to the sage ornaments of the Arapaho. In a third drawing a dancer is painted with lightning symbols down his legs and arms. 796 532

The Gros Ventre and Arapaho sun-dances differ about as much as their respective age-company ceremonies. The principal discrepancies seem to be the following. 796 171

The Gros Ventre accumulation of buffalo-tongues by the pledger after the making of the vow and before the ceremony. This feature is found among the Blackfoot, but not among the Arapaho.

The prairie-chicken lodge with its four-nights' singing apparently corresponds somewhat to the Arapaho rabbit-tent; but its daily removal, accompanied by the camp-circle, is not found among the Arapaho. The prairie-chicken singing recalls a feature in the Arapaho hinanaha^{n}wu, the fifth of the age-ceremonies.

According to the account obtained, the public ceremonies relating to the erection of the lodge do not take place until after the four-nights' singing in the prairie-chicken tent. Among the Arapaho, they occur while the rabbit-tent is in use, and are in large part connected with the rites within it. It is also not clear how long a time these public ceremonies — the scouting for the trees, the bringing-in of the centre pole, the killing of the buffalo, and the painting of the lodge-poles and erection of the lodge — occupy. They are described as if they occurred in the space of a day. This would not be impossible; but it is likely that this impression is due to indefiniteness of narration. It is, however, distinctly stated that the buffalo is shot while the people are bringing in the centre pole. Among the Arapaho, the centre pole is brought in two days after the buffalo has been shot. The skin of this buffalo is kept entire and taken into the dancing-lodge; by the Gros Ventre it is cut into thongs for fastening the lodge-beams to the upright forks. [114]

The "altars" of the two ceremonies cannot be definitely compared, owing to the indefiniteness of information from the Gros Ventre. The screen corresponds to the seven small trees of the Arapaho; the skull and the wheel on the stick are common to the two ceremonies; the red and the black upright stick have no Arapaho equivalents. The Arapaho trench, red and black logs, seven red and seven black sticks, seven wickets, and two sods with bushes, have not been mentioned among the Gros Ventre.

The miraculous raising of the centre pole does not seem to exist among the Arapaho.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 171 The Gros Ventre also introduce into the ceremony a thunder symbolism that the Arapaho lack, or have in a much less developed form. The lightning symbol on the centre pole, from which water can be drawn, and the power of the thunder to strike with lightning any dancer who drinks other water than this, evidence this.

Another element special to the Gros Ventre is the introduction of ceremonies relating to war, such as the dramatic performances and the seeing of the approach of the enemy by the pledger.

Features introducing miraculous and sometimes purely personal supernatural powers are apparently quite lacking from the Arapaho ceremony. Among the Gros Ventre there are the raising of the centre pole, the production of water from the centre pole with the crow, the clairvoyance of the pledger as regards the enemy, and the visions of some of the dancers.

In summary, the exact duration and sequence of all events in the Gros Ventre ceremony are not yet clear; the preliminary prairie-chicken tent does not correspond very closely to the Arapaho rabbit-tent; and the connection of the ceremony with the thunder, the introduction of warlike elements, and that of miraculous or personal features, are peculiar, or nearly so, to the Gros Ventre as compared with the Arapaho.

MODERN CEREMONIAL OBJECTS.

778 171 The recent ceremonial objects of the Gros Ventre are somewhat different from those of the Arapaho. The Arapaho were deeply affected by the ghost-dance movement, more, it is said, than any other tribe; and many of their modern religious regalia have a distinct character of their own. [668 177] The Gros Ventre received the ghost-dance from the Arapaho, but it seems to have taken little hold of them. The only distinctive ghost-dance objects seen or obtained were two small hoops and a few balls, all of which 177 resemble Arapaho types. The chief modern dance-ceremony of the Gros 778 Ventre, the only one performed at present, is the grass or war dance ob- 796 tained from the Sioux, and evidently a modification of the widespread Omaha dance upon which the Arapaho crow-dance is also based. This dance has in recent years been still further modified, until its character now is very similar to that of the crow-dance. [178] The regalia used in this dance at present are very individual, usually crude, and almost always stylistically degenerate. The delicate character and distinct style of the majority of modern Arapaho dance-objects are lacking.

171 The treatment of feathers in such objects is quite different among the 778 Gros Ventre and Arapaho. The Gros Ventre rarely ornament their feathers 287

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

with dyed plumes or tufts of horsehair, as the Arapaho so frequently do 778
both at the base and top of the feather. Feathers with the vanes cut from 237
the quill, except at the very top, are also scarcely used by the Gros Ventre. 171
Instead, they usually cut the feather squarely off across its end, or split the quill, from the end down, for the greater part of its length. Sometimes the uppermost part of the quill is entirely removed, with its attached portions of the vanes, leaving the top of the feather forked. Plume-feathers are also much less used by the Gros Ventre than by the Arapaho. In dyeing, the Gros Ventre generally used cruder colors; a blue-violet, a pink-red, a light- [386]
bluish green, and yellow, all of them aniline colors, being the most common. The Arapaho use true red and green more frequently, and in most cases employ the dyes more lightly, thus obtaining endurable or delicate effects where the Gros Ventre are garish.

The Gros Ventre methods of feather-treatment, both the cutting-off and the splitting of the end of the feather, go back, at least in part, to their older tribal ceremonies. Both these processes are found employed on the dog-dance regalia described.

As regards other differences, the Gros Ventre probably employ more weasel-skin in ornaments than the Arapaho, though far less than their neighbors the Blackfeet. They use cloth (both cotton and woollen goods), red, green, or blue, without reluctance; whereas the Arapaho have clung very tenaciously to skin in all ceremonial objects. Skin thongs and sinew for binding are, however, very rarely replaced by strings and thread, even with the Gros Ventre.

The few objects obtained belonging to the ghost-dance movement are 668
the following. 778

Fig. 41 shows an imitation of a netted playing-wheel. The piece is about two inches in diameter. The stitch of the meshes seems to be correct, though there are fewer meshes than in the full-sized wheels. The "crow," the centre mesh, is painted red; the rest of the thong, yellow. To the centre mesh are attached four magpie-feathers cut off across. This object was [301]
worn tied to the hair on the side of the head, or hanging from the little finger when the people joined hands to dance. Several very similar objects, lacking the feathers, are attached to the girl's painted dress shown in "Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History" (Vol. XVIII, Plate LXXV).

A head-dress consisting of a hoop of about the same size, quill-wound [292]
and bisected by two quill-wound strings, and of three long, blue-and-white quill-wound pendant thongs with plume-feathers at the ends, was collected by Dr. Clark Wissler. It is not known whether it belongs to the war-dance or the ghost-dance: its general similarity to certain Arapaho head-dresses

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

668 makes the latter seem possible. It differs from Arapaho objects chiefly in
778 that the color-ornamentation of the quill-wrapping divides the hoop into three instead of four parts. At the upper end of the hoop is attached a bunch of seven small strips of whitish rabbit-fur, resembling the weasel-skin style of ornamentation characteristic of the Blackfoot.

Two balls (Figs. 24 and 25) are identical in character with Arapaho ghost-dance objects, and the latter was made in connection with the movement. These balls are described above.

778
293
171

[292]

Fig. 41 (50-1922). Wheel Head-dress. Length, 21 cm.

The following objects, many of which were obtained by Dr. Clark Wissler and which were probably not connected with the ghost-dance, are of a character that does not seem to make it worth while to represent them in illustrations; but they resemble Arapaho or other pieces sufficiently for a brief description. They all appear to have been used in the war or grass dance.

Specimen Museum No. 50-1742 is a feathered crook modelled on the familiar type of curved lance that is common on the Plains, and to which the otterskin-wrapped lances of the second degree of the second Arapaho tribal ceremony belong.[1] The Gros Ventre too had such crooked lances in probably two of their tribal ceremonies. The present piece is about four feet long, and made of a stick painted yellow. There is no blade, or representation of it, at the lower end. At the end of the crook hangs a single eagle-feather. The greater portion of the shaft is covered by a casing of green cloth from which hang, attached by thongs and sinew wrapping painted yellow, a row of eighteen eagle-feathers.

A forked stick (specimen Museum No. 50-4328) resembles the Arapaho pieces of this kind described in the "Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History" (Vol. XVIII, p. 358). It is about six feet long, quite slender, and painted red. Some distance in the fork a quill-covered hoop is attached to the two spreading sticks. This hoop is red, with four white, blue-bordered areas on it. The ends of the fork are ornamented with a short green-cloth fringe, tufts of yellow-dyed hair, and feathers notched at the top. From the junction of the two arms downward,

[1] Compare Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part II, Plate XXXII.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the stick is first covered with green cloth, then with skin covered with red and blue quill-work, and at the pointed end is bare, except for its red paint. 778 293

A feathered wheel a foot or a foot and a half across (specimen Museum No. 50–4292) is covered with red, blue, green, yellow, white, and black feathers and plumes, many of them dyed, and tied to the hoop without any attempt at color-pattern or other arrangement. Most of the feathers have the quill split. 171

Another hoop (specimen Museum No. 50–1745) is a little smaller, and is covered with brown buffalo-fur instead of feathers. At one point, five split owl-feathers and six black unsplit feathers are attached; at a place opposite, two small yellowed feathers, one with a green plume at the base.

Other specimens secured by Dr. Clark Wissler are a ceremonial spoon with long, thin, decorated handle, and a quirt. The latter (specimen Museum No. 50–4305) is similar to Arapaho ceremonial quirts.[1] A heavy wooden handle consists of two parts, — the handle proper and a longer portion with five deep notches in the lower edge. The upper edge is straight. The part of the handle that is notched is ornamented with brass tacks. From the end of the stick hang two ends of thong, the whip. At the handle is attached a skin of a fox or similar animal, ornamented with eagle-feathers. 171 415 778

A feather shield consists essentially of a circle of radiating feathers, worn on the back. 171 293

A crow-belt, also secured by Dr. Clark Wissler, is quite similar to the Arapaho one described in the "Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History" (Vol. XVIII, p. 345). It is interesting that of the five Arapaho pieces in the Museum, this is at once the crudest in construction, and the most perverted by white influence from aboriginal style. In the present Gros Ventre belt, a rectangular piece of rawhide is bent over a stick as a support for the remainder of the specimen. The two hanging "tail" strips are of yellow cloth, quite narrow, hanging apart. Eagle-feathers, some dyed red, are attached to them. The belt proper is formed by two pieces of woven yarn. In the middle of the piece are attached the head and breast of an eagle. Below this, between the two hanging strips, is an ornament of a row of eagle-feathers pointing downward. These are attached in the folded edge of a squarish piece of rawhide, thus resembling the analogous piece in the Arapaho crow-belt referred to and the Arapaho biitaha"wu head-dresses. The ornament, however, is fastened to the remainder of the piece, so that it cannot have been worn as a head-dress. The two usual projecting arms consist each of a black eagle-wing feather, with a strip of quill-embroidery laid along the quill of the feather, and with several small bells, 778 [237]

[1] Mooney, Ghost-Dance Religion (Fourteenth Annual Report, Bureau of American Ethnology, Vol. XIV, p. 987, Fig. 94), shows a very similar quirt attributed to the dog-dance.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

171 whitish fur, and dyed horsehair tufts at the ends. At the base of each arm
293 are red, yellow, and violet feathers. These are either cut off across the end,
778 or have the uppermost part of the quill with its attached vanes removed.

CUSTOMS CONNECTED WITH RELIGION.

171 Sacred pipes were important in the religion of the Gros Ventre. The
276 beliefs and practices connected with these differ somewhat from those of
778 the Arapaho. The Arapaho recognize only one sacred pipe, which is pre-eminent over all others. Its worship is entirely tribal, though it is in the keeping of an individual. It occupies much the place in tribal life that the sacred pole did among the Omaha. While there are other sacred objects, such as the wheels and bundles, none of them equal the pipe in the regard in which they are held. Among the Gros Ventre there is an analogue of the Arapaho pipe, but also several others. This multiplicity distinctly differentiates the character of the Gros Ventre pipes from that of the Arapaho. The Gros Ventre pipes are not all primarily connected with the origin of the world; they are in part obtained from other tribes. They thus resemble the inter-tribal peace-pipes of the eastern and northern Plains.

[888] The sacred pipes were kept by old men. Their keepers could retain them as long as they wanted. They transferred their pipe to another keeper or owner whenever they wished, especially if some one prayed on their behalf. At present the Gros Ventre have three pipes. It is said that formerly they had more, some of which have been buried with their last owners. The most sacred of these pipes is called "flat-pipe" (çäčitsaⁿ). This is described as being made of catlinite, with the bowl in the shape of a person (initäⁿ). The Arapaho sacred pipe is also called "flat-pipe," and also is not flat; but it differs from the Gros Ventre pipe in being cylindrical and tubular. About the centre of the stem of this Gros Ventre flat-pipe is tied a string. A person in the tent where the pipe is kept should not tell myths. If through forgetfulness he begins to do so, it is necessary for him to continue all night.

276 A sick man sometimes pledged to smoke one of the sacred pipes for his
755 recovery. Then he provided food, and distinguished warriors were invited.
778 Each of these had to recount four coups before the pipe could be lighted. A green cherry-branch was then taken, greased, and put into the fire to light the pipe with. If it burnt well, the man would recover; if it burnt poorly, they were afraid that he would not become well, or that something would happen. Then the pipe was smoked in the greatest silence. Cloth or calico was "given" to it, the wrapping last given being the one on the out-

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

837 and the younger women as well, all emphatically maintained that the practice was a Piegan one and not Gros Ventre. On the other hand, The Boy claimed that it was a Gros Ventre practice in his father's time, which extends further back than the actual experience of Singer and Coming Daylight. Mary's statement throws some light on the attitudes in the very recent past. "I have heard that the Piegans did that. My mother-in-law lived among them a long time and told me what their life was like. Once a man here wanted to try that public type of confession. He told everybody: 'We are going to have a big gathering to show off some of our Gros Ventre women. Now remember that this is a sacred thing and you have to swear to it. You don't dare get up there and lie, because if you do you will have bad luck.' I went to that party, but that part of the proceedings didn't come off. Someone had said to the man who was running it: 'You don't want to start this thing because it will cause a lot of trouble.' I guess that is why the host didn't go through with it, although he had the prize—a big quarter of beef—all ready to be given to the one who could honestly make that claim."

In commenting on what Mary had said, Singer and Coming Daylight gave two reasons why this public confession of chastity could not have been a Gros Ventre custom, and would have not been feasible in their day. First, in a gathering of that kind there would have been too many relatives before whom a woman had to be "ashamed"—brothers, cousins, uncles and father; therefore if a woman could justly claim to be chaste she couldn't have gotten up in public and said so. Secondly, it would have exposed too many women; every husband whose wife could not rise to the occasion would have been embarrassed and there would have been too much suspicion and jealousy engendered.

This of course does not disprove the point made by The Boy [171] that the public confession of chastity was in the more remote past a Gros Ventre as well as a Piegan custom, but it does imply that such a ceremony was in all likelihood not held by the Gros Ventres subsequently to 1855 or thereabouts.[11]

[11] Clark, who visited the Fort Belknap Agency for a few days in 1881 mentions, p. 198, that among other dances they have a Strong Dance for women,—intended as a support to their chastity.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

analysis was given by our informants with a good deal of hesitation. The form of direct address, Ni:nänä'än, was not used at the sacred pipe rites nor in trivial matters, but in grave emergencies, —in very solemn oaths or vows, extreme danger in battle, critical illness,—which concern the life or welfare of human beings. 776

The fourth form of address used for the Supreme Being was Iθəna'an "our (inclusive) father."[4] This name was in use as far back as our oldest informants, Coming Daylight and Singer, could remember. The Gros Ventres are quite aware that their close linguistic and cultural kin, the Arapaho, use the name "father" for the Supreme Being. The Gros Ventres, however, unlike the Arapaho, never call him "grandfather."

Finally, the Supreme Being is also spoken of as initci:t nihəne:-hənixtè (life, he owns) "owner, or master of life," a common expression to or of the Supreme Being among other Algonquian-speaking peoples.[5] [171]

The Supreme Being, unlike the culture-hero, had no wife or children. He does not figure at all in the Gros Ventre folklore, nor even in the origin myths to be given later, except insofar as the culture-hero taught the people to worship him. The Supreme Being's appearance was completely unknown; the culture hero who taught the people to pray to him did not describe how he looked; and in all the folklore and sacred stories of the Gros Ventres there is no record of the Supreme Being having a body or taking material form or appearing in dream or vision in material form. As The Boy put it: "If anyone had ever seen the Supreme Being, he would have described how he looked, and this story would have been handed down as the biggest one in all the Gros Ventre tales."

The nearest to such is a story regarding the first Catholic priest[6] who came to the Gros Ventres when The Boy's father, Lame Bull (born 1824) was a young man old enough to remember the event well. At first the Gros Ventres said: "The Supreme Being has come down from above. He is the priest." The Supreme Being 776 797

[4] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, p. 275.
[5] Cf. Cooper, 1934, p. 71.
[6] Cf. Flannery, 1953, p. 20.

776 He was the "master of life" as previously mentioned. Long life was the result of something more than conformity to "health rules," such as daily morning cold baths to harden the body.[9] "The Supreme Being allows people to live long. If he wanted, he cut off their lives." "When people die, it is the Supreme Being who cuts off their lives." "Very old people lived a long life because they were pitied by the Supreme Being." The Boy's father, Lame Bull, said that "a man lives, not his own life, but according to what is given him and wished by Ixtcibani:hahat. A man has what he has by the wish of the One Above."

776 The Gros Ventres understood by that that the aged had survived to old age not by accident, but by the permission and wish 889 of the Supreme Being. It was common for young men to approach in tears a very old man or woman, offer a pipe, and request him or her to ask the Supreme Being to grant him long life, to make him a good warrior who would be immune to arrows or bullets when he was shot at.[10]

776 In grave illness the Supreme Being would be appealed to to spare the sick person's life. It was a common belief that the 721 Supreme Being would not perm[illegible]g force of enemies 782 to slaughter a smaller n[illegible] own camp. When a [755] group of young Gros[illegible]as leaving for World War II, the Supreme Be[illegible] to in an old song that he would watch over them [illegible] come back home unharmed; although there we[illegible]alties among Gros Ventre soldiers in World War II [illegible]e of the above particular group was even wounded.

776 The Supreme Being as the one who "owns everything" was the provider of food. He was not called "master of food," as was [171] common among the northeastern Algonquians,[11] living closer than the Gros Ventres to a scarcity economy; food, it was felt, was "too little" a thing, and the title undignified. But all good things to eat, including "wild" food such as berries, fruits, roots and tubers, came from the Supreme Being and were given by him.

---

[9] Cf. Flannery, 1953, p. 144.
[10] Cf. Flannery, 1953, pp. 195-96.
[11] Cooper, 1934, p. 71.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

keen intelligence and memory, stated the same, adding that her old grandmother was also familiar with the name of Ixtciboni:hohat for him. Furthermore the names for the Supreme Being as believed in by the Gros Ventres are commonly used for him among the Arapaho. Finally, the Gros Ventre concept itself of the Supreme Being tallies well in its main elements with the concept that is of universal or almost universal occurrence among the Algonquian-speaking peoples, to whom the Gros Ventres belong linguistically and, in spite of their dominantly Plains culture, in not a few important respects culturally as well.

The internal evidence corroborates the external. The whole Gros Ventre complex is quite lacking in distinctive Christian elements,—such as prayer to the Supreme Being for forgiveness, reward and punishment by him in the future life, going to the Supreme Being after death, the Trinity, a supreme evil spirit, and so forth,—elements which would be emphasized in most evangelization by Catholic missionaries. On the contrary, the complex has a distinctly aboriginal coloring. Mastery, including mastery of life, is to the fore, with making or creating hazy or in the background. The Supreme Being's names, apart from that of Father, seem clearly native, not white. It is certainly most unlikely that missionaries would have invented a term such as Ixtciboni:hohat by compounding the name of the trickster, whose vulgar and obscene escapades were matters of such common knowledge.

Finally, the Supreme Being concept is tied intimately into the whole ritual of the Gros Ventre, a ritual which itself is obviously aboriginal, with only the faintest traces, if any, of Christian infiltration.

Other Cult Beings

Next to the Supreme Being, the supernatural being most frequently mentioned by our informants was Bha'a,[18] the storm ruler or the thunderbird. He was also called, less commonly: etcitane:

[18] Informants insisted on the aspiration in the name of the thunderbird, bha'a. Without aspiration the term ba'a means "it is red," and the term ba'ats, means "blood."

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

276 would use tobacco in his prayers for the patient. If the patient survived but was still weak, the keeper made him smoke to get back his strength. So some of the other tribesmen learned to smoke. Gradually social (and recreative) smoking took its place together with ceremonial smoking.

In earlier times, the women never smoked either ritually or socially. Even in rites where they had an important role, such as [562] the inauguration of a new pipe keeper, they did not smoke, as women were considered secondary, not equal to men. Even as late as The Boy's and Thick's early boyhood in the decade before the last buffalo disappeared (1884), only the old women smoked, never the young girls. The spread of the custom among these old women was probably due to their discovery by experience that the smoking prescribed for maladies, such as, chronic headache, was good for the body. But even today, although women smoke non-ritually when alone or among themselves, they are not allowed to smoke at a Pipe rite, and, if wives are present when a man invites a group of men for a social visit or meal and he fills up his pipe to give his guests a smoke, he does not offer the pipe to the wives.

Tobacco was used only in pipe smoking. It was sometimes smoked straight by old men and old women, and by the sick as [17] a cure. But ordinarily the Gros Ventres smoked it mixed either [824] with red willow, as did the Cree and Assiniboine, or preferably, and in the Flat Pipe rites always, with larb.

Larb is "a ground plant that grows on hills and mountains." We could get no specimen for identification. After the tobacco and larb were mixed, a little more larb than tobacco, fat was worked into the mixture to season it. On taking leave from his Gros Ventre [431] friends in 1940 the present author was given a small bag of this [609] mixture as a token of peace and good will and found the mixture a very pleasant aromatic smoke.

The wild parsley, associated with the Flat and Feathered Pipe 278 and with the Crazy Lodge, was used as a powerful poison. It was greatly feared and was spoken of in undertones. Its preparation is a lost art. The whole plant was and is considered poisonous, but poison was prepared principally from the root, which was first

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

773
539 the one who introduced the Sacrifice Dance among the Gros Ventre people."

*796 Although in the origin story, it was the chief buffalo who promised to give aid to those who would perform the Sacrifice
● 171 Dance, actually the chief buffalo was not prayed to during it, nor was the sun or any other being except the Supreme Being and Bha'a. Our chief informants have considerable knowledge of the Piegan (Blackfoot), Assiniboine and Crow Sun Dances, and emphasized various important differences, as they understood them, between these dances and their own Sacrifice Dance. "These sacrifices [in the Sacrifice Dance]," Al Chandler remarked, "were made to God, not to the Sun. I have always wondered why people call our Sacrifice Dance the Sun Dance. Anything the Blackfeet cannot understand they call the Sun and think he must be something." According to The Boy and Thick, while the Blackfeet pray to the Sun and while the Assiniboine in their Sun Dance pray and sing to the Thunder Bird (corresponding to the Gros Ventre Bha'a), the Gros Ventres in their own Sacrifice Dance prayed chiefly to Ixtcibani:hohat, secondarily, as will be explained later, to Bha'a, and with some incidental mention of or appeal to the Four Holy Beings and Those-who-follow-each-other (Sun and Moon) when praying with a pipe. Vows to carry out the Sacrifice Dance were made by the Gros Ventres only to the Supreme Being; the sacrifices of property, the prayer-"sacrifices" of self-torture and fasting, and the chief verbalized and gesture prayers during the rite were likewise directed to him. Our informants consistently and insistently emphasized that the Gros Ventre Sacrifice Dance was, in this sense, a predominantly theistic ceremony.

*796 While more generally the Sacrifice Dance was regarded as of lower ritual rank than the Flat and Feathered Pipe rites and as
794 of higher rank than any of the other seven sacred Dances, there
791 was some difference of view on the point among our informants. The Boy, who himself emphatically ranked Flat Pipe rite as far and away first in dignity of all Gros Ventre ceremonies, with the Feathered Pipe rite, Sacrifice Dance, and other dances following in this order of dignity, summed up the situation as follows:

"While the supreme religion of the Gros Ventres was the Flat

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

utmost to be fervent and sincere,"—would, at some time or times (not specified by our informants) during the rite, keep staring fixedly for a long time at the "nest" in the fork of the center pole. The purpose was mostly "to see things that related to war." "If the gazer saw the forms of headless human beings, that meant that the Gros Ventres were going to be given an enemy to kill." Sometimes was seen a human form, healthy, all painted up and dressed in good clothes: This meant that the favors being sought through the Sacrifice Dance would be granted. In the Assiniboine and Cree Sun Dances, our Gros Ventre informants said, the staring is done in contrast to the Gros Ventre custom, at the knots in the center pole, but for what purpose our informants did not know.

This divination gazing to foreknow martial fortunes, taken together with the markedly martial symbolism underlying the scouting for and felling of the center pole, lend a definitely, although by no means exclusively or even predominantly, war coloring to the Sacrifice Dance,—a coloring almost entirely absent from the Sacred Pipe rites, which are concerned dominantly though not exclusively, with long life, food and health.

The gazing, at "Bha'a's nest," brought Bha'a, the Thunder Bird and ruler of the storm, prominently into the Sacrifice Dance, as did also the thunder bird and lightning symbols painted on the bodies of the dancers and carved on the center pole as well as certain reliances on and prayers to him during the Dance. "If the dancers had danced a long time," according to Al Chandler, "and were getting weak, Bha'a, it was claimed, could make it cool and shady or even make it rain." Bha'a, too, was mentioned, after the Supreme Being, in some at least of the prayers with the common pipe. In all cases however, where Bha'a entered into prayers, he was either given subordinate second-place mention or was appealed to as a subordinate agent, with limited autonomy, of the Supreme Being. The vows, the sacrifices of goods and flesh, the tortures, and predominantly the prayers and rites were to the Supreme Being. As one informant put it, "all the things done in the Sacrifice Dance,—the tortures and so forth,—were one great mass prayer to the Supreme Being."

We recorded five of the Sacrifice Dance songs, but there were

*796 608 When, consequently, a Crazy Dance was in the offing, older men who learned that they might be asked to be ritual grandfathers were very apt to run away and hide. But they could not sleep forever out on the hills, and when they came home, they would be stalked and caught by surprise, by day or night, and offered a pipe by an individual or group of two to four who intended to participate in the coming Dance. The group had secretly convened and decided on their grandfather. Finally bringing a filled pipe with them they would go to his lodge and walk in. The older man would then be practically trapped, for in accordance with the general Gros Ventre pattern an offered pipe could hardly be refused. He might wilt and long hesitate, sitting with bowed head while the visitors entreated him to accept and to help them carry out their part in the Dance. [576]

If on any occasion in the past he had had sex relations with any of these men's wives, either before or after their marriage to them, he would, when offered the pipe, be sacredly obligated to make indirect confession of the fact by refusing the pipe and saying to them (or to the individual young man, if the latter was alone), "My grandchildren, you are stillborn. I cannot serve as your grandfather," or "Go to somebody else. She is not your wife," or using some similar circumlocution. Such a reply might cause great embarrassment and worry to the young man, who perhaps had never suspected his wife.[11] Failure to confess would be "something wrong, a violation of belief or important custom" and would be followed by misfortune, even early death.

If when offered the pipe, stem first, the older man accepted it, and with it the office of grandfather, he would get up and say to the offerer: "All right, we will go outside." After they got outside the lodge the old man would say: "Now, young man, face east." The older man would stand behind him, holding the pipe stem up, and pronounce the vow, "A woman is being offered so that such-and-such a person will recover from sickness and get well. We are going to have a Crazy Dance. He [the young man]

[171]

[11] The Arapaho custom in this matter was quite similar, we were told by an Arapaho woman, the widow of a Gros Ventre, who was present while we were discussing the point.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

755
757 sional individuals; supernatural remedies used only by professional medicine men or women with power.

Natural Remedies

751 Both preventive and curative measures of the natural or ra-
515 tional order were numerous.

The most common preventive measure was the daily early morning plunge in the stream or roll in the snow by men, a practice carried out for hardening the body as well as for cleaning
[731] it. In small epidemics scattering and isolation were regularly resorted to in order to check the spread of the disease. The use of skunk fluid as a curative was more a Cree than a Gros Ventre procedure, but there was a Gros Ventre belief that skunk fluid diluted with water and put into the eyes of a person was a preventive and cure of snow-blindness. A mother, on knowing herself
[862] pregnant again, would cease nursing her infant lest it suffer from "bad stomach and diarrhea." Drinking the blood of a freshly butchered buffalo was looked upon as a preventive of tuberculosis.

757 Curative measures of the rational order were of many kinds. We recorded the following, but our list is far from exhaustive. All of them may best be classified as "domestic remedies," measures of common knowledge, resorted to by everybody who wished to use them, and not considered proprietary right of particular individuals.

757 Many herbal curatives came under this category.[8] The roots of
278 "sweetheart briars," so called because the burrs stuck so tightly, were used for colds, and the deeper the root the stronger was the medicine.[9]

An infusion of peppermint is now used as a beverage by everybody for "fits, spasms and stomach disorders," although the medicinal use of peppermint was formerly the monopoly of Flat Pipe keepers. A very strong drink was made by boiling a certain root and just a little of it drunk as a cure for difficulty in urination.

---

[8] Cf. list in Kroeber, 1908, pp. 224-27. We made no attempt in the field to
[171] get a full list of such herbal and other curatives.

[9] The Piegan, according to Coming Daylight and Singer, used these as "blood medicine."

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

cave. The keeper heard the commotion and suspected that White Man had gotten inside the cave. The keeper tried to hold the buffalo back, but they dashed madly through the cave opening, ran over the man and trampled him to death. 539 773

White Man kept barking till he had driven all the buffalo out of the cave and scattered them in all directions so they would not return to the cave. Then White Man assumed his own body again, went back to the dead keeper's camp, and raped the keeper's wife and daughter. Then he left to go in search of the camp of the main body of the Gros Ventres. When he arrived there he announced to them that he had driven all the buffalo out of the cave and that the keeper was dead and told them all he had done, and foretold that they would never more have trouble in getting buffalo. Since that time the buffalo have remained on top of the ground and the Gros Ventres have had plenty of meat and have been hungry no longer.

3. Earthmaker and the Deluge[a]

The (primeval) keeper of the Flat Pipe, known as Earthmaker, knew in some way that the earth was going to be covered with water. It must have been that he was the only one who knew it for he was the only one who got ready to survive the flood. The Keeper made a big raft of logs and took the Pipe and put it on the raft. In the course of time the whole earth was under water. The Keeper just floated around everywhere on the raft, only himself and the Pipe with no other human beings or animals.[b] After a long time the Keeper saw a mountain top sticking up out of the water. He drifted toward it and landed there. When he landed he saw lots of birds and some animals. Right away he was glad that he had struck land and had some company in the way of animals and birds. He knew that the helldiver (mud hen), turtle, beaver, and muskrat were water beings. So he had them dive to get some earth from the bottom and to bring it back to where he was. First he sent Helldiver who after a while came up drowned. The

[a] Cf. Kroeber, 1907, pp. 59-61 (Nos. 1 and 2). Our version of the deluge story seems to correspond with Kroeber's No. 1 in which the person who sends the animals to dive is not identified directly with the trickster. The incidents in our version correspond, however, somewhat to those in Kroeber's No. 2, including the importance of the pipe and the making of man and woman. The Boy, our narrator, had thought that the latter might show Christian influence but stated that when he questioned older men, like Bushy Head, they emphatically declared that the incident was included in the old Gros Ventre tradition. [R.F.]

[b] Charles Buckman's version of this myth differed in that he claimed that "Earthmaker was floating in a pipe bowl,—the sacred pipe [Flat Pipe] represents this." Floating in the pipe bowl corresponds to the Arapaho version. [171]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

up and one should sing the other's song then they must say: 'We have lost track of our song,' and must stop singing. But this must happen three times before they quit singing for good on such an occasion." And so all the societies imitate the calls of animals and birds. 539 773

Then the people multiplied more and more and followed strictly all the teaching about the Flat Pipe. This was the one and only sacred pipe they had until the time when the other sacred pipe, the Feathered Pipe, appeared on the scene. And it was the Ruler of the Storm who gave the Gros Ventre the Feathered Pipe.

What became of Keeper is not known, whether he died a natural death or not, nor is anything known of what became of White Man.

4. Origin of Death

When Earthmaker had made man and woman, and everything was finished, Earthmaker, man, woman and the animals were all sitting around admiring how beautiful everything was and talking together. Earthmaker put the question to humans and animals: "Now, how do you want things to run? You are going to multiply. If you die, shall you stay dead, or shall you come back to life again?" So the man and woman and animals had to decide, with Earthmaker as the judge.

The man took a buffalo chip and threw it in the water, saying: "Here's the way I want our lives to run." The chip sank and then came up to the surface. "I want life to be like that. We shall die but we shall come back to life again."

But the bear said: "No, that way won't do. Soon the earth would be full and there would be no room, and not enough for everyone to eat. There will be more pleasure and happiness in life if all die. Then there will always be new generations to succeed them." So the bear took a rock and threw it in the water, saying: "Here is the way I want life to be." The rock sank and remained down.

So Earthmaker decided: "This is the way it shall be, like this rock."

5. He-who-starved-to-death[1]

A long time ago the Gros Ventre lived in a land that was good, with plenty of game and of other things needed and used in their way of life.

[1] This story is not recorded by Kroeber. It contains the incident of a person crossing a body of water on the legs of a bird and shaken off, which was mentioned by Kroeber (1907, p. 58) as one of the motifs widespread in central N. America which to that date had not been recorded for the Gros Ventres or Arapaho. It also contains another common motif, that of the magically replenished food, which does not occur in Kroeber's Gros Ventre collection. [R.F.] [171]

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

525 we-group altruism, cohesion, and loyalty, the more gambling and the greater the
571 stakes and vice versa.

Two less important, secondary determinants were the rules of avoidance and respect on the one hand and those of familiarity and license on the other. In general, the greater the degree of avoidance and respect demanded between two persons or classes, the less gambling and the smaller the stakes; the greater the degree of familiarity and license permitted, the more gambling and the bigger the stakes.

A fourth determinant was the element of the sacred (and/or ascetic) associated with certain offices and with the persons occupying them, an element which barred gambling by and/or against these persons, namely, pipe keepers and ritual grandfathers.

A fifth determinant was obviously in operation, although the field evidence therefor is not abundant. We got no record, however, of Gros Ventre gambling with their ancient, hereditary and bitter enemies, the Sioux. Gambling, even to
[648] strip opponents completely, presupposes a minimum of friendliness between the players, or at least the absence of deadly and unqualified hostility.

If we diagram along a horizontal belt the full range of human relationships from unqualified friendliness and altruism on the extreme left through the various gradations to unqualified hostility and malevolence on the extreme right, Gros Ventre gambling may be represented on this belt as absent from the extreme left end, gradually increasing in frequency and in size of stakes as we pass along the central section toward the right, and then suddenly dropping and completely disappearing near the extreme right end.

Besides these five determinants or conditioning factors in Gros Ventre gambling, there were perhaps others, but this is as far as our evidence and our analysis thereof have gone. Of course, one cannot have gambling without some kind of close-range or long-range contact between the gamblers, without some kind of property or other valued thing to wager, and so forth, but working out a list of such requisites would be labor lost.

Before leaving this subject, we should emphasize that, while the preceding pages have referred particularly to the bettor-wager pattern as holding for the hand game, the same pattern held as well for all other Gros Ventre gambling games and contests.[7]

[171
525] 7 In our world sources on gambling we have noted only two explicit references, and these extremely brief, to the bettor-wager pattern: G. Goodwin, *The Social Organization of the Western Apache* (Chicago, 1942), p. 375, "certain types of gambling" are prevented "between members of the same clan," for it would be "like winning it [property] from yourself"; R.

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

NATIVE ATTITUDES

The attitude of the Gros Ventre toward their own gambling was a somewhat ambivalent one. Toward gambling practised within the limitations of the bettor-wager pattern, there was, by and large, no strong disapproval. Such gambling was in the main taken for granted. Yet such approval as was given, even as regards much of the gambling that conformed to the bettor-wager pattern, was in certain respects qualified and circumscribed. 525

Pretty near everyone gambled who had anything to wager. Boys and girls, men and women participated. We recorded only one specific exception, in the person of Mrs Warrior, although there may have been others. There appears to have been no disapproval at all of gambling for "cooking," and very little of gambling for takes of trivial or small value, within of course the bettor-wager pattern. There was a good deal of disapproval of gambling for big or ruinous stakes—how widely shared, how serious, and how "intolerant," it is hard to say.

Parents, however—some at least—commonly counseled their children against

---

Landes, *The Ojibwa Woman* (Columbia University Contributions to Anthropology, vol. 31, 1938), p. 28, differences between gambling by members of same household and by persons from different households. Under date of September 9, 1939, Father Herbert Prueher wrote to Cooper that among the Wachaga of Tanganyika Territory, East Africa, gambling is [only] by non-relatives, distant friends and strangers; under date of June 30, 1944, Father Berard Haile wrote that among the Navaho no gambling occurred between relatives or between members of same clan. 171 525

In short reconnaissance field studies among the Sinkaetku (Southern Okanagon) of Washington, the Kalispel of St Ignatius Mission, Montana, and the Blackfoot of Browning, Montana, in 1938, and the Assiniboine of Ft. Belknap Reservation, Montana, in 1939, Cooper gathered the following fragmentary data on the respective patterns:

Sinkaetku: No gambling against one's brother, sister or cousin: "If my brother wants anything I have, I say to him, 'Take it,' without any question." No gambling between members of same family, nor between members of a group wintering together. Not right to gamble except with "strangers." Intertribal gambling for big stakes customary.

Kalispel: No gambling between brothers. No twosome gambling between cousins, but cousins might gamble as members of opposing teams. Two teams from same village might gamble sometimes, but not often. Gambling is mostly between teams from different villages or tribes.

Blackfoot: Two brothers or two members of same band could gamble against each other only for small stakes; two members of different societies, such as the Brave Dogs and the Doves, could gamble against each other for big stakes, such as horses.

Assiniboine: Blood relatives, such as brothers and other close relatives, would not gamble on opposite sides against one another; they would gamble on same side always. Two brothers-in-law or two sisters-in-law could gamble against each other, but a son-in-law could not gamble against his father-in-law or his mother-in-law on account of current avoidance and respect conventions. Intertribal gambling is customary.

In our own American white culture there are clear indications of a bettor-wager pattern in gambling. No systematic field study thereof has, however, been made, so far as the present writers can discover.

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944

NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Blackfoot NF6 Assiniboine NF4

Montagnais NH6

 Ojibwa NG6

Cree NG4

B 787 776 ghost went away. They wanted and sang the song. When the ghost came back, they asked him: "What did you find out?" He replied: "I went clear to the Little Rockies and the Bear Paws. Between the two ranges, a creek makes a big bend, and in the middle of the big bend is a ridge. There your young men got killed."

When some years ago, The Boy told me, the road between Hays (at the foot of the Little Rockies) and Three Buttes was being built, on a ridge several holes were found in the rocks, and in one of the holes five skulls, as if a fight had occurred there. Platted Hair believed this to have been the scene of the above fight.

G B [177] We may add that there has been a great deal of close association between the Gros Ventres and the Blackfoot-Blood-Piegan, especially in recent generations.

Assiniboine Rite

The writer's first information on the shaking tent rite among the Assiniboine of Fort Belknap Reservation (which they have long shared with the Gros Ventres) came as a casual afterthought from a Gros Ventre informant in 1931. After giving the summary account of the Gros Ventre rite recorded earlier in this article, he added that the same rite is also found among the Fort Belknap Assiniboine.

G A [171] In the summer of 1940, my chief Gros Ventre informant, The Boy, stated that the Fort Belknap Assiniboine also had the ghost helper concept. In the case of one ghost-possessor at least, there were bells on top [or at the top] of his lodge, and when the ghost helper came, the bells would shake and the whole top of the lodge would shake. This possessor's name was "Standing Dog," or A [791] "Dog Rises," or a similar name. One ghost is credited with having thrown a performer on top of the lodge frame. Further details were not known by The Boy, and I had no good opportunity to consult the Assiniboine themselves.

Montagnais-Cree-Ojibwa Rite

C M O [171] The "shaking tent" rite is universal or practically so among

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13
Assiniboine NF4 Montagnais NH6
Blackfoot NF6 Ojibwa NG6
Cree NG4

C M O 787 776

the Têtes-de-Boule and the Abitibi. Mikenak, an Oteipwe (-Algonkin) form, among the above listed Cree groups points to diffusion of the name,—not necessarily of this particular spokesman, as is evidenced by the Ft. Chipewyan Mi'skenak. Mistabeo, as spokesman among the above-listed Montagnais bands, is an independent non-human being or spirit, not a man's "other self" or kind of soul.

C M O 787 171

The "Houdini trick," in which the shaking tent performer escapes from the thongs with which he is tied, was found among the Cree of Ft. Chipewyan, McMurray, and Rocky Boy, the Oteipwe of Lake of the Woods, and the Oteipwe(-Algonkin) of Abitibi. This Abitibi occurrence marks the farthest eastern extension found by me of the trick in connection with the shaking tent.[1] I did not learn of its use among the Oteipwe of the upper Albany River at Ft. Hope and Osnaburgh, though fairly extensive information on the shaking tent rite was obtained at these two localities in 1927. The "Houdini trick" is definitely lacking among the James Bay Cree, the Têtes-de-Boule, and the Montagnais groups studied.[2]

Some further general and specific characteristics of the Montagnais-Cree-Oteipwe shaking tent rite will be given in the next section of the present paper.

C M O [114] G M O C A B 787 171

Generalizations

The following generalizations are based partly on the foregoing data, partly on the writer's still unpublished fuller field notes on the Montagnais, Cree, and Oteipwe(-Algonkin).

Certain characters are common to the rite as practised both among the forest Montagnais-Cree-Oteipwe and Plains Cree and among the Gros Ventres and—so far as our fragmentary infor-

[1] Father R. Delage, O.M.I., Letter of Nov. 1, 1863, in Rapport sur les missions du diocese de Québec, Mar., 1864, no. 16, pp. 74–75, reported the "Houdini trick" in connection with the shaking tent rite among, apparently, the Grand Lake Victoria Oteipwe(-Algonkin)-speaking Indians.

[2] It was earlier reported among the Cree of York Factory, by Thomas M'Keevor, A voyage to Hudson's Bay during the summer of 1812, London 1819, 58.

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13
Assiniboine NF4 Cree NG4 Montaanais NH6
Blackfoot NF6 Ojibwa NG6

GMOCB 787 171

mation goes—the Blackfoot-Blood and Ft. Belknap Assiniboine. These common features are: shaking of the top of the tent or lodge at entrance and departure of spirit; entrance and departure of spirit by way of top of lodge; departure, during rite, of spirit after being questioned, to find facts, and subsequent return to tent with desired answer; performer not possessed by spirit, but spirit(s) speak(s) to or in presence of performer; performer concealed from sight of spectators and clients during visitation by spirit(s); no trance or ecstasy by performer, and performers not of psychopathic personality as such; spirits summoned primarily to obtain through them knowledge, chiefly knowledge hidden by barriers of time (future) and space (distance), or counsel on practical problems; a smoke given the spirit(s), and spectators smoke; absence of direct participation of Supreme Being in rite (apart from a minor exception or two); rite as such concerned with personal beings, not with impersonal forces, and thus a religious, not a magical rite (as many define religion and magic).

In certain features, the rite among the forest Montagnais-Cree-Otcipwe and Plains Cree consistently differs from that among the Gros Ventre, Blackfoot-Blood and Ft. Belknap Assiniboine. In the rite as found among the former: while one of the spirits is usually the chief informant or spokesman, other spirits and beings ordinarily come into the tent during the rite; all these spirits and beings are animistic; not manistic—never ghosts; humor, joking, trivial banter by the visiting spirit common; the "Houdini trick" absent from Montagnais and eastern Cree rite; food is not offered to the visiting beings.

On the other hand, in the rite as found among the Gros Ventres and, so far as our limited information goes, the Blackfoot-Blood and Ft. Belknap Assiniboine: one spirit only comes into the tent; the spirit that is summoned is exclusively a ghost, a deceased relative of the performer; humor, joking, trivial banter by the ghost are lacking; the "Houdini trick" is customary, except in emergency; food, especially the delicacy, puppy meat, is offered to and partaken of by visiting ghost.

So far as my information goes, among the above Montagnais-

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13
Assiniboine NF4 Montagnais NH6
Blackfoot NF6 Ojibwa NG6
Cree NG4

BCMOCA 787 171

Cree-Oteipwe, the power to summon the shaking tent spirit(s) is not thrust upon the person by any spirit, as in a great measure it is among the Gros Ventres.

In general, the shaking tent rite appears to have much more relative importance and to play a much more preponderant role in the total magico-religious life of the Montagnais-Cree-Oteipwe than of the Gros Ventres, Blackfoot-Blood and Assiniboine.

BCMOCA [177]

That there is a historical relationship between the two above contrasted shaking tent complexes appears very probable from the many specific and distinctive elements they share in common and from the almost continuous geographical distribution of the complexes, a distribution moreover predominantly among the main body of Algonquian-speaking peoples of the taiga and adjacent open country and the aberrant-Algonquian-speaking groups of the Plains, the Gros Ventres, the Blackfoot, and the Cheyenne.

Addendum on Wider Distribution

G 787 171 [114]

It has not been the purpose of the present paper to deal with the total distribution of the shaking tent rite and with the historical problems connected with such distribution. The following summary notes are added merely to contribute a mite toward filling out the picture of distribution as given in Ray's historical study and Hallowell's socio-psychological one.[8]

In the east, the shaking tent is not reported in our published sources, to my knowledge, south of the St. Lawrence. The record by Maurault for the Abnaki does not mention shaking of the conjurer's tent.[9] Inquiries by the writer in the field in 1931 among the Chipewyan and Dogrib of the Mackenzie-Slave watershed brought consistently negative results; in fact informants who knew well and gave many details of the rite as practised among the Cree of Ft. McMurray (Athabaska R.) and Ft. Chipewyan (L. Athabaska), on the Cree-Chipewyan borderline, and who were equally familiar with both Cree and Chipewyan

[8] Ray, 1941; Hallowell, 1942. See footnote 1.

[9] J. A. Maurault, Histoire des Abenakis depuis 1605 jusqu'à nos jours, Québec, 1866, 30.

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

culture, emphasized that the shaking tent rite was practised by the Cree only, and not by the Chipewyan, even in these border areas when the two peoples were in very close contact and association. 787 171

To the far north, however, the "Houdini trick" and the shaking of the conjurer's hut on the arrival of his spiritual helper was earlier reported by Boas among the Central Eskimos.[10] Lowie has also recorded among the Crow a tent-shaking rite very like that of the Gros Ventres and Cheyenne.[11] The first report and discussion, by Donald Collier, of the Kiowa occurrence is published in the present issue of Primitive Man. Regina Flannery has called my attention to the occurrence of the shaking-of-the-tent motif among the early Creek.[12]

Still farther afield, I have come across no reference to a shaking tent element in the many accounts of northern Asiatic and Lapp shamanism, but have made no thorough systematic search. In South America, I know of only one instance of a somewhat similar rite, that earlier reported among the Chiquitoan Manasi of eastern Bolivia. Part of the large public assembly hall was curtained off with mats, which part was reserved for the "high priest" alone and the visiting spirits. As the gods or spirits came down, a sound filled the air and shook the roof of the building and the mats. Chicha and food were offered the spirits. The people sang. The gods were consulted by the "high priest" about future events such as rains, harvests, fishing and hunting, whereabouts of game, outcome of prospective war raids.—the conversation being audible to the crowd outside the curtained compartment. The gods on departing shook the whole building as they ascended.[13]

[10] F. Boas, The central Eskimo, BAE-R 6 for 1884–85, Washington, 1888, 593–94.

[11] R. H. Lowie, The religion of the Crow Indians, AMNH-AP, v. 25, pt. 2 1922, 380–81; same, The Crow Indians, New York, 1935, 70–71.

[12] Captain Bossu, Travels through . . . Louisiana, tr., London, 1771, 1: 264–65, among the Allibamon (Alabama).

[13] A. Métraux, The social organization and religion of the Mojo and Manasi, in Primitive Man, 1943, 16: 22–23.

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787
171 The more distant of the above instances, those from the Eskimo and Creek and from the Manasi of South America are merely set down here as of record. We are not justified—as yet—in assuming historical relationship. The distances seem too great, and the resemblances too vague and generic. What future more complete descriptive and distributional information may suggest remains to be seen.

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 dance.[3] Wissler was well aware of the importance of the Grass
114 dance in the transition period of Plains culture from the old to the new, and suggested further studies be made. Nevertheless, no one has given us a close-up, so far as I know, of its dynamic aspects in the life of any one of the tribes who shared the phenomenon.

796 In 1901 Kroeber noted that the Grass dance as then performed
114 by the Gros Ventres differed considerably in form from that
177 which was described to him as having been the case when it was first adopted. He gives us a brief description of the earlier procedure, but naturally enough no details regarding the then current method of carrying out the Grass dance, since his concern was with the older tribal culture. He merely states: "It is no longer a young man's dance, nor confined to a certain group. All the people in the tribe take part in it. It is very similar in character to the present-day Arapaho crow-dance, as well as in the place it occupies in the life of the people. Among the Gros Ventre it is now the only dance held."[4] Our data, gathered during two visits to the Fort Belknap Reservation in 1940 and 1945, confirm Kroeber's and supplement them to a considerable extent.

121 In treating of the Grass dance then, we shall distinguish be-
128 tween an earlier period extending from between 1875 to 1880 up to about 1890, and a later period comprising the years from roughly 1890 to 1916. We shall first describe the form of the Grass dance as it was in the earlier period, then the changes which were later introduced, and finally we shall discuss the varying functions during both periods.

The Form: Earlier Period

796 According to Wissler the dance originated with the Dakota
177 about 1860 and is traceable as a development of the older Pawnee
171

[3] These specimens are in the American Museum of Natural History. Some of those used in the Gros Ventre Grass dance have been described by Kroeber, loc. cit.: fork, pp. 270–71; spoon, p. 271; whip, p. 271; crow-belt, pp. 271–72.

[4] Kroeber, loc. cit., p. 238.

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Iruska.[5] In its diffusion it reached the Assiniboine from the Sioux, —Rodnick places the date at 1872,[6]—and the Assiniboine in turn passed it on to the Gros Ventres, sometime between the years 1875 and 1880. We arrive at this approximate dating by reckoning the age of a now venerable old Gros Ventre woman informant who witnessed the actual transfer when she herself was in her later twenties or possibly early thirties. From all the evidence at our command it is fairly certain that she was born between 1850 and 1855. This informant not only was an eye-witness of the adoption of the ceremony by the Gros Ventres but also participated actively, so far as a woman could, in both the earlier and later phases of the dance. Before giving details of the regalia, personnel, and procedures it might be well to insert at this point her account of the actual transfer. 796 177 171 [174]

"The Gros Ventres were camped on the Milk River. They were joined there by the Assiniboine and the two tribes remained together while the Assiniboine taught the Gros Ventres the Grass dance. The Gros Ventres had never had any dancing of that kind before and called it jokingly *inaetenin* (moving-buttocks) referring to the way they danced. The Assiniboine gave crow-belts (feather bustles) to each of two men, and likewise swords to two others. They needed one man as spear (fork) man and two as *atsa'an* (waiters, servants). They also gave the Gros Ventres a big drum and everything that goes with the dance. The visitors showed the different individuals how to use these various things and taught the songs and dances that went with each. But they didn't do all that for nothing! Of all the things they had to give away to the Assiniboine! Even food was included in the exchange. The Gros Ventres had an enormous quantity of food prepared and you should have seen the number of puppies we cooked. The Assiniboine surely liked those pups. That was the first Grass dance we ever had. 648 177 796 [262]

"Then we moved camp from the Milk River over toward the 796

[5] Wissler, loc. cit., cf. table opp. p. 868.

[6] Rodnick, David, The Fort Belknap Assiniboine of Montana, A study in culture change, New Haven, Conn., 1938, pp. 123–24.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

776 beings as Little Spirit and ghosts, but not such major ones as the Supreme Being and Bha'a.

The following story, as told by The Boy, gives nearly all that 224 is known about Little Spirit, etcibotä:t (ètc,sä, it is little, bettêtô, 776 spirit [Sifton]).

"Long ago, how far back I do not know, Little Spirit made himself the guardian spirit helper of a certain man, saying: 'Whenever there is going to be a famine, call me.' 'What are you?' the man asked, 'Where do you come from?' 'I am Little Spirit, I am from the western wind.' The man who had Little Spirit never called him except when game was scarce and there was danger of famine among the people. Then he would call Little Spirit who would tell them where game was. When this man was dying, he said to the people: 'Whenever you go out hunting, pray to Little Spirit to show you where game is and when you have killed game and gutted it, take a piece of the liver and some of the fat, put in on the west side of the game killed, and say: "Here, Little Spirit, is liver and fat for you."' It was just that one man of long ago, no other, who had Little Spirit as a personal helper. When Little Spirit came, he came as a little whirlwind."[19]

Little Spirit was, in accordance with this man's instruction, ordinarily appealed to by the Gros Ventres for success in hunting particularly at times when game was hard to get, and the abovementioned first fruits sacrifice of liver and fat made to him after game was killed. He was not appealed to on any other occasion.

776 At a number of places in and around Gros Ventres territory are cliffs with incised pictographs on them made by a certain class ●[172] of "false persons" called tciya:tsine:n "ghost men" or "little men." They were never seen but according to Singer were dwarfish, about 3 feet tall. The Gros Ventres distinguish clearly between such pictographs made by these beings on the one hand and on the other those made by Indians or else tracks of animals in flat rocks. The first are temporary, and change from time to time; the other two kinds are permanent. Gros Ventres have tried to get

[114] [19] He did not, however, come into the shaking tent as the ghost helper did. The statement by Cooper, 1940, based on 1939 field notes, was an error corrected 1940 in the field.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787
172

At a number of spots in and around the territory of the Gros Ventre are cliffs on which the pictograph beings (supra, p. 20) made designs that could be interpreted as omens. The Boy enumerated the following localities where such picture cliffs were or are: one near Clagett on the Missouri River; another around Sun River; another southeast of the Sweet Grass Hills; another far up north in the forested country; another around the mouth of the Musselshell River; another north of the Musselshell; another north of the Yellowstone (north of where the Crow now are). Singer also mentioned one not far from Hays. Unfortunately our time schedule did not permit us to visit any of these spots.

The Gros Ventres explicitly distinguished these drawings from those recognized as made by Indians and from other somewhat similar things. Some such designs made by Indians in caves and on cliffs can be seen today: two, for example, in the Little Rockies, one on the south side and another on the southeast. Tracks of animals, "right in the stone," may also be seen: at one place on top of one end of Snake Butte, some miles east of St. Paul's Mission. The Gros Ventres do not know what these are.

Likewise, at one end of the Larb Hills, there is a big flat rock described as about 5 feet by 10, the upper surface of which is about waist high from the ground. The rock itself is not limestone, sandstone, or granite, but of a rarer mineral seen only once in a great while; of light color, and looking something like cement, and looking to be "artificial." It was discovered by the Gros Ventres only in recent times, apparently from the Assiniboine, who found it on directions given them by some Cree half-breeds. On the surface of this flat rock are seen tracks in the stone of a child, of hoofed animals, wolves and dogs, and of animals the Gros Ventres cannot identify. On one of the vertical sides of the rock is a dent, shaped like a lodge. The lodge is painted in colors, and in front of it, at the door side, is the figure of a man standing with a pipe extended upward. Some young Gros Ventre men have spit on their hands and tried to rub these lodge colors off, but without success. On the opposite vertical side of the flat rock are represented the sun and moon, the Dipper, and some other stars. The present-day Gros Ventres have tried to divine the meaning

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

of this rock with its designs, but to no avail. They just say of it "it is something holy." They do not know what if anything the pictograph beings may have had to do with it. 787 172

Before the death by lightning of a certain young man, a drawing was seen, on a pictograph being cliff, of a lodge, and inside a headless man, and a zigzag line to the top of the lodge. In another case some Gros Ventre hunters, recently, when out hunting, were wondering if the pictograph beings still predicted, and so they went to one of their cliffs and there saw so depicted a train, and in front of it a headless man. On their return after their hunting was over, they went to the Agency and there heard that a certain man had been killed by a train. Just in recent times, too, a Gros Ventre band was traveling (not as a war party) to the Crow reservation and being near the pictograph beings cliff at the mouth of the Musselshell, went and looked, and there saw pictured a water monster with long horns and a human being riding on its neck. (One on its head and another on its snout, according to Singer.) They interpreted this to mean: "Someone is going to be drowned." When they reached the Crow, they learned that a Gros Ventre young man had drowned crossing the Yellowstone somewhere near Billings, and the place where the river comes out of the mountains. Singer once saw on one of these cliffs a picture of their camp, with a gun pointing right at the middle of the camp; afterwards a person in the camp did actually get killed.

In general, if someone died from war or drowning or other cause, and a group were discussing the death, it would be said: "The pictograph beings drew and predicted this long ago."

There was relatively little divination among the Gros Ventres as compared with the many kinds of it among their Algonquian linguistic kin of the taiga. Scapulimancy was absent; none of a half-dozen or more of our informants to whom we broached the subject had ever heard of it. Scrying occurred in the form of peering into badger blood. When a war party had gone out on the trail, they would kill a badger, lay it on its back, slit it from throat to crotch, and leave the blood to gather in a pool around the belly. Those of the party who wished to peer into the pool of blood did so: but there was no obligation to do so; if some did not wish 787

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

101 because they have among them no such remnants of perishing tribes, appear
648 to know nothing of this fivefold group, but they recognize their close relationship to the Arapaho. There is no very great amount of intercourse between them and the Arapaho at present, nor does there appear to have been any unusual amount of communication during the greater part of the nineteenth century; but on both sides there is a mutual recognition as of separated relatives. The Arapaho are now and apparently have been for a long time considerably the larger tribe, the Gros Ventre having always in
[161] historical times been regarded as a small body. Their present number is about 550.

According to Hayden, the Gros Ventre, about 1800, were south of the
131 Saskatchewan; about 1820 they united with the Arapaho for a few years,
648 and then, following a quarrel, journeyed north, had a disastrous encounter with the Crow, and became neighbors and allies of the Blackfeet.[1] In spite of the usually close association of the Gros Ventre with the three Blackfoot tribes since that time, they became hostile to them for a time, about forty years ago, and united against them with their own long-standing enemies the Crow. In the course of this hostility the Gros Ventre sustained their heaviest reverse in war within their memory; the greater part of an unusually large war-party, including many Crow, being killed after an attack on a Piegan camp. This happened in 1867, according to Grinnell. The usual enemies of the Gros Ventre, besides the Crow, were other Siouan tribes, such as the Dakota and especially the Assiniboine. They also fought more or less with the Shoshone, and no doubt in alliance with the Blackfeet against the Salish Flathead. They were on the whole friendly with the tribes of their own stock of speech, the Arapaho, Cheyenne, Blackfeet, and Cree. The habitat of the Gros Ventre in recent times has been the Milk River territory, in which is situated their present reservation, which they occupy jointly with the Assiniboine.

The Gros Ventre have also been called Fall, Rapid, and Paunch Indians.
101 The term "Gros Ventre" has also been applied to the Minitari, a Siouan village tribe on the Missouri; and the two tribes have been distinguished as "Gros Ventre of the Prairie" and "Gros Ventre of the Missouri."

174 Gros Ventre tradition brings the tribe from the north; but their story of
131 the division of the tribe while crossing the ice on a great river is found also
[173] among the Blackfeet and the Cheyenne, and is worthless as historical evidence. While their earliest habitat known is north of their present territory, acquaintance of them goes back little more than a century, and there is

[1] See the excellent article by H. L. Scott on The Early History and the Names of the Arapaho, in the American Anthropologist, N.S., IX, 545. 1907. From this it appears that, at least from the middle of the eighteenth century on, except for about five years' association with the Arapaho (from 1818 to 1823), the habitat of the Gros Ventre was in the Blackfoot country, between the Saskatchewan and the Missouri.

622 seemed that the others present agreed with him, the leader would
[623] give in and have the crier announce the revised decision."

On the march, the leader went at the head of his band and
[484] showed the way. When several bands were together, the leader of one would have decided where he intended to go, and, if the other bands had decided to go along with this one, they followed, but were free to break away at any time.

[621 The band to which either the Keeper of the Flat Pipe or the
793] Keeper of the Feathered Pipe belonged had a certain distinction as there was a tendency when the tribe split for each to have a considerable following.

173 According to tradition, as related by The Boy, the Gros Ventres
643 had had in the fairly remote past a formally selected chief or leader of the whole tribe. It was said that he functioned when the whole tribe was together and that his decisions in important matters were made in consultation with the chief men, including the leaders of all the bands. There was no regular council and anyone
[623] present might express his opinion. Often the Keepers of the Sacred Pipes[4] were present at such meetings called by the tribal
[793] chief, but if they were not present they were supposed to be kept advised.

The last regularly selected leader of the whole tribe was said to have been White Eagle, who held this position in the last decades of the eighteenth century. It was said further that White Eagle was preceded by White Shield, of whom there are many stories extant, and that White Shield was preceded by Elk Going Against The Wind. The Boy gave the following information regarding the "election" of White Eagle. The account was given to The Boy by his father, Lame Bull, who had it from Old Man Gopher, a cousin of Lame Bull's paternal grandfather. "The Gros Ventres had been badly decimated by smallpox and only about 30 lodges were left.[8] Old Man Gopher and his sister, both of them very young children at the time, were the only survivors of their family. The old men among the survivors of the tribe got together and proceeded to choose a chief. White Eagle was then a young man

[931] [8] A reasonable chronological estimate would identify this as a tradition referring to the devastating smallpox epidemic of 1780. For historical data, see p. 9.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

and he knew that the old men were meeting. When he was called in he wondered 'Why do they call a man so young as I?' But after White Eagle accepted the pipe and prayed with it,—thus accepting the office,—all said 'Ai-e-e-e-.' Then White Eagle called one of the attendants: 'I am through praying. Come and get this pipe.' The attendant got up and took it to the first band chief to the left of the door as one entered the lodge. The band chief lit the pipe, said prayers to White Man Above, passed it to the next man on his left who likewise smoked, prayed and passed the pipe on until it reached the last man to the right of the door. Then the pipe was passed back, with no smoking except by the two Keepers of the two Sacred Pipes who were present, and then the two attendants and the announcer smoked. After that, they smoked socially and told stories until White Eagle got up to talk and told what he thought should be done, what would be for the good of the people. 173 643

"When White Eagle accepted the pipe he said, addressing the old man who had gathered the others together: 'Old man, I accept the pipe. I accept it with my whole heart. I am a young man, I am rather backward about everything. But since you chose me to be your head chief I take it with good will. Since I've done what you have asked me, in return I'm going to ask you to do everything I request. Don't refuse me. Don't think because I'm a young man what I say may be taken lightly. Now we've had smallpox and there are many dead. Among the living are many single men and single women. This very night I want each man to select a wife or each woman to select a husband—this very night I want *every* man and woman to marry. If this is done in a few years our old numbers will be restored. After the men and women get together we'll move to where there are buffalo. We will kill buffalo and tan the hides for lodges and bedding for these couples and, after this is done, we'll cut poles for the lodges, so each new married couple will have a home of their own. If we do this our population will increase fast.' After this speech White Eagle told the announcer to tell the people what he had just said and to tell the women not to refuse the men who ask them, and the men not to refuse the women who ask them. So the announcer told all this in the name of White Eagle, the head chief from then on. All was carried out as he had ordered and in a few years the population had 168 173 643

very much increased. White Eagle governed the people very wisely and he governed until he died."

It was The Boy's impression that following White Eagle, the chief of the whole tribe was no longer formally selected and simply attained his position through gradual recognition of his merits.[9] Sits Like A Woman succeeded White Eagle and was tribal chief in the first decades of the 19th century. He was followed by his son of the same name who was a signer of the 1855 treaty, and was still recognized as tribal head when he died suddenly about 1870. Coming Daylight claimed that this Sits Like a Woman II was certainly the greatest chief of her time and that, when he died, people were forbidden to light their camp fires as a sign of mourning. During the subsequent period Lame Bull was outstanding among the leading men, but he witnessed the dissolution of the band system and the camp circle. The Fort Belknap Reservation had been set up in 1873, encompassing much more territory than at present, and the first houses were built in 1882.

In spite of the fact that a tribal chief was recognized, band autonomy was apparently preserved. The ceremonial organization cut across band organization, however, and band autonomy was relinquished at the times during which the Sacred Dances were held. The movements and activities of the tribe as a whole were then in the hands of the company to which the vower of a particular Dance belonged.[10]

The Companies

Kroeber notes that "men of the tribe of age to make any one ceremony were not all in one society or company but in several, the total number of companies being three or four times as great as the number of ceremonies. Each company had a name which it

[9] So far as it goes, this would seem to confirm O. Lewis' interpretation, pp. 42–43, that the earlier Hudson's Bay Company policy on the northern plains reinforced tribal chieftaincy, but that with the development of competition in the fur trade, authority was weakened.

[10] For a discussion of the Sacred Dances, see Kroeber, 1908, pp. 239–68. Other details are given in Cooper, Ms. 1949. The following discussion is concerned only with the composition of the ceremonial organization so far as it can be reconstructed.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

101 because they have among them no such remnants of perishing tribes, appear to know nothing of this fivefold group, but they recognize their close rela-
648 tionship to the Arapaho. There is no very great amount of intercourse between them and the Arapaho at present, nor does there appear to have been any unusual amount of communication during the greater part of the nineteenth century; but on both sides there is a mutual recognition as of separated relatives. The Arapaho are now and apparently have been for a long time considerably the larger tribe, the Gros Ventre having always in
[161] historical times been regarded as a small body. Their present number is about 550.

According to Hayden, the Gros Ventre, about 1800, were south of the
131 Saskatchewan; about 1820 they united with the Arapaho for a few years,
648 and then, following a quarrel, journeyed north, had a disastrous encounter with the Crow, and became neighbors and allies of the Blackfeet.[1] In spite of the usually close association of the Gros Ventre with the three Blackfoot tribes since that time, they became hostile to them for a time, about forty years ago, and united against them with their own long-standing enemies the Crow. In the course of this hostility the Gros Ventre sustained their heaviest reverse in war within their memory; the greater part of an unusually large war-party, including many Crow, being killed after an attack on a Piegan camp. This happened in 1867, according to Grinnell. The usual enemies of the Gros Ventre, besides the Crow, were other Siouan tribes, such as the Dakota and especially the Assiniboine. They also fought more or less with the Shoshone, and no doubt in alliance with the Blackfeet against the Salish Flathead. They were on the whole friendly with the tribes of their own stock of speech, the Arapaho, Cheyenne, Blackfeet, and Cree. The habitat of the Gros Ventre in recent times has been the Milk River territory, in which is situated their present reservation, which they occupy jointly with the Assiniboine.

The Gros Ventre have also been called Fall, Rapid, and Paunch Indians.
101 The term "Gros Ventre" has also been applied to the Minitari, a Siouan village tribe on the Missouri; and the two tribes have been distinguished as "Gros Ventre of the Prairie" and "Gros Ventre of the Missouri."

174 Gros Ventre tradition brings the tribe from the north; but their story of
131 the division of the tribe while crossing the ice on a great river is found also
[173] among the Blackfeet and the Cheyenne, and is worthless as historical evidence. While their earliest habitat known is north of their present territory, acquaintance of them goes back little more than a century, and there is

[1] See the excellent article by H. L. Scott on The Early History and the Names of the Arapaho, in the American Anthropologist, N.S., IX, 545. 1907. From this it appears that, at least from the middle of the eighteenth century on, except for about five years' association with the Arapaho (from 1818 to 1823), the habitat of the Gros Ventre was in the Blackfoot country, between the Saskatchewan and the Missouri.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

nothing to show that they had long been in the Saskatchewan region. All that is certain of their previous past is their closer relationship to the Arapaho than to any other tribe; and the origin of the Arapaho is equally obscure, except that it is certain that, if they came from the north and east, it was a long time ago. Of the Gros Ventre it can only be said that, while related to the Arapaho and regarded by them as almost politically a part of themselves, they were far separated from them when first known, with them for a short time later, and again separated, and in contact and alliance with another much more distantly related Algonkin branch. Their habitat in a hundred years has been successively near the Saskatchewan, the Platte, and the Missouri. There is nothing to show that such variability of affiliation and location within the culture region of the Plains has not been characteristic of their previous history. 131 N4 [648]

The Gros Ventre call the tribes near them by the following names: Arapaho, hinan'an (in Arapaho, hinanaei-na"); Cheyenne, itison, "scars" (itiso", "a scar;" Arapaho name of the Cheyenne, hitaciina"); Cree, na"tsa", "rabbits;" Ojibwa, djinhuna"tsa", "Lower Cree;" the three Blackfoot tribes, waotä"nixtäats, "black-feet" (a Blackfoot, waota"nixtänin, "blackfoot-man;" a Piegan, tsä"t'; the Bloods, ka"winahaa"); Assiniboine, na"djineihin; Sioux, na"wina"djinei, "Below-Assiniboine" (in Arapaho, na"tinei, "a Sioux"); Crow, hounen, "crow-men;" Minitari, wuxnokayan, "—lodges;" Shoshone, sosouyänin, "snake-men;" Bannock, waotä"nixiinin, "black-men" (in Arapaho the Ute are called wnotänähiçi, "black"); Flathead Salish, kaakaäänin, "flathead-man;" Nezpercé, taniibäts, "pierced-nose" (Arapaho taniibaäçi is the Caddo). Two tribes to the southwest or perhaps west, which have not been identified, are the wasoi"hiiyeihits, "grass-dwellers," who live in houses of grass or brush; and the na"wuxaantibiina"ts, "fish-eaters." 101 648

The Gros Ventre were divided into groups similar to those of the Blackfeet and Sioux. The names of these bands were nicknames, and in no way totemic. As there was prohibition of marriage within the band, the name "clan" is, however, applicable to them. Descent was paternal and a man belonged to his father's band; but the prohibition of marriage extended also to his mother's clan, all the members of both the father's and mother's clan being considered relatives. Each band seems to have had a recognized head or chief. During the winter the tribe broke into smaller groups, consisting of one or perhaps more clans, which followed the buffalo, and camped chiefly in the timber. There corrals were made for the horses at night to prevent their being stolen by war-parties. When summer came, the clans joined and camped together in the large camp-circle. In this, the opening of which was toward the east, the different bands had definite 621 614 [617] [582] 221 361 621 614

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

CHAPTER I

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Location in the Eighteenth Century

The earliest available sources show that in the eighteenth century the Gros Ventres were in the Canadian plains region, far removed from their Arapaho kinsmen. Just where or when the Gros Ventres and Arapaho parted cannot be determined. As Kroeber has pointed out, their tradition of separating while crossing a large frozen body of water on which the ice broke, is not reliable, especially in view of similar traditions of tribal separations current among other peoples.[1] It is possible that there may be some truth in the tradition which Father De Smet had from the Gros Ventres in 1846, namely, that they had become separated from the Arapaho a hundred and fifty years before that date.[2] This would allow, however, only the bare minimum of time which Kroeber has suggested as necessary to account for the linguistic differentiation between Arapaho and Gros Ventre. It would seem a little late also should Morton be correct in identifying as Gros Ventres the tribe, in the region of the Saskatchewan River to the west of the Assiniboine, whom Kelsey mentions in 1691.[3]

The difficulty of exactly locating the Gros Ventres during the first half of the eighteenth century is all the greater in view of the fact that the observers often used general terms, rather than tribal designations, for the plains peoples as distinct from the Cree and Assiniboine. Among such terms are "equestrian natives," "slaves," and various renditions of the Cree word *ayatchiyiniw*,[4] literally "foreign man, stranger"—the generic Cree term by which all hostile peoples are called. The Cree were closely as-

[1] Kroeber, 1908, p. 146.

[2] De Smet, p. 265, note.

[3] Kroeber, 1908, p. 145; Morton, p. 113; Kelsey Papers, p. 16, mentions a nation who "knew not ye use of Canoes and were resolved to go to wars."

[4] Cf. LaCombe, p. 325.

101 sociated with the western expansion of the fur trade by both the English and the French, being dependent upon white goods and acting as middlemen and interpreters. Consequently Cree words were used often by the traders. Mandelbaum explains, in regard to the generic term, that, since the Blackfoot in particular were the enemy tribe, this term came to be especially applied to them.[6] Nevertheless to interpret it as always and exclusively referring to the Blackfoot is misleading.

Isham, writing in 1743, after having been for a decade on the west coast of Hudson's Bay, used the generic term in a widely inclusive sense. He was anxious to get the "Earchthinue" to come to the English forts on the Bay to trade. He had never seen any of them except "a Slave, which was brought down by the Southwd. Indians,—their country lies on the back of this Land and to the Westward of the Churchill River where the Spaniards frequent those seas, at the same time does not traffick with that nation,—I have heard from the mouth of the said Slave concerning that country, by which I understood it was situated much as York Fort Hays's River with a fine Navigable River that op'ns into the sea, and with great plenty of the best and finest fur's, which is their Chiefest Commodity's. The Sinnepoets and other Indians Going to war with them, is a hinderance to their Coming to to the English Settlements to trade. . . ."[6] It was presumably from this Indian that Isham recorded two different ways to count ten. One such list he designated as being the "Earchithinu Language," and the other as "Earchethinue Language in another part of the Country."[7] The first can be identified as Blackfoot, in the general sense of the term,[8] but the second is apparently neither Blackfoot nor Gros Ventre.

Le Gardeur de Saint Pierre, successor of La Verendrye and the last of those who tried to find "the way to the sea" for the French, rendered the generic Cree term as "Iactchejlini" but in addition mentions the Gros Ventres by name. He spent the winter of 1751

[6] Mandelbaum, p. 166.
[6] Isham, p. 113.
[7] Idem, p. 35 and p. 36.
[8] Identification by my colleague, Prof. James A. Geary, personal communication, September 17, 1949.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

175 648 Crow were in the vicinity, camped at a place through which the first contingent of Crow had already passed. Four young men from the second division of Crow were attempting to catch up with the first when they came across the Gros Ventres camp, thinking they had reached their goal. The Gros Ventres seized and killed three of these young men, but the fourth escaped to warn his people, who laid in ambush at a narrow pass through which the Gros Ventres would go. Taking the Gros Ventres by surprise, they completely demoralized them, killing 67 and capturing twice that many women and children. The remainder fled and reached safety with the Blackfoot, leaving the wounded where they lay.

Readjustment (1830–1870)

●174 That the whole Gros Ventres tribe could have gone south to the Arapaho, remained a few years, and suffered such disasters in 1832, is highly improbable. First of all, it is unlikely that if the whole tribe disappeared from their usual habitat they would have been able to regain their territory from encroachments by Assiniboine from the east and northeast, by Crow from the south, and by Piegan and Blackfoot from the west and northwest. Furthermore it is equally unlikely that such absence would have been unnoted by Catlin who in 1832, at the American Fur Company Post [161] at the mouth of the Yellowstone, gives a reasonable estimate of the Gros Ventre population (430 lodges) and notes the common error of traders in counting that tribe indiscriminately with the Blackfoot groups, in spite of the difference between the Blackfoot and Gros Ventre language.[51] Moreover, according to Maximilian, Mitchell of the American Fur Company affirmed in 1833 that he had always done business with the Gros Ventres with pleasure, and had never had any proof of the treachery imputed to them. Had there been no Gros Ventres around for five years, Mitchell would no doubt have mentioned that fact. The entire feeling of Maximilian's account is that the Gros Ventres were well known to American Fur Company traders—as compared to some Blackfoot proper, who arrived at the fort and were unknown.[52]

Finally, native tradition gives some negative evidence. Our

[51] Catlin, v. 1, pp. 59–60.
[52] Maximilian, pp. 73, 154.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

older informants at the present time belong to the bands known as the Frozens, the Tendons, and the Upper Quarters. If the entire tribe had gone on such a visit to the Arapaho, it is almost certain that some tradition of this travel would have been passed on, as it would have occurred in the lifetime of Coming Daylight's grandmother and of The Boy's father, from both of whom these informants had much reliable material. It thus seems more likely that several bands—perhaps in population amounting to as much as half the total tribe—went on the expedition together. It was customary for the Gros Ventres to split into smaller groups and for several bands to winter together. It would seem probable that one or two such smaller groups pillaged the Hudson's Bay Company post in the late 1820's, wintered together on the upper Missouri, and then traveled south to the Arapaho.

While part of the Gros Ventres tribe was with the Arapaho, the remainder,—roaming the strip of plains between the Blackfoot groups on the west, the Assiniboine on the east, and the Crow on the south,—managed to improve their situation somewhat. Although the whole tribe was probably reunited by 1833, when Maximilian gives us an account of his meeting with them, they were fairly prosperous in spite of the losses sustained by those who had fought at Pierre's Hole and had then been ambushed by the Crow. Maximilian states specifically that "these Indians were formerly very poor, had bad tents and could not buy firearms; they have, however, recovered of late and supplied their wants."[68] One of our informants told us that she had heard often, when she was a child, that in her grandmother's young days,—which we estimate as the early years of the 19th century—the Gros Ventres were very badly off and had so few horses that they used dog transport almost exclusively, but that the situation gradually improved, and, by the time our informant was born (ca. 1855), they again had many horses, a sign of prosperity. From Maximilian's description and from Bradley's estimate of the situation in the early 1830's, it would seem that there was no dearth of either horses or firearms among the Gros Ventres at that time. Maximilian states, however, that they showed the effect of their encounters with the Crow by a noticeable disproportion of the sexes, and that

[68] Maximilian, p. 75.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

776 reward and punishment for such human behavior exclusively or almost exclusively in this life. At death the souls of all except [775] murderers went to the same spirit habitat, not to the Supreme Being.[13]

The extensive cultural and ethico-social activities of man towards the Supreme Being will form the subject of succeeding chapters. We may merely state here that the Supreme Being easily held the first place in cult, as compared with other beings, and that he bulked large in the Gros Ventre ethico-social conscience.

776 That the foregoing concept of the Supreme Being was aboriginal with the Gros Ventres and not the result of borrowing from white ● 174 sources seems clear beyond reasonable doubt from both the external and internal evidence.

First the external evidence. While the Gros Ventres have been known in our literature since 1751, their contacts with the whites before the middle of the last century were relatively slight. They met traders and trappers and an occasional intermarriage with [797] whites occurred, but active missionary work among the Gros Ventres did not begin until 1884.[14]

Of about twenty different informants from whom we gathered our account of the Gros Ventre Supreme Being concept, most were older people, men and women, between the ages of 60 and 90 (in 1938-40) and all of them were positive, from their own memory of pre-missionary days and/or from what they had always heard from their parents or grandparents or other elders, that the belief was part of ancient native tradition and not one derived from the whites or from missionaries. For instance, Bull Head, about 80 years old in 1940, then the oldest living Gros Ventre man, stated that he had known about the Supreme Being as far back as he could remember. Coming Daylight, then about 85, and of

---

[13] The older name for the abode of the dead was tsɔtci:tãn (etymology unknown to informants) but described as "toward the sunset." The more [821] common name was ba:snabe (big sand) which was described as a place "to the north." The Milky Way was called Ghost Trail according to another tradition. No non-human supernatural being was conceived of as in charge of the future abode or as rewarder or punisher of the dead for earthly deeds.

[14] Cf. Flannery, 1953, p. 23.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

keen intelligence and memory, stated the same, adding that her old grandmother was also familiar with the name of Ixtcibəni:bəhat for him. Furthermore the names for the Supreme Being as believed in by the Gros Ventres are commonly used for him among the Arapaho. Finally, the Gros Ventre concept itself of the Supreme Being tallies well in its main elements with the concept that is of universal or almost universal occurrence among the Algonquian-speaking peoples, to whom the Gros Ventres belong linguistically and, in spite of their dominantly Plains culture, in not a few important respects culturally as well. 776 174 [171]

The internal evidence corroborates the external. The whole Gros Ventre complex is quite lacking in distinctive Christian elements,—such as prayer to the Supreme Being for forgiveness, reward and punishment by him in the future life, going to the Supreme Being after death, the Trinity, a supreme evil spirit, and so forth,—elements which would be emphasized in most evangelization by Catholic missionaries. On the contrary, the complex has a distinctly aboriginal coloring. Mastery, including mastery of life, is to the fore, with making or creating hazy or in the background. The Supreme Being's names, apart from that of Father, seem clearly native, not white. It is certainly most unlikely that missionaries would have invented a term such as Ixtcibəni:bəhat by compounding the name of the trickster, whose vulgar and obscene escapades were matters of such common knowledge.

Finally, the Supreme Being concept is tied intimately into the whole ritual of the Gros Ventre, a ritual which itself is obviously aboriginal, with only the faintest traces, if any, of Christian infiltration.

Other Cult Beings

Next to the Supreme Being, the supernatural being most frequently mentioned by our informants was Bha'a,[15] the storm ruler or the thunderbird. He was also called, less commonly: etcitane: 776

[15] Informants insisted on the aspiration in the name of the thunderbird, bha'a. Without aspiration the term ba'a means "it is red," and the term ba'ats, means "blood."

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Keeper of the Feathered Pipe

The terms for the keeper, co-keeper and Pipe child of the Feathered Pipe were the same as those for the keeper, co-keeper and Pipe child of the Flat Pipe. 793

Apparently the same high qualifications were required in the keeper of the Feathered as in the keeper of the Flat Pipe. Those specifically recorded by us were: "he had to be some good man and wealthy and noted"; "he had to be a man of intelligence to learn and know the rites and traditions and to maintain the dignity of the ceremonial." In actuality, not all keepers measured up to these lofty standards, as some of our informants emphasized, with ample supporting evidence.

As with the Flat Pipe, succession to the keepership could be either appointive or elective or else volunteer. According to the origin story of the Feathered Pipe, the man to whom the Pipe was first given, appointed, apparently on his sole authority, his uncle as keeper and turned over the Pipe to him. [428]

The recent history of the Feathered Pipe for about the last 100 years can be pieced together from data furnished by Garter Snake, Al Chandler, The Boy, and Thick. 793 174

Iron Necklace was keeper somewhere around 1850.[1] He was succeeded by Big Beaver. Bull Lodge succeeded Big Beaver, his sister's husband as keeper. Garter Snake, daughter of Bull Lodge, became Pipe child at the age of six or seven. Bull Lodge had wanted to keep the Pipe until his son, Otter Robe, came of age and then to transfer it to him. But in 1879 or 1880 Bull Lodge was asked for it, asked four times for the Pipe by Sitting High, so he had to give in and transfer it to the latter. Sitting High held the keepership a long time, in fact until his death in 1905. This break with the traditional rule of a maximum 12 years is probably accounted for by the cultural disintegration which set in after the disappearance of the buffalo. As Garter Snake expressed it: "The new life had come in and there was no one to transfer the Pipe to." Little Man, Al Chandler's adoptive father, was Sitting High's son, and Al lived as a boy with Sitting High in the

[1] The Boy in 1948 told a long story about his grandfather, Crow Moccasin, who was keeper of the Feathered Pipe probably around 1830-1840. [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

793 latter's lodge where the Feathered Pipe was kept. When Sitting High died in 1908, at the age of 92, his only surviving widow, ● 174 Kills in the Night, moved over with the Pipe to her uncle, old Sleeping Bear, who took charge of the Pipe. In 1910 Sleeping Bear gave the Pipe to Curly Head, the last keeper of it, who kept it until his death in 1937 (or 1938).

About 1930, during Curly Head's keepership, a certain young Gros Ventre, a cowboy (son of Bradley), had to pass through Curly Head's place at Lodge Pole. Curly Head gave him something to eat. The young man was looking at the Feathered Pipe bundle and noted that the wrapping of Hudson's Bay Company cloth was old. "That wrapping is old," he said, "I'll buy another for you." "All right," said Curly Head, "I am glad. We will discard the old wrapping."

The young fellow forgot all about the matter until the following summer, when in a dream someone said to him: "When are you going to buy that new wrapping for the Feathered Pipe?" This happened far from here. The young man was worried and made a special trip back to Curly Head, told him about his dream, and asked: "What shall I do?" "You better buy the wrapping you promised," said Curly Head. "This Pipe is no ordinary thing. Even though you were perhaps not serious when you made the promise, you better be on the safe side." "Where can I buy this kind of cloth?" he asked. "At Browning," said Curly Head, "You better go there or else send for it." "I will," said the young man. [165] The latter went away, and shortly after, while herding sheep, he was killed by lightning. And the Gros Ventres wonder today (1939) if this young man's death was a punishment for his failure to keep his promise.

Before his death Curly Head, knowing that his health was failing, came to Garter Snake and said: "Sister, you will be surprised some day. I'll keel over and quit. You were raised with the Feathered Pipe. Keep it as a keepsake." "I am blind," she said, "I cannot see. How can I take care of it? You better leave it in care of some one else." "All right," said Curly Head, "I'll leave it with Iron Man. But you see that it is not disposed of in any way. This Pipe has to remain with the Gros Ventres forever. Remember that the Feathered Pipe is the main hope of the Gros Ventres,

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

and as long as you live see that they do not sell it or part with it." 793 174

So at Curly Head's death the Pipe fell to Iron Man II (Tall Jack), a relative of Curly Head, who since 1937 (1938) has looked after it. In 1948 it was still being kept in Curly Head's house.[8]

The normal term of keepership of the Feathered Pipe was four years. The very first keeper held the office 80 years, according to the origin story given by Garter Snake, and some later ones, according to tradition, up to 20 years, but the usual limit was supposed to be at most two or three terms, that is eight or twelve years. 793

There was always a Pipe woman or co-keeper, wife of the keeper. She handled the Pipe bundle and in general had about the same ritual and other duties toward it as had the co-keeper of the Flat Pipe toward the Flat Pipe bundle. The Feathered Pipe keeper had to have at least two wives, for during her menses the co-keeper could not handle the bundle and had to sleep and live outside the keeper's lodge and another wife of the keeper had to substitute for her in the handling and care of the bundle. [841 595]

There was always, too, a Pipe child,—a girl, unless the keeper had no daughters, in which case a son could be selected by him as Pipe child. Thus the oldest son of Sitting High, who had no daughters, became Pipe child. The Pipe child was not necessarily appointed at once by the keeper on assuming the keepership. Garter Snake was not made Pipe child until she was about six years old. Iron Necklace who had been Feathered Pipe keeper some

---

[8] In the summer of 1951, Iron Man, assisted by The Boy, had a ceremonial opening of the Feathered Pipe bundle. Dr. Louis B. Hagener, Professor of Biology of Northern Montana College, accompanied by his wife, and Dr. Otto Nitz, Professor of Chemistry, now at Stout Institute of Technology, Menominie, Wisconsin, were among the spectators. The pictures in Plates 2 B-C, 3 A-D, were taken by Dr. Nitz at that time. Dr. Hagener has kindly supplied information regarding the 1951 ceremonial. He writes under date of Aug. 8, 1954, as to final disposal of the Feathered Pipe bundle: "Since the young people were so apathetic over the bundle, its significance, and the ceremony, Iron Man and his wife had resolved not to open it again. They were debating as to whether it should be given to a museum or whether the tribe would outfit Iron Man and his wife for a journey and permit them to dispose of it somewhere in the mountains." [R.F.] [114 796 186]

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Iruska.[5] In its diffusion it reached the Assiniboine from the Sioux, 796
—Rodnick places the date at 1872,[6]—and the Assiniboine in turn 177
passed it on to the Gros Ventres, sometime between the years 171
1875 and 1880. We arrive at this approximate dating by reckoning the age of a now venerable old Gros Ventre woman informant [174]
who witnessed the actual transfer when she herself was in her later twenties or possibly early thirties. From all the evidence at our command it is fairly certain that she was born between 1850 and 1855. This informant not only was an eye-witness of the adoption of the ceremony by the Gros Ventres but also participated actively, so far as a woman could, in both the earlier and later phases of the dance. Before giving details of the regalia, personnel, and procedures it might be well to insert at this point her account of the actual transfer.

"The Gros Ventres were camped on the Milk River. They 648
were joined there by the Assiniboine and the two tribes remained 177
together while the Assiniboine taught the Gros Ventres the Grass 796
dance. The Gros Ventres had never had any dancing of that kind before and called it jokingly *inaetenin* (moving-buttocks) referring to the way they danced. The Assiniboine gave crow-belts (feather bustles) to each of two men, and likewise swords to two others. They needed one man as spear (fork) man and two as *atsa'an* (waiters, servants). They also gave the Gros Ventres a big drum and everything that goes with the dance. The visitors showed the different individuals how to use these various things and taught the songs and dances that went with each. But they didn't do all that for nothing! Of all the things they had to give away to the Assiniboine! Even food was included in the exchange. The Gros Ventres had an enormous quantity of food prepared and you should have seen the number of puppies we [262]
cooked. The Assiniboine surely liked those pups. That was the first Grass dance we ever had.

"Then we moved camp from the Milk River over toward the 796

[5] Wissler, loc. cit., cf. table opp. p. 868.

[6] Rodnick, David, The Fort Belknap Assiniboine of Montana, A study in culture change, New Haven, Conn., 1938, pp. 123–24.

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 Bear Paw Mountains. It was there that the Gros Ventres had their first Grass dance alone. I don't know why they did things like this, but all those who had been given regalia walked instead of riding horseback. But the drum was packed on a special horse by itself and when they came to a stream, four men who owned the drumsticks carried the drum across, wading in without taking off their moccasins or other clothing. Furthermore those who owned the regalia were not supposed to help feed the crowd. They were not allowed to serve food and if they did, they had to give something away. Nor were these men supposed to borrow. They were supposed to have their own cup or dish and when it [415] was time to eat, if they didn't have any receptacle, they spread out their robes and the servers poured the coffee or soup or whatever was being served right in the robes."

114 The above account is the only explicit record of the actual 174 transfer which was obtainable in the field. From details supplied 796 by this same informant, however, as well as by others not so old as she, but who have accurate traditional knowledge of Gros Ventre culture, we have considerable information on the Grass dance as practiced from the time it was adopted.[7] Let us proceed then to the general description, first as the dance was carried out in the earlier period.

575 *Personnel and equipment.* At the time of adoption the Grass 796 dance came into the possession of a society, the Wolves or Wolf-men. Only members of the society actually danced, wearing the distinctive headdress of deer hair, although the rest of their costume varied with the individual. The special regalia which went with the dance were: 2 crow-belts; a large drum and 4 fancy drumsticks; a spear or fork; a spoon; 2 wands representing swords; a whistle.[8] Each item was owned by an individual member of the society who was, by virtue of this ownership, an officer

[115] [7] I wish to thank all of my Gros Ventre friends for their assistance, especially The Boy, Thick, Thomas Main, Charles Buckman, Al and Cora Chandler, Mary Ereaux, Mathilda Cuts-the-Rope, but above all, my old "grandmothers," Coming Daylight and Singer.

[8] For reference to description of some of these, see footnote 3.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

101 174 sociated with the western expansion of the fur trade by both the English and the French, being dependent upon white goods and acting as middlemen and interpreters. Consequently Cree words were used often by the traders. Mandelbaum explains, in regard to the generic term, that, since the Blackfoot in particular were the enemy tribe, this term came to be especially applied to them.[6] Nevertheless to interpret it as always and exclusively referring to the Blackfoot is misleading.

175 Isham, writing in 1743, after having been for a decade on the west coast of Hudson's Bay, used the generic term in a widely inclusive sense. He was anxious to get the "Earchthinue" to come to the English forts on the Bay to trade. He had never seen any of them except "a Slave, which was brought down by the Southwd. Indians,—their country lies on the back of this Land and to the Westward of the Churchill River where the Spaniards frequent those seas, at the same time does not traffick with that nation,—I have heard from the mouth of the said Slave concerning that country, by which I understood it was situated much as York Fort Hays's River with a fine Navigable River that op'ns into the sea, and with great plenty of the best and finest fur's, which is their Chiefest Commodity's. The Sinnepoets and other Indians Going to war with them, is a hinderance to their Coming to to the English Settlements to trade. . . ."[6] It was presumably from this Indian that Isham recorded two different ways to count ten. One such list he designated as being the "Earchithinu Language," and the other as "Earchethinue Language in another part of the Country."[7] The first can be identified as Blackfoot, in the general sense of the term,[8] but the second is apparently neither Blackfoot nor Gros Ventre.

Le Gardeur de Saint Pierre, successor of La Verendrye and the last of those who tried to find "the way to the sea" for the French, rendered the generic Cree term as "Iactchejlini" but in addition mentions the Gros Ventres by name. He spent the winter of 1751

[6] Mandelbaum, p. 166.
[6] Isham, p. 113.
[7] Idem, p. 35 and p. 36.
[8] Identification by my colleague, Prof. James A. Geary, personal communication, September 17, 1949.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

175

at fort de la Rayne on the Assiniboine River, and remarks that the wars which the natives of this area have with the Iactchejlini, the Brochets, and the Gros Ventres, would be an insurmountable obstacle to his plans.[9] It is possible, of course, that the Gros Ventres here referred to are the Hidatsa of the Missouri, since some confusion between the two occurs in the later sources, but this is unlikely.[10]

A few years later, the English-speaking Hendry (or Henday) gave the general Cree term as "archithinues," and Wissler was convinced that the people so designated by Hendry, and met by him in 1754–55, constituted the main body of the Gros Ventres, who were then occupying the area between the branches of the Saskatchewan River.[11] Lewis, however, in his recent reconstruction of Blackfoot history, has preferred to follow Burpee in identifying these people as Blackfoot.[12] Whichever interpretation may be the correct one, in 1772 we have our first absolutely unquestionable description of the Gros Ventres by Cocking. He uses the term "archithinue" but gives evidence that it includes not only the Blackfoot groups and Sarsi, but the Gros Ventres as well.

Cocking was sent by the Hudson's Bay Company, as Hendry had been, to try to persuade the "equestrian natives" to come to the Bay to trade. Like Hendry, Cocking too was accompanied by some Cree and Assiniboine in his search out into the northern plains. Though he had started in summer, 1772, by November 4th he had not actually met any of those whom he sought, and in his journal on that date records: "I shall be sorry not to see the Equestrian natives who are a brave people and superior to any who visit our Forts. They have dealings with no Europeans. They live in a southwest westerly direction and draw toward the northeast in March to meet our natives who traffic with them."[13] On November 21st, however, things looked better, as "two Archithinue natives" arrived from the south. Upon being assured that

[9] Le Gardeur de Saint-Pierre in Margry, v. 6, p. 640.

[10] Scott, p. 547, in his review of the early history of the Arapaho, states that this was the first mention of the Gros Ventres by name.

[11] Hendry, pp. 328–51; Wissler, 1936, p. 5, and personal communication, July 24, 1947.

[12] O. Lewis, p. 16.

[13] Cocking, p. 110.

175 Cocking's party was friendly, these two indicated that they would persuade the rest of their group to come and meet with them. Bad weather delayed the arrival of the larger group, and meanwhile Cocking's companions tried, without avail, to fix and use a buffalo pound which the "archithinue" natives had built the previous spring. Finally, on December 1st,

> "Our Archithinue friends came to us and pitched a small distance from us; on one side of the pound 21 tents of them, the other seven are pitched another way. One of the Leaders talks the Asinepoet language well, so that we shall understand each other, as my Leader understands it also. This tribe is named Powestic-Athinuewuck (i.e.) Water-fall Indians. There are 4 Tribes, or Nations, more, which are all Equestrians Indians, Viz. Mithco-Athinuwuck or Bloody Indians, Koskitow-Wathesitock or Blackfooted Indians,—Pegonow or Muddy-water Indians & Sassewuck or Woody Country Indians."[14]

175 101 Thus Cocking gives a very good approximation of the Cree terms, applied even today to the Blood, Blackfoot, Piegan and Sarsi, as well as the designation used by the Cree for the Indians whom we call Gros Ventres.[15] Wissler, and, more recently Ewers, refer to this passage in Cocking and suggest that the Waterfall Indians are the Gros Ventres.[16] Any remaining doubts regarding the identification are dispelled by the following quotation from Umfreville who was with the Northwest Company in the area for four years from 1784–88 and who knew the various groups. He states regarding the "Fall Indians":

> "This nation is named by us and by the Nehethawa [Cree] Indians, from their inhabiting a country on the Southern branch of the river [Saskatchewan], where the rapids are frequent. As they are not very numerous, and have a harsh gutteral language peculiar to themselves, I am inclined to think they are a tribe that has detached itself from some distant nation, with which we are not as

[14] Cocking, pp. 110–11.

[15] Cf. Mandelbaum, p. 166. For an early and quite independent list and explanation of the same Cree terms, see Richardson's Journal of 1819–20, quoted verbatim by Franklin, pp. 99–100.

[16] Wissler, 1936, p. 6; Ewers, 1945, p. 289–99.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

> yet acquainted. In this people another instance occurs of the impropriety with which the Canadian-French name the Indians. They call them *gros ventres* or big bellies; and that without any reason, as they are as comely and as well made as any tribe whatever; and are very far from being remarkable for their corpulency." [17]

175 ●
101

It so happens that the French name, "Gros Ventres," has been retained and at present is the most widely used designation for the tribe, although the Blackfoot term for them, "Atsina," is occasionally employed in recent ethnological sources. In the past, however, in addition to the French, translations of that term such as "Big Bellies," "Paunch Indians," and so on, occurred, as well as those derived from the Cree appellation,—"Falls," "Water-falls," or "Rapids Indians." To distinguish them from the village-dwelling Hidatsa, also known as Gros Ventres, sometimes they were called "Gros Ventres of the Prairies," or "Gros Ventres of Montana," in recognition of their later habitat.

Something of intertribal relations on the northern plains can be gleaned from the record Cocking has left us. It seems significant that he does not rate among the "equestrian natives" the Assiniboine whom he knew. Then, as later, the Assiniboine were apparently relatively poor in horses compared to the Gros Ventres and Blackfoot. Cocking mentions in regard to the Gros Ventres, whom he had opportunity to observe from December 1st to the 16th, 1772, that, not only at hunting buffalo but in all their actions, they excel his companions. He notes that the Gros Ventres are mounted on light sprightly animals and that they likewise use packhorses, which give their women great advantage over the Cree and Assiniboine women "who are either carrying, or hauling on sledges, every day in the year." They impress Cocking as being more like Europeans and he remarks that they are more cleanly in clothing and food than his companions.[18]

175

[442]

The Assiniboine were, however, on account of their close association with the Cree, better armed; and the Gros Ventres were wary enough to ascertain the friendly intentions of Cocking's party

[17] Umfreville, p. 197.

[18] Cocking, p. 111. At this time too, Cocking says, the Gros Ventres used pottery of their own manufacture and tobacco which they themselves planted.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

175 before approaching. It is true that peaceful relations of some Assiniboine, with "Archithinue natives (their friends) two days journey beyond Manitow-Sakahegan," are mentioned.[19] From the location of Manitou Lake it is probable that these were Blackfoot, although Cocking does not specify the tribe in this instance. Then, as later, peace on the northern plains was of short duration. Graham, for instance, in 1775 writes regarding the Assiniboine: [648] "War is their delight and the Archithenues the objects of their inveterate enemity, from these poor creatures they take the fine Horses so frequent among them and which serve to convey their baggage about the country."[20]

175 648 It is significant, too, for intertribal relations that the Indians whom the Cree-Assiniboine dreaded to meet, as they accompanied Cocking out into the plains, were the Snake. On August 24th, 1772, the hunters of his party on the South Saskatchewan River, reported having seen several horses up the branch on the other side, and Cocking remarks: "They are all in general afraid, supposing the horses to belong to the Snake Indians with whom they are always at variance." Again, on September 16th, they saw a strange horse and "supposed it to belong to the Snake, their enemies." Finally, on the last day on which the Water-falls Indians were with Cocking's party, "three Archithinue natives of the same tribe" came from the westward to say that buffalo were scarce and that their countrymen were going to war with the Snake Indians.[21] This bears out the very definite tradition current among the Gros Ventres today that they had to drive the Snake from the territory which they occupied.

Lewis, in his reconstruction of the early history of the Blackfoot, maintains that the Piegan had driven the Kutenai and Snake across the mountains by about 1750.[22] A careful reading of Thompson's account of Piegan history, as given to him in 1786–87 by the old Cree Saukamapee, indicates that while the Piegan had been gaining ground from the Snake since the 1730's, their advance may not have been as rapid as Lewis has suggested. The Piegan

[19] Cocking, p. 106.
[20] Graham's Observations of 1775, in Isham, p. 311.
[21] Cocking, pp. 103, 106, 112.
[22] O. Lewis, pp. 13, 15, and Map B.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

175 648

were said to have reached the Stag (Red Deer) River when both they and the Snake were decimated by a smallpox epidemic,[33] which would seem to have been that of 1780. For the next three years there were no wars, as the remnants of both tribes were occupied in merely sustaining life—parties of young Snake men were left unmolested by the Piegan. It was then decided that in future warfare, instead of looking only for the honor of taking scalps, that the Piegan should capture women and young men and adopt them in order to augment their depleted numbers. Apparently the Piegan gradually advanced to the Bow River as the Snake withdrew. Thompson, then among the Piegan at the Bow River, states: "The country where the Snake now [i.e. 1786] are is far away and little known to the Peeagan." Scouts were out five days but saw no Snake. "Affairs were in this state when we arrived."[34] A few days later a war chief with fifty warriors was sent out to examine the country. This party returned after about twenty days with five horses and fifteen mules which they had captured from the Snake, and old Saukamapee's son gave an account of the expedition. If this chronology is correct, Cocking's companions in 1772 had every reason to fear the Snake and to suspect their presence, as the power of the latter would not have been broken in the northern plains until 1780.

Cocking, as others before him, failed in his mission to persuade the "equestrian Indians" to come to Hudson's Bay.[35] During the last two decades of the 18th century, the Hudson's Bay Company, as well as the rival Northwest Company, established trading

[33] Thompson, p. 336. We know nothing of the wider effects of the smallpox epidemic which affected the Cree in 1736. Cf. Mandelbaum, p. 182.

[34] Thompson, p. 340. The author, pp. 328-47, in giving the account of old Saukamapee, often quotes the latter directly. But inasmuch as he usually omits important diacritical marks, and intersperses comments of his own, care must be exercised in reading these pages which recount events extending in time from about 1730 up to include a few weeks after Thompson's arrival among the Piegan in 1786. Furthermore, he wrote his whole Narrative about 1839, at the age of 70, following his notebooks it is true, but also making generalizations regarding the Piegan which do not necessarily refer to the year 1786-87 he spent among them, but may indicate a later date. See p. 348 where he describes boundaries of the Piegan, Blood and Blackfoot territory.

[114]

[35] Cocking p. 111. Cf. Graham's Observations in Isham, p. 312.

175 posts accessible to the Blackfoot and to the Gros Ventres. So long as the Cree and the friendly Assiniboine were appreciably
648 better armed than the other tribes on the northern plains, the traders had little to fear. But now, with the acquisition of more guns by the buffalo hunters, and with the increasing appetite of the latter, not only for still more firearms but for other items, especially spiritous liquors, they became more and more troublesome and it was necessary to fortify the trading posts.

Since the demand was mainly for beaver, and the Cree were the real trappers, they were particularly favored by the traders. Umfreville (1784–88) complains that both the Gros Ventres and the Blackfoot tribes bring in by far too many wolf skins, and says specifically of the Gros Ventres that they seem not yet initiated into the manner of hunting and killing beaver, dressing skins and killing small peltry.[26] Mackenzie from his observations in 1789 gives the impression that the buffalo hunters were little interested in trading at the posts, and states that the part of the Gros Ventres, who were with the Assiniboine on the plains near the central portion of the Assiniboine River, prepared fresh and dried buffalo meat and tallow, along with a few buffalo robes and wolf skins, to exchange for "arms and ammunition, rum, tobacco, knives and various baubles," with those who go to traffic with them.[27]

175 Mackenzie gives also the relative position and size of the northern plains groups. Some Cree-Assiniboine are mentioned by him as being at Nepawi and South Branch House, and whose territory extends upward about to the Eagle Hills. Next to them are the Cree about eighty tents and on the other side of the river their number may be 200. Mandelbaum cites this evidence to show that at this time the Cree were along the north Saskatchewan, but had not yet consolidated their position there.[28] Mackenzie goes on to say that at the southern headwaters of the North Saskatchewan dwell the Sarsi, 35 tents, 120 men; opposite to those
[161] eastward on the headwaters of the South Branch are the Piegan, 1200–1500 men; next to them on the same water, are the Blood,

[26] Umfreville, p. 198.
[27] Mackenzie, v. 1, pp. cxi, cili.
[28] Mandelbaum, pp. 181–82.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

50 tents or 250 men; next to them downward extend the Blackfeet, their number may be 800 men; next to them and who extend to the confluence of the South and North branch, are the Fall or Big Bellied Indians, who may amount to about 600 warriors.[29]

175 161

Dislocation and Warfare (1790–1830)

Within a decade of the time of Mackenzie's observations, however, the Gros Ventres were being ousted from between the forks of the Saskatchewan where they had been apparently well established since at least 1772, when Cocking met them.[30] Undoubtedly the Gros Ventres were greatly weakened by the smallpox epidemic of 1780, as Wissler has suggested.[31] In any case they were subsequently pushed south and east by the allied Assiniboine and Cree, who had the great advantage of being relatively well-armed with guns. Thus the Gros Ventres were launched on the most turbulent period of their career, with enmity toward the whites as an important factor.

175 648 731

We know from Harmon how bitterly the Gros Ventres resented the more favorable treatment accorded the Cree-Assiniboine by the traders. He was at Alexandria, a Northwest Company post on the Assiniboine River, and records on June 10, 1801, the following: "It is currently reported and believed that the Rapid Indians are forming a war party to come against the Indians of this quarter, whom they consider, and I think with sufficient reason, as their enemies. If they come this way they will fall on us as upon the natives themselves, for they say that we furnish the Cree and Assiniboine with what firearms they want, while they get few."[32] Although this particular attack on the post did not materialize, there was real reason to have feared it. In the summer of 1793 the Gros Ventres attacked old fort Brulé (South Branch House) and killed all but one of the twenty or so inhabitants; in 1794 they pillaged Manchester House. These two

[29] Mackenzie, v. 1, p. cx.

[30] O. Lewis p. 12, places them East of the South Branch prior to about 1750.

[31] Wissler, 1936, p. 18. Cf. interesting tradition of the ravages of the epidemic, pp. 34–36.

[32] Harmon, p. 51.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

175 648 acts of depredation were long remembered and formed the basis for the bad reputation the Gros Ventres sustained among the traders. Henry, speaking of them in 1808 as an audacious and turbulent race, says that they have repeatedly attempted to massacre the traders.[83]

During the early part of the nineteenth century the Gros Ventres continued losing ground to the Assiniboine and Cree. Harmon, again in 1801, mentions, for instance, that a party of Cree-Assiniboine had left Fort Alexandria in June against the Rapid Indians and were bringing a number of women and children for "slaves."[84] In 1803 he records that 40 lodges of Cree-Assiniboine went out on a war party with 40 lodges of "others," apparently against both the Blackfoot and Rapid Indians.[85] Incidentally, as the Gros Ventres were pushed out of the Saskatchewan basin, they no longer formed a buffer between the Cree-Assiniboine and Blackfoot, and these latter came into more direct and deadly conflict. Having rebuilt South Branch House in 1805, Harmon was there in April 1806 when the Cree-Assiniboine in that region went to war against the Rapid Indians, "their inveterate enemies, with whom they frequently patch up peace which is generally short endurance."[86] In August of that same year some Assiniboine reported to Harmon that about 80 tents of Cree-Assiniboine, with about as many of the Blackfoot, were on their way to war against the Gros Ventres. Nothing came of this expedition, however, inasmuch as the temporary allies began quarreling over a horse which each claimed and ended in an all-day fight between them.[87]

And so it went. By 1808 the Gros Ventres had been replaced in the area between the forks of the Saskatchewan and now roamed [131] the territory between the South Branch and the Missouri, although some of them at least went to the posts to trade. Henry remarks that at this time they were bringing to Fort Vermillion a good trade in dried provisions, beaver skins, and grizzly bear and buffalo

[83] Henry, v. 2, p. 530.
[84] Harmon, p. 55.
[85] *Idem*, p. 78.
[86] *Idem*, p. 119.
[87] *Idem*, p. 120.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

robes,—that the Gros Ventres were industrious and were as good skin-dressers as the Mandan and better than the Blackfoot. He further mentions that they were formerly numerous and dreaded but that since the smallpox, and the depredations by the tribes with whom they have been at variance, they had diminished. Although they formerly had bloody wars with the Blackfoot tribes, in 1808 they were at peace with them. 175 648

Henry's estimate, however, that at this time the Gros Ventres numbered but 80 tents or 240 men, seems very low.[38] He was probably basing his figures on those who came that far north to trade, because in 1805 Laroque, while with the Crow on an island in the Missouri River near the confluence of the Big Horn, met a delegation of the Gros Ventres who were camped on the Big Horn River behind the mountain. He states that they occupied 275–300 "huts" and that it was with friendly sentiments that they came to this region. They brought words of peace and said that they came to procure some horses from the Crow. Laroque referred to them as "Big bellies of the fort de prairie" and mentioned that they and the Crow communicated with each other by means of the sign language, not being able to understand each other in speech.[39] This makes it quite certain that these Indians were not the Hidatsa. 161 175 648

It would seem, then, from the above as well as from the figures obtained in the same year, 1805, by Lewis and Clark, viz. 260 tents or 660 men,[40] that the estimates of both Thompson and Henry, observing as they were from the Canadian area from which the Gros Ventres had been driven, refer to only part of the main group of Gros Ventres. Henry himself remarks in 1811 that the Gros Ventres are increasing very fast and that he had always noticed a greater percentage of young men among them than among the neighboring tribes. He admits further: "I have not been able to obtain their exact number but am fully confident they exceed 100 tents."[41] Richardson, moreover, in his journal of 1818–19, identifies the Gros Ventres and claims that they have about 450 to 500 tents.[42] [114]

[38] Henry, v. 2, pp. 530–31.
[39] Laroque, p. 20.
[40] Cf. Wissler, 1936, p. 4.
[41] Henry, v. 2, p. 733.
[42] Richardson, quoted in Franklin, pp. 99–100.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

175
648

During the second decade of the nineteenth century the American fur companies were beginning to show an active interest in the upper Missouri region. As Lewis has pointed out, there were certain differences between the methods used by the companies in Canada and those in the United States.[43] The Americans sent out trappers to hunt the streams for beaver rather than depending on the Indians to bring the pelts to the posts, as did the Canadian companies. The Gros Ventres as well as the Blackfoot resented the invasion of white trappers. To give but a single instance, in the summer of 1810 the Gros Ventres fell on a party of American freemen from Illinois whom they murdered and plundered of their possessions, including beaver skins which were marked and numbered. The Bloods were at war at the same time on the Missouri and murdered a party of Americans. Henry states: "The Bloods in general bear fully as bad reputation as the Fall Indians. They are fully as vicious, bloodthirsty, and turbulent, but, I believe, not so brave." [44]

Still another element which added appreciably to the difficulties of the Gros Ventres, in these first decades of the 19th century, was their increasing conflict with the numerous and powerful Crow. As they continually lost territory to the Cree-Assiniboine, it was not long before they were encroaching on the Crow, who promptly retaliated. It was largely the threat of the Crow to ally themselves with the Americans, in an offensive against the Gros Ventres, that fed the determination of the latter to again raid the Canadian posts. They were desperate for guns and ammunition and felt themselves unable to obtain them through regular trade. The Piegan, in order to protect their own trading interests, promised aid to the Gros Ventres, in case of attack by the Crow, and succeeded in temporarily pacifying them.[45]

In any case, the Gros Ventres were probably responsible for the abandonment of Chesterfield House, which had been rebuilt, after the amalgamation in 1822 of the Hudson's Bay Company and the Northwest Company, at the mouth of the Red Deer River which empties into the South Branch of the Saskatchewan. It was

[43] O. Lewis, pp. 23–31.
[44] Henry, v. 2, 735–36.
[45] Henry, v. 2, 718–21.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

seemingly after the pillaging of this fort about 1826 that part of the Gros Ventres fled to the headwaters of the Missouri, wintered there, and then proceeded south to join their Arapaho kinsmen. According to Hayden, the Gros Ventres spent about five years hunting with the Arapaho and joined them in trading with the Mexicans.[46] During this sojourn, the Gros Ventres suffered a devastating attack of smallpox which was said to have reduced their number by half. 175 648 [731]

From sources independent of Hayden we know that a large group of Gros Ventres was actually in the Cimarron area during the late 1820's. Gregg, with a party of independent traders, was traveling in the Cimarron Valley when on June 21, 1831, they met a very large group of Indians,—he estimates about a thousand including men, women and children,—who followed them for a day or two in order to pilfer what they could and to receive presents if possible. They were finally bought off with about sixty dollars worth of trade goods contributed by various members of the party. It was thought at first that these Indians were Comanche and Arapaho. "But," states Gregg, "they were principally if not altogether Blackfoot and Gros Ventres." A few days later Gregg received intelligence that Captain Sublette and his party, on their way from St. Louis to Santa Fe, had met "an immense horde of Blackfeet and Gros Ventres," and that although the Indians had assumed a menacing attitude, the party had passed without serious molestation. That same evening, however, Gregg camped near a place called the "Battle Ground," famous for a skirmish which a caravan of traders in the company of Mexican troops had in 1829 with the Gros Ventres. Gregg was told that on that occasion, the traders and troops, under Col. Vizcarra, were camped on the Cimarron when a party of 120 Gros Ventres approached on foot. The traders did not welcome the Indians, but seeing that they were disposed to remain until morning, Col. Vizcarra promised to disarm them. Nevertheless he failed to do so, and all of a sudden the Indians sprang to their feet, gave a yell and fired on the party. A Taos Indian, by giving his own life, saved that of the Colonel. The Mexican troops pursued the Gros

[46] Hayden, 341. The gist of what Hayden gives for this period is correct, though his dates are inaccurate. [114]

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

175
648

Ventres, killing and wounding a considerable number of them, but losing a captain and two or three privates.[47]

An interesting version of why the Gros Ventres parted with the Arapaho was related to Hayden by an Arapaho, named Friday, at Fort Laramie when the former was there in 1859–60. Friday stated that the Arapaho and Gros Ventres were camped together on the Cimarron where the Mexicans usually came to trade with them. On this particular occasion the chief of the Gros Ventres wanted all of the trade, whereas the chief of the Arapaho suggested that half of the traders should go to the Gros Ventres and the other half should trade with the Arapaho. An altercation between the two chiefs followed during which the chief of the Gros Ventres stabbed the chief of the Arapaho. The brothers and sons of the latter promptly retaliated by killing the Gros Ventre chief. Whereupon a battle ensued, but peace was made before many were killed. So the two tribes decided to separate, the Arapaho ranging along the S. Platte and Arkansas, the Gros Ventres passing through North Park to Bridger's Pass and thence along the west side of the Rockies to the region of the Three Tetons.[48]

Whether or not this was the actual cause for the separation,—and it sounds reasonable enough,—it is certain that the Gros Ventres did go north giving trouble to the whites along the headwaters of the Snake and Greene Rivers, and engaging some trappers who had met at a trading rendezvous at Pierre's Hole in the summer of 1832. Hayden has given an account of the battle and others refer to it, but Chittenden presents the most detailed description, having gathered together contemporary newspaper accounts, and so on. His version, with which Hayden's in general agrees, is that The Rocky Mountain traders under William L. Sublette, and those of the American Fur Company under Fontanelle, met at Pierre's Hole in the Teton Basin in July 1832. There were many hundreds of Indians in the valley, mostly Flathead and Nez Percé. When the business of the rendezvous was almost finished, a group under M. G. Sublette set out toward the main Snake River and camped for the night not far from the place of the rendezvous. The next morning a band of Gros

[47] Gregg, pp. 227–28, 231–32, 239.
[48] Hayden, p. 322.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Ventres approached in two parties, about 150 men, carrying with them a Hudson's Bay Company flag which they had taken from a party of Hudson Bay Company trappers whom they had recently defeated. The Gros Ventres made signs of truce, but the whites did not trust them and, as a Gros Ventre chief approached the party alone, a Flathead, by prearranged signal, shot him. The Gros Ventres withdrew to a copse and entrenched themselves, the women doing the work while the men held the firing line. 175 648

Sublette sent for reinforcements and his brother, William L. Sublette, came with Campbell and others. William Sublette and Campbell led a direct attack on the Gros Ventres entrenchments. The former was wounded and two of the others were killed. Finally Sublette decided, against the wishes of the friendly Indians, to burn the Gros Ventres out. One of the Flathead, who had communicated with the Gros Ventres, informed the whites that the Gros Ventres had 600–800 warriors who would arrive soon. The whites understood the Flathead to say that these warriors were attacking the main rendezvous camp at that moment, and so withdrew. The Gros Ventres fled. This was rated as one of the worst encounters of Indians and traders in the west. Five whites were killed and Sublette wounded; the Gros Ventres casualties are not exactly known, but they were said to have left nine dead warriors and 25 horses together with nearly all of their baggage in the "fort." Later on, when leaving the rendezvous, a party of whites was attacked, two being killed and one wounded. Sublette saw the large body of whom the Gros Ventres had spoken, but they did not attack, and the Gros Ventres finally left the country via the Wind River.[49]

This was not the end of difficulties for the Gros Ventres, however. Chittenden merely states that they then had a serious encounter with the Crow and were scattered over Crow territory. Hayden gives us more details which he apparently had from the Gros Ventres themselves as well as from traders.[50] It seems that the Crow were in the habit of visiting the Flathead to trade for horses and this summer of 1832 they were returning to their country in two groups. The Gros Ventres, without realizing that

[49] Chittenden, v. 2, pp. 657-62.
[50] Hayden, p. 342.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

175 648 Crow were in the vicinity, camped at a place through which the first contingent of Crow had already passed. Four young men from the second division of Crow were attempting to catch up with the first when they came across the Gros Ventres camp, thinking they had reached their goal. The Gros Ventres seized and killed three of these young men, but the fourth escaped to warn his people, who laid in ambush at a narrow pass through which the Gros Ventres would go. Taking the Gros Ventres by surprise, they completely demoralized them, killing 67 and capturing twice that many women and children. The remainder fled and reached safety with the Blackfoot, leaving the wounded where they lay.

Readjustment (1830–1870)

174 That the whole Gros Ventres tribe could have gone south to the Arapaho, remained a few years, and suffered such disasters in 1832, is highly improbable. First of all, it is unlikely that if the whole tribe disappeared from their usual habitat they would have been able to regain their territory from encroachments by Assiniboine from the east and northeast, by Crow from the south, and by Piegan and Blackfoot from the west and northwest. Furthermore it is equally unlikely that such absence would have been unnoted by Catlin who in 1832, at the American Fur Company Post [161] at the mouth of the Yellowstone, gives a reasonable estimate of the Gros Ventre population (430 lodges) and notes the common error of traders in counting that tribe indiscriminately with the Blackfoot groups, in spite of the difference between the Blackfoot and Gros Ventre language.[51] Moreover, according to Maximilian, Mitchell of the American Fur Company affirmed in 1833 that he had always done business with the Gros Ventres with pleasure, and had never had any proof of the treachery imputed to them. Had there been no Gros Ventres around for five years, Mitchell would no doubt have mentioned that fact. The entire feeling of Maximilian's account is that the Gros Ventres were well known to American Fur Company traders—as compared to some Blackfoot proper, who arrived at the fort and were unknown.[52]

Finally, native tradition gives some negative evidence. Our

[51] Catlin, v. 1, pp. 59–60.
[52] Maximilian, pp. 73, 154.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

older informants at the present time belong to the bands known as the Frozens, the Tendons, and the Upper Quarters. If the entire tribe had gone on such a visit to the Arapaho, it is almost certain that some tradition of this travel would have been passed on, as it would have occurred in the lifetime of Coming Daylight's grandmother and of The Boy's father, from both of whom these informants had much reliable material. It thus seems more likely that several bands—perhaps in population amounting to as much as half the total tribe—went on the expedition together. It was customary for the Gros Ventres to split into smaller groups and for several bands to winter together. It would seem probable that one or two such smaller groups pillaged the Hudson's Bay Company post in the late 1820's, wintered together on the upper Missouri, and then traveled south to the Arapaho. 174 [361]

While part of the Gros Ventres tribe was with the Arapaho, the remainder,—roaming the strip of plains between the Blackfoot groups on the west, the Assiniboine on the east, and the Crow on the south,—managed to improve their situation somewhat. Although the whole tribe was probably reunited by 1833, when Maximilian gives us an account of his meeting with them, they were fairly prosperous in spite of the losses sustained by those who had fought at Pierre's Hole and had then been ambushed by the Crow. Maximilian states specifically that " these Indians were formerly very poor, had bad tents and could not buy firearms; they have, however, recovered of late and supplied their wants." [88] One of our informants told us that she had heard often, when she was a child, that in her grandmother's young days,—which we estimate as the early years of the 19th century—the Gros Ventres were very badly off and had so few horses that they used dog transport almost exclusively, but that the situation gradually improved, and, by the time our informant was born (ca. 1855), they again had many horses, a sign of prosperity. From Maximilian's description and from Bradley's estimate of the situation in the early 1830's, it would seem that there was no dearth of either horses or firearms among the Gros Ventres at that time. Maximilian states, however, that they showed the effect of their encounters with the Crow by a noticeable disproportion of the sexes, and that 175 648

[88] Maximilian, p. 75.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

175 648 they had been hard put to it recently to ransom thirty warriors from the Crow—probably the wounded who had been abandoned in the panic following the ambush of 1832.[54]

So far as relations with the American traders go, in 1833 and subsequently the Gros Ventres were on their best behavior. Maximilian notes that the very large group of Gros Ventres, whom he met at the Judith River as he traveled with Mitchell of the American Fur Company on their way to Fort McKenzie, were surprisingly well-behaved. He adds, rightly enough, that it was to their self-interest to be so, in the light of the fact that formerly they had suffered with the traders on account of their bad reputation. He further remarks that the Gros Ventres were now known as dressing buffalo robes better than most of the other tribes. After trading a bit with the Gros Ventres where they met them, Mitchell invited them to meet him at Fort McKenzie. When the Gros Ventres arrived there, their chief men were received at the [439] Fort with the same pomp and ceremony as were accorded the [431] Piegan chiefs in the preliminaries to actual trading. The Gros Ventres, too, upheld their end by bringing the usual presents—a horse and some beaver skins—to present to the trader.[55]

This Fort had been established at the mouth of the Marias, very close to the later site of Ft. Benton, and was known first as Fort Piekann and the next year was renamed Fort McKenzie. It had been established at this point for dealing with the Blackfoot groups, especially the Piegan, and the surrounding tribes. At that time the American Fur Company was particularly interested in obtaining beaver skins, and one beaver skin was worth two buffalo robes. Later, as the market for buffalo robes opened up, the beaver gradually lessened in value so that finally two or three beaver skins became the equivalent of one buffalo robe.[56] Lewis has emphasized what the change in market meant for the Blackfoot groups.[57] Relations of the Gros Ventres with the whites improved, and there was a tendency for the Gros Ventres to become more and

[54] Cf. Ewers, 1943, p. 603: Maximilian, pp. 71, 75, 76.
[55] Maximilian, pp. 75–76, 126, 165.
[56] Bradley, p. 203, note on 204.
[57] O. Lewis, pp. 34–59.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

more dependent on trading as their thirst for liquor became greater and greater. 175 648

At the time of which we are speaking, 1833, the Gros Ventres and Piegan were at least temporarily at peace. The Assiniboine, however, were strong and, with the Cree, were raiding deep into Gros Ventres territory. They were likewise at enmity with the Piegan. Poorly mounted as they were, they were bold enough to attack Fort McKenzie in 1833, and were driven off by the whites, with very little assistance from the Piegan who were there at the time. The next fall apparently this same band of Cree-Assiniboine cut off sixty lodges of Gros Ventres in the Sweet Grass Hills and the Gros Ventres lost 400, only one escaping to tell the tale.[88]

The Crow, too, were being very troublesome and Bradley describes their siege of Fort McKenzie in 1834.[89] The traders on this occasion finally resorted to firing a cannon which frightened the Crow. To wipe out their disgrace in running away, the Crow rallied under their leader Rotten Belly, and resolved to make an expedition against the Blackfoot. They came across a dozen Gros Ventres warriors, however, near the Fort and satisfied their honor by killing them instead of the Blackfoot. Nevertheless the Gros Ventres had fought bravely and inflicted losses upon the Crow, including their chief who, when he was dying from the wounds, told his people never to attack the whites again. Bradley tells us that the Crow kept to this advice. Nevertheless they continued giving trouble to the Gros Ventres. Bradley says in 1835 that war continued to rage as fiercely as ever. For example, the Gros Ventres killed 40 Crow who had tried to steal their horses near the Fort; some months later they again got the best of a raiding expedition of Crow.[90]

In building up to the position they maintained in 1855, the Gros Ventres were undoubtedly able to profit from the effects of the great smallpox epidemic of 1837–38 which wreaked such havoc among all the Blackfoot groups and the Assiniboine, but which left the Gros Ventres and Crow relatively untouched. Bradley gives 175 648 731

[88] Bradley, 219.
[89] Bradley, p. 216.
[90] Bradley, p. 219. For an account of present Gros Ventre tradition of the first of these two battles, see pp. 94–96.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

175 648 731 an account of the terrible number of deaths among the Blackfoot in 1838 and states that the northern Assiniboine lost two-thirds of their number. He says of the Gros Ventres however that they escaped very lightly, their entire loss being less than 200. "This is to be attributed to their being in a measure innoculated by previous experience with the disease communicated by the Arapahoes in a visit to the south."[61] It may be recalled that Hayden mentions the epidemic which struck the Gros Ventres when they were among the Arapaho. Both are probably referring to the severe, but more or less localized, epidemic which hit the Indians of the Kansas Territory in 1829. Hayden, referring to the five year period during which the Gros Ventres hunted and traded along with the Arapahos—says that during this time: "Smallpox passed among them, having been communicated to them through other tribes with whom they were at peace or carried on a traffic. This disease, at that time, destroyed about half their number, but secured the remainder from the next attack which occurred in 1838. At this later period the smallpox only acted on the young, and destroyed a number of them, but the chiefs and elderly men escaped so that the tribe was not reduced to the disorderly and helpless condition of the Blackfoot and other surrounding nations."[62] That the Blackfoot groups were disorganized to a large extent is borne out by a completely independent source. Father Mengarini in 1841 notes the troublesome raids by the Blackfoot, around St. Mary's Mission among the Flatheads on the Bitter Root River, and adds: "Had not pestilence decimated the tribe the year before our arrival, our mission at St. Mary's would have been impossible."[63]

175 648 In the 1840's, then, the Gros Ventres had only one full-strength enemy to contend with, namely, the Crow. Presumably, they took advantage of the opportunity to raid extensively both the Blackfoot groups and the Assiniboine. Nevertheless they evidently continued to keep up their good relations with the whites. Father Point, S.J., who spent the fall and winter of 1846–47 among the Blackfoot and Gros Ventres wrote to Father de Smet regarding

[61] Bradley, p. 226.
[62] Hayden, p. 341.
[63] Mengarini, p. 8.

5

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the latter tribe that they appeared to him "to have the advantage of the others in being more adroit, more docile, and more courageous; but they are more attached to their old superstitions and are terrible *demanders*, as the Canadian employees here call shameless beggars; happily they are not offended when refused." In addition, he stated that if the Gros Ventres were less importunate he would willingly entitle them the Flatheads of the Missouri "as they have something of their simplicity and bravery." He considered that "the Piegans are the most civilized but the most noted thieves; the Blood well made and generally less dirty; while the Blackfeet proper are, it is said, the most hospitable." Among all four tribes Father Point found the disproportion of sexes great, and attributed to warfare the preponderance of women over men.[64] 175 648 [162]

The heart of the area held by the Gros Ventres at that time, and claimed by them subsequently at least until the establishment of the Fort Belknap Reservation in 1873, and probably until 1888, was described by Hayden as follows: "At present [1862] and for many years past, they range along the Milk River, on the east side of the Missouri, extending as far as the Cypress Mountains. From this line to the Marias River stretches a beautiful level country well covered with grass and adapted to pasturage of buffalo. Here the Indians under consideration may be found at all seasons—in the winter along the banks of the Milk River where wood may be obtained and in summer on the plains where fuel is not so necessary."[65] As the Gros Ventres were by no means confined to this area they were in intermittent conflict with surrounding tribes. 131 175 648

With a view to settling the quarrels of the Blackfoot, Piegan and Gros Ventres east of the mountains, and of the Flathead, Kootenais and Nez Percé and others west of the mountains, Governor Stevens held a council with the Gros Ventres on the Milk River in August, 1853, and with the Blackfoot and Piegan at Fort Benton in September.[66] In 1854, he ordered a thousand dollars worth of goods from Culbertson of the American Fur Company, for distribution to the Piegan and Gros Ventres. These goods, consisting mainly of foodstuffs with which they were un- 175 648

[64] Father Point's letter of 1847, in De Smet, pp. 254, 256.
[65] Hayden, p. 340.
[66] Hoopes, p. 101.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

175 648 familiar, were given to the Gros Ventres at the Milk River. In spite of warnings, the Indians ate the food uncooked, with the result that many became sick and several died. A creole Frenchman, living among them at the time, persuaded the Gros Ventres that they had been poisoned deliberately, and some of the warriors wanted to go after Culbertson with the intention of killing him. Fortunately, however, Culbertson was so well known to and liked by most of the Gros Ventres that the rasher members of the tribe were restrained from carrying out this project.[67]

Stevens concluded in 1855 a treaty at the Judith River whereby the Blackfoot Nation (including the Gros Ventres) agreed that their territory should be a common hunting territory for all signatories. The United States agreed to spend $20,000 each year for 10 years in provisions for the Gros Ventres, Blackfoot, Piegan and Blood, and $15,000 a year for ten years in instructing them in agriculture and mechanical pursuits, educating their children, and so on. The non-signatory tribes were the Crow, Assiniboine and Sioux.[68]

Although it was reported that the good will among the tribes was remarkable, and that peace was sincerely desired, raiding parties continued very much as before. In addition, more and more whites were encroaching on the territory supposed to have been reserved for the use of the Blackfoot tribes and Gros Ventres. Gold was discovered within the area about 1862, and Lewis has given a cogent summary of events which led up to Piegan enmity toward both Gros Ventres and whites, and which culminated in war, 1866–70.[69]

The End of the Buffalo Days (1870–1890).

136 175 648 The end of the buffalo days was now rapidly approaching. The completion of the Union Pacific railroad in 1869 split the northern and southern herds of buffalo. With the presence of increasing numbers of commercial white hunters, armed with long-range repeating rifles, the end of the great north herd was beginning in 1876. It was not, however, until 1880 that slaughter was universal

[67] Bradley, p. 271.
[68] Hoopes, pp. 113–15.
[69] O. Lewis, pp. 62–66.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

over the area. The Gros Ventres had the benefit of buffalo hunting a trifle longer than the other groups. All the buffalo in Montana were in February, 1882, in their territory, between the Milk River and the Bear Paw Mountains. The hunting season, of October 1882 to February 1883, finished the annihilation of the great northern herd and left only stragglers, merely a few thousands.[70] By August, 1883, both the Blackfoot and the Crow Agencies reported that all game was gone from their respective reservations, and a letter from the Fort Belknap Agency stated that game there "was practically exhausted."[71] In 1884 the Blackfoot and Crow agencies reported that the buffalo was extinct.[72] After ceding more land, in 1888 the limits of the Fort Belknap Reservation, which the Gros Ventres share with the Assiniboine, were finally fixed.[73]

136 175 648 [657]

Missionary endeavors, carried on by the Jesuit Fathers, had begun in earnest only in 1885. Prior to that time contact with missionaries had been sporadic. Father Point in 1846–47 had been well received and sent in a good report of this tribe. When Father Giorda attempted to go among them in 1862, however, Bull Lodge took him prisoner and stripped him of his possessions. Since his captivity did not last longer than a few weeks, and his property was restored to him, several months later he made another attempt. This time, while there was some opposition at first, he was permitted to baptize over a hundred children. Subsequently Fathers Rappagliosi and Grassi made several visits respectively, and at considerable intervals. Finally, after some preliminary negotiations, Father Ebershweiler established permanent residence in 1885, and the school at St. Paul's was opened in 1887. The mission and school flourished. In 1891 the founder was replaced by Father Flusi, assisted by Father Sansome.[74]

175 797

The Gros Ventres population—always small, relative to that of surrounding tribes—was steadily declining. Hayden's estimate of 1853 placed the total at 2520.[75] In 1883, at the time of the

175 161

[70] Hornaday, pp. 492, 506, 510–11.
[71] Report of Commissioner of Indian Affairs 1883–1915, pp. lx, 98.
[72] *Ibid.*, pp. 107, 109.
[73] *Ibid.*, p. 295.
[74] Palladino, pp. 187, 195–96, 230, 232, 235.
[75] Hayden, p. 344. Gros Ventres today claim their number was then 10,000.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

175 161 disappearance of the buffalo, the population was officially recorded as being 970. By 1895 it had been reduced to 596.[10] At this low ebb, in the last decade of the nineteenth century, there was still a [554] strong feeling among the Gros Ventres against the white man's dress; as of old, a man's wealth and standing still was measured [178] by the number of horses he owned. Nevertheless the ceremonial aspects of their culture, already on the wane before that decade, had practically disappeared.

[10] Report of Commissioner of Indian Affairs 1883-1915, pp. 101, 188.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

INDUSTRIES AND IMPLEMENTS.

281 When a skin was brought in, it was hung on a sort of tripod, and with a chisel-like flesher of buffalo-leg bone the meat was removed. Then the hide was stretched on the ground to dry. When dried, the hair and thin coat of skin on the same side were cut off with the familiar implement of bent elk-horn, always provided, in recent times, with a metal blade. To make rawhide, nothing more was done. To make dressed skin, liver, grease, and brains, boiled and mixed in the proper proportion, were rubbed [177] or soaked into the skin and then removed with an ordinary scraper, now usually of sheet-iron or tin. Finally the skin was worked over with a rough stone or a bone. In preparing buffalo-skins for a tent, four steps were recognized: first, drying the skins; next, removing the hair; third, soaking them; and, last, scraping and working them over. Skins were softened by being drawn over a rope of buffalo-sinew.

281 When a woman had prepared enough buffalo-skins for a tent, she made 342 a feast and invited other women who were skilful at making tents. The most 476 expert of these fitted and tacked the skins together loosely, and the others sewed them fast. When a robe was to be embroidered, the woman who wanted to make it prepared food and invited other women to help her in her work. When the robe was finished, the man who was to receive it was called in, and it was given to [illegible]

281 Caps of buffalo-skin were [illegible] in winter. They were provided with flaps that were pulled down over [illegible] and held by a string fastened under the chin. Mittens of buffalo-skin were also used, tied together by a string which passed behind the neck. When the hunter was ready to shoot, he slipped his hands out of the mittens.

282 Simple flat unbraided ropes of rawhide were cut out of the skin in a long spiral. After having been cut, they were stretched between two sticks. In order to soften them, they were covered with manure, or tied to a horse that dragged them over the ground until they became pliable.

323 Pottery is declared to have been made formerly of clay mixed with 252 crushed rock. Rawhide bags, drawn together at the top with a string, were also used for cooking by means of hot rocks. The often described Plains method of cooking in holes in the ground lined with rawhide was also followed.

372 When fire was struck with flint and steel, dry mushrooms were sometimes used as tinder.

411 Bows were most frequently made of cherry-wood, but sometimes of ash. Ash was harder and more elastic, but more brittle. Sinew backing was

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

159 561 796 Subsequently he was a "grandfather" in the crazy-dance, but in none of the other ceremonies. He never participated in the sun-dance, having had no occasion to do so, he said. Nevertheless he once was the man selected during the sun-dance to kill a buffalo with one arrow, the buffalo's skin being cut up into thongs with which the rafters of the lodge are fastened. He succeeded in killing the buffalo with one arrow.

Another man, now middle-aged, belonged to the "holding-to-a-dog's-tail" company. He made successively the fly-dance, the star-dance, and then the crazy-dance.

Star and War Dances.

171 561 796 575 [177] At present the organization into comparatively small companies is no longer maintained. In its place there is a division of the young men of the tribe into two groups, one of which practises, or did until recently, the star-dance; the other, the grass or war dance. The latter is universally stated to be a recent importation from the Sioux, apparently within the present generation. The star-dance, however, is an old ceremony, it is claimed; and this assertion is borne out by the occurrence among the Arapaho of the analogous star-dance. Among the Arapaho the star-dance, like the kit-fox dance, is a preliminary which appears to be gone through by all the men of the tribe, but has neither the standing, the organization, nor the definite observances and regalia of the subsequent ceremonies. Among the Gros Ventre the star-dance was formerly also outside the regular series of dances. It is generally spoken of as having been a warrior dance, made at any time and on any suitable occasion, and without the rigorously prescribed course of other dances. Some men seem to have made it before the fly-dance, and others afterward. Even in former times, however, before the war-dance had come among the Gros Ventre, the star-dance included only part of the young men of the tribe. The old men surviving from certain companies have never taken part in the star-dance, and explain this by the fact that there was rivalry between their company and the star-dancers. It might thus, perhaps, seem that a star company had a ceremony of its own, the star-dance, from which the members of rival companies naturally held aloof; but it is very improbable that only one age-company parallel to the others, and none of these others, should have had a distinctive ceremony. It is also improbable that this company, being one of many, should have been so large as to include about half of the men of the tribe, for it appears that some such large proportion took part in the star-dance. This makes it almost impossible to believe that there existed a star company exactly

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

they did not stay in one place, but at times moved about. They shook their rattles constantly. They did not sing, but uttered a pressed-out "Hah." Two atsaan (assistants or servants of the dance) attended near the door. They brought back such of the dancers as became exhausted from lack of sleep and left the ceremony. Two men who had fought and struck a mounted enemy while they themselves were mounted, rode on horseback. When they went to dance, the assistants went to them and helped them dismount. If the dancers were inactive, these two men went about among them to make them arise. If the dancers remained on the ground, they struck them with their whips. The spectators outside lifted up the bottom of the tent and looked underneath; or, as the tent was not very high (the lodge being roofless), those who were on horseback looked over it.

The Gros Ventre star-rattles consist of a tube of rawhide, an inch or less in diameter, bent on itself into a hoop three or four inches across, and attached to a stick handle half a foot or more in length. Apparently one end of the tube projects out from the hoop forming the head of the rattle, sufficiently to allow the stick to be inserted. The rawhide is painted, and ornamented with three or five bunches of feathers. The handle is wrapped with cloth, the upper end of which usually is cut into a small fringe at the base of the head of the rattle, while the lower end hangs free beyond the handle. The general outline of the rattle is similar to the Arapaho star-rattle, this having a round or kite-shaped flat head at the end of the handle. The hoop feature is, however, wanting in the Arapaho rattles, which are without a perforation. The Gros Ventre decorations of their rattles — whether feathers, cloth attachments, or painting — are usually crude and gaudy. It seems that the rattles now in use are a degenerate modern form. In the majority of cases the feathers attached are dyed: some are cut from the quill. This indicates a recent modifying influence. Many of the feathers are cut off transversely. This may or may not be an old feature. The piece shown in Fig. 31 has least of the base qualities of these rattles, and is a probable approximation to the older type.

Of some of the specimens to be seen in the Museum, descriptions are here given.

Fig. 31 (50-1783). Handle covered with red flannel, which hangs below the handle about two feet. Fringe of same at base of head, and same forms periphery of head. Rawhide of head painted blue, red on inside of loop. A string appears to have been wound around the head while the hide was fresh, and removed after the painting, leaving radiating white depressions. Head ornamented at top and sides with three bunches of four black-and-white, squarish, half-downy feathers attached by thongs. At the top there is also an eagle-feather. Handle wound with thong, forming at the end a loop to pass over the wrist. The head of this rattle was said to represent a star.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 171 The Gros Ventre also introduce into the ceremony a thunder symbolism that the Arapaho lack, or have in a much less developed form. The lightning symbol on the centre pole, from which water can be drawn, and the power of the thunder to strike with lightning any dancer who drinks other water than this, evidence this.

Another element special to the Gros Ventre is the introduction of ceremonies relating to war, such as the dramatic performances and the seeing of the approach of the enemy by the pledger.

Features introducing miraculous and sometimes purely personal supernatural powers are apparently quite lacking from the Arapaho ceremony. Among the Gros Ventre there are the raising of the centre pole, the production of water from the centre pole with the crow, the clairvoyance of the pledger as regards the enemy, and the visions of some of the dancers.

In summary, the exact duration and sequence of all events in the Gros Ventre ceremony are not yet clear; the preliminary prairie-chicken tent does not correspond very closely to the Arapaho rabbit-tent; and the connection of the ceremony with the thunder, the introduction of warlike elements, and that of miraculous or personal features, are peculiar, or nearly so, to the Gros Ventre as compared with the Arapaho.

MODERN CEREMONIAL OBJECTS.

778 171 The recent ceremonial objects of the Gros Ventre are somewhat different from those of the Arapaho. The Arapaho were deeply affected by the ghost-dance movement, more, it is said, than any other tribe; and many of their modern religious regalia have a distinct character of their own. [668 177] The Gros Ventre received the ghost-dance from the Arapaho, but it seems to have taken little hold of them. The only distinctive ghost-dance objects seen or obtained were two small hoops and a few balls, all of which resemble Arapaho types. 177 The chief modern dance-ceremony of the Gros Ventre, the only one performed at present, is the grass or war dance obtained from the Sioux, 778 and evidently a modification of the widespread 796 Omaha dance upon which the Arapaho crow-dance is also based. This dance has in recent years been still further modified, until its character now is very similar to that of the crow-dance. The regalia used in this [178] dance at present are very individual, usually crude, and almost always stylistically degenerate. The delicate character and distinct style of the majority of modern Arapaho dance-objects are lacking.

171 The treatment of feathers in such objects is quite different among the 778 Gros Ventre and Arapaho. The Gros Ventre rarely ornament their feathers 237

575 the marching song was sung.[17] Upon reaching the entrance of
796 the enclosure, which had been constructed in the middle of the camp circle, the double column parted, and filed around the inside of the enclosure and took their places. The noted men bearing whips, having been helped in dismounting, took up their positions at either side of the entrance, and the musicians carried the drum to the center of the enclosure where they provided the music for the dancing.

The dance of each society was distinctive. The Stars carried
[293] rattles, each designed by its owner,[18] which they waved about, as they danced. The Wolf-men did not have rattles or any special paraphernalia of the kind, but symbolized wolves as they stepped about, one hand at the forehead, and the other held behind to represent the tail.

575 These dances with their preliminary "begging" expeditions
535 were not put on regularly, but at the discretion of the societies. A time would be chosen when the whole tribe, or most of the bands thereof, were together, when there were no Sacred Dances in immediate prospect, and when there was no apparent danger from the enemy. If these conditions prevailed, one of the societies might proceed, singing loudly: "Harden your hearts, Wolf-men (or Stars)," meaning, "be prepared to give."[19] Not immediately, but some time later, when auspicious conditions again prevailed, the other society would "retaliate."

These dances were purely social. In between times members belonging to one would compete with members of the other in horse-racing, hand-game gambling, "bragging contests" recounting conquests in love and war—each trying to out-do his opposite number.

[177] Sometime between 1875 and 1880 the Wolf-men adopted the Grass Dance from the Assiniboine. Thereafter this Society was sometimes called the Grass dancers.[20]

575 The Boy was under the impression that the Stars and Wolf-men

[17] Recorded as No. 102.

[18] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, pp. 236–37, with illustration.

[19] These songs were recorded as Nos. 93, 94 for the Stars.

[20] Kroeber, 1908, p. 238 describes this dance as the "war-dance." For the adoption of the Grass Dance and subsequent history of the two societies, see Flannery, 1946, pp. 39–70.

342 were sewn together with sinew. The women selected the poles for the lodge, as well as for the travois, and were responsible for [484] erecting and taking down the lodge, for the arrangement of the interior, for the making of the travois, and for the packing and moving of impedimenta.

The foundation of three poles for the lodge was tied together and then raised as a unit. The other poles were arranged one by one, starting with those of the front. The cover of buffalo hides was tied to one pole, the "backbone," which was placed at the center-back, the cover then being drawn into place and fastened securely at the front, with small wooden pins usually made of cherry-tree wood. The ordinary Gros Ventre lodge stakes were shaped like a pin with a relatively small head. One informant, [184 however, stated that this form of stake often came loose where the cover became taut with the wind, and that she had found the 177] forked type, first observed by her many years ago when visiting another tribe to the south, far more satisfactory.

342 Old lodge covers were saved and cut up to make a sort of lining at the bottom of the lodge in winter, and the snow scraped away 353 to make place for the lodge was piled up on the outside thereof for extra warmth. In summer the ground inside the lodge was covered with willows, sagebrush or rye grass. Decorated robes as windbreaks were sometimes suspended in the lodge behind the fancy backrests, which were made by the women from slender willow rods. The women gathered and peeled the rods, although the young men helped straighten them by pulling them through their teeth. A willow ring encircled the fireplace and a broom of buckbrush was always kept handy. Personal belongings were neatly disposed against the wall of the lodge and in front of these were placed the skins which served as bedding by night and as seats by day. The painted parfleshes were given prominence to lend colorful touches. Dishes, utensils, and stored food were suspended 412 from poles well off the floor.

415 Among the articles of household equipment may be mentioned knives, both of bone and of metal, kettles, horn spoons, fleshing tools, etc., and food containers of various sorts. For the latter, [237] the membrane protecting the heart of the buffalo, the paunch, the bladder, and the intestines of the buffalo, as well as those of the

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

daughter, and might receive gifts from relatives, but would otherwise have few opportunities of obtaining horses. 231 556

In former times the rules regarding inheritance were fairly simple. If a man died, his relatives took the more valuable livestock, while anyone was free to come into the lodge and take any other personal property of the deceased which was not to be buried with him. The man's relatives would not, however, take the horses which belonged to his wife or wives, or which had been given before his death to his children. When a woman died she usually would have little valuable property in any case, but, again, any other woman might rush in and strip the lodge of whatever personal property might be therein, including food. The close family of the deceased were "so grief-stricken that they wouldn't notice who takes what," and "a husband would never keep anything of his wife's." It was said, too, that "women were braver than men in disposing of their property before death, and often gave gifts of personal property to those they wished to have them." 428 768 [431]

In objects derived from the white man, the value put upon them was mainly utilitarian. For example, in matching wagers on one occasion a man put up a gold watch. There was no one on the other side who had a watch to offer, but a spy-glass was considered the equivalent. It was explained that the value of the watch in dollars—whether it had a fine gold case or not—would not be taken into consideration. The question in matching was to find things of equal value to the Indian in his way of life. To illustrate this The Boy told of a gift to his father, Lame Bull, from a white trader on the Saskatchewan, of a hobble which locked. "Perhaps this didn't have a high value in dollars, but it was considered extremely valuable by Lame Bull because it saved him many a race horse. Even though the enemy might sneak a horse out of camp, being unable to unfasten the hobble, he would have to abandon the valuable horse before getting very far away." 177 435

On the other hand, while utility was certainly an important consideration in the Gros Ventres' evaluation of goods produced by themselves, various other elements were taken into account. A horse procured from the enemy was perhaps the most valuable of all things to the Gros Ventres; aside from other considerations, a man would have risked his life to obtain it and that in itself lent 435 554 231

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

514 country do what I did. When buffalo go to drink, Indians just
522 shoot them. I was just re-enacting this. What I did was proper.'
*796 To this the husband replied: 'My elder brother, that's true.'

"When the people heard the laughing, they came flocking around. The other Blood was still laughing, in fact was in a laughing spell. His relatives carried him out and took him home and there dashed water on him and revived him."

Peyote Cult and Ghost Dance

668 What little we were able to gather on the peyote cult and Ghost Dance among the Gros Ventres, is here presented.

795 Peyotism is entirely lacking among the present-day Gros Ventres and appears never to have gained a foothold among them in the past. Some individuals, we were told by The Boy and Thick, had tried to introduce it, but without success as the Gros Ventres were "a little afraid of it." The fact that the Gros Ventres have been under fairly intensive Catholic missionary influence since the middle 1880's may partly account for the resistance.[43] Some young Gros Ventres, who were on a visit to the Crows, were invited to take part in Peyote observances, but declined.

On the fortunes of the Ghost Dance among the Gros Ventres, our chief informants were Cora Chandler and her husband Al Chandler, Coming Daylight, The Boy, Thick, Charles Buckman and Thomas Main. Singer had joined the movement but though perfectly willing to speak freely about other subjects was somewhat reluctant to talk about this one. Our other informants had not joined the Ghost Dance, but Cora Chandler's people "were strong for it." Coming Daylight was, as will be explained, in close contact with certain phases of it, and The Boy had been present as a spectator at many Ghost Dance gatherings.

The Ghost Dance was called among the Gros Ventres, not "Ghost Dance," but "Little Round Dances." It was first introduced
● [177] among them in 1891 by a Gros Ventre from the Hays area who had lived among the Arapaho of Wyoming a number of years, had

[43] Coming Daylight came in contact with the Peyote Cult on a visit some years ago to Oklahoma, but, she remarked, "the Catholic Indians in Oklahoma were against peyote."

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

668
745

attended the Ghost Dance there, and had returned to Hays in that year. As introducer and leader of the cult he preached wa:hatcan (lit. "reunion of all together," cf. wahanichina "unite" [Sifton]), signifying the rising of the dead Indians either in the near future or at the end of the world, and predicted the return of the buffalo, and into his message wove something of both Christ and the Flat Pipe. Big gatherings of Gros Ventres listened to him. Some few became converts, but most remained spectators and hearers only and declined to join. Further, the Gros Ventres did not join at all in the Ghost Dance political uprising. They had previously given their word not to go to war with the whites. The movement lasted just two years and then died out.[44]

The factors accounting for the resistance to and decline of the Ghost Dance among the Gros Ventres were, according to The Boy and Charles Buckman, the following. The older men and women did not believe Returns-to-war and the other promoters because "they had to be shown, and they felt that it was impossible for the dead, to rise again and for the buffalo to come back." The younger fellows, of the age of The Boy and Charles Buckman at the time, that is, around twenty years, did not believe because "the younger generation was then going to the Catholic missionaries and had learned different." Moreover, in 1893, some Wyoming Arapaho visited Hays and from them the Gros Ventres found that Returns-to-war had "exaggerated the story," so they all quit the Ghost Dance.

From Cora Chandler, Coming Daylight and Al Chandler we gathered the following information that sheds additional light on the rise of the Gros Ventre Ghost Dance and especially on the causes believed to have led to its rejection and decline.

During the rites, there would be round dances; the dancers would be painted after which they would sing and sing; the songs

[44] Mooney, 1896, p. 817 in his exhaustive study of the situation states that a Gros Ventre had been visiting in 1889 among the Arapaho and "heard the story and brought back the wonderful news to the Gros Ventres and Assiniboine of Fort Belknap, but although his account was received by some with unquestioning faith, the excitement had in it nothing of a dangerous character."

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

668
T45

record of the original Jack Wilson (Wovoka) visiting the Gros Ventres. Could the Jack Wilson above mentioned be some other Indian who was an impostor or one who in good faith took Wovoka's white-man's name?

In addition, the causes listed by The Boy and Thick for the failure of the Ghost Dance to take real root among the Gros Ventre, the chicanery, racketeering and sexual episodes, attributed by many of the Gros Ventres to the leaders of the movement, must have contributed appreciably to the same result.

At any rate, the movement lasted only two years, 1891-1893, and appears to have left no permanent impression on Gros Ventre life. At or shortly after these dates, however the modern non-gambling hand game was introduced from Ghost Dance sources.

[M7
524]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

band, Little Man; Drops In The Fire, a horse for curing Crow Bull; 756
Stiffarm, lots of things, horses and so forth, including "one lovely mare," for treating—unsuccessfully—Little Man. Good Singer received "horses, blankets and such things," for curing Singer herself. Bull Lodge was given "the best horses" for treating Al Chandler's uncle. All the foregoing payments were for cases of serious illness. Mae Main stated that a person who wanted to procure a certain contraceptive root would have to "pay a big price for this, sometimes two or three horses."

Sometimes, how commonly or rarely it is hard to say, a medicine 837
man would stipulate sex relations as his payment or part thereof. 756
Cora Chandler had heard "that some medicine men take women afterwards as part of the payment for curing." "This," she explained, "is why Coming Daylight was afraid of that medicine man when he was stark naked," having disrobed before starting to treat her (supra, p. 338). "Occasionally," Thomas Main had heard, "in very serious circumstances a man, to save the life of a brother or of someone dear to him, would pay the fee of giving his wife [allowing the doctor sex relations with her]."

The relative decline of native doctoring is due in part to the 177
influence of the missionaries and of the civil authorities, in part no 795
doubt to educational and other accultural factors. All the 756
Gros Ventres today are members of the Catholic Church. "Joe Assiniboine," said Coming Daylight, "a good medicine man, still living [in 1940: he died in 1942 or 1943], never joined the Church; joining would take his power away from him." Stiffarm, one of the last of the great doctors, who died in 1932, on becoming a Catholic and later a catechist, is reported by one informant to have renounced his doctoring powers. One reason Coming Daylight gave for not accepting doctoring power herself was, "my children were all Catholics and I joined the Church and I will be a good Catholic till I die." Little Man, Al Chandler's adopted father, wanted to pass on some of his curing power to him, but Al did not want it, because, he said, he was afraid he would "poison someone" but also on account of the Catholic Church. . . . "The Catholics didn't want you to do such things."

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

525 Women (and men?) also gambled at ring-and-pin, the "ring" being made of four bones from deer feet.[4] The contest was mostly just for fun; the losers would have to "cook" for the winners.

Several types of bow and arrow contests, serving as archery practice as well as gambling sports, were indulged in by boys, young men, and sometimes older men, not, however, by girls or women. Both distance and accuracy contests occurred. In the latter, the target was a stick or arrow stuck upright in a small mound, or an arrow shot by one contestant a desired distance, say, 100 or 150 yards. In another kind of contest, a bow was set slanting, string upward; the string was vibrated by an arrow and the arrow on release flew toward the target about 35 or 40 feet away. In these bow and arrow contests, the wagers were small, usually arrows, sometimes a bow. Wagers were made by the players, and at times by onlookers too.

The modern 4-button hand game, distinct from the earlier 2-button one, is played more for fun than for winnings. At most the losers may be expected to [177] "cook" for the winners. This modern non-gambling hand game came to the Gros Ventre through an Arapaho, Dances All Night, in 1897, shortly after the [668] time the Ghost Dance was introduced among them (in 1891). The Ghost Dance itself had little popularity among the Gros Ventre and after a couple of years died out among them, but the non-gambling hand game took root and survived. At first, we were informed, it was played with two buttons, but after 1903 with four.

525 178 Gambling at playing cards, sometimes for large stakes, occurs today, but usually at the nearby white settlements, between Gros Ventre and white males. Some of the older Gros Ventre are shrewd poker players, and the younger ones play poker among themselves, but we obtained no record of ruinous stakes at cards among the Gros Ventre themselves on the reservation.

Major Gambling Games and Sports

525 The three more important gambling games and sports of half a century or more ago were races, the wheel game, and the 2-button hand game.

1. *Races*

[575] On horse races, usually between the two soldier-police societies, the Stars and Wolves (the latter became later the "Grass Dancers"), or between the [648] Gros Ventre and other tribes, such as the Piegan, at intertribal gatherings, were placed large bets—horses, saddles, and so forth—by the men, not however by

4 Illustration in Culin, *op. cit.*, fig. 706, p. 537.

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

left, although we still have reports of a hand game between the Gros Ventre 525
and the Flathead, staged at Glacier Park, Montana, as late as 1922, in which 182
Joe Assiniboine represented the Gros Ventre. Today neither the wheel game nor the 2-button hand game is played.

Hard times, for a short period near-famine conditions, prevailed for a while after 1884; an economy of abundance gave place to an economy of scarcity. [735] While a world survey of gambling reveals, so far as we can discern, no significant correlation between gambling and abundance or scarcity economies, extreme and sudden economic shock and shift, such as occurred among the Gros Ventre in the years immediately following 1884, may well have slowed up the gambling pace.

Around 1897 the non-gambling hand game was introduced, won favor, and [177] persists down to the present. Today there is little gambling among the Gros Ventre on the reservation. Most of what occurs among them takes place off [178] the reservation, at nearby white villages and towns, in the form of poker or other card games for money, between Gros Ventre and whites.

Catholic University of America
Washington, D. C.

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13
Blackfoot NF6 Assiniboine NF4
Montagnais NH6
Ojibwa NG6
Cree NG4

B 787 776 ghost went away. They waited and sang the song. When the ghost came back, they asked him: "What did you find out?" He replied: "I went clear to the Little Rockies and the Bear Paws. Between the two ranges, a creek makes a big bend, and in the middle of the big bend is a ridge. There your young men got killed."

When some years ago, The Boy told me, the road between Hays (at the foot of the Little Rockies) and Three Buttes was being built, on a ridge several holes were found in the rocks, and in one of the holes five skulls, as if a fight had occurred there. Platted Hair believed this to have been the scene of the above fight.

G B [177] We may add that there has been a great deal of close association between the Gros Ventres and the Blackfoot-Blood-Piegan, especially in recent generations.

Assiniboine Rite

The writer's first information on the shaking tent rite among the Assiniboine of Fort Belknap Reservation (which they have long shared with the Gros Ventres) came as a casual afterthought from a Gros Ventre informant in 1931. After giving the summary account of the Gros Ventre rite recorded earlier in this article, he added that the same rite is also found among the Fort Belknap Assiniboine.

G A [71] In the summer of 1940, my chief Gros Ventre informant, The Boy, stated that the Fort Belknap Assiniboine also had the ghost helper concept. In the case of one ghost-possessor at least, there were bells on top [or at the top] of his lodge, and when the ghost helper came, the bells would shake and the whole top of the lodge would shake. This possessor's name was "Standing Dog," or "Dog Rises," or a similar name. One ghost is credited with having thrown a performer on top of the lodge frame. Further details were not known by The Boy, and I had no good opportunity to consult the Assiniboine themselves.

A [79] C M O [71]

Montagnais-Cree-Otcipwe Rite

The "shaking tent" rite is universal or practically so among

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13
Assiniboine NF4 Montagnais NH6
Blackfoot NF6 Ojibwa NG6
Cree NG4

BCMOCA 787 171

Cree-Oteipwe, the power to summon the shaking tent spirit(s) is not thrust upon the person by any spirit, as in a great measure it is among the Gros Ventres.

In general, the shaking tent rite appears to have much more relative importance and to play a much more preponderant role in the total magico-religious life of the Montagnais-Cree-Oteipwe than of the Gros Ventres, Blackfoot-Blood and Assiniboine.

BCMOCA [177]

That there is a historical relationship between the two above contrasted shaking tent complexes appears very probable from the many specific and distinctive elements they share in common and from the almost continuous geographical distribution of the complexes, a distribution moreover predominantly among the main body of Algonquian-speaking peoples of the taiga and adjacent open country and the aberrant-Algonquian-speaking groups of the Plains, the Gros Ventres, the Blackfoot, and the Cheyenne.

Addendum on Wider Distribution

G 787 171 [114]

It has not been the purpose of the present paper to deal with the total distribution of the shaking tent rite and with the historical problems connected with such distribution. The following summary notes are added merely to contribute a mite toward filling out the picture of distribution as given in Ray's historical study and Hallowell's socio-psychological one.[8]

In the east, the shaking tent is not reported in our published sources, to my knowledge, south of the St. Lawrence. The record by Maurault for the Abnaki does not mention shaking of the conjurer's tent.[9] Inquiries by the writer in the field in 1931 among the Chipewyan and Dogrib of the Mackenzie-Slave watershed brought consistently negative results; in fact informants who knew well and gave many details of the rite as practised among the Cree of Ft. McMurray (Athabaska R.) and Ft. Chipewyan (L. Athabaska), on the Cree-Chipewyan borderline, and who were equally familiar with both Cree and Chipewyan

[8] Ray, 1941; Hallowell, 1942. See footnote 1.

[9] J. A. Maurault, Histoire des Abenakis depuis 1605 jusqu'à nos jours, Québec, 1866, 30.

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

[P.39] PRIMITIVE MAN

Quarterly Bulletin
of the
Catholic Anthropological Conference

Vol. 20 Washington 17, D. C., July, 1947 No. 3

THE CHANGING FORM AND FUNCTIONS OF THE GROS VENTRE GRASS DANCE

REGINA FLANNERY
Catholic University of America

THE purpose of the present paper is to discuss the changing 121
form, and to show as far as possible the changing functions, of the Grass dance in Gros Ventre culture from the time of its introduction between 1875 and 1880 up to about 1920 when it had paled off to relative insignificance.

The Gros Ventre tribe of Montana was one of the many which 796
adopted the Grass dance, sometimes called the Omaha dance, as 177
it spread rapidly over the northern plains in relatively recent times. Wissler studied the distribution and diffusion of the Grass dance as a trait-complex,[1] basing his interpretation upon his own 796
observations, especially among the Blackfeet, and on the de- 114
scriptions of this dance as published for other tribes. For the Gros Ventres he depended mainly on Kroeber's data,[2] the only source available, but he himself had visited that tribe and collected, among other specimens, regalia used by them in the Grass

[1] Wissler, C., General discussion of shamanistic and dancing societies, AMNH-AP 11, pt. 12 1916, pp. 862–71.

[2] Kroeber, A. L., Ethnology of the Gros Ventre, AMNH-AP 1, pt. 4, 1908, pp. 234, 238–39.

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 dance.[3] Wissler was well aware of the importance of the Grass
114 dance in the transition period of Plains culture from the old to the new, and suggested further studies be made. Nevertheless, no one has given us a close-up, so far as I know, of its dynamic aspects in the life of any one of the tribes who shared the phenomenon.

796 In 1901 Kroeber noted that the Grass dance as then performed
114 by the Gros Ventres differed considerably in form from that
●177 which was described to him as having been the case when it was first adopted. He gives us a brief description of the earlier procedure, but naturally enough no details regarding the then current method of carrying out the Grass dance, since his concern was with the older tribal culture. He merely states: "It is no longer a young man's dance, nor confined to a certain group. All the people in the tribe take part in it. It is very similar in character to the present-day Arapaho crow-dance, as well as in the place it occupies in the life of the people. Among the Gros Ventre it is now the only dance held."[4] Our data, gathered during two visits to the Fort Belknap Reservation in 1940 and 1945, confirm Kroeber's and supplement them to a considerable extent.

121 In treating of the Grass dance then, we shall distinguish be-
128 tween an earlier period extending from between 1875 to 1880 up to about 1890, and a later period comprising the years from roughly 1890 to 1916. We shall first describe the form of the Grass dance as it was in the earlier period, then the changes which were later introduced, and finally we shall discuss the varying functions during both periods.

The Form: Earlier Period

796 According to Wissler the dance originated with the Dakota
177 about 1860 and is traceable as a development of the older Pawnee
171

[3] These specimens are in the American Museum of Natural History. Some of those used in the Gros Ventre Grass dance have been described by Kroeber, loc. cit.: fork, pp. 270–71; spoon, p. 271; whip, p. 271; crow-belt, pp. 271–72.

[4] Kroeber, loc. cit., p. 238.

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Iruska.[5] In its diffusion it reached the Assiniboine from the Sioux, 796
—Rodnick places the date at 1872,[6]—and the Assiniboine in turn 177
passed it on to the Gros Ventres, sometime between the years 171
1875 and 1880. We arrive at this approximate dating by reckoning the age of a now venerable old Gros Ventre woman informant [174]
who witnessed the actual transfer when she herself was in her later twenties or possibly early thirties. From all the evidence at our command it is fairly certain that she was born between 1850 and 1855. This informant not only was an eye-witness of the adoption of the ceremony by the Gros Ventres but also participated actively, so far as a woman could, in both the earlier and later phases of the dance. Before giving details of the regalia, personnel, and procedures it might be well to insert at this point her account of the actual transfer.

"The Gros Ventres were camped on the Milk River. They 648
were joined there by the Assiniboine and the two tribes remained 177
together while the Assiniboine taught the Gros Ventres the Grass 796
dance. The Gros Ventres had never had any dancing of that kind before and called it jokingly *inaetenin* (moving-buttocks) referring to the way they danced. The Assiniboine gave crow-belts (feather bustles) to each of two men, and likewise swords to two others. They needed one man as spear (fork) man and two as *atsa'an* (waiters, servants). They also gave the Gros Ventres a big drum and everything that goes with the dance. The visitors showed the different individuals how to use these various things and taught the songs and dances that went with each. But they didn't do all that for nothing! Of all the things they had to give away to the Assiniboine! Even food was included in the exchange. The Gros Ventres had an enormous quantity of food prepared and you should have seen the number of puppies we [262]
cooked. The Assiniboine surely liked those pups. That was the first Grass dance we ever had.

"Then we moved camp from the Milk River over toward the 796.

[5] Wissler, loc. cit., cf. table opp. p. 868.

[6] Rodnick, David, The Fort Belknap Assiniboine of Montana, A study in culture change, New Haven, Conn., 1938, pp. 123–24.

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The
796 regalia were placed in front of their owners. Lay members sat around the sides.

[354] The fire was near the center of the dancing-place and beside
252 it the essential pot containing cooked dog flesh. The meat was
262 prepared by first rolling the carcass in very hot ashes to singe off
796 the hair and until the flesh was almost black, after which the entrails were removed and the meat boiled. Incidentally, the Gros Ventres were very fond of the flesh of puppies and used it in large quantities to supplement other types of food for feasts at various gatherings, including the Grass dance. The food for the feast, of which all present at the Grass dance partook, was heaped to the east of the fire.

796 In this setting the ceremonial eating of dog flesh, which involved the preliminary dancing with crow-belts, and so on, was carried out. We shall refer hereafter to this whole performance as the dog ritual because this is the core of the Grass dance proper wherever found and, so far as the Gros Ventres are concerned, remained essentially unchanged from the earlier through the later period. We use the term "ritual" without implying that there was any religious significance attached to the performance in the minds of the Gros Ventres. Connected therewith were a few sex prescriptions the violation of which were believed to be punished by vague misfortune, but that it had any deeper meaning for the Gros Ventres there is no evidence. On the contrary, their indifference toward possible symbolism, for instance, is illustrated by their acceptance at face value of the statement as to origin and meaning by an old Sioux from Fort Peck, Black Prairie Chicken, who claimed that he personally had created the Grass Dance, saying that he had "gotten his instructions" from a rooster; that the headdress of upstanding red-dyed deer hair
796 represented the rooster's comb and that the so-called crow-belt
177 was in reality a rooster's tail. My older informants knew this old man when he visited the Reservation many years ago, and they assured me that although the validity of his story was not questioned, it had had no effect. They maintained that when the dance was transferred to them, the Assiniboine had not mentioned

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

where it had come from or anything about its origin, so the Gros 796
Ventres simply performed it in the way it had been taught. They 177
continued to dance in the same way, and never at any time did they feel that the dance was connected with the white man's rooster, or that they were supposed to be imitating that type of fowl.

The ceremonial involved the donning of the crow-belts by their 796
respective owners, preceded by the incensing of the owners and of the regalia. The song connected with the crow-belt had four stanzas, each repeated four times while the owners danced. One of the owners then lifted the pot containing the already prepared dog flesh and, walking clockwise, placed it in the proper position to the north of the fire. The two crow-belt owners and the owners of the fork and spoon then knelt to the west of the fire while the owners of the swords and their two *atsa'an* (servants, assistants) knelt opposite them on the other side of the fire. These eight, as they knelt, danced by raising their bodies up and down to the rhythm of a special song which was sung once by the four male singers, repeated "like a chorus" during which the drum was beaten slowly and the four women singers joined in. As the chorus was sung the dancers raised their arms as though in salute. This song, with chorus, was repeated four times. After this the eight rose and, to the accompaniment of another song, danced in single file, the owners of the crow-belts in the lead and second place. They circled the fire four times, at the beginning of each circuit hesitating for a moment at the pot and making a gesture toward it. The dancing became more violent with each round and, on the fourth, the dancers "put on quite a show," stamping harder than before and using great exertion. On this fourth round each one touched the pot and the last one in line, one of the *atsa'an*, grabbed it up and put it to the west of the fire. The eight dancers would be panting and tired by this time.

The second crow-belt owner, however, transferred his belt to the fork owner who then danced alone. He followed the same pattern of first dancing slowly, and, at the beginning of each round making merely a gesture toward the pot. On the fourth

796 be repeated so that it was something of an ordeal. The sword owners would see to it that the dancers kept up, prodding the laggards until the series of songs had been completed.

[533 The singers themselves had a smoking song, one of the few [177] songs of the Grass dance for which words were adopted along with the tunes [11] from the Assiniboine. This song indicated a period of rest and relaxation for all but it was required that one of the officers provide the pipe and mixture for the singers.

Any member who left the dancing-place was obliged to surrender some piece of personal property as insurance that he would return. If he did not come back, the property was forfeit.

796 Another distinctive feature of the earlier Grass dance was the [43] throwing away of property and especially of wives. The term 586 "throwing away" is appropriate because a stick was held in the hand and after the holder publicly announced what the stick represented he would throw it to the ground. If, for instance, a member of the society had decided to give away his wife he would take a stick and say: "Here is so-and-so (naming the woman)" and throw the stick down. Sometimes another member would pick up the stick, thus indicating that he was taking this woman, but occasionally it happened that no one grabbed her and in such case the wife in question would return to live with her own relatives. The man who so renounced his wife was supposed to be through with her for good. It was said by informants, however, that once in a while, provided the wife had not been claimed 522 by another, the husband would want her back again. An in- 796 stance in illustration of this point was told to me. A man who 586 stood to my informant in the relation of enemy-friend [12] had so 572 disposed of his wife at a Grass dance. Some time later my informant saw the couple together again. My informant took ad-

[533] [11] Most of the Gros Ventre Grass dance songs have no words proper. This contrasts with the Arapaho Grass dance songs, as my informants are [177] well aware. The difference is perhaps due to the influence on the Arapaho of the Ghost Dance religion (cf. Kroeber, A. L., The Arapaho, AMNH-B 18, pt. 4, 1907, p. 320), which scarcely affected the Gros Ventres.

[572] [12] This was a joking and rivalry relationship entered into by presenting to a fellow tribesman an object captured from the enemy.

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 boine themselves considered the Grass dance as a modern form
575 of one of their own older soldier society dances.[15] Secondly there
178 were certain similarities between the original Star and Wolf dances on the one hand and the Grass dance on the other. In both types there was dancing to exhaustion and the employment of special officers to rouse the laggards,—the whip men in the first instance, the sword men in the other. Again women singers helped out occasionally in both. Still another feature in common was the custom of giving presents away, not to a relative who was a member, but in honor of that relative. Thus, the Grass dance became a part of Gros Ventres culture.

182 So long as Gros Ventre culture continued on its traditional eco-
178 nomic basis, the hunting of buffalo, the Grass dance fulfilled its function as the dance of the Wolf soldier society and was simply parallel to the dance of the rival Star society. The disappearance of the buffalo, however, wrought many changes in Gros Ventre life as it did in that of all of the Plains tribes. The Gros Ventres were fortunate in that the last large herd of buffalo happened to be in their hunting territory and thus they could benefit a little longer than most of their neighbors from this mainstay of their old way of life. This is not to say that prior to the extinction of the buffalo Gros Ventre culture was flourishing in pristine glory. Far from it. For one thing, at the time of the adoption of the
[177] Grass dance between 1875 and 1880, intertribal warfare, with which many aspects of their culture were interrelated, was at a minimum and was itself soon to disappear. Again, certain aspects of their ceremonial life had fallen into disuse, some of the Sacred Dances not having been given for years previously. Nevertheless, although the religious culture was dwindling, much was still left and the social side was relatively intact.

182 *Later period.* The break in economic life with the killing of
796 the last of the buffalo in 1884 was accompanied by the virtual disappearance of the Gros Ventre ceremonial organization. The public rites of a religious nature, which had formerly made for social solidarity as well, were abandoned. The last Sacrifice

[15] Lowie, loc. cit. p. 66.

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 gave away in his honor." When first adopted the Grass dance
178 offered only one such opportunity—and a relatively minor one.
431 As times changed, however, the Grass dance provided practically
156 the sole occasion for gaining prestige while at the same time
554 carrying out the old pattern of kinship obligation by enhancing the prestige of relatives.

The possibility in the later form of the Grass dance of paying for privileges, such as locking the door, or whipping those who did not get up to dance, gave further scope for the acquisition of prestige through liberality, as did also, of course, payments at transfer of office.

It was estimated by our informants that around 1900 as much as a thousand dollars in goods and cash changed hands at a single performance of the Grass dance. At that time it was not uncommon for the dance to be held at weekly intervals. So long as the Gros Ventre were relatively prosperous and had property to display and exchange according to the older patterns, the Grass dance continued to function. With increasing poverty, however, along
[735] with other factors such as the changing points of view and interests on the part of the younger generation, and the dying out of
[182] the older warriors, the Grass dance, the core of which was the dog ritual, gradually paled off leaving but the remnants of some of the round dances which had been added to the Grass dance as originally adopted from the Assiniboine.

Summary

796 Between 1875 and 1880 the Gros Ventres received the Grass
177 dance from the Assiniboine. From the date of adoption up to
575 about 1890 the Grass dance was performed only by members of one of the two soldier societies and the custodians of the ceremonial equipment were the officers. Offices were transferred among members according to the old Gros Ventre pattern.

796 The essential core of the Grass dance was the dog ritual, a
[262] ceremonial eating of dog flesh, carried out by the owners of the equipment with the assistance of four warriors selected from among the lay members. Other features of the program at each

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

171 531 Ventre robes. A child's quilled robe (Museum specimen 50-1751) agrees in general with the Arapaho style of ornamentation,[1] and is probably more or less representative of the Gros Ventre type. The style is similar to that of the quill-work on the Arapaho bag shown in the "Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History" (Vol. XVIII, Plate xvi). Seventeen red quilled lines pass across this robe. Four spaces, two on the lines and two at the ends, are green instead of red on each line. Originally, small green-dyed plumes seem to have been attached here also; these have now almost disappeared. At the four green spaces on the lowest line, pendants are attached. These each consist of a small loop wound with green quills, and of two thongs wound with red quills. At the ends of the thongs are small cylinders of tin from out of which issues a tuft of dyed horsehair. The seventeen embroidered lines do not stretch entirely across the robe to its edge, but occupy a rectangular area including the greater part of its somewhat irregular surface. Certain Arapaho robes are described as having been embroidered with seventeen such parallel lines, to which a group of three was added at the lower edge, where pendants were attached. An Arapaho child's robe in the Museum collections is almost identical with this in style. The ornamental spaces on the red quilled lines differ somewhat, and there are eighteen instead of seventeen lines; but the general construction and appearance are strikingly similar, even to the pendant attachments. Dr. Clark Wissler's illustration[2] of a small Sioux robe serves to give a very close idea of the present piece. Like the Arapaho robe, this Sioux one has eighteen lines. Dr. Wissler makes the point that among the Sioux such red-line embroidered robes were distinctive of women and girls; but among the Arapaho the typical robe of men is said to have been embroidered with yellow or white lines. The Field Columbian Museum has on exhibition Cree, Crow, and Sioux children's robes ornamented with from seventeen to twenty lines and with hoof pendants at the bottom.

[178] 342 531 171 The Gros Ventre have now entirely abandoned the use of embroidered tent-ornaments such as are still quite common among the Arapaho. A single dilapidated partial specimen was obtained, shown in Fig. 4. This is very similar to the Arapaho tent-ornaments.[3] The full set consisted of a larger, round quill-embroidered piece of skin sewed to the back of the top of a tent and called kaiⁿbiitᵃⁿ ("round embroidery"), four similar but smaller ornaments put on the sides of the tent lower down, and pendants attached to the upper flaps or ears of the tent. The circular embroidered ornaments had buffalo-tails or strips of buffalo-fur, and quill-wound pendant thongs with hoofs and loops at their ends, hanging from the middle.

[1] Compare Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part I, pp. 29, 33, 65.
[2] Ibid., Vol. XVIII, Part III, Fig. 81.
[3] Ibid., Vol. XVIII, Part I, pp. 61–63.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

each of which has a ceremony of its own rivalling that of the other (respectively the war-dance and the star-dance), compete in a horse-race, with the agreement that the beaten party is to put up the crazy-lodge. It does not seem that this is a common procedure. 796 616

The Gros Ventre abandoned their dances much earlier than the Arapaho, and almost nothing of the organization remains now, except a memory. It is somewhat difficult to procure precise details of the procedure, especially in the older dances. In great part, the regalia used have also perished, and it has been possible to secure only a very few pieces. These show, as do the descriptions given by the Indians, that the objects and decorations used are quite similar to those of the Arapaho. The distinction of several degrees purely of honor within each ceremony, which is so characteristic of the Arapaho age-dances, is also found in the Gros Ventre, though it seems that the distinctions made and the number of degrees are not quite so elaborate. This is evidenced, not only by the fact that few degrees are described by the Gros Ventre, a fact which might be due to their longer disuse of the ceremonies, but also by circumstances such as the one that certain regalia, which in the Arapaho dog-dance are worn only by the members of the second and third highest degrees, are among the Gros Ventre the common regalia of all participants; only the highest degree of the Arapaho being retained by the Gros Ventre as distinct. 796 178 [171]

The Gros Ventre call their entire ceremonial organizations benaa"wu, a dialectic form of the Arapaho Hayaa"wu, and, like it, probably meaning "all the lodges." The members of the age-societies are called beniinen, commonly translated at the present day as "soldiers," etymologically probably "all-men," or "all-(?)-men." 796 561

The ceremonies of the Gros Ventre benaa"wu, with the age-dances given in order from youth to old age, are the following: —

Açeiha"w"	Sacrifice-lodge,[1] sun-dance
	Star-dance, partial preliminary
Nôubâ"w"	Fly-lodge, first dance
Haha"tyâ"w"	Crazy-lodge, second dance
Nôuhâ"w"	Kit-fox lodge, third dance
Hotibyâ"w"	Dog-lodge, fourth dance
Nanâ"mahâ"w"	Tomahawk-lodge, fifth dance
Blitahâ"wu"	Drum (?) lodge, sixth (?) dance
Benuxteâ"w"	Buffalo(?) dance, women's dance.

The members of these successive age-ceremonies are called respectively

[1] Once translated "looked-at-lodge."

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Recently these two bodies of young men performing respectively the star-dance and the war-dance have supplanted entirely the older, more numerous age-companies. In late years they have taken the place of the age-companies in the ceremonies connected with the erection of the sun-dance lodge. There was then considerable rivalry between them, and it is said that a member of either company who should take part with the other would be abused by his companions, and perhaps have his clothes torn. Recently also the two groups have had certain social functions, which among most Plains tribes are in the hands of tribal bodies or societies. They had charge of the moving of the camp-circle and of locating it. If a man disapproved of their selection, or pitched his tent elsewhere than they directed, they overturned it, and perhaps destroyed his property or killed his horses. If buffalo were seen and others than themselves went ahead and killed them, these two companies cut both the meat and the skin of such game into small pieces.

The Fly-Dance.

The fly-dance (nouba^{n}w^{n}), the first of the dances, seems to have been regarded in some ways as preliminary to the series, rather than part of it, somewhat like the Arapaho kit-fox and star dances. The dancers were called noubän ("flies"). They were young men, sometimes described as boys. Apparently they were of an age where many or all of them were still unmarried, for no mention of their wives participating in the ceremony is made. The duration of the dance is not quite sure. It is said, like all the other ceremonies, to have continued four days; but another informant gave one day as the length of the ceremony. It is not clear whether or not a lodge was erected for the ceremony. In any case, however, the dance was performed outside of the camp-circle. A prominent feature seems to have been the food cooked by the relatives of the young dancers, and brought to the dancing-place. In distinction from what occurred in the other dances, "grandfathers" were secured very easily for this ceremony, which goes to show the light regard in which it was held by the elder men. The old men of the tribe are said to have gone out to the dancing-place, and, on being selected by groups of dancers as "grandfathers," to have accepted at once.

The dancing went on during the day. The dancers were practically naked; and their entire body, as customary in Arapaho and Gros Ventre ceremonies, was painted over. A common style of painting, or perhaps the characteristic one of the dance, was red, with a white stripe on the face and another on the belly. The pledger of the dance (yenouhuxtj^{t}; Arapaho, yanahut^{t}) was painted yellow, with corresponding black stripes. After the

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 As in the other ceremonies, the dancers were painted over the entire
302 body. It does not seem that the long-continued painting of the Arapaho
562 dog-dance, in connection with which the relationship between the dancers' wives and "grandfathers" found its chief expression in this tribe, existed among the Gros Ventre. The women, however, took considerable part in the ceremony as in the others, being painted with their husbands, sitting in the lodge and singing, and at times putting on their regalia; whereupon the men took hold of the ends of the regalia, and their wives led them about.

796 The complete disintegration and disuse of the old ceremonial life of
178 the Gros Ventre is shown by the fact that not a single dog-dance object belonging to an ordinary dancer has been collected. It is therefore the more fortunate that the Museum has been able to complete, through Dr. Clark Wissler, a valuable set of the regalia of the highest degree of this dance. This unique group of specimens is shown in Figs. 38, 39, and 40, and Plate XIII.

796 The coat (Fig. 38) is in shape an ordinary deer-skin shirt. At the neck
292 is an edging of red flannel. On the upper arms are two short, transverse bars of white quill-embroidery, the quills laid on in diagonal zigzag stitch. At each of the sides, at the bottom of the shirt, hang two long, pointed strips, as customary on men's shirts, — the legs of the animal decoratively used. Under the armpits are similar shorter flaps. The two sides of the shirt are open from the bottom to under the arms. These open edges, the hanging strips, the lower border, and the ends of the sleeves, are ornamented with a fringe about an inch long. The lower portion of the shirt for a width of about half a foot, and the hanging strips, are painted yellow. All the remainder of the shirt has been stained brown, apparently over yellow paint. On the two sides there are in this brown area a total of 225 yellow circles about an inch and a half in diameter, which have not been painted over with the brown stain. Each of these circles is edged by white quill-work, and from its centre hangs a mutilated crow-feather by a thong. The edging of the circles is produced by using single quills as threads in an in-and-out rotary stitch. The crow-feathers have the quill broken, in from one to four places, without being severed. The vanes are for the most part considerably disarranged, as if intentionally. At the lower end the feathers are cut off square and the quill is flattened by cutting on two sides, as if to get rid of the lowest part of the vane. The quill is cut in this way so far from its natural base that it is entirely solid. The feathers are simply wrapped against a thong with sinew. The end of the thong projects a little beyond the sinew. The thongs on the outside of the skin average half an inch in length, and are painted yellow. Each passes through a hole in the centre of a yellow circle. Behind this, that is, on the inner side of the shirt, it is

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 171 The Gros Ventre also introduce into the ceremony a thunder symbolism that the Arapaho lack, or have in a much less developed form. The lightning symbol on the centre pole, from which water can be drawn, and the power of the thunder to strike with lightning any dancer who drinks other water than this, evidence this.

Another element special to the Gros Ventre is the introduction of ceremonies relating to war, such as the dramatic performances and the seeing of the approach of the enemy by the pledger.

Features introducing miraculous and sometimes purely personal supernatural powers are apparently quite lacking from the Arapaho ceremony. Among the Gros Ventre there are the raising of the centre pole, the production of water from the centre pole with the crow, the clairvoyance of the pledger as regards the enemy, and the visions of some of the dancers.

In summary, the exact duration and sequence of all events in the Gros Ventre ceremony are not yet clear; the preliminary prairie-chicken tent does not correspond very closely to the Arapaho rabbit-tent; and the connection of the ceremony with the thunder, the introduction of warlike elements, and that of miraculous or personal features, are peculiar, or nearly so, to the Gros Ventre as compared with the Arapaho.

MODERN CEREMONIAL OBJECTS.

778 171 The recent ceremonial objects of the Gros Ventre are somewhat different from those of the Arapaho. The Arapaho were deeply affected by the ghost-dance movement, more, it is said, than any other tribe; and many of their modern religious regalia have a distinct character of their own. [668 177] The Gros Ventre received the ghost-dance from the Arapaho, but it seems to have taken little hold of them. The only distinctive ghost-dance objects seen or obtained were two small hoops and a few balls, all of which resemble Arapaho types. 177 The chief modern dance-ceremony of the Gros Ventre, the only one performed at present, is the grass or war dance obtained from the Sioux, 778 and evidently a modification of the widespread 796 Omaha dance upon which the Arapaho crow-dance is also based. This dance has in recent years been still further modified, until its character now is very similar to that of the crow-dance. [178] The regalia used in this dance at present are very individual, usually crude, and almost always stylistically degenerate. The delicate character and distinct style of the majority of modern Arapaho dance-objects are lacking.

171 The treatment of feathers in such objects is quite different among the 778 Gros Ventre and Arapaho. The Gros Ventre rarely ornament their feathers 287

dried and seasoned, then pulverized, and used in a liquid. It was also used mixed with other things. 278

The Pipe keepers, and co-keepers, ex-keepers and ex-co-keepers, were immune and could handle it. But if others touched the plant or powder they would be seized at once with fits which only an actual or retired keeper or co-keeper could cure by working on him and blowing some of the powder on him. Some Gros Ventres, however, such as old Deafie, did not believe that wild parsley caused fits, but many cases are reported. One man, for instance, in recent times carried some in his hands to a dance, and during the dance got a fit and it took one of the ex-co-keepers to bring him out of it. Another man used wild parsley as a medicine in doctoring. Each participant in the Crazy Lodge used it. But originally its use was confined to Pipe keepers and co-keepers (see p. 52).

If one were scratched with an arrow that had been dipped in wild parsley infusion he would suffer spasms, fits and acute agony and would not live till morning. Such a poisoned arrow was tied by each Crazy Lodge dancer to his bow, apparently as a silent threat to enforce obedience and respect by the people during the lodge rites, but was thrown away after the dance was over.* These poisoned arrows were not used at any other time than the Crazy Lodge; never for instance, in Gros Ventre wars or raids on enemies. 411 278

Seasonal Rites

The three annual seasonal rites were in the olden days the major ceremonial events in Gros Ventre life according to The Boy, Thick and older informants. No vow was necessary to hold them. They were never omitted. They had to be performed. The seasonal rites have long since been given up. They were last carried out sometime in the late 1860's or early 1870's, while The Boy's father, Lame Bull, was keeper. 796* 178

The three seasonal rites were held in the spring, fall and winter respectively. About April the various Gros Ventre bands, which 796* 221 361

*Cf. Kroeber, 1908, pp. 207-08 regarding poisoned arrow.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

175 disappearance of the buffalo, the population was officially recorded
161 as being 970. By 1895 it had been reduced to 596.[16] At this low ebb, in the last decade of the nineteenth century, there was still a
[554] strong feeling among the Gros Ventres against the white man's dress; as of old, a man's wealth and standing still was measured
[178] by the number of horses he owned. Nevertheless the ceremonial aspects of their culture, already on the wane before that decade, had practically disappeared.

[16] Report of Commissioner of Indian Affairs 1883-1915, pp. 101, 188.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

224 before the buffalo got out of range. Only one such run a day was made and, although all hunters had an equal opportunity, so to speak, since no one of them started before the others, the greatest chance of success lay with the man mounted on the fastest horse. Incidentally the gun never supplanted the bow and arrow as a weapon of the chase because, for a mounted hunter riding close to the game, the bow and arrow was just as effective and even easier to use than the gun which had to be reloaded and which was difficult to aim accurately when traveling at a fast pace. Succeeding generations of Gros Ventre boys were trained in archery right up to, and including, the time of the disappearance of the buffalo.

Our informants stated that while the surround was sometimes resorted to, the chase or run, as described above, was the method [178] preferred by the Gros Ventres. The old-fashioned methods of impounding and driving over the cliff were seemingly abandoned by the Gros Ventres in the 1830's. It was stated that an old man, who died at the age of 98 in 1920, witnessed the last big impounding at the head of the Teton River when he was twelve years old.[8] Our oldest informant (b. 1854) knew of these methods only because her grandmother and other older people had told her stories of what they had witnessed. She put it as follows: "When my grandmother was a young woman, the Gros Ventres were very badly off. Only a person here and there would have a horse, and these horses were not the fast kind that can be used in hunting. In fact they did better by building a row of rocks to lead the buffalo into a big corral;[9] or else by having a man covered with a buffalo robe to act as decoy. This man would run forward toward a steep precipice and just at the edge would jump aside while the buffalo following him would go over. The animals which were not crippled in the fall would be shot with bow and arrow. Every- [492] body had to use dogs to drag their stuff as the people moved around; and they cut the lodges in two so the load would not be too heavy for a dog to draw."

231 The possession of an adequate number of horses, then, seems

[8] Denig, p. 532, confirms this, holding that all the northern plains tribes, except the Assiniboine and Cree, are so well supplied with horses that they do not need to resort to the corral.

[9] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, pp. 148–49.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

CHAPTER VI

KINSHIP BEHAVIOR

Much of the more formalized behavior expected between particular categories of relatives among the Gros Ventres has survived the many changes in their economic, political, and religious structure. It is one of the few aspects of their older culture which can be observed as functioning at least partially. Although the economic side of the obligations has had to be reduced markedly under modern conditions, the attitudes accompanying avoidance and joking are still deeply ingrained in those of middle age and in older persons. 602 [178]

All in all, the type of behavior which indicated respect was extended to include by far the greatest number of relationships,—freedom being allowed only between those individuals considered to be related as grandparents and grandchildren, as siblings of the same sex, and as in-laws of opposite sex but of the same generation.

Parents

The parent-child relationship was characterized by a kind of reserve that tabooed any light talk, especially joking about sex or marriage. If the subject were approached in a serious way, however, it could be discussed between parent and child of like sex. A woman could, for instance, go to her divorced or widowed mother and tell her: "So-and-so wants you, will you not go and live with that man?" But she would not think of acting as intermediary in such a proposal to her father. 593

Throughout life children were supposed to address and to refer to their parents only by relationship terms,[1] never by personal name. Further, a son would be shamed by any incident even remotely connected with sex, in which he was involved, should it be [60 55]

[1] The kinship terminology given by our informants agrees in detail with that in Kroeber, 1902, p. 9.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

least one horse was included, but no given amount of property was specified nor did bargaining enter into the negotiations.[6] Following the pattern of ostentatious liberality, a man could reflect honor upon himself by giving generously, and one with such a reputation was preferred over a poor or stingy one. Whatever the groom offered was divided among the bride's relatives. As one woman said: "A husband always gave something for his wife, no matter how many wives he acquired, because this is what makes it 'legal.' Then the girl's father and brother divided the presents. If the brother arranged the marriage, he would say to the father 'Here is a horse for you.' And if the father or uncle had been approached by the husband, then they did the same way. Sometimes even the father's sister was given a horse or something else when her niece married."

587 [554]

Although it was not obligatory, a bride's family often provided her with goods to take to her marriage, especially if it were her first one. Singer explained in regard to Coming Daylight: "Her family was well-to-do and showed how much they thought of themselves by giving her a good send-off. You should have seen her going off to her first husband. She was only about ten years old and she looked so tiny leading that big horse. On the horse was a fine fringed saddle and the travois was just piled up with painted parfleshes and other things."

The following account of the marriage of Coming Daylight's daughter shows how the pattern was carried out under changed conditions: "One night when the family returned from a dance they found a letter addressed to the oldest son, Ed, from a man whom he liked, asking for Ed's sister, Gertrude. When his father came in from tending the horses they told him about the proposal and he agreed right away, saying: 'We are still keeping her and she is a big girl. I'm glad this offer has been made.' So a week later they loaded a new buggy with Gertrude's things,—bedding, beds, trunk, sewing machine, etc.,—and her father drove this to the creek where the dance hall was located. Meanwhile Coming Daylight took her daughter to the house of the man who had asked for her and left her there sitting on this man's bed. The groom did not appear at the Grass Dance that evening, even though he

585 178

[6] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, p. 180.

585 178 was Keeper of the Crow Belt, as he had taken Gertrude and camped at the Mission. The next morning the couple was married by the priest and Gertrude's father brought the buggy full of goods and gave them all that, including the team of horses. Everybody could see that this couple started off with a lot."

585 Instead of making arrangements, a man might simply send his daughter to become the wife of another man without forewarning him. The recipient of such a bride could not well refuse her and was supposed to act as though he were happy to have her, regardless of how many other wives he might have or his real feelings in the matter. He, too, would normally give some kind of present to her father, the amount depending somewhat on the previous reputation of the bride. On the one side, she might have been given merely to get her off her father's hands, on the other, she might have been highly desirable as a wife and her father would have taken this means to show generosity on his own part and to honor the husband he had selected.

583 Sometimes elopements occurred, but this was very rarely if ever the case, so far as the girl was concerned, until she had been given at least once in marriage arranged by her relatives. Should [684] a married woman run off with another man, it was up to her husband to deal with the situation. If, however, she had been widowed or divorced, and eloped before another marriage had been arranged, her relatives would be angry, but the affair could be patched up if the usual presents to them were forthcoming from the man.

591 There was no hard and fast rule in regard to residence. Matrilocal residence in the same lodge was incompatible with the observance of the mother-in-law taboo and it was said that if a man wished his son-in-law to remain with him, he provided the separate lodge and all the equipment.[7] The tendency seems to have been toward patrilocal residence in general, although it was not unusual for a couple to move back and forth. Coming Daylight lived most of her married life with her husband's people. As a child-bride she first lived in the lodge with her husband's parents; later on she and her husband went to her people, living with her

[7] Obligations between kin are discussed pp. 109–10. Kroeber, 1908, p. 180, states that a young married man often lived with his father-in-law.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

764 lodge at some little distance from the camp. As exceptions to the rule, however, Coming Daylight told of a couple of instances which came within her experience in the first epidemic which she remembers. One case concerned a man who simply left the body of one of his wives where she had fallen and Coming Daylight [766 73] came across the bones of that woman stripped of flesh by wild animals during the night. The other case was that of a man who mercilessly covered with stones the body of his infected sister, in spite of the fact that she was still alive.

[178] Only in relatively recent times has burial in the ground been common. This is illustrated by the comments of Coming Daylight in connection with a long story about a visit to a relative who was married to a white trader. "On this occasion my father's father was killed and scalped by the Piegan just outside of the white man's stockade. The white men brought in the body. He had been scalped and was bloody all over. These whites washed him, bound up his head, and dressed his body in their own clothes,—even to putting shoes on his feet. We thought that peculiar and some of our relatives wanted instead to put on him the best pair of beaded moccasins we had. My father said, however, that he wouldn't interfere as long as they were fixing him up in their way. So the whites buried him just like they do their own. The Gros Ventres never did that—they put the corpse up high somewhere, usually in a tree. We thought it was bad enough for our relatives to die, much less covering them up with earth. My maternal grandmother, who was there at the time, said: 'When I leave you, I don't want you to mourn for me because I have lived to be just as old as anyone should be. All I ask is that you see to it that I am fixed up the right way. Don't let them dig any hole for me. I want you to lay me up in a cliff in a nice quiet place, just make a bed for me and lay me there.' When she died, that is just what was done for her."

It was customary, prior to the time that the Gros Ventres settled down, to place some of the personal belongings of the deceased with the body.[6] When a beloved son died, for instance, his favorite horse might be taken along and killed at the place where the body was laid away. Similarly a minor pipe might have been

[6] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, p. 180.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

I have always heard her say that she would never smoke, even if someone gave her a pinto pony.' But when my husband told her about my dream, she said: 'Oh. It is great to have a dream like that. Many of us fast and pray and we are never shown anything!' So she fixed a smoke for me and gave it to me. I have been smoking ever since." 765 787

Whenever close relatives happened to be in the vicinity where lay the remains of one of their number, some at least went there to cry. Coming Daylight remarked that she remembers well where each and every one of her relatives had been "left," and feels the country, over which the Gros Ventres had control in the 1860's and 1870's, to be "fenced in" by their remains. 765

At present when a Gros Ventre dies, no "feasting and smoking" is done for four days thereafter. If, however, an important date has been set and it is seriously inconvenient to postpone a big gathering, at least one of the chief mourners would be invited "too soon," and has no choice but to accept. Before eating, the host or someone in his place "talked" to the mourner and commanded him to cease mourning, to paint his face, and henceforth to join in all amusements, dances, and social affairs of the people. 765 178

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 they would all be in camp anyhow. Our informants made no mention of criers or police in connection with the Fly Dance.

Ordinarily the Fly Dance was supposed to be gone through first, before any of the other sacred dances, but there were exceptions, as in the case of Turn Toes who joined the Crazy Dance first when he was a young man and the Fly Dance only after he was an old man. Coming Daylight's husband, Little Man, never joined the Fly Dance.[26]

[561] [883] The Fly Dance was usually performed by youths, mostly young unmarried fellows of the age range of about 16 to 20 years as nearly as we could determine. With the chief vower would be associated in the dance all the members of his own age-group or company (e.g., all the "Potbellies"), and apparently no others. They would carry it out in a body.

No women joined the dance. But, according to Coming Daylight, if a woman's son was participating as a dancer "she might go way to be back of the tent [apparently the dance lodge] and dance just like her son was doing, not making fun."

*796 608 The Fly Dancers would choose their ceremonial grandfathers from among the older men. The young fellow wishing to join the dance would fill a pipe, go with it to an old timer, and offer it to him saying: "Here is the pipe. You will be my grandfather." If the old man accepted, he would instruct the candidate in all the rites and observances of the dance and would perform the other functions therein to be noted presently. At the last Fly Dance held [circa 1907] two young fellows, Mark Black Crow and Jerry Bear, came together to Coming Daylight's husband, Warrior, and offered him a pipe, which he accepted, thereby agreeing to act as their grandfather.[27] Cora Chandler's uncle, Sits-in-the-middle, had been "boss" of a Fly Dance which she had witnessed one Fourth of July when she was still of school age, probably this last one held.

*796 According to The Boy, the Fly Dance lasted only one day. As our informants had been eye-witnesses of this dance, it is probable

[178] [26] These exceptions occurred after the breakdown of the ceremonial cycle. [R.F.]

[27] In 1948 The Boy explained that in this Dance a group of boys—even more than four—could have the same ritual grandfather. [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

769
787

war, wealth, curing, gambling, and sex. The helper imparted no power of clairvoyance or prophecy; the other lesser beings did impart one or other of the specific powers above listed. The helper had to be summoned to come in person on each occasion when needed; the other beings gave power once for all to the receiver and were not, at least not ordinarily, summoned to come in person when the imparted power was exercised. The helper was always a deceased relative of the helped; the power-giver was a non-ancestral being. The helper was not acquired by quest, he more or less forced his services on the recipient, and was not transferable; personal power was commonly (although not always) acquired by quest, was accepted or refused freely, and was more commonly transferable.

Our chief sources of information upon personal ancestral helpers and personal supernatural powers were: among the men, The Boy, Thick, Al Chandler, Thomas Main, Turn Toes; among the women, Coming Daylight, Singer, Garter Snake, Mary Ereaux, Cora Chandler. Their competence will, we believe, become clear from the circumstances to be noted passim in the present section.

Ancestral Helpers

The ancestral helper complex among the Gros Ventres has been recorded in detail by us in two papers published in 1944,[1] to which the reader is referred. The following account is a summarized version of these two papers.

The ancestral or ghost helper was called tsätsuwa'a,[2] of uncertain etymology. The word was used exclusively for such ancestral helpers, as distinct from other ghosts (see p. 23).

Such a ghost helper was acquired, not by quest through fasting or crying, as power was more commonly acquired. Acquisition usually came about as follows. A man or woman would keep some momento of a deceased close relative, such as some prized possession or else a rib or tooth[3] or lock of hair of the deceased,—either in

[1] Flannery, 1944, pp. 54-59; Cooper, 1944, pp. 80-84.

[2] This same word is used by the Gros Ventres at present for "radio."

[3] After the body had decomposed. Formerly the Gros Ventres did not bury the dead in the ground, cf. Flannery, 1953, p. 211.

L178
764

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

SOCIAL MECHANISMS IN GROS VENTRE GAMBLING

REGINA FLANNERY AND JOHN M. COOPER

INTRODUCTION

THE PRESENT PAPER is offered as a modest start toward opening up 121
what looks like a promising field, namely, the social implications of gambling. 114

Our anthropological sources yield a fairly generous amount of information 525
on the world distribution of gambling,[1] the games and sports gambled on, the valuables wagered, the payment of gambling debts, and the ritual accompaniments of gambling. On the other hand, the same sources yield extremely meager information, and for most gambling peoples none at all, on such social aspects of gambling as: its mode of meshing into the prevalent social organization (who gambles, with whom, and for what); its effectiveness in fulfilling or thwarting the wishes of the individual gambler and in meeting or blocking the needs of integral and fractional social groups; individual differences in participation and the motivations responsible for them; native attitudes toward gambling; the economic and other factors that are favorable or unfavorable to the rise and persistence of gambling in culture as such or in given cultures. Field and library studies of these and most other social aspects of gambling have been almost entirely neglected by anthropologists.[2] And, so far as the present writers have been able to discover from rapid search among the sociological sources and from random inquiries among their sociological friends, such studies have also been almost entirely neglected by the sociologists, even by those specializing in the area of delinquency.

The following pages are an attempt to present the gambling complex, with 121
emphasis on certain of its social aspects, as it existed during the second half of 525
the last century among the Gros Ventre of Montana. Most of the complex is now a thing of the past. New gambling games, particularly playing cards, have superseded the old, and gambling itself, on the reservation and among the [178]
Gros Ventre in general, is not the tense and meaningful activity it used to be.

The data on which this paper is based were gathered, incidentally to a gen- 121

1 World distribution is spotty and far from universal. A summarized world distribution, based on several hundred sources, is given in J. M. Cooper, *Temporal Sequence and the Marginal Cultures* (Anthropological Series, Catholic University of America, no. 10, 1941), pp. 67-68.

2 Father Gerald Desmond's *Gambling among the Yakima*, from his field study of 1944, a manuscript now being prepared for publication, is devoted largely to the social aspects.

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

525 Women (and men?) also gambled at ring-and-pin, the "ring" being made of four bones from deer feet.[4] The contest was mostly just for fun; the losers would have to "cook" for the winners.

Several types of bow and arrow contests, serving as archery practice as well as gambling sports, were indulged in by boys, young men, and sometimes older men, not, however, by girls or women. Both distance and accuracy contests occurred. In the latter, the target was a stick or arrow stuck upright in a small mound, or an arrow shot by one contestant a desired distance, say, 100 or 150 yards. In another kind of contest, a bow was set slanting, string upward; the string was vibrated by an arrow and the arrow on release flew toward the target about 35 or 40 feet away. In these bow and arrow contests, the wagers were small, usually arrows, sometimes a bow. Wagers were made by the players, and at times by onlookers too.

The modern 4-button hand game, distinct from the earlier 2-button one, is played more for fun than for winnings. At most the losers may be expected to [177] "cook" for the winners. This modern non-gambling hand game came to the Gros Ventre through an Arapaho, Dances All Night, in 1897, shortly after the [668] time the Ghost Dance was introduced among them (in 1891). The Ghost Dance itself had little popularity among the Gros Ventre and after a couple of years died out among them, but the non-gambling hand game took root and survived. At first, we were informed, it was played with two buttons, but after 1903 with four.

525 Gambling at playing cards, sometimes for large stakes, occurs today, but 178 usually at the nearby white settlements, between Gros Ventre and white males. Some of the older Gros Ventre are shrewd poker players, and the younger ones play poker among themselves, but we obtained no record of ruinous stakes at cards among the Gros Ventre themselves on the reservation.

Major Gambling Games and Sports

525 The three more important gambling games and sports of half a century or more ago were races, the wheel game, and the 2-button hand game.

1. *Races*

[575] On horse races, usually between the two soldier-police societies, the Stars and Wolves (the latter became later the "Grass Dancers"), or between the [648] Gros Ventre and other tribes, such as the Piegan, at intertribal gatherings, were placed large bets—horses, saddles, and so forth—by the men, not however by

4 Illustration in Culin, *op. cit.*, fig. 706, p. 537.

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

left, although we still have reports of a hand game between the Gros Ventre 525
and the Flathead, staged at Glacier Park, Montana, as late as 1922, in which 182
Joe Assiniboine represented the Gros Ventre. Today neither the wheel game nor the 2-button hand game is played.

Hard times, for a short period near-famine conditions, prevailed for a while after 1884; an economy of abundance gave place to an economy of scarcity. [735] While a world survey of gambling reveals, so far as we can discern, no significant correlation between gambling and abundance or scarcity economies, extreme and sudden economic shock and shift, such as occurred among the Gros Ventre in the years immediately following 1884, may well have slowed up the gambling pace.

Around 1897 the non-gambling hand game was introduced, won favor, and [177] persists down to the present. Today there is little gambling among the Gros Ventre on the reservation. Most of what occurs among them takes place off [178] the reservation, at nearby white villages and towns, in the form of poker or other card games for money, between Gros Ventre and whites.

Catholic University of America
Washington, D. C.

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 Such was the form of the Grass dance as carried out by the Gros Ventres from the time of its adoption from the Assiniboine up to about 1890 when changes began creeping in.

The Form: Later Period

796 178 It should perhaps be emphasized at this point that the changes which characterized the Grass dance after 1890 were mostly in the nature of accretions around the nucleus as originally adopted, so that, although in 1901 the form of the Grass dance differed somewhat from the earlier form, as Kroeber noted,[13] the whole was still distinctly recognizable as an expansion thereof.

Changes in personnel and equipment. At the turn of the century participation in the Grass dance was no longer restricted to members of a particular society. Everybody was free to join in. The Grass dance was, however, in charge of four officials, the "chiefs" who sat in the place of honor opposite the door and presided over the ceremony (Fig. 1). They were consulted on any matters pertaining to the performance, made rules, sometimes arbitrarily, during the dance, and were custodians of any fines collected. They were responsible for seeing to it that provisions were on hand when a dance was to be held. There were, moreover, two women officials, whose rank was said to be equal to that of the "chiefs" and whose insignia were ceremonial dresses of black cloth. These two sat to the right of the four chiefs.

[625] The orders of the "chiefs" were enforced by two men who sat, one on either side of the door, holding whips with ornamental handles. These whips were apparently a simple substitution for the wands representing swords in the original Grass dance. The whip owners each had an assistant who ran errands and attended to getting water, keeping up the fire and so on. An entirely new feature was, however, the addition of two women who owned whips and their two female assistants. They likewise sat on each side of the door but behind the men. When it was time for the women to dance,—another innovation to which we shall refer later,—the women whip owners rose and danced in opposite di-

[13] Kroeber, A. L., Ethnology of the Gros Ventre, AMNH-AP 1, pt. 4, 1908, p. 238.

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

rections around the circle. It was understood that if any woman had not risen to dance by the time those holding whips reached her, she would be lashed. These four women had the additional duty of helping serve when it was time for the general feast.

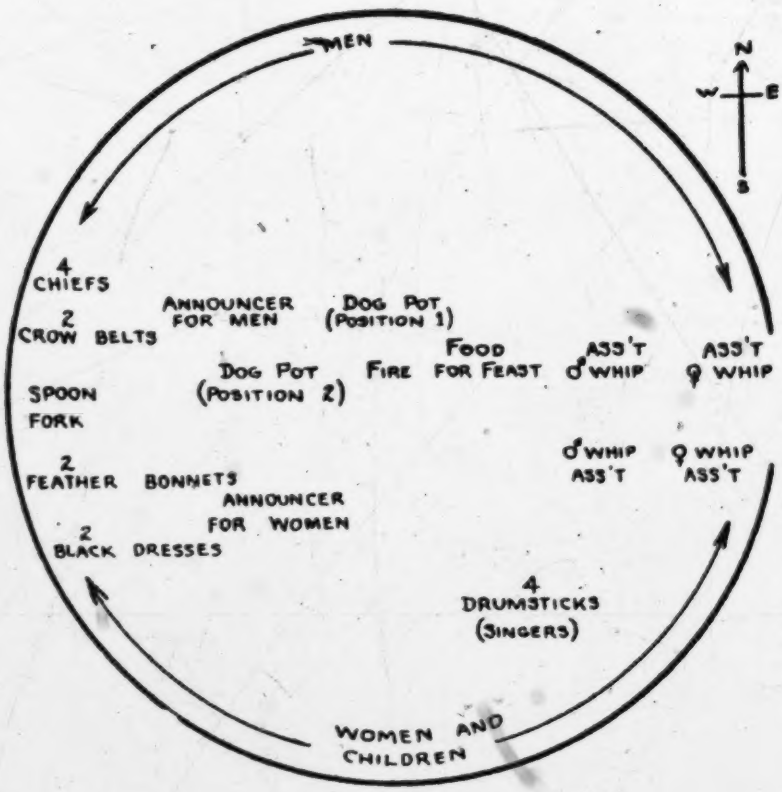


Fig. 1. Diagram of Dance Ground.

Considered as next in rank to the four "chiefs" were the four male singers, who, as in former times, owned the special drumsticks "decorated and official-looking, like emblems." They were expected to know faultlessly all of the many songs connected with the Grass dance as first adopted. If they should, for instance,

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 178 [688] sing a song out of the prescribed order, the "chiefs" would stop them at once, announce the mistake and what fine was to be demanded of the singers. Were the four women singers performing at that time, they too were penalized.

[534] The owners of the drumsticks cooperated with the owner of the drum whose special duty it was to care for this instrument and to have it in repair and ready for use at any time it was needed.

The concepts pertaining to the crow-belts, spoon, fork and whistle remained unchanged. The owners of these regalia treated them with the same respect as of old. Additional ceremonial equipment had been introduced in the form of four feathered war-bonnets, two of which were owned by men and two by women. There was a special little ceremony connected with the two bonnets owned by women. Early in the dance two outstanding warriors were selected to take these bonnets from their owners, dance four times around the rack where they were hung in front of their owners, and then hand them to the first two women sitting at the left of the door. When it was time to dance these women would don them and wear them throughout that dance, then pass them on to the next two, and so on, until everyone had had a chance to wear them.

796 178 624 Finally, there were two announcers, one who called out what he was directed to say by any of the men, and the other who publicized any statement to be made on behalf of the women.

All of these individuals were considered as office-holders in the Grass dance and, as formerly, each was free to transfer the office [622] to anyone he considered suitable to succeed himself. There was no regular term of office even for the "chiefs" and the transfer was described as purely voluntary. Apparently, however, there was a certain amount of consultation among the officers, when one of them decided to transfer his office, in order to agree on a well-qualified successor. Among other things it was necessary to consider the financial status of the individual, especially for those to take over the higher offices. Not only did the recipient heap property upon the donor, but according to the older pattern too, [431] the relatives of the recipient would give away horses and so on

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

in his honor, and there were certain obligations connected with some of the offices in the newer form of the Grass dance, such as payment for the privilege by the black-dress wearers of being invited to come near the fire in the center and eat dog flesh. Furthermore a new "chief" would almost without exception provide the wherewithal for a whole dance to show that he was worthy of the office.

The procedure of transfer was similar for each office. If, for instance, one of the four "chiefs" had decided he had held this position long enough, at one of the dances he would order the transferring song to be sung. He, together, with the other three, would rise and dance around more or less deliberately and in a dignified manner. When these four reached the man who was to receive the office, each of the other three would make a motion toward the recipient as though helping him to his feet, while the donor himself would actually take his hand and assist him to arise. They then led him around the dancing place and finally installed the new officer in the place of honor vacated by the donor. It was customary, as the donor approached the region where the recipient was sitting, for everyone in the vicinity to bow his head as though making himself inconspicuous. None of them was supposed to know ahead of time on whom the choice would fall and, according to Gros Ventre etiquette, it would be very bad form for anyone to seem eager to receive an office, or any kind of honor for that matter.

Changes in procedure. In this later period the Grass dance was held sometimes out of doors in a circular space enclosed by wagons, at other times in a large log building, the ground plan of which was as nearly round as it could be made. It was remarked in this connection that the modern rectangular community hall at Hays, on the Reservation, was no good for Gros Ventre ceremonies, including the Grass dance, "because everything we did was in a circle." The present almost circular community hall at Lodge Pole is considered much more satisfactory. The seating arrangements were very similar to those described for

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 the original Grass dance, the number participating, however, both
178 as officers and as general audience, being very much larger.

Although the dog ritual, carried out as described for the earlier period, remained the highlight and climax of the Grass dance, the general program had been enlarged to include other features. Not only were procedures introduced in connection with the newer offices, as indicated above, but other items such as the Owl dance and the Ringtail dance were introduced. The order of events was apparently determined by the "chiefs" at each performance of the Grass dance, but the general program did not vary markedly. The Ringtail dance, for instance, was always included at some time.

When the order for the Ringtail dance was given, any who wished to participate formed a circle facing inward and both men and women were free to choose partners of the opposite sex. The man placed his arm over the shoulders of his partner while she placed her arm around his back. The whole group moved in a circle clockwise in rhythm to the music provided by a group of singers other than those who sang and drummed for the dog ritual and other ceremonies in which officers as such participated.
[887] Any middle-aged or older woman who wished to do so might join the singers for any of the round dances. If none volunteered then they were sometimes drafted simply by being invited and led over to the spot where the male singers were performing.

796 It occasionally happened that during this dance, when the sing-
533 ers had "hit the spot,"—aroused the spirit of the crowd and the
178 floor was full,—the singers would stop all of a sudden, but without giving the usual signal to disperse. Then, without advance notice, they would start singing again, but a different song, a "punishing song." This was a feature obviously based on the "punishing songs" of the original Grass dance, but the tunes were different and it was carried out in the following way.

There were only two of these newer "punishing songs" but as soon as the dancers heard the singers start one of them they knew what it meant: "Now we are in for it. We will have to dance and dance!" The singers could sing the first of these

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

songs as many times as they pleased, and when tired of that one 796
switched to the others. There was no intermission and the 533
dancers got no rest, even the old women would stand up and 178
dance in one place and the old men would be yelling and calling out from where they sat. It was evidently a very lively scene. The dancers would sweat and get tired, but still there would be no let up. Finally the four wearers of the feathered war bonnets, —two men and two women,—would begin voicing appeals to the four "chiefs": "Please do something to stop this dance!" But the "chiefs" did not act right away. At last one of them would get up and walk around until he approached the wearer of a war-bonnet. He would then remove the bonnet and the people were glad and would cheer and yell, but this was not yet the end. They kept on dancing until a second of the "chiefs" got up and removed a war-bonnet from another of the wearers, which finally brought the Ringtail dance to a close.

It was said that while the women who wore black dresses could have answered the appeal to stop the dance, as a rule they would have hesitated to do so because the ones who took upon themselves this privilege would have to pay heavily for it. When the people had quieted down after the strenuous dance, those who had removed the war-bonnets would get up and announce what they were paying for having done so. One might have said, for instance: "All right. I will kill a beef for the next dance," or "I will give money" and name the sum. He could donate whatever [431]
he wished, but it was understood that it would be something really substantial. My informants explained that although the Ringtail dance was a regular feature of the Grass dance program, the "punishing songs" were not sung every time because "the reason for singing them was that the people hoped to have a Grass dance again soon and wanted an elaborate affair and so the singers had to use discretion; if the 'chiefs' happened to be in a good financial condition at the time, they made them 'shell out' in that way."

The owners of the ceremonial drumsticks retained the smoking song as described for the earlier period. It was the "chiefs" who

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 178 533 [625 681] were supposed to come prepared with pipe, tobacco, and matches in anticipation of this song. If, for some reason, one of the four was unable to furnish at least a pipeful of mixture, and could not borrow one, he was immediately arrested by the owners of the whips and punished by the singers who might tear his shirt at the neck so everyone could see it, or, perhaps, pour over him a good cupful of broth made from dog flesh. This broth has a strong and lasting odor. The female officers were likewise expected to give the women singers a smoke. The smoking song marked an intermission. No one danced to this song and all sat around smoking and taking it easy.

796 178 If things got too dull, however, one of the owners of the whips might get up, call the announcer, and say: "Tell my friends that I am going to whip them if they don't dance. I will have the right to whip them because I am going to pay for it," and he would present a bridle, or perhaps five dollars, or something of that order of magnitude, to anyone he wished. It was understood, then, that the next time the singing started this man might hit any person,—even one of the "chiefs,"—who failed to dance.

Another feature reminiscent of the original Grass dance but showing some slight change, was the provision that anyone who wished might have it announced that he was going to "lock the door," which meant that nobody could go home until the dance was over. For doing this however he had to provide all the necessary food for another Grass dance to be held on the night immediately following. It was up to the owners of the whips to enforce the regulation by taking something valuable, say a hat [689] or a blanket, from anyone who left the dance and the article was forfeit if he failed to return.

796 178 626 Based on the same concept, the practice grew up of forcing attendance in the following way. Once in a while the owners of the whips might order their assistants to go from door to door in the whole community and take something belonging to each householder, say a bridle, or a valuable belt, or a gun, and bring it to the dancing-place. If the owner of the object were not at the dance, his property was returned to him only if he promised

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

to provide food for the next dance. If he failed to redeem it by such promise, he had one more chance to do so by appearing at the following dance. If he did not show up on that occasion the announcer was told to call out: "The one who owns this bridle (or belt, or gun, etc.) does not want it." Whereupon the article would be thrown in the fire and destroyed. 796 178 626

Although the custom of "throwing away" wives gradually died out, the giving away of valuable property to honor loved ones continued and was elaborated. The following is only one example from many which might be cited as illustrative of attitudes. The informant is now a man in his early seventies. He stated: "When I was a young man I never went to these social affairs. After I married my wife would go with my older brother every time there was a Grass dance, but I would stay at home. This brother of mine used to get after me for not taking part. He would say: 'It is bad to be the way you are. When there is a dance or anything going on, go and look on. You don't necessarily have to dance, but at least be present.' One time in later years the Cheyenne came to visit and of course the Gros Ventres put on a dance for them. I decided to go and for the first time I joined in. When my brother saw me he got up and said: 'Well, my friends, I have been asking my brother to look on and to take part in these dances, and I have never succeeded. But today I see him at this dance and I am glad he is here. I am glad he is joining with us.' Then my brother went out and brought to the dancing-place a new yellow-wheeled buggy and a set of harness he had just purchased, and announced: 'Now, because my brother has joined the dance I am proud he did, and in his honor I am giving away this buggy and harness to the visitors.' Then my brother's wife announced: 'I am happy that my brother-in-law is joining the dance. I will give a beef to the visitors so they will kill it and have meat to eat.' Of course I felt embarrassed. It was hard on me because I thought everybody was looking at me and I sweated. Afterwards I told my brother: 'I didn't go in there for the purpose of having you give away all that stuff in my honor!' But he replied: 'Well, that is the way of our people 796 178 431 [586]

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

formance of the Grass dance, but that he was also paying for this 796
by cancelling debts owed him at his store by four specific indi- 178
viduals whom he named; that anyone who objected to the chil- 858
dren having the privilege would have to raise the ante; and that finally he would inaugurate this new feature of the Grass dance by having all of his own children dance first. No one disputed the point, and from that day to this children have had the freedom of the floor at any of the social gatherings.

The innovation described above was probably one of the last changes made in the form of the Grass dance before it began to disintegrate about 1916. Once the dog ritual was abandoned,—seemingly just prior to 1920,—the Grass dance as such disappeared, leaving only the round dances, one or two of which survive today and are performed at annual fairs, at celebrations of the Fourth of July, and so on.

Let us now turn to a consideration of the functions of the Grass dance in Gros Ventre culture in each of the two periods.

Functions

Earlier period. When the Grass dance was first adopted by the 796
Gros Ventres its function was a relatively minor one of replacing 575
the dance belonging to one of the two "soldier" societies, the Wolves, or Wolf-men as the members were called. The members of the parallel society were known as Stars. These two societies were approximately equal numerically and included between them the whole Gros Ventres population of able-bodied warriors. At the age of 18 or 19 the individual Gros Ventre young man who, together with say 30-50 of his age-mates, already belonged to one of several "companies"—the Rosebushes, or Calves, or Resting-on-the-breast-of-a-woman, or Holding-dogs'-tails, and so forth,—would enter either the Wolf society or the Star society, whichever one was selected by the "company." The individual would then be either a Wolf-dancer or a Star-dancer, although he retained close personal association with the members of his "company" which would have entered one society or the other as a body. With the mates of his "company" he would then go through the

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

others to the left forming a circle inside the dancing-place where 796
they sat. The two prominent warriors, having been assisted in 575
dismounting, took up their places, one on each side of the entrance, holding whips in their hands. It was their duty to rouse any lagging dancers, whipping them if necessary. Each member had his own rattle, of peculiar shape but painted with individual designs, which he waved about as he danced. The wives of some of the dancers joined the four singers in singing certain of the dance songs. Two of the youngest members acted as *atsa'an* (waiters) tending to the fire, getting water, and so on. Occasionally during the dance a woman relative of one of the partici- [431]
pants would rush up to him, throw down a blanket or some other gift in his honor, grab his rattle and dance for a short time. Members of the other society did not join in the festivities or partake of the feast, in spite of the fact that most of the provisions for the latter had been donated by some of them.

At some future date, however, the Wolf-men would agree that the time was auspicious for them to have a dance and "get even" with the Stars. They would of course have their own songs, sung in front of the lodges of prominent members of the Star society, but otherwise the procedure was identical, including their accompaniment by two outstanding warriors, the "snake-dance," the arrangement of the lodge in the center of the camp-circle, and so on. The Wolf-men differed from the Stars in their actual dance [534]
in that they did not have rattles and in dancing seemingly intended to portray wolves, placing one hand on the forehead and the other at the back to represent the animal's tail.[14]

The adoption of the Grass dance meant merely that the more 796
elaborate dog ritual, with its regalia and greater degree of organi- 575
zation, replaced the dance of the Wolf-men although the begging 178
preliminary and so on remained the same. So far as we can see, at the time of its adoption, the Grass dance was a case of pure substitution and one that fitted readily into the cultural situation. First of all, according to Lowie's information, the Assini-

[14] I am deeply grateful to my colleague, John M. Cooper, who generously placed at my disposal his field notes on the Wolf society.

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 boine themselves considered the Grass dance as a modern form
575 of one of their own older soldier society dances.[15] Secondly there
178 were certain similarities between the original Star and Wolf dances on the one hand and the Grass dance on the other. In both types there was dancing to exhaustion and the employment of special officers to rouse the laggards,—the whip men in the first instance, the sword men in the other. Again women singers helped out occasionally in both. Still another feature in common was the custom of giving presents away, not to a relative who was a member, but in honor of that relative. Thus, the Grass dance became a part of Gros Ventres culture.

182 So long as Gros Ventre culture continued on its traditional eco-
178 nomic basis, the hunting of buffalo, the Grass dance fulfilled its function as the dance of the Wolf soldier society and was simply parallel to the dance of the rival Star society. The disappearance of the buffalo, however, wrought many changes in Gros Ventre life as it did in that of all of the Plains tribes. The Gros Ventres were fortunate in that the last large herd of buffalo happened to be in their hunting territory and thus they could benefit a little longer than most of their neighbors from this mainstay of their old way of life. This is not to say that prior to the extinction of the buffalo Gros Ventre culture was flourishing in pristine glory. Far from it. For one thing, at the time of the adoption of the
[77] Grass dance between 1875 and 1880, intertribal warfare, with which many aspects of their culture were interrelated, was at a minimum and was itself soon to disappear. Again, certain aspects of their ceremonial life had fallen into disuse, some of the Sacred Dances not having been given for years previously. Nevertheless, although the religious culture was dwindling, much was still left and the social side was relatively intact.

182 *Later period.* The break in economic life with the killing of
796 the last of the buffalo in 1884 was accompanied by the virtual disappearance of the Gros Ventre ceremonial organization. The public rites of a religious nature, which had formerly made for social solidarity as well, were abandoned. The last Sacrifice

[15] Lowie, loc. cit. p. 66.

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 new lodge, certain practices in connection with the Flat Pipe, as well as in the dog ritual of the Grass dance. All in all the Grass dance was so much more colorful that, with choice left strictly to the individual, as it was after the "companies" were no longer formed, it seems probable that greater and greater numbers elected to join the Grass dancers. In time the Star society consequently lacked sufficient recruits to maintain its identity.

796 The addition of the round dances, such as the Ringtail, around
● 178 the dog ritual nucleus, allowed all to actively participate. In this way the Grass dance provided occasion for group recreational outlets, while at the same time fulfilling another function formerly carried out by the public religious rites, namely, that of enhancing the feeling of social solidarity. One aspect of the public religious rites had been a nice balance in their performance between periods of ritual solemnity and those of secular gaiety and relaxation. The Grass dance now approximated this situation to some degree in the reserve which the audience maintained during the performance of the ceremonial parts of the dog ritual, and the verve with which it entered into the other parts of the program, especially the round dances. If one may judge from the enthusiasm expressed by informants who knew the Grass dance between 1900 and 1916, it was a most stimulating and enjoyable affair. Each performance drew in a large proportion of the tribe, even those from the far corners of the Reservation.

In spite of its ceremonial features, the Grass dance was always looked upon as social rather than religious, and it could be given at any time. It thus became the accepted manner of entertaining the frequent visitors from other tribes and furthermore was emi-
[574] nently adapted to form the central part of Fourth of July celebrations and the like.

We have seen that in its later phase the Grass dance became more highly organized with the addition of new offices and a few new items of equipment. The expansion of offices meant retaining and underlining the recognition of types of ability formerly premiated while allowing for shifting emphases to different types of ability.

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The addition of the four "chiefs" of the Grass dance gave scope for public recognition of the middle-aged men of substance esteemed for their wisdom and judgment to whom office-holding proportionate for their dignity was otherwise denied. Although there was no longer opportunity for the ranks of warriors to swell, those who had in the past performed brave deeds could still gain status by being called upon to publicly recount them at the ceremonial eating of dog flesh and by being selected to handle the feathered bonnets. 796 178 622 [888] [554]

As the younger men had no chance to show their prowess in warfare and hunting, there was a change of emphasis to recognition of superior singing and dancing ability as one of the roads to public approval. This latter was brought out clearly by our informants when explaining the qualifications of those sought for the various officers of the Grass dance as it was performed around the turn of the century. 796 178 555

They stated that much of the success of the performance of the Grass dance depended particularly on the singers of the dog ritual songs. The four singers who owned the ceremonial drumsticks were chosen for their good voices and from among the "lively men who liked to do things." The candidates did not have to know the songs in advance because they could be trained. Two noted teachers were The Boy and Joe Big Beaver. The Boy said he used to "campaign against himself" when it was time for a drumstick to be transferred because "he didn't want to get tied down. He enjoyed dancing and the singers never got a chance to participate." Our informants told us of two men who are remembered especially as being outstanding singers and drummers, Ed Rider and Breath. The latter was described as a top-ranking singer who, so far as they knew, had never been surpassed. They said: "It was something worth listening to when Breath started those Grass dance songs. He had a voice adapted to that kind of singing and his sense of rhythm was superb. He could hold a big crowd of people spellbound. He was a real genius. Many others tried to copy him and learn from him, but none ever succeeded in equalling him. Regardless of his fine voice no one

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 even acquired his technique for beating the drum, that is, of be-
178 ginning lightly and then, in an inimitable manner, of increasing
555 the volume. Sometimes the other three singers would let him begin a song and sing it through once just to listen to him. He was left-handed, but he sure could beat the drum! He was a man of whom you could say he had a real personality as far as the Grass dance was concerned but who was not so noticeable outside this one field. He was always deliberate but as soon as he approached the dancing-place he seemed to come alive. He was good at that office in the Grass dance and he knew it. He would sit up at the drum as straight as a lord and never attempted to be inconspicuous as, for instance, by putting his hat down over his eyes. Many of the young fellows who usually didn't join in the dancing and liked to play around on the outside would nevertheless rush from every direction to get to the floor when they saw him coming."

796 While singing had always held an important place in Gros Ventre religious culture, in the past the emphasis had been on the meaning of the song far more than on the quality of the voice and the manner of performing as it was in the Grass dance. Similarly in times gone by what dancing there was in the various rites was more or less perfunctory, whereas in the Grass dance the ownership of the two crow-belts, the fork, the spoon, and the whistle was transferred to those among the younger men who had
[554] physical vigor and endurance as well as grace. For these offices "it took a good-looking young man in good physical condition to perform properly."

796 A still greater innovation was the inclusion of women as officers
178 of the Grass dance. The two ceremonial black dresses were
562 seemingly symbolic of the black paint used in the Victory dance of former years, especially in view of the fact that this was one of the few dances performed by women in the old culture. It should be mentioned, however, that in connection with the Victory dance there had been no formal office nor had the participants therein been under economic obligations. We might hazard the guess that the ownership by women of two of the war-bonnets in

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the Grass dance may have seemed appropriate to the Gros Ventres as reminiscent of the feather headdress worn by the participants in the Women's Dance belonging to the series of vowed Sacred Dances. But regardless of the possible symbolism, these four offices, plus the four others allotted to women,—two whip owners and their two assistants,—gave the female sex a fair degree of recognition, and probably reflect the newer economic status of women which came about with the changing concept of inheritance. Formerly women, of course, had a right to their own property, but acquisition thereof was mainly through their own manufacture, such as clothing, or through the relatively rare gift of a horse or so. They did not come in for any valuable property through inheritance and a widow in those days was not even entitled to any of her deceased husband's belongings.

The holding of office in the Grass dance thus offered one of the very few means remaining for acquisition of status by the individual. The frequent transfer of offices meant that there was opportunity for many individuals within each category,—mature men, older warriors, young men, women,—to enjoy such public recognition.

Public display of generosity in giving away property to honor a loved one, which became such a marked feature of the Grass dance in its later phase, carried on and accentuated the method most common in older Gros Ventre culture for the gaining of individual prestige. Formerly there were many opportunities for this kind of ostentatious liberality,—when a pipe or a painted lodge was transferred, when a warrior returned from accomplishing brave deeds, when a person was participating in one of the Sacred Dances, when a person was named, when a child's ears were pierced, and so on. At such times the relatives publicly gave away as much of their property as they possibly could,—not to the recipient of the pipe, the brave warrior, the participant in the Sacred Dance, et al.,—but to someone else in his honor. Everybody would know what was given and by whom; people would make such comments as: "So-and-so is a fine man. He surely must think a lot of his relative—look at all the things he

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 gave away in his honor." When first adopted the Grass dance
178 offered only one such opportunity—and a relatively minor one.
431 As times changed, however, the Grass dance provided practically
156 the sole occasion for gaining prestige while at the same time
554 carrying out the old pattern of kinship obligation by enhancing the prestige of relatives.

The possibility in the later form of the Grass dance of paying for privileges, such as locking the door, or whipping those who did not get up to dance, gave further scope for the acquisition of prestige through liberality, as did also, of course, payments at transfer of office.

It was estimated by our informants that around 1900 as much as a thousand dollars in goods and cash changed hands at a single performance of the Grass dance. At that time it was not uncommon for the dance to be held at weekly intervals. So long as the Gros Ventre were relatively prosperous and had property to display and exchange according to the older patterns, the Grass dance continued to function. With increasing poverty, however, along
[735] with other factors such as the changing points of view and interests on the part of the younger generation, and the dying out of
[182] the older warriors, the Grass dance, the core of which was the dog ritual, gradually paled off leaving but the remnants of some of the round dances which had been added to the Grass dance as originally adopted from the Assiniboine.

Summary

796 Between 1875 and 1880 the Gros Ventres received the Grass
177 dance from the Assiniboine. From the date of adoption up to
575 about 1890 the Grass dance was performed only by members of one of the two soldier societies and the custodians of the ceremonial equipment were the officers. Offices were transferred among members according to the old Gros Ventre pattern.

796 The essential core of the Grass dance was the dog ritual, a
[262] ceremonial eating of dog flesh, carried out by the owners of the equipment with the assistance of four warriors selected from among the lay members. Other features of the program at each

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Other features of the program at each performance of the Grass dance included the "punishing" dance, the smoking song, the forfeiture of property, the "throwing away" of property represented by sticks, gift-giving in honor of loved ones. 796 [533 431]

In 1890 changes in the form of the Grass dance began to be noticeable. By 1900 the Grass dance included all in the tribe who wished to participate. The official personnel had been expanded to include four "chiefs," four war-bonnet owners, two owners of ceremonial black dresses, two women whip-owners and two female assistants. Transfer of all offices was, however, carried out as before. 796 178

The dog ritual continued unchanged to be the highlight of the program. Perhaps the most obvious change in procedure was the inclusion of round dances, especially the Ringtail dance, in which both men and women participated and for which "punishing" songs had been devised. The smoking song and the forfeiture of property were retained, but with some elaborations. Although the "throwing away" of property gradually disappeared, the gift-giving in honor of relatives was very much emphasized. Other very minor changes were inaugurated at intervals up until about 1916. [533]

The changing functions of the Grass dance coincide with the changing form and can likewise be considered as of two periods, —the first from 1875–80 to 1890; the second from 1890 to 1916.

In the first period the function of the Grass dance was a relatively minor one. It was adopted, and fitted into place, as a substitute for the simpler and less colorful dance of the Wolf soldier society, and paralleled the dance of the other soldier society, the Star society. In view especially of the preliminary "begging" songs, the Grass dance seemingly was the expression of but one phase of the intense rivalry between the two soldier societies. [575]

With the extinction of the buffalo in 1884 came the breakdown of the older culture. By 1890 not only had most of the public religious rites disappeared, but the social organization was greatly altered. As the economic basis was changed, the nomadic life and the camp circle were abandoned, and the two soldier societies no [182]

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 longer existed. The dance of one of them, the Grass dance, how-
178 ever, survived. In its changed form the Grass dance filled the void in social life during the transition from old to new.

With the admission of all to membership and through the addition of round dances in which all could actively participate, the Grass dance met the needs for group recreational outlets and for expression of social solidarity.

796 As the sole surviving institution which carried the concept of
178 graded offices and their transfer, the Grass dance met the need of
554 the individual for status along traditional lines. The expansion of offices allowed for the recognition of types of ability formerly premiated and opened the way for younger men as well as for women in emphasizing different kinds of ability.

Finally, the Grass dance met the need of the individual for prestige in accordance with the older pattern by offering opportunity for ostentatious liberality. By bestowing gifts publicly
[431] at the Grass dance, one could gain the coveted reputation for generosity, while at the same time fulfilling a substantial part of one's obligation to kinsmen.

796 The Grass dance continued to function in this way up to about
182 1916, after which time it began gradually to pale off, and to practically disappear by 1920. The few round dances carried on at present under the name "Grass dance" bear no appreciable relationship to the lively and colorful performances that are remembered by the older Gros Ventres as having been so stimulating and enjoyable.

8:Flannery E-5 (1940-1948)1960 NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

INDIVIDUAL VARIATION IN CULTURE

Regina Flannery

It is generally accepted that what Benedict called the Dionysian configuration of Plains culture represents a dominant, if not the only trend. By definition a configuration is a generalization lying behind and explaining a number of cultural patterns. A pattern itself is of course an abstraction from the behavior of a number of individuals. The behavior of any one person may vary at different times in respect to a particular type of situation, but it is unlikely that the individual will show the whole range of possible behavior within a pattern; it will cover only a portion thereof. As Linton pointed out, the difference between the individual mode within this segment, and the mode of the behaviors on which the pattern is based, reflects the compromise which every individual has to make between the culture patterns of his society and his own inclinations. It would seem further, then, that if the modes of an individual's behavior-ranges show a consistent displacement with respect to a large series of patterns, it is safe to assume that the direction of this displacement reflects some quality of the individual.[1] The question we wish to raise is this: If the aspect of personality thus revealed runs counter to a dominant trend of his culture, is the individual a misfit in that society?

In attempting an answer, let us examine some individual variations within those patterns of Plains culture in which expression of emotional excess, and dangerous experience were expected of women in one Plains society, that of the Gros Ventres of Montana. We shall outline in some detail the behavior of one Gros Ventre woman in respect of these selected patterns—from which the Dionysian configuration was abstracted—and contrast her behavior with that of others of approximately the same age. All had participated as adults in the old way of life before the disappearance of the buffalo in 1887.

In Gros Ventre culture, as in all the Plains, there was high valuation placed on direct contact of the individual with the supernatural through dreams and visions. Men could actively seek such contact by employing dangerous means, and did so in order to obtain many kinds of power. While women did not go on the actual power quest, they might acquire medicine powers and less frequently, perhaps, powers of clairvoyance. Medicine powers were considered dangerous in that, it was believed, by accepting them a limitation was put upon the life span of the practitioner. But the rewards in terms of prestige for successful performance and of payment for services were high for women as well as for men. Not every individual man was successful in his quest, nor of course was every woman vouchsafed the kinds of dreams which were requisite. Coming Daylight, the woman whose behavior we are examining in particular, was what her contemporaries considered fortunate indeed in having been offered curing powers of several kinds. Nevertheless she rejected the possibility each time, in spite of the fact that she had a living example in the person of her father's sister of what it could mean in prestige to a woman who accepted. As the reasons for her refusal seem significant I shall describe her experience in her own words.

8:Flannery E-5 (1940-1948)1960 NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

and, each time he attempted to get to his knees, one of two women who had already reached the scene would strike him on the buttocks with the flat side of a hatchet, making an insulting remark, and both would laugh. Coming Daylight hesitated at some distance from where the other two were gloating over the fallen enemy. When one of them, Woman Chief by name, saw her she ran to her saying: "Why are you standing so far off?" She grabbed her by the arm and pushed a big club into her hand, saying: "He is still alive—you will do a great thing. *Ahe:ya'!*" Woman Chief forced Coming Daylight to strike him.

While both Woman Chief and Coming Daylight closely approximated the ideal for women as faithful wives and efficient workers who gave generously of their material goods to and on behalf of their relatives, they seemingly differed in temperament. Woman Chief was known as a very brave woman, and Coming Daylight was frank in admitting she would never have dreamed of doing the kinds of things for which Woman Chief was renowned. One of the latter's exploits, for example, was as follows. The Gros Ventres and Crow were allies in an encounter with the Piegan. The battle was in full force, but one Crow had withdrawn and was sitting motionless astride his horse at some distance from the melee. Woman Chief, who in contrast to most women was always well mounted, dashed up to the Crow, grabbed his wand from his hand, and rode pellmell into the thick of the battle, counting coups right and left. So brave was she considered in having really risked her life that she was accorded the distinction, most unusual for a woman, of being led around the camp circle with the victorious warriors. Furthermore, so many people came to sing in front of her lodge that she and her relatives, to show their appreciation of the honor, were forced to give away as much property as though she were a man. Judging on the basis of other biographical material, there can be no doubt that she gloried in her reputation and took every opportunity to enhance it. She was one to whom the more violent aspects of Gros Ventre culture were exceedingly congenial.

If we compare and contrast these two women we can say that insofar as the patterns of Dionysian configuration are the basis of the comparison, their behavior exhibits opposite extremes, the one going beyond the average in the direction of the configuration, the other running counter to and participating less than the average therein. Both might be termed deviant personalities in Honigman's sense of the term,[2] one overplaying and the other underplaying modal behavior in these selected patterns. Nevertheless, neither seems to have been a misfit insofar as each represents an extreme of socially accepted or sanctioned behavior within those patterns. If, for instance, Coming Daylight had been completely negative, and refused, say, to carry out at least the culturally defined minimum for mourning, had she, in addition to refusing to mutilate herself for the recovery of her ill relatives, neglected as an adult even the safe and less strenuous means to that end, she would have fallen without the pale, so to speak, and have been a misfit. If, at the opposite end of the scale, Woman Chief had gone further in the direction of masculinity, had she actually gone on raiding expeditions and herself stolen horses from the camp of the enemy, had she learned to shoot the bow and arrow or gun, or had she so much as adopted the vocabulary and/or pronunciation proper for males in the Gros Ventres language, she would have been carrying things too far. She, too, would have been dubbed a misfit.

The Catholic University of America,
Washington, D.C.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The Dance must have helped appreciably to enhance the status of the elderly participants, a little old to take active part in the actual hunting and game-food providing, and to have given them a feeling of still being economically useful members of the tribe. The same *mutatis mutandis* would be true of the old women in connection with their own Dance.

After the more or less secret rites inside the lodge of the Dance were over, the dancers ran a race. After the close of the dance, the camp moved.

The elderly men who as chief vowers or associates had gone once through the Dance had reached the end of the ritual trail and became members of the unorganized "retired old men," of equal rank in this respect with their ceremonial grandfathers. After the dance the grandfathers could not control their grandsons, as grandfathers could after other Dances. After going through this Dance, the dancer though entering in a sense the "inactive" ranks could still be called on to function as a ceremonial grandfather. He moreover was allowed very considerable freedom and latitude previously denied him. With his Punishers' Dance grandfather he contracted a relationship somewhat similar to the enemy-friend one. In general, while of course he was given no leave to commit grave crimes, he was allowed much freedom in talking or acting vulgarly or obscenely in public and in the presence of consanguineal or actual relatives toward whom respect and avoidance observances had been strictly required of him prior to his graduation into the class of "retired old men."[88]

He could, for instance, talk pretty freely with his own brother-in-law who was also a "retired old man" about matters concerning elimination and reproduction, and could indulge in a large degree of vulgarity and obscenity before a group which included even his own mother-in-law, and no one had the right to criticize him for this or protest against his behavior.

If, for example, he took off his breechcloth in the presence of a group that included such relatives, someone might say to him: "That's going too far." But the old man might answer: "I have sat on the sage brush. I have the right to do this."

[88] Cf. Flannery, 1953, p. 196.

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

525 did not want to lose it," and her grandmother used to advise her against gambling lest she lose valued things. All in all it looks as if economic considerations had little to do with such disapproval of gambling as was current among the Gros Ventre; if anything, economic considerations and concepts of property use and disposal would in the main have reinforced approval.

To sum up, Gros Ventre attitudes on gambling appear to have been influenced very much by concern for altruism and accord, very little by economic values.

PAST AND PRESENT

525 773 To round out the picture we have tried to give of Gros Ventre gambling, we are adding a brief sketch of its history.

Gros Ventre myth, folk lore, and tradition have little to say on gambling. According to one folk story, given by Mrs Sleeping Bear, but unknown to Mrs Warrior, the hand game was first gotten from the thunder by a certain Tsē'ganis (Little Short Horns). There is no reference to gambling in the fairly complete cycle of sacred myths we gathered or in the trickster (Nihāt'a) cycle.[8] This absence, particularly from the trickster cycle, may give some slight ground for suspecting that gambling may not go back very far in Gros Ventre culture history.

525 Apart, however, from such speculative surmise, what is clear is that gambling was in full vigor among the Gros Ventre in the second half of the last century, and had been since at least around the early part of the century. It was in full swing from at least the early boyhood days of Lame Bull who was born in 1825.

525 182 Gros Ventre gambling, especially with the wheel and hand games, suffered a severe shock after the disappearance of the buffalo in 1884, as did the main structure of Gros Ventre culture and society. With the rapid collapse of the broad framework into which gambling had so trimly fitted, gambling itself, especially with the older games, rapidly toppled down. The last big wheel game remembered by five older informants—~~The~~ Boy, Thick, Charles Buckman, Steven Bradley, Philip Shortman—occurred in 1893; the last big hand game in 1891.[9] Around the turn of the century not much of the older complex was

8 Gambling does however occur in the Found-in-the-Grass Gros Ventre folk story, according to The Boy. Gambling at the wheel game between Clotted-Blood and the Bull is recorded in the Clotted-Blood tale, by A. L. Kroeber, *Gros Ventre Myths and Tales* (Anthropological Papers, American Museum of Natural History, vol. 1, pt. 3, 1907), p. 86.

[115] 9 When in the field we failed to obtain these exact dates. We are indebted for them to our conscientious, high-minded and exceptionally able interpreter, Thomas Main, who procured them for us from the above five elder informants and forwarded them to us with some other supplementary information by letter of September 25, 1946.

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

left, although we still have reports of a hand game between the Gros Ventre 525
and the Flathead, staged at Glacier Park, Montana, as late as 1922, in which 182
Joe Assiniboine represented the Gros Ventre. Today neither the wheel game nor the 2-button hand game is played.

Hard times, for a short period near-famine conditions, prevailed for a while after 1884; an economy of abundance gave place to an economy of scarcity. [735] While a world survey of gambling reveals, so far as we can discern, no significant correlation between gambling and abundance or scarcity economies, extreme and sudden economic shock and shift, such as occurred among the Gros Ventre in the years immediately following 1884, may well have slowed up the gambling pace.

Around 1897 the non-gambling hand game was introduced, won favor, and [177] persists down to the present. Today there is little gambling among the Gros Ventre on the reservation. Most of what occurs among them takes place off [178] the reservation, at nearby white villages and towns, in the form of poker or other card games for money, between Gros Ventre and whites.

Catholic University of America
Washington, D. C.

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 boine themselves considered the Grass dance as a modern form
575 of one of their own older soldier society dances.[15] Secondly there
178 were certain similarities between the original Star and Wolf dances on the one hand and the Grass dance on the other. In both types there was dancing to exhaustion and the employment of special officers to rouse the laggards,—the whip men in the first instance, the sword men in the other. Again women singers helped out occasionally in both. Still another feature in common was the custom of giving presents away, not to a relative who was a member, but in honor of that relative. Thus, the Grass dance became a part of Gros Ventres culture.

182 So long as Gros Ventre culture continued on its traditional eco-
178 nomic basis, the hunting of buffalo, the Grass dance fulfilled its function as the dance of the Wolf soldier society and was simply parallel to the dance of the rival Star society. The disappearance of the buffalo, however, wrought many changes in Gros Ventre life as it did in that of all of the Plains tribes. The Gros Ventres were fortunate in that the last large herd of buffalo happened to be in their hunting territory and thus they could benefit a little longer than most of their neighbors from this mainstay of their old way of life. This is not to say that prior to the extinction of the buffalo Gros Ventre culture was flourishing in pristine glory. Far from it. For one thing, at the time of the adoption of the
[[77] Grass dance between 1875 and 1880, intertribal warfare, with which many aspects of their culture were interrelated, was at a minimum and was itself soon to disappear. Again, certain aspects of their ceremonial life had fallen into disuse, some of the Sacred Dances not having been given for years previously. Nevertheless, although the religious culture was dwindling, much was still left and the social side was relatively intact.

182 *Later period.* The break in economic life with the killing of
796 the last of the buffalo in 1884 was accompanied by the virtual disappearance of the Gros Ventre ceremonial organization. The public rites of a religious nature, which had formerly made for social solidarity as well, were abandoned. The last Sacrifice

[15] Lowie, loc. cit. p. 66.

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Dance (Sun Dance), for example, was given in that very year 182
and, so far as our data go, but one Crazy Dance was held after 796
that. The seasonal Flat Pipe rite was discontinued. Furthermore there was a breakdown in the socio-political life. The necessity for nomadic life had disappeared and as a consequence there was no longer need of policing the hunt or keeping order in [575]
the camp circle when the whole tribe gathered so that, with the further establishment of peace, the raison d'être for two rival soldier societies was gone.

In the transition period the missionaries were trying valiantly to fill the gap in religious life but did not offer a satisfactory [797]
solution for the social situation; nor did the Agency which had become the center of the new economic life. It was the Grass dance, which as we have seen survived in a somewhat changed form, that seems to have filled the void left in social life.

In its earlier form the Grass dance was purely social in nature, 796
as was ~~the~~ Star dance, but the latter faded away while the [535]
former attained a position of heightened importance. One of the factors accounting for this fact seems to be that the Grass dance "had more to it," as our informants put it. The performance of the dog ritual was certainly far more spectacular than the simpler dance of the Star society and, in addition, it had semi-ceremonial connotations reminiscent of other features of the older Gros Ventre culture which were lacking from the Star dance. For example, the owners of the regalia in the Grass dance were likewise officers of several degrees of importance therein, as was the case in the performance of the Sacred Dances. Again, sex abstinence was required before dancing with the crow-belts as it was [784]
before participating in the Sacrifice Dance (Sun Dance) and before dancing with the Feathered Pipe. Ceremonial incensing of persons and equipment had been a marked characteristic of Gros [783]
Ventre religious life. The formal transfer of office and regalia duplicates the pattern of transfer of office of Pipe Keeper, transfer of painted lodges, and so on. Recounting of war deeds was frequently demanded in connection with many aspects of Gros Ventre life,—to validate the giving of a name, the erection of a

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 gave away in his honor." When first adopted the Grass dance
178 offered only one such opportunity—and a relatively minor one.
431 As times changed, however, the Grass dance provided practically
156 the sole occasion for gaining prestige while at the same time
554 carrying out the old pattern of kinship obligation by enhancing the prestige of relatives.

The possibility in the later form of the Grass dance of paying for privileges, such as locking the door, or whipping those who did not get up to dance, gave further scope for the acquisition of prestige through liberality, as did also, of course, payments at transfer of office.

It was estimated by our informants that around 1900 as much as a thousand dollars in goods and cash changed hands at a single performance of the Grass dance. At that time it was not uncommon for the dance to be held at weekly intervals. So long as the Gros Ventre were relatively prosperous and had property to display and exchange according to the older patterns, the Grass dance continued to function. With increasing poverty, however, along
[735] with other factors such as the changing points of view and interests on the part of the younger generation, and the dying out of
[182] the older warriors, the Grass dance, the core of which was the dog ritual, gradually paled off leaving but the remnants of some of the round dances which had been added to the Grass dance as originally adopted from the Assiniboine.

Summary

796 Between 1875 and 1880 the Gros Ventres received the Grass
177 dance from the Assiniboine. From the date of adoption up to
575 about 1890 the Grass dance was performed only by members of one of the two soldier societies and the custodians of the ceremonial equipment were the officers. Offices were transferred among members according to the old Gros Ventre pattern.

796 The essential core of the Grass dance was the dog ritual, a
[262] ceremonial eating of dog flesh, carried out by the owners of the equipment with the assistance of four warriors selected from among the lay members. Other features of the program at each

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

other features of the program at each performance of the Grass dance included the "punishing" dance, the smoking song, the forfeiture of property, the "throwing away" of property represented by sticks, gift-giving in honor of loved ones. 796 [533 431]

In 1890 changes in the form of the Grass dance began to be noticeable. By 1900 the Grass dance included all in the tribe who wished to participate. The official personnel had been expanded to include four "chiefs," four war-bonnet owners, two owners of ceremonial black dresses, two women whip-owners and two female assistants. Transfer of all offices was, however, carried out as before. 796 178

The dog ritual continued unchanged to be the highlight of the program. Perhaps the most obvious change in procedure was the inclusion of round dances, especially the Ringtail dance, in which both men and women participated and for which "punishing" songs had been devised. The smoking song and the forfeiture of property were retained, but with some elaborations. Although the "throwing away" of property gradually disappeared, the gift-giving in honor of relatives was very much emphasized. Other very minor changes were inaugurated at intervals up until about 1916. [533]

The changing functions of the Grass dance coincide with the changing form and can likewise be considered as of two periods, —the first from 1875–80 to 1890; the second from 1890 to 1916.

In the first period the function of the Grass dance was a relatively minor one. It was adopted, and fitted into place, as a substitute for the simpler and less colorful dance of the Wolf soldier society, and paralleled the dance of the other soldier society, the Star society. In view especially of the preliminary "begging" songs, the Grass dance seemingly was the expression of but one phase of the intense rivalry between the two soldier societies. [575]

With the extinction of the buffalo in 1884 came the breakdown of the older culture. By 1890 not only had most of the public religious rites disappeared, but the social organization was greatly altered. As the economic basis was changed, the nomadic life and the camp circle were abandoned, and the two soldier societies no [182]

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 longer existed. The dance of one of them, the Grass dance, how-
178 ever, survived. In its changed form the Grass dance filled the void in social life during the transition from old to new.

With the admission of all to membership and through the addition of round dances in which all could actively participate, the Grass dance met the needs for group recreational outlets and for expression of social solidarity.

796 As the sole surviving institution which carried the concept of
178 graded offices and their transfer, the Grass dance met the need of
554 the individual for status along traditional lines. The expansion of offices allowed for the recognition of types of ability formerly premiated and opened the way for younger men as well as for women in emphasizing different kinds of ability.

Finally, the Grass dance met the need of the individual for prestige in accordance with the older pattern by offering opportunity for ostentatious liberality. By bestowing gifts publicly
[431] at the Grass dance, one could gain the coveted reputation for generosity, while at the same time fulfilling a substantial part of one's obligation to kinsmen.

796 The Grass dance continued to function in this way up to about
182 1916, after which time it began gradually to pale off, and to practically disappear by 1920. The few round dances carried on at present under the name "Grass dance" bear no appreciable relationship to the lively and colorful performances that are remembered by the older Gros Ventres as having been so stimulating and enjoyable.

8:Flannery E-5 (1940-1948)1960 NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Her final rejoinder was such a witty and pointed one that everyone laughed heartily at her rival's expense. In this culture, of course, public ridicule was a far more effective retaliation than the biting and scratching that other women said frankly they would have indulged in when attacked.

Expression of emotional excess was institutionalized for the Gros Ventres, as for the rest of the Plains, in the bereavement situation. Upon the death of a husband, son, or father, a woman was expected to start wailing as soon as she heard the news, have her hair cut off, discard good clothes for old ragged ones, gash her arms and legs, go to the hills to mourn and cry, resisting for a time the pleas of her relatives to return, and being watched lest she attempt suicide. Coming Daylight was only a young woman when she was first widowed and the mourning pattern was still in full vogue. It is certain from other evidence than Coming Dayling had a deep affection for this husband to whom she had been given as a child-bride and in whose kindly and indulgent treatment she had found a pleasant escape from the rigorous discipline of her grandmother. Nevertheless the public expression of her grief was minimal—no abandonment for her. Although her sister was sent on the hills with her to keep watch over her in the usual way, Coming Daylight was easily persuaded to return shortly though she herself was proud of the fact that she had stayed out so long that she actually had got a frozen toe! In later years when all that was left of the ritual was the wailing out on the hills, she lost the son whom she herself, and everybody else, acknowledged as her favorite. She had not been on the hills very long when she experienced a significant dream, as follows. She was in a lodge at the rear of which was a big pile of tobacco mixture and a pipe. The owner of the lodge filled the pipe and approached her. She was frightened because she didn't smoke. The owner of the lodge however told her: "Look at these people." She looked and saw many with their hair cut and their bodies bleeding from the gashes inflicted in grief. The man then told her: "That is in the past. Nowadays your only consolation is in smoking." So she accepted the pipe and, after smoking it, she was painted in ceremonial fashion by each of those other mourners. Then the owner of the lodge dismissed her saying: "Now, go home and don't ever go on the hills and mourn again. But always smoke if you want to." She went home right after this dream and when she told her husband of it he accepted it as valid and persuaded her sister to prepare for Coming Daylight her first real smoke. She maintained that the habit subsequently developed was actually a great comfort to her.

The final area with which we shall be concerned here is the war complex—a vital aspect of the old Plains culture. Gros Ventre women were allowed direct but limited participation in these activities in the sense that, while they would not join a party of men who were going on horse-raiding or revenge expeditions, if opportunity offered they might exhibit the same kind of bravery that a man should show and derive considerable status therefrom. For instance, if one of the enemy fell nearby, the women rushed out from camp to count coup, and to grab trophies with which to inaugurate the relationship known as "enemy-friends." Coming Daylight, however, was never one to indulge in this sport. She told of the one—and to her extremely distasteful—occasion on which her hand literally was forced. It seems that during a raid on their camp one of the enemy was shot and her husband scalped him. The victim was lying not far from her lodge and, as her husband dashed off to pursue the rest of the Assiniboine, he shouted for her to come out and see what was going on. Coming Daylight saw the man lying there, face down, covered with blood. He was not dead

Thus we have the basis for the generalizations the Gros Ventres
183 make about their own culture. The principle seemed to be that
the more one gives, the more he gets. Coming Daylight explained:
431 "Those who are stingy don't come up, they just go back, back,
back. Those who are generous gets lots of things. My maternal
uncle was very generous and I try to follow his example. I feed
everybody—old men, children and everybody—and people give me
lots of things. Stingy people would eat all by themselves and
nobody would give things to anyone like that."

The attitude is further illustrated by the following statement by Singer in explaining that the one selected as Feather Pipe Keeper had to give up everything he owned and would be sitting naked and bereft of all property: "Then his relatives and friends bring him things to live on. It is a great thing to give to someone like that. But these people kind of share everything and it holds back the ones that are prosperous. Our belief was that in a little while the ones who give have everything again. This didn't mean that a person could be lazy since it was 'thrown up' to anyone if he sat around and didn't work."

183 Again, according to Coming Daylight, "Formerly they all
431 seemed to work in a bunch and work hard for a living. It seemed
476 like they were all one, and always helped one another and treated
one another to things, especially to something they thought the other person didn't have. If a bunch of women went out to pick berries, they helped one another with pounding. If they had hides to tan, others seeing the work going on came and helped and in no time the work was done. Even if they dug turnips, which are hard to get, should they have brought in a lot, they passed them around. If someone had no horse to use in hunting, someone loaned him one."

Mary Ereaux mentioned: "The Gros Ventres are great ones for sharing and that keeps the more industrious ones down. They are not as present as generous as they used to be because they would be entirely out. But even today if a woman brings you some berries, later on you give her some sugar or something she needs. That is the way they always lived and still do."

In payment for services there is no set "price," so to speak, but there was a gradation according to the kind of service rendered. If an older experienced woman were called in to design a new

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

lodge cover, the hostess provided food and there was no other direct remuneration. If one sought knowledge as to how to use an ordinary medicinal root, something was given in exchange, but in a relatively small amount. On the other hand in compensation for the services of a medicine man, not only was food prepared, but in addition a much greater amount of property was given to the doctor, who in turn would see that those who had accompanied him to help in singing at the cure, would receive some goods as well. The amount offered to the doctor by the one paying for the services was governed by the reputation of the medicine man as well as by the individual's regard for his own reputation for generosity. People would say: "Look how much so-and-so thinks of his relative who was sick—he gave so much to the one who cured him." If the patient were very ill a whole family might really impoverish itself in paying doctors, were it necessary to call in one specialist after another, as sometimes happened. 183 431 476 [956]

Although apparently there was a tendency to call on relatives to perform services—such as naming a child, telling a war story at the erection of a new lodge, and so on—remuneration was forthcoming, although perhaps on not so large a scale as if a non-relative were called on to perform the same offices. [602]

In addition to exchange of goods effected through generous hospitality and the prestige-requirements of ostentatious liberality, including payment for services, the distribution of goods within the tribe was aided by gambling. Wagers were matched by two competing individuals and bet on an all-or-nothing basis. Considerable amounts of property changed hands at a single match.[19] [525]

[19] For a discussion of gambling among the Gros Ventres, see Flannery and Cooper, 1946.

868 ered the most difficult of all tasks allotted to women and not every one was able to do it.

183 The whole training of the girl was oriented toward marriage. A girl was supposed to have been ignorant in sex matters until 864 informed by an older person, presumably in most cases by a grand- 867 mother. Coming Daylight, for example, remembers very distinctly that when she was about ten years old and the man who became her first husband had asked her uncle for her, her grandmother warned her: "Don't be 'ashamed' of your husband." The old woman then told Coming Daylight what to expect as to the physical side of marriage. Her grandmother also told her many other things, as was usual for a girl about to be married. "Now you are going to be married. You be true to your man. If some young fellow comes to you and wants to 'throw in with you,' you tell him no. But refuse him in a nice way and don't say bad things. Try to get out of it nicely. Then go right to your husband and tell him what happened, because if he sees you talking to another man he might get the wrong impression and think you have consented. Moreover, never become jealous of your husband nor should you ever fight back at any woman who might attack you on account of wanting him. Just pity such a woman. Always remember you are the wife; the other woman is not married to him but you are."

Just before she went with her husband to his home, an uncle of hers came to Coming Daylight and told her to tend to her house well, to make clothes for her husband and to see to it that he was always nice and clean. Then he added that she should not get mad or pout if her husband should go out and stay away longer than she thought he should. He said: "When a woman gets mad from this cause, she wants to make her own life bad. When her husband goes around visiting other women, and his wife finds out, then she wants to run around with men. If she retaliates in this way she only gets herself in bad. What you should do when your husband goes out and stays late is to say nothing when he comes in. He will always come back to you. You just say to yourself that he is your man and that he won't leave you permanently for any other woman."

It would seem that girls, as part of their training, were con-

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

183 stantly admonished to stay at home after they were married and 864 not to go visiting and gossiping with other women. Mothers told 867 their daughters to be respectful to their husbands. When still very young, a girl was taught to "always make a lot over a man." She started with her father and was responsible, for instance, for seeing to it that in the morning when he awakened there was water beside him so he could wash his face before going for his morning bath, and that his breakfast would be ready for him when he came back therefrom. These are the kinds of things girls would be expected to do later for their husbands.

All during the time they were learning domestic skills, girls 183 were told that they should keep everything that they own nicely 867 and to have on hand everything they may need. It was not good to run around and borrow. "Keep your house clean and keep everything in good order, then your husband will like to stay at home." Again, "Don't let your husband's moccasins wear out before you make another pair. Always have things prepared ahead of time." Girls were told, too, that good wives took their husband's moccasins off for them when they came home tired, and so on.

Coming Daylight always admonished her daughters: "Never talk back to your husband. Women have fiery tongues when they get mad, and that is bad." It was nearly always taken for granted by others that the wife was to blame if her husband beat her. Since it was customary for very young girls to marry men very [582] much older than they, such husbands took upon themselves the role of disciplinarian.

While marriage was taken for granted, apparently a girl was 787 free to accept or to reject medicine power. Neither girls nor women went on power quests, but some individuals were vouch- [562] safed some kinds of supernatural power in dreams. While the experience of Coming Daylight may be unique, it is illuminating. "Even before I was married, I had a particular kind of dream which indicated power to extract illness from the body of a patient. This dream occurred four nights in succession. Each morning I would tell my grandmother about it. The old woman got angry each time and told me not to talk about it, to keep it to myself so that I would become a great doctor. But I had already

861 to their daughters.[10] The lecturing of the child started when he was an infant and continued until adulthood had been attained. Those charged with the training of children felt it to be a duty. As Coming Daylight put it: "They talked to their children right from the start, and before the babies themselves were able to talk, they seemed to understand." Singer remarked that, because modern parents do not talk to infants as the old-fashioned ones used to do, present-day infants do not respond by trying to "talk back." Nowadays, the two old women insisted, even infants pay no attention to instruction, and as for older children, some go so far as to tell their elders to shut up!

Under the old regime, however, a child had to listen, whether he wanted to or not, and he had to retain, at least outwardly, a respectful attitude. Cora, for instance, said that she hated this being talked to. Her father was the one who did the lecturing in her family and he used to require that she stand in one spot and not move "while he preached about being good and the ways of doing everything." Singer and Coming Daylight admitted that it was tiresome for the child to be continuously lectured, but they insisted that this is the best way for children to learn. Children [856] are supposed to really grasp what is being said to them from about the age of four.

867 183 Thick remembers the general content of the lectures he heard from his mother to have run along these lines: "If you get a mare, treat it well because mares will increase. Take good care of her. If you get a saddle, hang on to it. Robes, bridles, whips, are needed useful articles, keep them, don't give them away. If you don't keep these things you will have to go and borrow from someone else. That is bad. If you have to borrow a horse from some other boy, his family might become suspicious of you; yet if they refuse, there are hard feelings over it. Therefore when you get something, take good care of it.

"When you go out to play with your own things, your bow and arrows or hoop, others will want you to play with them and to bet with them. If you join in such games, somebody is likely to get mad because you have won and so he may beat you up. If

[10] For details on kinship behavior, see pp. 107–08.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

he should, don't fight back. Let him take it out on you and don't fight back. 183 867

"When you are out playing, if you are hungry and you want to eat, come home. Don't go to any other family to eat because people are fond of their food and might resent it. If a boy, some friend of yours, invites you to his home, don't go."

Garter Snake's father was the one who lectured his children,—three sons and three daughters. Since she was Pipe Child, when her father was Keeper of the Feathered Pipe, Garter Snake was talked to by him more often perhaps than were her siblings. Long after she was married, her mother used to remind her of the things her father told her. Some of these admonitions were as follows: "I want you to be an upright, honest and straight woman. If you listen to everything I tell you and do as I tell you, in the future you will thank me for it. Now don't think you are alone in this world because the One above the White Man sees everything that we do. Don't steal, don't lie, don't be tricky. Be honest about everything.

"When you grow up and finally have your own home, pity the old men and pity the old women, pity the poor. If you see an old woman with a ragged dress, give her a blanket. Make moccasins for these old women. The same holds for these old men. If you see an old man whose leggings are torn, make leggings for him. If you see a poor person who needs clothes, give him some if you have any. If you do that the One Above who watches and looks at you doing those things, He is going to reward you. [888]

"When you are married and have your own home, take care of it well. If you have horses, take care of them; try to have good property and take care of it. If you do that you will always have something. If you have horses of your own that will help your husband. He may not have any and you can help him along.

"Be good to everybody. If a man or woman comes to visit, welcome them. Tell them: 'Come in and sit down.' Then feed them well regardless of whether they are poor or rich, young or old, or even children. [574]

"Above all, don't you ever quarrel with anyone. Don't you ever fight. Try to be friendly with everybody." [865]

Charles Buckman's uncle, who, like Garter Snake's father,

183 867 was not a Christian, used to tell him: "You have eyes to see, a heart to think, and ears to hear. Listen to what I will tell you. You are a poor boy. As such, be faithful. Believe in the One Above the White Man. Pray to Him, ask Him to have pity on you and so make you a good man some day. Try to be good to all, especially when you become a man. Be good to the poor, be good to the old. Never take anything not belonging to you. Never speak evil of other people. Try to be patient. If a man says [865] anything wrong to you, and hurts your feelings, say nothing because if folks talk back it causes quarreling or fighting, which is not good. If a poor man asks you for anything, if you have it, be ready to hand it over to him. If you see anybody hungry and [888] you have it, feed him. If an old man or woman is in need and wants anything done, do it for him or her. If you do these things, the One Above will have pity on you."

685 867 183 All informants agreed that in addition to having been told to take care of whatever property they might have, they were instructed to regard the property rights of others. It was believed that, though the theft remained undiscovered, the thief would be punished by automatic supernatural sanction. "Something terrible would happen to anybody who stole something." Mary's grandmother, for instance, had told her time and again never to take anything that did not belong to her. To illustrate how well this had been instilled into her, she gave the following example. "On one occasion when I was a child, I found a really beautiful string of beads, but I did not take it. After I got to bed that night, however, I told my grandmother about it. When asked why I had failed to bring home the beads, I replied: 'I was afraid you would tell me that I had taken them from someone.' My grandmother merely remarked: 'Well, you should have brought them to me, or better, you should have taken me to where they were lying.' But when I took her to the spot the next day the beads were gone."

This reminded Coming Daylight of an incident in her own [764] childhood. "I was walking near a grove of trees where several corpses had been placed (in the traditional manner of disposing of the dead). I noticed a considerable amount of bear excrement and mixed in it were a number of elk teeth—the most valuable

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

trimming for women's clothing. I knew that the body of a girl had been among those left in the branches of the trees at this place, so I decided that the bear had disturbed the bodies and must have eaten the cloth along with everything else. I stood there quite a while wondering whether I should take those elk teeth. Finally I took them and having strung them on a piece of sinew laid them in the stream-bed with a rock covering them. When I went home I opened the matter with my grandmother by stating: 'A bear ate that girl who was buried in the elk tooth dress.' When my grandmother asked how I knew this, I told her about the elk teeth in the excrement. Whereupon my grandmother asked: 'Why didn't you take those teeth? They are valuable.' Feeling easier in my mind, I said: 'I was afraid you would accuse me of stealing them—but I did take them anyway!' My grandmother was glad and so I brought them from the creek and I was happy, too, since there were enough teeth to make two rows on my dress." 183 685 867

The usual procedure of careful parents when a child reported he had found some article was to first question him as to whether or not he had taken it from someone. Then the parent would go around and ask people if they had lost this certain article. If a child had stolen it he would thus be found out and it was believed that he would never steal anything again.

The rights of children to their own property were recognized by elders and, while they admonished children to take good care of their things, if a child wished to dispose of what belonged to him no one would reprimand him for having done so. After all, generosity is a trait that was much admired among the Gros Ventres. Informants said that if, for instance, a man had given a horse to his daughter and she gave it away, he would say nothing to her about it. Should she ask him for another he might, however, tell her: "Well, I don't know—you might give it away." But he would never scold her about it. 183 858 867 421

Even if a child were flagrantly disobedient he would ordinarily be punished only by a scolding rather than by whipping or deprivation. Singer and Coming Daylight both were shocked at the idea that a child might be punished by depriving him of something. They said: "Indians love their children and we don't think they would deprive them of anything. They just talk to their children 861

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

system of discipline, but it was not like that of the white man. 861
The Indian used his roaring voice and stinging words. When I was a boy there was one old man who had a crippled hand. On various occasions when we were told to keep quiet and we disregarded that appeal, that old man would sneak up to us and roar at us. Sometimes he would bluff mischievous boys by telling them: 'Come over here. I am going to work you over with this crippled hand,' but nobody would dare go near him. Then he would say: 'Well, give me one arrow apiece. I won't work you over this time—but next time I will surely do so!"

The bugaboo was used to threaten small children when they misbehaved. They were told that "someone" would come and take them away in a big sack. The story told by Singer and Coming Daylight regarding the bugaboo was that of a woman who put her disobedient son outside her lodge and this "someone" came along with a sack, put the child in it and hung the sack in a tree. Aside from this bugaboo, Coming Daylight could recall only one instance from her childhood where she was threatened through reference to "spirits." This was after she had swam the whole width of the Missouri River and back. She was, and still is, very proud of this feat, but her grandmother was angry with her for having been too bold in going so far. She scolded her saying: "Why did you do that? Don't you know there are all kinds of 'animals' in the deep water? They always grab what they want!" Sometimes, however, punishment in the form of "something awful will happen" was indicated for the wrong doer.

One point on which Coming Daylight and the other old women 183
were extremely emphatic was that in the old days the Gros Ventre never tried to scare children by mentioning the Supreme Being 861
in connection with punishment. These old women recalled that in [776]
the lectures they heard, and in the scoldings they received, the emphasis was much more on social motivation. Children were told: "Nobody will like you if you do so and so." Or: "People don't like anyone who is onery. They like those who are generous and kind." Self-regarding motives were stressed in some situations. "Don't gamble lest you lose something we value," "Do what is right so as to keep your man," "Be industrious so as to show off what a good worker you are," "Don't run around with

183 other men so you will avoid your husband's suspicion," and so on.
861 Sometimes the appeal was made by a parent: "If you do such and such a thing well, I will be proud of you." In general it would seem that the positive side rather than the negative, was stressed.

777 It was more often the men informants who mentioned super-
867 natural motives proposed for proper conduct. They remembered
888 that they were told that the Supreme Being would "have pity" on them if they followed the proper code of behavior. Both men and women mentioned, however, that respect for the aged was instilled because "people didn't become old for nothing. They had a blessing from the Supreme Being to live long lives. Whenever you see old people attempting to do something and are having difficulties, you should go right in and do it for them. Help old people out and then ask them to intercede for you that you will have good health, a long life and success in all your undertakings."

867 The example of others was recognized as effective in child-
574 training. Al feels that the Gros Ventres were well brought up in the old days "because children were taught to stick to the rules and they had the good example of adults to follow." In describing the duty of hospitality, Coming Daylight said: "My grandmother was a great one to have a lot of visitors because she was generous, and so I got a good example at home." It was said by others of Coming Daylight: "She feeds everyone who comes along just as she used to see her uncle (mother's brother) do. She takes after her uncle in lots of ways."

In lecturing to the young, examples of actual behavior of persons, both good and bad, were often given. For instance, in warning boys of the evils of gambling, reference would be made to men who would otherwise have had promising careers but who ruined their chances by too heavy stakes which they lost. Fear
[754] of offending those who had supernatural power lest they retaliate by means of black magic was implicit in at least some of the admonitions. This was so, for instance, in instructing young men to stay away from the wives of "powerful" men, as well as in warning girls to decline improper proposals "in a nice way."

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

part and as good sports, but actual behavior not infrequently fell short of 358
the code's demands. Bad feeling was at times engendered and could and did
end in blows and violence, as was noted earlier in our account of the wheel game. 525
Quarrels among gambling boys must have been fairly common. One of our 578
informants, Thick, recounted three different bow and arrow contests for arrows,
in which contests he had engaged as a boy with other boys. All three ended in
violence started by the losers. In one of the three set-tos, Thick, the winner,
was shot in the hand with an arrow by the other boy who lost his temper, and
Thick still, at the age of 75, carries the scar. That the Gros Ventre were perfectly aware, as of course they must have been, of the discord hazard in gambling, is clear from such counsel as, for example, Thick's mother used to give him when he was a boy: "If you join in those gambling games somebody is going to get mad on account of getting beaten and he may pound you up." Further, that gambling often led to bad feeling was given to us by The Boy as the reason why the Gros Ventre disapproved of gambling between relatives.

So far as we could make out, Gros Ventre attitudes on gambling were 525
determined in only minor measure by economic considerations. In the days 183
before the disappearance of the buffalo in 1883-84, the Gros Ventre lived under a normal economy of abundance. Moreover, generosity in parting with their possessions, through gift and sharing, was focal in code and practice. Criers around the camp would counsel the people in words such as: "Men and women, don't love your property. You will always acquire other property. Only life never comes back, but property you can have back any time." In the long run for most individuals winnings would balance losses, just as gifts tended to balance gifts—a system of exchange which incidentally must have served to prevent unhealthy accumulation of wealth in the hands of any individual or small group. The cases of really ruinous loss of property through gambling, of reduction to "pauperism," appear to have been rare, and even in these cases the losers would ordinarily be looked after temporarily and tided over by their kin or friends. At any rate we got no record of individuals or their dependents suffering grave [735]
privation of the necessities of life as a result of gambling losses.

How far such facts entered into the Gros Ventre attitude toward gambling 525
cannot be determined confidently from such evidence as we have. In our hours of free discussion with informants, there was almost no intimation of economic considerations leading to disapproval. One of the themes in the tongue-lashing Lame Bull got from his father after the disastrous contest with White Owl may have been the economic, but this was not expressly stated by The Boy. Mrs Warrior kept away from gambling because, she said: "I liked what I had and

8:Flannery E-5 (1940-1948)1960 NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

INDIVIDUAL VARIATION IN CULTURE

Regina Flannery

It is generally accepted that what Benedict called the Dionysian configuration of Plains culture represents a dominant, if not the only trend. By definition a configuration is a generalization lying behind and explaining a number of cultural patterns. A pattern itself is of course an abstraction from the behavior of a number of individuals. The behavior of any one person may vary at different times in respect to a particular type of situation, but it is unlikely that the individual will show the whole range of possible behavior within a pattern; it will cover only a portion thereof. As Linton pointed out, the difference between the individual mode within this segment, and the mode of the behaviors on which the pattern is based, reflects the compromise which every individual has to make between the culture patterns of his society and his own inclinations. It would seem further, then, that if the modes of an individual's behavior-ranges show a consistent displacement with respect to a large series of patterns, it is safe to assume that the direction of this displacement reflects some quality of the individual.[1] The question we wish to raise is this: If the aspect of personality thus revealed runs counter to a dominant trend of his culture, is the individual a misfit in that society?

In attempting an answer, let us examine some individual variations within those patterns of Plains culture in which expression of emotional excess, and dangerous experience were expected of women in one Plains society, that of the Gros Ventres of Montana. We shall outline in some detail the behavior of one Gros Ventre woman in respect of these selected patterns—from which the Dionysian configuration was abstracted—and contrast her behavior with that of others of approximately the same age. All had participated as adults in the old way of life before the disappearance of the buffalo in 1887.

In Gros Ventre culture, as in all the Plains, there was high valuation placed on direct contact of the individual with the supernatural through dreams and visions. Men could actively seek such contact by employing dangerous means, and did so in order to obtain many kinds of power. While women did not go on the actual power quest, they might acquire medicine powers and less frequently, perhaps, powers of clairvoyance. Medicine powers were considered dangerous in that, it was believed, by accepting them a limitation was put upon the life span of the practitioner. But the rewards in terms of prestige for successful performance and of payment for services were high for women as well as for men. Not every individual man was successful in his quest, nor of course was every woman vouchsafed the kinds of dreams which were requisite. Coming Daylight, the woman whose behavior we are examining in particular, was what her contemporaries considered fortunate indeed in having been offered curing powers of several kinds. Nevertheless she rejected the possibility each time, in spite of the fact that she had a living example in the person of her father's sister of what it could mean in prestige to a woman who accepted. As the reasons for her refusal seem significant I shall describe her experience in her own words.

8:Flannery·E-5 (1940-1948)1960 NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

"My experience was by dreaming. One time before I was married—I must have been about eight years old—I was sleeping in a big lodge and a 'person' came and wakened me. He had a bag of medicines on his back. He came to me on four successive nights and laid out these medicines and told me what each was for. On the third of these nights there was a man lying there—he was just skin and bones. The 'person' who had awakened me told me: 'You could take all these medicines and you could cure people like that one lying there' [i.e., a person in the last extremity]. In my dream I would do everything he told me, manipulate my hands to draw out the sickness, and do everything. But I didn't want that power and would tell him so. Each morning too I would relate to my grandmother exactly what had happened in the night but she would try to hush me up, telling me: 'Don't say anything; don't tell anyone. You will be a great medicine woman.' But I didn't want that power. I didn't like it because when medicine people suck on the weak part of the sick person they have to swallow what they extract. I had decided I would rather be quiet and not do anything like that, or sacrifice my flesh, or things of that kind. Perhaps if it had come later I might have taken that power and become great."

Nevertheless when later in life she had other dreams indicating supernatural power, she likewise refused. She explained in regard to one of these experiences, for instance: "The one who awakened me this time had told me to face the rising sun and was showing me how to make a smudge from the moss that grows close on logs; but I told him. 'No. I would rather not have it.' Those who have power die too soon."

Incidentally, still in connection with curing, bleeding was an operation which was performed purely as a natural remedy for a person who felt dizzy or sluggish. Anyone could do it—no supernatural validation was needed. Other women described quite casually how it was done and discussed the various times they had actually performed the operation. Coming Daylight, however, insisted that while there was really nothing to such an operation, she could never bring herself to perform it, nor would she allow anyone else to bleed her; she could not stand the sight of blood.

The aversion to the sight of blood and to self-mutilation was evidently deep-seated and showed itself in a marked manner early in her life. On one occasion a close relative was very ill. In such a situation it was expected that every member of the family would rally around and do whatever he could toward the recovery. Among the things that fell within the scope of activity for female relatives was that of vowing to sacrifice something valuable, including perhaps the blood from one's arm or a finger-joint, if the person recovered. At this particular time, Coming Daylight was a young child, and her grandmother decided that it would be appropriate for the little girl to offer that her finger-tip be removed if the relative regained his health. When it was suggested to her, Coming Daylight refused, even though her grandmother took after her with a stick. She actually ran away and wandered alone, until two nights later the relative died and an uncle finally found her.

On another occasion in her early youth, too, she defied a convention connected with kinship by refusing to join in mourning for an uncle who had been killed in revenge for having instigated the murder of his brother's wife. When her grandmother upbraided Coming Daylight for not expressing grief in the traditional manner, the latter defied her by saying: "I am not going to cry for that man. I don't know why you are crying for him. I have worked for that woman and she has fed me, and has even given me meat to bring home to you. I heard

8:Flannery E-5 (1940-1948)1960 NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the shots and went later to see what happened, and there I saw her lying across the fire; her dress had burned off and her body was all shriveled. They weren't satisfied to kill her, but they burned her too!" She maintained her attitude and all the scolding from her relatives was of no avail.

Before turning to her adult life, we may refer to another instance which illustrates Coming Daylight's sensitivity to the suffering of others. In the Sacrifice Lodge, which is the Gros Ventre version of the well-known Plains Sun Dance, one of the important features was the spectacular self-torture which the active participants underwent. Each one had a sliver of wood embedded in the flesh of his chest. To the wood was tied a line, the other end of which was fastened high on the center-pole of the lodge. The man, leaning back so that the line was taut, went back and forth until finally the sliver was torn from his flesh. Meanwhile the women cheered on their relatives by "rattling their tongues," singing war songs, and the like, by way of encouraging the men to be brave and see the thing through. Coming Daylight was quite a young child when she first witnessed this performance. She remembered vividly her reaction when one of the young men, in his exhaustion, went to the center-pole and, putting his arms around it, wept aloud. She was not able to stand it any longer and rushed home crying. Her grandmother was very angry with her for leaving in the middle of the performance, but all the little girl could say was: "Oh, I just pitied that young man," and she could not be induced to return to the dance lodge. We may add here that actually in later years she did not participate in the Sacrifice Lodge even so far as women were allowed to do so.

The examples we have given are sufficient to show, I believe, that Coming Daylight had developed as a child a very strong set against violence, against painful and dangerous experiences. She refused medicine power from supernatural sources not only because it was dangerous but also because it involved a kind of physical activity which was repugnant to her. She refused to mutilate herself and was extremely sensitive to painful experiences in others. Her actual deviations from the patterns of accepted or approved behavior all tended in this same direction against violence. Her adult behavior likewise was consistent with this trend in her personality.

In consonance with her feeling against physical violence Coming Daylight avoided as far as possible the rough-and-tumble play in which brother-in-law and sister-in-law were free to, and indeed expected to, indulge. Other women told with glee how they enjoyed "getting even" with their brothers-in-law by, for instance, pushing them when fully clothed into the river, or dumping bucketfuls of water over their heads when they least expected it, and so on; but Coming Daylight admitted without hesitation that she didn't like that sort of thing and never attempted to retaliate even when her brothers-in-law succeeded in playing jokes on her. Similarly while it was not unusual for women rivals to actively fight over a man, she refrained from such undignified behavior, although it must be admitted that she had enough provocation on at least one occasion of which she told me. She had just married a man who was described by others as something of a gay Lothario. A woman who had been trying to force her attentions on him was furious when she heard of the marriage. She rushed to the lodge and pulled Coming Daylight out feet first, yelling insults the while. When the latter regained her feet she made no attempt to hit back even though the other slapped her and pulled off an earring, tearing the lobe of the ear. Coming Daylight, however, bided her time and soon was able to make an opportunity for an exchange of words with the woman at a big social dance.

8:Flannery E-5 (1940-1948)1960 NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

159 Her final rejoinder was such a witty and pointed one that everyone laughed
578 heartily at her rival's expense. In this culture, of course, public ridicule was a
626 far more effective retaliation than the biting and scratching that other women said frankly they would have indulged in when attacked.

Expression of emotional excess was institutionalized for the Gros Ventres, as
152 for the rest of the Plains, in the bereavement situation. Upon the death of a
765 husband, son, or father, a woman was expected to start wailing as soon as she
183 heard the news, have her hair cut off, discard good clothes for old ragged ones,
[762] gash her arms and legs, go to the hills to mourn and cry, resisting for a time the pleas of her relatives to return, and being watched lest she attempt suicide. Coming Daylight was only a young woman when she was first widowed and
159 the mourning pattern was still in full vogue. It is certain from other evidence
765 than Coming Dayling had a deep affection for this husband to whom she had
183 been given as a child-bride and in whose kindly and indulgent treatment she had found a pleasant escape from the rigorous discipline of her grandmother.
152 Nevertheless the public expression of her grief was minimal—no abandonment
[603] for her. Although her sister was sent on the hills with her to keep watch over her in the usual way, Coming Daylight was easily persuaded to return shortly though she herself was proud of the fact that she had stayed out so long that she
159 actually had got a frozen toe! In later years when all that was left of the
182 ritual was the wailing out on the hills, she lost the son whom she herself, and everybody else, acknowledged as her favorite. She had not been on the hills
765 very long when she experienced a significant dream, as follows. She was in a
787 lodge at the rear of which was a big pile of tobacco mixture and a pipe. The
276 owner of the lodge filled the pipe and approached her. She was frightened because she didn't smoke. The owner of the lodge however told her: "Look at these people." She looked and saw many with their hair cut and their bodies bleeding from the gashes inflicted in grief. The man then told her: "That is in the past. Nowadays your only consolation is in smoking." So she accepted the pipe and, after smoking it, she was painted in ceremonial fashion by each of those other mourners. Then the owner of the lodge dismissed her saying: "Now, go home and don't ever go on the hills and mourn again. But always smoke if you want to." She went home right after this dream and when she told her husband of it he accepted it as valid and persuaded her sister to prepare for Coming Daylight her first real smoke. She maintained that the habit subsequently developed was actually a great comfort to her.

The final area with which we shall be concerned here is the war complex—a
726 vital aspect of the old Plains culture. Gros Ventre women were allowed direct
562 but limited participation in these activities in the sense that, while they would
182 not join a party of men who were going on horse-raiding or revenge expeditions,
[554] if opportunity offered they might exhibit the same kind of bravery that a man should show and derive considerable status therefrom. For instance, if one of the enemy fell nearby, the women rushed out from camp to count coup, and to grab trophies with which to inaugurate the relationship known as "enemy-friends." Coming Daylight, however, was never one to indulge in this sport.
159 She told of the one—and to her extremely distasteful—occasion on which her
726 hand literally was forced. It seems that during a raid on their camp one of the
562 enemy was shot and her husband scalped him. The victim was lying not far from her lodge and, as her husband dashed off to pursue the rest of the Assiniboine, he shouted for her to come out and see what was going on. Coming Daylight saw the man lying there, face down, covered with blood. He was not dead

8:Flannery E-5 (1940-1948)1960 NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

and, each time he attempted to get to his knees, one of two women who had already reached the scene would strike him on the buttocks with the flat side of a hatchet, making an insulting remark, and both would laugh. Coming Daylight hesitated at some distance from where the other two were gloating over the fallen enemy. When one of them, Woman Chief by name, saw her she ran to her saying: "Why are you standing so far off?" She grabbed her by the arm and pushed a big club into her hand, saying: "He is still alive—you will do a great thing. *Ahe:ya'!*" Woman Chief forced Coming Daylight to strike him.

While both Woman Chief and Coming Daylight closely approximated the ideal for women as faithful wives and efficient workers who gave generously of their material goods to and on behalf of their relatives, they seemingly differed in temperament. Woman Chief was known as a very brave woman, and Coming Daylight was frank in admitting she would never have dreamed of doing the kinds of things for which Woman Chief was renowned. One of the latter's exploits, for example, was as follows. The Gros Ventres and Crow were allies in an encounter with the Piegan. The battle was in full force, but one Crow had withdrawn and was sitting motionless astride his horse at some distance from the melee. Woman Chief, who in contrast to most women was always well mounted, dashed up to the Crow, grabbed his wand from his hand, and rode pellmell into the thick of the battle, counting coups right and left. So brave was she considered in having really risked her life that she was accorded the distinction, most unusual for a woman, of being led around the camp circle with the victorious warriors. Furthermore, so many people came to sing in front of her lodge that she and her relatives, to show their appreciation of the honor, were forced to give away as much property as though she were a man. Judging on the basis of other biographical material, there can be no doubt that she gloried in her reputation and took every opportunity to enhance it. She was one to whom the more violent aspects of Gros Ventre culture were exceedingly congenial.

If we compare and contrast these two women we can say that insofar as the patterns of Dionysian configuration are the basis of the comparison, their behavior exhibits opposite extremes, the one going beyond the average in the direction of the configuration, the other running counter to and participating less than the average therein. Both might be termed deviant personalities in Honigman's sense of the term,[2] one overplaying and the other underplaying modal behavior in these selected patterns. Nevertheless, neither seems to have been a misfit insofar as each represents an extreme of socially accepted or sanctioned behavior within those patterns. If, for instance, Coming Daylight had been completely negative, and refused, say, to carry out at least the culturally defined minimum for mourning, had she, in addition to refusing to mutilate herself for the recovery of her ill relatives, neglected as an adult even the safe and less strenuous means to that end, she would have fallen without the pale, so to speak, and have been a misfit. If, at the opposite end of the scale, Woman Chief had gone further in the direction of masculinity, had she actually gone on raiding expeditions and herself stolen horses from the camp of the enemy, had she learned to shoot the bow and arrow or gun, or had she so much as adopted the vocabulary and/or pronunciation proper for males in the Gros Ventres language, she would have been carrying things too far. She, too, would have been dubbed a misfit.

The Catholic University of America,
Washington, D.C.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

342 were sewn together with sinew. The women selected the poles for the lodge, as well as for the travois, and were responsible for [484] erecting and taking down the lodge, for the arrangement of the interior, for the making of the travois, and for the packing and moving of impedimenta.

The foundation of three poles for the lodge was tied together and then raised as a unit. The other poles were arranged one by one, starting with those of the front. The cover of buffalo hides was tied to one pole, the "backbone," which was placed at the center-back, the cover then being drawn into place and fastened securely at the front, with small wooden pins usually made of cherry-tree wood. The ordinary Gros Ventre lodge stakes were shaped like a pin with a relatively small head. One informant, [184 however, stated that this form of stake often came loose where 177] the cover became taut with the wind, and that she had found the forked type, first observed by her many years ago when visiting another tribe to the south, far more satisfactory.

342 Old lodge covers were saved and cut up to make a sort of lining at the bottom of the lodge in winter, and the snow scraped away 353 to make place for the lodge was piled up on the outside thereof for extra warmth. In summer the ground inside the lodge was covered with willows, sagebrush or rye grass. Decorated robes as windbreaks were sometimes suspended in the lodge behind the fancy backrests, which were made by the women from slender willow rods. The women gathered and peeled the rods, although the young men helped straighten them by pulling them through their teeth. A willow ring encircled the fireplace and a broom of buckbrush was always kept handy. Personal belongings were neatly disposed against the wall of the lodge and in front of these were placed the skins which served as bedding by night and as seats by day. The painted parfleshes were given prominence to lend colorful touches. Dishes, utensils, and stored food were suspended 412 from poles well off the floor.

415 Among the articles of household equipment may be mentioned knives, both of bone and of metal, kettles, horn spoons, fleshing tools, etc., and food containers of various sorts. For the latter, [237] the membrane protecting the heart of the buffalo, the paunch, the bladder, and the intestines of the buffalo, as well as those of the

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

769
787

was given. Two such songs, victory songs, given during war raids, were recorded by us.

A great many Gros Ventre men and women had power acquired by quest or otherwise from non-ancestral beings, but far fewer had [184] ancestral helpers such as we are describing. Our informants, in fact, whose combined memories carried back to the early 1860's, could recall only five or at most six, seven or eight: Good Singer, Woman (or Bear Old Woman), Morning Star Appears (probably the same as Rising Cross), Bird Child, Bull Head, and perhaps two or three others.[8] Persons with ghost helpers had prestige, not greater however than outstanding doctors had.

[425] Power acquired from non-ancestral beings could be transferred by the possessor to another person through gift or sale. But a ghost helper was not transferable; such power was owned property; a ghost helper was not. A given person never had more than one ghost helper, so far as we could discover. In the shaking tent rite, only this one ghost helper had part,—no other being, neither the Supreme Being, nor Bha'a, nor Little Spirit,[9] nor any power-giving being.

At the time the ghost helper was accepted by its surviving relative, it promised him (or her) to come when summoned with the summoning song, but, in sharp contrast to the practice of non-ancestral power-bestowing beings, it imparted no power to him whatever, whether in war, medicine, gambling or love, except the "power," if it can be called such, to summon the ghost and except by sheer coincidence as in the case of Bad Bad Bull mentioned above. The ghost helper imparted not power, but knowledge; not any power of clairvoyance, prophecy or wisdom, but knowledge itself; not once and for all at the time of being accepted by the person, as did the power-bestowing beings but from time to time if and when summoned. The sole function of the ghost helper as

[8] Cf. Flannery, 1944, pp. 55-58; Cooper, 1944, pp. 62-77 passim. Rising Cross of Flannery, p. 56, was pretty surely the same person as Morning-Star-Appears or Morning-Star-Is-Up, of Cooper, p. 71; probably the same person as mentioned in Watches-All's narrative by Kroeber, 1908, pp. 216-17.

[9] That Little Spirit could function in the shaking tent rite in place of an ancestral spirit, as stated reservedly by Cooper, 1940, p. 112, is an error, corrected by field data gotten by him later.

[114]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

778 Ventres, not many, had power. Males would start questing when
787 young, but older men would also go out to seek power. After a man got to be really old, he no longer tried." Charles Buckman had heard old men say that they had fasted and prayed (on the hills) over and over again but that in spite of the sufferings they thus endured "they never had even a dream," and, in another chat, he remarked that "few fasted and prayed."

[184] It seems, therefore, that many men did not go out on hills to seek power (women never did so), and that relatively few even of those who did go were successful. At least, very few were successful in acquiring really significant or great power. On the other hand, many, the majority perhaps of both men and women, had minor power or powers of one kind or another, gotten initially otherwise than by quest or by transfer. Thus for example, Coming Daylight, who had repeatedly refused curing powers offered her in dreams and who insisted she was in no sense a medicine woman or "holy," this is, power-possessing, woman, had certain herbal curatives, for family use, given her by her maternal grandmother and by her mother's sister, Good Singer, a noted medicine woman of earlier days. Or, to use just one other example, many women and men had bought love medicine from other men or women. These minor powers, of many different kinds not always distinguishable from non-magical knowledge and ability, were apparently very common,—"the usual thing," as The Boy expressed it above, "for grown-ups, men and women."

The Power Quest

787 The favorite time of the year for going out to seek war, wealth
827 and doctor power was spring. In The Boy's words: "It was known to be easier to get doctor power in spring. Everybody used to say that the young bear cubs used to wash their feet with the first rain of the spring. Bears were easy to get power from in spring. They were eager to give their power at this season. All nature is alive in spring. Grass, trees and leaves wake up. Hibernating animals used to sing before coming out of their winter dens. Bears come out of their hibernating dens after the first rain of spring. The body of even a human being is sort of stationary in winter

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

and as long as you live see that they do not sell it or part with it." 793 174

So at Curly Head's death the Pipe fell to Iron Man II (Tall Jack), a relative of Curly Head, who since 1937 (1938) has looked after it. In 1948 it was still being kept in Curly Head's house.[8]

The normal term of keepership of the Feathered Pipe was four years. The very first keeper held the office 80 years, according to the origin story given by Garter Snake, and some later ones, according to tradition, up to 20 years, but the usual limit was supposed to be at most two or three terms, that is eight or twelve years. 793

There was always a Pipe woman or co-keeper, wife of the keeper. She handled the Pipe bundle and in general had about the same ritual and other duties toward it as had the co-keeper of the Flat Pipe toward the Flat Pipe bundle. The Feathered Pipe keeper had to have at least two wives, for during her menses the co-keeper could not handle the bundle and had to sleep and live outside the keeper's lodge and another wife of the keeper had to substitute for her in the handling and care of the bundle. [841 595]

There was always, too, a Pipe child,—a girl, unless the keeper had no daughters, in which case a son could be selected by him as Pipe child. Thus the oldest son of Sitting High, who had no daughters, became Pipe child. The Pipe child was not necessarily appointed at once by the keeper on assuming the keepership. Garter Snake was not made Pipe child until she was about six years old. Iron Necklace who had been Feathered Pipe keeper some

---

[8] In the summer of 1951, Iron Man, assisted by The Boy, had a ceremonial opening of the Feathered Pipe bundle. Dr. Louis B. Hagener, Professor of Biology of Northern Montana College, accompanied by his wife; and Dr. Otto Nitz, Professor of Chemistry, now at Stout Institute of Technology, Menominie, Wisconsin, were among the spectators. The pictures in Plates 2 B-C, 3 A-D, were taken by Dr. Nitz at that time. Dr. Hagener has kindly supplied information regarding the 1951 ceremonial. He writes under date of Aug. 8, 1954, as to final disposal of the Feathered Pipe bundle: "Since the young people were so apathetic over the bundle, its significance, and the ceremony, Iron Man and his wife had resolved not to open it again. They were debating as to whether it should be given to a museum or whether the tribe would outfit Iron Man and his wife for a journey and permit them to dispose of it somewhere in the mountains." [R.F.] [114 796 186]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

782 Flannery: "I tried to be well prepared by a long period of study
123 as to what to tell him [Cooper] so that I could do something big for his health, that his health might be restored. I sort of prepared for this all winter long and then decided I would write this letter to him in the Spring of the year when everyone seems to feel good and [to be] glad that they are still living and that they survived the hardships of the winter and that it is time for rejoicing and that even the animals are glad that spring had come around again. They then woke up from their long sleep of hibernation when they bored underground or under a pile of rocks or whichever way they could get away from . . . winter. I tried to get him [Cooper] the full benefit of it. I am glad to hear he liked it. I tried hard to put into words what I wanted for my friend [Cooper], and so that he would get more I chose that time of the year [spring]. That is when all the animals wake up and talk and sing and move around and let the whole world know: 'I am still around too.' . . . They have made a real effort to live that long. . . . They try to keep themselves in existence as long as they can by growing and singing and running and so forth. . . . If I made my friend feel better and was able to master the great distance between us [Montana to Washington, D. C.] with those few words, I am exceedingly glad and will always feel good when I recall that letter and those words because they made him feel good. Besides my words written down, everything that I had went with them."

The Boy's message in the letter, as translated very carefully
[191] from his dictation in Gros Ventre and written down by his nephew,
[212] Thomas Main, was in part as follows:

"Dear friend—As winter is over and spring is on in its place,
123 it makes one feel good. And as I listen to the talking song of the
539 meadow larks they bring back pleasant memories of my association
782 with you. So I am writing this letter to bring my thoughts into expression.

"I hope I can infuse and saturate into this paper my feelings for you and my concern for your welfare and doctor you with the tidings and blessings which the season of spring always brings, when all nature arises from a long sleep, so that you too may enjoy the healing winds and sunshine which abound at this time.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

a young man's skin back of Thomas Main's house." (The cut off pieces of skin were, as at the Sacrifice Lodge, placed on the buffalo skull, "as an offering of the [person's] very body.") 782 785 304

Singer. "For cutting offerings of flesh from the arms they usually tried to get the same doctor who cut off my finger joint (see infra). He would take the flesh, put a needle through it and cut the flesh off. . . . He would then put the cut-off flesh in one of the bags from around the buffalo or cow heart which were used to carry water, and would hang it up or bury it. Women could not do the flesh cutting for themselves; they had to have a man doctor to do it. You promise so to torture yourself for some reason such as the wish to save the life of your sister or brother or other relative. For instance, if some young fellows were going off on a war party, the sisters would get out and make some such promise as: 'I will give part of my flesh or my finger if my brother comes back a great warrior.' It was great to have somebody [some relative] come back a hero, a brave man, or, as they called it, a big chief. . . . A wife could do this for her husband but usually it was a sister who thought that much of her brother. . . .

"I have a scar on my left upper arm [which she showed]. I made this promise for the recovery of one of my daughters who was ill. A sick person is doctored, but such a promise is made as a last resort. Lame Bull told me they were going to make a big [illegible] like the ones they made on men. The cutting was done in a sweat-lodge where they all sat and prayed. They blackened the spot on my arm with charcoal,[10] then clipped the flesh off and held it up to the sun and said: 'This is what we offered you.' He cut me in four places on each arm. My husband was mad because it was too much. The one place on my left arm where the scar is was cut deeper than the others. After I made that promise I had the cutting done right away. [Mary Ereaux, our interpreter, here interrupted: "Goodness, you might just as well have done like the Sacrifice Dancers. You tortured yourself just as badly."] I held myself in but they certainly hurt me. They did not put anything on the wounds, only the charcoal beforehand. People try to [191]

[10] Blackening sacrifices was a common (perhaps *the* regular) Gros Ventre procedure.

3: Gooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

melodies, wording, purpose, place, and meaning of many songs and could put the right feeling into their singing. The latter kind of singers were often the ones who taught the former how to sing correctly. One singer might be recognized as competent in religious or certain religious songs only, another for social songs only, and so forth. In each of the categories there were usually "one or several who were by far the best in bringing out this something in the song." Among the qualities of a good singer were and are: volume, clearness, wide range, sense of rhythm and ability to put life and feeling into the singing. Much too depended on "body motions, gestures, bodily interpretation, whole demeanor." Beating time too was an art; "anyone can take a stick and beat a drum but not everyone can beat it just right." S33

Many of the songs, both ritual and secular, contain words or expressions the meaning of which is not known today, or, although the meaning is known, the words or expressions are no longer in secular use or else differ appreciably in form from those in use. [192]

For some songs, such as solemn religious ones, it was relatively unimportant whether the singer had a good melodious voice or not. In sacred songs the all-important thing was the ability to put the proper feeling into the singing, "to get the hearers to concentrate ears, eyes, mind and heart," whereas the singer who had only a good voice reached only the ears of the hearers.

"The old time songs," The Boy explained, "are very hard. You cannot learn them overnight. It is hard for the Gros Ventres today to learn the old, old songs, and most of the songs I sang for your records are from the old times. Especially difficult are the Flat Pipe songs. They just consume your breath, so to speak. You have to sing them very solemnly and it would not do to shake your voice. They are supposed to be serious. You can notice the difference in singers when several sing together; they [some of them] get out of breath. When Horse Capture was Flat Pipe keeper, at one ceremony he and I sang together, and the old fellow would get tired."

Among the most accomplished Gros Ventre singers of recent times are first of all The Boy himself, to whom we are indebted for 102 of the songs we recorded, and Charles Buckman, who sang 6 for us. The Boy mentioned, too, certain other renowned living

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

CHAPTER I

SUPERNATURAL BEINGS

Before beginning our description of Gros Ventre ritual observances, it seems desirable, in the interests of order and clarity, to give some account one by one of the various Gros Ventre supernatural beings. These beings may be divided for our purposes into three categories: first, those to whom cult in the form of prayer or sacrifice was offered; second, those to whom no cult proper is offered but who enter in one form or another into ritual or who are conceived as actually helpful or harmful to the living Gros Ventres of modern times; third, those to whom no cult is rendered, who do not enter into ritual at all, and who, while conceived as helpful or harmful to the Gros Ventres at some time in the remoter or archaic past, are not so and have not been so in more recent or modern times. Beings of our third category belong rather to the realm of folklore or traditional history than to that of religion and will be given only passing attention here. 776 128

The chief beings of our first category are: the Supreme Being, the storm being, the sun, the earth, the Four Holy Men, Broken Knife, He-who-starved-to-death, the Last Child, the water monster(s), Little Spirit, He-who-dreams-of-Bha'a, the ghost helpers, the beings who gave power, the petroglyph beings. We shall now take these up in order, giving for each their names, nature, attributes and functions. The rites connected with them will be described in later chapters. 776

The Supreme Being

The most-common name by which the Supreme Being was called or addressed was Ixteibəni:hohat (Above Ni:hohat).[1] The

[1] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, p. 275. In our transcription, a, e, i, o, u, have continental values: ä is flat as in English "bat"; ë is close to French "feu"; vowels are lengthened by a colon, as a:; ə is the unstressed indeterminate vowel; θ is th as in English "thing"; tc is a single sound as ch in English "church"; tc̊ is the same sound but glottalized and occurs only terminally; apostrophe indicates glottal stop. [104 194]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 all ate plenty. Both the dancers and the grandfathers, and the latters' helpers, brought food. When the grandfathers brought food each would say to his respective grandson or team of two to four grandsons: "All right, my grandson(s), here is your milk." The grandsons or one of them would then get up, give the exclamation of thanks (according to Coming Daylight), and would kiss the "grandfather" and would "nurse."

In the course of the Crazy Dance, as at most other social and ritual large gatherings, it was customary for relatives of the dancers to give away presents in their honor, not to the dancers themselves, but to third parties.[18]

According to The Boy, a sweat-lodge rite was held in connection with the Crazy Dance, but we obtained no details. Presumably it followed the general pattern of the rite as carried out for the sacred Pipes.

*796 "Talking backward" was characteristic of the dancers' behavior during the day or days immediately following the four day rite, ●195 but also, according to our informants, during the four-day rite itself. If the dancer said "Hit me real hard," he would be barely touched; if he said, "Don't hit me hard," he would be hit very hard. "Go away" meant "Come here"; and vice versa. An answer "yes" meant "no." "Raise it up," meant "Lower it down." "All right," a dancer would say "you fellows will not dance"; then he would sing and they would dance.

*796 The sex-test calls for more extensive explanation. It was a major, in a sense the major, feature of the Crazy Dance, the 837 "sacrifice" about which the dance centered. The dancers were in a sense "throwing away," offering as a quasi-sacrifice, their wives or substitute women. In the sacred Pipe rites, the costly offerings were in material things, sacrifices in the strict sense of the term, in the Sacrifice Dance, the main offerings were the physical sufferings of the participants, "sacrifices" in an extended sense of the term; in the Crazy Dance, the "sacrifice" consisted more in the mental suffering of the dancers who submitted their wives or substitute women to a severe sex-test, a test which at best brought acute anxiety and embarrassment to all concerned. From the

[18] For example, see Flannery, 1953, p. 108.

8:Flannery E-5 (1940-1948)1960 NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

and, each time he attempted to get to his knees, one of two women who had already reached the scene would strike him on the buttocks with the flat side of a hatchet, making an insulting remark, and both would laugh. Coming Daylight hesitated at some distance from where the other two were gloating over the fallen enemy. When one of them, Woman Chief by name, saw her she ran to her saying: "Why are you standing so far off?" She grabbed her by the arm and pushed a big club into her hand, saying: "He is still alive—you will do a great thing. *Ahe:ya'!*" Woman Chief forced Coming Daylight to strike him.

While both Woman Chief and Coming Daylight closely approximated the ideal for women as faithful wives and efficient workers who gave generously of their material goods to and on behalf of their relatives, they seemingly differed in temperament. Woman Chief was known as a very brave woman, and Coming Daylight was frank in admitting she would never have dreamed of doing the kinds of things for which Woman Chief was renowned. One of the latter's exploits, for example, was as follows. The Gros Ventres and Crow were allies in an encounter with the Piegan. The battle was in full force, but one Crow had withdrawn and was sitting motionless astride his horse at some distance from the melee. Woman Chief, who in contrast to most women was always well mounted, dashed up to the Crow, grabbed his wand from his hand, and rode pellmell into the thick of the battle, counting coups right and left. So brave was she considered in having really risked her life that she was accorded the distinction, most unusual for a woman, of being led around the camp circle with the victorious warriors. Furthermore, so many people came to sing in front of her lodge that she and her relatives, to show their appreciation of the honor, were forced to give away as much property as though she were a man. Judging on the basis of other biographical material, there can be no doubt that she gloried in her reputation and took every opportunity to enhance it. She was one to whom the more violent aspects of Gros Ventre culture were exceedingly congenial.

If we compare and contrast these two women we can say that insofar as the patterns of Dionysian configuration are the basis of the comparison, their behavior exhibits opposite extremes, the one going beyond the average in the direction of the configuration, the other running counter to and participating less than the average therein. Both might be termed deviant personalities in Honigman's sense of the term,[2] one overplaying and the other underplaying modal behavior in these selected patterns. Nevertheless, neither seems to have been a misfit insofar as each represents an extreme of socially accepted or sanctioned behavior within those patterns. If, for instance, Coming Daylight had been completely negative, and refused, say, to carry out at least the culturally defined minimum for mourning, had she, in addition to refusing to mutilate herself for the recovery of her ill relatives, neglected as an adult even the safe and less strenuous means to that end, she would have fallen without the pale, so to speak, and have been a misfit. If, at the opposite end of the scale, Woman Chief had gone further in the direction of masculinity, had she actually gone on raiding expeditions and herself stolen horses from the camp of the enemy, had she learned to shoot the bow and arrow or gun, or had she so much as adopted the vocabulary and/or pronunciation proper for males in the Gros Ventres language, she would have been carrying things too far. She, too, would have been dubbed a misfit.

The Catholic University of America,
Washington, D.C.

1; Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

INTRODUCTION.

The following information on the Gros Ventre was collected in the winter and early spring of 1901, at the Fort Belknap Reservation in northern Montana, as part of the Mrs. Morris K. Jesup Expedition. Very few of the statements made, unless such is obviously the case, are based on observation. In general, where nothing is said to the contrary, they are founded on statements made by the Indians. The introductory explanations that have been made in regard to the Arapaho[1] apply also to the following material. The alphabet used for rendering Gros Ventre words is the same as that employed for Arapaho. Additional sounds are ö and ü, which are open, and k', a palatal k. |2| [104]

TRIBAL ORGANIZATION.

The Gros Ventre call themselves "Haäninin." The meaning of this term is sometimes given as "lime-men" or "chalk-men," from haä'a"tyi ("lime" or "soft white stone"). This etymology is, however, doubtful. In literature they have often been known as the "Atsina." They declare this to be the Piegan name for themselves, atsöna". Historically the Gros Ventre are known to have formed an independent tribe closely associated with the Blackfeet during the nineteenth century. Their dialect is similar to the Arapaho, and certainly intelligible to the Arapaho for at least the greater part. The two dialects are, however, sufficiently differentiated to make it certain that the tribes have been more or less distinct for a longer period than two centuries. The Arapaho regard the Gros Ventre as the northernmost one of a group of five closely affiliated or related tribes of which they themselves form the largest. Three of these tribes have long been extinct as separate bodies, and only the dialects of one or two survive among a few individuals with the Arapaho. The Gros Ventre, perhaps |1| [197] |1| 648

[1] A. L. Kroeber, The Arapaho (Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Parts I, II, and IV. New York, 1902, 1904, and 1907). A series of Gros Ventre myths and tales has been published in Anthropological Papers of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. I, Part III. New York, 1907.

[P. 144 Contains no Text]

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

INTRODUCTION

The Algonquian-speaking Gros Ventres live on the Fort Belknap Reservation in North Central Montana. The Reservation is a small part of the land claimed by this tribe in 1887, when the boundaries were finally fixed. At present, the Gros Ventres number between a thousand and eleven hundred, and they share their territory with almost as many Assiniboine. The latter tribe was included in the settlement of the Reservation although it did not participate with the Gros Ventres and Blackfoot tribes in the Treaty of 1855. In spite of some intermarriage, the two groups have never really blended and the Gros Ventres tend to center at the village of Hays at the southern part of the Reservation while the Assinboine are clustered around Lodge Pole, a settlement some ten miles east of Hays. The Indian Agency is approximately forty miles north of Hays at the northern boundary of the Reservation and close to the town of Harlem on the Great Northern Railroad. Of importance to the Gros Ventres, who are predominantly Roman Catholic, is St. Paul's Mission and School which lie at the foot of the Little Rockies only a mile south of Hays. David Rodnick has given an excellent description of the geographical setting of the Reservation for his study of modern conditions and of acculturation among the Fort Belknap Assiniboine.

131 657 [197] [161] [648] [797] [114]

Of the several tribes in the Northern Plains region, the Gros Ventres are perhaps the least known. Although they maintained intact their tribal identity, and were recognized as fierce warriors, they were often mistakenly identified with the Blackfoot tribes, with whom they were frequently allied. Moreover, little was known of the Gros Ventre language except that it was an exceedingly difficult one; practically every independent observer during the nineteenth century remarks on this fact. Since, however, many Gros Ventre men knew Blackfoot, the linguistic difference was often overlooked and the Gros Ventres tended to be counted as one of the Blackfoot tribes. As part of the so-called "Blackfoot Nation," leaders of the Gros Ventres signed the Treaty of 1855.

101 [648] 197 [648]

[P. viii contains no text]

863 might even 'fuss' a little with him, saying something like: 'Look at you! I thought I told you to urinate. I'm trying to make you do it at the right time, and you want to hold back!' But we were not harsh with infants because we knew they have to learn. Anyway, if you misjudged the time, all you had to do was to throw out the powdered chips and put in fresh ones. The old way was much better. These diaper-babies around here now are much more trouble."

[755] If a child developed enuresis, a tiny bit of the tail of a fox or of a beaver tied to his belt, or a piece of badger skin for him to sit on, was thought to guarantee a cure.

854 To help the child who had trouble teething, it was considered wise to kill a mouse, skin it, take the back thigh and, after cooking [825 it well, rub on the gums. It is said by Coming Daylight that 757] the Crow used fish for this purpose. Some children have such a difficult time that their gums are very sore and their tongues even swell. Coming Daylight's grandmother and others knew how to [757] remedy that condition. The doctor, using a sharp-pointed bone, would lance the gums here and there where the teeth were coming, after allowing the gums to bleed, they would rub some powdered [751] root on the gums. As a preventive, old folks said to catch tiny baby mice and, after roasting them on the coals, feed them to the child. Coming Daylight, for instance, did that for her children, and none of them had any trouble with teething.

856 They would let babies crawl when they showed the inclination to do so, but the old women were sure that they always watched their babies more closely than mothers do today. They used to encourage them to walk by holding them up and helping them. It has been Coming Daylight's experience that boys learn to walk more quickly than girls. It may be, however, that more attention was given to boys.

198 The only expression the old women, or the younger ones for that matter, could think of that could be considered "baby talk" 856 was that babies, when very small and just beginning to talk, say: "I" (prolonged and with strong glottal stop) if they do not like something or do not wish to take what is offered. This, together with *na'a* 'mother' and *ni'a* 'father,'[9]—which babies say properly

[9] These are vocative forms rather than descriptive forms.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

right off,—are about the first words a baby says. When a child is [198] backward in learning to talk, the remedy is to feed him meadow- 856 lark eggs, hard-boiled. Cora says this treatment was very effective for one of her sons, and Coming Daylight fed them to one of her daughters. They all agreed, however, that the treatment may sometimes be too effective. If anyone is very talkative even today the favorite saying is: "His mother must have fed him meadow-lark eggs."

The care of her baby was the first duty of a mother. Of course, 854 if she were a co-wife, the other wives might help her, and in any case the grandmother might take a hand. But Coming Daylight often had no one upon whom she could depend, so she had to be extremely careful. For example, when she was married to Little Man and had an infant in the toddling stage, she would drape a blanket loosely about her hips and while she sat and did beadwork, the infant could play safely at her left hip inside the blanket. The old-timers, moreover, never left a baby alone. When her first 854 child was born Coming Daylight was told by her grandmother 751 never to leave a baby alone; that if it were absolutely necessary she should leave him even for a minute, she should take a small stick, blacken the tip with nicotine, and leave it in the swing or alongside where the infant lay. This was done to keep the "spirits" away. Even Mary feels strongly about leaving a child alone. She tells her daughter about it, but the daughter is very modern. The result is that frequently Mary stays home from a dance rather than leave a grandchild by itself.

If the mother of a young infant was going on a trip, for in- [774] stance, to pick berries, she invited the baby's *bitd"tao* 'shadow, spirit, soul' saying: "Come on with us or we might leave you. We are going now." If one failed to do this, it would be like leaving part of the baby behind and the baby would be cross all evening.

Sometimes other children in the family would be called upon to 854 look after the infant. They were apt to get tired quickly however 857 and tell their mother: "Hurry up and take your baby or I will 593 drop it." Girls were depended upon more than boys to look after younger siblings, and girls more or less were expected to do so "right from the beginning." The old women felt that formerly

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Instead of killing an adulterous wife, or one so suspected, the husband might disfigure her and send her away. Coming Daylight witnessed the following scene when she was a child. "She had been sent on an errand by her grandmother to a lodge at some distance from her own. About half-way to her destination as she approached a clump of trees she heard a woman screaming. She then saw that this woman was standing there with her hair tied to the limb of a tree. The woman's husband cut off her nose, and left her tied there and bleeding. Coming Daylight was so frightened that she ran, and on her way back went around the other way to avoid passing that spot again. She doesn't know who released the woman, but she does recall that the woman was so ashamed that she hardly ever went outside her lodge, and if anyone came in she would hold her hand over her face. Ever after that, whenever Coming Daylight met that man, she would make a gesture toward him [double hand into fist, then force fingers out, spreading them wide apart], which means 'I hate you.' Her grandmother used to tell her not to do that lest that man harm her through supernatural means, but she would answer: 'I don't care if he has power. He is cruel and I hate him. We all have to die sometime.'" 684 [201]

The cutting off of the nose was said to be rather a Piegan than a Gros Ventre practice. Cutting off the ears was perhaps a more common form of punishment inasmuch as there is a word designating a woman known to have been unfaithful, and which refers to having the ears cut off.

The adulterous woman whose hair was cut by her husband was not marked permanently as were the others, but it was a severe punishment nonetheless because long thick hair was one of the chief criteria of beauty in women as well as in men. But whatever the form of disfigurement inflicted by the husband, the woman would be cast aside by him and would have to seek refuge with some of her relatives. The family, especially her brothers, would feel keenly the disgrace, but as Singer put it, "Mothers would feel sorry for their daughters and could not refuse to take them in, and they would take their children, too, should they have any. It was very seldom a man would keep the children of a wife sent away for adultery." [832]

Finally, a wronged husband could satisfy his honor by accept-

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

793 also to the whites, both mounted and dismounted their horses from
784 the right side, just as all other Gros Ventres did.

"You could not lend the Feathered Pipe keeper a horse, because if you loaned it to him this was just the same as giving it to him. You could not take it back once the rope was in his hands. The keeper never borrowed anything. If someone thought the keeper was short of something and without thinking said to him, 'Here is one you can use,' that was just too bad because that was really giving it to him."

[201] Apparently the keeper could not point at a person with his index finger, but would instead use his thumb.

793 The rôle of the Feathered Pipe keeper in the political life of
624 the Gros Ventre was quite similar to that of the Flat Pipe keeper, as regards such things as decision when and whether to move camp, matters of public policy, and veto power thereupon.

Feathered Pipe and Bundle

773 The Feathered Pipe was first given, as noted in the origin
778 stories (see No. 6 in Appendix), from above by Bha'a, the thunder and storm being. Garter Snake's father, Bull Lodge, used to tell her that it was really given by Ixtcibani:hohat, the Supreme Being, through Bha'a; that the Supreme Being was the father of the Pipe; and that it was to remain forever with the Gros Ventres and never under any condition to be transferred to any other tribe. According to Gros Ventre tradition, while the Feathered Pipe is very old, it is not as old as the Flat Pipe; when the Feathered Pipe was first given to the Gros Ventres, they were already in the possession of horses. According to The Boy, the Feathered Pipe was first given after the Gros Ventres came to their present territory which had previously been Snake Indian country, but before the coming of the whites thereto. With the Pipe itself were given in the beginning the stone image or face, the whistle, and the staff, to be described presently.

778 The proper name of the Feathered Pipe was ana:θanitč (it has feathers).

276 We were unable to attend any unwrapping rite and to see the Pipe. It was described to us as being in one piece, of "smooth,"

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

608 The problem of possible abuses of the system was explained by The Boy along the following lines. "First of all if an old man had become my 'grandfather' only recently, say just last week and I were a young man, no one would ordinarily ask me to appeal for him to my 'grandfather.' By strict right I could do so, and if no one else were available, I might be asked, but as an 'amateur,' as one lacking in experience, I would not be a good person to ask. An older, more experienced 'grandson' would be asked."

*796 Besides choosing a "grandfather" the vower also selected, as a herald or crier for the Dance, some intelligent old man gifted as an ●203 orator. The crier's chief task was to walk or ride around the camp before and during the Dance announcing to the people whether the group would move and other decisions and agreements covering preparations for and procedure during the dance.

If the bands happened to be scattered at the time a sacred Dance was to be held, runners were sent by the vower to bid them foregather for the Dance. All members of the tribe were obliged to attend the Sacrifice and Crazy Dances, and pretty surely the Drum, Kit-tox and Dog Dances. As regards the Fly Dance, this was ordinarily held in connection with one of the other Dances, so everybody would be present anyhow. As regards the Old Men's and Old Women's Dances, they were not so lively or colorful, and were held a little apart and the people did not take much interest in them and "did not go much" to them; attendance was apparently not required.

If any individual or group failed to come when summoned, the *.796 vower would request the soldiers of the Stars or Wolves as the 626 case might be, compel attendance.[8] Even a war party could not 701 start out if some one had vowed a dance and it was about ready to begin. So much for the types or personnel,—vower, associates, age-groups, ceremonial "grandfathers," criers, police, and "congregation,"—more or less common to all the Sacred Lodges. Personnel peculiar to particular Dances will be taken up later when each is described. Before describing the Dances one by one, some ritual observances common to all or many of them may be noted.

*.796 After the vower of a Dance had chosen his ritual grandfather

[8] For a detailed illustration of this point, see Flannery, 1953, pp. 49-51.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

For the duration of a Crazy Dance, political as well as ritual authority was vested in the age-group giving the Dance, and the ordinary personnel of government ceased for the time being to function. The Crazy Dancers ran everything; their word was law; they decided what was and was not to be done, even regarding the hunt. 796* [561 621]

The vower himself was for the time being in supreme command. He selected, as his councilors, however, four outstanding men, of middle age, older than the actual participant dancers, but not too old, men of prestige who had won recognition through merit, who had made their mark and were known as "chiefs," "successful and with good homes, good men." These four, according to Turn Toes, were chosen from among the next older age-group of the society, Stars or Wolves, to which the participant dancers age-group belonged, and were "elder brothers" of the dancers. Turn Toes emphasized more the ritual functions of these four "elder brothers." While the dancers themselves were in authority during the dance, and paid the expenses thereof, they would be helpless without knowledge of the proper rites and observances. The four "elder brothers" who had previously gone through the Crazy Dance, would be instructors in procedure to the group of younger dancers and would give the decisions thereon. The Boy emphasized more the political functions of the four "elder brothers." The vower together with these four constituted a sort of council or governing body. The five consulted and advised together on arrangements preparatory to and during the Dance, the "balance of power" resting with the vower in case of a deadlock among the four "elder brothers."

After these five got together they selected as their crier an intelligent old man who was known for his command of language. [203] He sat in on their meetings, but without vote, so to speak. It was his duty to listen carefully and keep abreast of proceedings, and when decisions were made by the council of five he was told: "Go around the whole camp and announce that such-and-such shall be done." The five also chose as attendants or servants two young men, apparently two who had not previously joined the Crazy Dance. These two had no initiative; their task was to do what

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

by his grandfather: "Do not seek doctoring power, but pray to the Supreme Being. This is enough." 782 869

According to The Boy, "Parents in advising their children how to conduct their lives would counsel them: 'Do not have ambition to have power like medicine men, else you will not live long. A medicine man forfeits his prospects of a long life and dies soon [a point to which we shall return presently]. It is far better and safer to just pray, that is, pray to the Supreme Being, and pray all the time. Make prayer the guiding rule in your lives.' Some people acquire power either by sleeping out on the hills or without seeking it. In either case they have to pay the price in shortened, restricted, danger-beset lives. The most important thing of all is to pray, beg, plead. This makes by far for the most happy and good life. This is far above seeking power."

On another occasion, The Boy explained the situation as follows: "However great or renowned these men and women with powers were in the old days, and however much they enjoyed the powers sought by and conferred upon them, they (the powers) were all right only while they lasted. The old-time Gros Ventres knew definitely that people who had these various powers would not live out their full span of life. Parents when raising their children would tell them to avoid that kind of life. They would exert all the influence in instructing their children not to go out on hills and seek power, but to have ambition to acquire fame and respect from exercise of natural ability. They tried to school their children along these lines and [to teach them] that it was considered weak to have the powers from these sources,—from rat, mountain, prairie chicken, and so forth. This my father, Lame Bull, told me all the time, and all the rest of the people told their sons and daughters this same rule of life. And the criers with the chiefs of the tribe, when they walked around on a nice calm day, would surely go into this matter, making it perhaps the main subject of their lecture. But still it [power seeking] was done, against such advice and against better judgment and better experience. All of these fellows who had these powers died prematurely." [203]

Thomas Main had many times heard his grandfather, Lame Bull,

843 thing unusual it will affect her child and, further, that a woman in that condition should not look upon a corpse.

[845] Coming Daylight could not remember any cases of stillborn children, but finally Singer recalled that a woman, whom they both had known, had borne triplets which were dead at birth. Incidentally, this was the only case of triplets of which either had ever heard.

Certain prenatal care was taken to ensure easy delivery and healthy offspring. It was often mentioned that in the old days pregnant women were well taken care of. Coming Daylight explained it thus: " In those days a man usually had several wives so that the one who happened to be pregnant was looked after by the others and didn't have to work hard. She was not supposed to do any cooking, and, if it were absolutely necessary that she cook, she must wear something like a heavy apron to protect her lest the afterbirth stick. During hot weather she was supposed to wear a robe on her back, because they claimed that the heat was hard on the breasts. She was not allowed to pack heavy loads. They believed that she should work, but not enough to wear herself out. She was taught to take certain precautions. My grandmother, especially, would tell me, when I was pregnant, such things as: 'If you have to change sides while lying in bed, sit up first and then lie down on the other side. Don't just roll over, or the cord will wrap around the infant's head. If you leave your lodge, you mustn't stand in the door, you must go right through, so the baby will come quickly. Never back into a lodge because that will make the infant come the wrong way.' "

Coming Daylight claimed that she always got along well in childbirth because her infants were small and she followed the advice given her. Her firstborn was the most difficult, as is usual for most women, but her husband was a very fine, mature man who hadn't let her do anything to injure herself during pregnancy. Furthermore he followed the customary Gros Ventre abstention, being " very careful especially during the last month, when Gros Ventre men refrain absolutely from intercourse with their pregnant wives lest, when the infant is born, it be covered with a lot of 'white lard-like stuff.' "

[805] [211] The length of gestation was counted by moons. If, for in-

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

stance, it was the dark of the moon when a woman ceased menstruation, she kept track of the months by marking with charcoal on a piece of wood, or by notching a stick, each successive time the moon was in that phase and "she would usually estimate it right." 843 805 211

Childbirth usually took place right in the woman's own lodge. Should someone there be sick, he would be moved to another lodge if possible, for while it was considered bad for the sick person to be in the same lodge with a woman in her menses, it was much worse were the woman in labor, for the odor of the blood at delivery would affect the sick person adversely. In fact, a person who had only been near the place where a woman was being delivered was not allowed to come near a person who was ill. If the patient could not be moved, the woman in labor would go to another lodge, preferably to that of her grandmother or of her widowed aunt. She would avoid her own mother's lodge as her father or brothers might be around and she would be "ashamed" to go where they might be. 844 [841]

Although the attitude has somewhat changed now, in former times, according to Coming Daylight and Singer, a pregnant woman was supposed to be reticent regarding her condition right up to the last moment. She might suffer intensely, but "you would never know there was a thing wrong with her." Only when she seemed to be very close to term did they send for a midwife and for some old man or woman who would give her medicine. A male doctor did not touch a woman in labor, but would give her medicine to alleviate the pains. Mary told of her own experience. "There was a well-known doctor of this kind who died about ten years ago. He was blind and, when called on a case, would sit with a pot of medicine beside him. He attended me and when he heard me say I was in pain he would just touch me with the end of the stick and the cramps would go away. Finally I complained that I was tired. The midwife said that it would soon be over, but the old doctor told them: 'No. It hasn't turned yet.' I thought this was strange that he should know this as not only was he blind but he had not touched me. Later on he said: 'It will be about a half hour more.' And he was right." 844 756

Different practitioners have different methods. Singer witnessed the following case. "A man had received power from

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 bundle were untied, after the third singing was ended (or perhaps one thong after each of the three singings). The keeper and co-keeper both together made three successive passes at the bundle with their right hands (3 finger tips still joined), spitting on the bundle at each pass. The keeper then untied the stem-end thong to the south, the co-keeper the middle one, and finally the keeper the bowl-end one.

Then both held their hands, three tips joined, breast height before them, made three passes, spitting at each pass. Then the keeper slowly unfolded the flap on his side and laid it flat. Next, after the same joint ceremony, the co-keeper unfolded and laid flat the flaps on her side. The same was repeated with other outer wrappings apparently if they existed. The outer cover of the bundle was then taken off leaving the objects within it exposed, not however the Flat Pipe itself which remained wrapped in its own special case.

The keeper would then hold up one by one the sacred objects in the bundle,—the turtle shell, the hell-diver skin, the muskrat pelt, the bird skins and so forth,—and narrate in full detail the flood and dry-land-making stories and the part played in it by each of the actors. Explanatory narratives of this kind were a very important feature of the seasonal and other more solemn [211] Flat Pipe rites. A primary purpose of them was to freshen the memory of the participants, and to make sure they had an intelligent understanding of what the Flat Pipe stood for. The narratives also included an almost complete ritual of the Flat Pipe as first taught and carried out in the beginning and so served to authenticate the modern rituals. The narratives were recited during this first of the three triads of songs, and also during the following two. They consisted exclusively of sacred traditions regarding the origin and earlier fortunes of the Pipe. War stories and war-deeds, Ni:hohat's secular adventures and escapades, secular folk-tales proper, even more serious ones like the Found-in-the-Grass and Blood-Clot cycles were rigidly excluded.

The narratives and explanations during this first triad of songs, like the songs themselves, revolve around the theme of the making of dry land and of the first human couple; those of the next two

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

782 Flannery: "I tried to be well prepared by a long period of study
123 as to what to tell him [Cooper] so that I could do something big for his health, that his health might be restored. I sort of prepared for this all winter long and then decided I would write this letter to him in the Spring of the year when everyone seems to feel good and [to be] glad that they are still living and that they survived the hardships of the winter and that it is time for rejoicing and that even the animals are glad that spring had come around again. They then woke up from their long sleep of hibernation when they bored underground or under a pile of rocks or whichever way they could get away from . . . winter. I tried to get him [Cooper] the full benefit of it. I am glad to hear he liked it. I tried hard to put into words what I wanted for my friend [Cooper], and so that he would get more I chose that time of the year [spring]. That is when all the animals wake up and talk and sing and move around and let the whole world know: 'I am still around too.' . . . They have made a real effort to live that long. . . . They try to keep themselves in existence as long as they can by growing and singing and running and so forth. . . . If I made my friend feel better and was able to master the great distance between us [Montana to Washington, D. C.] with those few words, I am exceedingly glad and will always feel good when I recall that letter and those words because they made him feel good. Besides my words written down, everything that I had went with them."

The Boy's message in the letter, as translated very carefully
[191] from his dictation in Gros Ventre and written down by his nephew,
[212] Thomas Main, was in part as follows:

"Dear friend—As winter is over and spring is on in its place,
123 it makes one feel good. And as I listen to the talking song of the
539 meadow larks they bring back pleasant memories of my association
782 with you. So I am writing this letter to bring my thoughts into expression.

"I hope I can infuse and saturate into this paper my feelings for you and my concern for your welfare and doctor you with the tidings and blessings which the season of spring always brings, when all nature arises from a long sleep, so that you too may enjoy the healing winds and sunshine which abound at this time.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

nothing to show that they had long been in the Saskatchewan region. All that is certain of their previous past is their closer relationship to the Arapaho than to any other tribe; and the origin of the Arapaho is equally obscure, except that it is certain that, if they came from the north and east, it was a long time ago. Of the Gros Ventre it can only be said that, while related to the Arapaho and regarded by them as almost politically a part of themselves, they were far separated from them when first known, with them for a short time later, and again separated, and in contact and alliance with another much more distantly related Algonkin branch. Their habitat in a hundred years has been successively near the Saskatchewan, the Platte, and the Missouri. There is nothing to show that such variability of affiliation and location within the culture region of the Plains has not been characteristic of their previous history. 131 N4 [648]

The Gros Ventre call the tribes near them by the following names: Arapaho, hinan'ăn (in Arapaho, hinanaei-na"); Cheyenne, itisön, "scars" (itisö", "a scar;" Arapaho name of the Cheyenne, hitaciina"); Cree, na"tsa", "rabbits;" Ojibwa, djinhuna"tsa", "Lower Cree;" the three Blackfoot tribes, waotä"nixtäats, "black-feet" (a Blackfoot, waotä"nixtänin, "blackfoot-man;" a Piegan, tsä"t'; the Bloods, ka"winähaä"); Assiniboine, na"djineihin; Sioux, na"wina"djinei, "Below-Assiniboine" (in Arapaho, na"tinei, "a Sioux"); Crow, hounen, "crow-men;" Minitari, wuxnokayan, "—lodges;" Shoshone, sösonyänin, "snake-men;" Bannock, waotä"nixiinin, "black-men" (in Arapaho the Ute are called wrotänähiçi, "black"); Flathead Salish, kaakaäänin, "flathead-man;" Nezpercé, taniibats, "pierced-nose" (Arapaho taniibaaçi is the Caddo). Two tribes to the southwest or perhaps west, which have not been identified, are the wasöi"hiiyeihits, "grass-dwellers," who live in houses of grass or brush; and the na"wuxaanibiina"ts, "fish-eaters." 101 648

The Gros Ventre were divided into groups similar to those of the Blackfeet and Sioux. The names of these bands were nicknames, and in no way totemic. As there was prohibition of marriage within the band, the name "clan" is, however, applicable to them. Descent was paternal and a man belonged to his father's band; but the prohibition of marriage extended also to his mother's clan, all the members of both the father's and mother's clan being considered relatives. Each band seems to have had a recognized head or chief. During the winter the tribe broke into smaller groups, consisting of one or perhaps more clans, which followed the buffalo, and camped chiefly in the timber. There corrals were made for the horses at night to prevent their being stolen by war-parties. When summer came, the clans joined and camped together in the large camp-circle. In this, the opening of which was toward the east, the different bands had definite 621 614 [611] [582] 221 361 621 614

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

CHAPTER III

NECESSITIES OF LIFE

The dominant technique by which the Gros Ventres met their needs was that of hunting, especially of the buffalo. The yearly round of productive activities was geared to the quest of that animal, with hunting of other animals, collecting, and the processing of raw materials subordinated thereto. 224

The Seasonal Round

The Gros Ventres state that buffalo were plentiful in their territory, at least in the area claimed from the 1830's on. This is borne out by studies of the habits and migrations of the buffalo in the northern plains.[1] In the exploitation of this abundant resource there were two regular peaks of intensive hunting—a concerted effort on the part of the tribe as a whole—in the spring and in the fall. During the summer the amount of hunting was fairly consistent, being stepped up occasionally in view of any Sacred Dances which might have been vowed. During the dead of winter the hunting of buffalo was said to have been only sporadic and not on so large a scale. 221 224

Some time in April the whole tribe foregathered to organize the first spring hunt which lasted about a month. This coincided with the northward migration of the buffalo which had wintered on the Montana ranges. The smaller herds formed in great masses as they sought their summer pastures on the plains of the Saskatchewan, where they again scattered into smaller herds. During this time the whole Gros Ventre tribe camped together and the hunters worked out from the camp as often as necessary, there being plenty of game within easy distance as the millions of buffalo passed a given spot. Apparently after this big hunt was over, the spring Pipe Rite was held and then everyone was free to move where he pleased. Usually the main body of the tribe stayed fairly

[1] Hornaday, pp. 388–89, 425.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

221 224 well together during the ensuing summer months, a band or two moving off by themselves to rejoin the tribe in time to prepare for whatever Sacred Dances might have been scheduled, and parties of 10, 20, 30 or more men would go off to raid the enemy. Precautions had to be taken, too, against the ever-present danger of being raided by the enemy, especially by smaller groups separated from the main tribe as they went further and further from the center of their territory in quest of game.[8]

[281] The hides of buffalo killed during the spring and summer were used to make parfleshes, moccasin soles, lodge covers, ropes and the like. Fresh meat was usually plentiful although it was necessary to move six or eight times a summer to keep up with the buffalo, some smaller herds of which apparently remained in Montana in spite of the migration of the vast majority to the north. [222] Meantime as the various berries, wild fruits and wild roots ripened, collecting was done whenever opportunity offered, neither tribal nor band movements being determined, so far as we are aware, by that objective, but depending almost entirely on the whereabouts of the buffalo. During August and September, the rutting season, the buffalo joined in great milling masses leaving bare the surrounding range for many miles. The buffalo then separated into smaller herds again and by October, when the Gros Ventres started their concerted fall hunt, the buffalo were in prime condition, their coats sleek and fine.

The best time for robe hunting was approximately from October [251] 15 to November 15, but the hunt continued until all had sufficient meat dried and stored to see them through the winter. It was said that as many robes as possible were dressed with the fur on, and

[8] In this connection it is interesting to note that the old Cree, quoted by Thompson, pp. 329–30, after describing a drawn battle between the Snake and Piegan about 1730 concludes: ". . . night put an end to the battle without a scalp being taken on either side, and in those days such was the result, unless one party was more numerous than the other. The great mischief of war then, was as now [1786], by attacking and destroying small camps of 10–30 tents which are obliged to separate for hunting." Such was evidently still the case in the middle of the 19th century. Denig writes in 1854, pp. 548–50, that when the contending parties are nearly equal, little damage is done. The worst damage occurs, however, when 200 to 400 warriors surprise a camp of 20 to 30 lodges.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

meat was dried "in wholesale quantities." This was the time of 221
year when lodge covers and furnishings were replaced where 224
necessary, new lodge poles cut, paint gathered from the mountains, and everything was done to prepare for winter quarters.

The tribe then split into groups of several bands each to seek places along watercourses where they would be protected as much as possible from the rigors of the weather as well as from depredations by their enemies. Trapping of fur-bearing animals and hunting of deer, elk and antelope by individual methods, such as stalking with the gun as weapon, were done during this season, with only an occasional buffalo being killed. The Gros Ventres placed the greatest emphasis on ability to hunt and recognized their limitations in trapping as compared with the Cree. It was considered most important for a man to be a good shot, whether with bow and arrow or gun. Nevertheless some fur-bearing animals were trapped. For beaver they usually used the steel trap or, when that was not available, they broke the dam and grabbed the beaver. Often they would smoke out an animal like the kit-fox, for example, and then shoot it. They knew a deadfall [3] for the fox and wolf, whose pelts they never used themselves but traded with the whites, and there was one trapping song which was sung to give luck in that pursuit.[4] But all in all hunting of the buffalo and to a lesser extent of the elk, deer and antelope, was a major occupation, while other animals were sought for only sporadically.

Buffalo Hunting and the Horse

The general procedure in hunting buffalo was about as follows. 224
First, scouts, sent out to locate the herd, reported its whereabouts. Then the group of hunters, varying in size according to whether the whole tribe or only a band or two were camped together, would depart from camp in order to reach the herd by dawn. The swift buffalo horses to be used in the actual chase were led unburdened so as to keep them fresh. When the herd was spotted, the hunters mounted their swiftest horses and, at a given signal, all dashed into the herd at once, each man then killing as many as he could

[3] Kroeber, 1908, p. 149, describes the deadfall, and mentions also snaring and other methods of hunting birds.

[4] The song was recorded as Nos. 89, 90, 91.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

take you to a camp of Gros Ventres.' 'Who are they?' she asked, 'What is their name?' The woman told her: 'A little short man called Warrior Man,' who was a brother of the returned woman through marriage. 793

"So the woman took the returned Gros Ventre woman to this camp and said: 'I have brought you a Gros Ventre woman. Come and see who it is.' As soon as they saw who it was, they were glad and took her and kissed her and gave her everything good.

"One evening a few days later Warrior Man and his wife got ready and before sunup started off for the big Gros Ventre camp. He walked while Crow Bull's wife rode horseback. It was springtime with wet snow still on the ground. The big camp was at Big Sandy, on the north side of Milk River at the place where the trees stop. They arrived there early in the morning and did not know where to go. I, Coming Daylight, saw the man and the two women approaching and went out to see who they were. The man asked: 'Where is Crow Bull's lodge?' I then saw them go to Crow Bull's lodge. All at his lodge were glad to see the returned captive and kissed her. 131 221 361

"Later when the ground got dry, the whole tribe moved to their usual place here at what is now Hays. Crow Bull made good his vow to take the Flat Pipe if his wife got back safe to him, and I witnessed the transfer, by the keeper of the time, Lame Bull. The rite took place just about a half mile north of where St. Paul's Mission now is." 131 221 361

Crow Bull kept the Pipe a long time, until his death in 1887, upon which it fell to his widow, an Assiniboine woman named Coming Day. This woman neglected the Pipe. Coming Daylight told her: "Now, this Pipe is just like your father. Why is he always left alone? He was never left alone before. Now I have a mare and this Pipe has a saddle. Put the Pipe on the saddle and take it to White Bird. He will take care of it." So they went to White Bird and talked to him first. He agreed to take it over without rite or vow. On the request of a young man, Bird Sits High, the Pipe was transferred to him. This young man died soon after and his father, Otter Robe, took it upon himself to harbor the Pipe. When Otter Robe died, sometime prior to 1908,

dried and seasoned, then pulverized, and used in a liquid. It was also used mixed with other things. 278

The Pipe keepers, and co-keepers, ex-keepers and ex-co-keepers, were immune and could handle it. But if others touched the plant or powder they would be seized at once with fits which only an actual or retired keeper or co-keeper could cure by working on him and blowing some of the powder on him. Some Gros Ventres, however, such as old Deafie, did not believe that wild parsley caused fits, but many cases are reported. One man, for instance, in recent times carried some in his hands to a dance, and during the dance got a fit and it took one of the ex-co-keepers to bring him out of it. Another man used wild parsley as a medicine in doctoring. Each participant in the Crazy Lodge used it. But originally its use was confined to Pipe keepers and co-keepers (see p. 52).

If one were scratched with an arrow that had been dipped in wild parsley infusion he would suffer spasms, fits and acute agony and would not live till morning. Such a poisoned arrow was tied by each Crazy Lodge dancer to his bow, apparently as a silent threat to enforce obedience and respect by the people during the lodge rites, but was thrown away after the dance was over.* These poisoned arrows were not used at any other time than the Crazy Lodge; never for instance, in Gros Ventre wars or raids on enemies. 411 278

Seasonal Rites

The three annual seasonal rites were in the olden days the major ceremonial events in Gros Ventre life according to The Boy, Thick and older informants. No vow was necessary to hold them. They were never omitted. They had to be performed. The seasonal rites have long since been given up. They were last carried out sometime in the late 1860's or early 1870's, while The Boy's father, Lame Bull, was keeper. 796* 178

The three seasonal rites were held in the spring, fall and winter respectively. About April the various Gros Ventre bands, which 796* 221 361

*Cf. Kroeber, 1908, pp. 207-08 regarding poisoned arrow.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 had been scattered during the winter, would foregather at a designated place for the spring buffalo hunt, and when the trees were
●221 in leaf and the grass up and everything growing and in blossom
361 and a certain kind of sage about 10 inches high, long enough to pluck, the spring rite was held. During the summer months the bands kept more or less together, largely engaged in hunting the buffalo and holding the Sacred Lodges. Around October occurred the larger fall hunt to get in supplies of meat, skin, fur, sinew and so forth for the winter, and, before the bands scattered, the fall rite took place. After the fall rite, the bands scattered for the winter months. The winter rite was performed about the middle of the winter season and was participated in only by the members of the band or bands which had elected to stay the winter with the Pipe and its keeper.

*796 The three rites were fundamentally the same, with some differences to be noted, but had each its own purpose. All three were dominantly theistic in the sense of being directed chiefly toward the Supreme Being. Spring time, when all nature was coming again to life, was in general Gros Ventre religious belief, the most propitious time for prayer. The spring Pipe rite was primarily a rite of hope and petition, a prayer that all things would grow well, that there would be plenty of game and of plant food, that the people would have abundance of all things they needed for living well, that they would be successful in all their worthwhile undertakings such as the hunt, that there would be no sickness, and that all would live happily. The fall rite, held after the winter supply had been killed and dried and berries had been gathered, new lodge coverings made, and perhaps new lodge poles, new bedding, clothes cleaned, etc., was primarily a rite of gladness and thanksgiving. To "make a sort of report" to the Supreme Being that they were still living, that their spring prayers to him had been answered in the way they had asked, and to give thanks to him for these good things which ultimately had come from him. The purpose of
[801] the winter rite was less clear cut. For one thing, the rite was required to round out the cycle of three, the Pipe number. Thanksgiving was one purpose, thanksgiving "and a sort of singing of praises," "a sort of adoration," because the people were at leisure, without hardship, sickness or anxiety, glad to be still alive in the

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

221 224 well together during the ensuing summer months, a band or two moving off by themselves to rejoin the tribe in time to prepare for whatever Sacred Dances might have been scheduled, and parties of 10, 20, 30 or more men would go off to raid the enemy. Precautions had to be taken, too, against the ever-present danger of being raided by the enemy, especially by smaller groups separated from the main tribe as they went further and further from the center of their territory in quest of game.[8]

[281] The hides of buffalo killed during the spring and summer were used to make parfleshes, moccasin soles, lodge covers, ropes and the like. Fresh meat was usually plentiful although it was necessary to move six or eight times a summer to keep up with the buffalo, some smaller herds of which apparently remained in Montana in spite of the migration of the vast majority to the north. [222] Meantime as the various berries, wild fruits and wild roots ripened, collecting was done whenever opportunity offered, neither tribal nor band movements being determined, so far as we are aware, by that objective, but depending almost entirely on the whereabouts of the buffalo. During August and September, the rutting season, the buffalo joined in great milling masses leaving bare the surrounding range for many miles. The buffalo then separated into smaller herds again and by October, when the Gros Ventres started their concerted fall hunt, the buffalo were in prime condition, their coats sleek and fine.

The best time for robe hunting was approximately from October [251] 15 to November 15, but the hunt continued until all had sufficient meat dried and stored to see them through the winter. It was said that as many robes as possible were dressed with the fur on, and

[8] In this connection it is interesting to note that the old Cree, quoted by Thompson, pp. 329–30, after describing a drawn battle between the Snake and Piegan about 1730 concludes: ". . . night put an end to the battle without a scalp being taken on either side, and in those days such was the result, unless one party was more numerous than the other. The great mischief of war then, was as now [1786], by attacking and destroying small camps of 10–30 tents which are obliged to separate for hunting." Such was evidently still the case in the middle of the 19th century. Denig writes in 1854, pp. 548–50, that when the contending parties are nearly equal, little damage is done. The worst damage occurs, however, when 200 to 400 warriors surprise a camp of 20 to 30 lodges.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

262 mountain lion, lynx, bobcat, and otter, never served as food.

Of vegetable foods there was a variety, especially of berries and [251] roots, many of which were gathered in large amounts and dried for winter use, either as seasoning in broths and soups, or to be mixed with grease. Currents, strawberries and raspberries were picked when ripe and only in sufficient quantities to meet daily needs. Juneberries, or service-berries, and gooseberries were dried and stored away in parfleshes. Bitterroot, wild onions and wild carrots were likewise preserved for winter use, as well as wild rhubarb stems. In July larb-berries, another name for which is bear-berries, and "plums" were ripe; and in August the choke-cherries and wild turnips were dried and pounded. In late August rose-berries were ready to eat, but were better after a touch of frost. There was no need of storing too many of these since they did not freeze and could be garnered all winter long. It is said that of all the berries and roots available, service-berries and choke-cherries, wild turnips and bitterroot, were the most important More of these were put up than of the others.

The yield of thorn-, rose- and larb-berries, of wild carrots and of wild rhubarb was always dependable. Other plants, however, were more erratic. For instance, one year there would be no chokecherries at all around Hays but plenty of them at Lodgepole, only ten miles distant; the next year the situation was as likely as not to be reversed. Moreover some plants grew only in a few localities at best. Red turnips or beet turnips, described as something like a radish, was one of those which was to be found only sporadically and in sandy places; the wild potato, another of the less common plants, grew only in the Sweet Grass Hills and in the Moccasin Mountains south of the Little Rockies, and around Billings.

262 Such additional foods were evidently of sufficient importance that the women occasionally ventured quite far from camp for 222 berry-picking and root-digging expeditions, disregarding the very real danger of surprise by the enemy. That these edibles were not despised is suggested, too, by the fact that the digging-stick had a prominent place at the center pole in the Women's Lodge, although it is true that the principal concern in the rite centered about the buffalo.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

passed, and so drove them forward over the bank into the enclosure. After horses were secured, the buffalo were generally run down. It is said that a buffalo shot with an arrow fell to the other side, never breaking the arrow by falling upon it. 224

The meat of an entire buffalo would be carried on a horse. It was cut in small pieces, which were tied to the ends of strips of the skin and then slung over the horse's back so as to balance. If necessary, the hunter would mount above. It is said that sometimes as many as four deer were carried on one horse. [492]

When a buffalo was killed, half the skin was sometimes stitched or tied into a sack, the meat put into it, and the bundle dragged home by a rope around the shoulders of a person. In other cases the meat would be tied into bundles and carried home on the shoulders. The buffalo were usually cut up by men. Women were said to have taken part in this work when luck was unusually good and many buffalo had been killed. After a man had brought home meat, the women cut it into thin slices, which were hung on racks to dry. The dried meat was either packed in parfleches, or pounded fine and made into pemmican by mixture with berries. Meat, whether fresh or dried, was usually eaten after having been boiled in water; but when one was hungry or in haste a piece would be put on a stick and turned over the fire. [482] [251] [252]

Traps for foxes and other animals, even bears, were constructed by making an enclosure, over the opening of which a heavy log, sliding between four sticks to keep it in place, was supported on a single slender upright stick resting on another stick attached to the bait. Other logs might be leaned against the first one to give it additional weight.

Birds such as sage-hens, ducks, and geese, were formerly not hunted extensively. The eggs, however, formed favorite food. When a camp was pitched near a lake, the young men would strip and go out into the water looking for duck-eggs. Fish were not caught except by children, for amusement. 223 [226]

When a camp was broken, small brush tents with windows of grass were built. Fat and meat were strewed about the place and a man entered the ambush before daylight. He could look and shoot through the grass, but he could not be seen inside. Birds as large as eagles were secured in this way.

Crows and magpies were caught with sinew snares attached to a willow hoop. Meat was laid in the middle of the hoop. Walking about inside of this, the birds caught their feet in the snares and were unable to fly away.

Gophers were caught by means of a horsehair loop fastened to the end of a rope and laid around a gopher-hole. A person lay down, and when the gopher raised its head he jerked the rope. 224

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

361 places. Beginning at the eastern opening of the circle, and going south-
621 ward, westward, northward, and eastward again, the order in which the
614 clans camped was as follows: —

1. Frozen, or plumes.
2. Those-who-water-their-horses-once-a-day.
3. Tendons.
4. Those-who-do-not-give-away, or buffalo-humps.
5. Opposite (or middle) Assiniboine.
6. Ugly-ones, or tent-poles worn smooth (from travel).
7. Bloods.
8. Fighting-alone.

Other names of clans, whose location in the camp-circle was not ascertained, and some of which, perhaps, are second names of clans enumerated above, are: —

Dusty-ones.
Coffee.
Weasel-skin head-dress.
Ka'hutyi (the name of a chief).
Poor-ones.
Berry-eaters.
Torn-trousers.
Gray-ones, or ash-colored.
Breech-cloths.
Night-hawks.

Anecdotes referring to incidents that are usually ridiculous accompany these names. The Smooth-worn-tent-pole people were so called, because the ends of their tent-poles, used as travois, were worn smooth from much travelling. The Tendon clan was so called, because one of this band had said that the tendons in the neck of a buffalo were good eating. The Frozen-people were so called, because, when they had hungry visitors in winter, they gave them frozen meat. Those-who-water-their-horses-once-a-day are said to have followed this practice so that their horses would gain flesh more quickly. The Opposite-Assiniboine, like the Assiniboine, were said to have had few horses, and the Fighting-alone were very warlike people. Those-who-do-not-give-away-without-return were considered stingy, and the Ugly-people were said not to have painted their faces.

FOOD AND HUNTING.

224 Like most of the other tribes of the Plains, the Gros Ventre subsisted
[262] almost entirely on the buffalo, and their culture depended to the usual degree upon this animal. The following scattering notes were obtained regarding the hunting of buffalo and other animals.

Buffalo enclosures used to be made of trees and forked limbs set in the ground in a half or three-quarter circle below a vertical bank. Extending over the country above the bank, a long chute of two rows of stone monuments was erected, behind which sat men. Other hunters drove the buffalo into the chute. Those behind the piles of stone rose up as the buffalo

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

passed, and so drove them forward over the bank into the enclosure. After horses were secured, the buffalo were generally run down. It is said that a buffalo shot with an arrow fell to the other side, never breaking the arrow by falling upon it. 224

The meat of an entire buffalo would be carried on a horse. It was cut in small pieces, which were tied to the ends of strips of the skin and then slung over the horse's back so as to balance. If necessary, the hunter would mount above. It is said that sometimes as many as four deer were carried on one horse. [492]

When a buffalo was killed, half the skin was sometimes stitched or tied into a sack, the meat put into it, and the bundle dragged home by a rope around the shoulders of a person. In other cases the meat would be tied into bundles and carried home on the shoulders. The buffalo were usually cut up by men. Women were said to have taken part in this work when luck was unusually good and many buffalo had been killed. After a man had brought home meat, the women cut it into thin slices, which were hung on racks to dry. The dried meat was either packed in parfleches, or pounded fine and made into pemmican by mixture with berries. Meat, whether fresh or dried, was usually eaten after having been boiled in water; but when one was hungry or in haste a piece would be put on a stick and turned over the fire. [482] [251] [252]

Traps for foxes and other animals, even bears, were constructed by making an enclosure, over the opening of which a heavy log, sliding between four sticks to keep it in place, was supported on a single slender upright stick resting on another stick attached to the bait. Other logs might be leaned against the first one to give it additional weight.

Birds such as sage-hens, ducks, and geese, were formerly not hunted extensively. The eggs, however, formed favorite food. When a camp was pitched near a lake, the young men would strip and go out into the water looking for duck-eggs. Fish were not caught except by children, for amusement. 223 [226]

When a camp was broken, small brush tents with windows of grass were built. Fat and meat were strewed about the place and a man entered the ambush before daylight. He could look and shoot through the grass, but he could not be seen inside. Birds as large as eagles were secured in this way.

Crows and magpies were caught with sinew snares attached to a willow hoop. Meat was laid in the middle of the hoop. Walking about inside of this, the birds caught their feet in the snares and were unable to fly away.

Gophers were caught by means of a horsehair loop fastened to the end of a rope and laid around a gopher-hole. A person lay down, and when the gopher raised its head he jerked the rope. 224

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

526 Fig. 25 shows one side of a small ball painted yellow, on which is a rude embroidery in red, yellow, and green quills, representing a bird. On the 532 opposite side is a red quilled cross. The bird-embroidery recalls the quill-ornamentation of an Arapaho ghost-dance drumstick and hand implement, both of them with stuffed heads of painted skin; also the painting of a crow on an Arapaho ghost-dance ball.[1]

526

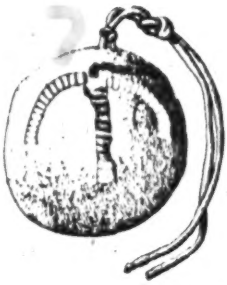


Fig. 25 (50-1731). Embroidered and Painted Ball. Diameter, 7 cm.

A game of throwing willow sticks on the ice, to see who could slide them farthest, was played by women. These sticks were sometimes tipped with buffalo-calves' horns. Young men, as well as women, sometimes threw horn-pointed sticks on the ice. It is said that women used long sticks, young men short sticks.

Children slid on the ice at a place they had made smooth. A boy and then a girl would slide alternately. When the whole party had slid one way, they would return, sliding in the opposite direction.

A toy made to slide on the ice consists of a bone to which two feathered sticks are attached at a diverging angle. It is called "tataxtsitcebya^{n}." The object is to bounce or slide the implement over the ice as far as possible. This type of object is found among a number of Plains tribes.

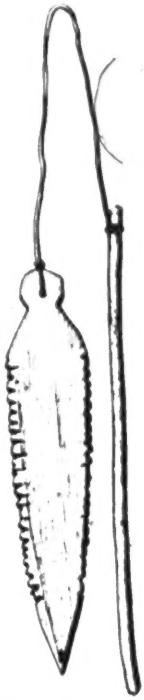


Fig. 26 (50-1788). Bull-roarer. Length, 56 cm.

493 Boys' sleds for coasting on hillsides were made of
526 several buffalo-ribs held together at each end by a long
857 thong winding in and out around the two halves of a split stick. A buffalo-tail was tied behind. These sleds were called "sö^{n}w^{u}haana^{n}." When a man presented such a sled to another man's boy, he received presents from the boy's parents. In early summer, when the grass was green, toboggans of rawhide were used on the hillsides. The front was held up and bent over, and the bottom soon became very smooth.

224 Slings were used by boys for killing birds and small animals. The entire
411 sling was made of skin. The thongs were passed through holes near the
857

[1] See Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part IV, p. 395, Fig. 151.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

 224 411 857

ends of the main portion of the sling, and then looped on themselves through a slit near one end.

The bull-roarer and buzzer were both well known to the Gros Ventre, but seem to be only children's toys. They were both called nakaa"ta" ("making cold," a name given also to the thermometer), probably from the widespread Indian idea that the bull-roarer breeds wind. The buzzer was made of a foot-bone of a buffalo, with a sinew string on each side, by which it was twirled, and then drawn so as to hum. The Arapaho type of buzzer is the same. The Gros Ventre bull-roarer seems to differ from the Arapaho form. Fig. 26 shows one of two very similar models, both of wood. The small, well-marked head, the long taper and point, and the numerous small notches, mark a distinct form. The sinew string is of about the length of the stick handle. 534 857 524 [821]

WAR.

Men generally went to war on foot, carrying food and moccasins on their backs. While on the trip they did not boil meat, but roasted it. Scouts, called "wolves," were sent out ahead. When these returned, running in a zigzag course, and shouting, it was a sign that they had seen something. If they had seen lodges, they barked like wolves. While they came, the women in the party stood in a row and sang, having made a pile of buffalo-chips. The "wolves" stopped a short distance away, and the leader of the party went to them. They came with him back to the pile of buffalo-chips, where he stopped, and, facing the party, recounted coups. After this, one of the scouts came before them and reported what he had seen. Upon this, all rushed at the pile of buffalo-chips, and kicked them about. If the enemy were near, they would now take off their heavier clothing, such as their robes, and dress and paint for war. 726 [252]

On returning to their camp victorious, the party approached stealthily, and made a charge upon it, often shooting; and sometimes the people in the tents jumped up out of their sleep in the early morning, thinking they had been attacked. The man who had killed an enemy, the one who had struck him first (whether dead or alive), and the one who had taken his gun, were held in about the same esteem. After the return to camp, a dance was made. Drums were beaten; and the women, who were standing in a curved row, danced in a circle toward the men, who stood in a row, and back again. The women carried the new scalps on sticks. If an enemy were killed near the home camp, his feet and hands might be cut off and carried on sticks, like the scalps. During this dance the man who first 727 [554] [554]

688 be held, runners were sent by the company of the vower and all were obliged to attend. If, in preparation for the Dance, the vower and the members of his company made a ruling, for example that a hunt was necessary, this would be announced. It would be stated that no one should go out alone to kill buffalo because they wanted everybody to kill some, and it was added: 'This is the order of the Wolves (or Stars). If anyone disobeys this rule, the Wolves (or Stars) will attend to them!' Should anyone have disobeyed the order, when they all returned from the hunt it would be announced: 'So-and-so disobeyed our rule.' The company of the vower would then go in a body to the delinquent's lodge, singing a special song.[34] The people would know that someone was going to be raided and all would go out to see who the culprit might have been." The delinquent knew that if he showed anger and resisted, he was in danger of being hurt or even killed. The company confiscated the culprit's meat, taking all of it that was there, and in addition would usually tear up his lodge. Should the delinquent have an enemy-friend among the "soldiers," that one took the lead in punishing and might even go so far as to cut the ears off of the delinquent's finest horse—a deep humiliation for its owner.

688 Thus during a Sacred Dance, from the time the vow was publicly
625 announced until the Dance was over, the company of the vower was in complete authority and could apply sanctions of force if the various rulings were not obeyed. They actually constituted a police for the duration of the Dance. As soon as the Dance was over, however, the vower's company had no further power and the police function inherent in the soldier societies apparently remained in abeyance until some other Sacred Dance was performed.

688 There is some little question as to whether or not attendance of
625 all bands was compulsory at the first spring hunt for buffalo and, if so, whether the Star and Wolf societies exercised their authority
224 at this time. On one occasion in 1939, one informant, speaking in general terms, stated that the chief of the tribe had the possibility of calling on either the Stars or the Wolves to punish an offender who hunted alone after it had been announced that the buffalo had been sighted and all were to hunt together; and on another

[34] Song recorded as No. 103.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

occasion he stated that it was the "law" of the spring hunt that no one should hunt buffalo alone or in a small group, violation of which invoked the sanctions applied by the Wolf-men or Stars. However, in 1940, this same informant stated twice, explicitly, that there was no police power except at the Sacred Dances and on a third occasion in that year said: "After the Sacred Dance the company disbanded, and the chief resumed control, but he did not punish anybody for hunting buffalo alone." 224 688 625

In any case, authority was delegated to the companies only temporarily. Otherwise there was no agency beyond that of the family which could apply sanctions of force, and then, on only two counts. A husband had the right to take the life of an unfaithful wife; the family had the right of blood revenge in case of murder. In both, however, less extreme modes of behavior were approved and bloodshed could honorably be avoided. 688 625 684 682

When murder occurred, if the family of the murdered person could be persuaded to accept a payment of goods as restitution, further spilling of blood was prevented. It was said that the lodge of the band chief offered temporary refuge to a murderer and that sanctuary was likewise available in the lodge of the Keeper either of the Flat or of the Feathered Pipe. It was thought that if the murderer and his family, who collectively shared responsibility for the crime, could flee the scene, time would be gained for negotiating the blood-price. If one blood relative killed another, there was no retaliation, but the murderer was shunned. 682 [778] [672]

While there was a considerable amount of fighting and quarreling among the Gros Ventres, especially under the influence of liquor, disputes were usually settled without bloodshed. Outright murder, as distinct from deaths attributed to witchcraft, was seemingly relatively infrequent. The following seven cases, arranged chronologically, illustrate actual behavior. Each of these was referred to independently by several different informants with a high level of agreement among them on details. The total represents all the murders that were known to have occurred in the period from about 1850 to 1885. 689

Case No. 1. These events took place about 1847. Two young men, who were related by blood, went on foot to steal horses from the enemy. One had obtained a fine horse, but the other had been 682

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

CHAPTER III

NECESSITIES OF LIFE

The dominant technique by which the Gros Ventres met their needs was that of hunting, especially of the buffalo. The yearly round of productive activities was geared to the quest of that animal, with hunting of other animals, collecting, and the processing of raw materials subordinated thereto. 224

The Seasonal Round

The Gros Ventres state that buffalo were plentiful in their territory, at least in the area claimed from the 1830's on. This is borne out by studies of the habits and migrations of the buffalo in the northern plains.[1] In the exploitation of this abundant resource there were two regular peaks of intensive hunting—a concerted effort on the part of the tribe as a whole—in the spring and in the fall. During the summer the amount of hunting was fairly consistent, being stepped up occasionally in view of any Sacred Dances which might have been vowed. During the dead of winter the hunting of buffalo was said to have been only sporadic and not on so large a scale. 221 224

Some time in April the whole tribe foregathered to organize the first spring hunt which lasted about a month. This coincided with the northward migration of the buffalo which had wintered on the Montana ranges. The smaller herds formed in great masses as they sought their summer pastures on the plains of the Saskatchewan, where they again scattered into smaller herds. During this time the whole Gros Ventre tribe camped together and the hunters worked out from the camp as often as necessary, there being plenty of game within easy distance as the millions of buffalo passed a given spot. Apparently after this big hunt was over, the spring Pipe Rite was held and then everyone was free to move where he pleased. Usually the main body of the tribe stayed fairly

[1] Hornaday, pp. 388–89, 425.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

221 224 well together during the ensuing summer months, a band or two moving off by themselves to rejoin the tribe in time to prepare for whatever Sacred Dances might have been scheduled, and parties of 10, 20, 30 or more men would go off to raid the enemy. Precautions had to be taken, too, against the ever-present danger of being raided by the enemy, especially by smaller groups separated from the main tribe as they went further and further from the center of their territory in quest of game.[8]

[281] The hides of buffalo killed during the spring and summer were used to make parfleshes, moccasin soles, lodge covers, ropes and the like. Fresh meat was usually plentiful although it was necessary to move six or eight times a summer to keep up with the buffalo, some smaller herds of which apparently remained in Montana in spite of the migration of the vast majority to the north. [222] Meantime as the various berries, wild fruits and wild roots ripened, collecting was done whenever opportunity offered, neither tribal nor band movements being determined, so far as we are aware, by that objective, but depending almost entirely on the whereabouts of the buffalo. During August and September, the rutting season, the buffalo joined in great milling masses leaving bare the surrounding range for many miles. The buffalo then separated into smaller herds again and by October, when the Gros Ventres started their concerted fall hunt, the buffalo were in prime condition, their coats sleek and fine.

The best time for robe hunting was approximately from October [251] 15 to November 15, but the hunt continued until all had sufficient meat dried and stored to see them through the winter. It was said that as many robes as possible were dressed with the fur on, and

[8] In this connection it is interesting to note that the old Cree, quoted by Thompson, pp. 329–30, after describing a drawn battle between the Snake and Piegan about 1730 concludes: ". . . night put an end to the battle without a scalp being taken on either side, and in those days such was the result, unless one party was more numerous than the other. The great mischief of war then, was as now [1786], by attacking and destroying small camps of 10–30 tents which are obliged to separate for hunting." Such was evidently still the case in the middle of the 19th century. Denig writes in 1854, pp. 548–50, that when the contending parties are nearly equal, little damage is done. The worst damage occurs, however, when 200 to 400 warriors surprise a camp of 20 to 30 lodges.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

meat was dried "in wholesale quantities." This was the time of 221
year when lodge covers and furnishings were replaced where 224
necessary, new lodge poles cut, paint gathered from the mountains, and everything was done to prepare for winter quarters.

The tribe then split into groups of several bands each to seek places along watercourses where they would be protected as much as possible from the rigors of the weather as well as from depredations by their enemies. Trapping of fur-bearing animals and hunting of deer, elk and antelope by individual methods, such as stalking with the gun as weapon, were done during this season, with only an occasional buffalo being killed. The Gros Ventres placed the greatest emphasis on ability to hunt and recognized their limitations in trapping as compared with the Cree. It was considered most important for a man to be a good shot, whether with bow and arrow or gun. Nevertheless some fur-bearing animals were trapped. For beaver they usually used the steel trap or, when that was not available, they broke the dam and grabbed the beaver. Often they would smoke out an animal like the kit-fox, for example, and then shoot it. They knew a deadfall [3] for the fox and wolf, whose pelts they never used themselves but traded with the whites, and there was one trapping song which was sung to give luck in that pursuit.[4] But all in all hunting of the buffalo and to a lesser extent of the elk, deer and antelope, was a major occupation, while other animals were sought for only sporadically.

Buffalo Hunting and the Horse

The general procedure in hunting buffalo was about as follows. 224
First, scouts, sent out to locate the herd, reported its whereabouts. Then the group of hunters, varying in size according to whether the whole tribe or only a band or two were camped together, would depart from camp in order to reach the herd by dawn. The swift buffalo horses to be used in the actual chase were led unburdened so as to keep them fresh. When the herd was spotted, the hunters mounted their swiftest horses and, at a given signal, all dashed into the herd at once, each man then killing as many as he could

[3] Kroeber, 1908, p. 149, describes the deadfall, and mentions also snaring and other methods of hunting birds.

[4] The song was recorded as Nos. 89, 90, 91.

224 before the buffalo got out of range. Only one such run a day was made and, although all hunters had an equal opportunity, so to speak, since no one of them started before the others, the greatest chance of success lay with the man mounted on the fastest horse. Incidentally the gun never supplanted the bow and arrow as a weapon of the chase because, for a mounted hunter riding close to the game, the bow and arrow was just as effective and even easier to use than the gun which had to be reloaded and which was difficult to aim accurately when traveling at a fast pace. Succeeding generations of Gros Ventre boys were trained in archery right up to, and including, the time of the disappearance of the buffalo.

Our informants stated that while the surround was sometimes resorted to, the chase or run, as described above, was the method [178] preferred by the Gros Ventres. The old-fashioned methods of impounding and driving over the cliff were seemingly abandoned by the Gros Ventres in the 1830's. It was stated that an old man, who died at the age of 98 in 1920, witnessed the last big impounding at the head of the Teton River when he was twelve years old.[5] Our oldest informant (b. 1854) knew of these methods only because her grandmother and other older people had told her stories of what they had witnessed. She put it as follows: "When my grandmother was a young woman, the Gros Ventres were very badly off. Only a person here and there would have a horse, and these horses were not the fast kind that can be used in hunting. In fact they did better by building a row of rocks to lead the buffalo into a big corral;[6] or else by having a man covered with a buffalo robe to act as decoy. This man would run forward toward a steep precipice and just at the edge would jump aside while the buffalo following him would go over. The animals which were not crippled in the fall would be shot with bow and arrow. Every- [492] body had to use dogs to drag their stuff as the people moved around; and they cut the lodges in two so the load would not be too heavy for a dog to draw."

231 The possession of an adequate number of horses, then, seems

[5] Denig, p. 532, confirms this, holding that all the northern plains tribes, except the Assiniboine and Cree, are so well supplied with horses that they do not need to resort to the corral.

[6] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, pp. 148–49.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

CHAPTER IV

ECONOMIC ASPECTS

Labor

In the production of economic goods the man supplied the great bulk of raw materials by means of hunting, doing relatively little collecting and processing. He was responsible, however, for the supply and care of the major means of production, the horse. The chief objects manufactured by him were bows, arrows, clubs, shields, and ceremonial equipment.[1] The woman, on the other hand, supplied only a small part of the raw materials, through collecting, but did most of the processing of raw materials and manufacturing. 462

Cooperation within the household was necessary for production, and the household was practically a self-sufficient unit with relatively little reliance on the cooperative work of others. In actuality there was quite a bit of mutual help, especially among relatives. There was, of course, a certain amount of dependence of the man on his fellows in hunting in the sense that men usually hunted buffalo in groups and, in view of the common welfare, an individual was restrained from selfishly hunting alone and scattering the herd on which his fellows were depending. Nevertheless the operation was a collective rather than a truly cooperative one because, once the chase started, each man was on his own and had the right of disposal over whatever game he killed. It was stated that in any given run the most a man could kill would be seven or eight buffalo and that almost inevitably some would get none. No one went home empty-handed, however, for the more fortunate 476 592 224 476 [431]

[1] Maximilian noted in 1833 that men make only arms and smoking equipment (p. 103), and that among the Gros Ventres were many war clubs "made of the long end of an elk's horn" and "daggers" of jaws and teeth of a bear (p. 75). For other details of materials and manufacture, see Kroeber, 1908, pp. 150–51. For illustration of a shield, see photograph, courtesy of Richard Pohrt, pl. 3. [411]

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

224 476 would share at least the meat, if not the hides, with the less fortunate, which latter would contribute by helping skin and butcher.

[431] Butchering was quite an art and was considered the man's work, although occasionally women accompanied the hunting party if there were a shortage of men, as was liable to be the case especially in winter. Should the party have crossed a river to hunt, the meat was prepared for transportation on a raft by being cut into large chunks, and each two chunks skewered and joined by a thong of sufficient length to hang on the poles forming the raft. The raft was built by crossing two long poles at one end, the other ends [386] free and forming an angle of about thirty degrees. Three or four shorter poles were placed crosswise and lashed firmly in place with rawhide. The paunch of the buffalo, after being washed out, was used as a container for the many leftover bits of meat and was tied to the middle of the lower rung of the raft. A whole beef could thus be loaded on such a raft and towed across by one horseman. When, as was more usually the case, the meat was to be [492] packed back to camp by horses, the butchering was done differently but in such a way that a whole buffalo could be packed on a single horse.[8] Sometimes in winter when a small party went out and [251] they could not pack all the meat back in one trip, the remainder was buried in the snow and called for the following day.

462 281 Once the proceeds of the hunt were turned over to the households of the individual hunters, it was the woman's task to cook the food for immediate consumption and to prepare the surplus for storage. Her most arduous and time-consuming task was the dressing of skins and the manufacture of these into finished articles of clothing, containers, lodge-covers, and so on. It was stated that skins in one stage of preparation or another were nearly always at hand.[9] "They didn't do things in a haphazard way because there was a certain time to do this and a certain time to do that." From the hides of buffalo killed during the spring and early summer, when the hair was not thick, they made the parfleshes and bags, soles for moccasins, rawhide ropes, and lodge-covers. In the fall, when the hide was furry, robes were made.

The older women informants described how, when they were

[8] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, p. 149.

[9] For some details on skin dressing, see Kroeber, 1908, p. 150.

857 524 "husbands": "Go out and hunt buffalo." The boys would go off and stay a little while and on their way back made noises like neighing horses. This would be a sign for the girls to come to meet them and make comments such as: "Oh, what a lot of meat you are bringing!" Then they would pretend to slice, cook, and eat this imaginary meat. Once in a while the children actually [224] snared a gopher, the skin of which served very well in their play as a food sack.

In order to lend excitement to this kind of play, they might divide into two groups and one "tribe" would attack the other. When their "husbands" or loved ones were "killed," the girls mourned, crying just as they had observed grown-ups do, even going so far as to make marks on their legs with mud to represent cuts. A "corpse" would be prepared for "burial," as they had seen the dead wrapped, with the exception that in play they failed to wrap the head.

Sometimes girls would take the foreleg of a buffalo, for example, and wrap it up to serve as a "baby." After having gotten from the river a certain kind of reed to serve as their hair, when the baby "died" they cut off their "hair" as a sign of mourning.

Many women described the lodges they, as children, built which [492] were large enough to play in. Garter Snake used a big yellow dog that belonged to her grandmother as a horse, and when her lodge moved she packed everything on a travois which the dog drew. When it was not convenient to have the lodges built large enough to actually accommodate the children inside, the formation of the camp circle was copied by making large leaves into the shape of tipis. Sticks then represented horses and other sticks attached thereto were travois. These little wooden horses might be fitted out like real ones, with miniature beaded horse blankets, and so on. Occasionally, too, a little boy might pretend he was a horse and drag the travois while being led by a girl as he held a line in his mouth. When this type of horse was out grazing, the owner would have a difficult time catching it.

Sometimes the girls pretended that they cut off their little fingers as a sacrifice, even holding sage to the "wound" as in real life. Coming Daylight and Garter Snake, both of whom as children were associated with one of the Sacred Pipes, mentioned that

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

776 beings as Little Spirit and ghosts, but not such major ones as the Supreme Being and Bha'a.

The following story, as told by The Boy, gives nearly all that 224 is known about Little Spirit, etcibətä:t (ètc,sä, it is little, bettètò, 776 spirit [Sifton]).

"Long ago, how far back I do not know, Little Spirit made himself the guardian spirit helper of a certain man, saying: 'Whenever there is going to be a famine, call me.' 'What are you?' the man asked, 'Where do you come from?' 'I am Little Spirit, I am from the western wind.' The man who had Little Spirit never called him except when game was scarce and there was danger of famine among the people. Then he would call Little Spirit who would tell them where game was. When this man was dying, he said to the people: 'Whenever you go out hunting, pray to Little Spirit to show you where game is and when you have killed game and gutted it, take a piece of the liver and some of the fat, put in on the west side of the game killed, and say: "Here, Little Spirit, is liver and fat for you."' It was just that one man of long ago, no other, who had Little Spirit as a personal helper. When Little Spirit came, he came as a little whirlwind."[19]

Little Spirit was, in accordance with this man's instruction, ordinarily appealed to by the Gros Ventres for success in hunting particularly at times when game was hard to get, and the abovementioned first fruits sacrifice of liver and fat made to him after game was killed. He was not appealed to on any other occasion.

776 At a number of places in and around Gros Ventres territory are cliffs with incised pictographs on them made by a certain class [172] of "false persons" called tciya:tsine:n "ghost men" or "little men." They were never seen but according to Singer were dwarfish, about 3 feet tall. The Gros Ventres distinguish clearly between such pictographs made by these beings on the one hand and on the other those made by Indians or else tracks of animals in flat rocks. The first are temporary, and change from time to time; the other two kinds are permanent. Gros Ventres have tried to get

[114] [19] He did not, however, come into the shaking tent as the ghost helper did. The statement by Cooper, 1940, based on 1939 field notes, was an error corrected 1940 in the field.

793 powers, intended more for the positive advantage of the keeper or
755 his people, were customarily acquired during or after the transfer rite.

In the transfer rite the new keeper was taught how to doctor, especially in cases of fits, spasms and cramps. The peppermint
[278] beverage, now used by everybody for these maladies, was formerly a monopoly of the Flat Pipe keeper in his curing practice. Other doctoring powers were also conferred on him and he could use the hair rope from the Flat Pipe bundle as a potent medicine to cure with, but we could obtain no details on these points.

The keeper would pray to have good dreams and might sleep
[787] on the Pipe bed for the same purpose. His dreams, when told, were important news for his fellows, as through them the future could be foretold.

The keeper was also given power to summon, call or "snare"
789 from a distance, enemies or reluctant friends. The Boy gave two
793 instances of the use of this power, both from the lips of his father, Lame Bull. When Lame Bull, on learning of his election as Flat Pipe keeper fled to the hills, the ex-keeper so summoned him, using the Flat Pipe itself in the rite. The nine Flat Pipe songs were sung and at the end of each, the ex-keeper holding the Pipe at arm's length in both hands with the stem pointed upward and outward, sang the Hair Rope song, then twisted the stem tip in a vertical near-circle first upward and outward and then inward and downward in a sort of beckoning motion as if drawing something toward him, then downward and finally lowered the bowl toward (or to?) the ground.

On a later occasion during Lame Bull's keepership, on a war
[726] expedition against the Piegan he learned in a dream where they were located and was told that five of them would be killed. The night before the attack on the Piegan, using a common pipe and the above calling rite, thrice performed, with the pipe stem pointed toward the distant Piegan camp, invisible at the time to the Gros Ventre party, and singing the Hair Rope song, he "called" five of the Piegan, who, separated from the main Piegan body, were killed by the Gros Ventres.

793 The keeper and co-keeper also were given power to use in hunt-
224 ing buffalo, but we were able to obtain no details on the rite. The

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

793
224

one occasion for which we obtained the account of Lame Bull's resort to this power, it failed to work.

The keeper likewise received power to use in case his horse played out during a war raid. In the 1868 battle with the Piegan, Lame Bull's horse stepped into a hole and fell at a moment when he was surrounded by Piegan. Two young Gros Ventre warriors, sons-in-law of Lame Bull, came to him. His horse got up but could not run, and in fact fell again. One of the young warriors said to him: "I thought the Flat Pipe was everything. Why don't you save yourself. The Piegan will kill all three of us." Lame Bull, keeper at the time, took some peppermint from the small bag tied to his whip, put it in his mouth, sang a certain song, spat on his hands, stroked his whip handle three times with his palm, made motions three times as if striking his horse, and the third time actually struck the horse. At this, the horse came to life as if fresh and started running, and Lame Bull got home safely.

793
726
789

Still another power conferred on the keeper was that of getting possession of a horse by obtaining a single hair thereof. Horses entered into the Feathered Pipe complex, not into the Flat Pipe one. But the Flat Pipe keeper could not be refused a request for a horse or horses made by him of anyone. Moreover, even though he did not directly make such a request, if he wanted a certain good horse, he could ask one of his relatives or good friends, surreptitiously and preferably by night, to pluck one hair from the horse's tail and bring it to him. The keeper would then perform some rite (details not obtainable by us) over the hair and put the hair in the Flat Pipe bundle, and pretty soon he would acquire the desired horse. It may be added that when the keeper walked near or around anybody's horse, he was watched suspiciously for fear that unobserved he would pluck a hair from the horse's tail.

793
789

In addition to these specific supernatural powers, the keeper and co-keeper were given a great number of ritual powers, the right and duty to carry out certain ceremonies directly or indirectly related to the Pipe and its keepership. These will be described later under "Ritual."

793

In accordance with their sacred office and eminent dignity, with their role as benevolent intercessors for the people with the super-

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

484 with the rites previously described. On a day's journey it may be
778 noted, the bundle would have been placed on the tripod in the open three times: before starting out, about half-way, and on arrival at the new camp.

782 The killing of a pure white buffalo, a pure albino,—always a cow never a bull, according to Gros Ventre tradition,—was an extremely
[224] rare occurrence. The killer could keep it himself, give it to the Flat Pipe keeper, or offer it as a sacrifice. This sacrificial rite was last held when the Boy's father, Lame Bull was a young man, probably in the 1850's, and served as a calendrical date: "at the time the white buffalo skin was offered as a sacrifice." The Boy, our sole informant on this rite, could give only fragmentary data on it, gotten from his father who had witnessed only that one time in his life.

If the killer chose to offer the albino skin as a sacrifice, he had to vow, and then had formally to notify the keeper of the Flat Pipe. Carrying it he went clockwise round the camp circle on the inside and brought it to the keeper's lodge. The keeper painted
[302] the man's face with charcoal paint (not red), the ritual color for sacrifices, with a circular band around his face, on the forehead, the sides of the cheeks near the ears, and under the jawbones and chin, and with also a star on the bridge of his nose. The circle, Lame Bull told the Boy, represented the sundog; the star, the sun. A procession in which the keeper, co-keeper, Pipe child, ex-keepers, ex-co-keepers, the two attendants, and all the people took part started at the keeper's lodge and marched clockwise all around the camp circle, very slowly, with three stops (probably at the west, east and south) for prayer, till they reached the sweat-lodge near the keeper's lodge. The albino skin was given a touch of charcoal paint, as in other sacrifices, but The Boy did not know other details of the special rite used in preparing the skin, nor did he know who carried it in the procession. On arrival of the procession at the sweat lodge, the main body of the people went away, but the small group who were to sweat remained and went through the whole sweat-lodge rite at which the albino skin was hung up on the sweat-lodge pole and after which, in accord-

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 782 be on the night immediately preceding the beginning of the Dance rite proper.

[785] Usually others besides the principal vower would vow to join the dance and to pierce their breasts with skewers. These associate vowers would also choose each his own grandfather and, with the help of his own crier, have the same formal public announcement made of his vow as in the case of the principal vower.

As proximate preparation for the Dance, if the bands were scattered at the time, the principal vower would send out young men as runners to summon the bands to foregather for the dance. Attendance was obligatory for all.

The principal vower set up his lodge in the center of the camp circle, and here headquarters were established where conferences of the vower and his assistants were held and whence pro tem laws and regulations, decisions when and whether to move camp, and so forth, were issued.

The vower's chief assistants in these matters were his own age-group or company, a component sub-group of either the Wolves or the Stars. Whether all the Wolves or Stars respectively, and not merely the vower's own age-group, were divided into "talls" and "shorts" (see below), and served as soldiers or "police" during the dance, to enforce attendance, order in the buffalo hunt and so forth, is a point we could not clear up, but more probably only the members of his own age-group.

[561 701] For either the vower's age-group, or perhaps, as just noted, all the Stars or Wolves respectively of which his age-group was a component sub-group, four head officers or "generals" or "lieutenants" were chosen, and also two subordinate officers or "servants" or attendants. The two tallest of the four head officers took the taller men of the age-group (or of the larger society, Stars or Wolves) as their soldiers, and one of the two subordinate officers; the two shortest, the shorter men, and the other subordinate officer. The two divisions, the "talls" and the "shorts," constituted the "soldiers" or "police" for the dance. Each division also had an outstanding old man as herald or crier.

[224] After the people had all been gathered together, the first task was that of gathering food supplies, buffalo meat and particularly

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

buffalo tongues, for the celebration. The vower and his assistants would through their crier announce to the people whether the camp would move for good hunting. On the march, the vower and his company took their place in line immediately after the sacred Pipes. No one was allowed to hunt or run the buffalo until the signal was given. 796* 782 224

During the hunt there would be foot and horse races, shooting contests and gambling matches between the "talls" and "shorts." The losers in the gambling would have to "cook," that is, to provide a meal for the winners, a feast at which the rest of the people, including the children, would horn in. Each one of the losers had to furnish some food or clothing and a smoke (not the pipe itself) to the winners. If one of the losers failed to bring a filled pipe along with the food or clothing wager, the wager was rejected, but he was given a chance to go get one. The winners kept track of the losers, and if any of the latter failed to pay up, they would not do anything to him at once while they were sitting around eating. But afterwards, the winners, followed by the rest of the people, would go to the lodge of the delinquent loser, who usually did not and dared not run away. Here the enemy-friend of the loser would take the latter out of his lodge, and lay him on a spread robe or blanket. The winners would then carry him to the stream or river, give him a good swing and throw him into the water. All the people would follow to see the fun, and the young boys would pelt him with buffalo chips. The victim had to take it all good naturedly and not lose his temper, and the crowd had a good laugh. If the loser were not in his lodge when the winners arrived, they would fetch water, and his enemy-friend would give the loser's bed a good drenching. 792 796* 525 527 522

The hunt continued, the group moving here and there, until enough tongues and other meat was collected, the tongues having been turned over to the vower to be jerked by his wife or wives. Then came the earlier-mentioned four whole nights of singing, done either on successive nights, or from time to time as the tribe moved toward the spot selected for the Sacrifice Dance. After arrival there the fourth of the four all-night singings took place, marking the first night or beginning of the Dance proper, which 782 796* [224 251]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 is far from complete. It does, however, help to fill out some details of the picture given by Kroeber.[83]

According to The Boy the Dance and the following one, the Old Women's Dance, were originally gifts from the buffalo. But the circumstances under which they were given were unknown even to the old men living in The Boy's lifetime. These two Dances were closely associated with the buffalo. In both, the dancers im- [224] personated buffalo, and the performance of both Dances was efficacious in bringing buffalo for the hunters to kill.

The Old Men's Dance, like the other Sacred Dances, was held only in the summer time, and only in fulfillment of a vow. The Boy was of the opinion that it lasted only one day.[84]

To be eligible to vow or to join the Law Enforcer's Dance, a man had to be well advanced in age, presumably having gone through the other Lodges, at least the Fly, Crazy, Kit-fox and Dog. The Drum Dance was dropped out of the series at the beginning of the nineteenth century, as noted above, and the Sacrifice Dance was regarded as outside of the series. While the participants were older men, somewhat beyond the prime of life, "they were still active and could get around." Since they would [88] still be eligible to vow and carry out the Sacrifice Dance they had not yet completed their society and dance career. So far as we could gather, their age range was seemingly from about the late forties or early fifties to the early or middle sixties.

Those who went through the Dance with the vower thereof were, according to The Boy, the men of about the same age-group who had gone through the other sacred Dances together,—seemingly therefore those who had been members of the same age-group of the Star or Wolves. Such a fellow member, who when invited by the others refused to join, was "punished."

The ritual grandfathers of the chief vower and of his associates were chosen from the ranks of the "retired old men" who had already gone through the Dance. According to The Boy, the chief vower's grandfather had to be a man who had himself previously gone through it as chief vower.

---

[83] Kroeber, 1908, pp. 258-59.

[84] It was a four day rite according to information given to Kroeber, 1908, p. 259.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Two young men attendants were chosen, but there was no police force, according to The Boy who said none was needed in the case of these "harmless" and "venerable" old men dancers. In general, The Boy had the impression that people had not cared much what these old men did in their Dance and did not go to it much, for it had "no color to it, nothing lively about it." 796* 888

The dance lodge,—a "very simple little hut" according to The Boy and Thick; a "big round camp" according to Coming Daylight, —was put up outside the camp circle, toward the south thereof. The dancers carried out their rites "sort of secretly." They could be heard singing and dancing inside their lodge, but they did not go around much in public view afterwards as the women did in their Dance. The rattles used to accompany the singing were sticks about a foot or foot-and-a-half long with big buffalo calf hoofs on one end, and were very noisy. The leader's stick was larger and its butt end was pounded on the ground to keep time. 796* [534] [533]

Two of the Dance songs, numbers 67 and 68, were recorded as sung by The Boy. Number 68 was sung while the old men were dancing and contains their particular yell.

The other song, number 67, has the words meaning: "You first (or leading) (buffalo) bull, come in this direction (come streaming in)." This song was a "half-prayer." The singers while singing it were wishing as hard as they could, so there would be plenty of buffalo and thus the people would not have to go far to hunt successfully. The very first original buffalo procreated other buffalo and singers wanted him to lead the other buffalo, his progeny, to the Gros Ventres. The wish-thought or "half-prayer" was directed, however, according to The Boy, not to the first buffalo, but to the Supreme Being so that the latter would provide buffalo.

The primary purpose of the Dance was pretty clearly that of bringing success in buffalo hunting. After the dance was over, the camp would move to another site, and then the people "would always run into a lot of buffalo and have good hunting luck." "Even if there were no buffalo nearby when this Dance had been going on, in some mysterious way many buffalo would come and even run around in the camp." Right after the very last time the Dance was performed, the people ran into a great many buffalo. [224]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

782 [511] praying and singing were done at other seasons of the year and how far as a more general custom by other fathers of families were points we did not clear up.

[264] Before eating food, at least in any more or less formal gathering, a portion of the food was offered up with prayer.

[224] Prayer rites and observances for good hunting were few and simple—as compared, for example, with the numerous and complicated ones practiced by the Algonquian-speaking tribes of the taiga. Abundance of food, which principally meant game food, was commonly prayed for. Two of the Sacred Dances, the Law Enforcers' and the Woman's, had as a purpose success in buffalo hunting. But beyond this, hunting entered little into ritual, and we may recall hunting was conspicuously absent from the power quest. We recorded no rites or observances whatever in connection with the gathering of berries, roots or other plant food.

[484] It was customary on crossing rivers to pray to the Last Child for protection, and to throw into the water offerings, especially shells and eagle-tail feathers, for the Last Child, or the water monster, or both, with some words such as, "I give you this." Sometimes, too, some prayer and offering would be made by a person going to swim, or on other occasions of water hazard.

During or just before severe thunderstorms, various prayer and other procedures were resorted to, many of them directed to Bha'a, the storm being.

Seeking indirectly or asking directly the prayers of the aged, especially for long life, took several different forms, and played an important role in Gros Ventre life, as we have explained elsewhere.

There were many different ways of seeking the prayers of the aged. We recorded the following, which may or may not exhaust the list: crying before a lodge, offering a pipe, promising a sweat-lodge, "holy boiling," providing a feast, doing favors of various kinds.

782 888 "Holy boiling," to which we have not as yet referred, was an observance distinct both from the preceding ones and from feasting a group of aged people. It was intended primarily for some one person, man or woman, although others partook of the meal, and

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

passed, and so drove them forward over the bank into the enclosure. After horses were secured, the buffalo were generally run down. It is said that a buffalo shot with an arrow fell to the other side, never breaking the arrow by falling upon it. 224

The meat of an entire buffalo would be carried on a horse. It was cut [492] in small pieces, which were tied to the ends of strips of the skin and then slung over the horse's back so as to balance. If necessary, the hunter would mount above. It is said that sometimes as many as four deer were carried on one horse.

When a buffalo was killed, half the skin was sometimes stitched or tied [482] into a sack, the meat put into it, and the bundle dragged home by a rope around the shoulders of a person. In other cases the meat would be tied into bundles and carried home on the shoulders. The buffalo were usually cut up by men. Women were said to have taken part in this work when luck was unusually good and many buffalo had been killed. After a man had brought home meat, the women cut it into thin slices, which were hung [251] on racks to dry. The dried meat was either packed in parfleches, or pounded fine and made into pemmican by mixture with berries. Meat, whether fresh or dried, was usually eaten after having been boiled in water; but [252] when one was hungry or in haste a piece would be put on a stick and turned over the fire.

Traps for foxes and other animals, even bears, were constructed by making an enclosure, over the opening of which a heavy log, sliding between four sticks to keep it in place, was supported on a single slender upright stick resting on another stick attached to the bait. Other logs might be leaned against the first one to give it additional weight.

Birds such as sage-hens, ducks, and geese, were formerly not hunted 223 extensively. The eggs, however, formed favorite food. When a camp was pitched near a lake, the young men would strip and go out into the water [226] looking for duck-eggs. Fish were not caught except by children, for amusement.

When a camp was broken, small brush tents with windows of grass were built. Fat and meat were strewed about the place and a man entered the ambush before daylight. He could look and shoot through the grass, but he could not be seen inside. Birds as large as eagles were secured in this way.

Crows and magpies were caught with sinew snares attached to a willow hoop. Meat was laid in the middle of the hoop. Walking about inside of this, the birds caught their feet in the snares and were unable to fly away.

Gophers were caught by means of a horsehair loop fastened to the end of 224 a rope and laid around a gopher-hole. A person lay down, and when the gopher raised its head he jerked the rope.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

224 before the buffalo got out of range. Only one such run a day was made and, although all hunters had an equal opportunity, so to speak, since no one of them started before the others, the greatest chance of success lay with the man mounted on the fastest horse. Incidentally the gun never supplanted the bow and arrow as a weapon of the chase because, for a mounted hunter riding close to the game, the bow and arrow was just as effective and even easier to use than the gun which had to be reloaded and which was difficult to aim accurately when traveling at a fast pace. Succeeding generations of Gros Ventre boys were trained in archery right up to, and including, the time of the disappearance of the buffalo.

Our informants stated that while the surround was sometimes resorted to, the chase or run, as described above, was the method [178] preferred by the Gros Ventres. The old-fashioned methods of impounding and driving over the cliff were seemingly abandoned by the Gros Ventres in the 1830's. It was stated that an old man, who died at the age of 98 in 1920, witnessed the last big impounding at the head of the Teton River when he was twelve years old.[5] Our oldest informant (b. 1854) knew of these methods only because her grandmother and other older people had told her stories of what they had witnessed. She put it as follows: "When my grandmother was a young woman, the Gros Ventres were very badly off. Only a person here and there would have a horse, and these horses were not the fast kind that can be used in hunting. In fact they did better by building a row of rocks to lead the buffalo into a big corral;[6] or else by having a man covered with a buffalo robe to act as decoy. This man would run forward toward a steep precipice and just at the edge would jump aside while the buffalo following him would go over. The animals which were not crippled in the fall would be shot with bow and arrow. Every- [492] body had to use dogs to drag their stuff as the people moved around; and they cut the lodges in two so the load would not be too heavy for a dog to draw."

231 The possession of an adequate number of horses, then, seems

[5] Denig, p. 532, confirms this, holding that all the northern plains tribes, except the Assiniboine and Cree, are so well supplied with horses that they do not need to resort to the corral.

[6] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, pp. 148–49.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

to have been the key factor in the abandonment of the earlier methods of hunting buffalo. The situation of the Gros Ventres in regard to horses, which had apparently been so bad in approximately the first two decades of the 19th century, gradually improved, according to our informants, by natural increase of the few horses they had and by successful raiding of the enemy, especially for the fast buffalo horse. If Bradley's figures are correct, the Gros Ventres averaged five horses per family in 1830. According to our informants, by about 1850 they had "lots of horses," but we know that, even so, the number of horses fluctuated considerably after that date. Coming Daylight, for instance, remembered clearly several times prior to 1880 when the whole tribe was relatively poor in horses. During these periods people were forced to cache as much as possible so they wouldn't be too heavily burdened as they traveled about on foot. No doubt the same factors were operative in the Gros Ventre area as obtained in Blackfoot territory—severe winters and skin diseases among the horses.[1] 231 [484]

In any case, even in relatively prosperous times, seldom if ever did an individual possess great herds such as are described for the Kiowa. The Boy stated that his father, Lame Bull, was an outstanding man, had a herd of about 60 horses. Coming Daylight explained: "Each family kept its own little bunch of horses. In early morning they would be taken out to pasture, usually by the older boys; around the middle of the day they would be watered and driven out again; in the evening they would be brought back and the more valuable ones, the swift buffalo horses, were always kept tied close by at night in case of raid by the enemy." [556]

Such a family-owned herd would be differentiated and would ideally include pack horses, riding horses, and a few buffalo horses. The right of disposal over his own horses was, however, recognized for each individual man, woman and child. A man had the possibility of augmenting his own holdings directly by raiding the enemy. Because of the social recognition attendant upon successful raiding, as well as the economic necessity for controlling the means of production, the individual might actually devote in the course of a year more time and energy in pursuing this objective [422] 231 556

[1] For an excellent discussion of the whole problem, see Ewers, 1943.

231 556 than in the actual production of raw materials. This was especially true of the young unmarried man who, though his ability to hunt was important, was even more anxious to establish his reputation for bravery.

Food

262 The Gros Ventres met their need for food very largely, but not exclusively, through a meat diet. Flesh of the buffalo was the meat par excellence and was considered by the Gros Ventres their "real food." To those who had been brought up on buffalo meat, beef was a poor substitute. It was said, by those who experienced the change of diet after the disappearance of the buffalo in 1884, that many of the older people "died of starvation" when deprived of buffalo meat. The Gros Ventres refused for a long time to accustom themselves to beef because "beef, even when fresh, smells so badly, and when we would see oxen slobber it turned our stomachs."

Buffalo meat, either fresh or dried, formed a major part of the dietary the year round. Each man had his own preference as to various parts of the buffalo. Charles Buckman, for instance, liked best the flanks, if fat, but some preferred the brisket. The tenderest part was the hump (withers) and the tenderloin was also a delicacy. Roast ribs, a whole rib for each person, were considered a most succulent feast and the embryo was highly appreciated. It was customary to eat raw the liver and manifolds dipped in blood and to drink some of the fresh blood. Nothing of the buffalo was wasted and every possible part was eaten even to the predigested vegetable food from the stomach and the soft inner part of the hoofs. The coagulated milk from a buffalo cow carrying young or nursing a calf was enjoyed by most, although it was [251] reported that some individuals did not care particularly for it. The guts were cleaned, dried, cooked and put away, and the lungs were sliced and dried. To be eaten with dried meat the back fat was cooked, and tallow was used in like manner. The bones were broken and boiled, and, after the grease was skimmed off and 252 stored, the bone broth was used plain or with either blood or 262 berries therein.

Pemmican was made from the base of the tenderloin, a long

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

strip on each side of the backbone. The meat was jerked, roasted a little and pounded. Then bone grease was kneaded into the pounded meat and occasionally berries, especially saskatoon berries, were put in. No further cooking was necessary and this preparation was very useful when they had to eat in a hurry, as, for example, at the Sacrifice Dance, when they didn't know at what moment some order might be given by the crier. 252 262

Rated next in the scale of foods valued by the Gros Ventres was the flesh of puppies. Although the flesh of grown dogs was consumed only in times of "famine," nursing pups were always considered a great delicacy. "These young pups are to us like chicken is for the whites, and that is why you see so many Indians with female dogs." In fact in former times the following method was used to assist a bitch which was having difficulty in bearing her litter: "One person would tie a rope around the bitch's neck and lead her around the lodge, while another would follow and, as they reached each of the four points of the compass, hit her on both hind-quarters with a moccasin filled with charcoal; by the time she reached the door again, the litter would come!" 262 231

The flesh and other edible parts of most of the animals hunted by the Gros Ventres were appreciated if there happened to be a dearth of buffalo, or as a welcome change during the winter months from the dried buffalo meat. As a rule these animals would be exploited for purposes other than for food. So far as additional meat diet is concerned, however, elk, deer, and antelope were the most important. Beaver probably came next. Prairie dogs, gophers, and several kinds of rabbit—cottontail, snowshoe, and jackrabbit—all were eaten in case of extremity, but these were ordinarily considered suitable trapping for children. Bear—black, brown and grizzly—were not sought, but should a hunter come across one, he killed it and the flesh was eaten, the grease being the only part that was to them worth storing. Some birds and their eggs were edible, such as duck, goose, grouse, prairie-chicken, and curlew.[8] There was a special use for meadowlark eggs.[9] Badger and porcupine were eaten, as also occasionally the young of wolves and coyote. The full-grown wolf and coyote, as well as fox, 262

[8] Eggs were a favorite food, according to Kroeber, 1908, p. 149.
[9] See p. 143.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

on the part of the men for supplying the raw materials. This, 461
however, was more than offset by the fact that the time consumed in producing the raw materials was less than that required to process and complete the manufacture thereof. The following calculation will give at least a rough approximation of the situation. It was estimated by our Gros Ventre informants that one woman would be able to dress about twenty robes a season, i.e., robes taken in the fall hunt and dressed with the fur on. This means she had to devote the equivalent of 60 full days' time to this task alone.[7] Actually she would not be free to work on robes exclusively, as she had to dress other kinds of skins, carry on her ordinary daily routine of procuring fuel and water, care of children, preparation of the daily meals, and in addition cut the [251]
enormous quantities of meat to be dried for winter consumption.[8] In contrast, if we can rely on Hornaday's figures, 15–25 men killed about a thousand buffalo in a fall season,[9] which means, taking the higher figure, one man alone would average more than two women could handle.

Value

Given the abundant supply of game, especially of buffalo, and the methods of exploiting it, the individual who controlled the relatively scarce means of production was in a position to command a larger labor supply and consequently to produce a larger surplus. The Boy summed up the situation thus: "The Gros 556
Ventres in their old way of life used to want a lot of horses be- 231
cause they knew from experience that if a man had a lot of horses he could acquire a little wealth and position in life. If, for instance, a family had a lot of horses, the man might have three or four or five buffalo horses with which to chase game and would bring in lots of skins and meat and could afford more wives, and the more wives he had the bigger and wealthier he would be. He could have

[7] Denig, pp. 540–41, estimates three days' work to prepare one robe for market and states that the preparation of 25 to 30 robes was an excellent winter's work for one woman, with the average at 18 to 20 robes.

[8] Hornaday, p 436, states that a whole buffalo cow, if economically worked up, yields about 55 lbs. of pemmican and 45 lbs. of dried meat.

[9] Hornaday, p. 465.

556 a great big lodge and all the other things that were required. But
231 some men might have only one horse and therefore only one wife. Such men wouldn't amount to much; they would be by-passed all the time and couldn't get anywhere. Therefore men did really desperate things in order to obtain horses."[10]

556 Horses were thus the most valuable item in Gros Ventre
231 economy. Other informants illustrated this attitude. Garter Snake, for instance, stated: "As a little girl I didn't know poverty.
735 My parents were rich. They had everything they wanted for their lodge, and clothing, and all kinds of horses so I was never in want at any time. Nevertheless, my father, when he was a little fellow, was very poor and had no horse to ride. Possibly somebody would put his mother, who was a widow, on a horse, but he would have to walk. He had hardly any clothes, he was so poor. One time when he was about 12, the camp was moving and they were going to go quite a distance. He was way behind because he would wait until everybody had gone, and then would follow as best he could. This day he went up on a hill to see where the people were camping next, and then he just lay there crying because he pitied himself for being so poor. It was at this time that he was granted his first experience [with the supernatural]. Later on, having made an offering of a black shirt and some feathers, which he had begged from someone at the camp, and having cut
556 off the first joint of the little finger of his left hand, he was told
231 in a vision: 'Son, I invited you here and I am glad you came.
735 Look over that way (the direction in which the camps lay). You
787 are poor now, but see those camps? You are going to be noted there. Everyone there is going to respect you and depend on you. And look this way (the opposite direction). See that big band of horses? Those are your horses. Of course you won't get them right away, but that is what you are going to have.' He was granted many powers later on, among them how to operate with a woodpecker feather; how to check hemorrhage; how to cure stoppage of the male urinary tract; how to cure consumption; how to revive a horse which was 'played out'; how to make raiders invisible so they could successfully steal horses. And he finally attained those horses he had been shown."

[10] Cf. Denig, p. 505, "An Indian with one wife cannot amass property."

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The above case illustrates how it was possible for a man, in spite of a poor start in life, to rise. Children were instructed by their elders, as was Thick by his maternal uncle: "Above all things try to have horses. Try to have property and whatever you have, take care of it. By having lots of horses and property, people will respect you and look upon you as somebody." 556 867

Again Coming Daylight stated: "They used to think more of horses than of anything else. They were sure proud of owning a pinto pony. In telling stories when they wanted to describe the best they could think of they would say: 'You should have seen her horse—it was a big pinto pony.'" And in telling of a relative of hers, Woman Chief, Coming Daylight said: "Her husband was not very handsome, but they were well-to-do and she always rode top horses." 554 231

While all horses were as a rule well cared for, special attention was devoted to the buffalo horses. On the hunt, for instance, these horses would be led along unburdened by pack or rider to keep them fresh. They were ridden only for the actual chase and after the kill were turned loose to roll around and graze like young colts. When the butchering was completed the meat was packed on other horses and the swift buffalo horses were then led home again. These horses were ridden on social and ceremonial occasions, when their owners wished to show off, and of course the soldier societies were well mounted, but such use amounted to no more than a good work-out, and these valuable horses were never abused nor wilfully exhausted. 231

Children were exhorted to take care of their property, especially of horses, and the girls were advised that "a mare is worth everything—it increases—treat her well." It was stated that some attention was given to breeding. A man might judge that a colt showed possibilities of becoming a fast horse. If it fulfilled the early promise the colts it sired would be watched. The less likely of these would be castrated. Likewise, a good mare would, if possible, be retained by the owner for breeding. A man who owned a particularly good buffalo horse might, on his deathbed, either order that it be killed at his grave or give it to some relative he knew cared well for horses, with instructions never to abuse it nor give it away. [867] [763 768 431]

426 The lending of horses, especially in an emergency, was not
231 uncommon especially among relatives. The owner however retained full rights and could dictate to the borrower the use to which the horse might be put. "One time, for instance," accord-
231 ing to Singer whose husband Iron Bucket was an eye-witness, "there were four lodges or families of Gros Ventres who
426 happened to be traveling along separated from the larger group.
734 Bear Nose's mother was taking care of a young man who was exceedingly ill. She didn't own the horse which was drawing the travois upon which the young man was lying. As the party climbed a steep hill the lines tying the travois to the horse broke and the travois dropped to the ground. The woman who owned the horse was already at the top and called down: 'Just leave him. Just leave him. You are always hauling him around with my horse.' The others told this woman owner: 'Let us pack him once more and wherever we stop we will make a sweatbath house for him and leave him in there and leave food for him.' But the owner didn't want it that way. The others told her again: 'Just pack him once more. You should think of the time when he was a Scout [at Ft. Assiniboine] and he used to get a lot of grub for you [with his pay].' But she said: 'No. I won't be packing him any more.' He was pretty far gone—his body already covered with flies—but the one who had been caring for him finally was forced to abandon him there with his few belongings and without any shelter or anything else. When they left him he had a sheet over his head and he started to cry. But the owner of the horse was adamant. The others of the party could argue with her, but could take no further action. They moved quite a distance and that very night a terrible storm came up and probably finished the young man. The woman who had been caring for him died shortly thereafter, and the others thought this was a consequence of their having abandoned him so callously, but they all said: 'It should have been the owner of the horse who died instead of the one who cared for him."

231 Because the real competition among the northern plains tribes
721 was for horses, it was not uncommon that a relatively well-to-do family might lose their entire pack of horses through a single raid by the enemy. The following experience of Coming Daylight illustrates the point.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

"The Gros Ventres moved camp again to new grounds across the Missouri. They were camped on a bluff overlooking the River, and there was a nice valley full of hay behind them. Her grandmother suggested that their family tie all their horses down in that nice valley. The men in the group had, however, obtained whiskey and a lot of them were drunk—even her uncle—and after they camped they kept on 'celebrating.' That night she was feeling very sick as it was almost time for her first child to be born. She couldn't sleep and would go out and sit leaning back against another lodge. While she was sitting there it was very dark, but she thought she saw two figures on horseback moving along the edge of the bluff, very, very, slowly, as though they were sneaking. So she went to her lodge and awakened her husband and told him she had seen strange men around. Of course it was very dark and she couldn't describe them so her husband didn't get excited and said: 'Oh, it is just some of our people.' She was still uneasy, however, and returned a couple of more times and told her husband what she had seen, but he didn't believe her nor pay any attention. A little later as she was lying fully dressed in her lodge, very uncomfortable—raising up, lying down, raising up again—not sleeping, she heard leaves rattling as someone walked slowly from the brush towards her lodge. Her uncle called her by name. She recognized his voice. He told her: 'All our horses are gone!' He had sobered up and had gone to see where the horses were. She just felt sick over it. They had lost all their beautiful horses.

"She was so mad at her husband, because he had been stubborn and hadn't given chase to the enemy, that she went out and walked and walked. She doesn't know how far she traveled in the dim moonlight when she heard a horse neighing and, since everyone knows his own horses when he hears them, she realized that it was the light buckskin horse, her husband's principal horse for hunting buffalo and for war. It was his best horse. She went in the direction she heard the neighing and the horse came towards her. It was all wet and had a short rope around its neck. She caught the horse and supposed that the enemy must have taken the stolen horses across the river and that this one must have been doing something that made them cut it loose. As she was leading the horse back to camp she saw something white lying there. She

231 721 got scared and ran to the other side of the horse. Finally she took a big stick and threw it at the white thing and still it didn't move so she went closer and found it to be a Hudson's Bay blanket just soaking wet. The enemy must have used it when they crossed the river. So she dragged it home to her lodge. When she got there she called to her grandmother: 'Is he there?' Her grandmother said: 'He is.' She was still furious at her husband and called to him: 'Come out! I am giving you this,' and she said it in the way people speak when they are giving something on return from war. She was giving her husband his own buffalo horse! He however didn't say anything or make any exclamation. This so enraged her that she took the blanket and rolled it up as small as she could and threw it at him, hitting him on the chest saying: 'Here is another thing I brought you!' Then he laughed. But she had at least saved one of the most valuable horses.

[431] "The next morning the rest of the Gros Ventres in the party moved on, leaving this family behind. But fortunately some others came along and seeing their plight gave them horses, for example, Pemmican gave one to Coming Daylight, Little Shields gave her uncle one, and Sleeping Bear gave her husband one."

231 436 The importance of various transactions could be gauged by whether or not a horse were included, other things such as fancy clothing, ornaments, guns, etc. being mentioned as "thrown in."

[554] A person who gave a horse in whatever connection accrued prestige for himself and at the same time showed in what esteem the donor

[583] held the recipient. Horses were generally included in the bride price; in inaugurating the more serious type of enemy-friendship; in payment for services of the medicine man in curing certain types of illness, and in payment to the ceremonial grandfather as well as in payment to the namer or ear-piercer of a child; in settling disputes; in gambling; in gifts to others in honor of relatives, and in meeting certain other kinship obligations.

231 556 Horses could be acquired by a man through raiding the enemy; by gift from relatives and from non-relatives in honor of someone else or in instituting the enemy-friendship; in the bride price of a sister, daughter, or maternal niece; in payment for services rendered; in gambling; through inheritance; in trading with the whites. A woman might share in the bride price of her brother's

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

daughter, and might receive gifts from relatives, but would otherwise have few opportunities of obtaining horses. 231 556

In former times the rules regarding inheritance were fairly simple. If a man died, his relatives took the more valuable livestock, while anyone was free to come into the lodge and take any other personal property of the deceased which was not to be buried with him. The man's relatives would not, however, take the horses which belonged to his wife or wives, or which had been given before his death to his children. When a woman died she usually would have little valuable property in any case, but, again, any other woman might rush in and strip the lodge of whatever personal property might be therein, including food. The close family of the deceased were "so grief-stricken that they wouldn't notice who takes what," and "a husband would never keep anything of his wife's." It was said, too, that "women were braver than men in disposing of their property before death, and often gave gifts of personal property to those they wished to have them." 428 768 [431]

In objects derived from the white man, the value put upon them was mainly utilitarian. For example, in matching wagers on one occasion a man put up a gold watch. There was no one on the other side who had a watch to offer, but a spy-glass was considered the equivalent. It was explained that the value of the watch in dollars—whether it had a fine gold case or not—would not be taken into consideration. The question in matching was to find things of equal value to the Indian in his way of life. To illustrate this The Boy told of a gift to his father, Lame Bull, from a white trader on the Saskatchewan, of a hobble which locked. "Perhaps this didn't have a high value in dollars, but it was considered extremely valuable by Lame Bull because it saved him many a race horse. Even though the enemy might sneak a horse out of camp, being unable to unfasten the hobble, he would have to abandon the valuable horse before getting very far away." 177 435

On the other hand, while utility was certainly an important consideration in the Gros Ventres' evaluation of goods produced by themselves, various other elements were taken into account. A horse procured from the enemy was perhaps the most valuable of all things to the Gros Ventres; aside from other considerations, a man would have risked his life to obtain it and that in itself lent 435 554 231

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

435 value. Thus any object captured from the enemy, no matter how
557 trivial it might be, was more valuable than a duplicate of that same
231 thing obtained in any other way, and could be used to initiate an enemy-friendship, one of the most important of Gros Ventre transactions. A man who gave a horse, rather than or in addition to other items—to establish the enemy-friendship, to pay for the curing of a relative, to someone in honor of his relative, to his ceremonial grandfather for guiding him through the Sacred Dance, to wager in gambling, to show how much he thought of his brother-in-law in return for so simple a gift as the flesh of a puppy—would gain in prestige, for he thus established for himself a reputation for "being somebody."

435 The amount of labor that went into the making of an object, such as the polished deer-hoof trimming on a robe, was an element in its value. When the robe was old and worn the recipient thereof [431] would remove the fringe and return to the donor "so she could use them again." Scarcity, too, entered into evaluation of goods. Eagle feathers were, for instance, more valuable than other kinds of feathers. Again, as to elk teeth, it was explained: "The elk has only two teeth that are like ivory,[11] and so it takes a long time to [237 accumulate them. They are to us Gros Ventres like pearls are to 301] the whites. They were our greatest decoration. They are valuable even today, and, while imitations are sometimes used, you can always tell the difference."

Exchange and Distribution

439 There was actually no need for economic exchange within the tribe, with the object of obtaining the necessities of life, but a need had developed for exchange with the fur traders to obtain guns, whiskey, metal objects—kettles, scraper-blades, etc.—cloth, tobacco, beads, paints, and so on. After about 1830, the medium of exchange with traders was the buffalo robe, which rapidly increased in value at the expense of beaver.[12] Traders on the Missouri accepted other items produced by the Indians, but everything was equated in terms of robes.[13]

[11] These are the rudimentary canines. Cf. Seton, v. 3, p. 5.

[12] Bradley, pp. 203–04.

[13] According to Denig, p. 421, an Assiniboine chief on Jan. 8, 1852, was

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

around it, but were taught and trained to be quiet around it and to observe reverence toward it. 784

No whistling or crying was permitted in the keeper's lodge. The keeper and co-keeper were forbidden to cry in the presence of the Pipe, if, for instance, they had lost a relative. A crying baby was never allowed in the lodge with the Pipe. As soon as the infant started to cry it was taken out. If, as previously noted, a man who had a young wife with a baby took the Pipe, she and the infant would be sent out of the Pipe lodge to a nearby lodge. [854]

Dogs were never allowed to enter the lodge where the Pipe was. If the keeper or co-keeper owned a dogskin robe, the rules forbade their using it. [231]

The people were not allowed to go to the keeper's lodge to get fire, as they used to go to other lodges in the early morning.

Breaking bones to extract marrow was prohibited in the keeper's lodge. If this were done, some accident, such as the breaking of a leg or arm, would happen to some relative of the keeper [or of the delinquent?]. [264]

The door of the keeper's lodge had to be kept closed, and the back cover of the lodge could not be lifted up in the warm summertime to get air.

A war party before starting off would sing at the door of each clan chief's lodge, but not at the door of the keeper's. [726]

When people went to the keeper's lodge for a social smoke and feast, they had to keep their wits about them and watch their speech carefully lest they should unthinkingly tell lies, vulgar or obscene stories, or start a war-deed contest.

There was a very strict prohibition against telling lies in the keeper's lodge.

If two men, while in the keeper's lodge, forgot themselves and started a war-deed contest, the keeper would remind them: "You are mistaken in talking so in here. Now you will have to continue for three days and nights." During this time all who were present when the slip was first made had to stay day and night in the lodge of the keeper, who would provide them with food and tobacco. These listeners would egg on and laughingly banter the two contestants and decide on the winner. After a while the pair's 784 517

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

baby was laid in the powder and rubbed under its arms, between its legs, under the toes, between the fingers,—wherever the baby might chafe. "The baby feels fine then and goes right to sleep." When no buffalo chips were available horse manure treated the same way was an adequate substitute. Fresh powder was put in the sack each day, and in the winter it was first heated. 854 278 234

Sometimes accidents happened. One time when a man named Fork (of a tree) was a baby, his grandmother was tending to him. She had heated the powdered chips in the sack with a hot stone and forgot to remove it. The baby cried and cried. Finally they unbound him and found that his toe was right against the hot rock. This injured his toe and he always walked with a peculiar gait. Cora has a scar on her buttocks which she thinks came from a similar accident.

If the father's sister failed to provide a sack and none was forthcoming from any other relative, the mother would wrap the infant in a skin and tie it with straps. Coming Daylight said that before her time they used a cradleboard. If they had a travois they would carry the baby on that. "Some, if they didn't have a cradleboard, used a piece of stiffened leather hooked over the saddle horn." 854

When the infant was old enough to move its arms, the arms were left free of wrappings. The infant was kept in the sack day and night. When not being carried about, it was hung either from one of the lodge poles inside the lodge, or swinging from the travois placed upright against the lodge. Lullabies were sometimes sung.* At night, the infant was right beside its mother, and the father usually slept in separate bedding so as not to crowd the child. When the powder in the sack was changed, they let the baby play around and stretch "because babies must have gotten tired staying in those sacks." [533]

Toilet training was started when the infant was between six and twelve months old. "The baby is more alert and easier to handle then. You just guessed at the time and opened the sack and held the baby out, supporting it under the knees and thighs. The child would usually respond. If there were a delay, then you talked to him and made a hissing noise to encourage him. You 863

* Unfortunately no lullabies were recorded.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

171 bags, recalling the typical checker and diagonal step design of Blackfoot beading. This type is, however, unusual among the Gros Ventre.

415 The fine bag shown in Fig. 6, collected by Dr. Clark Wissler, presents 501 unusual quill-embroidery on its front, suggestive perhaps of Sioux influence or origin; but the bead-work on its cover and sides, and the attached tin and horsehair ornaments, are typically Arapaho, except for the fact that this tribe would be very unlikely to make any pattern without at least some proportion of white. The transverse lines of quill-work on this bag might be regarded as nothing but a further five-line development of the three-line grouping illustrated by the last figure, with an alternating bar-pattern for its chief ornamentation instead of the box figure, which in element is identical. The central figure, however, is the typical Sioux spider-web pattern described by Dr. Clark Wissler,[1] and so far without any parallel among either Arapaho or Gros Ventre, or any approach nearer than that shown in an instance of blanket painting.[2] The two parallel bars in the centre of this concave quadrilateral figure, and the diamond-shaped feather symbols at its corners, are also typically Siouan: only the last-named element is occasionally used by the Gros Ventre.

237 Buffalo paunches, the mouth being drawn up by a string, like a sack, 415 were used for carrying and holding water, a paunchful being hung up in 505 the tent. If buffalo had been killed, and it was desired to transport the meat across the Missouri, the paunches were filled with meat, blown up, tied together at the mouth, and floated. The well-known circular skin [501] boats of the Missouri tribes were also used by the Gros Ventre for transporting clothing and property across streams.

171 Fig. 7 shows an ornamented food-bag of bladder. At the top is a strip 415 of skin covered with red quill-embroidery, with square star designs in blue 531 and white. From this strip of skin hangs a red quill-wound fringe. The thong handle of the bag is partly quilled, and has quilled thong pendants hanging from it. At the bottom of the bag a round piece of skin, covered with green-and-white quartered bead-work, is sewed on.

171 The navel-amulets of the Gros Ventre, which resemble those of the 532 Arapaho in their use, are in form of a somewhat different type, as they 751 approach more nearly to an animal's shape. They usually represent çaniwa", the "horned toad" (southern Arapaho, sániwa", a "lizard"), or sometimes a person. Their general shape is, as everywhere on the Plains, a rhomboid on end. To this the Gros Ventre add at the upper end a small rhomboid, forming the head of the animal represented. This augmented shape has not been found among the Arapaho, with whom the typical form

[1] See Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part III, p. 248.
[2] Ibid., Vol. XIII, p. 85, Fig. 138.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

727 counted coup on the enemy filled a pipe, and held it for the rest of the
[554] party to smoke as they stood in a row. The returning war-party, if successful, always painted black, but if a member of their own party had
[302] been killed, they returned without rejoicing; unless sometimes, when the loss of the enemy had been greater than their own, and a relative of the dead was in the party, he might say, "One of the enemy pays for my relative. On account of the others, let us enjoy ourselves." Then the party would paint black, and celebrate. Wounds received by members of the war-party would not prevent celebration, unless, of course, they resulted fatally; and they were always regarded as an honor.

726 Some war-parties started off publicly in broad daylight, having made
727 it known that they were going; and any one who wished joined. Sometimes, perhaps, two men would agree to go, and invited such others to accompany them as they wished. Women not infrequently went with the war-parties. If a man was killed in war, his relatives, especially his parents,
[765] mourned for him. His father might go to the tent of a renowned warrior, and cry until this man became angry and announced a day for a party to start out to obtain revenge. On the day set, the party left publicly, usually
751 on horseback.
237 A man's supernatural war paraphernalia are shown in Figs. 27, 28, and
726 29. They were obtained from a middle-aged man who had them from his
778 grandfather, who first dreamed of the magpie and the other animals con-
293 nected with the paraphernalia, and made the objects. A cylindrical raw-
[787] hide case (Fig. 27), such as is found used for holding feathers and medicine among most Plains tribes, is painted with a yellow, green, and blue design
[531] resembling parfleche designs. These colors represent the various colors of the birds that were dreamed of by the original owner, and whose feathers are kept in the case. The case is called the "house" of these objects. A wing-bone is attached to the outside of the case to make another whistle from in case of loss of the finished whistle included in the outfit. A small bag containing a necklace is kept in the case. The bag (Fig. 28, *a*) is ornamented with bead-work representing a frog (kaka^{n}). This frog was part of the original owner's dream. The necklace (Fig. 28, *b*) has various wasóti ("medicine-roots") on it. These are said to be neither eaten nor otherwise used, except as they are worn on the necklace. The bone whistle (Fig. 28, *c*) alluded to is attached to a necklace of otter-skin. It is blown during the fighting to prevent injury. A magpie's skin (Fig. 28, *d*) and the skin of a smaller bird (Fig. 29, *a*) are also contained in the case. The white magpie-feathers are dyed yellow. The two skins are worn at the back of the head, and prevent the wearer being injured even in a hand-to-hand fight. A head-dress of ten magpie-feathers and of a white plume on red-painted

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

237
726
293
778
751
[531]

thongs, tied together at the ends with a medicine-bag, and four brass bells (Fig. 29, *b*), is tied to the hair over the front of the head. When the warriors sing before dressing for battle, this head-dress is also used as a rattle. The medicine attached to it is chewed, and rubbed over the owner's body, as well

Fig. 27. (50-1952 a) Medicine-case for War Paraphernalia. Length, 40 cm.

as over his horse's, after he has painted himself. Two plumes of eagle-down (Fig. 29, *c*) are tied to the horse. One is tied to its fore-leg, the other to its tail. Then it will not be shot, and, if it falls, will not be hurt. In case of flight and pursuit, a little medicine that is attached to these plumes in a small

[text continues on p. 195]

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

[237]
293
726
751
778

bag is given to the horse to prevent its becoming exhausted. A cloth to wrap the various feathers and the whistle completes the outfit.

A warrior's outfit that was obtained for the Museum (specimen Museum No. 50–1862 a–c) consists of a beaded knife-scabbard, carried because the owner has cut loose horses that were tied by a rope leading into a tent; of a man's awl-case, carried presumably for mending moccasins and for

[237]

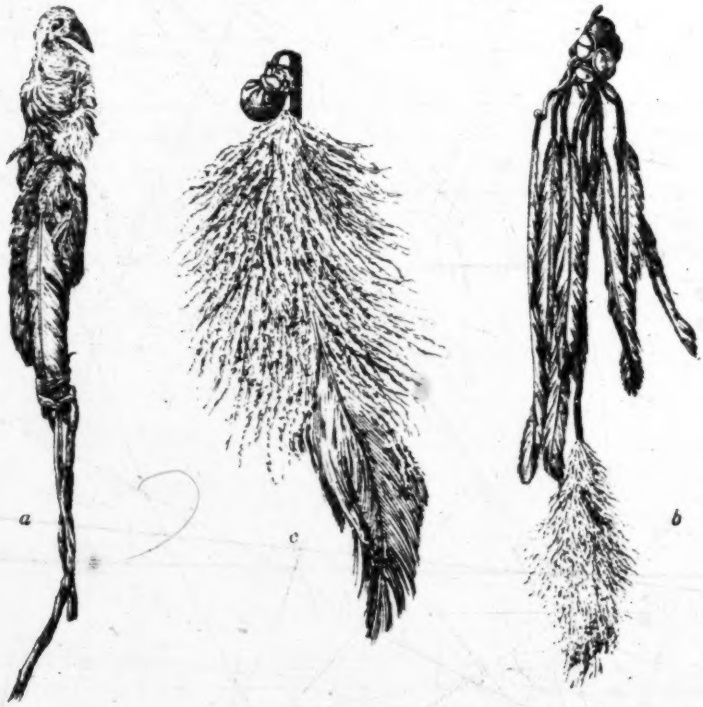


Fig. 29 (50–1952, f, g, h). War Paraphernalia. Lengths, 32 cm., 20 cm., 20 cm.

similar purposes; and of a piece of a scalp ornamented with beads, and worn attached to the shoulder of his shirt. The scabbard is ornamented with rectangular U-shaped bead-work designs similar to those in Fig 3, and representing horse-tracks.

[787] Sometimes in dreaming, a man saw a person in battle wearing the skin of a certain animal, and fighting very successfully. He would then wear the skin of that animal. Specimen Museum No. 50–1901 is a weasel-skin

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 171 The Gros Ventre also introduce into the ceremony a thunder symbolism that the Arapaho lack, or have in a much less developed form. The lightning symbol on the centre pole, from which water can be drawn, and the power of the thunder to strike with lightning any dancer who drinks other water than this, evidence this.

Another element special to the Gros Ventre is the introduction of ceremonies relating to war, such as the dramatic performances and the seeing of the approach of the enemy by the pledger.

Features introducing miraculous and sometimes purely personal supernatural powers are apparently quite lacking from the Arapaho ceremony. Among the Gros Ventre there are the raising of the centre pole, the production of water from the centre pole with the crow, the clairvoyance of the pledger as regards the enemy, and the visions of some of the dancers.

In summary, the exact duration and sequence of all events in the Gros Ventre ceremony are not yet clear; the preliminary prairie-chicken tent does not correspond very closely to the Arapaho rabbit-tent; and the connection of the ceremony with the thunder, the introduction of warlike elements, and that of miraculous or personal features, are peculiar, or nearly so, to the Gros Ventre as compared with the Arapaho.

MODERN CEREMONIAL OBJECTS.

778 171 The recent ceremonial objects of the Gros Ventre are somewhat different from those of the Arapaho. The Arapaho were deeply affected by the ghost-dance movement, more, it is said, than any other tribe; and many of their modern religious regalia have a distinct character of their own. [668 177] The Gros Ventre received the ghost-dance from the Arapaho, but it seems to have taken little hold of them. The only distinctive ghost-dance objects seen or obtained were two small hoops and a few balls, all of which resemble Arapaho types. 177 The chief modern dance-ceremony of the Gros Ventre, the only one performed at present, is the grass or war dance obtained 778 from the Sioux, and evidently a modification of the widespread 796 Omaha dance upon which the Arapaho crow-dance is also based. This dance has in recent years been still further modified, until its character now is very similar to that of the crow-dance. The regalia used in this [178] dance at present are very individual, usually crude, and almost always stylistically degenerate. The delicate character and distinct style of the majority of modern Arapaho dance-objects are lacking.

171 778 The treatment of feathers in such objects is quite different among the Gros Ventre and Arapaho. The Gros Ventre rarely ornament their feathers

237

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

with dyed plumes or tufts of horsehair, as the Arapaho so frequently do both at the base and top of the feather. Feathers with the vanes cut from the quill, except at the very top, are also scarcely used by the Gros Ventre. Instead, they usually cut the feather squarely off across its end, or split the quill, from the end down, for the greater part of its length. Sometimes the uppermost part of the quill is entirely removed, with its attached portions of the vanes, leaving the top of the feather forked. Plume-feathers are also much less used by the Gros Ventre than by the Arapaho. In dyeing, the Gros Ventre generally used cruder colors; a blue-violet, a pink-red, a light-bluish green, and yellow, all of them aniline colors, being the most common. The Arapaho use true red and green more frequently, and in most cases employ the dyes more lightly, thus obtaining endurable or delicate effects where the Gros Ventre are garish. 778 237 171 [386]

The Gros Ventre methods of feather-treatment, both the cutting-off and the splitting of the end of the feather, go back, at least in part, to their older tribal ceremonies. Both these processes are found employed on the dog-dance regalia described.

As regards other differences, the Gros Ventre probably employ more weasel-skin in ornaments than the Arapaho, though far less than their neighbors the Blackfeet. They use cloth (both cotton and woollen goods), red, green, or blue, without reluctance; whereas the Arapaho have clung very tenaciously to skin in all ceremonial objects. Skin thongs and sinew for binding are, however, very rarely replaced by strings and thread, even with the Gros Ventre.

The few objects obtained belonging to the ghost-dance movement are the following. 668 778

Fig. 41 shows an imitation of a netted playing-wheel. The piece is about two inches in diameter. The stitch of the meshes seems to be correct, though there are fewer meshes than in the full-sized wheels. The "crow," the centre mesh, is painted red; the rest of the thong, yellow. To the centre mesh are attached four magpie-feathers cut off across. This object was worn tied to the hair on the side of the head, or hanging from the little finger when the people joined hands to dance. Several very similar objects, lacking the feathers, are attached to the girl's painted dress shown in "Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History" (Vol. XVIII, Plate LXXV). [301]

A head-dress consisting of a hoop of about the same size, quill-wound and bisected by two quill-wound strings, and of three long, blue-and-white quill-wound pendant thongs with plume-feathers at the ends, was collected by Dr. Clark Wissler. It is not known whether it belongs to the war-dance or the ghost-dance: its general similarity to certain Arapaho head-dresses [292]

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the stick is first covered with green cloth, then with skin covered with red and blue quill-work, and at the pointed end is bare, except for its red paint. 778 293

A feathered wheel a foot or a foot and a half across (specimen Museum No. 50–4292) is covered with red, blue, green, yellow, white, and black feathers and plumes, many of them dyed, and tied to the hoop without any attempt at color-pattern or other arrangement. Most of the feathers have the quill split. 171

Another hoop (specimen Museum No. 50–1745) is a little smaller, and is covered with brown buffalo-fur instead of feathers. At one point, five split owl-feathers and six black unsplit feathers are attached; at a place opposite, two small yellowed feathers, one with a green plume at the base.

Other specimens secured by Dr. Clark Wissler are a ceremonial spoon with long, thin, decorated handle, and a quirt. The latter (specimen Museum No. 50–4305) is similar to Arapaho ceremonial quirts.[1] A heavy wooden handle consists of two parts, — the handle proper and a longer portion with five deep notches in the lower edge. The upper edge is straight. The part of the handle that is notched is ornamented with brass tacks. From the end of the stick hang two ends of thong, the whip. At the handle is attached a skin of a fox or similar animal, ornamented with eagle-feathers. 171 415 778

A feather shield consists essentially of a circle of radiating feathers, worn on the back. 171 293

A crow-belt, also secured by Dr. Clark Wissler, is quite similar to the Arapaho one described in the "Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History" (Vol. XVIII, p. 345). It is interesting that of the five Arapaho pieces in the Museum, this is at once the crudest in construction, and the most perverted by white influence from aboriginal style. In the present Gros Ventre belt, a rectangular piece of rawhide is bent over a stick as a support for the remainder of the specimen. The two hanging "tail" strips are of yellow cloth, quite narrow, hanging apart. Eagle-feathers, some dyed red, are attached to them. The belt proper is formed by two pieces of woven yarn. In the middle of the piece are attached the head and breast of an eagle. Below this, between the two hanging strips, is an ornament of a row of eagle-feathers pointing downward. These are attached in the folded edge of a squarish piece of rawhide, thus resembling the analogous piece in the Arapaho crow-belt referred to and the Arapaho biitaha"wu head-dresses. The ornament, however, is fastened to the remainder of the piece, so that it cannot have been worn as a head-dress. The two usual projecting arms consist each of a black eagle-wing feather, with a strip of quill-embroidery laid along the quill of the feather, and with several small bells, 778 [237]

[1] Mooney, Ghost-Dance Religion (Fourteenth Annual Report, Bureau of American Ethnology, Vol. XIV, p. 987, Fig. 94), shows a very similar quirt attributed to the dog-dance.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

276 778 The sacred flat-pipe was also used in the sun-dance. It was once captured in war. Then the man who took it had bad dreams, until the pipe spoke to him in his dream and said, "Return me, or your tribe will be [728] destroyed." Then this man brought back the pipe, and his tribe made peace with the Gros Ventre.

343 782 The making of a sweat-house was not restricted to certain persons. A man wishing success in war would make a sweat-house for another person, in order that he might accomplish the deed he had in mind. Or, if a person was sick, one of his relatives might pledge to make a sweat-house for him, just as he would a dance. In this case the sick person himself would not necessarily use the sweat-house. On the other hand, a doctor might prescribe sweating for a patient, and in this case the sick person would enter the sweat-house.

[757]

Fig. 43 (50-4255). Sweat-house Tail. Length, 36 cm.

343 515 [237]

About twelve or fourteen willow poles were cut for the sweat-house. The entrance always faced the sunrise, and a small cottonwood-tree was erected in front of it. To this, calico or other property was tied by an old man as a gift to the sun. The cloth was partly blackened, the corners being rubbed with charcoal.

When all the participants were inside, the blankets were pulled down and the house closed tight. Water was poured on hot stones, at first five times. Thereupon the lodge was opened at the entrance and at the opposite west end, and the people cooled. It was then closed again, and this time water was poured on the rocks seven times. After cooling once more, water was poured on the rocks nine times. The fourth time, the man that poured the water could put as much or as little on the stones as he wished. After the fourth time, the participants came out and bathed. [757] If they were suffering from pain, they whipped that part of the body with buffalo or horse tails. This practice made the heat greatest at that point, much as if it were beaten into the body.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

343 757

A man who pledges and erects a sweat-house does not participate in the sweating. He makes the fire, heats the rocks and passes them into the house, raises and lowers the blankets, and performs other services.

[237]

In sweating, animal tails were sometimes used to beat the body with. Fig. 43 shows such an implement, made of the tail of a buffalo, on a stick handle cased in the skin of the tail. This object is similar to the Arapaho specimens described in the "Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History" (Vol. XVIII, p. 316), but is noticeable for the shortness of the hair on the tail.

343 757 776

When people were called to come to sweat, hixtcib'nix'a^{n}t ("Above-Nix'a^{n}t") was first called to sweat with them. Then the people were called. This personage, whose name also means "Above-white-man," is said to have been prayed to before the whites were known; but the Gros Ventre, like the Arapaho, state that they do not know whether he is identical with the Nix'a^{n}t of their myths. Ordinary prayers were always addressed first to hixtcib'nix'a^{n}t or to iiçanânin ("our father"), then the sun and moon would be mentioned, next the sacred pipes, and then the earth. After these had been mentioned, anything else could be prayed to.

[301]

778

A charm tied on horses to make them run fast consists of rabbit-feet painted red and tied together. The Arapaho used rabbits' feet for the same purpose.

Specimen Museum No. 50-1804 is a pair of wild-cat-tails worn by young men at the shoulder, or at the heel of a moccasin. They were also tied to children's belts, next to the skin, in order to keep them from wetting the bed.

[751]

Specimen Museum No. 50-1903 is a gorget (commonly called by the Indians in English "moon-shell") said to have been made in the old way from an intervertebral disk of a buffalo. At present these objects are usually slightly concave, and are made of china.

Fig. 44 (50-4280). Thunder-stone Necklace. Length, 21 cm.

[30] 237

The Gros Ventre, according to Dr. Clark Wissler, call certain corrugated fossil stones "thunder-stones."[1] The Assiniboine seem to use the same name. The Blackfeet, who perhaps have most developed the cult of these objects, call them "buffalo-stones." A specimen from the Northern Arapaho is shown in the "Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural

[1] [These are probably ammonite septa. - Analyst]

I: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

237
292
796

Head-Dress for the Dog-Dance.

[End Plate 6]

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

281 successfully hunted than antelope. While the finest clothing was
291 made from deer, elk was preferred for some purposes such as
[825] moccasins and warm shirts and coats—it being more durable but not equally as flexible.

291 For winter wear, caps and mittens of beaver or otter were made for men and boys. Beaver skin served as a breech clout for the men in winter, although antelope was preferred for this purpose the rest of the year, unless cloth were available, since the latter was more comfortable than hide which chafed the skin so badly.

292 Ordinarily unornamented clothing was worn, but for special
301 events, particularly when the whole tribe was together, everyone
237 dressed in his best. Being well-dressed was as important to the Gros Ventres as being well-mounted on ceremonial and social occasions. The effect on both the eye and the ear was taken into account in the ornamentation. Dyed porcupine quill embroidery lent color, and mica—first heated, then powdered and rubbed over a robe—glistened beautifully. Polished deer-hoofs as edging for a robe or dangling from leggings or garters "made such a nice sound when one walked." This feeling both for color and sound was carried over when material from the whites was at hand, beadwork tending to supplant the quill embroidery and scraps of bright colored cloth and of metal serving as "dangles." [18]

Elk teeth, however, were said to be "the greatest decoration of the Gros Ventres." They were used principally for girls' and women's dresses. Not so long ago there was a man at Hays who wore a vest trimmed with elk teeth, and people would say to him: "You crazy thing, only women have that kind of decoration!" But he was unconventional and would retort: "Well, I dance, too, and I want to look nice." Everyone would laugh, but he persisted
[727] in wearing that vest. Human hair as fringe and on moccasins was proudly worn by men who had taken scalps.

292 Mink, otter, weasel, muskrat and kit-fox were all used as trim-
237 mings, and occasionally the whole pelt of mink, otter or muskrat was made into a bag, or tobacco pouch, or other small container. Feathers, especially eagle feathers, were highly prized, and red

[18] For the detailed comparative analysis of Decorative Art of the Gros Ventres and other plains tribes, see Kroeber, 1908, pp. 151–79.

Feathers, especially eagle feathers, were highly prized, and red 292 paint, prepared from ochre, as well as other paints obtained through 237 the trader, played their part in bodily decoration. 386

The younger men thought a great deal of their appearance. One 292 of the things they made for themselves was fancy painted sunshade- 751 hats of rawhide. The designs painted thereon had a yellow back- 531 ground against which various other colors stood out. Coming Daylight remarked: "These sunshades looked so fine that the other tribes copied them, just like the whites get their styles from Paris." Long thick hair was the ideal both for men and for 302 women. The tail of the porcupine made an admirable comb. A [237] number of perfumes were used by the young men. The castor of the beaver, for instance, was put in the paint bag so that the material for daily painting would be sweet smelling. Again, young men crushed "Piegan berries," chewed them, and rubbed them on hair, horses, and bedding, as perfume.

Incidentally, according to Coming Daylight, in order to clean 296 their buckskin clothing, the Gros Ventres would wear it into the water, getting it completely wet, and then rub it thoroughly with a certain kind of white clay.[14] She said that the tribe was spoken of by other tribes as always having such nice white clothes, and to this habit of rubbing them with clay she attributes the name by which the Gros Ventres call themselves, *a'aninin*, "white clay [101] people."

Ear-rings, worn both by men and women, were made from 301 imported abalone shell, which they cut up and shaped; they also [439] used a certain type of imported white shell. Many other kinds of necklaces, armlets, and so on were apparently used, but on these we failed to get details.

Household and Transportation

The lodges of the Gros Ventres were made from buffalo hides, 342 the number used in each depending on the size of the lodge. They

[14] This custom is mentioned in the sources of the early 19th century. Cf. Harmon, p. 277; Henry, v. 2, p. 734. The latter adds, as a further distinguishing characteristic, that when the Gros Ventres use red "it is always [822] of a light color, inclining to pale vermillion. The dark red or Spanish brown, so much in vogue among the other Meadow tribes, does not suit their taste."

342 were sewn together with sinew. The women selected the poles for the lodge, as well as for the travois, and were responsible for [484] erecting and taking down the lodge, for the arrangement of the interior, for the making of the travois, and for the packing and moving of impedimenta.

The foundation of three poles for the lodge was tied together and then raised as a unit. The other poles were arranged one by one, starting with those of the front. The cover of buffalo hides was tied to one pole, the "backbone," which was placed at the center-back, the cover then being drawn into place and fastened securely at the front, with small wooden pins usually made of cherry-tree wood. The ordinary Gros Ventre lodge stakes were shaped like a pin with a relatively small head. One informant, [184 however, stated that this form of stake often came loose where 177] the cover became taut with the wind, and that she had found the forked type, first observed by her many years ago when visiting another tribe to the south, far more satisfactory.

342 Old lodge covers were saved and cut up to make a sort of lining at the bottom of the lodge in winter, and the snow scraped away 353 to make place for the lodge was piled up on the outside thereof for extra warmth. In summer the ground inside the lodge was covered with willows, sagebrush or rye grass. Decorated robes as windbreaks were sometimes suspended in the lodge behind the fancy backrests, which were made by the women from slender willow rods. The women gathered and peeled the rods, although the young men helped straighten them by pulling them through their teeth. A willow ring encircled the fireplace and a broom of buckbrush was always kept handy. Personal belongings were neatly disposed against the wall of the lodge and in front of these were placed the skins which served as bedding by night and as seats by day. The painted parfleshes were given prominence to lend colorful touches. Dishes, utensils, and stored food were suspended 412 from poles well off the floor.

415 Among the articles of household equipment may be mentioned knives, both of bone and of metal, kettles, horn spoons, fleshing tools, etc., and food containers of various sorts. For the latter, [237] the membrane protecting the heart of the buffalo, the paunch, the bladder, and the intestines of the buffalo, as well as those of the

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

elk and deer, served very well, and the first three were often used for carrying water. It was said that water kept cooler and fresher much longer in these than in other types of container such as those of metal. 412 415 237

Pottery had been made by the Gros Ventres in earlier times [15] but the only information we were able to gather thereon is contained in the following statements. Coming Daylight volunteered the most details: "They used some clay to boil their meat in. My grandmother worked it. She made a pot and told me how she did it. It was made of black mud of some kind. My grandmother took this mud and mixed some kind of grease or tallow with it and shaped the pot. While mixing the clay with the grease, she would shape it. It was smooth then. When finished it was about 18 in. high, 9 in. in diameter, the same at the top as at the bottom (straight-sided). The bottom was flat because it was put right on the fire and the coals were kind of heaped up around it when cooking with it. When my grandmother finished shaping it, she put it close to the camp fire and turned it around once in awhile so it would dry out. Then, when it was dry, she put water in it and put it on the fire to see whether it would crack. This pot didn't crack. I don't know what became of it. I never used it myself. It was undecorated. This one belonging to my grandmother is the only one I know the history of, and the only one in our family. We used the wooden dishes more than the pot. The pot was used only to cook in. Each family might have had one or two to cook in." 323 415

Singer, who was present when Coming Daylight told about this, said she had heard of such pots, but had never used one herself. Mary Ereaux, the interpreter, commented, "In the Missouri River where they are making the dam, the mud taken out of the River, when it dries, is just like cement." When asked regarding pottery, Charles Buckman stated that he doubted that the Missouri River mud could have been used for this purpose. There is a blue clay near Hays that would be suitable for making pots—he had heard that pots were used "in the old days" but did not know how they 323

[15] Cocking, in 1772, writes of the Gros Ventres, p. 111: "Victuals are dressed in earthen pots of their own manufacturing much in the same form as Newcastle pots, but without feet."

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The older women informants described, when they were young, they would work at scraping skins pegged to the ground, by leaning over from the waist, feet well apart and knees unbent, swinging sideways from the hips. They could keep up this rhythmical steady motion, with the short-handled scraper usually tipped with metal, for hours at a time, one day after another. Sometimes, too, a woman would spend a whole day softening ropes of rawhide by rubbing the rope which had been run through the eye and ear apertures of a buffalo skull upon which the horns had been left so that she, sitting on the ground with legs extended, could rest her feet against the horns as she pulled the rope back and forth, making it soft and white.[4] Nevertheless the tedium of these operations was often relieved by the fact that occasionally other women, who had at the moment some leisure, would hear the work going on and would volunteer to help.

462 281 [516] [412] [283 237] 462 476 281

It was customary for women to do much of their work in groups. If a young woman, for instance, wished to make a fine robe, she would call in some other women, including an older experienced "hand." The latter would mark the robe where the embroidery should go, and the younger women did the fancy work. The hostess would cook for all present and so, in a pleasant atmosphere of sociability and "woman talk," the work would progress. A similar type of gathering would be held when a sufficient number of hides had been saved to make a lodge cover.

[531]

In size the lodges ranged from six skins up to twenty-four or twenty-five, with the average of about fourteen to seventeen.[5] Much skill was needed for cutting and fitting the skins and an experienced woman would be called in to do that part, while the others helped with the task of sewing the skins together. Our informants stated that a woman would have to "save and save" skins towards a new lodge, which was a necessity about every three years.

[342]

Women went out in groups to pick berries and wild fruits as well as to dig roots, but each one had right of disposal over what

462 476

[4] Another method for softening ropes is given by Kroeber, 1908, p. 150.

[5] The largest lodge remembered by the Gros Ventres is said to have been that of the Blood Chief, Father of All, who had, at the time of the 1855 treaty, a lodge with two fires, poles 65 ft. long, and the cover consisting of more than 25 skins.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

435 value. Thus any object captured from the enemy, no matter how
554 trivial it might be, was more valuable than a duplicate of that same
231 thing obtained in any other way, and could be used to initiate an enemy-friendship, one of the most important of Gros Ventre transactions. A man who gave a horse, rather than or in addition to other items—to establish the enemy-friendship, to pay for the curing of a relative, to someone in honor of his relative, to his ceremonial grandfather for guiding him through the Sacred Dance, to wager in gambling, to show how much he thought of his brother-in-law in return for so simple a gift as the flesh of a puppy—would gain in prestige, for he thus established for himself a reputation for "being somebody."

435 The amount of labor that went into the making of an object, such as the polished deer-hoof trimming on a robe, was an element in its value. When the robe was old and worn the recipient thereof [431] would remove the fringe and return to the donor "so she could use them again." Scarcity, too, entered into evaluation of goods. Eagle feathers were, for instance, more valuable than other kinds of feathers. Again, as to elk teeth, it was explained: "The elk has only two teeth that are like ivory,[11] and so it takes a long time to accumulate them. [237 301] They are to us Gros Ventres like pearls are to the whites. They were our greatest decoration. They are valuable even today, and, while imitations are sometimes used, you can always tell the difference."

Exchange and Distribution

439 There was actually no need for economic exchange within the tribe, with the object of obtaining the necessities of life, but a need had developed for exchange with the fur traders to obtain guns, whiskey, metal objects—kettles, scraper-blades, etc.—cloth, tobacco, beads, paints, and so on. After about 1830, the medium of exchange with traders was the buffalo robe, which rapidly increased in value at the expense of beaver.[12] Traders on the Missouri accepted other items produced by the Indians, but everything was equated in terms of robes.[13]

[11] These are the rudimentary canines. Cf. Seton, v. 3, p. 5.

[12] Bradley, pp. 203–04.

[13] According to Denig, p. 421, an Assiniboine chief on Jan. 8, 1852, was

593 infant. Some siblings, for example, would try to plug the infant's mouth with a rag or some other object. An occasional child would be unusually jealous and resent all younger siblings. One of Coming Daylight's own boys was like that. He would try persistently to get ahead of his little brother. The mother would be lying down with the infant at her side, and this little boy would try to snuggle in between her and the infant. He stuck close to her and wanted to accompany her everywhere, even when she left the lodge at night to attend to her necessities,— and this was after he was old enough to know he should not follow her at such a time. One of Cora's children was like that at the time the information was being gathered, jealous of the other children in the family and following her everywhere.

853 One of the first solid foods a baby was fed was a ball of cooked rose-berries mixed with grease. This was put on the end of a stick in lollypop fashion. Marrow, guts and rose-berry soup were considered the best food for growing, healthy children.

854 A newborn infant is called a "sack-baby." The sack was made of fine buckskin, or of buffalo calfskin with the fur left on one side, and was laced up the front. It was made just the same way for a girl as for a boy. A piece of rawhide was put inside the sack to stiffen it, and some rags were placed between it and the child's body to stuff it up and prevent chafing. The board was rectangular, rounded at the top, and reached only to the baby's neck. They made a little round cap out of calfskin, with little fur earmuffs that tied under the chin. They used to decorate their baby sacks nicely and sewed little deerhoofs thereon,—"They liked to have something rattle on their clothing."

When placing the infant in the sack they were very careful that its feet and legs should be properly placed. Singer remarked that in the old days everybody's legs were nice and straight and that it is only these "diaper babies" around here now who are bow-legged.

854 Small children, including infants, were washed each morning, —in winter rubbed with snow,—and then powdered. As a powder, 278 buffalo chips were pounded on rawhide and then, "to sort of ster- 237 ilize," hot stones were placed thereon. When the powdered chips were warmed, but not too hot, the stones were removed and the

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

has been given up, the Gros Ventres are so sunburned that their 302
skin looks almost "black." Singer showed a small bag of red
paint which she still had. She kept a piece of beaver castor in the [237]
bag so the paint would be sweet-smelling.

In the old days the Gros Ventres were early risers. Everyone 512
got up while it was still dark, perhaps about three o'clock in summer and before seven in winter. It didn't make any difference whether a child might otherwise be favored, the rule was iron-clad that all must rise early and that no one should lie abed. This applied to all—old people as well as to children.

One method of making sure that children would be strong was 856
to take a beaver tail and slap the child on the hand and on the back
while saying: "You will be good and strong." Mary, for instance, 825
has seen her mother do this to all her grandchildren, hitting them so hard they almost cried. The beaver is considered a very strong animal since he cuts down big trees and drags them about.

Naming and Ear-piercing

Every individaul received a name shortly after birth. Many 551
Gros Ventres, however, were, and are, known by names other than the original one. Names were changed for particular reasons, and in addition nicknames were frequently employed. Sometimes the first name was bestowed with considerable formality, but naming could be carried out in a variety of ways,[10] as the following examples show. 553

"Shortly after Coming Daylight was born, her father sent for 852
his sister's husband and told him: 'Now I invited you to name your niece. I am giving you such-and-such kind of horse' (a bay, or a pinto, or whatnot). There was a big feast on this occasion and the lodge was full of people. The namer sat in the place of honor at the back of the lodge. He held the infant in his arms, told a war deed and said: 'Now I name her 'Taken A Prisoner.' Then he said a long prayer, starting with the usual formula, and wishing the infant a long life. He then handed the infant to the person to his left saying: 'Take Taken A Prisoner'; and so the infant was passed all around the lodge, each repeating the same to

[10] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, p. 182.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

ciency with the overhand stroke and girls with the breast stroke.[8] 857
Sometimes the children amused themselves by rolling down the 526
bank so that their bodies made a loud smack as they hit the water. 481
At other times they held contests to see who could dive and stay under the longest time, or who could make the biggest bubble by exhaling under water. Follow-the-leader was played even in big rivers like the Missouri, but only the more courageous participated in this game. The one who had the reputation as bravest was the leader, and Coming Daylight claimed that she, herself, often led off, one of her accomplishments being the ability to swim quite far under water.

There was no adult supervision of children at play and they 857
spent much time at the water's edge, even when not intending to 524
swim. Modelling in clay was done by boys as well as by girls. The latter liked especially to form wet clay into "parflesches" and incise marks to represent beaded and painted designs.

Walking on stilts, teetering on logs, swinging by standing in a [481]
loop of rawhide, all were considered enjoyable activities for little girls. Nevertheless some of their games were quite rough and-tumble. In one such game, girls formed a circle, each pinching the flesh on the back of her neighbor's left hand; while standing thus they sang a song which was repeated as many times as necessary until someone let go of her neighbor's hand; whereupon this girl was jumped on and mauled by all the others. In another game, one girl, with her eyes closed, would try to find the others who were seated in a row on the ground. Different ones would call out: "This way! This way!" Each was anxious to be the first discovered. As soon as the girl who was "it" touched one of the others, she picked her up and, carrying her upside-down on her back to the spot from which she had originally started, she dumped her burden on the ground. This procedure was repeated until "it" had carried each girl, but the last one to be dumped was tickled unmercifully by all the others.

Girls played with two kinds of balls. One type was of buck- 857
skin stuffed with deer-hair. This they would toss to one another. 526
The other type of ball was large and made from the bladder of a [237]
buffalo cow, dried and stuffed.

[8] The marked ability of the Gros Ventres in swimming was noted in 1833 by Maximilian, p. 72. [147]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
773

he came out of the cave. As soon as the mother saw Blood-Clot she took wing and sailed into the air. There was a blinding flash of lightning and this was the last thing that Blood-Clot remembered. When he came to he found himself at the base of the mountain with his hair all singed up. He then collected himself and went back up to the top of the mountain. All this,—the flash of lightning, the becoming unconscious, finding himself at the base of the mountain, climbing it again,—took place four different times. The last time that Blood-Clot climbed the mountain he twisted the beaks of the young birds and taunted them with the words: "Tell your mother about this."

The next time, however, a big, black cloud appeared and came to the mountain. The father of the birds came. So soon as the father saw Blood-Clot there was a flash of lightning but after it Blood-Clot still stood there and said to the father: "You can't do anything with me. You can't kill me. You better leave me alone. It is useless for you to shoot at me. I will show you how powerful I am."

So Blood-Clot took an arrow and mounted it and shot at a big, flat stone on top of the mountain. The arrow pierced the stone and was buried in it, all but a bit of it that stuck out. "Look at that arrow there," said Blood-Clot to the father bird. "If you can pull it out from that rock then you can do something to me that will harm me. If you can't pull it out then it is useless for you, as I told you, to try to harm me." "All right," said the father. "I can do that. That is easy." So the bird sailed up in the air. As he did so, a flash of lightning struck at this rock. Then he tried to get hold of the arrow and pull it out. He took hold and flew up to pull it out and the arrow stretched and as it contracted it pulled the bird back as the father was caught fast by it.[14] Blood-Clot saw that the bills and feet of the father thunderbird and the other thunderbirds were of buffalo neck tendon. Thus Blood-Clot trapped the father. But he released the father saying to him: "Here is how powerful I am." And with that he pulled the arrow out with ease. Then he said to the bird: "Leave me alone. You can't do anything with me."

After that he came down from the mountain, went back home and told his wives what had happened. "No wonder," he said, "your father kills off the young men as he does. Tell your father that those birds up there could not do anything with me. You probably heard the thunder and lightning and disturbance up there while I was away. The birds were trying to kill me but they did not succeed." The girls then went back and told their father

---

237
283

[14] Blood-Clot's arrow, The Boy explained, was made of buffalo tendon from the upper neck of the animal—the tendon that holds the neck to the body. This is very tough and stretches like rubber when it is taken out. This tendon had many uses, for instance, for mending the broken handle of a knife. When it was wrapped around anything it was stretched as much as possible and when it dried it held very tightly. The travois basket was tied on with the same tendon.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

sometimes put on the bow with glue made from boiled skin from the head of a buffalo. Sometimes the bow was without sinew backing and sometimes ornamented by being covered on the back with snake-skin. Bows are said to have been held either horizontally or vertically, according to individual habit. Arrows for war and hunting are said to have been alike. 411

Shields were made of the thickest part of buffalo-bull skin, which was laid into a hole in the ground and made hard by being scorched with hot rocks placed upon it. It was then provided with a cover of white buckskin fringed with feathers. A man who carried a shield in war sometimes had no other weapon. 714

It is declared that no tobacco was raised, and that none growing wild was gathered, but that it was obtained from other tribes and from the whites. This is contrary to the practice of the equally non-agricultural Blackfoot, who planted tobacco; but it would seem to accord with the lack of any information obtained from the Arapaho as to tobacco-raising. 171 249 [439]

DECORATIVE ART.

The present day decorative art of the Gros Ventre is not nearly as strongly developed as that of the Arapaho. There is much less bead-work made, and this hardly ever equals the better work of the Arapaho either in technical or artistic excellence. Quill-embroidery is also found less frequently than among the Arapaho. How far this greater poverty and inferiority of Gros Ventre decorative art are matters of some standing in time is not certain; but it seems probable that there was a difference between the two tribes in this respect, even when they first came into contact with the whites. 531 171

It is in accord with this difference that inquiry as to the symbolic or conventional significance of the decorative designs used by the Gros Ventre has been practically without result. While the failure of the Gros Ventre to render such interpretations is due perhaps in large measure to change of mode of life under the influence of civilization, yet it seems that in this respect too there must have been a temperamental difference between the Arapaho and Gros Ventre, even in earlier times; for the Arapaho preserve at least distinguished wrecks of their symbolism, ceremonies, and religious life, while among the Gros Ventre, who are in much less intimate contact with the Americans, these things have vanished, leaving often scarcely a trace, and rarely more than a memory.

Partly on account of comparative scarcity of material, and also by reason of greater artistic poverty, the decoration of the Gros Ventre does not present as many typical characteristics as that of the Arapaho, the Blackfeet, the

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

been previously described. Some additional data on tobacco and wild parsley as associated with the Feathered Pipe help fill out the picture. 788

The keeper of the Feathered Pipe raised tobacco, as did the very first keeper, whose tobacco patch was raided by the people after the great war exploit of his son, He-Who-Dreams-of-Bha'a. 793 249

If anyone but the keeper [or co-keeper] touched the "wild parsley" root the delinquent would get fits, out of which he could be brought only by the keeper working on him and "blowing this same stuff on him." Old Deafie did not believe all this and there were other skeptics, some of whom, even small boys, would touch "wild parsley" to test out the belief and would immediately have fits. Al Chandler had heard of many such cases, although he had never seen any himself. 793 278

Sitting High used always to carry a couple of pinches of wild parsley in a little buckskin pouch in his pocket to use against rattlesnakes. On one occasion when Al Chandler was about 18 years old he and his grandfather (Sitting High) were at Henry Martin's place on the Hays side of the Bear Paws. Al was eating cherries at the creek bank, saw a big rattlesnake, and shouted to his grandfather. The latter imitated the snake's angry rattle, wet the end of a six-foot willow stick and stuck it in a small bit of wild parsley, then touched the snake with this end, and so "knocked the snake stiff." Some time later Al went to the spot to look and there he found the rattler dead, "bloated and stinking." Al Chandler, on another occasion, near Snake Butte, saw his grandfather kill a rattler in the same manner, merely touching it with the wet parsley-treated end of a stick. 278

Among the skeptics was Little Man, son of Sitting High and Al's adoptive father. He would even eat "wild parsley." On one occasion, Little Man took Jimmy, Al's three or four-year-old son, with him to the creek to wash, and while there was about to give Jimmy a bit of the wild parsley to eat, "to give him the power to use," when Al happened to see what was going on and told Jimmy: "Don't, that is poison." Little Man laughed and said: "It won't hurt him. I am giving it to him. I was going to give him this power. What is the matter with you? Why don't you eat it?" But Al said:

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

221 224 well together during the ensuing summer months, a band or two moving off by themselves to rejoin the tribe in time to prepare for whatever Sacred Dances might have been scheduled, and parties of 10, 20, 30 or more men would go off to raid the enemy. Precautions had to be taken, too, against the ever-present danger of being raided by the enemy, especially by smaller groups separated from the main tribe as they went further and further from the center of their territory in quest of game.[8]

[281] The hides of buffalo killed during the spring and summer were used to make parfleshes, moccasin soles, lodge covers, ropes and the like. Fresh meat was usually plentiful although it was necessary to move six or eight times a summer to keep up with the buffalo, some smaller herds of which apparently remained in [222] Montana in spite of the migration of the vast majority to the north. Meantime as the various berries, wild fruits and wild roots ripened, collecting was done whenever opportunity offered, neither tribal nor band movements being determined, so far as we are aware, by that objective, but depending almost entirely on the whereabouts of the buffalo. During August and September, the rutting season, the buffalo joined in great milling masses leaving bare the surrounding range for many miles. The buffalo then separated into smaller herds again and by October, when the Gros Ventres started their concerted fall hunt, the buffalo were in prime condition, their coats sleek and fine.

[251] The best time for robe hunting was approximately from October 15 to November 15, but the hunt continued until all had sufficient meat dried and stored to see them through the winter. It was said that as many robes as possible were dressed with the fur on, and

[8] In this connection it is interesting to note that the old Cree, quoted by Thompson, pp. 329–30, after describing a drawn battle between the Snake and Piegan about 1730 concludes: ". . . night put an end to the battle without a scalp being taken on either side, and in those days such was the result, unless one party was more numerous than the other. The great mischief of war then, was as now [1786], by attacking and destroying small camps of 10–30 tents which are obliged to separate for hunting." Such was evidently still the case in the middle of the 19th century. Denig writes in 1854, pp. 548–50, that when the contending parties are nearly equal, little damage is done. The worst damage occurs, however, when 200 to 400 warriors surprise a camp of 20 to 30 lodges.

231 556 than in the actual production of raw materials. This was especially true of the young unmarried man who, though his ability to hunt was important, was even more anxious to establish his reputation for bravery.

Food

262 The Gros Ventres met their need for food very largely, but not exclusively, through a meat diet. Flesh of the buffalo was the meat par excellence and was considered by the Gros Ventres their "real food." To those who had been brought up on buffalo meat, beef was a poor substitute. It was said, by those who experienced the change of diet after the disappearance of the buffalo in 1884, that many of the older people "died of starvation" when deprived of buffalo meat. The Gros Ventres refused for a long time to accustom themselves to beef because "beef, even when fresh, smells so badly, and when we would see oxen slobber it turned our stomachs."

Buffalo meat, either fresh or dried, formed a major part of the dietary the year round. Each man had his own preference as to various parts of the buffalo. Charles Buckman, for instance, liked best the flanks, if fat, but some preferred the brisket. The tenderest part was the hump (withers) and the tenderloin was also a delicacy. Roast ribs, a whole rib for each person, were considered a most succulent feast and the embryo was highly appreciated. It was customary to eat raw the liver and manifolds dipped in blood and to drink some of the fresh blood. Nothing of the buffalo was wasted and every possible part was eaten even to the predigested vegetable food from the stomach and the soft inner part of the hoofs. The coagulated milk from a buffalo cow carrying young or nursing a calf was enjoyed by most, although it was reported that some individuals did not care particularly for it. The [251] guts were cleaned, dried, cooked and put away, and the lungs were sliced and dried. To be eaten with dried meat the back fat was cooked, and tallow was used in like manner. The bones were broken and boiled, and, after the grease was skimmed off and 252 stored, the bone broth was used plain or with either blood or 262 berries therein.

Pemmican was made from the base of the tenderloin, a long

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

262 mountain lion, lynx, bobcat, and otter, never served as food.

[251] Of vegetable foods there was a variety, especially of berries and roots, many of which were gathered in large amounts and dried for winter use, either as seasoning in broths and soups, or to be mixed with grease. Currents, strawberries and raspberries were picked when ripe and only in sufficient quantities to meet daily needs. Juneberries, or service-berries, and gooseberries were dried and stored away in parfleshes. Bitterroot, wild onions and wild carrots were likewise preserved for winter use, as well as wild rhubarb stems. In July larb-berries, another name for which is bear-berries, and "plums" were ripe; and in August the choke-cherries and wild turnips were dried and pounded. In late August rose-berries were ready to eat, but were better after a touch of frost. There was no need of storing too many of these since they did not freeze and could be garnered all winter long. It is said that of all the berries and roots available, service-berries and choke-cherries, wild turnips and bitterroot, were the most important More of these were put up than of the others.

The yield of thorn-, rose- and larb-berries, of wild carrots and of wild rhubarb was always dependable. Other plants, however, were more erratic. For instance, one year there would be no chokecherries at all around Hays but plenty of them at Lodgepole, only ten miles distant; the next year the situation was as likely as not to be reversed. Moreover some plants grew only in a few localities at best. Red turnips or beet turnips, described as something like a radish, was one of those which was to be found only sporadically and in sandy places; the wild potato, another of the less common plants, grew only in the Sweet Grass Hills and in the Moccasin Mountains south of the Little Rockies, and around Billings.

262 222 Such additional foods were evidently of sufficient importance that the women occasionally ventured quite far from camp for berry-picking and root-digging expeditions, disregarding the very real danger of surprise by the enemy. That these edibles were not despised is suggested, too, by the fact that the digging-stick had a prominent place at the center pole in the Women's Lodge, although it is true that the principal concern in the rite centered about the buffalo.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

224 would share at least the meat, if not the hides, with the less for-
476 tunate, which latter would contribute by helping skin and butcher.
[431] Butchering was quite an art and was considered the man's work, although occasionally women accompanied the hunting party if there were a shortage of men, as was liable to be the case especially in winter. Should the party have crossed a river to hunt, the meat was prepared for transportation on a raft by being cut into large chunks, and each two chunks skewered and joined by a thong of sufficient length to hang on the poles forming the raft. The raft was built by crossing two long poles at one end, the other ends [396] free and forming an angle of about thirty degrees. Three or four shorter poles were placed crosswise and lashed firmly in place with rawhide. The paunch of the buffalo, after being washed out, was used as a container for the many leftover bits of meat and was tied to the middle of the lower rung of the raft. A whole beef could thus be loaded on such a raft and towed across by one horse-man. When, as was more usually the case, the meat was to be [492] packed back to camp by horses, the butchering was done differently but in such a way that a whole buffalo could be packed on a single horse.[8] Sometimes in winter when a small party went out and [251] they could not pack all the meat back in one trip, the remainder was buried in the snow and called for the following day.

462 Once the proceeds of the hunt were turned over to the house-
281 holds of the individual hunters, it was the woman's task to cook the food for immediate consumption and to prepare the surplus for storage. Her most arduous and time-consuming task was the dressing of skins and the manufacture of these into finished articles of clothing, containers, lodge-covers, and so on. It was stated that skins in one stage of preparation or another were nearly always at hand.[9] "They didn't do things in a haphazard way because there was a certain time to do this and a certain time to do that." From the hides of buffalo killed during the spring and early summer, when the hair was not thick, they made the parfleshes and bags, soles for moccasins, rawhide ropes, and lodge-covers. In the fall, when the hide was furry, robes were made.

The older women informants described how, when they were

[8] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, p. 149.

[9] For some details on skin dressing, see Kroeber, 1908, p. 150.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

on the part of the men for supplying the raw materials. This, 461
however, was more than offset by the fact that the time consumed in producing the raw materials was less than that required to process and complete the manufacture thereof. The following calculation will give at least a rough approximation of the situation. It was estimated by our Gros Ventre informants that one woman would be able to dress about twenty robes a season, i.e., robes taken in the fall hunt and dressed with the fur on. This means she had to devote the equivalent of 60 full days' time to this task alone.[7] Actually she would not be free to work on robes exclusively, as she had to dress other kinds of skins, carry on her ordinary daily routine of procuring fuel and water, care of children, preparation of the daily meals, and in addition cut the [251] enormous quantities of meat to be dried for winter consumption.[8] In contrast, if we can rely on Hornaday's figures, 15–25 men killed about a thousand buffalo in a fall season,[9] which means, taking the higher figure, one man alone would average more than two women could handle.

Value

Given the abundant supply of game, especially of buffalo, and the methods of exploiting it, the individual who controlled the relatively scarce means of production was in a position to command a larger labor supply and consequently to produce a larger surplus. The Boy summed up the situation thus: "The Gros 556
Ventres in their old way of life used to want a lot of horses be- 231
cause they knew from experience that if a man had a lot of horses he could acquire a little wealth and position in life. If, for instance, a family had a lot of horses, the man might have three or four or five buffalo horses with which to chase game and would bring in lots of skins and meat and could afford more wives, and the more wives he had the bigger and wealthier he would be. He could have

[7] Denig, pp. 540–41, estimates three days' work to prepare one robe for market and states that the preparation of 25 to 30 robes was an excellent winter's work for one woman, with the average at 18 to 20 robes.

[8] Hornaday, p 436, states that a whole buffalo cow, if economically worked up, yields about 55 lbs. of pemmican and 45 lbs. of dried meat.

[9] Hornaday, p. 465.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

buffalo tongues, for the celebration. The vower and his assistants would through their crier announce to the people whether the camp would move for good hunting. On the march, the vower and his company took their place in line immediately after the sacred Pipes. No one was allowed to hunt or run the buffalo until the signal was given. 796* 782 224

During the hunt there would be foot and horse races, shooting contests and gambling matches between the "talls" and "shorts." The losers in the gambling would have to "cook," that is, to provide a meal for the winners, a feast at which the rest of the people, including the children, would horn in. Each one of the losers had to furnish some food or clothing and a smoke (not the pipe itself) to the winners. If one of the losers failed to bring a filled pipe along with the food or clothing wager, the wager was rejected, but he was given a chance to go get one. The winners kept track of the losers, and if any of the latter failed to pay up, they would not do anything to him at once while they were sitting around eating. But afterwards, the winners, followed by the rest of the people, would go to the lodge of the delinquent loser, who usually did not and dared not run away. Here the enemy-friend of the loser would take the latter out of his lodge, and lay him on a spread robe or blanket. The winners would then carry him to the stream or river, give him a good swing and throw him into the water. All the people would follow to see the fun, and the young boys would pelt him with buffalo chips. The victim had to take it all good naturedly and not lose his temper, and the crowd had a good laugh. If the loser were not in his lodge when the winners arrived, they would fetch water, and his enemy-friend would give the loser's bed a good drenching. 792 796* 525 527 522

The hunt continued, the group moving here and there, until enough tongues and other meat was collected, the tongues having been turned over to the vower to be jerked by his wife or wives. Then came the earlier-mentioned four whole nights of singing, done either on successive nights, or from time to time as the tribe moved toward the spot selected for the Sacrifice Dance. After arrival there the fourth of the four all-night singings took place, marking the first night or beginning of the Dance proper, which 782 796* [224 251]

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

passed, and so drove them forward over the bank into the enclosure. After horses were secured, the buffalo were generally run down. It is said that a buffalo shot with an arrow fell to the other side, never breaking the arrow by falling upon it. 224

The meat of an entire buffalo would be carried on a horse. It was cut [492] in small pieces, which were tied to the ends of strips of the skin and then slung over the horse's back so as to balance. If necessary, the hunter would mount above. It is said that sometimes as many as four deer were carried on one horse.

When a buffalo was killed, half the skin was sometimes stitched or tied [482] into a sack, the meat put into it, and the bundle dragged home by a rope around the shoulders of a person. In other cases the meat would be tied into bundles and carried home on the shoulders. The buffalo were usually cut up by men. Women were said to have taken part in this work when luck was unusually good and many buffalo had been killed. After a man had brought home meat, the women cut it into thin slices, which were hung [251] on racks to dry. The dried meat was either packed in parfleches, or pounded fine and made into pemmican by mixture with berries. Meat, whether fresh or dried, was usually eaten after having been boiled in water; but [252] when one was hungry or in haste a piece would be put on a stick and turned over the fire.

Traps for foxes and other animals, even bears, were constructed by making an enclosure, over the opening of which a heavy log, sliding between four sticks to keep it in place, was supported on a single slender upright stick resting on another stick attached to the bait. Other logs might be leaned against the first one to give it additional weight.

Birds such as sage-hens, ducks, and geese, were formerly not hunted 223 extensively. The eggs, however, formed favorite food. When a camp was pitched near a lake, the young men would strip and go out into the water [226] looking for duck-eggs. Fish were not caught except by children, for amusement.

When a camp was broken, small brush tents with windows of grass were built. Fat and meat were strewed about the place and a man entered the ambush before daylight. He could look and shoot through the grass, but he could not be seen inside. Birds as large as eagles were secured in this way.

Crows and magpies were caught with sinew snares attached to a willow hoop. Meat was laid in the middle of the hoop. Walking about inside of this, the birds caught their feet in the snares and were unable to fly away.

Gophers were caught by means of a horsehair loop fastened to the end of 224 a rope and laid around a gopher-hole. A person lay down, and when the gopher raised its head he jerked the rope.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539 773 will see the thing I use." White Man looked up and saw a bladder[8] up above the door. The man said: "That is what I use." White Man said: "I see it."

The man took the bag from where it hung and he and White Man went to the rising ground. When they reached there the man said: "What I use to hunt with and make a living with and do all things with is in this bag. You will see. Make your heart strong." So the man untied the bag. As he did so adult people began to come out of the bag. The crowd got bigger and bigger around them. The man then said: "This is enough." So he closed the opening of the bag and tied it up again.

After he had tied it up the man said to White Man: "Here are the people I use when I want to do anything. They are the ones who hunt." The man said to the people: "Go hunt and bring the choicest things to eat to my lodge. Myself and my guest want to eat some more."

So the man and White Man went back to the lodge and stayed there all day. That night the same thing happened that had happened on the first and second night previously. They ate and ate until they had enough and were filled and then they slept.

The next day White Man moved on and went his way. Then White Man began to study and think how he could acquire from the man the man's way of living and of getting a living. So White Man studied how to get the man to let him have this bladder. So he hit upon a plan. He decided to cut himself, as the Indians do in mourning, and to cry. So he cut himself and came crying loud to the man's lodge. When he got to the lodge he walked around it crying and crying. The man and woman heard White Man but they knew that White Man was a tricky fellow and they paid no attention to him. But White Man just kept on crying. They heard White Man crying until they went to sleep.

When they woke up the next morning the man wondered what had become of White Man. He said to the woman: "Go out and see if White Man is around." She went and there was White Man asleep outside. The man woke White Man up and invited him into the lodge. White Man went in and sat down, and in the course of time the man said to him: "What do you want? Why have you cut yourself and made yourself suffer and cried?" White Man said: "I did so for a very serious reason. My enemies have killed my whole family, my wife and children, and have destroyed my home. I am destitute and do not know how I am going to live. So I thought I would come to you and ask you to share the bladder with me and tell me how to use it, so I may make ready to take revenge on the people who destroyed my family and home." The man, knowing White Man to be what he was, refused at once: "No. You will go to extremes. You will abuse it. You are crazy." White Man begged all the more. The man and woman were silent for a long time. But White Man kept talking and talked so

[8] A gall bladder sack, attached to the liver. Such gall bladders were used by the Gros Ventres to store grease prepared and mixed with berries and were kept closed to keep bugs out. 251 415

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

passed, and so drove them forward over the bank into the enclosure. After horses were secured, the buffalo were generally run down. It is said that a buffalo shot with an arrow fell to the other side, never breaking the arrow by falling upon it. 224

The meat of an entire buffalo would be carried on a horse. It was cut [492] in small pieces, which were tied to the ends of strips of the skin and then slung over the horse's back so as to balance. If necessary, the hunter would mount above. It is said that sometimes as many as four deer were carried on one horse.

When a buffalo was killed, half the skin was sometimes stitched or tied [482] into a sack, the meat put into it, and the bundle dragged home by a rope around the shoulders of a person. In other cases the meat would be tied into bundles and carried home on the shoulders. The buffalo were usually cut up by men. Women were said to have taken part in this work when luck was unusually good and many buffalo had been killed. After a man had brought home meat, the women cut it into thin slices, which were hung [251] on racks to dry. The dried meat was either packed in parfleches, or pounded fine and made into pemmican by mixture with berries. Meat, whether fresh or dried, was usually eaten after having been boiled in water; but [252] when one was hungry or in haste a piece would be put on a stick and turned over the fire.

Traps for foxes and other animals, even bears, were constructed by making an enclosure, over the opening of which a heavy log, sliding between four sticks to keep it in place, was supported on a single slender upright stick resting on another stick attached to the bait. Other logs might be leaned against the first one to give it additional weight.

Birds such as sage-hens, ducks, and geese, were formerly not hunted 223 extensively. The eggs, however, formed favorite food. When a camp was pitched near a lake, the young men would strip and go out into the water [226] looking for duck-eggs. Fish were not caught except by children, for amusement.

When a camp was broken, small brush tents with windows of grass were built. Fat and meat were strewed about the place and a man entered the ambush before daylight. He could look and shoot through the grass, but he could not be seen inside. Birds as large as eagles were secured in this way.

Crows and magpies were caught with sinew snares attached to a willow hoop. Meat was laid in the middle of the hoop. Walking about inside of this, the birds caught their feet in the snares and were unable to fly away.

Gophers were caught by means of a horsehair loop fastened to the end of 224 a rope and laid around a gopher-hole. A person lay down, and when the gopher raised its head he jerked the rope.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

INDUSTRIES AND IMPLEMENTS.

281 When a skin was brought in, it was hung on a sort of tripod, and with a chisel-like flesher of buffalo-leg bone the meat was removed. Then the hide was stretched on the ground to dry. When dried, the hair and thin coat of skin on the same side were cut off with the familiar implement of bent elk-horn, always provided, in recent times, with a metal blade. To make rawhide, nothing more was done. To make dressed skin, liver, grease, and brains, boiled and mixed in the proper proportion, were rubbed [177] or soaked into the skin and then removed with an ordinary scraper, now usually of sheet-iron or tin. Finally the skin was worked over with a rough stone or a bone. In preparing buffalo-skins for a tent, four steps were recognized: first, drying the skins; next, removing the hair; third, soaking them; and, last, scraping and working them over. Skins were softened by being drawn over a rope of buffalo-sinew.

281 When a woman had prepared enough buffalo-skins for a tent, she made
342 a feast and invited other women who were skilful at making tents. The most
476 expert of these fitted and tacked the skins together loosely, and the others sewed them fast. When a robe was to be embroidered, the woman who wanted to make it prepared food and invited other women to help her in her work. When the robe was finished, the man who was to receive it was called in, and it was given to him.

281 Caps of buffalo-skin were worn in winter. They were provided with flaps that were pulled down over the ears and held by a string fastened under the chin. Mittens of buffalo-skin were also used, tied together by a string which passed behind the neck. When the hunter was ready to shoot, he slipped his hands out of the mittens.

282 Simple flat unbraided ropes of rawhide were cut out of the skin in a long spiral. After having been cut, they were stretched between two sticks. In order to soften them, they were covered with manure, or tied to a horse that dragged them over the ground until they became pliable.

323 Pottery is declared to have been made formerly of clay mixed with
252 crushed rock. Rawhide bags, drawn together at the top with a string, were also used for cooking by means of hot rocks. The often described Plains method of cooking in holes in the ground lined with rawhide was also followed.

372 When fire was struck with flint and steel, dry mushrooms were sometimes used as tinder.

411 Bows were most frequently made of cherry-wood, but sometimes of ash. Ash was harder and more elastic, but more brittle. Sinew backing was

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

 224 411

ends of the main portion of the sling, and then looped on themselves through a slit near one end. 857

The bull-roarer and buzzer were both well known to the Gros Ventre, but seem to be only children's toys. They were both called nakan"ta" ("making cold," a name given also to the thermometer), probably from the widespread Indian idea that the bull-roarer breeds wind. The buzzer was made of a foot-bone of a buffalo, with a sinew string on each side, by which it was twirled, and then drawn so as to hum. The Arapaho type of buzzer is the same. The Gros Ventre bull-roarer seems to differ from the Arapaho form. Fig. 26 shows one of two very similar models, both of wood. The small, well-marked head, the long taper and point, and the numerous small notches, mark a distinct form. The sinew string is of about the length of the stick handle. 534 857 524 [821]

WAR.

Men generally went to war on foot, carrying food and moccasins on their backs. While on the trip they did not boil meat, but roasted it. Scouts, called "wolves," were sent out ahead. When these returned, running in a zigzag course, and shouting, it was a sign that they had seen something. If they had seen lodges, they barked like wolves. While they came, the women in the party stood in a row and sang, having made a pile of buffalo-chips. The "wolves" stopped a short distance away, and the leader of the party went to them. They came with him back to the pile of buffalo-chips, where he stopped, and, facing the party, recounted coups. After this, one of the scouts came before them and reported what he had seen. Upon this, all rushed at the pile of buffalo-chips, and kicked them about. If the enemy were near, they would now take off their heavier clothing, such as their robes, and dress and paint for war. 726 [252]

On returning to their camp victorious, the party approached stealthily, and made a charge upon it, often shooting; and sometimes the people in the tents jumped up out of their sleep in the early morning, thinking they had been attacked. The man who had killed an enemy, the one who had struck him first (whether dead or alive), and the one who had taken his gun, were held in about the same esteem. After the return to camp, a dance was made. Drums were beaten; and the women, who were standing in a curved row, danced in a circle toward the men, who stood in a row, and back again. The women carried the new scalps on sticks. If an enemy were killed near the home camp, his feet and hands might be cut off and carried on sticks, like the scalps. During this dance the man who first 727 [554] [554]

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

231
556

than in the actual production of raw materials. This was especially true of the young unmarried man who, though his ability to hunt was important, was even more anxious to establish his reputation for bravery.

Food

262 The Gros Ventres met their need for food very largely, but not exclusively, through a meat diet. Flesh of the buffalo was the meat par excellence and was considered by the Gros Ventres their "real food." To those who had been brought up on buffalo meat, beef was a poor substitute. It was said, by those who experienced the change of diet after the disappearance of the buffalo in 1884, that many of the older people "died of starvation" when deprived of buffalo meat. The Gros Ventres refused for a long time to accustom themselves to beef because "beef, even when fresh, smells so badly, and when we would see oxen slobber it turned our stomachs."

Buffalo meat, either fresh or dried, formed a major part of the dietary the year round. Each man had his own preference as to various parts of the buffalo. Charles Buckman, for instance, liked best the flanks, if fat, but some preferred the brisket. The tenderest part was the hump (withers) and the tenderloin was also a delicacy. Roast ribs, a whole rib for each person, were considered a most succulent feast and the embryo was highly appreciated. It was customary to eat raw the liver and manifolds dipped in blood and to drink some of the fresh blood. Nothing of the buffalo was wasted and every possible part was eaten even to the predigested vegetable food from the stomach and the soft inner part of the hoofs. The coagulated milk from a buffalo cow carrying young or nursing a calf was enjoyed by most, although it was reported that some individuals did not care particularly for it. The [251] guts were cleaned, dried, cooked and put away, and the lungs were sliced and dried. To be eaten with dried meat the back fat was cooked, and tallow was used in like manner. The bones were broken and boiled, and, after the grease was skimmed off and stored, the bone broth was used plain or with either blood or 252 262 berries therein.

Pemmican was made from the base of the tenderloin, a long

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

strip on each side of the backbone. The meat was jerked, roasted a little and pounded. Then bone grease was kneaded into the pounded meat and occasionally berries, especially saskatoon berries, were put in. No further cooking was necessary and this preparation was very useful when they had to eat in a hurry, as, for example, at the Sacrifice Dance, when they didn't know at what moment some order might be given by the crier. 252 262

Rated next in the scale of foods valued by the Gros Ventres was the flesh of puppies. Although the flesh of grown dogs was consumed only in times of "famine," nursing pups were always considered a great delicacy. "These young pups are to us like chicken is for the whites, and that is why you see so many Indians with female dogs." In fact in former times the following method was used to assist a bitch which was having difficulty in bearing her litter: "One person would tie a rope around the bitch's neck and lead her around the lodge, while another would follow and, as they reached each of the four points of the compass, hit her on both hind-quarters with a moccasin filled with charcoal; by the time she reached the door again, the litter would come!" 262 231

The flesh and other edible parts of most of the animals hunted by the Gros Ventres were appreciated if there happened to be a dearth of buffalo, or as a welcome change during the winter months from the dried buffalo meat. As a rule these animals would be exploited for purposes other than for food. So far as additional meat diet is concerned, however, elk, deer, and antelope were the most important. Beaver probably came next. Prairie dogs, gophers, and several kinds of rabbit—cottontail, snowshoe, and jackrabbit—all were eaten in case of extremity, but these were ordinarily considered suitable trapping for children. Bear—black, brown and grizzly—were not sought, but should a hunter come across one, he killed it and the flesh was eaten, the grease being the only part that was to them worth storing. Some birds and their eggs were edible, such as duck, goose, grouse, prairie-chicken, and curlew.[8] There was a special use for meadowlark eggs.[9] Badger and porcupine were eaten, as also occasionally the young of wolves and coyote. The full-grown wolf and coyote, as well as fox, 262

[8] Eggs were a favorite food, according to Kroeber, 1908, p. 149.
[9] See p. 143.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

782 [white man above, Our Father] in our prayer, so you would return safe: 'Oh, White Man Above, Our Father, spare her life. If you are going to take anybody, we are willing that you should take us in her place. She is young and has children and lives happy. But we two are old and starved anyway, so if you want to take anybody, take us.'

"I told him: 'An operation is not dangerous if you have it in time.' Strangely enough both he and his wife died within a month. It was just like he had bought my life. I feel badly even now when I think of it. Their one son married one of my daughters. . . . Old man Magpie was one of the old timers."

782 264 Food offerings, except perhaps the puppy meat given the ancestral spirit helper, were typical "first-fruits" sacrifices, made before eating. These offerings were regularly made, as we have seen, before any more or less formal, festive or ritual meal partaken of by a group, and at least very commonly before even everyday family meals at home. The latter everyday usage is explained in the following statement of informants:

Charles Buckman: "Before eating, a piece of meat is held up and so offered to the Master of All, and then is put on the ground."

Coming Daylight: "Whenever they [the Gros Ventres] eat and in their ceremonies, they never eat right away, but have a prayer, like this [here she held up her right hand]: 'Now here it is, I promised you, Our Father, the One Traveling [sun], and the Last Child.' "

The little chunks of food given in this first-fruits sacrifice rite to the Last Child were "pushed in the dirt or ground and sort of covered up with a little dirt,"—in the indoor modern rite previously described, deposited in cracks in the plank flooring.

782 As appears from the foregoing accounts considerable minor variations occurred in this first-fruits rite at meals.

The only first-fruits sacrifice connected with hunting proper, as distinct from eating, was the piece of liver and bit of fat deposited, as a thank offering to Little Spirit, on the west side of killed game.

[252 262] Puppy meat was looked upon by the Gros Ventres as a delicacy. Cooked puppy meat was commonly offered as food to ghost helpers on their visits. After the puppy was killed, the hair was

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

singed off at a fire, and the insides taken out without skinning the animal; then it was quartered up and boiled. 782 252 262

In addition, Charles Buckman stated: "If a party went out to war and met the enemy, before the actual fighting began a man might promise to give grub and a feast to old people, and as part of the feast there had to be a dog,—a pup, of any color. After the party got back home [at the feast, before eating] four pieces of the dog meat were taken and held up and then set on [in] the ground, one each to the north, east, south and west. The pieces were held up as offered to God—in thanksgiving and as a prayer for future favors. Then the young man served the grub to the old people. Before eating they would say, 'O God, this young man has fulfilled the promise he made to you,' and they would pray for him."

What we may call, for want of a better name, sacrifices of person or somatic sacrifices, took three main forms: offerings of flesh, of finger joints, and of self-inflicted suffering and/or privation. Each of the first two is a sacrifice in the strict sense of the term; the third, in the broader sense. The gashing of arms, legs or face as a mourning custom was quite distinct in the Gros Ventre mind from the above flesh offering: it expressed sorrow, it was not in any sense a sacrifice or offering to the deceased. No sacrifices at all were connected with mourning. Nor were finger joints ever cut off as a mourning observance.* 782 785 304 [765]

In most instances recorded by us, these somatic sacrifices were made in fulfillment of vows for the cure or safety of a close relative of the vower,—as, it may be recalled, was the case with self-torturers in the Sacrifice Dance. There were exceptions however: in their respective quests for power, Bull Lodge cut off a finger joint, and Little Man, Al Chandler's adopted father, cut off bits of flesh; the other Little Man, Coming Daylight's husband, when suffering from hemorrhages and pains around the heart was told in dream that he would get well if he underwent solitary self-torture.

Women as well as men would make offerings of their flesh and finger joints. To judge from the records we obtained, the finger joint sacrifice was more frequently made by women than by men,

*Cf. Flannery, 1953, p. 205.

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Ventres' horses except those belonging to one man. This man 787
loaned out his horses as far as they would go around to four of 539
the Gros Ventres who went in pursuit of the Cree.

"Then that evening two of the other men, one of them my 787
father, approached Bear Old Woman. They filled up a pipe just 539
as you do when you go to someone to doctor you, offered it to the 791
old woman, and asked her to find out from her ghost helper who stole the horses and where they were. Bear Old Woman, who had quite a temper, got angry right away as usual and pushed the pipe away as a sign of refusal. Finally one of the young fellows there, a relative of hers, said: 'Well, let me smoke it,' to force her to accept. She angrily grabbed the pipe and had to go through with the rite. When she took the pipe she rubbed her [782]
hands on the ground and rubbed dust on the pipe and offered a prayer before smoking. The pipe was then smoked by her and by the two men who had approached her.

"Then they began to get things ready. They killed a puppy, singed its hair off at a fire, took its insides out without skinning, [262
quartered it up and boiled it. They put the boiled meat on a 252]
plate and got ready some other kinds of food to give to the old woman. Then the two men filled up a pipe and they together with two other men and with a 'servant' went to Bear Old Woman's lodge. On arriving there they set down the plate of dog meat near the head of her bed, the pipe between the incense hearth and the lodge fire, and the other dishes between the lodge fire and the door.

"When everything was arranged and Bear Old Woman was still sitting on her bed, she said: 'Whoever is the greatest unbeliever among you, come and tie me up.' One of the four volunteered. Then the old woman got up and went to a place just south of the head of the bed, to a little enclosure made by hanging up a blanket. He hobbled her four fingers (thumb too?) with sinew, interlacing it in and out of the four fingers of each hand. Then he tied her hands together behind her back and also hobbled her feet. She was lying on a robe. He gathered the robe around her and tied her with rawhide thongs until only her head stuck out of the robe. And so he left her lying on her

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The
796 regalia were placed in front of their owners. Lay members sat around the sides.

[354] The fire was near the center of the dancing-place and beside
252 it the essential pot containing cooked dog flesh. The meat was
262 prepared by first rolling the carcass in very hot ashes to singe off
796 the hair and until the flesh was almost black, after which the entrails were removed and the meat boiled. Incidentally, the Gros Ventres were very fond of the flesh of puppies and used it in large quantities to supplement other types of food for feasts at various gatherings, including the Grass dance. The food for the feast, of which all present at the Grass dance partook, was heaped to the east of the fire.

796 In this setting the ceremonial eating of dog flesh, which involved the preliminary dancing with crow-belts, and so on, was carried out. We shall refer hereafter to this whole performance as the dog ritual because this is the core of the Grass dance proper wherever found and, so far as the Gros Ventres are concerned, remained essentially unchanged from the earlier through the later period. We use the term "ritual" without implying that there was any religious significance attached to the performance in the minds of the Gros Ventres. Connected therewith were a few sex prescriptions the violation of which were believed to be punished by vague misfortune, but that it had any deeper meaning for the Gros Ventres there is no evidence. On the contrary, their indifference toward possible symbolism, for instance, is illustrated by their acceptance at face value of the statement as to origin and meaning by an old Sioux from Fort Peck, Black Prairie Chicken, who claimed that he personally had created the Grass Dance, saying that he had "gotten his instructions" from a rooster; that the headdress of upstanding red-dyed deer hair
796 represented the rooster's comb and that the so-called crow-belt
177 was in reality a rooster's tail. My older informants knew this old man when he visited the Reservation many years ago, and they assured me that although the validity of his story was not questioned, it had had no effect. They maintained that when the dance was transferred to them, the Assiniboine had not mentioned

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

361 places. Beginning at the eastern opening of the circle, and going south-
621 ward, westward, northward, and eastward again, the order in which the
614 clans camped was as follows: —

1. Frozen, or plumes.
2. Those-who-water-their-horses-once-a-day.
3. Tendons.
4. Those-who-do-not-give-away, or buffalo-humps.
5. Opposite (or middle) Assiniboine.
6. Ugly-ones, or tent-poles worn smooth (from travel).
7. Bloods.
8. Fighting-alone.

Other names of clans, whose location in the camp-circle was not ascertained, and some of which, perhaps, are second names of clans enumerated above, are: —

Dusty-ones.
Coffee.
Weasel-skin head-dress.
Ka'hutyi (the name of a chief).
Poor-ones.
Berry-eaters.
Torn-trousers.
Gray-ones, or ash-colored.
Breech-cloths.
Night-hawks.

Anecdotes referring to incidents that are usually ridiculous accompany these names. The Smooth-worn-tent-pole people were so called, because the ends of their tent-poles, used as travois, were worn smooth from much travelling. The Tendon clan was so called, because one of this band had said that the tendons in the neck of a buffalo were good eating. The Frozen-people were so called, because, when they had hungry visitors in winter, they gave them frozen meat. Those-who-water-their-horses-once-a-day are said to have followed this practice so that their horses would gain flesh more quickly. The Opposite-Assiniboine, like the Assiniboine, were said to have had few horses, and the Fighting-alone were very warlike people. Those-who-do-not-give-away-without-return were considered stingy, and the Ugly-people were said not to have painted their faces.

FOOD AND HUNTING.

224 Like most of the other tribes of the Plains, the Gros Ventre subsisted
[262] almost entirely on the buffalo, and their culture depended to the usual degree upon this animal. The following scattering notes were obtained regarding the hunting of buffalo and other animals.

Buffalo enclosures used to be made of trees and forked limbs set in the ground in a half or three-quarter circle below a vertical bank. Extending over the country above the bank, a long chute of two rows of stone monuments was erected, behind which sat men. Other hunters drove the buffalo into the chute. Those behind the piles of stone rose up as the buffalo

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

A plant called tyäñänou is used as perfume, as a wash for the hair, and as a minor medicine. Bunches of the plant were used as perfume. A tea boiled of it is thought to make the hair grow while perfuming it. Such a tea is also poured into the nostrils as a remedy for headache (specimen Museum No. 50-1920). 278 757 [302]

Niibyouäxtjin is used as perfume. The stems and leaves are chewed and applied to the body (specimen Museum No. 50-1853). [302]

Tsaa"sübin is used as perfume. It is chewed, and rubbed on the hair (specimen Museum No. 50-1792).

One ingredient of incense is the callosity from the leg of a horse above the knee. This is cut up fine, and burned with sweet-grass. It is also worn on the body on a string.

Pine-nuts or other conifer-seeds are used for pemmican (specimen Museum No. 50-1913). [562] 824

For embroidery, dark fibrous water-plants, at"hin (the Arapaho atahina"), are used (specimen Museum No. 50-1891). [386]

Quills are dyed yellow with a solution from a conifer-lichen, no doubt the widely used *Evernia vulpina*, called otsahaa" (specimen Museum No. 50-1873).

TRIBAL CEREMONIAL ORGANIZATION.

The Gros Ventre ceremonial organization is akin to that of the Arapaho with such differences as would be expected from the differences in language and the period of separation of the two tribes. The fundamental feature of this organization, the grouping of men by ages and the observance of a series of a half-dozen ceremonies in order according to age, is common to the two tribes. The ceremonies vary somewhat, and in a few cases their names or order have been changed; but among both tribes there are about six regular consecutive men's ceremonies, one or two that are preliminary or somewhat outside of this series, a single ceremony for women corresponding to those for men, and the sun-dance, which is included by the Indians in the enumeration of their grouped ceremonies, but differs from the others in not being connected with age, or with any society-like association of individuals. 561 796

Among the Gros Ventre the dancing-lodge for these ceremonies — which is erected in the centre of the camp-circle, and, like this, opens to the east — is constructed of two large tents. The lodge is open above, and appears to be oval or round in shape. The dancers, before beginning the ceremony, secure old men, who are called their "grandfathers," and are their instruct- 346 796

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The place of the biitaha^{n}wu is not certain, as no informants were found who would positively express themselves on this matter. It is universally regarded as having been the most sacred and most dangerous of all the ceremonies, these qualities being thought to have led to its abandonment before any of the other dances. It can probably be concluded from this that it was last in the series, and performed by the oldest men. 171 796

As among the Arapaho, but somewhat more clearly, each dance refers symbolically to a certain animal. This symbolism is as follows. 171 796

The fly-dance takes its name from flies or mosquitoes, and was given or instituted by a mosquito. During part of the ceremony the dancers imitate the actions of mosquitoes. 825

The crazy-dance has comparatively little reference to any animal. The participants, however, wear anklets of badger-skin, and an entire badger-skin is used in ceremonies at the time of starting the dancing.

The kit-fox lodge was given by the kit-foxes, and a kit-fox skin is used somewhat analogously to the badger-skin in the crazy-dance.

In the dog-dance the dancers of highest degree represent shaggy dogs. It is also said that the participants in the ceremony largely eat dogs during its course. Among the Arapaho a dog is said to have instituted this lodge, and the Gros Ventre have a similar myth. [262]

In the naina^{n}naha^{n}w^{n} the dancers sing for the buffalo, and it is said that they always succeed in causing them to appear near the camp. Among the Arapaho the dancers represent both buffalo and prairie-chickens. The symbolic reference to prairie-chickens among the Gros Ventre is found in their sun-dance; their equivalent of the Arapaho rabbit-tent in this ceremony being called "prairie-chicken tent," and the singers in it "prairie-chickens" and "prairie-hens."

The biitaha^{n}w^{n}, as among the Arapaho, has connection with thunder. The dancers are painted over the body with dots which represent hail. If one of them violates the regulations of the dance, it is thought that it will begin to rain and that the offender may be struck by lightning. The Gros Ventre have an additional symbolic connection of their sun-dance with thunder, which is not strictly paralleled among the Arapaho. [302] [821]

The women in their dance among both tribes represent buffalo, and the actions gone through in this ceremony are in both tribes probably more directly imitative of the animals symbolized than in any of the men's ceremonies.

What has been said about the Arapaho in regard to the relation of the entire ceremonial organization to the lives of the men of the tribe, and in regard to the relative importance of the religious, military, and social functions of the age-companies constituting the organization, appears to apply 171 796 561

231 556 than in the actual production of raw materials. This was especially true of the young unmarried man who, though his ability to hunt was important, was even more anxious to establish his reputation for bravery.

Food

262 The Gros Ventres met their need for food very largely, but not exclusively, through a meat diet. Flesh of the buffalo was the meat par excellence and was considered by the Gros Ventres their "real food." To those who had been brought up on buffalo meat, beef was a poor substitute. It was said, by those who experienced the change of diet after the disappearance of the buffalo in 1884, that many of the older people "died of starvation" when deprived of buffalo meat. The Gros Ventres refused for a long time to accustom themselves to beef because "beef, even when fresh, smells so badly, and when we would see oxen slobber it turned our stomachs."

Buffalo meat, either fresh or dried, formed a major part of the dietary the year round. Each man had his own preference as to various parts of the buffalo. Charles Buckman, for instance, liked best the flanks, if fat, but some preferred the brisket. The tenderest part was the hump (withers) and the tenderloin was also a delicacy. Roast ribs, a whole rib for each person, were considered a most succulent feast and the embryo was highly appreciated. It was customary to eat raw the liver and manifolds dipped in blood and to drink some of the fresh blood. Nothing of the buffalo was wasted and every possible part was eaten even to the predigested vegetable food from the stomach and the soft inner part of the hoofs. The coagulated milk from a buffalo cow carrying young or nursing a calf was enjoyed by most, although it was [251] reported that some individuals did not care particularly for it. The guts were cleaned, dried, cooked and put away, and the lungs were sliced and dried. To be eaten with dried meat the back fat was cooked, and tallow was used in like manner. The bones were broken and boiled, and, after the grease was skimmed off and 252 stored, the bone broth was used plain or with either blood or 262 berries therein.

Pemmican was made from the base of the tenderloin, a long

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

strip on each side of the backbone. The meat was jerked, roasted a little and pounded. Then bone grease was kneaded into the pounded meat and occasionally berries, especially saskatoon berries, were put in. No further cooking was necessary and this preparation was very useful when they had to eat in a hurry, as, for example, at the Sacrifice Dance, when they didn't know at what moment some order might be given by the crier. 252 262

Rated next in the scale of foods valued by the Gros Ventres was the flesh of puppies. Although the flesh of grown dogs was consumed only in times of "famine," nursing pups were always considered a great delicacy. "These young pups are to us like chicken is for the whites, and that is why you see so many Indians with female dogs." In fact in former times the following method was used to assist a bitch which was having difficulty in bearing her litter: "One person would tie a rope around the bitch's neck and lead her around the lodge, while another would follow and, as they reached each of the four points of the compass, hit her on both hind-quarters with a moccasin filled with charcoal; by the time she reached the door again, the litter would come!" 262 231

The flesh and other edible parts of most of the animals hunted by the Gros Ventres were appreciated if there happened to be a dearth of buffalo, or as a welcome change during the winter months from the dried buffalo meat. As a rule these animals would be exploited for purposes other than for food. So far as additional meat diet is concerned, however, elk, deer, and antelope were the most important. Beaver probably came next. Prairie dogs, gophers, and several kinds of rabbit—cottontail, snowshoe, and jackrabbit—all were eaten in case of extremity, but these were ordinarily considered suitable trapping for children. Bear—black, brown and grizzly—were not sought, but should a hunter come across one, he killed it and the flesh was eaten, the grease being the only part that was to them worth storing. Some birds and their eggs were edible, such as duck, goose, grouse, prairie-chicken, and curlew.[8] There was a special use for meadowlark eggs.[9] Badger and porcupine were eaten, as also occasionally the young of wolves and coyote. The full-grown wolf and coyote, as well as fox, 262

[8] Eggs were a favorite food, according to Kroeber, 1908, p. 149.
[9] See p. 143.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

262 mountain lion, lynx, bobcat, and otter, never served as food.

Of vegetable foods there was a variety, especially of berries and [251] roots, many of which were gathered in large amounts and dried for winter use, either as seasoning in broths and soups, or to be mixed with grease. Currents, strawberries and raspberries were picked when ripe and only in sufficient quantities to meet daily needs. Juneberries, or service-berries, and gooseberries were dried and stored away in parfleshes. Bitterroot, wild onions and wild carrots were likewise preserved for winter use, as well as wild rhubarb stems. In July larb-berries, another name for which is bear-berries, and "plums" were ripe; and in August the choke-cherries and wild turnips were dried and pounded. In late August rose-berries were ready to eat, but were better after a touch of frost. There was no need of storing too many of these since they did not freeze and could be garnered all winter long. It is said that of all the berries and roots available, service-berries and choke-cherries, wild turnips and bitterroot, were the most important More of these were put up than of the others.

The yield of thorn-, rose- and larb-berries, of wild carrots and of wild rhubarb was always dependable. Other plants, however, were more erratic. For instance, one year there would be no chokecherries at all around Hays but plenty of them at Lodgepole, only ten miles distant; the next year the situation was as likely as not to be reversed. Moreover some plants grew only in a few localities at best. Red turnips or beet turnips, described as something like a radish, was one of those which was to be found only sporadically and in sandy places; the wild potato, another of the less common plants, grew only in the Sweet Grass Hills and in the Moccasin Mountains south of the Little Rockies, and around Billings.

262 Such additional foods were evidently of sufficient importance 222 that the women occasionally ventured quite far from camp for berry-picking and root-digging expeditions, disregarding the very real danger of surprise by the enemy. That these edibles were not despised is suggested, too, by the fact that the digging-stick had a prominent place at the center pole in the Women's Lodge, although it is true that the principal concern in the rite centered about the buffalo.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

In April, when the sap rises, the Gros Ventres scraped the juice from the inner bark peeled from cottonwood and sometimes even from box-elder. They also chewed the gum from pines. Infusions of cherry bark or roots and peppermint were said to have been drunk as tea, but such concoctions were considered usually more in the nature of medicines. 262 272

So long as the Gros Ventres had the buffalo, relatively little in the way of foodstuffs from the white man were imported. Sugar, flour, occasional fresh fruits, coffee and tea were known and used to some extent after about 1855.[10] The possibility of obtaining whiskey, was, however, one of the items which determined the popularity of a given trading place. Incidentally, tobacco was an important item of trade after 1800, although prior to that time the Gros Ventres had raised their own.[11] 262 439 [273] [276]

Clothing and Adornment

The importance of the buffalo in the economy of the Gros Ventres was as obvious in clothing and in shelter as it was in food. The buffalo robe, dressed with the hair on, was perhaps the most valuable article inasmuch as it was not only a regular part of their garb, but also was the main article of trade with the whites after about 1830. When decorated, it had high prestige value as a gift. 291 [439] [431]

Seldom was the hide of a buffalo older than two years used for robes since the fur of those of greater age was usually scabby even in the fall when the coats were in best condition. It required the skin of a yearling to make a robe for a twelve-year-old, and the skins of calves made robes for smaller children. When the demand of the trade for robes was very great, the large wool blanket sometimes replaced the robe for wearing apparel and for bedding.

Most of the other articles of clothing were made from well-dressed deer, elk and antelope skins.[12] Deer and elk were more 281 291

[10] See p. 22.

[11] This tradition is confirmed by Cocking in 1772, who writes, p. 111, "The tobacco they use is their own planting which hath disagreable flavor. I have preserved a specimen." Kroeber's informants denied knowledge of the tradition.

[12] In 1854 Denig, pp. 464–65, describes the cloth bought for clothing for summer and fall wear, but states that a real hunter must have a buffalo robe, moccasins, mittens, cap, skin leggings and an extra buffalo robe.

484 than six poles would be so tied together, a strong line running through the holes, leaving a loop to go about the horses' neck.
492 Another line was tied around the six, about in the middle, to hold the poles together as the horse dragged them through the water. A mounted horse could draw two sets of six poles across the river at one time, one set on each side, but could not take all the poles for a lodge on a single trip. Meat packed in skin bags was often lashed to the poles and did not suffer in transit. Occasionally older children rode across the river on these poles, and some people paddled across straddling a single log.

782 The same goods which we have described as used by the Gros Ventre to meet their needs for food, clothing, shelter and transportation were likewise used to meet many other needs. Cloth and clothing, feathers, ornaments, and so forth, were used as religious sacrifices and offerings. Food was used as payment or part-pay-
262 ment for services of those who helped in production of economic
436 goods, or of those who cured diseases, acted in ceremonial capacity of one kind or another, as well as in meeting certain specific kin-
342 ship obligations. Lodges might be painted in accordance with a
531 supernatural vision, and, with the associated songs, were transferrable to others as ritual objects. Horses were used as payments of various kinds,—in connection with the bride price, to ceremonial grandfathers, and so on. There was thus no medium of exchange
436 within the group and no strict classification into producer's goods as contrasted with consumer's goods is possible.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

439 wives had vowed to cover a Pipe, undoubtedly he would try to include in his purchases the requisite length of black cloth. Individuals of course differed. In view of their labor, the wives would expect to share in the return therefor which the husband was able to secure from the trader, but this expectation was not always met.[17]

The items thus obtained were consumed by the Gros Ventres in the same ways as those goods of their own manufacture—some being directly consumed, some entering into further production, and some being exchanged on the principle of gifts and of payments for services, and in gambling.

554 A man would accumulate a surplus only to expend it as
431 generously as possible in order to attain prestige. The person with
439 a reputation for generosity rose in public esteem, and was in turn the recipient of many gifts, whereas the man with only one horse and only one wife could not afford to meet the demands for hospitality and for generosity in other transactions, and thus could not profit by the system of indirect and deferred exchange.

262 Sharing of food was an important element in attaining prestige
574 through generosity. A person known to be stingy with food would
554 lack status. The ideal was often preached to children embodied in
867 such statements as the following: "If you have visitors, even though you don't have much food, give the last of it to them."

574 Should a male visitor drop in unexpectedly, the first thing a man did was to tell his wife to cook and she was expected to comply. How seriously this was regarded may be seen from the following case told by Singer: "One time my husband, Iron Bucket, went with a friend to visit the latter's brother. The sister-in-law was naturally a stingy woman and made no move to feed them. Her husband was sitting there fixing arrows and he told her: 'Hurry and cook. If you have nothing, ask for meat at one of the lodges.' This woman had a big shaggy head and sat there with her head bowed and her husband couldn't make her move. After a while, however, some meat was brought in from hunting, and this woman went out, got it and threw it down hard inside her lodge. She was mad. And instead of giving them in a nice way the manifolds and liver that they ordinarily eat first, she slung

[17] For a case in point, see p. 178.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the contrary, held to be holy and given special care.[8] They mentioned nevertheless that women of child-bearing age refrained from eating the two strips of flesh along the anterior of the backbone of buffalo lest twins result. 845 [262]

Coming Daylight said that she had heard of cases in the old days where twins would be separated,—one kept by the parents and the other adopted by someone else. Personally, however, she did not approve of this policy and when her daughter-in-law gave birth to twins she told her: "Be proud of them. Dress them alike and they will grow up well. Don't think more of one than of the other." She gave the same advice to her granddaughter when she in turn bore twins. The advice was not heeded in this instance and both the granddaughter and her husband adored one and neglected the other so that Coming Daylight herself took the neglected one. These twins were not quite a year old when the one loved by its parents died.

A middle-aged woman said that she had always heard regarding twins that they should be treated just alike and that the mother should always take both wherever she went and never leave one behind. Her own experience was a sad one. When her twins were about seven months old, one of them got sick and she had to take it to the hospital. The people at Hays told her: "You shouldn't leave one twin here." She, however, wanted to stay with the sick one, but the doctors sent her home. The twin left in the hospital died and people told her: "You shouldn't have left one there without the other."

Pregnancy and Childbirth

The only indication from these two oldest women informants of belief in prenatal impression was the remark of Coming Daylight when telling the story of a young man who opened the belly of a deer he had killed and found therein two young, each of which had "human faces." She said: "So they concluded that even animals get afraid and the young are marked." A younger woman mentioned that she had heard that if a pregnant woman looks at some- 843 825 843

[8] Kroeber, 1908, p. 182, gives the special names by which twins were called.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

among men. It was a severe ordeal and the older men had no mercy on these youngsters. 857 868

Occasionally as training in bravery, the heart of a bear was taken raw and cut into small bits. After calling together the older boys and young men and lining them up, each one in turn was given a bit of the heart dipped in fresh blood and asked: "Well, are you going to have a brave heart?" Some were able to swallow it easily, but others could not stomach it. Those who were able to swallow and retain it were said to be the really brave ones.[8] [262]

It was indicated by many informants that in the old days a man would almost have to have had supernatural powers in order to be outstandingly successful in war or to achieve fame as a medicine man. In fact it was thought that supernatural powers could be helpful in many aspects of life including gambling and love. Guardians, however, used to warn the boys and young men under their care that "you can't get something for nothing." By this was meant that a person who accepted supernatural power would not live out his full span of life. Thus, according to The Boy, parents emphasized in training their sons that, rather than going on power quests, they should be ambitious to acquire fame and respect by developing their natural abilities. Nevertheless many sought and obtained supernatural powers, visions apparently often being vouchsafed in youth, although the power might not have been used until later in life. It was believed that those who accepted and used such supernatural powers died prematurely.[9] 787 798

Methods of Instruction

Oral instruction, or "lecturing," stands out in the Gros Ventre mind as the most important method of child training. All of our middle-aged and older informants agreed that some relative, often either the mother or the father, lectured their children almost every day, telling them what was right and what was wrong and "how to live." If boys and girls were present together, there were some subjects which could not be touched upon and would be reserved for fathers to speak about to their sons and for mothers 861

[8] It was said that, in the distant past, the heart of an enemy was so devoured by warriors. For historical confirmation, see Henry, v. 2, p. 734. [266]

[9] Full discussion of supernatural powers is given in Cooper Ms., 1949.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

CHAPTER X

OLD AGE AND DEATH

It is the opinion of the now aged Gros Ventres that the proportion of old persons was much greater in the past than it has been since they have taken up the white man's ways; and further, that the aged then retained their health and vigor to a greater degree.[1] One old woman stated that when she was young, there used to be many old people, but that they died off when there were no more buffalo. She added: "People lived to a good old age on the things that the Supreme Being provided,—roots, wild vegetables and fruits, dried meats and berries. In those days, too, they drank broth instead of tea and coffee. Old folks didn't lose their teeth then, although even young girls do nowadays. Their teeth eventually got worn down, but they seldom pulled them. In fact, if an old person should lose a tooth, he thought it was awful and was sure that he was ready for the grave. Furthermore, people didn't get white hair until they were ready for 'old age sleep'—very old people sleep most of the time—yet now one sees middle-aged and even younger people with gray hair like the whites have."

Status and Treatment of the Aged

It was believed that a person who had lived to a ripe old age had been privileged to do so by the Supreme Being. Therefore, they reasoned, if you are good to old people, these in turn will pray to the Supreme Being for your health, long life, and success. Children were instructed explicitly to be good to the aged,—to feed them, to clothe them, and to help them in difficulties,—as well as to seek out those so blessed and ask for their prayers. It was

[1] Allowance should of course be made for the fact that "old age" is a relative term. When it was said that young men were urged to marry "older experienced women," this referred to a woman of perhaps twenty to twenty-five. See pp. 171–72. A woman on the northern plains was "old" at forty, according to Denig, p. 513.

793 although without the wild parsley, but we did not obtain details.

After ritual treatment of their wearing apparel, the new keeper 796 and co-keeper had to take off any ring, necklace or other personal adornment made of copper, iron or other metal, as the wearing [784] of metal adornments was forbidden them, apparently because such were from the whites. The two, but not the Pipe child, were each ritually invested with a necklace consisting of a large single shell on a string of twisted, not plaited, buckskin. The investure was done with three motions as if putting the necklace on, and at the third it was actually put on. Further the keeper, but not the co-keeper, had to frame his hair over his forehead with a large [302] pompadour, as a sign of distinction.[1]

The new co-keeper also put some dried peppermint leaves mixed with poisonous wild parsley in a little buckskin sack which she [778] then wore on her belt. This had a double purpose. First, the mixture being poisonous, she commanded respect. She must not be molested or even be bodily touched. Whoever molested or even touched her would suffer fits or spasms or a paralytic stroke. Sec- [837] ond, she must live a virtuous life and not run around with other men. The co-keeper, and keeper, as also the ex-co-keepers and ex- [784] keepers, since they had all been consecrated with peppermint and fumigation could handle the wild parsley without danger, but the common people were not immune to its supposedly highly toxic effects.

On this second day a big feast was given. Most of the food was provided by the new keeper and his relatives. That eaten 262 by the new keeper and co-keeper, who had been fasting from food 784 and water since the time they were first siezed a good thirty or more hours previously, was provided by the ex-keepers.

At sundown the day's instruction ended. That night the new keeper and co-keeper, the ex-keepers and ex-co-keepers and two attendants slept in the double lodge, where the Pipe also remained.

Very early the next morning (or less probably late on the

[1] In 1948 The Boy added: "When a man became keeper, he ceased to comb his hair and it would get in all kinds of shapes and hang down. So he would take a bunch from the center and wind it round and round and tied that knot of hair around with a string. Whenever the keeper took off that string the people would be afraid!" [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

also to enhance their sacredness and intercessory role as well as their prestige in the eyes of the people. Gros Ventre character-ideals have a high rating to "strong-heartedness," ability to bear and forego, readiness to do without, "asceticism" in its looser sense of voluntary self-punishment. Making one's self "pitiful" through hardships and privations in order to excite the sympathy of and to obtain blessings from the supernatural beings was a basic procedure in Gros Ventre religious practice. The keeper and co-keeper were expected to be sacred and powerful intercessors and to be individuals of high character. 793 785

In general the keeper and co-keeper had to lead very restricted lives, largely cut off from free association with their tribesmen, most of the time kept within or close to their lodge where the Pipe hung, and occupied with their official duties.

In particular they were under many specific privations and prohibitions. Perhaps the most severe of these was the obligation of sending away and thus practically giving up all their children, even their favorite one, except the one chosen as Pipe child. And ordinarily Gros Ventre parents were extremely fond of and attached to their children.

The keeper and co-keeper could not eat birds or bird eggs of any kind, nor any part of the head, such as the tongue or brains, of any quadruped. According to one tradition they could eat the body but not the head of dogs; according to another, not even the body. On the occasion however of feasts connected with the Flat Pipe they could eat buffalo tongue. They apparently did not eat fish, but the eating of fish was uncommon anyhow among the Gros Ventres and some Gros Ventres did not eat it at all. There were other minor food taboos, according to The Boy, but he could not recall what they were. 793 262

The co-keeper was obliged to wear a robe or blanket all the time, no small inconvenience during the Montana summer when the temperature not infrequently rises to the 90's Fahrenheit in the shade around midday and the afternoon. The prohibition against the wearing of metal personal adornments by the keeper and co-keeper was previously noted. 793 785 784

The keeper and co-keeper were not allowed to comb their hair, nor to scratch their heads except with a scratching-stick. The

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 515 whipped themselves, especially on any part of their bodies where they felt sick, with buffalo tails attached to a handle. The keeper used a distinctive whip of a white or beaver buffalo tail. After the men inside had sweated a while, the two attendants, who had meanwhile remained lying face down outside, one at each side of the east door, raised the covers first of the east door and then of the west. After a little breathing spell, the covers were lowered again by the attendants, the west door cover first, water was splashed afresh, without song or ritual, on the hot rocks, and a second sweating period ensued. After this, a third one followed. Then those of the sweaters who wished took a plunge in the river, and all donned their clothing.

*796 The offerings were then taken down from the offerings pole, and one of the assistants or some other good upright man was deputed by the keeper to take them away from camp to some knoll or mountain top or near some big rock, pray with them, and weight them down well with stones, or else, as a less common alternative, to carry them down to some stream and sink them in the water. Some of the offerings had been selected however for distribution to needy children.

[262] No food of any kind was eaten by the participants during the seasonal sweat-lodge rite. When the whole seasonal rite itself was carried out on the three-day plan, the sweating ceremony lasted from early morning until near sundown, and was followed by a big meal.

After the sweating rite was over, the sweat-lodge was not torn down but was just left standing. Children were admonished by their elders not to play around it, and especially not to go inside it, lest they should grow slowly and be dwarfs for a long time. Even though such an abandoned sweat-lodge was still in good condition when a later seasonal rite happened to be held at the same camp site, neither the lodge or any part of it would be used again. An entirely new one would be erected.

In a three-day seasonal rite, the second part of it with the terminal feast occupied the whole or most of the third day; in the one-day rite, what remained of the day after the sweating was over. All of this second part of the rite took place in the keeper's lodge where the Flat Pipe was.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

782 *796 [262] [595]

Hunters returning from a successful buffalo chase would select pieces of kidney (a special delicacy) and ribs, and put them on top of the Pipe bundle. In recent times, money offerings occur. Offerings for the Pipe have become increasingly infrequent; offerings are now usually made instead by the Gros Ventres, all of whom are Catholics, to the Mission Church or at the Shrine of Our Lady of the Little Rockies on the Mission grounds.

A promise or vow to cover the Pipe, made silently or aloud, would be worded, "I vow to cover (or wrap) the Flat Pipe," rather than "I vow to give something to the Flat Pipe."

During our field work in 1940, when Coming Daylight was telling among other things what she knew of the Flat Pipe and its ritual, one evening (Aug. 16) she heard that her grandchild was seriously ill. Thereupon she went outside a little distance and holding both arms up, palms out, looking up and facing toward where the Flat Pipe was she spoke and prayed: "I am telling about you. I am telling everything straight. I suppose you hear everything, and must know that I am telling everything straight. I am telling the truth and nothing but the truth. Look at me. Have pity on me and upon all the rest of the people. Take away all bad things that go around here on earth. Have pity so my grandchild may get well. I promise to put a robe on you. I hear you value black more than anything, and that is what I shall get you. I hear my grandchild though still sick is better." In this case, as Coming Daylight explained, she was "talking right to the Pipe."

In a long discussion, a couple of days later (Aug. 20, 1940), with The Boy, he emphasized that while a person covering the Flat Pipe had great reverence for it and would address it by its own two names, Flat Pipe and Little Turtle, the Pipe itself was only a medium by which the Supreme Being was petitioned or thanked. A man, for instance, in sudden imminent danger would perhaps, praying in his heart and mind, mention only the Pipe, but he would know what the Pipe represented, namely, only a powerful means used so that his prayer would be hearkened to by the Supreme Being. We may add incidentally that mention in the course of this discussion of the Sinkaetk custom of praying to the sweat-lodge caused hearty laughter by The Boy and Thomas Main.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 over and sat down with the principal vower and his grandfather and all six of them smoked the grandfather's filled pipe. When they had finished smoking, two young men selected for the purpose started to actually fell the tree. As soon as the tree began to totter, the four scouts shot at it and yelled, just as was done at the killing of an enemy in real warfare.

After the tree was "shot down," it was dragged in by the young men "soldiers," with much yelling and shooting, and was deposited at the spot where the Sacrifice Dance was to be held.

Then a recess was taken and those not obliged to fast ate. The [262] chief food eaten at the Sacrifice Dance was buffalo tongues and pemmican, both already prepared, which could be eaten in a hurry, for no one knew at what moment some order to be obeyed would be announced by the crier.

After the recess the "soldiers" went out to get the other poles [593] and the brush needed for the dance lodge. Each "soldier" would choose a woman, not his own wife, but "his sister-in-law, or any other woman of whom he was not bashful" to ride double with and accompany him. The women would dress up and stand outside their lodges waiting for the men to come along and put them on their horses. The woman sat on the saddle, the man riding behind her. Some women would run away so as to avoid going out with the men, "probably," Coming Daylight stated, "because these ones were afraid of their husbands." Coming Daylight herself had never so gone, but Singer had. "Some husbands," Singer commented, "were too jealous to allow their wives to go with other men to get branches for the Sacrifice Dance lodge."

*796 The poles and brush were brought in, and a number of hoisting 346 props were made. These props were made each of two tent poles; to one end of each pole a single short transverse connecting thong was fastened. The two divisions of "soldiers" the "talls" and the "shorts," each then split up into two subdivisions making four subdivisions in all. At the call of the crier, "Get ready," these four subdivisions began to march toward the hole, previously dug, for the center pole which lay alongside, all singing their parade song. On the way toward the spot, each of the four subdivisions had a number of the double-pole hoisting props, each prop being carried

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 The main rites of the Crazy Dance extended over four days and four nights, and were followed by a period of "talking backward" and other "crazy" behavior by the dancers. Dancers did not fast during the dance, as did vowers during the Sacrifice Dance, but ate heartily. Large quantities of food were procured beforehand, and many puppies were killed and cooked to provide the delicacy, dog meat. The dancers, however, were not allowed to swim, bathe, or "touch water" during the Dance. If any dancer did so, Bha'a would get angry and there would be a big storm. On each of the four nights of the dance, the dancers slept in the Crazy Dance lodge, but after each night they went back home in the morning to paint up.

[262] [784]

*796 346 The Crazy Dance lodge was erected in the center of the camp circle, not far from the chief vower's tipi and executive headquarters. The "lodge" was an open roofless circular corral made of upright poles about 6 or 7 feet high stuck in the ground, with a wide opening to the south according to Coming Daylight, to the southeast according to The Boy and Thick. To the top of the poles were lashed tipi poles to make a railing. Over this railing were hung tipi covers, which lapped over on the ground inside the corral as a place on which to rest and sleep. The tipi covers needed—two, or three, or more, depending on the number of the vower's age-group who participated and hence on the size of the corral—were taken, without asking permission, by the dancers from enemy-friends belonging to the next older age-group of the dancers' own society, Stars or Wolves as the case might be.

*796 Inside the corral, at the place of honor immediately to the right of the opening, according to The Boy, or opposite the opening according to Coming Daylight, a little sort of wickiup was put up. Here, as the ceremony started, sat the chief vower and here was kept the ritual badger skin. The crier(s) (and council of four?) also were in the wickiup, according to The Boy and Thick. Very little of what went on inside the wickiup was known to our informants.

The participant dancers sat in the corral on either side, the "talls" on the west, the "shorts" on the east, with their respective ritual grandfathers and wives,—the dancers in front, the grand-

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

in the operator. It was resorted to for various ailments; tuberculosis, dizziness and "logginess" were specifically mentioned by our informants. "If the ailment were located somewhere above the waist the patient was bled at the elbow joint on the upper surface of the arm; if somewhere below the waist, on top of the instep." One arm might be opened in spring, the other in the fall. In the procedure described by the Boy, before the incision was made, the patient would put his hand on the ground and hold his arm rather rigid, while the operator squeezed and at the same time rubbed down the upper arm until the blood vessel at the bend of the arm bulged. In a slightly different procedure described by Singer, the patient's upper arm was tied very tight and "the blood was worked down;" then the large blood vessel on the upper side of the elbow joint was pierced with a very sharp chip off an "onyx stone,"[8] and the blood would spurt out; when the patient was sufficiently bled, a bit of buffalo fur was scorched, put over the incision, and kept in place without any dressing. By bedtime everything would be "okay."

Certain individuals, such as Thick's wife, and Woman Chief, were more skillful than others at bloodletting. On one occasion Singer's husband said to her: "Come on now. I want you to bleed me." She started to do so but "just had to yell," at which he said: "Why anyone would think that it was you who were going to bleed." Coming Daylight was still more reluctant to perform the operation. "In fact, I could never do it," she said, "because I cannot stand the sight of blood."

A tattoo-like surgical treatment was described by Coming Daylight, although Gros Ventres did not practice decorative tattooing. "For a while," she said, "it seemed like my hand would come unjointed and I could not use it very well. They took a bunch of needles and pierced my hand where it was hurting me. They told me: 'Now if you don't eat anything fried, it won't turn blue.' After piercing my hand they put some root on it, and it never got sore." She added: "They do that to the head, too."

Lancing of the gums of children when teething, elsewhere de-

[8] Singer showed the stone she owned from which the chip is struck. It was a shiny black one, but we did not identify it.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

782 [white man above, Our Father] in our prayer, so you would return safe: 'Oh, White Man Above, Our Father, spare her life. If you are going to take anybody, we are willing that you should take us in her place. She is young and has children and lives happy. But we two are old and starved anyway, so if you want to take anybody, take us.'

"I told him: 'An operation is not dangerous if you have it in time.' Strangely enough both he and his wife died within a month. It was just like he had bought my life. I feel badly even now when I think of it. Their one son married one of my daughters. . . . Old man Magpie was one of the old timers."

782 264 Food offerings, except perhaps the puppy meat given the ancestral spirit helper, were typical "first-fruits" sacrifices, made before eating. These offerings were regularly made, as we have seen, before any more or less formal, festive or ritual meal partaken of by a group, and at least very commonly before even everyday family meals at home. The latter everyday usage is explained in the following statement of informants:

Charles Buckman: "Before eating, a piece of meat is held up and so offered to the Master of All, and then is put on the ground."

Coming Daylight: "Whenever they [the Gros Ventres] eat and in their ceremonies, they never eat right away, but have a prayer, like this [here she held up her right hand]: 'Now here it is, I promised you, Our Father, the One Traveling [sun], and the Last Child.' "

The little chunks of food given in this first-fruits sacrifice rite to the Last Child were "pushed in the dirt or ground and sort of covered up with a little dirt,"—in the indoor modern rite previously described, deposited in cracks in the plank flooring.

782 As appears from the foregoing accounts considerable minor variations occurred in this first-fruits rite at meals.

The only first-fruits sacrifice connected with hunting proper, as distinct from eating, was the piece of liver and bit of fat deposited, as a thank offering to Little Spirit, on the west side of killed game.

[252 262] Puppy meat was looked upon by the Gros Ventres as a delicacy. Cooked puppy meat was commonly offered as food to ghost helpers on their visits. After the puppy was killed, the hair was

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

singed off at a fire, and the insides taken out without skinning the animal; then it was quartered up and boiled. 782 252 262

In addition, Charles Buckman stated: "If a party went out to war and met the enemy, before the actual fighting began a man might promise to give grub and a feast to old people, and as part of the feast there had to be a dog,—a pup, of any color. After the party got back home [at the feast, before eating] four pieces of the dog meat were taken and held up and then set on [in] the ground, one each to the north, east, south and west. The pieces were held up as offered to God—in thanksgiving and as a prayer for future favors. Then the young man served the grub to the old people. Before eating they would say, 'O God, this young man has fulfilled the promise he made to you,' and they would pray for him."

What we may call, for want of a better name, sacrifices of person or somatic sacrifices, took three main forms: offerings of flesh, of finger joints, and of self-inflicted suffering and/or privation. Each of the first two is a sacrifice in the strict sense of the term; the third, in the broader sense. The gashing of arms, legs or face as a mourning custom was quite distinct in the Gros Ventre mind from the above flesh offering: it expressed sorrow, it was not in any sense a sacrifice or offering to the deceased. No sacrifices at all were connected with mourning. Nor were finger joints ever cut off as a mourning observance.* 782 785 304 [765]

In most instances recorded by us, these somatic sacrifices were made in fulfillment of vows for the cure or safety of a close relative of the vower,—as, it may be recalled, was the case with self-torturers in the Sacrifice Dance. There were exceptions however: in their respective quests for power, Bull Lodge cut off a finger joint, and Little Man, Al Chandler's adopted father, cut off bits of flesh; the other Little Man, Coming Daylight's husband, when suffering from hemorrhages and pains around the heart was told in dream that he would get well if he underwent solitary self-torture.

Women as well as men would make offerings of their flesh and finger joints. To judge from the records we obtained, the finger joint sacrifice was more frequently made by women than by men,

*Cf. Flannery, 1953, p. 205.

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

ghost, they could not refuse, at least not easily. And if they accepted the pipe, they committed themselves definitely. 787 791

The summoning rite was performed only at night, with the fire out, regardless of the severity of the weather, and in darkness. In the two narratives by The Boy appended infra the ghost helper spoke in the daytime, but had been summoned the preceding night. The rite was ordinarily performed in the performer's lodge, he being hidden out of sight of the clients or spectators behind a blanket-curtain hung up for this purpose to partition off a segment of the lodge. Away from the camp, the rite was sometimes performed in an emergency shelter or a sweat lodge. Before the rite, the clients got ready a pipe and tobacco, a dish of puppy meat (an earlier Gros Ventre delicacy), and other food, [262] and at the appointed time for the rite brought these to the lodge of the ghost-possessor.

The performer was then bound with thongs. The four fingers (thumb too?) of each hand were tied tightly together by interlacing them (somewhat after the technique of wrapped or twined basketry), the hands were tied behind the back, he was rolled in his blanket and tied around securely with thongs, with only his head protruding, and then was deposited behind the blanket partition out of sight of the spectators.

It appears to have been a common practice for the performer to challenge the most skeptical member of the party, and ask him to do the tying. Various stories of skeptics were narrated to me.

On one occasion when the main body of the Gros Ventres, then 787 at war with the Piegan (or Blackfoot), were camped on the east 776 side of Judas River and a small band of them on the west side, the ghost helper of one of the Gros Ventres in the small band told them: "Tell the people to leave this small camp and go across the river to the big one, for the enemy is going to raid tonight." But many of the Gros Ventres of the small band said: "Ghosts are big liars. We are not cowards to run." Of the skeptics many remained, while about half crossed back to the big camp. About dawn, the enemy came as the ghost had predicted and nearly all who had remained at the small camp were massacred.

On another occasion when the Gros Ventres had (or were

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13 ●

Ventres' horses except those belonging to one man. This man 787
loaned out his horses as far as they would go around to four of 539
the Gros Ventres who went in pursuit of the Cree.

"Then that evening two of the other men, one of them my 787
father, approached Bear Old Woman. They filled up a pipe just 539
as you do when you go to someone to doctor you, offered it to the 791
old woman, and asked her to find out from her ghost helper who stole the horses and where they were. Bear Old Woman, who had quite a temper, got angry right away as usual and pushed the pipe away as a sign of refusal. Finally one of the young fellows there, a relative of hers, said: 'Well, let me smoke it,' to force her to accept. She angrily grabbed the pipe and had to go through with the rite. When she took the pipe she rubbed her [782] hands on the ground and rubbed dust on the pipe and offered a prayer before smoking. The pipe was then smoked by her and by the two men who had approached her.

"Then they began to get things ready. They killed a puppy, singed its hair off at a fire, took its insides out without skinning, [262 ● quartered it up and boiled it. They put the boiled meat on a 252] plate and got ready some other kinds of food to give to the old woman. Then the two men filled up a pipe and they together with two other men and with a 'servant' went to Bear Old Woman's lodge. On arriving there they set down the plate of dog meat near the head of her bed, the pipe between the incense hearth and the lodge fire, and the other dishes between the lodge fire and the door.

"When everything was arranged and Bear Old Woman was still sitting on her bed, she said: 'Whoever is the greatest unbeliever among you, come and tie me up.' One of the four volunteered. Then the old woman got up and went to a place just south of the head of the bed, to a little enclosure made by hanging up a blanket. He hobbled her four fingers (thumb too?) with sinew, interlacing it in and out of the four fingers of each hand. Then he tied her hands together behind her back and also hobbled her feet. She was lying on a robe. He gathered the robe around her and tied her with rawhide thongs until only her head stuck out of the robe. And so he left her lying on her

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Iruska.[5] In its diffusion it reached the Assiniboine from the Sioux, 796
—Rodnick places the date at 1872,[6]—and the Assiniboine in turn 177
passed it on to the Gros Ventres, sometime between the years 171
1875 and 1880. We arrive at this approximate dating by reckoning the age of a now venerable old Gros Ventre woman informant [174]
who witnessed the actual transfer when she herself was in her later twenties or possibly early thirties. From all the evidence at our command it is fairly certain that she was born between 1850 and 1855. This informant not only was an eye-witness of the adoption of the ceremony by the Gros Ventres but also participated actively, so far as a woman could, in both the earlier and later phases of the dance. Before giving details of the regalia, personnel, and procedures it might be well to insert at this point her account of the actual transfer.

"The Gros Ventres were camped on the Milk River. They 648
were joined there by the Assiniboine and the two tribes remained 177
together while the Assiniboine taught the Gros Ventres the Grass 796
dance. The Gros Ventres had never had any dancing of that kind before and called it jokingly *inaetenin* (moving-buttocks) referring to the way they danced. The Assiniboine gave crow-belts (feather bustles) to each of two men, and likewise swords to two others. They needed one man as spear (fork) man and two as *atsa'an* (waiters, servants). They also gave the Gros Ventres a big drum and everything that goes with the dance. The visitors showed the different individuals how to use these various things and taught the songs and dances that went with each. But they didn't do all that for nothing! Of all the things they had to give away to the Assiniboine! Even food was included in the exchange. The Gros Ventres had an enormous quantity of food prepared and you should have seen the number of puppies we [262]
cooked. The Assiniboine surely liked those pups. That was the first Grass dance we ever had.

"Then we moved camp from the Milk River over toward the 796

[5] Wissler, loc. cit., cf. table opp. p. 868.

[6] Rodnick, David, The Fort Belknap Assiniboine of Montana, A study in culture change, New Haven, Conn., 1938, pp. 123–24.

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 The regalia were placed in front of their owners. Lay members sat around the sides.

[354] The fire was near the center of the dancing-place and beside
252 it the essential pot containing cooked dog flesh. The meat was
●262 prepared by first rolling the carcass in very hot ashes to singe off
796 the hair and until the flesh was almost black, after which the entrails were removed and the meat boiled. Incidentally, the Gros Ventres were very fond of the flesh of puppies and used it in large quantities to supplement other types of food for feasts at various gatherings, including the Grass dance. The food for the feast, of which all present at the Grass dance partook, was heaped to the east of the fire.

796 In this setting the ceremonial eating of dog flesh, which involved the preliminary dancing with crow-belts, and so on, was carried out. We shall refer hereafter to this whole performance as the dog ritual because this is the core of the Grass dance proper wherever found and, so far as the Gros Ventres are concerned, remained essentially unchanged from the earlier through the later period. We use the term "ritual" without implying that there was any religious significance attached to the performance in the minds of the Gros Ventres. Connected therewith were a few sex prescriptions the violation of which were believed to be punished by vague misfortune, but that it had any deeper meaning for the Gros Ventres there is no evidence. On the contrary, their indifference toward possible symbolism, for instance, is illustrated by their acceptance at face value of the statement as to origin and meaning by an old Sioux from Fort Peck, Black Prairie Chicken, who claimed that he personally had created the Grass Dance, saying that he had "gotten his instructions" from a rooster; that the headdress of upstanding red-dyed deer hair
796 represented the rooster's comb and that the so-called crow-belt
177 was in reality a rooster's tail. My older informants knew this old man when he visited the Reservation many years ago, and they assured me that although the validity of his story was not questioned, it had had no effect. They maintained that when the dance was transferred to them, the Assiniboine had not mentioned

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 gave away in his honor." When first adopted the Grass dance
178 offered only one such opportunity—and a relatively minor one.
431 As times changed, however, the Grass dance provided practically
156 the sole occasion for gaining prestige while at the same time
554 carrying out the old pattern of kinship obligation by enhancing the prestige of relatives.

The possibility in the later form of the Grass dance of paying for privileges, such as locking the door, or whipping those who did not get up to dance, gave further scope for the acquisition of prestige through liberality, as did also, of course, payments at transfer of office.

It was estimated by our informants that around 1900 as much as a thousand dollars in goods and cash changed hands at a single performance of the Grass dance. At that time it was not uncommon for the dance to be held at weekly intervals. So long as the Gros Ventre were relatively prosperous and had property to display and exchange according to the older patterns, the Grass dance continued to function. With increasing poverty, however, along
[735] with other factors such as the changing points of view and interests on the part of the younger generation, and the dying out of
[182] the older warriors, the Grass dance, the core of which was the dog ritual, gradually paled off leaving but the remnants of some of the round dances which had been added to the Grass dance as originally adopted from the Assiniboine.

Summary

796 Between 1875 and 1880 the Gros Ventres received the Grass
177 dance from the Assiniboine. From the date of adoption up to
575 about 1890 the Grass dance was performed only by members of one of the two soldier societies and the custodians of the ceremonial equipment were the officers. Offices were transferred among members according to the old Gros Ventre pattern.

796 The essential core of the Grass dance was the dog ritual, a
[262] ceremonial eating of dog flesh, carried out by the owners of the equipment with the assistance of four warriors selected from among the lay members. Other features of the program at each

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

around it, but were taught and trained to be quiet around it and to observe reverence toward it. 784

No whistling or crying was permitted in the keeper's lodge. The keeper and co-keeper were forbidden to cry in the presence of the Pipe, if, for instance, they had lost a relative. A crying baby was never allowed in the lodge with the Pipe. As soon as the infant started to cry it was taken out. If, as previously noted, a man who had a young wife with a baby took the Pipe, she and the infant would be sent out of the Pipe lodge to a nearby lodge. [854]

Dogs were never allowed to enter the lodge where the Pipe was. If the keeper or co-keeper owned a dogskin robe, the rules forbade their using it. [231]

The people were not allowed to go to the keeper's lodge to get fire, as they used to go to other lodges in the early morning.

Breaking bones to extract marrow was prohibited in the keeper's lodge. If this were done, some accident, such as the breaking of a leg or arm, would happen to some relative of the keeper [or of the delinquent?]. [264]

The door of the keeper's lodge had to be kept closed, and the back cover of the lodge could not be lifted up in the warm summer-time to get air.

A war party before starting off would sing at the door of each clan chief's lodge, but not at the door of the keeper's. [726]

When people went to the keeper's lodge for a social smoke and feast, they had to keep their wits about them and watch their speech carefully lest they should unthinkingly tell lies, vulgar or obscene stories, or start a war-deed contest.

There was a very strict prohibition against telling lies in the keeper's lodge.

If two men, while in the keeper's lodge, forgot themselves and started a war-deed contest, the keeper would remind them: "You are mistaken in talking so in here. Now you will have to continue for three days and nights." During this time all who were present when the slip was first made had to stay day and night in the lodge of the keeper, who would provide them with food and tobacco. These listeners would egg on and laughingly banter the two contestants and decide on the winner. After a while the pair's 784 517

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

782 [511] praying and singing were done at other seasons of the year and how far as a more general custom by other fathers of families were points we did not clear up.

[264] Before eating food, at least in any more or less formal gathering, a portion of the food was offered up with prayer.

[224] Prayer rites and observances for good hunting were few and simple—as compared, for example, with the numerous and complicated ones practiced by the Algonquian-speaking tribes of the taiga. Abundance of food, which principally meant game food, was commonly prayed for. Two of the Sacred Dances, the Law Enforcers' and the Woman's, had as a purpose success in buffalo hunting. But beyond this, hunting entered little into ritual, and we may recall hunting was conspicuously absent from the power quest. We recorded no rites or observances whatever in connection with the gathering of berries, roots or other plant food.

[484] It was customary on crossing rivers to pray to the Last Child for protection, and to throw into the water offerings, especially shells and eagle-tail feathers, for the Last Child, or the water monster, or both, with some words such as, "I give you this." Sometimes, too, some prayer and offering would be made by a person going to swim, or on other occasions of water hazard.

During or just before severe thunderstorms, various prayer and other procedures were resorted to, many of them directed to Bha'a, the storm being.

Seeking indirectly or asking directly the prayers of the aged, especially for long life, took several different forms, and played an important role in Gros Ventre life, as we have explained elsewhere.

There were many different ways of seeking the prayers of the aged. We recorded the following, which may or may not exhaust the list: crying before a lodge, offering a pipe, promising a sweat-lodge, "holy boiling," providing a feast, doing favors of various kinds.

782 888 "Holy boiling," to which we have not as yet referred, was an observance distinct both from the preceding ones and from feasting a group of aged people. It was intended primarily for some one person, man or woman, although others partook of the meal, and

782 [white man above, Our Father] in our prayer, so you would return safe: 'Oh, White Man Above, Our Father, spare her life. If you are going to take anybody, we are willing that you should take us in her place. She is young and has children and lives happy. But we two are old and starved anyway, so if you want to take anybody, take us.'

"I told him: 'An operation is not dangerous if you have it in time.' Strangely enough both he and his wife died within a month. It was just like he had bought my life. I feel badly even now when I think of it. Their one son married one of my daughters. . . . Old man Magpie was one of the old timers."

782 Food offerings, except perhaps the puppy meat given the ancestral spirit helper, were typical "first-fruits" sacrifices, made 264 before eating. These offerings were regularly made, as we have seen, before any more or less formal, festive or ritual meal partaken of by a group, and at least very commonly before even everyday family meals at home. The latter everyday usage is explained in the following statement of informants:

Charles Buckman: "Before eating, a piece of meat is held up and so offered to the Master of All, and then is put on the ground."

Coming Daylight: "Whenever they [the Gros Ventres] eat and in their ceremonies, they never eat right away, but have a prayer, like this [here she held up her right hand]: 'Now here it is, I promised you, Our Father, the One Traveling [sun], and the Last Child.' "[18]

The little chunks of food given in this first-fruits sacrifice rite to the Last Child were "pushed in the dirt or ground and sort of covered up with a little dirt,"—in the indoor modern rite previously described, deposited in cracks in the plank flooring.

782 As appears from the foregoing accounts considerable minor variations occurred in this first-fruits rite at meals.

The only first-fruits sacrifice connected with hunting proper, as distinct from eating, was the piece of liver and bit of fat deposited, as a thank offering to Little Spirit, on the west side of killed game.

[252 262] Puppy meat was looked upon by the Gros Ventres as a delicacy. Cooked puppy meat was commonly offered as food to ghost helpers on their visits. After the puppy was killed, the hair was

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

among men. It was a severe ordeal and the older men had no mercy on these youngsters. 857 868

Occasionally as training in bravery, the heart of a bear was taken raw and cut into small bits. After calling together the older boys and young men and lining them up, each one in turn was given a bit of the heart dipped in fresh blood and asked: "Well, are you going to have a brave heart?" Some were able to swallow it easily, but others could not stomach it. Those who were able to swallow and retain it were said to be the really brave ones.[8] [262]

It was indicated by many informants that in the old days a man would almost have to have had supernatural powers in order to be outstandingly successful in war or to achieve fame as a medicine man. In fact it was thought that supernatural powers could be helpful in many aspects of life including gambling and love. Guardians, however, used to warn the boys and young men under their care that "you can't get something for nothing." By this was meant that a person who accepted supernatural power would not live out his full span of life. Thus, according to The Boy, parents emphasized in training their sons that, rather than going on power quests, they should be ambitious to acquire fame and respect by developing their natural abilities. Nevertheless many sought and obtained supernatural powers, visions apparently often being vouchsafed in youth, although the power might not have been used until later in life. It was believed that those who accepted and used such supernatural powers died prematurely.[9] 787 798

Methods of Instruction

Oral instruction, or "lecturing," stands out in the Gros Ventre mind as the most important method of child training. All of our middle-aged and older informants agreed that some relative, often either the mother or the father, lectured their children almost every day, telling them what was right and what was wrong and "how to live." If boys and girls were present together, there were some subjects which could not be touched upon and would be reserved for fathers to speak about to their sons and for mothers 861

[8] It was said that, in the distant past, the heart of an enemy was so devoured by warriors. For historical confirmation, see Henry, v. 2, p. 734. [266]

[9] Full discussion of supernatural powers is given in Cooper Ms., 1949.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 men are named, their female relatives return to their tents, and cook. When
76 they have prepared food, they all together bring a large quantity of it to the lodge. The men selected carry weapons, and are dressed for war. They are usually mounted. Where they themselves or their horses were wounded, [302] they paint themselves. If they have ridden over an enemy, a man is painted on the breast of the horse. When the food which has been brought by their female relatives has been eaten, these men, two at a time, go through numerous performances of their achievements in battle. This is done each day of the dance.

796 A group of men and women, called, like those in the preliminary singing-tent, "prairie-chickens," and therefore probably the same persons, seem [534] to be the singers for the dance. They beat a rawhide in place of a drum, and hold branches, which, at the end of each song, they shake, shouting.

The dancers may not drink water, no matter how great the heat. If [271] one of them is unable to endure, and a pitying relative gives him even only [821] a drop, a thunderstorm follows, and the offender may be struck by lightning, or one of his horses may be killed by lightning. In case it seems necessary for the dancers to drink, a pipe is taken to one of the old men. If he accepts it and smokes it, he goes to the central tree. He wears a robe with the hair-side out. He has a whistle in his mouth, feathers in one hand, and a crow-skin in the other. He strikes the bill of the crow four [789] times, with a downward motion, against the lightning symbol on the tree. A vessel is held against the tree at the bottom of the symbol, and, after the fourth blow, water is said to run out until the vessel is filled, when it stops. This water is given to the dancers, each of whom drinks a very small quan- [787] tity. The actions of the man producing this water are said to be determined by his personal supernatural vision.

After the four days of the ceremony are completed, the lodge is left standing. All the cloth and clothing that have been attached to it remain [789] in place, and it appears that other clothes, especially of children, are left at the lodge. This is done in order that the children may live a long life.

796 From drawings made by a Gros Ventre, it appears that the buffalo-skull is painted with spots, and has its nose and eyes stuffed. Behind it is 532 represented a dancer holding the wheel. He is presumably the pledger of the ceremony. The wheel is bisected by two strings, and has eagle-feathers and down-feathers attached to it. The dancer blows a whistle at the end of which is a plume. The whistle hangs from his neck. At the back of the head is a plume. Lines of paint proceed from his breast to his wrists and ankles. On each of these are four diamonds, two on each upper and lower arm, thigh, and calf. If this is a correct representation, the Gros Ventre use at least one style of painting that is like the most typical Arap-

854 857 men were much more interested in children than they seem to be at present.

855 515 857 Just as soon as a child was old enough to look after himself—say from about the age of three or four years—he would be compelled to bathe every morning before eating. An older boy would supervise his younger brothers and see to it that they complied with the regulation—even in winter when it was sometimes necessary to cut a hole in the ice. Al says: "This is what makes one tough." Charles gave as illustration an incident which occurred one morning when there was ice on the edge of the river and snow was floating on the surface. "An older brother said to his three younger brothers: 'Go and take a plunge.' The wind was blowing and the three boys sat on the bank, each one encouraging the other to be the first one in. The older brother came behind them yelling: 'I didn't say to you boys to stay on the edge—I said to take a plunge!' Whereupon he threw each of them in the icy water telling them to wash their faces, hair and hands. He then sent them home to water the horses while he took his plunge." In case the lodge might be too far from a stream in winter, the boys and men rolled in the snow and rubbed their bodies with it. Everyone, young and old alike, bathed every day.

515 751 That the daily dip was looked upon as a health measure is shown by the statement of Cora who remarked that when she was small she used to bathe daily in the creek and she has never been sick up to the present. Coming Daylight, too, said that she had kept up the practice until a few years ago and complains that she has been sickly ever since giving it up.

● 271 751 It was considered important for health's sake to drink a lot of water too. The relatives who raised Coming Daylight used to tell her to wash her mouth out with water immediately upon arising. Further she was instructed to drink water right after eating, even though she might not feel thirsty, and to walk about after finishing a meal. She claims she followed these rules all her life and that for this reason she is not troubled, as so many of the aged are, with difficulty in controlling urination, and so on.

302 After the morning bath, all would have their faces painted all over with red paint "in order to keep their faces clean and light-skinned." Coming Daylight complained that since this practice

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

In April, when the sap rises, the Gros Ventres scraped the juice from the inner bark peeled from cottonwood and sometimes even from box-elder. They also chewed the gum from pines. Infusions of cherry bark or roots and peppermint were said to have been drunk as tea, but such concoctions were considered usually more in the nature of medicines. 262 272

So long as the Gros Ventres had the buffalo, relatively little in the way of foodstuffs from the white man were imported. Sugar, flour, occasional fresh fruits, coffee and tea were known and used to some extent after about 1855.[10] The possibility of obtaining whiskey, was, however, one of the items which determined the popularity of a given trading place. Incidentally, tobacco was an important item of trade after 1800, although prior to that time the Gros Ventres had raised their own.[11] 262 439 [273] [276]

Clothing and Adornment

The importance of the buffalo in the economy of the Gros Ventres was as obvious in clothing and in shelter as it was in food. The buffalo robe, dressed with the hair on, was perhaps the most valuable article inasmuch as it was not only a regular part of their garb, but also was the main article of trade with the whites after about 1830. When decorated, it had high prestige value as a gift. 291 [439] [431]

Seldom was the hide of a buffalo older than two years used for robes since the fur of those of greater age was usually scabby even in the fall when the coats were in best condition. It required the skin of a yearling to make a robe for a twelve-year-old, and the skins of calves made robes for smaller children. When the demand of the trade for robes was very great, the large wool blanket sometimes replaced the robe for wearing apparel and for bedding.

Most of the other articles of clothing were made from well-dressed deer, elk and antelope skins.[12] Deer and elk were more 281 291

[10] See p. 22.

[11] This tradition is confirmed by Cocking in 1772, who writes, p. 111, "The tobacco they use is their own planting which hath disagreable flavor. I have preserved a specimen." Kroeber's informants denied knowledge of the tradition.

[12] In 1854 Denig, pp. 464–65, describes the cloth bought for clothing for summer and fall wear, but states that a real hunter must have a buffalo robe, moccasins, mittens, cap, skin leggings and an extra buffalo robe.

CHAPTER X

OLD AGE AND DEATH

It is the opinion of the now aged Gros Ventres that the proportion of old persons was much greater in the past than it has been since they have taken up the white man's ways; and further, that the aged then retained their health and vigor to a greater degree.[1] One old woman stated that when she was young, there used to be many old people, but that they died off when there were no more buffalo. She added: "People lived to a good old age on the things that the Supreme Being provided,—roots, wild vegetables and fruits, dried meats and berries. In those days, too, they drank broth instead of tea and coffee. Old folks didn't lose their teeth then, although even young girls do nowadays. Their teeth eventually got worn down, but they seldom pulled them. In fact, if an old person should lose a tooth, he thought it was awful and was sure that he was ready for the grave. Furthermore, people didn't get white hair until they were ready for 'old age sleep'—very old people sleep most of the time—yet now one sees middle-aged and even younger people with gray hair like the whites have."

Status and Treatment of the Aged

It was believed that a person who had lived to a ripe old age had been privileged to do so by the Supreme Being. Therefore, they reasoned, if you are good to old people, these in turn will pray to the Supreme Being for your health, long life, and success. Children were instructed explicitly to be good to the aged,—to feed them, to clothe them, and to help them in difficulties,—as well as to seek out those so blessed and ask for their prayers. It was

[1] Allowance should of course be made for the fact that "old age" is a relative term. When it was said that young men were urged to marry "older experienced women," this referred to a woman of perhaps twenty to twenty-five. See pp. 171–72. A woman on the northern plains was "old" at forty, according to Denig, p. 513.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 hand hidden fresh kidney, with the fat on, under their dresses would on being struck fall over, "killed," and the "hunters" would pretend to cut open the dead "cows" and extract the kidney fat. The "bull," too, would be shot down with blunt arrows and "butchered," the kidney extracted first and a bit of it (and presumably of the fat taken from the "cows") offered to each person present and eaten.

The "cows," "bull" and "calves" made their way quickly back to the dance lodge, in a mimic stampede. After re-entering, the "cows" kept walking round and round the center pole, "puffing and puffing" as if winded,—representing, we may reasonably infer, buffalo milling around in a corral at the end of a drive. After a while they all sat down and partook of a good feast, and after the feast was over danced.

*796 ● 272 554 It was apparently at the time of this terminal feast (possibly at some other time or times in the four-day rite,—our information is not quite clear on the point) that prominent men would come into the dance lodge for a drink of "berry water." Near the center pole was a big wooden bowl containing berries crushed to a juice "something like syrup fixed real sweet," and hav[illegible] tached. Prominent men, "all the great big chiefs," [illegible] g men, warriors," were invited to come in and take a [illegible] hey did not come in any old way. They would come in [illegible] the door, to the left side, drink, and then go out a[illegible] ht side." They had to leave something as pay, such [illegible] rifle, or a horse, "because it was a great honor to b[illegible] drink." During this drinking by the "chiefs," the "bull" ha[illegible] in her place silently with her horned headdress on and her he[illegible] hanging down. Coming Daylight, at this juncture in one of the dances in which she was a "calf," remarked to her grandmother: "Well, that 'bull' does not even move. She just sits there." Her grandmother admonished her: "Don't say that. You are not supposed to 'tease' about it." "Well," Coming Daylight said, "'he' pushed me away when I went to my 'mother.'" After the whole dance was over, Coming Daylight used to tell all about it, but her grandmother would caution her: "Don't talk about it. You are not supposed to laugh over it."

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

In April, when the sap rises, the Gros Ventres scraped the juice from the inner bark peeled from cottonwood and sometimes even from box-elder. They also chewed the gum from pines. Infusions of cherry bark or roots and peppermint were said to have been drunk as tea, but such concoctions were considered usually more in the nature of medicines. 262 272

So long as the Gros Ventres had the buffalo, relatively little in the way of foodstuffs from the white man were imported. Sugar, flour, occasional fresh fruits, coffee and tea were known and used to some extent after about 1855.[10] The possibility of obtaining whiskey, was, however, one of the items which determined the popularity of a given trading place. Incidentally, tobacco was an important item of trade after 1800, although prior to that time the Gros Ventres had raised their own.[11] 262 439 [273] [276]

Clothing and Adornment

The importance of the buffalo in the economy of the Gros Ventres was as obvious in clothing and in shelter as it was in food. The buffalo robe, dressed with the hair on, was perhaps the most valuable article inasmuch as it was not only a regular part of their garb, but also was the main article of trade with the whites after about 1830. When decorated, it had high prestige value as a gift. 291 [439] [431]

Seldom was the hide of a buffalo older than two years used for robes since the fur of those of greater age was usually scabby even in the fall when the coats were in best condition. It required the skin of a yearling to make a robe for a twelve-year-old, and the skins of calves made robes for smaller children. When the demand of the trade for robes was very great, the large wool blanket sometimes replaced the robe for wearing apparel and for bedding.

Most of the other articles of clothing were made from well-dressed deer, elk and antelope skins.[12] Deer and elk were more 281 291

[10] See p. 22.

[11] This tradition is confirmed by Cocking in 1772, who writes, p. 111, "The tobacco they use is their own planting which hath disagreable flavor. I have preserved a specimen." Kroeber's informants denied knowledge of the tradition.

[12] In 1854 Denig, pp. 464–65, describes the cloth bought for clothing for summer and fall wear, but states that a real hunter must have a buffalo robe, moccasins, mittens, cap, skin leggings and an extra buffalo robe.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

At this late date it was difficult to obtain in the field details of exchange between the Gros Ventres and the white traders. One such transaction was recalled clearly by Coming Daylight, who remembered it because the amount given in return was relatively large. On this occasion, for 12 buffalo robes, the Gros Ventres received 2 striped blankets, 1 whole sack of sugar, 1 horse. If we compare with Denig's figures for a typical exchange in the 1850's where a horse was worth 10 robes, and 1 white, 3-point blanket was the equivalent of 3 robes,[14] we can agree that this was a good bargain. The same informant, however, remembers another occasion on which she herself gave the robe off her back to a trader in return for some apples which her little daughter craved. We have no figures on the relative value of robes as compared with whiskey, but our data show that whiskey was highly valued by the Gros Ventres.[15] 439 [273]

So far as we have been able to find out, while the trade with the whites was carried on at every possible opportunity, the amount of intertribal exchange was relatively slight. Perhaps intertribal gambling contests would account for most of it. Coming Daylight remembers, however, one case where a Crow friend of her maternal uncle's offered him a race horse in exchange for elk teeth sufficient to trim a woman's dress. We lack details on other outside exchanges, but our informants mentioned that the Gros Ventres used to obtain abálone shells from the Nez Percé and also occasionally camas roots, but this latter was very rare. Denig mentions the abalone shell was earlier worth $20 (i.e. 6-7 robes), but that when the traders brought in so many their value dropped to $10.[16]

The head of the household was the one who bargained with the trader, but the materials he took in exchange were supposed to have been decided upon in view of the needs of the household as well as his own personal needs. If, for instance, one of his

credited as follows: 30 lbs. of dried meat, 1 robe; 2 red fox skins, 1 robe; 1 large raw elk skin, 1 robe; 12 wolf skins, 4 robes.

[14] Denig, p. 420.

[15] Several of the traders remark that the Gros Ventres did not beg for whiskey as did the Piegan and others, but they were willing to pay for it. See Henry, v. 2, p. 734.

[16] Denig, pp. 590-91.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

171 whitish fur, and dyed horsehair tufts at the ends. At the base of each arm
293 are red, yellow, and violet feathers. These are either cut off across the end,
778 or have the uppermost part of the quill with its attached vanes removed.

CUSTOMS CONNECTED WITH RELIGION.

171 Sacred pipes were important in the religion of the Gros Ventre. The
276 beliefs and practices connected with these differ somewhat from those of
778 the Arapaho. The Arapaho recognize only one sacred pipe, which is pre-eminent over all others. Its worship is entirely tribal, though it is in the keeping of an individual. It occupies much the place in tribal life that the sacred pole did among the Omaha. While there are other sacred objects, such as the wheels and bundles, none of them equal the pipe in the regard in which they are held. Among the Gros Ventre there is an analogue of the Arapaho pipe, but also several others. This multiplicity distinctly differentiates the character of the Gros Ventre pipes from that of the Arapaho. The Gros Ventre pipes are not all primarily connected with the origin of the world; they are in part obtained from other tribes. They thus resemble the inter-tribal peace-pipes of the eastern and northern Plains.

[888] The sacred pipes were kept by old men. Their keepers could retain them as long as they wanted. They transferred their pipe to another keeper or owner whenever they wished, especially if some one prayed on their behalf. At present the Gros Ventre have three pipes. It is said that formerly they had more, some of which have been buried with their last owners. The most sacred of these pipes is called "flat-pipe" (çäčitsa"). This is described as being made of catlinite, with the bowl in the shape of a person (inita"). The Arapaho sacred pipe is also called "flat-pipe," and also is not flat; but it differs from the Gros Ventre pipe in being cylindrical and tubular. About the centre of the stem of this Gros Ventre flat-pipe is tied a string. A person in the tent where the pipe is kept should not tell myths. If through forgetfulness he begins to do so, it is necessary for him to continue all night.

276 A sick man sometimes pledged to smoke one of the sacred pipes for his
755 recovery. Then he provided food, and distinguished warriors were invited.
778 Each of these had to recount four coups before the pipe could be lighted. A green cherry-branch was then taken, greased, and put into the fire to light the pipe with. If it burnt well, the man would recover; if it burnt poorly, they were afraid that he would not become well, or that something would happen. Then the pipe was smoked in the greatest silence. Cloth or calico was "given" to it, the wrapping last given being the one on the out-

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

276 755 778

side of the bundle, it is said. Except at such ceremonies as this, only the keeper could touch the pipe.

276 778 [648] [728]

Pipes were sometimes given to other tribes, and were sometimes received from them. Sometimes they were carried by war-parties. One of the three pipes still in existence is said to have been given by the Cheyenne to the Crow, and by the latter to the Gros Ventre, when peace was made between the two tribes. The stem is ornamented with feathers, weasel-skins, and at the end with a bunch of eagle-feathers. The sacred pipes were kept wrapped in many pieces of skin or cloth, and hung up in the tent. In good weather they were hung on a stand of three or four sticks, behind the tent. The keepers of the sacred pipes observed stringent rules. They could not eat of the head or back of any animal, nor of any part of the white-tailed deer, nor any eggs. They were not allowed to bathe, or to paint (except red), or to take the ashes out of the tent. They had to smoke in certain ways. They did not eat dogs, or allow them in the tent; nor did they let dogs touch them, or walk over their legs, or walk before them, while they were smoking. The keepers of the sacred pipes wore their hair uncut and uncombed. They could not cut it until they had given the pipe to another keeper. The hair was worn tied in a bunch just above the forehead. Fig. 42 shows such a bunch of matted hair, said to have been that of the grandfather of the father of the man who was the oldest in the tribe in 1901. This former keeper of the pipe became so old that he lost most of his hair, and the bunch shown was cut off by him before it should drop off. To this hair the later owner of the pipe, his present great-grandson, tied the first of his own teeth to fall out from old age: they are contained in a small cloth sack.

Fig. 42 (50 1902). Matted Hair. Length, 41 cm.

276 778 784

[825]

[302]

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

276
778 The sacred flat-pipe was also used in the sun-dance. It was once captured in war. Then the man who took it had bad dreams, until the pipe spoke to him in his dream and said, "Return me, or your tribe will be
[728] destroyed." Then this man brought back the pipe, and his tribe made peace with the Gros Ventre.

343
782 The making of a sweat-house was not restricted to certain persons. A man wishing success in war would make a sweat-house for another person, in order that he might accomplish the deed he had in mind. Or, if a person was sick, one of his relatives might pledge to make a sweat-house for him, just as he would a dance. In this case the sick person himself would not necessarily use the sweat-house. On the other hand, a doctor might prescribe sweating for a patient, and in this case the sick person would enter the sweat-house.

[757]

Fig. 43 (50-4355). Sweat-house Tail. Length, 36 cm.

343
515
[237]

About twelve or fourteen willow poles were cut for the sweat-house. The entrance always faced the sunrise, and a small cottonwood-tree was erected in front of it. To this, calico or other property was tied by an old man as a gift to the sun. The cloth was partly blackened, the corners being rubbed with charcoal.

When all the participants were inside, the blankets were pulled down and the house closed tight. Water was poured on hot stones, at first five times. Thereupon the lodge was opened at the entrance and at the opposite west end, and the people cooled. It was then closed again, and this time water was poured on the rocks seven times. After cooling once more, water was poured on the rocks nine times. The fourth time, the man that poured the water could put as much or as little on the stones as he wished. After the fourth time, the participants came out and bathed.
[757] If they were suffering from pain, they whipped that part of the body with buffalo or horse tails. This practice made the heat greatest at that point, much as if it were beaten into the body.

2? Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

In April, when the sap rises, the Gros Ventres scraped the juice from the inner bark peeled from cottonwood and sometimes even from box-elder. They also chewed the gum from pines. Infusions of cherry bark or roots and peppermint were said to have been drunk as tea, but such concoctions were considered usually more in the nature of medicines. 262 272

So long as the Gros Ventres had the buffalo, relatively little in the way of foodstuffs from the white man were imported. Sugar, flour, occasional fresh fruits, coffee and tea were known and used to some extent after about 1855.[10] The possibility of obtaining whiskey, was, however, one of the items which determined the popularity of a given trading place. Incidentally, tobacco was an important item of trade after 1800, although prior to that time the Gros Ventres had raised their own.[11] 262 439 [273] [276]

Clothing and Adornment

The importance of the buffalo in the economy of the Gros Ventres was as obvious in clothing and in shelter as it was in food. The buffalo robe, dressed with the hair on, was perhaps the most valuable article inasmuch as it was not only a regular part of their garb, but also was the main article of trade with the whites after about 1830. When decorated, it had high prestige value as a gift. 291 [439] [431]

Seldom was the hide of a buffalo older than two years used for robes since the fur of those of greater age was usually scabby even in the fall when the coats were in best condition. It required the skin of a yearling to make a robe for a twelve-year-old, and the skins of calves made robes for smaller children. When the demand of the trade for robes was very great, the large wool blanket sometimes replaced the robe for wearing apparel and for bedding.

Most of the other articles of clothing were made from well-dressed deer, elk and antelope skins.[12] Deer and elk were more 281 291

[10] See p. 22.

[11] This tradition is confirmed by Cocking in 1772, who writes, p. 111, "The tobacco they use is their own planting which hath disagreable flavor. I have preserved a specimen." Kroeber's informants denied knowledge of the tradition.

[12] In 1854 Denig, pp. 464–65, describes the cloth bought for clothing for summer and fall wear, but states that a real hunter must have a buffalo robe, moccasins, mittens, cap, skin leggings and an extra buffalo robe.

574 your arm because they always get after me if I feed any one.' So as I was going along the other two wives were coming back with the wood and saw me. They asked this third wife what I had wanted and she said: 'She came here to beg.' They asked her: 'Did you feed her?' and when she said no, the other two scolded her saying: 'You should have fed her at least a little bit' and continued to bawl her out for being so stingy."

While not all individuals lived up to the standard of casual hospitality, the majority seemingly did so, and business negotiations were usually transacted while visiting.[18] The individual who [554] dispensed food liberally could expect a return from others, although not necessarily the ones whom he had fed. Furthermore, if a man wished to sustain a good reputation he was expected to entertain well. It was customary, therefore, when fresh meat had been brought in for a man to tell his wife to cook and then he called out: "So-and-so, come and smoke," to as many as he wished to [554] invite. When the guests arrived he greeted each and assigned him to a place in the lodge, the most honored guests being seated in the back opposite the opening. After the guests had eaten, the host filled the pipe from a plentiful supply of "mixture," and the smok- [276] ing continued until the host gave the sign for dispersal by knocking the ashes from the pipe.

553 574 On more formal occasions, such as a naming feast, the host would ask some older man with a strong voice to act as announcer, and in such case the latter would call out by name each guest and say who was inviting him. Ordinarily a man would invite his own age group, his close friends, but it was not customary for the wives of the guests to come. If a woman wished to invite others, she would go to the various lodges and invite them personally. In this type of planned hospitality there was more in the nature of direct exchange although it might be considerably deferred.

574 431 In addition to hospitality, ostentatious liberality accomplished circulation of goods within the tribe. From the Gros Ventre point of view: "Presents were usually given with the intention of doing good and if no return were made, nothing was said or done. But often it turned out that at some later time the recipient would say

[18] Cf. Denig, pp. 514–15.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

us begin again. Keep quiet," and to the first attendant: "Bring a live buffalo chip." The attendant did so, put it on the hearth, and returned to his place. The retiring keeper then took a pinch of dried peppermint leaves, and after the triple successive lowering and three clockwise circles above described, but without song or spoken word, released the peppermint, dropping it on the smoldering chip.

Squatting on his knees and heels instead of cross-legged, so that he could move around more easily, he took up the Flat Pipe, grasping it by the stem, palms up, with his left hand nearer the bowl. Then he circled the stem through the incense and upward until it pointed *east* and held it steady a moment at this point. He repeated the circling and pointing at a lower level, again at a still lower one, and finally made three clockwise circles with the bowl around the incense. Next he repeated the same smudging but toward the *south*; finally, toward the *west*.

After the smudging came the solemn prayer (to be described later) said by the retiring keeper, kneeling upright and holding the Pipe with the stem pointing, not to any point of the compass, but vertically upward. At the end of the prayer he let himself down on his heels, still kneeling, and held the Pipe in position to smoke. He ordered the first attendant: "Bring a live buffalo chip." The attendant thereupon took a chip from the lodge hearth with a forked stick and applied it to the tobacco in the Pipe. The keeper puffed the Pipe until the tobacco was lit, and then took three distinct puffs, blowing the smoke upward around and downward around. Then he passed the Pipe to the new keeper, first swinging it upward. The new keeper, after taking three puffs and blowing the smoke up and down in the same manner, took a real full smoke with the Pipe. Then he passed it clockwise to the nearest ex-keeper to the east, who smoked it, but without swinging it upward. Then it was passed in turn clockwise to the other ex-keepers, if there were others, to be smoked but not swung, till it reached the last nearest the door. The ex-co-keepers did not smoke the Pipe in this or in any other Flat Pipe rite. Then the lighted Pipe was passed back anti-clockwise, without smoking, and without swinging upward except by the new keeper (this honor

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

their fellows, there were many other ones that fulfilled the same function. Of these latter, some, more distinctively ritual, will be dealt with later passim under "Flat Pipe Ritual"; others, more secular, may be mentioned now. 793 784

The keeper and co-keeper were not supposed to carry a pack on their own backs, except that on the march the Pipe bundle might be packed by the co-keeper. [482]

They could not mount and dismount a horse on the same side, but mounted from the right side and dismounted from the left.

If you handed something to the keeper it became his property, and if he handed something to you it became yours. If you thoughtlessly left anything with the keeper or co-keeper to keep for you, —if, for instance, you said: "Here, hold my horse (or my gun)," —the object became the property of the keeper or co-keeper and could not be gotten back. The keeper and co-keeper never loaned their robes, dresses, moccasins or other belongings, unless asked, and they were not supposed to be asked to loan. If you thoughtlessly broke the code and asked to borrow something from them, they were obliged to give it to you to own. [426]

Neither the keeper nor co-keeper was allowed to handle ashes, nor could the Pipe bundle remain in the keeper's lodge when ashes were taken out. Were this rule violated, the keeper or co-keeper or both would lose eyesight. When ashes were to be removed from the keeper's lodge, the Pipe bundle was taken outside the lodge by the co-keeper, and both the keeper and the co-keeper stayed outside, while another of the keeper's wives removed the ashes.

When a group of men were seated in a crescent or near-circle enjoying a purely social smoke together, each took a puff from the lighted pipe and passed it clockwise to the man on his left until it reached the end of the line. Then the pipe would be passed back anti-clockwise from hand to hand to the other end without anyone puffing from it. But if the keeper were in the group, he could take a puff not only when the pipe was passing him clockwise but also on its anti-clockwise return. The man passing the pipe to the keeper from either left or right had to raise it upward a little toward his own right before doing so. The first time the pipe reached the keeper, he would take a big puff, and point 276 793

276
793 the pipe stem and blow the smoke first upward and then downward, and after that would smoke like anyone else.

793 In general, religious and political life were closely interwoven
624 in the Gros Ventre theocracy. "The Pipes [both the Flat and The Feathered]," as The Boy expressed it, "seemed to hold the tribe together more or less." They were the most sacred and revered possessions of the tribe. The keepers were men of eminence, by virtue of their personal qualities and achievements as well as of their office. In view of these and other facts, it is to be expected that the keeper of the Flat Pipe played a role in Gros Ventre political life, a role however not shared except in a minimal de-
[562] gree by the co-keeper, a woman in a man-dominated sphere of action. The keeper's role in Gros Ventre political life was fairly clearly defined and delimited. Here we shall summarize the main points.

When camp was to be moved, the decision as to time and destination was mainly in the hands of the head men, although the keeper would participate. In some cases, it seems, he might initiate the move by calling the head men together, usually at night. The whole decision was not ordinarily announced by the crier or criers. He would be sent around to notify the people that all would move camp the next morning. They by looking toward the keeper's lodge in the morning would learn the direction in which the camp would move, for the Flat Pipe bundle would be taken out of the lodge, to the north thereof, and hung on its tripod, with the stem end pointing in the agreed upon direction of the trek. On the trek itself, the co-worker with the bundle led the cavalcade.

When the bands scattered for the winter after the fall hunt and for the late spring after the first spring hunts, usually both the Flat and Feathered Pipes attracted a large following.

The keeper could be invited to sit in important council meetings, and to participate in elections and in decisions involving policy or action and had a certain veto prerogative thereon. He could, on occasions at least, intercede with considerable power, to resolve conflicts and avert bloodshed. He could accompany war-parties and might even have a voice in strategy and tactics, but he was not *ex officio* a fighter or war-leader. He could, as

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

previously mentioned, afford asylum in his lodge to criminals. All in all, he wielded very considerable influence in the political life of his people, but he was in no sense a dictator. 793 624

While a good many of the prerogatives and restrictions attaching to the keeper and co-keeper ceased when their term of office ended, others automatically continued, beyond the period of keepership or, as regards restrictions, could be and often were voluntarily continued by the ex-keepers. Most of such cessations and continuances on which we obtained specific information have been explicitly or inexplicitly noted in the preceding pages.

Flat Pipe and Bundle: Description

The proper name of the Flat Pipe was θe:tsa. It was also called bä'ɔno (turtle), the turtle having played such an important role in the first making of dry land after the flood (for story see No. 3 in Appendix), and a turtle shell ranking next in dignity to the Flat Pipe itself in the Flat Pipe bundle. Bä'ɔno was used in an appealing, pleading or begging way. 778 276

The Flat Pipe bundle containing the Flat Pipe and other sacred objects could not be unwrapped and opened except on solemn ceremonial occasions and with the appropriate elaborate rites. The last such occasion was on February 6, 1946, when it was impossible for us to be present and when photographs taken turned out badly. Our description, therefore, of the Pipe and of the other contents of the bundle has to rest on detailed accounts given us by our various informants who had witnessed one or more openings, upon sketches of the Pipe drawn by The Boy in 1939, by Thomas Main in 1938 or 1939 (after an opening in 1938) and by a young high school student, Frank Cuts The Rope in 1946 (after the above 1946 opening), and upon dimensions given by Thomas Main (See fig. 1).

The Flat Pipe itself is of wood, in a perfect state of preservation, carved in one piece, light brown or almost tan in color, very smooth as if polished from long and frequent wrapping, and about 18½ inches long. The bowl is round, low or squat, and flaring, 3⅛ inches in diameter on top with the hole for the tobacco about ½ inch in diameter, 2½ inches in diameter at its

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

778 base, and 2½ inches in depth from top to bottom. The stem is
276 roundish in section, about 1½ inches in diameter at the distal end, tapering slightly to about 1⅛ toward the proximal. The stem is "humped a bit toward the middle," with a ring carved all round to which is attached a small tasseled string ornament believed to represent the hair rope with which He-who-starved-to-death snared the Red Bird. (For story see No. 5 in Appendix.) The
[283] Gros Ventre women used to make an adornment from "a growth looking like hair" which they gathered from the water and twisted into a strong thread, and The Boy thinks that this tasseled ornament on the Pipe is of the same material.

There is another ring carved around and the proximal end of the Pipe is carved in the shape of a "duck" head. Into the "duck's" bill is fitted a small stem,—about 1⅛ inches long and ¼ inch in diameter, projecting about ½ inch beyond the tip of the bill, encased in copper,—from which the Pipe was smoked.[8]

[532]

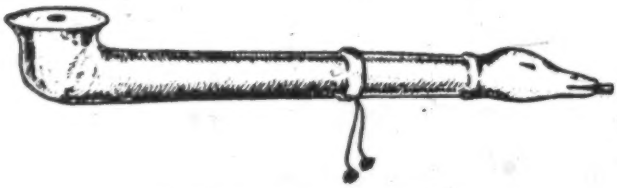


FIGURE 1. THE FLAT PIPE.

The whole Pipe is enclosed in its own numerous wrappings which form a separate case with its own three thong ties within the larger Pipe bundle. No one, it may be added, seems to know how the Flat Pipe got its name; there is nothing markedly "flat" about it, except the somewhat squat bowl.

778 The whole Pipe bundle contains many other sacred objects

[8] Kroeber, 1908, p. 272, gives a description of the Flat Pipe as being made of catlinite with the bowl in the shape of a person. Actually this sounds more like one of the objects in the Feathered Pipe bundle,—the so-called Image or Human Face. See p. 142. Kroeber's mention of a string around the center of the stem of the Flat Pipe, however, matches the description given us. [R.F.]

31 Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Flat Pipe. It was dried before being used for ritual purposes. In the olden days the Flat Pipe keeper and co-keeper had monopolistic control of it in curing. But nowadays a peppermint beverage, good for fits, spasms, and stomach disorder, is used by everybody.

The ritual number of the Flat Pipe is three, whereas that of the Feathered Pipe and the Sacred Lodges is four. Songs are sung three times, ritual gestures are in threes, and so forth. The old people when sitting around smoking socially used often to discuss the reason for this. Some held that Earthmaker sent only three animals down to dive for earth, because, for one reason at least, there were only three animals in the Flat Pipe bundle. Others held he sent four. But regardless of these opposing views on this point in the earthmaking, there was always complete agreement that the Flat Pipe ritual number itself was three, while that in the Feathered Pipe and Sacred Lodge rituals was four.

The musical instrument proper to the Flat Pipe ritual was the rattle (see Plate 1C). The drum, proper to the Feathered Pipe ritual, was not used. In the Flat Pipe ritual, the rattle was shaken clockwise in a sort of circle at breast height, whereas medicine men shook their rattles anti-clockwise and Star Dancers alternately back and forth.[1]

It may be added here that while the Flat Pipe was actually smoked only when it was being ritually transferred to a new keeper and when some individual had vowed to smoke it, and was never danced with, smoking the Feathered Pipe and dancing with it were common.

Among the more significant and more commonly recurring features shared by both the Flat Pipe and Feathered Pipe rituals were clockwise movements, singing, and the use of paint, buffalo chips, and of sage, tobacco, larb, and wild parsley.

Entering and leaving the keeper's lodge, ritual gestures, and so forth were consistently clockwise.

Singing bulked large in the Flat Pipe rite, and, for that matter, in nearly every phase of Gros Ventre religious and social life. As Thomas Main put it speaking for himself and The Boy: "We cannot describe how much singing means in the lives of the Gros

[1] For description of Star Dance, see Flannery, 1953, p. 42.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

788 first contact with whites they found that among these latter too
533 singing had in similar fashion degenerated.

Among the birds and animals it was otherwise. They continued to sing as they had done at the earthmaking. They held fast to the privilege given them and did not abuse it or let their singing degenerate. So it was that the Gros Ventres used to go to the tops of buttes, hills and high mountains and to streams and forests, begging these animals and birds to give them songs, and in this measure to restore singing to its former purpose and dignity. But later the Gros Ventres sometimes prevailed even upon the animals and birds to teach them "no-good songs."

Nevertheless in spite of all this badness and degeneration the Gros Ventres never lost sight of the fact that they depended on the Supreme Being for everything. So whenever they had occasion to pray and perform their ceremonies, they sang. And with such sacred singing was so intimately associated the use of the pipe
[276 and tobacco that "one could hardly separate singing and pipe-
782] smoking." In nearly all rites they entered in as a means of imploring the Supreme Being to grant the people's requests. The Gros Ventres learned by experience that if they sang and smoked and followed faithfully the rest of the Flat Pipe ritual, they could at least hope for a hearing by the Supreme Being. Smoking too, it may be added, like singing, later degenerated, a point to which we shall come presently.

533 Practically every Gros Ventre ceremony or social event began or was accompanied with song. And each of the many Gros Ventre songs had to be used on certain and only certain specified occasions. Thus, for example, it would not do at all to sing Pipe songs during social dances or in a hand game or at "good-time" gatherings. Each religious or secular occasion had its own song or set of songs. Very commonly a story teller would in the course of his or her narrative sing the song or songs the characters in the story were supposed to have sung.

Many Gros Ventre songs were wordless. In most of the worded ones, the words consisted of short pregnant phrases or sentences preceded and followed by wordless singing.

Two kinds of singers were recognized and distinguished: those who had good voices, and those who had knowledge of the

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

372 The Flat (and Feathered) Pipe keepers had to keep on hand a good supply of buffalo chips, the proper ritual fuel, as also the common fuel of the people especially when traveling out on the woodless plains. The Boy once asked his father: "Why are buffalo chips used in rites? This does not seem proper." "Buffalo chips," Lame Bull replied, "are plentiful everywhere and burn longest. And they are cleanest: the ashes do not stick to your hands; wood ashes do and are hard to rub off." After the buffalo were exterminated, cattle chips were substituted, but these, as Coming Daylight stated, "have an awful odor when burned, while buffalo chips have none." She used to gather buffalo chips for her uncle when he was Flat Pipe keeper; Cora Chandler used to gather cattle chips when her uncle Curly Head was Feathered Pipe keeper. On one occasion, after the disappearance of the buffalo, Coming Daylight went south with her husband, coming back by way of Yellowstone Park where some buffalo were kept. Here she found some buffalo chips, put them in a sack, and brought them all the way back home to give to Horse Capture, then the Flat Pipe keeper. On arriving home she went to his lodge, "covered the Pipe" with a new robe, and laid the chips at the head of the Pipe.

824 The other plants [besides peppermint] that entered into the Flat Pipe and Feathered Pipe rites were sage, tobacco, larb and wild parsley.

Sage was used for the Pipe bed and for other ritual purposes. For the spring Flat Pipe rite at least, only a certain kind of sage (artemisia sp.) was used. Sage was gathered by the co-keeper or one of her children, and could be gotten all the year round, even if in winter only the sticks. According to tradition, the gathering and use of sage for medicinal purposes were in the old days confined to keepers; but in more recent times the people in general have used it, by rubbing themselves with it and smelling it for headache, and by boiling the leaves, especially the top ones, and drinking the infusion for coughs, colds and tuberculosis.

824 773 276 According to the traditional story as told by The Boy, tobacco and tobacco planting came originally to the Gros Ventres from Earthmaker who taught the first man how to plant tobacco, and its cultivation and use have come down in an unbroken line since

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

that time. In the olden days it was only the keeper of the Flat Pipe who planted and harvested it; and for ritual use only.[4] As time went on, the keeper thought to himself: "These older men should have something to pray with when the tribe breaks camp and each band goes its own way." So he said to these older men, each a chief in his own band: "When your bands go their own way you have nothing to use in your prayers. So I am going to distribute some tobacco to each of you for you and your band to use." This he did, and so the use of tobacco began to spread. After this some bands broke away entirely from the Gros Ventres, the original planters and users of tobacco, and became separate tribes and the language changed. The probable order, The Boy thinks, in which they broke away was: first, the Gros Ventres of Dakota,[5] next the Cree, then the Piegan, after this the Crow, and last the Arapaho. He thinks too that the keeper who first distributed tobacco to the bands must have distributed the seed too, for in later years all these people raised their own tobacco.

In the course of time the use of tobacco among the Gros Ventres underwent two important developments, from ritual to recreative and from male to female use.

In earliest days only the keeper and a few old men used tobacco, and used it only ritually. When somebody got sick, the keeper

[4] In 1948 The Boy elaborated on the original planting of tobacco which he had heard Lame Bull discuss many times. "It was virgin soil deep in the forest and they made a woven fence around it so nothing could get in. After the planting, they moved off for hunting and every once in a while the keeper made a ceremonial smoke and prayed to the Supreme Being that the tobacco would grow. After the vegetation began to mature they returned to the plot and the keeper went to look and thanked the Supreme Being in a loud voice that the crop had matured. The tobacco was picked ceremoniously and three plants were always left standing in the plot." There was a plot of ground in the forested area of Canada on which nothing grew and which the Gros Ventres called "Broken Grass." In Lame Bull's time they used to leave offerings there whenever they passed nearby. The Boy and other old men and women believe that this was the site on which the original tobacco was planted under instruction from the Supreme Being. [R.F.]

[5] The original Gros Ventres, according to the same tradition, had no corn. Corn originated among the Gros Ventres of Dakota. [For confirmation of tradition regarding raising of tobacco, see Flannery, 1953, p. 61, n. 12.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

276 would use tobacco in his prayers for the patient. If the patient survived but was still weak, the keeper made him smoke to get back his strength. So some of the other tribesmen learned to smoke. Gradually social (and recreative) smoking took its place together with ceremonial smoking.

In earlier times, the women never smoked either ritually or socially. Even in rites where they had an important role, such as [562] the inauguration of a new pipe keeper, they did not smoke, as women were considered secondary, not equal to men. Even as late as The Boy's and Thick's early boyhood in the decade before the last buffalo disappeared (1884), only the old women smoked, never the young girls. The spread of the custom among these old women was probably due to their discovery by experience that the smoking prescribed for maladies, such as, chronic headache, was good for the body. But even today, although women smoke non-ritually when alone or among themselves, they are not allowed to smoke at a Pipe rite, and, if wives are present when a man invites a group of men for a social visit or meal and he fills up his pipe to give his guests a smoke, he does not offer the pipe to the wives.

Tobacco was used only in pipe smoking. It was sometimes smoked straight by old men and old women, and by the sick as [17] a cure. But ordinarily the Gros Ventres smoked it mixed either [824] with red willow, as did the Cree and Assiniboine, or preferably, and in the Flat Pipe rites always, with larb.

Larb is "a ground plant that grows on hills and mountains." We could get no specimen for identification. After the tobacco and larb were mixed, a little more larb than tobacco, fat was worked into the mixture to season it. On taking leave from his Gros Ventre [431] friends in 1940 the present author was given a small bag of this [609] mixture as a token of peace and good will and found the mixture a very pleasant aromatic smoke.

278 The wild parsley, associated with the Flat and Feathered Pipe and with the Crazy Lodge, was used as a powerful poison. It was greatly feared and was spoken of in undertones. Its preparation is a lost art. The whole plant was and is considered poisonous, but poison was prepared principally from the root, which was first

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

793 also to the whites, both mounted and dismounted their horses from
784 the right side, just as all other Gros Ventres did.

"You could not lend the Feathered Pipe keeper a horse, because if you loaned it to him this was just the same as giving it to him. You could not take it back once the rope was in his hands. The keeper never borrowed anything. If someone thought the keeper was short of something and without thinking said to him, 'Here is one you can use,' that was just too bad because that was really giving it to him."

[201] Apparently the keeper could not point at a person with his index finger, but would instead use his thumb.

793 The role of the Feathered Pipe keeper in the political life of
624 the Gros Ventre was quite similar to that of the Flat Pipe keeper, as regards such things as decision when and whether to move camp, matters of public policy, and veto power thereupon.

Feathered Pipe and Bundle

773 The Feathered Pipe was first given, as noted in the origin
778 stories (see No. 6 in Appendix), from above by Bha'a, the thunder and storm being. Garter Snake's father, Bull Lodge, used to tell her that it was really given by Ixtcibani:hohat, the Supreme Being, through Bha'a; that the Supreme Being was the father of the Pipe; and that it was to remain forever with the Gros Ventres and never under any condition to be transferred to any other tribe. According to Gros Ventre tradition, while the Feathered Pipe is very old, it is not as old as the Flat Pipe; when the Feathered Pipe was first given to the Gros Ventres, they were already in the possession of horses. According to The Boy, the Feathered Pipe was first given after the Gros Ventres came to their present territory which had previously been Snake Indian country, but before the coming of the whites thereto. With the Pipe itself were given in the beginning the stone image or face, the whistle, and the staff, to be described presently.

778 The proper name of the Feathered Pipe was ana:θanitĕ (it has feathers).

276 We were unable to attend any unwrapping rite and to see the Pipe. It was described to us as being in one piece, of "smooth,"

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

"glistening" [no doubt, highly polished], very dark grey or greyish brown stone, with three or four humps on the upper surface of the stone stem part. Our informants, who had seen the Pipe, disagreed as to whether there are feathers on the Pipe itself, and one of them stated that it had looked different to him on the two occasions he had seen it. 778 276

In the Pipe bundle were many other sacred objects besides the Pipe itself. Most of these had their separate wrappings or cases, the Pipe itself being wrapped in buffalo hair. The first keeper, according to Garter Snake, wrapped the Pipe itself in a bit of white buffalo skin. The outermost wrapping of the Pipe bundle was, originally at least, of tanned elkskin, tied around with four strings. There was also, again originally at least, a bear robe cover for the bundle.[4] 778

The Pipe bundle would shake and quiver when there was going to be an earthquake. The keeper could then predict that the earthquake would occur soon, although he could not predict the exact time. Not so long ago Cora Chandler's old aunt saw the bundle quiver, and sure enough that summer an earthquake occurred. [787 823]

Informants consistently agreed that there were four main things in the bundle, and that two of the four were the Pipe itself and the carved stone face.[5] Most of them included the feathered stick among the four. As to whether the fourth was the whistle, the owl, or the crane, there was considerable conflict of opinion, a conflict we were unable to clear up.

The feathered stick, from which the Pipe itself derived its name,

---

[4] Dr. Hagener noted at the 1951 opening that the innermost wrapping of the whole bundle was of "old bison leather" and the outer wrapping of modern cloth." [R.F.]

[5] Dr. Hagener stated in letter of Jan. 18, 1954, "The pipe displayed in the pictures [Plate 3, C and D] was not the chief pipe of the bundle (that having mysteriously disappeared). It was however made of the red stone commonly traded from the Minnesota area. Although there were other pipes in the bundle this was the only one we were permitted to see. Iron Man checked on the presence of other pipes by feeling inside the leather casings, but did not bring them out." Under date of Aug. 8, 1954, Dr. Hagener remarked: "Dr. Nitz was of the opinion that there were two somewhat similar pipes in the bundle, one of which had disappeared. The picture . . . is of the remaining one." [R.F.] [439 276]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

and before any further ritual step toward fulfillment of his vow had been taken, he arranged to have formal and public announcement of his vow to the people, even though he had already told some of his relatives or friends quickly or confidentially of it. In some instances the actual making of the vow took place at the public announcement rite. In either case the vower would call together in his own lodge all the "holy" men and women, such as ex-keepers but looked upon as holy, powerful, great. When all had gathered and were properly and solemnly seated, the vower filled a common pipe, offered it to one of the men present to have him pray with it and announce the vow. The one to whom it was offered could not refuse. If he were already in the place of honor in the circle he would remain there; else he would take it, and the occupant would vacate it. The chosen announcer would next make a smudge with sweet grass, and smudge the pipe in it. Then carrying the pipe he would go outside the lodge, stand in front of it, and in a loud voice call for order and command attention. After all was quiet, he would hold up the pipe and say: "So-and-so (the vower's name) has made a vow to do such-and-such (the content of the vow), you, Ixtcibani:hohat," ending with a prolonged "Yo ho ho ho." Then he prayed, addressing first as always, the Supreme Being and next to the other supernatural beings such as the Four Holy Beings, Those-who-follow-each-other, but not the Last Child, that the vow might be carried out well, that its purpose might be attained (if not already attained), and that no sickness or other misfortune might come to the tribe during or after the ritual fulfillment of the vow. During the prayer, the announcer would mention the name of the person whom the vower had chosen as ritual grandfather. After ending the prayer, the announcer re-entered the lodge, and gave the pipe to this grandfather, and the latter took the place of honor which the announcer had momentarily occupied. Before or after the handing over of the pipe, all would smoke it, and some of those present would, of their own choice and without being invited, say a short prayer for themselves or for the vower.

Throughout the Sacred Dances, any ritual praying and smoking to be done with a pipe was done with an ordinary black stone pipe. Apart from the bringing of the Flat Pipe to the erection of the

*796 Sacrifice Dance center pole, the sacred Pipes did not enter at all
[276] into the Sacred Lodges.
[801] In all the Sacred Dances, the ritual number was four and movement was clockwise.

A sweat-lodge rite was held in connection with the Sacrifice and Crazy Dances, but we could obtain no details on it; whether also in connection with the others our informants could not say.

The Sacrifice, Drum, Kit-fox, Dog and Crazy Dances regularly lasted four nights and days; the Fly and probably the Old Men's and Old Women's just one day.

The sacred Dances were not held in the winter time when the bands were usually widely scattered, but in the period from about May or June when the bands foregathered to September after which the bands tended to scatter for the fall buffalo hunt.

[361] The lodges for the Old Men's and Old Women's Dances were very simple and were put up outside the camp circle toward the south thereof. The lodges for the other Dances were erected inside the camp circle, near the center.

Feasting daily during the four-day dances was customary, except during the Sacrifice Dance which entailed much fasting on the part of the participants.

The alternation of reverent tension and pleasurable free release that characterized the sacred Pipe rites was even more characteristic of the Sacred Dances.

Sacrifice Dance

*796 The proper name of the Gros Ventre dance commonly referred to by whites and by many English-speaking Gros Ventres as the Sun Dance is aθe:hao'wə (literally, "sacrifice lodge"—aθe:'atc "sacrifice" and -ao'wə "sacred [not common] lodge"; cf. Sifton "sacrifice," athêyach and "Sun Dance," athéihawh'). We are therefore using the term Sacrifice Dance for it. The sun does not enter at all into it. The name apparently has references to the tortures undergone around the center pole by the main participants.

115 Our chief informants on the Sacrifice Dance were The Boy and Thick, who had witnessed the rite as boys and who had learned much about it from their elders: Coming Daylight, who had wit-

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

535
796*
522
831

to jump on them," simulating copulation, to the amusement apparently of the other "cows." Whether the chief vower and the "boss" took part in the dancing is not clear,—more probably they did not.

796*

Intervals between the dancing were given over to smoking, chatting, feasting, and fun-making. In more modern times at least the women smoked for pleasure. The dancers were each expected to bring food to the dance, and feasting was an important element, the singers at the back of the lodge faring particularly well. During these intervals, too, the women would play all kinds of tricks on one another, such as taking some woman's belongings and hiding them. They would have "lots of fun," "laughing all the time" and "making lots of racket."

[276] [522]

Apparently it was customary for relatives of dancers in the Women's Dance, as in other sacred Dances, to give away presents to third parties in honor of the dancers.

[431]

The more public and more spectacular episodes of the Women's Dance, as of the Sacrifice and Crazy Dances, occurred on the fourth and last day. To these features we now turn.

The "cows" and the "bull," all wearing their headdresses and accompanied by the "calves," left the dance lodge and went in a bunch to look for water in the creek and to drink. The "bull" followed to the rear, herding the "cows," and if one of the latter started to stray she would be punched back with the herd. Part of the time at least, the "cows" were "bent over, dancing like animals, and going on hands and knees." The "bull" would run after different "cows" and "jump on them," in mimic copulation. Coming Daylight, as a "calf" was told to follow one of the "cows" as her "mother" and try to nurse, but the "bull" chased her away when she approached her mother. In general, the "calves" were supposed to keep to the side, out of the way of the "bull."

796*
535
831

After the drink at the creek, came the pantomime buffalo drive. The two "hunters" (cf. supra, p. 245) would make a fire outside the camp circle up-wind from the women, and as the women got the smell of the smoke, the "hunters" on horseback drove them, as in a real buffalo drive, and shot the "cows" or some of them with blunt arrows that did not hurt. The "cows" who had before-

796*

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

upward or downward but to the hill, with a ritual gesture and would make his request direct to the one or ones inhabiting the hill or mountain top and tell this one or these ones what [power] he actually wanted." 787 [782]

In all the above the quester was following the general ritual and social Gros Ventre pattern for making requests. Such was the ritual pattern in prayer with a pipe. And whenever a pipe was offered to a fellow-tribesman it was offered with the stem toward him. The offering of a pipe to another when asking something of him was an "emphatic way of pleading." Thomas Main here remarked: "If I wanted to borrow money of another and were afraid my request would not be granted, I might offer him a pipe when asking for the loan and so reinforce my request." 787 576 276

Bull Lodge, when seeking power on a butte, made offerings of material goods and of the first joint of his left little finger. Little Man made offerings of a bit or bits of his flesh. 787 [782 304]

While up on the mountains the quester, alone and praying and concentrating his thoughts on his quest, would fast, neither eating or drinking, and would walk around crying, shedding real tears. He, or the man who had first accompanied him to the spot and then left him, would make a rude sleeping place of rocks and twigs and branches. This sort of "nest" was called his "call-for-power lodge." When the quester got weak or fatigued or sleepy, he would lie down in this "nest" and doze or sleep. Al Chandler stated: "Their [the quester's] sleep is not sound, any little thing wakens them. They are expecting something all the time and they look for it." Usually power was given during such sleep, although in some instances when the quester was wide awake. The power-giving being would speak to the quester and, usually at least, appear to him.

Sometimes a quester would be told by the being whose "house" was the mountain on which the man was questing: "Here is the kind of power I have. This is all I have. That other one [being] has the kind of power you wish. Go over there." And the being would name some other butte or mountain. Thus, for instance, a man going to a given mountain to seek wealth or war power might be offered doctoring power, and if he did not take this

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

beat a rapid tattoo on the drum while he prayed, and when he 755
started to sing he beat a much slower, even time." Little Man, Al Chandler's adoptive father, in one case at least, followed a somewhat different procedure. He hit the drum just a little, that is, lightly, while he prayed. Then he sang and beat ~~the drum~~ harder, and sang until those present caught on to the song. Then he gave the drum to one of the men, and the others present sang to the latter's drumming while Little Man doctored the patient. If, according to The Boy, a medicine man used a rattle, he shook it in circles anti-clockwise—in contrast to the clockwise circling of the Flat Pipe keeper and the fanning back and forth of Star dancers.

Disease-causing objects within the patient's body were ordinarily extracted by suction. The object extracted was swallowed by the doctor, burned, or otherwise disposed of or destroyed, as will be given later in describing the curing procedures of individual doctors. A pipe stem might be used, in exceptional instances at least, for sucking out the object, to judge from the offer, with this provision, of power once made to Singer in a dream.

Tobacco smoking was sometimes prescribed for the sick by a Pipe keeper when doctoring and apparently by other doctors. According to The Boy, tobacco in such use was often pure, unmixed with other plant. [276]

In curing rites, sometimes—how commonly, we could not determine—sweating in a sweat-lodge was prescribed for the patient by male doctors, in one instance to be described later, by a female doctor. Singer described an experience of her own as follows. "I was once thrown from a horse and hurt pretty badly. I was afraid I could not stand the sweating, for I could never stand heat. Sure enough, although the medicine man told me to crawl in and lie down so he could work on my back, as soon as they put the water on the stones, I got out in a hurry."

We now pass on, from more general curing practices to those of individual doctors, and may well start with an account from Coming Daylight which illustrates both sickness experience and curing ritual.

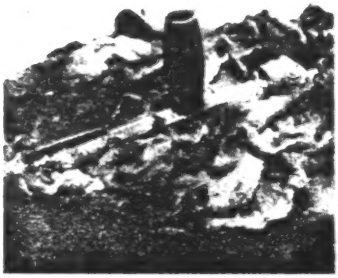
"I am going to tell about the time I almost died. We were living

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

276
778
796

A. *Unwrapping Feathered Pipe bundle at hearth.*

B. *Contents of bundle.*



C. *One of the pipes in the bundle.*

D. *Iron Man II holding a pipe from bundle.*

PLATE 3

[p.427]

Her final rejoinder was such a witty and pointed one that everyone laughed heartily at her rival's expense. In this culture, of course, public ridicule was a far more effective retaliation than the biting and scratching that other women said frankly they would have indulged in when attacked.

Expression of emotional excess was institutionalized for the Gros Ventres, as for the rest of the Plains, in the bereavement situation. Upon the death of a husband, son, or father, a woman was expected to start wailing as soon as she heard the news, have her hair cut off, discard good clothes for old ragged ones, gash her arms and legs, go to the hills to mourn and cry, resisting for a time the pleas of her relatives to return, and being watched lest she attempt suicide. Coming Daylight was only a young woman when she was first widowed and the mourning pattern was still in full vogue. It is certain from other evidence than Coming Dayling had a deep affection for this husband to whom she had been given as a child-bride and in whose kindly and indulgent treatment she had found a pleasant escape from the rigorous discipline of her grandmother. Nevertheless the public expression of her grief was minimal—no abandonment for her. Although her sister was sent on the hills with her to keep watch over her in the usual way, Coming Daylight was easily persuaded to return shortly though she herself was proud of the fact that she had stayed out so long that she actually had got a frozen toe! In later years when all that was left of the ritual was the wailing out on the hills, she lost the son whom she herself, and everybody else, acknowledged as her favorite. She had not been on the hills very long when she experienced a significant dream, as follows. She was in a lodge at the rear of which was a big pile of tobacco mixture and a pipe. The owner of the lodge filled the pipe and approached her. She was frightened because she didn't smoke. The owner of the lodge however told her: "Look at these people." She looked and saw many with their hair cut and their bodies bleeding from the gashes inflicted in grief. The man then told her: "That is in the past. Nowadays your only consolation is in smoking." So she accepted the pipe and, after smoking it, she was painted in ceremonial fashion by each of those other mourners. Then the owner of the lodge dismissed her saying: "Now, go home and don't ever go on the hills and mourn again. But always smoke if you want to." She went home right after this dream and when she told her husband of it he accepted it as valid and persuaded her sister to prepare for Coming Daylight her first real smoke. She maintained that the habit subsequently developed was actually a great comfort to her.

The final area with which we shall be concerned here is the war complex—a vital aspect of the old Plains culture. Gros Ventre women were allowed direct but limited participation in these activities in the sense that, while they would not join a party of men who were going on horse-raiding or revenge expeditions, if opportunity offered they might exhibit the same kind of bravery that a man should show and derive considerable status therefrom. For instance, if one of the enemy fell nearby, the women rushed out from camp to count coup, and to grab trophies with which to inaugurate the relationship known as "enemy-friends." Coming Daylight, however, was never one to indulge in this sport. She told of the one—and to her extremely distasteful—occasion on which her hand literally was forced. It seems that during a raid on their camp one of the enemy was shot and her husband scalped him. The victim was lying not far from her lodge and, as her husband dashed off to pursue the rest of the Assiniboine, he shouted for her to come out and see what was going on. Coming Daylight saw the man lying there, face down, covered with blood. He was not dead

846 self had to get up sooner and help with cooking because she was an only wife, except for the short time during her first marriage when her sister was co-wife. The midwife usually stayed and looked after the infant for a few days, at least until the cord came off.

Coming Daylight always put on a belt of rawhide about a foot wide immediately after delivery and laced it up tighter each day. She said the Gros Ventre women were strict about this practice as it "put the figure back into place."

If a woman were able to rest quietly after childbirth the flow should stop in about two weeks. If she worked, it was longer, perhaps a month. At any rate, after the flow stopped, a woman wrapped a blanket around herself and someone then held under the blanket a pan of live coals on which medicine had been sprinkled. Woman claimed they felt much better after this "fumigation." [757] There was also another medicine which Coming Daylight described as "good to clean you out after childbirth." This was made from a powdered root, a little pinch of which was put in a couple of quarts of water and turned the water about the color of tea. There was no bitter taste and the patient drank it like tea and instead of water.

[834] It was said that Gros Ventre men did not resume marital relations until at least a month after the baby was born,—often they deferred the resumption of relations even longer.

853 There was medicine given to make the mother's milk come. It was made from the same root as that used in the Crazy Dance. [278] The infant was not put to the breast immediately, as someone else drew out the "first milk" (colostrum) and spit it out. "After that, the milk would be the right blue color. [825] Should a woman be all alone when her child was born, she might have puppies draw out that 'first milk.'" Cora believes it is absolutely necessary to follow this rule. When her own daughter, for example, delivered her firstborn, an old woman offered to draw off this "first milk," but the daughter refused—so now she can give milk only from one breast and has to supplement her infant's feeding with milk from a bottle. No water or oil was given the infant before its first nursing. They started the baby to nurse after the colostrum had been drawn off "because there is something in the mother's milk that cleans the baby out."

593 infant. Some siblings, for example, would try to plug the infant's mouth with a rag or some other object. An occasional child would be unusually jealous and resent all younger siblings. One of Coming Daylight's own boys was like that. He would try persistently to get ahead of his little brother. The mother would be lying down with the infant at her side, and this little boy would try to snuggle in between her and the infant. He stuck close to her and wanted to accompany her everywhere, even when she left the lodge at night to attend to her necessities,— and this was after he was old enough to know he should not follow her at such a time. One of Cora's children was like that at the time the information was being gathered, jealous of the other children in the family and following her everywhere.

853 One of the first solid foods a baby was fed was a ball of cooked rose-berries mixed with grease. This was put on the end of a stick in lollypop fashion. Marrow, guts and rose-berry soup were considered the best food for growing, healthy children.

854 A newborn infant is called a "sack-baby." The sack was made of fine buckskin, or of buffalo calfskin with the fur left on one side, and was laced up the front. It was made just the same way for a girl as for a boy. A piece of rawhide was put inside the sack to stiffen it, and some rags were placed between it and the child's body to stuff it up and prevent chafing. The board was rectangular, rounded at the top, and reached only to the baby's neck. They made a little round cap out of calfskin, with little fur earmuffs that tied under the chin. They used to decorate their baby sacks nicely and sewed little deerhoofs thereon,—"They liked to have something rattle on their clothing."

When placing the infant in the sack they were very careful that its feet and legs should be properly placed. Singer remarked that in the old days everybody's legs were nice and straight and that it is only these "diaper babies" around here now who are bow-legged.

854 Small children, including infants, were washed each morning, —in winter rubbed with snow,—and then powdered. As a powder, ●278 buffalo chips were pounded on rawhide and then, "to sort of ster-237 ilize," hot stones were placed thereon. When the powdered chips were warmed, but not too hot, the stones were removed and the

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

baby was laid in the powder and rubbed under its arms, between its legs, under the toes, between the fingers,—wherever the baby might chafe. "The baby feels fine then and goes right to sleep." When no buffalo chips were available horse manure treated the same way was an adequate substitute. Fresh powder was put in the sack each day, and in the winter it was first heated. 854 278 234

Sometimes accidents happened. One time when a man named Fork (of a tree) was a baby, his grandmother was tending to him. She had heated the powdered chips in the sack with a hot stone and forgot to remove it. The baby cried and cried. Finally they unbound him and found that his toe was right against the hot rock. This injured his toe and he always walked with a peculiar gait. Cora has a scar on her buttocks which she thinks came from a similar accident.

If the father's sister failed to provide a sack and none was forthcoming from any other relative, the mother would wrap the infant in a skin and tie it with straps. Coming Daylight said that before her time they used a cradleboard. If they had a travois they would carry the baby on that. "Some, if they didn't have a cradleboard, used a piece of stiffened leather hooked over the saddle horn." 854

When the infant was old enough to move its arms, the arms were left free of wrappings. The infant was kept in the sack day and night. When not being carried about, it was hung either from one of the lodge poles inside the lodge, or swinging from the travois placed upright against the lodge. Lullabies were sometimes sung.* At night, the infant was right beside its mother, and the father usually slept in separate bedding so as not to crowd the child. When the powder in the sack was changed, they let the baby play around and stretch "because babies must have gotten tired staying in those sacks." [533]

Toilet training was started when the infant was between six and twelve months old. "The baby is more alert and easier to handle then. You just guessed at the time and opened the sack and held the baby out, supporting it under the knees and thighs. The child would usually respond. If there were a delay, then you talked to him and made a hissing noise to encourage him. You 863

* Unfortunately no lullabies were recorded.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

793 powers, intended more for the positive advantage of the keeper or
755 his people, were customarily acquired during or after the transfer rite.

In the transfer rite the new keeper was taught how to doctor, especially in cases of fits, spasms and cramps. The peppermint
[278] beverage, now used by everybody for these maladies, was formerly a monopoly of the Flat Pipe keeper in his curing practice. Other doctoring powers were also conferred on him and he could use the hair rope from the Flat Pipe bundle as a potent medicine to cure with, but we could obtain no details on these points.

The keeper would pray to have good dreams and might sleep
[787] on the Pipe bed for the same purpose. His dreams, when told, were important news for his fellows, as through them the future could be foretold.

789 The keeper was also given power to summon, call or "snare"
793 from a distance, enemies or reluctant friends. The Boy gave two instances of the use of this power, both from the lips of his father, Lame Bull. When Lame Bull, on learning of his election as Flat Pipe keeper fled to the hills, the ex-keeper so summoned him, using the Flat Pipe itself in the rite. The nine Flat Pipe songs were sung and at the end of each, the ex-keeper holding the Pipe at arm's length in both hands with the stem pointed upward and outward, sang the Hair Rope song, then twisted the stem tip in a vertical near-circle first upward and outward and then inward and downward in a sort of beckoning motion as if drawing something toward him, then downward and finally lowered the bowl toward (or to?) the ground.

On a later occasion during Lame Bull's keepership, on a war
[726] expedition against the Piegan he learned in a dream where they were located and was told that five of them would be killed. The night before the attack on the Piegan, using a common pipe and the above calling rite, thrice performed, with the pipe stem pointed toward the distant Piegan camp, invisible at the time to the Gros Ventre party, and singing the Hair Rope song, he "called" five of the Piegan, who, separated from the main Piegan body, were killed by the Gros Ventres.

793 The keeper and co-keeper also were given power to use in hunt-
224 ing buffalo, but we were able to obtain no details on the rite. The

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

276 would use tobacco in his prayers for the patient. If the patient survived but was still weak, the keeper made him smoke to get back his strength. So some of the other tribesmen learned to smoke. Gradually social (and recreative) smoking took its place together with ceremonial smoking.

In earlier times, the women never smoked either ritually or socially. Even in rites where they had an important role, such as [562] the inauguration of a new pipe keeper, they did not smoke, as women were considered secondary, not equal to men. Even as late as The Boy's and Thick's early boyhood in the decade before the last buffalo disappeared (1884), only the old women smoked, never the young girls. The spread of the custom among these old women was probably due to their discovery by experience that the smoking prescribed for maladies, such as, chronic headache, was good for the body. But even today, although women smoke non-ritually when alone or among themselves, they are not allowed to smoke at a Pipe rite, and, if wives are present when a man invites a group of men for a social visit or meal and he fills up his pipe to give his guests a smoke, he does not offer the pipe to the wives.

Tobacco was used only in pipe smoking. It was sometimes smoked straight by old men and old women, and by the sick as [17] a cure. But ordinarily the Gros Ventres smoked it mixed either [824] with red willow, as did the Cree and Assiniboine, or preferably, and in the Flat Pipe rites always, with larb.

Larb is "a ground plant that grows on hills and mountains." We could get no specimen for identification. After the tobacco and larb were mixed, a little more larb than tobacco, fat was worked into the mixture to season it. On taking leave from his Gros Ventre [431] friends in 1940 the present author was given a small bag of this [609] mixture as a token of peace and good will and found the mixture a very pleasant aromatic smoke.

The wild parsley, associated with the Flat and Feathered Pipe ●278 and with the Crazy Lodge, was used as a powerful poison. It was greatly feared and was spoken of in undertones. Its preparation is a lost art. The whole plant was and is considered poisonous, but poison was prepared principally from the root, which was first

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

dried and seasoned, then pulverized, and used in a liquid. It was also used mixed with other things. 278

The Pipe keepers, and co-keepers, ex-keepers and ex-co-keepers, were immune and could handle it. But if others touched the plant or powder they would be seized at once with fits which only an actual or retired keeper or co-keeper could cure by working on him and blowing some of the powder on him. Some Gros Ventres, however, such as old Deafie, did not believe that wild parsley caused fits, but many cases are reported. One man, for instance, in recent times carried some in his hands to a dance, and during the dance got a fit and it took one of the ex-co-keepers to bring him out of it. Another man used wild parsley as a medicine in doctoring. Each participant in the Crazy Lodge used it. But originally its use was confined to Pipe keepers and co-keepers (see p. 52).

If one were scratched with an arrow that had been dipped in wild parsley infusion he would suffer spasms, fits and acute agony and would not live till morning. Such a poisoned arrow was tied by each Crazy Lodge dancer to his bow, apparently as a silent threat to enforce obedience and respect by the people during the lodge rites, but was thrown away after the dance was over.[a] These poisoned arrows were not used at any other time than the Crazy Lodge; never for instance, in Gros Ventre wars or raids on enemies. 411 278

Seasonal Rites

The three annual seasonal rites were in the olden days the major ceremonial events in Gros Ventre life according to The Boy, Thick and older informants. No vow was necessary to hold them. They were never omitted. They had to be performed. The seasonal rites have long since been given up. They were last carried out sometime in the late 1860's or early 1870's, while The Boy's father, Lame Bull, was keeper. 796* 178

The three seasonal rites were held in the spring, fall and winter respectively. About April the various Gros Ventre bands, which 796* 221 361

[a] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, pp. 207-08 regarding poisoned arrow.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787 mountain and asked the spirit that appeared to him for a love-medicine
832 which would bring him the woman. Soon after, she would come to him and try to obtain his love, but usually he would reject her, for a time at least, by way of revenge.

A young middle-aged man of the present time is noted for his love-medicine. He tells the following. He was once in love with a woman who only reviled him. For a long time this was on his mind. Constantly thinking of her harsh treatment of him, he fasted in a number of places, and finally received supernatural power. Then the woman came to him. She kissed him on the cheek; but he said, "You have abused me," and he made her go away. Four times she came to him; only the fourth time did he consent to gratify her wishes. Since that time, he has frequently used his medicine. His present wife was living with a white trader, where she had every comfort and great abundance; but by his medicine he made her leave the trader for him. His wife, it would appear, looks upon his powers without jealousy. He sells the use of his medicine to young men for two horses. His young son is crippled, so that he would have difficulty in winning women; but his father is keeping the medicine for him, so that he will be able to possess any woman he desires. The objects used include several medicine-plants. Some of these appear to be used to incense the man who is making the
[824] medicine. When a woman is unusually obdurate, wild parsnip (the root supposed to produce the peculiar state of mind of the crazy-dance) is employed by this man. When he begins to exert his influence on a woman, she becomes restless and sexually excited. She leaves the tent frequently, and will cohabit with any man. When the influence of the medicine is removed, she remains faithful to her lover.

MEDICINES AND PLANTS.

278 The following medicines, consisting chiefly of plants, are almost wholly
757 family remedies, and, while no doubt also used by medicine-men, their supposed effects are generally known, and not connected with any personal supernatural experiences of the person using them. As the specimens were secured in winter, it was impossible to obtain material for botanical identification.

Wanouwasóó ("wart-medicine"), a root, is used for stomach-ache (specimen Museum No. 50-1800).

A root called ahaa^{n}tjiiniça^{n} ("wood-like") is used for colic. This seems to be the root of a species of Asclepias (specimen Museum No. 50-1836).

A root called baasó ("red medicine," because it is reddish when fresh) is used for diarrhœa (specimen Museum No. 50-1914).

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

A plant called häyaa"t" is used both as a perfume and as a medicine. Pieces of it tied by a string to the shoulder of the shirt give a pleasant smell. It is also laid in warm water without being boiled, and the water is then used as medicine for sore eyes (specimen Museum No. 50-1883). 278 757

In case of snow-blindness, charcoal is put around the eyes, and believed to be very efficacious.

The green stems of a plant containing a white juice are used for women who have no milk. The Arapaho use the same plant for a similar purpose, and call it "milk liquid." [1]

A root called bäetset ("hand," on account of the peculiar conformation of the roots) is laid in very small quantity into cold water, which is drunk by women to insure easy child-birth (specimen Museum No. 50-1946). [844]

The flowers of a composita called niha"äänou ("yellow-head") or tjitjixta"sibyiis60 are put on coals for a woman who has given birth. She stands above the fire to incense herself (specimen Museum No. 50-1944).

Another plant called niha"nääänou ("yellow-head"), which grows close to the water, is boiled, and drunk for pain in the back or in the body (specimen Museum No. 50-1945).

A root called niitasou ("sharp") is pulverized, and then applied to sores in the mouth and on the tongue (specimen Museum No. 50-1838).

A rock lichen called benaatsön is chewed for a sore mouth (specimen Museum No. 50-1874).

The root of tyätyäniçä is obtained from swampy land far to the north of the Gros Ventre habitat. The roots are soaked in water and the black portions removed. Then they are grated, mixed with water, and applied to the neck for sores (specimen Museum No. 50-1907).

A root called kouh'ya" is chewed until a sticky paste results, which is applied to sores (specimen Museum No. 50-1919).

A fungus called tsäädjina" is set on fire, and when glowing is applied to wounds or sores. It is also pulverized, and put on the gums of children when they are teething. It is said to grow on birch-trees, near the root (specimen Museum No. 50-1837). [752]

The roots of iniitsöö are boiled and the water used to wash the part of the body which has been burned by the application of the glowing fungus tsäädjina" (specimen Museum No. 50-1856). [752]

Ibyaa"tou-leaves, which are also used as incense, are boiled in water. This is then applied to the body to allay pain (specimen Museum No. 50-1790). This medicine is the Arapaho niibaa"tou or ibaa"tou (fir or similar leaves), used both as incense [2] and as medicine.[3]

[1] See Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part IV, p. 438.
[2] Ibid., Vol. XVIII, Part I, p. 32.
[3] Ibid., Part IV, p. 426.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

278
757

Na^{n}kasö ("white medicine") is a fungus growing high on pine-trees. It has a general use for any disease (specimen Museum No. 50–1796).

The leaves of ka^{n}kadyikou, growing in the mountains, are boiled, and the tea used as medicine for various purposes (specimen Museum No. 50–1897).

The bark of iinaa^{n}söönicou is either chewed in the native state, or boiled [752] and drunk, for hemorrhages and pain in the back. The plant is said not to grow in the Gros Ventre country (specimen Museum No. 50–1943).

Tawaa^{n}nasöö-root is used for pleurisy and heart-sickness. It is said to taste sweet. The root is either chewed, or boiled and drunk. This is the Arapaho häçawaanaxu, and is much used in the age-ceremonies of both tribes (specimen Museum No. 50–1855).

Juniper-berries (çää^{n}touwun) are a cure for asthma. They are either eaten entire, or they are pulverized and boiled, and the water drunk. The leaves, called "çää^{n}touwuusöö," are mixed with the root, and then used as a remedy for hemorrhage. The leaves are also used by the doctors to incense themselves before they begin to doctor (specimen Museum No. 50–1854).

The root called niäätä^{n}, used by the Arapaho ceremonially and as an ingredient for incense, is employed by the Gros Ventre as a remedy for tuberculosis and hemorrhages. It is said not to be used as incense. The root is boiled before being used. It is eaten in the solid state, or a decoction of it is drunk (specimen Museum No. 50–1793).

The root of naw'asöö ("fish medicine") is eaten for colds (specimen Museum No. 50–1794).

Niitsiça^{n} ("hollow root") is primarily a horse-medicine. It is given to horses to strengthen and refresh them. People also use a decoction of it as a remedy for colds (specimen Museum No. 50–1795).

Niha^{n}nisö ("yellow medicine") is used for colds. Either the root is eaten, or water in which it has been boiled is drunk (specimen Museum No. 50–1799).

A plant which grows north of the Gros Ventre country, and for which they appear to have no name, is used for colds and sore throat, a small quantity of the root being chewed (specimen Museum No. 50–1848).

A root called taw'haa^{n} is obtained from other tribes. The plant is said not to grow in the Gros Ventre country. It is pounded and used as snuff in order to clear the head in case of cold or headache (specimen Museum No. 50–1797).

The stems and leaves of waasöwahaa^{n}, a sweet peppermint, are used for headache. The plant is also drunk as tea (specimen Museum No. 50–1791).

The root called wanaa^{n}sübyaa^{n} ("smelling loud") is smoked in the pipe against headache (specimen Museum No. 50–1798).

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

A plant called tyäänou is used as perfume, as a wash for the hair, and as a minor medicine. Bunches of the plant were used as perfume. A tea boiled of it is thought to make the hair grow while perfuming it. Such a tea is also poured into the nostrils as a remedy for headache (specimen Museum No. 50-1920). 278 757 [302]

Niibyouäxtjin is used as perfume. The stems and leaves are chewed and applied to the body (specimen Museum No. 50-1853). [302]

Tsaa"sübin is used as perfume. It is chewed, and rubbed on the hair (specimen Museum No. 50-1792).

One ingredient of incense is the callosity from the leg of a horse above the knee. This is cut up fine, and burned with sweet-grass. It is also worn on the body on a string.

Pine-nuts or other conifer-seeds are used for pemmican (specimen Museum No. 50-1913). [562] 824

For embroidery, dark fibrous water-plants, at"hin (the Arapaho atahina"), are used (specimen Museum No. 50-1891).

Quills are dyed yellow with a solution from a conifer-lichen, no doubt the widely used *Evernia vulpina*, called otsahaa" (specimen Museum No. 50-1873). [386]

TRIBAL CEREMONIAL ORGANIZATION.

The Gros Ventre ceremonial organization is akin to that of the Arapaho with such differences as would be expected from the differences in language and the period of separation of the two tribes. The fundamental feature of this organization, the grouping of men by ages and the observance of a series of a half-dozen ceremonies in order according to age, is common to the two tribes. The ceremonies vary somewhat, and in a few cases their names or order have been changed; but among both tribes there are about six regular consecutive men's ceremonies, one or two that are preliminary or somewhat outside of this series, a single ceremony for women corresponding to those for men, and the sun-dance, which is included by the Indians in the enumeration of their grouped ceremonies, but differs from the others in not being connected with age, or with any society-like association of individuals. 561 796

Among the Gros Ventre the dancing-lodge for these ceremonies — which is erected in the centre of the camp-circle, and, like this, opens to the east — is constructed of two large tents. The lodge is open above, and appears to be oval or round in shape. The dancers, before beginning the ceremony, secure old men, who are called their "grandfathers," and are their instruct- 346 796

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

been previously described. Some additional data on tobacco and wild parsley as associated with the Feathered Pipe help fill out the picture. 788

The keeper of the Feathered Pipe raised tobacco, as did the very first keeper, whose tobacco patch was raided by the people after the great war exploit of his son, He-Who-Dreams-of-Bha'a. 793 249

If anyone but the keeper [or co-keeper] touched the "wild parsley" root the delinquent would get fits, out of which he could be brought only by the keeper working on him and "blowing this same stuff on him." Old Deafie did not believe all this and there were other skeptics, some of whom, even small boys, would touch "wild parsley" to test out the belief and would immediately have fits. Al Chandler had heard of many such cases, although he had never seen any himself. 793 278

Sitting High used always to carry a couple of pinches of wild parsley in a little buckskin pouch in his pocket to use against rattlesnakes. On one occasion when Al Chandler was about 18 years old he and his grandfather (Sitting High) were at Henry Martin's place on the Hays side of the Bear Paws. Al was eating cherries at the creek bank, saw a big rattlesnake, and shouted to his grandfather. The latter imitated the snake's angry rattle, wet the end of a six-foot willow stick and stuck it in a small bit of wild parsley, then touched the snake with this end, and so "knocked the snake stiff." Some time later Al went to the spot to look and there he found the rattler dead, "bloated and stinking." Al Chandler, on another occasion, near Snake Butte, saw his grandfather kill a rattler in the same manner, merely touching it with the wet parsley-treated end of a stick. 278

Among the skeptics was Little Man, son of Sitting High and Al's adoptive father. He would even eat "wild parsley." On one occasion, Little Man took Jimmy, Al's three or four-year-old son, with him to the creek to wash, and while there was about to give Jimmy a bit of the wild parsley to eat, "to give him the power to use," when Al happened to see what was going on and told Jimmy: "Don't, that is poison." Little Man laughed and said: "It won't hurt him. I am giving it to him. I was going to give him this power. What is the matter with you? Why don't you eat it?" But Al said:

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

278 "No, I might get fits." Little Man said: "I will eat it." This he then did. Al was worried about him and did not go to work, for he thought the old man would have fits, but actually nothing happened to him.

778 782 The Feathered Pipe was given originally by Bha'a or by the Supreme Being through Bha'a, who had control of thunderstorms. While individual petitioners in simpler rites such as covering the Pipe often addressed the Pipe itself in their prayers, and while in even more formal rites Bha'a was addressed, it appears to have been generally understood that the final word lay with the Supreme Being. The Pipe was given to pray through rather than to pray to, and Bha'a while exercising a certain autonomy in his office as ruler of thunderstorms exercised it as agent of and subordinate to the Supreme Being, and in the more formal ritual prayers of the Feathered Pipe, the Supreme Being's name always came first.

782 Feathered Pipe rites were carried out mostly and mainly, although not exclusively, to ask for rain and for protection against [821] threatening thunderstorms or against lightning and destructive high winds during them, and sometimes for cessation of floods and rains. Often however major or minor rites were carried out, with or without previous promise or vow, for ends not connected with weather, to ask for cure in illness, escape from grave danger, safe return from a war expedition, and so forth. In times of drought, Bha'a would be asked for rain. In the more elaborate rites commonly held each spring, petition would be made "To have rain and [in recent decades] good crops and grass, . . . to bless the earth so everybody will be happy and healthy and no bad luck for anybody all summer, so they [all the people] will live 'till next spring,' that is, so when this time of the year comes around again they will be here."

* 796 The more solemn Feathered Pipe rites, those at least which involved the sweat-lodge ceremony and the unwrapping of the Pipe bundle, were performed only during the period of the year when thunderstorms could be expected, namely from spring through to fall, and never during the winter months. The Pipe could, however be "covered" at any time of the year. In contrast to the Flat Pipe cycle, seasonal rites proper did not occur, although some rite was

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

755
757 sional individuals; supernatural remedies used only by professional medicine men or women with power.

Natural Remedies

751 Both preventive and curative measures of the natural or ra-
515 tional order were numerous.

The most common preventive measure was the daily early morning plunge in the stream or roll in the snow by men, a practice carried out for hardening the body as well as for cleaning
[731] it. In small epidemics scattering and isolation were regularly resorted to in order to check the spread of the disease. The use of skunk fluid as a curative was more a Cree than a Gros Ventre procedure, but there was a Gros Ventre belief that skunk fluid diluted with water and put into the eyes of a person was a preventive and cure of snow-blindness. A mother, on knowing herself
[862] pregnant again, would cease nursing her infant lest it suffer from "bad stomach and diarrhea." Drinking the blood of a freshly butchered buffalo was looked upon as a preventive of tuberculosis.

757 Curative measures of the rational order were of many kinds. We recorded the following, but our list is far from exhaustive. All of them may best be classified as "domestic remedies," measures of common knowledge, resorted to by everybody who wished to use them, and not considered proprietary right of particular individuals.

757 Many herbal curatives came under this category.[3] The roots of
●278 "sweetheart briars," so called because the burrs stuck so tightly, were used for colds, and the deeper the root the stronger was the medicine.[4]

An infusion of peppermint is now used as a beverage by everybody for "fits, spasms and stomach disorders," although the medicinal use of peppermint was formerly the monopoly of Flat Pipe keepers. A very strong drink was made by boiling a certain root and just a little of it drunk as a cure for difficulty in urination.

---

[3] Cf. list in Kroeber, 1908, pp. 224-27. We made no attempt in the field to
[171] get a full list of such herbal and other curatives.

[4] The Piegan, according to Coming Daylight and Singer, used these as "blood medicine."

3: Cooper-E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

757
278

"Many people," The Boy remarked, "had died of this ailment as they were ashamed to tell they had it." According to Mary Ereaux, "a lot of times children were born with poor eyesight. If a fellow [adult] in those days had sore eyes he would be ashamed of it. It would have been a kind of disgrace. They had a kind of tea which they used as an eyewash."

For colds, the root of a briar, a plant with burrs smaller than "sand burrs," perhaps the "sweetheart briar" mentioned above, was chewed and the saliva swallowed. For "colds and sore throat, and teeth and bones," a bit of the root of a plant called "tastes-like-pepper" is broken off and kept in the mouth.

For head colds and headaches a snuff is made of the root of a large plant called "sneezer or pacifier,"[4] which grows up in the Rocky Mountains, and when snuffed up "it clears your head and mucus comes out. Every time you sneeze it kind of brings your cold out in a sweat."

Several plants used as fumigants or infusions for or by the mother before or after childbirth are described elsewhere.[5]

For children's dysentery (usually occurring in summer) and piles, Coming Daylight used a root called "stomach ache medicine," a root "which runs close to the surface of the ground." When one of her grandchildren "had piles from this summer dysentery" she heated a flat rock, saturated a cloth with water, sprinkled the medicine thereon, put the cloth on the hot rock to make steam, and held the child over it with its buttocks close to the steam. She also made a "tea" of the root and gave it to the child to drink. One treatment cured the piles. Coming Daylight remarked that she "wouldn't be without this medicine." This particular herbal curative is perhaps peculiar to her, and not in general use.

A curative called "fish medicine,"[6] "an old, old medicine," is a plant that grows in the water and is brought in from Minnesota.

"White medicine" has many curative uses. It is made from a "sort of sponge" [fungus] growing rarely on pine trees. When people find it, they throw stones at it and, being "kind of soft,"

---

[4] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, 226.
[5] See Flannery, 1953, pp. 136, 138.
[6] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, 226, naw'asoo—for colds.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

757 it drops off. It is powdered before use. Mary Ereaux' mother used
278. it, on a warm rag, for chickenpox. It was first gotten by a man who saw it in a dream and it said to him: "I am good for everything, to drink and to use externally too." It was this man who spread the knowledge of this medicine.[1]

For diarrhea a tea was made from the boiled roots of rose bush or cherry bush and drunk. For asthma and hay fever the vapor from juniper berries put in a pot of boiling water was considered helpful. Sage, in the very early days gathered and used only by sacred Pipe keepers, was later used by everybody: being rubbed and smelled for headache; the leaves especially the top ones, boiled and drunk for colds, coughs and tuberculosis.

The little daughter of Singer's husband, Iron Bucket, was "poisoned" [bewitched] on one occasion, when Singer was present, from some meat broth she had taken. After taking some of the broth, the little girl remarked "M-m-m this tastes funny." While Iron Bucket was telling stories, the little girl would interject from time to time the single word "moose." Finally she had a fit. They then gave her a lot of warm water as an emetic, and after she had vomited several times she recovered.

Raw liver and blood from a freshly butchered buffalo were considered as a cure for tuberculosis. Mary Ereaux' grandmother had told her that people would go after a man who had just butchered a buffalo to have him dip bits of the manifold in the warm blood and to have the children eat it as a delicacy.

Beaver oil from the oil sacs was used as medicine but we obtained no details.

[841] When a woman in her menses, or one who had been with a man the night before, entered the lodge of a sick person, the latter grew weaker. To protect the sick person fumigation was resorted to. Powdered beaver castor (always kept on hand if available, for this purpose) was put on live coals in a pan, and the patient without any clothing on, huddled beneath a blanket over the smoke so that it went all over the sick person's body.

757 Blood-letting was a common procedure, purely "rational" with no magic-religious element at all in it and calling for no "power"

[1] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, 226.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

INDUSTRIES AND IMPLEMENTS.

281 When a skin was brought in, it was hung on a sort of tripod, and with a chisel-like flesher of buffalo-leg bone the meat was removed. Then the hide was stretched on the ground to dry. When dried, the hair and thin coat of skin on the same side were cut off with the familiar implement of bent elk-horn, always provided, in recent times, with a metal blade. To make rawhide, nothing more was done. To make dressed skin, liver, grease, and brains, boiled and mixed in the proper proportion, were rubbed [177] or soaked into the skin and then removed with an ordinary scraper, now usually of sheet-iron or tin. Finally the skin was worked over with a rough stone or a bone. In preparing buffalo-skins for a tent, four steps were recognized: first, drying the skins; next, removing the hair; third, soaking them; and, last, scraping and working them over. Skins were softened by being drawn over a rope of buffalo-sinew.

281 342 476 When a woman had prepared enough buffalo-skins for a tent, she made a feast and invited other women who were skilful at making tents. The most expert of these fitted and tacked the skins together loosely, and the others sewed them fast. When a robe was to be embroidered, the woman who wanted to make it prepared food and invited other women to help her in her work. When the robe was finished, the man who was to receive it was called in, and it was given to him.

281 Caps of buffalo-skin were worn in winter. They were provided with flaps that were pulled down over the ears and held by a string fastened under the chin. Mittens of buffalo-skin were also used, tied together by a string which passed behind the neck. When the hunter was ready to shoot, he slipped his hands out of the mittens.

282 Simple flat unbraided ropes of rawhide were cut out of the skin in a long spiral. After having been cut, they were stretched between two sticks. In order to soften them, they were covered with manure, or tied to a horse that dragged them over the ground until they became pliable.

323 252 Pottery is declared to have been made formerly of clay mixed with crushed rock. Rawhide bags, drawn together at the top with a string, were also used for cooking by means of hot rocks. The often described Plains method of cooking in holes in the ground lined with rawhide was also followed.

372 When fire was struck with flint and steel, dry mushrooms were sometimes used as tinder.

411 Bows were most frequently made of cherry-wood, but sometimes of ash. Ash was harder and more elastic, but more brittle. Sinew backing was

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

221 224 well together during the ensuing summer months, a band or two moving off by themselves to rejoin the tribe in time to prepare for whatever Sacred Dances might have been scheduled, and parties of 10, 20, 30 or more men would go off to raid the enemy. Precautions had to be taken, too, against the ever-present danger of being raided by the enemy, especially by smaller groups separated from the main tribe as they went further and further from the center of their territory in quest of game.[8]

[281] The hides of buffalo killed during the spring and summer were used to make parfleshes, moccasin soles, lodge covers, ropes and the like. Fresh meat was usually plentiful although it was necessary to move six or eight times a summer to keep up with the buffalo, some smaller herds of which apparently remained in Montana in spite of the migration of the vast majority to the north. [222] Meantime as the various berries, wild fruits and wild roots ripened, collecting was done whenever opportunity offered, neither tribal nor band movements being determined, so far as we are aware, by that objective, but depending almost entirely on the whereabouts of the buffalo. During August and September, the rutting season, the buffalo joined in great milling masses leaving bare the surrounding range for many miles. The buffalo then separated into smaller herds again and by October, when the Gros Ventres started their concerted fall hunt, the buffalo were in prime condition, their coats sleek and fine.

The best time for robe hunting was approximately from October [251] 15 to November 15, but the hunt continued until all had sufficient meat dried and stored to see them through the winter. It was said that as many robes as possible were dressed with the fur on, and

[8] In this connection it is interesting to note that the old Cree, quoted by Thompson, pp. 329–30, after describing a drawn battle between the Snake and Piegan about 1730 concludes: ". . . night put an end to the battle without a scalp being taken on either side, and in those days such was the result, unless one party was more numerous than the other. The great mischief of war then, was as now [1786], by attacking and destroying small camps of 10–30 tents which are obliged to separate for hunting." Such was evidently still the case in the middle of the 19th century. Denig writes in 1854, pp. 548–50, that when the contending parties are nearly equal, little damage is done. The worst damage occurs, however, when 200 to 400 warriors surprise a camp of 20 to 30 lodges.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

In April, when the sap rises, the Gros Ventres scraped the juice from the inner bark peeled from cottonwood and sometimes even from box-elder. They also chewed the gum from pines. Infusions of cherry bark or roots and peppermint were said to have been drunk as tea, but such concoctions were considered usually more in the nature of medicines. 262 272

So long as the Gros Ventres had the buffalo, relatively little in the way of foodstuffs from the white man were imported. Sugar, flour, occasional fresh fruits, coffee and tea were known and used to some extent after about 1855.[10] The possibility of obtaining whiskey, was, however, one of the items which determined the popularity of a given trading place. Incidentally, tobacco was an important item of trade after 1800, although prior to that time the Gros Ventres had raised their own.[11] 262 439 [273] [276]

Clothing and Adornment

The importance of the buffalo in the economy of the Gros Ventres was as obvious in clothing and in shelter as it was in food. The buffalo robe, dressed with the hair on, was perhaps the most valuable article inasmuch as it was not only a regular part of their garb, but also was the main article of trade with the whites after about 1830. When decorated, it had high prestige value as a gift. 291 [439] [431]

Seldom was the hide of a buffalo older than two years used for robes since the fur of those of greater age was usually scabby even in the fall when the coats were in best condition. It required the skin of a yearling to make a robe for a twelve-year-old, and the skins of calves made robes for smaller children. When the demand of the trade for robes was very great, the large wool blanket sometimes replaced the robe for wearing apparel and for bedding.

Most of the other articles of clothing were made from well-dressed deer, elk and antelope skins.[12] Deer and elk were more 281 291

[10] See p. 22.

[11] This tradition is confirmed by Cocking in 1772, who writes, p. 111, "The tobacco they use is their own planting which hath disagreable flavor. I have preserved a specimen." Kroeber's informants denied knowledge of the tradition.

[12] In 1854 Denig, pp. 464–65, describes the cloth bought for clothing for summer and fall wear, but states that a real hunter must have a buffalo robe, moccasins, mittens, cap, skin leggings and an extra buffalo robe.

281 successfully hunted than antelope. While the finest clothing was
291 made from deer, elk was preferred for some purposes such as
[825] moccasins and warm shirts and coats—it being more durable but not equally as flexible.

291 For winter wear, caps and mittens of beaver or otter were made for men and boys. Beaver skin served as a breech clout for the men in winter, although antelope was preferred for this purpose the rest of the year, unless cloth were available, since the latter was more comfortable than hide which chafed the skin so badly.

292 Ordinarily unornamented clothing was worn, but for special
301 events, particularly when the whole tribe was together, everyone
237 dressed in his best. Being well-dressed was as important to the Gros Ventres as being well-mounted on ceremonial and social occasions. The effect on both the eye and the ear was taken into account in the ornamentation. Dyed porcupine quill embroidery lent color, and mica—first heated, then powdered and rubbed over a robe—glistened beautifully. Polished deer-hoofs as edging for a robe or dangling from leggings or garters "made such a nice sound when one walked." This feeling both for color and sound was carried over when material from the whites was at hand, beadwork tending to supplant the quill embroidery and scraps of bright colored cloth and of metal serving as "dangles." [18]

Elk teeth, however, were said to be "the greatest decoration of the Gros Ventres." They were used principally for girls' and women's dresses. Not so long ago there was a man at Hays who wore a vest trimmed with elk teeth, and people would say to him: "You crazy thing, only women have that kind of decoration!" But he was unconventional and would retort: "Well, I dance, too, and I want to look nice." Everyone would laugh, but he persisted
[727] in wearing that vest. Human hair as fringe and on moccasins was proudly worn by men who had taken scalps.

292 Mink, otter, weasel, muskrat and kit-fox were all used as trim-
237 mings, and occasionally the whole pelt of mink, otter or muskrat was made into a bag, or tobacco pouch, or other small container. Feathers, especially eagle feathers, were highly prized, and red

[18] For the detailed comparative analysis of Decorative Art of the Gros Ventres and other plains tribes, see Kroeber, 1908, pp. 151–79.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

224 would share at least the meat, if not the hides, with the less for-
476 tunate, which latter would contribute by helping skin and butcher.
[431] Butchering was quite an art and was considered the man's work, although occasionally women accompanied the hunting party if there were a shortage of men, as was liable to be the case especially in winter. Should the party have crossed a river to hunt, the meat was prepared for transportation on a raft by being cut into large chunks, and each two chunks skewered and joined by a thong of sufficient length to hang on the poles forming the raft. The raft was built by crossing two long poles at one end, the other ends
[316] free and forming an angle of about thirty degrees. Three or four shorter poles were placed crosswise and lashed firmly in place with rawhide. The paunch of the buffalo, after being washed out, was used as a container for the many leftover bits of meat and was tied to the middle of the lower rung of the raft. A whole beef could thus be loaded on such a raft and towed across by one horse-
man. When, as was more usually the case, the meat was to be
[492] packed back to camp by horses, the butchering was done differently but in such a way that a whole buffalo could be packed on a single
[251] horse.[8] Sometimes in winter when a small party went out and they could not pack all the meat back in one trip, the remainder was buried in the snow and called for the following day.

462 Once the proceeds of the hunt were turned over to the house-
281 holds of the individual hunters, it was the woman's task to cook the food for immediate consumption and to prepare the surplus for storage. Her most arduous and time-consuming task was the dressing of skins and the manufacture of these into finished articles of clothing, containers, lodge-covers, and so on. It was stated that skins in one stage of preparation or another were nearly always at hand.[9] "They didn't do things in a haphazard way because there was a certain time to do this and a certain time to do that." From the hides of buffalo killed during the spring and early summer, when the hair was not thick, they made the parfleshes and bags, soles for moccasins, rawhide ropes, and lodge-covers. In the fall, when the hide was furry, robes were made.

The older women informants described how, when they were

[8] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, p. 149.

[9] For some details on skin dressing, see Kroeber, 1908, p. 150.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The older women informants described, when they were young, they would work at scraping skins pegged to the ground, by leaning over from the waist, feet well apart and knees unbent, swinging sideways from the hips. They could keep up this rhythmical steady motion, with the short-handled scraper usually tipped with metal, for hours at a time, one day after another. Sometimes, too, a woman would spend a whole day softening ropes of rawhide by rubbing the rope which had been run through the eye and ear apertures of a buffalo skull upon which the horns had been left so that she, sitting on the ground with legs extended, could rest her feet against the horns as she pulled the rope back and forth, making it soft and white.[4] Nevertheless the tedium of these operations was often relieved by the fact that occasionally other women, who had at the moment some leisure, would hear the work going on and would volunteer to help.

It was customary for women to do much of their work in groups. If a young woman, for instance, wished to make a fine robe, she would call in some other women, including an older experienced "hand." The latter would mark the robe where the embroidery should go, and the younger women did the fancy work. The hostess would cook for all present and so, in a pleasant atmosphere of sociability and "woman talk," the work would progress. A similar type of gathering would be held when a sufficient number of hides had been saved to make a lodge cover.

In size the lodges ranged from six skins up to twenty-four or twenty-five, with the average of about fourteen to seventeen.[5] Much skill was needed for cutting and fitting the skins and an experienced woman would be called in to do that part, while the others helped with the task of sewing the skins together. Our informants stated that a woman would have to "save and save" skins towards a new lodge, which was a necessity about every three years.

Women went out in groups to pick berries and wild fruits as well as to dig roots, but each one had right of disposal over what

[4] Another method for softening ropes is given by Kroeber, 1908, p. 150.

[5] The largest lodge remembered by the Gros Ventres is said to have been that of the Blood Chief, Father of All, who had, at the time of the 1855 treaty, a lodge with two fires, poles 65 ft. long, and the cover consisting of more than 25 skins.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

ance with given practice it must have been carried away on a hill or elsewhere.[1] 782

[1] In 1948 The Boy gave a detailed description of the rite should the killer of an albino or "beaver" buffalo present the skin to the Pipe, rather than offer it as a sacrifice. He said that in this case, the man presented the green hide to the Pipe with a ritual directed by the keeper and included the painting of the donor. The keeper then called in two young women known to be expert tanners, received them ritually, and instructed them in procedures to be followed in tanning this particular hide. He made a crown, bracelets and anklets of twisted sage for each woman while singing a special song (not recorded by Cooper). When the hide was dressed there was a big feast at the keeper's lodge at which the keeper ritually painted the skin red. The keeper gave the donor of the skin the choice of any horse from all except one of his herd; to each of the women tanners he gave three valuable presents. [R.F.] [28] 30] [431]

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

INDUSTRIES AND IMPLEMENTS.

281 When a skin was brought in, it was hung on a sort of tripod, and with a chisel-like flesher of buffalo-leg bone the meat was removed. Then the hide was stretched on the ground to dry. When dried, the hair and thin coat of skin on the same side were cut off with the familiar implement of bent elk-horn, always provided, in recent times, with a metal blade. To make rawhide, nothing more was done. To make dressed skin, liver, grease, and brains, boiled and mixed in the proper proportion, were rubbed [177] or soaked into the skin and then removed with an ordinary scraper, now usually of sheet-iron or tin. Finally the skin was worked over with a rough stone or a bone. In preparing buffalo-skins for a tent, four steps were recognized: first, drying the skins; next, removing the hair; third, soaking them; and, last, scraping and working them over. Skins were softened by being drawn over a rope of buffalo-sinew.

281 When a woman had prepared enough buffalo-skins for a tent, she made a feast and invited other women who were skilful at making tents. The most 342 expert of these fitted and tacked the skins together loosely, and the others 476 sewed them fast. When a robe was to be embroidered, the woman who wanted to make it prepared food and invited other women to help her in her work. When the robe was finished, the man who was to receive it was called in, and it was given to him.

281 Caps of buffalo-skin were worn in winter. They were provided with flaps that were pulled down over the ears and held by a string fastened under the chin. Mittens of buffalo-skin were also used, tied together by a string which passed behind the neck. When the hunter was ready to shoot, he slipped his hands out of the mittens.

282 Simple flat unbraided ropes of rawhide were cut out of the skin in a long spiral. After having been cut, they were stretched between two sticks. In order to soften them, they were covered with manure, or tied to a horse that dragged them over the ground until they became pliable.

323 Pottery is declared to have been made formerly of clay mixed with crushed rock. Rawhide bags, drawn together at the top with a string, were 252 also used for cooking by means of hot rocks. The often described Plains method of cooking in holes in the ground lined with rawhide was also followed.

372 When fire was struck with flint and steel, dry mushrooms were sometimes used as tinder.

411 Bows were most frequently made of cherry-wood, but sometimes of ash. Ash was harder and more elastic, but more brittle. Sinew backing was

The older women informants described, when they were young, they would work at scraping skins pegged to the ground, by leaning over from the waist, feet well apart and knees unbent, swinging sideways from the hips. They could keep up this rhythmical steady motion, with the short-handled scraper usually tipped with metal, for hours at a time, one day after another. Sometimes, too, a woman would spend a whole day softening ropes of rawhide by rubbing the rope which had been run through the eye and ear apertures of a buffalo skull upon which the horns had been left so that she, sitting on the ground with legs extended, could rest her feet against the horns as she pulled the rope back and forth, making it soft and white.[4] Nevertheless the tedium of these operations was often relieved by the fact that occasionally other women, who had at the moment some leisure, would hear the work going on and would volunteer to help. 462 281 [516] [412] [283] [237] 462 476 281

It was customary for women to do much of their work in groups. If a young woman, for instance, wished to make a fine robe, she would call in some other women, including an older experienced "hand." The latter would mark the robe where the embroidery should go, and the younger women did the fancy work. The hostess would cook for all present and so, in a pleasant atmosphere of sociability and "woman talk," the work would progress. A similar type of gathering would be held when a sufficient number of hides had been saved to make a lodge cover. [531]

In size the lodges ranged from six skins up to twenty-four or twenty-five, with the average of about fourteen to seventeen.[5] Much skill was needed for cutting and fitting the skins and an experienced woman would be called in to do that part, while the others helped with the task of sewing the skins together. Our informants stated that a woman would have to "save and save" skins towards a new lodge, which was a necessity about every three years. [342]

Women went out in groups to pick berries and wild fruits as well as to dig roots, but each one had right of disposal over what 462 476

[4] Another method for softening ropes is given by Kroeber, 1908, p. 150.

[5] The largest lodge remembered by the Gros Ventres is said to have been that of the Blood Chief, Father of All, who had, at the time of the 1855 treaty, a lodge with two fires, poles 65 ft. long, and the cover consisting of more than 25 skins.

778 base, and 2½ inches in depth from top to bottom. The stem is
276 roundish in section, about 1½ inches in diameter at the distal end, tapering slightly to about 1⅛ toward the proximal. The stem is "humped a bit toward the middle," with a ring carved all round to which is attached a small tasseled string ornament believed to represent the hair rope with which He-who-starved-to-death snared the Red Bird. (For story see No. 5 in Appendix.) The
[283] Gros Ventre women used to make an adornment from "a growth looking like hair" which they gathered from the water and twisted into a strong thread, and The Boy thinks that this tasseled ornament on the Pipe is of the same material.

There is another ring carved around and the proximal end of the Pipe is carved in the shape of a "duck" head. Into the "duck's" bill is fitted a small stem,—about 1⅛ inches long and ¾ inch in diameter, projecting about ½ inch beyond the tip of the bill, encased in copper,—from which the Pipe was smoked.[8]

[532]

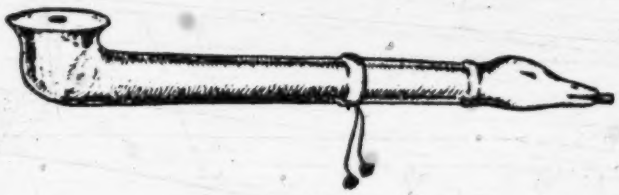


FIGURE 1. THE FLAT PIPE.

The whole Pipe is enclosed in its own numerous wrappings which form a separate case with its own three thong ties within the larger Pipe bundle. No one, it may be added, seems to know how the Flat Pipe got its name; there is nothing markedly "flat" about it, except the somewhat squat bowl.

778 The whole Pipe bundle contains many other sacred objects

[8] Kroeber, 1908, p. 272, gives a description of the Flat Pipe as being made of catlinite with the bowl in the shape of a person. Actually this sounds more like one of the objects in the Feathered Pipe bundle,—the so-called Image or Human Face. See p. 142. Kroeber's mention of a string around the center of the stem of the Flat Pipe, however, matches the description given us. [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539 773 he came out of the cave. As soon as the mother saw Blood-Clot she took wing and sailed into the air. There was a blinding flash of lightning and this was the last thing that Blood-Clot remembered. When he came to he found himself at the base of the mountain with his hair all singed up. He then collected himself and went back up to the top of the mountain. All this,—the flash of lightning, the becoming unconscious, finding himself at the base of the mountain, climbing it again,—took place four different times. The last time that Blood-Clot climbed the mountain he twisted the beaks of the young birds and taunted them with the words: "Tell your mother about this."

The next time, however, a big, black cloud appeared and came to the mountain. The father of the birds came. So soon as the father saw Blood-Clot there was a flash of lightning but after it Blood-Clot still stood there and said to the father: "You can't do anything with me. You can't kill me. You better leave me alone. It is useless for you to shoot at me. I will show you how powerful I am."

So Blood-Clot took an arrow and mounted it and shot at a big, flat stone on top of the mountain. The arrow pierced the stone and was buried in it, all but a bit of it that stuck out. "Look at that arrow there," said Blood-Clot to the father bird. "If you can pull it out from that rock then you can do something to me that will harm me. If you can't pull it out then it is useless for you, as I told you, to try to harm me." "All right," said the father. "I can do that. That is easy." So the bird sailed up in the air. As he did so, a flash of lightning struck at this rock. Then he tried to get hold of the arrow and pull it out. He took hold and flew up to pull it out and the arrow stretched and as it contracted it pulled the bird back as the father was caught fast by it.[14] Blood-Clot saw that the bills and feet of the father thunderbird and the other thunderbirds were of buffalo neck tendon. Thus Blood-Clot trapped the father. But he released the father saying to him: "Here is how powerful I am." And with that he pulled the arrow out with ease. Then he said to the bird: "Leave me alone. You can't do anything with me."

After that he came down from the mountain, went back home and told his wives what had happened. "No wonder," he said, "your father kills off the young men as he does. Tell your father that those birds up there could not do anything with me. You probably heard the thunder and lightning and disturbance up there while I was away. The birds were trying to kill me but they did not succeed." The girls then went back and told their father.

---

237 283 [14] Blood-Clot's arrow, The Boy explained, was made of buffalo tendon from the upper neck of the animal—the tendon that holds the neck to the body. This is very tough and stretches like rubber when it is taken out. This tendon had many uses, for instance, for mending the broken handle of a knife. When it was wrapped around anything it was stretched as much as possible and when it dried it held very tightly. The travois basket was tied on with the same tendon.

l: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

296 The feathers on this cap all have the quill split nearly as far down as the vanes extend. They are attached to one or perhaps more thongs painted 292 yellow, which form a continuous, or at least virtually continuous, expanding spiral of six or more turns from the centre of the head-dress to about one-third of the distance to the edge. This thong gathers several feathers, then passes for a short stitch through the skin of the cap, not penetrating to the under side. Thus it continues its spiral course, lying for almost its whole length on the upper surface of the cap. The feathers are all attached to it in one fundamental manner, the thong passing through a loop formed by the [284] turning-back on itself of the cut-down end of the quill. But three variations

[534]

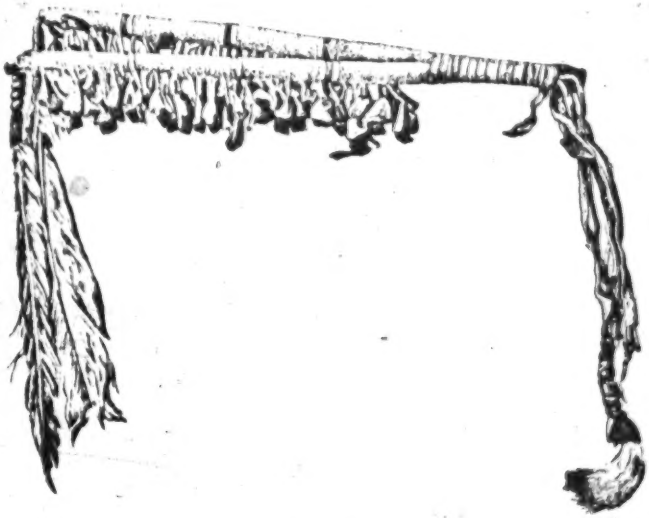


Fig. 39 (50-1789 a). Rattle of Dog-dancer, Highest-Degree. Length, 47 cm.

of this method appear. Sometimes the end of the quill is turned into itself. In other cases the end is bent forward in the same way, but laid over the outside of the quill, and lashed to it with wrapping of sinew. This sinew wrapping, however, is used also with the first method, though it is not absolutely essential. In other cases the end of the quill is bent backward on itself so that its inner side is out, and fastened in the same way. When this is done, a smaller feather has its quill inserted in the sinew wrapping holding the loop of the main feather. Why the quill should be looped backward whenever a small feather is included, and only then, is not clear. The area encircled by the thong with its hundreds of feathers strung on it is only a

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

INDUSTRIES AND IMPLEMENTS.

281 When a skin was brought in, it was hung on a sort of tripod, and with a chisel-like flesher of buffalo-leg bone the meat was removed. Then the hide was stretched on the ground to dry. When dried, the hair and thin coat of skin on the same side were cut off with the familiar implement of bent elk-horn, always provided, in recent times, with a metal blade. To make rawhide, nothing more was done. To make dressed skin, liver, grease, and brains, boiled and mixed in the proper proportion, were rubbed or soaked into the skin and then removed with an ordinary scraper, now [177] usually of sheet-iron or tin. Finally the skin was worked over with a rough stone or a bone. In preparing buffalo-skins for a tent, four steps were recognized: first, drying the skins; next, removing the hair; third, soaking them; and, last, scraping and working them over. Skins were softened by being drawn over a rope of buffalo-sinew.

281 When a woman had prepared enough buffalo-skins for a tent, she made a feast and invited other women who were skilful at making tents. The most 342 expert of these fitted and tacked the skins together loosely, and the others 476 sewed them fast. When a robe was to be embroidered, the woman who wanted to make it prepared food and invited other women to help her in her work. When the robe was finished, the man who was to receive it was called in, and it was given to him.

281 Caps of buffalo-skin were worn in winter. They were provided with flaps that were pulled down over the ears and held by a string fastened under the chin. Mittens of buffalo-skin were also used, tied together by a string which passed behind the neck. When the hunter was ready to shoot, he slipped his hands out of the mittens.

282 Simple flat unbraided ropes of rawhide were cut out of the skin in a long spiral. After having been cut, they were stretched between two sticks. In order to soften them, they were covered with manure, or tied to a horse that dragged them over the ground until they became pliable.

323 Pottery is declared to have been made formerly of clay mixed with crushed rock. Rawhide bags, drawn together at the top with a string, were 252 also used for cooking by means of hot rocks. The often described Plains method of cooking in holes in the ground lined with rawhide was also followed.

372 When fire was struck with flint and steel, dry mushrooms were sometimes used as tinder.

411 Bows were most frequently made of cherry-wood, but sometimes of ash. Ash was harder and more elastic, but more brittle. Sinew backing was

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

M1
531

fifteenth type may be regarded as comprising the moccasins in which a single figure of very variable shape, but always comparatively small, occupies the centre of the otherwise unbroken front area. The U-figure is sometimes symmetrically angular. The cross can also be regarded as a development of the stripe; but, as its shape is almost invariably maltese and not rectangular, it is perhaps usually an independently developed figure.[1]

The Gros Ventre moccasins shown belong to types *d* (Fig. 3), *i* (Plate VIII, Fig. 3), and *j* (Plate VIII, Fig. 2). The moccasin in Plate VIII, Fig. 1, does not belong clearly to any of the typical forms.

[291]

Fig. 3 (50-1824 a). Moccasin. Length, 19 cm.

The stripe-border figures constitute a majority of Arapaho moccasin designs. They occur on Cheyenne moccasins in at least a considerable number of cases. All forms of these designs are found on Sioux and Assiniboine moccasins, but all together on only one among every three or four pieces. Among the Kiowa and Comanche, many moccasins depend for ornamentation on fringes and painting as much as on bead-work: the latter in such cases consists of narrow white edging, which usually follows the stripe and border designs. Among the Ute the proportion of stripe and border designs reaches a very high proportion, even the majority of solidly beaded moccasins being of this type. Of nearly twenty Ute moccasins in the Museum, all but two are of the stripe-border pattern.[2] The related and neighboring Shoshone, however, use this pattern rarely; and the same is true of the Gros Ventre. The Crow use the stripe considerably, but usually with some modification or addition (such as the feather-design element), and only rarely in combination with the border. The Blackfeet lack stripe-border designs almost entirely.

[1] Sioux and Arapaho moccasins with the three types of designs have been illustrated in Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII. Examples of the stripe-border class of moccasins are shown in Plate I, 1–8; Fig. 5, b–f; Plate II, 3; Plate III, 1, 3, 4; Plate IV, 1; Fig. 6; Plates XXXVIII, 2, 4, 6, and XXXIX, 6; and Figs. 96 and 98. Moccasins of the second class are shown in Fig. 5, a; Plates III, 2, and XXXVIII, 1 (red-line pattern); Fig. 5, e; and Plate LIV, 2 (checker-pattern). Moccasins with the third type of ornamentation are shown as follows: Four-squares, Plates XXXVIII, 1, and LII, 2; transverse-zigzag, Plates III, 5, and XXXVIII, 5; angle-across, Plates II, 2, XXXIX, 2, and Fig. 97; round-head, Plates LII, 1, and LIV, 1; cross, Plates I, 8, and XXXIX, 5; bird, Plate XXXIX, 4; a small figure in the centre, Plates II, 4, 5, LII, 3, and LIV, 3.

[2] These two show the round-head and the angle-across designs, which reach great frequency among the Shoshone and Gros Ventre.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

A wife inherited practically nothing from her husband. If she had been faithful to him and had been of a good disposition, her parents-in-law might give her a certain number of horses or other property. The tent was considered the woman's possession while she lived with her husband; but on his death, even this was no longer her property. If the tent was worth keeping at all, it generally went to the dead man's sister, if she was newly married. A man, on the contrary, inherited his wife's property, though he generally gave back part of it to her relatives. 428 562 [422]

A woman, on her husband's death, went back to live with her parents, or, if these were dead, with her brother, uncle, or other relative. An old woman, on the death of her husband, generally went to live with her children, most frequently with a daughter. 768

On the death of a brother, especially a beloved one, or of his father or his son, a man cut his hair and went out naked (with only a buffalo robe) on the prairie to cry from morning until late at night. Women, besides cutting their hair, and cutting themselves (especially on the leg) until they bled, would also go out to cry, naked from the waist up. A sister cut herself for a brother, but a mother mourning for a child underwent the most pain. Of course the mourning was greatest for an only child. In such a case, parents might give away everything in their tent and nearly all their horses, stripping themselves of property so thoroughly as almost to go naked. Some mourners fasted for a number of days. If, while a person was crying on the prairie, one should in joke attempt to scare him, he might kill the disturber. Mourners were the bravest people in war, caring about no danger whatever. 765 [304] [431]

Burial was in trees, on high rocks, or in caves inaccessible to wolves and coyotes. The corpse was wrapped in a burial robe. 764

A menstruating woman was called niniitixtj. It is said that she did not retire to a separate lodge, or eat separately from her family; but she did not approach a sick patient, because of the evil effect she would have on his condition by her presence. Some women were said to wear a breech-cloth during their menstruation. 841 [291]

In childbirth, women either lay or knelt. They grasped a stick supported in a horizontal position by two upright forked sticks set in the ground. After the umbilical cord had been severed, the end was left on the child. It was thought to fall off on the fourth day. The woman who had cut the umbilical cord received as a gift the knife she had used. A woman who washed a new-born child was given the vessel in which it was washed. The afterbirth was hung in a tree. If it were left lying to be handled, the child would be afflicted with sores. For three or four days after birth, the child was given suck by other women than its mother. This statement apparently refers chiefly to a woman's first child. 844 [846]

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Recently these two bodies of young men performing respectively the star-dance and the war-dance have supplanted entirely the older, more numerous age-companies. In late years they have taken the place of the age-companies in the ceremonies connected with the erection of the sun-dance lodge. There was then considerable rivalry between them, and it is said that a member of either company who should take part with the other would be abused by his companions, and perhaps have his clothes torn. Recently also the two groups have had certain social functions, which among most Plains tribes are in the hands of tribal bodies or societies. They had charge of the moving of the camp-circle and of locating it. If a man disapproved of their selection, or pitched his tent elsewhere than they directed, they overturned it, and perhaps destroyed his property or killed his horses. If buffalo were seen and others than themselves went ahead and killed them, these two companies cut both the meat and the skin of such game into small pieces. 178 561 796 [625]

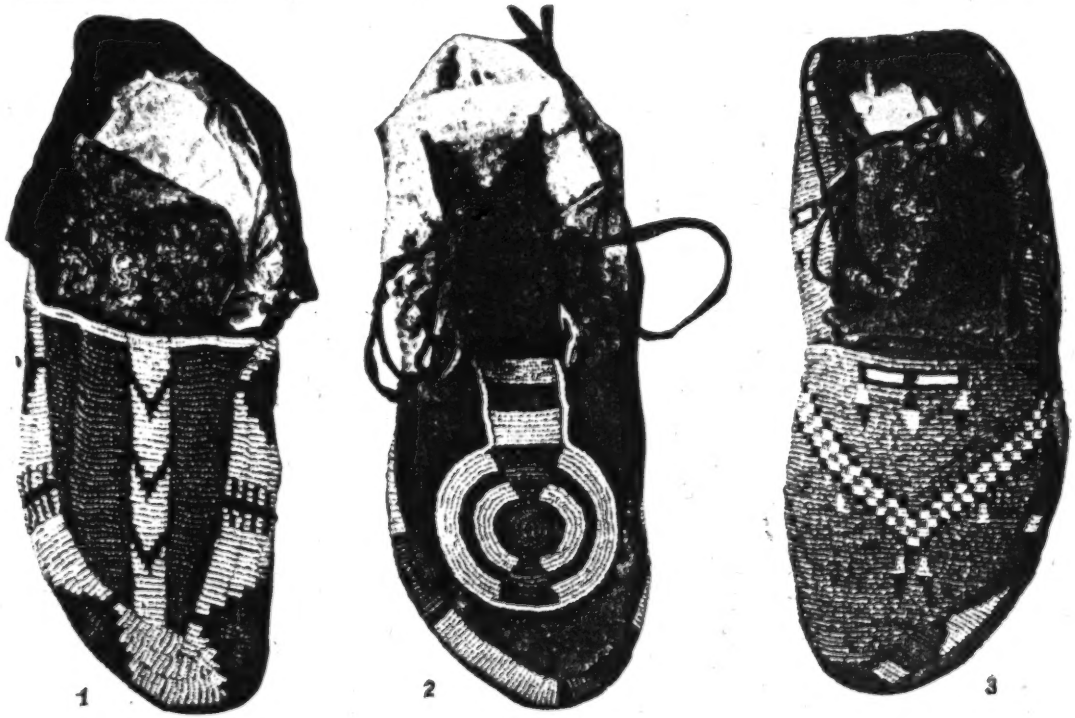
The Fly-Dance.

The fly-dance (nouba^{n}w^{n}), the first of the dances, seems to have been regarded in some ways as preliminary to the series, rather than part of it, somewhat like the Arapaho kit-fox and star dances. The dancers were called noubän ("flies"). They were young men, sometimes described as boys. Apparently they were of an age where many or all of them were still unmarried, for no mention of their wives participating in the ceremony is made. The duration of the dance is not quite sure. It is said, like all the other ceremonies, to have continued four days; but another informant gave one day as the length of the ceremony. It is not clear whether or not a lodge was erected for the ceremony. In any case, however, the dance was performed outside of the camp-circle. A prominent feature seems to have been the food cooked by the relatives of the young dancers, and brought to the dancing-place. In distinction from what occurred in the other dances, "grandfathers" were secured very easily for this ceremony, which goes to show the light regard in which it was held by the elder men. The old men of the tribe are said to have gone out to the dancing-place, and, on being selected by groups of dancers as "grandfathers," to have accepted at once. 796

The dancing went on during the day. The dancers were practically naked; and their entire body, as customary in Arapaho and Gros Ventre ceremonies, was painted over. A common style of painting, or perhaps the characteristic one of the dance, was red, with a white stripe on the face and another on the belly. The pledger of the dance (yenouhuxtj^{1}; Arapaho, yanahut^{1}) was painted yellow, with corresponding black stripes. After the [29 302]

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

291
531



MOCCASINS.

[End plate 1]

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

In April, when the sap rises, the Gros Ventres scraped the juice from the inner bark peeled from cottonwood and sometimes even from box-elder. They also chewed the gum from pines. Infusions of cherry bark or roots and peppermint were said to have been drunk as tea, but such concoctions were considered usually more in the nature of medicines. 262 272

So long as the Gros Ventres had the buffalo, relatively little in the way of foodstuffs from the white man were imported. Sugar, flour, occasional fresh fruits, coffee and tea were known and used to some extent after about 1855.[10] The possibility of obtaining whiskey, was, however, one of the items which determined the popularity of a given trading place. Incidentally, tobacco was an important item of trade after 1800, although prior to that time the Gros Ventres had raised their own.[11] 262 439 [273] [276]

Clothing and Adornment

The importance of the buffalo in the economy of the Gros Ventres was as obvious in clothing and in shelter as it was in food. The buffalo robe, dressed with the hair on, was perhaps the most valuable article inasmuch as it was not only a regular part of their garb, but also was the main article of trade with the whites after about 1830. When decorated, it had high prestige value as a gift. 291 [439] [431]

Seldom was the hide of a buffalo older than two years used for robes since the fur of those of greater age was usually scabby even in the fall when the coats were in best condition. It required the skin of a yearling to make a robe for a twelve-year-old, and the skins of calves made robes for smaller children. When the demand of the trade for robes was very great, the large wool blanket sometimes replaced the robe for wearing apparel and for bedding.

Most of the other articles of clothing were made from well-dressed deer, elk and antelope skins.[12] Deer and elk were more 281 291

[10] See p. 22.

[11] This tradition is confirmed by Cocking in 1772, who writes, p. 111, "The tobacco they use is their own planting which hath disagreable flavor. I have preserved a specimen." Kroeber's informants denied knowledge of the tradition.

[12] In 1854 Denig, pp. 464–65, describes the cloth bought for clothing for summer and fall wear, but states that a real hunter must have a buffalo robe, moccasins, mittens, cap, skin leggings and an extra buffalo robe.

successfully hunted than antelope. While the finest clothing was made from deer, elk was preferred for some purposes such as moccasins and warm shirts and coats—it being more durable but not equally as flexible.

For winter wear, caps and mittens of beaver or otter were made for men and boys. Beaver skin served as a breech clout for the men in winter, although antelope was preferred for this purpose the rest of the year, unless cloth were available, since the latter was more comfortable than hide which chafed the skin so badly.

Ordinarily unornamented clothing was worn, but for special events, particularly when the whole tribe was together, everyone dressed in his best. Being well-dressed was as important to the Gros Ventres as being well-mounted on ceremonial and social occasions. The effect on both the eye and the ear was taken into account in the ornamentation. Dyed porcupine quill embroidery lent color, and mica—first heated, then powdered and rubbed over a robe—glistened beautifully. Polished deer-hoofs as edging for a robe or dangling from leggings or garters "made such a nice sound when one walked." This feeling both for color and sound was carried over when material from the whites was at hand, beadwork tending to supplant the quill embroidery and scraps of bright colored cloth and of metal serving as "dangles." [18]

Elk teeth, however, were said to be "the greatest decoration of the Gros Ventres." They were used principally for girls' and women's dresses. Not so long ago there was a man at Hays who wore a vest trimmed with elk teeth, and people would say to him: "You crazy thing, only women have that kind of decoration!" But he was unconventional and would retort: "Well, I dance, too, and I want to look nice." Everyone would laugh, but he persisted in wearing that vest. Human hair as fringe and on moccasins was proudly worn by men who had taken scalps.

Mink, otter, weasel, muskrat and kit-fox were all used as trimmings, and occasionally the whole pelt of mink, otter or muskrat was made into a bag, or tobacco pouch, or other small container. Feathers, especially eagle feathers, were highly prized, and red

[18] For the detailed comparative analysis of Decorative Art of the Gros Ventres and other plains tribes, see Kroeber, 1908, pp. 151–79.

593 alluded to or occur in the presence of either his father or mother. To appear unclothed in each other's presence would be embarass-
[241] ing to father and son alike. A woman refrained from any conversation or action that would call the attention of her father to the fact that she was menstruating or pregnant. An example of the
[845] attitude in this regard came to attention recently. "A woman, who was walking along the road near her house one evening, suffered a miscarriage. Instead of being taken to her own house nearby she insisted on being taken to a neighbor's, her reason being that her father and a few of his friends had been at her home when she had left and she would be 'ashamed' to appear in front of him in her condition."

It would seem that in some ways mothers had closer ties with their daughters and fathers with their sons. If, for example, parents disagreed about something their children did, each took up for the child of like sex. A man said to his wife: "You leave the boy alone, he's *my* boy," and a woman would say the same regarding the daughter. Or had a child done something to disgrace the parents, the wife was likely to upbraid her husband, if a boy were the culprit, by telling him: "Your son did so-and-so!" Should
[597] the daughter have been at fault, her father would speak in similar vein to his wife. In cases of adoption, too, a woman claimed a girl and a man, a boy.

On the other hand, in circumstances where parents could publicly show pride in their children, it often happened that a woman gave presents away in honor of her son and a man in honor of his daughter. It was customary, too, that if a young man had done something especially noteworthy at war, anyone could approach his mother and ask for whatever was wanted, and she would give it. Middle-aged women, whose sons were in World War II, joked with each other along these lines when news of their sons came from the front. Unfortunately, however, adverse economic circumstances precluded the full carrying out of the custom.

604 Attitudes of respect and reserve between parents and children
601 are extended to include all of parents' siblings and their spouses, special emphasis being put on father's sister and mother's brother. Kinship terms reflect this situation. The term "father" includes father's brother, male cousin, mother's sister's husband; "mo-

604 man, but his maternal uncle would be given the greatest amount of credit for his nephew's prowess, and he would rejoice more than the others in his nephew's successes.

426 A nephew could, if he wished, use his uncle's property without asking permission. If he damaged the property so borrowed, how-
604 ever, the uncle might reprimand him severely. Sometimes an uncle took the initiative and told one of his nephews: "All that I have is yours." In such a case, not only would the nephew be free to use the property without asking, but even if it were damaged—say a borrowed horse was carelessly injured or lost,—nothing would be said by the uncle nor any punishment inflicted. A nephew was supposed to be very respectful toward his uncle, but was freer with him than he could be with his own father. He could, for instance, joke with his uncle about being a lady's man, but he
[834] could not go too far in referring to sexual matters. He would not
[291] feel quite so embarrassed if his uncle should happen to see him unclothed, as would be the case with his father or his brother-in-law, but he would be far from comfortable in that situation.

604 The relationship between a man and his sister's daughter was not as direct as that between him and his sister's son. If a woman died, leaving orphan girls, it was not unusual that the wife of her brother would say: "I am going to take these girls so that I can have a son-in-law through them." This is what happened to Coming Daylight and her sister, whose maternal uncle took responsibility for them, although they were actually trained by his mother. It was he who arranged their marriages and it was to him they returned when widowed or divorced. His sons took the place of brothers to these two orphans.

While he did not take on the role of disciplinarian to his sister's daughters, whether or not their parents were living, the maternal uncle was expected to be generous to his nieces and to show his regard by giving things away in their honor. If a maternal uncle asked a niece for anything she possessed, she was supposed to give it to him without question, even though at considerable cost to herself. "Coming Daylight was asked by her uncle for the elk teeth she owned, to exchange with a Crow who had offered him an excellent race horse in return. She gave up these valuables without a word, though she hated to part with them since she did not know

PLATES

142 The original photograph of Plate 1 was taken in 1887 and
291 belongs to The Boy. Shown in it are Lame Bull, The Boy's
301 father, and Crow Bull, maternal uncle of Coming Daylight. Both
302 of these men were born around 1825 and their personal experiences were often referred to by our informants as we took down the record of the old way of life. Each had been Keeper of the sacred Flat Pipe.

115 The photographs composing Plate 2, except for the one of The
133 Boy, were taken in 1940 by Dr. Karl F. Herzfeld. The first three
142 show the nature of the country around Hays on the Fort Belknap
291 Reservation; the other three show some of our informants and
292 interpreters whose biographical sketches follow.

531 In Plate 3, the shield and war medicines of Bull Lodge, father
797 of our informant, Garter Snake, represent only a few of the specimens of Gros Ventre culture collected in 1937 by Mr.
778 Richard Pohrt, of Flint, Michigan.
293
714
721

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

142
291
301
302

PLATE I

LEFT TO RIGHT: LAME BULL, BIRD SITTING, BLACK BIRD AND CROW BULL

(Photo by Dan Dutro, Fort Benton, Montana, 1887)

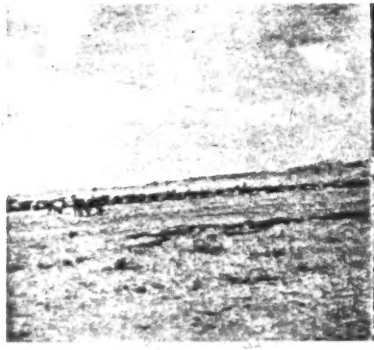
[p. 212 (A)]

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

115
133
142
291
292
531

IN THE LITTLE ROCKIES

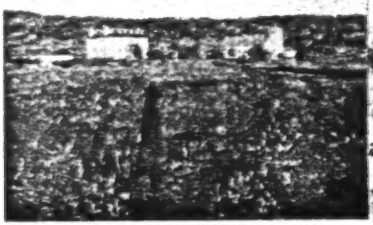
THE BOY



PLAINS NEAR HAYS

MARY, SINGER, AND COMING DAYLIGHT

[342]
[797]



ST. PAUL'S MISSION AND SCHOOL

COMING DAYLIGHT'S TIPI

PLATE II

[p. 212 (B)]

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

293 used in this way. The owner twice dreamed of a weasel, which told him to
726 use its skin. Thereupon he first wore a weasel-skin in dances, and later
751 carried it to war. Subsequently he lent it to his son and to other men who
778 went to war, and they always returned successfully.

A man to whom a fisher had appeared in a dream or vision used a fish-
[787] skin medicine-bag, and on going to war carried this with him.

A renowned warrior, dead for some time, received his personal medicine from the bears, and was forbidden to scalp, count coup on the enemy, or take away a gun. He could only kill. He once killed two Sioux with one shot, at a place which received its name from the event.

A simple riding-whip (specimen Museum No. 50-1821) has on its wooden
[492] handle four red marks, each of which is said to represent an enemy struck in the face with a whip in battle.

Representations, used in the modern "war-dance," of the weapons of
532 Black-Wolf, a well-known Gros Ventre warrior, part of whose experiences
726 in war are told below, consist of a shield and spear. The shield, which is made of painted white cloth, represents the shield carried by him on an occasion when he rushed to battle with no other weapon. The shield is decorated with a blue crescent along the lower edge, representing the sun, and bordered by a wavy red line denoting lightning. The wooden spear and spear-point
[822] represent a spear with which the owner stabbed a Piegan in battle. The spear-point is painted blue and red; the blue representing iron, the red blood. Red marks on the handle of the spear represent coups.

A pair of beaded and painted moccasins executed by a woman, but
[292] designed by an old man, symbolize his exploits in war. An outside rim of beading represents the enemy's camp-circle. In the middle of the camp-circle is beaded the figure of a tent belonging to a chief. To this tent was tied a horse, which the wearer of the moccasins cut loose. This feat is represented by an outline painting of a horse and halter. Three U-shaped figures, also painted, are horse-tracks, and represent the capture of horses. On the other moccasin there are again three such figures in a row, which here were said to indicate a charge on horseback on the camp; while two other such figures, facing each other, indicate a face-to-face fight.

Curtains hanging behind the bed in front of the tent-wall were sometimes painted to illustrate the owner's achievements in war.

WAR-EXPERIENCES OF INDIVIDUALS.

114 The following narratives give an entirely personal account of the war-
115 experiences of three individuals, two of them men of about sixty years of

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Fig. 33 shows one of the small quill-wrapped hoops carried on a stick in the fly-dance. It is about three inches across, and lacks the feathers once attached to it. The hoop is not continuous, but consists of four slightly curved sticks. Each of these is wound with yellow quills, and in the middle with black (really dark-brown) fibres. The quill-wrapping encloses a sinew strand, which passes from one stick to the other, holding them together into a flexible, somewhat four-cornered hoop. At each of the four dark marks an eagle-plume was formerly attached, and in addition an eagle-feather (specimen Museum No. 50-1936b) was hung from the hoop. This hoop was made, for the man from whom it was obtained, at the time he took part in the fly-dance. 796 293

The Crazy-Dance.

The second ceremony, the crazy-dance, corresponds pretty closely to the Arapaho crazy-dance. When it was summer, and the time came to make the ceremony in fulfilment of the pledge previously given, the different bands of the tribe gathered in a single camp-circle. Certain men, leaving this camp, then went out to select a suitable site for the dance. When they had found this, the camp started for the place, while they made piles of buffalo-chips in a circle, indicating the place for the camp. The company about to make the ceremony gathered at night, and, taking a pipe of black stone, went stealthily to the tent of an old man whom they had selected to put up the lodge (that is, direct the ceremony) for them. They entered his tent while he was sleeping, woke him, and handed him the pipe. When he signified his acceptance by taking it, they kissed him in thanks, and made him presents. After he had smoked the pipe, he told them to obtain "grandfathers," which they did. 796

When the preparations had begun to be made, crows and owls were killed by the dancers, because they used their feathers. The dancers' regalia consisted of anklets of badger-skin and of quill-embroidered leg-lets, to both of which four crow-feathers and buffalo-fetlocks, or antelope-hoofs, were attached as ornaments and rattles. Around the head they wore a narrow strip of skin embroidered with quill-work, to which an owl's head was tied on one side. Around their necks hung another quill-embroidered thong, at the end of which was a whistle of eagle-wing bone. A buffalo robe painted red was worn. A round hole was cut in this through which the head was put, so that the dancers did not have to hold the garment in place. The piece cut out for the head was not entirely detached, but left hanging down the back. Two long streamers of skin hung down the back [825] [292] [534]

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

an enemy; and each took from among the property as nearly as possible such objects as he had actually captured in war. One who had stolen horses would take a horse; one who had taken a gun from an enemy would pick out a gun. While this was being done, or soon after, the dancers were dancing, concluding with a race similar to that in the crazy-dance. This marked the end of the ceremony. 796

There were several degrees of distinction in this dance. Two men had crooked lances wrapped with otter-skin. In four places these lances were tied about with small strips of white fur from which a pair of eagle-feathers hung. These lances were called nouçä"ts'ta". Two other lances were straight, and wrapped with jack-rabbit skin. These also bore feathers. A single dancer had a rattle of the globular shape common on the Plains. Half of the rattle was painted red, and half blue; and feathers were attached both to the top of the rattle and to the bottom of its handle. These regalia of honor were given to men renowned in war. A pipe was brought such a man, and if he thought himself entitled to the honor, and was ready to accept it, he took the pipe. If a man felt that others were really braver than himself, or had some other reason, he refused to take the pipe. One informant stated that he had declined the proffered honor because his wife's brother had recently died. The rank and file of the kit-fox dancers are said to have worn belts of prairie-dog skin. How far these corresponded with the biitaha"wu belts of the Arapaho is uncertain. The fur-wrapped crooked and straight lances are certainly similar to the crooked and straight lances indicating the second and third degrees in the Arapaho biitaha"wu. 796 554 293 [534]

Two girls took part in this ceremony. They were girls who were much thought of and beloved by their relatives. One of the dancers carried a kit-fox skin, the inside of which was painted blue. His companion had the rattle that has been described. While he rattled, the other, holding the skin by the neck and the tail, pointed it at the other dancers. These ran off, and this seems to have been the signal for the beginning of the dance. The two girls followed these two men everywhere. Their parents and relatives gave away great quantities of property in the dancing-lodge. Something similar is found in one of the Cheyenne society-dances, in which four young women accompanied the dancers from place to place. 796 857 593 [171]

Nothing was learned about the origin of the kit-fox dance, except that it is said to have been given by the kit-foxes, which is like what the Cheyenne tell of their analogous society. 796

A neck-band of badger-skin is the only object secured said to have been used in the kit-fox dance. To the end of it a tip of whitish rabbit-fur is attached. The lower part of the piece, which bears this rabbit-fur, hangs down the dancer's back. The upper portion, which is about four inches wide, is slit for a distance of a foot. Through this slit the head is inserted. [292]

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The Dog-Dance.

796 Next after the kit-fox dance is the dog-dance, hotibya^{n}wu. The dancers were called hotibyi ("dogs"). What has been said about the general course of the kit-fox ceremony applies also to this. On the last day, the dancers danced before the tents of several prominent men of the tribe for gifts. Then, going ahead of the route which the camp would take, they spread out this property and waited. When the camp arrived, a stick with rattles attached, similar to that used for the same purpose in the crazy-dance, was struck on the ground by one of the old men, whereupon the singing commenced, and the dancers danced four times. At the end of the fourth song, they raced, during which time, if not before, the people of the camp, it appears, seized the property.

The dog-dance is said to have been given by a dog. A long-haired dog was left behind when the camp left. An old man going into the hills to acquire supernatural power saw the dog following the trail, and, wondering, went to see, and pitied him. He went to sleep by him; and the dog, knowing the old man's pity for him, pitied him, and, appearing to him in a dream, said he would give him a dance, the dog-dance. He especially described to him the highest degree of the dance, the tsööyanchi, which seems to be a representation of himself.

796 The dancers wore a strip of skin or red cloth on which four round figures
292 were embroidered in quills, and which passed over one shoulder and under the other, the lower end dragging on the ground. At this end there was a hole, through which, in time of war, a stick was stuck. The wearers then did not flee, even if to remain resulted in their being killed. These scarfs appear to have resembled closely the scarfs worn by the Arapaho dancers of the second and third degree in the same ceremony. They were called naa^{n}tsöiya^{n}. In addition the dancers wore bunchy head-dresses of owl feathers and of two eagle-feathers. They also carried rattles of a stick on which hoofs were hung.

796 Two men were of higher degree, that is to say, honored on account of
554 bravery. These were the "shaggy dogs," and were called tsööyanchin, the
292 dialectic equivalent of the Arapaho teiiyanchina^{n}. Among the Arapaho, however, there is only one dancer of this highest degree. As among the Arapaho, these men did not get up, or take part in the dancing, unless they were struck, or driven to it. They wore a shirt all over which circles were fastened in *appliqué*. To the centre of each circle, feathers were attached. On their heads they had owl-feather bunches like those of the rank and file of the dancers; and around their necks were long strings of bear-claws.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

They also had rattles similar to those of the rank and file of dog-dancers,— a row of small hoofs attached to a stick, — except that the rattles of the tsôôyanchin were forked instead of single. In addition they each had a long wooden whistle. 796 554 292

Some of the "grandfathers" are said also to have worn scarfs, like the dancers; but as these were made of pieces of old tent-skins, undecorated and ugly, it is probable that this action was intended to be ridiculous.

The "shaggy dog" took his whistle, forked rattle, and head-dress with him when he went to the lodge, but left his crow-feather-covered shirt behind. When he was in the lodge, a woman was sent for the shirt. She put it on, and went to the lodge, wearing it. Standing before the "shaggy dog," she pulled it off, and, holding it open at the bottom, moved four times as if to put it on him. The fourth time, she drew it over and on him. The place of the two "shaggy dogs" in the lodge was at the western end, the middle of the back.

The dog-lodge is described as having been constructed like the crazy-lodge, and to have had the same small screen or partial enclosure at the eastern end, facing the entrance of the lodge. 796 [346]

The beginning of the dancing was as follows. One of the old men who would sing, went in a circle four times. He was followed by the two "shaggy dogs." The old man began to sing and dance, and the two "shaggy dogs" whistled. When they moved to any distance away from him, the old man motioned and clicked to them, as one does to a dog. Then they danced toward him. After this, the rank and file of the dancers stood up and danced. Four servants of the dance, said to have been chiefs, sat in front of the small enclosure at the east. When they thought that the dancers had danced long enough, one of these went among them and said, "Friends, rest." Thereupon they all stopped dancing, standing in their places. Then this man told a war story. When the singers thought that the dancers had rested sufficiently, they began to sing and the members of the company took up their dancing again. Altogether they danced four times, being made to rest each time by the exhortation of an old man who told a war story. This dancing took place four days, during which period the dancers were supposed not to sleep.

When at night the dancers left the lodge and danced before the tents of chiefs, begging for gifts, the two "shaggy dogs" are said to have stood by the door of the tent. It is therefore probable that the body of the dancers formed a circle in front of the tent, as they do among the Arapaho on this occasion. When the owner of the tent had given them property, he pulled at the flaps hanging at the sides of the feather-covered shirts of the "shaggy dogs," whereupon they sat down and the dancing ceased. This dancing for gifts is said to have continued for four entire nights. [431]

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 As in the other ceremonies, the dancers were painted over the entire
302 body. It does not seem that the long-continued painting of the Arapaho
562 dog-dance, in connection with which the relationship between the dancers' wives and "grandfathers" found its chief expression in this tribe, existed among the Gros Ventre. The women, however, took considerable part in the ceremony as in the others, being painted with their husbands, sitting in the lodge and singing, and at times putting on their regalia; whereupon the men took hold of the ends of the regalia, and their wives led them about.

796 The complete disintegration and disuse of the old ceremonial life of
178 the Gros Ventre is shown by the fact that not a single dog-dance object belonging to an ordinary dancer has been collected. It is therefore the more fortunate that the Museum has been able to complete, through Dr. Clark Wissler, a valuable set of the regalia of the highest degree of this dance. This unique group of specimens is shown in Figs. 38, 39, and 40, and Plate XIII.

796 The coat (Fig. 38) is in shape an ordinary deer-skin shirt. At the neck
292 is an edging of red flannel. On the upper arms are two short, transverse bars of white quill-embroidery, the quills laid on in diagonal zigzag stitch. At each of the sides, at the bottom of the shirt, hang two long, pointed strips, as customary on men's shirts, — the legs of the animal decoratively used. Under the armpits are similar shorter flaps. The two sides of the shirt are open from the bottom to under the arms. These open edges, the hanging strips, the lower border, and the ends of the sleeves, are ornamented with a fringe about an inch long. The lower portion of the shirt for a width of about half a foot, and the hanging strips, are painted yellow. All the remainder of the shirt has been stained brown, apparently over yellow paint. On the two sides there are in this brown area a total of 225 yellow circles about an inch and a half in diameter, which have not been painted over with the brown stain. Each of these circles is edged by white quill-work, and from its centre hangs a mutilated crow-feather by a thong. The edging of the circles is produced by using single quills as threads in an in-and-out rotary stitch. The crow-feathers have the quill broken, in from one to four places, without being severed. The vanes are for the most part considerably disarranged, as if intentionally. At the lower end the feathers are cut off square and the quill is flattened by cutting on two sides, as if to get rid of the lowest part of the vane. The quill is cut in this way so far from its natural base that it is entirely solid. The feathers are simply wrapped against a thong with sinew. The end of the thong projects a little beyond the sinew. The thongs on the outside of the skin average half an inch in length, and are painted yellow. Each passes through a hole in the centre of a yellow circle. Behind this, that is, on the inner side of the shirt, it is

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796
292

knotted on itself sufficiently to keep from being pulled out. Of the circles, forty-two are on one sleeve, forty-three on the other; on the two sides of the shirt there are sixty-three and seventy-seven, in seven and eight rows of from six to thirteen.

The owl-feather head-dress of this set of regalia (see Plate XIII) contains

Fig. 38 (50-4277). Dog-dance Shirt, Highest Degree. Length, 70 cm.

several hundred feathers mounted on a skin cap. This cap is of heavy skin, circular, somewhat over a foot in diameter, and surrounded by a short fringe. The inner ends of this fringe are wound with white porcupine-quills. The upper surface of the cap is painted yellow, the under side is unpainted. Two thongs hanging from the edge of the cap serve to tie it.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The feathers on this cap all have the quill split nearly as far down as the vanes extend. They are attached to one or perhaps more thongs painted yellow, which form a continuous, or at least virtually continuous, expanding spiral of six or more turns from the centre of the head-dress to about one-third of the distance to the edge. This thong gathers several feathers, then passes for a short stitch through the skin of the cap, not penetrating to the under side. Thus it continues its spiral course, lying for almost its whole length on the upper surface of the cap. The feathers are all attached to it in one fundamental manner, the thong passing through a loop formed by the turning-back on itself of the cut-down end of the quill. But three variations

Fig. 39 (50–1789 a). Rattle of Dog-dancer, Highest Degree. Length, 47 cm.

of this method appear. Sometimes the end of the quill is turned into itself. In other cases the end is bent forward in the same way, but laid over the outside of the quill, and lashed to it with wrapping of sinew. This sinew wrapping, however, is used also with the first method, though it is not absolutely essential. In other cases the end of the quill is bent backward on itself so that its inner side is out, and fastened in the same way. When this is done, a smaller feather has its quill inserted in the sinew wrapping holding the loop of the main feather. Why the quill should be looped backward whenever a small feather is included, and only then, is not clear. The area encircled by the thong with its hundreds of feathers strung on it is only a

1; Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

small part of the surface of the cap. The feathers are long enough to extend beyond the outer edge of the skin as they fall. Two special, slightly longer wing-feathers of the same species of owl are separately attached near the top of the head-dress, on opposite sides, like horns, by thongs passing through the skin where their ends hang loose. These evidently correspond to the two eagle-feathers once mentioned as occurring on the owl-feather caps of the rank and file of the dog-dancers.

The rattle of the Gros Ventre tsôôyanchin (Fig. 39) is very similar to the Arapaho dog-dance rattles, its most prominent peculiarity being that it is

Fig. 40 (50-1789 b). Whistle of Dog-dancer, Highest Degree. Length, 60 cm.

bifurcated. Two sticks appear to have been joined at the handle so as to spread slightly. The sticks, where separate, are incased in skin painted yellow; at the handle they are wrapped together with a flat thong. Across each stick pass three stripes of quill-embroidery, each consisting of a red row of quills bordered on each side by white. At the end of each fork hangs an eagle-wing feather, the base of its quill covered with red cloth. Along the lower side of each fork are the small hoofs that rattle. There are on each stick about thirty-three pairs of these hoofs. Each pair is attached to a yellow-painted thong passing through the skin casing of the stick where this is joined in a sinew-sewn seam. The ends of these thongs pass through holes at the upper ends of the irregularly pyramidal-shaped hoofs. Inside the hoof, the end of thong is knotted around the middle of a little strip of red flannel or blanketing. This prevents the thong from being pulled out

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 but none are living who have taken part in it. The meaning of the term, as among the Arapaho, is unknown. One informant gave the etymology "drum-dance" (from biitaxäänaⁿ, "drum"). The dancers were called biitaxäänen. As in the preceding ceremonies, a man took part in this dance accompanied by his wife, or, if it happened to be held while he was at war, his wife took part as if he were present. Nothing is known as to the conduct of the ceremony nor as to the regalia, except that the dancers, or certain of them, carried crooked sticks wrapped with white fur. The dancers were [302a] painted over their body with dots resembling hail. The dance is looked upon as having been very dangerous, as a mistake in painting or in other observances would result in death from the thunder.

It is not impossible, that, if the present Arapaho series of dances represents a more original order of arrangement than the Gros Ventre, in the development of the Gros Ventre series the biitahaⁿwᵘ was displaced by the kit-fox dance, which grew in importance from a dance of the youngest men to one of older men. This would account for the use of crooked fur-wrapped sticks in the Gros Ventre kit-fox dance as well as in their biitahaⁿwᵘ. If this was the course of events, it does not follow that the biitahaⁿwᵘ became the sixth dance of the series. It may simply have been displaced, and fallen into disuse. Lack of knowledge of the proper conduct of the ceremony would be sufficient to make the Indians afraid to undertake it. It has been stated that no informants could be found who professed to know the place of this dance in the series, and it is possible that its dangerous qualities were not due to its greater sacredness through being the dance of the oldest men, but to such lack of knowledge. On the whole it is very difficult to see how such differentiations in the order of dances as exist in the Arapaho and Gros Ventre schemes of ceremonial organization may have taken place.

The Women's Dance.

[171] The women's dance — called benuxteaⁿwᵘ, the dancers being named 796 benuxteiiçäⁿ[1] — resembles the Arapaho women's dance quite closely. The dancers had on their ordinary clothing, but wore belts to which four buffalo-292 tails were fastened, and head-dresses which fell down the back of their heads and from which horns rose. These head-dresses are said to have been covered with feathers; but it seems possible that this statement refers only to the dancers of certain degrees, as among the Arapaho only the dancer of highest degree wears such a feather-covered head-dress. Four of the dancers wore [171] no horned head-dress, but "war-bonnets." These may have been equivalent

[1] The Gros Ventre declare that they do not know the significance of the word element benux-te-.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

171 796 [292] [887] [554] [302] [431]

to the Arapaho "white-stand" and "red-stand" head-dresses of upright feathers surrounding the head. The dancers are described as all old or elderly women, which among the Arapaho was not the case. The exceptions were two participants called "calves" (nihanou, "yellow calves"), who were middle-aged, or, at any rate, adults. Among the Arapaho the "calves" were children. There is a further difference, that, whereas among the Arapaho the "calves" were of high degree in the dance and for the greater part of the time were not allowed to stir, the Gros Ventre "calves" took the place of the atsaan or servants in the men's dances. They are said to have worn no regalia. The dancers were painted with the symbol of a pipe on each cheek, close under the eye. Old men sang for them, rattling but not using a drum. The women in dancing shifted their weight from one side of the body to the other, and cried like crows. Two tent-poles, two pegs, and two ropes belonging to the dancing-lodge, were painted respectively one black and one red. On the fourth day of the ceremony there were observances outside of the dancing-lodge. A prominent chief was selected to take a burning stick. The dancers, moving and running about like a herd of buffalo, pretended to scent the smoke of his fire from windward, and stampeded. Another distinguished warrior pretended to shoot at the herd as if they were buffalo. Both of these features of the ceremony are found among the Arapaho. A third distinguished man (or perhaps several) was honored by being offered a pipe to smoke, and on his acceptance was given a vessel of water containing berries. He then gave away property.

The Sun-Dance.

796

As stated before, the Gros Ventre sun-dance, haçeiha^{n}w^{u}, is not restricted to men belonging to certain age-companies, but, as among the Arapaho, can be made by any man.[1] Like the other dances, however, it is made as the result of the pledge of an individual for deliverance from sickness or danger. As soon as the pledge has been publicly announced, or as soon thereafter as the buffalo begin to get fat in spring, the pledger and his relatives begin to accumulate buffalo-tongues, which they slice and dry like buffalo-meat. They also save a buffalo-skin, which is packed with the tongues, two sticks being wrapped up in it. When the time comes, a large lodge made of two tent-covers is set up in the middle of the camp-circle. Into this many women enter at night to sing. This marks the beginning of the ceremony. The tent is called tjinaa^{n}w^{u} ("prairie-chicken lodge"); and the participants, "prairie-chickens" and "prairie-chicken women." The pledger brings his buffalo-skin to this lodge. He incenses it four times.

[1] See Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part II, p. 152.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

with dyed plumes or tufts of horsehair, as the Arapaho so frequently do 778
both at the base and top of the feather. Feathers with the vanes cut from 237
the quill, except at the very top, are also scarcely used by the Gros Ventre. 171
Instead, they usually cut the feather squarely off across its end, or split the quill, from the end down, for the greater part of its length. Sometimes the uppermost part of the quill is entirely removed, with its attached portions of the vanes, leaving the top of the feather forked. Plume-feathers are also much less used by the Gros Ventre than by the Arapaho. In dyeing, the Gros Ventre generally used cruder colors; a blue-violet, a pink-red, a light- [386]
bluish green, and yellow, all of them aniline colors, being the most common. The Arapaho use true red and green more frequently, and in most cases employ the dyes more lightly, thus obtaining endurable or delicate effects where the Gros Ventre are garish.

The Gros Ventre methods of feather-treatment, both the cutting-off and the splitting of the end of the feather, go back, at least in part, to their older tribal ceremonies. Both these processes are found employed on the dog-dance regalia described.

As regards other differences, the Gros Ventre probably employ more weasel-skin in ornaments than the Arapaho, though far less than their neighbors the Blackfeet. They use cloth (both cotton and woollen goods), red, green, or blue, without reluctance; whereas the Arapaho have clung very tenaciously to skin in all ceremonial objects. Skin thongs and sinew for binding are, however, very rarely replaced by strings and thread, even with the Gros Ventre.

The few objects obtained belonging to the ghost-dance movement are 668 778
the following.

Fig. 41 shows an imitation of a netted playing-wheel. The piece is about two inches in diameter. The stitch of the meshes seems to be correct, though there are fewer meshes than in the full-sized wheels. The "crow," the centre mesh, is painted red; the rest of the thong, yellow. To the centre mesh are attached four magpie-feathers cut off across. This object was [301]
worn tied to the hair on the side of the head, or hanging from the little finger when the people joined hands to dance. Several very similar objects, lacking the feathers, are attached to the girl's painted dress shown in "Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History" (Vol. XVIII, Plate LXXV).

A head-dress consisting of a hoop of about the same size, quill-wound [292]
and bisected by two quill-wound strings, and of three long, blue-and-white quill-wound pendant thongs with plume-feathers at the ends, was collected by Dr. Clark Wissler. It is not known whether it belongs to the war-dance or the ghost-dance: its general similarity to certain Arapaho head-dresses

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

668 makes the latter seem possible. It differs from Arapaho objects chiefly in
778 that the color-ornamentation of the quill-wrapping divides the hoop into three instead of four parts. At the upper end of the hoop is attached a bunch of seven small strips of whitish rabbit-fur, resembling the weasel-skin style of ornamentation characteristic of the Blackfoot.

Two balls (Figs. 24 and 25) are identical in character with Arapaho ghost-dance objects, and the latter was made in connection with the movement. These balls are described above.

778
293
171

[292]

Fig. 41 (50-1922). Wheel Head-dress. Length, 21 cm.

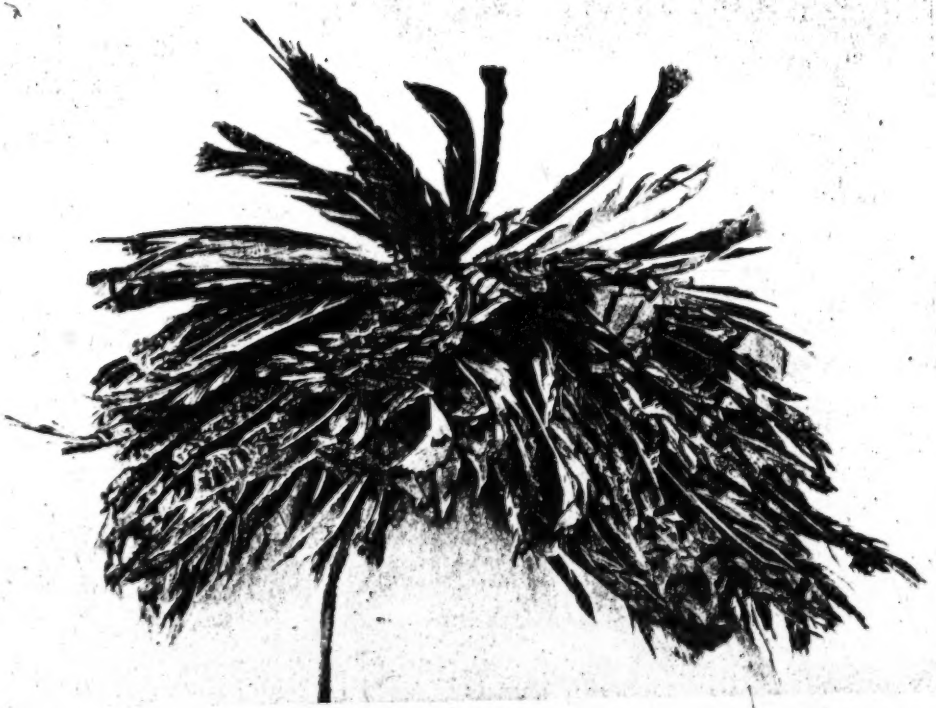
The following objects, many of which were obtained by Dr. Clark Wissler and which were probably not connected with the ghost-dance, are of a character that does not seem to make it worth while to represent them in illustrations; but they resemble Arapaho or other pieces sufficiently for a brief description. They all appear to have been used in the war or grass dance.

Specimen Museum No. 50-1742 is a feathered crook modelled on the familiar type of curved lance that is common on the Plains, and to which the otterskin-wrapped lances of the second degree of the second Arapaho tribal ceremony belong.[1] The Gros Ventre too had such crooked lances in probably two of their tribal ceremonies. The present piece is about four feet long, and made of a stick painted yellow. There is no blade, or representation of it, at the lower end. At the end of the crook hangs a single eagle-feather. The greater portion of the shaft is covered by a casing of green cloth from which hang, attached by thongs and sinew wrapping painted yellow, a row of eighteen eagle-feathers.

A forked stick (specimen Museum No. 50-4328) resembles the Arapaho pieces of this kind described in the "Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History" (Vol. XVIII, p. 358). It is about six feet long, quite slender, and painted red. Some distance in the fork a quill-covered hoop is attached to the two spreading sticks. This hoop is red, with four white, blue-bordered areas on it. The ends of the fork are ornamented with a short green-cloth fringe, tufts of yellow-dyed hair, and feathers notched at the top. From the junction of the two arms downward,

[1] Compare Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part II, Plate XXXII.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13



Head-Dress for the Dog-Dance.

[End Plate 6]

successfully hunted than antelope. While the finest clothing was made from deer, elk was preferred for some purposes such as moccasins and warm shirts and coats—it being more durable but not equally as flexible.

For winter wear, caps and mittens of beaver or otter were made for men and boys. Beaver skin served as a breech clout for the men in winter, although antelope was preferred for this purpose the rest of the year, unless cloth were available, since the latter was more comfortable than hide which chafed the skin so badly.

Ordinarily unornamented clothing was worn, but for special events, particularly when the whole tribe was together, everyone dressed in his best. Being well-dressed was as important to the Gros Ventres as being well-mounted on ceremonial and social occasions. The effect on both the eye and the ear was taken into account in the ornamentation. Dyed porcupine quill embroidery lent color, and mica—first heated, then powdered and rubbed over a robe—glistened beautifully. Polished deer-hoofs as edging for a robe or dangling from leggings or garters "made such a nice sound when one walked." This feeling both for color and sound was carried over when material from the whites was at hand, beadwork tending to supplant the quill embroidery and scraps of bright colored cloth and of metal serving as "dangles." [18]

Elk teeth, however, were said to be "the greatest decoration of the Gros Ventres." They were used principally for girls' and women's dresses. Not so long ago there was a man at Hays who wore a vest trimmed with elk teeth, and people would say to him: "You crazy thing, only women have that kind of decoration!" But he was unconventional and would retort: "Well, I dance, too, and I want to look nice." Everyone would laugh, but he persisted in wearing that vest. Human hair as fringe and on moccasins was proudly worn by men who had taken scalps.

Mink, otter, weasel, muskrat and kit-fox were all used as trimmings, and occasionally the whole pelt of mink, otter or muskrat was made into a bag, or tobacco pouch, or other small container. Feathers, especially eagle feathers, were highly prized, and red

[18] For the detailed comparative analysis of Decorative Art of the Gros Ventres and other plains tribes, see Kroeber, 1908, pp. 151–79.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Feathers, especially eagle feathers, were highly prized, and red 292
paint, prepared from ochre, as well as other paints obtained through 237
the trader, played their part in bodily decoration. 386

The younger men thought a great deal of their appearance. One 292
of the things they made for themselves was fancy painted sunshade- 751
hats of rawhide. The designs painted thereon had a yellow back- 531
ground against which various other colors stood out. Coming Daylight remarked: "These sunshades looked so fine that the other tribes copied them, just like the whites get their styles from Paris." Long thick hair was the ideal both for men and for 302
women. The tail of the porcupine made an admirable comb. A [239]
number of perfumes were used by the young men. The castor of the beaver, for instance, was put in the paint bag so that the material for daily painting would be sweet smelling. Again, young men crushed "Piegan berries," chewed them, and rubbed them on hair, horses, and bedding, as perfume.

Incidentally, according to Coming Daylight, in order to clean 296
their buckskin clothing, the Gros Ventres would wear it into the water, getting it completely wet, and then rub it thoroughly with a certain kind of white clay.[14] She said that the tribe was spoken of by other tribes as always having such nice white clothes, and to this habit of rubbing them with clay she attributes the name by which the Gros Ventres call themselves, *a'aninin*, "white clay [101]
people."

Ear-rings, worn both by men and women, were made from 301
imported abalone shell, which they cut up and shaped; they also [439]
used a certain type of imported white shell. Many other kinds of necklaces, armlets, and so on were apparently used, but on these we failed to get details.

Household and Transportation

The lodges of the Gros Ventres were made from buffalo hides, 342
the number used in each depending on the size of the lodge. They

[14] This custom is mentioned in the sources of the early 19th century. Cf. Harmon, p. 277; Henry, v. 2, p. 734. The latter adds, as a further distinguishing characteristic, that when the Gros Ventres use red "it is always [822]
of a light color, inclining to pale vermillion. The dark red or Spanish brown, so much in vogue among the other Meadow tribes, does not suit their taste."

607 A woman was, however, expected to be especially generous to her brother's wife. Coming Daylight gave, as example, her own experience at the time of her first marriage. "One day, shortly after I had arrived at my husband's home, his sister, Watches All, brought me a couple of skins saying: 'Now you take the flesh off these hides. You are known to do a good job, and since my eyesight is poor I might cut the skin.' So I did what was asked, never dreaming that one of these skins was to be a robe for me. Some time later Watches All invited me and another young woman who was married to my husband's cousin, to a lodge. When I arrived I found the lodge full of old women. I was told to go around to the place of honor in the rear, where two robes were placed. When the other young woman arrived, they told her to take her place beside me. We were both to sit beside the robes and not to rise until they were all through. Watches All had invited, among the others, the woman who had 'initiated' her and who acted as a sort of teacher. Watches All said to this woman: 'You are going to initiate my sister-in-law with this robe.' So they made a smudge and Watches All held one side of the robe and the woman held the other, as they stood behind me. Then they held the robe toward the fire three times, making the motion as though to put it about my shoulders, and on the fourth time they actually put it around me, tying it at the breast and telling me not to hold it on with my hands. Each of the four times the motion was made, the woman blew on the robe spraying it with a powdered root which she had in her mouth. Then they went through the same procedure for the other bride. Finally, we were told to walk out without picking up our old robes, which we had left by the door when we entered, and which were to be given to two of the oldest women present. The new robes were beautiful. They were embroidered with porcupine quills, fringed with deer-hoofs, and sprinkled with mica, which glittered in the firelight as we moved. It was certainly fine to have such a beautiful new robe; and right away, my husband gave his sister a horse because she had been so good to me. Later on, I made her some moccasins."

607 431 [292]

In addition to the special honor a woman might show her brother's wife by a ceremony such as described above, she would in general take pride in keeping her well-dressed. For instance Mary

PLATES

142 The original photograph of Plate 1 was taken in 1887 and
291 belongs to The Boy. Shown in it are Lame Bull, The Boy's
301 father, and Crow Bull, maternal uncle of Coming Daylight. Both
302 of these men were born around 1825 and their personal experiences were often referred to by our informants as we took down the record of the old way of life. Each had been Keeper of the sacred Flat Pipe.

115 The photographs composing Plate 2, except for the one of The
133 Boy, were taken in 1940 by Dr. Karl F. Herzfeld. The first three
142 show the nature of the country around Hays on the Fort Belknap
291 Reservation; the other three show some of our informants and
292 interpreters whose biographical sketches follow.

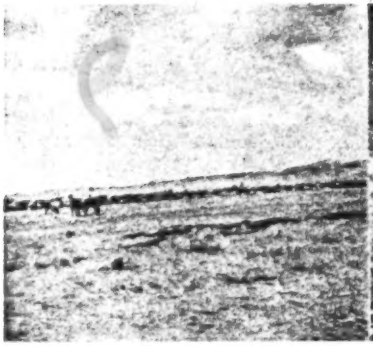
531 In Plate 3, the shield and war medicines of Bull Lodge, father
797 of our informant, Garter Snake, represent only a few of the specimens of Gros Ventre culture collected in 1937 by Mr.
778 Richard Pohrt, of Flint, Michigan.
293
714
721

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

115
133
142
291
292
531

IN THE LITTLE ROCKIES

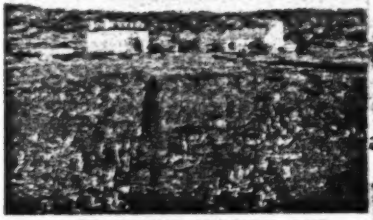
THE BOY



PLAINS NEAR HAYS

MARY, SINGER, AND COMING DAYLIGHT

[342]
[797]



ST. PAUL'S MISSION AND SCHOOL

COMING DAYLIGHT'S TIPI

PLATE II

[p. 212 (B)]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

just want you to join and be a little calf in this dance." "I don't smoke," Coming Daylight replied. Her grandmother then spoke up. "My grandchild, take that pipe. There isn't anything bad about it. Just take it. If you take it it might give you long life . . . and luck in receiving gifts and things. . . . We don't like to turn it down because it belongs to life. . . . This dance all comes like concerning life, and when you get painted [in it] you have a long life. . . . You are going to be asked to dance with these women. You must try to do everything well they want you to do. You must dance good." And so she accepted, for there was nothing else to do, and when she was being painted in the dance, she prayed for the things her grandmother used to tell her to pray for,—a long life and easy acquisition of food. And she concluded: "Here, I have gotten a long enough life, so long I stagger around when I try to show how they danced!" 796*

In addition to the girl "calf" or "calves," there was also a "bull calf" (or "bull calves?"), a small boy chosen to take this part.

No men entered the ceremonial lodge during most of the dance, except two (or perhaps only one) old men singers who sat with the chief vower and the "boss" at the back of the lodge and sang. The two had no drums, but instead each of them had a deer-claw rattle, similar to the Crazy Dance rattle, but "taller and with larger trimmings." The two men and two women sang, all four together, while the other participants danced. The task of these men was solely that of singing.[39] [534]

Two other men, younger men chosen from among the most prominent and most handsome of the Stars or Wolves, served as "hunters" of the women on the last day of the dance.

Each of the "cows" had her own headdress made like a war bonnet, but smaller, with feathers of all colors,—yellow, blue, red and so forth,—and with a bunch of feathers hanging at the nape of the neck. Coming Daylight's grandmother had belonged to the Women's Dance; when she got too old to dance herself she let her daughter-in-law use her headdress to dance with and when

[39] In 1948 The Boy said that no men sang, and that the only male participants were the two "hunters." Lame Bull acted one time in that capacity. [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the grandmother died she was buried with it. Coming Daylight and Singer had never heard in their grandmothers' time of the "cows" wearing belts with four buffalo tails attached, or being painted with a pipe symbol on the cheeks, or calling like crows when dancing.[40] The "cows" would don their good buckskin dresses for the dance, and, according to Singer, wore "for their belts a little calf robe tied around."

The "bull" wore as a headdress the shaggy skin of a buffalo head with the horns attached. Coming Daylight emphatically insisted that only one woman, the "bull," had horns on her headdress.[41]

The two attendants danced during the rite, but had no feathered or horned headdresses. Coming Daylight mentioned wearing her elk-tooth dress when functioning as a "calf," but spoke of no specific ritual costume for "calves" or for the "bull calf."

The dance lodge, a big one, was, according to The Boy, set up outside the camp circle. The men used to put it up for them. The center pole, not so big as the Sacrifice Dance one, was erected without ceremony, and was painted red by the "boss." Each dancer had her own [ceremonial?] digging-stick made of a stout cherry or Juneberry branch about 2" to 3" in diameter, with the distal end pointed and curved. These digging sticks were tied to the center pole all around, with the handle end resting on the ground and the curved end pointing outward. Both sticks and ties were painted [red?] by the "boss." Coming Daylight remarked *apropos* of this: "I was small then, but I certainly looked to see how that pole was fixed. It is a good thing I did. Most children would be too crazy to observe how things were." She had never heard of two tent-poles, two pegs and two ropes of the dance lodge being painted respectively one black and one red.[42] A fire burned in or close to the middle of the lodge.

The two (or one) men singers sat in the place of honor in the

[40] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, pp. 260-61.

[41] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, p. 260. Coming Daylight had seen the Blood Indians' Women's Dance, with the women wearing headdresses like those of the Gros Ventre women and with the "bull" sitting over on the west side.

[42] Kroeber, 1908, p. 261.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

727 counted coup on the enemy filled a pipe, and held it for the rest of the
[554] party to smoke as they stood in a row. The returning war-party, if
successful, always painted black, but if a member of their own party had
[302] been killed, they returned without rejoicing; unless sometimes, when the
loss of the enemy had been greater than their own, and a relative of the
dead was in the party, he might say, "One of the enemy pays for my
relative. On account of the others, let us enjoy ourselves." Then the
party would paint black, and celebrate. Wounds received by members of
the war-party would not prevent celebration, unless, of course, they resulted
fatally; and they were always regarded as an honor.

726 Some war-parties started off publicly in broad daylight, having made
it known that they were going; and any one who wished joined. Some-
727 times, perhaps, two men would agree to go, and invited such others to
accompany them as they wished. Women not infrequently went with the
war-parties. If a man was killed in war, his relatives, especially his parents,
[765] mourned for him. His father might go to the tent of a renowned warrior,
and cry until this man became angry and announced a day for a party to
start out to obtain revenge. On the day set, the party left publicly, usually
751 on horseback.

237 A man's supernatural war paraphernalia are shown in Figs. 27, 28, and
726 29. They were obtained from a middle-aged man who had them from his
778 grandfather, who first dreamed of the magpie and the other animals con-
293 nected with the paraphernalia, and made the objects. A cylindrical raw-
[787] hide case (Fig. 27), such as is found used for holding feathers and medicine
among most Plains tribes, is painted with a yellow, green, and blue design
[531] resembling parfleche designs. These colors represent the various colors
of the birds that were dreamed of by the original owner, and whose feathers
are kept in the case. The case is called the "house" of these objects. A
wing-bone is attached to the outside of the case to make another whistle
from in case of loss of the finished whistle included in the outfit. A small
bag containing a necklace is kept in the case. The bag (Fig. 28, *a*) is orna-
mented with bead-work representing a frog (kaka"). This frog was part of
the original owner's dream. The necklace (Fig. 28, *b*) has various wasóo
("medicine-roots") on it. These are said to be neither eaten nor otherwise
used, except as they are worn on the necklace. The bone whistle (Fig. 28,
c) alluded to is attached to a necklace of otter-skin. It is blown during the
fighting to prevent injury. A magpie's skin (Fig. 28, *d*) and the skin of a
smaller bird (Fig. 29, *a*) are also contained in the case. The white magpie-
feathers are dyed yellow. The two skins are worn at the back of the head,
and prevent the wearer being injured even in a hand-to-hand fight. A
head-dress of ten magpie-feathers and of a white plume on red-painted

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

237
726
293
778
751
[531]

thongs, tied together at the ends with a medicine-bag, and four brass bells (Fig. 29, *b*), is tied to the hair over the front of the head. When the warriors sing before dressing for battle, this head-dress is also used as a rattle. The medicine attached to it is chewed, and rubbed over the owner's body, as well

Fig. 27. (50-1952 a) Medicine-case for War Paraphernalia. Length, 40 cm.

as over his horse's, after he has painted himself. Two plumes of eagle-down (Fig. 29, *c*) are tied to the horse. One is tied to its fore-leg, the other to its tail. Then it will not be shot, and, if it falls, will not be hurt. In case of flight and pursuit, a little medicine that is attached to these plumes in a small

[text continues on p. 195]

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

293
726
778
[532]

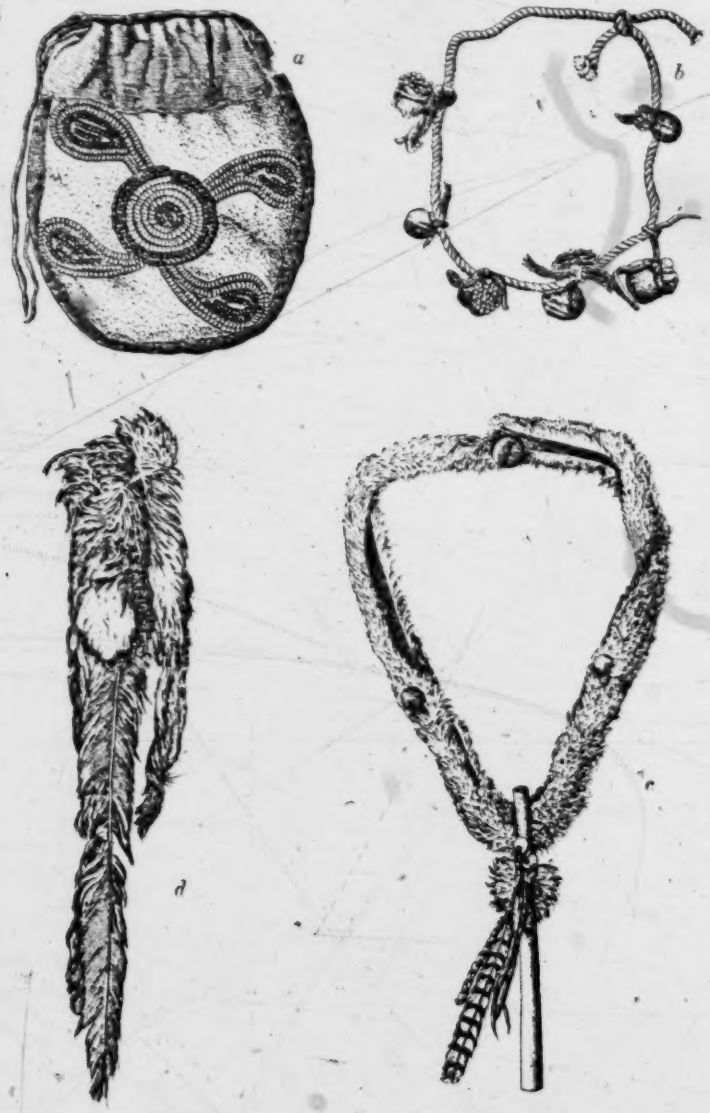


Fig. 28 (50–1952 b, c, d, e). War Paraphernalia. Lengths, 15 cm., 9 cm., 45 cm., 40 cm.

l: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

bag is given to the horse to prevent its becoming exhausted. A cloth to wrap the various feathers and the whistle completes the outfit.

A warrior's outfit that was obtained for the Museum (specimen Museum No. 50–1862 a–e) consists of a beaded knife-scabbard, carried because the owner has cut loose horses that were tied by a rope leading into a tent; of a man's awl-case, carried presumably for mending moccasins and for

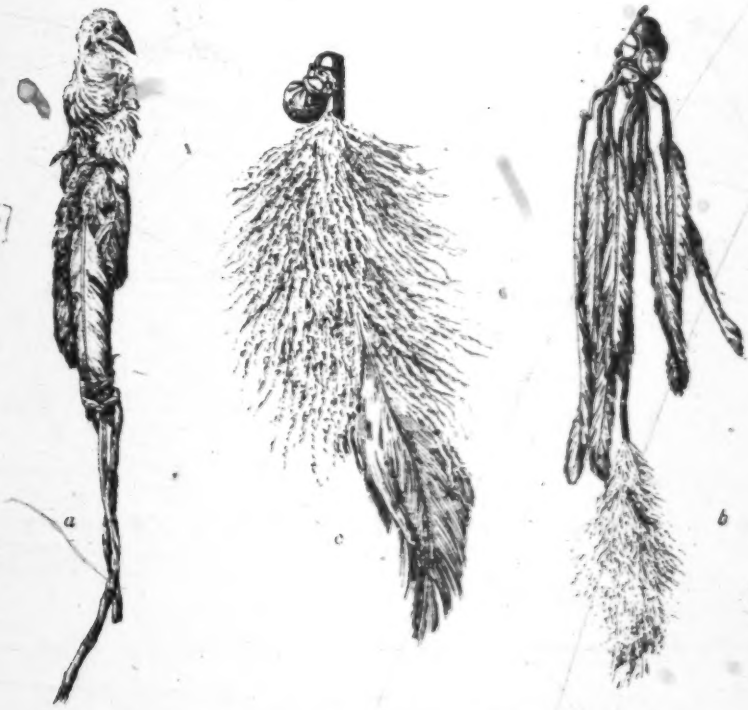


Fig. 29 (50–1952, f, g, h). War Paraphernalia. Lengths, 32 cm., 20 cm., 20 cm.

similar purposes; and of a piece of a scalp ornamented with beads, and worn attached to the shoulder of his shirt. The scabbard is ornamented with rectangular U-shaped bead-work designs similar to those in Fig 3, and representing horse-tracks.

Sometimes in dreaming, a man saw a person in battle wearing the skin of a certain animal, and fighting very successfully. He would then wear the skin of that animal. Specimen Museum No. 50–1901 is a weasel-skin

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

293 used in this way. The owner twice dreamed of a weasel, which told him to
726 use its skin. Thereupon he first wore a weasel-skin in dances, and later
751 carried it to war. Subsequently he lent it to his son and to other men who
778 went to war, and they always returned successfully.

A man to whom a fisher had appeared in a dream or vision used a fish-
[787] skin medicine-bag, and on going to war carried this with him.

A renowned warrior, dead for some time, received his personal medicine from the bears, and was forbidden to scalp, count coup on the enemy, or take away a gun. He could only kill. He once killed two Sioux with one shot, at a place which received its name from the event.

[492] A simple riding-whip (specimen Museum No. 50-1821) has on its wooden handle four red marks, each of which is said to represent an enemy struck in the face with a whip in battle.

Representations, used in the modern "war-dance," of the weapons of
532 Black-Wolf, a well-known Gros Ventre warrior, part of whose experiences
726 in war are told below, consist of a shield and spear. The shield, which is made of painted white cloth, represents the shield carried by him on an occasion when he rushed to battle with no other weapon. The shield is decorated with a blue crescent along the lower edge, representing the sun, and bordered by a wavy red line denoting lightning. The wooden spear and spear-point
[822] represent a spear with which the owner stabbed a Piegan in battle. The spear-point is painted blue and red; the blue representing iron, the red blood. Red marks on the handle of the spear represent coups.

[292] A pair of beaded and painted moccasins executed by a woman, but designed by an old man, symbolize his exploits in war. An outside rim of beading represents the enemy's camp-circle. In the middle of the camp-circle is beaded the figure of a tent belonging to a chief. To this tent was tied a horse, which the wearer of the moccasins cut loose. This feat is represented by an outline painting of a horse and halter. Three U-shaped figures, also painted, are horse-tracks, and represent the capture of horses. On the other moccasin there are again three such figures in a row, which here were said to indicate a charge on horseback on the camp; while two other such figures, facing each other, indicate a face-to-face fight.

Curtains hanging behind the bed in front of the tent-wall were sometimes painted to illustrate the owner's achievements in war.

WAR-EXPERIENCES OF INDIVIDUALS.

114 The following narratives give an entirely personal account of the war-
115 experiences of three individuals, two of them men of about sixty years of

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

746 they did not stay in one place, but at times moved about. They shook their rattles constantly. They did not sing, but uttered a pressed-out "Hah." Two atsaan (assistants or servants of the dance) attended near the door. [624] They brought back such of the dancers as became exhausted from lack of sleep and left the ceremony. Two men who had fought and struck a mounted enemy while they themselves were mounted, rode on horseback. When they went to dance, the assistants went to them and helped them dismount. If the dancers were inactive, these two men went about among them to make them arise. If the dancers remained on the ground, they struck them with their whips. The spectators outside lifted up the bottom of the tent and looked underneath; or, as the tent was not very high (the lodge being roofless), those who were on horseback looked over it.

534 The Gros Ventre star-rattles consist of a tube of rawhide, an inch or less in diameter, bent on itself into a hoop three or four inches across, and 293 attached to a stick handle half a foot or more in length. Apparently one end of the tube projects out from the hoop forming the head of the rattle, sufficiently to allow the stick to be inserted. The rawhide is painted, and ornamented with three or five bunches of feathers. The handle is wrapped with cloth, the upper end of which usually is cut into a small fringe at the base of the head of the rattle, while the lower end hangs free beyond the handle. The general outline of the rattle is similar to the Arapaho star-rattle, this having a round or kite-shaped flat head at the end of the handle. The hoop feature is, however, wanting in the Arapaho rattles, which [531] are without a perforation. The Gros Ventre decorations of their rattles — whether feathers, cloth attachments, or painting — are usually crude and gaudy. It seems that the rattles now in use are a degenerate modern form. In the majority of cases the feathers attached are dyed: some are cut from [197] the quill. This indicates a recent modifying influence. Many of the feathers are cut off transversely. This may or may not be an old feature. The piece shown in Fig. 31 has least of the base qualities of these rattles, and is a probable approximation to the older type.

Of some of the specimens to be seen in the Museum, descriptions are here given.

Fig. 31 (50-1783). Handle covered with red flannel, which hangs below the handle about two feet. Fringe of same at base of head, and same forms periphery of head. Rawhide of head painted blue, red on inside of loop. A string appears to have been wound around the head while the hide was fresh, and removed after the painting, leaving radiating white depressions. Head ornamented at top and sides with three bunches of four black-and-white, squarish, half-downy feathers attached by thongs. At the top there is also an eagle-feather. Handle wound with thong, forming at the end a loop to pass over the wrist. The head of this rattle was said to represent a star.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Specimen Museum No. 50-1787 has a small rough head and a crooked handle. Handle wound with blue cotton cloth. Two strips of green cloth hang from the end of the handle. No fringe at the base of the head. Head painted yellow-green; on this, eight red spots centred with yellow and bordered with green; on the opposite side, five green spots bordered by red. Three bunches of feathers. Feathers at top, — one eagle; several smaller, dyed violet-blue and yellow, cut off or slit from quill. Two bunches at sides, yellow-dyed and chicken feathers. Places at periphery for the attachment of other bunches.

534
293

Specimen Museum No. 50-1806. Handle short, scarcely six inches; head forming a large even circle nearly four inches across. Handle wrapped with blue woollen cloth, chiefly covered by the winding of a red-painted thong; free end of blue cloth more than a foot long. Fringe of three or four pieces of the same cloth at base of head. Head painted over red. Feathers attached in three places, all cut off across, and dyed violet. Two are attached at top, one on each side.

Specimen Museum No. 50-1807. Handle about six inches, head scarcely three. Rawhide covers the stick nearly to end. Two upper inches of covering exposed; below this, handle covered over rawhide with dark-blue cloth; short fringe above; fringe of several strips, about one foot long, below. All rawhide painted yellow; on each side of head, a red line; inside of hoop, about eight blue spots; periphery, blue. Feathers in five places. Top, eagle-feather, white portion reddened, yellow-green stripe on black along quill; three green-dyed cut-off feathers. At each side, below, one or two yellow-dyed cut-off feathers. On each side, still farther below, two or three similar feathers dyed green.

Fig. 31 (50-1783). Star-dance Rattle. Length of loop and handle, 80 cm.

Specimen Museum No. 50-1808 is similar to the last in several details, and was obtained from the same person. Size a little larger than last. Extent and painting of rawhide the same. Handle completely covered with winding of red cotton cloth; no fringe above, two short ends below. At top, bunch of fifteen yellow-dyed feathers cut off very short; on each side, bunch of four (in one case, two) feathers dyed green; the upper portions of quills cut out, the vanes more complete.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

534 The large amount of individual variation within the limits of the general type characterizing these rattles occurs apparently also among the Arapaho star-rattles.

796 In the war-dance as it was held when first introduced, there were two men who had wands representing swords, and several wearing the familiar [293] belts of crow-feathers with tails falling behind and projections at the lower part of the back. As among the Arapaho, these belts are referred to the crow. A drum was used, made of a cottonwood board or slab bent into [534] a circle, covered both above and below with horse-skin, and hung on four sticks. Four drumsticks went with it, one of which belonged to the owner of the drum, the three others to three different individuals. The sides of the drum were covered, half with red cloth and half with blue, and the skin was painted half blue and half yellow. When the men who owned the swords, the crow-belts, and the drum, gave these away, which they generally did at [431] the same time, a dance was held. The new owners, in turn, by giving the objects to their successors, would furnish the occasion for another performance of the dance.

The war-dancers dressed quite variously. Some wore skunk-skin strips around the leg below the knee, beaded, and with small bells attached. Some wore similar strips around the head. Others had the well-known upright head-dress of deer-tail hair. Some carried fans of eagle-tails; some, whips; some, painted sticks with attached feathers. The dancing went on in a lodge similar to that of the star-dancers. The owner of the drum had his tent near this lodge in the middle of the camp-circle, and the members of the dance went to him to eat. If the head man of the star-dancers was popular, he was asked by the rival war-company to pitch his tent in the middle of the camp-circle, near the owner of the war-dance drum. There are said to have been no assistants in this ceremony, nor any old men as singers; but four of the wives of the dancers were selected to sing. The two men [624 with swords (kakaat) had functions similar to those of the two mounted men 626] with whips in the star-dance. They urged the laggard dancers to get up, and, if they fell down, struck them with their wands. If the man thus struck bore the blow like a man, as the Indians call it, the sword-bearer made him a present; but if he became angry he received nothing, and appears to have been looked upon with ridicule or contempt.

The war-dance as at present given is different from the form described. It is no longer a young men's dance, nor confined to a certain group. All the people of the tribe take part in it. It is very similar in general character to the present-day Arapaho crow-dance, as well as in the place it occupies in the life of the people. Among the Gros Ventre it is now the only dance held.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 painting, an old man took the lead, followed by the pledger, and he by the dancers in file. All the dancers carried small hoops ornamented with quill-embroidery and with small feathers. These hoops were carried on sticks. When the old man stopped, the dancers gathered in a circle about him to dance. They took hold of the corners of their robes, and flapped them like wings, buzzing and humming like mosquitoes. After they had done this four times, they lay on the ground on their faces. Beyond the small hoops there seem to have been no regalia. There were also neither whistles, rattles, nor drums used, except that the "grandfathers" each had a leafy branch (as of willow, cottonwood, or cherry), which they shook, rustling it in time to the singing.

[293] [534]

Fig. 32 (50-1839). Fly-dance Horn. Length, 18 cm.

Towards evening the dancers went to one side of the camp-circle, but still outside of it. There they danced. Going west of the camp-circle, they danced there, then to the side opposite to that where they had begun, and finally to the east or opening of the camp. When they had danced four times here, all the people had retired to their tents for the night, and all outdoor work had been done. The dancers immediately started out in all directions, looking for people. If they saw any one, they pursued him until they overtook him. They carried cactus-spines and sharp claws, with which they pricked him. If he succeeded in reaching a tent, they walked around outside, pelting the tent with pebbles. It is said that if the person attacked fanned himself, as he would for flies, the dancers would not sting him. In all their actions in this part of the ceremony, the dancers seem to have imitated flies or mosquitoes. Going about among the tents, they also took meat hanging outside, cooked it, and ate their fill. They also played and ran races until they were tired.

[293]

Fig. 33 (50-1936 a). Fly-dance Hoop. Diameter, 8 cm.

[587] As to the origin of the dance, it is said that once an old man was asleep, when he dreamed this dance. The fly that gave him the ceremony was a mosquito. It directed him to institute the dance, and showed him how it should be conducted.

[293] Fig. 32 shows a small mountain-goat horn, painted over red, used in this dance as one of the implements for pricking or scratching.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Fig. 33 shows one of the small quill-wrapped hoops carried on a stick in the fly-dance. It is about three inches across, and lacks the feathers once attached to it. The hoop is not continuous, but consists of four slightly curved sticks. Each of these is wound with yellow quills, and in the middle with black (really dark-brown) fibres. The quill-wrapping encloses a sinew strand, which passes from one stick to the other, holding them together into a flexible, somewhat four-cornered hoop. At each of the four dark marks an eagle-plume was formerly attached, and in addition an eagle-feather (specimen Museum No. 50-1936b) was hung from the hoop. This hoop was made, for the man from whom it was obtained, at the time he took part in the fly-dance. 796 293

The Crazy-Dance.

The second ceremony, the crazy-dance, corresponds pretty closely to the Arapaho crazy-dance. When it was summer, and the time came to make the ceremony in fulfilment of the pledge previously given, the different bands of the tribe gathered in a single camp-circle. Certain men, leaving this camp, then went out to select a suitable site for the dance. When they had found this, the camp started for the place, while they made piles of buffalo-chips in a circle, indicating the place for the camp. The company about to make the ceremony gathered at night, and, taking a pipe of black stone, went stealthily to the tent of an old man whom they had selected to put up the lodge (that is, direct the ceremony) for them. They entered his tent while he was sleeping, woke him, and handed him the pipe. When he signified his acceptance by taking it, they kissed him in thanks, and made him presents. After he had smoked the pipe, he told them to obtain "grandfathers," which they did. 796

When the preparations had begun to be made, crows and owls were killed by the dancers, because they used their feathers. The dancers' regalia consisted of anklets of badger-skin and of quill-embroidered leg-lets, to both of which four crow-feathers and buffalo-fetlocks, or antelope-hoofs, were attached as ornaments and rattles. Around the head they wore a narrow strip of skin embroidered with quill-work, to which an owl's head was tied on one side. Around their necks hung another quill-embroidered thong, at the end of which was a whistle of eagle-wing bone. A buffalo robe painted red was worn. A round hole was cut in this through which the head was put, so that the dancers did not have to hold the garment in place. The piece cut out for the head was not entirely detached, but left hanging down the back. Two long streamers of skin hung down the back [825] [292] [534]

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

411 tcäätcei), was attached to the shaft just behind the point. This root is the
796 well-known poisonous wild parsnip. The arrow-point seems to have been painted blue. Even a slight scratch with this arrow was, on account of the power of the medicine, supposed to cause fits and death. The theory was, that if any one became angry under the unbridled annoyances of the crazy-dancers, and attempted to resist, he would be shot with this arrow. It is, of course, extremely unlikely that this ever actually occurred, or, if it did, the offender was, as among the Arapaho, no doubt immediately cured by the dancers from his imaginary convulsions or paralysis. If buffalo were driven among the tents of the camp-

[243]

Fig. 34.

Fig. 35.

Fig. 34 (50-1884 b). Crazy-dance Regalia. Length, 29 cm.
Fig. 35 (50-1884 c). Crazy-dance Regalia. Length, 23 cm.

circle, they were shot with these arrows, and are believed to have been killed, even if only very slightly wounded. Dogs were also killed in this way.

796 After four days of this playing, the ceremony ended. At its conclusion
431 the bows were given away to boys who were relatives of the dancers; but the other regalia were kept, as the dance was not infrequently repeated.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

More regalia of the crazy-dance than of any other ceremony were obtained for the Museum; but not a single set secured is complete. The Arapaho do not keep their crazy-dance bows after the ceremony, so that, under the present much more complete disappearance of Gros Ventre regalia, the preservation of a bow (see Plate XII) is very fortunate, though it lacks string, arrows, the sage for the handle, and the buckskin thong for wrapping the handle. The remaining ornaments of the bow have been re-attached to it. None of the peculiar crazy-dance robes or capes seem to be any longer in existence. Descriptions and drawings by the Indians show

Fig. 36.

Fig. 37.

Fig. 36 (50 1884 c). Crazy-dance Regalia. Length, 37 cm.
Fig. 37 (50 1884 b). Crazy-dance Regalia. Length, 25 cm.

that they must have been very similar to those of the Arapaho. The Gros Ventre, however, declare theirs to have been painted entirely red; those of the Arapaho are part red and part white. Two pieces of feathered owl-skin

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 for the ends of the streamers of this robe have been preserved in a few sets
293 of these regalia. The head-band, leglets, anklets, and feather and fur attachments of the bow, also exist in two or more sets in the Museum. They agree entirely, so that only the set shown in Figs. 34, 35, 36, and 37, need be described. This set lacks only the whistle and whistle necklace, which have been supplied from another set (see Plate XII).

[411] The bow (see Plate XII) is three feet long, an inch wide, nearly rectangular in cross-section, unbacked, and slightly reddened. At each end is tied a piece of skin slit into seven fringes, to the end of each of which is wrapped a crow-wing feather. At the middle of the bow is tied a strip of bear-skin a foot long and an inch or less wide. With this are six owl-feathers, — all to be held to the bow, it will be remembered, together with some sage, by a thong. The pieces of owl-skin for the streamers on the robe (Fig. 34) need no comment. The anklets of badger-skin are (Fig. 35) a foot long, an inch or more wide, tied together by two thongs, and near one end have four small hoofs attached. The head, leg, and neck bands differ from one another only in length and in attachments. They consist of a strip of skin a quarter of an inch wide, completely wrapped with yellow porcupine-quills. In four places are areas extending about half an inch, that are covered with dark-brown fibres. Attached to the head-band (Fig. 36) is part of a small owl-skin, including one of the mandibles. The whistle on the neck-band (Plate XII) is made of the wing-bone of an eagle or similar bird, and appears to be unornamented. It has been broken. At one end of the leg-bands (Fig. 37) are four small crow-feathers, attached by red-painted thongs.

The Kit-Fox Dance.

796 The kit-fox dance, the next in order after the crazy-dance, was called nouha"wu; and the dancers, nouhunen ("kit-fox men"). In its general course this ceremony was exactly analogous to the first part of the crazy-dance. For four nights, the dancers' wives went out with their "grandfathers" to receive medicine, and for four days, the dancers themselves danced in the lodge erected in the centre of the camp-circle. On the fourth day of the ceremony, or "after four days," as the Indians say, the dancers went to the tent of a prominent chief and danced at his door, which was
[431] equivalent to asking him for gifts. The chief would give them horses and other property. Three other chiefs were accorded the same distinction. The camp thereupon broke, and the dancers, going ahead, put the property which they had received down on the ground in a row. The camp coming up, the brave men of the tribe made a charge on these things, as if they were

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

an enemy; and each took from among the property as nearly as possible such objects as he had actually captured in war. One who had stolen horses would take a horse; one who had taken a gun from an enemy would pick out a gun. While this was being done, or soon after, the dancers were dancing, concluding with a race similar to that in the crazy-dance. This marked the end of the ceremony. 796

There were several degrees of distinction in this dance. Two men had crooked lances wrapped with otter-skin. In four places these lances were tied about with small strips of white fur from which a pair of eagle-feathers hung. These lances were called nouçä"ts'ta". Two other lances were straight, and wrapped with jack-rabbit skin. These also bore feathers. A single dancer had a rattle of the globular shape common on the Plains. Half of the rattle was painted red, and half blue; and feathers were attached both to the top of the rattle and to the bottom of its handle. These regalia of honor were given to men renowned in war. A pipe was brought such a man, and if he thought himself entitled to the honor, and was ready to accept it, he took the pipe. If a man felt that others were really braver than himself, or had some other reason, he refused to take the pipe. One informant stated that he had declined the proffered honor because his wife's brother had recently died. The rank and file of the kit-fox dancers are said to have worn belts of prairie-dog skin. How far these corresponded with the biitaha"wu belts of the Arapaho is uncertain. The fur-wrapped crooked and straight lances are certainly similar to the crooked and straight lances indicating the second and third degrees in the Arapaho biitaha"wu. 796 554 293 [534]

Two girls took part in this ceremony. They were girls who were much thought of and beloved by their relatives. One of the dancers carried a kit-fox skin, the inside of which was painted blue. His companion had the rattle that has been described. While he rattled, the other, holding the skin by the neck and the tail, pointed it at the other dancers. These ran off, and this seems to have been the signal for the beginning of the dance. The two girls followed these two men everywhere. Their parents and relatives gave away great quantities of property in the dancing-lodge. Something similar is found in one of the Cheyenne society-dances, in which four young women accompanied the dancers from place to place. 796 857 593 [171]

Nothing was learned about the origin of the kit-fox dance, except that it is said to have been given by the kit-foxes, which is like what the Cheyenne tell of their analogous society. 796

A neck-band of badger-skin is the only object secured said to have been used in the kit-fox dance. To the end of it a tip of whitish rabbit-fur is attached. The lower part of the piece, which bears this rabbit-fur, hangs down the dancer's back. The upper portion, which is about four inches wide, is slit for a distance of a foot. Through this slit the head is inserted. [292]

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

in the approach of the buffalo, even if previously there had been none in the vicinity of the camp. 796

The dancers carried representations of war-spikes or tomahawks, which apparently resembled the buffalo-shaped sticks of the first dance of the Arapaho. The sticks are described as being about as long as women's digging-sticks, and, like them, sharpened at one end. The other end, however, was bent. The stick was painted red, and a quill-embroidered strip of skin was wound around it as a handle. A buffalo-calf's tail and a bunch of buffalo-fetlocks, and no doubt other objects, were also attached. The stick was used as a rattle. 796 293 [534]

The conclusion of this ceremony presented a feature not found in the two preceding ones. According to one account, the gifts obtained by these dancers were received in payment from the spectators looking in at the lodge. After four days the camp broke, and followed the dancers. On reaching a place where the property had been laid on the ground, the people of the tribe stood in a long row, facing the east. One of the dancers filled a pipe, and selecting one of the poorest men in the camp offered it to him. When the old man took the pipe, the dancer prayed him to allow that all of his company should strike him (count coup on him). A bed of sage was then made for the old man in front of the assembled tribe. Along the edges of this bed, buffalo-chips were laid. The old man crouched on his hands and knees with his head toward the east, and, like the old man undergoing a similar humiliation in the crazy-dance, was covered with a buffalo robe the hair-side of which was turned out. The dancers faced him in a row and danced, rattling. After four songs they ran to the old man, and one after another struck him lightly, each placing beside him a moccasin or some other object, which the old man, on getting up, kept for himself. Then the dancers' "grandfathers" each picked up one of the buffalo-chips from the edges of the sage, and, when they had prepared them, one of the dancers squatted over each. Then his "grandfather," taking him by the shoulders, motioned with him four times, and the fourth time pushed him down. When they had all sat down, each "grandfather" spoke to his "grandson," telling him, "From now on, you need not be afraid to interrupt a sacred performance. You can talk obscenely to a chief, and no one will say anything to you." The people had been watching this performance, which marked the end of the dance. 888 796 [431]

The Bitahaⁿwᵘ.

As stated, this dance has been abandoned a long time, and very little information was obtained regarding it. Men are alive who have seen it, 796

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

668 makes the latter seem possible. It differs from Arapaho objects chiefly in
778 that the color-ornamentation of the quill-wrapping divides the hoop into three instead of four parts. At the upper end of the hoop is attached a bunch of seven small strips of whitish rabbit-fur, resembling the weasel-skin style of ornamentation characteristic of the Blackfoot.

Two balls (Figs. 24 and 25) are identical in character with Arapaho ghost-dance objects, and the latter was made in connection with the movement. These balls are described above.

778
● 293
171

[292]

Fig. 41 (50-1922). Wheel head-dress. Length, 21 cm.

The following objects, many of which were obtained by Dr. Clark Wissler and which were probably not connected with the ghost-dance, are of a character that does not seem to make it worth while to represent them in illustrations; but they resemble Arapaho or other pieces sufficiently for a brief description. They all appear to have been used in the war or grass dance.

Specimen Museum No. 50–1742 is a feathered crook modelled on the familiar type of curved lance that is common on the Plains, and to which the otterskin-wrapped lances of the second degree of the second Arapaho tribal ceremony belong.[1] The Gros Ventre too had such crooked lances in probably two of their tribal ceremonies. The present piece is about four feet long, and made of a stick painted yellow. There is no blade, or representation of it, at the lower end. At the end of the crook hangs a single eagle-feather. The greater portion of the shaft is covered by a casing of green cloth from which hang, attached by thongs and sinew wrapping painted yellow, a row of eighteen eagle-feathers.

A forked stick (specimen Museum No. 50–4328) resembles the Arapaho pieces of this kind described in the "Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History" (Vol. XVIII, p. 358). It is about six feet long, quite slender, and painted red. Some distance in the fork a quill-covered hoop is attached to the two spreading sticks. This hoop is red, with four white, blue-bordered areas on it. The ends of the fork are ornamented with a short green-cloth fringe, tufts of yellow-dyed hair, and feathers notched at the top. From the junction of the two arms downward,

[1] Compare Bulletin of the Amer[illegible] Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part II, Plate XXXII.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the stick is first covered with green cloth, then with skin covered with red and blue quill-work, and at the pointed end is bare, except for its red paint. 778 293

A feathered wheel a foot or a foot and a half across (specimen Museum No. 50-4292) is covered with red, blue, green, yellow, white, and black feathers and plumes, many of them dyed, and tied to the hoop without any attempt at color-pattern or other arrangement. Most of the feathers have the quill split. 171

Another hoop (specimen Museum No. 50-1745) is a little smaller, and is covered with brown buffalo-fur instead of feathers. At one point, five split owl-feathers and six black unsplit feathers are attached; at a place opposite, two small yellowed feathers, one with a green plume at the base.

Other specimens secured by Dr. Clark Wissler are a ceremonial spoon with long, thin, decorated handle, and a quirt. The latter (specimen Museum No. 50-4305) is similar to Arapaho ceremonial quirts.[1] A heavy wooden handle consists of two parts, — the handle proper and a longer portion with five deep notches in the lower edge. The upper edge is straight. The part of the handle that is notched is ornamented with brass tacks. From the end of the stick hang two ends of thong, the whip. At the handle is attached a skin of a fox or similar animal, ornamented with eagle-feathers. 171 415 778

A feather shield consists essentially of a circle of radiating feathers, worn on the back. 171 293

A crow-belt, also secured by Dr. Clark Wissler, is quite similar to the Arapaho one described in the "Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History" (Vol. XVIII, p. 345). It is interesting that of the five Arapaho pieces in the Museum, this is at once the crudest in construction, and the most perverted by white influence from aboriginal style. In the present Gros Ventre belt, a rectangular piece of rawhide is bent over a stick as a support for the remainder of the specimen. The two hanging "tail" strips are of yellow cloth, quite narrow, hanging apart. Eagle-feathers, some dyed red, are attached to them. The belt proper is formed by two pieces of woven yarn. In the middle of the piece are attached the head and breast of an eagle. Below this, between the two hanging strips, is an ornament of a row of eagle-feathers pointing downward. These are attached in the folded edge of a squarish piece of rawhide, thus resembling the analogous piece in the Arapaho crow-belt referred to and the Arapaho biitaha"wu head-dresses. The ornament, however, is fastened to the remainder of the piece, so that it cannot have been worn as a head-dress. The two usual projecting arms consist each of a black eagle-wing feather, with a strip of quill-embroidery laid along the quill of the feather, and with several small bells, 778 [237]

[1] Mooney, Ghost-Dance Religion (Fourteenth Annual Report, Bureau of American Ethnology, Vol. XIV, p. 987, Fig. 94), shows a very similar quirt attributed to the dog-dancer.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

171 whitish fur, and dyed horsehair tufts at the ends. At the base of each arm
293 are red, yellow, and violet feathers. These are either cut off across the end,
778 or have the uppermost part of the quill with its attached vanes removed.

CUSTOMS CONNECTED WITH RELIGION.

171 Sacred pipes were important in the religion of the Gros Ventre. The
beliefs and practices connected with these differ somewhat from those of
276 the Arapaho. The Arapaho recognize only one sacred pipe, which is pre-
778 eminent over all others. Its worship is entirely tribal, though it is in the keeping of an individual. It occupies much the place in tribal life that the sacred pole did among the Omaha. While there are other sacred objects, such as the wheels and bundles, none of them equal the pipe in the regard in which they are held. Among the Gros Ventre there is an analogue of the Arapaho pipe, but also several others. This multiplicity distinctly differentiates the character of the Gros Ventre pipes from that of the Arapaho. The Gros Ventre pipes are not all primarily connected with the origin of the world; they are in part obtained from other tribes. They thus resemble the inter-tribal peace-pipes of the eastern and northern Plains.

[888] The sacred pipes were kept by old men. Their keepers could retain them as long as they wanted. They transferred their pipe to another keeper or owner whenever they wished, especially if some one prayed on their behalf. At present the Gros Ventre have three pipes. It is said that formerly they had móre, some of which have been buried with their last owners. The most sacred of these pipes is called "flat-pipe" (çäẽitsa"). This is described as being made of catlinite, with the bowl in the shape of a person (inità"). The Arapaho sacred pipe is also called "flat-pipe," and also is not flat; but it differs from the Gros Ventre pipe in being cylindrical and tubular. About the centre of the stem of this Gros Ventre flat-pipe is tied a string. A person in the tent where the pipe is kept should not tell myths. If through forgetfulness he begins to do so, it is necessary for him to continue all night.

276 A sick man sometimes pledged to smoke one of the sacred pipes for his
755 recovery. Then he provided food, and distinguished warriors were invited.
778 Each of these had to recount four coups before the pipe could be lighted. A green cherry-branch was then taken, greased, and put into the fire to light the pipe with. If it burnt well, the man would recover; if it burnt poorly, they were afraid that he would not become well, or that something would happen. Then the pipe was smoked in the greatest silence. Cloth or calico was "given" to it, the wrapping last given being the one on the out-

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

●293
411
796

Crazy-Dance Bow and Paraphernalia.

[End Plate 5]

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

575 the marching song was sung.[17] Upon reaching the entrance of
796 the enclosure, which had been constructed in the middle of the camp circle, the double column parted, and filed around the inside of the enclosure and took their places. The noted men bearing whips, having been helped in dismounting, took up their positions at either side of the entrance, and the musicians carried the drum to the center of the enclosure where they provided the music for the dancing.

The dance of each society was distinctive. The Stars carried
[243] rattles, each designed by its owner,[18] which they waved about, as they danced. The Wolf-men did not have rattles or any special paraphernalia of the kind, but symbolized wolves as they stepped about, one hand at the forehead, and the other held behind to represent the tail.

575 These dances with their preliminary "begging" expeditions
535 were not put on regularly, but at the discretion of the societies. A time would be chosen when the whole tribe, or most of the bands thereof, were together, when there were no Sacred Dances in immediate prospect, and when there was no apparent danger from the enemy. If these conditions prevailed, one of the societies might proceed, singing loudly: "Harden your hearts, Wolf-men (or Stars)," meaning, "be prepared to give."[19] Not immediately, but some time later, when auspicious conditions again prevailed, the other society would "retaliate."

These dances were purely social. In between times members belonging to one would compete with members of the other in horse-racing, hand-game gambling, "bragging contests" recounting conquests in love and war—each trying to out-do his opposite number.

Sometime between 1875 and 1880 the Wolf-men adopted the
[177] Grass Dance from the Assiniboine. Thereafter this Society was sometimes called the Grass dancers.[20]

575 The Boy was under the impression that the Stars and Wolf-men

[17] Recorded as No. 102.

[18] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, pp. 236–37, with illustration.

[19] These songs were recorded as Nos. 93, 94 for the Stars.

[20] Kroeber, 1908, p. 238 describes this dance as the "war-dance." For the adoption of the Grass Dance and subsequent history of the two societies, see Flannery, 1946, pp. 39–70.

PLATES

142 The original photograph of Plate 1 was taken in 1887 and
291 belongs to The Boy. Shown in it are Lame Bull, The Boy's
301 father, and Crow Bull, maternal uncle of Coming Daylight. Both
302 of these men were born around 1825 and their personal experiences were often referred to by our informants as we took down the record of the old way of life. Each had been Keeper of the sacred Flat Pipe.

115 The photographs composing Plate 2, except for the one of The
133 Boy, were taken in 1940 by Dr. Karl F. Herzfeld. The first three
142 show the nature of the country around Hays on the Fort Belknap
291 Reservation; the other three show some of our informants and
292 interpreters whose biographical sketches follow.

531 In Plate 3, the shield and war medicines of Bull Lodge, father
797 of our informant, Garter Snake, represent only a few of the specimens of Gros Ventre culture collected in 1937 by Mr.
778 Richard Pohrt, of Flint, Michigan.

293
714
724

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

293
778
721
714

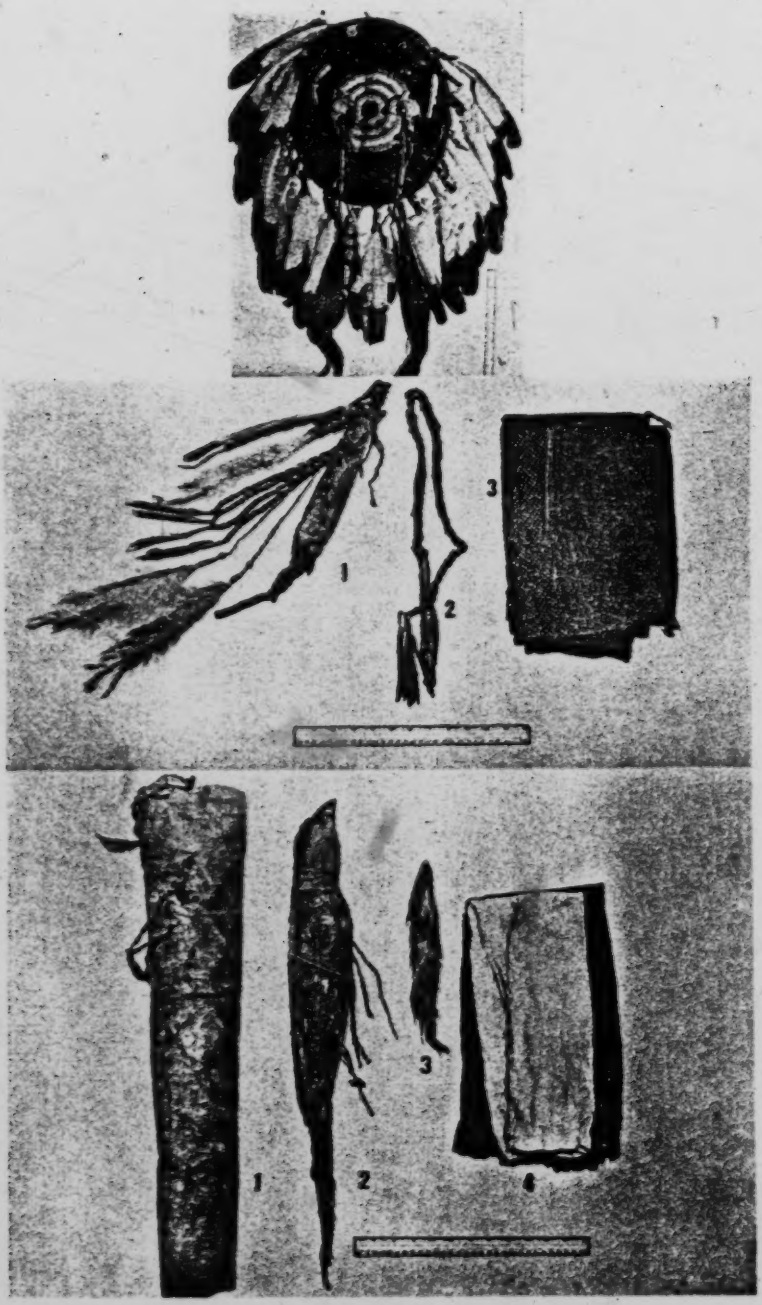


PLATE III

SHIELD AND WAR MEDICINES MADE
AND USED BY BULL LODGE

[p. 212(C)]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

fathers back of them and the wives back of the grandfathers, according to one statement by Coming Daylight; the grandfathers in front, and the dancers and their wives back of them according to another by her. The bows of the "talls" and "shorts" were stuck upright in the ground in two crescents in front of the two respective divisions; the bows of the ritual "elder brothers" (the four councilors?), a little apart near the south or southeast ends of these two crescents.[18] 796*

The chief ritual paraphernalia used in the Crazy Dance were the badger pelt, hoof rattles, whistles, bows, and poisoned arrows. The stuffed badger hide, "trimmed and fixed up," figured prominently in the rites. The bone whistles, hung on the neck of the dancers, were blown by them when dancing. The rattles, θaθanas, sticks about five feet long, with deer hoofs attached in a row along the upper third, were used by the grandfathers who sang, sitting in a row and pounding the ends of the rattles on the ground to beat time. 293 796*

Each Crazy Dancer treated one of his arrows with poisonous wild parsley, and tied the poisoned arrow to his bow. If the dancer "got mad or any serious situation arose" he would unfasten the arrow and shoot to kill. If the arrow penetrated the skin of the victim or even scratched him, he died. This extreme measure was very rarely resorted to. We were told of no actual instance. When the dance was over these poisoned arrows were carried away to a spot where no one could find them and were buried. 796* [626]

The ceremonies on each of the four days of the Crazy Dance began with the painting of the bodies of the dancers and their wives, the pattern of the painting differing each day. The painting was done in the respective lodges of the leaders of the groups of two to four dancers. Here they gathered with their respective ceremonial grandfathers and "Little Crazy Dancers." The dancer and his wife, or borrowed surrogate, would sit there naked, the woman with legs close together and stretched out in front. This was a source of serious embarrassment to all concerned. The bodies 796* 302 [834 516]

[18] Kroeber, 1908, p. 242, gives a different arrangement, with which still another statement by Coming Daylight that "the women sat on the west side" insofar agrees.

2: Flannery E-5/ (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Feathers, especially eagle feathers, were highly prized, and red paint, prepared from ochre, as well as other paints obtained through the trader, played their part in bodily decoration. 292 237 386

The younger men thought a great deal of their appearance. One of the things they made for themselves was fancy painted sunshade-hats of rawhide. The designs painted thereon had a yellow background against which various other colors stood out. Coming Daylight remarked: "These sunshades looked so fine that the other tribes copied them, just like the whites get their styles from Paris." Long thick hair was the ideal both for men and for women. The tail of the porcupine made an admirable comb. A number of perfumes were used by the young men. The castor of the beaver, for instance, was put in the paint bag so that the material for daily painting would be sweet smelling. Again, young men crushed "Piegan berries," chewed them, and rubbed them on hair, horses, and bedding, as perfume. 292 751 531 302 [237]

Incidentally, according to Coming Daylight, in order to clean their buckskin clothing, the Gros Ventres would wear it into the water, getting it completely wet, and then rub it thoroughly with a certain kind of white clay.[14] She said that the tribe was spoken of by other tribes as always having such nice white clothes, and to this habit of rubbing them with clay she attributes the name by which the Gros Ventres call themselves, *a'aninin*, "white clay people." 296 [101]

Ear-rings, worn both by men and women, were made from imported abalone shell, which they cut up and shaped; they also used a certain type of imported white shell. Many other kinds of necklaces, armlets, and so on were apparently used, but on these we failed to get details. 301 [439]

Household and Transportation

The lodges of the Gros Ventres were made from buffalo hides, the number used in each depending on the size of the lodge. They 342

[14] This custom is mentioned in the sources of the early 19th century. Cf. Harmon, p. 277; Henry, v. 2, p. 734. The latter adds, as a further distinguishing characteristic, that when the Gros Ventres use red "it is always of a light color, inclining to pale vermillion. The dark red or Spanish brown, so much in vogue among the other Meadow tribes, does not suit their taste." [822]

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

with dyed plumes or tufts of horsehair, as the Arapaho so frequently do both at the base and top of the feather. Feathers with the vanes cut from the quill, except at the very top, are also scarcely used by the Gros Ventre. Instead, they usually cut the feather squarely off across its end, or split the quill, from the end down, for the greater part of its length. Sometimes the uppermost part of the quill is entirely removed, with its attached portions of the vanes, leaving the top of the feather forked. Plume-feathers are also much less used by the Gros Ventre than by the Arapaho. In dyeing, the Gros Ventre generally used cruder colors; a blue-violet, a pink-red, a light-bluish green, and yellow, all of them aniline colors, being the most common. The Arapaho use true red and green more frequently, and in most cases employ the dyes more lightly, thus obtaining endurable or delicate effects where the Gros Ventre are garish. 778 237 171 [386]

The Gros Ventre methods of feather-treatment, both the cutting-off and the splitting of the end of the feather, go back, at least in part, to their older tribal ceremonies. Both these processes are found employed on the dog-dance regalia described.

As regards other differences, the Gros Ventre probably employ more weasel-skin in ornaments than the Arapaho, though far less than their neighbors the Blackfeet. They use cloth (both cotton and woollen goods), red, green, or blue, without reluctance; whereas the Arapaho have clung very tenaciously to skin in all ceremonial objects. Skin thongs and sinew for binding are, however, very rarely replaced by strings and thread, even with the Gros Ventre.

The few objects obtained belonging to the ghost-dance movement are the following. 668 778

Fig. 41 shows an imitation of a netted playing-wheel. The piece is about two inches in diameter. The stitch of the meshes seems to be correct, though there are fewer meshes than in the full-sized wheels. The "crow," the centre mesh, is painted red; the rest of the thong, yellow. To the centre mesh are attached four magpie-feathers cut off across. This object was worn tied to the hair on the side of the head, or hanging from the little finger when the people joined hands to dance. Several very similar objects, lacking the feathers, are attached to the girl's painted dress shown in "Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History" (Vol. XVIII, Plate LXXV). [301]

A head-dress consisting of a hoop of about the same size, quill-wound and bisected by two quill-wound strings, and of three long, blue-and-white quill-wound pendant thongs with plume-feathers at the ends, was collected by Dr. Clark Wissler. It is not known whether it belongs to the war-dance or the ghost-dance: its general similarity to certain Arapaho head-dresses [292]

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

343 757

A man who pledges and erects a sweat-house does not participate in the sweating. He makes the fire, heats the rocks and passes them into the house, raises and lowers the blankets, and performs other services.

[237]

In sweating, animal tails were sometimes used to beat the body with. Fig. 43 shows such an implement, made of the tail of a buffalo, on a stick handle cased in the skin of the tail. This object is similar to the Arapaho specimens described in the "Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History" (Vol. XVIII, p. 316), but is noticeable for the shortness of the hair on the tail.

343 757 776

When people were called to come to sweat, hixteib'nix'a"t ("Above-Nix'a"t") was first called to sweat with them. Then the people were called. This personage, whose name also means "Above-white-man," is said to have been prayed to before the whites were known; but the Gros Ventre, like the Arapaho, state that they do not know whether he is identical with the Nix'a"t of their myths. Ordinary prayers were always addressed first to hixteib'nix'a"t or to iiqanânin ("our father"), then the sun and moon would be mentioned, next the sacred pipes, and then the earth. After these had been mentioned, anything else could be prayed to.

[301]

778

A charm tied on horses to make them run fast consists of rabbit-feet painted red and tied together. The Arapaho used rabbits' feet for the same purpose.

Specimen Museum No. 50 1804 is a pair of wild-cat-tails worn by young men at the shoulder, or at the heel of a moccasin. They were also tied to children's belts, next to the skin, in order to keep them from wetting the bed.

[751]

Specimen Museum No. 50 1903 is a gorget (commonly called by the Indians in English "moon-shell") said to have been made in the old way from an intervertebral disk of a buffalo. At present these objects are usually slightly concave, and are made of china.

Fig. 44 (50-4280). Thunder-stone Necklace. Length, 21 cm.

[301 237]

The Gros Ventre, according to Dr. Clark Wissler, call certain corrugated fossil stones "thunder-stones."[1] The Assiniboine seem to use the same name. The Blackfeet, who perhaps have most developed the cult of these objects, call them "buffalo-stones." A specimen from the Northern Arapaho is shown in the "Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural

[1] [These are probably Ammonite septa. - Analyst]

281 successfully hunted than antelope. While the finest clothing was
291 made from deer, elk was preferred for some purposes such as
[825] moccasins and warm shirts and coats—it being more durable but not equally as flexible.

291 For winter wear, caps and mittens of beaver or otter were made for men and boys. Beaver skin served as a breech clout for the men in winter, although antelope was preferred for this purpose the rest of the year, unless cloth were available, since the latter was more comfortable than hide which chafed the skin so badly.

292 Ordinarily unornamented clothing was worn, but for special events, particularly when the whole tribe was together, everyone
301 dressed in his best. Being well-dressed was as important to the
237 Gros Ventres as being well-mounted on ceremonial and social occasions. The effect on both the eye and the ear was taken into account in the ornamentation. Dyed porcupine quill embroidery lent color, and mica—first heated, then powdered and rubbed over a robe—glistened beautifully. Polished deer-hoofs as edging for a robe or dangling from leggings or garters "made such a nice sound when one walked." This feeling both for color and sound was carried over when material from the whites was at hand, beadwork tending to supplant the quill embroidery and scraps of bright colored cloth and of metal serving as "dangles." [18]

Elk teeth, however, were said to be "the greatest decoration of the Gros Ventres." They were used principally for girls' and women's dresses. Not so long ago there was a man at Hays who wore a vest trimmed with elk teeth, and people would say to him: "You crazy thing, only women have that kind of decoration!" But he was unconventional and would retort: "Well, I dance, too, and I want to look nice." Everyone would laugh, but he persisted
[727] in wearing that vest. Human hair as fringe and on moccasins was proudly worn by men who had taken scalps.

292 Mink, otter, weasel, muskrat and kit-fox were all used as trim-
237 mings, and occasionally the whole pelt of mink, otter or muskrat was made into a bag, or tobacco pouch, or other small container. Feathers, especially eagle feathers, were highly prized, and red

[18] For the detailed comparative analysis of Decorative Art of the Gros Ventres and other plains tribes, see Kroeber, 1908, pp. 151–79.

Feathers, especially eagle feathers, were highly prized, and red 292
paint, prepared from ochre, as well as other paints obtained through 237
the trader, played their part in bodily decoration. 336

The younger men thought a great deal of their appearance. One 292
of the things they made for themselves was fancy painted sunshade- 751
hats of rawhide. The designs painted thereon had a yellow back- 531
ground against which various other colors stood out. Coming Daylight remarked: "These sunshades looked so fine that the other tribes copied them, just like the whites get their styles from Paris." Long thick hair was the ideal both for men and for 302
women. The tail of the porcupine made an admirable comb. A [237]
number of perfumes were used by the young men. The castor of the beaver, for instance, was put in the paint bag so that the material for daily painting would be sweet smelling. Again, young men crushed "Piegan berries," chewed them, and rubbed them on hair, horses, and bedding, as perfume.

Incidentally, according to Coming Daylight, in order to clean 296
their buckskin clothing, the Gros Ventres would wear it into the water, getting it completely wet, and then rub it thoroughly with a certain kind of white clay.[14] She said that the tribe was spoken of by other tribes as always having such nice white clothes, and to this habit of rubbing them with clay she attributes the name by which the Gros Ventres call themselves, *a'aninin*, "white clay [101]
people."

Ear-rings, worn both by men and women, were made from 301
imported abalone shell, which they cut up and shaped; they also [439]
used a certain type of imported white shell. Many other kinds of necklaces, armlets, and so on were apparently used, but on these we failed to get details.

Household and Transportation

The lodges of the Gros Ventres were made from buffalo hides, 342
the number used in each depending on the size of the lodge. They

[14] This custom is mentioned in the sources of the early 19th century. Cf. Harmon, p. 277; Henry, v. 2, p. 734. The latter adds, as a further distinguishing characteristic, that when the Gros Ventres use red "it is always of a light color, inclining to pale vermillion. The dark red or Spanish [822]
brown, so much in vogue among the other Meadow tribes, does not suit their taste."

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

435 value. Thus any object captured from the enemy, no matter how
554 trivial it might be, was more valuable than a duplicate of that same
231 thing obtained in any other way, and could be used to initiate an enemy-friendship, one of the most important of Gros Ventre transactions. A man who gave a horse, rather than or in addition to other items—to establish the enemy-friendship, to pay for the curing of a relative, to someone in honor of his relative, to his ceremonial grandfather for guiding him through the Sacred Dance, to wager in gambling, to show how much he thought of his brother-in-law in return for so simple a gift as the flesh of a puppy—would gain in prestige, for he thus established for himself a reputation for "being somebody."

435 The amount of labor that went into the making of an object, such as the polished deer-hoof trimming on a robe, was an element in its value. When the robe was old and worn the recipient thereof
[431] would remove the fringe and return to the donor "so she could use them again." Scarcity, too, entered into evaluation of goods. Eagle feathers were, for instance, more valuable than other kinds of feathers. Again, as to elk teeth, it was explained: "The elk has only two teeth that are like ivory,[11] and so it takes a long time to
[237 accumulate them. They are to us Gros Ventres like pearls are to
301] the whites. They were our greatest decoration. They are valuable even today, and, while imitations are sometimes used, you can always tell the difference."

Exchange and Distribution

439 There was actually no need for economic exchange within the tribe, with the object of obtaining the necessities of life, but a need had developed for exchange with the fur traders to obtain guns, whiskey, metal objects—kettles, scraper-blades, etc.—cloth, tobacco, beads, paints, and so on. After about 1830, the medium of exchange with traders was the buffalo robe, which rapidly increased in value at the expense of beaver.[12] Traders on the Missouri accepted other items produced by the Indians, but everything was equated in terms of robes.[13]

[11] These are the rudimentary canines. Cf. Seton, v. 3, p. 5.

[12] Bradley, pp. 203–04.

[13] According to Denig, p. 421, an Assiniboine chief on Jan. 8, 1852, was

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

nothing the person can do about it. One of Singer's friends was called "Matter in the Ear" and another "Ugly or Homely." Another woman harped so much on an event which took place at Turtle River, that "Turtle River" became the name by which she was known, and most people forgot that her actual name was "Spotted Calf." 551

The piercing of the ears may be done at the same time as the naming, as apparently was done in the case of Coming Daylight, or might be done shortly thereafter. Singer, for instance, was named by Sitting High, but her grandmother on a different occasion pierced her ears. The parents might pay someone to do this, or a relative might volunteer. The sooner the ear-piercing is done the better, because the older the child is the more it may hurt. Singer said: "That ear-piercing goes either through a dream or through war deeds." In the former case, the dream is told and then the ears are pierced. In the latter case the person must relate a war story: "This is what I have done. . . ." The story has to be a true one concerning an incident wherein the enemy did not retaliate so the ears will heal up without any trouble.[13] The actual procedure, regardless of whether there is much formality or not, is as follows. An awl is used to pierce the ear and into the hole is inserted either a small splinter of rose-wood sharpened to a pin-point, or a porcupine quill. Whichever is used, it is greased before inserting and is left in until it falls out when the ear is healed. At this time is then inserted a small ring merely to keep the hole open. Fancy earrings are not worn by small children. Formerly boys' ears were pierced as well as girls'. The number of holes in each ear seems more or less arbitrary, but all are made on the same occasion. Coming Daylight has one in each ear; Singer has two; Coming Daylight's eldest son has three. The custom is now dying out as the present generation of mothers does not believe in it. Coming Daylight wanted to pierce the ears of her great-granddaughter but the child's mother said: "No. You will hurt her." 304 [852] [787] [301]

[13] Kroeber, 1908, p. 182 states that ear-piercing was said to be unaccompanied by special ceremonial actions.

PLATES

142 The original photograph of Plate 1 was taken in 1887 and
291 belongs to The Boy. Shown in it are Lame Bull, The Boy's
301 father, and Crow Bull, maternal uncle of Coming Daylight. Both
302 of these men were born around 1825 and their personal experiences were often referred to by our informants as we took down the record of the old way of life. Each had been Keeper of the sacred Flat Pipe.

115 The photographs composing Plate 2, except for the one of The
133 Boy, were taken in 1940 by Dr. Karl F. Herzfeld. The first three
142 show the nature of the country around Hays on the Fort Belknap
291 Reservation; the other three show some of our informants and
292 interpreters whose biographical sketches follow.

531 In Plate 3, the shield and war medicines of Bull Lodge, father
797 of our informant, Garter Snake, represent only a few of the specimens of Gros Ventre culture collected in 1937 by Mr.
778 Richard Pohrt, of Flint, Michigan.
293
714
721

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

142
291
301
302

PLATE I

LEFT TO RIGHT: LAME BULL, BIRD SITTING, BLACK BIRD AND CROW BULL

(Photo by Don Dutro, Fort Benton, Montana, 1887)

[p. 212 (A)]

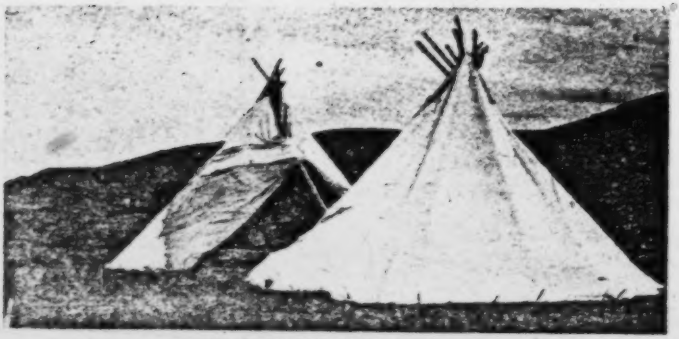
3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

ance with given practice it must have been carried away on a hill or elsewhere.[1] 782

[1] In 1948 The Boy gave a detailed description of the rite should the killer of an albino or "beaver" buffalo present the skin to the Pipe, rather than offer it as a sacrifice. He said that in this case, the man presented the green hide to the Pipe with a ritual directed by the keeper and included the painting of the donor. The keeper then called in two young women known to be expert tanners, received them ritually, and instructed them in procedures to be followed in tanning this particular hide. He made a crown, bracelets and anklets of twisted sage for each woman while singing a special song (not recorded by Cooper). When the hide was dressed there was a big feast at the keeper's lodge at which the keeper ritually painted the skin red. The keeper gave the donor of the skin the choice of any horse from all except one of his herd; to each of the women tanners he gave three valuable presents. [R.F.] [28] 30 [431]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

346
796



A. *Double tipi for ceremony.*

[301
782]

B. *The Boy prays with ordinary pipe.*

[516
534
778]

C. *The Boy smudges rattles over Flat Pipe hearth.*

PLATE I

[p.425]

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

551 Names were given to children very soon after birth. Names were frequently changed and given away. A man would receive his father's name
553 from the latter, or would take it after his death. If a child were sickly, a relative, such as a grandfather, sometimes gave him another name. A sick person sometimes also took a new name in order to recover. Renowned warriors sometimes gave away their names to young men. They might retain the same name for themselves, or take a new one. One very aged man gave away his name to a young man, telling him, "I give you my name in order that you may have as long a life as I." This was done without the occasion or accompaniment of a ceremony.

There seems to have been no prohibition against mentioning the name of the dead, nor even any reluctance on the matter. Some people, however, were ashamed to speak their own names.

551 Twins, called niiçan, were named, if boys, respectively Kaaen and Niiçaⁿ.
845 The latter name, however, was not always used, an ordinary name being given instead. Girl twins were not called by these names.

302 The hair was formerly worn in braids, as at present customary among the Plains tribes, but also erect over the forehead. The women wore their
[765] hair either in braids or sometimes loose. In mourning, the hair, especially of the women, was cut about halfway across the cheek.

304 Ear-piercing, which among the Arapaho is performed on ceremonial occasions, and is itself accompanied with ceremony and giving of presents, was said among the Gros Ventre to be unaccompanied by special ceremonial actions. A woman or any one else does the piercing.

857 Boys who were herding horses sometimes took off their clothes and daubed themselves with mud until they were unrecognizable. They painted
673 their horses, and made shields of willow. Then they came to the camp,
868 mounted or on foot, to steal meat. Approaching the camp like a war-party, they would select the best meat hanging outdoors, charge on it, take it, and run. The old men and women and children chased them with clubs, but of course without success. The boys would go back to where they were herding, and have a feast.

576 The Gros Ventre say that both hand-shaking and kissing are aboriginal with them.

GAMES.

524 A common cup-and-ball game called tsöötskuutjaⁿ ("throw in") consisted of four hollow deer or antelope leg bones, each about two inches long, attached to a string passing through them, at the end of which there was a needle eight or ten inches long. This game appears to be identical with

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

727 counted coup on the enemy filled a pipe, and held it for the rest of the
[554] party to smoke as they stood in a row. The returning war-party, if
successful, always painted black, but if a member of their own party had
[302] been killed, they returned without rejoicing; unless sometimes, when the
loss of the enemy had been greater than their own, and a relative of the
dead was in the party, he might say, "One of the enemy pays for my
relative. On account of the others, let us enjoy ourselves." Then the
party would paint black, and celebrate. Wounds received by members of
the war-party would not prevent celebration, unless, of course, they resulted
fatally; and they were always regarded as an honor.

Some war-parties started off publicly in broad daylight, having made
726 it known that they were going; and any one who wished joined. Some-
727 times, perhaps, two men would agree to go, and invited such others to
accompany them as they wished. Women not infrequently went with the
war-parties. If a man was killed in war, his relatives, especially his parents,
[765] mourned for him. His father might go to the tent of a renowned warrior,
and cry until this man became angry and announced a day for a party to
start out to obtain revenge. On the day set, the party left publicly, usually
751 on horseback.

237 A man's supernatural war paraphernalia are shown in Figs. 27, 28, and
726 29. They were obtained from a middle-aged man who had them from his
778 grandfather, who first dreamed of the magpie and the other animals con-
293 nected with the paraphernalia, and made the objects. A cylindrical raw-
[787] hide case (Fig. 27), such as is found used for holding feathers and medicine
among most Plains tribes, is painted with a yellow, green, and blue design
[531] resembling partfleche designs. These colors represent the various colors
of the birds that were dreamed of by the original owner, and whose feathers
are kept in the case. The case is called the "house" of these objects. A
wing-bone is attached to the outside of the case to make another whistle
from in case of loss of the finished whistle included in the outfit. A small
bag containing a necklace is kept in the case. The bag (Fig. 28, *a*) is orna-
mented with bead-work representing a frog (kaka"). This frog was part of
the original owner's dream. The necklace (Fig. 28, *b*) has various wasóo
("medicine-roots") on it. These are said to be neither eaten nor otherwise
used, except as they are worn on the necklace. The bone whistle (Fig. 28,
c) alluded to is attached to a necklace of otter-skin. It is blown during the
fighting to prevent injury. A magpie's skin (Fig. 28, *d*) and the skin of a
smaller bird (Fig. 29, *a*) are also contained in the case. The white magpie-
feathers are dyed yellow. The two skins are worn at the back of the head,
and prevent the wearer being injured even in a hand-to-hand fight. A
head-dress of ten magpie-feathers and of a white plume on red-painted

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

A plant called tyäänou is used as perfume, as a wash for the hair, and as a minor medicine. Bunches of the plant were used as perfume. A tea boiled of it is thought to make the hair grow while perfuming it. Such a tea is also poured into the nostrils as a remedy for headache (specimen Museum No. 50-1920). 278 757 [302]

Niibyouäxtjin is used as perfume. The stems and leaves are chewed, and applied to the body (specimen Museum No. 50-1853). [302]

Tsaa^{n}stibin is used as perfume. It is chewed, and rubbed on the hair (specimen Museum No. 50-1792).

One ingredient of incense is the callosity from the leg of a horse above the knee. This is cut up fine, and burned with sweet-grass. It is also worn on the body on a string.

Pine-nuts or other conifer-seeds are used for pemmican (specimen Museum No. 50-1913). [562] 824

For embroidery, dark fibrous water-plants, at^{a}hin (the Arapaho atahina^{n}), are used (specimen Museum No. 50 1891).

Quills are dyed yellow with a solution from a conifer-lichen, no doubt the widely used *Evernia vulpina*, called otsahaa^{n} (specimen Museum No. 50 1873). [386]

TRIBAL CEREMONIAL ORGANIZATION.

The Gros Ventre ceremonial organization is akin to that of the Arapaho with such differences as would be expected from the differences in language and the period of separation of the two tribes. The fundamental feature of this organization, the grouping of men by ages and the observance of a series of a half-dozen ceremonies in order according to age, is common to the two tribes. The ceremonies vary somewhat, and in a few cases their names or order have been changed; but among both tribes there are about six regular consecutive men's ceremonies, one or two that are preliminary or somewhat outside of this series, a single ceremony for women corresponding to those for men, and the sun-dance, which is included by the Indians in the enumeration of their grouped ceremonies, but differs from the others in not being connected with age, or with any society-like association of individuals. 561 796

Among the Gros Ventre the dancing-lodge for these ceremonies — which is erected in the centre of the camp-circle, and, like this, opens to the east — is constructed of two large tents. The lodge is open above, and appears to be oval or round in shape. The dancers, before beginning the ceremony, secure old men, who are called their "grandfathers," and are their instruct- 346 796

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The place of the biitaha^{n}wu is not certain, as no informants were found who would positively express themselves on this matter. It is universally regarded as having been the most sacred and most dangerous of all the ceremonies, these qualities being thought to have led to its abandonment before any of the other dances. It can probably be concluded from this that it was last in the series, and performed by the oldest men. 171 796

As among the Arapaho, but somewhat more clearly, each dance refers symbolically to a certain animal. This symbolism is as follows. 171 796

The fly-dance takes its name from flies or mosquitoes, and was given or instituted by a mosquito. During part of the ceremony the dancers imitate the actions of mosquitoes. 825

The crazy-dance has comparatively little reference to any animal. The participants, however, wear anklets of badger-skin, and an entire badger-skin is used in ceremonies at the time of starting the dancing.

The kit-fox lodge was given by the kit-foxes, and a kit-fox skin is used somewhat analogously to the badger-skin in the crazy-dance.

In the dog-dance the dancers of highest degree represent shaggy dogs. It is also said that the participants in the ceremony largely eat dogs during its course. Among the Arapaho a dog is said to have instituted this lodge, and the Gros Ventre have a similar myth. [262]

In the nana^{n}naha^{n}w^{n} the dancers sing for the buffalo, and it is said that they always succeed in causing them to appear near the camp. Among the Arapaho the dancers represent both buffalo and prairie-chickens. The symbolic reference to prairie-chickens among the Gros Ventre is found in their sun-dance; their equivalent of the Arapaho rabbit-tent in this ceremony being called "prairie-chicken tent," and the singers in it "prairie-chickens" and "prairie-hens."

The biitaha^{n}w^{n}, as among the Arapaho, has connection with thunder. The dancers are painted over the body with dots which represent hail. If one of them violates the regulations of the dance, it is thought that it will begin to rain and that the offender may be struck by lightning. The Gros Ventre have an additional symbolic connection of their sun-dance with thunder, which is not strictly paralleled among the Arapaho. [302] [821]

The women in their dance among both tribes represent buffalo, and the actions gone through in this ceremony are in both tribes probably more directly imitative of the animals symbolized than in any of the men's ceremonies.

What has been said about the Arapaho in regard to the relation of the entire ceremonial organization to the lives of the men of the tribe, and in regard to the relative importance of the religious, military, and social functions of the age-companies constituting the organization, appears to apply 171 796 561

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

analogous to the "green-grass" and "young-sheep" and other companies, but having an additional ceremony confined to itself. On the other hand, if the "stars" were not one of the age-companies, it is hard to see with what groups of men they competed. It is therefore not improbable that there formerly existed among the Gros Ventre a star-society, which had a ceremony of its own, and which, while based partly on age in being constituted of young men, was outside and independent of the scheme of the benan"wu, with which it had no, or only indirect, relation, and with whose working out it must in some measure have conflicted. Such a society, which would be a true society in being based on a membership determined by choice, purchase, initiation, or supernatural experience, — in other words, by selection, would be of a type of organization quite distinct from the ordinary Gros Ventre or Arapaho age-company performing in the course of its existence an entire series of tribal ceremonies, but would have abundant parallels in other ceremonial societies on the Plains and elsewhere. Its presence would therefore be readily explainable as an incipient intrusion due to the cultural influence of some other tribe, the chief objection to such an explanation being the occurrence of the star-dance also among the Arapaho, but without a known association with a special society. This suggested character of the Gros Ventre star-society and star-dance fits the facts, but is after all only hypothetical; and altogether the relation of the ceremony to the remainder of the Gros Ventre ceremonial organizations is not yet clear.

The star-dance as formerly held is said to have lasted four days and nights. There might be further subsequent dancing. At the beginning of the ceremony, the dancers went to four places at the camp-circle facing or representing the four cardinal directions, and at each place danced before the tent of a prominent man. The owner of the tent gave away property and filled a pipe for the dancers, after smoking which they proceeded to the next one. After having danced in the four places, they danced in the middle of the camp-circle. This might be in the open air, or in a lodge made of two large tents combined. The singers were four old men, who accompanied themselves on small hand drums. The dancers' wives sat behind these four old men and sang with them. The dancer's relatives at times went to them and danced with them, taking their rattles and temporarily using them. The dancers' bodies seem to have been variously decorated; but they had no distinctive regalia except rattles. These were alike in general character, being loop-shaped, and decorated with gaudy paint and attachments, but there seems to have been no attempt at making them uniform. The dancing-lodge was elliptical, with the door towards the east and a fire near the western end. The singers were at this end, and the dancers near them, in two lines, along the sides of the lodge, facing each other. In dancing

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Recently these two bodies of young men performing respectively the star-dance and the war-dance have supplanted entirely the older, more numerous age-companies. In late years they have taken the place of the age-companies in the ceremonies connected with the erection of the sun-dance lodge. There was then considerable rivalry between them, and it is said that a member of either company who should take part with the other would be abused by his companions, and perhaps have his clothes torn. Recently also the two groups have had certain social functions, which among most Plains tribes are in the hands of tribal bodies or societies. They had charge of the moving of the camp-circle and of locating it. If a man disapproved of their selection, or pitched his tent elsewhere than they directed, they overturned it, and perhaps destroyed his property or killed his horses. If buffalo were seen and others than themselves went ahead and killed them, these two companies cut both the meat and the skin of such game into small pieces. 178 561 796 [625]

The Fly-Dance.

The fly-dance (nouba^{n}w^{u}), the first of the dances, seems to have been regarded in some ways as preliminary to the series, rather than part of it, somewhat like the Arapaho kit-fox and star dances. The dancers were called noubän ("flies"). They were young men, sometimes described as boys. Apparently they were of an age where many or all of them were still unmarried, for no mention of their wives participating in the ceremony is made. The duration of the dance is not quite sure. It is said, like all the other ceremonies, to have continued four days; but another informant gave one day as the length of the ceremony. It is not clear whether or not a lodge was erected for the ceremony. In any case, however, the dance was performed outside of the camp-circle. A prominent feature seems to have been the food cooked by the relatives of the young dancers, and brought to the dancing-place. In distinction from what occurred in the other dances, "grandfathers" were secured very easily for this ceremony, which goes to show the light regard in which it was held by the elder men. The old men of the tribe are said to have gone out to the dancing-place, and, on being selected by groups of dancers as "grandfathers," to have accepted at once. 796

The dancing went on during the day. The dancers were practically naked; and their entire body, as customary in Arapaho and Gros Ventre ceremonies, was painted over. A common style of painting, or perhaps the characteristic one of the dance, was red, with a white stripe on the face and another on the belly. The pledger of the dance (yenouhuxtj^{i}; Arapaho, yanahut^{i}) was painted yellow, with corresponding black stripes. After the [291 302]

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 from this part of the robe. At the end of each of these, a bunch of owl-feathers, or rather a piece of owl-skin, was attached. The dancers carried bows, to each end of which seven crow-feathers were tied. Down was [411] fastened to the bowstring at several places. At the handle of the bow a strip of bear-skin, owl-feathers, and some sage were fastened with a buck-skin thong. Four arrows accompanied each bow. One had a metal point, which subsequently was made more effective by medicine. The three other arrows were blunt, or had wooden points that had been chewed soft so as to be harmless.

The pledger, and three other men called "brothers" (hinähäbyiitou), who sat apart from the other dancers in the lodge and acted somewhat differently on certain occasions, had bows that were unornamented, except for the down on the string. These four men wore their robes turned so that the hair was outside, whereas the other dancers wore the dressed side out.

[302] All the dancers were painted entirely red. Their hair was daubed with white paint. They stopped the left ear with a mushroom, such as was used [824] for tinder, and put paint (apparently white) over the ear and the entire left side of the face.

Four young men who would be good workers were selected to be the assistants or servants (atsaan) of this company. They brought wood and water, and performed other services.

[346] The lodge for this dance is described as having been made of travois or tent poles about which tent-skins were drawn. It was open to the east. There was a fire about in the centre. Facing the opening of the lodge was a small partial enclosure or screen constructed on dog-travois. In this were the pledger and his three companions, the "brothers." The dancers are said to have occupied the northern half of the wall in the dancing-lodge; the "grandfathers," behind whom sat the dancers' wives, the southern half. As among the Arapaho, the dancers were divided into two sections; the tall men toward the rear and the short men toward the front, of the lodge. These two divisions competed against each other in the races to follow. The dancers' bows were stood up in the ground in a row just beyond the fire.

During the four days of the dance, the dancers, every morning before sunrise, went to their "grandfathers" to be painted. Apparently they went to their "grandfathers'" tents, and not to the dancing-lodge, for this [302] purpose. The dancers' wives went with them. They were naked, and [824] were painted too. No one but the "grandfather" looked at them. Before [788] being painted, the dancers made incense of sage-leaves on burning charcoal. They also rubbed their bodies with fragrant fir or balsam leaves (Rushed and mixed with fat.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 As in the other ceremonies, the dancers were painted over the entire
302 body. It does not seem that the long-continued painting of the Arapaho
562 dog-dance, in connection with which the relationship between the dancers' wives and "grandfathers" found its chief expression in this tribe, existed among the Gros Ventre. The women, however, took considerable part in the ceremony as in the others, being painted with their husbands, sitting in the lodge and singing, and at times putting on their regalia; whereupon the men took hold of the ends of the regalia, and their wives led them about.

796 The complete disintegration and disuse of the old ceremonial life of
178 the Gros Ventre is shown by the fact that not a single dog-dance object belonging to an ordinary dancer has been collected. It is therefore the more fortunate that the Museum has been able to complete, through Dr. Clark Wissler, a valuable set of the regalia of the highest degree of this dance. This unique group of specimens is shown in Figs. 38, 39, and 40, and Plate XIII.

The coat (Fig. 38) is in shape an ordinary deer-skin shirt. At the neck
796 is an edging of red flannel. On the upper arms are two short, transverse
292 bars of white quill-embroidery, the quills laid on in diagonal zigzag stitch. At each of the sides, at the bottom of the shirt, hang two long, pointed strips, as customary on men's shirts, — the legs of the animal decoratively used. Under the armpits are similar shorter flaps. The two sides of the shirt are open from the bottom to under the arms. These open edges, the hanging strips, the lower border, and the ends of the sleeves, are ornamented with a fringe about an inch long. The lower portion of the shirt for a width of about half a foot, and the hanging strips, are painted yellow. All the remainder of the shirt has been stained brown, apparently over yellow paint. On the two sides there are in this brown area a total of 225 yellow circles, about an inch and a half in diameter, which have not been painted over with the brown stain. Each of these circles is edged by white quill-work, and from its centre hangs a mutilated crow-feather by a thong. The edging of the circles is produced by using single quills as threads in an in-and-out rotary stitch. The crow-feathers have the quill broken, in from one to four places, without being severed. The vanes are for the most part considerably disarranged, as if intentionally. At the lower end the feathers are cut off square and the quill is flattened by cutting on two sides, as if to get rid of the lowest part of the vane. The quill is cut in this way so far from its natural base that it is entirely solid. The feathers are simply wrapped against a thong with sinew. The end of the thong projects a little beyond the sinew. The thongs on the outside of the skin average half an inch in length, and are painted yellow. Each passes through a hole in the centre of a yellow circle. Behind this, that is, on the inner side of the shirt, it is

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 but none are living who have taken part in it. The meaning of the term, as among the Arapaho, is unknown. One informant gave the etymology "drum-dance" (from biitaxäänaⁿ, "drum"). The dancers were called biitaxäänen. As in the preceding ceremonies, a man took part in this dance accompanied by his wife, or, if it happened to be held while he was at war, his wife took part as if he were present. Nothing is known as to the conduct of the ceremony nor as to the regalia, except that the dancers, or certain of them, carried crooked sticks wrapped with white fur. The dancers were [302] painted over their body with dots resembling hail. The dance is looked upon as having been very dangerous, as a mistake in painting or in other observances would result in death from the thunder.

It is not impossible, that, if the present Arapaho series of dances represents a more original order of arrangement than the Gros Ventre, in the development of the Gros Ventre series the biitahaⁿwᵘ was displaced by the kit-fox dance, which grew in importance from a dance of the youngest men to one of older men. This would account for the use of crooked fur-wrapped sticks in the Gros Ventre kit-fox dance as well as in their biitahaⁿwᵘ. If this was the course of events, it does not follow that the biitahaⁿwᵘ became the sixth dance of the series. It may simply have been displaced, and fallen into disuse. Lack of knowledge of the proper conduct of the ceremony would be sufficient to make the Indians afraid to undertake it. It has been stated that no informants could be found who professed to know the place of this dance in the series, and it is possible that its dangerous qualities were not due to its greater sacredness through being the dance of the oldest men, but to such lack of knowledge. On the whole it is very difficult to see how such differentiations in the order of dances as exist in the Arapaho and Gros Ventre schemes of ceremonial organization may have taken place.

The Women's Dance.

[171] The women's dance — called benuxteaⁿwᵘ, the dancers being named 796 benuxteiiçäⁿ[1] — resembles the Arapaho women's dance quite closely. The 292 dancers had on their ordinary clothing, but wore belts to which four buffalo-tails were fastened, and head-dresses which fell down the back of their heads and from which horns rose. These head-dresses are said to have been covered with feathers; but it seems possible that this statement refers only to the dancers of certain degrees, as among the Arapaho only the dancer of highest degree wears such a feather-covered head-dress. Four of the dancers wore [171] no horned head-dress, but "war-bonnets." These may have been equivalent

[1] The Gros Ventre declare that they do not know the significance of the word element benux-te-.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

171 796 [292] [887] [554] [302] [431]

to the Arapaho "white-stand" and "red-stand" head-dresses of upright feathers surrounding the head. The dancers are described as all old or elderly women, which among the Arapaho was not the case. The exceptions were two participants called "calves" (nihanou, "yellow calves"), who were middle-aged, or, at any rate, adults. Among the Arapaho the "calves" were children. There is a further difference, that, whereas among the Arapaho the "calves" were of high degree in the dance and for the greater part of the time were not allowed to stir, the Gros Ventre "calves" took the place of the atsaan or servants in the men's dances. They are said to have worn no regalia. The dancers were painted with the symbol of a pipe on each cheek, close under the eye. Old men sang for them, rattling but not using a drum. The women in dancing shifted their weight from one side of the body to the other, and cried like crows. Two tent-poles, two pegs, and two ropes belonging to the dancing-lodge, were painted respectively one black and one red. On the fourth day of the ceremony there were observances outside of the dancing-lodge. A prominent chief was selected to take a burning stick. The dancers, moving and running about like a herd of buffalo, pretended to scent the smoke of his fire from windward, and stampeded. Another distinguished warrior pretended to shoot at the herd as if they were buffalo. Both of these features of the ceremony are found among the Arapaho. A third distinguished man (or perhaps several) was honored by being offered a pipe to smoke, and on his acceptance was given a vessel of water containing berries. He then gave away property.

The Sun-Dance.

796

As stated before, the Gros Ventre sun-dance, haçeiha^{n}w^{u}, is not restricted to men belonging to certain age-companies, but, as among the Arapaho, can be made by any man.[1] Like the other dances, however, it is made as the result of the pledge of an individual for deliverance from sickness or danger. As soon as the pledge has been publicly announced, or as soon thereafter as the buffalo begin to get fat in spring, the pledger and his relatives begin to accumulate buffalo-tongues, which they slice and dry like buffalo-meat. They also save a buffalo-skin, which is packed with the tongues, two sticks being wrapped up in it. When the time comes, a large lodge made of two tent-covers is set up in the middle of the camp-circle. Into this many women enter at night to sing. This marks the beginning of the ceremony. The tent is called tjinaa^{n}w^{u} ("prairie-chicken lodge"); and the participants, "prairie-chickens" and "prairie-chicken women." The pledger brings his buffalo-skin to this lodge. He incenses it four times.

[1] See Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part II, p. 152.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 Entering the tent very slowly while the people are singing, he stops four times at the end of a song, and motions with the skin. The fourth time he throws the skin among the singers, who shout, and seize it, spread it out, and commence to beat it with their sticks and sing the songs of the night. They go through all the sun-dance songs this night. In the morning the entire camp breaks, and moves to another place not far away. That night the entire ritual is gone through again, and this is repeated altogether four times. The pledger provides food for the singers in the prairie-chicken lodge. The singing in this lodge is called "singing-for-it" (niinibyaa^{n}tou).

After the four nights of the prairie-chicken lodge, seven chiefs are selected to go out as scouts looking for trees to be used in the dancing-lodge. The trees should be straight, and the largest one, for the middle, forked. These men scout for the trees as they would for an enemy. They are painted as [302] if for war, and wear what they would in war. When the people in the camp see them returning, they rush to the centre of the camp-circle, carrying hand-drums. The scouts go circling and dancing, and crying like wolves or coyotes, whereupon the people cry out that the scouts are returning successfully. Those who bear drums stand in a line abreast; in front of them is a pile of rocks. The scouts, still circling, and crying each time they face the direction from which they have come, approach nearer and nearer. Then one by one they circle about the heap of stones, and, stepping forward a short distance, stop and stand abreast, facing the drums. A prominent man who has been selected steps out from the people and recounts his most distinguished coups. Thereupon he goes up to one of the seven scouts, and leads his horse forward by the bridle. The scout then recounts four coups. Then the chief leads forward the horse of the next scout, who also tells four stories; and so on until all seven have spoken. Thereupon the first of the seven addresses the people, and reports that they have found good-looking people and a chief, meaning the smaller poles and the central fork of the lodge.

Some time after this the people go to the trees. The young men especially dress and paint themselves as well as they can, and ride their best horses. They go first to what is to be the central pole. One man dismounts, and places coals and fir-needle incense on the ground on four sides of the tree, thus incensing it. Then all dismount, and, standing about and having shouted, begin to sing. After they have sung, two men stand by the tree and swing axes four times, as if to strike it. Then they begin to chop it. When the tree begins to lean, every one shoots at it; and when it falls, all dash up to it and strip it of branches and leaves. Thereupon they scatter in the timber, cutting the smaller forks and poles, and as each one of these falls it is shot. There are many small parties getting these smaller forks,

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

791 men are named, their female relatives return to their tents, and cook. When
789 they have prepared food, they all together bring a large quantity of it to the lodge. The men selected carry weapons, and are dressed for war. They are usually mounted. Where they themselves or their horses were wounded, [302] they paint themselves. If they have ridden over an enemy, a man is painted on the breast of the horse. When the food which has been brought by their female relatives has been eaten, these men, two at a time, go through numerous performances of their achievements in battle. This is done each day of the dance.

796 A group of men and women, called, like those in the preliminary singing-tent, "prairie-chickens," and therefore probably the same persons, seem [534] to be the singers for the dance. They beat a rawhide in place of a drum, and hold branches, which, at the end of each song, they shake, shouting.

[791] The dancers may not drink water, no matter how great the heat. If [821] one of them is unable to endure, and a pitying relative gives him even only a drop, a thunderstorm follows, and the offender may be struck by lightning, or one of his horses may be killed by lightning. In case it seems necessary for the dancers to drink, a pipe is taken to one of the old men. If he accepts it and smokes it, he goes to the central tree. He wears a robe with the hair-side out. He has a whistle in his mouth, feathers in one hand, and a crow-skin in the other. He strikes the bill of the crow four [789] times, with a downward motion, against the lightning symbol on the tree. A vessel is held against the tree at the bottom of the symbol, and, after the fourth blow, water is said to run out until the vessel is filled, when it stops. This water is given to the dancers, each of whom drinks a very small quan- [787] tity. The actions of the man producing this water are said to be determined by his personal supernatural vision.

After the four days of the ceremony are completed, the lodge is left standing. All the cloth and clothing that have been attached to it remain [789] in place, and it appears that other clothes, especially of children, are left at the lodge. This is done in order that the children may live a long life.

796 From drawings made by a Gros Ventre, it appears that the buffalo-skull is painted with spots, and has its nose and eyes stuffed. Behind it is 532 represented a dancer holding the wheel. He is presumably the pledger of the ceremony. The wheel is bisected by two strings, and has eagle-feathers and down-feathers attached to it. The dancer blows a whistle at the end of which is a plume. The whistle hangs from his neck. At the back of the head is a plume. Lines of paint proceed from his breast to his wrists and ankles. On each of these are four diamonds, two on each upper and lower arm, thigh, and calf. If this is a correct representation, the Gros Ventre use at least one style of painting that is like the most typical Arap-

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

276
755
778

side of the bundle, it is said. Except at such ceremonies as this, only the keeper could touch the pipe.

276
778
[648]
[528]

Pipes were sometimes given to other tribes, and were sometimes received from them. Sometimes they were carried by war-parties. One of the three pipes still in existence is said to have been given by the Cheyenne to the Crow, and by the latter to the Gros Ventre, when peace was made between the two tribes. The stem is ornamented with feathers, weasel-skins, and at the end with a bunch of eagle-feathers. The sacred pipes were kept wrapped in many pieces of skin or cloth, and hung up in the tent. In good weather they were hung on a stand of three or four sticks, behind the tent. The keepers of the sacred pipes observed stringent rules. They could not eat of the head or back of any animal, nor of any part of the white-tailed deer, nor any eggs. They were not allowed to bathe, or to paint (except red), or to take the ashes out of the tent. They had to smoke in certain ways. They did not eat dogs, or allow them in the tent; nor did they let dogs touch them, or walk over their legs, or walk before them, while they were smoking. The keepers of the sacred pipes wore their hair uncut and uncombed. They could not cut it until they had given the pipe to another keeper. The hair was worn tied in a bunch just above the forehead. Fig. 42 shows such a bunch of matted hair, said to have been that of the grandfather of the father of the man who was the oldest in the tribe in 1901. This former keeper of the pipe became so old that he lost most of his hair, and the bunch shown was cut off by him before it should drop off. To this hair the later owner of the pipe, his present great-grandson, tied the first of his own teeth to fall out from old age: they are contained in a small cloth sack.

Fig. 42 (50/1902). Matted Hair. Length, 41 cm.

276
778
784

[825]

[302]

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Feathers, especially eagle feathers, were highly prized, and red paint, prepared from ochre, as well as other paints obtained through the trader, played their part in bodily decoration. 292 237 336

The younger men thought a great deal of their appearance. One of the things they made for themselves was fancy painted sunshade-hats of rawhide. The designs painted thereon had a yellow background against which various other colors stood out. Coming Daylight remarked: "These sunshades looked so fine that the other tribes copied them, just like the whites get their styles from Paris." Long thick hair was the ideal both for men and for women. The tail of the porcupine made an admirable comb. A number of perfumes were used by the young men. The castor of the beaver, for instance, was put in the paint bag so that the material for daily painting would be sweet smelling. Again, young men crushed "Piegan berries," chewed them, and rubbed them on hair, horses, and bedding, as perfume. 292 751 531 302 [239]

Incidentally, according to Coming Daylight, in order to clean their buckskin clothing, the Gros Ventres would wear it into the water, getting it completely wet, and then rub it thoroughly with a certain kind of white clay.[14] She said that the tribe was spoken of by other tribes as always having such nice white clothes, and to this habit of rubbing them with clay she attributes the name by which the Gros Ventres call themselves, *a'aninin*, "white clay people." 296 [101]

Ear-rings, worn both by men and women, were made from imported abalone shell, which they cut up and shaped; they also used a certain type of imported white shell. Many other kinds of necklaces, armlets, and so on were apparently used, but on these we failed to get details. 301 [439]

Household and Transportation

The lodges of the Gros Ventres were made from buffalo hides, the number used in each depending on the size of the lodge. They 342

[14] This custom is mentioned in the sources of the early 19th century. Cf. Harmon, p. 277; Henry, v. 2, p. 734. The latter adds, as a further distinguishing characteristic, that when the Gros Ventres use red "it is always of a light color, inclining to pale vermillion. The dark red or Spanish brown, so much in vogue among the other Meadow tribes, does not suit their taste." [822]

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

726 wanted a downpour of rain. At once a cloud appeared and in no
787 time it was a big black storm cloud. Then there was a wind and
769 a very heavy storm and thus the Gros Ventres got safely back to camp. The only loss on this occasion was that of two fine horses, one played out and the other foundered from drinking when overheated."

Return of the War Party

727 After a successful encounter with the enemy, the homecoming was a joyful one, provided no Gros Ventre lives had been lost. As they approached the camp, appropriate songs were said to have been sung by the victorious party. If, for instance, they had stolen horses there was one type of song. On the other hand
[302] when scalps had been taken, they sang other kinds of songs and painted themselves with charcoal. Incidentally, the Gros Ventres had a saying that "women and children do not make good charcoal." Women and children should be captured but not killed and scalped.[18]

When the victorious party arrived, they circled the outside of the encampment before entering. "Then the party broke, each member surrounded by his womenfolk who crowded around, kissing him and taking the scalps or other trophies which had been won. After a reasonable interval, the crier called all to come to
[302] the center of the circle and dance. Men and women alike blackened their faces with charcoal, and the women, carrying scalps attached to poles, or weapons captured from the enemy, danced as innumerable victory songs were sung. Only members of the war party were allowed to join with the women in dancing. Many husbands, who had to stand on the sidelines, were jealous of the brave warriors at a time like this."

727 Most of the songs sung during the victory celebration had
533 words which referred to encounters wherein the Gros Ventres had been successful. New words were often made up to commemorate a particular incident. One of these songs had the following words: "Where are you going? I've been here all the

[18] Cocking, p. 112, mentions in 1772 that the Gros Ventres adopted "slaves" of both sexes into families who had lost their children either by war or sickness.
[567]

854 857 men were much more interested in children than they seem to be at present.

855 515 857 Just as soon as a child was old enough to look after himself—say from about the age of three or four years—he would be compelled to bathe every morning before eating. An older boy would supervise his younger brothers and see to it that they complied with the regulation—even in winter when it was sometimes necessary to cut a hole in the ice. Al says: "This is what makes one tough." Charles gave as illustration an incident which occurred one morning when there was ice on the edge of the river and snow was floating on the surface. "An older brother said to his three younger brothers: 'Go and take a plunge.' The wind was blowing and the three boys sat on the bank, each one encouraging the other to be the first one in. The older brother came behind them yelling: 'I didn't say to you boys to stay on the edge—I said to take a plunge!' Whereupon he threw each of them in the icy water telling them to wash their faces, hair and hands. He then sent them home to water the horses while he took his plunge." In case the lodge might be too far from a stream in winter, the boys and men rolled in the snow and rubbed their bodies with it. Everyone, young and old alike, bathed every day.

515 751 That the daily dip was looked upon as a health measure is shown by the statement of Cora who remarked that when she was small she used to bathe daily in the creek and she has never been sick up to the present. Coming Daylight, too, said that she had kept up the practice until a few years ago and complains that she has been sickly ever since giving it up.

271 751 It was considered important for health's sake to drink a lot of water too. The relatives who raised Coming Daylight used to tell her to wash her mouth out with water immediately upon arising. Further she was instructed to drink water right after eating, even though she might not feel thirsty, and to walk about after finishing a meal. She claims she followed these rules all her life and that for this reason she is not troubled, as so many of the aged are, with difficulty in controlling urination, and so on.

302 After the morning bath, all would have their faces painted all over with red paint "in order to keep their faces clean and light-skinned." Coming Daylight complained that since this practice

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

has been given up, the Gros Ventres are so sunburned that their 302
skin looks almost "black." Singer showed a small bag of red
paint which she still had. She kept a piece of beaver castor in the [237]
bag so the paint would be sweet-smelling.

In the old days the Gros Ventres were early risers. Everyone 512
got up while it was still dark, perhaps about three o'clock in summer and before seven in winter. It didn't make any difference whether a child might otherwise be favored, the rule was iron-clad that all must rise early and that no one should lie abed. This applied to all—old people as well as to children.

One method of making sure that children would be strong was 856
to take a beaver tail and slap the child on the hand and on the back
while saying: "You will be good and strong." Mary, for instance, 825
has seen her mother do this to all her grandchildren, hitting them so hard they almost cried. The beaver is considered a very strong animal since he cuts down big trees and drags them about.

Naming and Ear-piercing

Every individaul received a name shortly after birth. Many 551
Gros Ventres, however, were, and are, known by names other than the original one. Names were changed for particular reasons, and in addition nicknames were frequently employed. Sometimes the first name was bestowed with considerable formality, but naming could be carried out in a variety of ways,[10] as the following examples show. 553

"Shortly after Coming Daylight was born, her father sent for 852
his sister's husband and told him: 'Now I invited you to name your niece. I am giving you such-and-such kind of horse' (a bay, or a pinto, or whatnot). There was a big feast on this occasion and the lodge was full of people. The namer sat in the place of honor at the back of the lodge. He held the infant in his arms, told a war deed and said: 'Now I name her 'Taken A Prisoner.' Then he said a long prayer, starting with the usual formula, and wishing the infant a long life. He then handed the infant to the person to his left saying: 'Take Taken A Prisoner'; and so the infant was passed all around the lodge, each repeating the same to

[10] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, p. 182.

787 775 began to dig around behind her bedding and brought out a bowl such as that in which buffalo chips are pounded into powder. She said: 'Here. I want you to eat this.' It didn't look good to me and I just kind of felt it with my fingers. Instead of having sat by my sister as my mother had directed, I had remained by the door, because I felt kind of scared in some way. So I told them: 'Wait. I guess I will go out a minute. I will be right back.' But I got out of there and ran home as fast as I could go—back to my own bed, back to myself. If I had eaten what they had given me that would have been the last of me! After this dream I got well."

Mourning

765 152 As soon as word was circulated that someone had died, all relatives of that person, especially the women, were supposed to gather as soon as possible to cry and mourn for the deceased. Very close kin were expected to show their sorrow at the death of a loved one not only by crying and wailing, but also by casting off their good clothes and donning old ones,—robes, for instance, consisting of pieces of old discarded lodge covers, or ordinary robes that were rough and worn,—and by cutting the hair.[7] This latter was truly [872] a great sacrifice, for to the Gros Ventres one of the chief criteria [302] of beauty, in men and women alike, was extreme length of hair. The hair of younger children in a family was spared, even at the death of parents, but should, say, a father die, the hair of the older daughters was shorn, though not cut so short as that of the widow. [888] An elderly woman was usually called upon to do the cutting and the widow, guided by the strength of her emotional reaction, would indicate how short she wished her hair to be. It was said that some widows would leave their hair relatively long, just free of the shoulders, while others "when they felt too badly, had all their hair cut off, almost as men now wear their hair."

Close kin were accustomed to further show grief by going off to the hills and fasting, crying aloud as they wandered about alone, and sleeping out without shelter. A parent would have done so at the loss of a son, one spouse at the death of the other, or a sister for her deceased brother. Such mourners would stay out

[7] For this and other practices in mourning, see Kroeber, 1908, p. 181.

PLATES

142 The original photograph of Plate 1 was taken in 1887 and
291 belongs to The Boy. Shown in it are Lame Bull, The Boy's
301 father, and Crow Bull, maternal uncle of Coming Daylight. Both
302 of these men were born around 1825 and their personal experiences were often referred to by our informants as we took down the record of the old way of life. Each had been Keeper of the sacred Flat Pipe.

115 The photographs composing Plate 2, except for the one of The
133 Boy, were taken in 1940 by Dr. Karl F. Herzfeld. The first three
142 show the nature of the country around Hays on the Fort Belknap
291 Reservation; the other three show some of our informants and
292 interpreters whose biographical sketches follow.

531 In Plate 3, the shield and war medicines of Bull Lodge, father
797 of our informant, Garter Snake, represent only a few of the specimens of Gros Ventre culture collected in 1937 by Mr.
778 Richard Pohrt, of Flint, Michigan.
293
714
721

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

142
291
301
302

PLATE I

LEFT TO RIGHT: LAME BULL, BIRD SITTING, BLACK BIRD AND CROW BULL

(Photo by Dan Dutro, Fort Benton, Montana, 1887)

[p. 212 (A)]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

776 bātč, "he (who) has gristle (tendon from back of neck of animal) nose," and "black hawk," a certain very large black-feathered hawk known also locally as "bullet hawk" (*Buteo sp.?*). Another name for Bha'a was "old man four parts of the earth." Bha'a, the thunderbird, as was appropriate, had dark or black feathers, and was a swift flier; his bill and feet were of the same material as back tendon (see Blood-Clot Story, No. 11 in Appendix).

778 In the Gros Ventre Sacrifice Lodge, or "Sun dance," Bha'a
776 was represented near the top of the center pole as a bird, painted
black, with a buffalo tail fastened to his head as a sort of plume,
796 with a zigzag line descending from the bird almost to the ground and ending in a fork, and with a bunch of branches stuck in the fork of the center pole of the lodge to represent Bha'a's nest. Each
[302] of the dancers painted all over in white had a bird representing Bha'a, painted in black with charcoal or paint on his upper center breast, with black zigzag lines ending in a fork from the bird's wings down each arm and forearm and from the bird's feet down each thigh and leg to his ankle, with a black zigzag line forked at each end across the forehead, and with a vertical red zigzag line forked at the lower end extending down from each eye. The
[534] drum-head used in the Feathered Pipe rite had a red background on which the Thunderbird was represented in blue, with a yellow zigzag line on either side from the head to the wings. Bha'a entered prominently into both the Sacrifice Lodge and the Feathered Pipe rite.

776 Any large strange animal might in the olden days be called
825 Bha'a or even be looked upon as an embodiment or theophany of Bha'a.

One supposed theophany over which the present day Gros Ventres laugh heartily, is recorded on the occasion of their seeing their first mule. The story as told with verve and intense amusement by The Boy was as follows:

"The Gros Ventres used to move around a great deal. Once a mule, the first one the Gros Ventres had ever seen, got lost somehow, struck the Gros Ventres' trail, came to their camp and stopped. A Gros Ventre crier spied it and came back to camp

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

was reserved to the new keeper), and with tamping by the retiring keeper as it passed him, till it reached the last ex-keeper on the west side of the lodge. Then it was passed clockwise back toward the new keeper, each ex-keeper on the west side smoking it in turn, till it reached the retiring keeper. By this time the tobacco would probably be all smoked up, so he would dump it out by lifting up the Pipe, horizontal and bowl up, to head height, then lowering it still horizontal and bowl up, and finally turning the bowl over,—all this being done very slowly. 793 796*

Another important part of the transfer rite was the blessing of the person and clothing of the new keeper and co-keeper, but when it occurred, before or after the Pipe smoking, was not cleared up. According to The Boy, "Every part of the new keeper was blessed, even his mouth, that is, his talk was blessed," but we obtained only the following details. The new keeper and co-keeper (and Pipe child) were painted by the retiring keeper on the forehead and under the jawbone and chin as signifying the world above and the earth respectively. The retiring keeper also chewed peppermint leaves and spat upon the two, to signify that they must "quiet down and be good." [302]

The moccasins and feet of the new keeper, co-keeper and Pipe child were treated as follows. The retiring keeper took peppermint leaves in his mouth, chewed them, spat three times on the sole of one moccasin (moccasined foot) of the new keeper, lowered it down in three stages over the smudge of the sacred hearth, and circled it three times around the hearth. Then he took a pinch of poisonous wild parsley (see infra), spat three times on his palms, rubbed the palms together and rubbed the sole of the moccasin with his palm three times from toe to heel. The same treatment was given to the keeper's other moccasin by the retiring keeper, then to the new co-keeper's moccasins by the retiring co-keeper, and lastly to the new Pipe child's moccasins by the retiring keeper. At the end of the whole transfer these blessed moccasins were taken off and put in the Flat Pipe bundle, and were worn only during rites, not as everyday footwear. Every other piece of clothing of the new keeper, co-keeper and Pipe child was blessed with peppermint and fumigation, apparently with a similar rite [824]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

although without the wild parsley, but we did not obtain details.

After ritual treatment of their wearing apparel, the new keeper and co-keeper had to take off any ring, necklace or other personal adornment made of copper, iron or other metal, as the wearing of metal adornments was forbidden them, apparently because such were from the whites. The two, but not the Pipe child, were each ritually invested with a necklace consisting of a large single shell on a string of twisted, not plaited, buckskin. The investure was done with three motions as if putting the necklace on, and at the third it was actually put on. Further the keeper, but not the co-keeper, had to frame his hair over his forehead with a large pompadour, as a sign of distinction.[1]

The new co-keeper also put some dried peppermint leaves mixed with poisonous, wild parsley in a little buckskin sack which she then wore on her belt. This had a double purpose. First, the mixture being poisonous, she commanded respect. She must not be molested or even be bodily touched. Whoever molested or even touched her would suffer fits or spasms or a paralytic stroke. Second, she must live a virtuous life and not run around with other men. The co-keeper and keeper, as also the ex-co-keepers and ex-keepers, since they had all been consecrated with peppermint and fumigation could handle the wild parsley without danger, but the common people were not immune to its supposedly highly toxic effects.

On this second day a big feast was given. Most of the food was provided by the new keeper and his relatives. That eaten by the new keeper and co-keeper, who had been fasting from food and water since the time they were first siezed a good thirty or more hours previously, was provided by the ex-keepers.

At sundown the day's instruction ended. That night the new keeper and co-keeper, the ex-keepers and ex-co-keepers and two attendants slept in the double lodge, where the Pipe also remained.

Very early the next morning (or less probably late on the

[1] In 1948 The Boy added: "When a man became keeper, he ceased to comb his hair and it would get in all kinds of shapes and hang down. So he would take a bunch from the center and wind it round and round and tied that knot of hair around with a string. Whenever the keeper took off that string the people would be afraid!" [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

besides the Pipe itself. The most important of these is a turtle shell, next in rank a "duck" pelt, and third a muskrat skin.* These represent the animals sent down by Earthmaker at the time of the great flood to dive for earth. The turtle and "duck" are more important than the muskrat as they were the only two who brought back earth. There is no beaver skin in the bundle; either it was barred or discarded, or, as The Boy put it, "the beaver must have gotten mad and started his own pipe and pipe rite." (Cf. under "Other Pipes," pp. 166-168.) 778

The turtle shell is kept enclosed in its own special case. Neither The Boy nor his father Lame Bull had ever seen this shell, which is said not to have been taken from its case and exposed since the early nineteenth century.

The "duck" is apparently, from the detailed description given us of plumage and habits, a grebe. This bird has a special sacredness in Gross Ventre thought on account of its part not only in the primeval making of dry land but also in present-day bird migration.

According to tradition, when the birds, who in the fall have gone where there is no winter, want in the spring to come back they talk the matter over and plan the flight to the north. On the migration flight the grebes, who are poor flyers, are carried on the backs of the larger birds such as the ducks, geese and cranes. The big bird is careful not to drop the little bird; if he does, he will have bad luck. If the small bird is killed by the fall, the big bird does not live long. When in migration one of the big birds breaks rank and flies around alone, the Gros Ventres know that he has lost his passenger, and it is up to him alone to find the dropped bird. Sometimes you can see a big bird hovering round the spot where he has dropped his small passenger, looking for him in order to pick him up again, and catch up with the 825

* In 1948 The Boy explained: "The muskrat and the beaver tried to bring back earth but failed. Beaver was banished from any connection with the Pipe. The keeper would not let anyone who used the beaver-castor perfume come near him or his lodge. But muskrat was taken back without ceremonial significance for no other purpose than to wipe the keeper's face, as well as faces of others, before the keeper painted them. So muskrat is still in the bundle and shares indirectly in the great Pipe ceremonies." [R.F.] [302]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 and incense hearth, the latter to the east. The others sat in order of dignity and rank on the west and east sides of the lodge, the two attendants at either side of the door, the attendant whom we shall call "attendant number one" at the west side, number two at the east. These attendants were chosen for their intelligence and integrity and to be chosen for the task was looked upon as a great honor.

Before the rite started, those inside the lodge or at least the ex-keepers and ex-co-keepers would have painted themselves, without ritual, for the occasion. [302]

The rite in the keeper's lodge was made up of the following elements:

Peppermint laving
Smudging and smoking
  Making incense (with song)
  Smudging, praying with and smoking common pipe
    Recess
Untying and unwrapping Flat Pipe bundle
  (with 3 songs and origin narrative)
    Recess
Painting of
  People
  Sacred objects
  (with 3 songs and origin narrative)
    Recess
Rewrapping and re-tying bundle
  (with 3 songs and origin narrative)
    Recess
Terminal feast
  Praying with food offering
  Consuming of meal
  Reciting war-deeds.

Our chief informant on the rite was The Boy. Even in the old buffalo days before 1884 when the seasonal rites were regularly carried out, questions and debates used to arise at times regarding this or that minor point, such as sequence of some songs. It is quite understandable therefore that The Boy, although clear regarding the main ritual features, most details, and main sequence, was uncertain regarding some minor points, especially regarding

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

triads to the later early fortunes of the people after they started to live and multiply. 796*

After the narratives were over, the third song (No. 38), the unwrapping song, was sung three times. This was properly the song for unwrapping the Flat Pipe case and so exposing the Flat Pipe to view. Inasmuch however as the Flat Pipe itself remained in its own proper case and was not exposed in the seasonal rites, but only at the Transfer Rite and the rite in fulfillment of a vow to smoke it, the keeper would explain: "This is the song we sing when we unwrap the Pipe itself," and the song would then be sung.

At the end of the third singing of this song, a good recess was taken.

After the recess all reassembled in the keeper's lodge for the painting and second triad of songs, sung to the accompaniment of the rattles. The painting of the sacred objects came at this point; more probably too the painting of the people's faces, although it is just possible that this took place earlier in the rite, between the smoking of the common pipe and the singing of the first song of the first triad.

The face painting began with the triple singing of its own wordless proper song (No. 38). The people filed in proceeding clockwise. Each person fumigated his or her hands, arms, mouth and head in the accustomed ritual manner (cf. Transfer Rite), the keeper from time to time dropping peppermint leaves on the sacred hearth to make incense with the customary three motions, at shoulder height, lower, then close to the hearth, but without singing the smudge song. The keeper prayed for them and they themselves prayed. The keeper, co-keeper, Pipe child, ex-keepers and ex-co-keepers had already painted themselves—the keeper and co-keeper with slate-colored paint—and were not included among those to be painted at this time. The keeper painted the men and boys; the co-keeper, the women and girls. If any of those to be painted already had "good-time" paint on their faces, this was wiped off with the muskrat skin.

The paint was first applied to the faces with a little piece of wood, 3 or 4 inches long, dipped in the sacred red paint. A streak or solid band was made across the forehead from temple to temple, 796* 302

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 narrow at one temple, broader in front, and narrow at the other temple, to represent the sky and the region above; another under
● 302 the jawbones and chin, from ear to ear likewise narrow near the ear, broader under the chin, and narrow at the other ear, to represent the earth or dry land. Then with a stamp, made of a stick having a cross of four equal-length arms carved in relief on its end, and dipped into the paint, crosses in red were imprinted on each cheek bone of the adults, on the bridge of the nose according to The Boy, or on the forehead according to
[821 Thick, and on both cheeks. This cross-shaped imprint represented the morning star (called simply "the cross" [not "the
531] cross star"] in Gros Ventre), so The Boy and Thick conjectured on their own, but this they never heard from the old people. This painting meant much, it seems, to the people; as Coming Daylight expressed it: "It was a great thing to get painted at Flat Pipe ceremonies." As the people were painted they filed out clockwise. The rite ordinarily took a long time and only ended when the last of the people quit coming in. During it the strict silence was not observed by the ex-keepers and oth[illegible] privileged persons in the lodge; they chatted and smoked.

*796 Two other songs (No. 40 and No. 41), both wor[illegible]e now sung by the keeper and the small groups in the l[illegible] the first of these two songs the keeper painted with re[illegible] sacred objects kept in the Pipe bundle: the Pipe cas[illegible] the bird skins, the rattles, and so forth. After the second, [illegible] keeper painted the sacred objects connected with the Pipe bu[illegible] kept in the bundle: the tripod, pipe saddle and so forth. Meanwhile or at the end of the painting, the keeper told further details regarding the history and significance of the Flat Pipe and the sacred objects associated with it. After all this a long recess was taken with free smoking and chatting.

After the recess came the third triad of songs and the rewrapping and re-tying of the Pipe bundle. The order of the songs, as well as The Boy could remember was: The Last Child Song (No. 42), The Rope Song (No. 43), The Horse Song (No. 44), all three, wordless except for short sentences in the middle, of these were brought back by He-who-starved-to-death

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

484 778 with the rites previously described. On a day's journey it may be noted, the bundle would have been placed on the tripod in the open three times: before starting out, about half-way, and on arrival at the new camp.

782 The killing of a pure white buffalo, a pure albino,—always a cow never a bull, according to Gros Ventre tradition,—was an extremely [224] rare occurrence. The killer could keep it himself, give it to the Flat Pipe keeper, or offer it as a sacrifice. This sacrificial rite was last held when the Boy's father, Lame Bull was a young man, probably in the 1850's, and served as a calendrical date: "at the time the white buffalo skin was offered as a sacrifice." The Boy, our sole informant on this rite, could give only fragmentary data on it, gotten from his father who had witnessed only that one time in his life.

If the killer chose to offer the albino skin as a sacrifice, he had to vow, and then had formally to notify the keeper of the Flat Pipe. Carrying it he went clockwise round the camp circle on the inside and brought it to the keeper's lodge. The keeper painted [302] the man's face with charcoal paint (not red), the ritual color for sacrifices, with a circular band around his face, on the forehead, the sides of the cheeks near the ears, and under the jawbones and chin, and with also a star on the bridge of his nose. The circle, Lame Bull told the Boy, represented the sundog; the star, the sun. A procession in which the keeper, co-keeper, Pipe child, ex-keepers, ex-co-keepers, the two attendants, and all the people took part started at the keeper's lodge and marched clockwise all around the camp circle, very slowly, with three stops (probably at the west, east and south) for prayer, till they reached the sweat-lodge near the keeper's lodge. The albino skin was given a touch of charcoal paint, as in other sacrifices, but The Boy did not know other details of the special rite used in preparing the skin, nor did he know who carried it in the procession. On arrival of the procession at the sweat lodge, the main body of the people went away, but the small group who were to sweat remained and went through the whole sweat-lodge rite at which the albino skin was hung up on the sweat-lodge pole and after which, in accord-

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

According to Al Chandler, if some one were ill a near relative would vow to be painted and would go to the keeper. The sweat-lodge rite was first gone through. After this, in the keeper's lodge, the keeper would take the paint from the Pipe bundle, make a smudge as usual, sing the songs, dip his finger in the paint, and hold it up while addressing the Supreme Being and add: "This man vowed to you that he wanted to be painted with your paint so that his child might live," or similar words. Then he repeated the same thing to the Pipe. Then he painted first the vower, and afterwards he painted the men and male children present and the co-keeper, the women and female children,—the males with a curved band on the forehead near the hair line, the females with dots, one on the forehead and one on each cheek. This painting could take place any time in the year. 782 302

According to Garter Snake, in case of dangerous or critical illness, the vower would promise to cook up lots of food and have the keeper open up the Pipe bundle and paint the vower. If the vower were a man he was painted with the sacred red paint by the keeper; if a woman, by the co-keeper. The Pipe child would sit with the co-keeper during the rite. All the men, women and children who could attend would come to the keeper's lodge and be painted. Any ex-keepers and ex-co-keepers present would not be painted by the keeper and co-keeper as they would paint themselves. 782 755

According to Charles Buckman, it was customary to unwrap the Pipe bundle at this vowed painting rite.

Apart from this vowed rite, ritual face painting was also, as previously noted, a common feature of the Feathered Pipe dancing ceremony. In addition, according to Jim Shortman, if the Feathered Pipe keeper were told in a dream by the owl that sickness was coming to the camp, he would call all the children and infants together with the grown-ups to his lodge and would paint every individual. 302 751 782

Offerings to cover the Feathered Pipe could be made by anyone, at any time of the year, winter included, more frequently with, but often without, previous vow. They were commonly made for cure in cases of illness. The original first owner of the Pipe had told the people: "If you are sick, you can make a vow to cover the Pipe, and thus get well." But covering occurred also on other 782

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

789 song had also to be sung, apparently to the accompaniment of the drum.

755 Putting sweet pine needles on the sick person's head, blowing wild parsley on him, and smudging him as doctoring practices have been previously described. According to Singer, if some one were so sick that his life was despaired of, the keeper would take the Feathered Pipe [the bundle, probably] and lay it on him and pray over him, and the sick person would recover, and, she added, "it cured a lot of them." Doctoring power was regularly acquired by reason of acquiring the keepership.

783 The keeper and co-keeper painted their own faces every morning after breakfast, like the men, in two bands, but broader ones ●302 three or four fingers wide, one on the forehead near the hair line and the other from one jaw across the chin to the other jaw.

778 The Pipe bundle was smudged by the keeper every morning and evening with sweet pine needles. During Curly Head's keepership Cora Chandler and her children were kept busy collecting dried cow dung for the daily smudging ceremony. The keeper made it a practice to "talk" or pray often to the Pipe in his lodge. According to The Boy, the keeper was fearful lest otherwise he might make ritual mistakes, at which the Pipe would be angry. According to Al Chandler, the Pipe being jealous, the keeper "had to talk to it to let it know it was not forgotten or put away; he treated it just like a person."

788 Customary observances on the occasions of feasts or ordinary meals to guests in the keeper's lodge have been previously 778 described.

When the keeper and the people were camped for any length of time in a given place, the Feathered Pipe bundle was ordinarily taken in the morning from its place of honor opposite the entrance inside the keeper's lodge, hung up outside over the entrance, and brought back inside at eventide.

[361 When the camp was to be moved, the Feathered Pipe keeper, like the Flat Pipe keeper, had, it seems, a consultative voice in 624] the decision and perhaps even veto power at times, although ordinarily the final decision was made by the head men. The decision 778 once made, early in the morning when camp was to be broken, 484 the Feathered Pipe bundle was hung out on its tripod back of the

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The rite of self-torture, carried out on the day after the third (or second)[12] night of singing was the dramatic climax of the Sacrifice Dance. Either during the three-day singing and dancing or, more probably, on the morning of the day of torture occurred the painting and decorating of the dancers, those who had vowed to undergo self-torture.[13] By their respective grandfathers or others substituting as sort of "secondary grandfathers," each dancer was first painted over his entire body with white clay. On his upper chest, near the neck, was painted in black with charcoal or paint the figure of a bird (evidently representing Bha'a, the Thunder Bird), and a black zigzag line ending in a fork from each of the bird's wings across the chest and down either arm of the dancer to the forearm, and a similar black zigzag fork-ended line from each of the bird's feet down either leg and thigh to the ankle. Another black zigzag line, forked at both ends, was painted across the dancer's forehead, and under each eye, a vertical zigzag line, ending at the bottom in a fork, but painted in red, not in black. Sprigs of sage-brush were put on as wristlets and anklets, and around the head "so that they met over the eyes." "Common dancers" and other active participants such as the ceremonial grandfathers were painted all over with red paint instead of white clay, and were apparently decorated with over-painted designs similar to those of the self-torturers, the "dancers" proper. 785 796* 302 532

The self-torture rite, on the last day of the Sacrifice Dance, began with the skin-piercing, the insertion of the skewers, and the attachment of the thongs and shield. The skin-piercing was done by the respective grandfathers to whom the respective vowers, their grandchildren, gave generous presents of horses, robes and 785 796*

[12] Our informants agreed that the Sacrifice Dance lasted through four nights, but whether the night of singing just before the "scouting" for the center pole counted as one of these four or not, and hence whether the skin piercing took place on the second or third day after the "scouting" was not made fully clear to us,—more probably the third day.

[13] In 1948 The Boy stated that the dancers were painted with white clay and their faces painted differently each morning. "On the first day each dancer has a red dot on each cheek, the second day two dots, the third day, three,—these are their tears and indicated that the dancers are crying." [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

fathers back of them and the wives back of the grandfathers, according to one statement by Coming Daylight; the grandfathers in front, and the dancers and their wives back of them according to another by her. The bows of the "talls" and "shorts" were stuck upright in the ground in two crescents in front of the two respective divisions; the bows of the ritual "elder brothers" (the four councilors?), a little apart near the south or southeast ends of these two crescents.[18] 796*

The chief ritual paraphernalia used in the Crazy Dance were the badger pelt, hoof rattles, whistles, bows, and poisoned arrows. The stuffed badger hide, "trimmed and fixed up," figured prominently in the rites. The bone whistles, hung on the neck of the dancers, were blown by them when dancing. The rattles, θaθanas, sticks about five feet long, with deer hoofs attached in a row along the upper third, were used by the grandfathers who sang, sitting in a row and pounding the ends of the rattles on the ground to beat time. 293 796*

Each Crazy Dancer treated one of his arrows with poisonous wild parsley, and tied the poisoned arrow to his bow. If the dancer "got mad or any serious situation arose" he would unfasten the arrow and shoot to kill. If the arrow penetrated the skin of the victim or even scratched him, he died. This extreme measure was very rarely resorted to. We were told of no actual instance. When the dance was over these poisoned arrows were carried away to a spot where no one could find them and were buried. 796* [626]

The ceremonies on each of the four days of the Crazy Dance began with the painting of the bodies of the dancers and their wives, the pattern of the painting differing each day. The painting was done in the respective lodges of the leaders of the groups of two to four dancers. Here they gathered with their respective ceremonial grandfathers and "Little Crazy Dancers." The dancer and his wife, or borrowed surrogate, would sit there naked, the woman with legs close together and stretched out in front. This was a source of serious embarrassment to all concerned. The bodies 796* 302 [834 546]

[18] Kroeber, 1908, p. 242, gives a different arrangement, with which still another statement by Coming Daylight that "the women sat on the west side" insofar agrees.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 of the two, even the soles of their feet, were painted all over,—in
● 302 red, at least on the first day. Coming Daylight, although she herself had never joined the Crazy Dance, used to hear that the women would say: "Grandfather, I cannot paint my back. Now you paint my back." The grandfather, according to The Boy, commonly recruited a younger man than himself as helper in the painting and would direct him how to paint the various parts of the couple's bodies. At some time in this painting rite, the grandfather prayed in a short quick way with a pipe for those being painted.

*796 After the couples were painted, all proceeded to the Crazy Dance lodge or corral, the dancers whistling on the way with their bone whistles in their mouths. On arrival at the lodge, the chief vower and the 4 councilors took their places inside the smaller wickiup, or enclosure within the corral, and the rite proper began.

[824] A smudge was made,—according to The Boy, of a certain large flat or bulbous semispherical mushroom the "fuzz" of which "flies out when it is stepped on,"—a smudge song was sung (but The Boy did not remember the melody), and a solemn prayer was said.

After the prayer came the "feeding" of the badger. Someone would suggest: "Sing the feeding song, so the badger can eat." Then someone would take the badger skin and walk with it clockwise around the lodge, inside between the bows and the outer wall. He walked very very slowly, barely moving, and while he did so song No. 59 was sung. He made the complete circuit four times, and the song was sung once at each circuit. If at any time he were not holding pelt down low enough to the ground, he would be told in backward talk (see infra): "Raise him up!" When at the end of the fourth round he reached the wickiup, he would lay the pelt down. Then song No. 60 was sung, four times in succession, and at the end of each singing the pelt was given a hard blow with a stick by "the old man" (the chief vower's grandfather?). All this singing and striking was done seriously and reverently, without levity. The Boy had asked his father, Lame Bull, the meaning of the blows, but the latter had answered: "I do not know." The two above songs, both wordless, were sung without accompaniment of rattle or drum. The drum note in song No. 60 was introduced by The Boy in his recording merely to represent

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

bearing, or child begetting. She had said to her husband on one occasion: "If I had joined it [the Crazy Dance] and had been given it [this root], I would use it." To this her husband replied: "You should not talk that way. You already have children. You should pray to the Supreme Being." In this connection it may be recalled that some once wanted Singer to join the Crazy Dance in order that her husband's other wife, pregnant at the time, would have a safe delivery. The root may also have been a medium through or by which long life was imparted to the woman. 796* 842

The chief events of the fourth and last day of the Crazy Dance proper were, after the preliminary body painting, the fire dance and the bow rites. 796*

According to The Boy and Thick, on this last day in their respective lodges the Crazy Dancers were painted up to represent owls,—why, we could not discover. Their bodies were painted yellow all over, to the elbows and knees; the forearms, and the legs from the knees down, solid black. On the chest was painted an owl, with wings spread, the wings represented by black strips extending along the arms. The dancers' left ears were daubed and plugged with white clay (and apparently a mushroom), so that hearing was blocked on that side. From the left side of the headband there hung an owl head (not a skull) over the left ear. 796* 302

In preparation for the fire dance, the ritual grandfathers treated the soles of the dancers' feet, according to The Boy and Thick,—their whole bodies, according to Coming Daylight,—with medicine. The dancers also, Coming Daylight implied, chewed this root during the fire dance. 796*

A prominent warrior "chief," from an age-group other than the one giving the dance, was then asked to make shavings out of a lodge-pole for the fire. He would tell four of his outstanding war-deeds, and at each would make a motion as if starting to cut the shavings. After the fourth deed was told, he actually began making the shavings, continuing until he judged he had a pile big enough for the fire. Then he would light them. The fire was made in the middle of the Crazy Dance corral or lodge.

After the fire was started, there were four songs and four dances. One of these four, or else a song sung to the accompaniment

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

773 been told to do and put up the Drum Dance. Thus was the Drum
539 Dance introduced among the Gros Ventres into their sacred dance system."

When Lame Bull told The Boy this story, the latter asked him: "Who was it who gave this dance and these horses?" And his
[825] father answered: "The killdeer." So the Drum Dance is owned by the killdeer (*Oxyechus vociferus*).

The Drum Dance ranked high in dignity among the Sacred
*796 dances. Lame Bull ranked it next after the Sacrifice Dance, and first in importance in the Drum-Dog-Kitfox-Crazy group, because, he told The Boy, the Drum Dance was "most difficult and complicated to carry out," and through it "more horses had come to the Gros Ventre tribe."

The Drum Dance was held only in fulfillment of a vow. The
[801] rite lasted the customary four days and nights, with a big feast each day. The Boy was uncertain whether a sweat-lodge ceremony was held during the Drum Dance.

The chief sacred objects used in the Drum Dance were, so far
[778] as we could learn, the very large drum, and the fur-wrapped crooked sticks which were carried by the dancers and which to judge from the origin story were four in number and were decorated as therein described. The dancers themselves were
[302] painted yellow all over their bodies, with black dots, representing hail, from the waist up.

Four of the Drum Dance songs, numbers 52-55, were recorded,
*796 as sung by The Boy, who had learned them from his father, Lame
533 Bull. There were others which The Boy did not remember, nor did he know the ritual order in which they were sung.

Two of these four songs, numbers 52 and 53, are wordless, and were sung at good-time dances during the Drum Dance. Number 53 is the song that was sung by the men marching out of the dry lake-bed when the Drum Dance was first given to the starving Gros Ventre man by the killdeer. These dancing songs were lively ones, sung to fast time.

Song number 54 is difficult to translate as the meaning of two of one of the words was unknown. The Boy ventured the conjecture that the whole wording might possibly mean: "There are

These were fastened to the center pole "at the top," so that it was "full of goods that they offered." The offerings were made by "those who made the dance." Such an offering was made, for instance, by the woman above-mentioned who joined the dance for the recovery of her wounded brother. As at the Sacrifice Dance, too, when the Women's Dance was over and camp was moved, the lodge, center pole and attached offerings were all left just standing there.

The dancers, the two attendants and the "calf" or "calves," were painted, by the "boss" (and perhaps ~~by~~ others),—the dancers at least, "all over the face, then on top of the hair and down the hair hanging to the shoulders." During the painting the one painting would pray for the other being painted, and the latter might pray on her own account for whatever she desired, such as long life, medicine power, or other favors.

Of the songs sung during the Women's Dance we recorded only one, number 66, a wordless one, sung by The Boy. The singing was done or at least led by the old man (or two old men) who sat at the back of the lodge, and was apparently (the point was not cleared up by us) joined in by the chief vower and "boss," and also by the "cows." The singing was done to the accompaniment of the deer-claw rattles mentioned previously, and without the drum. Those dancing did not sing while dancing. "The singing in the Women's Dance," The Boy remarked, "sounded 'old,' quite different from the way a young woman sings." To Coming Daylight's ear "it sounded fine."

The dancing went on, not continuously, but intermittently, with intervals in between. Dancing was done by the "cows," attendants, and "calves," not by the "bull" who just sat in her place near the door with her horned headdress on and her head bowed down. The participants danced toward the back of the lodge, "kind of bouncing up and down in one place and shaking their heads from side to side." Coming Daylight, as a "calf," danced with the rest, near the door. According to Singer, the dances were done in series of four, as told her by one or two of her grandmothers who had been through the Women's Dance, and, if any of the "cows" did not get up to dance, the "bull" would "get busy" and "start

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

while shells like those I wore for earrings would show. But the place was grown over with weeds and white settlers were there. The old women said: 'It is funny that they [the whites] do not hear the spirit getting [ready] a pot of boiling water for them.' They thought it strange that the white people could stay there." 787 823

Those few men who sought gambling power—it was never sought or possessed by women, we were told—sought it not on hill tops but in the lowlands, in the brush and timber along streams, from prairie chickens or ghosts there. The quester chose by preference a place where wild morning-glories formed a sort of bower or "tipi." The seeker would cry and when he got sleepy would crawl into the bower and sleep. In his sleep a prairie chicken or ghost would give him a song, certain rules to live by, procedures and rites to use in the hand game,—the only game in which gambling power was used,—and perhaps some powers of the legerdemain order. The person who acquired gambling power by quest would be very chary of revealing his quest experiences.[10]

Seemingly still more secretive and tight lipped were persons who acquired love power through quest. According to The Boy, our only informant on this point, "these fellows [who had it] were careful never to tell who gave this power. Sometimes they would say a 'person' gave it, but it was generally known that it came from bird or animal on the ground or in the water." On other occasions he stated: "Usually some animal gave love power," and questers "did not ask for success in gambling or love on the mountains, but on the prairies or in the brush along rivers." The being would give the quester a root to use in exercising love power.

A person before starting out for a chosen mountain top to seek major powers would, The Boy put it, "take a good bath and clean up his body well and put perfume on his body so he would smell good—those who did not use perfume would be told by the being on the mountain: 'Go away. You smell bad.'" He would also unbraid his hair and would wear no clothing except his moccasins and under his blanket his breechcloth. He took no weapons with him. "He took a lot of chances," Al Chandler commented, "because enemies might be close-by. But no enemy ever seemed to [302a 515]

[10] For fuller details, see Flannery and Cooper, 1946, pp. 405-09, 416.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

to do that I guess it will be all right.' He did it and it went down easily. Then he was told: 'You go to sleep. I will tell you what this is for.' 787

"So he stayed out there and fell asleep. He saw an old fellow, grey-haired, coming who could hardly walk he was so old. This old man told him: 'That which I gave you is going to be all in your line. You are going to be a medicine man. This medicine is for those women or girls who should not have children for some reason; they are afraid or don't like to go through that and they always want help from somebody if anybody can do anything for them to keep them from having children. You will have to use your own judgment on that. If you think that a woman shouldn't want to do anything like that, if she is strong and young and should have children, you should not help her. You just tell her that you haven't got anything. But there are some who really need that kind of help. They are weak and won't make good mothers. Those are the ones you should help. That is what I give it to you for. I give you just one [hailstone] but every time you use it there is always another one. All you have to do is to sing the proper song (this person taught him the song, but I do not know it) and just take that hailstone from your body, that same one you swallowed, and give it to this woman to swallow and she won't have any children after that.'

"Little Man used this medicine twice and he said he didn't know where it came from but each time he used it [the hailstone] there was another one there for use the next time. My mother's sister's first child pretty near killed her and she was one he worked on. Another woman came to him who was in the same situation and he gave it to her and she never had more children. Lots of times women came to him, but he knew it was not because they were too weak to have children, but were just women who liked to run around and he didn't want to help that kind. This person who gave him that power had told him: 'When you are giving that thing to the women whom you help, paint yourself red from half your eyes up your forehead and head; below that paint all yellow.' If he would not have painted, the power would not have worked. If he omitted anything it would have been no good,—like if he didn't sing the song, it would be no good. [302]

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

A wife inherited practically nothing from her husband. If she had been faithful to him and had been of a good disposition, her parents-in-law might give her a certain number of horses or other property. The tent was considered the woman's possession while she lived with her husband; but on his death, even this was no longer her property. If the tent was worth keeping at all, it generally went to the dead man's sister, if she was newly married. A man, on the contrary, inherited his wife's property, though he generally gave back part of it to her relatives. 428 862 [422]

A woman, on her husband's death, went back to live with her parents, or, if these were dead, with her brother, uncle, or other relative. An old woman, on the death of her husband, generally went to live with her children, most frequently with a daughter. 768

On the death of a brother, especially a beloved one, or of his father or his son, a man cut his hair and went out naked (with only a buffalo robe) on the prairie to cry from morning until late at night. Women, besides cutting their hair, and cutting themselves (especially on the leg) until they bled, would also go out to cry, naked from the waist up. A sister cut herself for a brother, but a mother mourning for a child underwent the most pain. Of course the mourning was greatest for an only child. In such a case parents might give away everything in their tent and nearly all their horses, stripping themselves of property so thoroughly as almost to go naked. Some mourners fasted for a number of days. If, while a person was crying on the prairie, one should in joke attempt to scare him, he might kill the disturber. Mourners were the bravest people in war, caring about no danger whatever. 765 [304] [431]

Burial was in trees, on high rocks, or in caves inaccessible to wolves and coyotes. The corpse was wrapped in a burial robe. 764

A menstruating woman was called niniitixtj. It is said that she did not retire to a separate lodge, or eat separately from her family; but she did not approach a sick patient, because of the evil effect she would have on his condition by her presence. Some women were said to wear a breech-cloth during their menstruation. 841 [291]

In childbirth, women either lay or knelt. They grasped a stick supported in a horizontal position by two upright forked sticks set in the ground. After the umbilical cord had been severed, the end was left on the child. It was thought to fall off on the fourth day. The woman who had cut the umbilical cord received as a gift the knife she had used. A woman who washed a new-born child was given the vessel in which it was washed. The afterbirth was hung in a tree. If it were left lying to be handled, the child would be afflicted with sores. For three or four days after birth, the child was given suck by other women than its mother. This statement apparently refers chiefly to a woman's first child. 844 [846]

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

551 Names were given to children very soon after birth. Names were fre-
553 quently changed and given away. A man would receive his father's name from the latter, or would take it after his death. If a child were sickly, a relative, such as a grandfather, sometimes gave him another name. A sick person sometimes also took a new name in order to recover. Renowned warriors sometimes gave away their names to young men. They might retain the same name for themselves, or take a new one. One very aged man gave away his name to a young man, telling him, "I give you my name in order that you may have as long a life as I." This was done without the occasion or accompaniment of a ceremony.

There seems to have been no prohibition against mentioning the name of the dead, nor even any reluctance on the matter. Some people, however, were ashamed to speak their own names.

551 Twins, called niiçan, were named, if boys, respectively Kaaen and Niiça^{n}.
845 The latter name, however, was not always used, an ordinary name being given instead. Girl twins were not called by these names.

The hair was formerly worn in braids, as at present customary among
302 the Plains tribes, but also erect over the forehead. The women wore their
[765] hair either in braids or sometimes loose. In mourning, the hair, especially of the women, was cut about halfway across the cheek.

● 304 Ear-piercing, which among the Arapaho is performed on ceremonial occasions, and is itself accompanied with ceremony and giving of presents, was said among the Gros Ventre to be unaccompanied by special ceremonial actions. A woman or any one else does the piercing.

857 Boys who were herding horses sometimes took off their clothes and daubed themselves with mud until they were unrecognizable. They painted
673 their horses, and made shields of willow. Then they came to the camp,
868 mounted or on foot, to steal meat. Approaching the camp like a war-party, they would select the best meat hanging outdoors, charge on it, take it, and run. The old men and women and children chased them with clubs, but of course without success. The boys would go back to where they were herding, and have a feast.

576 The Gros Ventre say that both hand-shaking and kissing are aboriginal with them.

GAMES.

524 A common cup-and-ball game called tsöötskuutja^{n} ("throw in") consisted of four hollow deer or antelope leg bones, each about two inches long, attached to a string passing through them, at the end of which there was a needle eight or ten inches long. This game appears to be identical with

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Doctors were paid a horse or more for their services. Sometimes several, in turn, doctored a patient, each one blaming those that had failed before. Often they laid the sickness to spirits, or to other doctors. This last occurred especially if in their sucking they extracted human finger-nails or similar objects. In such a case the doctor got his patient to sleep. The patient might then in his dream see the person that had made him sick, and on awaking would denounce him. If the sick man died, his relatives might kill the doctor whom he had named as the cause of his sickness. 756

There were not so many women doctors as men. They appear not to have gone out to the mountains with the intention of acquiring supernatural power, but to have received guardian spirits when they were away from the camp, mourning.

The jugular and femoral arteries and the aorta were called ts'niinotanoudj[1] ("having no ears"), because, when severed, they did not heed any remedies.

In order to save the life of a sick relative, the joint of the little finger was sometimes cut off in sacrifice to the sun.

There were some medicine-men who, having had their fingers tied, then had their knees fastened together and their hands secured behind their back. After this they were wrapped in a robe and the robe was wound about with a rope. Then such a medicine-man called his spirit. When it appeared, he was loosened instantaneously, and the robe and the rope were thrown at the man that tied him.

Fig. 30 (50 1937). Doctor's Charm. Length, 22 cm.

A charm used by a doctor is shown in Fig. 30. It consists of a deer-tail with beaded base, and of two black feathers and a bunch of down feathers. All parts of the object are reddened. This piece was used to brush patients. At other times during the doctoring it was worn on the medicine-man's clothing.[2] 756 778

A man unsuccessful in winning a woman's love sometimes fasted on a 787 832

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Grôs Ventre NQ13

796 fork is upright, the young men all compete, trying to raise their rafters into position in the centre fork and in a fork at the periphery, before the others. After the tree has been raised, or possibly before, the young men go out, apparently by age-companies, to cut willows to form the walls of the lodge. More recently the star-dancers and war-dancers have done this, those of each company taking the wives of the men of the other company on their horses behind them. As they go, they shoot up in the air, and when in the timber each man cuts a willow-branch. They return holding the branches and singing, ride around the lodge, and then deposit them. After the outside rafter-poles of the lodge have been tied fast in the forks, these branches are leaned in position, forming an enclosure of the lodge.

The centre fork has a buffalo-tail attached to it. A bundle of brush, called a "nest," is also fastened in the fork. A lightning symbol is made on the western side of the tree down to the ground. Inside the lodge a low screen, said to be about waist high, is erected at the western end, opposite the entrance. Behind this is the pledger of the dance. In front of the screen is a painted buffalo-skull. Two sticks of cherry-wood, one red and one black, stand on each side of the skull. A wheel or ceremonial hoop made of a stick bent in a circle, wrapped with skin, and with feathers attached, is hung on one of these sticks. Just as clothing is hung at the ends of the horizontal rafters of the lodge, or possibly on the centre fork itself, as an offering to the sun, objects are said to be hung on this brush screen at the western end of the lodge.

[171] Apparently the general course of the main portion of the dance, which follows the erection of the lodge, is similar to that of the Arapaho sun-dance, though there are certain features entirely without parallel among the Arapaho. The pledger and the other dancers neither eat nor drink during the ceremony. Women join in the fasting, but do not dance. The dancers stand whistling, and looking up at the "nest" in the tree.

796 The self-torture characterizing the sun-dance among most tribes is found
● 364 with the Gros Ventre in its usual form. Four knotted thongs hang from the
785 centre fork. Two sticks are passed under the skin of the dancers' breasts, one on each side, to which the thongs are fastened. The dancers try to tear the sticks out of their skin. Some whose skin is tough do not succeed. In that case a medicine-man comes to them and makes them unconscious of pain, so that they break loose easily. When they have fallen, he restores them to consciousness. One after the other, the dancers go through this ordeal. While the dancers are thus tied to the tree, they move back and forth, apparently dancing. This is called niina^{n}tsôia^{n}. Some dancers also fasten shields in a similar way to the skin of their back, and pull these out. Others are attached by the breast to a post located outside of the dancing-

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

lodge. Other men go up into the hills near the camp, where they are 796
fastened to a post, and fast from sunrise to sunset. In the evening their 304
ceremonial "grandfather" comes and cuts them loose. Young men who 785
want to meet with success in war pierce the skin over their shoulder-blade, and, having inserted sticks, hang two guns to these on each side. Sometimes a crooked-hoofed horse is fastened to the sticks. Thereupon they go about outside of the camp-circle, crying constantly, hoping that some supernatural being will pity them. Still others tie four or five buffalo-skulls in a row, which they fasten in the same way to their backs. They also go around the camp-circle.

If it is thought possible that the enemy may be near at the time of the 796
dance, a man brings a filled pipe to the pledger of the dance and offers it 787
to him, asking about the enemy. The pledger takes out his medicine-bag, which is the skin of the animal he saw in his vision, incenses it, and performs the acts which this guardian animal commanded. Every one is quiet, and the fire is put out so that the lodge is completely dark. The pledger blows his whistle, and the people sing for him as loudly as they can. He makes motions around his head with his medicine, thereby asking his guardian spirit to enable him to see supernaturally. He continues his motions until he is able to see the enemy. Thereupon he sits down. After this, another man offers him a pipe, saying, "We wish you to tell us what you have seen. Therefore take this pipe and smoke it." After he has smoked, the pledger tells the people how many people he has seen, and where they are. He says, "I saw so many buffalo-bulls (men). They are coming from there. Take [822] charcoal for successful battle" (black being the paint of victory).

The dancers also have the power to see the enemy. If, as they look at the "nest" day and night, they see legs hanging down, or a headless body in the tree, it is the sign that an enemy will be killed by the tribe. If, on the other hand, they see blood on the poles overhead or running down the central tree, a member of the tribe will be killed. Sometimes they see a man whom they can recognize as a member of the tribe, black as coal and very thin, hanging from the poles above them. Then he will die soon.

Each day certain men, who seem to be young men, are selected, and their 796
names called out. These men dress as if for war. When they enter, it 729
seems that they sit in a row at the left of the entrance. The bravest of them are then selected, and taken to the back of the lodge, where a bed and head-rest have been prepared, on which they sit. One of these men counts a coup, and picking up a stick puts it into the fire. One after another they do this until a large fire is blazing. These men are called tsöötaxwuhuu ("inside dancers"). Thereupon two old men, going to the centre of the lodge and conferring in whispers, select six or eight warriors. As soon as these

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

nothing the person can do about it. One of Singer's friends was called "Matter in the Ear" and another "Ugly or Homely." Another woman harped so much on an event which took place at Turtle River, that "Turtle River" became the name by which she was known, and most people forgot that her actual name was "Spotted Calf." 551

The piercing of the ears may be done at the same time as the naming, as apparently was done in the case of Coming Daylight, or might be done shortly thereafter. Singer, for instance, was named by Sitting High, but her grandmother on a different occasion pierced her ears. The parents might pay someone to do this, or a relative might volunteer. The sooner the ear-piercing is done the better, because the older the child is the more it may hurt. Singer said: "That ear-piercing goes either through a dream or through war deeds." In the former case, the dream is told and then the ears are pierced. In the latter case the person must relate a war story: "This is what I have done. . . ." The story has to be a true one concerning an incident wherein the enemy did not retaliate so the ears will heal up without any trouble.[12] The actual procedure, regardless of whether there is much formality or not, is as follows. An awl is used to pierce the ear and into the hole is inserted either a small splinter of rose-wood sharpened to a pin-point, or a porcupine quill. Whichever is used, it is greased before inserting and is left in until it falls out when the ear is healed. At this time is then inserted a small ring merely to keep the hole open. Fancy earrings are not worn by small children. Formerly boys' ears were pierced as well as girls'. The number of holes in each ear seems more or less arbitrary, but all are made on the same occasion. Coming Daylight has one in each ear; Singer has two; Coming Daylight's eldest son has three. The custom is now dying out as the present generation of mothers does not believe in it. Coming Daylight wanted to pierce the ears of her great-granddaughter but the child's mother said: "No. You will hurt her." 304 [852] [987] [301]

[12] Kroeber, 1908, p. 182 states that ear-piercing was said to be unaccompanied by special ceremonial actions.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

765
152

until someone went after them and talked to them and persuaded them to eat and drink some water.

The most extravagant expressions of grief were expected on the part of close relatives of men killed at war. It was under such circumstances that the mourners tore off their clothes and gashed their arms and legs. The blood was not washed off and the wounds were allowed to fester, often leaving ugly scars. It was maintained that in mourning the Gros Ventres did not cut off fingers,—that was done only in fulfilment of a vow. [304]

If a brave young man were killed by the enemy, his parents went even further in the expression of their grief, and sometimes had to be restrained from committing suicide. The father could show additional sorrow by cutting the manes and tails of his son's horses, which he then led about as he wandered on the hills for four days and nights, crying and mourning. The following case illustrates the behavior of an elder brother in mourning for a younger one, but may be somewhat exceptional in that the former felt responsible for the latter's death. [762] 765 787

"Little Man, also known as Deafie, was on his way home with his younger brother. They had been on a friendly visit to the Crow. There were others in the party and one evening while they were camped, the younger brother had a dream. The next morning he told them: 'I had a bad dream. I dreamed I got killed.' One of the older men said: 'All right. We will stop here awhile so we can make a sweat-lodge and we will smudge.' (That is what they did when they wanted to prevent something bad from happening.) But Little Man told them that, although the rest of them might believe in dreams, he did not, and he insisted that they move on. The old man couldn't say anything more. As they were going along that same day, Little Man was scouting ahead and sighted the enemy. The Gros Ventre party separated, Little Man going with one group, his brother with the other. The brother happened to go right into the midst of the Assiniboine and was killed. The others heard the shots, but when they got there, Little Man found his brother lying dead. He then tore off all his clothes and would have committed suicide by dashing singlehanded after the enemy had not his brother-in-law grabbed him and held him back. When they got home, Little Man felt so badly that he cut off his beautiful

793 keeper (and probably the co-keeper too) could not cut his hair, but had to wear it tangled and disheveled.

785 The keeper and co-keeper were not permitted to bathe and
784 swim in the creeks,—this in contrast to the Gros Ventre custom of daily early morning bathing and swimming by both sexes the
[515] year round when not prevented by ice, as a cleansing, body-hardening and recreative practice. In fact, the two were not allowed to wash even their hands and face with water, but, according to The Boy, had to use instead fat, grease or oil, and to wipe them with the same muskrat skin they used in face painting.

● [304] The keeper could not draw blood on his own person by cutting, as was done by others in the sweat lodge rite, in mourning, and on other occasions.

793 The keeper and co-keeper were not supposed to cry or to cut
784 their hair in case of the death of a relative, nor to go where any one lay dead, nor to have anything at all to do with a corpse. In particular they were not allowed to give clothes, at least their own, to put on a dead person. It was a breach of this last prohibition, in fact, that resulted in Lame Bull's lameness, and his subsequent sobriquet, Lame Bull, his proper name being Under Bull.[4]

The keeper and co-keeper could not gamble or be gambled with. If the keeper nevertheless did so and won, he won not only the wager, but also the life of his opponent. The latter would meet with some fatality unless the keeper agreed to avert the evil by performing the proper rite over him. The keeper would direct the
[755] man to build a sweat-lodge and would enter it with him. The man would fumigate himself and inhale the smudge. The keeper would rub the man all over from head to feet with sage.

The keeper was not allowed just to throw off his saddle or blankets onto the ground but had to take good care of them.

According to Coming Daylight, a keeper during his term of office "could not sing the songs he was supposed to sing," but we secured no clarification of this statement. The reference may be to songs previously gotten in quests for supernatural power.

In addition to the foregoing more or less restrictive or "ascetic" observances that served to set the keeper and co-keeper apart from

---

[4] Cf. Flannery, 1953, p. 201.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

upward or downward but to the hill, with a ritual gesture and would make his request direct to the one or ones inhabiting the hill or mountain top and tell this one or these ones what [power] he actually wanted." 787 [782]

In all the above the quester was following the general ritual and social Gros Ventre pattern for making requests. Such was the ritual pattern in prayer with a pipe. And whenever a pipe was offered to a fellow-tribesman it was offered with the stem toward him. The offering of a pipe to another when asking something of him was an "emphatic way of pleading." Thomas Main here remarked: "If I wanted to borrow money of another and were afraid my request would not be granted, I might offer him a pipe when asking for the loan and so reinforce my request." 787 576 276

Bull Lodge, when seeking power on a butte, made offerings of material goods and of the first joint of his left little finger. Little Man made offerings of a bit or bits of his flesh. 787 [782 304]

While up on the mountains the quester, alone and praying and concentrating his thoughts on his quest, would fast, neither eating or drinking, and would walk around crying, shedding real tears. He, or the man who had first accompanied him to the spot and then left him, would make a rude sleeping place of rocks and twigs and branches. This sort of "nest" was called his "call-for-power lodge." When the quester got weak or fatigued or sleepy, he would lie down in this "nest" and doze or sleep. Al Chandler stated: "Their [the quester's] sleep is not sound, any little thing wakens them. They are expecting something all the time and they look for it." Usually power was given during such sleep, although in some instances when the quester was wide awake. The power-giving being would speak to the quester and, usually at least, appear to him.

Sometimes a quester would be told by the being whose "house" was the mountain on which the man was questing: "Here is the kind of power I have. This is all I have. That other one [being] has the kind of power you wish. Go over there." And the being would name some other butte or mountain. Thus, for instance, a man going to a given mountain to seek wealth or war power might be offered doctoring power, and if he did not take this

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

after a certain period of probation. He, however, broke the rule and doctored before his time was up. A night or so after he had doctored a spider came out of his ears and a thunder-rock out of his mouth, and so he lost his doctoring power. 778 787

Occasionally in connection with the power quest the right would be given to the quester to paint his lodge in a particular manner.[13] Among the Gros Ventre such sacred or holy painted lodges were relatively rare and were thought of very highly. We recorded one song (No. 88), a wordless one, which belonged with Bull Lodge's sacred lodge. Bull Lodge had been "invited" to quest for power at Baldy Butte, the highest peak in the Bear Paws. The being who gave him other powers also bestowed upon him his own lodge, with instructions how to paint it and the song to sing while it was being painted. Coming Daylight's father had a sacred lodge around the bottom of which were painted the figures of men, each figure the same and each with a feather in the head. The upper part was painted red. "At the tip of the ears of the lodge were things hanging, and feathers in back. The back part had a cross (morning star) and the sun."[14] 346 787

What has been said in the preceding pages about the circumstances of Gros Ventre quest may be illustrated by the following account given by Al Chandler of that of Little Man, his adoptive father: 787

"When Little Man first went out to seek power, the old medicine man (his tutor in the matter) told him: 'I am going with you.' So when they got out in the hills, maybe a whole day's travel to this place where he wanted to go, this old man asked Little Man where he wanted to go to fast and Little Man chose a place not very far away. So they went together. This old man cut his (Little Man's) flesh, took a pinch,—(some did it 3, 6, or 9 pinches), and prayed each time he cut a bit of flesh off. He told Little Man: 'Nobody is going to come after you until your time is up. If I tell you three days, nobody is coming after you until this time is up. In the meantime use your whole heart and don't get 801 304 782

[13] There was a distinction between the sacred painted lodges and the lodges painted with war deeds. Cf. Flannery, 1953, pp. 68, 102.

[14] For illustrations of sacred painted lodges, see Plate 4.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

in the operator. It was resorted to for various ailments; tuberculosis, dizziness and "logginess" were specifically mentioned by our informants. "If the ailment were located somewhere above the waist the patient was bled at the elbow joint on the upper surface of the arm; if somewhere below the waist, on top of the instep." One arm might be opened in spring, the other in the fall. In the procedure described by the Boy, before the incision was made, the patient would put his hand on the ground and hold his arm rather rigid, while the operator squeezed and at the same time rubbed down the upper arm until the blood vessel at the bend of the arm bulged. In a slightly different procedure described by Singer, the patient's upper arm was tied very tight and "the blood was worked down;" then the large blood vessel on the upper side of the elbow joint was pierced with a very sharp chip off an "onyx stone,"* and the blood would spurt out; when the patient was sufficiently bled, a bit of buffalo fur was scorched, put over the incision, and kept in place without any dressing. By bedtime everything would be "okay." 757 [752]

Certain individuals, such as Thick's wife, and Woman Chief, were more skillful than others at bloodletting. On one occasion Singer's husband said to her: "Come on now. I want you to bleed me." She started to do so but "just had to yell," at which he said: "Why anyone would think that it was you who were going to bleed." Coming Daylight was still more reluctant to perform the operation. "In fact, I could never do it," she said, "because I cannot stand the sight of blood."

A tattoo-like surgical treatment was described by Coming Daylight, although Gros Ventres did not practice decorative tattooing. "For a while," she said, "it seemed like my hand would come unjointed and I could not use it very well. They took a bunch of needles and pierced my hand where it was hurting me. They told me: 'Now if you don't eat anything fried, it won't turn blue.' After piercing my hand they put some root on it, and it never got sore." She added: "They do that to the head, too." [304] [262]

Lancing of the gums of children when teething, elsewhere de-

* Singer showed the stone she owned from which the chip is struck. It was a shiny black one, but we did not identify it.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

singed off at a fire, and the insides taken out without skinning the animal; then it was quartered up and boiled.

In addition, Charles Buckman stated: "If a party went out to war and met the enemy, before the actual fighting began a man might promise to give grub and a feast to old people, and as part of the feast there had to be a dog,—a pup, of any color. After the party got back home [at the feast, before eating] four pieces of the dog meat were taken and held up and then set on [in] the ground, one each to the north, east, south and west. The pieces were held up as offered to God—in thanksgiving and as a prayer for future favors. Then the young man served the grub to the old people. Before eating they would say, 'O God, this young man has fulfilled the promise he made to you,' and they would pray for him."

What we may call, for want of a better name, sacrifices of person or somatic sacrifices, took three main forms: offerings of flesh, of finger joints, and of self-inflicted suffering and/or privation. Each of the first two is a sacrifice in the strict sense of the term; the third, in the broader sense. The gashing of arms, legs or face as a mourning custom was quite distinct in the Gros Ventre mind from the above flesh offering: it expressed sorrow, it was not in any sense a sacrifice or offering to the deceased. No sacrifices at all were connected with mourning. Nor were finger joints ever cut off as a mourning observance.*

In most instances recorded by us, these somatic sacrifices were made in fulfillment of vows for the cure or safety of a close relative of the vower,—as, it may be recalled, was the case with self-torturers in the Sacrifice Dance. There were exceptions however: in their respective quests for power, Bull Lodge cut off a finger joint, and Little Man, Al Chandler's adopted father, cut off bits of flesh; the other Little Man, Coming Daylight's husband, when suffering from hemorrhages and pains around the heart was told in dream that he would get well if he underwent solitary self-torture.

Women as well as men would make offerings of their flesh and finger joints. To judge from the records we obtained, the finger joint sacrifice was more frequently made by women than by men,

* Cf. Flannery, 1953, p. 205.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

782
785
304

the flesh sacrifice with about equal frequency by the two sexes. Ordinarily only a little of the woman's flesh was cut, small bits, as against the large bits or strips not infrequently cut from the man. Only men underwent solitary self-torture out in the hills.

With these generalizations on somatic sacrifices covered, we shall now take up specific features of the flesh, finger and self-torture sacrifices in order.

In the early archaic times Ni:hohat, as we have seen, gave detailed instructions on cutting off bits of flesh when explaining about the Flat Pipe sweat-lodge.

The rite was described by The Boy (Thick present and concurring) and, with some differences, by Singer, as follows:

The Boy (and Thick). "The cutting off of bits of flesh was a rite all to itself. A round hole was made in the ground for the heated rocks; a common sweat-lodge was erected; a mound was made of the dirt excavated to make the hole; a buffalo skull was put on the mound; and a pole was put up for offerings. . . . The one to be cut would get as an operator someone who had gone through the rite himself. . . . The cut off flesh was offered to the Supreme Being. . . . Usually the rite was undergone so that some sick person who was near and dear to the undergoer would get well. . . . The skin was not pierced but a piece of green branch was split in two, and the two pieces were pressed hard, parallel and not quite touching each other, on the skin making it rise up, and these raised strips were then cut off. . . . One of my grandfathers was all cut up, with two half circles on his chest, one half circle on the outer side of each shoulder, a double row of cuts—not little bits, but strips cut right down—on both his upper arms and forearms and legs from hip to ankle. All these cuts were made on a single occasion. It was thought he would die of this sacrifice but he did not. . . . I myself had four bits of flesh cut from my arm, and others [farther] up my arm. [He here bared his arm and showed the scars: they were not crescent shaped.] The first cutting was done when I was a child. I was told to look away when it was being done. Sometimes children would run away and hide when told it was to be done to them. . . . Only three or four years ago [this would be about 1935-36] an old man so cut off

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

a young man's skin back of Thomas Main's house." (The cut off pieces of skin were, as at the Sacrifice Lodge, placed on the buffalo skull, "as an offering of the [person's] very body.") 782 785 304

Singer. "For cutting offerings of flesh from the arms they usually tried to get the same doctor who cut off my finger joint (see infra). He would take the flesh, put a needle through it and cut the flesh off. . . . He would then put the cut-off flesh in one of the bags from around the buffalo or cow heart which were used to carry water, and would hang it up or bury it. Women could not do the flesh cutting for themselves; they had to have a man doctor to do it. You promise so to torture yourself for some reason such as the wish to save the life of your sister or brother or other relative. For instance, if some young fellows were going off on a war party, the sisters would get out and make some such promise as: 'I will give part of my flesh or my finger if my brother comes back a great warrior.' It was great to have somebody [some relative] come back a hero, a brave man, or, as they called it, a big chief. . . . A wife could do this for her husband but usually it was a sister who thought that much of her brother. . . .

"I have a scar on my left upper arm [which she showed]. I had made this promise for the recovery of one of my daughters who was ill. A sick person is doctored, but such a promise is made as a last resort. Lame Bull told me they were going to make a big cut, like the ones they made on men. The cutting was done in a sweat-lodge where they all sat and prayed. They blackened the spot on my arm with charcoal,[10] then clipped the flesh off and held it up to the sun and said: 'This is what we offered you.' He cut me in four places on each arm. My husband was mad because it was too much. The one place on my left arm where the scar is was cut deeper than the others. After I made that promise I had the cutting done right away. [Mary Ereaux, our interpreter, here interrupted: "Goodness, you might just as well have done like the Sacrifice Dancers. You tortured yourself just as badly."] I held myself in but they certainly hurt me. They did not put anything on the wounds, only the charcoal beforehand. People try to [191]

[10] Blackening sacrifices was a common (perhaps *the* regular) Gros Ventre procedure.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

782
785 take anything like that very patiently" ["Like our Lord being
304 crucified," Mary Ereaux commented].

Very much the same procedure as regards the sweat-lodge, buffalo skull and so forth was ordinarily followed when a finger joint was amputated. The cut-off joint was offered commonly to the sun, or to the Supreme Being. The operation regularly took place inside a sweat-lodge. "A joint from any finger could be offered up, but usually it was the first joint of the little finger of the left hand. The offerer would put his or her finger on a log or stone; the operator, someone skilled in the matter, would then place a knife on the joint and hit the knife with something heavy. [752] Sage was put on the wound, to stanch the flow of blood and help healing. Children in their play, it may be added, would in make-believe cut off little fingers, apply sage and so forth.

The finger amputation complex may be illustrated by Singer's experience:

"My infant daughter [one of her three children by Iron Bucket] had been ill. I sacrificed [in a delayed fulfillment of her vow] the end joint of the little finger of my left hand. . . . I said: 'I give you this. This is what I sacrifice to save my child's life.' This I said to the sun which is God's work, His property like. . . . I held the baby and my husband prayed: 'Sun, she has given you her finger so our child's life will be saved.' . . .

"The rite was private, not a big ceremony. We went out of the lodge and the sun was about half way up and he [apparently the operator] held up my whole left hand and said: 'Now, Passing or Traveling Man, this is what she is going to give you.' There was just one old man who cut off fingers. They claimed he had [this power from] a dream. . . . He was the father of Dwarf; Dwarf died just recently.

"They had me lie face down and the others held me so I would not move. The old man [Dwarf's father] . . . told me to relax, . . . felt around, found the joint, put my finger over the lodge pole and chopped it [the end joint only] off. I did not see it but I heard when he hit the lodge pole. But there was no pain. Then they let me sit up.

"The old man said: 'Do you want it to bleed, or shall I close

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

it up right away?' My husband said, 'Let it bleed,' because he was afraid it would be sore if it didn't bleed. So when the old man thought it had bled enough, he chewed some big-leaf sage, made a poultice, and put it on my finger (and/or "sprinkled powdered root on my finger," she added later). It healed quickly and never troubled me. . . . We had to give the old man something for doing that. . . . My daughter lived to be a young woman." 782 785 304 [752]

Self-torture out on the hills,—"sacrifice alone on hills," as it was called,—had much in common with self-torture at the Sacrifice Dance. The chief difference was that, unlike the Sacrifice Dance torture rite, it was done in solitude. The self-torturer had to have a ritual grandfather, a man who himself had previously undergone this solitary self-torture—this in contrast to flesh and finger cutting in which there were no ritual grandfathers. The "grandfather-grandson" relationship so contracted persisted after the rite was over. Coming Daylight and The Boy were in agreement that the solitary self-torture was a more severe ordeal than self-torture at the Sacrifice Dance. [608]

Those mentioned by our informants as having gone through "sacrifice alone on the hills" were: Stiffarm; Running Crow (Stiffarm as his "grandfather" for this rite); Coming Daylight's husband Little Man (Running Crow as his "grandfather"); her cousin White Skunk, son of Crow Bull; The Boy's brother; Jim Shortman; and perhaps Sits-in-the-Middle. On Stiffarm's, Running Crow's, and Sits-in-the-Middle's experience we obtained no details; on White Skunk's, no details beyond the fact that he underwent it "because my [Coming Daylight's] son was sick at the mission school: that son died anyway," and that he did "right on this hill here [at Hays]." The detailed accounts of Little Man's experience as narrated by Coming Daylight, of The Boy's brother's as narrated by The Boy, and of Jim Shortman's as narrated by himself, to be given now, will help to fill out the generalized picture of the rite in the preceding paragraph.

Coming Daylight's account of Little Man's "sacrifice alone on the hills," given in separate fragments on four different days, is here presented just as she gave it.

"My husband Little Man [Deafie] went out to the hills. When

782 anyone so goes to be tortured someone else goes along. It was
785 awful when they so went to pray and cry and sacrifice themselves.
●304 Running Crow went with Little Man, as the latter's grandfather, to pierce his breast and insert the skewers whereby he was attached to the pole by a thong. [After that was done] Running Crow gave Little Man a push and Little Man danced round and round the pole. Running Crow and Stiffarm, who went out with him [just as helper, not as grandfather], left Little Man, as was customary, alone. Then sometime during the day the two returned and gave Little Man a smoke, but the latter did not eat or drink anything. He would be hungry and thirsty and would run around without even moccasins on his feet. It is an awful sacrifice. He would dance until the skewer pulled out of his flesh. Then he would be tired and would sleep and dream.

"Little Man went through this rite on account of a dream. He had been sick [heart pains and hemorrhages] and had dreamed he was going through the rite, and in consequence did later actually carry it out. He carried it out at Chinook where we were all living at the time. During the rite his mother sang war songs in her camp.

"Little Man had not tortured himself in any big celebration [Sacrifice Dance]. He did this only alone on the hills. It is hardest this latter way. It takes longer to break off [for the skewer to tear through the flesh] in the heat [sic]. It is awfully hot out in the hills and the self-torturer goes barefoot, without moccasins. He dances west to east, counter clockwise, from sun up to sun down. It is not so hot in the lodge at the big celebrations [Sacrifice Dances]. It is a greater thing to do it alone.

"The time my husband, Little Man, did this I too was away on the hills. I pitied my old man [husband] and did not eat. I came home in the evening to cook for him. We always help a relative when he fasts like that. My husband's mother and sister were at home together with another woman relative, Ed Blackbird's wife."

[787] After Little Man's self-torture was over, he was told in a dream the exact kind of leaf (or root) to use for curing his hemorrhages and just where it was to be found, Coming Daylight was able to find it, and Little Man was cured.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The Boy's narrative of his older brother's experience gives insight into the brother's feelings during the ordeal as well as detailed information on the rite itself. His brother had undergone self-torture once at a Sacrifice Dance and twice alone on a hill. The occasion of one of the two solitary rites was the following. Lame Bull had adopted a young boy who grew up as one of the family and proved himself worthy. The adopted boy and The Boy's older brother, both now dead, were sort of favorite sons of Lame Bull. The adopted son suddenly became mentally unbalanced. It was for his cure that The Boy's older brother vowed solitary self-torture. After the fulfillment of the vow the adopted son recovered. 782 785 304

The older brother, before the solitary rite, gave a pipe to a man to pray with and to announce out loud the coming rite and the name of the "grandfather" selected. At the end of the prayer the announcer released the pipe to the ritual grandfather who then took charge of the rite, piercing the vower and later cutting him loose.

The skewer punctures were made by first plunging a big awl into the skin on the side of the chest, the vower lying on his back. Then with the awl the skin was raised up, and a knife plunged point first right through the skin at right angles to the awl,—making in all three perforations of the skin, one by the awl and two by the knife point. Then the knife was withdrawn, the stick or skewer was pushed through at once while the holes were fresh, and finally the awl was withdrawn. One end, slashed, of a buckskin thong was put over the two projecting ends of the skewer, and the other end attached to the top of the pole anchored on the hill or knoll.

With the thongs so attached to the pole and the skewers [in the vower's chest, right and left side], the vower walked and ran, from sunrise to sunset, clockwise, starting at the south and ending there, then counter-clockwise, all through the day. He would go around so often that he would make a trail there.

The brother's feelings, as described by him to The Boy, are here given in The Boy's words:

"Out on the hill was the most severe [as compared with the Sacrifice Dance] for the reason that he had to do it all alone. From time to time he would rest, exhausted and crying. [When going]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

782
785
304

he would stretch himself good and tight [the thongs taut, his body weight pulling on them]. When he rested and wanted to relax and let the thongs go slack, the pain was worse than when they were taut. The skin over the skewer would dry up (and would work toward the living skin). . . . At sundown my brother's 'grandfather' came to him, and the toughest part of all occurred. My brother had not during the day tried to break loose [by body pull to make the skewer sever the skin], as at the Sacrifice Dance, for his 'grandfather' was to cut his skin loose. My brother all but died when he was cut loose. It was as if his heart was being cut. And at night, after both the Sacrifice Dance and the solitary ordeal, the pain was so intense, as if there were two red hot coals there [where the flesh was cut], that he could not sleep."

Jim Shortman (died 1948), probably the last Gros Ventre living who had gone through the solitary self-torture rite, gave the following account of his experience:

"The sticks [skewers for thongs] were about three inches long. (Here Jim undid his shirt to show the scars which were still visible on his chest.) My helper [ritual grandfather] was Running Crow. He was the man who fixed me up, pierced my flesh and fastened the thongs. My self-torture alone took place on a hill way out.

"My first struggle and ordeal in all that I was to do was to follow a command by Running Crow for me to go to the stream and break off a quaking aspen tree, but not to cut it with knife or axe,—to break it off in some way and bring to where I was going to do the fasting. So I went and twisted and worked and wore the ground just smooth around the tree with my efforts, and finally I got it down and twisted it off. I put a rope around it and dragged it to the scene of the fasting, and I had to accomplish this before sun-up of that day.

"So Running Crow went with me on my way to the scene of the fasting, which was a little west of where I and Paul Shortman now live. Just to the right of it is a little ridge. That is where I did it. The reason I vowed to do this was because my mother was at the point of death. She was very sick and I carried out my vow and she got well.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

"Paddy Skinner came along to help Running Crow dig a hole and fix in it the pole I had twisted off and tamp it in the ground securely. After they put up that pole or tree, Running Crow tied all of my offerings up there on top and also fastened the rope that was to be secured to the sticks in my chest. 782 785 304

"After this tree was made secure in the ground, Running Crow told me to take my clothes off, which I did, and he made a paste of white clay and painted my body with it. So these two men told me to lie down on my back and face my head towards the rising sun. Then they took a knife, and a big needle in the other hand, and lifted the skin on my upper arm and cut off seven pieces of my skin. Then they did that to my other arm. This made fourteen pieces in all. They put these pieces they had cut off at the foot of this tree. Then they cut off seven more pieces on the outside of each of my thighs, and by that time it began to hurt.

"Then last they cut my chest, the right side first. They pierced me there with the blade of a pocket knife and pushed the stick [skewer] in as soon as he released the blade. Then they repeated this on my left side. They told me to stand up so they fastened the thongs onto these sticks. Running Crow did that.

"Then after these things were securely fastened, Running Crow put the palm of his hand on my chest and pushed me four times to make the ropes tight. He stepped to my right side and pushed me four times too, and at the same time he told me: 'Now you begin your fasting and your actual performance of your vow and you must begin by crying.' And I did all that. And Running Crow told me: 'Go around this pole, round and round clockwise, and when you get tired you can lie down or sit down anyway you find restful, but always keep the ropes tight and do not loosen them, much less take them off.'

"Finally I got tired and I thought I would lie down and rest, and I did lie down but I did not rest well. In fact it seemed to be worse. Even the wind making the thongs sway hurt me. I had started out without eating or drinking anything. I was fasting. I had a terrible ordeal, to say the least, but I found that when I pulled tight [pulled the body away from the pole and kept the thongs taut] I suffered less.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

782 "Just before the sun went down that day, all at once I felt
785 something touching me on my left side. It was Running Crow
304 and the other man who stopped me. This meant that my fasting and chastizing myself were about over.

"They took off those thongs and told me to lie down in the same position that they had told me to lie in at the beginning. That is when I suffered the most. They did not take the sticks out, but just cut those thongs off and it seemed to me as if they were cutting my heart. Those fellows took those pieces that my skin was still clinging to and buried them at the foot of the post. And that is my experience. They told me to put on my clothes and I did so. I did not experience or perceive anything out of the ordinary. I just suffered. That is all.

"After I put on my clothes I found out that the skin of my feet was worn off and blistered and sore, and they sure hurt me. And to add to my aches, on the soles of my feet I was awfully sore the next morning and couldn't walk. And that is the end of my experience."

Sweat-Bath

782 In Gros Ventre ritual, sweating and sacrificing were quite closely
5:5 associated. Invitations to sweat extended to the Supreme Being and other beings in certain sweat-lodge rites,[11] such as those connected with the Flat and Feathered Pipe ceremonies, were of the nature of gifts or offerings, and hence sacrifices in the broader sense of the term. Then, too, the sweat-lodge and sweat-bath were a chosen medium for making offerings or consummating the sacrificial rite: the pole erected in front of the sweat-lodge and the buffalo skull on the adjacent mound were intended particularly for the attachment to and disposition of respectively sacrificial objects,—offerings of robes, bits of flesh, and so forth. Furthermore, the sweat-lodge was a preferred place in which to make sacrifices of flesh and of finger joints.

On other occasions too sweat-lodge and sacrifice went together. For instance, a man whose son had been killed by the enemy might

[11] Kroeber, 1908, pp. 274-75, gives an account of sweating and mentions that "Above-white-man" was called first.

8:Flannery E-5 (1940-1948)1960 NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

159 756 789 "My experience was by dreaming. One time before I was married—I must have been about eight years old—I was sleeping in a big lodge and a 'person' came and wakened me. He had a bag of medicines on his back. He came to me on four successive nights and laid out these medicines and told me what each was for. On the third of these nights there was a man lying there—he was just skin and bones. The 'person' who had awakened me told me: 'You could take all these medicines and you could cure people like that one lying there' [i.e., a person in the last extremity]. In my dream I would do everything he told me, manipulate my hands to draw out the sickness, and do everything. But I didn't want that power and would tell him so. Each morning too I would relate to my grandmother exactly what had happened in the night but she would try to hush me up, telling me: 'Don't say anything; don't tell anyone. You will be a great medicine woman.' But I didn't want that power. I didn't like it because [755] when medicine people suck on the weak part of the sick person they have to swallow what they extract. I had decided I would rather be quiet and not do anything like that, or sacrifice my flesh, or things of that kind. Perhaps if it had come later I might have taken that power and become great."

Nevertheless when later in life she had other dreams indicating supernatural power, she likewise refused. She explained in regard to one of these experiences, for instance: "The one who awakened me this time had told me to face the rising sun and was showing me how to make a smudge from the moss that grows close on logs; but I told him. 'No. I would rather not have it.' Those who have power die too soon."

159 757 Incidentally, still in connection with curing, bleeding was an operation which was performed purely as a natural remedy for a person who felt dizzy or sluggish. Anyone could do it—no supernatural validation was needed. Other women described quite casually how it was done and discussed the various times they had actually performed the operation. Coming Daylight, however, insisted that while there was really nothing to such an operation, she could never bring herself to perform it, nor would she allow anyone else to bleed her; she could not stand the sight of blood.

The aversion to the sight of blood and to self-mutilation was evidently deep-seated and showed itself in a marked manner early in her life. On one occasion a close relative was very ill. In such a situation it was expected that every member of the family would rally around and do whatever he could toward the recovery. Among the things that fell within the scope of activity for female relatives was that of vowing to sacrifice something valuable, including perhaps the blood [602] from one's arm or a finger-joint, if the person recovered. At this particular [782] time, Coming Daylight was a young child, and her grandmother decided that it would be appropriate for the little girl to offer that her finger-tip be removed [826] if the relative regained his health. When it was suggested to her, Coming [304] Daylight refused, even though her grandmother took after her with a stick. She actually ran away and wandered alone, until two nights later the relative died and an uncle finally found her.

159 183 765 On another occasion in her early youth, too, she defied a convention connected with kinship by refusing to join in mourning for an uncle who had been killed in revenge for having instigated the murder of his brother's wife. When her grandmother upbraided Coming Daylight for not expressing grief in the traditional manner, the latter defied her by saying: "I am not going to cry for that [602] man. I don't know why you are crying for him. I have worked for that woman [607] and she has fed me, and has even given me meat to bring home to you. I heard

8:Flannery E-5 (1940-1948)1960 NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the shots and went later to see what happened, and there I saw her lying across the fire; her dress had burned off and her body was all shriveled. They weren't satisfied to kill her, but they burned her too!" She maintained her attitude and all the scolding from her relatives was of no avail.

Before turning to her adult life, we may refer to another instance which illustrates Coming Daylight's sensitivity to the suffering of others. In the Sacrifice Lodge, which is the Gros Ventre version of the well-known Plains Sun Dance, one of the important features was the spectacular self-torture which the active participants underwent. Each one had a sliver of wood embedded in the flesh of his chest. To the wood was tied a line, the other end of which was fastened high on the center-pole of the lodge. The man, leaning back so that the line was taut, went back and forth until finally the sliver was torn from his flesh. Meanwhile the women cheered on their relatives by "rattling their tongues," singing war songs, and the like, by way of encouraging the men to be brave and see the thing through. Coming Daylight was quite a young child when she first witnessed this performance. She remembered vividly her reaction when one of the young men, in his exhaustion, went to the center-pole and, putting his arms around it, wept aloud. She was not able to stand it any longer and rushed home crying. Her grandmother was very angry with her for leaving in the middle of the performance, but all the little girl could say was: "Oh, I just pitied that young man," and she could not be induced to return to the dance lodge. We may add here that actually in later years she did not participate in the Sacrifice Lodge even so far as women were allowed to do so.

The examples we have given are sufficient to show, I believe, that Coming Daylight had developed as a child a very strong set against violence, against painful and dangerous experiences. She refused medicine power from supernatural sources not only because it was dangerous but also because it involved a kind of physical activity which was repugnant to her. She refused to mutilate herself and was extremely sensitive to painful experiences in others. Her actual deviations from the patterns of accepted or approved behavior all tended in this same direction against violence. Her adult behavior likewise was consistent with this trend in her personality.

In consonance with her feeling against physical violence Coming Daylight avoided as far as possible the rough-and-tumble play in which brother-in-law and sister-in-law were free to, and indeed expected to, indulge. Other women told with glee how they enjoyed "getting even" with their brothers-in-law by, for instance, pushing them when fully clothed into the river, or dumping bucketfuls of water over their heads when they least expected it, and so on; but Coming Daylight admitted without hesitation that she didn't like that sort of thing and never attempted to retaliate even when her brothers-in-law succeeded in playing jokes on her. Similarly while it was not unusual for women rivals to actively fight over a man, she refrained from such undignified behavior, although it must be admitted that she had enough provocation on at least one occasion of which she told me. She had just married a man who was described by others as something of a gay Lothario. A woman who had been trying to force her attentions on him was furious when she heard of the marriage. She rushed to the lodge and pulled Coming Daylight out feet first, yelling insults the while. When the latter regained her feet she made no attempt to hit back even though the other slapped her and pulled off an earring, tearing the lobe of the ear. Coming Daylight, however, bided her time and soon was able to make an opportunity for an exchange of words with the woman at a big social dance.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

726 latter and raise his leg in imitation of a urinating dog. All would
626 know then on whom Eater's displeasure had fallen, and the young man in question would break down and sob. That would cure him of laziness."

726 Among the important duties on a war party were those of the water-carrier. If the mission were to be performed under more
318 than ordinarily dangerous circumstances, young men might volunteer for the job, but usually the leader chose someone for it. A water-carrier had to have courage and resourcefulness because in order to fetch water it might be necessary that he be sent long distances without guard, and then have to catch up with the group
[482 in case the rest had to move. When the members of the party
[534] sighted the water-carrier returning successfully bearing the skin
533 water-container attached to a pole, a song was sung by the war party as they marked time by beating two sticks together.[2]

726 Scouting was another important aspect of a war party. The leader selected two well-qualified men for this job. "They had to have courage and endurance for, while scouting, they would run instead of walk and not eat until their mission was completed." Scouts were called "wolves" and wore wolf-skins as insignia and
[714] sometimes, at least, would stick brush on their heads so they could not be so easily spotted against the horizon.[3] They went to high
[533] places to look around. If the enemy were not in sight, they might sing, making up words to the tune mentioned as having been sung before the party left camp.[4]

If the scouts saw indications of the enemy, such as smoke rising from a coulee, but without actually seeing the enemy sufficiently clearly to identify them, on their return to the party they gave a wolf howl as they approached and proceeded in a sharp zigzag path. If, however, they had more definite information, they gave the wolf howl and approached in a circular path; that is, advanced, turned in a circle, advanced again, turned in a circle, advanced again, turned in a circle and halted. They were then met by two older men who had been successful scouts in their day. While the
[533] scouts were approaching—occasionally looking back over their

[2] Recorded as No. 130.
[3] For illustrations, see Curtis, v. 5, p. 176.
[4] Samples of this kind of song were recorded as No. 23 and No. 24.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

INDUSTRIES AND IMPLEMENTS.

281 When a skin was brought in, it was hung on a sort of tripod, and with a chisel-like flesher of buffalo-leg bone the meat was removed. Then the hide was stretched on the ground to dry. When dried, the hair and thin coat of skin on the same side were cut off with the familiar implement of bent elk-horn, always provided, in recent times, with a metal blade. To make rawhide, nothing more was done. To make dressed skin, liver, grease, and brains, boiled and mixed in the proper proportion, were rubbed [177] or soaked into the skin and then removed with an ordinary scraper, now usually of sheet-iron or tin. Finally the skin was worked over with a rough stone or a bone. In preparing buffalo-skins for a tent, four steps were recognized: first, drying the skins; next, removing the hair; third, soaking them; and, last, scraping and working them over. Skins were softened by being drawn over a rope of buffalo-sinew.

281 When a woman had prepared enough buffalo-skins for a tent, she made
342 a feast and invited other women who were skilful at making tents. The most
476 expert of these fitted and tacked the skins together loosely, and the others sewed them fast. When a robe was to be embroidered, the woman who wanted to make it prepared food and invited other women to help her in her work. When the robe was finished, the man who was to receive it was called in, and it was given to him.

281 Caps of buffalo-skin were worn in winter. They were provided with flaps that were pulled down over the ears and held by a string fastened under the chin. Mittens of buffalo-skin were also used, tied together by a string which passed behind the neck. When the hunter was ready to shoot, he slipped his hands out of the mittens.

282 Simple flat unbraided ropes of rawhide were cut out of the skin in a long spiral. After having been cut, they were stretched between two sticks. In order to soften them, they were covered with manure, or tied to a horse that dragged them over the ground until they became pliable.

323 Pottery is declared to have been made formerly of clay mixed with
252 crushed rock. Rawhide bags, drawn together at the top with a string, were also used for cooking by means of hot rocks. The often described Plains method of cooking in holes in the ground lined with rawhide was also followed.

372 When fire was struck with flint and steel, dry mushrooms were sometimes used as tinder.

411 Bows were most frequently made of cherry-wood, but sometimes of ash. Ash was harder and more elastic, but more brittle. Sinew backing was

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

elk and deer, served very well, and the first three were often used for carrying water. It was said that water kept cooler and fresher much longer in these than in other types of container such as those of metal.

Pottery had been made by the Gros Ventres in earlier times[18] but the only information we were able to gather thereon is contained in the following statements. Coming Daylight volunteered the most details: "They used some clay to boil their meat in. My grandmother worked it. She made a pot and told me how she did it. It was made of black mud of some kind. My grandmother took this mud and mixed some kind of grease or tallow with it and shaped the pot. While mixing the clay with the grease, she would shape it. It was smooth then. When finished it was about 18 in. high, 9 in. in diameter, the same at the top as at the bottom (straight-sided). The bottom was flat because it was put right on the fire and the coals were kind of heaped up around it when cooking with it. When my grandmother finished shaping it, she put it close to the camp fire and turned it around once in awhile so it would dry out. Then, when it was dry, she put water in it and put it on the fire to see whether it would crack. This pot didn't crack. I don't know what became of it. I never used it myself. It was undecorated. This one belonging to my grandmother is the only one I know the history of, and the only one in our family. We used the wooden dishes more than the pot. The pot was used only to cook in. Each family might have had one or two to cook in."

Singer, who was present when Coming Daylight told about this, said she had heard of such pots, but had never used one herself. Mary Ereaux, the interpreter, commented, "In the Missouri River where they are making the dam, the mud taken out of the River, when it dries, is just like cement." When asked regarding pottery, Charles Buckman stated that he doubted that the Missouri River mud could have been used for this purpose. There is a blue clay near Hays that would be suitable for making pots—he had heard that pots were used "in the old days" but did not know how they

[18] Cocking, in 1772, writes of the Gros Ventres, p. 111: "Victuals are dressed in earthen pots of their own manufacturing much in the same form as Newcastle pots, but without feet."

323 were made. Several days later he reported that he had asked around about how pots were made, and some old-timers said that they braided sinew to the shape of pot they wished; heated white flint and pulverized it, and mixed with the blue clay from around the neighborhood of Hays. This mixture was about 6 per cent pulverized flint. The clay and pulverized rock were mixed in a mortar, pasted over the woven sinew, and baked. "It gets so hard you can't break it." Tom Bad Road, now (1948) about 70 years old told Mary Ereaux that once when he was a young boy he saw an old, old woman making a pot of "sand." The pot had dried hard, but some young fellows used it as a target for throwing stones and broke it to pieces.

554 The place of honor was at the back of the lodge, opposite the door. Here at night slept the "man of the house" and his senior
513 wife, if he were a polygynist, the other wives and children on either
595 side. Coming Daylight described the arrangement of her father's lodge as it was before she was sent to live with her grandmother. Her father and one wife slept at the rear, the bedding placed parallel to the door; she and her mother had their bedding to the left as one entered the lodge, and perpendicular in regard to the opening, sleeping with their heads to the rear and feet to the door; while her father's unmarried brothers were similarly placed as she and her mother, but on the opposite side of the lodge.

484 When on the move, the women were in charge of the children and impedimenta and usually traveled in a group considerably be-
492 hind the men. Horses or dogs were used to draw the travois, and sometimes younger children or the sick and disabled were carried thereon. Mae Main remarked that her memory of riding on a horse travois was not a very pleasant one as she was often annoyed by the horse's tail brushing over her. Horses had to be broken to the travois and a horse owned by a man would never be so used. The horse can draw a far heavier load than a dog, but seemingly the Gros Ventres at no time had so many horses that the dog could be dispensed with altogether and the dog travois survived until very recently. At such times that horses for one reason or another were scarce, the people would be forced to cache a great deal of their surplus and to cut their lodges in half so the load would not be too great for a dog to draw.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

INDUSTRIES AND IMPLEMENTS.

281 When a skin was brought in, it was hung on a sort of tripod, and with a chisel-like flesher of buffalo-leg bone the meat was removed. Then the hide was stretched on the ground to dry. When dried, the hair and thin coat of skin on the same side were cut off with the familiar implement of bent elk-horn, always provided, in recent times, with a metal blade. To make rawhide, nothing more was done. To make dressed skin, liver, grease, and brains, boiled and mixed in the proper proportion, were rubbed [177] or soaked into the skin and then removed with an ordinary scraper, now usually of sheet-iron or tin. Finally the skin was worked over with a rough stone or a bone. In preparing buffalo-skins for a tent, four steps were recognized: first, drying the skins; next, removing the hair; third, soaking them; and, last, scraping and working them over. Skins were softened by being drawn over a rope of buffalo-sinew.

281 When a woman had prepared enough buffalo-skins for a tent, she made a feast and invited other women who were skilful at making tents. The most 342 expert of these fitted and tacked the skins together loosely, and the others 476 sewed them fast. When a robe was to be embroidered, the woman who wanted to make it prepared food and invited other women to help her in her work. When the robe was finished, the man who was to receive it was called in, and it was given to him.

281 Caps of buffalo-skin were worn in winter. They were provided with flaps that were pulled down over the ears and held by a string fastened under the chin. Mittens of buffalo-skin were also used, tied together by a string which passed behind the neck. When the hunter was ready to shoot, he slipped his hands out of the mittens.

282 Simple flat unbraided ropes of rawhide were cut out of the skin in a long spiral. After having been cut, they were stretched between two sticks. In order to soften them, they were covered with manure, or tied to a horse that dragged them over the ground until they became pliable.

323 Pottery is declared to have been made formerly of clay mixed with crushed rock. Rawhide bags, drawn together at the top with a string, were 252 also used for cooking by means of hot rocks. The often described Plains method of cooking in holes in the ground lined with rawhide was also followed.

372 When fire was struck with flint and steel, dry mushrooms were sometimes used as tinder.

411 Bows were most frequently made of cherry-wood, but sometimes of ash. Ash was harder and more elastic, but more brittle. Sinew backing was

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

171
531

Ventre robes. A child's quilled robe (Museum specimen 50-1751) agrees in general with the Arapaho style of ornamentation,[1] and is probably more or less representative of the Gros Ventre type. The style is similar to that of the quill-work on the Arapaho bag shown in the "Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History" (Vol. XVIII, Plate xvi). Seventeen red quilled lines pass across this robe. Four spaces, two on the lines and two at the ends, are green instead of red on each line. Originally, small green-dyed plumes seem to have been attached here also; these have now almost disappeared. At the four green spaces on the lowest line, pendants are attached. These each consist of a small loop wound with green quills, and of two thongs wound with red quills. At the ends of the thongs are small cylinders of tin from out of which issues a tuft of dyed horsehair. The seventeen embroidered lines do not stretch entirely across the robe to its edge, but occupy a rectangular area including the greater part of its somewhat irregular surface. Certain Arapaho robes are described as having been embroidered with seventeen such parallel lines, to which a group of three was added at the lower edge, where pendants were attached. An Arapaho child's robe in the Museum collections is almost identical with this in style. The ornamental spaces on the red quilled lines differ somewhat, and there are eighteen instead of seventeen lines; but the general construction and appearance are strikingly similar, even to the pendant attachments. Dr. Clark Wissler's illustration[2] of a small Sioux robe serves to give a very close idea of the present piece. Like the Arapaho robe, this Sioux one has eighteen lines. Dr. Wissler makes the point that among the Sioux such red-line embroidered robes were distinctive of women and girls; but among the Arapaho the typical robe of men is said to have been embroidered with yellow or white lines. The Field Columbian Museum has on exhibition Cree, Crow, and Sioux children's robes ornamented with from seventeen to twenty lines and with hoof pendants at the bottom.

[178]
342
531
171

The Gros Ventre have now entirely abandoned the use of embroidered tent-ornaments such as are still quite common among the Arapaho. A single dilapidated partial specimen was obtained, shown in Fig. 4. This is very similar to the Arapaho tent-ornaments.[3] The full set consisted of a larger, round quill-embroidered piece of skin sewed to the back of the top of a tent and called kaiⁿbiitᵃⁿ ("round embroidery"), four similar but smaller ornaments put on the sides of the tent lower down, and pendants attached to the upper flaps or ears of the tent. The circular embroidered ornaments had buffalo-tails or strips of buffalo-fur, and quill-wound pendant thongs with hoofs and loops at their ends, hanging from the middle.

---

[1] Compare Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part I, pp. 29, 33, 65.
[2] Ibid., Vol. XVIII, Part III, Fig. 81.
[3] Ibid., Vol. XVIII, Part I, pp. 61–63.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

171
531
342

Of the pieces illustrated, the larger contains four black concentric circles interrupted by four black-bordered sectors. Quills, not plant fibres, have been used for this black embroidery. The lighter portions of the embroidery adjacent to the black circles seem to have been originally yellow, as the underlying protected quills are of this color, while those on the surface are

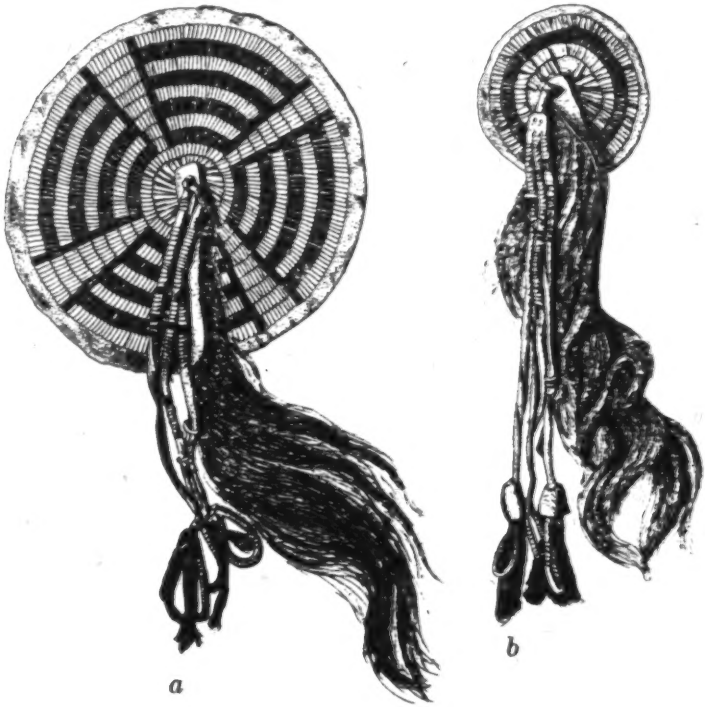


Fig. 4 (50-1829 a, b). Tent-ornaments. Diameters, 17 cm., 8 cm.

weathered white. The quills within the sectors, however, appear to have been always white. The pendants, three in number, are very much destroyed: it is evident, however, that they were wound with orange-yellow, red, white, and black quills in exactly the pattern used by the Arapaho.[1] The loops at the ends of the pendants contained red, yellow, and black quills,

[1] For description and illustration of pattern, see Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part I, pp. 35, 65, Figs. 12, 13.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

171
342
531

and probably white also. The pendants on the smaller ornament are identical, and still show the hoofs at their ends. It thus appears that, whereas the main ornament has only the three colors, namely, white, yellow, and black, — found also in an Arapaho ornament [1] with which it is virtually identical, — yet the peculiar line-pattern combination of red, yellow, white, and black, characteristic of the Arapaho "tribal" style of quill embroidery, also occurs in this Gros Ventre set of ornaments.

171
415
531

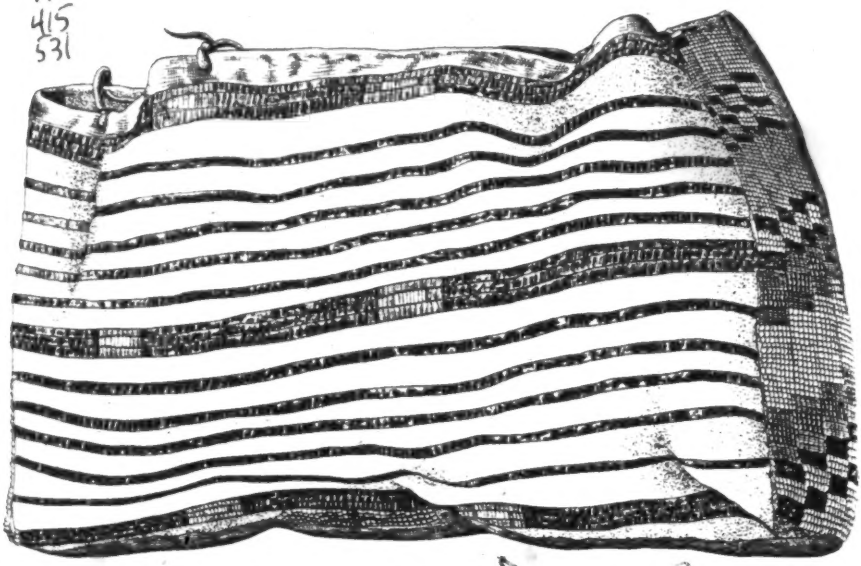


Fig. 5 (50-1738). Soft-skin Bag. Length, 21 cm.

Bags of soft skin, used chiefly for keeping and transporting clothing and small household articles, are made by the Gros Ventre very much as by the Arapaho and other Plains tribes. The ornamentation is also of the same character, consisting of red quill-embroidered lines across the front of the bag, and a pattern of bead-work (generally of alternately colored bars with cross spaces, augmented by tin and horsehair or other pendants) along the top and two side edges of the bag. This style has been illustrated for the Arapaho.[2] About half the Gros Ventre bags show the same ornamentation,

[1] Compare Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part I, p. 60, Fig. 9, a.
[2] Ibid., Vol. XVIII, Plate xvi.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Feathers, especially eagle feathers, were highly prized, and red paint, prepared from ochre, as well as other paints obtained through the trader, played their part in bodily decoration.

The younger men thought a great deal of their appearance. One of the things they made for themselves was fancy painted sunshade-hats of rawhide. The designs painted thereon had a yellow background against which various other colors stood out. Coming Daylight remarked: "These sunshades looked so fine that the other tribes copied them, just like the whites get their styles from Paris." Long thick hair was the ideal both for men and for women. The tail of the porcupine made an admirable comb. A number of perfumes were used by the young men. The castor of the beaver, for instance, was put in the paint bag so that the material for daily painting would be sweet smelling. Again, young men crushed "Piegan berries," chewed them, and rubbed them on hair, horses, and bedding, as perfume.

Incidentally, according to Coming Daylight, in order to clean their buckskin clothing, the Gros Ventres would wear it into the water, getting it completely wet, and then rub it thoroughly with a certain kind of white clay.[14] She said that the tribe was spoken of by other tribes as always having such nice white clothes, and to this habit of rubbing them with clay she attributes the name by which the Gros Ventres call themselves, *a'aninin*, "white clay people."

Ear-rings, worn both by men and women, were made from imported abalone shell, which they cut up and shaped; they also used a certain type of imported white shell. Many other kinds of necklaces, armlets, and so on were apparently used, but on these we failed to get details.

Household and Transportation

The lodges of the Gros Ventres were made from buffalo hides, the number used in each depending on the size of the lodge. They

[14] This custom is mentioned in the sources of the early 19th century. Cf. Harmon, p. 277; Henry, v. 2, p. 734. The latter adds, as a further distinguishing characteristic, that when the Gros Ventres use red "it is always of a light color, inclining to pale vermillion. The dark red or Spanish brown, so much in vogue among the other Meadow tribes, does not suit their taste."

342 were sewn together with sinew. The women selected the poles for the lodge, as well as for the travois, and were responsible for [484] erecting and taking down the lodge, for the arrangement of the interior, for the making of the travois, and for the packing and moving of impedimenta.

The foundation of three poles for the lodge was tied together and then raised as a unit. The other poles were arranged one by one, starting with those of the front. The cover of buffalo hides was tied to one pole, the "backbone," which was placed at the center-back, the cover then being drawn into place and fastened securely at the front, with small wooden pins usually made of cherry-tree wood. The ordinary Gros Ventre lodge stakes were shaped like a pin with a relatively small head. One informant, [184 however, stated that this form of stake often came loose where 177] the cover became taut with the wind, and that she had found the forked type, first observed by her many years ago when visiting another tribe to the south, far more satisfactory.

342 Old lodge covers were saved and cut up to make a sort of lining at the bottom of the lodge in winter, and the snow scraped away 353 to make place for the lodge was piled up on the outside thereof for extra warmth. In summer the ground inside the lodge was covered with willows, sagebrush or rye grass. Decorated robes as windbreaks were sometimes suspended in the lodge behind the fancy backrests, which were made by the women from slender willow rods. The women gathered and peeled the rods, although the young men helped straighten them by pulling them through their teeth. A willow ring encircled the fireplace and a broom of buckbrush was always kept handy. Personal belongings were neatly disposed against the wall of the lodge and in front of these were placed the skins which served as bedding by night and as seats by day. The painted parfleshes were given prominence to lend colorful touches. Dishes, utensils, and stored food were suspended 412 from poles well off the floor.

415 Among the articles of household equipment may be mentioned knives, both of bone and of metal, kettles, horn spoons, fleshing tools, etc., and food containers of various sorts. For the latter, [237] the membrane protecting the heart of the buffalo, the paunch, the bladder, and the intestines of the buffalo, as well as those of the

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

To cross a deep river such as the Missouri was quite an undertaking. When they reached the bank, they would spread out in family groups, while the men and women worked together to convert the lodges into round boats. Coming Daylight gave the following description. "The lodge cover was folded in half lengthwise over a rope of sufficient length that the ends protruded somewhat. Mud was then smeared as a layer between the two halves of the cover and on the outside of that half which would ultimately be in the water. The next step was to take the loose edges together, to form the rim of the boat by bunching up a considerable bit of the material and tying securely; leaving a free space, bunching up another bit of the material, leaving another free space, and repeating this operation at intervals, shaping the receptacle to the proper diameter by running a rope taut from 'tuft' to 'tuft'; then they packed in very carefully as much as the round boat would safely hold, and finally the portion of the rim which was formed by the fold—as distinct from the now 'tufted' free edges—was gathered into place by manipulating the ends of the rope which had been placed originally in the fold, the rope being now tied securely. A lead rope was attached to one 'tuft' at each side of the gathered portion of the rim. Two young men on horseback then dragged the boat into the water and took it across the river, dragging it safely up on the opposite bank." [16] 484 501 396

The boat was watertight and safe to transport any of their belongings, and even children or disabled adults. When the water transporting was finished the mud was washed off and the lodge cover spread on the ground to dry. This didn't take long and the lodge cover was soon as good as new. 484 501

The lodge poles had to be transported separately from the cover. The poles were cut when needed, and a hole was burned about four inches from the top of each. When the lodge was up, the free ends of the short strings of buckskin, run through these holes, fluttered in the breeze, making a fine decoration. The more practical purpose of the holes, however, was to allow a number of poles to be strung together for moving. For water transport not more 484 342 484 492

[16] Maximilian, who met the Gros Ventres on the Missouri in 1833, mentions, p. 73, their round boats made of buffalo skin, filled with articles for barter, "drawn by one swimmer and pushed by another."

484 than six poles would be so tied together, a strong line running
through the holes, leaving a loop to go about the horses' neck.
492 Another line was tied around the six, about in the middle, to hold the poles together as the horse dragged them through the water. A mounted horse could draw two sets of six poles across the river at one time, one set on each side, but could not take all the poles for a lodge on a single trip. Meat packed in skin bags was often lashed to the poles and did not suffer in transit. Occasionally older children rode across the river on these poles, and some people paddled across straddling a single log.

782 The same goods which we have described as used by the Gros Ventre to meet their needs for food, clothing, shelter and transportation were likewise used to meet many other needs. Cloth and clothing, feathers, ornaments, and so forth, were used as religious sacrifices and offerings. Food was used as payment or part-pay-
262 ment for services of those who helped in production of economic
436 goods, or of those who cured diseases, acted in ceremonial capacity of one kind or another, as well as in meeting certain specific kin-
342 ship obligations. Lodges might be painted in accordance with a
531 supernatural vision, and, with the associated songs, were transferrable to others as ritual objects. Horses were used as payments of various kinds,—in connection with the bride price, to ceremonial
436 grandfathers, and so on. There was thus no medium of exchange within the group and no strict classification into producer's goods as contrasted with consumer's goods is possible.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The older women informants described, when they were young, they would work at scraping skins pegged to the ground, by leaning over from the waist, feet well apart and knees unbent, swinging sideways from the hips. They could keep up this rhythmical steady motion, with the short-handled scraper usually tipped with metal, for hours at a time, one day after another. Sometimes, too, a woman would spend a whole day softening ropes of rawhide by rubbing the rope which had been run through the eye and ear apertures of a buffalo skull upon which the horns had been left so that she, sitting on the ground with legs extended, could rest her feet against the horns as she pulled the rope back and forth, making it soft and white.[4] Nevertheless the tedium of these operations was often relieved by the fact that occasionally other women, who had at the moment some leisure, would hear the work going on and would volunteer to help. 462 281 [516] [412] [283 237] 462 476 281

It was customary for women to do much of their work in groups. If a young woman, for instance, wished to make a fine robe, she would call in some other women, including an older experienced "hand." The latter would mark the robe where the embroidery should go, and the younger women did the fancy work. The hostess would cook for all present and so, in a pleasant atmosphere of sociability and "woman talk," the work would progress. A similar type of gathering would be held when a sufficient number of hides had been saved to make a lodge cover. [531]

In size the lodges ranged from six skins up to twenty-four or twenty-five, with the average of about fourteen to seventeen.[5] Much skill was needed for cutting and fitting the skins and an experienced woman would be called in to do that part, while the others helped with the task of sewing the skins together. Our informants stated that a woman would have to "save and save" skins towards a new lodge, which was a necessity about every three years. [342]

Women went out in groups to pick berries and wild fruits as well as to dig roots, but each one had right of disposal over what 462 476

[4] Another method for softening ropes is given by Kroeber, 1908, p. 150.

[5] The largest lodge remembered by the Gros Ventres is said to have been that of the Blood Chief, Father of All, who had, at the time of the 1855 treaty, a lodge with two fires, poles 65 ft. long, and the cover consisting of more than 25 skins.

555 The more war-deeds a man performed, the more frequently was he the center of attention. Gradually he began to rise above others and finally he achieved recognition as an outstanding warrior. Only when a man reached this enviable height was he justified in having his war record painted on his lodge for all the world to admire. When a newly painted lodge of this kind was first erected, the owner initiated its use by giving a feast to which other prominent warriors were invited. From among the guests, the host "pulled up" one who was able to tell four brave exploits, each connected in some way with a different lodge belonging to the enemy. At the conclusion of each separate account, the warrior who was reciting hit the taut new lodge a resounding blow, thus attracting attention. Then while the guests were feasting and smoking with the host, crowds gathered around to examine the lodge and to discuss the record depicted thereon. It was said, too, that similar discussions took place when the Gros Ventres met on friendly terms with other tribes. The reputation of the owner was thereby enhanced as his prowess was ever more widely acknowledged.

Enemy-Friends

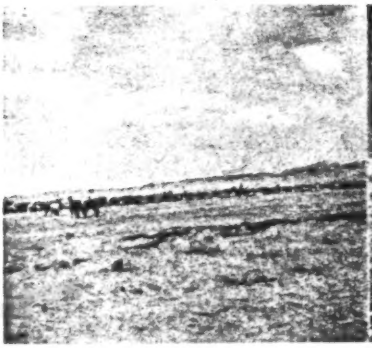
572 In accordance with the general prestige pattern, an outstanding warrior, or one who had aspirations toward that end, was expected to be generous as well as brave. Particular significance attached, however, to the disposition of horses stolen from the enemy or of weapons or other trophies obtained from the enemy at risk of life. The giving of such presents initiated a particular relationship between recipient and donor known as the enemy-friendship. This was a kind of "joking relationship" and involved the greatest amount of freedom between the two both in word and action. Whatever one enemy-friend said or did to the other had to be borne with equanimity. Loss of temper involved loss of prestige, and it was said that in some cases one enemy-friend had to suffer patiently audacity which would have led him to murder another not in that relationship. Each tried to out-do the other by kinds of speech and action ranging all the way from the most harmless teasing and jokes to the most humiliating exposition of foibles and misdemeanors.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

115
133
142
291
292
531

IN THE LITTLE ROCKIES

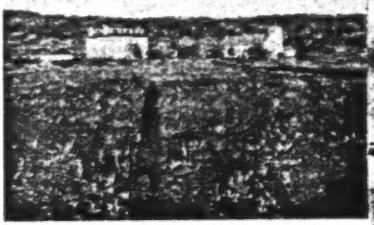
THE BOY



PLAINS NEAR HAYS

MARY, SINGER, AND COMING DAYLIGHT

[342]
[797]



ST. PAUL'S MISSION AND SCHOOL

COMING DAYLIGHT'S TIPI

PLATE II

[p. 212 (B)]

793 informed one, feasting them and also, *de regueur*, giving payment
*796 in valuable goods for each bit of instruction received. In these instruction sessions, the last keeper usually played the leading role, but the others would coach and correct when necessary or one of them if better informed on this or that point might teach while the last keeper took a back seat. The retiring co-keeper did most of the instruction of the new co-keeper. The Feathered Pipe keeper co-keeper, ex-keepers, and ex-co-keepers would commonly sit in at these sessions, but only as guests, without taking part in the instruction. Lame Bull, when first made keeper, got a great deal of his instruction from Deer, an earlier exceptionally well informed keeper.

793 A ritual relationship was contracted between the new keeper
608 and co-keeper on the one hand and the ex-keeper and ex-co-keepers on the other. All the ex-keepers become "grandfathers" to the new keeper and co-keeper; all the ex-co-keepers, "grandmothers" to them; and are so addressed by these names respectively. The retiring keeper and co-keeper became, as it were, principal "grandfather" and "grandmother" respectively. This sacred relationship was looked upon as very like that between grandparents and grandchildren by blood. Privileged familiarity in the way of vulgar talk and banter, between these ritual grandparents and grandchildren, obtained, but not quite the large degree of freedom that obtained between grandparents and grandchildren by blood.[3] The ritual "grandfathers" and "grandmothers" also had certain recognized
[626] powers of control over their "grandchildren": if, for instance, one of these "grandsons" went on a berserk rampage and was about to kill a fellow-tribesman, and his own father and mother could not bring him to reason, one of the ritual grandfathers might be called in to reason with his grandson and the latter would have to abandon his angry murderous design.

Keeper's Lodge

342 The Flat Pipe keeper's lodge was a large one, undecorated on
346 the outside except for a portion painted red around the door.

[3] Cf. Flannery, 1953, pp. 121-22.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The lodges of the other people faced toward the east-southeast, from utilitarian consideration, since the prevailing and strongest winds were from the northwest in winter and west in summer. But the door of the keeper's lodge was toward the south, an orientation determined by the ritual position of the Pipe inside the lodge, namely, in the place of honor opposite the door with the stem pointing toward the rising sun. 342 346 [361]

The interior of the keeper's lodge was arranged as follows. In the center was the family hearth. About midway between this and the north segment was the square incense hearth, with the west half of black sand and the east of red. At the north, close to the wall, was the Pipe bed and place for the Pipe tripod. The bed, oriented east and west, was made of a buffalo robe over sage brush. At each end was a willow back rest, and over each rest a robe of summer-pelage (after winter coat completely shed) buffalo skin. The tripod, of three legs, was a little over five feet high. The Pipe bundle was either laid on the bed close to the wall or else hung on the tripod, always with the stem to the rising sun. The northern part of the lodge, including the incense hearth and Pipe bed and adjacent area, in all about one-third of the interior, constituted a sort of "sanctuary." 342 346 353 778

The keeper's sleeping bed, with its back rest toward the north, was a little removed from the Pipe bed, toward the west; the co-keeper's in a corresponding position toward the east. The Pipe child commonly slept on the Pipe bed, alongside of and to the south of the Pipe bundle, with his head to the east. If however the keeper or co-keeper wanted to sleep on the Pipe bed in order to dream, the Pipe child would then give place and sleep in his father's or mother's bed as the case might be. When any of the three slept on the Pipe bed, the Pipe bundle might hang on the tripod over them or else rest on the northern edge of the bed nearest the wall. In the latter case, the tripod was folded up and leaned between the Pipe bed and the co-keeper's bed. According to Thick the sleepers had to lie flat on their backs all night. According, however, to The Boy they were forbidden to do so and had instead to lie on their sides, because the turtle was closely associated with the Flat Pipe and if a turtle gets on its back it cannot right itself. 342 346 513 [784] [825]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

341 The triangular space between the foot of the Pipe bed and the
346 head of the keeper's bed served the keeper as a place to keep such
353 of his personal and ritual belongings as his peppermint, sage brush, personal smoking pipe, and so forth.

In good weather, the Pipe bundle was taken outside by the co-
778 keeper in the morning (rite to be described later) and hung up,
788 stem to east, on the outside of the keeper's lodge just above the door, the thong handle of the bundle being looped around a pin of the lodge. About sundown the bundle was brought inside again by the co-keeper to its ritual place. At night the opening of the keeper's lodge was securely closed with a piece of rawhide, shaped like the door, covered with a sort of lattice work of rawhide, and fastened from the inside.

778 The keeper's lodge, as the depository of the Flat Pipe and the dwelling of the consecrated custodians thereof, had to be treated with great respect. This respect was formalized in a number of ritual and other observances.

784 No one was permitted to step over the incense hearth, under penalty of being inflicted with fits.

When the keeper, co-keeper and Pipe child took off their moccasins for the night, these had to be deposited, not alongside the beds or *under the pillows or anywhere in the* "sanctuary," but near the lodge door,—the keeper's to the west of the door, the co-keeper's to the east, the Pipe child's to either the west or the east *ad libitum*. If this were not done, severe headaches would result.

Anyone entering the keeper's lodge or leaving it or passing from one part of it to another, always had to walk clockwise.

784 When anything was going on therein, with men and women both
present, the men had to sit on the western side, the women on the
516 eastern. When they sat down, they could not sit with legs stretched out in front; the men squatted on their heels with knees touching the ground and legs parallel, while the women sat on their buttocks with their legs to the right side one leg under the other.

No one, adult or child, could throw stones or sticks at the
784 keeper's lodge. Children were not allowed to play or fool or romp

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

276 The sacred flat-pipe was also used in the sun-dance. It was once cap-
778 tured in war. Then the man who took it had bad dreams, until the pipe
spoke to him in his dream and said, "Return me, or your tribe will be
[728] destroyed." Then this man brought back the pipe, and his tribe made
peace with the Gros Ventre.

343 The making of a sweat-house was not restricted to certain persons. A
782 man wishing success in war would make a sweat-house for another person, in order that he might accomplish the deed he had in mind. Or, if a person was sick, one of his relatives might pledge to make a sweat-house for him, just as he would a dance. In this case the sick person himself would not necessarily use the sweat-house. On the other hand, a doctor might prescribe sweating for a patient, and in this case the sick person would enter the sweat-house.

[757]

Fig. 43 (50–4355). Sweat-house Tail. Length, 36 cm.

343
515
[237]

About twelve or fourteen willow poles were cut for the sweat-house. The entrance always faced the sunrise, and a small cottonwood-tree was erected in front of it. To this, calico or other property was tied by an old man as a gift to the sun. The cloth was partly blackened, the corners being rubbed with charcoal.

When all the participants were inside, the blankets were pulled down and the house closed tight. Water was poured on hot stones, at first five times. Thereupon the lodge was opened at the entrance and at the opposite west end, and the people cooled. It was then closed again, and this time water was poured on the rocks seven times. After cooling once more, water was poured on the rocks nine times. The fourth time, the man that poured the water could put as much or as little on the stones as he wished. After the fourth time, the participants came out and bathed.
[757] If they were suffering from pain, they whipped that part of the body with buffalo or horse tails. This practice made the heat greatest at that point, much as if it were beaten into the body.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

343 757

A man who pledges and erects a sweat-house does not participate in the sweating. He makes the fire, heats the rocks and passes them into the house, raises and lowers the blankets, and performs other services.

[237]

In sweating, animal tails were sometimes used to beat the body with. Fig. 43 shows such an implement, made of the tail of a buffalo, on a stick handle cased in the skin of the tail. This object is similar to the Arapaho specimens described in the "Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History" (Vol. XVIII, p. 316), but is noticeable for the shortness of the hair on the tail.

343 757 776

When people were called to come to sweat, hixteib'nix'a^{n}t ("Above-Nix'a^{n}t") was first called to sweat with them. Then the people were called. This personage, whose name also means "Above-white-man," is said to have been prayed to before the whites were known; but the Gros Ventre, like the Arapaho, state that they do not know whether he is identical with the Nix'a^{n}t of their myths. Ordinary prayers were always addressed first to hixteib'nix'a^{n}t or to iiçanânin ("our father"), then the sun and moon would be mentioned, next the sacred pipes, and then the earth. After these had been mentioned, anything else could be prayed to.

[30]

778

A charm tied on horses to make them run fast consists of rabbit-feet painted red and tied together. The Arapaho used rabbits' feet for the same purpose.

Specimen Museum No. 50-1804 is a pair of wild-cat-tails worn by young men at the shoulder, or at the heel of a moccasin. They were also tied to children's belts, next to the skin, in order to keep them from wetting the bed.

[51]

Specimen Museum No. 50-1903 is a gorget (commonly called by the Indians in English "moon-shell") said to have been made in the old way from an intervertebral disk of a buffalo. At present these objects are usually slightly concave, and are made of china.

Fig. 44 (50-4280). Thunder-stone Necklace. Length, 21 cm.

[30] 237

The Gros Ventre, according to Dr. Clark Wissler, call certain corrugated fossil stones "thunder-stones."[1] The Assiniboine seem to use the same name. The Blackfeet, who perhaps have most developed the cult of these objects, call them "buffalo-stones." A specimen from the Northern Arapaho is shown in the "Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural

[1] [These are probably ammonite septa. - Analyst]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The sweat-bath was resorted ritually on many occasions other than those mentioned in the immediately preceding pages and passim in preceding sections. Coming Daylight spoke of it in a general way as "the thing they [the Gros Ventres] go through with when they don't want something to happen." On some of these many occasions reported by our informants there was no mention of accompanying offerings,—for instance the many sweat-baths Singer made for her sick husband (or were these purely "rational" curative measures, as may have been the sweating Coming Daylight went through for her rheumatism?). The sweat-lodge was commonly used, especially as we have seen, in connection with professional doctoring. 515 782

The sweat-bath was resorted to rather commonly—how commonly we cannot say—for pleasure, as a purely rational hygienic and curative measure, and for cleanliness. In such cases, no ceremony at all was connected with it. The keepers of the Flat and Feathered Pipes, if known to like sweating,—but not otherwise,—could be invited, but without ritual accompaniment. There was no mixed-sex sweating; men sweated with men, women with women. Sweating was a little hard on novices unused to the heat and steam. The white man who asked to learn about the Feathered Pipe was told: "The first night in a sweat-bath is pretty hard and beginners are allowed to lie down close to the ground." Singer, once when being washed by a medicine man, had to leave the lodge as soon as the water was poured on the stones; she could not stand the heat. Mary Ereaux' mother used to keep her head outside the sweat-lodge when sweating. Those, however, habituated to sweating, found the after-effect pleasant and soothing. As Al Chandler expressed it: "After you are all through sweating you sure feel good. You could go right to sleep." 515

The sweaters during the sweating whipped themselves,—"to make them even hotter" (Al Chandler), "to dry themselves" (Coming Daylight)—with formerly a whip made of a buffalo tail attached to a handle, or later of "a horse tail or any old thing." [412]

The sweat-lodge for secular use was always beehived shaped, of bent willows framework, but no special number of willows was required. 343

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

A plant called tyäänou is used as perfume, as a wash for the hair, and as a minor medicine. Bunches of the plant were used as perfume. A tea boiled of it is thought to make the hair grow while perfuming it. Such a tea is also poured into the nostrils as a remedy for headache (specimen Museum No. 50–1920). 278 157 [302]

Niibyouäxtjin is used as perfume. The stems and leaves are chewed and applied to the body (specimen Museum No. 50–1853). [302]

Tsaa^{n}sübin is used as perfume. It is chewed, and rubbed on the hair (specimen Museum No. 50-1792).

One ingredient of incense is the callosity from the leg of a horse above the knee. This is cut up fine, and burned with sweet-grass. It is also worn on the body on a string.

Pine-nuts or other conifer-seeds are used for pemmican (specimen Museum No. 50–1913). [562] 824

For embroidery, dark fibrous water-plants, at^{a}hin (the Arapaho atahina^{n}), are used (specimen Museum No. 50-1891).

Quills are dyed yellow with a solution from a conifer-lichen, no doubt the widely used *Evernia vulpina*, called otsahaa^{n} (specimen Museum No. 50-1873). [386]

TRIBAL CEREMONIAL ORGANIZATION.

The Gros Ventre ceremonial organization is akin to that of the Arapaho with such differences as would be expected from the differences in language and the period of separation of the two tribes. The fundamental feature of this organization, the grouping of men by ages and the observance of a series of a half-dozen ceremonies in order according to age, is common to the two tribes. The ceremonies vary somewhat, and in a few cases their names or order have been changed; but among both tribes there are about six regular consecutive men's ceremonies, one or two that are preliminary or somewhat outside of this series, a single ceremony for women corresponding to those for men, and the sun-dance, which is included by the Indians in the enumeration of their grouped ceremonies, but differs from the others in not being connected with age, or with any society-like association of individuals. 561 796

Among the Gros Ventre the dancing-lodge for these ceremonies — which is erected in the centre of the camp-circle, and, like this, opens to the east — is constructed of two large tents. The lodge is open above, and appears to be oval or round in shape. The dancers, before beginning the ceremony, secure old men, who are called their "grandfathers," and are their instruct- 346 796

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 from this part of the robe. At the end of each of these, a bunch of owl-feathers, or rather a piece of owl-skin, was attached. The dancers carried bows, to each end of which seven crow-feathers were tied. Down was [411] fastened to the bowstring at several places. At the handle of the bow a strip of bear-skin, owl-feathers, and some sage were fastened with a buck-skin thong. Four arrows accompanied each bow. One had a metal point, which subsequently was made more effective by medicine. The three other arrows were blunt, or had wooden points that had been chewed soft so as to be harmless.

The pledger, and three other men called "brothers" (hinähäbyiitou), who sat apart from the other dancers in the lodge and acted somewhat differently on certain occasions, had bows that were unornamented, except for the down on the string. These four men wore their robes turned so that the hair was outside, whereas the other dancers wore the dressed side out.

[302] All the dancers were painted entirely red. Their hair was daubed with white paint. They stopped the left ear with a mushroom, such as was used [824] for tinder, and put paint (apparently white) over the ear and the entire left side of the face.

Four young men who would be good workers were selected to be the assistants or servants (atsaan) of this company. They brought wood and water, and performed other services.

[346] The lodge for this dance is described as having been made of travois or tent poles about which tent-skins were drawn. It was open to the east. There was a fire about in the centre. Facing the opening of the lodge was a small partial enclosure or screen constructed on dog-travois. In this were the pledger and his three companions, the "brothers." The dancers are said to have occupied the northern half of the wall in the dancing-lodge; the "grandfathers," behind whom sat the dancers' wives, the southern half. As among the Arapaho, the dancers were divided into two sections; the tall men toward the rear and the short men toward the front, of the lodge. These two divisions competed against each other in the races to follow. The dancers' bows were stood up in the ground in a row just beyond the fire.

During the four days of the dance, the dancers, every morning before sunrise, went to their "grandfathers" to be painted. Apparently they went to their "grandfathers'" tents, and not to the dancing-lodge, for this [302] purpose. The dancers' wives went with them. They were naked, and [824] were painted too. No one but the "grandfather" looked at them. Before [788] being painted, the dancers made incense of sage-leaves on burning charcoal. They also rubbed their bodies with fragrant fir or balsam leaves crushed and mixed with fat.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

They also had rattles similar to those of the rank and file of dog-dancers,— a row of small hoofs attached to a stick, — except that the rattles of the tsöö̈yanchin were forked instead of single. In addition they each had a long wooden whistle. 796 554 292

Some of the "grandfathers" are said also to have worn scarfs, like the dancers; but as these were made of pieces of old tent-skins, undecorated and ugly, it is probable that this action was intended to be ridiculous.

The "shaggy dog" took his whistle, forked rattle, and head-dress with him when he went to the lodge, but left his crow-feather-covered shirt behind. When he was in the lodge, a woman was sent for the shirt. She put it on, and went to the lodge, wearing it. Standing before the "shaggy dog," she pulled it off, and, holding it open at the bottom, moved four times as if to put it on him. The fourth time, she drew it over and on him. The place of the two "shaggy dogs" in the lodge was at the western end, the middle of the back.

The dog-lodge is described as having been constructed like the crazy-lodge, and to have had the same small screen or partial enclosure at the eastern end, facing the entrance of the lodge. 796 [346]

The beginning of the dancing was as follows. One of the old men who would sing, went in a circle four times. He was followed by the two "shaggy dogs." The old man began to sing and dance, and the two "shaggy dogs" whistled. When they moved to any distance away from him, the old man motioned and clicked to them, as one does to a dog. Then they danced toward him. After this, the rank and file of the dancers stood up and danced. Four servants of the dance, said to have been chiefs, sat in front of the small enclosure at the east. When they thought that the dancers had danced long enough, one of these went among them and said, "Friends, rest." Thereupon they all stopped dancing, standing in their places. Then this man told a war story. When the singers thought that the dancers had rested sufficiently, they began to sing and the members of the company took up their dancing again. Altogether they danced four times, being made to rest each time by the exhortation of an old man who told a war story. This dancing took place four days, during which period the dancers were supposed not to sleep.

When at night the dancers left the lodge and danced before the tents of chiefs, begging for gifts, the two "shaggy dogs" are said to have stood by the door of the tent. It is therefore probable that the body of the dancers formed a circle in front of the tent, as they do among the Arapaho on this occasion. When the owner of the tent had given them property, he pulled at the flaps hanging at the sides of the feather-covered shirts of the "shaggy dogs," whereupon they sat down and the dancing ceased. This dancing for gifts is said to have continued for four entire nights. [431]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

informed one, feasting them and also, *de regueur*, giving payment in valuable goods for each bit of instruction received. In these instruction sessions, the last keeper usually played the leading role, but the others would coach and correct when necessary or one of them if better informed on this or that point might teach while the last keeper took a back seat. The retiring co-keeper did most of the instruction of the new co-keeper. The Feathered Pipe keeper co-keeper, ex-keepers, and ex-co-keepers would commonly sit in at these sessions, but only as guests, without taking part in the instruction. Lame Bull, when first made keeper, got a great deal of his instruction from Deer, an earlier exceptionally well informed keeper.

A ritual relationship was contracted between the new keeper and co-keeper on the one hand and the ex-keeper and ex-co-keepers on the other. All the ex-keepers become "grandfathers" to the new keeper and co-keeper; all the ex-co-keepers, "grandmothers" to them; and are so addressed by these names respectively. The retiring keeper and co-keeper became, as it were, principal "grandfather" and "grandmother" respectively. This sacred relationship was looked upon as very like that between grandparents and grandchildren by blood. Privileged familiarity in the way of vulgar talk and banter, between these ritual grandparents and grandchildren, obtained, but not quite the large degree of freedom that obtained between grandparents and grandchildren by blood.[8] The ritual "grandfathers" and "grandmothers" also had certain recognized powers of control over their "grandchildren": if, for instance, one of these "grandsons" went on a berserk rampage and was about to kill a fellow-tribesman, and his own father and mother could not bring him to reason, one of the ritual grandfathers might be called in to reason with his grandson and the latter would have to abandon his angry murderous design.

Keeper's Lodge

The Flat Pipe keeper's lodge was a large one, undecorated on the outside except for a portion painted red around the door.

[8] Cf. Flannery, 1953, pp. 121-22.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The lodges of the other people faced toward the east-southeast, from utilitarian consideration, since the prevailing and strongest winds were from the northwest in winter and west in summer. But the door of the keeper's lodge was toward the south, an orientation determined by the ritual position of the Pipe inside the lodge, namely, in the place of honor opposite the door with the stem pointing toward the rising sun. 342 346 [361]

The interior of the keeper's lodge was arranged as follows. In the center was the family hearth. About midway between this and the north segment was the square incense hearth, with the west half of black sand and the east of red. At the north, close to the wall, was the Pipe bed and place for the Pipe tripod. The bed, oriented east and west, was made of a buffalo robe over sage brush. At each end was a willow back rest, and over each rest a robe of summer-pelage (after winter coat completely shed) buffalo skin. The tripod, of three legs, was a little over five feet high. The Pipe bundle was either laid on the bed close to the wall or else hung on the tripod, always with the stem to the rising sun. The northern part of the lodge, including the incense hearth and Pipe bed and adjacent area, in all about one-third of the interior, constituted a sort of "sanctuary." 342 346 353 778

The keeper's sleeping bed, with its back rest toward the north, was a little removed from the Pipe bed, toward the west; the co-keeper's in a corresponding position toward the east. The Pipe child commonly slept on the Pipe bed, alongside of and to the south of the Pipe bundle, with his head to the east. If however the keeper or co-keeper wanted to sleep on the Pipe bed in order to dream, the Pipe child would then give place and sleep in his father's or mother's bed as the case might be. When any of the three slept on the Pipe bed, the Pipe bundle might hang on the tripod over them or else rest on the northern edge of the bed nearest the wall. In the latter case, the tripod was folded up and leaned between the Pipe bed and the co-keeper's bed. According to Thick the sleepers had to lie flat on their backs all night. According, however, to The Boy they were forbidden to do so and had instead to lie on their sides, because the turtle was closely associated with the Flat Pipe and if a turtle gets on its back it cannot right itself. 342 346 513 [784] [825]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

341 The triangular space between the foot of the Pipe bed and the
●346 head of the keeper's bed served the keeper as a place to keep such
353 of his personal and ritual belongings as his peppermint, sage brush, personal smoking pipe, and so forth.

In good weather, the Pipe bundle was taken outside by the co-
778 keeper in the morning (rite to be described later) and hung up,
788 stem to east, on the outside of the keeper's lodge just above the door, the thong handle of the bundle being looped around a pin of the lodge. About sundown the bundle was brought inside again by the co-keeper to its ritual place. At night the opening of the keeper's lodge was securely closed with a piece of rawhide, shaped like the door, covered with a sort of lattice work of rawhide, and fastened from the inside.

778 The keeper's lodge, as the depository of the Flat Pipe and the dwelling of the consecrated custodians thereof, had to be treated with great respect. This respect was formalized in a number of ritual and other observances.

784 No one was permitted to step over the incense hearth, under penalty of being inflicted with fits.

When the keeper, co-keeper and Pipe child took off their moccasins for the night, these had to be deposited, not alongside the beds or under the pillows or anywhere in the "sanctuary," but near the lodge door,—the keeper's to the west of the door, the co-keeper's to the east, the Pipe child's to either the west or the east *ad libitum*. If this were not done, severe headaches would result.

Anyone entering the keeper's lodge or leaving it or passing from one part of it to another, always had to walk clockwise.

784 When anything was going on therein, with men and women both
present, the men had to sit on the western side, the women on the
516 eastern. When they sat down, they could not sit with legs stretched out in front; the men squatted on their heels with knees touching the ground and legs parallel, while the women sat on their buttocks with their legs to the right side one leg under the other.

784 No one, adult or child, could throw stones or sticks at the keeper's lodge. Children were not allowed to play or fool or romp

*796 afterwards according to the Ni:hahat story or after the great deluge according to the flood story.

Ritual sweating and use of the sweat-lodge, tsë:bäte, were resorted to by the Gros Ventres on many occasions not connected [515 721] with the sacred pipe rites,—skin and finger-joint sacrifices, war expeditions, and dreamed-of impending evils. Sweating in such cases will be dealt with in the proper places, as also sweating at the Feathered Pipe rites and Sacred lodges. The sweat-lodge rite was obligatory at the following Flat Pipe ceremonies: the three seasonal rites, the transfer rite (previously described), rites in fulfillment of a vow to smoke the Pipe or to paint its bowl, or to make a sweat-lodge for the keeper or for the Pipe, and at the disposal of offerings to the Pipe.

726 Before a war party started out, among other ceremonial ob-
*796 servances a sweat-lodge rite was commonly gone through. A Flat Pipe Keeper might on such an occasion take pity on the leader and members of the departing war party, build his own 31-stick sweat-lodge, and go through the sweating rite. If, furthermore, the keeper accompanied the war party, he might do the same from time to time during the course of the expedition.

*796 For the present we shall confine our attention chiefly to the sweat-lodge as used in the three seasonal rites, dealing first with *the sweat-lodge itself*, and after that with the sweating rite. We merely reiterate in passing that the sweating rite, [illegible] obligatory in a seasonal rite, was somewhat distinct from [illegible] ceremonial which followed it and which was carried out in the keeper's lodge.

346 The Flat Pipe sweat-lodge was constructed as follows. In ground
*796 plan it was more or less circular about 7 to 9 feet in diameter, with two openings, the main larger entrance at the east and the smaller exit opening at the west. The general form was nearly semi-spherical. On each side, the northern and southern, 15 willows [802] were stuck in the ground. The number 30 may represent a multiple of the sacred number three, and one of our informants conjectured, with particular reference to the 30 poles of lodge where He-who-starved-to-death slept fasting on the 30 successive nights. These 30 willows were arched over and woven fast into a ridge willow that ran the east-west axis of the structure. Thus the sweat-lodge was constructed of 31 willows in all.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The ridge willow was painted all black with charcoal. Each of the other 30 lateral willows was painted black around its whole circumference just at the point where the upright section began to bend or arch. This "painting" was done by grasping the willow at this point with the blacked palm. Each willow was also painted black at the very top where the arched willows met, this painting being done by simultaneously grasping each two willows at the top. The whole framework was covered with robes when the sweating was about to take place. 346 796*

Inside the sweat-lodge at about its centre, was dug a pit, about 2 feet square by about 15-16 inches deep, as a deposit hearth for the heated rocks. Around the four sides of the square pit at near ground level there was a beveled groove of earth, with the bevel slanting outward and downward from the edge of the pit. The surfaces of the bevel and the bottom of the pit were covered with powdered charcoal.

From near the two corners of the eastern beveling to the two first willows flanking the main entrance, the ground space was cleared of grass and smoothed even, and this space was covered with powdered charcoal.

Sage brush was laid around the inside of the sweat-lodge next to the wall.

At three spots on the east-west axis of the sweat-lodge,—on the surface of the west bevel, on the bottom of the pit at its centre, and just doorward of the east bevel on the cleared charcoaled space,—incense places, pi-shaped with the open side toward the east, were made with powdered red paint.

Near to and east of the main entrance on a line with the east-west axis of the lodge were the hearth and fire for heating the rocks. Still farther removed, about 25 feet from the main entrance and on the same axis, was the pipe mound, circular in ground plan, about 2 feet in diameter more or less conical in shape, made with the earth that had been taken out to form the sweat-lodge pit. [482] The dirt so dug out had to be carried, not in the hands, but on a choice piece of buffalo hide with the fur on. The ordinary pipe* (not the Flat Pipe), used to pray and smoke with in the sweating ritual, was placed on the west slope of this mound, with stem up

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

346 toward the east and bowl filled down toward the west. At sweating
*796 rites on certain occasions as when a man was fulfilling a vow to make a sweat-house for the Pipe or when a participant offered bits of his flesh, a buffalo skull was placed on top of the mound, but not at seasonal rites.

Close to the mound, eastward thereof, on the east-west axis, was erected the pole on which offerings were hung. The pole was a small straight tree trunk, not too big, with the limbs trimmed off but the bark left on, well imbedded upright in the ground. It was colored black all the way round by grasping it with a blackened palm, in three places,—about head high, about half way between this point and the top, and at the very top.

[361] The Pipe sweat-lodge was erected near the keeper's tent, outside the camp circle. A new one was built for each seasonal rite.

*796 The chief components of the sweat-lodge ceremony of the Flat Pipe seasonal rite were: the preparation, presentation and disposal of gifts; the invitation to the sweaters; the smudging; the prayer with and smoking of a common pipe; the sweating proper; the three series of songs. Of these components the principal one was the offering of the gifts or sacrifices. The sweat-lodge and sweating were necessary "to make the offering complete." In other words, the whole rite was essentially a sacrificial one. The offerings were given voluntarily by members of the tribe, including commonly the keeper himself. The gifts or sacrifices were offered to the Supreme Being through the inferior beings who entered into the rite and in a sense through the Flat Pipe.

The sweat-lodge rite had three main divisions with three songs sung at each: the preparation of the offerings, the hanging of them on the offerings pole, and the sweating and associated observances within the sweat-lodge.

The sweat-lodge rite began with the preparation of the offerings. If the whole seasonal rite was a three-day one, this preparation took place on the first night and day, the rite at and in the sweat-lodge on the second day, and the separate Pipe rite in the keeper's lodge on the third; if a one-day one, the preparation of the offerings took place the night before, the rite at or in the sweat-lodge early on the following morning, and rite in the keeper's lodge during the day. The whole order and content of the rites

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

793 preme Being through Bha'a, the Supreme Being is the father of the Pipe.' "

In the cases where the new keeper was elected in secret conclave and not told or asked beforehand, at night after the camp was asleep a group sneaked up to the electee's lodge, and one of the group carrying the feathered stick from the Pipe bundle entered the lodge. If the electee tried to escape, the watchers outside would grab and hold him. The electee was raided and lost everything, his lodge and horses and other belongings,—just as the man to whom the Pipe had first been given from above lost everything. Afterwards, however, the relatives and friends of the electee, anybody that could, would give a new lodge, new bedding and other lodge equipment, and horses,—as was done to the first owner and keeper.

After being grabbed, the new keeper and his wife were carried —they did not walk—to the lodge of the retiring keeper who put a cloth over their heads. They were thus in the dark and didn't know what was going on until a special song was sung and the cloth removed. We were unable to secure many details of the transfer rite. The rite included, of course, ritual and other instruction of the new keeper, and co-keeper for which he had to pay handsomely,—for instance, a horse for a ritual song taught him. For [431] these payments he had to count on his relatives and friends who, later in the course of his keepership, would receive equivalent presents in return. A central feature of the transfer rite was the new keeper's dance with the Pipe. In earlier times, in fact up to about 1905, it was only the keeper, we were informed, who could dance with the Pipe and this only at the transfer rite.

346 Apparently the lodge of the Feathered Pipe keeper was very like that of the Flat Pipe keeper, and under similar respect taboos, 353 but we were able to obtain only fragmentary specific information.

[784] At the back of the lodge, in the place of honor opposite the door, was the Pipe bed of sage brush, laid down with the tip ends pointed toward the lodge center, and covered with a white buffalo robe. When the group was camping at the same site for any length of time, in good weather the Pipe bundle was hung up during the daytime over the lodge door.

346 784 All movement within the lodge was clockwise. There could be

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

no crying by children in the lodge; if a child started to cry it was taken out at once. Dogs were not allowed in the lodge, nor could the keeper use a dog robe. Bones could not be broken in the lodge to extract marrow, as in the case of the Flat Pipe lodge and under the same penalty. War-deed contests in the Feathered Pipe lodge were prohibited and penalized, as in the Flat Pipe lodge,—with a four-day penalty. The right of asylum was recognized exactly as in the case of the Flat Pipe keeper's lodge.

The lodge occupied a place of honor in the camp circle, but whether opposite the opening of the circle or just in front of the keeper's band is controverted, as in the case of the Flat Pipe keeper's lodge (see p. 58).

The prerogatives and restrictions attaching to the keepership of the Feathered Pipe appear to have been quite similar in number and kind to those attaching to the keepership of the Flat Pipe, although we did not obtain as full details regarding them as we did for the Flat Pipe. We shall mention only those prerogatives and restrictions for which we obtained specific information. The functional relation of the various prerogatives and restrictions to the sacredness and dignity of the keepership was quite the same for both Pipes.

In accord with the dignity of their office, the keeper and co-keeper were expected to comport themselves respectably on all occasions and to conform to the strict ethical norms to be mentioned presently.

The people were in turn expected to treat them with great respect. Things asked for by the keeper had to be handed to him, not thrown, exactly as with the Flat Pipe keeper, and under the same penalty. If someone absent-mindedly stepped over the outstretched feet or legs of the keeper, the latter would keel over in a faint and the co-keeper would have to smudge him ritually to bring him to, or the offender would fall down with a "cramp." Coming Daylight once saw a woman in a crowded place step over the feet of the Feathered Pipe co-keeper. The woman "fell in a cramp." Her mother got angry and upbraided the co-keeper: "You ought to know better than to leave your feet sticking out." But her sister went over and kissed the co-keeper and begged her in a nice way to doctor the stricken woman. So the co-keeper got up and

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 ceremonies before taking up the ceremonies themselves one by one. And first of all the sweat-lodge and its ritual.

The Feathered Pipe sweat-lodge and sweating ritual came in when the Pipe itself was given by Bha'a to the first keeper.

*796 The sweat-lodge, large enough to accommodate several people, and with crowding up to ten or twelve, was constructed like the 346 Flat Pipe sweat-lodge,—with the framework of willows about an inch in diameter tied to a ridge willow, with main entrance to the east, and with slanting cleared space from pit to door. According to Garter Snake, 23 willows were used, 11 on each side, plus the ridge willow; according to Jim Shortman, 24; according to Al Chandler, 26. The interior pit was circular, with a circular cleared bevel and groove around it, and about one to one-and-a-half feet deep. The three pi-shaped incense hearths of the Flat Pipe sweat-lodge were apparently lacking. The willows forming the door-posts were painted red "about half-way down." To the east of the lodge, on the east-west axis line, were, in order, the hearth for heating the stones, the mound (made of the dirt dug out to make the pit), the buffalo skull, and the offerings pole, just as in the Flat Pipe layout.

*796 The sweating rite corresponded, so far as our data go, with the Flat Pipe sweating rite. Presumably the offerings were ritually wrapped and tied, for they were later hung on the offerings pole, but we obtained no information on the wrapping ceremony. The offerings were tied onto the offerings pole; a special song was sung for this tying. A large pipe filled with tobacco, which rested slanting on the west side of the mound, bowl down, was taken, as in the Flat Pipe sweating ceremony, by an old man chosen for the purpose. Standing by the mound and holding the Pipe, stem up, in both hands, he gave the invitations to sweat. He invited by name first the Supreme Being, calling his name four times; next and finally each of the old men who were to sweat, calling each name only once. According to Jim Shortman, the Four Holy Beings, and four Pipe keepers (the original first one and three others) were also invited, with fourfold calling of the names. After all the invitees had entered the sweat-lodge, they smoked the common pipe.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 over and sat down with the principal vower and his grandfather and all six of them smoked the grandfather's filled pipe. When they had finished smoking, two young men selected for the purpose started to actually fell the tree. As soon as the tree began to totter, the four scouts shot at it and yelled, just as was done at the killing of an enemy in real warfare.

After the tree was "shot down," it was dragged in by the young men "soldiers," with much yelling and shooting, and was deposited at the spot where the Sacrifice Dance was to be held.

Then a recess was taken and those not obliged to fast ate. The [262] chief food eaten at the Sacrifice Dance was buffalo tongues and pemmican, both already prepared, which could be eaten in a hurry, for no one knew at what moment some order to be obeyed would be announced by the crier.

After the recess the "soldiers" went out to get the other poles [593] and the brush needed for the dance lodge. Each "soldier" would choose a woman, not his own wife, but "his sister-in-law, or any other woman of whom he was not bashful" to ride double with and accompany him. The women would dress up and stand outside their lodges waiting for the men to come along and put them on their horses. The woman sat on the saddle, the man riding behind her. Some women would run away so as to avoid going out with the men, "probably," Coming Daylight stated, "because these ones were afraid of their husbands." Coming Daylight herself had never so gone, but Singer had. "Some husbands," Singer commented, "were too jealous to allow their wives to go with other men to get branches for the Sacrifice Dance lodge."

*796 The poles and brush were brought in, and a number of hoisting ●346 props were made. These props were made each of two tent poles; to one end of each pole a single short transverse connecting thong was fastened. The two divisions of "soldiers" the "talls" and the "shorts," each then split up into two subdivisions making four subdivisions in all. At the call of the crier, "Get ready," these four subdivisions began to march toward the hole, previously dug, for the center pole which lay alongside, all singing their parade song. On the way toward the spot, each of the four subdivisions had a number of the double-pole hoisting props, each prop being carried

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

vertically by two men, and the subdivisions all made four stops or halts, the last one right where center pole lay. Here they recessed a bit, waiting for the Flat Pipe. 796* 346

"The man who was going to put up the center pole," apparently the principal vower, would then take some goods as presents to the Flat Pipe keeper and ask that the Pipe be brought over for the raising of the center pole. The Flat Pipe was then brought to the spot by the co-keeper, with the ritual observances previously described (supra, p. 117), the prayer on the occasion being said by the Flat Pipe keeper, not by the vower or his grandfather or anyone else, and after the pole was up the co-keeper took the Pipe back. The bringing of the Pipe was intended, according to The Boy, to add solemnity and prestige by such participation to the Sacrifice Dance and to "sort of bless the dance and ask that good would come of it."

The center pole was forked at the top and was decorated, as described in detail on page 10, with symbols of Bha'a. At the base of the erected pole was an old bleached buffalo skull, placed facing the lodge door.

Before the center pole was raised, the principal vower's wife was taken over to the pole by his (and her) ceremonial grandfather who then "blew medicine" on it four times, the wife putting a band around it, and also the other poles of the dance lodge, with red paint.

The center pole was quickly raised, with the mechanical help of the hoisting props and apparently with the supernatural help of the Flat Pipe. Everybody cheered when the pole was finally raised upright in its hole. After it was firmly embedded, the upper ends of the rafters were placed in the center pole fork, the lower ends, seemingly, in other forked upright posts, and lashed on with rawhide. The sides of the circular dance lodge were then filled in with willows. The lodge was located near the center of the camp circle and faced south. According to Singer, "only great warriors went out to get sticks to keep the lodge lighted at night."

Clothing, dry goods and other offerings were tied on to the rafters, not on to the center pole, either before the lodge was erected or afterwards by a young man who climbed up the structure to tie 796

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 The main rites of the Crazy Dance extended over four days and four nights, and were followed by a period of "talking backward" and other "crazy" behavior by the dancers. Dancers did not fast during the dance, as did vowers during the Sacrifice Dance, but [262] ate heartily. Large quantities of food were procured beforehand, [784] and many puppies were killed and cooked to provide the delicacy, dog meat. The dancers, however, were not allowed to swim, bathe, or "touch water" during the Dance. If any dancer did so, Bha'a would get angry and there would be a big storm. On each of the four nights of the dance, the dancers slept in the Crazy Dance lodge, but after each night they went back home in the morning to paint up.

*796 The Crazy Dance lodge was erected in the center of the camp circle, not far from the chief vower's tipi and executive head- ●346 quarters. The "lodge" was an open roofless circular corral made of upright poles about 6 or 7 feet high stuck in the ground, with a wide opening to the south according to Coming Daylight, to the southeast according to The Boy and Thick. To the top of the poles were lashed tipi poles to make a railing. Over this railing were hung tipi covers, which lapped over on the ground inside the corral as a place on which to rest and sleep. The tipi covers needed—two, or three, or more, depending on the number of the vower's age-group who participated and hence on the size of the corral—were taken, without asking permission, by the dancers from enemy-friends belonging to the next older age-group of the dancers' own society, Stars or Wolves as the case might be.

*796 Inside the corral, at the place of honor immediately to the right of the opening, according to The Boy, or opposite the opening according to Coming Daylight, a little sort of wickiup was put up. Here, as the ceremony started, sat the chief vower and here was kept the ritual badger skin. The crier(s) (and council of four?) also were in the wickiup, according to The Boy and Thick. Very little of what went on inside the wickiup was known to our informants.

The participant dancers sat in the corral on either side, the "talls" on the west, the "shorts" on the east, with their respective ritual grandfathers and wives,—the dancers in front, the grand-

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the grandmother died she was buried with it. Coming Daylight and Singer had never heard in their grandmothers' time of the "cows" wearing belts with four buffalo tails attached, or being painted with a pipe symbol on the cheeks, or calling like crows when dancing.[40] The "cows" would don their good buckskin dresses for the dance, and, according to Singer, wore "for their belts a little calf robe tied around."

The "bull" wore as a headdress the shaggy skin of a buffalo head with the horns attached. Coming Daylight emphatically insisted that only one woman, the "bull," had horns on her headdress.[41]

The two attendants danced during the rite, but had no feathered or horned headdresses. Coming Daylight mentioned wearing her elk-tooth dress when functioning as a "calf," but spoke of no specific ritual costume for "calves" or for the "bull calf."

The dance lodge, a big one, was, according to The Boy, set up outside the camp circle. The men used to put it up for them. The center pole, not so big as the Sacrifice Dance one, was erected without ceremony, and was painted red by the "boss." Each dancer had her own [ceremonial?] digging-stick made of a stout cherry or Juneberry branch about 2" to 3" in diameter, with the distal end pointed and curved. These digging sticks were tied to the center pole all around, with the handle end resting on the ground and the curved end pointing outward. Both sticks and ties were painted [red?] by the "boss." Coming Daylight remarked *apropos* of this: "I was small then, but I certainly looked to see how that pole was fixed. It is a good thing I did. Most children would be too crazy to observe how things were." She had never heard of two tent-poles, two pegs and two ropes of the dance lodge being painted respectively one black and one red.[42] A fire burned in or close to the middle of the lodge.

The two (or one) men singers sat in the place of honor in the

[40] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, pp. 260-61.

[41] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, p. 260. Coming Daylight had seen the Blood Indians' Women's Dance, with the women wearing headdresses like those of the Gros Ventre women and with the "bull" sitting over on the west side.

[42] Kroeber, 1908, p. 261.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

after a certain period of probation. He, however, broke the rule and doctored before his time was up. A night or so after he had doctored a spider came out of his ears and a thunder-rock out of his mouth, and so he lost his doctoring power. 778 787

Occasionally in connection with the power quest the right would be given to the quester to paint his lodge in a particular manner.[13] Among the Gros Ventre such sacred or holy painted lodges were relatively rare and were thought of very highly. We recorded one song (No. 88), a wordless one, which belonged with Bull Lodge's sacred lodge. Bull Lodge had been "invited" to quest for power at Baldy Butte, the highest peak in the Bear Paws. The being who gave him other powers also bestowed upon him his own lodge, with instructions how to paint it and the song to sing while it was being painted. Coming Daylight's father had a sacred lodge around the bottom of which were painted the figures of men, each figure the same and each with a feather in the head. The upper part was painted red. "At the tip of the ears of the lodge were things hanging, and feathers in back. The back part had a cross (morning star) and the sun."[14] 346 787

What has been said in the preceding pages about the circumstances of Gros Ventre quest may be illustrated by the following account given by Al Chandler of that of Little Man, his adoptive father: 787

"When Little Man first went out to seek power, the old medicine man (his tutor in the matter) told him: 'I am going with you.' So when they got out in the hills, maybe a whole day's travel to this place where he wanted to go, this old man asked Little Man where he wanted to go to fast and Little Man chose a place not very far away. So they went together. This old man cut his (Little Man's) flesh, took a pinch,—(some did it 3, 6, or 9 pinches), and prayed each time he cut a bit of flesh off. He told Little Man: 'Nobody is going to come after you until your time is up. If I tell you three days, nobody is coming after you until this time is up. In the meantime use your whole heart and don't get 801 304 782

[13] There was a distinction between the sacred painted lodges and the lodges painted with war deeds. Cf. Flannery, 1953, pp. 68, 102.

[14] For illustrations of sacred painted lodges, see Plate 4.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

offer a pipe to a band chief and ask him to avenge the son's death. The chief would accept the pipe and pray to the Supreme Being for success in the revenge expedition. Then the father would erect a sweat-lodge and make offerings in connection therewith, inviting a lot of "holy" old men to sweat and likewise to pray to the Supreme Being for success in the expedition. 782 515

Al Chandler gave the following account: "A young fellow would go and tell some old medicine man that he was going to make a sweat-bath for him so that the old man would pray for him, and would ask him what he [the young man] should do, whether there was a certain special way of performing the ceremony, and how the sweat-lodge should be fixed. The medicine men had all different ways. Some medicine men would have, say, 18 willows at least for the sweat-lodge framework, or others 26, or 30 at the most, with four willows called the 'head frame' oriented toward the sunrise, or the north, or other direction. A hole about six inches deep was dug inside for the heated rocks and the surface cleared about an inch down from the hole to the door. On this cleared space, shaped more or less like a truncated triangle, some design in red paint might be drawn—such as a circle, or figure of a bird or man. A dozen different men might follow one particular set of specifications in case they had all gotten the right to do so from the same [medicine] man. 346 515 782

"The fire for heating the rocks was made about 8 to 10 feet from the door of the sweat-lodge, and the dirt dug to make the hole in the lodge was put in a nice pile about 4 to 5 feet beyond the fireplace on the same axis therewith. The offerings made by the young fellow—such as calico or feathers—were tied on a willow stick about 6 or 7 feet long. He had also to get the rocks, to no specified number. 515

"When all was ready the old fellow would tell the young man to get, say, 7 to 9 old men to come and join them. When they arrived, the rocks were all heated. The young man then gave the old man [the one he had first approached] the willow stick with the offerings tied to it. The old man then went to the dirt pile, faced in the direction in which the lodge faced, and holding the offerings on [over?] the pile prayed as loud as he could: 'God, 782

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

●346
796

A. *Double tipi for ceremony.*

[301
782]

B. *The Boy prays with ordinary pipe.*

[516
534
778]

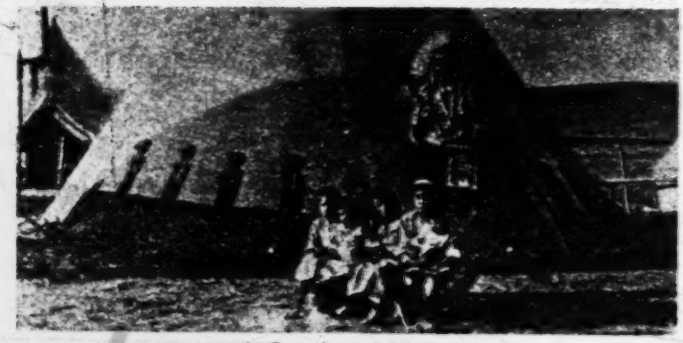
C. *The Boy smudges rattles over Flat Pipe hearth.*

PLATE 1

[p.425]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

346



A. *Sacred painted lodge.*

B. *Sacred lodge of Iron Man I.*

C. *Another painted lodge.*

PLATE 4

[p. 428]

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

of the society. The officers were free to transfer their ceremonial 575
equipment to other members whom they would select. Following 796
the typical Gros Ventre pattern of transfer of ownership, the
recipient would present as lavish gifts as he could afford to the [431]
donor while the relatives of the recipient showed their appreciation of the favor to their kinsman by giving away expensive gifts in his honor. All of this took place publicly at the dance.

Particular dances and songs were attached to each office and the owners of the ceremonial drumsticks were required to know in correct order all the numerous songs and to provide the musical [533]
accompaniment for the whole ceremony. These four drumstick owners were joined in certain of the songs by four women singers selected from among the wives of the Wolf-men. The owners of the various objects were responsible for the proper care thereof, the crow-belts and the drum receiving most respect. When not in use, the crow-belts were kept wrapped in special bundles in the [841]
lodges of their respective owners, but were hung outside when the [784]
owner's wife was in her menstrual period. Moreover, those who [833]
danced wearing the crow-belts were obliged to refrain from sexual [782]
relations for two or three days previous to the dancing and, before donning the belts, to make a smudge of sweet-grass to incense themselves and the crow-belts. The drum, too, received special attention. One informant speaks of it as having been "nicely [534]
decorated," and we know from Kroeber's description[9] that the trimming was very similar to that of the Assiniboine Grass dance drum.[10]

Procedure. The actual dancing took place in a special circular 346
dancing-place in the center of the camp circle. This "corral," as 796
it was sometimes referred to, was constructed from several lodge covers, but was open at the top and the entrance thereto was at the east. The tipi of the drum-keeper was put up nearby. Opposite the opening of the "corral" was the place of honor where [554]
sat the officials,—with the exception of the sword owners, who with their assistants were at either side of the entrance. The 000

[9] Kroeber, loc. cit., p. 238.
[10] Lowie, R. H., The Assiniboine, AMNH-AP 4, pt. 1, 1909, p. 67.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

big things, including horses. He is the one who cured me. He pulled out a little animal from himself. That was his medicine. He showed it to the people present and its tail just shook. Then he doctored me by sucking on my cheek and on the nape of my neck. He extracted from me a fingernail. It was just all green, it had been in there so long. I had not called White Weasel until the fall. . . .

"White Weasel said that it was not a spirit that had shot me but that it had been done by somebody living although he did not mention the person's name. I never knew who did it."

"There was a man," Singer said on another occasion, "who had power to cure this stomach-eating sickness. His name was Bad Bad Bull. In his lodge he had little willow back-rests with fringes along each side, and on each piece of fringe he had these little animals that cause this sickness. When anyone was in that lodge and would, for instance, be helping his wife to find something and would come across one of these little animals and would draw away frightened. Bad Bad Bull would say; 'What are you scared of? They won't do anything to you.'

"Bad Bad Bull's nephew's wife had this stomach-eating sickness. It was making her poorly and she was sick all the time. The old fellow said: 'Oh I will pity my nephew. If his wife dies and he has to go out and cry. I guess I will pity him and doctor his wife.'

"So they fixed the lodge in readiness for the doctoring. Iron Bucket, my husband, was present there for the doctoring. They all sat around, and Bad Bad Bull told them to sing and said: 'When you get through singing I will pick away all the stuff that the animal has eaten. And then I am going to suck this thing out. I want you to catch hold of my back locks of hair and hold my head up.'

"He had them heat two rocks and these rocks were still in the fire while he was doctoring. So they watched him when he was throwing that bad stuff out. When he had his mouth ready to suck, they pulled his head up, and he had that animal in his mouth. So, as they always do, they all looked at it. When Iron Bucket saw it, it was round and most of it was mouth. After they had all seen it, Bad Bad Bull had them pull the two red-hot rocks out of the fire, and he put the animal on them and burned it up. The woman

342 were sewn together with sinew. The women selected the poles for the lodge, as well as for the travois, and were responsible for [484] erecting and taking down the lodge, for the arrangement of the interior, for the making of the travois, and for the packing and moving of impedimenta.

The foundation of three poles for the lodge was tied together and then raised as a unit. The other poles were arranged one by one, starting with those of the front. The cover of buffalo hides was tied to one pole, the "backbone," which was placed at the center-back, the cover then being drawn into place and fastened securely at the front, with small wooden pins usually made of cherry-tree wood. The ordinary Gros Ventre lodge stakes were shaped like a pin with a relatively small head. One informant, [184 however, stated that this form of stake often came loose where 177] the cover became taut with the wind, and that she had found the forked type, first observed by her many years ago when visiting another tribe to the south, far more satisfactory.

342 Old lodge covers were saved and cut up to make a sort of lining at the bottom of the lodge in winter, and the snow scraped away 353 to make place for the lodge was piled up on the outside thereof for extra warmth. In summer the ground inside the lodge was covered with willows, sagebrush or rye grass. Decorated robes as windbreaks were sometimes suspended in the lodge behind the fancy backrests, which were made by the women from slender willow rods. The women gathered and peeled the rods, although the young men helped straighten them by pulling them through their teeth. A willow ring encircled the fireplace and a broom of buckbrush was always kept handy. Personal belongings were neatly disposed against the wall of the lodge and in front of these were placed the skins which served as bedding by night and as seats by day. The painted parfleshes were given prominence to lend colorful touches. Dishes, utensils, and stored food were suspended 412 from poles well off the floor.

415 Among the articles of household equipment may be mentioned knives, both of bone and of metal, kettles, horn spoons, fleshing tools, etc., and food containers of various sorts. For the latter, [237] the membrane protecting the heart of the buffalo, the paunch, the bladder, and the intestines of the buffalo, as well as those of the

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The lodges of the other people faced toward the east-southeast, from utilitarian consideration, since the prevailing and strongest winds were from the northwest in winter and west in summer. But the door of the keeper's lodge was toward the south, an orientation determined by the ritual position of the Pipe inside the lodge, namely, in the place of honor opposite the door with the stem pointing toward the rising sun. 342 346 [361]

The interior of the keeper's lodge was arranged as follows. In the center was the family hearth. About midway between this and the north segment was the square incense hearth, with the west half of black sand and the east of red. At the north, close to the wall, was the Pipe bed and place for the Pipe tripod. The bed, oriented east and west, was made of a buffalo robe over sage brush. At each end was a willow back rest, and over each rest a robe of summer-pelage (after winter coat completely shed) buffalo skin. The tripod, of three legs, was a little over five feet high. The Pipe bundle was either laid on the bed close to the wall or else hung on the tripod, always with the stem to the rising sun. The northern part of the lodge, including the incense hearth and Pipe bed and adjacent area, in all about one-third of the interior, constituted a sort of "sanctuary." 342 346 353 778

The keeper's sleeping bed, with its back rest toward the north, was a little removed from the Pipe bed, toward the west; the co-keeper's in a corresponding position toward the east. The Pipe child commonly slept on the Pipe bed, alongside of and to the south of the Pipe bundle, with his head to the east. If however the keeper or co-keeper wanted to sleep on the Pipe bed in order to dream, the Pipe child would then give place and sleep in his father's or mother's bed as the case might be. When any of the three slept on the Pipe bed, the Pipe bundle might hang on the tripod over them or else rest on the northern edge of the bed nearest the wall. In the latter case, the tripod was folded up and leaned between the Pipe bed and the co-keeper's bed. According to Thick the sleepers had to lie flat on their backs all night. According, however, to The Boy they were forbidden to do so and had instead to lie on their sides, because the turtle was closely associated with the Flat Pipe and if a turtle gets on its back it cannot right itself. 342 346 513 [784] [825]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

341 The triangular space between the foot of the Pipe bed and the
346 head of the keeper's bed served the keeper as a place to keep such
353 of his personal and ritual belongings as his peppermint, sage brush, personal smoking pipe, and so forth.

In good weather, the Pipe bundle was taken outside by the co-
778 keeper in the morning (rite to be described later) and hung up,
788 stem to east, on the outside of the keeper's lodge just above the door, the thong handle of the bundle being looped around a pin of the lodge. About sundown the bundle was brought inside again by the co-keeper to its ritual place. At night the opening of the keeper's lodge was securely closed with a piece of rawhide, shaped like the door, covered with a sort of lattice work of rawhide, and fastened from the inside.

778 The keeper's lodge, as the depository of the Flat Pipe and the dwelling of the consecrated custodians thereof, had to be treated with great respect. This respect was formalized in a number of ritual and other observances.

784 No one was permitted to step over the incense hearth, under penalty of being inflicted with fits.

When the keeper, co-keeper and Pipe child took off their moccasins for the night, these had to be deposited, not alongside the beds or under the pillows or anywhere in the "sanctuary," but near the lodge door,—the keeper's to the west of the door, the co-keeper's to the east, the Pipe child's to either the west or the east *ad libitum*. If this were not done, severe headaches would result.

Anyone entering the keeper's lodge or leaving it or passing from one part of it to another, always had to walk clockwise.

784 When anything was going on therein, with men and women both
516 present, the men had to sit on the western side, the women on the eastern. When they sat down, they could not sit with legs stretched out in front; the men squatted on their heels with knees touching the ground and legs parallel, while the women sat on their buttocks with their legs to the right side one leg under the other.

784 No one, adult or child, could throw stones or sticks at the keeper's lodge. Children were not allowed to play or fool or romp

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

793 preme Being through Bha'a, the Supreme Being is the father of the Pipe.'"

In the cases where the new keeper was elected in secret conclave and not told or asked beforehand, at night after the camp was asleep a group sneaked up to the electee's lodge, and one of the group carrying the feathered stick from the Pipe bundle entered the lodge. If the electee tried to escape, the watchers outside would grab and hold him. The electee was raided and lost everything, his lodge and horses and other belongings,—just as the man to whom the Pipe had first been given from above lost everything. Afterwards, however, the relatives and friends of the electee, anybody that could, would give a new lodge, new bedding and other lodge equipment, and horses,—as was done to the first owner and keeper.

After being grabbed, the new keeper and his wife were carried —they did not walk—to the lodge of the retiring keeper who put a cloth over their heads. They were thus in the dark and didn't know what was going on until a special song was sung and the cloth removed. We were unable to secure many details of the transfer rite. The rite included, of course, ritual and other instruction of the new keeper, and co-keeper for which he had to pay handsomely,—for instance, a horse for a ritual song taught him. For [431] these payments he had to count on his relatives and friends who, later in the course of his keepership, would receive equivalent presents in return. A central feature of the transfer rite was the new keeper's dance with the Pipe. In earlier times, in fact up to about 1905, it was only the keeper, we were informed, who could dance with the Pipe and this only at the transfer rite.

346 Apparently the lodge of the Feathered Pipe keeper was very like that of the Flat Pipe keeper, and under similar respect taboos, ●353 but we were able to obtain only fragmentary specific information.

[784] At the back of the lodge, in the place of honor opposite the door, was the Pipe bed of sage brush, laid down with the tip ends pointed toward the lodge center, and covered with a white buffalo robe. When the group was camping at the same site for any length of time, in good weather the Pipe bundle was hung up during the daytime over the lodge door.

346 784 All movement within the lodge was clockwise. There could be

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Before the rite began all things were made ready. Ordinarily the sacred incense-hearth, so important a feature of the rite, was already built. It was customarily made by the keeper immediately after his lodge was erected on arrival at a new camp site and he had to have such a hearth in his lodge at all times. By way of exception, when the seasonal rite took place at once on the arrival of the tribe at a new camp and in the rush the keeper had not gotten around to making the hearth, he would begin the preparation of the offerings by so doing. 796*

This sacred hearth was quite distinct from the keeper's ordinary lodge hearth. The latter was made without ceremony, in the center of his lodge, and without an encompassing circle of rocks. Such rock circles were made only when fires were kindled on the march, to prevent prairie fires, and on hearths built outside the lodge for boiling bones and so forth. 796* 354● 778

The sacred incense or smudge hearth was built with a special solemn rite of its own, a rite in no way connected with seasonal or other ones, in the following manner.

The keeper himself made the hearth, assisted by the co-keeper and Pipe child, or in some cases by an attendant or vow-maker. First the grass was cut on an oblong space, about the length of the Flat Pipe bed, between the ordinary family hearth in the center of the lodge and the Flat Pipe bed at the rear (north) side thereof. The keeper, co-keeper and Pipe child, if all three were to participate, chewed peppermint, spat on their hands, and rubbed their hands together as if washing them, but did not rub their arms or head. 796*

The keeper, facing south (as also his wife) and holding an axe in his right hand, lowered the axe three times, spitting at each lowering, and then chopped in the ground the outline of the oblong space, beginning at the southeast corner and proceeding clockwise. Then with a knife he cut off all the grass in this space, smoothing it but not digging out a sunken one. The co-keeper, who had previously placed a choice piece of buffalo robe, about 3′ to 4′ square from a buffalo that had completely shed its winter coat, to the east of the oblong space, then spat three times on the cut grass and removed dirt and placed it on the robe, carried the blanket of grass and dirt out clockwise, turned to the east, walked a good

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The
796 regalia were placed in front of their owners. Lay members sat around the sides.

●[354] The fire was near the center of the dancing-place and beside
252 it the essential pot containing cooked dog flesh. The meat was
262 prepared by first rolling the carcass in very hot ashes to singe off
796 the hair and until the flesh was almost black, after which the entrails were removed and the meat boiled. Incidentally, the Gros Ventres were very fond of the flesh of puppies and used it in large quantities to supplement other types of food for feasts at various gatherings, including the Grass dance. The food for the feast, of which all present at the Grass dance partook, was heaped to the east of the fire.

796 In this setting the ceremonial eating of dog flesh, which involved the preliminary dancing with crow-belts, and so on, was carried out. We shall refer hereafter to this whole performance as the dog ritual because this is the core of the Grass dance proper wherever found and, so far as the Gros Ventres are concerned, remained essentially unchanged from the earlier through the later period. We use the term "ritual" without implying that there was any religious significance attached to the performance in the minds of the Gros Ventres. Connected therewith were a few sex prescriptions the violation of which were believed to be punished by vague misfortune, but that it had any deeper meaning for the Gros Ventres there is no evidence. On the contrary, their indifference toward possible symbolism, for instance, is illustrated by their acceptance at face value of the statement as to origin and meaning by an old Sioux from Fort Peck, Black Prairie Chicken, who claimed that he personally had created the Grass Dance, saying that he had "gotten his instructions" from a rooster; that the headdress of upstanding red-dyed deer hair
796 represented the rooster's comb and that the so-called crow-belt
177 was in reality a rooster's tail. My older informants knew this old man when he visited the Reservation many years ago, and they assured me that although the validity of his story was not questioned, it had had no effect. They maintained that when the dance was transferred to them, the Assiniboine had not mentioned

l: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

nothing to show that they had long been in the Saskatchewan region. All that is certain of their previous past is their closer relationship to the Arapaho than to any other tribe; and the origin of the Arapaho is equally obscure, except that it is certain that, if they came from the north and east, it was a long time ago. Of the Gros Ventre it can only be said that, while related to the Arapaho and regarded by them as almost politically a part of themselves, they were far separated from them when first known, with them for a short time later, and again separated, and in contact and alliance with another much more distantly related Algonkin branch. Their habitat in a hundred years has been successively near the Saskatchewan, the Platte, and the Missouri. There is nothing to show that such variability of affiliation and location within the culture region of the Plains has not been characteristic of their previous history. 131 N4 [648]

The Gros Ventre call the tribes near them by the following names: Arapaho, hinan'än (in Arapaho, hinamei-na"); Cheyenne, itisön, "scars" (itisö", "a scar;" Arapaho name of the Cheyenne, hitaciina"); Cree, na"tsa", "rabbits;" Ojibwa, djinhuna"tsa", "Lower Cree;" the three Blackfoot tribes, waotä"nixtääts, "black-feet" (a Blackfoot, waotä"nixtänin, "black-foot-man;" a Piegan, tsä"t'; the Bloods, ka"winähää"); Assiniboine, na"djineihin; Sioux, na"wina"djinei, "Below-Assiniboine" (in Arapaho, na"tinei, "a Sioux"); Crow, hounen, "crow-men;" Minitari, wuxnokayän, "—lodges;" Shoshone, sösöuyänin, "snake-men;" Bannock, waotä"nixiinin, "black-men" (in Arapaho the Ute are called waotänähiçi, "black"); Flathead Salish, kaakaäänin, "flathead-man;" Nezperé, taniibäts, "pierced-nose" (Arapaho taniibääçi is the Caddo). Two tribes to the southwest or perhaps west, which have not been identified, are the wasöi"hiiyeihits, "grass-dwellers," who live in houses of grass or brush; and the na"wuxa-antibiina"ts, "fish-eaters." 101 648

The Gros Ventre were divided into groups similar to those of the Blackfeet and Sioux. The names of these bands were nicknames, and in no way totemic. As there was prohibition of marriage within the band, the name "clan" is, however, applicable to them. Descent was paternal and a man belonged to his father's band; but the prohibition of marriage extended also to his mother's clan, all the members of both the father's and mother's clan being considered relatives. Each band seems to have had a recognized head or chief. During the winter the tribe broke into smaller groups, consisting of one or perhaps more clans, which followed the buffalo, and camped chiefly in the timber. There corrals were made for the horses at night to prevent their being stolen by war-parties. When summer came, the clans joined and camped together in the large camp-circle. In this, the opening of which was toward the east, the different bands had definite 621 614 [611] [582] 221 361 621 614

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

361 places. Beginning at the eastern opening of the circle, and going south-
621 ward, westward, northward, and eastward again, the order in which the
614 clans camped was as follows: —

1. Frosen, or plumes.
2. Those-who-water-their-horses-once-a-day.
3. Tendons.
4. Those-who-do-not-give-away, or buffalo-humps.
5. Opposite (or middle) Assiniboine.
6. Ugly-ones, or tent-poles worn smooth (from travel).
7. Bloods.
8. Fighting-alone.

Other names of clans, whose location in the camp-circle was not ascertained, and some of which, perhaps, are second names of clans enumerated above, are: —

Dusty-ones.
Coffee.
Weasel-skin head-dress.
Ka'hutyi (the name of a chief).
Poor-ones.
Berry-eaters.
Torn-trousers.
Gray-ones, or ash-colored.
Breech-cloths.
Night-hawks.

Anecdotes referring to incidents that are usually ridiculous accompany these names. The Smooth-worn-tent-pole people were so called, because the ends of their tent-poles, used as travois, were worn smooth from much travelling. The Tendon clan was so called, because one of this band had said that the tendons in the neck of a buffalo were good eating. The Frozen-people were so called, because, when they had hungry visitors in winter, they gave them frozen meat. Those-who-water-their-horses-once-a-day are said to have followed this practice so that their horses would gain flesh more quickly. The Opposite-Assiniboine, like the Assiniboine, were said to have had few horses, and the Fighting-alone were very warlike people. Those-who-do-not-give-away-without-return were considered stingy, and the Ugly-people were said not to have painted their faces.

FOOD AND HUNTING.

224 Like most of the other tribes of the Plains, the Gros Ventre subsisted
[262] almost entirely on the buffalo, and their culture depended to the usual degree upon this animal. The following scattering notes were obtained regarding the hunting of buffalo and other animals.

Buffalo enclosures used to be made of trees and forked limbs set in the ground in a half or three-quarter circle below a vertical bank. Extending over the country above the bank, a long chute of two rows of stone monuments was erected, behind which sat men. Other hunters drove the buffalo into the chute. Those behind the piles of stone rose up as the buffalo

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 ors and directors through the dance. By these old men the dancers are painted in the dancing-lodge every morning during the ceremony. The dancers' wives take a more prominent part in the ceremonies among the Gros Ventre than among the Arapaho. They are painted at the same time as their husbands by his "grandfather." Every night during the ceremony there are certain observances between the "grandfathers" and the dancers' wives, who leave the camp-circle together in order that the women may receive medicine from the old men. This practice is much more developed among the Gros Ventre than among the Arapaho.

Whether there is in each dance a preparatory period in which the dancers' regalia are made and they are instructed in the ceremony by their "grandfathers," as among the Arapaho, is not clear in the case of the Gros Ventre. The dancing itself in all of the age-ceremonies goes on for four days,[1] and, in some cases, nights. On the last day the dancers leave the lodge, and [361] dance for gifts before the tents of prominent men at different places in the camp-circle. Immediately upon this the camp breaks. The dancers, with the property they have received in gifts, go in advance, and lay the presents on the ground. The camp comes up in a body and makes a rush; the property is seized and divided. The dancers form in a circle, and at the conclusion of four dances rush off to race. On their return the ceremony is ended. Only in the case of the crazy-dance do these ceremonies of the fourth day appear to take place without the camp-circle having been broken; [786] and for four days thereafter the camp remains in position, giving the participants in the ceremony opportunity for the license which is a part of this dance.

All the ceremonies, including the sun-dance and the women's dance, are made as the result of the pledge of an individual in the hope of deliverance from death or danger, either of himself or of a relative. If a member of a company of men who are of the proper age to make the crazy-dance has a relative whom he loves, and whose death from sickness is feared, he may say, "Such and such an old man (naming him) shall put up the crazy-lodge for me this summer." If the sick person dies, the dance is not held. Sometimes a person who is ill himself pledges to make the dance on his recovery. The pledger of any dance is called ye'nouhuxtj[1] (Arapaho, ya'nahût[1]). A man in danger in war, or one who has been wounded, may also pledge the dance. The time for the dances is apparently summer. For the sun-dance, spring or early summer, when the trees are full leaved, is [616] specified; and it is added that sometimes, after the pledge is given, the people have to wait all winter to make the ceremony. In the case of the crazy-dance, it is stated that two divisions of the young men of the tribe,

[1] Probably to be interpreted as three nights and three days.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

older informants at the present time belong to the bands known as the Frozens, the Tendons, and the Upper Quarters. If the entire tribe had gone on such a visit to the Arapaho, it is almost certain that some tradition of this travel would have been passed on, as it would have occurred in the lifetime of Coming Daylight's grandmother and of The Boy's father, from both of whom these informants had much reliable material. It thus seems more likely that several bands—perhaps in population amounting to as much as half the total tribe—went on the expedition together. It was customary for the Gros Ventres to split into smaller groups and for several bands to winter together. It would seem probable that one or two such smaller groups pillaged the Hudson's Bay Company post in the late 1820's, wintered together on the upper Missouri, and then traveled south to the Arapaho. 174 [361]

While part of the Gros Ventres tribe was with the Arapaho, the remainder,—roaming the strip of plains between the Blackfoot groups on the west, the Assiniboine on the east, and the Crow on the south,—managed to improve their situation somewhat. Although the whole tribe was probably reunited by 1833, when Maximilian gives us an account of his meeting with them, they were fairly prosperous in spite of the losses sustained by those who had fought at Pierre's Hole and had then been ambushed by the Crow. Maximilian states specifically that " these Indians were formerly very poor, had bad tents and could not buy firearms; they have, however, recovered of late and supplied their wants." [68] One of our informants told us that she had heard often, when she was a child, that in her grandmother's young days,—which we estimate as the early years of the 19th century—the Gros Ventres were very badly off and had so few horses that they used dog transport almost exclusively, but that the situation gradually improved, and, by the time our informant was born (ca. 1855), they again had many horses, a sign of prosperity. From Maximilian's description and from Bradley's estimate of the situation in the early 1830's, it would seem that there was no dearth of either horses or firearms among the Gros Ventres at that time. Maximilian states, however, that they showed the effect of their encounters with the Crow by a noticeable disproportion of the sexes, and that 175 648

[68] Maximilian, p. 75.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

621 The Boy, ventured the following tentative indentification, saying
114 that these may have been earlier names respectively for Same As Assiniboine, Upper Quarters, Water Horses, Night Hawks, Coffees, Frozens. A few informants had heard of Breech Cloths and Weasel Skin Headdresses as band names but didn't know which modern bands they might have been, always assuming that the number of bands had been twelve.

361 As to the exact order of the bands in the camp circle, there was
621 no real agreement. The order given by Singer and Coming Day-
114 light differs from that given by Kroeber. Furthermore, while the two old women were emphatic that the places within the camp circle were permanent—"otherwise we could not remember all this!"—some of the men informants were under the impression that the band from which a new Flat Pipe Keeper was chosen moved to the center position opposite the opening of the camp
361 circle, and that the others shifted accordingly.

621 In any case, the circle, with opening toward the rising sun, was the formation employed when the whole tribe was together. When bands were separated from the main group they might or might not camp in this way, depending somewhat on the length of time they expected to remain in one spot, and on the nature of the terrain. Sometimes, for instance, the lodges of the various families of the band were strung out along a watercourse.

According to The Boy, there was a tendency for bands which camped in proximity within the big camp circle to go off together when the tribe split up. The Upper Quarters and Frozens were often together and, along with them, the Same As Assiniboine or occasionally the Greys (proper) and Buffalo Overloaded, usually staying more or less in the vicinity of the Milk River, the center of the territory claimed by the Gros Ventres. Whereas the Tendons, followed by the Poor Greys and Bad Plenty, moved for winter quarters to the country bounded by the Big Sandy, the Marias River (at Ft. Benton), and the Bear Paws; while the Fast Travelers as a rule sought out the country south of the Missouri toward the Yellowstone River and Crow country, accompanied by perhaps the Coffees. Water Horses and Bloods were friendly
554 with each other and joined now one group and now another.

621 A band which was thus followed by two or three others had

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

take you to a camp of Gros Ventres.' 'Who are they?' she asked, 'What is their name?' The woman told her: 'A little short man called Warrior Man,' who was a brother of the returned woman through marriage. 793

"So the woman took the returned Gros Ventre woman to this camp and said: 'I have brought you a Gros Ventre woman. Come and see who it is.' As soon as they saw who it was, they were glad and took her and kissed her and gave her everything good.

"One evening a few days later Warrior Man and his wife got ready and before sunup started off for the big Gros Ventre camp. He walked while Crow Bull's wife rode horseback. It was springtime with wet snow still on the ground. The big camp was at Big Sandy, on the north side of Milk River at the place where the trees stop. They arrived there early in the morning and did not know where to go. I, Coming Daylight, saw the man and the two women approaching and went out to see who they were. The man asked: 'Where is Crow Bull's lodge?' I then saw them go to Crow Bull's lodge. All at his lodge were glad to see the returned captive and kissed her. 131 221 361

"Later when the ground got dry, the whole tribe moved to their usual place here at what is now Hays. Crow Bull made good his vow to take the Flat Pipe if his wife got back safe to him, and I witnessed the transfer, by the keeper of the time, Lame Bull. The rite took place just about a half mile north of where St. Paul's Mission now is." 131 221 361

Crow Bull kept the Pipe a long time, until his death in 1887, upon which it fell to his widow, an Assiniboine woman named Coming Day. This woman neglected the Pipe. Coming Daylight told her: "Now, this Pipe is just like your father. Why is he always left alone? He was never left alone before. Now I have a mare and this Pipe has a saddle. Put the Pipe on the saddle and take it to White Bird. He will take care of it." So they went to White Bird and talked to him first. He agreed to take it over without rite or vow. On the request of a young man, Bird Sits High, the Pipe was transferred to him. This young man died soon after and his father, Otter Robe, took it upon himself to harbor the Pipe. When Otter Robe died, sometime prior to 1908,

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The lodges of the other people faced toward the east-southeast, from utilitarian consideration, since the prevailing and strongest winds were from the northwest in winter and west in summer. But the door of the keeper's lodge was toward the south, an orientation determined by the ritual position of the Pipe inside the lodge, namely, in the place of honor opposite the door with the stem pointing toward the rising sun. 342 346 [36]

The interior of the keeper's lodge was arranged as follows. In the center was the family hearth. About midway between this and the north segment was the square incense hearth, with the west half of black sand and the east of red. At the north, close to the wall, was the Pipe bed and place for the Pipe tripod. The bed, oriented east and west, was made of a buffalo robe over sage brush. At each end was a willow back rest, and over each rest a robe of summer-pelage (after winter coat completely shed) buffalo skin. The tripod, of three legs, was a little over five feet high. The Pipe bundle was either laid on the bed close to the wall or else hung on the tripod, always with the stem to the rising sun. The northern part of the lodge, including the incense hearth and Pipe bed and adjacent area, in all about one-third of the interior, constituted a sort of "sanctuary." 342 346 353 778

The keeper's sleeping bed, with its back rest toward the north, was a little removed from the Pipe bed, toward the west; the co-keeper's in a corresponding position toward the east. The Pipe child commonly slept on the Pipe bed, alongside of and to the south of the Pipe bundle, with his head to the east. If however the keeper or co-keeper wanted to sleep on the Pipe bed in order to dream, the Pipe child would then give place and sleep in his father's or mother's bed as the case might be. When any of the three slept on the Pipe bed, the Pipe bundle might hang on the tripod over them or else rest on the northern edge of the bed nearest the wall. In the latter case, the tripod was folded up and leaned between the Pipe bed and the co-keeper's bed. According to Thick the sleepers had to lie flat on their backs all night. According, however, to The Boy they were forbidden to do so and had instead to lie on their sides, because the turtle was closely associated with the Flat Pipe and if a turtle gets on its back it cannot right itself. 342 346 513 [784] [825]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

784 fund of war exploits would be apt to give out, and the two would
517 begin talking about trifling occurrences in camp, personal reminiscences about their marriages, and so forth. Everybody had a good time at such a three-day session.

Neither the keeper nor others were permitted to tell folk-tales of the vulgar or obscene Ni:hahat type in the former's lodge. If a member of a visiting group inadvertently broke the rule, a three-day session similar to the war-deed one above was prescribed, during which he had to continue telling such tales.

778 If a murder of a fellow-tribesman had been committed in camp, and the murdered person's relatives were about to kill the murderer
696 in revenge, the latter could run to and take refuge in the keeper's lodge and was safe so long, but only so long, as he stayed there. The avengers dared not enter it to kill, but immunity ceased so soon as the murderer left the lodge.

621 There is general agreement among our informants that the keeper's lodge was pitched in a prominent place, but exactly where
361 in the camp circle is a controverted point we did not succeed in clearing up. According to one tradition, it occupied the place of honor in the circle, toward the northwest—opposite the circle's opening which was toward the southeast or the rising sun,—regardless of where the keeper's band camped in the circle. Three, however, of our oldest informants, Coming Daylight, Takes-the-Bow, and Turn-Toes, held that the keeper remained with his band, the first two of the three stating that his lodge was pitched a little in front of his band toward the center of the circle.

Prerogatives and Restrictions of Keepership

793 The office of keepership carried with it on the one hand a great many special rights, privileges, prerogatives and powers and on the other a great many restrictions, obligations, responsibilities and sacrifices. The following list is undoubtedly incomplete, as new ones were still being revealed when our field work came to an end,[8] but it probably includes most of them. They functionally accord with sacred and high dignity of the keepership, the supernatural power attached to it, the lofty ethical behavior and "as-

[8] Kroeber, 1908, p. 273, has some we did not get.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

dried and seasoned, then pulverized, and used in a liquid. It was also used mixed with other things. 278

The Pipe keepers, and co-keepers, ex-keepers and ex-co-keepers, were immune and could handle it. But if others touched the plant or powder they would be seized at once with fits which only an actual or retired keeper or co-keeper could cure by working on him and blowing some of the powder on him. Some Gros Ventres, however, such as old Deafie, did not believe that wild parsley caused fits, but many cases are reported. One man, for instance, in recent times carried some in his hands to a dance, and during the dance got a fit and it took one of the ex-co-keepers to bring him out of it. Another man used wild parsley as a medicine in doctoring. Each participant in the Crazy Lodge used it. But originally its use was confined to Pipe keepers and co-keepers (see p. 52).

If one were scratched with an arrow that had been dipped in wild parsley infusion he would suffer spasms, fits and acute agony and would not live till morning. Such a poisoned arrow was tied by each Crazy Lodge dancer to his bow, apparently as a silent threat to enforce obedience and respect by the people during the lodge rites, but was thrown away after the dance was over.* These poisoned arrows were not used at any other time than the Crazy Lodge; never for instance, in Gros Ventre wars or raids on enemies. 411 278

Seasonal Rites

The three annual seasonal rites were in the olden days the major ceremonial events in Gros Ventre life according to The Boy, Thick and older informants. No vow was necessary to hold them. They were never omitted. They had to be performed. The seasonal rites have long since been given up. They were last carried out sometime in the late 1860's or early 1870's, while The Boy's father, Lame Bull, was keeper. 796* 178

The three seasonal rites were held in the spring, fall and winter respectively. About April the various Gros Ventre bands, which 796* 221 361

*Cf. Kroeber, 1908, pp. 207-08 regarding poisoned arrow.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 had been scattered during the winter, would foregather at a designated place for the spring buffalo hunt, and when the trees were
221 in leaf and the grass up and everything growing and in blossom
361 and a certain kind of sage about 10 inches high, long enough to pluck, the spring rite was held. During the summer months the bands kept more or less together, largely engaged in hunting the buffalo and holding the Sacred Lodges. Around October occurred the larger fall hunt to get in supplies of meat, skin, fur, sinew and so forth for the winter, and, before the bands scattered, the fall rite took place. After the fall rite, the bands scattered for the winter months. The winter rite was performed about the middle of the winter season and was participated in only by the members of the band or bands which had elected to stay the winter with the Pipe and its keeper.

*796 The three rites were fundamentally the same, with some differences to be noted, but had each its own purpose. All three were dominantly theistic in the sense of being directed chiefly toward the Supreme Being. Spring time, when all nature was coming again to life, was in general Gros Ventre religious belief, the most propitious time for prayer. The spring Pipe rite was primarily a rite of hope and petition, a prayer that all things would grow well, that there would be plenty of game and of plant food, that the people would have abundance of all things they needed for living well, that they would be successful in all their worthwhile undertakings such as the hunt, that there would be no sickness, and that all would live happily. The fall rite, held after the winter supply had been killed and dried and berries had been gathered, new lodge coverings made, and perhaps new lodge poles, new bedding, clothes cleaned, etc., was primarily a rite of gladness and thanksgiving. To "make a sort of report" to the Supreme Being that they were still living, that their spring prayers to him had been answered in the way they had asked, and to give thanks to him for these good things which ultimately had come from him. The purpose of
[801] the winter rite was less clear cut. For one thing, the rite was required to round out the cycle of three, the Pipe number. Thanksgiving was one purpose, thanksgiving "and a sort of singing of praises," "a sort of adoration," because the people were at leisure, without hardship, sickness or anxiety, glad to be still alive in the

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

346 toward the east and bowl filled down toward the west. At sweating
*796 rites on certain occasions as when a man was fulfilling a vow to make a sweat-house for the Pipe or when a participant offered bits of his flesh, a buffalo skull was placed on top of the mound, but not at seasonal rites.

Close to the mound, eastward thereof, on the east-west axis, was erected the pole on which offerings were hung. The pole was a small straight tree trunk, not too big, with the limbs trimmed off but the bark left on, well imbedded upright in the ground. It was colored black all the way round by grasping it with a blackened palm, in three places,—about head high, about half way between this point and the top, and at the very top.

● [361] The Pipe sweat-lodge was erected near the keeper's tent, outside the camp circle. A new one was built for each seasonal rite.

*796 The chief components of the sweat-lodge ceremony of the Flat Pipe seasonal rite were: the preparation, presentation and disposal of gifts; the invitation to the sweaters; the smudging; the prayer with and smoking of a common pipe; the sweating proper; the three series of songs. Of these components the principal one was the offering of the gifts or sacrifices. The sweat-lodge and sweating were necessary "to make the offering complete." In other words, the whole rite was essentially a sacrificial one. The offerings were given voluntarily by members of the tribe, including commonly the keeper himself. The gifts or sacrifices were offered to the Supreme Being through the inferior beings who entered into the rite and in a sense through the Flat Pipe.

The sweat-lodge rite had three main divisions with three songs sung at each: the preparation of the offerings, the hanging of them on the offerings pole, and the sweating and associated observances within the sweat-lodge.

The sweat-lodge rite began with the preparation of the offerings. If the whole seasonal rite was a three-day one, this preparation took place on the first night and day, the rite at and in the sweat-lodge on the second day, and the separate Pipe rite in the keeper's lodge on the third; if a one-day one, the preparation of the offerings took place the night before, the rite at or in the sweat-lodge early on the following morning, and rite in the keeper's lodge during the day. The whole order and content of the rites

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

position. In depositing the bundle on its bed, she would lower it gently in three stages, spitting at each one.

When the people were staying for any length of time at a given camp site, the Flat Pipe bundle, which was always kept inside the keeper's lodge during the night time, would regularly in good weather be taken out early in the morning at breakfast time by the co-keeper, with the customary grasping and carrying ritual, and hung up, stem-end pointing east just over the door of the keeper's lodge, not on its tripod. The outside of the keeper's lodge around the door up to full reaching height, about 6 or 7 feet, was painted red. The thong handle of the bundle was looped over, the two projecting ends of a stout pin, skewered horizontally in the tent cover, on the immediate line above the door at the upper edge of the red-painted area.

The bundle would hang over the door all day until about sundown when it would be brought back into the lodge for the night. In bringing it back, the co-keeper walked out of the lodge, unhooked and grasped the bundle, turned clockwise, walked all around the lodge clockwise, entered the lodge, proceeded clockwise to the incense hearth, dipped the stem end of the bundle three times in the smudge, and deposited the bundle in the usual ritual manner, as above described, at the far north end of the Pipe bed.

The final decision as to when and whether the camp, in which the Flat Pipe chanced to be, was to be moved was made by the head man especially the band chiefs and in the olden days the tribal chief too, the keepers having perhaps taken the initiative in calling them together. They would notify the Pipe keeper. Early the next morning the co-keeper with the usual ritual observances would take the Pipe bundle from its bed and carry it and its tripod outside the lodge a little to the north thereof, set up the tripod and hang the bundle on it. The tripod would be set up with two of its legs closer together, and with the third leg stretched out farther, its upper end projecting a little beyond the junction of the three legs. On this projecting end the bundle was hung by the thong handle looped over the end. On other occasions the bundle was hung on the tripod stem-end pointing east. But on this occasion the rule was superseded by another, namely, the third leg

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

no crying by children in the lodge; if a child started to cry it was taken out at once. Dogs were not allowed in the lodge, nor could the keeper use a dog robe. Bones could not be broken in the lodge to extract marrow, as in the case of the Flat Pipe lodge and under the same penalty. War-deed contests in the Feathered Pipe lodge were prohibited and penalized, as in the Flat Pipe lodge,—with a four-day penalty. The right of asylum was recognized exactly as in the case of the Flat Pipe keeper's lodge.

The lodge occupied a place of honor in the camp circle, but whether opposite the opening of the circle or just in front of the keeper's band is controverted, as in the case of the Flat Pipe keeper's lodge (see p. 58).

The prerogatives and restrictions attaching to the keepership of the Feathered Pipe appear to have been quite similar in number and kind to those attaching to the keepership of the Flat Pipe, although we did not obtain as full details regarding them as we did for the Flat Pipe. We shall mention only those prerogatives and restrictions for which we obtained specific information. The functional relation of the various prerogatives and restrictions to the sacredness and dignity of the keepership was quite the same for both Pipes.

In accord with the dignity of their office, the keeper and co-keeper were expected to comport themselves respectably on all occasions and to conform to the strict ethical norms to be mentioned presently.

The people were in turn expected to treat them with great respect. Things asked for by the keeper had to be handed to him, not thrown, exactly as with the Flat Pipe keeper, and under the same penalty. If someone absent-mindedly stepped over the outstretched feet or legs of the keeper, the latter would keel over in a faint and the co-keeper would have to smudge him ritually to bring him to, or the offender would fall down with a "cramp." Coming Daylight once saw a woman in a crowded place step over the feet of the Feathered Pipe co-keeper. The woman "fell in a cramp." Her mother got angry and upbraided the co-keeper: "You ought to know better than to leave your feet sticking out." But her sister went over and kissed the co-keeper and begged her in a nice way to doctor the stricken woman. So the co-keeper got up and

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

789 be spoiled. Sitting High told him to summon the other old men. I could not stay in the tent with them although I was living with Sitting High at the time. Sitting High and his wife were there; so were the other old men, but not their wives. They started singing about three or four o'clock in the afternoon and kept it up all night. I woke up very early next morning and could hear them still singing. They were then just about breaking up. They had to see the ceremony through. They would sing four songs and smudge and smoke and talk. Then they would sing four more and rest between each four until they had sung 44 songs. Sure enough it cleared up the next day."

[361] A rite for stopping floods was described as follows by Jim Shortman: "One whole winter the Gros Ventres camped on the Musselshell River until spring. When the ice would go out the water would flood the valley from hill to hill, and all the camps, set up in the timber along the river for shelter, would move. My father, then Feathered Pipe keeper, did not move, and his wife said to him: "We will be flooded. What will you do?" "We will stay here," he said. "It is too much trouble to move." She told him: "We will be drowned." But he said: "No." That night he took down one of his little bags, which contained a hand-made wooden bowl. He took out the bowl, made a smudge, smudged the bowl and sang and talked to him, and after that went outside the lodge. I followed him out to see what he would do. He walked right out to the river which was rising and stopped about 8 or 10 feet from the water. He held the bowl up towards heaven, sang and talked [prayed, evidently], then lowered it first in the three stages, and at the fourth set it on the ground face down. Then he went back to his lodge. And, don't you know, the water was all around everywhere else, but did not come any closer to the spot where he put the bowl. Gosh, I was scared. I thought we would all drown. But when I got up the next morning the water was all around us, but we were all right."

Various ritual procedures were used by the Feathered Pipe keeper to avert or to stop thunderstorms. He would go out and stand, facing the oncoming storm. He would then stretch out his arms straight from the shoulder with his palms together. Then he would move his arms outward at the same time turning his

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

789 song had also to be sung, apparently to the accompaniment of the drum.

755 Putting sweet pine needles on the sick person's head, blowing wild parsley on him, and smudging him as doctoring practices have been previously described. According to Singer, if some one were so sick that his life was despaired of, the keeper would take the Feathered Pipe [the bundle, probably] and lay it on him and pray over him, and the sick person would recover, and, she added, "it cured a lot of them." Doctoring power was regularly acquired by reason of acquiring the keepership.

793 The keeper and co-keeper painted their own faces every morning after breakfast, like the men, in two bands, but broader ones
302 three or four fingers wide, one on the forehead near the hair line and the other from one jaw across the chin to the other jaw.

778 The Pipe bundle was smudged by the keeper every morning and evening with sweet pine needles. During Curly Head's keepership Cora Chandler and her children were kept busy collecting dried cow dung for the daily smudging ceremony. The keeper made it a practice to "talk" or pray often to the Pipe in his lodge. According to The Boy, the keeper was fearful lest otherwise he might make ritual mistakes, at which the Pipe would be angry. According to Al Chandler, the Pipe being jealous, the keeper "had to talk to it to let it know it was not forgotten or put away; he treated it just like a person."

788 Customary observances on the occasions of feasts or ordinary meals to guests in the keeper's lodge have been previously
778 described.

When the keeper and the people were camped for any length of time in a given place, the Feathered Pipe bundle was ordinarily taken in the morning from its place of honor opposite the entrance inside the keeper's lodge, hung up outside over the entrance, and brought back inside at eventide.

[361 When the camp was to be moved, the Feathered Pipe keeper, like the Flat Pipe keeper, had, it seems, a consultative voice in
624] the decision and perhaps even veto power at times, although ordinarily the final decision was made by the head men. The decision
778 once made, early in the morning when camp was to be broken,
484 the Feathered Pipe bundle was hung out on its tripod back of the

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 Sacrifice Dance center pole, the sacred Pipes did not enter at all
[276] into the Sacred Lodges.
[801] In all the Sacred Dances, the ritual number was four and movement was clockwise.

A sweat-lodge rite was held in connection with the Sacrifice and Crazy Dances, but we could obtain no details on it; whether also in connection with the others our informants could not say.

The Sacrifice, Drum, Kit-fox, Dog and Crazy Dances regularly lasted four nights and days; the Fly and probably the Old Men's and Old Women's just one day.

The sacred Dances were not held in the winter time when the bands were usually widely scattered, but in the period from about May or June when the bands foregathered to September after which the bands tended to scatter for the fall buffalo hunt.

[361] The lodges for the Old Men's and Old Women's Dances were very simple and were put up outside the camp circle toward the south thereof. The lodges for the other Dances were erected inside the camp circle, near the center.

Feasting daily during the four-day dances was customary, except during the Sacrifice Dance which entailed much fasting on the part of the participants.

The alternation of reverent tension and pleasurable free release that characterized the sacred Pipe rites was even more characteristic of the Sacred Dances.

Sacrifice Dance

*796 The proper name of the Gros Ventre dance commonly referred to by whites and by many English-speaking Gros Ventres as the Sun Dance is aθe:hao'wə (literally, "sacrifice lodge"—aθe:'atc "sacrifice" and -ao'wə "sacred [not common] lodge"; cf. Sifton "sacrifice," athêyach and "Sun Dance," athéihawh'). We are therefore using the term Sacrifice Dance for it. The sun does not enter at all into it. The name apparently has references to the tortures undergone around the center pole by the main participants.

115 Our chief informants on the Sacrifice Dance were The Boy and Thick, who had witnessed the rite as boys and who had learned much about it from their elders: Coming Daylight, who had wit-

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

says this to You [Supreme Being]," and at the end would say four times, "Yo-o-o-o-o-o." Then (or perhaps before this pronouncement rite) the older man smoked the pipe. The grandfather was free to recruit an assistant, usually a younger man than himself, to help him paint the vower and the vower's wife. The several functions of the grandfather,—instructing, painting, feeding, gift-making, and especially the sex test,—will be described as we go along. 796* 608

If the chief vower or any members of the groups of two to four dancers had younger brothers of, say, about 7 to 10 years of age, these latter could be brought into the dance as "Little Crazy Boys." These young boys were painted, were present all through the rite, and served as pages or messengers. If, for instance, a grandfather did not know exactly how body painting at a particular juncture should be done, the Little Crazy Boys would be sent around to get the information. They did not, however, participate in major features of the rite, such as jumping in the fire and so forth. 796*

The making of the vow to hold the Crazy Dance and the securing of the ceremonial grandfathers were done quietly and privately. The public phase of the dance began with the formal announcement.

A crier (or criers) would go around the camp advertising the dance and talking it up, with exhortations such as: "Now you young men who are going to dance, fix up your hearts, be men, be strong, be men and join the dance, go through with it. Be men, don't be weaklings. But think it all over well before you join. This red paint is rough (said figuratively to imply: your wife is involved, you will have to give her away, to expose her to a severe test.)" As previously mentioned there was apt to be a certain resistance on the part of the younger men, to this "sales pressure," and a touch of cynicism as well.

The Crazy Dance was usually held about June when the buffalo had fattened up well, or else a little later, about August. In case the people happened to be scattered at the time, runners were sent out to bid them foregather. The chief vower or the one who accepted the challenge put up his lodge in the center of the camp circle, and this served as executive headquarters of his council and age-group until and during the dance. [361]

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

INDUSTRIES AND IMPLEMENTS.

281 When a skin was brought in, it was hung on a sort of tripod, and with a chisel-like flesher of buffalo-leg bone the meat was removed. Then the hide was stretched on the ground to dry. When dried, the hair and thin coat of skin on the same side were cut off with the familiar implement of bent elk-horn, always provided, in recent times, with a metal blade. To make rawhide, nothing more was done. To make dressed skin, liver, grease, and brains, boiled and mixed in the proper proportion, were rubbed [177] or soaked into the skin and then removed with an ordinary scraper, now usually of sheet-iron or tin. Finally the skin was worked over with a rough stone or a bone. In preparing buffalo-skins for a tent, four steps were recognized: first, drying the skins; next, removing the hair; third, soaking them; and, last, scraping and working them over. Skins were softened by being drawn over a rope of buffalo-sinew.

281 When a woman had prepared enough buffalo-skins for a tent, she made
342 a feast and invited other women who were skilful at making tents. The most
476 expert of these fitted and tacked the skins together loosely, and the others sewed them fast. When a robe was to be embroidered, the woman who wanted to make it prepared food and invited other women to help her in her work. When the robe was finished, the man who was to receive it was called in, and it was given to him.

281 Caps of buffalo-skin were worn in winter. They were provided with flaps that were pulled down over the ears and held by a string fastened under the chin. Mittens of buffalo-skin were also used, tied together by a string which passed behind the neck. When the hunter was ready to shoot, he slipped his hands out of the mittens.

282 Simple flat unbraided ropes of rawhide were cut out of the skin in a long spiral. After having been cut, they were stretched between two sticks. In order to soften them, they were covered with manure, or tied to a horse that dragged them over the ground until they became pliable.

323 Pottery is declared to have been made formerly of clay mixed with
252 crushed rock. Rawhide bags, drawn together at the top with a string, were also used for cooking by means of hot rocks. The often described Plains method of cooking in holes in the ground lined with rawhide was also followed.

372 When fire was struck with flint and steel, dry mushrooms were sometimes used as tinder.

411 Bows were most frequently made of cherry-wood, but sometimes of ash. Ash was harder and more elastic, but more brittle. Sinew backing was

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

776 Ventres or the enemy. According to another, the sun on one
821 occasion delivered seven Gros Ventre men, to be killed by the
[539] Crow, into the hands of a Gros Ventre woman captured by the Crow, so the woman claimed. Apart from the incidental inclusion of the moon, bracketed with the sun, in prayers and in invitations to sweat as above stated, there was no specific independent moon cult and in no case, according to our informants, were sacrifices ever made to the moon. Nor, so far as we could discover, was there any star cult, though the stars, or some of them such as those constituting the Great Dipper, the Pleiades, the Bear were seemingly looked upon as in some sense "spirits" or personal beings. In the archaic era, before the flood and Ni:hohat, people used to go in the morning to get fire from the morning star, "the cross," just as in modern times the old people
[372] used to go in the morning to get a live coal from a neighbor's hearth instead of using matches. The morning star served also as a "clock." When people were planning to get up unusually early in the morning they would be guided by its position in the
[805] heavens. Someone in the lodge would be told: "Go out and see if the cross is up yet."

776 Among the beings involved in prayers and invited to sweat, after the Supreme Being, were the "Four Old Men," currently referred to by English-speaking Gros Ventres as the "Four Holy Old Men." According to Singer and Coming Daylight there were also, it appears, "Four Old Women," but this statement was not independently confirmed by other informants.

Very little is known about these Four Old Men. The Boy had more than once asked his father about them, but Lame Bull could only say that the Gros Ventres were taught by Ni:hohat to call on them in praying and sweating but that the people did not know who they are. They lived in the very beginning of things, but whether before or after the flood, is not quite clear. They were
776 not human beings. Gros Ventre belief does not associate them with the four winds or cardinal directions, but, vaguely, with the
801 sacred number four, the four "ridges" or stages of full human life, and the four great floods or other great catastrophes or revolutions, of which the first was the primeval flood, that are to occur,

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

793 *796 At the end of the recess after the third "crazy singing," the boisterous hilarity gave place to sober seriousness, and the solemn secret instruction and consecration of the new keeper and co-keeper were resumed in the northern section of the double lodge. About this time, too, the new Pipe child came into the lodge, and the heads and faces of the new keeper and co-keeper were uncovered. In general when, during their training, the two were learning by hearing, their heads were covered so they could concentrate their attention on what they heard; while, when learning by seeing, their heads were uncovered. The covering of the head at certain times, as on the march to the keeper's lodge immediately after the previous night's notification and raid and as during the "crazy singing," seems also to have had an "ascetic" purpose, just as the abstention from food and smoking throughout most of this first day had.

The instruction after the "crazy singing" concerned primarily the ritual of smoking the Flat Pipe. Right after the uncovering of [824] the heads of the keeper and co-keeper, the retiring keeper took peppermint leaves and gave some to the new keeper, while the retiring co-keeper did the same, giving some to the new co-keeper. Then each of the four chewed the leaves, spat three times on his or her own hands, rubbed the hands together then with the right palm rubbed his or her own left forearm up to the shoulder and with left palm the right forearm up to the shoulder, and finally with right palm from the mouth up over the face and hair to the occiput,—three rubbing or laving motions in all. This was done three times in succession.

After this peppermint laving came the fumigation or smudging rite. At the word of the retiring keeper the first of the two at- [372] tendants, to the west of the door, with two sticks as tongs took a lighted buffalo chip from the fire in the center of the lodge and placed it on the incense mound (to be described later), and went back to his place, proceeding clockwise throughout. The retiring keeper then took from the supply alongside him a pinch of dried peppermint leaves in the tips of his five right-hand fingers and crawled on his knees to the incense hearth. There, kneeling squatted on his heels, and facing east, he held his hand, finger tips

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

from which it was made, inao:, a term not used for white traders' paint. 386 [788]

The Gros Ventres used to get it out in the hills on Stiffarm Creek at Curly Head's place. It occurs as a yellow clay or dirt, as a yellow strip or streak in whitish banks or hillsides, or sometimes it was dug up from the ground. Not everyone could gather it; never men even in the old days, although in recent times Little Man used to do so; but only old women, and only certain ones at that. Coming Daylight's grandmother used to gather it and so did Coming Daylight herself who learned the method and ritual of gathering and preparing it from her grandmother. Singer's grandmother used to gather and prepare it, but she herself did not want to do it, although she had the chance to learn from her grandmother. The art and rite were "kind of handed down."

When about to gather the yellow clay, the woman would sit by the deposit, smoke, and while smoking pray that the clay she was about to gather would be abundant and good. An offering, usually of tobacco, was left at the spot. Both in gathering and in baking the clay the woman had to be alone. [782]

The baking of the clay was done at night by the woman who had gathered it. The children could not be around making a noise, and she herself had to be very quiet. She would make a sort of batter of the clay by mixing it with water, and would knead it into flat round cakes with a round hole in the center. A fire, formerly of buffalo chips, more recently of cow manure, was made, and when it died down to coals, the cakes were put at the bottom, covered up with live coals, and a fire built on top. The woman baking did not blow the fire and she shut everything up. If you blew on the fire the whole paint would disappear. The baking had to be done very skillfully to turn out just right. The baking was fraught with some danger, and some fear went with it. If the cakes baked too brown, this was a bad omen. When the cakes were baked sufficiently all the coals were removed and the cakes, blackened on the surface, were taken out and allowed to cool. The black surface was scraped away, leaving the clay now burnt red. This red clay was then pounded to fine powder on a piece of rawhide. [372] [787]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

372 The Flat (and Feathered) Pipe keepers had to keep on hand a good supply of buffalo chips, the proper ritual fuel, as also the common fuel of the people especially when traveling out on the woodless plains. The Boy once asked his father: "Why are buffalo chips used in rites? This does not seem proper." "Buffalo chips," Lame Bull replied, "are plentiful everywhere and burn longest. And they are cleanest: the ashes do not stick to your hands; wood ashes do and are hard to rub off." After the buffalo were exterminated, cattle chips were substituted, but these, as Coming Daylight stated, "have an awful odor when burned, while buffalo chips have none." She used to gather buffalo chips for her uncle when he was Flat Pipe keeper; Cora Chandler used to gather cattle chips when her uncle Curly Head was Feathered Pipe keeper. On one occasion, after the disappearance of the buffalo, Coming Daylight went south with her husband, coming back by way of Yellowstone Park where some buffalo were kept. Here she found some buffalo chips, put them in a sack, and brought them all the way back home to give to Horse Capture, then the Flat Pipe keeper. On arriving home she went to his lodge, "covered the Pipe" with a new robe, and laid the chips at the head of the Pipe.

824 The other plants [besides peppermint] that entered into the Flat Pipe and Feathered Pipe rites were sage, tobacco, larb and wild parsley.

Sage was used for the Pipe bed and for other ritual purposes. For the spring Flat Pipe rite at least, only a certain kind of sage (artemisia sp.) was used. Sage was gathered by the co-keeper or one of her children, and could be gotten all the year round, even if in winter only the sticks. According to tradition, the gathering and use of sage for medicinal purposes were in the old days confined to keepers; but in more recent times the people in general have used it, by rubbing themselves with it and smelling it for headache, and by boiling the leaves, especially the top ones, and drinking the infusion for coughs, colds and tuberculosis.

824 773 276 According to the traditional story as told by The Boy, tobacco and tobacco planting came originally to the Gros Ventres from Earthmaker who taught the first man how to plant tobacco, and its cultivation and use have come down in an unbroken line since

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

A plant called tyäñänou is used as perfume, as a wash for the hair, and as a minor medicine. Bunches of the plant were used as perfume. A tea boiled of it is thought to make the hair grow while perfuming it. Such a tea is also poured into the nostrils as a remedy for headache (specimen Museum No. 50-1920). 278 257 [302]

Niibyouäxtjin is used as perfume. The stems and leaves are chewed and applied to the body (specimen Museum No. 50-1853). [302]

Tsaa"stibin is used as perfume. It is chewed, and rubbed on the hair (specimen Museum No. 50-1792).

One ingredient of incense is the callosity from the leg of a horse above the knee. This is cut up fine, and burned with sweet-grass. It is also worn on the body on a string.

Pine-nuts or other conifer-seeds are used for pemmican (specimen Museum No. 50-1913). [562] 824

For embroidery, dark fibrous water-plants, at"hin (the Arapaho atahina"), are used (specimen Museum No. 50-1891). [386]

Quills are dyed yellow with a solution from a conifer-lichen, no doubt the widely used *Evernia vulpina*, called otsahaa" (specimen Museum No. 50-1873).

TRIBAL CEREMONIAL ORGANIZATION.

The Gros Ventre ceremonial organization is akin to that of the Arapaho with such differences as would be expected from the differences in language and the period of separation of the two tribes. The fundamental feature of this organization, the grouping of men by ages and the observance of a series of a half-dozen ceremonies in order according to age, is common to the two tribes. The ceremonies vary somewhat, and in a few cases their names or order have been changed; but among both tribes there are about six regular consecutive men's ceremonies, one or two that are preliminary or somewhat outside of this series, a single ceremony for women corresponding to those for men, and the sun-dance, which is included by the Indians in the enumeration of their grouped ceremonies, but differs from the others in not being connected with age, or with any society-like association of individuals. 561 796

Among the Gros Ventre the dancing-lodge for these ceremonies — which is erected in the centre of the camp-circle, and, like this, opens to the east — is constructed of two large tents. The lodge is open above, and appears to be oval or round in shape. The dancers, before beginning the ceremony, secure old men, who are called their "grandfathers," and are their instruct- 346 796

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

with dyed plumes or tufts of horsehair, as the Arapaho so frequently do both at the base and top of the feather. Feathers with the vanes cut from the quill, except at the very top, are also scarcely used by the Gros Ventre. Instead, they usually cut the feather squarely off across its end, or split the quill, from the end down, for the greater part of its length. Sometimes the uppermost part of the quill is entirely removed, with its attached portions of the vanes, leaving the top of the feather forked. Plume-feathers are also much less used by the Gros Ventre than by the Arapaho. In dyeing, the Gros Ventre generally used cruder colors; a blue-violet, a pink-red, a light-bluish green, and yellow, all of them aniline colors, being the most common. The Arapaho use true red and green more frequently, and in most cases employ the dyes more lightly, thus obtaining endurable or delicate effects where the Gros Ventre are garish. 778 237 171 [386]

The Gros Ventre methods of feather-treatment, both the cutting-off and the splitting of the end of the feather, go back, at least in part, to their older tribal ceremonies. Both these processes are found employed on the dog-dance regalia described.

As regards other differences, the Gros Ventre probably employ more weasel-skin in ornaments than the Arapaho, though far less than their neighbors the Blackfeet. They use cloth (both cotton and woollen goods), red, green, or blue, without reluctance; whereas the Arapaho have clung very tenaciously to skin in all ceremonial objects. Skin thongs and sinew for binding are, however, very rarely replaced by strings and thread, even with the Gros Ventre.

The few objects obtained belonging to the ghost-dance movement are the following. 668 778

Fig. 41 shows an imitation of a netted playing-wheel. The piece is about two inches in diameter. The stitch of the meshes seems to be correct, though there are fewer meshes than in the full-sized wheels. The "crow," the centre mesh, is painted red; the rest of the thong, yellow. To the centre mesh are attached four magpie-feathers cut off across. This object was worn tied to the hair on the side of the head, or hanging from the little finger when the people joined hands to dance. Several very similar objects, lacking the feathers, are attached to the girl's painted dress shown in "Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History" (Vol. XVIII, Plate LXXV). [301]

A head-dress consisting of a hoop of about the same size, quill-wound and bisected by two quill-wound strings, and of three long, blue-and-white quill-wound pendant thongs with plume-feathers at the ends, was collected by Dr. Clark Wissler. It is not known whether it belongs to the war-dance or the ghost-dance: its general similarity to certain Arapaho head-dresses [292]

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Feathers, especially eagle feathers, were highly prized, and red 292
paint, prepared from ochre, as well as other paints obtained through 237
the trader, played their part in bodily decoration. 386

The younger men thought a great deal of their appearance. One 282
of the things they made for themselves was fancy painted sunshade- 751
hats of rawhide. The designs painted thereon had a yellow back- 531
ground against which various other colors stood out. Coming Daylight remarked: "These sunshades looked so fine that the other tribes copied them, just like the whites get their styles from Paris." Long thick hair was the ideal both for men and for 302
women. The tail of the porcupine made an admirable comb. A [237]
number of perfumes were used by the young men. The castor of the beaver, for instance, was put in the paint bag so that the material for daily painting would be sweet smelling. Again, young men crushed "Piegan berries," chewed them, and rubbed them on hair, horses, and bedding, as perfume.

Incidentally, according to Coming Daylight, in order to clean 296
their buckskin clothing, the Gros Ventres would wear it into the water, getting it completely wet, and then rub it thoroughly with a certain kind of white clay.[14] She said that the tribe was spoken of by other tribes as always having such nice white clothes, and to this habit of rubbing them with clay she attributes the name by [101]
which the Gros Ventres call themselves, *a'aninin*, "white clay people."

Ear-rings, worn both by men and women, were made from 301
imported abalone shell, which they cut up and shaped; they also [439]
used a certain type of imported white shell. Many other kinds of necklaces, armlets, and so on were apparently used, but on these we failed to get details.

Household and Transportation

The lodges of the Gros Ventres were made from buffalo hides, 342
the number used in each depending on the size of the lodge. They

[14] This custom is mentioned in the sources of the early 19th century. Cf. Harmon, p. 277; Henry, v. 2, p. 734. The latter adds, as a further distinguishing characteristic, that when the Gros Ventres use red "it is always of a light color, inclining to pale vermillion. The dark red or Spanish [822]
brown, so much in vogue among the other Meadow tribes, does not suit their taste."

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13
Blackfoot NF6

G 533 singers: Tom Bad Road, Charlie Arms, Mrs. Katie Matt Croft, and Mrs. Albert Perry. Apropos of the last two, it may be added that women frequently sang and sing with the men, and the latter "like it when the women join in because this makes the singing colorful and nice."[3]

G 386 The Gros Ventres used many kinds of paint; some of Indian, some of white man origin; some in secular, some only in ritual uses. Powdered paints of different colors were gotten from traders and were used to paint parfleches and, by the men, alone, never G [439] by the women, to paint their bodies. A yellow paint was also gotten from the Cheyenne or from Cheyenne territory. On one occasion Coming Daylight brought a lot of this yellow paint which she had gathered there and gave enough of it to a Gros Ventre man to paint his big lodge with it. These paints were not sacred. A black paint, obtained from the Standing Rock region, was used in making fine lines on parfleches. Only the old women who made and painted the parfleches were the ones that gathered it, but it was not so sacred as the red paint used in face painting.

G 788 386 [778] This sacred red face paint was in a class by itself, and was used in the Flat and Feathered Pipe rites, by the "grandfathers" in painting the wives during the Sacred Lodge rites, and apparently by the women in everyday painting of their own and the children's faces.[4] This special red paint was called, as also the yellow clay

---

[3] About 1900 The Boy went along with the Gros Ventres on a 4th of July visit to the Piegan at Browning. All four groups, the Piegan, Blood, Blackfeet proper, and northern Piegan, were gathered there. In all the four there was only one man, a famous singer, who knew all the ceremonial dance B songs, although some of the other Indians knew some of them, and he was [527 533] imported by the Browning Piegan for the reason. The Boy heard him sing. The man did not have a nice clear voice, but he lived up to his reputation, for he knew the songs and their order for all the many rites and was kept busy all the time. And he cashed in handsomely with horses, blankets and money. He was able to make a living from his singing. The Boy learned some of the songs this man sang, and he sang one of them for us, that had the words: "You who are the ruler of all sacred (powerful) things having to do with all life, give me all of that so that I may use it all my life." The Blackfeet, The Boy added, think more of the Sun than do the Gros Ventres: it is their deity.

[4] See Flannery, 1953, pp. 144-45.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

from which it was made, inao:, a term not used for white traders' paint. 386 [788]

The Gros Ventres used to get it out in the hills on Stiffarm Creek at Curly Head's place. It occurs as a yellow clay or dirt, as a yellow strip or streak in whitish banks or hillsides, or sometimes it was dug up from the ground. Not everyone could gather it; never men even in the old days, although in recent times Little Man used to do so; but only old women, and only certain ones at that. Coming Daylight's grandmother used to gather it and so did Coming Daylight herself who learned the method and ritual of gathering and preparing it from her grandmother. Singer's grandmother used to gather and prepare it, but she herself did not want to do it, although she had the chance to learn from her grandmother. The art and rite were "kind of handed down."

When about to gather the yellow clay, the woman would sit by the deposit, smoke, and while smoking pray that the clay she was about to gather would be abundant and good. An offering, usually of tobacco, was left at the spot. Both in gathering and in baking the clay the woman had to be alone. [782]

The baking of the clay was done at night by the woman who had gathered it. The children could not be around making a noise, and she herself had to be very quiet. She would make a sort of batter of the clay by mixing it with water, and would knead it into flat round cakes with a round hole in the center. A fire, formerly of buffalo chips, more recently of cow manure, was made, and when it died down to coals, the cakes were put at the bottom, covered up with live coals, and a fire built on top. The woman baking did not blow the fire and she shut everything up. If you blew on the fire the whole paint would disappear. The baking had to be done very skillfully to turn out just right. The baking was fraught with some danger, and some fear went with it. If the cakes baked too brown, this was a bad omen. When the cakes were baked sufficiently all the coals were removed and the cakes, blackened on the surface, were taken out and allowed to cool. The black surface was scraped away, leaving the clay now burnt red. This red clay was then pounded to fine powder on a piece of rawhide. [372] [787]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

were quite the same in both cases. The decision as to length was apparently optional with the keeper, and depended on his ability and willingness to cover the heavy costs of providing food and other necessaries. We shall describe the one-night one-day rite. 796*

The day before the sweating, the keeper would direct his assistants,—one of his brothers or grown sons or friends,—to get the 31 willows, the pole and other raw material for the sweat-lodge, and the sticks to tie the offerings, and would have his wives gather the required wood and uniform stones for the heating, pulverize charcoal, and tidy up the Pipe lodge.

After sundown the keeper had his wives take their children away from his lodge. All the people would know what was to take place in the keeper's lodge that evening and would keep quiet. Then, when in the keeper's judgment, all was quiet in camp and practically everyone had retired for the night, the keeper and a chosen assistant began preparing the offerings in the former's lodge, the Pipe lodge.

The keeper and his assistant began by laving themselves three times with chewed peppermint. Then the keeper filled his common pipe with tobacco, sang thrice the solemn smudge or incense song (No. 81) and dropped peppermint leaves on the sacred hearth, smudged himself (the assistant doing the same), smudged the common pipe, and prayed with it,—all with the same rites as at the Transfer Ceremony (pp. 44-54). Then after a good smoke with the common pipe, the two took a little rest. The incense song, like all others in the sweat-lodge rite, was sung without rattle or other accompaniment. [533]

After this, a fresh live buffalo chip was put on the sacred hearth, another peppermint smudge was made with the triple east, south and west orientation, and all the offerings were smudged by him and laid down. Then he sang another song (No. 79?) three times and started the actual tying of the offerings.

While the keeper was sorting out the offerings and selecting the one he considered the greatest and most valuable, the assistant blackened the sticks to which they were to be tied. This blackening was done by taking a bit of tallow in the palm of the hand, putting charcoal on it, rubbing the palms together, and then rubbing the palms on the stick. [386]

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

To cross a deep river such as the Missouri was quite an undertaking. When they reached the bank, they would spread out in family groups, while the men and women worked together to convert the lodges into round boats. Coming Daylight gave the following description. "The lodge cover was folded in half lengthwise over a rope of sufficient length that the ends protruded somewhat. Mud was then smeared as a layer between the two halves of the cover and on the outside of that half which would ultimately be in the water. The next step was to take the loose edges together, to form the rim of the boat by bunching up a considerable bit of the material and tying securely; leaving a free space, bunching up another bit of the material, leaving another free space, and repeating this operation at intervals, shaping the receptacle to the proper diameter by running a rope taut from 'tuft' to 'tuft'; then they packed in very carefully as much as the round boat would safely hold, and finally the portion of the rim which was formed by the fold—as distinct from the now 'tufted' free edges—was gathered into place by manipulating the ends of the rope which had been placed originally in the fold, the rope being now tied securely. A lead rope was attached to one 'tuft' at each side of the gathered portion of the rim. Two young men on horseback then dragged the boat into the water and took it across the river, dragging it safely up on the opposite bank." [16] 484 501 396

The boat was watertight and safe to transport any of their belongings, and even children or disabled adults. When the water transporting was finished the mud was washed off and the lodge cover spread on the ground to dry. This didn't take long and the lodge cover was soon as good as new. 484 501

The lodge poles had to be transported separately from the cover. The poles were cut when needed, and a hole was burned about four inches from the top of each. When the lodge was up, the free ends of the short strings of buckskin, run through these holes, fluttered in the breeze, making a fine decoration. The more practical purpose of the holes, however, was to allow a number of poles to be strung together for moving. For water transport not more 484 342 484 492

[16] Maximilian, who met the Gros Ventres on the Missouri in 1833, mentions, p. 73, their round boats made of buffalo skin, filled with articles for barter, "drawn by one swimmer and pushed by another."

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

224 would share at least the meat, if not the hides, with the less for-
476 tunate, which latter would contribute by helping skin and butcher.
[431] Butchering was quite an art and was considered the man's work, although occasionally women accompanied the hunting party if there were a shortage of men, as was liable to be the case especially in winter. Should the party have crossed a river to hunt, the meat was prepared for transportation on a raft by being cut into large chunks, and each two chunks skewered and joined by a thong of sufficient length to hang on the poles forming the raft. The raft was built by crossing two long poles at one end, the other ends [386] free and forming an angle of about thirty degrees. Three or four shorter poles were placed crosswise and lashed firmly in place with rawhide. The paunch of the buffalo, after being washed out, was used as a container for the many leftover bits of meat and was tied to the middle of the lower rung of the raft. A whole beef could thus be loaded on such a raft and towed across by one horse-man. When, as was more usually the case, the meat was to be [492] packed back to camp by horses, the butchering was done differently but in such a way that a whole buffalo could be packed on a single [251] horse.[2] Sometimes in winter when a small party went out and they could not pack all the meat back in one trip, the remainder was buried in the snow and called for the following day.

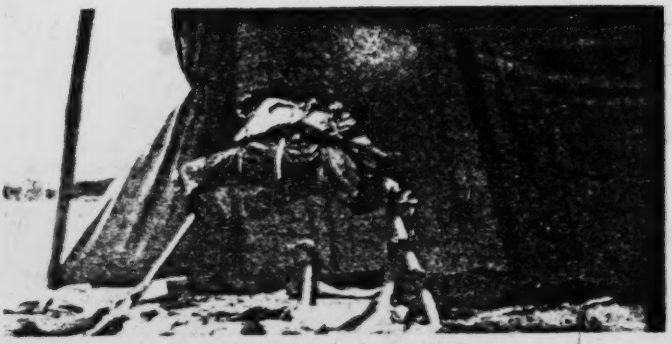
462 Once the proceeds of the hunt were turned over to the house-
281 holds of the individual hunters, it was the woman's task to cook the food for immediate consumption and to prepare the surplus for storage. Her most arduous and time-consuming task was the dressing of skins and the manufacture of these into finished articles of clothing, containers, lodge-covers, and so on. It was stated that skins in one stage of preparation or another were nearly always at hand.[3] "They didn't do things in a haphazard way because there was a certain time to do this and a certain time to do that." From the hides of buffalo killed during the spring and early summer, when the hair was not thick, they made the parfleshes and bags, soles for moccasins, rawhide ropes, and lodge-covers. In the fall, when the hide was furry, robes were made.

The older women informants described how, when they were

[2] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, p. 149.

[3] For some details on skin dressing, see Kroeber, 1908, p. 150.

796
778
[401]



A. *Flat Pipe bundle on tripod.*

B. *Setting at opening of Feathered Pipe ceremonial.*

C. *Drum hung on tripod.*

PLATE 2

[p. 426]

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

INDUSTRIES AND IMPLEMENTS.

281 When a skin was brought in, it was hung on a sort of tripod, and with a chisel-like flesher of buffalo-leg bone the meat was removed. Then the hide was stretched on the ground to dry. When dried, the hair and thin coat of skin on the same side were cut off with the familiar implement of bent elk-horn, always provided, in recent times, with a metal blade. To make rawhide, nothing more was done. To make dressed skin, liver, grease, and brains, boiled and mixed in the proper proportion, were rubbed [177] or soaked into the skin and then removed with an ordinary scraper, now usually of sheet-iron or tin. Finally the skin was worked over with a rough stone or a bone. In preparing buffalo-skins for a tent, four steps were recognized: first, drying the skins; next, removing the hair; third, soaking them; and, last, scraping and working them over. Skins were softened by being drawn over a rope of buffalo-sinew.

281 342 476 When a woman had prepared enough buffalo-skins for a tent, she made a feast and invited other women who were skilful at making tents. The most expert of these fitted and tacked the skins together loosely, and the others sewed them fast. When a robe was to be embroidered, the woman who wanted to make it prepared food and invited other women to help her in her work. When the robe was finished, the man who was to receive it was called in, and it was given to him.

281 Caps of buffalo-skin were worn in winter. They were provided with flaps that were pulled down over the ears and held by a string fastened under the chin. Mittens of buffalo-skin were also used, tied together by a string which passed behind the neck. When the hunter was ready to shoot, he slipped his hands out of the mittens.

282 Simple flat unbraided ropes of rawhide were cut out of the skin in a long spiral. After having been cut, they were stretched between two sticks. In order to soften them, they were covered with manure, or tied to a horse that dragged them over the ground until they became pliable.

323 252 Pottery is declared to have been made formerly of clay mixed with crushed rock. Rawhide bags, drawn together at the top with a string, were also used for cooking by means of hot rocks. The often described Plains method of cooking in holes in the ground lined with rawhide was also followed.

372 When fire was struck with flint and steel, dry mushrooms were sometimes used as tinder.

411 Bows were most frequently made of cherry-wood, but sometimes of ash. Ash was harder and more elastic, but more brittle. Sinew backing was

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

sometimes put on the bow with glue made from boiled skin from the head of a buffalo. Sometimes the bow was without sinew backing and sometimes ornamented by being covered on the back with snake-skin. Bows are said to have been held either horizontally or vertically, according to individual habit. Arrows for war and hunting are said to have been alike. 411

Shields were made of the thickest part of buffalo-bull skin, which was laid into a hole in the ground and made hard by being scorched with hot rocks placed upon it. It was then provided with a cover of white buckskin fringed with feathers. A man who carried a shield in war sometimes had no other weapon. 714

It is declared that no tobacco was raised, and that none growing wild was gathered, but that it was obtained from other tribes and from the whites. This is contrary to the practice of the equally non-agricultural Blackfoot, who planted tobacco; but it would seem to accord with the lack of any information obtained from the Arapaho as to tobacco-raising. 171 249 [439]

DECORATIVE ART.

The present day decorative art of the Gros Ventre is not nearly as strongly developed as that of the Arapaho. There is much less bead-work made, and this hardly ever equals the better work of the Arapaho either in technical or artistic excellence. Quill-embroidery is also found less frequently than among the Arapaho. How far this greater poverty and inferiority of Gros Ventre decorative art are matters of some standing in time is not certain; but it seems probable that there was a difference between the two tribes in this respect, even when they first came into contact with the whites. 531 171

It is in accord with this difference that inquiry as to the symbolic or conventional significance of the decorative designs used by the Gros Ventre has been practically without result. While the failure of the Gros Ventre to render such interpretations is due perhaps in large measure to change of mode of life under the influence of civilization, yet it seems that in this respect too there must have been a temperamental difference between the Arapaho and Gros Ventre, even in earlier times; for the Arapaho preserve at least distinguished wrecks of their symbolism, ceremonies, and religious life, while among the Gros Ventre, who are in much less intimate contact with the Americans, these things have vanished, leaving often scarcely a trace, and rarely more than a memory.

Partly on account of comparative scarcity of material, and also by reason of greater artistic poverty, the decoration of the Gros Ventre does not present as many typical characteristics as that of the Arapaho, the Blackfeet, the

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

526 Fig. 25 shows one side of a small ball painted yellow, on which is a rude embroidery in red, yellow, and green quills, representing a bird. On the 532 opposite side is a red quilled cross. The bird-embroidery recalls the quill-ornamentation of an Arapaho ghost-dance drumstick and hand implement, both of them with stuffed heads of painted skin; also the painting of a crow on an Arapaho ghost-dance ball.[1]

526

Fig. 25 (50-1731). Embroidered and Painted Ball. Diameter, 7 cm.

A game of throwing willow sticks on the ice, to see who could slide them farthest, was played by women. These sticks were sometimes tipped with buffalo-calves' horns. Young men, as well as women, sometimes threw horn-pointed sticks on the ice. It is said that women used long sticks, young men short sticks.

Children slid on the ice at a place they had made smooth. A boy and then a girl would slide alternately. When the whole party had slid one way, they would return, sliding in the opposite direction.

A toy made to slide on the ice consists of a bone to which two feathered sticks are attached at a diverging angle. It is called "tataxtsitcebya^{n}." The object is to bounce or slide the implement over the ice as far as possible. This type of object is found among a number of Plains tribes.

Fig. 26 (50-1788). Bull-roarer. Length, 56 cm.

493 Boys' sleds for coasting on hillsides were made of several buffalo-ribs held together at each end by a long 526 thong winding in and out around the two halves of a 857 split stick. A buffalo-tail was tied behind. These sleds were called "sö^{n}w^{u}haana^{n}." When a man presented such a sled to another man's boy, he received presents from the boy's parents. In early summer, when the grass was green, toboggans of rawhide were used on the hillsides. The front was held up and bent over, and the bottom soon became very smooth.

224 Slings were used by boys for killing birds and small animals. The entire 411 sling was made of skin. The thongs were passed through holes near the 857

[1] See Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part IV, p. 395, Fig. 151.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

224 411 857

ends of the main portion of the sling, and then looped on themselves through a slit near one end.

The bull-roarer and buzzer were both well known to the Gros Ventre, but seem to be only children's toys. They were both called nakaa^{n}ta^{n} ("making cold," a name given also to the thermometer), probably from the widespread Indian idea that the bull-roarer breeds wind. The buzzer was made of a foot-bone of a buffalo, with a sinew string on each side, by which it was twirled, and then drawn so as to hum. The Arapaho type of buzzer is the same. The Gros Ventre bull-roarer seems to differ from the Arapaho form. Fig. 26 shows one of two very similar models, both of wood. The small, well-marked head, the long taper and point, and the numerous small notches, mark a distinct form. The sinew string is of about the length of the stick handle.

534 857 524 [821]

WAR.

Men generally went to war on foot, carrying food and moccasins on their backs. While on the trip they did not boil meat, but roasted it. Scouts, called "wolves," were sent out ahead. When these returned, running in a zigzag course, and shouting, it was a sign that they had seen something. If they had seen lodges, they barked like wolves. While they came, the women in the party stood in a row and sang, having made a pile of buffalo-chips. The "wolves" stopped a short distance away, and the leader of the party went to them. They came with him back to the pile of buffalo-chips, where he stopped, and, facing the party, recounted coups. After this, one of the scouts came before them and reported what he had seen. Upon this, all rushed at the pile of buffalo-chips, and kicked them about. If the enemy were near, they would now take off their heavier clothing, such as their robes, and dress and paint for war.

726 [252]

On returning to their camp victorious, the party approached stealthily, and made a charge upon it, often shooting; and sometimes the people in the tents jumped up out of their sleep in the early morning, thinking they had been attacked. The man who had killed an enemy, the one who had struck him first (whether dead or alive), and the one who had taken his gun, were held in about the same esteem. After the return to camp, a dance was made. Drums were beaten; and the women, who were standing in a curved row, danced in a circle toward the men, who stood in a row, and back again. The women carried the new scalps on sticks. If an enemy were killed near the home camp, his feet and hands might be cut off and carried on sticks, like the scalps. During this dance the man who first

727 [554] [554]

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 from this part of the robe. At the end of each of these, a bunch of owl-feathers, or rather a piece of owl-skin, was attached. The dancers carried bows, to each end of which seven crow-feathers were tied. Down was [411] fastened to the bowstring at several places. At the handle of the bow a strip of bear-skin, owl-feathers, and some sage were fastened with a buck-skin thong. Four arrows accompanied each bow. One had a metal point, which subsequently was made more effective by medicine. The three other arrows were blunt, or had wooden points that had been chewed soft so as to be harmless.

The pledger, and three other men called "brothers" (hinähäbyiitou), who sat apart from the other dancers in the lodge and acted somewhat differently on certain occasions, had bows that were unornamented, except for the down on the string. These four men wore their robes turned so that the hair was outside, whereas the other dancers wore the dressed side out.

[302] All the dancers were painted entirely red. Their hair was daubed with white paint. They stopped the left ear with a mushroom, such as was used [824] for tinder, and put paint (apparently white) over the ear and the entire left side of the face.

Four young men who would be good workers were selected to be the assistants or servants (atsaan) of this company. They brought wood and water, and performed other services.

[346] The lodge for this dance is described as having been made of travois or tent poles about which tent-skins were drawn. It was open to the east. There was a fire about in the centre. Facing the opening of the lodge was a small partial enclosure or screen constructed on dog-travois. In this were the pledger and his three companions, the "brothers." The dancers are said to have occupied the northern half of the wall in the dancing-lodge; the "grandfathers," behind whom sat the dancers' wives, the southern half. As among the Arapaho, the dancers were divided into two sections; the tall men toward the rear and the short men toward the front, of the lodge. These two divisions competed against each other in the races to follow. The dancers' bows were stood up in the ground in a row just beyond the fire.

During the four days of the dance, the dancers, every morning before sunrise, went to their "grandfathers" to be painted. Apparently they went to their "grandfathers'" tents, and not to the dancing-lodge, for this [302] purpose. The dancers' wives went with them. They were naked, and [824] were painted too. No one but the "grandfather" looked at them. Before 788 being painted, the dancers made incense of sage-leaves on burning charcoal. They also rubbed their bodies with fragrant fir or balsam leaves

Crushed and mixed with fat.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the old man who had directed the ceremony stood by him. Until this time, the dancers' bows, which were to play so prominent a part in the dance of the next four days, had been unstrung. Each of the dancers carried a pair of moccasins in his belt, or perhaps some other property. The pledger now came up to have his bow stretched. The old man in charge of the dance, receiving the bow from him, rested it on the back of the crouching old man. Four times he bent it, and the fourth time slipped the string into its notch. Then he untied the three arrows from the bow and gave them to the young man, who put his moccasins or other gift under the crouchcr's robe. Another and another dancer came up with his bow, until all their bows had been strung on the back of the old man, and his robe swelled out from the accumulating gifts. 796 431

While the bows were being strung, the people took down the dancing-lodge, which, by the time of the return of the dancers to the centre of the camp-circle, was completely gone. The dancers now stood in a circle while the old man in charge of the dance, or, according to another account, two of the "grandfathers," sang for them. The long stick with rattling hoofs was shaken, and the young men danced for four songs. At the end of each song, they aimed an arrow at the sky, making a motion of shooting, and crying "Yaa!" At the end of the fourth song, all shot as high up as they could. As the arrows fell back they did not try to avoid them, and, it is said, were never hit. By this time the people had watered their horses and done whatever outdoor work was necessary, and retired to their tents, for, immediately after shooting into the air, the dancers rushed in all directions; and from this moment they had full liberty about the camp, except indoors, for four days. Any one seen outside of a tent was shot with the soft blunt arrows. He was pursued amid shots and blowing of whistles. If a man was caught, he was made to sit down, and all the dancers, seeing what was happening, gathered. If he rode, he was pursued on horseback until he was overtaken, whereupon he would say, "Do not wait: I will not give you a dance," meaning "Wait: I will give you a dance." Then they stood about him, and he sang and they danced. At the end of his song, every one shouted "Yaa!" and kicked him until he was knocked over. Perhaps he would say, "Kick me hard." Then they would barely touch him. Sometimes he said, "Now you must kill me." If, however, he said, "Do not hurt me," he would be hurt severely. Scarcely any one went out during these four days, except, of course, the dancers' "grandfathers," who were exempt from annoyance. 796 [786]

The pointed arrow tied to each bow, and ordinarily not loosened, was prayed over for each young man by his "grandfather;" and a piece of root esteemed as exceedingly powerful, and called tjitjäätsä" (Arapaho, tee- 411 796

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

411 tcäätcei), was attached to the shaft just behind the point. This root is the
796 well-known poisonous wild parsnip. The arrow-point seems to have been painted blue. Even a slight scratch with this arrow was, on account of the power of the medicine, supposed to cause fits and death. The theory was, that if any one became angry under the unbridled annoyances of the crazy-dancers, and attempted to resist, he would be shot with this arrow. It is, of course, extremely unlikely that this ever actually occurred, or, if it did, the offender was, as among the Arapaho, no doubt immediately cured by the dancers from his imaginary convulsions or paralysis. If buffalo were driven among the tents of the camp-

[243]

Fig. 34.

Fig. 35.

Fig. 34 (50-1884 b). Crazy-dance Regalia. Length, 29 cm.
Fig. 35 (50-1884 c). Crazy-dance Regalia. Length, 23 cm.

circle, they were shot with these arrows, and are believed to have been killed, even if only very slightly wounded. Dogs were also killed in this way.

796 After four days of this playing, the ceremony ended. At its conclusion
431 the bows were given away to boys who were relatives of the dancers; but the other regalia were kept, as the dance was not infrequently repeated.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 for the ends of the streamers of this robe have been preserved in a few sets
293 of these regalia. The head-band, leglets, anklets, and feather and fur attachments of the bow, also exist in two or more sets in the Museum. They agree entirely, so that only the set shown in Figs. 34, 35, 36, and 37, need be described. This set lacks only the whistle and whistle necklace, which have been supplied from another set (see Plate XII).

[411] The bow (see Plate XII) is three feet long, an inch wide, nearly rectangular in cross-section, unbacked, and slightly reddened. At each end is tied a piece of skin slit into seven fringes, to the end of each of which is wrapped a crow-wing feather. At the middle of the bow is tied a strip of bear-skin a foot long and an inch or less wide. With this are six owl-feathers, — all to be held to the bow, it will be remembered, together with some sage, by a thong. The pieces of owl-skin for the streamers on the robe (Fig. 34) need no comment. The anklets of badger-skin are (Fig. 35) a foot long, an inch or more wide, tied together by two thongs, and near one end have four small hoofs attached. The head, leg, and neck bands differ from one another only in length and in attachments. They consist of a strip of skin a quarter of an inch wide, completely wrapped with yellow porcupine-quills. In four places are areas extending about half an inch, that are covered with dark-brown fibres. Attached to the head-band (Fig. 36) is part of a small owl-skin, including one of the mandibles. The whistle on the neck-band (Plate XII) is made of the wing-bone of an eagle or similar bird, and appears to be unornamented. It has been broken. At one end of the leg-bands (Fig. 37) are four small crow-feathers, attached by red-painted thongs.

The Kit-Fox Dance.

796 The kit-fox dance, the next in order after the crazy-dance, was called nouha"wu; and the dancers, nouhunen ("kit-fox men"). In its general course this ceremony was exactly analogous to the first part of the crazy-dance. For four nights, the dancers' wives went out with their "grandfathers" to receive medicine, and for four days, the dancers themselves danced in the lodge erected in the centre of the camp-circle. On the fourth day of the ceremony, or "after four days," as the Indians say, the dancers went to the tent of a prominent chief and danced at his door, which was
[431] equivalent to asking him for gifts. The chief would give them horses and other property. Three other chiefs were accorded the same distinction. The camp thereupon broke, and the dancers, going ahead, put the property which they had received down on the ground in a row. The camp coming up, the brave men of the tribe made a charge on these things, as if they were

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

293
●411
796

Crazy-Dance Bow and Paraphernalia.

[End Plate 5]

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

CHAPTER IV

ECONOMIC ASPECTS

Labor

In the production of economic goods the man supplied the great bulk of raw materials by means of hunting, doing relatively little collecting and processing. He was responsible, however, for the supply and care of the major means of production, the horse. The chief objects manufactured by him were bows, arrows, clubs, shields, and ceremonial equipment.[1] The woman, on the other hand, supplied only a small part of the raw materials, through collecting, but did most of the processing of raw materials and manufacturing. 462

Cooperation within the household was necessary for production, and the household was practically a self-sufficient unit with relatively little reliance on the cooperative work of others. In actuality there was quite a bit of mutual help, especially among relatives. There was, of course, a certain amount of dependence of the man on his fellows in hunting in the sense that men usually hunted buffalo in groups and, in view of the common welfare, an individual was restrained from selfishly hunting alone and scattering the herd on which his fellows were depending. Nevertheless the operation was a collective rather than a truly cooperative one because, once the chase started, each man was on his own and had the right of disposal over whatever game he killed. It was stated that in any given run the most a man could kill would be seven or eight buffalo and that almost inevitably some would get none. No one went home empty-handed, however, for the more fortunate 476 592 224 476 [431]

[1] Maximilian noted in 1833 that men make only arms and smoking equipment (p. 103), and that among the Gros Ventres were many war clubs "made of the long end of an elk's horn" and "daggers" of jaws and teeth of a bear (p. 75). For other details of materials and manufacture, see Kroeber, 1908, pp. 150-51. For illustration of a shield, see photograph, courtesy of Richard Pohrt, pl. 3. [411]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

dried and seasoned, then pulverized, and used in a liquid. It was also used mixed with other things. 278

The Pipe keepers, and co-keepers, ex-keepers and ex-co-keepers, were immune and could handle it. But if others touched the plant or powder they would be seized at once with fits which only an actual or retired keeper or co-keeper could cure by working on him and blowing some of the powder on him. Some Gros Ventres, however, such as old Deafie, did not believe that wild parsley caused fits, but many cases are reported. One man, for instance, in recent times carried some in his hands to a dance, and during the dance got a fit and it took one of the ex-co-keepers to bring him out of it. Another man used wild parsley as a medicine in doctoring. Each participant in the Crazy Lodge used it. But originally its use was confined to Pipe keepers and co-keepers (see p. 52).

If one were scratched with an arrow that had been dipped in wild parsley infusion he would suffer spasms, fits and acute agony and would not live till morning. Such a poisoned arrow was tied by each Crazy Lodge dancer to his bow, apparently as a silent threat to enforce obedience and respect by the people during the lodge rites, but was thrown away after the dance was over.* These poisoned arrows were not used at any other time than the Crazy Lodge; never for instance, in Gros Ventre wars or raids on enemies. 411 ● 278

Seasonal Rites

The three annual seasonal rites were in the olden days the major ceremonial events in Gros Ventre life according to The Boy, Thick and older informants. No vow was necessary to hold them. They were never omitted. They had to be performed. The seasonal rites have long since been given up. They were last carried out sometime in the late 1860's or early 1870's, while The Boy's father, Lame Bull, was keeper. 796* 178

The three seasonal rites were held in the spring, fall and winter respectively. About April the various Gros Ventre bands, which 796* 221 361

*Cf. Kroeber, 1908, pp. 207-08 regarding poisoned arrow.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

342 were sewn together with sinew. The women selected the poles for the lodge, as well as for the travois, and were responsible for [484] erecting and taking down the lodge, for the arrangement of the interior, for the making of the travois, and for the packing and moving of impedimenta.

The foundation of three poles for the lodge was tied together and then raised as a unit. The other poles were arranged one by one, starting with those of the front. The cover of buffalo hides was tied to one pole, the "backbone," which was placed at the center-back, the cover then being drawn into place and fastened securely at the front, with small wooden pins usually made of cherry-tree wood. The ordinary Gros Ventre lodge stakes were shaped like a pin with a relatively small head. One informant, [184 however, stated that this form of stake often came loose where 177] the cover became taut with the wind, and that she had found the forked type, first observed by her many years ago when visiting another tribe to the south, far more satisfactory.

342 Old lodge covers were saved and cut up to make a sort of lining at the bottom of the lodge in winter, and the snow scraped away 353 to make place for the lodge was piled up on the outside thereof for extra warmth. In summer the ground inside the lodge was covered with willows, sagebrush or rye grass. Decorated robes as windbreaks were sometimes suspended in the lodge behind the fancy backrests, which were made by the women from slender willow rods. The women gathered and peeled the rods, although the young men helped straighten them by pulling them through their teeth. A willow ring encircled the fireplace and a broom of buckbrush was always kept handy. Personal belongings were neatly disposed against the wall of the lodge and in front of these were placed the skins which served as bedding by night and as seats by day. The painted parfleshes were given prominence to lend colorful touches. Dishes, utensils, and stored food were suspended 412 from poles well off the floor.

415 Among the articles of household equipment may be mentioned knives, both of bone and of metal, kettles, horn spoons, fleshing tools, etc., and food containers of various sorts. For the latter, [237] the membrane protecting the heart of the buffalo, the paunch, the bladder, and the intestines of the buffalo, as well as those of the

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

elk and deer, served very well, and the first three were often used for carrying water. It was said that water kept cooler and fresher much longer in these than in other types of container such as those of metal. 412 415 237

Pottery had been made by the Gros Ventres in earlier times[18] but the only information we were able to gather thereon is contained in the following statements. Coming Daylight volunteered the most details: "They used some clay to boil their meat in. My grandmother worked it. She made a pot and told me how she did it. It was made of black mud of some kind. My grandmother took this mud and mixed some kind of grease or tallow with it and shaped the pot. While mixing the clay with the grease, she would shape it. It was smooth then. When finished it was about 18 in. high, 9 in. in diameter, the same at the top as at the bottom (straight-sided). The bottom was flat because it was put right on the fire and the coals were kind of heaped up around it when cooking with it. When my grandmother finished shaping it, she put it close to the camp fire and turned it around once in awhile so it would dry out. Then, when it was dry, she put water in it and put it on the fire to see whether it would crack. This pot didn't crack. I don't know what became of it. I never used it myself. It was undecorated. This one belonging to my grandmother is the only one I know the history of, and the only one in our family. We used the wooden dishes more than the pot. The pot was used only to cook in. Each family might have had one or two to cook in." 323 415

Singer, who was present when Coming Daylight told about this, said she had heard of such pots, but had never used one herself. Mary Ereaux, the interpreter, commented, "In the Missouri River where they are making the dam, the mud taken out of the River, when it dries, is just like cement." When asked regarding pottery, Charles Buckman stated that he doubted that the Missouri River mud could have been used for this purpose. There is a blue clay near Hays that would be suitable for making pots—he had heard that pots were used "in the old days" but did not know how they 323

[18] Cocking, in 1772, writes of the Gros Ventres, p. 111: "Victuals are dressed in earthen pots of their own manufacturing much in the same form as Newcastle pots, but without feet."

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The older women informants described, when they were young, they would work at scraping skins pegged to the ground, by leaning over from the waist, feet well apart and knees unbent, swinging sideways from the hips. They could keep up this rhythmical steady motion, with the short-handled scraper usually tipped with metal, for hours at a time, one day after another. Sometimes, too, a woman would spend a whole day softening ropes of rawhide by rubbing the rope which had been run through the eye and ear apertures of a buffalo skull upon which the horns had been left so that she, sitting on the ground with legs extended, could rest her feet against the horns as she pulled the rope back and forth, making it soft and white.[4] Nevertheless the tedium of these operations was often relieved by the fact that occasionally other women, who had at the moment some leisure, would hear the work going on and would volunteer to help.

462 281 [516] [412] [283 237] 462 476 281

It was customary for women to do much of their work in groups. If a young woman, for instance, wished to make a fine robe, she would call in some other women, including an older experienced "hand." The latter would mark the robe where the embroidery should go, and the younger women did the fancy work. The hostess would cook for all present and so, in a pleasant atmosphere of sociability and "woman talk," the work would progress. A similar type of gathering would be held when a sufficient number of hides had been saved to make a lodge cover.

[531]

In size the lodges ranged from six skins up to twenty-four or twenty-five, with the average of about fourteen to seventeen.[5] Much skill was needed for cutting and fitting the skins and an experienced woman would be called in to do that part, while the others helped with the task of sewing the skins together. Our informants stated that a woman would have to "save and save" skins towards a new lodge, which was a necessity about every three years.

[342]

Women went out in groups to pick berries and wild fruits as well as to dig roots, but each one had right of disposal over what

462 476

[4] Another method for softening ropes is given by Kroeber, 1908, p. 150.

[5] The largest lodge remembered by the Gros Ventres is said to have been that of the Blood Chief, Father of All, who had, at the time of the 1855 treaty, a lodge with two fires, poles 65 ft. long, and the cover consisting of more than 25 skins.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

793 us begin again. Keep quiet," and to the first attendant: "Bring
*796 a live buffalo chip." The attendant did so, put it on the hearth, and returned to his place. The retiring keeper then took a pinch of dried peppermint leaves, and after the triple successive lowering and three clockwise circles above described, but without song or spoken word, released the peppermint, dropping it on the smoldering chip.

[516] Squatting on his knees and heels instead of cross-legged, so that he could move around more easily, he took up the Flat Pipe, grasping it by the stem, palms up, with his left hand nearer the bowl. Then he circled the stem through the incense and upward until it pointed *east* and held it steady a moment at this point. He repeated the circling and pointing at a lower level, again at a still lower one, and finally made three clockwise circles with the bowl around the incense. Next he repeated the same smudging but toward the *south;* finally, toward the *west.*

After the smudging came the solemn prayer (to be described later) said by the retiring keeper, kneeling upright and holding the Pipe with the stem pointing, not to any point of the compass, [516] but vertically upward. At the end of the prayer he let himself down on his heels, still kneeling, and held the Pipe in position to smoke. He ordered the first attendant: "Bring a live buffalo chip." The ● [412] attendant thereupon took a chip from the lodge hearth with a forked stick and applied it to the tobacco in the Pipe. The keeper [276] puffed the Pipe until the tobacco was lit, and then took three distinct puffs, blowing the smoke upward around and downward around. Then he passed the Pipe to the new keeper, first swinging it upward. The new keeper, after taking three puffs and blowing the smoke up and down in the same manner, took a real full smoke with the Pipe. Then he passed it clockwise to the nearest ex-keeper to the east, who smoked it, but without swinging it upward. Then it was passed in turn clockwise to the other ex-keepers, if there were others, to be smoked but not swung, till it reached the last nearest the door. The ex-co-keepers did not smoke the Pipe in this or in any other Flat Pipe rite. Then the lighted Pipe was passed back anti-clockwise, without smoking, and without swinging upward except by the new keeper (this honor

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The sweat-bath was resorted ritually on many occasions other than those mentioned in the immediately preceding pages and passim in preceding sections. Coming Daylight spoke of it in a general way as "the thing they [the Gros Ventres] go through with when they don't want something to happen." On some of these many occasions reported by our informants there was no mention of accompanying offerings,—for instance the many sweat-baths Singer made for her sick husband (or were these purely "rational" curative measures, as may have been the sweating Coming Daylight went through for her rheumatism?). The sweat-lodge was commonly used, especially as we have seen, in connection with professional doctoring. 515 782

The sweat-bath was resorted to rather commonly—how commonly we cannot say—for pleasure, as a purely rational hygienic and curative measure, and for cleanliness. In such cases, no ceremony at all was connected with it. The keepers of the Flat and Feathered Pipes, if known to like sweating,—but not otherwise,—could be invited, but without ritual accompaniment. There was no mixed-sex sweating; men sweated with men, women with women. Sweating was a little hard on novices unused to the heat and steam. The white man who asked to learn about the Feathered Pipe was told: "The first night in a sweat-bath is pretty hard and beginners are allowed to lie down close to the ground." Singer, once when being washed by a medicine man, had to leave the lodge as soon as the water was poured on the stones; she could not stand the heat. Mary Ereaux' mother used to keep her head outside the sweat-lodge when sweating. Those, however, habituated to sweating, found the after-effect pleasant and soothing. As Al Chandler expressed it: "After you are all through sweating you sure feel good. You could go right to sleep." 515

The sweaters during the sweating whipped themselves,—"to make them even hotter" (Al Chandler), "to dry themselves" (Coming Daylight)—with formerly a whip made of a buffalo tail attached to a handle, or later of "a horse tail or any old thing." [412]

The sweat-lodge for secular use was always beehived shaped, of bent willows framework, but no special number of willows was required. 343

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

171
342
531

and probably white also. The pendants on the smaller ornament are identical, and still show the hoofs at their ends. It thus appears that, whereas the main ornament has only the three colors, namely, white, yellow, and black, — found also in an Arapaho ornament [1] with which it is virtually identical, — yet the peculiar line-pattern combination of red, yellow, white, and black, characteristic of the Arapaho "tribal" style of quill embroidery, also occurs in this Gros Ventre set of ornaments.

171
415
531

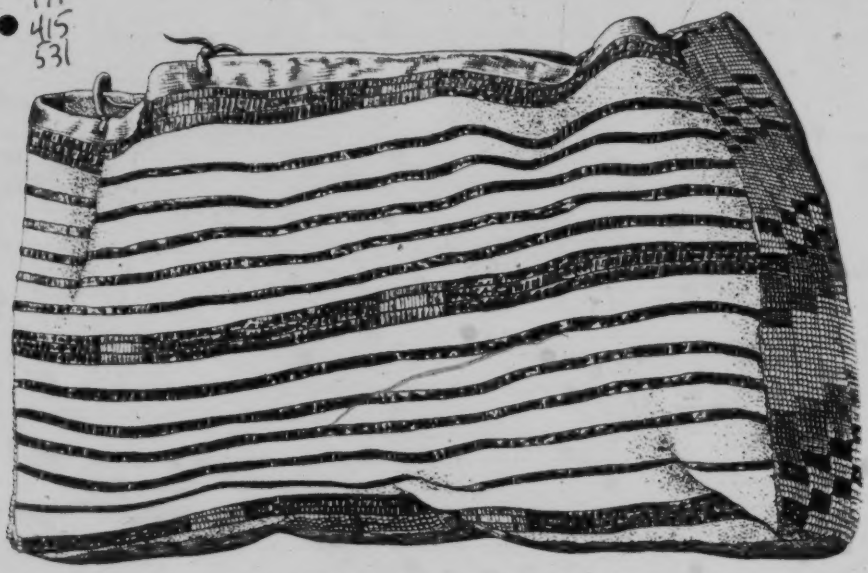


Fig. 5 (50-1738). Soft-skin Bag. Length, 21 cm.

Bags of soft skin, used chiefly for keeping and transporting clothing and small household articles, are made by the Gros Ventre very much as by the Arapaho and other Plains tribes. The ornamentation is also of the same character, consisting of red quill-embroidered lines across the front of the bag, and a pattern of bead-work (generally of alternately colored bars with cross spaces, augmented by tin and horsehair or other pendants) along the top and two side edges of the bag. This style has been illustrated for the Arapaho.[2] About half the Gros Ventre bags show the same ornamentation,

[1] Compare Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part I, p. 60, Fig. 9, a.
[2] Ibid., Vol. XVIII, Plate XVI.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

varied only in inessential details. The remainder introduce a characteristic variation, though the fundamental type of decoration is the same. Such a bag is shown in Fig. 5. The red quilled lines are present, but are in part grouped in threes, so as to form stripes of three times the width of the lines. In consequence of this, the small differently colored spaces on the lines become rectangles, which usually assume the box form shown in the figure,

171
415
531

Fig. 6 (50/4299). Soft-skin Bag. Length, 35 cm.

and more characteristic of Sioux than of Arapaho ornamentation. The number of single lines between the compound stripes varies; in some specimens it is only two or three. Sometimes the box design of the stripes is represented on the lines by an end-bordered bar, as is customary on the bags with lines only, and as appears in the bag in Fig. 6. Even the small down-feathers of the line-embroidered bags may be present on the wider stripes of this variant Gros Ventre type. The bead-work along the two ends of the bag shown in Fig. 5 is very different from that on Arapaho

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

171 bags, recalling the typical checker and diagonal step design of Blackfoot beading. This type is, however, unusual among the Gros Ventre.

415 531 The fine bag shown in Fig. 6, collected by Dr. Clark Wissler, presents unusual quill-embroidery on its front, suggestive perhaps of Sioux influence or origin; but the bead-work on its cover and sides, and the attached tin and horsehair ornaments, are typically Arapaho, except for the fact that this tribe would be very unlikely to make any pattern without at least some proportion of white. The transverse lines of quill-work on this bag might be regarded as nothing but a further five-line development of the three-line grouping illustrated by the last figure, with an alternating bar-pattern for its chief ornamentation instead of the box figure, which in element is identical. The central figure, however, is the typical Sioux spider-web pattern described by Dr. Clark Wissler,[1] and so far without any parallel among either Arapaho or Gros Ventre, or any approach nearer than that shown in an instance of blanket painting.[2] The two parallel bars in the centre of this concave quadrilateral figure, and the diamond-shaped feather symbols at its corners, are also typically Siouan: only the last-named element is occasionally used by the Gros Ventre.

237 415 505 Buffalo paunches, the mouth being drawn up by a string, like a sack, were used for carrying and holding water, a paunchful being hung up in the tent. If buffalo had been killed, and it was desired to transport the meat across the Missouri, the paunches were filled with meat, blown up, tied together at the mouth, and floated. The well-known circular skin [501] boats of the Missouri tribes were also used by the Gros Ventre for transporting clothing and property across streams.

171 415 531 Fig. 7 shows an ornamented food-bag of bladder. At the top is a strip of skin covered with red quill-embroidery, with square star designs in blue and white. From this strip of skin hangs a red quill-wound fringe. The thong handle of the bag is partly quilled, and has quilled thong pendants hanging from it. At the bottom of the bag a round piece of skin, covered with green-and-white quartered bead-work, is sewed on.

171 532 751 The navel-amulets of the Gros Ventre, which resemble those of the Arapaho in their use, are in form of a somewhat different type, as they approach more nearly to an animal's shape. They usually represent çaniwa", the "horned toad" (southern Arapaho, säniwa", a "lizard"), or sometimes a person. Their general shape is, as everywhere on the Plains, a rhomboid on end. To this the Gros Ventre add at the upper end a small rhomboid, forming the head of the animal represented. This augmented shape has not been found among the Arapaho, with whom the typical form

[1] See Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part III, p. 248.
[2] Ibid., Vol. XIII, p. 85, Fig. 138.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

is a narrow simple rhomboid.[1] The Blackfeet and Sioux make figures resembling those of the Gros Ventre, but carry the realism farther. The Sioux most frequently represent an entire animal with head, legs, and tail, much like Fig. 1 in Plate VIII of Vol. XVIII of the "Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History," but broader, in the shape of a turtle.[2] The Arapaho, Gros Ventre, and Blackfeet use ornamented strings hanging from the corners of the rhomboid to represent limbs and tail. The Blackfeet make realistic snake amulets for their boys, and more conventional turtle or lizard-like figures, resembling those of the Gros Ventre, for their girls. Among the Assiniboine, and west of the Rockies among the Bannock and Ute, a reduced form of navel-amulets occurs, though perhaps it is not the only one used. It is usually small and flat, with the acute angles of the rhomboid cut off transversely, rendering the whole piece hexagonal rather than quadrilateral. Sometimes the entire edges are fringed. The relative distribution of this small form and of the other forms is not yet clear. A Shoshone amulet in the Museum is a pointed rhomboid resembling the Arapaho type, even to being quartered in its bead-ornamentation. A Kiowa specimen in the Anthropological Museum of the University of California is a plain rhombus, of Arapaho type, except in being smaller and more nearly square. The following distribution of types is at least partly correct: realistic, Sioux, Blackfoot, occasionally Arapaho; semi-realistic, Blackfoot, Gros Ventre; conventional rhomboid, Arapaho, Kiowa, Shoshone; reduced hexagonal, Assiniboine, Ute, Bannock, and perhaps Shoshone.

Fig. 7 (50-1801). Ornamented Food-bag of Bladder. Length, 29 cm.

On Plate IX are shown three Gros Ventre navel-amulets. Fig. 3 was said to represent a horned toad, and Fig. 2, a person. It will be seen that the mouth in the former is near the end of the head; in the latter, in the lower part of the face. Both these specimens have quilled or beaded appendages at the two side corners and at the lower end. Fig. 1 has a distinct

[1] See Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part I, Plate VIII.
[2] Ibid., Vol. XVIII, Part III, p. 242, Fig. 76.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the Shoshone. Specimen Museum No. 50-1741 (not shown in the plate) is similar to Fig. 6, but contains two central figures instead of one, and lacks the symmetrical half-designs along the edges. 531 171

A curious design on a bag is shown in Fig. 11. This, while much specialized, seems to show Blackfoot influence.

While these Gros Ventre pieces show resemblances here and there to the work of a number of tribes, yet they seem distinctly impressed with the tendencies of none. Perhaps fundamentally Gros Ventre rawhide painting is most similar to that of the Arapaho; but there are many departures from the Arapaho type, without corresponding development of any characteristically tribal style. There are some approaches to the art of both the Sioux and the Blackfeet, the two principal large tribes to the east and west; but these resemblances are not very marked. It is not unlikely that there may have been closer correspondences with the Crow. While the Blackfeet, according to Dr. Clark Wissler,[1] called their regular parfleche paintings "Gros Ventre painting," it is quite evident that the influence suggested by this name has actually had very little to do with the origin and development of the present style of Blackfoot painting. Not only do the Blackfeet appear to be in possession of a more distinctive style of rawhide painting than the Gros Ventre, but it is generally evident that any inter-influence of the two tribes on each other in respect to rawhide ornamentation has been inconsiderable.

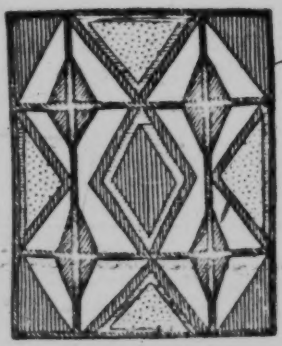


Fig. 11 (50-1805). Design on Bag. Length, 20 cm.

The cylindrical rawhide cases used by most Plains tribes, generally for holding medicine, are painted, on the whole, in styles resembling those of parfleches; but as the shape of the object and the portion of the decorative field visible at one time are quite different from those of parfleches, there are certain differences of design. At least four types of designs can be made out on medicine-cases; and, as more material becomes available for study, the tribal distribution of these, and especially the transition forms between the pure types, promise to be interesting. [415]

These four types, which have already been partly described in connection with the Arapaho,[2] are shown in Fig. 12 (*a–d*), and may be characterized as

[1] Clark Wissler, Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part III, p. 276.
[2] See Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part I, p. 132.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the stick is first covered with green cloth, then with skin covered with red and blue quill-work, and at the pointed end is bare, except for its red paint. 778 293

A feathered wheel a foot or a foot and a half across (specimen Museum No. 50–4292) is covered with red, blue, green, yellow, white, and black feathers and plumes, many of them dyed, and tied to the hoop without any attempt at color-pattern or other arrangement. Most of the feathers have the quill split. 171

Another hoop (specimen Museum No. 50–1745) is a little smaller, and is covered with brown buffalo-fur instead of feathers. At one point, five split owl-feathers and six black unsplit feathers are attached; at a place opposite, two small yellowed feathers, one with a green plume at the base.

Other specimens secured by Dr. Clark Wissler are a ceremonial spoon with long, thin, decorated handle, and a quirt. The latter (specimen Museum No. 50–4305) is similar to Arapaho ceremonial quirts.[1] A heavy wooden handle consists of two parts, — the handle proper and a longer portion with five deep notches in the lower edge. The upper edge is straight. The part of the handle that is notched is ornamented with brass tacks. From the end of the stick hang two ends of thong, the whip. At the handle is attached a skin of a fox or similar animal, ornamented with eagle-feathers. 171 415 778

A feather shield consists essentially of a circle of radiating feathers, worn on the back. 171 293

A crow-belt, also secured by Dr. Clark Wissler, is quite similar to the Arapaho one described in the "Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History" (Vol. XVIII, p. 345). It is interesting that of the five Arapaho pieces in the Museum, this is at once the crudest in construction, and the most perverted by white influence from aboriginal style. In the present Gros Ventre belt, a rectangular piece of rawhide is bent over a stick as a support for the remainder of the specimen. The two hanging "tail" strips are of yellow cloth, quite narrow, hanging apart. Eagle-feathers, some dyed red, are attached to them. The belt proper is formed by two pieces of woven yarn. In the middle of the piece are attached the head and breast of an eagle. Below this, between the two hanging strips, is an ornament of a row of eagle-feathers pointing downward. These are attached in the folded edge of a squarish piece of rawhide, thus resembling the analogous piece in the Arapaho crow-belt referred to and the Arapaho biitaha"wu head-dresses. The ornament, however, is fastened to the remainder of the piece, so that it cannot have been worn as a head-dress. The two usual projecting arms consist each of a black eagle-wing feather, with a strip of quill-embroidery laid along the quill of the feather, and with several small bells, 778 [237]

[1] Mooney, Ghost-Dance Religion (Fourteenth Annual Report, Bureau of American Ethnology, Vol. XIV, p. 987, Fig. 94), shows a very similar quirt attributed to the dog-dance.

342 were sewn together with sinew. The women selected the poles for the lodge, as well as for the travois, and were responsible for [484] erecting and taking down the lodge, for the arrangement of the interior, for the making of the travois, and for the packing and moving of impedimenta.

The foundation of three poles for the lodge was tied together and then raised as a unit. The other poles were arranged one by one, starting with those of the front. The cover of buffalo hides was tied to one pole, the "backbone," which was placed at the center-back, the cover then being drawn into place and fastened securely at the front, with small wooden pins usually made of cherry-tree wood. The ordinary Gros Ventre lodge stakes were shaped like a pin with a relatively small head. One informant, [184 however, stated that this form of stake often came loose where 177] the cover became taut with the wind, and that she had found the forked type, first observed by her many years ago when visiting another tribe to the south, far more satisfactory.

342 Old lodge covers were saved and cut up to make a sort of lining at the bottom of the lodge in winter, and the snow scraped away 353 to make place for the lodge was piled up on the outside thereof for extra warmth. In summer the ground inside the lodge was covered with willows, sagebrush or rye grass. Decorated robes as windbreaks were sometimes suspended in the lodge behind the fancy backrests, which were made by the women from slender willow rods. The women gathered and peeled the rods, although the young men helped straighten them by pulling them through their teeth. A willow ring encircled the fireplace and a broom of buckbrush was always kept handy. Personal belongings were neatly disposed against the wall of the lodge and in front of these were placed the skins which served as bedding by night and as seats by day. The painted parfleshes were given prominence to lend colorful touches. Dishes, utensils, and stored food were suspended 412 from poles well off the floor.

415 Among the articles of household equipment may be mentioned knives, both of bone and of metal, kettles, horn spoons, fleshing tools, etc., and food containers of various sorts. For the latter, [237] the membrane protecting the heart of the buffalo, the paunch, the bladder, and the intestines of the buffalo, as well as those of the

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

elk and deer, served very well, and the first three were often used for carrying water. It was said that water kept cooler and fresher much longer in these than in other types of container such as those of metal.

Pottery had been made by the Gros Ventres in earlier times[10] but the only information we were able to gather thereon is contained in the following statements. Coming Daylight volunteered the most details: "They used some clay to boil their meat in. My grandmother worked it. She made a pot and told me how she did it. It was made of black mud of some kind. My grandmother took this mud and mixed some kind of grease or tallow with it and shaped the pot. While mixing the clay with the grease, she would shape it. It was smooth then. When finished it was about 18 in. high, 9 in. in diameter, the same at the top as at the bottom (straight-sided). The bottom was flat because it was put right on the fire and the coals were kind of heaped up around it when cooking with it. When my grandmother finished shaping it, she put it close to the camp fire and turned it around once in awhile so it would dry out. Then, when it was dry, she put water in it and put it on the fire to see whether it would crack. This pot didn't crack. I don't know what became of it. I never used it myself. It was undecorated. This one belonging to my grandmother is the only one I know the history of, and the only one in our family. We used the wooden dishes more than the pot. The pot was used only to cook in. Each family might have had one or two to cook in."

Singer, who was present when Coming Daylight told about this, said she had heard of such pots, but had never used one herself. Mary Ereaux, the interpreter, commented, "In the Missouri River where they are making the dam, the mud taken out of the River, when it dries, is just like cement." When asked regarding pottery, Charles Buckman stated that he doubted that the Missouri River mud could have been used for this purpose. There is a blue clay near Hays that would be suitable for making pots—he had heard that pots were used "in the old days" but did not know how they

[10] Cocking, in 1772, writes of the Gros Ventres, p. 111: "Victuals are dressed in earthen pots of their own manufacturing much in the same form as Newcastle pots, but without feet."

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

"They usually cut the cord long, say four to six inches, because they were afraid the infant would bleed to death if they cut it short. You kind of drain it and get it cleaned out and tie it once. Apply a powdered root and then put a band around the body. It usually takes four days before it drops off." Since the cord is part of the body and they wanted to keep it close to its owner, when the cord came off, they placed it in a small fancy bag filled with sweetgrass or tobacco and pinned the bag to the clothing right at the back of the neck. Singer said that she had heard that boys used to wear this little bag tied to the wrist rather than at the back of the neck as girls did. Good care was taken of the bag until adulthood. The bag was usually in the shape of a turtle, with a little head. Although Coming Daylight had made two such bags, she didn't know why they used this shape except that it had been done thus for generations.[8] Mary's grandmother, however, made a little container for Mary's own son and it was in the shape of a snake with a head. Mary added: "And the Gros Ventres don't like snakes either. But my grandmother made that one in the shape of a snake on account of a dream she had."

The afterbirth was disposed of just as soon as possible, preferably by having someone place it good and high in the branches of a tree.[9] The person who disposed of the afterbirth was not supposed to let anyone see him do so, although the informants did not know the reason for the secrecy. It is more customary at present to burn the afterbirth as the whites do, but Coming Daylight remarked that she had done that only once,—on the occasion when she was caught out in the open all alone and had to deliver herself.

A mother rested quite a while after her child was born because it was said that working would make her sweat and that would hurt her milk. The child of a woman who worked a great deal immediately after its birth would not grow up to be so healthy as the child of one who took it easy. In the opinion of Coming Daylight and of Singer a woman should sit up only after four days and get up and be walking around in about ten days. Coming Daylight her-

[8] For discussion of these navel amulets and illustrations thereof, see Kroeber, 1908, pp. 166-67, and plate IX.

[9] "If it were left lying to be handled, the child would be afflicted with sores." Kroeber, 1908, p. 181.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

exceptionally chewed in contrast to the Flat Pipe peppermint. A bag, painted red all over, about a foot square, and fringed on three sides but with no beading or other decoration, now hangs with the bundle and served, Al Chandler thought, as a container for the dried sweet pine needles.

The ritual number of the Feathered Pipe, running all through the songs and ceremonies, was four, from the days of the first keeper down to most recent times.

The musical instrument used to accompany the songs was, likewise from the time of the first keeper, the drum. According to Garter Snake, the first keeper's drum was painted half black to represent black [storm] clouds and half red to represent the earth. According to Al Chandler, the present drum, about 16 inches in diameter and two inches deep, has a figure of a thunderbird painted in blue on the drumhead against a red background, to represent Bha'a, with zigzag yellow lines from either side of the head to the wings, to represent lightning. A long string is tied to the drum. The drumstick is painted red, the distal end being covered with buckskin "stuffed with something like cotton." Curly Head, when keeper, never used the drum, or even took it out of its covering in which it hung next to the bundle, but Sitting High used it regularly with the songs.*

According to Garter Snake, the first keeper had somebody make him a wooden bowl, which still hangs with, not in, the Pipe bundle, but we obtained no information on its type or use. She also stated that the first keeper had a "gourd rattle" or four rattles, but Al Chandler never saw any rattle kept or used with the Feathered Pipe, and no other informant mentioned such.

The Feathered Pipe, like the Flat Pipe, was smoked, in fulfillment of vows, but very rarely. More commonly, in contrast with the Flat Pipe, it was danced with, earlier only by the keeper, in recent decades by others.

General ritual features common to the Feathered Pipe and Flat Pipe,—clockwise movement, singing, the use of paint, of buffalo chips, and of sage, tobacco, larb and wild parsley,—have

* The drum used in the 1951 rite was apparently undecorated. See Plate 2 C. [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539 773 will see the thing I use." White Man looked up and saw a bladder[8] up above the door. The man said: "That is what I use." White Man said: "I see it."

The man took the bag from where it hung and he and White Man went to the rising ground. When they reached there the man said: "What I use to hunt with and make a living with and do all things with is in this bag. You will see. Make your heart strong." So the man untied the bag. As he did so adult people began to come out of the bag. The crowd got bigger and bigger around them. The man then said: "This is enough." So he closed the opening of the bag and tied it up again.

After he had tied it up the man said to White Man: "Here are the people I use when I want to do anything. They are the ones who hunt." The man said to the people: "Go hunt and bring the choicest things to eat to my lodge. Myself and my guest want to eat some more."

So the man and White Man went back to the lodge and stayed there all day. That night the same thing happened that had happened on the first and second night previously. They ate and ate until they had enough and were filled and then they slept.

The next day White Man moved on and went his way. Then White Man began to study and think how he could acquire from the man the man's way of living and of getting a living. So White Man studied how to get the man to let him have this bladder. So he hit upon a plan. He decided to cut himself, as the Indians do in mourning, and to cry. So he cut himself and came crying loud to the man's lodge. When he got to the lodge he walked around it crying and crying. The man and woman heard White Man but they knew that White Man was a tricky fellow and they paid no attention to him. But White Man just kept on crying. They heard White Man crying until they went to sleep.

When they woke up the next morning the man wondered what had become of White Man. He said to the woman: "Go out and see if White Man is around." She went and there was White Man asleep outside. The man woke White Man up and invited him into the lodge. White Man went in and sat down, and in the course of time the man said to him: "What do you want? Why have you cut yourself and made yourself suffer and cried?" White Man said: "I did so for a very serious reason. My enemies have killed my whole family, my wife and children, and have destroyed my home. I am destitute and do not know how I am going to live. So I thought I would come to you and ask you to share the bladder with me and tell me how to use it, so I may make ready to take revenge on the people who destroyed my family and home." The man, knowing White Man to be what he was, refused at once: "No. You will go to extremes. You will abuse it. You are crazy." White Man begged all the more. The man and woman were silent for a long time. But White Man kept talking and talked so

[8] A gall bladder sack, attached to the liver. Such gall bladders were used by the Gros Ventres to store grease prepared and mixed with berries and were kept closed to keep bugs out. [251 415]

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 Bear Paw Mountains. It was there that the Gros Ventres had their first Grass dance alone. I don't know why they did things like this, but all those who had been given regalia walked instead of riding horseback. But the drum was packed on a special horse by itself and when they came to a stream, four men who owned the drumsticks carried the drum across, wading in without taking off their moccasins or other clothing. Furthermore those who owned the regalia were not supposed to help feed the crowd. They were not allowed to serve food and if they did, they had to give something away. Nor were these men supposed to borrow. They were supposed to have their own cup or dish and when it [415] was time to eat, if they didn't have any receptacle, they spread out their robes and the servers poured the coffee or soup or whatever was being served right in the robes."

114 The above account is the only explicit record of the actual 174 transfer which was obtainable in the field. From details supplied 796 by this same informant, however, as well as by others not so old as she, but who have accurate traditional knowledge of Gros Ventre culture, we have considerable information on the Grass dance as practiced from the time it was adopted.[7] Let us proceed then to the general description, first as the dance was carried out in the earlier period.

575 *Personnel and equipment.* At the time of adoption the Grass 796 dance came into the possession of a society, the Wolves or Wolfmen. Only members of the society actually danced, wearing the distinctive headdress of deer hair, although the rest of their costume varied with the individual. The special regalia which went with the dance were: 2 crow-belts; a large drum and 4 fancy drumsticks; a spear or fork; a spoon; 2 wands representing swords; a whistle.[8] Each item was owned by an individual member of the society who was, by virtue of this ownership, an officer

[115] [7] I wish to thank all of my Gros Ventre friends for their assistance, especially The Boy, Thick, Thomas Main, Charles Buckman, Al and Cora Chandler, Mary Ereaux, Mathilda Cuts-the-Rope, but above all, my old "grandmothers," Coming Daylight and Singer.

[8] For reference to description of some of these, see footnote 3.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787 made up my mind that I did not want such power, the immediate reason for my refusal being that I had seen doctors who swallowed what they had sucked from the weak spot in patients whom they cured, and I just couldn't bring myself to have to do likewise."

857 Although boys had much more freedom than had girls, they
562 too were assigned tasks at a fairly early age. One of the responsibilities of boys was to water the horses during the day. At about the age of fourteen, however, a boy would be required to take the horses out to graze immediately after taking his morning plunge. He would be gone perhaps three or four hours and would eat only after he returned.

857 The play of younger boys with bow and arrow was training for
868 later life. The older boys accompanied the men on hunting par-
852 ties and by the time they were about 18 most were skilled hunt-
[431] ers. Some families, it was said, took advantage of the fact that a boy would have killed his first big game,—antelope, deer, buffalo, —by making a feast at which this game was served. On such an occasion the boy stood at the center and gave away property, such as horses and blankets provided by his father or uncle, in
[421] order to mark the event. This was considered training for the way he should behave in later life in regard to his own property.

857 Boys were trained in trapping as well as hunting. There were
868 certain songs which were sung by grandparents as the boys danced
[533] around in the lodge both before and after trapping. These songs were supposed to bring luck in finding game.
[777] Sometimes when older boys were out taking care of horses, they would band together, daub their faces and bodies with mud as "war paint," and make a "raid" on the camp in order to steal meat which was drying on racks. The women who had worked so hard to prepare the meat got angry and sometimes fought the boys with sticks. Usually, the boys were successful, and would then cook the meat and have a wonderful feast,[1] far outside the camp circle.

[554] Men encouraged their sons to be brave, and a boy would be anxious to go along on a real raiding party just as soon as possible because a young man had no standing until he had risked his life. An adolescent boy who accompanied a war party had to be a man

[1] This type of raiding is also described by Kroeber, 1908, p. 182.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

trimming for women's clothing. I knew that the body of a girl had been among those left in the branches of the trees at this place, so I decided that the bear had disturbed the bodies and must have eaten the cloth along with everything else. I stood there quite a while wondering whether I should take those elk teeth. Finally I took them and having strung them on a piece of sinew laid them in the stream-bed with a rock covering them. When I went home I opened the matter with my grandmother by stating: 'A bear ate that girl who was buried in the elk tooth dress.' When my grandmother asked how I knew this, I told her about the elk teeth in the excrement. Whereupon my grandmother asked: 'Why didn't you take those teeth? They are valuable.' Feeling easier in my mind, I said: 'I was afraid you would accuse me of stealing them—but I did take them anyway!' My grandmother was glad and so I brought them from the creek and I was happy, too, since there were enough teeth to make two rows on my dress." 183 685 867

The usual procedure of careful parents when a child reported he had found some article was to first question him as to whether or not he had taken it from someone. Then the parent would go around and ask people if they had lost this certain article. If a child had stolen it he would thus be found out and it was believed that he would never steal anything again.

The rights of children to their own property were recognized by elders and, while they admonished children to take good care of their things, if a child wished to dispose of what belonged to him no one would reprimand him for having done so. After all, generosity is a trait that was much admired among the Gros Ventres. Informants said that if, for instance, a man had given a horse to his daughter and she gave it away, he would say nothing to her about it. Should she ask him for another he might, however, tell her: "Well, I don't know—you might give it away." But he would never scold her about it. 183 858 867 421

Even if a child were flagrantly disobedient he would ordinarily be punished only by a scolding rather than by whipping or deprivation. Singer and Coming Daylight both were shocked at the idea that a child might be punished by depriving him of something. They said: "Indians love their children and we don't think they would deprive them of anything. They just talk to their children 861

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

A wife inherited practically nothing from her husband. If she had been faithful to him and had been of a good disposition, her parents-in-law might give her a certain number of horses or other property. The tent was considered the woman's possession while she lived with her husband; but on his death, even this was no longer her property. If the tent was worth keeping at all, it generally went to the dead man's sister, if she was newly married. A man, on the contrary, inherited his wife's property, though he generally gave back part of it to her relatives. 428 562 [422]

A woman, on her husband's death, went back to live with her parents, or, if these were dead, with her brother, uncle, or other relative. An old woman, on the death of her husband, generally went to live with her children, most frequently with a daughter. 768

On the death of a brother, especially a beloved one, or of his father or his son, a man cut his hair and went out naked (with only a buffalo robe) on the prairie to cry from morning until late at night. Women, besides cutting their hair, and cutting themselves (especially on the leg) until they bled, would also go out to cry, naked from the waist up. A sister cut herself for a brother, but a mother mourning for a child underwent the most pain. Of course the mourning was greatest for an only child. In such a case, parents might give away everything in their tent and nearly all their horses, stripping themselves of property so thoroughly as almost to go naked. Some mourners fasted for a number of days. If, while a person was crying on the prairie, one should in joke attempt to scare him, he might kill the disturber. Mourners were the bravest people in war, caring about no danger whatever. 765 [304] [431]

Burial was in trees, on high rocks, or in caves inaccessible to w[illegible] and coyotes. The corpse was wrapped in a burial robe.

A menstruating woman was called niniitixt. It is said that she did [illegible] retire to a separate lodge, or eat separately from her family; but she [illegible] not approach a sick patient, because of the evil effect she would have on his condition by her presence. Some women were said to wear a breech-cloth during their menstruation.

In childbirth, women either lay or knelt. They grasped a stick supported in a horizontal position by two upright forked sticks set in the ground. After the umbilical cord had been severed, the end was left on the child. It was thought to fall off on the fourth day. The woman who had cut the umbilical cord received as a gift the knife she had used. A woman who washed a new-born child was given the vessel in which it was washed. The afterbirth was hung in a tree. If it were left lying to be handled, the child would be afflicted with sores. For three or four days after birth, the child was given suck by other women than its mother. This statement apparently refers chiefly to a woman's first child. 844 [846]

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

to have been the key factor in the abandonment of the earlier methods of hunting buffalo. The situation of the Gros Ventres in regard to horses, which had apparently been so bad in approximately the first two decades of the 19th century, gradually improved, according to our informants, by natural increase of the few horses they had and by successful raiding of the enemy, especially for the fast buffalo horse. If Bradley's figures are correct, the Gros Ventres averaged five horses per family in 1830. According to our informants, by about 1850 they had "lots of horses," but we know that, even so, the number of horses fluctuated considerably after that date. Coming Daylight, for instance, remembered clearly several times prior to 1880 when the whole tribe was relatively poor in horses. During these periods people were forced to cache as much as possible so they wouldn't be too heavily burdened as they traveled about on foot. No doubt the same factors were operative in the Gros Ventre area as obtained in Blackfoot territory—severe winters and skin diseases among the horses.[7]

231 [484]

In any case, even in relatively prosperous times, seldom if ever did an individual possess great herds such as are described for the Kiowa. The Boy stated that his father, Lame Bull, who was an outstanding man, had a herd of about 60 horses. Coming Daylight explained: "Each family kept its own little bunch of horses. In early morning they would be taken out to pasture, usually by the older boys; around the middle of the day they would be watered and driven out again; in the evening they would be brought back and the more valuable ones, the swift buffalo horses, were always kept tied close by at night in case of raid by the enemy."

[556]

Such a family-owned herd would be differentiated and would ideally include pack horses, riding horses, and a few buffalo horses. The right of disposal over his own horses was, however, recognized for each individual man, woman and child. A man had the possibility of augmenting his own holdings directly by raiding the enemy. Because of the social recognition attendant upon successful raiding, as well as the economic necessity for controlling the means of production, the individual might actually devote in the course of a year more time and energy in pursuing this objective

[422]

231
556

[7] For an excellent discussion of the whole problem, see Ewers, 1943.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787 778 looking more closely Keg saw that the fellow was he, Keg, himself. The fellow said: "Do as you see me doing here. Use my throat as an object (button) to hide." Then Keg woke up and saw nearby a covey of prairie chickens at their mating dance. Keg was so given gambling power by the prairie chicken(s), and was a very successful gambler, from that time on.[18]

778 424 425 Acquisition of power directly and in first instance from a power-giving being gave the acquirer right of exclusive ownership and use of the power. The power was a gift from the being to the human individual, and became the latter's property to be exclusively held and used by him, as would any gift given him outright by a fellow Gros Ventre. The owner could however transfer it, in most cases, by sale or gift. The Boy and Thick explained the main features of the system as follows: "The individual who acquired the power, and he alone, would use it. He would not part with it unless someone bought it from him. . . . In case of purchase he would teach the buyer the secret of how to use the power. Then too the owner of the power might transfer it without remuneration to one of his children if the owner lived to old age and had [living] children; he might do this rather than have the secret of the power die with him and do no one any good." On other occasions The Boy, speaking particularly of doctoring power, further explained: "While a doctor had many power songs, no other doctor had a right to sing these songs, unless the doctor-owner transferred his power to the other. . . . If someone else knew what plant a given doctor used and tried himself to use it, he could not get results, because he would not know the songs and rites to use with it. . . . Even though he should know the songs and rites as well as the plants, it would have been very wrong to try to use them. . . . Only the one who had [acquired] the power had the right to practice it. If everybody had been free to practice it, there would have been no use for the doctor to have gone through such hardship [fasting, etc.] to acquire it."

Power acquired in first instance as a gift from a power-bestowing being, although exclusively owned by the recipient, could be under

[18] For further details, see Flannery and Cooper, 1946, pp. 407-08.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

certain conditions, to be described as we go along, transferred by gift or sale, loaned, or delegated. 778

Individuals who had personal ancestral helpers practiced no kind of transfer, loan or delegation. After all, such helpers were in no sense "owned" by or the property of these individuals. The concept of the ancestral helper is fundamentally different from that of power in this as in most other respects. 424 425

While we obtained records of many instances of transfer, by sale or gift, of war, doctor, and love power, we obtained none of transfer of gambling power. Whether it was transferable at all is a point we could not fully clear up; more probably it was not, but at any rate actual transfer either did not occur or must have been excessively rare. According to The Boy: "Nobody wanted their [gamblers'] power. It became so that it was non-transferable. . . . There were some [possessors of power], and among these was the gambler, who would not transfer."

A transferee could not, so far as we could discover, retransfer power by sale or gift to a third party, except perhaps power to be lucky, especially invulnerable, in warfare. Our field data on this point are slim.

While women sometimes, as we have seen, got power direct from power-giving beings, very commonly,—"mostly" The Boy stated,—the powers they possessed were acquired by transfer from men, or from women.

Initiative in transfer could be taken either by the owner of a given power or by the party wishing to purchase it.

When power was transferred either by sale or by gift, the transferrer carefully taught the transferee all the songs, rites, objects and taboos that pertained to the power in question.

So much for transfer in general. We now turn to certain aspects, first of transfer by sale, and after that of transfer by gift.

Transfer by sale of doctoring power, at least of major doctoring power, was, according to The Boy and Thick, uncommon; that of love power, rather common.

A man who had by quest acquired doctoring power could transfer it by sale to a maximum of four people. After the fourth transfer, he, according to The Boy, "would have exhausted it so far as he 778 425

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Other songs, distinct from this summoning or shaking tent rite song, were also given and taught at times by ghost helpers. Two of them, both victory songs, were recorded as sung by The Boy in 1940. These two were given on occasions other than that on which the surviving relative initially acquired his ghost helper. 776 787 [533]

After all the above teaching was concluded, the ghost of the deceased relative belonged to the survivor and was supposed to come whenever summoned by the latter in the manner the ghost told him while in trance to do. A great many Gros Ventre men and women had guardian spirits and "power" acquired by fasting and crying or otherwise. But fewer individuals, men and women, had ghost helpers. My informants in 1939 and 1940 could recall only four persons in the last two generations or last 70 years or so who had had ghost helpers.

In one case (see first of the two appended stories by Thick) two spirits tried to come to the shaking tent rite conducted by Woman, one bad and the other good, but whether the bad one was one of her deceased relatives or not, she never knew. The people were under the impression that the bad one was an intruder who used to come first and try to "horn in" on the proceedings. No case of a given person clearly having more than one ghost helper was recalled by my informants.

Ordinary "power" could be and often was transferred by the possessor to another person by donation or bequeathment. But a ghost helper never was so transferred and could not be. [424]

It may be added that neither my informants, The Boy and Thick, nor my interpreter, Thomas Main, all highly intelligent and informed men, were at all sure of the etymology of the word tsatsawâ·'ª. The Boy thought it might connote the meaning of "slave," "some one who is forced to do things." Thomas Main suggested a possible relationship to tsatsa—"coming, flight"; plus—wa, an old Gros Ventre word, meaning unknown. The two words for ordinary ghosts as such are tsa·k'ª (sing.; pl., tsa·k'an:'a's as u in English but), and bie'te'ᵉ (sing.; pl. bi'eten). Tsatsawâ·'ª is used exclusively for ghost helpers, not for an ordinary ghost, or ghosts in general. An ordinary medicine man was called nata'nhehi (a's as u in but), but there was no special name 791 787 [115]

769
787

was given. Two such songs, victory songs, given during war raids, were recorded by us.

A great many Gros Ventre men and women had power acquired by quest or otherwise from non-ancestral beings, but far fewer had [184] ancestral helpers such as we are describing. Our informants, in fact, whose combined memories carried back to the early 1860's, could recall only five or at most six, seven or eight: Good Singer, Woman (or Bear Old Woman), Morning Star Appears (probably the same as Rising Cross), Bird Child, Bull Head, and perhaps two or three others.[5] Persons with ghost helpers had prestige, not greater however than outstanding doctors had.

[425] Power acquired from non-ancestral beings could be transferred by the possessor to another person through gift or sale. But a ghost helper was not transferable; such power was owned property; a ghost helper was not. A given person never had more than one ghost helper, so far as we could discover. In the shaking tent rite, only this one ghost helper had part,—no other being, neither the Supreme Being, nor Bha'a, nor Little Spirit,[6] nor any power-giving being.

At the time the ghost helper was accepted by its surviving relative, it promised him (or her) to come when summoned with the summoning song, but, in sharp contrast to the practice of non-ancestral power-bestowing beings, it imparted no power to him whatever, whether in war, medicine, gambling or love, except the "power," if it can be called such, to summon the ghost and except by sheer coincidence as in the case of Bad Bad Bull mentioned above. The ghost helper imparted not power, but knowledge; not any power of clairvoyance, prophecy or wisdom, but knowledge itself; not once and for all at the time of being accepted by the person, as did the power-bestowing beings but from time to time if and when summoned. The sole function of the ghost helper as

[5] Cf. Flannery, 1944, pp. 55-58; Cooper, 1944, pp. 62-77 passim. Rising Cross of Flannery, p. 56, was pretty surely the same person as Morning-Star-Appears or Morning-Star-Is-Up, of Cooper, p. 71; probably the same person as mentioned in Watches-All's narrative by Kroeber, 1908, pp. 216-17.

[114] [6] That Little Spirit could function in the shaking tent rite in place of an ancestral spirit, as stated reservedly by Cooper, 1940, p. 112, is an error, corrected by field data gotten by him later.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787 778 looking more closely Keg saw that the fellow was he, Keg, himself. The fellow said: "Do as you see me doing here. Use my throat as an object (button) to hide." Then Keg woke up and saw nearby a covey of prairie chickens at their mating dance. Keg was so given gambling power by the prairie chicken(s), and was a very successful gambler, from that time on.[18]

778 424 425 Acquisition of power directly and in first instance from a power-giving being gave the acquirer right of exclusive ownership and use of the power. The power was a gift from the being to the human individual, and became the latter's property to be exclusively held and used by him, as would any gift given him outright by a fellow Gros Ventre. The owner could however transfer it, in most cases, by sale or gift. The Boy and Thick explained the main features of the system as follows: "The individual who acquired the power, and he alone, would use it. He would not part with it unless someone bought it from him. . . . In case of purchase he would teach the buyer the secret of how to use the power. Then too the owner of the power might transfer it without remuneration to one of his children if the owner lived to old age and had [living] children; he might do this rather than have the secret of the power die with him and do no one any good." On other occasions The Boy, speaking particularly of doctoring power, further explained: "While a doctor had many power songs, no other doctor had a right to sing these songs, unless the doctor-owner transferred his power to the other. . . . If someone else knew what plant a given doctor used and tried himself to use it, he could not get results, because he would not know the songs and rites to use with it. . . . Even though he should know the songs and rites as well as the plants, it would have been very wrong to try to use them. . . . Only the one who had [acquired] the power had the right to practice it. If everybody had been free to practice it, there would have been no use for the doctor to have gone through such hardship [fasting, etc.] to acquire it."

Power acquired in first instance as a gift from a power-bestowing being, although exclusively owned by the recipient, could be under

[18] For further details, see Flannery and Cooper, 1946, pp. 407-08.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

certain conditions, to be described as we go along, transferred by gift or sale, loaned, or delegated. 778 424 425

Individuals who had personal ancestral helpers practiced no kind of transfer, loan or delegation. After all, such helpers were in no sense "owned" by or the property of these individuals. The concept of the ancestral helper is fundamentally different from that of power in this as in most other respects.

While we obtained records of many instances of transfer, by sale or gift, of war, doctor, and love power, we obtained none of transfer of gambling power. Whether it was transferable at all is a point we could not fully clear up; more probably it was not, but at any rate actual transfer either did not occur or must have been excessively rare. According to The Boy: "Nobody wanted their [gamblers'] power. It became so that it was non-transferable. . . . There were some [possessors of power], and among these was the gambler, who would not transfer."

A transferee could not, so far as we could discover, retransfer power by sale or gift to a third party, except perhaps power to be lucky, especially invulnerable, in warfare. Our field data on this point are slim.

While women sometimes, as we have seen, got power direct from power-giving beings, very commonly,—"mostly" The Boy stated,—the powers they possessed were acquired by transfer from men, or from women.

Initiative in transfer could be taken either by the owner of a given power or by the party wishing to purchase it.

When power was transferred either by sale or by gift, the transferrer carefully taught the transferee all the songs, rites, objects and taboos that pertained to the power in question.

So much for transfer in general. We now turn to certain aspects, first of transfer by sale, and after that of transfer by gift.

Transfer by sale of doctoring power, at least of major doctoring power, was, according to The Boy and Thick, uncommon; that of love power, rather common.

A man who had by quest acquired doctoring power could transfer it by sale to a maximum of four people. After the fourth transfer, he, according to The Boy, "would have exhausted it so far as he 778 425

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

778 himself was concerned, he had transferred it all away," and "had
425 made himself negative again," that is no longer subject to the penalties of power possession. This first possessor was, so long as he kept his power, "a big fellow, but after he had transferred it to the four other people [men and/or women], there were now four big people, and he was such no more, so far as power was concerned and had no right even to sing the songs [proper to this power]. He was right where he had started [before acquiring this power]. The four could then go on and do just what he did when he alone possessed the power and they could [each, apparently] scatter it in four other different directions transfer it to four others." Such multiple diffusion by transfer did not, it seems, proceed far in actuality. "Scholars," as The Boy explained, "may all go through the same school under one great teacher, but seldom if ever do they all equal the teacher,—maybe only one, if any, will. So not all who got power by transfer were successful with the power because maybe they did not do or avoid doing all that the transferrer told them to do and avoid doing. So after a while the transferred power just died out."

832 Love power, or love medicine serving as the vehicle of power,
778 could, however, in contrast to doctoring power, be transferred by the owner, at least the original one, to any number of people. It
425 could be "transferred without limit and sold. The things," The Boy added by way of comment, "that were better for social life were limited. Love medicine [or power] was limitless, unless the possessor stopped gathering the root or bark or whatever it was he used to do his stuff."

Whether in cases of transfer by sale of doctoring power by a man to a woman the granting of sex intercourse by the woman was always and *de rigueur* the payment or part of the payment, is not quite clear from our field data. But that it was not uncommonly required is beyond question; in cases of man-to-woman sale transfer of love power, it was very common, in fact the usual thing, and seemingly more or less *de rigueur* to validate the transfer. When a woman sought such love power from a man who possessed it, she would watch her chance when his wife was not around and secretly carry out this part of the bargain. If the transferrer were

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

832
778
425

a woman, one of her adult male kin might be chosen by her to have sexual intercourse with the woman transferee.

To judge from the many anecdotes in circulation about this sex element in transfer payment, anecdotes dating mostly from quite recent decades in the memory of informants, it was a very common topic of gossip and of grapevine communication.

431
778

Transfer of power by gift, appears on the whole to have been much more common than transfer by sale. This accords with the general Gros Ventre pattern of transfer of other kinds of property. The Gros Ventre sold little; he gave much. Property changed hands within the tribe much more by donation than by barter.[16]

Gifts of power were made either to relatives or to friends, and while the giver still had his or her health, though perhaps of advanced age, and not ordinarily at least, on his death bed. A number of cases of offer to transfer by gift doctoring and love power during the possessor's lifetime have been previously given. War power, according to The Boy, "was commonly given, without payment, to a son or brother." "War medicine," according to Al Chandler, "was passed down from generation to generation; Bull Lodge gave his sons (Curly Head and Otter Robe) their war powers. Curly Head was a medicine man but Otter Robe was more of a warrior. Little Man, my adopted father, had some kind of war medicine from his brother, when his brother got killed Little Man took this medicine (a sparrow-hawk and a shirt) from him to keep it, and to use it."[17] While war power might pass down in a family, we obtained no clear instance of such transmission by inheritance proper, in the sense of transfer to take effect only upon the death of the transferrer.

[428]

778
426

Our data, all from The Boy, on loan and delegation of power, as distinct from outright transfer, are meager. "An owner of power to be lucky in warfare so as not to be shot could lend this to somebody, and if the owner were going to die he could tell the borrower to keep it." "Sometimes, when a man with medicine power was appealed to come and doctor somebody, he could say to his wife:

---

[16] For details, see Flannery, 1953, pp. 80-87.

[17] Some of Bull Lodge's war medicines are illustrated in Flannery, 1953, Plate 3; cf. also p. 92.

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the Grass dance may have seemed appropriate to the Gros Ventres as reminiscent of the feather headdress worn by the participants in the Women's Dance belonging to the series of vowed Sacred Dances. But regardless of the possible symbolism, these four offices, plus the four others allotted to women,—two whip owners and their two assistants,—gave the female sex a fair degree of recognition, and probably reflect the newer economic status of women which came about with the changing concept of inheritance. Formerly women, of course, had a right to their own property, but acquisition thereof was mainly through their own manufacture, such as clothing, or through the relatively rare gift of a horse or so. They did not come in for any valuable property through inheritance and a widow in those days was not even entitled to any of her deceased husband's belongings.

The holding of office in the Grass dance thus offered one of the very few means remaining for acquisition of status by the individual. The frequent transfer of offices meant that there was opportunity for many individuals within each category,—mature men, older warriors, young men, women,—to enjoy such public recognition.

Public display of generosity in giving away property to honor a loved one, which became such a marked feature of the Grass dance in its later phase, carried on and accentuated the method most common in older Gros Ventre culture for the gaining of individual prestige. Formerly there were many opportunities for this kind of ostentatious liberality,—when a pipe or a painted lodge was transferred, when a warrior returned from accomplishing brave deeds, when a person was participating in one of the Sacred Dances, when a person was named, when a child's ears were pierced, and so on. At such times the relatives publicly gave away as much of their property as they possibly could,—not to the recipient of the pipe, the brave warrior, the participant in the Sacred Dance, et al.,—but to someone else in his honor. Everybody would know what was given and by whom; people would make such comments as: "So-and-so is a fine man. He surely must think a lot of his relative—look at all the things he

426 231 The lending of horses, especially in an emergency, was not uncommon especially among relatives. The owner however retained full rights and could dictate to the borrower the use to which the horse might be put. "One time, for instance," according to Singer whose husband Iron Bucket was an eye-witness, 231 "there were four lodges or families of Gros Ventres who 426 happened to be traveling along separated from the larger group. 734 Bear Nose's mother was taking care of a young man who was exceedingly ill. She didn't own the horse which was drawing the travois upon which the young man was lying. As the party climbed a steep hill the lines tying the travois to the horse broke and the travois dropped to the ground. The woman who owned the horse was already at the top and called down: 'Just leave him. Just leave him. You are always hauling him around with my horse.' The others told this woman owner: 'Let us pack him once more and wherever we stop we will make a sweatbath house for him and leave him in there and leave food for him.' But the owner didn't want it that way. The others told her again: 'Just pack him once more. You should think of the time when he was a Scout [at Ft. Assiniboine] and he used to get a lot of grub for you [with his pay].' But she said: 'No. I won't be packing him any more.' He was pretty far gone—his body already covered with flies—but the one who had been caring for him finally was forced to abandon him there with his few belongings and without any shelter or anything else. When they left him he had a sheet over his head and he started to cry. But the owner of the horse was adamant. The others of the party could argue with her, but could take no further action. They moved quite a distance and that very night a terrible storm came up and probably finished the young man. The woman who had been caring for him died shortly thereafter, and the others thought this was a consequence of their having abandoned him so callously, but they all said: 'It should have been the owner of the horse who died instead of the one who cared for him."

231 721 Because the real competition among the northern plains tribes was for horses, it was not uncommon that a relatively well-to-do family might lose their entire pack of horses through a single raid by the enemy. The following experience of Coming Daylight illustrates the point.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

to himself: 'He gave to me, so I'll give to him.' But no one was in duty bound to give the equivalent in return." 574 431

Within the network of kinship obligations, exchange was more often indirect than reciprocal. A man could expect help from his father and from his mother's brother without being under obligation to return goods in like amount—he was supposed to repay them by conducting himself in such a way that they could be proud of him. This meant that the man in his turn would be especially generous toward his sister and her children, that he would adequately fulfill his duties toward his wife's people and provide goods in sufficient amount that his wife could fulfill her own obligations especially those toward her own brother's wife and children. 602 431

When others saw fit to honor an individual, say for bravery in warfare, that person was supposed to give away goods in large amounts to show that he appreciated the honor; and his relatives would join with him in giving, thereby increasing his, as well as their own, prestige. Likewise in paying for services, such as those of a medicine man, relatives would "chip in" to the best of their ability, the one assuming the largest part of the burden receiving the greatest boost in public esteem. A person who impoverished himself by giving generously at such times would be sure that, with his reputation thus established, he would soon be the recipient of gifts dispensed by others in like liberality. Meantime, however, he could not afford to sit back awaiting the presents from others. He would soon lose his coveted reputation and be referred to as lazy, an epithet strong enough to bring tears to the eyes of a man who entertained any ambitions whatsoever. 554 431 [602] [461]

If a person were in need, it was possible for him to request what was necessary, preferably from some relative who was well-to-do, and usually his request would be met. But a continual borrower lost status and a limit was thus put upon indiscriminate "begging." One woman stated: "If your sister asked you for something you would not refuse her, but it was to your brother's wife you would give things voluntarily. A woman had great pride in keeping her brother's wife well-dressed, and if you had an extra supply of dried berries she is the one you would think of first." 426 558 [607]

Thus we have the basis for the generalizations the Gros Ventres 431

604 man, but his maternal uncle would be given the greatest amount of credit for his nephew's prowess, and he would rejoice more than the others in his nephew's successes.

●426 A nephew could, if he wished, use his uncle's property without asking permission. If he damaged the property so borrowed, how-
604 ever, the uncle might reprimand him severely. Sometimes an uncle took the initiative and told one of his nephews: "All that I have is yours." In such a case, not only would the nephew be free to use the property without asking, but even if it were damaged—say a borrowed horse was carelessly injured or lost,—nothing would be said by the uncle nor any punishment inflicted. A nephew was supposed to be very respectful toward his uncle, but was freer with him than he could be with his own father. He could, for instance, joke with his uncle about being a lady's man, but he
[834] could not go too far in referring to sexual matters. He would not
[291] feel quite so embarrassed if his uncle should happen to see him unclothed, as would be the case with his father or his brother-in-law, but he would be far from comfortable in that situation.

604 The relationship between a man and his sister's daughter was not as direct as that between him and his sister's son. If a woman died, leaving orphan girls, it was not unusual that the wife of her brother would say: "I am going to take these girls so that I can have a son-in-law through them." This is what happened to Coming Daylight and her sister, whose maternal uncle took responsibility for them, although they were actually trained by his mother. It was he who arranged their marriages and it was to him they returned when widowed or divorced. His sons took the place of brothers to these two orphans.

While he did not take on the role of disciplinarian to his sister's daughters, whether or not their parents were living, the maternal uncle was expected to be generous to his nieces and to show his regard by giving things away in their honor. If a maternal uncle asked a niece for anything she possessed, she was supposed to give it to him without question, even though at considerable cost to herself. "Coming Daylight was asked by her uncle for the elk teeth she owned, to exchange with a Crow who had offered him an excellent race horse in return. She gave up these valuables without a word, though she hated to part with them since she did not know

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

their fellows, there were many other ones that fulfilled the same function. Of these latter, some, more distinctively ritual, will be dealt with later passim under "Flat Pipe Ritual"; others, more secular, may be mentioned now. 793 784

The keeper and co-keeper were not supposed to carry a pack on their own backs, except that on the march the Pipe bundle might be packed by the co-keeper. [482]

They could not mount and dismount a horse on the same side, but mounted from the right side and dismounted from the left.

If you handed something to the keeper it became his property, and if he handed something to you it became yours. If you thoughtlessly left anything with the keeper or co-keeper to keep for you, —if, for instance, you said: "Here, hold my horse (or my gun)," —the object became the property of the keeper or co-keeper and could not be gotten back. The keeper and co-keeper never loaned their robes, dresses, moccasins or other belongings, unless asked, and they were not supposed to be asked to loan. If you thoughtlessly broke the code and asked to borrow something from them, they were obliged to give it to you to own. [426]

Neither the keeper nor co-keeper was allowed to handle ashes, nor could the Pipe bundle remain in the keeper's lodge when ashes were taken out. Were this rule violated, the keeper or co-keeper or both would lose eyesight. When ashes were to be removed from the keeper's lodge, the Pipe bundle was taken outside the lodge by the co-keeper, and both the keeper and the co-keeper stayed outside, while another of the keeper's wives removed the ashes.

When a group of men were seated in a crescent or near-circle enjoying a purely social smoke together, each took a puff from the lighted pipe and passed it clockwise to the man on his left until it reached the end of the line. Then the pipe would be passed back anti-clockwise from hand to hand to the other end without anyone puffing from it. But if the keeper were in the group, he could take a puff not only when the pipe was passing him clockwise but also on its anti-clockwise return. The man passing the pipe to the keeper from either left or right had to raise it upward a little toward his own right before doing so. The first time the pipe reached the keeper, he would take a big puff, and point 276 793

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

832
778
425

a woman, one of her adult male kin might be chosen by her to have sexual intercourse with the woman transferee.

To judge from the many anecdotes in circulation about this sex element in transfer payment, anecdotes dating mostly from quite recent decades in the memory of informants, it was a very common topic of gossip and of grapevine communication.

Transfer of power by gift, appears on the whole to have been much more common than transfer by sale. This accords with the general Gros Ventre pattern of transfer of other kinds of property. The Gros Ventre sold little; he gave much. Property changed hands within the tribe much more by donation than by barter.[10] 431 778

Gifts of power were made either to relatives or to friends, and while the giver still had his or her health, though perhaps of advanced age, and not ordinarily at least, on his death bed. A number of cases of offer to transfer by gift doctoring and love power during the possessor's lifetime have been previously given. War power, according to The Boy, "was commonly given, without payment, to a son or brother." "War medicine," according to Al Chandler, "was passed down from generation to generation; Bull Lodge gave his sons (Curly Head and Otter Robe) their war powers. Curly Head was a medicine man but Otter Robe was more of a warrior. Little Man, my adopted father, had some kind of war medicine from his brother, when his brother got killed Little Man took this medicine (a sparrow-hawk and a shirt) from him to keep it, and to use it."[11] While war power might pass down in a family, we obtained no clear instance of such transmission by inheritance proper, in the sense of transfer to take effect only upon the death of the transferrer. [428]

Our data, all from The Boy, on loan and delegation of power, as distinct from outright transfer, are meager. "An owner of power to be lucky in warfare so as not to be shot could lend this to somebody, and if the owner were going to die he could tell the borrower to keep it." "Sometimes, when a man with medicine power was appealed to come and doctor somebody, he could say to his wife: 778 426

[10] For details, see Flannery, 1953, pp. 80-87.

[11] Some of Bull Lodge's war medicines are illustrated in Flannery, 1953, Plate 3; cf. also p. 92.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

778 'Wife, I transfer this power to you. You go and doctor this time.
426 I don't feel like doctoring today.' But before this she would have always accompanied him in his curing practice and knew exactly what to do and sing." Such a "transfer" was purely an *ad hoc* delegation, not a surrender of his power.

Power could be completely lost by the owner either during his lifetime or at death. During the owner's lifetime it could be lost by persistent disuse, by complete and final transfer through sale or gift, by "using it up," and as a result of breach of the rules. Where, for instance, a man had power to cure only a limited number of people, say four, with the conclusion of his fourth cure, the power was "used up" and so ceased. A certain Gros Ventre who had power to cause rain and storms made much use of it in a battle with the Crow but finally used it up and was killed by them.

If a person with power had not transferred it, on his deathbed the power embodied in or associated with some material object or living thing within him would come out of him, usually out of his mouth, and so his power would die with him. Even though the root or medicine he had used but had not transferred was known to others, they would not be allowed after his death to use it in curing. Thus lots of good medicines were not used, even though they were known to be efficacious.

Use of Powers

778 We now come to rites and procedures followed in the exercise of powers for war, gambling, love and various miscellaneous purposes, including legerdemain. A consideration of the use of the very important doctoring power is reserved for separate treatment in a subsequent chapter.

The great majority of those who went out in quest of power sought power to be great warriors and to become wealthy. The two aims were ordinarily closely related. A major goal of most
[721 war parties was the acquisition of horses,—the chief wealth of
556] the Gros Ventres in the old days. Both success in war and possession of wealth brought prestige, and such prestige in the individualistic competitive culture of the Gros Ventre was eagerly sought after.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

SOCIAL CUSTOMS.

000 The Gros Ventre system of terms of relationship has been given in a
605 former publication.[1]

601 Cousins, so far as the relationship was known, were called brothers and sisters, and they called each other's children son or daughter if the cousin
[582] was of the same sex as the speaker, or nephew or niece if the cousin was of
[587] the opposite sex. Any known relationship was a bar to marriage. The brother of a dead man sometimes married his widow, but this was not always the case.

583 Large amounts of property, especially horses, were given away for wives for the honor of the act, but there was no rule or definite custom covering the quantity of property so given. The horses might be given not only to the father, but to the brothers, uncles, and other relatives of the girl. Sometimes, without having received any gifts and apparently without any previous understanding, a man would give his daughter to a young man, who thereupon would give him horses, or distribute them among his wife's other relatives. Old men practised this custom in order to obtain the aid and services of a young man in caring for their horses and in other ways, and no doubt
585 sometimes also to insure a more certain food-supply. A young man on
431 marrying received a tent with all the proper furniture, usually from his prospective parents-in-law, but sometimes from his own parents, if they were the wealthier.

606 Although a young married man often lived with his father-in-law, the well-known taboo custom between mother-in-law and son-in-law — which
[591] forbade their speaking, looking at each other, or being in the same tent — existed among the Gros Ventre. There was, however, no father-in-law taboo. The mother-in-law taboo extended to the son-in-law's brother.

584 If a woman did not wish a man for her lover, she might send him to do a
721 certain act of bravery. If he returned successfully from war, having accomplished the deed, he was then accepted. This custom is said to have led to the death of many young men.

●428 At a person's death his property was inherited generally by his relatives. His father and mother, brothers, sisters, and children would receive part. His father and mother received the most. A man often disposed of his property before his death. If he died suddenly, as on being killed in war, his parents divided his property. It was not customary for a man on going to war to divide his property among his relatives in the contingency of his
[764] death. Property particularly valued by the dead person was buried with him.

[1] Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part I, pp. 9, 150.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

A wife inherited practically nothing from her husband. If she had been faithful to him and had been of a good disposition, her parents-in-law might give her a certain number of horses or other property. The tent was considered the woman's possession while she lived with her husband; but on his death, even this was no longer her property. If the tent was worth keeping at all, it generally went to the dead man's sister, if she was newly married. A man, on the contrary, inherited his wife's property, though he generally gave back part of it to her relatives. 428 562 [422]

A woman, on her husband's death, went back to live with her parents, or, if these were dead, with her brother, uncle, or other relative. An old woman, on the death of her husband, generally went to live with her children, most frequently with a daughter. 768

On the death of a brother, especially a beloved one, or of his father or his son, a man cut his hair and went out naked (with only a buffalo robe) on the prairie to cry from morning until late at night. Women, besides cutting their hair, and cutting themselves (especially on the leg) until they bled, would also go out to cry, naked from the waist up. A sister cut herself for a brother, but a mother mourning for a child underwent the most pain. Of course the mourning was greatest for an only child. In such a case, parents might give away everything in their tent and nearly all their horses, stripping themselves of property so thoroughly as almost to go naked. Some mourners fasted for a number of days. If, while a person was crying on the prairie, one should in joke attempt to scare him, he might kill the disturber. Mourners were the bravest people in war, caring about no danger whatever. 765 [304] [431]

Burial was in trees, on high rocks, or in caves inaccessible to wolves and coyotes. The corpse was wrapped in a burial robe. 764

A menstruating woman was called niniitixtj. It is said that she did not retire to a separate lodge, or eat separately from her family; but she did not approach a sick patient, because of the evil effect she would have on his condition by her presence. Some women were said to wear a breech-cloth during their menstruation. 841 [291]

In childbirth, women either lay or knelt. They grasped a stick supported in a horizontal position by two upright forked sticks set in the ground. After the umbilical cord had been severed, the end was left on the child. It was thought to fall off on the fourth day. The woman who had cut the umbilical cord received as a gift the knife she had used. A woman who washed a new-born child was given the vessel in which it was washed. The afterbirth was hung in a tree. If it were left lying to be handled, the child would be afflicted with sores. For three or four days after birth, the child was given suck by other women than its mother. This statement apparently refers chiefly to a woman's first child. 844 [846]

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

daughter, and might receive gifts from relatives, but would otherwise have few opportunities of obtaining horses. 231 556

In former times the rules regarding inheritance were fairly simple. If a man died, his relatives took the more valuable livestock, while anyone was free to come into the lodge and take any other personal property of the deceased which was not to be buried with him. The man's relatives would not, however, take the horses which belonged to his wife or wives, or which had been given before his death to his children. When a woman died she usually would have little valuable property in any case, but, again, any other woman might rush in and strip the lodge of whatever personal property might be therein, including food. The close family of the deceased were "so grief-stricken that they wouldn't notice who takes what," and "a husband would never keep anything of his wife's." It was said, too, that "women were braver than men in disposing of their property before death, and often gave gifts of personal property to those they wished to have them." 428 768 [431]

In objects derived from the white man, the value put upon them was mainly utilitarian. For example, in matching wagers on one occasion a man put up a gold watch. There was no one on the other side who had a watch to offer, but a spy-glass was considered the equivalent. It was explained that the value of the watch in dollars—whether it had a fine gold case or not—would not be taken into consideration. The question in matching was to find things of equal value to the Indian in his way of life. To illustrate this The Boy told of a gift to his father, Lame Bull, from a white trader on the Saskatchewan, of a hobble which locked. "Perhaps this didn't have a high value in dollars, but it was considered extremely valuable by Lame Bull because it saved him many a race horse. Even though the enemy might sneak a horse out of camp, being unable to unfasten the hobble, he would have to abandon the valuable horse before getting very far away." 177 435

On the other hand, while utility was certainly an important consideration in the Gros Ventres' evaluation of goods produced by themselves, various other elements were taken into account. A horse procured from the enemy was perhaps the most valuable of all things to the Gros Ventres; aside from other considerations, a man would have risked his life to obtain it and that in itself lent 435 554 231

CHAPTER II

THE FLAT PIPE

Keepership

The Flat Pipe was ordinarily in the custody of an official keeper called nätcä:ta' (nätcä, chief) with his head wife as co-keeper, nä:tciθä (chief woman) and one of their young children as pipe child, nätcəta:niθə'. 793 [778]

In olden times before the coming of the whites according to the tradition as handed down to The Boy and Thick, the Flat Pipe was hereditary in one of the families or bands—which one is unknown. The man and wife chosen, from within the family or band, to be keeper and co-keeper were usually a couple in the prime of life, not an old man married to a young woman or an old woman married to a very young man. A couple in the prime of life were chosen so that, even though they already had children, they could still have more. For it was the tribal law that they should designate out of their children, a boy or girl, born after they had entered upon their keepership to remain with them and to succeed to the keepership should both the keeper and his wife die by accident or sickness. Nearly always they designated a boy, rarely a girl, as the keeper had ordinarily to be a man. The Boy and Thick thought that this system of hereditary keepership came to an end long ago as a result perhaps of the fact that a keeper might have had no children or children died off, or the complete dying out of the family or band in which the Pipe was then hereditary. 793 428

In historic times, that is, as far back as definite tribal memory goes, non-hereditary succession has prevailed. It took two forms, elective and volunteer. In the first case, the initiative was taken by others than the prospective keeper; in the second, by the prospective keeper himself. To become an official keeper a man had to be formally inaugurated with a rite which will be described later. In certain emergencies the Pipe was temporarily without 793

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Keeper of the Feathered Pipe

The terms for the keeper, co-keeper and Pipe child of the Feathered Pipe were the same as those for the keeper, co-keeper and Pipe child of the Flat Pipe. 793

Apparently the same high qualifications were required in the keeper of the Feathered as in the keeper of the Flat Pipe. Those specifically recorded by us were: "he had to be some good man and wealthy and noted"; "he had to be a man of intelligence to learn and know the rites and traditions and to maintain the dignity of the ceremonial." In actuality, not all keepers measured up to these lofty standards, as some of our informants emphasized, with ample supporting evidence.

As with the Flat Pipe, succession to the keepership could be either appointive or elective or else volunteer. According to the origin story of the Feathered Pipe, the man to whom the Pipe was first given, appointed, apparently on his sole authority, his uncle as keeper and turned over the Pipe to him. [428]

The recent history of the Feathered Pipe for about the last 100 years can be pieced together from data furnished by Garter Snake, Al Chandler, The Boy, and Thick. 753 174

Iron Necklace was keeper somewhere around 1850.[1] He was succeeded by Big Beaver. Bull Lodge succeeded Big Beaver, his sister's husband as keeper. Garter Snake, daughter of Bull Lodge, became Pipe child at the age of six or seven. Bull Lodge had wanted to keep the Pipe until his son, Otter Robe, came of age and then to transfer it to him. But in 1879 or 1880 Bull Lodge was asked for it, asked four times for the Pipe by Sitting High, so he had to give in and transfer it to the latter. Sitting High held the keepership a long time, in fact until his death in 1905. This break with the traditional rule of a maximum 12 years is probably accounted for by the cultural disintegration which set in after the disappearance of the buffalo. As Garter Snake expressed it: "The new life had come in and there was no one to transfer the Pipe to." Little Man, Al Chandler's adoptive father, was Sitting High's son, and Al lived as a boy with Sitting High in the

[1] The Boy in 1948 told a long story about his grandfather, Crow Moccasin, who was keeper of the Feathered Pipe probably around 1830-1840. [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

832
778
425

a woman, one of her adult male kin might be chosen by her to have sexual intercourse with the woman transferee.

To judge from the many anecdotes in circulation about this sex element in transfer payment, anecdotes dating mostly from quite recent decades in the memory of informants, it was a very common topic of gossip and of grapevine communication.

431
778

Transfer of power by gift, appears on the whole to have been much more common than transfer by sale. This accords with the general Gros Ventre pattern of transfer of other kinds of property. The Gros Ventre sold little; he gave much. Property changed hands within the tribe much more by donation than by barter.[16]

Gifts of power were made either to relatives or to friends, and while the giver still had his or her health, though perhaps of advanced age, and not ordinarily at least, on his death bed. A number of cases of offer to transfer by gift doctoring and love power during the possessor's lifetime have been previously given. War power, according to The Boy, "was commonly given, without payment, to a son or brother." "War medicine," according to Al Chandler, "was passed down from generation to generation; Bull Lodge gave his sons (Curly Head and Otter Robe) their war powers. Curly Head was a medicine man but Otter Robe was more of a warrior. Little Man, my adopted father, had some kind of war medicine from his brother, when his brother got killed Little Man took this medicine (a sparrow-hawk and a shirt) from him to keep it, and to use it."[17] While war power might pass down in a family, we obtained no clear instance of such transmission by inheritance proper, in the sense of transfer to take effect only upon the death of the transferrer. [428]

778
426

Our data, all from The Boy, on loan and delegation of power, as distinct from outright transfer, are meager. "An owner of power to be lucky in warfare so as not to be shot could lend this to somebody, and if the owner were going to die he could tell the borrower to keep it." "Sometimes, when a man with medicine power was appealed to come and doctor somebody, he could say to his wife:

[16] For details, see Flannery, 1953, pp. 80-87.

[17] Some of Bull Lodge's war medicines are illustrated in Flannery, 1953, Plate 3; cf. also p. 92.

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the Grass dance may have seemed appropriate to the Gros Ventres as reminiscent of the feather headdress worn by the participants in the Women's Dance belonging to the series of vowed Sacred Dances. But regardless of the possible symbolism, these four offices, plus the four others allotted to women,—two whip owners and their two assistants,—gave the female sex a fair degree of recognition, and probably reflect the newer economic status of women which came about with the changing concept of inheritance. Formerly women, of course, had a right to their own property, but acquisition thereof was mainly through their own manufacture, such as clothing, or through the relatively rare gift of a horse or so. They did not come in for any valuable property through inheritance and a widow in those days was not even entitled to any of her deceased husband's belongings.

The holding of office in the Grass dance thus offered one of the very few means remaining for acquisition of status by the individual. The frequent transfer of offices meant that there was opportunity for many individuals within each category,—mature men, older warriors, young men, women,—to enjoy such public recognition.

Public display of generosity in giving away property to honor a loved one, which became such a marked feature of the Grass dance in its later phase, carried on and accentuated the method most common in older Gros Ventre culture for the gaining of individual prestige. Formerly there were many opportunities for this kind of ostentatious liberality,—when a pipe or a painted lodge was transferred, when a warrior returned from accomplishing brave deeds, when a person was participating in one of the Sacred Dances, when a person was named, when a child's ears were pierced, and so on. At such times the relatives publicly gave away as much of their property as they possibly could,—not to the recipient of the pipe, the brave warrior, the participant in the Sacred Dance, et al.,—but to someone else in his honor. Everybody would know what was given and by whom; people would make such comments as: "So-and-so is a fine man. He surely must think a lot of his relative—look at all the things he

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

SOCIAL CUSTOMS.

000 The Gros Ventre system of terms of relationship has been given in a
605 former publication.[1]

601 Cousins, so far as the relationship was known, were called brothers and sisters, and they called each other's children son or daughter if the cousin
[582] was of the same sex as the speaker, or nephew or niece if the cousin was of the opposite sex. Any known relationship was a bar to marriage. The
[587] brother of a dead man sometimes married his widow, but this was not always the case.

583 Large amounts of property, especially horses, were given away for wives for the honor of the act, but there was no rule or definite custom covering the quantity of property so given. The horses might be given not only to the father, but to the brothers, uncles, and other relatives of the girl. Sometimes, without having received any gifts and apparently without any previous understanding, a man would give his daughter to a young man, who thereupon would give him horses, or distribute them among his wife's other relatives. Old men practised this custom in order to obtain the aid and services of a young man in caring for their horses and in other ways, and no doubt
585 sometimes also to insure a more certain food-supply. A young man on
431 marrying received a tent with all the proper furniture, usually from his prospective parents-in-law, but sometimes from his own parents, if they were the wealthier.

606 Although a young married man often lived with his father-in-law, the
[591] well-known taboo custom between mother-in-law and son-in-law — which forbade their speaking, looking at each other, or being in the same tent — existed among the Gros Ventre. There was, however, no father-in-law taboo. The mother-in-law taboo extended to the son-in-law's brother.

584 If a woman did not wish a man for her lover, she might send him to do a
721 certain act of bravery. If he returned successfully from war, having accomplished the deed, he was then accepted. This custom is said to have led to the death of many young men.

428 At a person's death his property was inherited generally by his relatives. His father and mother, brothers, sisters, and children would receive part. His father and mother received the most. A man often disposed of his property before his death. If he died suddenly, as on being killed in war, his parents divided his property. It was not customary for a man on going to war to divide his property among his relatives in the contingency of his
[764] death. Property particularly valued by the dead person was buried with him.

[1] Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part I, pp. 9, 150.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

A wife inherited practically nothing from her husband. If she had been faithful to him and had been of a good disposition, her parents-in-law might give her a certain number of horses or other property. The tent was considered the woman's possession while she lived with her husband; but on his death, even this was no longer her property. If the tent was worth keeping at all, it generally went to the dead man's sister, if she was newly married. A man, on the contrary, inherited his wife's property, though he generally gave back part of it to her relatives. 428 562 [422]

A woman, on her husband's death, went back to live with her parents, or, if these were dead, with her brother, uncle, or other relative. An old woman, on the death of her husband, generally went to live with her children, most frequently with a daughter. 768

On the death of a brother, especially a beloved one, or of his father or his son, a man cut his hair and went out naked (with only a buffalo robe) on the prairie to cry from morning until late at night. Women, besides cutting their hair, and cutting themselves (especially on the leg) until they bled, would also go out to cry, naked from the waist up. A sister cut herself for a brother, but a mother mourning for a child underwent the most pain. Of course the mourning was greatest for an only child. In such a case, parents might give away everything in their tent and nearly all their horses, stripping themselves of property so thoroughly as almost to go naked. Some mourners fasted for a number of days. If, while a person was crying on the prairie, one should in joke attempt to scare him, he might kill the disturber. Mourners were the bravest people in war, caring about no danger whatever. 765 [304] [431]

Burial was in trees, on high rocks, or in caves inaccessible to wolves and coyotes. The corpse was wrapped in a burial robe. 764

A menstruating woman was called niniitixtj. It is said that she did not retire to a separate lodge, or eat separately from her family; but she did not approach a sick patient, because of the evil effect she would have on his condition by her presence. Some women were said to wear a breech-cloth during their menstruation. 841 [291]

In childbirth, women either lay or knelt. They grasped a stick supported in a horizontal position by two upright forked sticks set in the ground. After the umbilical cord had been severed, the end was left on the child. It was thought to fall off on the fourth day. The woman who had cut the umbilical cord received as a gift the knife she had used. A woman who washed a new-born child was given the vessel in which it was washed. The afterbirth was hung in a tree. If it were left lying to be handled, the child would be afflicted with sores. For three or four days after birth, the child was given suck by other women than its mother. This statement apparently refers chiefly to a woman's first child. 844 [846]

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

534 The large amount of individual variation within the limits of the general type characterizing these rattles occurs apparently also among the Arapaho star-rattles.

746 In the war-dance as it was held when first introduced, there were two men who had wands representing swords, and several wearing the familiar [293] belts of crow-feathers with tails falling behind and projections at the lower part of the back. As among the Arapaho, these belts are referred to the crow. A drum was used, made of a cottonwood board or slab bent into [534] a circle, covered both above and below with horse-skin, and hung on four sticks. Four drumsticks went with it, one of which belonged to the owner of the drum, the three others to three different individuals. The sides of the drum were covered, half with red cloth and half with blue, and the skin was painted half blue and half yellow. When the men who owned the swords, the crow-belts, and the drum, gave these away, which they generally did at [431] the same time, a dance was held. The new owners, in turn, by giving the objects to their successors, would furnish the occasion for another performance of the dance.

The war-dancers dressed quite variously. Some wore skunk-skin strips around the leg below the knee, beaded, and with small bells attached. Some wore similar strips around the head. Others had the well-known upright head-dress of deer-tail hair. Some carried fans of eagle-tails; some, whips; some, painted sticks with attached feathers. The dancing went on in a lodge similar to that of the star-dancers. The owner of the drum had his tent near this lodge in the middle of the camp-circle, and the members of the dance went to him to eat. If the head man of the star-dancers was popular, he was asked by the rival war-company to pitch his tent in the middle of the camp-circle, near the owner of the war-dance drum. There are said to have been no assistants in this ceremony, nor any old men as singers; but four of the wives of the dancers were selected to sing. The two men [624] with swords (kakaat) had functions similar to those of the two mounted men 626 with whips in the star-dance. They urged the laggard dancers to get up, and, if they fell down, struck them with their wands. If the man thus struck bore the blow like a man, as the Indians call it, the sword-bearer made him a present; but if he became angry he received nothing, and appears to have been looked upon with ridicule or contempt.

The war-dance as at present given is different from the form described. It is no longer a young men's dance, nor confined to a certain group. All the people of the tribe take part in it. It is very similar in general character to the present-day Arapaho crow-dance, as well as in the place it occupies in the life of the people. Among the Gros Ventre it is now the only dance held.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 hand, according as they belonged to one division or the other. Vessels of water were ready to pour on the racers in order to cool them. The four 526 "brothers," the dancers previously separate from the rest at the eastern end of the lodge, did not run with the crowd, but started out slowly together, their faces covered with their robes. They trotted at a slow pace over the same course as the other dancers. As they returned, long after the crowd, 796 the boys, young men, and young women of the camp, had gathered on both sides, and pelted them with buffalo-chips until they reached the dancing-lodge. There is, in this slow following of the pledger and his three companions, a reminiscence of the white-fool, the dancer of highest degree in the Arapaho crazy-lodge, who on all occasions contrasts by his slow movements with the other dancers.[1] After the return of all the dancers, [431] they presented horses loaded with property to their "grandfathers," and these made similar presents to them. These gifts seem to have been payments to the old men for their instruction and painting, and to have been made at the conclusion of the part of the ceremony which was under their control. From this time on, the dancers' wives returned to their tents, and took no further part in the ceremony.

After this followed two observances. It is not certain which of the two came first. A crowd of people were waiting for the dancers in the open. The dancers, wearing their best moccasins put on loosely without being tied, left the lodge; and the waiting people, mostly women and children, ran after them, pulling off their moccasins, and, when they could not succeed in doing so otherwise, seizing their feet, and tripping them as they went. The dancers did not try to escape, or save their moccasins, but [888] allowed them to be taken. Or, again, an old man who was poor was selected, and, having been given a pipe to smoke in order that he might 796 accept, he went to the east of the camp-circle. A buffalo robe was brought, 431 incensed four times with sweet-grass placed on burning charcoal or buffalo-chips, and then placed over the old man, with the hair side out, as, bent over, he knelt on the ground. The dancers gathered about him, and

[1] According to an Arapaho account obtained, somewhat different from those previously utilized, there are two white-fools, not one. It is not clear which information is more correct. The white-fools always follow the dancers. If one of the ordinary dancers should be behind them, he would become unable to move. This is the result of any violation of a rule of the [114 ceremony by a participant. In such cases the white-fools have the power to cure them by 171] taking off their owl-feather head-bands, and rubbing them over the body with them. The white-fools are addressed as beiçâbihin ("sisters-in-law," strictly, "brother or sister-in-law" of opposite sex from the speaker). The dancers, to look at a person, put their head to the ground, and pretend to look with their rump. They throw dung into tents, calling it "food." If people look at them through awl-holes in a tent, they at once shoot the tent in that place. Going out on the prairie, they say, "Let us not shoot into the air," and shoot up. When the arrows fall in plain sight, they cannot find them: if they fall into brush or tall grass, they find them at once. They imitate, often with obscene renderings, anything that they hear, such as a person's speech, or a dog's bark. They paralyze dogs by pointing at them an arrow to which teteâtcel is attached. They give the dogs they kill to their "grandfathers" to eat. As soon as they take off their head-bands, they become rational. Mooney's account of the Cheyenne and Arapaho crazy-dance, which seems to refer chiefly to the former, mentions two white-fools; compare Ghost-Dance Religion, op. cit., 1033.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the old man who had directed the ceremony stood by him. Until this time, the dancers' bows, which were to play so prominent a part in the dance of the next four days, had been unstrung. Each of the dancers carried a pair of moccasins in his belt, or perhaps some other property. The pledger now came up to have his bow stretched. The old man in charge of the dance, receiving the bow from him, rested it on the back of the crouching old man. Four times he bent it, and the fourth time slipped the string into its notch. Then he untied the three arrows from the bow and gave them to the young man, who put his moccasins or other gift under the croucher's robe. Another and another dancer came up with his bow, until all their bows had been strung on the back of the old man, and his robe swelled out from the accumulating gifts. 796 431

While the bows were being strung, the people took down the dancing-lodge, which, by the time of the return of the dancers to the centre of the camp-circle, was completely gone. The dancers now stood in a circle while the old man in charge of the dance, or, according to another account, two of the "grandfathers," sang for them. The long stick with rattling hoofs was shaken, and the young men danced for four songs. At the end of each song, they aimed an arrow at the sky, making a motion of shooting, and crying "Yaa!" At the end of the fourth song, all shot as high up as they could. As the arrows fell back they did not try to avoid them, and, it is said, were never hit. By this time the people had watered their horses and done whatever outdoor work was necessary, and retired to their tents, for, immediately after shooting into the air, the dancers rushed in all directions; and from this moment they had full liberty about the camp, except indoors, for four days. Any one seen outside of a tent was shot with the soft blunt arrows. He was pursued amid shots and blowing of whistles. If a man was caught, he was made to sit down, and all the dancers, seeing what was happening, gathered. If he rode, he was pursued on horseback until he was overtaken, whereupon he would say, "Do not wait: I will not give you a dance," meaning "Wait: I will give you a dance." Then they stood about him, and he sang and they danced. At the end of his song, every one shouted "Yaa!" and kicked him until he was knocked over. Perhaps he would say, "Kick me hard." Then they would barely touch him. Sometimes he said, "Now you must kill me." If, however, he said, "Do not hurt me," he would be hurt severely. Scarcely any one went out during these four days, except, of course, the dancers' "grandfathers," who were exempt from annoyance. 796 786

The pointed arrow tied to each bow, and ordinarily not loosened, was prayed over for each young man by his "grandfather;" and a piece of root esteemed as exceedingly powerful, and called tjitjäätsä" (Arapaho, tee- 411 796

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

411 796 teäätcei), was attached to the shaft just behind the point. This root is the well-known poisonous wild parsnip. The arrow-point seems to have been painted blue. Even a slight scratch with this arrow was, on account of the power of the medicine, supposed to cause fits and death. The theory was, that if any one became angry under the unbridled annoyances of the crazy-dancers, and attempted to resist, he would be shot with this arrow. It is, of course, extremely unlikely that this ever actually occurred, or, if it did, the offender was, as among the Arapaho, no doubt immediately cured by the dancers from his imaginary convulsions or paralysis. If buffalo were driven among the tents of the camp-

[293]

Fig. 34.

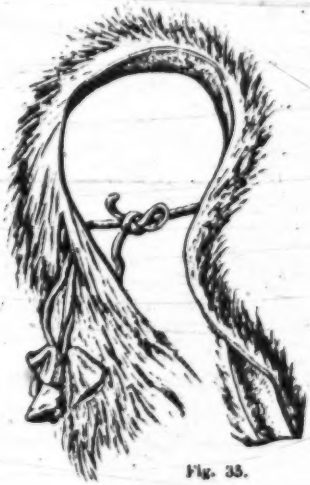


Fig. 35.

Fig. 34 (50-1884 b). Crazy-dance Regalia. Length, 29 cm.
Fig. 35 (50-1884 c). Crazy-dance Regalia. Length, 23 cm.

circle, they were shot with these arrows, and are believed to have been killed, even if only very slightly wounded. Dogs were also killed in this way.

796 After four days of this playing, the ceremony ended. At its conclusion the bows were given away to boys who were relatives of the dancers; but the other regalia were kept, as the dance was not infrequently repeated.
431

I: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 for the ends of the streamers of this robe have been preserved in a few sets
293 of these regalia. The head-band, leglets, anklets, and feather and fur attachments of the bow, also exist in two or more sets in the Museum. They agree entirely, so that only the set shown in Figs. 34, 35, 36, and 37, need be described. This set lacks only the whistle and whistle necklace, which have been supplied from another set (see Plate XII).

[411] The bow (see Plate XII) is three feet long, an inch wide, nearly rectangular in cross-section, unbacked, and slightly reddened. At each end is tied a piece of skin slit into seven fringes, to the end of each of which is wrapped a crow-wing feather. At the middle of the bow is tied a strip of bear-skin a foot long and an inch or less wide. With this are six owl-feathers, — all to be held to the bow, it will be remembered, together with some sage, by a thong. The pieces of owl-skin for the streamers on the robe (Fig. 34) need no comment. The anklets of badger-skin are (Fig. 35) a foot long, an inch or more wide, tied together by two thongs, and near one end have four small hoofs attached. The head, leg, and neck bands differ from one another only in length and in attachments. They consist of a strip of skin a quarter of an inch wide, completely wrapped with yellow porcupine-quills. In four places are areas extending about half an inch, that are covered with dark-brown fibres. Attached to the head-band (Fig. 36) is part of a small owl-skin, including one of the mandibles. The whistle on the neck-band (Plate XII) is made of the wing-bone of an eagle or similar bird, and appears to be unornamented. It has been broken. At one end of the leg-bands (Fig. 37) are four small crow-feathers, attached by red-painted thongs.

The Kit-Fox Dance.

796 The kit-fox dance, the next in order after the crazy-dance, was called nouha"wu; and the dancers, nouhunen ("kit-fox men"). In its general course this ceremony was exactly analogous to the first part of the crazy-dance. For four nights, the dancers' wives went out with their "grandfathers" to receive medicine, and for four days, the dancers themselves danced in the lodge erected in the centre of the camp-circle. On the fourth day of the ceremony, or "after four days," as the Indians say, the dancers went to the tent of a prominent chief and danced at his door, which was
[431] equivalent to asking him for gifts. The chief would give them horses and other property. Three other chiefs were accorded the same distinction. The camp thereupon broke, and the dancers, going ahead, put the property which they had received down on the ground in a row. The camp coming up, the brave men of the tribe made a charge on these things, as if they were

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

They also had rattles similar to those of the rank and file of dog-dancers,—a row of small hoofs attached to a stick,—except that the rattles of the tsôôyanchin were forked instead of single. In addition they each had a long wooden whistle. 796 554 292

Some of the "grandfathers" are said also to have worn scarfs, like the dancers; but as these were made of pieces of old tent-skins, undecorated and ugly, it is probable that this action was intended to be ridiculous.

The "shaggy dog" took his whistle, forked rattle, and head-dress with him when he went to the lodge, but left his crow-feather-covered shirt behind. When he was in the lodge, a woman was sent for the shirt. She put it on, and went to the lodge, wearing it. Standing before the "shaggy dog," she pulled it off, and, holding it open at the bottom, moved four times as if to put it on him. The fourth time, she drew it over and on him. The place of the two "shaggy dogs" in the lodge was at the western end, the middle of the back.

The dog-lodge is described as having been constructed like the crazy-lodge, and to have had the same small screen or partial enclosure at the eastern end, facing the entrance of the lodge. 796 [346]

The beginning of the dancing was as follows. One of the old men who would sing, went in a circle four times. He was followed by the two "shaggy dogs." The old man began to sing and dance, and the two "shaggy dogs" whistled. When they moved to any distance away from him, the old man motioned and clicked to them, as one does to a dog. Then they danced toward him. After this, the rank and file of the dancers stood up and danced. Four servants of the dance, said to have been chiefs, sat in front of the small enclosure at the east. When they thought that the dancers had danced long enough, one of these went among them and said, "Friends, rest." Thereupon they all stopped dancing, standing in their places. Then this man told a war story. When the singers thought that the dancers had rested sufficiently, they began to sing and the members of the company took up their dancing again. Altogether they danced four times, being made to rest each time by the exhortation of an old man who told a war story. This dancing took place four days, during which period the dancers were supposed not to sleep.

When at night the dancers left the lodge and danced before the tents of chiefs, begging for gifts, the two "shaggy dogs" are said to have stood by the door of the tent. It is therefore probable that the body of the dancers formed a circle in front of the tent, as they do among the Arapaho on this occasion. When the owner of the tent had given them property, he pulled at the flaps hanging at the sides of the feather-covered shirts of the "shaggy dogs," whereupon they sat down and the dancing ceased. This dancing for gifts is said to have continued for four entire nights. [431]

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

in the approach of the buffalo, even if previously there had been none in the vicinity of the camp. 796

The dancers carried representations of war-spikes or tomahawks, which apparently resembled the buffalo-shaped sticks of the first dance of the Arapaho. The sticks are described as being about as long as women's digging-sticks, and, like them, sharpened at one end. The other end, however, was bent. The stick was painted red, and a quill-embroidered strip of skin was wound around it as a handle. A buffalo-calf's tail and a bunch of buffalo-fetlocks, and no doubt other objects, were also attached. The stick was used as a rattle. 796 293 [534]

The conclusion of this ceremony presented a feature not found in the two preceding ones. According to one account, the gifts obtained by these dancers were received in payment from the spectators looking in at the lodge. After four days the camp broke, and followed the dancers. On reaching a place where the property had been laid on the ground, the people of the tribe stood in a long row, facing the east. One of the dancers filled a pipe, and selecting one of the poorest men in the camp offered it to him. When the old man took the pipe, the dancer prayed him to allow that all of his company should strike him (count coup on him). A bed of sage was then made for the old man in front of the assembled tribe. Along the edges of this bed, buffalo-chips were laid. The old man crouched on his hands and knees with his head toward the east, and, like the old man undergoing a similar humiliation in the crazy-dance, was covered with a buffalo robe the hair-side of which was turned out. The dancers faced him in a row and danced, rattling. After four songs they ran to the old man, and one after another struck him lightly, each placing beside him a moccasin or some other object, which the old man, on getting up, kept for himself. Then the dancers' "grandfathers" each picked up one of the buffalo-chips from the edges of the sage, and, when they had prepared them, one of the dancers squatted over each. Then his "grandfather," taking him by the shoulders, motioned with him four times, and the fourth time pushed him down. When they had all sat down, each "grandfather" spoke to his "grandson," telling him, "From now on, you need not be afraid to interrupt a sacred performance. You can talk obscenely to a chief, and no one will say anything to you." The people had been watching this performance, which marked the end of the dance. 888 796 [431]

The Bitahanwu.

As stated, this dance has been abandoned a long time, and very little information was obtained regarding it. Men are alive who have seen it, 796

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

171
796

to the Arapaho "white-stand" and "red-stand" head-dresses of upright feathers surrounding the head. The dancers are described as all old or elderly women, which among the Arapaho was not the case. The exceptions were two participants called "calves" (nihanou, "yellow calves"), who were middle-aged, or, at any rate, adults. Among the Arapaho the "calves" were children. There is a further difference, that, whereas among the Arapaho the "calves" were of high degree in the dance and for the greater part of the time were not allowed to stir, the Gros Ventre "calves" took the place of the atsaan or servants in the men's dances. They are said to have worn no regalia. The dancers were painted with the symbol of a pipe on each cheek, close under the eye. Old men sang for them, rattling but not using a drum. The women in dancing shifted their weight from one side of the body to the other, and cried like crows. Two tent-poles, two pegs, and two ropes belonging to the dancing-lodge, were painted respectively one black and one red. On the fourth day of the ceremony there were observances outside of the dancing-lodge. A prominent chief was selected to take a burning stick. The dancers, moving and running about like a herd of buffalo, pretended to scent the smoke of his fire from windward, and stampeded. Another distinguished warrior pretended to shoot at the herd as if they were buffalo. Both of these features of the ceremony are found among the Arapaho. A third distinguished man (or perhaps several) was honored by being offered a pipe to smoke, and on his acceptance was given a vessel of water containing berries. He then gave away property.

[292] [887] [554] [302] [431]

The Sun-Dance.

796

As stated before, the Gros Ventre sun-dance, haçeiha^{n}w^{u}, is not restricted to men belonging to certain age-companies, but, as among the Arapaho, can be made by any man.[1] Like the other dances, however, it is made as the result of the pledge of an individual for deliverance from sickness or danger. As soon as the pledge has been publicly announced, or as soon thereafter as the buffalo begin to get fat in spring, the pledger and his relatives begin to accumulate buffalo-tongues, which they slice and dry like buffalo-meat. They also save a buffalo-skin, which is packed with the tongues, two sticks being wrapped up in it. When the time comes, a large lodge made of two tent-covers is set up in the middle of the camp-circle. Into this many women enter at night to sing. This marks the beginning of the ceremony. The tent is called tjinaa^{n}w^{u} ("prairie-chicken lodge"); and the participants, "prairie-chickens" and "prairie-chicken women." The pledger brings his buffalo-skin to this lodge. He incenses it four times.

[1] See Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part II, p. 152.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

175 648 they had been hard put to it recently to ransom thirty warriors from the Crow—probably the wounded who had been abandoned in the panic following the ambush of 1832.[54]

So far as relations with the American traders go, in 1833 and subsequently the Gros Ventres were on their best behavior. Maximilian notes that the very large group of Gros Ventres, whom he met at the Judith River as he traveled with Mitchell of the American Fur Company on their way to Fort McKenzie, were surprisingly well-behaved. He adds, rightly enough, that it was to their self-interest to be so, in the light of the fact that formerly they had suffered with the traders on account of their bad reputation. He further remarks that the Gros Ventres were now known as dressing buffalo robes better than most of the other tribes. After trading a bit with the Gros Ventres where they met them, Mitchell invited them to meet him at Fort McKenzie. When the Gros Ventres arrived there, their chief men were received at the [439] Fort with the same pomp and ceremony as were accorded the Piegan chiefs in the preliminaries to actual trading. The Gros [431] Ventres, too, upheld their end by bringing the usual presents—a horse and some beaver skins—to present to the trader.[55]

This Fort had been established at the mouth of the Marias, very close to the later site of Ft. Benton, and was known first as Fort Piekann and the next year was renamed Fort McKenzie. It had been established at this point for dealing with the Blackfoot groups, especially the Piegan, and the surrounding tribes. At that time the American Fur Company was particularly interested in obtaining beaver skins, and one beaver skin was worth two buffalo robes. Later, as the market for buffalo robes opened up, the beaver gradually lessened in value so that finally two or three beaver skins became the equivalent of one buffalo robe.[56] Lewis has emphasized what the change in market meant for the Blackfoot groups.[57] Relations of the Gros Ventres with the whites improved, and there was a tendency for the Gros Ventres to become more and

[54] Cf. Ewers, 1943, p. 603: Maximilian, pp. 71, 75, 76.
[55] Maximilian, pp. 75–76, 126, 165.
[56] Bradley, p. 203, note on 204.
[57] O. Lewis, pp. 34–59.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

In April, when the sap rises, the Gros Ventres scraped the juice from the inner bark peeled from cottonwood and sometimes even from box-elder. They also chewed the gum from pines. Infusions of cherry bark or roots and peppermint were said to have been drunk as tea, but such concoctions were considered usually more in the nature of medicines. 262 272

So long as the Gros Ventres had the buffalo, relatively little in the way of foodstuffs from the white man were imported. Sugar, flour, occasional fresh fruits, coffee and tea were known and used to some extent after about 1855.[10] The possibility of obtaining whiskey, was, however, one of the items which determined the popularity of a given trading place. Incidentally, tobacco was an important item of trade after 1800, although prior to that time the Gros Ventres had raised their own.[11] 262 439 [273] [276]

Clothing and Adornment

The importance of the buffalo in the economy of the Gros Ventres was as obvious in clothing and in shelter as it was in food. The buffalo robe, dressed with the hair on, was perhaps the most valuable article inasmuch as it was not only a regular part of their garb, but also was the main article of trade with the whites after about 1830. When decorated, it had high prestige value as a gift. 291 [439] [431]

Seldom was the hide of a buffalo older than two years used for robes since the fur of those of greater age was usually scabby even in the fall when the coats were in best condition. It required the skin of a yearling to make a robe for a twelve-year-old, and the skins of calves made robes for smaller children. When the demand of the trade for robes was very great, the large wool blanket sometimes replaced the robe for wearing apparel and for bedding.

Most of the other articles of clothing were made from well-dressed deer, elk and antelope skins.[12] Deer and elk were more 281 291

[10] See p. 22.

[11] This tradition is confirmed by Cocking in 1772, who writes, p. 111, "The tobacco they use is their own planting which hath disagreable flavor. I have preserved a specimen." Kroeber's informants denied knowledge of the tradition.

[12] In 1854 Denig, pp. 464–65, describes the cloth bought for clothing for summer and fall wear, but states that a real hunter must have a buffalo robe, moccasins, mittens, cap, skin leggings and an extra buffalo robe.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

CHAPTER IV

ECONOMIC ASPECTS

Labor

In the production of economic goods the man supplied the great bulk of raw materials by means of hunting, doing relatively little collecting and processing. He was responsible, however, for the supply and care of the major means of production, the horse. The chief objects manufactured by him were bows, arrows, clubs, shields, and ceremonial equipment.[1] The woman, on the other hand, supplied only a small part of the raw materials, through collecting, but did most of the processing of raw materials and manufacturing. 462

Cooperation within the household was necessary for production, and the household was practically a self-sufficient unit with relatively little reliance on the cooperative work of others. In actuality there was quite a bit of mutual help, especially among relatives. There was, of course, a certain amount of dependence of the man on his fellows in hunting in the sense that men usually hunted buffalo in groups and, in view of the common welfare, an individual was restrained from selfishly hunting alone and scattering the herd on which his fellows were depending. Nevertheless the operation was a collective rather than a truly cooperative one because, once the chase started, each man was on his own and had the right of disposal over whatever game he killed. It was stated that in any given run the most a man could kill would be seven or eight buffalo and that almost inevitably some would get none. No one went home empty-handed, however, for the more fortunate 476 592 224 476 [431]

[1] Maximilian noted in 1833 that men make only arms and smoking equipment (p. 103), and that among the Gros Ventres were many war clubs "made of the long end of an elk's horn" and "daggers" of jaws and teeth of a bear (p. 75). For other details of materials and manufacture, see Kroeber, 1908, pp. 150-51. For illustration of a shield, see photograph, courtesy of Richard Pohrt, pl. 3. [411]

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

would share at least the meat, if not the hides, with the less fortunate, which latter would contribute by helping skin and butcher.

Butchering was quite an art and was considered the man's work, although occasionally women accompanied the hunting party if there were a shortage of men, as was liable to be the case especially in winter. Should the party have crossed a river to hunt, the meat was prepared for transportation on a raft by being cut into large chunks, and each two chunks skewered and joined by a thong of sufficient length to hang on the poles forming the raft. The raft was built by crossing two long poles at one end, the other ends free and forming an angle of about thirty degrees. Three or four shorter poles were placed crosswise and lashed firmly in place with rawhide. The paunch of the buffalo, after being washed out, was used as a container for the many leftover bits of meat and was tied to the middle of the lower rung of the raft. A whole beef could thus be loaded on such a raft and towed across by one horseman. When, as was more usually the case, the meat was to be packed back to camp by horses, the butchering was done differently but in such a way that a whole buffalo could be packed on a single horse.[8] Sometimes in winter when a small party went out and they could not pack all the meat back in one trip, the remainder was buried in the snow and called for the following day.

Once the proceeds of the hunt were turned over to the households of the individual hunters, it was the woman's task to cook the food for immediate consumption and to prepare the surplus for storage. Her most arduous and time-consuming task was the dressing of skins and the manufacture of these into finished articles of clothing, containers, lodge-covers, and so on. It was stated that skins in one stage of preparation or another were nearly always at hand.[9] "They didn't do things in a haphazard way because there was a certain time to do this and a certain time to do that." From the hides of buffalo killed during the spring and early summer, when the hair was not thick, they made the parfleshes and bags, soles for moccasins, rawhide ropes, and lodge-covers. In the fall, when the hide was furry, robes were made.

The older women informants described how, when they were

[8] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, p. 149.

[9] For some details on skin dressing, see Kroeber, 1908, p. 150.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The above case illustrates how it was possible for a man, in spite of a poor start in life, to rise. Children were instructed by their elders, as was Thick by his maternal uncle: "Above all things try to have horses. Try to have property and whatever you have, take care of it. By having lots of horses and property, people will respect you and look upon you as somebody." 556 867

Again Coming Daylight stated: "They used to think more of horses than of anything else. They were sure proud of owning a pinto pony. In telling stories when they wanted to describe the best they could think of they would say: 'You should have seen her horse—it was a big pinto pony.'" And in telling of a relative of hers, Woman Chief, Coming Daylight said: "Her husband was not very handsome, but they were well-to-do and she always rode top horses." 554 231

While all horses were as a rule well cared for, special attention was devoted to the buffalo horses. On the hunt, for instance, these horses would be led along unburdened by pack or rider to keep them fresh. They were ridden only for the actual chase and after the kill were turned loose to roll around and graze like young colts. When the butchering was completed the meat was packed on other horses and the swift buffalo horses were then led home again. These horses were ridden on social and ceremonial occasions, when their owners wished to show off, and of course the soldier societies were well mounted, but such use amounted to no more than a good work-out, and these valuable horses were never abused nor wilfully exhausted. 231

Children were exhorted to take care of their property, especially of horses, and the girls were advised that "a mare is worth everything—it increases—treat her well." It was stated that some attention was given to breeding. A man might judge that a colt showed possibilities of becoming a fast horse. If it fulfilled the early promise the colts it sired would be watched. The less likely of these would be castrated. Likewise, a good mare would, if possible, be retained by the owner for breeding. A man who owned a particularly good buffalo horse might, on his deathbed, either order that it be killed at his grave or give it to some relative he knew cared well for horses, with instructions never to abuse it nor give it away. [867] [763 768 431]

231 721 got scared and ran to the other side of the horse. Finally she took a big stick and threw it at the white thing and still it didn't move so she went closer and found it to be a Hudson's Bay blanket just soaking wet. The enemy must have used it when they crossed the river. So she dragged it home to her lodge. When she got there she called to her grandmother: 'Is he there?' Her grandmother said: 'He is.' She was still furious at her husband and called to him: 'Come out! I am giving you this,' and she said it in the way people speak when they are giving something on return from war. She was giving her husband his own buffalo horse! He however didn't say anything or make any exclamation. This so enraged her that she took the blanket and rolled it up as small as she could and threw it at him, hitting him on the chest saying: 'Here is another thing I brought you!' Then he laughed. But she had at least saved one of the most valuable horses.

[431] "The next morning the rest of the Gros Ventres in the party moved on, leaving this family behind. But fortunately some others came along and seeing their plight gave them horses, for example, Pemmican gave one to Coming Daylight, Little Shields gave her uncle one, and Sleeping Bear gave her husband one."

231 436 The importance of various transactions could be gauged by whether or not a horse were included, other things such as fancy clothing, ornaments, guns, etc. being mentioned as "thrown in." [554] A person who gave a horse in whatever connection accrued prestige for himself and at the same time showed in what esteem the donor [583] held the recipient. Horses were generally included in the bride price; in inaugurating the more serious type of enemy-friendship; in payment for services of the medicine man in curing certain types of illness, and in payment to the ceremonial grandfather as well as in payment to the namer or ear-piercer of a child; in settling disputes; in gambling; in gifts to others in honor of relatives, and in meeting certain other kinship obligations.

231 556 Horses could be acquired by a man through raiding the enemy; by gift from relatives and from non-relatives in honor of someone else or in instituting the enemy-friendship; in the bride price of a sister, daughter, or maternal niece; in payment for services rendered; in gambling; through inheritance; in trading with the whites. A woman might share in the bride price of her brother's

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

daughter, and might receive gifts from relatives, but would otherwise have few opportunities of obtaining horses. 231 556

In former times the rules regarding inheritance were fairly simple. If a man died, his relatives took the more valuable livestock, while anyone was free to come into the lodge and take any other personal property of the deceased which was not to be buried with him. The man's relatives would not, however, take the horses which belonged to his wife or wives, or which had been given before his death to his children. When a woman died she usually would have little valuable property in any case, but, again, any other woman might rush in and strip the lodge of whatever personal property might be therein, including food. The close family of the deceased were "so grief-stricken that they wouldn't notice who takes what," and "a husband would never keep anything of his wife's." It was said, too, that "women were braver than men in disposing of their property before death, and often gave gifts of personal property to those they wished to have them." 428 768 [431]

In objects derived from the white man, the value put upon them was mainly utilitarian. For example, in matching wagers on one occasion a man put up a gold watch. There was no one on the other side who had a watch to offer, but a spy-glass was considered the equivalent. It was explained that the value of the watch in dollars—whether it had a fine gold case or not—would not be taken into consideration. The question in matching was to find things of equal value to the Indian in his way of life. To illustrate this The Boy told of a gift to his father, Lame Bull, from a white trader on the Saskatchewan, of a hobble which locked. "Perhaps this didn't have a high value in dollars, but it was considered extremely valuable by Lame Bull because it saved him many a race horse. Even though the enemy might sneak a horse out of camp, being unable to unfasten the hobble, he would have to abandon the valuable horse before getting very far away." 177 435

On the other hand, while utility was certainly an important consideration in the Gros Ventres' evaluation of goods produced by themselves, various other elements were taken into account. A horse procured from the enemy was perhaps the most valuable of all things to the Gros Ventres; aside from other considerations, a man would have risked his life to obtain it and that in itself lent 435 554 231

435 value. Thus any object captured from the enemy, no matter how
554 trivial it might be, was more valuable than a duplicate of that same
231 thing obtained in any other way, and could be used to initiate an enemy-friendship, one of the most important of Gros Ventre transactions. A man who gave a horse, rather than or in addition to other items—to establish the enemy-friendship, to pay for the curing of a relative, to someone in honor of his relative, to his ceremonial grandfather for guiding him through the Sacred Dance, to wager in gambling, to show how much he thought of his brother-in-law in return for so simple a gift as the flesh of a puppy—would gain in prestige, for he thus established for himself a reputation for "being somebody."

435 The amount of labor that went into the making of an object, such as the polished deer-hoof trimming on a robe, was an element in its value. When the robe was old and worn the recipient thereof
[431] would remove the fringe and return to the donor "so she could use them again." Scarcity, too, entered into evaluation of goods. Eagle feathers were, for instance, more valuable than other kinds of feathers. Again, as to elk teeth, it was explained: "The elk has only two teeth that are like ivory,[11] and so it takes a long time to
[237 accumulate them. They are to us Gros Ventres like pearls are to
301] the whites. They were our greatest decoration. They are valuable even today, and, while imitations are sometimes used, you can always tell the difference."

Exchange and Distribution

439 There was actually no need for economic exchange within the tribe, with the object of obtaining the necessities of life, but a need had developed for exchange with the fur traders to obtain guns, whiskey, metal objects—kettles, scraper-blades, etc.—cloth, tobacco, beads, paints, and so on. After about 1830, the medium of exchange with traders was the buffalo robe, which rapidly increased in value at the expense of beaver.[12] Traders on the Missouri accepted other items produced by the Indians, but everything was equated in terms of robes.[13]

[11] These are the rudimentary canines. Cf. Seton, v. 3, p. 5.

[12] Bradley, pp. 203–04.

[13] According to Denig, p. 421, an Assiniboine chief on Jan. 8, 1852, was

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

439 wives had vowed to cover a Pipe, undoubtedly he would try to include in his purchases the requisite length of black cloth. Individuals of course differed. In view of their labor, the wives would expect to share in the return therefor which the husband was able to secure from the trader, but this expectation was not always met.[17]

The items thus obtained were consumed by the Gros Ventres in the same ways as those goods of their own manufacture—some being directly consumed, some entering into further production, and some being exchanged on the principle of gifts and of payments for services, and in gambling.

554 A man would accumulate a surplus only to expend it as generously as possible in order to attain prestige. The person with
431 a reputation for generosity rose in public esteem, and was in turn
439 the recipient of many gifts, whereas the man with only one horse and only one wife could not afford to meet the demands for hospitality and for generosity in other transactions, and thus could not profit by the system of indirect and deferred exchange.

262 Sharing of food was an important element in attaining prestige
574 through generosity. A person known to be stingy with food would
554 lack status. The ideal was often preached to children embodied in
867 such statements as the following: "If you have visitors, even though you don't have much food, give the last of it to them."

574 Should a male visitor drop in unexpectedly, the first thing a man did was to tell his wife to cook and she was expected to comply. How seriously this was regarded may be seen from the following case told by Singer: "One time my husband, Iron Bucket, went with a friend to visit the latter's brother. The sister-in-law was naturally a stingy woman and made no move to feed them. Her husband was sitting there fixing arrows and he told her: 'Hurry and cook. If you have nothing, ask for meat at one of the lodges.' This woman had a big shaggy head and sat there with her head bowed and her husband couldn't make her move. After a while, however, some meat was brought in from hunting, and this woman went out, got it and threw it down hard inside her lodge. She was mad. And instead of giving them in a nice way the manifolds and liver that they ordinarily eat first, she slung

[17] For a case in point, see p. 178.

574 your arm because they always get after me if I feed any one.' So as I was going along the other two wives were coming back with the wood and saw me. They asked this third wife what I had wanted and she said: 'She came here to beg.' They asked her: 'Did you feed her?' and when she said no, the other two scolded her saying: 'You should have fed her at least a little bit' and continued to bawl her out for being so stingy."

While not all individuals lived up to the standard of casual hospitality, the majority seemingly did so, and business negotiations were usually transacted while visiting.[18] The individual who [554] dispensed food liberally could expect a return from others, although not necessarily the ones whom he had fed. Furthermore, if a man wished to sustain a good reputation he was expected to entertain well. It was customary, therefore, when fresh meat had been brought in for a man to tell his wife to cook and then he called out: "So-and-so, come and smoke," to as many as he wished to [554] invite. When the guests arrived he greeted each and assigned him to a place in the lodge, the most honored guests being seated in the back opposite the opening. After the guests had eaten, the host filled the pipe from a plentiful supply of "mixture," and the smok- [276] ing continued until the host gave the sign for dispersal by knocking the ashes from the pipe.

553 574 On more formal occasions, such as a naming feast, the host would ask some older man with a strong voice to act as announcer, and in such case the latter would call out by name each guest and say who was inviting him. Ordinarily a man would invite his own age group, his close friends, but it was not customary for the wives of the guests to come. If a woman wished to invite others, she would go to the various lodges and invite them personally. In this type of planned hospitality there was more in the nature of direct exchange although it might be considerably deferred.

574 431 In addition to hospitality, ostentatious liberality accomplished circulation of goods within the tribe. From the Gros Ventre point of view: "Presents were usually given with the intention of doing good and if no return were made, nothing was said or done. But often it turned out that at some later time the recipient would say

[18] Cf. Denig, pp. 514–15.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

to himself: 'He gave to me, so I'll give to him.' But no one was in duty bound to give the equivalent in return." 574 431

Within the network of kinship obligations, exchange was more often indirect than reciprocal. A man could expect help from his father and from his mother's brother without being under obligation to return goods in like amount—he was supposed to repay them by conducting himself in such a way that they could be proud of him. This meant that the man in his turn would be especially generous toward his sister and her children, that he would adequately fulfill his duties toward his wife's people and provide goods in sufficient amount that his wife could fulfill her own obligations especially those toward her own brother's wife and children. 602 431

When others saw fit to honor an individual, say for bravery in warfare, that person was supposed to give away goods in large amounts to show that he appreciated the honor; and his relatives would join with him in giving, thereby increasing his, as well as their own, prestige. Likewise in paying for services, such as those of a medicine man, relatives would "chip in" to the best of their ability, the one assuming the largest part of the burden receiving the greatest boost in public esteem. A person who impoverished himself by giving generously at such times would be sure that, with his reputation thus established, he would soon be the recipient of gifts dispensed by others in like liberality. Meantime, however, he could not afford to sit back awaiting the presents from others. He would soon lose his coveted reputation and be referred to as lazy, an epithet strong enough to bring tears to the eyes of a man who entertained any ambitions whatsoever. 554 431 [602] [461]

If a person were in need, it was possible for him to request what was necessary, preferably from some relative who was well-to-do, and usually his request would be met. But a continual borrower lost status and a limit was thus put upon indiscriminate "begging." One woman stated: "If your sister asked you for something you would not refuse her, but it was to your brother's wife you would give things voluntarily. A woman had great pride in keeping her brother's wife well-dressed, and if you had an extra supply of dried berries she is the one you would think of first." 426 558 [607]

Thus we have the basis for the generalizations the Gros Ventres 431

Thus we have the basis for the generalizations the Gros Ventres
183 make about their own culture. The principle seemed to be that
431 the more one gives, the more he gets. Coming Daylight explained:
"Those who are stingy don't come up, they just go back, back, back. Those who are generous gets lots of things. My maternal uncle was very generous and I try to follow his example. I feed everybody—old men, children and everybody—and people give me lots of things. Stingy people would eat all by themselves and nobody would give things to anyone like that."

The attitude is further illustrated by the following statement by Singer in explaining that the one selected as Feather Pipe Keeper had to give up everything he owned and would be sitting naked and bereft of all property: "Then his relatives and friends bring him things to live on. It is a great thing to give to someone like that. But these people kind of share everything and it holds back the ones that are prosperous. Our belief was that in a little while the ones who give have everything again. This didn't mean that a person could be lazy since it was 'thrown up' to anyone if he sat around and didn't work."

183 Again, according to Coming Daylight, "Formerly they all
431 seemed to work in a bunch and work hard for a living. It seemed
476 like they were all one, and always helped one another and treated one another to things, especially to something they thought the other person didn't have. If a bunch of women went out to pick berries, they helped one another with pounding. If they had hides to tan, others seeing the work going on came and helped and in no time the work was done. Even if they dug turnips, which are hard to get, should they have brought in a lot, they passed them around. If someone had no horse to use in hunting, someone loaned him one."

Mary Ereaux mentioned: "The Gros Ventres are great ones for sharing and that keeps the more industrious ones down. They are not as present as generous as they used to be because they would be entirely out. But even today if a woman brings you some berries, later on you give her some sugar or something she needs. That is the way they always lived and still do."

In payment for services there is no set "price," so to speak, but there was a gradation according to the kind of service rendered. If an older experienced woman were called in to design a new

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

lodge cover, the hostess provided food and there was no other direct remuneration. If one sought knowledge as to how to use an ordinary medicinal root, something was given in exchange, but in a relatively small amount. On the other hand in compensation for the services of a medicine man, not only was food prepared, but in addition a much greater amount of property was given to the doctor, who in turn would see that those who had accompanied him to help in singing at the cure, would receive some goods as well. The amount offered to the doctor by the one paying for the services was governed by the reputation of the medicine man as well as by the individual's regard for his own reputation for generosity. People would say: "Look how much so-and-so thinks of his relative who was sick—he gave so much to the one who cured him." If the patient were very ill a whole family might really impoverish itself in paying doctors, were it necessary to call in one specialist after another, as sometimes happened. 183 431 476 [956]

Although apparently there was a tendency to call on relatives to perform services—such as naming a child, telling a war story at the erection of a new lodge, and so on—remuneration was forthcoming, although perhaps on not so large a scale as if a non-relative were called on to perform the same offices. [602]

In addition to exchange of goods effected through generous hospitality and the prestige-requirements of ostentatious liberality, including payment for services, the distribution of goods within the tribe was aided by gambling. Wagers were matched by two competing individuals and bet on an all-or-nothing basis. Considerable amounts of property changed hands at a single match.[19] [525]

[19] For a discussion of gambling among the Gros Ventres, see Flannery and Cooper, 1946.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

case of necessity pay the indemnity. Other people might say to a man that it was of no use to help that nephew, that he was no good. Yet the uncle did not give up trying to save face for the nephew, and to do his best to shield or rehabilitate him—but at the same time he "talked turkey to him." 604

Even after a man was married, his maternal uncle had the right of disciplining him. If a husband mistreated his wife undeservedly it was said that his maternal uncle could step in and take the wife temporarily away from his nephew, letting him shift for himself, doing his own cooking and so on, "until he came to his senses." A man would have to take such treatment from his uncle, it was said, because public opinion condemned the husband and backed up the uncle, who was considered within his rights. [684] [626]

Furthermore the maternal uncle would feel duty-bound to protect his nephew from danger. An extreme case was cited in illustration. "A Gros Ventre boy was captured by the Crow when fairly young and he remained among them after he grew up although he could have returned. On one occasion the Gros Ventres surrounded a war party of Crow among whom was this young Gros Ventre man. The young man appealed to his mother's brother to save his life, and the uncle responded by using every argument he could think of. The other Gros Ventres in the party refused the plea, however, on the grounds that the boy had previously had the opportunity to return to his own people, and asked: 'Why didn't he think of his uncle then?'"

On the other side of the picture, if a young man were successful and "on the way up," as the saying goes, his maternal uncle had priority over the boy's father or older brother in helping him by giving generously to him in private and by giving away publicly in his honor as lavishly as possible. It was stated, for instance, that if a young man was ready to go to war, his uncle might go to him and give him a horse, encouraging him to face the enemy bravely and to show courage under fire. He would tell his nephew: "I'm going to watch you. Here is your chance to show what you can do." Thus he might "steal the show" from a father or older brother who themselves might have intended to help the boy off to a good start. Because it was the uncle who did this, nothing would be said. All his relatives would be proud of a successful young [431]

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

607 A woman was, however, expected to be especially generous to her brother's wife. Coming Daylight gave, as example, her own experience at the time of her first marriage. "One day, shortly after I had arrived at my husband's home, his sister, Watches All, brought me a couple of skins saying: 'Now you take the flesh off these hides. You are known to do a good job, and since my eyesight is poor I might cut the skin.' So I did what was asked, never dreaming that one of these skins was to be a robe for me. Some time later Watches All invited me and another young woman who was married to my husband's cousin, to a lodge. When I arrived I found the lodge full of old women. I was told to go around to the place of honor in the rear, where two robes were placed. When the other young woman arrived, they told her to take her place beside me. We were both to sit beside the robes and not to rise until they were all through. Watches All had invited, among the others, the woman who had 'initiated' her and who acted as a sort of teacher. Watches All said to this woman: 'You are going to initiate my sister-in-law with this robe.' So they made a smudge and Watches All held one side of the robe and the woman held the other, as they stood behind me. Then they held the robe toward the fire three times, making the motion as though to put it about my shoulders, and on the fourth time they actually put it around me, tying it at the breast and telling me not to hold it on with my hands. Each of the four times the motion was made, the woman blew on the robe spraying it with a powdered root which she had in her mouth. Then they went through the same procedure for the other bride. Finally, we were told to walk out without picking up our old robes, which we had left by the door when we entered, and which were to be given to two of the oldest women present. The new robes were beautiful. They were embroidered with porcupine quills, fringed with deer-hoofs, and sprinkled with mica, which glittered in the firelight as we moved. It was certainly fine to have such a beautiful new robe; and right away, my husband gave his sister a horse because she had been so good to me. Later on, I made her some moccasins."

607 431 292

In addition to the special honor a woman might show her brother's wife by a ceremony such as described above, she would in general take pride in keeping her well-dressed. For instance Mary

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

explained: "Mrs. Curly Head was the best-dressed woman I knew. Her husband's sister kept her well-dressed. A woman has a lot of pride in the appearance of her brother's wife, and the old women tell us that it was the same in the old days." Cora corroborated this by stating: "My sister and I would load my brother's wife with presents. And if he had more than one wife, it would be the same,—a woman is good to her brother's wife no matter how many times he might be married." Coming Daylight mentioned that she made it a point to bring her cousin's wife—she had no blood brother—especially nice gifts whenever she made a trip and added that in former times, just as today, when a woman distributed berries she had picked, the first one she would think of would be either her brother's wife or her son's wife. 607 431 [431]

About all that a woman did for her husband's sister was to make her occasional gifts of moccasins. The giving of moccasins, however, had a significance far beyond what their extrinsic value suggests. Mary illustrated this by the following incident: "Flat Head is my cousin. He has three half-brothers, all of them having the same father but different mothers. I treat these three in the same way I treat Flat Head, namely, as a brother. One of these men died last spring, and his wife, who is of course my sister-in-law, came and brought me a pair of moccasins. So when she was leaving I gave her a woolen shawl which I had just bought, and a dress which I had made and intended to display in the bazaar. My husband's niece, who is young and doesn't understand the old ways, said reproachfully to me: 'Why, Aunt Mary, you gave up that nice shawl you wanted so badly.' So I told her: 'Surely—I couldn't let my sister-in-law go out of here without giving her something! You should know that when anyone gives you a pair of moccasins it is a big thing. It is as much as anything I can think of—as much as a bottle of whiskey or of brandy!'"

Grandparents

The relationship between grandparents and grandchildren was a free-and-easy one, unmarked by the reticence which characterized the parent-child relationship, or by the feeling of restraint which obtains between so many relatives of opposite sex. "A grandfather can say anything he likes to his granddaughter, and vice 603

603 versa. Grandparents, for instance, can tell folk-tales and stories, the subject-matter and details of which no parents would mention in the hearing of their children." A woman would think nothing of teasing her grandmother about men. The following is typical of the milder sort of joking which is customary, but which would be considered highly improper toward parents. "Coming Daylight's granddaughter came into her house to borrow a knife. The old woman told her: 'Don't lose that knife. I have had it for a long time and I love that knife.' Whereupon the granddaughter replied: 'Yes, you love that knife just like you love your sweethearts!' and the several women present had a good laugh over this joke." Again, Coming Daylight herself told of an old man who was grandfather to her maternal uncle and thus also her "grandfather." She said: "One day when I was still a young woman, this old man asked me why I didn't come to him to obtain medicine power from him. I replied: 'Oh, I wouldn't come to you [831] because I know that you are one of those medicine men who includes sexual intercourse as payment, and if I came to you, you would try to have me too!' Of course I could never have said that to anyone in my parents' generation."

Grandparents are said to have been indulgent toward their grandchildren. They might occasionally give advice, and indeed [868] it was expected that a grandmother would train her granddaughter not only in skills and techniques, but also prepare her for what to expect on the physical side of marriage, warn her not to arouse her husband's jealousy, etc. When in trouble, however, a grandchild could discuss any matter with his grandparents. They would give counsel, but never scold. A man would usually not count on material aid from his grandparents, but, on the other hand, he was not expected to contribute to their support to any greater degree [431] than he would to that of any old persons were they in need—namely, by giving an occasional present of food or clothing.

Siblings of the Same Sex

593 The relationship between brothers on the one hand and between sisters on the other was a more or less casual one. Family loyalty and ordinary generosity were expected, but formality was lacking. "A girl and her sisters could, of course, laugh and joke and tease

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Names may be bestowed on account of dreams. Coming Daylight named one of her grandchildren that way. "She dreamed that there was a big gathering and that she was looking for this little grandson. In reality of course he was an infant, but in the dream he was three or four years old. There was an old man, a very old man, dressed all in white, who said to her: 'Why, there goes "White Skunk" up that way.' As she looked she saw her grandson running in the distance and he seemed to be now a tall young man. Upon waking, she told her dream to her daughter. The daughter in turn told her husband: 'My mother had a dream and "White Skunk" is what the old man called him.' The husband said: 'Fine. We will call him that. Now he will reach old age.'" 553 787

If the name is from a dream, the person tells the dream at the time of the naming. This is the way Singer was named by Old Man Sitting High. Occasionally a person might volunteer to name a child on account of a dream, although not always because he had dreamed of a name. "Before one of Cora's children was born, Stiff Arm came to her and told her he had had a bad dream about her. He said: 'In order to prevent my bad dream coming true, I will name the child.' Cora was scared because he was a medicine man. So she had to have a big feast and invite lots of people and give Stiff Arm a horse. There was the formal ceremony. Stiff Arm had given Cora and her husband the choice of three names, derived from his medicine powers: 'White Eagle,' 'Rides Down Hill,' and 'Sailing Eagle.' They chose the last, but the boy was sickly and they had a hard time rearing him. Her relatives thought she should change his name, but she never bothered to do so. He is a young man now."

It was customary that "when a child gets sick through the given name," the name be changed. The Skinners, for instance, hired Stiff Arm to name their boy. He called him "White Eagle" but he was sickly, so his grandmother, Ghost Calf, and Coming Daylight were the ones that changed his name to that of his grandfather, "Big Man." Ghost Calf told the boy's father to give away two dollars at the dance when she announced the new name. It was stated that in any case the namer should be a healthy person. 553 [431]

Old folks sometimes gave away their own names to children, as in the case of a man nicknamed Iron Bucket, whose grand-

553 father had given him his own name, "Bear Teeth"; and in that of Ragged Robe's wife who gave her name to a little girl. In this latter case, at least, the woman continued using her own name.

Except in those cases where the name of a relative is given, as is seemingly the rule nowadays, the name must have some specific relation to either the war deeds or the medicine powers of the namer. Singer remarked that one time, when she had been very lucky in locating some weapons abandoned by the enemy, she was looking forward very much to naming a little relative "Finder" in connection with this exploit. Unfortunately, however, the child's father had already had a name for her so Singer was disappointed. A Pipe-Keeper, too, might name a child from something connected with the Pipe. Rufus Warrior, for instance, was named from the rawhide with which the Flat Pipe is wrapped; another child was called "Red Woman" from the fact that the wife of the Flat Pipe Keeper was always painted red,—even her hair. Al Chandler knows of two people his grandfather had named from objects in the Feather Pipe bundle.

The more formal the occasion, the more expensive the naming was for the family involved. If, for instance, advantage was taken of a public ceremony, not only was the one who gave the name recompensed by a valuable gift, such as a horse, but many other gifts would be given to various persons in the audience in order to honor the recipient of the name and to give prestige to his family. The expense was particularly heavy when a name was publicly bestowed upon an adult in recognition of bravery at war.[11]

431 727 554

551 Nearly everyone had a nickname. One of the most common was, and is, simply "Girl" or "Boy." Such a nickname often was acquired in early childhood because the name which had been bestowed was not liked,—and those names given through medicine often fell in that category. Coming Daylight said that she had not cared for the name given by a medicine man to her first-born son, so she had called him "Boy." The child died very young, and she now wonders if he would have lived longer had they used his real name. Nicknames may be acquired at any time of life and sometimes they are far from complimentary, especially those bestowed later in life by enemy-friends. If the nickname "takes" there is

[11] Cf. Chapter 5, p. 101.

787 made up my mind that I did not want such power, the immediate reason for my refusal being that I had seen doctors who swallowed what they had sucked from the weak spot in patients whom they cured, and I just couldn't bring myself to have to do likewise."

857 562 Although boys had much more freedom than had girls, they too were assigned tasks at a fairly early age. One of the responsibilities of boys was to water the horses during the day. At about the age of fourteen, however, a boy would be required to take the horses out to graze immediately after taking his morning plunge. He would be gone perhaps three or four hours and would eat only after he returned.

857 868 852 The play of younger boys with bow and arrow was training for later life. The older boys accompanied the men on hunting parties and by the time they were about 18 most were skilled hunters. Some families, it was said, took advantage of the fact that a boy would have killed his first big game,—antelope, deer, buffalo, [431] —by making a feast at which this game was served. On such an occasion the boy stood at the center and gave away property, such as horses and blankets provided by his father or uncle, in [421] order to mark the event. This was considered training for the way he should behave in later life in regard to his own property.

857 868 Boys were trained in trapping as well as hunting. There were certain songs which were sung by grandparents as the boys danced around in the lodge both before and after trapping. These songs [533] were supposed to bring luck in finding game.

[777] Sometimes when older boys were out taking care of horses, they would band together, daub their faces and bodies with mud as "war paint," and make a "raid" on the camp in order to steal meat which was drying on racks. The women who had worked so hard to prepare the meat got angry and sometimes fought the boys with sticks. Usually, the boys were successful, and would then cook the meat and have a wonderful feast,[7] far outside the camp circle.

[554] Men encouraged their sons to be brave, and a boy would be anxious to go along on a real raiding party just as soon as possible because a young man had no standing until he had risked his life. An adolescent boy who accompanied a war party had to be a man

[7] This type of raiding is also described by Kroeber, 1908, p. 182.

888 It was thought well, too, to name a child after someone who had attained advanced age. Thus it was that youths of 16 or 17 years of age [551] would go out in a storm and stand before the lodge of some old man or woman and cry, begging the prayers of that person. Again, on a hunting party, should there be some old man along, [431] unable to hunt, one member of the group might give a whole buffalo carcass to him; whereupon the grateful elder would offer a [782] spontaneous prayer on the donor's behalf. Similarly, it was not at all unusual for successful young hunters to seek out old people to share in some of the spoils,—just as in these later times a bottle of whiskey was occasionally given to old persons by the young. Once in a while, too, some married man would have his wife cook [782] a quantity of food and publicly invite old people, one of whom, in appreciation of this attention, would offer the expected prayer for the long life, health and success of the host and all the members of his household.

Dignity was, however, not necessarily an attribute of old age. With advancing years the conventions were somewhat relaxed. It was stated by one informant: "When a man had lived long enough to have participated in all the Sacred Dances, he had acquired the right to do almost as he pleased, including not having to observe so strictly the relationship taboos. It seemed to throw the bars down and he could have even more fun than ever at the expense of his enemy-friends and become still more vulgar and obscene." Relations between old women living together were not always harmonious and noisy quarreling was not unusual. Sometimes young boys played pranks on such old women, as in the following case.

888 "Two old women who were sisters shared a lodge. One day they were in there, seated back to back, warming themselves by 522 the fire. They didn't have any clothes on and were feeling good, scratching their skins with sticks. Two young boys peeped in. They took a long willow and quietly heated the end of it in the fire. When the end of the willow was glowing, they touched one of the old women with it. She yelled at the other: 'You burned me,' and of course the other denied it. After a little while, the boys did the same thing to the other old woman. They heard her call out: 'What did you do to me? You burned me!' The boys

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

second day; our field information is not clear) the Flat Pipe which had been kept only loosely covered most of the time since the first night was ritually wrapped up in its bundle and the new keeper was told to observe carefully so he would know how the re-wrapping was done. 793 796*

Meanwhile a regulation Flat Pipe sweat-lodge was put up, outside the camp circle as always and near the new keeper's lodge, for the new keeper and ex-keepers to sweat. In this sweat the women co-keepers did not join. The first after the Supreme Being (and other supernatural beings?) in the list of invitees to sweat was the new keeper, after him the ex-keepers. After all had taken their places inside the sweat-lodge, the retiring co-keeper carried the Flat Pipe, wrapped in its bundle, walking clockwise if necessary around the sweat-lodge, to the door thereof as the last. She entered by the east door, deposited the bundle in the place of honor at the west, and went out through the small west door. When it was time to take the Pipe out, she, accompanied by the new co-keeper, came to the west door, reached in and grasped the Pipe bundle, at once handed over the bundle to the new co-keeper and escorted her to the latter's lodge.

Then the new keeper and the ex-keepers sweated. When through, they put on their clothes and scattered to their lodges, the new keeper going back to his own, a new one which the retiring keeper and his relatives provided for him if his old one had been lost in the first night's raid. For every pin put in to hold the new lodge down he had to make a gift to the retiring keeper and the latter's relatives. So too even when they tied the door and showed the new keeper and his wife how to start their fire, make their bed, mount a horse, and so forth. [431]

So ended the transfer rite proper. The new keeper and co-keeper were now consecrated, and had to live by the keepership code, no matter how they had previously lived.

So ended, too, the preliminary instruction. But further instruction was given from time to time later. When the new keeper, with the help of his relatives, would gather together sufficient property, he would seek further instruction from the Flat Pipe ex-keepers especially the last keeper or some particularly well-

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

793 natural world and as beneficent helpers of their people, and the lofty ethical behavior and magnanimity demanded by the Gros Ventres' code in individuals of prominence in secular as well as in sacred activities, the Flat Pipe keeper and co-keeper were expected in general to live lives strictly conformed to the Gros
793 Ventre ethical code and in particular to be generous and to repress
431 aggressive impulses. The people would ordinarily be generous to them. For instance, after a successful buffalo hunt the killer or killers would share the spoils with them. But they themselves were under special obligations of generosity. If, for example, a person came to the keeper's lodge and, observing the rule above mentioned of going all the way inside, asked the keeper for something, the latter had to comply with the request and could not refuse it, and in actuality hardly ever refused. If the keeper lacked what was requested, he had to give the petitioner something else, for the latter would not be sent away empty-handed. This custom did not, it seems, lead to abuse and the keeper was not imposed upon. The keeper and his wife were required to be especially generous in providing feasts from time to time and in giving food to callers. Whenever any one came to the keeper's lodge to make an offering to the Pipe, the donor was fed.

When a man became keeper all grudges held by or toward him
793 and the co-keeper were wiped away. They could no longer make
785 their enemies the target of abuse or revenge, and vice versa.

As mentioned above, to command respect they could use the powers previously described, although at the risk of ensuing penalties. But for the rest, they were strictly forbidden to lose their tempers with, or show anger toward, anyone and particularly to strike anyone. If they wished evil on anyone, the evil would come to pass. If in a fit of anger they forgot themselves and hit or whipped a person, or even a dog or horse, the victim would be paralyzed. Nor could they talk badly about people.

The keepership imposed many major and minor hardships, austerities, privations and inconveniences upon the keeper and co-keeper. These had not, so far as we can judge, an ascetic purpose proper, that is, spiritual or moral self-control and achievement through self-denial. They did however serve, not only to set apart the keeper and co-keeper from the rest of the tribe but

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

276 would use tobacco in his prayers for the patient. If the patient survived but was still weak, the keeper made him smoke to get back his strength. So some of the other tribesmen learned to smoke. Gradually social (and recreative) smoking took its place together with ceremonial smoking.

In earlier times, the women never smoked either ritually or socially. Even in rites where they had an important role, such as [562] the inauguration of a new pipe keeper, they did not smoke, as women were considered secondary, not equal to men. Even as late as The Boy's and Thick's early boyhood in the decade before the last buffalo disappeared (1884), only the old women smoked, never the young girls. The spread of the custom among these old women was probably due to their discovery by experience that the smoking prescribed for maladies, such as, chronic headache, was good for the body. But even today, although women smoke non-ritually when alone or among themselves, they are not allowed to smoke at a Pipe rite, and, if wives are present when a man invites a group of men for a social visit or meal and he fills up his pipe to give his guests a smoke, he does not offer the pipe to the wives.

Tobacco was used only in pipe smoking. It was sometimes smoked straight by old men and old women, and by the sick as [17 824] a cure. But ordinarily the Gros Ventres smoked it mixed either with red willow, as did the Cree and Assiniboine, or preferably, and in the Flat Pipe rites always, with larb.

Larb is "a ground plant that grows on hills and mountains." We could get no specimen for identification. After the tobacco and larb were mixed, a little more larb than tobacco, fat was worked into the mixture to season it. On taking leave from his Gros Ventre [431 609] friends in 1940 the present author was given a small bag of this mixture as a token of peace and good will and found the mixture a very pleasant aromatic smoke.

The wild parsley, associated with the Flat and Feathered Pipe 278 and with the Crazy Lodge, was used as a powerful poison. It was greatly feared and was spoken of in undertones. Its preparation is a lost art. The whole plant was and is considered poisonous, but poison was prepared principally from the root, which was first

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 buffalo chips she had brought back, and sat down. They then heard
782 a "terrible groan" from the room where the Pipe was kept. Horse Capture and his wife seemed surprised and did not know what to make of it. The groan sounded to Coming Daylight more as if it said "Yes." After this all sat down to dinner. Afterwards Horse Capture's wife gave Coming Daylight a big buggy-parasol, a very expensive present. "They never say: 'I give you this for that,' but any little thing you do for the Pipe, like picking mint for it, the co-keeper would give you something for it."

When a number of "coverings" would accumulate on the Pipe bundle they would be hung elsewhere in the keeper's lodge, and from time to time the "coverings" would have to be ritually disposed of by the keeper with the full sweat-lodge rite. The keeper would detail a couple of young men to help him prepare the "coverings" and to make the sweat-lodge. The "coverings" might be tied to the sweat-lodge pole, as in the seasonal rite, or might just be brought as such by the co-keeper or an attendant to the sweat-lodge. Here, in the latter case, before the sweating proper began, they were brought in clockwise and given to the keeper. He would dip his right hand in the black charcoal paint, and touch each covering three times in three different places. Then he would gather up all the coverings, lift them up over the ascending smudge, lower them in three stages, move them around in three clockwise circles, and hand the whole bunch to the first man on his left, from whom it was successively passed till it reached the door. Here attendant two took the bunch of coverings and deposited it on the top of the mound in front of the sweat-lodge.

The coverings were finally taken by one of the attendants way out on the hills or elsewhere, as was done with other offerings.
[43] Or else the keeper could call together the orphans and other
735 poorer children and distribute the coverings to them, for it was believed that being good to children, especially needy and orphaned ones, was pleasing to the Supreme Being. Coming Daylight's uncle, Crow Bull, when keeper of the Flat Pipe, used to distribute the coverings to the very poor and needy old folks. If among the coverings there was tobacco, this was not deposited out on the hills but was given to the old people. The buffalo

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

ance with given practice it must have been carried away on a hill or elsewhere.[7] 782

[7] In 1948 The Boy gave a detailed description of the rite should the killer of an albino or "beaver" buffalo present the skin to the Pipe, rather than offer it as a sacrifice. He said that in this case, the man presented the green hide to the Pipe with a ritual directed by the keeper and included the painting of the donor. The keeper then called in two young women known to be expert tanners, received them ritually, and instructed them in procedures to be followed in tanning this particular hide. He made a crown, bracelets and anklets of twisted sage for each woman while singing a special song (not recorded by Cooper). When the hide was dressed there was a big feast at the keeper's lodge at which the keeper ritually painted the skin red. The keeper gave the donor of the skin the choice of any horse from all except one of his herd; to each of the women tanners he gave three valuable presents. [R.F.] [281 301] [431]

793 preme Being through Bha'a, the Supreme Being is the father of the Pipe.' "

In the cases where the new keeper was elected in secret conclave and not told or asked beforehand, at night after the camp was asleep a group sneaked up to the electee's lodge, and one of the group carrying the feathered stick from the Pipe bundle entered the lodge. If the electee tried to escape, the watchers outside would grab and hold him. The electee was raided and lost everything, his lodge and horses and other belongings,—just as the man to whom the Pipe had first been given from above lost everything. Afterwards, however, the relatives and friends of the electee, anybody that could, would give a new lodge, new bedding and other lodge equipment, and horses,—as was done to the first owner and keeper.

After being grabbed, the new keeper and his wife were carried —they did not walk—to the lodge of the retiring keeper who put a cloth over their heads. They were thus in the dark and didn't know what was going on until a special song was sung and the cloth removed. We were unable to secure many details of the transfer rite. The rite included, of course, ritual and other instruction of the new keeper, and co-keeper for which he had to pay handsomely,—for instance, a horse for a ritual song taught him. For [431] these payments he had to count on his relatives and friends who, later in the course of his keepership, would receive equivalent presents in return. A central feature of the transfer rite was the new keeper's dance with the Pipe. In earlier times, in fact up to about 1905, it was only the keeper, we were informed, who could dance with the Pipe and this only at the transfer rite.

Apparently the lodge of the Feathered Pipe keeper was very 346 like that of the Flat Pipe keeper, and under similar respect taboos, 353 but we were able to obtain only fragmentary specific information.

[784] At the back of the lodge, in the place of honor opposite the door, was the Pipe bed of sage brush, laid down with the tip ends pointed toward the lodge center, and covered with a white buffalo robe. When the group was camping at the same site for any length of time, in good weather the Pipe bundle was hung up during the daytime over the lodge door.

346 784 All movement within the lodge was clockwise. There could be

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

rate it was apparently a well-known song, as Singer also, who knew some of the Sacrifice Dance songs, knew it and spoke of it. 796* [533]

Besides the sacrifice offerings, previously mentioned, of the trimmed pieces of flesh, and the self-torture looked upon itself as a sort of "sacrifice," other offerings of clothing, dry goods and so forth were made at the Sacrifice Dance. These offerings were made, Coming Daylight stated, "to ask the Supreme Being to give them a long happy life," and both she and Singer on another occasion affirmed that the "sacrifice" in the Sacrifice Dance was offered to the Supreme Being.

Further, apart from the gifts made by vowers to their ritual grandfathers for the skin piercing and to the Flat Pipe keeper by the principal vower, presents were commonly given away by relatives of the self-torturers to third parties,—old people, visitors from neighboring tribes, or others,—in honor of the self-torturers, or perhaps of others, too. At one Sacrifice Dance, Singer was allowed by her husband, Crooked Arm, to be present because her mother's brother was to participate (apparently as a self-torturer) in it. "I gave," she said, "a dress and a blanket in my uncle's honor. I put them down and a woman grabbed them immediately. When nobody grabbed the things, someone would go around and give them to old people. Most of the stuff was just piled up and then all of it was given away. If there were visitors present from another tribe, they would be given some of the stuff. Someone told that woman right there that she should not have grabbed those things, but they were not taken away from her. People used to give away even horses at a Sacrifice Dance." Coming Daylight's uncle, Crow Bull, gave an Assiniboine, Old Man Pigeon Toes, a horse at a Sacrifice Dance in which her husband, Little Man, took part in the "sham Battle." "Through these presents," she added, "Old Man Pigeon Toes claimed relationship with Crow Bull and called me 'grandchild.' The Assiniboine are worse than the Gros Ventres for claiming relationships!" 796* 431

As is obvious, it cost a vower, particularly the principal vower, a great deal to put up a Sacrifice Dance, and the occasion was also a considerable drain upon the resources of his relatives. Perhaps this, rather than any ritual prohibition, was the reason why, 796*

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the blow struck on the badger. Both songs were sung by The Boy for the recordings. Apparently at other times during the Crazy Dance rites,—about 10:00 a.m., 2:00 p.m. and 5:00 p.m. according to Coming Daylight,—the badger skin was given a blow, but clear details were not obtained by us. 796*

Between whiles during the Crazy Dance, when no specific ceremony or observance was going on, there was very lively good-time dancing, the dancers "jumping up and down" to the accompaniment of the above-mentioned deer-hoof rattlers. One such song, No. 61, was recorded as sung by The Boy, it has just one word in it: meaning: "I poured water all over him." The song is supposed to have been composed by the enemy-friend of some Crazy Dancer and sung about him. The reference in the case is to the prohibition against bathing and "touching water" by Crazy Dancers.

What rites, if any, were peculiar to the second day of the Crazy Dance we did not discover. The third day, according to The Boy and Thick, was the day on which payment of horses, robes, clothes and so forth, "the best of everything" was made and in generous quantity, to the grandfathers. The goods would be piled up and the horses picketed nearby, for all to see. Participants who "brought no presents then were looked down upon as no good." Singer mentioned only the presents given to the grandfathers, but The Boy and Thick stated that the grandfathers on their part also "presents" to the Crazy Dancers and that the transaction was "really a trade." In accord with the general Gros Ventre pattern of trade and gambling as well as of remuneration for ritual services rendered, payment to the grandfathers was expected to be made on the spot and in full; promises to pay at some future time and payment by installment were barred. 431● 796*

Before we take up the rites and observances peculiar to the fourth and last day of the Crazy Dance, it seems advisable to cover certain ones whose exact place in the ceremonial sequence we are unable to determine from our field evidence. These are: the ceremonial feeding of the dancers, the giving of presents in honor of the dancers, the sweat-lodge rite, talking backward, and the sex-test. 796*

There was no fasting during the Crazy Dance; on the contrary

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

535
796*
522
831

to jump on them," simulating copulation, to the amusement apparently of the other "cows." Whether the chief vower and the "boss" took part in the dancing is not clear,—more probably they did not.

796*

Intervals between the dancing were given over to smoking, chatting, feasting, and fun-making. In more modern times at least the women smoked for pleasure. The dancers were each expected to bring food to the dance, and feasting was an important element, the singers at the back of the lodge faring particularly well. During these intervals, too, the women would play all kinds of tricks on one another, such as taking some woman's belongings and hiding them. They would have "lots of fun," "laughing all the time" and "making lots of racket."

[276]

[522]

Apparently it was customary for relatives of dancers in the Women's Dance, as in other sacred Dances, to give away presents to third parties in honor of the dancers.

[431]

The more public and more spectacular episodes of the Women's Dance, as of the Sacrifice and Crazy Dances, occurred on the fourth and last day. To these features we now turn.

796*
535
831

The "cows" and the "bull," all wearing their headdresses and accompanied by the "calves," left the dance lodge and went in a bunch to look for water in the creek and to drink. The "bull" followed to the rear, herding the "cows," and if one of the latter started to stray she would be punched back with the herd. Part of the time at least, the "cows" were "bent over, dancing like animals, and going on hands and knees." The "bull" would run after different "cows" and "jump on them," in mimic copulation. Coming Daylight, as a "calf" was told to follow one of the "cows" as her "mother" and try to nurse, but the "bull" chased her away when she approached her mother. In general, the "calves" were supposed to keep to the side, out of the way of the "bull."

796*

After the drink at the creek, came the pantomime buffalo drive. The two "hunters" (cf. supra, p. 245) would make a fire outside the camp circle up-wind from the women, and as the women got the smell of the smoke, the "hunters" on horseback drove them, as in a real buffalo drive, and shot the "cows" or some of them with blunt arrows that did not hurt. The "cows" who had before-

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

832
778
425

a woman, one of her adult male kin might be chosen by her to have sexual intercourse with the woman transferee.

To judge from the many anecdotes in circulation about this sex element in transfer payment, anecdotes dating mostly from quite recent decades in the memory of informants, it was a very common topic of gossip and of grapevine communication.

Transfer of power by gift, appears on the whole to have been much more common than transfer by sale. This accords with the general Gros Ventre pattern of transfer of other kinds of property. The Gros Ventre sold little; he gave much. Property changed hands within the tribe much more by donation than by barter.[16] 431 ● 778

Gifts of power were made either to relatives or to friends, and while the giver still had his or her health, though perhaps of advanced age, and not ordinarily at least, on his death bed. A number of cases of offer to transfer by gift doctoring and love power during the possessor's lifetime have been previously given. War power, according to The Boy, "was commonly given, without payment, to a son or brother." "War medicine," according to Al Chandler, "was passed down from generation to generation; Bull Lodge gave his sons (Curly Head and Otter Robe) their war powers. Curly Head was a medicine man but Otter Robe was more of a warrior. Little Man, my adopted father, had some kind of war medicine from his brother, when his brother got killed Little Man took this medicine (a sparrow-hawk and a shirt) from him to keep it, and to use it."[17] While war power might pass down in a family, we obtained no clear instance of such transmission by inheritance proper, in the sense of transfer to take effect only upon the death of the transferrer. [428]

Our data, all from The Boy, on loan and delegation of power, as distinct from outright transfer, are meager. "An owner of power to be lucky in warfare so as not to be shot could lend this to somebody, and if the owner were going to die he could tell the borrower to keep it." "Sometimes, when a man with medicine power was appealed to come and doctor somebody, he could say to his wife: 778 426

[16] For details, see Flannery, 1953, pp. 80-87.

[17] Some of Bull Lodge's war medicines are illustrated in Flannery, 1953, Plate 3; cf. also p. 92.

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

of the society. The officers were free to transfer their ceremonial 575
equipment to other members whom they would select. Following 796
the typical Gros Ventre pattern of transfer of ownership, the
recipient would present as lavish gifts as he could afford to the [431]
donor while the relatives of the recipient showed their appreciation of the favor to their kinsman by giving away expensive gifts in his honor. All of this took place publicly at the dance.

Particular dances and songs were attached to each office and the owners of the ceremonial drumsticks were required to know in correct order all the numerous songs and to provide the musical [533]
accompaniment for the whole ceremony. These four drumstick owners were joined in certain of the songs by four women singers selected from among the wives of the Wolf-men. The owners of the various objects were responsible for the proper care thereof, the crow-belts and the drum receiving most respect. When not in use, the crow-belts were kept wrapped in special bundles in the [841
lodges of their respective owners, but were hung outside when the 784
owner's wife was in her menstrual period. Moreover, those who 833
danced wearing the crow-belts were obliged to refrain from sexual 782]
relations for two or three days previous to the dancing and, before donning the belts, to make a smudge of sweet-grass to incense themselves and the crow-belts. The drum, too, received special attention. One informant speaks of it as having been "nicely [534]
decorated," and we know from Kroeber's description[9] that the trimming was very similar to that of the Assiniboine Grass dance drum.[10]

Procedure. The actual dancing took place in a special circular 346
dancing-place in the center of the camp circle. This "corral," as 796
it was sometimes referred to, was constructed from several lodge covers, but was open at the top and the entrance thereto was at the east. The tipi of the drum-keeper was put up nearby. Opposite the opening of the "corral" was the place of honor where [554]
sat the officials,—with the exception of the sword owners, who with their assistants were at either side of the entrance. The

[9] Kroeber, loc. cit., p. 238.
[10] Lowie, R. H., The Assiniboine, AMNH-AP 4, pt. 1, 1909, p. 67.

796 be repeated so that it was something of an ordeal. The sword owners would see to it that the dancers kept up, prodding the laggards until the series of songs had been completed.

[533] [177] The singers themselves had a smoking song, one of the few songs of the Grass dance for which words were adopted along with the tunes [11] from the Assiniboine. This song indicated a period of rest and relaxation for all but it was required that one of the officers provide the pipe and mixture for the singers.

Any member who left the dancing-place was obliged to surrender some piece of personal property as insurance that he would return. If he did not come back, the property was forfeit.

796 [43] 586 Another distinctive feature of the earlier Grass dance was the throwing away of property and especially of wives. The term "throwing away" is appropriate because a stick was held in the hand and after the holder publicly announced what the stick represented he would throw it to the ground. If, for instance, a member of the society had decided to give away his wife he would take a stick and say: "Here is so-and-so (naming the woman)" and throw the stick down. Sometimes another member would pick up the stick, thus indicating that he was taking this woman, but occasionally it happened that no one grabbed her and in such case the wife in question would return to live with her own relatives. The man who so renounced his wife was supposed to be through with her for good. It was said by informants, however, that once in a while, provided the wife had not been claimed by another, the husband would want her back again. An instance in illustration of this point was told to me. A man who stood to my informant in the relation of enemy-friend [12] had so disposed of his wife at a Grass dance. Some time later my informant saw the couple together again. My informant took ad-

522 796 586 572

[533] [177] [572]

[11] Most of the Gros Ventre Grass dance songs have no words proper. This contrasts with the Arapaho Grass dance songs, as my informants are well aware. The difference is perhaps due to the influence on the Arapaho of the Ghost Dance religion (cf. Kroeber, A. L., The Arapaho, AMNH-B 18, pt. 4, 1907, p. 320), which scarcely affected the Gros Ventres.

[12] This was a joking and rivalry relationship entered into by presenting to a fellow tribesman an object captured from the enemy.

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

vantage of the occasion, as she had the right to do, to make fun 522 796
of her enemy-friend without his being able to retaliate. She 586
took a handful of horse manure and rubbed it all over his face 572
saying, "Oh! All of us at the Grass dance saw you throw her away, why are you going with her again?" and in this way called attention to the fact that he was not so "brave" as he had pretended to be.

Another informant stated that she and her sister were just able 796
to escape the embarrassing experience of so being given away. 586
They were both living with a man who was a prominent member of the Wolf society. One of his fellow-members, however, came to the two women and told them that their husband planned on throwing them both away at the forthcoming Grass dance. My informant was very angry to get this news and said to her sister: "We will get ready and get rid of him first!" Whereupon they packed their belongings and taking their own horses went quickly to their mother's brother. My informant said that this man who was going to throw them away tried many times to speak to her thereafter but she always turned away and refused to listen, thinking to herself: "Well, there are plenty of other men."

As a final point in the discussion of the earlier form of the 796
Grass dance, the custom of members giving away presents in 431
honor of their loved ones should be mentioned. This was a purely voluntary procedure and could be done by any member who wished to do so at any performance of the Grass dance. The following is a typical example of how this was carried out. The same informant last mentioned, married another member of the Wolf society not long after the incident she described above, and had been selected as one of the four women singers for the Grass dance. At one performance she was holding her infant daughter, her first child by this marriage, as she sang. Her husband, wishing to honor his little daughter, told a war story, went to his wife and took the child in his arms and, going to the center of the dancing-place, gave away a horse to one of the Assiniboine who happened to be visiting at the time of the dance.

Such was the form of the Grass dance as carried out by the 000

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 178 [688] sing a song out of the prescribed order, the "chiefs" would stop them at once, announce the mistake and what fine was to be demanded of the singers. Were the four women singers performing at that time, they too were penalized.

[534] The owners of the drumsticks cooperated with the owner of the drum whose special duty it was to care for this instrument and to have it in repair and ready for use at any time it was needed.

The concepts pertaining to the crow-belts, spoon, fork and whistle remained unchanged. The owners of these regalia treated them with the same respect as of old. Additional ceremonial equipment had been introduced in the form of four feathered war-bonnets, two of which were owned by men and two by women. There was a special little ceremony connected with the two bonnets owned by women. Early in the dance two outstanding warriors were selected to take these bonnets from their owners, dance four times around the rack where they were hung in front of their owners, and then hand them to the first two women sitting at the left of the door. When it was time to dance these women would don them and wear them throughout that dance, then pass them on to the next two, and so on, until everyone had had a chance to wear them.

796 178 624 Finally, there were two announcers, one who called out what he was directed to say by any of the men, and the other who publicized any statement to be made on behalf of the women.

All of these individuals were considered as office-holders in the Grass dance and, as formerly, each was free to transfer the office [622] to anyone he considered suitable to succeed himself. There was no regular term of office even for the "chiefs" and the transfer was described as purely voluntary. Apparently, however, there was a certain amount of consultation among the officers, when one of them decided to transfer his office, in order to agree on a well-qualified successor. Among other things it was necessary to consider the financial status of the individual, especially for those to take over the higher offices. Not only did the recipient heap property upon the donor, but according to the older pattern too, [431] the relatives of the recipient would give away horses and so on

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

in his honor, and there were certain obligations connected with some of the offices in the newer form of the Grass dance, such as payment for the privilege by the black-dress wearers of being invited to come near the fire in the center and eat dog flesh. Furthermore a new "chief" would almost without exception provide the wherewithal for a whole dance to show that he was worthy of the office.

The procedure of transfer was similar for each office. If, for instance, one of the four "chiefs" had decided he had held this position long enough, at one of the dances he would order the transferring song to be sung. He, together, with the other three, would rise and dance around more or less deliberately and in a dignified manner. When these four reached the man who was to receive the office, each of the other three would make a motion toward the recipient as though helping him to his feet, while the donor himself would actually take his hand and assist him to arise. They then led him around the dancing place and finally installed the new officer in the place of honor vacated by the donor. It was customary, as the donor approached the region where the recipient was sitting, for everyone in the vicinity to bow his head as though making himself inconspicuous. None of them was supposed to know ahead of time on whom the choice would fall and, according to Gros Ventre etiquette, it would be very bad form for anyone to seem eager to receive an office, or any kind of honor for that matter.

Changes in procedure. In this later period the Grass dance was held sometimes out of doors in a circular space enclosed by wagons, at other times in a large log building, the ground plan of which was as nearly round as it could be made. It was remarked in this connection that the modern rectangular community hall at Hays, on the Reservation, was no good for Gros Ventre ceremonies, including the Grass dance, "because everything we did was in a circle." The present almost circular community hall at Lodge Pole is considered much more satisfactory. The seating arrangements were very similar to those described for

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

songs as many times as they pleased, and when tired of that one 796
switched to the others. There was no intermission and the 533
dancers got no rest, even the old women would stand up and 178
dance in one place and the old men would be yelling and calling out from where they sat. It was evidently a very lively scene. The dancers would sweat and get tired, but still there would be no let up. Finally the four wearers of the feathered war bonnets, —two men and two women,—would begin voicing appeals to the four "chiefs": "Please do something to stop this dance!" But the "chiefs" did not act right away. At last one of them would get up and walk around until he approached the wearer of a war-bonnet. He would then remove the bonnet and the people were glad and would cheer and yell, but this was not yet the end. They kept on dancing until a second of the "chiefs" got up and removed a war-bonnet from another of the wearers, which finally brought the Ringtail dance to a close.

It was said that while the women who wore black dresses could have answered the appeal to stop the dance, as a rule they would have hesitated to do so because the ones who took upon themselves this privilege would have to pay heavily for it. When the people had quieted down after the strenuous dance, those who had removed the war-bonnets would get up and announce what they were paying for having done so. One might have said, for instance: "All right. I will kill a beef for the next dance," or "I will give money" and name the sum. He could donate whatever [431] ● he wished, but it was understood that it would be something really substantial. My informants explained that although the Ringtail dance was a regular feature of the Grass dance program, the "punishing songs" were not sung every time because "the reason for singing them was that the people hoped to have a Grass dance again soon and wanted an elaborate affair and so the singers had to use discretion; if the 'chiefs' happened to be in a good financial condition at the time, they made them 'shell out' in that way."

The owners of the ceremonial drumsticks retained the smoking song as described for the earlier period. It was the "chiefs" who

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

to provide food for the next dance. If he failed to redeem it by such promise, he had one more chance to do so by appearing at the following dance. If he did not show up on that occasion the announcer was told to call out: "The one who owns this bridle (or belt, or gun, etc.) does not want it." Whereupon the article would be thrown in the fire and destroyed. 796 178 626

Although the custom of "throwing away" wives gradually died out, the giving away of valuable property to honor loved ones continued and was elaborated. The following is only one example from many which might be cited as illustrative of attitudes. The informant is now a man in his early seventies. He stated: "When I was a young man I never went to these social affairs. After I married my wife would go with my older brother every time there was a Grass dance, but I would stay at home. This brother of mine used to get after me for not taking part. He would say: 'It is bad to be the way you are. When there is a dance or anything going on, go and look on. You don't necessarily have to dance, but at least be present.' One time in later years the Cheyenne came to visit and of course the Gros Ventres put on a dance for them. I decided to go and for the first time I joined in. When my brother saw me he got up and said: 'Well, my friends, I have been asking my brother to look on and to take part in these dances, and I have never succeeded. But today I see him at this dance and I am glad he is here. I am glad he is joining with us.' Then my brother went out and brought to the dancing-place a new yellow-wheeled buggy and a set of harness he had just purchased, and announced: 'Now, because my brother has joined the dance I am proud he did, and in his honor I am giving away this buggy and harness to the visitors.' Then my brother's wife announced: 'I am happy that my brother-in-law is joining the dance. I will give a beef to the visitors so they will kill it and have meat to eat.' Of course I felt embarrassed. It was hard on me because I thought everybody was looking at me and I sweated. Afterwards I told my brother: 'I didn't go in there for the purpose of having you give away all that stuff in my honor!' But he replied: 'Well, that is the way of our people 796 178 431 [586]

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 and we follow that. But don't stop going. You went once, so
178 keep going.' And so I did go and when I noticed that at nearly
431 every dance my brother gave away beef or horses—he was certainly a generous man—I started to follow his example. It got so that whenever there was a dance I was the first one there and I used to give away all kinds of things. For my adopted daughter, for instance, I gave beef, horses, and money at different times."

796 The final event of the program of the Grass dance during the
178 later period was a dance by one of the owners of the feathered war-bonnets who, to the accompaniment of a special song, stepped toward the door, made three passes towards the latch and on the fourth actually opened the door, took off the bonnet and went out. Everyone by that time would be standing up ready to go with their bundles and babies. It was remarked that since they usually started the Grass dance about one in the afternoon and stopped only well after midnight, they had plenty of time for all these things.

796 In this section we have dealt only with the main differences
178 between the earlier and later forms of the Grass dance as prac-
858 tised by the Gros Ventres. Other minor changes were introduced from time to time, one being that of allowing children on the dancing floor. This will be briefly described merely to indicate the latitude allowed to the individual in the later period during which the Gros Ventre Grass dance flourished, and to illustrate the mechanism by which some, at least, of the changes could have been actually accomplished. My informant, who had held important offices in the Grass dance and who is a man of prominence, said that, up to the time he acted in this matter, it had been the duty of the owners of the whips to take children bold enough to mingle with the dancers and drag them off the floor by force. It was obvious to my informant that the children were anxious to dance so at one of the performances he tied a bunch of paper money to the amount of $50 on the end of a buggy whip and had the announcer call out that he was going to buy for the children the privilege of joining in the dancing; that he was not only paying for this by giving the money toward the next per-

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

others to the left forming a circle inside the dancing-place where 796
they sat. The two prominent warriors, having been assisted in 575
dismounting, took up their places, one on each side of the entrance, holding whips in their hands. It was their duty to rouse any lagging dancers, whipping them if necessary. Each member had his own rattle, of peculiar shape but painted with individual designs, which he waved about as he danced. The wives of some of the dancers joined the four singers in singing certain of the dance songs. Two of the youngest members acted as *atsa'an* (waiters) tending to the fire, getting water, and so on. Occasionally during the dance a woman relative of one of the partici- [43]
pants would rush up to him, throw down a blanket or some other gift in his honor, grab his rattle and dance for a short time. Members of the other society did not join in the festivities or partake of the feast, in spite of the fact that most of the provisions for the latter had been donated by some of them.

At some future date, however, the Wolf-men would agree that the time was auspicious for them to have a dance and "get even" with the Stars. They would of course have their own songs, sung in front of the lodges of prominent members of the Star society, but otherwise the procedure was identical, including their accompaniment by two outstanding warriors, the "snake-dance," the arrangement of the lodge in the center of the camp-circle, and so on. The Wolf-men differed from the Stars in their actual dance [534]
in that they did not have rattles and in dancing seemingly intended to portray wolves, placing one hand on the forehead and the other at the back to represent the animal's tail.[14]

The adoption of the Grass dance meant merely that the more 796
elaborate dog ritual, with its regalia and greater degree of organi- 575
zation, replaced the dance of the Wolf-men although the begging 178
preliminary and so on remained the same. So far as we can see, at the time of its adoption, the Grass dance was a case of pure substitution and one that fitted readily into the cultural situation. First of all, according to Lowie's information, the Assini-

[14] I am deeply grateful to my colleague, John M. Cooper, who generously placed at my disposal his field notes on the Wolf society.

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the Grass dance may have seemed appropriate to the Gros Ventres as reminiscent of the feather headdress worn by the participants in the Women's Dance belonging to the series of vowed Sacred Dances. But regardless of the possible symbolism, these four offices, plus the four others allotted to women,—two whip owners and their two assistants,—gave the female sex a fair degree of recognition, and probably reflect the newer economic status of women which came about with the changing concept of inheritance. Formerly women, of course, had a right to their own property, but acquisition thereof was mainly through their own manufacture, such as clothing, or through the relatively rare gift of a horse or so. They did not come in for any valuable property through inheritance and a widow in those days was not even entitled to any of her deceased husband's belongings. 796 178 562 [425] [428 589]

The holding of office in the Grass dance thus offered one of the very few means remaining for acquisition of status by the individual. The frequent transfer of offices meant that there was opportunity for many individuals within each category,—mature men, older warriors, young men, women,—to enjoy such public recognition. 796 554

Public display of generosity in giving away property to honor a loved one, which became such a marked feature of the Grass dance in its later phase, carried on and accentuated the method most common in older Gros Ventre culture for the gaining of individual prestige. Formerly there were many opportunities for this kind of ostentatious liberality,—when a pipe or a painted lodge was transferred, when a warrior returned from accomplishing brave deeds, when a person was participating in one of the Sacred Dances, when a person was named, when a child's ears were pierced, and so on. At such times the relatives publicly gave away as much of their property as they possibly could,—not to the recipient of the pipe, the brave warrior, the participant in the Sacred Dance, et al.,—but to someone else in his honor. Everybody would know what was given and by whom; people would make such comments as: "So-and-so is a fine man. He surely must think a lot of his relative—look at all the things he 796 178 431 156 554

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 gave away in his honor." When first adopted the Grass dance
178 offered only one such opportunity—and a relatively minor one.
●431 As times changed, however, the Grass dance provided practically
156 the sole occasion for gaining prestige while at the same time
554 carrying out the old pattern of kinship obligation by enhancing the prestige of relatives.

The possibility in the later form of the Grass dance of paying for privileges, such as locking the door, or whipping those who did not get up to dance, gave further scope for the acquisition of prestige through liberality, as did also, of course, payments at transfer of office.

It was estimated by our informants that around 1900 as much as a thousand dollars in goods and cash changed hands at a single performance of the Grass dance. At that time it was not uncommon for the dance to be held at weekly intervals. So long as the Gros Ventre were relatively prosperous and had property to display and exchange according to the older patterns, the Grass dance continued to function. With increasing poverty, however, along
[735] with other factors such as the changing points of view and interests on the part of the younger generation, and the dying out of
[182] the older warriors, the Grass dance, the core of which was the dog ritual, gradually paled off leaving but the remnants of some of the round dances which had been added to the Grass dance as originally adopted from the Assiniboine.

Summary

796 Between 1875 and 1880 the Gros Ventres received the Grass
177 dance from the Assiniboine. From the date of adoption up to
575 about 1890 the Grass dance was performed only by members of one of the two soldier societies and the custodians of the ceremonial equipment were the officers. Offices were transferred among members according to the old Gros Ventre pattern.

796 The essential core of the Grass dance was the dog ritual, a
[262] ceremonial eating of dog flesh, carried out by the owners of the equipment with the assistance of four warriors selected from among the lay members. Other features of the program at each

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Other features of the program at each performance of the Grass dance included the "punishing" dance, the smoking song, the forfeiture of property, the "throwing away" of property represented by sticks, gift-giving in honor of loved ones. 796 [533 431]

In 1890 changes in the form of the Grass dance began to be noticeable. By 1900 the Grass dance included all in the tribe who wished to participate. The official personnel had been expanded to include four "chiefs," four war-bonnet owners, two owners of ceremonial black dresses, two women whip-owners and two female assistants. Transfer of all offices was, however, carried out as before. 796 178

The dog ritual continued unchanged to be the highlight of the program. Perhaps the most obvious change in procedure was the inclusion of round dances, especially the Ringtail dance, in which both men and women participated and for which "punishing" songs had been devised. The smoking song and the forfeiture of property were retained, but with some elaborations. Although the "throwing away" of property gradually disappeared, the gift-giving in honor of relatives was very much emphasized. Other very minor changes were inaugurated at intervals up until about 1916. [533]

The changing functions of the Grass dance coincide with the changing form and can likewise be considered as of two periods, —the first from 1875–80 to 1890; the second from 1890 to 1916.

In the first period the function of the Grass dance was a relatively minor one. It was adopted, and fitted into place, as a substitute for the simpler and less colorful dance of the Wolf soldier society, and paralleled the dance of the other soldier society, the Star society. In view especially of the preliminary "begging" songs, the Grass dance seemingly was the expression of but one phase of the intense rivalry between the two soldier societies. [575]

With the extinction of the buffalo in 1884 came the breakdown of the older culture. By 1890 not only had most of the public religious rites disappeared, but the social organization was greatly altered. As the economic basis was changed, the nomadic life and the camp circle were abandoned, and the two soldier societies no [182]

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 longer existed. The dance of one of them, the Grass dance, how-
178 ever, survived. In its changed form the Grass dance filled the void in social life during the transition from old to new.

With the admission of all to membership and through the addition of round dances in which all could actively participate, the Grass dance met the needs for group recreational outlets and for expression of social solidarity.

796 As the sole surviving institution which carried the concept of
178 graded offices and their transfer, the Grass dance met the need of
554 the individual for status along traditional lines. The expansion of offices allowed for the recognition of types of ability formerly premiated and opened the way for younger men as well as for women in emphasizing different kinds of ability.

Finally, the Grass dance met the need of the individual for prestige in accordance with the older pattern by offering opportunity for ostentatious liberality. By bestowing gifts publicly
[431] at the Grass dance, one could gain the coveted reputation for generosity, while at the same time fulfilling a substantial part of one's obligation to kinsmen.

796 The Grass dance continued to function in this way up to about
182 1916, after which time it began gradually to pale off, and to practically disappear by 1920. The few round dances carried on at present under the name "Grass dance" bear no appreciable relationship to the lively and colorful performances that are remembered by the older Gros Ventres as having been so stimulating and enjoyable.

8:Flannery E-5 (1940-1948)1960 NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

and, each time he attempted to get to his knees, one of two women who had already reached the scene would strike him on the buttocks with the flat side of a hatchet, making an insulting remark, and both would laugh. Coming Daylight hesitated at some distance from where the other two were gloating over the fallen enemy. When one of them, Woman Chief by name, saw her she ran to her saying: "Why are you standing so far off?" She grabbed her by the arm and pushed a big club into her hand, saying: "He is still alive—you will do a great thing. *Ahe:ya'!*" Woman Chief forced Coming Daylight to strike him.

While both Woman Chief and Coming Daylight closely approximated the ideal for women as faithful wives and efficient workers who gave generously of their material goods to and on behalf of their relatives, they seemingly differed in temperament. Woman Chief was known as a very brave woman, and Coming Daylight was frank in admitting she would never have dreamed of doing the kinds of things for which Woman Chief was renowned. One of the latter's exploits, for example, was as follows. The Gros Ventres and Crow were allies in an encounter with the Piegan. The battle was in full force, but one Crow had withdrawn and was sitting motionless astride his horse at some distance from the melee. Woman Chief, who in contrast to most women was always well mounted, dashed up to the Crow, grabbed his wand from his hand, and rode pellmell into the thick of the battle, counting coups right and left. So brave was she considered in having really risked her life that she was accorded the distinction, most unusual for a woman, of being led around the camp circle with the victorious warriors. Furthermore, so many people came to sing in front of her lodge that she and her relatives, to show their appreciation of the honor, were forced to give away as much property as though she were a man. Judging on the basis of other biographical material, there can be no doubt that she gloried in her reputation and took every opportunity to enhance it. She was one to whom the more violent aspects of Gros Ventre culture were exceedingly congenial.

If we compare and contrast these two women we can say that insofar as the patterns of Dionysian configuration are the basis of the comparison, their behavior exhibits opposite extremes, the one going beyond the average in the direction of the configuration, the other running counter to and participating less than the average therein. Both might be termed deviant personalities in Honigman's sense of the term,[2] one overplaying and the other underplaying modal behavior in these selected patterns. Nevertheless, neither seems to have been a misfit insofar as each represents an extreme of socially accepted or sanctioned behavior within those patterns. If, for instance, Coming Daylight had been completely negative, and refused, say, to carry out at least the culturally defined minimum for mourning, had she, in addition to refusing to mutilate herself for the recovery of her ill relatives, neglected as an adult even the safe and less strenuous means to that end, she would have fallen without the pale, so to speak, and have been a misfit. If, at the opposite end of the scale, Woman Chief had gone further in the direction of masculinity, had she actually gone on raiding expeditions and herself stolen horses from the camp of the enemy, had she learned to shoot the bow and arrow or gun, or had she so much as adopted the vocabulary and/or pronunciation proper for males in the Gros Ventres language, she would have been carrying things too far. She, too, would have been dubbed a misfit.

The Catholic University of America,
Washington, D.C.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

daughter, and might receive gifts from relatives, but would otherwise have few opportunities of obtaining horses. 231 556

In former times the rules regarding inheritance were fairly simple. If a man died, his relatives took the more valuable livestock, while anyone was free to come into the lodge and take any other personal property of the deceased which was not to be buried with him. The man's relatives would not, however, take the horses which belonged to his wife or wives, or which had been given before his death to his children. When a woman died she usually would have little valuable property in any case, but, again, any other woman might rush in and strip the lodge of whatever personal property might be therein, including food. The close family of the deceased were "so grief-stricken that they wouldn't notice who takes what," and "a husband would never keep anything of his wife's." It was said, too, that "women were braver than men in disposing of their property before death, and often gave gifts of personal property to those they wished to have them." 428 768 [431]

In objects derived from the white man, the value put upon them was mainly utilitarian. For example, in matching wagers on one occasion a man put up a gold watch. There was no one on the other side who had a watch to offer, but a spy-glass was considered the equivalent. It was explained that the value of the watch in dollars—whether it had a fine gold case or not—would not be taken into consideration. The question in matching was to find things of equal value to the Indian in his way of life. To illustrate this The Boy told of a gift to his father, Lame Bull, from a white trader on the Saskatchewan, of a hobble which locked. "Perhaps this didn't have a high value in dollars, but it was considered extremely valuable by Lame Bull because it saved him many a race horse. Even though the enemy might sneak a horse out of camp, being unable to unfasten the hobble, he would have to abandon the valuable horse before getting very far away." 177 435

On the other hand, while utility was certainly an important consideration in the Gros Ventres' evaluation of goods produced by themselves, various other elements were taken into account. A horse procured from the enemy was perhaps the most valuable of all things to the Gros Ventres; aside from other considerations, a man would have risked his life to obtain it and that in itself lent 435 554 231

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

435 value. Thus any object captured from the enemy, no matter how trivial it might be, was more valuable than a duplicate of that same thing obtained in any other way, and could be used to initiate an enemy-friendship, one of the most important of Gros Ventre transactions. A man who gave a horse, rather than or in addition to other items—to establish the enemy-friendship, to pay for the curing of a relative, to someone in honor of his relative, to his ceremonial grandfather for guiding him through the Sacred Dance, to wager in gambling, to show how much he thought of his brother-in-law in return for so simple a gift as the flesh of a puppy—would gain in prestige, for he thus established for himself a reputation for "being somebody."

435 The amount of labor that went into the making of an object, such as the polished deer-hoof trimming on a robe, was an element in its value. When the robe was old and worn the recipient thereof would remove the fringe and return to the donor "so she could use them again." Scarcity, too, entered into evaluation of goods. Eagle feathers were, for instance, more valuable than other kinds of feathers. Again, as to elk teeth, it was explained: "The elk has only two teeth that are like ivory,[11] and so it takes a long time to accumulate them. They are to us Gros Ventres like pearls are to the whites. They were our greatest decoration. They are valuable even today, and, while imitations are sometimes used, you can always tell the difference."

Exchange and Distribution

439 There was actually no need for economic exchange within the tribe, with the object of obtaining the necessities of life, but a need had developed for exchange with the fur traders to obtain guns, whiskey, metal objects—kettles, scraper-blades, etc.—cloth, tobacco, beads, paints, and so on. After about 1830, the medium of exchange with traders was the buffalo robe, which rapidly increased in value at the expense of beaver.[12] Traders on the Missouri accepted other items produced by the Indians, but everything was equated in terms of robes.[13]

[11] These are the rudimentary canines. Cf. Seton, v. 3, p. 5.

[12] Bradley, pp. 203–04.

[13] According to Denig, p. 421, an Assiniboine chief on Jan. 8, 1852, was

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

484 than six poles would be so tied together, a strong line running
492 through the holes, leaving a loop to go about the horses' neck. Another line was tied around the six, about in the middle, to hold the poles together as the horse dragged them through the water. A mounted horse could draw two sets of six poles across the river at one time, one set on each side, but could not take all the poles for a lodge on a single trip. Meat packed in skin bags was often lashed to the poles and did not suffer in transit. Occasionally older children rode across the river on these poles, and some people paddled across straddling a single log.

782 The same goods which we have described as used by the Gros Ventre to meet their needs for food, clothing, shelter and transportation were likewise used to meet many other needs. Cloth and clothing, feathers, ornaments, and so forth, were used as religious sacrifices and offerings. Food was used as payment or part-pay-
262 ment for services of those who helped in production of economic
436 goods, or of those who cured diseases, acted in ceremonial capacity of one kind or another, as well as in meeting certain specific kin-
342 ship obligations. Lodges might be painted in accordance with a
531 supernatural vision, and, with the associated songs, were transferrable to others as ritual objects. Horses were used as payments of various kinds,—in connection with the bride price, to ceremonial grandfathers, and so on. There was thus no medium of exchange
436 within the group and no strict classification into producer's goods as contrasted with consumer's goods is possible.

231 721 got scared and ran to the other side of the horse. Finally she took a big stick and threw it at the white thing and still it didn't move so she went closer and found it to be a Hudson's Bay blanket just soaking wet. The enemy must have used it when they crossed the river. So she dragged it home to her lodge. When she got there she called to her grandmother: 'Is he there?' Her grandmother said: 'He is.' She was still furious at her husband and called to him: 'Come out! I am giving you this,' and she said it in the way people speak when they are giving something on return from war. She was giving her husband his own buffalo horse! He however didn't say anything or make any exclamation. This so enraged her that she took the blanket and rolled it up as small as she could and threw it at him, hitting him on the chest saying: 'Here is another thing I brought you!' Then he laughed. But she had at least saved one of the most valuable horses.

[431] "The next morning the rest of the Gros Ventres in the party moved on, leaving this family behind. But fortunately some others came along and seeing their plight gave them horses, for example, Pemmican gave one to Coming Daylight, Little Shields gave her uncle one, and Sleeping Bear gave her husband one."

231 436 The importance of various transactions could be gauged by whether or not a horse were included, other things such as fancy clothing, ornaments, guns, etc. being mentioned as "thrown in."

[554] A person who gave a horse in whatever connection accrued prestige for himself and at the same time showed in what esteem the donor

[583] held the recipient. Horses were generally included in the bride price; in inaugurating the more serious type of enemy-friendship; in payment for services of the medicine man in curing certain types of illness, and in payment to the ceremonial grandfather as well as in payment to the namer or ear-piercer of a child; in settling disputes; in gambling; in gifts to others in honor of relatives, and in meeting certain other kinship obligations.

231 556 Horses could be acquired by a man through raiding the enemy; by gift from relatives and from non-relatives in honor of someone else or in instituting the enemy-friendship; in the bride price of a sister, daughter, or maternal niece; in payment for services rendered; in gambling; through inheritance; in trading with the whites. A woman might share in the bride price of her brother's

I: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

sometimes put on the bow with glue made from boiled skin from the head of a buffalo. Sometimes the bow was without sinew backing and sometimes ornamented by being covered on the back with snake-skin. Bows are said to have been held either horizontally or vertically, according to individual habit. Arrows for war and hunting are said to have been alike. 411

Shields were made of the thickest part of buffalo-bull skin, which was laid into a hole in the ground and made hard by being scorched with hot rocks placed upon it. It was then provided with a cover of white buckskin fringed with feathers. A man who carried a shield in war sometimes had no other weapon. 714

It is declared that no tobacco was raised, and that none growing wild was gathered, but that it was obtained from other tribes and from the whites. This is contrary to the practice of the equally non-agricultural Blackfoot, who planted tobacco; but it would seem to accord with the lack of any information obtained from the Arapaho as to tobacco-raising. 171 249 [439]

DECORATIVE ART.

The present day decorative art of the Gros Ventre is not nearly as strongly developed as that of the Arapaho. There is much less bead-work made, and this hardly ever equals the better work of the Arapaho either in technical or artistic excellence. Quill-embroidery is also found less frequently than among the Arapaho. How far this greater poverty and inferiority of Gros Ventre decorative art are matters of some standing in time is not certain; but it seems probable that there was a difference between the two tribes in this respect, even when they first came into contact with the whites. 531 171

It is in accord with this difference that inquiry as to the symbolic or conventional significance of the decorative designs used by the Gros Ventre has been practically without result. While the failure of the Gros Ventre to render such interpretations is due perhaps in large measure to change of mode of life under the influence of civilization, yet it seems that in this respect too there must have been a temperamental difference between the Arapaho and Gros Ventre, even in earlier times; for the Arapaho preserve at least distinguished wrecks of their symbolism, ceremonies, and religious life, while among the Gros Ventre, who are in much less intimate contact with the Americans, these things have vanished, leaving often scarcely a trace, and rarely more than a memory.

Partly on account of comparative scarcity of material, and also by reason of greater artistic poverty, the decoration of the Gros Ventre does not present as many typical characteristics as that of the Arapaho, the Blackfeet, the

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

175 they had been hard put to it recently to ransom thirty warriors
648 from the Crow—probably the wounded who had been abandoned in the panic following the ambush of 1832.[84]

So far as relations with the American traders go, in 1833 and subsequently the Gros Ventres were on their best behavior. Maximilian notes that the very large group of Gros Ventres, whom he met at the Judith River as he traveled with Mitchell of the American Fur Company on their way to Fort McKenzie, were surprisingly well-behaved. He adds, rightly enough, that it was to their self-interest to be so, in the light of the fact that formerly they had suffered with the traders on account of their bad reputation. He further remarks that the Gros Ventres were now known as dressing buffalo robes better than most of the other tribes. After trading a bit with the Gros Ventres where they met them, Mitchell invited them to meet him at Fort McKenzie. When the Gros Ventres arrived there, their chief men were received at the
[439] Fort with the same pomp and ceremony as were accorded the
[431] Piegan chiefs in the preliminaries to actual trading. The Gros Ventres, too, upheld their end by bringing the usual presents—a horse and some beaver skins—to present to the trader.[85]

This Fort had been established at the mouth of the Marias, very close to the later site of Ft. Benton, and was known first as Fort Piekann and the next year was renamed Fort McKenzie. It had been established at this point for dealing with the Blackfoot groups, especially the Piegan, and the surrounding tribes. At that time the American Fur Company was particularly interested in obtaining beaver skins, and one beaver skin was worth two buffalo robes. Later, as the market for buffalo robes opened up, the beaver gradually lessened in value so that finally two or three beaver skins became the equivalent of one buffalo robe.[86] Lewis has emphasized what the change in market meant for the Blackfoot groups.[87] Relations of the Gros Ventres with the whites improved, and there was a tendency for the Gros Ventres to become more and

[84] Cf. Ewers, 1943, p. 603; Maximilian, pp. 71, 75, 76.
[85] Maximilian, pp. 75–76, 126, 165.
[86] Bradley, p. 203, note on 204.
[87] O. Lewis, pp. 34–59.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

In April, when the sap rises, the Gros Ventres scraped the juice from the inner bark peeled from cottonwood and sometimes even from box-elder. They also chewed the gum from pines. Infusions of cherry bark or roots and peppermint were said to have been drunk as tea, but such concoctions were considered usually more in the nature of medicines. 262 272

So long as the Gros Ventres had the buffalo, relatively little in the way of foodstuffs from the white man were imported. Sugar, flour, occasional fresh fruits, coffee and tea were known and used to some extent after about 1855.[10] The possibility of obtaining whiskey, was, however, one of the items which determined the popularity of a given trading place. Incidentally, tobacco was an important item of trade after 1800, although prior to that time the Gros Ventres had raised their own.[11] 262 439 [273] [276]

Clothing and Adornment

The importance of the buffalo in the economy of the Gros Ventres was as obvious in clothing and in shelter as it was in food. The buffalo robe, dressed with the hair on, was perhaps the most valuable article inasmuch as it was not only a regular part of their garb, but also was the main article of trade with the whites after about 1830. When decorated, it had high prestige value as a gift. 291 [439] [431]

Seldom was the hide of a buffalo older than two years used for robes since the fur of those of greater age was usually scabby even in the fall when the coats were in best condition. It required the skin of a yearling to make a robe for a twelve-year-old, and the skins of calves made robes for smaller children. When the demand of the trade for robes was very great, the large wool blanket sometimes replaced the robe for wearing apparel and for bedding.

Most of the other articles of clothing were made from well-dressed deer, elk and antelope skins.[12] Deer and elk were more 281 291

[10] See p. 22.

[11] This tradition is confirmed by Cocking in 1772, who writes, p. 111, "The tobacco they use is their own planting which hath disagreable flavor. I have preserved a specimen." Kroeber's informants denied knowledge of the tradition.

[12] In 1854 Denig, pp. 464-65, describes the cloth bought for clothing for summer and fall wear, but states that a real hunter must have a buffalo robe, moccasins, mittens, cap, skin leggings and an extra buffalo robe.

Feathers, especially eagle feathers, were highly prized, and red 292 paint, prepared from ochre, as well as other paints obtained through 237 the trader, played their part in bodily decoration. 386

The younger men thought a great deal of their appearance. One 282 of the things they made for themselves was fancy painted sunshade- 751 hats of rawhide. The designs painted thereon had a yellow back- 531 ground against which various other colors stood out. Coming Daylight remarked: "These sunshades looked so fine that the other tribes copied them, just like the whites get their styles from Paris." Long thick hair was the ideal both for men and for 302 women. The tail of the porcupine made an admirable comb. A [237] number of perfumes were used by the young men. The castor of the beaver, for instance, was put in the paint bag so that the material for daily painting would be sweet smelling. Again, young men crushed "Piegan berries," chewed them, and rubbed them on hair, horses, and bedding, as perfume.

Incidentally, according to Coming Daylight, in order to clean 296 their buckskin clothing, the Gros Ventres would wear it into the water, getting it completely wet, and then rub it thoroughly with a certain kind of white clay.[14] She said that the tribe was spoken of by other tribes as always having such nice white clothes, and to this habit of rubbing them with clay she attributes the name by which the Gros Ventres call themselves, *a'aninin*, "white clay [101] people."

Ear-rings, worn both by men and women, were made from 301 imported abalone shell, which they cut up and shaped; they also [439] used a certain type of imported white shell. Many other kinds of necklaces, armlets, and so on were apparently used, but on these we failed to get details.

Household and Transportation

The lodges of the Gros Ventres were made from buffalo hides, 342 the number used in each depending on the size of the lodge. They

[14] This custom is mentioned in the sources of the early 19th century. Cf. Harmon, p. 277; Henry, v. 2, p. 734. The latter adds, as a further distinguishing characteristic, that when the Gros Ventres use red "it is always of a light color, inclining to pale vermillion. The dark red or Spanish [822] brown, so much in vogue among the other Meadow tribes, does not suit their taste."

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

At this late date it was difficult to obtain in the field details of exchange between the Gros Ventres and the white traders. One such transaction was recalled clearly by Coming Daylight, who remembered it because the amount given in return was relatively large. On this occasion, for 12 buffalo robes, the Gros Ventres received 2 striped blankets, 1 whole sack of sugar, 1 horse. If we compare with Denig's figures for a typical exchange in the 1850's where a horse was worth 10 robes, and 1 white, 3-point blanket was the equivalent of 3 robes,[14] we can agree that this was a good bargain. The same informant, however, remembers another occasion on which she herself gave the robe off her back to a trader in return for some apples which her little daughter craved. We have no figures on the relative value of robes as compared with whiskey, but our data show that whiskey was highly valued by the Gros Ventres.[15] 439 [273]

So far as we have been able to find out, while the trade with the whites was carried on at every possible opportunity, the amount of intertribal exchange was relatively slight. Perhaps intertribal gambling contests would account for most of it. Coming Daylight remembers, however, one case where a Crow friend of her maternal uncle's offered him a race horse in exchange for elk teeth sufficient to trim a woman's dress. We lack details on other outside exchanges, but our informants mentioned that the Gros Ventres used to obtain abalone shells from the Nez Percé and also occasionally camas roots, but this latter was very rare. Denig mentions the abalone shell was earlier worth $20 (i.e. 6-7 robes), but that when the traders brought in so many their value dropped to $10.[16]

The head of the household was the one who bargained with the trader, but the materials he took in exchange were supposed to have been decided upon in view of the needs of the household as well as his own personal needs. If, for instance, one of his

credited as follows: 30 lbs. of dried meat, 1 robe; 2 red fox skins, 1 robe; 1 large raw elk skin, 1 robe; 12 wolf skins, 4 robes.

[14] Denig, p. 420.

[15] Several of the traders remark that the Gros Ventres did not beg for whiskey as did the Piegan and others, but they were willing to pay for it. See Henry, v. 2, p. 734.

[16] Denig, pp. 590-91.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

435 value. Thus any object captured from the enemy, no matter how
557 trivial it might be, was more valuable than a duplicate of that same
231 thing obtained in any other way, and could be used to initiate an enemy-friendship, one of the most important of Gros Ventre transactions. A man who gave a horse, rather than or in addition to other items—to establish the enemy-friendship, to pay for the curing of a relative, to someone in honor of his relative, to his ceremonial grandfather for guiding him through the Sacred Dance, to wager in gambling, to show how much he thought of his brother-in-law in return for so simple a gift as the flesh of a puppy—would gain in prestige, for he thus established for himself a reputation for "being somebody."

435 The amount of labor that went into the making of an object, such as the polished deer-hoof trimming on a robe, was an element in its value. When the robe was old and worn the recipient thereof [431] would remove the fringe and return to the donor "so she could use them again." Scarcity, too, entered into evaluation of goods. Eagle feathers were, for instance, more valuable than other kinds of feathers. Again, as to elk teeth, it was explained: "The elk has only two teeth that are like ivory,[11] and so it takes a long time to [237 accumulate them. They are to us Gros Ventres like pearls are to 301] the whites. They were our greatest decoration. They are valuable even today, and, while imitations are sometimes used, you can always tell the difference."

Exchange and Distribution

439 There was actually no need for economic exchange within the tribe, with the object of obtaining the necessities of life, but a need had developed for exchange with the fur traders to obtain guns, whiskey, metal objects—kettles, scraper-blades, etc.—cloth, tobacco, beads, paints, and so on. After about 1830, the medium of exchange with traders was the buffalo robe, which rapidly increased in value at the expense of beaver.[12] Traders on the Missouri accepted other items produced by the Indians, but everything was equated in terms of robes.[13]

[11] These are the rudimentary canines. Cf. Seton, v. 3, p. 5.

[12] Bradley, pp. 203–04.

[13] According to Denig, p. 421, an Assiniboine chief on Jan. 8, 1852, was

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

439 wives had vowed to cover a Pipe, undoubtedly he would try to include in his purchases the requisite length of black cloth. Individuals of course differed. In view of their labor, the wives would expect to share in the return therefor which the husband was able to secure from the trader, but this expectation was not always met.[17]

The items thus obtained were consumed by the Gros Ventres in the same ways as those goods of their own manufacture—some being directly consumed, some entering into further production, and some being exchanged on the principle of gifts and of payments for services, and in gambling.

554 A man would accumulate a surplus only to expend it as
431 generously as possible in order to attain prestige. The person with
439 a reputation for generosity rose in public esteem, and was in turn the recipient of many gifts, whereas the man with only one horse and only one wife could not afford to meet the demands for hospitality and for generosity in other transactions, and thus could not profit by the system of indirect and deferred exchange.

262 Sharing of food was an important element in attaining prestige
574 through generosity. A person known to be stingy with food would
554 lack status. The ideal was often preached to children embodied in
867 such statements as the following: "If you have visitors, even though you don't have much food, give the last of it to them."

574 Should a male visitor drop in unexpectedly, the first thing a man did was to tell his wife to cook and she was expected to comply. How seriously this was regarded may be seen from the following case told by Singer: "One time my husband, Iron Bucket, went with a friend to visit the latter's brother. The sister-in-law was naturally a stingy woman and made no move to feed them. Her husband was sitting there fixing arrows and he told her: 'Hurry and cook. If you have nothing, ask for meat at one of the lodges.' This woman had a big shaggy head and sat there with her head bowed and her husband couldn't make her move. After a while, however, some meat was brought in from hunting, and this woman went out, got it and threw it down hard inside her lodge. She was mad. And instead of giving them in a nice way the manifolds and liver that they ordinarily eat first, she slung

[17] For a case in point, see p. 178.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13
Blackfoot NF6

G 533 singers: Tom Bad Road, Charlie Arms, Mrs. Katie Matt Croft, and Mrs. Albert Perry. Apropos of the last two, it may be added that women frequently sang and sing with the men, and the latter "like it when the women join in because this makes the singing colorful and nice."[3]

G 386 The Gros Ventres used many kinds of paint; some of Indian, some of white man origin; some in secular, some only in ritual uses. Powdered paints of different colors were gotten from traders G and were used to paint parfleches and, by the men, alone, never [439] by the women, to paint their bodies. A yellow paint was also gotten from the Cheyenne or from Cheyenne territory. On one occasion Coming Daylight brought a lot of this yellow paint which she had gathered there and gave enough of it to a Gros Ventre man to paint his big lodge with it. These paints were not sacred. A black paint, obtained from the Standing Rock region, was used in making fine lines on parfleches. Only the old women who made and painted the parfleches were the ones that gathered it, but it G was not so sacred as the red paint used in face painting.

788 386 [778] This sacred red face paint was in a class by itself, and was used in the Flat and Feathered Pipe rites, by the "grandfathers" in painting the wives during the Sacred Lodge rites, and apparently by the women in everyday painting of their own and the children's faces.[4] This special red paint was called, as also the yellow clay

---

[3] About 1900 The Boy went along with the Gros Ventres on a 4th of July visit to the Piegan at Browning. All four groups, the Piegan, Blood, Blackfeet proper, and northern Piegan, were gathered there. In all the four there B was only one man, a famous singer, who knew all the ceremonial dance [527] songs, although some of the other Indians knew some of them, and he was 533 imported by the Browning Piegan for the reason. The Boy heard him sing. The man did not have a nice clear voice, but he lived up to his reputation, for he knew the songs and their order for all the many rites and was kept busy all the time. And he cashed in handsomely with horses, blankets and money. He was able to make a living from his singing. The Boy learned some of the songs this man sang, and he sang one of them for us, that had the words: "You who are the ruler of all sacred (powerful) things having to do with all life, give me all of that so that I may use it all my life." The Blackfeet, The Boy added, think more of the Sun than do the Gros Ventres: it is their deity.

[4] See Flannery, 1953, pp. 144-45.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

"glistening" [no doubt, highly polished], very dark grey or greyish brown stone, with three or four humps on the upper surface of the stone stem part. Our informants, who had seen the Pipe, disagreed as to whether there are feathers on the Pipe itself, and one of them stated that it had looked different to him on the two occasions he had seen it. 778 276

In the Pipe bundle were many other sacred objects besides the Pipe itself. Most of these had their separate wrappings or cases, the Pipe itself being wrapped in buffalo hair. The first keeper, according to Garter Snake, wrapped the Pipe itself in a bit of white buffalo skin. The outermost wrapping of the Pipe bundle was, originally at least, of tanned elkskin, tied around with four strings. There was also, again originally at least, a bear robe cover for the bundle.[4] 778

The Pipe bundle would shake and quiver when there was going to be an earthquake. The keeper could then predict that the earthquake would occur soon, although he could not predict the exact time. Not so long ago Cora Chandler's old aunt saw the bundle quiver, and sure enough that summer an earthquake occurred. [787 823]

Informants consistently agreed that there were four main things in the bundle, and that two of the four were the Pipe itself and the carved stone face.[5] Most of them included the feathered stick among the four. As to whether the fourth was the whistle, the owl, or the crane, there was considerable conflict of opinion, a conflict we were unable to clear up.

The feathered stick, from which the Pipe itself derived its name,

---

[4] Dr. Hagener noted at the 1951 opening that the innermost wrapping of the whole bundle was of "old bison leather" and the outer wrapping of modern cloth." [R.F.]

[5] Dr. Hagener stated in letter of Jan. 18, 1954, "The pipe displayed in the pictures [Plate 3, C and D] was not the chief pipe of the bundle (that having mysteriously disappeared). It was however made of the red stone commonly traded from the Minnesota area. Although there were other pipes in the bundle this was the only one we were permitted to see. Iron Man checked on the presence of other pipes by feeling inside the leather casings, but did not bring them out." Under date of Aug. 8, 1954, Dr. Hagener remarked: "Dr. Nitz was of the opinion that there were two somewhat similar pipes in the bundle, one of which had disappeared. The picture . . . is of the remaining one." [R.F.] [439 276]

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

462 she herself had picked or dug. In preparing the material for
476 storage, too, the women would sit in a big circle, pounding cherries
[251] for instance, one woman helping to crush the cherries brought in by another. But, again, while it lightened the work of an individual woman who might have gathered more than the others, there was no pooling of resources. Sociability and friendship were apparently the chief motives for joining such a work group.

463 While there was a slight amount of occupational specialization, there was no real division of labor in the sense that persons with, say, supernatural power to cure, and who were well paid for their services, would be supported by this means alone. Nor could a man live, for instance, by specializing in raiding and raising horses. Every man, whatever else he might do, would have to make at least an attempt to hunt. Similarly, regardless of the temporary division of tasks which might be assigned among the women of the household, no individual woman could profit sufficiently through her ability to cut and fit lodge covers or through her ability to embroider well. Some, who were more skilled at one task than another, might perhaps devote more time and energy to that pursuit, but the rewards therefor were more in the nature of prestige than of direct economic advantage. An old woman for instance might be adept at making buffalo-hair rope. Men desiring to have it, would give her things in exchange for it, but it is doubtful if she would receive sufficient from this one type of manufacture to make her independent of relatives, even so far as food was concerned.

464 The potential supply of labor consisted in all able-bodied men of the tribe from the age of about 17 or 18, at which time a young
[58a] man was sufficiently skilled to hunt seriously, and of all able-bodied females from about the age of twelve, the time at which the
[162] average girl was married and was supposed to have been trained to woman's work. The unbalance of the sexes in favor of females, a marked feature in the population of the northern plains tribes,[4]
461 plus the fact that the tasks allotted to women could be begun at a much earlier age than those undertaken by men, meant that the amount of labor contributed by the woman, in manufacturing economic goods, was greater than the amount of labor available

[4] Cf. Wissler, 1936 (a), p. 38.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

on the part of the men for supplying the raw materials. This, however, was more than offset by the fact that the time consumed in producing the raw materials was less than that required to process and complete the manufacture thereof. The following calculation will give at least a rough approximation of the situation. It was estimated by our Gros Ventre informants that one woman would be able to dress about twenty robes a season, i.e., robes taken in the fall hunt and dressed with the fur on. This means she had to devote the equivalent of 60 full days' time to this task alone.[7] Actually she would not be free to work on robes exclusively, as she had to dress other kinds of skins, carry on her ordinary daily routine of procuring fuel and water, care of children, preparation of the daily meals, and in addition cut the enormous quantities of meat to be dried for winter consumption.[8] In contrast, if we can rely on Hornaday's figures, 15–25 men killed about a thousand buffalo in a fall season,[9] which means, taking the higher figure, one man alone would average more than two women could handle.

Value

Given the abundant supply of game, especially of buffalo, and the methods of exploiting it, the individual who controlled the relatively scarce means of production was in a position to command a larger labor supply and consequently to produce a larger surplus. The Boy summed up the situation thus: "The Gros Ventres in their old way of life used to want a lot of horses because they knew from experience that if a man had a lot of horses he could acquire a little wealth and position in life. If, for instance, a family had a lot of horses, the man might have three or four or five buffalo horses with which to chase game and would bring in lots of skins and meat and could afford more wives, and the more wives he had the bigger and wealthier he would be. He could have

[7] Denig, pp. 540–41, estimates three days' work to prepare one robe for market and states that the preparation of 25 to 30 robes was an excellent winter's work for one woman, with the average at 18 to 20 robes.

[8] Hornaday, p 436, states that a whole buffalo cow, if economically worked up, yields about 55 lbs. of pemmican and 45 lbs. of dried meat.

[9] Hornaday, p. 465.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

to himself: 'He gave to me, so I'll give to him.' But no one was in duty bound to give the equivalent in return." 574 431

Within the network of kinship obligations, exchange was more often indirect than reciprocal. A man could expect help from his father and from his mother's brother without being under obligation to return goods in like amount—he was supposed to repay them by conducting himself in such a way that they could be proud of him. This meant that the man in his turn would be especially generous toward his sister and her children, that he would adequately fulfill his duties toward his wife's people and provide goods in sufficient amount that his wife could fulfill her own obligations especially those toward her own brother's wife and children. 602 431

When others saw fit to honor an individual, say for bravery in warfare, that person was supposed to give away goods in large amounts to show that he appreciated the honor; and his relatives would join with him in giving, thereby increasing his, as well as their own, prestige. Likewise in paying for services, such as those of a medicine man, relatives would "chip in" to the best of their ability, the one assuming the largest part of the burden receiving the greatest boost in public esteem. A person who impoverished himself by giving generously at such times would be sure that, with his reputation thus established, he would soon be the recipient of gifts dispensed by others in like liberality. Meantime, however, he could not afford to sit back awaiting the presents from others. He would soon lose his coveted reputation and be referred to as lazy, an epithet strong enough to bring tears to the eyes of a man who entertained any ambitions whatsoever. 554 431 [602] [461]

If a person were in need, it was possible for him to request what was necessary, preferably from some relative who was well-to-do, and usually his request would be met. But a continual borrower lost status and a limit was thus put upon indiscriminate "begging." One woman stated: "If your sister asked you for something you would not refuse her, but it was to your brother's wife you would give things voluntarily. A woman had great pride in keeping her brother's wife well-dressed, and if you had an extra supply of dried berries she is the one you would think of first." 426 558 [607]

Thus we have the basis for the generalizations the Gros Ventres 431

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

CHAPTER IV

ECONOMIC ASPECTS

Labor

In the production of economic goods the man supplied the great bulk of raw materials by means of hunting, doing relatively little collecting and processing. He was responsible, however, for the supply and care of the major means of production, the horse. The chief objects manufactured by him were bows, arrows, clubs, shields, and ceremonial equipment.[1] The woman, on the other hand, supplied only a small part of the raw materials, through collecting, but did most of the processing of raw materials and manufacturing. 462

Cooperation within the household was necessary for production, and the household was practically a self-sufficient unit with relatively little reliance on the cooperative work of others. In actuality there was quite a bit of mutual help, especially among relatives. There was, of course, a certain amount of dependence of the man on his fellows in hunting in the sense that men usually hunted buffalo in groups and, in view of the common welfare, an individual was restrained from selfishly hunting alone and scattering the herd on which his fellows were depending. Nevertheless the operation was a collective rather than a truly cooperative one because, once the chase started, each man was on his own and had the right of disposal over whatever game he killed. It was stated that in any given run the most a man could kill would be seven or eight buffalo and that almost inevitably some would get none. No one went home empty-handed, however, for the more fortunate 476 592 224 476 [431]

[1] Maximilian noted in 1833 that men make only arms and smoking equipment (p. 103), and that among the Gros Ventres were many war clubs "made of the long end of an elk's horn" and "daggers" of jaws and teeth of a bear (p. 75). For other details of materials and manufacture, see Kroeber, 1908, pp. 150-51. For illustration of a shield, see photograph, courtesy of Richard Pohrt, pl. 3. [411]

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

224 would share at least the meat, if not the hides, with the less for-
476 tunate, which latter would contribute by helping skin and butcher.
[431] Butchering was quite an art and was considered the man's work, although occasionally women accompanied the hunting party if there were a shortage of men, as was liable to be the case especially in winter. Should the party have crossed a river to hunt, the meat was prepared for transportation on a raft by being cut into large chunks, and each two chunks skewered and joined by a thong of sufficient length to hang on the poles forming the raft. The raft
[386] was built by crossing two long poles at one end, the other ends free and forming an angle of about thirty degrees. Three or four shorter poles were placed crosswise and lashed firmly in place with rawhide. The paunch of the buffalo, after being washed out, was used as a container for the many leftover bits of meat and was tied to the middle of the lower rung of the raft. A whole beef could thus be loaded on such a raft and towed across by one horse-
[492] man. When, as was more usually the case, the meat was to be packed back to camp by horses, the butchering was done differently but in such a way that a whole buffalo could be packed on a single
[251] horse.[3] Sometimes in winter when a small party went out and they could not pack all the meat back in one trip, the remainder was buried in the snow and called for the following day.

● 462 Once the proceeds of the hunt were turned over to the house-
281 holds of the individual hunters, it was the woman's task to cook the food for immediate consumption and to prepare the surplus for storage. Her most arduous and time-consuming task was the dressing of skins and the manufacture of these into finished articles of clothing, containers, lodge-covers, and so on. It was stated that skins in one stage of preparation or another were nearly always at hand.[4] "They didn't do things in a haphazard way because there was a certain time to do this and a certain time to do that." From the hides of buffalo killed during the spring and early summer, when the hair was not thick, they made the parfleshes and bags, soles for moccasins, rawhide ropes, and lodge-covers. In the fall, when the hide was furry, robes were made.

The older women informants described how, when they were

[3] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, p. 149.

[4] For some details on skin dressing, see Kroeber, 1908, p. 150.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The older women informants described, when they were young, they would work at scraping skins pegged to the ground, by leaning over from the waist, feet well apart and knees unbent, swinging sideways from the hips. They could keep up this rhythmical steady motion, with the short-handled scraper usually tipped with metal, for hours at a time, one day after another. Sometimes, too, a woman would spend a whole day softening ropes of rawhide by rubbing the rope which had been run through the eye and ear apertures of a buffalo skull upon which the horns had been left so that she, sitting on the ground with legs extended, could rest her feet against the horns as she pulled the rope back and forth, making it soft and white.[4] Nevertheless the tedium of these operations was often relieved by the fact that occasionally other women, who had at the moment some leisure, would hear the work going on and would volunteer to help. 462 281 [516] [412] [283 237] 462 476 281

It was customary for women to do much of their work in groups. If a young woman, for instance, wished to make a fine robe, she would call in some other women, including an older experienced "hand." The latter would mark the robe where the embroidery should go, and the younger women did the fancy work. The hostess would cook for all present and so, in a pleasant atmosphere of sociability and "woman talk," the work would progress. A similar type of gathering would be held when a sufficient number of hides had been saved to make a lodge cover. [531]

In size the lodges ranged from six skins up to twenty-four or twenty-five, with the average of about fourteen to seventeen.[5] Much skill was needed for cutting and fitting the skins and an experienced woman would be called in to do that part, while the others helped with the task of sewing the skins together. Our informants stated that a woman would have to "save and save" skins towards a new lodge, which was a necessity about every three years. [342]

Women went out in groups to pick berries and wild fruits as well as to dig roots, but each one had right of disposal over what 462 476

[4] Another method for softening ropes is given by Kroeber, 1908, p. 150.

[5] The largest lodge remembered by the Gros Ventres is said to have been that of the Blood Chief, Father of All, who had, at the time of the 1855 treaty, a lodge with two fires, poles 65 ft. long, and the cover consisting of more than 25 skins.

462 she herself had picked or dug. In preparing the material for
476 storage, too, the women would sit in a big circle, pounding cherries
[251] for instance, one woman helping to crush the cherries brought in by another. But, again, while it lightened the work of an individual woman who might have gathered more than the others, there was no pooling of resources. Sociability and friendship were apparently the chief motives for joining such a work group.

463 While there was a slight amount of occupational specialization, there was no real division of labor in the sense that persons with, say, supernatural power to cure, and who were well paid for their services, would be supported by this means alone. Nor could a man live, for instance, by specializing in raiding and raising horses. Every man, whatever else he might do, would have to make at least an attempt to hunt. Similarly, regardless of the temporary division of tasks which might be assigned among the women of the household, no individual woman could profit sufficiently through her ability to cut and fit lodge covers or through her ability to embroider well. Some, who were more skilled at one task than another, might perhaps devote more time and energy to that pursuit, but the rewards therefor were more in the nature of prestige than of direct economic advantage. An old woman for instance might be adept at making buffalo-hair rope. Men desiring to have it, would give her things in exchange for it, but it is doubtful if she would receive sufficient from this one type of manufacture to make her independent of relatives, even so far as food was concerned.

464 The potential supply of labor consisted in all able-bodied men of the tribe from the age of about 17 or 18, at which time a young
[582] man was sufficiently skilled to hunt seriously, and of all able-bodied females from about the age of twelve, the time at which the
[162] average girl was married and was supposed to have been trained to woman's work. The unbalance of the sexes in favor of females, a marked feature in the population of the northern plains tribes,*
461 plus the fact that the tasks allotted to women could be begun at a much earlier age than those undertaken by men, meant that the amount of labor contributed by the woman, in manufacturing economic goods, was greater than the amount of labor available

* Cf. Wissler, 1936 (a), p. 38.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

462 she herself had picked or dug. In preparing the material for
476 storage, too, the women would sit in a big circle, pounding cherries
[251] for instance, one woman helping to crush the cherries brought in by another. But, again, while it lightened the work of an individual woman who might have gathered more than the others, there was no pooling of resources. Sociability and friendship were apparently the chief motives for joining such a work group.

463 While there was a slight amount of occupational specialization, there was no real division of labor in the sense that persons with, say, supernatural power to cure, and who were well paid for their services, would be supported by this means alone. Nor could a man live, for instance, by specializing in raiding and raising horses. Every man, whatever else he might do, would have to make at least an attempt to hunt. Similarly, regardless of the temporary division of tasks which might be assigned among the women of the household, no individual woman could profit sufficiently through her ability to cut and fit lodge covers or through her ability to embroider well. Some, who were more skilled at one task than another, might perhaps devote more time and energy to that pursuit, but the rewards therefor were more in the nature of prestige than of direct economic advantage. An old woman for instance might be adept at making buffalo-hair rope. Men desiring to have it, would give her things in exchange for it, but it is doubtful if she would receive sufficient from this one type of manufacture to make her independent of relatives, even so far as food was concerned.

464 The potential supply of labor consisted in all able-bodied men of the tribe from the age of about 17 or 18, at which time a young
[580] man was sufficiently skilled to hunt seriously, and of all able-bodied females from about the age of twelve, the time at which the
[162] average girl was married and was supposed to have been trained to woman's work. The unbalance of the sexes in favor of females, a marked feature in the population of the northern plains tribes,*
461 plus the fact that the tasks allotted to women could be begun at a much earlier age than those undertaken by men, meant that the amount of labor contributed by the woman, in manufacturing economic goods, was greater than the amount of labor available

* Cf. Wissler, 1936 (a), p. 38.

462 she herself had picked or dug. In preparing the material for
476 storage, too, the women would sit in a big circle, pounding cherries
[251] for instance, one woman helping to crush the cherries brought in by another. But, again, while it lightened the work of an individual woman who might have gathered more than the others, there was no pooling of resources. Sociability and friendship were apparently the chief motives for joining such a work group.

463 While there was a slight amount of occupational specialization, there was no real division of labor in the sense that persons with, say, supernatural power to cure, and who were well paid for their services, would be supported by this means alone. Nor could a man live, for instance, by specializing in raiding and raising horses. Every man, whatever else he might do, would have to make at least an attempt to hunt. Similarly, regardless of the temporary division of tasks which might be assigned among the women of the household, no individual woman could profit sufficiently through her ability to cut and fit lodge covers or through her ability to embroider well. Some, who were more skilled at one task than another, might perhaps devote more time and energy to that pursuit, but the rewards therefor were more in the nature of prestige than of direct economic advantage. An old woman for instance might be adept at making buffalo-hair rope. Men desiring to have it, would give her things in exchange for it, but it is doubtful if she would receive sufficient from this one type of manufacture to make her independent of relatives, even so far as food was concerned.

464 The potential supply of labor consisted in all able-bodied men of the tribe from the age of about 17 or 18, at which time a young
[582] man was sufficiently skilled to hunt seriously, and of all able-bodied females from about the age of twelve, the time at which the
[162] average girl was married and was supposed to have been trained to woman's work. The unbalance of the sexes in favor of females, a marked feature in the population of the northern plains tribes,[6]
461 plus the fact that the tasks allotted to women could be begun at a much earlier age than those undertaken by men, meant that the amount of labor contributed by the woman, in manufacturing economic goods, was greater than the amount of labor available

[6] Cf. Wissler, 1936 (a), p. 38.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

756 to do so in Stiffarm's presence. Making fun to their face of powerful medicine men or so expressing skepticism of their power was evidently not considered prudent.

Skepticism, or at least profession of skepticism, regarding the powers of medicine men or regarding some powers of some medicine man, was not confined to Coming Daylight and her husband, their own skepticism centered mostly on one doctor. We recorded a number of professions of skepticism, but what weight and interpretation should be put on them is not easy to say. Even though Little Man, Coming Daylight's husband, "did not," she said, "believe in Indian doctors," at one time at least, he submitted to treatmenet by Goes Back and became convinced she had extracted the cause of his illness. Another man present at Little Man's cure said, "I too never believed things," but he likewise was convinced when he saw the rag that Goes Back extracted.

In general, our evidence on doctoring points definitely toward the conclusion that the powers of medicine men, both for curing and for causing illness, were all but universally believed in. Such skepticism as prevailed was confirmed to certain individual skeptics and even in these cases or in most of them as regards not doctors in general but only certain individual doctors, and not all powers and procedures of the doctor but only certain ones. Furthermore profession of skepticism need not in all cases of course have been indicative of actual skepticism, and even actual skepticism would give place to belief when the skeptic witnessed cures, or profession of skepticism to profession of belief when the doctor was present. Some of such skepticism as prevailed may well have been a compensation reaction to the size and kind of payment demanded by some doctors. To this matter of payment we now turn.

Payment for Services

756 465 Some payment or gift was commonly, perhaps always, made to even the non-professional individual who gathered a medicine for you or gave one to you or who treated you, unless he or she was your very close relative. One who wanted "fish medicine" from a person who had brought it back from Minnesota would buy it from him. Singer remarked: "My mother always taught me: 'If

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

you are not feeling well and someone brings you medicine, say, medicine to clear you out after childbirth, and you have nothing else to give the person, just give a dish of food.'" Coming Daylight, who was not a professional doctor, was called about 1928 to attend a childbirth and, when ready to leave after looking after the mother in every way, was given a big sack of flour, a small sack of sugar, and five dollars in cash. Mary Ereaux, in speaking of the two roots given to Coming Daylight by the latter's grandmother to hasten childbirth and to bring the mother's milk quickly, remarked: "They say that if it [either of these roots] is given to an outsider [not a close relative of Coming Daylight], the recipient must pay, else it wouldn't be any good." "Last winter [1939-40]," Mary Ereaux said on another occasion, "I had a cold. An old lady picked some roots for me and I gave her potatoes and eggs in place of this medicine. They believe such medicine does not work if you don't pay for it, no matter how easy it is to gather the particular medicine."

A payment or fee was always expected by the professional doctor for his or her services, unless again the patient was a close relative. The doctor had commonly "paid" well in hardship or goods to acquire his power; he expected to be paid well in turn. And even though he had acquired ownership of it, not the hard way by quest or purchase, but by spontaneous offer from some being or by free gift from some relative, he still "paid" in shortened life and in restrictions on freedom. Doctors did not make their whole living from their practice but the fees received by them, especially by "great" doctors, were substantial additions to income and wealth. This economic goal loomed large in the consciousness of the people and of the professional doctor. When, for instance, Bad Bad Bull's sister refused his offer to her of power to cure stomach sickness, people said to her: "You should have accepted this power and so have gotten a lot of things for curing this disease." Doctoring was an avenue to wealth and to the ease and prestige that came with wealth, but in general was not practiced by the young. It was, however, a form of "old age insurance."

Sometimes professional doctors named their fee before accepting a case. "Give me this or that, and I'll doctor you." At other times

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

INDUSTRIES AND IMPLEMENTS.

281 When a skin was brought in, it was hung on a sort of tripod, and with a chisel-like flesher of buffalo-leg bone the meat was removed. Then the hide was stretched on the ground to dry. When dried, the hair and thin coat of skin on the same side were cut off with the familiar implement of bent elk-horn, always provided, in recent times, with a metal blade. To make rawhide, nothing more was done. To make dressed skin, liver, grease, and brains, boiled and mixed in the proper proportion, were rubbed [177] or soaked into the skin and then removed with an ordinary scraper, now usually of sheet-iron or tin. Finally the skin was worked over with a rough stone or a bone. In preparing buffalo-skins for a tent, four steps were recognized: first, drying the skins; next, removing the hair; third, soaking them; and, last, scraping and working them over. Skins were softened by being drawn over a rope of buffalo-sinew.

281 When a woman had prepared enough buffalo-skins for a tent, she made a feast and invited other women who were skilful at making tents. The most 342 expert of these fitted and tacked the skins together loosely, and the others 476 sewed them fast. When a robe was to be embroidered, the woman who wanted to make it prepared food and invited other women to help her in her work. When the robe was finished, the man who was to receive it was called in, and it was given to him.

281 Caps of buffalo-skin were worn in winter. They were provided with flaps that were pulled down over the ears and held by a string fastened under the chin. Mittens of buffalo-skin were also used, tied together by a string which passed behind the neck. When the hunter was ready to shoot, he slipped his hands out of the mittens.

282 Simple flat unbraided ropes of rawhide were cut out of the skin in a long spiral. After having been cut, they were stretched between two sticks. In order to soften them, they were covered with manure, or tied to a horse that dragged them over the ground until they became pliable.

323 Pottery is declared to have been made formerly of clay mixed with crushed rock. Rawhide bags, drawn together at the top with a string, were 252 also used for cooking by means of hot rocks. The often described Plains method of cooking in holes in the ground lined with rawhide was also followed.

372 When fire was struck with flint and steel, dry mushrooms were sometimes used as tinder.

411 Bows were most frequently made of cherry-wood, but sometimes of ash. Ash was harder and more elastic, but more brittle. Sinew backing was

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

CHAPTER IV

ECONOMIC ASPECTS

Labor

In the production of economic goods the man supplied the great bulk of raw materials by means of hunting, doing relatively little collecting and processing. He was responsible, however, for the supply and care of the major means of production, the horse. The chief objects manufactured by him were bows, arrows, clubs, shields, and ceremonial equipment.[1] The woman, on the other hand, supplied only a small part of the raw materials, through collecting, but did most of the processing of raw materials and manufacturing. 462

Cooperation within the household was necessary for production, and the household was practically a self-sufficient unit with relatively little reliance on the cooperative work of others. In actuality there was quite a bit of mutual help, especially among relatives. There was, of course, a certain amount of dependence of the man on his fellows in hunting in the sense that men usually hunted buffalo in groups and, in view of the common welfare, an individual was restrained from selfishly hunting alone and scattering the herd on which his fellows were depending. Nevertheless the operation was a collective rather than a truly cooperative one because, once the chase started, each man was on his own and had the right of disposal over whatever game he killed. It was stated that in any given run the most a man could kill would be seven or eight buffalo and that almost inevitably some would get none. No one went home empty-handed, however, for the more fortunate 476 592 224 476 [431]

[1] Maximilian noted in 1833 that men make only arms and smoking equipment (p. 103), and that among the Gros Ventres were many war clubs "made of the long end of an elk's horn" and "daggers" of jaws and teeth of a bear (p. 75). For other details of materials and manufacture, see Kroeber, 1908, pp. 150–51. For illustration of a shield, see photograph, courtesy of Richard Pohrt, pl. 3. [411]

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

224 would share at least the meat, if not the hides, with the less for-
476 tunate, which latter would contribute by helping skin and butcher.
[431] Butchering was quite an art and was considered the man's work, although occasionally women accompanied the hunting party if there were a shortage of men, as was liable to be the case especially in winter. Should the party have crossed a river to hunt, the meat was prepared for transportation on a raft by being cut into large chunks, and each two chunks skewered and joined by a thong of sufficient length to hang on the poles forming the raft. The raft was built by crossing two long poles at one end, the other ends
[386] free and forming an angle of about thirty degrees. Three or four shorter poles were placed crosswise and lashed firmly in place with rawhide. The paunch of the buffalo, after being washed out, was used as a container for the many leftover bits of meat and was tied to the middle of the lower rung of the raft. A whole beef could thus be loaded on such a raft and towed across by one horse-
[492] man. When, as was more usually the case, the meat was to be packed back to camp by horses, the butchering was done differently but in such a way that a whole buffalo could be packed on a single horse.[8] Sometimes in winter when a small party went out and
[251] they could not pack all the meat back in one trip, the remainder was buried in the snow and called for the following day.

462 Once the proceeds of the hunt were turned over to the house-
281 holds of the individual hunters, it was the woman's task to cook the food for immediate consumption and to prepare the surplus for storage. Her most arduous and time-consuming task was the dressing of skins and the manufacture of these into finished articles of clothing, containers, lodge-covers, and so on. It was stated that skins in one stage of preparation or another were nearly always at hand.[9] "They didn't do things in a haphazard way because there was a certain time to do this and a certain time to do that." From the hides of buffalo killed during the spring and early summer, when the hair was not thick, they made the parfleshes and bags, soles for moccasins, rawhide ropes, and lodge-covers. In the fall, when the hide was furry, robes were made.

The older women informants described how, when they were

[8] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, p. 149.

[9] For some details on skin dressing, see Kroeber, 1908, p. 150.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The older women in informants described, when they were young, they would work at scraping skins pegged to the ground, by leaning over from the waist, feet well apart and knees unbent, swinging sideways from the hips. They could keep up this rhythmical steady motion, with the short-handled scraper usually tipped with metal, for hours at a time, one day after another. Sometimes, too, a woman would spend a whole day softening ropes of rawhide by rubbing the rope which had been run through the eye and ear apertures of a buffalo skull upon which the horns had been left so that she, sitting on the ground with legs extended, could rest her feet against the horns as she pulled the rope back and forth, making it soft and white.[4] Nevertheless the tedium of these operations was often relieved by the fact that occasionally other women, who had at the moment some leisure, would hear the work going on and would volunteer to help.

It was customary for women to do much of their work in groups. If a young woman, for instance, wished to make a fine robe, she would call in some other women, including an older experienced "hand." The latter would mark the robe where the embroidery should go, and the younger women did the fancy work. The hostess would cook for all present and so, in a pleasant atmosphere of sociability and "woman talk," the work would progress. A similar type of gathering would be held when a sufficient number of hides had been saved to make a lodge cover.

In size the lodges ranged from six skins up to twenty-four or twenty-five, with the average of about fourteen to seventeen.[5] Much skill was needed for cutting and fitting the skins and an experienced woman would be called in to do that part, while the others helped with the task of sewing the skins together. Our informants stated that a woman would have to "save and save" skins towards a new lodge, which was a necessity about every three years.

Women went out in groups to pick berries and wild fruits as well as to dig roots, but each one had right of disposal over what

[4] Another method for softening ropes is given by Kroeber, 1908, p. 150.

[5] The largest lodge remembered by the Gros Ventres is said to have been that of the Blood Chief, Father of All, who had, at the time of the 1855 treaty, a lodge with two fires, poles 65 ft. long, and the cover consisting of more than 25 skins.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

462 she herself had picked or dug. In preparing the material for
476 storage, too, the women would sit in a big circle, pounding cherries
[251] for instance, one woman helping to crush the cherries brought in by another. But, again, while it lightened the work of an individual woman who might have gathered more than the others, there was no pooling of resources. Sociability and friendship were apparently the chief motives for joining such a work group.

463 While there was a slight amount of occupational specialization, there was no real division of labor in the sense that persons with, say, supernatural power to cure, and who were well paid for their services, would be supported by this means alone. Nor could a man live, for instance, by specializing in raiding and raising horses. Every man, whatever else he might do, would have to make at least an attempt to hunt. Similarly, regardless of the temporary division of tasks which might be assigned among the women of the household, no individual woman could profit sufficiently through her ability to cut and fit lodge covers or through her ability to embroider well. Some, who were more skilled at one task than another, might perhaps devote more time and energy to that pursuit, but the rewards therefor were more in the nature of prestige than of direct economic advantage. An old woman for instance might be adept at making buffalo-hair rope. Men desiring to have it, would give her things in exchange for it, but it is doubtful if she would receive sufficient from this one type of manufacture to make her independent of relatives, even so far as food was concerned.

464 The potential supply of labor consisted in all able-bodied men of the tribe from the age of about 17 or 18, at which time a young
[582] man was sufficiently skilled to hunt seriously, and of all able-bodied females from about the age of twelve, the time at which the average girl was married and was supposed to have been trained
[162] to woman's work. The unbalance of the sexes in favor of females, a marked feature in the population of the northern plains tribes,[4]
461 plus the fact that the tasks allotted to women could be begun at a much earlier age than those undertaken by men, meant that the amount of labor contributed by the woman, in manufacturing economic goods, was greater than the amount of labor available

[4] Cf. Wissler, 1936 (a), p. 38.

Thus we have the basis for the generalizations the Gros Ventres
183 make about their own culture. The principle seemed to be that
the more one gives, the more he gets. Coming Daylight explained:
431 "Those who are stingy don't come up, they just go back, back, back. Those who are generous gets lots of things. My maternal uncle was very generous and I try to follow his example. I feed everybody—old men, children and everybody—and people give me lots of things. Stingy people would eat all by themselves and nobody would give things to anyone like that."

The attitude is further illustrated by the following statement by Singer in explaining that the one selected as Feather Pipe Keeper had to give up everything he owned and would be sitting naked and bereft of all property: "Then his relatives and friends bring him things to live on. It is a great thing to give to someone like that. But these people kind of share everything and it holds back the ones that are prosperous. Our belief was that in a little while the ones who give have everything again. This didn't mean that a person could be lazy since it was 'thrown up' to anyone if he sat around and didn't work."

183 Again, according to Coming Daylight, "Formerly they all
seemed to work in a bunch and work hard for a living. It seemed
431 like they were all one, and always helped one another and treated
476 one another to things, especially to something they thought the other person didn't have. If a bunch of women went out to pick berries, they helped one another with pounding. If they had hides to tan, others seeing the work going on came and helped and in no time the work was done. Even if they dug turnips, which are hard to get, should they have brought in a lot, they passed them around. If someone had no horse to use in hunting, someone loaned him one."

Mary Ereaux mentioned: "The Gros Ventres are great ones for sharing and that keeps the more industrious ones down. They are not as present as generous as they used to be because they would be entirely out. But even today if a woman brings you some berries, later on you give her some sugar or something she needs. That is the way they always lived and still do."

In payment for services there is no set "price," so to speak, but there was a gradation according to the kind of service rendered. If an older experienced woman were called in to design a new

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

lodge cover, the hostess provided food and there was no other direct remuneration. If one sought knowledge as to how to use an ordinary medicinal root, something was given in exchange, but in a relatively small amount. On the other hand in compensation for the services of a medicine man, not only was food prepared, but in addition a much greater amount of property was given to the doctor, who in turn would see that those who had accompanied him to help in singing at the cure, would receive some goods as well. The amount offered to the doctor by the one paying for the services was governed by the reputation of the medicine man as well as by the individual's regard for his own reputation for generosity. People would say: "Look how much so-and-so thinks of his relative who was sick—he gave so much to the one who cured him." If the patient were very ill a whole family might really impoverish itself in paying doctors, were it necessary to call in one specialist after another, as sometimes happened. 183 431 476 [956]

Although apparently there was a tendency to call on relatives to perform services—such as naming a child, telling a war story at the erection of a new lodge, and so on—remuneration was forthcoming, although perhaps on not so large a scale as if a non-relative were called on to perform the same offices. [602]

In addition to exchange of goods effected through generous hospitality and the prestige-requirements of ostentatious liberality, including payment for services, the distribution of goods within the tribe was aided by gambling. Wagers were matched by two competing individuals and bet on an all-or-nothing basis. Considerable amounts of property changed hands at a single match.[19] [525]

[19] For a discussion of gambling among the Gros Ventres, see Flannery and Cooper, 1946.

CHAPTER VIII

CHILDHOOD

858 In the days before the buffalo disappeared and before formal schooling was available, childhood, it was said, for girls was shorter and for boys was longer than at present. A girl was ordinarily [582] given in marriage before she was twelve years old—certainly before she attained physiological maturity. A boy on the other hand, though seemingly anxious to participate in hunting and in war as soon as he was able, was not forced to bear the full responsibilities of adulthood until the end of adolescence. While there was considerable variation from family to family in the amount of time required of children in training for practical tasks, all enjoyed a considerable amount of "free time."

PLAY

857 Singer and Coming Daylight, the two oldest of our informants, 526 in recalling the amusements and pastimes of their youth, decided that sliding down hills was one of the most pleasurable as it could be done at any time of the year. In winter, when there was snow, [493] the boys used a kind of sled made by lashing buffalo rib-bones together. Girls managed just as well by simply sitting on their robes and holding between their legs the end which usually hung free. In summer a stiff buffalo hide was used for sliding down the grassy slopes.[1] When the water was frozen, boys and girls alike [524] skated with their feet on the ice, thus clearing a slick surface on which to spin their tops made of horn.

857 Swimming, however, was the great sport in summer. Girls left their dresses close to the bank, those of the older girls in a neat 526 row closest to the edge and those of the smaller girls in the next 481 row. Beginners used the dog-paddle, but the boys developed profi-

[1] For this and some other types of amusement, see Kroeber, 1908, pp. 190–91.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

ciency with the overhand stroke and girls with the breast stroke.[8] 857
Sometimes the children amused themselves by rolling down the 526
bank so that their bodies made a loud smack as they hit the water. 481
At other times they held contests to see who could dive and stay under the longest time, or who could make the biggest bubble by exhaling under water. Follow-the-leader was played even in big rivers like the Missouri, but only the more courageous participated in this game. The one who had the reputation as bravest was the leader, and Coming Daylight claimed that she, herself, often led off, one of her accomplishments being the ability to swim quite far under water.

There was no adult supervision of children at play and they 857
spent much time at the water's edge, even when not intending to 524
swim. Modelling in clay was done by boys as well as by girls. The latter liked especially to form wet clay into "parflesches" and incise marks to represent beaded and painted designs.

Walking on stilts, teetering on logs, swinging by standing in a [481]
loop of rawhide, all were considered enjoyable activities for little girls. Nevertheless some of their games were quite rough and-tumble. In one such game, girls formed a circle, each pinching the flesh on the back of her neighbor's left hand; while standing thus they sang a song which was repeated as many times as necessary until someone let go of her neighbor's hand; whereupon this girl was jumped on and mauled by all the others. In another game, one girl, with her eyes closed, would try to find the others who were seated in a row on the ground. Different ones would call out: "This way! This way!" Each was anxious to be the first discovered. As soon as the girl who was "it" touched one of the others, she picked her up and, carrying her upside-down on her back to the spot from which she had originally started, she dumped her burden on the ground. This procedure was repeated until "it" had carried each girl, but the last one to be dumped was tickled unmercifully by all the others.

Girls played with two kinds of balls. One type was of buck- 857
skin stuffed with deer-hair. This they would toss to one another. 526
The other type of ball was large and made from the bladder of a [232]
buffalo cow, dried and stuffed.

[8] The marked ability of the Gros Ventres in swimming was noted in 1833 [147]
by Maximilian, p. 72.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

passed, and so drove them forward over the bank into the enclosure. After horses were secured, the buffalo were generally run down. It is said that a buffalo shot with an arrow fell to the other side, never breaking the arrow by falling upon it. 224

The meat of an entire buffalo would be carried on a horse. It was cut [492] in small pieces, which were tied to the ends of strips of the skin and then slung over the horse's back so as to balance. If necessary, the hunter would mount above. It is said that sometimes as many as four deer were carried on one horse.

When a buffalo was killed, half the skin was sometimes stitched or tied [482] into a sack, the meat put into it, and the bundle dragged home by a rope around the shoulders of a person. In other cases the meat would be tied into bundles and carried home on the shoulders. The buffalo were usually cut up by men. Women were said to have taken part in this work when luck was unusually good and many buffalo had been killed. After a man had brought home meat, the women cut it into thin slices, which were hung [251] on racks to dry. The dried meat was either packed in parfleches, or pounded fine and made into pemmican by mixture with berries. Meat, whether fresh or dried, was usually eaten after having been boiled in water; but [252] when one was hungry or in haste a piece would be put on a stick and turned over the fire.

Traps for foxes and other animals, even bears, were constructed by making an enclosure, over the opening of which a heavy log, sliding between four sticks to keep it in place, was supported on a single slender upright stick resting on another stick attached to the bait. Other logs might be leaned against the first one to give it additional weight.

Birds such as sage-hens, ducks, and geese, were formerly not hunted 223 extensively. The eggs, however, formed favorite food. When a camp was pitched near a lake, the young men would strip and go out into the water [226] looking for duck-eggs. Fish were not caught except by children, for amusement.

When a camp was broken, small brush tents with windows of grass were built. Fat and meat were strewed about the place and a man entered the ambush before daylight. He could look and shoot through the grass, but he could not be seen inside. Birds as large as eagles were secured in this way.

Crows and magpies were caught with sinew snares attached to a willow hoop. Meat was laid in the middle of the hoop. Walking about inside of this, the birds caught their feet in the snares and were unable to fly away.

Gophers were caught by means of a horsehair loop fastened to the end of 224 a rope and laid around a gopher-hole. A person lay down, and when the gopher raised its head he jerked the rope.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

726 626 latter and raise his leg in imitation of a urinating dog. All would know then on whom Eater's displeasure had fallen, and the young man in question would break down and sob. That would cure him of laziness."

726 318 Among the important duties on a war party were those of the water-carrier. If the mission were to be performed under more than ordinarily dangerous circumstances, young men might volunteer for the job, but usually the leader chose someone for it. A water-carrier had to have courage and resourcefulness because in order to fetch water it might be necessary that he be sent long distances without guard, and then have to catch up with the group in case the rest had to move. When the members of the party sighted the water-carrier returning successfully bearing the skin water-container attached to a pole, a song was sung by the war party as they marked time by beating two sticks together.[3]

[482 534 533]

726 Scouting was another important aspect of a war party. The leader selected two well-qualified men for this job. "They had to have courage and endurance for, while scouting, they would run instead of walk and not eat until their mission was completed." Scouts were called "wolves" and wore wolf-skins as insignia and sometimes, at least, would stick brush on their heads so they could not be so easily spotted against the horizon.[3] They went to high places to look around. If the enemy were not in sight, they might sing, making up words to the tune mentioned as having been sung before the party left camp.[4]

[714] [533]

If the scouts saw indications of the enemy, such as smoke rising from a coulee, but without actually seeing the enemy sufficiently clearly to identify them, on their return to the party they gave a wolf howl as they approached and proceeded in a sharp zigzag path. If, however, they had more definite information, they gave the wolf howl and approached in a circular path; that is, advanced, turned in a circle, advanced again, turned in a circle, advanced again, turned in a circle and halted. They were then met by two older men who had been successful scouts in their day. While the scouts were approaching—occasionally looking back over their

[533]

[3] Recorded as No. 130.
[3] For illustrations, see Curtis, v. 5, p. 176.
[4] Samples of this kind of song were recorded as No. 23 and No. 24.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The keeper knew Lame Bull had only three wives and when he saw that two had gotten away and that the third and last was coming out, he said: 'Be sure to get this one. She is the last.' She was the youngest of the three, the mother of The Boy. Somebody did seize her. 793

"Then the members of the crowd pulled out all the picket pins and grabbed everything they could find. But they did not get everything belonging to Lame Bull and his wives, for the brother of the oldest wife had stolen into the crowd in order to protect his sister's property, and he was a good fighter, a man to be reckoned with. When the crowd started raiding, he threw the people right and left, fighting, hitting and pushing them, and so saved his sister's bed and some of her things.

"The crowd had gotten one of Lame Bull's wives but could not find him, and were undecided what to do. They finally agreed to take Lame Bull's wife back with them. They put a robe down and said to her: 'Sit on this. We are going to carry you back on that robe.' But when they lifted her up and put her on it she jumped off, saying: 'I don't want to be carried. I would rather walk.' One of the men, a cousin of hers, said: 'Get on to it, or else we will whip you.' So she got on it and they carried her over (to the keeper's lodge, apparently). When they arrived there they all sat down and took their places just as if Lame Bull were there, with the wife seated next to the keeper's wife. [482]

"Then the ex-keeper, who had transferred the Pipe to the keeper from whom Lame Bull had just run, said, 'I will try to call my friend (Lame Bull). Maybe he does not want to be keeper.' So the keeper gave his place to this ex-keeper who then started to perform the rite for summoning unwilling persons.

"All this time Lame Bull was hiding up in the mountains, and it so happened that his horses were grazing nearby. As he looked at them he was more than ever determined never to become a keeper, for he did not want to give his horses away as he would have to do as keeper. So while he was listening to the singing and rattling of the rite, he said to himself: 'Sing all you want. I'll never go down there.'

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

their fellows, there were many other ones that fulfilled the same function. Of these latter, some, more distinctively ritual, will be dealt with later passim under "Flat Pipe Ritual"; others, more secular, may be mentioned now. 793 784

The keeper and co-keeper were not supposed to carry a pack on their own backs, except that on the march the Pipe bundle might be packed by the co-keeper. [482]

They could not mount and dismount a horse on the same side, but mounted from the right side and dismounted from the left.

If you handed something to the keeper it became his property, and if he handed something to you it became yours. If you thoughtlessly left anything with the keeper or co-keeper to keep for you, —if, for instance, you said: "Here, hold my horse (or my gun)," —the object became the property of the keeper or co-keeper and could not be gotten back. The keeper and co-keeper never loaned their robes, dresses, moccasins or other belongings, unless asked, and they were not supposed to be asked to loan. If you thoughtlessly broke the code and asked to borrow something from them, they were obliged to give it to you to own. [426]

Neither the keeper nor co-keeper was allowed to handle ashes, nor could the Pipe bundle remain in the keeper's lodge when ashes were taken out. Were this rule violated, the keeper or co-keeper or both would lose eyesight. When ashes were to be removed from the keeper's lodge, the Pipe bundle was taken outside the lodge by the co-keeper, and both the keeper and the co-keeper stayed outside, while another of the keeper's wives removed the ashes.

When a group of men were seated in a crescent or near-circle enjoying a purely social smoke together, each took a puff from the lighted pipe and passed it clockwise to the man on his left until it reached the end of the line. Then the pipe would be passed back anti-clockwise from hand to hand to the other end without anyone puffing from it. But if the keeper were in the group, he could take a puff not only when the pipe was passing him clockwise but also on its anti-clockwise return. The man passing the pipe to the keeper from either left or right had to raise it upward a little toward his own right before doing so. The first time the pipe reached the keeper, he would take a big puff, and point 276 793

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The ridge willow was painted all black with charcoal. Each of the other 30 lateral willows was painted black around its whole circumference just at the point where the upright section began to bend or arch. This "painting" was done by grasping the willow at this point with the blacked palm. Each willow was also painted black at the very top where the arched willows met, this painting being done by simultaneously grasping each two willows at the top. The whole framework was covered with robes when the sweating was about to take place. 346 796*

Inside the sweat-lodge at about its centre, was dug a pit, about 2 feet square by about 15-16 inches deep, as a deposit hearth for the heated rocks. Around the four sides of the square pit at near ground level there was a beveled groove of earth, with the bevel slanting outward and downward from the edge of the pit. The surfaces of the bevel and the bottom of the pit were covered with powdered charcoal.

From near the two corners of the eastern beveling to the two first willows flanking the main entrance, the ground space was cleared of grass and smoothed, even, and this space was covered with powdered charcoal.

Sage brush was laid around the inside of the sweat-lodge next to the wall.

At three spots on the east-west axis of the sweat-lodge,—on the surface of the west bevel, on the bottom of the pit at its centre, and just doorward of the east bevel on the cleared charcoaled space,—incense places, pi-shaped with the open side toward the east, were made with powdered red paint.

Near to and east of the main entrance on a line with the east-west axis of the lodge were the hearth and fire for heating the rocks. Still farther removed, about 25 feet from the main entrance and on the same axis, was the pipe mound, circular in ground plan, about 2 feet in diameter more or less conical in shape, made with the earth that had been taken out to form the sweat-lodge pit. The dirt so dug out had to be carried, not in the hands, but on a choice piece of buffalo hide with the fur on. The ordinary pipe (not the Flat Pipe), used to pray and smoke with in the sweating ritual, was placed on the west slope of this mound, with stem up [482]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 * [782]

kidneys and ribs offered as "coverings" after a hunt were left all day on the bundle and late in the evening given to some of the very poor children to eat.

482 ● 778

Moving, carrying and handling the Flat Pipe bundle in camp and on the march were the exclusive responsibility and privilege of the Flat Pipe co-keeper. Whenever the bundle was to be transferred from its tripod to its bed or vice versa, to be hung up over the door of the keeper's lodge, to be carried to and from the sweat lodge or Sacrifice Dance, or to be transported from camp site to camp site, she was the one to do it.

Exceptions to the rule, in emergency, were rare. One such exceptional instance was reported by Coming Daylight. On one occasion the Flat Pipe bundle was still outside the keeper's lodge when darkness set in, and both the keeper and co-keeper were away. In such a case an ex-co-keeper would usually substitute for the co-keeper, but there was none around. It was not customary to leave the Pipe out at night, or even to leave it alone. So Coming Daylight's maternal aunt said to her: "We will put this poor thing [the Pipe] in. Your father once owned a pipe [not the Flat Pipe], so you should not be afraid to handle it." So the two went out and gathering sage rubbed themselves all over with it. Then together they unloosed the bundle and started to carry it in, all the time praying: "We are children of an ex-keeper and this is just the same as if our fathers owned this Pipe. We have the right to handle it. We hate to see you stay out over night. It would be bad if you stayed out. We are bringing you in because we pity you. We hope you will have pity on us, and that we will have long life." And Coming Daylight, about 86 years old in 1940, ended her account by remarking that her prayer was heard because she had lived so long, even though in these last years her legs were unsteady and every little while she fell down on her buttocks!

Coming Daylight also mentioned one other old woman, Mouse, who, although not the co-keeper, used to volunteer to carry the Pipe bundle on her back when the people were on the march from camp site to camp site. This was apparently at a period when horses were very scarce, only one or two to several families, and [492]

dog travois had to be resorted to.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

482 778 dog travois had to be resorted to. The old woman thought that she was doing the Pipe a great favor and that her packing it would bring her good fortune.

The co-keeper when afoot and carrying the Pipe bundle in her arms held it under her left armpit with her left arm encircling it and her right arm and hand supporting it from beneath, and with the stem-end of the bundle pointing forward.

482 778 783 The co-keeper was usually very careful to observe the stem-end-forward rule. But if through forgetfulness or absent-mindedness she had carried the bundle bowl-end forward or had hung it on its tripod with the bowl end to the east, she would be to blame. The keeper, co-keeper or Pipe child would be told by the Pipe in a dream about the error while sleeping [that night] on the Pipe bed, and she would have to be ritually cleansed. The keeper and co-keeper would sit on their haunches on the Pipe bed facing each other, he facing east and she west. Peppermint was put on the incense hearth to make a smudge. The keeper then took a bunch of sage brush, some of which he usually kept ready, held it up in his right hand, and prayed to the Supreme Being to release his wife, to take away her mistake, and not to be angry over it. Then he lowered the large brush by three stages, circled it three times around the incense, and "sort of brushed" her with it three times from her head down her right arm and from her head down her left arm, and three times from her chin up over her face to her occiput. Then he laid down the bunch of sage brush between the incense hearth and south edge of the Pipe bed, and said to his wife: "Take this sage brush out." She took it, walked out with it clockwise, turned to her left, that is, in the east, walked a good way off, and lowering it in the usual three stages deposited reverently on the ground.

778 788 Grasping and depositing the Flat Pipe bundle were regularly done by the co-keeper in a ritually prescribed manner. Before actually taking hold of it, she would face it, and three times pose at shoulder height her empty right hand, palm down with fingertips joined and pointing away from her, make a motion or pass with her hand toward the bundle while at the same time spitting a bit of chewed peppermint on it, and then bring her hand back to

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

position. In depositing the bundle on its bed, she would lower it gently in three stages, spitting at each one. 778 [788]

When the people were staying for any length of time at a given camp site, the Flat Pipe bundle, which was always kept inside the keeper's lodge during the night time, would regularly in good weather be taken out early in the morning at breakfast time by the co-keeper, with the customary grasping and carrying ritual, and hung up, stem-end pointing east just over the door of the keeper's lodge, not on its tripod. The outside of the keeper's lodge around the door up to full reaching height, about 6 or 7 feet, was painted red. The thong handle of the bundle was looped over, the two projecting ends of a stout pin, skewered horizontally in the tent cover, on the immediate line above the door at the upper edge of the red-painted area.

The bundle would hang over the door all day until about sundown when it would be brought back into the lodge for the night. In bringing it back, the co-keeper walked out of the lodge, unhooked and grasped the bundle, turned clockwise, walked all around the lodge clockwise, entered the lodge, proceeded clockwise to the incense hearth, dipped the stem end of the bundle three times in the smudge, and deposited the bundle in the usual ritual manner, as above described, at the far north end of the Pipe bed. 482 778 778

The final decision as to when and whether the camp, in which the Flat Pipe chanced to be, was to be moved was made by the head man especially the band chiefs and in the olden days the tribal chief too, the keepers having perhaps taken the initiative in calling them together. They would notify the Pipe keeper. Early the next morning the co-keeper with the usual ritual observances would take the Pipe bundle from its bed and carry it and its tripod outside the lodge a little to the north thereof, set up the tripod and hang the bundle on it. The tripod would be set up with two of its legs closer together, and with the third leg stretched out farther, its upper end projecting a little beyond the junction of the three legs. On this projecting end the bundle was hung by the thong handle looped over the end. On other occasions the bundle was hung on the tripod stem-end pointing east. But on this occasion the rule was superseded by another, namely, the third leg [622 623] 361

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

778 had to point in the direction in which the camp was to move. This orientation could be discerned from a considerable distance. The people would already know that camp was to be broken that day and early in the morning would go out to see how the bundle hung and which direction the third leg of the tripod was pointing.

778 When the camp families were packed and all ready to start off, the Flat Pipe's own special horse was led up to the tripod where 492 the bundle hung. The co-keeper, before taking hold of the bundle 484 made the customary three passes at it spitting chewed peppermint at the bundle with each pass, lifted it off the tripod, turned around clockwise, made three motions with the bundle, stem-end forward, as if putting it on the saddle (note saddle of Flat Pipe in Plate 2A), and at the third actually put it there where it rested crosswise, held taut with thongs to both sides of the saddle and under the horse's belly. Then she mounted from the right side her own horse, and started off leading the horse that carried the Pipe bundle, the latter horse coming behind her own, not abreast.

[482] Sometimes the co-keeper, *ad libertum*, would carry the bundle herself on her own back, putting it on her back before mounting her horse and carrying the bundle with the thong handle resting over her upper arm just below the bend of the shoulder and the bundle itself at her back. To help her mount so burdened they would lead her to a side hill. The Boy's mother, when co-keeper, at times on the march used to say that the bundle so carried felt heavy at the start, but after a while felt light. When the co-keeper so carried the bundle, leading the Pipe's own horse, she followed the keeper. Occasionally the Pipe bundle was carried on a travois, but we obtained no details on this point.

484 On the march, while scouts were not uncommonly sent out ahead to find the best route or watch for enemies, the co-keeper with 778 the Pipe bundle led the cavalcade itself. No one could go in front of her: if any one did, bad luck would befall him. If both the Flat and Feathered Pipes were with the caravan, the Flat Pipe was in the lead, next the Feathered Pipe, then the chief or chiefs, finally the body of the group. The keepers rode immediately behind the respective co-keepers, never before. If the caravan were on the way to one celebration or a Sacred Dance, the group giv-

622 seemed that the others present agreed with him, the leader would
[623] give in and have the crier announce the revised decision."

On the march, the leader went at the head of his band and
[484] showed the way. When several bands were together, the leader of one would have decided where he intended to go, and, if the other bands had decided to go along with this one, they followed, but were free to break away at any time.

[621 The band to which either the Keeper of the Flat Pipe or the
793] Keeper of the Feathered Pipe belonged had a certain distinction as there was a tendency when the tribe split for each to have a considerable following.

173 According to tradition, as related by The Boy, the Gros Ventres
643 had had in the fairly remote past a formally selected chief or leader of the whole tribe. It was said that he functioned when the whole tribe was together and that his decisions in important matters were made in consultation with the chief men, including the leaders of all the bands. There was no regular council and anyone
[623] present might express his opinion. Often the Keepers of the Sacred Pipes were present at such meetings called by the tribal
[793] chief, but if they were not present they were supposed to be kept advised.

The last regularly selected leader of the whole tribe was said to have been White Eagle, who held this position in the last decades of the eighteenth century. It was said further that White Eagle was preceded by White Shield, of whom there are many stories extant, and that White Shield was preceded by Elk Going Against The Wind. The Boy gave the following information regarding the "election" of White Eagle. The account was given to The Boy by his father, Lame Bull, who had it from Old Man Gopher, a cousin of Lame Bull's paternal grandfather. "The Gros Ventres had been badly decimated by smallpox and only about 30 lodges were left.[8] Old Man Gopher and his sister, both of them very young children at the time, were the only survivors of their family. The old men among the survivors of the tribe got together and proceeded to choose a chief. White Eagle was then a young man

[931] [8] A reasonable chronological estimate would identify this as a tradition referring to the devastating smallpox epidemic of 1780. For historical data, see p. 9.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

to have been the key factor in the abandonment of the earlier methods of hunting buffalo. The situation of the Gros Ventres in regard to horses, which had apparently been so bad in approximately the first two decades of the 19th century, gradually improved, according to our informants, by natural increase of the few horses they had and by successful raiding of the enemy, especially for the fast buffalo horse. If Bradley's figures are correct, the Gros Ventres averaged five horses per family in 1830. According to our informants, by about 1850 they had "lots of horses," but we know that, even so, the number of horses fluctuated considerably after that date. Coming Daylight, for instance, remembered clearly several times prior to 1880 when the whole tribe was relatively poor in horses. During these periods people were forced to cache as much as possible so they wouldn't be too heavily burdened as they traveled about on foot. No doubt the same factors were operative in the Gros Ventre area as obtained in Blackfoot territory—severe winters and skin diseases among the horses.[7]

231 [484]

In any case, even in relatively prosperous times, seldom if ever did an individual possess great herds such as are described for the Kiowa. The Boy stated that his father, Lame Bull, who was an outstanding man, had a herd of about 60 horses. Coming Daylight explained: "Each family kept its own little bunch of horses. In early morning they would be taken out to pasture, usually by the older boys; around the middle of the day they would be watered and driven out again; in the evening they would be brought back and the more valuable ones, the swift buffalo horses, were always kept tied close by at night in case of raid by the enemy."

[556]

Such a family-owned herd would be differentiated and would ideally include pack horses, riding horses, and a few buffalo horses. The right of disposal over his own horses was, however, recognized for each individual man, woman and child. A man had the possibility of augmenting his own holdings directly by raiding the enemy. Because of the social recognition attendant upon successful raiding, as well as the economic necessity for controlling the means of production, the individual might actually devote in the course of a year more time and energy in pursuing this objective

[422]

231 556

[7] For an excellent discussion of the whole problem, see Ewers, 1943.

342 were sewn together with sinew. The women selected the poles for the lodge, as well as for the travois, and were responsible for [484] erecting and taking down the lodge, for the arrangement of the interior, for the making of the travois, and for the packing and moving of impedimenta.

The foundation of three poles for the lodge was tied together and then raised as a unit. The other poles were arranged one by one, starting with those of the front. The cover of buffalo hides was tied to one pole, the "backbone," which was placed at the center-back, the cover then being drawn into place and fastened securely at the front, with small wooden pins usually made of cherry-tree wood. The ordinary Gros Ventre lodge stakes were shaped like a pin with a relatively small head. One informant, [184 however, stated that this form of stake often came loose where 177] the cover became taut with the wind, and that she had found the forked type, first observed by her many years ago when visiting another tribe to the south, far more satisfactory.

342 Old lodge covers were saved and cut up to make a sort of lining 353 at the bottom of the lodge in winter, and the snow scraped away to make place for the lodge was piled up on the outside thereof for extra warmth. In summer the ground inside the lodge was covered with willows, sagebrush or rye grass. Decorated robes as windbreaks were sometimes suspended in the lodge behind the fancy backrests, which were made by the women from slender willow rods. The women gathered and peeled the rods, although the young men helped straighten them by pulling them through their teeth. A willow ring encircled the fireplace and a broom of buckbrush was always kept handy. Personal belongings were neatly disposed against the wall of the lodge and in front of these were placed the skins which served as bedding by night and as seats by day. The painted parfleshes were given prominence to lend colorful touches. Dishes, utensils, and stored food were suspended 412 from poles well off the floor.

415 Among the articles of household equipment may be mentioned knives, both of bone and of metal, kettles, horn spoons, fleshing tools, etc., and food containers of various sorts. For the latter, [237] the membrane protecting the heart of the buffalo, the paunch, the bladder, and the intestines of the buffalo, as well as those of the

323 were made. Several days later he reported that he had asked around about how pots were made, and some old-timers said that they braided sinew to the shape of pot they wished; heated white flint and pulverized it, and mixed with the blue clay from around the neighborhood of Hays. This mixture was about 6 per cent pulverized flint. The clay and pulverized rock were mixed in a mortar, pasted over the woven sinew, and baked. "It gets so hard you can't break it." Tom Bad Road, now (1948) about 70 years old told Mary Ereaux that once when he was a young boy he saw an old, old woman making a pot of "sand." The pot had dried hard, but some young fellows used it as a target for throwing stones and broke it to pieces.

554 The place of honor was at the back of the lodge, opposite the door. Here at night slept the "man of the house" and his senior
513 wife, if he were a polygynist, the other wives and children on either
595 side. Coming Daylight described the arrangement of her father's lodge as it was before she was sent to live with her grandmother. Her father and one wife slept at the rear, the bedding placed parallel to the door; she and her mother had their bedding to the left as one entered the lodge, and perpendicular in regard to the opening, sleeping with their heads to the rear and feet to the door; while her father's unmarried brothers were similarly placed as she and her mother, but on the opposite side of the lodge.

484 When on the move, the women were in charge of the children and impedimenta and usually traveled in a group considerably be-
492 hind the men. Horses or dogs were used to draw the travois, and sometimes younger children or the sick and disabled were carried thereon. Mae Main remarked that her memory of riding on a horse travois was not a very pleasant one as she was often annoyed by the horse's tail brushing over her. Horses had to be broken to the travois and a horse owned by a man would never be so used. The horse can draw a far heavier load than a dog, but seemingly the Gros Ventres at no time had so many horses that the dog could be dispensed with altogether and the dog travois survived until very recently. At such times that horses for one reason or another were scarce, the people would be forced to cache a great deal of their surplus and to cut their lodges in half so the load would not be too great for a dog to draw.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

To cross a deep river such as the Missouri was quite an undertaking. When they reached the bank, they would spread out in family groups, while the men and women worked together to convert the lodges into round boats. Coming Daylight gave the following description. "The lodge cover was folded in half lengthwise over a rope of sufficient length that the ends protruded somewhat. Mud was then smeared as a layer between the two halves of the cover and on the outside of that half which would ultimately be in the water. The next step was to take the loose edges together, to form the rim of the boat by bunching up a considerable bit of the material and tying securely; leaving a free space, bunching up another bit of the material, leaving another free space, and repeating this operation at intervals, shaping the receptacle to the proper diameter by running a rope taut from 'tuft' to 'tuft'; then they packed in very carefully as much as the round boat would safely hold, and finally the portion of the rim which was formed by the fold—as distinct from the now 'tufted' free edges—was gathered into place by manipulating the ends of the rope which had been placed originally in the fold, the rope being now tied securely. A lead rope was attached to one 'tuft' at each side of the gathered portion of the rim. Two young men on horseback then dragged the boat into the water and took it across the river, dragging it safely up on the opposite bank." [18] 484 501 396

The boat was watertight and safe to transport any of their belongings, and even children or disabled adults. When the water transporting was finished the mud was washed off and the lodge cover spread on the ground to dry. This didn't take long and the lodge cover was soon as good as new. 484 501

The lodge poles had to be transported separately from the cover. The poles were cut when needed, and a hole was burned about four inches from the top of each. When the lodge was up, the free ends of the short strings of buckskin, run through these holes, fluttered in the breeze, making a fine decoration. The more practical purpose of the holes, however, was to allow a number of poles to be strung together for moving. For water transport not more 484 342 484 492

[18] Maximilian, who met the Gros Ventres on the Missouri in 1833, mentions, p. 73, their round boats made of buffalo skin, filled with articles for barter, "drawn by one swimmer and pushed by another."

484 than six poles would be so tied together, a strong line running
through the holes, leaving a loop to go about the horses' neck.
492 Another line was tied around the six, about in the middle, to hold the poles together as the horse dragged them through the water. A mounted horse could draw two sets of six poles across the river at one time, one set on each side, but could not take all the poles for a lodge on a single trip. Meat packed in skin bags was often lashed to the poles and did not suffer in transit. Occasionally older children rode across the river on these poles, and some people paddled across straddling a single log.

782 The same goods which we have described as used by the Gros Ventre to meet their needs for food, clothing, shelter and transportation were likewise used to meet many other needs. Cloth and clothing, feathers, ornaments, and so forth, were used as religious sacrifices and offerings. Food was used as payment or part-pay-
262 ment for services of those who helped in production of economic
436 goods, or of those who cured diseases, acted in ceremonial capacity of one kind or another, as well as in meeting certain specific kin-
342 ship obligations. Lodges might be painted in accordance with a
531 supernatural vision, and, with the associated songs, were transferrable to others as ritual objects. Horses were used as payments of various kinds,—in connection with the bride price, to ceremonial
436 grandfathers, and so on. There was thus no medium of exchange within the group and no strict classification into producer's goods as contrasted with consumer's goods is possible.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

boy. He was so scared, he went insane and died in a few days," 776
according to The Boy. 539

One story we gathered is about a very big rattlesnake, "as big as a person," big enough to eat a human being and leave only the skeleton. It had a large shining horn. Where it traveled it made a great bare trail like a modern road. It was horned, but was not of the water or earth monster "species." It was shot dead by a young man whom it had molested with murderous design while he was out in the hills crying and sleeping to obtain supernatural power.

In one story, the following, told by Singer, it is not clear whether there is question of a gigantic horned snake or of an earth monster proper.

"Near the head of Snake Butte there is a big cleft which runs all the way to the bottom. The cleft is said to have been made by lightning striking there. My husband Ax Handle [Assiniboine] was there and looked. He thought he saw something and looked again. It was a great big snake with a horn on the top of its head. He was scared and ran away." [823]

A somewhat conspicuous, though very human, role in Gros Ventre ritual and thought was played by the Last Child, idaːsθa, (itasé, "lastly," itasünna, "last;" -tha, "child" [Sifton]; apparently meaning "last child born in a family"). He was the little water snake, offspring of the water monster who figured in the story of He-who-starved-to-death (see No. 5 in Appendix). The Last Child had power in water, sharing to an undefined subordinate degree in the power of his father, the water monster, who was ruler under the water. He, alone or together with his father, was prayed to or given offerings, when the Gros Ventres had to cross rivers or lakes or when they swam or bathed in rivers or pools, lest they drown or be snatched down by the water monster. Early in World War II when a batch of Gros Ventre recruits was about to leave for overseas duty in the Pacific he was prayed to to protect them in crossing the ocean. In praying with a pipe, the Gros Ventres always held it up first to the Supreme Being, but lastly down to the Last Child. In food offerings, the Last Child was invited, last in order, to partake. In the sweat lodge he was mentioned 776 776 782 [484] 776

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

778 had to point in the direction in which the camp was to move. This orientation could be discerned from a considerable distance. The people would already know that camp was to be broken that day and early in the morning would go out to see how the bundle hung and which direction the third leg of the tripod was pointing.

778 When the camp families were packed and all ready to start off, the Flat Pipe's own special horse was led up to the tripod where 492 the bundle hung. The co-keeper, before taking hold of the bundle 484 made the customary three passes at it spitting chewed peppermint at the bundle with each pass, lifted it off the tripod, turned around clockwise, made three motions with the bundle, stem-end forward, as if putting it on the saddle (note saddle of Flat Pipe in Plate 2A), and at the third actually put it there where it rested crosswise, held taut with thongs to both sides of the saddle and under the horse's belly. Then she mounted from the right side her own horse, and started off leading the horse that carried the Pipe bundle, the latter horse coming behind her own, not abreast.

487 Sometimes the co-keeper, *ad libertum*, would carry the bundle herself on her own back, putting it on her back before mounting her horse and carrying the bundle with the thong handle resting over her upper arm just below the bend of the shoulder and the bundle itself at her back. To help her mount so burdened they would lead her to a side hill. The Boy's mother, when co-keeper, at times on the march used to say that the bundle so carried felt heavy at the start, but after a while felt light. When the co-keeper so carried the bundle, leading the Pipe's own horse, she followed the keeper. Occasionally the Pipe bundle was carried on a travois, but we obtained no details on this point.

484 On the march, while scouts were not uncommonly sent out ahead to find the best route or watch for enemies, the co-keeper with 778 the Pipe-bundle led the cavalcade itself. No one could go in front of her: if any one did, bad luck would befall him. If both the Flat and Feathered Pipes were with the caravan, the Flat Pipe was in the lead, next the Feathered Pipe, then the chief or chiefs, finally the body of the group. The keepers rode immediately behind the respective co-keepers, never before. If the caravan were on the way to one celebration or a Sacred Dance, the group giv-

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

ing the Dance came right after the Pipe or Pipes. If there were no sacred pipe with the caravan, the chief or head man rode first in the line of march. 484 578

On the march, which was ordinarily at a slow pace, no one stopped to smoke or for other reason unless the co-keeper halted. When they stopped, usually about half-way, she would hang the bundle on the tripod, all by itself away from and well forward of the crowd in the direction of the trek. All stopped behind it; they did not surround it; it was always ahead of them in the direction they were heading. No one moved to re-start ahead until the co-keeper did so.

If the route of march necessitated crossing a big river, such as the Missouri River, the procedure in Coming Daylight's words, was as follows. "They put the Flat Pipe bundle in a bullboat. Of course there was no child in the bullboat. They chose two young men, popular and heroes, to lead that bullboat across. These two would be all painted red. They had robes rolled up and when they got midway across the river they put the robes in the water as offerings. As soon as they started across my grandmother up on the cliff at the river's edge would start cheering and singing the victory song. This song is a strong-heart song. When there was something hard to do they sang this song. They would say the names of the two young men and sing this song to encourage them. They all moved the bullboat into the water and different people would put into it various things to be thrown into the middle of the river. The keeper and co-keeper who owned the Pipe were not supposed to swim or bathe in water. Both could ride in this bullboat with the Pipe, but the woman always did. The two young men [on horseback apparently] held the robes [offering mentioned above] in one hand and pulled the bullboat with the other. The Pipe in the bullboat was the first of the caravan to cross the river. After all the people had gotten across the old women had a victory dance and sang for the crossing." [505] [782]

On arrival at the new camp site the co-keeper would hang the Pipe bundle on the tripod at a spot just to the north of where the keeper's lodge was to be erected. Then the new sage bed and sacred hearth were made, and the bundle brought into the lodge,

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

484
778

with the rites previously described. On a day's journey it may be noted, the bundle would have been placed on the tripod in the open three times: before starting out, about half-way, and on arrival at the new camp.

782
[224]

The killing of a pure white buffalo, a pure albino,—always a cow never a bull, according to Gros Ventre tradition,—was an extremely rare occurrence. The killer could keep it himself, give it to the Flat Pipe keeper, or offer it as a sacrifice. This sacrificial rite was last held when the Boy's father, Lame Bull was a young man, probably in the 1850's, and served as a calendrical date: "at the time the white buffalo skin was offered as a sacrifice." The Boy, our sole informant on this rite, could give only fragmentary data on it, gotten from his father who had witnessed only that one time in his life.

If the killer chose to offer the albino skin as a sacrifice, he had to vow, and then had formally to notify the keeper of the Flat Pipe. Carrying it he went clockwise round the camp circle on the inside and brought it to the keeper's lodge. The keeper painted
[302] the man's face with charcoal paint (not red), the ritual color for sacrifices, with a circular band around his face, on the forehead, the sides of the cheeks near the ears, and under the jawbones and chin, and with also a star on the bridge of his nose. The circle, Lame Bull told the Boy, represented the sundog; the star, the sun. A procession in which the keeper, co-keeper, Pipe child, ex-keepers, ex-co-keepers, the two attendants, and all the people took part started at the keeper's lodge and marched clockwise all around the camp circle, very slowly, with three stops (probably at the west, east and south) for prayer, till they reached the sweat-lodge near the keeper's lodge. The albino skin was given a touch of charcoal paint, as in other sacrifices, but The Boy did not know other details of the special rite used in preparing the skin, nor did he know who carried it in the procession. On arrival of the procession at the sweat lodge, the main body of the people went away, but the small group who were to sweat remained and went through the whole sweat-lodge rite at which the albino skin was hung up on the sweat-lodge pole and after which, in accord-

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

789 song had also to be sung, apparently to the accompaniment of the drum.

755 Putting sweet pine needles on the sick person's head, blowing wild parsley on him, and smudging him as doctoring practices have been previously described. According to Singer, if some one were so sick that his life was despaired of, the keeper would take the Feathered Pipe [the bundle, probably] and lay it on him and pray over him, and the sick person would recover, and, she added, "it cured a lot of them." Doctoring power was regularly acquired by reason of acquiring the keepership.

793 The keeper and co-keeper painted their own faces every morning after breakfast, like the men, in two bands, but broader ones
302 three or four fingers wide, one on the forehead near the hair line and the other from one jaw across the chin to the other jaw.

778 The Pipe bundle was smudged by the keeper every morning and evening with sweet pine needles. During Curly Head's keepership Cora Chandler and her children were kept busy collecting dried cow dung for the daily smudging ceremony. The keeper made it a practice to "talk" or pray often to the Pipe in his lodge. According to The Boy, the keeper was fearful lest otherwise he might make ritual mistakes, at which the Pipe would be angry. According to Al Chandler, the Pipe being jealous, the keeper "had to talk to it to let it know it was not forgotten or put away; he treated it just like a person."

788 Customary observances on the occasions of feasts or ordinary meals to guests in the keeper's lodge have been previously
778 described.

When the keeper and the people were camped for any length of time in a given place, the Feathered Pipe bundle was ordinarily taken in the morning from its place of honor opposite the entrance inside the keeper's lodge, hung up outside over the entrance, and brought back inside at eventide.

[361 When the camp was to be moved, the Feathered Pipe keeper, like the Flat Pipe keeper, had, it seems, a consultative voice in
624] the decision and perhaps even veto power at times, although ordi-
778 narily the final decision was made by the head men. The decision once made, early in the morning when camp was to be broken,
484 the Feathered Pipe bundle was hung out on its tripod back of the

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

keeper's lodge, with two tripod legs close together and the third pointing in the direction of march, as a signal to the people. 484 778

On the march, the Pipe bundle was ordinarily packed on Pipe's own horse. Two stuffed parfleches were placed, one on either side of the saddle; blanket robes were thrown over them and the saddle; the bundle, with its covers, was then put thereon and securely lashed down with specially tied rawhide thongs.

On breaking camp, the two Pipe keepers with their Pipes might decide to stay together, or else to separate. "Most of the people [usually] hung around the Pipes." If the Pipe keepers decided to separate, some of the bands or other groups or families might choose to go with one Pipe, others with the other, others still with neither. "Both Pipes had certain bunches who followed them, and when the Pipes split certain ones went with each. Each band suited itself and followed the Pipe it liked best." This, for example, is what happened on the occasion when the Assiniboine captured the Flat Pipe. 621 484 778

If both Pipes stayed together, then according to The Boy, Turn Toes, and Takes the Bow, the Flat Pipe took the lead, the Feathered Pipe coming second in line. Garter Snake could not recall the order of precedence. We did not obtain further clarification of Al Chandler's statement: "The two keepers moved out first side by side and if the tribe was going to split, it was up to the people which Pipe they would follow." The statement may refer to those occasions when the Pipes were going to separate. On such occasions, all informants were fully agreed that the Flat Pipe and Feathered Pipe each came first in the line of march of its respective followers. The order on the march, for the Feathered as for the Flat Pipe was: the keeper in the lead, next to him the co-keeper leading the Pipe horse behind her, then the Pipe child alongside or just behind the horse. In this connection the original first co-keeper of the Feathered Pipe was called, in Garter Snake's version of the origin story, "Woman-takes-the-lead."

Other Sacred Pipes

In recent years the Gros Ventres have had only the Flat and Feathered Pipes, but earlier there were others. The Boy listed 778

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

782 [511] praying and singing were done at other seasons of the year and how far as a more general custom by other fathers of families were points we did not clear up.

[264] Before eating food, at least in any more or less formal gathering, a portion of the food was offered up with prayer.

[224] Prayer rites and observances for good hunting were few and simple—as compared, for example, with the numerous and complicated ones practiced by the Algonquian-speaking tribes of the taiga. Abundance of food, which principally meant game food, was commonly prayed for. Two of the Sacred Dances, the Law Enforcers' and the Woman's, had as a purpose success in buffalo hunting. But beyond this, hunting entered little into ritual, and we may recall hunting was conspicuously absent from the power quest. We recorded no rites or observances whatever in connection with the gathering of berries, roots or other plant food.

[484] It was customary on crossing rivers to pray to the Last Child for protection, and to throw into the water offerings, especially shells and eagle-tail feathers, for the Last Child, or the water monster, or both, with some words such as, "I give you this." Sometimes, too, some prayer and offering would be made by a person going to swim, or on other occasions of water hazard.

During or just before severe thunderstorms, various prayer and other procedures were resorted to, many of them directed to Bha'a, the storm being.

Seeking indirectly or asking directly the prayers of the aged, especially for long life, took several different forms, and played an important role in Gros Ventre life, as we have explained elsewhere.

There were many different ways of seeking the prayers of the aged. We recorded the following, which may or may not exhaust the list: crying before a lodge, offering a pipe, promising a sweat-lodge, "holy boiling," providing a feast, doing favors of various kinds.

782 888 "Holy boiling," to which we have not as yet referred, was an observance distinct both from the preceding ones and from feasting a group of aged people. It was intended primarily for some one person, man or woman, although others partook of the meal, and

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

passed, and so drove them forward over the bank into the enclosure. After horses were secured, the buffalo were generally run down. It is said that a buffalo shot with an arrow fell to the other side, never breaking the arrow by falling upon it. 224

The meat of an entire buffalo would be carried on a horse. It was cut in small pieces, which were tied to the ends of strips of the skin and then slung over the horse's back so as to balance. If necessary, the hunter would mount above. It is said that sometimes as many as four deer were carried on one horse. [492]

When a buffalo was killed, half the skin was sometimes stitched or tied into a sack, the meat put into it, and the bundle dragged home by a rope around the shoulders of a person. In other cases the meat would be tied into bundles and carried home on the shoulders. The buffalo were usually cut up by men. Women were said to have taken part in this work when luck was unusually good and many buffalo had been killed. After a man had brought home meat, the women cut it into thin slices, which were hung on racks to dry. The dried meat was either packed in parfleches, or pounded fine and made into pemmican by mixture with berries. Meat, whether fresh or dried, was usually eaten after having been boiled in water; but when one was hungry or in haste a piece would be put on a stick and turned over the fire. [482] [251] [252]

Traps for foxes and other animals, even bears, were constructed by making an enclosure, over the opening of which a heavy log, sliding between four sticks to keep it in place, was supported on a single slender upright stick resting on another stick attached to the bait. Other logs might be leaned against the first one to give it additional weight.

Birds such as sage-hens, ducks, and geese, were formerly not hunted extensively. The eggs, however, formed favorite food. When a camp was pitched near a lake, the young men would strip and go out into the water looking for duck-eggs. Fish were not caught except by children, for amusement. 223 226

When a camp was broken, small brush tents with windows of grass were built. Fat and meat were strewed about the place and a man entered the ambush before daylight. He could look and shoot through the grass, but he could not be seen inside. Birds as large as eagles were secured in this way.

Crows and magpies were caught with sinew snares attached to a willow hoop. Meat was laid in the middle of the hoop. Walking about inside of this, the birds caught their feet in the snares and were unable to fly away.

Gophers were caught by means of a horsehair loop fastened to the end of a rope and laid around a gopher-hole. A person lay down, and when the gopher raised its head he jerked the rope. 224

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

293 used in this way. The owner twice dreamed of a weasel, which told him to
726 use its skin. Thereupon he first wore a weasel-skin in dances, and later
751 carried it to war. Subsequently he lent it to his son and to other men who
778 went to war, and they always returned successfully.

A man to whom a fisher had appeared in a dream or vision used a fish-
[787] skin medicine-bag, and on going to war carried this with him.

A renowned warrior, dead for some time, received his personal medicine from the bears, and was forbidden to scalp, count coup on the enemy, or take away a gun. He could only kill. He once killed two Sioux with one shot, at a place which received its name from the event.

[492] A simple riding-whip (specimen Museum No. 50-1821) has on its wooden handle four red marks, each of which is said to represent an enemy struck in the face with a whip in battle.

Representations, used in the modern "war-dance," of the weapons of
532 Black-Wolf, a well-known Gros Ventre warrior, part of whose experiences
726 in war are told below, consist of a shield and spear. The shield, which is made of painted white cloth, represents the shield carried by him on an occasion when he rushed to battle with no other weapon. The shield is decorated with a blue crescent along the lower edge, representing the sun, and bordered by a wavy red line denoting lightning. The wooden spear and spear-point
[822] represent a spear with which the owner stabbed a Piegan in battle. The spear-point is painted blue and red; the blue representing iron, the red blood. Red marks on the handle of the spear represent coups.

A pair of beaded and painted moccasins executed by a woman, but
[292] designed by an old man, symbolize his exploits in war. An outside rim of beading represents the enemy's camp-circle. In the middle of the camp-circle is beaded the figure of a tent belonging to a chief. To this tent was tied a horse, which the wearer of the moccasins cut loose. This feat is represented by an outline painting of a horse and halter. Three U-shaped figures, also painted, are horse-tracks, and represent the capture of horses. On the other moccasin there are again three such figures in a row, which here were said to indicate a charge on horseback on the camp; while two other such figures, facing each other, indicate a face-to-face fight.

Curtains hanging behind the bed in front of the tent-wall were sometimes painted to illustrate the owner's achievements in war.

WAR-EXPERIENCES OF INDIVIDUALS.

114 The following narratives give an entirely personal account of the war-
115 experiences of three individuals, two of them men of about sixty years of

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

> yet acquainted. In this people another instance occurs of the impropriety with which the Canadian-French name the Indians. They call them *gros ventres* or big bellies; and that without any reason, as they are as comely and as well made as any tribe whatever; and are very far from being remarkable for their corpulency."[17]

175
101

It so happens that the French name, "Gros Ventres," has been retained and at present is the most widely used designation for the tribe, although the Blackfoot term for them, "Atsina," is occasionally employed in recent ethnological sources. In the past, however, in addition to the French, translations of that term such as "Big Bellies," "Paunch Indians," and so on, occurred, as well as those derived from the Cree appellation,—"Falls," "Water-falls," or "Rapids Indians." To distinguish them from the village-dwelling Hidatsa, also known as Gros Ventres, sometimes they were called "Gros Ventres of the Prairies," or "Gros Ventres of Montana," in recognition of their later habitat.

Something of intertribal relations on the northern plains can be gleaned from the record Cocking has left us. It seems significant that he does not rate among the "equestrian natives" the Assiniboine whom he knew. Then, as later, the Assiniboine were apparently relatively poor in horses compared to the Gros Ventres and Blackfoot. Cocking mentions in regard to the Gros Ventres, whom he had opportunity to observe from December 1st to the 16th, 1772, that, not only at hunting buffalo but in all their actions, they excel his companions. He notes that the Gros Ventres are mounted on light sprightly animals and that they likewise use packhorses, which give their women great advantage over the Cree and Assiniboine women "who are either carrying, or hauling on sledges, every day in the year." They impress Cocking as being more like Europeans and he remarks that they are more cleanly in clothing and food than his companions.[18]

175

[492]

The Assiniboine were, however, on account of their close association with the Cree, better armed; and the Gros Ventres were wary enough to ascertain the friendly intentions of Cocking's party

[17] Umfreville, p. 197.

[18] Cocking, p. 111. At this time too, Cocking says, the Gros Ventres used pottery of their own manufacture and tobacco which they themselves planted.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

224 before the buffalo got out of range. Only one such run a day was made and, although all hunters had an equal opportunity, so to speak, since no one of them started before the others, the greatest chance of success lay with the man mounted on the fastest horse. Incidentally the gun never supplanted the bow and arrow as a weapon of the chase because, for a mounted hunter riding close to the game, the bow and arrow was just as effective and even easier to use than the gun which had to be reloaded and which was difficult to aim accurately when traveling at a fast pace. Succeeding generations of Gros Ventre boys were trained in archery right up to, and including, the time of the disappearance of the buffalo.

Our informants stated that while the surround was sometimes resorted to, the chase or run, as described above, was the method [178] preferred by the Gros Ventres. The old-fashioned methods of impounding and driving over the cliff were seemingly abandoned by the Gros Ventres in the 1830's. It was stated that an old man, who died at the age of 98 in 1920, witnessed the last big impounding at the head of the Teton River when he was twelve years old.[8] Our oldest informant (b. 1854) knew of these methods only because her grandmother and other older people had told her stories of what they had witnessed. She put it as follows: "When my grandmother was a young woman, the Gros Ventres were very badly off. Only a person here and there would have a horse, and these horses were not the fast kind that can be used in hunting. In fact they did better by building a row of rocks to lead the buffalo into a big corral;[9] or else by having a man covered with a buffalo robe to act as decoy. This man would run forward toward a steep precipice and just at the edge would jump aside while the buffalo following him would go over. The animals which were not crippled in the fall would be shot with bow and arrow. Every- [492] body had to use dogs to drag their stuff as the people moved around; and they cut the lodges in two so the load would not be too heavy for a dog to draw."

231 The possession of an adequate number of horses, then, seems

[8] Denig, p. 532, confirms this, holding that all the northern plains tribes, except the Assiniboine and Cree, are so well supplied with horses that they do not need to resort to the corral.

[9] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, pp. 148–49.

323 were made. Several days later he reported that he had asked around about how pots were made, and some old-timers said that they braided sinew to the shape of pot they wished; heated white flint and pulverized it, and mixed with the blue clay from around the neighborhood of Hays. This mixture was about 6 per cent pulverized flint. The clay and pulverized rock were mixed in a mortar, pasted over the woven sinew, and baked. "It gets so hard you can't break it." Tom Bad Road, now (1948) about 70 years old told Mary Ereaux that once when he was a young boy he saw an old, old woman making a pot of "sand." The pot had dried hard, but some young fellows used it as a target for throwing stones and broke it to pieces.

554 513 595 The place of honor was at the back of the lodge, opposite the door. Here at night slept the "man of the house" and his senior wife, if he were a polygynist, the other wives and children on either side. Coming Daylight described the arrangement of her father's lodge as it was before she was sent to live with her grandmother. Her father and one wife slept at the rear, the bedding placed parallel to the door; she and her mother had their bedding to the left as one entered the lodge, and perpendicular in regard to the opening, sleeping with their heads to the rear and feet to the door; while her father's unmarried brothers were similarly placed as she and her mother, but on the opposite side of the lodge.

484 492 When on the move, the women were in charge of the children and impedimenta and usually traveled in a group considerably behind the men. Horses or dogs were used to draw the travois, and sometimes younger children or the sick and disabled were carried thereon. Mae Main remarked that her memory of riding on a horse travois was not a very pleasant one as she was often annoyed by the horse's tail brushing over her. Horses had to be broken to the travois and a horse owned by a man would never be so used. The horse can draw a far heavier load than a dog, but seemingly the Gros Ventres at no time had so many horses that the dog could be dispensed with altogether and the dog travois survived until very recently. At such times that horses for one reason or another were scarce, the people would be forced to cache a great deal of their surplus and to cut their lodges in half so the load would not be too great for a dog to draw.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

To cross a deep river such as the Missouri was quite an undertaking. When they reached the bank, they would spread out in family groups, while the men and women worked together to convert the lodges into round boats. Coming Daylight gave the following description. "The lodge cover was folded in half lengthwise over a rope of sufficient length that the ends protruded somewhat. Mud was then smeared as a layer between the two halves of the cover and on the outside of that half which would ultimately be in the water. The next step was to take the loose edges together, to form the rim of the boat by bunching up a considerable bit of the material and tying securely; leaving a free space, bunching up another bit of the material, leaving another free space, and repeating this operation at intervals, shaping the receptacle to the proper diameter by running a rope taut from 'tuft' to 'tuft'; then they packed in very carefully as much as the round boat would safely hold, and finally the portion of the rim which was formed by the fold—as distinct from the now 'tufted' free edges—was gathered into place by manipulating the ends of the rope which had been placed originally in the fold, the rope being now tied securely. A lead rope was attached to one 'tuft' at each side of the gathered portion of the rim. Two young men on horseback then dragged the boat into the water and took it across the river, dragging it safely up on the opposite bank." [16] 484 501 396

The boat was watertight and safe to transport any of their belongings, and even children or disabled adults. When the water transporting was finished the mud was washed off and the lodge cover spread on the ground to dry. This didn't take long and the lodge cover was soon as good as new. 484 501

The lodge poles had to be transported separately from the cover. The poles were cut when needed, and a hole was burned about four inches from the top of each. When the lodge was up, the free ends of the short strings of buckskin, run through these holes, fluttered in the breeze, making a fine decoration. The more practical purpose of the holes, however, was to allow a number of poles to be strung together for moving. For water transport not more 484 342 484 492

[16] Maximilian, who met the Gros Ventres on the Missouri in 1833, mentions, p. 73, their round boats made of buffalo skin, filled with articles for barter, "drawn by one swimmer and pushed by another."

484 than six poles would be so tied together, a strong line running through the holes, leaving a loop to go about the horses' neck.
492 Another line was tied around the six, about in the middle, to hold the poles together as the horse dragged them through the water. A mounted horse could draw two sets of six poles across the river at one time, one set on each side, but could not take all the poles for a lodge on a single trip. Meat packed in skin bags was often lashed to the poles and did not suffer in transit. Occasionally older children rode across the river on these poles, and some people paddled across straddling a single log.

782 The same goods which we have described as used by the Gros Ventre to meet their needs for food, clothing, shelter and transportation were likewise used to meet many other needs. Cloth and clothing, feathers, ornaments, and so forth, were used as religious sacrifices and offerings. Food was used as payment or part-pay-
262 ment for services of those who helped in production of economic
436 goods, or of those who cured diseases, acted in ceremonial capacity of one kind or another, as well as in meeting certain specific kin-
342 ship obligations. Lodges might be painted in accordance with a
531 supernatural vision, and, with the associated songs, were transferrable to others as ritual objects. Horses were used as payments of various kinds,—in connection with the bride price, to ceremonial
436 grandfathers, and so on. There was thus no medium of exchange within the group and no strict classification into producer's goods as contrasted with consumer's goods is possible.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

224 would share at least the meat, if not the hides, with the less for-
476 tunate, which latter would contribute by helping skin and butcher.
[431] Butchering was quite an art and was considered the man's work, although occasionally women accompanied the hunting party if there were a shortage of men, as was liable to be the case especially in winter. Should the party have crossed a river to hunt, the meat was prepared for transportation on a raft by being cut into large chunks, and each two chunks skewered and joined by a thong of sufficient length to hang on the poles forming the raft. The raft
[396] was built by crossing two long poles at one end, the other ends free and forming an angle of about thirty degrees. Three or four shorter poles were placed crosswise and lashed firmly in place with rawhide. The paunch of the buffalo, after being washed out, was used as a container for the many leftover bits of meat and was tied to the middle of the lower rung of the raft. A whole beef could thus be loaded on such a raft and towed across by one horse-
[492] man. When, as was more usually the case, the meat was to be packed back to camp by horses, the butchering was done differently but in such a way that a whole buffalo could be packed on a single
[251] horse.[8] Sometimes in winter when a small party went out and they could not pack all the meat back in one trip, the remainder was buried in the snow and called for the following day.

462 Once the proceeds of the hunt were turned over to the house-
281 holds of the individual hunters, it was the woman's task to cook the food for immediate consumption and to prepare the surplus for storage. Her most arduous and time-consuming task was the dressing of skins and the manufacture of these into finished articles of clothing, containers, lodge-covers, and so on. It was stated that skins in one stage of preparation or another were nearly always at hand.[9] "They didn't do things in a haphazard way because there was a certain time to do this and a certain time to do that." From the hides of buffalo killed during the spring and early summer, when the hair was not thick, they made the parfleshes and bags, soles for moccasins, rawhide ropes, and lodge-covers. In the fall, when the hide was furry, robes were made.

The older women informants described how, when they were

[8] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, p. 149.

[9] For some details on skin dressing, see Kroeber, 1908, p. 150.

857 524 "husbands": "Go out and hunt buffalo." The boys would go off and stay a little while and on their way back made noises like neighing horses. This would be a sign for the girls to come to meet them and make comments such as: "Oh, what a lot of meat you are bringing!" Then they would pretend to slice, cook, and eat this imaginary meat. Once in a while the children actually [224] snared a gopher, the skin of which served very well in their play as a food sack.

In order to lend excitement to this kind of play, they might divide into two groups and one "tribe" would attack the other. When their "husbands" or loved ones were "killed," the girls mourned, crying just as they had observed grown-ups do, even going so far as to make marks on their legs with mud to represent cuts. A "corpse" would be prepared for "burial," as they had seen the dead wrapped, with the exception that in play they failed to wrap the head.

Sometimes girls would take the foreleg of a buffalo, for example, and wrap it up to serve as a "baby." After having gotten from the river a certain kind of reed to serve as their hair, when the baby "died" they cut off their "hair" as a sign of mourning.

Many women described the lodges they, as children, built which [492] were large enough to play in. Garter Snake used a big yellow dog that belonged to her grandmother as a horse, and when her lodge moved she packed everything on a travois which the dog drew. When it was not convenient to have the lodges built large enough to actually accommodate the children inside, the formation of the camp circle was copied by making large leaves into the shape of tipis. Sticks then represented horses and other sticks attached thereto were travois. These little wooden horses might be fitted out like real ones, with miniature beaded horse blankets, and so on. Occasionally, too, a little boy might pretend he was a horse and drag the travois while being led by a girl as he held a line in his mouth. When this type of horse was out grazing, the owner would have a difficult time catching it.

Sometimes the girls pretended that they cut off their little fingers as a sacrifice, even holding sage to the "wound" as in real life. Coming Daylight and Garter Snake, both of whom as children were associated with one of the Sacred Pipes, mentioned that

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

778 the bundle. He wanted to take the scalp off and throw it away. But Lame Bull held that it should stay where it was, for since it was given by Fur Moccasin to the Flat Pipe in fulfillment of a vow and since Fur Moccasin and the Flat Pipe were enemy-friends, its presence involved no real lack of respect to the Pipe.

When, however, in later years the Flat Pipe came into unofficial possession of The Boy, his prejudice against it had not abated. Since he had authority in the matter, he gave the scalp in about 1932 to John Galen Carter who, The Boy was told, finally turned it over to Columbia University or to the American Museum of Natural History. The Boy laughingly remarked that if he had foreseen that he would be giving us the whole record of Gros Ventre history and culture he would have saved the scalp and given it to Cooper and so Cooper would have become the enemy-friend of Fur Moccasin!

[492] The Flat Pipe always, as in the above case, had its own horse on which it was packed and which was not used for any other purpose or ridden by the keeper or anyone else, except, it appears, once in a while by the co-keeper who would take the bundle on her back and ride the horse. The Flat Pipe's horse was painted red on its forehead and down to the end of its mane, and also on the top of its rump at the base of the tail, as were also all things used to transport the Pipe,—its special saddle, blanket, outfit, tripod and so forth.*

* In 1948 The Boy added that the keeper could use in addition to red paint another kind "of a dirty slate color and no one else in the tribe used it." [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

kidneys and ribs offered as "coverings" after a hunt were left all day on the bundle and late in the evening given to some of the very poor children to eat.

Moving, carrying and handling the Flat Pipe bundle in camp and on the march were the exclusive responsibility and privilege of the Flat Pipe co-keeper. Whenever the bundle was to be transferred from its tripod to its bed or vice versa, to be hung up over the door of the keeper's lodge, to be carried to and from the sweat lodge or Sacrifice Dance, or to be transported from camp site to camp site, she was the one to do it.

Exceptions to the rule, in emergency, were rare. One such exceptional instance was reported by Coming Daylight. On one occasion the Flat Pipe bundle was still outside the keeper's lodge when darkness set in, and both the keeper and co-keeper were away. In such a case an ex-co-keeper would usually substitute for the co-keeper, but there was none around. It was not customary to leave the Pipe out at night, or even to leave it alone. So Coming Daylight's maternal aunt said to her: "We will put this poor thing [the Pipe] in. Your father once owned a pipe [not the Flat Pipe], so you should not be afraid to handle it." So the two went out and gathering sage rubbed themselves all over with it. Then together they unloosed the bundle and started to carry it in, all the time praying: "We are children of an ex-keeper and this is just the same as if our fathers owned this Pipe. We have the right to handle it. We hate to see you stay out over night. It would be bad if you stayed out. We are bringing you in because we pity you. We hope you will have pity on us, and that we will have long life." And Coming Daylight, about 86 years old in 1940, ended her account by remarking that her prayer was heard because she had lived so long, even though in these last years her legs were unsteady and every little while she fell down on her buttocks!

Coming Daylight also mentioned one other old woman, Mouse, who, although not the co-keeper, used to volunteer to carry the Pipe bundle on her back when the people were on the march from camp site to camp site. This was apparently at a period when horses were very scarce, only one or two to several families, and dog travois had to be resorted to.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

778 had to point in the direction in which the camp was to move. This orientation could be discerned from a considerable distance. The people would already know that camp was to be broken that day and early in the morning would go out to see how the bundle hung and which direction the third leg of the tripod was pointing.

778 When the camp families were packed and all ready to start off, the Flat Pipe's own special horse was led up to the tripod where 442 the bundle hung. The co-keeper, before taking hold of the bundle 484 made the customary three passes at it spitting chewed peppermint at the bundle with each pass, lifted it off the tripod, turned around clockwise, made three motions with the bundle, stem-end forward, as if putting it on the saddle (note saddle of Flat Pipe in Plate 2A), and at the third actually put it there where it rested crosswise, held taut with thongs to both sides of the saddle and under the horse's belly. Then she mounted from the right side her own horse, and started off leading the horse that carried the Pipe bundle, the latter horse coming behind her own, not abreast.

482 Sometimes the co-keeper, *ad libertum*, would carry the bundle herself on her own back, putting it on her back before mounting her horse and carrying the bundle with the thong handle resting over her upper arm just below the bend of the shoulder and the bundle itself at her back. To help her mount so burdened they would lead her to a side hill. The Boy's mother, when co-keeper, at times on the march used to say that the bundle so carried felt heavy at the start, but after a while felt light. When the co-keeper so carried the bundle, leading the Pipe's own horse, she followed the keeper. Occasionally the Pipe bundle was carried on a travois, but we obtained no details on this point.

484 On the march, while scouts were not uncommonly sent out ahead to find the best route or watch for enemies, the co-keeper with 778 the Pipe-bundle led the cavalcade itself. No one could go in front of her: if any one did, bad luck would befall him. If both the Flat and Feathered Pipes were with the caravan, the Flat Pipe was in the lead, next the Feathered Pipe, then the chief or chiefs, finally the body of the group. The keepers rode immediately behind the respective co-keepers, never before. If the caravan were on the way to one celebration or a Sacred Dance, the group giv-

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

778

High was keeper, he told Al Chandler that one of the sticks in the bundle was already notched on two edges.

778
492

Like the Flat Pipe, the Feathered Pipe also had its own horse, saddle, robe and blankets. The saddle, like a woman's saddle of old times, had two horns from which fringes hung, and a beaded crupper, and was painted red. The horse had to be the best available; no one could ride it, and if it died or was stolen, another had to be provided. The horse had to be very gentle.

Feathered Pipe Ritual

788

Certain general features characteristically recur throughout the Feathered Pipe rites, some contrasting with those of the Flat Pipe rites, others common to both cycles.

The following are distinctive of the Feathered Pipe rites: association with air, sky, cloud, rain and storm; sweet pine for smudge; ritual number four; the drum accompaniment for songs; dancing with the Pipe.

The Feathered Pipe, as previously noted, "belongs up above the earth," having been given by Bha'a the storm being and during a violent thunderstorm. In prayer and other ritual it was [illegible] ularly associated with the sky and storm clouds, with [illegible] storms.

For ritual smudge or incense the dried needles of an [illegible] the "sweet pine," nibiya:ta, were exclusively used, in ac[illegible] with directions given the original first keeper of the [illegible] accordance too with the origin of the Pipe from "up abo[illegible] earth," for the "sweet pine" tree grows only in high altitu[illegible] up on the hills and mountains. The tree grows in the Rocky Mountains, the Sweet Grass Hills, and Eagle Butte, nearer to the present location of the Gros Ventres. The Boy has seen it growing in only about two places, to about 10 feet high on top of Bird Tail Butte in the Bear Paw Mountains, and to about five feet high with a trunk about four inches in diameter on the top of Mission Peak in the Little Rockies. We were unable to secure specimens for botanical identification. The tree was described as "like a fir," or "special kind of pine." It is presumably *Abies sp.* Ritually the needles were mostly used to make incense, and, only

788

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

526 Fig. 25 shows one side of a small ball painted yellow, on which is a rude embroidery in red, yellow, and green quills, representing a bird. On the 532 opposite side is a red quilled cross. The bird-embroidery recalls the quill-ornamentation of an Arapaho ghost-dance drumstick and hand implement, both of them with stuffed heads of painted skin; also the painting of a crow on an Arapaho ghost-dance ball.[1]

526'

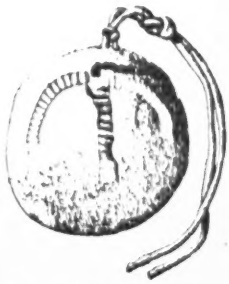


Fig. 25 (50-1731). Embroidered and Painted Ball. Diameter, 7 cm.

A game of throwing willow sticks on the ice, to see who could slide them farthest, was played by women. These sticks were sometimes tipped with buffalo-calves' horns. Young men, as well as women, sometimes threw horn-pointed sticks on the ice. It is said that women used long sticks, young men short sticks.

Children slid on the ice at a place they had made smooth. A boy and then a girl would slide alternately. When the whole party had slid one way, they would return, sliding in the opposite direction.

A toy made to slide on the ice consists of a bone to which two feathered sticks are attached at a diverging angle. It is called "tafaxtsiteebya^{n}." The object is to bounce or slide the implement over the ice as far as possible. This type of object is found among a number of Plains tribes.

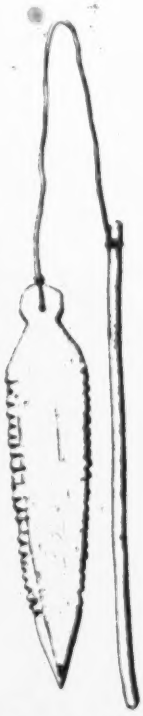


Fig. 26 (50-1788). Bull-roarer. Length, 56 cm.

493 Boys' sleds for coasting on hillsides were made of several buffalo-ribs held together at each end by a long 526 thong winding in and out around the two halves of a 857 split stick. A buffalo-tail was tied behind. These sleds were called "sö^{n}w^{n}haana^{n}." When a man presented such a sled to another man's boy, he received presents from the boy's parents. In early summer, when the grass was green, toboggans of rawhide were used on the hillsides. The front was held up and bent over, and the bottom soon became very smooth.

224 Slings were used by boys for killing birds and small animals. The entire 411 sling was made of skin. The thongs were passed through holes near the 857

[1] See Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part IV, p. 393, Fig. 151.

CHAPTER VIII

CHILDHOOD

858 In the days before the buffalo disappeared and before formal schooling was available, childhood, it was said, for girls was shorter [582] and for boys was longer than at present. A girl was ordinarily given in marriage before she was twelve years old—certainly before she attained physiological maturity. A boy on the other hand, though seemingly anxious to participate in hunting and in war as soon as he was able, was not forced to bear the full responsibilities of adulthood until the end of adolescence. While there was considerable variation from family to family in the amount of time required of children in training for practical tasks, all enjoyed a considerable amount of " free time."

Play

857 Singer and Coming Daylight, the two oldest of our informants, 526 in recalling the amusements and pastimes of their youth, decided that sliding down hills was one of the most pleasurable as it could be done at any time of the year. In winter, when there was snow, [493] the boys used a kind of sled made by lashing buffalo rib-bones together. Girls managed just as well by simply sitting on their robes and holding between their legs the end which usually hung free. In summer a stiff buffalo hide was used for sliding down the grassy slopes.[1] When the water was frozen, boys and girls alike [524] skated with their feet on the ice, thus clearing a slick surface on which to spin their tops made of horn.

857 Swimming, however, was the great sport in summer. Girls left 526 their dresses close to the bank, those of the older girls in a neat row closest to the edge and those of the smaller girls in the next 481 row. Beginners used the dog-paddle, but the boys developed profi-

[1] For this and some other types of amusement, see Kroeber, 1908, pp. 190–91.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

171 bags, recalling the typical checker and diagonal step design of Blackfoot
415 beading. This type is, however, unusual among the Gros Ventre.
531 The fine bag shown in Fig. 6, collected by Dr. Clark Wissler, presents unusual quill-embroidery on its front, suggestive perhaps of Sioux influence or origin; but the bead-work on its cover and sides, and the attached tin and horsehair ornaments, are typically Arapaho, except for the fact that this tribe would be very unlikely to make any pattern without at least some proportion of white. The transverse lines of quill-work on this bag might be regarded as nothing but a further five-line development of the three-line grouping illustrated by the last figure, with an alternating bar-pattern for its chief ornamentation instead of the box figure, which in element is identical. The central figure, however, is the typical Sioux spider-web pattern described by Dr. Clark Wissler,[1] and so far without any parallel among either Arapaho or Gros Ventre, or any approach nearer than that shown in an instance of blanket painting.[2] The two parallel bars in the centre of this concave quadrilateral figure, and the diamond-shaped feather symbols at its corners, are also typically Siouan: only the last-named element is occasionally used by the Gros Ventre.

237 Buffalo paunches, the mouth being drawn up by a string, like a sack,
415 were used for carrying and holding water, a paunchful being hung up in
505 the tent. If buffalo had been killed, and it was desired to transport the meat across the Missouri, the paunches were filled with meat, blown up, tied together at the mouth, and floated. The well-known circular skin
[501] boats of the Missouri tribes were also used by the Gros Ventre for transporting clothing and property across streams.

171 Fig. 7 shows an ornamented food-bag of bladder. At the top is a strip
415 of skin covered with red quill-embroidery, with square star designs in blue
531 and white. From this strip of skin hangs a red quill-wound fringe. The thong handle of the bag is partly quilled, and has quilled thong pendants hanging from it. At the bottom of the bag a round piece of skin, covered with green-and-white quartered bead-work, is sewed on.

171 The navel-amulets of the Gros Ventre, which resemble those of the
532 Arapaho in their use, are in form of a somewhat different type, as they
751 approach more nearly to an animal's shape. They usually represent çaniwa", the "horned toad" (southern Arapaho, sániwa", a "lizard"), or sometimes a person. Their general shape is, as everywhere on the Plains, a rhomboid on end. To this the Gros Ventre add at the upper end a small rhomboid, forming the head of the animal represented. This augmented shape has not been found among the Arapaho, with whom the typical form

[1] See Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part III, p. 248.
[2] Ibid., Vol. XIII, p. 85, Fig. 138.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

To cross a deep river such as the Missouri was quite an undertaking. When they reached the bank, they would spread out in family groups, while the men and women worked together to convert the lodges into round boats. Coming Daylight gave the following description. "The lodge cover was folded in half lengthwise over a rope of sufficient length that the ends protruded somewhat. Mud was then smeared as a layer between the two halves of the cover and on the outside of that half which would ultimately be in the water. The next step was to take the loose edges together, to form the rim of the boat by bunching up a considerable bit of the material and tying securely; leaving a free space, bunching up another bit of the material, leaving another free space, and repeating this operation at intervals, shaping the receptacle to the proper diameter by running a rope taut from 'tuft' to 'tuft'; then they packed in very carefully as much as the round boat would safely hold, and finally the portion of the rim which was formed by the fold—as distinct from the now 'tufted' free edges—was gathered into place by manipulating the ends of the rope which had been placed originally in the fold, the rope being now tied securely. A lead rope was attached to one 'tuft' at each side of the gathered portion of the rim. Two young men on horseback then dragged the boat into the water and took it across the river, dragging it safely up on the opposite bank." [16]

484 501 396

The boat was watertight and safe to transport any of their belongings, and even children or disabled adults. When the water transporting was finished the mud was washed off and the lodge cover spread on the ground to dry. This didn't take long and the lodge cover was soon as good as new.

484 501

The lodge poles had to be transported separately from the cover. The poles were cut when needed, and a hole was burned about four inches from the top of each. When the lodge was up, the free ends of the short strings of buckskin, run through these holes, fluttered in the breeze, making a fine decoration. The more practical purpose of the holes, however, was to allow a number of poles to be strung together for moving. For water transport not more

484 342 484 492

[16] Maximilian, who met the Gros Ventres on the Missouri in 1833, mentions, p. 73, their round boats made of buffalo skin, filled with articles for barter, "drawn by one swimmer and pushed by another."

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

171 bags, recalling the typical checker and diagonal step design of Blackfoot
415 beading. This type is, however, unusual among the Gros Ventre.
531 The fine bag shown in Fig. 6, collected by Dr. Clark Wissler, presents unusual quill-embroidery on its front, suggestive perhaps of Sioux influence or origin; but the bead-work on its cover and sides, and the attached tin and horsehair ornaments, are typically Arapaho, except for the fact that this tribe would be very unlikely to make any pattern without at least some proportion of white. The transverse lines of quill-work on this bag might be regarded as nothing but a further five-line development of the three-line grouping illustrated by the last figure, with an alternating bar-pattern for its chief ornamentation instead of the box figure, which in element is identical. The central figure, however, is the typical Sioux spider-web pattern described by Dr. Clark Wissler,[1] and so far without any parallel among either Arapaho or Gros Ventre, or any approach nearer than that shown in an instance of blanket painting.[2] The two parallel bars in the centre of this concave quadrilateral figure, and the diamond-shaped feather symbols at its corners, are also typically Siouan: only the last-named element is occasionally used by the Gros Ventre.

237 Buffalo paunches, the mouth being drawn up by a string, like a sack,
415 were used for carrying and holding water, a paunchful being hung up in
● 505 the tent. If buffalo had been killed, and it was desired to transport the meat across the Missouri, the paunches were filled with meat, blown up,
[501] tied together at the mouth, and floated. The well-known circular skin boats of the Missouri tribes were also used by the Gros Ventre for transporting clothing and property across streams.

171 Fig. 7 shows an ornamented food-bag of bladder. At the top is a strip
415 of skin covered with red quill-embroidery, with square star designs in blue
531 and white. From this strip of skin hangs a red quill-wound fringe. The thong handle of the bag is partly quilled, and has quilled thong pendants hanging from it. At the bottom of the bag a round piece of skin, covered with green-and-white quartered bead-work, is sewed on.

171 The navel-amulets of the Gros Ventre, which resemble those of the
532 Arapaho in their use, are in form of a somewhat different type, as they approach more nearly to an animal's shape. They usually represent
751 çaniwa", the "horned toad" (southern Arapaho, sániwa", a "lizard"), or sometimes a person. Their general shape is, as everywhere on the Plains, a rhomboid on end. To this the Gros Ventre add at the upper end a small rhomboid, forming the head of the animal represented. This augmented shape has not been found among the Arapaho, with whom the typical form

[1] See Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part III, p. 248.
[2] Ibid., Vol. XIII, p. 85, Fig. 138.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

ing the Dance came right after the Pipe or Pipes. If there were no sacred pipe with the caravan, the chief or head man rode first in the line of march. 484 578

On the march, which was ordinarily at a slow pace, no one stopped to smoke or for other reason unless the co-keeper halted. When they stopped, usually about half-way, she would hang the bundle on the tripod, all by itself away from and well forward of the crowd in the direction of the trek. All stopped behind it; they did not surround it; it was always ahead of them in the direction they were heading. No one moved to re-start ahead until the co-keeper did so.

If the route of march necessitated crossing a big river, such as the Missouri River, the procedure in Coming Daylight's words, was as follows. "They put the Flat Pipe bundle in a bullboat. Of course there was no child in the bullboat. They chose two young men, popular and heroes, to lead that bullboat across. These two would be all painted red. They had robes rolled up and when they got midway across the river they put the robes in the water as offerings. As soon as they started across my grandmother up on the cliff at the river's edge would start cheering and singing the victory song. This song is a strong-heart song. When there was something hard to do they sang this song. They would say the names of the two young men and sing this song to encourage them. They all moved the bullboat into the water and different people would put into it various things to be thrown into the middle of the river. The keeper and co-keeper who owned the Pipe were not supposed to swim or bathe in water. Both could ride in this bullboat with the Pipe, but the woman always did. The two young men [on horseback apparently] held the robes [offering mentioned above] in one hand and pulled the bullboat with the other. The Pipe in the bullboat was the first of the caravan to cross the river. After all the people had gotten across the old women had a victory dance and sang for the crossing." [505] [782]

On arrival at the new camp site the co-keeper would hang the Pipe bundle on the tripod at a spot just to the north of where the keeper's lodge was to be erected. Then the new sage bed and sacred hearth were made, and the bundle brought into the lodge,

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
782
123

"I have heard that your health [has not been good] . . . and it is my earnest hope that you may get back your health. I shall never forget nor cease to appreciate the encouragement you gave me when I was losing my health rapidly, and your promise to pray for me so that my health might be restored back to me.[6] I sincerely believe that your prayer was heard, as my health seems to be improving, even in my advancing age.

"So now it is my turn to pray that your life span may be extended, and among other good things to which you apply your mind that you may further contribute to the great study of the races and peoples of the earth.

"I have told you in my story of the Gros Ventres before the days of the white man, which includes the belief of my ancestors, that in the spring of the year is when one's prayers are more readily heard, and that was the time that the Indians in the long ago went to the hills, streams and mountain tops to fast and pray.

"We, the Gros Ventres, pray and implore the Supreme Being to protect our boys fighting on the various fronts in this great war, and so far only one Gros Ventre boy has been killed, out of many who are in the service. And we also pray that this terrible war and this mass killing may soon stop and that a just and lasting peace may be declared, so that the great family of nations may be true brothers again and go on with life in harmony and prosperity.

. . .

"I will now close and I am very glad to have spoke to you on this paper and it is my sincere hope that you can feel my words, so that they will do you good and doctor you.[7] With a good and hearty handshake, I am

Your friend
The Boy"

782
511

In the spring, The Boy's father, Lame Bull, would at bedtime after all were lying down, sing certain songs after first praying for himself, his household and all the people. Whether this bedtime

---

[6] See p. 366, in references to The Boy's illness in 1940. In 1948, The Boy again mentioned gratefully Cooper's prayer for him. [R.F.]

[7] Some of the expressions used in this letter seem to be implicit references to the efficacy of the sincere wish as well as of prayer.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

782 [511] praying and singing were done at other seasons of the year and how far as a more general custom by other fathers of families were points we did not clear up.

[264] Before eating food, at least in any more or less formal gathering, a portion of the food was offered up with prayer.

[224] Prayer rites and observances for good hunting were few and simple—as compared, for example, with the numerous and complicated ones practiced by the Algonquian-speaking tribes of the taiga. Abundance of food, which principally meant game food, was commonly prayed for. Two of the Sacred Dances, the Law Enforcers' and the Woman's, had as a purpose success in buffalo hunting. But beyond this, hunting entered little into ritual, and we may recall hunting was conspicuously absent from the power quest. We recorded no rites or observances whatever in connection with the gathering of berries, roots or other plant food.

[484] It was customary on crossing rivers to pray to the Last Child for protection, and to throw into the water offerings, especially shells and eagle-tail feathers, for the Last Child, or the water monster, or both, with some words such as, "I give you this." Sometimes, too, some prayer and offering would be made by a person going to swim, or on other occasions ~~of~~ water hazard.

During or just before severe thunderstorms, various prayer and other procedures were resorted to, many of them directed to Bha'a, the storm being.

Seeking indirectly or asking directly the prayers of the aged, especially for long life, took several different forms, and played an important role in Gros Ventre life, as we have explained elsewhere.

There were many different ways of seeking the prayers of the aged. We recorded the following, which may or may not exhaust the list: crying before a lodge, offering a pipe, promising a sweat-lodge, "holy boiling," providing a feast, doing favors of various kinds.

782 888 "Holy boiling," to which we have not as yet referred, was an observance distinct both from the preceding ones and from feasting a group of aged people. It was intended primarily for some one person, man or woman, although others partook of the meal, and

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

has been given up, the Gros Ventres are so sunburned that their 302
skin looks almost "black." Singer showed a small bag of red
paint which she still had. She kept a piece of beaver castor in the [237]
bag so the paint would be sweet-smelling.

In the old days the Gros Ventres were early risers. Everyone 512
got up while it was still dark, perhaps about three o'clock in summer and before seven in winter. It didn't make any difference whether a child might otherwise be favored, the rule was iron-clad that all must rise early and that no one should lie abed. This applied to all—old people as well as to children.

One method of making sure that children would be strong was 856
to take a beaver tail and slap the child on the hand and on the back
while saying: "You will be good and strong." Mary, for instance, 825
has seen her mother do this to all her grandchildren, hitting them so hard they almost cried. The beaver is considered a very strong animal since he cuts down big trees and drags them about.

Naming and Ear-piercing

Every individaul received a name shortly after birth. Many 551
Gros Ventres, however, were, and are, known by names other than the original one. Names were changed for particular reasons, and in addition nicknames were frequently employed. Sometimes the first name was bestowed with considerable formality, but naming could be carried out in a variety of ways,[10] as the following examples show. 553

"Shortly after Coming Daylight was born, her father sent for 852
his sister's husband and told him: 'Now I invited you to name your niece. I am giving you such-and-such kind of horse' (a bay, or a pinto, or whatnot). There was a big feast on this occasion and the lodge was full of people. The namer sat in the place of honor at the back of the lodge. He held the infant in his arms, told a war deed and said: 'Now I name her 'Taken A Prisoner.' Then he said a long prayer, starting with the usual formula, and wishing the infant a long life. He then handed the infant to the person to his left saying: 'Take Taken A Prisoner'; and so the infant was passed all around the lodge, each repeating the same to

[10] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, p. 182.

323 were made. Several days later he reported that he had asked around about how pots were made, and some old-timers said that they braided sinew to the shape of pot they wished; heated white flint and pulverized it, and mixed with the blue clay from around the neighborhood of Hays. This mixture was about 6 per cent pulverized flint. The clay and pulverized rock were mixed in a mortar, pasted over the woven sinew, and baked. "It gets so hard you can't break it." Tom Bad Road, now (1948) about 70 years old told Mary Ereaux that once when he was a young boy he saw an old, old woman making a pot of "sand." The pot had dried hard, but some young fellows used it as a target for throwing stones and broke it to pieces.

554 The place of honor was at the back of the lodge, opposite the door. Here at night slept the "man of the house" and his senior
513 wife, if he were a polygynist, the other wives and children on either
595 side. Coming Daylight described the arrangement of her father's lodge as it was before she was sent to live with her grandmother. Her father and one wife slept at the rear, the bedding placed parallel to the door; she and her mother had their bedding to the left as one entered the lodge, and perpendicular in regard to the opening, sleeping with their heads to the rear and feet to the door; while her father's unmarried brothers were similarly placed as she and her mother, but on the opposite side of the lodge.

484 When on the move, the women were in charge of the children and impedimenta and usually traveled in a group considerably be-
492 hind the men. Horses or dogs were used to draw the travois, and sometimes younger children or the sick and disabled were carried thereon. Mae Main remarked that her memory of riding on a horse travois was not a very pleasant one as she was often annoyed by the horse's tail brushing over her. Horses had to be broken to the travois and a horse owned by a man would never be so used. The horse can draw a far heavier load than a dog, but seemingly the Gros Ventres at no time had so many horses that the dog could be dispensed with altogether and the dog travois survived until very recently. At such times that horses for one reason or another were scarce, the people would be forced to cache a great deal of their surplus and to cut their lodges in half so the load would not be too great for a dog to draw.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The lodges of the other people faced toward the east-southeast, from utilitarian consideration, since the prevailing and strongest winds were from the northwest in winter and west in summer. But the door of the keeper's lodge was toward the south, an orientation determined by the ritual position of the Pipe inside the lodge, namely, in the place of honor opposite the door with the stem pointing toward the rising sun. 342 346 [36]

The interior of the keeper's lodge was arranged as follows. In the center was the family hearth. About midway between this and the north segment was the square incense hearth, with the west half of black sand and the east of red. At the north, close to the wall, was the Pipe bed and place for the Pipe tripod. The bed, oriented east and west, was made of a buffalo robe over sage brush. At each end was a willow back rest, and over each rest a robe of summer-pelage (after winter coat completely shed) buffalo skin. The tripod, of three legs, was a little over five feet high. The Pipe bundle was either laid on the bed close to the wall or else hung on the tripod, always with the stem to the rising sun. The northern part of the lodge, including the incense hearth and Pipe bed and adjacent area, in all about one-third of the interior, constituted a sort of "sanctuary." 342 346 353 778

The keeper's sleeping bed, with its back rest toward the north, was a little removed from the Pipe bed, toward the west; the co-keeper's in a corresponding position toward the east. The Pipe child commonly slept on the Pipe bed, alongside of and to the south of the Pipe bundle, with his head to the east. If however the keeper or co-keeper wanted to sleep on the Pipe bed in order to dream, the Pipe child would then give place and sleep in his father's or mother's bed as the case might be. When any of the three slept on the Pipe bed, the Pipe bundle might hang on the tripod over them or else rest on the northern edge of the bed nearest the wall. In the latter case, the tripod was folded up and leaned between the Pipe bed and the co-keeper's bed. According to Thick the sleepers had to lie flat on their backs all night. According, however, to The Boy they were forbidden to do so and had instead to lie on their sides, because the turtle was closely associated with the Flat Pipe and if a turtle gets on its back it cannot right itself. 342 346 513 [784] [825]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

After the Women's Dance was ended, the women participants broke up and each went back to her own lodge where she went through a final private ceremony. This,—and some other phases of Gros Ventre culture,—may be illustrated in the following story from real life, told by The Boy with hilarious laughter and with consummate histrionic artistry of intonation, gesture, facial expression and mimicry. Would that we could have gotten a sound-movie of it. 796*

"It was the custom among all the tribes around here that when the old women had their Dance and it had ended they would go back to their tents and rest. Before they took a drink they would do like the buffalo does on going to water.

"Not long ago there died here a Gros Ventre man, named Hill (or Butte), who was famous for his ability to break wind, loud or soft, at will. He had a friend, a Blood Indian. On one occasion the Gros Ventres and Bloods got together, and a Women's Dance was held. Hill went to visit his Blood friend in the latter's lodge. 514 522 796*

"After a while, when the dance was over, the Blood's wife came home, squatted down, said 'Phew' from fatigue, took off her dance regalia, and wiped the sweat off her face. Then she took an unborn-calf robe and laid it on her head, and put on her horned ritual headdress. She next gave her husband a wooden dish to fill with water and place in the lodge opposite the entrance. Hill, a spectator of all this, was a brother-in-law of the Blood's wife and hence had a right to joke with her. [602]

"The old woman, then, in her dance regalia, got down on all fours, crawled up to the bowl of water sort of roaring like a buffalo going to drink, and as she reached the bowl suddenly shied away. This she did three times. After the fourth time she would have taken a drink, but just as she was about to drink, after the fourth approach, Hill broke wind loudly. At this the old woman just fell backwards, her headdress fell off, and she did not drink.

"Another Blood Indian present fell backwards laughing. Hill did not crack a smile. The woman's husband put his hand over his face and kept a stern demeanor until Hill said to him: 'My younger brother, don't get mad. All the tribes all over the

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

514 522 796 country do what I did. When buffalo go to drink, Indians just shoot them. I was just re-enacting this. What I did was proper.' To this the husband replied: 'My elder brother, that's true.'

"When the people heard the laughing, they came flocking around. The other Blood was still laughing, in fact was in a laughing spell. His relatives carried him out and took him home and there dashed water on him and revived him."

Peyote Cult and Ghost Dance

668 795 What little we were able to gather on the peyote cult and Ghost Dance among the Gros Ventres, is here presented.

Peyotism is entirely lacking among the present-day Gros Ventres and appears never to have gained a foothold among them in the past. Some individuals, we were told by The Boy and Thick, had tried to introduce it, but without success as the Gros Ventres were "a little afraid of it." The fact that the Gros Ventres have been under fairly intensive Catholic missionary influence since the middle 1880's may partly account for the resistance.[43] Some young Gros Ventres, who were on a visit to the Crows, were invited to take part in Peyote observances, but declined.

On the fortunes of the Ghost Dance among the Gros Ventres, our chief informants were Cora Chandler and her husband Al Chandler, Coming Daylight, The Boy, Thick, Charles Buckman and Thomas Main. Singer had joined the movement but though perfectly willing to speak freely about other subjects was somewhat reluctant to talk about this one. Our other informants had not joined the Ghost Dance, but Cora Chandler's people "were strong for it." Coming Daylight was, as will be explained, in close contact with certain phases of it, and The Boy had been present as a spectator at many Ghost Dance gatherings.

The Ghost Dance was called among the Gros Ventres, not "Ghost Dance," but "Little Round Dances." It was first introduced [177] among them in 1891 by a Gros Ventre from the Hays area who had lived among the Arapaho of Wyoming a number of years, had

[43] Coming Daylight came in contact with the Peyote Cult on a visit some years ago to Oklahoma, but, she remarked, "the Catholic Indians in Oklahoma were against peyote."

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

276 778 The sacred flat-pipe was also used in the sun-dance. It was once captured in war. Then the man who took it had bad dreams, until the pipe spoke to him in his dream and said, "Return me, or your tribe will be [728] destroyed." Then this man brought back the pipe, and his tribe made peace with the Gros Ventre.

343 782 The making of a sweat-house was not restricted to certain persons. A man wishing success in war would make a sweat-house for another person, in order that he might accomplish the deed he had in mind. Or, if a person was sick, one of his relatives might pledge to make a sweat-house for him, just as he would a dance. In this case the sick person himself would not necessarily use the sweat-house. On the other hand, a doctor might prescribe sweating for a patient, [757] and in this case the sick person would enter the sweat-house.

Fig. 43 (50–4288). Sweat-house Tail. Length, 36 cm.

343 515 [237]

About twelve or fourteen willow poles were cut for the sweat-house. The entrance always faced the sunrise, and a small cottonwood-tree was erected in front of it. To this, calico or other property was tied by an old man as a gift to the sun. The cloth was partly blackened, the corners being rubbed with charcoal.

When all the participants were inside, the blankets were pulled down and the house closed tight. Water was poured on hot stones, at first five times. Thereupon the lodge was opened at the entrance and at the opposite west end, and the people cooled. It was then closed again, and this time water was poured on the rocks seven times. After cooling once more, water was poured on the rocks nine times. The fourth time, the man that poured the water could put as much or as little on the stones as he wished. After the fourth time, the participants came out and bathed. [757] If they were suffering from pain, they whipped that part of the body with buffalo or horse tails. This practice made the heat greatest at that point, much as if it were beaten into the body.

854 857 men were much more interested in children than they seem to be at present.

855 515 857 Just as soon as a child was old enough to look after himself—say from about the age of three or four years—he would be compelled to bathe every morning before eating. An older boy would supervise his younger brothers and see to it that they complied with the regulation—even in winter when it was sometimes necessary to cut a hole in the ice. Al says: "This is what makes one tough." Charles gave as illustration an incident which occurred one morning when there was ice on the edge of the river and snow was floating on the surface. "An older brother said to his three younger brothers: 'Go and take a plunge.' The wind was blowing and the three boys sat on the bank, each one encouraging the other to be the first one in. The older brother came behind them yelling: 'I didn't say to you boys to stay on the edge—I said to take a plunge!' Whereupon he threw each of them in the icy water telling them to wash their faces, hair and hands. He then sent them home to water the horses while he took his plunge." In case the lodge might be too far from a stream in winter, the boys and men rolled in the snow and rubbed their bodies with it. Everyone, young and old alike, bathed every day.

515 751 That the daily dip was looked upon as a health measure is shown by the statement of Cora who remarked that when she was small she used to bathe daily in the creek and she has never been sick up to the present. Coming Daylight, too, said that she had kept up the practice until a few years ago and complains that she has been sickly ever since giving it up.

271 751 It was considered important for health's sake to drink a lot of water too. The relatives who raised Coming Daylight used to tell her to wash her mouth out with water immediately upon arising. Further she was instructed to drink water right after eating, even though she might not feel thirsty, and to walk about after finishing a meal. She claims she followed these rules all her life and that for this reason she is not troubled, as so many of the aged are, with difficulty in controlling urination, and so on.

302 After the morning bath, all would have their faces painted all over with red paint "in order to keep their faces clean and light-skinned." Coming Daylight complained that since this practice

793 keeper (and probably the co-keeper too) could not cut his hair, but had to wear it tangled and disheveled.

785 The keeper and co-keeper were not permitted to bathe and
784 swim in the creeks,—this in contrast to the Gros Ventre custom of daily early morning bathing and swimming by both sexes the
[515] year round when not prevented by ice, as a cleansing, body-hardening and recreative practice. In fact, the two were not allowed to wash even their hands and face with water, but, according to The Boy, had to use instead fat, grease or oil, and to wipe them with the same muskrat skin they used in face painting.

[304] The keeper could not draw blood on his own person by cutting, as was done by others in the sweat lodge rite, in mourning, and on other occasions.

793 The keeper and co-keeper were not supposed to cry or to cut
784 their hair in case of the death of a relative, nor to go where any one lay dead, nor to have anything at all to do with a corpse. In particular they were not allowed to give clothes, at least their own, to put on a dead person. It was a breach of this last prohibition, in fact, that resulted in Lame Bull's lameness, and his subsequent sobriquet, Lame Bull, his proper name being Under Bull.[4]

The keeper and co-keeper could not gamble or be gambled with. If the keeper nevertheless did so and won, he won not only the wager, but also the life of his opponent. The latter would meet with some fatality unless the keeper agreed to avert the evil by performing the proper rite over him. The keeper would direct the
[755] man to build a sweat-lodge and would enter it with him. The man would fumigate himself and inhale the smudge. The keeper would rub the man all over from head to feet with sage.

The keeper was not allowed just to throw off his saddle or blankets onto the ground but had to take good care of them.

According to Coming Daylight, a keeper during his term of office "could not sing the songs he was supposed to sing," but we secured no clarification of this statement. The reference may be to songs previously gotten in quests for supernatural power.

In addition to the foregoing more or less restrictive or "ascetic" observances that served to set the keeper and co-keeper apart from

---

[4] Cf. Flannery, 1953, p. 201.

*796 afterwards according to the Ni:hohat story or after the great deluge according to the flood story.

Ritual sweating and use of the sweat-lodge, tsë:bätc, were resorted to by the Gros Ventres on many occasions not connected with the sacred pipe rites,—skin and finger-joint sacrifices, war expeditions, and dreamed-of impending evils. Sweating in such cases will be dealt with in the proper places, as also sweating at the Feathered Pipe rites and Sacred lodges. The sweat-lodge rite was obligatory at the following Flat Pipe ceremonies: the three seasonal rites, the transfer rite (previously described), rites in fulfillment of a vow to smoke the Pipe or to paint its bowl, or to make a sweat-lodge for the keeper or for the Pipe, and at the disposal of offerings to the Pipe.

[515 721]

726 Before a war party started out, among other ceremonial observances a sweat-lodge rite was commonly gone through. A Flat *796 Pipe Keeper might on such an occasion take pity on the leader and members of the departing war party, build his own 31-stick sweat-lodge, and go through the sweating rite. If, furthermore, the keeper accompanied the war party, he might do the same from time to time during the course of the expedition.

*796 For the present we shall confine our attention chiefly to the sweat-lodge as used in the three seasonal rites, dealing first with the sweat-lodge itself, and after that with the sweating rite. We merely reiterate in passing that the sweating rite, while obligatory in a seasonal rite, was somewhat distinct from the ceremonial which followed it and which was carried out in the keeper's lodge.

346 The Flat Pipe sweat-lodge was constructed as follows. In ground *796 plan it was more or less circular about 7 to 9 feet in diameter, with two openings, the main larger entrance at the east and the smaller exit opening at the west. The general form was nearly semi-spherical. On each side, the northern and southern, 15 willows were stuck in the ground. The number 30 may represent a multiple of the sacred number three, and one of our informants conjectured, with particular reference to the 30 poles of lodge where He-who-starved-to-death slept fasting on the 30 successive nights. These 30 willows were arched over and woven fast into a ridge willow that ran the east-west axis of the structure. Thus the sweat-lodge was constructed of 31 willows in all.

[802]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 ing clockwise each to his place with the keeper in the place of honor opposite the east door, and sat cross-legged on their buttocks, not squatted on their heels. The man who had chanted the invitations then followed them, after placing the pipe on the mound, and took his place at the left of the east door.

At this juncture the keeper's wife at his direction, brought the Flat Pipe bundle to the sweat-lodge, gave it to the keeper who smudged it three times at each of the three incense places. Then she took the bundle and went out through the west door,—all with the same ceremonial observance as at the Transfer Rite.

A live buffalo chip was put on each pi-shaped hearth by one of the attendants. Next the keeper made the smudge or incense by dropping peppermint on these three hearths,—the eastern, middle, and western in order,—with the smudge song and ritual as described for the Transfer Rite. Then followed the fumigation of the keeper's person and of the common pipe, as *mutatis mutandis* in the same Transfer Rite. Then the keeper with closed eyes prayed with the common pipe extended upward in his hands, after which the pipe was passed clockwise till it reached the man nearest the east door who passed it across the door to the inviter seated next the door. The latter with the help of the assistants who brought a live buffalo chip, lit the pipe, puffed it, passed it to the man on his left to puff, and so on clockwise until it reached the man nearest the east door on the north side. Then it was passed back anti-clockwise, without being puffed, till it reached the inviter. So the smoking continued until all the tobacco was smoked up, when it was passed to the keeper who emptied it slowly with the usual ceremony and cleaned it out with the regular stick. Then the pipe was passed clockwise to the attendant at the north side of the door, who deposited it on the slope of the mound outside in its ritual position of bowl to west and stem to east.

*796 Now the sweaters disrobed, passing their clothing to the two attendants who piled them up outside to the north and the south
● 515 of the sweat-lodge respectively. The heated rocks were then brought in and deposited in the sweat-lodge pit and the door coverings were lowered. The two attendants then stretched out, just outside the east door face down, head resting on the folded

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

arms and so propped up a little (a common sleeping posture, with ears exposed to hear well and mouth free to breathe easily), and so remained during the ensuing songs and until summoned to open up the sweat-lodge coverings for breathing spells.

796*
515

The keeper then began singing a song (No. 83) in which all present in the sweat-lodge joined. This was sung three times. During the singing any who wished would pray, each by himself out loud, for the two attendants outside, who were gladdened to hear this. Several could pray aloud at the same time without being distracted as they were accustomed so to pray.

Just before the actual sweating another song (No. 84) was sung in like manner.

Next the hot rocks were sprinkled by the man who had chanted the initial invitations to sweat. While he and the others sang the "hell-diver's song" (No. 84), he dipped his right hand fingers, tips joined, into the water, stirred the water with his fingers, and at the end of the song snapped his finger tips open over the rocks and sprinkled them, at the same time making a sort of grunted "uh! uh! uh!" (three times), an imitation of the hell-diver's call. Then plenty of water was splashed on the hot rocks. The same ritual and song were gone through three times.

It was during this sprinkling that they used to hear a woman's voice singing. Both The Boy and Thick have heard this voice—the former long ago when his father then an ex-keeper put up a sweat-lodge, both when a few years ago Thick's brother, then a keeper, put up one. The old people thought this woman was some holy being, but beyond that knew nothing more about her. The Boy and Thick conjectured that she may possibly have been the first woman made after the flood by Earthmaker.

The hell-diver entered into the sprinkling rite and at this point because both in actual habit and in the origin story of the flood he is associated with water. He was prayed to, "Hell-diver, help me! Come!" in the sweat-lodge rite, probably at this juncture. The hell-diver song was never sung outside of the sweat-lodge rite.

After the third singing, sprinkling, and splashing, all those inside the sweat-lodge had a good sweat, during which the sweaters

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 ●515 whipped themselves, especially on any part of their bodies where they felt sick, with buffalo tails attached to a handle. The keeper used a distinctive whip of a white or beaver buffalo tail. After the men inside had sweated a while, the two attendants, who had meanwhile remained lying face down outside, one at each side of the east door, raised the covers first of the east door and then of the west. After a little breathing spell, the covers were lowered again by the attendants, the west door cover first, water was splashed afresh, without song or ritual, on the hot rocks, and a second sweating period ensued. After this, a third one followed. Then those of the sweaters who wished took a plunge in the river, and all donned their clothing.

*796 The offerings were then taken down from the offerings pole, and one of the assistants or some other good upright man was deputed by the keeper to take them away from camp to some knoll or mountain top or near some big rock, pray with them, and weight them down well with stones, or else, as a less common alternative, to carry them down to some stream and sink them in the water. Some of the offerings had been selected however for distribution to needy children.

[262] No food of any kind was eaten by the participants during the seasonal sweat-lodge rite. When the whole seasonal rite itself was carried out on the three-day plan, the sweating ceremony lasted from early morning until near sundown, and was followed by a big meal.

After the sweating rite was over, the sweat-lodge was not torn down but was just left standing. Children were admonished by their elders not to play around it, and especially not to go inside it, lest they should grow slowly and be dwarfs for a long time. Even though such an abandoned sweat-lodge was still in good condition when a later seasonal rite happened to be held at the same camp site, neither the lodge or any part of it would be used again. An entirely new one would be erected.

In a three-day seasonal rite, the second part of it with the terminal feast occupied the whole or most of the third day; in the one-day rite, what remained of the day after the sweating was over. All of this second part of the rite took place in the keeper's lodge where the Flat Pipe was.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

while shells like those I wore for earrings would show. But the place was grown over with weeds and white settlers were there. The old women said: 'It is funny that they [the whites] do not *hear the spirit getting [ready] a pot of boiling water for them.'* They thought it strange that the white people could stay there." 787 823

Those few men who sought gambling power—it was never sought or possessed by women, we were told—sought it not on hill tops but in the lowlands, in the brush and timber along streams, from prairie chickens or ghosts there. The quester chose by preference a place where wild morning-glories formed a sort of bower or "tipi." The seeker would cry and when he got sleepy would crawl into the bower and sleep. In his sleep a prairie chicken or ghost would give him a song, certain rules to live by, procedures and rites to use in the hand game,—the only game in which gambling power was used,—and perhaps some powers of the legerdemain order. The person who acquired gambling power by quest would be very chary of revealing his quest experiences.[10]

Seemingly still more secretive and tight lipped were persons who acquired love power through quest. According to The Boy, our only informant on this point, "these fellows [who had it] were careful never to tell who gave this power. Sometimes they would say a 'person' gave it, but it was generally known that it came from bird or animal on the ground or in the water." On other occasions he stated: "Usually some animal gave love power," and questers "did not ask for success in gambling or love on the mountains, but on the prairies or in the brush along rivers." The being would give the quester a root to use in exercising love power.

A person before starting out for a chosen mountain top to seek major powers would, The Boy put it, "take a good bath and clean up his body well and put perfume on his body so he would smell good—those who did not use perfume would be told by the being on the mountain: 'Go away. You smell bad.'" He would also unbraid his hair and would wear no clothing except his moccasins and under his blanket his breechcloth. He took no weapons with him. "He took a lot of chances," Al Chandler commented, "because enemies might be close-by. But no enemy ever seemed to [302 515]

[10] For fuller details, see Flannery and Cooper, 1946, pp. 405-09, 416.

755
757 sional individuals; supernatural remedies used only by professional medicine men or women with power.

Natural Remedies

751 Both preventive and curative measures of the natural or ra-
515 tional order were numerous.

The most common preventive measure was the daily early morning plunge in the stream or roll in the snow by men, a practice carried out for hardening the body as well as for cleaning
[731] it. In small epidemics scattering and isolation were regularly resorted to in order to check the spread of the disease. The use of skunk fluid as a curative was more a Cree than a Gros Ventre procedure, but there was a Gros Ventre belief that skunk fluid diluted with water and put into the eyes of a person was a preventive and cure of snow-blindness. A mother, on knowing herself
[862] pregnant again, would cease nursing her infant lest it suffer from "bad stomach and diarrhea." Drinking the blood of a freshly butchered buffalo was looked upon as a preventive of tuberculosis.

757 Curative measures of the rational order were of many kinds. We recorded the following, but our list is far from exhaustive. All of them may best be classified as "domestic remedies," measures of common knowledge, resorted to by everybody who wished to use them, and not considered proprietary right of particular individuals.

757 Many herbal curatives came under this category.[3] The roots of
278 "sweetheart briars," so called because the burrs stuck so tightly, were used for colds, and the deeper the root the stronger was the medicine.[4]

An infusion of peppermint is now used as a beverage by everybody for "fits, spasms and stomach disorders," although the medicinal use of peppermint was formerly the monopoly of Flat Pipe keepers. A very strong drink was made by boiling a certain root and just a little of it drunk as a cure for difficulty in urination.

---

[3] Cf. list in Kroeber, 1908, pp. 224-27. We made no attempt in the field to get a full list of such herbal and other curatives.

[171] [4] The Piegan, according to Coming Daylight and Singer, used these as "blood medicine."

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

782 "Just before the sun went down that day, all at once I felt
785 something touching me on my left side. It was Running Crow
304 and the other man who stopped me. This meant that my fasting and chastizing myself were about over.

"They took off those thongs and told me to lie down in the same position that they had told me to lie in at the beginning. That is when I suffered the most. They did not take the sticks out, but just cut those thongs off and it seemed to me as if they were cutting my heart. Those fellows took those pieces that my skin was still clinging to and buried them at the foot of the post. And that is my experience. They told me to put on my clothes and I did so. I did not experience or perceive anything out of the ordinary. I just suffered. That is all.

"After I put on my clothes I found out that the skin of my feet was worn off and blistered and sore, and they sure hurt me. And to add to my aches, on the soles of my feet I was awfully sore the next morning and couldn't walk. And that is the end of my experience."

Sweat-Bath

782 In Gros Ventre ritual, sweating and sacrificing were quite closely
515 associated. Invitations to sweat extended to the Supreme Being and other beings in certain sweat-lodge rites,[11] such as those connected with the Flat and Feathered Pipe ceremonies, were of the nature of gifts or offerings, and hence sacrifices in the broader sense of the term. Then, too, the sweat-lodge and sweat-bath were a chosen medium for making offerings or consummating the sacrificial rite: the pole erected in front of the sweat-lodge and the buffalo skull on the adjacent mound were intended particularly for the attachment to and disposition of respectively sacrificial objects,—offerings of robes, bits of flesh, and so forth. Furthermore, the sweat-lodge was a preferred place in which to make sacrifices of flesh and of finger joints.

On other occasions too sweat-lodge and sacrifice went together. For instance, a man whose son had been killed by the enemy might

[11] Kroeber, 1908, pp. 274-75, gives an account of sweating and mentions that "Above-white-man" was called first.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

offer a pipe to a band chief and ask him to avenge the son's death. The chief would accept the pipe and pray to the Supreme Being for success in the revenge expedition. Then the father would erect a sweat-lodge and make offerings in connection therewith, inviting a lot of "holy" old men to sweat and likewise to pray to the Supreme Being for success in the expedition. 782 515

Al Chandler gave the following account: "A young fellow would go and tell some old medicine man that he was going to make a sweat-bath for him so that the old man would pray for him, and would ask him what he [the young man] should do, whether there was a certain special way of performing the ceremony, and how the sweat-lodge should be fixed. The medicine men had all different ways. Some medicine men would have, say, 18 willows at least for the sweat-lodge framework, or others 26, or 30 at the most, with four willows called the 'head frame' oriented toward the sunrise, or the north, or other direction. A hole about six inches deep was dug inside for the heated rocks and the surface cleared about an inch down from the hole to the door. On this cleared space, shaped more or less like a truncated triangle, some design in red paint might be drawn—such as a circle, or figure of a bird or man. A dozen different men might follow one particular set of specifications in case they had all gotten the right to do so from the same [medicine] man. 346 515 782

"The fire for heating the rocks was made about 8 to 10 feet from the door of the sweat-lodge, and the dirt dug to make the hole in the lodge was put in a nice pile about 4 to 5 feet beyond the fireplace on the same axis therewith. The offerings made by the young fellow—such as calico or feathers—were tied on a willow stick about 6 or 7 feet long. He had also to get the rocks, to no specified number. 515

"When all was ready the old fellow would tell the young man to get, say, 7 to 9 old men to come and join them. When they arrived, the rocks were all heated. The young man then gave the old man [the one he had first approached] the willow stick with the offerings tied to it. The old man then went to the dirt pile, faced in the direction in which the lodge faced, and holding the offerings on [over?] the pile prayed as loud as he could: 'God, 782

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

515 702 come and listen to me. God, come and get in the sweat-bath with me. Here is what X [naming the young man] gives you as an offering!' Then he would go on to pray for the young fellow and would tell who had given him [the old man] power to make the sweat-bath this particular way: 'You gave me this for some purpose, so you must come and help me now. This young man has gone to a lot of trouble to do this for me and you. So listen to me and help this young man, whatever his wish is.' Then he stuck the offering in the dirt pile, to remain there while they were all inside the lodge sweating.

"After he and the invited old men got inside the lodge, he would appoint one of them to pour the water on the heated rocks. The appointee would ask, 'How much for the start,' and would be told, [80] 'Four times' or maybe 'Seven times,' either four or seven. The appointee would then pour, the required number of times, just enough, say about one third of or a whole cupful, to make a little steam. Then the leading old fellow would say: 'Now it is up to you. Pour any amount you want.'

"Then all those old men prayed inside for the young man, who remained outside and had to look after the rocks and the opening up of the sweat-lodge. Every so often he had to open it up in front and back and so kind of cooled the sweaters off. It was so opened maybe four successive times, and then the sweating was over.

"The young fellow might then be told to come in, and the old fellows would kind of clean him by first blowing on their hands and then rubbing him, and when they were through they would twiddle their fingers as one does to get rid of dirt.

"This young man hired all these people and he would think that these old men prayed hard, and that he would get what he asked for, and that he would not be afraid, and that regardless of odds he would come out on top because of this faith."

The ritual cleansing effected by sweating as well as the sacrificial aspect of the rite is definitely referred to in the foregoing account, but here as in most other cases the sacrificial aspect is the more prominent. The cleansing effect was also hinted at in Sitting High's remark quoted by Al Chandler: "You have to clean yourself through this sweating."

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The sweat-bath was resorted ritually on many occasions other than those mentioned in the immediately preceding pages and passim in preceding sections. Coming Daylight spoke of it in a general way as "the thing they [the Gros Ventres] go through with when they don't want something to happen." On some of these many occasions reported by our informants there was no mention of accompanying offerings,—for instance the many sweat-baths Singer made for her sick husband (or were these purely "rational" curative measures, as may have been the sweating Coming Daylight went through for her rheumatism?). The sweat-lodge was commonly used, especially as we have seen, in connection with professional doctoring. 515 782

The sweat-bath was resorted to rather commonly—how commonly we cannot say—for pleasure, as a purely rational hygienic and curative measure, and for cleanliness. In such cases, no ceremony at all was connected with it. The keepers of the Flat and Feathered Pipes, if known to like sweating,—but not otherwise,—could be invited, but without ritual accompaniment. There was no mixed-sex sweating; men sweated with men, women with women. Sweating was a little hard on novices unused to the heat and steam. The white man who asked to learn about the Feathered Pipe was told: "The first night in a sweat-bath is pretty hard and beginners are allowed to lie down close to the ground." Singer, once when being washed by a medicine man, had to leave the lodge as soon as the water was poured on the stones; she could not stand the heat. Mary Ereaux' mother used to keep her head outside the sweat-lodge when sweating. Those, however, habituated to sweating, found the after-effect pleasant and soothing. As Al Chandler expressed it: "After you are all through sweating you sure feel good. You could go right to sleep." 515

The sweaters during the sweating whipped themselves,—"to make them even hotter" (Al Chandler), "to dry themselves" (Coming Daylight)—with formerly a whip made of a buffalo tail attached to a handle, or later of "a horse tail or any old thing." [412]

The sweat-lodge for secular use was always beehived shaped, of bent willows framework, but no special number of willows was required. 343

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The older women informants described, when they were young, they would work at scraping skins pegged to the ground, by leaning over from the waist, feet well apart and knees unbent, swinging sideways from the hips. They could keep up this rhythmical steady motion, with the short-handled scraper usually tipped with metal, for hours at a time, one day after another. Sometimes, too, a woman would spend a whole day softening ropes of rawhide by rubbing the rope which had been run through the eye and ear apertures of a buffalo skull upon which the horns had been left so that she, sitting on the ground with legs extended, could rest her feet against the horns as she pulled the rope back and forth, making it soft and white.[4] Nevertheless the tedium of these operations was often relieved by the fact that occasionally other women, who had at the moment some leisure, would hear the work going on and would volunteer to help.

462 281 [516] [412] [283 237] 462 476 281

It was customary for women to do much of their work in groups. If a young woman, for instance, wished to make a fine robe, she would call in some other women, including an older experienced "hand." The latter would mark the robe where the embroidery should go, and the younger women did the fancy work. The hostess would cook for all present and so, in a pleasant atmosphere of sociability and "woman talk," the work would progress. A similar type of gathering would be held when a sufficient number of hides had been saved to make a lodge cover.

[531]

In size the lodges ranged from six skins up to twenty-four or twenty-five, with the average of about fourteen to seventeen.[5] Much skill was needed for cutting and fitting the skins and an experienced woman would be called in to do that part, while the others helped with the task of sewing the skins together. Our informants stated that a woman would have to "save and save" skins towards a new lodge, which was a necessity about every three years.

[342]

Women went out in groups to pick berries and wild fruits as well as to dig roots, but each one had right of disposal over what

462 476

[4] Another method for softening ropes is given by Kroeber, 1908, p. 150.

[5] The largest lodge remembered by the Gros Ventres is said to have been that of the Blood Chief, Father of All, who had, at the time of the 1855 treaty, a lodge with two fires, poles 65 ft. long, and the cover consisting of more than 25 skins.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

us begin again. Keep quiet," and to the first attendant: "Bring a live buffalo chip." The attendant did so, put it on the hearth, and returned to his place. The retiring keeper then took a pinch of dried peppermint leaves, and after the triple successive lowering and three clockwise circles above described, but without song or spoken word, released the peppermint, dropping it on the smoldering chip.

Squatting on his knees and heels instead of cross-legged, so that he could move around more easily, he took up the Flat Pipe, grasping it by the stem, palms up, with his left hand nearer the bowl. Then he circled the stem through the incense and upward until it pointed *east* and held it steady a moment at this point. He repeated the circling and pointing at a lower level, again at a still lower one, and finally made three clockwise circles with the bowl around the incense. Next he repeated the same smudging but toward the *south;* finally, toward the *west.*

After the smudging came the solemn prayer (to be described later) said by the retiring keeper, kneeling upright and holding the Pipe with the stem pointing, not to any point of the compass, but vertically upward. At the end of the prayer he let himself down on his heels, still kneeling, and held the Pipe in position to smoke. He ordered the first attendant: "Bring a live buffalo chip." The attendant thereupon took a chip from the lodge hearth with a forked stick and applied it to the tobacco in the Pipe. The keeper puffed the Pipe until the tobacco was lit, and then took three distinct puffs, blowing the smoke upward around and downward around. Then he passed the Pipe to the new keeper, first swinging it upward. The new keeper, after taking three puffs and blowing the smoke up and down in the same manner, took a real full smoke with the Pipe. Then he passed it clockwise to the nearest ex-keeper to the east, who smoked it, but without swinging it upward. Then it was passed in turn clockwise to the other ex-keepers, if there were others, to be smoked but not swung, till it reached the last nearest the door. The ex-co-keepers did not smoke the Pipe in this or in any other Flat Pipe rite. Then the lighted Pipe was passed back anti-clockwise, without smoking, and without swinging upward except by the new keeper (this honor

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

341 The triangular space between the foot of the Pipe bed and the
346 head of the keeper's bed served the keeper as a place to keep such
353 of his personal and ritual belongings as his peppermint, sage brush, personal smoking pipe, and so forth.

In good weather, the Pipe bundle was taken outside by the co-
778 keeper in the morning (rite to be described later) and hung up,
788 stem to east, on the outside of the keeper's lodge just above the door, the thong handle of the bundle being looped around a pin of the lodge. About sundown the bundle was brought inside again by the co-keeper to its ritual place. At night the opening of the keeper's lodge was securely closed with a piece of rawhide, shaped like the door, covered with a sort of lattice work of rawhide, and fastened from the inside.

778 The keeper's lodge, as the depository of the Flat Pipe and the dwelling of the consecrated custodians thereof, had to be treated with great respect. This respect was formalized in a number of ritual and other observances.

784 No one was permitted to step over the incense hearth, under penalty of being inflicted with fits.

When the keeper, co-keeper and Pipe child took off their moccasins for the night, these had to be deposited, not alongside the beds or under the pillows or anywhere in the "sanctuary," but near the lodge door,—the keeper's to the west of the door, the co-keeper's to the east, the Pipe child's to either the west or the east *ad libitum*. If this were not done, severe headaches would result.

Anyone entering the keeper's lodge or leaving it or passing from one part of it to another, always had to walk clockwise.

784 When anything was going on therein, with men and women both present, the men had to sit on the western side, the women on the
● 516 eastern. When they sat down, they could not sit with legs stretched out in front; the men squatted on their heels with knees touching the ground and legs parallel, while the women sat on their buttocks with their legs to the right side one leg under the other.

No one, adult or child, could throw stones or sticks at the
784 keeper's lodge. Children were not allowed to play or fool or romp

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

fathers back of them and the wives back of the grandfathers, 796*
according to one statement by Coming Daylight; the grandfathers in front, and the dancers and their wives back of them according to another by her. The bows of the "talls" and "shorts" were stuck upright in the ground in two crescents in front of the two respective divisions; the bows of the ritual "elder brothers" (the four councilors?), a little apart near the south or southeast ends of these two crescents.[18]

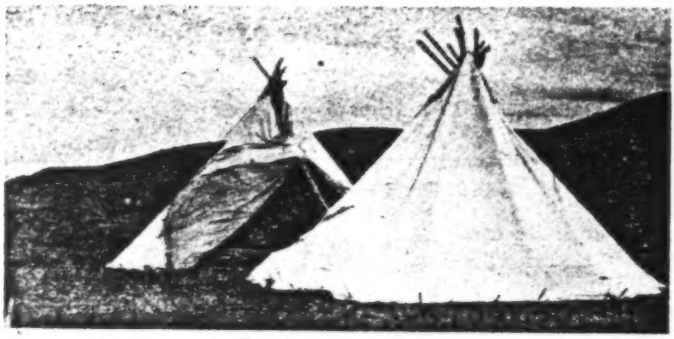
The chief ritual paraphernalia used in the Crazy Dance were 293
the badger pelt, hoof rattles, whistles, bows, and poisoned arrows. 796*
The stuffed badger hide, "trimmed and fixed up," figured prominently in the rites. The bone whistles, hung on the neck of the dancers, were blown by them when dancing. The rattles, θaθanas, sticks about five feet long, with deer hoofs attached in a row along the upper third, were used by the grandfathers who sang, sitting in a row and pounding the ends of the rattles on the ground to beat time.

Each Crazy Dancer treated one of his arrows with poisonous 796*
wild parsley, and tied the poisoned arrow to his bow. If the dancer [626]
"got mad or any serious situation arose" he would unfasten the arrow and shoot to kill. If the arrow penetrated the skin of the victim or even scratched him, he died. This extreme measure was very rarely resorted to. We were told of no actual instance. When the dance was over these poisoned arrows were carried away to a spot where no one could find them and were buried.

The ceremonies on each of the four days of the Crazy Dance 796*
began with the painting of the bodies of the dancers and their 302
wives, the pattern of the painting differing each day. The painting was done in the respective lodges of the leaders of the groups of two to four dancers. Here they gathered with their respective ceremonial grandfathers and "Little Crazy Dancers." The dancer and his wife, or borrowed surrogate, would sit there naked, the [834
woman with legs close together and stretched out in front. This 546]
was a source of serious embarrassment to all concerned. The bodies

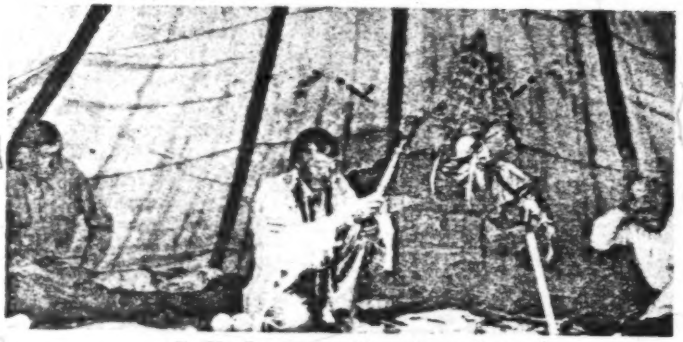
[18] Kroeber, 1908, p. 242, gives a different arrangement, with which still another statement by Coming Daylight that "the women sat on the west side" insofar agrees.

346
796



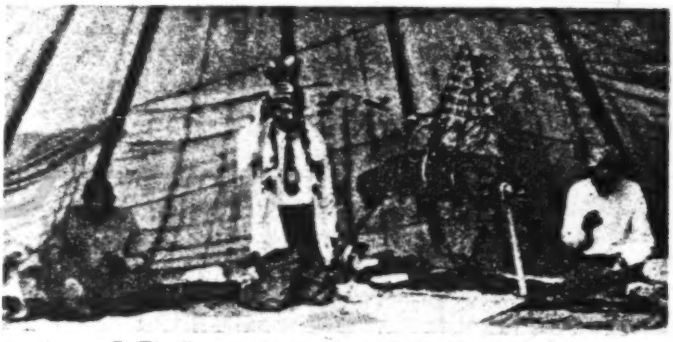
A. *Double tipi for ceremony.*

[301
782]



B. *The Boy prays with ordinary pipe.*

[516
534
778]



C. *The Boy smudges rattles over Flat Pipe hearth.*

PLATE I

[p.425]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

around it, but were taught and trained to be quiet around it and to observe reverence toward it. 784

No whistling or crying was permitted in the keeper's lodge. The keeper and co-keeper were forbidden to cry in the presence of the Pipe, if, for instance, they had lost a relative. A crying baby was never allowed in the lodge with the Pipe. As soon as the infant started to cry it was taken out. If, as previously noted, a man who had a young wife with a baby took the Pipe, she and the infant would be sent out of the Pipe lodge to a nearby lodge. [854]

Dogs were never allowed to enter the lodge where the Pipe was. If the keeper or co-keeper owned a dogskin robe, the rules forbade their using it. [231]

The people were not allowed to go to the keeper's lodge to get fire, as they used to go to other lodges in the early morning.

Breaking bones to extract marrow was prohibited in the keeper's lodge. If this were done, some accident, such as the breaking of a leg or arm, would happen to some relative of the keeper [or of the delinquent?]. [264]

The door of the keeper's lodge had to be kept closed, and the back cover of the lodge could not be lifted up in the warm summertime to get air.

A war party before starting off would sing at the door of each clan chief's lodge, but not at the door of the keeper's. [726]

When people went to the keeper's lodge for a social smoke and feast, they had to keep their wits about them and watch their speech carefully lest they should unthinkingly tell lies, vulgar or obscene stories, or start a war-deed contest.

There was a very strict prohibition against telling lies in the keeper's lodge.

If two men, while in the keeper's lodge, forgot themselves and started a war-deed contest, the keeper would remind them: "You are mistaken in talking so in here. Now you will have to continue for three days and nights." During this time all who were present when the slip was first made had to stay day and night in the lodge of the keeper, who would provide them with food and tobacco. These listeners would egg on and laughingly banter the two contestants and decide on the winner. After a while the pair's 784 517

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

784 fund of war exploits would be apt to give out, and the two would
517 begin talking about trifling occurrences in camp, personal reminiscences about their marriages, and so forth. Everybody had a good time at such a three-day session.

Neither the keeper nor others were permitted to tell folk-tales of the vulgar or obscene Ni:hahat type in the former's lodge. If a member of a visiting group inadvertently broke the rule, a three-day session similar to the war-deed one above was prescribed, during which he had to continue telling such tales.

778 If a murder of a fellow-tribesman had been committed in camp, and the murdered person's relatives were about to kill the murderer
696 in revenge, the latter could run to and take refuge in the keeper's lodge and was safe so long, but only so long, as he stayed there. The avengers dared not enter it to kill, but immunity ceased so soon as the murderer left the lodge.

621 There is general agreement among our informants that the keeper's lodge was pitched in a prominent place, but exactly where
361 in the camp circle is a controverted point we did not succeed in clearing up. According to one tradition, it occupied the place of honor in the circle, toward the northwest—opposite the circle's opening which was toward the southeast or the rising sun,—regardless of where the keeper's band camped in the circle. Three, however, of our oldest informants, Coming Daylight, Takes-the-Bow, and Turn-Toes, held that the keeper remained with his band, the first two of the three stating that his lodge was pitched a little in front of his band toward the center of the circle.

Prerogatives and Restrictions of Keepership

793 The office of keepership carried with it on the one hand a great many special rights, privileges, prerogatives and powers and on the other a great many restrictions, obligations, responsibilities and sacrifices. The following list is undoubtedly incomplete, as new ones were still being revealed when our field work came to an end,[8] but it probably includes most of them. They functionally accord with sacred and high dignity of the keepership, the supernatural power attached to it, the lofty ethical behavior and "as-

[8] Kroeber, 1908, p. 273, has some we did not get.

Between times, during the summer months, that is, when no sacred dance was in progress, the two soldier societies, the Stars and the Grass dancers (Wolves), would compete with each other in foot races or other sports or in gambling bouts.[16] The losers would have to "cook" or to do other things for the winners. The losers in formation, with one of them in front carrying the Crazy Dance badger pelt trimmed and fixed up and tied to one end of a stick, might go to where the winners were sitting in a sort of semi-circle. On arrival there, the man carrying the pelt would say: "We are also bringing the badger pelt. It, too, we lost in the bet,"—although actually the pelt itself had not been wagered. This was a dare or challenge to the winners to put up the Crazy Lodge, a challenge which they were "compelled" to accept. Some great man among the winners would then get up, take the badger pelt from the man who brought it, and make an exclamation meaning that he was glad and that he accepted the challenge. He and his fellow-winners of the same age-group would then at once send criers to announce their acceptance of the challenge and, to give notice that they would without fail carry through their acceptance, would get in formation and sing. When the Crazy Dance was so carried out it had the same prestige and it was performed with the same rites and observances, as when carried out to fulfill a vow.

796* [701 517]

Each of those men who joined the Crazy Dance joined with one of his wives or with a substitute for her. The chief although not the only role of these women was participation in the ritual grandfather sex-test to be described later. Some husbands were so jealous of their wives that they would do all possible to avoid joining the dance or having their wives join. This appears to have been the case with the husbands of Coming Daylight, who was a belle in her day. In other cases, as The Boy remarked, "the husband knew his wife's character and disposition, and if she were weak he did not put her to this test as he would be pretty sure that she would fail." Singer had never joined although some wanted her to do so at the time. "My husband," she said, "was advised not to let me do so because I was too young and I might make

796* 593

[16] Cf. Flannery, 1953, p. 42.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

A man who was ambitious selected his enemy-friends with care so as to ensure opponents worthy of his efforts. It was said that often an older man whose reputation was already well established chose a spunky youngster. As The Boy phrased it, "This was an honor for the younger man and the older had nothing to lose. If the older continually won out over the younger in a fair 'fight' he ruined the younger man's reputation and thus eliminated a possible rival. On the other hand, if the younger man showed that he could take 'abuse' as well as give it, the older man could go along with him as an enemy-friend of long standing." 572

Everyone watched with interest the contest between well-matched enemy-friends whether they indulged in good-natured razzing of one another or whether they were concerned with more serious matters. When each tried to out-do the other in bragging of conquests both in love and at war, a large audience was attracted. Practical jokes were expected between them and the more vulgar and obscene their nature, the greater the enjoyment. Whenever one enemy-friend thought he "had something" on the other, he hastened to expose him publicly, so that the enemy-friendship often functioned as an effective means of social control. [522] [626]

When a man publicly taunted his enemy-friend, however, it was well for him to have ample grounds for the accusation lest the tables be turned against him as the case of Bull Lodge and Sits Like A Woman. This was told by The Boy.

"Sits Like A Woman was leading a war party out of camp as his enemy-friend, Bull Lodge, was returning from a hunt. Bull Lodge inquired of some members of the party as to who their leader might be. When he was told that Sits Like A Woman was the leader, Bull Lodge remarked: 'I'd hesitate to meet such warriors as yourselves were I the enemy, but Sits Like A Woman has no shame to lead such great men as you are!' Sits Like A Woman heard this and didn't forget it. The party was a very successful one, returning with 'charcoal' (scalps) and none of the Gros Ventres was even hurt. When they got home they sang around the camp circle here and there as usual. Bull Lodge at the time was entertaining many guests including his brothers-in-law who were seated near the entrance of the tipi. After Sits Like A

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

cepted the pipe and gifts. Two days later Sits Like A Woman told his wives to cook and had the announcer call out: 'Bull Lodge, your friend Sits Like A Woman is inviting you to his lodge to smoke.' Others were likewise invited and when Bull Lodge arrived he was put in the place of honor. After they had eaten a good meal and had started to smoke, Sits Like A Woman said to Bull Lodge: 'My friend, you can rest assured that I'll never do that to you again. I went to that extreme because you told some of my party I was not fit to lead them. But I showed you what kind of a man I am. You are intelligent and I don't think you'll make a mistake like that again. Also its good you didn't get mad but took what I handed out to you. You probably regret the blanket and clothes I cut up. So here are my best clothes—you can have them.' Then, indicating his best race horse, he added: 'Lead that horse home and keep it.' Thus Sits Like A Woman publicly absolved Bull Lodge, but by heaping gifts upon him so generously he exposed him too." 572

If enemy-friends were relatives, usually they were of opposite sex and the joking aspects, rather than the spirit of rivalry, were predominant. Should the enemy-friendship be inaugurated between two relatives who otherwise were expected to be reserved in each other's presence, somewhat more freedom between them was permitted, although the taboo on reference to sex was said to have been strictly maintained.[24] Among other examples of this type of enemy-friendship, Coming Daylight gave the following from her own experience. "My husband's nephew, Crazy Bull, one time presented to me a horse he had captured from the enemy. Before that time we had always properly avoided speaking to each other unless it was necessary, but now we were enemy-friends and we could play jokes on each other and he would tease me, too. One time, for instance, during the night he piled up a big load of firewood just in front of the entrance to my lodge. He had hoped that when I went out in the morning I would open the flap and go out head foremost into the wood and lose my temper. He was there watching to see what would happen, but unfortunately for him, my grandmother was the first to venture forth and so the trick miscarried and counted for me rather than for him. I never liked 572 602 522

[24] For details on kinship behavior, see pp. 107–26.

572 to play jokes, but I would get even with him by going over to his
602 lodge when I would hear him abusing his wife. He had to stop
522 when I came in there because if I actually caught him at it, I could dub him a wife-beater or worse in public."

While in most instances the enemy-friendship was initiated by
562 men, women occasionally obtained war trophies on their own, and
572 had the same privilege. The following, told by Singer, illustrates
602 how she herself came by some war trophies and the manner in which she disposed of them. "One time, when the Piegan had attacked us and the Gros Ventres were pursuing them, I dashed out with some of my women relatives. We came upon three Piegan who had just been killed. Those other women stopped to hit them but I rode by more slowly and spotted some booty near one of the bodies. I dismounted and picked up a nail-studded belt to which was attached a scabbard containing a knife and a nicely beaded gun case. I didn't want to show these to the others, but when they taunted me because I failed to count coups as they had done, I showed them this belt. One of them grabbed the scabbard, which I had intended to give to my own husband, saying: 'You are giving me this. Now we are enemy-friends!' To my nephew I later gave the gun case, saying as I threw it down in front of him: 'Here. You could have this for your gun. This is what I took in war.' The knife I threw down in front of my grandmother and, because we were now enemy-friends, I used a 'bad' name for her —I called her 'you who don't wipe your behind.'"

604 that the wife of a maternal uncle may likewise claim his nephew as "son-in-law."[8]

Brothers-in-law and Sisters-in-law

607 The mutual regard between brother and sister is said to have been reflected not only through the carrying out of the obligations of the avunculate and amitate in the spirit of "showing how much brothers and sisters thought of each other." It could also be seen in the type of behavior expected between brothers-in-law on the one hand, and sisters-in-law on the other. Brothers-in-law were generous to each other and could joke lightly with each other, but nothing even remotely connected with sex could be so much as mentioned in each other's presence. A man was circumspect in regard to his sister's husband out of respect for his sister, and to his wife's brother because the latter, out of respect for his own sister, had similar obligations toward him. Sisters-in-law behaved toward each other in like fashion. These attitudes were extended to include wife's brother's wife as "sister," rather than "sister-in-law," and husband's sister's husband as "brother."

[522] [831]

Unmarried brothers of a man and wife likewise regarded themselves as brothers-in-law. A case which well illustrates the attitudes between them is the following as told by The Boy. "My older brother was married to Thick's older sister and we two young unmarried brothers-in-law experienced a most embarrassing situation. One of us was visiting a woman at night and the other came to the same woman, not realizing in the dark that his brother-in-law was already there. We recognized each other's voices, however, and the one who arrived last beat a hasty retreat. The matter has never, even to this day, been discussed nor so much as indirectly alluded to between us, and the embarrassment over this event led us to avoid each other for a considerable time thereafter. Eventually our relationship was deepened inasmuch as Thick married my sister. Even though my sister should die, Thick and I would continue to be brothers-in-law on the same plane."

[831]

[8] Kroeber, 1902, p. 10, calls attention to the identity of terms for "niece" and "daughter-in-law." Apparently a woman used the term "son-in-law" for her niece's husband or for her husband's nephew only if presents were given.

[601]

593 so." Brothers could borrow from each other without asking beforehand. Futhermore, an older man, who was married, might allow a younger unmarried brother to join the Crazy Lodge, lending his wife to stand in the place of a wife to him for ceremonial purposes.

Brothers- and Sisters-in-law

607 The greatest freedom was exhibited between a man and his brother's wife, on the one hand, and his wife's sister on the other.
522 Likewise a woman could say anything she chose to her husband's brother and to her sister's husband. Teasing and horseplay between brother-in-law and sister-in-law were not only permitted but expected. A favorite joke was for one to conceal in a strategic place within the lodge an "air cushion" consisting of a buffalo cow bladder, blown up and tied. When the other came in he was shown to the appointed place and his weight on the cushion caused a most embarrassing noise, much to the hilarity of all present. Taking it in apparent good nature, the victim would, however, bide his time to get even.

Another accepted type of trick was for one to make a laughing stock of the other by heavily blackening the eyebrows of the victim, while he or she was asleep. A rougher kind of play was also indulged in. Singer, for instance, said: "I was once thrown in the creek by my brother-in-law. It took me a long time to find opportunity for retaliation, because he was wary and stayed away from the creek when I was around. On one occasion though, when he started for his bath, I followed him, and, when he was on the brink of the creek, I sneaked up behind him and shoved him in yelling as I ran away: 'It took me a long time to get even with you!'" On another occasion she and her brother-in-law were partners in a game he made up. "The Gros Ventres had won in battle and this man said he was going to give a 'Victory Dance.' My sister and I joined the group, and, as we arrived, this brother-in-law of ours was singing all kinds of songs,—silly songs with the words all mixed up. Then he said: 'Each man take a partner. We are going to stand up all night. The first one who sits has to pay a fine!' So he chose me as his partner. Finally, after some time, he said: 'Wait a minute, I have to get a drink.'

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

So he rushed into his father's lodge, but another of his sisters-in-law went in and saw him sitting down, and said to me: 'You two have lost, and we have won, because your partner sat down first.' Since I didn't have anything to put up as fine, my husband's brother pulled my eyebrows out, as was customary when a person couldn't pay a debt of this kind. My partner, however, gave a feast prepared by his mother as payment, but failed to include me. I got even with him by coming up behind him one day shortly thereafter and emptying a pail of water over his head." 607 522 [686]

Whether he liked it or not, a man had to take without complaint whatever kind of speech or action his own brother directed towards his wife, and likewise a woman had to put up with whatever her sister said or did to her husband. Men who were married to sisters considered each other as "brothers" rather than as brothers-in-law, just as women married to brothers were "sisters" and not sisters-in-law.

Inseparable-friends

As broadly as kinship bonds were conceived among the Gros Ventres in both consanguineal and affinal relationships, kinship behavior and obligations were extended even more widely through the institution of "inseparable-friends." Coming Daylight explained this as follows: "If two men are *inithlha* this means that they have grown up together and are the same as brothers although they are not really kin to each other. The children of these two men would be the same as brothers and sisters to each other and could not marry. All relatives of 'inseparable-friends' were considered as own relatives. Crow's Bull's 'inseparable-friend' was Truth. He knew all the songs that belonged to the Flat Pipe because Crow Bull was Keeper and the two were so much together. Truth always called Crow Bull's son 'son,' and he called me 'niece' because Crow Bull was my mother's brother. A woman could tease the 'inseparable-friend' of her husband in just the same way she could tease her brother-in-law." 572 608

Cora illustrated how complicated relationships could become through the inseparable-friendship. "My brother and Arthur Skinner were such friends, which made Arthur my 'brother.' When Arthur married I should normally have taken his wife as 'sister-

It was
888 thought well, too, to name a child after someone who had attained
[551] advanced age. Thus it was that youths of 16 or 17 years of age would go out in a storm and stand before the lodge of some old man or woman and cry, begging the prayers of that person. Again, on a hunting party, should there be some old man along,
[431] unable to hunt, one member of the group might give a whole buf-
782 falo carcass to him; whereupon the grateful elder would offer a spontaneous prayer on the donor's behalf. Similarly, it was not at all unusual for successful young hunters to seek out old people to share in some of the spoils,—just as in these later times a bottle of whiskey was occasionally given to old persons by the young. Once in a while, too, some married man would have his wife cook
[782] a quantity of food and publicly invite old people, one of whom, in appreciation of this attention, would offer the expected prayer for the long life, health and success of the host and all the members of his household.

Dignity was, however, not necessarily an attribute of old age. With advancing years the conventions were somewhat relaxed. It was stated by one informant: "When a man had lived long enough to have participated in all the Sacred Dances, he had acquired the right to do almost as he pleased, including not having to observe so strictly the relationship taboos. It seemed to throw the bars down and he could have even more fun than ever at the expense of his enemy-friends and become still more vulgar and obscene." Relations between old women living together were not always harmonious and noisy quarreling was not unusual. Sometimes young boys played pranks on such old women, as in the following case.

888 "Two old women who were sisters shared a lodge. One day they were in there, seated back to back, warming themselves by
● 522 the fire. They didn't have any clothes on and were feeling good, scratching their skins with sticks. Two young boys peeped in. They took a long willow and quietly heated the end of it in the fire. When the end of the willow was glowing, they touched one of the old women with it. She yelled at the other: 'You burned me,' and of course the other denied it. After a little while, the boys did the same thing to the other old woman. They heard her call out: 'What did you do to me? You burned me!' The boys

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

repeated this stunt twice more, but this was too much for these old women, who then started fighting and shouting recriminations, blaming each other. The boys of course were in high glee as the old women hit each other and grunted. Finally, however, they called the daughter of one of the old women, saying: 'Come and see these old ones fighting. Try and stop them. They will kill each other.' So as the boys ran away, the younger woman restored peace." 888 522

Care of the aged devolved upon close kin. Whereas old men customarily lived directly with the households to which they were attached, old windows usually lived in lodges separate from, but located near, those of relatives who provided most of their food. To old women was often relegated the care of their grandchildren, especially of their granddaughters, whom they were supposed to train from the age of about seven until such time as they were given in marriage. The young girls in turn supplied the water and fuel for their grandmothers. In case the aged person had children of his own, he was reasonably secure. Those whose dependence was on more remote relatives were less assured of good care. The aged who had special skills which could be exercised in spite of debility, especially those who possessed "medicine power," were better off than the others.[8] 888 [542] [887]

In dealing with old people it was said that much patience and forbearance were often necessary. For instance, one old woman, now deceased, was described by a relative in the following terms: "She was a hardboiled old jane, rough and tough, who didn't hesitate to tell you what she thought of things. But she had many friends and when visitors came she would swell up and be proud when they sat beside her rather than beside one of the several other old women who lived in the same place. Usually during the visit, however, she would get mad and threaten all kinds of things, and people would have to humor her. One day she really blew up and said: 'I'm going to save my relatives the job of hauling my carcass out, so I'm going out on the hills right now and lie out there and die!' So one of her relatives had to pretend to take her

[8] Denig, pp. 576–77, states that only such old persons who possess medicine powers are exempt from the petty tricks and other annoyances to which the aged in general are subject among northern plains tribes.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

buffalo tongues, for the celebration. The vower and his assistants would through their crier announce to the people whether the camp would move for good hunting. On the march, the vower and his company took their place in line immediately after the sacred Pipes. No one was allowed to hunt or run the buffalo until the signal was given. 796* 782 224

During the hunt there would be foot and horse races, shooting contests and gambling matches between the "talls" and "shorts." The losers in the gambling would have to "cook," that is, to provide a meal for the winners, a feast at which the rest of the people, including the children, would horn in. Each one of the losers had to furnish some food or clothing and a smoke (not the pipe itself) to the winners. If one of the losers failed to bring a filled pipe along with the food or clothing wager, the wager was rejected, but he was given a chance to go get one. The winners kept track of the losers, and if any of the latter failed to pay up, they would not do anything to him at once while they were sitting around eating. But afterwards, the winners, followed by the rest of the people, would go to the lodge of the delinquent loser, who usually did not and dared not run away. Here the enemy-friend of the loser would take the latter out of his lodge, and lay him on a spread robe or blanket. The winners would then carry him to the stream or river, give him a good swing and throw him into the water. All the people would follow to see the fun, and the young boys would pelt him with buffalo chips. The victim had to take it all good naturedly and not lose his temper, and the crowd had a good laugh. If the loser were not in his lodge when the winners arrived, they would fetch water, and his enemy-friend would give the loser's bed a good drenching. 792 796* 525 527 522

The hunt continued, the group moving here and there, until enough tongues and other meat was collected, the tongues having been turned over to the vower to be jerked by his wife or wives. Then came the earlier-mentioned four whole nights of singing, done either on successive nights, or from time to time as the tribe moved toward the spot selected for the Sacrifice Dance. After arrival there the fourth of the four all-night singings took place, marking the first night or beginning of the Dance proper, which 782 796* [224 251]

3; Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 of the deer-hoof rattles as the dancers jumped in the fire, was recorded, number 62, as sung by The Boy. It contains just one word meaning: "I wonder what makes me so crazy" (i.e., so crazy that I will jump in the fire). After the singing of the four songs, when the fire was blazing well, the Crazy Dancers said "Ya" and leaped barefooted into the fire and trampled it out with their bare feet. No case is on record of a dancer's feet being burned. As noted previously, the dancers in some way represented millers (moths).

It was a common custom for enemy-friends, male or female, of the dancers to rope them just as the latter were about to jump in the blazing fire and to release them only after the fire had died down or been stamped out. On release, the dancers would step only in the coals or ashes. Coming Daylight had so held back an enemy-friend on one occasion. Some women were quite strong enough to so hold men dancers back. At other times the men would [522] break loose from the women. All this was done as a practical joke on the enemy-friend. Sometimes a wife would so hold back or try to hold back her husband, with a rawhide rope tied to his belt, apparently out of fear for his safety.

After the fire dance came a series of rites or observances which we are calling the bow rites, as the bow enters prominently into them. They consist of a dance, a race, bow-tightening, arrow-shooting, and moccasin plundering.

*796 Before the dance began the Crazy Dancers selected two prom-
526 inent men from another age-group than their own to act as referees for the race that followed the Dance. These two, one for the "talls" and one for the "shorts," took their places on either side of the dance lodge door. Then the grandfathers took the bows of their respective grandsons and, to the accompaniment of the deer-hoof rattles, sang four times a wordless song, number 63,—sung by The Boy and recorded by us. The dancers did not join in the singing as they had their whistles in their mouths. During the singing, the Crazy Dancers, in a mass, "talls" and "shorts" mingled, but with each team of two to four led by its grandfather carrying its bows, moved clockwise in a sort of dancing walk around the inside of the dance lodge, beginning at the left of the entrance. The singing and dancing were so synchronized that the

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 the bow on the old man's back, and would push in under the old man's robe moccasins or other goods, as presents or payment. "The old man's back," Coming Daylight remarked, "would get higher and higher and he would go home with a pack [of these presents] on his back."

After this, each of the dancers moved away from where the old man had been lying, mounted an arrow, and danced four times. At each of the four dances, they motioned as if to shoot the arrow. At the end of the fourth song, they said "Ya," and released their arrows. The boys then grabbed the arrows; whoever grabbed one could keep it as his own.

Then the dancers started running back to camp, with men, women and children chasing them. Any pursuer who succeeded in grabbing a dancer—and throwing him down, according to Coming Daylight—would take the moccasins of the latter, who would submit without struggle. On one occasion Coming Daylight chased a dancer who was "kind of queer" but who "could run like an antelope." He made for a high hill, calling back at her repeatedly: "Why don't you make your own moccasins if you want them?" She could not overtake him.

This moccasin-plundering apparently marked the end of the Crazy Dance rite proper. After it the dancers would mingle barefooted with the people throughout the camp and "talk backward," and the whole camp would move, if only a little way off.

*796 But for some time after the end of the rites proper,[21] the dancers would go around giving orders in "backward talk" to any one they 522 met to dance or sing, chasing and "shooting" members of other age-groups as "imaginary enemies," and indulging in other forms of horseplay. If any victim was commanded "I suggest that you don't dance," he would have to dance. If told, "Don't sing," he would have to sing four times any Crazy Dance song he remembered. If the victim said, "Don't kick me hard," he would be kicked hard, and vice versa. The "imaginary enemies," especially enemy-friends and members (and their wives) of the opposite society, Stars or Wolves as the case might be, were shot with arrows the ends of which had been chewed to blunt them, as there

[21] Four days, according to Kroeber, 1908, p. 247.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

was no intention to really hurt the "enemies." Dogs, too, would be shot at. The poisoned arrow was of course never used in such good-natured shooting. The horseplay could, however, at times be pretty rough. On one occasion, a Crazy Dancer put his foot on the chest of an old man returning from berry-picking in the mountains, and pushed him over the edge of a cutbank. The old man fell over and also spilled all his berries. The Crazy Dancer was avenging the old man's inordinate boasting against "imaginary enemies" in an earlier Dance in which the latter had been a crier. On another occasion, when Coming Daylight's husband, Deafie, was coming back from hunting with deer meat piled on his horse, Crazy Dancers chased him clear to his lodge, although he had been their ritual-grandfather. Coming Daylight at risk of being herself "shot" by them, went out of the lodge and upbraided them roundly, throwing in to boot a coarse remark, and making an insulting noise. They went off without "shooting" her but with the parting remark: "My, we have a crazy grandmother!" 796* 522

Drum Dance

This Sacred Dance got its name bie:təhao'wə, "drum lodge" (cf. *Siíton*, "drum," *biitáhé*) from the single very big drum used in it. The members of the dance or lodge were called Drum Lodge men. 796*

The Dance died out very early, either shortly before Lame Bull's birth in 1824, or too soon thereafter for him to have witnessed it. Our information on it, derived mostly from The Boy, with stray bits from Coming Daylight, and Singer, is extremely fragmentary. The Boy had learned the origin story, four of the songs, and a few ritual details from Lame Bull. The latter knew a married couple who had taken part in the dance; the wife used to show a crooked stick that had been used in it. Coming Daylight had been told a little about it by one of her very aged "mothers"; Singer, by her husband, Iron Bucket. Neither of the two old women liked to talk about it as, they thought, they did not know enough about it to do so. Some features of the rite, in addition to those explicitly mentioned by our informants, may be reasonably inferred from parts of two stories narrated by The Boy.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

At big social or Grass Dances, the people used to be good to these "retired old men" and gave them good seats inside the hall or enclosure where the dance was held. At one such gathering, probably around 1905, a lot of these old men were present sitting in a semi-circle in front of the four chief men. One "retired old man," Fire Steel, Thomas Main's father-in-law and Lame Bull's brother-in-law, a witty old man who liked to talk, came late. Even though Lame Bull was present, Fire Steel said aloud, in a voice that could be heard by everyone: "What is the matter with you old men sitting there? You ought to sing songs of praise. Instead you are sitting there and playing 'it' so women can admire you. But your behinds are all pretty black now!" And everybody laughed. Fire Steel used to get to a dance late and in a tone loud enough for everyone present to hear used to expose these old men's past behavior,—things that they would not want said in public. 888 561 626 522

Fly Dance

This dance was called no:bao'wə "fly lodge." The word no:bä is at present used for "house fly." Our informants were not sure if the word, as used for the dance itself, referred to flies or to mosquitoes. 796

The dance was last performed about 1907. Our chief sources were The Boy, Thick and Coming Daylight; some stray data were gotten from Turn Toes, Charles Buckman, Thomas Main and Cora Chandler. Our information confirms Kroeber's description, and supplements it in only a few minor details.

No origin story was known to our informants, beyond the item that the dance "belongs to the flies [or mosquitoes]."

The Fly Dance, like other Sacred Dances, was held only in fulfillment of a vow, a vow usually made in less grave emergencies. In dignity the Fly Dance ranked lowest among the seven Sacred Dances carried out by men.

It was held in the summer, usually around the time when one of other Sacred Dances was being performed. Consequently there was no necessity of sending runners to assemble the people, as

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

that the rites and observances to be described include all or at least the main features of it, although many details may be lacking. In general, the pattern was a comparatively simple one, and, while certain sacred elements were present, recreative elements, fun-making, and a sort of Halloween spirit were decidedly to the fore. 796*

The young fellows had a dance lodge of their own, apparently outside the camp circle. To this they brought plenty of food to provide a feast for their ritual grandfathers. After the grandfathers, or one of them, had made a smudge and offered a prayer, they painted the youths. The painting was done privately, without spectators. The smudging and praying, including perhaps the painting, were sacred. From then on the dance was secular.

After this religious part of the dance was over, the grandfather [probably of the chief vower] left the dance lodge with the young fellows, and, choosing a proper spot, started the first dance and song. The Flies formed in a circle with the grandfather in the center. He held his robe spread out, like insect wings, with his outstretched arms, and started chanting "Yo ho." The Flies then chanted "Yo ho, yo ho, yo ho," a number of times, and, crouching over danced in a circle jumping up and down on both feet together. The "song," number 65, recorded as sung by The Boy, was wordless, and more a sort of chant than a song proper, and ending with a buzzing sound. There was no accompaniment of drum or rattle. At the end of the dance the Flies all of a sudden fell over, lay on the ground face down, and hummed and buzzed like a swarm of flies (or mosquitoes). 535

This whole dance performance was gone through at four spots around the camp circle, to the north, east, south and west in succession.

According to Coming Daylight the ceremonial grandfather, standing in the middle of ring of dancers, would play jokes on them, throwing buffalo chips at them. According to The Boy and Thick, the Dancers themselves, either then or after breaking up, would throw buffalo chips at one another. [522]

After the fourth dance, to the west, the dancers would disperse and would with sticks, to the end of which cactus spines were attached, stick anyone they could reach.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 These were fastened to the center pole "at the top," so that it was "full of goods that they offered." The offerings were made by "those who made the dance." Such an offering was made, for instance, by the woman above-mentioned who joined the dance for the recovery of her wounded brother. As at the Sacrifice Dance, too, when the Women's Dance was over and camp was moved, the lodge, center pole and attached offerings were all left just standing there.

*796 302 The dancers, the two attendants and the "calf" or "calves," were painted, by the "boss" (and perhaps by others),—the dancers at least, "all over the face, then on top of the hair and down the hair hanging to the shoulders." During the painting the one painting would pray for the other being painted, and the latter might pray on her own account for whatever she desired, such as long life, medicine power, or other favors.

*796 533 Of the songs sung during the Women's Dance we recorded only one, number 66, a wordless one, sung by The Boy. The singing was done or at least led by the old man (or two old men) who sat at the back of the lodge, and was apparently (the point was not cleared up by us) joined in by the chief vower and "boss," and also by the "cows." The singing was done to the accompaniment of the deer-claw rattles mentioned previously, and without the drum. Those dancing did not sing while dancing. "The singing in the Women's Dance," The Boy remarked, "sounded 'old,' quite different from the way a young woman sings." To Coming Daylight's ear "it sounded fine."

*796 535 The dancing went on, not continuously, but intermittently, with intervals in between. Dancing was done by the "cows," attendants, and "calves," not by the "bull" who just sat in her place near the door with her horned headdress on and her head bowed down. The participants danced toward the back of the lodge, "kind of bouncing up and down in one place and shaking their heads from side to side." Coming Daylight, as a "calf," danced with the rest, near the door. According to Singer, the dances were done in series of four, as told her by one or two of her grandmothers who [522 831] had been through the Women's Dance, and, if any of the "cows" did not get up to dance, the "bull" would "get busy" and "start

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

535
796*
522
831

to jump on them," simulating copulation, to the amusement apparently of the other "cows." Whether the chief vower and the "boss" took part in the dancing is not clear,—more probably they did not.

796*

Intervals between the dancing were given over to smoking, chatting, feasting, and fun-making. In more modern times at least the women smoked for pleasure. The dancers were each expected to bring food to the dance, and feasting was an important element, the singers at the back of the lodge faring particularly well. During these intervals, too, the women would play all kinds of tricks on one another, such as taking some woman's belongings and hiding them. They would have "lots of fun," "laughing all the time" and "making lots of racket."

[276]

[522]

Apparently it was customary for relatives of dancers in the Women's Dance, as in other sacred Dances, to give away presents to third parties in honor of the dancers.

[431]

The more public and more spectacular episodes of the Women's Dance, as of the Sacrifice and Crazy Dances, occurred on the fourth and last day. To these features we now turn.

The "cows" and the "bull," all wearing their headdresses and accompanied by the "calves," left the dance lodge and went in a bunch to look for water in the creek and to drink. The "bull" followed to the rear, herding the "cows," and if one of the latter started to stray she would be punched back with the herd. Part of the time at least, the "cows" were "bent over, dancing like animals, and going on hands and knees." The "bull" would run after different "cows" and "jump on them," in mimic copulation. Coming Daylight, as a "calf" was told to follow one of the "cows" as her "mother" and try to nurse, but the "bull" chased her away when she approached her mother. In general, the "calves" were supposed to keep to the side, out of the way of the "bull."

796*
535
831

After the drink at the creek, came the pantomime buffalo drive. The two "hunters" (cf. supra, p. 245) would make a fire outside the camp circle up-wind from the women, and as the women got the smell of the smoke, the "hunters" on horseback drove them, as in a real buffalo drive, and shot the "cows" or some of them with blunt arrows that did not hurt. The "cows" who had before-

796*

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

After the Women's Dance was ended, the women participants 796*
broke up and each went back to her own lodge where she went through a final private ceremony. This,—and some other phases of Gros Ventre culture,—may be illustrated in the following story from real life, told by The Boy with hilarious laughter and with consummate histrionic artistry of intonation, gesture, facial expression and mimicry. Would that we could have gotten a sound-movie of it.

"It was the custom among all the tribes around here that when the old women had their Dance and it had ended they would go back to their tents and rest. Before they took a drink they would do like the buffalo does on going to water.

"Not long ago there died here a Gros Ventre man, named Hill 514
(or Butte), who was famous for his ability to break wind, loud 522
or soft, at will. He had a friend, a Blood Indian. On one occasion 796*
the Gros Ventres and Bloods got together, and a Women's Dance was held. Hill went to visit his Blood friend in the latter's lodge.

"After a while, when the dance was over, the Blood's wife came home, squatted down, said 'Phew' from fatigue, took off her dance regalia, and wiped the sweat off her face. Then she took an unborn-calf robe and laid it on her head, and put on her horned ritual headdress. She next gave her husband a wooden dish to fill with water and place in the lodge opposite the entrance. [602]
Hill, a spectator of all this, was a brother-in-law of the Blood's wife and hence had a right to joke with her.

"The old woman, then, in her dance regalia, got down on all fours, crawled up to the bowl of water sort of roaring like a buffalo going to drink, and as she reached the bowl suddenly shied away. This she did three times. After the fourth time she would have taken a drink, but just as she was about to drink, after the fourth approach, Hill broke wind loudly. At this the old woman just fell backwards, her headdress fell off, and she did not drink.

"Another Blood Indian present fell backwards laughing. Hill did not crack a smile. The woman's husband put his hand over his face and kept a stern demeanor until Hill said to him: 'My younger brother, don't get mad. All the tribes all over the

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

514 country do what I did. When buffalo go to drink, Indians just
●522 shoot them. I was just re-enacting this. What I did was proper.'
*796 To this the husband replied: 'My elder brother, that's true.'

"When the people heard the laughing, they came flocking around. The other Blood was still laughing, in fact was in a laughing spell. His relatives carried him out and took him home and there dashed water on him and revived him."

Peyote Cult and Ghost Dance

668 What little we were able to gather on the peyote cult and Ghost
795 Dance among the Gros Ventres, is here presented.

Peyotism is entirely lacking among the present-day Gros Ventres and appears never to have gained a foothold among them in the past. Some individuals, we were told by The Boy and Thick, had tried to introduce it, but without success as the Gros Ventres were "a little afraid of it." The fact that the Gros Ventres have been under fairly intensive Catholic missionary influence since the middle 1880's may partly account for the resistance.[43] Some young Gros Ventres, who were on a visit to the Crows, were invited to take part in Peyote observances, but declined.

On the fortunes of the Ghost Dance among the Gros Ventres, our chief informants were Cora Chandler and her husband Al Chandler, Coming Daylight, The Boy, Thick, Charles Buckman and Thomas Main. Singer had joined the movement but though perfectly willing to speak freely about other subjects was somewhat reluctant to talk about this one. Our other informants had not joined the Ghost Dance, but Cora Chandler's people "were strong for it." Coming Daylight was, as will be explained, in close contact with certain phases of it, and The Boy had been present as a spectator at many Ghost Dance gatherings.

The Ghost Dance was called among the Gros Ventres, not
[197] "Ghost Dance," but "Little Round Dances." It was first introduced among them in 1891 by a Gros Ventre from the Hays area who had lived among the Arapaho of Wyoming a number of years, had

[43] Coming Daylight came in contact with the Peyote Cult on a visit some years ago to Oklahoma, but, she remarked, "the Catholic Indians in Oklahoma were against peyote."

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

only his property and so have to begin accumulating again from scratch, but 554
might at the same time lose as well his standing in the tribe and become a de- 523
feated and disgraced nobody, of a low standing from which it was very difficult to rise in the scale.

The wheel game was not played by women or children, nor apparently by the 525
very young men, but only by fully adult or middle-aged men and older ones, and 572
by only two players at a time. The really big games with large stakes were in [885]
most cases, it seems—almost all, according to our informants—played by two "enemy friends" or "war friends." Such enemy friends or war friends were very different from ordinary friends or "true" pledged friends. An "enemy friendship" was a war-related compact entered into in the following manner. A member of a returning war party would give some trophy or booty he had taken from the enemy—e.g., a scalp, or horse, or weapon—to one of his own compatriots of the same or opposite sex, who had little choice but to accept. Acceptance made "enemy friends" or "war friends" of the two. War friends, particularly if unrelated and both males, could go the limit in twitting and in- [522]
sulting each other and in playing practical jokes, even rather outrageous ones, on each other, and the victim had to take such behavior in good part, at least externally. However, along with the privilege of taking such liberties ran the accepted obligation to stand by each other in real need or hazard of grave nature.

The two war friends could gamble with each other. In fact, gambling among the Gros Ventre reached at times its climax in contests between two war friends. A wheel game between war friends commonly arose out of a "bragging match" between them; one would challenge the other to play the wheel game. If the one challenged declined to accept the challenge, his war friend who challenged him, and his other war friends, would ever after take occasion to deride him publicly for it at the least provocation. So the challenge could not easily be declined. The game often became one in which each enemy friend would go out to strip the other of practically everything he owned—horses, gun, blankets, lodge—and at which the most eager interest was aroused among the relatives, fellow-clansmen, and friends of the respective players and, for that matter, among the whole camp population. Such enemy-friend contests were commonly protracted sessions, often all-day ones, at the wheel game.

The following three narratives of particular wheel-game gambling contests—the first two of which are matters of well-remembered recent history, the third an older traditional story paralleled elsewhere on the Plains—throw some further light on the social role of the Gros Ventre wheel game.

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

stakes, but not for really large ones. A gambling game between two brothers-in-law, small though the stakes had to be, was a good show for the onlookers—not, however, nearly so good as one between two prominent enemy friends. Two sisters-in-law were also "just right" for gambling against each other. 606 525

Through all these three relationships run two currents: one of mutual goodwill and helpfulness, the other of familiarity, "teasing" and twitting. Between two brothers-in-law and two sisters-in-law there is relatively more of the first and less of the second; between brother-in-law and sister-in-law relatively more of the second and less of the first.

Two brothers-in-law could not discuss sex or vulgarity and could not go to the toilet together. They would be helpful to each other in giving presents, in a building project, in business matters, and so forth. But on the other hand they could go quite far in "humiliating" each other, in indulging in practical jokes and horse play at the other's expense, and in rivaling each other in war and in war-deed matching contests—but not to the limit, not so far as enemy friends could go. Two sisters-in-law could likewise "tease" each other, but could not go to the same length that brothers-in-law could go. [522]

To her brother-in-law (sister's husband or husband's brother) a woman could go nearly any length in "teasing" and freedom in the way of crude horse play and of vulgar and obscene talk, and vice versa.

The gambling rule that prevailed, and still prevails largely, between these three types of siblings-in-law, namely, gambling for small stakes permitted and encouraged, but not for large stakes, appears to be genetically related to the two currents we have been discussing: the goodwill one prohibiting stakes whose loss would really hurt, the familiarity one permitting and provoking small-stake gambling. 619 525

The Gros Ventre, with a population range of between about 800 and 2,000 in the second half of the last century, were divided into about a dozen bands. These bands were not sibs proper, but each was composed largely of kin related by blood or marriage. Members of a given band, whether related or not, would not gamble against one another. There was a well-marked we-feeling among the members of a band, somewhat distinct from and additional to the kinship feeling proper. Actually this was almost equivalent to "tribal" we-feeling, for each band was for the greater part of the year, particularly in the winter months when the bands scattered to separate quarters within the tribal territory, an almost completely autonomous economico-political unit, and any band was free if it wished to secede from the tribe at any time, temporarily or permanently. 621 [161]

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 be repeated so that it was something of an ordeal. The sword owners would see to it that the dancers kept up, prodding the laggards until the series of songs had been completed.

[533 The singers themselves had a smoking song, one of the few
177] songs of the Grass dance for which words were adopted along with the tunes [11] from the Assiniboine. This song indicated a period of rest and relaxation for all but it was required that one of the officers provide the pipe and mixture for the singers.

Any member who left the dancing-place was obliged to surrender some piece of personal property as insurance that he would return. If he did not come back, the property was forfeit.

796 Another distinctive feature of the earlier Grass dance was the
[143] throwing away of property and especially of wives. The term
586 "throwing away" is appropriate because a stick was held in the hand and after the holder publicly announced what the stick represented he would throw it to the ground. If, for instance, a member of the society had decided to give away his wife he would take a stick and say: "Here is so-and-so (naming the woman)" and throw the stick down. Sometimes another member would pick up the stick, thus indicating that he was taking this woman, but occasionally it happened that no one grabbed her and in such case the wife in question would return to live with her own relatives. The man who so renounced his wife was supposed to be through with her for good. It was said by informants, however, that once in a while, provided the wife had not been claimed
522 by another, the husband would want her back again. An in-
796 stance in illustration of this point was told to me. A man who
586 stood to my informant in the relation of enemy-friend [12] had so
572 disposed of his wife at a Grass dance. Some time later my informant saw the couple together again. My informant took ad-

[533] [11] Most of the Gros Ventre Grass dance songs have no words proper. This contrasts with the Arapaho Grass dance songs, as my informants are
[177] well aware. The difference is perhaps due to the influence on the Arapaho of the Ghost Dance religion (cf. Kroeber, A. L., The Arapaho, AMNH-B 18, pt. 4, 1907, p. 320), which scarcely affected the Gros Ventres.

[572] [12] This was a joking and rivalry relationship entered into by presenting to a fellow tribesman an object captured from the enemy.

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

522 ●
vantage of the occasion, as she had the right to do, to make fun 796
of her enemy-friend without his being able to retaliate. She 586
took a handful of horse manure and rubbed it all over his face 572
saying, "Oh! All of us at the Grass dance saw you throw her away, why are you going with her again?" and in this way called attention to the fact that he was not so "brave" as he had pretended to be.

Another informant stated that she and her sister were just able 796
to escape the embarrassing experience of so being given away. 586
They were both living with a man who was a prominent member of the Wolf society. One of his fellow-members, however, came to the two women and told them that their husband planned on throwing them both away at the forthcoming Grass dance. My informant was very angry to get this news and said to her sister: "We will get ready and get rid of him first!" Whereupon they packed their belongings and taking their own horses went quickly to their mother's brother. My informant said that this man who was going to throw them away tried many times to speak to her thereafter but she always turned away and refused to listen, thinking to herself: "Well, there are plenty of other men."

As a final point in the discussion of the [illegible]r form of the 796
Grass dance, the custom of members giving away presents in 431
honor of their loved ones should be mentioned. This was a purely voluntary procedure and could be done by any member who wished to do so at any performance of the Grass dance. The following is a typical example of how this was carried out. The same informant last mentioned, married another member of the Wolf society not long after the incident she described above, and had been selected as one of the four women singers for the Grass dance. At one performance she was holding her infant daughter, her first child by this marriage, as she sang. Her husband, wishing to honor his little daughter, told a war story, went to his wife and took the child in his arms and, going to the center of the dancing-place, gave away a horse to one of the Assiniboine who happened to be visiting at the time of the dance.

Such was the form of the Grass dance as carried out by the 000

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

551 Names were given to children very soon after birth. Names were fre-
553 quently changed and given away. A man would receive his father's name from the latter, or would take it after his death. If a child were sickly, a relative, such as a grandfather, sometimes gave him another name. A sick person sometimes also took a new name in order to recover. Renowned warriors sometimes gave away their names to young men. They might retain the same name for themselves, or take a new one. One very aged man gave away his name to a young man, telling him, "I give you my name in order that you may have as long a life as I." This was done without the occasion or accompaniment of a ceremony.

There seems to have been no prohibition against mentioning the name of the dead, nor even any reluctance on the matter. Some people, however, were ashamed to speak their own names.

551 Twins, called niiçan, were named, if boys, respectively Kaaen and Niiçaⁿ.
845 The latter name, however, was not always used, an ordinary name being given instead. Girl twins were not called by these names.

302 The hair was formerly worn in braids, as at present customary among the Plains tribes, but also erect over the forehead. The women wore their
[765] hair either in braids or sometimes loose. In mourning, the hair, especially of the women, was cut about halfway across the cheek.

304 Ear-piercing, which among the Arapaho is performed on ceremonial occasions, and is itself accompanied with ceremony and giving of presents, was said among the Gros Ventre to be unaccompanied by special ceremonial actions. A woman or any one else does the piercing.

857 Boys who were herding horses sometimes took off their clothes and daubed themselves with mud until they were unrecognizable. They painted
673 their horses, and made shields of willow. Then they came to the camp,
868 mounted or on foot, to steal meat. Approaching the camp like a war-party, they would select the best meat hanging outdoors, charge on it, take it, and run. The old men and women and children chased them with clubs, but of course without success. The boys would go back to where they were herding, and have a feast.

576 The Gros Ventre say that both hand-shaking and kissing are aboriginal with them.

GAMES.

● 524 A common cup-and-ball game called tsöötskuutjaⁿ ("throw in") consisted of four hollow deer or antelope leg bones, each about two inches long, attached to a string passing through them, at the end of which there was a needle eight or ten inches long. This game appears to be identical with

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the Arapaho type shown in the "Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History" (Vol. XVIII, p. 397, Fig. 154). In place of the needle, grease-wood or bone was formerly used. The bones usually had small holes bored through their sides, but these, if caught on the needle, scored only one point. The bones were usually swung with the needle pointing away from the body, in such a manner, that, when they were horizontal, a sudden motion backward of the needle drew them over its point. An expert player usually caught all, or at least several, of the bones at each throw. There were usually small loops of beads at the end of the string. Each of these, when caught on the needle, scored as much as had been agreed upon. The four bones also counted variously. In one set they are marked respectively 2, 3, 4, and 5 in parallel notches; but the owner of the game was in the habit of counting them as 6, 7, 8, and 9, the one with the highest value being farthest from the needle. It seems that other values — such as 10, 20, 30, and 40 — were sometimes given the four bones, if the players wished to play rapidly. It is said by some that, whereas a single bone or loop when caught counted as many points as had been agreed upon, if two or three bones or loops were caught, they counted only two or three points instead of the sum of the scores that each was worth individually. A considerable number of sticks were used for counters, a hundred or more according as there were two or more players. As is customary in Indian games, the counters were not divided between the players to begin with, but were in a neutral pile, from which the players took as many as their score entitled them to, until the heap was divided between them. Only after this did they begin to win from each other. Usually a man swung until he had missed three times, when his opponent was handed the game. When there were four players, they formed two sides. It is said that when the original heap of counters is exhausted, the player who is then throwing must hand over the bones to his opponent, even without having missed. The game's stakes, of course, are won when one player or one side has all the counters. 524 [525]

The dice of the Gros Ventre differ from those of the Arapaho. The latter have both small flat dice and long stick dice. The former may have a small form of the game; but long dice are certainly the prevailing type, as all sets seen were of this kind. The Gros Ventre dice are much flatter than the Arapaho stick dice, though of about equal length, and sometimes are made of bone. Thus they form in themselves something of a transition between the two types of Arapaho dice. The Arapaho long dice are essentially split sticks. One side is convex. The flat side may have the pith removed. The Gros Ventre dice are small boards, or similarly proportioned pieces of bone, rounded or pointed at the ends, and ornamented on one side with carving. The Arapaho use two sets of four sticks; the Gros Ventre, 525 171

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

524 531 A form of the widely spread guessing-game occurred among the Gros Ventre. Two buttons, which were enclosed in the hand, were used. At the beginning each player held one button. One of them guessed in which hand the other held the button. If he guessed wrong, his opponent got four counters; but if he guessed right, his opponent must yield the button to him. When he held two, his opponent guessed in which hand each of them was. If his opponent guessed wrong, the player received two counters; but if his opponent was right, the player must hand over both buttons, and himself guess. The game was played for twelve stick counters. These at the beginning were in a pile belonging to neither of the players. This neutral pile was drawn upon until exhausted, before either player gave counters to the other. This method of using counters was customary in Arapaho and Gros Ventre games.

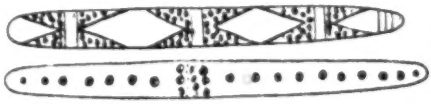


Fig. 18 (50 4325, 50-4325 a). Dice. Lengths, 15 cm., 16 cm.

[171]

The buttons used in this game are different from those the Arapaho have had in recent years. They lack symbolism altogether, and are even without the red-black color-dualism obvious in the Arapaho game. The elaborate counters, food-sticks, pointers, and head-dresses of the Arapaho are also not found among the Gros Ventre. Of one pair of buttons, one was of brass beads, the other of green glass beads. They were called respectively "long" and "short." Another pair, made of bone, are illustrated in Fig. 19. A single button made of bone, apparently from a tooth-brush-handle, is shown in Fig. 20.

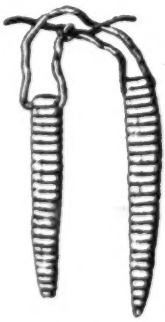


Fig. 19.

Fig. 20.

Fig. 19 (50 1931 a, b). Hiding-buttons. Length, 7 cm.
Fig. 20 (50 1917). Hiding-button. Length, 6 cm.

526 857 Boys shot arrows or threw sticks at a netted hoop, apparently identical with the Arapaho hoop except for nomenclature. The central mesh, called the "crow" or "crow's heart," won the game for whoever hit it. If the "crow's heart" was not pierced, a point was scored by the arrow nearest to it. An arrow passing through the netting without being held in it counted nothing. If one of the hoops rolled within reach, a player was at liberty to

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

 224 411

ends of the main portion of the sling, and then looped on themselves through a slit near one end. 857

The bull-roarer and buzzer were both well known to the Gros Ventre, but seem to be only children's toys. They were both called nakan^{n}ta^{n} ("making cold," a name given also to the thermometer), probably from the widespread Indian idea that the bull-roarer breeds wind. The buzzer was made of a foot-bone of a buffalo, with a sinew string on each side, by which it was twirled, and then drawn so as to hum. The Arapaho type of buzzer is the same. The Gros Ventre bull-roarer seems to differ from the Arapaho form. Fig. 20 shows one of two very similar models, both of wood. The small, well-marked head, the long taper and point, and the numerous small notches, mark a distinct form. The sinew string is of about the length of the stick handle. 534 857 524 [821]

WAR.

Men generally went to war on foot, carrying food and moccasins on their backs. While on the trip they did not boil meat, but roasted it. Scouts, called "wolves," were sent out ahead. When these returned, running in a zigzag course, and shouting, it was a sign that they had seen something. If they had seen lodges, they barked like wolves. While they came, the women in the party stood in a row and sang, having made a pile of buffalo-chips. The "wolves" stopped a short distance away, and the leader of the party went to them. They came with him back to the pile of buffalo-chips, where he stopped, and, facing the party, recounted coups. After this, one of the scouts came before them and reported what he had seen. Upon this, all rushed at the pile of buffalo-chips, and kicked them about. If the enemy were near, they would now take off their heavier clothing, such as their robes, and dress and paint for war. 726 [252]

On returning to their camp victorious, the party approached stealthily, and made a charge upon it, often shooting; and sometimes the people in the tents jumped up out of their sleep in the early morning, thinking they had been attacked. The man who had killed an enemy, the one who had struck him first (whether dead or alive), and the one who had taken his gun, were held in about the same esteem. After the return to camp, a dance was made. Drums were beaten; and the women, who were standing in a curved row, danced in a circle toward the men, who stood in a row, and back again. The women carried the new scalps on sticks. If an enemy were killed near the home camp, his feet and hands might be cut off and carried on sticks, like the scalps. During this dance the man who first 727 [554] [554]

CHAPTER VIII

CHILDHOOD

858 In the days before the buffalo disappeared and before formal schooling was available, childhood, it was said, for girls was shorter and for boys was longer than at present. A girl was ordinarily [582] given in marriage before she was twelve years old—certainly before she attained physiological maturity. A boy on the other hand, though seemingly anxious to participate in hunting and in war as soon as he was able, was not forced to bear the full responsibilities of adulthood until the end of adolescence. While there was considerable variation from family to family in the amount of time required of children in training for practical tasks, all enjoyed a considerable amount of " free time."

Play

857 Singer and Coming Daylight, the two oldest of our informants, in recalling the amusements and pastimes of their youth, decided 526 that sliding down hills was one of the most pleasurable as it could be done at any time of the year. In winter, when there was snow, [493] the boys used a kind of sled made by lashing buffalo rib-bones together. Girls managed just as well by simply sitting on their robes and holding between their legs the end which usually hung free. In summer a stiff buffalo hide was used for sliding down the grassy slopes.[1] When the water was frozen, boys and girls alike [524] skated with their feet on the ice, thus clearing a slick surface on which to spin their tops made of horn.

857 Swimming, however, was the great sport in summer. Girls left their dresses close to the bank, those of the older girls in a neat 526 row closest to the edge and those of the smaller girls in the next 481 row. Beginners used the dog-paddle, but the boys developed profi-

[1] For this and some other types of amusement, see Kroeber, 1908, pp. 190–91.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

ciency with the overhand stroke and girls with the breast stroke.[8] 857
Sometimes the children amused themselves by rolling down the 526
bank so that their bodies made a loud smack as they hit the water. 481
At other times they held contests to see who could dive and stay under the longest time, or who could make the biggest bubble by exhaling under water. Follow-the-leader was played even in big rivers like the Missouri, but only the more courageous participated in this game. The one who had the reputation as bravest was the leader, and Coming Daylight claimed that she, herself, often led off, one of her accomplishments being the ability to swim quite far under water.

There was no adult supervision of children at play and they 857
spent much time at the water's edge, even when not intending to 524
swim. Modelling in clay was done by boys as well as by girls. The latter liked especially to form wet clay into "parflesches" and incise marks to represent beaded and painted designs.

Walking on stilts, teetering on logs, swinging by standing in a [481]
loop of rawhide, all were considered enjoyable activities for little girls. Nevertheless some of their games were quite rough and-tumble. In one such game, girls formed a circle, each pinching the flesh on the back of her neighbor's left hand; while standing thus they sang a song which was repeated as many times as necessary until someone let go of her neighbor's hand; whereupon this girl was jumped on and mauled by all the others. In another game, one girl, with her eyes closed, would try to find the others who were seated in a row on the ground. Different ones would call out: "This way! This way!" Each was anxious to be the first discovered. As soon as the girl who was "it" touched one of the others, she picked her up and, carrying her upside-down on her back to the spot from which she had originally started, she dumped her burden on the ground. This procedure was repeated until "it" had carried each girl, but the last one to be dumped was tickled unmercifully by all the others.

Girls played with two kinds of balls. One type was of buck- 857
skin stuffed with deer-hair. This they would toss to one another. 526
The other type of ball was large and made from the bladder of a [232]
buffalo cow, dried and stuffed.

[8] The marked ability of the Gros Ventres in swimming was noted in 1833 [149]
by Maximilian, p. 72.

857 buffalo cow, dried and stuffed. This type they would bounce and
526 kick. A popular game played among girls in spring was as follows. The girls holding hands formed a big ring. One girl in the center would have a ball. She would throw it at anyone in the ring. When she hit her chosen victim on the chest with the ball, the girls let go of each other's hands and each ran for a piece of buffalo chip where she would be "safe."[8]

A game played by boys and girls together in the evening was as follows. The children would line up according to size behind the tallest boy who would have in his hand a stick which was smouldering at the end. Each child held on tightly to the one in front of him. The boy holding the stick would try to touch the smallest child at the end of the line. The line would writhe as big sparks would fly and sometimes hair got singed. One old woman, recalling this game, remarked: "I don't know when we would get to bed, we had such a good time!"

Sometimes the children would send one of the group on an er-
857 rand. Those who stayed behind would wet their hands with their
524 tongues and say: "We will watch this to see if it takes you a long time or not." If their hands were still wet when the member of the group returned, they decided that he had done the errand very quickly.

When there were pretty clouds in the sky a little girl might point one out to the other children and tell them to watch it. Then she would stand at the bank of the river, bending over at the waist and violently flinging her arms from side to side while sing-
[82] ing. The others would watch the cloud and tell her that it was dis-
787 appearing and soon it would be gone. "They used to think they could make the cloud disappear by singing that song."

If a group of girls were playing together and some one boy, say
[576] from seven to nine years old, would butt in, the girls would all sit down to show that they resented the intrusion. If the boy did not leave, the girls would then form a circle around him and sing a derisive song. Thus the boy would be shamed and run off. The opportunity for this did not occur very often, since boys from about the age of seven usually went off to be by themselves

[8] For description of ball games and illustration of type of football, see Kroeber, 1908, fig. 23.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

at play. It was said that a girl, of course, would never think of attempting to break into a group of boys. 857 524

Sometimes a group of boys tried to break up the girls' play. One way they pestered them was to wait until they were about to slide down a hill. Just as a girl would be ready to start, one of the boys would grab one of her legs and spin her around so that she would go down the hill backwards.

A favorite sport among boys involved skill in shooting arrows.[4] One game was to plant a marked arrow as a target. Then two boys would shoot two arrows each, and the one whose arrow came closest to the marker would take the arrows of his opponent. Sometimes they would see who could shoot the greatest distance. An interesting variation was to fasten a bow to upright sticks, one stick shorter than the other, so that the bow slanted with the string up. The player would stand on one side of the bow and tap the arrow against the bowstring to get the string vibrating, and when he judged the vibration sufficient to send the arrow toward the marker about 35-40 feet distant, he would release the arrow. Then another player would try his luck. The one who came closer to the marker would take the arrow of the one who lost. 857 526

Boys played a variant of the hoop and pole game. The hoop was larger than that used in the game as played by adults and a split stick was used as lance. The thrower aimed at the center of the wheel and, if he hit it, the shot was called "the crow." Another wheel game played by boys was rolling hoops made of green willow wrapped with willow bark. There were no cross-pieces in this wheel which was about 16 inches in diameter. Two teams lined up and the hoop was rolled as swiftly as possible by a member of one team while the members of the opposing team by shooting arrows tried to hit the rim of the hoop. If one succeeded and thus stopped the wheel, he retrieved his arrow, placed the hoop against a rock and had a chance to hit the rim while the hoop was at rest.

Occasionally there was trouble between boys who were contesting. Thick told of one occasion when he and his partner were betting against two other boys. Thick himself happened to make the winning point by splitting the upright arrow at which they 857 526 578

[4] Some boys' games are described by Kroeber, 1908, pp. 186–87.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

them, he was afraid to go to his own home, so he ran to a neighbor's. Jim's father found him there half-crying. He took Dwarf by the wrist and said: 'Come my friend.' He led him to his home and Dwarf thought he was going to be killed. On the contrary, however, Jim's father led him into his lodge and said: 'My friend, I am glad you made my boy cry. I have never laid a hand on him nor did I ever make him cry, and I'm glad you have done this.' He then gave Dwarf a big pile of meat and told him to eat as much as he liked and to take the rest home. As Dwarf was leaving Jim's father took a valuable Hudson's Bay blanket and cut it in two and gave him half saying: 'Here is this, use it for your blanket.' Then he took another half-blanket and said: 'Have your mother make leggins for you. Friend, I am glad you made my boy cry. I thank you for it. Now you can go home.' It just so happened, fortunately for Dwarf, that Jim Shortman was a beloved-child." [6] 857 578

Occasionally girls, or sometimes boys and girls together, formed a group in the evening to sing in front of the lodge of a rich family who they knew had such a specially loved child. The group danced and sang and then the woman of the lodge would invite them in. She would feed them and say that she was doing so in the name of that beloved-child. 857 533 [593]

Coming Daylight described how she joined groups who were going around the camp circle singing in front of the lodges of those who had returned successfully from a war party. This was before she was married and so she had to get permission from her grandmother. Mounted on a horse with a girl friend her own age, whose brother was supposed to keep an eye on them, they rode with the others. Singer admitted she had not participated in such singing parties when she was a child because she never had a horse to ride upon.

Much of the leisure time of children was seemingly spent in play which reflected the daily routine of adult life as well as many aspects of the life cycle. A group went quite far outside the camp circle, for instance, to play they were "married folk." If little boys went along with the girls, some would be "husbands," some "sons" and "sons-in-law." The "women" would tell their 857 524

[6] For details on the concept of the beloved-child, see Flannery, 1941.

857 524 "husbands": "Go out and hunt buffalo." The boys would go off and stay a little while and on their way back made noises like neighing horses. This would be a sign for the girls to come to meet them and make comments such as: "Oh, what a lot of meat you are bringing!" Then they would pretend to slice, cook, and eat this imaginary meat. Once in a while the children actually [224] snared a gopher, the skin of which served very well in their play as a food sack.

In order to lend excitement to this kind of play, they might divide into two groups and one "tribe" would attack the other. When their "husbands" or loved ones were "killed," the girls mourned, crying just as they had observed grown-ups do, even going so far as to make marks on their legs with mud to represent cuts. A "corpse" would be prepared for "burial," as they had seen the dead wrapped, with the exception that in play they failed to wrap the head.

Sometimes girls would take the foreleg of a buffalo, for example, and wrap it up to serve as a "baby." After having gotten from the river a certain kind of reed to serve as their hair, when the baby "died" they cut off their "hair" as a sign of mourning.

Many women described the lodges they, as children, built which [492] were large enough to play in. Garter Snake used a big yellow dog that belonged to her grandmother as a horse, and when her lodge moved she packed everything on a travois which the dog drew. When it was not convenient to have the lodges built large enough to actually accommodate the children inside, the formation of the camp circle was copied by making large leaves into the shape of tipis. Sticks then represented horses and other sticks attached thereto were travois. These little wooden horses might be fitted out like real ones, with miniature beaded horse blankets, and so on. Occasionally, too, a little boy might pretend he was a horse and drag the travois while being led by a girl as he held a line in his mouth. When this type of horse was out grazing, the owner would have a difficult time catching it.

Sometimes the girls pretended that they cut off their little fingers as a sacrifice, even holding sage to the "wound" as in real life. Coming Daylight and Garter Snake, both of whom as children were associated with one of the Sacred Pipes, mentioned that

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

many girls liked to pretend that they had one of these Pipes at their play-lodge. They used a certain kind of flower to represent the Pipe and would put it outside the play-lodge in the same position as the real Pipe was placed. They smudged and sang Pipe songs just as their elders did. Once in a while they would pretend they were going to transfer the Pipe. Mud was smeared on their foreheads just as the Keeper used paint. The others would seize the new "Keeper," paint him, go through an imitation of the ceremonies, sing songs, and so on. At the end of the game, however, the rest of the children finally took the "Keeper" and dumped him in the water head foremost,—an indignity that would have been out of the question in regard to a real Keeper. 857 524

Thus it was evident how much children learned by observation. It was specifically stated in regard to the learning of songs that no one ever sat down with a child to teach him a special song or dance, that he would pick up songs and dances by hearing and seeing them performed at the various ceremonies. Similarly, according to both Coming Daylight and to Singer, there was no special teaching in regard to a knowledge of the Supreme Being. Children would know about Him because they would from infancy have heard older people mention Him. In the old days people never did anything without first saying a prayer. The prayers always started out by mentioning the name of the "One above the White Man," and then names of other beings followed.[4] 857 868 [869] [782]

Training

Formal training, in skills necessary for women's work, was begun for little girls at an early age. This was usually in the hands of a female relative,—a grandmother or perhaps a widowed aunt, —to whom the child would be sent at about the age of seven years. The reason for removing a girl from her immediate family circle was said to have been to protect her virginity. Her parents wanted to send her "where no men were living, as they didn't want a girl around home with her father, brother, male cousins." Should there not be a suitable relative, however, the girls' parents would keep her at home and she would receive training in domestic duties from her own mother. In any case, the girl was sup- 868

[4] Religion is treated in full in Cooper Ms. 1949.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

668
745

record of the original Jack Wilson (Wovoka) visiting the Gros Ventres. Could the Jack Wilson above mentioned be some other Indian who was an impostor or one who in good faith took Wovoka's white-man's name?

In addition, the causes listed by The Boy and Thick for the failure of the Ghost Dance to take real root among the Gros Ventre, the chicanery, racketeering and sexual episodes, attributed by many of the Gros Ventres to the leaders of the movement, must have contributed appreciably to the same result.

At any rate, the movement lasted only two years, 1891-1893, and appears to have left no permanent impression on Gros Ventre life. At or shortly after these dates, however the modern non-gambling hand game was introduced from Ghost Dance sources.

[M7
524]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

782 who knows me and whom I know is my husband. But many of
837 you have tried to [seduce me] but did not succeed. Ninä:nä'ak is listening to me and he knows I am telling the truth. Sunshine gives the most light, and what I have to say has nothing hidden in it. It is as true as the light of day which sunshine gives. My husband is off on a war party and he will distinguish himself during it, and this will be another mark that I am telling the truth.'

"Then the old men and old women drowned out one another singing her praises. All thought her a wonderful woman, being alone at night and so beautiful and yet withstanding all advances. Her name was Speaks Holy, and her husband's, Sun Old Man.

"After the bones had been uncovered a dance was held, including a contest between a man and a woman. A woman and a man
[524] got up and danced toward each other, each making faces at the other, pulling noses, and so forth. The one who laughed first lost and was pushed back into his or her seat. The winner remained on the floor and challenged. Another, of the opposite sex, then got up from the side of the loser and contested with the previous winner. And so the contest went on until one, a man or woman, won in four successive bouts. When this happened he or she was the winner. All the people then threw them [each successive loser?] down and covered them up with their robes. Then there was food and feasting and the affair ended.

"There was no prayer or smudging or other rite, except the oath the woman took on the spot to the Supreme Being, Ninänä'äte. The young woman in the case had taken upon herself a serious thing. She took an oath. . . . She was glad of the opportunity to declare her fidelity. . . .

"At the end the double lodge was torn down. Early in the morning, after the third night, the war party returned. . . . Sun Old Man had counted coup, he had struck an enemy and had returned with something. So his wife must have told the truth, for nothing had been prearranged. All this added to the fury of other husbands against their wives. The women denied and said: 'We did not want to do this publicly. What that woman did in uncovering the bones was just a bid for notoriety. We can be faithful without doing that. We are humble.'

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

two enemy friends to strip the loser bare of everything he owned, down to his 572
very lodge, was, like a wheel game of the same order of magnitude, a crowning 525
event in Gros Ventre gambling, one arousing most intense popular interest. One of our informants was, in view of this fact, of the opinion that gambling among the Gros Ventre may have been first invented by enemy friends.

The keepers of the two most sacred pipes, the Flat Pipe and the Feathered 792
Pipe, were not allowed to gamble with any one, nor were their wives, nor (prob- 525
ably: our chief informant was not sure) ex-keepers. Rare exceptions may have occurred in practice. Should an enemy friend of a keeper taunt him into betting and should the challenger lose, he would lose not only his wager but also in a sense his life. For his life would in consequence be shortened, unless the keeper took pity on him and through submitting him to the appropriate ritual procedure averted the penalty. It was believed too that the keeper could not lose if, against the rules, he really did gamble. Gamblers, at least notorious ones, were not selected as pipe keepers.

Keepers and their wives were subject to a great many other restrictions. They had to maintain a high degree of dignity, to practise many kinds of abstention and "asceticism," and to be benefactors to and intercessors for all [784] the people. It seems probably that the taboo on their gambling was related to one or more of these aspects of the keepership.

Ritual "grandfathers" among the Gros Ventre were of two kinds. A retiring sacred-pipe keeper became automatically "grandfather" to the incoming keeper and instructed him in the ritual, prerogatives and duties of the keepership; a candidate for a sacred lodge chose an older man who had been through the rite as a ritual "grandfather" who would instruct him in the ceremonies and observances of the lodge in question. A person would never gamble against his ritual grandfather. The relationship established between grandfather and grandchild in both cases was predominantly a respectful and sacred one. Against his ritual grandfather a man would not even play in the modern non-gambling 4-button [524] hand game.

The foregoing rather intricate "bettor-wager" gambling pattern appears to 525
be the result of the orderly interplay of five chief determinants or conditioning 571
factors.

The most important and most basic determinant was that of in-group altruism, cohesion, and loyalty, decreasing in intensity from closer and smaller circle to more distant and larger circle, from biological family, to kinship group, to band, to lodge and society, to tribe as such, to more or less friendly alien tribe, and stopping short of hostile alien tribe. In general, the less intense the

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the Arapaho type shown in the "Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History" (Vol. XVIII, p. 397, Fig. 154). In place of the needle, grease-wood or bone was formerly used. The bones usually had small holes bored through their sides, but these, if caught on the needle, scored only one point. The bones were usually swung with the needle pointing away from the body, in such a manner, that, when they were horizontal, a sudden motion backward of the needle drew them over its point. An expert player usually caught all, or at least several, of the bones at each throw. There were usually small loops of beads at the end of the string. Each of these, when caught on the needle, scored as much as had been agreed upon. The four bones also counted variously. In one set they are marked respectively 2, 3, 4, and 5 in parallel notches; but the owner of the game was in the habit of counting them as 6, 7, 8, and 9, the one with the highest value being farthest from the needle. It seems that other values — such as 10, 20, 30, and 40 — were sometimes given the four bones, if the players wished to play rapidly. It is said by some that, whereas a single bone or loop when caught counted as many points as had been agreed upon, if two or three bones or loops were caught, they counted only two or three points instead of the sum of the scores that each was worth individually. A considerable number of sticks were used for counters, a hundred or more according as there were two or more players. As is customary in Indian games, the counters were not divided between the players to begin with, but were in a neutral pile, from which the players took as many as their score entitled them to, until the heap was divided between them. Only after this did they begin to win from each other. Usually a man swung until he had missed three times, when his opponent was handed the game. When there were four players, they formed two sides. It is said that when the original heap of counters is exhausted, the player who is then throwing must hand over the bones to his opponent, even without having missed. The game's stakes, of course, are won when one player or one side has all the counters.

The dice of the Gros Ventre differ from those of the Arapaho. The latter have both small flat dice and long stick dice. The former may have a small form of the game; but long dice are certainly the prevailing type, as all sets seen were of this kind. The Gros Ventre dice are much flatter than the Arapaho stick dice, though of about equal length, and sometimes are made of bone. Thus they form in themselves something of a transition between the two types of Arapaho dice. The Arapaho long dice are essentially split sticks. One side is convex. The flat side may have the pith removed. The Gros Ventre dice are small boards, or similarly proportioned pieces of bone, rounded or pointed at the ends, and ornamented on one side with carving. The Arapaho use two sets of four sticks; the Gros Ventre,

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

525 171 four in all, in two pairs. The Gros Ventre dice are marked with incised lines on one side only. The Arapaho burn marks on the back or convex side in order to distinguish the two sets of dice they use together. The usual Gros Ventre markings consist of diagonal crosses and zigzag lines. 525 A single die is usually specially marked in the middle. By this means the scoring or the playing is elaborated. The number of counters among the 531 Gros Ventre is twelve. Sticks are used for this purpose. The methods

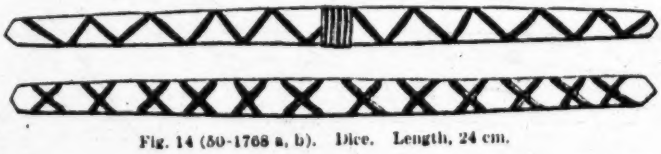


Fig. 14 (50-1768 a, b). Dice. Length, 24 cm.

of counting points are given somewhat differently by various individuals. For this reason the explanations obtained with each set of dice are here presented.

The set of dice one of each of whose pairs is shown in Fig. 14 has one die marked with a bit of string. There are twelve counters. The three unmarked sticks were thrown first. If they fell alike, the other one was thrown separately; but, if one of the first three fell differently from the other two, the marked stick was thrown at it in the hope of turning it over, so that all four sticks might rest alike. If this were the case, whether they were all face up or face down, four points were scored. If two were face up and two face down, two points were scored. If three faced one way and a single one was opposite, nothing was scored.

Fig. 15 (50-1812 b, d). Dice. Lengths, 20 cm., 20½ cm.

The set of dice of which the two kinds are shown in Fig. 15 is also accompanied by twelve counters. One of the sticks in this set is also marked by being tied around. This set was used somewhat differently, the four sticks being thrown together. If the marked stick fell one way, and the remainder opposite, six points were scored. If all four sticks fell alike, four were scored. If two sticks fell face up and two face down, two were scored; but three sticks one way and one the other, unless this single one happened to be the marked one, counted nothing.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The four dice shown in Fig. 16 are white on the face and green on the back. One of the plainer pair of sticks is marked on the face with a cross. If this stick fell up while the other three turned face down, six points were counted. If all the dice fell one way, the score was four points; if they fell in pairs, — two green and two banded, or two plain and two green, — two points were scored; while any other combination did not count. A player

525
531

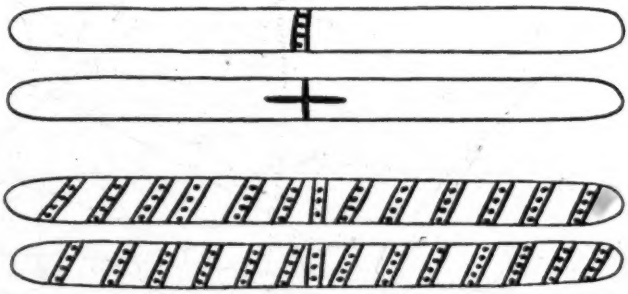


Fig. 16 (50-1869 a, b, c, d). Set of Dice. Length, 23 cm.

that scored was entitled to another throw, but should he fail, his opponent took the dice.

Fig. 17 shows a model of a fourth set of dice, made of bone instead of wood, painted red, and accompanied by twelve counters of grease-wood, pointed at one end to be stuck in the ground. The two pairs of dice are marked respectively with transverse and zigzag incised lines. One of the latter is cut with three parallel lines on the back also. The owner of this

Fig. 17 (50-1900 a, d). Dice. Length, 21 cm.

set scored as follows. Six points were won, if all the dice fell plain side up; and six, if the odd one fell plain side up and the three others marked side up. For all four marked sides up, four points were made; for one pair marked, the other plain, two points; for other combinations there was no score.

A fifth set, Fig. 18, obtained by Dr. Clark Wissler, is of bone. The ornamentation is by small pits. One of the dice with the long single row of dots is marked on the middle of the back with several small holes to set it off from the rest.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

lodge cover, the hostess provided food and there was no other direct remuneration. If one sought knowledge as to how to use an ordinary medicinal root, something was given in exchange, but in a relatively small amount. On the other hand in compensation for the services of a medicine man, not only was food prepared, but in addition a much greater amount of property was given to the doctor, who in turn would see that those who had accompanied him to help in singing at the cure, would receive some goods as well. The amount offered to the doctor by the one paying for the services was governed by the reputation of the medicine man as well as by the individual's regard for his own reputation for generosity. People would say: "Look how much so-and-so thinks of his relative who was sick—he gave so much to the one who cured him." If the patient were very ill a whole family might really impoverish itself in paying doctors, were it necessary to call in one specialist after another, as sometimes happened. 183 431 476 [956]

Although apparently there was a tendency to call on relatives to perform services—such as naming a child, telling a war story at the erection of a new lodge, and so on—remuneration was forthcoming, although perhaps on not so large a scale as if a non-relative were called on to perform the same offices. [602]

In addition to exchange of goods effected through generous hospitality and the prestige-requirements of ostentatious liberality, including payment for services, the distribution of goods within the tribe was aided by gambling. Wagers were matched by two competing individuals and bet on an all-or-nothing basis. Considerable amounts of property changed hands at a single match.[19] [525]

[19] For a discussion of gambling among the Gros Ventres, see Flannery and Cooper, 1946.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The old man, however, might and commonly would appeal to another old man, who knew the Dance rites well even though he might never have vowed the dance, to double for him in seeing that the rite was properly carried out. 608 796 *

A keeper of one of the sacred Pipes, or at least of the Flat or Feathered Pipe, could not, during his term of office, function as "grandfather" at a sacred Lodge, but an ex-keeper could.

The relationship between ceremonial grandfather or grandmother and grandchild was a sacred one. Between such grandparent and grandchild a certain respect behavior had to be observed, and either was obligated not to refuse a request of the other. 608

Gambling, for instance, between them, or apparently even playing on opposite sides in a non-gambling hand game, was improper. [525] ● Between blood grandparents and grandchildren a distinct joking relationship obtained,* not however between ritual grandparents and grandchildren, although our field evidence is not entirely consistent. According to one good informant, between these latter, telling vulgar jokes and stories, teasing about lovers, and so forth, were taboo; according to another, a little freedom in such matters was allowed, but not as much as was allowed and practiced between blood grandparents and grandchildren. [603]

As regards, however, the much more significant mutual obligation of ceremonial grandparents not to refuse requests of grandchildren, our field data are entirely consistent and clear. This mutual obligation was rigidly lived up to and played a very important role in Gros Ventre social life. This role may best be illustrated by the following actual case.

Once Iron Woman, Crow Bull's wife, ran away with Kitfox. When people noticed she was gone, they said: "Oh, she must have run away again with somebody." Before she ran away this time, Crow Bull had said: "If she runs away again, there will be trouble." So people went to Black Raven, Kitfox's father, to tell him that his son was suspected and that there would probably be trouble. When Iron Woman and Kitfox came back, Crow Bull seized his loaded gun and dashed out as if he were going to kill

* See Flannery, 1953, pp. 121-22.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

buffalo tongues, for the celebration. The vower and his assistants would through their crier announce to the people whether the camp would move for good hunting. On the march, the vower and his company took their place in line immediately after the sacred Pipes. No one was allowed to hunt or run the buffalo until the signal was given. 796* 782 224

During the hunt there would be foot and horse races, shooting contests and gambling matches between the "talls" and "shorts." The losers in the gambling would have to "cook," that is, to provide a meal for the winners, a feast at which the rest of the people, including the children, would horn in. Each one of the losers had to furnish some food or clothing and a smoke (not the pipe itself) to the winners. If one of the losers failed to bring a filled pipe along with the food or clothing wager, the wager was rejected, but he was given a chance to go get one. The winners kept track of the losers, and if any of the latter failed to pay up, they would not do anything to him at once while they were sitting around eating. But afterwards, the winners, followed by the rest of the people, would go to the lodge of the delinquent loser, who usually did not and dared not run away. Here the enemy-friend of the loser would take the latter out of his lodge, and lay him on a spread robe or blanket. The winners would then carry him to the stream or river, give him a good swing and throw him into the water. All the people would follow to see the fun, and the young boys would pelt him with buffalo chips. The victim had to take it all good naturedly and not lose his temper, and the crowd had a good laugh. If the loser were not in his lodge when the winners arrived, they would fetch water, and his enemy-friend would give the loser's bed a good drenching. 792 796* 525● 527 522

The hunt continued, the group moving here and there, until enough tongues and other meat was collected, the tongues having been turned over to the vower to be jerked by his wife or wives. Then came the earlier-mentioned four whole nights of singing, done either on successive nights, or from time to time as the tribe moved toward the spot selected for the Sacrifice Dance. After arrival there the fourth of the four all-night singings took place, marking the first night or beginning of the Dance proper, which 782 796* [224 251]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

778 would make his horse go so fast that no other horse could catch
781 up with it. Little Man himself did not go out war-raiding, but once when he and some of his people while on a journey were waylaid by Piegans, he used the hawk medicine as his brother had done, and in the fight no Gros Ventre casualties occurred but three Piegan were killed. In later days, Little Man put a feather from this hawk on the horse Smokey, an entrant in the two-mile [525] and mile races at the Fair, and the horse came in first in both races within less than an hour, while Little Man won $75.00.

Al Chandler added that "every man's war medicine was different" but gave no further details.

Garter Snake told the following story of Bull Lodge's power in the war-wealth field. "Otter Robe, his son, once came in, there being a lot of young men in there, and said to his father: 'Father, we are going out on a war party and we want to steal horses from the enemy. Could you help us so the enemy will not be able to see us and we will have luck to get these horses?' Bull Lodge replied: 'All right. I will try to see if I can. If I can I will tell you.' So he told his wife: 'Get that wooden bowl and that colt hide [objects he used in his practice]'. He smudged them four times, then set the bowl down and covered it with the colt hide, and they put out the fire. I was sitting there beside my mother. . . . When my father got through, we heard nicks and neighs of horses in that bowl. We did not see anything [any horses] but only heard them, and Bull Lodge said to his son: 'You are going to be lucky. You will get the horses.' Then he removed the colt hide and there [in the bowl] was horse manure. This he took and gave to Otter Robe and said: 'Take and dry this. And when you go out [on the raid] and get to the enemy's camp, make a smudge of a certain thing, take the manure, pulverize it, and sprinkle the powder all around the smudge. If you do this and go into that camp, the enemy are not going to see you. You can steal all the horses you want. And after you leave with the horses, there will be a big fog in that camp, so that the enemy cannot see you or follow you.' And that is what happened. The raiders got horses and brought them home, and the fog protected them."

778 Gambling power was gotten only for use in the old two-button
525 hand games. So far as our evidence goes, the possessor could use

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

his power only when he was an active participant in the game. 778
Keg, who had gotten gambling power from a prairie chicken, 525
would, when using this power in a hand game, imitate the hissing, swishing noise made by the prairie chickens when they ruffle their tail feathers. He had been given by the prairie chicken its windpipe to use in the hand game, and for this he made use of a small metal spring resembling the windpipe. Red Whip, famous for his great gambling power, used a weasel skin in exercising this power. A player with power who was losing in a game might half seriously voice an appeal: "What is the matter with you, prairie chicken (or ghost)? You are failing me."

Only certain songs could be sung in a two-button hand game; [533
others, such as doctors' songs or medicine lodge songs, could not 784]
then be sung. If one of the players had a gambling power song, gotten in a dream from a prairie chicken or ghost, he would start singing it and others would join in. Gambling songs were sung in fast time to the accompaniment usually of small hand drums, the players marked time by striking with sticks the logs that lay stretched in front of each team. After a game was well under way, in the excitement, grunts would often take the place of songs.

We recorded two gambling songs for the old hand game, numbers 107 and 108, as sung by The Boy.

Love power, more common than gambling power, was acquired, 778
by quest or transfer, to attain various ends: by a man to secure sex favors from women who were reluctant to grant them, or 832
who had not only rejected his advances but had privately or publicly met them with insult;[18] by a jilted lover to win back the jilting man or woman; by a man or woman to win over a desired but unwilling prospective marital mate; by a wife to win back the affections and fidelity of a husband who was running around with other women.

We could obtain very little information on the rites carried out when love power was used. Our chief informant on love power, The Boy, had been offered it on various occasions but had never accepted it, so had not been told the ritual procedures to use, procedures about which the possessors of love power were ap-

[18] See Flannery, 1953, pp. 174, 193.

828 pretty clearly to be operative on its own although along with the
[754 "natural" morale-building effect of cheering words.
626] "There is an old Gros Ventre saying that if a man is ailing and some relative or friend of his comes in and says pleasant things to him or tells him he is going to get well, such a talk helps him. When someone gives the sick person a good talk and sincerely wishes he will get well, then the patient will do his best and get well. If you say unpleasant things to a sick man you will help to kill him. Don't hurt a sick man's feelings. The wish in the case is looked upon as something like a prayer. It has to be really meant. When a person talks that way to you when you are sick, [782] the Supreme Being will look down upon you and help you to get well. If a person is visiting a sick Indian, he will say good things to you, even though he knows you are going to die. A white doctor might say: 'There is not much hope.'

"When 32 years ago I was thought to be dying of appendicitis and had been given up by the doctors, old fellows came in and talked hopefully to me and put new life in me.

"In 1918, when I was ill with the flu, I overheard the doctor say: 'It is only a question of a half-hour. You better get a coffin for him.' Then another fellow, an Indian, came in and said to me: 'Well, what did the doctor tell you?' I said: 'Nothing.' He then said: 'He told that fellow over there that you are going to die. But he is not the governor of death. You are not going to die. You are going to live. You want to live for these children of yours. You are going to get well, and for the sake of these children. And think of the One Above [Supreme Being]. He's going to keep you. That's all I want to say to you. I wish you will be up in a few days.' And he walked out. It took me two years to recover fully."

In one of the songs, No. 67, sung in the Law Enforcers' Dance, the words, "The lead bull, comes in this direction," were explained [782] to us by The Boy as being a "half prayer." The singer was "wishing as hard as he could, so there would be plenty of game, especially buffalo, so the people would not have to go far to hunt."

525 The Gros Ventre, The Boy stated in 1939, "did not pray for
828 success in gambling," but just before a wheel game started, the player would take the wheel in his hand and hold one of the

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

arrows to some part of the wheel and say something silently, "regarding for example, a horse he had captured in a raid: He had to make sure that what he so said was not a lie, all this 'was not a prayer,' but it brought good fortune in the game." 828 525

In a big gambling contest, The Boy told us in 1940, between two opponents in the wheel game, one of them might take up the wheel and his arrow and "think of a war-deed" he had done. "He would use that as a sort of prayer for better luck in the game and would then win. . . . He here used the supernatural. He used words in his mind. He did not talk out loud. . . . He was sort of taking an oath indirectly. In an indirect way he would think: 'I am not telling a lie [about this war-deed]. The powers know I am not telling a lie.' He actually did the deed, otherwise he could not hope to have better luck in the game. It was a sort of indirect prayer. If he were really praying, he would do differently. He was not actually asking any being for anything. He was not appealing to or asking any one particular being, any single being or animal, but was just thinking of everything supernatural."

The Boy further explained in 1945: "The gamblers 'prayed' over the wheel silently. But they were not exactly praying. They were appealing against fate. They were wishing for good fortune and good luck in the game, and they were debating [sic] that thought by thinking of a particular time, when for instance, they brought back a good-looking horse from a war raid. . . . They made that wish silently. . . . They did not swear or take an oath or hold up a pipe. . . . The onlookers would wonder which one of his great deeds the gambler was going to hit his opponent with . . . [later in the game] he could tell what [the war-deed] he had been concentrating on. . . . He had to tell the truth. . . . So practically he had nearly taken an oath."

When a new name was solemnly conferred on a person, the namer while brushing the person with sage would pray for the person after saying to him: "I am going to pray for you. And you yourself at the same time pray and wish for good things." 828 553

So much for the raw field data. What do they mean? Quite clearly, wishing and thinking under such conditions as indicated, while at times associated with and blending into prayer, into mere 828

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

SOCIAL MECHANISMS IN GROS VENTRE GAMBLING

REGINA FLANNERY AND JOHN M. COOPER

INTRODUCTION

THE PRESENT PAPER is offered as a modest start toward opening up what looks like a promising field, namely, the social implications of gambling. 121 114

Our anthropological sources yield a fairly generous amount of information on the world distribution of gambling,[1] the games and sports gambled on, the valuables wagered, the payment of gambling debts, and the ritual accompaniments of gambling. On the other hand, the same sources yield extremely meager information, and for most gambling peoples none at all, on such social aspects of gambling as: its mode of meshing into the prevalent social organization (who gambles, with whom, and for what); its effectiveness in fulfilling or thwarting the wishes of the individual gambler and in meeting or blocking the needs of integral and fractional social groups; individual differences in participation and the motivations responsible for them; native attitudes toward gambling; the economic and other factors that are favorable or unfavorable to the rise and persistence of gambling in culture as such or in given cultures. Field and library studies of these and most other social aspects of gambling have been almost entirely neglected by anthropologists.[2] And, so far as the present writers have been able to discover from rapid search among the sociological sources and from random inquiries among their sociological friends, such studies have also been almost entirely neglected by the sociologists, even by those specializing in the area of delinquency. 525

The following pages are an attempt to present the gambling complex, with emphasis on certain of its social aspects, as it existed during the second half of the last century among the Gros Ventre of Montana. Most of the complex is now a thing of the past. New gambling games, particularly playing cards, have superseded the old, and gambling itself, on the reservation and among the Gros Ventre in general, is not the tense and meaningful activity it used to be. 121 525 [178]

The data on which this paper is based were gathered, incidentally to a gen- 121

1 World distribution is spotty and far from universal. A summarized world distribution, based on several hundred sources, is given in J. M. Cooper, *Temporal Sequence and the Marginal Cultures* (Anthropological Series, Catholic University of America, no. 10, 1941), pp. 67-68.

2 Father Gerald Desmond's *Gambling among the Yakima*, from his field study of 1944, a manuscript now being prepared for publication, is devoted largely to the social aspects.

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

121 eral study of the social organization and religion of the Gros Ventre, at the Fort Belknap Reservation, Montana, in about equal proportions by Flannery in the summers of 1940 and 1945 and by Cooper in the summers of 1939 and 1940, from Gros Ventre informants, mostly of the older generation. In most cases we 115 used interpreters; in some, we communicated in English. Our chief informants on gambling were: The Boy (b.1872, our most important source, who had gotten a good deal of his information from his father, Lame Bull, b.1825, d.1908), Thick (b. ca. 1870-71), Charles John Buckman (b.1872), Mrs Takes-a-Prisoner Warrior (b. ca. 1850-55) and Mrs Singer Sleeping-Bear (b. ca. 1860). These informants were exceptionally intelligent and dependable, and were not only willing to give us the information they had but anxious to do so. In spite of this, not all the past could, of course, be recaptured, and in certain parts the picture we got is far from complete, particularly regarding individual differences and motivations. However, we have had extremely little reconstruction proper to do, as most of the older gambling complex survived up to near the turn of the century, and had been actively participated in and/or witnessed and was vividly remembered by our informants, while some parts of it, especially many of the social aspects thereof, have persisted down to the present.

WAGERS AND BETTING PROCEDURE

●525 Stakes wagered by the Gros Ventre may be divided into small or trivial ones and big or valuable ones. Small stakes consisted of such things as arrows, bows, bags, beads, pipes, knives, handkerchiefs, dishes, and so forth; big ones, of such things as guns, saddles, lodges, and especially horses (the chief wealth in the old days). Wives were never wagered. Two teams might play mostly for fun, the losers being merely expected or obligated to provide a smoke, or, as more commonly, refreshments or a meal—"to cook," as the current expression goes—for the winners. This last was seemingly the only type of non-dyadic wagering in vogue among the Gros Ventre, if it can be called wagering at all, for such provision of smokes or food for relatives and friends was an everyday custom. Mrs Sleeping-Bear stated that in a gambling game she once played with her husband's brother, she forfeited her eyebrows, which he pulled out, but whether this was an exceptional occurrence or a customary one within the prevalent pattern of rough familiarity between brother-in-law and sister-in-law we could not discover.

Betting was typically dyadic, a given individual matching the wager of another individual, and the stakes going to the winning individual. The dyadic system was kept to even where, as was common, betting was by sides, each side,

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

composed of several or many participants, betting on its favorite player or team. 525 There was no pooling of bets by groups, with equal division of gains among the winners, apart from the "stakes" of food or smokes above mentioned. A given person could put up two or more wagers in a given contest with two or more other persons, but any one wager laid by any one person had to be matched by a single individual. Thus a handkerchief might be matched by another one of equal value, a good horse by another good horse, and so forth. In one case we recorded, a watch was matched against a pair of field glasses, the matching being calculated more by use-value to the respective owners than by money-value or "store-value." Finally there was seemingly no gambling on the promissory principle. Bettors had to have the stakes on hand and to put them up on the spot in full sight of players and onlookers, except of course where a man's lodge or perhaps a given horse at pasture was wagered. Consequently gambling debts proper were not incurred; at most a man lost all he actually possessed at the time. If in the course of a game, he had lost all he had actually at hand and wanted to bet more, he would send for or fetch the articles he wanted to put up.

In gambling activities, certain rather elaborate rules obtained as to who could gamble and could not gamble, with whom, and for what—rules which will be explained later in connection with the wheel game and especially with the hand game.

GAMBLING GAMES AND SPORTS

The Gros Ventre gambled, or gamble, chiefly at the following games and sports: 2-button hand game, wheel (hoop-and-pole) game, horse and foot races, dice, ring-and-pin, bow and arrow contests, and, more recently, playing cards. Of these the more important, as judged by size of wagers, by degree of participation, and by intensity of interest, were the 2-button hand game, the wheel game, and the races. We shall take up, first and briefly, the minor gambling games and sports, and get them out of the way, and after that, in more detail, the above three major ones.

Minor Gambling Games and Sports

The dice game, played with four dice having marks carved or painted on them, was a woman's game.[3] The dice were rubbed in the hands and then thrown down. Ordinarily the wagers were small, but sometimes even horses were lost and won by the women.

3 Illustrations of Gros Ventre dice are given in S. Culin, *Games of the North American Indians* (Twenty-Fourth Annual Report, Bureau of American Ethnology, 1907), figs. 54-55, p. 71, and A. L. Kroeber, *Ethnology of the Gros Ventre* (Anthropological Papers, American Museum of Natural History, vol. 1, pt. 4, 1908), figs. 14-18, pp. 184-186.

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

525 Women (and men?) also gambled at ring-and-pin, the "ring" being made of four bones from deer feet.[4] The contest was mostly just for fun; the losers would have to "cook" for the winners.

Several types of bow and arrow contests, serving as archery practice as well as gambling sports, were indulged in by boys, young men, and sometimes older men, not, however, by girls or women. Both distance and accuracy contests occurred. In the latter, the target was a stick or arrow stuck upright in a small mound, or an arrow shot by one contestant a desired distance, say, 100 or 150 yards. In another kind of contest, a bow was set slanting, string upward; the string was vibrated by an arrow and the arrow on release flew toward the target about 35 or 40 feet away. In these bow and arrow contests, the wagers were small, usually arrows, sometimes a bow. Wagers were made by the players, and at times by onlookers too.

The modern 4-button hand game, distinct from the earlier 2-button one, is played more for fun than for winnings. At most the losers may be expected to [177] "cook" for the winners. This modern non-gambling hand game came to the Gros Ventre through an Arapaho, Dances All Night, in 1897, shortly after the [668] time the Ghost Dance was introduced among them (in 1891). The Ghost Dance itself had little popularity among the Gros Ventre and after a couple of years died out among them, but the non-gambling hand game took root and survived. At first, we were informed, it was played with two buttons, but after 1903 with four.

525 Gambling at playing cards, sometimes for large stakes, occurs today, but 178 usually at the nearby white settlements, between Gros Ventre and white males. Some of the older Gros Ventre are shrewd poker players, and the younger ones play poker among themselves, but we obtained no record of ruinous stakes at cards among the Gros Ventre themselves on the reservation.

Major Gambling Games and Sports

525 The three more important gambling games and sports of half a century or more ago were races, the wheel game, and the 2-button hand game.

1. *Races*

[575] On horse races, usually between the two soldier-police societies, the Stars and Wolves (the latter became later the "Grass Dancers"), or between the [648] Gros Ventre and other tribes, such as the Piegan, at intertribal gatherings, were placed large bets—horses, saddles, and so forth—by the men, not however by

4 Illustration in Culin, *op. cit.*, fig. 706, p. 537.

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

women or children. The winners would twit the losers with such remarks as: 525
"Don't use that horse to race with. Use it to pack meat." Horse races for prizes, as distinct from wagers, did not occur.

Bets, often large ones, of horses and so forth, were laid on foot races, particularly on foot races between champions of the two above-mentioned soldier-police societies.

2. *The Wheel Game*

While large bets were often laid on horse and foot races, the most intense gambling interest of the Gros Ventre appears to have centered on the wheel game and the 2-button hand game.

The wheel game, as the present-day English-speaking Gros Ventre call it, was a variety of the hoop-and-pole game. The implements used in it were: a small buckskin-wrapped hoop about 3-5 inches in diameter, with variously colored large trade beads strung within the rim,[5] a "pole" consisting of an arrow or a stick, and a set of short sticks serving as tallies or counters. The court was about 25-30 feet long with, at each end, a log or other obstruction against which the wheel bumped and then fell. One of the two players would roll the wheel underhand with his right hand, and the two players, each with his pole, would trot on toes, sideways or backwards, stooped over somewhat, alongside the rolling wheel. As the wheel bumped against the obstruction, each would hurriedly but deftly throw down his pole for the wheel to fall upon. If according to the count of beads the roller lost the throw, the other player then rolled. The wheel was rolled back and forth in the court alternately. The roller had a slight advantage over his opponent, but he had to play fairly and roll the wheel vertically, for if he rolled it slanting so that it fell toward him too often he was not considered a good sport.

Before the game started the two players agreed upon the number of counters (say ten for each player) that would constitute a game, upon the value in counters of each bead, and upon one particular bright- or odd-colored bead which would win all the counters and with them the game and the stakes. The counters were not put in one single pile, as they were in the 2-button hand game. They were "bought" with the wagers in equal numbers by the two players from a man widely known for his honesty and integrity who functioned in the game as keeper of these wheel-game counters. This man sat all through the course of the game and "sold" counters to the two players. Each player had a second or representative who looked after his counters, receiving or giving

5 Illustration in Kroeber, *op. cit.*, fig. 22, p. 188.

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

525 according to the fortunes of play on orders from the principals. Each player also selected a watcher who had to see that the game was played straight.

If the wheel after falling came to rest on neither player's pole, no counters were won by either player, but the player towards whose pole the wheel came to rest closer won the right to roll the wheel next. Whether counters were won by relative closeness of pole to bead or by actual contact only, is a minor point we could not clear up.

Once a player had thrown his pole, touching it was strictly forbidden: "You could not even blow on it," as one informant expressed the matter. At times there were close decisions and arguments would arise over the lay. If the two opponents could not come to an agreement, each would look over the spectators and each would pick out some man of known fairness and probity to act as referee. To be chosen as referee in a big game was looked upon as a high honor. The two referees might have to lie down flat on the ground in order to get as close view as possible, and each might argue his case for his chooser. An agreement reached by the two referees was supposed to be final and without appeal. Sometimes, however, the argument would end in blows.

The wheel game was ordinarily played outside the camp circle, not as the result of any strict prohibition, but merely to be out of people's way. For a big game would attract a large number of spectators and backers, and interest was intense, so intense in fact that in an all-day series of games neither player nor onlookers might go back to their lodges to cook and eat, but might forego eating or else have the food brought to them by the women. Relatives and other partisans of the winning player might provide food for all present, with boasting comments, such as: "Our 'race-horse' here is not just a young fellow. He can feed this whole crowd here too. We will show you how this is done, just as he is showing his opponent how to play."

The onlookers had to keep from getting in the way of players, and could not interfere in any way. Nor was there any rooting by them. In fact, while the game was all-absorbing for players and for spectators, it was played tensely, quietly, and gravely, without the noise and hubbub that characterized the 2-button hand game. And no songs were sung by any one during it; the winner would merely give a yell at the end. Should the winner's pole touch the "joker" bead, he would just walk away, and some one or more of the crowd would walk up to the spot where the wheel lay and would say: "Yes, that's the 'joker' bead." The winner, however, might twit the loser, with some such remark as: "My friend, haven't you any better sense than to gamble with me. You know or ought to know that you don't amount to much."

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The wheel game, too, in contrast to the 2-button hand game, was accompanied with no legerdemain and no grace or fancy movements. The players might run or trot in a rather awkward or ridiculous fashion, "awfully funny, like a chicken walking backwards," as one informant put it; but they did not care what the crowd might think of their queer or clumsy gait; they were out to win; they would await some other occasion "to show off handsome." 525 [789]

Likewise, in the wheel game, no prayers to any being were said and there was no resort to supernatural power gotten from prairie chickens or ghosts (see *infra* under hand game). Even if a given wheel-game player had such power, it was of no avail in the wheel game and was not called upon. In the gambling-for-scalps story, to be mentioned presently, the Gros Ventre prayed to the Supreme Being to win, but here there was question not so much of winning material goods as of preserving physical wholeness and life itself, things within the peculiar keeping of the Supreme Being in Gros Ventre theology. [782]

Success in the wheel game depended on two things: skill and what may be called thought-wish power. In the play all effort was concentrated by the players on the utmost exercise of skill and adroitness acquired through long practice and of judgment, in following the rolling wheel and in throwing the pole at just the precise moment and in just the right manner. But, in at least some of the big wheel games, a sort of thought power or thought-wish power was used by the players. In how far such power can be considered "supernatural" is hard to say; it seems to have been more "natural" than "supernatural," as judged by most definitions of "supernatural." At any rate, it was not a power gained, as most other Gros Ventre supernatural powers were gained, from some being by crying, fasting, and dreaming on mountain tops or along timbered water courses. 525 789

Its efficacy was derived ultimately from the player's previous war exploits. Its exercise was along the following pattern. There being no set time for wheel games, one might get under way any time, with relatively small stakes, and develop in the course of play into a really big game, or the game could be a big one from the start. In such a big game, between outstanding opponents, for large stakes and for status (see *infra*), before starting to roll the wheel, each player would in turn take the wheel in one hand and with the other touch his pole (arrow or stick) under the wheel on a particular bead. While doing so he would think with intense concentration of one of his past war deeds—e.g., a horse he took from the very door of his enemy's lodge at great risk of life—and would say in his mind, silently and not audibly: "I am not telling a lie [about this deed]. The powers know I am not telling a lie." He would rehearse the event in his mind, and probably (the point was not fully cleared up by us) would think of

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

525 some object connected with the deed, which was of the same color as the bead
789 he was touching.

This thought-wish was a sort of indirect or implicit oath, not a formal audibly uttered one. If he actually had done no such deed, he could not hope to have good fortune from such intense concentration of thought and wish. But it was not a prayer proper; he was not asking anything directly of any being. The act was called beta´c^{tc}et^{ts}. It may be added here parenthetically that a highly abstract concept of effective power from deeply sincere wish or intense thought or from both combined plays an important part in many phases of Gros Ventre life even today.

While the player was making this silent wish, the spectators would speculate a lot about which of his great war deeds he was thinking. Later the winner would recite publicly the great deed he had been thinking about. In doing so he had to keep scrupulously to the facts, facts well known to the people, for he was looked upon as a man of character and high standing with a reputation gained by merit, sacrifice, and risk of life.

525 If a player were losing, one of his kinsmen, friends, or backers might volunteer to take his place playing, and also (apparently: our field evidence is not fully clear) to use his own war deeds power.

The main gambling at the wheel game was for stakes wagered by the two players themselves, a given piece of property against an equivalent piece for each game of any agreed number, say 10, of counters won. But the spectators, too, often bet on the game, although not so generally, it appears, as they did at the 2-button hand game. The wagers by players or spectators could be small or large. Two given players might keep at play many hours in succession, playing game after game. In some instances the betting between the two players would result in the loss by one of the last bit of his property—horses, blankets, clothing, household utensils, even his lodge itself. A comparatively wealthy man could thus become a "pauper" in a day. Often, too, the relatives of the players would win or lose almost as heavily in backing their respective kinsmen.

554 In some of the big wheel games the "social" stakes were as important as or
525 more important than the property ones, as illustrated in the case of Lame Bull given below. Two prominent men, enemy friends to each other and at the same time rivals for prestige and status in the tribe, would on a given day play the game *à outrance*. The winner's status and prestige would be greatly exalted; the loser's proportionately lowered. A man's whole career of advancement to prominence in the tribe—a basic ambition among Gros Ventre men—could be brought to ruin in a single day's gaming at the wheel game. He might lose not

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

only his property and so have to begin accumulating again from scratch, but 554
might at the same time lose as well his standing in the tribe and become a de- 525
feated and disgraced nobody, of a low standing from which it was very difficult to rise in the scale.

The wheel game was not played by women or children, nor apparently by the 525
very young men, but only by fully adult or middle-aged men and older ones, and 572
by only two players at a time. The really big games with large stakes were in [885]
most cases, it seems—almost all, according to our informants—played by two "enemy friends" or "war friends." Such enemy friends or war friends were very different from ordinary friends or "true" pledged friends. An "enemy friendship" was a war-related compact entered into in the following manner. A member of a returning war party would give some trophy or booty he had taken from the enemy—e.g., a scalp, or horse, or weapon—to one of his own compatriots of the same or opposite sex, who had little choice but to accept. Acceptance made "enemy friends" or "war friends" of the two. War friends, particularly if unrelated and both males, could go the limit in twitting and in- [522]
sulting each other and in playing practical jokes, even rather outrageous ones, on each other, and the victim had to take such behavior in good part, at least externally. However, along with the privilege of taking such liberties ran the accepted obligation to stand by each other in real need or hazard of grave nature.

The two war friends could gamble with each other. In fact, gambling among the Gros Ventre reached at times its climax in contests between two war friends. A wheel game between war friends commonly arose out of a "bragging match" between them; one would challenge the other to play the wheel game. If the one challenged declined to accept the challenge, his war friend who challenged him, and his other war friends, would ever after take occasion to deride him publicly for it at the least provocation. So the challenge could not easily be declined. The game often became one in which each enemy friend would go out to strip the other of practically everything he owned—horses, gun, blankets, lodge—and at which the most eager interest was aroused among the relatives, fellow-clansmen, and friends of the respective players and, for that matter, among the whole camp population. Such enemy-friend contests were commonly protracted sessions, often all-day ones, at the wheel game.

The following three narratives of particular wheel-game gambling contests—the first two of which are matters of well-remembered recent history, the third an older traditional story paralleled elsewhere on the Plains—throw some further light on the social role of the Gros Ventre wheel game.

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

525 572 578 538 *Narrative 1.* In 1893 two Gros Ventre, enemy friends to each other, Red Whip who died in 1912 and Many Tail Feathers, got into a gambling game with the wheel. Many Tail Feathers was losing and he got angry. He grabbed Red Whip and they had a rought-and-tumble tussle. They fell to the ground, with Red Whip on top, astraddle Many Tail Feathers. Red Whip drew his knife, cut off all of the other's hair, at which loss the latter cried while the people cheered a cheer of contempt. Red Whip acting as if he had scalped an enemy, threw the hair in the air, and said in the hearing of all: "What's the matter with you, my friend? You must have a weak heart. Look at me. This is what I did to my enemy [such and such a time]. You know all about it. I just wanted to show you that I am your superior in matters of this kind. But anyhow you can have that good horse of mine."

[115] *Narrative 2.* Lame Bull, father of The Boy, our chief informant on gambling, died in 1908 at the age of 83 or 84 years. Lame Bull, when still a fairly young man, a rising one with prospects of rising higher and higher in the prestige scale, had been chosen as an enemy friend by White Owl, an older man, and Lame Bull had, according to custom, accepted the offer. An offer of enemy friendship was on the one hand almost mandatory, and on the other, where it came from an outstanding man of great experience and ability, as in this case, it was a real honor to the recipient and would rarely be refused.

When Lame Bull and White Owl became enemy friends, they "started to act like two roosters" and were saying to themselves: "I am going to get you when you are off your guard." Both knew that at some time or another, sooner or later, they would have to do something to put their enemy friendship to the greatest test. After much sparring around, the two men engaged in a wheel game as just such a climactic test. At this game White Owl had a big reputation (besides all his other accomplishments), while Lame Bull had no reputation at all at it.

On this occasion Lame Bull wagered everything he owned, and all his wife's property, including their lodge. As it was customary at such events for the kinsmen of the respective players to bet on their kinsman, Lame Bull's father, together with other relatives wagered large stakes on him, although the father was strongly opposed on principle to such betting and had always counseled Lame Bull strenuously against it. More, however, than large amounts of property was at stake; the players' relative and absolute standing in the tribe hung upon the outcome. In the case of Lame Bull and White Owl, the former a younger man of great promise, the latter an older one of recognized prominence, the rivalry was keen and, in a very true sense, ruthless. The older man was jealous of his great reputation and did not want any one to get near him in prestige. He was trying to crush Lame Bull's rising career betimes lest later Lame Bull might outdo him. At the same time, White Owl stood to profit even if he lost, for he would still be attached as enemy friend to Lame Bull and would have reflected prestige from being the enemy friend of this rising man. He would thus profit inevitably by the latter's prestige.

Lame Bull lost everything in the contest, and, of course, his father and relatives lost heavily. White Owl's people tore down Lame Bull's lodge and took it away as winnings and took everything in it, even down to the dishes of Lame Bull's wife. At the end of the playing, Lame Bull was an object of charity and a laughing stock.

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

About the only thing that earned him a bit of recognition was the fact that in spite 525
of his loss of property and of status—to have recognition at all you had to have some 572
possessions to hold and to give away in presents—and in spite of the strutting and 578
crowing and twitting by the winner and his followers after the playing was over, 538
Lame Bull did not lose his temper.

When the playing ended, Lame Bull had nothing of his own except his wife. So his father and mother invited them to eat. Downcast, embarrassed, ashamed, "feeling like a small potato," he ate. When he had finished, his father gave him such a tongue lashing that Lame Bull, who was very fond of his father, cried, and Lame Bull was a strong man who did not easily cry. He felt so bad that he went out on the hills and cried and cried, and slept out there, and came back a pretty sorry young man. And for a long time after, his wife, who also was one of his enemy friends, would throw this up to him: "Oh, you are nothing. You were always weak. Look what your enemy friend did to you. You will never amount to anything." And she would say such things to him especially when others were present. So she set about training him. At any rate Lame Bull was cured of gambling by his great loss to White Owl.

As time went on, Lame Bull recovered from the defeat which might have wrecked for good the career of another. His people had given him enough property to make a new start in life. He would invite White Owl to his lodge and give him big feasts and would make valuable presents of horses and such things to him. And White Owl would make a mental note of these things and would say to himself: "All right, my friend, you wait and see what I will do for you", awaiting the proper time to reciprocate, as was Gros Ventre custom. So a long time afterwards White Owl made very valuable presents to Lame Bull. And they were very good friends.

Narrative 3. Long ago, the story runs, a young Gros Ventre warrior went off 525
alone on a war raid. He got to a mountain, and after nightfall went into a cave 648
to camp overnight. On feeling around in the darkness he found some one else 538
there, and said to himself: "An enemy." To make sure he asked by touching the skin of the other's forearm. The other by wiggling his finger on the Gros Ventre's chest signified: "I am a Snake Indian." So the Gros Ventre took the Snake's hand and made the sign of "big belly" to signify: "I am a Gros Ventre."

The Gros Ventre then said to the Snake: "Let's not fight tonight. You go to sleep and I'll go to sleep. Tomorrow morning we'll see what we'll do." But being afraid of each other, neither slept at all during the night.

The next morning the Gros Ventre asked the Snake: "Friend, where were you going?" He replied: "On the war path." "Alone?" "Yes, all alone." The Snake then asked the same questions and got the same answers. Then the Gros Ventre said: "We are both alone. Instead of killing each other, let's gamble with the wheel. The loser loses his scalp to the winner."

So they started to play, with such things as bow and arrows and clothing for stakes, and the Snake won everything from the Gros Ventre. Then the Gros Ventre proposed: "Friend, you stake all you have won, in a lump, against my scalp," and this was agreed upon. At this point the Gros Ventre got afraid he would lose, so

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

525 he prayed to I^{x}tcibiniąt'a, the Supreme Being: "Have pity on me, so I may beat
648 this man. I'll make a Medicine Dance when I get back home." And as he prayed,
538 he took his arrow and the wheel, and put the arrow on the winning bead of the wheel, and prayed to the Supreme Being that when the wheel was rolled it would fall just that way on the arrow. So when the Gros Ventre rolled the wheel, it fell as he had prayed it would, and he won back all that he had lost.

Then the two men started all over again, and this time the Gros Ventre won everything from the Snake. So the Snake in turn proposed: "Friend, you stake all you have won, in a lump, against my scalp." They played again and the Gros Ventre won.

The Snake then said: "Now you have won my scalp. Tie my head around [at the level of the forehead], then take your knife and cut, and pull off my scalp. And after my scalp is off, go to that hill yonder and wave it at me and sing. Then you go back home and I'll go back home." All this the Gros Ventre did. But before leaving, he said to the Snake: "My friend, you came from a long way off. So did I. It is bad enough that you have lost your scalp. So I am going to give you back some of your things that you'll need on your way back home." So the Gros Ventre gave him back his robe, moccasins, bow and arrow, and knife, saying: "You'll need these."

3. *The 2-Button Hand Game*

525 The wheel game, as played and gambled on in really big contests by outstanding enemy friends, was in some respects the supreme gambling game of the Gros Ventre. It was supreme at least in the intensity of interest it aroused as a spectacle and supreme in the value of what was won and lost, not merely the great amounts of property wagered, but, still more, such prestige and status or loss thereof as could make or break the contestants' careers. On the other hand, as regards everyday popularity, frequency of use, and range of participation, first rank in the gambling complex was held, it clearly appears, by the old 2-button hand game, the predecessor of the modern non-gambling 4-button hand game. In the following pages we shall use the term "hand game" without qualification to designate this earlier pre-Ghost-Dance hand game proper.

The hand game could be played at nearly any time. There were no set occasions for it, though some were more favorable than others, especially intertribal gatherings. Commonly a game started just with some one proposing: "Let's gamble." So somebody would go to the nearest bush and cut the required twelve sticks, each about a foot in length, for counters. Sometimes the bark would then be peeled off the sticks and the ends thereof squared, but this was not necessary. Then agreement was reached on what would serve to hide as the two required "buttons"—such as a bit of "sun-shell" off an earring for the "short" button, and an end of horn off a bracelet for the "long" button. There

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

had to be two buttons, a "short" and a "long" one.[6] Very commonly the game 525
was played inside a lodge, with the main center of interest opposite the door, but outdoor playing also occurred frequently.

When the game took place inside a lodge the arrangement and line up were about as follows. The twelve counters were in one pile at the rear opposite the door. The two teams, of any number each, were lined up from rear to door facing each other, with a tent pole or sections of one before each team to beat time upon and with the wagers placed in view of all between the teams. Each team had its own tally keeper, guesser, hider, assistant hider, and other teammates, ranged in the foregoing order from the counter pile toward the door. We shall call these teams A and B with their respective A and B tally keepers, guessers, and so forth.

The game began with a gambling song, sung, to the measure of a small hand 525
drum and/or beats with sticks on the tent poles lying in front of the teams, by 533
all present, team members and spectators. In 1940 we recorded, as part of a series of 116 Gros Ventre songs, two such gambling songs, sung by The Boy. These two songs are wordless, except for a short sentence or phrase in the middle of each. The wording of one is: ą́niti be´taną (general sense: "It's no use you trying to guess me; I'm 'holy' "). The wording of the other, incomplete (as The Boy could not recall the full native text) is: ą̄´tibdjī nǫ´nǫ'tsǫnen ("dogs" "wet legs": allusion not known to The Boy; the full wording was literally: "dogs wet-legs little-legs"). The tunes are lively ones sung in fast time. Only certain songs could be sung in a gambling game; doctors' songs or Medicine Dance songs were taboo therein. If one of the players had his own gambling song gotten from a prairie chicken or ghost (see *infra*), he would start it and the others (only of his own team or side ?) would sing it with him. In the excitement of a game well under way, grunts would often take the place of songs proper.

Each team selected its best player. One held the short button, the other 525
the long one. Player A (of and for team A) hid his button in one of his hands, putting on a show with motions, feints, and so forth. Player B (of and for team B) went through his own show, and finally guessed by pointing. Then B hid and A guessed him. If both guessed correctly or both incorrectly, they each hid and guessed again, and they kept this up until one had guessed correctly and the other incorrectly. So one won the preliminary, and the tally keeper of the winner's side, let us say team A, took four counters from the pile and laid them on his side. The preliminary win also gave the winner's team the right to hide.

6 Illustrations of buttons and counters in Culin, *op. cit.*, figs. 345-348, p. 271.

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

525 Next, hider A and assistant hider A each took one of the two buttons and put on their show together, while team A and only team A sang, this time a song different from the one sung by everybody together at the very start of the game. The rule was that after the opening song before the preliminary round, only the team whose turn it was to hold the buttons to hide could sing. Guesser B watched the two hiders closely, scrutinizing their motions, eyes, expression of countenance, everything, for clues. If he came to the conclusion that hider A had one button hidden in his left hand and assistant hider A the other button in his right hand, guesser B so indicated by pointing with his thumb to hider A and at the same time with his index finger to assistant hider A. Suppose he guessed incorrectly in both cases Tally keeper A would then take two more counters from the pile and team A would cheer, shout, and get up and dance around. Team B would begin to get scared, as team A would then have won six of the twelve counters.

If in the next play, guesser B indicated one of the two hiders A correctly and the other incorrectly, team A got another counter, thus leaving five counters in the pile. The hider A (hider or assistant hider) who had not been guessed this last time then took both buttons and worked with them; if guesser B pointing with his index finger for the long one and at the same with his thumb for the short one, guessed wrong, team A won one more counter, and then both hiders A would hide. By this time guesser B would be getting more and more worried, and the supporters of team A might be booing and twitting him: "Those [of team A] are winning and winning."

Let us say guesser B lost again on the double guess; then team A won two more counters (it would now have ten of the twelve). Guesser B might here appeal half-seriously to his supernatural helper, if he had one: "What is the matter with you, prairie chicken (or ghost)? You are failing me."

As neither had been guessed in the last play, the two hiders A would both hide again—interchanging the buttons perhaps, signaling between themselves, making quick motions, and so forth. Suppose hider A was then guessed correctly, but assistant hider A incorrectly, then team A would win another counter, and only one would be left in the pile. Excitement would here reach a climax. Assistant hider A, who had not been guessed just before, would then take both buttons. Let us assume that guesser B finally guessed him right and thus saved the day at the last minute. His side B would cheer and cheer. The one last counter would remain in the center between the two tally keepers, but now B got a chance to win counters.

If team B then won two counters on the next play, in which guesser A did

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the guessing, tally keeper B would take the one counter remaining in the center 525 and also draw one counter from team A's won counters. And so the game went back and forth, one or two hiding at a time according to rule, until one team won all the twelve counters.

A session of hand games might go on for many hours; starting, say, in the morning it might continue throughout the whole day and through the night until the next morning. When any of the players or supporters got hungry, they would go home and eat and then return to the game. After a game in which the twelve counters and stakes were won, and before the next one, there would usually be a little time out for a rest and smoke, and for the placing of bets on the next game.

The atmosphere of the hand game was a holiday one. Raillery was a little rough at times. But for players and spectators, the game was a major source of enjoyment, relaxation, and pleasurable excitement. What with the singing, the drumming, the twitting, the shouting, the often loud and uproarious cheering, the hand game—in rather sharp contrast to the quiet, grave wheel game—was apt to be decidedly noisy, not to say boisterous. Not the least appreciated feature of the hand game was the showmanship, the grace and virtuosity of the players, who played to an appreciative and discriminating house. The victors gloated conspicuously over the losers and bantered them unmercifully, but the losers were expected to keep their tempers, an expectation, however, not always realized.

For success in hand game gambling, most players, it seems clear from our evidence, relied on chance and skill—an occasional one on sleight-of-hand proper—rather than on supernatural power or aid. So far as we could determine, the drumming and singing that accompanied the playing were not of the magico-religious order, at least ordinarily and apart from the exceptional games in which individuals with supernatural power (see *infra*) participated. Certain individuals were, from native keenness or from practice and experience, particularly adept at hiding and guessing, and these were apt to play the role of hiders and guessers for their teammates and backers.

Some few men, however—never women, we were informed—had supernat- 525 ural gambling power. This power might come unsought, as in the case of Keg 789 to be given presently, or, more commonly, was sought. Not many sought it or possessed it. The young were strongly advised against seeking it by their parents and by the tribal counsellors, for the man who sought and obtained it had to pay a heavy penalty. He would be affected with some serious ailment of the limbs, such as pains in and swelling of the joints, and would die before his

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

525 789 time. This latter aspect of the belief accorded with the larger Gros Ventre pattern: any acquisition of special supernatural power sought by quest would be apt to lead to shortening of life.

Nevertheless, against the reiterated advice of parents and elders who would so lecture the growing children and of the chiefs and counsellors who would walk around the camp so warning the people, a good many individuals would seek supernatural power, and a few would go out in quest of supernatural gambling power. In some cases such gambling power was sought by a man who had lost heavily or lost his all at the wheel or hand game, as a desperate measure to recoup his losses and to get a new start in his career.

Gambling power was not sought from the Supreme Being, who apparently did not enter at all into the gambling cycle. The appeal to him in the previously given traditional story of gambling for scalps is more a confirmation of than an exception to the rule. Nor was it sought as other power—to be a great warrior or doctor or to acquire wealth or to live long—was sought, by fasting and dreaming on the hill tops. The seeker for gambling power resorted to the brush and timber along watercourses to obtain it from the prairie chickens, [176] or from a ghost. It was more commonly gotten from prairie chickens; but not infrequently from a ghost, not an ancestor of the candidate, at least not necessarily, but, as The Boy put it laughingly, from "any good-natured ghost." This power was gotten for use only in the hand game, not in any other gambling game or sport.

[824] Usually the seeker looked for a place where wild morning glories formed a sort of bower, "like a little lodge or tipi." It was in there that a ghost was believed to live; the morning glory was called tzek'unθänādzu, "ghost rope" (tzek'ⁿ or tsä·k'ⁿ, "ghost"). The seeker would cry and cry, and when he got sleepy he would crawl into the bower and sleep. Pretty soon a ghost or prairie chicken might ask him: "Why are you punishing yourself so much?" He might answer: "Because I have lost all my belongings." "Is that all? Well, I will help you out," the being or beings would say, and then would give the seeker a song and tell him what rules he must live by and how he must act in the hand game. The person who got such power would not afterwards reveal the details told him by the giver. From the prairie chicken or ghost the person might also get at the same time the power to do marvelous things, such as making an object disappear, swallowing it and then drawing it out of some part of his body, making it go into his skull and come out of his mouth into his hand or go through his veins and come out somewhere else on his person, and so forth (cf. Red Whip story *infra*.)

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Gambling power was of a lower order of dignity and solemnity than power 525 obtained by fasting on the mountains and hill tops. It was taken less seriously, 789 more lightly, and, if we may judge from attitudes today, with an undercurrent of amused jocoseness. It was not, as was power gotten on mountains, transferrable by the original possessor to another, or at least it was not transferred. For one reason others did not usually want it, on account of the ailments and shortened life its possession entailed. A man who was known to have such power was further handicapped: his fellow tribesmen would not ordinarily gamble against him and so his opportunities for participation were few, being limited mostly to games played by the Gros Ventre with other tribes. In such intertribal games, however, he would become a popular champion, and would derive therefrom a certain prestige as well as material gains. The possession then of gambling power, while to a certain limited extent an asset to its owner, was in more respects than one a decided liability.

It may be added here that while those who possessed supernatural gambling power are spoken of today by English-speaking Gros Ventre as "professional gamblers," in reality there were no professional gamblers among the Gros Ventre even in the old days, professional, that is, in the sense of making their living or most of their living at gambling.

The following three narratives, related by The Boy, illustrate various aspects of gambling power.

Narrative 1. Lone Bear, The Boy's wife's father, had gambling power. While 525 he was still in his prime, his legs started hurting him. To escape the penalty he quit 789 gambling. But in vain. His legs went bad, and he died before his time.

539

Narrative 2. When Lame Bull, The Boy's father, was a young boy about ten years of age he had a friend of about the same age, called Keg, to whom he was much attached. Keg, like other boys of his age, had the daily chore of rising [857] long before daylight and driving out the family horses away from camp to graze. One morning he was awakened very early and was told to drive the horses out. He did so, but when he got out to the grazing ground he decided to steal a few winks lying face down. So he fell asleep, and all at once he started to dream. He dreamed that he saw a big hand game going on with high stakes and one fellow winning everything. Keg looked at this fellow closely and saw it was he, Keg, himself. [787] This man spoke to Keg saying: "Do as you see me doing here. Use my throat as an object [button] to hide."

Then Keg woke up and looked around, and there right near where he lay he saw a covey of prairie chickens doing their mating dance and making a whirring noise with their tails. When he got back he said to Lame Bull: "Let's play and see whether what I dreamed is true. I'll put my helper to the test." Lame Bull tried to guess Keg, but Keg would make a noise like a prairie chicken and thereupon

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

525 would switch the button to the other hand without Lame Bull perceiving it, and
789 Lame Bull could not guess him.

So as the two grew up, Lame Bull always bet when Keg was playing and won
539 a lot of stuff that way. Keg started gambling from his boyhood and always had luck. After he grew up, however, he did not have many chances to play, because everybody, knowing his power, shied away from gambling against him. But when he did play, he would win. When he was resorting to his power in a game, he would imitate the hissing, swishing noise made by the prairie chickens when they ruffle their tail feathers. The prairie chicken had also given Keg its windpipe to use (apparently as a button) in the hand game, and for it Keg used a little metal spring resembling the windpipe.

525 *Narrative 3.* During the lifetime of Red Whip (d. 1912), the Gros Ventre on
789 one occasion, about 1873-75, met the Flathead where Lewistown (Montana) now is
539 and camped close together. The latter asked the former to gamble at the hand
648 game. So when night came, they all assembled in a big lodge. The Flathead had a great gambler, nicknamed Crazy Child, who had gambling power and had never been beaten by anyone on the west side of the Rockies. Outside the lodge the young men of both tribes were visiting in a friendly fashion together, and the Flathead young men told the Gros Ventre young men: "Don't get into that game. Our man cannot be beaten," and some of the latter on that account refrained from betting. But the Gros Ventre had a man of their own, Red Whip, who had gambling power from a ghost, greater gambling power than Crazy Child had.

So the hand game started, with big stakes wagered on both sides. Neither champion showed his prowess right away; they just let themselves run along easily for a while. At last Red Whip decided to cut loose: "This Flathead makes me mad. He has hand game power. So I'll have to use mine. Give me a piece of weasel skin and I'll stop his power." They gave him a piece and he rubbed off a small bit of it and put it on the ground and knelt on it with one knee.

Crazy Child, whose hand-game helper was the owl, used every trick his helper had taught him, to hide the button and battle Red Whip, but to no avail, for Red Whip's ghost helper was more powerful than Crazy Child's owl helper. Then Red Whip, when his turn came to hide, said to the Gros Ventre, "I have this Flathead beaten and I know his helper, the owl, has abandoned him; so sing good and loud and beat time fast and lively," and to the Flathead, "Watch closely, and I will let you hunt for the button after I have hidden it." Red Whip then put on a big show, exhibited the button to the Flathead, threw it into the air, and told him to look for it. Crazy Child hooted like an owl and did all sorts of other things like an owl, but finally gave up: "I can't find the button," at which the Gros Ventre cheered uproariously. Then Red Whip got up, showed the Flathead the button, which was embedded in the lodge pole to the left of the door as you go out, and asked him to pull it out. Crazy Child tried to pull it out but failed, but Red Whip pulled it out easily, and said to Crazy Child: "You are nothing. You are just a little fellow. You don't amount to much. I didn't have to try hard to beat you. But I just wanted to show you this."

This great game lasted one whole night; daylight was breaking when the two

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

 525 789 539 648

men called on their helpers. The Gros Ventres won many things of value: many best horses, guns, and clothes; and no Gros Ventre ever gambled against Red Whip after that.

Men, women, and children could participate in a hand game played by men. All, with an exception or two to be noted, could bet thereon, and men and women could bet on both sides. In a game where the men were players, the women would be present and would join in the singing as well as in the betting, but they could not be guessers, hiders, or tally keepers; only men could be such. Women, however, could so function in hand games among themselves. 525

Actual participation in hand game gambling was high. One of our women informants, Mrs Warrior, never went in for betting, she emphasized; but she seems to have been rather exceptional in this regard. Our other woman informant on gambling, Mrs Sleeping Bear, was much devoted to gambling, for relatively small stakes. Nearly every one, so far as we could make out from our evidence, seems to have gambled, either frequently and habitually or at least from time to time.

Participation, however, followed a well-defined and established pattern as regards who could or should bet with or against whom and for what kind of stakes. For convenience we are calling this the "bettor-wager pattern."

Some persons or classes of persons could not gamble at all or could not gamble against certain others; others could or would gamble against certain others only for refreshments or a meal; others, for small stakes of little value; others still, for big stakes. The Gros Ventre bettor-wager pattern at first glimpse looks complicated, but actually it conforms to a few very simple principles. We shall look first at the pattern itself; afterwards at the principles.

Blood relatives could not gamble against each other either for large or for small stakes. Such blood relatives included parents and children, grandparents and grandchildren, brothers and sisters, uncles and aunts and nephews and nieces, and also all classificatory relatives of the same categories. At most a group of blood relatives might engage in a hand game with the half-serious half-playful agreement that the losing side would "cook" for the winning side. A given gambling team would commonly be composed chiefly of members who were kin to one another, but non-relatives could also be on the team; the opposing team would likewise be commonly composed chiefly of another kinship group. Where blood relatives gambled in the same game for small or large stakes, they always gambled and bet, not against one another, but on the same side, and in wagering they bet on and backed their own kinsman or kinsmen, wagering dyadically against fellow tribesmen or aliens not related to them. 602 525

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

602 Gambling between blood relatives for property the loss of which would hurt
525 or would entail even small hardship on the loser was evidently looked upon as conflicting with the common loyalty and mutual helpfulness among all blood relatives that were expected by the Gros Ventre social code. The Gros Ventre felt, furthermore, that such gambling might easily give rise to quarreling and ill-will among relatives, whereas the code expected harmony and good will.

As regards affinal relatives, the rules were more complicated and less uniform. Loyalty, helpfulness, and harmony were desired and expected among close relatives by marriage, but the avoidance, respect, and familiarity conventions differed.

606 A son-in-law could not gamble at all against his mother-in-law, even on
525 different sides for "cooking" for the winners. On the one hand the rule of respect and avoidance was the most rigid and absolute within the avoidance regulations: they could not look at or speak directly to each other, and could not be in the same lodge together. On the other hand they were expected to be very good and generous to each other. It may be added that these restrictions on the son-in-law applied also to his brothers, presumably too to the mother-in-law's sisters, although we failed to inquire about this last point.

[602] As regards all other relatives by marriage, they, even those prohibited from gambling even for small stakes, were permitted, it seems, to gamble as members of groups against one another where the stakes, if they can really be called such, were merely the above-mentioned "cooking" by the losing side for the winners. Some affinal relatives, however, such as father-in-law and daughter-in-law could not engage in a non-group twosome game, even for fun, just as brother and sister could not do so.

A son-in-law and father-in-law could not gamble against each other even for small wagers; the former could not gamble with the latter's brothers or even his close friends—and presumably vice versa, the father-in-law could not with the son-in-law's. Nor, as mentioned, could daughter-in-law with father-in-law. A son-in-law and father-in-law were under certain restrictions of respect and avoidance but not so absolute as those between son-in-law and mother-in-law; the two men could discuss "business" matters with each other, but could not just sit down and chat together about trivial things and especially about anything concerning sex or the eliminative functions. And about the same rule held for daughter-in-law and father-in-law in their personal relations.

Two brothers-in-law, two sisters-in-law, or a brother-in-law and his sister-in-law (wife's sister or brother's wife) could gamble against each other for small

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

stakes, but not for really large ones. A gambling game between two brothers-in-law, small though the stakes had to be, was a good show for the onlookers—not, however, nearly so good as one between two prominent enemy friends. Two sisters-in-law were also "just right" for gambling against each other. 606 525

Through all these three relationships run two currents: one of mutual goodwill and helpfulness, the other of familiarity, "teasing" and twitting. Between two brothers-in-law and two sisters-in-law there is relatively more of the first and less of the second; between brother-in-law and sister-in-law relatively more of the second and less of the first.

Two brothers-in-law could not discuss sex or vulgarity and could not go to the toilet together. They would be helpful to each other in giving presents, in a building project, in business matters, and so forth. But on the other hand they could go quite far in "humiliating" each other, in indulging in practical jokes and horse play at the other's expense, and in rivaling each other in war and in war-deed matching contests—but not to the limit, not so far as enemy friends could go. Two sisters-in-law could likewise "tease" each other, but could not go to the same length that brothers-in-law could go. [522]

To her brother-in-law (sister's husband or husband's brother) a woman could go nearly any length in "teasing" and freedom in the way of crude horse play and of vulgar and obscene talk, and vice versa.

The gambling rule that prevailed, and still prevails largely, between these three types of siblings-in-law, namely, gambling for small stakes permitted and encouraged, but not for large stakes, appears to be genetically related to the two currents we have been discussing: the goodwill one prohibiting stakes whose loss would really hurt, the familiarity one permitting and provoking small-stake gambling. 619 525

The Gros Ventre, with a population range of between about 800 and 2,000 in the second half of the last century, were divided into about a dozen bands. These bands were not sibs proper, but each was composed largely of kin related by blood or marriage. Members of a given band, whether related or not, would not gamble against one another. There was a well-marked we-feeling among the members of a band, somewhat distinct from and additional to the kinship feeling proper. Actually this was almost equivalent to "tribal" we-feeling, for each band was for the greater part of the year, particularly in the winter months when the bands scattered to separate quarters within the tribal territory, an almost completely autonomous economico-political unit, and any band was free if it wished to secede from the tribe at any time, temporarily or permanently. 621 [161]

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

621 Members of one band could and not infrequently did gamble both for small
525 and for big stakes against members of other bands, just as one kinship group used to gamble against others. Tribal we-feeling certainly existed, but seemingly not as intense as band we-feeling, just as, in turn, the latter was not as intense as kin we-feeling. In inter-band, as in inter-kin, gambling, spectators, if they bet at all, would lay their wagers on the players of their own band, as required by band loyalty, regardless of the relative skill and reputation of the contesting players or teams.

575 For Gros Ventre men who had reached full adulthood and were still in the
[885] prime of life, there were two age-societies, called the Stars and the Wolves (or
525 Wolf-men). These two groups, with soldier-police functions, would join forces when necessary in keeping order, in fighting fires, and in defending the whole tribe against enemies, but for the rest rivalry between them was pretty keen. Stars would gamble against Wolves in big games for large stakes, but ordinarily a Star would not gamble against a Star or a Wolf against a Wolf, except for refreshments or a smoke or similar trifling "stakes." Inasmuch as membership in the two societies cut across the lines of kinship and band membership, intersociety gambling suffered an important restriction: if a Star were gambling in a given game, his relatives among the Wolves would not play or bet against him in that particular game. Kinship ties took precedence over society ties.

525 Gros Ventre would of course gamble for big stakes against members of other
648 tribes with whom they happened to be at the time on sufficiently good terms, or at least not bitterly and actively hostile, to meet and foregather peacefully, such as the Piegan, Flathead, Nez Percé, and Cree. In such intertribal contests they would often go out to win every possession of their opponents.

572 The Gros Ventre distinguished three kinds of friends: ordinary friends,
525 true or pledged friends, and enemy or war friends. As a rule ordinary close friends would not take opposite sides in a big gambling game. This was all the more true of pledged friends. Two boys, for instance, who liked each other
[608] and who had perhaps grown up together would, though belonging to different bands, enter into a sort of "sworn brotherhood," give each other presents, exchange intimate confidences, and promise, without religious rite of any kind, to stand by each other always, even to death if necessary. Two girls could also enter into a similar pact. Such "true" or pledged friends never gambled against each other either as players or as backers, at least never for stakes of value.

Of enemy or war friends we have previously spoken when describing the wheel game. Two enemy friends would gamble against each other for small stakes or big, the bigger the better. In fact a hand game for big stakes between

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

two enemy friends to strip the loser bare of everything he owned, down to his 572
very lodge, was, like a wheel game of the same order of magnitude, a crowning 525
event in Gros Ventre gambling, one arousing most intense popular interest. One of our informants was, in view of this fact, of the opinion that gambling among the Gros Ventre may have been first invented by enemy friends.

The keepers of the two most sacred pipes, the Flat Pipe and the Feathered 792
Pipe, were not allowed to gamble with any one, nor were their wives, nor (prob- 525
ably: our chief informant was not sure) ex-keepers. Rare exceptions may have occurred in practice. Should an enemy friend of a keeper taunt him into betting and should the challenger lose, he would lose not only his wager but also in a sense his life. For his life would in consequence be shortened, unless the keeper took pity on him and through submitting him to the appropriate ritual procedure averted the penalty. It was believed too that the keeper could not lose if, against the rules, he really did gamble. Gamblers, at least notorious ones, were not selected as pipe keepers.

Keepers and their wives were subject to a great many other restrictions. They had to maintain a high degree of dignity, to practise many kinds of abstention and "asceticism," and to be benefactors to and intercessors for all [784] the people. It seems probably that the taboo on their gambling was related to one or more of these aspects of the keepership.

Ritual "grandfathers" among the Gros Ventre were of two kinds. A retiring sacred-pipe keeper became automatically "grandfather" to the incoming keeper and instructed him in the ritual, prerogatives and duties of the keepership; a candidate for a sacred lodge chose an older man who had been through the rite as a ritual "grandfather" who would instruct him in the ceremonies and observances of the lodge in question. A person would never gamble against his ritual grandfather. The relationship established between grandfather and grandchild in both cases was predominantly a respectful and sacred one. Against his ritual grandfather a man would not even play in the modern non-gambling 4-button [524] hand game.

The foregoing rather intricate "bettor-wager" gambling pattern appears to 525
be the result of the orderly interplay of five chief determinants or conditioning 571
factors.

The most important and most basic determinant was that of in-group altruism, cohesion, and loyalty, decreasing in intensity from closer and smaller circle to more distant and larger circle, from biological family, to kinship group, to band, to lodge and society, to tribe as such, to more or less friendly alien tribe, and stopping short of hostile alien tribe. In general, the less intense the

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

525 we-group altruism, cohesion, and loyalty, the more gambling and the greater the
571 stakes and vice versa.

Two less important, secondary determinants were the rules of avoidance and respect on the one hand and those of familiarity and license on the other. In general, the greater the degree of avoidance and respect demanded between two persons or classes, the less gambling and the smaller the stakes; the greater the degree of familiarity and license permitted, the more gambling and the bigger the stakes.

A fourth determinant was the element of the sacred (and/or ascetic) associated with certain offices and with the persons occupying them, an element which barred gambling by and/or against these persons, namely, pipe keepers and ritual grandfathers.

A fifth determinant was obviously in operation, although the field evidence therefor is not abundant. We got no record, however, of Gros Ventre gambling with their ancient, hereditary and bitter enemies, the Sioux. Gambling, even to
[648] strip opponents completely, presupposes a minimum of friendliness between the players, or at least the absence of deadly and unqualified hostility.

If we diagram along a horizontal belt the full range of human relationships from unqualified friendliness and altruism on the extreme left through the various gradations to unqualified hostility and malevolence on the extreme right, Gros Ventre gambling may be represented on this belt as absent from the extreme left end, gradually increasing in frequency and in size of stakes as we pass along the central section toward the right, and then suddenly dropping and completely disappearing near the extreme right end.

Besides these five determinants or conditioning factors in Gros Ventre gambling, there were perhaps others, but this is as far as our evidence and our analysis thereof have gone. Of course, one cannot have gambling without some kind of close-range or long-range contact between the gamblers, without some kind of property or other valued thing to wager, and so forth, but working out a list of such requisites would be labor lost.

Before leaving this subject, we should emphasize that, while the preceding pages have referred particularly to the bettor-wager pattern as holding for the hand game, the same pattern held as well for all other Gros Ventre gambling games and contests.[7]

[171
525] 7 In our world sources on gambling we have noted only two explicit references, and these extremely brief, to the bettor-wager pattern: G. Goodwin, *The Social Organization of the Western Apache* (Chicago, 1942), p. 375, "certain types of gambling" are prevented "between members of the same clan," for it would be "like winning it [property] from yourself"; R.

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

NATIVE ATTITUDES

The attitude of the Gros Ventre toward their own gambling was a somewhat ambivalent one. Toward gambling practised within the limitations of the bettor-wager pattern, there was, by and large, no strong disapproval. Such gambling was in the main taken for granted. Yet such approval as was given, even as regards much of the gambling that conformed to the bettor-wager pattern, was in certain respects qualified and circumscribed. 525

Pretty near everyone gambled who had anything to wager. Boys and girls, men and women participated. We recorded only one specific exception, in the person of Mrs Warrior, although there may have been others. There appears to have been no disapproval at all of gambling for "cooking," and very little of gambling for takes of trivial or small value, within of course the bettor-wager pattern. There was a good deal of disapproval of gambling for big or ruinous stakes—how widely shared, how serious, and how "intolerant," it is hard to say.

Parents, however—some at least—commonly counseled their children against

---

Landes, *The Ojibwa Woman* (Columbia University Contributions to Anthropology, vol. 31, 1938), p. 28, differences between gambling by members of same household and by persons from different households. Under date of September 9, 1939, Father Herbert Prucher wrote to Cooper that among the Wachaga of Tanganyika Territory, East Africa, gambling is [only] by non-relatives, distant friends and strangers; under date of June 30, 1944, Father Berard Haile wrote that among the Navaho no gambling occurred between relatives or between members of same clan. 171 525

In short reconnaissance field studies among the Sinkaetku (Southern Okanagon) of Washington, the Kalispel of St Ignatius Mission, Montana, and the Blackfoot of Browning, Montana, in 1938, and the Assiniboine of Ft. Belknap Reservation, Montana, in 1939, Cooper gathered the following fragmentary data on the respective patterns:

Sinkaetku: No gambling against one's brother, sister or cousin: "If my brother wants anything I have, I say to him, 'Take it,' without any question." No gambling between members of same family, not between members of a group wintering together. Not right to gamble except with "strangers." Intertribal gambling for big stakes customary.

Kalispel: No gambling between brothers. No twosome gambling between cousins, but cousins might gamble as members of opposing teams. Two teams from same village might gamble sometimes, but not often. Gambling is mostly between teams from different villages or tribes.

Blackfoot: Two brothers or two members of same band could gamble against each other only for small stakes; two members of different societies, such as the Brave Dogs and the Doves, could gamble against each other for big stakes, such as horses.

Assiniboine: Blood relatives, such as brothers and other close relatives, would not gamble on opposite sides against one another; they would gamble on same side always. Two brothers-in-law or two sisters-in-law could gamble against each other, but a son-in-law could not gamble against his father-in-law or his mother-in-law on account of current avoidance and respect conventions. Intertribal gambling is customary.

In our own American white culture there are clear indications of a bettor-wager pattern in gambling. No systematic field study thereof has, however, been made, so far as the present writers can discover.

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

525 gambling, even for the small stakes, mostly arrows, which children could put up. Further, advice against gambling was commonly given by tribal leaders as well as by relatives and friends, presumably with more particular reference to gambling for high stakes.

[558] Excessive or inveterate high-stake gamblers easily lost the respect of the people and were looked down upon. Such were not likely to be chosen as "chiefs," and could not be chosen as keepers of the sacred pipes. The possession of gambling power from prairie chickens or ghosts netted the possessor a certain prestige, but not nearly the prestige that came from achievements in war or medicine, or even from skill in hunting. Keg, whose story we have given above, had little real prestige, we were told. Red Whip had more, it seems, but this or much of it may well have been the result of his outstanding war record.

The foregoing ambivalent attitude can, we believe, be accounted for, in large part at least, by the data we have, incomplete though these data are. It is pretty clear from the prevalent bettor-wager pattern that the Gros Ventre recognized two more or less conflicting aspects of their gambling: a recreative one and a predatory one. Certain kinds of gambling were indulged in predominantly for friendly recreation, to have a good time together. The minor wagering therein merely added a little spice and zest to play, while the losers suffered no appreciable loss or hurt. Other kinds, the common games for large stakes and the occasional ones for career prestige, were indulged in predominantly for gain and this at the expense of the losers, for acquisition in which the losers suffered losses that were grievously felt and that seriously hurt. As the bettor-wager pattern shows, gambling of the first kinds was recognized as consistent with the accepted canons of in-group altruism and benevolence; that of the second, as inconsistent therewith.

Actually gambling contributed both to social concord and solidarity and to social discord and disunion. It must have contributed in some measure to social concord and solidarity inasmuch as it provided a large measure of pleasurable recreation and excitement shared in common and a relatively innocuous outlet for aggression and dominance. The Gros Ventre were consciously concerned with fomenting solidarity within their ranks: for one thing they were a fighting people beset with powerful enemies. But whether they were aware of the role their gambling played in positively and constructively promoting solidarity is not possible to say on the evidence we have and at this distance of time.

As regards, however, discord resulting from gambling, this was common and they were keenly aware of it. The code demanded that losers should take their losses, together with the associated twitting and strutting by the winners, in good

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

part and as good sports, but actual behavior not infrequently fell short of 358
the code's demands. Bad feeling was at times engendered and could and did
end in blows and violence, as was noted earlier in our account of the wheel game. 525
Quarrels among gambling boys must have been fairly common. One of our 578
informants, Thick, recounted three different bow and arrow contests for arrows, in which contests he had engaged as a boy with other boys. All three ended in violence started by the losers. In one of the three set-tos, Thick, the winner, was shot in the hand with an arrow by the other boy who lost his temper, and Thick still, at the age of 75, carries the scar. That the Gros Ventre were perfectly aware, as of course they must have been, of the discord hazard in gambling, is clear from such counsel as, for example, Thick's mother used to give him when he was a boy: "If you join in those gambling games somebody is going to get mad on account of getting beaten and he may pound you up." Further, that gambling often led to bad feeling was given to us by The Boy as the reason why the Gros Ventre disapproved of gambling between relatives.

So far as we could make out, Gros Ventre attitudes on gambling were 525
determined in only minor measure by economic considerations. In the days 183-
before the disappearance of the buffalo in 1883-84, the Gros Ventre lived under a normal economy of abundance. Moreover, generosity in parting with their possessions, through gift and sharing, was focal in code and practice. Criers around the camp would counsel the people in words such as: "Men and women, don't love your property. You will always acquire other property. Only life never comes back, but property you can have back any time." In the long run for most individuals winnings would balance losses, just as gifts tended to balance gifts—a system of exchange which incidentally must have served to prevent unhealthy accumulation of wealth in the hands of any individual or small group. The cases of really ruinous loss of property through gambling, of reduction to "pauperism," appear to have been rare, and even in these cases the losers would ordinarily be looked after temporarily and tided over by their kin or friends. At any rate we got no record of individuals or their dependents suffering grave [735]
privation of the necessities of life as a result of gambling losses.

How far such facts entered into the Gros Ventre attitude toward gambling 525
cannot be determined confidently from such evidence as we have. In our hours of free discussion with informants, there was almost no intimation of economic considerations leading to disapproval. One of the themes in the tongue-lashing Lame Bull got from his father after the disastrous contest with White Owl may have been the economic, but this was not expressly stated by The Boy. Mrs Warrior kept away from gambling because, she said: "I liked what I had and

525 did not want to lose it," and her grandmother used to advise her against gambling lest she lose valued things. All in all it looks as if economic considerations had little to do with such disapproval of gambling as was current among the Gros Ventre; if anything, economic considerations and concepts of property use and disposal would in the main have reinforced approval.

To sum up, Gros Ventre attitudes on gambling appear to have been influenced very much by concern for altruism and accord, very little by economic values.

PAST AND PRESENT

525 773 To round out the picture we have tried to give of Gros Ventre gambling, we are adding a brief sketch of its history.

Gros Ventre myth, folk lore, and tradition have little to say on gambling. According to one folk story, given by Mrs Sleeping Bear, but unknown to Mrs Warrior, the hand game was first gotten from the thunder by a certain Tsê·ganis (Little Short Horns). There is no reference to gambling in the fairly complete cycle of sacred myths we gathered or in the trickster (Nihât'") cycle.[8] This absence, particularly from the trickster cycle, may give some slight ground for suspecting that gambling may not go back very far in Gros Ventre culture history.

525 Apart, however, from such speculative surmise, what is clear is that gambling was in full vigor among the Gros Ventre in the second half of the last century, and had been since at least around the early part of the century. It was in full swing from at least the early boyhood days of Lame Bull who was born in 1825.

525 182 Gros Ventre gambling, especially with the wheel and hand games, suffered a severe shock after the disappearance of the buffalo in 1884, as did the main structure of Gros Ventre culture and society. With the rapid collapse of the broad framework into which gambling had so trimly fitted, gambling itself, especially with the older games, rapidly toppled down. The last big wheel game remembered by five older informants—The Boy, Thick, Charles Buckman, Steven Bradley, Philip Shortman—occurred in 1893; the last big hand game in 1891.[9] Around the turn of the century not much of the older complex was

8 Gambling does however occur in the Found-in-the-Grass Gros Ventre folk story, according to The Boy. Gambling at the wheel game between Clotted-Blood and the Bull is recorded in the Clotted-Blood tale, by A. L. Kroeber, *Gros Ventre Myths and Tales* (Anthropological Papers, American Museum of Natural History, vol. 1, pt. 3, 1907), p. 86.

[115] 9 When in the field we failed to obtain these exact dates. We are indebted for them to our conscientious, high-minded and exceptionally able interpreter, Thomas Main, who procured them for us from the above five elder informants and forwarded them to us with some other supplementary information by letter of September 25, 1946.

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

left, although we still have reports of a hand game between the Gros Ventre 525
and the Flathead, staged at Glacier Park, Montana, as late as 1922, in which 182
Joe Assiniboine represented the Gros Ventre. Today neither the wheel game nor the 2-button hand game is played.

Hard times, for a short period near-famine conditions, prevailed for a while after 1884; an economy of abundance gave place to an economy of scarcity. [735] While a world survey of gambling reveals, so far as we can discern, no significant correlation between gambling and abundance or scarcity economies, extreme and sudden economic shock and shift, such as occurred among the Gros Ventre in the years immediately following 1884, may well have slowed up the gambling pace.

Around 1897 the non-gambling hand game was introduced, won favor, and [177] persists down to the present. Today there is little gambling among the Gros Ventre on the reservation. Most of what occurs among them takes place off [178] the reservation, at nearby white villages and towns, in the form of poker or other card games for money, between Gros Ventre and whites.

Catholic University of America
Washington, D. C.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

524 A form of the widely spread guessing-game occurred among the Gros
531 Ventre. Two buttons, which were enclosed in the hand, were used. At the beginning each player held one button. One of them guessed in which hand the other held the button. If he guessed wrong, his opponent got four counters; but if he guessed right, his opponent must yield the button to him. When he held two, his opponent guessed in which hand each of them was. If his opponent guessed wrong, the player received two counters; but if his opponent was right, the player must hand over both buttons, and himself guess. The game was played for twelve stick counters. These at the beginning were in a pile belonging to neither of the players. This neutral pile was drawn upon until exhausted, before either player gave counters to the other. This method of using counters was customary in Arapaho and Gros Ventre games.

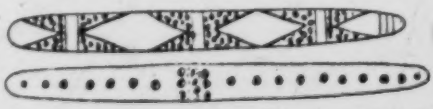


Fig. 18 (50 4325, 50 4325 a). Dice. Lengths, 15 cm., 16 cm.

[171]

The buttons used in this game are different from those the Arapaho have had in recent years. They lack symbolism altogether, and are even without the red-black color-dualism obvious in the Arapaho game. The elaborate counters, food-sticks, pointers, and head-dresses of the Arapaho are also not found among the Gros Ventre. Of one pair of buttons, one was of brass beads, the other of green glass beads. They were called respectively "long" and "short." Another pair, made of bone, are illustrated in Fig. 19. A single button made of bone, apparently from a tooth-brush-handle, is shown in Fig. 20.

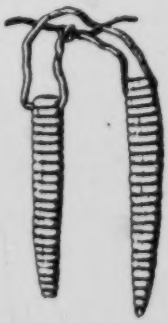


Fig. 19.

Fig. 20.

Fig. 19 (50 1931 a, b). Hiding-buttons. Length, 7 cm.
Fig. 20 (50 1917). Hiding-button. Length, 6 cm.

● 526 Boys shot arrows or threw sticks
857 at a netted hoop, apparently identical with the Arapaho hoop except for nomenclature. The central mesh, called the "crow" or "crow's heart," won the game for whoever hit it. If the "crow's heart" was not pierced, a point was scored by the arrow nearest to it. An arrow passing through the netting without being held in it counted nothing. If one of the hoops rolled within reach, a player was at liberty to

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

526
857

spear and catch it on his stick, or, if it was flying through the air, he was allowed to do the same. On winning, he put the wheel on top of his head, keeping it there as long as he could. When it fell down, the others all threw their wheels at him while he cowered under his robe. The wheel was usually thrown overhand, as were the sticks.

Another game was played with bow and arrows. The bow was rested in a diagonal position or held in the hand, while an arrow was several times tapped against the string and then suddenly released so that it was thrown several feet. Another player then followed, trying to cause his arrow to be thrown so as to rest on the first. If none of the players succeeded in hitting the others' arrows, all the arrows used were put aside in a pile as stakes, and the game recommenced.

Still another game played by boys consisted of five sticks or arrows. The smallest, a white stick, was thrown ahead, and the longer sticks were thrown after it. The stick that came nearest the short piece won as many points as agreed upon, but a stick resting on the short piece won the game. This game, like others of boys, was played for arrows.

Another game played by boys was to throw sticks at a forked stick stood up in the ground. A player whose stick rested in the fork won the other sticks played with. If all the players missed, they laid their sticks into the fork as stakes. They continued to do this after each throw, until a player, by dropping his stick into the fork, won all those that were there. The sticks were thrown from a mark in the ground made at a certain distance from the fork.

Fig. 21 (50 1859). Grass Target. Length, 23 cm.

Boys played still another game by throwing sticks so as to strike the ground, bounce, and slide; the one throwing farthest winning the sticks of the others. These sticks were held at the very end, and thrown underhand. Like all sticks or arrows used in games, they were called "kanii." Sometimes longer darts were used, which were slid over the instep of the foot.

Boys also played by setting up three sticks or arrows in a row, and shooting at them. The one whose arrow rested nearest the middle upright stick won. In case of doubt, a small stick was used to measure the distance. This game seems to have been played indoors. Outdoors the shooting would be from a greater distance. Whoever came nearest to the mark then threw up and shot at a bunch of grass, exts'ta". If he hit the bunch while

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

526 857 it was in the air, he won. This game was played customarily for arrows as stakes. Such a bunch of grass which was shot at is shown in Fig. 21. It is curved, and tapers to one end, and it is wound with sinew.

526

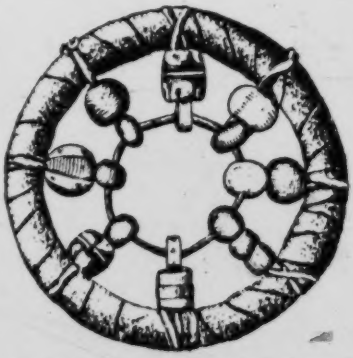


Fig. 22 (50-1934). Gaming-wheel. Diameter, 8 cm.

Adults — instead of throwing sticks, or shooting arrows at a netted hoop — rolled a small hoop in a carefully cleared and smoothed place towards a log or obstruction, while they threw at it with arrows or sticks, trying to have the hoop and the arrow in contact when at rest. The hoops were ornamented with beads or other small objects of different colors or shapes, and certain values in counters were given to each of these ornaments (Fig. 22). Usually there were two small banks or logs, one at each end of the course, a hoop being rolled alternately back and forth. It is said that, in order to score, it was necessary for some part of the hoop to rest on the point of the arrow, the shaft not counting. If several of the sets of beads on the hoop touched the arrowhead, the score was the sum of the points of the several ornaments.

Shinny was played with bent sticks and a ball by young men against girls. In driving the ball towards the goal, each player tried to keep it to himself as long as he could. The balls were stuffed with deer-hair. The goal at each end of the field was marked by a pair of monuments of stone. It is said that the young women often won from the young men.

Fig. 23 (50-1896). Women's Football. Diameter, 14 cm.

Ball was played by women or girls standing in a circle and striking the ball back and forth with the open palm until one missed it, whereupon all rushed for it. Whoever secured the ball started throwing it again. Sometimes it was thrown from one to another around a circle. When one failed to catch it, the others scattered. Picking up the ball, she pursued them with it while they looked for buffalo-chips on which to stand. There they were safe. Some, how-

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

ever, could find none to stand on, and this was what gave rise to the excitement and amusement. 526

Girls sometimes kicked a football upward, as if juggling with it. Such a football was kicked with the instep, either while free or while held by a string. Fig. 23 shows such a football about six inches in diameter. It is said to be made of the skin of an unborn buffalo-calf, and to be stuffed with fur. It is covered with an unknotted network of sinew strands.

The ordinary balls are much smaller than this one, and lack the sinew network. They are made of soft-dressed skin, and painted. In construction and appearance they are not to be distinguished from Arapaho ghost-dance balls, except that none have yet been seen with a plume on the attached thong, as is customary with the Arapaho. One, approaching the last in size, was said to have been struck with a stick, and is therefore probably a shinny-ball. It lacks a thong. The others are smaller, usually with a double thong, and are said to be stuffed with hair. [171]

Fig. 24 (50-1981). Ghost-dance Ball. Diameter, 9 cm.

[531]

Specimen Museum No. 50-1729 is the thongless ball mentioned as used with a stick. It is painted red. One side has been lightly gone over with a dark paint, blue or black. In the middle of the red side is a small dark cross.

Specimen Museum No. 50-1728 is painted yellow. Along the seam where the two hemispheres are joined, it is red. On one side a hand is outlined in green; on the other side, in red. An Arapaho ball described[1] had a smaller hand painted on it, because, it is said, the hand threw the ball.

The ball one side of which is shown in Fig. 24 was said to have been made in connection with the ghost-dance. One side is primarily dark blue or green; the other, yellow. Each side has on it a central spot and a ring of the opposite color. The symbolism of this painting is not quite consistent, but recalls that of the Arapaho. On the dark side three concentric circles were distinguished, representing three successive existences of the world; the fourth was still to come. On the yellow side the central spot represented the entrance to the sky. It thus seems that the two sides of the ball represent heaven and earth, the future life and this.

[1] See Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part IV, Fig. 150.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

526 Fig. 25 shows one side of a small ball painted yellow, on which is a rude embroidery in red, yellow, and green quills, representing a bird. On the 532 opposite side is a red quilled cross. The bird-embroidery recalls the quill-ornamentation of an Arapaho ghost-dance drumstick and hand implement, both of them with stuffed heads of painted skin; also the painting of a crow on an Arapaho ghost-dance ball.[1]

526

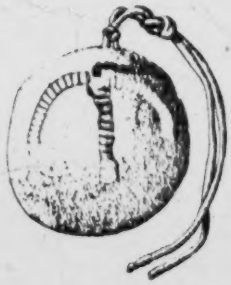


Fig. 25 (50-1731). Embroidered and Painted Ball. Diameter, 7 cm.

A game of throwing willow sticks on the ice, to see who could slide them farthest, was played by women. These sticks were sometimes tipped with buffalo-calves' horns. Young men, as well as women, sometimes threw horn-pointed sticks on the ice. It is said that women used long sticks, young men short sticks.

Children slid on the ice at a place they had made smooth. A boy and then a girl would slide alternately. When the whole party had slid one way, they would return, sliding in the opposite direction.

A toy made to slide on the ice consists of a bone to which two feathered sticks are attached at a diverging angle. It is called "tataxtsitcebya^{n}." The object is to bounce or slide the implement over the ice as far as possible. This type of object is found among a number of Plains tribes.

Fig. 26 (50-1788). Bull-roarer. Length, 56 cm.

493 Boys' sleds for coasting on hillsides were made of 526 several buffalo-ribs held together at each end by a long 857 thong winding in and out around the two halves of a split stick. A buffalo-tail was tied behind. These sleds were called "sö^{n}ẽ^{n}haana^{n}." When a man presented such a sled to another man's boy, he received presents from the boy's parents. In early summer, when the grass was green, toboggans of rawhide were used on the hillsides. The front was held up and bent over, and the bottom soon became very smooth.

224 Slings were used by boys for killing birds and small animals. The entire 411 sling was made of skin. The thongs were passed through holes near the 857

[1] See Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part IV, p. 395, Fig. 151.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

All that has been described took place for four successive days. While it is not clearly so stated, it seems likely that the four nights on which medicine was given to the dancers' wives constituted the four-days' period of painting and dancing. On the fourth day, after the dancing, certain special spectacular ceremonies were gone through, analogous to those which in all the succeeding dances terminated the ceremony. In this dance, however, a second period of four days, in which the dancers acted in their assumed capacity of being crazy or foolish, followed these spectacular ceremonies of the fourth day. 796

On this fourth day, two prominent chiefs, noted for their success in war, were selected. They held bared knives, and two tent-poles were brought to them. Each of them recounted four of his most distinguished coups. They then cut up the tent-poles into small pieces, and piled them up at the fireplace of the lodge and set them on fire. The flames blazed up high, while the dancers stood north and south of the fire with their "grandfathers" and danced. The fire was kept up and tended so that all the wood would be simultaneously consumed. The dancers' relatives held them by the hair or body, wherever they could seize them, while the dancers stood like horses trying to break loose, and blew their whistles. Each tried to be the first to rush into the fire. They seem to have moved toward the fire four times without entering it. The fourth time, at a signal, they were released, and rushed into the fire, dancing and stamping it with their bare feet until they had put it out. Medicine was put on the skin, and no one is said to have been burned; but men have fainted in the fire. One informant, who said that he had been the first to jump into the fire, stated that the soles of his feet became very hot, but that his skin was not burned. [554] [789]

After the fire had been put out, the dancers went to their "grandfathers," who prayed over their bows, put medicine on them, and gave them to the young men. The old men then sang and the dancers marched around in a circle for four songs. At the end of the last song, they ran out of the lodge, racing to a monument, which had been erected by the young men of other companies, at some distance to the southeast, and back again to the lodge. As they returned, each passed between two men standing near the entrance of the lodge, to whom he gave his bow as he ran between them. One of these two men was the tallest man that could be secured; the other was as short as possible. One of them took the bows of the tall division of dancers; the other, of the short division. It is said that these two men received bows until they had a large armful, but that they never made a mistake in taking a bow from a man of the other division. It appears, however, that the racers carried their bows in their right or left 796 526

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 hand, according as they belonged to one division or the other. Vessels of water were ready to pour on the racers in order to cool them. The four 526 "brothers," the dancers previously separate from the rest at the eastern end of the lodge, did not run with the crowd, but started out slowly together, their faces covered with their robes. They trotted at a slow pace over the same course as the other dancers. As they returned, long after the crowd, 796 the boys, young men, and young women of the camp, had gathered on both sides, and pelted them with buffalo-chips until they reached the dancing-lodge. There is, in this slow following of the pledger and his three companions, a reminiscence of the white-fool, the dancer of highest degree in the Arapaho crazy-lodge, who on all occasions contrasts by his slow movements with the other dancers.[1] After the return of all the dancers, [431] they presented horses loaded with property to their "grandfathers," and these made similar presents to them. These gifts seem to have been payments to the old men for their instruction and painting, and to have been made at the conclusion of the part of the ceremony which was under their control. From this time on, the dancers' wives returned to their tents, and took no further part in the ceremony.

After this followed two observances. It is not certain which of the two came first. A crowd of people were waiting for the dancers in the open. The dancers, wearing their best moccasins put on loosely without being tied, left the lodge; and the waiting people, mostly women and children, ran after them, pulling off their moccasins, and, when they could not succeed in doing so otherwise, seizing their feet, and tripping them as they went. The dancers did not try to escape, or save their moccasins, but [888] allowed them to be taken. Or, again, an old man who was poor was selected, and, having been given a pipe to smoke in order that he might 796 accept, he went to the east of the camp-circle. A buffalo robe was brought, 431 incensed four times with sweet-grass placed on burning charcoal or buffalo-chips, and then placed over the old man, with the hair side out, as, bent over, he knelt on the ground. The dancers gathered about him, and

[1] According to an Arapaho account obtained, somewhat different from those previously utilized, there are two white-fools, not one. It is not clear which information is more correct. [114] The white-fools always follow the dancers. If one of the ordinary dancers should be behind them, he would become unable to move. This is the result of any violation of a rule of the ceremony by a participant. In such cases the white-fools have the power to cure them by 171 taking off their owl-feather head-bands, and rubbing them over the body with them. The white-fools are addressed as heiçâbihin ("sisters-in-law," strictly, "brother or sister-in-law" of opposite sex from the speaker). The dancers, to look at a person, put their head to the ground, and pretend to look with their rump. They throw dung into tents, calling it "food." If people look at them through awl-holes in a tent, they at once shoot the tent in that place. Going out on the prairie, they say, "Let us not shoot into the air," and shoot up. When the arrows fall in plain sight, they cannot find them; if they fall into brush or tall grass, they find them at once. They imitate, often with obscene renderings, anything that they hear, such as a person's speech, or a dog's bark. They paralyze dogs by pointing at them an arrow to which tetemâtcci is attached. They give the dogs they kill to their "grandfathers" to eat. As soon as they take off their head-bands, they become rational. Mooney's account of the Cheyenne and Arapaho crazy-dance, which seems to refer chiefly to the former, mentions two white-fools; compare Ghost-Dance Religion, op. cit., 1033.

CHAPTER VIII

CHILDHOOD

858 In the days before the buffalo disappeared and before formal schooling was available, childhood, it was said, for girls was shorter and for boys was longer than at present. A girl was ordinarily [582] given in marriage before she was twelve years old—certainly before she attained physiological maturity. A boy on the other hand, though seemingly anxious to participate in hunting and in war as soon as he was able, was not forced to bear the full responsibilities of adulthood until the end of adolescence. While there was considerable variation from family to family in the amount of time required of children in training for practical tasks, all enjoyed a considerable amount of " free time."

Play

857 Singer and Coming Daylight, the two oldest of our informants, in recalling the amusements and pastimes of their youth, decided 526 that sliding down hills was one of the most pleasurable as it could be done at any time of the year. In winter, when there was snow, [493] the boys used a kind of sled made by lashing buffalo rib-bones together. Girls managed just as well by simply sitting on their robes and holding between their legs the end which usually hung free. In summer a stiff buffalo hide was used for sliding down the grassy slopes.[1] When the water was frozen, boys and girls alike [524] skated with their feet on the ice, thus clearing a slick surface on which to spin their tops made of horn.

857 Swimming, however, was the great sport in summer. Girls left their dresses close to the bank, those of the older girls in a neat 526 row closest to the edge and those of the smaller girls in the next 481 row. Beginners used the dog-paddle, but the boys developed profi-

[1] For this and some other types of amusement, see Kroeber, 1908, pp. 190–91.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

ciency with the overhand stroke and girls with the breast stroke.[3] 857
Sometimes the children amused themselves by rolling down the 526
bank so that their bodies made a loud smack as they hit the water. 481
At other times they held contests to see who could dive and stay under the longest time, or who could make the biggest bubble by exhaling under water. Follow-the-leader was played even in big rivers like the Missouri, but only the more courageous participated in this game. The one who had the reputation as bravest was the leader, and Coming Daylight claimed that she, herself, often led off, one of her accomplishments being the ability to swim quite far under water.

There was no adult supervision of children at play and they 857
spent much time at the water's edge, even when not intending to 524
swim. Modelling in clay was done by boys as well as by girls. The latter liked especially to form wet clay into "parflesches" and incise marks to represent beaded and painted designs.

Walking on stilts, teetering on logs, swinging by standing in a [481]
loop of rawhide, all were considered enjoyable activities for little girls. Nevertheless some of their games were quite rough and-tumble. In one such game, girls formed a circle, each pinching the flesh on the back of her neighbor's left hand; while standing thus they sang a song which was repeated as many times as necessary until someone let go of her neighbor's hand; whereupon this girl was jumped on and mauled by all the others. In another game, one girl, with her eyes closed, would try to find the others who were seated in a row on the ground. Different ones would call out: "This way! This way!" Each was anxious to be the first discovered. As soon as the girl who was "it" touched one of the others, she picked her up and, carrying her upside-down on her back to the spot from which she had originally started, she dumped her burden on the ground. This procedure was repeated until "it" had carried each girl, but the last one to be dumped was tickled unmercifully by all the others.

Girls played with two kinds of balls. One type was of buck- 857
skin stuffed with deer-hair. This they would toss to one another. 526
The other type of ball was large and made from the bladder of a [237]
buffalo cow dried and stuffed.

[3] The marked ability of the Gros Ventres in swimming was noted in 1833 [147]
by Maximilian, p. 72.

857 buffalo cow, dried and stuffed. This type they would bounce and
526 kick. A popular game played among girls in spring was as follows. The girls holding hands formed a big ring. One girl in the center would have a ball. She would throw it at anyone in the ring. When she hit her chosen victim on the chest with the ball, the girls let go of each other's hands and each ran for a piece of buffalo chip where she would be "safe."[8]

A game played by boys and girls together in the evening was as follows. The children would line up according to size behind the tallest boy who would have in his hand a stick which was smouldering at the end. Each child held on tightly to the one in front of him. The boy holding the stick would try to touch the smallest child at the end of the line. The line would writhe as big sparks would fly and sometimes hair got singed. One old woman, recalling this game, remarked: "I don't know when we would get to bed, we had such a good time!"

Sometimes the children would send one of the group on an er-
857 rand. Those who stayed behind would wet their hands with their
524 tongues and say: "We will watch this to see if it takes you a long time or not." If their hands were still wet when the member of the group returned, they decided that he had done the errand very quickly.

When there were pretty clouds in the sky a little girl might point one out to the other children and tell them to watch it. Then she would stand at the bank of the river, bending over at the waist and violently flinging her arms from side to side while sing-
[821 ing. The others would watch the cloud and tell her that it was dis-
789 appearing and soon it would be gone. "They used to think they could make the cloud disappear by singing that song."

If a group of girls were playing together and some one boy, say
[576] from seven to nine years old, would butt in, the girls would all sit down to show that they resented the intrusion. If the boy did not leave, the girls would then form a circle around him and sing a derisive song. Thus the boy would be shamed and run off. The opportunity for this did not occur very often, since boys from about the age of seven usually went off to be by themselves

[8] For description of ball games and illustration of type of football, see Kroeber, 1908, fig. 23.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

at play. It was said that a girl, of course, would never think of attempting to break into a group of boys. 857 524

Sometimes a group of boys tried to break up the girls' play. One way they pestered them was to wait until they were about to slide down a hill. Just as a girl would be ready to start, one of the boys would grab one of her legs and spin her around so that she would go down the hill backwards.

A favorite sport among boys involved skill in shooting arrows.[4] One game was to plant a marked arrow as a target. Then two boys would shoot two arrows each, and the one whose arrow came closest to the marker would take the arrows of his opponent. Sometimes they would see who could shoot the greatest distance. An interesting variation was to fasten a bow to upright sticks, one stick shorter than the other, so that the bow slanted with the string up. The player would stand on one side of the bow and tap the arrow against the bowstring to get the string vibrating, and when he judged the vibration sufficient to send the arrow toward the marker about 35-40 feet distant, he would release the arrow. Then another player would try his luck. The one who came closer to the marker would take the arrow of the one who lost. 857 526

Boys played a variant of the hoop and pole game. The hoop was larger than that used in the game as played by adults and a split stick was used as lance. The thrower aimed at the center of the wheel and, if he hit it, the shot was called "the crow." Another wheel game played by boys was rolling hoops made of green willow wrapped with willow bark. There were no cross-pieces in this wheel which was about 16 inches in diameter. Two teams lined up and the hoop was rolled as swiftly as possible by a member of one team while the members of the opposing team by shooting arrows tried to hit the rim of the hoop. If one succeeded and thus stopped the wheel, he retrieved his arrow, placed the hoop against a rock and had a chance to hit the rim while the hoop was at rest.

Occasionally there was trouble between boys who were contesting. Thick told of one occasion when he and his partner were betting against two other boys. Thick himself happened to make the winning point by splitting the upright arrow at which they 857 526 578

[4] Some boys' games are described by Kroeber, 1908, pp. 186-87.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

857 were shooting. "Just as I leaned down to pick up the arrows which had been bet and fairly won, one of the other boys got mad
●526 and shot at me. The arrow hit my hand and I bear the scar to
578 this day. On another occasion at the same kind of game, my partner and I won, and one of the boys of the opposing couple hit both of us over the head with his bow. My people always discouraged me from fighting—I was a shy boy in any case—but my partner took the bow away from one of our opponents and in turn hit him over the head. The opponent ran home and reported to his parents. His mother was the kind who took up for her sons and so she came toward my partner and me. My partner was still angry and called out to the woman: 'We are going to shoot you with our arrows if you come any closer!' Whereupon the woman turned around and went back without saying anything. When our par-
[861] ents heard of this, however, both my partner and I were given a good tongue-lashing for having threatened a woman."

In summer, boys of the same band playing together as a group
857 expected a fight if they came in contact with a group from another
578 band. While sometimes they used bows and arrows in this type of fighting, more often they used mud balls propelled from the end of a willow stick about three feet long. Thick gave the following account of one of these battles in which he participated as a boy.

"One summer day I was with my band group, the Frozens. We expected we might be raided, so we had already prepared mud balls and were modeling clay figures—horses, buffalo, men, and so on—when the Upper Quarters gang attacked. We Frozens grabbed our sticks and mud balls and ran into a coulee and then turned on the Upper Quarters. As the latter approached they protected themselves by holding their robes up in front of their faces, since the mud balls were aimed at their heads. Jim Shortman happened to be the member of the Upper Quarters who was 'bravest' and in the lead. I aimed at him and Jim put up his robe and warded off the shot; but Dwarf, who was right beside me, threw a mud ball immediately after I had and hit Jim right in the eye, breaking the skin and knocking him down. When they saw the blood, Jim ran home and the others, especially Dwarf, were scared. When Dwarf saw Jim's father coming toward

3; Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 of the deer-hoof rattles as the dancers jumped in the fire, was recorded, number 62, as sung by The Boy. It contains just one word meaning: "I wonder what makes me so crazy" (i.e., so crazy that I will jump in the fire). After the singing of the four songs, when the fire was blazing well, the Crazy Dancers said "Ya" and leaped barefooted into the fire and trampled it out with their bare feet. No case is on record of a dancer's feet being burned. As noted previously, the dancers in some way represented millers (moths).

It was a common custom for enemy-friends, male or female, of the dancers to rope them just as the latter were about to jump in the blazing fire and to release them only after the fire had died down or been stamped out. On release, the dancers would step only in the coals or ashes. Coming Daylight had so held back an enemy-friend on one occasion. Some women were quite strong enough to so hold men dancers back. At other times the men would [522] break loose from the women. All this was done as a practical joke on the enemy-friend. Sometimes a wife would so hold back or try to hold back her husband, with a rawhide rope tied to his belt, apparently out of fear for his safety.

After the fire dance came a series of rites or observances which we are calling the bow rites, as the bow enters prominently into them. They consist of a dance, a race, bow-tightening, arrow-shooting, and moccasin plundering.

*796 Before the dance began the Crazy Dancers selected two prominent men from another age-group than their own to act as 526 referees for the race that followed the Dance. These two, one for the "talls" and one for the "shorts," took their places on either side of the dance lodge door. Then the grandfathers took the bows of their respective grandsons and, to the accompaniment of the deer-hoof rattles, sang four times a wordless song, number 63,—sung by The Boy and recorded by us. The dancers did not join in the singing as they had their whistles in their mouths. During the singing, the Crazy Dancers, in a mass, "talls" and "shorts" mingled, but with each team of two to four led by its grandfather carrying its bows, moved clockwise in a sort of dancing walk around the inside of the dance lodge, beginning at the left of the entrance. The singing and dancing were so synchronized that the

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

mass of dancers would reach the right entrance at the ending of the fourth singing. On arrival there, the dancers said "Ya" and grabbed their bows from the hands of their grandfathers and started their race. 796* 526

They ran pell-mell toward a mound far outside the camp circle, rounded the mound clockwise, raced back to the dance lodge. All the dancers, "talls" and "shorts," had to take part in the race. Their grandfathers did not accompany them, but the two old men criers, of the "talls" and "shorts" respectively, ran along with them.

Each of the "talls" and "shorts" on reaching the dance lodge gave his bow to the respective referee at one entrance. The losing side, "talls" or "shorts," had to give a smoke to the winners.

While the dancers were racing, the two old criers were having a race of their own, a race which provided "lots of fun" for the spectators. Along the way the boys would in fun pick up buffalo chips and throw them at the two old men. At one Crazy Dance, the two racing criers were The Boy's father, Lame Bull, and another old man, both crippled. The latter was outdistancing Lame Bull, but the boys bothered him so much that he left off the race to chase them, while Lame Bull kept going and came in the winner. The other old man accused Lame Bull of framing him. According to Turn Toes, the four "elder brothers" or councilors were the ones who raced and were pelted with buffalo chips, but we did not have opportunity to discuss the point in detail with him.

After the race and the subsequent smoke to the winners, came the bow-tightening rite, for which some poor old man was chosen. The referees re-distributed the bows to the dancers. The dancers then each put on their best moccasins and an old robe with a hole in the middle to be worn like a poncho, the old robe being "in imitation of millers."[20] The old man would get ready well away from camp, lying face down on the ground with his head covered with a robe. Each dancer would tighten his bowstring, bracing 796*

* In 1948 The Boy stated that this robe made from discarded lodge covers hung down the back, with only enough in front to hold it on. It was painted red at the four corners and at the neck; owl "pelts" were attached between the shoulders, the large feathers having been removed, and hung down the back. When the garment was worn it looked as though the dancer's shoulders were painted. [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

buffalo tongues, for the celebration. The vower and his assistants would through their crier announce to the people whether the camp would move for good hunting. On the march, the vower and his company took their place in line immediately after the sacred Pipes. No one was allowed to hunt or run the buffalo until the signal was given. 796* 782 224

During the hunt there would be foot and horse races, shooting contests and gambling matches between the "talls" and "shorts." The losers in the gambling would have to "cook," that is, to provide a meal for the winners, a feast at which the rest of the people, including the children, would horn in. Each one of the losers had to furnish some food or clothing and a smoke (not the pipe itself) to the winners. If one of the losers failed to bring a filled pipe along with the food or clothing wager, the wager was rejected, but he was given a chance to go get one. The winners kept track of the losers, and if any of the latter failed to pay up, they would not do anything to him at once while they were sitting around eating. But afterwards, the winners, followed by the rest of the people, would go to the lodge of the delinquent loser, who usually did not and dared not run away. Here the enemy-friend of the loser would take the latter out of his lodge, and lay him on a spread robe or blanket. The winners would then carry him to the stream or river, give him a good swing and throw him into the water. All the people would follow to see the fun, and the young boys would pelt him with buffalo chips. The victim had to take it all good naturedly and not lose his temper, and the crowd had a good laugh. If the loser were not in his lodge when the winners arrived, they would fetch water, and his enemy-friend would give the loser's bed a good drenching. 792 796* 525 527● 522

The hunt continued, the group moving here and there, until enough tongues and other meat was collected, the tongues having been turned over to the vower to be jerked by his wife or wives. Then came the earlier-mentioned four whole nights of singing, done either on successive nights, or from time to time as the tribe moved toward the spot selected for the Sacrifice Dance. After arrival there the fourth of the four all-night singings took place, marking the first night or beginning of the Dance proper, which 782 796* [224 251]

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

sometimes put on the bow with glue made from boiled skin from the head of a buffalo. Sometimes the bow was without sinew backing and sometimes ornamented by being covered on the back with snake-skin. Bows are said to have been held either horizontally or vertically, according to individual habit. Arrows for war and hunting are said to have been alike. 411

Shields were made of the thickest part of buffalo-bull skin, which was laid into a hole in the ground and made hard by being scorched with hot rocks placed upon it. It was then provided with a cover of white buckskin fringed with feathers. A man who carried a shield in war sometimes had no other weapon. 714

It is declared that no tobacco was raised, and that none growing wild was gathered, but that it was obtained from other tribes and from the whites. This is contrary to the practice of the equally non-agricultural Blackfoot, who planted tobacco; but it would seem to accord with the lack of any information obtained from the Arapaho as to tobacco-raising. 171 249 [439]

DECORATIVE ART.

The present day decorative art of the Gros Ventre is not nearly as strongly developed as that of the Arapaho. There is much less bead-work made, and this hardly ever equals the better work of the Arapaho either in technical or artistic excellence. Quill-embroidery is also found less frequently than among the Arapaho. How far this greater poverty and inferiority of Gros Ventre decorative art are matters of some standing in time is not certain; but it seems probable that there was a difference between the two tribes in this respect, even when they first came into contact with the whites. 531 171

It is in accord with this difference that inquiry as to the symbolic or conventional significance of the decorative designs used by the Gros Ventre has been practically without result. While the failure of the Gros Ventre to render such interpretations is due perhaps in large measure to change of mode of life under the influence of civilization, yet it seems that in this respect too there must have been a temperamental difference between the Arapaho and Gros Ventre, even in earlier times; for the Arapaho preserve at least distinguished wrecks of their symbolism, ceremonies, and religious life, while among the Gros Ventre, who are in much less intimate contact with the Americans, these things have vanished, leaving often scarcely a trace, and rarely more than a memory.

Partly on account of comparative scarcity of material, and also by reason of greater artistic poverty, the decoration of the Gros Ventre does not present as many typical characteristics as that of the Arapaho, the Blackfeet, the

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

531
171

Ute, and other tribes. It bears certain partial resemblances to Arapaho, Blackfoot, and Sioux decoration, and probably has been subject to their influences; but a clear determination of its special qualities is rather difficult. A consideration of some of the more prominent features of the bead and quill embroidery of the northern and western Plains tribes — especially the Cheyenne, Arapaho, Blackfeet, Sioux, Assiniboine, Ute, and Shoshone — will, however, bring out by comparison some of the leanings of the art of the Gros Ventre.

Fig. 1 (*a–n*) presents some of the more conspicuous decorative design elements among the Plains Indians.

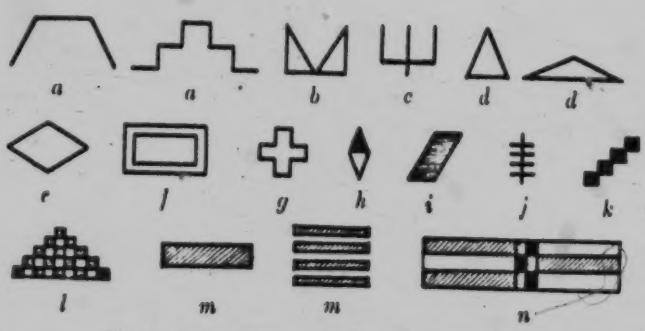


Fig. 1. Design Elements, Bead and Quill Embroidery.

Design *a* shows two schematized forms of a type of pattern that varies greatly in detail, but is always characterized by a horizontal line or bar connecting two spreading arms. The whole figure is usually worked in lines or small areas; it scarcely ever shows any heavy masses. Like the other designs considered, it is frequently only an element in patterns. It is often paired, two figures being arranged back to back, connected by a line, a diamond, acute triangles, or other design elements. This design is conspicuous in Ute bead-work. It may be called the "spreading design."

Design *b* is familiar from the Arapaho specimens that have been illustrated.[1] It may be called the "forked design." Design *c*, the "pronged design," needs no comment. The type of design *d* is the isosceles triangle. Design *e* shows the rhombus; and *f*, a square or rectangle, usually with border and centre of different colors. Element *g* is a square cross; element *h*, a well-known design called "feather" by the Sioux. Elements *i*, *j*, the slanting bar and crossed line, need no comment. Design *k*, the

[1] See Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part III, p. 237.

1: Kroeber E-5. (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

531
171

checker-diagonal, may be a single diagonal row of squares, as here shown, or several rows arranged in checker-pattern. In design *l* the fundamental idea seems to be not so much the effect of checkered color as of steps, analogous to that of design *k*, since the Blackfeet, the great exponents of this type, sometimes make this design in a solid mass, but rarely depart from the exterior step contour which distinguishes this form from the virtually straight-lined element *d*. Design *m* is a wide short stripe or long rectangle, either standing alone, or, if in contact with other stripes, decoratively separated from them by containing an internal design. Very similar in one respect is the solid stripe of one color, the unit-element of design *n*, but entirely different in being developed into a drawn-out checker-pattern by combination with analogous stripes of other colors, as in the soft bag bead-patterns of the Arapaho.

Other important design elements — such as, for instance, the simple right-angled triangle, the leaf-design of the Sioux — are not considered here, because they seem at present of less consequence for comparative determinations.

The spreading pattern (*a*) is most developed by the Ute. It is also common among the Arapaho and Shoshone. The Gros Ventre and Sioux use it less; the Blackfeet apparently not at all.

The forked pattern (*b*) is possibly most used by the Arapaho, but occurs among the Ute, Shoshone, and Sioux, and apparently less frequently among the Gros Ventre. The Blackfeet use this design as little as the last.

The pronged design (*c*) is a third that the Blackfeet lack. It finds its greatest development among the Sioux and Assiniboine. It is rare or lacking among the Gros Ventre.

The triangle designs, both acute and obtuse (*d*), are found among all the tribes under consideration, but seem to be most characteristic of the Sioux and Arapaho.

The diamond (*e*) is apparently most frequent among the Arapaho, the Ute, and the Sioux. The two latter use it chiefly as a centre for more elaborate designs; the Arapaho, also as a separate design.

The square or box design (*f*) is most characteristic of the Sioux and Assiniboine, from whom the Gros Ventre and Crow have perhaps chiefly derived it. With the Arapaho the nearest approach usually is the small solid square the hiiteni symbol.

The square cross (*g*) has a wide distribution. It is very frequent among the Sioux. The Arapaho also use it, but less often alone, and a maltese cross, or some variation, is the form more characteristic of them.

The feather design (*h*) is most typically Sioux and Assiniboine. It is not rare among the Gros Ventre. It occurs but little among the Ute, Sho-

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

531
171

shone, and Blackfeet; and there is not a single example known from the Arapaho. It is frequent among the Crow, and occurs among the Comanche and probably other southern Plains tribes.

The slanting bar (*i*) is characteristic of the Ute and Shoshone, though it never appears with great frequency. It occurs also among the Arapaho as a small design in borders.

The crossed line (*j*) is uncommon as a distinct design unit. The Gros Ventre use it more or less.

The diagonal checker-row (*k*) is pre-eminently Shoshone and Blackfoot.

The triangular step or checker pattern (*l*), often doubled to form a rhombus, is the most distinctive design in Blackfoot ornamentation. Its use by the Gros Ventre is to be attributed to Blackfoot influence. It crops out occasionally elsewhere, as among the Arapaho, but is probably mostly a modification of the simple triangle (*d*), as it shows no tendency toward an interior checker-work pattern accompanying the steps on its outline.

The stripe (*m*), as the main design of a decorative area, is also distinctive of the Blackfeet. Several stripes are usually found parallel but separate, and are internally elaborated, as by transverse bars. A form occurs among the Gros Ventre as a border design. The general outline of this pattern is similar to that of the next design, the drawn-out checker, as its constituent stripes are three abreast, in contact, and succeed each other end to end; but there is a total dissimilarity of decorative effect from the checker-pattern, brought about by the division of the stripe elements into right-angled triangles of different colors; so that to the eye the contained triangles, rather than the including rectangles, stand out.

The lengthened checker-pattern (*n*) is regularly used for the top and sides of Arapaho soft bags. The Gros Ventre and other tribes employ it for the same purpose. The occurrence of this pattern is therefore determined functionally as much as tribally.

The following, accordingly, are the chief characteristics of the several tribes as regards the use of these decorative elements in bead-embroidery.

The Arapaho frequently use the forked design, the triangle, and diamond, also, in certain cases, the lengthened checker-pattern. The spreading and pronged designs, the cross, and the slanting bar, occur. The Sioux feather design, the Gros Ventre crossed-line design, and the three most characteristic Blackfoot designs, — the diagonal checker-row, the checker or step triangle, and the short or separate stripe, — are as good as wanting.

The southern tribes — such as the Kiowa, Comanche, Wichita, and to a certain extent the eastern Apache — have little solid bead-work: they employ simple and small designs as isolated figures to give variety to the

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

narrow white stripes and edgings that characterize their embroidery. Among these subsidiary designs are the feather, the square, the cross, the triangle, and the slanting bar. 531 171

The Blackfeet use especially the three designs mentioned,— the diagonal checker-row, the checker or step triangle, and the stripe. A few others, such as the cross and the feather, occasionally occur: still others, such as the spreading and forked designs, are lacking.

The Ute and Shoshone designs are much alike. The Ute have especially developed and varied the spreading design; but simple forms of this are not rare among the Shoshone. Both tribes frequently use the forked design. The pronged design, the triangle, the slanting bar, and occasionally the diamond, are found among both. The Shoshone sometimes employ the diagonal checker-row Otherwise both tribes lack the typical Blackfoot designs, as well as the characteristically Sioux square, cross, and feather.

The Sioux and Assiniboine perhaps employ the square, cross, and feather no more frequently than the pronged, forked, and triangle designs, but they share the latter with other tribes, such as the Arapaho; whereas the square and feather, and perhaps the wide rectangular cross, are much less frequent among the other tribes. The Sioux, for the most part, lack the characteristic designs of the western tribes,— the diagonal checker and the stripe of the Blackfeet, the crossed line of the Gros Ventre, the spreading design of the Ute.

The Crow resemble both the Sioux and the Blackfeet. Typical designs are the feather, the square, the slanting bar, and the separate stripe.

The Gros Ventre use the forked design, the triangle, the box-square, the feather, the stripe, and the Arapaho pattern-stripe. The spreading design and the cross are not very common. Their form of the stripe has been mentioned as being usually a complex of colored right triangles. The diamond, the slanting bar, and the prongs are rare among them. The crossed line, which is practically absent among other tribes, must not be regarded as the characteristic Gros Ventre figure. It occurs only occasionally, almost always alternating with a step-triangle of the Blackfoot type.

As regards the color of the background of bead-work on which these designs are made, there are certain well-marked tribal habits. White is the most common color, and is at least frequent among every tribe. The Arapaho, however, are alone, among those here considered, in using it almost exclusively. The Cheyenne use much white, but show also a distinct leaning toward yellow. The Ute use various backgrounds, but white is the most frequent. Among the Shoshone a light grayish blue is much used besides white. The Sioux use various colors, but chiefly white, light blue, and yellow. The Crow use colored backgrounds considerably. The Blackfeet 171 531 822

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

171 use much less white than any of the other tribes: their characteristic back-
531 grounds are light red, yellow, and blue. The Kiowa, Comanche, Wichita, and Apache use white very predominatingly; but they show very few solid
822 backgrounds of embroidery, their bead-work rarely consisting of more than stripes and borders. The Gros Ventre type is as indeterminate as their designs. It is only possible to say that besides various colors, such as red and light blue, white is considerably used.

It appears from this examination that the tribes under consideration
171 form at least four groups as regards their bead-embroidery. The Blackfeet
531 stand alone. The Sioux and Assiniboine form a second unit. The Arapaho, Ute, and Shoshone are a third; the more southerly tribes using outline embroidery, the fourth. Within their group the Arapaho show closer resemblance to the Ute than to the Shoshone. The Arapaho also have a good deal in common with the Sioux. The position of the Cheyenne is not certain: they certainly have partial resemblances to both Arapaho and Sioux, as their historical and ethnographical situation would lead one to infer. The Crow appear to be intermediate between the Blackfeet and the Sioux. The Gros Ventre show distinct approximations to all three of the northern groups, in the third, of course, especially to the Arapaho. Neither their Blackfoot nor their Sioux characteristics seem fundamental. Their present art shows little character of its own.

It is not probable that the groups here distinguished will stand without modification. With fuller knowledge regarding the Bannock, Crow, Cheyenne, Kiowa, Comanche, and the village and eastern and southern tribes, as well as those of the Columbia drainage, new and wider groups are almost certain to be determined. In this event the Arapaho, for instance, may appear more properly to belong with the Sioux than with the Shoshone; but their relations to the latter, and the similarities among the several tribes as they are here indicated, whether they prove finally to be fundamental or only subsidiary, are already quite clear.

The types of designs discussed occur more or less on all classes of objects decorated with embroidery, but are especially characteristic of larger areas of decoration, as on pouches, leggings, and tobacco-bags. Where there are special forms or limited areas, there is usually a more restricted type of ornamentation. Thus the quill-wound, close-set fringe of tobacco-bags lends itself best to heavy rectilinear designs, and squares and crosses are the result. Moccasins also furnish a special decorative field, in which the decoration is in great measure directly dependent on the form of the object; so that the distribution of the designs already discussed applies to moccasins only in part, and their ornamentation needs some separate consideration.

Some of the chief types of moccasin ornamentation are shown in Fig. 2

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

(a–o). The first four forms have been discussed in connection with the description of Arapaho moccasins.[1] They may all be considered as consisting of one of two simple elements (the longitudinal dividing stripe and the sub-border), or of combinations and developments of these two elements. Subsidiary designs usual within these stripes and borders need not be considered here, as they do not affect the ornamentation of the moccasin as a whole.

171
531

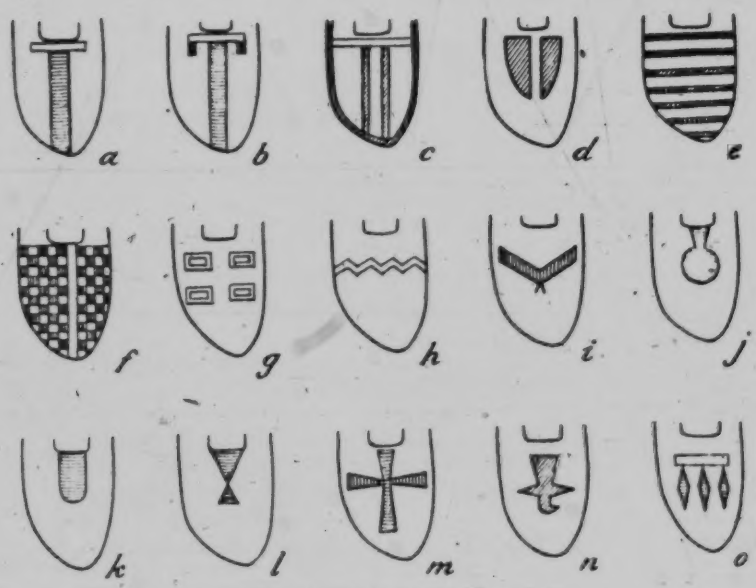


Fig. 2. Types of Designs on Moccasins.

The forms shown in *e* and *f* — the red-line and checker designs, the former usually executed in red quill-work, the latter in beads — may be regarded as forming a second class, in which the entire front of the moccasin is covered with one geometric pattern. All the remaining types can be grouped into a third class, consisting of forms having a figure in the middle of the decorable space on the front of the moccasin, this figure neither filling the entire space nor bearing any exact relation to its outline. Simple forms of some of the more frequent designs of this middle-figure class are here given, such as the four-squares (*g*), the transverse-zigzag (*h*), the crossing angle (*i*), the circle or head (*j*), the oval or U (*k*), the tent (*l*), the cross (*m*), the bird (*n*). A

[1] See Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part I, pp. 36–46.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

fifteenth type may be regarded as comprising the moccasins in which a single figure of very variable shape, but always comparatively small, occupies the centre of the otherwise unbroken front area. The U-figure is sometimes symmetrically angular. The cross can also be regarded as a development of the stripe; but, as its shape is almost invariably maltese and not rectangular, it is perhaps usually an independently developed figure.[1]

The Gros Ventre moccasins shown belong to types *d* (Fig. 3), *i* (Plate VIII, Fig. 3), and *j* (Plate VIII, Fig. 2). The moccasin in Plate VIII, Fig. 1, does not belong clearly to any of the typical forms.

Fig. 3 (50–1824 a). Moccasin. Length, 19 cm.

The stripe-border figures constitute a majority of Arapaho moccasin designs. They occur on Cheyenne moccasins in at least a considerable number of cases. All forms of these designs are found on Sioux and Assiniboine moccasins, but all together on only one among every three or four pieces. Among the Kiowa and Comanche, many moccasins depend for ornamentation on fringes and painting as much as on bead-work: the latter in such cases consists of narrow white edging, which usually follows the stripe and border designs. Among the Ute the proportion of stripe and border designs reaches a very high proportion, even the majority of solidly beaded moccasins being of this type. Of nearly twenty Ute moccasins in the Museum, all but two are of the stripe-border pattern.[2] The related and neighboring Shoshone, however, use this pattern rarely; and the same is true of the Gros Ventre. The Crow use the stripe considerably, but usually with some modification or addition (such as the feather-design element), and only rarely in combination with the border. The Blackfeet lack stripe-border designs almost entirely.

[1] Sioux and Arapaho moccasins with the three types of designs have been illustrated in Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII. Examples of the stripe-border class of moccasins are shown in Plate I, 1–8; Fig. 5, b–f; Plate II, 3; Plate III, 1, 3, 4; Plate IV, 1; Fig. 6; Plates XXXVIII, 2, 4, 6, and XXXIX, 6; and Figs. 96 and 98. Moccasins of the second class are shown in Fig. 5, a; Plates III, 2, and XXXVIII, 1 (red-line pattern); Fig. 5, e; and Plate LIV, 2 (checker-pattern). Moccasins with the third type of ornamentation are shown as follows: Four-squares, Plates XXXVIII, 1, and LII, 2; transverse-zigzag, Plates III, 5, and XXXVIII, 5; angle-across, Plates II, 2, XXXIX, 2, and Fig. 97; round-head, Plates LII, 1, and LIV, 1; cross, Plates I, 8, and XXXIX, 5; bird, Plate XXXIX, 4; a small figure in the centre, Plates II, 4, 5, LII, 3, and LIV, 3.

[2] These two show the round-head and the angle-across designs which reach great frequency among the Shoshone and Gros Ventre.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Designs of the second class, the red-line and checker-patterns, are most frequent among the Sioux and Arapaho. There are a few Shoshone and Gros Ventre examples. The Blackfeet largely lack designs of this class. 171 531

Of the several designs of the third class, the squares and the transverse-zigzag (*g*, *h*) are not very common. They are frequent among the Sioux and Assiniboine, especially the former pattern, as is to be expected from the prevalence of the square-box design in the bead-work of these two tribes.

The angle-across design (*i*) and the round-head or circle design (*j*) are the most persistent of the designs of the third class, and the former especially has a wide distribution. The angle is found least among the Arapaho, Sioux, and Ute. Among these tribes it is usually also light or open in pattern, so as not to dominate the decoration. The Cheyenne have this pattern, and it is one of the few designs used by the Blackfeet that are untypical of them. Among both Shoshone and Gros Ventre it is common, and the Crow use it. It is interesting that two Ojibwa moccasins in the Museum also show this pattern. The round-head design occurs most frequently among tribes where the angle design is abundant, especially the Shoshone and Gros Ventre, less among the Sioux and Blackfeet. No Arapaho moccasin with this design has yet been seen. The symbolism of this figure varies. It is interpreted as a head, a spoon, feathers, or the sun.

The semi-oval or U-shaped figure (*k*) belongs more distinctly to the north and east than to the Plains. In certain regions it is the typical moccasin pattern. This figure is probably closely related to the simple stripe. It may be regarded as a wide stripe not reaching to the end of the moccasin, and rounded in front; or perhaps as an inner concentric area, slightly altered so as to be symmetrical, determined by the outline of the moccasin. In its occurrence among the Plains tribes under consideration, it does not, however, show any transitions to stripe and border patterns; and it accordingly belongs, so far as the Plains are concerned, in the class of designs bearing no specific relation to the shape of the moccasin. A few occurrences, chiefly among the Blackfeet, of angular forms having the appearance of being modifications of this U-shaped figure, can be included with it.

This design is the characteristic one of the Blackfeet, as noted by Dr. Clark Wissler.[1] It is also nearly confined to the Blackfeet within the Plains region. The Museum has a few scattering Sioux and Shoshone examples, and one from the Ojibwa; and the Field Columbian Museum exhibits a number of specimens from the Crow, though usually with the addition of the feather or pronged design element at the end of the U-figure. The U-form has not been met with among the Arapaho or the Gros Ventre, nor among

[1] Clark Wissler, Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part III, p. 270.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the tribe in many ways nearest to the Arapaho in decorative art,— the Ute. That the Gros Ventre in their century of contact with the Blackfeet have not taken up the design is of interest, and is due, possibly, to its being at bottom of so different a decorative type that it is scarcely compatible with the established style of Gros Ventre decoration.

The tent figure (*l*) is infrequent. It has been found among the Sioux and Gros Ventre.

The cross (*m*) is most common on children's moccasins. It has so far been found on Sioux, Cheyenne, and Arapaho moccasins. It may prove to be most typically Sioux-Cheyenne.

The bird-figured moccasin (*n*) is infrequent. There are three examples in the Museum, all Sioux or Assiniboine. This design is one of the few — really the only one of those considered, besides the red-line pattern — that is usually executed in quills. It seems to go back to an old type independent of the stylistic influences of bead-work. A quill-embroidered bird moccasin is mentioned in an Arapaho myth.[1]

Type *o*, in which any small figure occupies the centre of the main decorative field on the moccasin, occurs chiefly among the Sioux, Cheyenne, and Arapaho. The figure may be the pronged design, the feather design, a triangle, a form of the forked design, or any other figure. A few Blackfoot moccasins can be included in this type, but as yet none from the Ute or Shoshone.

The chief tribal characteristics of moccasin ornamentation can be summarized as follows:—

The Ute use stripe-border designs almost exclusively. The few exceptions found are of the round-head and angle-across types, and are due perhaps to Shoshone influence.

The Arapaho use stripe-border designs in the majority of cases. They show no special predilection for any of the other designs. They lack the round-head, and their angle-across figures are not well marked.

The Kiowa and Comanche, and other southern tribes, confine themselves practically to stripe-border designs; but the bead-work of their moccasins is used mainly for outlining or edging, and solid beading is little practised, so that a turn is given to their style which sets them apart from the other tribes considered.

Cheyenne moccasins are more or less similar to those of the Arapaho, but probably show some leaning toward Sioux types.

The Sioux and Assiniboine moccasins show every type of figure discussed. All forms of the stripe-border class occur, but with less frequency than among the Ute and Arapaho. The round-head and angle-across

[1] See Traditions of the Arapaho (Field Columbian Publication No. 81, p. 291).

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

occur, but less than among other tribes, and the latter shows the light forms that characterize it among the Arapaho. On the whole, the Sioux type is apparently the most mixed and inclusive of those discussed. 171 531

Among the Shoshone the designs are more frequently the round-head and angle-across than any other. They use a number of other forms, such as the red-line, checker, and transverse-zigzag. Stripe-border patterns are little developed among them.

The Crow use designs of all classes, including the stripe, the round-head, the angle-across, the red-line, and the characteristic Blackfoot U-figure, and, as in other bead-work, resemble both Blackfeet and Sioux.

The Blackfeet show by far the most specialized type, not only in the dominance of the U-shaped design, but in the absence of stripe-border patterns, which all the other tribes agree in using at least to a certain extent.[1] The chief designs that have obtained a hold among them, other than the U-figure, are the round-head and angle-across.

The Gros Ventre use a comparatively small proportion of stripe-border patterns, perhaps about in the degree of the Sioux and Shoshone. They use the Sioux-Arapaho red-line figure. Of designs of the third class, the round-head and angle-across are the most frequent.

It is evident that the distribution of these moccasin designs is primarily dependent upon geography, not upon tribal relations. The southern tribes — the Kiowa, Comanche, Ute, and Arapaho — use mainly stripe and border patterns. The northern tribes — the Shoshone, Gros Ventre, Sioux and Assiniboine, and Blackfeet — use chiefly middle-figure designs. Of these figures the most strongly developed are the round-head and angle-across. Approximation of the Shoshone and Gros Ventre proportional frequencies of these designs is to be attributed to the fact that these two tribes are situated in the same northern region of the Plains, rather than to any special cultural relations between them. The Sioux and Arapaho show certain resemblances which may be due to direct relations or to transmission by the Cheyenne. The Blackfeet alone are tribally specialized, at least if regarded as part of the Plains group of tribes. They have been somewhat influenced by the northern Plains type of design, but have not affected it. Even the inter-influence of the Blackfeet and Gros Ventre upon each other has been insignificant. The Ojibwa are not altogether out of the influence of the Plains.

Nothing was learned about the typical tribal ornamentation of Gros

[1] A series of Blackfoot, Blood, and Piegan moccasins in the Museum of the Anthropological Department of the University of California, shows many more moccasins with stripe-border and middle-figure ornamentation than of the U-type, which is contrary to the ornamentation of those in the American Museum of Natural History, of which fully half, omitting the modern leaf-figured specimens, show the U-design; and contrary also to the statements of Dr. Wissler and of Clark (Indian Sign Language, p. 69).

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

171 531 Ventre robes. A child's quilled robe (Museum specimen 50-1751) agrees in general with the Arapaho style of ornamentation,[1] and is probably more or less representative of the Gros Ventre type. The style is similar to that of the quill-work on the Arapaho bag shown in the "Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History" (Vol. XVIII, Plate XVI). Seventeen red quilled lines pass across this robe. Four spaces, two on the lines and two at the ends, are green instead of red on each line. Originally, small green-dyed plumes seem to have been attached here also; these have now almost disappeared. At the four green spaces on the lowest line, pendants are attached. These each consist of a small loop wound with green quills, and of two thongs wound with red quills. At the ends of the thongs are small cylinders of tin from out of which issues a tuft of dyed horsehair. The seventeen embroidered lines do not stretch entirely across the robe to its edge, but occupy a rectangular area including the greater part of its somewhat irregular surface. Certain Arapaho robes are described as having been embroidered with seventeen such parallel lines, to which a group of three was added at the lower edge, where pendants were attached. An Arapaho child's robe in the Museum collections is almost identical with this in style. The ornamental spaces on the red quilled lines differ somewhat, and there are eighteen instead of seventeen lines; but the general construction and appearance are strikingly similar, even to the pendant attachments. Dr. Clark Wissler's illustration[2] of a small Sioux robe serves to give a very close idea of the present piece. Like the Arapaho robe, this Sioux one has eighteen lines. Dr. Wissler makes the point that among the Sioux such red-line embroidered robes were distinctive of women and girls; but among the Arapaho the typical robe of men is said to have been embroidered with yellow or white lines. The Field Columbian Museum has on exhibition Cree, Crow, and Sioux children's robes ornamented with from seventeen to twenty lines and with hoof pendants at the bottom.

[178] 342 531 171 The Gros Ventre have now entirely abandoned the use of embroidered tent-ornaments such as are still quite common among the Arapaho. A single dilapidated partial specimen was obtained, shown in Fig. 4. This is very similar to the Arapaho tent-ornaments.[3] The full set consisted of a larger, round quill-embroidered piece of skin sewed to the back of the top of a tent and called kaⁿbiitⁿ ("round embroidery"), four similar but smaller ornaments put on the sides of the tent lower down, and pendants attached to the upper flaps or ears of the tent. The circular embroidered ornaments had buffalo-tails or strips of buffalo-fur, and quill-wound pendant thongs with hoofs and loops at their ends, hanging from the middle.

[1] Compare Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part I, pp. 29, 33, 65.
[2] Ibid., Vol. XVIII, Part III, Fig. 81.
[3] Ibid., Vol. XVIII, Part I, pp. 61-63.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

171
531
342

Of the pieces illustrated, the larger contains four black concentric circles interrupted by four black-bordered sectors. Quills, not plant fibres, have been used for this black embroidery. The lighter portions of the embroidery adjacent to the black circles seem to have been originally yellow, as the underlying protected quills are of this color, while those on the surface are

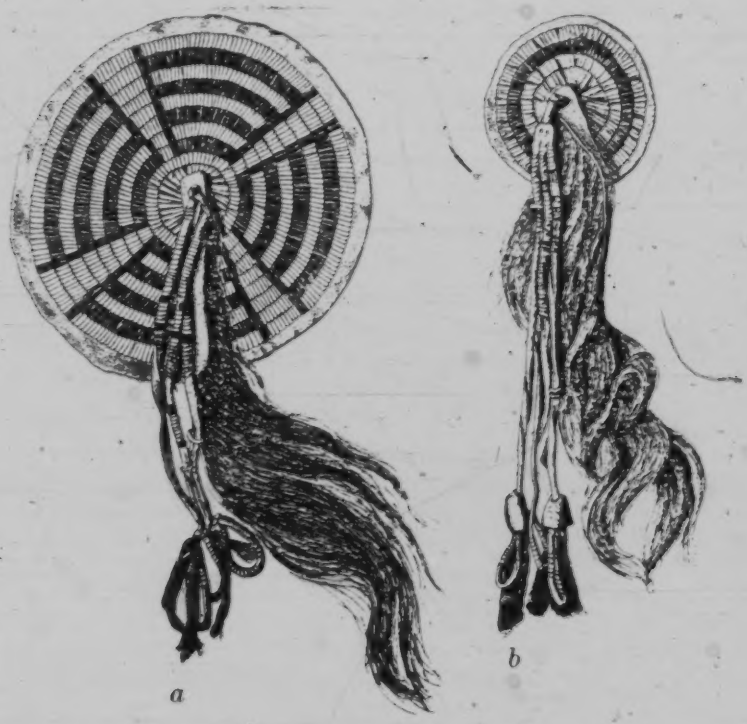


Fig. 4 (50-1829 a, b). Tent-ornaments. Diameters, 17 cm., 8 cm.

weathered white. The quills within the sectors, however, appear to have been always white. The pendants, three in number, are very much destroyed; it is evident, however, that they were wound with orange-yellow, red, white, and black quills in exactly the pattern used by the Arapaho.[1] The loops at the ends of the pendants contained red, yellow, and black quills,

[1] For description and illustration of pattern, see Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part I, pp. 35, 65, Figs. 12, 13.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

171
342
531

and probably white also. The pendants on the smaller ornament are identical, and still show the hoofs at their ends. It thus appears that, whereas the main ornament has only the three colors, namely, white, yellow, and black, — found also in an Arapaho ornament [1] with which it is virtually identical, — yet the peculiar line-pattern combination of red, yellow, white, and black, characteristic of the Arapaho "tribal" style of quill embroidery, also occurs in this Gros Ventre set of ornaments.

171
415
531

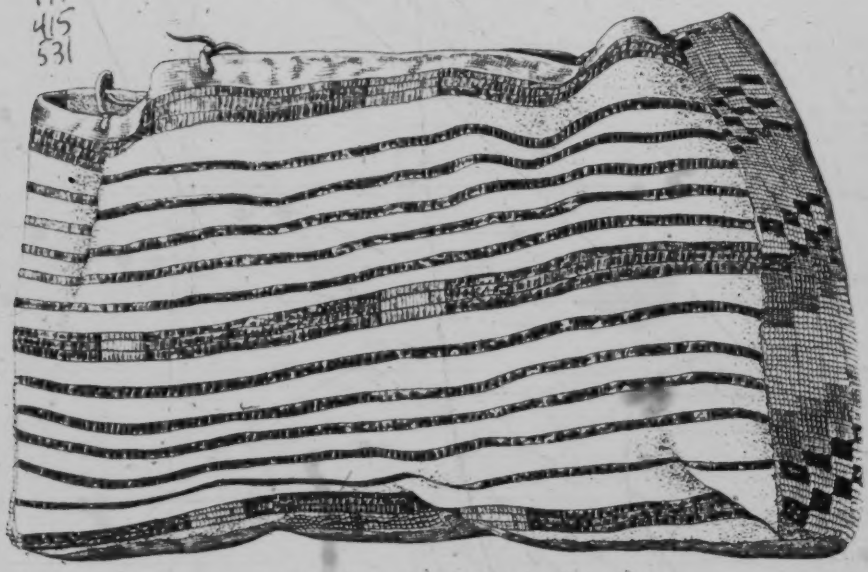


Fig. 5 (50-1738). Soft-skin Bag. Length, 21 cm.

Bags of soft skin, used chiefly for keeping and transporting clothing and small household articles, are made by the Gros Ventre very much as by the Arapaho and other Plains tribes. The ornamentation is also of the same character, consisting of red quill-embroidered lines across the front of the bag, and a pattern of bead-work (generally of alternately colored bars with cross spaces, augmented by tin and horsehair or other pendants) along the top and two side edges of the bag. This style has been illustrated for the Arapaho.[2] About half the Gros Ventre bags show the same ornamentation,

[1] Compare Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part I, p. 60, Fig. 9, a.
[2] Ibid., Vol. XVIII, Plate XVI.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

varied only in inessential details. The remainder introduce a characteristic variation, though the fundamental type of decoration is the same. Such a bag is shown in Fig. 5. The red quilled lines are present, but are in part grouped in threes, so as to form stripes of three times the width of the lines. In consequence of this, the small differently colored spaces on the lines become rectangles, which usually assume the box form shown in the figure,

171
415
531

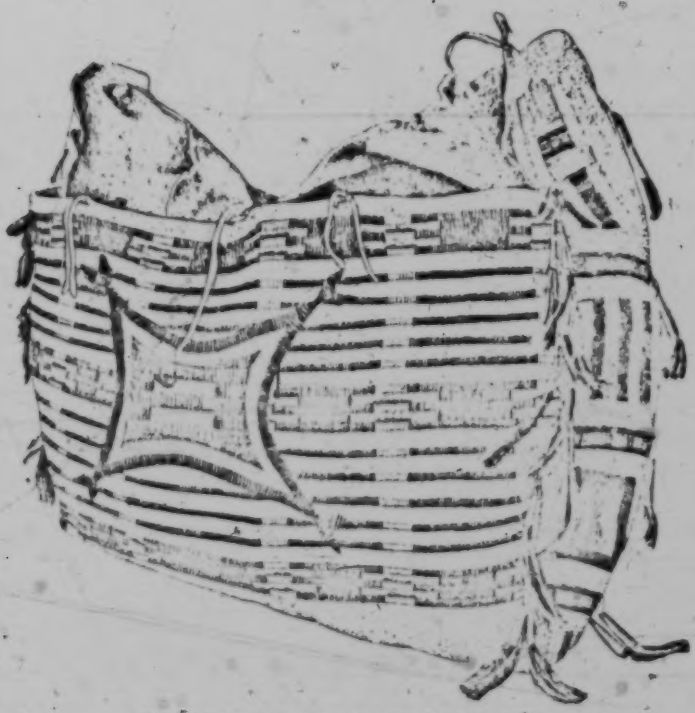


Fig. 6 (50 4299). Soft-skin Bag. Length, 35 cm.

and more characteristic of Sioux than of Arapaho ornamentation. The number of single lines between the compound stripes varies; in some specimens it is only two or three. Sometimes the box design of the stripes is represented on the lines by an end-bordered bar, as is customary on the bags with lines only, and as appears in the bag in Fig. 6. Even the small down-feathers of the line-embroidered bags may be present on the wider stripes of this variant Gros Ventre type. The bead-work along the two ends of the bag shown in Fig. 5 is very different from that on Arapaho

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

171 bags, recalling the typical checker and diagonal step design of Blackfoot
415 beading. This type is, however, unusual among the Gros Ventre.
531 The fine bag shown in Fig. 6, collected by Dr. Clark Wissler, presents unusual quill-embroidery on its front, suggestive perhaps of Sioux influence or origin; but the bead-work on its cover and sides, and the attached tin and horsehair ornaments, are typically Arapaho, except for the fact that this tribe would be very unlikely to make any pattern without at least some proportion of white. The transverse lines of quill-work on this bag might be regarded as nothing but a further five-line development of the three-line grouping illustrated by the last figure, with an alternating bar-pattern for its chief ornamentation instead of the box figure, which in element is identical. The central figure, however, is the typical Sioux spider-web pattern described by Dr. Clark Wissler,[1] and so far without any parallel among either Arapaho or Gros Ventre, or any approach nearer than that shown in an instance of blanket painting.[2] The two parallel bars in the centre of this concave quadrilateral figure, and the diamond-shaped feather symbols at its corners, are also typically Siouan: only the last-named element is occasionally used by the Gros Ventre.

237 Buffalo paunches, the mouth being drawn up by a string, like a sack,
415 were used for carrying and holding water, a paunchful being hung up in
505 the tent. If buffalo had been killed, and it was desired to transport the meat across the Missouri, the paunches were filled with meat, blown up, tied together at the mouth, and floated. The well-known circular skin
[501] boats of the Missouri tribes were also used by the Gros Ventre for transporting clothing and property across streams.

171 Fig. 7 shows an ornamented food-bag of bladder. At the top is a strip
415 of skin covered with red quill-embroidery, with square star designs in blue
531 and white. From this strip of skin hangs a red quill-wound fringe. The thong handle of the bag is partly quilled, and has quilled thong pendants hanging from it. At the bottom of the bag a round piece of skin, covered with green-and-white quartered bead-work, is sewed on.

171 The navel-amulets of the Gros Ventre, which resemble those of the
532 Arapaho in their use, are in form of a somewhat different type, as they
751 approach more nearly to an animal's shape. They usually represent çaniwa", the "horned toad" (southern Arapaho, sániwa", a "lizard"), or sometimes a person. Their general shape is, as everywhere on the Plains, a rhomboid on end. To this the Gros Ventre add at the upper end a small rhomboid, forming the head of the animal represented. This augmented shape has not been found among the Arapaho, with whom the typical form

[1] See Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part III, p. 248.
[2] Ibid., Vol. XIII, p. 85, Fig. 138.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

is a narrow simple rhomboid.[1] The Blackfeet and Sioux make figures resembling those of the Gros Ventre, but carry the realism farther. The Sioux most frequently represent an entire animal with head, legs, and tail, much like Fig. 1 in Plate VIII of Vol. XVIII of the "Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History," but broader, in the shape of a turtle.[2] The Arapaho, Gros Ventre, and Blackfeet use ornamented strings hanging from the corners of the rhomboid to represent limbs and tail. The Blackfeet make realistic snake amulets for their boys, and more conventional turtle or lizard-like figures, resembling those of the Gros Ventre, for their girls. Among the Assiniboine, and west of the Rockies among the Bannock and Ute, a reduced form of navel-amulets occurs, though perhaps it is not the only one used. It is usually small and flat, with the acute angles of the rhomboid cut off transversely, rendering the whole piece hexagonal rather than quadrilateral. Sometimes the entire edges are fringed. The relative distribution of this small form and of the other forms is not yet clear. A Shoshone amulet in the Museum is a pointed rhomboid resembling the Arapaho type, even to being quartered in its bead-ornamentation. A Kiowa specimen in the Anthropological Museum of the University of California is a plain rhombus, of Arapaho type, except in being smaller and more nearly square. The following distribution of types is at least partly correct: realistic, Sioux, Blackfoot, occasionally Arapaho; semi-realistic, Blackfoot, Gros Ventre; conventional rhomboid, Arapaho, Kiowa, Shoshone; reduced hexagonal, Assiniboine, Ute, Bannock, and perhaps Shoshone.

Fig. 7 (50-1801). Ornamented Food-bag of Bladder. Length, 20 cm.

On Plate IX are shown three Gros Ventre navel-amulets. Fig. 3 was said to represent a horned toad, and Fig. 2, a person. It will be seen that the mouth in the former is near the end of the head; in the latter, in the lower part of the face. Both these specimens have quilled or beaded appendages at the two side corners and at the lower end. Fig. 1 has a distinct

[1] See Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part I, Plate v7o.
[2] Ibid., Vol. XVIII, Part III, p. 242, Fig. 76.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

171 tail as well as head, a cross instead of an attempt at representative ornamen-
532 tation in the bead-work on the head, and unornamented yellowed thongs as
751 sole attachments. Another specimen (Museum No. 50-4278), not figured, is much smaller than any of the others. It resembles Fig. 3 of Plate IX in that the bead-work on its upper surface is quartered; and that there is a distinct attempt to represent eyes in the head. The attachments are short unpainted thongs with tin cones at their ends.

Of these four pieces, Fig. 1 of Plate IX and Museum No. 50-4278 are unbeaded on the lower side; Fig. 3 of Plate IX has a few curvilinear leaf-ornaments on the lower side; and Fig. 2 of Plate IX is entirely beaded on both sides, showing on the reverse a simple quartering in blue and yellow without attempted representation of animal form. It thus appears that all the pieces are ornamented with bead-work in quartering, a design found also among the Arapaho, although transverse or diagonal parallel lines, or a crossed longitudinal line, are more common among them. The specimen figured

[531]

Fig. 8. Triangular Designs on Parfleches and Bags.

in Fig. 1 of Plate IX is quartered asymmetrically. The greater flatness of Fig. 3, same plate, is due to the contents of the amulet-pouch having been removed, no doubt for preservation.

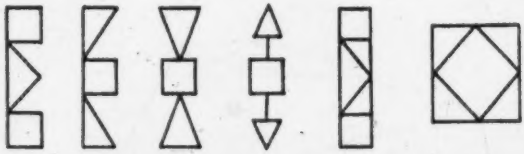
The principal form of Gros Ventre decorative art other than embroidery
531 is painting, mainly on skin and rawhide. As to the symbolism of this paint-
171 ing, as little was learned as of the symbolism of embroidered designs. The style of decoration itself, however, offers some points of interest when compared with the forms of decoration typical of other Plains tribes.

Outside of robe-painting, tent-painting, and semi-realistic painting of a more directly symbolic or religious nature, the principal form of this branch of Plains decorative art is the painting of parfleches and rawhide bags. In these the decorative field is invariably rectangular, usually nearly square. Within this rectangular field, which may be merely outlined or may be heavily bordered, three principal types of design elements and combinations of elements can be distinguished. These can be called respectively the "triangular," the "square-and-triangular," and the "square."

The triangular type of design is by far the most common, taking the Plains as a whole, and among some tribes is used almost exclusively. The

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

fundamental element of this form may be taken to be the right-angled triangle with one side considerably longer than the other. Two such triangles placed together give either a long and flat or a narrow and high isosceles triangle. Two such isosceles triangles placed base to base give a rhombus or diamond. From these elements, — the right-angled triangle, the isosceles triangle, and the diamond, — the designs of this first form are built up. Some of the most frequent combinations are shown in Fig. 8 (*a–j*). It is common to find combinations of an isosceles triangle flanked by two right-angled triangles (*e*, *f*), this pattern being disposed along the inside of the longer edges of the rectangular decorative field; while in the middle there will be either one or two, or sometimes three, figures, each of which is the double of those at the edges, consisting, accordingly, of a diamond flanked by two isosceles triangles (*g*, *h*). If there are half-patterns on the side, they usually agree with the full patterns in the middle. Sometimes diamonds are lacking, and two isosceles triangles form either a long rhomboid (*d*), or an



a *b* *c* *d* *e* *f*

Fig. 9. Square-and-triangular Designs on Parfleches and Bags.

hourglass-shaped figure (*c*), according as their bases or apices are in contact. In the same way, two rectangular triangles are combined along the edges of the decorative field (*a*, *b*). Diamonds and isosceles triangles are sometimes bisected, and occasionally the two halves are colored differently, thus emphasizing the inherent relation of these figures to right-angled triangles.

There are many subsidiary features of ornamentation accompanying those here outlined, such as borders of different colors, small triangles at the base or at the apex of isosceles triangles, reduced figures within designs, and so on. In essence, however, this first or triangular type of parfleche paintings can be considered as being built up out of right-angled triangles and combinations of right-angled triangles.

The second, or square-and-triangular, type is less common. It uses triangles much as does the first type, except that in part it replaces them by rectangles, usually squares. These squares may be placed along the edges of the decorative field, especially in the corners or in the middle. When in the middle of the field, they are of considerable size, and contain other

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

531
171

figures, especially diamonds. Various characteristic forms of this type are shown in Fig. 9 (*a–f*). It will be seen that full forms, such as a square with two adjacent isosceles triangles directed toward it (*c*), are paralleled by half-forms, such as a rectangle flanked by two right-angled triangles with their apices in contact with it (*b*). A variation of this latter form may be regarded as an inversion, the two right-angled triangles being placed together in the middle to form an isosceles triangle, and this being flanked by two squares (*a*). Not infrequently this form is further developed by being combined into a continuous stripe (*e*); the ends of this stripe being squares, and the middle portion three or more triangles distinguished by color. When full figures consist of a square flanked by two triangles, with their bases instead of their apices directed toward it, these triangles are separated from the square, but the decorative unity of the pattern is retained by means of connecting lines (*d*). No perfect illustrations of this square-and-triangular type have been published in the "Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History," either from among Arapaho or Sioux specimens, but an approximation is shown there in Plate XVIII, Fig. 2, of Vol. XVIII. Plate XIX, Fig. 3, of the same volume, while containing scarcely any square elements, also bears some general resemblance to designs of this type. Nearly all the illustrations of rawhide painting in that volume belong to the first type, the few exceptions belonging to the third.

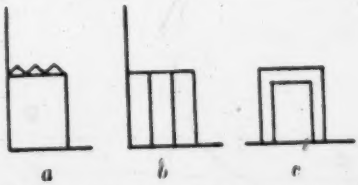


Fig. 10. Square Designs on Parfleches and Bags.

The third, or square, type of parfleche ornamentation either lacks triangular design elements altogether, or employs them as subsidiary to, or at least distinct from, the square design elements. Most frequently this type of design shows squares in the corners. It is frequently elaborated by rows of small triangles within, or adjacent to, the squares. Elementary forms are indicated in Fig. 10 (*a–c*). This is not a common type of design among any tribe, but appears to be found to some extent among all, or nearly all, Plains tribes. Two instances of its most developed form are shown in the "Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History," in Vol. XVIII, Plate XVIII, Fig. 5, and Plate XIX, Fig. 5; while less distinctive forms are given in Fig. 34 of the same volume. Among the Arapaho there is some tendency to interpret this type of design as the bear-foot, especially when combined with rows of pointed triangles. A similar interpretation has been obtained among the Bannock. There are, of course, easy and natural

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

531
171

transitions from this square type of design to the preceding, or square-and-triangular type. But there seems to be an essential difference between the two types in general character and decorative purpose; and this is made the more probable by the fact that the entirely square type is less frequent among the tribes that have developed patterns of the second, or square-and-triangular, type, than among the tribes that lack this second type. The difference between the two types is not so much in their individual design elements as in the disposition of these in the decorative field.

The tribal distribution of these three types is as follows. The first, or triangular, type is found among all tribes from which material is available. It is used, nearly to the exclusion of other types, by the Arapaho, the Sioux, and probably the Cheyenne and the Kootenay; and it predominates among all other tribes except the Shoshone. The second, or square-and-triangular, type reaches its greatest known development among the Shoshone. It is more or less employed by the Ute, and to some extent by the Blackfeet and Sahaptin. It will be seen that the Gros Ventre also employ this form. The third, or entirely square, type appears to occur somewhat sporadically among almost all tribes.

The rawhide painting of the Arapaho, besides employing design elements of the triangular type almost exclusively, is characterized by a certain lightness and openness of patterns, due to the comparatively large amount of background left white and unpainted. The patterns of right-angled and isosceles triangles and diamonds are usually narrow and long. The patterns in the middle of the field are sometimes separated from one another and from those along the edges by stripes; and in other cases full designs in the middle are split into two half-designs by such stripes. The general pattern arrangement is thus approximately one of stripes or longitudinal figures, usually from three to five in number, and consisting in element of right-angled triangles. The half-designs at the edge of the decorative field are usually directly or inversely symmetrical with those in the middle. Characteristic subsidiary features are rows of black dots, especially within white stripes, rows of small triangles at the bases of acute triangles, small black inverted single triangles at the apices of obtuse isosceles triangles, and small figures enclosed in larger design elements. These enclosed figures are usually triangles and pentagons respectively in acute and obtuse isosceles triangles. The outlines of Arapaho parfleche paintings are generally made in narrow lines of a faint black or brown. There is often some difference in pattern between stitched rawhide bags and folded-parfleches; the former showing a greater tendency toward a heavy border or frame, consisting usually of a double stripe filled in with alternating triangles of two colors. The backs of bags, and occasionally of parfleches, may be striped across.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

531
171

Sioux ornamentation of rawhide is more difficult to characterize than Arapaho, although the Museum contains a good representation of specimens, a number of which have been figured.[1] The design elements of the Sioux are as preponderatingly of the first, or triangular, type as among the Arapaho. Their disposition and their relation to the decorative field are, however, less open, and it is not uncommon to find Sioux bags which are covered so completely with painting that no white background remains within the decorative field, or only so little that it becomes equivalent in function to one of the colors used. Many Sioux parfleches are heavily bordered, the wide outside design frame being as common on them as it is rare in Arapaho parfleches. Not infrequently the decorative field is divided longitudinally by a heavy stripe similar to those which frame the field. A subsidiary feature that is characteristic is the occurrence of large diamonds containing one or two longitudinal bars. Most of the typical subsidiary features of the Arapaho are either wanting or are much less common. The Arapaho parfleche design shown in the "Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History" (Vol. XVIII, Plate xx, Fig. 5) is typically Sioux. The one in Fig. 3 of the same plate has Sioux reminiscences. On the whole, the differences between the styles of the two tribes are not very great.

There is too little Cheyenne parfleche material available to allow a characterization; but it appears in general that the painting is similar to that of the Arapaho and Sioux, as is to be expected.

With the Shoshone[2] a new style of rawhide painting is encountered, characterized by a predominance of designs of the second, or square-and-triangular type. There are many triangular designs and design combinations, but the square-and-triangular type is so strongly impressed on Shoshone art that there are very few parfleches that do not show at least some rectangular forms. Very common is a broad stripe consisting of triangles in its middle portion and ending off in squares (Fig. 9, *e*). These squares fill the corners of the decorative field. Such border-stripes may be found occurring transversely as well as longitudinally, in which case, by forming a heavy frame, they leave a rectangular area considerably smaller than the decorative field. This area, in turn, contains designs — usually a diamond or two half-diamonds, that is to say, isosceles triangles — set point to point into an hourglass figure. In other cases the central rectangular area is more prominently developed than the border-stripes. It is in such cases that types result resembling the sporadic Arapaho forms mentioned.[3] Al-

[1] See Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part III, Figs. 78, 82, 87–94.
[2] The Shoshone parfleches in the Museum are from Wind River and Fort Hall Reservations.
[3] See Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part I, Plate xviii, Fig. 2.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

gether it may be said that there is scarcely a Shoshone parfleche which does not contain either the central rectangle, squares in the corners of the decorative field in combination with triangles, or the heavy square-containing border-stripe. The open border-figures of the Arapaho, consisting of an obtuse isosceles triangle with or without flanking right-angled triangles, are scarcely ever found. The Shoshone show a fondness, as compared with the Arapaho, for heavy black or dark-blue outlines for their figures. They lack the Arapaho rows of black dots and small black apex triangles, but show the row of small acute triangles in several instances.

Ute[1] parfleche painting shows some approximation to that of the Shoshone in using the square-and-triangular patterns, but also has distinct resemblances to Arapaho. It is more open than Shoshone painting, and shows some tendency towards the Arapaho longitudinal arrangement. The square-and-triangular type of design is also much less common than among the Shoshone. Ute painting differs even more than does Arapaho from both Sioux and Shoshone in lacking the heavy frame to the decorative field found among these two tribes. In fact there are a number of Ute parfleches in the Museum that show a total absence of any framing: even the half-designs along the border, which among the Arapaho duplicate the full designs in the middle, are omitted. This is practically never done by the Arapaho. It may be estimated that a third of all Ute parfleches lack a border of any kind entirely, and that in another third only the two longitudinal sides of the decorative field are partially edged by isolated figures. A special form of Ute design, which needs no comment other than that it is quite evidently a form of the square-and-triangular type, is shown in Fig. 3 of Plate X. Although an isolated occurrence, it is not uncharacteristic, as is shown by certain approximations in parfleches and by similar forms in medicine-cases (Fig. 13). In its subsidiary features, Ute parfleche-painting resembles Arapaho rather surprisingly; the small apex triangle, the row of small basal triangles, and the small triangle, rectangle, or pentagon enclosed in a larger triangle, all being found.

Half a dozen parfleches and several bags obtained among the Bannock of Fort Hall Reservation give some idea of the position of this tribe in relation to the others. The second, or square-and-triangular, type of design elements is found, but is not so prominent as among the Shoshone. There is a well-marked tendency toward large diamonds occupying the greater part of the central area, or at least the entire length, of the decorative field. As among the Shoshone, the decorative area is well filled with designs; but it cannot be said to be crowded, because the figures are generally large and

[1] Uintah and Uncompahgre Reservations.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

531
171

simple. While there is considerable general resemblance to Shoshone designs, elements of the specifically triangular type much outweigh those of the square-and-triangular type.

The Blackfoot style of painting is rather distinctive. The elements are very predominatingly of the purely triangular type; but the decorative field as a whole is quite different from that of the Arapaho and Sioux. It is more open than the latter, and lacks the general longitudinal disposition of figures of the former. There is very frequently a light border containing triangles or diagonal bars; or the design as a whole may be regarded as consisting of a design (of acute isosceles triangles and diamonds) within a central square area around which is placed a light border containing triangles. When this frame and defined central square area are absent, there are usually no bordering figures such as characterize the Arapaho style. It is not uncommon for a figure or two figures to stand free, as it were, in the decorative field. In this respect there is a leaning toward the Ute style. The resemblances that there are to Shoshone are not so much in the occurrence of the square-and-triangular designs, for these are not numerous, as in the tendency to group smaller designs within a central square. Most of the figures employed by the Blackfeet are small relatively to the decorative field, thus differing from those of the Shoshone, Ute, and Bannock. Th[illegible]liary decorative features characteristic of the Arapaho are w[illegible] for occasional rows of small triangles. A considerable pro[illegible] specimens, approximately one-half, show V-shaped designs on [illegible] the parfleche. This characteristic is also found among the Koo[illegible]shapting but (with the exception of sporadic cases from the As[illegible]ux, Gros Ventre, and Ute) is not known to occur among other [illegible]inting on the sides of parfleches must therefore be considere[illegible]estern, and as more characteristic of the Pacific than of the [illegible]nage in the Plains culture.

Two Blackfoot bags collected by Dr. Clark Wissler are shown in Plate x, Figs. 5 and 6. These are perhaps extreme cases of the typical Blackfoot tendency toward an open frame and a large central square area.

Half a dozen Kootenay parfleches and painted bags collected by the author in 1900 in northern Idaho are very uniform in style of ornamentation. They show no trace of the typical Shoshone square-and-triangular type of design, but use triangular elements exclusively. A simple but typical design is shown in Plate x, Fig. 4. It will be seen that in the general pattern there is nothing that might not well be Arapaho. Two other specimens show fundamentally the same pattern. Two others are longitudinally bisected by a wide stripe, the two resulting rectangles being internally bordered along their long sides with isosceles or right-angled triangles. Another

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

specimen has two hourglass-shaped figures stretched longitudinally across the field; between these is a diamond, and on each side there are two isosceles triangles. The figures in all the specimens show the convex roundness visible in the one chosen for illustration, so that actually triangles often approach more nearly to being segments of circles than polygons. 531 171

A special subsidiary characteristic of Kootenay painting is the development of rows of small black triangles set upon the outer edges of the main figures. These were said by the Kootenay to represent the trees which, in their heavily timbered and hilly country, everywhere form the limit of vision. As just mentioned, the Kootenay also frequently use side designs on their parfleches.

A valuable collection of parfleches and some bags was made for the Museum by Dr. L. Farrand among the Sahaptin. Considering that the habitat of these people is in Oregon, the general similarity of their art, as of most sides of their material culture, to that of the Plains Indians of for instance Dakota and Kansas, is very remarkable. In their rawhide painting the Sahaptin show a somewhat greater tendency to use designs of the square-and-triangular type than do the Kootenay, although such designs are neither very frequent nor very prominent among them. It is probable that the occurrence of this type of design among the Sahaptin is due to direct contact with Shoshoneans, principally of Idaho. It is interesting to observe that the wide border-stripe consisting of triangles with squares at the ends, which is so typical of the Shoshone, is found among the Sahaptin as frequently in the form of a transverse end-stripe as it is as a longitudinal border. Central squares of no great size occur several times in combination with adjacent acute isosceles triangles. Wide stripes, sometimes longitudinal and sometimes transverse, are not uncommon. When longitudinal, they occur also in the middle of the decorative field. In this case the two resulting halves of the decorative area are usually occupied mainly by diamonds or hourglass figures. There is very little tendency toward a distinct enclosing frame, as among the Sioux and Blackfeet. There are also very few cases of a repetition, along the longitudinal borders, of the designs in the middle, such as is so characteristic of the Arapaho; but there are cases even of this. Altogether there is hardly any characteristic tribal type which has not some representation among the Sahaptin. The figures are generally large. They are, however, so placed that the white background is comparatively prominent; and the close effect found, for instance, in most Bannock parfleches, where large design elements are also favorites, is wanting. The outlines of the figures are usually marked quite heavily in black or dark blue, much as among the Shoshone and Bannock. About half the parfleches have paintings on the side, similar to those of the Blackfeet and

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

53 171 Kootenay. The typical form of these side-paintings seems to be a row of angles or V's with the apices directed upward; that is to say, more or less inward as the flattened parfleche is viewed from above. Usually each angle or V contains one or two smaller parallel ones. In a few cases among the Sahaptin, the V-shaped angles are replaced by square U-shaped figures or by diagonal stripes.

The characteristics of Gros Ventre rawhide painting, in spite of some fifteen pieces in the Museum, are difficult to define. There is certainly very little stylistic tendency peculiar to the tribe. A considerable proportion both of parfleches and bags resembles typical Arapaho ones, though on the whole with the difference that there is a less marked longitudinal arrangement of figures, and not quite so much openness of the decorative field. On the other hand, there is visible some tendency toward the use of the Shoshone square-and-triangular type of design, though with an inclination rather toward a central square with acute triangles directed toward it, such as is found among the Ute and Blackfeet, than toward the heavy diamond-filled central square and the square-and-triangular stripe of the Shoshone.

Of specimens which have more or less close Arapaho analogues, there may be mentioned Fig. 5 of Plate XI[1] and specimens Museum Nos. 50–1734,[2] 50–1929 and 50–1776,[3] and 50–1830.[4] A specimen (Museum No. 50–4327) collected by Dr. Clark Wissler may be described as approximately the equivalent of double that part of an Arapaho design which appears on the front of the bag.[5]

Several forms that are quite distinct from anything found among the Arapaho are illustrated in Plate XI. The design shown in Fig. 1 consists in essence of four squares, each containing two inturned obtuse triangles, and is without close parallel among any of the tribes from which there is material. Fig. 2 suggests the entirely-painted-over Sioux decorative field divided longitudinally by a wide stripe which is flanked by two long diamonds. It will be seen, however, that transverse divisions give a marked square effect to this pattern as a whole. Fig. 3 is a parfleche collected by Dr. Clark Wissler. It is in typical Shoshone style, showing the square-ended wide stripes and the general square effect of the central portion of the decorative field. Fig. 4 was also collected by Dr. Wissler, and is in many respects unique. Figs. 5 and 6 are two designs of the square-and-triangular type, but rather of the form used by the Ute than that typical of

1 Compare Bulletin American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part I, Plate XXII, Fig. 2.
2 Ibid., Vol. XVIII, Part I, Plate XX, Fig. 5.
3 Ibid., Vol. XVIII, Part I, Plate XVIII, Figs. 3 and 4.
4 Ibid., Vol. XVIII, Part I, Fig. 36.
5 Ibid., Vol. XVIII, Part I, Fig. 33.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the Shoshone. Specimen Museum No. 50-1741 (not shown in the plate) is similar to Fig. 6, but contains two central figures instead of one, and lacks the symmetrical half-designs along the edges. 531 171

A curious design on a bag is shown in Fig. 11. This, while much specialized, seems to show Blackfoot influence.

While these Gros Ventre pieces show resemblances here and there to the work of a number of tribes, yet they seem distinctly impressed with the tendencies of none. Perhaps fundamentally Gros Ventre rawhide painting is most similar to that of the Arapaho; but there are many departures from the Arapaho type, without corresponding development of any characteristically tribal style. There are some approaches to the art of both the Sioux and the Blackfeet, the two principal large tribes to the east and west; but these resemblances are not very marked. It is not unlikely that there may have been closer correspondences with the Crow. While the Blackfeet, according to Dr. Clark Wissler,[1] called their regular parfleche paintings "Gros Ventre painting," it is quite evident that the influence suggested by this name has actually had very little to do with the origin and development of the present style of Blackfoot painting. Not only do the Blackfeet appear to be in possession of a more distinctive style of rawhide painting than the Gros Ventre, but it is generally evident that any inter-influence of the two tribes on each other in respect to rawhide ornamentation has been inconsiderable.

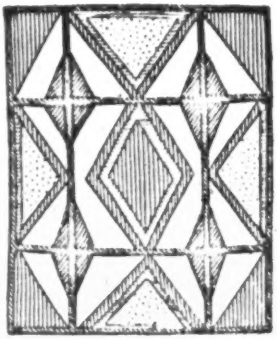


Fig. 11 (50-1805). Design on Bag. Length, 29 cm.

The cylindrical rawhide cases used by most Plains tribes, generally for holding medicine, are painted, on the whole, in styles resembling those of parfleches; but as the shape of the object and the portion of the decorative field visible at one time are quite different from those of parfleches, there are certain differences of design. At least four types of designs can be made out on medicine-cases; and, as more material becomes available for study, the tribal distribution of these, and especially the transition forms between the pure types, promise to be interesting. [415]

These four types, which have already been partly described in connection with the Arapaho,[2] are shown in Fig. 12 (*a–d*), and may be characterized as

[1] Clark Wissler, Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part III, p. 276.
[2] See Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part I, p. 132.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

53
17

follows. The first type (*a*) consists of a pattern of inverted tents.[1] The second type (*b*) consists of a pattern of stemmed crescents and forked upright fishtail figures.[2] The third type (*c*) has for its principal or central design a single figure, one of the characteristic elements of the pure triangular type

Fig. 12. Designs on Cylindrical Medicine-cases.

of parfleche designs, — a rhombus between two triangles directed toward it. As in parfleches, this figure may be flanked by symmetrical half-figures.[3] The fourth type (*d*) is similar, but substitutes in its principal figure the square-and-triangular type for the purely triangular one. The two Ute medicine-cases shown in Fig. 13 are illustrations.

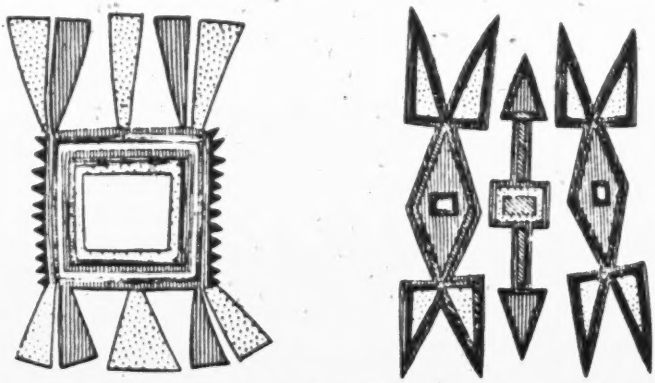


Fig. 13 (50 1255, 50 1276). Ute Medicine-case Designs. Lengths, 40 cm., 71 cm.

Among the Arapaho the tent-pattern seems most common, and next to this the crescent-and-fishtail design. One case of the third type has been found, and none of the fourth. The interesting specimen painted with bear-feet, in the Field Columbian Museum, may also be recalled.

Of Sioux medicine-cases little is known. A specimen in the Museum

[1] See Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part I, Plate xxv, Fig. 1.
[2] Ibid., Vol. XVIII, Part I, Plate xxv, Figs. 2 and 3.
[3] Ibid., Vol. XVIII, Part I, Fig. 43.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

531
171

has a design the most prominent figure in which is the spider-web symbol,[1] a concave quadrilateral. Superficially this design resembles those of the fourth type. A specimen in the Museum of the Department of Anthropology of the University of California shows an asymmetrical design, which in some respects approaches each of the four fundamental types here distinguished.

The Ute, to judge from four or five examples in the American Museum of Natural History, employ chiefly the third and fourth types; but their designs of the third or triangular type are almost always tinged with elements of the fourth, or square-and-triangular type.

The Shoshone cases, also represented by several examples, show some variation of pattern; but all are of the triangular type, and generally approach the design illustrated as most elemental. While in parfleches the Shoshone incline more than the Ute to square-and-triangular patterns, they appear to favor them less than the Ute on medicine-cases.

The Blackfoot tribes, also represented in the Museum by several specimens, show the third type, with but little variation from the illustration, quite regularly.

A single Sahaptin case in the Museum is also of this third type.

The only Gros Ventre case obtained is shown in Fig. 27, and the design is of the third type.

A Kiowa case in the Field Columbian Museum, the only specimen from this tribe known to the writer, and previously commented upon,[2] is intermediate between the first and second types.

The Arapaho being the southernmost of the tribes represented, it seems, especially in connection with this Kiowa case, that the first two types of medicine-case designs, the tent and the crescent-and-fishtail patterns, are probably characteristic of the southern Plains. Among the northern, or at least the northwestern, tribes belonging to the Plains culture, designs of the third and fourth types, more closely related to parfleche figures than are the first and second, are clearly prevalent. These are normally of the third or purely triangular form; but among the Ute a special form of the square-and-triangular type of design, found also on the parfleches of this tribe, has strongly influenced the medicine-case designs. Among the Shoshone the fundamentally square-and-triangular tendency of their parfleche-painting is without appreciable effect on their medicine-case style. The position of the Sioux in this classification, although geographically they belong to the northern tribes, remains to be more exactly determined.

[1] Compare Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part III, p. 248.
[2] Ibid., Vol. XVIII, Part I, p. 134.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

525 four in all, in two pairs. The Gros Ventre dice are marked with incised
171 lines on one side only. The Arapaho burn marks on the back or convex side in order to distinguish the two sets of dice they use together. The usual Gros Ventre markings consist of diagonal crosses and zigzag lines.
525 A single die is usually specially marked in the middle. By this means the scoring or the playing is elaborated. The number of counters among the
531 Gros Ventre is twelve. Sticks are used for this purpose. The methods

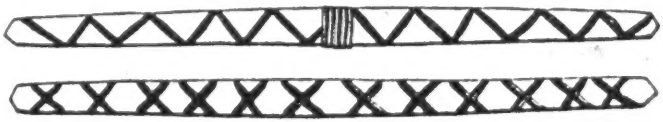


Fig. 14 (50-1768 a, b). Dice. Length, 24 cm.

of counting points are given somewhat differently by various individuals. For this reason the explanations obtained with each set of dice are here presented.

The set of dice one of each of whose pairs is shown in Fig. 14 has one die marked with a bit of string. There are twelve counters. The three unmarked sticks were thrown first. If they fell alike, the other one was thrown separately; but, if one of the first three fell differently from the other two, the marked stick was thrown at it in the hope of turning it over, so that all four sticks might rest alike. If this were the case, whether they were all face up or face down, four points were scored. If two were face up and two face down, two points were scored. If three faced one way and a single one was opposite, nothing was scored.

Fig. 15 (50-1812 b, d). Dice. Lengths, 20 cm., 20½ cm.

The set of dice of which the two kinds are shown in Fig. 15 is also accompanied by twelve counters. One of the sticks in this set is also marked by being tied around. This set was used somewhat differently, the four sticks being thrown together. If the marked stick fell one way, and the remainder opposite, six points were scored. If all four sticks fell alike, four were scored. If two sticks fell face up and two face down, two were scored; but three sticks one way and one the other, unless this single one happened to be the marked one, counted nothing.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The four dice shown in Fig. 16 are white on the face and green on the back. One of the plainer pair of sticks is marked on the face with a cross. If this stick fell up while the other three turned face down, six points were counted. If all the dice fell one way, the score was four points; if they fell in pairs, — two green and two banded, or two plain and two green, — two points were scored; while any other combination did not count. A player

525
531

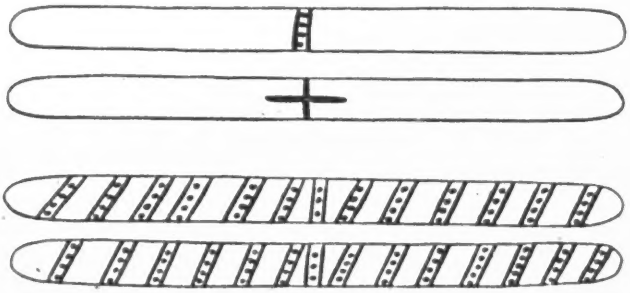


Fig. 16 (50-1860 a, b, c, d). Set of Dice. Length, 23 cm.

that scored was entitled to another throw, but should he fail, his opponent took the dice.

Fig. 17 shows a model of a fourth set of dice, made of bone instead of wood, painted red, and accompanied by twelve counters of grease-wood, pointed at one end to be stuck in the ground. The two pairs of dice are marked respectively with transverse and zigzag incised lines. One of the latter is cut with three parallel lines on the back also. The owner of this

Fig. 17 (50-1900 a, d). Dice. Length, 21 cm.

set scored as follows. Six points were won, if all the dice fell plain side up; and six, if the odd one fell plain side up and the three others marked side up. For all four marked sides up, four points were made; for one pair marked, the other plain, two points; for other combinations there was no score.

A fifth set, Fig. 18, obtained by Dr. Clark Wissler, is of bone. The ornamentation is by small pits. One of the dice with the long single row of dots is marked on the middle of the back with several small holes to set it off from the rest.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

524 A form of the widely spread guessing-game occurred among the Gros
531 Ventre. Two buttons, which were enclosed in the hand, were used. At the beginning each player held one button. One of them guessed in which hand the other held the button. If he guessed wrong, his opponent got four counters; but if he guessed right, his opponent must yield the button to him. When he held two, his opponent guessed in which hand each of them was. If his opponent guessed wrong, the player received two counters; but if his opponent was right, the player must hand over both buttons, and himself guess. The game was played for twelve stick counters. These at the beginning were in a pile belonging to neither of the players. This neutral pile was drawn upon until exhausted, before either player gave counters to the other. This method of using counters was customary in Arapaho and Gros Ventre games.

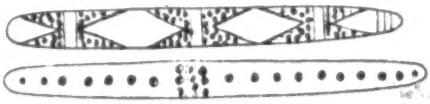


Fig. 18 (50 4325, 50 4325 a). Dice. Lengths, 15 cm., 16 cm.

[M1]

The buttons used in this game are different from those the Arapaho have had in recent years. They lack symbolism altogether, and are even without the red-black color-dualism obvious in the Arapaho game. The elaborate counters, food-sticks, pointers, and head-dresses of the Arapaho are also not found among the Gros Ventre. Of one pair of buttons, one was of brass beads, the other of green glass beads. They were called respectively "long" and "short." Another pair, made of bone, are illustrated in Fig. 19. A single button made of bone, apparently from a tooth-brush-handle, is shown in Fig. 20.

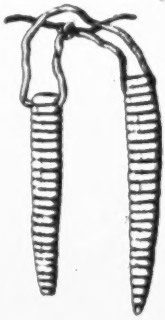


Fig. 19.

Fig. 20.

Fig. 19 (50 1931 a, b). Hiding-buttons. Length, 7 cm.
Fig. 20 (50 1917). Hiding-button. Length, 6 cm.

526 Boys shot arrows or threw sticks
857 at a netted hoop, apparently identical with the Arapaho hoop except for nomenclature. The central mesh, called the "crow" or "crow's heart," won the game for whoever hit it. If the "crow's heart" was not pierced, a point was scored by the arrow nearest to it. An arrow passing through the netting without being held in it counted nothing. If one of the hoops rolled within reach, a player was at liberty to

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

ever, could find none to stand on, and this was what gave rise to the excitement and amusement. 526

Girls sometimes kicked a football upward, as if juggling with it. Such a football was kicked with the instep, either while free or while held by a string. Fig. 23 shows such a football about six inches in diameter. It is said to be made of the skin of an unborn buffalo-calf, and to be stuffed with fur. It is covered with an unknotted network of sinew strands.

The ordinary balls are much smaller than this one, and lack the sinew network. They are made of soft-dressed skin, and painted. In construction and appearance they are not to be distinguished from Arapaho ghost-dance balls, except that none have yet been seen with a plume on the attached thong, as is customary with the Arapaho. One, approaching the last in size, was said to have been struck with a stick, and is therefore probably a shinny-ball. It lacks a thong. The others are smaller, usually with a double thong, and are said to be stuffed with hair. [171]

Specimen Museum No. 50-1729 is the thongless ball mentioned as used with a stick. It is painted red. One side has been lightly gone over with a dark paint, blue or black. In the middle of the red side is a small dark cross. [531]

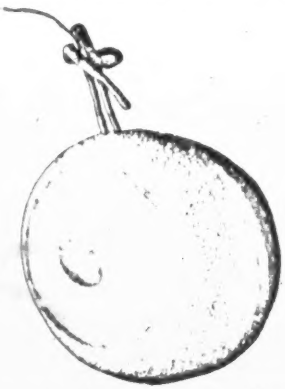


Fig. 24 (50-1981). Ghost-dance Ball. Diameter, 9 cm.

Specimen Museum No. 50-1728 is painted yellow. Along the seam where the two hemispheres are joined, it is red. On one side a hand is outlined in green; on the other side, in red. An Arapaho ball described[1] had a smaller hand painted on it, because, it is said, the hand threw the ball.

The ball one side of which is shown in Fig. 24 was said to have been made in connection with the ghost-dance. One side is primarily dark blue or green; the other, yellow. Each side has on it a central spot and a ring of the opposite color. The symbolism of this painting is not quite consistent, but recalls that of the Arapaho. On the dark side three concentric circles were distinguished, representing three successive existences of the world; the fourth was still to come. On the yellow side the central spot represented the entrance to the sky. It thus seems that the two sides of the ball represent heaven and earth, the future life and this.

[1] See Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part IV, Fig. 150.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

727 counted coup on the enemy filled a pipe, and held it for the rest of the
[554] party to smoke as they stood in a row. The returning war-party, if
[302] successful, always painted black, but if a member of their own party had been killed, they returned without rejoicing; unless sometimes, when the loss of the enemy had been greater than their own, and a relative of the dead was in the party, he might say, "One of the enemy pays for my relative. On account of the others, let us enjoy ourselves." Then the party would paint black, and celebrate. Wounds received by members of the war-party would not prevent celebration, unless, of course, they resulted fatally; and they were always regarded as an honor.

726 Some war-parties started off publicly in broad daylight, having made
727 it known that they were going; and any one who wished joined. Sometimes, perhaps, two men would agree to go, and invited such others to accompany them as they wished. Women not infrequently went with the war-parties. If a man was killed in war, his relatives, especially his parents,
[765] mourned for him. His father might go to the tent of a renowned warrior, and cry until this man became angry and announced a day for a party to
751 start out to obtain revenge. On the day set, the party left publicly, usually
237 on horseback.

726 A man's supernatural war paraphernalia are shown in Figs. 27, 28, and
778 29. They were obtained from a middle-aged man who had them from his grandfather, who first dreamed of the magpie and the other animals con-
293 nected with the paraphernalia, and made the objects. A cylindrical raw-
[787] hide case (Fig. 27), such as is found used for holding feathers and medicine among most Plains tribes, is painted with a yellow, green, and blue design
[531] resembling parfleche designs. These colors represent the various colors of the birds that were dreamed of by the original owner, and whose feathers are kept in the case. The case is called the "house" of these objects. A wing-bone is attached to the outside of the case to make another whistle from in case of loss of the finished whistle included in the outfit. A small bag containing a necklace is kept in the case. The bag (Fig. 28, *a*) is ornamented with bead-work representing a frog (kaka"). This frog was part of the original owner's dream. The necklace (Fig. 28, *b*) has various wasóo ("medicine-roots") on it. These are said to be neither eaten nor otherwise used, except as they are worn on the necklace. The bone whistle (Fig. 28, *c*) alluded to is attached to a necklace of otter-skin. It is blown during the fighting to prevent injury. A magpie's skin (Fig. 28, *d*) and the skin of a smaller bird (Fig. 29, *a*) are also contained in the case. The white magpie-feathers are dyed yellow. The two skins are worn at the back of the head, and prevent the wearer being injured even in a hand-to-hand fight. A head-dress of ten magpie-feathers and of a white plume on red-painted

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

237
726
293
778
751

thongs, tied together at the ends with a medicine-bag, and four brass bells (Fig. 29, *b*), is tied to the hair over the front of the head. When the warriors sing before dressing for battle, this head-dress is also used as a rattle. The medicine attached to it is chewed, and rubbed over the owner's body, as well

[531]

Fig. 27. (50-1952 a) Medicine-case for War Paraphernalia. Length, 40 cm.

as over his horse's, after he has painted himself. Two plumes of eagle-down (Fig. 29, *c*) are tied to the horse. One is tied to its fore-leg, the other to its tail. Then it will not be shot, and, if it falls, will not be hurt. In case of flight and pursuit, a little medicine that is attached to these plumes in a small

[text continues on p. 195]

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

they did not stay in one place, but at times moved about. They shook their rattles constantly. They did not sing, but uttered a pressed-out "Hah." Two atsaan (assistants or servants of the dance) attended near the door. They brought back such of the dancers as became exhausted from lack of sleep and left the ceremony. Two men who had fought and struck a mounted enemy while they themselves were mounted, rode on horseback. When they went to dance, the assistants went to them and helped them dismount. If the dancers were inactive, these two men went about among them to make them arise. If the dancers remained on the ground, they struck them with their whips. The spectators outside lifted up the bottom of the tent and looked underneath; or, as the tent was not very high (the lodge being roofless), those who were on horseback looked over it.

The Gros Ventre star-rattles consist of a tube of rawhide, an inch or less in diameter, bent on itself into a hoop three or four inches across, and attached to a stick handle half a foot or more in length. Apparently one end of the tube projects out from the hoop forming the head of the rattle, sufficiently to allow the stick to be inserted. The rawhide is painted, and ornamented with three or five bunches of feathers. The handle is wrapped with cloth, the upper end of which usually is cut into a small fringe at the base of the head of the rattle, while the lower end hangs free beyond the handle. The general outline of the rattle is similar to the Arapaho star-rattle, this having a round or kite-shaped flat head at the end of the handle. The hoop feature is, however, wanting in the Arapaho rattles, which are without a perforation. The Gros Ventre decorations of their rattles — whether feathers, cloth attachments, or painting — are usually crude and gaudy. It seems that the rattles now in use are a degenerate modern form. In the majority of cases the feathers attached are dyed: some are cut from the quill. This indicates a recent modifying influence. Many of the feathers are cut off transversely. This may or may not be an old feature. The piece shown in Fig. 34 has least of the base qualities of these rattles, and is a probable approximation to the older type.

Of some of the specimens to be seen in the Museum, descriptions are here given.

Fig. 31 (50-1783). Handle covered with red flannel, which hangs below the handle about two feet. Fringe of same at base of head, and same forms periphery of head. Rawhide of head painted blue, red on inside of hoop. A string appears to have been wound around the head while the hide was fresh, and removed after the painting, leaving radiating white depressions. Head ornamented at top and sides with three bunches of four black-and-white, squarish, half-downy feathers attached by thongs. At the top there is also an eagle-feather. Handle wound with thong, forming at the end a loop to pass over the wrist. The head of this rattle was said to represent a star.

1: Kroeber E.5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

291
531

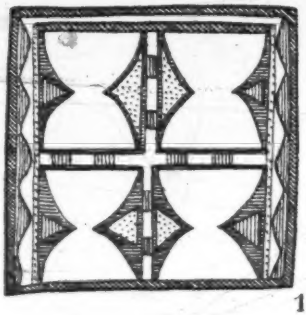
1 2 3

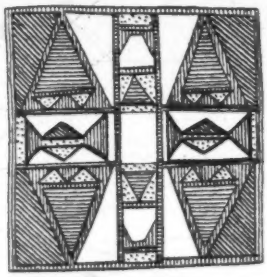
MOCCASINS.

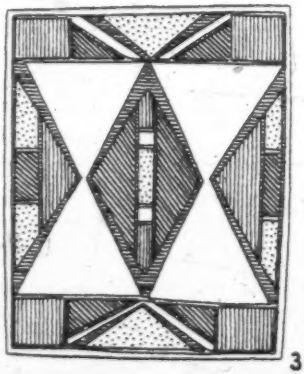
[End plate 1]

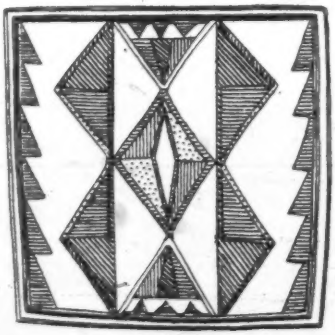
1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

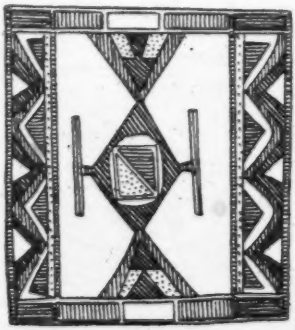
531

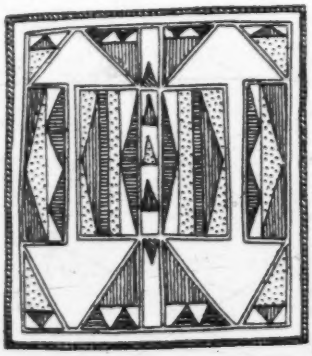

1


2


3


4


5


6

ORNAMENTATION OF GROS VENTRE PARFLECHES.

[End Plate 4]

2; Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Feathers, especially eagle feathers, were highly prized, and red paint, prepared from ochre, as well as other paints obtained through the trader, played their part in bodily decoration. 292 237 386

The younger men thought a great deal of their appearance. One of the things they made for themselves was fancy painted sunshade-hats of rawhide. The designs painted thereon had a yellow background against which various other colors stood out. Coming Daylight remarked: "These sunshades looked so fine that the other tribes copied them, just like the whites get their styles from Paris." Long thick hair was the ideal both for men and for women. The tail of the porcupine made an admirable comb. A number of perfumes were used by the young men. The castor of the beaver, for instance, was put in the paint bag so that the material for daily painting would be sweet smelling. Again, young men crushed "Piegan berries," chewed them, and rubbed them on hair, horses, and bedding, as perfume. 292 751 531 302 [237]

Incidentally, according to Coming Daylight, in order to clean their buckskin clothing, the Gros Ventres would wear it into the water, getting it completely wet, and then rub it thoroughly with a certain kind of white clay.[14] She said that the tribe was spoken of by other tribes as always having such nice white clothes, and to this habit of rubbing them with clay she attributes the name by which the Gros Ventres call themselves, *a'aninin*, "white clay people." 296 [101]

Ear-rings, worn both by men and women, were made from imported abalone shell, which they cut up and shaped; they also used a certain type of imported white shell. Many other kinds of necklaces, armlets, and so on were apparently used, but on these we failed to get details. 301 [439]

Household and Transportation

The lodges of the Gros Ventres were made from buffalo hides, the number used in each depending on the size of the lodge. They 342

[14] This custom is mentioned in the sources of the early 19th century. Cf. Harmon, p. 277; Henry, v. 2, p. 734. The latter adds, as a further distinguishing characteristic, that when the Gros Ventres use red "it is always of a light color, inclining to pale vermillion. The dark red or Spanish brown, so much in vogue among the other Meadow tribes, does not suit their taste." [822]

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

484 than six poles would be so tied together, a strong line running
through the holes, leaving a loop to go about the horses' neck.
492 Another line was tied around the six, about in the middle, to hold the poles together as the horse dragged them through the water. A mounted horse could draw two sets of six poles across the river at one time, one set on each side, but could not take all the poles for a lodge on a single trip. Meat packed in skin bags was often lashed to the poles and did not suffer in transit. Occasionally older children rode across the river on these poles, and some people paddled across straddling a single log.

782 The same goods which we have described as used by the Gros Ventre to meet their needs for food, clothing, shelter and transportation were likewise used to meet many other needs. Cloth and clothing, feathers, ornaments, and so forth, were used as religious sacrifices and offerings. Food was used as payment or part-pay-
262 ment for services of those who helped in production of economic
436 goods, or of those who cured diseases, acted in ceremonial capacity of one kind or another, as well as in meeting certain specific kin-
342 ship obligations. Lodges might be painted in accordance with a
531 supernatural vision, and, with the associated songs, were transferrable to others as ritual objects. Horses were used as payments of various kinds,—in connection with the bride price, to ceremonial
436 grandfathers, and so on. There was thus no medium of exchange within the group and no strict classification into producer's goods as contrasted with consumer's goods is possible.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The older women informants described, when they were young, they would work at scraping skins pegged to the ground, by leaning over from the waist, feet well apart and knees unbent, swinging sideways from the hips. They could keep up this rhythmical steady motion, with the short-handled scraper usually tipped with metal, for hours at a time, one day after another. Sometimes, too, a woman would spend a whole day softening ropes of rawhide by rubbing the rope which had been run through the eye and ear apertures of a buffalo skull upon which the horns had been left so that she, sitting on the ground with legs extended, could rest her feet against the horns as she pulled the rope back and forth, making it soft and white.[4] Nevertheless the tedium of these operations was often relieved by the fact that occasionally other women, who had at the moment some leisure, would hear the work going on and would volunteer to help.

462 281 [516] [412] [283 237] 462 476 281

It was customary for women to do much of their work in groups. If a young woman, for instance, wished to make a fine robe, she would call in some other women, including an older experienced "hand." The latter would mark the robe where the embroidery should go, and the younger women did the fancy work. The hostess would cook for all present and so, in a pleasant atmosphere of sociability and "woman talk," the work would progress. A similar type of gathering would be held when a sufficient number of hides had been saved to make a lodge cover.

[531]

In size the lodges ranged from six skins up to twenty-four or twenty-five, with the average of about fourteen to seventeen.[5] Much skill was needed for cutting and fitting the skins and an experienced woman would be called in to do that part, while the others helped with the task of sewing the skins together. Our informants stated that a woman would have to "save and save" skins towards a new lodge, which was a necessity about every three years.

[342]

Women went out in groups to pick berries and wild fruits as well as to dig roots, but each one had right of disposal over what

462 476

[4] Another method for softening ropes is given by Kroeber, 1908, p. 150.

[5] The largest lodge remembered by the Gros Ventres is said to have been that of the Blood Chief, Father of All, who had, at the time of the 1855 treaty, a lodge with two fires, poles 65 ft. long, and the cover consisting of more than 25 skins.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the mind was clouded for a while and a man could not remember so well afterwards all that happened in the battle." [14] 726

The leader was constantly on the alert and tended to interpret anything out of the ordinary as having a bearing on the success or ill fate of his party. As a case in point we have the following account of an expedition in the 1860's. "Lame Bull was on a war party of which Big Beaver was the leader. They went to the Crow country hoping to find some hunters in the mountains. At the timber on the river not far from Crow Mountain, the party stopped near a big tree. It was during a thaw in the spring and after they had eaten, they took off their moccasins and hung them on the tree. Then they sat around and smoked and told stories. All of a sudden they heard an owl in the tree above them calling out: 'Where you are sitting under this tree, you are going to be killed.' The owl called again and said the same thing. Big Beaver said to his party: 'I've lived a long time. But never have I heard anything like this owl talking. Let's put on our moccasins and go fast. I think the owl is telling the truth. I think he knows what is going on and people must be near.' All quickly put on their moccasins, and, as they were putting out the fire and preparing to leave, they heard people yelling. Big Beaver gave instructions: 'Scatter. Don't go in file and don't step in the snow, but keep to the bare places so our tracks won't be seen.' So they ran away and soon reached the mountain. When they got to the top of the mountain, daylight had come. They looked down and saw people at the big tree where they had been, searching around for tracks. The Gros Ventres called at the other Indians to invite attack, but the others only stood and looked up, without trying to catch them." 726 787

If the war party happened to be near certain petroglyphs, believed by the Gros Ventres to reveal the future, they went there to read the omens. If they could not then interpret the markings, an offering was left there and the next morning they went again. The markings on the rock were believed to change, and the predictions interpreted therefrom to be accurate. If the omens thus appeared too unfavorable, the whole party might even turn back. 726 787 531

[14] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, pp. 201, 208, for remarks relating to war experiences of individuals.

PLATES

142 The original photograph of Plate 1 was taken in 1887 and
291 belongs to The Boy. Shown in it are Lame Bull, The Boy's
301 father, and Crow Bull, maternal uncle of Coming Daylight. Both
302 of these men were born around 1825 and their personal experiences were often referred to by our informants as we took down the record of the old way of life. Each had been Keeper of the sacred Flat Pipe.

115 The photographs composing Plate 2, except for the one of The
133 Boy, were taken in 1940 by Dr. Karl F. Herzfeld. The first three
142 show the nature of the country around Hays on the Fort Belknap
291 Reservation; the other three show some of our informants and
292 interpreters whose biographical sketches follow.

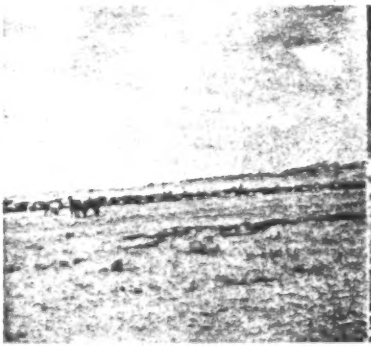
531 In Plate 3, the shield and war medicines of Bull Lodge, father
797 of our informant, Garter Snake, represent only a few of the specimens of Gros Ventre culture collected in 1937 by Mr.
778 Richard Pohrt, of Flint, Michigan.
293
714
721

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

115
133
142
291
292
531

IN THE LITTLE ROCKIES

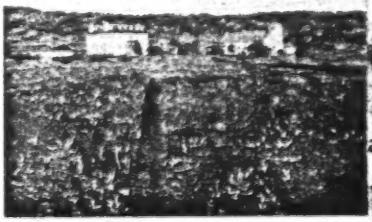
THE BOY



PLAINS NEAR HAYS

MARY, SINGER, AND COMING DAYLIGHT

[342]
[797]



ST. PAUL'S MISSION AND SCHOOL

COMING DAYLIGHT'S TIPI

PLATE II

[p. 212 (B)]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 narrow at one temple, broader in front, and narrow at the other temple, to represent the sky and the region above; another under 302 the jawbones and chin, from ear to ear likewise narrow near the ear, broader under the chin, and narrow at the other ear, to represent the earth or dry land. Then with a stamp, made of a stick having a cross of four equal-length arms carved in relief on its end, and dipped into the paint, crosses in red were imprinted on each cheek bone of the adults, on the bridge of the nose according to The Boy, or on the forehead according to [821 Thick, and on both cheeks. This cross-shaped imprint represented the morning star (called simply "the cross" [not "the ●531] cross star"] in Gros Ventre), so The Boy and Thick conjectured on their own, but this they never heard from the old people. This painting meant much, it seems, to the people; as Coming Daylight expressed it: "It was a great thing to get painted at Flat Pipe ceremonies." As the people were painted they filed out clockwise. The rite ordinarily took a long time and only ended when the last of the people quit coming in. During it the strict silence was not observed by the ex-keepers and other privileged persons in the lodge; they chatted and smoked freely.

*796 Two other songs (No. 40 and No. 41), both wordless, were now sung by the keeper and the small groups in the lodge. After the first of these two songs the keeper painted with red paint the sacred objects kept in the Pipe bundle: the Pipe case proper, the bird skins, the rattles, and so forth. After the second, the co-keeper painted the sacred objects connected with the Pipe but not kept in the bundle: the tripod, pipe saddle and so forth. Meanwhile or at the end of the painting, the keeper told further details regarding the history and significance of the Flat Pipe and the sacred objects associated with it. After all this a long recess was taken with free smoking and chatting.

After the recess came the third triad of songs and the re-wrapping and re-tying of the Pipe bundle. The order of the songs, as well as The Boy could remember was: The Last Child Song (No. 42), The Rope Song (No. 43), The Horse Song (No. 44), all three, wordless except for short sentences in the middle, of these were brought back by He-who-starved-to-death

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

171 bags, recalling the typical checker and diagonal step design of Blackfoot
415 beading. This type is, however, unusual among the Gros Ventre.

531 The fine bag shown in Fig. 6, collected by Dr. Clark Wissler, presents unusual quill-embroidery on its front, suggestive perhaps of Sioux influence or origin; but the bead-work on its cover and sides, and the attached tin and horsehair ornaments, are typically Arapaho, except for the fact that this tribe would be very unlikely to make any pattern without at least some proportion of white. The transverse lines of quill-work on this bag might be regarded as nothing but a further five-line development of the three-line grouping illustrated by the last figure, with an alternating bar-pattern for its chief ornamentation instead of the box figure, which in element is identical. The central figure, however, is the typical Sioux spider-web pattern described by Dr. Clark Wissler,[1] and so far without any parallel among either Arapaho or Gros Ventre, or any approach nearer than that shown in an instance of blanket painting.[2] The two parallel bars in the centre of this concave quadrilateral figure, and the diamond-shaped feather symbols at its corners, are also typically Siouan: only the last-named element is occasionally used by the Gros Ventre.

237 Buffalo paunches, the mouth being drawn up by a string, like a sack,
415 were used for carrying and holding water, a paunchful being hung up in
505 the tent. If buffalo had been killed, and it was desired to transport the meat across the Missouri, the paunches were filled with meat, blown up, tied together at the mouth, and floated. The well-known circular skin
[501] boats of the Missouri tribes were also used by the Gros Ventre for transporting clothing and property across streams.

171 Fig. 7 shows an ornamented food-bag of bladder. At the top is a strip
415 of skin covered with red quill-embroidery, with square star designs in blue
531 and white. From this strip of skin hangs a red quill-wound fringe. The thong handle of the bag is partly quilled, and has quilled thong pendants hanging from it. At the bottom of the bag a round piece of skin, covered with green-and-white quartered bead-work, is sewed on.

171 The navel-amulets of the Gros Ventre, which resemble those of the
● 532 Arapaho in their use, are in form of a somewhat different type, as they approach more nearly to an animal's shape. They usually represent
751 çaniwa", the "horned toad" (southern Arapaho, sāniwa", a "lizard"), or sometimes a person. Their general shape is, as everywhere on the Plains, a rhomboid on end. To this the Gros Ventre add at the upper end a small rhomboid, forming the head of the animal represented. This augmented shape has not been found among the Arapaho, with whom the typical form

[1] See Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part III, p. 248.
[2] Ibid., Vol. XIII, p. 85, Fig. 138.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

is a narrow simple rhomboid.[1] The Blackfeet and Sioux make figures resembling those of the Gros Ventre, but carry the realism farther. The Sioux most frequently represent an entire animal with head, legs, and tail, much like Fig. 1 in Plate VIII of Vol. XVIII of the "Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History," but broader, in the shape of a turtle.[2] The Arapaho, Gros Ventre, and Blackfeet use ornamented strings hanging from the corners of the rhomboid to represent limbs and tail. The Blackfeet make realistic snake amulets for their boys, and more conventional turtle or lizard-like figures, resembling those of the Gros Ventre, for their girls. Among the Assiniboine, and west of the Rockies among the Bannock and Ute, a reduced form of navel-amulets occurs, though perhaps it is not the only one used. It is usually small and flat, with the acute angles of the rhomboid cut off transversely, rendering the whole piece hexagonal rather than quadrilateral. Sometimes the entire edges are fringed. The relative distribution of this small form and of the other forms is not yet clear. A Shoshone amulet in the Museum is a pointed rhomboid resembling the Arapaho type, even to being quartered in its bead-ornamentation. A Kiowa specimen in the Anthropological Museum of the University of California is a plain rhombus, of Arapaho type, except in being smaller and more nearly square. The following distribution of types is at least partly correct: realistic, Sioux, Blackfoot, occasionally Arapaho; semi-realistic, Blackfoot, Gros Ventre; conventional rhomboid, Arapaho, Kiowa, Shoshone; reduced hexagonal, Assiniboine, Ute, Bannock, and perhaps Shoshone.

Fig. 7 (50-1801). Ornamented Food-bag of Bladder. Length, 29 cm.

On Plate IX are shown three Gros Ventre navel-amulets. Fig. 3 was said to represent a horned toad, and Fig. 2, a person. It will be seen that the mouth in the former is near the end of the head; in the latter, in the lower part of the face. Both these specimens have quilled or beaded appendages at the two side corners and at the lower end. Fig. 1 has a distinct

[1] See Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part I, Plate VIII.
[2] Ibid., Vol. XVIII, Part III, p. 242, Fig. 76.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

171 tail as well as head, a cross instead of an attempt at representative ornamen-
532 tation in the bead-work on the head, and unornamented yellowed thongs as
751 sole attachments. Another specimen (Museum No. 50–4278), not figured, is much smaller than any of the others. It resembles Fig. 3 of Plate IX in that the bead-work on its upper surface is quartered, and that there is a distinct attempt to represent eyes in the head. The attachments are short unpainted thongs with tin cones at their ends.

Of these four pieces, Fig. 1 of Plate IX and Museum No. 50–4278 are unbeaded on the lower side; Fig. 3 of Plate IX has a few curvilinear leaf-ornaments on the lower side; and Fig. 2 of Plate IX is entirely beaded on both sides, showing on the reverse a simple quartering in blue and yellow without attempted representation of animal form. It thus appears that all the pieces are ornamented with bead-work in quartering, a design found also among the Arapaho, although transverse or diagonal parallel lines, or a crossed longitudinal line, are more common among them. The specimen figured

[531]

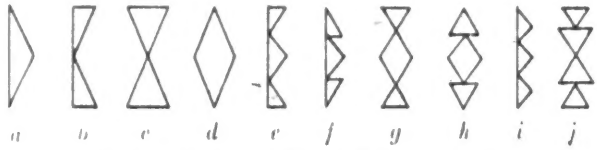


Fig. 8. Triangular Designs on Parfleches and Bags.

in Fig. 1 of Plate IX is quartered asymmetrically. The greater flatness of Fig. 3, same plate, is due to the contents of the amulet-pouch having been removed, no doubt for preservation.

The principal form of Gros Ventre decorative art other than embroidery
531 is painting, mainly on skin and rawhide. As to the symbolism of this paint-
171 ing, as little was learned as of the symbolism of embroidered designs. The style of decoration itself, however, offers some points of interest when compared with the forms of decoration typical of other Plains tribes.

Outside of robe-painting, tent-painting, and semi-realistic painting of a more directly symbolic or religious nature, the principal form of this branch of Plains decorative art is the painting of parfleches and rawhide bags. In these the decorative field is invariably rectangular, usually nearly square. Within this rectangular field, which may be merely outlined or may be heavily bordered, three principal types of design elements and combinations of elements can be distinguished. These can be called respectively the "triangular," the "square-and-triangular," and the "square."

The triangular type of design is by far the most common, taking the Plains as a whole, and among some tribes is used almost exclusively. The

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

526 Fig. 25 shows one side of a small ball painted yellow, on which is a rude embroidery in red, yellow, and green quills, representing a bird. On the 532 opposite side is a red quilled cross. The bird-embroidery recalls the quill-ornamentation of an Arapaho ghost-dance drumstick and hand implement, both of them with stuffed heads of painted skin; also the painting of a crow on an Arapaho ghost-dance ball.[1]

526

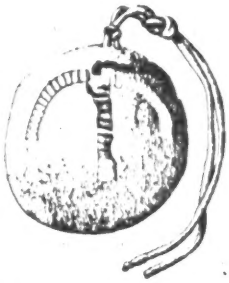


Fig. 25 (50-1731). Embroidered and Painted Ball. Diameter, 7 cm.

A game of throwing willow sticks on the ice, to see who could slide them farthest, was played by women. These sticks were sometimes tipped with buffalo-calves' horns. Young men, as well as women, sometimes threw horn-pointed sticks on the ice. It is said that women used long sticks, young men short sticks.

Children slid on the ice at a place they had made smooth. A boy and then a girl would slide alternately. When the whole party had slid one way, they would return, sliding in the opposite direction.

A toy made to slide on the ice consists of a bone to which two feathered sticks are attached at a diverging angle. It is called "tataxtsitcebyn^{n}." The object is to bounce or slide the implement over the ice as far as possible. This type of object is found among a number of Plains tribes.

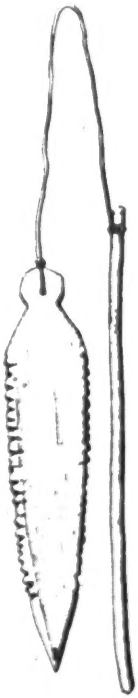


Fig. 26 (50-1788). Bull-roarer. Length, 56 cm.

493 Boys' sleds for coasting on hillsides were made of 526 several buffalo-ribs held together at each end by a long 857 thong winding in and out around the two halves of a split stick. A buffalo-tail was tied behind. These sleds were called "'sö^{n}w^{n}haana^{n}." When a man presented such a sled to another man's boy, he received presents from the boy's parents. In early summer, when the grass was green, toboggans of rawhide were used on the hillsides. The front was held up and bent over, and the bottom soon became very smooth.

227 Slings were used by boys for killing birds and small animals. The entire 411 sling was made of skin. The thongs were passed through holes near the 857

[1] See Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part IV, p. 395, Fig. 151.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

293
726
778
[532]

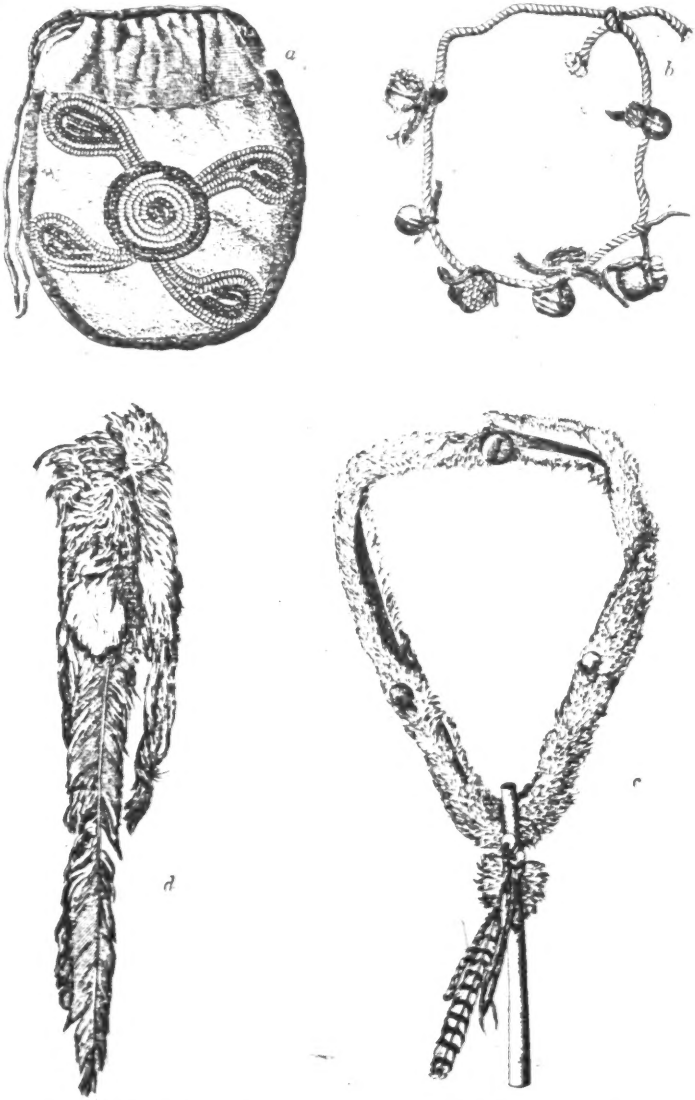


Fig. 28 (50–1952 b, c, d, e). War Paraphernalia. Lengths, 15 cm., 9 cm., 45 cm., 40 cm.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

used in this way. The owner twice dreamed of a weasel, which told him to use its skin. Thereupon he first wore a weasel-skin in dances, and later carried it to war. Subsequently he lent it to his son and to other men who went to war, and they always returned successfully.

A man to whom a fisher had appeared in a dream or vision used a fish-skin medicine-bag, and on going to war carried this with him.

A renowned warrior, dead for some time, received his personal medicine from the bears, and was forbidden to scalp, count coup on the enemy, or take away a gun. He could only kill. He once killed two Sioux with one shot, at a place which received its name from the event.

A simple riding-whip (specimen Museum No. 50-1821) has on its wooden handle four red marks, each of which is said to represent an enemy struck in the face with a whip in battle.

Representations, used in the modern "war-dance," of the weapons of Black-Wolf, a well-known Gros Ventre warrior, part of whose experiences in war are told below, consist of a shield and spear. The shield, which is made of painted white cloth, represents the shield carried by him on an occasion when he rushed to battle with no other weapon. The shield is decorated with a blue crescent along the lower edge, representing the sun, and bordered by a wavy red line denoting lightning. The wooden spear and spear-point represent a spear with which the owner stabbed a Piegan in battle. The spear-point is painted blue and red; the blue representing iron, the red blood. Red marks on the handle of the spear represent coups.

A pair of beaded and painted moccasins executed by a woman, but designed by an old man, symbolize his exploits in war. An outside rim of beading represents the enemy's camp-circle. In the middle of the camp-circle is beaded the figure of a tent belonging to a chief. To this tent was tied a horse, which the wearer of the moccasins cut loose. This feat is represented by an outline painting of a horse and halter. Three U-shaped figures, also painted, are horse-tracks, and represent the capture of horses. On the other moccasin there are again three such figures in a row, which here were said to indicate a charge on horseback on the camp; while two other such figures, facing each other, indicate a face-to-face fight.

Curtains hanging behind the bed in front of the tent-wall were sometimes painted to illustrate the owner's achievements in war.

WAR-EXPERIENCES OF INDIVIDUALS.

The following narratives give an entirely personal account of the war-experiences of three individuals, two of them men of about sixty years of

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 men are named, their female relatives return to their tents, and cook. When
729 they have prepared food, they all together bring a large quantity of it to the lodge. The men selected carry weapons, and are dressed for war. They are usually mounted. Where they themselves or their horses were wounded, [302] they paint themselves. If they have ridden over an enemy, a man is painted on the breast of the horse. When the food which has been brought by their female relatives has been eaten, these men, two at a time, go through numerous performances of their achievements in battle. This is done each day of the dance.

796 A group of men and women, called, like those in the preliminary singing-tent, "prairie-chickens," and therefore probably the same persons, seem [534] to be the singers for the dance. They beat a rawhide in place of a drum, and hold branches, which, at the end of each song, they shake, shouting.

[271] The dancers may not drink water, no matter how great the heat. If [821] one of them is unable to endure, and a pitying relative gives him even only a drop, a thunderstorm follows, and the offender may be struck by lightning, or one of his horses may be killed by lightning. In case it seems necessary for the dancers to drink, a pipe is taken to one of the old men. If he accepts it and smokes it, he goes to the central tree. He wears a robe with the hair-side out. He has a whistle in his mouth, feathers in one hand, and a crow-skin in the other. He strikes the bill of the crow four [789] times, with a downward motion, against the lightning symbol on the tree. A vessel is held against the tree at the bottom of the symbol, and, after the fourth blow, water is said to run out until the vessel is filled, when it stops. This water is given to the dancers, each of whom drinks a very small quan- [787] tity. The actions of the man producing this water are said to be determined by his personal supernatural vision.

After the four days of the ceremony are completed, the lodge is left standing. All the cloth and clothing that have been attached to it remain [789] in place, and it appears that other clothes, especially of children, are left at the lodge. This is done in order that the children may live a long life.

796 From drawings made by a Gros Ventre, it appears that the buffalo-skull is painted with spots, and has its nose and eyes stuffed. Behind it is
● 532 represented a dancer holding the wheel. He is presumably the pledger of the ceremony. The wheel is bisected by two strings, and has eagle-feathers and down-feathers attached to it. The dancer blows a whistle at the end of which is a plume. The whistle hangs from his neck. At the back of the head is a plume. Lines of paint proceed from his breast to his wrists and ankles. On each of these are four diamonds, two on each upper and lower arm, thigh, and calf. If this is a correct representation, the Gros Ventre use at least one style of painting that is like the most typical Arap-

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

aho sun-dance paint. Usually the Arapaho paint only two diamonds on each limb; but four have been seen on the northern Arapaho pledger, as in this picture. Another drawing repeats this painting, and adds a head-band, anklets, and wristlets apparently corresponding to the sage ornaments of the Arapaho. In a third drawing a dancer is painted with lightning symbols down his legs and arms. 796 532

The Gros Ventre and Arapaho sun-dances differ about as much as their respective age-company ceremonies. The principal discrepancies seem to be the following. 796 171

The Gros Ventre accumulation of buffalo-tongues by the pledger after the making of the vow and before the ceremony. This feature is found among the Blackfoot, but not among the Arapaho.

The prairie-chicken lodge with its four-nights' singing apparently corresponds somewhat to the Arapaho rabbit-tent; but its daily removal, accompanied by the camp-circle, is not found among the Arapaho. The prairie-chicken singing recalls a feature in the Arapaho hinanaha^{n}wu, the fifth of the age-ceremonies.

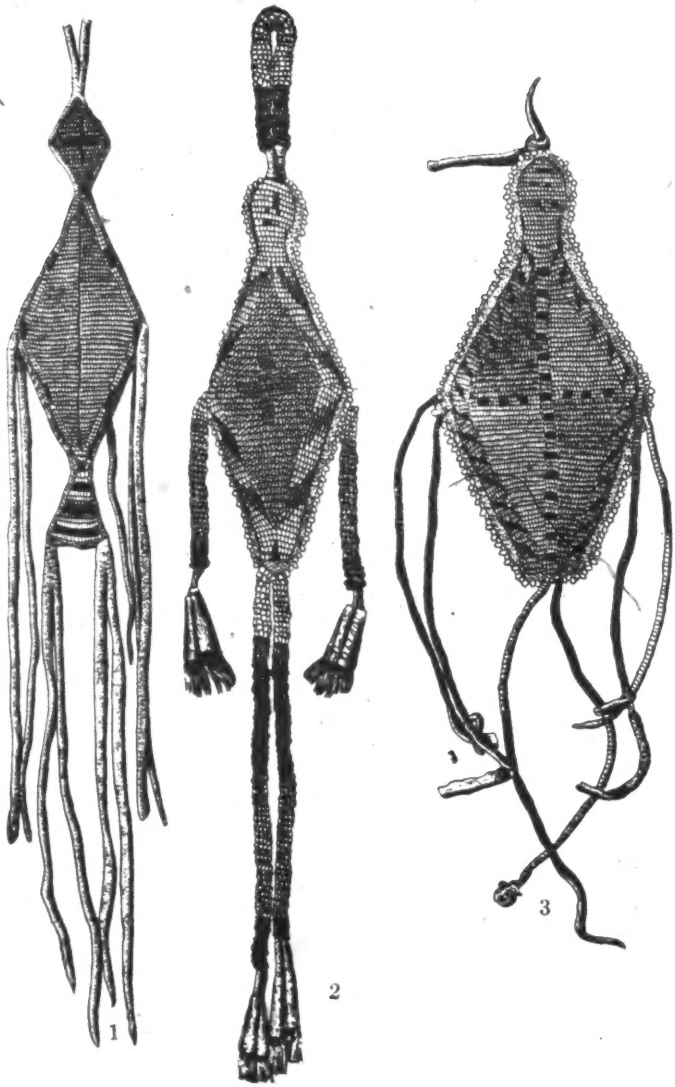
According to the account obtained, the public ceremonies relating to the erection of the lodge do not take place until after the four-nights' singing in the prairie-chicken tent. Among the Arapaho, they occur while the rabbit-tent is in use, and are in large part connected with the rites within it. It is also not clear how long a time these public ceremonies — the scouting for the trees, the bringing-in of the centre pole, the killing of the buffalo, and the painting of the lodge-poles and erection of the lodge — occupy. They are described as if they occurred in the space of a day. This would not be impossible; but it is likely that this impression is due to indefiniteness of narration. It is, however, distinctly stated that the buffalo is shot while the people are bringing in the centre pole. Among the Arapaho, the centre pole is brought in two days after the buffalo has been shot. The skin of this buffalo is kept entire and taken into the dancing-lodge; by the Gros Ventre it is cut into thongs for fastening the lodge-beams to the upright forks. [114]

The "altars" of the two ceremonies cannot be definitely compared, owing to the indefiniteness of information from the Gros Ventre. The screen corresponds to the seven small trees of the Arapaho; the skull and the wheel on the stick are common to the two ceremonies; the red and the black upright stick have no Arapaho equivalents. The Arapaho trench, red and black logs, seven red and seven black sticks, seven wickets, and two sods with bushes, have not been mentioned among the Gros Ventre.

The miraculous raising of the centre pole does not seem to exist among the Arapaho.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

778
751
532



Navel-Amulets.

[End plate 2]

555 342 532 The more war-deeds a man performed, the more frequently was he the center of attention. Gradually he began to rise above others and finally he achieved recognition as an outstanding warrior. Only when a man reached this enviable height was he justified in having his war record painted on his lodge for all the world to admire. When a newly painted lodge of this kind was first erected, the owner initiated its use by giving a feast to which other prominent warriors were invited. From among the guests, the host "pulled up" one who was able to tell four brave exploits, each connected in some way with a different lodge belonging to the enemy. At the conclusion of each separate account, the warrior who was reciting hit the taut new lodge a resounding blow, thus attracting attention. Then while the guests were feasting and smoking with the host, crowds gathered around to examine the lodge and to discuss the record depicted thereon. It was said, too, that similar discussions took place when the Gros Ventres met on friendly terms with other tribes. The reputation of the owner was thereby enhanced as his prowess was ever more widely acknowledged.

Enemy-Friends

572 In accordance with the general prestige pattern, an outstanding warrior, or one who had aspirations toward that end, was expected to be generous as well as brave. Particular significance attached, however, to the disposition of horses stolen from the enemy or of weapons or other trophies obtained from the enemy at risk of life. The giving of such presents initiated a particular relationship between recipient and donor known as the enemy-friendship. This was a kind of "joking relationship" and involved the greatest amount of freedom between the two both in word and action. Whatever one enemy-friend said or did to the other had to be borne with equanimity. Loss of temper involved loss of prestige, and it was said that in some cases one enemy-friend had to suffer patiently audacity which would have led him to murder another not in that relationship. Each tried to out-do the other by kinds of speech and action ranging all the way from the most harmless teasing and jokes to the most humiliating exposition of foibles and misdemeanors.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

"They usually cut the cord long, say four to six inches, because they were afraid the infant would bleed to death if they cut it short. You kind of drain it and get it cleaned out and tie it once. Apply a powdered root and then put a band around the body. It usually takes four days before it drops off." Since the cord is part of the body and they wanted to keep it close to its owner, when the cord came off, they placed it in a small fancy bag filled with sweetgrass or tobacco and pinned the bag to the clothing right at the back of the neck. Singer said that she had heard that boys used to wear this little bag tied to the wrist rather than at the back of the neck as girls did. Good care was taken of the bag until adulthood. The bag was usually in the shape of a turtle, with a little head. Although Coming Daylight had made two such bags, she didn't know why they used this shape except that it had been done thus for generations.[8] Mary's grandmother, however, made a little container for Mary's own son and it was in the shape of a snake with a head. Mary added: "And the Gros Ventres don't like snakes either. But my grandmother made that one in the shape of a snake on account of a dream she had."

844 [415 532] [825]

The afterbirth was disposed of just as soon as possible, preferably by having someone place it good and high in the branches of a tree.[9] The person who disposed of the afterbirth was not supposed to let anyone see him do so, although the informants did not know the reason for the secrecy. It is more customary at present to burn the afterbirth as the whites do, but Coming Daylight remarked that she had done that only once,—on the occasion when she was caught out in the open all alone and had to deliver herself.

A mother rested quite a while after her child was born because it was said that working would make her sweat and that would hurt her milk. The child of a woman who worked a great deal immediately after its birth would not grow up to be so healthy as the child of one who took it easy. In the opinion of Coming Daylight and of Singer a woman should sit up only after four days and get up and be walking around in about ten days. Coming Daylight her-

846

[8] For discussion of these navel amulets and illustrations thereof, see Kroeber, 1908, pp. 166–67, and plate IX.

[9] "If it were left lying to be handled, the child would be afflicted with sores." Kroeber, 1908, p. 181.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

778 base, and 2½ inches in depth from top to bottom. The stem is
276 roundish in section, about 1½ inches in diameter at the distal end, tapering slightly to about 1⅛ toward the proximal. The stem is "humped a bit toward the middle," with a ring carved all round to which is attached a small tasseled string ornament believed to represent the hair rope with which He-who-starved-to-death snared the Red Bird. (For story see No. 5 in Appendix.) The
[283] Gros Ventre women used to make an adornment from "a growth looking like hair" which they gathered from the water and twisted into a strong thread, and The Boy thinks that this tasseled ornament on the Pipe is of the same material.

There is another ring carved around and the proximal end of the Pipe is carved in the shape of a "duck" head. Into the "duck's" bill is fitted a small stem,—about 1⅛ inches long and ¾ inch in diameter, projecting about ½ inch beyond the tip of the bill, encased in copper,—from which the Pipe was smoked.*

[532]

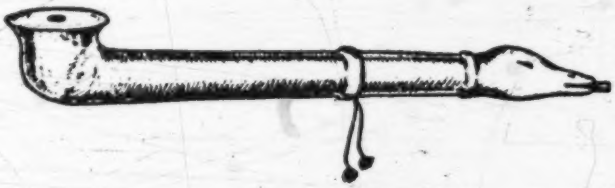


FIGURE 1. THE FLAT PIPE.

The whole Pipe is enclosed in its own numerous wrappings which form a separate case with its own three thong ties within the larger Pipe bundle. No one, it may be added, seems to know how the Flat Pipe got its name; there is nothing markedly "flat" about it, except the somewhat squat bowl.

778 The whole Pipe bundle contains many other sacred objects

* Kroeber, 1908, p. 272, gives a description of the Flat Pipe as being made of catlinite with the bowl in the shape of a person. Actually this sounds more like one of the objects in the Feathered Pipe bundle,—the so-called Image or Human Face. See p. 142. Kroeber's mention of a string around the center of the stem of the Flat Pipe, however, matches the description given us. [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

778 was a wooden staff about three or four feet long, to which were attached feathers from "all kinds of birds," including the eagle, the feathers literally covering the staff. The staff itself was given the first keeper in the beginning from above, but tradition is not consistent as to whether it was already feathered or was later feathered by this keeper. At any rate the feathers still on the staff are believed to be the original ones, are not broken off and are perfectly preserved. According to one report the staff has porcupine quill work on it; according to another, it is undecorated. The first keeper wrapped the stick in smoked skin, for which a wrapping of black and white cotton flannel was later substituted.

The image, called inite:atē (it is a person) translated "human [532] face," was described to us as about eight inches long, of stone, "with a trace of faded red in it" and looking like the "brown pottery of a teapot," of human shape, male according to one informant, female according to another. It was wrapped in buffalo hair and until Curly Head's keepership was rarely unwrapped, and even when unwrapped only the face was supposed to be exposed, by raising a bit of the cover, although Curly Head exposed the whole figure.* Formerly, according to Garter Snake, nobody was allowed to look at the face, except the keeper and even he could do so only now and then. Garter Snake, although Pipe child for six or seven years while her father Bull Lodge was keeper, had never seen it. Sitting High, who succeeded Bull Lodge, showed the face of the image very rarely, only once or twice so far as Al Chandler, his grandson, had heard, and even old-timers wondered what it looked like. Sitting High would take the wrapped image out of the large bundle and let you hold it and pray to it, and this oftener than he would the Pipe, but without un-

---

* Although this has not been confirmed, it is highly possible that the pipe shown at the 1951 unwrapping and pictured in Plate 3 C-D may actually be this "human face" or image. The stone and color of the pipe meet the specifications (cf. Dr. Hegener's comment as given in footnote 5), the plat- [123] form of the pipe is of about the right dimension, and one end thereof is carved in the form of a human face as can be seen in Dr. Nitz' photographs. Dr. Hagener noted on the back of the photograph in Plate 3 C that Iron Man allowed the picture to be taken only after long consultation with others and much hesitation. [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

covering it. When they talked to the image, they prayed for whatever they wanted, but did not mention Bha'a. Whom the image represented is not known: probably Bha'a, but this is uncertain. 778

In recent times, the last real keeper, Curly Head, had danced with the image, contrary to all the ritual rules. Curly Head is consistently reported by informants to have been very careless as well as poorly informed about the ritual and other observances connected with the Feathered Pipe keepership.

The face when exposed was apt to look different to different people on any one occasion as well as to the same person on different occasions. To one man the face seemed not to want to look at him; it "kind of turned away and sweated." To another observer, a woman, it appeared as "a rock that had two shining eyes." Al Chandler had seen the face three times. On each occasion it had a different expression: on the first it looked as if it were "smiling, sort of bashful;" on the second, "kind of sad;" on the third, "sad." On the one occasion on which his wife, Cora Chandler, had seen the face, it "seemed like it was looking away, and wouldn't look at her." 778 532

According to Al Chandler, if the face smiled, this was an omen that "everything was going to be good;" if it "looked in the opposite direction, something not good" would happen. According to Garter Snake, if when the keeper saw the face, it had paint on it, there would be plenty of food, no sickness, and so forth; if it had no paint on it, there would be sickness or other misfortune. 778 787

The whistle, of wood ("of an unknown kind of wood," according to Garter Snake), was given the first keeper from above. It was kept without wrapping in the Pipe bundle. 778 [534]

The owl in the bundle was the skin of a big owl, painted up, with few of the feathers still attached. The body was wrapped leaving the head and neck sticking out. This owl skin was apparently of modern introduction. According to Al Chandler, when a new keeper took over the Pipe, he could add to the bundle whatever he was told "by a voice" to add; Sitting High said he was told by God Himself to put that owl in the bundle. Sitting High used to talk a great deal to the owl. The owl's duty, accord-

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

788 exceptionally chewed in contrast to the Flat Pipe peppermint. A
824 bag, painted red all over, about a foot square, and fringed on three sides but with no beading or other decoration, now hangs with the
[415] bundle and served, Al Chandler thought, as a container for the dried sweet pine needles.

802 The ritual number of the Feathered Pipe, running all through the songs and ceremonies, was four, from the days of the first keeper down to most recent times.

534 The musical instrument used to accompany the songs was, likewise from the time of the first keeper, the drum. According to
778 Garter Snake, the first keeper's drum was painted half black to represent black [storm] clouds and half red to represent the earth. According to Al Chandler, the present drum, about 16 inches in diameter and two inches deep, has a figure of a thunderbird
[532] painted in blue on the drumhead against a red background, to represent Bha'a, with zigzag yellow lines from either side of the head to the wings, to represent lightning. A long string is tied to the drum. The drumstick is painted red, the distal end being covered with buckskin "stuffed with something like cotton." Curly Head, when keeper, never used the drum, or even took it out of its covering in which it hung next to the bundle, but Sitting High used it regularly with the songs.*

788 According to Garter Snake, the first keeper had somebody make him a wooden bowl, which still hangs with, not in, the Pipe bundle,
778 but we obtained no information on its type or use. She also stated that the first keeper had a "gourd rattle" or four rattles, but Al Chandler never saw any rattle kept or used with the Feathered Pipe, and no other informant mentioned such.

The Feathered Pipe, like the Flat Pipe, was smoked, in ful-
[782] fillment of vows, but very rarely. More commonly, in contrast with the Flat Pipe, it was danced with, earlier only by the keeper, in recent decades by others.

788 General ritual features common to the Feathered Pipe and Flat Pipe,—clockwise movement, singing, the use of paint, of buffalo chips, and of sage, tobacco, larb and wild parsley,—have

* The drum used in the 1951 rite was apparently undecorated. See Plate 2 C. [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The rite of self-torture, carried out on the day after the third (or second)[12] night of singing was the dramatic climax of the Sacrifice Dance. Either during the three-day singing and dancing or, more probably, on the morning of the day of torture occurred the painting and decorating of the dancers, those who had vowed to undergo self-torture.[13] By their respective grandfathers or others substituting as sort of "secondary grandfathers," each dancer was first painted over his entire body with white clay. On his upper chest, near the neck, was painted in black with charcoal or paint the figure of a bird (evidently representing Bha'a, the Thunder Bird), and a black zigzag line ending in a fork from each of the bird's wings across the chest and down either arm of the dancer to the forearm, and a similar black zigzag fork-ended line from each of the bird's feet down either leg and thigh to the ankle. Another black zigzag line, forked at both ends, was painted across the dancer's forehead, and under each eye, a vertical zigzag line, ending at the bottom in a fork, but painted in red, not in black. Sprigs of sage-brush were put on as wristlets and anklets, and around the head "so that they met over the eyes." "Common dancers" and other active participants such as the ceremonial grandfathers were painted all over with red paint instead of white clay, and were apparently decorated with over-painted designs similar to those of the self-torturers, the "dancers" proper. 785 796* 302 532

The self-torture rite, on the last day of the Sacrifice Dance, began with the skin-piercing, the insertion of the skewers, and the attachment of the thongs and shield. The skin-piercing was done by the respective grandfathers to whom the respective vowers, their grandchildren, gave generous presents of horses, robes and 785 796*

[12] Our informants agreed that the Sacrifice Dance lasted through four nights, but whether the night of singing just before the "scouting" for the center pole counted as one of these four or not, and hence whether the skin piercing took place on the second or third day after the "scouting" was not made fully clear to us,—more probably the third day.

[13] In 1948 The Boy stated that the dancers were painted with white clay and their faces painted differently each morning. "On the first day each dancer has a red dot on each cheek, the second day two dots, the third day, three,—these are their tears and indicated that the dancers are crying." [R.F.]

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

crushed and mixed with fat. When the painting was completed, food 796
from the young men's parents was brought to the old men. The old men also presented their "grandsons" with food. The food was then eaten. During the day the dancers and their "grandfathers" were in the dancing-lodge. In connection with the beginning of the dancing, a badger-skin was used. This was entirely wrapped, except at the head, in a flat rope of [778]
rawhide, half of which (one side?) was painted red, the other half black. [825]
This skin lay on the ground before the pledger of the dance, in or in front of his small enclosure, with the head toward the east. Glowing charcoal was laid before the row of bows, and sweet-grass (niasö; Arapaho, niox^{u}) was put on the coals to incense the bows. The pledger, rising, took the badger-skin, and, holding it with the head pointing forward, walked slowly around the inside of the lodge, and then to the smouldering incense, over which he made four passes with the skin; then returning to his enclosure, he laid the badger-skin on the ground. Taking out a stick tied in with the skin, he struck the skin as hard as he could. At this, a singer at the middle of the back or western end of the lodge — who held a stick as high as a man, wrapped with buckskin, and with buffalo or antelope hoofs hanging along its length — struck the end on the ground, thus beginning the rattling that accompanied the singing. [533] The old men began to sing, while the dancers simultaneously blew their whistles, and cried "Yaa!" The old men stood up and sang, and the dancers went to them, each of them to his "grandfather," usually three or four to one old man. The old men then drilled them, showing them how to dance and how to handle their bows and their robes. It seems that the dancers stood at the opening of the lodge, somewhat on the south. After dancing to four songs, during which they whistled and at the end of each of which they cried "Yaa," they dashed off in a race around a monument that had been erected at some distance to the southeast. If one of the division of tall men returned to the lodge first and thus won the race for his side, the short men filled pipes for the tall men and presented them to them to smoke, and, of course, *vice versâ*.

After the cessation of the dancing, and when it was dark, old men cried out to the people to retire to their tents, the dancers' wives being about to go out with the "grandfathers." As the women went out, the dancers stood in the lodge in a circle, singing loudly and shouting in conclusion. The "grandfathers" went to the north of the camp-circle, where they stood in a row. Their "grand-daughters," that is to say, the dancers' wives, each carrying a pipe, followed them, and stood behind them. They addressed their "grandfathers," praying them to take the pipe and smoke it. After much persuasion, the old man accepted the pipe. Then the woman prayed to him again, asking him to pray in her behalf, that she might be

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Each society had its distinctive songs which would be used by its component companies in carrying out their police duties during the Sacred Dances. Both had their "begging songs," as well as their marching and dance songs. Everyone in camp would know from the songs which of the societies was performing. 575 533

In connection with the distinctive dance of either society was first the preliminary "begging." This meant that the members of the society, dressed in their best and mounted on their finest horses, would select the lodges of prominent men belonging to the opposite society in front of which they would sing.[14] The leaders of the society were supposed to be present on these begging expeditions, otherwise their enemy-friends could take advantage of their absence and twit them by singing a special song.[15] The members of the society might be accompanied by their wives, who helped out in the singing, and usually a member of the society would suggest that they sing in front of the lodge belonging to his enemy-friend of the opposite society. If, while they were singing, the owner of the lodge failed to appear, his enemy-friend would peep into the lodge and at this the owner, assisted by his relatives, would get busy and give food to be used in the feast of the society which was doing the begging. If the owner of the lodge were a prominent man, who wished to take this occasion to enhance further his reputation, he might give something really valuable to the singers and would have the opportunity later of bragging: "On such-and-such an occasion, this is what I gave you Wolf-men (or Star men)." If he were a really good sport, our informants said, he would even send his wife out to sing with the others. After something had been given to the society, the singers sang other special songs,[16] while the rest danced. 533 575 796 572

After obtaining in this fashion the wherewithal for the feast, the society members lined up two-by-two at the entrance of the camp circle. The two noted men carrying whips remained mounted, while the column stepped in time to the music provided by the singers who were carrying the drum at the end of the procession. They wove in and out, snake-dance fashion, while 575 796

[14] A begging song of the Wolf-men was recorded as No. 98; two such songs of the Stars, as No. 96 and 97.

[15] Recorded as No. 101.

[16] Recorded as No. 95 and No. 100.

CHAPTER V

WAR AND PRESTIGE

Organization and Conduct of the Party

721 554 Recognition was granted for any accomplishment that involved risk of life at the hands of the enemy. The constantly recurring attacks upon the Gros Ventres by one neighboring tribe or another offered many opportunities for the display of bravery, but those who joined in taking the initiative against the enemy had the greatest chances of accumulating impressive war records. Consequently parties set out at frequent intervals with the avowed purpose either of stealing horses or of avenging loss of Gros Ventre life.

721 Although it was not uncommon for two or three men to go off quietly together when raiding for horses, if a larger number was involved, some formalities were observed. The man who decided to lead a war party had his intention publicly announced around the camp circle by a crier and any who wished might volunteer to join him. A young man, untried in war, would hardly set himself up as leader in this way, but would be anxious to follow someone whose reputation for bravery was already well established.[1]

533 721 [782] Ordinarily, when the group was composed of ten or more men, there were some preliminaries the night before the party set off. The members gathered and sang in front of lodges of those they hoped would be able to help them. Each man so selected at least prayed for the success of the party as he gave them a smoke and fed them. In addition, if he had ammunition or clothing or something of the kind that would be useful on the expedition, he donated these to the party. It was said that an occasional man would "be so pleased with what the party was about to do" that he sent his wife out to sing with them. Thus the party sang around the camp circle in front of various lodges and, after agreeing on

[1] Sometimes young men were restless and sang around the camp circle to indicate their willingness to go on a raid if someone would lead them. Such a song was recorded as No. 70.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

what time they should meet the next morning to start off, they dispersed. 721 533

Before leaving camp the next day, the party again sang in front of the lodges which they had approached the night before. This same tune was also sung while the party was en route, words being composed to suit various occasions. This tune was known as the "men's song" and was said to have been given to the Gros Ventres by Nihiatu, the culture-hero. Other songs were also sung while the party was away from camp as, for example, on the first night out when they lamented their absence from friends and loved ones.

Various duties were assigned by the leader, and all, but especially the youngest members of the party, were expected to do their part. If a young fellow were "lazy" on a raiding expedition, the leader would see to it that he was punished. An accepted way of accomplishing this end was on the sly to substitute strips of rawhide for the usual strips of meat in the container used by the young man. When the party started to eat, all would watch this particular young man and, as he pulled out the rawhide, they would laugh at him. It was said that young men in this predicament would be so humiliated that they would actually cry. It was a serious matter at the time, and also offered good material to be used later by potential enemy-friends who might have witnessed this embarrassing situation. 726 [626]

Along this line, it is interesting to note the detailed procedure of one man, which may or may not be typical of the behavior of leaders in disciplining members of their party. "This particular leader, known as Eater, a contemporary of Running Bear, was highly respected and feared because it was known that when he led a war party he expected the other members to live up to the high standard he set by his own actions. If, however, he found that someone in the party was not doing his duty, in the evening he would start singing a song which he had acquired through a dream. All the young men would be apprehensive, wondering which of them was to be humiliated. The others would take up the song while Eater alone would dance, imitating a wolf by placing one hand on the forehead and the other behind him to represent the tail. He would circle around, dancing in this manner, until he came to the victim. Whereupon he would stop in front of the 726 626

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

726 626 latter and raise his leg in imitation of a urinating dog. All would know then on whom Eater's displeasure had fallen, and the young man in question would break down and sob. That would cure him of laziness."

726 312 Among the important duties on a war party were those of the water-carrier. If the mission were to be performed under more than ordinarily dangerous circumstances, young men might volunteer for the job, but usually the leader chose someone for it. A water-carrier had to have courage and resourcefulness because in order to fetch water it might be necessary that he be sent long distances without guard, and then have to catch up with the group [482] in case the rest had to move. When the members of the party [534] sighted the water-carrier returning successfully bearing the skin [533] water-container attached to a pole, a song was sung by the war party as they marked time by beating two sticks together.[3]

726 Scouting was another important aspect of a war party. The leader selected two well-qualified men for this job. "They had to have courage and endurance for, while scouting, they would run instead of walk and not eat until their mission was completed." Scouts were called "wolves" and wore wolf-skins as insignia and [714] sometimes, at least, would stick brush on their heads so they could not be so easily spotted against the horizon.[3] They went to high [533] places to look around. If the enemy were not in sight, they might sing, making up words to the tune mentioned as having been sung before the party left camp.[4]

If the scouts saw indications of the enemy, such as smoke rising from a coulee, but without actually seeing the enemy sufficiently clearly to identify them, on their return to the party they gave a wolf howl as they approached and proceeded in a sharp zigzag path. If, however, they had more definite information, they gave the wolf howl and approached in a circular path; that is, advanced, turned in a circle, advanced again, turned in a circle, advanced again, turned in a circle and halted. They were then met by two older men who had been successful scouts in their day. While the [533] scouts were approaching—occasionally looking back over their

[3] Recorded as No. 130.
[3] For illustrations, see Curtis, v. 5, p. 176.
[4] Samples of this kind of song were recorded as No. 23 and No. 24.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

shoulders and barking like wolves—the party sang three songs, one to accompany the scouts as they made each circle.[5] 726 [533]

The two older men who met the scouts were told by them privately what they had seen. The four then went to a mound of buffalo chips which had been piled up, the rest of the party awaiting the scouts standing in a semicircle—the women, if present, behind the men—and all facing the direction from which the scouts had come. They sang while the two warriors and two scouts circled the mound of chips four times.[6] After each of the two older men had recited his war deeds in scouting for and locating the enemy, they called upon the scouts to relate to the whole party the results of their expedition.[7] [533]

It sometimes happened of course that there would be no time to go through the above ceremony if the enemy were approaching. But if time allowed it was done in that fashion.[8] Then the leader laid out plans to steal horses and/or get scalps, according to the news which the scouts had brought in. The leader would instruct the rest of the party where to meet after the raid, how long to wait there before starting for home, what signals he would use to indicate the moment of attack, and what signals of identification were to be used between members of the party should it be dark when they closed in on the enemy. It was stated that the Gros Ventres usually attacked in the evening after dark, whereas the Sioux were more apt to attack in the early dawn. Should the plans of the leader not seem satisfactory, some of the party might offer objections. The leader, feeling himself responsible for the safety of all members of the party, put forth his case, but the others were not bound to follow him and, if no agreement could be reached, the party might split. One consideration which tended to keep the party together was, however, the fact that there was a fine paid to the rest of the party by one returning to camp ahead of the others. [681]

[5] A song without words, recorded as No. 14, accompanied the first circling. Songs at the second and third circling had words, composed by enemy-friends of the scouts, the words usually being both derisive and vulgar.

[6] This was recorded as No. 15.

[7] Kroeber's account, p. 191, differs slightly. Cf. also Curtis, v. 5, pp. 181–82.

[8] The formalities of scouting were carried out in detail during the ceremonies of the Sacrifice Dance. See Cooper Ms. 1949.

726 533 When close to the enemy, each member of the party unwrapped his war medicine in preparation for the real battle. While painting themselves and putting on their charms and other regalia, the warriors sang.[9] Lame Bull, for instance, had a "medicine" war bonnet and there was a special song without words which he sang as he donned it; if there was time, the rest of the party danced while he sang and drummed.[10] Other songs might be sung immediately before going into battle.[11] The words of one such song imply: "If I am killed it doesn't matter; women will bear other children to take my place; I am ready to die." Some individuals, too, had special songs of their own to be sung as they made the charge against the enemy.[12]

726 762 The most daring men in battle were said to have been those who wished to die. Men who were grieving over the loss of loved ones were believed to have been especially prone to this indirect method of suicide. Others took this way of gloriously ending their lives out of a sense of pique, or in order to vindicate their honor. In this latter case it was customary for a man who had something discreditable to account for, either on his own part or on the part of some member of his family, to publicly announce that he was [533] about to die by singing the "brave-song" or "death-song" as he rode around the camp circle. This indicated that he would seek the earliest opportunity of losing his life at the hands of the enemy while accomplishing some particularly outstanding war-deed.[13]

726 It was recognized that even the bravest of men might experience acute fear during battle. "Their souls kind of left them on [774] account of the danger. They looked different from normal and their minds seemed not quite clear. Lame Bull used to say that the effect was quite similar to that of drinking too much whiskey—

[9] Kroeber, 1908, pp. 192–93 gives details and illustrations of supernatural paraphernalia for war. War medicines, illustrating those which had belonged to Bull Lodge, are presented here, Plate 3, courtesy of Richard Pohrt.

[10] The song recorded as No. 76 is Lame Bull's and is said to be typical of this class of songs.

[11] Two were recorded as No. 16 and No. 17.

[12] Lame Bull's song was recorded as No. 77.

[13] Two such "brave-songs" were recorded as No. 111 and No. 112. See also p. 191.

726 wanted a downpour of rain. At once a cloud appeared and in no
787 time it was a big black storm cloud. Then there was a wind and
769 a very heavy storm and thus the Gros Ventres got safely back to camp. The only loss on this occasion was that of two fine horses, one played out and the other foundered from drinking when overheated."

Return of the War Party

727 After a successful encounter with the enemy, the homecoming was a joyful one, provided no Gros Ventre lives had been lost. As they approached the camp, appropriate songs were said to have been sung by the victorious party. If, for instance, they had stolen horses there was one type of song. On the other hand
[302] when scalps had been taken, they sang other kinds of songs and painted themselves with charcoal. Incidentally, the Gros Ventres had a saying that "women and children do not make good charcoal." Women and children should be captured but not killed and scalped.[16]

When the victorious party arrived, they circled the outside of the encampment before entering. "Then the party broke, each member surrounded by his womenfolk who crowded around, kissing him and taking the scalps or other trophies which had been won. After a reasonable interval, the crier called all to come to
[302] the center of the circle and dance. Men and women alike blackened their faces with charcoal, and the women, carrying scalps attached to poles, or weapons captured from the enemy, danced as innumerable victory songs were sung. Only members of the war party were allowed to join with the women in dancing. Many husbands, who had to stand on the sidelines, were jealous of the brave warriors at a time like this."

727 Most of the songs sung during the victory celebration had
533 words which referred to encounters wherein the Gros Ventres had been successful. New words were often made up to commemorate a particular incident. One of these songs had the following words: "Where are you going? I've been here all the

[567] [16] Cocking, p. 112, mentions in 1772 that the Gros Ventres adopted "slaves" of both sexes into families who had lost their children either by war or sickness.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

time, thou with grey hair."[17] It refers to a particular Crow who had long grey braids. This man had captured some Gros Ventre women who were out picking berries and had returned to the Crow without having killed a man or stolen horses. His fellow-tribesmen taunted him with his "weakness" and in order to vindicate his honor he again sought out the Gros Ventres and was killed by them. The song was composed by the husband of one of the captured Gros Ventre women. 727 533

Another song, classed as a victory song, was composed by an old man whose faith in a younger man was justified. The young man had had a supernatural vision and, although he was as yet untried, he successfully led a war party.[18] Still another song was composed on the occasion on which a Piegan, who had survived a partial scalping, was killed by the Gros Ventres.[19] [787]

Even though the party might have succeeded in taking scalps, if any of their number had been killed, the return was a sad one. Whenever feasible they brought back the bodies of the slain from the field of battle. In any case, there was no circling of the camp nor singing. Nor was there a victory dance unless close relatives of the deceased warriors gave permission. An example to illustrate the procedure may be taken from the description of a serious encounter between the Gros Ventres and Sioux, known as the Battle of Black Butte which occurred in 1871 or 1872, upstream from the present site of Havre.[20] "There were approximately 30 lodges of Gros Ventres who were greatly outnumbered by the Sioux. Nevertheless, about 30 Sioux were killed and only one Gros Ventre lost his life. On the return of the party, the father of this one victim said: 'I give you charcoal. My son is lying on many.' So they were able to celebrate that victory in a big way."[21] 727

More often, however, when Gros Ventres were killed in battle, an outstanding relative of one of the deceased volunteered to or-

[17] Song recorded as No. 19.

[18] This was recorded as No. 22.

[19] Song recorded as No. 106. Other songs used at the victory dances were recorded as No. 117, No. 118, No. 119, No. 123, No. 124.

[20] His own part in this encounter is described by Black Wolf in Kroeber, 1908, pp. 203-04.

[21] A song recorded as No. 91 was said to have been composed to commemorate this occasion.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

baby was laid in the powder and rubbed under its arms, between its legs, under the toes, between the fingers,—wherever the baby might chafe. "The baby feels fine then and goes right to sleep." When no buffalo chips were available horse manure treated the same way was an adequate substitute. Fresh powder was put in the sack each day, and in the winter it was first heated. 854 278 234

Sometimes accidents happened. One time when a man named Fork (of a tree) was a baby, his grandmother was tending to him. She had heated the powdered chips in the sack with a hot stone and forgot to remove it. The baby cried and cried. Finally they unbound him and found that his toe was right against the hot rock. This injured his toe and he always walked with a peculiar gait. Cora has a scar on her buttocks which she thinks came from a similar accident.

If the father's sister failed to provide a sack and none was forthcoming from any other relative, the mother would wrap the infant in a skin and tie it with straps. Coming Daylight said that before her time they used a cradleboard. If they had a travois they would carry the baby on that. "Some, if they didn't have a cradleboard, used a piece of stiffened leather hooked over the saddle horn." 854

When the infant was old enough to move its arms, the arms were left free of wrappings. The infant was kept in the sack day and night. When not being carried about, it was hung either from one of the lodge poles inside the lodge, or swinging from the travois placed upright against the lodge. Lullabies were sometimes sung.* At night, the infant was right beside its mother, and the father usually slept in separate bedding so as not to crowd the child. When the powder in the sack was changed, they let the baby play around and stretch "because babies must have gotten tired staying in those sacks." [533]

Toilet training was started when the infant was between six and twelve months old. "The baby is more alert and easier to handle then. You just guessed at the time and opened the sack and held the baby out, supporting it under the knees and thighs. The child would usually respond. If there were a delay, then you talked to him and made a hissing noise to encourage him. You 863

* Unfortunately no lullabies were recorded.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

them, he was afraid to go to his own home, so he ran to a neighbor's. Jim's father found him there half-crying. He took Dwarf by the wrist and said: 'Come my friend.' He led him to his home and Dwarf thought he was going to be killed. On the contrary, however, Jim's father led him into his lodge and said: 'My friend, I am glad you made my boy cry. I have never laid a hand on him nor did I ever make him cry, and I'm glad you have done this.' He then gave Dwarf a big pile of meat and told him to eat as much as he liked and to take the rest home. As Dwarf was leaving Jim's father took a valuable Hudson's Bay blanket and cut it in two and gave him half saying: 'Here is this, use it for your blanket.' Then he took another half-blanket and said: 'Have your mother make leggins for you. Friend, I am glad you made my boy cry. I thank you for it. Now you can go home.' It just so happened, fortunately for Dwarf, that Jim Shortman was a beloved-child." [8] 857 578

Occasionally girls, or sometimes boys and girls together, formed a group in the evening to sing in front of the lodge of a rich family who they knew had such a specially loved child. The group danced and sang and then the woman of the lodge would invite them in. She would feed them and say that she was doing so in the name of that beloved-child. 857 533 [593]

Coming Daylight described how she joined groups who were going around the camp circle singing in front of the lodges of those who had returned successfully from a war party. This was before she was married and so she had to get permission from her grandmother. Mounted on a horse with a girl friend her own age, whose brother was supposed to keep an eye on them, they rode with the others. Singer admitted she had not participated in such singing parties when she was a child because she never had a horse to ride upon.

Much of the leisure time of children was seemingly spent in play which reflected the daily routine of adult life as well as many aspects of the life cycle. A group went quite far outside the camp circle, for instance, to play they were "married folk." If little boys went along with the girls, some would be "husbands," some "sons" and "sons-in-law." The "women" would tell their 857 524

[8] For details on the concept of the beloved-child, see Flannery, 1941.

787 made up my mind that I did not want such power, the immediate reason for my refusal being that I had seen doctors who swallowed what they had sucked from the weak spot in patients whom they cured, and I just couldn't bring myself to have to do likewise."

857 562 Although boys had much more freedom than had girls, they too were assigned tasks at a fairly early age. One of the responsibilities of boys was to water the horses during the day. At about the age of fourteen, however, a boy would be required to take the horses out to graze immediately after taking his morning plunge. He would be gone perhaps three or four hours and would eat only after he returned.

857 868 852 The play of younger boys with bow and arrow was training for later life. The older boys accompanied the men on hunting parties and by the time they were about 18 most were skilled hunters. Some families, it was said, took advantage of the fact that [431] a boy would have killed his first big game,—antelope, deer, buffalo, —by making a feast at which this game was served. On such an occasion the boy stood at the center and gave away property, such as horses and blankets provided by his father or uncle, in [421] order to mark the event. This was considered training for the way he should behave in later life in regard to his own property.

857 868 Boys were trained in trapping as well as hunting. There were certain songs which were sung by grandparents as the boys danced around in the lodge both before and after trapping. These songs [533] were supposed to bring luck in finding game.

[777] Sometimes when older boys were out taking care of horses, they would band together, daub their faces and bodies with mud as "war paint," and make a "raid" on the camp in order to steal meat which was drying on racks. The women who had worked so hard to prepare the meat got angry and sometimes fought the boys with sticks. Usually, the boys were successful, and would then cook the meat and have a wonderful feast,[1] far outside the camp circle.

[554] Men encouraged their sons to be brave, and a boy would be anxious to go along on a real raiding party just as soon as possible because a young man had no standing until he had risked his life. An adolescent boy who accompanied a war party had to be a man

[1] This type of raiding is also described by Kroeber, 1908, p. 182.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

and spectacular war deed before she granted her favors to him.[9] 837
If he returned, she was supposed to keep her word, accepting him as her lover. In the other type of situation, it was taken for granted that a woman would succumb to the pleas of a man who [762] had publicly announced his intention of virtually committing suicide. Such a man, by singing the "brave-song" as he circled [533] the camp, indicated that he would seize the first opportunity there- [726] after to encounter the enemy but make no effort to defend himself.[10]

According to a number of stories that are told, it was not uncommon that a woman committed suicide when her lover failed 837 to return from war. That this actually happened, in some cases 762 at least, is vouched for by the following factual account given by Singer. "White people, on one occasion, invited some Gros Ventres to visit them. All of the people, whose lodges were near to that of my grandmother, went, except one woman. This woman was scraping a skin when word was announced that a certain young man had been killed at war. My grandmother, noticing that the sound of scraping had stopped, thought that this woman was resting, and after a little while started over to visit her. On the way, however, she heard a shot, and when she got to that lodge she found that this woman was dead. She had first dressed herself nicely in her best clothes and had then shot herself, pulling the trigger of the gun by means of a string attached to her toe. My grandmother had suspected an affair between this woman and the young man who had lost his life at war, but she hadn't known for sure until this woman committed suicide. In those days a woman would have kept such an affair secret. (Now since women have the law to protect them from their husbands, wives just don't care and boldly run around with anybody they fancy and talk back to their husbands, and everybody knows all about it.) But anyway, that woman was a good worker,—she was working for her husband when that bad news came about the death of her lover,—and of course her husband mourned for her."

It was said that women who had been cast aside by their hus- 837

[9] "This custom is said to have led to the death of many young men," Kroeber, 1908, p. 180. 578

[10] For further details on the "brave-song," see p. 92.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

posited in the north section thereof, which was reserved for the Pipe and for new keeper and co-keeper, who walked there from the retiring keeper's lodge, and for the ex-keepers, ex-co-keepers and two attendants. The cover of this northern section was down, but that of the southern was lifted up to let the people look in and watch. Into the southern section went a group of Sacrifice Lodge men and another of Stars, and each group sat in its own circle on either side of the interior. Other people would also come in till all space was occupied. Children were not allowed to fool around the double lodge and dogs were kept away, but the general public was welcome. During the following song contest the new keeper and co-keeper sat with heads covered and faces hidden.

793 1796*

793 1796* 533

When all was ready, at the word from the ex-keeper's party, the Sacrifice Dancers and Stars shouted and beat their drums, then stopped. After that the retiring keeper started singing the Flat Pipe song "My holiness, have pity on me," all the other ex-keepers and ex-co-keepers joining in. At the same time the Sacrifice Dancer and Star groups each started one of its own songs. The singing recalled the gladness that followed upon the first making of dry land, the increase and welfare of the succeeding generations under fidelity to the old beliefs and under good leadership, and the wish that the new keeper would perpetuate all this and that his leadership would be successful.

The simultaneous singing of the three distinct songs was also a sort of contest to see which group was "stronger," which group or individual would amidst this bedlam of conflicting choruses first sing false. Rivalry was keen but good-natured between the three groups of singers. The moment any one member of any of the three groups began to sing false, that is, if a Star sang the Sacrifice Dancer's song or an ex-keeper sang the Star's song, the singing stopped. Everybody knew at once which group had made the mistake, but not which individual. He had to confess. This was made public and everybody including the onlookers, laughed at and bantered the one who sang false and his group. Then a recess was taken and they sat around and chatted and smoked. After the recess, the same procedure was repeated; then came another recess, followed by a third contest and recess.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

down, at shoulder height and sang the incense song while the other members of his party joined in, and at the conclusion of the song said: "Yo!" Then he lowered his hand a little, sang with the others the same song, and ended with the recited "Yo!" Finally he further lowered his hand close to the hearth, sang with the others the same song, and at the end made three circles clockwise with his hand around the burning chip saying at each circle: "Yo'ho ho ho" (Yo followed by glottal stop; ho ho ho, in lower pitch, not emphatic), and after the third circle released the peppermint on the chip. Then he turned toward the south, and the same triple rite was repeated, and finally toward the west, with repetition of the rite. 793 796* [533]

Immediately after this, the retiring keeper, the new keeper, the retiring co-keeper, and the new co-keeper, in this order, fumigated themselves. Each put his (or her) hands palm down, in the peppermint incense smoke, rubbed his hands together, rubbed the left arm from the tips of fingers up to the shoulder with the right palm and the right arm likewise with the left palm. This was done three times. Then three times in succession he put his right palm over the incense, lifted his palm to his mouth, and inhaled. Then he held both palms over the incense and passed them from his mouth up over his face and hair to his occiput. [788]

The Pipe child also went through both the peppermint laving and the fumigating rite in each case after the other four participants.

The retiring keeper next filled the Flat Pipe with tobacco. He took a little tobacco in the five fingers of his right hand, finger tips down, while holding the Pipe by the bowl in his left hand. Poising his right hand about a foot above the bowl, he spat a little. Then he made a pass with the tobacco down a little nearer to the bowl and spat. Next he repeated the pass still nearer, and spat, and put the tobacco in the bowl. Then he filled the bowl with tobacco. Then laid the Pipe down with stem to the east on sage brush between the hearth and the pipe bed. After this a recess was taken. The party chatted and smoked socially or left the lodge.

After the recess, the retiring keeper would say to all: "Let

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

783 Flat Pipe. It was dried before being used for ritual purposes. In
824 the olden days the Flat Pipe keeper and co-keeper had monopolistic control of it in curing. But nowadays a peppermint beverage, good for fits, spasms, and stomach disorder, is used by everybody.

The ritual number of the Flat Pipe is three, whereas that of
788 the Feathered Pipe and the Sacred Lodges is four. Songs are
801 sung three times, ritual gestures are in threes, and so forth. The old people when sitting around smoking socially used often to discuss the reason for this. Some held that Earthmaker sent only three animals down to dive for earth, because, for one reason at least, there were only three animals in the Flat Pipe bundle. Others held he sent four. But regardless of these opposing views on this point in the earthmaking, there was always complete agreement that the Flat Pipe ritual number itself was three, while that in the Feathered Pipe and Sacred Lodge rituals was four.

The musical instrument proper to the Flat Pipe ritual was the
788 rattle (see Plate 1C). The drum, proper to the Feathered Pipe
534 ritual, was not used. In the Flat Pipe ritual, the rattle was shaken clockwise in a sort of circle at breast height, whereas medicine men shook their rattles anti-clockwise and Star Dancers alternately back and forth.[1]

788 It may be added here that while the Flat Pipe was actually
276 smoked only when it was being ritually transferred to a new keeper and when some individual had vowed to smoke it, and was never danced with, smoking the Feathered Pipe and dancing with it were common.

788 Among the more significant and more commonly recurring features shared by both the Flat Pipe and Feathered Pipe rituals were clockwise movements, singing, and the use of paint, buffalo chips, and of sage, tobacco, larb, and wild parsley.

Entering and leaving the keeper's lodge, ritual gestures, and so forth were consistently clockwise.

788 Singing bulked large in the Flat Pipe rite, and, for that matter, in nearly every phase of Gros Ventre religious and social life. As
● 533 Thomas Main put it speaking for himself and The Boy: "We cannot describe how much singing means in the lives of the Gros

[1] For description of Star Dance, see Flannery, 1953, p. 42.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

788
533

Ventres. They *sing!* This subject is one you cannot exhaust. You cannot put in words how they feel about it."

773
533

Singing, according to The Boy, had its origin at the time of the flood when Earthmaker was floating around on the raft with the Flat Pipe. He was being blown around by the wind, at the mercy of the elements. He was tired and utterly lonely. So he started to think: "I must do something about this. It is too hard. I have had enough of it." And thus he planned the making of dry land by sending the animals diving down for earth. He had all the power to make land from the bits of earth brought up by the turtle and hell-diver, but he decided to do the making solemnly and with dignity. So he composed the earthmaking song: "My holiness (or my power) respond to me (pity me)." He did not whisper or talk it, but sang it, and sang it loud, so that he could be heard all over, so that this first act would last forever, so that it would "be elaborate and have dignity" and would be respected and honored for all time. Up to the moment of the singing of this first song, he had been mute, silent; he had only thought, this was the first utterance. This was the origin of Gros Ventre singing. This song, taught them by Earthmaker, was the first their primeval ancestors ever sang. This first song was sung by Earthmaker four times in succession, to the east, south, west and north. But after this he discarded one of the four animals, the beaver, keeping the other three, and ordained that thenceforth, not four as in the very beginning, but three, should be the Flat Pipe sacred number, and its songs should be sung in threes and multiples thereof, and that ritual movements should be to east, south and west, leaving out the north as he had left out the beaver ("let the beaver stay there where it is cold").

[788]

So Earthmaker planned and taught the system of the Flat Pipe ritual, with songs proper to it that could not be sung on other occasions.

788
533

Singing was thus originally religious and sacred only. As time went on, songs were sung for other functions, social and political. Singing degenerated among the Gros Ventres and they fell farther and farther down until they made and sang songs for the most trivial things in their lives, and even unworthy things. On their

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

788 first contact with whites they found that among these latter too
533 singing had in similar fashion degenerated.

Among the birds and animals it was otherwise. They continued to sing as they had done at the earthmaking. They held fast to the privilege given them and did not abuse it or let their singing degenerate. So it was that the Gros Ventres used to go to the tops of buttes, hills and high mountains and to streams and forests, begging these animals and birds to give them songs, and in this measure to restore singing to its former purpose and dignity. But later the Gros Ventres sometimes prevailed even upon the animals and birds to teach them "no-good songs."

Nevertheless in spite of all this badness and degeneration the Gros Ventres never lost sight of the fact that they depended on the Supreme Being for everything. So whenever they had occasion to pray and perform their ceremonies, they sang. And with such sacred singing was so intimately associated the use of the pipe
[276 and tobacco that "one could hardly separate singing and pipe-
782] smoking." In nearly all rites they entered in as a means of imploring the Supreme Being to grant the people's requests. The Gros Ventres learned by experience that if they sang and smoked and followed faithfully the rest of the Flat Pipe ritual, they could at least hope for a hearing by the Supreme Being. Smoking too, it may be added, like singing, later degenerated, a point to which we shall come presently.

533 Practically every Gros Ventre ceremony or social event began or was accompanied with song. And each of the many Gros Ventre songs had to be used on certain and only certain specified occasions. Thus, for example, it would not do at all to sing Pipe songs during social dances or in a hand game or at "good-time" gatherings. Each religious or secular occasion had its own song or set of songs. Very commonly a story teller would in the course of his or her narrative sing the song or songs the characters in the story were supposed to have sung.

Many Gros Ventre songs were wordless. In most of the worded ones, the words consisted of short pregnant phrases or sentences preceded and followed by wordless singing.

Two kinds of singers were recognized and distinguished: those who had good voices, and those who had knowledge of the

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

melodies, wording, purpose, place, and meaning of many songs and could put the right feeling into their singing. The latter kind of singers were often the ones who taught the former how to sing correctly. One singer might be recognized as competent in religious or certain religious songs only, another for social songs only, and so forth. In each of the categories there were usually "one or several who were by far the best in bringing out this something in the song." Among the qualities of a good singer were and are: volume, clearness, wide range, sense of rhythm and ability to put life and feeling into the singing. Much too depended on "body motions, gestures, bodily interpretation, whole demeanor." Beating time too was an art; "anyone can take a stick and beat a drum but not everyone can beat it just right." 533

Many of the songs, both ritual and secular, contain words or expressions the meaning of which is not known today, or, although the meaning is known, the words or expressions are no longer in secular use or else differ appreciably in form from those in use. [192]

For some songs, such as solemn religious ones, it was relatively unimportant whether the singer had a good melodious voice or not. In sacred songs the all-important thing was the ability to put the proper feeling into the singing, "to get the hearers to concentrate ears, eyes, mind and heart," whereas the singer who had only a good voice reached only the ears of the hearers.

"The old time songs," The Boy explained, "are very hard. You cannot learn them overnight. It is hard for the Gros Ventres today to learn the old, old songs, and most of the songs I sang for your records are from the old times. Especially difficult are the Flat Pipe songs. They just consume your breath, so to speak. You have to sing them very solemnly and it would not do to shake your voice. They are supposed to be serious. You can notice the difference in singers when several sing together; they [some of them] get out of breath. When Horse Capture was Flat Pipe keeper, at one ceremony he and I sang together, and the old fellow would get tired."

Among the most accomplished Gros Ventre singers of recent times are first of all The Boy himself, to whom we are indebted for 102 of the songs we recorded, and Charles Buckman, who sang 6 for us. The Boy mentioned, too, certain other renowned living

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13
Blackfoot NF6

G 533 singers: Tom Bad Road, Charlie Arms, Mrs. Katie Matt Croft, and Mrs. Albert Perry. Apropos of the last two, it may be added that women frequently sang and sing with the men, and the latter "like it when the women join in because this makes the singing colorful and nice."[3]

G 386 The Gros Ventres used many kinds of paint; some of Indian, some of white man origin; some in secular, some only in ritual uses. Powdered paints of different colors were gotten from traders and were used to paint parfleches and, by the men, alone, never G [439] by the women, to paint their bodies. A yellow paint was also gotten from the Cheyenne or from Cheyenne territory. On one occasion Coming Daylight brought a lot of this yellow paint which she had gathered there and gave enough of it to a Gros Ventre man to paint his big lodge with it. These paints were not sacred. A black paint, obtained from the Standing Rock region, was used in making fine lines on parfleches. Only the old women who made and painted the parfleches were the ones that gathered it, but it was not so sacred as the red paint used in face painting.

788 386 This sacred red face paint was in a class by itself, and was used in the Flat and Feathered Pipe rites, by the "grandfathers" in [778] painting the wives during the Sacred Lodge rites, and apparently by the women in everyday painting of their own and the children's faces.[4] This special red paint was called, as also the yellow clay

---

[3] About 1900 The Boy went along with the Gros Ventres on a 4th of July visit to the Piegan at Browning. All four groups, the Piegan, Blood, Blackfeet proper, and northern Piegan, were gathered there. In all the four there B was only one man, a famous singer, who knew all the ceremonial dance [527] songs, although some of the other Indians knew some of them, and he was 533 imported by the Browning Piegan for the reason. The Boy heard him sing. The man did not have a nice clear voice, but he lived up to his reputation, for he knew the songs and their order for all the many rites and was kept busy all the time. And he cashed in handsomely with horses, blankets and money. He was able to make a living from his singing. The Boy learned some of the songs this man sang, and he sang one of them for us, that had the words: "You who are the ruler of all sacred (powerful) things having to do with all life, give me all of that so that I may use it all my life." The Blackfeet, The Boy added, think more of the Sun than do the Gros Ventres: it is their deity.

[4] See Flannery, 1953, pp. 144-45.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

were quite the same in both cases. The decision as to length was apparently optional with the keeper, and depended on his ability and willingness to cover the heavy costs of providing food and other necessaries. We shall describe the one-night one-day rite. 796 7

The day before the sweating, the keeper would direct his assistants,—one of his brothers or grown sons or friends,—to get the 31 willows, the pole and other raw material for the sweat-lodge, and the sticks to tie the offerings, and would have his wives gather the required wood and uniform stones for the heating, pulverize charcoal, and tidy up the Pipe lodge.

After sundown the keeper had his wives take their children away from his lodge. All the people would know what was to take place in the keeper's lodge that evening and would keep quiet. Then, when in the keeper's judgment, all was quiet in camp and practically everyone had retired for the night, the keeper and a chosen assistant began preparing the offerings in the former's lodge, the Pipe lodge.

The keeper and his assistant began by laving themselves three times with chewed peppermint. Then the keeper filled his common pipe with tobacco, sang thrice the solemn smudge or incense song (No. 81) and dropped peppermint leaves on the sacred hearth, smudged himself (the assistant doing the same), smudged the common pipe, and prayed with it,—all with the same rites as at the Transfer Ceremony (pp. 44-54). Then after a good smoke with the common pipe, the two took a little rest. The incense song, like all others in the sweat-lodge rite, was sung without rattle or other accompaniment. [533]

After this, a fresh live buffalo chip was put on the sacred hearth, another peppermint smudge was made with the triple east, south and west orientation, and all the offerings were smudged by him and laid down. Then he sang another song (No. 79?) three times and started the actual tying of the offerings.

While the keeper was sorting out the offerings and selecting the one he considered the greatest and most valuable, the assistant blackened the sticks to which they were to be tied. This blackening was done by taking a bit of tallow in the palm of the hand, putting charcoal on it, rubbing the palms together, and then rubbing the palms on the stick. [386]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 neck and down her breast. According to Al Chandler, first they would rub the left arm, then the right, then twice on the head. According to him, too, the co-keeper, before taking hold of the Pipe bundle to carry it, would smudge herself by putting first one foot and then the other over the ascending smudge, then rub her arms [and head?] as above.

The unwrapping and re-wrapping of the Pipe bundle at a rite in fulfillment of a vow to dance with the Pipe, and presumably at other rites, was carried out, according to Al Chandler in the following manner where the rite took place in the special double lodge. The co-keeper, when about to take hold of the heavy Pipe bundle in the keeper's lodge, would talk to it: "I am going to take you over there [to the double lodge]. Make yourself light." In carrying the bundle to the double lodge she would walk very slowly, making three stops on the way and a fourth just in front of the double lodge. This she entered on the left, proceeded clockwise, and deposited the bundle on a sage brush bed in the place of honor at the back of the lodge opposite the door. Before starting to unwrap the bundle, the keeper chewed a little sweet pine, spat on his fingers with it, made four motions or passes toward the bundle, and at the fourth touched and started untying the string at one end. We obtained no details on the unwrapping as distinct from the untying, or on the re-wrapping and re-tying. The bundle was re-tied after the dancing but before the terminal feast. After the whole dancing rite and terminal feast were over, the co-keeper took the bundle out of the double lodge and back to the keeper's lodge, without making the four stops on the way.

*796 The songs of the Feathered Pipe ritual were sung to the accompaniment of the drum and were less solemn, faster and more
●533 lively, than those of the Flat Pipe ritual. Informants agreed that there were many songs peculiar to the Feathered Pipe. According to The Boy at the more elaborate rites, sixteen different songs were sung, in four series of four each, each of the sixteen songs being sung four times. The total singings were thus 64 (4 x 4 x 4 x 4) as compared with the Flat Pipe 27 (3 x 3 x 3). We recorded six of these (Nos. 45-46, 126-29) as sung by The Boy, all six of them wordless. Number 45 was the song heard up in the air,

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

with drumming, by the first keeper of the Pipe; number 46, the song sung when the feathered stick was danced with; numbers 126-29, the songs sung while He-who-dreams-of-Bha'a painted his shield. According to Jim Shortman there was a "song for everything" [of importance in the Pipe bundle], "even the owl." The Boy had heard one such song, containing the words: "owl he is telling me." According to the origin story of the Feathered Pipe, the first keeper at the very start was given and sang four songs; the others would thus have been added later, some at least during his life time. 796* 533

The terminal feast with which the more elaborate Feathered Pipe rites ended differed it seems, only in minor details, from that of the Flat Pipe. According to Al Chandler, just before the eating began, a tiny piece of each kind of food prepared was given to the keeper. He then took one such piece, touched all the other pieces with it, held it up and prayed. He held it up to the Supreme Being, and prayed first of all to him, then to the Pipe, and sometimes to the Human Face and the owl. Sitting High used to talk to all four. But in all cases the Supreme Being was included and was addressed first. The Last Child was not mentioned. After the prayer was over, the keeper put the bit of food in the ground and left it there, not however for the Last Child. After the eating was over, if there was any food left which the people wanted to take out, some old man had first to tell one [or four?] of his war-deeds. 796*

The paint on the bundle would wear off, and the bundle would need repainting at least once a year. While there was no seasonal spring rite proper, this repainting was usually done, by the keeper, in the spring time, about June, around the beginning of the thunderstorm season. This repainting rite was performed whether or not anyone had vowed a Feathered Pipe rite, but might be combined with such a vowed rite. In the course of this repainting rite, put on by the keeper and held in his lodge or in a specially erected double lodge, the keeper painted "the bundle red all over" and everything that belonged to the Pipe, including the Feathered Pipe drum and tripod, but did not dance with it. During the rite he would pray for rain and other blessings. If asked to do so, he would also paint the people. Everyone was free to attend the repainting rite, and big crowds would ordinarily come.

*1796 We Recorded five of the Sacrifice Dance songs, but there were
● 533 others, apparently many others. The skin-piercing song has been mentioned above. Another song recorded, a wordless one, number 49, as rendered by The Boy, was sung "when the old man [the grandfather] put the young fellow [his grandson, a 'dancer'] to sleep,"—a reference not clear to us. We also recorded another song, a wordless one, No. 51, as sung by The Boy. Another song, not recorded by us, but known to Singer, contained the words: "I soaked them with water."

The story back of one of the Sacrifice Dance songs, number 109, a wordless one, recorded by us as sung by Charles Buckman, was given us by him as follows:

"On one occasion the Gros Ventres held a Sacrifice Dance. Just then a new Sacrifice Dance song sprang up and was sung often during the four days and nights of the Dance. After the Dance was over, the people broke camp and moved to a site five or six miles down the creek. That evening a woman disappeared and no one knew what had become of her. The next day a searching party was sent out to find her. Some of the young fellows rode back toward where the Dance had been and when they got close they thought they heard someone singing. So they stopped and listened. Someone was singing this new song. 'It's a woman,' they said. 'Let's go and see.' So they rode up to the abandoned Dance lodge and inside it they saw the woman all alone shaking leaves (as was the custom) and singing this song. They took her and carried her back to the camp. There she had to be hobbled in order to be kept from running away. She died soon after."

Another Sacrifice Dance song, number 50, recorded by us as sung by The Boy, has the words: "The Fur Cap (an older Gros Ventre name for The Little Rockies) on the side (side hill or slope) of it. There is frivolity (sexual cutting up or looseness)." [836] This song was composed on the Hays side of the big brush between what are now Hays and St. Paul's Mission. Ritual sex license did not enter into the Sacrifice Dance, but during the Dance when the leading people and their helpers were busy and all the tribe was gathered together some of the younger people might seize the opportunity to "play a little," as The Boy euphemistically put it. Mothers would be anxious about their daughters. At any

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

rate it was apparently a well-known song, as Singer also, who knew some of the Sacrifice Dance songs, knew it and spoke of it. 796* [533]

Besides the sacrifice offerings, previously mentioned, of the trimmed pieces of flesh, and the self-torture looked upon itself as a sort of "sacrifice," other offerings of clothing, dry goods and so forth were made at the Sacrifice Dance. These offerings were made, Coming Daylight stated, "to ask the Supreme Being to give them a long happy life," and both she and Singer on another occasion affirmed that the "sacrifice" in the Sacrifice Dance was offered to the Supreme Being.

Further, apart from the gifts made by vowers to their ritual grandfathers for the skin piercing and to the Flat Pipe keeper by the principal vower, presents were commonly given away by relatives of the self-torturers to third parties,—old people, visitors from neighboring tribes, or others,—in honor of the self-torturers, or perhaps of others, too. At one Sacrifice Dance, Singer was allowed by her husband, Crooked Arm, to be present because her mother's brother was to participate (apparently as a self-torturer) in it. "I gave," she said, "a dress and a blanket in my uncle's honor. I put them down and a woman grabbed them immediately. When nobody grabbed the things, someone would go around and give them to old people. Most of the stuff was just piled up and then all of it was given away. If there were visitors present from another tribe, they would be given some of the stuff. Someone told that woman right there that she should not have grabbed those things, but they were not taken away from her. People used to give away even horses at a Sacrifice Dance." Coming Daylight's uncle, Crow Bull, gave an Assiniboine, Old Man Pigeon Toes, a horse at a Sacrifice Dance in which her husband, Little Man, took part in the "sham Battle." "Through these presents," she added, "Old Man Pigeon Toes claimed relationship with Crow Bull and called me 'grandchild.' The Assiniboine are worse than the Gros Ventres for claiming relationships!" 796* 431

As is obvious, it cost a vower, particularly the principal vower, a great deal to put up a Sacrifice Dance, and the occasion was also a considerable drain upon the resources of his relatives. Perhaps this, rather than any ritual prohibition, was the reason why, 796*

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

773 been told to do and put up the Drum Dance. Thus was the Drum
539 Dance introduced among the Gros Ventres into their sacred dance system."

When Lame Bull told The Boy this story, the latter asked him: "Who was it who gave this dance and these horses?" And his
[825] father answered: "The killdeer." So the Drum Dance is owned by the killdeer (*Oxyechus vociferus*).

The Drum Dance ranked high in dignity among the Sacred
*796 dances. Lame Bull ranked it next after the Sacrifice Dance, and first in importance in the Drum-Dog-Kitfox-Crazy group, because, he told The Boy, the Drum Dance was "most difficult and complicated to carry out," and through it "more horses had come to the Gros Ventre tribe."

The Drum Dance was held only in fulfillment of a vow. The
[811] rite lasted the customary four days and nights, with a big feast each day. The Boy was uncertain whether a sweat-lodge ceremony was held during the Drum Dance.

The chief sacred objects used in the Drum Dance were, so far
[778] as we could learn, the very large drum, and the fur-wrapped crooked sticks which were carried by the dancers and which to judge from the origin story were four in number and were decorated as therein described. The dancers themselves were
[302] painted yellow all over their bodies, with black dots, representing hail, from the waist up.

Four of the Drum Dance songs, numbers 52-55, were recorded,
*796 as sung by The Boy, who had learned them from his father, Lame
533 Bull. There were others which The Boy did not remember, nor did he know the ritual order in which they were sung.

Two of these four songs, numbers 52 and 53, are wordless, and were sung at good-time dances during the Drum Dance. Number 53 is the song that was sung by the men marching out of the dry lake-bed when the Drum Dance was first given to the starving Gros Ventre man by the killdeer. These dancing songs were lively ones, sung to fast time.

Song number 54 is difficult to translate as the meaning of two of one of the words was unknown. The Boy ventured the conjecture that the whole wording might possibly mean: "There are

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

so many other people (besides the Drum Dance men) whom I am carrying that I don't care about the rest of them." He recalled in this connection a Gros Ventre children's game in which they split into two groups and one child from one group goes over to the other group and carries the members thereof one by one to his side. At any rate, this was the first song sung by the Drum Dance men at the first stop they made when going to fight the Piegan (in the story to be given presently). 796* 533●

The words of song number 55 refer to the place of the future life where the lodge of the Drum Dance men is all ready to receive them if they die in the battle. They were supposed to be ready to sacrifice their lives, feeling they would go to the Big Sand where they would be better off than here. As these words were sung, the men would point with their thumbs toward where the Big Sand was located, in the north, and would face in that direction. In the sign language pointing is done only with the index finger. Pointing in this special way, with the thumb, was done to signify that the men so pointing were doing a brave thing, were courageous and not chicken-hearted, and were ready for the worst. Some further light upon the meaning and context of this song, as well as upon certain other aspects of the Drum Dance, is shed by the following story narrated by The Boy, and confirmed in part by a less detailed version of it by Coming Daylight who stated somewhat cryptically that "these (Drum Dance) men never stood back [retreated?], they always made an attack on the enemy." Singer also stated, likewise rather cryptically, "Iron Bucket [her husband] told me they (the Drum Dancers) would go away off on a war path and stay four days and spy on their own camp and go back to war." The Boy's story was as follows:

"On one occasion during a Drum Dance which had been put on in fulfillment of a vow, a group of Gros Ventre men went out to hunt buffalo. While they were out they were attacked by some Piegan. The Piegan were on foot, while the Gros Ventres were on horseback, so it was easy for the latter to get away. It occurred to the Gros Ventres that they might play a trick on the Piegan and make a lot of sport for the occasion of the Drum Dance. So they detailed one of their number to go back and notify their camp 726 796*

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Two young men attendants were chosen, but there was no police force, according to The Boy who said none was needed in the case of these "harmless" and "venerable" old men dancers. In general, The Boy had the impression that people had not cared much what these old men did in their Dance and did not go to it much, for it had "no color to it, nothing lively about it." 796* 888

The dance lodge,—a "very simple little hut" according to The Boy and Thick; a "big round camp" according to Coming Daylight, —was put up outside the camp circle, toward the south thereof. The dancers carried out their rites "sort of secretly." They could be heard singing and dancing inside their lodge, but they did not go around much in public view afterwards as the women did in their Dance. The rattles used to accompany the singing were sticks about a foot or foot-and-a-half long with big buffalo calf hoofs on one end, and were very noisy. The leader's stick was larger and its butt end was pounded on the ground to keep time. 796* [534] [533]

Two of the Dance songs, numbers 67 and 68, were recorded as sung by The Boy. Number 68 was sung while the old men were dancing and contains their particular yell.

The other song, number 67, has the words meaning: "You first (or leading) (buffalo) bull, come in this direction (come streaming in)." This song was a "half-prayer." The singers while singing it were wishing as hard as they could, so there would be plenty of buffalo and thus the people would not have to go far to hunt successfully. The very first original buffalo procreated other buffalo and singers wanted him to lead the other buffalo, his progeny, to the Gros Ventres. The wish-thought or "half-prayer" was directed, however, according to The Boy, not to the first buffalo, but to the Supreme Being so that the latter would provide buffalo.

The primary purpose of the Dance was pretty clearly that of bringing success in buffalo hunting. After the dance was over, the camp would move to another site, and then the people "would always run into a lot of buffalo and have good hunting luck." "Even if there were no buffalo nearby when this Dance had been going on, in some mysterious way many buffalo would come and even run around in the camp." Right after the very last time the Dance was performed, the people ran into a great many buffalo. [224]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 These were fastened to the center pole "at the top," so that it was "full of goods that they offered." The offerings were made by "those who made the dance." Such an offering was made, for instance, by the woman above-mentioned who joined the dance for the recovery of her wounded brother. As at the Sacrifice Dance, too, when the Women's Dance was over and camp was moved, the lodge, center pole and attached offerings were all left just standing there.

*796 302 The dancers, the two attendants and the "calf" or "calves," were painted, by the "boss" (and perhaps by others),—the dancers at least, "all over the face, then on top of the hair and down the hair hanging to the shoulders." During the painting the one painting would pray for the other being painted, and the latter might pray on her own account for whatever she desired, such as long life, medicine power, or other favors.

*796 533 Of the songs sung during the Women's Dance we recorded only one, number 66, a wordless one, sung by The Boy. The singing was done or at least led by the old man (or two old men) who sat at the back of the lodge, and was apparently (the point was not cleared up by us) joined in by the chief vower and "boss," and also by the "cows." The singing was done to the accompaniment of the deer-claw rattles mentioned previously, and without the drum. Those dancing did not sing while dancing. "The singing in the Women's Dance," The Boy remarked, "sounded 'old,' quite different from the way a young woman sings." To Coming Daylight's ear "it sounded fine."

*796 535 The dancing went on, not continuously, but intermittently, with intervals in between. Dancing was done by the "cows," attendants, and "calves," not by the "bull" who just sat in her place near the door with her horned headdress on and her head bowed down. The participants danced toward the back of the lodge, "kind of bouncing up and down in one place and shaking their heads from side to side." Coming Daylight, as a "calf," danced with the rest, near the door. According to Singer, the dances were done in series of four, as told her by one or two of her grandmothers who had been through the ~~Women's~~ Dance, and, if any of the "cows" did not get up to dance, the "bull" would "get busy" and "start

[522 831]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787 latter he would be told by the offerer to go to some other designated mountain to get what he was seeking.

The length of time a man would stay out on the mountain varied, the range being apparently from one to seven days, and of course the nights too. Power might be given in full daylight as well as at night. Various informants mentioned one to seven days, five to seven days, seven days, two to four days, four days. Sometimes questers were given power the very first day or night; others, only on a later day or night; others still not on the first quest at all, even though they remained five or seven days, but only on a following quest or after repeated quests; others, finally, never got power, not even a dream, even though they went out over and over again on the hills to seek power. Great medicine men got their full powers as a rule only after a number of years of repeated sleeping around on high buttes.

The recipient of power ordinarily got three things from the donor: a song, instructions on the rites to be observed in using the power, and some material object which was a symbol, and/or instrument vehicle of the power.

533 778 Singing, as we noted earlier (supra, p. 79), was originally gotten by the Gros Ventres from Earthmaker at the time of the great flood and was confined to sacred occasions. Later it degenerated and became secular as well. But among the birds and animals it did not degenerate; it kept its pristine sacredness. And these birds and animals and other beings would give their songs to questers for power, to each successful quester a specific song for his own use in exercising the particular power given at the time.

As The Boy explained it: "From time immemorial every Gros Ventre rite or ceremony began with song. . . . And when the Gros Ventres went out on the hills or to the forests to seek power and were granted a hearing and were going to be given power by rock, forest, animal or other creature, the granting always began by a song. . . . It was remarkable how they [the questers] could memorize these songs that were sung [to them] by these several creatures, and the recipients never forgot these songs and always had them foremost in their minds and never altered them in any

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

way. Others of course, learned them from the one to whom they were first given, but always sang them the same unaltered way." 533 778

An individual might have more than one kind of power, and hence more than one song. A doctor might have more than one doctoring song; Stiffarm, for example, had many. At any given time a great number of doctoring songs were in use by the many doctors. The four doctoring songs we recorded are only samplings. Only the person who acquired a power by quest or transfer had the right to sing the song or songs connected therewith except when requested to help sing with the owner at say a curing rite. A person who had acquired power songs could, if he desired, sing them in his lodge as bedtime songs.

The recipient of power was given and taught by the power-donor not only a song but also detailed instructions on other ritual procedures to be followed in exercising the specific power. These procedures will be described presently, in our section on power use and ritual.

At the time when power was bestowed, the recipient also got some power object. Sometimes they were given to him directly by the supernatural donor; sometimes the donor instructed the recipient where to find or how to make the power object, or just told him what kind of object to use. This object was often spoken of as the medicine or power of the possessor. So far as we could discover, the object was conceived of as more or less identical with the power or as the tangible embodiment, vehicle or instrument of it. The power object was consistently brought into play when the possessor made use of his power, as will be described later. A recipient might obtain at any given quest more than one such object from the donor. 787 778

These objects,—such as a weasel skin, otter skin, root, and so forth,—were commonly kept by the possessor in a skin bag as the possessor's medicine bundle. The Boy made a gift to us of the badger-skin medicine bag of his father, Lame Bull, who used to keep peppermint and a thunder-stone in it.

In many cases power objects were swallowed by the power-recipient when first given to him and were so retained within his body until he forfeited his power through breach of code or in-

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

his power only when he was an active participant in the game. Keg, who had gotten gambling power from a prairie chicken, would, when using this power in a hand game, imitate the hissing, swishing noise made by the prairie chickens when they ruffle their tail feathers. He had been given by the prairie chicken its windpipe to use in the hand game, and for this he made use of a small metal spring resembling the windpipe. Red Whip, famous for his great gambling power, used a weasel skin in exercising this power. A player with power who was losing in a game might half seriously voice an appeal: "What is the matter with you, prairie chicken (or ghost)? You are failing me."

Only certain songs could be sung in a two-button hand game; others, such as doctors' songs or medicine lodge songs, could not then be sung. If one of the players had a gambling power song, gotten in a dream from a prairie chicken or ghost, he would start singing it and others would join in. Gambling songs were sung in fast time to the accompaniment usually of small hand drums, the players marked time by striking with sticks the logs that lay stretched in front of each team. After a game was well under way, in the excitement, grunts would often take the place of songs.

We recorded two gambling songs for the old hand game, numbers 107 and 108, as sung by The Boy.

Love power, more common than gambling power, was acquired, by quest or transfer, to attain various ends: by a man to secure sex favors from women who were reluctant to grant them, or who had not only rejected his advances but had privately or publicly met them with insult;[18] by a jilted lover to win back the jilting man or woman; by a man or woman to win over a desired but unwilling prospective marital mate; by a wife to win back the affections and fidelity of a husband who was running around with other women.

We could obtain very little information on the rites carried out when love power was used. Our chief informant on love power, The Boy, had been offered it on various occasions but had never accepted it, so had not been told the ritual procedures to use, procedures about which the possessors of love power were ap-

[18] See Flannery, 1953, pp. 174, 193.

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

had to be two buttons, a "short" and a "long" one.[6] Very commonly the game 525
was played inside a lodge, with the main center of interest opposite the door, but outdoor playing also occurred frequently.

When the game took place inside a lodge the arrangement and line up were about as follows. The twelve counters were in one pile at the rear opposite the door. The two teams, of any number each, were lined up from rear to door facing each other, with a tent pole or sections of one before each team to beat time upon and with the wagers placed in view of all between the teams. Each team had its own tally keeper, guesser, hider, assistant hider, and other teammates, ranged in the foregoing order from the counter pile toward the door. We shall call these teams A and B with their respective A and B tally keepers, guessers, and so forth.

The game began with a gambling song, sung, to the measure of a small hand 525
drum and/or beats with sticks on the tent poles lying in front of the teams, by 533
all present, team members and spectators. In 1940 we recorded, as part of a series of 116 Gros Ventre songs, two such gambling songs, sung by The Boy. These two songs are wordless, except for a short sentence or phrase in the middle of each. The wording of one is: ą́niti be´taną (general sense: "It's no use you trying to guess me; I'm 'holy'"). The wording of the other, incomplete (as The Boy could not recall the full native text) is: ą̄´tibdjī nǫ´nǫ'tsǫnen ("dogs" "wet legs": allusion not known to The Boy; the full wording was literally: "dogs wet-legs little-legs"). The tunes are lively ones sung in fast time. Only certain songs could be sung in a gambling game; doctors' songs or Medicine Dance songs were taboo therein. If one of the players had his own gambling song gotten from a prairie chicken or ghost (see *infra*), he would start it and the others (only of his own team or side ?) would sing it with him. In the excitement of a game well under way, grunts would often take the place of songs proper.

Each team selected its best player. One held the short button, the other 525
the long one. Player A (of and for team A) hid his button in one of his hands, putting on a show with motions, feints, and so forth. Player B (of and for team B) went through his own show, and finally guessed by pointing. Then B hid and A guessed him. If both guessed correctly or both incorrectly, they each hid and guessed again, and they kept this up until one had guessed correctly and the other incorrectly. So one won the preliminary, and the tally keeper of the winner's side, let us say team A, took four counters from the pile and laid them on his side. The preliminary win also gave the winner's team the right to hide.

6 Illustrations of buttons and counters in Culin, *op. cit.*, figs. 345-348, p. 271.

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787 where the memento was kept. After a while the ghost would
776 come to the keeper, the surviving relative, on successive visits and talk to him (or her), telling him its intention of becoming his ghost helper, and finally putting him in a deep sleep ("killing" him) and saying to him: "I shall be your tsatsawâ·'ª." In other words, it was the ghost, not the surviving relative, who regularly took the initiative and broke the ice. In fact, the latter had little or no freedom to accept or refuse.

By the ghost the survivor in trance would be taught the procedure to use for summoning and dealing with the ghost, how to put incense in the smudge place in the person's own lodge, how to lay the pipe, the direction of stem and bowl, what kind of food to put out, and so forth. A key element in such teaching was a special song, given by the ghost to be sung in said rite. One
776 such song, recorded by me in 1940 as sung by The Boy but not
787 yet transcribed, a wordless song sung to the accompaniment of a
791 drum, had belonged to a woman named "Woman." She had
[533] been taught it by the ghost of her deceased husband (or brother), *Wawathana'tca* * (*a*'s nasalized) "Bad-bad Bull." He had been a medicine man when still living, and this had been his "power" song. His ghost gave it to her both as the song to summon his ghost with and as a doctoring song. She had therefore both ghost-summoning and doctoring power. While that old woman had both a ghost helper and doctoring power, the two things did not necessarily go together in the same person. One could have a ghost helper without having doctoring power, and vice versa. No one lacking a ghost helper could conduct the shaking tent rite, no matter how great power he had received by fasting and crying, and no matter what guardian spirit or spirits he had acquired. After her husband's death the above old woman had not married. People were a little afraid of her because she had this ghost helper. She was a capable old woman, with lots of horses; some of her breed of horses are still (1940) around. She died around 1907.

* Owing to delays and difficulties under present war conditions in obtaining symbols not in our printer's stock a and e with a stroke above them are here printed in italic.

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Other songs, distinct from this summoning or shaking tent rite song, were also given and taught at times by ghost helpers. Two of them, both victory songs, were recorded as sung by The Boy in 1940. These two were given on occasions other than that on which the surviving relative initially acquired his ghost helper. 776 787 [533]

After all the above teaching was concluded, the ghost of the deceased relative belonged to the survivor and was supposed to come whenever summoned by the latter in the manner the ghost told him while in trance to do. A great many Gros Ventre men and women had guardian spirits and "power" acquired by fasting and crying or otherwise. But fewer individuals, men and women, had ghost helpers. My informants in 1939 and 1940 could recall only four persons in the last two generations or last 70 years or so who had had ghost helpers.

In one case (see first of the two appended stories by Thick) two spirits tried to come to the shaking tent rite conducted by Woman, one bad and the other good, but whether the bad one was one of her deceased relatives or not, she never knew. The people were under the impression that the bad one was an intruder who used to come first and try to "horn in" on the proceedings. No case of a given person clearly having more than one ghost helper was recalled by my informants.

Ordinary "power" could be and often was transferred by the possessor to another person by donation or bequeathment. But a ghost helper never was so transferred and could not be. [424]

It may be added that neither my informants, The Boy and Thick, nor my interpreter, Thomas Main, all highly intelligent and informed men, were at all sure of the etymology of the word tsatsawâ·'ª. The Boy thought it might connote the meaning of "slave," "some one who is forced to do things." Thomas Main suggested a possible relationship to tsatsa—"coming, flight"; plus—wa, an old Gros Ventre word, meaning unknown. The two words for ordinary ghosts as such are tsa·k'ª (sing.; pl., tsa·k'an: a's as u in English but), and bie'te'ᵉ (sing.; pl. bi'eten). Tsatsawâ·'ª is used exclusively for ghost helpers, not for an ordinary ghost, or ghosts in general. An ordinary medicine man was called nata'nhehi (a's as u in but), but there was no special name 791 787 [115]

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

of the society. The officers were free to transfer their ceremonial 575
equipment to other members whom they would select. Following 796
the typical Gros Ventre pattern of transfer of ownership, the
recipient would present as lavish gifts as he could afford to the [431]
donor while the relatives of the recipient showed their appreciation of the favor to their kinsman by giving away expensive gifts in his honor. All of this took place publicly at the dance.

Particular dances and songs were attached to each office and the owners of the ceremonial drumsticks were required to know in correct order all the numerous songs and to provide the musical [533]
accompaniment for the whole ceremony. These four drumstick owners were joined in certain of the songs by four women singers selected from among the wives of the Wolf-men. The owners of the various objects were responsible for the proper care thereof, the crow-belts and the drum receiving most respect. When not in use, the crow-belts were kept wrapped in special bundles in the [841
lodges of their respective owners, but were hung outside when the 784]
owner's wife was in her menstrual period. Moreover, those who 833
danced wearing the crow-belts were obliged to refrain from sexual 782]
relations for two or three days previous to the dancing and, before donning the belts, to make a smudge of sweet-grass to incense themselves and the crow-belts. The drum, too, received special attention. One informant speaks of it as having been "nicely [534]
decorated," and we know from Kroeber's description[9] that the trimming was very similar to that of the Assiniboine Grass dance drum.[10]

Procedure. The actual dancing took place in a special circular 346
dancing-place in the center of the camp circle. This "corral," as 796
it was sometimes referred to, was constructed from several lodge covers, but was open at the top and the entrance thereto was at the east. The tipi of the drum-keeper was put up nearby. Opposite the opening of the "corral" was the place of honor where [554]
sat the officials,—with the exception of the sword owners, who with their assistants were at either side of the entrance. The 800

[9] Kroeber, loc. cit., p. 238.
[10] Lowie, R. H., The Assiniboine, AMNH-AP 4, pt. 1, 1909, p. 67.

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

spoon to touch his tongue regardless of consequences. Some hours later in the excitement accompanying the end of the dance, this man's horse was jumping around and broke loose, was chased by a dog and ran against a log projecting from the corner of a corral. The horse was killed. The owner then admitted that this bad luck had befallen him because he had falsely allowed himself to be honored at the dance. 796 688

Following upon the performance with the spoon, the dog meat was next distributed to the four warriors, the wounded warrior receiving the head. When the meat was eaten the skull was put down to the west of the fire. The four warriors remained seated while the other members danced for some time. So soon, however, as the singers switched to the appropriate music, the spoon owner dashed to the dog skull and pointed the skull in four directions, and the four warriors danced around, everybody else rising to dance at his place, yelling and calling out, while this song with chorus was sung once. All were then seated except the warriors who pranced around the fire four times. After this each of the four warriors in turn picked up the dog skull, pointed it in the direction in which he had accomplished the particular war deed he was to recount, and related his story. If one of them had been forced to refuse the spoon, the owner of the spoon would have to point the dog skull for him while the warrior talked and gestured. The warrior who had been wounded spoke last, and when he finished he tossed the dog skull outside of the dancing-place. 796

The owner of the whistle had a particular dance. When the accompaniment started, it was stated, " for some reason he did not dance alone. It seemed that all the members were glad and danced with him and kind of helped him. The song was repeated three more times. At the end of each ' stanza ' the owner of the whistle would dance at the edge of the circle, apart from and very much faster than the other dancers." It was his privilege, too, to " punish " the dancers. At a signal from the owner of the whistle, the singers would switch to the " punishing songs " of which there were said to have been ten in all. No one could drop out of the dancing while these were being sung. Each of the ten songs could [533]

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 be repeated so that it was something of an ordeal. The sword owners would see to it that the dancers kept up, prodding the laggards until the series of songs had been completed.

[533 177] The singers themselves had a smoking song, one of the few songs of the Grass dance for which words were adopted along with the tunes [11] from the Assiniboine. This song indicated a period of rest and relaxation for all but it was required that one of the officers provide the pipe and mixture for the singers.

Any member who left the dancing-place was obliged to surrender some piece of personal property as insurance that he would return. If he did not come back, the property was forfeit.

796 [431] 586 Another distinctive feature of the earlier Grass dance was the throwing away of property and especially of wives. The term "throwing away" is appropriate because a stick was held in the hand and after the holder publicly announced what the stick represented he would throw it to the ground. If, for instance, a member of the society had decided to give away his wife he would take a stick and say: "Here is so-and-so (naming the woman)" and throw the stick down. Sometimes another member would pick up the stick, thus indicating that he was taking this woman, but occasionally it happened that no one grabbed her and in such case the wife in question would return to live with her own relatives. The man who so renounced his wife was supposed to be through with her for good. It was said by informants, however, that once in a while, provided the wife had not been claimed 522 by another, the husband would want her back again. An in- 796 stance in illustration of this point was told to me. A man who 586 stood to my informant in the relation of enemy-friend [12] had so 572 disposed of his wife at a Grass dance. Some time later my informant saw the couple together again. My informant took ad-

[533] [11] Most of the Gros Ventre Grass dance songs have no words proper. This contrasts with the Arapaho Grass dance songs, as my informants are [177] well aware. The difference is perhaps due to the influence on the Arapaho of the Ghost Dance religion (cf. Kroeber, A. L., The Arapaho, AMNH-B 18, pt. 4, 1907, p. 320), which scarcely affected the Gros Ventres.

[572] [12] This was a joking and rivalry relationship entered into by presenting to a fellow tribesman an object captured from the enemy.

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 the original Grass dance, the number participating, however, both
178 as officers and as general audience, being very much larger.

Although the dog ritual, carried out as described for the earlier period, remained the highlight and climax of the Grass dance, the general program had been enlarged to include other features. Not only were procedures introduced in connection with the newer offices, as indicated above, but other items such as the Owl dance and the Ringtail dance were introduced. The order of events was apparently determined by the "chiefs" at each performance of the Grass dance, but the general program did not vary markedly. The Ringtail dance, for instance, was always included at some time.

When the order for the Ringtail dance was given, any who wished to participate formed a circle facing inward and both men and women were free to choose partners of the opposite sex. The man placed his arm over the shoulders of his partner while she placed her arm around his back. The whole group moved in a circle clockwise in rhythm to the music provided by a group of singers other than those who sang and drummed for the dog ritual and other ceremonies in which officers as such participated.
[887] Any middle-aged or older woman who wished to do so might join the singers for any of the round dances. If none volunteered then they were sometimes drafted simply by being invited and led over to the spot where the male singers were performing.

796 It occasionally happened that during this dance, when the sing-
533 ers had "hit the spot,"—aroused the spirit of the crowd and the
178 floor was full,—the singers would stop all of a sudden, but without giving the usual signal to disperse. Then, without advance notice, they would start singing again, but a different song, a "punishing song." This was a feature obviously based on the "punishing songs" of the original Grass dance, but the tunes were different and it was carried out in the following way.

There were only two of these newer "punishing songs" but as soon as the dancers heard the singers start one of them they knew what it meant: "Now we are in for it. We will have to dance and dance!" The singers could sing the first of these

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

songs as many times as they pleased, and when tired of that one 796
switched to the others. There was no intermission and the 533
dancers got no rest, even the old women would stand up and 178
dance in one place and the old men would be yelling and calling out from where they sat. It was evidently a very lively scene. The dancers would sweat and get tired, but still there would be no let up. Finally the four wearers of the feathered war bonnets, —two men and two women,—would begin voicing appeals to the four "chiefs": "Please do something to stop this dance!" But the "chiefs" did not act right away. At last one of them would get up and walk around until he approached the wearer of a war-bonnet. He would then remove the bonnet and the people were glad and would cheer and yell, but this was not yet the end. They kept on dancing until a second of the "chiefs" got up and removed a war-bonnet from another of the wearers, which finally brought the Ringtail dance to a close.

It was said that while the women who wore black dresses could have answered the appeal to stop the dance, as a rule they would have hesitated to do so because the ones who took upon themselves this privilege would have to pay heavily for it. When the people had quieted down after the strenuous dance, those who had removed the war-bonnets would get up and announce what they were paying for having done so. One might have said, for instance: "All right. I will kill a beef for the next dance," or "I will give money" and name the sum. He could donate whatever [431] he wished, but it was understood that it would be something really substantial. My informants explained that although the Ringtail dance was a regular feature of the Grass dance program, the "punishing songs" were not sung every time because "the reason for singing them was that the people hoped to have a Grass dance again soon and wanted an elaborate affair and so the singers had to use discretion; if the 'chiefs' happened to be in a good financial condition at the time, they made them 'shell out' in that way."

The owners of the ceremonial drumsticks retained the smoking song as described for the earlier period. It was the "chiefs" who

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 178 533 [625 681] were supposed to come prepared with pipe, tobacco, and matches in anticipation of this song. If, for some reason, one of the four was unable to furnish at least a pipeful of mixture, and could not borrow one, he was immediately arrested by the owners of the whips and punished by the singers who might tear his shirt at the neck so everyone could see it, or, perhaps, pour over him a good cupful of broth made from dog flesh. This broth has a strong and lasting odor. The female officers were likewise expected to give the women singers a smoke. The smoking song marked an intermission. No one danced to this song and all sat around smoking and taking it easy.

796 178 If things got too dull, however, one of the owners of the whips might get up, call the announcer, and say: "Tell my friends that I am going to whip them if they don't dance. I will have the right to whip them because I am going to pay for it," and he would present a bridle, or perhaps five dollars, or something of that order of magnitude, to anyone he wished. It was understood, then, that the next time the singing started this man might hit any person,—even one of the "chiefs,"—who failed to dance.

Another feature reminiscent of the original Grass dance but showing some slight change, was the provision that anyone who wished might have it announced that he was going to "lock the door," which meant that nobody could go home until the dance was over. For doing this however he had to provide all the necessary food for another Grass dance to be held on the night immediately following. It was up to the owners of the whips to enforce the regulation by taking something valuable, say a hat [689] or a blanket, from anyone who left the dance and the article was forfeit if he failed to return.

796 178 626 Based on the same concept, the practice grew up of forcing attendance in the following way. Once in a while the owners of the whips might order their assistants to go from door to door in the whole community and take something belonging to each householder, say a bridle, or a valuable belt, or a gun, and bring it to the dancing-place. If the owner of the object were not at the dance, his property was returned to him only if he promised

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 preliminary to the series of Sacred Dances, namely the Fly Dance.
575 After this ceremony was over he was eligible as a "soldier." That is, should one of the members of his "company" vow to give any one of the Sacred Dances in the series, he and other members of the society to which he belonged—either Wolf or Star—would act as police for the time during which the Dance was being held. Thus it was that Stars might police the hunt
[625] and keep order in the camp circle during one such Sacred Dance while Wolves might perform the same duties at another time, depending on which moiety the vower belonged to.

When not engaged as soldiers in connection with one of the Dances, the two societies exhibited the keenest rivalry, particularly in war-deeds, but also in gambling, in foot-racing, and whenever else opportunity offered. One aspect of this rivalry was apparent when each put on its own dance. The general procedure of both was identical but there were a few distinctive features. When the whole tribe was together and there was no serious threat of war, one society or the other would decide the time was ripe to hold its dance. Let us assume that the Star society had so decided.

The members of the Star society would then don their best clothes and, mounted on their finest horses, go around the camp circle accompanied by two especially prominent members who had counted coup against the enemy while on horseback. They would
[533] sing special begging songs in front of the lodges of several well-to-do members of the opposite society. It was a challenge to the Wolf-men and they usually responded in the accepted fashion by giving large quantities of food, in which their relatives would help them out. This would provide the feast at the dance. The Stars then proceeded to the opening of the camp circle and all dismounting except the two very prominent warriors, formed in a line by twos, the four singers with their hand drums last. To the accompaniment of a marching song the line moved "snake-dance" fashion weaving back and forth, to the dancing lodge which had been erected in the center of the camp circle. At the entrance to the lodge the line divided, some going to the right,

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Other features of the program at each performance of the Grass dance included the "punishing" dance, the smoking song, the forfeiture of property, the "throwing away" of property represented by sticks, gift-giving in honor of loved ones. 796 [533 431]

In 1890 changes in the form of the Grass dance began to be noticeable. By 1900 the Grass dance included all in the tribe who wished to participate. The official personnel had been expanded to include four "chiefs," four war-bonnet owners, two owners of ceremonial black dresses, two women whip-owners and two female assistants. Transfer of all offices was, however, carried out as before. 796 178

The dog ritual continued unchanged to be the highlight of the program. Perhaps the most obvious change in procedure was the inclusion of round dances, especially the Ringtail dance, in which both men and women participated and for which "punishing" songs had been devised. The smoking song and the forfeiture of property were retained, but with some elaborations. Although the "throwing away" of property gradually disappeared, the gift-giving in honor of relatives was very much emphasized. Other very minor changes were inaugurated at intervals up until about 1916. [533]

The changing functions of the Grass dance coincide with the changing form and can likewise be considered as of two periods, —the first from 1875–80 to 1890; the second from 1890 to 1916.

In the first period the function of the Grass dance was a relatively minor one. It was adopted, and fitted into place, as a substitute for the simpler and less colorful dance of the Wolf soldier society, and paralleled the dance of the other soldier society, the Star society. In view especially of the preliminary "begging" songs, the Grass dance seemingly was the expression of but one phase of the intense rivalry between the two soldier societies. [575]

With the extinction of the buffalo in 1884 came the breakdown of the older culture. By 1890 not only had most of the public religious rites disappeared, but the social organization was greatly altered. As the economic basis was changed, the nomadic life and the camp circle were abandoned, and the two soldier societies no [182]

8:Flannery E-5 (1940-1948)1960 NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the shots and went later to see what happened, and there I saw her lying across the fire; her dress had burned off and her body was all shriveled. They weren't satisfied to kill her, but they burned her too!" She maintained her attitude and all the scolding from her relatives was of no avail. 159 183 765 [627]

Before turning to her adult life, we may refer to another instance which illustrates Coming Daylight's sensitivity to the suffering of others. In the Sacrifice Lodge, which is the Gros Ventre version of the well-known Plains Sun Dance, one of the important features was the spectacular self-torture which the active participants underwent. Each one had a sliver of wood embedded in the flesh of his chest. To the wood was tied a line, the other end of which was fastened high on the center-pole of the lodge. The man, leaning back so that the line was taut, went back and forth until finally the sliver was torn from his flesh. Meanwhile the women cheered on their relatives by "rattling their tongues," singing war songs, and the like, by way of encouraging the men to be brave and see the thing through. Coming Daylight was quite a young child when she first witnessed this performance. She remembered vividly her reaction when one of the young men, in his exhaustion, went to the center-pole and, putting his arms around it, wept aloud. She was not able to stand it any longer and rushed home crying. Her grandmother was very angry with her for leaving in the middle of the performance, but all the little girl could say was: "Oh, I just pitied that young man," and she could not be induced to return to the dance lodge. We may add here that actually in later years she did not participate in the Sacrifice Lodge even so far as women were allowed to do so. 304 [602] [533] 159 304

The examples we have given are sufficient to show, I believe, that Coming Daylight had developed as a child a very strong set against violence, against painful and dangerous experiences. She refused medicine power from supernatural sources not only because it was dangerous but also because it involved a kind of physical activity which was repugnant to her. She refused to mutilate herself and was extremely sensitive to painful experiences in others. Her actual deviations from the patterns of accepted or approved behavior all tended in this same direction against violence. Her adult behavior likewise was consistent with this trend in her personality. 159

In consonance with her feeling against physical violence Coming Daylight avoided as far as possible the rough-and-tumble play in which brother-in-law and sister-in-law were free to, and indeed expected to, indulge. Other women told with glee how they enjoyed "getting even" with their brothers-in-law by, for instance, pushing them when fully clothed into the river, or dumping bucketfuls of water over their heads when they least expected it, and so on; but Coming Daylight admitted without hesitation that she didn't like that sort of thing and never attempted to retaliate even when her brothers-in-law succeeded in playing jokes on her. Similarly while it was not unusual for women rivals to actively fight over a man, she refrained from such undignified behavior, although it must be admitted that she had enough provocation on at least one occasion of which she told me. She had just married a man who was described by others as something of a gay Lothario. A woman who had been trying to force her attentions on him was furious when she heard of the marriage. She rushed to the lodge and pulled Coming Daylight out feet first, yelling insults the while. When the latter regained her feet she made no attempt to hit back even though the other slapped her and pulled off an earring, tearing the lobe of the ear. Coming Daylight, however, bided her time and soon was able to make an opportunity for an exchange of words with the woman at a big social dance. 159 607 159 578 [535] [626]

8:Flannery E-5 (1940-1948)1960 NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

and, each time he attempted to get to his knees, one of two women who had already reached the scene would strike him on the buttocks with the flat side of a hatchet, making an insulting remark, and both would laugh. Coming Daylight hesitated at some distance from where the other two were gloating over the fallen enemy. When one of them, Woman Chief by name, saw her she ran to her saying: "Why are you standing so far off?" She grabbed her by the arm and pushed a big club into her hand, saying: "He is still alive—you will do a great thing. *Ahe:ya'!*" Woman Chief forced Coming Daylight to strike him.

While both Woman Chief and Coming Daylight closely approximated the ideal for women as faithful wives and efficient workers who gave generously of their material goods to and on behalf of their relatives, they seemingly differed in temperament. Woman Chief was known as a very brave woman, and Coming Daylight was frank in admitting she would never have dreamed of doing the kinds of things for which Woman Chief was renowned. One of the latter's exploits, for example, was as follows. The Gros Ventres and Crow were allies in an encounter with the Piegan. The battle was in full force, but one Crow had withdrawn and was sitting motionless astride his horse at some distance from the melee. Woman Chief, who in contrast to most women was always well mounted, dashed up to the Crow, grabbed his wand from his hand, and rode pellmell into the thick of the battle, counting coups right and left. So brave was she considered in having really risked her life that she was accorded the distinction, most unusual for a woman, of being led around the camp circle with the victorious warriors. Furthermore, so many people came to sing in front of her lodge that she and her relatives, to show their appreciation of the honor, were forced to give away as much property as though she were a man. Judging on the basis of other biographical material, there can be no doubt that she gloried in her reputation and took every opportunity to enhance it. She was one to whom the more violent aspects of Gros Ventre culture were exceedingly congenial.

If we compare and contrast these two women we can say that insofar as the patterns of Dionysian configuration are the basis of the comparison, their behavior exhibits opposite extremes, the one going beyond the average in the direction of the configuration, the other running counter to and participating less than the average therein. Both might be termed deviant personalities in Honigman's sense of the term,[2] one overplaying and the other underplaying modal behavior in these selected patterns. Nevertheless, neither seems to have been a misfit insofar as each represents an extreme of socially accepted or sanctioned behavior within those patterns. If, for instance, Coming Daylight had been completely negative, and refused, say, to carry out at least the culturally defined minimum for mourning, had she, in addition to refusing to mutilate herself for the recovery of her ill relatives, neglected as an adult even the safe and less strenuous means to that end, she would have fallen without the pale, so to speak, and have been a misfit. If, at the opposite end of the scale, Woman Chief had gone further in the direction of masculinity, had she actually gone on raiding expeditions and herself stolen horses from the camp of the enemy, had she learned to shoot the bow and arrow or gun, or had she so much as adopted the vocabulary and/or pronunciation proper for males in the Gros Ventres language, she would have been carrying things too far. She, too, would have been dubbed a misfit.

The Catholic University of America,
Washington, D.C.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

 224 411

ends of the main portion of the sling, and then looped on themselves through a slit near one end. 857

The bull-roarer and buzzer were both well known to the Gros Ventre, but seem to be only children's toys. They were both called nakaa"ta" ("making cold," a name given also to the thermometer), probably from the widespread Indian idea that the bull-roarer breeds wind. The buzzer was made of a foot-bone of a buffalo, with a sinew string on each side, by which it was twirled, and then drawn so as to hum. The Arapaho type of buzzer is the same. The Gros Ventre bull-roarer seems to differ from the Arapaho form. Fig. 26 shows one of two very similar models, both of wood. The small, well-marked head, the long taper and point, and the numerous small notches, mark a distinct form. The sinew string is of about the length of the stick handle. 534 857 524 [821]

WAR.

Men generally went to war on foot, carrying food and moccasins on their backs. While on the trip they did not boil meat, but roasted it. Scouts, called "wolves," were sent out ahead. When these returned, running in a zigzag course, and shouting, it was a sign that they had seen something. If they had seen lodges, they barked like wolves. While they came, the women in the party stood in a row and sang, having made a pile of buffalo-chips. The "wolves" stopped a short distance away, and the leader of the party went to them. They came with him back to the pile of buffalo-chips, where he stopped, and, facing the party, recounted coups. After this, one of the scouts came before them and reported what he had seen. Upon this, all rushed at the pile of buffalo-chips, and kicked them about. If the enemy were near, they would now take off their heavier clothing, such as their robes, and dress and paint for war. 726 [252]

On returning to their camp victorious, the party approached stealthily, and made a charge upon it, often shooting; and sometimes the people in the tents jumped up out of their sleep in the early morning, thinking they had been attacked. The man who had killed an enemy, the one who had struck him first (whether dead or alive), and the one who had taken his gun, were held in about the same esteem. After the return to camp, a dance was made. Drums were beaten; and the women, who were standing in a curved row, danced in a circle toward the men, who stood in a row, and back again. The women carried the new scalps on sticks. If an enemy were killed near the home camp, his feet and hands might be cut off and carried on sticks, like the scalps. During this dance the man who first 727 [554] [554]

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

analogous to the "green-grass" and "young-sheep" and other companies, but having an additional ceremony confined to itself. On the other hand, if the "stars" were not one of the age-companies, it is hard to see with what groups of men they competed. It is therefore not improbable that there formerly existed among the Gros Ventre a star-society, which had a ceremony of its own, and which, while based partly on age in being constituted of young men, was outside and independent of the scheme of the beman"wu, with which it had no, or only indirect, relation, and with whose working out it must in some measure have conflicted. Such a society, which would be a true society in being based on a membership determined by choice, purchase, initiation, or supernatural experience, — in other words, by selection, would be of a type of organization quite distinct from the ordinary Gros Ventre or Arapaho age-company performing in the course of its existence an entire series of tribal ceremonies, but would have abundant parallels in other ceremonial societies on the Plains and elsewhere. Its presence would therefore be readily explainable as an incipient intrusion due to the cultural influence of some other tribe, the chief objection to such an explanation being the occurrence of the star-dance also among the Arapaho, but without a known association with a special society. This suggested character of the Gros Ventre star-society and star-dance fits the facts, but is after all only hypothetical; and altogether the relation of the ceremony to the remainder of the Gros Ventre ceremonial organizations is not yet clear.

The star-dance as formerly held is said to have lasted four days and nights. There might be further subsequent dancing. At the beginning of the ceremony, the dancers went to four places at the camp-circle facing or representing the four cardinal directions, and at each place danced before the tent of a prominent man. The owner of the tent gave away property and filled a pipe for the dancers, after smoking which they proceeded to the next one. After having danced in the four places, they danced in the middle of the camp-circle. This might be in the open air, or in a lodge made of two large tents combined. The singers were four old men, who accompanied themselves on small hand drums. The dancers' wives sat behind these four old men and sang with them. The dancer's relatives at times went to them and danced with them, taking their rattles and temporarily using them. The dancers' bodies seem to have been variously decorated; but they had no distinctive regalia except rattles. These were alike in general character, being loop-shaped, and decorated with gaudy paint and attachments, but there seems to have been no attempt at making them uniform. The dancing-lodge was elliptical, with the door towards the east and a fire near the western end. The singers were at this end, and the dancers near them, in two lines, along the sides of the lodge, facing each other. In dancing

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

they did not stay in one place, but at times moved about. They shook their rattles constantly. They did not sing, but uttered a pressed-out "Hah." Two atsaan (assistants or servants of the dance) attended near the door. They brought back such of the dancers as became exhausted from lack of sleep and left the ceremony. Two men who had fought and struck a mounted enemy while they themselves were mounted, rode on horseback. When they went to dance, the assistants went to them and helped them dismount. If the dancers were inactive, these two men went about among them to make them arise. If the dancers remained on the ground, they struck them with their whips. The spectators outside lifted up the bottom of the tent and looked underneath; or, as the tent was not very high (the lodge being roofless), those who were on horseback looked over it.

The Gros Ventre star-rattles consist of a tube of rawhide, an inch or less in diameter, bent on itself into a hoop three or four inches across, and attached to a stick handle half a foot or more in length. Apparently one end of the tube projects out from the hoop forming the head of the rattle, sufficiently to allow the stick to be inserted. The rawhide is painted, and ornamented with three or five bunches of feathers. The handle is wrapped with cloth, the upper end of which usually is cut into a small fringe at the base of the head of the rattle, while the lower end hangs free beyond the handle. The general outline of the rattle is similar to the Arapaho star-rattle, this having a round or kite-shaped flat head at the end of the handle. The hoop feature is, however, wanting in the Arapaho rattles, which are without a perforation. The Gros Ventre decorations of their rattles — whether feathers, cloth attachments, or painting — are usually crude and gaudy. It seems that the rattles now in use are a degenerate modern form. In the majority of cases the feathers attached are dyed: some are cut from the quill. This indicates a recent modifying influence. Many of the feathers are cut off transversely. This may or may not be an old feature. The piece shown in Fig. 31 has least of the base qualities of these rattles, and is a probable approximation to the older type.

Of some of the specimens to be seen in the Museum, descriptions are here given.

Fig. 31 (50-1783). Handle covered with red flannel, which hangs below the handle about two feet. Fringe of same at base of head, and same forms periphery of head. Rawhide of head painted blue, red on inside of loop. A string appears to have been wound around the head while the hide was fresh, and removed after the painting, leaving radiating white depressions. Head ornamented at top and sides with three bunches of four black-and-white, squarish, half-downy feathers attached by thongs. At the top there is also an eagle-feather. Handle wound with thong, forming at the end a loop to pass over the wrist. The head of this rattle was said to represent a star.

l: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

534
293

Specimen Museum No. 50–1767 has a small rough head and a crooked handle. Handle wound with blue cotton cloth. Two strips of green cloth hang from the end of the handle. No fringe at the base of the head. Head painted yellow-green; on this, eight red spots centred with yellow and bordered with green; on the opposite side, five green spots bordered by red. Three bunches of feathers. Feathers at top, — one eagle; several smaller, dyed violet-blue and yellow, cut off or slit from quill. Two bunches at sides, yellow-dyed and chicken feathers. Places at periphery for the attachment of other bunches.

Specimen Museum No. 50–1806. Handle short, scarcely six inches; head forming a large even circle nearly four inches across. Handle wrapped with blue woollen cloth, chiefly covered by the winding of a red-painted thong; free end of blue cloth more than a foot long. Fringe of three or four pieces of the same cloth at base of head. Head painted over red. Feathers attached in three places, all cut off across, and dyed violet. Two are attached at top, one on each side.

Specimen Museum No. 50–1807. Handle about six inches, head scarcely three. Rawhide covers the stick nearly to end. Two upper inches of covering exposed; below this, handle covered over rawhide with dark-blue cloth; short fringe above; fringe of several strips, about one foot long, below. All rawhide painted yellow; on each side of head, a red line; inside of hoop, about eight blue spots; periphery, blue. Feathers in five places. Top, eagle-feather, white portion reddened, yellow-green stripe on black along quill; three green-dyed cut-off feathers. At each side, below, one or two yellow-dyed cut-off feathers. On each side, still farther below, two or three similar feathers dyed green.

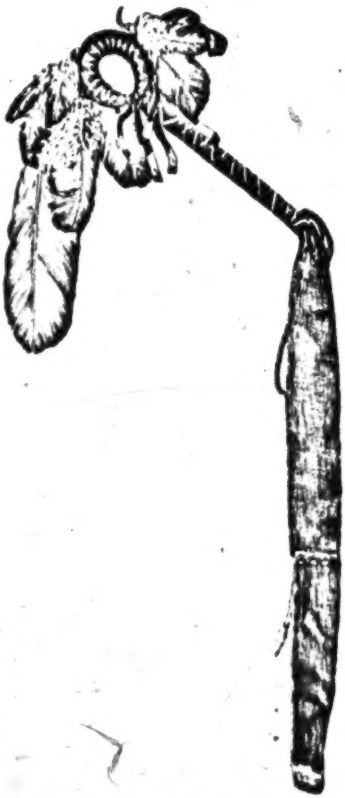


Fig. 31 (50–1783). Star-dance Rattle. Length of loop and handle, 80 cm.

Specimen Museum No. 50–1808 is similar to the last in several details, and was obtained from the same person. Size a little larger than last. Extent and painting of rawhide the same. Handle completely covered with winding of red cotton cloth; no fringe above, two short ends below. At top, bunch of fifteen yellow-dyed feathers cut off very short; on each side, bunch of four (in one case, two) feathers dyed green; the upper portions of quills cut out, the vanes more complete.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

534 The large amount of individual variation within the limits of the general type characterizing these rattles occurs apparently also among the Arapaho star-rattles.

796 In the war-dance as it was held when first introduced, there were two men who had wands representing swords, and several wearing the familiar [293] belts of crow-feathers with tails falling behind and projections at the lower part of the back. As among the Arapaho, these belts are referred to the crow. A drum was used, made of a cottonwood board or slab bent into [534] a circle, covered both above and below with horse-skin, and hung on four sticks. Four drumsticks went with it, one of which belonged to the owner of the drum, the three others to three different individuals. The sides of the drum were covered, half with red cloth and half with blue, and the skin was painted half blue and half yellow. When the men who owned the swords, the crow-belts, and the drum, gave these away, which they generally did at [431] the same time, a dance was held. The new owners, in turn, by giving the objects to their successors, would furnish the occasion for another performance of the dance.

The war-dancers dressed quite variously. Some wore skunk-skin strips around the leg below the knee, beaded, and with small bells attached. Some wore similar strips around the head. Others had the well-known upright head-dress of deer-tail hair. Some carried fans of eagle-tails; some, whips; some, painted sticks with attached feathers. The dancing went on in a lodge similar to that of the star-dancers. The owner of the drum had his tent near this lodge in the middle of the camp-circle, and the members of the dance went to him to eat. If the head man of the star-dancers was popular, he was asked by the rival war-company to pitch his tent in the middle of the camp-circle, near the owner of the war-dance drum. There are said to have been no assistants in this ceremony, nor any old men as singers; but four of the wives of the dancers were selected to sing. The two men [624 with swords (kakaat) had functions similar to those of the two mounted men 626] with whips in the star-dance. They urged the laggard dancers to get up, and, if they fell down, struck them with their wands. If the man thus struck bore the blow like a man, as the Indians call it, the sword-bearer made him a present; but if he became angry he received nothing, and appears to have been looked upon with ridicule or contempt.

The war-dance as at present given is different from the form described. It is no longer a young men's dance, nor confined to a certain group. All the people of the tribe take part in it. It is very similar in general character to the present-day Arapaho crow-dance, as well as in the place it occupies in the life of the people. Among the Gros Ventre it is now the only dance held.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 painting, an old man took the lead, followed by the pledger, and he by the dancers in file. All the dancers carried small hoops ornamented with quill-embroidery and with small feathers. These hoops were carried on sticks. When the old man stopped, the dancers gathered in a circle about him to dance. They took hold of the corners of their robes, and flapped them like wings, buzzing and humming like mosquitoes. After they had done this four times, they lay on the ground on their faces. Beyond the small hoops there seem to have been no regalia. There were also neither whistles, rattles, nor drums used, except that the "grandfathers" each had a leafy branch (as of willow, cottonwood, or cherry), which they shook, rustling it in time to the singing.

[293] [534]

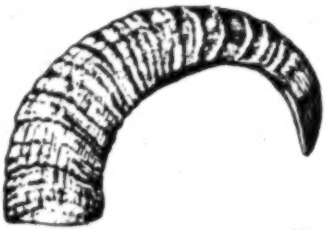


Fig. 32 (50-1839). Fly-dance Horn. Length, 18 cm.

Towards evening the dancers went to one side of the camp-circle, but still outside of it. There they danced. Going west of the camp-circle, they danced there, then to the side opposite to that where they had begun, and finally to the east or opening of the camp. When they had danced four times here, all the people had retired to their tents for the night, and all outdoor work had been done. The dancers immediately started out in all directions, looking for people. If they saw any one, they pursued him until they overtook him. They carried cactus-spines and sharp claws, with which they pricked him. If he succeeded in reaching a tent, they walked around outside, pelting the tent with pebbles. It is said that if the person attacked fanned himself, as he would for flies, the dancers would not sting him. In all their actions in this part of the ceremony, the dancers seem to have imitated flies or mosquitoes. Going about among the tents, they also took meat hanging outside, cooked it, and ate their fill. They also played and ran races until they were tired.

[293]

Fig. 33 (50-1936 a). Fly-dance Hoop. Diameter, 8 cm.

[787] As to the origin of the dance, it is said that once an old man was asleep, when he dreamed this dance. The fly that gave him the ceremony was a mosquito. It directed him to institute the dance, and showed him how it should be conducted.

[293] Fig. 32 shows a small mountain-goat horn, painted over red, used in this dance as one of the implements for pricking or scratching.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Fig. 33 shows one of the small quill-wrapped hoops carried on a stick in the fly-dance. It is about three inches across, and lacks the feathers once attached to it. The hoop is not continuous, but consists of four slightly curved sticks. Each of these is wound with yellow quills, and in the middle with black (really dark-brown) fibres. The quill-wrapping encloses a sinew strand, which passes from one stick to the other, holding them together into a flexible, somewhat four-cornered hoop. At each of the four dark marks an eagle-plume was formerly attached, and in addition an eagle-feather (specimen Museum No. 50-1936b) was hung from the hoop. This hoop was made, for the man from whom it was obtained, at the time he took part in the fly-dance. 796 293

The Crazy-Dance.

The second ceremony, the crazy-dance, corresponds pretty closely to the Arapaho crazy-dance. When it was summer, and the time came to make the ceremony in fulfilment of the pledge previously given, the different bands of the tribe gathered in a single camp-circle. Certain men, leaving this camp, then went out to select a suitable site for the dance. When they had found this, the camp started for the place, while they made piles of buffalo-chips in a circle, indicating the place for the camp. The company about to make the ceremony gathered at night, and, taking a pipe of black stone, went stealthily to the tent of an old man whom they had selected to put up the lodge (that is, direct the ceremony) for them. They entered his tent while he was sleeping, woke him, and handed him the pipe. When he signified his acceptance by taking it, they kissed him in thanks, and made him presents. After he had smoked the pipe, he told them to obtain "grandfathers," which they did. 796

When the preparations had begun to be made, crows and owls were killed by the dancers, because they used their feathers. The dancers' regalia consisted of anklets of badger-skin and of quill-embroidered leg-lets, to both of which four crow-feathers and buffalo-fetlocks, or antelope-hoofs, were attached as ornaments and rattles. Around the head they wore a narrow strip of skin embroidered with quill-work, to which an owl's head was tied on one side. Around their necks hung another quill-embroidered thong, at the end of which was a whistle of eagle-wing bone. A buffalo robe painted red was worn. A round hole was cut in this through which the head was put, so that the dancers did not have to hold the garment in place. The piece cut out for the head was not entirely detached, but left hanging down the back. Two long streamers of skin hung down the back [825] [292] [534]

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

an enemy; and each took from among the property as nearly as possible such objects as he had actually captured in war. One who had stolen horses would take a horse; one who had taken a gun from an enemy would pick out a gun. While this was being done, or soon after, the dancers were dancing, concluding with a race similar to that in the crazy-dance. This marked the end of the ceremony. 796

There were several degrees of distinction in this dance. Two men had crooked lances wrapped with otter-skin. In four places these lances were tied about with small strips of white fur from which a pair of eagle-feathers hung. These lances were called nouçä"ts'ta". Two other lances were straight, and wrapped with jack-rabbit skin. These also bore feathers. A single dancer had a rattle of the globular shape common on the Plains. Half of the rattle was painted red, and half blue; and feathers were attached both to the top of the rattle and to the bottom of its handle. These regalia of honor were given to men renowned in war. A pipe was brought such a man, and if he thought himself entitled to the honor, and was ready to accept it, he took the pipe. If a man felt that others were really braver than himself, or had some other reason, he refused to take the pipe. One informant stated that he had declined the proffered honor because his wife's brother had recently died. The rank and file of the kit-fox dancers are said to have worn belts of prairie-dog skin. How far these corresponded with the biitaha"wu belts of the Arapaho is uncertain. The fur-wrapped crooked and straight lances are certainly similar to the crooked and straight lances indicating the second and third degrees in the Arapaho biitaha"wu. 796 554 293 [534]

Two girls took part in this ceremony. They were girls who were much thought of and beloved by their relatives. One of the dancers carried a kit-fox skin, the inside of which was painted blue. His companion had the rattle that has been described. While he rattled, the other, holding the skin by the neck and the tail, pointed it at the other dancers. These ran off, and this seems to have been the signal for the beginning of the dance. The two girls followed these two men everywhere. Their parents and relatives gave away great quantities of property in the dancing-lodge. Something similar is found in one of the Cheyenne society-dances, in which four young women accompanied the dancers from place to place. 796 857 593 [171]

Nothing was learned about the origin of the kit-fox dance, except that it is said to have been given by the kit-foxes, which is like what the Cheyenne tell of their analogous society. 796

A neck-band of badger-skin is the only object secured said to have been used in the kit-fox dance. To the end of it a tip of whitish rabbit-fur is attached. The lower part of the piece, which bears this rabbit-fur, hangs down the dancer's back. The upper portion, which is about four inches wide, is slit for a distance of a foot. Through this slit the head is inserted. [292]

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 The feathers on this cap all have the quill split nearly as far down as the vanes extend. They are attached to one or perhaps more thongs painted 292 yellow, which form a continuous, or at least virtually continuous, expanding spiral of six or more turns from the centre of the head-dress to about one-third of the distance to the edge. This thong gathers several feathers, then passes for a short stitch through the skin of the cap, not penetrating to the under side. Thus it continues its spiral course, lying for almost its whole length on the upper surface of the cap. The feathers are all attached to it [284] in one fundamental manner, the thong passing through a loop formed by the turning-back on itself of the cut-down end of the quill. But three variations

[634]

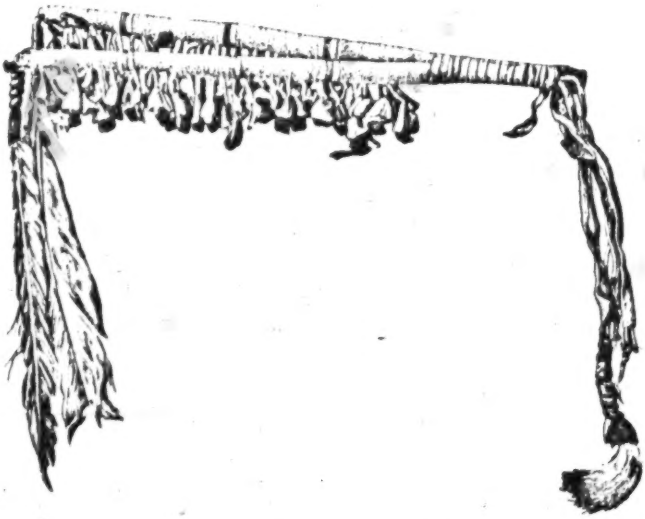


Fig. 39 (50-1789 a). Rattle of Dog-dancer, Highest-Degree. Length, 47 cm.

of this method appear. Sometimes the end of the quill is turned into itself. In other cases the end is bent forward in the same way, but laid over the outside of the quill, and lashed to it with wrapping of sinew. This sinew wrapping, however, is used also with the first method, though it is not absolutely essential. In other cases the end of the quill is bent backward on itself so that its inner side is out, and fastened in the same way. When this is done, a smaller feather has its quill inserted in the sinew wrapping holding the loop of the main feather. Why the quill should be looped backward whenever a small feather is included, and only then, is not clear. The area encircled by the thong with its hundreds of feathers strung on it is only a

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

small part of the surface of the cap. The feathers are long enough to extend beyond the outer edge of the skin as they fall. Two special, slightly longer wing-feathers of the same species of owl are separately attached near the top of the head-dress, on opposite sides, like horns, by thongs passing through the skin where their ends hang loose. These evidently correspond to the two eagle-feathers once mentioned as occurring on the owl-feather caps of the rank and file of the dog-dancers. 796 292

The rattle of the Gros Ventre tsôôyanehin (Fig. 39) is very similar to the Arapaho dog-dance rattles, its most prominent peculiarity being that it is 796 534

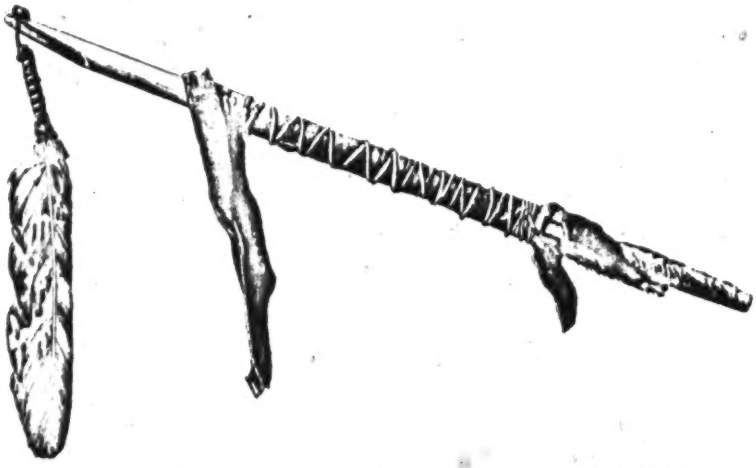


Fig. 40 (50-1789 b). Whistle of Dog-dancer, Highest Degree. Length, 60 cm.

bifurcated. Two sticks appear to have been joined at the handle so as to spread slightly. The sticks, where separate, are incased in skin painted yellow; at the handle they are wrapped together with a flat thong. Across each stick pass three stripes of quill-embroidery, each consisting of a red row of quills bordered on each side by white. At the end of each fork hangs an eagle-wing feather, the base of its quill covered with red cloth. Along the lower side of each fork are the small hoofs that rattle. There are on each stick about thirty-three pairs of these hoofs. Each pair is attached to a yellow-painted thong passing through the skin casing of the stick where this is joined in a sinew-sewn seam. The ends of these thongs pass through holes at the upper ends of the irregularly pyramidal-shaped hoofs. Inside the hoof, the end of thong is knotted around the middle of a little strip of red flannel or blanketing. This prevents the thong from being pulled out

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 of the hoof; at the same time the two ends of the red cloth hang out of the hoof, giving a decorative effect. At the end of the handle the skin casing
● 534 of the sticks emerges from under its thong wrapping, and hangs down free about two-thirds of a foot. Part of this loose strip is cut out, so as to make of the remainder a loop to pass over the wrist. In this cut-out portion are four narrow thongs,— two wound with white quills, two with red. The end of this loop-strip is fringed and quill-wound; a deer-tail, its base covered with red cloth, hangs from it.

The whistle (Fig. 40) is of wood, in which it differs from all Arapaho bäyaa^{n}wu whistles, painted yellow, and two feet long. The end farthest from the mouth is cut off diagonally almost to a point. Here is hung an eagle-feather, its base covered with red cloth. Along the middle portion of the whistle are laid two strips of red cloth, held by two sinew bands and by a long doubly wound thong wrapped with white porcupine-quills. These red strips are not quite wide enough to entirely cover the whistle. The two ends of both pieces hang free. Where the cloth ends on the whistle, toward the mouthpiece, two magpie-feathers are laid along the wood, nearly to the end, their bases being held by the last wrappings of the cloth. One or more small yellowhammer-feathers are also held by these wrappings.

Another dog-dance whistle secured (specimen Museum No. 50-1899) was
[822] said also to have been used by a tsööyanehi. Its only essential difference from the piece just described is that it is painted red, whereas the previous one, like all the regalia which it accompanied, was yellow. The present whistle is one-third shorter, has the yellowhammer-feathers displayed more conspicuously, has a plain instead of a quill-wound thong to hold the red cloth, lacks the red cloth at the base of its end eagle-feather, and has this feather painted over red. All these differences, except that of general color, are either insignificant or matters of proportion.

The Nanī^{n}naha^{n}w^{u}.

796 The fifth dance is known, nearly as among the Arapaho, by the name of nanä^{n}naha^{n}w^{u}. The exact meaning of this term is not known. It is generally translated "soldiers' lodge." The dancers are called nanä^{n}nähä^{n}ts, or hiityäna^{n}süts, which means "those who have war-sticks," the teäna^{n}sö or Arapaho teëox. The lodge was made, as for the other dances, of the two largest tents available, in the middle of the camp-circle, with the door towards the east. The dancers obtained medicine from their "grandfathers" through their wives at night, were painted in the morning, and danced during the day, or, according to another account, at night. In the songs of this dance the buffalo were called, and it is said that the ceremony always resulted

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

in the approach of the buffalo, even if previously there had been none in the vicinity of the camp. 796

The dancers carried representations of war-spikes or tomahawks, which apparently resembled the buffalo-shaped sticks of the first dance of the Arapaho. The sticks are described as being about as long as women's digging-sticks, and, like them, sharpened at one end. The other end, however, was bent. The stick was painted red, and a quill-embroidered strip of skin was wound around it as a handle. A buffalo-calf's tail and a bunch of buffalo-fetlocks, and no doubt other objects, were also attached. The stick was used as a rattle. 796 293 [534]

The conclusion of this ceremony presented a feature not found in the two preceding ones. According to one account, the gifts obtained by these dancers were received in payment from the spectators looking in at the lodge. After four days the camp broke, and followed the dancers. On reaching a place where the property had been laid on the ground, the people of the tribe stood in a long row, facing the east. One of the dancers filled a pipe, and selecting one of the poorest men in the camp offered it to him. When the old man took the pipe, the dancer prayed him to allow that all of his company should strike him (count coup on him). A bed of sage was then made for the old man in front of the assembled tribe. Along the edges of this bed, buffalo-chips were laid. The old man crouched on his hands and knees with his head toward the east, and, like the old man undergoing a similar humiliation in the crazy-dance, was covered with a buffalo robe the hair-side of which was turned out. The dancers faced him in a row and danced, rattling. After four songs they ran to the old man, and one after another struck him lightly, each placing beside him a moccasin or some other object, which the old man, on getting up, kept for himself. Then the dancers' "grandfathers" each picked up one of the buffalo-chips from the edges of the sage, and, when they had prepared them, one of the dancers squatted over each. Then his "grandfather," taking him by the shoulders, motioned with him four times, and the fourth time pushed him down. When they had all sat down, each "grandfather" spoke to his "grandson," telling him, "From now on, you need not be afraid to interrupt a sacred performance. You can talk obscenely to a chief, and no one will say anything to you." The people had been watching this performance, which marked the end of the dance. 888 796 [431]

The Bitahaⁿwᵘ.

As stated, this dance has been abandoned a long time, and very little information was obtained regarding it. Men are alive who have seen it, 796

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 men are named, their female relatives return to their tents, and cook. When
729 they have prepared food, they all together bring a large quantity of it to the lodge. The men selected carry weapons, and are dressed for war. They are usually mounted. Where they themselves or their horses were wounded, [302] they paint themselves. If they have ridden over an enemy, a man is painted on the breast of the horse. When the food which has been brought by their female relatives has been eaten, these men, two at a time, go through numerous performances of their achievements in battle. This is done each day of the dance.

796 A group of men and women, called, like those in the preliminary singing-tent, "prairie-chickens," and therefore probably the same persons, seem to be the singers for the dance. They beat a rawhide in place of a drum, [534] and hold branches, which, at the end of each song, they shake, shouting.

[271] The dancers may not drink water, no matter how great the heat. If [821] one of them is unable to endure, and a pitying relative gives him even only a drop, a thunderstorm follows, and the offender may be struck by lightning, or one of his horses may be killed by lightning. In case it seems necessary for the dancers to drink, a pipe is taken to one of the old men. If he accepts it and smokes it, he goes to the central tree. He wears a robe with the hair-side out. He has a whistle in his mouth, feathers in one hand, and a crow-skin in the other. He strikes the bill of the crow four [789] times, with a downward motion, against the lightning symbol on the tree. A vessel is held against the tree at the bottom of the symbol, and, after the fourth blow, water is said to run out until the vessel is filled, when it stops. This water is given to the dancers, each of whom drinks a very small quan- [787] tity. The actions of the man producing this water are said to be determined by his personal supernatural vision.

After the four days of the ceremony are completed, the lodge is left standing. All the cloth and clothing that have been attached to it remain [789] in place, and it appears that other clothes, especially of children, are left at the lodge. This is done in order that the children may live a long life.

796 From drawings made by a Gros Ventre, it appears that the buffalo-skull is painted with spots, and has its nose and eyes stuffed. Behind it is 532 represented a dancer holding the wheel. He is presumably the pledger of the ceremony. The wheel is bisected by two strings, and has eagle-feathers and down-feathers attached to it. The dancer blows a whistle at the end of which is a plume. The whistle hangs from his neck. At the back of the head is a plume. Lines of paint proceed from his breast to his wrists and ankles. On each of these are four diamonds, two on each upper and lower arm, thigh, and calf. If this is a correct representation, the Gros Ventre use at least one style of painting that is like the most typical Arap-

726 626 latter and raise his leg in imitation of a urinating dog. All would know then on whom Eater's displeasure had fallen, and the young man in question would break down and sob. That would cure him of laziness."

726 312 Among the important duties on a war party were those of the water-carrier. If the mission were to be performed under more than ordinarily dangerous circumstances, young men might volunteer for the job, but usually the leader chose someone for it. A water-carrier had to have courage and resourcefulness because in order to fetch water it might be necessary that he be sent long distances without guard, and then have to catch up with the group in case the rest had to move. When the members of the party [482] [534] [533] sighted the water-carrier returning successfully bearing the skin water-container attached to a pole, a song was sung by the war party as they marked time by beating two sticks together.[3]

726 Scouting was another important aspect of a war party. The leader selected two well-qualified men for this job. "They had to have courage and endurance for, while scouting, they would run instead of walk and not eat until their mission was completed." Scouts were called "wolves" and wore wolf-skins as insignia and [714] sometimes, at least, would stick brush on their heads so they could not be so easily spotted against the horizon.[3] They went to high [533] places to look around. If the enemy were not in sight, they might sing, making up words to the tune mentioned as having been sung before the party left camp.[4]

If the scouts saw indications of the enemy, such as smoke rising from a coulee, but without actually seeing the enemy sufficiently clearly to identify them, on their return to the party they gave a wolf howl as they approached and proceeded in a sharp zigzag path. If, however, they had more definite information, they gave the wolf howl and approached in a circular path; that is, advanced, turned in a circle, advanced again, turned in a circle, advanced again, turned in a circle and halted. They were then met by two older men who had been successful scouts in their day. While the [533] scouts were approaching—occasionally looking back over their

[3] Recorded as No. 130.
[3] For illustrations, see Curtis, v. 5, p. 176.
[4] Samples of this kind of song were recorded as No. 23 and No. 24.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

776 bätĕ, "he (who) has gristle (tendon from back of neck of animal) nose," and "black hawk," a certain very large black-feathered hawk known also locally as "bullet hawk" (*Buteo sp.?*). Another name for Bha'a was "old man four parts of the earth." Bha'a, the thunderbird, as was appropriate, had dark or black feathers, and was a swift flier; his bill and feet were of the same material as back tendon (see Blood-Clot Story, No. 11 in Appendix).

778 776 796 In the Gros Ventre Sacrifice Lodge, or "Sun dance," Bha'a was represented near the top of the center pole as a bird, painted black, with a buffalo tail fastened to his head as a sort of plume, with a zigzag line descending from the bird almost to the ground and ending in a fork, and with a bunch of branches stuck in the fork of the center pole of the lodge to represent Bha'a's nest. Each [302] of the dancers painted all over in white had a bird representing Bha'a, painted in black with charcoal or paint on his upper center breast, with black zigzag lines ending in a fork from the bird's wings down each arm and forearm and from the bird's feet down each thigh and leg to his ankle, with a black zigzag line forked at each end across the forehead, and with a vertical red zigzag line forked at the lower end extending down from each eye. The drum-head used in the Feathered Pipe rite had a red background [534] on which the Thunderbird was represented in blue, with a yellow zigzag line on either side from the head to the wings. Bha'a entered prominently into both the Sacrifice Lodge and the Feathered Pipe rite.

776 835 Any large strange animal might in the olden days be called Bha'a or even be looked upon as an embodiment or theophany of Bha'a.

One supposed theophany over which the present day Gros Ventres laugh heartily, is recorded on the occasion of their seeing their first mule. The story as told with verve and intense amusement by The Boy was as follows:

"The Gros Ventres used to move around a great deal. Once a mule, the first one the Gros Ventres had ever seen, got lost somehow, struck the Gros Ventres' trail, came to their camp and stopped. A Gros Ventre crier spied it and came back to camp

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

783 Flat Pipe. It was dried before being used for ritual purposes. In
824 the olden days the Flat Pipe keeper and co-keeper had monopolistic control of it in curing. But nowadays a peppermint beverage, good for fits, spasms, and stomach disorder, is used by everybody.

The ritual number of the Flat Pipe is three, whereas that of
788 the Feathered Pipe and the Sacred Lodges is four. Songs are
801 sung three times, ritual gestures are in threes, and so forth. The old people when sitting around smoking socially used often to discuss the reason for this. Some held that Earthmaker sent only three animals down to dive for earth, because, for one reason at least, there were only three animals in the Flat Pipe bundle. Others held he sent four. But regardless of these opposing views on this point in the earthmaking, there was always complete agreement that the Flat Pipe ritual number itself was three, while that in the Feathered Pipe and Sacred Lodge rituals was four.

The musical instrument proper to the Flat Pipe ritual was the
788 rattle (see Plate 1C). The drum, proper to the Feathered Pipe
● 534 ritual, was not used. In the Flat Pipe ritual, the rattle was shaken clockwise in a sort of circle at breast height, whereas medicine men shook their rattles anti-clockwise and Star Dancers alternately back and forth.[1]

788 It may be added here that while the Flat Pipe was actually
276 smoked only when it was being ritually transferred to a new keeper and when some individual had vowed to smoke it, and was never danced with, smoking the Feathered Pipe and dancing with it were common.

788 Among the more significant and more commonly recurring features shared by both the Flat Pipe and Feathered Pipe rituals were clockwise movements, singing, and the use of paint, buffalo chips, and of sage, tobacco, larb, and wild parsley.

Entering and leaving the keeper's lodge, ritual gestures, and so forth were consistently clockwise.

788 Singing bulked large in the Flat Pipe rite, and, for that matter,
in nearly every phase of Gros Ventre religious and social life. As
533 Thomas Main put it speaking for himself and The Boy: "We cannot describe how much singing means in the lives of the Gros

[1] For description of Star Dance, see Flannery, 1953, p. 42.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

covering it. When they talked to the image, they prayed for whatever they wanted, but did not mention Bha'a. Whom the image represented is not known: probably Bha'a, but this is uncertain. 778

In recent times, the last real keeper, Curly Head, had danced with the image, contrary to all the ritual rules. Curly Head is consistently reported by informants to have been very careless as well as poorly informed about the ritual and other observances connected with the Feathered Pipe keepership.

The face when exposed was apt to look different to different people on any one occasion as well as to the same person on different occasions. To one man the face seemed not to want to look at him; it "kind of turned away and sweated." To another observer, a woman, it appeared as "a rock that had two shining eyes." Al Chandler had seen the face three times. On each occasion it had a different expression: on the first it looked as if it were "smiling, sort of bashful;" on the second, "kind of sad;" on the third, "sad." On the one occasion on which his wife, Cora Chandler, had seen the face, it "seemed like it was looking away, and wouldn't look at her." 778 532

According to Al Chandler, if the face smiled, this was an omen that "everything was going to be good;" if it "looked in the opposite direction, something not good" would happen. According to Garter Snake, if when the keeper saw the face, it had paint on it, there would be plenty of food, no sickness, and so forth; if it had no paint on it, there would be sickness or other misfortune. 778 787

The whistle, of wood ("of an unknown kind of wood," according to Garter Snake), was given the first keeper from above. It was kept without wrapping in the Pipe bundle. 778 [534]

The owl in the bundle was the skin of a big owl, painted up, with few of the feathers still attached. The body was wrapped leaving the head and neck sticking out. This owl skin was apparently of modern introduction. According to Al Chandler, when a new keeper took over the Pipe, he could add to the bundle whatever he was told "by a voice" to add; Sitting High said he was told by God Himself to put that owl in the bundle. Sitting High used to talk a great deal to the owl. The owl's duty, accord-

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

788 exceptionally chewed in contrast to the Flat Pipe peppermint. A
824 bag, painted red all over, about a foot square, and fringed on three sides but with no beading or other decoration, now hangs with the
[415] bundle and served, Al Chandler thought, as a container for the dried sweet pine needles.

802 The ritual number of the Feathered Pipe, running all through the songs and ceremonies, was four, from the days of the first keeper down to most recent times.

534 The musical instrument used to accompany the songs was, likewise from the time of the first keeper, the drum. According to
778 Garter Snake, the first keeper's drum was painted half black to represent black [storm] clouds and half red to represent the earth. According to Al Chandler, the present drum, about 16 inches in diameter and two inches deep, has a figure of a thunderbird
[532] painted in blue on the drumhead against a red background, to represent Bha'a, with zigzag yellow lines from either side of the head to the wings, to represent lightning. A long string is tied to the drum. The drumstick is painted red, the distal end being covered with buckskin "stuffed with something like cotton." Curly Head, when keeper, never used the drum, or even took it out of its covering in which it hung next to the bundle, but Sitting High used it regularly with the songs.[8]

788 According to Garter Snake, the first keeper had somebody make him a wooden bowl, which still hangs with, not in, the Pipe bundle,
778 but we obtained no information on its type or use. She also stated that the first keeper had a "gourd rattle" or four rattles, but Al Chandler never saw any rattle kept or used with the Feathered Pipe, and no other informant mentioned such.

[782] The Feathered Pipe, like the Flat Pipe, was smoked, in fulfillment of vows, but very rarely. More commonly, in contrast with the Flat Pipe, it was danced with, earlier only by the keeper, in recent decades by others.

788 General ritual features common to the Feathered Pipe and Flat Pipe,—clockwise movement, singing, the use of paint, of buffalo chips, and of sage, tobacco, larb and wild parsley,—have

[8] The drum used in the 1951 rite was apparently undecorated. See Plate 2 C. [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Other pipes, some at least of them "Beaver" Pipes apparently, 778
were specifically mentioned by our informants. There may be some duplications in the following listing.

The pipe owned by Roasted-in-the-coals, or Roasted-under-the-fire was called asti:θibie:tsa (meaning not obtainable). It was buried with him. It had two big rattles with it about 6 to 8 inches [534] in diameter. After he died, these rattles were brought to Crow Bull, Coming Daylight's maternal uncle. He kept them quite a while, but, perhaps because they did not belong to the Flat Pipe which he owned or because he had had a dream about them, he decided to put them away, and had his wife Iron Woman and his niece Coming Daylight dispose of them. They were camping on the Missouri River at the time. The two women dug a kind of tunnel in the bank just big enough to hold them. Coming Daylight pitied these rattles because they were not even wrapped. So she took her robe and wrapped them in it and prayed to them: "Have pity on us. I pity you because you are not even wrapped up. I take my robe to wrap you. You are poor like orphans." And so the two women put them away.

Coming Daylight's father also was keeper of a pipe, but only for a short time as he was killed in war, not long after getting it. When her father first received this pipe, he was not grabbed without warning, as new keepers of the Flat and Feathered Pipes were. The wives of her uncle, Crow Bull, made a big lodge for her father and put this pipe on a tripod in front of it. Then Crow Bull went to his sister, Coming Daylight's mother, and said: "Go in your lodge. This lodge is yours." So her father and his two wives moved in. Her mother had children at the time and so was not co-keeper, and when the babies cried she would take them out of the lodge. Instead her father's other wife, who never had any children to Coming Daylight's knowledge, was co-keeper. The pipe's place in the big lodge was opposite the door. When [602] Coming Daylight's father died, her mother's brother, Crow Bull, took over the pipe. This pipe, with most of the wrappings removed to lessen the weight, and wrapped in a small bundle with rawhide, lashed around near either end and with a thong handle, was taken by Crow Bull to the war called by the Gros Ventres "When

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

a circle and sang a wordless song, while "other men and women danced up and down in one place behind the old women singers." 785 796*

The vower would start his "dance" by reaching back and tearing off his shield, and in doing so, of course tearing the skin over the skewer in his back. Then with the bone whistle he carried round his neck he blew "a rapid whistle," "a sort of trill," "as if he were blowing on a flute,"—this as a sign he was ready to go through the rest of the ordeal. Then while the singers "sang hard for him," he danced with both feet, pumped up and down, and swung around, pulling and jerking and backing on the taut thongs attached to the center pole in order to tear the skewered flesh of his chest and to free himself. Sometimes the flesh would not break, or the flesh on one side of his chest would while that on the other would not. When the ordeal would go on very long, and the suffering would be extreme, and the dancer might be exhausting himself, some one of the onlookers might have pity on him and say to a bystander: "You go and tear him loose." He would then go and push and throw the "dancer" hard so the skin would break off. The Boy and Thick knew one case where the skin on one side of the "dancer's" chest would not break off even by such pushing and throwing; so they had to cut it with a knife. People thought that the darker a man's skin was the tougher it was and this last man had very dark skin. "Sometimes the dancer's skin was so tough it would stretch way out like a shirt." When a "dancer's" skin would finally break under the pulling and backing he would just fall over to the ground and the thong would spring back round the pole. Then he would be taken back and laid down and the loose skin would be trimmed off. These trimmed off pieces of skin would be gotten together by the ritual grandfathers who would take them to the buffalo skull (at the base of the center pole), hold them up, and then lay them on top of the skull, "as an offering of the very body itself." [534]

"Some 'dancers' did not have much nerve and would wince and flinch. Some didn't bat an eye." At one dance, Coming Daylight told us, one young man after the thongs were attached and pulled "just burst out crying, it was so painful. After that he went to the center pole and put his arms around it and cried there. I [152]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Two young men attendants were chosen, but there was no police force, according to The Boy who said none was needed in the case of these "harmless" and "venerable" old men dancers. In general, The Boy had the impression that people had not cared much what these old men did in their Dance and did not go to it much, for it had "no color to it, nothing lively about it." 796* 888

The dance lodge,—a "very simple little hut" according to The Boy and Thick; a "big round camp" according to Coming Daylight, —was put up outside the camp circle, toward the south thereof. The dancers carried out their rites "sort of secretly." They could be heard singing and dancing inside their lodge, but they did not go around much in public view afterwards as the women did in their Dance. The rattles used to accompany the singing were sticks about a foot or foot-and-a-half long with big buffalo calf hoofs on one end, and were very noisy. The leader's stick was larger and its butt end was pounded on the ground to keep time. 796* [534] [533]

Two of the Dance songs, numbers 67 and 68, were recorded as sung by The Boy. Number 68 was sung while the old men were dancing and contains their particular yell.

The other song, number 67, has the words meaning: "You first (or leading) (buffalo) bull, come in this direction (come streaming in)." This song was a "half-prayer." The singers while singing it were wishing as hard as they could, so there would be plenty of buffalo and thus the people would not have to go far to hunt successfully. The very first original buffalo procreated other buffalo and singers wanted him to lead the other buffalo, his progeny, to the Gros Ventres. The wish-thought or "half-prayer" was directed, however, according to The Boy, not to the first buffalo, but to the Supreme Being so that the latter would provide buffalo.

The primary purpose of the Dance was pretty clearly that of bringing success in buffalo hunting. After the dance was over, the camp would move to another site, and then the people "would always run into a lot of buffalo and have good hunting luck." "Even if there were no buffalo nearby when this Dance had been going on, in some mysterious way many buffalo would come and even run around in the camp." Right after the very last time the Dance was performed, the people ran into a great many buffalo. [224]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

just want you to join and be a little calf in this dance." "I don't smoke," Coming Daylight replied. Her grandmother then spoke up. "My grandchild, take that pipe. There isn't anything bad about it. Just take it. If you take it it might give you long life . . . and luck in receiving gifts and things. . . . We don't like to turn it down because it belongs to life. . . . This dance all comes like concerning life, and when you get painted [in it] you have a long life. . . . You are going to be asked to dance with these women. You must try to do everything well they want you to do. You must dance good." And so she accepted, for there was nothing else to do, and when she was being painted in the dance, she prayed for the things her grandmother used to tell her to pray for,—a long life and easy acquisition of food. And she concluded: "Here, I have gotten a long enough life, so long I stagger around when I try to show how they danced!" 796*

In addition to the girl "calf" or "calves," there was also a "bull calf" (or "bull calves?"), a small boy chosen to take this part.

No men entered the ceremonial lodge during most of the dance, except two (or perhaps only one) old men singers who sat with the chief vower and the "boss" at the back of the lodge and sang. The two had no drums, but instead each of them had a deer-claw rattle, similar to the Crazy Dance rattle, but "taller and with larger trimmings." The two men and two women sang, all four together, while the other participants danced. The task of these men was solely that of singing.[39] [534]

Two other men, younger men chosen from among the most prominent and most handsome of the Stars or Wolves, served as "hunters" of the women on the last day of the dance.

Each of the "cows" had her own headdress made like a war bonnet, but smaller, with feathers of all colors,—yellow, blue, red and so forth,—and with a bunch of feathers hanging at the nape of the neck. Coming Daylight's grandmother had belonged to the Women's Dance; when she got too old to dance herself she let her daughter-in-law use her headdress to dance with and when [522]

[39] In 1948 The Boy said that no men sang, and that the only male participants were the two "hunters." Lame Bull acted one time in that capacity. [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

782 837 Following is The Boy's account gotten from his father, Lame Bull, and given to us in 1939, with slight additions, in parentheses, from his quite similar account given us in 1945:

"This custom disappeared when Lame Bull was a small boy [hence, about 1832-35]. He remembered it distinctly, although he had seen it only once, in his early boyhood. The crier went around saying to everybody: 'Get ready everybody, after sunrise tomorrow morning, to see who is the woman most faithful to her husband.' The custom was carried out only once in a great while. A group of older men, not real old ones but those still active, would get together and agree that the test should be carried out.

"The very first thing the next morning, the crier went around and announced: 'This is meant for *every* married couple, old and young. Put on your best clothes. Start right away.' Then two of the biggest lodges in the camp circle were put together to make a two-lodge tent. After it was put up, the crier announced: 'Everyone come from every direction to the center-lodge.' All came, dressed up, especially the unmarried young men. (The young men before the test witnessed by Lame Bull had made it up among themselves, to get up and say publicly, 'That woman is lying,' should any woman get up and dance whom they knew to be lying about her fidelity.) (They had a brush shed at the front of the double-lodge, and the flaps of the lodge were raised so that more people could fit in and look on. The women had to sit inside. The only men inside were the singers and musicians, some standing and beating drums, others seated with their hands under the elkskin in front of them.) The singers sat in a circle with a big tanned elkskin in the middle, and each singer had two human shin-
[534] bones, one in each hand, and both shin-bones were notched saw-like with a series of notches. There were several pairs of these bones. When the singing began and the drum holders beat their drums, the bone holders sawed with the bones under the elkskin. A weird noise was made by the sawing together of these bones invisible to the onlookers.

"Before the singing began, one man got up and told the women what the affair was about and the procedure in it, so that they would understand: 'The men are going to sing four times. If not a single woman gets up and dances and uncovers the human bones

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

supernatural power is present would, in so far, be positive "magical" practices, or else negative ones, "taboo" proper. The great number of such observances and avoidances, treated elsewhere—are here omitted or else touched upon only summarily. We shall list first acts done, and after that acts avoided. 784 789

To bring cold or a cold wind in winter time, a bull-roarer was whirled, or a buzzer, made of a dew claw with two holes in it, on a string, was revolved. Children were not allowed to use the buzzer. Plucking a bird to bring a north wind was not known to informants. [534]

As soon as the first thunder of spring is heard, blow on any warts you have and they will come off.

The Gros Ventres, when aware someone was trying to bewitch or poison them or when they were going to visit another tribe, especially the Cree, would rub themselves with sweet pine needles and these would make them proof against witchcraft, poison, or other harm.

The shoulder-blade of an unborn buffalo-calf was hung up "so that buffalo would continue to exist."

Many acts were to be avoided lest undesirable consequences should follow.

If you touch a mole, a rash like poison ivy will result. The widespread belief among northeastern Algonquians that seeing a dead mole brings bad luck is however, lacking. If you touch a toad, you will get warts [European influence?] If a spider is killed, rain comes. [797]

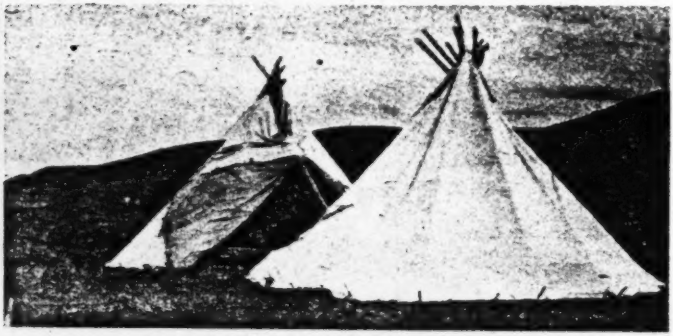
Do not eat the meat of the rare albino buffalo, else your hair will turn white. Children should not eat buffalo testicle, raw or cooked, lest they wet the bed; infants not yet able to talk should not eat puppy meat, lest they be a long time learning to talk. Young women of childbearing age should not eat the two strips of flesh, called the "twins," running along the backbone [tenderloins], lest they have twins, nor the colon of buffalo, for the same reason.

Horses should never be abused: such was the caution given to the founder of the Drum Dance by the drum men leader when the latter presented him with the stallion and other horses.

C

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

346
796



A. *Double tipi for ceremony.*

[301
782]

B. *The Boy prays with ordinary pipe.*

[516
534
778]

C. *The Boy smudges rattles over Flat Pipe hearth.*

PLATE I

[p.425]

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

of the society. The officers were free to transfer their ceremonial 575
equipment to other members whom they would select. Following 796
the typical Gros Ventre pattern of transfer of ownership, the
recipient would present as lavish gifts as he could afford to the [431]
donor while the relatives of the recipient showed their appreciation of the favor to their kinsman by giving away expensive gifts in his honor. All of this took place publicly at the dance.

Particular dances and songs were attached to each office and the owners of the ceremonial drumsticks were required to know in correct order all the numerous songs and to provide the musical [533]
accompaniment for the whole ceremony. These four drumstick owners were joined in certain of the songs by four women singers selected from among the wives of the Wolf-men. The owners of the various objects were responsible for the proper care thereof, the crow-belts and the drum receiving most respect. When not in use, the crow-belts were kept wrapped in special bundles in the [841]
lodges of their respective owners, but were hung outside when the [784]
owner's wife was in her menstrual period. Moreover, those who [833]
danced wearing the crow-belts were obliged to refrain from sexual [782]
relations for two or three days previous to the dancing and, before donning the belts, to make a smudge of sweet-grass to incense themselves and the crow-belts. The drum, too, received special attention. One informant speaks of it as having been "nicely [534]
decorated," and we know from Kroeber's description[9] that the trimming was very similar to that of the Assiniboine Grass dance drum.[10]

Procedure. The actual dancing took place in a special circular 346
dancing-place in the center of the camp circle. This "corral," as 796
it was sometimes referred to, was constructed from several lodge covers, but was open at the top and the entrance thereto was at the east. The tipi of the drum-keeper was put up nearby. Opposite the opening of the "corral" was the place of honor where [554]
sat the officials,—with the exception of the sword owners, who with their assistants were at either side of the entrance. The 000

[9] Kroeber, loc. cit., p. 238.
[10] Lowie, R. H., The Assiniboine, AMNH-AP 4, pt. 1, 1909, p. 67.

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 178 [688] sing a song out of the prescribed order, the "chiefs" would stop them at once, announce the mistake and what fine was to be demanded of the singers. Were the four women singers performing at that time, they too were penalized.

[534] The owners of the drumsticks cooperated with the owner of the drum whose special duty it was to care for this instrument and to have it in repair and ready for use at any time it was needed.

The concepts pertaining to the crow-belts, spoon, fork and whistle remained unchanged. The owners of these regalia treated them with the same respect as of old. Additional ceremonial equipment had been introduced in the form of four feathered war-bonnets, two of which were owned by men and two by women. There was a special little ceremony connected with the two bonnets owned by women. Early in the dance two outstanding warriors were selected to take these bonnets from their owners, dance four times around the rack where they were hung in front of their owners, and then hand them to the first two women sitting at the left of the door. When it was time to dance these women would don them and wear them throughout that dance, then pass them on to the next two, and so on, until everyone had had a chance to wear them.

796 178 624 Finally, there were two announcers, one who called out what he was directed to say by any of the men, and the other who publicized any statement to be made on behalf of the women.

All of these individuals were considered as office-holders in the Grass dance and, as formerly, each was free to transfer the office [622] to anyone he considered suitable to succeed himself. There was no regular term of office even for the "chiefs" and the transfer was described as purely voluntary. Apparently, however, there was a certain amount of consultation among the officers, when one of them decided to transfer his office, in order to agree on a well-qualified successor. Among other things it was necessary to consider the financial status of the individual, especially for those to take over the higher offices. Not only did the recipient heap property upon the donor, but according to the older pattern too, [431] the relatives of the recipient would give away horses and so on

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

others to the left forming a circle inside the dancing-place where 796
they sat. The two prominent warriors, having been assisted in 575
dismounting, took up their places, one on each side of the entrance, holding whips in their hands. It was their duty to rouse any lagging dancers, whipping them if necessary. Each member had his own rattle, of peculiar shape but painted with individual designs, which he waved about as he danced. The wives of some of the dancers joined the four singers in singing certain of the dance songs. Two of the youngest members acted as *atsa'an* (waiters) tending to the fire, getting water, and so on. Occasionally during the dance a woman relative of one of the partici- [431]
pants would rush up to him, throw down a blanket or some other gift in his honor, grab his rattle and dance for a short time. Members of the other society did not join in the festivities or partake of the feast, in spite of the fact that most of the provisions for the latter had been donated by some of them.

At some future date, however, the Wolf-men would agree that the time was auspicious for them to have a dance and " get even " with the Stars. They would of course have their own songs, sung in front of the lodges of prominent members of the Star society, but otherwise the procedure was identical, including their accompaniment by two outstanding warriors, the " snake-dance," the arrangement of the lodge in the center of the camp-circle, and so on. The Wolf-men differed from the Stars in their actual dance [534]
in that they did not have rattles and in dancing seemingly intended to portray wolves, placing one hand on the forehead and the other at the back to represent the animal's tail.[14]

The adoption of the Grass dance meant merely that the more 796
elaborate dog ritual, with its regalia and greater degree of organi- 575
zation, replaced the dance of the Wolf-men although the begging 178
preliminary and so on remained the same. So far as we can see, at the time of its adoption, the Grass dance was a case of pure substitution and one that fitted readily into the cultural situation. First of all, according to Lowie's information, the Assini-

[14] I am deeply grateful to my colleague, John M. Cooper, who generously placed at my disposal his field notes on the Wolf society.

575 the marching song was sung.[17] Upon reaching the entrance of
796 the enclosure, which had been constructed in the middle of the camp circle, the double column parted, and filed around the inside of the enclosure and took their places. The noted men bearing whips, having been helped in dismounting, took up their positions at either side of the entrance, and the musicians carried the drum to the center of the enclosure where they provided the music for the dancing.

The dance of each society was distinctive. The Stars carried
[293] rattles, each designed by its owner,[18] which they waved about, as they danced. The Wolf-men did not have rattles or any special paraphernalia of the kind, but symbolized wolves as they stepped about, one hand at the forehead, and the other held behind to represent the tail.

575 These dances with their preliminary "begging" expeditions were not put on regularly, but at the discretion of the societies.
535 A time would be chosen when the whole tribe, or most of the bands thereof, were together, when there were no Sacred Dances in immediate prospect, and when there was no apparent danger from the enemy. If these conditions prevailed, one of the societies might proceed, singing loudly: "Harden your hearts, Wolf-men (or Stars)," meaning, "be prepared to give."[19] Not immediately, but some time later, when auspicious conditions again prevailed, the other society would "retaliate."

These dances were purely social. In between times members belonging to one would compete with members of the other in horse-racing, hand-game gambling, "bragging contests" recounting conquests in love and war—each trying to out-do his opposite number.

Sometime between 1875 and 1880 the Wolf-men adopted the
[177] Grass Dance from the Assiniboine. Thereafter this Society was sometimes called the Grass dancers.[20]

575 The Boy was under the impression that the Stars and Wolf-men

[17] Recorded as No. 102.

[18] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, pp. 236–37, with illustration.

[19] These songs were recorded as Nos. 93, 94 for the Stars.

[20] Kroeber, 1908, p. 238 describes this dance as the "war-dance." For the adoption of the Grass Dance and subsequent history of the two societies, see Flannery, 1946, pp. 39–70.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

down blankets and whatever he had to give and then his relatives and friends started putting down things to help him out. All those who are going to dance have to put things down. Nobody has to pay who is not going to dance. It cost Jim and his relatives plenty. Old Sitting High, the keeper, wouldn't keep all that stuff. He would give it out to his relatives and friends. I got a horse. The keeper is cleared out. His relatives have to help him lots when he gets the Pipe and then when he has the ceremonies he gets paid and then gives that stuff to his relatives to kind of pay back and in the long run they are not out anything. The more ceremonies the quicker they get their stuff back. Of course they don't figure on it, how much they will get, but that is the way it looks." 796*

According to Al Chandler, our chief informant on the ritual of the Feathered Pipe dance, only the Pipe itself was danced with. According to other informants, other objects in the bundle—the feathered stick and owl—were danced with. We could not clear up the point. Perhaps dancing with the feathered stick or owl was a separate rite, or else a latter (after ca. 1905) development of the Pipe dance rite.

According to Rufus Warrior, the dancing consisted in swaying of the body, rather, or more, than in movement of the feet. [535]

After the dancing was over, the bundle was re-wrapped and re-tied. Then came the terminal feast with food provided by the vower and his relatives and served by the "waiters." Lastly, the co-keeper took back the bundle to the keeper's lodge.

Our informants were in clear agreement that a person could vow to smoke the Feathered Pipe, but Garter Snake could recall no instance of such smoking, and Al Chandler had never witnessed such, although he had been told by Sitting High that it had been done. Coming Daylight, our oldest informant, stated that "lots of people" had smoked the Feathered Pipe, and that it was smoked much oftener than the Flat Pipe. Seemingly the rite, not so infrequent prior to the 1870's, was later given up. We could obtain no details on the ceremony, but no doubt the rite followed the general pattern: offerings and sweat-lodge; unwrapping, songs, re-wrapping; and terminal feast.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

that the rites and observances to be described include all or at least the main features of it, although many details may be lacking. In general, the pattern was a comparatively simple one, and, while certain sacred elements were present, recreative elements, fun-making, and a sort of Halloween spirit were decidedly to the fore. 796*

The young fellows had a dance lodge of their own, apparently outside the camp circle. To this they brought plenty of food to provide a feast for their ritual grandfathers. After the grandfathers, or one of them, had made a smudge and offered a prayer, they painted the youths. The painting was done privately, without spectators. The smudging and praying, including perhaps the painting, were sacred. From then on the dance was secular.

After this religious part of the dance was over, the grandfather [probably of the chief vower] left the dance lodge with the young fellows, and, choosing a proper spot, started the first dance and song. The Flies formed in a circle with the grandfather in the center. He held his robe spread out, like insect wings, with his outstretched arms, and started chanting "Yo ho." The Flies then chanted "Yo ho, yo ho, yo ho," a number of times, and, crouching over danced in a circle jumping up and down on both feet together. The "song," number 65, recorded as sung by The Boy, was wordless, and more a sort of chant than a song proper, and ending with a buzzing sound. There was no accompaniment of drum or rattle. At the end of the dance the Flies all of a sudden fell over, lay on the ground face down, and hummed and buzzed like a swarm of flies (or mosquitoes). 535

This whole dance performance was gone through at four spots around the camp circle, to the north, east, south and west in succession.

According to Coming Daylight the ceremonial grandfather, [522] standing in the middle of ring of dancers, would play jokes on them, throwing buffalo chips at them. According to The Boy and Thick, the Dancers themselves, either then or after breaking up, would throw buffalo chips at one another.

After the fourth dance, to the west, the dancers would disperse and would with sticks, to the end of which cactus spines were attached, stick anyone they could reach.

31 Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

●535 Then they all went back to their lodge. And so the Fly Dance ended.

Women's Dance

*796 This dance was called benohtcao'wa. None of our informants knew the meaning of the first element of the term. The Boy thought it might possibly be related to an "old-time" Gros Ventre word for "smudge making."

The Dance was held at least twice, and perhaps oftener, during the childhood of Coming Daylight, and was last held when The Boy and Thick were small boys, too young to remember much of what they saw. Our chief informants on it were: Coming Daylight who had participated in it on two occasions as a "calf" and whose memory of many details was quite clear; The Boy and Thick who had learned something about it through personal observation, and from their elders; and Singer, a contemporary of Coming Daylight, who had witnessed it more than once. Our information supplements Kroeber's account considerably, agreeing with it in most details, but differing in some others, especially regarding personnel and regalia.[48]

As previously noted, the Dance was originally a gift from the buffalo but no origin story is known; the dancers impersonated buffalo and their performance brought buffalo for the hunters to kill.

Coming Daylight was quite positive that the Dance lasted four days or four "nights." Like the other Sacred Dances it was held in the warm weather period. According to Coming Daylight it was held once every summer.

This Sacred Dance was the only one which women could vow and only women, older or elderly ones at that, could vow it or participate in it as dancers proper. The Women's Dance was performed only in fulfillment of a vow to the Supreme Being, made by a woman. One such Women's Dance in which Coming Daylight had played the role of "calf" had been vowed by a woman "for her husband so that he would not get killed in war." He did

[48] Kroeber, 1908, pp. 260-61.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 These were fastened to the center pole "at the top," so that it was "full of goods that they offered." The offerings were made by "those who made the dance." Such an offering was made, for instance, by the woman above-mentioned who joined the dance for the recovery of her wounded brother. As at the Sacrifice Dance, too, when the Women's Dance was over and camp was moved, the lodge, center pole and attached offerings were all left just standing there.

*796 302 The dancers, the two attendants and the "calf" or "calves," were painted, by the "boss" (and perhaps by others),—the dancers at least, "all over the face, then on top of the hair and down the hair hanging to the shoulders." During the painting the one painting would pray for the other being painted, and the latter might pray on her own account for whatever she desired, such as long life, medicine power, or other favors.

*796 533 Of the songs sung during the Women's Dance we recorded only one, number 66, a wordless one, sung by The Boy. The singing was done or at least led by the old man (or two old men) who sat at the back of the lodge, and was apparently (the point was not cleared up by us) joined in by the chief vower and "boss," and also by the "cows." The singing was done to the accompaniment of the deer-claw rattles mentioned previously, and without the drum. Those dancing did not sing while dancing. "The singing in the Women's Dance," The Boy remarked, "sounded 'old,' quite different from the way a young woman sings." To Coming Daylight's ear "it sounded fine."

*796 535 The dancing went on, not continuously, but intermittently, with intervals in between. Dancing was done by the "cows," attendants, and "calves," not by the "bull" who just sat in her place near the door with her horned headdress on and her head bowed down. The participants danced toward the back of the lodge, "kind of bouncing up and down in one place and shaking their heads from side to side." Coming Daylight, as a "calf," danced with the rest, near the door. According to Singer, the dances were done in series of four, as told her by one or two of her grandmothers who had been through the Women's Dance, and, if any of the "cows" did not get up to dance, the "bull" would "get busy" and "start

[523 831]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

535 796* 522 831

to jump on them," simulating copulation, to the amusement apparently of the other "cows." Whether the chief vower and the "boss" took part in the dancing is not clear,—more probably they did not.

Intervals between the dancing were given over to smoking, chatting, feasting, and fun-making. In more modern times at least the women smoked for pleasure. The dancers were each expected to bring food to the dance, and feasting was an important element, the singers at the back of the lodge faring particularly well. During these intervals, too, the women would play all kinds of tricks on one another, such as taking some woman's belongings and hiding them. They would have "lots of fun," "laughing all the time" and "making lots of racket."

796* [276] [522]

Apparently it was customary for relatives of dancers in the Women's Dance, as in other sacred Dances, to give away presents to third parties in honor of the dancers.

[431]

The more public and more spectacular episodes of the Women's Dance, as of the Sacrifice and Crazy Dances, occurred on the fourth and last day. To these features we now turn.

The "cows" and the "bull," all wearing their headdresses and accompanied by the "calves," left the dance lodge and went in a bunch to look for water in the creek and to drink. The "bull" followed to the rear, herding the "cows," and if one of the latter started to stray she would be punched back with the herd. Part of the time at least, the "cows" were "bent over, dancing like animals, and going on hands and knees." The "bull" would run after different "cows" and "jump on them," in mimic copulation. Coming Daylight, as a "calf" was told to follow one of the "cows" as her "mother" and try to nurse, but the "bull" chased her away when she approached her mother. In general, the "calves" were supposed to keep to the side, out of the way of the "bull."

796* 535 831

After the drink at the creek, came the pantomime buffalo drive. The two "hunters" (cf. supra, p. 245) would make a fire outside the camp circle up-wind from the women, and as the women got the smell of the smoke, the "hunters" on horseback drove them, as in a real buffalo drive, and shot the "cows" or some of them with blunt arrows that did not hurt. The "cows" who had before-

796*

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Dance (Sun Dance), for example, was given in that very year 182
and, so far as our data go, but one Crazy Dance was held after 796
that. The seasonal Flat Pipe rite was discontinued. Furthermore there was a breakdown in the socio-political life. The necessity for nomadic life had disappeared and as a consequence there was no longer need of policing the hunt or keeping order in [575]
the camp circle when the whole tribe gathered so that, with the further establishment of peace, the raison d'être for two rival soldier societies was gone.

In the transition period the missionaries were trying valiantly to fill the gap in religious life but did not offer a satisfactory [797]
solution for the social situation; nor did the Agency which had become the center of the new economic life. It was the Grass dance, which as we have seen survived in a somewhat changed form, that seems to have filled the void left in social life.

In its earlier form the Grass dance was purely social in nature, 796
as was the Star dance, but the latter faded away while the [535]
former attained a position of heightened importance. One of the factors accounting for this fact seems to be that the Grass dance "had more to it," as our informants put it. The performance of the dog ritual was certainly far more spectacular than the simpler dance of the Star society and, in addition, it had semi-ceremonial connotations reminiscent of other features of the older Gros Ventre culture which were lacking from the Star dance. For example, the owners of the regalia in the Grass dance were likewise officers of several degrees of importance therein, as was the case in the performance of the Sacred Dances. Again, sex abstinence was required before dancing with the crow-belts as it was [784]
before participating in the Sacrifice Dance (Sun Dance) and before dancing with the Feathered Pipe. Ceremonial incensing of persons and equipment had been a marked characteristic of Gros [783]
Ventre religious life. The formal transfer of office and regalia duplicates the pattern of transfer of office of Pipe Keeper, transfer of painted lodges, and so on. Recounting of war deeds was frequently demanded in connection with many aspects of Gros Ventre life,—to validate the giving of a name, the erection of a

8:Flannery E-5 (1940-1948)1960 NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the shots and went later to see what happened, and there I saw her lying across the fire; her dress had burned off and her body was all shriveled. They weren't satisfied to kill her, but they burned her too!" She maintained her attitude and all the scolding from her relatives was of no avail. 159 183 765 [627]

Before turning to her adult life, we may refer to another instance which illustrates Coming Daylight's sensitivity to the suffering of others. In the Sacrifice Lodge, which is the Gros Ventre version of the well-known Plains Sun Dance, one of the important features was the spectacular self-torture which the active participants underwent. Each one had a sliver of wood embedded in the flesh of his chest. To the wood was tied a line, the other end of which was fastened high on the center-pole of the lodge. The man, leaning back so that the line was taut, went back and forth until finally the sliver was torn from his flesh. Meanwhile the women cheered on their relatives by "rattling their tongues," singing war songs, and the like, by way of encouraging the men to be brave and see the thing through. Coming Daylight was quite a young child when she first witnessed this performance. She remembered vividly her reaction when one of the young men, in his exhaustion, went to the center-pole and, putting his arms around it, wept aloud. She was not able to stand it any longer and rushed home crying. Her grandmother was very angry with her for leaving in the middle of the performance, but all the little girl could say was: "Oh, I just pitied that young man," and she could not be induced to return to the dance lodge. We may add here that actually in later years she did not participate in the Sacrifice Lodge even so far as women were allowed to do so. 304 [602] [533] 159 304

The examples we have given are sufficient to show, I believe, that Coming Daylight had developed as a child a very strong set against violence, against painful and dangerous experiences. She refused medicine power from supernatural sources not only because it was dangerous but also because it involved a kind of physical activity which was repugnant to her. She refused to mutilate herself and was extremely sensitive to painful experiences in others. Her actual deviations from the patterns of accepted or approved behavior all tended in this same direction against violence. Her adult behavior likewise was consistent with this trend in her personality. 159

In consonance with her feeling against physical violence Coming Daylight avoided as far as possible the rough-and-tumble play in which brother-in-law and sister-in-law were free to, and indeed expected to, indulge. Other women told with glee how they enjoyed "getting even" with their brothers-in-law by, for instance, pushing them when fully clothed into the river, or dumping bucketfuls of water over their heads when they least expected it, and so on; but Coming Daylight admitted without hesitation that she didn't like that sort of thing and never attempted to retaliate even when her brothers-in-law succeeded in playing jokes on her. Similarly while it was not unusual for women rivals to actively fight over a man, she refrained from such undignified behavior, although it must be admitted that she had enough provocation on at least one occasion of which she told me. She had just married a man who was described by others as something of a gay Lothario. A woman who had been trying to force her attentions on him was furious when she heard of the marriage. She rushed to the lodge and pulled Coming Daylight out feet first, yelling insults the while. When the latter regained her feet she made no attempt to hit back even though the other slapped her and pulled off an earring, tearing the lobe of the ear. Coming Daylight, however, bided her time and soon was able to make an opportunity for an exchange of words with the woman at a big social dance. 159 607 159 578 [535] [626]

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

525 *Narrative 1.* In 1893 two Gros Ventre, enemy friends to each other, Red Whip
572 who died in 1912 and Many Tail Feathers, got into a gambling game with the wheel.
578 Many Tail Feathers was losing and he got angry. He grabbed Red Whip and they
538 had a rought-and-tumble tussle. They fell to the ground, with Red Whip on top, astraddle Many Tail Feathers. Red Whip drew his knife, cut off all of the other's hair, at which loss the latter cried while the people cheered a cheer of contempt. Red Whip acting as if he had scalped an enemy, threw the hair in the air, and said in the hearing of all: "What's the matter with you, my friend? You must have a weak heart. Look at me. This is what I did to my enemy [such and such a time]. You know all about it. I just wanted to show you that I am your superior in matters of this kind. But anyhow you can have that good horse of mine."

[115] *Narrative 2.* Lame Bull, father of The Boy, our chief informant on gambling, died in 1908 at the age of 83 or 84 years. Lame Bull, when still a fairly young man, a rising one with prospects of rising higher and higher in the prestige scale, had been chosen as an enemy friend by White Owl, an older man, and Lame Bull had, according to custom, accepted the offer. An offer of enemy friendship was on the one hand almost mandatory, and on the other, where it came from an outstanding man of great experience and ability, as in this case, it was a real honor to the recipient and would rarely be refused.

When Lame Bull and White Owl became enemy friends, they "started to act like two roosters" and were saying to themselves: "I am going to get you when you are off your guard." Both knew that at some time or another, sooner or later, they would have to do something to put their enemy friendship to the greatest test. After much sparring around, the two men engaged in a wheel game as just such a climactic test. At this game White Owl had a big reputation (besides all his other accomplishments), while Lame Bull had no reputation at all at it.

On this occasion Lame Bull wagered everything he owned, and all his wife's property, including their lodge. As it was customary at such events for the kinsmen of the respective players to bet on their kinsman, Lame Bull's father, together with other relatives wagered large stakes on him, although the father was strongly opposed on principle to such betting and had always counseled Lame Bull strenuously against it. More, however, than large amounts of property was at stake; the players' relative and absolute standing in the tribe hung upon the outcome. In the case of Lame Bull and White Owl, the former a younger man of great promise, the latter an older one of recognized prominence, the rivalry was keen and, in a very true sense, ruthless. The older man was jealous of his great reputation and did not want any one to get near him in prestige. He was trying to crush Lame Bull's rising career betimes lest later Lame Bull might outdo him. At the same time, White Owl stood to profit even if he lost, for he would still be attached as enemy friend to Lame Bull and would have reflected prestige from being the enemy friend of this rising man. He would thus profit inevitably by the latter's prestige.

Lame Bull lost everything in the contest, and, of course, his father and relatives lost heavily. White Owl's people tore down Lame Bull's lodge and took it away as winnings and took everything in it, even down to the dishes of Lame Bull's wife. At the end of the playing, Lame Bull was an object of charity and a laughing stock.

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

About the only thing that earned him a bit of recognition was the fact that in spite 525
of his loss of property and of status—to have recognition at all you had to have some 572
possessions to hold and to give away in presents—and in spite of the strutting and 578
crowing and twitting by the winner and his followers after the playing was over, 538
Lame Bull did not lose his temper.

When the playing ended, Lame Bull had nothing of his own except his wife. So his father and mother invited them to eat. Downcast, embarrassed, ashamed, "feeling like a small potato," he ate. When he had finished, his father gave him such a tongue lashing that Lame Bull, who was very fond of his father, cried, and Lame Bull was a strong man who did not easily cry. He felt so bad that he went out on the hills and cried and cried, and slept out there, and came back a pretty sorry young man. And for a long time after, his wife, who also was one of his enemy friends, would throw this up to him: "Oh, you are nothing. You were always weak. Look what your enemy friend did to you. You will never amount to anything." And she would say such things to him especially when others were present. So she set about training him. At any rate Lame Bull was cured of gambling by his great loss to White Owl.

As time went on, Lame Bull recovered from the defeat which might have wrecked for good the career of another. His people had given him enough property to make a new start in life. He would invite White Owl to his lodge and give him big feasts and would make valuable presents of horses and such things to him. And White Owl would make a mental note of these things and would say to himself: "All right, my friend, you wait and see what I will do for you", awaiting the proper time to reciprocate, as was Gros Ventre custom. So a long time afterwards White Owl made very valuable presents to Lame Bull. And they were very good friends.

Narrative 3. Long ago, the story runs, a young Gros Ventre warrior went off 525
alone on a war raid. He got to a mountain, and after nightfall went into a cave 648
to camp overnight. On feeling around in the darkness he found some one else 538
there, and said to himself: "An enemy." To make sure he asked by touching the skin of the other's forearm. The other by wiggling his finger on the Gros Ventre's chest signified: "I am a Snake Indian." So the Gros Ventre took the Snake's hand and made the sign of "big belly" to signify: "I am a Gros Ventre."

The Gros Ventre then said to the Snake: "Let's not fight tonight. You go to sleep and I'll go to sleep. Tomorrow morning we'll see what we'll do." But being afraid of each other, neither slept at all during the night.

The next morning the Gros Ventre asked the Snake: "Friend, where were you going?" He replied: "On the war path." "Alone?" "Yes, all alone." The Snake then asked the same questions and got the same answers. Then the Gros Ventre said: "We are both alone. Instead of killing each other, let's gamble with the wheel. The loser loses his scalp to the winner."

So they started to play, with such things as bow and arrows and clothing for stakes, and the Snake won everything from the Gros Ventre. Then the Gros Ventre proposed: "Friend, you stake all you have won, in a lump, against my scalp," and this was agreed upon. At this point the Gros Ventre got afraid he would lose, so

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

525 he prayed to I'tcibiniąt'a, the Supreme Being: "Have pity on me, so I may beat
648 this man. I'll make a Medicine Dance when I get back home." And as he prayed,
538 he took his arrow and the wheel, and put the arrow on the winning bead of the wheel, and prayed to the Supreme Being that when the wheel was rolled it would fall just that way on the arrow. So when the Gros Ventre rolled the wheel, it fell as he had prayed it would, and he won back all that he had lost.

Then the two men started all over again, and this time the Gros Ventre won everything from the Snake. So the Snake in turn proposed: "Friend, you stake all you have won, in a lump, against my scalp." They played again and the Gros Ventre won.

The Snake then said: "Now you have won my scalp. Tie my head around [at the level of the forehead], then take your knife and cut, and pull off my scalp. And after my scalp is off, go to that hill yonder and wave it at me and sing. Then you go back home and I'll go back home." All this the Gros Ventre did. But before leaving, he said to the Snake: "My friend, you came from a long way off. So did I. It is bad enough that you have lost your scalp. So I am going to give you back some of your things that you'll need on your way back home." So the Gros Ventre gave him back his robe, moccasins, bow and arrow, and knife, saying: "You'll need these."

3. *The 2-Button Hand Game*

525 The wheel game, as played and gambled on in really big contests by outstanding enemy friends, was in some respects the supreme gambling game of the Gros Ventre. It was supreme at least in the intensity of interest it aroused as a spectacle and supreme in the value of what was won and lost, not merely the great amounts of property wagered, but, still more, such prestige and status or loss thereof as could make or break the contestants' careers. On the other hand, as regards everyday popularity, frequency of use, and range of participation, first rank in the gambling complex was held, it clearly appears, by the old 2-button hand game, the predecessor of the modern non-gambling 4-button hand game. In the following pages we shall use the term "hand game" without qualification to designate this earlier pre-Ghost-Dance hand game proper.

The hand game could be played at nearly any time. There were no set occasions for it, though some were more favorable than others, especially intertribal gatherings. Commonly a game started just with some one proposing: "Let's gamble." So somebody would go to the nearest bush and cut the required twelve sticks, each about a foot in length, for counters. Sometimes the bark would then be peeled off the sticks and the ends thereof squared, but this was not necessary. Then agreement was reached on what would serve to hide as the two required "buttons"—such as a bit of "sun-shell" off an earring for the "short" button, and an end of horn off a bracelet for the "long" button. There

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

long, more or less serpent-shaped, being with pointed snout and tail, and with a horn or two horns in its forehead. It lives in its lodge under water, is occasionally seen, snatches bathers or swimmers, and carries them down to its underwater dwelling. Drowned persons are supposed to go to or to be captured and held by the water monster in the after-life. The people made offerings to the water monster or to its youngest offspring, the Last Child (see p. 15), when crossing rivers and on other occasions.

There is a close connection between Bha'a the Thunderbird on the one hand, and these water and earth monsters on the other, but they are quite distinct. During storms the Thunderbird may strike a monster and carry it away as game food up into the clouds to its own mountain-top nest. There is no explicit note of hostility toward the monster.

The following story may illustrate ways of the water monster and the Thunderbird's habit of preying on the water or earth monsters.[11]

When The Boy's father, Lame Bull, was a young man, in the 1840's, three young Gros Ventre younger than Lame Bull,—two of them relatives of Lame Bull,—had gone on a war party down toward the Yellowstone River. The Boy told the story: "They ran before the oncoming storm to take refuge among the rocks on a knoll. When they got within about 100-150 yards of the knoll, lightning struck. All three lost consciousness for a moment and, when they came to, were facing the opposite way. They turned around to go to the rocks on the knoll. As they did so, they saw a cloud right over the knoll and heard a noise as of a struggle going on in the clouds. The cloud started to rise and as it left the ground they could see something hanging down from the cloud, with its head in the cloud. As the cloud went up higher, they could see that the something was some kind of monster, with colors like a snake and striped. The cloud rose higher and higher, seeming to be taking a great monster out of the knoll. Finally the lower end of the monster came into view, struggling as it were. The struggling monster was immense, snake-like in build

[11] Cf. also Kroeber, 1908, pp. 278-80.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

776
539

with a tapering tail. The cloud kept going straight up, the three young men waited until it had disappeared from sight up in the sky and wondered where it was taking the monster. Then they looked toward the spot out of which the monster had been pulled and they saw smoke and blue flame there and smelt a bad odor. They tried to coax themselves to walk up close to the spot and get a good look at it. But one of them said: 'Don't go. Something might happen to you. You can go if you wish. I'm going way round this spot.' He left and the others later joined him without going close to the spot."

Singer had heard the following story and knew the principal actor. "Some men on a war party went to a stream and noticed that the water was disturbed by something rolling,—a water monster with a horn in the middle of its head. All were scared except one, who said: 'I am scared of nothing. That is why I came on a war party.' He shot the monster right in the forehead and it whirled like a top. They took it out of the water. It had one horn. They thought it was the being who owned the stream. The others in the party thought this deed would shorten the brave killer's life. But he lived to be a real old man."

Cora mentioned the following incident: "My uncle on one occasion went out hunting for game in the Sweet Grass Hills. A violent storm arose and while he was loading the meat on the horses, lightning struck close by. The people say that the thunder pulls big 'bugs' called thunder bugs out of the earth or water. My uncle saw this bug as it came out and went wriggling up and up, until finally he could not see it any longer. You can see the holes in the earth from which the thunder bugs come."

Coming Daylight told of her own experience: "After a storm, the people used to go out and look for traces and I once saw one of these ditches. The thunder is supposed to be some kind of a big bird and it goes way up on top of the highest peak to eat these bugs it pulls out of the ground. The old-timers saw one place where the thunderbird had eaten one of these 'worms' and there was nothing but the bones of a great big 'bug' lying there [fossil vertebrate remains?]."

"A water monster was once seen in the Milk River by a small

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

boy. He was so scared, he went insane and died in a few days," 776
according to The Boy. 539

One story we gathered is about a very big rattlesnake, "as big as a person," big enough to eat a human being and leave only the skeleton. It had a large shining horn. Where it traveled it made a great bare trail like a modern road. It was horned, but was not of the water or earth monster "species." It was shot dead by a young man whom it had molested with murderous design while he was out in the hills crying and sleeping to obtain supernatural power.

In one story, the following, told by Singer, it is not clear whether there is question of a gigantic horned snake or of an earth monster proper.

"Near the head of Snake Butte there is a big cleft which runs all the way to the bottom. The cleft is said to have been made by lightning striking there. My husband Ax Handle [Assiniboine] was there and looked. He thought he saw something and looked again. It was a great big snake with a horn on the top of its head. He was scared and ran away." [823]

A somewhat conspicuous, though very human, role in Gros Ventre ritual and thought was played by the Last Child, idaːsθa, (itasé, "lastly," itasünna, "last;" -tha, "child" [Sifton]; apparently meaning "last child born in a family"). He was the little water snake, offspring of the water monster who figured in the story of He-who-starved-to-death (see No. 5 in Appendix). The Last Child had power in water, sharing to an undefined subordinate degree in the power of his father, the water monster, who was ruler under the water. He, alone or together with his father, was prayed to or given offerings, when the Gros Ventres had to cross rivers or lakes or when they swam or bathed in rivers or pools, lest they drown or be snatched down by the water monster. Early in World War II when a batch of Gros Ventre recruits was about to leave for overseas duty in the Pacific he was prayed to to protect them in crossing the ocean. In praying with a pipe, the Gros Ventres always held it up first to the Supreme Being, but lastly down to the Last Child. In food offerings, the Last Child was invited, last in order, to partake. In the sweat lodge he was mentioned 776 776 782 [484] 776

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Child, and made offering of tobacco and food to earth. Al Chandler explained: "The earth is put in because that is where your living is. You get everything from the earth, fruit, animals, everything to live on, and get everything you eat from there," although ultimately it is the Supreme Being who owns and gives everything. We got one passing casual reference to "mother earth" by Mary Ereaux, and another by Tom Main to earth as being a "spirit" and having a "special keeper," but obtained no later confirmation of or detailed information on these points. In general, earth seems to have played a quite subordinate role in Gros Ventre religious thought and ritual. 776 823

The sun was appreciably more prominent, ranking according to some informants next to the Supreme Being, and mentioned as "The One Traveling," or "Passing or Traveling Man" immediately after him in prayers. Another current seems to have assigned a much lower relative rank to the sun, and mentioned sun and moon together, as "Those-who-follow-each-other," and after the Supreme Being and the Four Holy Old Men. In any case the sun was in no sense identified with the Supreme Being, but was his property, work and servant, far below him in dignity, and had not anything like the religious predominance it had in such tribes as the neighboring Blackfoot. The sun did not enter at all into the so-called "Sun Dance" of the Gros Ventres, nor into the Feathered Pipe rite. Prayers and food were offered to the sun, and the sun was invited to sweat in the sweat lodge rite along with but subordinately to the Supreme Being. Individuals would offer a finger joint or bits of their flesh to the sun on such occasions as the grave illness of a relative. While the sun "sees everything, that's why the Supreme Being put it there," the Supreme Being, not the sun, was appealed to as witness in oaths; the widespread American Indian oath formula, "The sun sees me," was not used. 776 821 [755] [695]

The sun and moon were, according to myth, brothers from the same mother, but were never human beings proper, though they married, the one a frog woman and the other a human female. According to one story, the sun regularly appeared in battle as a man riding a white horse who scared and helped either the Gros [773] 776 821 539

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

776 Ventres or the enemy. According to another, the sun on one
821 occasion delivered seven Gros Ventre men, to be killed by the
[539] Crow, into the hands of a Gros Ventre woman captured by the Crow, so the woman claimed. Apart from the incidental inclusion of the moon, bracketed with the sun, in prayers and in invitations to sweat as above stated, there was no specific independent moon cult and in no case, according to our informants, were sacrifices ever made to the moon. Nor, so far as we could discover, was there any star cult, though the stars, or some of them such as those constituting the Great Dipper, the Pleiades, the Bear were seemingly looked upon as in some sense "spirits" or personal beings. In the archaic era, before the flood and Ni:hohat, people used to go in the morning to get fire from the morning star, "the cross," just as in modern times the old people
[372] used to go in the morning to get a live coal from a neighbor's hearth instead of using matches. The morning star served also as a "clock." When people were planning to get up unusually early in the morning they would be guided by its position in the
[805] heavens. Someone in the lodge would be told: "Go out and see if the cross is up yet."

776 Among the beings involved in prayers and invited to sweat, after the Supreme Being, were the "Four Old Men," currently referred to by English-speaking Gros Ventres as the "Four Holy Old Men." According to Singer and Coming Daylight there were also, it appears, "Four Old Women," but this statement was not independently confirmed by other informants.

Very little is known about these Four Old Men. The Boy had more than once asked his father about them, but Lame Bull could only say that the Gros Ventres were taught by Ni:hohat to call on them in praying and sweating but that the people did not know who they are. They lived in the very beginning of things, but whether before or after the flood, is not quite clear. They were
776 not human beings. Gros Ventre belief does not associate them with the four winds or cardinal directions, but, vaguely, with the
801 sacred number four, the four "ridges" or stages of full human life, and the four great floods or other great catastrophes or revolutions, of which the first was the primeval flood, that are to occur,

774 In general, apart
775 from the ghost helper and gambling power complexes, to be
[769] described later, no cult of ghosts existed, and no prayers or food or other offerings were made to them. Ghosts of those who had committed unjustified murder, as defined by the Gros Ventre code, did not go where the other souls went, but stayed where their bodies lay or wandered around and "bothered" the living.
[753] If a person suffered a stroke, a ghost, apparently of a murderer, was thought to have caused it and to have twisted the victim's face or mouth and pulled the eyelid down.

Ghosts "bothered" the living in less serious ways, appearing
775 in the shadow and disappearing, whistling, playing tricks, in more
539 recent times rapping on windows, and so forth. The two following stories, told by The Boy in light vein and laughingly, illustrate ghostly ways.

"A war party of brave Gros Ventres started out.[24] Toward evening they came to a timbered stream and made a lodge of willows near a good-sized tree, not knowing that a couple had been buried there. After a good meal, they were singing and enjoying themselves, when they heard someone hollering far off. The hollering kept coming closer and closer to their camp until it got very near. One of the men said: 'We had better start up a fire.' Before anyone got up to fetch wood, wood began being thrown into the tepee. This kept up until the tepee was so loaded up with wood that they were crowded out. They then started to carry the wood out of the tepee. One man remarked: 'I never heard of a ghost killing anybody.' Then they heard the ghost laughing a little distance off. One of the men shot toward the spot from which the laughing was coming, but the ghost laughed all the more. All the men then got back inside the tepee, and one of them said: 'I'll get some wood and we'll make some tea.' A good fire was started, and the old fellows prayed with the pipe. The ghost was meanwhile moving the embers away to keep the fire from burning. Before the snow was fetched to be melted, snow fell from the open center top of the tepee and put the fire out. At this they got scared and said: 'Let's move from here.'

[24] In 1948 The Boy remarked that this happened in Lame Bull's life time; and that the ghost referred to in the story is the kind known as tsë:k. [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

All of them, bunched close together, ran away, and they could hear the ghost laughing. They shot at it but it laughed all the more. When they got a good distance from their camping spot, they could still hear the ghost laughing behind them, and it only quit bothering them when they got far away. Whenever a war party came close to this spot, it would be bothered by that ghost, whose name was 'Hole-through-his-penis.' So the Gros Ventres quit camping there."

775
539

The second illustration was given as follows: "On one occasion, during the lifetime of Lame Bull (The Boy's father), a number of Gros Ventres went off on a war party and camped at an old abandoned winter camp on the Missouri River. They made a shelter frame of old tent and travois poles. One of the men went out some distance, gathered wood and lit a fire and started to cook meat. The night was very dark. Something started throwing sticks at him every now and then. He thought to himself: 'My friends are trying to test my courage,' and paid no attention. The sticks began coming too frequently. He said to them: 'You better quit throwing at me. You might hurt me. You can't scare me.' They said: 'We're not throwing at you.' The sticks came faster. So he ran back to the shelter where the others were, rushed in and hid behind the leader of the war party. They all got scared then and piled up in a struggling heap close to the leader until he was pinned under them. 'Let me up,' he said, 'I'll see what is scaring you and deal with that thing.' The ghost poked in a cross piece of a travois and scattered their fire. While still piled up in a heap they heard a voice laughing outside and seeming to go away. They at last got straightened out and fixed up the fire, but still could hear the ghost laughing. One of the men, Chief Grass, said: 'I'm going to kill that ghost.' He then rolled some buffalo hair around the head of an arrow, singed it a little and spat on it,—his way, it was believed, of using his power. He then shot the arrow in the direction where the laughing could still be heard. The voice was at once silenced, and they were not bothered any more that night. 'I believe I killed that ghost.' Chief Grass said, 'at daylight, I'll look around.' The next morning they looked around and found a bleached human skull with the arrow of

[778]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

775
[539]

Chief Grass in one of the eye sockets. So it was always thought that he had killed that ghost."

There was a considerable fear of these bad ghosts who "bothered" or even seriously harmed human beings. Certain other ghosts were merely "earthbound," that is, they lingered around or came back because they were fond of their belongings—clothing, footwear, and so forth—which were buried with them. Such earthbound ghosts did no harm to human beings and were not supposed to be feared.[28]

Singer, then married to Crooked Arm, told of an occasion on which she ran away from her home. She wandered around at random and happened to stop at the spot where her sister was buried, and heard a voice [presumably her sister's] saying: "Just lie quiet. They are all looking for you." She did so, apparently without fear.

One informant, Al Chandler, narrated certain experiences of his early childhood and boyhood that suggest a somewhat deviant attitude toward ghosts. When he was about four years old, his mother died, and the morning after her burial he went to the grave and lay there, falling into a profound sleep. Not long after this, when his uncle died, and the body was laid on a bed in a lodge some distance off, he went to the lodge and crept under the blanket covering the body and went to sleep. Another time, while still very young, he got lost and around dark found himself at a place where there were a number of old graves. He lay down and slept the night there. These incidents were early childhood ones, when he hardly realized the meaning of death. At a later age, during his boyhood, everybody was afraid to go along a certain bit of woodland lest the ghosts bother them. Al wanted to find out for himself. So against advice of his father, and feeling a little "spooky," one night just after midnight he went through the stretch of brush and as he did so heard a sound behind him as of someone dragging a robe over gravel. Mustering up his courage he turned around quickly and saw a big old owl dragging its feathers and scarcely able to fly. When he got back home, he told his venture, and the old man [his father] laughed and said: "Owls

[825]

[28] For illustration, see Flannery, 1953, p. 203.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

"nothing compared to the Supreme Being." At an eclipse of the sun the Gros Ventres were much afraid; for they thought that the sun was covering himself and that Atsa: would come around. To ward him off on the occasion of a solar eclipse, the Gros Ventres in recent times would load their guns and shoot up in the air, and so make so much noise that he would be scared away. Then they would all laugh, feeling that they had gotten the best of him. Atsa: also functioned as a bugaboo. When Thomas Main was a boy his parents used to tell him: "If you don't behave, Atsa: will get you." Atsa: was afraid of skunks, as the Gros Ventres of several generations ago learned from the following incident, related by The Boy.[28]

776
776
821
539
731
776

"In the days of Gopher and Prairie Dog Old Man, Atsa: declared war. At that time the Gros Ventres were very numerous. There were only twelve bands but they were so big and there were so many people that when the children played around they would get lost and could not find their way home. When the crier walked around and made his announcements, after only one circle around the camp he was hoarse and was tired from walking. A large part of Gros Ventres went off on a war raid to the east to fight the Shoshoni, Assiniboine and Sioux. They got a little below the confluence of the Milk and Missouri Rivers, and saw two corpses wrapped in good blankets up in a tree. So they cut the bundles loose and dropped the bodies to the ground. The blankets, of white-man make, were a novelty to the Gros Ventres at the time. The men unwrapped the blankets and cut them up for leggings.

"That same night one of the Gros Ventres took ill. As the night wore on he got worse and worse. The men began to suspect: 'These two must have died of smallpox.' The sick man died after sun-up in the morning. They became panic-stricken. 'Sure enough,' they said, 'that's smallpox.' They decided to rush back to the main camp.

"On the way back every night one or more men died. Only a few got back alive. Most of the party died on the way back. When

[28] The incident probably is part of the tradition of the smallpox epidemic of 1780. Cf. Flannery, 1953, p. 34.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539 the survivors reached home and told their story, the people were excited. The old people said: 'That is a bad sickness. It all but kills off the tribe once it starts.' The criers announced to the people: 'Scatter in all directions. That is the only way to combat this sickness.' So the bands scattered in all directions. A lot of the people died, some even before camp was broken.

"One band went up Milk River. One man of this band who had a big family studied what he should do. He decided to go off secretly from his band. He had plenty of meat, as it was in the fall. So he sneaked away unnoticed with his family, went up the Milk River looking for the thickest patch of brush and trees he could find, and there pitched his camp. The next spring, the survivors of this man's band, which had wintered around the Sweet Grass Hills, decided that the sickness was over, and that Atsa: must be in a good humor again and had left them. The survivors went looking for the rest of the Gros Ventres, so they packed up and left their camp, where in many lodges all the inmates were dead. They made their way toward the place where the Marias and Teton Rivers empty into the Missouri. As they went along they found some whole camps wiped out by smallpox, other camps with just a few lodges with some survivors. These survivors would then join them. At last they reached the Marias and decided to camp there and send scouts around to look for the other survivors.

"A group of young men acting as scouts went down the river to its confluence with the Missouri and ran onto a camp where they saw someone walking around in front of a lodge. As soon as this person saw them he disappeared. They approached and looked into the lodge, but could at first see only a bunch of dead bodies in it, though the fire was burning. They then went in to investigate and found a small boy and small girl there, each living with the dead body of his and her mother. The boy and girl fought and bit like animals not to be taken away. The young men saw the places where the boy and girl had been sleeping beside the bodies of the dead mothers. They saw also a bear that lived in this lodge and fed on the corpses. They looked in other lodges and found that the bear must have lived there too on the dead bodies. It had not eaten of the supply of meat which was still untouched.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

"The young men then took the boy and girl back to camp where some families took them and tamed them down. The young men kept scouting for survivors along the Missouri River and on both sides of the Bear Paw Mountains but could find none. All the living then moved to the north end of the Bear Paws and camped. They decided to stay there and wait. Most of the Gros Ventre camps had been entirely wiped out. The survivors felt bad about it, but there was plenty to eat. They had taken along with them the meat supplies of the deceased victims. It was now far along in spring and they thought the danger was over. 539 731 776

"The man who had spent the winter in the thick timber now decided to move around and look for his people. He started toward Marias River and found the other Gros Ventre survivors' camp north of the Bear Paws. The man, his wives and all their children had come through the epidemic without sickness. The people asked the father: 'How did you escape getting sick?' He replied: 'Just by accident. I happened to kill a skunk, to windward of our camp, and just left the carcass at the spot, as I had no use for it. We were forced to smell it. In time we all got used to the stench. In the timber we felt safe from enemies and we dared not go far from camp. So we stayed there in spite of the skunk. But we were all the time worried lest the children or myself should die. As time went on and no one got sick, I laid our good fortune to the skunk carcass. I thought that Atsa: must be afraid of skunks. So I started to kill as many as I could and I hung them around in every direction, so that no matter from what quarter the wind blew we always had skunk smell. I honestly believe skunks are too much for him.' The people agreed with him, for he proved his belief by the fact that he and all his family had come back safe. Since then the Gros Ventres have known that Atsa: is afraid of skunks."[28]

Both giants and dwarfs were believed to exist. The giants were as tall as trees. When one of these got a buffalo he would stick it on his belt just as the Indian did with rabbits. The giants were 776

[28] The Gros Ventres know that the Cree of the Ft. Belknap area use skunk fluid for many medical purposes; the Gros Ventres however do not. In Gros Ventres lore the animal kingdom calls the skunk "Chief Stripe."

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

773
539

The origin of it (or them) was attributed, somewhat tentatively and speculatively, by The Boy to pique on the part of the beaver for being left out of the Flat Pipe bundle or for other reason and hence the desire to start his own pipe and pipe rite.

The traditional origin story of the first Beaver Pipe was given as follows by Coming Daylight. "A certain man had two wives. He went out hunting and took one of his wives along. The other stayed at camp and about noon as she went to fetch water from the creek, she saw there a young man. 'I am going to marry you,' he told her. 'Where you are is not a good place, with two women to one man.' 'Let me first take this water home,' said she. 'Oh,' he said, 'don't take it all the way home, but only half way.' This she did and then followed him to his house. When he took her into his house, he turned into a beaver and told her to go into his beaver lodge.

"When the husband returned home from his hunt, he saw the filled water bucket half way to the creek, but the woman was missing. 'Somebody must have taken her,' he thought. He looked all over for her and called her, but in vain. So he went back home and told her father and mother the story that she was gone. They searched for her in different tribes but could not find her. They even checked on all the young men to see if any of them were away from home, but all were accounted for.

"After her husband and parents had searched a long time and had not found her, they began to mourn for her. The husband was crying all around on the hills. At last a spirit told him: 'Quit crying. She is not dead. Go back and camp at the same spot where she disappeared.' So he came in from the hills and invited some old men and told them what the spirit said. The old men advised him: 'Go back to the spot. This spirit may be telling the truth.'

"So he and his other wife went back to that same spot and camped. In the evening while supper was cooking they heard a

---

and kind of boisterous compared to the Flat and Feathered Pipe rites of the Gros Ventres, and this appeals to many people."

In 1948 Al Chandler mentioned that Old Man Blackbird was keeper of a Beaver Pipe which had been given him by the Crow. "It was a small bundle, but they used to hang it just like the Flat and Feathered Pipes were hung, and they had a smudge and some kind of dance to go with it." [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

773
539

noise coming into the lodge. The lost woman was looking in the door. Her husband seeing her jumped. 'Go back,' she said, 'and sit down. Don't come near me. Don't eat supper. Clean up and get sage brush and fix it nicely all around the lodge and close up all the holes. I am coming back. I just came first to tell you to clean up and fix the lodge.' So the two did as they were told and sat waiting, he at the back of the lodge and she on the east side, for the lost wife to come back.

"After a while they heard in the distance drumming and singing which kept coming closer. Then they saw the beaver husband's father coming first with the Pipe, after him the beaver husband and the woman, and last four [beaver?] beating the drum. All entered the lodge. The father then gave the Pipe to the man who had lost the one of his wives, saying: 'Here is a Pipe. Smoke it.' So the man took it and smoked it. The beaver husband's father also took this man as a son.

"The father then told two of the drummers: 'Invite the people to come into the lodge.' This they did and soon the lodge was filled with all the different animals, frog and snake and others, that live in the water. The old father then said: 'I invite you to give my son a song.'

"The frog then began to sing and as he began, a storm came with hail and the creek ran full. Next came the snake's turn, but the snake said: 'I don't know how to sing.' And the snake crawled out of the lodge, so he does not belong to this Pipe.

"The man was taught how to sing and to make smudge with sweet grass [sweet pine?], and was given back his lost wife with the admonition not to beat her and was told to go back home with her. Then the old father and the beaver husband went away, leaving the lost wife with her human husband.

"When the man got back home with his two wives and with the Pipe he had been given, everybody came to visit him. The re-found woman's brothers gave her husband two horses. They called that Pipe, Beaver Pipe, and when the man died they buried it with him. And this is why they buried owners of such pipes unless the owners when still living had transferred the pipes to someone else. This is the story we have heard from way back."

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

nessed the rite about ten times, Singer who had taken part in it by giving presents, by singing, and by riding double with the men going out to look for the center pole; Mathilda Cuts-the-rope; Al Chandler, and Thomas Main. Thick's father made the last Sacrifice Dance in 1884.[10] 115

The origin Story of the Sacrifice Dance as told by The Boy is as follows: 773 539

"In the days when Ni:hohat was still around, a Gros Ventre man went out hunting in the timberland where there was a lot of trees and brush. While he was hunting he heard a noise. He listened to find the direction from which the noise was coming and then went in that direction. He sneaked around and looked from under cover. He saw a dance going on. A bunch of buffalo were dancing in a circle. He looked on a long time unseen by them. He heard the songs they were singing and learned them, and saw how everything was done. He saw a buffalo bring the other buffalo and set them in a semi-circle, and saw them sit down in a semi-circle.

"He made up his mind to approach them. So he walked over to where they were. When the leader of the buffalo, at the back of the lodge opposite the door, saw him, he invited him to come in and sit down beside him: 'Do like we are doing. Look around and see how the lodge is made. Study it and try to remember it and all the things here.' The man saw a buffalo skull alongside the center pole.

"The chief buffalo then said to him: 'I give you this lodge (dance). Use it. If in sickness or in danger the people promise they will make a Sacrifice Dance I will help them. When you implore the help of the Sacrifice Dance, it will be a powerful means to avert sickness or danger.' So the man left and went back home and related what he had seen and experienced. He is

[10] In 1948 The Boy, Charles Buckman and Steve Bradley among them were able to name 15 of the 23 Dancers whose flesh was pierced at this last Dance, as follows: Bull Head, Horse Capture (Thick's brother), Stiffarm, Wolf, Stiff Wings, Grebe Child (The Boy's brother), Arrowhead, Peter Capture, Boy Capture, Strikes On Top, Dan Sleeping Bear, Skinner, Many Capture, Stabber, Fluttering Eagle. Dan Sleeping Bear had told Charles Buckman that there had been 23 altogether. [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

773
539 the one who introduced the Sacrifice Dance among the Gros Ventre people."

*796 171 Although in the origin story, it was the chief buffalo who promised to give aid to those who would perform the Sacrifice Dance, actually the chief buffalo was not prayed to during it, nor was the sun or any other being except the Supreme Being and Bha'a. Our chief informants have considerable knowledge of the Piegan (Blackfoot), Assiniboine and Crow Sun Dances, and emphasized various important differences, as they understood them, between these dances and their own Sacrifice Dance. "These sacrifices [in the Sacrifice Dance]," Al Chandler remarked, "were made to God, not to the Sun. I have always wondered why people call our Sacrifice Dance the Sun Dance. Anything the Blackfeet cannot understand they call the Sun and think he must be something." According to The Boy and Thick, while the Blackfeet pray to the Sun and while the Assiniboine in their Sun Dance pray and sing to the Thunder Bird (corresponding to the Gros Ventre Bha'a), the Gros Ventres in their own Sacrifice Dance prayed chiefly to Ixtcibani:hohat, secondarily, as will be explained later, to Bha'a, and with some incidental mention of or appeal to the Four Holy Beings and Those-who-follow-each-other (Sun and Moon) when praying with a pipe. Vows to carry out the Sacrifice Dance were made by the Gros Ventres only to the Supreme Being; the sacrifices of property, the prayer-"sacrifices" of self-torture and fasting, and the chief verbalized and gesture prayers during the rite were likewise directed to him. Our informants consistently and insistently emphasized that the Gros Ventre Sacrifice Dance was, in this sense, a predominantly theistic ceremony.

*796 While more generally the Sacrifice Dance was regarded as of lower ritual rank than the Flat and Feathered Pipe rites and as 794 of higher rank than any of the other seven sacred Dances, there 791 was some difference of view on the point among our informants. The Boy, who himself emphatically ranked Flat Pipe rite as far and away first in dignity of all Gros Ventre ceremonies, with the Feathered Pipe rite, Sacrifice Dance, and other dances following in this order of dignity, summed up the situation as follows:

"While the supreme religion of the Gros Ventres was the Flat

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

773
539

One of these, the origin story of the Drum Dance, was told by him as follows:

"A long time ago the Gros Ventres (or a party of Gros Ventres) made a long journey toward the Black Hills (in South Dakota). One of the Gros Ventre men became separated from his friends, and could not find his way back to them, and so got lost on an endless plain somewhere northwest of the Black Hills. He must have had no weapons with him, for in his wanderings he had nothing to eat and was near starving to death. So he made up his mind to seek a place where he could lie down and die.

"So he came to the bed of an old dry lake and said: 'Here I will die.' He decided to die crying. So he walked around the lake bed crying. He spent four nights there. The morning after the fourth night he was still crying but was very weak. Every once in a while he lay down. On one such rest, he fell into a light slumber, not a deep sleep, and heard a crier under the lake bed announcing: 'W-e-e-e-e. What is the matter with you drum men who belong to the Drum Dance? When are you going to pity that poor man up there? Come here together.'

"Then the sleeping man heard drumming and singing. The drumming and singing seemed to be coming in his direction and when it got to where he was lying a voice said to him: 'Get up and look at the drum men.' Then he sat up. It was broad daylight and as he looked toward the direction whence the voice and drumming and singing had come, he saw two lances (or sticks), curved (crooked) around on the upper end (like a shepherd's crook), come up from the ground of the dry lake bed. Three times they came up and after each time disappeared in the ground. The fourth time they came up, there were two men carrying them. A crowd of men, walking two by two, streamed out after the two lance carriers, and two other lance bearers brought up the rear end of the line. They all marched in this formation round the dry lake bed once, clockwise, and then stopped. The one who seemed to be leader of the group then spoke to the starving man: 'Take a good look at me and us. We have pitied you. You are going to be saved and to get back home. Also we will transfer to you our drum, our lodge (dance), our power.'

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

"The Gros Ventre man looked around and he saw that the two crooked sticks carried at the front of the line were wrapped around with otter skin, around which skin were tied four pieces of white rabbit skin, and at each place two eagle feathers were hanging. The sticks carried by the two rear carriers were wrapped with rabbit skin, with four pieces of otter skin tied around, and with two eagle feathers at each place where the otter skin was tied. 973 539

"Then the group started to sing and dance and to go round in a circle. This they did four times, with a rest after each circling. Then said the leader to the Gros Ventre man: 'I have told you that we have pitied you. Now I will show you the rite that belongs to our dance. You will be saved and will get home. This dance of ours can be called upon (that is, vowed) in times of great emergency, especially in times of great fear. We give you the whole thing. When you get home you can make known what you have seen and heard here. Tell the people that when they are in fear, they can call on us, on our dance, and we will help them. Besides giving you our dance, I am giving you my horses so you can get home quickly. Soon after you get home you must put up this lodge.'

"Then they danced and they taught him the rite. The leader then said to him: 'Wait here. I will go back after the horses I promised you.' Then he and the others of his group disappeared under the ground. Pretty soon the leader reappeared coming up at the same spot where he had gone under. This time he was alone, leading a big black stallion. He brought the horse to the Gros Ventre and said: 'Here is your horse. You can ride him, or else sometimes lead him. You will get home quickly and safely. This stallion has many colts. They will follow him. Do not abuse the stallion or any of his colts.[22] Ride them. You can go now.'

"So the Gros Ventre took the horse and mounted it and rode off. As he looked back he saw a big herd of horses following him. It was not long, only a few nights, before he got home, bringing the big herd of horses with him. To each Gros Ventre of the whole tribe he gave a horse. After he had rested up he did what he had

[22] That horses should never be abused or badly treated was part of the general code.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

773 been told to do and put up the Drum Dance. Thus was the Drum
539 Dance introduced among the Gros Ventres into their sacred dance system."

When Lame Bull told The Boy this story, the latter asked him: "Who was it who gave this dance and these horses?" And his [825] father answered: "The killdeer." So the Drum Dance is owned by the killdeer (*Oxyechus vociferus*).

*796 The Drum Dance ranked high in dignity among the Sacred dances. Lame Bull ranked it next after the Sacrifice Dance, and first in importance in the Drum-Dog-Kitfox-Crazy group, because, he told The Boy, the Drum Dance was "most difficult and complicated to carry out," and through it "more horses had come to the Gros Ventre tribe."

The Drum Dance was held only in fulfillment of a vow. The [801] rite lasted the customary four days and nights, with a big feast each day. The Boy was uncertain whether a sweat-lodge ceremony was held during the Drum Dance.

The chief sacred objects used in the Drum Dance were, so far [778] as we could learn, the very large drum, and the fur-wrapped crooked sticks which were carried by the dancers and which to judge from the origin story were four in number and were decorated as therein described. The dancers themselves were [302] painted yellow all over their bodies, with black dots, representing hail, from the waist up.

*796 Four of the Drum Dance songs, numbers 52-55, were recorded,
533 as sung by The Boy, who had learned them from his father, Lame Bull. There were others which The Boy did not remember, nor did he know the ritual order in which they were sung.

Two of these four songs, numbers 52 and 53, are wordless, and were sung at good-time dances during the Drum Dance. Number 53 is the song that was sung by the men marching out of the dry lake-bed when the Drum Dance was first given to the starving Gros Ventre man by the killdeer. These dancing songs were lively ones, sung to fast time.

Song number 54 is difficult to translate as the meaning of two of one of the words was unknown. The Boy ventured the conjecture that the whole wording might possibly mean: "There are

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

uncle, Crow Bull, had joined it,—and Singer. According to Turn Toes the dance was probably last performed when he (born about 1860) was a little boy, too young to take part in it.

The following is the Kit-fox Dance origin story as told by The Boy:

"Long ago a Gros Ventre man was hunting kit-foxes to get their pelts for use as clothing. He sighted a kit-fox but before he could kill it it ran into its hole. The man made up his mind to nevertheless get the kit-fox. So he gathered sage and other brush and made a smudge. When the brush was smoking well, he shoved it into the kit-fox's hole and closed up the hole, in order to smoke out the kit-fox.

"Then waiting around he lay down and dozed, and while he dozed he heard singing under the ground. When the singing stopped, he woke up, and heard the kit-fox grunting. So he opened up the hole. At this the kit-fox came out, sat down at the opening of the hole, facing the Gros Ventre, and said to him: 'I am glad you have spared my children and me. You were just about to kill all of us. I am glad you pitied us. So in turn I will pity you. I will give you my lodge and you can have it ever after this. If you or anyone in the tribe is sick, make a vow to put up my lodge, and you or the other sick person will get well.'

"Then the kit-fox sang a song, one different from the song the man had heard when he was dozing. When the kit-fox had finished singing this second song it said to the Gros Ventre: 'Look at me. See how I am painted. In my lodge (dance) paint yourself the same way. When you put up this lodge, use my body.' Then the kit-fox told the man how to dress and paint in the dance and what songs to sing, and taught him all these songs. Then 'Go back,' said the kit-fox, 'to your tribe and put up this lodge. I give you this right, so you may introduce this dance into your tribe. In order to put up my lodge, a vow must first be made. But I give you the right to put up the first one, and then you can tell the story!'

"Then after the kit-fox had fully instructed the man, he did not kill that particular kit-fox but let it go and he himself went back to camp. When he got back home he told what had happened and started to get ready for the dance, gathering clothes and other

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

things together, and making ready a kit-fox skin stuffed to look like a live kit-fox. This last was used in the dance. The Gros Ventre made a great impression on his tribe and his dance was accepted and recognized as a Sacred Dance, and a vow was made to perform it." 773 539

The Kit-fox Dance was held, like the other dances, in the summer time,—about August, so Charles Buckman thought,—and everyone was obliged to be on hand for it. Preliminaries might however begin far back in the preceding winter, particularly the painting and taking out of the joiner's wives by the ritual grandfathers. This latter preliminary phase of the dance seems, from Coming Daylight's report (infra), to have been very similar to a corresponding phase of the Crazy Dance, but we were able to secure only the following, rather vague, account of it as described by Coming Daylight: 796*

"In the Kit-fox Dance the wives had to go out with their 'grandfathers' just as in the Crazy Dance. My uncle, Crow Bull, once joined it with his Assiniboine wife, Coming Day, and it took a long time. The 'grandfathers' used to take extra long [in preparation for] for this dance and, if the [preparatory] time was winter, they made nice places, brushing the snow away, where they would lie down with their ceremonial grandfathers. The 'granddaughters' would go to their 'grandfathers'' lodges and then the 'grandfathers' would take them out, and the 'grandsons' would be painted. The 'grandsons' would have so to go for a long time, from winter to spring, to their 'grandfathers,' before actually joining the dance. So Crow Bull would go with his wife to his 'grandfather's' lodge to get instructions and each time he would be painted and the 'grandfather' would take Crow Bull's wife out and brush away the snow and lie with her." 796* 837

Besides the stuffed kit-fox skin mentioned in the origin story above, the Kit-fox Dance paraphernalia included two crooked sticks, used when dancing. These were shaped like a shepherd's crook or hockey stick, with strips of little otter skin carefully wrapped around them "all the way down" and with eagle-tail feathers tied to them here and there. The wrapping had to be done in a certain way, and only by a brave warrior. These sticks 796* 778

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 ashamed. When the dance was over, the people moved to old haunts north of the Bear Paws, and then to the west of Three Buttes, and camped. The young man dressed, got on his horse and rode completely around the camp circle, singing the death-song.[10] A little later they moved to right near the Bear Paws. Here they camped and met a large Piegan war party, and had a fight. The pitched battle took place in the open plain. This young fellow fixed up and got on his horse, and was among the last arrivals. He rode headlong into the thick of the battle and all the Piegan shot at him, but they all missed and he came out unharmed to their rear. At this he wheeled his horse around, and charged right back. This time the Piegan got him and knocked him off his horse. A big crowd of them surrounded him and when the Gros Ventres got to him only his torso remained. The Gros Ventres afterwards said that he should not have ridden back the second time, that once would have been enough to satisfy for the death-song he had sung. But he had done it out of disgrace and shame he felt for not having anything to give his grandfather at the Kit-fox Dance. All this was in recent times."

Dog Dance

The name of this dance was hotəbyao'wə, "dog lodge." The dance had disappeared before 1874, the date of The Boy's birth. But his father had joined it and both Coming Daylight and Singer had witnessed it, the latter when still a little girl. The last Gros Ventre celebration of it took place in Canada, according to Coming Daylight,—sometime between about 1865 and 1874. Our information on it, derived mostly from The Boy, who got his knowledge of it from his father, Lame Bull, with a few sparse data from Coming Daylight and Singer, is even more fragmentary than that on the Drum Dance. The origin story of the Dog Dance was given us by The Boy as follows:

*796 "A long time ago the Gros Ventres were camped at a certain
703 spot and a young Gros Ventre man fell asleep some distance away
539 from the camp. When he woke up the camp had moved. The young

[10] See Flannery, 1953, p. 92.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796*
773
539

man followed their trail. After a while he saw something ahead of him also following the trail. When he got near it he saw it was a dog, and when he caught up with the dog he saw that it was an old, toothless, lame, sorefooted dog, and it whined as he caught up with it.

"The young man pitied the poor old dog and said to it: 'All right. You follow me. I'll travel with you.' So they went along. But the dog could not walk fast enough to keep up with the young man. He then lifted it up on his back and carried it, and whenever he got tired he unloaded the dog and they both rested. Finally he got to the Gros Ventre camp and there he brought the dog to his lodge and fed and took care of it.

"Then the Gros Ventres moved camp again when the young fellow was away and asleep, and he let them move and then followed carrying the dog, and he rested from time to time as he had done the first time. Then a third time all this happened, and a fourth time.

"This last and fourth time, as the young man was carrying the dog he came to a high ridge and when he got up on top of it he saw the Gros Ventre camp some distance away, and he thought: 'Here is a good place to rest.' So the young man let the dog down, rested and fell asleep. The dog slept near the young man's head, instead of near his feet.

"While the young man was asleep he heard the dog singing. The dog when it had finished singing spoke to him: 'You have done me a great favor. I am very grateful to you for pitying me and taking care of me. So I am going to repay you and pity you by giving you my lodge (dance). Look at me. I am an old dog. I will give you age. You will live long and get to look old, as I look. You will be a renowned outstanding man among your own Gros Ventre people and among all other peoples around them. I give you my coat. You must wear it when you put up my lodge. This will be part of my rite. When my lodge is put up one man shall wear my coat and he must be the most renowned man in the tribe.'

"The dog then sang a song and at the end of it howled, and then said to the young man: 'When in war you get in a tight situation,

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

if you sing this song, you will be saved.' After that the dog taught the young man other songs which ended with a bark instead of a howl. And then the dog after having taught him all about the rite, said to him: 'Put up the lodge, just as I have told you, as soon as possible and introduce it into the Gros Ventre tribe. When anybody gets scared or sick or in any other emergency, make a vow and put up my lodge.'

"And so the Dog Lodge (Dance) was accepted by the Gros Ventre tribe and every once in a while would be put up in fulfillment of a vow."[27]

We could obtain very little information on the Dog Dance rite beyond that contained in or hinted at in the origin story. Our meager data add only few minor items to Kroeber's much fuller account of the Dog Dance.[28]

The coat or shirt referred to therein was "made from curly-haired dogs" and was given to an outstanding warrior—whether as a more or less permanent possession, or only for the duration of the rite, is not clear. The one who wore it during the dance was called tsetcane:hi, a word having reference to "curly."[29] Coming Daylight readily recognized the shirt figured by Kroeber[30] and stated that its owner was Ice, also called Bill Jones. According to The Boy, Bull Robe[31] too, "the greatest warrior by far of his day," once owned a [or the] Dog Dance shirt, sang the first Dog Dance song (with the howl at the end) wearing the shirt, and on one occasion of extreme emergency had it with him and was the only one of his party who was saved.[32]

Of the various songs proper to the Dog Dance we could record only one, a wordless one, number 58, sung by The Boy. In the Dog Dance the first song sung was the one ending in a howl, and

---

[27] Cf. shorter version in Kroeber, 1907, p. 111; also idem, 1908, p. 252.

[28] Kroeber, 1908, pp. 252-58.

[29] Kroeber, 1908, p. 252, mentions two such dancers referred to as "shaggy dogs."

[30] Kroeber, 1908, p. 255, fig. 38.

[31] Kroeber, 1908, pp. 204-16, Bull Robe's narrative.

[32] In 1948 The Boy stated that the shirt was worn by the principal vower of the Dance and kept by him until the Dance was vowed by another, in which case the shirt would be "transferred" to the new vower. [R F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

was, but he told Gambler afterwards: 'I could not stand that kind of thing!' X went home as Gambler had predicted and when Gambler went to X's house the next morning for the milk bucket, there was X. X would never tell what really happened that night." The Boy commented, "X was not the only one [quester on mountain top] who ran away; others did;" and added parenthetically, "No one has ever been able to spend the first night on Chief Mountain in Glacier National Park." 787

One legendary narrative we gathered,—"just an old time story" the narrator, Coming Daylight, called it,—was well calculated to put fear into questers. 787 539

"A certain young man slept out on the hills and he cried and cried. He had a shelter and went to sleep in it. While he slept a big snake came from the south to west all around where he slept. The snake ate up the young man and left only the bones. Where the snake had come from it had made a bald path with no grass at all, just like a rock.

"This young man had told his friend: 'Come tomorrow and bring me a pipe.' The next afternoon his friend came and saw the snake track and got scared. From outside the shelter he called to his friend. Getting no answer he went in. There he saw the skeleton. So he called out yelling for the young man's people. Everybody came, and the young man's folks especially were scared when they saw the snake's track. When the young man's folks saw the skeleton they started to mourn. His friend took a quilt, wrapped up the bones in it, and carried them home. The people had a hard time to quiet the parents.

"So the friend said: 'I will go and sleep there tonight and I'll carry a gun.' So he went to the place, and in the evening he started to cry and cry. At night when he was crying and crying, he lay in the bed but did not go to sleep. He had his gun ready.

"After a while he heard a great big noise, like a big rattle. It sounded scary. The snake came in the same track. When it got to the door, it kind of lifted up the rock and threw it aside. It had a big shiny horn and sort of blinded the friend, and its eyes were yellow shiny, and it was a great big snake. It was as big as a human being and its rattler was great big. When it knocked the

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787 door down, the man shot it. It just writhed and he emptied his whole gun on it.

539 "He stayed there until the morning. In the morning he started to holler for the people. They saw this big snake and burned it up. They thought this man very brave."

787 Of equal importance with isolation was concentration of thought. "If," said The Boy, "while on the mountain top the quester was thinking about his wife or about other affairs, he would get nothing [no power] for he did not have his mind on it —If a person is playing cards he must keep his mind on playing else he will not win. In like manner, when a man was fasting out on a mountain he had to concentrate his mind on what he was after—He went there to pray, to ask for help for something above the human."

787 The first ritual act after arrival at the mountain top was the prayer with the pipe. This rite was described by The Boy and
782 Thick as follows: "When a Gros Ventre went out in the mountains to seek power he always took along a pipe to use in prayer. He asked from above that the being who owned the mountain or hilltop would be commanded to grant this power. He took the pipe along to pray to the Supreme Being,—it was the idea that the Supreme Being ruled everything but his ruling was systematic or by plans. He seemed to believe that there were lesser beings who sort of managed [ruled] details of the whole situation. He [the quester] would start out, in his very first prayer [by praying] to the Supreme Being asking the granting of his petition, so that the one to whom he went, the one who owned or lived in the hill would be sort of forced or commanded to grant the power that was being requested. The pipe was first offered, with the stem pointing upward to the Supreme Being. Then the quester lit it and blew the smoke upward [toward the Supreme Being] and afterwards downward to the Last Child. But there was no comparison between the up and the down prayer. He held the stem pointing downward to the Last Child to give him a smoke. The Last Child was of the order of the killdeer [vastly inferior to the Supreme Being]. After giving the smoke to the Last Child in a sort of important way, he would offer the pipe to the hill, with the stem pointing not

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

782 Being. The things asked for in the prayer would differ according to the occasion.

782 At the elaborate naming feast at which Flannery was adopted and given her name the following two prayers offered by The Boy 583 who was in charge of the ceremony may serve as examples of [123] these longer solemn prayers of which we are here speaking. As The Boy makes it a practice to plan carefully whatever he intends to utter in public, we may be reasonably sure that he had given much thought ahead of time to the form and content of these two prayers.

Before partaking of the lunch which was an integral feature of the naming rite, The Boy took a piece of bread and standing held it aloft while he prayed as follows before depositing a bit of the bread in each of the four corners of the stage of the community hall where the rite was held:

553 "Supreme Being, look down upon us as we sit here today. We are going to eat of the food which you gave to us. We are glad. 782 We are thankful for this gift of food that we are going to eat. ●539 Whenever we, your children, displease you and do things contrary to your law, forgive us for these, we pray you. Also look down upon us here today as we sit together and help us to successfully portray our poor life which you have allowed us to live by for so many ages. We have reached the end of that long trail of life that you have allowed us to live by, and bowing to your will we accept the conditions of today, different as they may be from yesterday, because this is your will. And in your mercy and consideration for our conducted [sic] life and assistance, give us food, give us breath, so that we may live out our lives according to your plan. And protect, watch over our loved ones who are participating and fighting in a terrible war,[4] so that they may come back to us safe and unhurt, so that once more they may set their feet upon the soil of their birthplace. This is their heritage."

After lunch and some smoking and chatting The Boy called all to order. Then, seated, he held a pipe stem pointed upward and finally downward and prayed:

"Master of All, of the above and of the below and of the entire

[4] This refers to the many Gros Ventre young men then, 1945, in the armed forces while World War II was still going on.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

universe, and you the Four Old Men, here is a pipe that we are inviting you to place [take? accept?] and look upon our gathering here today. We, your poor creatures, are desperately trying to carry on and preserve, as one of our traditions, this way [with a pipe] of drawing your attention and your ear. Even though we are old and are reaching and going rapidly towards the sunset of our lives, help us to finish our lives so that we may die of old age. We ask you to look down upon White Shield [Cooper]. In your mercy have consideration for his welfare. Restore him to full health, so that he too may live out his life in good health and peace of heart and mind with us and that he may complete the great work of recording the history of the life of the Gros Ventres and that it may be a true record of that former life and that it may be worthy to be taken in as an annal of history. Then we ask you too to look down upon this white woman [Flannery] who is the representative of White Shield. They together have made possible one portion [of the food] so necessary to make this gathering a success. We ask that these two, White Shield and this woman, may live out their lives with us, and that this white woman in particular may successfully record that portion of the history of the old Gros Ventres that she has been assigned to do and that during her stay [here] so far from her home she may enjoy health, happiness and peace and that she may arrive back safe to her home. And you, the Last Child, of whom it is said to be revealed to us that you have control of the water, look upon our sons and grandsons [those in the armed services in World War II] who are far from home today and who are going to the far corners of the earth over water, fighting to maintain this way of life, protect them when they go over the water so that they may come back home safe." 553 782 539

After this prayer the pipe was passed around ceremonially. Thomas Main, who translated the prayer, which like the preceding one was said by The Boy in Gros Ventre, explained that after mentioning the Four Old Men The Boy had left out He Who Starved To Death who ordinarily was addressed after the Four in Flat Pipe rites. "He, while a great human being, was only a human being and so on a history-making occasion like this one his name was not invoked." 553 782

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

782 This last prayer was said while World War II was still in progress. After it was over and the Gros Ventre young men had returned from service in the armed forces, a very solemn ritual opening of the Flat Pipe was held, on February 6, 1946,—at which unfortunately neither of us could be present. The School Sisters of St. Francis, however, who teach the elementary and secondary grades at the Mission of St. Paul, Hays, were present and took [126] careful notes of the proceedings which they afterwards wrote up and hectographed. Early in the rite, before actually opening the Flat Pipe bundle, The Boy, who had charge of the ceremony, held up a pipe and prayed in Gros Ventre as follows, the prayer being translated for the Sisters by Thomas Main and being preceded by a brief explanatory word by The Boy:

782 "I will now speak in the first person and give you a prayer [such as] our Gros Ventre forefathers prayed in times of distress ●539 to the Turtle who reposes in this [Flat Pipe] bundle and to the Maker of the earth:

"Supreme Being, look down upon me, a poor mortal person, as I pray to You, and appeal to You, in this time of great distress and disturbance among your children, the peoples of this earth.

"I pray to You, a poor and lowly Indian, in the spirit and way that my ancestors prayed to You. I ask that the fires of hatred subside among all men, and that they may now love one another and understand that they are all brothers and must share the handiwork of Your hand, creation, the universe, and all nature. I ask that You may inspire the representatives of the peoples of the earth who are now engaged in a most difficult task, the framing of the terms of peace, so that it may be just and lasting.

"Supreme Being, I asked You to watch over and take care of my grandchildren, the young men of the Indian people, as they went off to all the corners of the earth to fight in the greatest war and conflict of all time for the cause of freedom and liberty, and now that they are back safe to those near and dear to them I feel that You have listened to and granted my prayer. Now, My Father, I ask you again to give to my grandchildren, the veterans of the great war just ended, peace of mind, happiness, good health, and a long life. And that they enjoy the soil of their birth and the land

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

of our ancestors, and that they may gain inspiration from our legends, traditions and heritages and the history of the world that repose in this bundle of the Flat Pipe as the Indian race understands your creation of the world. So that my grandchildren may learn to have that strong character possessed by our ancestors and their utmost sincerity of purpose of [and?] the true philosophy of life on earth. And that they may merge this sterling character into the life of this day and age. 782 539

"As I stand here today, I am fully conscious and fully realize that the White man is here to stay. And that we, the Indians, must live according to his way of life.

"I pray that White Shield [Cooper] may be restored back to good health. And I pray that Chief Woman [Flannery] may live a long, and a healthy, happy life. I pray that the Black-Robed missionaries of St. Paul's Mission [the Jesuit Fathers] may succeed in their efforts to teach us the true way of life. I pray that our leaders of the Indian people may be inspired to do good work for their people.

"My Father, I talk to you today with all of my person, and with all my heart and my mind. I give You thanksgiving for hearing my weak and mortal voice, and from my heart I ask You to again listen to my prayer, which I am making most devoutly and which is my most earnest wish."[8]

The question as to when the Gros Ventres prayed has been partly answered passim in the treatment of the sacred Pipe rituals, the sacred Dances, ghost helpers, and power. We shall here include other occasions and situations calling for or accompanied by prayer: spring time, mealtime, bedtime, hunting, river crossing, storms, the aged. 782

The Gros Ventres prayed, as occasion arose, at all seasons of the year, but spring time was looked upon as a particularly propitious time not only for seeking power, but also for other kinds of praying. The point of view may be illustrated by excerpts from a letter of March 24, 1945, from The Boy to Cooper. The letter was not just dashed off hurriedly or without previous thought. For composing it, The Boy explained orally the following summer to 782 123

[8] School Sisters of St. Francis, 1946, pp. 3-4.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

782 123 Flannery: "I tried to be well prepared by a long period of study as to what to tell him [Cooper] so that I could do something big for his health, that his health might be restored. I sort of prepared for this all winter long and then decided I would write this letter to him in the Spring of the year when everyone seems to feel good and [to be] glad that they are still living and that they survived the hardships of the winter and that it is time for rejoicing and that even the animals are glad that spring had come around again. They then woke up from their long sleep of hibernation when they bored underground or under a pile of rocks or whichever way they could get away from . . . winter. I tried to get him [Cooper] the full benefit of it. I am glad to hear he liked it. I tried hard to put into words what I wanted for my friend [Cooper], and so that he would get more I chose that time of the year [spring]. That is when all the animals wake up and talk and sing and move around and let the whole world know: 'I am still around too.' . . . They have made a real effort to live that long. . . . They try to keep themselves in existence as long as they can by growing and singing and running and so forth. . . . If I made my friend feel better and was able to master the great distance between us [Montana to Washington, D. C.] with those few words, I am exceedingly glad and will always feel good when I recall that letter and those words because they made him feel good. Besides my words written down, everything that I had went with them."

The Boy's message in the letter, as translated very carefully [191] [212] from his dictation in Gros Ventre and written down by his nephew, Thomas Main, was in part as follows:

"Dear friend—As winter is over and spring is on in its place, 123 it makes one feel good. And as I listen to the talking song of the 539 meadow larks they bring back pleasant memories of my association 782 with you. So I am writing this letter to bring my thoughts into expression.

"I hope I can infuse and saturate into this paper my feelings for you and my concern for your welfare and doctor you with the tidings and blessings which the season of spring always brings, when all nature arises from a long sleep, so that you too may enjoy the healing winds and sunshine which abound at this time.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539●
"I have heard that your health [has not been good] . . . and it 782
is my earnest hope that you may get back your health. I shall 123
never forget nor cease to appreciate the encouragement you gave me when I was losing my health rapidly, and your promise to pray for me so that my health might be restored back to me.[6] I sincerely believe that your prayer was heard, as my health seems to be improving, even in my advancing age.

"So now it is my turn to pray that your life span may be extended, and among other good things to which you apply your mind that you may further contribute to the great study of the races and peoples of the earth.

"I have told you in my story of the Gros Ventres before the days of the white man, which includes the belief of my ancestors, that in the spring of the year is when one's prayers are more readily heard, and that was the time that the Indians in the long ago went to the hills, streams and mountain tops to fast and pray.

"We, the Gros Ventres, pray and implore the Supreme Being to protect our boys fighting on the various fronts in this great war, and so far only one Gros Ventre boy has been killed, out of many who are in the service. And we also pray that this terrible war and this mass killing may soon stop and that a just and lasting peace may be declared, so that the great family of nations may be true brothers again and go on with life in harmony and prosperity.

. . .

"I will now close and I am very glad to have spoke to you on this paper and it is my sincere hope that you can feel my words, so that they will do you good and doctor you.[7] With a good and hearty handshake, I am

Your friend
The Boy"

In the spring, The Boy's father, Lame Bull, would at bedtime 782
after all were lying down, sing certain songs after first praying 511
for himself, his household and all the people. Whether this bedtime

[6] See p. 366, in references to The Boy's illness in 1940. In 1948, The Boy again mentioned gratefully Cooper's prayer for him. [R.F.]

[7] Some of the expressions used in this letter seem to be implicit references to the efficacy of the sincere wish as well as of prayer.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

APPENDIX

The following myths, tales, and traditions are given as told us mostly by The Boy, who in turn learned them in large part from his father. Variants from other informants are noted in passing and reference is made to Kroeber's earlier and more complete collection where appropriate. 128

1. Ni:hahat Liberates the Bladder People[1]

White Man started out and wandered around. At last he saw a single lodge and went over to it and entered. A man and woman were sitting there. They welcomed White Man and told him to sit down. Right away White Man thought: "I am tired and hungry. But they have nothing to eat." He wondered what to do next. The man said to the woman: "My friend has caught me unawares. He is hungry and tired and I have no food to give him." So the man called out: "My children, go and hunt so that we may eat and our guest may eat." This was good news to White Man. So he waited. It was now night. During the night something was bringing meat. You could hear something laying down meat outside. White Man thought this queer that meat should be brought at night instead of in the day time, but he just waited. After a while something stopped bringing these things to eat. The man then said to the woman: "Go out and fetch these things to eat so we and our guest can eat." So she went out and brought in all sorts of meat. So they ate liver, kidneys, tripe, and manifolds, eating them raw. There was plenty to eat so they ate and ate until they were full. 539 773

White Man began to wonder how all this was done. He had it on the tip of his tongue to ask but he didn't do so as this would have been impolite. So after a while he was so full that he fell asleep.

White Man woke up the next day and spent the day with the couple. When night came the man gave the same order in a loud voice: "My children, go and hunt and bring things to eat so that our guest may eat." Then this second night the same thing happened as on the night before.

This time White Man, after he had eaten until he was filled, made up his mind to ask the man how it was all done: "How do they get these good things to eat? Who are your children? I haven't seen any of them." The man replied: "Do you really want to know?" White Man answered: "Yes." The man said to him: "All right. Come with me to this rising ground here. I will show you." As they left the man's lodge he said: "Look up and you

[1] For explanation of the term "White Man" as used for the trickster, see p. 2. This story does not appear in Kroeber's collection.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
773

will see the thing I use." White Man looked up and saw a bladder[1] up above the door. The man said: "That is what I use." White Man said: "I see it."

The man took the bag from where it hung and he and White Man went to the rising ground. When they reached there the man said: "What I use to hunt with and make a living with and do all things with is in this bag. You will see. Make your heart strong." So the man untied the bag. As he did so adult people began to come out of the bag. The crowd got bigger and bigger around them. The man then said: "This is enough." So he closed the opening of the bag and tied it up again.

After he had tied it up the man said to White Man: "Here are the people I use when I want to do anything. They are the ones who hunt." The man said to the people: "Go hunt and bring the choicest things to eat to my lodge. Myself and my guest want to eat some more."

So the man and White Man went back to the lodge and stayed there all day. That night the same thing happened that had happened on the first and second night previously. They ate and ate until they had enough and were filled and then they slept.

The next day White Man moved on and went his way. Then White Man began to study and think how he could acquire from the man the man's way of living and of getting a living. So White Man studied how to get the man to let him have this bladder. So he hit upon a plan. He decided to cut himself, as the Indians do in mourning, and to cry. So he cut himself and came crying loud to the man's lodge. When he got to the lodge he walked around it crying and crying. The man and woman heard White Man but they knew that White Man was a tricky fellow and they paid no attention to him. But White Man just kept on crying. They heard White Man crying until they went to sleep.

When they woke up the next morning the man wondered what had become of White Man. He said to the woman: "Go out and see if White Man is around." She went and there was White Man asleep outside. The man woke White Man up and invited him into the lodge. White Man went in and sat down, and in the course of time the man said to him: "What do you want? Why have you cut yourself and made yourself suffer and cried?" White Man said: "I did so for a very serious reason. My enemies have killed my whole family, my wife and children, and have destroyed my home. I am destitute and do not know how I am going to live. So I thought I would come to you and ask you to share the bladder with me and tell me how to use it, so I may make ready to take revenge on the people who destroyed my family and home." The man, knowing White Man to be what he was, refused at once: "No. You will go to extremes. You will abuse it. You are crazy." White Man begged all the more. The man and woman were silent for a long time. But White Man kept talking and talked so

[1] A gall bladder sack, attached to the liver. Such gall bladders were used by the Gros Ventres to store grease prepared and mixed with berries and were kept closed to keep bugs out.

251
415

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
773

much and so piteously that the man and woman were moved. The woman said to the man: "You ought to pity him. He has suffered a lot. I think he is serious and not up to his tricks this time." So the man said to her: "All right." Then he said to White Man; "Do not use the bladder and the people in it except on rare occasions, such as taking revenge on the enemies who killed your family, or as hunting when in need of food." White Man said: "I promise." White Man embraced the man and was glad. Now White Man had the bladder with instructions how to use it. The man just loaned the bladder to White Man. The man said to him: "There is one very strict rule to be followed by the person who has the bladder. You must sleep with your head toward the place to which you are going. You must observe this rule strictly to the letter." White Man said: "I shall." The man said to him again: "Remember to use the bladder only when you have to."

So White Man went off. And when night came he stopped. He was wondering if the whole thing would work. He couldn't stand it any longer so he said: "My children, go, I am hungry and want to eat." So they went and brought all kinds of meat. So he ate and ate, and then slept. When he woke up there was nothing there, no meat but only the bladder. So White Man picked up the bladder and went away again. He did in like manner each night, and each time the plan was successful and there was always something to eat.

White Man told his people what they should do in case he got killed: "Make a sweat house and a mound of earth in front of it. Someone should have a filled pipe and should stand at the mound of earth and should invite the Supreme Being four separate times with a stop after each invitation. Then a second invitation should be given, this time to 'You that follow one another' [Sun and Moon], and this invitation too should be given four separate times. Then you should give an invitation, likewise four separate times, to the 'Four holy old men.' Next you should give an invitation, also four separate times to 'You that starve to death.' Then you should give one invitation only to all of those who are to take part in the sweat, naming each one and saying: 'Come and join the sweat.'" White Man was here telling the people what to do if he should lose his life. They were to do this four days after White Man's death and then quit and wait and White Man would appear and come to join them.

White Man traveled four nights and slept four times after leaving the man's lodge with the bladder. On the morning after the fourth night there appeared signs of a habitation. And White Man said to his followers: "Stay right here." White Man went slyly to a little hill and peeked and peeked and saw a big camp with lots and lots of people. So absorbed was he in the sight that he did not notice some hunters coming in between him and his people. The hunters sneaked up and killed White Man. White Man had with him at the time the bladder. The hunters captured the bladder and brought it to camp and wondered what it was and why White Man carried

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
713

it. It was still tied up. Out of curiosity they untied it and at once people began to come out of the bladder. So they lost control of the bladder, were overrun with these bladder people, were hopelessly outnumbered, and were destroyed and killed by them.

The bladder people were now without a leader but they remembered what White Man had told them to do if he were killed. So they built a sweat house and made a mound of earth in front of it and all who were going to sweat assembled there. One of them then took a pipe and filled it and stood at the mound and did just what White Man had told them to do. In a loud voice he invited the Supreme Being to come and sweat with them and did this four times. At once after the fourth invitation someone appeared in the direction the inviter was facing and walked toward them. The inviter went on to the next invitation as White Man had instructed. Meanwhile this person kept approaching. By the time the inviter had finished all the invitations, this person arrived where the people were. It was White Man. He said to them: "My children, I came back. I am going to sweat with you." Then they all went into the sweat house except the man with the pipe who remained standing where he was. After all, including White Man, were seated inside the sweat-lodge where they were going to sweat, White Man said to the man standing outside at the mound with the pipe: "Come in. Hand me the pipe." He handed the pipe to White Man who received it and said to him, "Go and get that [dry] buffalo chip out of the fire and put it down in front of me." The man did so. White Man took dry peppermint leaves and put them down on the chip and made incense and passed the as yet unlit pipe around and up and down in the smoke three times.

White Man in receiving the pipe grasped it with his left hand around the pipe stem just next to the bowl and his right hand around the pipe stem further toward the mouth. At first he held the pipe, bowl up and level, towards the smoke of the incense, then he raised the stem end of the pipe upwards until the pipe was nearly vertical and held it toward the rising sun, next toward due south, and finally towards the setting sun. Finally he reversed the stem towards his mouth. After this White Man said to the people: "Now you are free. You won't have to go back in the bladder again."

White Man while still holding the pipe prayed to the Supreme Being to bless his liberation of the people. After he had finished praying he told his people to do all the things which he himself had done since he had been with them. He told them to stand at the mound and put a buffalo skull on top of the mound in such wise that the forehead of the skull would rest level. He told them to have the children come around and to get some good old man to cut off a little of the flesh of the children's arms and to offer it to the Supreme Being by putting it on top of the skull. He told the older people to cut bits of flesh in the shape of the new moon from off their arms from between shoulder and elbow, from between elbow and wrist, from off

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

their thighs to the knee and from off their legs between the knee and the ankle and from off their chest (sternum),—to cut off as much as they could stand and not to fail to do this, and to put the cut-off bits on top of the buffalo skull. [Thick showed the writer the crescent-shaped scars on the outer side of his upper arm.]

539 773

Inside the sweat house White Man instructed them too in all the details of how to make the sweat house and the mound and how to heat the rocks and how to place the pipe on the mound.

White Man sat just inside the east entrance of the sweat house on the left as you enter. He had two assistants who remained outside. He told one of them to take two sticks tied together and get a live coal with them. With this coal he lit the pipe. Then all the people sitting in the sweat-lodge smoked. When all were through smoking White Man handed the pipe to one of his assistants who put it on the mound. Then he told the two assistants to close the doors of the sweat-lodge and one of them closed the front eastern opening and the other closed the rear western opening. Then White Man sang a song. Some of the people learned this song right away and sang it with White Man. Some of the people prayed while White Man and the others were singing. Then they heard a woman's voice, a very beautiful voice singing the same song that they were singing. Two songs had words that are translated as follows:[8]

First song: "My holiness have pity on me." (White Man was here really speaking to himself. He had great power to do things.)

Second song: "Something long (string, rope) have pity on me."

By this time the openings of the sweat-lodge had been closed and [illegible] water was ready. Each of these first two songs were sung three ti[illegible] After this the third song was sung, a song without words. Then the wa[illegible] was stirred up and the people imitated the sound of the helldiver. Each tim[illegible] they got through singing the third song water was sprinkled on the rocks. The third song was sung three times and water was sprinkled on the rocks three times.

Ever since that time the Indians have done in just this way.

After White Man had told the people all about the pipe and how to use it, all at once the real Flat Pipe appeared. It was a pipe made all of wood in one piece bowl and all, with no detachable stem. This pipe was the main thing with the people after that.

Its real name is the Flat Pipe. The name Little Turtle is also used for it. The Pipe that is now kept is the same one that was given to the people by White Man.

---

[8] These songs were recorded as No. 35 and No. 43. For the latter see also story No. 5.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
773

The same Flat Pipe survived with the one man who survived the Deluge (see No. 3).

2. Ni:hə̃hat Obtains the Buffalo[4]

At one time a certain man owned all the buffalo. At this time White Man was living and used to wander around. In his wanderings he came upon a camp of Gros Ventres and learned that they were always short of meat, because the man who owned all the buffalo kept them in a cave (or tunnel) in the ground.

White Man started to think up some plan to help the people. When he had decided on his plan, he said to the people: "Leave this camping ground and move away." They did so. But White Man stayed behind and turned himself into a little mangy pup.

Soon a little girl, the daughter of the man who kept the buffalo, came to the deserted camping ground, looked around, and found the pup. She was glad and took it back home. When she got back home she showed the pup to her parents. They said: "That's not a real dog, but White Man. Let him go. Kick him out and let him die." But the little girl insisted on keeping and raising the pup, and had her own way. The pup remained inside the lodge and was well fed and cared for.

The keeper of the buffalo had his camp just outside the cave where he kept them. He used to pass out the buffalo for the Gros Ventres in only limited numbers. That is why the Gros Ventres were always short of meat and hungry. Every day the man would let one buffalo out of the cave to water and graze, and each evening he would call them and they would come back in the cave.

White Man, the pup, studied the situation. When the keeper got back home from caring for the buffalo, he would scratch and howl and act like a real pup. The man would scold him and say to him: "You are not a real pup; you are White Man." But the pup would work on the affections of the little girl and the man would quiet down.

White Man watched how the man let the buffalo out of the cave and got them back, and awaited his chance. One evening as the man was putting the buffalo in the cave for the night, the pup ran out among them and decided to hide on the scrotum of an old bull. He took a good hold of the scrotum. The old bull went by the man who failed to notice the pup hanging on the bull's scrotum. So the pup got inside the cave, and did not let go his hold until the bull was far inside. Then the pup let go his hold and turned himself into a great big ferocious dog and started to bark.

This was strange to the buffalo, and caused commotion among them. They started milling around and finally stampeded toward the opening of the

---

[4] Cf. Kroeber, 1907, pp. 65-67. Kroeber's informant, Flea, was of the same generation as our narrator, The Boy.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

cave. The keeper heard the commotion and suspected that White Man had gotten inside the cave. The keeper tried to hold the buffalo back, but they dashed madly through the cave opening, ran over the man and trampled him to death. 539 773

White Man kept barking till he had driven all the buffalo out of the cave and scattered them in all directions so they would not return to the cave. Then White Man assumed his own body again, went back to the dead keeper's camp, and raped the keeper's wife and daughter. Then he left to go in search of the camp of the main body of the Gros Ventres. When he arrived there he announced to them that he had driven all the buffalo out of the cave and that the keeper was dead and told them all he had done, and foretold that they would never more have trouble in getting buffalo. Since that time the buffalo have remained on top of the ground and the Gros Ventres have had plenty of meat and have been hungry no longer.

3. Earthmaker and the Deluge[8]

The (primeval) keeper of the Flat Pipe, known as Earthmaker, knew in some way that the earth was going to be covered with water. It must have been that he was the only one who knew it for he was the only one who got ready to survive the flood. The Keeper made a big raft of logs and took the Pipe and put it on the raft. In the course of time the whole earth was under water. The Keeper just floated around everywhere on the raft, only himself and the Pipe with no other human beings or animals.[9] After a long time the Keeper saw a mountain top sticking up out of the water. He drifted toward it and landed there. When he landed he saw lots of birds and some animals. Right away he was glad that he had struck land and had some company in the way of animals and birds. He knew that the helldiver (mud hen), turtle, beaver, and muskrat were water beings. So he had them dive to get some earth from the bottom and to bring it back to where he was. First he sent Helldiver who after a while came up drowned. The

---

[8] Cf. Kroeber, 1907, pp. 59-61 (Nos. 1 and 2). Our version of the deluge story seems to correspond with Kroeber's No. 1 in which the person who sends the animals to dive is not identified directly with the trickster. The incidents in our version correspond, however, somewhat to those in Kroeber's No. 2, including the importance of the pipe and the making of man and woman. The Boy, our narrator, had thought that the latter might show Christian influence but stated that when he questioned older men, like Bushy Head, they emphatically declared that the incident was included in the old Gros Ventre tradition. [R.F.]

[9] Charles Buckman's version of this myth differed in that he claimed that "Earthmaker was floating in a pipe bowl,—the sacred pipe [Flat Pipe] represents this." Floating in the pipe bowl corresponds to the Arapaho version. [171]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
773

Keeper examined him and found some mud in the folds of his feet. He took the mud off and put it away on the raft. Then the Keeper sent Turtle to dive. Turtle also came up drowned, and the Keeper found some mud on the fold of his neck and put it where the other mud was. Next the Keeper sent Beaver to dive. Beaver came up drowned but without any mud. Last he sent Muskrat to dive. Muskrat came up drowned, but like Beaver without any mud. Then the Keeper spread the mud out to dry in the sun. When it was dried out the Keeper took a pinch of the dry dust between thumb and index finger, faced east, held up the pinch of dry dust towards the east then back towards his shoulder and sang Ni:hahat's first song: "My holiness have pity on me" (No. 35). Then he held the pinch of dry dust again towards the east and brought it back to his shoulder and sang the same song again. Again the third time he did the same and at the end of the third singing of this first song released the dry dust from between his thumb and index finger and said: "Go as far as the eyes can reach," and immediately ground appeared on top of the water.

Then he took another pinch of dry dust, turnd to the south and went through the whole procedure that he had gone through when turning towards the east, singing likewise in each case the same song. Then he took the last pinch, the remainder of the dust, and turning to the west went through the same procedure, still singing White Man's first song. And each time more ground appeared. After this last turning to the west all the birds and animals gave their own special calls. They rejoiced for there was ground again.

Then the Keeper with his Pipe was on dry earth, and he went around all alone, the only human survivor. Wherever he wandered from one place to another he always took the Pipe. After a while he became tired of being alone. So he decided to make another man like himself. He took mud and moulded it into the shape of a human being and held it in his hand and breathed on it three times. After the third breathing the man appeared, like himself. And now he had a male partner. So the three, the Keeper, the man and the Pipe went around together. After a while the Keeper said: "We have no way to increase unless we have a female." So when the man was asleep, the Keeper took out the last lowest rib on the man's left side and breathed on it three times and the last time he breathed a woman appeared. The Keeper said to the man and woman: "Get married and live together and multiply mankind."

So the man and woman lived together and the Keeper continued to stay with them. The couple bore children and after a while there were again a lot of people. The Keeper decided to teach the man and woman all about the Pipe, the Keeper's lodge, and so forth. "Whenever the Pipe is transferred from one Keeper to another, all the societies in the tribe,—age societies, soldiers, Stars, Grass Dancers, Crazy Dancers, and so on,—should sit in and sing their songs and imitate the calls which the birds and animals gave when I made the land again. If any of these societies should get mixed

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

up and one should sing the other's song then they must say: 'We have lost track of our song,' and must stop singing. But this must happen three times before they quit singing for good on such an occasion." And so all the societies imitate the calls of animals and birds. 539 773

Then the people multiplied more and more and followed strictly all the teaching about the Flat Pipe. This was the one and only sacred pipe they had until the time when the other sacred pipe, the Feathered Pipe, appeared on the scene. And it was the Ruler of the Storm who gave the Gros Ventre the Feathered Pipe.

What became of Keeper is not known, whether he died a natural death or not, nor is anything known of what became of White Man.

4. Origin of Death

When Earthmaker had made man and woman, and everything was finished, Earthmaker, man, woman and the animals were all sitting around admiring how beautiful everything was and talking together. Earthmaker put the question to humans and animals: "Now, how do you want things to run? You are going to multiply. If you die, shall you stay dead, or shall you come back to life again?" So the man and woman and animals had to decide, with Earthmaker as the judge.

The man took a buffalo chip and threw it in the water, saying: "Here's the way I want our lives to run." The chip sank and then came up to the surface. "I want life to be like that. We shall die but we shall come back to life again."

But the bear said: "No, that way won't do. Soon the earth would be full and there would be no room, and not enough for everyone to eat. There will be more pleasure and happiness in life if all die. Then there will always be new generations to succeed them." So the bear took a rock and threw it in the water, saying: "Here is the way I want life to be." The rock sank and remained down.

So Earthmaker decided: "This is the way it shall be, like this rock."

5. He-who-starved-to-death[1]

A long time ago the Gros Ventre lived in a land that was good, with plenty of game and of other things needed and used in their way of life.

---

[1] This story is not recorded by Kroeber. It contains the incident of a person crossing a body of water on the legs of a bird and shaken off, which was mentioned by Kroeber (1907, p. 58) as one of the motifs widespread in central N. America which to that date had not been recorded for the Gros Ventres or Arapaho. It also contains another common motif, that of the magically replenished food, which does not occur in Kroeber's Gros Ventre collection. [R.F.] [171]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
773

At that time there lived a man who was then the Keeper of the Flat Pipe. When the man's first son was born the child was beloved and was declared to be the Pipe Son according to custom. The boy was very happy as his parents showered all their affections on him. This went on until another son was born to the Keeper and his wife. For some unaccountable reason this second son won the affections of his parents over those of his older brother and so became the Pipe Son and he instead of his older brother got everything in the way of affection, attention and favors from his parents. This caused a break in the harmony and happiness which had prevailed in the family up to that time. The older brother became violently jealous of his younger brother.

One day while the older brother was out hunting buffalo, the enemy attacked the Gros Ventre camp. The younger brother wished to distinguish himself and so prove himself worthy of the esteem which his parents and all the people had for him. And so he decided to join the fight which took place. In the absence of his brother he took a red otter skin belonging to his brother and went out and joined in the fight. This red otter skin was very rare and was used by the older brother as his war medicine and when he wore it on his person he never failed to distinguish himself in battle.

While the fight was still on, the older brother came home from his hunting. On being told by his parents that a fight was going on, he immediately got ready to take part in it. He went to look for his red otter skin but could not find it. So he asked his parents: "What has become of my otter skin?" They told him: "Your brother took it and went to the fight."

The older brother was very angry at his younger brother and vowed that upon the latter's return from the fight he would give him a sound upbraiding. As soon as his brother got back from the fight he upbraided him severely and said to him: "If you wish to own a red otter skin go to the place where they are found and get one for yourself." The younger brother took this violent scolding of his brother very seriously and felt it deeply in his heart. After that he grieved and pined and hardly ever remained around the lodge, but stayed out alone away from the camp and was very sad and cried most of the time. He rarely came home. When he did so his parents would try their best by constantly talking to him to pacify him, but it was of no avail. He said to his parents: "I cannot get out of my mind the matter of the red otter skin. I am resolved to go where they can be acquired." In spite of the warnings and entreaties of his parents and the other people to discourage the young man from this very dangerous undertaking, he struck out towards the rising of the sun and the habitat of the red otter.

After traveling for many days and nights and crying most of the way, he came in sight of a large camp of lodges. He did not hesitate to enter the camp and was not afraid, as he was resolved to acquire a red otter skin even at the risk of his life. The people welcomed him warmly and said to him: "What are you doing so far from home and from your parents?"

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

They knew how his parents loved him most dearly because he was the Pipe Child. He answered them: "I am going to the place where the red otter was gotten." They were horror-struck and said to him: "By all means turn back from going there, as no one who has gone there has ever returned, but has lost his life." The young man however was determined to go on and did not lend an ear to the advice and warnings given him by the people. Disregarding all they said he went on his way toward the rising sun.

539
773

After many days of traveling he came upon another large camp. Here too he was known as the Pipe Child and was given a warm welcome and good treatment. They too warned him but he went on. Finally he arrived at a third camp and was likewise well received and fully warned. When however the people saw that he was determined to go on and was not going to listen to their counsel to go back, they said to him: "All right. But at least listen carefully while we tell you what lies in store for you on this final and fourth leg of your journey and quest. When you leave this camp go toward the rising of the sun. After many days of travel you will come upon a lone lodge on the edge of a large body of water and facing toward the rising of the sun. When you get to the lodge you should do nothing else but start to cry and to walk around the lodge. When night comes lie down and sleep at the foot of the first pole to the left of the lodge door. The next night sleep at the foot of the second pole, and so on each night at the succeeding pole until you reach the last of the thirty poles. When you succeed in doing this then the man to whom the lodge belongs will invite you inside and will ask you what is your reason for inflicting so much punishment on yourself. You will tell him about the red otter. Then the man will grant your request as you will practically have gained the red otter by being able to sleep at each of the thirty lodge poles without having taken anything to eat or drink. But by all means do whatever the man tells you to do, following every instruction exactly. Another danger however awaits you. For besides giving you the red otter the man at the lodge will offer you a gift of one of his many birds that live there with him. Among them is a certain red bird who is very evil and tricky. Those who have picked him as a gift have been exposed to great danger as the red bird flies up into air with anyone that takes hold of his legs and after flying around a long while deposits him on an island in the middle of the large body of water. Every time without fail such men have died from starving or exposure or drowning."

So the young man after listening carefully to all this friendly counsel and warning, struck out toward the rising of the sun. After traveling many days and just when he was weary and tired out, as he came over a high ridge he saw a large body of water and on the shore a lodge pitched. He was glad that he had now reached his goal. On arriving at the lodge he did what he was told to do. He began walking around the lodge crying at the same time. When night came on he lay down at the foot of the

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

●539
773

first pole to the left of the lodge and slept there. The next morning he got up, and all day long he walked around the lodge and cried. When night came he lay down at the next pole and slept there. He did this day after day, always moving to the next pole each night and sleeping there.

When he came to the pole straight back from and opposite the door he was unable any longer to stand up on his feet but had to crawl from one pole to the next one. When he reached the pole half way between the back of the lodge and the door he was unable to crawl any more and so he rolled from one pole to the next one. He was now so weak from lack of food and drink that he could not cry out loud any more but just shed tears. He went on from pole to pole. Mustering up his last energy he rolled to the 30th and last pole and fainted. This was the last he remembered.

When he awoke he heard talking inside the lodge, and soon he heard the man say to his wife: "Go out and bring our son inside our lodge, so we can care for him and ask him why he is punishing himself so much." The woman went out and exclaimed: "He is near death, being a mere skeleton." The young man was unable to walk or even to move. So she dragged him inside and laid him gently on a soft bed of robes. The man said to his wife: "Give the young man a drink of water." She dipped a small shell into the water and handed it to the young man to drink. The young man thought to himself: "This small shellful of water is not enough to quench my great thirst." But the man spoke kindly to him and told him: "Go ahead and drink. You will get enough." So he drank his fill and the shell was still full of water as before he began to drink.

Then the man said to his wife: "Give the young man food to eat." She gave him on the shell four pieces of meat already cut. He thought to himself: "These four small pieces of meat are not enough to satisfy my great hunger." But the man told him: "Do not worry. Go ahead and eat the meat." So he began eating the meat, and, each time after he took a piece, there remained four pieces of meat, and when he had eaten his fill there were still four pieces of meat left.

The young man then slept four nights in the man's lodge. At the end of this time he was fully recovered from his experience. The man then asked him: "Why have you come here and why have you done all these things to yourself?" The young man replied: "My older brother saddened me most grievously by scolding me for using his red otter skin war medicine. I felt so bad that I left my home and came toward the rising of the sun to acquire a red otter skin to have for my own. I have been told this is the place to come." The man said: "Yes I will give you what you ask. It is a request easily complied with. And also besides giving you the otter skin I am giving you one of my many birds that are along the shore of the water. Pick out any bird from the flock and then come back to my lodge to get your red otter skin along with full and final instructions."

So the young man went along the shore and soon came upon a large flock of most beautiful birds in many different colors and plumages. He

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
773

walked among them and they did not run away from him. He was undecided as to which bird he would pick, for it was hard to tell which was the most beautiful. He finally decided on a certain one, and, as he stooped down to pick it up, the red bird that he had been warned not to pick as a gift, got in the way. But knowing the red bird was evil and without pity he would not take it. Every time however he was about to catch the bird of his choice, the red bird got in his way. Then the young man began to study the red bird. He looked him over carefully and saw that he was a very beautiful bird after all, being all pure red in color and with a bunch of red feathers forming a beautiful arch on his head. He decided then to choose the red bird as after all it measured up to all the requirements of beauty.

So disregarding the advice he had gotten from the people he took hold of the bird's legs. As soon as he closed his hands on them, the red bird took wing and soared up in the air with him, and he could not relax his grip on the legs of the bird. After flying around a long time the bird made for the island in the middle of the great body of water and dropped the young man there.

The young man walked around on the island, and found there many skeletons of human beings who had met the same fate, death, which now faced him. There was nothing to eat there except a few berries and some frogs and moss that had washed ashore, and white clay. He ate these the best he could. He fully realized that it was impossible to swim back to the mainland as the distance was too great. He cried all of his spare time in the hope that something would take pity on him and rescue him.

Every once in a while the red bird would fly over the island and would say: "Oh, the one who eats rosebush berries is still alive," and then would fly away. One day as the young man was crying along the shore of the island he came across a little water snake. He picked it up and looked at it. Then he took a small ornament off his person and tied it around the neck of the little water snake and laid down the snake again unharmed.

After having spent more than thirty nights on the island he was getting very weak again and was reduced to skin and bones. This time as he was walking around crying he heard singing behind him. He stopped and listened. Finding that the singing was coming toward him, he stood there and waited. Then as he listened he heard these words: "I am here and I am coming." The singing stopped and then a voice said: "Man, my father sent me here to call you to our lodge." The young man thought it best not to move at once, but to wait until the voice invited him four times. After the fourth invitation he looked all around and saw no one. Then looking down he saw the little water snake on whom he had tied the ornament. The snake said to him: "Follow me to my father's lodge." So saying the snake went into the water and the man followed it under the water.

After a long walk under the water they came to a large lodge with two big water monsters painted on it, their heads meeting at the door. The little water snake said to him: "Go inside. This is my father's lodge." So

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
773

he went in. A big water monster lay at the back of the lodge and welcomed him in. So he sat down near the water monster's head. The water monster said: "You have done something which must be rewarded. You are the man who tied the ornament around the neck of the little water snake. This little water snake is my last child and his name is 'The Last Child.' Now listen to me and you will see your parents and all things which you hold dear. For I have pitied you and I am going to rescue you from your desperate plight and also reward you for what you have done for The Last Child."

The water monster then sang a song with these words in it: "Hair Rope, have pity on me." After the monster sang this song he gave the young man a Hair Rope made of the long hair from the forelegs of the buffalo and from the back of the neck of buffalo bulls. And he told the young man: "Use this Hair Rope to get revenge on the red bird who so ruthlessly carried you away and left you alone on the island to die. Lay the Hair Rope in a circle on the ground as if setting a trap and say: 'I want a fat young buffalo to be here.' And immediately you will turn into a young buffalo. After some time birds of all kinds will come around and eat you and if the red bird even so much as steps inside the ring of Rope you will have him trapped and completely at your mercy. If that plan does not lure him into the trap, wish for a fat elk; if that fails, then for a fat deer; if that fails, then for a fat white-tailed deer; if that fails, finally for a fat young wolf and this will not fail. The red bird is very powerful, above all on top of the ground. I am the ruler under the water. I transfer my power to you and ordain that for all time to come this power shall be used by all generations of men, and shall be used for the purpose of revenge." So saying the monster told the young man: "Get on my neck and I will take you to the mainland. But do not open your eyes until I say to you: 'Now get off.'"

So the young man got on the water monster's neck and they started for the mainland. They went on and on, and after a long time the young man heard a sound as of scraping on rocks. Thinking they had reached the shore of the mainland he opened his eyes and at that instant he was again on the island where he had been before. The monster rebuked him for his disobedience in opening his eyes before it was time and said to him: "That was the one and only power I had to help you. There is nothing further I can do for you."

So the young man was back on the island as far as ever from home and from the fulfillment of his desire to have the red otter skin. So he began crying again, and he did this daily for a long time. One day he was walking along and crying. He went near a big tree and as he went under it he heard a voice saying: "Stop your crying and look up at me. I am the bald eagle and I am very powerful. I am taking pity on you and am going to help you." Looking up the young man saw a bald eagle perched on a limb.

The eagle said to the young man: "I am transferring my lodge to you and you are to have my body as a flag when you put up my lodge. I am going to take you to the mainland. You must do what I say and I will succeed.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

But if you do not do as I say, as you did with the water monster, I will not succeed. Take hold of my tail feathers with both hands, and close your eyes and you are not to open them until you touch ground with your feet." 539 773

The young man did as he was told and took a firm hold of the eagle's tail feathers and closed his eyes. Then the eagle let out his loud whistle, took wing, and sailed up in the air. The young man could feel that he was being carried through space and he was determined that this time he was not going to open his eyes until he touched ground with his feet, as the eagle had told him. He could feel the eagle sailing as it were in a circle and after a time he felt the ground under his feet. Upon opening his eyes he found that the eagle had deposited him in front of the lodge where he had slept and suffered so much for thirty nights.

He stood there not knowing what to do. Then the man whose lodge it was invited him inside. He went inside and sat down. The man said to him: "I am very sorry for you. The red bird is very evil and without pity. But now that you have gone through all these things required and are still alive, I will give you the red otter skin, and also horses and a bunch of leg hoofs of buffalo to use for a bell [rattle] on the horses' necks." The man took down the hoof bell from its place on one of the poles of the lodge and told the young man to follow him to the shore. On arriving at the shore the man shook the hoof bell violently and a beautiful black stallion with a bob tail came out from the water. The man now told him: "This is your horse and he is the father of all the horses that I am going to give you. And here is what you must do to get back home with these horses. These horses must not be abused or ill-treated and must not be killed. Whoever of your people so maltreats them will not own any horses for in a mysterious way he will lose his ownership. When I transfer this hoof bell from my hand to yours, shake it as you saw me do, turn around, and go back to where you came from toward the setting sun. When night comes you must lay your head forward when you sleep, and for four nights you are not to look back or around, but walk with your head down and your eyes on the ground. If you do not do as I say, the horses will disappear and you will have gone through all this suffering in vain. But if you carry out what I say, you will have wealth, happiness, long-life, and a renown that shall last for all time to come.[a] Finally I impart to you all my power and my whole being, under one other condition, namely, that you are not to give a single thing, a horse or anything else, to your older brother who caused you all the suffering and privation which you have gone through this long time. At each of the Gros Ventre camps which you will pass you will give to each man, woman, and child a horse, and in the following manner. Halt a good distance away from the camp with your horses and call one man from the camp, and tell him to go and announce to the other people to

[a] Cf. Kroeber, 1907, p. 128, incident of water monster giving horses to young man.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
773

bring all of their ropes, that 'He-who-starved-to-death' would give them each a horse. Now go back toward the setting sun and do as I have told you."

So as soon as the man put the hoof bell in the hand of He-who-starved-to-death, the latter turned around shaking the bell and started out toward the setting sun. As he went along it was all he could do not to look back, for he could hear the tramping of the horses behind him, sometimes nearly running over him in their frolicking and play. But he had made up his mind firmly to do as he was told for he had had bitter experiences. Each night he lay down with his head toward the setting sun as he had been told. And at each of the three camps on the way he gave a horse to each person there. He successfully arrived back at the fourth camp, his home, and there gave a horse to each person except to his older brother. To him he would not give a single horse or anything else. His brother wept almost continually and was rarely seen in camp after that. And now the younger son of the Keeper of the Flat Pipe was back home and safe and was known as He-who-starved-to-death.

After he was fully rested and recovered from his experiences and travels he began to lay plans as to how to get revenge on the red bird who had caused him so much suffering. So as he had been instructed to do by the water monster he sweated on four different days and in the sweat-lodge told his story to his people. The first of the four sweatings was just for the purpose of getting ready for his revenge on the red bird.

After having gone through the ceremonies four times on four different days, he went away from the camp to a knoll and there laid down his Hair Rope trap. Standing in the middle of the circle of Rope he said: "I want a fat young buffalo to lie here," and immediately he himself turned into a buffalo. Soon a great number of birds flew to the spot from every direction, there to eat of the fat buffalo. After a considerable time the red bird appeared there. He alighted some distance from where the buffalo lay and down windward and asked one of the birds to toss him a piece of fat of the buffalo. He hopped to the fat tossed to him and inspected it carefully. Then he flew up and circled over the buffalo and said: "The one who eats rosebush berries cannot trap or outwit me, he is not powerful or clever enough," and the red bird flew away. So He-who-starved-to-death gave up and went back to camp.

After quite a long time he again went away from camp, but to a different spot, and again set his Hair Rope trap. This time he said: "I want a fat young elk to lie here," and at that instant he turned into a fat elk. As at the first setting of the trap, many birds came there to eat the fat meat. Soon the red bird came again and asked one of the birds to toss him a piece of fat. He inspected it as he had done before and on finding that it was that of his enemy he flew away saying: "You are not smart enough to trap me."

And so in turn He-who-starved-to-death set his Hair Rope trap for the red bird as he had been told to do and in the order prescribed,—the third

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
773

time by turning into a fat deer, the fourth into a fat white-tailed deer and the fifth into a fat wolf. The last time He-who-starved-to-death put perfume on himself, and the red bird, failing until too late to discern that it was his enemy and not a real wolf, was fooled. Before he found out his mistake he had already stepped inside the circle of the Hair Rope and was trapped. But not knowing that he was trapped he flew away taunting He-who-starved-to-death and calling him names.

So He-who-starved-to-death proceeded to do the thing he had been told to do by the water monster, by the bald eagle and by the man at the lodge by the water's edge. Since he was a Pipe Child he felt that he had the hereditary right to use some of the rites of the Flat Pipe in order to war against and totally destroy the red bird who had great power and who made life on top of the ground almost unbearable for anyone who wished to advance and get along better.

When the red bird flew away out of sight into the clouds, He-who-starved-to-death collected himself, fixed himself up, brushed down his hair, sat down facing the rising sun, and began to sing the song of the water monster at his home under the water. He moved his hands as if pulling something down from above with a rope, and at the end of each song he uttered the sacred refrain of the Pipe songs: "Yo-ho-ho-ho." He sang the song a number of times and before long the red bird appeared in the sky coming down toward him. When he saw this he was encouraged and sang with renewed fervor, and after he finished singing he jerked his hands down violently with all his might. And the red bird hit the earth in a cloud of dust at his feet, with one leg securely snared in the Hair Rope trap. "Now, red bird," said He-who-starved-to-death, "I have gotten you at last and I am going to mete out to you a far worse and more cruel punishment than you inflicted on me. In the end I am going to destroy you completely and the human race will hear of this for all time. In a short time from now you will be no more." So saying he proceeded to pluck the feathers off the red bird until there remained only a few down feathers around the bird's beak. The proud red bird was now a sorry sight, and realizing it closed his eyes and hung his head in shame. He-who-starved-to-death taunted the bird and twisted his beak around: "Now if you are as powerful as you claim to be, do something for yourself, for you have no feathers on your body and winter will soon be here and you will freeze to death." So he tormented the red bird for some time until finally the bird got angry, raised up his head, opened his eyes and said to He-who-starved-to-death: "Yes, I am the most powerful one on top of the ground, and now I will prove it. You cannot get the best of me. You are less powerful than I am." So saying the bird shook himself violently and after he ceased to shake all his feathers came back on his body again. He became whole and entire and with a few more cutting and final remarks to his enemy he flew up and disappeared in the clouds.

He-who-starved-to-death sat there for a while sort of bewildered. But recovering himself soon, he began to sing the song belonging to the Hair

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
773

Rope trap as he had been taught to do by the water monster under the water and repeated the same pulling-down motions he had made before. He succeeded in pulling down the red bird and plucking him as he had done the first time, but the red bird was able to get his feathers back again.

Four times in all he did all this and each time the bird got his feathers back again. But He-who-starved-to-death did not give up. For the fifth time he began singing, believing that the red bird had exhausted his power the fourth time. Sure enough on this fifth trial after he had sung the song a number of times, the red bird appeared, came toward him and landed at his feet with the Hair Rope trap still attached to one of his legs. He plucked all the bird's feathers off again. Again the red bird shook himself violently as he had done the other four times, but all his efforts failed and his feathers did not come back again.

So He-who-starved-to-death tormented the bird to his heart's content until he tired of doing so. Then he said to the bird: "Now since you did not pity me on that island where you put me against my will, and since you do not even now respect me nor my present true name 'He-who-starved-to-death,' but you alone still call me 'He-who-eats-rosebush-berries,' I will not be moved by any prayer or entreaty you might make. I doubt whether you will even attempt to pray, for you are too proud and think too much of yourself, having the idea that you do not need anyone's help. It took me all summer to trap you and to get revenge on you. But now I have conquered you completely and will leave you to your fate. You will starve and freeze to death after winter sets in."

So He-who-starved-to-death, the Flat Pipe Child and the second son of the Keeper of the Flat Pipe at that time, now became ruler of all the people who lived on top of the ground. He added many rites to the Flat Pipe rite,—the invocation of the Last Child, the Hair Rope, the song of the water monster. He did so much and so well for his people that after he died his name was invoked when the Gros Ventres prayed in earnest and has been so invoked down to this present day.[9]

6. Origin of the Feathered Pipe[10]

a. *Version of The Boy*

All the people after the flood were living the life of the Flat Pipe as they

---

[9] The horse does not enter into the Flat Pipe rite although He-who-starved-to-death was the one who brought horses to the Gros Ventres. There are, however, certain associations between the keeper of the Flat Pipe and horses (see p. 63).

[10] Kroeber, 1907, p. 112 (No. 23), gives a short version of origin of the "chief Pipe" which undoubtedly refers to the Feathered Pipe. See also our No. 7, in which young man dies, is placed in Feathered Pipe lodge, and storm comes.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

had been taught to live by White Man. There were many people then who lived happily and multiplied.

539
773

All were camped in a circle in a certain place. Quite a distance away there was high ground with a steep bank on one end of it. A certain childless couple decided to move up to this high ground. The man was very successful in his hunting there in that isolated place and spent most of his time hunting. Towards sundown one day they saw coming a big storm with lightning and rain. It looked as if it would be an unusually severe storm so they got everything ready, tightening the lodge and so forth. The man and woman then sat in the lodge. When the storm was within hearing distance they heard some men singing right in the storm. When the storm reached them it turned out to be a very severe one with high wind, though of short duration. During the storm the Ruler of the Storm spoke to the man and his wife: "You have been selected by the Ruler of the Storm to be Keepers of the Pipe and of that carved rock. Whenever a storm like this comes, use this pipe and rock to pray to the Ruler of the Storm not to be too hard on you." The Ruler of the Storm taught them the four different songs of the Pipe and the ritual of it.

When the storm was over the tent and everything the couple owned had been taken away by the storm. They looked around and saw a pipe and a rock with a human face carved in profile on it.

So now the Gros Ventre people had two pipes and bundles, the Flat Pipe and the Feathered Pipe. And they prospered and lived long and were happy and always had good luck. They had great reverence for both of the pipes, but greater reverence for the Flat Pipe. All the people lived together in one camp. And whenever they moved camping sites, the Flat Pipe as the senior pipe took the lead while the Feathered Pipe came next. If the people separated into two camps, so that one half had the Flat Pipe and the other the Feathered Pipe, the Feathered Pipe took the lead in this other party.

b. *Version by Thick*

A certain couple who lived at a time after the great Flood had a boy and this boy from the time he was a child never went out and played or joined with other children; he stayed by himself. He was a good boy, a very modest boy. This boy was like that up to about the age of 17 or 18. There was another family of another band, a member of which was a girl of the same nature,—a quiet, stay-at-home girl. Since neither went out and played they wouldn't have known one another; they must have been told through a dream. The boy said: "Well, my father and my mother, you go to this family. They have a girl. You go there and ask the parents of that girl if I can have her for my wife." And the father of course was glad to do it.

So he and his old woman went over to this family. When they got over there this man who had the daughter was glad to see these folks visit. "Well, old man, you have never come into my lodge before and I am glad you have come. Sit down." And he told his wife: "Cook for them." So they cooked

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
773

and after they had eaten this man said: "Well, my friend, what I came for today is this. My son sent me over here to ask for your daughter. He wants to marry her." The girl's father said: "Thanks, thanks, I am glad somebody has asked for my daughter. All right. Now, you tell your son not to be in a big hurry because we want to make a lodge and when we are ready we will let you know."

So they went home and told their son and he said: "That is all right." So the girl's parents got busy and got hides and robes and made a big lodge all furnished. So when it was ready they pitched it and put everything in it and horses were tied by the lodge. Then they cooked a lot of food and brought it in there. Then they sent word to this other family: "Now we are ready for your son." So this man took his son over there. When they got there the girl's father came out and said: "Son-in-law, that is your lodge. Go right in." The girl went in. Then the man said: "Son-in-law, there is a lot of food in there and you have to invite old men." So the father-in-law called out and invited several old men to feast with this young couple. So the young couple stayed with the girl's parents for a long time.

After a while the young man said to his wife: "Well, we have stayed with your parents long enough. We will now stay with my parents." So they camped by his father.

One midsummer day it was very hot and they raised the lodge cover to let air in. In the evening the young fellow told his father: "Father, early in the morning I want you folks to move my lodge. You see that flat out there (away from the camp on the west side)? I want you to set my lodge there early in the morning." So the next morning the old people got busy and moved the lodge to where he wanted it. They did it without asking any questions and he didn't tell them why he asked this. After they moved it he said: "Now, father, you get a couple of old men (criers) to tell the people to fix up their lodges tight, so they won't blow over. There is to be a terrible wind."

So his father went back and got the men to announce what his son had said. And you know how it is, there are always many people who don't believe. "Why should I try to fix my lodge tight when it is a hot day and there is no wind?" But of course a lot of them fixed up their lodges tight. So the young fellow told his father: "You bring all my horses and picket them right here in front of the lodge." And the old man, without asking any questions, did everything his son told him. So he brought up all the horses, quite a lot, because both families had given the young couple horses. And after they did that the young man said: "Well, you go home." And after the young man's father went home they saw a little cloud in the west and it soon spread, and when it was coming there was lightning and thunder, and when it came to the camp, the wind and rain came together. It was like a cloudburst and where the young man's lodge was that thunder was just rolling.

After the storm had passed over very few lodges were left standing. They never did find the lodges of those who disobeyed. The old man went out

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
773

and saw that his son's lodge, horses and belongings were all gone. He found only the two young persons sitting on the flat where the lodge had been. And then the old man walked out there, his son saw him coming and called to him at a distance: "Stop! Now go right back and tell the people I want all of them, young and old, to come, I want to show them something." So the old man turned and walked back and got the crier to announce that. So the whole tribe came and the young man told them: "Tell all the people to come in single file, coming from the west, my parents first, then my wife's parents, and then all the rest." So they did that. They came in single file. They came slowly and the young man had on only his robe. He put his robe back and held out both his hands touching and his wife did the same. And in his hands he had the Pipe and this woman had the Image. Neither the Pipe nor the Image had been made by the couple, but had been given them from heaven. Everybody went by and looked.

After everyone was gone, they got up and went home. Then people got busy and they got another lodge and everything that goes with it and set it up for this young couple again—horses and everything. And after he got his lodge and everything back, the young man and his wife went in and he told his father: "You call the old men, the noted men, call all of them." So they called all the old and noted men and they came in and the young man said: "All right. This thing has been done and I am going to tell you about it. From the time I was old enough to know I began to dream. And everything about the Pipe, how it is to be handled and what to do with it, I used to be told in my dreams. And that is why I had to be by myself and never go out and play. When I got to be a young man, I was told that the Pipe was ready. That is why I then asked for this girl. She was the same. And after that you know what happened. Well, here it is. From now on, whenever this Pipe is passed to another hand they will have to do the same. When this Pipe has to be passed on, you will have to make a raid on the one who gets it and take everything he has, the same as they did with me. You see they took my lodge and horses and everything, and they went up in the clouds. But this other, he will lose everything but it will remain among the people. I am going to bundle this Pipe and these other things have to go in (the feather stem, the Pipe, the Image, the owl and the whistle). When I pass this Pipe on there will be six persons that will keep the Pipe in turn and carry on the work, but every seventh keeper is going to become a holy man, and he will get all the power. He will have control of the weather, with power to cause and stop rain and storms." And the Gros Ventres claim that it has worked out just this way. Every seventh keeper became a great man, holy. In recent years old Bull Lodge got the Pipe and he must have been a seventh one in the series, and he became a holy man (bitä:nchi) with weather power.

c. *Version by Singer*

A certain young man was sleeping and in his dream a person came to him and said: "Don't camp in this circle. Camp off by yourself. You are going

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
773

to get something." He did so. There was just a huge rain cloud and the thunder was terrible, and that is when Bha'a gave him the Feathered Pipe. He didn't have a horse or anything else left, but only the clothing he had on. He and his wife just sat there like that. When he was given the Pipe, this person said: "When this Pipe is given away the people receiving it want to do just as you did." So when the Pipe is transferred the new owner and his wife give away everything he has to the old owner and just sit there with nothing but the clothes they have on.

d. *Version by Al Chandler*[11]

This Feathered Pipe was gotten from a young fellow who was a very poor man. He didn't have any father or mother. They had died when he was young and he was staying with his grandmother. He used to have dreams that something was going to be given to him, something very important. He figured that people always have to pay something to get anything, so he thought he had better go out and rustle some horses to pay for what he was going to get. He went out two or three times and brought back quite a bunch of horses.

One summer he was sitting around in the daytime and something told him: "Well, you are going to get something now. You better get ready for it. The first thing you want to do is to get a big lodge. If you haven't got one, get it some way, buy it or ask for one." He went around and told people and they helped him out, they just gave him the lodge. After he got the lodge he was told to put it up somewhere by itself. "Now after you do that," he was told, "you rustle good things like beadwork and what Indians have, blankets and things inside the lodge and fix your lodge up good. And you must have a horse tied to every one of the lodge pins. When you have finished with that, you go in there (in the lodge) and be there all alone." So after he got everything ready, he did this, just as he was told. Whoever this was who told him what to do knew that he was ready.

It was toward the middle of the day and he was in there all by himself. All at once it started to get cloudy and an electric storm and a strong wind came. After all the storm had passed, the people wondered what had happened. They looked over where the lodge had been, and nothing was there except a man sitting on the ground. The lodge, the horses, everything was gone. He was sitting there by himself with this Feathered Pipe and some kind of moccasins of animal fur (these are in the Pipe bundle now). Some old fellows came very close and asked him: "What happened?" "Well," he said, "you can all come now, all those who want to hear."

So the old men and old women came. They kept the youngsters and the young women away. This young man's name was Broken Knife. He told

[11] When Al Chandler was a child he lived with Sitting High, who at that time was keeper of the Feathered Pipe.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

what had happened, and of course they were afraid to touch the Pipe. They had never seen anything like it. It was just glittering with different colors. They had never seen a Pipe like that. The stem is porcupine quill work with eagle feathers all along the stem. The young man knew all the songs that belong to the Feathered Pipe. The Pipe was given by Bha'a.

539
773

e. *Version by Garter Snake*[10]

A long time ago there lived a man named First Man, with two wives and two children. He used to have dreams, and in one of them he was told he was to be given something from above (heaven). After he had been told this the third time in dreams he called the old men together and said to them: "Three times I have dreamed that I am to be given something from above. I do not know what to do. I have called you together to tell you my dream and to get your advice." One old man as spokesman advised him: "If you dream this again, accept the gift, for the good of all the people." After this the First Man had the same dream again (the fourth time). He did not see anybody but he said: "All right, I'll accept it." He was then told in his dream to get ready four nights after that.

On the fourth afternoon after, he told his father: "You and some of the old men, criers, go around and tell the people to make their lodges fast so they will not blow down. There is going to be a big storm with great wind and much rain." The criers went around and warned the people. Some obeyed and some made light of the warning. First Man then took his own lodge and set it up some distance from the camp. He then picketed his horses near his lodge and sent his younger wife back to the main camp to stay there that night. But First Man and his older wife, First Woman, with one of his two children, remained in his lodge.

About dusk that evening a heavy black cloud with lightning came from the west. That night a terrific storm, with very sharp lightning and thunder, violent wind and torrents of rain, started and lasted all night until about daybreak. During it, people could hear a whistling from a whistle. The next morning the sun came out warm, and there was water all over the place.

First Man's father was worried about his son and went out to look toward's his son's lodge. The lodge and horses were gone. He saw only First Man, First Woman and the child, sitting out there on the flat. So he called to his people: "Come out and look. Everything my son owned is gone. He

---

[10] In early life Garter Snake had been Pipe Child to the Feathered Pipe. Her version came from her father, Bull Lodge, a former keeper. She emphasized that she was giving us what and only what her father had told and that he had not told her everything. She mentioned that when her father was about to tell her the story of the Pipe he said: "Listen very closely to what I am going to tell you; you can tell it to your grandchildren when you get old."

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
773

is sitting out on the flat." So everybody came out and looked. The man and his wife and child were sitting there on sage with their heads and faces covered with some kind of covering sent down from heaven. The people were afraid to go near them. Up above a man and woman singing was heard (by First Man? or by the people?).

At last about noon the young man uncovered his head and his father came closer: "Son, we don't know what to do. What do you want us to do?" He replied: "First, put up a lodge with all its furnishings close to where my lodge was which was taken from me. Then get sage and put it inside the lodge at the back, with the heads of the sage pointing to the center, and put some down on the ground from where we are to the door of the lodge." After all this was done, the three walked over to the lodge and went in.

During the storm First Man had been given four things from above: The Pipe, a feathered thing, an image and a whistle. The Pipe had been given by the Supreme Being through Bha'a. The Supreme Being was father of the Pipe. He was also told what names he and his first wife should thenceforth be known by: Whistling Man and Woman-takes-the-lead because she had to take the lead in all wanderings.

She became the main Pipe Woman who would carry the Pipe when the people were on the march and who would take it in and out of the Keeper's lodge. The man's younger wife became second Pipe Woman whose duty it was to handle the Pipe when the main Pipe Woman was in her menses, for at such times the latter was not allowed to handle the Pipe.

The night after the storm Whistling Man asked to have a drum (or four drums?) brought over to his lodge. He called the old men over and sang four songs (no doubt the four Feathered Pipe songs). He put the four gifts each in a separate covering, placed them all together in a black-bear robe, tied the bundle, and put it in the back of his lodge on the sage that had been spread there. After he had wrapped the Pipe and sung the four songs, he told the story of his dreams and gave instructions about the Pipe and its ritual.

Every night after this he was told in his dreams what other things should be put in the bundle with the Pipe. These were various birds of the air,—for the Pipe came from above,—except one thing from a ground animal, a muskrat skin. He also had somebody make a drum and a wooden bowl, which still hang with, not in, the Pipe bundle. It took him several years to get all these things together. The last thing he got for the bundle was a tanned elk hide.

When all these things were ready, he took a white-buffalo robe, cut it to size, and wrapped the Pipe itself in this. The other things too he wrapped separately, the feathered thing in smoked skin, the image in hair of buffalo fur, but the whistle was just put unwrapped in the bundle.

He was told too (in his dreams) about the ritual of the Pipe. The boughs or needles of sweet pine were to be used as incense. At the time they were camped far from the mountains where sweet pine grows, but in Whistling

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539 773

Man's lodge was a whole branch of sweet pine. Where it came from, the people did not know. The people in case of sickness would come to Whistling Man with offerings of tanned deer or antelope skin to "cover" the Pipe. After the offerings had accumulated he had some of the men make a sweat-lodge, with pile of dirt outside (from the excavation inside the lodge), and a buffalo skull on top of it, and with a long pole on which the offerings were hung. When all was ready and the stones were heated, an old man prayed, inviting four times, first the Supreme Being, and afterwards the old men present, to sweat.

Whistling Man also told the people that the Feathered Pipe had been given them for their well-being and protection, that it should remain with the Gros Ventres as long as the world would last, and that it should never be transferred to any other tribe, no matter what should happen.

So Whistling Man kept the Pipe for forty years. Then he was told in his dream of a coming great flood. Forty years after the flood, when he was so old and feeble that he could hardly dance at all, he was told in a dream to transfer it to some other Keeper. He then made a drum and a gourd rattle. The drum was painted half black and half red, black to represent black (storm) clouds and red to represent the earth. He was told, too, from time to time to add to the Pipe bundle certain specified things: the whole skin of a muskrat, a crane, a big white swan, a duck, helldivers, and an unidentified bird called Big Bird. After all these things were finally gathered together, he wrapped each one separately. He was further told to collect one feather from each of all kinds of birds and tie these feathers on the stick to make the feathered thing. All these objects were then put in the Pipe bundle which had its cover of black-bear robe and an outside cover of tanned elk hide.

When all was ready, he was told in a dream: "You are now ready to turn over this Pipe. But wait until you are told." The man chosen to receive it had to be a good, noted and wealthy man. Finally, after a time, Whistling Man gave it to his uncle who meanwhile had been told in a dream that it was to be given to him. Whistling Man said to the people: "Now, my children, I am going to give you my son (the Pipe)." And he said to his uncle: "After you keep it four years, transfer it to somebody else. If you cannot find a worthy man, keep it four more years. If at the end of your second term (eight years) you cannot find a worthy successor, keep it four more years. But at the end of twelve years you have to transfer it." When Whistling Man actually turned over the Pipe, it was night time. He did what had been done to him in the storm when he first got the Pipe: He took the same black cloth and put it over the heads of his uncle and the latter's wife. Then the people raided his uncle and took his lodge, belongings, horses, everything, as Whistling Man's property had been taken in the storm. The next day the people clubbed together and gave the uncle and his wife a lodge, bedding, horses and everything they needed, and gave them horses to give to the nephew who had given his uncle the Pipe.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
773

And so as time went on the Pipe passed from Keeper to Keeper at least every twelve years. Later the new Keeper was appointed, not by the previous one acting alone from instructions in a dream, but by consultation and agreement with the old men called together by the Keeper to elect the successor. Since the days of the first Keeper, Whistling Man, up to the time Bull Lodge became keeper, there had been 200 keepers.

7. He-who-dreams-of-Bha'a

The man and woman who were given the Feathered Pipe by the Ruler of the Storm had at the time no children. They were a young couple still in the prime of life. After they got the Feathered Pipe a boy was born to them. This boy grew up like any other boy. For a while he was called Pipe Child. After he got to be a good sized boy (about 14 years old) he used to leave his father's lodge, go away from the camp, and cry. Pipe Child used to do this every once in a while. Sometimes he would come back sooner than usual and would walk around his father's lodge and cry; after a while he would get tired and would go stay to the back of the lodge on the outside on the place of honor and would sit reclining against the lodge just where the Feathered Pipe was kept and would sleep there. At other times he would go inside the lodge to the Feathered Pipe bundle and embrace it and cry; and when he got sleepy he would lie down on the bed right under the tripod where the Feathered Pipe was kept.

Pipe Child did all this over and over again. He would go out away from camp and cry or he would come and cry around his father's lodge. His father and mother would be glad at this, for they knew that the boy was in this way forming his character. They did not tell the boy this in so many words, but silently they approved.

While the boy was doing this the people were camped near a steep coulee with water at the bottom of it. This was where the people went to fetch water. One day the enemy sneaked up to them at a time when a lot of women had gone down together to the stream for water. Here the enemy attacked them. The banks were steep and the Gros Ventre women could not easily make their escape. So a lot of the women were killed and some were scalped alive. The alarm spread rapidly and the Gros Ventre then got their horses ready and put on their war regalia and prepared to pursue the enemy and to give battle. Pipe Child's father said to him: "My boy, you are old enough now. You are nearly grown up (the boy was about 16 or 17 years old at the time, which was about the age at which fathers let their sons go to battle). So you will have to live like the rest of the people. You might as well start now. You go along on this fighting expedition." The father dressed up Pipe Child, tied his own war medicine on the boy (war medicines were tied on the head or elsewhere), gave him a spear but no other weapons, mounted the boy on his own (the father's) horse, the fastest and best horse in the Gros Ventre tribe. The name of the horse was

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Crooked Leg. The father said to Pipe Child: "Give chase to the enemy, and when you overtake them ride right into their midst, get on the right-hand side of one of the enemy and spear him, and after you have done that wheel your horse around and come back to camp. Do not do anything else. Do not spare the horse; he is a good fast horse. Let him run for all he is worth." The man took quite a while to get Pipe Child ready. When Pipe Child was ready he rode off and rode as fast as he could. By the time he reached the battleground, a pitched battle was already under way. Pipe Child used his own judgment since there was only one single thing he had to do, to pick out one of the enemy worth attacking. So he saw one of the enemy mounted on an "aplouse" horse (white with black spots on the rump) with bloody withers. Pipe Child thought to himself: "This is one of the enemy who scalped the women alive." So Pipe Child made for him. He was a great warrior, one of the most prominent men of the enemy tribe. Pipe Child waited until this man was riding away from him. The boy then rode after him, got to the right side of him and when just opposite him speared him, piercing his body through and through. He couldn't pull the spear out, so he just left it in the man's body and wheeled his horse about and rode back to camp. His father was waiting for him and said to him: "Son, what did you do?" The boy replied: "I did just what you told me to do." Then he related all he had done. His father was glad.

By this time all the other Gros Ventre warriors had come back. They had killed many of the enemy and inflicted on them a crushing defeat. There was great rejoicing. They were singing all over the camp. Finally the celebration centered in front of the Feathered Pipe Keeper's lodge, for it was the custom to celebrate the victory in front of the lodge of the person who had done the greatest deed, and in that battle Pipe Child had performed the greatest feat. The people danced and sang and the father gave away all his belongings in honor of Pipe Child, his friends helping him to give the things away. At last he had nothing left but the Feathered Pipe and his own horse, Crooked Leg.

When the dancing was over, one old couple still remained around dancing and singing. They went toward the father's lodge, saying the name of Pipe Child and of his parents. When they got in front of the lodge, they stopped and sang and danced there, still saying the name of the boy and his father. Finally the father and his wife were moved and he said to her: "Invite them in." The old couple came in and the father said to them: "Why are you still celebrating and why do you come to my lodge?" The old man replied: "The reason is that I want your horse, Crooked Leg. I want you to give it to me. I am a poor man. It would do me a lot of service in my hunting and other work." The Keeper of the Feathered Pipe said to him: "That is easy. I thought you would ask something hard. If that is all you want, you shall have the horse." So the Keeper said to his wife: "Go out and unpicket Crooked Leg and give him to this old man." So the woman went out and unpicketed Crooked Leg and gave him to the old man. The

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
773

old man and his wife had the more reason to celebrate, and *they shouted* louder and louder and attracted the attention of the whole camp. Everybody knew that the old man had gotten this great horse from the Keeper.

The Keeper had planted tobacco for that season. Without waiting for the customary harvesting of the tobacco, all the people took advantage of the occasion and raided the tobacco patch and the man couldn't say anything for his son had performed the greatest deed in battle. Such was the custom. That was the way renown was acquired, doing such things as that.

Pipe Child grew up and went on in his way. Whenever there was a battle or other event, he did like everyone else. Every time there was a battle he distinguished himself among the best of the warriors. He was brave, capable, and intelligent, and in a short time he acquired a place in the inside circle of the leading men. When Pipe Child observed this he said to his father: "You tell the people that when they go out for the buffalo hunt they should get a buffalo skin from around the forehead, and I will use that for my shield. Tell the people to get good elk skin. I am going to use that for my shield case. Then after they have gotten us these two skins, dry and prepare them. Then just the three of us, you, my mother and myself, will go apart secretly and cut ourselves off from the rest of the people. Then I will paint my shield. While I am painting my shield you will sing for me, singing the songs used in the Feathered Pipe rite."

So they got the two skins, prepared them in the ordinary way. The buffalo head skin was prepared stiff as rawhide; the elk skin was tanned soft and pliable. When everything was ready the father and mother and Pipe Child shut themselves in the Feathered Pipe lodge and started in, the father singing the Feathered Pipe songs while Pipe Child painted the shield. The round buffalo-head rawhide was covered with the elk skin, and it was the elk skin that was painted. A smudge was made and the paints used were fumigated in the smudge from time to time. The background of the shield was left in its natural color. Pipe Child, with black charcoal paint, painted on the shield in profile facing each other the two birds representing the Ruler of the Storm, Bha'a. Just above them he painted two zigzag lines nearly horizontal, crossing each other and pointing in opposite directions to represent the lightning. All this was painted in black with charcoal paint. Just above the lightning lines he tied to the shield a dead bird,—a small coal black bird (a little bigger than a swallow, with forked tail, white breast with a little yellow on the breast). Then he trimmed the periphery of the shield with eagle tail feathers attached all around at intervals but not touching one another. Then he put a thong on by which the shield could be suspended from his neck or elsewhere. All this is what came from Pipe Child's crying. He had waited all these years to prove himself worthy before making such a shield. Then Pipe Child said to his father and mother: "Now I am through. I have made my shield. Send for the crier and tell him to come over here."

When the crier got to the lodge Pipe Child said to him: "Go around the

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

camp and tell the people: 'He-who-dreams-of-Bha'a has finished making his shield and is going to put it outside on a tripod. Fasten your lodges down solidly and gather wood and drive your horses to shelter and get ready for a storm." A good many of the people thought this ridiculous for it was about August, the hottest time of the year, the time when the berries and chokecherries were ripe, and the day was a hot sultry one with not a cloud in the sky and with no sign of a storm. A lot of the people had the lower parts of their lodges raised up to let in the breeze and were sitting inside in the shade. A good many of the people however got ready their tents as they were warned to do. 539 773

He-who-dreams-of-Bha'a, for Pipe Child had given himself that name and was henceforth to be known by it, took out his shield and got the tripod on which the Feathered Pipe hung and hung his shield thereon a good distance back of his father's lodge. Almost at once a speck of cloud appeared in the west. In no time it grew bigger and bigger. Very soon after there were signs of an approaching storm. The people hurried to get ready, but before they were ready the storm struck with a violent wind that blew over a number of the lodges. Rain poured in torrents and there was severe lightning as if just over head. So it stormed and stormed day and night for four nights. On the morning after the fourth night there was a deep snow. One of the Gros Ventre got up early that morning, looked toward the Feathered Pipe lodge and saw that there was no snow around the lodge for a good distance. And he said to the people: "Look over there. Not a flake has fallen in a circle a good distance around the Feathered Pipe lodge."

He-who-dreams-of-Bha'a always wore his shield when he went to battle. He also made four round wheels of willow, each wrapped around with buckskin and with little feathers on them. These he used to tie on his head, one on his forehead and the other three in the same row back to his occiput. He also wore as a cuff on his right wrist a tanned badger face with the mouth towards his hand. He said to the people: "Unless I am struck on the head within one of the four wheels I will not be hurt." He wore the badger face on his wrist because he was right-handed and used this right hand for everything and hence everything he did while wearing it would be supernaturally easy for him.

And so He-who-dreams enjoyed great reputation and became a renowned war chief while he was still young. He lived on and was getting to be a grown man. Many offers of marriage were made to him from other prominent families, but he always refused saying: "I am not ready yet to get married."

He-who-dreams had a specially good friend. There was a big battle and for some reason He-who-dreams was among the last to start out for it. When he arrived at the scene of battle the fighting was about over and the two contending parties were at a standstill. The Gros Ventre said to him: "You are late. The fighting is now practically over. Your friend got killed." He-who-dreams felt very bad and said: "Let me go fight

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
773

those who killed my friend." But his relatives would not let him go. They held his horse. They were afraid for him. They felt the odds were too great against him to go alone, great warrior though he was. So he couldn't get away and was angry. Then he jumped off his horse and jerked his shield off himself, bent it out of shape across his knee and threw it to the ground in anger. It rolled away and as it rolled the ground burned, so that a burnt trail was left.

Then He-who-dreams went back home and he felt bad. His friend had been killed. The enemy had departed. All the Gros Ventre came back and went to bed. That night he dreamed that he had done a wrong thing, that he had violated something great in the way he had treated his shield, that his career was threatened with coming to an end and that he was practically done for. When he woke up he felt bad and told his father and mother about his dream. They became worried over their son.

After a while He-who-dreams began to sicken; his skin turned black; he got thinner and thinner and he lost his good looks and appearance. His father got the best medicine men to doctor him paying them big fees. Finally He-who-dreams got so weak that he had to be raised from the bed. Then he said to his father: "It is of no use to doctor me as I cannot be cured. I am going to die unless just one thing can be done." The father was glad and said to him: "What is this thing?" The son replied: "Someone must cut my hair, cutting off a little bunch on my forehead, over each ear and straight back of the head, and then I will recover." So the father was glad and he tried to get someone to do the cutting this way. But one after another refused because the father and mother and boy were special persons and everybody was afraid. So nobody would do it. The boy's father and mother were desperate because it was not permitted by their belief for the father and mother to do it for their own son and they couldn't get anybody else to do it.

After this He-who-dreams was bedridden and finally dying. He said: "I am going to die but not right away. There are four things inside my body. When they have come out I am going to die. Do not worry. Do not mourn for me. Do not shed a tear. For if certain things are done I will come back to life again. The four things inside me are: a small petrified animal with four legs (about as long as a middle finger, a thunder stone), which will come out first; a sucker; a water snake; a bird, the one I have sewed on my shield. After all four are out I shall die." Then all these four things came out: first, the thunder stone; then the fish came out alive, wriggled and died; then the water snake wriggled around a while and died; last the little bird looked out of his mouth and made a squeaking noise and died; and at this moment He-who-dreams breathed his last.

Before he died He-who-dreams had given instructions to his father and mother what to do after he died: "Leave the lodge where it is facing to the south. Lay my body on the Feathered Pipe bed with my head towards the east, the rising sun. Cover me up as if I were asleep. Fill a black pipe (but

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
773

not the Feathered Pipe) and lay it alongside of the incense hearth with the stem to the east and the bowl to the west. Close the lodge tight, including the top-opening and the ears. You two and everyone else move away out of sight of the Feathered Pipe lodge and when you get to the new camp ground go through the smudging, smoking and singing rite gone through when I made my shield. I have one doubt, because my father, the Ruler of the Storm, will be gone. (It was the fall of the year with the leaves and the birds gone and past the season for thunderstorms.) But do not lose courage. Do what I tell you. For four nights no one shall come to look in where my body is lying. On the morning after the fourth night come. If you do all the things I tell you to do and if you hear a rumble a long ways off, this is a sign that I will come back alive again."

The father and mother did as their son had told them. They shed no tears, carried out no mourning and kept their heads and followed his other instructions. Everyone moved away from the Feathered Pipe lodge. When they reached the new camp site it was late in the evening. The father started at once to sing, smoke, and make a smudge. Just before sundown he heard thunder rumbling somewhere. He grunted the grunt of gladness: "Now my boy will come back." By nightfall the sky was overcast with clouds all over, rain came, and with it thunder and lightning as if just overhead and especially in the direction where the tent with the body of the dead son lay. The storm kept up as long as they stayed awake. The next day it continued with thunder and lightning the whole day long and into the second night so long as they stayed awake. On the third morning the storm was still on and lasted through the day and the third night. But a little after noon on the third day the sun appeared. The storm had spent itself and there was still some dripping, but it was no longer raging.

He-who-dreams had a married brother. The brother knew the orders that had been left by He-who-dreams but he was jealous of him, even to the point of stealing his wife (paramour?). So the brother got on his horse to go over to where the dead body was lying although he was not supposed to do so. When he came in sight of the Feathered Pipe lodge, from afar he saw a man standing in front of it. After taking a good look and surmising it was his brother he wheeled his horse and rode fast back to his father's camp and told his father what he had seen and done. His father rebuked him: "You should not have done this. You have killed my son, your brother."

Then a lot of people went over to look. When they reached the lodge they found the lodge door open and there lying just over the threshold with his head inside He-who-dreams, stripped except for his breech-cloth, dead. He had come to life again but because his brother had looked before it was time, he had died again. The people looked all around the lodge and they found due east from the head of He-who-dreams a spot where the grass was trampled and where lightning had struck and had run in a crooked line toward where the dead man's head was. Due south they found another like spot with a crooked chain leading toward his side. Due west a like spot and

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
773

a chain leading toward his feet and due north another similar spot and a chain leading toward his side. The Gros Ventre always believed that the Ruler of the Storm had doctored (revived?) him and that if it had not been for what his brother had done, He-who-dreams would have come back to life as he had said. This is the only story the Gros Ventre know in which somebody who was dead came back to life. He-who-dreams was a truly great man.

(All the above happened in recent times since the Gros Ventre came to this part of the country which was previously Snake Indian country, the Snakes using rocks for pickets instead of sticks. Since that time which was, however, before the white people appeared, the Gros Ventre have believed that the Feathered Pipe was given them from above by the Bha'a because everything narrated in the preceding story happened before their very eyes.)

8. Loss and Recovery of the Flat Pipe[18]

The Gros Ventre went on and lived around this country, fighting with all the surrounding tribes, especially the Sioux and the Assiniboine. On one occasion they were camped on the White River (which empties into the Missouri R. from the south), south of the Missouri R. from the end of Bear Paw Mountains. All at once they were attacked by a great body of Sioux, Assiniboine and Cree from the east, who were determined to exterminate the Gros Ventre. The Gros Ventre were hopelessly outnumbered. A great battle was fought. For once the Gros Ventre lost the battle and with it the Flat Pipe. The Flat Pipe was captured by these enemies who took it away with them. It was the Assiniboine who had captured the Pipe. The Assiniboine who had captured the Pipe was an outstanding respectable and very wise man. He did not molest the bundle, but kept it in a prominent place in his lodge and treated it with respect. During the early part of the winter following the capture he had a dream one night. In the dream he heard the Flat Pipe talking to him and telling him it wanted to go back to its father and mother, and telling the man to bring the Pipe back to the Gros Ventre. The man paid no attention to the dream. He told nobody. He thought it was just a dream and nothing more. After a while he had another dream in which the Flat Pipe said to him: "Bring me back to my father and mother. If you do not, some grave evil will happen to your tribe,—famine, suffering, a great calamity." Still the man told nobody. In the dead of winter it kept snowing and snowing. The snow got so deep that no one could travel around in it. The people were without food and were suffering. The man had a dream again in which the Flat Pipe said to him: "If you do not bring me back to my father and mother (the Keepers) I will wipe you off the face of the earth."

Now the Assiniboine man was really alarmed. The next morning he invited all the principal Indians to his lodge to tell them about his dreams.

[18] Cf. passing reference to the incident in Kroeber, 1908, p. 274.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

His wife cooked food for them and after they had eaten and smoked, he told them about his dreams. They discussed the matter and decided that the pipe might be the cause of their suffering. It was still snowing and they could not travel. They decided that it was best to return the Flat Pipe to the Gros Ventre although they were at war with them. They felt that the Flat Pipe must be powerful otherwise it could not cause such hard times. So they told the Flat Pipe: "We are going to bring you back to your father and mother, your Keepers, so soon as the grass grows in the spring." The meeting broke up, and they all went away. 539 773

The following night the same Assiniboine man had a fourth dream in which the Flat Pipe told him: "I am glad I am going back home. The threat I made will be withdrawn for you have granted my request. Go to the top of the hills from where you are camped, and you will find four buffalo there and they will be easy to get. In three nights from the time you get them, I will send you warm winds to melt the snow so that you can get around and will not suffer so much."

The next morning the man told the people about his fourth dream. He told them he thought that the best way to get the four buffalo was to send two good men out to scout for them and to come back and report. The two men went out and came back and reported: "There are four buffalo there, a little way off." But the snow was deep and it was hard to get around, so they decided to send out enough good hunters to surround the buffalo so that whichever way the buffalo ran, they would run into armed hunters. And so they got all four buffalo and had fresh meat to eat. After three days the warm winds came and the snow left the ground. And there were plenty of other buffalo killed. Soon the people were strong again. The grass came up a little later. It was an unusually early season.

So the Assiniboine got ready and started for the Gros Ventre country. The Assinoboine man who had captured the Flat Pipe took the lead, carrying the Flat Pipe on his back. The Assiniboine found the Gros Ventre somewhere around where the latter now are. When the Gros Ventre saw the Assiniboine coming they made ready for battle, but seeing the bundle on the Assiniboine man's back, they just surrounded him without attacking. The Gros Ventre made peace with the Assiniboine on the spot. The most remarkable thing was that this peace was a lasting one, the Gros Ventre and Assiniboine never fought one another again. All this happened a long time ago and peace has lasted down to the present day. The country of the Assiniboine is to the east of the present Gros Ventre country. They have no real right here where the Gros Ventre are, but are allowed to remain here because of their returning the Flat Pipe to the Gros Ventre. The Assiniboine used to be poor, ragged, leading a miserable life with no horses and besides they had no morals and had evil ways. But the Gros Ventre saved them from the condition they were in, gave them horses and other things and made them what they are, bringing them out of their low moral condition. All this was done on account of their bringing back the Flat Pipe.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

9. Man Escapes From a Cannibal Dwarf

●539
773

One day a man was out hunting. He spied a dwarf first. So he hid as best he could and hoped to escape the notice of the dwarf. The dwarf came to where the man was hiding and discovered him. The man played dead. The dwarf was undecided what to do. "I wonder," he thought, "what has happened to this man. I wonder if he is dead." So he walked up close to the man, examined him, and concluded he was dead. Said the dwarf to himself: "I'll bring his body home and eat it."

So the dwarf put the body on his back and went off. On the way the man was trying to think up some way of escaping. From time to time the dwarf's trail led through brush. The man knew that the dwarf was not very intelligent, so took a chance and his one arm being free, with his fist he hit the dwarf in the face, hoping the dwarf would think himself hit by the brush. This the man did every time the trail led through the brush, until the dwarf became much annoyed. So the dwarf put the man down saying: "I'll break his arm. It swings and hits me catching in the brush." So the dwarf stopped and pulled on the arm. The man let his arm bend and the dwarf thought he had broken it.

The dwarf then packed the man on his shoulders and went on again. The man kept hitting the dwarf in the face as before, until soon the dwarf's eyes were closed and he could not see. So the dwarf decided to cache his load. He laid the man on top of a stump and made for home. As soon as the dwarf was out of sight, the man jumped off the stump and made his escape.

When the dwarf reached home, he said to his children: "My children, I have very good food. I cached a man back yonder. Go fetch him and we'll eat him." The children were glad and got ready. "Wait," said the father, "I'll go with you and show you the spot. We're so glad to have something to eat, we'll dance all the way over." So they danced all the way to the stump. When they got to it, there was nothing there. The dwarf was puzzled, for he thought the man was dead. They examined the stump and looked all around it. On the stump they saw some fluid (probably sap), and concluded that the man had just rotted away. So they all went back home empty-handed.

10. Found-in-the-Grass[14]

In the long ago the Gros Ventres lived in a land of many mysterious and terrible dangers. They lived in villages separated by great distances, and it

[14] This tale seems to be the most complete of any told by The Boy, probably because it was told at leisure, translated and written out by Tom Main and sent to us by mail. The first part corresponds with Kroeber, 1907, pp. 77-82, No. 19, but in our version The Boy goes on to add a number of incidents which are attributed by Kroeber's informant, Flea, to Blood-Clot (pp. 82-90, No. 20). Both of Kroeber's informants, Flea (for No. 20) and Paul Plummage (for No. 19) were of the same generations as The Boy, though of course they were young men when they gave their versions.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

was dangerous for anyone to venture out of any of the villages to get food or wood, to hunt, and especially to visit from one village to another. 539 773

During this period, there lived a Gros Ventre man and his wife who had no children. This man was a great hunter and good provider. Because he was a hunter, he was absent from his village most of the time. On one of these hunting expeditions, he was camped in a most dangerous part of the country, but game was abundant. At the time of this particular hunt, his wife was pregnant, and he took special care of her for their joy was great that now they were going to have a child. He hunted every day and sometimes was gone several days from his camp while his wife stayed alone. He cautioned and advised his wife very earnestly: "Do not answer any calls, or voices, or knocks on the lodge, even if they are cries for help, nor under any circumstances, while I am absent from home."

One day he told his wife. "I am going away to hunt in the most dangerous part of the land, but where furbearing animals are abundant. Winter is approaching and we need warm clothing for ourselves and our expected child. I shall be gone a long time. There are dangers. Remain inside of the lodge and be absolutely quiet if you hear any voices or calls, whether they be from humans or animals. If only you carry out my instructions, if you close the lodge and make it appear as if no one is at home and stay inside and be perfectly silent when you hear voices of any kind, nothing will harm or molest you."

So he got ready all the things needed for this his greatest hunt and went to the land of the furbearing animals. As soon as he was out of sight his wife immediately proceeded to fix the lodge and camp for a long siege and as she went inside she fixed the door so it would appear that no one was home.

As she sat at work on some handiwork, she heard a moaning cry for help of some one in great distress. It seemed to her that it was from a human being, but she was not sure, and she immediately put away her work and sat perfectly still. As she sat listening, the cry for help was repeated and this time it was closer to the camp. She suddenly felt a great urge to go outside and see who was in such distress and offer her help, but remembering what her husband had said about remaining inside the lodge and being perfectly silent she gave up the idea and sat and listened.

As the cry for help came ever closer to the lodge she was positive now that it was that of a human being hopelessly lost. She sat perfectly still and made up her mind that in the event that this person forced his way into the lodge and tried to harm or molest her she would struggle, fight, and defend herself even if it cost her her life. By this time the person who was lost and crying for help, stumbled onto her lodge and was groping around it as if trying to find the door. The intruder went around the lodge several times, and on each round he made he hesitated at the door and could be heard as if fumbling with it.

Finally the woman, notwithstanding her husband's command and the fact that she was alone and not in a physically fit condition to defend herself,

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

534
772

out of compassion and pity for the one in great distress, threw all caution aside and spoke to this person, and directed him where the door could be found. She heard the person cry out for joy when invited by her from inside the lodge. The person removed the barriers that she had placed at the door to make it secure from intrusion, and came in the lodge.

She looked at the person as he straightened up, and saw that he was a blind and very old man. She led him to the place of honor to sit, this being the spot straight opposite the door. The blind man spoke to her kindly, and thanked her for having admitted him into her lodge. All her fears were removed as she thought that even in her condition she could handle this blind old man. Besides he seemed very kind and probably would not try to harm or molest her.

According to the custom of the Gros Ventres at that time, she immediately prepared food for him as he was very hungry and on the verge of starvation, having wandered around for a long time.

When the food was ready to be served, she put it on one of her best bowls and placed it in front of him and told him to eat it. She thought it would be wise to treat him as nicely as possible, even if he was a blind old man, because in those times no one could tell who possessed great power. The old man felt for his food and when he found that it was in this bowl, he said: "This is not the kind of bowl that I eat my food out of."

The woman now sensed that the old man was no ordinary person, so did not question his complaint, but proceeded to put the food in another bowl that she rarely used, and again placed it in front of him. He felt the bowl and said: "This is not the kind yet."

The woman then put the food in her most precious bowl made of shell. But still the old man would not eat the food, saying: "Until the food is placed on the right thing, I cannot eat it."

Then the woman in desperation wondered what she should do. So she took off one of her möccasins and put the food on it, and the old man said: "You are nearer the thing to put the food on than ever, but not yet." So being encouraged she took off one of her leggings, and placed the food on it, then gave it to the old man, but he still refused to eat saying: "You are closer than ever to placing the food on the thing that I use for a bowl."

She then took off her dress and laid it in front of the old man and put the food on it. The old man felt for his meal, and found what it was placed on and told the woman: "I am sure you will comply with my custom." He pushed the dress away with the food on it saying: "If you will only try once more to put my food on the thing that I use for a bowl, I am sure you will succeed."

So the woman pondered a long moment reviewing everything she had tried to do to please the old man. She came to the conclusion that there was one more thing she could do to please him and that was for her to place the food on her body. She then laid down on her back and placed the food he was to eat on her stomach and told him to eat. The old man exclaimed in

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
773

a loud voice: "You have guessed what I use for a bowl, when I eat my food." The old man used his big knife to cut up the meat that was given him and she could see him slashing away.

When the old man had finished eating he told her: "Lie still a moment while I pronounce a prophecy. You are a great, courageous, and wise woman. Your renown will be heard by posterity for all time. Your descendants are destined to be among the greatest of men. Now that you have done all things well I will proceed to carry out my part in the events to come, according to my prophecy."

The woman being nude, the old man took his knife and slashed her abdomen open and felt for her womb. Finding it he found twin boys in it. He took hold of one of them and said to him: "Your name shall be Twin," and threw him to one side of the door. Then taking the other one, he said: "Your name shall be Guyahnôô," and threw him to the other side of the door.

The old man after having done this terrible job, wiped his big knife and went his way, leaving the woman lying dead.

The husband of the woman after a long but successful hunt arrived loaded down with the skins and pelts of furbearing animals. He had some on his back, and a great many on a kind of sleigh which he pulled by hand. He stopped at the door of his lodge, having a premonition that all was not well, as he had seen no sign of his wife when he came in sight, and had heard no noise inside the lodge. Having relieved himself of his great load, he called out to his wife: "Come out and see the great number of fur skins which I have brought for ourselves and our expected child."

Hearing no response, a great fear came over him. However, hoping for the best, he entered the lodge. The sight that met his eyes was not what he had expected. Everything was in utter confusion, and worst of all, his wife lay dead, slashed wide open, and nude.

His sorrow was great, and thoughts raced through his mind reviewing the events which had led up to the death of his wife. He upbraided himself for being so selfish in his desire for hunting, which had caused him to come to the most wild and dangerous regions. And now he was all alone.

Collecting himself, he tenderly lifted the body of his wife and laid it on a bed of robes and furs, the best and most rare of the land. He rearranged everything in the lodge the best he could and sat down to think things out, and try to find a way out of the situation.

After having sat a long time in deep and serious thought, he decided to remain in the same place for an indefinite time in the hope that he might avenge the brutal and shameful killing of his beloved wife. So it was his wont to go out every morning away from the lodge and cry all day long, always on the alert for some human being or animal to come within range so that he could inquire of them who it was that had killed his wife. He came back to the lodge at every sundown, and spent the night there. As time went on, this became a fixed routine which he followed every day.

One evening as he came home after having cried all day some distance

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
773

from the lodge, he found that some of his arrows and other things were scattered around. Not giving this any serious thought, he put things back into place. This happened several times and he began to wonder who or what was taking his things, and leaving them lying around that way. He then decided to match wits with whatever was bothering his lodge and see if he could catch the one.

One day as he stepped out of his lodge he began to cry, and when he got a little way, he cupped his hands over his mouth to make his crying sound as if he were far away. Then he rushed back inside the lodge in time to see two small boys just starting to play with his arrows and things. The boys taken by surprise stood still a moment, but as he reached to get hold of them, they dashed toward the door, and one disappeared at the bottom of the pole on one side of the door and the other at the pole on the other side of the door.

He stood there very much bewildered, but he at least found out who it was that was taking his things, and he determined to catch the boys in one way or another.

The next day he did as he had done before. He cupped his hands over his mouth when he cried, and remained very close to the lodge. In a little while he heard one boy tell the other: "Our father is far away. Come out of your hiding place so that we may play."

The man made his crying as if he were far away and finally stopped, and tiptoed back to the lodge, and rushed in. This time he succeeded in catching hold of one of the boys, who fought desperately to get away, but he held him fast. The boy finally submitted to his kindness, and agreed to stay and live with him, promising not to disappear under the pole again.

After a while when he saw that the boy was used to him, he got him to promise to trick the other boy out of his hiding place so that he might also catch him. The boy agreed and the next day the man went on with his crying as usual and cupped his hands over his mouth to sound like he was far away. He gradually stopped crying and he could hear the boy he had caught coaxing the other boy out from his hiding place, but the boy in hiding refused to come out saying to his brother: "Since my father has handled you, you smell bad." But he kept on coaxing him until he finally came out, and they had just started to play when their father rushed in and caught him holding him fast till he ceased to struggle and promised to live on top of the ground with his father and twin brother.

The father was glad that now he had company, and that the twin boys were his own, they having told him so. He remained in the same place hoping that in some way the one who killed his wife would show up so that he could get revenge.

He made bows and arrows for each of his boys and told them: "When you shoot at anythhg do not pick up the arrows again. I will always make you new ones." He allowed them only two arrows each. The boys grew up rapidly, and they were very skillful with the bow and arrow.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

One day the boys told their father: "Make a sweat-lodge. Face it toward the east, and leave a little opening at the top. Dig a little pit directly in front of the sweat lodge, and gather some stones to heat them there. Then dig another small pit inside the lodge exactly in the center of it. After having heated the stones, cover the sweat-lodge and carry the body of your wife and lay it down with the head to the north, on the west side of the lodge." 539 773

The man hastily did all these things and when he had done everything as told, he announced to his boys: "Everything is ready." They came each carrying the bow and arrow that he had made for them. The boys told their father: "Transfer the stones from the pit outside to the one inside the lodge and leave the flap open while we pray." He did as told, and the boys standing one on each side of the door of the lodge facing east, raised up their eyes toward the sky, and in a loud voice invited the Supreme Being to come and join in the sweating ceremony, so that what they wanted to do might be successful.

After having prayed, they told their father: "Pour water on the hot stones and close the lodge."

Then after this one of the boys took one of his arrows, and shot it straight up in the air, at the same time saying: "Look out, my mother, the arrow is coming down and it might fall on and hurt you if you do not move."

The boys then told their father: "Open the sweat-lodge, and pour more water on the stones, and then close it again." After the lodge was closed the boy shot his other arrow up in the air repeating the words he said when he shot his first arrow, and this time, they all saw the lodge moving.

Again the father was told: "Open the lodge and pour more water on the stones then after having done so, close it."

The other boy then shot one of his arrows in the air saying the same words that his brother had said, and this time, the lodge shook violently.

The fourth and last time the lodge was opened by the father, and more water was poured on the stones and the lodge was closed again. The boy shot his second arrow in the air saying the same words as before, and as the arrow hit the ground very near the lodge, their mother rushed out alive from the west side of the lodge and came to her husband and the twin boys greeting them.

Now they were all together and happy, and they continued to stay where they were, while the father went on with his hunting.

One day while their father was out on a hunt, the boys wandered away from the lodge to try their skill with the bow and arrow. They saw a prairie chicken, and they shot at it missing all of their shots. The chicken would not fly away and one of the boys in his eagerness to shoot again, ran to pick up one of the arrows which they had already shot, for the time being forgetting the rule laid down by their father not to pick an arrow up again, and before his brother could stop him he shot at the chicken again. Immediately there arose a mighty wind, and the boys, frightened, rushed back to the lodge for shelter. One boy succeeded in getting inside, but the other boy was blown up in the air with the door of the lodge held fast in his hands.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
773

He blew around in the sky for a long time, and finally came back to earth and landed in a spot thick with tall grass. Not knowing what else to do he settled down in the grass, and covered himself with the door flap of the lodge, which he still had in his hands. He laid there many days not daring to venture around, for he was in a strange land.

One day as he lay in the grass languishing he heard voices coming in his direction. He crouched down motionless and listened. He now heard talking and it was Gros Ventre. These people were from a big village which was nearby, and they were out cutting grass for their horses. An old woman came nearer and nearer to where he was lying, finally finding him. She was very glad to have found a boy and talked most kindly to him, and invited him to live in her lodge saying: "I will adopt you and be your grandmother."

So the boy went along with the old woman to the village and lived there with her.

He eventually grew up to young manhood amidst many hardships and dangers, for the Gros Ventres in this village were poor due to the many dangers which existed and which prevented them from hunting at will and from moving around to follow the game.

It came to pass that a beautiful black fox was frequently seen near and around the village. Since its appearance, the people began to miss their hard-earned meat and other things such as raw hides, ropes, and sinew with which their travois were bound together.

The people tried in every way to catch the black fox, setting out snares and traps, but the fox was too cunning for them.

The fox stole meat and chewed up rawhide and sinew to such an extent, that he was a real menace to them and to everything that was left outside for the night. It even went inside the lodges and stole meat.

Finally the chief of the tribe called one of the criers of the village, and told him: "Announce to the people that I am offering a great reward for the man who will catch the fox. The reward is my oldest daughter." She was the most beautiful girl in the village. "Whoever catches and kills the fox is to bring it to my lodge immediately, and on the spot he will take my daughter and have her for a wife."

Most all the young men began trying to catch the fox, but failed.

After a time, the boy who was found in the grass told his grandmother he wished to try for the reward, telling her: "Make a trap as I shall direct."

The old woman, being much attached to the boy, did not raise any question, but proceeded to make a trap according to his instructions. When she finished it, he told her: "Set it just outside the door of our lodge." She did as told and went to sleep for the night.

The boy, who was now a young man, remained awake most of the night, and went to see the trap a number of times. Toward daylight, he became sleepy and lay down to sleep until his grandmother woke him, saying: "The trap is sprung, but there is no fox in it."

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

He went out, and examined the trap closely, and found some black hair stuck onto it in places. He told his grandmother: "I am sure I caught the fox in my trap, but it must have been stolen by someone while we slept." The old woman shared his opinion, and they discussed it for some time. 539 773

The young man at length told his grandmother: "Go to the chief's lodge, and inquire whether or not anyone has brought the fox."

His grandmother agreed, and upon inquiry was told: "Crow [a bird] brought the fox at daylight, and he claimed the reward, and was given the chief's oldest daughter."

The old woman returned, and told her grandson all about this. After some thought he sent her back to the chief telling her to insist and demand that rightfully the reward was his, as he was positive now that he had trapped the fox, but that it had been stolen by Crow. Then the old woman went back to the chief's lodge, and told him what her grandson had said.

The chief believed the old woman and her grandson, and said: "Since Crow has already taken my oldest daughter and has her in his lodge, I cannot take her back. But I am willing to let the young man have my second oldest daughter. She is beautiful like her sister and is old enough to be married."

The old woman once more returned to her own lodge, and told her grandson what the chief had said. The young man considered it at some length and asked his grandmother's advice. She advised him to take the second reward and told him that in order to keep peace it would be well to do so.

The young man agreed and they got ready to receive the chief's second daughter and the old woman went after her and brought her to her lodge. So the matter of rewarding the one that killed the fox was settled.

It came to pass that all the members of the tribe were out of meat and other food and were on the verge of starvation on account of the dangers that existed which kept the people from hunting freely. The chief, fearing that his tribe would starve, sent his wife, the mother of the wife of Crow, to tell him to go out and stalk and run buffalo into the buffalo run so that the people could have meat to eat.

The wife of the chief did as told, and Crow sent word back by her for the chief to announce to the people: "I am going out at daybreak to run buffalo." The people hearing this announced by the crier were glad and made ready to help Crow run buffalo, and various ones were detailed by the chief to sit at each mound and scare the game into the buffalo run.

At daylight, those who were detailed sat at the mounds. They sat there all day and when it was evening, they went back home, and heard that Crow had not succeeded in driving the buffalo into the run. The people were very much disappointed, and Crow said: "I will try again next day," but he failed the same as he had done the first day.

All this time the young man, who was married to the second daughter of the chief, was not heard of, and he was very ugly and unkempt. But since Crow had failed to run the buffalo and had given up, the young man sent

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
773

his grandmother to the chief for him to detail men to sit at the mounds while he would run the buffalo. The old woman did as told, and the chief complied with the order and sent men to the mounds.

The young man struck out at daylight to run the buffalo and when he got away out from the village and in line with the buffalo run and the mounds, he gathered together some buffalo chips and said to them: "You turn into live buffalo and go into the runs so that my people may eat," and immediately the chips became buffalo. Then plucking a certain kind of grass he said to it: "You turn into a live but mangy and poor buffalo and join in the run and when you get to the pitfall you manage so that one of your hind legs gets caught in the corral." And the grass became a live but mangy buffalo and joined in the run.

The young man after having started the buffalo into the run between the mounds, followed behind. When he arrived at the pitfall and corral, he found that the hunt was very successful and that the people were busy skinning the animals and were happy but were inquiring among themselves who it was that had run the buffalo in.

The young man stood listening to them and after a while told them that it was he who had done it, and that henceforth they were to call him Found-in-the-Grass.

After the people were all through, he went after his grandmother to come and get some of the meat. When she arrived at the pitfall, he told her to look for a buffalo caught on the corral. The old woman looking around, saw an old and mangy bull and remarked that it was very poor. Found-in-the-Grass loosened the bull and gave it a good kick on the rump and immediately it became a fat buffalo in its prime. They both skinned the bull and cut up the meat in pieces so that it could be brought to their lodge easily.

Found-in-the-Grass sought out a certain intestine and filled it with the blood of the bull, tying both ends securely so that the blood would not spill. Then he fixed the intestine with thongs ready to pack. He and his grandmother then packed the meat to their lodge, but he forbade his wife to help, telling her: "On the last trip you are to help carry the intestine fillled with blood and the three of us are to walk in single file, my grandmother first, you next, and I last."

While they were packing the meat home the wife waited at the pitfall as she had been told, and as she turned around she saw Crow perched on the corral, and she noticed her sister, the wife of Crow, struggling with many heads of buffalo and putting them in a pile. She asked her sister the meaning of this and was told: "Since Crow is a scavenger and is not particular what he eats and since the people no longer have respect for him as having failed to run the buffalo, I am giving him only the heads as his share."

Found-in-the-Grass and his grandmother came back to the pitfall and were getting ready for the last trip when his wife remarked about Crow's share of the hunt. Crow, hearing this, was very angry and flew around up in the air scolding his tormentors, and his wife was very much ashamed

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Found-in-the-Grass and his grandmother and his wife stood in single file ready to go, and his wife took up the intestine and loaded it on her back as he had told her. Crow and his wife watched in admiration as the party went on the march. They were still watching and saw Found-in-the-Grass punch a hole in the intestine with an arrow and the blood spilled all out and over his wife and she immediately became most beautiful and fully matured.

539
773

The wife of Crow became very jealous over the good fortune of her sister, and also very sad because of the way in which she had become the wife of Crow.

Every family of the entire village had all the meat they wanted, and was happy that now they were saved from starvation, and the women were busy slicing and jerking the meat. This required many days to do, as the run and hunt was the greatest ever known to the Gros Ventres.

During this time the wife of Found-in-the-Grass confided to her mother that sometimes her husband was most handsome and smelled like the rarest of perfumes. She was very much worried about this, as just when she was about to get a hold of her handsome husband, he would turn to the same ugly and unkempt man that he always was. The mother advised her daughter: "Say nothing of this to anyone, but have confidence in your husband. He has just managed the greatest hunt and run ever known. All will be well if only you have perseverance."

The mother of the wife of Crow overheard this conversation and told her daughter about it, and it was soon known by all the people in the village. One day the wife of Found-in-the-Grass was visiting her sister, and the conversation soon turned to Found-in-the-Grass, how he would turn into a most handsome man, but when the sun rose again, he would still be the ugly and unkempt man he always was. The wife of Crow doubted this, saying: "My sister is very young. Maybe she had a nightmare or imagined it." So saying she got up and went to the lodge of her brother-in-law to see for herself.

She arrived there and finding Found-in-the-Grass to be the same ugly and unkempt man, she proceeded to call him all kinds of names and to make fun of him. After having shown all her scorn, she added: "It is most shameful of you to fool my young and innocent sister and for that matter all the rest of the people. It is a shame to acquire cheap notoriety and renown. But you will never succeed as you are not powerful enough to do it." Found-in-the-Grass said nothing, but bore all this tongue lashing from his sister-in-law.

The wife of Crow went back to her lodge and finding her sister still there, advised her: "Leave and separate from your husband, as there is nothing to all this talk about him being a most handsome man at times. In the event he is successful in his attempt to be powerful, in all probability he will be an evil one and will perhaps try to destroy the whole Gros Ventre tribe." But the wife of Found-in-the-Grass went back to her husband and resolved to stay with him, no matter what the cost or how ugly he was and notwithstanding her sister's advice to leave him.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
773

At this time the meat was all being jerked and was partly dry, and Found-in-the-Grass sent his wife to her father, the chief, to tell him to detail men to sit at the mounds and help him run the buffalo again the next day. The chief when told this by his daughter was glad and proceeded to place men at the mounds to run the buffalo. Found-in-the-Grass did as before, going out at daybreak and gathering buffalo chips and commanding them to turn into buffalo and also the certain kind of grass to turn into a mangy and poor buffalo and join in the run. As at the first run he followed the buffalo and arrived at the pitfall finding the people busy skinning the animals. And as before he called his grandmother to come and help him to skin the mangy buffalo caught in the corral by a hind leg. And as before, he sought out the certain intestine and filled it with blood and fixed it up to pack.

Crow and his wife were gathering the heads together as before, and as his wife looked with contempt on her brother-in-law, the latter suddenly turned into the most handsome man she ever saw. Then and there she made up her mind to woo him away from her sister and to have him for her husband.

By this time Found-in-the-Grass and his grandmother and wife were getting ready to make the last trip packing meat to his lodge and were forming in single file. Not being able to stand it any longer, the older sister rushed to his side and implored him to allow her to pack the intestine filled with blood instead of her sister, so that she too would become most beautiful when the blood spilled out over her as he punched it with his arrow. Found-in-the-Grass granted her request and ordered her to get in line, behind her sister, and loaded the intestine on her back. After they had gone a little way, he punched the intestine and the blood spilled out all over his sister-in-law, but instead of her becoming beautiful as she had expected, she became most ugly and loathsome and was horrible to look at.

When she fully recovered from what had happened to her, she was most ashamed and did not know what to do. She appealed to her husband Crow for him to show his power, but all in vain for he had no power, but was instead hopping around picking up scraps of meat and blood and paid no attention to his wife. Found-in-the-Grass then told his sister-in-law: "Go your way and out of sight, and mind your own business hereafter."

So it was that Found-in-the-Grass came to the rescue of the desperate situation that this village of Gros Ventres was in and in fact saved them from extermination as now there was no immediate need to hunt or run the buffalo as they were supplied with a great quantity of meat, sinew, bones, and other things needed, and the people were most happy.

After a time Found-in-the-Grass told his wife and grandmother: "I am going visiting at the next village of Gros Ventres." The grandmother was worried and told him: "It is most dangerous for any one to visit or be out alone, as between the two villages and on the only trail which must be followed, there is a big and powerful wolf that no one can escape once the wolf sees him. The wolf once it sights anyone opens his powerful jaws and draws him into his open mouth with a mysterious power the person is unable

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

to get away from, and swallows him up. Besides, in the event that the person escapes from the big wolf and arrives at the next village, there is there a man, whom every stranger is forced to listen to telling myths and when he falls asleep listening to him, this man puts a flat stone under his head and hits him on the head with a stone hammer, killing him. Therefore you must not leave this village, as you are now married, and besides, you should have no further ambition, as you are now the most renowned one of the entire village. Then too, I am greatly attached to you, having reared you up from childhood since the time I found you in the grass."

539 ●
773

Found-in-the-Grass gently told his wife and grandmother: "Calm down and do not worry about me. I am now a full grown man and am not afraid of anything. I am determined to make this visit in spite of the dangers you tell about."

So, unable to discourage him, the women made much pemmican and fat for him to take along and eat on the way as the village was very far away and it took many days to reach it. So everything being ready for his use,—weapons, food, clothing,—Found-in-the-Grass struck out on his visit to the next village.

After he was gone many days from his village, he came to a rise of ground and in a clearing in the trail, he saw a great wolf, and remembering what his grandmother had said about the wolf, he cautiously approached, and when the wolf saw him, he opened his jaws and big mouth and at that instant Found-in-the-Grass felt the power of the wolf and was drawn into his mouth and swallowed up. But he had prepared for this and the moment he found himself in the stomach of the wolf, he slashed away right and left, and soon the wolf fell down dead. Found-in-the-Grass came out unharmed and upon examination found many human bones in the stomach of the wolf. He took all the bones out and put them in a pile, and he said to them: "Get up, you weaklings, and go back to the village from which you came," and immediately several persons appeared whole and alive, and each went his way.

Found-in-the-Grass continued on his way and after a time came in sight of a large village of Gros Ventres. He circled the camp several times and finally decided to enter an old woman's lodge. She welcomed him and invited him to sit in the place of honor, also telling him that she had heard of his fame and she called him by name and seemed to know all about him.

He told her: "I have come a long way and have run out of food. I am very hungry. Give me something to eat."

She told him: "I am glad that you have escaped the big wolf on the trail. But it is not safe for strangers to be in the village as there is a man here who forces them to listen to him tell myths, and when they fall asleep he kills them with his stone hammer. Besides, the people in this village are very poor and do not have much to eat, as it is most dangerous to leave the village and hunt on account of the many dangers which exist here." And she urged him to leave and go his way after she fed him her only piece of meat, which she took out from under her bed and cooked for him.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
773

He told the old woman: "Do not worry about me. I am a man and can take care of myself at all times." He ate only a small portion of the meat given him and told the old woman to eat the rest of it.

Soon the sun went down and night came on, and as was expected, the man who told myths by night invited Found-in-the-Grass: "Come to my lodge. I will tell you myths and put you to sleep. You have come a long way and must be tired out." After the man had the crier make his invitation several times, Found-in-the-Grass went to his lodge, and was invited to sit in the place of honor, and the man began to tell him myths. The man told him myths far into the night and several times asked him: "Are you sleepy?" "I am," he said, "but I am trying to remain awake, as the myths are very interesting."

The man told him: "Go to sleep whenever you wish. I shall tell myths until you go to sleep. Then I will put you to bed and cover you with robes so you will not be cold."

Found-in-the-Grass pretended to be very sleepy, closing his eyes, but watched the man through slits to see what he was going to do. After a time, he pretended to be sleeping and snoring. The man touched him to make sure, and then got his flat stone putting it under his head, and was just taking hold of the stone hammer, when Found-in-the-Grass suddenly jumped up and asked the man: "What are you doing?" The man, taken completely by surprise, lost his balance and before he could regain it, Found-in-the-Grass shot him full of arrows and killed him.

Then he looked around in the lodge and noticed a pile of something covered with robes. Throwing them back he discovered that the pile was a mass of human bones, some of them old and bleached and others not so old but showing that it was of ones recently killed by the man.

Found-in-the-Grass had great compassion on the ones whose bones lay there and thought how unfortunate they had been to be forced to listen to the man who told myths and falling asleep to be killed by him. He then spoke thus: "Get up and come alive, you weaklings and cowards. Go back to your various villages," and immediately they were whole and alive again and went their way.

He then went back to the lodge of the old woman and remained there for the night.

The next day he sent the old woman to the chief of the village, to tell him to place men at the mounds, that he would run the buffalo. The old woman came back, saying: "The chief is glad and will tell the criers to announce to the people about the run." The criers were heard in every direction, announcing about the run and the people were glad.

Found-in-the-Grass left the old woman's lodge at daybreak to run the buffalo. He repeated the procedure in running the buffalo as at his own village, using chips and the certain grass for the mangy one. He ran the buffalo twice as before and the old woman got the mangy one as her share, and the people were saying: "This is the greatest run we have ever known."

After a while he told the old woman: "I am going on to the next village."

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The old woman said: "The trail is dangerous, as on the only crossing at the big river which cannot be avoided, there is a water monster, that is used for a bridge. Travelers get on his head, holding themselves on by his horns, and when the monster gets to midstream, he dives into deep water drowning those who ride on his head. Besides, in the event that one escapes the monster and succeeds in getting to the next village, there is a gambler there, whose name is Crooked Bull who forces strangers and travelers to play with him, shooting arrows at the wheel. Crooked Bull has a bad temper and when anyone beats him at this game too much, he suddenly turns into a buffalo bull and gores his victim to death."

Found-in-the-Grass told the old woman: "Do not worry about me. I can take care of myself at all times. I am a grown man now and am not afraid of anything."

So, in spite of the entreaties and warnings of the old woman, Found-in-the-Grass struck out on the trail leading to the next village of Gros Ventres.

After traveling many days through the forest he came to a big river and remembering what the old woman said about the monster, approached the shore cautiously, and sure enough a big water monster was there, asleep. He got up on his head and got a hold of the big horns and the monster turned around and began to swim across the river. Before the monster dived to deep water, Found-in-the-Grass stabbed him to death and he sank down, making the water red with his blood, while Found-in-the-Grass swam to the opposite shore safe.

He stood on the shore and in a loud voice said: "All those who were drowned by the monster and who hear my voice shall come alive." As he said this, a great number of persons came out of the water, alive, saying: "We are the ones who have been tricked by the monster and drowned." He told them: "Go back to your villages," and he went on his way. He picked up a knotty limb of a tree on the trail and used it for a cane.

After some time he came in sight of a large village and entering it found and heard the Gros Ventre language spoken there. He sought and found an old woman's lodge and entered it. The old woman invited him to sit in the place of honor and said: "My grandson, Found-in-the-Grass, I am glad to see you, and I have heard many good things about you and you are welcome in my lodge, but how did you escape the water monster on the way? And why did you come here to this village, for we are very poor and are at the point of starvation, and besides, there is a man here whose name is Crooked Bull with whom strangers must shoot at the wheel and gamble. His temper is bad and he kills at the slightest provocation when angered."

He told the old woman how he had stabbed the monster to death and how he brought back all those who had been drowned at the river, and said: "I am not afraid of Crooked Bull, the gambler, nor of anyone else. Give me something to eat, for I am hungry, not having eaten for several days."

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
773

So, she reached under her bed of robes and got the only piece of meat she had, and cooked it for him to eat. He ate only a small piece of it and gave the rest back to the woman, telling her to eat it.

Soon a crier was heard summoning Found-in-the-Grass to go to the lodge of Crooked Bull the gambler and shoot the wheel and test his skill with arrows. After a while, he went to Crooked Bull's lodge and found that a crowd had gathered there to watch the game of shooting arrows at the wheel, that was to take place between them.

So they started to shoot arrows at the wheel and Crooked Bull was winning all bets put up by Found-in-the-Grass, until the latter was almost naked, having lost nearly everything of his, including the clothes he had on. Crooked Bull taunted him to the merriment of the crowd, until the game seemed to turn in the favor of Found-in-the-Grass, and then Crooked Bull began to get mad and to roar like distant thunder. Found-in-the-Grass was winning steadily now, and in turn Crooked Bull had lost nearly everything, and when they were rolling the wheel for the finals, Crooked Bull suddenly turned into a young and powerful buffalo and was pawing the earth, letting out bellows that sent the onlookers to cover. The bull suddenly rushed at Found-in-the-Grass to gore him to death, but at the same instant the latter disappeared.

A down feather was seen by the people floating in the air, while the bull was raging, bellowing and pawing the ground, having missed its victim. The feather landed close by the bull and it was Found-in-the-Grass who had turned into a feather. He told the bull: "Your end has come. Your taking of human lives is at an end. I am going to wipe you off the face of the earth." So saying he sent many arrows into the bull before he had time to change again, and killed him.

He went into the lodge of Crooked Bull and found a heap of human bones there. He commanded the ones whose bones they were: "Come back to life and go back to the villages from which you came." Immediately many humans came alive and went to their several villages.

Found-in-the-Grass went back to the lodge of the old woman and told her to go tell the chief of the village to send men to the mounds as on the morrow he would run the buffalo. The old woman did as told, and soon criers were heard announcing to the people that Found-in-the-Grass, the man who had killed Crooked Bull, was to run the buffalo next day.

Found-in-the-Grass struck out at daybreak for the mounds to run the buffalo. This he did two times as at the two previous villages, always using chips which turned into buffalo at his bidding and the certain grass for the mangy one which the old woman with whom he stayed got for herself alone.

The people were very glad that he had come to their village as in the nick of time he had saved them from extermination by starvation and had rid the country of the undesirables, the water monster, the Crooked Bull, the gambler. The chief of the village offered him his oldest and very beautiful daughter in marriage, also his office as chief, but he refused all

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

saying: "In the first place, I have a wife in a village far away, and moreover I have no desire to be a chief." 539 773

After a while, he told the old woman: "Now since the people in this village have all the meat they need, and all dangers are gone and they can hunt and run the buffalo in peace, I am going on my way to the next village of Gros Ventres."

The old woman was alarmed at this and told him: "This is a dangerous and fatal thing to do, as on the only trail to the next village and one which can not be avoided, there is a big tree, which falls on and crushes to death anyone who goes under it. Besides if one succeeds in passing this tree unharmed and arrives at the next village, there is a man there with whom travelers and strangers must play football by force. And if the man is beaten at this game by anyone, he kicks him to death with a sharp iron into which one of his legs turns when he is angered."

He told the old woman: "Do not worry over me. I am a grown man and can take care of myself in any situation."

So saying, Found-in-the-Grass made ready for travel and left the village for the trail to the other village, taking with him the knotty tree limb, which he had picked up on the way.

After traveling many days, he came upon a place on the trail that was very narrow and a big tree stood along side, by which one had to pass to go on the trail. He approached the tree cautiously and when he came directly under it, he jumped back to safety, as the tree crashed to the ground and was broken up to pieces, not having anything to fall on. The tree tried to get itself together again, but failed, as it was broken up into too many pieces, and besides Found-in-the-Grass threw the pieces in every direction and they were unable to come back together.

After the big tree died, Found-in-the-Grass called out in a loud voice and commanded: "All you who lie dead under the ground and who were killed by the tree, come back to life." Many dead humans heard him and stood there alive and well again. He told them: "Go back to your villages," and they went their several ways.

He continued on the trail many more days and finally came in sight of a large village. He entered it and looked for an old woman's lodge. Finding one, he entered it, and was welcomed by the old woman and invited by her to sit in the place of honor.

The old woman wondered how he had escaped the big tree on the trail and was worried that although he escaped the tree, there was another evil element to which he was exposed and that was to play football by force with a man in the village who when beaten killed people to death with a large iron, into which one of his legs turned when he was angered.

He told the old woman: "Do not worry as I mean to take care of myself. Give me some food as I am hungry."

The old woman said that the people in this village were at the point of starvation not being able to hunt nor run the buffalo on account of the dan-

Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
773

gers which existed in their land, but she reached under her bed and produced a little piece of meat and cooked it and gave it to him to eat. He ate only a little of it and gave the rest back to her and told her to eat it.

Soon a crier was heard calling him to the place where football was played and telling him to go there and play with the man. He went after a while, taking with him the knotty tree limb he had carried.

The game was a lively one and many people were there to watch. After a while Found-in-the-Grass was winning the game and the people began to laugh at the man whose leg turned into a sharp iron when he was angered. Now, the game was approaching its end, and Found-in-the-Grass was winner by far over the man, who suddenly flew into a rage, and made for him to kick him to death with his sharp iron leg. As the man kicked at him, Found-in-the-Grass threw the knotty tree limb in the way and the man's iron leg plunged into it and was securely fastened to it. The man could not remove his iron leg from the limb, and this angered him very much, while the people were having a good laugh at his misfortune. Found-in-the-Grass blew his breath on him and he raised in the air, sailing around and finally lighting on top of a large tree.

The man could not untangle himself and was furious but helpless. Found-in-the-Grass finally shot him to death with many arrows and the man's relatives did not bother about removing him from the tree top but left him there where his body withered away.

Found-in-the-Grass asked the people to direct him to the lodge of the man he just killed. On being shown the lodge, he entered it and to his amazement found it about filled with human bones. He commanded those whose bones lay there: "Come back to life," and as he said that, many humans came to life. He told them: "Go back to your villages," and they went their way.

He went back to the lodge of the old woman and told her to go and tell the chief of the village to send men to the mounds, that he was going to run the buffalo. The old woman went as told and soon criers were heard telling the people that Found-in-the-Grass was running buffalo the next day.

This he did two times and used buffalo chips and the certain kind of grass for the mangy buffalo, which the old woman got as her share each time, the same as before.

The people were now very happy, having plenty of meat and material for their various tools, weapons, and travois. They made new bow strings from the fresh sinew and also mended the feathers on their arrows.

Found-in-the-Grass stayed with the old woman and helped her with some of her work, hanging jerked meat, mashing bone to be boiled for grease and to be used in making pemmican.

When all this was done, he told the old woman: "I am going on to the next village to visit there." She told him: "You had better not, as on the way over there, and on the only trail and crossing at the river, a buffalo head is used for a ferry and most times this head sinks in the middle of the river, drowning those who ride on it, and even if one manages to avoid the

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
793

buffalo head and get to the village, there is a big bear there with one white forearm, who dominates the people there and she has great power. If anyone dares to interfere with the bear, she points her white forearm at them at any distance and they drop dead on the spot." He told her: "Do not worry about me, for I am a grown man and am not afraid of anybody or anything."

So saying he took the trail leading to the next village of Gros Ventres. After many days traveling, he came to a big river, and on the shore and half in the water lay a bleached buffalo head. He said to himself: "This must be the head the old woman mentioned that is used as a ferry." He stepped on the head and it immediately moved into the water. As he felt the head sinking, he leaped off of it as quickly as he could and saw the head sink into deep water and it did not come up. He was satisfied that, as the head reached bottom without any human load on it, the water monster who lived under the water was angry and destroyed the head, for it did not appear on the surface any more.

He then faced toward the sunrise and said in a loud voice: "Come out from the bottom of the water and out of the stomach of the water monster, all you who have been tricked by the buffalo head." As he finished talking thus, a great many human beings, young and old, male and female, came up from the bottom of the water and out of the stomach of the water monster, until they were almost enough to make a tribe. He then commanded them: "Go back to the villages from which you came," and continued on his way.

After many more days of traveling, he came in sight of a large village. Circling it, he saw an old lodge pitched on the edge of the circle. He entered and found an old woman sitting there scraping the inside of a buffalo hide. She looked up and greeted him and invited him to sit in the place of honor. Calling him by his name she asked him: "Where are you going and how did you escape from all the dangers on the trail?" He told her: "I have come a long way. I have taken many moons to get here from where I started. I have killed all the evil ones along the way."

He asked her: "Why are you scraping the hide?" She said: "I was so hungry, I was trying to get enough off of the hide to boil and eat." He said to her: "If that is all you have to eat, go on scraping and get enough for two, as I am very hungry myself, not having eaten for a long time."

The old woman scraped enough of the hide for both of them and they ate and drank the soup she made from the scrapings.

After they had eaten, he told her to go and tell the chief of the village to place men at the mounds and help him run the buffalo. The old woman protested, saying: "It will do no good to run the buffalo, as the bear with the white forearm will take all the meat and bones, as is her wont when game and meat are brought in. And if anyone has enough courage to interfere with her, she points the white forearm at him and he dies immediately." Found-in-the-Grass told the old woman to go tell the chief what he said and not mind the bear.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
773

Finally the old woman went to the lodge of the chief to tell him what Found-in-the-Grass had ordered but she had little belief that it would do any good. The chief upon hearing this was glad and directed the criers to announce to the people this matter, and he also detailed men to sit at the mounds and help run the buffalo. The people upon hearing this announcement were very glad but at the same time very fearful that the bear would be angered, as it was the order at this village for the bear to say when game was to be gotten.

The bear upon hearing the criers flew into a rage and she growled, roared and rolled around, saying: "Whoever gave the order to run the buffalo before time will pay for it with his life. Besides, I and my cubs will take all the meat and bones as usual."

This being an exceptionally large village and hence requiring a great number of animals to supply all with meat and bones, Found-in-the-Grass left at midnight, instead of at daylight as he had done at the other villages, for the mounds and run. He gathered a great amount of buffalo chips and commanded them to turn into buffalo and they did as told and went into the run between the mounds and toward the pitfall. Then he took the special kind of grass for the mangy bull and ordered it to join in the run and fall last into the corral and manage so that one hind leg would be caught there and wait till he came.

He followed behind as usual and arriving at the pitfall and corral noticed that some of the people were packing the meat to a large lodge while others were skinning and cutting and putting thongs through the meat to pack. He gave this no serious thought but wondered, and as usual he went after the old woman to come and get her share. She protested, saying: "The bear will surely kill me if I take meat before I am told by the bear." He urged her to come and not be afraid of the bear or anyone else, as he would be with her all the time and would protect her.

So, with great fear, she went with him to the pitfall and corral to skin the mangy bull. Arriving there, he loosened the bull from where its hind leg was caught on the corral and gave it a good kick on the rump, and it became a fat bull in its prime. The old woman, notwithstanding her fear of the bear, was glad and helped him skin and fix up the meat to pack to her lodge. The pitfall and corral were deserted by the people, save for the two of them and the two cubs of the bear who were chewing up and licking up the scraps and blood left there.

They noticed that one of the cubs disappeared for a while, and when it came back, said: "My mother, the big bear, orders that you two bring the meat to her lodge." Found-in-the-Grass sent the old woman to the lodge of the bear to tell the bear that he did not intend to carry out or obey her order. The old woman protested saying: "The bear will surely point her white forearm at me and kill me."

Found-in-the-Grass told her: "Do not worry or be afraid, but go tell the bear what I said. If you refuse to do as I say, I will kill you anyway." So,

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the old woman went to tell the bear what he said, realizing there was no use to refuse, as it meant instant death from the hands of Found-in-the-Grass and there might be some escape from the bear.

539
793

When the bear heard from the old woman what he had said, she was very angry and told the old woman: "Go back and tell him to do as I wish before I go myself to enforce my rule."

The poor old woman went back and forth between the pitfall and corral four times and the last time the bear came with her to the scene to see for herself who it was that was defying her. As she approached the corral, she saw a pile of meat at the feet of Found-in-the-Grass. She stopped some distance away, and called out to him: "Pack the meat to my lodge. I have come out to see that my rule is carried out."

He paid no heed to her demand and she said: "If you refuse me four times in succession, I will be forced to treat you like all others who interfered with me." But he paid no attention to her. The fourth and last time she ordered him to pack the meat to her lodge and he still paid no attention. She then called out to him and as he straightened up from his work, she raised her white forearm and pointed it at him, but instead of killing him as it had killed all others before him, the arm of the bear broke off from her body.

She howled and growled so loud that she was heard all over the great village. She then raised up her other forearm and pointed it at him but it broke off the same as her other arm had done.

Found-in-the-Grass then took one of the kidneys of the bull and spoke to the bear who was rolling in rage and pain, and he said to her: "Look at me. I will show you how to kill by pointing but you will not live to use it on anything." So saying he pointed the kidney at the bear as she looked, and she rolled over dead.

The cubs ran around whimpering, and he said to them: "Go back to the forest and the animal world. That is where you belong, not among human beings." The cubs ran away and disappeared into the deep forest and were seen no more.

Found-in-the-Grass and the old woman packed the meat of the bull to her lodge amidst great rejoicing. Then the meat that was in the lodge of the bear was divided up among the people, and the slaves who worked for the bear were freed and told to go back to the clans from which they had been drafted. The people were most happy, as they were saved from sure starvation by Found-in-the-Grass; besides he had killed the bear and had run her cubs out to the forest and had freed the slaves.

When the meat was partly dry, he sent the old woman to the chief again, to tell him: "Send men to the mounds and help me run buffalo once more. This time nothing will interfere with or bother the people. They will have all the meat to themselves hereafter." The old woman told the chief and he told the criers to announce that to the people.

Found-in-the-Grass followed the same procedure as before in running the

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
773

buffalo. The chief offered him his oldest and very beautiful daughter and his office as chief, but he refused all, saying: "I have a wife far away. I have been absent from her for a long time. I am going back to live with her."

So Found-in-the-Grass marched back in great triumph, through the villages to the village of his adoption, to his wife and his grandmother. He had destroyed all the things both human and animal which made traveling unsafe. He also taught all the people the art of running the buffalo, and he invented the trap which caught the black fox. (This trap was, according to tradition, a samson-post deadfall.) He ruled his village with great wisdom for many years. Thus, the prophecy pronounced by the blind old man who cut open and killed his mother came to pass.

11. Blood-Clot[16]

A long time ago when the Gros Ventres used still to make earthen dishes, there was an old couple who had three or four daughters. All the daughters were married to one man. Their husband used to leave the rest of the people and go hunting to accumulate meat and would take his father-in-law and mother-in-law along. He was a good hunter. The old father-in-law used to help him skin the game, carry the meat and so forth. But the man would never give his parents-in-law any but one little piece of meat. So the old people lived on the verge of starvation all the time. Their youngest daughter used to steal meat for them from her husband occasionally, she and they concealing the fact, and so things went along.

Once while the old father-in-law was helping his son-in-law to skin, he had his eye on quite a pool of blood and made up his mind to take it home and eat it. By the time they were ready to leave, the pool of blood had so hardened that it could be picked up. The old man let his son-in-law go ahead but the son-in-law saw the old man putting something away and asked him: "What did you pick up?" "Nothing" the old man answered. "I was only fixing up my belt."

So the old man brought the blood clot home and said to his old woman [his wife]: "Fix up the earthen pot and the fire and cook this clot." As the clot came to a boil he heard a baby crying in the pot. "There is a baby," said the man. "Get him out and we will have him for our own." They took him out of the pot of boiling water. He was a little boy and they were very glad.

When the son-in-law heard the baby crying he sent his youngest wife to see if it was a boy or girl. "If it is a girl," he said, "I will take her for my wife." So she went to her parents and asked them: "Is the baby a boy or a girl?" The old couple were not afraid of this daughter, for she treated them well while the other daughters treated them badly. They were not

[16] This version is shorter than Kroeber, 1907, pp. 82-90, No. 20. See our footnote 14.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

afraid to tell her the truth, so they said to her: "It is a boy. But tell your husband it is a girl" This they did so the son-in-law would not kill the boy. The daughter did as she was told and her husband said: "All right. We will treat your parents a little better. Take these scraps of meat over to your mother so she will have milk for the baby." 539 793

After the boy was a few days old and all cleaned up he spoke to the old man: "Swing me four places inside this lodge, going clockwise, once first at the left of the door, then twice straight back from the door, then once at the right of the door." When he was swung the first time he was already getting sense. At the second swing, the boy smiled and laughed. At the third, he acted as if he wanted to jump out of the swing. At the fourth he actually did jump out of it. Then he said to the old man: "My father, make me a bow and four arrows. Make the bow from the last rib of the buffalo and the arrows with tendons from the back of the buffalo."

The old man then made the bows and arrows as he was told. The boy asked him: "What usually happens when your son-in-law goes hunting?" "Sometimes," the old man said, "he comes back to camp and leaves me out there where he made his kill, to skin and cut the meat ready for packing. Then his wives come for the meat." "When the next time comes," said the boy, "I will go along but don't tell your son-in-law that I have gone along or that I am around. Just do as you always do."

When time to hunt came again, the son-in-law said to the old man: "Get ready. I am going hunting." The old man got ready. The boy followed behind them staying in the background and hoping that the son-in-law would go away for his wives and leave the old man to do the skinning. The son-in-law killed the buffalo and the old man went over to him. "Butcher the buffalo," said the son-in-law. "I am going back to camp and send my wives to help carry the meat."

After the son-in law had gotten out of sight the boy came from hiding and went to where the old man was still butchering. By the time the boy got there, practically all the butchering was done except cutting the ribs off the backbone. "Stop butchering," said the boy, "and listen to me carefully. When the son-in-law comes back, take the kidney of the buffalo and hold it in your hand and face him. When he comes near enough to see what you have in your hand and what you are going to do, take a bite out of the kidney." "I dare not do that," said the old man. "He will kill me." "No," said the boy. "You must do as I tell you." While the boy was insisting and the old man was protesting, the son-in-law with his wives got back. The boy then hid behind the buffalo's ribs which were still on the carcass and said to the old man: "Stand at attention and do what I said." In great fear, thinking he would be killed, the old man took the buffalo kidney in his hand and faced his son-in-law. "If you don't do as I say," said the boy, "I will kill you." When the son-in-law was close enough to see clearly, the old man took a bite out of the kidney. "Put down what you are biting" said the son-in-law in a rage. This, he said once, twice, three times and after the third added:

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
773

"I will tell you only once more. That will be the last time. If after that you still bite the kidney, I will manhandle you." After each warning, the son-in-law said, "Drop that," at the same time making a gesture with his right arm from up to his right, down to his left. As he said and did this for the fourth time, his right arm dropped off. So he tried to finish the sign with his left arm and it too dropped off.

Then the boy came out from hiding and took over the situation and said to the son-in-law: "Is that the way you have been treating this old man and his wife? Your hour has arrived. You are going to die." The son-in-law tried to run away but the boy put an arrow through him and also killed two of the man's wives. Then the old man and the boy went back to camp and on the way back the boy said to him: "Which of your four daughters pities you? Are they all on the side of your son-in-law or has any one of them shown affection for you?" "Yes," said the old man, "the youngest one is good to me." When they got back to camp the boy killed the next to youngest wife of the son-in-law. The youngest then started to run away but the boy said to her: "Don't run. I won't kill you." Then the old man, his wife, the boy and the youngest daughter took possession of all the meat in the camp and ate plenty.

Blood-Clot went to four big camps. There was always something dangerous on the road and when he got to camp something else to overcome. As Blood-Clot left the third camp the people said: "Don't go any further. At the next camp is the greatest of all dangers. If you insist and get there, you will be in extreme danger because there is a man there with a number of daughters and when a stranger comes he offers his daughters in marriage to the stranger. You can't get out of it. After you become his son-in-law he will send you after water saying, 'Go to a certain mountain for water,' but that is just to lure you to the place where his pet water monster will eat you. If by any chance you escape the water monster and get back to camp then he will send you after feathers saying, 'Go to a certain mountain top and get feathers off young birds up there and bring the feathers home as I want to use them for my arrows.' That is the supreme test because that is where Bha'a lives. Be very, very careful. We are not telling you this just for fun."

When Blood-Clot left the third camp he went on his way to the fourth. On arrival the man with the several daughters offered them to Blood-Clot as wives and Blood-Clot married all of them. Blood-Clot was well treated there and happy. One day his wives said to him: "Our father wants you to get water at a certain spring at the foot of this mountain." "Yes," said Blood-Clot, "I will fetch it." So he went. Being forewarned he went cautiously. When he got to a bit of rising ground he saw from there a body of water and a water monster half out of the water facing his trail. As soon as the water monster saw Blood-Clot the water monster opened his mouth and Blood-Clot felt that he was being pulled in from the suction. But he jerked out an arrow, mounted it and shot it his hardest into the water

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

monster's mouth. The water monster in its death struggle churned up the water and then lay still, dead. 539 773

Blood-Clot opened up the water monster and found a lot of human bones inside—some of the bones without any flesh on them, some with the flesh on them and the skeleton still together. Blood-Clot pulled all the bones out of the water monster's stomach and said to them: "You are not children. Get up and go back where you belong." All of them got up alive and went off. Blood-Clot then got the water he went after and came back and said to his wives: "Here is the water. I killed a water monster over there." When they told the father this he said: "My son-in-law has killed my pet and my power." (Not a power gotten through sleeping; it was the father who controlled the water monster and made him act the way he did.)

After this the man sent his daughters to tell Blood-Clot: "Go after feathers on the top of a certain high mountain a good way from camp." When his wives gave this message to Blood-Clot he said to them: "Yes, I'll go." He got ready and very early in the morning he went off taking his bow and arrows with him.

When he got to the mountain he climbed and climbed and climbed and finally got to the top of it and here he found a large nest with two big, young birds in it. Blood-Clot said to himself: "These must be the young thunders." He looked them over good. They had many feathers. He lifted up the wing of one of them and he heard a rumbling, so he dropped it and the noise stopped. Blood-Clot asked the birds: "Where are your father and mother?" The birds answered: "They are off way up somewhere in the air." "When," asked Blood-Clot, "do your father and mother come back to your nest?" "Usually," they replied, "in the evening toward sundown." "Is there any particular sign announcing the approach of your father and mother and any different sign for one or the other?" "Yes," said the birds, "there is." "What is the sign," asked Blood-Clot, "if your father is coming back to the nest?" "A dark, heavy cloud toward the sunset [west]." "What," asked Blood-Clot, "is the sign when it is your mother coming back?" "Clouds in the west," said the birds, "but white clouds." So Blood-Clot got this information from the birds.

The birds then said to him: "Our father and mother are both powerful. You better not stay here. You better escape. If they find you here they will kill you as they have always done to anybody they find at this nest." "All right," said Blood-Clot, "but don't tell your father and mother I came here." They promised not to give Blood-Clot away and promised that "by the love of our mother." So Blood-Clot crawled into a nearby cave.

After a bit a white cloud appeared in the distance, got to the spot on the mountain close to the cave, and the mother herself arrived. "Has anyone," she asked the young birds, "come here while I have been away?" "No," said they. "No one has come." "It smells like human here," said the mother. "Some human must have been here." "No," said the young birds. "We saw no human." Blood-Clot heard them talking and while they were still talking

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539 773 he came out of the cave. As soon as the mother saw Blood-Clot she took wing and sailed into the air. There was a blinding flash of lightning and this was the last thing that Blood-Clot remembered. When he came to he found himself at the base of the mountain with his hair all singed up. He then collected himself and went back up to the top of the mountain. All this,—the flash of lightning, the becoming unconscious, finding himself at the base of the mountain, climbing it again,—took place four different times. The last time that Blood-Clot climbed the mountain he twisted the beaks of the young birds and taunted them with the words: "Tell your mother about this."

The next time, however, a big, black cloud appeared and came to the mountain. The father of the birds came. So soon as the father saw Blood-Clot there was a flash of lightning but after it Blood-Clot still stood there and said to the father: "You can't do anything with me. You can't kill me. You better leave me alone. It is useless for you to shoot at me. I will show you how powerful I am."

So Blood-Clot took an arrow and mounted it and shot at a big, flat stone on top of the mountain. The arrow pierced the stone and was buried in it, all but a bit of it that stuck out. "Look at that arrow there," said Blood-Clot to the father bird. "If you can pull it out from that rock then you can do something to me that will harm me. If you can't pull it out then it is useless for you, as I told you, to try to harm me." "All right," said the father. "I can do that. That is easy." So the bird sailed up in the air. As he did so, a flash of lightning struck at this rock. Then he tried to get hold of the arrow and pull it out. He took hold and flew up to pull it out and the arrow stretched and as it contracted it pulled the bird back as the father was caught fast by it.[16] Blood-Clot saw that the bills and feet of the father thunderbird and the other thunderbirds were of buffalo neck tendon. Thus Blood-Clot trapped the father. But he released the father saying to him: "Here is how powerful I am." And with that he pulled the arrow out with ease. Then he said to the bird: "Leave me alone. You can't do anything with me."

After that he came down from the mountain, went back home and told his wives what had happened. "No wonder," he said, "your father kills off the young men as he does. Tell your father that those birds up there could not do anything with me. You probably heard the thunder and lightning and disturbance up there while I was away. The birds were trying to kill me but they did not succeed." The girls then went back and told their father.

[237 283] [16] Blood-Clot's arrow, The Boy explained, was made of buffalo tendon from the upper neck of the animal—the tendon that holds the neck to the body. This is very tough and stretches like rubber when it is taken out. This tendon had many uses, for instance, for mending the broken handle of a knife. When it was wrapped around anything it was stretched as much as possible and when it dried it held very tightly. The travois basket was tied on with the same tendon.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

After a while Blood-Clot took his bow and arrow and went into his father-in-law's lodge and said to him: "What you have been doing you will do no more. I am going to kill you." So Blood-Clot shot his arrows into his father-in-law and killed him. 539 773

Thus it is that Bha'a was known to be a bird. He and Blood-Clot fought but neither killed the other. Blood-Clot destroyed other evil things but Bha'a was a little too much for him to destroy. This Bha'a is the same who was associated with the Feathered Pipe.

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Gambling power was of a lower order of dignity and solemnity than power obtained by fasting on the mountains and hill tops. It was taken less seriously, more lightly, and, if we may judge from attitudes today, with an undercurrent of amused jocoseness. It was not, as was power gotten on mountains, transferrable by the original possessor to another, or at least it was not transferred. For one reason others did not usually want it, on account of the ailments and shortened life its possession entailed. A man who was known to have such power was further handicapped: his fellow tribesmen would not ordinarily gamble against him and so his opportunities for participation were few, being limited mostly to games played by the Gros Ventre with other tribes. In such intertribal games, however, he would become a popular champion, and would derive therefrom a certain prestige as well as material gains. The possession then of gambling power, while to a certain limited extent an asset to its owner, was in more respects than one a decided liability. 525 789

It may be added here that while those who possessed supernatural gambling power are spoken of today by English-speaking Gros Ventre as "professional gamblers," in reality there were no professional gamblers among the Gros Ventre even in the old days, professional, that is, in the sense of making their living or most of their living at gambling.

The following three narratives, related by The Boy, illustrate various aspects of gambling power.

Narrative 1. Lone Bear, The Boy's wife's father, had gambling power. While he was still in his prime, his legs started hurting him. To escape the penalty he quit gambling. But in vain. His legs went bad, and he died before his time. 525 789 539

Narrative 2. When Lame Bull, The Boy's father, was a young boy about ten years of age he had a friend of about the same age, called Keg, to whom he was much attached. Keg, like other boys of his age, had the daily chore of rising long before daylight and driving out the family horses away from camp to graze. One morning he was awakened very early and was told to drive the horses out. He did so, but when he got out to the grazing ground he decided to steal a few winks lying face down. So he fell asleep, and all at once he started to dream. He dreamed that he saw a big hand game going on with high stakes and one fellow winning everything. Keg looked at this fellow closely and saw it was he, Keg, himself. This man spoke to Keg saying: "Do as you see me doing here. Use my throat as an object [button] to hide." [857] [787]

Then Keg woke up and looked around, and there right near where he lay he saw a covey of prairie chickens doing their mating dance and making a whirring noise with their tails. When he got back he said to Lame Bull: "Let's play and see whether what I dreamed is true. I'll put my helper to the test." Lame Bull tried to guess Keg, but Keg would make a noise like a prairie chicken and thereupon

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

525 would switch the button to the other hand without Lame Bull perceiving it, and
789 Lame Bull could not guess him.

So as the two grew up, Lame Bull always bet when Keg was playing and won
539 a lot of stuff that way. Keg started gambling from his boyhood and always had luck. After he grew up, however, he did not have many chances to play, because everybody, knowing his power, shied away from gambling against him. But when he did play, he would win. When he was resorting to his power in a game, he would imitate the hissing, swishing noise made by the prairie chickens when they ruffle their tail feathers. The prairie chicken had also given Keg its windpipe to use (apparently as a button) in the hand game, and for it Keg used a little metal spring resembling the windpipe.

525 *Narrative 3.* During the lifetime of Red Whip (d. 1912), the Gros Ventre on
789 one occasion, about 1873-75, met the Flathead where Lewistown (Montana) now is
539 and camped close together. The latter asked the former to gamble at the hand
648 game. So when night came, they all assembled in a big lodge. The Flathead had a great gambler, nicknamed Crazy Child, who had gambling power and had never been beaten by anyone on the west side of the Rockies. Outside the lodge the young men of both tribes were visiting in a friendly fashion together, and the Flathead young men told the Gros Ventre young men: "Don't get into that game. Our man cannot be beaten," and some of the latter on that account refrained from betting. But the Gros Ventre had a man of their own, Red Whip, who had gambling power from a ghost, greater gambling power than Crazy Child had.

So the hand game started, with big stakes wagered on both sides. Neither champion showed his prowess right away; they just let themselves run along easily for a while. At last Red Whip decided to cut loose: "This Flathead makes me mad. He has hand game power. So I'll have to use mine. Give me a piece of weasel skin and I'll stop his power." They gave him a piece and he rubbed off a small bit of it and put it on the ground and knelt on it with one knee.

Crazy Child, whose hand-game helper was the owl, used every trick his helper had taught him, to hide the button and battle Red Whip, but to no avail, for Red Whip's ghost helper was more powerful than Crazy Child's owl helper. Then Red Whip, when his turn came to hide, said to the Gros Ventre, "I have this Flathead beaten and I know his helper, the owl, has abandoned him; so sing good and loud and beat time fast and lively," and to the Flathead, "Watch closely, and I will let you hunt for the button after I have hidden it." Red Whip then put on a big show, exhibited the button to the Flathead, threw it into the air, and told him to look for it. Crazy Child hooted like an owl and did all sorts of other things like an owl, but finally gave up: "I can't find the button," at which the Gros Ventre cheered uproariously. Then Red Whip got up, showed the Flathead the button, which was embedded in the lodge pole to the left of the door as you go out, and asked him to pull it out. Crazy Child tried to pull it out but failed, but Red Whip pulled it out easily, and said to Crazy Child: "You are nothing. You are just a little fellow. You don't amount to much. I didn't have to try hard to beat you. But I just wanted to show you this."

This great game lasted one whole night; daylight was breaking when the two

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

 525 789 539 648

men called on their helpers. The Gros Ventres won many things of value: many best horses, guns, and clothes; and no Gros Ventre ever gambled against Red Whip after that.

Men, women, and children could participate in a hand game played by men. 525
All, with an exception or two to be noted, could bet thereon, and men and women could bet on both sides. In a game where the men were players, the women would be present and would join in the singing as well as in the betting, but they could not be guessers, hiders, or tally keepers; only men could be such. Women, however, could so function in hand games among themselves.

Actual participation in hand game gambling was high. One of our women informants, Mrs Warrior, never went in for betting, she emphasized; but she seems to have been rather exceptional in this regard. Our other woman informant on gambling, Mrs Sleeping Bear, was much devoted to gambling, for relatively small stakes. Nearly every one, so far as we could make out from our evidence, seems to have gambled, either frequently and habitually or at least from time to time.

Participation, however, followed a well-defined and established pattern as regards who could or should bet with or against whom and for what kind of stakes. For convenience we are calling this the "bettor-wager pattern."

Some persons or classes of persons could not gamble at all or could not gamble against certain others; others could or would gamble against certain others only for refreshments or a meal; others, for small stakes of little value; others still, for big stakes. The Gros Ventre bettor-wager pattern at first glimpse looks complicated, but actually it conforms to a few very simple principles. We shall look first at the pattern itself; afterwards at the principles.

Blood relatives could not gamble against each other either for large or for 602
small stakes. Such blood relatives included parents and children, grandparents 525
and grandchildren, brothers and sisters, uncles and aunts and nephews and nieces, and also all classificatory relatives of the same categories. At most a group of blood relatives might engage in a hand game with the half-serious half-playful agreement that the losing side would "cook" for the winning side. A given gambling team would commonly be composed chiefly of members who were kin to one another, but non-relatives could also be on the team; the opposing team would likewise be commonly composed chiefly of another kinship group. Where blood relatives gambled in the same game for small or large stakes, they always gambled and bet, not against one another, but on the same side, and in wagering they bet on and backed their own kinsman or kinsmen, wagering dyadically against fellow tribesmen or aliens not related to them.

5: Flannery E-5 (1940)1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

group was more or less permanently encamped. It was told by 787
Mrs. Warrior, now a very old woman, as one of her childhood [124]
memories and was not elicited by questioning.

"Many, many years ago when I was a small girl, my father 787
had gone on the warpath with several other men. When winter 539
came they hadn't returned. So my uncle (mother's brother) went to an old woman, Good Singer, who was known to be a spiritualist, although she was famous for other medicine powers as well. She consented and the seance was held in the lodge. My sister and I and our aunts and relatives were all there.

"A curtain was hung across the back part of the lodge and Good Singer was bound with ropes tightly knotted, then wrapped in a blanket so that only her head stuck out. She was behind the curtain and began to sing a certain song. She told us all to sing that song four times. I joined in the singing. When we finished we heard a humming sound and scraping and all kinds of noise through the opening at the top of the lodge. The top of the lodge began to shake and all at once we heard something slide from the top down behind the curtain where the old woman was, and land with a thump. That was her spirit, that is, the spirit of her son who had died long, long before.

"As soon as they heard the thump my uncle said: 'Here is the offering,' as he handed behind the curtain the pot containing a pup they had killed and cooked. We could hear the dishes rattling as the spirit ate. Soon all of the bones were picked clean and the spirit tossed them over the curtain so that they landed in our midst. The spirit then complained that they had tied his mother so tightly, and as he untied her we could hear the sound of the ropes as he worked at them. Then the ropes too came sailing over the top of the curtain. They were all knotted up in one bunch, and, try as they would, they couldn't unravel it.

"The spirit then complained again: 'Why did you tie my mother up so tightly?' and then asked: 'What did you call me for?' My uncle said: 'Well, I called you because these men went out on a war party and some, including Holy Weasel, didn't return. I want to know where they are and what became of them.' Then my uncle lighted a pipe and put it under the cur-

5: Flannery E-5 (1940)1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787 tain. When the spirit finished smoking he put the pipe outside
539 the curtain and my uncle said: 'Well, I want you to hunt my brother-in-law to see where he is or what became of him.' Immediately the spirit made a noise and we could hear it going out of the top of the lodge which shook violently again. The people all sat quietly smoking and listening. Then old Good Singer called from behind the curtain: 'Sing again four times.' So they began to sing and I joined in. After the fourth repetition the spirit came back in the same way as it entered the first time, dropping down behind the curtain and landing with a thump. Every time the spirit goes in or out the top of the lodge shakes. Then the spirit made the exclamation which the Gros Ventres use to indicate that something terrible has happened, and continued: 'You should have told him [Holy Weasel] to stay at home. He and his party were killed. They were raiding the enemy and came across some Piegan. The latter made believe they were meeting the Gros Ventre in a friendly way, but when they got close they killed all the party except one who escaped.'

"Just before the spirit made this last speech, two little boys in the lodge had been playing during that ceremony and the spirit told them: 'Be quiet because I am going to tell you what happened.' And before they knew what happened to them these two little boys landed outside the lodge. The spirit must have pushed them out! And everybody was certainly quiet after that."

/ The second account will illustrate some differences in procedure when a spiritualist was consulted while a party was on
[115] the move and on the look-out for enemies. It was told to me by another old woman informant, Singer Sleeping Bear, incidentally to a long story of one of the journeys made by members of her father's group when she was a small girl.

"The party got as far as Canada and stayed all night. One of the men filled his pipe and took it over to another man, Rising Cross, and said: 'Now here. I am giving you the pipe. I want you to invite your spirit. I want you to ask your spirit if the road is clear (that is, if there is no enemy in sight).' Rising Cross took the pipe and prayed a few moments. The other men

5: Flannery E-5 (1940)1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

made a small rounded lodge of willows, just like a sweat lodge. 787
A few of them went in there with the spiritualist who just sat 539
there with them as one of the group. He did, however, smoke the pipe and sing his song. Finally this little lodge shook so hard it almost fell over. It was like a terrible wind. Then a voice said: 'Yes, yes, what do you want?' Rising Cross said: 'Well, we want to know if the way is clear. We are looking for the enemy. How will the way be near where they are?' So the spirit said: 'Well, if you do as I say you are going to kill the chief (the father of a captive Piegan who had married among the Gros Ventres). Go up over the hill and you will see the plain just covered with lodges. If you don't turn back immediately after you kill that one man, you are going to have bad luck.'

"So the young fellows jumped on their fastest horses and went off. They found the situation as described by the spirit. The man whom the spirit mentioned was riding up the trail along the coulee accompanied only by a woman on horseback. When these two had gotten some distance from the lodges in the plain, the young Gros Ventre took after them and killed the man, but the woman wheeled her horse and sped back to the camp to give the alarm. The Gros Ventres said to one another: 'Now you know what the spirit told us. It told us to run just as soon as we killed him.' And the majority was in favor, but one man was obstinate. While they were arguing the enemies approached and were able to overtake most of them. Only a few escaped. It is always someone who doesn't believe the spirit who ruins the party."

That there might occasionally have been some room for 787
doubting the validity of the information received through a par- [15]
ticular spirit is suggested by a comment made by another informant, Al Chandler, a middle-aged man. He had mentioned an old woman spiritualist, David Man's grandmother, and said that she was honest about it and her spirit could be depended upon for the truth. He added, however: "But a man I knew used to hold seances and had his own brother as his spirit. This spirit always lied. When this brother was living he was a liar, so you couldn't expect his spirit to tell the truth!"

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

791
787
776 from behind the blanketed enclosure, the fire would be re-lighted, the performer would say the prayer customary among the Gros
[782] Ventres before all meals to the Supreme Being and other beings, then he or she and the others present would eat the food that had remained from the ghost's repast. Finally they would all sit around smoking and chatting a while before dispersing. I failed to gather any information on whether the performer receives any payment or not for his or her services in the rite.

Certain simplifications of the above procedure under emergency conditions as on war expeditions are noted or intimated in a couple of the following four narratives, the first two given by The Boy, the last two by Thick.

Narrative 1

787 The following story was told by The Boy.
776 "A certain man had his deceased father as his ghost helper.
539 The ghost helper used to speak Gros Ventre just like living people but in a bass voice. Everybody understood him when they heard him.

"On one occasion the Gros Ventre tribe were camped near the forks of the Teton and Marias Rivers. While there a large group of the men decided to go on the warpath. So they left the main camp, went up the Missouri River and camped that first night at the mouth of Crow Creek where it empties into the Missouri River. When it was dark that night some of the men said: 'Let's offer the pipe to X [the one mentioned above who had the ghost helper; name not given] and ask him to find out whether our prospects on this war party are good or bad.' So they filled up a pipe and went to X, held out the pipe to him and asked him: 'Accept the pipe and call your spirit.'

[791] "X accepted willingly and soon after they had smoked the pipe together they made a shelter where X was to do the spirit-rite. So they tied up X, filled the pipe again, put it there and sang a song four times. When they were singing it the fourth time they heard a voice in the air. The ghost helper arrived and the shelter shook as a lodge would have done in the same rite. When the spirit hit the ground, the ground shook too. The spirit

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

seemed excited and kept repeating: 'What do you want, my children?' and added: 'If you were in my place and were as old and feeble as I am, you wouldn't like to be disturbed. But here I am. What do you want?' They answered: 'We want to know how this venture of ours is going to turn out,—well or badly.' Then they lit the pipe and offered it to the spirit and they could see from the rhythmic glaring of the pipe that the ghost helper was smoking. After he had smoked he replied: 'Well, I don't know offhand. I'll have to look around and investigate. I am going away to look around. While I am gone you smoke and after a while sing again and I'll come back.' The ghost helper went away with a noise and commotion as always.

"They sat around and smoked and after a while sang again. The ghost helper came back blowing as if catching his breath, as an old man does, and said: 'My children, Crow Indians without number are invading the camp you just left. Knowing you men are away they are so bold that they are peeping into the lodges at your women and watching them playing the hand game. Your women are in happy mood. These Crow Indians seem to be preparing to take all the Gros Ventre horses. I shall go back and watch to see what they will do. Meanwhile you do as you did before: sit around and smoke and then sing. I'll come back and make a final report.' And so they talked and smoked and sang.

"Then the ghost helper came back bringing with him one hair from the head of a Crow. This was not a scalp but was only a hair representing a scalp and was wrapped around a piece of sagebrush. It was brought to convince the Gros Ventres there was no danger. Then the ghost helper reported: 'The Crows have taken practically all your horses and about sun-up will arrive where you now are. You need have no fear of the Crows provided you do just one thing. Be sure to kill the Crow with the blue blanket coat (with hood). He is the one brave man in the crowd. Kill him first and you will kill all the others. None of the Gros Ventres will be actually killed, but two of them will be wounded. In case you do not kill the Crow with the blue coat the outcome of the battle will be doubtful. But if you kill the

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787 Crow with the blue coat you will kill all the Crows and get your
776 horses back.' The Gros Ventres asked the ghost helper which
539 two of their party would be wounded, but were not told by the ghost helper. If they had been told they would not have let these two go into battle.

"By the time they were through with the spirit it was near daylight. So they decided not to go to sleep but to wait up the rest of the night. [Here followed a long detailed description of the battle with the Crows beginning around daylight.] The Crow with the blue coat escaped. Of the sixty Crows in all, forty were killed. No Gros Ventres were killed, but two were wounded—two members of my own [The Boy's] clan. While the party was still at the war camp, some distance from the main camp, the ghost helper came and said: 'I came to hear the news. Did you kill the man with the blue coat?' They answered: 'No.' The ghost helper said: 'It is your own fault. If you had, you would have killed all the Crows. But anyhow you did well and have done yourselves credit. I am going to teach
[727] you a victory song so you can sing it when you get back to camp.' So he taught them this victory song[2] and they learned it and he said to them: 'Well, my children, I am going home. When I get back to my place of abode I will celebrate that victory too. I will give you charcoal [it was the custom for returning victors to paint themselves black] and I'll bring charcoal to my own land and celebrate.'

"The foregoing incident happened in the time of my [The Boy's] grandfather, Crow Moccasin."

Narrative 2

The story which here follows was also told by The Boy.

"The Gros Ventres were camped east of (the site of) Lewistown (south of the Missouri River). A party of Gros Ventre warriors left the camp to go on the warpath against the Sioux. One of this Gros Ventre party was known to have a ghost helper.

[2] This song as sung by The Boy was recorded in the field in 1940, together with about 120 other Gros Ventre songs, but I have not found it possible, as yet, to get any of the records transcribed for publication.

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The party traveled north and when they arrived at the river they camped there. Some of the men said: 'Morning-star-appears (or Morning-star-is-up: the man with the ghost helper) should be approached to find out what our prospects are on this expedition.' It was agreed among themselves that they would make a sweat lodge. 797 776 539

"Among those invited to sweat was Morning-star-appears. While they were sweating they offered the pipe to him to get him to call his helper. He agreed. Then they all smoked and got ready in the sweat lodge. [79]

"The ghost helper came to the sweat lodge for the possessor was right there. Just before the helper alighted he whistled violently and rapidly. Then the sweat lodge shook and they heard the ghost helper say: 'What do you want? Why did you call me?' They said: 'We are going on the warpath after the Sioux. What success will we have? Is there any danger?' So they offered the lighted pipe to the ghost helper and saw it smoked by him. After smoking, the ghost helper said: 'I'll go and see first before I answer. You go ahead and smoke and after a while sing again.' This they did.

"The ghost helper came back in the usual way, and highly elated, and said: 'All right. I am ready to tell you. First here is a strand of hair of a man (a Sioux) whom you will kill tomorrow. This represents his scalp.' It was wrapped around sagebrush. He continued: 'I have found a big Sioux camp on Beaver Creek [east of the Little Rocky Mountains]. The Sioux are having a big Grass Dance. The one who is having the most fun is the one you are to kill tomorrow. He is a handsome man and has a sword. You will capture that sword when you kill him. Don't be afraid. No Gros Ventre will be killed but two of you Gros Ventres don't look good to me.' They said to the ghost helper: 'Name the two.' But he refused to do so, saying: 'Just don't be afraid. Go ahead to the place where the Sioux are and attack them. Choose now what kind of weather you wish after the fight tomorrow, and I will see that the weather will be that way.' They failed, however, to make a choice. The ghost helper also said: 'Every once in a while tomorrow take

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787 a look at the sun. There will be all kinds of sundogs tomorrow,
776 changing every little while. When they appear you will know
539 that I have told you the truth.'

"Then the ghost helper left and the Gros Ventres slept until early morning. [Here followed a long description by The Boy of the battle.] Just one Sioux was killed in the battle, a very handsome man with a sword, as the ghost helper had predicted. Likewise they saw the sundogs changing. The Gros Ventres, however, after this first skirmish realized that the Sioux would soon get reorganized and that their own situation was perilous. So they called on Morning-star-appears to cause such weather that the Sioux could not catch them. He sang his song, using his robe as a cover in which to enclose himself, and said: 'We wish rain.' At once a cloud appeared and in a short time grew into a great black storm cloud; then came a perfect cloudburst, with thunder and lightning, in which you couldn't see any distance. Under this cover the Gros Ventres escaped from the pursuing Sioux and got back to camp safely with no loss of life, although two of their number had had narrow escapes, just as the ghost helper had said: 'Two of you do not look good to me.'

"The above occurred in Stiff Arm's time, when he was a young man. The man who killed the Sioux was Crazy Bull. I do not recall the name of the ghost helper, but this same ghost helper on this occasion taught the Gros Ventres a song to use in their celebration after the victory."[3]

Narrative 3

787 The following two stories were told me by Thick.
539 "A certain old woman (her great-great-grandchild is still living) had a ghost helper. Her name was 'Woman' but for various reasons she was nicknamed 'Bear Old Woman.' When I was about ten years old a party of Gros Ventres was camped at Lodge Pole, about two miles from the Little Rocky Mountains. One night Cree enemies came and stole all the Gros

[3] This song as sung by The Boy was recorded in 1940.

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Ventres' horses except those belonging to one man. This man 787
loaned out his horses as far as they would go around to four of 539
the Gros Ventres who went in pursuit of the Cree.

"Then that evening two of the other men, one of them my 787
father, approached Bear Old Woman. They filled up a pipe just 539
as you do when you go to someone to doctor you, offered it to the 791
old woman, and asked her to find out from her ghost helper who stole the horses and where they were. Bear Old Woman, who had quite a temper, got angry right away as usual and pushed the pipe away as a sign of refusal. Finally one of the young fellows there, a relative of hers, said: 'Well, let me smoke it.' to force her to accept. She angrily grabbed the pipe and had to go through with the rite. When she took the pipe she rubbed her [782]
hands on the ground and rubbed dust on the pipe and offered a prayer before smoking. The pipe was then smoked by her and by the two men who had approached her.

"Then they began to get things ready. They killed a puppy, singed its hair off at a fire, took its insides out without skinning. [262
quartered it up and boiled it. They put the boiled meat on a 252]
plate and got ready some other kinds of food to give to the old woman. Then the two men filled up a pipe and they together with two other men and with a 'servant' went to Bear Old Woman's lodge. On arriving there they set down the plate of dog meat near the head of her bed, the pipe between the incense hearth and the lodge fire, and the other dishes between the lodge fire and the door.

"When everything was arranged and Bear Old Woman was still sitting on her bed, she said: 'Whoever is the greatest unbeliever among you, come and tie me up.' One of the four volunteered. Then the old woman got up and went to a place just south of the head of the bed, to a little enclosure made by hanging up a blanket. He hobbled her four fingers (thumb too?) with sinew, interlacing it in and out of the four fingers of each hand. Then he tied her hands together behind her back and also hobbled her feet. She was lying on a robe. He gathered the robe around her and tied her with rawhide thongs until only her head stuck out of the robe. And so he left her lying on her

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787 back. He returned to his place to the southeast of the old
539 woman and sat down.
791 "Then Bear Old Woman said: 'All right. Start to sing now.' They sang four times without stopping, the song belonging to the old woman's ghost helper. As they were singing the third time they heard an owl and the old woman said: 'Don't receive *that* spirit. He is bad. Continue singing.' So they continued and just as they finished the fourth time the old woman said: 'That is the one. Receive *that* spirit.' The people around heard these two owls.

787 "When the second owl lighted on top of the lodge, the top
539 shook and the ghost helper spoke: 'What do you want me for?'
776 They said: 'We want you to tell us where our horses are and who has them so we can find them.' The ghost helper answered: 'All right. I'll have to go look for them, but you go ahead and smoke this pipe [the one lying near the incense hearth]. When you have smoked up what is in the pipe, refill it and put it back in the same place and wait.'

"They had barely started smoking when the ghost helper was back again. So they just dumped out what was left in the pipe and refilled it. The helper said: 'Never mind. I am hungry and want to eat.' But they didn't mind. The spirit then said: 'Your horses are not very far away from here. Your four friends have already recaptured your horses and are bringing them back.' He also said to my father: 'One of your horses has a thick broad rawhide rope around his neck and is dragging it, and that other man's mare's colt will play out on the trip back home.'

"After the helper had said all this, the four men judged that he was through, so they took the pipe and lit it and offered the helper a smoke. The inside of the old woman's lodge was dark as there was no fire. The helper took the pipe from their hands and then they saw it light up rhythmically as a pipe does when it is puffed, and after taking a few puffs the helper said to the men: 'You smoke the rest. I am hungry and want to eat.' They could hear him chewing on the dog meat inside where the woman was. After a while the helper said to the men: 'Here.

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

You can eat the rest of this pup.' The meat had been eaten off 787
of one hind leg of the pup so that just the bones were left. Then 539
the ghost helper said: 'I see this foolish old woman lying here 776
helpless.' Then they heard a noise as if the helper had struck the old woman with the flat of his hand and he was heard blowing. The next instant the ghost helper said: 'Here, try to untie this,' and the knotted sinew and rawhide thong hit the chest of the man who had tied her up.

"Then they heard the old woman give a long sigh. She had [791]
been in a trance all this time and was just coming out of it. Next the ghost helper said: 'Now I am going to leave you.' And they heard the same racket at the top of the lodge they had heard when he first came in and there was a violent shaking of the whole lodge, especially at the top of it.

"After the ghost helper was gone they kindled the fire again
and there was light. Bear Old Woman came out of the enclosure [791]
and sat down on the bed and prayed with the bowls of food in her hand. Then she and the men ate and afterwards sat around and smoked and chatted. Then the men went home and told what the spirit had said.

"Next morning all the people in the camp, including the chil- 787
dren, got up early and went up on the highest nearby ground to 539
look for the four men coming back with the horses. Towards evening of the day the four Gros Ventres who had gone in pursuit of the thieves brought all the horses back, except the one which, as the spirit had said, had played out and could not stand the trip back. And one of my father's horses had a rope around its neck as the ghost helper had said it had. The pursuers had caught up with the Cree and surprised them asleep in a little swamp covered with grass and brush and so took the horses back home. On the return trip they got lost in a bad storm, went in the wrong direction and not until daylight did they discover their mistake and so had to circle their way back. They had neither eaten nor slept during all the two days and night they had been gone.

"The above incident occurred just at about the time when the buffalo disappeared from this part of the country [1880's]."

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

NARRATIVE 4

787 Here is the second story told me by Thick.

539 "There was a man by the name of Bird Child who had a ghost
791 helper. Bird Child's wife had four brothers, one of them my father. One evening they filled a pipe and went to Bird Child's lodge to get him to find out from his ghost helper where there would be lots of buffalo and no danger, so they could go there and hunt. When they arrived at Bird Child's lodge they found him absent and only his wife in the lodge. Without invitation they made themselves at home and asked their sister where Bird Child was. She answered: 'I don't know where he is nor when he will be back.'

787 "Being Bird Child's brothers-in-law they decided to take the
776 liberty of using Bird Child's power and ghost helper, and of hav-
539 ing a seance in his absence. They asked their sister where Bird
[607] Child's bundle was. She showed them. One of the four brothers took it down. They then agreed who was to be tied up and to represent Bird Child. The one of the four designated agreed. They had him lie down and two of them tied him up tight and laid him in an enclosure made along the side of the tent [as in preceding story]. They were half-fooling, not quite serious. Their sister couldn't say anything: they imposed on her. They even attached the man's hair to the ropes with which they bound him in the robe until only his mouth was visible.

"Then they started to sing and sang the same song four times without stopping. At the end they heard yelling in the air and said: 'There he is. He has come for us.' As the ghost helper arrived the tent shook and the helper said: 'Who's that lying back there?' and answered himself: 'Some crazy man or someone with no regard for anybody's rights.' Then they heard a commotion behind the enclosure. The bound brother started to hollow for mercy. Next one of the brothers who had done the tying got hit with all the ropes tangled in a knot.

"Then they heard the bound man being thrown towards the door, and saying: 'Hurry up and make a light before this ghost helper kills me.' The spirit had picked him up and was trying

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13
Blackfoot NF6

G
787
539
776

to wedge him between the poles in the lodge. By this time, however, the other brothers had kindled a fire and of course as soon as the flame flared up the spirit was gone. The ghost helper was good and mad but anyhow had come."

Blackfoot-Blood Rite

B
787
791

On a casual visit to Browning, Montana, in August, 1931, the writer was given some information by Mrs. Frances (Joseph) Brown of Browning on the Blackfoot shaking tent rite. The rite is performed by a woman who is a sort of "spiritualist" or "medium," as Mrs. Brown put it. She summons the dead spirits [spirit?] and they come and answer questions. Only she can understand the language of the dead spirits and can converse with them. She tells their answers to the other people who are around. During the rite, people are all around in the tipi. A curtain is put over a part of the interior of the tipi, and the "medium" sits behind the curtain. The lights are extinguished. Food is put on a plate. During the rite noises are heard "inside" [apparently behind the curtain], and everything moves, including the tent itself. It was emphasized to me that this rite is an old Indian one, not a modern intrusion of white spiritualistic seances.

B
787
776

While talking with The Boy (Gros Ventre) in August 1940 about the Gros Ventre ghost helper complex, he told me the following story that his friend, Platted Hair, a Blood from Canada, had told him on a visit to him some time before:

A long time ago, before the Gros Ventres came and when the Snakes still occupied this part of the country, a large party of Bloods came over toward the Little Rockies and never returned to their home country. Their people at home did not know what to make of it. One of the Bloods in the home camp had a ghost helper. So they gave this Blood a pipe to summon his ghost helper. When the ghost arrived, he asked: "Why did you send for me?" They said: "Our young men went on a war party and did not return. What has happened to them?" The ghost said: "I'll go and see. You may sing the song. I'll come back and I may be able to tell you what has happened." So the

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

551 Names were given to children very soon after birth. Names were fre-
563 quently changed and given away. A man would receive his father's name from the latter, or would take it after his death. If a child were sickly, a relative, such as a grandfather, sometimes gave him another name. A sick person sometimes also took a new name in order to recover. Renowned warriors sometimes gave away their names to young men. They might retain the same name for themselves, or take a new one. One very aged man gave away his name to a young man, telling him, "I give you my name in order that you may have as long a life as I." This was done without the occasion or accompaniment of a ceremony.

There seems to have been no prohibition against mentioning the name of the dead, nor even any reluctance on the matter. Some people, however, were ashamed to speak their own names.

551 Twins, called niiçan, were named, if boys, respectively Kaaen and Niiça^{n}.
845 The latter name, however, was not always used, an ordinary name being given instead. Girl twins were not called by these names.

The hair was formerly worn in braids, as at present customary among
302 the Plains tribes, but also erect over the forehead. The women wore their
[765] hair either in braids or sometimes loose. In mourning, the hair, especially of the women, was cut about halfway across the cheek.

304 Ear-piercing, which among the Arapaho is performed on ceremonial occasions, and is itself accompanied with ceremony and giving of presents, was said among the Gros Ventre to be unaccompanied by special ceremonial actions. A woman or any one else does the piercing.

857 Boys who were herding horses sometimes took off their clothes and
673 daubed themselves with mud until they were unrecognizable. They painted their horses, and made shields of willow. Then they came to the camp,
868 mounted or on foot, to steal meat. Approaching the camp like a war-party, they would select the best meat hanging outdoors, charge on it, take it, and run. The old men and women and children chased them with clubs, but of course without success. The boys would go back to where they were herding, and have a feast.

576 The Gros Ventre say that both hand-shaking and kissing are aboriginal with them.

GAMES.

524 A common cup-and-ball game called tsöötskuutja^{n} ("throw in") consisted of four hollow deer or antelope leg bones, each about two inches long, attached to a string passing through them, at the end of which there was a needle eight or ten inches long. This game appears to be identical with

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

CHAPTER VI

KINSHIP BEHAVIOR

Much of the more formalized behavior expected between particular categories of relatives among the Gros Ventres has survived the many changes in their economic, political, and religious structure. It is one of the few aspects of their older culture which can be observed as functioning at least partially. Although the economic side of the obligations has had to be reduced markedly under modern conditions, the attitudes accompanying avoidance and joking are still deeply ingrained in those of middle age and in older persons. 602 [178]

All in all, the type of behavior which indicated respect was extended to include by far the greatest number of relationships,—freedom being allowed only between those individuals considered to be related as grandparents and grandchildren, as siblings of the same sex, and as in-laws of opposite sex but of the same generation.

Parents

The parent-child relationship was characterized by a kind of reserve that tabooed any light talk, especially joking about sex or marriage. If the subject were approached in a serious way, however, it could be discussed between parent and child of like sex. A woman could, for instance, go to her divorced or widowed mother and tell her: "So-and-so wants you, will you not go and live with that man?" But she would not think of acting as intermediary in such a proposal to her father. 593

Throughout life children were supposed to address and to refer to their parents only by relationship terms,[1] never by personal name. Further, a son would be shamed by any incident even remotely connected with sex, in which he was involved, should it be [601 55]

[1] The kinship terminology given by our informants agrees in detail with that in Kroeber, 1902, p. 9.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

has been given up, the Gros Ventres are so sunburned that their 302
skin looks almost "black." Singer showed a small bag of red
paint which she still had. She kept a piece of beaver castor in the [237]
bag so the paint would be sweet-smelling.

In the old days the Gros Ventres were early risers. Everyone 512
got up while it was still dark, perhaps about three o'clock in summer and before seven in winter. It didn't make any difference whether a child might otherwise be favored, the rule was iron-clad that all must rise early and that no one should lie abed. This applied to all—old people as well as to children.

One method of making sure that children would be strong was 856
to take a beaver tail and slap the child on the hand and on the back
while saying: "You will be good and strong." Mary, for instance, 825
has seen her mother do this to all her grandchildren, hitting them so hard they almost cried. The beaver is considered a very strong animal since he cuts down big trees and drags them about.

Naming and Ear-piercing

Every individaul received a name shortly after birth. Many 551 ●
Gros Ventres, however, were, and are, known by names other than the original one. Names were changed for particular reasons, and in addition nicknames were frequently employed. Sometimes the first name was bestowed with considerable formality, but naming could be carried out in a variety of ways,[10] as the following examples show. 553

"Shortly after Coming Daylight was born, her father sent for 852
his sister's husband and told him: 'Now I invited you to name your niece. I am giving you such-and-such kind of horse' (a bay, or a pinto, or whatnot). There was a big feast on this occasion and the lodge was full of people. The namer sat in the place of honor at the back of the lodge. He held the infant in his arms, told a war deed and said: 'Now I name her 'Taken A Prisoner.' Then he said a long prayer, starting with the usual formula, and wishing the infant a long life. He then handed the infant to the person to his left saying: 'Take Taken A Prisoner'; and so the infant was passed all around the lodge, each repeating the same to

[10] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, p. 182.

553 father had given him his own name, "Bear Teeth"; and in that of Ragged Robe's wife who gave her name to a little girl. In this latter case, at least, the woman continued using her own name.

Except in those cases where the name of a relative is given, as is seemingly the rule nowadays, the name must have some specific relation to either the war deeds or the medicine powers of the namer. Singer remarked that one time, when she had been very lucky in locating some weapons abandoned by the enemy, she was looking forward very much to naming a little relative "Finder" in connection with this exploit. Unfortunately, however, the child's father had already had a name for her so Singer was disappointed. A Pipe-Keeper, too, might name a child from something connected with the Pipe. Rufus Warrior, for instance, was named from the rawhide with which the Flat Pipe is wrapped; another child was called "Red Woman" from the fact that the wife of the Flat Pipe Keeper was always painted red,—even her hair. Al Chandler knows of two people his grandfather had named from objects in the Feather Pipe bundle.

The more formal the occasion, the more expensive the naming was for the family involved. If, for instance, advantage was taken of a public ceremony, not only was the one who gave the name recompensed by a valuable gift, such as a horse, but many other gifts would be given to various persons in the audience in order to honor the recipient of the name and to give prestige to his family. The expense was particularly heavy when a name was publicly bestowed upon an adult in recognition of bravery at war.[11]

[431 727 554]

551 Nearly everyone had a nickname. One of the most common was, and is, simply "Girl" or "Boy." Such a nickname often was acquired in early childhood because the name which had been bestowed was not liked,—and those names given through medicine often fell in that category. Coming Daylight said that she had not cared for the name given by a medicine man to her first-born son, so she had called him "Boy." The child died very young, and she now wonders if he would have lived longer had they used his real name. Nicknames may be acquired at any time of life and sometimes they are far from complimentary, especially those bestowed later in life by enemy-friends. If the nickname "takes" there is

[11] Cf. Chapter 5, p. 101.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

nothing the person can do about it. One of Singer's friends was called "Matter in the Ear" and another "Ugly or Homely." Another woman harped so much on an event which took place at Turtle River, that "Turtle River" became the name by which she was known, and most people forgot that her actual name was "Spotted Calf." 551

The piercing of the ears may be done at the same time as the naming, as apparently was done in the case of Coming Daylight, or might be done shortly thereafter. Singer, for instance, was named by Sitting High, but her grandmother on a different occasion pierced her ears. The parents might pay someone to do this, or a relative might volunteer. The sooner the ear-piercing is done the better, because the older the child is the more it may hurt. Singer said: "That ear-piercing goes either through a dream or through war deeds." In the former case, the dream is told and then the ears are pierced. In the latter case the person must relate a war story: "This is what I have done. . . ." The story has to be a true one concerning an incident wherein the enemy did not retaliate so the ears will heal up without any trouble.[12] The actual procedure, regardless of whether there is much formality or not, is as follows. An awl is used to pierce the ear and into the hole is inserted either a small splinter of rose-wood sharpened to a pin-point, or a porcupine quill. Whichever is used, it is greased before inserting and is left in until it falls out when the ear is healed. At this time is then inserted a small ring merely to keep the hole open. Fancy earrings are not worn by small children. Formerly boys' ears were pierced as well as girls'. The number of holes in each ear seems more or less arbitrary, but all are made on the same occasion. Coming Daylight has one in each ear; Singer has two; Coming Daylight's eldest son has three. The custom is now dying out as the present generation of mothers does not believe in it. Coming Daylight wanted to pierce the ears of her great-granddaughter but the child's mother said: "No. You will hurt her." 304 [852] [987] [301]

[12] Kroeber, 1908, p. 182 states that ear-piercing was said to be unaccompanied by special ceremonial actions.

It was
888 thought well, too, to name a child after someone who had attained
[551] advanced age. Thus it was that youths of 16 or 17 years of age would go out in a storm and stand before the lodge of some old man or woman and cry, begging the prayers of that person. Again, on a hunting party, should there be some old man along,
[431 unable to hunt, one member of the group might give a whole buf-
782] falo carcass to him; whereupon the grateful elder would offer a spontaneous prayer on the donor's behalf. Similarly, it was not at all unusual for successful young hunters to seek out old people to share in some of the spoils,—just as in these later times a bottle of whiskey was occasionally given to old persons by the young. Once in a while, too, some married man would have his wife cook
[782] a quantity of food and publicly invite old people, one of whom, in appreciation of this attention, would offer the expected prayer for the long life, health and success of the host and all the members of his household.

Dignity was, however, not necessarily an attribute of old age. With advancing years the conventions were somewhat relaxed. It was stated by one informant: "When a man had lived long enough to have participated in all the Sacred Dances, he had acquired the right to do almost as he pleased, including not having to observe so strictly the relationship taboos. It seemed to throw the bars down and he could have even more fun than ever at the expense of his enemy-friends and become still more vulgar and obscene." Relations between old women living together were not always harmonious and noisy quarreling was not unusual. Sometimes young boys played pranks on such old women, as in the following case.

888 "Two old women who were sisters shared a lodge. One day
522 they were in there, seated back to back, warming themselves by the fire. They didn't have any clothes on and were feeling good, scratching their skins with sticks. Two young boys peeped in. They took a long willow and quietly heated the end of it in the fire. When the end of the willow was glowing, they touched one of the old women with it. She yelled at the other: 'You burned me,' and of course the other denied it. After a little while, the boys did the same thing to the other old woman. They heard her call out: 'What did you do to me? You burned me!' The boys

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

784 Sex abstinence was generally observed before hunting, and par-
789 ticularly before and all during golden eagle trapping. Eagle
[834] trappers "had to have a special religious character, to observe certain food taboos, and a special way of handling [being handed?] a pipe." The leader of a war party, but not other members thereof, also observed sex abstinence.

Do not break leg bones or ribs to extract the marrow or for other purpose, inside the lodge or house; go outside to do it, else you will get sore legs, or your horses may break their legs. Cora Chandler stated in 1940 that she still observed this latter, as her folks had always made her do. If an embryo calf were to be taken out of the belly of a buffalo, the embryo's eyes had to be extracted before it was brought into the lodge to be cooked; if the eyes were taken out inside the lodge, a member of the family would go blind, —"and this has been proven." Likewise it was forbidden to butcher and extract the brains from a buffalo head inside a lodge, and also break off the "soft end" of roast buffalo ribs. "Never use a knife to fuss with ashes or coals because you might cut yourself if you did so."

After blood-letting, the subject abstained from eating anything fried so the cut would not turn blue.

[651] There does not seem to have been any prohibition against mentioning the name of a deceased relative or other person.

777 Coming Daylight and Mary Ereaux had never heard of lucky or
801 unlucky numbers. The Boy, however, stated: "According to the old law, the people were forbidden to use seven. For instance, a war party was not to have seven members, but either more or fewer. Cases are known in which young fellows disobeyed this rule and ran into trouble. In one case of this kind six of the party got killed and only one escaped with his life."

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

551 Names were given to children very soon after birth. Names were fre-
553 quently changed and given away. A man would receive his father's name from the latter, or would take it after his death. If a child were sickly, a relative, such as a grandfather, sometimes gave him another name. A sick person sometimes also took a new name in order to recover. Renowned warriors sometimes gave away their names to young men. They might retain the same name for themselves, or take a new one. One very aged man gave away his name to a young man, telling him, "I give you my name in order that you may have as long a life as I." This was done without the occasion or accompaniment of a ceremony.

There seems to have been no prohibition against mentioning the name of the dead, nor even any reluctance on the matter. Some people, however, were ashamed to speak their own names.

551 Twins, called niiçan, were named, if boys, respectively Kaaen and Niiçaⁿ.
845 The latter name, however, was not always used, an ordinary name being given instead. Girl twins were not called by these names.

The hair was formerly worn in braids, as at present customary among
362 the Plains tribes, but also erect over the forehead. The women wore their
[765] hair either in braids or sometimes loose. In mourning, the hair, especially of the women, was cut about halfway across the cheek.

304 Ear-piercing, which among the Arapaho is performed on ceremonial occasions, and is itself accompanied with ceremony and giving of presents, was said among the Gros Ventre to be unaccompanied by special ceremonial actions. A woman or any one else does the piercing.

857 Boys who were herding horses sometimes took off their clothes and
673 daubed themselves with mud until they were unrecognizable. They painted their horses, and made shields of willow. Then they came to the camp,
868 mounted or on foot, to steal meat. Approaching the camp like a war-party, they would select the best meat hanging outdoors, charge on it, take it, and run. The old men and women and children chased them with clubs, but of course without success. The boys would go back to where they were herding, and have a feast.

576 The Gros Ventre say that both hand-shaking and kissing are aboriginal with them.

GAMES.

524 A common cup-and-ball game called tsöötskuutjaⁿ ("throw in") consisted of four hollow deer or antelope leg bones, each about two inches long, attached to a string passing through them, at the end of which there was a needle eight or ten inches long. This game appears to be identical with

574 your arm because they always get after me if I feed any one.' So as I was going along the other two wives were coming back with the wood and saw me. They asked this third wife what I had wanted and she said: 'She came here to beg.' They asked her: 'Did you feed her?' and when she said no, the other two scolded her saying: 'You should have fed her at least a little bit' and continued to bawl her out for being so stingy."

While not all individuals lived up to the standard of casual hospitality, the majority seemingly did so, and business negotiations were usually transacted while visiting.[18] The individual who [554] dispensed food liberally could expect a return from others, although not necessarily the ones whom he had fed. Furthermore, if a man wished to sustain a good reputation he was expected to entertain well. It was customary, therefore, when fresh meat had been brought in for a man to tell his wife to cook and then he called out: "So-and-so, come and smoke," to as many as he wished to [554] invite. When the guests arrived he greeted each and assigned him to a place in the lodge, the most honored guests being seated in the back opposite the opening. After the guests had eaten, the host filled the pipe from a plentiful supply of "mixture," and the smok- [276] ing continued until the host gave the sign for dispersal by knocking the ashes from the pipe.

553 574 On more formal occasions, such as a naming feast, the host would ask some older man with a strong voice to act as announcer, and in such case the latter would call out by name each guest and say who was inviting him. Ordinarily a man would invite his own age group, his close friends, but it was not customary for the wives of the guests to come. If a woman wished to invite others, she would go to the various lodges and invite them personally. In this type of planned hospitality there was more in the nature of direct exchange although it might be considerably deferred.

574 431 In addition to hospitality, ostentatious liberality accomplished circulation of goods within the tribe. From the Gros Ventre point of view: "Presents were usually given with the intention of doing good and if no return were made, nothing was said or done. But often it turned out that at some later time the recipient would say

[18] Cf. Denig, pp. 514–15.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

those which were valuable enough to be tethered near lodges at night, was considered practically on a par with killing, scalping and counting coups. Capturing weapons and other trophies, as well as taking women and children prisoner, were likewise deserving of praise. Helping fellow-tribesmen in danger and many other types of action such as successful scouting for a war party, or acting as water-carrier under dangerous circumstances, were taken into account in assessing the war record of the individual. 554

An ambitious man grasped every opportunity for distinguishing himself in as many of these ways as possible, for prestige depended primarily on a reputation for bravery, and competition between warriors was keen.[22] The ideal man was one who had so many war-deeds to his credit that "his wrist would be made slim from being pulled up to recite them." So great was the variety of circumstances under which a recitation of war-deeds was required, that a man who had accomplished little was of necessity ignored and doomed to remain a nonentity.

Furthermore there were many occasions on which those who had given a good account of themselves in battle were singled out for public recognition. During the victory dance, for instance, a warrior, who had remained at home, chose one of the returning party to whom he would offer a ceremonial smoke while singing his praises. Again, the relatives of a man who had behaved with particular heroism might decide to formally bestow a new name upon him. In such a case, a group of men and women would approach the lodge where the naming ceremony was held, calling attention to the hero by loudly singing there. To show his appreciation of the honor the hero gave valuable presents to the singers. If a group approached a second time, the honor was doubled and so were the presents. In illustration, the story was told of a woman who was on one occasion so outstandingly brave during battle that she was accorded the same honor a man would have been under the same circumstances,—she was given a new name, that of Woman Chief, and her praises were sung by three groups. Moreover, it was customary at the social dances of the Stars and of the Wolf-men, to compose songs referring to specific deeds of their members respectively, and to sing these over and over again. [553] [562]

[22] For this and other aspects of status, see also pp. 32-33.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

at the time whether she would ever have a chance to acquire more of these highly desirable decorations." On the other hand, a maternal uncle would not refuse his niece or her husband anything it was in his power to give, and would always lend them horses or other kinds of property when requested. 604

Compared with the responsibilities of the maternal uncle, a paternal aunt had relatively few obligations to her nephews and nieces but correspondingly more to their mother, her brother's wife. Nevertheless it was she who took particular interest in her brother's children when they were infants. She showed regard for her brother by providing, if possible, the sack for the newborn baby and the goods to pay the medicine man in case it were necessary to call one to the child-bed of her sister-in-law. If the child became ill she, too, usually paid for the necessary doctoring and it was not unusual for her and her husband to assume the expense of a formal naming feast for the infant. [854] [553]

The paternal aunt had the duty of "bawling out" her brother's daughters if they misbehaved. In regard to property, a niece would have to ask permission before using anything of her aunt, but the request was always granted. The aunt would tell her niece in an offhand way: "Well, why don't you go get it!". Whereas if someone not in that relationship had made the request, she would have gotten the object and handed it to her. A woman was expected to be as reserved with her aunt as she would be with her own mother and with her mother-in-law. A man was even more respectful to his aunt in the sense that he would not speak to her unnecessarily nor look directly at her. [861]

When a girl married, the paternal aunt sometimes participated in the bride-price, and claimed her niece's husband as "son-in-law." According to Garter Snake: "When Otter Robe's oldest sister married, the groom gave three horses, one of which went to the bride's father, one to her brother, and the third to her father's sister. The latter made for her niece's husband a fine fancy robe, treating him with the same consideration she would have accorded her own daughter's husband. Then, when this 'son-in-law' returned successfully from a raiding party, he gave his 'mother-in-law' one of the horses he had captured." It is interesting to note [583]

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

has been given up, the Gros Ventres are so sunburned that their skin looks almost "black." Singer showed a small bag of red paint which she still had. She kept a piece of beaver castor in the bag so the paint would be sweet-smelling. 302 [237]

In the old days the Gros Ventres were early risers. Everyone got up while it was still dark, perhaps about three o'clock in summer and before seven in winter. It didn't make any difference whether a child might otherwise be favored, the rule was iron-clad that all must rise early and that no one should lie abed. This applied to all—old people as well as to children. 512

One method of making sure that children would be strong was to take a beaver tail and slap the child on the hand and on the back while saying: "You will be good and strong." Mary, for instance, has seen her mother do this to all her grandchildren, hitting them so hard they almost cried. The beaver is considered a very strong animal since he cuts down big trees and drags them about. 856 825

Naming and Ear-piercing

Every individaul received a name shortly after birth. Many Gros Ventres, however, were, and are, known by names other than the original one. Names were changed for particular reasons, and in addition nicknames were frequently employed. Sometimes the first name was bestowed with considerable formality, but naming could be carried out in a variety of ways,[10] as the following examples show. 551 553

"Shortly after Coming Daylight was born, her father sent for his sister's husband and told him: 'Now I invited you to name your niece. I am giving you such-and-such kind of horse' (a bay, or a pinto, or whatnot). There was a big feast on this occasion and the lodge was full of people. The namer sat in the place of honor at the back of the lodge. He held the infant in his arms, told a war deed and said: 'Now I name her 'Taken A Prisoner.' Then he said a long prayer, starting with the usual formula, and wishing the infant a long life. He then handed the infant to the person to his left saying: 'Take Taken A Prisoner'; and so the infant was passed all around the lodge, each repeating the same to 852

[10] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, p. 182.

553 852 his neighbor. The reason that her father did all this was because she was the first-born and so she was kind of expensive to her family. If a man thought he could afford it, he would make a big feast for his first-born, and then give less at the naming of his other children, although it was not always the case that the first-born got the best. It apparently depended on what the man could afford at the time."

"When Coming Daylight's sister was born, her father's sister told her husband that she wanted him to name this niece. So she came to her brother's lodge and said: 'Well, I have come for my niece, I am going to have her named by the same person who named her older sister.' This woman, then, invited a lot of people to her place and put up the feast. She gave her husband a small keg of whiskey, when he named the infant Kills One. She laid the present down in front of him and said: 'This is what I give you for naming this child—and you seem very pleased with it, too!'"

Coming Daylight's eldest daughter, however, was named "Plumes in the Hair" by her own father. This was just a private naming, that is, no invited guests or big feast. Iron Bucket, husband of Singer, named their first daughter, too. He gave her the name of "Kills Last."

Coming Daylight was offered the choice of two names for one of her little boys, by his father who dreamed of them while he was out on the hills torturing himself by the Sacrifice Dance technique.

Another of Coming Daylight's children was named by an old blind doctor. "Her sister-in-law, wife of her brother-cousin, brought in this doctor. She told him: 'I brought you here to give my sister-in-law something to drink [to hasten delivery].' The old man said: 'This child that is to be born will be a girl and I am going to name her "Earth Woman." She will grow up and live to be an old woman." Cora, too, mentioned that her sister-in-law (a relative of her husband's) came to her and said: "If I can, I will come and attend you when your child is born, and I will name it too." She was not able to attend the birth, but she did come later and fetch the infant. Standing in the center of the dancing space she named him "Runs on Top," after one of her relatives, and gave away lots of things in his honor.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Names may be bestowed on account of dreams. Coming Daylight named one of her grandchildren that way. "She dreamed that there was a big gathering and that she was looking for this little grandson. In reality of course he was an infant, but in the dream he was three or four years old. There was an old man, a very old man, dressed all in white, who said to her: 'Why, there goes "White Skunk" up that way.' As she looked she saw her grandson running in the distance and he seemed to be now a tall young man. Upon waking, she told her dream to her daughter. The daughter in turn told her husband: 'My mother had a dream and "White Skunk" is what the old man called him.' The husband said: 'Fine. We will call him that. Now he will reach old age.'" 553 787

If the name is from a dream, the person tells the dream at the time of the naming. This is the way Singer was named by Old Man Sitting High. Occasionally a person might volunteer to name a child on account of a dream, although not always because he had dreamed of a name. "Before one of Cora's children was born, Stiff Arm came to her and told her he had had a bad dream about her. He said: 'In order to prevent my bad dream coming true, I will name the child.' Cora was scared because he was a medicine man. So she had to have a big feast and invite lots of people and give Stiff Arm a horse. There was the formal ceremony. Stiff Arm had given Cora and her husband the choice of three names, derived from his medicine powers: 'White Eagle,' 'Rides Down Hill,' and 'Sailing Eagle.' They chose the last, but the boy was sickly and they had a hard time rearing him. Her relatives thought she should change his name, but she never bothered to do so. He is a young man now."

It was customary that "when a child gets sick through the given name," the name be changed. The Skinners, for instance, hired Stiff Arm to name their boy. He called him "White Eagle" but he was sickly, so his grandmother, Ghost Calf, and Coming Daylight were the ones that changed his name to that of his grandfather, "Big Man." Ghost Calf told the boy's father to give away two dollars at the dance when she announced the new name. It was stated that in any case the namer should be a healthy person. 553 [431]

Old folks sometimes gave away their own names to children, as in the case of a man nicknamed Iron Bucket, whose grand-

553 father had given him his own name, "Bear Teeth"; and in that of Ragged Robe's wife who gave her name to a little girl. In this latter case, at least, the woman continued using her own name.

Except in those cases where the name of a relative is given, as is seemingly the rule nowadays, the name must have some specific relation to either the war deeds or the medicine powers of the namer. Singer remarked that one time, when she had been very lucky in locating some weapons abandoned by the enemy, she was looking forward very much to naming a little relative "Finder" in connection with this exploit. Unfortunately, however, the child's father had already had a name for her so Singer was disappointed. A Pipe-Keeper, too, might name a child from something connected with the Pipe. Rufus Warrior, for instance, was named from the rawhide with which the Flat Pipe is wrapped; another child was called "Red Woman" from the fact that the wife of the Flat Pipe Keeper was always painted red,—even her hair. Al Chandler knows of two people his grandfather had named from objects in the Feather Pipe bundle.

The more formal the occasion, the more expensive the naming was for the family involved. If, for instance, advantage was taken of a public ceremony, not only was the one who gave the name recompensed by a valuable gift, such as a horse, but many other gifts would be given to various persons in the audience in order to honor the recipient of the name and to give prestige to his family. The expense was particularly heavy when a name was publicly bestowed upon an adult in recognition of bravery at war.[11]

431 727 554

551 Nearly everyone had a nickname. One of the most common was, and is, simply "Girl" or "Boy." Such a nickname often was acquired in early childhood because the name which had been bestowed was not liked,—and those names given through medicine often fell in that category. Coming Daylight said that she had not cared for the name given by a medicine man to her first-born son, so she had called him "Boy." The child died very young, and she now wonders if he would have lived longer had they used his real name. Nicknames may be acquired at any time of life and sometimes they are far from complimentary, especially those bestowed later in life by enemy-friends. If the nickname "takes" there is

[11] Cf. Chapter 5, p. 101.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

arrows to some part of the wheel and say something silently, "regarding for example, a horse he had captured in a raid: He had to make sure that what he so said was not a lie, all this 'was not a prayer,' but it brought good fortune in the game." 828 525

In a big gambling contest, The Boy told us in 1940, between two opponents in the wheel game, one of them might take up the wheel and his arrow and "think of a war-deed" he had done. "He would use that as a sort of prayer for better luck in the game and would then win. . . . He here used the supernatural. He used words in his mind. He did not talk out loud. . . . He was sort of taking an oath indirectly. In an indirect way he would think: 'I am not telling a lie [about this war-deed]. The powers know I am not telling a lie.' He actually did the deed, otherwise he could not hope to have better luck in the game. It was a sort of indirect prayer. If he were really praying, he would do differently. He was not actually asking any being for anything. He was not appealing to or asking any one particular being, any single being or animal, but was just thinking of everything supernatural."

The Boy further explained in 1945: "The gamblers 'prayed' over the wheel silently. But they were not exactly praying. They were appealing against fate. They were wishing for good fortune and good luck in the game, and they were debating [sic] that thought by thinking of a particular time, when for instance, they brought back a good-looking horse from a war raid. . . . They made that wish silently. . . . They did not swear or take an oath or hold up a pipe. . . . The onlookers would wonder which one of his great deeds the gambler was going to hit his opponent with . . . [later in the game] he could tell what [the war-deed] he had been concentrating on. . . . He had to tell the truth. . . . So practically he had nearly taken an oath."

When a new name was solemnly conferred on a person, the namer while brushing the person with sage would pray for the person after saying to him: "I am going to pray for you. And you yourself at the same time pray and wish for good things." 828 553

So much for the raw field data. What do they mean? Quite clearly, wishing and thinking under such conditions as indicated, while at times associated with and blending into prayer, into mere 828

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

782 Being. The things asked for in the prayer would differ according to the occasion.

782 At the elaborate naming feast at which Flannery was adopted and given her name the following two prayers offered by The Boy 553 who was in charge of the ceremony may serve as examples of [123] these longer solemn prayers of which we are here speaking. As The Boy makes it a practice to plan carefully whatever he intends to utter in public, we may be reasonably sure that he had given much thought ahead of time to the form and content of these two prayers.

Before partaking of the lunch which was an integral feature of the naming rite, The Boy took a piece of bread and standing held it aloft while he prayed as follows before depositing a bit of the bread in each of the four corners of the stage of the community hall where the rite was held:

553 "Supreme Being, look down upon us as we sit here today. We are going to eat of the food which you gave to us. We are glad 782 We are thankful for this gift of food that we are going to eat. 539 Whenever we, your children, displease you and do things contrary to your law, forgive us for these, we pray you. Also look down upon us here today as we sit together and help us to successfully portray our poor life which you have allowed us to live by for so many ages. We have reached the end of that long trail of life that you have allowed us to live by, and bowing to your will we accept the conditions of today, different as they may be from yesterday, because this is your will. And in your mercy and consideration for our conducted [sic] life and assistance, give us food, give us breath, so that we may live out our lives according to your plan. And protect, watch over our loved ones who are participating and fighting in a terrible war,[4] so that they may come back to us safe and unhurt, so that once more they may set their feet upon the soil of their birthplace. This is their heritage."

After lunch and some smoking and chatting The Boy called all to order. Then, seated, he held a pipe stem pointed upward and finally downward and prayed:

"Master of All, of the above and of the below and of the entire

[4] This refers to the many Gros Ventre young men then, 1945, in the armed forces while World War II was still going on.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

universe, and you the Four Old Men, here is a pipe that we are inviting you to place [take? accept?] and look upon our gathering here today. We, your poor creatures, are desperately trying to carry on and preserve, as one of our traditions, this way [with a pipe] of drawing your attention and your ear. Even though we are old and are reaching and going rapidly towards the sunset of our lives, help us to finish our lives so that we may die of old age. We ask you to look down upon White Shield [Cooper]. In your mercy have consideration for his welfare. Restore him to full health, so that he too may live out his life in good health and peace of heart and mind with us and that he may complete the great work of recording the history of the life of the Gros Ventres and that it may be a true record of that former life and that it may be worthy to be taken in as an annal of history. Then we ask you too to look down upon this white woman [Flannery] who is the representative of White Shield. They together have made possible one portion [of the food] so necessary to make this gathering a success. We ask that these two, White Shield and this woman, may live out their lives with us, and that this white woman in particular may successfully record that portion of the history of the old Gros Ventres that she has been assigned to do and that during her stay [here] so far from her home she may enjoy health, happiness and peace and that she may arrive back safe to her home. And you, the Last Child, of whom it is said to be revealed to us that you have control of the water, look upon our sons and grandsons [those in the armed services in World War II] who are far from home today and who are going to the far corners of the earth over water, fighting to maintain this way of life, protect them when they go over the water so that they may come back home safe."

553 782 539

After this prayer the pipe was passed around ceremonially. Thomas Main, who translated the prayer, which like the preceding one was said by The Boy in Gros Ventre, explained that after mentioning the Four Old Men The Boy had left out He Who Starved To Death who ordinarily was addressed after the Four in Flat Pipe rites. "He, while a great human being, was only a human being and so on a history-making occasion like this one his name was not invoked."

553 782

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

 224 411

ends of the main portion of the sling, and then looped on themselves through a slit near one end. 857

The bull-roarer and buzzer were both well known to the Gros Ventre, but seem to be only children's toys. They were both called nakaa"ta" ("making cold," a name given also to the thermometer), probably from the widespread Indian idea that the bull-roarer breeds wind. The buzzer was made of a foot-bone of a buffalo, with a sinew string on each side, by which it was twirled, and then drawn so as to hum. The Arapaho type of buzzer is the same. The Gros Ventre bull-roarer seems to differ from the Arapaho form. Fig. 26 shows one of two very similar models, both of wood. The small, well-marked head, the long taper and point, and the numerous small notches, mark a distinct form. The sinew string is of about the length of the stick handle. 534 857 524 [821]

WAR.

Men generally went to war on foot, carrying food and moccasins on their backs. While on the trip they did not boil meat, but roasted it. Scouts, called "wolves," were sent out ahead. When these returned, running in a zigzag course, and shouting, it was a sign that they had seen something. If they had seen lodges, they barked like wolves. While they came, the women in the party stood in a row and sang, having made a pile of buffalo-chips. The "wolves" stopped a short distance away, and the leader of the party went to them. They came with him back to the pile of buffalo-chips, where he stopped, and, facing the party, recounted coups. After this, one of the scouts came before them and reported what he had seen. Upon this, all rushed at the pile of buffalo-chips, and kicked them about. If the enemy were near, they would now take off their heavier clothing, such as their robes, and dress and paint for war. 726 [252]

On returning to their camp victorious, the party approached stealthily, and made a charge upon it, often shooting; and sometimes the people in the tents jumped up out of their sleep in the early morning, thinking they had been attacked. The man who had killed an enemy, the one who had struck him first (whether dead or alive), and the one who had taken his gun, were held in about the same esteem. After the return to camp, a dance was made. Drums were beaten; and the women, who were standing in a curved row, danced in a circle toward the men, who stood in a row, and back again. The women carried the new scalps on sticks. If an enemy were killed near the home camp, his feet and hands might be cut off and carried on sticks, like the scalps. During this dance the man who first 727 [554] [554]

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

727 counted coup on the enemy filled a pipe, and held it for the rest of the
[554] party to smoke as they stood in a row. The returning war-party, if
successful, always painted black, but if a member of their own party had
[302] been killed, they returned without rejoicing; unless sometimes, when the
loss of the enemy had been greater than their own, and a relative of the
dead was in the party, he might say, "One of the enemy pays for my
relative. On account of the others, let us enjoy ourselves." Then the
party would paint black, and celebrate. Wounds received by members of
the war-party would not prevent celebration, unless, of course, they resulted
fatally; and they were always regarded as an honor.

726 Some war-parties started off publicly in broad daylight, having made
it known that they were going; and any one who wished joined. Some-
727 times, perhaps, two men would agree to go, and invited such others to
accompany them as they wished. Women not infrequently went with the
war-parties. If a man was killed in war, his relatives, especially his parents,
[765] mourned for him. His father might go to the tent of a renowned warrior,
and cry until this man became angry and announced a day for a party to
start out to obtain revenge. On the day set, the party left publicly, usually
751 on horseback.

237 A man's supernatural war paraphernalia are shown in Figs. 27, 28, and
726 29. They were obtained from a middle-aged man who had them from his
778 grandfather, who first dreamed of the magpie and the other animals con-
293 nected with the paraphernalia, and made the objects. A cylindrical raw-
[787] hide case (Fig. 27), such as is found used for holding feathers and medicine
among most Plains tribes, is painted with a yellow, green, and blue design
[531] resembling parfleche designs. These colors represent the various colors
of the birds that were dreamed of by the original owner, and whose feathers
are kept in the case. The case is called the "house" of these objects. A
wing-bone is attached to the outside of the case to make another whistle
from in case of loss of the finished whistle included in the outfit. A small
bag containing a necklace is kept in the case. The bag (Fig. 28, *a*) is orna-
mented with bead-work representing a frog (kaka[a]). This frog was part of
the original owner's dream. The necklace (Fig. 28, *b*) has various wasôô
("medicine-roots") on it. These are said to be neither eaten nor otherwise
used, except as they are worn on the necklace. The bone whistle (Fig. 28,
c) alluded to is attached to a necklace of otter-skin. It is blown during the
fighting to prevent injury. A magpie's skin (Fig. 28, *d*) and the skin of a
smaller bird (Fig. 29, *a*) are also contained in the case. The white magpie-
feathers are dyed yellow. The two skins are worn at the back of the head,
and prevent the wearer being injured even in a hand-to-hand fight. A
head-dress of ten magpie-feathers and of a white plume on red-painted

1; Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

All that has been described took place for four successive days. While it is not clearly so stated, it seems likely that the four nights on which medicine was given to the dancers' wives constituted the four-days' period of painting and dancing. On the fourth day, after the dancing, certain special spectacular ceremonies were gone through, analogous to those which in all the succeeding dances terminated the ceremony. In this dance, however, a second period of four days, in which the dancers acted in their assumed capacity of being crazy or foolish, followed these spectacular ceremonies of the fourth day. 796

On this fourth day, two prominent chiefs, noted for their success in war, were selected. They held bared knives, and two tent-poles were brought to them. Each of them recounted four of his most distinguished coups. They then cut up the tent-poles into small pieces, and piled them up at the fireplace of the lodge and set them on fire. The flames blazed up high, while the dancers stood north and south of the fire with their "grandfathers" and danced. The fire was kept up and tended so that all the wood would be simultaneously consumed. The dancers' relatives held them by the hair or body, wherever they could seize them, while the dancers stood like horses trying to break loose, and blew their whistles. Each tried to be the first to rush into the fire. They seem to have moved toward the fire four times without entering it. The fourth time, at a signal, they were released, and rushed into the fire, dancing and stamping it with their bare feet until they had put it out. Medicine was put on the skin, and no one is said to have been burned; but men have fainted in the fire. One informant, who said that he had been the first to jump into the fire, stated that the soles of his feet became very hot, but that his skin was not burned. [554] [789]

After the fire had been put out, the dancers went to their "grandfathers," who prayed over their bows, put medicine on them, and gave them to the young men. The old men then sang and the dancers marched around in a circle for four songs. At the end of the last song, they ran out of the lodge, racing to a monument, which had been erected by the young men of other companies, at some distance to the southeast, and back again to the lodge. As they returned, each passed between two men standing near the entrance of the lodge, to whom he gave his bow as he ran between them. One of these two men was the tallest man that could be secured; the other was as short as possible. One of them took the bows of the tall division of dancers; the other, of the short division. It is said that these two men received bows until they had a large armful, but that they never made a mistake in taking a bow from a man of the other division. It appears, however, that the racers carried their bows in their right or left 796 526

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

an enemy; and each took from among the property as nearly as possible such objects as he had actually captured in war. One who had stolen horses would take a horse; one who had taken a gun from an enemy would pick out a gun. While this was being done, or soon after, the dancers were dancing, concluding with a race similar to that in the crazy-dance. This marked the end of the ceremony. 796

There were several degrees of distinction in this dance. Two men had crooked lances wrapped with otter-skin. In four places these lances were tied about with small strips of white fur from which a pair of eagle-feathers hung. These lances were called nouçä"ts'ta". Two other lances were straight, and wrapped with jack-rabbit skin. These also bore feathers. A single dancer had a rattle of the globular shape common on the Plains. Half of the rattle was painted red, and half blue; and feathers were attached both to the top of the rattle and to the bottom of its handle. These regalia of honor were given to men renowned in war. A pipe was brought such a man, and if he thought himself entitled to the honor, and was ready to accept it, he took the pipe. If a man felt that others were really braver than himself, or had some other reason, he refused to take the pipe. One informant stated that he had declined the proffered honor because his wife's brother had recently died. The rank and file of the kit-fox dancers are said to have worn belts of prairie-dog skin. How far these corresponded with the biitaha"wu belts of the Arapaho is uncertain. The fur-wrapped crooked and straight lances are certainly similar to the crooked and straight lances indicating the second and third degrees in the Arapaho biitaha"wu. 796 554 293 [534]

Two girls took part in this ceremony. They were girls who were much thought of and beloved by their relatives. One of the dancers carried a kit-fox skin, the inside of which was painted blue. His companion had the rattle that has been described. While he rattled, the other, holding the skin by the neck and the tail, pointed it at the other dancers. These ran off, and this seems to have been the signal for the beginning of the dance. The two girls followed these two men everywhere. Their parents and relatives gave away great quantities of property in the dancing-lodge. Something similar is found in one of the Cheyenne society-dances, in which four young women accompanied the dancers from place to place. 796 857 593 [171]

Nothing was learned about the origin of the kit-fox dance, except that it is said to have been given by the kit-foxes, which is like what the Cheyenne tell of their analogous society. 796

A neck-band of badger-skin is the only object secured said to have been used in the kit-fox dance. To the end of it a tip of whitish rabbit-fur is attached. The lower part of the piece, which bears this rabbit-fur, hangs down the dancer's back. The upper portion, which is about four inches wide, is slit for a distance of a foot. Through this slit the head is inserted. [292]

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The Dog-Dance.

796 Next after the kit-fox dance is the dog-dance, hotibya^{n}wu. The dancers were called hotibyi ("dogs"). What has been said about the general course of the kit-fox ceremony applies also to this. On the last day, the dancers danced before the tents of several prominent men of the tribe for gifts. Then, going ahead of the route which the camp would take, they spread out this property and waited. When the camp arrived, a stick with rattles attached, similar to that used for the same purpose in the crazy-dance, was struck on the ground by one of the old men, whereupon the singing commenced, and the dancers danced four times. At the end of the fourth song, they raced, during which time, if not before, the people of the camp, it appears, seized the property.

The dog-dance is said to have been given by a dog. A long-haired dog was left behind when the camp left. An old man going into the hills to acquire supernatural power saw the dog following the trail, and, wondering, went to see, and pitied him. He went to sleep by him; and the dog, knowing the old man's pity for him, pitied him, and, appearing to him in a dream, said he would give him a dance, the dog-dance. He especially described to him the highest degree of the dance, the tsööyanchi, which seems to be a representation of himself.

796 292 The dancers wore a strip of skin or red cloth on which four round figures were embroidered in quills, and which passed over one shoulder and under the other, the lower end dragging on the ground. At this end there was a hole, through which, in time of war, a stick was stuck. The wearers then did not flee, even if to remain resulted in their being killed. These scarfs appear to have resembled closely the scarfs worn by the Arapaho dancers of the second and third degree in the same ceremony. They were called naa^{n}tsöiya^{n}. In addition the dancers wore bunchy head-dresses of owl feathers and of two eagle-feathers. They also carried rattles of a stick on which hoofs were hung.

796 554 292 Two men were of higher degree, that is to say, honored on account of bravery. These were the "shaggy dogs," and were called tsööyanchin, the dialectic equivalent of the Arapaho teiiyanchina^{n}. Among the Arapaho, however, there is only one dancer of this highest degree. As among the Arapaho, these men did not get up, or take part in the dancing, unless they were struck, or driven to it. They wore a shirt all over which circles were fastened in *appliqué*. To the centre of each circle, feathers were attached. On their heads they had owl-feather bunches like those of the rank and file of the dancers; and around their necks were long strings of bear-claws.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

They also had rattles similar to those of the rank and file of dog-dancers,—a row of small hoofs attached to a stick,—except that the rattles of the tsööyanchin were forked instead of single. In addition they each had a long wooden whistle. 796 554 292

Some of the "grandfathers" are said also to have worn scarfs, like the dancers; but as these were made of pieces of old tent-skins, undecorated and ugly, it is probable that this action was intended to be ridiculous.

The "shaggy dog" took his whistle, forked rattle, and head-dress with him when he went to the lodge, but left his crow-feather-covered shirt behind. When he was in the lodge, a woman was sent for the shirt. She put it on, and went to the lodge, wearing it. Standing before the "shaggy dog," she pulled it off, and, holding it open at the bottom, moved four times as if to put it on him. The fourth time, she drew it over and on him. The place of the two "shaggy dogs" in the lodge was at the western end, the middle of the back.

The dog-lodge is described as having been constructed like the crazy-lodge, and to have had the same small screen or partial enclosure at the eastern end, facing the entrance of the lodge. 796 [346]

The beginning of the dancing was as follows. One of the old men who would sing, went in a circle four times. He was followed by the two "shaggy dogs." The old man began to sing and dance, and the two "shaggy dogs" whistled. When they moved to any distance away from him, the old man motioned and clicked to them, as one does to a dog. Then they danced toward him. After this, the rank and file of the dancers stood up and danced. Four servants of the dance, said to have been chiefs, sat in front of the small enclosure at the east. When they thought that the dancers had danced long enough, one of these went among them and said, "Friends, rest." Thereupon they all stopped dancing, standing in their places. Then this man told a war story. When the singers thought that the dancers had rested sufficiently, they began to sing and the members of the company took up their dancing again. Altogether they danced four times, being made to rest each time by the exhortation of an old man who told a war story. This dancing took place four days, during which period the dancers were supposed not to sleep.

When at night the dancers left the lodge and danced before the tents of chiefs, begging for gifts, the two "shaggy dogs" are said to have stood by the door of the tent. It is therefore probable that the body of the dancers formed a circle in front of the tent, as they do among the Arapaho on this occasion. When the owner of the tent had given them property, he pulled at the flaps hanging at the sides of the feather-covered shirts of the "shaggy dogs," whereupon they sat down and the dancing ceased. This dancing for gifts is said to have continued for four entire nights. [431]

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

171
796
[292]
[887]
[554]
[302]
[431]

to the Arapaho "white-stand" and "red-stand" head-dresses of upright feathers surrounding the head. The dancers are described as all old or elderly women, which among the Arapaho was not the case. The exceptions were two participants called "calves" (nihanou, "yellow calves"), who were middle-aged, or, at any rate, adults. Among the Arapaho the "calves" were children. There is a further difference, that, whereas among the Arapaho the "calves" were of high degree in the dance and for the greater part of the time were not allowed to stir, the Gros Ventre "calves" took the place of the atsaan or servants in the men's dances. They are said to have worn no regalia. The dancers were painted with the symbol of a pipe on each cheek, close under the eye. Old men sang for them, rattling but not using a drum. The women in dancing shifted their weight from one side of the body to the other, and cried like crows. Two tent-poles, two pegs, and two ropes belonging to the dancing-lodge, were painted respectively one black and one red. On the fourth day of the ceremony there were observances outside of the dancing-lodge. A prominent chief was selected to take a burning stick. The dancers, moving and running about like a herd of buffalo, pretended to scent the smoke of his fire from windward, and stampeded. Another distinguished warrior pretended to shoot at the herd as if they were buffalo. Both of these features of the ceremony are found among the Arapaho. A third distinguished man (or perhaps several) was honored by being offered a pipe to smoke, and on his acceptance was given a vessel of water containing berries. He then gave away property.

The Sun-Dance.

796

As stated before, the Gros Ventre sun-dance, haçeiha^{n}w^{u}, is not restricted to men belonging to certain age-companies, but, as among the Arapaho, can be made by any man.[1] Like the other dances, however, it is made as the result of the pledge of an individual for deliverance from sickness or danger. As soon as the pledge has been publicly announced, or as soon thereafter as the buffalo begin to get fat in spring, the pledger and his relatives begin to accumulate buffalo-tongues, which they slice and dry like buffalo-meat. They also save a buffalo-skin, which is packed with the tongues, two sticks being wrapped up in it. When the time comes, a large lodge made of two tent-covers is set up in the middle of the camp-circle. Into this many women enter at night to sing. This marks the beginning of the ceremony. The tent is called tjinan^{n}w^{u} ("prairie-chicken lodge"); and the participants, "prairie-chickens" and "prairie-chicken women." The pledger brings his buffalo-skin to this lodge. He incenses it four times.

[1] See Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part II, p. 152.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

175 disappearance of the buffalo, the population was officially recorded
161 as being 970. By 1895 it had been reduced to 596.[10] At this low ebb, in the last decade of the nineteenth century, there was still a
[554] strong feeling among the Gros Ventres against the white man's dress; as of old, a man's wealth and standing still was measured
[178] by the number of horses he owned. Nevertheless the ceremonial aspects of their culture, already on the wane before that decade, had practically disappeared.

[10] Report of Commissioner of Indian Affairs 1883-1915, pp. 101, 188.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

621 114 The Boy, ventured the following tentative indentification, saying that these may have been earlier names respectively for Same As Assiniboine, Upper Quarters, Water Horses, Night Hawks, Coffees, Frozens. A few informants had heard of Breech Cloths and Weasel Skin Headdresses as band names but didn't know which modern bands they might have been, always assuming that the number of bands had been twelve.

361 621 114 As to the exact order of the bands in the camp circle, there was no real agreement. The order given by Singer and Coming Daylight differs from that given by Kroeber. Furthermore, while the two old women were emphatic that the places within the camp circle were permanent—"otherwise we could not remember all this!"—some of the men informants were under the impression that the band from which a new Flat Pipe Keeper was chosen moved to the center position opposite the opening of the camp circle, and that the others shifted accordingly.

361 621 In any case, the circle, with opening toward the rising sun, was the formation employed when the whole tribe was together. When bands were separated from the main group they might or might not camp in this way, depending somewhat on the length of time they expected to remain in one spot, and on the nature of the terrain. Sometimes, for instance, the lodges of the various families of the band were strung out along a watercourse.

According to The Boy, there was a tendency for bands which camped in proximity within the big camp circle to go off together when the tribe split up. The Upper Quarters and Frozens were often together and, along with them, the Same As Assiniboine or occasionally the Greys (proper) and Buffalo Overloaded, usually staying more or less in the vicinity of the Milk River, the center of the territory claimed by the Gros Ventres. Whereas the Tendons, followed by the Poor Greys and Bad Plenty, moved for winter quarters to the country bounded by the Big Sandy, the Marias River (at Ft. Benton), and the Bear Paws; while the Fast Travelers as a rule sought out the country south of the Missouri toward the Yellowstone River and Crow country, accompanied by perhaps the Coffees. Water Horses and Bloods were friendly with each other and joined now one group and now another.

554 621 A band which was thus followed by two or three others had

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

added prestige. Those mentioned as leading bands above were seemingly the most numerous and most prominent in the recent past, and their representatives are more numerous at the present time. While the Frozens, Upper Quarters and Bad Plenty have the most living descendants, apparently there are no Poor Greys or Coffees today, only one Night Hawk, and a few each of the others. 621 554

Although Coming Daylight and Singer claimed membership in the Frozen band, they had no false modesty in proclaiming: "The Frozens were the best workers, had the biggest lodges, the prettiest women and the best-looking men. In fact they were the 'aristocratic' families, being the best-dressed and having the most horses." This was confirmed voluntarily by Cora who stated that she belonged to the Same As Assiniboines, but had heard all her life that the Frozens were the most distinguished band along the lines the old women mentioned. The men informants admitted that some bands were considered better in some respects than others, but failed to be more specific, and added that regardless of the reputation of the whole band, an individual man had to make his own way. [565]

It is somewhat difficult to arrive at the exact situation as to band affiliation and exogamy inasmuch as the band ceased to function not long after our oldest male informants were born. Our oldest female informants, whose memory includes the 1860's, stated in regard to this individual or that, whom they mentioned, that they could not remember to which band he had belonged. In fact the old women became quite impatient when questioned on this subject since from their point of view it was not important. To them the question of marriage regulations was a practical one of avoiding as mate any person to whom blood relationship could be traced, no matter how remotely, and any affinal relative not of the same generation. 621 [582]

There was general agreement among all informants, however, that under normal circumstances children were of the same band as their father.[3] Nevertheless, residence was an important factor, and not a few persons claimed affiliation with bands other than those into which they had been born. Coming Daylight, for instance, said she was a Frozen, the band to which her mother had [591] 621 597

[3] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, p. 147.

323 were made. Several days later he reported that he had asked around about how pots were made, and some old-timers said that they braided sinew to the shape of pot they wished; heated white flint and pulverized it, and mixed with the blue clay from around the neighborhood of Hays. This mixture was about 6 per cent pulverized flint. The clay and pulverized rock were mixed in a mortar, pasted over the woven sinew, and baked. "It gets so hard you can't break it." Tom Bad Road, now (1948) about 70 years old told Mary Ereaux that once when he was a young boy he saw an old, old woman making a pot of "sand." The pot had dried hard, but some young fellows used it as a target for throwing stones and broke it to pieces.

554 513 595 The place of honor was at the back of the lodge, opposite the door. Here at night slept the "man of the house" and his senior wife, if he were a polygynist, the other wives and children on either side. Coming Daylight described the arrangement of her father's lodge as it was before she was sent to live with her grandmother. Her father and one wife slept at the rear, the bedding placed parallel to the door; she and her mother had their bedding to the left as one entered the lodge, and perpendicular in regard to the opening, sleeping with their heads to the rear and feet to the door; while her father's unmarried brothers were similarly placed as she and her mother, but on the opposite side of the lodge.

484 492 When on the move, the women were in charge of the children and impedimenta and usually traveled in a group considerably behind the men. Horses or dogs were used to draw the travois, and sometimes younger children or the sick and disabled were carried thereon. Mae Main remarked that her memory of riding on a horse travois was not a very pleasant one as she was often annoyed by the horse's tail brushing over her. Horses had to be broken to the travois and a horse owned by a man would never be so used. The horse can draw a far heavier load than a dog, but seemingly the Gros Ventres at no time had so many horses that the dog could be dispensed with altogether and the dog travois survived until very recently. At such times that horses for one reason or another were scarce, the people would be forced to cache a great deal of their surplus and to cut their lodges in half so the load would not be too great for a dog to draw.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The above case illustrates how it was possible for a man, in spite of a poor start in life, to rise. Children were instructed by their elders, as was Thick by his maternal uncle: "Above all things try to have horses. Try to have property and whatever you have, take care of it. By having lots of horses and property, people will respect you and look upon you as somebody." 556 867

Again Coming Daylight stated: "They used to think more of horses than of anything else. They were sure proud of owning a pinto pony. In telling stories when they wanted to describe the best they could think of they would say: 'You should have seen her horse—it was a big pinto pony.'" And in telling of a relative of hers, Woman Chief, Coming Daylight said: "Her husband was not very handsome, but they were well-to-do and she always rode top horses." 554 231

While all horses were as a rule well cared for, special attention was devoted to the buffalo horses. On the hunt, for instance, these horses would be led along unburdened by pack or rider to keep them fresh. They were ridden only for the actual chase and after the kill were turned loose to roll around and graze like young colts. When the butchering was completed the meat was packed on other horses and the swift buffalo horses were then led home again. These horses were ridden on social and ceremonial occasions, when their owners wished to show off, and of course the soldier societies were well mounted, but such use amounted to no more than a good work-out, and these valuable horses were never abused nor wilfully exhausted. 231

Children were exhorted to take care of their property, especially of horses, and the girls were advised that "a mare is worth everything—it increases—treat her well." It was stated that some attention was given to breeding. A man might judge that a colt showed possibilities of becoming a fast horse. If it fulfilled the early promise the colts it sired would be watched. The less likely of these would be castrated. Likewise, a good mare would, if possible, be retained by the owner for breeding. A man who owned a particularly good buffalo horse might, on his deathbed, either order that it be killed at his grave or give it to some relative he knew cared well for horses, with instructions never to abuse it nor give it away. [867] [763 768 431]

231 721 got scared and ran to the other side of the horse. Finally she took a big stick and threw it at the white thing and still it didn't move so she went closer and found it to be a Hudson's Bay blanket just soaking wet. The enemy must have used it when they crossed the river. So she dragged it home to her lodge. When she got there she called to her grandmother: 'Is he there?' Her grandmother said: 'He is.' She was still furious at her husband and called to him: 'Come out! I am giving you this,' and she said it in the way people speak when they are giving something on return from war. She was giving her husband his own buffalo horse! He however didn't say anything or make any exclamation. This so enraged her that she took the blanket and rolled it up as small as she could and threw it at him, hitting him on the chest saying: 'Here is another thing I brought you!' Then he laughed. But she had at least saved one of the most valuable horses.

[431] "The next morning the rest of the Gros Ventres in the party moved on, leaving this family behind. But fortunately some others came along and seeing their plight gave them horses, for example, Pemmican gave one to Coming Daylight, Little Shields gave her uncle one, and Sleeping Bear gave her husband one."

231 436 The importance of various transactions could be gauged by whether or not a horse were included, other things such as fancy clothing, ornaments, guns, etc. being mentioned as "thrown in." [554] A person who gave a horse in whatever connection accrued prestige for himself and at the same time showed in what esteem the donor [583] held the recipient. Horses were generally included in the bride price; in inaugurating the more serious type of enemy-friendship; in payment for services of the medicine man in curing certain types of illness, and in payment to the ceremonial grandfather as well as in payment to the namer or ear-piercer of a child; in settling disputes; in gambling; in gifts to others in honor of relatives, and in meeting certain other kinship obligations.

231 556 Horses could be acquired by a man through raiding the enemy; by gift from relatives and from non-relatives in honor of someone else or in instituting the enemy-friendship; in the bride price of a sister, daughter, or maternal niece; in payment for services rendered; in gambling; through inheritance; in trading with the whites. A woman might share in the bride price of her brother's

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

daughter, and might receive gifts from relatives, but would otherwise have few opportunities of obtaining horses. 231 556

In former times the rules regarding inheritance were fairly simple. If a man died, his relatives took the more valuable livestock, while anyone was free to come into the lodge and take any other personal property of the deceased which was not to be buried with him. The man's relatives would not, however, take the horses which belonged to his wife or wives, or which had been given before his death to his children. When a woman died she usually would have little valuable property in any case, but, again, any other woman might rush in and strip the lodge of whatever personal property might be therein, including food. The close family of the deceased were "so grief-stricken that they wouldn't notice who takes what," and "a husband would never keep anything of his wife's." It was said, too, that "women were braver than men in disposing of their property before death, and often gave gifts of personal property to those they wished to have them." 428 768 [431]

In objects derived from the white man, the value put upon them was mainly utilitarian. For example, in matching wagers on one occasion a man put up a gold watch. There was no one on the other side who had a watch to offer, but a spy-glass was considered the equivalent. It was explained that the value of the watch in dollars—whether it had a fine gold case or not—would not be taken into consideration. The question in matching was to find things of equal value to the Indian in his way of life. To illustrate this The Boy told of a gift to his father, Lame Bull, from a white trader on the Saskatchewan, of a hobble which locked. "Perhaps this didn't have a high value in dollars, but it was considered extremely valuable by Lame Bull because it saved him many a race horse. Even though the enemy might sneak a horse out of camp, being unable to unfasten the hobble, he would have to abandon the valuable horse before getting very far away." 177 435

On the other hand, while utility was certainly an important consideration in the Gros Ventres' evaluation of goods produced by themselves, various other elements were taken into account. A horse procured from the enemy was perhaps the most valuable of all things to the Gros Ventres; aside from other considerations, a man would have risked his life to obtain it and that in itself lent 435 554 231

435 value. Thus any object captured from the enemy, no matter how
● 554 trivial it might be, was more valuable than a duplicate of that same
231 thing obtained in any other way, and could be used to initiate an enemy-friendship, one of the most important of Gros Ventre transactions. A man who gave a horse, rather than or in addition to other items—to establish the enemy-friendship, to pay for the curing of a relative, to someone in honor of his relative, to his ceremonial grandfather for guiding him through the Sacred Dance, to wager in gambling, to show how much he thought of his brother-in-law in return for so simple a gift as the flesh of a puppy—would gain in prestige, for he thus established for himself a reputation for "being somebody."

435 The amount of labor that went into the making of an object, such as the polished deer-hoof trimming on a robe, was an element in its value. When the robe was old and worn the recipient thereof
[431] would remove the fringe and return to the donor "so she could use them again." Scarcity, too, entered into evaluation of goods. Eagle feathers were, for instance, more valuable than other kinds of feathers. Again, as to elk teeth, it was explained: "The elk has only two teeth that are like ivory,[11] and so it takes a long time to
[237 accumulate them. They are to us Gros Ventres like pearls are to
307] the whites. They were our greatest decoration. They are valuable even today, and, while imitations are sometimes used, you can always tell the difference."

Exchange and Distribution

439 There was actually no need for economic exchange within the tribe, with the object of obtaining the necessities of life, but a need had developed for exchange with the fur traders to obtain guns, whiskey, metal objects—kettles, scraper-blades, etc.—cloth, tobacco, beads, paints, and so on. After about 1830, the medium of exchange with traders was the buffalo robe, which rapidly increased in value at the expense of beaver.[12] Traders on the Missouri accepted other items produced by the Indians, but everything was equated in terms of robes.[13]

[11] These are the rudimentary canines. Cf. Seton, v. 3, p. 5.

[12] Bradley, pp. 203–04.

[13] According to Denig, p. 421, an Assiniboine chief on Jan. 8, 1852, was

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

439 wives had vowed to cover a Pipe, undoubtedly he would try to include in his purchases the requisite length of black cloth. Individuals of course differed. In view of their labor, the wives would expect to share in the return therefor which the husband was able to secure from the trader, but this expectation was not always met.[17]

The items thus obtained were consumed by the Gros Ventres in the same ways as those goods of their own manufacture—some being directly consumed, some entering into further production, and some being exchanged on the principle of gifts and of payments for services, and in gambling.

554 A man would accumulate a surplus only to expend it as
431 generously as possible in order to attain prestige. The person with
439 a reputation for generosity rose in public esteem, and was in turn the recipient of many gifts, whereas the man with only one horse and only one wife could not afford to meet the demands for hospitality and for generosity in other transactions, and thus could not profit by the system of indirect and deferred exchange.

262 Sharing of food was an important element in attaining prestige
574 through generosity. A person known to be stingy with food would
554 lack status. The ideal was often preached to children embodied in
867 such statements as the following: "If you have visitors, even though you don't have much food, give the last of it to them."

574 Should a male visitor drop in unexpectedly, the first thing a man did was to tell his wife to cook and she was expected to comply. How seriously this was regarded may be seen from the following case told by Singer: "One time my husband, Iron Bucket, went with a friend to visit the latter's brother. The sister-in-law was naturally a stingy woman and made no move to feed them. Her husband was sitting there fixing arrows and he told her: 'Hurry and cook. If you have nothing, ask for meat at one of the lodges.' This woman had a big shaggy head and sat there with her head bowed and her husband couldn't make her move. After a while, however, some meat was brought in from hunting, and this woman went out, got it and threw it down hard inside her lodge. She was mad. And instead of giving them in a nice way the manifolds and liver that they ordinarily eat first, she slung

[17] For a case in point, see p. 178.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

574 your arm because they always get after me if I feed any one.' So as I was going along the other two wives were coming back with the wood and saw me. They asked this third wife what I had wanted and she said: 'She came here to beg.' They asked her: 'Did you feed her?' and when she said no, the other two scolded her saying: 'You should have fed her at least a little bit' and continued to bawl her out for being so stingy."

While not all individuals lived up to the standard of casual hospitality, the majority seemingly did so, and business negotiations were usually transacted while visiting.[18] The individual who [554] dispensed food liberally could expect a return from others, although not necessarily the ones whom he had fed. Furthermore, if a man wished to sustain a good reputation he was expected to entertain well. It was customary, therefore, when fresh meat had been brought in for a man to tell his wife to cook and then he called out: "So-and-so, come and smoke" to as many as he wished to [554] invite. When the guests arrived he greeted each and assigned him to a place in the lodge, the most honored guests being seated in the back opposite the opening. After the guests had eaten, the host filled the pipe from a plentiful supply of "mixture," and the smok- [276] ing continued until the host gave the sign for dispersal by knocking the ashes from the pipe.

553 574 On more formal occasions, such as a naming feast, the host would ask some older man with a strong voice to act as announcer, and in such case the latter would call out by name each guest and say who was inviting him. Ordinarily a man would invite his own age group, his close friends, but it was not customary for the wives of the guests to come. If a woman wished to invite others, she would go to the various lodges and invite them personally. In this type of planned hospitality there was more in the nature of direct exchange although it might be considerably deferred.

574 431 In addition to hospitality, ostentatious liberality accomplished circulation of goods within the tribe. From the Gros Ventre point of view: "Presents were usually given with the intention of doing good and if no return were made, nothing was said or done. But often it turned out that at some later time the recipient would say

[18] Cf. Denig, pp. 514–15.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

to himself: 'He gave to me, so I'll give to him.' But no one was in duty bound to give the equivalent in return." 574 431

Within the network of kinship obligations, exchange was more often indirect than reciprocal. A man could expect help from his father and from his mother's brother without being under obligation to return goods in like amount—he was supposed to repay them by conducting himself in such a way that they could be proud of him. This meant that the man in his turn would be especially generous toward his sister and her children, that he would adequately fulfill his duties toward his wife's people and provide goods in sufficient amount that his wife could fulfill her own obligations especially those toward her own brother's wife and children. 602 431

When others saw fit to honor an individual, say for bravery in warfare, that person was supposed to give away goods in large amounts to show that he appreciated the honor; and his relatives would join with him in giving, thereby increasing his, as well as their own, prestige. Likewise in paying for services, such as those of a medicine man, relatives would "chip in" to the best of their ability, the one assuming the largest part of the burden receiving the greatest boost in public esteem. A person who impoverished himself by giving generously at such times would be sure that, with his reputation thus established, he would soon be the recipient of gifts dispensed by others in like liberality. Meantime, however, he could not afford to sit back awaiting the presents from others. He would soon lose his coveted reputation and be referred to as lazy, an epithet strong enough to bring tears to the eyes of a man who entertained any ambitions whatsoever. 554 431 [602] [461]

If a person were in need, it was possible for him to request what was necessary, preferably from some relative who was well-to-do, and usually his request would be met. But a continual borrower lost status and a limit was thus put upon indiscriminate "begging." One woman stated: "If your sister asked you for something you would not refuse her, but it was to your brother's wife you would give things voluntarily. A woman had great pride in keeping her brother's wife well-dressed, and if you had an extra supply of dried berries she is the one you would think of first." 426 558 [607]

Thus we have the basis for the generalizations the Gros Ventres 431

CHAPTER V

WAR AND PRESTIGE

Organization and Conduct of the Party

721 554 Recognition was granted for any accomplishment that involved risk of life at the hands of the enemy. The constantly recurring attacks upon the Gros Ventres by one neighboring tribe or another offered many opportunities for the display of bravery, but those who joined in taking the initiative against the enemy had the greatest chances of accumulating impressive war records. Consequently parties set out at frequent intervals with the avowed purpose either of stealing horses or of avenging loss of Gros Ventre life.

721 Although it was not uncommon for two or three men to go off quietly together when raiding for horses, if a larger number was involved, some formalities were observed. The man who decided to lead a war party had his intention publicly announced around the camp circle by a crier and any who wished might volunteer to join him. A young man, untried in war, would hardly set himself up as leader in this way, but would be anxious to follow someone whose reputation for bravery was already well established.[1]

533 721 [782] Ordinarily, when the group was composed of ten or more men, there were some preliminaries the night before the party set off. The members gathered and sang in front of lodges of those they hoped would be able to help them. Each man so selected at least prayed for the success of the party as he gave them a smoke and fed them. In addition, if he had ammunition or clothing or something of the kind that would be useful on the expedition, he donated these to the party. It was said that an occasional man would "be so pleased with what the party was about to do" that he sent his wife out to sing with them. Thus the party sang around the camp circle in front of various lodges and, after agreeing on

[1] Sometimes young men were restless and sang around the camp circle to indicate their willingness to go on a raid if someone would lead them. Such a song was recorded as No. 70.

727 ganize a revenge party. The Boy gave the following account of the circumstances under which one such party was announced and carried out. "The brother of Lame Bull's mother had been killed in war by the Piegan. This woman took it very hard because it 726 was her youngest brother of whom she was particularly fond. 787 None of her relatives had taken any action and she was out on the 727 hills mourning. While she was out there she fell asleep and an 'old man' appeared to her and said: 'If you make an effort, you will forget your grief. I will teach you a song that you will use when they dance at the victory celebration after your people have avenged his death. This song will be used when they bring back the scalps of the enemies who have killed your brother.' So she went home but didn't say anything about her experience for some time. Finally, however, she told her husband. He then decided to organize a war party to get revenge for his brother-in-law's death. He had a big following as he went against the Piegan. On the way, however, they came across some Blood Indians and killed five of them, which was considered as fulfilling his duty to bring backs scalps in retaliation. When the party returned, the woman of course joined in the victory dance and sang that song, which was then used many times after that when the Gros Ventres were successful."

726 If no prominent relative led the revenge party, the parents of a man killed in war could request some noted chief to do so. In 727 that case the one selected prayed for the success of the party himself and made a sweatlodge, inviting many old men who would likewise pray. The large number of offerings requisite for the occasion were supplied, however, by the man who had made the request. Should he not have the wherewithal to formally approach a prominent warrior, there was still the possibility that revenge might be volunteered by someone who pitied parents as they grieved for their son. This would afford an opportunity for some lesser man to legitimately set himself up as leader of a raiding party for the first time.

Status Through War-Deeds

554 Any action that involved risk of life at the hands of the enemy was counted as a war-deed. Raiding for horses, especially for

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

those which were valuable enough to be tethered near lodges at night, was considered practically on a par with killing, scalping and counting coups. Capturing weapons and other trophies, as well as taking women and children prisoner, were likewise deserving of praise. Helping fellow-tribesmen in danger and many other types of action such as successful scouting for a war party, or acting as water-carrier under dangerous circumstances, were taken into account in assessing the war record of the individual. 554

An ambitious man grasped every opportunity for distinguishing himself in as many of these ways as possible, for prestige depended primarily on a reputation for bravery, and competition between warriors was keen.[23] The ideal man was one who had so many war-deeds to his credit that "his wrist would be made slim from being pulled up to recite them." So great was the variety of circumstances under which a recitation of war-deeds was required, that a man who had accomplished little was of necessity ignored and doomed to remain a nonentity.

Furthermore there were many occasions on which those who had given a good account of themselves in battle were singled out for public recognition. During the victory dance, for instance, a warrior, who had remained at home, chose one of the returning party to whom he would offer a ceremonial smoke while singing his praises. Again, the relatives of a man who had behaved with particular heroism might decide to formally bestow a new name upon him. In such a case, a group of men and women would approach the lodge where the naming ceremony was held, calling attention to the hero by loudly singing there. To show his appreciation of the honor the hero gave valuable presents to the singers. If a group approached a second time, the honor was doubled and so were the presents. In illustration, the story was told of a woman who was on one occasion so outstandingly brave during battle that she was accorded the same honor a man would have been under the same circumstances,—she was given a new name that of Woman Chief, and her praises were sung by three groups. Moreover, it was customary at the social dances of the Stars and of the Wolf-men, to compose songs referring to specific deeds of their members respectively, and to sing these over and over again. [553] [562]

[23] For this and other aspects of status, see also pp. 32-33.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

553 father had given him his own name, "Bear Teeth"; and in that of Ragged Robe's wife who gave her name to a little girl. In this latter case, at least, the woman continued using her own name.

Except in those cases where the name of a relative is given, as is seemingly the rule nowadays, the name must have some specific relation to either the war deeds or the medicine powers of the namer. Singer remarked that one time, when she had been very lucky in locating some weapons abandoned by the enemy, she was looking forward very much to naming a little relative "Finder" in connection with this exploit. Unfortunately, however, the child's father had already had a name for her so Singer was disappointed. A Pipe-Keeper, too, might name a child from something connected with the Pipe. Rufus Warrior, for instance, was named from the rawhide with which the Flat Pipe is wrapped; another child was called "Red Woman" from the fact that the wife of the Flat Pipe Keeper was always painted red,—even her hair. Al Chandler knows of two people his grandfather had named from objects in the Feather Pipe bundle.

The more formal the occasion, the more expensive the naming was for the family involved. If, for instance, advantage was taken of a public ceremony, not only was the one who gave the name recompensed by a valuable gift, such as a horse, but many other gifts would be given to various persons in the audience in order to honor the recipient of the name and to give prestige to his family. The expense was particularly heavy when a name was publicly bestowed upon an adult in recognition of bravery at war.[11]

[431 727] 554

551 Nearly everyone had a nickname. One of the most common was, and is, simply "Girl" or "Boy." Such a nickname often was acquired in early childhood because the name which had been bestowed was not liked,—and those names given through medicine often fell in that category. Coming Daylight said that she had not cared for the name given by a medicine man to her first-born son, so she had called him "Boy." The child died very young, and she now wonders if he would have lived longer had they used his real name. Nicknames may be acquired at any time of life and sometimes they are far from complimentary, especially those bestowed later in life by enemy-friends. If the nickname "takes" there is

[11] Cf. Chapter 5, p. 101.

787 made up my mind that I did not want such power, the immediate reason for my refusal being that I had seen doctors who swallowed what they had sucked from the weak spot in patients whom they cured, and I just couldn't bring myself to have to do likewise."

857 Although boys had much more freedom than had girls, they
562 too were assigned tasks at a fairly early age. One of the responsibilities of boys was to water the horses during the day. At about the age of fourteen, however, a boy would be required to take the horses out to graze immediately after taking his morning plunge. He would be gone perhaps three or four hours and would eat only after he returned.

857 The play of younger boys with bow and arrow was training for
868 later life. The older boys accompanied the men on hunting par-
852 ties and by the time they were about 18 most were skilled hunters. Some families, it was said, took advantage of the fact that
[431] a boy would have killed his first big game,—antelope, deer, buffalo, —by making a feast at which this game was served. On such an occasion the boy stood at the center and gave away property, such as horses and blankets provided by his father or uncle, in
[421] order to mark the event. This was considered training for the way he should behave in later life in regard to his own property.

857 Boys were trained in trapping as well as hunting. There were
868 certain songs which were sung by grandparents as the boys danced
[533] around in the lodge both before and after trapping. These songs were supposed to bring luck in finding game.

[777] Sometimes when older boys were out taking care of horses, they would band together, daub their faces and bodies with mud as "war paint," and make a "raid" on the camp in order to steal meat which was drying on racks. The women who had worked so hard to prepare the meat got angry and sometimes fought the boys with sticks. Usually, the boys were successful, and would then cook the meat and have a wonderful feast,[1] far outside the camp circle.

[554] Men encouraged their sons to be brave, and a boy would be anxious to go along on a real raiding party just as soon as possible because a young man had no standing until he had risked his life. An adolescent boy who accompanied a war party had to be a man

[1] This type of raiding is also described by Kroeber, 1908, p. 182.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

least one horse was included, but no given amount of property was specified nor did bargaining enter into the negotiations.[6] Following the pattern of ostentatious liberality, a man could reflect honor upon himself by giving generously, and one with such a reputation was preferred over a poor or stingy one. Whatever the groom offered was divided among the bride's relatives. As one woman said: "A husband always gave something for his wife, no matter how many wives he acquired, because this is what makes it 'legal.' Then the girl's father and brother divided the presents. If the brother arranged the marriage, he would say to the father 'Here is a horse for you.' And if the father or uncle had been approached by the husband, then they did the same way. Sometimes even the father's sister was given a horse or something else when her niece married."

587 [554]

Although it was not obligatory, a bride's family often provided her with goods to take to her marriage, especially if it were her first one. Singer explained in regard to Coming Daylight: "Her family was well-to-do and showed how much they thought of themselves by giving her a good send-off. You should have seen her going off to her first husband. She was only about ten years old and she looked so tiny leading that big horse. On the horse was a fine fringed saddle and the travois was just piled up with painted parfleshes and other things."

The following account of the marriage of Coming Daylight's daughter shows how the pattern was carried out under changed conditions: "One night when the family returned from a dance they found a letter addressed to the oldest son, Ed, from a man whom he liked, asking for Ed's sister, Gertrude. When his father came in from tending the horses they told him about the proposal and he agreed right away, saying: 'We are still keeping her and she is a big girl. I'm glad this offer has been made.' So a week later they loaded a new buggy with Gertrude's things,—bedding, beds, trunk, sewing machine, etc.,—and her father drove this to the creek where the dance hall was located. Meanwhile Coming Daylight took her daughter to the house of the man who had asked for her and left her there sitting on this man's bed. The groom did not appear at the Grass Dance that evening, even though he

585 178

[6] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, p. 180.

684 ing indemnity from his wife's lover and allowing her unharmed to go to him. This solution was often resorted to and in fact was the one that was urged upon both parties concerned. It was customary for the paramour to offer compensation, although an occasional individual tried to dispose of an unwanted wife with profit to himself by taking the initiative in demanding indemnity. If there were no real evidence of wrong-doing, or if the man in question wished to brave the consequences, he might refuse. One instance was given by Singer concerning a man who, returning home one night, saw a young man crouched beside the lodge. "Although he took after the young man when he ran away, he could not catch him. The next day he told one of his wives—the sister of the one whom he pretended to suspect—to take her younger sister to the young man and demand in return a gun and a horse. The elder sister took up for the younger one and refused. So the husband told his oldest wife, unrelated to the other two, to carry out his orders. This one did as she was told. When confronted by the demand, however, the young man said: 'There is no truth in it. The old man did see something that made it look bad for me, but it wasn't what he thought.' The husband did not care to force the issue, since real evidence was lacking, and that was an end to the matter." Another example shows that even when the husband had evidence of his wife's infidelity he could not always collect indemnity. The husband in question sent his wife to her lover with a long list of things which he requested in return. The paramour, who did not want the woman as his wife, refused to pay the indemnity. "Perhaps another man would have killed his wife's lover when he refused, but this one took the easier [682] way by cutting off his wife's hair and turning her loose." In case the husband killed the paramour, it was interpreted as murder and he was subject to retaliation.

[554] A man who kept as wife a woman known to be unfaithful to him lost status. He would be considered weak and was subject to 684 humiliating taunts by his enemy-friends. Nevertheless some men 558 braved adverse public opinion out of deep affection for their erring wives. While not all went so far as Sits Like A Woman, his case is an interesting one. It was related by The Boy as follows.

"The famous chief Sits Like A Woman was at the height of

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

on a given night after everybody was asleep lest the matter became known and the prospective electee take flight. When a rumor would spread that a new election was imminent, those who thought they might be elected used commonly to go away and sleep elsewhere than in their own lodges, as almost all were reluctant to become keepers. Those invited to the election meeting had to keep absolute secrecy beforehand, and at the meeting itself no one else than the keeper and co-keeper and the above invitees was present except two attendants, sons of keepers or ex-keepers. 793

The actual keeper might open the discussion by proposing a name. Discussion was free but dignified. Agreement would be finally reached, perhaps well after midnight or towards morning, on the keeper's first choice or on some other man. Knowing how onerous the keepership was, the keeper out of the regard for the ex-keepers would not be apt to nominate one of their sons, and ordinarily did not nominate one of his own.

The proposed keeper had to be a prominent member of the tribe, a man of great ability and renown, with a record of recognized achievement and with very considerable wealth in horses, in the size and furnishings of his lodge, and so forth. He had to be of the cream of the tribe, or "the best among many." And he had "to be good" as the Gros Ventre ethical code conceived goodness. He had to be generous; a stingy man, even though a great warrior, and even though he had vowed to become keeper, would never get the Pipe, for the keeper had to feed people and to be good to them and have pity on them. A murderer of a fellow tribesman could not become keeper, nor could a "professional" gambler, that is, one who is known to have supernatural gambling power. In general one guilty of grave crime such as rape or theft from fellow tribesman, or of habitual marked moral delinquency or defect, such as lying, backbiting, felony, disbelief in or disrespect for holy things, was barred from the keepership as he was barred from rising high in the prestige scale. 793 577 [778] [554]

After the choice was finally decided upon, the whole party with others of their kin proceeded secretively before or toward daybreak to the lodge of the electee to seize him bodily by surprise before he could escape. Once seized or even only elected he had practically 793

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 hand hidden fresh kidney, with the fat on, under their dresses would on being struck fall over, "killed," and the "hunters" would pretend to cut open the dead "cows" and extract the kidney fat. The "bull," too, would be shot down with blunt arrows and "butchered," the kidney extracted first and a bit of it (and presumably of the fat taken from the "cows") offered to each person present and eaten.

The "cows," "bull" and "calves" made their way quickly back to the dance lodge, in a mimic stampede. After re-entering, the "cows" kept walking round and round the center pole, "puffing and puffing" as if winded,—representing, we may reasonably infer, buffalo milling around in a corral at the end of a drive. After a while they all sat down and partook of a good feast, and after the feast was over danced.

*796 272 554 It was apparently at the time of this terminal feast (possibly at some other time or times in the four-day rite,—our information is not quite clear on the point) that prominent men would come into the dance lodge for a drink of "berry water." Near the center pole was a big wooden bowl containing berries crushed to a juice "something like syrup fixed real sweet," and having a cup attached. Prominent men, "all the great big chiefs," "only big men, warriors," were invited to come in and take a drink. "They did not come in any old way. They would come in nice through the door, to the left side, drink, and then go out around the right side." They had to leave something as pay, such as a bridle, a rifle, or a horse, "because it was a great honor to be invited to drink." During this drinking by the "chiefs," the "bull" had to sit in her place silently with her horned headdress on and her head hanging down. Coming Daylight, at this juncture in one of the dances in which she was a "calf," remarked to her grandmother: "Well, that 'bull' does not even move. She just sits there." Her grandmother admonished her: "Don't say that. You are not supposed to 'tease' about it." "Well," Coming Daylight said, "'he' pushed me away when I went to my 'mother.'" After the whole dance was over, Coming Daylight used to tell all about it, but her grandmother would caution her: "Don't talk about it. You are not supposed to laugh over it."

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

or social compulsion to seek power, and was subject to no penalty if he refused it when offered to him by supernatural beings or by fellow-tribesmen. In fact, a certain amount of social pressure was brought to bear upon him to avoid and refuse it. Each individual had to make his own free choice, weighing the advantages against the disadvantages, the profit against the cost. The decision to seek or refrain from seeking, to accept when offered or to refuse, was entirely up to him.

We have listed the disadvantages, the cost. What were the advantages, the profit? Chiefly prestige, material gains or wealth, and sex favors, depending on the type of power sought or accepted. The great warrior and the great doctor who attained eminence through power both enjoyed high prestige. Which of the two, warrior or doctor, ranked higher is hard to say. Both had very high standing and both were deeply respected. The Boy and Coming Daylight inclined to rank the great warrior a bit higher than the great doctor. In The Boy's word, "both had high standing, each in his own field. The warrior perhaps rated higher. The medicine man had standing, but only on certain occasions was he thought of. But a renowned warrior had the admiration of the tribe because he had risked his life and was a strategist and by his own efforts." According to Coming Daylight "it was the greatest thing to be a warrior and look for the enemy." Al Chandler leaned more to the view that "if a man was honest about his medicine,—so many times they [medicine men] faked and tried to got everything a person owned,—and was known to be honest, he was respected to the same degree as a warrior." All informants were however fully agreed that both warriors and doctors ranked high. Doctors who had power to kill and who were suspected of using it were more feared than respected. Men who had gambling powers ranked far below warriors and doctors in the prestige scale. Of one the most famous recent Gros Ventre possessors of gambling power The Boy remarked: "He was just a little fellow. He was just a gambler," and a man known to have gambler power could not be selected to the high office of Pipe-keeper. Likewise those who had love power were usually rather chary of advertising widely the fact as well as the source of their power.

Power thus in varying degrees conferred prestige, a much sought

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

after good in Gros Ventre competitive life. Most types of power,— and not only power to acquire wealth directly,—brought material rewards. War raids had largely the purpose of acquiring horses, the main Gros Ventre wealth in earlier days, from the enemy.* Doctoring brought the practitioner large emoluments; gambling power netted the owner rich winnings. Love power, in addition to securing sex favors for its possessor, could also be a source of good profit through transfer by sale to others. Wealth among the Gros Ventres gave prestige on its own account as well as material ease and security. Further, wealth was inextricably tied up with prestige as goals sought through military, medicinal, gambling and love powers. 554 778 [721]

These were the chief advantages and profit or power which the individual had to weight against the disadvantages and cost thereof.

Many individuals, in view of the cost, neither sought nor accepted power, as we have seen.

Many others, however, men and women and even some young boys and girls, sought or accepted power, and such power was by no means confined to professional medicine men but was widely distributed among the laity. A few, but very few, children had power: the several cases recorded will be given later. But many women as well as men acquired it; what exact proportion of whole adult population is hard to say. The Boy, Thick concurring, stated: "Only a few men and women had ancestral helpers, but it was the usual thing for grownups, men and women, to have some kind of power." On another occasion, they said: "Not everyone tried to get power [by fasting on mountains] but only certain individuals. For instance, of three men only one might try, the other two might not care to try." On still another occasion, The Boy remarked: "Not all who slept on mountains got power. Lots got nothing; they didn't even dream. Only a few got power from such a quest. Some tried over and over again but never got anything. A man might spend five to seven days on the mountains and yet not even dream. If, say 30 or 40 slept on the mountains, only three or four of them might get power. Only a few Gros 778 787

* For discussion of Gros Ventres concept of wealth, see Flannery, 1953, pp. 73-79.

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

525 some object connected with the deed, which was of the same color as the bead
789 he was touching.

This thought-wish was a sort of indirect or implicit oath, not a formal audibly uttered one. If he actually had done no such deed, he could not hope to have good fortune from such intense concentration of thought and wish. But it was not a prayer proper; he was not asking anything directly of any being. The act was called beta´c^{ie}et^{ie}. It may be added here parenthetically that a highly abstract concept of effective power from deeply sincere wish or intense thought or from both combined plays an important part in many phases of Gros Ventre life even today.

While the player was making this silent wish, the spectators would speculate a lot about which of his great war deeds he was thinking. Later the winner would recite publicly the great deed he had been thinking about. In doing so he had to keep scrupulously to the facts, facts well known to the people, for he was looked upon as a man of character and high standing with a reputation gained by merit, sacrifice, and risk of life.

525 If a player were losing, one of his kinsmen, friends, or backers might volunteer to take his place playing, and also (apparently: our field evidence is not fully clear) to use his own war deeds power.

The main gambling at the wheel game was for stakes wagered by the two players themselves, a given piece of property against an equivalent piece for each game of any agreed number, say 10, of counters won. But the spectators, too, often bet on the game, although not so generally, it appears, as they did at the 2-button hand game. The wagers by players or spectators could be small or large. Two given players might keep at play many hours in succession, playing game after game. In some instances the betting between the two players would result in the loss by one of the last bit of his property—horses, blankets, clothing, household utensils, even his lodge itself. A comparatively wealthy man could thus become a "pauper" in a day. Often, too, the relatives of the players would win or lose almost as heavily in backing their respective kinsmen.

554 In some of the big wheel games the "social" stakes were as important as or
525 more important than the property ones, as illustrated in the case of Lame Bull given below. Two prominent men, enemy friends to each other and at the same time rivals for prestige and status in the tribe, would on a given day play the game *à outrance*. The winner's status and prestige would be greatly exalted; the loser's proportionately lowered. A man's whole career of advancement to prominence in the tribe—a basic ambition among Gros Ventre men—could be brought to ruin in a single day's gaming at the wheel game. He might lose not

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

only his property and so have to begin accumulating again from scratch, but 554
might at the same time lose as well his standing in the tribe and become a de- 525
feated and disgraced nobody, of a low standing from which it was very difficult to rise in the scale.

The wheel game was not played by women or children, nor apparently by the 525
very young men, but only by fully adult or middle-aged men and older ones, and 572
by only two players at a time. The really big games with large stakes were in [885]
most cases, it seems—almost all, according to our informants—played by two "enemy friends" or "war friends." Such enemy friends or war friends were very different from ordinary friends or "true" pledged friends. An "enemy friendship" was a war-related compact entered into in the following manner. A member of a returning war party would give some trophy or booty he had taken from the enemy—e.g., a scalp, or horse, or weapon—to one of his own compatriots of the same or opposite sex, who had little choice but to accept. Acceptance made "enemy friends" or "war friends" of the two. War friends, particularly if unrelated and both males, could go the limit in twitting and in- [522]
sulting each other and in playing practical jokes, even rather outrageous ones, on each other, and the victim had to take such behavior in good part, at least externally. However, along with the privilege of taking such liberties ran the accepted obligation to stand by each other in real need or hazard of grave nature.

The two war friends could gamble with each other. In fact, gambling among the Gros Ventre reached at times its climax in contests between two war friends. A wheel game between war friends commonly arose out of a "bragging match" between them; one would challenge the other to play the wheel game. If the one challenged declined to accept the challenge, his war friend who challenged him, and his other war friends, would ever after take occasion to deride him publicly for it at the least provocation. So the challenge could not easily be declined. The game often became one in which each enemy friend would go out to strip the other of practically everything he owned—horses, gun, blankets, lodge—and at which the most eager interest was aroused among the relatives, fellow-clansmen, and friends of the respective players and, for that matter, among the whole camp population. Such enemy-friend contests were commonly protracted sessions, often all-day ones, at the wheel game.

The following three narratives of particular wheel-game gambling contests—the first two of which are matters of well-remembered recent history, the third an older traditional story paralleled elsewhere on the Plains—throw some further light on the social role of the Gros Ventre wheel game.

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

of the society. The officers were free to transfer their ceremonial 575
equipment to other members whom they would select. Following 796
the typical Gros Ventre pattern of transfer of ownership, the
recipient would present as lavish gifts as he could afford to the [431]
donor while the relatives of the recipient showed their appreciation of the favor to their kinsman by giving away expensive gifts in his honor. All of this took place publicly at the dance.

Particular dances and songs were attached to each office and the owners of the ceremonial drumsticks were required to know in correct order all the numerous songs and to provide the musical [533]
accompaniment for the whole ceremony. These four drumstick owners were joined in certain of the songs by four women singers selected from among the wives of the Wolf-men. The owners of the various objects were responsible for the proper care thereof, the crow-belts and the drum receiving most respect. When not in use, the crow-belts were kept wrapped in special bundles in the [841
lodges of their respective owners, but were hung outside when the 784
owner's wife was in her menstrual period. Moreover, those who 833
danced wearing the crow-belts were obliged to refrain from sexual 782]
relations for two or three days previous to the dancing and, before donning the belts, to make a smudge of sweet-grass to incense themselves and the crow-belts. The drum, too, received special attention. One informant speaks of it as having been "nicely [534]
decorated," and we know from Kroeber's description[9] that the trimming was very similar to that of the Assiniboine Grass dance drum.[10]

Procedure. The actual dancing took place in a special circular 346
dancing-place in the center of the camp circle. This "corral," as 796
it was sometimes referred to, was constructed from several lodge covers, but was open at the top and the entrance thereto was at the east. The tipi of the drum-keeper was put up nearby. Opposite the opening of the "corral" was the place of honor where [554]
sat the officials,—with the exception of the sword owners, who with their assistants were at either side of the entrance. The 800

[9] Kroeber, loc. cit., p. 238.
[10] Lowie, R. H., The Assiniboine, AMNH-AP 4, pt. 1, 1909, p. 67.

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

rections around the circle. It was understood that if any woman had not risen to dance by the time those holding whips reached her, she would be lashed. These four women had the additional duty of helping serve when it was time for the general feast.

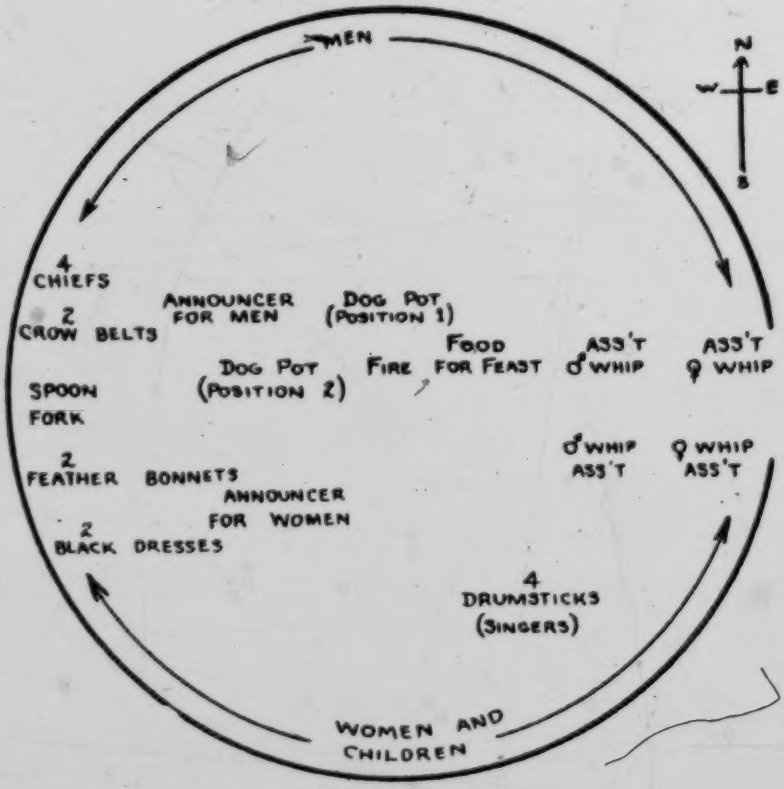


Fig. 1. Diagram of Dance Ground.

Considered as next in rank to the four "chiefs" were the four male singers, who, as in former times, owned the special drumsticks "decorated and official-looking, like emblems." They were expected to know faultlessly all of the many songs connected with the Grass dance as first adopted. If they should, for instance,

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The addition of the four "chiefs" of the Grass dance gave scope for public recognition of the middle-aged men of substance esteemed for their wisdom and judgment to whom office-holding proportionate for their dignity was otherwise denied. Although there was no longer opportunity for the ranks of warriors to swell, those who had in the past performed brave deeds could still gain status by being called upon to publicly recount them at the ceremonial eating of dog flesh and by being selected to handle the feathered bonnets. 796 178 622 [888] [554]

As the younger men had no chance to show their prowess in warfare and hunting, there was a change of emphasis to recognition of superior singing and dancing ability as one of the roads to public approval. This latter was brought out clearly by our informants when explaining the qualifications of those sought for the various officers of the Grass dance as it was performed around the turn of the century. 796 178 555

They stated that much of the success of the performance of the Grass dance depended particularly on the singers of the dog ritual songs. The four singers who owned the ceremonial drumsticks were chosen for their good voices and from among the "lively men who liked to do things." The candidates did not have to know the songs in advance because they could be trained. Two noted teachers were The Boy and Joe Big Beaver. The Boy said he used to "campaign against himself" when it was time for a drumstick to be transferred because "he didn't want to get tied down. He enjoyed dancing and the singers never got a chance to participate." Our informants told us of two men who are remembered especially as being outstanding singers and drummers, Ed Rider and Breath. The latter was described as a top-ranking singer who, so far as they knew, had never been surpassed. They said: "It was something worth listening to when Breath started those Grass dance songs. He had a voice adapted to that kind of singing and his sense of rhythm was superb. He could hold a big crowd of people spellbound. He was a real genius. Many others tried to copy him and learn from him, but none ever succeeded in equalling him. Regardless of his fine voice no one

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 178 555 even acquired his technique for beating the drum, that is, of beginning lightly and then, in an inimitable manner, of increasing the volume. Sometimes the other three singers would let him begin a song and sing it through once just to listen to him. He was left-handed, but he sure could beat the drum! He was a man of whom you could say he had a real personality as far as the Grass dance was concerned but who was not so noticeable outside this one field. He was always deliberate but as soon as he approached the dancing-place he seemed to come alive. He was good at that office in the Grass dance and he knew it. He would sit up at the drum as straight as a lord and never attempted to be inconspicuous as, for instance, by putting his hat down over his eyes. Many of the young fellows who usually didn't join in the dancing and liked to play around on the outside would nevertheless rush from every direction to get to the floor when they saw him coming."

796 While singing had always held an important place in Gros Ventre religious culture, in the past the emphasis had been on the meaning of the song far more than on the quality of the voice and the manner of performing as it was in the Grass dance. Similarly in times gone by what dancing there was in the various rites was more or less perfunctory, whereas in the Grass dance the ownership of the two crow-belts, the fork, the spoon, and the whistle was transferred to those among the younger men who had [554] physical vigor and endurance as well as grace. For these offices "it took a good-looking young man in good physical condition to perform properly."

796 178 562 A still greater innovation was the inclusion of women as officers of the Grass dance. The two ceremonial black dresses were seemingly symbolic of the black paint used in the Victory dance of former years, especially in view of the fact that this was one of the few dances performed by women in the old culture. It should be mentioned, however, that in connection with the Victory dance there had been no formal office nor had the participants therein been under economic obligations. We might hazard the guess that the ownership by women of two of the war-bonnets in

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the Grass dance may have seemed appropriate to the Gros Ventres as reminiscent of the feather headdress worn by the participants in the Women's Dance belonging to the series of vowed Sacred Dances. But regardless of the possible symbolism, these four offices, plus the four others allotted to women,—two whip owners and their two assistants,—gave the female sex a fair degree of recognition, and probably reflect the newer economic status of women which came about with the changing concept of inheritance. Formerly women, of course, had a right to their own property, but acquisition thereof was mainly through their own manufacture, such as clothing, or through the relatively rare gift of a horse or so. They did not come in for any valuable property through inheritance and a widow in those days was not even entitled to any of her deceased husband's belongings.

The holding of office in the Grass dance thus offered one of the very few means remaining for acquisition of status by the individual. The frequent transfer of offices meant that there was opportunity for many individuals within each category,—mature men, older warriors, young men, women,—to enjoy such public recognition.

Public display of generosity in giving away property to honor a loved one, which became such a marked feature of the Grass dance in its later phase, carried on and accentuated the method most common in older Gros Ventre culture for the gaining of individual prestige. Formerly there were many opportunities for this kind of ostentatious liberality,—when a pipe or a painted lodge was transferred, when a warrior returned from accomplishing brave deeds, when a person was participating in one of the Sacred Dances, when a person was named, when a child's ears were pierced, and so on. At such times the relatives publicly gave away as much of their property as they possibly could,—not to the recipient of the pipe, the brave warrior, the participant in the Sacred Dance, et al.,—but to someone else in his honor. Everybody would know what was given and by whom; people would make such comments as: "So-and-so is a fine man. He surely must think a lot of his relative—look at all the things he

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 gave away in his honor." When first adopted the Grass dance
178 offered only one such opportunity—and a relatively minor one.
431 As times changed, however, the Grass dance provided practically
156 the sole occasion for gaining prestige while at the same time
554 carrying out the old pattern of kinship obligation by enhancing the prestige of relatives.

The possibility in the later form of the Grass dance of paying for privileges, such as locking the door, or whipping those who did not get up to dance, gave further scope for the acquisition of prestige through liberality, as did also, of course, payments at transfer of office.

It was estimated by our informants that around 1900 as much as a thousand dollars in goods and cash changed hands at a single performance of the Grass dance. At that time it was not uncommon for the dance to be held at weekly intervals. So long as the Gros Ventre were relatively prosperous and had property to display and exchange according to the older patterns, the Grass dance continued to function. With increasing poverty, however, along
[735] with other factors such as the changing points of view and interests on the part of the younger generation, and the dying out of
[182] the older warriors, the Grass dance, the core of which was the dog ritual, gradually paled off leaving but the remnants of some of the round dances which had been added to the Grass dance as originally adopted from the Assiniboine.

Summary

796 Between 1875 and 1880 the Gros Ventres received the Grass
177 dance from the Assiniboine. From the date of adoption up to
575 about 1890 the Grass dance was performed only by members of one of the two soldier societies and the custodians of the ceremonial equipment were the officers. Offices were transferred among members according to the old Gros Ventre pattern.

796 The essential core of the Grass dance was the dog ritual, a
[262] ceremonial eating of dog flesh, carried out by the owners of the equipment with the assistance of four warriors selected from among the lay members. Other features of the program at each

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 longer existed. The dance of one of them, the Grass dance, how-
178 ever, survived. In its changed form the Grass dance filled the void in social life during the transition from old to new.

With the admission of all to membership and through the addition of round dances in which all could actively participate, the Grass dance met the needs for group recreational outlets and for expression of social solidarity.

796 As the sole surviving institution which carried the concept of
178 graded offices and their transfer, the Grass dance met the need of
554 the individual for status along traditional lines. The expansion of offices allowed for the recognition of types of ability formerly premiated and opened the way for younger men as well as for women in emphasizing different kinds of ability.

Finally, the Grass dance met the need of the individual for prestige in accordance with the older pattern by offering opportunity for ostentatious liberality. By bestowing gifts publicly
[431] at the Grass dance, one could gain the coveted reputation for generosity, while at the same time fulfilling a substantial part of one's obligation to kinsmen.

796 The Grass dance continued to function in this way up to about
182 1916, after which time it began gradually to pale off, and to practically disappear by 1920. The few round dances carried on at present under the name "Grass dance" bear no appreciable relationship to the lively and colorful performances that are remembered by the older Gros Ventres as having been so stimulating and enjoyable.

8:Flannery E-5 (1940-1948)1960 NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

INDIVIDUAL VARIATION IN CULTURE

Regina Flannery

It is generally accepted that what Benedict called the Dionysian configuration of Plains culture represents a dominant, if not the only trend. By definition a configuration is a generalization lying behind and explaining a number of cultural patterns. A pattern itself is of course an abstraction from the behavior of a number of individuals. The behavior of any one person may vary at different times in respect to a particular type of situation, but it is unlikely that the individual will show the whole range of possible behavior within a pattern; it will cover only a portion thereof. As Linton pointed out, the difference between the individual mode within this segment, and the mode of the behaviors on which the pattern is based, reflects the compromise which every individual has to make between the culture patterns of his society and his own inclinations. It would seem further, then, that if the modes of an individual's behavior-ranges show a consistent displacement with respect to a large series of patterns, it is safe to assume that the direction of this displacement reflects some quality of the individual.[1] The question we wish to raise is this: If the aspect of personality thus revealed runs counter to a dominant trend of his culture, is the individual a misfit in that society? (2)

In attempting an answer, let us examine some individual variations within those patterns of Plains culture in which expression of emotional excess, and dangerous experience were expected of women in one Plains society, that of the Gros Ventres of Montana. We shall outline in some detail the behavior of one Gros Ventre woman in respect of these selected patterns—from which the Dionysian configuration was abstracted—and contrast her behavior with that of others of approximately the same age. All had participated as adults in the old way of life before the disappearance of the buffalo in 1887. [181]

In Gros Ventre culture, as in all the Plains, there was high valuation placed on direct contact of the individual with the supernatural through dreams and visions. Men could actively seek such contact by employing dangerous means, and did so in order to obtain many kinds of power. While women did not go on the actual power quest, they might acquire medicine powers and less frequently, perhaps, powers of clairvoyance. Medicine powers were considered dangerous in that, it was believed, by accepting them a limitation was put upon the life span of the practitioner. But the rewards in terms of prestige for successful performance and of payment for services were high for women as well as for men. Not every individual man was successful in his quest, nor of course was every woman vouchsafed the kinds of dreams which were requisite. Coming Daylight, the woman whose behavior we are examining in particular, was what her contemporaries considered fortunate indeed in having been offered curing powers of several kinds. Nevertheless she rejected the possibility each time, in spite of the fact that she had a living example in the person of her father's sister of what it could mean in prestige to a woman who accepted. As the reasons for her refusal seem significant I shall describe her experience in her own words. 787 183 [562] 756 [554] 159 756

[p.87]

8:Flannery E-5 (1940-1948)1960 NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Her final rejoinder was such a witty and pointed one that everyone laughed heartily at her rival's expense. In this culture, of course, public ridicule was a far more effective retaliation than the biting and scratching that other women said frankly they would have indulged in when attacked.

Expression of emotional excess was institutionalized for the Gros Ventres, as for the rest of the Plains, in the bereavement situation. Upon the death of a husband, son, or father, a woman was expected to start wailing as soon as she heard the news, have her hair cut off, discard good clothes for old ragged ones, gash her arms and legs, go to the hills to mourn and cry, resisting for a time the pleas of her relatives to return, and being watched lest she attempt suicide. Coming Daylight was only a young woman when she was first widowed and the mourning pattern was still in full vogue. It is certain from other evidence than Coming Dayling had a deep affection for this husband to whom she had been given as a child-bride and in whose kindly and indulgent treatment she had found a pleasant escape from the rigorous discipline of her grandmother. Nevertheless the public expression of her grief was minimal—no abandonment for her. Although her sister was sent on the hills with her to keep watch over her in the usual way, Coming Daylight was easily persuaded to return shortly though she herself was proud of the fact that she had stayed out so long that she actually had got a frozen toe! In later years when all that was left of the ritual was the wailing out on the hills, she lost the son whom she herself, and everybody else, acknowledged as her favorite. She had not been on the hills very long when she experienced a significant dream, as follows. She was in a lodge at the rear of which was a big pile of tobacco mixture and a pipe. The owner of the lodge filled the pipe and approached her. She was frightened because she didn't smoke. The owner of the lodge however told her: "Look at these people." She looked and saw many with their hair cut and their bodies bleeding from the gashes inflicted in grief. The man then told her: "That is in the past. Nowadays your only consolation is in smoking." So she accepted the pipe and, after smoking it, she was painted in ceremonial fashion by each of those other mourners. Then the owner of the lodge dismissed her saying: "Now, go home and don't ever go on the hills and mourn again. But always smoke if you want to." She went home right after this dream and when she told her husband of it he accepted it as valid and persuaded her sister to prepare for Coming Daylight her first real smoke. She maintained that the habit subsequently developed was actually a great comfort to her.

The final area with which we shall be concerned here is the war complex—a vital aspect of the old Plains culture. Gros Ventre women were allowed direct but limited participation in these activities in the sense that, while they would not join a party of men who were going on horse-raiding or revenge expeditions, if opportunity offered they might exhibit the same kind of bravery that a man should show and derive considerable status therefrom. For instance, if one of the enemy fell nearby, the women rushed out from camp to count coup, and to grab trophies with which to inaugurate the relationship known as "enemy-friends." Coming Daylight, however, was never one to indulge in this sport. She told of the one—and to her extremely distasteful—occasion on which her hand literally was forced. It seems that during a raid on their camp one of the enemy was shot and her husband scalped him. The victim was lying not far from her lodge and, as her husband dashed off to pursue the rest of the Assiniboine, he shouted for her to come out and see what was going on. Coming Daylight saw the man lying there, face down, covered with blood. He was not dead

8:Flannery E-5 (1940-1948)1960 NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

and, each time he attempted to get to his knees, one of two women who had already reached the scene would strike him on the buttocks with the flat side of a hatchet, making an insulting remark, and both would laugh. Coming Daylight hesitated at some distance from where the other two were gloating over the fallen enemy. When one of them, Woman Chief by name, saw her she ran to her saying: "Why are you standing so far off?" She grabbed her by the arm and pushed a big club into her hand, saying: "He is still alive—you will do a great thing. *Ahe:ya'!*" Woman Chief forced Coming Daylight to strike him.

While both Woman Chief and Coming Daylight closely approximated the ideal for women as faithful wives and efficient workers who gave generously of their material goods to and on behalf of their relatives, they seemingly differed in temperament. Woman Chief was known as a very brave woman, and Coming Daylight was frank in admitting she would never have dreamed of doing the kinds of things for which Woman Chief was renowned. One of the latter's exploits, for example, was as follows. The Gros Ventres and Crow were allies in an encounter with the Piegan. The battle was in full force, but one Crow had withdrawn and was sitting motionless astride his horse at some distance from the melee. Woman Chief, who in contrast to most women was always well mounted, dashed up to the Crow, grabbed his wand from his hand, and rode pellmell into the thick of the battle, counting coups right and left. So brave was she considered in having really risked her life that she was accorded the distinction, most unusual for a woman, of being led around the camp circle with the victorious warriors. Furthermore, so many people came to sing in front of her lodge that she and her relatives, to show their appreciation of the honor, were forced to give away as much property as though she were a man. Judging on the basis of other biographical material, there can be no doubt that she gloried in her reputation and took every opportunity to enhance it. She was one to whom the more violent aspects of Gros Ventre culture were exceedingly congenial.

If we compare and contrast these two women we can say that insofar as the patterns of Dionysian configuration are the basis of the comparison, their behavior exhibits opposite extremes, the one going beyond the average in the direction of the configuration, the other running counter to and participating less than the average therein. Both might be termed deviant personalities in Honigman's sense of the term,[2] one overplaying and the other underplaying modal behavior in these selected patterns. Nevertheless, neither seems to have been a misfit insofar as each represents an extreme of socially accepted or sanctioned behavior within those patterns. If, for instance, Coming Daylight had been completely negative, and refused, say, to carry out at least the culturally defined minimum for mourning, had she, in addition to refusing to mutilate herself for the recovery of her ill relatives, neglected as an adult even the safe and less strenuous means to that end, she would have fallen without the pale, so to speak, and have been a misfit. If, at the opposite end of the scale, Woman Chief had gone further in the direction of masculinity, had she actually gone on raiding expeditions and herself stolen horses from the camp of the enemy, had she learned to shoot the bow and arrow or gun, or had she so much as adopted the vocabulary and/or pronunciation proper for males in the Gros Ventres language, she would have been carrying things too far. She, too, would have been dubbed a misfit.

The Catholic University of America,
Washington, D.C.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

622 to have been the primary one of the leader. He decided where to go and when, in order to hunt, to seek lodge covers, to gather berries, to cut new tent- and travois-poles, and so on. He invited people, prominent men of his own band and of other bands, and fed [574] people every day. He would have provisions on hand and was prepared to carry out extensive hospitality. He would be one who had plenty of buffalo horses which younger men—his sons and nephews—would use on the hunt, and numerous pack horses which returned from the hunt laden with meat. His wives would invite old women, and especially needy ones, to help slice meat, prepare it for storage, to render grease and extract marrow, all of which these old women were glad to do in return for some fresh meat.

As explained by The Boy, a man had to work up from the ranks, 622 so to speak, to be recognized as chief and as leader. "It paid to 555 be prosperous and a good man. In the course of time people would look up to him as leader and other bands would be told that he is the leader. He does not ask for this distinction but, if he is prosperous and good, people recognize him. The band gets together and tells him: 'You are our leader.' He holds 'office' for life. As he grows old he might tell the people to select someone else, but, even so, they would continue to look up to him and to ask his advice and consult him. There are obstacles in the path of life, and one who would rise must walk around or over them. To be an acknowledged leader a man must have distinguished himself at war, but many who were known for their brave deeds were not necessarily in line for leadership.[6] The kinds of things which would have prevented a man from receiving this type of recognition were the following. First of all, murder of one of his own band. For instance there was a well-known character who had

p. 147, mentions that "Each band seems to have had a recognized chief or leader."

[6] Denig, whose experience with the northern plains tribes extended from 1832 to 1854, expresses, p. 403, the concept as follows: "In fact the rank or standing of each Indian be he chief or warrior is so well known and his character so well judged by the vox populi that he takes his place spontaneously. A higher step than his acts and past conduct confer, imprudently taken, would have the effect of injuring him in their eyes as a leader. Every chief, warrior or brave carves his own way to fame, and if recognized as one by the general voice becomes popular and is supported; if not he mixes with hundreds of others in similar situation and waiting opportunity to rise."

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

an outstanding war record, was known to be courageous and not afraid to die, yet, because he was quick-tempered and murdered a member of his own band, he forfeited what would have been a very good chance of becoming leader of his band. Second, a man who had the reputation of being woman-crazy, of bothering other men's wives, or who was guilty of rape or incest, would not be selected as leader. Furthermore, a man who wished to rise should control his temper, be good to others and avoid lying, back-biting and jealousy in regard to other prominent men. If he had these qualities, and was eminent at war, he would rise high in public esteem and be in the running not only as a leader of a band, or of the whole tribe, but also as Keeper of one of the Sacred Pipes." [7]

622 55.5 [193]

It was further explained by this same informant, The Boy, that if the leader died, there was a lot of talk both by members and non-members as to who was qualified to succeed. Those outside the band speculated on whom the choice would fall and said: "It ought to be so-and-so," and in this way attempt to influence the opinion as to which of the outstanding men of the band had the best qualifications. Soon a certain man became the leader, and once he was invited to a meeting of other band leaders he was "full-fledged."

622

In carrying out his duties, that is, in deciding when and where to move, the leader consulted with others and proceeded in a democratic fashion. If two or more bands were camped together, for instance, the leaders would consult among themselves and come to a decision as to whether or not the bands should remain together and as to where they should go. Other men would be present and any one of them apparently had the privilege of speaking his mind. "Suppose that the leader had decided that his band should leave the other and go to some particular spot. Someone in his band who disagreed with the decision would speak up and raise the question of, say, danger from the enemy. He would suggest a different place free from such danger and where game would be plentiful, where there was a good camping ground and sufficient water for the horses, etc. He would give his reasons in detail, and, if it

622 623

[7] The role of the Keepers of the Flat and Feathered Pipes is discussed in detail in Cooper, Ms. 1949.

555 342 532 The more war-deeds a man performed, the more frequently was he the center of attention. Gradually he began to rise above others and finally he achieved recognition as an outstanding warrior. Only when a man reached this enviable height was he justified in having his war record painted on his lodge for all the world to admire. When a newly painted lodge of this kind was first erected, the owner initiated its use by giving a feast to which other prominent warriors were invited. From among the guests, the host "pulled up" one who was able to tell four brave exploits, each connected in some way with a different lodge belonging to the enemy. At the conclusion of each separate account, the warrior who was reciting hit the taut new lodge a resounding blow, thus attracting attention. Then while the guests were feasting and smoking with the host, crowds gathered around to examine the lodge and to discuss the record depicted thereon. It was said, too, that similar discussions took place when the Gros Ventres met on friendly terms with other tribes. The reputation of the owner was thereby enhanced as his prowess was ever more widely acknowledged.

Enemy-Friends

572 In accordance with the general prestige pattern, an outstanding warrior, or one who had aspirations toward that end, was expected to be generous as well as brave. Particular significance attached, however, to the disposition of horses stolen from the enemy or of weapons or other trophies obtained from the enemy at risk of life. [602] The giving of such presents initiated a particular relationship between recipient and donor known as the enemy-friendship. This was a kind of "joking relationship" and involved the greatest amount of freedom between the two both in word and action. Whatever one enemy-friend said or did to the other had to be borne with equanimity. Loss of temper involved loss of prestige, and it was said that in some cases one enemy-friend had to suffer patiently audacity which would have led him to murder another not in that relationship. Each tried to out-do the other by kinds of speech and action ranging all the way from the most harmless teasing and jokes to the most humiliating exposition of foibles and misdemeanors.

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The addition of the four "chiefs" of the Grass dance gave scope for public recognition of the middle-aged men of substance esteemed for their wisdom and judgment to whom office-holding proportionate for their dignity was otherwise denied. Although there was no longer opportunity for the ranks of warriors to swell, those who had in the past performed brave deeds could still gain status by being called upon to publicly recount them at the ceremonial eating of dog flesh and by being selected to handle the feathered bonnets. 796 178 622 [888] [554]

As the younger men had no chance to show their prowess in warfare and hunting, there was a change of emphasis to recognition of superior singing and dancing ability as one of the roads to public approval. This latter was brought out clearly by our informants when explaining the qualifications of those sought for the various officers of the Grass dance as it was performed around the turn of the century. 796 178 555

They stated that much of the success of the performance of the Grass dance depended particularly on the singers of the dog ritual songs. The four singers who owned the ceremonial drumsticks were chosen for their good voices and from among the "lively men who liked to do things." The candidates did not have to know the songs in advance because they could be trained. Two noted teachers were The Boy and Joe Big Beaver. The Boy said he used to "campaign against himself" when it was time for a drumstick to be transferred because "he didn't want to get tied down. He enjoyed dancing and the singers never got a chance to participate." Our informants told us of two men who are remembered especially as being outstanding singers and drummers, Ed Rider and Breath. The latter was described as a top-ranking singer who, so far as they knew, had never been surpassed. They said: "It was something worth listening to when Breath started those Grass dance songs. He had a voice adapted to that kind of singing and his sense of rhythm was superb. He could hold a big crowd of people spellbound. He was a real genius. Many others tried to copy him and learn from him, but none ever succeeded in equalling him. Regardless of his fine voice no one

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 even acquired his technique for beating the drum, that is, of be-
178 ginning lightly and then, in an inimitable manner, of increasing
555 the volume. Sometimes the other three singers would let him begin a song and sing it through once just to listen to him. He was left-handed, but he sure could beat the drum! He was a man of whom you could say he had a real personality as far as the Grass dance was concerned but who was not so noticeable outside this one field. He was always deliberate but as soon as he approached the dancing-place he seemed to come alive. He was good at that office in the Grass dance and he knew it. He would sit up at the drum as straight as a lord and never attempted to be inconspicuous as, for instance, by putting his hat down over his eyes. Many of the young fellows who usually didn't join in the dancing and liked to play around on the outside would nevertheless rush from every direction to get to the floor when they saw him coming."

796 While singing had always held an important place in Gros Ventre religious culture, in the past the emphasis had been on the meaning of the song far more than on the quality of the voice and the manner of performing as it was in the Grass dance. Similarly in times gone by what dancing there was in the various rites was more or less perfunctory, whereas in the Grass dance the ownership of the two crow-belts, the fork, the spoon, and the whistle was transferred to those among the younger men who had
[554] physical vigor and endurance as well as grace. For these offices "it took a good-looking young man in good physical condition to perform properly."

796 A still greater innovation was the inclusion of women as officers
178 of the Grass dance. The two ceremonial black dresses were
562 seemingly symbolic of the black paint used in the Victory dance of former years, especially in view of the fact that this was one of the few dances performed by women in the old culture. It should be mentioned, however, that in connection with the Victory dance there had been no formal office nor had the participants therein been under economic obligations. We might hazard the guess that the ownership by women of two of the war-bonnets in

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

to have been the key factor in the abandonment of the earlier methods of hunting buffalo. The situation of the Gros Ventres in regard to horses, which had apparently been so bad in approximately the first two decades of the 19th century, gradually improved, according to our informants, by natural increase of the few horses they had and by successful raiding of the enemy, especially for the fast buffalo horse. If Bradley's figures are correct, the Gros Ventres averaged five horses per family in 1830. According to our informants, by about 1850 they had "lots of horses," but we know that, even so, the number of horses fluctuated considerably after that date. Coming Daylight, for instance, remembered clearly several times prior to 1880 when the whole tribe was relatively poor in horses. During these periods people were forced to cache as much as possible so they wouldn't be too heavily burdened as they traveled about on foot. No doubt the same factors were operative in the Gros Ventre area as obtained in Blackfoot territory—severe winters and skin diseases among the horses.[1]

In any case, even in relatively prosperous times, seldom if ever did an individual possess great herds such as are described for the Kiowa. The Boy stated that his father, Lame Bull, who was an outstanding man, had a herd of about 60 horses. Coming Daylight explained: "Each family kept its own little bunch of horses. In early morning they would be taken out to pasture, usually by the older boys; around the middle of the day they would be watered and driven out again; in the evening they would be brought back and the more valuable ones, the swift buffalo horses, were always kept tied close by at night in case of raid by the enemy."

Such a family-owned herd would be differentiated and would ideally include pack horses, riding horses, and a few buffalo horses. The right of disposal over his own horses was, however, recognized for each individual man, woman and child. A man had the possibility of augmenting his own holdings directly by raiding the enemy. Because of the social recognition attendant upon successful raiding, as well as the economic necessity for controlling the means of production, the individual might actually devote in the course of a year more time and energy in pursuing this objective

[1] For an excellent discussion of the whole problem, see Ewers, 1943.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

231 556 than in the actual production of raw materials. This was especially true of the young unmarried man who, though his ability to hunt was important, was even more anxious to establish his reputation for bravery.

Food

262 The Gros Ventres met their need for food very largely, but not exclusively, through a meat diet. Flesh of the buffalo was the meat par excellence and was considered by the Gros Ventres their "real food." To those who had been brought up on buffalo meat, beef was a poor substitute. It was said, by those who experienced the change of diet after the disappearance of the buffalo in 1884, that many of the older people "died of starvation" when deprived of buffalo meat. The Gros Ventres refused for a long time to accustom themselves to beef because "beef, even when fresh, smells so badly, and when we would see oxen slobber it turned our stomachs."

Buffalo meat, either fresh or dried, formed a major part of the dietary the year round. Each man had his own preference as to various parts of the buffalo. Charles Buckman, for instance, liked best the flanks, if fat, but some preferred the brisket. The tenderest part was the hump (withers) and the tenderloin was also a delicacy. Roast ribs, a whole rib for each person, were considered a most succulent feast and the embryo was highly appreciated. It was customary to eat raw the liver and manifolds dipped in blood and to drink some of the fresh blood. Nothing of the buffalo was wasted and every possible part was eaten even to the predigested vegetable food from the stomach and the soft inner part of the hoofs. The coagulated milk from a buffalo cow carrying young or nursing a calf was enjoyed by most, although it was reported that some individuals did not care particularly for it. The [251] guts were cleaned, dried, cooked and put away, and the lungs were sliced and dried. To be eaten with dried meat the back fat was cooked, and tallow was used in like manner. The bones were broken and boiled, and, after the grease was skimmed off and 252 stored, the bone broth was used plain or with either blood or 262 berries therein.

Pemmican was made from the base of the tenderloin, a long

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

on the part of the men for supplying the raw materials. This, however, was more than offset by the fact that the time consumed in producing the raw materials was less than that required to process and complete the manufacture thereof. The following calculation will give at least a rough approximation of the situation. It was estimated by our Gros Ventre informants that one woman would be able to dress about twenty robes a season, i.e., robes taken in the fall hunt and dressed with the fur on. This means she had to devote the equivalent of 60 full days' time to this task alone.[7] Actually she would not be free to work on robes exclusively, as she had to dress other kinds of skins, carry on her ordinary daily routine of procuring fuel and water, care of children, preparation of the daily meals, and in addition cut the enormous quantities of meat to be dried for winter consumption.[8] In contrast, if we can rely on Hornaday's figures, 15–25 men killed about a thousand buffalo in a fall season,[9] which means, taking the higher figure, one man alone would average more than two women could handle.

Value

Given the abundant supply of game, especially of buffalo, and the methods of exploiting it, the individual who controlled the relatively scarce means of production was in a position to command a larger labor supply and consequently to produce a larger surplus. The Boy summed up the situation thus: "The Gros Ventres in their old way of life used to want a lot of horses because they knew from experience that if a man had a lot of horses he could acquire a little wealth and position in life. If, for instance, a family had a lot of horses, the man might have three or four or five buffalo horses with which to chase game and would bring in lots of skins and meat and could afford more wives, and the more wives he had the bigger and wealthier he would be. He could have

[7] Denig, pp. 540–41, estimates three days' work to prepare one robe for market and states that the preparation of 25 to 30 robes was an excellent winter's work for one woman, with the average at 18 to 20 robes.

[8] Hornaday, p 436, states that a whole buffalo cow, if economically worked up, yields about 55 lbs. of pemmican and 45 lbs. of dried meat.

[9] Hornaday, p. 465.

556 a great big lodge and all the other things that were required. But
231 some men might have only one horse and therefore only one wife. Such men wouldn't amount to much; they would be by-passed all the time and couldn't get anywhere. Therefore men did really desperate things in order to obtain horses."[10]

556 Horses were thus the most valuable item in Gros Ventre
231 economy. Other informants illustrated this attitude. Garter
735 Snake, for instance, stated: "As a little girl I didn't know poverty. My parents were rich. They had everything they wanted for their lodge, and clothing, and all kinds of horses so I was never in want at any time. Nevertheless, my father, when he was a little fellow, was very poor and had no horse to ride. Possibly somebody would put his mother, who was a widow, on a horse, but he would have to walk. He had hardly any clothes, he was so poor. One time when he was about 12, the camp was moving and they were going to go quite a distance. He was way behind because he would wait until everybody had gone, and then would follow as best he could. This day he went up on a hill to see where the people were camping next, and then he just lay there crying because he pitied himself for being so poor. It was at this time that he was granted his first experience [with the supernatural]. Later on, having made an offering of a black shirt and some feathers, which he had begged from someone at the camp, and having cut
556 off the first joint of the little finger of his left hand, he was told
231 in a vision: 'Son, I invited you here and I am glad you came.
735 Look over that way (the direction in which the camps lay). You
787 are poor now, but see those camps? You are going to be noted there. Everyone there is going to respect you and depend on you. And look this way (the opposite direction). See that big band of horses? Those are your horses. Of course you won't get them right away, but that is what you are going to have.' He was granted many powers later on, among them how to operate with a woodpecker feather; how to check hemorrhage; how to cure stoppage of the male urinary tract; how to cure consumption; how to revive a horse which was 'played out'; how to make raiders invisible so they could successfully steal horses. And he finally attained those horses he had been shown."

[10] Cf. Denig, p. 505, "An Indian with one wife cannot amass property."

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The above case illustrates how it was possible for a man, in spite of a poor start in life, to rise. Children were instructed by their elders, as was Thick by his maternal uncle: "Above all things try to have horses. Try to have property and whatever you have, take care of it. By having lots of horses and property, people will respect you and look upon you as somebody." 556 867

Again Coming Daylight stated: "They used to think more of horses than of anything else. They were sure proud of owning a pinto pony. In telling stories when they wanted to describe the best they could think of they would say: 'You should have seen her horse—it was a big pinto pony.'" And in telling of a relative of hers, Woman Chief, Coming Daylight said: "Her husband was not very handsome, but they were well-to-do and she always rode top horses." 554 231

While all horses were as a rule well cared for, special attention was devoted to the buffalo horses. On the hunt for instance, these horses would be led along unburdened by pack or rider to keep them fresh. They were ridden only for the actual chase and after the kill were turned loose to roll around and graze like young colts. When the butchering was completed the meat was packed on other horses and the swift buffalo horses were then led home again. These horses were ridden on social and ceremonial occasions, when their owners wished to show off, and of course the soldier societies were well mounted, but such use amounted to no more than a good work-out, and these valuable horses were never abused nor wilfully exhausted. 231

Children were exhorted to take care of their property, especially of horses, and the girls were advised that "a mare is worth everything—it increases—treat her well." It was stated that some attention was given to breeding. A man might judge that a colt showed possibilities of becoming a fast horse. If it fulfilled the early promise the colts it sired would be watched. The less likely of these would be castrated. Likewise, a good mare would, if possible, be retained by the owner for breedng. A man who owned a particularly good buffalo horse might, on his deathbed, either order that it be killed at his grave or give it to some relative he knew cared well for horses, with instructions never to abuse it nor give it away. [867] 763 768 431

231 721 got scared and ran to the other side of the horse. Finally she took a big stick and threw it at the white thing and still it didn't move so she went closer and found it to be a Hudson's Bay blanket just soaking wet. The enemy must have used it when they crossed the river. So she dragged it home to her lodge. When she got there she called to her grandmother: 'Is he there?' Her grandmother said: 'He is.' She was still furious at her husband and called to him: 'Come out! I am giving you this,' and she said it in the way people speak when they are giving something on return from war. She was giving her husband his own buffalo horse! He however didn't say anything or make any exclamation. This so enraged her that she took the blanket and rolled it up as small as she could and threw it at him, hitting him on the chest saying: 'Here is another thing I brought you!' Then he laughed. But she had at least saved one of the most valuable horses.

[431] "The next morning the rest of the Gros Ventres in the party moved on, leaving this family behind. But fortunately some others came along and seeing their plight gave them horses, for example, Pemmican gave one to Coming Daylight, Little Shields gave her uncle one, and Sleeping Bear gave her husband one."

231 436 The importance of various transactions could be gauged by whether or not a horse were included, other things such as fancy clothing, ornaments, guns, etc. being mentioned as "thrown in." [554] A person who gave a horse in whatever connection accrued prestige for himself and at the same time showed in what esteem the donor [583] held the recipient. Horses were generally included in the bride price; in inaugurating the more serious type of enemy-friendship; in payment for services of the medicine man in curing certain types of illness, and in payment to the ceremonial grandfather as well as in payment to the namer or ear-piercer of a child; in settling disputes; in gambling; in gifts to others in honor of relatives, and in meeting certain other kinship obligations.

231 556 Horses could be acquired by a man through raiding the enemy; by gift from relatives and from non-relatives in honor of someone else or in instituting the enemy-friendship; in the bride price of a sister, daughter, or maternal niece; in payment for services rendered; in gambling; through inheritance; in trading with the whites. A woman might share in the bride price of her brother's

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

daughter, and might receive gifts from relatives, but would otherwise have few opportunities of obtaining horses. 231 556

In former times the rules regarding inheritance were fairly simple. If a man died, his relatives took the more valuable livestock, while anyone was free to come into the lodge and take any other personal property of the deceased which was not to be buried with him. The man's relatives would not, however, take the horses which belonged to his wife or wives, or which had been given before his death to his children. When a woman died she usually would have little valuable property in any case, but, again, any other woman might rush in and strip the lodge of whatever personal property might be therein, including food. The close family of the deceased were "so grief-stricken that they wouldn't notice who takes what," and "a husband would never keep anything of his wife's." It was said, too, that "women were braver than men in disposing of their property before death, and often gave gifts of personal property to those they wished to have them." 428 768 [431]

In objects derived from the white man, the value put upon them was mainly utilitarian. For example, in matching wagers on one occasion a man put up a gold watch. There was no one on the other side who had a watch to offer, but a spy-glass was considered the equivalent. It was explained that the value of the watch in dollars--whether it had a fine gold case or not--would not be taken into consideration. The question in matching was to find things of equal value to the Indian in his way of life. To illustrate this The Boy told of a gift to his father, Lame Bull, from a white trader on the Saskatchewan, of a hobble which locked. "Perhaps this didn't have a high value in dollars, but it was considered extremely valuable by Lame Bull because it saved him many a race horse. Even though the enemy might sneak a horse out of camp, being unable to unfasten the hobble, he would have to abandon the valuable horse before getting very far away." 177 435

On the other hand, while utility was certainly an important consideration in the Gros Ventres' evaluation of goods produced by themselves, various other elements were taken into account. A horse procured from the enemy was perhaps the most valuable of all things to the Gros Ventres; aside from other considerations, a man would have risked his life to obtain it and that in itself lent 435 554 231

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

778 426 'Wife, I transfer this power to you. You go and doctor this time. I don't feel like doctoring today.' But before this she would have always accompanied him in his curing practice and knew exactly what to do and sing." Such a "transfer" was purely an *ad hoc* delegation, not a surrender of his power.

Power could be completely lost by the owner either during his lifetime or at death. During the owner's lifetime it could be lost by persistent disuse, by complete and final transfer through sale or gift, by "using it up," and as a result of breach of the rules. Where, for instance, a man had power to cure only a limited number of people, say four, with the conclusion of his fourth cure, the power was "used up" and so ceased. A certain Gros Ventre who had power to cause rain and storms made much use of it in a battle with the Crow but finally used it up and was killed by them.

If a person with power had not transferred it, on his deathbed the power embodied in or associated with some material object or living thing within him would come out of him, usually out of his mouth, and so his power would die with him. Even though the root or medicine he had used but had not transferred was known to others, they would not be allowed after his death to use it in curing. Thus lots of good medicines were not used, even though they were known to be efficacious.

Use of Powers

778 We now come to rites and procedures followed in the exercise of powers for war, gambling, love and various miscellaneous purposes, including legerdemain. A consideration of the use of the very important doctoring power is reserved for separate treatment in a subsequent chapter.

The great majority of those who went out in quest of power sought power to be great warriors and to become wealthy. The two aims were ordinarily closely related. A major goal of most war parties was the acquisition of horses,—the chief wealth of the Gros Ventres in the old days. Both success in war and possession of wealth brought prestige, and such prestige in the individualistic competitive culture of the Gros Ventre was eagerly sought after.

[721 556]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

War power usually included both a positive aspect, outstanding success in killing, wounding and capturing enemies and in taking booty, especially horses, and a negative one, luck in escaping injury. Little Man's brother had power to make his horse run so fast in war that no other horse could overtake it. 778 721

Those who sought wealth power asked mostly to have many horses, not to be poor, and "to get things easy without much effort." 778

"My grandmother's brother," Coming Daylight related, "the first Crow Bull went to McCann Butte in the Bear Paws to sleep. The people were camped at the bottom near the lake, and from an opening in the mountains on the other side of the lake they saw a lot of white horses come to the lake. Crow Bull was told in his dream: 'These are all your horses.' It is claimed that everybody else saw them too. After that Crow Bull always had white horses. People gave him white horses and he brought white horses home from war." 556 787

Cora Chandler had heard a similar story about Bear Nose who slept at the same spot. He saw (in a dream, probably) a lot of prairie dogs and was told: "These are your horses." Cora commented: "I knew the day when Bear Nose had only buckskin horses,"—of the color of prairie dogs.

On both the preceding cases, the two men who got power only to own all these horses, although, Cora thought, Bear Nose also had lots of other powers.

As regards war-power ritual we gathered only a few details, mostly from Al Chandler regarding his adoptive father, Little Man, and from Garter Snake regarding her father, Bull Lodge. 778 721

Little Man got from his brother who was killed in battle the latter's war medicine. The brother's power objects were: the dried skin of a sparrow hawk [Flaco Sparverius] with the head, claws and feathers; a shirt, tailored like an ordinary shirt, but kept painted yellow all the time and with "little holes all over it even on the sleeves and with hawk feathers on the shoulders and some on the back." The yellow paint and holes presumably symbolized the predominant rufous and buff coloring and spotted belly and sides of this fast flier. When the brother went to war, he would put this dried hawk skin on his back, and take a "little fuzzy feather" from the wing and tie it on his horse's tail, and the power

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

you are not feeling well and someone brings you medicine, say, medicine to clear you out after childbirth, and you have nothing else to give the person, just give a dish of food.'" Coming Daylight, who was not a professional doctor, was called about 1928 to attend a childbirth and, when ready to leave after looking after the mother in every way, was given a big sack of flour, a small sack of sugar, and five dollars in cash. Mary Ereaux, in speaking of the two roots given to Coming Daylight by the latter's grandmother to hasten childbirth and to bring the mother's milk quickly, remarked: "They say that if it [either of these roots] is given to an outsider [not a close relative of Coming Daylight], the recipient must pay, else it wouldn't be any good." "Last winter [1939-40]," Mary Ereaux said on another occasion, "I had a cold. An old lady picked some roots for me and I gave her potatoes and eggs in place of this medicine. They believe such medicine does not work if you don't pay for it, no matter how easy it is to gather the particular medicine."

A payment or fee was always expected by the professional doctor for his or her services, unless again the patient was a close relative. The doctor had commonly "paid" well in hardship or goods to acquire his power; he expected to be paid well in turn. And even though he had acquired ownership of it, not the hard way by quest or purchase, but by spontaneous offer from some being or by free gift from some relative, he still "paid" in shortened life and in restrictions on freedom. Doctors did not make their whole living from their practice but the fees received by them, especially by "great" doctors, were substantial additions to income and wealth. This economic goal loomed large in the consciousness of the people and of the professional doctor. When, for instance, Bad Bad Bull's sister refused his offer to her of power to cure stomach sickness, people said to her: "You should have accepted this power and so have gotten a lot of things for curing this disease." Doctoring was an avenue to wealth and to the ease and prestige that came with wealth, but in general was not practiced by the young. It was, however, a form of "old age insurance."

Sometimes professional doctors named their fee before accepting a case. "Give me this or that, and I'll doctor you." At other times

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
/ NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

to himself: 'He gave to me, so I'll give to him.' But no one was in duty bound to give the equivalent in return." 574 431

Within the network of kinship obligations, exchange was more often indirect than reciprocal. A man could expect help from his father and from his mother's brother without being under obligation to return goods in like amount—he was supposed to repay them by conducting himself in such a way that they could be proud of him. This meant that the man in his turn would be especially generous toward his sister and her children, that he would adequately fulfill his duties toward his wife's people and provide goods in sufficient amount that his wife could fulfill her own obligations especially those toward her own brother's wife and children. 602 431

When others saw fit to honor an individual, say for bravery in warfare, that person was supposed to give away goods in large amounts to show that he appreciated the honor; and his relatives would join with him in giving, thereby increasing his, as well as their own, prestige. Likewise in paying for services, such as those of a medicine man, relatives would "chip in" to the best of their ability, the one assuming the largest part of the burden receiving the greatest boost in public esteem. A person who impoverished himself by giving generously at such times would be sure that, with his reputation thus established, he would soon be the recipient of gifts dispensed by others in like liberality. Meantime, however, he could not afford to sit back awaiting the presents from others. He would soon lose his coveted reputation and be referred to as lazy, an epithet strong enough to bring tears to the eyes of a man who entertained any ambitions whatsoever. 554 431 [602] [461]

If a person were in need, it was possible for him to request what was necessary, preferably from some relative who was well-to-do, and usually his request would be met. But a continual borrower lost status and a limit was thus put upon indiscriminate "begging." One woman stated: "If your sister asked you for something you would not refuse her, but it was to your brother's wife you would give things voluntarily. A woman had great pride in keeping her brother's wife well-dressed, and if you had an extra supply of dried berries she is the one you would think of first." 426 558 [607]

Thus we have the basis for the generalizations the Gros Ventres 431

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

684 ing indemnity from his wife's lover and allowing her unharmed to go to him. This solution was often resorted to and in fact was the one that was urged upon both parties concerned. It was customary for the paramour to offer compensation, although an occasional individual tried to dispose of an unwanted wife with profit to himself by taking the initiative in demanding indemnity. If there were no real evidence of wrong-doing, or if the man in question wished to brave the consequences, he might refuse. One instance was given by Singer concerning a man who, returning home one night, saw a young man crouched beside the lodge. "Although he took after the young man when he ran away, he could not catch him. The next day he told one of his wives—the sister of the one whom he pretended to suspect—to take her younger sister to the young man and demand in return a gun and a horse. The elder sister took up for the younger one and refused. So the husband told his oldest wife, unrelated to the other two, to carry out his orders. This one did as she was told. When confronted by the demand, however, the young man said: 'There is no truth in it. The old man did see something that made it look bad for me, but it wasn't what he thought.' The husband did not care to force the issue, since real evidence was lacking, and that was an end to the matter." Another example shows that even when the husband had evidence of his wife's infidelity he could not always collect indemnity. The husband in question sent his wife to her lover with a long list of things which he requested in return. The paramour, who did not want the woman as his wife, refused to pay the indemnity. "Perhaps another man would have killed his wife's lover when he refused; but this one took the easier [682] way by cutting off his wife's hair and turning her loose." In case the husband killed the paramour, it was interpreted as murder and he was subject to retaliation.

[554] A man who kept as wife a woman known to be unfaithful to him lost status. He would be considered weak and was subject to 684 humiliating taunts by his enemy-friends. Nevertheless some men 558 braved adverse public opinion out of deep affection for their erring wives. While not all went so far as Sits Like A Woman, his case is an interesting one. It was related by The Boy as follows:

"The famous chief Sits Like A Woman was at the height of

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

his popularity and power when he caught *in flagrante delicto* the youngest of his four current wives. He failed to act immediately, so the father of the young man with whom she had been discovered began to think of a way to save his son [fearing that Sits Like A Woman planned to injure him]. He decided to approach one of the ceremonial grandfathers of the chief and ask him to intercede. The ceremonial grandfather accepted the mission. He told Sits Like A Woman that the young man's father had such a high regard for him that he would not like to see his household disturbed any further and that, if he would consider this request, he should name the price. The chief listened very attentively and finally replied: 'Grandfather, I will do as you say. I have been thinking what I should do about this, and I have not punished my unfaithful wife nor even scolded her. Since it is you who came here to make this request of me, I will solve the situation in this way. Go back and tell the old man who sent you that I want his son's racehorse and eight other well-broken horses, and I want that old man to come over here and escort his new daughter-in-law back to his home. She is just as she always was. I have not disfigured her nor punished her, so he can make use of her in his household. When he carries out this demand, I will forget the whole matter.' The ceremonial grandfather was highly pleased and praised the chief for removing the stigma from his home by relinquishing his unfaithful wife. The father of the young man immediately set about getting the required horses and he and his wife loaded some of them with clothing and other articles. Together they led the horses toward the lodge of the chief, ostentatiously singing in his praise as they went. The old man even danced as he approached the lodge. After handing over the goods, the couple, followed by their new daughter-in-law, went back to their own lodge, all three singing as they went.

"This should conclude the story of how a great chief received indemnity. There was a sequel, however, which illustrates that even the greatest and bravest warriors may succumb to the weakness of love and affection for their wives. On that very same day, about dusk, the chief's 'heart failed him.' He ordered the nine horses to be turned loose so that they could return to the camp from which they had come, although he kept the clothes and other

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

684
558

articles which had been given him. Then he told two of his wives to go to the camp and call from outside the lodge the name of that youngest wife, and, when she came out, to bring her back to him without offering any explanation. This placed Sits Like a Woman in a difficult position, giving his enemy-friends plenty of ammunition since they could justly taunt him that a woman had gotten the better of him. He was eventually able to live it down, however, so that although it was a temporary set-back to his colorful career, it did not mar it completely as might have been the case for a lesser man."

The above case was exceptional in that no others could be recalled wherein a man who had accepted indemnity actually took back his wife. Nevertheless other instances were given of men who disregarded public opinion to the extent that they ignored flagrant infidelity on the part of their wives. Usually however if the wife in question did not mend her ways, even the most tolerant husband lost patience. By giving her away quite casually and without compensation, he retrieved his reputation since he thus indicated that it was indifference toward her rather than the weakness of love which had caused him to overlook her infidelity.

One instance was given by Coming Daylight. "One of my uncle's wives was continually running away with different men and he allowed her to return each time without punishment. I was still a child and one day, for instance, I went with this woman for water rather far from camp. When we got to the creek, one of her lovers grabbed her and wouldn't let her go. Finally I got tired of waiting and called out that I was going home and would tell on them. Still she didn't come, so I left. My uncle asked me why I had come alone, so I told him what had happened. But when that woman showed up, my uncle said nothing to her. A long time went by. Then on one occasion when we were camped near the Bear Paws, there was a crowd of people, all more or less drunk, in my uncle's lodge. They called me in because I did not drink and, since my uncle was Keeper, they had to have someone to look after the Flat Pipe. So I was there and saw my uncle staggering around. His nose was running and he called a man by name and said: 'Come and clean my nose!' The man obliged him and my uncle said, pointing to that unfaithful wife of his:

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

'It is a good thing you cleaned my nose, because for that I am giving you that woman over there.'" 684 558

A husband who had harbored an unfaithful wife was likewise within his rights in "throwing her away." This was accomplished by his going to a public gathering and simply throwing down a stick to indicate that he was through with her. Whoever wished might pick up the stick and claim her as his wife without giving any compensation. 684 586

It was said, too, that if a man was "big enough" to allow his wife to go unpunished for adultery he usually would not refuse to eventually let her go to some lesser man who demeaned himself by asking for her. Thick related details of several transactions of this kind which occurred when he was a young boy. One of these was as follows:

"There was a man who had several wives, perhaps four. One day another man came to his lodge. He invited him in and said: 'This is the first time you ever came into my lodge, my friend. You must have a reason to come now, after all this time.' Then he said to his wife: 'Woman, get up and cook for my friend.' So the visitor spoke up: 'Well, my friend, the purpose of my coming here is to ask you for that Arapaho woman. I am not married now, I haven't a wife at present and I need a wife.' The host replied: 'All right, my friend, she is yours. After you eat, you could take her home.' When he had finished eating, the visitor said: 'Well, my friend, I have to go a little further. I want that boy of hers too.' The host answered: 'I hate to let my children go, but since he is so small you could take him, but don't ask for any of the others.' So the visitor, happy that he had gotten this woman without much talk and a boy as well, said: 'Well, my friend, since you are so good to me and give me your boy, I will give you a horse, my last horse.' It turned out that he was as good to this boy, whom he had attained in this way, as he would have been to his own son." It should be noted that the horse was given voluntarily and because of the child rather than in compensation for the wife.

It was the opinion of those women who had lived under this system, wherein the authority of the husband was so great, that all in all it worked well. They admitted that an occasional woman 595 562

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

525 gambling, even for the small stakes, mostly arrows, which children could put up. Further, advice against gambling was commonly given by tribal leaders as well as by relatives and friends, presumably with more particular reference to gambling for high stakes.

[558] Excessive or inveterate high-stake gamblers easily lost the respect of the people and were looked down upon. Such were not likely to be chosen as "chiefs," and could not be chosen as keepers of the sacred pipes. The possession of gambling power from prairie chickens or ghosts netted the possessor a certain prestige, but not nearly the prestige that came from achievements in war or medicine, or even from skill in hunting. Keg, whose story we have given above, had little real prestige, we were told. Red Whip had more, it seems, but this or much of it may well have been the result of his outstanding war record.

The foregoing ambivalent attitude can, we believe, be accounted for, in large part at least, by the data we have, incomplete though these data are. It is pretty clear from the prevalent bettor-wager pattern that the Gros Ventre recognized two more or less conflicting aspects of their gambling: a recreative one and a predatory one. Certain kinds of gambling were indulged in predominantly for friendly recreation, to have a good time together. The minor wagering therein merely added a little spice and zest to play, while the losers suffered no appreciable loss or hurt. Other kinds, the common games for large stakes and the occasional ones for career prestige, were indulged in predominantly for gain and this at the expense of the losers, for acquisition in which the losers suffered losses that were grievously felt and that seriously hurt. As the bettor-wager pattern shows, gambling of the first kinds was recognized as consistent with the accepted canons of in-group altruism and benevolence; that of the second, as inconsistent therewith.

Actually gambling contributed both to social concord and solidarity and to social discord and disunion. It must have contributed in some measure to social concord and solidarity inasmuch as it provided a large measure of pleasurable recreation and excitement shared in common and a relatively innocuous outlet for aggression and dominance. The Gros Ventre were consciously concerned with fomenting solidarity within their ranks: for one thing they were a fighting people beset with powerful enemies. But whether they were aware of the role their gambling played in positively and constructively promoting solidarity is not possible to say on the evidence we have and at this distance of time.

As regards, however, discord resulting from gambling, this was common and they were keenly aware of it. The code demanded that losers should take their losses, together with the associated twitting and strutting by the winners, in good

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

part and as good sports, but actual behavior not infrequently fell short of the code's demands. Bad feeling was at times engendered and could and did end in blows and violence, as was noted earlier in our account of the wheel game. Quarrels among gambling boys must have been fairly common. One of our informants, Thick, recounted three different bow and arrow contests for arrows, in which contests he had engaged as a boy with other boys. All three ended in violence started by the losers. In one of the three set-tos, Thick, the winner, was shot in the hand with an arrow by the other boy who lost his temper, and Thick still, at the age of 75, carries the scar. That the Gros Ventre were perfectly aware, as of course they must have been, of the discord hazard in gambling, is clear from such counsel as, for example, Thick's mother used to give him when he was a boy: "If you join in those gambling games somebody is going to get mad on account of getting beaten and he may pound you up." Further, that gambling often led to bad feeling was given to us by The Boy as the reason why the Gros Ventre disapproved of gambling between relatives.

So far as we could make out, Gros Ventre attitudes on gambling were determined in only minor measure by economic considerations. In the days before the disappearance of the buffalo in 1883-84, the Gros Ventre lived under a normal economy of abundance. Moreover, generosity in parting with their possessions, through gift and sharing, was focal in code and practice. Criers around the camp would counsel the people in words such as: "Men and women, don't love your property. You will always acquire other property. Only life never comes back, but property you can have back any time." In the long run for most individuals winnings would balance losses, just as gifts tended to balance gifts—a system of exchange which incidentally must have served to prevent unhealthy accumulation of wealth in the hands of any individual or small group. The cases of really ruinous loss of property through gambling, of reduction to "pauperism," appear to have been rare, and even in these cases the losers would ordinarily be looked after temporarily and tided over by their kin or friends. At any rate we got no record of individuals or their dependents suffering grave privation of the necessities of life as a result of gambling losses.

How far such facts entered into the Gros Ventre attitude toward gambling cannot be determined confidently from such evidence as we have. In our hours of free discussion with informants, there was almost no intimation of economic considerations leading to disapproval. One of the themes in the tongue-lashing Lame Bull got from his father after the disastrous contest with White Owl may have been the economic, but this was not expressly stated by The Boy. Mrs Warrior kept away from gambling because, she said: "I liked what I had and

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

A plant called tyäñänou is used as perfume, as a wash for the hair, and as a minor medicine. Bunches of the plant were used as perfume. A tea boiled of it is thought to make the hair grow while perfuming it. Such a tea is also poured into the nostrils as a remedy for headache (specimen Museum No. 50–1920). 278 757 [302]

Niibyouäxtjin is used as perfume. The stems and leaves are chewed and applied to the body (specimen Museum No. 50–1853). [302]

Tsaa"sûbin is used as perfume. It is chewed, and rubbed on the hair (specimen Museum No. 50–1792).

One ingredient of incense is the callosity from the leg of a horse above the knee. This is cut up fine, and burned with sweet-grass. It is also worn on the body on a string.

Pine-nuts or other conifer-seeds are used for pemmican (specimen Museum No. 50–1913). [562] 824

For embroidery, dark fibrous water-plants, at"hin (the Arapaho atahina"), are used (specimen Museum No. 50–1891). [386]

Quills are dyed yellow with a solution from a conifer-lichen, no doubt the widely used *Evernia vulpina*, called otsähaa" (specimen Museum No. 50–1873).

TRIBAL CEREMONIAL ORGANIZATION.

The Gros Ventre ceremonial organization is akin to that of the Arapaho with such differences as would be expected from the differences in language and the period of separation of the two tribes. The fundamental feature of this organization, the grouping of men by ages and the observance of a series of a half-dozen ceremonies in order according to age, is common to the two tribes. The ceremonies vary somewhat, and in a few cases their names or order have been changed; but among both tribes there are about six regular consecutive men's ceremonies, one or two that are preliminary or somewhat outside of this series, a single ceremony for women corresponding to those for men, and the sun-dance, which is included by the Indians in the enumeration of their grouped ceremonies, but differs from the others in not being connected with age, or with any society-like association of individuals. 561 796

Among the Gros Ventre the dancing-lodge for these ceremonies — which is erected in the centre of the camp-circle, and, like this, opens to the east — is constructed of two large tents. The lodge is open above, and appears to be oval or round in shape. The dancers, before beginning the ceremony, secure old men, who are called their "grandfathers," and are their instruct- 346 796

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

each of which has a ceremony of its own rivalling that of the other (respectively the war-dance and the star-dance), compete in a horse-race, with the agreement that the beaten party is to put up the crazy-lodge. It does not seem that this is a common procedure. 796 616

The Gros Ventre abandoned their dances much earlier than the Arapaho, and almost nothing of the organization remains now, except a memory. It is somewhat difficult to procure precise details of the procedure, especially in the older dances. In great part, the regalia used have also perished, and it has been possible to secure only a very few pieces. These show, as do the descriptions given by the Indians, that the objects and decorations used are quite similar to those of the Arapaho. The distinction of several degrees purely of honor within each ceremony, which is so characteristic of the Arapaho age-dances, is also found in the Gros Ventre, though it seems that the distinctions made and the number of degrees are not quite so elaborate. This is evidenced, not only by the fact that few degrees are described by the Gros Ventre, a fact which might be due to their longer disuse of the ceremonies, but also by circumstances such as the one that certain regalia, which in the Arapaho dog-dance are worn only by the members of the second and third highest degrees, are among the Gros Ventre the common regalia of all participants; only the highest degree of the Arapaho being retained by the Gros Ventre as distinct. 796 178 [171]

The Gros Ventre call their entire ceremonial organizations benaa"wu, a dialectic form of the Arapaho bayaa"wu, and, like it, probably meaning "all the lodges." The members of the age-societies are called beniimen, commonly translated at the present day as "soldiers," etymologically probably "all-men," or "all-(?)-men." 796 561

The ceremonies of the Gros Ventre benaa"wu, with the age-dances given in order from youth to old age, are the following:—

Açeihā"w"	Sacrifice-lodge,[1] sun-dance
	Star-dance, partial preliminary
Nōuhā"w"	Fly-lodge, first dance
Haha"tyā"w"	Crazy-lodge, second dance
Nōuhā"w"	Kit-fox lodge, third dance
Hotibyā"w"	Dog-lodge, fourth dance
Nanā"nahā"w"	Tomahawk-lodge, fifth dance
Bītahā"wu"	Drum (?) lodge, sixth (?) dance
Benuxteā"w"	Buffalo(?) dance, women's dance.

The members of these successive age-ceremonies are called respectively

[1] Once translated "looked-at-lodge."

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796
561

hotohuūu, nōubän, hahā^{n}tyänen, nōuhunen, hotibyī, nanā^{n}nähä^{n}ts or perhaps hiityaäa^{n}süts, biitaxäänen; or "stars," "flies," "crazy-men," "kit-fox men," "dogs," "soldiers" or "having-war-spikes," and "drum (?) men."

171
796

Aside from changes in the order of the ceremonies, of which there are several, the chief known differences between this progressive dance-series of the Gros Ventre and that of the Arapaho are two. One of these differences is, that the first dance of the Gros Ventre is the fly-dance, which the Arapaho lack altogether. The second difference is, that the fifth dance of the Gros Ventre, the nana^{n}naha^{n}w^{u}, seems to combine the characteristics of the corresponding Arapaho dance (the hinanaha^{n}wu or fifth) and of the first dance (the Arapaho hiiteeäoxa^{n}wu). In its name, its place in the series, and the age of its dancers, the Gros Ventre fifth ceremony agrees with the similarly named Arapaho fifth ceremony; but in the use of war-club-like implements carried by the dancers, and in the symbolic connection of the dance with the buffalo, there is an agreement with the Arapaho first dance. This first dance of the Arapaho is not represented by a separate ceremony among the Gros Ventre. A third possible difference between the two systems is, that no information was obtained regarding any Gros Ventre lodge corresponding to the oldest men's sweat-house among the Arapaho; but it is not unlikely that something similar formerly existed.

The several changes in order of the dances between the two tribes imply something more than mere change of position in the series. For instance, the displacing of the kit-fox lodge and of the biitaha^{n}wu, both of which are early ceremonies in the Arapaho and late ones among the Gros Ventre, involves a change of the age of the participants, and therefore necessarily, in some degree, of the character of the ceremony itself, since, the greater the age of the participants in the ceremony, the more sacred it is.

The following comparison shows the respective places of each ceremony in the Arapaho and Gros Ventre ceremonial series.

Ceremony.	Arapaho.	Gros Ventre.
Sun-dance	Men of any age	Men of any age
Kit-fox lodge	First preliminary	Third dance
Star-dance	Second preliminary	Outside of regular series
Fly-lodge	Lacking	First dance
Hiiteeäoxa^{n}wu	First dance	Lacking (see Hinanaha^{n}wu)
Biitaha^{n}w^{u}	Second dance	Probably sixth dance
Crazy-lodge	Third dance	Second dance
Dog-lodge	Fourth dance	Fourth dance
Hinanaha^{n}wu	Fifth dance	Fifth dance
Seven old men	Sixth ceremony	Lacking?
Bänuxta^{n}wu	Women's dance	Women's dance

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The place of the biitaha^{n}wu is not certain, as no informants were found who would positively express themselves on this matter. It is universally regarded as having been the most sacred and most dangerous of all the ceremonies, these qualities being thought to have led to its abandonment before any of the other dances. It can probably be concluded from this that it was last in the series, and performed by the oldest men. 171 796

As among the Arapaho, but somewhat more clearly, each dance refers symbolically to a certain animal. This symbolism is as follows. 171 796

The fly-dance takes its name from flies or mosquitoes, and was given or instituted by a mosquito. During part of the ceremony the dancers imitate the actions of mosquitoes. 825

The crazy-dance has comparatively little reference to any animal. The participants, however, wear anklets of badger-skin, and an entire badger-skin is used in ceremonies at the time of starting the dancing.

The kit-fox lodge was given by the kit-foxes, and a kit-fox skin is used somewhat analogously to the badger-skin in the crazy-dance.

In the dog-dance the dancers of highest degree represent shaggy dogs. It is also said that the participants in the ceremony largely eat dogs during its course. Among the Arapaho a dog is said to have instituted this lodge, and the Gros Ventre have a similar myth. [262]

In the nana^{n}naha^{n}w^{n} the dancers sing for the buffalo, and it is said that they always succeed in causing them to appear near the camp. Among the Arapaho the dancers represent both buffalo and prairie-chickens. The symbolic reference to prairie-chickens among the Gros Ventre is found in their sun-dance; their equivalent of the Arapaho rabbit-tent in this ceremony being called "prairie-chicken tent," and the singers in it "prairie-chickens" and "prairie-hens."

The biitaha^{n}w^{n}, as among the Arapaho, has connection with thunder. The dancers are painted over the body with dots which represent hail. If one of them violates the regulations of the dance, it is thought that it will begin to rain and that the offender may be struck by lightning. The Gros Ventre have an additional symbolic connection of their sun-dance with thunder, which is not strictly paralleled among the Arapaho. [302] [821]

The women in their dance among both tribes represent buffalo, and the actions gone through in this ceremony are in both tribes probably more directly imitative of the animals symbolized than in any of the men's ceremonies.

What has been said about the Arapaho in regard to the relation of the entire ceremonial organization to the lives of the men of the tribe, and in regard to the relative importance of the religious, military, and social functions of the age-companies constituting the organization, appears to apply 171 796 561

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

171 796 561 equally to the Gros Ventre. The Gros Ventre, however, used a method of organization as regards the performance of the age-ceremonies of which nothing was heard among the Arapaho. The men of the tribe of age to make any one ceremony were not all in one society or company, but in several; the total number of the companies being three or four times as great as the number of ceremonies. Each of these companies had a name, which it retained throughout its existence, irrespective of the dance it had last performed; and each held its ceremonies without participating in those of any other company. It seems that, when one of these companies had made all the dances, the surviving old men grouped together the available young men in the tribe, and formed them into a new company of the same name. With this organization it was possible for each ceremony to be performed in the tribe much more frequently than if all those of an age and previous ceremonial experience entitling them to make a certain dance had performed this together, as appears to have been the case among the Arapaho; or the ceremony could be given at short intervals without involving the repetition of it for a considerable number of times by the same body of men. The Gros Ventre companies could and did repeat the ceremonies, especially the earlier ones, but do not seem to have done so more than once or twice.

561 796 The names of these companies resembled nicknames, and for the most part had a character not very different from the clan names in use among the Gros Ventre and other Plains tribes, in which a certain humorous or derisive element prevails. The following are the companies whose names were obtained:

Green-grass, wanoçetyi
Young-sheep, wnotei
Small-horses, tsuâaçibyi
Rosebushes, yuâniisô
Calves (of leg), itsiitsûn
Sleeping-on-the-breast-of-a-woman, bitenamaakataâaabei
Grass-in-their-pockets, wasôôn thnâyhuts
Big-bellies, tjiitâât
White-horns, hanâtsôenitâts
White-backs, nanâtsetâts
Men-across-the-river, haasôitjânen
Different-from-benilnen, kaasôbenilnen
Ugly-dogs, wasaatibyi
Seed-necklaces, hity'lisûtyâ
Having-back-fat, hiinaniihits
White-noses, nanaatsôôbâats
Eat-enough-to-last-over-night, âteinotâats
Holding-dogs'-tails, hotibyi naninaanâts
White-blankets, nanaatsôubânts
Fur-wrapped-wands, hiibiçôuts
Bad-horns, wanaasônitâts
(? Stars, hotohuûu)
(? Feathered-sword-wands, iikokôuuts)
(? Having-spikes, hiitjaâaasûts)

The list is probably not complete, as, with the disuse of the ceremonies, the formation of these companies has been discontinued for some time.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

It seems impossible to tell at present whether these and the additional ones that there may have been, all existed contemporaneously, or whether some grew up as others died out. The last few named are doubtful as true companies. The Indians sometimes include the dances themselves among these companies, calling their members "flies," "dogs," "kit-fox men," and so on. This is, of course, a cross-division, as each of the numerous companies in turn makes, for instance, the fly-dance. During and after the ceremony its members are called "flies," as well as by the name of their company. As there is a star-dance, it is therefore possible that there was no true star company. The sword-wands and war-spikes are also somewhat doubtful. These names refer to objects used as regalia in the Arapaho first dance and in part in the Gros Ventre fifth dance. The participants in the Gros Ventre fifth dance, it seems, were also called by the latter name. It is therefore probable that these two names refer to dances and not to real companies. 561 796

The companies held together, to a certain extent, outside of their dances. They were likely to act together in war, and there was a spirit of rivalry between them. In the sun-dance, and possibly on other ceremonial occasions, the younger men of the tribe took part in certain actions by companies.

The following specific statements of the ceremonial experiences of a few of the old men of the tribe alive in 1901 will make the general scheme of the organization more concrete.

A man known as Bill Jones, reputed to be the oldest man in the tribe, belonged to the "big-belly" company. Of this, only one other member survived at that date. He himself had been keeper of one of the sacred pipes; and he and his "big-belly" companion, together with the five survivors of the next oldest company, were spoken of as the seven oldest men of the tribe. As all the Gros Ventre ceremonies have been discontinued, it is not possible to deduce from this statement with certainty that these seven men would in former times have constituted a definite body with distinct ceremonial powers and observances, like the Arapaho water-sprinkling old men. This man had made the fly-dance, the crazy-dance twice, the kit-fox dance twice, the dog-dance, and the nana"naha"w". He had not made the biitaha"w". Younger men than himself have seen this; but it appears to have been abandoned some time before he became of age to take part in it. He had made the star-dance before the fly-dance. He had also taken the part of the man who shoots a buffalo (in the women's dance?). 159 561 796

Bull-Robe, now dead, a renowned warrior, belonged to the next age-company, "those-who-eat-to-last-all-night." He had made the fly-dance, the crazy-dance, the kit-fox dance, and the dog-dance. The nana"naha"w" seems to have been discontinued before he reached it. In the first three of his dances he was one of the leaders, or recipients of special degrees.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

159 561 796

Subsequently he was a "grandfather" in the crazy-dance, but in none of the other ceremonies. He never participated in the sun-dance, having had no occasion to do so, he said. Nevertheless he once was the man selected during the sun-dance to kill a buffalo with one arrow, the buffalo's skin being cut up into thongs with which the rafters of the lodge are fastened. He succeeded in killing the buffalo with one arrow.

Another man, now middle-aged, belonged to the "holding-to-a-dog's-tail" company. He made successively the fly-dance, the star-dance, and then the crazy-dance.

Star and War Dances.

171 561 796 575 [177]

At present the organization into comparatively small companies is no longer maintained. In its place there is a division of the young men of the tribe into two groups, one of which practises, or did until recently, the star-dance; the other, the grass or war dance. The latter is universally stated to be a recent importation from the Sioux, apparently within the present generation. The star-dance, however, is an old ceremony, it is claimed; and this assertion is borne out by the occurrence among the Arapaho of the analogous star-dance. Among the Arapaho the star-dance, like the kit-fox dance, is a preliminary which appears to be gone through by all the men of the tribe, but has neither the standing, the organization, nor the definite observances and regalia of the subsequent ceremonies. Among the Gros Ventre the star-dance was formerly also outside the regular series of dances. It is generally spoken of as having been a warrior dance, made at any time and on any suitable occasion, and without the rigorously prescribed course of other dances. Some men seem to have made it before the fly-dance, and others afterward. Even in former times, however, before the war-dance had come among the Gros Ventre, the star-dance included only part of the young men of the tribe. The old men surviving from certain companies have never taken part in the star-dance, and explain this by the fact that there was rivalry between their company and the star-dancers. It might thus, perhaps, seem that a star company had a ceremony of its own, the star-dance, from which the members of rival companies naturally held aloof; but it is very improbable that only one age-company parallel to the others, and none of these others, should have had a distinctive ceremony. It is also improbable that this company, being one of many, should have been so large as to include about half of the men of the tribe, for it appears that some such large proportion took part in the star-dance. This makes it almost impossible to believe that there existed a star company exactly

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

analogous to the "green-grass" and "young-sheep" and other companies, but having an additional ceremony confined to itself. On the other hand, if the "stars" were not one of the age-companies, it is hard to see with what groups of men they competed. It is therefore not improbable that there formerly existed among the Gros Ventre a star-society, which had a ceremony of its own, and which, while based partly on age in being constituted of young men, was outside and independent of the scheme of the bennaⁿwu, with which it had no, or only indirect, relation, and with whose working out it must in some measure have conflicted. Such a society, which would be a true society in being based on a membership determined by choice, purchase, initiation, or supernatural experience, — in other words, by selection, would be of a type of organization quite distinct from the ordinary Gros Ventre or Arapaho age-company performing in the course of its existence an entire series of tribal ceremonies, but would have abundant parallels in other ceremonial societies on the Plains and elsewhere. Its presence would therefore be readily explainable as an incipient intrusion due to the cultural influence of some other tribe, the chief objection to such an explanation being the occurrence of the star-dance also among the Arapaho, but without a known association with a special society. This suggested character of the Gros Ventre star-society and star-dance fits the facts, but is after all only hypothetical; and altogether the relation of the ceremony to the remainder of the Gros Ventre ceremonial organizations is not yet clear.

The star-dance as formerly held is said to have lasted four days and nights. There might be further subsequent dancing. At the beginning of the ceremony, the dancers went to four places at the camp-circle facing or representing the four cardinal directions, and at each place danced before the tent of a prominent man. The owner of the tent gave away property and filled a pipe for the dancers, after smoking which they proceeded to the next one. After having danced in the four places, they danced in the middle of the camp-circle. This might be in the open air, or in a lodge made of two large tents combined. The singers were four old men, who accompanied themselves on small hand drums. The dancers' wives sat behind these four old men and sang with them. The dancer's relatives at times went to them and danced with them, taking their rattles and temporarily using them. The dancers' bodies seem to have been variously decorated; but they had no distinctive regalia except rattles. These were alike in general character, being loop-shaped, and decorated with gaudy paint and attachments, but there seems to have been no attempt at making them uniform. The dancing-lodge was elliptical, with the door towards the east and a fire near the western end. The singers were at this end, and the dancers near them, in two lines, along the sides of the lodge, facing each other. In dancing

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Recently these two bodies of young men performing respectively the star-dance and the war-dance have supplanted entirely the older, more numerous age-companies. In late years they have taken the place of the age-companies in the ceremonies connected with the erection of the sun-dance lodge. There was then considerable rivalry between them, and it is said that a member of either company who should take part with the other would be abused by his companions, and perhaps have his clothes torn. Recently also the two groups have had certain social functions, which among most Plains tribes are in the hands of tribal bodies or societies. They had charge of the moving of the camp-circle and of locating it. If a man disapproved of their selection, or pitched his tent elsewhere than they directed, they overturned it, and perhaps destroyed his property or killed his horses. If buffalo were seen and others than themselves went ahead and killed them, these two companies cut both the meat and the skin of such game into small pieces. 178 561 796 [625]

The Fly-Dance.

The fly-dance (nouba^{n}w^{n}), the first of the dances, seems to have been regarded in some ways as preliminary to the series, rather than part of it, somewhat like the Arapaho kit-fox and star dances. The dancers were called noubân ("flies"). They were young men, sometimes described as boys. Apparently they were of an age where many or all of them were still unmarried, for no mention of their wives participating in the ceremony is made. The duration of the dance is not quite sure. It is said, like all the other ceremonies, to have continued four days; but another informant gave one day as the length of the ceremony. It is not clear whether or not a lodge was erected for the ceremony. In any case, however, the dance was performed outside of the camp-circle. A prominent feature seems to have been the food cooked by the relatives of the young dancers, and brought to the dancing-place. In distinction from what occurred in the other dances, "grandfathers" were secured very easily for this ceremony, which goes to show the light regard in which it was held by the elder men. The old men of the tribe are said to have gone out to the dancing-place, and, on being selected by groups of dancers as "grandfathers," to have accepted at once. 796

The dancing went on during the day. The dancers were practically naked; and their entire body, as customary in Arapaho and Gros Ventre ceremonies, was painted over. A common style of painting, or perhaps the characteristic one of the dance, was red, with a white stripe on the face and another on the belly. The pledger of the dance (yenouhuxtj^{i}; Arapaho, yanahut^{i}) was painted yellow, with corresponding black stripes. After the [291 302]

173 very much increased. White Eagle governed the people very
643 wisely and he governed until he died."

It was The Boy's impression that following White Eagle, the
643 chief of the whole tribe was no longer formally selected and simply attained his position through gradual recognition of his merits.[9] Sits Like A Woman succeeded White Eagle and was tribal chief in the first decades of the 19th century. He was followed by his son of the same name who was a signer of the 1855 treaty, and was still recognized as tribal head when he died suddenly about 1870. Coming Daylight claimed that this Sits Like a Woman II was certainly the greatest chief of her time and that, when he died, people were forbidden to light their camp fires as a sign of mourning. During the subsequent period Lame Bull was outstanding among the leading men, but he witnessed the dissolution of the
[657] band system and the camp circle. The Fort Belknap Reservation had been set up in 1873, encompassing much more territory than at present, and the first houses were built in 1882.

619 In spite of the fact that a tribal chief was recognized, band autonomy was apparently preserved. The ceremonial organization
621 cut across band organization, however, and band autonomy was
796 relinquished at the times during which the Sacred Dances were held. The movements and activities of the tribe as a whole were then in the hands of the company to which the vower of a particular Dance belonged.[10]

The Companies

56 Kroeber notes that "men of the tribe of age to make any one ceremony were not all in one society or company but in several, the total number of companies being three or four times as great as the number of ceremonies. Each company had a name which it

[9] So far as it goes, this would seem to confirm O. Lewis' interpretation, pp. 42–43, that the earlier Hudson's Bay Company policy on the northern plains reinforced tribal chieftaincy, but that with the development of competition in the fur trade, authority was weakened.

[10] For a discussion of the Sacred Dances, see Kroeber, 1908, pp. 239–68. Other details are given in Cooper, Ms. 1949. The following discussion is concerned only with the composition of the ceremonial organization so far as it can be reconstructed.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

retained throughout its existence and held its ceremonies without participating in those of any other company." He gives the list of company names. He is aware that the Stars are not quite comparable to the other companies but is not clear as to the position of that organization.[11] 561

Our information from The Boy, whose father, Lame Bull, was the contemporary of Bill Jones, mentioned by Kroeber, and whose ceremonial experiences were the same as Bill Jones', throws some light on the subject. Furthermore we have useful material from Turn Toes, who was a member of another one of the companies. Incidental information was obtained from our other informants as well.

According to The Boy: "When a bunch of young men of somewhat similar age grew up, they were old enough to take the place of another group or company. There were a number of these companies. These young men began to have meetings and these meetings had names, although not organized as yet. Let us say 'Rosebushes' would be the name by which they were called. Another group of boys grew up and these would be called 'Hang-onto-a-dog's-tail-and-run-or-be-dragged-by-it.' Other groups would come along and be called by such names as 'Many-little-horses,' 'Potbellies,' 'Calves (of the leg),' and so on." Incidentally The Boy recognized 21 out of the 25 names listed by Kroeber as those of companies, although he gave the names above quoted quite independently of Kroeber's list.

The young men who so met and acquired names were 15–17 years of age, according to one informant, and 16–19 or 20, according to another. In any case, they decided as a body to join either of the two societies known as the Stars and the Wolf-men. We know from Kroeber's data, as well as from The Boy, that Bill Jones and Lame Bull were members of the group of young men who banded together under the name of "Bigbellies" or "Potbellies" and who subsequently joined the Stars. Lame Bull was born about 1825, so this company must have joined the Stars some time in the early 1840's. One of our informants, Charles Buckman, a contemporary of The Boy, remembers having heard that the Potbellies at one time numbered about a hundred. 561 575

[11] Kroeber, 1908, pp. 232–33.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

561 Turn Toes (b. 1860) was one with 30 or 40 other young men who, in a group known as Calves (of leg) joined the Wolf-men about 1877. Turn Toes was certain that "Having-the-breast-of-a-woman-as-pillow" and "Holding-onto-dog's-tail" were companies which had joined the Stars. According to Turn Toes' account, when his company, the Calves, joined the Wolf-men, four men from the company which had just preceded them in entry were asked by the present company to act as "elder brothers." These four considered themselves honored to instruct the new company before they would appear publicly at the next Wolf-men's dance. Lame Bull had been one of the four so selected from among the Potbellies to initiate the next incoming Star group, but we failed to obtain the name of that company.

It apparently was permissible, either before or after the company was so initiated into the society, that any one of its members could vow the least important and simplest of the Sacred Dances, namely, the Fly Dance. When a member of the company so vowed, all the members of that company, and they alone, went through the ceremony, after which they were eligible as "soldiers," [12] i.e., when one of their number subsequently vowed any of the other Sacred Dances in the regular series, the company not only participated but also was in complete charge for the duration of the ceremony and had the authority to enforce whatever "laws" might be enacted. Inasmuch as the Sacrifice Dance was outside the regular [625] series, if that Dance were vowed, the members of the vower's company could participate if they wished, but in any case those not actually dancing acted as police.

561 An hypothesis which reconciles Kroeber's and our own data on the companies and age societies is the following. All or most of 575 the young men of the whole tribe, between the ages of 16 and 19, formed a company which met informally for some time before it joined either the Stars or the Wolf-men, and, after having gone through the Fly Dance, acted as police force during the Sacred Dances vowed by any of their number. When not participating in a Sacred Dance, the members joined in the purely social activi-

[12] Kroeber, 1908, p. 229, "The members of the age-societies are called beniinen, commonly translated at the present day as 'soldiers,' etymologically probably 'all-men,' or 'all-(?)-men.'"

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

ties of the larger society which the company had joined. Meanwhile another group was meeting informally before it was admitted into one or other of the Societies. Since the Stars and Wolf-men were approximately even in number, there probably was a regular alternation. According to reasonable estimate, the Potbellies joined the Stars about 1840; the next group of young men would then have joined the Wolves, say in 1843 or 1844; the following company joining the Stars in about 1849–50. 561 575

If the Sacred Dances, except the Sacrifice Dance, were gone through in order, there would thus be several companies each year whose members were eligible to vow any one of the Dances, and our informants were all under the impression that one or more of the Dances was given each summer. It seems quite clear that the Law Enforcer Dance was vowed only by the older levels of the active warriors. After having gone through this rite, these men more or less retired as "old men," and, having "sat on the sage," acquired certain privileges and freedom denied to their fellow tribesmen who had not yet gone through this Dance. These "old men" acted as ceremonial grandfathers, i.e. sponsors and teachers, for others going through the various lodges, but were no longer active as Stars or Wolf-men. They became members of an undifferentiated group of elders, the ranks of their original company having no doubt been drastically thinned out by the time they would have arrived at this status. 796 561 [886] [888]

If the above interpretation be correct, there would be three age divisions: the "young men," those meeting in companies; the "middle-aged, mature men," whose companies had joined either the Stars or the Wolf-men, and, having gone through the Fly Dance, were eligible to vow the other Dances; the "old men" who had gone through the Law Enforcer's Dance and were no longer active in the Star and Wolf-men societies, except two of their number, one of whom served as announcer in each. 561

The young men, who together formed the company, being of approximately the same age, were tied together by bonds of friendship and there were apparently not a few pairs of "inseparable friends" in each company. One of our informants, Cora Chandler, indicated that the bonds holding together the members of a company were so intimate that marriage between their children was [572] 561 582

561 582 taboo. This was the case regarding the children of "inseparable friends," but whether or not it was so regarding the children of all members of the company, mutual hospitality was frequently extended among the members—"a man would most often invite the members of his age group." Further, it was not unusual for members of the same company to go hunting and on raiding and revenge parties together. If a young man were killed at war and [727 his body brought home, the members of his company were said to 764] have assembled and danced around his bier, sometimes sobbing and crying as they danced.

561 As members of either one or other of the two larger societies they joined with members of other companies, in the Stars and 575 Wolf-men respectively, to perform their proper social dance and to participate in activities such as gambling, horse-racing, "brag- [616] ging contests," and so on, wherein they could compete with members of the opposite moiety. An individual seemingly tended to choose his serious enemy-friends from among those of the rival organization and thus is explained the spirit of competition which Kroeber notes between the Stars and "other companies."[13]

The Societies

575 The Stars and Wolf-men societies were organized along identical lines and were distinguished from each other only in details of procedure.

Each society included approximately half the total number of able-bodied warriors in the tribe. They each had two renowned men as leaders—two Star leaders of relatively recent times having been Comes A-flying and Crazy Bull; two Wolf-men leaders, Skinner and Strikes On Top. The leaders remained mounted when the others of the society were marching on foot in preparation for their dance, and carried whips at the dance as insignia. These men were supposed to have been outstanding warriors who had while mounted actually counted coup against the enemy. Two members of the last-admitted company served as *atsa'an* (waiters, messengers) at the dances, and each society had an announcer, presumably chosen from among the "old men" who had gone through the Law Enforcer Dance.

[13] Kroeber, 1908, p. 234.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

be on the night immediately preceding the beginning of the Dance rite proper.

Usually others besides the principal vower would vow to join the dance and to pierce their breasts with skewers. These associate vowers would also choose each his own grandfather and, with the help of his own crier, have the same formal public announcement made of his vow as in the case of the principal vower.

As proximate preparation for the Dance, if the bands were scattered at the time, the principal vower would send out young men as runners to summon the bands to foregather for the dance. Attendance was obligatory for all.

The principal vower set up his lodge in the center of the camp circle, and here headquarters were established where conferences of the vower and his assistants were held and whence pro tem laws and regulations, decisions when and whether to move camp, and so forth, were issued.

The vower's chief assistants in these matters were his own age-group or company, a component sub-group of either the Wolves or the Stars. Whether all the Wolves or Stars respectively, and not merely the vower's own age-group, were divided into "talls" and "shorts" (see below), and served as soldiers or "police" during the dance, to enforce attendance, order in the buffalo hunt and so forth, is a point we could not clear up, but more probably only the members of his own age-group.

For either the vower's age-group, or perhaps, as just noted, all the Stars or Wolves respectively of which his age-group was a component sub-group, four head officers or "generals" or "lieutenants" were chosen, and also two subordinate officers or "servants" or attendants. The two tallest of the four head officers took the taller men of the age-group (or of the larger society, Stars or Wolves) as their soldiers, and one of the two subordinate officers; the two shortest, the shorter men, and the other subordinate officer. The two divisions, the "talls" and the "shorts," constituted the "soldiers" or "police" for the dance. Each division also had an outstanding old man as herald or crier.

[224] After the people had all been gathered together, the first task was that of gathering food supplies, buffalo meat and particularly

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

For the duration of a Crazy Dance, political as well as ritual authority was vested in the age-group giving the Dance, and the ordinary personnel of government ceased for the time being to function. The Crazy Dancers ran everything; their word was law; they decided what was and was not to be done, even regarding the hunt. 796* [561 621]

The vower himself was for the time being in supreme command. He selected, as his councilors, however, four outstanding men, of middle age, older than the actual participant dancers, but not too old, men of prestige who had won recognition through merit, who had made their mark and were known as "chiefs," "successful and with good homes, good men." These four, according to Turn Toes, were chosen from among the next older age-group of the society, Stars or Wolves, to which the participant dancers age-group belonged, and were "elder brothers" of the dancers. Turn Toes emphasized more the ritual functions of these four "elder brothers." While the dancers themselves were in authority during the dance, and paid the expenses thereof, they would be helpless without knowledge of the proper rites and observances. The four "elder brothers" who had previously gone through the Crazy Dance, would be instructors in procedure to the group of younger dancers and would give the decisions thereon. The Boy emphasized more the political functions of the four "elder brothers." The vower together with these four constituted a sort of council or governing body. The five consulted and advised together on arrangements preparatory to and during the Dance, the "balance of power" resting with the vower in case of a deadlock among the four "elder brothers."

After these five got together they selected as their crier an intelligent old man who was known for his command of language. [203] He sat in on their meetings, but without vote, so to speak. It was his duty to listen carefully and keep abreast of proceedings, and when decisions were made by the council of five he was told: "Go around the whole camp and announce that such-and-such shall be done." The five also chose as attendants or servants two young men, apparently two who had not previously joined the Crazy Dance. These two had no initiative; their task was to do what

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The Dance must have helped appreciably to enhance the status of the elderly participants, a little old to take active part in the actual hunting and game-food providing, and to have given them a feeling of still being economically useful members of the tribe. The same *mutatis mutandis* would be true of the old women in connection with their own Dance.

After the more or less secret rites inside the lodge of the Dance were over, the dancers ran a race. After the close of the dance, the camp moved.

The elderly men who as chief vowers or associates had gone once through the Dance had reached the end of the ritual trail and became members of the unorganized "retired old men," of equal rank in this respect with their ceremonial grandfathers. After the dance the grandfathers could not control their grandsons, as grandfathers could after other Dances. After going through this Dance, the dancer though entering in a sense the "inactive" ranks could still be called on to function as a ceremonial grandfather. He moreover was allowed very considerable freedom and latitude previously denied him. With his Punishers' Dance grandfather he contracted a relationship somewhat similar to the enemy-friend one. In general, while of course he was given no leave to commit grave crimes, he was allowed much freedom in talking or acting vulgarly or obscenely in public and in the presence of consanguineal or actual relatives toward whom respect and avoidance observances had been strictly required of him prior to his graduation into the class of "retired old men."[*]

He could, for instance, talk pretty freely with his own brother-in-law who was also a "retired old man" about matters concerning elimination and reproduction, and could indulge in a large degree of vulgarity and obscenity before a group which included even his own mother-in-law, and no one had the right to criticize him for this or protest against his behavior.

If, for example, he took off his breechcloth in the presence of a group that included such relatives, someone might say to him: "That's going too far." But the old man might answer: "I have sat on the sage brush. I have the right to do this."

[*] Cf. Flannery, 1953, p. 196.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

At big social or Grass Dances, the people used to be good to these "retired old men" and gave them good seats inside the hall or enclosure where the dance was held. At one such gathering, probably around 1905, a lot of these old men were present sitting in a semi-circle in front of the four chief men. One "retired old man," Fire Steel, Thomas Main's father-in-law and Lame Bull's brother-in-law, a witty old man who liked to talk, came late. Even though Lame Bull was present, Fire Steel said aloud, in a voice that could be heard by everyone: "What is the matter with you old men sitting there? You ought to sing songs of praise. Instead you are sitting there and playing 'it' so women can admire you. But your behinds are all pretty black now!" And everybody laughed. Fire Steel used to get to a dance late and in a tone loud enough for everyone present to hear used to expose these old men's past behavior,—things that they would not want said in public.

888
561
626
522

Fly Dance

This dance was called no:bao'wə "fly lodge." The word no:bä is at present used for "house fly." Our informants were not sure if the word, as used for the dance itself, referred to flies or to mosquitoes.

796

The dance was last performed about 1907. Our chief sources were The Boy, Thick and Coming Daylight; some stray data were gotten from Turn Toes, Charles Buckman, Thomas Main and Cora Chandler. Our information confirms Kroeber's description, and supplements it in only a few minor details.

No origin story was known to our informants, beyond the item that the dance "belongs to the flies [or mosquitoes]."

The Fly Dance, like other Sacred Dances, was held only in fulfillment of a vow, a vow usually made in less grave emergencies. In dignity the Fly Dance ranked lowest among the seven Sacred Dances carried out by men.

It was held in the summer, usually around the time when one of other Sacred Dances was being performed. Consequently there was no necessity of sending runners to assemble the people, as

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 they would all be in camp anyhow. Our informants made no mention of criers or police in connection with the Fly Dance.

Ordinarily the Fly Dance was supposed to be gone through first, before any of the other sacred dances, but there were exceptions, as in the case of Turn Toes who joined the Crazy Dance first when he was a young man and the Fly Dance only after he was an old man. Coming Daylight's husband, Little Man, never joined the Fly Dance.[36]

[561] [883] The Fly Dance was usually performed by youths, mostly young unmarried fellows of the age range of about 16 to 20 years as nearly as we could determine. With the chief vower would be associated in the dance all the members of his own age-group or company (e.g., all the "Potbellies"), and apparently no others. They would carry it out in a body.

No women joined the dance. But, according to Coming Daylight, if a woman's son was participating as a dancer "she might go way to be back of the tent [apparently the dance lodge] and dance just like her son was doing, not making fun."

*796 608 The Fly Dancers would choose their ceremonial grandfathers from among the older men. The young fellow wishing to join the dance would fill a pipe, go with it to an old timer, and offer it to him saying: "Here is the pipe. You will be my grandfather." If the old man accepted, he would instruct the candidate in all the rites and observances of the dance and would perform the other functions therein to be noted presently. At the last Fly Dance held [circa 1907] two young fellows, Mark Black Crow and Jerry Bear, came together to Coming Daylight's husband, Warrior, and offered him a pipe, which he accepted, thereby agreeing to act as their grandfather.[37] Cora Chandler's uncle, Sits-in-the-middle, had been "boss" of a Fly Dance which she had witnessed one Fourth of July when she was still of school age, probably this last one held.

*796 According to The Boy, the Fly Dance lasted only one day. As our informants had been eye-witnesses of this dance, it is probable

[178]

[36] These exceptions occurred after the breakdown of the ceremonial cycle. [R.F.]

[37] In 1948 The Boy explained that in this Dance a group of boys—even more than four—could have the same ritual grandfather. [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

get killed but she was told to go ahead anyway and have the Dance,—which she did. Other women would join the Dance with the chief vower, but under what general conditions and procedures we did not ascertain except that to qualify either as associates or as chief vower, women had to be "old" or "very old," to be "women who had seen all of life" and were "beyond their prime," not "young women." This would probably mean in Gros Ventre age terminology women beyond the age of about forty-five or fifty. On one occasion, while a Women's Dance was in progress a very old woman, whose brother had just been very badly wounded by some Sioux and who was hovering between life and death, came to the dance lodge where the dancers were gathered and said, "Well, I came in here of my own accord without anyone asking me to join. I promised to join so that my brother may get well." She was told to choose her side, "talls" or "shorts," her face was painted the ritual way, and so she joined. The wounded brother, it may be added, did not recover. The Women's Dance was not put up, as were the men's Sacred Dances, by age-groups proper since women had no such age group organizations corresponding to the men's Star and Wolf societies and companies.

The women dancers had no crier and no police force, but were divided, as in the men's dances, into tall slender ones and short ones. Two young women were chosen to serve during the rite as ätsa'an, attendants or waiters. "Those who were not ashamed to do things," Coming Daylight explained, "and who were quick, were chosen [as waiters]. These were not bashful or backward. They had to do whatever they were told and to wait on people. They had a lot of work to do. When there was going to be a Women's Dance, they would have to call on the members on each side of the camp circle, starting at the center opening. They would go to each lodge where there was a member." They also had to dance hard, but did not wear any caps. Their places in the dance lodge were at the door, one on the side where the "talls" sat, the other on the side of the "shorts." On both occasions when Coming Daylight served as a "calf" the two young women attendants were Woman Chief for the "talls" and Perfume (or Sweet Perfume) for the "shorts."

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

A wife inherited practically nothing from her husband. If she had been faithful to him and had been of a good disposition, her parents-in-law might give her a certain number of horses or other property. The tent was considered the woman's possession while she lived with her husband; but on his death, even this was no longer her property. If the tent was worth keeping at all, it generally went to the dead man's sister, if she was newly married. A man, on the contrary, inherited his wife's property, though he generally gave back part of it to her relatives. 428 562 [422]

A woman, on her husband's death, went back to live with her parents, or, if these were dead, with her brother, uncle, or other relative. An old woman, on the death of her husband, generally went to live with her children, most frequently with a daughter. 768

On the death of a brother, especially a beloved one, or of his father or his son, a man cut his hair and went out naked (with only a buffalo robe) on the prairie to cry from morning until late at night. Women, besides cutting their hair, and cutting themselves (especially on the leg) until they bled, would also go out to cry, naked from the waist up. A sister cut herself for a brother, but a mother mourning for a child underwent the most pain. Of course the mourning was greatest for an only child. In such a case, parents might give away everything in their tent and nearly all their horses, stripping themselves of property so thoroughly as almost to go naked. Some mourners fasted for a number of days. If, while a person was crying on the prairie, one should in joke attempt to scare him, he might kill the disturber. Mourners were the bravest people in war, caring about no danger whatever. 765 [304] [431]

Burial was in trees, on high rocks, or in caves inaccessible to wolves and coyotes. The corpse was wrapped in a burial robe. 764

A menstruating woman was called niiitixtj. It is said that she did not retire to a separate lodge, or eat separately from her family; but she did not approach a sick patient, because of the evil effect she would have on his condition by her presence. Some women were said to wear a breech-cloth during their menstruation. 841 [291]

In childbirth, women either lay or knelt. They grasped a stick supported in a horizontal position by two upright forked sticks set in the ground. After the umbilical cord had been severed, the end was left on the child. It was thought to fall off on the fourth day. The woman who had cut the umbilical cord received as a gift the knife she had used. A woman who washed a new-born child was given the vessel in which it was washed. The afterbirth was hung in a tree. If it were left lying to be handled, the child would be afflicted with sores. For three or four days after birth, the child was given suck by other women than its mother. This statement apparently refers chiefly to a woman's first child. 844 [846]

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 As in the other ceremonies, the dancers were painted over the entire
302 body. It does not seem that the long-continued painting of the Arapaho
dog-dance, in connection with which the relationship between the dancers'
562 wives and "grandfathers" found its chief expression in this tribe, existed among the Gros Ventre. The women, however, took considerable part in the ceremony as in the others, being painted with their husbands, sitting in the lodge and singing, and at times putting on their regalia; whereupon the men took hold of the ends of the regalia, and their wives led them about.

796 The complete disintegration and disuse of the old ceremonial life of
178 the Gros Ventre is shown by the fact that not a single dog-dance object belonging to an ordinary dancer has been collected. It is therefore the more fortunate that the Museum has been able to complete, through Dr. Clark Wissler, a valuable set of the regalia of the highest degree of this dance. This unique group of specimens is shown in Figs. 38, 39, and 40, and Plate XIII.

796 The coat (Fig. 38) is in shape an ordinary deer-skin shirt. At the neck
292 is an edging of red flannel. On the upper arms are two short, transverse bars of white quill-embroidery, the quills laid on in diagonal zigzag stitch. At each of the sides, at the bottom of the shirt, hang two long, pointed strips, as customary on men's shirts, — the legs of the animal decoratively used. Under the armpits are similar shorter flaps. The two sides of the shirt are open from the bottom to under the arms. These open edges, the hanging strips, the lower border, and the ends of the sleeves, are ornamented with a fringe about an inch long. The lower portion of the shirt for a width of about half a foot, and the hanging strips, are painted yellow. All the remainder of the shirt has been stained brown, apparently over yellow paint. On the two sides there are in this brown area a total of 225 yellow circles about an inch and a half in diameter, which have not been painted over with the brown stain. Each of these circles is edged by white quill-work, and from its centre hangs a mutilated crow-feather by a thong. The edging of the circles is produced by using single quills as threads in an in-and-out rotary stitch. The crow-feathers have the quill broken, in from one to four places, without being severed. The vanes are for the most part considerably disarranged, as if intentionally. At the lower end the feathers are cut off square and the quill is flattened by cutting on two sides, as if to get rid of the lowest part of the vane. The quill is cut in this way so far from its natural base that it is entirely solid. The feathers are simply wrapped against a thong with sinew. The end of the thong projects a little beyond the sinew. The thongs on the outside of the skin average half an inch in length, and are painted yellow. Each passes through a hole in the centre of a yellow circle. Behind this, that is, on the inner side of the shirt, it is

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

those which were valuable enough to be tethered near lodges at night, was considered practically on a par with killing, scalping and counting coups. Capturing weapons and other trophies, as well as taking women and children prisoner, were likewise deserving of praise. Helping fellow-tribesmen in danger and many other types of action such as successful scouting for a war party, or acting as water-carrier under dangerous circumstances, were taken into account in assessing the war record of the individual. 554

An ambitious man grasped every opportunity for distinguishing himself in as many of these ways as possible, for prestige depended primarily on a reputation for bravery, and competition between warriors was keen.[33] The ideal man was one who had so many war-deeds to his credit that "his wrist would be made slim from being pulled up to recite them." So great was the variety of circumstances under which a recitation of war-deeds was required, that a man who had accomplished little was of necessity ignored and doomed to remain a nonentity.

Furthermore there were many occasions on which those who had given a good account of themselves in battle were singled out for public recognition. During the victory dance, for instance, a warrior, who had remained at home, chose one of the returning party to whom he would offer a ceremonial smoke while singing his praises. Again, the relatives of a man who had behaved with particular heroism might decide to formally bestow a new name upon him. In such a case, a group of men and women would approach the lodge where the naming ceremony was held, calling attention to the hero by loudly singing there. To show his appreciation of the honor the hero gave valuable presents to the singers. If a group approached a second time, the honor was doubled and so were the presents. In illustration, the story was told of a woman who was on one occasion so outstandingly brave during battle that she was accorded the same honor a man would have been under the same circumstances,—she was given a new name, that of Woman Chief, and her praises were sung by three groups. Moreover, it was customary at the social dances of the Stars and of the Wolf-men, to compose songs referring to specific deeds of their members respectively, and to sing these over and over again. [553] [562]

[33] For this and other aspects of status, see also pp. 32-33.

572 602 522 to play jokes, but I would get even with him by going over to his lodge when I would hear him abusing his wife. He had to stop when I came in there because if I actually caught him at it, I could dub him a wife-beater or worse in public."

While in most instances the enemy-friendship was initiated by men, women occasionally obtained war trophies on their own, and had the same privilege. The following, told by Singer, illustrates how she herself came by some war trophies and the manner in which she disposed of them. "One time, when the Piegan had attacked us and the Gros Ventres were pursuing them, I dashed out with some of my women relatives. We came upon three Piegan who had just been killed. Those other women stopped to hit them but I rode by more slowly and spotted some booty near one of the bodies. I dismounted and picked up a nail-studded belt to which was attached a scabbard containing a knife and a nicely beaded gun case. I didn't want to show these to the others, but when they taunted me because I failed to count coups as they had done, I showed them this belt. One of them grabbed the scabbard, which I had intended to give to my own husband, saying: 'You are giving me this. Now we are enemy-friends!' To my nephew I later gave the gun case, saying as I threw it down in front of him: 'Here. You could have this for your gun. This is what I took in war.' The knife I threw down in front of my grandmother and, because we were now enemy-friends, I used a 'bad' name for her —I called her 'you who don't wipe your behind.'"

562 572 602

868 posed to be watched over and kept under close supervision. For
[562] her there was much less freedom than for a boy of like age.

As a rare treat, a girl of eight or nine might have been allowed
857 to stay with a friend of her own age overnight, providing her guardian knew exactly where she was and that there was some responsible party to look after her. Boys of the same age and even younger could come and go more or less as they pleased. In
[564] illustration Al Chandler told of an incident in his childhood. "At the death of my uncle, the corpse was placed in a lodge removed at some distance from where he resided. I was only a little fellow at the time and I wandered over to that lodge. Not realizing my uncle was dead, I crawled under the covers. I was not missed from home and was not discovered until the next morning when my grandfather came to the lodge to mourn. Thereafter for a week or so my grandmother watched me when I set off from home, but when she saw I was steering clear of that particular lodge, she allowed me to go without saying anything. She knew I could take care of myself so she didn't care where I went or when I came home."

857 In spite of strict supervision of girls, sometimes they evaded
868 their guardians. Coming Daylight told of one of the "tricks" that she had used. "One night I heard there was dancing and my sister and I wanted to sneak out to enjoy the fun while my grandmother was sleeping. We rolled up our blankets and put them beside her. Fortunately she didn't awaken even when we came in. If she had known we were out she would have come after us and given us a good lecture when we got home."

868 So far as training in domestic tasks is concerned, it was considered an important part of a girl's duty to gather berries and to dig roots. Some older woman went with a group of girls to show them what to collect, pointing out at the same time the things that were not edible. Each girl worked and whatever she garnered would be given by her to her mother or grandmother. What was not used immediately would then be stored for winter use.

Learning to slice meat very thin for drying seemed to have been picked up easily by girls at playing "house." Skinning and butchering were much more difficult tasks which had to be learned carefully. These were considered mainly work for men, but it

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

stantly admonished to stay at home after they were married and not to go visiting and gossiping with other women. Mothers told *their daughters to be respectful to their husbands.* When still very young, a girl was taught to "always make a lot over a man." She started with her father and was responsible, for instance, for seeing to it that in the morning when he awakened there was water beside him so he could wash his face before going for his morning bath, and that his breakfast would be ready for him when he came back therefrom. These are the kinds of things girls would be expected to do later for their husbands. 183 864 867

All during the time they were learning domestic skills, girls were told that they should keep everything that they own nicely and to have on hand everything they may need. It was not good to run around and borrow. "Keep your house clean and keep everything in good order, then your husband will like to stay at home." Again, "Don't let your husband's moccasins wear out before you make another pair. Always have things prepared ahead of time." Girls were told, too, that good wives took their husband's moccasins off for them when they came home tired, and so on. 183 867

Coming Daylight always admonished her daughters: "Never talk back to your husband. Women have fiery tongues when they get mad, and that is bad." It was nearly always taken for granted by others that the wife was to blame if her husband beat her. Since it was customary for very young girls to marry men very much older than they, such husbands took upon themselves the role of disciplinarian. [582]

While marriage was taken for granted, apparently a girl was free to accept or to reject medicine power. Neither girls nor women went on power quests, but some individuals were vouchsafed some kinds of supernatural power in dreams. While the experience of Coming Daylight may be unique, it is illuminating. "Even before I was married, I had a particular kind of dream which indicated power to extract illness from the body of a patient. This dream occurred four nights in succession. Each morning I would tell my grandmother about it. The old woman got angry each time and told me not to talk about it, to keep it to myself so that I would become a great doctor. But I had already 787 [562]

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787 made up my mind that I did not want such power, the immediate reason for my refusal being that I had seen doctors who swallowed what they had sucked from the weak spot in patients whom they cured, and I just couldn't bring myself to have to do likewise."

857 562 Although boys had much more freedom than had girls, they too were assigned tasks at a fairly early age. One of the responsibilities of boys was to water the horses during the day. At about the age of fourteen, however, a boy would be required to take the horses out to graze immediately after taking his morning plunge. He would be gone perhaps three or four hours and would eat only after he returned.

857 868 852 The play of younger boys with bow and arrow was training for later life. The older boys accompanied the men on hunting parties and by the time they were about 18 most were skilled hunters. Some families, it was said, took advantage of the fact that [431] a boy would have killed his first big game,—antelope, deer, buffalo, —by making a feast at which this game was served. On such an occasion the boy stood at the center and gave away property, such as horses and blankets provided by his father or uncle, in [421] order to mark the event. This was considered training for the way he should behave in later life in regard to his own property.

857 868 [533] Boys were trained in trapping as well as hunting. There were certain songs which were sung by grandparents as the boys danced around in the lodge both before and after trapping. These songs were supposed to bring luck in finding game.

[777] Sometimes when older boys were out taking care of horses, they would band together, daub their faces and bodies with mud as "war paint," and make a "raid" on the camp in order to steal meat which was drying on racks. The women who had worked so hard to prepare the meat got angry and sometimes fought the boys with sticks. Usually, the boys were successful, and would then cook the meat and have a wonderful feast,[1] far outside the camp circle.

[554] Men encouraged their sons to be brave, and a boy would be anxious to go along on a real raiding party just as soon as possible because a young man had no standing until he had risked his life. An adolescent boy who accompanied a war party had to be a man

[1] This type of raiding is also described by Kroeber, 1908, p. 182.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Daylight and her sister, who were married, for a short while after their first husband died, to his classificatory brother. The other concerned an outstanding woman, Woman Chief, who was said to have been so highly valued by her husband's people that "she was kept in his family by marrying her to three brothers [successively]." 587 595

Regulations

Marriage was prohibited for those related by blood, no matter how remote the tie. If, however, a couple were in "good faith," so to speak, and it was discovered later on that they were distant kin, it was not considered necessary for them to separate on that account.[4] Affinal relatives were likewise barred as possible marriage partners, except those who were classified as in-laws of the same generation.[5] In other words, the levirate and sororate were permitted, so that any who addressed each other as brother-in-law and sister-in-law respectively were possible mates, but relatives-by-marriage in any other category were prohibited from contracting marriage. The far-reaching effects of this latter regulation can be seen from the following case. "Not so many years ago, a Gros Ventre woman was the subject of a great deal of gossip because she married late in life a man who, many years previously, had for a time been married to a widow of her maternal uncle. People didn't like it and thought she shouldn't have married that man, even though times had changed and the whites wouldn't count them as being related to each other at all." 582 [587]

Arrangements

As a rule, marriage arrangements were made between the husband-to-be and one or other of the bride's male kinsmen,—father, uncle or brother. Either side could take the initiative, but the bride herself was not consulted. Coming Daylight summed up the prevailing attitude in this way: "When I was young, a girl's life was not her own. When a girl was about seven she was sent away from her home to a grandmother or widowed aunt to be trained to do a woman's work. 584 562 [868]

[4] See also the discussion of band affiliation and exogamy, pp. 29–31.
[5] For kinship classification, see pp. 124–25.

584 trained to do a woman's work. Then when she was ten or eleven
562 she was handed over to some man. They thought that if they gave her to her husband when she was so young she would get attached to him and make him a good wife. The Gros Ventres didn't
[587] want a woman to get in the habit of running around with different men, so a woman's folks worried if she was unmarried too long [after being divorced or widowed] because she might do something bad."

587 There is some evidence that as a woman became older, if she had occasion to remarry, she was somewhat more free to express her choice, although presumably a male relative would still be in the position of making the actual decision. It was said that
584 younger men, especially those seeking to marry "older" women,
832 "were afraid of their tongues" and felt more confident of success in possession of "love medicine." Al Chandler, for instance, was offered a love charm which he refused, but the speech of his uncle on that occasion throws some light on a situation of this kind. His uncle had told him: "Now you are a young man and you will be thinking about women. Maybe you want to get married and have picked out a woman and she doesn't want you. Maybe you are not good enough for her and, when you ask her, she will run you down plenty. Some women are swell-heads and can make a man feel cheap. It hurts a fellow to hear things like that—but that is what this charm is for. You take this and keep it in your pocket safely and do not show it to anyone or let anyone know you have it. Now if this woman hurts your feelings, go at night to where she lives and watch carefully, being sure you have the right one. Then when she goes out of the lodge to relieve herself, watch her so you can locate the exact spot. Then open this little packet and dip in it the tip of a little sliver of wood. Go over to the spot and stick the sliver right in the ground on the spot where she urinated and walk away. That is all you have to do, and in a very short time this woman will come running after you. You tell her: 'What are you doing that for? I don't want you.' She will get so anxious that she will beg you to have her."

585 Regardless of whether the man were the suitor, or whether the woman's relatives offered her in marriage, the marriage was validated through presents given by the groom. Traditionally at

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

together!' so I jumped up and ran as hard as I could. Finally after wandering around a long time, not caring whether I lived or died, a man on horseback caught up with me. Telling me how dangerous it was to be out alone on account of possible capture by the enemy, he persuaded me to go back. Nobody said anything to me directly, but one of my husband's relatives did take up for me by saying insultingly to my husband: 'You would have such a one for a boss wife. She is ugly, and has a shaggy head, and she doesn't even know how to do a woman's work properly—blood runs out of the meat she prepares!' The older wife left me alone after that incident." 595

Nevertheless Singer admitted that in spite of her unhappy life with co-wives in two or three of her marriages, when she was married to Iron Bucket, she and her "rival" cooperated very nicely and were never jealous of each other or quarrelsome. All the women too agreed that, while the husband did not approve of hair-pulling and "jaw-fights" among his wives, and could resort to stern measures to prevent it, there were many polygynous households where peace and harmony reigned.

Authority of the Husband

The husband was expected to assume complete responsibility for his wife and had the right to enforce obedience. It was perhaps inevitable that some men used their authority in an arbitrary manner. The following was one among many examples offered in proof of this point. "There was a man who was known to be very stingy. On one occasion his wife cooked more meat than he thought she should have prepared. He was very angry with her and, in order to punish her, he made a big pile of the meat and forced her to eat every scrap of it. It made her very sick and she had to vomit a couple of times before she could get it all down. But she preferred to be sick rather than to get a beating." 593 562

It was said that wife-beating was very common and that in many cases it was unjustified. Singer gave part of her own experience as a sample. "My husband wouldn't allow me to go anywhere away from the lodge except to do the necessary jobs of getting wood and water. The whole time I was married to him I attended only one celebration. That time he more or less had to let

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

S93 me go because by mother's brother was in the Sacrifice Dance and
S62 I was supposed to be there to give things away in his honor. He was mean about it, but I got to that one thing. Another time though, I was scraping hides and I heard it announced in the camp circle that a relative of mine had been killed at war. Of course I went right away to mourn for him. But when I got back, my husband was furious. He yelled at me: 'You ought to stay home and attend to your work!' and then gave me an awful beating."

It was usually of little avail for a woman to return home with grievances against her husband because it was assumed that a wife deserved the type of treatment she received. Generally her
S93 family would send her back to her husband promptly and often
S86 with a present for him to show their good will. Only under exceptional circumstances was the wife allowed to initiate separation from her husband. If he grossly neglected her and showed his indifference openly, she might be permitted to remain with her family. Should the husband not send for her, they were then free to arrange for her another marriage. Coming Daylight gave as an example her own experience, which was considered as somewhat unusual. "My uncle had arranged as our third marriage for my younger sister and me to go to a man who later turned out to be a poor provider. He seldom got buffalo meat, and he didn't water the horses, or do the other things he was supposed to. He was so busy chasing other women he didn't have time for anything else! One day, however, a friend of his came and told us that our husband was planning to publicly throw us away. His uncle came to see our husband that same day and tried to persuade him not to do it. Among other things he told him: 'You have such nice quiet industrious women. Just think of all the robes they have dressed for you!' But our husband just sat there with his head bowed and didn't say anything, and we knew then that he was going to do it. So I told my sister when he went out: 'We will get ready and throw him away before he has a chance.' I had a horse of my own, and we packed all our belongings as quickly as possible and went back to our uncle. When he found out what that man was going to do, of course he didn't make us go back. Our husband was in the wrong. He didn't

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

'It is a good thing you cleaned my nose, because for that I am giving you that woman over there.'" 684 558

A husband who had harbored an unfaithful wife was likewise within his rights in "throwing her away." This was accomplished by his going to a public gathering and simply throwing down a stick to indicate that he was through with her. Whoever wished might pick up the stick and claim her as his wife without giving any compensation. 684 586

It was said, too, that if a man was "big enough" to allow his wife to go unpunished for adultery he usually would not refuse to eventually let her go to some lesser man who demeaned himself by asking for her. Thick related details of several transactions of this kind which occurred when he was a young boy. One of these was as follows:

"There was a man who had several wives, perhaps four. One day another man came to his lodge. He invited him in and said: 'This is the first time you ever came into my lodge, my friend. You must have a reason to come now, after all this time.' Then he said to his wife: 'Woman, get up and cook for my friend.' So the visitor spoke up: 'Well, my friend, the purpose of my coming here is to ask you for that Arapaho woman. I am not married now, I haven't a wife at present and I need a wife.' The host replied: 'All right, my friend, she is yours. After you eat, you could take her home.' When he had finished eating, the visitor said: 'Well, my friend, I have to go a little further. I want that boy of hers too.' The host answered: 'I hate to let my children go, but since he is so small you could take him, but don't ask for any of the others.' So the visitor, happy that he had gotten this woman without much talk and a boy as well, said: 'Well, my friend, since you are so good to me and give me your boy, I will give you a horse, my last horse.' It turned out that he was as good to this boy, whom he had attained in this way, as he would have been to his own son." It should be noted that the horse was given voluntarily and because of the child rather than in compensation for the wife.

It was the opinion of those women who had lived under this system, wherein the authority of the husband was so great, that all in all it worked well. They admitted that an occasional woman 595 562

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

suffered injustice, but they insisted that the disciplinary power of the husband "made good wives of many women." In spite of the fact that many cases were given in illustration of harsh treatment, not a few were mentioned in which husband and wife lived happily together in an atmosphere of mutual esteem and deep affection. Coming Daylight herself, for instance, experienced what could be considered an ideal marriage with her first husband, Dressed in White.

Extra-marital Affairs

Girls were instructed before marriage to expect and condone infidelity on the part of the husband. An ambivalent attitude prevailed in that a man's reputation was said to have suffered if he were known as one who was "always fooling around with other men's wives"; yet brave young men were expected to make as many conquests as possible.

There were few women who escaped their husband's suspicion at one time or another. The reasons why the suspicion was often justified were given by Singer to have been the following. "Too often young girls were given in marriage to old men for whom they did not care and to whom they never got attached; so when younger men more to their liking came along, lots of these girls gave in to them and took chances of getting caught by their husbands. But even if a woman liked her husband and he was real good to her, when she saw that he was running around with other women, she might be jealous and want to 'make her life bad' just to get even with him."

While a woman could not count on her mother, or aunt, or sister-in-law to help along her illicit love affair, in some cases a grandmother, or sister, or friend might assist her in making assignations with the lover and would do their best to shield her from her husband. It was said that others were sympathetic especially if the lover were known as a brave man. In fact there were two sets of circumstances in which public opinion was lenient almost to the point of approval, although great discretion was necessary to avoid the husband's suspicion, since he still had the right of punishing his wife if he found her out. One kind of situation concerned the woman who sent a man out to accomplish some specific

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

276
793 the pipe stem and blow the smoke first upward and then downward, and after that would smoke like anyone else.

793 In general, religious and political life were closely interwoven
624 in the Gros Ventre theocracy. "The Pipes [both the Flat and The Feathered]," as The Boy expressed it, "seemed to hold the tribe together more or less." They were the most sacred and revered possessions of the tribe. The keepers were men of eminence, by virtue of their personal qualities and achievements as well as of their office. In view of these and other facts, it is to be expected that the keeper of the Flat Pipe played a role in Gros Ventre political life, a role however not shared except in a minimal de-
[562] gree by the co-keeper, a woman in a man-dominated sphere of action. The keeper's role in Gros Ventre political life was fairly clearly defined and delimited. Here we shall summarize the main points.

When camp was to be moved, the decision as to time and destination was mainly in the hands of the head men, although the keeper would participate. In some cases, it seems, he might initiate the move by calling the head men together, usually at night. The whole decision was not ordinarily announced by the crier or criers. He would be sent around to notify the people that all would move camp the next morning. They by looking toward the keeper's lodge in the morning would learn the direction in which the camp would move, for the Flat Pipe bundle would be taken out of the lodge, to the north thereof, and hung on its tripod, with the stem end pointing in the agreed upon direction of the trek. On the trek itself, the co-worker with the bundle led the cavalcade.

When the bands scattered—for the winter after the fall hunt and for the late spring after the first spring hunts, usually both the Flat and Feathered Pipes attracted a large following.

The keeper could be invited to sit in important council meetings, and to participate in elections and in decisions involving policy or action and had a certain veto prerogative thereon. He could, on occasions at least, intercede with considerable power, to resolve conflicts and avert bloodshed. He could accompany war-parties and might even have a voice in strategy and tactics, but he was not *ex officio* a fighter or war-leader. He could, as

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

276 would use tobacco in his prayers for the patient. If the patient survived but was still weak, the keeper made him smoke to get back his strength. So some of the other tribesmen learned to smoke. Gradually social (and recreative) smoking took its place together with ceremonial smoking.

In earlier times, the women never smoked either ritually or socially. Even in rites where they had an important role, such as [562] the inauguration of a new pipe keeper, they did not smoke, as women were considered secondary, not equal to men. Even as late as The Boy's and Thick's early boyhood in the decade before the last buffalo disappeared (1884), only the old women smoked, never the young girls. The spread of the custom among these old women was probably due to their discovery by experience that the smoking prescribed for maladies, such as, chronic headache, was good for the body. But even today, although women smoke non-ritually when alone or among themselves, they are not allowed to smoke at a Pipe rite, and, if wives are present when a man invites a group of men for a social visit or meal and he fills up his pipe to give his guests a smoke, he does not offer the pipe to the wives.

Tobacco was used only in pipe smoking. It was sometimes smoked straight by old men and old women, and by the sick as [17] a cure. But ordinarily the Gros Ventres smoked it mixed either 824 with red willow, as did the Cree and Assiniboine, or preferably, and in the Flat Pipe rites always, with larb.

Larb is "a ground plant that grows on hills and mountains." We could get no specimen for identification. After the tobacco and larb were mixed, a little more larb than tobacco, fat was worked into the mixture to season it. On taking leave from his Gros Ventre [431] friends in 1940 the present author was given a small bag of this 609 mixture as a token of peace and good will and found the mixture a very pleasant aromatic smoke.

The wild parsley, associated with the Flat and Feathered Pipe 278 and with the Crazy Lodge, was used as a powerful poison. It was greatly feared and was spoken of in undertones. Its preparation is a lost art. The whole plant was and is considered poisonous, but poison was prepared principally from the root, which was first

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

get killed but she was told to go ahead anyway and have the Dance,—which she did. Other women would join the Dance with the chief vower, but under what general conditions and procedures we did not ascertain except that to qualify either as associates or as chief vower, women had to be "old" or "very old," to be "women who had seen all of life" and were "beyond their prime," not "young women." This would probably mean in Gros Ventre age terminology women beyond the age of about forty-five or fifty. On one occasion, while a Women's Dance was in progress a very old woman, whose brother had just been very badly wounded by some Sioux and who was hovering between life and death, came to the dance lodge where the dancers were gathered and said, "Well, I came in here of my own accord without anyone asking me to join. I promised to join so that my brother may get well." She was told to choose her side, "talls" or "shorts," her face was painted the ritual way, and so she joined. The wounded brother, it may be added, did not recover. The Women's Dance was not put up, as were the men's Sacred Dances, by age-groups proper since women had no such age group organizations corresponding to the men's Star and Wolf societies and companies.

The women dancers had no crier and no police force, but were divided, as in the men's dances, into tall slender ones and short ones. Two young women were chosen to serve during the rite as átsa'an, attendants or waiters. "Those who were not ashamed to do things," Coming Daylight explained, "and who were quick, were chosen [as waiters]. These were not bashful or backward. They had to do whatever they were told and to wait on people. They had a lot of work to do. When there was going to be a Women's Dance, they would have to call on the members on each side of the camp circle, starting at the center opening. They would go to each lodge where there was a member." They also had to dance hard, but did not wear any caps. Their places in the dance lodge were at the door, one on the side where the "talls" sat, the other on the side of the "shorts." On both occasions when Coming Daylight served as a "calf" the two young women attendants were Woman Chief for the "talls" and Perfume (or Sweet Perfume) for the "shorts."

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 even acquired his technique for beating the drum, that is, of be-
178 ginning lightly and then, in an inimitable manner, of increasing
555 the volume. Sometimes the other three singers would let him begin a song and sing it through once just to listen to him. He was left-handed, but he sure could beat the drum! He was a man of whom you could say he had a real personality as far as the Grass dance was concerned but who was not so noticeable outside this one field. He was always deliberate but as soon as he approached the dancing-place he seemed to come alive. He was good at that office in the Grass dance and he knew it. He would sit up at the drum as straight as a lord and never attempted to be inconspicuous as, for instance, by putting his hat down over his eyes. Many of the young fellows who usually didn't join in the dancing and liked to play around on the outside would nevertheless rush from every direction to get to the floor when they saw him coming."

796 While singing had always held an important place in Gros Ventre religious culture, in the past the emphasis had been on the meaning of the song far more than on the quality of the voice and the manner of performing as it was in the Grass dance. Similarly in times gone by what dancing there was in the various rites was more or less perfunctory, whereas in the Grass dance the ownership of the two crow-belts, the fork, the spoon, and the whistle was transferred to those among the younger men who had
[554] physical vigor and endurance as well as grace. For these offices "it took a good-looking young man in good physical condition to perform properly."

796 A still greater innovation was the inclusion of women as officers
178 of the Grass dance. The two ceremonial black dresses were
562 seemingly symbolic of the black paint used in the Victory dance of former years, especially in view of the fact that this was one of the few dances performed by women in the old culture. It should be mentioned, however, that in connection with the Victory dance there had been no formal office nor had the participants therein been under economic obligations. We might hazard the guess that the ownership by women of two of the war-bonnets in

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the Grass dance may have seemed appropriate to the Gros Ventres as reminiscent of the feather headdress worn by the participants in the Women's Dance belonging to the series of vowed Sacred Dances. But regardless of the possible symbolism, these four offices, plus the four others allotted to women,—two whip owners and their two assistants,—gave the female sex a fair degree of recognition, and probably reflect the newer economic status of women which came about with the changing concept of inheritance. Formerly women, of course, had a right to their own property, but acquisition thereof was mainly through their own manufacture, such as clothing, or through the relatively rare gift of a horse or so. They did not come in for any valuable property through inheritance and a widow in those days was not even entitled to any of her deceased husband's belongings.

The holding of office in the Grass dance thus offered one of the very few means remaining for acquisition of status by the individual. The frequent transfer of offices meant that there was opportunity for many individuals within each category,—mature men, older warriors, young men, women,—to enjoy such public recognition.

Public display of generosity in giving away property to honor a loved one, which became such a marked feature of the Grass dance in its later phase, carried on and accentuated the method most common in older Gros Ventre culture for the gaining of individual prestige. Formerly there were many opportunities for this kind of ostentatious liberality,—when a pipe or a painted lodge was transferred, when a warrior returned from accomplishing brave deeds, when a person was participating in one of the Sacred Dances, when a person was named, when a child's ears were pierced, and so on. At such times the relatives publicly gave away as much of their property as they possibly could,—not to the recipient of the pipe, the brave warrior, the participant in the Sacred Dance, et al.,—but to someone else in his honor. Everybody would know what was given and by whom; people would make such comments as: "So-and-so is a fine man. He surely must think a lot of his relative—look at all the things he

8:Flannery E-5 (1940-1948)1960 NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

INDIVIDUAL VARIATION IN CULTURE

Regina Flannery

It is generally accepted that what Benedict called the Dionysian configuration of Plains culture represents a dominant, if not the only trend. By definition a configuration is a generalization lying behind and explaining a number of cultural patterns. A pattern itself is of course an abstraction from the behavior of a number of individuals. The behavior of any one person may vary at different times in respect to a particular type of situation, but it is unlikely that the individual will show the whole range of possible behavior within a pattern; it will cover only a portion thereof. As Linton pointed out, the difference between the individual mode within this segment, and the mode of the behaviors on which the pattern is based, reflects the compromise which every individual has to make between the culture patterns of his society and his own inclinations. It would seem further, then, that if the modes of an individual's behavior-ranges show a consistent displacement with respect to a large series of patterns, it is safe to assume that the direction of this displacement reflects some quality of the individual.[1] The question we wish to raise is this: If the aspect of personality thus revealed runs counter to a dominant trend of his culture, is the individual a misfit in that society?

In attempting an answer, let us examine some individual variations within those patterns of Plains culture in which expression of emotional excess, and dangerous experience were expected of women in one Plains society, that of the Gros Ventres of Montana. We shall outline in some detail the behavior of one Gros Ventre woman in respect of these selected patterns—from which the Dionysian configuration was abstracted—and contrast her behavior with that of others of approximately the same age. All had participated as adults in the old way of life before the disappearance of the buffalo in 1887.

In Gros Ventre culture, as in all the Plains, there was high valuation placed on direct contact of the individual with the supernatural through dreams and visions. Men could actively seek such contact by employing dangerous means, and did so in order to obtain many kinds of power. While women did not go on the actual power quest, they might acquire medicine powers and less frequently, perhaps, powers of clairvoyance. Medicine powers were considered dangerous in that, it was believed, by accepting them a limitation was put upon the life span of the practitioner. But the rewards in terms of prestige for successful performance and of payment for services were high for women as well as for men. Not every individual man was successful in his quest, nor of course was every woman vouchsafed the kinds of dreams which were requisite. Coming Daylight, the woman whose behavior we are examining in particular, was what her contemporaries considered fortunate indeed in having been offered curing powers of several kinds. Nevertheless she rejected the possibility each time, in spite of the fact that she had a living example in the person of her father's sister of what it could mean in prestige to a woman who accepted. As the reasons for her refusal seem significant I shall describe her experience in her own words.

[p.87]

8:Flannery E-5 (1940-1948)1960 NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Her final rejoinder was such a witty and pointed one that everyone laughed heartily at her rival's expense. In this culture, of course, public ridicule was a far more effective retaliation than the biting and scratching that other women said frankly they would have indulged in when attacked.

Expression of emotional excess was institutionalized for the Gros Ventres, as for the rest of the Plains, in the bereavement situation. Upon the death of a husband, son, or father, a woman was expected to start wailing as soon as she heard the news, have her hair cut off, discard good clothes for old ragged ones, gash her arms and legs, go to the hills to mourn and cry, resisting for a time the pleas of her relatives to return, and being watched lest she attempt suicide. Coming Daylight was only a young woman when she was first widowed and the mourning pattern was still in full vogue. It is certain from other evidence than Coming Dayling had a deep affection for this husband to whom she had been given as a child-bride and in whose kindly and indulgent treatment she had found a pleasant escape from the rigorous discipline of her grandmother. Nevertheless the public expression of her grief was minimal—no abandonment for her. Although her sister was sent on the hills with her to keep watch over her in the usual way, Coming Daylight was easily persuaded to return shortly though she herself was proud of the fact that she had stayed out so long that she actually had got a frozen toe! In later years when all that was left of the ritual was the wailing out on the hills, she lost the son whom she herself, and everybody else, acknowledged as her favorite. She had not been on the hills very long when she experienced a significant dream, as follows. She was in a lodge at the rear of which was a big pile of tobacco mixture and a pipe. The owner of the lodge filled the pipe and approached her. She was frightened because she didn't smoke. The owner of the lodge however told her: "Look at these people." She looked and saw many with their hair cut and their bodies bleeding from the gashes inflicted in grief. The man then told her: "That is in the past. Nowadays your only consolation is in smoking." So she accepted the pipe and, after smoking it, she was painted in ceremonial fashion by each of those other mourners. Then the owner of the lodge dismissed her saying: "Now, go home and don't ever go on the hills and mourn again. But always smoke if you want to." She went home right after this dream and when she told her husband of it he accepted it as valid and persuaded her sister to prepare for Coming Daylight her first real smoke. She maintained that the habit subsequently developed was actually a great comfort to her.

The final area with which we shall be concerned here is the war complex—a vital aspect of the old Plains culture. Gros Ventre women were allowed direct but limited participation in these activities in the sense that, while they would not join a party of men who were going on horse-raiding or revenge expeditions, if opportunity offered they might exhibit the same kind of bravery that a man should show and derive considerable status therefrom. For instance, if one of the enemy fell nearby, the women rushed out from camp to count coup, and to grab trophies with which to inaugurate the relationship known as "enemy-friends." Coming Daylight, however, was never one to indulge in this sport. She told of the one—and to her extremely distasteful—occasion on which her hand literally was forced. It seems that during a raid on their camp one of the enemy was shot and her husband scalped him. The victim was lying not far from her lodge and, as her husband dashed off to pursue the rest of the Assiniboine, he shouted for her to come out and see what was going on. Coming Daylight saw the man lying there, face down, covered with blood. He was not dead

8:Flannery E-5 (1940-1948)1960 NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

and, each time he attempted to get to his knees, one of two women who had already reached the scene would strike him on the buttocks with the flat side of a hatchet, making an insulting remark, and both would laugh. Coming Daylight hesitated at some distance from where the other two were gloating over the fallen enemy. When one of them, Woman Chief by name, saw her she ran to her saying: "Why are you standing so far off?" She grabbed her by the arm and pushed a big club into her hand, saying: "He is still alive—you will do a great thing. *Ahe:ya'!*" Woman Chief forced Coming Daylight to strike him. 159 726 562

While both Woman Chief and Coming Daylight closely approximated the ideal for women as faithful wives and efficient workers who gave generously of their material goods to and on behalf of their relatives, they seemingly differed in temperament. Woman Chief was known as a very brave woman, and Coming Daylight was frank in admitting she would never have dreamed of doing the kinds of things for which Woman Chief was renowned. One of the latter's exploits, for example, was as follows. The Gros Ventres and Crow were allies in an encounter with the Piegan. The battle was in full force, but one Crow had withdrawn and was sitting motionless astride his horse at some distance from the melee. Woman Chief, who in contrast to most women was always well mounted, dashed up to the Crow, grabbed his wand from his hand, and rode pellmell into the thick of the battle, counting coups right and left. So brave was she considered in having really risked her life that she was accorded the distinction, most unusual for a woman, of being led around the camp circle with the victorious warriors. Furthermore, so many people came to sing in front of her lodge that she and her relatives, to show their appreciation of the honor, were forced to give away as much property as though she were a man. Judging on the basis of other biographical material, there can be no doubt that she gloried in her reputation and took every opportunity to enhance it. She was one to whom the more violent aspects of Gros Ventre culture were exceedingly congenial. [183] 727 554 562 [533] [431]

If we compare and contrast these two women we can say that insofar as the patterns of Dionysian configuration are the basis of the comparison, their behavior exhibits opposite extremes, the one going beyond the average in the direction of the configuration, the other running counter to and participating less than the average therein. Both might be termed deviant personalities in Honigman's sense of the term,[2] one overplaying and the other underplaying modal behavior in these selected patterns. Nevertheless, neither seems to have been a misfit insofar as each represents an extreme of socially accepted or sanctioned behavior within those patterns. If, for instance, Coming Daylight had been completely negative, and refused, say, to carry out at least the culturally defined minimum for mourning, had she, in addition to refusing to mutilate herself for the recovery of her ill relatives, neglected as an adult even the safe and less strenuous means to that end, she would have fallen without the pale, so to speak, and have been a misfit. If, at the opposite end of the scale, Woman Chief had gone further in the direction of masculinity, had she actually gone on raiding expeditions and herself stolen horses from the camp of the enemy, had she learned to shoot the bow and arrow or gun, or had she so much as adopted the vocabulary and/or pronunciation proper for males in the Gros Ventres language, she would have been carrying things too far. She, too, would have been dubbed a misfit. 121 183 159 [181] [195]

The Catholic University of America,
Washington, D.C.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

added prestige. Those mentioned as leading bands above were seemingly the most numerous and most prominent in the recent past, and their representatives are more numerous at the present time. While the Frozens, Upper Quarters and Bad Plenty have the most living descendants, apparently there are no Poor Greys or Coffees today, only one Night Hawk, and a few each of the others. 621 554

Although Coming Daylight and Singer claimed membership in the Frozen band, they had no false modesty in proclaiming: "The Frozens were the best workers, had the biggest lodges, the prettiest women and the best-looking men. In fact they were the 'aristocratic' families, being the best-dressed and having the most horses." This was confirmed voluntarily by Cora who stated that she belonged to the Same As Assiniboines, but had heard all her life that the Frozens were the most distinguished band along the lines the old women mentioned. The men informants admitted that some bands were considered better in some respects than others, but failed to be more specific, and added that regardless of the reputation of the whole band, an individual man had to make his own way. [565]

It is somewhat difficult to arrive at the exact situation as to band affiliation and exogamy inasmuch as the band ceased to function not long after our oldest male informants were born. Our oldest female informants, whose memory includes the 1860's, stated in regard to this individual or that, whom they mentioned, that they could not remember to which band he had belonged. In fact the old women became quite impatient when questioned on this subject since from their point of view it was not important. To them the question of marriage regulations was a practical one of avoiding as mate any person to whom blood relationship could be traced, no matter how remotely, and any affinal relative not of the same generation. 621 [582]

There was general agreement among all informants, however, that under normal circumstances children were of the same band as their father.[3] Nevertheless, residence was an important factor, and not a few persons claimed affiliation with bands other than those into which they had been born. Coming Daylight, for instance, said she was a Frozen, the band to which her mother had [591] 621 597

[3] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, p. 147.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

726 wanted a downpour of rain. At once a cloud appeared and in no
787 time it was a big black storm cloud. Then there was a wind and
769 a very heavy storm and thus the Gros Ventres got safely back to camp. The only loss on this occasion was that of two fine horses, one played out and the other foundered from drinking when overheated."

Return of the War Party

727 After a successful encounter with the enemy, the homecoming was a joyful one, provided no Gros Ventre lives had been lost. As they approached the camp, appropriate songs were said to have been sung by the victorious party. If, for instance, they had stolen horses there was one type of song. On the other hand
[302] when scalps had been taken, they sang other kinds of songs and painted themselves with charcoal. Incidentally, the Gros Ventres had a saying that "women and children do not make good charcoal." Women and children should be captured but not killed and scalped.[48]

When the victorious party arrived, they circled the outside of the encampment before entering. "Then the party broke, each member surrounded by his womenfolk who crowded around, kissing him and taking the scalps or other trophies which had been
[302] won. After a reasonable interval, the crier called all to come to the center of the circle and dance. Men and women alike blackened their faces with charcoal, and the women, carrying scalps attached to poles, or weapons captured from the enemy, danced as innumerable victory songs were sung. Only members of the war party were allowed to join with the women in dancing. Many husbands, who had to stand on the sidelines, were jealous of the brave warriors at a time like this."

727 Most of the songs sung during the victory celebration had
533 words which referred to encounters wherein the Gros Ventres had been successful. New words were often made up to commemorate a particular incident. One of these songs had the following words: "Where are you going? I've been here all the

[567] [48] Cocking, p. 112, mentions in 1772 that the Gros Ventres adopted "slaves" of both sexes into families who had lost their children either by war or sickness.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 888 182 The Dance must have helped appreciably to enhance the status of the elderly participants, a little old to take active part in the actual hunting and game-food providing, and to have given them a feeling of still being economically useful members of the tribe. The same *mutatis mutandis* would be true of the old women in connection with their own Dance.

After the more or less secret rites inside the lodge of the Dance were over, the dancers ran a race. After the close of the dance, the camp moved.

888 561 The elderly men who as chief vowers or associates had gone once through the Dance had reached the end of the ritual trail and became members of the unorganized "retired old men," of equal rank in this respect with their ceremonial grandfathers. After the dance the grandfathers could not control their grandsons, as grandfathers could after other Dances. After going through this Dance, the dancer though entering in a sense the "inactive" ranks could still be called on to function as a ceremonial grandfather. He moreover was allowed very considerable freedom and latitude previously denied him. With his Punishers' Dance grandfather he [571] contracted a relationship somewhat similar to the enemy-friend one. In general, while of course he was given no leave to commit grave crimes, he was allowed much freedom in talking or acting vulgarly or obscenely in public and in the presence of consanguineal or actual relatives toward whom respect and avoidance observances had been strictly required of him prior to his graduation into the class of "retired old men."[88]

He could, for instance, talk pretty freely with his own brother-in-law who was also a "retired old man" about matters concerning elimination and reproduction, and could indulge in a large degree of vulgarity and obscenity before a group which included even his own mother-in-law, and no one had the right to criticize him for this or protest against his behavior.

If, for example, he took off his breechcloth in the presence of a group that included such relatives, someone might say to him: "That's going too far." But the old man might answer: "I have sat on the sage brush. I have the right to do this."

[88] Cf. Flannery, 1953, p. 196.

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

two enemy friends to strip the loser bare of everything he owned, down to his 572
very lodge, was, like a wheel game of the same order of magnitude, a crowning 525
event in Gros Ventre gambling, one arousing most intense popular interest. One of our informants was, in view of this fact, of the opinion that gambling among the Gros Ventre may have been first invented by enemy friends.

The keepers of the two most sacred pipes, the Flat Pipe and the Feathered 792
Pipe, were not allowed to gamble with any one, nor were their wives, nor (prob- 525
ably: our chief informant was not sure) ex-keepers. Rare exceptions may have occurred in practice. Should an enemy friend of a keeper taunt him into betting and should the challenger lose, he would lose not only his wager but also in a sense his life. For his life would in consequence be shortened, unless the keeper took pity on him and through submitting him to the appropriate ritual procedure averted the penalty. It was believed too that the keeper could not lose if, against the rules, he really did gamble. Gamblers, at least notorious ones, were not selected as pipe keepers.

Keepers and their wives were subject to a great many other restrictions. They had to maintain a high degree of dignity, to practise many kinds of abstention and "asceticism," and to be benefactors to and intercessors for all [784] the people. It seems probably that the taboo on their gambling was related to one or more of these aspects of the keepership.

Ritual "grandfathers" among the Gros Ventre were of two kinds. A retiring sacred-pipe keeper became automatically "grandfather" to the incoming keeper and instructed him in the ritual, prerogatives and duties of the keepership; a candidate for a sacred lodge chose an older man who had been through the rite as a ritual "grandfather" who would instruct him in the ceremonies and observances of the lodge in question. A person would never gamble against his ritual grandfather. The relationship established between grandfather and grandchild in both cases was predominantly a respectful and sacred one. Against his ritual grandfather a man would not even play in the modern non-gambling 4-button [524] hand game.

The foregoing rather intricate "bettor-wager" gambling pattern appears to 525
be the result of the orderly interplay of five chief determinants or conditioning 571
factors.

The most important and most basic determinant was that of in-group altruism, cohesion, and loyalty, decreasing in intensity from closer and smaller circle to more distant and larger circle, from biological family, to kinship group, to band, to lodge and society, to tribe as such, to more or less friendly alien tribe, and stopping short of hostile alien tribe. In general, the less intense the

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

525 we-group altruism, cohesion, and loyalty, the more gambling and the greater the
571 stakes and vice versa.

Two less important, secondary determinants were the rules of avoidance and respect on the one hand and those of familiarity and license on the other. In general, the greater the degree of avoidance and respect demanded between two persons or classes, the less gambling and the smaller the stakes; the greater the degree of familiarity and license permitted, the more gambling and the bigger the stakes.

A fourth determinant was the element of the sacred (and/or ascetic) associated with certain offices and with the persons occupying them, an element which barred gambling by and/or against these persons, namely, pipe keepers and ritual grandfathers.

A fifth determinant was obviously in operation, although the field evidence therefor is not abundant. We got no record, however, of Gros Ventre gambling with their ancient, hereditary and bitter enemies, the Sioux. Gambling, even to
[648] strip opponents completely, presupposes a minimum of friendliness between the players, or at least the absence of deadly and unqualified hostility.

If we diagram along a horizontal belt the full range of human relationships from unqualified friendliness and altruism on the extreme left through the various gradations to unqualified hostility and malevolence on the extreme right, Gros Ventre gambling may be represented on this belt as absent from the extreme left end, gradually increasing in frequency and in size of stakes as we pass along the central section toward the right, and then suddenly dropping and completely disappearing near the extreme right end.

Besides these five determinants or conditioning factors in Gros Ventre gambling, there were perhaps others, but this is as far as our evidence and our analysis thereof have gone. Of course, one cannot have gambling without some kind of close-range or long-range contact between the gamblers, without some kind of property or other valued thing to wager, and so forth, but working out a list of such requisites would be labor lost.

Before leaving this subject, we should emphasize that, while the preceding pages have referred particularly to the bettor-wager pattern as holding for the hand game, the same pattern held as well for all other Gros Ventre gambling games and contests.[7]

[171
525] 7 In our world sources on gambling we have noted only two explicit references, and these extremely brief, to the bettor-wager pattern: G. Goodwin, *The Social Organization of the Western Apache* (Chicago, 1942), p. 375, "certain types of gambling" are prevented "between members of the same clan," for it would be "like winning it [property] from yourself"; R.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

ties of the larger society which the company had joined. Meanwhile another group was meeting informally before it was admitted into one or other of the Societies. Since the Stars and Wolf-men were approximately even in number, there probably was a regular alternation. According to reasonable estimate, the Potbellies joined the Stars about 1840; the next group of young men would then have joined the Wolves, say in 1843 or 1844; the following company joining the Stars in about 1849–50. 561 575

If the Sacred Dances, except the Sacrifice Dance, were gone through in order, there would thus be several companies each year whose members were eligible to vow any one of the Dances, and our informants were all under the impression that one or more of the Dances was given each summer. It seems quite clear that the Law Enforcer Dance was vowed only by the older levels of the active warriors. After having gone through this rite, these men more or less retired as "old men," and, having "sat on the sage," acquired certain privileges and freedom denied to their fellow tribesmen who had not yet gone through this Dance. These "old men" acted as ceremonial grandfathers, i.e. sponsors and teachers, for others going through the various lodges, but were no longer active as Stars or Wolf-men. They became members of an undifferentiated group of elders, the ranks of their original company having no doubt been drastically thinned out by the time they would have arrived at this status. 796 561 [886] [888]

If the above interpretation be correct, there would be three age divisions: the "young men," those meeting in companies; the "middle-aged, mature men," whose companies had joined either the Stars or the Wolf-men, and, having gone through the Fly Dance, were eligible to vow the other Dances; the "old men" who had gone through the Law Enforcer's Dance and were no longer active in the Star and Wolf-men societies, except two of their number, one of whom served as announcer in each. 561

The young men, who together formed the company, being of approximately the same age, were tied together by bonds of friendship and there were apparently not a few pairs of "inseparable friends" in each company. One of our informants, Cora Chandler, indicated that the bonds holding together the members of a company were so intimate that marriage between their children was [572] 561 582

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Each society had its distinctive songs which would be used by its component companies in carrying out their police duties during the Sacred Dances. Both had their "begging songs," as well as their marching and dance songs. Everyone in camp would know from the songs which of the societies was performing. 575 533

In connection with the distinctive dance of either society was first the preliminary "begging." This meant that the members of the society, dressed in their best and mounted on their finest horses, would select the lodges of prominent men belonging to the opposite society in front of which they would sing.[14] The leaders of the society were supposed to be present on these begging expeditions, otherwise their enemy-friends could take advantage of their absence and twit them by singing a special song.[15] The members of the society might be accompanied by their wives, who helped out in the singing, and usually a member of the society would suggest that they sing in front of the lodge belonging to his enemy-friend of the opposite society. If, while they were singing, the owner of the lodge failed to appear, his enemy-friend would peep into the lodge and at this the owner, assisted by his relatives, would get busy and give food to be used in the feast of the society which was doing the begging. If the owner of the lodge were a prominent man, who wished to take this occasion to enhance further his reputation, he might give something really valuable to the singers and would have the opportunity later of bragging: "On such-and-such an occasion, this is what I gave you Wolf-men (or Star men)." If he were a really good sport, our informants said, he would even send his wife out to sing with the others. After something had been given to the society, the singers sang other special songs,[16] while the rest danced. 533 575 796 572

After obtaining in this fashion the wherewithal for the feast, the society members lined up two-by-two at the entrance of the camp circle. The two noted men carrying whips remained mounted, while the column stepped in time to the music provided by the singers, who were carrying the drum at the end of the procession. They wove in and out, snake-dance fashion, while 575 796

[14] A begging song of the Wolf-men was recorded as No. 98; two such songs of the Stars, as No. 96 and 97.

[15] Recorded as No. 101.

[16] Recorded as No. 95 and No. 100.

555 342 532 The more war-deeds a man performed, the more frequently was he the center of attention. Gradually he began to rise above others and finally he achieved recognition as an outstanding warrior. Only when a man reached this enviable height was he justified in having his war record painted on his lodge for all the world to admire. When a newly painted lodge of this kind was first erected, the owner initiated its use by giving a feast to which other prominent warriors were invited. From among the guests, the host "pulled up" one who was able to tell four brave exploits, each connected in some way with a different lodge belonging to the enemy. At the conclusion of each separate account, the warrior who was reciting hit the taut new lodge a resounding blow, thus attracting attention. Then while the guests were feasting and smoking with the host, crowds gathered around to examine the lodge and to discuss the record depicted thereon. It was said, too, that similar discussions took place when the Gros Ventres met on friendly terms with other tribes. The reputation of the owner was thereby enhanced as his prowess was ever more widely acknowledged.

Enemy-Friends

572 In accordance with the general prestige pattern, an outstanding warrior, or one who had aspirations toward that end, was expected to be generous as well as brave. Particular significance attached, however, to the disposition of horses stolen from the enemy or of weapons or other trophies obtained from the enemy at risk of life. [602] The giving of such presents initiated a particular relationship between recipient and donor known as the enemy-friendship. This was a kind of "joking relationship" and involved the greatest amount of freedom between the two both in word and action. Whatever one enemy-friend said or did to the other had to be borne with equanimity. Loss of temper involved loss of prestige, and it was said that in some cases one enemy-friend had to suffer patiently audacity which would have led him to murder another not in that relationship. Each tried to out-do the other by kinds of speech and action ranging all the way from the most harmless teasing and jokes to the most humiliating exposition of foibles and misdemeanors.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

A man who was ambitious selected his enemy-friends with care so as to ensure opponents worthy of his efforts. It was said that often an older man whose reputation was already well established chose a spunky youngster. As The Boy phrased it, "This was an honor for the younger man and the older had nothing to lose. If the older continually won out over the younger in a fair 'fight' he ruined the younger man's reputation and thus eliminated a possible rival. On the other hand, if the younger man showed that he could take 'abuse' as well as give it, the older man could go along with him as an enemy-friend of long standing." 572

Everyone watched with interest the contest between well-matched enemy-friends whether they indulged in good-natured razzing of one another or whether they were concerned with more serious matters. When each tried to out-do the other in bragging of conquests both in love and at war, a large audience was attracted. Practical jokes were expected between them and the more vulgar and obscene their nature, the greater the enjoyment. Whenever one enemy-friend thought he "had something" on the other, he hastened to expose him publicly, so that the enemy-friendship often functioned as an effective means of social control. [522] [626]

When a man publicly taunted his enemy-friend, however, it was well for him to have ample grounds for the accusation lest the tables be turned against him as the case of Bull Lodge and Sits Like A Woman. This was told by The Boy.

"Sits Like A Woman was leading a war party out of camp as his enemy-friend, Bull Lodge, was returning from a hunt. Bull Lodge inquired of some members of the party as to who their leader might be. When he was told that Sits Like A Woman was the leader, Bull Lodge remarked: 'I'd hesitate to meet such warriors as yourselves were I the enemy, but Sits Like A Woman has no shame to lead such great men as you are!' Sits Like A Woman heard this and didn't forget it. The party was a very successful one, returning with 'charcoal' (scalps) and none of the Gros Ventres was even hurt. When they got home they sang around the camp circle here and there as usual. Bull Lodge at the time was entertaining many guests including his brothers-in-law who were seated near the entrance of the tipi. After Sits Like A

572 Woman had sung around the circle once, he led his party to Bull Lodge's tipi. The latter was suspicious and thought: 'I'm in for it now!' Sits Like A Woman went up to Bull Lodge, took him by the arm and said: 'Come, my friend.' He led him to the middle of the group of returned warriors. He then faced Bull Lodge and said in a jesting way: 'Stand still or I'll kill you.' Bull Lodge stood there and Sits Like A Woman took his rifle and, drumming with the stock on Bull Lodge's back, sang the following song: 'He who poisons (i.e., a medicine man with power to kill) has no penis.' Bull Lodge and his brothers-in-law realized that Sits Like A Woman was in earnest because not only was the song a great insult, but the victim's brothers-in-law were present,—which they should not have been when any reference to private parts was made.[23] The war party took up the song with enthusiasm as Sits Like A Woman told Bull Lodge again: 'Don't move yet—I'll kill you anyway.' He took Bull Lodge's new Hudson Bay blanket and slit it in two; he slashed Bull Lodge's shirt and took it off him; he slashed his leggings and removed them; and finally he cut the belt so that the breech-cloth fell to the ground. Bull Lodge was standing there naked. By that time the brothers-in-law had stolen away, one by one. Bull Lodge knew better than to run away, and Sits Like A Woman said: 'Perhaps you have power to poison people. If you have a mind to poison me, go ahead and try. I'm not afraid of you. If you choose to pay me back that way, you might just as well try it on the sun. Or, if you choose to pay me back in the way I have treated you, go ahead. But first lead a successful war party. If you then do to me what I have done to you, I won't be mad. But I'll lead still another war party and do far worse to you that second time than I have done this time.'

[602 834]

"After thinking it over, Bull Lodge decided to buy off his enemy-friend and the next morning he got together an armful of valuable things, filled a pipe and went to Sits Like A Woman. 'My friend,' he said, 'here's a pipe I am offering to you. You take this pipe so you will stop doing things like this to me. While I don't mind it, my brothers-in-law were there. And here are some things you can have.' Sits Like A Woman laughed, but ac-

[607] [23] Relationship between brothers-in-law precluded any reference to sex and bodily exposure in each other's presence. See pp. 118–19.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

cepted the pipe and gifts. Two days later Sits Like A Woman told his wives to cook and had the announcer call out: 'Bull Lodge, your friend Sits Like A Woman is inviting you to his lodge to smoke.' Others were likewise invited and when Bull Lodge arrived he was put in the place of honor. After they had eaten a good meal and had started to smoke, Sits Like A Woman said to Bull Lodge: 'My friend, you can rest assured that I'll never do that to you again. I went to that extreme because you told some of my party I was not fit to lead them. But I showed you what kind of a man I am. You are intelligent and I don't think you'll make a mistake like that again. Also its good you didn't get mad but took what I handed out to you. You probably regret the blanket and clothes I cut up. So here are my best clothes—you can have them.' Then, indicating his best race horse, he added: 'Lead that horse home and keep it.' Thus Sits Like A Woman publicly absolved Bull Lodge, but by heaping gifts upon him so generously he exposed him too." 572

If enemy-friends were relatives, usually they were of opposite sex and the joking aspects, rather than the spirit of rivalry, were predominant. Should the enemy-friendship be inaugurated between two relatives who otherwise were expected to be reserved in each other's presence, somewhat more freedom between them was permitted, although the taboo on reference to sex was said to have been strictly maintained.[24] Among other examples of this type of enemy-friendship, Coming Daylight gave the following from her own experience. "My husband's nephew, Crazy Bull, one time presented to me a horse he had captured from the enemy. Before that time we had always properly avoided speaking to each other unless it was necessary, but now we were enemy-friends and we could play jokes on each other and he would tease me, too. One time, for instance, during the night he piled up a big load of firewood just in front of the entrance to my lodge. He had hoped that when I went out in the morning I would open the flap and go out head foremost into the wood and lose my temper. He was there watching to see what would happen, but unfortunately for him, my grandmother was the first to venture forth and so the trick miscarried and counted for me rather than for him. I never liked 572 602 522

[24] For details on kinship behavior, see pp. 107–26.

572 602 522 to play jokes, but I would get even with him by going over to his lodge when I would hear him abusing his wife. He had to stop when I came in there because if I actually caught him at it, I could dub him a wife-beater or worse in public."

While in most instances the enemy-friendship was initiated by 562 572 602 men, women occasionally obtained war trophies on their own, and had the same privilege. The following, told by Singer, illustrates how she herself came by some war trophies and the manner in which she disposed of them. "One time, when the Piegan had attacked us and the Gros Ventres were pursuing them, I dashed out with some of my women relatives. We came upon three Piegan who had just been killed. Those other women stopped to hit them but I rode by more slowly and spotted some booty near one of the bodies. I dismounted and picked up a nail-studded belt to which was attached a scabbard containing a knife and a nicely beaded gun case. I didn't want to show these to the others, but when they taunted me because I failed to count coups as they had done, I showed them this belt. One of them grabbed the scabbard, which I had intended to give to my own husband, saying: 'You are giving me this. Now we are enemy-friends!' To my nephew I later gave the gun case, saying as I threw it down in front of him: 'Here. You could have this for your gun. This is what I took in war.' The knife I threw down in front of my grandmother and, because we were now enemy-friends, I used a 'bad' name for her —I called her 'you who don't wipe your behind.'"

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

So he rushed into his father's lodge, but another of his sisters-in-law went in and saw him sitting down, and said to me: 'You two have lost, and we have won, because your partner sat down first.' Since I didn't have anything to put up as fine, my husband's brother pulled my eyebrows out, as was customary when a person couldn't pay a debt of this kind. My partner, however, gave a feast prepared by his mother as payment, but failed to include me. I got even with him by coming up behind him one day shortly thereafter and emptying a pail of water over his head." 607 522 [686]

Whether he liked it or not, a man had to take without complaint whatever kind of speech or action his own brother directed towards his wife, and likewise a woman had to put up with whatever her sister said or did to her husband. Men who were married to sisters considered each other as "brothers" rather than as brothers-in-law, just as women married to brothers were "sisters" and not sisters-in-law.

Inseparable-friends

As broadly as kinship bonds were conceived among the Gros Ventres in both consanguineal and affinal relationships, kinship behavior and obligations were extended even more widely through the institution of "inseparable-friends." Coming Daylight explained this as follows: "If two men are *inithiha* this means that they have grown up together and are the same as brothers although they are not really kin to each other. The children of these two men would be the same as brothers and sisters to each other and could not marry. All relatives of 'inseparable-friends' were considered as own relatives. Crow's Bull's 'inseparable-friend' was Truth. He knew all the songs that belonged to the Flat Pipe because Crow Bull was Keeper and the two were so much together. Truth always called Crow Bull's son 'son,' and he called me 'niece' because Crow Bull was my mother's brother. A woman could tease the 'inseparable-friend' of her husband in just the same way she could tease her brother-in-law." 572 608

Cora illustrated how complicated relationships could become through the inseparable-friendship. "My brother and Arthur Skinner were such friends, which made Arthur my 'brother.' When Arthur married I should normally have taken his wife as 'sister-

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

572
608

in-law.' The difficulty was that this woman Arthur married was already my 'aunt' because her father and my own were 'inseparable-friends.' Maybe in the old days Arthur couldn't have married her. But anyway we solved the situation by letting the older relationship take precedence over the newer one, so I called her 'aunt' rather than 'sister-in-law.'"

Some other pairs of "inseparable-friends," who were mentioned, were Cora's maternal grandfather and Consume It; Dressed In White and Ibe; Curley Head and Eagle Child. It was stated that while one friend was supposed to offer his life for the other in case of necessity, it did not always work out this way and at least one example was given to prove the point.

Regarding the same type of institutionalized friendship between women, the evidence is not clear. Singer stated: "When they use the word *itóhaha* it means that the two women concerned were friends from early childhood to the end of their lives. I had a friend like that. The father of that girl considered me as his own daughter and I had to respect her brother all my life. This girl was a cousin of Coming Daylight and we two were closer than sisters because we were the same age. We played together, worked together and did everything together. We used to eat at each other's homes, and we kept in touch after marriage by visiting back and forth." Coming Daylight suggested that these two were such close friends because their fathers may have been "inseparable-friends" and she denied that two women would participate in a relationship of the kind which would bind their families together independently of formalized friendship between men. No further information was obtained on this aspect of the subject.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

763 property.[4] Although in the following case ideal conditions did not obtain, the account as given by an old woman illustrates something of the attitudes which prevailed even after the Gros Ventres had settled down. "My husband had been ill. We were very badly off, having nothing to eat and no light, but worst of all my husband had no suitable clothes in which to pass his last moments. A friend of his fortunately came to the rescue, bringing new clothes, food, a fancy new lamp and fuel. A short time after this my husband called to me to come to him and said: 'I have lost life long ago. The only thing I have left is my eyesight. I can see, but I will be leaving you soon. Bring me the bundle my friend has given me.' I did so and as he examined the new clothing piece by piece he said: 'Now I am glad I shall have something to wear. I want you to listen carefully. I don't want you to mourn—we have too many children for that, and they must be cared for. Don't go to your relatives nor to mine. We have been very poor since I have been sick and none of them has even come to see us. I want you to go straight to the home of this man who has given me these clothes. Now I am ready to go.' After my husband [587] died, I did just as he had requested. In spite of all the gossip, I married that man. People were talking about me because that man had at one time been married to a wife of my mother's brother."

764 If circumstances did not permit arrangements to be made before death, as soon as possible after death the corpse was washed and dressed. This office was performed preferably by friends of the [572] deceased since it was not expected of near relatives because "they felt too bad." Should the deceased not own a proper outfit, one was usually somehow provided. Coming Daylight remembered that one time when a small boy was drowned, the child's distracted mother came running to her lodge saying: "I am very poor and my little boy has no good clothes to wear. Will you let me have your little boy's clothes?" Coming Daylight felt so sorry for this woman that she let her have her own son's nicely beaded clothes and moccasins, and gave her a blanket as well. After the body was dressed, they laid it on this blanket in the place of honor at the back of the parents' lodge.

[4] Kroeber, 1908, p. 180, notes that "A man often disposed of his property before death."

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

only his property and so have to begin accumulating again from scratch, but 554
might at the same time lose as well his standing in the tribe and become a de- 525
feated and disgraced nobody, of a low standing from which it was very difficult to rise in the scale.

The wheel game was not played by women or children, nor apparently by the 525
very young men, but only by fully adult or middle-aged men and older ones, and 572
by only two players at a time. The really big games with large stakes were in [885]
most cases, it seems—almost all, according to our informants—played by two "enemy friends" or "war friends." Such enemy friends or war friends were very different from ordinary friends or "true" pledged friends. An "enemy friendship" was a war-related compact entered into in the following manner. A member of a returning war party would give some trophy or booty he had taken from the enemy—e.g., a scalp, or horse, or weapon—to one of his own compatriots of the same or opposite sex, who had little choice but to accept. Acceptance made "enemy friends" or "war friends" of the two. War friends, particularly if unrelated and both males, could go the limit in twitting and in- [522]
sulting each other and in playing practical jokes, even rather outrageous ones, on each other, and the victim had to take such behavior in good part, at least externally. However, along with the privilege of taking such liberties ran the accepted obligation to stand by each other in real need or hazard of grave nature.

The two war friends could gamble with each other. In fact, gambling among the Gros Ventre reached at times its climax in contests between two war friends. A wheel game between war friends commonly arose out of a "bragging match" between them; one would challenge the other to play the wheel game. If the one challenged declined to accept the challenge, his war friend who challenged him, and his other war friends, would ever after take occasion to deride him publicly for it at the least provocation. So the challenge could not easily be declined. The game often became one in which each enemy friend would go out to strip the other of practically everything he owned—horses, gun, blankets, lodge—and at which the most eager interest was aroused among the relatives, fellow-clansmen, and friends of the respective players and, for that matter, among the whole camp population. Such enemy-friend contests were commonly protracted sessions, often all-day ones, at the wheel game.

The following three narratives of particular wheel-game gambling contests—the first two of which are matters of well-remembered recent history, the third an older traditional story paralleled elsewhere on the Plains—throw some further light on the social role of the Gros Ventre wheel game.

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

525 *Narrative 1.* In 1893 two Gros Ventre, enemy friends to each other, Red Whip
● 572 who died in 1912 and Many Tail Feathers, got into a gambling game with the wheel.
578 Many Tail Feathers was losing and he got angry. He grabbed Red Whip and they
538 had a rought-and-tumble tussle. They fell to the ground, with Red Whip on top, astraddle Many Tail Feathers. Red Whip drew his knife, cut off all of the other's hair, at which loss the latter cried while the people cheered a cheer of contempt. Red Whip acting as if he had scalped an enemy, threw the hair in the air, and said in the hearing of all: "What's the matter with you, my friend? You must have a weak heart. Look at me. This is what I did to my enemy [such and such a time]. You know all about it. I just wanted to show you that I am your superior in matters of this kind. But anyhow you can have that good horse of mine."

[115] *Narrative 2.* Lame Bull, father of The Boy, our chief informant on gambling, died in 1908 at the age of 83 or 84 years. Lame Bull, when still a fairly young man, a rising one with prospects of rising higher and higher in the prestige scale, had been chosen as an enemy friend by White Owl, an older man, and Lame Bull had, according to custom, accepted the offer. An offer of enemy friendship was on the one hand almost mandatory, and on the other, where it came from an outstanding man of great experience and ability, as in this case, it was a real honor to the recipient and would rarely be refused.

When Lame Bull and White Owl became enemy friends, they "started to act like two roosters" and were saying to themselves: "I am going to get you when you are off your guard." Both knew that at some time or another, sooner or later, they would have to do something to put their enemy friendship to the greatest test. After much sparring around, the two men engaged in a wheel game as just such a climactic test. At this game White Owl had a big reputation (besides all his other accomplishments), while Lame Bull had no reputation at all at it.

On this occasion Lame Bull wagered everything he owned, and all his wife's property, including their lodge. As it was customary at such events for the kinsmen of the respective players to bet on their kinsman, Lame Bull's father, together with other relatives wagered large stakes on him, although the father was strongly opposed on principle to such betting and had always counseled Lame Bull strenuously against it. More, however, than large amounts of property was at stake; the players' relative and absolute standing in the tribe hung upon the outcome. In the case of Lame Bull and White Owl, the former a younger man of great promise, the latter an older one of recognized prominence, the rivalry was keen and, in a very true sense, ruthless. The older man was jealous of his great reputation and did not want any one to get near him in prestige. He was trying to crush Lame Bull's rising career betimes lest later Lame Bull might outdo him. At the same time, White Owl stood to profit even if he lost, for he would still be attached as enemy friend to Lame Bull and would have reflected prestige from being the enemy friend of this rising man. He would thus profit inevitably by the latter's prestige.

Lame Bull lost everything in the contest, and, of course, his father and relatives lost heavily. White Owl's people tore down Lame Bull's lodge and took it away as winnings and took everything in it, even down to the dishes of Lame Bull's wife. At the end of the playing, Lame Bull was an object of charity and a laughing stock.

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

About the only thing that earned him a bit of recognition was the fact that in spite of his loss of property and of status—to have recognition at all you had to have some possessions to hold and to give away in presents—and in spite of the strutting and crowing and twitting by the winner and his followers after the playing was over, Lame Bull did not lose his temper. 525 572 578 538

When the playing ended, Lame Bull had nothing of his own except his wife. So his father and mother invited them to eat. Downcast, embarrassed, ashamed, "feeling like a small potato," he ate. When he had finished, his father gave him such a tongue lashing that Lame Bull, who was very fond of his father, cried, and Lame Bull was a strong man who did not easily cry. He felt so bad that he went out on the hills and cried and cried, and slept out there, and came back a pretty sorry young man. And for a long time after, his wife, who also was one of his enemy friends, would throw this up to him: "Oh, you are nothing. You were always weak. Look what your enemy friend did to you. You will never amount to anything." And she would say such things to him especially when others were present. So she set about training him. At any rate Lame Bull was cured of gambling by his great loss to White Owl.

As time went on, Lame Bull recovered from the defeat which might have wrecked for good the career of another. His people had given him enough property to make a new start in life. He would invite White Owl to his lodge and give him big feasts and would make valuable presents of horses and such things to him. And White Owl would make a mental note of these things and would say to himself: "All right, my friend, you wait and see what I will do for you", awaiting the proper time to reciprocate, as was Gros Ventre custom. So a long time afterwards White Owl made very valuable presents to Lame Bull. And they were very good friends.

Narrative 3. Long ago, the story runs, a young Gros Ventre warrior went off alone on a war raid. He got to a mountain, and after nightfall went into a cave to camp overnight. On feeling around in the darkness he found some one else there, and said to himself: "An enemy." To make sure he asked by touching the skin of the other's forearm. The other by wiggling his finger on the Gros Ventre's chest signified: "I am a Snake Indian." So the Gros Ventre took the Snake's hand and made the sign of "big belly" to signify: "I am a Gros Ventre." 525 648 538

The Gros Ventre then said to the Snake: "Let's not fight tonight. You go to sleep and I'll go to sleep. Tomorrow morning we'll see what we'll do." But being afraid of each other, neither slept at all during the night.

The next morning the Gros Ventre asked the Snake: "Friend, where were you going?" He replied: "On the war path." "Alone?" "Yes, all alone." The Snake then asked the same questions and got the same answers. Then the Gros Ventre said: "We are both alone. Instead of killing each other, let's gamble with the wheel. The loser loses his scalp to the winner."

So they started to play, with such things as bow and arrows and clothing for stakes, and the Snake won everything from the Gros Ventre. Then the Gros Ventre proposed: "Friend, you stake all you have won, in a lump, against my scalp," and this was agreed upon. At this point the Gros Ventre got afraid he would lose, so

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

621 Members of one band could and not infrequently did gamble both for small
525 and for big stakes against members of other bands, just as one kinship group used to gamble against others. Tribal we-feeling certainly existed, but seemingly not as intense as band we-feeling, just as, in turn, the latter was not as intense as kin we-feeling. In inter-band, as in inter-kin, gambling, spectators, if they bet at all, would lay their wagers on the players of their own band, as required by band loyalty, regardless of the relative skill and reputation of the contesting players or teams.

575 For Gros Ventre men who had reached full adulthood and were still in the
[885] prime of life, there were two age-societies, called the Stars and the Wolves (or
525 Wolf-men). These two groups, with soldier-police functions, would join forces when necessary in keeping order, in fighting fires, and in defending the whole tribe against enemies, but for the rest rivalry between them was pretty keen. Stars would gamble against Wolves in big games for large stakes, but ordinarily a Star would not gamble against a Star or a Wolf against a Wolf, except for refreshments or a smoke or similar trifling "stakes." Inasmuch as membership in the two societies cut across the lines of kinship and band membership, intersociety gambling suffered an important restriction: if a Star were gambling in a given game, his relatives among the Wolves would not play or bet against him in that particular game. Kinship ties took precedence over society ties.

525 Gros Ventre would of course gamble for big stakes against members of other
648 tribes with whom they happened to be at the time on sufficiently good terms, or at least not bitterly and actively hostile, to meet and foregather peacefully, such as the Piegan, Flathead, Nez Percé, and Cree. In such intertribal contests they would often go out to win every possession of their opponents.

572 The Gros Ventre distinguished three kinds of friends: ordinary friends,
525 true or pledged friends, and enemy or war friends. As a rule ordinary close friends would not take opposite sides in a big gambling game. This was all the more true of pledged friends. Two boys, for instance, who liked each other
[608] and who had perhaps grown up together would, though belonging to different bands, enter into a sort of "sworn brotherhood," give each other presents, exchange intimate confidences, and promise, without religious rite of any kind, to stand by each other always, even to death if necessary. Two girls could also enter into a similar pact. Such "true" or pledged friends never gambled against each other either as players or as backers, at least never for stakes of value.

Of enemy or war friends we have previously spoken when describing the wheel game. Two enemy friends would gamble against each other for small stakes or big, the bigger the better. In fact a hand game for big stakes between

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

two enemy friends to strip the loser bare of everything he owned, down to his 572
very lodge, was, like a wheel game of the same order of magnitude, a crowning 525
event in Gros Ventre gambling, one arousing most intense popular interest. One of our informants was, in view of this fact, of the opinion that gambling among the Gros Ventre may have been first invented by enemy friends.

The keepers of the two most sacred pipes, the Flat Pipe and the Feathered 792
Pipe, were not allowed to gamble with any one, nor were their wives, nor (prob- 525
ably: our chief informant was not sure) ex-keepers. Rare exceptions may have occurred in practice. Should an enemy friend of a keeper taunt him into betting and should the challenger lose, he would lose not only his wager but also in a sense his life. For his life would in consequence be shortened, unless the keeper took pity on him and through submitting him to the appropriate ritual procedure averted the penalty. It was believed too that the keeper could not lose if, against the rules, he really did gamble. Gamblers, at least notorious ones, were not selected as pipe keepers.

Keepers and their wives were subject to a great many other restrictions. They had to maintain a high degree of dignity, to practise many kinds of abstention and "asceticism," and to be benefactors to and intercessors for all [784] the people. It seems probably that the taboo on their gambling was related to one or more of these aspects of the keepership.

Ritual "grandfathers" among the Gros Ventre were of two kinds. A retiring sacred-pipe keeper became automatically "grandfather" to the incoming keeper and instructed him in the ritual, prerogatives and duties of the keepership; a candidate for a sacred lodge chose an older man who had been through the rite as a ritual "grandfather" who would instruct him in the ceremonies and observances of the lodge in question. A person would never gamble against his ritual grandfather. The relationship established between grandfather and grandchild in both cases was predominantly a respectful and sacred one. Against his ritual grandfather a man would not even play in the modern non-gambling 4-button [524] hand game.

The foregoing rather intricate "bettor-wager" gambling pattern appears to 525
be the result of the orderly interplay of five chief determinants or conditioning 571
factors.

The most important and most basic determinant was that of in-group altruism, cohesion, and loyalty, decreasing in intensity from closer and smaller circle to more distant and larger circle, from biological family, to kinship group, to band, to lodge and society, to tribe as such, to more or less friendly alien tribe, and stopping short of hostile alien tribe. In general, the less intense the

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 be repeated so that it was something of an ordeal. The sword owners would see to it that the dancers kept up, prodding the laggards until the series of songs had been completed.

[533 177] The singers themselves had a smoking song, one of the few songs of the Grass dance for which words were adopted along with the tunes [11] from the Assiniboine. This song indicated a period of rest and relaxation for all but it was required that one of the officers provide the pipe and mixture for the singers.

Any member who left the dancing-place was obliged to surrender some piece of personal property as insurance that he would return. If he did not come back, the property was forfeit.

796 [143] 586 Another distinctive feature of the earlier Grass dance was the throwing away of property and especially of wives. The term "throwing away" is appropriate because a stick was held in the hand and after the holder publicly announced what the stick represented he would throw it to the ground. If, for instance, a member of the society had decided to give away his wife he would take a stick and say: "Here is so-and-so (naming the woman)" and throw the stick down. Sometimes another member would pick up the stick, thus indicating that he was taking this woman, but occasionally it happened that no one grabbed her and in such case the wife in question would return to live with her own relatives. The man who so renounced his wife was supposed to be through with her for good. It was said by informants, however, that once in a while, provided the wife had not been claimed 522 by another, the husband would want her back again. An in- 796 stance in illustration of this point was told to me. A man who 586 stood to my informant in the relation of enemy-friend [12] had so ● 572 disposed of his wife at a Grass dance. Some time later my informant saw the couple together again. My informant took ad-

[533] [177] [11] Most of the Gros Ventre Grass dance songs have no words proper. This contrasts with the Arapaho Grass dance songs, as my informants are well aware. The difference is perhaps due to the influence on the Arapaho of the Ghost Dance religion (cf. Kroeber, A. L., The Arapaho, AMNH-B 18, pt. 4, 1907, p. 320), which scarcely affected the Gros Ventres.

[572] [12] This was a joking and rivalry relationship entered into by presenting to a fellow tribesman an object captured from the enemy.

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

vantage of the occasion, as she had the right to do, to make fun of her enemy-friend without his being able to retaliate. She took a handful of horse manure and rubbed it all over his face saying, "Oh! All of us at the Grass dance saw you throw her away, why are you going with her again?" and in this way called attention to the fact that he was not so "brave" as he had pretended to be.

Another informant stated that she and her sister were just able to escape the embarrassing experience of so being given away. They were both living with a man who was a prominent member of the Wolf society. One of his fellow-members, however, came to the two women and told them that their husband planned on throwing them both away at the forthcoming Grass dance. My informant was very angry to get this news and said to her sister: "We will get ready and get rid of him first!" Whereupon they packed their belongings and taking their own horses went quickly to their mother's brother. My informant said that this man who was going to throw them away tried many times to speak to her thereafter but she always turned away and refused to listen, thinking to herself: "Well, there are plenty of other men."

As a final point in the discussion of the earlier form of the Grass dance, the custom of members giving away presents in honor of their loved ones should be mentioned. This was a purely voluntary procedure and could be done by any member who wished to do so at any performance of the Grass dance. The following is a typical example of how this was carried out. The same informant last mentioned, married another member of the Wolf society not long after the incident she described above, and had been selected as one of the four women singers for the Grass dance. At one performance she was holding her infant daughter, her first child by this marriage, as she sang. Her husband, wishing to honor his little daughter, told a war story, went to his wife and took the child in his arms and, going to the center of the dancing-place, gave away a horse to one of the Assiniboine who happened to be visiting at the time of the dance.

Such was the form of the Grass dance as carried out by the

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

622 to have been the primary one of the leader. He decided where to go and when, in order to hunt, to seek lodge covers, to gather berries, to cut new tent- and travois-poles, and so on. He invited people, prominent men of his own band and of other bands, and fed [574] people every day. He would have provisions on hand and was prepared to carry out extensive hospitality. He would be one who had plenty of buffalo horses which younger men—his sons and nephews—would use on the hunt, and numerous pack horses which returned from the hunt laden with meat. His wives would invite old women, and especially needy ones, to help slice meat, prepare it for storage, to render grease and extract marrow, all of which these old women were glad to do in return for some fresh meat.

As explained by The Boy, a man had to work up from the ranks, 622 so to speak, to be recognized as chief and as leader. "It paid to 555 be prosperous and a good man. In the course of time people would look up to him as leader and other bands would be told that he is the leader. He does not ask for this distinction but, if he is prosperous and good, people recognize him. The band gets together and tells him: 'You are our leader.' He holds 'office' for life. As he grows old he might tell the people to select someone else, but, even so, they would continue to look up to him and to ask his advice and consult him. There are obstacles in the path of life, and one who would rise must walk around or over them. To be an acknowledged leader a man must have distinguished himself at war, but many who were known for their brave deeds were not necessarily in line for leadership.[6] The kinds of things which would have prevented a man from receiving this type of recognition were the following. First of all, murder of one of his own band. For instance there was a well-known character who had

p. 147, mentions that "Each band seems to have had a recognized chief or leader."

[6] Denig, whose experience with the northern plains tribes extended from 1832 to 1854, expresses, p. 403, the concept as follows: "In fact the rank or standing of each Indian be he chief or warrior is so well known and his character so well judged by the vox populi that he takes his place spontaneously. A higher step than his acts and past conduct confer, imprudently taken, would have the effect of injuring him in their eyes as a leader. Every chief, warrior or brave carves his own way to fame, and if recognized as one by the general voice becomes popular and is supported; if not he mixes with hundreds of others in similar situation and waiting opportunity to rise."

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

439 wives had vowed to cover a Pipe, undoubtedly he would try to include in his purchases the requisite length of black cloth. Individuals of course differed. In view of their labor, the wives would expect to share in the return therefor which the husband was able to secure from the trader, but this expectation was not always met.[17]

The items thus obtained were consumed by the Gros Ventres in the same ways as those goods of their own manufacture—some being directly consumed, some entering into further production, and some being exchanged on the principle of gifts and of payments for services, and in gambling.

554 A man would accumulate a surplus only to expend it as
431 generously as possible in order to attain prestige. The person with
439 a reputation for generosity rose in public esteem, and was in turn the recipient of many gifts, whereas the man with only one horse and only one wife could not afford to meet the demands for hospitality and for generosity in other transactions, and thus could not profit by the system of indirect and deferred exchange.

262 Sharing of food was an important element in attaining prestige
574 through generosity. A person known to be stingy with food would
554 lack status. The ideal was often preached to children embodied in
867 such statements as the following: "If you have visitors, even though you don't have much food, give the last of it to them."

574 Should a male visitor drop in unexpectedly, the first thing a man did was to tell his wife to cook and she was expected to comply. How seriously this was regarded may be seen from the following case told by Singer: "One time my husband, Iron Bucket, went with a friend to visit the latter's brother. The sister-in-law was naturally a stingy woman and made no move to feed them. Her husband was sitting there fixing arrows and he told her: 'Hurry and cook. If you have nothing, ask for meat at one of the lodges.' This woman had a big shaggy head and sat there with her head bowed and her husband couldn't make her move. After a while, however, some meat was brought in from hunting, and this woman went out, got it and threw it down hard inside her lodge. She was mad. And instead of giving them in a nice way the manifolds and liver that they ordinarily eat first, she slung

[17] For a case in point, see p. 178.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

some liver at them and then put on the meanest part of the meat to boil. Her husband didn't like it, and his brother who had brought the visitor didn't like it either. Her husband picked up the manifold and said: 'Some day I will see about this.' Her brother-in-law said to her: 'Some day I might hear something about you (meaning that she had a lover), and you will find out that I am as mean as you are.' So it seems that not long after that someone saw this woman with a lover and told her brother-in-law, who immediately filled his gun and went over to her and said: 'So I find you aren't as mean as you pretend to be. You are generous about some things. I heard things about you. I came to kill you.' The woman replied, very sassily: 'Well, kill me then!' and he shot her. When they told her husband she had been killed, he said: 'Well, it is all right. I would have done the same.'"

574 ● 574 684

Etiquette was not so formal with women visitors as with men. If a woman were hungry she would not hesitate to go to the lodge of a very good friend or relative and ask for food, with the reasonable expectation that the hostess would get busy and prepare something for her. Singer, herself, however, had the following experience, where hospitality was lacking. "One day a little dog came into my lodge carrying a piece of meat. I said: 'I am going to take the meat from that dog. I am hungry.' But my husband said: 'No, let the poor little thing have it, he is hungry.' I took it away from the dog anyway and then I said: 'Wait, I am going to beg some meat,' and I went over to a certain lodge. Two of that man's wives were out gathering wood and one was home. This one didn't even greet me but sat with her head bowed. I told her: 'I have come because I am hungry.' But still this woman didn't say anything at all. I sat there a long time. Finally a neighboring woman, who happened to be the man's daughter-in-law, came home with wood and looked in. She called me over to her lodge and said: 'What were you doing there?' I told her: 'I just went there because I was hungry and she never even talked to me.' So this woman cooked for me, fed me and gave me a piece of meat to carry home. When I was leaving she told me: 'They really have lots of meat, but they give me only the shoulder. As you leave you must hide this meat I am giving you up under

574

574 your arm because they always get after me if I feed any one.' So as I was going along the other two wives were coming back with the wood and saw me. They asked this third wife what I had wanted and she said: 'She came here to beg.' They asked her: 'Did you feed her?' and when she said no, the other two scolded her saying: 'You should have fed her at least a little bit' and continued to bawl her out for being so stingy."

While not all individuals lived up to the standard of casual hospitality, the majority seemingly did so, and business negotiations were usually transacted while visiting.[18] The individual who [554] dispensed food liberally could expect a return from others, although not necessarily the ones whom he had fed. Furthermore, if a man wished to sustain a good reputation he was expected to entertain well. It was customary, therefore, when fresh meat had been brought in for a man to tell his wife to cook and then he called out: "So-and-so, come and smoke," to as many as he wished to [554] invite. When the guests arrived he greeted each and assigned him to a place in the lodge, the most honored guests being seated in the back opposite the opening. After the guests had eaten, the host filled the pipe from a plentiful supply of "mixture," and the smok- [276] ing continued until the host gave the sign for dispersal by knocking the ashes from the pipe.

553 574 On more formal occasions, such as a naming feast, the host would ask some older man with a strong voice to act as announcer, and in such case the latter would call out by name each guest and say who was inviting him. Ordinarily a man would invite his own age group, his close friends, but it was not customary for the wives of the guests to come. If a woman wished to invite others, she would go to the various lodges and invite them personally. In this type of planned hospitality there was more in the nature of direct exchange although it might be considerably deferred.

574 431 In addition to hospitality, ostentatious liberality accomplished circulation of goods within the tribe. From the Gros Ventre point of view: "Presents were usually given with the intention of doing good and if no return were made, nothing was said or done. But often it turned out that at some later time the recipient would say

[18] Cf. Denig, pp. 514–15.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

to himself: 'He gave to me, so I'll give to him.' But no one was in duty bound to give the equivalent in return." 574 431

Within the network of kinship obligations, exchange was more often indirect than reciprocal. A man could expect help from his father and from his mother's brother without being under obligation to return goods in like amount—he was supposed to repay them by conducting himself in such a way that they could be proud of him. This meant that the man in his turn would be especially generous toward his sister and her children, that he would adequately fulfill his duties toward his wife's people and provide goods in sufficient amount that his wife could fulfill her own obligations especially those toward her own brother's wife and children. 602 431

When others saw fit to honor an individual, say for bravery in warfare, that person was supposed to give away goods in large amounts to show that he appreciated the honor; and his relatives would join with him in giving, thereby increasing his, as well as their own, prestige. Likewise in paying for services, such as those of a medicine man, relatives would "chip in" to the best of their ability, the one assuming the largest part of the burden receiving the greatest boost in public esteem. A person who impoverished himself by giving generously at such times would be sure that, with his reputation thus established, he would soon be the recipient of gifts dispensed by others in like liberality. Meantime, however, he could not afford to sit back awaiting the presents from others. He would soon lose his coveted reputation and be referred to as lazy, an epithet strong enough to bring tears to the eyes of a man who entertained any ambitions whatsoever. 554 431 [602] [461]

If a person were in need, it was possible for him to request what was necessary, preferably from some relative who was well-to-do, and usually his request would be met. But a continual borrower lost status and a limit was thus put upon indiscriminate "begging." One woman stated: "If your sister asked you for something you would not refuse her, but it was to your brother's wife you would give things voluntarily. A woman had great pride in keeping her brother's wife well-dressed, and if you had an extra supply of dried berries she is the one you would think of first." 426 558 [607]

Thus we have the basis for the generalizations the Gros Ventres 431

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

he should, don't fight back. Let him take it out on you and don't fight back. 183 867

"When you are out playing, if you are hungry and you want to eat, come home. Don't go to any other family to eat because people are fond of their food and might resent it. If a boy, some friend of yours, invites you to his home, don't go."

Garter Snake's father was the one who lectured his children,—three sons and three daughters. Since she was Pipe Child, when her father was Keeper of the Feathered Pipe, Garter Snake was talked to by him more often perhaps than were her siblings. Long after she was married, her mother used to remind her of the things her father told her. Some of these admonitions were as follows: "I want you to be an upright, honest and straight woman. If you listen to everything I tell you and do as I tell you, in the future you will thank me for it. Now don't think you are alone in this world because the One above the White Man sees everything that we do. Don't steal, don't lie, don't be tricky. Be honest about everything.

"When you grow up and finally have your own home, pity the old men and pity the old women, pity the poor. If you see an old woman with a ragged dress, give her a blanket. Make moccasins for these old women. The same holds for these old men. If you see an old man whose leggings are torn, make [illegible] for him. If you see a poor person who needs clothes, give [illegible] some if you have any. If you do that the One Above who watches and looks at you doing those things, He is going to reward you. [888]

"When you are married and have your own home, take care of it well. If you have horses, take care of them; try to have good property and take care of it. If you do that you will always have something. If you have horses of your own that will help your husband. He may not have any and you can help him along.

"Be good to everybody. If a man or woman comes to visit, welcome them. Tell them: 'Come in and sit down.' Then feed them well regardless of whether they are poor or rich, young or old, or even children. [574]

"Above all, don't you ever quarrel with anyone. Don't you ever fight. Try to be friendly with everybody." [865]

Charles Buckman's uncle, who, like Garter Snake's father,

183 other men so you will avoid your husband's suspicion," and so on.
861 Sometimes the appeal was made by a parent: "If you do such and such a thing well, I will be proud of you." In general it would seem that the positive side rather than the negative, was stressed.

777 It was more often the men informants who mentioned super-
867 natural motives proposed for proper conduct. They remembered that they were told that the Supreme Being would "have pity" on
888 them if they followed the proper code of behavior. Both men and women mentioned, however, that respect for the aged was instilled because "people didn't become old for nothing. They had a blessing from the Supreme Being to live long lives. Whenever you see old people attempting to do something and are having difficulties, you should go right in and do it for them. Help old people out and then ask them to intercede for you that you will have good health, a long life and success in all your undertakings."

867 The example of others was recognized as effective in child-
574 training. Al feels that the Gros Ventres were well brought up in the old days "because children were taught to stick to the rules and they had the good example of adults to follow." In describing the duty of hospitality, Coming Daylight said: "My grandmother was a great one to have a lot of visitors because she was generous, and so I got a good example at home." It was said by others of Coming Daylight: "She feeds everyone who comes along just as she used to see her uncle (mother's brother) do. She takes after her uncle in lots of ways."

In lecturing to the young, examples of actual behavior of persons, both good and bad, were often given. For instance, in warning boys of the evils of gambling, reference would be made to men who would otherwise have had promising careers but who ruined their chances by too heavy stakes which they lost. Fear
[1154] of offending those who had supernatural power lest they retaliate by means of black magic was implicit in at least some of the admonitions. This was so, for instance, in instructing young men to stay away from the wives of "powerful" men, as well as in warning girls to decline improper proposals "in a nice way."

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 new lodge, certain practices in connection with the Flat Pipe, as well as in the dog ritual of the Grass dance. All in all the Grass dance was so much more colorful that, with choice left strictly to the individual, as it was after the "companies" were no longer formed, it seems probable that greater and greater numbers elected to join the Grass dancers. In time the Star society consequently lacked sufficient recruits to maintain its identity.

796 178 The addition of the round dances, such as the Ringtail, around the dog ritual nucleus, allowed all to actively participate. In this way the Grass dance provided occasion for group recreational outlets, while at the same time fulfilling another function formerly carried out by the public religious rites, namely, that of enhancing the feeling of social solidarity. One aspect of the public religious rites had been a nice balance in their performance between periods of ritual solemnity and those of secular gaiety and relaxation. The Grass dance now approximated this situation to some degree in the reserve which the audience maintained during the performance of the ceremonial parts of the dog ritual, and the verve with which it entered into the other parts of the program, especially the round dances. If one may judge from the enthusiasm expressed by informants who knew the Grass dance between 1900 and 1916, it was a most stimulating and enjoyable affair. Each performance drew in a large proportion of the tribe, even those from the ~~far~~ corners of the Reservation.

In spite of its ceremonial features, the Grass dance was always looked upon as social rather than religious, and it could be given at any time. It thus became the accepted manner of entertaining the frequent visitors from other tribes and furthermore was eminently adapted to form the central part of Fourth of July celebrations and the like. [574]

We have seen that in its later phase the Grass dance became more highly organized with the addition of new offices and a few new items of equipment. The expansion of offices meant retaining and underlining the recognition of types of ability formerly premiated while allowing for shifting emphases to different types of ability.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

159 561 796 Subsequently he was a "grandfather" in the crazy-dance, but in none of the other ceremonies. He never participated in the sun-dance, having had no occasion to do so, he said. Nevertheless he once was the man selected during the sun-dance to kill a buffalo with one arrow, the buffalo's skin being cut up into thongs with which the rafters of the lodge are fastened. He succeeded in killing the buffalo with one arrow.

Another man, now middle-aged, belonged to the "holding-to-a-dog's-tail" company. He made successively the fly-dance, the star-dance, and then the crazy-dance.

Star and War Dances.

171 561 796 575 [177] At present the organization into comparatively small companies is no longer maintained. In its place there is a division of the young men of the tribe into two groups, one of which practises, or did until recently, the star-dance; the other, the grass or war dance. The latter is universally stated to be a recent importation from the Sioux, apparently within the present generation. The star-dance, however, is an old ceremony, it is claimed; and this assertion is borne out by the occurrence among the Arapaho of the *analogous* star-dance. Among the Arapaho the star-dance, like the kit-fox dance, is a preliminary which appears to be gone through by all the men of the tribe, but has neither the standing, the organization, nor the definite observances and regalia of the subsequent ceremonies. Among the Gros Ventre the star-dance was formerly also outside the regular series of dances. It is generally spoken of as having been a warrior dance, made at any time and on any suitable occasion, and without the rigorously prescribed course of other dances. Some men seem to have made it before the fly-dance, and others afterward. Even in former times, however, before the war-dance had come among the Gros Ventre, the star-dance included only part of the young men of the tribe. The old men surviving from certain companies have never taken part in the star-dance, and explain this by the fact that there was rivalry between their company and the star-dancers. It might thus, perhaps, seem that a star company had a ceremony of its own, the star-dance, from which the members of rival companies naturally held aloof; but it is very improbable that only one age-company parallel to the others, and none of these others, should have had a distinctive ceremony. It is also improbable that this company, being one of many, should have been so large as to include about half of the men of the tribe, for it appears that some such large proportion took part in the star-dance. This makes it almost impossible to believe that there existed a star company exactly

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

analogous to the "green-grass" and "young-sheep" and other companies, but having an additional ceremony confined to itself. On the other hand, if the "stars" were not one of the age-companies, it is hard to see with what groups of men they competed. It is therefore not improbable that there formerly existed among the Gros Ventre a star-society, which had a ceremony of its own, and which, while based partly on age in being constituted of young men, was outside and independent of the scheme of the benna"wu, with which it had no, or only indirect, relation, and with whose working out it must in some measure have conflicted. Such a society, which would be a true society in being based on a membership determined by choice, purchase, initiation, or supernatural experience, — in other words, by selection, would be of a type of organization quite distinct from the ordinary Gros Ventre or Arapaho age-company performing in the course of its existence an entire series of tribal ceremonies, but would have abundant parallels in other ceremonial societies on the Plains and elsewhere. Its presence would therefore be readily explainable as an incipient intrusion due to the cultural influence of some other tribe, the chief objection to such an explanation being the occurrence of the star-dance also among the Arapaho, but without a known association with a special society. This suggested character of the Gros Ventre star-society and star-dance fits the facts, but is after all only hypothetical; and altogether *the relation of the ceremony to the* remainder of the Gros Ventre ceremonial organizations is not yet clear.

The star-dance as formerly held is said to have lasted four days and nights. There might be further subsequent dancing. At the beginning of the ceremony, the dancers went to four places at the camp-circle facing or representing the four cardinal directions, and at each place danced before the tent of a prominent man. The owner of the tent gave away property and filled a pipe for the dancers, after smoking which they proceeded to the next one. After having danced in the four places, they danced in the middle of the camp-circle. This might be in the open air, or in a lodge made of two large tents combined. The singers were four old men, who accompanied themselves on small hand drums. The dancers' wives sat behind these four old men and sang with them. The dancer's relatives at times went to them and danced with them, taking their rattles and temporarily using them. The dancers' bodies seem to have been variously decorated; but they had no distinctive regalia except rattles. These were alike in general character, being loop-shaped, and decorated with gaudy paint and attachments, but there seems to have been no attempt at making them uniform. The dancing-lodge was elliptical, with the door towards the east and a fire near the western end. The singers were at this end, and the dancers near them, in two lines, along the sides of the lodge, facing each other. In dancing

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

retained throughout its existence and held its ceremonies without participating in those of any other company." He gives the list of company names. He is aware that the Stars are not quite comparable to the other companies but is not clear as to the position of that organization.[11] 561

Our information from The Boy, whose father, Lame Bull, was the contemporary of Bill Jones, mentioned by Kroeber, and whose ceremonial experiences were the same as Bill Jones', throws some light on the subject. Furthermore we have useful material from Turn Toes, who was a member of another one of the companies. Incidental information was obtained from our other informants as well.

According to The Boy: "When a bunch of young men of somewhat similar age grew up, they were old enough to take the place of another group or company. There were a number of these companies. These young men began to have meetings and these meetings had names, although not organized as yet. Let us say 'Rosebushes' would be the name by which they were called. Another group of boys grew up and these would be called 'Hang-onto-a-dog's-tail-and-run-or-be-dragged-by-it.' Other groups would come along and be called by such names as 'Many-little-horses,' 'Potbellies,' 'Calves (of the leg),' and so on." Incidentally The Boy recognized 21 out of the 25 names listed by Kroeber as those of companies, although he gave the names above quoted quite independently of Kroeber's list.

The young men who so met and acquired names were 15–17 years of age, according to one informant, and 16–19 or 20, according to another. In any case, they decided as a body to join either of the two societies known as the Stars and the Wolf-men. We know from Kroeber's data, as well as from The Boy, that Bill Jones and Lame Bull were members of the group of young men who banded together under the name of "Bigbellies" or "Potbellies" and who subsequently joined the Stars. Lame Bull was born about 1825, so this company must have joined the Stars some time in the early 1840's. One of our informants, Charles Buckman, a contemporary of The Boy, remembers having heard that the Potbellies at one time numbered about a hundred. 561 575

[11] Kroeber, 1908, pp. 232–33.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

561 Turn Toes (b. 1860) was one with 30 or 40 other young men who, in a group known as Calves (of leg) joined the Wolf-men about 1877. Turn Toes was certain that "Having-the-breast-of-a-woman-as-pillow" and "Holding-onto-dog's-tail" were companies which had joined the Stars. According to Turn Toes' account, when his company, the Calves, joined the Wolf-men, four men from the company which had just preceded them in entry were asked by the present company to act as "elder brothers." These four considered themselves honored to instruct the new company before they would appear publicly at the next Wolf-men's dance. Lame Bull had been one of the four so selected from among the Potbellies to initiate the next incoming Star group, but we failed to obtain the name of that company.

It apparently was permissible, either before or after the company was so initiated into the society, that any one of its members could vow the least important and simplest of the Sacred Dances, namely, the Fly Dance. When a member of the company so vowed, all the members of that company, and they alone, went through the ceremony, after which they were eligible as "soldiers," [12] i.e., when one of their number subsequently vowed any of the other Sacred Dances in the regular series, the company not only participated but also was in complete charge for the duration of the ceremony and had the authority to enforce whatever "laws" might be enacted. Inasmuch as the Sacrifice Dance was outside the regular [625] series, if that Dance were vowed, the members of the vower's company could participate if they wished, but in any case those not actually dancing acted as police.

561 An hypothesis which reconciles Kroeber's and our own data on the companies and age societies is the following. All or most of 575 the young men of the whole tribe, between the ages of 16 and 19, formed a company which met informally for some time before it joined either the Stars or the Wolf-men, and, after having gone through the Fly Dance, acted as police force during the Sacred Dances vowed by any of their number. When not participating in a Sacred Dance, the members joined in the purely social activi-

[12] Kroeber, 1908, p. 229, "The members of the age-societies are called beniinen, commonly translated at the present day as 'soldiers,' etymologically probably 'all-men,' or 'all-(?)-men.'"

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

ties of the larger society which the company had joined. Meanwhile another group was meeting informally before it was admitted into one or other of the Societies. Since the Stars and Wolf-men were approximately even in number, there probably was a regular alternation. According to reasonable estimate, the Potbellies joined the Stars about 1840; the next group of young men would then have joined the Wolves, say in 1843 or 1844; the following company joining the Stars in about 1849–50. 561 575

If the Sacred Dances, except the Sacrifice Dance, were gone through in order, there would thus be several companies each year whose members were eligible to vow any one of the Dances, and our informants were all under the impression that one or more of the Dances was given each summer. It seems quite clear that the Law Enforcer Dance was vowed only by the older levels of the active warriors. After having gone through this rite, these men more or less retired as "old men," and, having "sat on the sage," acquired certain privileges and freedom denied to their fellow tribesmen who had not yet gone through this Dance. These "old men" acted as ceremonial grandfathers, i.e. sponsors and teachers, for others going through the various lodges, but were no longer active as Stars or Wolf-men. They became members of an undifferentiated group of elders, the ranks of their original company having no doubt been drastically thinned out by the time they would have arrived at this status. 796 561 [886] [888]

If the above interpretation be correct, there would be three age divisions: the "young men," those meeting in companies; the "middle-aged, mature men," whose companies had joined either the Stars or the Wolf-men, and, having gone through the Fly Dance, were eligible to vow the other Dances; the "old men" who had gone through the Law Enforcer's Dance and were no longer active in the Star and Wolf-men societies, except two of their number, one of whom served as announcer in each. 561

The young men, who together formed the company, being of approximately the same age, were tied together by bonds of friendship and there were apparently not a few pairs of "inseparable friends" in each company. One of our informants, Cora Chandler, indicated that the bonds holding together the members of a company were so intimate that marriage between their children was [572] 561 582

561 taboo. This was the case regarding the children of "inseparable
582 friends," but whether or not it was so regarding the children of all members of the company, mutual hospitality was frequently extended among the members—"a man would most often invite the members of his age group." Further, it was not unusual for members of the same company to go hunting and on raiding and revenge parties together. If a young man were killed at war and
[727 his body brought home, the members of his company were said to
764] have assembled and danced around his bier, sometimes sobbing and crying as they danced.

As members of either one or other of the two larger societies
561 they joined with members of other companies, in the Stars and
575 Wolf-men respectively, to perform their proper social dance and to participate in activities such as gambling, horse-racing, "brag-
[616] ging contests," and so on, wherein they could compete with members of the opposite moiety. An individual seemingly tended to choose his serious enemy-friends from among those of the rival organization and thus is explained the spirit of competition which Kroeber notes between the Stars and "other companies."[18]

The Societies

575 The Stars and Wolf-men societies were organized along identical lines and were distinguished from each other only in details of procedure.

Each society included approximately half the total number of able-bodied warriors in the tribe. They each had two renowned men as leaders—two Star leaders of relatively recent times having been Comes A-flying and Crazy Bull; two Wolf-men leaders, Skinner and Strikes On Top. The leaders remained mounted when the others of the society were marching on foot in preparation for their dance, and carried whips at the dance as insignia. These men were supposed to have been outstanding warriors who had while mounted actually counted coup against the enemy. Two members of the last-admitted company served as *atsa'an* (waiters, messengers) at the dances, and each society had an announcer, presumably chosen from among the "old men" who had gone through the Law Enforcer Dance.

[18] Kroeber, 1908, p. 234.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Each society had its distinctive songs which would be used by its component companies in carrying out their police duties during the Sacred Dances. Both had their "begging songs," as well as their marching and dance songs. Everyone in camp would know from the songs which of the societies was performing. 575 533

In connection with the distinctive dance of either society was first the preliminary "begging." This meant that the members of the society, dressed in their best and mounted on their finest horses, would select the lodges of prominent men belonging to the opposite society in front of which they would sing.[14] The leaders of the society were supposed to be present on these begging expeditions, otherwise their enemy-friends could take advantage of their absence and twit them by singing a special song.[15] The members of the society might be accompanied by their wives, who helped out in the singing, and usually a member of the society would suggest that they sing in front of the lodge belonging to his enemy-friend of the opposite society. If, while they were singing, the owner of the lodge failed to appear, his enemy-friend would peep into the lodge and at this the owner, assisted by his relatives, would get busy and give food to be used in the feast of the society which was doing the begging. If the owner of the lodge were a prominent man, who wished to take this occasion to enhance further his reputation, he might give something really valuable to the singers and would have the opportunity later of bragging: "On such-and-such an occasion, this is what I gave you Wolf-men (or Star men)." If he were a really good sport, our informants said, he would even send his wife out to sing with the others. After something had been given to the society, the singers sang other special songs,[16] while the rest danced. 533 575 796 572

After obtaining in this fashion the wherewithal for the feast, the society members lined up two-by-two at the entrance of the camp circle. The two noted men carrying whips remained mounted, while the column stepped in time to the music provided by the singers who were carrying the drum at the end of the procession. They wove in and out, snake-dance fashion, while 575 796

[14] A begging song of the Wolf-men was recorded as No. 98; two such songs of the Stars, as No. 96 and 97.

[15] Recorded as No. 101.

[16] Recorded as No. 95 and No. 100.

575 796 the marching song was sung.[17] Upon reaching the entrance of the enclosure, which had been constructed in the middle of the camp circle, the double column parted, and filed around the inside of the enclosure and took their places. The noted men bearing whips, having been helped in dismounting, took up their positions at either side of the entrance, and the musicians carried the drum to the center of the enclosure where they provided the music for the dancing.

The dance of each society was distinctive. The Stars carried [293] rattles, each designed by its owner,[18] which they waved about, as they danced. The Wolf-men did not have rattles or any special paraphernalia of the kind, but symbolized wolves as they stepped about, one hand at the forehead, and the other held behind to represent the tail.

575 These dances with their preliminary "begging" expeditions were not put on regularly, but at the discretion of the societies. 535 A time would be chosen when the whole tribe, or most of the bands thereof, were together, when there were no Sacred Dances in immediate prospect, and when there was no apparent danger from the enemy. If these conditions prevailed, one of the societies might proceed, singing loudly: "Harden your hearts, Wolf-men (or Stars)," meaning, "be prepared to give."[19] Not immediately, but some time later, when auspicious conditions again prevailed, the other society would "retaliate."

These dances were purely social. In between times members belonging to one would compete with members of the other in horse-racing, hand-game gambling, "bragging contests" recounting conquests in love and war—each trying to out-do his opposite number.

[177] Sometime between 1875 and 1880 the Wolf-men adopted the Grass Dance from the Assiniboine. Thereafter this Society was sometimes called the Grass dancers.[20]

575 The Boy was under the impression that the Stars and Wolf-men

[17] Recorded as No. 102.

[18] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, pp. 236–37, with illustration.

[19] These songs were recorded as Nos. 93, 94 for the Stars.

[20] Kroeber, 1908, p. 238 describes this dance as the "war-dance." For the adoption of the Grass Dance and subsequent history of the two societies, see Flannery, 1946, pp. 39–70.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

had probably had different names before his father's time but that the division into two big groups of "mature, middle-aged" men was always characteristic of Gros Ventre organization. This same informant was likewise under the impression that a man would have to stay with whichever of the two societies he, with his company, had originally joined. Turn Toes said however that he had known a few cases of men who had originally been Stars later joining with the Wolf-men, and of one Wolf-man who afterwards joined the Stars. These known cases, however, occurred fairly late in Gros Ventre history, and probably after the formation of new companies had ceased. 575

Sanctions of Force

Social sanctions were seemingly the most important means of control. Public opinion was effective in all aspects of conduct. Public disapproval meant loss of prestige and in more severe cases made itself felt by "shunning." It was brought to bear upon the individual in an especially effective way through ridicule, as exercised particularly in the enemy-friendship.[21] 626

A considerable number of misdeeds, like theft or failure to observe the rules in ceremonial life, were believed to result automatically in supernatural punishment ("bad luck"). Fear of retaliation through witchcraft also exerted a restraining influence.[22]

There were only three situations in which sanction through physical force was applicable. These were, first, failure to obey the rules of behavior promulgated by the society in charge while any one of the Sacred Dances was in progress; second, murder; third, adultery on the part of the wife.[23] 681

In regard to the first, it is quite clear that in case one of the Sacred Dances had been vowed, the whole tribe had to come together and remain united until the rite was finished. "If the bands happened to be scattered at the time a Sacred Dance was to 688

[21] For a discussion of the enemy-friendship, see pp. 102–06.

[22] Cf. also pp. 169–70 for a discussion of social and other types of motivation proposed to children. Witchcraft is dealt with in detail in Cooper, Ms., 1949.

[23] A detailed treatment of punishment for adultery is given in pp. 183–90, and will not be discussed in this section.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Dance.[3] Women could vow the Old Women's Dance, but no other Dance could be vowed by women of any age. 796*

The vower would call upon his company or age-society to help him fulfill his vow. As elsewhere explained, when the young boy was about 15 to 17 years old he together with others of his age joined in a body one or other of the two Soldier Societies, the Stars of the Wolves. Each such newly joining group of youths would be incorporated in the larger society of Stars or Wolves, but would keep its own identity through life as a subdivision of the Stars or Wolves, would have its own name (such as Potbellies, Calves, Holding-On-to-Dogs-Tail), and would hang together in common loyalty, protection and helpfulness.[3] 575● 701 796*

The vower's company, not all the Stars of Wolves, would help him make provision for the Dance, would be in charge of the affair and, during it and only during it, could exercise certain definite authority over other members of the tribe. If the tribe were on the march toward the spot where the dance was about to be held, that company came immediately after the Flat Pipe, according to The Boy, and during the Dance the band chiefs and Pipe keepers stepped aside and yielded to the company the authority to run the camp, compel attendance, give orders, and punish disobedience. If during a Sacred Lodge an individual hunted buffalo out of turn, before the communal hunt began, his lodge would be destroyed, his clothes cut up, and so forth. A like punishment might be meted out to any who might refuse to come into camp, at the time the dance was held.[4] [624] [689]

The two Soldier Societies, the Stars and Wolves, and their respective constituent companies were permanent organizations. The specific individuals who vowed or joined in any given Dance

[3] In 1948, The Boy indicated that probably the Crazy, Dog, Kit-fox and Drum Dances would have been vowed in order, that is, that a man would vow a Dog Dance only if he had been previously a Crazy Dancer, and so on. He was none too sure on this point. He was quite emphatic, however, that any man who belonged to either the Stars or Wolf Men could vow the Sacrifice Dance. [R.F.]

[3] For a description of the whole ceremonial organization, so far as it can be reconstructed, see Flannery, 1953, pp. 36-43.

[4] See Flannery, 1953, pp. 43-44.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

575 701 *796 did not constitute such. Their grouping was a purely temporary one, lasting only for the duration of the Dance. During, for instance, the Crazy Dance, all who joined in it, both members of the vower's company and others, were called Crazy Dancers, but once the Dance was over, they ceased to be such; there was no permanent organization or society of Crazy Dancers.

608 *796 A first step which a man who had vowed a Sacred Dance had to take was to fill an ordinary pipe, go to a man who had gone through the rite in fulfillment of a vow and who knew the rite well, and offer him the pipe, saying: "Here is the pipe. You will be my 'grandfather.'" By accepting the pipe,—and he could hardly refuse,—the latter became the vower's ritual "grandfather." At the same time the "grandfather's" wife became the vower's "grandmother," and both the vower and his wife (or wives) became "grandchildren" of the "grandfather" and his wife, and they addressed one another respectively by these names. The vower himself was in charge of the Dance and of the preparations therefor. The "grandfather's" role was that of liturgist, to instruct the vower in the ceremonies and observances proper to the given Lodge, and to see that they were carried out correctly. By way of exception, for the Old Women's Dance there were "grandmothers," but no "grandfathers."

When a given individual vowed one of the Sacred Lodges, other individuals could join with him in the rite, and each of these others would also choose a "grandfather,"—one who had participated in the given Dance,—with whom he (and his wife) would contract the same sacred relationship and who would perform the same offices. No person could be "grandfather" to more than one vower or associate on the occasion of any one dance.[8] The "grandfathers" would usually be older than the participants but not by any means necessarily very old men.

If, however, a younger man offered a pipe to a very feeble old man whose memory of the rites was poor, the old man might accept the pipe and so become the younger man's "grandfather."

[8] In 1948, The Boy indicated that for the Crazy Dance at least two younger men might together approach an older man and have him act as their ritual grandfather if he accepted them. [R.F.]

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

525 Women (and men?) also gambled at ring-and-pin, the "ring" being made of four bones from deer feet.[4] The contest was mostly just for fun; the losers would have to "cook" for the winners.

Several types of bow and arrow contests, serving as archery practice as well as gambling sports, were indulged in by boys, young men, and sometimes older men, not, however, by girls or women. Both distance and accuracy contests occurred. In the latter, the target was a stick or arrow stuck upright in a small mound, or an arrow shot by one contestant a desired distance, say, 100 or 150 yards. In another kind of contest, a bow was set slanting, string upward; the string was vibrated by an arrow and the arrow on release flew toward the target about 35 or 40 feet away. In these bow and arrow contests, the wagers were small, usually arrows, sometimes a bow. Wagers were made by the players, and at times by onlookers too.

The modern 4-button hand game, distinct from the earlier 2-button one, is played more for fun than for winnings. At most the losers may be expected to [177] "cook" for the winners. This modern non-gambling hand game came to the Gros Ventre through an Arapaho, Dances All Night, in 1897, shortly after the [668] time the Ghost Dance was introduced among them (in 1891). The Ghost Dance itself had little popularity among the Gros Ventre and after a couple of years died out among them, but the non-gambling hand game took root and survived. At first, we were informed, it was played with two buttons, but after 1903 with four.

525 Gambling at playing cards, sometimes for large stakes, occurs today, but 178 usually at the nearby white settlements, between Gros Ventre and white males. Some of the older Gros Ventre are shrewd poker players, and the younger ones play poker among themselves, but we obtained no record of ruinous stakes at cards among the Gros Ventre themselves on the reservation.

Major Gambling Games and Sports

525 The three more important gambling games and sports of half a century or more ago were races, the wheel game, and the 2-button hand game.

1. *Races*

[575] On horse races, usually between the two soldier-police societies, the Stars and Wolves (the latter became later the "Grass Dancers"), or between the [648] Gros Ventre and other tribes, such as the Piegan, at intertribal gatherings, were placed large bets—horses, saddles, and so forth—by the men, not however by

4 Illustration in Culin, *op. cit.*, fig. 706, p. 537.

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

621 Members of one band could and not infrequently did gamble both for small
525 and for big stakes against members of other bands, just as one kinship group used to gamble against others. Tribal we-feeling certainly existed, but seemingly not as intense as band we-feeling, just as, in turn, the latter was not as intense as kin we-feeling. In inter-band, as in inter-kin, gambling, spectators, if they bet at all, would lay their wagers on the players of their own band, as required by band loyalty, regardless of the relative skill and reputation of the contesting players or teams.

575 For Gros Ventre men who had reached full adulthood and were still in the
[885] prime of life, there were two age-societies, called the Stars and the Wolves (or
525 Wolf-men). These two groups, with soldier-police functions, would join forces when necessary in keeping order, in fighting fires, and in defending the whole tribe against enemies, but for the rest rivalry between them was pretty keen. Stars would gamble against Wolves in big games for large stakes, but ordinarily a Star would not gamble against a Star or a Wolf against a Wolf, except for refreshments or a smoke or similar trifling "stakes." Inasmuch as membership in the two societies cut across the lines of kinship and band membership, inter-society gambling suffered an important restriction: if a Star were gambling in a given game, his relatives among the Wolves would not play or bet against him in that particular game. Kinship ties took precedence over society ties.

525 Gros Ventre would of course gamble for big stakes against members of other
648 tribes with whom they happened to be at the time on sufficiently good terms, or at least not bitterly and actively hostile, to meet and foregather peacefully, such as the Piegan, Flathead, Nez Percé, and Cree. In such intertribal contests they would often go out to win every possession of their opponents.

512 The Gros Ventre distinguished three kinds of friends: ordinary friends,
525 true or pledged friends, and enemy or war friends. As a rule ordinary close friends would not take opposite sides in a big gambling game. This was all the more true of pledged friends. Two boys, for instance, who liked each other
[608] and who had perhaps grown up together would, though belonging to different bands, enter into a sort of "sworn brotherhood," give each other presents, exchange intimate confidences, and promise, without religious rite of any kind, to stand by each other always, even to death if necessary. Two girls could also enter into a similar pact. Such "true" or pledged friends never gambled against each other either as players or as backers, at least never for stakes of value.

Of enemy or war friends we have previously spoken when describing the wheel game. Two enemy friends would gamble against each other for small stakes or big, the bigger the better. In fact a hand game for big stakes between

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 Bear Paw Mountains. It was there that the Gros Ventres had their first Grass dance alone. I don't know why they did things like this, but all those who had been given regalia walked instead of riding horseback. But the drum was packed on a special horse by itself and when they came to a stream, four men who owned the drumsticks carried the drum across, wading in without taking off their moccasins or other clothing. Furthermore those who owned the regalia were not supposed to help feed the crowd. They were not allowed to serve food and if they did, they had to give something away. Nor were these men supposed to borrow. They were supposed to have their own cup or dish and when it [415] was time to eat, if they didn't have any receptacle, they spread out their robes and the servers poured the coffee or soup or whatever was being served right in the robes."

114 The above account is the only explicit record of the actual 174 transfer which was obtainable in the field. From details supplied 796 by this same informant, however, as well as by others not so old as she, but who have accurate traditional knowledge of Gros Ventre culture, we have considerable information on the Grass dance as practiced from the time it was adopted.[7] Let us proceed then to the general description, first as the dance was carried out in the earlier period.

575 *Personnel and equipment.* At the time of adoption the Grass 796 dance came into the possession of a society, the Wolves or Wolf-men. Only members of the society actually danced, wearing the distinctive headdress of deer hair, although the rest of their costume varied with the individual. The special regalia which went with the dance were: 2 crow-belts; a large drum and 4 fancy drumsticks; a spear or fork; a spoon; 2 wands representing swords; a whistle.[8] Each item was owned by an individual member of the society who was, by virtue of this ownership, an officer

[115] [7] I wish to thank all of my Gros Ventre friends for their assistance, especially The Boy, Thick, Thomas Main, Charles Buckman, Al and Cora Chandler, Mary Ereaux, Mathilda Cuts-the-Rope, but above all, my old "grandmothers," Coming Daylight and Singer.

[8] For reference to description of some of these, see footnote 3.

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

of the society. The officers were free to transfer their ceremonial equipment to other members whom they would select. Following the typical Gros Ventre pattern of transfer of ownership, the recipient would present as lavish gifts as he could afford to the donor while the relatives of the recipient showed their appreciation of the favor to their kinsman by giving away expensive gifts in his honor. All of this took place publicly at the dance.

Particular dances and songs were attached to each office and the owners of the ceremonial drumsticks were required to know in correct order all the numerous songs and to provide the musical accompaniment for the whole ceremony. These four drumstick owners were joined in certain of the songs by four women singers selected from among the wives of the Wolf-men. The owners of the various objects were responsible for the proper care thereof, the crow-belts and the drum receiving most respect. When not in use, the crow-belts were kept wrapped in special bundles in the lodges of their respective owners, but were hung outside when the owner's wife was in her menstrual period. Moreover, those who danced wearing the crow-belts were obliged to refrain from sexual relations for two or three days previous to the dancing and, before donning the belts, to make a smudge of sweet-grass to incense themselves and the crow-belts. The drum, too, received special attention. One informant speaks of it as having been "nicely decorated," and we know from Kroeber's description[9] that the trimming was very similar to that of the Assiniboine Grass dance drum.[10]

Procedure. The actual dancing took place in a special circular dancing-place in the center of the camp circle. This "corral," as it was sometimes referred to, was constructed from several lodge covers, but was open at the top and the entrance thereto was at the east. The tipi of the drum-keeper was put up nearby. Opposite the opening of the "corral" was the place of honor where sat the officials,—with the exception of the sword owners, who with their assistants were at either side of the entrance. The

[9] Kroeber, loc. cit., p. 238.
[10] Lowie, R. H., The Assiniboine, AMNH-AP 4, pt. 1, 1909, p. 67.

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

formance of the Grass dance, but that he was also paying for this 796
by cancelling debts owed him at his store by four specific indi- 178
viduals whom he named; that anyone who objected to the chil- 858
dren having the privilege would have to raise the ante; and that finally he would inaugurate this new feature of the Grass dance by having all of his own children dance first. No one disputed the point, and from that day to this children have had the freedom of the floor at any of the social gatherings.

The innovation described above was probably one of the last changes made in the form of the Grass dance before it began to disintegrate about 1916. Once the dog ritual was abandoned,—seemingly just prior to 1920,—the Grass dance as such disappeared, leaving only the round dances, one or two of which survive today and are performed at annual fairs, at celebrations of the Fourth of July, and so on.

Let us now turn to a consideration of the functions of the Grass dance in Gros Ventre culture in each of the two periods.

Functions

Earlier period. When the Grass dance was first adopted by the 796
Gros Ventres its function was a relatively minor one of replacing 575
the dance belonging to one of the two "soldier" societies, the Wolves, or Wolf-men as the members were called. The members of the parallel society were known as Stars. These two societies were approximately equal numerically and included between them the whole Gros Ventres population of able-bodied warriors. At the age of 18 or 19 the individual Gros Ventre young man who, together with say 30-50 of his age-mates, already belonged to one of several "companies"—the Rosebushes, or Calves, or Resting-on-the-breast-of-a-woman, or Holding-dogs'-tails, and so forth,—would enter either the Wolf society or the Star society, whichever one was selected by the "company." The individual would then be either a Wolf-dancer or a Star-dancer, although he retained close personal association with the members of his "company" which would have entered one society or the other as a body. With the mates of his "company" he would then go through the

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 preliminary to the series of Sacred Dances, namely the Fly Dance.
575 After this ceremony was over he was eligible as a "soldier." That is, should one of the members of his "company" vow to give any one of the Sacred Dances in the series, he and other members of the society to which he belonged—either Wolf or Star—would act as police for the time during which the Dance was being held. Thus it was that Stars might police the hunt [625] and keep order in the camp circle during one such Sacred Dance while Wolves might perform the same duties at another time, depending on which moiety the vower belonged to.

When not engaged as soldiers in connection with one of the Dances, the two societies exhibited the keenest rivalry, particularly in war-deeds, but also in gambling, in foot-racing, and whenever else opportunity offered. One aspect of this rivalry was apparent when each put on its own dance. The general procedure of both was identical but there were a few distinctive features. When the whole tribe was together and there was no serious threat of war, one society or the other would decide the time was ripe to hold its dance. Let us assume that the Star society had so decided.

The members of the Star society would then don their best clothes and, mounted on their finest horses, go around the camp circle accompanied by two especially prominent members who had counted coup against the enemy while on horseback. They would [533] sing special begging songs in front of the lodges of several well-to-do members of the opposite society. It was a challenge to the Wolf-men and they usually responded in the accepted fashion by giving large quantities of food, in which their relatives would help them out. This would provide the feast at the dance. The Stars then proceeded to the opening of the camp circle and all dismounting except the two very prominent warriors, formed in a line by twos, the four singers with their hand drums last. To the accompaniment of a marching song the line moved "snake-dance" fashion weaving back and forth, to the dancing lodge which had been erected in the center of the camp circle. At the entrance to the lodge the line divided, some going to the right,

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

others to the left forming a circle inside the dancing-place where they sat. The two prominent warriors, having been assisted in dismounting, took up their places, one on each side of the entrance, holding whips in their hands. It was their duty to rouse any lagging dancers, whipping them if necessary. Each member had his own rattle, of peculiar shape but painted with individual designs, which he waved about as he danced. The wives of some of the dancers joined the four singers in singing certain of the dance songs. Two of the youngest members acted as *atsa'an* (waiters) tending to the fire, getting water, and so on. Occasionally during the dance a woman relative of one of the participants would rush up to him, throw down a blanket or some other gift in his honor, grab his rattle and dance for a short time. Members of the other society did not join in the festivities or partake of the feast, in spite of the fact that most of the provisions for the latter had been donated by some of them.

At some future date, however, the Wolf-men would agree that the time was auspicious for them to have a dance and "get even" with the Stars. They would of course have their own songs, sung in front of the lodges of prominent members of the Star society, but otherwise the procedure was identical, including their accompaniment by two outstanding warriors, the "snake-dance," the arrangement of the lodge in the center of the camp-circle, and so on. The Wolf-men differed from the Stars in their actual dance in that they did not have rattles and in dancing seemingly intended to [illegible] wolves, placing one hand on the forehead and the other at the back to represent the animal's tail.[14]

The adoption of the Grass dance meant merely that the more elaborate dog ritual, with its regalia and greater degree of organization, replaced the dance of the Wolf-men although the begging preliminary and so on remained the same. So far as we can see, at the time of its adoption, the Grass dance was a case of pure substitution and one that fitted readily into the cultural situation. First of all, according to Lowie's information, the Assini-

[14] I am deeply grateful to my colleague, John M. Cooper, who generously placed at my disposal his field notes on the Wolf society.

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 boine themselves considered the Grass dance as a modern form
575 of one of their own older soldier society dances.[15] Secondly there
178 were certain similarities between the original Star and Wolf dances on the one hand and the Grass dance on the other. In both types there was dancing to exhaustion and the employment of special officers to rouse the laggards,—the whip men in the first instance, the sword men in the other. Again women singers helped out occasionally in both. Still another feature in common was the custom of giving presents away, not to a relative who was a member, but in honor of that relative. Thus, the Grass dance became a part of Gros Ventres culture.

182 So long as Gros Ventre culture continued on its traditional eco-
178 nomic basis, the hunting of buffalo, the Grass dance fulfilled its function as the dance of the Wolf soldier society and was simply parallel to the dance of the rival Star society. The disappearance of the buffalo, however, wrought many changes in Gros Ventre life as it did in that of all of the Plains tribes. The Gros Ventres were fortunate in that the last large herd of buffalo happened to be in their hunting territory and thus they could benefit a little longer than most of their neighbors from this mainstay of their old way of life. This is not to say that prior to the extinction of the buffalo Gros Ventre culture was flourishing in pristine glory. Far from it. For one thing, at the time of the adoption of the
[177] Grass dance between 1875 and 1880, intertribal warfare, with which many aspects of their culture were interrelated, was at a minimum and was itself soon to disappear. Again, certain aspects of their ceremonial life had fallen into disuse, some of the Sacred Dances not having been given for years previously. Nevertheless, although the religious culture was dwindling, much was still left and the social side was relatively intact.

182 *Later period.* The break in economic life with the killing of
796 the last of the buffalo in 1884 was accompanied by the virtual disappearance of the Gros Ventre ceremonial organization. The public rites of a religious nature, which had formerly made for social solidarity as well, were abandoned. The last Sacrifice

[15] Lowie, loc. cit. p. 66.

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Dance (Sun Dance), for example, was given in that very year 182
and, so far as our data go, but one Crazy Dance was held after 796
that. The seasonal Flat Pipe rite was discontinued. Furthermore there was a breakdown in the socio-political life. The necessity for nomadic life had disappeared and as a consequence there was no longer need of policing the hunt or keeping order in [575]
the camp circle when the whole tribe gathered so that, with the further establishment of peace, the raison d'être for two rival soldier societies was gone.

In the transition period the missionaries were trying valiantly to fill the gap in religious life but did not offer a satisfactory [797]
solution for the social situation; nor did the Agency which had become the center of the new economic life. It was the Grass dance, which as we have seen survived in a somewhat changed form, that seems to have filled the void left in social life.

In its earlier form the Grass dance was purely social in nature, 796
as was the Star dance, but the latter faded away while the [535]
former attained a position of heightened importance. One of the factors accounting for this fact seems to be that the Grass dance "had more to it," as our informants put it. The performance of the dog ritual was certainly far more spectacular than the simpler dance of the Star society and, in addition, it had semi-ceremonial connotations reminiscent of other features of the older Gros Ventre culture which were lacking from the Star dance. For example, the owners of the regalia in the Grass dance were likewise officers of several degrees of importance therein, as was the case in the performance of the Sacred Dances. Again, sex abstinence was required before dancing with the crow-belts as it was [784]
before participating in the Sacrifice Dance (Sun Dance) and before dancing with the Feathered Pipe. Ceremonial incensing of persons and equipment had been a marked characteristic of Gros [783]
Ventre religious life. The formal transfer of office and regalia duplicates the pattern of transfer of office of Pipe Keeper, transfer of painted lodges, and so on. Recounting of war deeds was frequently demanded in connection with many aspects of Gros Ventre life,—to validate the giving of a name, the erection of a

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 gave away in his honor." When first adopted the Grass dance
178 offered only one such opportunity—and a relatively minor one.
431 As times changed, however, the Grass dance provided practically
156 the sole occasion for gaining prestige while at the same time
554 carrying out the old pattern of kinship obligation by enhancing the prestige of relatives.

The possibility in the later form of the Grass dance of paying for privileges, such as locking the door, or whipping those who did not get up to dance, gave further scope for the acquisition of prestige through liberality, as did also, of course, payments at transfer of office.

It was estimated by our informants that around 1900 as much as a thousand dollars in goods and cash changed hands at a single performance of the Grass dance. At that time it was not uncommon for the dance to be held at weekly intervals. So long as the Gros Ventre were relatively prosperous and had property to display and exchange according to the older patterns, the Grass dance continued to function. With increasing poverty, however, along
[735] with other factors such as the changing points of view and interests on the part of the younger generation, and the dying out of
[182] the older warriors, the Grass dance, the core of which was the dog ritual, gradually paled off leaving but the remnants of some of the round dances which had been added to the Grass dance as originally adopted from the Assiniboine.

Summary

796 Between 1875 and 1880 the Gros Ventres received the Grass
177 dance from the Assiniboine. From the date of adoption up to
● 575 about 1890 the Grass dance was performed only by members of one of the two soldier societies and the custodians of the ceremonial equipment were the officers. Offices were transferred among members according to the old Gros Ventre pattern.

796 The essential core of the Grass dance was the dog ritual, a
[262] ceremonial eating of dog flesh, carried out by the owners of the equipment with the assistance of four warriors selected from among the lay members. Other features of the program at each

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Other features of the program at each performance of the Grass dance included the "punishing" dance, the smoking song, the forfeiture of property, the "throwing away" of property represented by sticks, gift-giving in honor of loved ones. 796 [533 43]

In 1890 changes in the form of the Grass dance began to be noticeable. By 1900 the Grass dance included all in the tribe who wished to participate. The official personnel had been expanded to include four "chiefs," four war-bonnet owners, two owners of ceremonial black dresses, two women whip-owners and two female assistants. Transfer of all offices was, however, carried out as before. 796 178

The dog ritual continued unchanged to be the highlight of the program. Perhaps the most obvious change in procedure was the inclusion of round dances, especially the Ringtail dance, in which both men and women participated and for which "punishing" songs had been devised. The smoking song and the forfeiture of property were retained, but with some elaborations. Although the "throwing away" of property gradually disappeared, the gift-giving in honor of relatives was very much emphasized. Other very minor changes were inaugurated at intervals up until about 1916. [533]

The changing functions of the Grass dance coincide with the changing form and can likewise be considered as of two periods, —the first from 1875–80 to 1890; the second from 1890 to 1916.

In the first period the function of the Grass dance was a relatively minor one. It was adopted, and fitted into place, as a substitute for the simpler and less colorful dance of the Wolf soldier society, and paralleled the dance of the other soldier society, the Star society. In view especially of the preliminary "begging" songs, the Grass dance seemingly was the expression of but one phase of the intense rivalry between the two soldier societies. [575]

With the extinction of the buffalo in 1884 came the breakdown of the older culture. By 1890 not only had most of the public religious rites disappeared, but the social organization was greatly altered. As the economic basis was changed, the nomadic life and the camp circle were abandoned, and the two soldier societies no [182]

857 buffalo cow, dried and stuffed. This type they would bounce and
526 kick. A popular game played among girls in spring was as follows. The girls holding hands formed a big ring. One girl in the center would have a ball. She would throw it at anyone in the ring. When she hit her chosen victim on the chest with the ball, the girls let go of each other's hands and each ran for a piece of buffalo chip where she would be "safe."[8]

A game played by boys and girls together in the evening was as follows. The children would line up according to size behind the tallest boy who would have in his hand a stick which was smouldering at the end. Each child held on tightly to the one in front of him. The boy holding the stick would try to touch the smallest child at the end of the line. The line would writhe as big sparks would fly and sometimes hair got singed. One old woman, recalling this game, remarked: "I don't know when we would get to bed, we had such a good time!"

Sometimes the children would send one of the group on an er-
857 rand. Those who stayed behind would wet their hands with their
524 tongues and say: "We will watch this to see if it takes you a long time or not." If their hands were still wet when the member of the group returned, they decided that he had done the errand very quickly.

When there were pretty clouds in the sky a little girl might point one out to the other children and tell them to watch it. Then she would stand at the bank of the river, bending over at the waist and violently flinging her arms from side to side while sing-
[821 ing. The others would watch the cloud and tell her that it was dis-
789 appearing and soon it would be gone. "They used to think they could make the cloud disappear by singing that song."

If a group of girls were playing together and some one boy, say
[576] from seven to nine years old, would butt in, the girls would all sit down to show that they resented the intrusion. If the boy did not leave, the girls would then form a circle around him and sing a derisive song. Thus the boy would be shamed and run off. The opportunity for this did not occur very often, since boys from about the age of seven usually went off to be by themselves

[8] For description of ball games and illustration of type of football, see Kroeber, 1908, fig. 23.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

551 Names were given to children very soon after birth. Names were fre-
553 quently changed and given away. A man would receive his father's name from the latter, or would take it after his death. If a child were sickly, a relative, such as a grandfather, sometimes gave him another name. A sick person sometimes also took a new name in order to recover. Renowned warriors sometimes gave away their names to young men. They might retain the same name for themselves, or take a new one. One very aged man gave away his name to a young man, telling him, "I give you my name in order that you may have as long a life as I." This was done without the occasion or accompaniment of a ceremony.

There seems to have been no prohibition against mentioning the name of the dead, nor even any reluctance on the matter. Some people, however, were ashamed to speak their own names.

551 Twins, called niiçan, were named, if boys, respectively Kaaen and Niiçan.
845 The latter name, however, was not always used, an ordinary name being given instead. Girl twins were not called by these names.

The hair was formerly worn in braids, as at present customary among
302 the Plains tribes, but also erect over the forehead. The women wore their
[765] hair either in braids or sometimes loose. In mourning, the hair, especially of the women, was cut about halfway across the cheek.

304 Ear-piercing, which among the Arapaho is performed on ceremonial occasions, and is itself accompanied with ceremony and giving of presents, was said among the Gros Ventre to be unaccompanied by special ceremonial actions. A woman or any one else does the piercing.

857 Boys who were herding horses sometimes took off their clothes and
673 daubed themselves with mud until they were unrecognizable. They painted their horses, and made shields of willow. Then they came to the camp,
868 mounted or on foot, to steal meat. Approaching the camp like a war-party, they would select the best meat hanging outdoors, charge on it, take it, and run. The old men and women and children chased them with clubs, but of course without success. The boys would go back to where they were herding, and have a feast.

576 The Gros Ventre say that both hand-shaking and kissing are aboriginal with them.

GAMES.

524 A common cup-and-ball game called tsöötskuutjan ("throw in") consisted of four hollow deer or antelope leg bones, each about two inches long, attached to a string passing through them, at the end of which there was a needle eight or ten inches long. This game appears to be identical with

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 successful and happy in this world, in acquiring wealth and in living a long life. Then the old man pointed the pipe east, south, west, north, and up, lit it, and smoked it. Then wiping it, and dropping the ashes out of it, he held the pipe up toward the sky, and prayed for his "grand-daughter," then laid it on the ground. The woman was naked, except for her robe. She then begged the old man to give her the medicine called tawaanas66 (the Arapaho hâçawaanaxu). It is said that sometimes the old man gave her none, but undoubtedly it was customary for him to give it to her. Only a small piece was used.

After this the women returned to the dancing-lodge, where their husbands were waiting for them. They did not go together, but singly. A boy or young man had been selected to stand outside the door, and watch for the women returning. As a woman came near enough to be recognized, he called into the lodge that she was coming, whereupon the dancers [576] came out. Her husband and all the others kissed her. Her husband kissed the "grandfather" also. One by one the other women came back, and were received in the same way. If the woman had received medicine, she gave half to her husband. He chewed it up, and then rubbed himself over his body with it.

For four nights this appears to have been done. On all but the last night, it is said, that, on the return of the women, they and their husbands left the lodge and returned to their tents to sleep, to be painted again next morning. The last night, after the women and their "grandfathers" had returned, the old men picked out from the row of bows their "grandsons'," and, standing north and south of the fire, danced, holding the bows; their "grandsons" meanwhile dancing with them, but the women sitting in their places.

These observances connected with the giving of medicine by the "grandfathers" to the dancers' wives are found, without essential modification, in the three following dances, as well as in this. It will be seen that they are considerably more developed than the corresponding practices among the Arapaho.[1]

[1] In the Arapaho crazy and dog dances the procedure is not carried quite so far. Dorsey has described almost the same practice as occurring in the Arapaho sun-dance. What takes place on this occasion in the Arapaho crazy and dog dances has been summarized in Vol. XVIII, pp. 193, 200, of the Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History. The following somewhat more precise account is appended for comparison with the Gros Ventre. The "grandfather" and the dancer's wife (who is naked, except, presumably, for a robe) go off. As or before they go it is said aloud, "He gives his wife away." She is given, theoretically, not to her husband's ceremonial "grandfather," but to "the four old men" that play a part in esoteric Arapaho ritual. The woman prays, asking the old man for life. He spits medicine on the ground four times, once for each of the four old men. She lies down before him, stretching her legs and arms, facing him. He asks "the grandfather above" — apparently "our father" — to look, and puts away his desire. Restraining himself, he covers her with a robe, draws her up, and leads her back, pushing her gently before him. When she rejoins her husband, the latter says, "Hahô'u" ("thanks") four times. That this custom of the Arapaho and Gros Ventre is not confined to them, is evident from a well-known passage in Lewis and Clark.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

793 blew medicine on the woman who then recovered. If you even
784 passed in front of the keeper, you would "drop in a cramp."

Food offered in the keeper's lodge, even on a purely social and informal occasion, had to be eaten there and could not be taken out unless some one told a personal war-deed. This taboo applied even to an ex-keeper guest, although not to the actual keeper's
[576] children. The keeper could break up the gathering by emptying his own pipe—a recognized Gros Ventre convention for hosts.

[821] If anybody threw water at the keeper or hit him with water, this would cause rain.

Where a group of men were seated in a row or crescent having a purely social smoke, the general procedure was as previously described. If the Pipe keeper were one of the group, the man passing the pipe to him on either the clockwise or return circuit would first make a gesture with it "to the rear between himself and the keeper," if you didn't do that the keeper would not accept it.

The powers of the Feathered Pipe keeper and co-keeper specifically recorded by us were similar, apart from control of storm, rain and flood and, as far as they went, to those of the Flat Pipe keeper and co-keeper. The weather control powers will be described later under Feathered Pipe ritual.

[753] Anyone who stepped in the track of the keeper or co-keeper got a fit, for the soles of their moccasins were kept treated with wild parsley.

The keeper and co-keeper acquired by reason of their office certain doctoring powers.

787 The keeper had marked dreaming and forecasting powers, just as the Flat Pipe keeper had, and his dreams when told to the
793 people were "big news." In a dream he would, for instance, see animals fighting the Gros Ventres and this would be a warning to a war-raiding party to act discreetly. He would foretell from his dreams who would win in a prospective battle and how many would be killed. At the time the Flat Pipe was captured by the Assiniboine (see No. 8 in Appendix), the Feathered Pipe owner was fore-warned by the Pipe in a dream and he and his party escaped. If the keeper had a dream that foreboded evil fortune he would on waking talk to the Pipe and ask it not to let the evil

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 608 When, consequently, a Crazy Dance was in the offing, older men who learned that they might be asked to be ritual grandfathers were very apt to run away and hide. But they could not sleep forever out on the hills, and when they came home, they would be stalked and caught by surprise, by day or night, and offered a pipe by an individual or group of two to four who intended to participate in the coming Dance. The group had secretly convened and decided on their grandfather. Finally bringing a filled pipe with them they would go to his lodge and walk in. The older man would then be practically trapped, for in accordance with the general Gros Ventre pattern an offered pipe could hardly be refused. He might wilt and long hesitate, sitting with bowed head while the visitors entreated him to accept and to help them carry out their part in the Dance. [576]

If on any occasion in the past he had had sex relations with any of these men's wives, either before or after their marriage to them, he would, when offered the pipe, be sacredly obligated to make indirect confession of the fact by refusing the pipe and saying to them (or to the individual young man, if the latter was alone), "My grandchildren, you are stillborn. I cannot serve as your grandfather," or "Go to somebody else. She is not your wife," or using some similar circumlocution. Such a reply might cause great embarrassment and worry to the young man, who perhaps had never suspected his wife.[11] Failure to confess would be "something wrong, a violation of belief or important custom" and would be followed by misfortune, even early death.

If when offered the pipe, stem first, the older man accepted it, and with it the office of grandfather, he would get up and say to the offerer: "All right, we will go outside." After they got outside the lodge the old man would say: "Now, young man, face east." The older man would stand behind him, holding the pipe stem up, and pronounce the vow, "A woman is being offered so that such-and-such a person will recover from sickness and get well. We are going to have a Crazy Dance. He [the young man]

[171] [11] The Arapaho custom in this matter was quite similar, we were told by an Arapaho woman, the widow of a Gros Ventre, who was present while we were discussing the point.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

upward or downward but to the hill, with a ritual gesture and would make his request direct to the one or ones inhabiting the hill or mountain top and tell this one or these ones what [power] he actually wanted."

In all the above the quester was following the general ritual and social Gros Ventre pattern for making requests. Such was the ritual pattern in prayer with a pipe. And whenever a pipe was offered to a fellow-tribesman it was offered with the stem toward him. The offering of a pipe to another when asking something of him was an "emphatic way of pleading." Thomas Main here remarked: "If I wanted to borrow money of another and were afraid my request would not be granted, I might offer him a pipe when asking for the loan and so reinforce my request."

Bull Lodge, when seeking power on a butte, made offerings of material goods and of the first joint of his left little finger. Little Man made offerings of a bit or bits of his flesh.

While up on the mountains the quester, alone and praying and concentrating his thoughts on his quest, would fast, neither eating or drinking, and would walk around crying, shedding real tears. He, or the man who had first accompanied him to the spot and then left him, would make a rude sleeping place of rocks and twigs and branches. This sort of "nest" was called his "call-for-power lodge." When the quester got weak or fatigued or sleepy, he would lie down in this "nest" and doze or sleep. Al Chandler stated: "Their [the quester's] sleep is not sound, any little thing wakens them. They are expecting something all the time and they look for it." Usually power was given during such sleep, although in some instances when the quester was wide awake. The power-giving being would speak to the quester and, usually at least, appear to him.

Sometimes a quester would be told by the being whose "house" was the mountain on which the man was questing: "Here is the kind of power I have. This is all I have. That other one [being] has the kind of power you wish. Go over there." And the being would name some other butte or mountain. Thus, for instance, a man going to a given mountain to seek wealth or war power might be offered doctoring power, and if he did not take this

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 178 624 [431] [622]

in his honor, and there were certain obligations connected with some of the offices in the newer form of the Grass dance, such as payment for the privilege by the black-dress wearers of being invited to come near the fire in the center and eat dog flesh. Furthermore a new "chief" would almost without exception provide the wherewithal for a whole dance to show that he was worthy of the office.

The procedure of transfer was similar for each office. If, for instance, one of the four "chiefs" had decided he had held this position long enough, at one of the dances he would order the transferring song to be sung. He, together, with the other three, would rise and dance around more or less deliberately and in a dignified manner. When these four reached the man who was to receive the office, each of the other three would make a motion toward the recipient as though helping him to his feet, while the donor himself would actually take his hand and assist him to arise. They then led him around the dancing place and finally installed the new officer in the place of honor vacated by the donor. It was customary, as the donor approached the region where the recipient was sitting, for everyone in the vicinity to bow his head as though making himself inconspicuous. None of them was supposed to know ahead of time on whom the choice would fall and, according to Gros Ventre etiquette, it would be very bad form for anyone to seem eager to receive an office, or any kind of honor for that matter. [576]

796 178

Changes in procedure. In this later period the Grass dance was held sometimes out of doors in a circular space enclosed by wagons, at other times in a large log building, the ground plan of which was as nearly round as it could be made. It was remarked in this connection that the modern rectangular community hall at Hays, on the Reservation, was no good for Gros Ventre ceremonies, including the Grass dance, "because everything we did was in a circle." The present almost circular community hall at Lodge Pole is considered much more satisfactory. The seating arrangements were very similar to those described for

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

on a given night after everybody was asleep lest the matter became known and the prospective electee take flight. When a rumor would spread that a new election was imminent, those who thought they might be elected used commonly to go away and sleep elsewhere than in their own lodges, as almost all were reluctant to become keepers. Those invited to the election meeting had to keep absolute secrecy beforehand, and at the meeting itself no one else than the keeper and co-keeper and the above invitees was present except two attendants, sons of keepers or ex-keepers. 793

The actual keeper might open the discussion by proposing a name. Discussion was free but dignified. Agreement would be finally reached, perhaps well after midnight or towards morning, on the keeper's first choice or on some other man. Knowing how onerous the keepership was, the keeper out of the regard for the ex-keepers would not be apt to nominate one of their sons, and ordinarily did not nominate one of his own.

The proposed keeper had to be a prominent member of the tribe, a man of great ability and renown, with a record of recognized achievement and with very considerable wealth in horses, in the size and furnishings of his lodge, and so forth. He had to be of the cream of the tribe, or "the best among many." And he had "to be good" as the Gros Ventre ethical code conceived goodness. He had to be generous; a stingy man, even though a great warrior, and even though he had vowed to become keeper, would never get the Pipe, for the keeper had to feed people and to be good to them and have pity on them. A murderer of a fellow tribesman could not become keeper, nor could a "professional" gambler, that is, one who is known to have supernatural gambling power. In general one guilty of grave crime such as rape or theft from fellow tribesman, or of habitual marked moral delinquency or defect, such as lying, backbiting, felony, disbelief in or disrespect for holy things, was barred from the keepership as he was barred from rising high in the prestige scale. 793 577 [778] [554]

After the choice was finally decided upon, the whole party with others of their kin proceeded secretively before or toward daybreak to the lodge of the electee to seize him bodily by surprise before he could escape. Once seized or even only elected he had practically 793

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13.

ceticism" expected of the keeper, his status as one set apart from his fellows, and his political and civil role in the Gros Ventre theocracy. We shall classify and treat them in this order, although some of them do not fit too neatly into any one of the five or six categories, and some straddle two or more of them. Incidentally, in many cases these refer to the co-keeper as well, although our field notes mention only the keeper. 793

The keeper and co-keeper of the Flat Pipe held a very sacred office of great eminence, and their persons and everything on or about them were considered holy. They themselves were expected always to behave in a dignified manner becoming their exalted and sacred position, and others were obliged to show them due respect. [778]

The keeper and co-keeper were not permitted "to do foolish things like other people." They could not, for instance, take part in gossip or other petty meanness. They were obligated as well to many ethical, "ascetic" and ritual observances to be described presently. [784] [577]

Marked respect was due them from their fellow-tribesmen. As The Boy put it, the Gros Ventres, now all Catholics, "had just the same great respect for the keeper and his wife as they now have for the priests and nuns." [795]

People had to keep their distance from the keeper and co-keeper, and could not sit close to them, or touch, grab or wrestle with them. Apparently, however, they could shake hands with them. If the keeper asked anyone to hand him something, the object had to be passed by hand, not thrown to him; if it were thrown toward the keeper on the ground and he had to pick it up, some accident would befall either the keeper or the thrower. 793 784

If anyone stepped over the outstretched feet or legs of the sitting keeper or co-keeper, the guilty party would at once fall in a fit, or get cramps and could be cured only by the offended keeper or co-keeper. Likewise, if the keeper, intentionally or unintentionally, stepped over the outstretched legs of a sitting person, the person would get fits or cramps and could be cured only by the keeper.

If the keeper or an ex-keeper had the Flat Pipe or even a com-

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

793
787

happen. If told in a dream, perhaps by the owl, of an impending epidemic, he might call all the people to his lodge and ritually paint them. If he dreamed of bad luck about to befall some individual in camp, he would tell him: "I dreamed that something was going to happen to you. You better make an offering. I will pray for you and try to avert the misfortune, but you must help."

793
577

In general the keeper and co-keeper of the Feathered Pipe were expected to live strictly in conformity with Gros Ventre ethical norms. Specifically recorded by us as unbecoming and forbidden to the keeper were: stealing, fighting, quarreling, losing temper, wife-beating, talking evil of fellow-tribesman, "talking dirty," threatening to kill, and, for more recent times, cursing and swearing like the whites.

793
784

The Feathered Pipe keepership seems to have involved for the keeper and co-keeper about the same privations and restrictions as did the Flat Pipe, although we obtained explicit information only regarding the following ones.

"The keeper of the Feathered Pipe was not supposed to comb his hair. It was all matted and made him look different from other men. You see him and you know at once he is a Pipe man. Sitting High's hair was that way. The locks were stuck together in the back. It made him look like a holy man. He never cut his hair and was not supposed to put water on it. His wife [the co-keeper] could comb her hair, but I do not think she could put water on it."[8]

C

The keeper could not bathe or swim in a stream; if he did, there would be rain. He could not wash his face but wiped it off with a cloth. He could not cut himself as a sacrifice or as a sign of mourning. He could not cry at mourning, not in the presence of the Pipe. Gambling by or with the keeper was forbidden, under the same penalty of life and with the same rite of absolution as described for the Flat Pipe keeper.

According to Al Chandler, the Feathered Pipe keeper and co-keeper, in contrast to the Flat Pipe keeper and co-keeper and

[8] In 1948 Al Chandler added: "The keeper cannot eat eggs, chicken, the head of any animal, nor dogs. In fact nothing about dogs was allowed near the keeper. Wherever they were, no one could walk in front of the keeper or co-keeper." [R.F.]

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

at play. It was said that a girl, of course, would never think of attempting to break into a group of boys. 857 524

Sometimes a group of boys tried to break up the girls' play. One way they pestered them was to wait until they were about to slide down a hill. Just as a girl would be ready to start, one of the boys would grab one of her legs and spin her around so that she would go down the hill backwards.

A favorite sport among boys involved skill in shooting arrows.[4] One game was to plant a marked arrow as a target. Then two boys would shoot two arrows each, and the one whose arrow came closest to the marker would take the arrows of his opponent. Sometimes they would see who could shoot the greatest distance. An interesting variation was to fasten a bow to upright sticks, one stick shorter than the other, so that the bow slanted with the string up. The player would stand on one side of the bow and tap the arrow against the bowstring to get the string vibrating, and when he judged the vibration sufficient to send the arrow toward the marker about 35-40 feet distant, he would release the arrow. Then another player would try his luck. The one who came closer to the marker would take the arrow of the one who lost. 857 526

Boys played a variant of the hoop and pole game. The hoop was larger than that used in the game as played by adults and a split stick was used as lance. The thrower aimed at the center of the wheel and, if he hit it, the shot was called "the crow." Another wheel game played by boys was rolling hoops made of green willow wrapped with willow bark. There were no cross-pieces in this wheel which was about 16 inches in diameter. Two teams lined up and the hoop was rolled as swiftly as possible by a member of one team while the members of the opposing team by shooting arrows tried to hit the rim of the hoop. If one succeeded and thus stopped the wheel, he retrieved his arrow, placed the hoop against a rock and had a chance to hit the rim while the hoop was at rest.

Occasionally there was trouble between boys who were contesting. Thick told of one occasion when he and his partner were betting against two other boys. Thick himself happened to make the winning point by splitting the upright arrow at which they 857 526 578

[4] Some boys' games are described by Kroeber, 1908, pp. 186–87.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

857 were shooting. "Just as I leaned down to pick up the arrows
526 which had been bet and fairly won, one of the other boys got mad
578 and shot at me. The arrow hit my hand and I bear the scar to this day. On another occasion at the same kind of game, my partner and I won, and one of the boys of the opposing couple hit both of us over the head with his bow. My people always discouraged me from fighting—I was a shy boy in any case—but my partner took the bow away from one of our opponents and in turn hit him over the head. The opponent ran home and reported to his parents. His mother was the kind who took up for her sons and so she came toward my partner and me. My partner was still angry and called out to the woman: 'We are going to shoot you with our arrows if you come any closer!' Whereupon the woman turned
[861] around and went back without saying anything. When our parents heard of this, however, both my partner and I were given a good tongue-lashing for having threatened a woman."

857 In summer, boys of the same band playing together as a group
578 expected a fight if they came in contact with a group from another band. While sometimes they used bows and arrows in this type of fighting, more often they used mud balls propelled from the end of a willow stick about three feet long. Thick gave the following account of one of these battles in which he participated as a boy.

"One summer day I was with my band group, the Frozens. We expected we might be raided, so we had already prepared mud balls and were modeling clay figures—horses, buffalo, men, and so on—when the Upper Quarters gang attacked. We Frozens grabbed our sticks and mud balls and ran into a coulee and then turned on the Upper Quarters. As the latter approached they protected themselves by holding their robes up in front of their faces, since the mud balls were aimed at their heads. Jim Shortman happened to be the member of the Upper Quarters who was 'bravest' and in the lead. I aimed at him and Jim put up his robe and warded off the shot; but Dwarf, who was right beside me, threw a mud ball immediately after I had and hit Jim right in the eye, breaking the skin and knocking him down. When they saw the blood, Jim ran home and the others, especially Dwarf, were scared. When Dwarf saw Jim's father coming toward

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

them, he was afraid to go to his own home, so he ran to a neighbor's. Jim's father found him there half-crying. He took Dwarf by the wrist and said: 'Come my friend.' He led him to his home and Dwarf thought he was going to be killed. On the contrary, however, Jim's father led him into his lodge and said: 'My friend, I am glad you made my boy cry. I have never laid a hand on him nor did I ever make him cry, and I'm glad you have done this.' He then gave Dwarf a big pile of meat and told him to eat as much as he liked and to take the rest home. As Dwarf was leaving Jim's father took a valuable Hudson's Bay blanket and cut it in two and gave him half saying: 'Here is this, use it for your blanket.' Then he took another half-blanket and said: 'Have your mother make leggins for you. Friend, I am glad you made my boy cry. I thank you for it. Now you can go home.' It just so happened, fortunately for Dwarf, that Jim Shortman was a beloved-child." [8] 857 578

Occasionally girls, or sometimes boys and girls together, formed a group in the evening to sing in front of the lodge of a rich family who they knew had such a specially loved child. The group danced and sang and then the woman of the lodge would invite them in. She would feed them and say that she was doing so in the name of that beloved-child. 857 533 [593]

Coming Daylight described how she joined groups who were going around the camp circle singing in front of the lodges of those who had returned successfully from a war party. This was before she was married and so she had to get permission from her grandmother. Mounted on a horse with a girl friend her own age, whose brother was supposed to keep an eye on them, they rode with the others. Singer admitted she had not participated in such singing parties when she was a child because she never had a horse to ride upon.

Much of the leisure time of children was seemingly spent in play which reflected the daily routine of adult life as well as many aspects of the life cycle. A group went quite far outside the camp circle, for instance, to play they were "married folk." If little boys went along with the girls, some would be "husbands," some "sons" and "sons-in-law." The "women" would tell their 857 524

[8] For details on the concept of the beloved-child, see Flannery, 1941.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

and spectacular war deed before she granted her favors to him.[9] 837
If he returned, she was supposed to keep her word, accepting him as her lover. In the other type of situation, it was taken for granted that a woman would succumb to the pleas of a man who [762] had publicly announced his intention of virtually committing suicide. Such a man, by singing the "brave-song" as he circled [533] the camp, indicated that he would seize the first opportunity thereafter to encounter the enemy but make no effort to defend [726] himself.[10]

According to a number of stories that are told, it was not uncommon that a woman committed suicide when her lover failed 837 to return from war. That this actually happened, in some cases 762 at least, is vouched for by the following factual account given by Singer. "White people, on one occasion, invited some Gros Ventres to visit them. All of the people, whose lodges were near to that of my grandmother, went, except one woman. This woman was scraping a skin when word was announced that a certain young man had been killed at war. My grandmother, noticing that the sound of scraping had stopped, thought that this woman was resting, and after a little while started over to visit her. On the way, however, she heard a shot, and when she got to that lodge she found that this woman was dead. She had first dressed herself nicely in her best clothes and had then shot herself, pulling the trigger of the gun by means of a string attached to her toe. My grandmother had suspected an affair between this woman and the young man who had lost his life at war, but she hadn't known for sure until this woman committed suicide. In those days a woman would have kept such an affair secret. (Now since women have the law to protect them from their husbands, wives just don't care and boldly run around with anybody they fancy and talk back to their husbands, and everybody knows all about it.) But anyway, that woman was a good worker,—she was working for her husband when that bad news came about the death of her lover,—and of course her husband mourned for her."

It was said that women who had been cast aside by their hus- 837

[9] "This custom is said to have led to the death of many young men," 578
Kroeber, 1908, p. 180.

[10] For further details on the "brave-song," see p. 92.

837 bands, and whose families were indifferent to their conduct, were easy conquests for men, but sometimes caused a great deal of
578 trouble. A woman like that usually had more difficulty in acquiring a good husband, and was jealous if her lover refused to take her as wife, yet married some other woman. Coming Daylight had an experience with one such woman. "My husband and I were living in a lodge with his mother and her husband and his two brothers, really cousins. My husband was a very handsome man and shortly after we were married, a woman whose lover he had been, came to that lodge and tried to get him to marry her too. When I saw that she was running after him I told him: 'You ought to take that woman. I can just make my bed on the other side of the fire [with the two cousins]!' But, knowing that she was the promiscuous kind, he didn't want her and refused her. She made her bed in our lodge anyway though and kept after him, but still he wouldn't have her. His mother told him one day: 'You might just as well marry her because she is a good worker and besides she had friends among the whites, so we could all eat!' My husband got mad then and told his mother what he thought of his former sweetheart. He even threatened to go off to war again if she didn't go away. The woman was right outside the lodge and heard what they said about her. She was so furious that she rushed in and dragged me out feet first so that all my clothes went up over my head. When I got up, she grabbed at my ear and pulled off my ear-ring—you can still see where she tore the flesh. Then she ran in the lodge again and started pounding on my husband. Finally, one of those unmarried relatives, who was not as particular as my husband, told her: 'Well, take your things over to that other lodge and I will move my things over there too.' So they lived as man and wife. I never tried to hit back at that woman and I didn't even talk about her, but I got even with her in a quiet way. One night at a dance, I took my husband by the arm and told him to dance with her. When she said: 'Oh, I have no use for him now—he is old,' I said in a loud voice: 'You would change your mind quick enough if I had asked him to sleep with you!' And everybody laughed and laughed at that woman because they knew how anxious she had been to have him."

837 It was said that when virtuous women refused improper ad-

C

and who was floating on the raft with the Flat Pipe, whether he may then have gone to the whites and taught them, too, how to pray; but all this he considers speculation only. 776 [773]

It should be emphasized that as previously noted, no sacrifices or prayers were ever offered by the Gros Ventres to Ni:hohat himself, nor, it may be here added, to Earthmaker. The Boy once said to his father, Lame Bull: "You talk so much about Ni:hohat. He was a superhuman. He should have been prayed to." "No," Lame Bull replied, "he never told the people to pray to him, but told them to pray to the Supreme Being. He was a man and not worthy to be prayed to." [782]

Earthmaker was the human being, apparently a or the primeval keeper of the Flat Pipe, who knowing the earth was to be covered with water made a raft of logs on which he and the Flat Pipe floated during the great flood.[22] (See full story, No. 3 in Appendix.) Where he came from is unknown. Landing on a mountain top he there made dry land (not *the* earth, the terrestrial globe as such which already existed), and also made a man and woman. He gave the Flat Pipe into the keeping of the man he had made, and taught him the Flat Pipe rite, instructed him how to carry out the rite and to plant tobacco, and told the people how to worship the Supreme Being. The Flat Pipe rite has been known ever since that time. Earthmaker is mentioned only in the Flat Pipe rite. After giving the pipe and the above instructions, he disappeared, and what became of him, whether he died or not, is not known. 776 773

Ghosts were called tsë:k. Another name for ghosts was byi'te:' a word that "gives the impression like a hollow-eyed bleached-out skull." An occasional ancestral ghost became the guardian helper of a surviving relative.[23] Gambling power might also be gotten from a ghost. Most ghosts were in their own future abode and did not have any contact at all with the living. In general, apart 774 775

[22] He was not floating in the Pipe bowl; this is the Arapaho version.

[23] In 1948 The Boy explained: "Tciya:təwu:nitän (see p. 19) are not tsë:k; tsë:k is the opposite of everything good—you can cuss by calling someone tsë:k. Byi'te:' is even worse. The ancestral ghost is tsätsuwa'a, not tsë:k. Shadow, soul, spirit, echo is bətäto:u. [R.F.] [578]

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

525 572 578 538 *Narrative 1.* In 1893 two Gros Ventre, enemy friends to each other, Red Whip who died in 1912 and Many Tail Feathers, got into a gambling game with the wheel. Many Tail Feathers was losing and he got angry. He grabbed Red Whip and they had a rought-and-tumble tussle. They fell to the ground, with Red Whip on top, astraddle Many Tail Feathers. Red Whip drew his knife, cut off all of the other's hair, at which loss the latter cried while the people cheered a cheer of contempt. Red Whip acting as if he had scalped an enemy, threw the hair in the air, and said in the hearing of all: "What's the matter with you, my friend? You must have a weak heart. Look at me. This is what I did to my enemy [such and such a time]. You know all about it. I just wanted to show you that I am your superior in matters of this kind. But anyhow you can have that good horse of mine."

[115] *Narrative 2.* Lame Bull, father of The Boy, our chief informant on gambling, died in 1908 at the age of 83 or 84 years. Lame Bull, when still a fairly young man, a rising one with prospects of rising higher and higher in the prestige scale, had been chosen as an enemy friend by White Owl, an older man, and Lame Bull had, according to custom, accepted the offer. An offer of enemy friendship was on the one hand almost mandatory, and on the other, where it came from an outstanding man of great experience and ability, as in this case, it was a real honor to the recipient and would rarely be refused.

When Lame Bull and White Owl became enemy friends, they "started to act like two roosters" and were saying to themselves: "I am going to get you when you are off your guard." Both knew that at some time or another, sooner or later, they would have to do something to put their enemy friendship to the greatest test. After much sparring around, the two men engaged in a wheel game as just such a climactic test. At this game White Owl had a big reputation (besides all his other accomplishments), while Lame Bull had no reputation at all at it.

On this occasion Lame Bull wagered everything he owned, and all his wife's property, including their lodge. As it was customary at such events for the kinsmen of the respective players to bet on their kinsman, Lame Bull's father, together with other relatives wagered large stakes on him, although the father was strongly opposed on principle to such betting and had always counseled Lame Bull strenuously against it. More, however, than large amounts of property was at stake; the players' relative and absolute standing in the tribe hung upon the outcome. In the case of Lame Bull and White Owl, the former a younger man of great promise, the latter an older one of recognized prominence, the rivalry was keen and, in a very true sense, ruthless. The older man was jealous of his great reputation and did not want any one to get near him in prestige. He was trying to crush Lame Bull's rising career betimes lest later Lame Bull might outdo him. At the same time, White Owl stood to profit even if he lost, for he would still be attached as enemy friend to Lame Bull and would have reflected prestige from being the enemy friend of this rising man. He would thus profit inevitably by the latter's prestige.

Lame Bull lost everything in the contest, and, of course, his father and relatives lost heavily. White Owl's people tore down Lame Bull's lodge and took it away as winnings and took everything in it, even down to the dishes of Lame Bull's wife. At the end of the playing, Lame Bull was an object of charity and a laughing stock.

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

About the only thing that earned him a bit of recognition was the fact that in spite of his loss of property and of status—to have recognition at all you had to have some possessions to hold and to give away in presents—and in spite of the strutting and crowing and twitting by the winner and his followers after the playing was over, Lame Bull did not lose his temper. 525 572 578 538

When the playing ended, Lame Bull had nothing of his own except his wife. So his father and mother invited them to eat. Downcast, embarrassed, ashamed, "feeling like a small potato," he ate. When he had finished, his father gave him such a tongue lashing that Lame Bull, who was very fond of his father, cried, and Lame Bull was a strong man who did not easily cry. He felt so bad that he went out on the hills and cried and cried, and slept out there, and came back a pretty sorry young man. And for a long time after, his wife, who also was one of his enemy friends, would throw this up to him: "Oh, you are nothing. You were always weak. Look what your enemy friend did to you. You will never amount to anything." And she would say such things to him especially when others were present. So she set about training him. At any rate Lame Bull was cured of gambling by his great loss to White Owl.

As time went on, Lame Bull recovered from the defeat which might have wrecked for good the career of another. His people had given him enough property to make a new start in life. He would invite White Owl to his lodge and give him big feasts and would make valuable presents of horses and such things to him. And White Owl would make a mental note of these things and would say to himself: "All right, my friend, you wait and see what I will do for you", awaiting the proper time to reciprocate, as was Gros Ventre custom. So a long time afterwards White Owl made very valuable presents to Lame Bull. And they were very good friends.

Narrative 3. Long ago, the story runs, a young Gros Ventre warrior went off alone on a war raid. He got to a mountain, and after nightfall went into a cave to camp overnight. On feeling around in the darkness he found some one else there, and said to himself: "An enemy." To make sure he asked by touching the skin of the other's forearm. The other by wiggling his finger on the Gros Ventre's chest signified: "I am a Snake Indian." So the Gros Ventre took the Snake's hand and made the sign of "big belly" to signify: "I am a Gros Ventre." 525 648 538

The Gros Ventre then said to the Snake: "Let's not fight tonight. You go to sleep and I'll go to sleep. Tomorrow morning we'll see what we'll do." But being afraid of each other, neither slept at all during the night.

The next morning the Gros Ventre asked the Snake: "Friend, where were you going?" He replied: "On the war path." "Alone?" "Yes, all alone." The Snake then asked the same questions and got the same answers. Then the Gros Ventre said: "We are both alone. Instead of killing each other, let's gamble with the wheel. The loser loses his scalp to the winner."

So they started to play, with such things as bow and arrows and clothing for stakes, and the Snake won everything from the Gros Ventre. Then the Gros Ventre proposed: "Friend, you stake all you have won, in a lump, against my scalp," and this was agreed upon. At this point the Gros Ventre got afraid he would lose, so

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

part and as good sports, but actual behavior not infrequently fell short of 558
the code's demands. Bad feeling was at times engendered and could and did
end in blows and violence, as was noted earlier in our account of the wheel game. 525
Quarrels among gambling boys must have been fairly common. One of our 578
informants, Thick, recounted three different bow and arrow contests for arrows, in which contests he had engaged as a boy with other boys. All three ended in violence started by the losers. In one of the three set-tos, Thick, the winner, was shot in the hand with an arrow by the other boy who lost his temper, and Thick still, at the age of 75, carries the scar. That the Gros Ventre were perfectly aware, as of course they must have been, of the discord hazard in gambling, is clear from such counsel as, for example, Thick's mother used to give him when he was a boy: "If you join in those gambling games somebody is going to get mad on account of getting beaten and he may pound you up." Further, that gambling often led to bad feeling was given to us by The Boy as the reason why the Gros Ventre disapproved of gambling between relatives.

So far as we could make out, Gros Ventre attitudes on gambling were 525
determined in only minor measure by economic considerations. In the days 183
before the disappearance of the buffalo in 1883-84, the Gros Ventre lived under a normal economy of abundance. Moreover, generosity in parting with their possessions, through gift and sharing, was focal in code and practice. Criers around the camp would counsel the people in words such as: "Men and women, don't love your property. You will always acquire other property. Only life never comes back, but property you can have back any time." In the long run for most individuals winnings would balance losses, just as gifts tended to balance gifts—a system of exchange which incidentally must have served to prevent unhealthy accumulation of wealth in the hands of any individual or small group. The cases of really ruinous loss of property through gambling, of reduction to "pauperism," appear to have been rare, and even in these cases the losers would ordinarily be looked after temporarily and tided over by their kin or friends. At any rate we got no record of individuals or their dependents suffering grave [735]
privation of the necessities of life as a result of gambling losses.

How far such facts entered into the Gros Ventre attitude toward gambling 525
cannot be determined confidently from such evidence as we have. In our hours of free discussion with informants, there was almost no intimation of economic considerations leading to disapproval. One of the themes in the tongue-lashing Lame Bull got from his father after the disastrous contest with White Owl may have been the economic, but this was not expressly stated by The Boy. Mrs Warrior kept away from gambling because, she said: "I liked what I had and

8:Flannery E-5 (1940-1948)1960 NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the shots and went later to see what happened, and there I saw her lying across the fire; her dress had burned off and her body was all shriveled. They weren't satisfied to kill her, but they burned her too!" She maintained her attitude and all the scolding from her relatives was of no avail.

Before turning to her adult life, we may refer to another instance which illustrates Coming Daylight's sensitivity to the suffering of others. In the Sacrifice Lodge, which is the Gros Ventre version of the well-known Plains Sun Dance, one of the important features was the spectacular self-torture which the active participants underwent. Each one had a sliver of wood embedded in the flesh of his chest. To the wood was tied a line, the other end of which was fastened high on the center-pole of the lodge. The man, leaning back so that the line was taut, went back and forth until finally the sliver was torn from his flesh. Meanwhile the women cheered on their relatives by "rattling their tongues," singing war songs, and the like, by way of encouraging the men to be brave and see the thing through. Coming Daylight was quite a young child when she first witnessed this performance. She remembered vividly her reaction when one of the young men, in his exhaustion, went to the center-pole and, putting his arms around it, wept aloud. She was not able to stand it any longer and rushed home crying. Her grandmother was very angry with her for leaving in the middle of the performance, but all the little girl could say was: "Oh, I just pitied that young man," and she could not be induced to return to the dance lodge. We may add here that actually in later years she did not participate in the Sacrifice Lodge even so far as women were allowed to do so.

The examples we have given are sufficient to show, I believe, that Coming Daylight had developed as a child a very strong set against violence, against painful and dangerous experiences. She refused medicine power from supernatural sources not only because it was dangerous but also because it involved a kind of physical activity which was repugnant to her. She refused to mutilate herself and was extremely sensitive to painful experiences in others. Her actual deviations from the patterns of accepted or approved behavior all tended in this same direction against violence. Her adult behavior likewise was consistent with this trend in her personality.

In consonance with her feeling against physical violence Coming Daylight avoided as far as possible the rough-and-tumble play in which brother-in-law and sister-in-law were free to, and indeed expected to, indulge. Other women told with glee how they enjoyed "getting even" with their brothers-in-law by, for instance, pushing them when fully clothed into the river, or dumping bucketfuls of water over their heads when they least expected it, and so on; but Coming Daylight admitted without hesitation that she didn't like that sort of thing and never attempted to retaliate even when her brothers-in-law succeeded in playing jokes on her. Similarly while it was not unusual for women rivals to actively fight over a man, she refrained from such undignified behavior, although it must be admitted that she had enough provocation on at least one occasion of which she told me. She had just married a man who was described by others as something of a gay Lothario. A woman who had been trying to force her attentions on him was furious when she heard of the marriage. She rushed to the lodge and pulled Coming Daylight out feet first, yelling insults the while. When the latter regained her feet she made no attempt to hit back even though the other slapped her and pulled off an earring, tearing the lobe of the ear. Coming Daylight, however, bided her time and soon was able to make an opportunity for an exchange of words with the woman at a big social dance.

8:Flannery E-5 (1940-1948)1960 NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Her final rejoinder was such a witty and pointed one that everyone laughed heartily at her rival's expense. In this culture, of course, public ridicule was a far more effective retaliation than the biting and scratching that other women said frankly they would have indulged in when attacked.

Expression of emotional excess was institutionalized for the Gros Ventres, as for the rest of the Plains, in the bereavement situation. Upon the death of a husband, son, or father, a woman was expected to start wailing as soon as she heard the news, have her hair cut off, discard good clothes for old ragged ones, gash her arms and legs, go to the hills to mourn and cry, resisting for a time the pleas of her relatives to return, and being watched lest she attempt suicide. Coming Daylight was only a young woman when she was first widowed and the mourning pattern was still in full vogue. It is certain from other evidence than Coming Dayling had a deep affection for this husband to whom she had been given as a child-bride and in whose kindly and indulgent treatment she had found a pleasant escape from the rigorous discipline of her grandmother. Nevertheless the public expression of her grief was minimal—no abandonment for her. Although her sister was sent on the hills with her to keep watch over her in the usual way, Coming Daylight was easily persuaded to return shortly though she herself was proud of the fact that she had stayed out so long that she actually had got a frozen toe! In later years when all that was left of the ritual was the wailing out on the hills, she lost the son whom she herself, and everybody else, acknowledged as her favorite. She had not been on the hills very long when she experienced a significant dream, as follows. She was in a lodge at the rear of which was a big pile of tobacco mixture and a pipe. The owner of the lodge filled the pipe and approached her. She was frightened because she didn't smoke. The owner of the lodge however told her: "Look at these people." She looked and saw many with their hair cut and their bodies bleeding from the gashes inflicted in grief. The man then told her: "That is in the past. Nowadays your only consolation is in smoking." So she accepted the pipe and, after smoking it, she was painted in ceremonial fashion by each of those other mourners. Then the owner of the lodge dismissed her saying: "Now, go home and don't ever go on the hills and mourn again. But always smoke if you want to." She went home right after this dream and when she told her husband of it he accepted it as valid and persuaded her sister to prepare for Coming Daylight her first real smoke. She maintained that the habit subsequently developed was actually a great comfort to her.

The final area with which we shall be concerned here is the war complex—a vital aspect of the old Plains culture. Gros Ventre women were allowed direct but limited participation in these activities in the sense that, while they would not join a party of men who were going on horse-raiding or revenge expeditions, if opportunity offered they might exhibit the same kind of bravery that a man should show and derive considerable status therefrom. For instance, if one of the enemy fell nearby, the women rushed out from camp to count coup, and to grab trophies with which to inaugurate the relationship known as "enemy-friends." Coming Daylight, however, was never one to indulge in this sport. She told of the one—and to her extremely distasteful—occasion on which her hand literally was forced. It seems that during a raid on their camp one of the enemy was shot and her husband scalped him. The victim was lying not far from her lodge and, as her husband dashed off to pursue the rest of the Assiniboine, he shouted for her to come out and see what was going on. Coming Daylight saw the man lying there, face down, covered with blood. He was not dead

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

nothing to show that they had long been in the Saskatchewan region. All that is certain of their previous past is their closer relationship to the Arapaho than to any other tribe; and the origin of the Arapaho is equally obscure, except that it is certain that, if they came from the north and east, it was a long time ago. Of the Gros Ventre it can only be said that, while related to the Arapaho and regarded by them as almost politically a part of themselves, they were far separated from them when first known, with them for a short time later, and again separated, and in contact and alliance with another much more distantly related Algonkin branch. Their habitat in a hundred years has been successively near the Saskatchewan, the Platte, and the Missouri. There is nothing to show that such variability of affiliation and location within the culture region of the Plains has not been characteristic of their previous history. 131 N4 [648]

The Gros Ventre call the tribes near them by the following names: Arapaho, hinan'ăn (in Arapaho, hinanaci-na"); Cheyenne, itisin, "scars" (itiso", "a scar;" Arapaho name of the Cheyenne, hitaciina"); Cree, na"tsa", "rabbits;" Ojibwa, djinbuna"tsa", "Lower Cree;" the three Blackfoot tribes, waotä"nixtäats, "black-feet" (a Blackfoot, waotä"nixtänin, "black-foot-man;" a Piegan, tsä"t'; the Bloods, ka"winähaä"); Assiniboine, na"djineihin; Sioux, na"wina"djinei, "Below-Assiniboine" (in Arapaho, na"tinei, "a Sioux"); Crow, hounen, "crow-men;" Minitari, wuxnokayan, "—lodges;" Shoshone, sösouyänin, "snake-men;" Bannock, waotä"nixiinin, "black-men" (in Arapaho the Ute are called wrotänähiçi, "black"); Flathead Salish, kaakaäänin, "flathead-man;" Nezpercé, taniibats, "pierced-nose" (Arapaho taniibaaçi is the Caddo). Two tribes to the southwest or perhaps west, which have not been identified, are the wasöi"hiiyeihits, "grass-dwellers," who live in houses of grass or brush; and the na"wuxnanibiina"ts, "fish-eaters." 101 648

The Gros Ventre were divided into groups similar to those of the Blackfeet and Sioux. The names of these bands were nicknames, and in no way totemic. As there was prohibition of marriage within the band, the name "clan" is, however, applicable to them. Descent was paternal and a man belonged to his father's band; but the prohibition of marriage extended also to his mother's clan, all the members of both the father's and mother's clan being considered relatives. Each band seems to have had a recognized head or chief. During the winter the tribe broke into smaller groups, consisting of one or perhaps more clans, which followed the buffalo, and camped chiefly in the timber. There corrals were made for the horses at night to prevent their being stolen by war-parties. When summer came, the clans joined and camped together in the large camp-circle. In this, the opening of which was toward the east, the different bands had definite 621 614 [614] [582] 221 361 621 614

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

SOCIAL CUSTOMS.

000 The Gros Ventre system of terms of relationship has been given in a
605 former publication.[1]

601 Cousins, so far as the relationship was known, were called brothers and sisters, and they called each other's children son or daughter if the cousin
[582] was of the same sex as the speaker, or nephew or niece if the cousin was of the opposite sex. Any known relationship was a bar to marriage. The
[587] brother of a dead man sometimes married his widow, but this was not always the case.

583 Large amounts of property, especially horses, were given away for wives for the honor of the act, but there was no rule or definite custom covering the quantity of property so given. The horses might be given not only to the father, but to the brothers, uncles, and other relatives of the girl. Sometimes, without having received any gifts and apparently without any previous understanding, a man would give his daughter to a young man, who thereupon would give him horses, or distribute them among his wife's other relatives. Old men practised this custom in order to obtain the aid and services of a young man in caring for their horses and in other ways, and no doubt
585 sometimes also to insure a more certain food-supply. A young man on
431 marrying received a tent with all the proper furniture, usually from his prospective parents-in-law, but sometimes from his own parents, if they were the wealthier.

606 Although a young married man often lived with his father-in-law, the
[591] well-known taboo custom between mother-in-law and son-in-law — which forbade their speaking, looking at each other, or being in the same tent — existed among the Gros Ventre. There was, however, no father-in-law taboo. The mother-in-law taboo extended to the son-in-law's brother.

584 If a woman did not wish a man for her lover, she might send him to do a
721 certain act of bravery. If he returned successfully from war, having accomplished the deed, he was then accepted. This custom is said to have led to the death of many young men.

428 At a person's death his property was inherited generally by his relatives. His father and mother, brothers, sisters, and children would receive part. His father and mother received the most. A man often disposed of his property before his death. If he died suddenly, as on being killed in war, his parents divided his property. It was not customary for a man on going to war to divide his property among his relatives in the contingency of his
[764] death. Property particularly valued by the dead person was buried with him.

[1] Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part I, pp. 9, 160.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

added prestige. Those mentioned as leading bands above were seemingly the most numerous and most prominent in the recent past, and their representatives are more numerous at the present time. While the Frozens, Upper Quarters and Bad Plenty have the most living descendants, apparently there are no Poor Greys or Coffees today, only one Night Hawk, and a few each of the others. 621 554

Although Coming Daylight and Singer claimed membership in the Frozen band, they had no false modesty in proclaiming: "The Frozens were the best workers, had the biggest lodges, the prettiest women and the best-looking men. In fact they were the 'aristocratic' families, being the best-dressed and having the most horses." This was confirmed voluntarily by Cora who stated that she belonged to the Same As Assiniboines, but had heard all her life that the Frozens were the most distinguished band along the lines the old women mentioned. The men informants admitted that some bands were considered better in some respects than others, but failed to be more specific, and added that regardless of the reputation of the whole band, an individual man had to make his own way. [565]

It is somewhat difficult to arrive at the exact situation as to band affiliation and exogamy inasmuch as the band ceased to function not long after our oldest male informants were born. Our oldest female informants, whose memory includes the 1860's, stated in regard to this individual or that, whom they mentioned, that they could not remember to which band he had belonged. In fact the old women became quite impatient when questioned on this subject since from their point of view it was not important. To them the question of marriage regulations was a practical one of avoiding as mate any person to whom blood relationship could be traced, no matter how remotely, and any affinal relative not of the same generation. 621 [582]

There was general agreement among all informants, however, that under normal circumstances children were of the same band as their father.[8] Nevertheless, residence was an important factor, and not a few persons claimed affiliation with bands other than those into which they had been born. Coming Daylight, for instance, said she was a Frozen, the band to which her mother had [591] 621 597

[8] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, p. 147.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

621 belonged. She was orphaned at an early age and was raised by
597 her maternal grandmother under the protection of her mother's brother, Crow Bull, a prominent member of the Frozen band. Garter Snake claimed to be a Tendon, likewise the band into which her mother had been born, although her father, Bull Lodge, a so-called "Hudson Bay Company breed," was classed as a Frozen. If a child were adopted by, and remained during his childhood days with, a family of another band than that into which his real father had been born, he became a member of the adopting band. For instance, Lame Bull adopted a boy whose father belonged to a different band, but the boy was always known as a member of Lame Bull's band, the Upper Quarters.

[591] One informant stated that when a woman married she became a member of her husband's band, but this statement refers in all
621 probability merely to the fact that patrilocal residence was often practiced. Each of our older women informants stated as her band the one in which she grew up. When speaking of their husbands, these women, each of whom had survived several mates, seldom mentioned their band affiliations, unless asked specifically, nor did they mention to which of the soldier societies their several husbands had belonged. One gathers the very distinct impression
[602] that the kinship bonds were the all-important social relationships so far as Gros Ventres women were concerned, and that the wider political and social groupings did not impinge very directly on their lives.

621 All informants stated that one should not marry into the band in which he claimed membership and in which he was brought up.
582 There was a difference of opinion among them, however, as to whether one might marry into his mother's band providing he had not been raised therein and no blood relationship could be traced.[8] The Boy stated positively that a man who would so much as flirt with a young woman of his mother's band would be disliked. Charles Buckman differed, holding that any marriage would be proper, providing the far-reaching incest taboos based on blood and affinal relationship be observed. The Boy admitted that, because of changes which occurred in band affiliation, occasionally a person would take a wife from some other band than that of either

[8] Kroeber, 1908, p. 147, prohibition of marriage extended to mother's clan.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

his father or mother and still discover later that she was related 621
to him. The Boy's own experience illustrates this. The Boy is 582
an Upper Quarters as was his father, and his mother was a Frozen. It so happened that his mother's father was one of three brothers who were Frozens. The grandson of one of these three brothers married a Bad Plenty and stayed with his wife's band so long a time that he was known as a member of the Bad Plenty and his children took that affiliation. The Boy married one of the daughters of this family, a woman known as a member of the Bad Plenty. Only after several years of married life did they one day discover that The Boy had married his maternal grandfather's brother's great-granddaughter! Charles Buckman, whose father was a white man, and whose mother, a Bad Plenty, later married a Water Horses man, took Charles there to live, and he claimed affiliation with the latter band. He married a Bad Plenty woman, however, and discovered years later that his wife was remotely related to him on his mother's side. It seems certain that in former times, when the bands were functioning, an Upper Quarters would not marry an Upper Quarters, that is, that an individual would not marry into his own band; but beyond this, apparently only known blood and most types of affinal relationship were bars to marriage.

Within the band, close relatives usually camped in proximity, 621
whether residence was matrilocal or patrilocal. The general consensus of opinion among our informants was that most of the persons within a band were related to each other. Band members would not wager against each other for high stakes in gambling, [628]
and sometimes the whole band might become involved as a unit in case of blood revenge.

Chief or Leader

The term "chief" was employed to designate any man who had 622
distinguished himself in war.[4] Each band then might have several or many such "chiefs," but among them would be one recognized as leader, "he who takes us around," that is, the one who directed the band when it moved from place to place.[5] This function seems

[4] The Gros Ventre term is *nätcä* (m. s.) *näkyä* (w. s.). For linguistic shift between men's and women's speech, see Flannery, 1946, pp. 133–34.

[5] The Gros Ventre term is *ninä'ninänä:titc* (m. s.). Kroeber, 1908,

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

ties of the larger society which the company had joined. Meanwhile another group was meeting informally before it was admitted into one or other of the Societies. Since the Stars and Wolf-men were approximately even in number, there probably was a regular alternation. According to reasonable estimate, the Potbellies joined the Stars about 1840; the next group of young men would then have joined the Wolves, say in 1843 or 1844; the following company joining the Stars in about 1849–50. 561 575

If the Sacred Dances, except the Sacrifice Dance, were gone through in order, there would thus be several companies each year whose members were eligible to vow any one of the Dances, and our informants were all under the impression that one or more of the Dances was given each summer. It seems quite clear that the Law Enforcer Dance was vowed only by the older levels of the active warriors. After having gone through this rite, these men more or less retired as "old men," and, having "sat on the sage," acquired certain privileges and freedom denied to their fellow tribesmen who had not yet gone through this Dance. These "old men" acted as ceremonial grandfathers, i.e. sponsors and teachers, for others going through the various lodges, but were no longer active as Stars or Wolf-men. They became members of an undifferentiated group of elders, the ranks of their original company having no doubt been drastically thinned out by the time they would have arrived at this status. 796 561 [886] [888]

If the above interpretation be correct, there would be three age divisions: the "young men," those meeting in companies; the "middle-aged, mature men," whose companies had joined either the Stars or the Wolf-men, and, having gone through the Fly Dance, were eligible to vow the other Dances; the "old men" who had gone through the Law Enforcer's Dance and were no longer active in the Star and Wolf-men societies, except two of their number, one of whom served as announcer in each. 561

The young men, who together formed the company, being of approximately the same age, were tied together by bonds of friendship and there were apparently not a few pairs of "inseparable friends" in each company. One of our informants, Cora Chandler, indicated that the bonds holding together the members of a company were so intimate that marriage between their children was [572] 561 582

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

561 taboo. This was the case regarding the children of "inseparable
582 friends," but whether or not it was so regarding the children of all members of the company, mutual hospitality was frequently extended among the members—"a man would most often invite the members of his age group." Further, it was not unusual for members of the same company to go hunting and on raiding and revenge parties together. If a young man were killed at war and
[727 his body brought home, the members of his company were said to
764] have assembled and danced around his bier, sometimes sobbing and crying as they danced.

As members of either one or other of the two larger societies
561 they joined with members of other companies, in the Stars and
575 Wolf-men respectively, to perform their proper social dance and to participate in activities such as gambling, horse-racing, "brag-
[616] ging contests," and so on, wherein they could compete with members of the opposite moiety. An individual seemingly tended to choose his serious enemy-friends from among those of the rival organization and thus is explained the spirit of competition which Kroeber notes between the Stars and "other companies."[18]

The Societies

575 The Stars and Wolf-men societies were organized along identical lines and were distinguished from each other only in details of procedure.

Each society included approximately half the total number of able-bodied warriors in the tribe. They each had two renowned men as leaders—two Star leaders of relatively recent times having been Comes A-flying and Crazy Bull; two Wolf-men leaders, Skinner and Strikes On Top. The leaders remained mounted when the others of the society were marching on foot in preparation for their dance, and carried whips at the dance as insignia. These men were supposed to have been outstanding warriors who had while mounted actually counted coup against the enemy. Two members of the last-admitted company served as *atsa'an* (waiters, messengers) at the dances, and each society had an announcer, presumably chosen from among the "old men" who had gone through the Law Enforcer Dance.

[18] Kroeber, 1908, p. 234.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

462 she herself had picked or dug. In preparing the material for
476 storage, too, the women would sit in a big circle, pounding cherries
for instance, one woman helping to crush the cherries brought in
[251] by another. But, again, while it lightened the work of an individual woman who might have gathered more than the others, there was no pooling of resources. Sociability and friendship were apparently the chief motives for joining such a work group.

463 While there was a slight amount of occupational specialization, there was no real division of labor in the sense that persons with, say, supernatural power to cure, and who were well paid for their services, would be supported by this means alone. Nor could a man live, for instance, by specializing in raiding and raising horses. Every man, whatever else he might do, would have to make at least an attempt to hunt. Similarly, regardless of the temporary division of tasks which might be assigned among the women of the household, no individual woman could profit sufficiently through her ability to cut and fit lodge covers or through her ability to embroider well. Some, who were more skilled at one task than another, might perhaps devote more time and energy to that pursuit, but the rewards therefor were more in the nature of prestige than of direct economic advantage. An old woman for instance might be adept at making buffalo-hair rope. Men desiring to have it, would give her things in exchange for it, but it is doubtful if she would receive sufficient from this one type of manufacture to make her independent of relatives, even so far as food was concerned.

464 The potential supply of labor consisted in all able-bodied men of the tribe from the age of about 17 or 18, at which time a young
[582] man was sufficiently skilled to hunt seriously, and of all able-bodied females from about the age of twelve, the time at which the average girl was married and was supposed to have been trained
[162] to woman's work. The unbalance of the sexes in favor of females, a marked feature in the population of the northern plains tribes,*
461 plus the fact that the tasks allotted to women could be begun at a much earlier age than those undertaken by men, meant that the amount of labor contributed by the woman, in manufacturing economic goods, was greater than the amount of labor available

* Cf. Wissler, 1936 (a), p. 38.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

ther" includes mother's sister, female cousin, father's brother's wife. This was neatly illustrated in an instance given by Mary Ereaux. "My mother's cousin's husband came to my house a few weeks ago and wanted to ask me something about arrangements for the pop concession at the Fair. It was a matter of serious business and he and I stood, each looking in a different direction, talking only about the matter in hand. After he had left, my son-in-law, who is not an Indian, and who does not understand the Gros Ventre language, said: 'Mother, you looked as though you were mad at that man.' So I told him: 'In the Indian way, that man would be the same as my father, because his wife would be in the same relation to me as my mother, so we never talk unless necessary and never look at each other while talking.'" 604 601 [582]

The term "aunt" is reserved for father's sister and female cousins, and "uncle" for mother's brother and male cousins. Here, too, heightened reserve characterized the cross-sex relationship. "A man would not address his 'aunt' directly unless by chance she would be the only one there and he needed information. He would under no circumstances linger to make conversation with her. The same for a woman and her 'uncle.'"

Parents-in-law

The respect between members of the opposite sex who are of contiguous generations was most apparent in the avoidance between mother-in-law and son-in-law. This required that the two neither look at nor speak to each other at any time. It was stated that some men disregarded these rules after the death of the wife, "but most used to keep them all the time." There was one case mentioned in which the son-in-law of a very old woman told his wife: "Your mother is getting very old now. We won't see each other much longer anyway. It would be all right for your mother to come in to our lodge." Both Coming Daylight and Singer insisted nevertheless that, should such a proposal be made, the son-in-law would be the one to make the initiative, never the mother-in-law. 606

The avoidance between father-in-law and daughter-in-law was almost as strictly observed, in that a woman could not look directly at her father-in-law when she spoke to him, and she did not

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

CHAPTER VII

BIRTH AND INFANCY

Conception and Contraception

It was a common belief among the Gros Ventres that for conception to occur, sex relations must continue over a period of time, conception could not occur as the result of one copulation. The fact that a girl would be given in marriage before she reached physiological maturity tended to confirm this belief, which is also linked with another one, namely, that a girl would not menstruate unless and until she had experienced sex relations. This latter belief is reflected in comments made by old women concerning the young unmarried girls of the present day. Coming Daylight and Singer remarked on several occasions: "Nowadays girls are 'terrible.' They menstruate and have well-developed figures before they are married." These signs of physical maturity the old women take as absolute evidence of loose conduct on the part of the girl, regardless of what the facts in the individual case may be. 842 [582] 841 856

The Gros Ventres apparently recognized some relationship between conception and lactation. Coming Daylight, for instance, said: "The Indian women claim that they didn't become pregnant so soon if they nursed their babies. They always used to carry their infants about with them because, if they went far away and left them, their milk might spoil. The old-timers used to say that if a woman took good care of her children and kept them close to her, her family would not increase so rapidly. It is the young ones nowadays who have the bottle-fed babies!" 842

There were certain precautions, too, that a woman should take to keep her offspring properly spaced. "If you sit in the place from which a pregnant woman has just risen, you will conceive immediately. Dispose of the afterbirth quickly. Destroy all clothing worn during pregnancy, even moccasins, or give them to some woman past child-bearing age. If a woman put these clothes on again she would soon become pregnant. Nowadays though mo-

842 pressed this desire early in life and volunteered the following story
[787] of her experience.

"My first husband, Dressed in White, went out hunting and
[587] brought back a lot of buffalo meat. I had my robe spread out just inside the door and he threw all the meat on it. Being hungry, I sat down there and was just about to eat the raw liver when he said: 'Wait! Don't eat that.' When I asked why not, he countered with the query: 'Do you like children?' To which I replied: 'You know I love children. I go wherever there is a baby—I love to have them on my lap.' So he said: 'Well, it is your fault that this is going to happen.' He took the oval piece of meat from the upper front quarter and roasted it in the coals. He then threw it to me in a careless way, instead of passing it to me as usual, and said: 'Here, you can have that for your son. You eat this plain—don't eat any tallow with it.' although they usually ate tallow with such lean meat. I said in disgust: 'E:ka:kya! I have always liked children,' and flung the meat out of the door. He said: 'Now that you have done this, you are going to have children from now on.' So, as he predicted, not long after that I became pregnant with my firstborn who was a boy. Unfortunately this boy died and I often wondered if it happened because I threw the meat too violently on that occasion when my husband had offered me the opportunity to choose whether or not I wished to bear children." Incidentally she remarked many times that she is happy she chose as she did,—otherwise now she would be all alone and her children have been so good to her.

The telling of the above incident brought to Coming Daylight's mind another, which confirms her belief in the relation between
[595] "medicine" and conception. "Crow Bull, my mother's brother,
[582] had four wives. His first wife did not have any children. Then he married an Assiniboine woman and still later took a third wife. Neither of the latter had children either until one time Crow Bull got mad. His third wife wanted to leave him for another man, but her relatives sent her back to Crow Bull. He, however, slept across from her bed and did not have intercourse with her. Shortly after this the Assiniboine woman did something to displease him and so he made up his mind: 'These two wives of mine
[789] are going to have children and settle down!' He had an old-fash-

CHAPTER VIII

CHILDHOOD

858 In the days before the buffalo disappeared and before formal schooling was available, childhood, it was said, for girls was shorter and for boys was longer than at present. A girl was ordinarily [582] given in marriage before she was twelve years old—certainly before she attained physiological maturity. A boy on the other hand, though seemingly anxious to participate in hunting and in war as soon as he was able, was not forced to bear the full responsibilities of adulthood until the end of adolescence. While there was considerable variation from family to family in the amount of time required of children in training for practical tasks, all enjoyed a considerable amount of "free time."

Play

857 Singer and Coming Daylight, the two oldest of our informants, in recalling the amusements and pastimes of their youth, decided 526 that sliding down hills was one of the most pleasurable as it could be done at any time of the year. In winter, when there was snow, [493] the boys used a kind of sled made by lashing buffalo rib-bones together. Girls managed just as well by simply sitting on their robes and holding between their legs the end which usually hung free. In summer a stiff buffalo hide was used for sliding down the grassy slopes.[1] When the water was frozen, boys and girls alike [524] skated with their feet on the ice, thus clearing a slick surface on which to spin their tops made of horn.

857 Swimming, however, was the great sport in summer. Girls left their dresses close to the bank, those of the older girls in a neat 526 row closest to the edge and those of the smaller girls in the next 481 row. Beginners used the dog-paddle, but the boys developed profi-

[1] For this and some other types of amusement, see Kroeber, 1908, pp. 190–91.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

stantly admonished to stay at home after they were married and 183
not to go visiting and gossiping with other women. Mothers told 864
their daughters to be respectful to their husbands. When still 867
very young, a girl was taught to "always make a lot over a man." She started with her father and was responsible, for instance, for seeing to it that in the morning when he awakened there was water beside him so he could wash his face before going for his morning bath, and that his breakfast would be ready for him when he came back therefrom. These are the kinds of things girls would be expected to do later for their husbands.

All during the time they were learning domestic skills, girls 183
were told that they should keep everything that they own nicely 867
and to have on hand everything they may need. It was not good to run around and borrow. "Keep your house clean and keep everything in good order, then your husband will like to stay at home." Again, "Don't let your husband's moccasins wear out before you make another pair. Always have things prepared ahead of time." Girls were told, too, that good wives took their husband's moccasins off for them when they came home tired, and so on.

Coming Daylight always admonished her daughters: "Never talk back to your husband. Women have fiery tongues when they get mad, and that is bad." It was nearly always taken for granted by others that the wife was to blame if her husband beat her. [582] Since it was customary for very young girls to marry men very much older than they, such husbands took upon themselves the role of disciplinarian.

While marriage was taken for granted, apparently a girl was 787
free to accept or to reject medicine power. Neither girls nor [562]
women went on power quests, but some individuals were vouchsafed some kinds of supernatural power in dreams. While the experience of Coming Daylight may be unique, it is illuminating. "Even before I was married, I had a particular kind of dream which indicated power to extract illness from the body of a patient. This dream occurred four nights in succession. Each morning I would tell my grandmother about it. The old woman got angry each time and told me not to talk about it, to keep it to myself so that I would become a great doctor. But I had already

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

CHAPTER IX

MARRIAGE

Polygyny and the Child-bride

The institution of the child-bride, combined with polygyny, was characteristic of Gros Ventre marriage up to about 1880. How far back it was practiced is difficult to say. Our informants who themselves were married off as children of ten or eleven to their first husbands about the year 1865, took the custom for granted and so far as they knew "it had always been that way."[1] 595 582

All girls were given in marriage before puberty, and usually as wives to older men with independent households. Because of the disparity in age between husband and child-bride, many of these girls were widowed early and remarriage was quickly arranged for them, even if the widow were not claimed by her husband's brother. Moreover, divorce or separation initiated by the husband was relatively easy and frequent. Consequently the majority of Gros Ventre women knew at least three or four different husbands, and often in fairly rapid succession. Upon successive remarriages the wife's age came to approximate more closely that of her husband. [586] [587] 582

Young men were not eligible for marriage until about twenty. By that time a young man would have attained proficiency in hunting and have taken the first steps in ceremonial life, being a member of one or other of the two adult men's societies, either the Wolf-men or the Stars. In addition he should have war-deeds to his credit and some property of his own, especially horses stolen from the enemy, in order to qualify as husband. In view of the fact, however, that very young girls were given more often to older already-married men, most young men marrying for the first time had as wife "an older experienced woman." Actually 582 587

[1] It was believed that a girl could not menstruate until after she had experienced sexual intercourse. If, therefore, a girl had her first menses before she had been given in marriage, her family would be disgraced. [841]

582 587 this meant that a young man's first wife was not necessarily "older" in years than he, but that she was "experienced" in marriage, having been either widowed or divorced, perhaps several times.

Only as an exception was a bachelor married to a child-bride. [543] One case of the kind which was recalled concerned a young man who was a "beloved-child" and consequently highly favored by his parents. He however refused to "settle down" when his parents suggested various marriage partners to him, and acceded to their request only when they obtained for him the hand of a young girl who had not previously been married.

582 595 587 Young men just starting their careers were urged to seek as wives among the "older" women, those who were known as "good workers" and who had acquired some property of their own. A wife of this kind could help him become established, and "if he amounted to anything" it would not be long before he could take a second wife, perhaps a younger sister of his first one. Then, as he became more prominent, he would acquire one or two additional wives.[2] To this type of man child-brides usually were given. It was said that an outstanding man had three or four wives at the same time, but conditions were such that he would have had a dozen different ones in the course of his career.

587 595 A man was considered fortunate if he obtained as wife the oldest of several sisters as the chances were great that these others might be offered to him. "If a man married the oldest girl in a family, and her folks liked him and saw that he was a good provider and that he was trying to live right, they would give him the two or three others as they came of age." Many instances were given wherein several sisters were married to the same man. On the other hand it was said that, if a man, who was already married to one or more sisters, asked for another, he might be refused and that "there was nothing he could do about it."

Since the levirate was permitted, it was possible that a man could claim the wife or wives of his deceased brother. This was seemingly carried out infrequently, however, since only two instances could be recalled.[3] Of these two, one involved Coming

[2] For a discussion of the economic basis of polygyny, see pp. 73–74.

[3] "The brother of a dead man sometimes married his widow, but this was not always the case." Kroeber, 1908, p. 180.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Daylight and her sister, who were married, for a short while after their first husband died, to his classificatory brother. The other concerned an outstanding woman, Woman Chief, who was said to have been so highly valued by her husband's people that "she was kept in his family by marrying her to three brothers [successively]." 587 595

Regulations

Marriage was prohibited for those related by blood, no matter how remote the tie. If, however, a couple were in "good faith," so to speak, and it was discovered later on that they were distant kin, it was not considered necessary for them to separate on that account.[4] Affinal relatives were likewise barred as possible marriage partners, except those who were classified as in-laws of the same generation.[5] In other words, the levirate and sororate were permitted, so that any who addressed each other as brother-in-law and sister-in-law respectively were possible mates, but relatives-by-marriage in any other category were prohibited from contracting marriage. The far-reaching effects of this latter regulation can be seen from the following case. "Not so many years ago, a Gros Ventre woman was the subject of a great deal of gossip because she married late in life a man who, many years previously, had for a time been married to a widow of her maternal uncle. People didn't like it and thought she shouldn't have married that man, even though times had changed and the whites wouldn't count them as being related to each other at all." 582 [587]

Arrangements

As a rule, marriage arrangements were made between the husband-to-be and one or other of the bride's male kinsmen,—father, uncle or brother. Either side could take the initiative, but the bride herself was not consulted. Coming Daylight summed up the prevailing attitude in this way: "When I was young, a girl's life was not her own. When a girl was about seven she was sent away from her home to a grandmother or widowed aunt to be 584 562 [868]

trained to do a woman's work.

[4] See also the discussion of band affiliation and exogamy, pp. 29–31.

[5] For kinship classification, see pp. 124–25.

CHAPTER X

OLD AGE AND DEATH

It is the opinion of the now aged Gros Ventres that the proportion of old persons was much greater in the past than it has been since they have taken up the white man's ways; and further, that the aged then retained their health and vigor to a greater degree.[1] One old woman stated that when she was young, there used to be many old people, but that they died off when there were no more buffalo. She added: "People lived to a good old age on the things that the Supreme Being provided,—roots, wild vegetables and fruits, dried meats and berries. In those days, too, they drank broth instead of tea and coffee. Old folks didn't lose their teeth then, although even young girls do nowadays. Their teeth eventually got worn down, but they seldom pulled them. In fact, if an old person should lose a tooth, he thought it was awful and was sure that he was ready for the grave. Furthermore, people didn't get white hair until they were ready for 'old age sleep'—very old people sleep most of the time—yet now one sees middle-aged and even younger people with gray hair like the whites have."

Status and Treatment of the Aged

It was believed that a person who had lived to a ripe old age had been privileged to do so by the Supreme Being. Therefore, they reasoned, if you are good to old people, these in turn will pray to the Supreme Being for your health, long life, and success. Children were instructed explicitly to be good to the aged,—to feed them, to clothe them, and to help them in difficulties,—as well as to seek out those so blessed and ask for their prayers. It was

[1] Allowance should of course be made for the fact that "old age" is a relative term. When it was said that young men were urged to marry "older experienced women," this referred to a woman of perhaps twenty to twenty-five. See pp. 171–72. A woman on the northern plains was "old" at forty, according to Denig, p. 513.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

743 such an official keeper and was merely held by someone for the time being.

From data supplied mostly by The Boy and Coming Daylight, it is possible to trace the fortunes of the Flat Pipe during the last hundred years. Somewhere about 1850 the Flat Pipe keeper was Deer, who was succeeded by "Bear-going-along-side-of-hill," from whom it was ceremonially transferred about 1860-65 to The Boy's father, Lame Bull. One or two of Lame Bull's successors died before completing the customary four-year term, and Lame Bull took the Pipe back. About 1873-75 it was ritually transferred to Crow Bull, Coming Daylight's mother's brother and a good friend of Lame Bull, as a result of a vow made by Crow Bull to take the keepership if the wife, who had been captured by the Piegan, should get back safely to him, which she did.

Coming Daylight gave the story as follows:

743 "In the 1869 battle between the Gros Ventres and the Piegan,
727 a wife of my uncle, Crow Bull, was captured by the Piegan. After some time the man who captured her and who had taken her as wife saw her crying and asked her: 'Why are you crying?' She replied: 'I am lonesome for my children.' She had borne no children during her stay with the Piegan. So he told her: 'All right. I am a man, a real chief. I will let you go back to your children. But it would be dangerous for you to go on horseback. You must walk.'

743 "So on the sly he fixed up a big traveling dog to pack food and she made moccasins for the journey. He told her which way to go, this is, by way of Fort Benton where there were some Piegan [582] and Gros Ventre women married to whites. He also told her she must travel by night lest the Piegan capture her again, and he accompanied her quite a way on her journey.

"After two days on the road, traveling by night and hiding in the day, she reached Fort Benton safely just at daybreak on the third. When she got there she did not know where to go. She saw someone emptying water, who looked like an Indian woman, so she went up to her. The woman said: 'Oh, where did you come from?' 'I came from the Piegan,' she replied, 'my Piegan husband there let me go.' The woman said: 'After you have eaten I will

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

old doctor. He went out in the hills to look for the calf but could not find it any place. He was near my cousin's and thought he would go over. My cousin's people had just butchered that same morning and they made signs to my husband: 'You are just in time. Now you can come in and eat.' But he said: 'I am in a hurry. I am looking for a calf to butcher for my wife. She is awfully hungry. She has not eaten since she was taken sick.' My cousin said: 'I will give you some [meat].' So she put liver and tripe and different things in a sack. My husband came back and threw the sack of meat on the floor and said: 'Your sister [cousin] sent this to you. They have just butchered.' 755

"I lost no time and rushed over to this sack of meat: I saw a piece of liver in there and took a knife and went to slice off a piece. The old medicine man said: 'Slow now. You should cook it first.' But I said: 'I just cannot. I am going to eat it this way.' I ate it raw like that with some tallow. It seemed like from then on I was just myself again.

"All I know about this person who appeared to me was that he was a man, but I did not recognize him. He was a bitä:tao (soul, spirit shadow).

"It was the medicine man's wife who did the doctoring for me in the case. She did a kind of quiet doctoring. She boiled roots and rubbed me all over with them. They called that woman Nätsiθä ('Cree woman') and she really was a Cree. They say those Cree medicines are good." [582]

Coming Daylight gave two accounts, in 1940 and 1945, of another personal experience in being cured. The two accounts supplement each other. Here follows the 1945 account with some detailed interpolated in parentheses from the 1940 one.

"When my first little boy (by my husband, Dressed In White) died, he died, I think because my breasts were bad. Then I had a girl baby. When this girl baby was getting older and already learning to sit up, I was still nursing her of course, and my breasts went bad again, that is, the milk was bad. (They were tight and full and hard . . . the infant had diarrhea and got very weak.) I was suffering with my breasts and my husband thought he should get a doctor to do something for me. So he got a certain man, a great doctor, but one of whom the women were afraid and whom

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

755 Good Singer. The one that called her in made a smudge, with fire of buffalo chips on which some kind of medicine—sweet pine, or sweet grass,—was sprinkled. Good Singer then smudged herself, putting the smoke up to her face four times and then rubbing it on her breast. Then she sang her song [Singer here sang it], the burden of which was: 'My pipe is lying here!' Then she was ready to doctor.

"She hit herself on the chest, and a bead came out of her mouth. She put the bead on the top of her foot and extracted it from the sole thereof. She next smudged the head four times by putting it to her mouth, and then laid the bead down.

"Next she went to the patient and worked on him, sucked at the spot where his pain was, and after showing the people what she extracted from him swallowed it, and named the one who had caused his sickness. Then she swallowed her own medicine [the bead] and smudged at her mouth four times. They gave her a lot of things for doing that,—horses and blankets and such things."

Singer also gave details on two other cures, one by White Weasel, the other by Bad Bad Bull.

"Once I hooked up the wagon and went for wood. We were living at the time down the Milk River Valley. While getting the wood, all of a sudden I was struck with a sharp pain in the back of my neck. It was like a sharp pinch. I went back with my load [582] of wood. I was married at the time to an Assiniboine named Axe Handle. I told him: 'The Assiniboines have shot me [with medicine].' He told me: 'No, I guess you haven't had that happen to you.'

"This was a little before the Fourth of July and I went to the celebration suffering with that pain in the neck. After that they began to call all kinds of Indian doctors for me—Stiffarm, Bill Jones, Ragged Robe. Each pulled out something, a piece of skin or something. And they had to give a lot of things away to each doctor. But none of them did me any good.

"We were living close to a friend who told me: 'The only one who can cure you is my brother [White Weasel, a Gros Ventre].' So I called him and they gave him a lot of things,—about seven

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

SOCIAL CUSTOMS.

000 The Gros Ventre system of terms of relationship has been given in a
605 former publication.[1]

601 Cousins, so far as the relationship was known, were called brothers and sisters, and they called each other's children son or daughter if the cousin
[582] was of the same sex as the speaker, or nephew or niece if the cousin was of the opposite sex. Any known relationship was a bar to marriage. The
[587] brother of a dead man sometimes married his widow, but this was not always the case.

583 Large amounts of property, especially horses, were given away for wives for the honor of the act, but there was no rule or definite custom covering the quantity of property so given. The horses might be given not only to the father, but to the brothers, uncles, and other relatives of the girl. Sometimes, without having received any gifts and apparently without any previous understanding, a man would give his daughter to a young man, who thereupon would give him horses, or distribute them among his wife's other relatives. Old men practised this custom in order to obtain the aid and services of a young man in caring for their horses and in other ways, and no doubt
585 sometimes also to insure a more certain food-supply. A young man on
431 marrying received a tent with all the proper furniture, usually from his prospective parents-in-law, but sometimes from his own parents, if they were the wealthier.

606 Although a young married man often lived with his father-in-law, the
[591] well-known taboo custom between mother-in-law and son-in-law — which forbade their speaking, looking at each other, or being in the same tent — existed among the Gros Ventre. There was, however, no father-in-law taboo. The mother-in-law taboo extended to the son-in-law's brother.

584 If a woman did not wish a man for her lover, she might send him to do a
721 certain act of bravery. If he returned successfully from war, having accomplished the deed, he was then accepted. This custom is said to have led to the death of many young men.

428 At a person's death his property was inherited generally by his relatives. His father and mother, brothers, sisters, and children would receive part. His father and mother received the most. A man often disposed of his property before his death. If he died suddenly, as on being killed in war, his parents divided his property. It was not customary for a man on going to war to divide his property among his relatives in the contingency of his
[764] death. Property particularly valued by the dead person was buried with him.

[1] Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part I, pp. 9, 150.

231 721 got scared and ran to the other side of the horse. Finally she took a big stick and threw it at the white thing and still it didn't move so she went closer and found it to be a Hudson's Bay blanket just soaking wet. The enemy must have used it when they crossed the river. So she dragged it home to her lodge. When she got there she called to her grandmother: 'Is he there?' Her grandmother said: 'He is.' She was still furious at her husband and called to him: 'Come out! I am giving you this,' and she said it in the way people speak when they are giving something on return from war. She was giving her husband his own buffalo horse! He however didn't say anything or make any exclamation. This so enraged her that she took the blanket and rolled it up as small as she could and threw it at him, hitting him on the chest saying: 'Here is another thing I brought you!' Then he laughed. But she had at least saved one of the most valuable horses.

[431] "The next morning the rest of the Gros Ventres in the party moved on, leaving this family behind. But fortunately some others came along and seeing their plight gave them horses, for example, Pemmican gave one to Coming Daylight, Little Shields gave her uncle one, and Sleeping Bear gave her husband one."

231 436 The importance of various transactions could be gauged by whether or not a horse were included, other things such as fancy clothing, ornaments, guns, etc. being mentioned as "thrown in."

[554] A person who gave a horse in whatever connection accrued prestige for himself and at the same time showed in what esteem the donor held the recipient. Horses were generally included in the bride [583] price; in inaugurating the more serious type of enemy-friendship; in payment for services of the medicine man in curing certain types of illness, and in payment to the ceremonial grandfather as well as in payment to the namer or ear-piercer of a child; in settling disputes; in gambling; in gifts to others in honor of relatives, and in meeting certain other kinship obligations.

231 556 Horses could be acquired by a man through raiding the enemy; by gift from relatives and from non-relatives in honor of someone else or in instituting the enemy-friendship; in the bride price of a sister, daughter, or maternal niece; in payment for services rendered; in gambling; through inheritance; in trading with the whites. A woman might share in the bride price of her brother's

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

at the time whether she would ever have a chance to acquire more of these highly desirable decorations." On the other hand, a maternal uncle would not refuse his niece or her husband anything it was in his power to give, and would always lend them horses or other kinds of property when requested. 604

Compared with the responsibilities of the maternal uncle, a paternal aunt had relatively few obligations to her nephews and nieces but correspondingly more to their mother, her brother's wife. Nevertheless it was she who took particular interest in her brother's children when they were infants. She showed regard for her brother by providing, if possible, the sack for the newborn baby and the goods to pay the medicine man in case it were necessary to call one to the child-bed of her sister-in-law. If the child became ill she, too, usually paid for the necessary doctoring and it was not unusual for her and her husband to assume the expense of a formal naming feast for the infant. [854] [553]

The paternal aunt had the duty of "bawling out" her brother's daughters if they misbehaved. In regard to property, a niece would have to ask permission before using anything of her aunt, but the request was always granted. The aunt would tell her niece in an offhand way: "Well, why don't you go get it!". Whereas if someone not in that relationship had made the request, she would have gotten the object and handed it to her. A woman was expected to be as reserved with her aunt as she would be with her own mother and with her mother-in-law. A man was even more respectful to his aunt in the sense that he would not speak to her unnecessarily nor look directly at her. [861]

When a girl married, the paternal aunt sometimes participated in the bride-price, and claimed her niece's husband as "son-in-law." According to Garter Snake: "When Otter Robe's oldest sister married, the groom gave three horses, one of which went to the bride's father, one to her brother, and the third to her father's sister. The latter made for her niece's husband a fine fancy robe, treating him with the same consideration she would have accorded her own daughter's husband. Then, when this 'son-in-law' returned successfully from a raiding party, he gave his 'mother-in-law' one of the horses he had captured." It is interesting to note [583]

585 178 was Keeper of the Crow Belt, as he had taken Gertrude and camped at the Mission. The next morning the couple was married by the priest and Gertrude's father brought the buggy full of goods and gave them all that, including the team of horses. Everybody could see that this couple started off with a lot."

585 Instead of making arrangements, a man might simply send his daughter to become the wife of another man without forewarning him. The recipient of such a bride could not well refuse her and was supposed to act as though he were happy to have her, regardless of how many other wives he might have or his real feelings in the matter. He, too, would normally give some kind of present to her father, the amount depending somewhat on the previous reputation of the bride. On the one side, she might have been given merely to get her off her father's hands, on the other, she might have been highly desirable as a wife and her father would have taken this means to show generosity on his own part and to honor the husband he had selected.

583 Sometimes elopements occurred, but this was very rarely if ever the case, so far as the girl was concerned, until she had been given at least once in marriage arranged by her relatives. Should [684] a married woman run off with another man, it was up to her husband to deal with the situation. If, however, she had been widowed or divorced, and eloped before another marriage had been arranged, her relatives would be angry, but the affair could be patched up if the usual presents to them were forthcoming from the man.

591 There was no hard and fast rule in regard to residence. Matrilocal residence in the same lodge was incompatible with the observance of the mother-in-law taboo and it was said that if a man wished his son-in-law to remain with him, he provided the separate lodge and all the equipment.[7] The tendency seems to have been toward patrilocal residence in general, although it was not unusual for a couple to move back and forth. Coming Daylight lived most of her married life with her husband's people. As a child-bride she first lived in the lodge with her husband's parents; later on she and her husband went to her people, living with her

[7] Obligations between kin are discussed pp. 109–10. Kroeber, 1908, p. 180, states that a young married man often lived with his father-in-law.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

SOCIAL CUSTOMS.

000 The Gros Ventre system of terms of relationship has been given in a
605 former publication.[1]

601 Cousins, so far as the relationship was known, were called brothers and sisters, and they called each other's children son or daughter if the cousin
[582] was of the same sex as the speaker, or nephew or niece if the cousin was of the opposite sex. Any known relationship was a bar to marriage. The
[587] brother of a dead man sometimes married his widow, but this was not always the case.

583 Large amounts of property, especially horses, were given away for wives for the honor of the act, but there was no rule or definite custom covering the quantity of property so given. The horses might be given not only to the father, but to the brothers, uncles, and other relatives of the girl. Sometimes, without having received any gifts and apparently without any previous understanding, a man would give his daughter to a young man, who thereupon would give him horses, or distribute them among his wife's other relatives. Old men practised this custom in order to obtain the aid and services of a young man in caring for their horses and in other ways, and no doubt
585 sometimes also to insure a more certain food-supply. A young man on
431 marrying received a tent with all the proper furniture, usually from his prospective parents-in-law, but sometimes from his own parents, if they were the wealthier.

606 Although a young married man often lived with his father-in-law, the
[591] well-known taboo custom between mother-in-law and son-in-law — which forbade their speaking, looking at each other, or being in the same tent — existed among the Gros Ventre. There was, however, no father-in-law taboo. The mother-in-law taboo extended to the son-in-law's brother.

584 If a woman did not wish a man for her lover, she might send him to do a
721 certain act of bravery. If he returned successfully from war, having accomplished the deed, he was then accepted. This custom is said to have led to the death of many young men.

428 At a person's death his property was inherited generally by his relatives. His father and mother, brothers, sisters, and children would receive part. His father and mother received the most. A man often disposed of his property before his death. If he died suddenly, as on being killed in war, his parents divided his property. It was not customary for a man on going to war to divide his property among his relatives in the contingency of his
[764] death. Property particularly valued by the dead person was buried with him.

[1] Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part I, pp. 9, 150.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

have someone come back a real hero, and, although such a promise to torture oneself could be made in regard to other relatives, "it was usually a sister who thought so much of her brother who did that." Other forms of sacrifice which a girl might practice on her brother's behalf would be to take a fine robe, or something else of value, and stick it on top of the lodge saying: "I offer this that my brother may come back with good luck, bringing something fine from war." This could be even more specific in that a girl could offer, say, the tip of her finger, if her brother would bring back a particular thing, such as a scalp or a horse or a weapon. Again, should her brother be ill or wounded, a woman would be exceedingly concerned and might go so far, as in one case recorded, of promising that if he should recover she would join the Women's Lodge—"which was considered a great thing to do for your brother." 593 728 721

Usually a man would have some voice in regard to his sister's marriage and, if he were the one who made the arrangements, he received the larger share of the bride-price. It was said, too, that a brother would be especially concerned regarding his younger sister's moral conduct and might take it upon himself to keep her in line. Although parents would feel the disgrace of an erring daughter, a brother was expected to react violently. If her husband failed to punish his wife for adultery, her brother could kill her. Some instances were given, too, in which the man took his own life indirectly, by riding into the midst of the enemy without taking any precautions, because he felt so keenly the dishonor his sister who was unfaithful had imposed on him. 593 [584] [684]

Maternal Uncle and Paternal Aunt

"Because a brother and a sister thought so much of each other, they were expected to be good to each other's children." If a woman had several brothers, it was the eldest who assumed the duties of the maternal uncle and his relationship with his nephews was a direct one. Should the eldest brother be unable to undertake the responsibility another brother or male cousin was expected to do so. 604

The maternal uncle was supposed to watch his sister's children closely even though her husband was on the scene. If he did not 604 861

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Daylight and her sister, who were married, for a short while after their first husband died, to his classificatory brother. The other concerned an outstanding woman, Woman Chief, who was said to have been so highly valued by her husband's people that "she was kept in his family by marrying her to three brothers [successively]." 587 595

Regulations

Marriage was prohibited for those related by blood, no matter how remote the tie. If, however, a couple were in "good faith," so to speak, and it was discovered later on that they were distant kin, it was not considered necessary for them to separate on that account.[4] Affinal relatives were likewise barred as possible marriage partners, except those who were classified as in-laws of the same generation.[5] In other words, the levirate and sororate were permitted, so that any who addressed each other as brother-in-law and sister-in-law respectively were possible mates, but relatives-by-marriage in any other category were prohibited from contracting marriage. The far-reaching effects of this latter regulation can be seen from the following case. "Not so many years ago, a Gros Ventre woman was the subject of a great deal of gossip because she married late in life a man who, many years previously, had for a time been married to a widow of her maternal uncle. People didn't like it and thought she shouldn't have married that man, even though times had changed and the whites wouldn't count them as being related to each other at all." 582 [587]

Arrangements

As a rule, marriage arrangements were made between the husband-to-be and one or other of the bride's male kinsmen,—father, uncle or brother. Either side could take the initiative, but the bride herself was not consulted. Coming Daylight summed up the prevailing attitude in this way: "When I was young, a girl's life was not her own. When a girl was about seven she was sent away from her home to a grandmother or widowed aunt to be trained to do a women's work. 584 562 [868]

[4] See also the discussion of band affiliation and exogamy, pp. 29–31.

[5] For kinship classification, see pp. 124–25.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

584 trained to do a woman's work. Then when she was ten or eleven
562 she was handed over to some man. They thought that if they gave her to her husband when she was so young she would get attached to him and make him a good wife. The Gros Ventres didn't want a woman to get in the habit of running around with differ-
[587] ent men, so a woman's folks worried if she was unmarried too long [after being divorced or widowed] because she might do something bad."

587 There is some evidence that as a woman became older, if she had occasion to remarry, she was somewhat more free to express her choice, although presumably a male relative would still be in the position of making the actual decision. It was said that
584 younger men, especially those seeking to marry "older" women,
832 "were afraid of their tongues" and felt more confident of success in possession of "love medicine." Al Chandler, for instance, was offered a love charm which he refused, but the speech of his uncle on that occasion throws some light on a situation of this kind. His uncle had told him: "Now you are a young man and you will be thinking about women. Maybe you want to get married and have picked out a woman and she doesn't want you. Maybe you are not good enough for her and, when you ask her, she will run you down plenty. Some women are swell-heads and can make a man feel cheap. It hurts a fellow to hear things like that—but that is what this charm is for. You take this and keep it in your pocket safely and do not show it to anyone or let anyone know you have it. Now if this woman hurts your feelings, go at night to where she lives and watch carefully, being sure you have the right one. Then when she goes out of the lodge to relieve herself, watch her so you can locate the exact spot. Then open this little packet and dip in it the tip of a little sliver of wood. Go over to the spot and stick the sliver right in the ground on the spot where she urinated and walk away. That is all you have to do, and in a very short time this woman will come running after you. You tell her: 'What are you doing that for? I don't want you.' She will get so anxious that she will beg you to have her."

585 Regardless of whether the man were the suitor, or whether the woman's relatives offered her in marriage, the marriage was validated through presents given by the groom. Traditionally at

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

SOCIAL CUSTOMS.

000 The Gros Ventre system of terms of relationship has been given in a
605 former publication.[1]

601 Cousins, so far as the relationship was known, were called brothers and sisters, and they called each other's children son or daughter if the cousin
[582] was of the same sex as the speaker, or nephew or niece if the cousin was of the opposite sex. Any known relationship was a bar to marriage. The
[587] brother of a dead man sometimes married his widow, but this was not always the case.

583 Large amounts of property, especially horses, were given away for wives for the honor of the act, but there was no rule or definite custom covering the quantity of property so given. The horses might be given not only to the father, but to the brothers, uncles, and other relatives of the girl. Sometimes, without having received any gifts and apparently without any previous understanding, a man would give his daughter to a young man, who thereupon would give him horses, or distribute them among his wife's other relatives. Old men practised this custom in order to obtain the aid and services of a young man in caring for their horses and in other ways, and no doubt
585 sometimes also to insure a more certain food-supply. A young man on
431 marrying received a tent with all the proper furniture, usually from his prospective parents-in-law, but sometimes from his own parents, if they were the wealthier.

606 Although a young married man often lived with his father-in-law, the
[591] well-known taboo custom between mother-in-law and son-in-law — which forbade their speaking, looking at each other, or being in the same tent — existed among the Gros Ventre. There was, however, no father-in-law taboo. The mother-in-law taboo extended to the son-in-law's brother.

584 If a woman did not wish a man for her lover, she might send him to do a
721 certain act of bravery. If he returned successfully from war, having accomplished the deed, he was then accepted. This custom is said to have led to the death of many young men.

428 At a person's death his property was inherited generally by his relatives. His father and mother, brothers, sisters, and children would receive part. His father and mother received the most. A man often disposed of his property before his death. If he died suddenly, as on being killed in war, his parents divided his property. It was not customary for a man on going to war to divide his property among his relatives in the contingency of his
[764] death. Property particularly valued by the dead person was buried with him.

---

[1] Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part I, pp. 9, 150.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

584 trained to do a woman's work. Then when she was ten or eleven
562 she was handed over to some man. They thought that if they gave her to her husband when she was so young she would get attached to him and make him a good wife. The Gros Ventres didn't
[587] want a woman to get in the habit of running around with different men, so a woman's folks worried if she was unmarried too long [after being divorced or widowed] because she might do something bad."

587 There is some evidence that as a woman became older, if she had occasion to remarry, she was somewhat more free to express her choice, although presumably a male relative would still be in the position of making the actual decision. It was said that
584 younger men, especially those seeking to marry "older" women,
832 "were afraid of their tongues" and felt more confident of success in possession of "love medicine." Al Chandler, for instance, was offered a love charm which he refused, but the speech of his uncle on that occasion throws some light on a situation of this kind. His uncle had told him: "Now you are a young man and you will be thinking about women. Maybe you want to get married and have picked out a woman and she doesn't want you. Maybe you are not good enough for her and, when you ask her, she will run you down plenty. Some women are swell-heads and can make a man feel cheap. It hurts a fellow to hear things like that—but that is what this charm is for. You take this and keep it in your pocket safely and do not show it to anyone or let anyone know you have it. Now if this woman hurts your feelings, go at night to where she lives and watch carefully, being sure you have the right one. Then when she goes out of the lodge to relieve herself, watch her so you can locate the exact spot. Then open this little packet and dip in it the tip of a little sliver of wood. Go over to the spot and stick the sliver right in the ground on the spot where she urinated and walk away. That is all you have to do, and in a very short time this woman will come running after you. You tell her: 'What are you doing that for? I don't want you.' She will get so anxious that she will beg you to have her."

585 Regardless of whether the man were the suitor, or whether the woman's relatives offered her in marriage, the marriage was validated through presents given by the groom. Traditionally at

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

least one horse was included, but no given amount of property was specified nor did bargaining enter into the negotiations.[6] Following the pattern of ostentatious liberality, a man could reflect honor upon himself by giving generously, and one with such a reputation was preferred over a poor or stingy one. Whatever the groom offered was divided among the bride's relatives. As one woman said: "A husband always gave something for his wife, no matter how many wives he acquired, because this is what makes it 'legal.' Then the girl's father and brother divided the presents. If the brother arranged the marriage, he would say to the father 'Here is a horse for you.' And if the father or uncle had been approached by the husband, then they did the same way. Sometimes even the father's sister was given a horse or something else when her niece married."

Although it was not obligatory, a bride's family often provided her with goods to take to her marriage, especially if it were her first one. Singer explained in regard to Coming Daylight: "Her family was well-to-do and showed how much they thought of themselves by giving her a good send-off. You should have seen her going off to her first husband. She was only about ten years old and she looked so tiny leading that big horse. On the horse was a fine fringed saddle and the travois was just piled up with painted parfleshes and other things."

The following account of the marriage of Coming Daylight's daughter shows how the pattern was carried out under changed conditions: "One night when the family returned from a dance they found a letter addressed to the oldest son, Ed, from a man whom he liked, asking for Ed's sister, Gertrude. When his father came in from tending the horses they told him about the proposal and he agreed right away, saying: 'We are still keeping her and she is a big girl. I'm glad this offer has been made.' So a week later they loaded a new buggy with Gertrude's things,—bedding, beds, trunk, sewing machine, etc.,—and her father drove this to the creek where the dance hall was located. Meanwhile Coming Daylight took her daughter to the house of the man who had asked for her and left her there sitting on this man's bed. The groom did not appear at the Grass Dance that evening, even though he

[6] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, p. 180.

was Keeper of the Crow Belt, as he had taken Gertrude and camped at the Mission. The next morning the couple was married by the priest and Gertrude's father brought the buggy full of goods and gave them all that, including the team of horses. Everybody could see that this couple started off with a lot."

Instead of making arrangements, a man might simply send his daughter to become the wife of another man without forewarning him. The recipient of such a bride could not well refuse her and was supposed to act as though he were happy to have her, regardless of how many other wives he might have or his real feelings in the matter. He, too, would normally give some kind of present to her father, the amount depending somewhat on the previous reputation of the bride. On the one side, she might have been given merely to get her off her father's hands, on the other, she might have been highly desirable as a wife and her father would have taken this means to show generosity on his own part and to honor the husband he had selected.

Sometimes elopements occurred, but this was very rarely if ever the case, so far as the girl was concerned, until she had been given at least once in marriage arranged by her relatives. Should a married woman run off with another man, it was up to her husband to deal with the situation. If, however, she had been widowed or divorced, and eloped before another marriage had been arranged, her relatives would be angry, but the affair could be patched up if the usual presents to them were forthcoming from the man.

There was no hard and fast rule in regard to residence. Matrilocal residence in the same lodge was incompatible with the observance of the mother-in-law taboo and it was said that if a man wished his son-in-law to remain with him, he provided the separate lodge and all the equipment.[7] The tendency seems to have been toward patrilocal residence in general, although it was not unusual for a couple to move back and forth. Coming Daylight lived most of her married life with her husband's people. As a child-bride she first lived in the lodge with her husband's parents; later on she and her husband went to her people, living with her

[7] Obligations between kin are discussed pp. 109–10. Kroeber, 1908, p. 180, states that a young married man often lived with his father-in-law.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

me and he didn't send for me to come back. Not long after that though, my sister died, and her husband's other two wives came after me. I was playing out on the ice when they came and told me they were going to take me back with them. Ignorant as I was, I said I would go, and that I would have to tell my father first. But my father said: 'No. You shouldn't go with them. Those two women are not related to you and they might be mean to you. If your sister were still living, I would see to it that you went back to that man.' So those women said nothing more and I never heard from them or their husband again." 587 595

It was also thought that if the older wife were the sister of a child-bride she might be more willing to "protect" her. The husband of so young a wife was supposed to "wait a while" before claiming the marital right, and some men actually did so. Dressed-in-White for instance deferred the consummation of his marriage for over two years after Coming Daylight had been given to him at about the age of ten. Other men were not so considerate, however, and if an older wife tried to delay the procedure it was interpreted as being done not out of jealousy but through fear of consequences to so young a child. The husband alone determined the use of the marital right and such interference as another wife could offer would be only indirect. This is shown in the following account which concerns a woman well-known to both Singer and Coming Daylight. "One night soon after her little sister had been sent to their husband, this woman overheard him say to the girl: 'Make your bed wider, I am going to sleep with you.' Her own bedding was on the opposite side of the fire from that of her sister and she decided to try to discourage her husband from this undertaking. As she had expected, the husband that night covered up the fire so the lodge would be dark. On the sly, however, she was able to poke the fire so it flared out brightly. He got up and dimmed it once more, but again she made it flare. This was repeated several times and once she heard him say angrily; 'Oh, this is such good wood, it burns too well—I wish I could kill it!' Finally to her dismay she heard him whisper to the girl: 'I will take you outside because I can't seem to make it dark in here. You must not scream or cry out though because 585 587 595

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

CHAPTER IX

MARRIAGE

Polygyny and the Child-bride

The institution of the child-bride, combined with polygyny, was 595
characteristic of Gros Ventre marriage up to about 1880. How 582
far back it was practiced is difficult to say. Our informants who themselves were married off as children of ten or eleven to their first husbands about the year 1865, took the custom for granted and so far as they knew "it had always been that way."[1]

All girls were given in marriage before puberty, and usually as wives to older men with independent households. Because of the disparity in age between husband and child-bride, many of these girls were widowed early and remarriage was quickly arranged for them, even if the widow were not claimed by her husband's brother. Moreover, divorce or separation initiated by the [586] husband was relatively easy and frequent. Consequently the majority of Gros Ventre women knew at least three or four different [587] husbands, and often in fairly rapid succession. Upon successive remarriages the wife's age came to approximate more closely that 582 of her husband.

Young men were not eligible for marriage until about twenty. By that time a young man would have attained proficiency in hunting and have taken the first steps in ceremonial life, being a member of one or other of the two adult men's societies, either the Wolf-men or the Stars. In addition he should have war-deeds to his credit and some property of his own, especially horses stolen from the enemy, in order to qualify as husband. In view of the 582 fact, however, that very young girls were given more often to 587 older already-married men, most young men marrying for the first time had as wife "an older experienced woman." Actually

[1] It was believed that a girl could not menstruate until after she had experienced sexual intercourse. If, therefore, a girl had her first menses [841] before she had been given in marriage, her family would be disgraced.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

S93 me go because by mother's brother was in the Sacrifice Dance and
S62 I was supposed to be there to give things away in his honor. He was mean about it, but I got to that one thing. Another time though, I was scraping hides and I heard it announced in the camp circle that a relative of mine had been killed at war. Of course I went right away to mourn for him. But when I got back, my husband was furious. He yelled at me: 'You ought to stay home and attend to your work!' and then gave me an awful beating."

It was usually of little avail for a woman to return home with grievances against her husband because it was assumed that a wife deserved the type of treatment she received. Generally her
S93 family would send her back to her husband promptly and often
S86 with a present for him to show their good will. Only under exceptional circumstances was the wife allowed to initiate separation from her husband. If he grossly neglected her and showed his indifference openly, she might be permitted to remain with her family. Should the husband not send for her, they were then free to arrange for her another marriage. Coming Daylight gave as an example her own experience, which was considered as somewhat unusual. "My uncle had arranged as our third marriage for my younger sister and me to go to a man who later turned out to be a poor provider. He seldom got buffalo meat, and he didn't water the horses, or do the other things he was supposed to. He was so busy chasing other women he didn't have time for anything else! One day, however, a friend of his came and told us that our husband was planning to publicly throw us away. His uncle came to see our husband that same day and tried to persuade him not to do it. Among other things he told him: 'You have such nice quiet industrious women. Just think of all the robes they have dressed for you!' But our husband just sat there with his head bowed and didn't say anything, and we knew then that he was going to do it. So I told my sister when he went out: 'We will get ready and throw him away before he has a chance.' I had a horse of my own, and we packed all our belongings as quickly as possible and went back to our uncle. When he found out what that man was going to do, of course he didn't make us go back. Our husband was in the wrong. He didn't

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

 593

have any reason to suspect us [of infidelity] so he shouldn't have been planning to get rid of us." 586

It was said that in case a husband abused his wife without reason his relatives remonstrated with him, reminding him, for instance, that if he acquired a reputation for ill-treating his wife he might have difficulty in obtaining additional wives of good reputation. Some claimed that his maternal uncle could go so far as to remove the wife from her husband's household "until he came to his senses." Such interference was however seemingly rare. A wife was seldom given the benefit of any doubt.

The husband had the right to punish, even with death, any departure from the standard of chastity set for women. [684]

Most of the harsh treatment accorded to wives was believed to have been the result of just suspicion of their infidelity, where sufficient evidence was lacking to prove it. Girls were warned before marriage to so conduct themselves as to avoid their husbands' jealousy at all costs. They were told, for instance, that when visiting other women it was well to be chaperoned since otherwise a jealous husband could magnify an innocent visit into an incipient affair with the woman's husband. While it was considered within the proprieties for women to go out and count coups on the enemy fallen near camp, "they didn't approve of women chasing off on horseback to 'hit the enemy' because their husbands were sure to suspect they were off to meet some man." A girl was instructed by her relatives to yield willingly to her husband when he claimed his marital rights lest he interpret her reluctance as preference for another. 593 [726]

On the other hand, when there was reasonable proof of the wife's infidelity, the husband was more or less forced by public opinion to take some action against her. He was, however, allowed considerable latitude in choosing among several equally honorable alternatives. 593 684

The extreme punishment was that of death, and apparently it was not uncommonly applied. Among the cases described was the following which concerned a contemporary of Singer and Coming Daylight. "On one occasion a man discovered that one of his wives was missing. As usual in such circumstances, he inquired whether any man in the camp was unaccounted for. He soon

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

'It is a good thing you cleaned my nose, because for that I am giving you that woman over there.'" 684 558

A husband who had harbored an unfaithful wife was likewise within his rights in "throwing her away." This was accomplished by his going to a public gathering and simply throwing down a stick to indicate that he was through with her. Whoever wished might pick up the stick and claim her as his wife without giving any compensation. 684 586

It was said, too, that if a man was "big enough" to allow his wife to go unpunished for adultery he usually would not refuse to eventually let her go to some lesser man who demeaned himself by asking for her. Thick related details of several transactions of this kind which occurred when he was a young boy. One of these was as follows:

"There was a man who had several wives, perhaps four. One day another man came to his lodge. He invited him in and said: 'This is the first time you ever came into my lodge, my friend. You must have a reason to come now, after all this time.' Then he said to his wife: 'Woman, get up and cook for my friend.' So the visitor spoke up: 'Well, my friend, the purpose of my coming here is to ask you for that Arapaho woman. I am not married now, I haven't a wife at present and I need a wife.' The host replied: 'All right, my friend, she is yours. After you eat, you could take her home.' When he had finished eating, the visitor said: 'Well, my friend, I have to go a little further. I want that boy of hers too.' The host answered: 'I hate to let my children go, but since he is so small you could take him, but don't ask for any of the others.' So the visitor, happy that he had gotten this woman without much talk and a boy as well, said: 'Well, my friend, since you are so good to me and give me your boy, I will give you a horse, my last horse.' It turned out that he was as good to this boy, whom he had attained in this way, as he would have been to his own son." It should be noted that the horse was given voluntarily and because of the child rather than in compensation for the wife.

It was the opinion of those women who had lived under this system, wherein the authority of the husband was so great, that all in all it worked well. They admitted that an occasional woman 595 562

608 them. Crow Bull's ceremonial grandson, whom he had instructed during the Crazy Dance and who was a relative of Black Raven, heard about this and ran in front of Crow Bull, saying: "Grandfather, don't do anything," and grabbed him just when he was about to fire. So Crow Bull said: "All right, because my grandchild stopped me." Then the relatives of Black Raven collected horses and blankets and other valuables, the young man himself contributing a blanket, and they all marched to Crow Bull's lodge carrying the goods and leading the horses. On arrival at the lodge, the guilty lover went in first with the fine blanket he was giving and did a great thing. He covered White Skunk, Crow Bull's "dearly-loved child"[7] with this blanket. So Crow Bull could hardly do or say anything. He just said, "Well, I will leave it up to my son White Skunk, whatever he says, I will do." White Skunk then said: "Just give her (Iron Woman) to that man (Kitfox). Just let her go," and that is what Crow Bull did. He got all these horses and blankets and other things in payment.[8] Thus even though Crow Bull was so angry, his "grandchild" could stop him.

[586] If a woman left her husband, and her "grandfather" went to her and told her to go back to her husband for she had nothing to get mad about, she would have to do so no matter how much she dreaded it.

608 If one Gros Ventre had murdered another, and the relatives of the murdered person were afraid to approach the victim's father
682 to offer indemnity, they could offer a pipe to any one of the father's ceremonial grandfathers. If the grandfather accepted it, he prayed with it and smoked it. When the murderer's relatives were ready with horses and clothing for payment, the grandfather would lead the relatives to his grandson, the murdered person's father, and say to him: "I have brought these people who ask your forgiveness. They are bringing these horses and blankets to you. I am asking you as my 'grandchild' to accept." The father could not refuse, for if he refused, some evil would overtake him. Actually refusals to such requests by a "grandfather" did not occur, to our informants' knowledge.

---

[7] For details on the dearly-loved child, see Flannery, 1941, pp. 33-37.

[8] For a discussion of indemnity in case of adultery see Flannery, 1953, pp. 185-88; for indemnity in case of murder, idem, p. 45.

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 be repeated so that it was something of an ordeal. The sword owners would see to it that the dancers kept up, prodding the laggards until the series of songs had been completed.

[533] [177] The singers themselves had a smoking song, one of the few songs of the Grass dance for which words were adopted along with the tunes [11] from the Assiniboine. This song indicated a period of rest and relaxation for all but it was required that one of the officers provide the pipe and mixture for the singers.

Any member who left the dancing-place was obliged to surrender some piece of personal property as insurance that he would return. If he did not come back, the property was forfeit.

796 [43] 586 Another distinctive feature of the earlier Grass dance was the throwing away of property and especially of wives. The term "throwing away" is appropriate because a stick was held in the hand and after the holder publicly announced what the stick represented he would throw it to the ground. If, for instance, a member of the society had decided to give away his wife he would take a stick and say: "Here is so-and-so (naming the woman)" and throw the stick down. Sometimes another member would pick up the stick, thus indicating that he was taking this woman, but occasionally it happened that no one grabbed her and in such case the wife in question would return to live with her own relatives. The man who so renounced his wife was supposed to be through with her for good. It was said by informants, however, that once in a while, provided the wife had not been claimed by another, the husband would want her back again. An instance in illustration of this point was told to me. A man who stood to my informant in the relation of enemy-friend [12] had so disposed of his wife at a Grass dance. Some time later my informant saw the couple together again. My informant took ad-

522 796 586 572

[533] [177] [572]

[11] Most of the Gros Ventre Grass dance songs have no words proper. This contrasts with the Arapaho Grass dance songs, as my informants are well aware. The difference is perhaps due to the influence on the Arapaho of the Ghost Dance religion (cf. Kroeber, A. L., The Arapaho, AMNH-B 18, pt. 4, 1907, p. 320), which scarcely affected the Gros Ventres.

[12] This was a joking and rivalry relationship entered into by presenting to a fellow tribesman an object captured from the enemy.

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

vantage of the occasion, as she had the right to do, to make fun of her enemy-friend without his being able to retaliate. She took a handful of horse manure and rubbed it all over his face saying, "Oh! All of us at the Grass dance saw you throw her away, why are you going with her again?" and in this way called attention to the fact that he was not so "brave" as he had pretended to be.

Another informant stated that she and her sister were just able to escape the embarrassing experience of so being given away. They were both living with a man who was a prominent member of the Wolf society. One of his fellow-members, however, came to the two women and told them that their husband planned on throwing them both away at the forthcoming Grass dance. My informant was very angry to get this news and said to her sister: "We will get ready and get rid of him first!" Whereupon they packed their belongings and taking their own horses went quickly to their mother's brother. My informant said that this man who was going to throw them away tried many times to speak to her thereafter but she always turned away and refused to listen, thinking to herself: "Well, there are plenty of other men."

As a final point in the discussion of the earlier form of the Grass dance, the custom of members giving away presents in honor of their loved ones should be mentioned. This was a purely voluntary procedure and could be done by any member who wished to do so at any performance of the Grass dance. The following is a typical example of how this was carried out. The same informant last mentioned, married another member of the Wolf society not long after the incident she described above, and had been selected as one of the four women singers for the Grass dance. At one performance she was holding her infant daughter, her first child by this marriage, as she sang. Her husband, wishing to honor his little daughter, told a war story, went to his wife and took the child in his arms and, going to the center of the dancing-place, gave away a horse to one of the Assiniboine who happened to be visiting at the time of the dance.

Such was the form of the Grass dance as carried out by the

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

to provide food for the next dance. If he failed to redeem it by such promise, he had one more chance to do so by appearing at the following dance. If he did not show up on that occasion the announcer was told to call out: "The one who owns this bridle (or belt, or gun, etc.) does not want it." Whereupon the article would be thrown in the fire and destroyed. 796 178 626

Although the custom of "throwing away" wives gradually died out, the giving away of valuable property to honor loved ones continued and was elaborated. The following is only one example from many which might be cited as illustrative of attitudes. The informant is now a man in his early seventies. He stated: "When I was a young man I never went to these social affairs. After I married my wife would go with my older brother every time there was a Grass dance, but I would stay at home. This brother of mine used to get after me for not taking part. He would say: 'It is bad to be the way you are. When there is a dance or anything going on, go and look on. You don't necessarily have to dance, but at least be present.' One time in later years the Cheyenne came to visit and of course the Gros Ventres put on a dance for them. I decided to go and for the first time I joined in. When my brother saw me he got up and said: 'Well, my friends, I have been asking my brother to look on and to take part in these dances, and I have never succeeded. But today I see him at this dance and I am glad he is here. I am glad he is joining with us.' Then my brother went out and brought to the dancing-place a new yellow-wheeled buggy and a set of harness he had just purchased, and announced: 'Now, because my brother has joined the dance I am proud he did, and in his honor I am giving away this buggy and harness to the visitors.' Then my brother's wife announced: 'I am happy that my brother-in-law is joining the dance. I will give a beef to the visitors so they will kill it and have meat to eat.' Of course I felt embarrassed. It was hard on me because I thought everybody was looking at me and I sweated. Afterwards I told my brother: 'I didn't go in there for the purpose of having you give away all that stuff in my honor!' But he replied: 'Well, that is the way of our people 796 178 431 [586]

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

SOCIAL CUSTOMS.

000 The Gros Ventre system of terms of relationship has been given in a
605 former publication.[1]

601 Cousins, so far as the relationship was known, were called brothers and sisters, and they called each other's children son or daughter if the cousin
[582] was of the same sex as the speaker, or nephew or niece if the cousin was of the opposite sex. Any known relationship was a bar to marriage. The
[587] brother of a dead man sometimes married his widow, but this was not always the case.

583 Large amounts of property, especially horses, were given away for wives for the honor of the act, but there was no rule or definite custom covering the quantity of property so given. The horses might be given not only to the father, but to the brothers, uncles, and other relatives of the girl. Sometimes, without having received any gifts and apparently without any previous understanding, a man would give his daughter to a young man, who thereupon would give him horses, or distribute them among his wife's other relatives. Old men practised this custom in order to obtain the aid and services of a young man in caring for their horses and in other ways, and no doubt
585 sometimes also to insure a more certain food-supply. A young man on
431 marrying received a tent with all the pr[illegible]niture, usually from his prospective parents-in-law, but somet[illegible] his own parents, if they were the wealthier.

606 Although a young married ma[illegible]ed with his father-in-law, the
[591] well-known taboo custom between [illegible]w and son-in-law—which forbade their speaking, looking at [illegible] being in the same tent —existed among the Gros Ventre. [illegible]ever, no father-in-law taboo. The mother-in-law taboo extend[illegible]n-law's brother.

584 If a woman did not wish a man for her [illegible]ht send him to do a
721 certain act of bravery. If he returned successfu[illegible]war, having accomplished the deed, he was then accepted. This cus[illegible] is said to have led to the death of many young men.

428 At a person's death his property was inherited generally by his relatives. His father and mother, brothers, sisters, and children would receive part. His father and mother received the most. A man often disposed of his property before his death. If he died suddenly, as on being killed in war, his parents divided his property. It was not customary for a man on going to war to divide his property among his relatives in the contingency of his
[764] death. Property particularly valued by the dead person was buried with him.

---

[1] Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part I, pp. 9, 150.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

in-law to do anything of the kind for her mother-in-law. So I gave that daughter-in-law two horses." 606

Although economic obligations were not incumbent, the relationship terms were used, and avoidances practiced, between parents-in-law and the brothers and sisters of the man and wife respectively. It was explained: "The brothers of a man respected his mother-in-law because in the old days it could happen that if a man died his brother might take the wife. And the same with a woman, because they had the custom of giving all the girls in a family to the same man if they liked him." [587]

Siblings of Opposite Sex

Among members of the same generation, the most marked respect was exhibited between siblings of opposite sex, and was extended to include all cousins. There was no relationship term for "cousin," all using sibling terms of address and without distinguishing between parallel- and cross-cousins. 593 605 [607]

Since a girl was removed from her own family at an early age and was brought up in a different household, actual face-to-face contact between brothers and sisters was slight. Nevertheless, their attitudes toward each other had important consequences with many ramifications. As interpreted by the Gros Ventres, the basic relationship between siblings of opposite sex gave clues to understanding expected behavior in several other categories of kinship, —in the avunculate and amitate, as well as in the relations between in-laws of the same sex and generation.

If it could possibly be avoided, brother and sister did not speak to nor look directly at each other. They communicated through a third person. Gros Ventres, who are today in middle age, explained how embarrassed they were as children when the authorities did not understand "the proper way of doing things." For instance, the good sisters and priests in charge of St Paul's, which at that time was a boarding-school, insisted as a privilege for the boys that they visit their sisters on Sunday afternoons in the girls' part of the school! How deeply this feeling of respect penetrates was brought home to the present author by the following incident. "One day she was with Mary and Coming Daylight, while waiting for Charles Buckman, who was to drive her to another part of the

842 pressed this desire early in life and volunteered the following story
[787] of her experience.

"My first husband, Dressed in White, went out hunting and
[587] brought back a lot of buffalo meat. I had my robe spread out just inside the door and he threw all the meat on it. Being hungry, I sat down there and was just about to eat the raw liver when he said: 'Wait! Don't eat that.' When I asked why not, he countered with the query: 'Do you like children?' To which I replied: 'You know I love children. I go wherever there is a baby—I love to have them on my lap.' So he said: 'Well, it is your fault that this is going to happen.' He took the oval piece of meat from the upper front quarter and roasted it in the coals. He then threw it to me in a careless way, instead of passing it to me as usual, and said: 'Here, you can have that for your son. You eat this plain—don't eat any tallow with it.' although they usually ate tallow with such lean meat. I said in disgust: 'E:ka:kya! I have always liked children,' and flung the meat out of the door. He said: 'Now that you have done this, you are going to have children from now on.' So, as he predicted, not long after that I became pregnant with my firstborn who was a boy. Unfortunately this boy died and I often wondered if it happened because I threw the meat too violently on that occasion when my husband had offered me the opportunity to choose whether or not I wished to bear children." Incidentally she remarked many times that she is happy she chose as she did,—otherwise now she would be all alone and her children have been so good to her.

The telling of the above incident brought to Coming Daylight's mind another, which confirms her belief in the relation between
[595] "medicine" and conception. "Crow Bull, my mother's brother,
[582] had four wives. His first wife did not have any children. Then he married an Assiniboine woman and still later took a third wife. Neither of the latter had children either until one time Crow Bull got mad. His third wife wanted to leave him for another man, but her relatives sent her back to Crow Bull. He, however, slept across from her bed and did not have intercourse with her. Shortly after this the Assiniboine woman did something to dis-
[789] please him and so he made up his mind: 'These two wives of mine are going to have children and settle down!' He had an old-fash-

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

CHAPTER IX

MARRIAGE

Polygyny and the Child-bride

The institution of the child-bride, combined with polygyny, was characteristic of Gros Ventre marriage up to about 1880. How far back it was practiced is difficult to say. Our informants who themselves were married off as children of ten or eleven to their first husbands about the year 1865, took the custom for granted and so far as they knew "it had always been that way."[1] 545 582

All girls were given in marriage before puberty, and usually as wives to older men with independent households. Because of the disparity in age between husband and child-bride, many of these girls were widowed early and remarriage was quickly arranged for them, even if the widow were not claimed by her husband's brother. Moreover, divorce or separation initiated by the husband was relatively easy and frequent. Consequently the majority of Gros Ventre women knew at least three or four different husbands, and often in fairly rapid succession. Upon successive remarriages the wife's age came to approximate more closely that of her husband. [586] [587] 582

Young men were not eligible for marriage until about twenty. By that time a young man would have attained proficiency in hunting and have taken the first steps in ceremonial life, being a member of one or other of the two adult men's societies, either the Wolf-men or the Stars. In addition he should have war-deeds to his credit and some property of his own, especially horses stolen from the enemy, in order to qualify as husband. In view of the fact, however, that very young girls were given more often to older already-married men, most young men marrying for the first time had as wife "an older experienced woman." Actually 582 587

[1] It was believed that a girl could not menstruate until after she had experienced sexual intercourse. If, therefore, a girl had her first menses before she had been given in marriage, her family would be disgraced. [841]

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

582 587 this meant that a young man's first wife was not necessarily "older" in years than he, but that she was "experienced" in marriage, having been either widowed or divorced, perhaps several times.

Only as an exception was a bachelor married to a child-bride. One case of the kind which was recalled concerned a young man [593] who was a "beloved-child" and consequently highly favored by his parents. He however refused to "settle down" when his parents suggested various marriage partners to him, and acceded to their request only when they obtained for him the hand of a young girl who had not previously been married.

582 595 587 Young men just starting their careers were urged to seek as wives among the "older" women, those who were known as "good workers" and who had acquired some property of their own. A wife of this kind could help him become established, and "if he amounted to anything" it would not be long before he could take a second wife, perhaps a younger sister of his first one. Then, as he became more prominent, he would acquire one or two additional wives.[2] To this type of man child-brides usually were given. It was said that an outstanding man had three or four wives at the same time, but conditions were such that he would have had a dozen different ones in the course of his career.

587 595 A man was considered fortunate if he obtained as wife the oldest of several sisters as the chances were great that these others might be offered to him. "If a man married the oldest girl in a family, and her folks liked him and saw that he was a good provider and that he was trying to live right, they would give him the two or three others as they came of age." Many instances were given wherein several sisters were married to the same man. On the other hand it was said that, if a man, who was already married to one or more sisters, asked for another, he might be refused and that "there was nothing he could do about it."

Since the levirate was permitted, it was possible that a man could claim the wife or wives of his deceased brother. This was seemingly carried out infrequently, however, since only two instances could be recalled.[3] Of these two, one involved Coming

[2] For a discussion of the economic basis of polygyny, see pp. 73–74.

[3] "The brother of a dead man sometimes married his widow, but this was not always the case." Kroeber, 1900, p. 150.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Daylight and her sister, who were married, for a short while after their first husband died, to his classificatory brother. The other concerned an outstanding woman, Woman Chief, who was said to have been so highly valued by her husband's people that "she was kept in his family by marrying her to three brothers [successively]." 587 595

Regulations

Marriage was prohibited for those related by blood, no matter how remote the tie. If, however, a couple were in "good faith," so to speak, and it was discovered later on that they were distant kin, it was not considered necessary for them to separate on that account.[4] Affinal relatives were likewise barred as possible marriage partners, except those who were classified as in-laws of the same generation.[5] In other words, the levirate and sororate were permitted, so that any who addressed each other as brother-in-law and sister-in-law respectively were possible mates, but relatives-by-marriage in any other category were prohibited from contracting marriage. The far-reaching effects of this latter regulation can be seen from the following case. "Not so many years ago, a Gros Ventre woman was the subject of a great deal of gossip because she married late in life a man who, many years previously, had for a time been married to a widow of her maternal uncle. People didn't like it and thought she shouldn't have married that man, even though times had changed and the whites wouldn't count them as being related to each other at all." 582 [587]

Arrangements

As a rule, marriage arrangements were made between the husband-to-be and one or other of the bride's male kinsmen,—father, uncle or brother. Either side could take the initiative, but the bride herself was not consulted. Coming Daylight summed up the prevailing attitude in this way: "When I was young, a girl's life was not her own. When a girl was about seven she was sent away from her home to a grandmother or widowed aunt to be [868] 584 562

trained to do a woman's work.

[4] See also the discussion of band affiliation and exogamy, pp. 29–31.

[5] For kinship classification, see pp. 124–25.

584 trained to do a woman's work. Then when she was ten or eleven
562 she was handed over to some man. They thought that if they gave her to her husband when she was so young she would get attached to him and make him a good wife. The Gros Ventres didn't want a woman to get in the habit of running around with differ-
[587] ent men, so a woman's folks worried if she was unmarried too long [after being divorced or widowed] because she might do something bad."

587 There is some evidence that as a woman became older, if she had occasion to remarry, she was somewhat more free to express her choice, although presumably a male relative would still be in the position of making the actual decision. It was said that
584 younger men, especially those seeking to marry "older" women,
832 "were afraid of their tongues" and felt more confident of success in possession of "love medicine." Al Chandler, for instance, was offered a love charm which he refused, but the speech of his uncle on that occasion throws some light on a situation of this kind. His uncle had told him: "Now you are a young man and you will be thinking about women. Maybe you want to get married and have picked out a woman and she doesn't want you. Maybe you are not good enough for her and, when you ask her, she will run you down plenty. Some women are swell-heads and can make a man feel cheap. It hurts a fellow to hear things like that—but that is what this charm is for. You take this and keep it in your pocket safely and do not show it to anyone or let anyone know you have it. Now if this woman hurts your feelings, go at night to where she lives and watch carefully, being sure you have the right one. Then when she goes out of the lodge to relieve herself, watch her so you can locate the exact spot. Then open this little packet and dip in it the tip of a little sliver of wood. Go over to the spot and stick the sliver right in the ground on the spot where she urinated and walk away. That is all you have to do, and in a very short time this woman will come running after you. You tell her: 'What are you doing that for? I don't want you.' She will get so anxious that she will beg you to have her."

585 Regardless of whether the man were the suitor, or whether the woman's relatives offered her in marriage, the marriage was validated through presents given by the groom. Traditionally at

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

least one horse was included; but no given amount of property was specified nor did bargaining enter into the negotiations.[6] Following the pattern of ostentatious liberality, a man could reflect honor upon himself by giving generously, and one with such a reputation was preferred over a poor or stingy one. Whatever the groom offered was divided among the bride's relatives. As one woman said: "A husband always gave something for his wife, no matter how many wives he acquired, because this is what makes it 'legal.' Then the girl's father and brother divided the presents. If the brother arranged the marriage, he would say to the father 'Here is a horse for you.' And if the father or uncle had been approached by the husband, then they did the same way. Sometimes even the father's sister was given a horse or something else when her niece married."

587 [554]

Although it was not obligatory, a bride's family often provided her with goods to take to her marriage, especially if it were her first one. Singer explained in regard to Coming Daylight: "Her family was well-to-do and showed how much they thought of themselves by giving her a good send-off. You should have seen her going off to her first husband. She was only about ten years old and she looked so tiny leading that big horse. On the horse was a fine fringed saddle and the travois was just piled up with painted parfleshes and other things."

The following account of the marriage of Coming Daylight's daughter shows how the pattern was carried out under changed conditions: "One night when the family returned from a dance they found a letter addressed to the oldest son, Ed, from a man whom he liked, asking for Ed's sister, Gertrude. When his father came in from tending the horses they told him about the proposal and he agreed right away, saying: 'We are still keeping her and she is a big girl. I'm glad this offer has been made.' So a week later they loaded a new buggy with Gertrude's things,—bedding, beds, trunk, sewing machine, etc.,—and her father drove this to the creek where the dance hall was located. Meanwhile Coming Daylight took her daughter to the house of the man who had asked for her and left her there sitting on this man's bed. The groom did not appear at the Grass Dance that evening, even though he

585 178

[6] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, p. 180.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

grandmother while her uncle's wives were making a lodge which they gave to her; then they went back and her new lodge was the sixth in a row, the five others being those of her husband's relatives who habitually camped together. When this husband died, she was claimed by a classificatory brother of her husband's and remained with the same people. This marriage did not last very long and, when her uncle arranged another marriage, again she lived near the man's relatives rather than her own. Since this too was of short duration, she remarried another time and lived in the same lodge as her husband's mother and unmarried brothers, until, at the time the Gros Ventre settled down (after 1883), her husband got a farm of his own and his mother went to live with one of her daughters.

Relations between Co-Wives

Subsidiary wives were known as "helpers" to the senior wife and co-wives addressed each other as "rival," unless they were related to each other and employed the ordinary form of address as "sister."[4] The senior wife distributed the household tasks and the "helpers" were allotted the heavier work, which usually included the procuring of fuel and water. Nevertheless all women were expected to be industrious and the senior wife as a rule enjoyed no more leisure or freedom than the others. In explaining the situation, Cora referred to her mother's experience. "My mother was always that kind of 'helper' but she didn't seem to mind it. After all, there were so many women who were 'helpers' and, as long as they got their work done, it didn't seem to matter who was 'boss' and who was 'helper.' They used to say in fact that some women preferred to be 'helpers' because while doing their jobs like going after water, they would have a chance to get away by themselves for a while—their husbands couldn't keep such close watch over them."

One of the advantages of living in a polygynous household was

[4] The Gros Ventre word for subsidiary wives, *atsd'anhiniya*, although at present sometimes translated as "slaves" as well as "helpers," is etymologically the same as the term applied to younger men who were appointed on ceremonial occasions to act as "waiters" for the principal performers. The term *inf'isag*, "rival," was used between co-wives who were not kin.

545 said to have been that the wife who was pregnant, whether senior or subsidiary, could be well cared for and was relieved of the heavier domestic tasks until a considerable time after the child was born. Furthermore, the children of all wives were considered [858] equal in status. "As long as a man claimed the children as his own, he treated them all the same way, whether they were the children of older or younger wives." That differential treatment was sometimes accorded children by their father can be seen from the following case, although it is doubtful whether the father distinguished between his daughters simply on account of the relative position of their mothers. Singer, however, implied that it was so in giving the account of her experience: "When I was married as a younger wife to a certain man, he certainly made a difference between my child and that of his older wife. Both of us had girls, but one time, for instance, when I was out getting wood, they threw my little girl right out of the lodge. A neighbor took her in and when I returned this neighbor said to me: 'I notice they don't seem to care much for this little girl.' So after that I would have to take her with me, carrying a heavy pack on my back and dragging my little one along by the arm. Although my husband never let me use a horse, he would put the child of his other wife on the saddle when he was riding, and often he would hold her in his arms when he was around the camp. One of the worst things I had to endure was that when my husband would return from trading at Fort Benton with goodies like candy and fruit, my little girl was never given any and had to stand by and watch the other child eating. Finally it got so bad that my father took his grandchild and raised her. But I must say that this husband of mine was a really mean man."

587 The general feeling prevailed that sisters got along together more peaceably as co-wives than did "rivals." In any case the 545 sororate was preferred and it was said that parents were better satisfied to send a child-bride into the household of her sister. This attitude was exemplified by Singer's father in the following account which she gave: "I had been given to my sister's husband when I was just a child. It wasn't a real marriage because I didn't stay long enough. I was sent home by him because he thought I would rather play than work, and my sister took up for

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

me and he didn't send for me to come back. Not long after that though, my sister died, and her husband's other two wives came after me. I was playing out on the ice when they came and told me they were going to take me back with them. Ignorant as I was, I said I would go, and that I would have to tell my father first. But my father said: 'No. You shouldn't go with them. Those two women are not related to you and they might be mean to you. If your sister were still living, I would see to it that you went back to that man.' So those women said nothing more and I never heard from them or their husband again." 587 595

It was also thought that if the older wife were the sister of a child-bride she might be more willing to "protect" her. The husband of so young a wife was supposed to "wait a while" before claiming the marital right, and some men actually did so. Dressed-in-White for instance deferred the consummation of his marriage for over two years after Coming Daylight had been given to him at about the age of ten. Other men were not so considerate, however, and if an older wife tried to delay the procedure it was interpreted as being done not out of jealousy but through fear of consequences to so young a child. The husband alone determined the use of the marital right and such interference as another wife could offer would be only indirect. This is shown in the following account which concerns a woman well-known to both Singer and Coming Daylight. "One night soon after her little sister had been sent to their husband, this woman overheard him say to the girl: 'Make your bed wider, I am going to sleep with you.' Her own bedding was on the opposite side of the fire from that of her sister and she decided to try to discourage her husband from this undertaking. As she had expected, the husband that night covered up the fire so the lodge would be dark. On the sly, however, she was able to poke the fire so it flared out brightly. He got up and dimmed it once more, but again she made it flare. This was repeated several times and once she heard him say angrily; 'Oh, this is such good wood, it burns too well—I wish I could kill it!" Finally to her dismay she heard him whisper to the girl: 'I will take you outside because I can't seem to make it dark in here. You must not scream or cry out though because 585 587 595

587 your sister is alseep.' She was unhappy that her efforts had failed,
595 but of course she didn't dare do anything more."

In confirmation of the theory that sisters lived in harmony as co-wives, Coming Daylight said that she and her younger sister
595 had gotten along well together, but the two had some difficulties with a "rival" in one of their marriages. She added that whether wives were kin or not was less important than "the kind of women they were who lived in the same lodge." Cora gave an interesting illustration of the personality factor involved. Her mother once was married to the same husband of both her older and younger sisters. The youngest of the trio knew that their father had rejected her when she was born. The order to abandon the infant had been carried out, and she was found and adopted by a friend of her father's who raised her as his own. Cora said: "My mother and her older sister got along just fine. But the younger one never hit it off with these other two. It seemed like she was always jealous of them and took every chance she could find to get them in bad with their husband. She was kind of 'tricky.' Although as usual they lived in the same lodge, with their husband, she had her meals separately from the other two, she fetched water only for her own use, and on nice days when they sat outside the lodge she put up her shelter apart from theirs. Things were so bad between her and the other two, even after this common marriage was finished and they had separate husbands, that I grew up without realizing that she was my mother's sister. So that is the reason I feel no responsibility for her now."

Sometimes a senior wife of bad disposition made it very hard for a very young "rival," especially if she were in her husband's favor and the subsidiary wife were not. Singer told of one of her experiences with such a "rival." "I was much younger than this woman and she treated me abominably and sometimes she even beat me. One time my father found me crying after this woman had hit me, and he told me: 'You are getting to be a big girl now. You ought not to let her treat you like that. You should fight for yourself.' So the next time this woman pulled my hair, I grabbed her just as though I had turned into a bear, and held her to the ground and almost killed her. Those outside the lodge heard the commotion and someone yelled: 'Tie them together! Tie them

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

763 property.[4] Although in the following case ideal conditions did not obtain, the account as given by an old woman illustrates something of the attitudes which prevailed even after the Gros Ventres had settled down. "My husband had been ill. We were very badly off, having nothing to eat and no light, but worst of all my husband had no suitable clothes in which to pass his last moments. A friend of his fortunately came to the rescue, bringing new clothes, food, a fancy new lamp and fuel. A short time after this my husband called to me to come to him and said: 'I have lost life long ago. The only thing I have left is my eyesight. I can see, but I will be leaving you soon. Bring me the bundle my friend has given me.' I did so and as he examined the new clothing piece by piece he said: 'Now I am glad I shall have something to wear. I want you to listen carefully. I don't want you to mourn—we have too many children for that, and they must be cared for. Don't go to your relatives nor to mine. We have been very poor since I have been sick and none of them has even come to see us. I want you to go straight to the home of this man who has given me these clothes. Now I am ready to go.' After my husband [587] died, I did just as he had requested. In spite of all the gossip, I married that man. People were talking about me because that man had at one time been married to a wife of my mother's brother."

764 If circumstances did not permit arrangements to be made before death, as soon as possible after death the corpse was washed and dressed. This office was performed preferably by friends of the [572] deceased since it was not expected of near relatives because "they felt too bad." Should the deceased not own a proper outfit, one was usually somehow provided. Coming Daylight remembered that one time when a small boy was drowned, the child's distracted mother came running to her lodge saying: "I am very poor and my little boy has no good clothes to wear. Will you let me have your little boy's clothes?" Coming Daylight felt so sorry for this woman that she let her have her own son's nicely beaded clothes and moccasins, and gave her a blanket as well. After the body was dressed, they laid it on this blanket in the place of honor at the back of the parents' lodge.

[4] Kroeber, 1908, p. 180, notes that "A man often disposed of his property before death."

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the Grass dance may have seemed appropriate to the Gros Ventres as reminiscent of the feather headdress worn by the participants in the Women's Dance belonging to the series of vowed Sacred Dances. But regardless of the possible symbolism, these four offices, plus the four others allotted to women,—two whip owners and their two assistants,—gave the female sex a fair degree of recognition, and probably reflect the newer economic status of women which came about with the changing concept of inheritance. Formerly women, of course, had a right to their own property, but acquisition thereof was mainly through their own manufacture, such as clothing, or through the relatively rare gift of a horse or so. They did not come in for any valuable property through inheritance and a widow in those days was not even entitled to any of her deceased husband's belongings.

The holding of office in the Grass dance thus offered one of the very few means remaining for acquisition of status by the individual. The frequent transfer of offices meant that there was opportunity for many individuals within each category,—mature men, older warriors, young men, women,—to enjoy such public recognition.

Public display of generosity in giving away property to honor a loved one, which became such a marked feature of the Grass dance in its later phase, carried on and accentuated the method most common in older Gros Ventre culture for the gaining of individual prestige. Formerly there were many opportunities for this kind of ostentatious liberality,—when a pipe or a painted lodge was transferred, when a warrior returned from accomplishing brave deeds, when a person was participating in one of the Sacred Dances, when a person was named, when a child's ears were pierced, and so on. At such times the relatives publicly gave away as much of their property as they possibly could,—not to the recipient of the pipe, the brave warrior, the participant in the Sacred Dance, et al.,—but to someone else in his honor. Everybody would know what was given and by whom; people would make such comments as: "So-and-so is a fine man. He surely must think a lot of his relative—look at all the things he

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

SOCIAL CUSTOMS.

600 The Gros Ventre system of terms of relationship has been given in a
605 former publication.[1]

601 Cousins, so far as the relationship was known, were called brothers and sisters, and they called each other's children son or daughter if the cousin
[582] was of the same sex as the speaker, or nephew or niece if the cousin was of the opposite sex. Any known relationship was a bar to marriage. The
[587] brother of a dead man sometimes married his widow, but this was not always the case.

583 Large amounts of property, especially horses, were given away for wives for the honor of the act, but there was no rule or definite custom covering the quantity of property so given. The horses might be given not only to the father, but to the brothers, uncles, and other relatives of the girl. Sometimes, without having received any gifts and apparently without any previous understanding, a man would give his daughter to a young man, who thereupon would give him horses, or distribute them among his wife's other relatives. Old men practised this custom in order to obtain the aid and services of a young man in caring for their horses and in other ways, and no doubt
585 sometimes also to insure a more certain food-supply. A young man on
431 marrying received a tent with all the proper furniture, usually from his prospective parents-in-law, but sometimes from his own parents, if they were the wealthier.

606 Although a young married man often lived with his father-in-law, the
[591] well-known taboo custom between mother-in-law and son-in-law — which forbade their speaking, looking at each other, or being in the same tent — existed among the Gros Ventre. There was, however, no father-in-law taboo. The mother-in-law taboo extended to the son-in-law's brother.

584 If a woman did not wish a man for her lover, she might send him to do a
721 certain act of bravery. If he returned successfully from war, having accomplished the deed, he was then accepted. This custom is said to have led to the death of many young men.

428 At a person's death his property was inherited generally by his relatives. His father and mother, brothers, sisters, and children would receive part. His father and mother received the most. A man often disposed of his property before his death. If he died suddenly, as on being killed in war, his parents divided his property. It was not customary for a man on going to war to divide his property among his relatives in the contingency of his
[764] death. Property particularly valued by the dead person was buried with him.

---

[1] Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part I, pp. 9, 150.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

added prestige. Those mentioned as leading bands above were seemingly the most numerous and most prominent in the recent past, and their representatives are more numerous at the present time. While the Frozens, Upper Quarters and Bad Plenty have the most living descendants, apparently there are no Poor Greys or Coffees today, only one Night Hawk, and a few each of the others. 621 554

Although Coming Daylight and Singer claimed membership in the Frozen band, they had no false modesty in proclaiming: "The Frozens were the best workers, had the biggest lodges, the prettiest women and the best-looking men. In fact they were the 'aristocratic' families, being the best-dressed and having the most horses." This was confirmed voluntarily by Cora who stated that she belonged to the Same As Assiniboines, but had heard all her life that the Frozens were the most distinguished band along the lines the old women mentioned. The men informants admitted that some bands were considered better in some respects than others, but failed to be more specific, and added that regardless of the reputation of the whole band, an individual man had to make his own way. [565]

It is somewhat difficult to arrive at the exact situation as to band affiliation and exogamy inasmuch as the band ceased to function not long after our oldest male informants were born. Our oldest female informants, whose memory includes the 1860's, stated in regard to this individual or that, whom they mentioned, that they could not remember to which band he had belonged. In fact the old women became quite impatient when questioned on this subject since from their point of view it was not important. To them the question of marriage regulations was a practical one of avoiding as mate any person to whom blood relationship could be traced, no matter how remotely, and any affinal relative not of the same generation. 621 [582]

There was general agreement among all informants, however, that under normal circumstances children were of the same band as their father.[3] Nevertheless, residence was an important factor, and not a few persons claimed affiliation with bands other than those into which they had been born. Coming Daylight, for instance, said she was a Frozen, the band to which her mother had [591] 621 597

[3] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, p. 147.

621 belonged. She was orphaned at an early age and was raised by
597 her maternal grandmother under the protection of her mother's brother, Crow Bull, a prominent member of the Frozen band. Garter Snake claimed to be a Tendon, likewise the band into which her mother had been born, although her father, Bull Lodge, a so-called "Hudson Bay Company breed," was classed as a Frozen. If a child were adopted by, and remained during his childhood days with, a family of another band than that into which his real father had been born, he became a member of the adopting band. For instance, Lame Bull adopted a boy whose father belonged to a different band, but the boy was always known as a member of Lame Bull's band, the Upper Quarters.

[597] One informant stated that when a woman married she became a
621 member of her husband's band, but this statement refers in all probability merely to the fact that patrilocal residence was often practiced. Each of our older women informants stated as her band the one in which she grew up. When speaking of their husbands, these women, each of whom had survived several mates, seldom mentioned their band affiliations, unless asked specifically, nor did they mention to which of the soldier societies their several husbands had belonged. One gathers the very distinct impression
[602] that the kinship bonds were the all-important social relationships so far as Gros Ventres women were concerned, and that the wider political and social groupings did not impinge very directly on their lives.

621 All informants stated that one should not marry into the band
582 in which he claimed membership and in which he was brought up. There was a difference of opinion among them, however, as to whether one might marry into his mother's band providing he had not been raised therein and no blood relationship could be traced.[8] The Boy stated positively that a man who would so much as flirt with a young woman of his mother's band would be disliked. Charles Buckman differed, holding that any marriage would be proper, providing the far-reaching incest taboos based on blood and affinal relationship be observed. The Boy admitted that, because of changes which occurred in band affiliation, occasionally a person would take a wife from some other band than that of either

[8] Kroeber, 1908, p. 147, prohibition of marriage extended to mother's clan.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

585 178 was Keeper of the Crow Belt, as he had taken Gertrude and camped at the Mission. The next morning the couple was married by the priest and Gertrude's father brought the buggy full of goods and gave them all that, including the team of horses. Everybody could see that this couple started off with a lot."

585 Instead of making arrangements, a man might simply send his daughter to become the wife of another man without forewarning him. The recipient of such a bride could not well refuse her and was supposed to act as though he were happy to have her, regardless of how many other wives he might have or his real feelings in the matter. He, too, would normally give some kind of present to her father, the amount depending somewhat on the previous reputation of the bride. On the one side, she might have been given merely to get her off her father's hands, on the other, she might have been highly desirable as a wife and her father would have taken this means to show generosity on his own part and to honor the husband he had selected.

585 Sometimes elopements occurred, but this was very rarely if ever the case, so far as the girl was concerned, until she had been given at least once in marriage arranged by her relatives. Should 1684 a married woman run off with another man, it was up to her husband to deal with the situation. If, however, she had been widowed or divorced, and eloped before another marriage had been arranged, her relatives would be angry, but the affair could be patched up if the usual presents to them were forthcoming from the man.

591 There was no hard and fast rule in regard to residence. Matrilocal residence in the same lodge was incompatible with the observance of the mother-in-law taboo and it was said that if a man wished his son-in-law to remain with him, he provided the separate lodge and all the equipment.[7] The tendency seems to have been toward patrilocal residence in general, although it was not unusual for a couple to move back and forth. Coming Daylight lived most of her married life with her husband's people. As a child-bride she first lived in the lodge with her husband's parents; later on she and her husband went to her people, living with her

[7] Obligations between kin are discussed pp. 109–10. Kroeber, 1908, p. 180, states that a young married man often lived with his father-in-law.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

grandmother while her uncle's wives were making a lodge which they gave to her; then they went back and her new lodge was the sixth in a row, the five others being those of her husband's relatives who habitually camped together. When this husband died, she was claimed by a classificatory brother of her husband's and remained with the same people. This marriage did not last very long and, when her uncle arranged another marriage, again she lived near the man's relatives rather than her own. Since this too was of short duration, she remarried another time and lived in the same lodge as her husband's mother and unmarried brothers, until, at the time the Gros Ventre settled down (after 1883), her husband got a farm of his own and his mother went to live with one of her daughters.

Relations between Co-Wives

Subsidiary wives were known as "helpers" to the senior wife and co-wives addressed each other as "rival," unless they were related to each other and employed the ordinary form of address as "sister."[8] The senior wife distributed the household tasks and the "helpers" were allotted the heavier work, which usually included the procuring of fuel and water. Nevertheless all women were expected to be industrious and the senior wife as a rule enjoyed no more leisure or freedom than the others. In explaining the situation, Cora referred to her mother's experience. "My mother was always that kind of 'helper' but she didn't seem to mind it. After all, there were so many women who were 'helpers' and, as long as they got their work done, it didn't seem to matter who was 'boss' and who was 'helper.' They used to say in fact that some women preferred to be 'helpers' because while doing their jobs like going after water, they would have a chance to get away by themselves for a while—their husbands couldn't keep such close watch over them."

One of the advantages of living in a polygynous household was

[8] The Gros Ventre word for subsidiary wives, *atsd'anhiniya*, although at present sometimes translated as "slaves" as well as "helpers," is etymologically the same as the term applied to younger men who were appointed on ceremonial occasions to act as "waiters" for the principal performers. The term *inl'isag*, "rival," was used between co-wives who were not kin.

CHAPTER IV

ECONOMIC ASPECTS

Labor

In the production of economic goods the man supplied the great bulk of raw materials by means of hunting, doing relatively little collecting and processing. He was responsible, however, for the supply and care of the major means of production, the horse. The chief objects manufactured by him were bows, arrows, clubs, shields, and ceremonial equipment.[1] The woman, on the other hand, supplied only a small part of the raw materials, through collecting, but did most of the processing of raw materials and manufacturing. 462

Cooperation within the household was necessary for production, and the household was practically a self-sufficient unit with relatively little reliance on the cooperative work of others. In actuality there was quite a bit of mutual help, especially among relatives. There was, of course, a certain amount of dependence of the man on his fellows in hunting in the sense that men usually hunted buffalo in groups and, in view of the common welfare, an individual was restrained from selfishly hunting alone and scattering the herd on which his fellows were depending. Nevertheless the operation was a collective rather than a truly cooperative one because, once the chase started, each man was on his own and had the right of disposal over whatever game he killed. It was stated that in any given run the most a man could kill would be seven or eight buffalo and that almost inevitably some would get none. No one went home empty-handed, however, for the more fortunate 476 592 224 476 [431]

[1] Maximilian noted in 1833 that men make only arms and smoking equipment (p. 103), and that among the Gros Ventres were many war clubs "made of the long end of an elk's horn" and "daggers" of jaws and teeth of a bear (p. 75). For other details of materials and manufacture, see Kroeber, 1908, pp. 150–51. For illustration of a shield, see photograph, courtesy of Richard Pohrt, pl. 3. [411]

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

repeated this stunt twice more, but this was too much for these old 888
women, who then started fighting and shouting recriminations, 522
blaming each other. The boys of course were in high glee as the old women hit each other and grunted. Finally, however, they called the daughter of one of the old women, saying: 'Come and see these old ones fighting. Try and stop them. They will kill each other.' So as the boys ran away, the younger woman restored peace."

Care of the aged devolved upon close kin. Whereas old men 888
customarily lived directly with the households to which they were
attached, old windows usually lived in lodges separate from, but [542]
located near, those of relatives who provided most of their food. To old women was often relegated the care of their grandchildren, especially of their granddaughters, whom they were supposed to [887]
train from the age of about seven until such time as they were given in marriage. The young girls in turn supplied the water and fuel for their grandmothers. In case the aged person had children of his own, he was reasonably secure. Those whose dependence was on more remote relatives were less assured of good care. The aged who had special skills which could be exercised in spite of debility, especially those who possessed "medicine power," were better off than the others.[1]

In dealing with old people it was said that much patience and forbearance were often necessary. For instance, one old woman, now deceased, was described by a relative in the following terms: "She was a hardboiled old jane, rough and tough, who didn't hesitate to tell you what she thought of things. But she had many friends and when visitors came she would swell up and be proud when they sat beside her rather than beside one of the several other old women who lived in the same place. Usually during the visit, however, she would get mad and threaten all kinds of things, and people would have to humor her. One day she really blew up and said: 'I'm going to save my relatives the job of hauling my carcass out, so I'm going out on the hills right now and lie out there and die!' So one of her relatives had to pretend to take her

[1] Denig, pp. 576–77, states that only such old persons who possess medicine powers are exempt from the petty tricks and other annoyances to which the aged in general are subject among northern plains tribes.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

an enemy; and each took from among the property as nearly as possible such objects as he had actually captured in war. One who had stolen horses would take a horse; one who had taken a gun from an enemy would pick out a gun. While this was being done, or soon after, the dancers were dancing, concluding with a race similar to that in the crazy-dance. This marked the end of the ceremony. 796

There were several degrees of distinction in this dance. Two men had crooked lances wrapped with otter-skin. In four places these lances were tied about with small strips of white fur from which a pair of eagle-feathers hung. These lances were called nouçä"ts'ta". Two other lances were straight, and wrapped with jack-rabbit skin. These also bore feathers. A single dancer had a rattle of the globular shape common on the Plains. Half of the rattle was painted red, and half blue; and feathers were attached both to the top of the rattle and to the bottom of its handle. These regalia of honor were given to men renowned in war. A pipe was brought such a man, and if he thought himself entitled to the honor, and was ready to accept it, he took the pipe. If a man felt that others were really braver than himself, or had some other reason, he refused to take the pipe. One informant stated that he had declined the proffered honor because his wife's brother had recently died. The rank and file of the kit-fox dancers are said to have worn belts of prairie-dog skin. How far these corresponded with the biitaha"wu belts of the Arapaho is uncertain. The fur-wrapped crooked and straight lances are certainly similar to the crooked and straight lances indicating the second and third degrees in the Arapaho biitaha"wu. 796 554 293 [534]

Two girls took part in this ceremony. They were girls who were much thought of and beloved by their relatives. One of the dancers carried a kit-fox skin, the inside of which was painted blue. His companion had the rattle that has been described. While he rattled, the other, holding the skin by the neck and the tail, pointed it at the other dancers. These ran off, and this seems to have been the signal for the beginning of the dance. The two girls followed these two men everywhere. Their parents and relatives gave away great quantities of property in the dancing-lodge. Something similar is found in one of the Cheyenne society-dances, in which four young women accompanied the dancers from place to place. 796 857 593 [171]

Nothing was learned about the origin of the kit-fox dance, except that it is said to have been given by the kit-foxes, which is like what the Cheyenne tell of their analogous society. 796

A neck-band of badger-skin is the only object secured said to have been used in the kit-fox dance. To the end of it a tip of whitish rabbit-fur is attached. The lower part of the piece, which bears this rabbit-fur, hangs down the dancer's back. The upper portion, which is about four inches wide, is slit for a distance of a foot. Through this slit the head is inserted. [292]

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

CHAPTER VI

KINSHIP BEHAVIOR

Much of the more formalized behavior expected between particular categories of relatives among the Gros Ventres has survived the many changes in their economic, political, and religious structure. It is one of the few aspects of their older culture which can be observed as functioning at least partially. Although the economic side of the obligations has had to be reduced markedly under modern conditions, the attitudes accompanying avoidance and joking are still deeply ingrained in those of middle age and in older persons. 602 [178]

All in all, the type of behavior which indicated respect was extended to include by far the greatest number of relationships,—freedom being allowed only between those individuals considered to be related as grandparents and grandchildren, as siblings of the same sex, and as in-laws of opposite sex but of the same generation.

Parents

The parent-child relationship was characterized by a kind of reserve that tabooed any light talk, especially joking about sex or marriage. If the subject were approached in a serious way, however, it could be discussed between parent and child of like sex. A woman could, for instance, go to her divorced or widowed mother and tell her: "So-and-so wants you, will you not go and live with that man?" But she would not think of acting as intermediary in such a proposal to her father. 593

Throughout life children were supposed to address and to refer to their parents only by relationship terms,[1] never by personal name. Further, a son would be shamed by any incident even remotely connected with sex, in which he was involved, should it be [601 55]

[1] The kinship terminology given by our informants agrees in detail with that in Kroeber, 1902, p. 9.

593 alluded to or occur in the presence of either his father or mother. To appear unclothed in each other's presence would be embarass-
[241] ing to father and son alike. A woman refrained from any conversation or action that would call the attention of her father to the fact that she was menstruating or pregnant. An example of the
[845] attitude in this regard came to attention recently. "A woman, who was walking along the road near her house one evening, suffered a miscarriage. Instead of being taken to her own house nearby she insisted on being taken to a neighbor's, her reason being that her father and a few of his friends had been at her home when she had left and she would be 'ashamed' to appear in front of him in her condition."

It would seem that in some ways mothers had closer ties with their daughters and fathers with their sons. If, for example, parents disagreed about something their children did, each took up for the child of like sex. A man said to his wife: "You leave the boy alone, he's *my* boy," and a woman would say the same regarding the daughter. Or had a child done something to disgrace the parents, the wife was likely to upbraid her husband, if a boy were the culprit, by telling him: "Your son did so-and-so!" Should
[597] the daughter have been at fault, her father would speak in similar vein to his wife. In cases of adoption, too, a woman claimed a girl and a man, a boy.

On the other hand, in circumstances where parents could publicly show pride in their children, it often happened that a woman gave presents away in honor of her son and a man in honor of his daughter. It was customary, too, that if a young man had done something especially noteworthy at war, anyone could approach his mother and ask for whatever was wanted, and she would give it. Middle-aged women, whose sons were in World War II, joked with each other along these lines when news of their sons came from the front. Unfortunately, however, adverse economic circumstances precluded the full carrying out of the custom.

604 Attitudes of respect and reserve between parents and children
601 are extended to include all of parents' siblings and their spouses, special emphasis being put on father's sister and mother's brother. Kinship terms reflect this situation. The term "father" includes father's brother, male cousin, mother's sister's husband; "mo-

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

in-law to do anything of the kind for her mother-in-law. So I gave that daughter-in-law two horses." 606

Although economic obligations were not incumbent, the relationship terms were used, and avoidances practiced, between parents-in-law and the brothers and sisters of the man and wife respectively. It was explained: "The brothers of a man respected his mother-in-law because in the old days it could happen that if a man died his brother might take the wife. And the same with a woman, because they had the custom of giving all the girls in a family to the same man if they liked him." [587]

Siblings of Opposite Sex

Among members of the same generation, the most marked respect was exhibited between siblings of opposite sex, and was extended to include all cousins. There was no relationship term for "cousin," all using sibling terms of address and without distinguishing between parallel- and cross-cousins. 593 605 [601]

Since a girl was removed from her own family at an early age and was brought up in a different household, actual face-to-face contact between brothers and sisters was slight. Nevertheless, their attitudes toward each other had important consequences with many ramifications. As interpreted by the Gros Ventres, the basic relationship between siblings of opposite sex gave clues to understanding expected behavior in several other categories of kinship, —in the avunculate and amitate, as well as in the relations between in-laws of the same sex and generation.

If it could possibly be avoided, brother and sister did not speak to nor look directly at each other. They communicated through a third person. Gros Ventres, who are today in middle age, explained how embarrassed they were as children when the authorities did not understand "the proper way of doing things." For instance, the good sisters and priests in charge of St Paul's, which at that time was a boarding-school, insisted as a privilege for the boys that they visit their sisters on Sunday afternoons in the girls' part of the school! How deeply this feeling of respect penetrates was brought home to the present author by the following incident. "One day she was with Mary and Coming Daylight, while waiting for Charles Buckman, who was to drive her to another part of the

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

605 Reservation. She heard the car drive up and, without thinking
593 how it might be interpreted by the other two women, exclaimed: 'Oh, there is my man! I must go!' Since in that neighborhood 'my man' is commonly used to indicate husband or lover, Mary laughed. Almost immediately, however, she caught herself and straightened her face, remarking: 'I shouldn't have even thought that or laughed like I did. That man is my cousin and I should be ashamed of him.' Furthermore when Mary went out with her to get in the car, Charles insisted that Mary sit in the back seat so that everybody could see that they rode in the same car only to accommodate the white woman. Mary remarked later on: 'It is funny, but I just can't bring myself to sit down and have a conversation with my men-relatives, like white brothers and sisters do. I still have a feeling it is an awful thing to talk to my brothers, male cousins, father-in-law and Indian sons-in-law,—although I don't mind in the least talking to my white son-in-law.'"

Brother and sister were expected to grant each other's requests whenever it was in their power to do so and without complaint, regardless of the inconvenience which might be involved. The following incident illustrates how sensitive the Gros Ventres were on this point. "When the present Mrs. Takes-the-Bow was a small girl, she often was sick. One time her father's sister came into the lodge and muttered to herself: 'Oh you are just using up all my medicine in doctoring you—what is wrong with you!' Unfortunately the child's father overheard this impatient comment and was deeply hurt, because very seldom would a woman say anything like that in front of her brother. So he decided: 'My sister considers me a lot of trouble, and if that is the way she feels about it I shall never request her services again.' He meant exactly what he said. He left immediately to go on a war party. Careless of his life, he recklessly rode into the midst of the enemy and was killed."

593 One way of showing how much a woman thought of her brother
782 was for her to make offerings in his behalf. When young men
721 were going off on a war party, the sister of one of them might go outside the lodge and make a promise along the following lines: "I will give my finger as offering if my brother will come back a great warrior." It was considered a great honor, of course, to

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

have someone come back a real hero, and, although such a promise to torture oneself could be made in regard to other relatives, "it was usually a sister who thought so much of her brother who did that." Other forms of sacrifice which a girl might practice on her brother's behalf would be to take a fine robe, or something else of value, and stick it on top of the lodge saying: "I offer this that my brother may come back with good luck, bringing something fine from war." This could be even more specific in that a girl could offer, say, the tip of her finger, if her brother would bring back a particular thing, such as a scalp or a horse or a weapon. Again, should her brother be ill or wounded, a woman would be exceedingly concerned and might go so far, as in one case recorded, of promising that if he should recover she would join the Women's Lodge—"which was considered a great thing to do for your brother." 593 728 721

Usually a man would have some voice in regard to his sister's marriage and, if he were the one who made the arrangements, he received the larger share of the bride-price. It was said, too, that a brother would be especially concerned regarding his younger sister's moral conduct and might take it upon himself to keep her in line. Although parents would feel the disgrace of an erring daughter, a brother was expected to react violently. If her husband failed to punish his wife for adultery, her brother could kill her. Some instances were given, too, in which the man took his own life indirectly, by riding into the midst of the enemy without taking any precautions, because he felt so keenly the dishonor his sister who was unfaithful had imposed on him. 593 [584] [684]

Maternal Uncle and Paternal Aunt

"Because a brother and a sister thought so much of each other, they were expected to be good to each other's children." If a woman had several brothers, it was the eldest who assumed the duties of the maternal uncle and his relationship with his nephews was a direct one. Should the eldest brother be unable to undertake the responsibility another brother or male cousin was expected to do so. 604

The maternal uncle was supposed to watch his sister's children closely even though her husband was on the scene. If he did not 604 861

603 versa. Grandparents, for instance, can tell folk-tales and stories, the subject-matter and details of which no parents would mention in the hearing of their children." A woman would think nothing of teasing her grandmother about men. The following is typical of the milder sort of joking which is customary, but which would be considered highly improper toward parents. "Coming Daylight's granddaughter came into her house to borrow a knife. The old woman told her: 'Don't lose that knife. I have had it for a long time and I love that knife.' Whereupon the granddaughter replied: 'Yes, you love that knife just like you love your sweethearts!' and the several women present had a good laugh over this joke." Again, Coming Daylight herself told of an old man who was grandfather to her maternal uncle and thus also her "grandfather." She said: "One day when I was still a young woman, this old man asked me why I didn't come to him to obtain medicine power from him. I replied: 'Oh, I wouldn't come to you [831] because I know that you are one of those medicine men who includes sexual intercourse as payment, and if I came to you, you would try to have me too!' Of course I could never have said that to anyone in my parents' generation."

Grandparents are said to have been indulgent toward their grandchildren. They might occasionally give advice, and indeed [868] it was expected that a grandmother would train her granddaughter not only in skills and techniques, but also prepare her for what to expect on the physical side of marriage, warn her not to arouse her husband's jealousy, etc. When in trouble, however, a grandchild could discuss any matter with his grandparents. They would give counsel, but never scold. A man would usually not count on material aid from his grandparents, but, on the other hand, he was not expected to contribute to their support to any greater degree [431] than he would to that of any old persons were they in need—namely, by giving an occasional present of food or clothing.

Siblings of the Same Sex

593 The relationship between brothers on the one hand and between sisters on the other was a more or less casual one. Family loyalty and ordinary generosity were expected, but formality was lacking. "A girl and her sisters could, of course, laugh and joke and tease

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

about sweethearts or any other topic they wish, always providing that there is no other person present whom they must 'respect,' just as they can laugh and joke with women who are not related to them at all." Women who are on good terms tease and joke with each other a good deal. Coming Daylight and Singer for instance made remarks relating to sex whenever opportunity afforded. As an example, when one of them was telling of her marital experiences she said: "I was willing enough to get married, but I didn't like that particular old man to whom they gave me. I wrapped myself up in a separate blanket and wouldn't let him get near me." Whereupon the other old woman remarked: "I wish I had been there, I would have held you down!"—and this was considered a great joke. Again, while talking about modesty, or rather the lack of it among Crow women, Singer said: "That was in the old days and Gros Ventre women were very careful. These Gros Ventre girls at the present time—I don't think they even wear breech-cloths!" And Coming Daylight retorted: "If you were young now, you wouldn't wear one either!" In this vein then the two old grandmothers teased the present author as their granddaughter, saying to her: "We thought you had a husband. Why didn't you bring him with you to see us? Is it because you are afraid that we would take him away from you?"

Brothers can discuss any matters they choose, love affairs included, but they usually do not josh and tease each other in public as do brothers-in-law, nor is the spirit of rivalry between them exhibited as it was with their enemy-friends.

Older brothers and sisters assumed a protective attitude toward younger siblings of like sex, and when in a position to do so would sometimes exhibit extreme generosity, although in this regard there was not the same sense of obligation which characterized the relationship with some other relatives. "It was considered unusual, for example, that Horse Capture, who had been urging his younger brother to be more sociable, gave away in his honor a horse and buggy on the occasion when the brother finally decided to join in the Grass Dance. But it was in line with the ordinary way of doing things that Horse Capture, who had been highly favored by his maternal uncle, privately gave to this young brother horses, as a start in life, when the maternal uncle failed to do

593 so." Brothers could borrow from each other without asking beforehand. Futhermore, an older man, who was married, might allow a younger unmarried brother to join the Crazy Lodge, lending his wife to stand in the place of a wife to him for ceremonial purposes.

Brothers- and Sisters-in-law

607 The greatest freedom was exhibited between a man and his brother's wife, on the one hand, and his wife's sister on the other.
522 Likewise a woman could say anything she chose to her husband's brother and to her sister's husband. Teasing and horseplay between brother-in-law and sister-in-law were not only permitted but expected. A favorite joke was for one to conceal in a strategic place within the lodge an "air cushion" consisting of a buffalo cow bladder, blown up and tied. When the other came in he was shown to the appointed place and his weight on the cushion caused a most embarrassing noise, much to the hilarity of all present. Taking it in apparent good nature, the victim would, however, bide his time to get even.

Another accepted type of trick was for one to make a laughing stock of the other by heavily blackening the eyebrows of the victim, while he or she was asleep. A rougher kind of play was also indulged in. Singer, for instance, said: "I was once thrown in the creek by my brother-in-law. It took me a long time to find opportunity for retaliation, because he was wary and stayed away from the creek when I was around. On one occasion though, when he started for his bath, I followed him, and, when he was on the brink of the creek, I sneaked up behind him and shoved him in yelling as I ran away: 'It took me a long time to get even with you!'" On another occasion she and her brother-in-law were partners in a game he made up. "The Gros Ventres had won in battle and this man said he was going to give a 'Victory Dance.' My sister and I joined the group, and, as we arrived, this brother-in-law of ours was singing all kinds of songs,—silly songs with the words all mixed up. Then he said: 'Each man take a partner. We are going to stand up all night. The first one who sits has to pay a fine!' So he chose me as his partner. Finally, after some time, he said: 'Wait a minute, I have to get a drink.'

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

If a mother could not feed her child well, they used to supplement the mother's milk by broth from meat. Occasionally some woman could be found who would help out.[7] Coming Daylight, for instance, used to allow a son of her mother's brother to nurse, as his own mother was very thin and her milk was insufficient. Another time she nursed the infant son of her cousin whose wife, after he had deserted her, brought their baby to her husband and refused to take it back. Again, Mae's mother nursed several children not her own. When she was an old woman she would complain because she was not invited by these persons. She would fuss along these lines: "They never even invited me once. If it hadn't been for me, they would have starved when they were infants." 853

Early Disciplines

The child was usually not weaned until it was two years old or more. Sometimes a child would be allowed to nurse until six or so, provided his mother did not become pregnant again. There was a boy who had started to school at six, and who would still run up to his mother to nurse when he had the opportunity. Many children would even run in from playing to get at the mother's breast. "It didn't seem to hurt them any!" 862

Definite effort was made to wean the child when the mother became pregnant. "If a woman didn't realize she was in this condition and allowed the child her breast, the child would have a bad stomach and diarrhea." One way of weaning the child was to put nicotine from a pipe on the nipples. The sight of this so frightened the child that he would not try to nurse. If it was dark and he didn't see it and happened to taste it, he would raise an awful cry, but he would be cured. Pepper was also used in the same way. They would give the child as a "pacifier" a piece of meat, pounded soft, sweetened and tied in a soft white rag. The child would suck on this until he fell asleep.

It was when the new baby was born that they would have the most trouble with the child who had just been weaned. Many children were jealous of a new arrival. Coming Daylight said that they had to watch carefully lest an attempt be made to harm the 593

[7] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, p. 181.

593 infant. Some siblings, for example, would try to plug the infant's mouth with a rag or some other object. An occasional child would be unusually jealous and resent all younger siblings. One of Coming Daylight's own boys was like that. He would try persistently to get ahead of his little brother. The mother would be lying down with the infant at her side, and this little boy would try to snuggle in between her and the infant. He stuck close to her and wanted to accompany her everywhere, even when she left the lodge at night to attend to her necessities,— and this was after he was old enough to know he should not follow her at such a time. One of Cora's children was like that at the time the information was being gathered, jealous of the other children in the family and following her everywhere.

853 One of the first solid foods a baby was fed was a ball of cooked rose-berries mixed with grease. This was put on the end of a stick in lollypop fashion. Marrow, guts and rose-berry soup were considered the best food for growing, healthy children.

854 A newborn infant is called a "sack-baby." The sack was made of fine buckskin, or of buffalo calfskin with the fur left on one side, and was laced up the front. It was made just the same way for a girl as for a boy. A piece of rawhide was put inside the sack to stiffen it, and some rags were placed between it and the child's body to stuff it up and prevent chafing. The board was rectangular, rounded at the top, and reached only to the baby's neck. They made a little round cap out of calfskin, with little fur earmuffs that tied under the chin. They used to decorate their baby sacks nicely and sewed little deerhoofs thereon,—"They liked to have something rattle on their clothing."

When placing the infant in the sack they were very careful that its feet and legs should be properly placed. Singer remarked that in the old days everybody's legs were nice and straight and that it is only these "diaper babies" around here now who are bow-legged.

854 Small children, including infants, were washed each morning, —in winter rubbed with snow,—and then powdered. As a powder, 278 buffalo chips were pounded on rawhide and then, "to sort of ster- 237 ilize," hot stones were placed thereon. When the powdered chips were warmed, but not too hot, the stones were removed and the

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

right off,—are about the first words a baby says. When a child is backward in learning to talk, the remedy is to feed him meadowlark eggs, hard-boiled. Cora says this treatment was very effective for one of her sons, and Coming Daylight fed them to one of her daughters. They all agreed, however, that the treatment may sometimes be too effective. If anyone is very talkative even today the favorite saying is: "His mother must have fed him meadowlark eggs." [198] 856

The care of her baby was the first duty of a mother. Of course, if she were a co-wife, the other wives might help her, and in any case the grandmother might take a hand. But Coming Daylight often had no one upon whom she could depend, so she had to be extremely careful. For example, when she was married to Little Man and had an infant in the toddling stage, she would drape a blanket loosely about her hips and while she sat and did beadwork, the infant could play safely at her left hip inside the blanket. The old-timers, moreover, never left a baby alone. When her first child was born Coming Daylight was told by her grandmother never to leave a baby alone; that if it were absolutely necessary she should leave him even for a minute, she should take a small stick, blacken the tip with nicotine, and leave it in the swing or alongside where the infant lay. This was done to keep the "spirits" away. Even Mary feels strongly about leaving a child alone. She tells her daughter about it, but the daughter is very modern. The result is that frequently Mary stays home from a dance rather than leave a grandchild by itself. 854 854 751

If the mother of a young infant was going on a trip, for instance, to pick berries, she invited the baby's *bitd"tao* 'shadow, spirit, soul' saying: "Come on with us or we might leave you. We are going now." If one failed to do this, it would be like leaving part of the baby behind and the baby would be cross all evening. [774]

Sometimes other children in the family would be called upon to look after the infant. They were apt to get tired quickly however and tell their mother: "Hurry up and take your baby or I will drop it." Girls were depended upon more than boys to look after younger siblings, and girls more or less were expected to do so "right from the beginning." The old women felt that formerly 854 857 593

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

them, he was afraid to go to his own home, so he ran to a neighbor's. Jim's father found him there half-crying. He took Dwarf by the wrist and said: 'Come my friend.' He led him to his home and Dwarf thought he was going to be killed. On the contrary, however, Jim's father led him into his lodge and said: 'My friend, I am glad you made my boy cry. I have never laid a hand on him nor did I ever make him cry, and I'm glad you have done this.' He then gave Dwarf a big pile of meat and told him to eat as much as he liked and to take the rest home. As Dwarf was leaving Jim's father took a valuable Hudson's Bay blanket and cut it in two and gave him half saying: 'Here is this, use it for your blanket.' Then he took another half-blanket and said: 'Have your mother make leggins for you. Friend, I am glad you made my boy cry. I thank you for it. Now you can go home.' It just so happened, fortunately for Dwarf, that Jim Shortman was a beloved-child."[8] 857 578

Occasionally girls, or sometimes boys and girls together, formed a group in the evening to sing in front of the lodge of a rich family who they knew had such a specially loved child. The group danced and sang and then the woman of the lodge would invite them in. She would feed them and say that she was doing so in the name of that beloved-child. 857 533 [593]

Coming Daylight described how she joined groups who were going around the camp circle singing in front of the lodges of those who had returned successfully from a war party. This was before she was married and so she had to get permission from her grandmother. Mounted on a horse with a girl friend her own age, whose brother was supposed to keep an eye on them, they rode with the others. Singer admitted she had not participated in such singing parties when she was a child because she never had a horse to ride upon.

Much of the leisure time of children was seemingly spent in play which reflected the daily routine of adult life as well as many aspects of the life cycle. A group went quite far outside the camp circle, for instance, to play they were "married folk." If little boys went along with the girls, some would be "husbands," some "sons" and "sons-in-law." The "women" would tell their 857 524

[8] For details on the concept of the beloved-child, see Flannery, 1941.

582 587 this meant that a young man's first wife was not necessarily "older" in years than he, but that she was "experienced" in marriage, having been either widowed or divorced, perhaps several times.

Only as an exception was a bachelor married to a child-bride. [593] One case of the kind which was recalled concerned a young man who was a "beloved-child" and consequently highly favored by his parents. He however refused to "settle down" when his parents suggested various marriage partners to him, and acceded to their request only when they obtained for him the hand of a young girl who had not previously been married.

582 595 587 Young men just starting their careers were urged to seek as wives among the "older" women, those who were known as "good workers" and who had acquired some property of their own. A wife of this kind could help him become established, and "if he amounted to anything" it would not be long before he could take a second wife, perhaps a younger sister of his first one. Then, as he became more prominent, he would acquire one or two additional wives.[2] To this type of man child-brides usually were given. It was said that an outstanding man had three or four wives at the same time, but conditions were such that he would have had a dozen different ones in the course of his career.

587 595 A man was considered fortunate if he obtained as wife the oldest of several sisters as the chances were great that these others might be offered to him. "If a man married the oldest girl in a family, and her folks liked him and saw that he was a good provider and that he was trying to live right, they would give him the two or three others as they came of age." Many instances were given wherein several sisters were married to the same man. On the other hand it was said that, if a man, who was already married to one or more sisters, asked for another, he might be refused and that "there was nothing he could do about it."

Since the levirate was permitted, it was possible that a man could claim the wife or wives of his deceased brother. This was seemingly carried out infrequently, however, since only two instances could be recalled.[3] Of these two, one involved Coming

[2] For a discussion of the economic basis of polygyny, see pp. 73–74.

[3] "The brother of a dead man sometimes married his widow, but this was not always the case." Kroeber, 1908, p. 180.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

together!' so I jumped up and ran as hard as I could. Finally after wandering around a long time, not caring whether I lived or died, a man on horseback caught up with me. Telling me how dangerous it was to be out alone on account of possible capture by the enemy, he persuaded me to go back. Nobody said anything to me directly, but one of my husband's relatives did take up for me by saying insultingly to my husband: 'You would have such a one for a boss wife. She is ugly, and has a shaggy head, and she doesn't even know how to do a woman's work properly—blood runs out of the meat she prepares!' The older wife left me alone after that incident." 595

Nevertheless Singer admitted that in spite of her unhappy life with co-wives in two or three of her marriages, when she was married to Iron Bucket, she and her "rival" cooperated very nicely and were never jealous of each other or quarrelsome. All the women too agreed that, while the husband did not approve of hair-pulling and "jaw-fights" among his wives, and could resort to stern measures to prevent it, there were many polygynous households where peace and harmony reigned.

Authority of the Husband

The husband was expected to assume complete responsibility for his wife and had the right to enforce obedience. It was perhaps inevitable that some men used their authority in an arbitrary manner. The following was one among many examples offered in proof of this point. "There was a man who was known to be very stingy. On one occasion his wife cooked more meat than he thought she should have prepared. He was very angry with her and, in order to punish her, he made a big pile of the meat and forced her to eat every scrap of it. It made her very sick and she had to vomit a couple of times before she could get it all down. But she preferred to be sick rather than to get a beating." 593 562

It was said that wife-beating was very common and that in many cases it was unjustified. Singer gave part of her own experience as a sample. "My husband wouldn't allow me to go anywhere away from the lodge except to do the necessary jobs of getting wood and water. The whole time I was married to him I attended only one celebration. That time he more or less had to let

593 me go because by mother's brother was in the Sacrifice Dance and
562 I was supposed to be there to give things away in his honor. He was mean about it, but I got to that one thing. Another time though, I was scraping hides and I heard it announced in the camp circle that a relative of mine had been killed at war. Of course I went right away to mourn for him. But when I got back, my husband was furious. He yelled at me: 'You ought to stay home and attend to your work!' and then gave me an awful beating."

It was usually of little avail for a woman to return home with grievances against her husband because it was assumed that a wife deserved the type of treatment she received. Generally her
593 family would send her back to her husband promptly and often
586 with a present for him to show their good will. Only under exceptional circumstances was the wife allowed to initiate separation from her husband. If he grossly neglected her and showed his indifference openly, she might be permitted to remain with her family. Should the husband not send for her, they were then free to arrange for her another marriage. Coming Daylight gave as an example her own experience, which was considered as somewhat unusual. "My uncle had arranged as our third marriage for my younger sister and me to go to a man who later turned out to be a poor provider. He seldom got buffalo meat, and he didn't water the horses, or do the other things he was supposed to. He was so busy chasing other women he didn't have time for anything else! One day, however, a friend of his came and told us that our husband was planning to publicly throw us away. His uncle came to see our husband that same day and tried to persuade him not to do it. Among other things he told him: 'You have such nice quiet industrious women. Just think of all the robes they have dressed for you!' But our husband just sat there with his head bowed and didn't say anything, and we knew then that he was going to do it. So I told my sister when he went out: 'We will get ready and throw him away before he has a chance.' I had a horse of my own, and we packed all our belongings as quickly as possible and went back to our uncle. When he found out what that man was going to do, of course he didn't make us go back. Our husband was in the wrong. He didn't

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

 593

have any reason to suspect us [of infidelity] so he shouldn't have been planning to get rid of us." 586

It was said that in case a husband abused his wife without reason his relatives remonstrated with him, reminding him, for instance, that if he acquired a reputation for ill-treating his wife he might have difficulty in obtaining additional wives of good reputation. Some claimed that his maternal uncle could go so far as to remove the wife from her husband's household "until he came to his senses." Such interference was however seemingly rare. A wife was seldom given the benefit of any doubt.

The husband had the right to punish, even with death, any departure from the standard of chastity set for women. [684]

Most of the harsh treatment accorded to wives was believed to have been the result of just suspicion of their infidelity, where sufficient evidence was lacking to prove it. Girls were warned before marriage to so conduct themselves as to avoid their husbands' jealousy at all costs. They were told, for instance, that when visiting other women it was well to be chaperoned since otherwise a jealous husband could magnify an innocent visit into an incipient affair with the woman's husband. While it was considered within the proprieties for women to go out and count coups on the enemy fallen near camp, "they didn't approve of women chasing off on horseback to 'hit the enemy' because their husbands were sure to suspect they were off to meet some man." A girl was instructed by her relatives to yield willingly to her husband when he claimed his marital rights lest he interpret her reluctance as preference for another. 593 [726]

On the other hand, when there was reasonable proof of the wife's infidelity, the husband was more or less forced by public opinion to take some action against her. He was, however, allowed considerable latitude in choosing among several equally honorable alternatives. 593 684

The extreme punishment was that of death, and apparently it was not uncommonly applied. Among the cases described was the following which concerned a contemporary of Singer and Coming Daylight. "On one occasion a man discovered that one of his wives was missing. As usual in such circumstances, he inquired whether any man in the camp was unaccounted for. He soon

593 learned that his wife had gone off with a certain one and set out in
684 pursuit. He was in a rage as he met the lovers, who had turned back toward the camp. The man fled, leaving the wife to face her husband's fury. He commanded her to dismount and then tore her robe from her. After cutting off her breasts and her arms, he abandoned the body and returned home."

According to our informants, however, not all cases were so clearly defined. Some women lost their lives merely because their husbands were suspicious. A man who acted without sufficient evidence ran some slight risk that his wife's family would avenge her death, but it was usually assumed that the wife must have been guilty. This was the situation in regard to a cousin of Singer's about whom she gave the following account. "This cousin of mine was a very beautiful woman. Her husband's lodge was close to that of Sits Like A Woman, one of the most famous chiefs the Gros Ventres ever had. This woman was fleshing a buffalo hide one day, and the chief saw her there outside her lodge. He said to Coming Daylight, then a very small girl, 'Run over to that woman who is tanning and see what she says to you.' So, childlike, she ran over there and told the woman: 'Sits Like A Woman told me to come over to the woman who is tanning and see what she tells me.' The woman said: 'Sh-h, you mustn't talk like that.' Being young and innocent Coming Daylight didn't realize the situation, and reported to the chief that she had been hushed up. The chief said: 'Well, who would be afraid of him [the husband]. What is she afraid of him for?' Now the husband was inside his lodge at the time, and overhearing this, he imagined his wife was running with this great chief. He bided his time and it so happened that the woman, who was a friend of the chief's wife, went one day to that lodge and asked her friend for something to eat. She was really hungry, and while she was sitting there eating, her husband came to the lodge. The chief said: 'Come in. I will give you a drink.' But the man did not accept the invitation, and merely said to his wife: 'You needn't come back!' This boded no good, so the frightened woman went to her mother's lodge. Her mother was very much upset, and was calling for protection for her daughter, when the husband came with his gun and shot his wife six times. No one retaliated."

793 co-keepers with her, but they or one of them would substitute for her in such minor duties as taking the Pipe out of the lodge in the morning and bringing it back in the evening when she was sick abed, or busy, or during her menses. During menses the [84] co-keeper was not allowed to handle the Pipe. After Crow Bull, 784] during his keepership, gave away his head wife and co-keeper, Digger, to Small White Cow in a drunken spree and Digger went away as wife to Small White Cow, Crow Bull's second oldest wife, Coming Day became co-keeper in Digger's place. If a man at the [784] time of becoming keeper had a young wife with an infant, she and the infant were sent away to another lodge as infant-crying was not allowed in the keeper's lodge where the Pipe was.

The Flat Pipe keeper, if he had two or more children, chose one and one only of his children, more commonly a boy, to be Pipe Child. It was a strict rule that he could keep only one of his children with him; all his other children had to live elsewhere than in their father's lodge, because, for one important reason, the Pipe was jealous. Some keepers were such rigorists in the matter that they practically forgot all their other children.

793 The children that were put out of their father's lodge naturally 784 found this hard and rebelled, but they were trained to take it as a matter of course. A special interest was taken by others in such 593 children as they were felt to be unfortunate in being deprived of the care and affection of their own parents. These children were permitted to visit their father and mother but they were under restrictions when they did so. Their grandmothers or foster parents would instruct them how to behave on such visits. They could not stay long, much less sleep there. They had to sit quiet in a special place in their parents' lodge and not roam around in it freely. They had to stay mostly near the door and not go near where the Pipe was. They were strictly forbidden to play in their father's lodge when visiting there. If their mother gave them something to eat they could eat it. They could sit on her lap. [781] But they could not talk loud or shout. When so visiting they were not at ease and felt sort of foreign and awestricken. The Boy 793 thought that these children may have been jealous of their sibling, 593 the Pipe Child, but in such case they would have had to keep

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

their feelings to themselves, for any show of such feelings would be contrary to the deep veneration due to the Pipe and its official personnel. They had to be resigned to have that particular sibling as the Pipe Child. When the keeper gave up his keepership, some of his children might go back to their father's lodge but not necessarily all of them. Some had gotten used to living elsewhere and just remained there.

The Boy's own experience may further illustrate the foregoing situation.

He was born while his father, Lame Bull, was keeper of the Flat Pipe, and consequently he was born not in his father's lodge but in that of one of his grandmothers. His mother went back to his father's lodge, but she used to come to his grandmother's lodge to nurse and look after him. In his earliest years he had four or five "grandmothers" or great-grandmothers [real and classificatory] living, one of them his mother's mother. He stayed most of the time with his maternal grandmother and with her mother. It was from these grandmothers that he got most of the affectionate attention he craved and most of his early training and instruction. Every night, too, one or other of the grandmothers would tell old-time stories and Ni:hahat tales. After a while he was permitted to go to his father's lodge but only for a little while at a time, but he was not allowed to live or sleep there. He never addressed his parents as "father" or "mother," but only by their given names, although there was no taboo in the matter, and his younger brother Andrew Lame Bull used the former manner of address. The Boy as a child did not feel much inclined to "play baby" and sit alongside his father and mother, as other Gros Ventre children did, to get special attention, but he did act so elsewhere, around his grandmothers and great-grandmothers. He did not go to live in his father's lodge until he was about nine (or eleven?) years old, after his father had ceased being Pipe keeper, and by this time he was able to take pretty good care of himself, to ride horseback, and so forth.

All of The Boy's eight brothers and sisters—he was the ninth—who survived infancy were reared outside their father's lodge, except the one who was Pipe child. After Lame Bull's keepership

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

793 ended, all of them just invaded their father's lodge. The Pipe
●593 child did not measure up to Lame Bull's expectations, so the latter's attention slowly centered on The Boy. Lame Bull, as an ex-keeper, still practiced some of the Pipe ceremonies, and The Boy came to act the part of "Pipe child" in these for his father.

Rite of Transfer

793 When the keeper of the Flat Pipe was about to transfer it to a successor he would invite to his lodge for a secret night meeting
*796 the surviving ex-keepers with their ex-co-keeper wives of both the Flat and the Feathered Pipes. The Feathered Pipe ex-keepers and ex-co-keepers were present purely as invited guests. They did not have any voice in decisions nor did they do any prompting. The first task of the assembled Flat Pipe group was to choose the new keeper, as previously described. The Flat Pipe ex-keepers and ex-co-keepers, further, remained with the transferring keeper and his co-keeper wife throughout the rite of transfer, to prompt and correct them in case they should forget, be in doubt about, or incorrectly perform some part of the rite. Two young men attendants, usually sons of keeper or ex-keepers, were present throughout the election transfer.

After the group had decided who should be next keeper, they quietly scattered and gathered together their relatives and reassembled outside the actual keeper's lodge. The whole party then proceeded quietly, at night before dawn when the camp was asleep, to the selectee's lodge, the keeper in the lead holding the bared Flat Pipe stem forward and slanting upward, with the bowl in his cupped left hand and the stem in his upturned right palm, at about breast height. One of the party, an ex-keeper or one of his sons or other kin, a physically powerful man, had been designated as the person to grab and hold the selectee in case he tried to run away.

The party usually succeeded in reaching the selectee's lodge without arousing anyone. On arrival thereat they all shouted noisily. This was the signal for the strong man to dash into the selectee's lodge and seize him. Any other member of the party could grab the selectee's wife who was to be co-keeper pipe

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 over and sat down with the principal vower and his grandfather and all six of them smoked the grandfather's filled pipe. When they had finished smoking, two young men selected for the purpose started to actually fell the tree. As soon as the tree began to totter, the four scouts shot at it and yelled, just as was done at the killing of an enemy in real warfare.

After the tree was "shot down," it was dragged in by the young men "soldiers," with much yelling and shooting, and was deposited at the spot where the Sacrifice Dance was to be held.

Then a recess was taken and those not obliged to fast ate. The [262] chief food eaten at the Sacrifice Dance was buffalo tongues and pemmican, both already prepared, which could be eaten in a hurry, for no one knew at what moment some order to be obeyed would be announced by the crier.

After the recess the "soldiers" went out to get the other poles and the brush needed for the dance lodge. Each "soldier" would [593] choose a woman, not his own wife, but "his sister-in-law, or any other woman of whom he was not bashful" to ride double with and accompany him. The women would dress up and stand outside their lodges waiting for the men to come along and put them on their horses. The woman sat on the saddle, the man riding behind her. Some women would run away so as to avoid going out with the men, "probably," Coming Daylight stated, "because these ones were afraid of their husbands." Coming Daylight herself had never so gone, but Singer had. "Some husbands," Singer commented, "were too jealous to allow their wives to go with other men to get branches for the Sacrifice Dance lodge."

*796 The poles and brush were brought in, and a number of hoisting 346 props were made. These props were made each of two tent poles; to one end of each pole a single short transverse connecting thong was fastened. The two divisions of "soldiers" the "talls" and the "shorts," each then split up into two subdivisions making four subdivisions in all. At the call of the crier, "Get ready," these four subdivisions began to march toward the hole, previously dug, for the center pole which lay alongside, all singing their parade song. On the way toward the spot, each of the four subdivisions had a number of the double-pole hoisting props, each prop being carried

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Between times, during the summer months, that is, when no sacred dance was in progress, the two soldier societies, the Stars and the Grass dancers (Wolves), would compete with each other in foot races or other sports or in gambling bouts.[16] The losers would have to "cook" or to do other things for the winners. The losers in formation, with one of them in front carrying the Crazy Dance badger pelt trimmed and fixed up and tied to one end of a stick, might go to where the winners were sitting in a sort of semi-circle. On arrival there, the man carrying the pelt would say: "We are also bringing the badger pelt. It, too, we lost in the bet,"—although actually the pelt itself had not been wagered. This was a dare or challenge to the winners to put up the Crazy Lodge, a challenge which they were "compelled" to accept. Some great man among the winners would then get up, take the badger pelt from the man who brought it, and make an exclamation meaning that he was glad and that he accepted the challenge. He and his fellow-winners of the same age-group would then at once send criers to announce their acceptance of the challenge and, to give notice that they would without fail carry through their acceptance, would get in formation and sing. When the Crazy Dance was so carried out it had the same prestige and it was performed with the same rites and observances, as when carried out to fulfill a vow.

796* [70] 517

Each of those men who joined the Crazy Dance joined with one of his wives or with a substitute for her. The chief although not the only role of these women was participation in the ritual grandfather sex-test to be described later. Some husbands were so jealous of their wives that they would do all possible to avoid joining the dance or having their wives join. This appears to have been the case with the husbands of Coming Daylight, who was a belle in her day. In other cases, as The Boy remarked, "the husband knew his wife's character and disposition, and if she were weak he did not put her to this test as he would be pretty sure that she would fail." Singer had never joined although some wanted her to do so at the time. "My husband," she said, "was advised not to let me do so because I was too young and I might make

796* 593

[16] Cf. Flannery, 1953, p. 42.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 a mistake [ritual?] and besides it was a hard thing to do. I was
● 593 too crazy yet, they said. At the time my husband's other wife was about to have a baby, and some wanted me to join so she would have a safe delivery, but the others did not let me do it." Then, too, if a wife were in her menses at the time of the dance, she to her embarrassment would have to say so and she would have to be substituted for. If a Crazy Dancer did not have a wife of his own he could borrow one, a sister-in-law or other woman with whom an avoidance or respect relationship did not obtain. Thus Little Man, Coming Daylight's husband, once gave permission to his unmarried younger brother, Spotted Bird, to join the Crazy Dance with her, but Spotted Bird declined on the ground of his being too young, although actually Spotted Bird took part in that Dance as an attendant, which made Little Man so angry that he would not give anything away during the Dance for Spotted Bird. "A man," said The Boy, "who loaned his wife to another man for the Crazy Dance had to be a strong man. And before he would lend any of his women he was pretty sure he was lending away the right one who had strong character because it was tough."

When a man made a vow or accepted a challenge to perform the Crazy Dance all and only the members of his own company such as Calves, Holding-on-to-dog's-tail, Having-breast-for-a-pillow, or other,—within the Stars or Wolves as the case might be, joined or were expected to join the dance with him. Actually, on at least some later Crazy Dance occasions, not all the members of the given age-group joined. When the crier announced the coming Dance, some of the men of the age-group involved might make remarks such as: "Well, these old men [the ritual grandfathers] are getting hungry for good times again! They want to play around! They are agitating for the Crazy Dance." And some might bypass that particular dance even though at the risk of being looked upon as jealous weaklings. "If," said The Boy "a man belonging to the age-group to which the vower of the Crazy Dance belonged failed to join the dance, without good excuse, he and
[626] his wife would catch it; this would be published, because he did not want to have his wife go through this [the ritual grandfather sex-test]."

323 were made. Several days later he reported that he had asked around about how pots were made, and some old-timers said that they braided sinew to the shape of pot they wished; heated white flint and pulverized it, and mixed with the blue clay from around the neighborhood of Hays. This mixture was about 6 per cent pulverized flint. The clay and pulverized rock were mixed in a mortar, pasted over the woven sinew, and baked. "It gets so hard you can't break it." Tom Bad Road, now (1948) about 70 years old told Mary Ereaux that once when he was a young boy he saw an old, old woman making a pot of "sand." The pot had dried hard, but some young fellows used it as a target for throwing stones and broke it to pieces.

554 The place of honor was at the back of the lodge, opposite the door. Here at night slept the "man of the house" and his senior 513 wife, if he were a polygynist, the other wives and children on either 595 side. Coming Daylight described the arrangement of her father's lodge as it was before she was sent to live with her grandmother. Her father and one wife slept at the rear, the bedding placed parallel to the door; she and her mother had their bedding to the left as one entered the lodge, and perpendicular in regard to the opening, sleeping with their heads to the rear and feet to the door; while her father's unmarried brothers were similarly placed as she and her mother, but on the opposite side of the lodge.

484 When on the move, the women were in charge of the children and impedimenta and usually traveled in a group considerably be- 492 hind the men. Horses or dogs were used to draw the travois, and sometimes younger children or the sick and disabled were carried thereon. Mae Main remarked that her memory of riding on a horse travois was not a very pleasant one as she was often annoyed by the horse's tail brushing over her. Horses had to be broken to the travois and a horse owned by a man would never be so used. The horse can draw a far heavier load than a dog, but seemingly the Gros Ventres at no time had so many horses that the dog could be dispensed with altogether and the dog travois survived until very recently. At such times that horses for one reason or another were scarce, the people would be forced to cache a great deal of their surplus and to cut their lodges in half so the load would not be too great for a dog to draw.

842 pressed this desire early in life and volunteered the following story
[787] of her experience.

"My first husband, Dressed in White, went out hunting and
[587] brought back a lot of buffalo meat. I had my robe spread out just inside the door and he threw all the meat on it. Being hungry, I sat down there and was just about to eat the raw liver when he said: 'Wait! Don't eat that.' When I asked why not, he countered with the query: 'Do you like children?' To which I replied: 'You know I love children. I go wherever there is a baby—I love to have them on my lap.' So he said: 'Well, it is your fault that this is going to happen.' He took the oval piece of meat from the upper front quarter and roasted it in the coals. He then threw it to me in a careless way, instead of passing it to me as usual, and said: 'Here, you can have that for your son. You eat this plain—don't eat any tallow with it.' although they usually ate tallow with such lean meat. I said in disgust: 'E:ka:kya! I have always liked children,' and flung the meat out of the door. He said: 'Now that you have done this, you are going to have children from now on.' So, as he predicted, not long after that I became pregnant with my firstborn who was a boy. Unfortunately this boy died and I often wondered if it happened because I threw the meat too violently on that occasion when my husband had offered me the opportunity to choose whether or not I wished to bear children." Incidentally she remarked many times that she is happy she chose as she did,—otherwise now she would be all alone and her children have been so good to her.

The telling of the above incident brought to Coming Daylight's mind another, which confirms her belief in the relation between
[595] "medicine" and conception. "Crow Bull, my mother's brother, had four wives. His first wife did not have any children. Then
[582] he married an Assiniboine woman and still later took a third wife. Neither of the latter had children either until one time Crow Bull got mad. His third wife wanted to leave him for another man, but her relatives sent her back to Crow Bull. He, however, slept across from her bed and did not have intercourse with her. Shortly after this the Assiniboine woman did something to dis-
[789] please him and so he made up his mind: 'These two wives of mine are going to have children and settle down!' He had an old-fash-

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

CHAPTER IX

MARRIAGE

Polygyny and the Child-bride

The institution of the child-bride, combined with polygyny, was 595
characteristic of Gros Ventre marriage up to about 1880. How 582
far back it was practiced is difficult to say. Our informants who themselves were married off as children of ten or eleven to their first husbands about the year 1865, took the custom for granted and so far as they knew "it had always been that way."[1]

All girls were given in marriage before puberty, and usually as wives to older men with independent households. Because of the disparity in age between husband and child-bride, many of these girls were widowed early and remarriage was quickly arranged for them, even if the widow were not claimed by her husband's brother. Moreover, divorce or separation initiated by the [586]
husband was relatively easy and frequent. Consequently the majority of Gros Ventre women knew at least three or four different [587]
husbands, and often in fairly rapid succession. Upon successive
remarriages the wife's age came to approximate more closely that 582
of her husband.

Young men were not eligible for marriage until about twenty. By that time a young man would have attained proficiency in hunting and have taken the first steps in ceremonial life, being a member of one or other of the two adult men's societies, either the Wolf-men or the Stars. In addition he should have war-deeds to his credit and some property of his own, especially horses stolen from the enemy, in order to qualify as husband. In view of the 582
fact, however, that very young girls were given more often to 587
older already-married men, most young men marrying for the first time had as wife "an older experienced woman." Actually

[1] It was believed that a girl could not menstruate until after she had [841]
experienced sexual intercourse. If, therefore, a girl had her first menses before she had been given in marriage, her family would be disgraced.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

this meant that a young man's first wife was not necessarily "older" in years than he, but that she was "experienced" in marriage, having been either widowed or divorced, perhaps several times.

Only as an exception was a bachelor married to a child-bride. One case of the kind which was recalled concerned a young man who was a "beloved-child" and consequently highly favored by his parents. He however refused to "settle down" when his parents suggested various marriage partners to him, and acceded to their request only when they obtained for him the hand of a young girl who had not previously been married.

Young men just starting their careers were urged to seek as wives among the "older" women, those who were known as "good workers" and who had acquired some property of their own. A wife of this kind could help him become established, and "if he amounted to anything" it would not be long before he could take a second wife, perhaps a younger sister of his first one. Then, as he became more prominent, he would acquire one or two additional wives.[2] To this type of man child-brides usually were given. It was said that an outstanding man had three or four wives at the same time, but conditions were such that he would have had a dozen different ones in the course of his career.

A man was considered fortunate if he obtained as wife the oldest of several sisters as the chances were great that these others might be offered to him. "If a man married the oldest girl in a family, and her folks liked him and saw that he was a good provider and that he was trying to live right, they would give him the two or three others as they came of age." Many instances were given wherein several sisters were married to the same man. On the other hand it was said that, if a man, who was already married to one or more sisters, asked for another, he might be refused and that "there was nothing he could do about it."

Since the levirate was permitted, it was possible that a man could claim the wife or wives of his deceased brother. This was seemingly carried out infrequently, however, since only two instances could be recalled.[3] Of these two, one involved Coming

[2] For a discussion of the economic basis of polygyny, see pp. 73–74.

[3] "The brother of a dead man sometimes married his widow, but this was not always the case." Kroeber, 1908, p. 180.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Daylight and her sister, who were married, for a short while after 587
their first husband died, to his classificatory brother. The other 595
concerned an outstanding woman, Woman Chief, who was said to have been so highly valued by her husband's people that "she was kept in his family by marrying her to three brothers [successively]."

Regulations

Marriage was prohibited for those related by blood, no matter 582
how remote the tie. If, however, a couple were in "good faith," so to speak, and it was discovered later on that they were distant kin, it was not considered necessary for them to separate on that account.[4] Affinal relatives were likewise barred as possible marriage partners, except those who were classified as in-laws of the same generation.[5] In other words, the levirate and sororate were [587]
permitted, so that any who addressed each other as brother-in-law and sister-in-law respectively were possible mates, but relatives-by-marriage in any other category were prohibited from contracting marriage. The far-reaching effects of this latter regulation can be seen from the following case. "Not so many years ago, a Gros Ventre woman was the subject of a great deal of gossip because she married late in life a man who, many years previously, had for a time been married to a widow of her maternal uncle. People didn't like it and thought she shouldn't have married that man, even though times had changed and the whites wouldn't count them as being related to each other at all."

Arrangements

As a rule, marriage arrangements were made between the hus- 584
band-to-be and one or other of the bride's male kinsmen,—father, 562
uncle or brother. Either side could take the initiative, but the bride herself was not consulted. Coming Daylight summed up the prevailing attitude in this way: "When I was young, a girl's life was not her own. When a girl was about seven she was sent away from her home to a grandmother or widowed aunt to be [868]
trained to do a woman's work.

[4] See also the discussion of band affiliation and exogamy, pp. 29–31.
[5] For kinship classification, see pp. 124–25.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

grandmother while her uncle's wives were making a lodge which they gave to her; then they went back and her new lodge was the sixth in a row, the five others being those of her husband's relatives who habitually camped together. When this husband died, she was claimed by a classificatory brother of her husband's and remained with the same people. This marriage did not last very long and, when her uncle arranged another marriage, again she lived near the man's relatives rather than her own. Since this too was of short duration, she remarried another time and lived in the same lodge as her husband's mother and unmarried brothers, until, at the time the Gros Ventre settled down (after 1883), her husband got a farm of his own and his mother went to live with one of her daughters. 591 [587]

Relations between Co-Wives

Subsidiary wives were known as "helpers" to the senior wife and co-wives addressed each other as "rival," unless they were related to each other and employed the ordinary form of address as "sister."[8] The senior wife distributed the household tasks and the "helpers" were allotted the heavier work, which usually included the procuring of fuel and water. Nevertheless all women were expected to be industrious and the senior wife as a rule enjoyed no more leisure or freedom than the others. In explaining the situation, Cora referred to her mother's experience. "My mother was always that kind of 'helper' but she didn't seem to mind it. After all, there were so many women who were 'helpers' and, as long as they got their work done, it didn't seem to matter who was 'boss' and who was 'helper.' They used to say in fact that some women preferred to be 'helpers' because while doing their jobs like going after water, they would have a chance to get away by themselves for a while—their husbands couldn't keep such close watch over them." 595

One of the advantages of living in a polygynous household was

[8] The Gros Ventre word for subsidiary wives, *atsd'anhiniya*, although at present sometimes translated as "slaves" as well as "helpers," is etymologically the same as the term applied to younger men who were appointed on ceremonial occasions to act as "waiters" for the principal performers. The term *inf'isag*, "rival," was used between co-wives who were not kin.

595 said to have been that the wife who was pregnant, whether senior or subsidiary, could be well cared for and was relieved of the heavier domestic tasks until a considerable time after the child was born. Furthermore, the children of all wives were considered [858] equal in status. "As long as a man claimed the children as his own, he treated them all the same way, whether they were the children of older or younger wives." That differential treatment was sometimes accorded children by their father can be seen from the following case, although it is doubtful whether the father distinguished between his daughters simply on account of the relative position of their mothers. Singer, however, implied that it was so in giving the account of her experience: "When I was married as a younger wife to a certain man, he certainly made a difference between my child and that of his older wife. Both of us had girls, but one time, for instance, when I was out getting wood, they threw my little girl right out of the lodge. A neighbor took her in and when I returned this neighbor said to me: 'I notice they don't seem to care much for this little girl.' So after that I would have to take her with me, carrying a heavy pack on my back and dragging my little one along by the arm. Although my husband never let me use a horse, he would put the child of his other wife on the saddle when he was riding, and often he would hold her in his arms when he was around the camp. One of the worst things I had to endure was that when my husband would return from trading at Fort Benton with goodies like candy and fruit, my little girl was never given any and had to stand by and watch the other child eating. Finally it got so bad that my father took his grandchild and raised her. But I must say that this husband of mine was a really mean man."

587 The general feeling prevailed that sisters got along together more peaceably as co-wives than did "rivals." In any case the 595 sororate was preferred and it was said that parents were better satisfied to send a child-bride into the household of her sister. This attitude was exemplified by Singer's father in the following account which she gave: "I had been given to my sister's husband when I was just a child. It wasn't a real marriage because I didn't stay long enough. I was sent home by him because he thought I would rather play than work, and my sister took up for

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

me and he didn't send for me to come back. Not long after that though, my sister died, and her husband's other two wives came after me. I was playing out on the ice when they came and told me they were going to take me back with them. Ignorant as I was, I said I would go, and that I would have to tell my father first. But my father said: 'No. You shouldn't go with them. Those two women are not related to you and they might be mean to you. If your sister were still living, I would see to it that you went back to that man.' So those women said nothing more and I never heard from them or their husband again." 587 595

It was also thought that if the older wife were the sister of a child-bride she might be more willing to "protect" her. The husband of so young a wife was supposed to "wait a while" before claiming the marital right, and some men actually did so. Dressed-in-White for instance deferred the consummation of his marriage for over two years after Coming Daylight had been given to him at about the age of ten. Other men were not so considerate, however, and if an older wife tried to delay the procedure it was interpreted as being done not out of jealousy but through fear of consequences to so young a child. The husband alone determined the use of the marital right and such interference as another wife could offer would be only indirect. This is shown in the following account which concerns a woman well-known to both Singer and Coming Daylight. "One night soon after her little sister had been sent to their husband, this woman overheard him say to the girl: 'Make your bed wider, I am going to sleep with you.' Her own bedding was on the opposite side of the fire from that of her sister and she decided to try to discourage her husband from this undertaking. As she had expected, the husband that night covered up the fire so the lodge would be dark. On the sly, however, she was able to poke the fire so it flared out brightly. He got up and dimmed it once more, but again she made it flare. This was repeated several times and once she heard him say angrily; 'Oh, this is such good wood, it burns too well—I wish I could kill it!" Finally to her dismay she heard him whisper to the girl: 'I will take you outside because I can't seem to make it dark in here. You must not scream or cry out though because 585 587 595

587 your sister is alseep.' She was unhappy that her efforts had failed, but of course she didn't dare do anything more."

In confirmation of the theory that sisters lived in harmony as co-wives, Coming Daylight said that she and her younger sister had gotten along well together, but the two had some difficulties with a "rival" in one of their marriages. She added that whether wives were kin or not was less important than "the kind of women they were who lived in the same lodge." Cora gave an interesting illustration of the personality factor involved. Her mother once was married to the same husband of both her older and younger sisters. The youngest of the trio knew that their father had rejected her when she was born. The order to abandon the infant had been carried out, and she was found and adopted by a friend of her father's who raised her as his own. Cora said: "My mother and her older sister got along just fine. But the younger one never hit it off with these other two. It seemed like she was always jealous of them and took every chance she could find to get them in bad with their husband. She was kind of 'tricky.' Although as usual they lived in the same lodge, with their husband, she had her meals separately from the other two, she fetched water only for her own use, and on nice days when they sat outside the lodge she put up her shelter apart from theirs. Things were so bad between her and the other two, even after this common marriage was finished and they had separate husbands, that I grew up without realizing that she was my mother's sister. So that is the reason I feel no responsibility for her now."

Sometimes a senior wife of bad disposition made it very hard for a very young "rival," especially if she were in her husband's favor and the subsidiary wife were not. Singer told of one of her experiences with such a "rival." "I was much younger than this woman and she treated me abominably and sometimes she even beat me. One time my father found me crying after this woman had hit me, and he told me: 'You are getting to be a big girl now. You ought not to let her treat you like that. You should fight for yourself.' So the next time this woman pulled my hair, I grabbed her just as though I had turned into a bear, and held her to the ground and almost killed her. Those outside the lodge heard the commotion and someone yelled: 'Tie them together! Tie them

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

together!' so I jumped up and ran as hard as I could. Finally after wandering around a long time, not caring whether I lived or died, a man on horseback caught up with me. Telling me how dangerous it was to be out alone on account of possible capture by the enemy, he persuaded me to go back. Nobody said anything to me directly, but one of my husband's relatives did take up for me by saying insultingly to my husband: 'You would have such a one for a boss wife. She is ugly, and has a shaggy head, and she doesn't even know how to do a woman's work properly—blood runs out of the meat she prepares!' The older wife left me alone after that incident." 595

Nevertheless Singer admitted that in spite of her unhappy life with co-wives in two or three of her marriages, when she was married to Iron Bucket, she and her "rival" cooperated very nicely and were never jealous of each other or quarrelsome. All the women too agreed that, while the husband did not approve of hair-pulling and "jaw-fights" among his wives, and could resort to stern measures to prevent it, there were many polygynous households where peace and harmony reigned.

Authority of the Husband

The husband was expected to assume complete responsibility for his wife and had the right to enforce obedience. It was perhaps inevitable that some men used their authority in an arbitrary manner. The following was one among many examples offered in proof of this point. "There was a man who was known to be very stingy. On one occasion his wife cooked more meat than he thought she should have prepared. He was very angry with her and, in order to punish her, he made a big pile of the meat and forced her to eat every scrap of it. It made her very sick and she had to vomit a couple of times before she could get it all down. But she preferred to be sick rather than to get a beating." 593 562

It was said that wife-beating was very common and that in many cases it was unjustified. Singer gave part of her own experience as a sample. "My husband wouldn't allow me to go anywhere away from the lodge except to do the necessary jobs of getting wood and water. The whole time I was married to him I attended only one celebration. That time he more or less had to let

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

'It is a good thing you cleaned my nose, because for that I am giving you that woman over there.'" 684 558

A husband who had harbored an unfaithful wife was likewise within his rights in "throwing her away." This was accomplished by his going to a public gathering and simply throwing down a stick to indicate that he was through with her. Whoever wished might pick up the stick and claim her as his wife without giving any compensation. 684 586

It was said, too, that if a man was "big enough" to allow his wife to go unpunished for adultery he usually would not refuse to eventually let her go to some lesser man who demeaned himself by asking for her. Thick related details of several transactions of this kind which occurred when he was a young boy. One of these was as follows:

"There was a man who had several wives, perhaps four. One day another man came to his lodge. He invited him in and said: 'This is the first time you ever came into my lodge, my friend. You must have a reason to come now, after all this time.' Then he said to his wife: 'Woman, get up and cook for my friend.' So the visitor spoke up: 'Well, my friend, the purpose of my coming here is to ask you for that Arapaho woman. I am not married now, I haven't a wife at present and I need a wife.' The host replied: 'All right, my friend, she is yours. After you eat, you could take her home.' When he had finished eating, the visitor said: 'Well, my friend, I have to go a little further. I want that boy of hers too.' The host answered: 'I hate to let my children go, but since he is so small you could take him, but don't ask for any of the others.' So the visitor, happy that he had gotten this woman without much talk and a boy as well, said: 'Well, my friend, since you are so good to me and give me your boy, I will give you a horse, my last horse.' It turned out that he was as good to this boy, whom he had attained in this way, as he would have been to his own son." It should be noted that the horse was given voluntarily and because of the child rather than in compensation for the wife.

It was the opinion of those women who had lived under this system, wherein the authority of the husband was so great, that all in all it worked well. They admitted that an occasional woman 595 562

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

595 562 suffered injustice, but they insisted that the disciplinary power of the husband "made good wives of many women." In spite of the fact that many cases were given in illustration of harsh treatment, not a few were mentioned in which husband and wife lived happily together in an atmosphere of mutual esteem and deep affection. Coming Daylight herself, for instance, experienced what could be considered an ideal marriage with her first husband, Dressed in White.

Extra-marital Affairs

837 Girls were instructed before marriage to expect and condone infidelity on the part of the husband. An ambivalent attitude prevailed in that a man's reputation was said to have suffered if he were known as one who was "always fooling around with other men's wives"; yet brave young men were expected to make as many conquests as possible.

There were few women who escaped their husband's suspicion at one time or another. The reasons why the suspicion was often justified were given by Singer to have been the following. "Too often young girls were given in marriage to old men for whom they did not care and to whom they never got attached; so when younger men more to their liking came along, lots of these girls gave in to them and took chances of getting caught by their husbands. But even if a woman liked her husband and he was real good to her, when she saw that he was running around with other women, she might be jealous and want to 'make her life bad' just to get even with him."

While a woman could not count on her mother, or aunt, or sister-in-law to help along her illicit love affair, in some cases a grandmother, or sister, or friend might assist her in making assignations with the lover and would do their best to shield her from her husband. It was said that others were sympathetic especially if the lover were known as a brave man. In fact there were two sets of circumstances in which public opinion was lenient almost to the point of approval, although great discretion was necessary to avoid the husband's suspicion, since he still had the right of punishing his wife if he found her out. One kind of situation concerned the woman who sent a man out to accomplish some specific

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

793
174

and as long as you live see that they do not sell it or part with it."

So at Curly Head's death the Pipe fell to Iron Man II (Tall Jack), a relative of Curly Head, who since 1937 (1938) has looked after it. In 1948 it was still being kept in Curly Head's house.[8]

793

The normal term of keepership of the Feathered Pipe was four years. The very first keeper held the office 80 years, according to the origin story given by Garter Snake, and some later ones, according to tradition, up to 20 years, but the usual limit was supposed to be at most two or three terms, that is eight or twelve years.

There was always a Pipe woman or co-keeper, wife of the keeper. She handled the Pipe bundle and in general had about the same ritual and other duties toward it as had the co-keeper of the Flat Pipe toward the Flat Pipe bundle. The Feathered Pipe keeper had to have at least two wives, for during her menses the co-keeper could not handle the bundle and had to sleep and live outside the keeper's lodge and another wife of the keeper had to substitute for her in the handling and care of the bundle.

[841
595]

There was always, too, a Pipe child,—a girl, unless the keeper had no daughters, in which case a son could be selected by him as Pipe child. Thus the oldest son of Sitting High, who had no daughters, became Pipe child. The Pipe child was not necessarily appointed at once by the keeper on assuming the keepership. Garter Snake was not made Pipe child until she was about six years old. Iron Necklace who had been Feathered Pipe keeper some

---

[8] In the summer of 1951, Iron Man, assisted by The Boy, had a ceremonial opening of the Feathered Pipe bundle. Dr. Louis B. Hagener, Professor of Biology of Northern Montana College, accompanied by his wife, and Dr. Otto Nitz, Professor of Chemistry, now at Stout Institute of Technology, Menominie, Wisconsin, were among the spectators. The pictures in Plates 2 B-C, 3 A-D, were taken by Dr. Nitz at that time. Dr. Hagener has kindly supplied information regarding the 1951 ceremonial. He writes under date of Aug. 8, 1954, as to final disposal of the Feathered Pipe bundle: "Since the young people were so apathetic over the bundle, its significance, and the ceremony, Iron Man and his wife had resolved not to open it again. They were debating as to whether it should be given to a museum or whether the tribe would outfit Iron Man and his wife for a journey and permit them to dispose of it somewhere in the mountains." [R.F.]

[114
796
186]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

powerful men to die. That particular man Drops In The Fire, however, always claimed to be bullet proof." 755

When, on one occasion, one of Coming Daylight's daughters was very ill, the wife of Buffalo Run finally cured the girl. "I called in Stiffarm," Coming Daylight said, "who demanded a large amount of things for payment, because he said the girl had this stomach diseasse [cancer?]. He wanted my husband, Little Man, to make him a lodge and he would doctor the girl. But I said: 'No. My daughter hasn't got that disease. I don't want you to make that lodge.' Then we got another medicine man, whose daughter had died at the Mission. Finally I said: 'I am going to take my daughter to someone who can cure her.'

"So I told my husband to load food and wood. I took my daughter down below Stiffarm's place, to where Buffalo Run (or Chase) used to live with his wife. There was the woman who was the medicine woman. When I got there, she said to me, just teasing: 'Where is this mean woman going?' I handed her the pipe and told her to smoke it, and she took it, which meant she would do what I was asking her to do. I said to her: 'I want you to get my daughter well.' And I gave her the grub to eat and some wood. She said to me, just teasing like: 'So you had to come to me, this mean woman!' Then she said: 'If you do what I tell you to do, I will get your daughter well. You are to leave her here with me and I will give her medicine every day and tend to her (that is, put medicine all over her, make her drink it, and draw the thing out).' So I and my husband left my daughter there and we went home alone. Every now and then I took grub and wood to the medicine woman. Sure enough, not long after that my daughter got well. Soon after that she married, and she is alive and well today." 757 755

Good Singer, Coming Daylight's mother's sister, had an ancestral helper[14] and was also a practicing doctor. We recorded her doctoring song, as sung by The Boy, song number 28, and by Coming Daylight, song number 122.

A cure by Good Singer was described by Singer. "Once the man I was living with was very ill, almost dead. One of his wives—he had several besides myself,—called in this medicine woman, Good Singer. 755 [595]

[14] Cf. Flannery, 1944, pp. 55-56.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

added prestige. Those mentioned as leading bands above were seemingly the most numerous and most prominent in the recent past, and their representatives are more numerous at the present time. While the Frozens, Upper Quarters and Bad Plenty have the most living descendants, apparently there are no Poor Greys or Coffees today, only one Night Hawk, and a few each of the others. 621 554

Although Coming Daylight and Singer claimed membership in the Frozen band, they had no false modesty in proclaiming: "The Frozens were the best workers, had the biggest lodges, the prettiest women and the best-looking men. In fact they were the 'aristocratic' families, being the best-dressed and having the most horses." This was confirmed voluntarily by Cora who stated that she belonged to the Same As Assiniboines, but had heard all her life that the Frozens were the most distinguished band along the lines the old women mentioned. The men informants admitted that some bands were considered better in some respects than others, but failed to be more specific, and added that regardless of the reputation of the whole band, an individual man had to make his own way. [565]

It is somewhat difficult to arrive at the exact situation as to band affiliation and exogamy inasmuch as the band ceased to function not long after our oldest male informants were born. Our oldest female informants, whose memory includes the 1860's, stated in regard to this individual or that, whom they mentioned, that they could not remember to which band he had belonged. In fact the old women became quite impatient when questioned on this subject since from their point of view it was not important. To them the question of marriage regulations was a practical one of avoiding as mate any person to whom blood relationship could be traced, no matter how remotely, and any affinal relative not of the same generation. 621 [582]

There was general agreement among all informants, however, that under normal circumstances children were of the same band as their father.[2] Nevertheless, residence was an important factor, and not a few persons claimed affiliation with bands other than those into which they had been born. Coming Daylight, for instance, said she was a Frozen, the band to which her mother had [591] 621 597

[2] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, p. 147.

621 belonged. She was orphaned at an early age and was raised by
597 her maternal grandmother under the protection of her mother's brother, Crow Bull, a prominent member of the Frozen band. Garter Snake claimed to be a Tendon, likewise the band into which her mother had been born, although her father, Bull Lodge, a so-called "Hudson Bay Company breed," was classed as a Frozen. If a child were adopted by, and remained during his childhood days with, a family of another band than that into which his real father had been born, he became a member of the adopting band. For instance, Lame Bull adopted a boy whose father belonged to a different band, but the boy was always known as a member of Lame Bull's band, the Upper Quarters.

[591] One informant stated that when a woman married she became a
621 member of her husband's band, but this statement refers in all probability merely to the fact that patrilocal residence was often practiced. Each of our older women informants stated as her band the one in which she grew up. When speaking of their husbands, these women, each of whom had survived several mates, seldom mentioned their band affiliations, unless asked specifically, nor did they mention to which of the soldier societies their several husbands had belonged. One gathers the very distinct impression
[602] that the kinship bonds were the all-important social relationships so far as Gros Ventres women were concerned, and that the wider political and social groupings did not impinge very directly on their lives.

621 All informants stated that one should not marry into the band in which he claimed membership and in which he was brought up.
582 There was a difference of opinion among them, however, as to whether one might marry into his mother's band providing he had not been raised therein and no blood relationship could be traced.[8] The Boy stated positively that a man who would so much as flirt with a young woman of his mother's band would be disliked. Charles Buckman differed, holding that any marriage would be proper, providing the far-reaching incest taboos based on blood and affinal relationship be observed. The Boy admitted that, because of changes which occurred in band affiliation, occasionally a person would take a wife from some other band than that of either

[8] Kroeber, 1908, p. 147, prohibition of marriage extended to mother's clan.

593 alluded to or occur in the presence of either his father or mother. To appear unclothed in each other's presence would be embarass-
[291] ing to father and son alike. A woman refrained from any conversation or action that would call the attention of her father to the fact that she was menstruating or pregnant. An example of the
[845] attitude in this regard came to attention recently. "A woman, who was walking along the road near her house one evening, suffered a miscarriage. Instead of being taken to her own house nearby she insisted on being taken to a neighbor's, her reason being that her father and a few of his friends had been at her home when she had left and she would be 'ashamed' to appear in front of him in her condition."

It would seem that in some ways mothers had closer ties with their daughters and fathers with their sons. If, for example, parents disagreed about something their children did, each took up for the child of like sex. A man said to his wife: "You leave the boy alone, he's *my* boy," and a woman would say the same regarding the daughter. Or had a child done something to disgrace the parents, the wife was likely to upbraid her husband, if a boy were the culprit, by telling him: "Your son did so-and-so!" Should
[597] the daughter have been at fault, her father would speak in similar vein to his wife. In cases of adoption, too, a woman claimed a girl and a man, a boy.

On the other hand, in circumstances where parents could publicly show pride in their children, it happened that a woman gave presents away in honor of her [illegible] and a man in honor of his daughter. It was customary, too, that if a young man had done something especially noteworthy at war, anyone could approach his mother and ask for whatever was wanted, and she would give it. Middle-aged women, whose sons were in World War II, joked with each other along these lines when news of their sons came from the front. Unfortunately, however, adverse economic circumstances precluded the full carrying out of the custom.

604 Attitudes of respect and reserve between parents and children
601 are extended to include all of parents' siblings and their spouses, special emphasis being put on father's sister and mother's brother. Kinship terms reflect this situation. The term "father" includes father's brother, male cousin, mother's sister's husband; "mo-

845 helped.' But we Gros Ventres think so much of anything like that and if one of our own is deformed we almost want to die over it."[8]

847 Instances were known in which a normal infant, abandoned by its parents, was picked up and raised by someone else. Cora, for 597 instance, had been told that when the third successive daughter was born to her maternal grandparents, the father was angry because he had badly wanted a son. He ordered that the infant be abandoned to die. She was saved, however, when the father's "inseparable-friend" found and adopted her. Again, Charles Buckman had heard that his great-grandfather one morning very early was attracted by the sound of an infant crying in the bush. He found the newborn baby and took it to his lodge, telling his wife to find a woman to nurse it. He raised this infant as his daughter.

847 The case of infanticide that stands out most clearly in the minds of Singer and Coming Daylight is that of twins born to the latter's 845 sister. Coming Daylight was present at the birth and saw that her sister felt terrible about having borne twins. "My sister said: 'I won't nurse them anyway, so just take them away.' So they were both taken off in the bush; the boy was already dead and the girl froze to death. My sister was a terribly proud woman and was afraid people would think she was over-sexed. Besides she hadn't wanted any more children, since her two other sons were fairly well grown, and she maintained that a woman couldn't keep as neat with infants about. I had been waiting for my sister's husband to speak up, but he didn't say a word. I, however, told my sister: 'It is a bad thing to get rid of those babies, something will happen as a consequence.' As I had predicted, the next baby my sister had took her life. When trying to persuade her not to do away with the infants, I had used as one argument that white people have twins more often than Indians, but she persisted in maintaining that it was a disgrace." Mary remarked while Coming Daylight was telling this story of her sister: "My mother used to think it was so funny that white people are proud of twins!"

845 The attitude towards twins seems to have changed, as younger informants did not indicate that twins were considered a disgrace. For instance both The Boy and Thick insisted that twins were, on

[8] Cf. Denig, p. 403.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

SOCIAL CUSTOMS.

000 The Gros Ventre system of terms of relationship has been given in a
605 former publication.[1]

601 Cousins, so far as the relationship was known, were called brothers and sisters, and they called each other's children son or daughter if the cousin
[582] was of the same sex as the speaker, or nephew or niece if the cousin was of the opposite sex. Any known relationship was a bar to marriage. The
[587] brother of a dead man sometimes married his widow, but this was not always the case.

583 Large amounts of property, especially horses, were given away for wives for the honor of the act, but there was no rule or definite custom covering the quantity of property so given. The horses might be given not only to the father, but to the brothers, uncles, and other relatives of the girl. Sometimes, without having received any gifts and apparently without any previous understanding, a man would give his daughter to a young man, who thereupon would give him horses, or distribute them among his wife's other relatives. Old men practised this custom in order to obtain the aid and services of a young man in caring for their horses and in other ways, and no doubt
585 sometimes also to insure a more certain food-supply. A young man on
431 marrying received a tent with all the proper furniture, usually from his prospective parents-in-law, but sometimes from his own parents, if they were the wealthier.

606 Although a young married man often lived with his father-in-law, the well-known taboo custom between mother-in-law and son-in-law — which
[591] forbade their speaking, looking at each other, or being in the same tent — existed among the Gros Ventre. There was, however, no father-in-law taboo. The mother-in-law taboo extended to the son-in-law's brother.

584 If a woman did not wish a man for her lover, she might send him to do a
721 certain act of bravery. If he returned successfully from war, having accomplished the deed, he was then accepted. This custom is said to have led to the death of many young men.

428 At a person's death his property was inherited generally by his relatives. His father and mother, brothers, sisters, and children would receive part. His father and mother received the most. A man often disposed of his property before his death. If he died suddenly, as on being killed in war, his parents divided his property. It was not customary for a man on going to war to divide his property among his relatives in the contingency of his
[764] death. Property particularly valued by the dead person was buried with him.

---

[1] Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part I, pp. 9, 150.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

CHAPTER VI

KINSHIP BEHAVIOR

Much of the more formalized behavior expected between particular categories of relatives among the Gros Ventres has survived the many changes in their economic, political, and religious structure. It is one of the few aspects of their older culture which can be observed as functioning at least partially. Although the economic side of the obligations has had to be reduced markedly under modern conditions, the attitudes accompanying avoidance and joking are still deeply ingrained in those of middle age and in older persons. 602 [178]

All in all, the type of behavior which indicated respect was extended to include by far the greatest number of relationships,—freedom being allowed only between those individuals considered to be related as grandparents and grandchildren, as siblings of the same sex, and as in-laws of opposite sex but of the same generation.

Parents

The parent-child relationship was characterized by a kind of reserve that tabooed any light talk, especially joking about sex or marriage. If the subject were approached in a serious way, however, it could be discussed between parent and child of like sex. A woman could, for instance, go to her divorced or widowed mother and tell her: "So-and-so wants you, will you not go and live with that man?" But she would not think of acting as intermediary in such a proposal to her father. 593

Throughout life children were supposed to address and to refer to their parents only by relationship terms,[1] never by personal name. Further, a son would be shamed by any incident even remotely connected with sex, in which he was involved, should it be [601 55]

[1] The kinship terminology given by our informants agrees in detail with that in Kroeber, 1902, p. 9.

593 alluded to or occur in the presence of either his father or mother. To appear unclothed in each other's presence would be embarass-
[291] ing to father and son alike. A woman refrained from any conversation or action that would call the attention of her father to the fact that she was menstruating or pregnant. An example of the
[845] attitude in this regard came to attention recently. "A woman, who was walking along the road near her house one evening, suffered a miscarriage. Instead of being taken to her own house nearby she insisted on being taken to a neighbor's, her reason being that her father and a few of his friends had been at her home when she had left and she would be 'ashamed' to appear in front of him in her condition."

It would seem that in some ways mothers had closer ties with their daughters and fathers with their sons. If, for example, parents disagreed about something their children did, each took up for the child of like sex. A man said to his wife: "You leave the boy alone, he's *my* boy," and a woman would say the same regarding the daughter. Or had a child done something to disgrace the parents, the wife was likely to upbraid her husband, if a boy were the culprit, by telling him: "Your son did so-and-so!" Should
[597] the daughter have been at fault, her father would speak in similar vein to his wife. In cases of adoption, too, a woman claimed a girl and a man, a boy.

On the other hand, in circumstances where parents could publicly show pride in their children, it often happened that a woman gave presents away in honor of her son and a man in honor of his daughter. It was customary, too, that if a young man had done something especially noteworthy at war, anyone could approach his mother and ask for whatever was wanted, and she would give it. Middle-aged women, whose sons were in World War II, joked with each other along these lines when news of their sons came from the front. Unfortunately, however, adverse economic circumstances precluded the full carrying out of the custom.

604 Attitudes of respect and reserve between parents and children
601 are extended to include all of parents' siblings and their spouses, special emphasis being put on father's sister and mother's brother. Kinship terms reflect this situation. The term "father" includes father's brother, male cousin, mother's sister's husband; "mo-

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

ther" includes mother's sister, female cousin, father's brother's wife. This was neatly illustrated in an instance given by Mary Ereaux. "My mother's cousin's husband came to my house a few weeks ago and wanted to ask me something about arrangements for the pop concession at the Fair. It was a matter of serious business and he and I stood, each looking in a different direction, talking only about the matter in hand. After he had left, my son-in-law, who is not an Indian, and who does not understand the Gros Ventre language, said: 'Mother, you looked as though you were mad at that man.' So I told him: 'In the Indian way, that man would be the same as my father, because his wife would be in the same relation to me as my mother, so we never talk unless necessary and never look at each other while talking.'" 604 601 [582]

The term "aunt" is reserved for father's sister and female cousins, and "uncle" for mother's brother and male cousins. Here, too, heightened reserve characterized the cross-sex relationship. "A man would not address his 'aunt' directly unless by chance she would be the only one there and he needed information. He would under no circumstances linger to make conversation with her. The same for a woman and her 'uncle.'"

Parents-in-law

The respect between members of the opposite sex who are of contiguous generations was most apparent in the avoidance between mother-in-law and son-in-law. This required that the two neither look at nor speak to each other at any time. It was stated that some men disregarded these rules after the death of the wife, "but most used to keep them all the time." There was one case mentioned in which the son-in-law of a very old woman told his wife: "Your mother is getting very old now. We won't see each other much longer anyway. It would be all right for your mother to come in to our lodge." Both Coming Daylight and Singer insisted nevertheless that, should such a proposal be made, the son-in-law would be the one to make the initiative, never the mother-in-law. 606

The avoidance between father-in-law and daughter-in-law was almost as strictly observed, in that a woman could not look directly at her father-in-law when she spoke to him, and she did not

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

in-law to do anything of the kind for her mother-in-law. So I gave that daughter-in-law two horses." 606

Although economic obligations were not incumbent, the relationship terms were used, and avoidances practiced, between parents-in-law and the brothers and sisters of the man and wife respectively. It was explained: "The brothers of a man respected his mother-in-law because in the old days it could happen that if a man died his brother might take the wife. And the same with a woman, because they had the custom of giving all the girls in a family to the same man if they liked him." [587]

Siblings of Opposite Sex

Among members of the same generation, the most marked respect was exhibited between siblings of opposite sex, and was extended to include all cousins. There was no relationship term for "cousin," all using sibling terms of address and without distinguishing between parallel- and cross-cousins. 593 605 [601]

Since a girl was removed from her own family at an early age and was brought up in a different household, actual face-to-face contact between brothers and sisters was slight. Nevertheless, their attitudes toward each other had important consequences with many ramifications. As interpreted by the Gros Ventres, the basic relationship between siblings of opposite sex gave clues to understanding expected behavior in several other categories of kinship, —in the avunculate and amitate, as well as in the relations between in-laws of the same sex and generation.

If it could possibly be avoided, brother and sister did not speak to nor look directly at each other. They communicated through a third person. Gros Ventres, who are today in middle age, explained how embarrassed they were as children when the authorities did not understand "the proper way of doing things." For instance, the good sisters and priests in charge of St Paul's, which at that time was a boarding-school, insisted as a privilege for the boys that they visit their sisters on Sunday afternoons in the girls' part of the school! How deeply this feeling of respect penetrates was brought home to the present author by the following incident. "One day she was with Mary and Coming Daylight, while waiting for Charles Buckman, who was to drive her to another part of the

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

604 that the wife of a maternal uncle may likewise claim his nephew as "son-in-law."[8]

Brothers-in-law and Sisters-in-law

607 The mutual regard between brother and sister is said to have been reflected not only through the carrying out of the obligations of the avunculate and amitate in the spirit of "showing how much brothers and sisters thought of each other." It could also be seen in the type of behavior expected between brothers-in-law on the one hand, and sisters-in-law on the other. Brothers-in-law were generous to each other and could joke lightly with each other, but nothing even remotely connected with sex could be so much as mentioned in each other's presence. A man was circumspect in regard to his sister's husband out of respect for his sister, and to his wife's brother because the latter, out of respect for his own sister, had similar obligations toward him. Sisters-in-law behaved toward each other in like fashion. These attitudes were extended to include wife's brother's wife as "sister," rather than "sister-in-law," and husband's sister's husband as "brother."

[522] [831]

Unmarried brothers of a man and wife likewise regarded themselves as brothers-in-law. A case which well illustrates the attitudes between them is the following as told by The Boy. "My older brother was married to Thick's older sister and we two young unmarried brothers-in-law experienced a most embarrassing situation. One of us was visiting a woman at night and the other came to the same woman, not realizing in the dark that his brother-in-law was already there. We recognized each other's voices, however, and the one who arrived last beat a hasty retreat. The matter has never, even to this day, been discussed nor so much as indirectly alluded to between us, and the embarrassment over this event led us to avoid each other for a considerable time thereafter. Eventually our relationship was deepened inasmuch as Thick married my sister. Even though my sister should die, Thick and I would continue to be brothers-in-law on the same plane."

[835]

---

[8] Kroeber, 1902, p. 10, calls attention to the identity of terms for "niece" and "daughter-in-law." Apparently a woman used the term "son-in-law" for her niece's husband or for her husband's nephew only if presents were given.

[601]

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

621 belonged. She was orphaned at an early age and was raised by
597 her maternal grandmother under the protection of her mother's brother, Crow Bull, a prominent member of the Frozen band. Garter Snake claimed to be a Tendon, likewise the band into which her mother had been born, although her father, Bull Lodge, a so-called "Hudson Bay Company breed," was classed as a Frozen. If a child were adopted by, and remained during his childhood days with, a family of another band than that into which his real father had been born, he became a member of the adopting band. For instance, Lame Bull adopted a boy whose father belonged to a different band, but the boy was always known as a member of Lame Bull's band, the Upper Quarters.

[591] One informant stated that when a woman married she became a
621 member of her husband's band, but this statement refers in all probability merely to the fact that patrilocal residence was often practiced. Each of our older women informants stated as her band the one in which she grew up. When speaking of their husbands, these women, each of whom had survived several mates, seldom mentioned their band affiliations, unless asked specifically, nor did they mention to which of the soldier societies their several husbands had belonged. One gathers the very distinct impression
[602] that the kinship bonds were the all-important social relationships so far as Gros Ventres women were concerned, and that the wider political and social groupings did not impinge very directly on their lives.

621 All informants stated that one should not marry into the band in which he claimed membership and in which he was brought up.
582 There was a difference of opinion among them, however, as to whether one might marry into his mother's band providing he had not been raised therein and no blood relationship could be traced.[8] The Boy stated positively that a man who would so much as flirt with a young woman of his mother's band would be disliked. Charles Buckman differed, holding that any marriage would be proper, providing the far-reaching incest taboos based on blood and affinal relationship be observed. The Boy admitted that, because of changes which occurred in band affiliation, occasionally a person would take a wife from some other band than that of either

[8] Kroeber, 1908, p. 147, prohibition of marriage extended to mother's clan.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

to himself: 'He gave to me, so I'll give to him.' But no one was in duty bound to give the equivalent in return." 574 431

Within the network of kinship obligations, exchange was more often indirect than reciprocal. A man could expect help from his father and from his mother's brother without being under obligation to return goods in like amount—he was supposed to repay them by conducting himself in such a way that they could be proud of him. This meant that the man in his turn would be especially generous toward his sister and her children, that he would adequately fulfill his duties toward his wife's people and provide goods in sufficient amount that his wife could fulfill her own obligations especially those toward her own brother's wife and children. 602 431

When others saw fit to honor an individual, say for bravery in warfare, that person was supposed to give away goods in large amounts to show that he appreciated the honor; and his relatives would join with him in giving, thereby increasing his, as well as their own, prestige. Likewise in paying for services, such as those of a medicine man, relatives would "chip in" to the best of their ability, the one assuming the largest part of the burden receiving the greatest boost in public esteem. A person who impoverished himself by giving generously at such times would be sure that, with his reputation thus established, he would soon be the recipient of gifts dispensed by others in like liberality. Meantime, however, he could not afford to sit back awaiting the presents from others. He would soon lose his coveted reputation and be referred to as lazy, an epithet strong enough to bring tears to the eyes of a man who entertained any ambitions whatsoever. 554 431 [602] [461]

If a person were in need, it was possible for him to request what was necessary, preferably from some relative who was well-to-do, and usually his request would be met. But a continual borrower lost status and a limit was thus put upon indiscriminate "begging." One woman stated: "If your sister asked you for something you would not refuse her, but it was to your brother's wife you would give things voluntarily. A woman had great pride in keeping her brother's wife well-dressed, and if you had an extra supply of dried berries she is the one you would think of first." 426 558 [607]

Thus we have the basis for the generalizations the Gros Ventres 431

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

lodge cover, the hostess provided food and there was no other direct remuneration. If one sought knowledge as to how to use an ordinary medicinal root, something was given in exchange, but in a relatively small amount. On the other hand in compensation for the services of a medicine man, not only was food prepared, but in addition a much greater amount of property was given to the doctor, who in turn would see that those who had accompanied him to help in singing at the cure, would receive some goods as well. The amount offered to the doctor by the one paying for the services was governed by the reputation of the medicine man as well as by the individual's regard for his own reputation for generosity. People would say: "Look how much so-and-so thinks of his relative who was sick—he gave so much to the one who cured him." If the patient were very ill a whole family might really impoverish itself in paying doctors, were it necessary to call in one specialist after another, as sometimes happened. 183 431 476 [956]

Although apparently there was a tendency to call on relatives to perform services—such as naming a child, telling a war story at the erection of a new lodge, and so on—remuneration was forthcoming, although perhaps on not so large a scale as if a non-relative were called on to perform the same offices. [602]

In addition to exchange of goods effected through generous hospitality and the prestige-requirements of ostentatious liberality, including payment for services, the distribution of goods within the tribe was aided by gambling. Wagers were matched by two competing individuals and bet on an all-or-nothing basis. Considerable amounts of property changed hands at a single match.[19] [525]

[19] For a discussion of gambling among the Gros Ventres, see Flannery and Cooper, 1946.

555 342 532 The more war-deeds a man performed, the more frequently was he the center of attention. Gradually he began to rise above others and finally he achieved recognition as an outstanding warrior. Only when a man reached this enviable height was he justified in having his war record painted on his lodge for all the world to admire. When a newly painted lodge of this kind was first erected, the owner initiated its use by giving a feast to which other prominent warriors were invited. From among the guests, the host "pulled up" one who was able to tell four brave exploits, each connected in some way with a different lodge belonging to the enemy. At the conclusion of each separate account, the warrior who was reciting hit the taut new lodge a resounding blow, thus attracting attention. Then while the guests were feasting and smoking with the host, crowds gathered around to examine the lodge and to discuss the record depicted thereon. It was said, too, that similar discussions took place when the Gros Ventres met on friendly terms with other tribes. The reputation of the owner was thereby enhanced as his prowess was ever more widely acknowledged.

Enemy-Friends

572 In accordance with the general prestige pattern, an outstanding warrior, or one who had aspirations toward that end, was expected to be generous as well as brave. Particular significance attached, however, to the disposition of horses stolen from the enemy or of weapons or other trophies obtained from the enemy at risk of life. [602] The giving of such presents initiated a particular relationship between recipient and donor known as the enemy-friendship. This was a kind of "joking relationship" and involved the greatest amount of freedom between the two both in word and action. Whatever one enemy-friend said or did to the other had to be borne with equanimity. Loss of temper involved loss of prestige, and it was said that in some cases one enemy-friend had to suffer patiently audacity which would have led him to murder another not in that relationship. Each tried to out-do the other by kinds of speech and action ranging all the way from the most harmless teasing and jokes to the most humiliating exposition of foibles and misdemeanors.

572 Woman had sung around the circle once, he led his party to Bull Lodge's tipi. The latter was suspicious and thought: 'I'm in for it now!' Sits Like A Woman went up to Bull Lodge, took him by the arm and said: 'Come, my friend.' He led him to the middle of the group of returned warriors. He then faced Bull Lodge and said in a jesting way: 'Stand still or I'll kill you.' Bull Lodge stood there and Sits Like A Woman took his rifle and, drumming with the stock on Bull Lodge's back, sang the following song: 'He who poisons (i.e., a medicine man with power to kill) has no penis.' Bull Lodge and his brothers-in-law realized that Sits Like [602 834] A Woman was in earnest because not only was the song a great insult, but the victim's brothers-in-law were present,—which they should not have been when any reference to private parts was made.[23] The war party took up the song with enthusiasm as Sits Like A Woman told Bull Lodge again: 'Don't move yet—I'll kill you anyway.' He took Bull Lodge's new Hudson Bay blanket and slit it in two; he slashed Bull Lodge's shirt and took it off him; he slashed his leggings and removed them; and finally he cut the belt so that the breech-cloth fell to the ground. Bull Lodge was standing there naked. By that time the brothers-in-law had stolen away, one by one. Bull Lodge knew better than to run away, and Sits Like A Woman said: 'Perhaps you have power to poison people. If you have a mind to poison me, go ahead and try. I'm not afraid of you. If you choose to pay me back that way, you might just as well try it on the sun. Or, if you choose to pay me back in the way I have treated you, go ahead. But first lead a successful war party. If you then do to me what I have done to you, I won't be mad. But I'll lead still another war party and do far worse to you that second time than I have done this time.'

"After thinking it over, Bull Lodge decided to buy off his enemy-friend and the next morning he got together an armful of valuable things, filled a pipe and went to Sits Like A Woman. 'My friend,' he said, 'here's a pipe I am offering to you. You take this pipe so you will stop doing things like this to me. While I don't mind it, my brothers-in-law were there. And here are some things you can have.' Sits Like A Woman laughed, but ac-

[607] [23] Relationship between brothers-in-law precluded any reference to sex and bodily exposure in each other's presence. See pp. 118–19.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

cepted the pipe and gifts. Two days later Sits Like A Woman told his wives to cook and had the announcer call out: 'Bull Lodge, your friend Sits Like A Woman is inviting you to his lodge to smoke.' Others were likewise invited and when Bull Lodge arrived he was put in the place of honor. After they had eaten a good meal and had started to smoke, Sits Like A Woman said to Bull Lodge: 'My friend, you can rest assured that I'll never do that to you again. I went to that extreme because you told some of my party I was not fit to lead them. But I showed you what kind of a man I am. You are intelligent and I don't think you'll make a mistake like that again. Also its good you didn't get mad but took what I handed out to you. You probably regret the blanket and clothes I cut up. So here are my best clothes—you can have them.' Then, indicating his best race horse, he added: 'Lead that horse home and keep it.' Thus Sits Like A Woman publicly absolved Bull Lodge, but by heaping gifts upon him so generously he exposed him too." 572

If enemy-friends were relatives, usually they were of opposite sex and the joking aspects, rather than the spirit of rivalry, were predominant. Should the enemy-friendship be inaugurated between two relatives who otherwise were expected to be reserved in each other's presence, somewhat more freedom between them was permitted, although the taboo on reference to sex was said to have been strictly maintained.[24] Among other examples of this type of enemy-friendship, Coming Daylight gave the following from her own experience. "My husband's nephew, Crazy Bull, one time presented to me a horse he had captured from the enemy. Before that time we had always properly avoided speaking to each other unless it was necessary, but now we were enemy-friends and we could play jokes on each other and he would tease me, too. One time, for instance, during the night he piled up a big load of firewood just in front of the entrance to my lodge. He had hoped that when I went out in the morning I would open the flap and go out head foremost into the wood and lose my temper. He was there watching to see what would happen, but unfortunately for him, my grandmother was the first to venture forth and so the trick miscarried and counted for me rather than for him. I never liked 572 602 522

[24] For details on kinship behavior, see pp. 107–26.

572 to play jokes, but I would get even with him by going over to his
602 lodge when I would hear him abusing his wife. He had to stop
522 when I came in there because if I actually caught him at it, I could dub him a wife-beater or worse in public."

While in most instances the enemy-friendship was initiated by
562 men, women occasionally obtained war trophies on their own, and
572 had the same privilege. The following, told by Singer, illustrates
602 how she herself came by some war trophies and the manner in which she disposed of them. "One time, when the Piegan had attacked us and the Gros Ventres were pursuing them, I dashed out with some of my women relatives. We came upon three Piegan who had just been killed. Those other women stopped to hit them but I rode by more slowly and spotted some booty near one of the bodies. I dismounted and picked up a nail-studded belt to which was attached a scabbard containing a knife and a nicely beaded gun case. I didn't want to show these to the others, but when they taunted me because I failed to count coups as they had done, I showed them this belt. One of them grabbed the scabbard, which I had intended to give to my own husband, saying: 'You are giving me this. Now we are enemy-friends!' To my nephew I later gave the gun case, saying as I threw it down in front of him: 'Here. You could have this for your gun. This is what I took in war.' The knife I threw down in front of my grandmother and, because we were now enemy-friends, I used a 'bad' name for her —I called her 'you who don't wipe your behind.'"

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

CHAPTER VI

KINSHIP BEHAVIOR

Much of the more formalized behavior expected between particular categories of relatives among the Gros Ventres has survived the many changes in their economic, political, and religious structure. It is one of the few aspects of their older culture which can be observed as functioning at least partially. Although the economic side of the obligations has had to be reduced markedly under modern conditions, the attitudes accompanying avoidance and joking are still deeply ingrained in those of middle age and in older persons. 602 [178]

All in all, the type of behavior which indicated respect was extended to include by far the greatest number of relationships,—freedom being allowed only between those individuals considered to be related as grandparents and grandchildren, as siblings of the same sex, and as in-laws of opposite sex but of the same generation.

Parents

The parent-child relationship was characterized by a kind of reserve that tabooed any light talk, especially joking about sex or marriage. If the subject were approached in a serious way, however, it could be discussed between parent and child of like sex. A woman could, for instance, go to her divorced or widowed mother and tell her: "So-and-so wants you, will you not go and live with that man?" But she would not think of acting as intermediary in such a proposal to her father. 593

Throughout life children were supposed to address and to refer to their parents only by relationship terms,[1] never by personal name. Further, a son would be shamed by any incident even remotely connected with sex, in which he was involved, should it be [601 55]

[1] The kinship terminology given by our informants agrees in detail with that in Kroeber, 1902, p. 9.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Other pipes, some at least of them "Beaver" Pipes apparently, were specifically mentioned by our informants. There may be some duplications in the following listing. 778

The pipe owned by Roasted-in-the-coals, or Roasted-under-the-fire was called asti:θibie:tsa (meaning not obtainable). It was buried with him. It had two big rattles with it about 6 to 8 inches in diameter. After he died, these rattles were brought to Crow Bull, Coming Daylight's maternal uncle. He kept them quite a while, but, perhaps because they did not belong to the Flat Pipe which he owned or because he had had a dream about them, he decided to put them away, and had his wife Iron Woman and his niece Coming Daylight dispose of them. They were camping on the Missouri River at the time. The two women dug a kind of tunnel in the bank just big enough to hold them. Coming Daylight pitied these rattles because they were not even wrapped. So she took her robe and wrapped them in it and prayed to them: "Have pity on us. I pity you because you are not even wrapped up. I take my robe to wrap you. You are poor like orphans." And so the two women put them away. [534]

Coming Daylight's father also was keeper of a pipe, but only for a short time as he was killed in war, not long after getting it. When her father first received this pipe, he was not grabbed without warning, as new keepers of the Flat and Feathered Pipes were. The wives of her uncle, Crow Bull, made a big lodge for her father and put this pipe on a tripod in front of it. Then Crow Bull went to his sister, Coming Daylight's mother, and said: "Go in your lodge. This lodge is yours." So her father and his two wives moved in. Her mother had children at the time and so was not co-keeper, and when the babies cried she would take them out of the lodge. Instead her father's other wife, who never had any children to Coming Daylight's knowledge, was co-keeper. The pipe's place in the big lodge was opposite the door. When Coming Daylight's father died, her mother's brother, Crow Bull, took over the pipe. This pipe, with most of the wrappings removed to lessen the weight, and wrapped in a small bundle with rawhide, lashed around near either end and with a thong handle, was taken by Crow Bull to the war called by the Gros Ventres "When [602]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

After the Women's Dance was ended, the women participants broke up and each went back to her own lodge where she went through a final private ceremony. This,—and some other phases of Gros Ventre culture,—may be illustrated in the following story from real life, told by The Boy with hilarious laughter and with consummate histrionic artistry of intonation, gesture, facial expression and mimicry. Would that we could have gotten a sound-movie of it. 796*

"It was the custom among all the tribes around here that when the old women had their Dance and it had ended they would go back to their tents and rest. Before they took a drink they would do like the buffalo does on going to water.

"Not long ago there died here a Gros Ventre man, named Hill (or Butte), who was famous for his ability to break wind, loud or soft, at will. He had a friend, a Blood Indian. On one occasion the Gros Ventres and Bloods got together, and a Women's Dance was held. Hill went to visit his Blood friend in the latter's lodge. 514 522 796*

"After a while, when the dance was over, the Blood's wife came home, squatted down, said 'Phew' from fatigue, took off her dance regalia, and wiped the sweat off her face. Then she took an unborn-calf robe and laid it on her head, and put on her horned ritual headdress. She next gave her husband a wooden dish to fill with water and place in the lodge opposite the entrance. Hill, a spectator of all this, was a brother-in-law of the Blood's wife and hence had a right to joke with her. [602]

"The old woman, then, in her dance regalia, got down on all fours, crawled up to the bowl of water sort of roaring like a buffalo going to drink, and as she reached the bowl suddenly shied away. This she did three times. After the fourth time she would have taken a drink, but just as she was about to drink, after the fourth approach, Hill broke wind loudly. At this the old woman just fell backwards, her headdress fell off, and she did not drink.

"Another Blood Indian present fell backwards laughing. Hill did not crack a smile. The woman's husband put his hand over his face and kept a stern demeanor until Hill said to him: 'My younger brother, don't get mad. All the tribes all over the

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

 525 789 539 648

men called on their helpers. The Gros Ventres won many things of value: many best horses, guns, and clothes; and no Gros Ventre ever gambled against Red Whip after that.

Men, women, and children could participate in a hand game played by men. 525
All, with an exception or two to be noted, could bet thereon, and men and women could bet on both sides. In a game where the men were players, the women would be present and would join in the singing as well as in the betting, but they could not be guessers, hiders, or tally keepers; only men could be such. Women, however, could so function in hand games among themselves.

Actual participation in hand game gambling was high. One of our women informants, Mrs Warrior, never went in for betting, she emphasized; but she seems to have been rather exceptional in this regard. Our other woman informant on gambling, Mrs Sleeping Bear, was much devoted to gambling, for relatively small stakes. Nearly every one, so far as we could make out from our evidence, seems to have gambled, either frequently and habitually or at least from time to time.

Participation, however, followed a well-defined and established pattern as regards who could or should bet with or against whom and for what kind of stakes. For convenience we are calling this the "bettor-wager pattern."

Some persons or classes of persons could not gamble at all or could not gamble against certain others; others could or would gamble against certain others only for refreshments or a meal; others, for small stakes of little value; others still, for big stakes. The Gros Ventre bettor-wager pattern at first glimpse looks complicated, but actually it conforms to a few very simple principles. We shall look first at the pattern itself; afterwards at the principles.

Blood relatives could not gamble against each other either for large or for 602 ●
small stakes. Such blood relatives included parents and children, grandparents 525
and grandchildren, brothers and sisters, uncles and aunts and nephews and nieces, and also all classificatory relatives of the same categories. At most a group of blood relatives might engage in a hand game with the half-serious half-playful agreement that the losing side would "cook" for the winning side. A given gambling team would commonly be composed chiefly of members who were kin to one another, but non-relatives could also be on the team; the opposing team would likewise be commonly composed chiefly of another kinship group. Where blood relatives gambled in the same game for small or large stakes, they always gambled and bet, not against one another, but on the same side, and in wagering they bet on and backed their own kinsman or kinsmen, wagering dyadically against fellow tribesmen or aliens not related to them.

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

602 525 Gambling between blood relatives for property the loss of which would hurt or would entail even small hardship on the loser was evidently looked upon as conflicting with the common loyalty and mutual helpfulness among all blood relatives that were expected by the Gros Ventre social code. The Gros Ventre felt, furthermore, that such gambling might easily give rise to quarreling and ill-will among relatives, whereas the code expected harmony and good will.

As regards affinal relatives, the rules were more complicated and less uniform. Loyalty, helpfulness, and harmony were desired and expected among close relatives by marriage, but the avoidance, respect, and familiarity conventions differed.

606 525 A son-in-law could not gamble at all against his mother-in-law, even on different sides for "cooking" for the winners. On the one hand the rule of respect and avoidance was the most rigid and absolute within the avoidance regulations: they could not look at or speak directly to each other, and could not be in the same lodge together. On the other hand they were expected to be very good and generous to each other. It may be added that these restrictions on the son-in-law applied also to his brothers, presumably too to the mother-in-law's sisters, although we failed to inquire about this last point.

[602] As regards all other relatives by marriage, they, even those prohibited from gambling even for small stakes, were permitted, it seems, to gamble as members of groups against one another where the stakes, if they can really be called such, were merely the above-mentioned "cooking" by the losing side for the winners. Some affinal relatives, however, such as father-in-law and daughter-in-law could not engage in a non-group twosome game, even for fun, just as brother and sister could not do so.

A son-in-law and father-in-law could not gamble against each other even for small wagers; the former could not gamble with the latter's brothers or even his close friends—and presumably vice versa, the father-in-law could not with the son-in-law's. Nor, as mentioned, could daughter-in-law with father-in-law. A son-in-law and father-in-law were under certain restrictions of respect and avoidance but not so absolute as those between son-in-law and mother-in-law; the two men could discuss "business" matters with each other, but could not just sit down and chat together about trivial things and especially about anything concerning sex or the eliminative functions. And about the same rule held for daughter-in-law and father-in-law in their personal relations.

Two brothers-in-law, two sisters-in-law, or a brother-in-law and his sister-in-law (wife's sister or brother's wife) could gamble against each other for small

8:Flannery E-5 (1940-1948)1960 NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

"My experience was by dreaming. One time before I was married—I must have been about eight years old—I was sleeping in a big lodge and a 'person' came and wakened me. He had a bag of medicines on his back. He came to me on four successive nights and laid out these medicines and told me what each was for. On the third of these nights there was a man lying there—he was just skin and bones. The 'person' who had awakened me told me: 'You could take all these medicines and you could cure people like that one lying there' [i.e., a person in the last extremity]. In my dream I would do everything he told me, manipulate my hands to draw out the sickness, and do everything. But I didn't want that power and would tell him so. Each morning too I would relate to my grandmother exactly what had happened in the night but she would try to hush me up, telling me: 'Don't say anything; don't tell anyone. You will be a great medicine woman.' But I didn't want that power. I didn't like it because when medicine people suck on the weak part of the sick person they have to swallow what they extract. I had decided I would rather be quiet and not do anything like that, or sacrifice my flesh, or things of that kind. Perhaps if it had come later I might have taken that power and become great."

Nevertheless when later in life she had other dreams indicating supernatural power, she likewise refused. She explained in regard to one of these experiences, for instance: "The one who awakened me this time had told me to face the rising sun and was showing me how to make a smudge from the moss that grows close on logs; but I told him. 'No. I would rather not have it.' Those who have power die too soon."

Incidentally, still in connection with curing, bleeding was an operation which was performed purely as a natural remedy for a person who felt dizzy or sluggish. Anyone could do it—no supernatural validation was needed. Other women described quite casually how it was done and discussed the various times they had actually performed the operation. Coming Daylight, however, insisted that while there was really nothing to such an operation, she could never bring herself to perform it, nor would she allow anyone else to bleed her; she could not stand the sight of blood.

The aversion to the sight of blood and to self-mutilation was evidently deep-seated and showed itself in a marked manner early in her life. On one occasion a close relative was very ill. In such a situation it was expected that every member of the family would rally around and do whatever he could toward the recovery. Among the things that fell within the scope of activity for female relatives was that of vowing to sacrifice something valuable, including perhaps the blood from one's arm or a finger-joint, if the person recovered. At this particular time, Coming Daylight was a young child, and her grandmother decided that it would be appropriate for the little girl to offer that her finger-tip be removed if the relative regained his health. When it was suggested to her, Coming Daylight refused, even though her grandmother took after her with a stick. She actually ran away and wandered alone, until two nights later the relative died and an uncle finally found her.

On another occasion in her early youth, too, she defied a convention connected with kinship by refusing to join in mourning for an uncle who had been killed in revenge for having instigated the murder of his brother's wife. When her grandmother upbraided Coming Daylight for not expressing grief in the traditional manner, the latter defied her by saying: "I am not going to cry for that man. I don't know why you are crying for him. I have worked for that woman and she has fed me, and has even given me meat to bring home to you. I heard

8:Flannery E-5 (1940-1948)1960 NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the shots and went later to see what happened, and there I saw her lying across the fire; her dress had burned off and her body was all shriveled. They weren't satisfied to kill her, but they burned her too!" She maintained her attitude and all the scolding from her relatives was of no avail.

Before turning to her adult life, we may refer to another instance which illustrates Coming Daylight's sensitivity to the suffering of others. In the Sacrifice Lodge, which is the Gros Ventre version of the well-known Plains Sun Dance, one of the important features was the spectacular self-torture which the active participants underwent. Each one had a sliver of wood embedded in the flesh of his chest. To the wood was tied a line, the other end of which was fastened high on the center-pole of the lodge. The man, leaning back so that the line was taut, went back and forth until finally the sliver was torn from his flesh. Meanwhile the women cheered on their relatives by "rattling their tongues," singing war songs, and the like, by way of encouraging the men to be brave and see the thing through. Coming Daylight was quite a young child when she first witnessed this performance. She remembered vividly her reaction when one of the young men, in his exhaustion, went to the center-pole and, putting his arms around it, wept aloud. She was not able to stand it any longer and rushed home crying. Her grandmother was very angry with her for leaving in the middle of the performance, but all the little girl could say was: "Oh, I just pitied that young man," and she could not be induced to return to the dance lodge. We may add here that actually in later years she did not participate in the Sacrifice Lodge even so far as women were allowed to do so.

The examples we have given are sufficient to show, I believe, that Coming Daylight had developed as a child a very strong set against violence, against painful and dangerous experiences. She refused medicine power from supernatural sources not only because it was dangerous but also because it involved a kind of physical activity which was repugnant to her. She refused to mutilate herself and was extremely sensitive to painful experiences in others. Her actual deviations from the patterns of accepted or approved behavior all tended in this same direction against violence. Her adult behavior likewise was consistent with this trend in her personality.

In consonance with her feeling against physical violence Coming Daylight avoided as far as possible the rough-and-tumble play in which brother-in-law and sister-in-law were free to, and indeed expected to, indulge. Other women told with glee how they enjoyed "getting even" with their brothers-in-law by, for instance, pushing them when fully clothed into the river, or dumping bucketfuls of water over their heads when they least expected it, and so on; but Coming Daylight admitted without hesitation that she didn't like that sort of thing and never attempted to retaliate even when her brothers-in-law succeeded in playing jokes on her. Similarly while it was not unusual for women rivals to actively fight over a man, she refrained from such undignified behavior, although it must be admitted that she had enough provocation on at least one occasion of which she told me. She had just married a man who was described by others as something of a gay Lothario. A woman who had been trying to force her attentions on him was furious when she heard of the marriage. She rushed to the lodge and pulled Coming Daylight out feet first, yelling insults the while. When the latter regained her feet she made no attempt to hit back even though the other slapped her and pulled off an earring, tearing the lobe of the ear. Coming Daylight, however, bided her time and soon was able to make an opportunity for an exchange of words with the woman at a big social dance.

124 Cooper felt that compensation was due them. It may be stated however that the money paid was looked upon as in the nature of a gift, and the generosity displayed in the form of counter-gifts, both to Dr. Cooper and to me, was truly touching.

115 I was invited to the Fort Belknap Reservation in 1940 to work
123 exclusively with the women and to deal mainly with matters other than religion. The two oldest women at Hays, Coming Daylight
[609 and Singer, accepted me as their "granddaughter" which was
603] fortunate in view of the freedom allowed between grandparents and grandchildren in Gros Ventre society. Although these two old women did not speak English, I was happy in having as interpreters women who were well liked by them and who were themselves interested in "the old ways of doing things." Thus they proved valuable informants on their own account. Mary Ereaux and the late Cora Chandler were two who served admirably in both capacities in 1940; Mathilda Cuts The Rope and Mae Main aided me most ably in 1945 and 1948. Garter Snake, a valuable informant, was the only woman for whom a man, Charles Buckman, interpreted.

123 While on the Reservation, I enjoyed the hospitality of the
124 School Sisters of Saint Francis at their convent. I went out, however, before nine and returned at five or six, spending each day visiting the women in their homes. There we smoked and chatted and worked in an atmosphere of easy informality. Much of the material given by the women might be classified under the heading of "expressive interviews." The older women were interested in the fact that I could take down so quickly in shorthand what the interpreter said, but occasionally checked on my accuracy, and the interpreter's as well, by asking me to read back for translation to them something they had said hours or days before!

In 1945 and 1948 when I worked with the men, who had previously cooperated with Dr. Cooper, the situation was naturally somewhat more formal than that which obtained with the women. We met in the Community Hall at Hays. As our business-like sessions proceeded, various Gros Ventre men dropped in and sat on the sidelines. Many of these, including some who were not regular informants or interpreters, such as Tom Bad Road, Steve Bradly, Rufus Warrior and others, helped by freely joining in

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

explained: "Mrs. Curly Head was the best-dressed woman I knew. Her husband's sister kept her well-dressed. A woman has a lot of pride in the appearance of her brother's wife, and the old women tell us that it was the same in the old days." Cora corroborated this by stating: "My sister and I would load my brother's wife with presents. And if he had more than one wife, it would be the same,—a woman is good to her brother's wife no matter how many times he might be married." Coming Daylight mentioned that she made it a point to bring her cousin's wife—she had no blood brother—especially nice gifts whenever she made a trip and added that in former times, just as today, when a woman distributed berries she had picked, the first one she would think of would be either her brother's wife or her son's wife. 607 431 [431]

About all that a woman did for her husband's sister was to make her occasional gifts of moccasins. The giving of moccasins, however, had a significance far beyond what their extrinsic value suggests. Mary illustrated this by the following incident: "Flat Head is my cousin. He has three half-brothers, all of them having the same father but different mothers. I treat these three in the same way I treat Flat Head, namely, as a brother. One of these men died last spring, and his wife, who is of course my sister-in-law, came and brought me a pair of moccasins. So when she was leaving I gave her a woolen shawl which I had just bought, and a dress which I had made and intended to display in the bazaar. My husband's niece, who is young and doesn't understand the old ways, said reproachfully to me: 'Why, Aunt Mary, you gave up that nice shawl you wanted so badly.' So I told her: 'Surely—I couldn't let my sister-in-law go out of here without giving her something! You should know that when anyone gives you a pair of moccasins it is a big thing. It is as much as anything I can think of—as much as a bottle of whiskey or of brandy!'"

Grandparents

The relationship between grandparents and grandchildren was a free-and-easy one, unmarked by the reticence which characterized the parent-child relationship, or by the feeling of restraint which obtains between so many relatives of opposite sex. "A grandfather can say anything he likes to his granddaughter, and vice 603

603 versa. Grandparents, for instance, can tell folk-tales and stories, the subject-matter and details of which no parents would mention in the hearing of their children." A woman would think nothing of teasing her grandmother about men. The following is typical of the milder sort of joking which is customary, but which would be considered highly improper toward parents. "Coming Daylight's granddaughter came into her house to borrow a knife. The old woman told her: 'Don't lose that knife. I have had it for a long time and I love that knife.' Whereupon the granddaughter replied: 'Yes, you love that knife just like you love your sweethearts!' and the several women present had a good laugh over this joke." Again, Coming Daylight herself told of an old man who was grandfather to her maternal uncle and thus also her "grandfather." She said: "One day when I was still a young woman, this old man asked me why I didn't come to him to obtain medicine power from him. I replied: 'Oh, I wouldn't come to you because I know that you are one of those medicine men who includes sexual intercourse as payment, and if I came to you, you would try to have me too!' Of course I could never have said that to anyone in my parents' generation."

[831]

Grandparents are said to have been indulgent toward their grandchildren. They might occasionally give advice, and indeed it was expected that a grandmother would train her granddaughter not only in skills and techniques, but also prepare her for what to expect on the physical side of marriage, warn her not to arouse her husband's jealousy, etc. When in trouble, however, a grandchild could discuss any matter with his grandparents. They would give counsel, but never scold. A man would usually not count on material aid from his grandparents, but, on the other hand, he was not expected to contribute to their support to any greater degree than he would to that of any old persons were they in need—namely, by giving an occasional present of food or clothing.

[868]

[431]

Siblings of the Same Sex

593 The relationship between brothers on the one hand and between sisters on the other was a more or less casual one. Family loyalty and ordinary generosity were expected, but formality was lacking. "A girl and her sisters could, of course, laugh and joke and tease

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

their feelings to themselves, for any show of such feelings would be contrary to the deep veneration due to the Pipe and its official personnel. They had to be resigned to have that particular sibling as the Pipe Child. When the keeper gave up his keepership, some of his children might go back to their father's lodge but not necessarily all of them. Some had gotten used to living elsewhere and just remained there. 793 593

The Boy's own experience may further illustrate the foregoing situation. 793

He was born while his father, Lame Bull, was keeper of the Flat Pipe, and consequently he was born not in his father's lodge but in that of one of his grandmothers. His mother went back to his father's lodge, but she used to come to his grandmother's lodge to nurse and look after him. In his earliest years he had four or five "grandmothers" or great-grandmothers [real and classificatory] living, one of them his mother's mother. He stayed most of the time with his maternal grandmother and with her mother. It was from these grandmothers that he got most of the affectionate attention he craved and most of his early training and instruction. Every night, too, one or other of the grandmothers would tell old-time stories and Ni:hahat tales. After a while he was permitted to go to his father's lodge but only for a little while at a time, but he was not allowed to live or sleep there. He never addressed his parents as "father" or "mother," but only by their given names, although there was no taboo in the matter, and his younger brother Andrew Lame Bull used the former manner of address. The Boy as a child did not feel much inclined to "play baby" and sit alongside his father and mother, as other Gros Ventre children did, to get special attention, but he did act so elsewhere, around his grandmothers and great-grandmothers. He did not go to live in his father's lodge until he was about nine (or eleven?) years old, after his father had ceased being Pipe keeper, and by this time he was able to take pretty good care of himself, to ride horseback, and so forth. 793 603 593

All of The Boy's eight brothers and sisters—he was the ninth—who survived infancy were reared outside their father's lodge, except the one who was Pipe child. After Lame Bull's keepership 793 593

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The old man, however, might and commonly would appeal to another old man, who knew the Dance rites well even though he might never have vowed the dance, to double for him in seeing that the rite was properly carried out. 608 796 *

A keeper of one of the sacred Pipes, or at least of the Flat or Feathered Pipe, could not, during his term of office, function as "grandfather" at a sacred Lodge, but an ex-keeper could.

The relationship between ceremonial grandfather or grandmother and grandchild was a sacred one. Between such grandparent and grandchild a certain respect behavior had to be observed, and either was obligated not to refuse a request of the other. 608

Gambling, for instance, between them, or apparently even playing on opposite sides in a non-gambling hand game, was improper. Between blood grandparents and grandchildren a distinct joking relationship obtained,* not however between ritual grandparents and grandchildren, although our field evidence is not entirely consistent. According to one good informant, between these latter, telling vulgar jokes and stories, teasing about lovers, and so forth, were taboo; according to another, a little freedom in such matters was allowed, but not as much as was allowed and practiced between blood grandparents and grandchildren. [525] [603]

As regards, however, the much more significant mutual obligation of ceremonial grandparents not to refuse requests of grandchildren, our field data are entirely consistent and clear. This mutual obligation was rigidly lived up to and played a very important role in Gros Ventre social life. This role may best be illustrated by the following actual case.

Once Iron Woman, Crow Bull's wife, ran away with Kitfox. When people noticed she was gone, they said: "Oh, she must have run away again with somebody." Before she ran away this time, Crow Bull had said: "If she runs away again, there will be trouble." So people went to Black Raven, Kitfox's father, to tell him that his son was suspected and that there would probably be trouble. When Iron Woman and Kitfox came back, Crow Bull seized his loaded gun and dashed out as if he were going to kill

* See Flannery, 1953, pp. 121-22.

8:Flannery E-5 (1940-1948)1960 NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Her final rejoinder was such a witty and pointed one that everyone laughed heartily at her rival's expense. In this culture, of course, public ridicule was a far more effective retaliation than the biting and scratching that other women said frankly they would have indulged in when attacked.

Expression of emotional excess was institutionalized for the Gros Ventres, as for the rest of the Plains, in the bereavement situation. Upon the death of a husband, son, or father, a woman was expected to start wailing as soon as she heard the news, have her hair cut off, discard good clothes for old ragged ones, gash her arms and legs, go to the hills to mourn and cry, resisting for a time the pleas of her relatives to return, and being watched lest she attempt suicide. Coming Daylight was only a young woman when she was first widowed and the mourning pattern was still in full vogue. It is certain from other evidence than Coming Dayling had a deep affection for this husband to whom she had been given as a child-bride and in whose kindly and indulgent treatment she had found a pleasant escape from the rigorous discipline of her grandmother. Nevertheless the public expression of her grief was minimal—no abandonment for her. Although her sister was sent on the hills with her to keep watch over her in the usual way, Coming Daylight was easily persuaded to return shortly though she herself was proud of the fact that she had stayed out so long that she actually had got a frozen toe! In later years when all that was left of the ritual was the wailing out on the hills, she lost the son whom she herself, and everybody else, acknowledged as her favorite. She had not been on the hills very long when she experienced a significant dream, as follows. She was in a lodge at the rear of which was a big pile of tobacco mixture and a pipe. The owner of the lodge filled the pipe and approached her. She was frightened because she didn't smoke. The owner of the lodge however told her: "Look at these people." She looked and saw many with their hair cut and their bodies bleeding from the gashes inflicted in grief. The man then told her: "That is in the past. Nowadays your only consolation is in smoking." So she accepted the pipe and, after smoking it, she was painted in ceremonial fashion by each of those other mourners. Then the owner of the lodge dismissed her saying: "Now, go home and don't ever go on the hills and mourn again. But always smoke if you want to." She went home right after this dream and when she told her husband of it he accepted it as valid and persuaded her sister to prepare for Coming Daylight her first real smoke. She maintained that the habit subsequently developed was actually a great comfort to her.

The final area with which we shall be concerned here is the war complex—a vital aspect of the old Plains culture. Gros Ventre women were allowed direct but limited participation in these activities in the sense that, while they would not join a party of men who were going on horse-raiding or revenge expeditions, if opportunity offered they might exhibit the same kind of bravery that a man should show and derive considerable status therefrom. For instance, if one of the enemy fell nearby, the women rushed out from camp to count coup, and to grab trophies with which to inaugurate the relationship known as "enemy-friends." Coming Daylight, however, was never one to indulge in this sport. She told of the one—and to her extremely distasteful—occasion on which her hand literally was forced. It seems that during a raid on their camp one of the enemy was shot and her husband scalped him. The victim was lying not far from her lodge and, as her husband dashed off to pursue the rest of the Assiniboine, he shouted for her to come out and see what was going on. Coming Daylight saw the man lying there, face down, covered with blood. He was not dead

593 alluded to or occur in the presence of either his father or mother. To appear unclothed in each other's presence would be embarass-
[291] ing to father and son alike. A woman refrained from any conversation or action that would call the attention of her father to the fact that she was menstruating or pregnant. An example of the
[845] attitude in this regard came to attention recently. "A woman, who was walking along the road near her house one evening, suffered a miscarriage. Instead of being taken to her own house nearby she insisted on being taken to a neighbor's, her reason being that her father and a few of his friends had been at her home when she had left and she would be 'ashamed' to appear in front of him in her condition."

It would seem that in some ways mothers had closer ties with their daughters and fathers with their sons. If, for example, parents disagreed about something their children did, each took up for the child of like sex. A man said to his wife: "You leave the boy alone, he's *my* boy," and a woman would say the same regarding the daughter. Or had a child done something to disgrace the parents, the wife was likely to upbraid her husband, if a boy were the culprit, by telling him: "Your son did so-and-so!" Should
[597] the daughter have been at fault, her father would speak in similar vein to his wife. In cases of adoption, too, a woman claimed a girl and a man, a boy.

On the other hand, in circumstances where parents could publicly show pride in their children, it often happened that a woman gave presents away in honor of her son and a man in honor of his daughter. It was customary, too, that if a young man had done something especially noteworthy at war, anyone could approach his mother and ask for whatever was wanted, and she would give it. Middle-aged women, whose sons were in World War II, joked with each other along these lines when news of their sons came from the front. Unfortunately, however, adverse economic circumstances precluded the full carrying out of the custom.

● 604 Attitudes of respect and reserve between parents and children
601 are extended to include all of parents' siblings and their spouses, special emphasis being put on father's sister and mother's brother. Kinship terms reflect this situation. The term "father" includes father's brother, male cousin, mother's sister's husband; "mo-

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

ther" includes mother's sister, female cousin, father's brother's wife. This was neatly illustrated in an instance given by Mary Ereaux. "My mother's cousin's husband came to my house a few weeks ago and wanted to ask me something about arrangements for the pop concession at the Fair. It was a matter of serious business and he and I stood, each looking in a different direction, talking only about the matter in hand. After he had left, my son-in-law, who is not an Indian, and who does not understand the Gros Ventre language, said: 'Mother, you looked as though you were mad at that man.' So I told him: 'In the Indian way, that man would be the same as my father, because his wife would be in the same relation to me as my mother, so we never talk unless necessary and never look at each other while talking.'" 604 601 [582]

The term "aunt" is reserved for father's sister and female cousins, and "uncle" for mother's brother and male cousins. Here, too, heightened reserve characterized the cross-sex relationship. "A man would not address his 'aunt' directly unless by chance she would be the only one there and he needed information. He would under no circumstances linger to make conversation with her. The same for a woman and her 'uncle.'"

Parents-in-law

The respect between members of the opposite sex who are of contiguous generations was most apparent in the avoidance between mother-in-law and son-in-law. This required that the two neither look at nor speak to each other at any time. It was stated that some men disregarded these rules after the death of the wife, "but most used to keep them all the time." There was one case mentioned in which the son-in-law of a very old woman told his wife: "Your mother is getting very old now. We won't see each other much longer anyway. It would be all right for your mother to come in to our lodge." Both Coming Daylight and Singer insisted nevertheless that, should such a proposal be made, the son-in-law would be the one to make the initiative, never the mother-in-law. 606

The avoidance between father-in-law and daughter-in-law was almost as strictly observed, in that a woman could not look directly at her father-in-law when she spoke to him, and she did not

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

have someone come back a real hero, and, although such a promise to torture oneself could be made in regard to other relatives, "it was usually a sister who thought so much of her brother who did that." Other forms of sacrifice which a girl might practice on her brother's behalf would be to take a fine robe, or something else of value, and stick it on top of the lodge saying: "I offer this that my brother may come back with good luck, bringing something fine from war." This could be even more specific in that a girl could offer, say, the tip of her finger, if her brother would bring back a particular thing, such as a scalp or a horse or a weapon. Again, should her brother be ill or wounded, a woman would be exceedingly concerned and might go so far, as in one case recorded, of promising that if he should recover she would join the Women's Lodge—"which was considered a great thing to do for your brother." 593 728 721

Usually a man would have some voice in regard to his sister's marriage and, if he were the one who made the arrangements, he received the larger share of the bride-price. It was said, too, that a brother would be especially concerned regarding his younger sister's moral conduct and might take it upon himself to keep her in line. Although parents would feel the disgrace of an erring daughter, a brother was expected to react violently. If her husband failed to punish his wife for adultery, her brother could kill her. Some instances were given, too, in which the man took his own life indirectly, by riding into the midst of the enemy without taking any precautions, because he felt so keenly the dishonor his sister who was unfaithful had imposed on him. 593 [584] [684]

Maternal Uncle and Paternal Aunt

"Because a brother and a sister thought so much of each other, they were expected to be good to each other's children." If a woman had several brothers, it was the eldest who assumed the duties of the maternal uncle and his relationship with his nephews was a direct one. Should the eldest brother be unable to undertake the responsibility another brother or male cousin was expected to do so. 604

The maternal uncle was supposed to watch his sister's children closely even though her husband was on the scene. If he did not 604 861

604 861 approve of the way they were being raised, he could remove a sister's son from the parental home and keep him. The parents would have to let him go. Thick told of his own experience in this regard. One day at the time when he was nine or ten years old, his mother's brother came and told his brother-in-law: "I am taking my nephew. You folks are not training him to be a man." So his uncle took Thick away and raised him very strictly. He was made to work very hard and his uncle did not hesitate to lecture him and to administer severe tongue-lashings. His uncle's wife would occasionally intervene in the attempt to bring about a more lenient attitude toward the boy, especially as Thick got older, but all to no avail. Finally, when Thick had become a young man, he could not stand it any longer and rebelled. He has never forgotten that after all those years of what amounted practically to servitude, his uncle did not give him a single horse nor any other presents, although he showered Thick's elder brother with good things, especially with horses.

604 In case the maternal uncle was well-off, and his sister and her husband in bad straits, the uncle was more or less obliged to take the responsibility for his nephew. If he did not do so, people would say he had neglected his duty. Furthermore, if a boy were [855] lazy and consistently refused to obey his own father, he might be ejected from his home, and it would be up to his maternal uncle to take him in. One case was cited, too, of a boy who was neglected by his parents, and whose uncle not only took him in, but acted as though he thought more of his nephew than he did of his own sons.

Whether or not the maternal uncle insisted on taking full charge, he had the right of disciplining his nephew, reprimanding him when he failed to measure up, but at the same time he had the obligation of protecting and shielding him in public. While a father could, and sometimes did, disown his son, the boy could be sure of a refuge with his mother's brother, although he faced severe punishment in private at his uncle's hands. Thus a young man who was in difficulties, over say a love affair, would seek out his uncle. Should he be threatened by a husband who suspected the young man of fooling around his wife, the uncle could be counted upon to invite the irate husband, smooth over the situation, and in

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

case of necessity pay the indemnity. Other people might say to a man that it was of no use to help that nephew, that he was no good. Yet the uncle did not give up trying to save face for the nephew, and to do his best to shield or rehabilitate him—but at the same time he "talked turkey to him." 604●

Even after a man was married, his maternal uncle had the right of disciplining him. If a husband mistreated his wife undeservedly it was said that his maternal uncle could step in and take the wife temporarily away from his nephew, letting him shift for himself, doing his own cooking and so on, "until he came to his senses." A man would have to take such treatment from his uncle, it was said, because public opinion condemned the husband and backed up the uncle, who was considered within his rights. [684] [626]

Furthermore the maternal uncle would feel duty-bound to protect his nephew from danger. An extreme case was cited in illustration. "A Gros Ventre boy was captured by the Crow when fairly young and he remained among them after he grew up although he could have returned. On one occasion the Gros Ventres surrounded a war party of Crow among whom was this young Gros Ventre man. The young man appealed to his mother's brother to save his life, and the uncle responded by using every argument he could think of. The other Gros Ventres in the party refused the plea, however, on the grounds that the boy had previously had the opportunity to return to his own people, and asked: 'Why didn't he think of his uncle then?'"

On the other side of the picture, if a young man were successful and "on the way up," as the saying goes, his maternal uncle had priority over the boy's father or older brother in helping him by giving generously to him in private and by giving away publicly in his honor as lavishly as possible. It was stated, for instance, that if a young man was ready to go to war, his uncle might go to him and give him a horse, encouraging him to face the enemy bravely and to show courage under fire. He would tell his nephew: "I'm going to watch you. Here is your chance to show what you can do." Thus he might "steal the show" from a father or older brother who themselves might have intended to help the boy off to a good start. Because it was the uncle who did this, nothing would be said. All his relatives would be proud of a successful young [431]

604 man, but his maternal uncle would be given the greatest amount of credit for his nephew's prowess, and he would rejoice more than the others in his nephew's successes.

426 A nephew could, if he wished, use his uncle's property without asking permission. If he damaged the property so borrowed, how-
604 ever, the uncle might reprimand him severely. Sometimes an uncle took the initiative and told one of his nephews: "All that I have is yours." In such a case, not only would the nephew be free to use the property without asking, but even if it were damaged—say a borrowed horse was carelessly injured or lost,—nothing would be said by the uncle nor any punishment inflicted. A nephew was supposed to be very respectful toward his uncle, but was freer with him than he could be with his own father. He could, for instance, joke with his uncle about being a lady's man, but he
[834] could not go too far in referring to sexual matters. He would not
[291] feel quite so embarrassed if his uncle should happen to see him unclothed, as would be the case with his father or his brother-in-law, but he would be far from comfortable in that situation.

604 The relationship between a man and his sister's daughter was not as direct as that between him and his sister's son. If a woman died, leaving orphan girls, it was not unusual that the wife of her brother would say: "I am going to take these girls so that I can have a son-in-law through them." This is what happened to Coming Daylight and her sister, whose maternal uncle took responsibility for them, although they were actually trained by his mother. It was he who arranged their marriages and it was to him they returned when widowed or divorced. His sons took the place of brothers to these two orphans.

While he did not take on the role of disciplinarian to his sister's daughters, whether or not their parents were living, the maternal uncle was expected to be generous to his nieces and to show his regard by giving things away in their honor. If a maternal uncle asked a niece for anything she possessed, she was supposed to give it to him without question, even though at considerable cost to herself. "Coming Daylight was asked by her uncle for the elk teeth she owned, to exchange with a Crow who had offered him an excellent race horse in return. She gave up these valuables without a word, though she hated to part with them since she did not know

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

at the time whether she would ever have a chance to acquire more of these highly desirable decorations." On the other hand, a maternal uncle would not refuse his niece or her husband anything it was in his power to give, and would always lend them horses or other kinds of property when requested. 604

Compared with the responsibilities of the maternal uncle, a paternal aunt had relatively few obligations to her nephews and nieces but correspondingly more to their mother, her brother's wife. Nevertheless it was she who took particular interest in her brother's children when they were infants. She showed regard for her brother by providing, if possible, the sack for the newborn baby and the goods to pay the medicine man in case it were necessary to call one to the child-bed of her sister-in-law. If the child became ill she, too, usually paid for the necessary doctoring and it was not unusual for her and her husband to assume the expense of a formal naming feast for the infant. [854] [553]

The paternal aunt had the duty of "bawling out" her brother's daughters if they misbehaved. In regard to property, a niece would have to ask permission before using anything of her aunt, but the request was always granted. The aunt would tell her niece in an offhand way: "Well, why don't you go get it!". Whereas if someone not in that relationship had made the request, she would have gotten the object and handed it to her. A woman was expected to be as reserved with her aunt as she would be with her own mother and with her mother-in-law. A man was even more respectful to his aunt in the sense that he would not speak to her unnecessarily nor look directly at her. [861]

When a girl married, the paternal aunt sometimes participated in the bride-price, and claimed her niece's husband as "son-in-law." According to Garter Snake: "When Otter Robe's oldest sister married, the groom gave three horses, one of which went to the bride's father, one to her brother, and the third to her father's sister. The latter made for her niece's husband a fine fancy robe, treating him with the same consideration she would have accorded her own daughter's husband. Then, when this 'son-in-law' returned successfully from a raiding party, he gave his 'mother-in-law' one of the horses he had captured." It is interesting to note [583]

604 that the wife of a maternal uncle may likewise claim his nephew as "son-in-law."[2]

Brothers-in-law and Sisters-in-law

607 The mutual regard between brother and sister is said to have been reflected not only through the carrying out of the obligations of the avunculate and amitate in the spirit of "showing how much brothers and sisters thought of each other." It could also be seen in the type of behavior expected between brothers-in-law on the one hand, and sisters-in-law on the other. Brothers-in-law were generous to each other and could joke lightly with each other, but nothing even remotely connected with sex could be so much as mentioned in each other's presence. A man was circumspect in regard to his sister's husband out of respect for his sister, and to his wife's brother because the latter, out of respect for his own sister, had similar obligations toward him. Sisters-in-law behaved toward each other in like fashion. These attitudes were extended to include wife's brother's wife as "sister," rather than "sister-in-law," and husband's sister's husband as "brother."

Unmarried brothers of a man and wife likewise regarded themselves as brothers-in-law. A case which well illustrates the attitudes between them is the following as told by The Boy. "My older brother was married to Thick's older sister and we two young unmarried brothers-in-law experienced a most embarrassing situation. One of us was visiting a woman at night and the other came to the same woman, not realizing in the dark that his brother-in-law was already there. We recognized each other's voices, however, and the one who arrived last beat a hasty retreat. The matter has never, even to this day, been discussed nor so much as indirectly alluded to between us, and the embarrassment over this event led us to avoid each other for a considerable time thereafter. Eventually our relationship was deepened inasmuch as Thick married my sister. Even though my sister should die, Thick and I would continue to be brothers-in-law on the same plane."

[2] Kroeber, 1902, p. 10, calls attention to the identity of terms for "niece" and "daughter-in-law." Apparently a woman used the term "son-in-law" for her niece's husband or for her husband's nephew only if presents were given.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

SOCIAL CUSTOMS.

000 The Gros Ventre system of terms of relationship has been given in a
605 former publication.[1]

601 Cousins, so far as the relationship was known, were called brothers and sisters, and they called each other's children son or daughter if the cousin
[582] was of the same sex as the speaker, or nephew or niece if the cousin was of the opposite sex. Any known relationship was a bar to marriage. The
[587] brother of a dead man sometimes married his widow, but this was not always the case.

583 Large amounts of property, especially horses, were given away for wives for the honor of the act, but there was no rule or definite custom covering the quantity of property so given. The horses might be given not only to the father, but to the brothers, uncles, and other relatives of the girl. Sometimes, without having received any gifts and apparently without any previous understanding, a man would give his daughter to a young man, who thereupon would give him horses, or distribute them among his wife's other relatives. Old men practised this custom in order to obtain the aid and services of a young man in caring for their horses and in other ways, and no doubt
585 sometimes also to insure a more certain food-supply. A young man on
431 marrying received a tent with all the proper furniture, usually from his prospective parents-in-law, but sometimes from his own parents, if they were the wealthier.

606 Although a young married man often lived with his father-in-law, the well-known taboo custom between mother-in-law and son-in-law — which
[591] forbade their speaking, looking at each other, or being in the same tent — existed among the Gros Ventre. There was, however, no father-in-law taboo. The mother-in-law taboo extended to the son-in-law's brother.

584 If a woman did not wish a man for her lover, she might send him to do a
721 certain act of bravery. If he returned successfully from war, having accomplished the deed, he was then accepted. This custom is said to have led to the death of many young men.

428 At a person's death his property was inherited generally by his relatives. His father and mother, brothers, sisters, and children would receive part. His father and mother received the most. A man often disposed of his property before his death. If he died suddenly, as on being killed in war, his parents divided his property. It was not customary for a man on going to war to divide his property among his relatives in the contingency of his
[764] death. Property particularly valued by the dead person was buried with him.

---

[1] Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part I, pp. 9, 150.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

in-law to do anything of the kind for her mother-in-law. So I gave that daughter-in-law two horses." 606

Although economic obligations were not incumbent, the relationship terms were used, and avoidances practiced, between parents-in-law and the brothers and sisters of the man and wife respectively. It was explained: "The brothers of a man respected his mother-in-law because in the old days it could happen that if a man died his brother might take the wife. And the same with a woman, because they had the custom of giving all the girls in a family to the same man if they liked him." [587]

Siblings of Opposite Sex

Among members of the same generation, the most marked respect was exhibited between siblings of opposite sex, and was extended to include all cousins. There was no relationship term for "cousin," all using sibling terms of address and without distinguishing between parallel- and cross-cousins. 593 605 [601]

Since a girl was removed from her own family at an early age and was brought up in a different household, actual face-to-face contact between brothers and sisters was slight. Nevertheless, their attitudes toward each other had important consequences with many ramifications. As interpreted by the Gros Ventres, the basic relationship between siblings of opposite sex gave clues to understanding expected behavior in several other categories of kinship, —in the avunculate and amitate, as well as in the relations between in-laws of the same sex and generation.

If it could possibly be avoided, brother and sister did not speak to nor look directly at each other. They communicated through a third person. Gros Ventres, who are today in middle age, explained how embarrassed they were as children when the authorities did not understand "the proper way of doing things." For instance, the good sisters and priests in charge of St Paul's, which at that time was a boarding-school, insisted as a privilege for the boys that they visit their sisters on Sunday afternoons in the girls' part of the school! How deeply this feeling of respect penetrates was brought home to the present author by the following incident. "One day she was with Mary and Coming Daylight, while waiting for Charles Buckman, who was to drive her to another part of the

605 593 Reservation. She heard the car drive up and, without thinking how it might be interpreted by the other two women, exclaimed: 'Oh, there is my man! I must go!' Since in that neighborhood 'my man' is commonly used to indicate husband or lover, Mary laughed. Almost immediately, however, she caught herself and straightened her face, remarking: 'I shouldn't have even thought that or laughed like I did. That man is my cousin and I should be ashamed of him.' Furthermore when Mary went out with her to get in the car, Charles insisted that Mary sit in the back seat so that everybody could see that they rode in the same car only to accommodate the white woman. Mary remarked later on: 'It is funny, but I just can't bring myself to sit down and have a conversation with my men-relatives, like white brothers and sisters do. I still have a feeling it is an awful thing to talk to my brothers, male cousins, father-in-law and Indian sons-in-law,—although I don't mind in the least talking to my white son-in-law.'"

Brother and sister were expected to grant each other's requests whenever it was in their power to do so and without complaint, regardless of the inconvenience which might be involved. The following incident illustrates how sensitive the Gros Ventres were on this point. "When the present Mrs. Takes-the-Bow was a small girl, she often was sick. One time her father's sister came into the lodge and muttered to herself: 'Oh you are just using up all my medicine in doctoring you—what is wrong with you!' Unfortunately the child's father overheard this impatient comment and was deeply hurt, because very seldom would a woman say anything like that in front of her brother. So he decided: 'My sister considers me a lot of trouble, and if that is the way she feels about it I shall never request her services again.' He meant exactly what he said. He left immediately to go on a war party. Careless of his life, he recklessly rode into the midst of the enemy and was killed."

593 782 721 One way of showing how much a woman thought of her brother was for her to make offerings in his behalf. When young men were going off on a war party, the sister of one of them might go outside the lodge and make a promise along the following lines: "I will give my finger as offering if my brother will come back a great warrior." It was considered a great honor, of course, to

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

SOCIAL CUSTOMS.

000 The Gros Ventre system of terms of relationship has been given in a
605 former publication.[1]

601 Cousins, so far as the relationship was known, were called brothers and sisters, and they called each other's children son or daughter if the cousin
[582] was of the same sex as the speaker, or nephew or niece if the cousin was of the opposite sex. Any known relationship was a bar to marriage. The
[587] brother of a dead man sometimes married his widow, but this was not always the case.

583 Large amounts of property, especially horses, were given away for wives for the honor of the act, but there was no rule or definite custom covering the quantity of property so given. The horses might be given not only to the father, but to the brothers, uncles, and other relatives of the girl. Sometimes, without having received any gifts and apparently without any previous understanding, a man would give his daughter to a young man, who thereupon would give him horses, or distribute them among his wife's other relatives. Old men practised this custom in order to obtain the aid and services of a young man in caring for their horses and in other ways, and no doubt
585 sometimes also to insure a more certain food-supply. A young man on
431 marrying received a tent with all the proper furniture, usually from his prospective parents-in-law, but sometimes from his own parents, if they were the wealthier.

606 Although a young married man often lived with his father-in-law, the
[591] well-known taboo custom between mother-in-law and son-in-law — which forbade their speaking, looking at each other, or being in the same tent — existed among the Gros Ventre. There was, however, no father-in-law taboo. The mother-in-law taboo extended to the son-in-law's brother.

584 If a woman did not wish a man for her lover, she might send him to do a
721 certain act of bravery. If he returned successfully from war, having accomplished the deed, he was then accepted. This custom is said to have led to the death of many young men.

428 At a person's death his property was inherited generally by his relatives. His father and mother, brothers, sisters, and children would receive part. His father and mother received the most. A man often disposed of his property before his death. If he died suddenly, as on being killed in war, his parents divided his property. It was not customary for a man on going to war to divide his property among his relatives in the contingency of his
[764] death. Property particularly valued by the dead person was buried with him.

[1] Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part I, pp. 9, 150.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

ther" includes mother's sister, female cousin, father's brother's wife. This was neatly illustrated in an instance given by Mary Ereaux. "My mother's cousin's husband came to my house a few weeks ago and wanted to ask me something about arrangements for the pop concession at the Fair. It was a matter of serious business and he and I stood, each looking in a different direction, talking only about the matter in hand. After he had left, my son-in-law, who is not an Indian, and who does not understand the Gros Ventre language, said: 'Mother, you looked as though you were mad at that man.' So I told him: 'In the Indian way, that man would be the same as my father, because his wife would be in the same relation to me as my mother, so we never talk unless necessary and never look at each other while talking.'" 604 601 [582]

The term "aunt" is reserved for father's sister and female cousins, and "uncle" for mother's brother and male cousins. Here, too, heightened reserve characterized the cross-sex relationship. "A man would not address his 'aunt' directly unless by chance she would be the only one there and he needed information. He would under no circumstances linger to make conversation with her. The same for a woman and her 'uncle.'"

Parents-in-law

The respect between members of the opposite sex who are of contiguous generations was most apparent in the avoidance between mother-in-law and son-in-law. This required that the two neither look at nor speak to each other at any time. It was stated that some men disregarded these rules after the death of the wife, "but most used to keep them all the time." There was one case mentioned in which the son-in-law of a very old woman told his wife: "Your mother is getting very old now. We won't see each other much longer anyway. It would be all right for your mother to come in to our lodge." Both Coming Daylight and Singer insisted nevertheless that, should such a proposal be made, the son-in-law would be the one to make the initiative, never the mother-in-law. 606

The avoidance between father-in-law and daughter-in-law was almost as strictly observed, in that a woman could not look directly at her father-in-law when she spoke to him, and she did not

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

606 even speak to him if it could be avoided. A man showed about the same degree of reserve to his father-in-law as he would to his own father, and a woman to her mother-in-law as to her own mother. Traditionally, a son-in-law was supposed to treat his parents-in-law well in the sense that he would send them a large proportion of the proceeds of his hunt. A woman would take the meat to her mother saying: "This is what your son-in-law sends you." Frequently the mother of the woman selected the choicest parts of this game to send as a return gift to her son-in-law. Parents-in-law were expected to publicly show pride in the achievements of their sons-in-law to about the same extent they would in those of their own sons. One especially nice way of showing appreciation of a good son-in-law was for his mother-in-law to make for and formally present to him a fancy robe and decorated moccasins to "dress him up" for dancing and for other occasions when finery was displayed. It was not uncommon, too, that shortly after marriage the bride's father would give a feast to which he invited his son-in-law, along with a number of his own friends, in order to "show his son-in-law how to observe the laws of hospitality and generosity in food." Later on, of course, a man would then once in a while include his father-in-law among those whom he invited.

Furthermore, a woman was supposed to be very generous to her son's wife in the way of keeping her supplied with berries and so on. Yet reciprocity was not expected, as illustrated by Cora's remark: "Most of the time it is the mother-in-law's place to do a lot for her son's wife. But I used to give berries and other nice things to my husband's mother, and she would laugh, because in the old days it would have been the other way around." And Coming Daylight's experience with her own daughter-in-law reveals something of the attitude in former times. Coming Daylight said: "I like my sons' wives just as much as I do my sons themselves. In fact I love them just as dearly as I do my own children. One time when I returned from working near the present Fort Belknap, the wife of my eldest son brought me some berry soup along with a big sackful of berries she had just gathered. I was so touched I said: 'You kill me but you don't kill me,' which is the equivalent of saying it was wonderful for a daughter-

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

in-law to do anything of the kind for her mother-in-law. So I gave that daughter-in-law two horses." 606

Although economic obligations were not incumbent, the relationship terms were used, and avoidances practiced, between parents-in-law and the brothers and sisters of the man and wife respectively. It was explained: "The brothers of a man respected his mother-in-law because in the old days it could happen that if a man died his brother might take the wife. And the same with a woman, because they had the custom of giving all the girls in a family to the same man if they liked him." [587]

Siblings of Opposite Sex

Among members of the same generation, the most marked respect was exhibited between siblings of opposite sex, and was extended to include all cousins. There was no relationship term for "cousin," all using sibling terms of address and without distinguishing between parallel- and cross-cousins. 593 605 [601]

Since a girl was removed from her own family at an early age and was brought up in a different household, actual face-to-face contact between brothers and sisters was slight. Nevertheless, their attitudes toward each other had important consequences with many ramifications. As interpreted by the Gros Ventres, the basic relationship between siblings of opposite sex gave clues to understanding expected behavior in several other categories of kinship, —in the avunculate and amitate, as well as in the relations between in-laws of the same sex and generation.

If it could possibly be avoided, brother and sister did not speak to nor look directly at each other. They communicated through a third person. Gros Ventres, who are today in middle age, explained how embarrassed they were as children when the authorities did not understand "the proper way of doing things." For instance, the good sisters and priests in charge of St Paul's, which at that time was a boarding-school, insisted as a privilege for the boys that they visit their sisters on Sunday afternoons in the girls' part of the school! How deeply this feeling of respect penetrates was brought home to the present author by the following incident. "One day she was with Mary and Coming Daylight, while waiting for Charles Buckman, who was to drive her to another part of the

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

602 525 Gambling between blood relatives for property the loss of which would hurt or would entail even small hardship on the loser was evidently looked upon as conflicting with the common loyalty and mutual helpfulness among all blood relatives that were expected by the Gros Ventre social code. The Gros Ventre felt, furthermore, that such gambling might easily give rise to quarreling and ill-will among relatives, whereas the code expected harmony and good will.

As regards affinal relatives, the rules were more complicated and less uniform. Loyalty, helpfulness, and harmony were desired and expected among close relatives by marriage, but the avoidance, respect, and familiarity conventions differed.

606 525 A son-in-law could not gamble at all against his mother-in-law, even on different sides for "cooking" for the winners. On the one hand the rule of respect and avoidance was the most rigid and absolute within the avoidance regulations: they could not look at or speak directly to each other, and could not be in the same lodge together. On the other hand they were expected to be very good and generous to each other. It may be added that these restrictions on the son-in-law applied also to his brothers, presumably too to the mother-in-law's sisters, although we failed to inquire about this last point.

[602] As regards all other relatives by marriage, they, even those prohibited from gambling even for small stakes, were permitted, it seems, to gamble as members of groups against one another where the stakes, if they can really be called such, were merely the above-mentioned "cooking" by the losing side for the winners. Some affinal relatives, however, such as father-in-law and daughter-in-law could not engage in a non-group twosome game, even for fun, just as brother and sister could not do so.

A son-in-law and father-in-law could not gamble against each other even for small wagers; the former could not gamble with the latter's brothers or even his close friends—and presumably vice versa, the father-in-law could not with the son-in-law's. Nor, as mentioned, could daughter-in-law with father-in-law. A son-in-law and father-in-law were under certain restrictions of respect and avoidance but not so absolute as those between son-in-law and mother-in-law; the two men could discuss "business" matters with each other, but could not just sit down and chat together about trivial things and especially about anything concerning sex or the eliminative functions. And about the same rule held for daughter-in-law and father-in-law in their personal relations.

Two brothers-in-law, two sisters-in-law, or a brother-in-law and his sister-in-law (wife's sister or brother's wife) could gamble against each other for small

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

stakes, but not for really large ones. A gambling game between two brothers-in- 606
law, small though the stakes had to be, was a good show for the onlookers— 525
not, however, nearly so good as one between two prominent enemy friends. Two sisters-in-law were also "just right" for gambling against each other.

Through all these three relationships run two currents: one of mutual goodwill and helpfulness, the other of familiarity, "teasing" and twitting. Between two brothers-in-law and two sisters-in-law there is relatively more of the first and less of the second; between brother-in-law and sister-in-law relatively more of the second and less of the first.

Two brothers-in-law could not discuss sex or vulgarity and could not go to the toilet together. They would be helpful to each other in giving presents, in a building project, in business matters, and so forth. But on the other hand [522]
they could go quite far in "humiliating" each other, in indulging in practical jokes and horse play at the other's expense, and in rivaling each other in war and in war-deed matching contests—but not to the limit, not so far as enemy friends could go. Two sisters-in-law could likewise "tease" each other, but could not go to the same length that brothers-in-law could go.

To her brother-in-law (sister's husband or husband's brother) a woman could go nearly any length in "teasing" and freedom in the way of crude horse play and of vulgar and obscene talk, and vice versa.

The gambling rule that prevailed, and still prevails largely, between these three types of siblings-in-law, namely, gambling for small stakes permitted and encouraged, but not for large stakes, appears to be genetically related to the two currents we have been discussing: the goodwill one prohibiting stakes whose loss would really hurt, the familiarity one permitting and provoking small-stake 619
gambling. 525

The Gros Ventre, with a population range of between about 800 and 2,000 621
in the second half of the last century, were divided into about a dozen bands. These bands were not sibs proper, but each was composed largely of kin [161]
related by blood or marriage. Members of a given band, whether related or not, would not gamble against one another. There was a well-marked we-feeling among the members of a band, somewhat distinct from and additional to the kinship feeling proper. Actually this was almost equivalent to "tribal" we-feeling, for each band was for the greater part of the year, particularly in the winter months when the bands scattered to separate quarters within the tribal territory, an almost completely autonomous economico-political unit, and any band was free if it wished to secede from the tribe at any time, temporarily or permanently.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

to himself: 'He gave to me, so I'll give to him.' But no one was in duty bound to give the equivalent in return." 574 431

Within the network of kinship obligations, exchange was more often indirect than reciprocal. A man could expect help from his father and from his mother's brother without being under obligation to return goods in like amount—he was supposed to repay them by conducting himself in such a way that they could be proud of him. This meant that the man in his turn would be especially generous toward his sister and her children, that he would adequately fulfill his duties toward his wife's people and provide goods in sufficient amount that his wife could fulfill her own obligations especially those toward her own brother's wife and children. 602 431

When others saw fit to honor an individual, say for bravery in warfare, that person was supposed to give away goods in large amounts to show that he appreciated the honor; and his relatives would join with him in giving, thereby increasing his, as well as their own, prestige. Likewise in paying for services, such as those of a medicine man, relatives would "chip in" to the best of their ability, the one assuming the largest part of the burden receiving the greatest boost in public esteem. A person who impoverished himself by giving generously at such times would be sure that, with his reputation thus established, he would soon be the recipient of gifts dispensed by others in like liberality. Meantime, however, he could not afford to sit back awaiting the presents from others. He would soon lose his coveted reputation and be referred to as lazy, an epithet strong enough to bring tears to the eyes of a man who entertained any ambitions whatsoever. 554 431 [602] [461]

If a person were in need, it was possible for him to request what was necessary, preferably from some relative who was well-to-do, and usually his request would be met. But a continual borrower lost status and a limit was thus put upon indiscriminate "begging." One woman stated: "If your sister asked you for something you would not refuse her, but it was to your brother's wife you would give things voluntarily. A woman had great pride in keeping her brother's wife well-dressed, and if you had an extra supply of dried berries she is the one you would think of first." 426 558 [607]

Thus we have the basis for the generalizations the Gros Ventres 431

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

572 Woman had sung around the circle once, he led his party to Bull Lodge's tipi. The latter was suspicious and thought: 'I'm in for it now!' Sits Like A Woman went up to Bull Lodge, took him by the arm and said: 'Come, my friend.' He led him to the middle of the group of returned warriors. He then faced Bull Lodge and said in a jesting way: 'Stand still or I'll kill you.' Bull Lodge stood there and Sits Like A Woman took his rifle and, drumming with the stock on Bull Lodge's back, sang the following song: 'He who poisons (i.e., a medicine man with power to kill) has no penis.' Bull Lodge and his brothers-in-law realized that Sits Like A Woman was in earnest because not only was the song a great insult, but the victim's brothers-in-law were present,—which they should not have been when any reference to private parts was made.[23] The war party took up the song with enthusiasm as Sits Like A Woman told Bull Lodge again: 'Don't move yet—I'll kill you anyway.' He took Bull Lodge's new Hudson Bay blanket and slit it in two; he slashed Bull Lodge's shirt and took it off him; he slashed his leggings and removed them; and finally he cut the belt so that the breech-cloth fell to the ground. Bull Lodge was standing there naked. By that time the brothers-in-law had stolen away, one by one. Bull Lodge knew better than to run away, and Sits Like A Woman said: 'Perhaps you have power to poison people. If you have a mind to poison me, go ahead and try. I'm not afraid of you. If you choose to pay me back that way, you might just as well try it on the sun. Or, if you choose to pay me back in the way I have treated you, go ahead. But first lead a successful war party. If you then do to me what I have done to you, I won't be mad. But I'll lead still another war party and do far worse to you that second time than I have done this time.'

[602 834]

"After thinking it over, Bull Lodge decided to buy off his enemy-friend and the next morning he got together an armful of valuable things, filled a pipe and went to Sits Like A Woman. 'My friend,' he said, 'here's a pipe I am offering to you. You take this pipe so you will stop doing things like this to me. While I don't mind it, my brothers-in-law were there. And here are some things you can have.' Sits Like A Woman laughed, but ac-

[607]

[23] Relationship between brothers-in-law precluded any reference to sex and bodily exposure in each other's presence. See pp. 118–19.

604 that the wife of a maternal uncle may likewise claim his nephew as "son-in-law."[8]

Brothers-in-law and Sisters-in-law

607 The mutual regard between brother and sister is said to have been reflected not only through the carrying out of the obligations of the avunculate and amitate in the spirit of "showing how much brothers and sisters thought of each other." It could also be seen in the type of behavior expected between brothers-in-law on the one hand, and sisters-in-law on the other. Brothers-in-law were generous to each other and could joke lightly with each other, but nothing even remotely connected with sex could be so much as mentioned in each other's presence. A man was circumspect in regard to his sister's husband out of respect for his sister, and to his wife's brother because the latter, out of respect for his own sister, had similar obligations toward him. Sisters-in-law behaved toward each other in like fashion. These attitudes were extended to include wife's brother's wife as "sister," rather than "sister-in-law," and husband's sister's husband as "brother."

Unmarried brothers of a man and wife likewise regarded themselves as brothers-in-law. A case which well illustrates the attitudes between them is the following as told by The Boy. "My older brother was married to Thick's older sister and we two young unmarried brothers-in-law experienced a most embarrassing situation. One of us was visiting a woman at night and the other came to the same woman, not realizing in the dark that his brother-in-law was already there. We recognized each other's voices, however, and the one who arrived last beat a hasty retreat. The matter has never, even to this day, been discussed nor so much as indirectly alluded to between us, and the embarrassment over this event led us to avoid each other for a considerable time thereafter. Eventually our relationship was deepened inasmuch as Thick married my sister. Even though my sister should die, Thick and I would continue to be brothers-in-law on the same plane."

[8] Kroeber, 1902, p. 10, calls attention to the identity of terms for "niece" and "daughter-in-law." Apparently a woman used the term "son-in-law" for her niece's husband or for her husband's nephew only if presents were given.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Traditionally, all reference to sex was forbidden between brothers-in-law in private as well as in public. They would be embarrassed at bodily exposure in each other's presence and consequently did not go swimming together, nor relieve their bodily necessities in sight of each other, nor indeed break wind. They were, however, allowed and even expected to joke with one another, or, better, to mildly tease each other in public. This sort of "joking" was of a very different kind from that expected between brother- and sister-in-law or between enemy-friends. As an example, it was stated that a man might say to a prospective employer, when his brother-in-law was present: "I'm the best logger around here. My brother-in-law can't cut logs as well as I can. Why hire him?" The other was supposed to take such ribbing without losing his temper, but try to get even at some later date. 607 834

Among the younger generation of today, brothers-in-law still "josh" at each other's expense and in good nature, but they tend to disregard the respectful attitudes and to discuss tabooed subjects. Deploring this state of affairs, Coming Daylight commented: "These young men around here now are 'tough' just like the Assiniboine men always were. The Assiniboine never were ashamed in front of their sisters' husbands, whereas the Gros Ventres were different and knew better than to behave in such a way." 607

Even at the present time, nevertheless, just as in the past, brothers-in-law are supposed to be generous with each other. They would advise each other in regard to a good business proposition, give each other the benefit in anything along that line, help each other in such ways as in building a house, in giving presents away in public, and so on.

Reticence on matters connected with sex was practiced between sisters-in-law, a woman being careful what she said both to her brother's wife and to her husband's sister. It was stated, for example, that "a woman can tease her sister-in-law, but not in a bad way because she would be her brother's wife." The stock joke between sisters-in-law hinges upon stinginess. A woman could say to her brother's wife: "Oh, you stingy thing. You hid your knife," which would indicate that she is fond of her food and doesn't wish to share it. But sisters-in-law do not josh each other to the same extent as do brothers-in-law.

607 A woman was, however, expected to be especially generous to her brother's wife. Coming Daylight gave, as example, her own experience at the time of her first marriage. "One day, shortly after I had arrived at my husband's home, his sister, Watches All, brought me a couple of skins saying: 'Now you take the flesh off these hides. You are known to do a good job, and since my eyesight is poor I might cut the skin.' So I did what was asked, never dreaming that one of these skins was to be a robe for me. Some time later Watches All invited me and another young woman who was married to my husband's cousin, to a lodge. When I arrived I found the lodge full of old women. I was told to go around to the place of honor in the rear, where two robes were placed. When the other young woman arrived, they told her to take her place beside me. We were both to sit beside the robes and not to rise until they were all through. Watches All had invited, among the others, the woman who had 'initiated' her and who acted as a sort of teacher. Watches All said to this woman: 'You are going to initiate my sister-in-law with this robe.' So they made a smudge and Watches All held one side of the robe and the woman held the other, as they stood behind me. Then they held the robe toward the fire three times, making the motion as though to put it about my shoulders, and on the fourth time they actually put it around me, tying it at the breast and telling me not to hold it on with my hands. Each of the four times the motion was made, the woman blew on the robe spraying it with a powdered root which she had in her mouth. Then they went through the same procedure for the other bride. Finally, we were told to walk out without picking up our old robes, which we had left by the door when we entered, and which were to be given to two of the oldest women present. The new robes were beautiful. They were embroidered with porcupine quills, fringed with deer-hoofs, and sprinkled with mica, which glittered in the firelight as we moved. It was certainly fine to have such a beautiful new robe; and right away, my husband gave his sister a horse because she had been so good to me. Later on, I made her some moccasins."

607 431 [292]

In addition to the special honor a woman might show her brother's wife by a ceremony such as described above, she would in general take pride in keeping her well-dressed. For instance Mary

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

explained: "Mrs. Curly Head was the best-dressed woman I knew. Her husband's sister kept her well-dressed. A woman has a lot of pride in the appearance of her brother's wife, and the old women tell us that it was the same in the old days." Cora corroborated this by stating: "My sister and I would load my brother's wife with presents. And if he had more than one wife, it would be the same,—a woman is good to her brother's wife no matter how many times he might be married." Coming Daylight mentioned that she made it a point to bring her cousin's wife—she had no blood brother—especially nice gifts whenever she made a trip and added that in former times, just as today, when a woman distributed berries she had picked, the first one she would think of would be either her brother's wife or her son's wife. 607 431 [431]

About all that a woman did for her husband's sister was to make her occasional gifts of moccasins. The giving of moccasins, however, had a significance far beyond what their extrinsic value suggests. Mary illustrated this by the following incident: "Flat Head is my cousin. He has three half-brothers, all of them having the same father but different mothers. I treat these three in the same way I treat Flat Head, namely, as a brother. One of these men died last spring, and his wife, who is of course my sister-in-law, came and brought me a pair of moccasins. So when she was leaving I gave her a woolen shawl which I had just bought, and a dress which I had made and intended to display in the bazaar. My husband's niece, who is young and doesn't understand the old ways, said reproachfully to me: 'Why, Aunt Mary, you gave up that nice shawl you wanted so badly.' So I told her: 'Surely—I couldn't let my sister-in-law go out of here without giving her something! You should know that when anyone gives you a pair of moccasins it is a big thing. It is as much as anything I can think of—as much as a bottle of whiskey or of brandy!'"

Grandparents

The relationship between grandparents and grandchildren was a free-and-easy one, unmarked by the reticence which characterized the parent-child relationship, or by the feeling of restraint which obtains between so many relatives of opposite sex. "A grandfather can say anything he likes to his granddaughter, and vice 603

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

593 so." Brothers could borrow from each other without asking beforehand. Futhermore, an older man, who was married, might allow a younger unmarried brother to join the Crazy Lodge, lending his wife to stand in the place of a wife to him for ceremonial purposes.

Brothers- and Sisters-in-law

607 522 The greatest freedom was exhibited between a man and his brother's wife, on the one hand, and his wife's sister on the other. Likewise a woman could say anything she chose to her husband's brother and to her sister's husband. Teasing and horseplay between brother-in-law and sister-in-law were not only permitted but expected. A favorite joke was for one to conceal in a strategic place within the lodge an "air cushion" consisting of a buffalo cow bladder, blown up and tied. When the other came in he was shown to the appointed place and his weight on the cushion caused a most embarrassing noise, much to the hilarity of all present. Taking it in apparent good nature, the victim would, however, bide his time to get even.

Another accepted type of trick was for one to make a laughing stock of the other by heavily blackening the eyebrows of the victim, while he or she was asleep. A rougher kind of play was also indulged in. Singer, for instance, said: "I was once thrown in the creek by my brother-in-law. It took me a long time to find opportunity for retaliation, because he was wary and stayed away from the creek when I was around. On one occasion though, when he started for his bath, I followed him, and, when he was on the brink of the creek, I sneaked up behind him and shoved him in yelling as I ran away: 'It took me a long time to get even with you!'" On another occasion she and her brother-in-law were partners in a game he made up. "The Gros Ventres had won in battle and this man said he was going to give a 'Victory Dance.' My sister and I joined the group, and, as we arrived, this brother-in-law of ours was singing all kinds of songs,—silly songs with the words all mixed up. Then he said: 'Each man take a partner. We are going to stand up all night. The first one who sits has to pay a fine!' So he chose me as his partner. Finally, after some time, he said: 'Wait a minute, I have to get a drink.'

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

So he rushed into his father's lodge, but another of his sisters-in-law went in and saw him sitting down, and said to me: 'You two have lost, and we have won, because your partner sat down first.' Since I didn't have anything to put up as fine, my husband's brother pulled my eyebrows out, as was customary when a person couldn't pay a debt of this kind. My partner, however, gave a feast prepared by his mother as payment, but failed to include me. I got even with him by coming up behind him one day shortly thereafter and emptying a pail of water over his head." 607 522 [686]

Whether he liked it or not, a man had to take without complaint whatever kind of speech or action his own brother directed towards his wife, and likewise a woman had to put up with whatever her sister said or did to her husband. Men who were married to sisters considered each other as "brothers" rather than as brothers-in-law, just as women married to brothers were "sisters" and not sisters-in-law.

Inseparable-friends

As broadly as kinship bonds were conceived among the Gros Ventres in both consanguineal and affinal relationships, kinship behavior and obligations were extended even more widely through the institution of "inseparable-friends." Coming Daylight explained this as follows: "If two men are *inithlha* this means that they have grown up together and are the same as brothers although they are not really kin to each other. The children of these two men would be the same as brothers and sisters to each other and could not marry. All relatives of 'inseparable-friends' were considered as own relatives. Crow's Bull's 'inseparable-friend' was Truth. He knew all the songs that belonged to the Flat Pipe because Crow Bull was Keeper and the two were so much together. Truth always called Crow Bull's son 'son,' and he called me 'niece' because Crow Bull was my mother's brother. A woman could tease the 'inseparable-friend' of her husband in just the same way she could tease her brother-in-law." 572 608

Cora illustrated how complicated relationships could become through the inseparable-friendship. "My brother and Arthur Skinner were such friends, which made Arthur my 'brother.' When Arthur married I should normally have taken his wife as 'sister-

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

NARRATIVE 4

787 Here is the second story told me by Thick.

539 "There was a man by the name of Bird Child who had a ghost
791 helper. Bird Child's wife had four brothers, one of them my father. One evening they filled a pipe and went to Bird Child's lodge to get him to find out from his ghost helper where there would be lots of buffalo and no danger, so they could go there and hunt. When they arrived at Bird Child's lodge they found him absent and only his wife in the lodge. Without invitation they made themselves at home and asked their sister where Bird Child was. She answered: 'I don't know where he is nor when he will be back.'

787 "Being Bird Child's brothers-in-law they decided to take the
776 liberty of using Bird Child's power and ghost helper, and of hav-
539 ing a seance in his absence. They asked their sister where Bird
[607] Child's bundle was. She showed them. One of the four brothers took it down. They then agreed who was to be tied up and to represent Bird Child. The one of the four designated agreed. They had him lie down and two of them tied him up tight and laid him in an enclosure made along the side of the tent [as in preceding story]. They were half-fooling, not quite serious. Their sister couldn't say anything: they imposed on her. They even attached the man's hair to the ropes with which they bound him in the robe until only his mouth was visible.

"Then they started to sing and sang the same song four times without stopping. At the end they heard yelling in the air and said: 'There he is. He has come for us.' As the ghost helper arrived the tent shook and the helper said: 'Who's that lying back there?' and answered himself: 'Some crazy man or someone with no regard for anybody's rights.' Then they heard a commotion behind the enclosure. The bound brother started to hollow for mercy. Next one of the brothers who had done the tying got hit with all the ropes tangled in a knot.

"Then they heard the bound man being thrown towards the door, and saying: 'Hurry up and make a light before this ghost helper kills me.' The spirit had picked him up and was trying

8:Flannery E-5 (1940-1948)1960 NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the shots and went later to see what happened, and there I saw her lying across the fire; her dress had burned off and her body was all shriveled. They weren't satisfied to kill her, but they burned her too!" She maintained her attitude and all the scolding from her relatives was of no avail. 159 183 765 [627]

Before turning to her adult life, we may refer to another instance which illustrates Coming Daylight's sensitivity to the suffering of others. In the Sacrifice Lodge, which is the Gros Ventre version of the well-known Plains Sun Dance, one of the important features was the spectacular self-torture which the active participants underwent. Each one had a sliver of wood embedded in the flesh of his chest. To the wood was tied a line, the other end of which was fastened high on the center-pole of the lodge. The man, leaning back so that the line was taut, went back and forth until finally the sliver was torn from his flesh. Meanwhile the women cheered on their relatives by "rattling their tongues," singing war songs, and the like, by way of encouraging the men to be brave and see the thing through. Coming Daylight was quite a young child when she first witnessed this performance. She remembered vividly her reaction when one of the young men, in his exhaustion, went to the center-pole and, putting his arms around it, wept aloud. She was not able to stand it any longer and rushed home crying. Her grandmother was very angry with her for leaving in the middle of the performance, but all the little girl could say was: "Oh, I just pitied that young man," and she could not be induced to return to the dance lodge. We may add here that actually in later years she did not participate in the Sacrifice Lodge even so far as women were allowed to do so. 304 [602] [533] 159 304

The examples we have given are sufficient to show, I believe, that Coming Daylight had developed as a child a very strong set against violence, against painful and dangerous experiences. She refused medicine power from supernatural sources not only because it was dangerous but also because it involved a kind of physical activity which was repugnant to her. She refused to mutilate herself and was extremely sensitive to painful experiences in others. Her actual deviations from the patterns of accepted or approved behavior all tended in this same direction against violence. Her adult behavior likewise was consistent with this trend in her personality. 159

In consonance with her feeling against physical violence Coming Daylight avoided as far as possible the rough-and-tumble play in which brother-in-law and sister-in-law were free to, and indeed expected to, indulge. Other women told with glee how they enjoyed "getting even" with their brothers-in-law by, for instance, pushing them when fully clothed into the river, or dumping bucketfuls of water over their heads when they least expected it, and so on; but Coming Daylight admitted without hesitation that she didn't like that sort of thing and never attempted to retaliate even when her brothers-in-law succeeded in playing jokes on her. Similarly while it was not unusual for women rivals to actively fight over a man, she refrained from such undignified behavior, although it must be admitted that she had enough provocation on at least one occasion of which she told me. She had just married a man who was described by others as something of a gay Lothario. A woman who had been trying to force her attentions on him was furious when she heard of the marriage. She rushed to the lodge and pulled Coming Daylight out feet first, yelling insults the while. When the latter regained her feet she made no attempt to hit back even though the other slapped her and pulled off an earring, tearing the lobe of the ear. Coming Daylight, however, bided her time and soon was able to make an opportunity for an exchange of words with the woman at a big social dance. 159 607 159 578 [535] [626]

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

So he rushed into his father's lodge, but another of his sisters-in-law went in and saw him sitting down, and said to me: 'You two have lost, and we have won, because your partner sat down first.' Since I didn't have anything to put up as fine, my husband's brother pulled my eyebrows out, as was customary when a person couldn't pay a debt of this kind. My partner, however, gave a feast prepared by his mother as payment, but failed to include me. I got even with him by coming up behind him one day shortly thereafter and emptying a pail of water over his head." 607 522 [686]

Whether he liked it or not, a man had to take without complaint whatever kind of speech or action his own brother directed towards his wife, and likewise a woman had to put up with whatever her sister said or did to her husband. Men who were married to sisters considered each other as "brothers" rather than as brothers-in-law, just as women married to brothers were "sisters" and not sisters-in-law.

Inseparable-friends

As broadly as kinship bonds were conceived among the Gros Ventres in both consanguineal and affinal relationships, kinship behavior and obligations were extended even more widely through the institution of "inseparable-friends." Coming Daylight explained this as follows: "If two men are *inithlha* this means that they have grown up together and are the same as brothers although they are not really kin to each other. The children of these two men would be the same as brothers and sisters to each other and could not marry. All relatives of 'inseparable-friends' were considered as own relatives. Crow's Bull's 'inseparable-friend' was Truth. He knew all the songs that belonged to the Flat Pipe because Crow Bull was Keeper and the two were so much together. Truth always called Crow Bull's son 'son,' and he called me 'niece' because Crow Bull was my mother's brother. A woman could tease the 'inseparable-friend' of her husband in just the same way she could tease her brother-in-law." 572 608

Cora illustrated how complicated relationships could become through the inseparable-friendship. "My brother and Arthur Skinner were such friends, which made Arthur my 'brother.' When Arthur married I should normally have taken his wife as 'sister-

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
/ NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

572
608

in-law.' The difficulty was that this woman Arthur married was already my 'aunt' because her father and my own were 'inseparable-friends.' Maybe in the old days Arthur couldn't have married her. But anyway we solved the situation by letting the older relationship take precedence over the newer one, so I called her 'aunt' rather than 'sister-in-law.'"

Some other pairs of "inseparable-friends," who were mentioned, were Cora's maternal grandfather and Consume It; Dressed In White and Ibe; Curley Head and Eagle Child. It was stated that while one friend was supposed to offer his life for the other in case of necessity, it did not always work out this way and at least one example was given to prove the point.

Regarding the same type of institutionalized friendship between women, the evidence is not clear. Singer stated: "When they use the word *itóhaha* it means that the two women concerned were friends from early childhood to the end of their lives. I had a friend like that. The father of that girl considered me as his own daughter and I had to respect her brother all my life. This girl was a cousin of Coming Daylight and we two were closer than sisters because we were the same age. We played together, worked together and did everything together. We used to eat at each other's homes, and we kept in touch after marriage by visiting back and forth." Coming Daylight suggested that these two were such close friends because their fathers may have been "inseparable-friends" and she denied that two women would participate in a relationship of the kind which would bind their families together independently of formalized friendship between men. No further information was obtained on this aspect of the subject.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

793 informed one, feasting them and also, *de regueur*, giving payment
*796 in valuable goods for each bit of instruction received. In these instruction sessions, the last keeper usually played the leading role, but the others would coach and correct when necessary or one of them if better informed on this or that point might teach while the last keeper took a back seat. The retiring co-keeper did most of the instruction of the new co-keeper. The Feathered Pipe keeper co-keeper, ex-keepers, and ex-co-keepers would commonly sit in at these sessions, but only as guests, without taking part in the instruction. Lame Bull, when first made keeper, got a great deal of his instruction from Deer, an earlier exceptionally well informed keeper.

793 A ritual relationship was contracted between the new keeper and co-keeper on the one hand and the ex-keeper and ex-co-keepers
● 608 on the other. All the ex-keepers become "grandfathers" to the new keeper and co-keeper; all the ex-co-keepers, "grandmothers" to them; and are so addressed by these names respectively. The retiring keeper and co-keeper became, as it were, principal "grandfather" and "grandmother" respectively. This sacred relationship was looked upon as very like that between grandparents and grandchildren by blood. Privileged familiarity in the way of vulgar talk and banter, between these ritual grandparents and grandchildren, obtained, but not quite the large degree of freedom that obtained between grandparents and grandchildren by blood.[8] The ritual "grandfathers" and "grandmothers" also had certain recognized powers of control over their "grandchildren": if, for instance, one
[626] of these "grandsons" went on a berserk rampage and was about to kill a fellow-tribesman, and his own father and mother could not bring him to reason, one of the ritual grandfathers might be called in to reason with his grandson and the latter would have to abandon his angry murderous design.

Keeper's Lodge

342 The Flat Pipe keeper's lodge was a large one, undecorated on
346 the outside except for a portion painted red around the door.

[8] Cf. Flannery, 1953, pp. 121-22.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

575 did not constitute such. Their grouping was a purely temporary
701 one, lasting only for the duration of the Dance. During, for in-
*796 stance, the Crazy Dance, all who joined in it, both members of the vower's company and others, were called Crazy Dancers, but once the Dance was over, they ceased to be such; there was no permanent organization or society of Crazy Dancers.

●608 A first step which a man who had vowed a Sacred Dance had
*796 to take was to fill an ordinary pipe, go to a man who had gone through the rite in fulfillment of a vow and who knew the rite well, and offer him the pipe, saying: "Here is the pipe. You will be my 'grandfather.'" By accepting the pipe,—and he could hardly refuse,—the latter became the vower's ritual "grandfather." At the same time the "grandfather's" wife became the vower's "grandmother," and both the vower and his wife (or wives) became "grandchildren" of the "grandfather" and his wife, and they addressed one another respectively by these names. The vower himself was in charge of the Dance and of the preparations therefor. The "grandfather's" role was that of liturgist, to instruct the vower in the ceremonies and observances proper to the given Lodge, and to see that they were carried out correctly. By way of exception, for the Old Women's Dance there were "grandmothers," but no "grandfathers."

When a given individual vowed one of the Sacred Lodges, other individuals could join with him in the rite, and each of these others would also choose a "grandfather,"—one who had participated in the given Dance,—with whom he (and his wife) would contract the same sacred relationship and who would perform the same offices. No person could be "grandfather" to more than one vower or associate on the occasion of any one dance.[8] The "grandfathers" would usually be older than the participants but not by any means necessarily very old men.

If, however, a younger man offered a pipe to a very feeble old man whose memory of the rites was poor, the old man might accept the pipe and so become the younger man's "grandfather."

---

[8] In 1948, The Boy indicated that for the Crazy Dance at least two younger men might together approach an older man and have him act as their ritual grandfather if he accepted them. [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The old man, however, might and commonly would appeal to another old man, who knew the Dance rites well even though he might never have vowed the dance, to double for him in seeing that the rite was properly carried out. 608 796 *

A keeper of one of the sacred Pipes, or at least of the Flat or Feathered Pipe, could not, during his term of office, function as "grandfather" at a sacred Lodge, but an ex-keeper could.

The relationship between ceremonial grandfather or grandmother and grandchild was a sacred one. Between such grandparent and grandchild a certain respect behavior had to be observed, and either was obligated not to refuse a request of the other. 608

Gambling, for instance, between them, or apparently even playing on opposite sides in a non-gambling hand game, was improper. [525] Between blood grandparents and grandchildren a distinct joking relationship obtained,[6] not however between ritual grandparents and grandchildren, although our field evidence is not entirely consistent. [603] According to one good informant, between these latter, telling vulgar jokes and stories, teasing about lovers, and so forth, were taboo; according to another, a little freedom in such matters was allowed, but not as much as was allowed and practiced between blood grandparents and grandchildren.

As regards, however, the much more significant mutual obligation of ceremonial grandparents not to refuse requests of grandchildren, our field data are entirely consistent and clear. This mutual obligation was rigidly lived up to and played a very important role in Gros Ventre social life. This role may best be illustrated by the following actual case.

Once Iron Woman, Crow Bull's wife, ran away with Kitfox. When people noticed she was gone, they said: "Oh, she must have run away again with somebody." Before she ran away this time, Crow Bull had said: "If she runs away again, there will be trouble." So people went to Black Raven, Kitfox's father, to tell him that his son was suspected and that there would probably be trouble. When Iron Woman and Kitfox came back, Crow Bull seized his loaded gun and dashed out as if he were going to kill

[6] See Flannery, 1953, pp. 121-22.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

608 them. Crow Bull's ceremonial grandson, whom he had instructed during the Crazy Dance and who was a relative of Black Raven, heard about this and ran in front of Crow Bull, saying: "Grandfather, don't do anything," and grabbed him just when he was about to fire. So Crow Bull said: "All right, because my grandchild stopped me." Then the relatives of Black Raven collected horses and blankets and other valuables, the young man himself contributing a blanket, and they all marched to Crow Bull's lodge carrying the goods and leading the horses. On arrival at the lodge, the guilty lover went in first with the fine blanket he was giving and did a great thing. He covered White Skunk, Crow Bull's "dearly-loved child"[7] with this blanket. So Crow Bull could hardly do or say anything. He just said, "Well, I will leave it up to my son White Skunk, whatever he says, I will do." White Skunk then said: "Just give her (Iron Woman) to that man (Kitfox). Just let her go," and that is what Crow Bull did. He got all these horses and blankets and other things in payment.[8] Thus even though Crow Bull was so angry, his "grandchild" could stop him.

[586] If a woman left her husband, and her "grandfather" went to her and told her to go back to her husband for she had nothing to get mad about, she would have to do so no matter how much she dreaded it.

608 If one Gros Ventre had murdered another, and the relatives of the murdered person were afraid to approach the victim's father
682 to offer indemnity, they could offer a pipe to any one of the father's ceremonial grandfathers. If the grandfather accepted it, he prayed with it and smoked it. When the murderer's relatives were ready with horses and clothing for payment, the grandfather would lead the relatives to his grandson, the murdered person's father, and say to him: "I have brought these people who ask your forgiveness. They are bringing these horses and blankets to you. I am asking you as my 'grandchild' to accept." The father could not refuse, for if he refused, some evil would overtake him. Actually refusals to such requests by a "grandfather" did not occur, to our informants' knowledge.

---

[7] For details on the dearly-loved child, see Flannery, 1941, pp. 33-37.

[8] For a discussion of indemnity in case of adultery see Flannery, 1953, pp. 185-88; for indemnity in case of murder, idem, p. 45.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Two general aspects of this socio-ceremonial relationship were discussed in detail with The Boy: the obligation not to refuse requests, and the possibility of abuses arising under the system which for the rest had obvious social values in solving conflicts and preventing bloodshed. 608

What lay back of the sense of obligation to grant requests? The offered pipe was the central symbol, whether offered once for all at the time the ceremonial relationship was first contracted or offered on a specific occasion to a "grandfather" or "grandson" not the offerer's own. The ordinary pipe as offered in either case was looked upon as a sacred thing, as symbolic or representative of the sacrosanct Flat Pipe and/or Feathered Pipe which had been given by the Supreme Being as the most powerful media to pray with, as the most assured means of getting a hearing from the Supreme Being. The offered common pipe was a sort of substitute in the case for the sacred Pipes themselves. The "grandfather" or prospective "grandfather" on accepting the offered pipe, would always pray reverently with it to the Supreme Being before smoking it. If he once accepted the office of "grandfather" to another, he realized that he was assuming all the responsibilities that went with it, among them that of never refusing a request made by his "grandson" without a pipe, or by another with a pipe to intercede with his grandson. It was a sort of implicit sacred pledge into which the Supreme Being himself entered, at least indirectly. He knew that if he ever refused such a request, harm would come to him in some form: he would have to pay the price of his refusal, to suffer the consequences. Whether such consequences would follow automatically or by action of the Supreme Being, or other beings is not clear from our field data, but in any case they were in some sense "supernaturally" caused. If people heard that a "grandfather" had refused a request made to him by his "grandson," they would say: "He (the 'grandfather') has sealed his fate." They would immediately lose their good opinion of him,—a social sanction added to the supernatural one,—and would look for some misfortune to befall him sooner or later. If soon after the refusal, evil did befall him, death or other grave mishap, they would say: "That's because he refused his grandson."

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

608 The problem of possible abuses of the system was explained by The Boy along the following lines. "First of all if an old man had become my 'grandfather' only recently, say just last week and I were a young man, no one would ordinarily ask me to appeal for him to my 'grandfather.' By strict right I could do so, and if no one else were available, I might be asked, but as an 'amateur,' as one lacking in experience, I would not be a good person to ask. An older, more experienced 'grandson' would be asked."

*796 Besides choosing a "grandfather" the vower also selected, as a herald or crier for the Dance, some intelligent old man gifted as an 20 orator. The crier's chief task was to walk or ride around the camp before and during the Dance announcing to the people whether the group would move and other decisions and agreements covering preparations for and procedure during the dance.

If the bands happened to be scattered at the time a sacred Dance was to be held, runners were sent by the vower to bid them foregather for the Dance. All members of the tribe were obliged to attend the Sacrifice and Crazy Dances, and pretty surely the Drum, Kit-tox and Dog Dances. As regards the Fly Dance, this was ordinarily held in connection with one of the other Dances, so everybody would be present anyhow. As regards the Old Men's and Old Women's Dances, they were not so lively or colorful, and were held a little apart and the people did not take much interest in them and "did not go much" to them; attendance was apparently not required.

*796 If any individual or group failed to come when summoned, the vower would request the soldiers of the Stars or Wolves as the 626 case might be, compel attendance.[9] Even a war party could not 701 start out if some one had vowed a dance and it was about ready to begin. So much for the types or personnel,—vower, associates, age-groups, ceremonial "grandfathers," criers, police, and "congregation,"—more or less common to all the Sacred Lodges. Personnel peculiar to particular Dances will be taken up later when each is described. Before describing the Dances one by one, some ritual observances common to all or many of them may be noted.

*796 After the vower of a Dance had chosen his ritual grandfather

[9] For a detailed illustration of this point, see Flannery, 1953, pp. 49-51.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 When, consequently, a Crazy Dance was in the offing, older
608 men who learned that they might be asked to be ritual grandfathers were very apt to run away and hide. But they could not sleep forever out on the hills, and when they came home, they would be stalked and caught by surprise, by day or night, and offered a pipe by an individual or group of two to four who intended to participate in the coming Dance. The group had secretly convened and decided on their grandfather. Finally bringing a filled pipe with them they would go to his lodge and walk in. The older man would then be practically trapped, for in ac-
[576] cordance with the general Gros Ventre pattern an offered pipe could hardly be refused. He might wilt and long hesitate, sitting with bowed head while the visitors entreated him to accept and to help them carry out their part in the Dance.

If on any occasion in the past he had had sex relations with any of these men's wives, either before or after their marriage to them, he would, when offered the pipe, be sacredly obligated to make indirect confession of the fact by refusing the pipe and saying to them (or to the individual young man, if the latter was alone), "My grandchildren, you are stillborn. I cannot serve as your grandfather," or "Go to somebody else. She is not your wife," or using some similar circumlocution. Such a reply might cause great embarrassment and worry to the young man, who perhaps had never suspected his wife.[11] Failure to confess would be "something wrong, a violation of belief or important custom" and would be followed by misfortune, even early death.

If when offered the pipe, stem first, the older man accepted it, and with it the office of grandfather, he would get up and say to the offerer: "All right, we will go outside." After they got outside the lodge the old man would say: "Now, young man, face east." The older man would stand behind him, holding the pipe stem up, and pronounce the vow, "A woman is being offered so that such-and-such a person will recover from sickness and get well. We are going to have a Crazy Dance. He [the young man]

[171] [11] The Arapaho custom in this matter was quite similar, we were told by an Arapaho woman, the widow of a Gros Ventre, who was present while we were discussing the point.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

says this to You [Supreme Being]," and at the end would say four times, "Yo-o-o-o-o-o." Then (or perhaps before this pronouncement rite) the older man smoked the pipe. The grandfather was free to recruit an assistant, usually a younger man than himself, to help him paint the vower and the vower's wife. The several functions of the grandfather,—instructing, painting, feeding, gift-making, and especially the sex test,—will be described as we go along. 796* 608●

If the chief vower or any members of the groups of two to four dancers had younger brothers of, say, about 7 to 10 years of age, these latter could be brought into the dance as "Little Crazy Boys." These young boys were painted, were present all through the rite, and served as pages or messengers. If, for instance, a grandfather did not know exactly how body painting at a particular juncture should be done, the Little Crazy Boys would be sent around to get the information. They did not, however, participate in major features of the rite, such as jumping in the fire and so forth. 796*

The making of the vow to hold the Crazy Dance and the securing of the ceremonial grandfathers were done quietly and privately. The public phase of the dance began with the formal announcement.

A crier (or criers) would go around the camp advertising the dance and talking it up, with exhortations such as: "Now you young men who are going to dance, fix up your hearts, be men, be strong, be men and join the dance, go through with it. Be men, don't be weaklings. But think it all over well before you join. This red paint is rough (said figuratively to imply: your wife is involved, you will have to give her away, to expose her to a severe test.)" As previously mentioned there was apt to be a certain resistance on the part of the younger men, to this "sales pressure," and a touch of cynicism as well.

The Crazy Dance was usually held about June when the buffalo had fattened up well, or else a little later, about August. In case the people happened to be scattered at the time, runners were sent out to bid them foregather. The chief vower or the one who accepted the challenge put up his lodge in the center of the camp circle, and this served as executive headquarters of his council and age-group until and during the dance. [361]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 they would all be in camp anyhow. Our informants made no mention of criers or police in connection with the Fly Dance.

Ordinarily the Fly Dance was supposed to be gone through first, before any of the other sacred dances, but there were exceptions, as in the case of Turn Toes who joined the Crazy Dance first when he was a young man and the Fly Dance only after he was an old man. Coming Daylight's husband, Little Man, never joined the Fly Dance.[26]

[561] [883] The Fly Dance was usually performed by youths, mostly young unmarried fellows of the age range of about 16 to 20 years as nearly as we could determine. With the chief vower would be associated in the dance all the members of his own age-group or company (e.g., all the "Potbellies"), and apparently no others. They would carry it out in a body.

No women joined the dance. But, according to Coming Daylight, if a woman's son was participating as a dancer "she might go way to be back of the tent [apparently the dance lodge] and dance just like her son was doing, not making fun."

*796 The Fly Dancers would choose their ceremonial grandfathers from among the older men. The young fellow wishing to join the 608 dance would fill a pipe, go with it to an old timer, and offer it to him saying: "Here is the pipe. You will be my grandfather." If the old man accepted, he would instruct the candidate in all the rites and observances of the dance and would perform the other functions therein to be noted presently. At the last Fly Dance held [circa 1907] two young fellows, Mark Black Crow and Jerry Bear, came together to Coming Daylight's husband, Warrior, and offered him a pipe, which he accepted, thereby agreeing to act as their grandfather.[27] Cora Chandler's uncle, Sits-in-the-middle, had been "boss" of a Fly Dance which she had witnessed one Fourth of July when she was still of school age, probably this last one held.

*796 According to The Boy, the Fly Dance lasted only one day. As our informants had been eye-witnesses of this dance, it is probable

[178] [26] These exceptions occurred after the breakdown of the ceremonial cycle. [R.F.]

[27] In 1948 The Boy explained that in this Dance a group of boys—even more than four—could have the same ritual grandfather. [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 The chief vower and her associate dancers had no ceremonial
608 grandfathers but each one had a ceremonial grandmother, an old woman "who had retired and reached end of the road."

The chief vower would take a pipe filled with tobacco, offer it to an old woman, so requesting her to be grandmother and to be the "boss" and "manager" of the dance. This latter woman was in charge of the dance and told the others what to do, and was said to "make the dance for" the chief vower. The dance was held so often that all the dancers knew what was to come next, but nevertheless they would await instructions from the "boss." On one occasion when Coming Daylight was a "calf," the chief vower was a very old woman, Digger, at one time married to Crow Bull, and the "boss" was Matter-in-the-ear. After the latter had "made the dance for" Digger, the latter could "make it for" some other
[845] woman. On another occasion, a woman named Hairy Woman (born with lanugo) was "boss." According to Coming Daylight, the "boss" was called "grandmother" by all the women dancers.

*796 The women dancers were considered as buffalo "cows," and as "mothers" to the "calves." One of the old women dancers played the role of buffalo "bull."

The "calves" were very young girls, not necessarily "dearly-loved" children, although there was a certain preference for them. There could be more than one girl "calf" for each dance. In one of the two dances in which Coming Daylight was a "calf," there were four girl "calves," all of them associated with the "shorts," and one boy "bull calf." The "talls" on this occasion could get no "calf" as they were too poor to give things away, as was *de rigueur*, for the "calves." "Dearly-loved" children were preferred for the reason that their people would usually be in a position to make such presents.

When Coming Daylight was asked to take the part of a "calf" in the Women's Dance, she was a very little girl, then living with her grandmother. Two women, apparently the two waiters or attendants, came into her grandmother's lodge. One of the two at once offered Coming Daylight a big pipe, stem first, filled with tobacco mixture. She did not take it right away as she did not know what the action meant. The woman said to her: "Take it. We

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

it up right away?' My husband said, 'Let it bleed,' because he was afraid it would be sore if it didn't bleed. So when the old man thought it had bled enough, he chewed some big-leaf sage, made a poultice, and put it on my finger (and/or "sprinkled powdered root on my finger," she added later). It healed quickly and never troubled me. . . . We had to give the old man something for doing that. . . . My daughter lived to be a young woman." 782 785 304 [752]

Self-torture out on the hills,—"sacrifice alone on hills," as it was called,—had much in common with self-torture at the Sacrifice Dance. The chief difference was that, unlike the Sacrifice Dance torture rite, it was done in solitude. The self-torturer had to have a ritual grandfather, a man who himself had previously undergone this solitary self-torture—this in contrast to flesh and finger cutting in which there were no ritual grandfathers. The "grandfather-grandson" relationship so contracted persisted after the rite was over. Coming Daylight and The Boy were in agreement that the solitary self-torture was a more severe ordeal than self-torture at the Sacrifice Dance. [608]

Those mentioned by our informants as having gone through "sacrifice alone on the hills" were: Stiffarm; Running Crow (Stiffarm as his "grandfather" for this rite); Coming Daylight's husband Little Man (Running Crow as his "grandfather"); her cousin White Skunk, son of Crow Bull; The Boy's brother; Jim Shortman; and perhaps Sits-in-the-Middle. On Stiffarm's, Running Crow's, and Sits-in-the-Middle's experience we obtained no details; on White Skunk's, no details beyond the fact that he underwent it "because my [Coming Daylight's] son was sick at the mission school: that son died anyway," and that he did "right on this hill here [at Hays]." The detailed accounts of Little Man's experience as narrated by Coming Daylight, of The Boy's brother's as narrated by The Boy, and of Jim Shortman's as narrated by himself, to be given now, will help to fill out the generalized picture of the rite in the preceding paragraph.

Coming Daylight's account of Little Man's "sacrifice alone on the hills," given in separate fragments on four different days, is here presented just as she gave it.

"My husband Little Man [Deafie] went out to the hills. When

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

621 525 Members of one band could and not infrequently did gamble both for small and for big stakes against members of other bands, just as one kinship group used to gamble against others. Tribal we-feeling certainly existed, but seemingly not as intense as band we-feeling, just as, in turn, the latter was not as intense as kin we-feeling. In inter-band, as in inter-kin, gambling, spectators, if they bet at all, would lay their wagers on the players of their own band, as required by band loyalty, regardless of the relative skill and reputation of the contesting players or teams.

575 [885] 525 For Gros Ventre men who had reached full adulthood and were still in the prime of life, there were two age-societies, called the Stars and the Wolves (or Wolf-men). These two groups, with soldier-police functions, would join forces when necessary in keeping order, in fighting fires, and in defending the whole tribe against enemies, but for the rest rivalry between them was pretty keen. Stars would gamble against Wolves in big games for large stakes, but ordinarily a Star would not gamble against a Star or a Wolf against a Wolf, except for refreshments or a smoke or similar trifling "stakes." Inasmuch as membership in the two societies cut across the lines of kinship and band membership, inter-society gambling suffered an important restriction: if a Star were gambling in a given game, his relatives among the Wolves would not play or bet against him in that particular game. Kinship ties took precedence over society ties.

525 648 Gros Ventre would of course gamble for big stakes against members of other tribes with whom they happened to be at the time on sufficiently good terms, or at least not bitterly and actively hostile, to meet and foregather peacefully, such as the Piegan, Flathead, Nez Percé, and Cree. In such intertribal contests they would often go out to win every possession of their opponents.

572 525 The Gros Ventre distinguished three kinds of friends: ordinary friends, true or pledged friends, and enemy or war friends. As a rule ordinary close friends would not take opposite sides in a big gambling game. This was all the more true of pledged friends. Two boys, for instance, who liked each other and who had perhaps grown up together would, though belonging to different [608] bands, enter into a sort of "sworn brotherhood," give each other presents, exchange intimate confidences, and promise, without religious rite of any kind, to stand by each other always, even to death if necessary. Two girls could also enter into a similar pact. Such "true" or pledged friends never gambled against each other either as players or as backers, at least never for stakes of value.

Of enemy or war friends we have previously spoken when describing the wheel game. Two enemy friends would gamble against each other for small stakes or big, the bigger the better. In fact a hand game for big stakes between

124 Cooper felt that compensation was due them. It may be stated however that the money paid was looked upon as in the nature of a gift, and the generosity displayed in the form of counter-gifts, both to Dr. Cooper and to me, was truly touching.

115 I was invited to the Fort Belknap Reservation in 1940 to work
123 exclusively with the women and to deal mainly with matters other than religion. The two oldest women at Hays, Coming Daylight
[609 and Singer, accepted me as their "granddaughter" which was
603] fortunate in view of the freedom allowed between grandparents and grandchildren in Gros Ventre society. Although these two old women did not speak English, I was happy in having as interpreters women who were well liked by them and who were themselves interested in "the old ways of doing things." Thus they proved valuable informants on their own account. Mary Ereaux and the late Cora Chandler were two who served admirably in both capacities in 1940; Mathilda Cuts The Rope and Mae Main aided me most ably in 1945 and 1948. Garter Snake, a valuable informant, was the only woman for whom a man, Charles Buckman, interpreted.

123 While on the Reservation, I enjoyed the hospitality of the
124 School Sisters of Saint Francis at their convent. I went out, however, before nine and returned at five or six, spending each day visiting the women in their homes. There we smoked and chatted and worked in an atmosphere of easy informality. Much of the material given by the women might be classified under the heading of "expressive interviews." The older women were interested in the fact that I could take down so quickly in shorthand what the interpreter said, but occasionally checked on my accuracy, and the interpreter's as well, by asking me to read back for translation to them something they had said hours or days before!

In 1945 and 1948 when I worked with the men, who had previously cooperated with Dr. Cooper, the situation was naturally somewhat more formal than that which obtained with the women. We met in the Community Hall at Hays. As our business-like sessions proceeded, various Gros Ventre men dropped in and sat on the sidelines. Many of these, including some who were not regular informants or interpreters, such as Tom Bad Road, Steve Bradly, Rufus Warrior and others, helped by freely joining in

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

276 would use tobacco in his prayers for the patient. If the patient survived but was still weak, the keeper made him smoke to get back his strength. So some of the other tribesmen learned to smoke. Gradually social (and recreative) smoking took its place together with ceremonial smoking.

In earlier times, the women never smoked either ritually or socially. Even in rites where they had an important role, such as [562] the inauguration of a new pipe keeper, they did not smoke, as women were considered secondary, not equal to men. Even as late as The Boy's and Thick's early boyhood in the decade before the last buffalo disappeared (1884), only the old women smoked, never the young girls. The spread of the custom among these old women was probably due to their discovery by experience that the smoking prescribed for maladies, such as, chronic headache, was good for the body. But even today, although women smoke non-ritually when alone or among themselves, they are not allowed to smoke at a Pipe rite, and, if wives are present when a man invites a group of men for a social visit or meal and he fills up his pipe to give his guests a smoke, he does not offer the pipe to the wives.

Tobacco was used only in pipe smoking. It was sometimes smoked straight by old men and old women, and by the sick as [17 824] a cure. But ordinarily the Gros Ventres smoked it mixed either with red willow, as did the Cree and Assiniboine, or preferably, and in the Flat Pipe rites always, with larb.

Larb is "a ground plant that grows on hills and mountains." We could get no specimen for identification. After the tobacco and larb were mixed, a little more larb than tobacco, fat was worked into the mixture to season it. On taking leave from his Gros Ventre [431 609] friends in 1940 the present author was given a small bag of this mixture as a token of peace and good will and found the mixture a very pleasant aromatic smoke.

The wild parsley, associated with the Flat and Feathered Pipe 278 and with the Crazy Lodge, was used as a powerful poison. It was greatly feared and was spoken of in undertones. Its preparation is a lost art. The whole plant was and is considered poisonous, but poison was prepared principally from the root, which was first

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

nothing to show that they had long been in the Saskatchewan region. All that is certain of their previous past is their closer relationship to the Arapaho than to any other tribe; and the origin of the Arapaho is equally obscure, except that it is certain that, if they came from the north and east, it was a long time ago. Of the Gros Ventre it can only be said that, while related to the Arapaho and regarded by them as almost politically a part of themselves, they were far separated from them when first known, with them for a short time later, and again separated, and in contact and alliance with another much more distantly related Algonkin branch. Their habitat in a hundred years has been successively near the Saskatchewan, the Platte, and the Missouri. There is nothing to show that such variability of affiliation and location within the culture region of the Plains has not been characteristic of their previous history. 131 N4 [648]

The Gros Ventre call the tribes near them by the following names: Arapaho, hinan'än (in Arapaho, hinanaei-na"); Cheyenne, itisön, "scars" (itisö", "a scar;" Arapaho name of the Cheyenne, hitaciina"); Cree, na"tsa", "rabbits;" Ojibwa, djinhuna"tsa", "Lower Cree;" the three Blackfoot tribes, waotä"nixtääts, "black-feet" (a Blackfoot, waotä"nixtänin, "black-foot-man;" a Piegan, tsä"t'; the Bloods, ka"winähää"); Assiniboine, na"djineihin; Sioux, na"wina"djinei, "Below-Assiniboine" (in Arapaho, na"tinei, "a Sioux"); Crow, hounen, "crow-men;" Minitari, wuxnokayän, "—lodges;" Shoshone, sösöuyänin, "snake-men;" Bannock, waotä"nixiinin, "black-men" (in Arapaho the Ute are called wɛotänähiçi, "black"); Flathead Salish, kaakaäänin, "flathead-man;" Nezpercé, taniibäts, "pierced-nose" (Arapaho taniibääçi is the Caddo). Two tribes to the southwest or perhaps west, which have not been identified, are the wasöi"hiiyeihits, "grass-dwellers," who live in houses of grass or brush; and the na"wuxaaniibiina"ts, "fish-eaters." 101 648

The Gros Ventre were divided into groups similar to those of the Blackfeet and Sioux. The names of these bands were nicknames, and in no way totemic. As there was prohibition of marriage within the band, the name "clan" is, however, applicable to them. Descent was paternal and a man belonged to his father's band; but the prohibition of marriage extended also to his mother's clan, all the members of both the father's and mother's clan being considered relatives. Each band seems to have had a recognized head or chief. During the winter the tribe broke into smaller groups, consisting of one or perhaps more clans, which followed the buffalo, and camped chiefly in the timber. There corrals were made for the horses at night to prevent their being stolen by war-parties. When summer came, the clans joined and camped together in the large camp-circle. In this, the opening of which was toward the east, the different bands had definite 621 614 [611] [582] 221 361 621 614

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

nothing to show that they had long been in the Saskatchewan region. All that is certain of their previous past is their closer relationship to the Arapaho than to any other tribe; and the origin of the Arapaho is equally obscure, except that it is certain that, if they came from the north and east, it was a long time ago. Of the Gros Ventre it can only be said that, while related to the Arapaho and regarded by them as almost politically a part of themselves, they were far separated from them when first known, with them for a short time later, and again separated, and in contact and alliance with another much more distantly related Algonkin branch. Their habitat in a hundred years has been successively near the Saskatchewan, the Platte, and the Missouri. There is nothing to show that such variability of affiliation and location within the culture region of the Plains has not been characteristic of their previous history. 131 N4 [648]

The Gros Ventre call the tribes near them by the following names: Arapaho, hinan'än (in Arapaho, hinanaei-na"); Cheyenne, itisön, "scars" (itisö", "a scar;" Arapaho name of the Cheyenne, hitaciina"); Cree, na"tsa", "rabbits;" Ojibwa, djinhuna"tsa", "Lower Cree;" the three Blackfoot tribes, waotä"nixtääts, "black-feet". (a Blackfoot, waotä"nixtänin, "black-foot-man;" a Piegan, tsä"t'; the Bloods, ka"winähää"); Assiniboine, na"djineihin; Sioux, na"wina"djinei, "Below-Assiniboine" (in Arapaho, nä"tinei, "a Sioux"); Crow, hounen, "crow-men;" Minitari, wuxnokayän, "—lodges;" Shoshone, sösöuyänin, "snake-men;" Bannock, waotä"nixiinin, "black-men" (in Arapaho the Ute are called wootänähiçi, "black"); Flathead Salish, kankaäänin, "flathead-man;" Nezpercé, taniibäts, "pierced-nose" (Arapaho taniibäätçi is the Caddo). Two tribes to the southwest or perhaps west, which have not been identified, are the wasöi"hiiyeihits, "grass-dwellers," who live in houses of grass or brush; and the na"wuxanlibiina"ts, "fish-eaters." 101 648

The Gros Ventre were divided into groups similar to those of the Blackfeet and Sioux. The names of these bands were nicknames, and in no way totemic. As there was prohibition of marriage within the band, the name "clan" is, however, applicable to them. Descent was paternal and a man belonged to his father's band; but the prohibition of marriage extended also to his mother's clan, all the members of both the father's and mother's clan being considered relatives. Each band seems to have had a recognized head or chief. During the winter the tribe broke into smaller groups, consisting of one or perhaps more clans, which followed the buffalo, and camped chiefly in the timber. There corrals were made for the horses at night to prevent their being stolen by war-parties. When summer came, the clans joined and camped together in the large camp-circle. In this, the opening of which was toward the east, the different bands had definite 621 614 [611] [582] 221 361 621 614

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

361 places. Beginning at the eastern opening of the circle, and going south-
621 ward, westward, northward, and eastward again, the order in which the
614 clans camped was as follows: —

1. Frozen, or plumes.
2. Those-who-water-their-horses-once-a-day.
3. Tendons.
4. Those-who-do-not-give-away, or buffalo-humps.
5. Opposite (or middle) Assiniboine.
6. Ugly-ones, or tent-poles worn smooth (from travel).
7. Bloods.
8. Fighting-alone.

Other names of clans, whose location in the camp-circle was not ascertained, and some of which, perhaps, are second names of clans enumerated above, are: —

Dusty-ones.
Coffee.
Weasel-skin head-dress.
Ka'hutyi (the name of a chief).
Poor-ones.
Berry-eaters.
Torn-trousers.
Gray-ones, or ash-colored.
Breech-cloths.
Night-hawks.

Anecdotes referring to incidents that are usually ridiculous accompany these names. The Smooth-worn-tent-pole people were so called, because the ends of their tent-poles, used as travois, were worn smooth from much travelling. The Tendon clan was so called, because one of this band had said that the tendons in the neck of a buffalo were good eating. The Frozen-people were so called, because, when they had hungry visitors in winter, they gave them frozen meat. Those-who-water-their-horses-once-a-day are said to have followed this practice so that their horses would gain flesh more quickly. The Opposite-Assiniboine, like the Assiniboine, were said to have had few horses, and the Fighting-alone were very warlike people. Those-who-do-not-give-away-without-return were considered stingy, and the Ugly-people were said not to have painted their faces.

FOOD AND HUNTING.

224 Like most of the other tribes of the Plains, the Gros Ventre subsisted
[262] almost entirely on the buffalo, and their culture depended to the usual degree upon this animal. The following scattering notes were obtained regarding the hunting of buffalo and other animals.

Buffalo enclosures used to be made of trees and forked limbs set in the ground in a half or three-quarter circle below a vertical bank. Extending over the country above the bank, a long chute of two rows of stone monuments was erected, behind which sat men. Other hunters drove the buffalo into the chute. Those behind the piles of stone rose up as the buffalo

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

each of which has a ceremony of its own rivalling that of the other (respectively the war-dance and the star-dance), compete in a horse-race, with the agreement that the beaten party is to put up the crazy-lodge. It does not seem that this is a common procedure. 796 616

The Gros Ventre abandoned their dances much earlier than the Arapaho, and almost nothing of the organization remains now, except a memory. It is somewhat difficult to procure precise details of the procedure, especially in the older dances. In great part, the regalia used have also perished, and it has been possible to secure only a very few pieces. These show, as do the descriptions given by the Indians, that the objects and decorations used are quite similar to those of the Arapaho. The distinction of several degrees purely of honor within each ceremony, which is so characteristic of the Arapaho age-dances, is also found in the Gros Ventre, though it seems that the distinctions made and the number of degrees are not quite so elaborate. This is evidenced, not only by the fact that few degrees are described by the Gros Ventre, a fact which might be due to their longer disuse of the ceremonies, but also by circumstances such as the one that certain regalia, which in the Arapaho dog-dance are worn only by the members of the second and third highest degrees, are among the Gros Ventre the common regalia of all participants; only the highest degree of the Arapaho being retained by the Gros Ventre as distinct. 796 178 171

The Gros Ventre call their entire ceremonial organizations benaa"wu, a dialectic form of the Arapaho bayaa"wu, and, like it, probably meaning "all the lodges." The members of the age-societies are called beniinen, commonly translated at the present day as "soldiers," etymologically probably "all-men," or "all-(?)-men." 796 561

The ceremonies of the Gros Ventre benaa"wu, with the age-dances given in order from youth to old age, are the following:—

Açeiha"w"	Sacrifice-lodge,[1] sun-dance
	Star-dance, partial preliminary
Nōubā"w"	Fly-lodge, first dance
Haha"tyā"w"	Crazy-lodge, second dance
Nōuhā"w"	Kit-fox lodge, third dance
Hotibyā"w"	Dog-lodge, fourth dance
Nanā"nahā"w"	Tomahawk-lodge, fifth dance
Bītahā"wu"	Drum (?) lodge, sixth (?) dance
Benuxteā"w"	Buffalo(?) dance, women's dance.

The members of these successive age-ceremonies are called respectively

[1] Once translated "looked-at-lodge."

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 ors and directors through the dance. By these old men the dancers are painted in the dancing-lodge every morning during the ceremony. The dancers' wives take a more prominent part in the ceremonies among the Gros Ventre than among the Arapaho. They are painted at the same time as their husbands by his "grandfather." Every night during the ceremony there are certain observances between the "grandfathers" and the dancers' wives, who leave the camp-circle together in order that the women may receive medicine from the old men. This practice is much more developed among the Gros Ventre than among the Arapaho.

Whether there is in each dance a preparatory period in which the dancers' regalia are made and they are instructed in the ceremony by their "grandfathers," as among the Arapaho, is not clear in the case of the Gros Ventre. The dancing itself in all of the age-ceremonies goes on for four days,[1] and, in some cases, nights. On the last day the dancers leave the lodge, and [361] dance for gifts before the tents of prominent men at different places in the camp-circle. Immediately upon this the camp breaks. The dancers, with the property they have received in gifts, go in advance, and lay the presents on the ground. The camp comes up in a body and makes a rush; the property is seized and divided. The dancers form in a circle, and at the conclusion of four dances rush off to race. On their return the ceremony is ended. Only in the case of the crazy-dance do these ceremonies of the fourth day appear to take place without the camp-circle having been broken; [786] and for four days thereafter the camp remains in position, giving the participants in the ceremony opportunity for the license which is a part of this dance.

All the ceremonies, including the sun-dance and the women's dance, are made as the result of the pledge of an individual in the hope of deliverance from death or danger, either of himself or of a relative. If a member of a company of men who are of the proper age to make the crazy-dance has a relative whom he loves, and whose death from sickness is feared, he may say, "Such and such an old man (naming him) shall put up the crazy-lodge for me this summer." If the sick person dies, the dance is not held. Sometimes a person who is ill himself pledges to make the dance on his recovery. The pledger of any dance is called ye'nouhuxtj[1] (Arapaho, ya'nahût[1]). A man in danger in war, or one who has been wounded, may also pledge the dance. The time for the dances is apparently summer. For the sun-dance, spring or early summer, when the trees are full leaved, is [616] specified; and it is added that sometimes, after the pledge is given, the people have to wait all winter to make the ceremony. In the case of the crazy-dance, it is stated that two divisions of the young men of the tribe,

[1] Probably to be interpreted as three nights and three days.

561 582 taboo. This was the case regarding the children of "inseparable friends," but whether or not it was so regarding the children of all members of the company, mutual hospitality was frequently extended among the members—"a man would most often invite the members of his age group." Further, it was not unusual for members of the same company to go hunting and on raiding and revenge parties together. If a young man were killed at war and [727 his body brought home, the members of his company were said to 764] have assembled and danced around his bier, sometimes sobbing and crying as they danced.

561 As members of either one or other of the two larger societies they joined with members of other companies, in the Stars and 575 Wolf-men respectively, to perform their proper social dance and to participate in activities such as gambling, horse-racing, "bragging contests," and so on, wherein they could compete with mem- [616] bers of the opposite moiety. An individual seemingly tended to choose his serious enemy-friends from among those of the rival organization and thus is explained the spirit of competition which Kroeber notes between the Stars and "other companies."[18]

The Societies

575 The Stars and Wolf-men societies were organized along identical lines and were distinguished from each other only in details of procedure.

Each society included approximately half the total number of able-bodied warriors in the tribe. They each had two renowned men as leaders—two Star leaders of relatively recent times having been Comes A-flying and Crazy Bull; two Wolf-men leaders, Skinner and Strikes On Top. The leaders remained mounted when the others of the society were marching on foot in preparation for their dance, and carried whips at the dance as insignia. These men were supposed to have been outstanding warriors who had while mounted actually counted coup against the enemy. Two members of the last-admitted company served as *atsa'an* (waiters, messengers) at the dances, and each society had an announcer, presumably chosen from among the "old men" who had gone through the Law Enforcer Dance.

[18] Kroeber, 1908, p. 234.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

CHAPTER II

TRIBAL ORGANIZATION

The greater bulk of our material on the Gros Ventres covers the fifty year span from about 1835 to 1885. During that period, the tribal territory centered about the Milk River. The present Reservation, the boundaries of which were finally fixed in 1888, represents only a small part of the land claimed and held by the Gros Ventres as their own. 131 [648]

Band Names and Affiliation

619 621

The political organization of the Gros Ventres was simple. The division into fairly autonomous bands was basic, and apparently the number of bands was twelve. Our informants, both those who were adult and those who were children, at the time when the whole tribe still encamped as a unit, agreed on that point. The list of band names given by our two oldest informants, Coming Daylight (b. 1854) and Singer (b. ca. 1856), is as follows: Coffees, Same as Assiniboine, Plenty Bad, Greys, Fast Travelers, Water Horses Once a Day, Upper Quarters, Frozens, Buffalo Overloaded, Tendons, Bloods, Night Hawks. These two old women maintained that, in their own experience, the bands camped in this order, and in a circle, when the whole tribe was together. [115]

Quite independently of the above list, another was obtained from The Boy (b. 1870). As a child he witnessed the formation of the camp circle, and he knows many details of previous decades from his father, Lame Bull (b. ca. 1825, d. 1890) and from other old men. The Boy's list agrees with that given by the two women, except in regard to one band. He includes a group called Poor Greys and omits Night Hawks. All of our informants insisted that the Greys and Night Hawks were distinct bands, but there was a difference of opinion as to whether or not the Greys and Poor Greys were in reality the same band. 621 115 114

Seven of the band names can be identified with Kroeber's num- 621

very much increased. White Eagle governed the people very wisely and he governed until he died."

It was The Boy's impression that following White Eagle, the chief of the whole tribe was no longer formally selected and simply attained his position through gradual recognition of his merits.[9] Sits Like A Woman succeeded White Eagle and was tribal chief in the first decades of the 19th century. He was followed by his son of the same name who was a signer of the 1855 treaty, and was still recognized as tribal head when he died suddenly about 1870. Coming Daylight claimed that this Sits Like a Woman II was certainly the greatest chief of her time and that, when he died, people were forbidden to light their camp fires as a sign of mourning. During the subsequent period Lame Bull was outstanding among the leading men, but he witnessed the dissolution of the band system and the camp circle. The Fort Belknap Reservation had been set up in 1873, encompassing much more territory than at present, and the first houses were built in 1882.

In spite of the fact that a tribal chief was recognized, band autonomy was apparently preserved. The ceremonial organization cut across band organization, however, and band autonomy was relinquished at the times during which the Sacred Dances were held. The movements and activities of the tribe as a whole were then in the hands of the company to which the vower of a particular Dance belonged.[10]

The Companies

Kroeber notes that "men of the tribe of age to make any one ceremony were not all in one society or company but in several, the total number of companies being three or four times as great as the number of ceremonies. Each company had a name which it

[9] So far as it goes, this would seem to confirm O. Lewis' interpretation, pp. 42–43, that the earlier Hudson's Bay Company policy on the northern plains reinforced tribal chieftaincy, but that with the development of competition in the fur trade, authority was weakened.

[10] For a discussion of the Sacred Dances, see Kroeber, 1908, pp. 239–68. Other details are given in Cooper, Ms. 1949. The following discussion is concerned only with the composition of the ceremonial organization so far as it can be reconstructed.

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

stakes, but not for really large ones. A gambling game between two brothers-in- 606
law, small though the stakes had to be, was a good show for the onlookers— 525
not, however, nearly so good as one between two prominent enemy friends. Two sisters-in-law were also "just right" for gambling against each other.

Through all these three relationships run two currents: one of mutual goodwill and helpfulness, the other of familiarity, "teasing" and twitting. Between two brothers-in-law and two sisters-in-law there is relatively more of the first and less of the second; between brother-in-law and sister-in-law relatively more of the second and less of the first.

Two brothers-in-law could not discuss sex or vulgarity and could not go to the toilet together. They would be helpful to each other in giving presents, in a building project, in business matters, and so forth. But on the other hand [522]
they could go quite far in "humiliating" each other, in indulging in practical jokes and horse play at the other's expense, and in rivaling each other in war and in war-deed matching contests—but not to the limit, not so far as enemy friends could go. Two sisters-in-law could likewise "tease" each other, but could not go to the same length that brothers-in-law could go.

To her brother-in-law (sister's husband or husband's brother) a woman could go nearly any length in "teasing" and freedom in the way of crude horse play and of vulgar and obscene talk, and vice versa.

The gambling rule that prevailed, and still prevails largely, between these three types of siblings-in-law, namely, gambling for small stakes permitted and encouraged, but not for large stakes, appears to be genetically related to the two currents we have been discussing: the goodwill one prohibiting stakes whose loss would really hurt, the familiarity one permitting and provoking small-stake 619
gambling. 525

The Gros Ventre, with a population range of between about 800 and 2,000 621
in the second half of the last century, were divided into about a dozen bands. [161]
These bands were not sibs proper, but each was composed largely of kin related by blood or marriage. Members of a given band, whether related or not, would not gamble against one another. There was a well-marked we-feeling among the members of a band, somewhat distinct from and additional to the kinship feeling proper. Actually this was almost equivalent to "tribal" we-feeling, for each band was for the greater part of the year, particularly in the winter months when the bands scattered to separate quarters within the tribal territory, an almost completely autonomous economico-political unit, and any band was free if it wished to secede from the tribe at any time, temporarily or permanently.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

nothing to show that they had long been in the Saskatchewan region. All that is certain of their previous past is their closer relationship to the Arapaho than to any other tribe; and the origin of the Arapaho is equally obscure, except that it is certain that, if they came from the north and east, it was a long time ago. Of the Gros Ventre it can only be said that, while related to the Arapaho and regarded by them as almost politically a part of themselves, they were far separated from them when first known, with them for a short time later, and again separated, and in contact and alliance with another much more distantly related Algonkin branch. Their habitat in a hundred years has been successively near the Saskatchewan, the Platte, and the Missouri. There is nothing to show that such variability of affiliation and location within the culture region of the Plains has not been characteristic of their previous history. 131 N4 [648]

The Gros Ventre call the tribes near them by the following names: Arapaho, hinan'ăn (in Arapaho, hinanaei-na"); Cheyenne, itisŏn, "scars" (itisŏ", "a scar;" Arapaho name of the Cheyenne, hitaciina"); Cree, na"tsa", "rabbits;" Ojibwa, djinhuna"tsa", "Lower Cree;" the three Blackfoot tribes, waotä"nixtäats, "black-feet" (a Blackfoot, waotä"nixtänin, "blackfoot-man;" a Piegan, tsä"t'; the Bloods, ka"winähäa"); Assiniboine, na"djineihin; Sioux, na"wina"djinei, "Below-Assiniboine" (in Arapaho, na"tinei, "a Sioux"); Crow, hounen, "crow-men;" Minitari, wuxnokayan, "—lodges;" Shoshone, sŏsŏtyănin, "snake-men;" Bannock, waotä"nixiinin, "black-men" (in Arapaho the Ute are called wrotänähiçi, "black"); Flathead Salish, kaakaänin, "flathead-man;" Nezperce, taniibats, "pierced-nose" (Arapaho taniibäaçi is the Caddo). Two tribes to the southwest or perhaps west, which have not been identified, are the wasoi"hiiyeihits, "grass-dwellers," who live in houses of grass or brush; and the na"wuxaantibiina"ts, "fish-eaters." 101 648

The Gros Ventre were divided into groups similar to those of the Blackfeet and Sioux. The names of these bands were nicknames, and in no way totemic. As there was prohibition of marriage within the band, the name "clan" is, however, applicable to them. Descent was paternal and a man belonged to his father's band; but the prohibition of marriage extended also to his mother's clan, all the members of both the father's and mother's clan being considered relatives. Each band seems to have had a recognized head or chief. During the winter the tribe broke into smaller groups, consisting of one or perhaps more clans, which followed the buffalo, and camped chiefly in the timber. There corrals were made for the horses at night to prevent their being stolen by war-parties. When summer came, the clans joined and camped together in the large camp-circle. In this, the opening of which was toward the east, the different bands had definite 621 614 [611] [582] 221 361 621 614

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

361 places. Beginning at the eastern opening of the circle, and going southward, westward, northward, and eastward again, the order in which the 621 clans camped was as follows: —

614

1. Frozen, or plumes.
2. Those-who-water-their-horses-once-a-day.
3. Tendons.
4. Those-who-do-not-give-away, or buffalo-humps.
5. Opposite (or middle) Assiniboine.
6. Ugly-ones, or tent-poles worn smooth (from travel).
7. Bloods.
8. Fighting-alone.

Other names of clans, whose location in the camp-circle was not ascertained, and some of which, perhaps, are second names of clans enumerated above, are: —

Dusty-ones.
Coffee.
Weasel-skin head-dress.
Kashutyi (the name of a chief).
Poor-ones.
Berry-eaters.
Torn-trousers.
Gray-ones, or ash-colored.
Breech-cloths.
Night-hawks.

Anecdotes referring to incidents that are usually ridiculous accompany these names. The Smooth-worn-tent-pole people were so called, because the ends of their tent-poles, used as travois, were worn smooth from much travelling. The Tendon clan was so called, because one of this band had said that the tendons in the neck of a buffalo were good eating. The Frozen-people were so called, because, when they had hungry visitors in winter, they gave them frozen meat. Those-who-water-their-horses-once-a-day are said to have followed this practice so that their horses would gain flesh more quickly. The Opposite-Assiniboine, like the Assiniboine, were said to have had few horses, and the Fighting-alone were very warlike people. Those-who-do-not-give-away-without-return were considered stingy, and the Ugly-people were said not to have painted their faces.

FOOD AND HUNTING.

224 Like most of the other tribes of the Plains, the Gros Ventre subsisted [262] almost entirely on the buffalo, and their culture depended to the usual degree upon this animal. The following scattering notes were obtained regarding the hunting of buffalo and other animals.

Buffalo enclosures used to be made of trees and forked limbs set in the ground in a half or three-quarter circle below a vertical bank. Extending over the country above the bank, a long chute of two rows of stone monuments was erected, behind which sat men. Other hunters drove the buffalo into the chute. Those behind the piles of stone rose up as the buffalo

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

CHAPTER II

TRIBAL ORGANIZATION

The greater bulk of our material on the Gros Ventres covers the fifty year span from about 1835 to 1885. During that period, the tribal territory centered about the Milk River. The present Reservation, the boundaries of which were finally fixed in 1888, represents only a small part of the land claimed and held by the Gros Ventres as their own. 131 [648]

Band Names and Affiliation

The political organization of the Gros Ventres was simple. The division into fairly autonomous bands was basic, and apparently the number of bands was twelve. Our informants, both those who were adult and those who were children, at the time when the whole tribe still encamped as a unit, agreed on that point. The list of band names given by our two oldest informants, Coming Daylight (b. 1854) and Singer (b. ca. 1856), is as follows: Coffees, Same as Assiniboine, Plenty Bad, Greys, Fast Travelers, Water Horses Once a Day, Upper Quarters, Frozens, Buffalo Overloaded, Tendons, Bloods, Night Hawks. These two old women maintained that, in their own experience, the bands camped in this order, and in a circle, when the whole tribe was together. 619 626 [115]

Quite independently of the above list, another was obtained from The Boy (b. 1870). As a child he witnessed the formation of the camp circle, and he knows many details of previous decades from his father, Lame Bull (b. ca. 1825, d. 1890) and from other old men. The Boy's list agrees with that given by the two women, except in regard to one band. He includes a group called Poor Greys and omits Night Hawks. All of our informants insisted that the Greys and Night Hawks were distinct bands, but there was a difference of opinion as to whether or not the Greys and Poor Greys were in reality the same band. 621 115 114

Seven of the band names can be identified with Kroeber's num- 621

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

621

bered list: Same as Assiniboine (No. 5); Fast Travelers (No. 6); Water Horses Once a Day (No. 2); Upper Quarters (No. 4); Frozens (No. 1); Tendons (No. 3); Bloods (No. 7). Furthermore in Kroeber's supplementary list we find the Coffees and Night Hawks mentioned; we are probably correct in assuming that Kroeber's Dusty Ones in that same supplementary list correspond to our Greys. Kroeber does not refer, however, to either Plenty Bad nor Buffalo Overloaded; whereas our informants could not identify Kroeber's Fighting Alone (No. 8).[1]

621
114

The fact that there is as much agreement, namely, in ten band names, between Kroeber's information and our own, is quite remarkable since the band names were nicknames, the explanations for which were quite trivial. Not only were variations used to designate the same band by different informants, but also apparently the band names were frequently changed altogether.

For example, Kroeber's Smooth-worn-tent-people were designated variously by our informants as Slick Runners, Slippery Travois Poles and Fast Travelers—all of these taken from the little explanatory anecdote that this band was supposed to travel so far and so fast that the ends of the travois poles which dragged on the ground quickly became smooth and worn.

Similarly the Dusty-ones of Kroeber w[illegible]ermed by our informants Greys (proper) and Those [illegible]o Not Wash Their Faces, playing around the theme t[illegible] members of this band did not paint up as did other Gr[illegible]es and that they thus looked unkempt and dirty.

Those-who-do-not-give-away, or [illegible], mentioned by Kroeber were consistently identified [illegible]nts as Upper Quarters, the explanation lying in the [illegible] stinginess acquired one time when members of the [illegible] asked for meat, and gave the upper quarters or hump of t[illegible]lo instead of the more desirable parts.

The Opposite-Assiniboine or Same-as-Assiniboine were also called Poor Ones because they, like the Assiniboine tribe in general, possessed few horses.

Our informants said that Water Horses Once A Day were so

[1] Kroeber, 1908, p. 148.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

called because the band members were too lazy to water their horses more often. 621 114

The story regarding the Frozens is that one winter people were hungry and the members of this band killed buffalo; when they were asked for meat, they replied: "The meat is frozen and we can't cut it." The alternative name for this band, given by Kroeber and by one of our informants, as Plumes or Those-who-wear-feathers-on-the-head, is probably an older name for the band, but one for which neither Kroeber nor we received an explanation.

The Coffees and Bloods were so known on account of their going to extremes in the consumption of these two foods respectively.

Plenty Bad refers to the fact that this band was numerous but were all "bad" people, that is, that there were few with good reputations as warriors.

Buffalo Overloaded were supposed to have been very foolish people. Their name derives from the story that on one occasion, when hunting, they saw a small herd of buffalo, one of which sat down. A band member said: "That buffalo is overloaded (i.e., he has eaten too much and has died)." The others said: "Let's wait till all the buffalo get overloaded, then we will go and get our meat." One by one the buffalo sat down and when the hunters thought they were all dead, they walked toward them, but the buffalo, catching the scent, ran away.

The Tendons were so named because they were said to have expressed a preference for the neck tendons of the buffalo as food.

The Night Hawks received their name from the habit of the band members of breaking wind audibly, the sound suggesting the noise the night hawk makes as it flies.

Only one of our informants mentioned Berry Men as the name of a band, whose place in the camp circle was said to have been next to Water Horses. Although this name is likewise listed by Kroeber, none of our informants could say to which band the term referred. Several other names of bands which various informants mentioned as having been heard by them to have existed in the past were Black Horns, Yellow Tail Feathers, Saw-whet Owls, Red Eagles, Torn Leggings, and Traders. One informant,

621 The Boy, ventured the following tentative indentification, saying
114 that these may have been earlier names respectively for Same As Assiniboine, Upper Quarters, Water Horses, Night Hawks, Coffees, Frozens. A few informants had heard of Breech Cloths and Weasel Skin Headdresses as band names but didn't know which modern bands they might have been, always assuming that the number of bands had been twelve.

361 As to the exact order of the bands in the camp circle, there was
621 no real agreement. The order given by Singer and Coming Day-
114 light differs from that given by Kroeber. Furthermore, while the two old women were emphatic that the places within the camp circle were permanent—"otherwise we could not remember all this!"—some of the men informants were under the impression that the band from which a new Flat Pipe Keeper was chosen moved to the center position opposite the opening of the camp
361 circle, and that the others shifted accordingly.

621 In any case, the circle, with opening toward the rising sun, was the formation employed when the whole tribe was together. When bands were separated from the main group they might or might not camp in this way, depending somewhat on the length of time they expected to remain in one spot, and on the nature of the terrain. Sometimes, for instance, the lodges of the various families of the band were strung out along a watercourse.

According to The Boy, there was a tendency for bands which camped in proximity within the big camp circle to go off together when the tribe split up. The Upper Quarters and Frozens were often together and, along with them, the Same As Assiniboine or occasionally the Greys (proper) and Buffalo Overloaded, usually staying more or less in the vicinity of the Milk River, the center of the territory claimed by the Gros Ventres. Whereas the Tendons, followed by the Poor Greys and Bad Plenty, moved for winter quarters to the country bounded by the Big Sandy, the Marias River (at Ft. Benton), and the Bear Paws; while the Fast Travelers as a rule sought out the country south of the Missouri toward the Yellowstone River and Crow country, accompanied by perhaps the Coffees. Water Horses and Bloods were friendly
554 with each other and joined now one group and now another.

621 A band which was thus followed by two or three others had

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

added prestige. Those mentioned as leading bands above were seemingly the most numerous and most prominent in the recent past, and their representatives are more numerous at the present time. While the Frozens, Upper Quarters and Bad Plenty have the most living descendants, apparently there are no Poor Greys or Coffees today, only one Night Hawk, and a few each of the others. 621 554

Although Coming Daylight and Singer claimed membership in the Frozen band, they had no false modesty in proclaiming: "The Frozens were the best workers, had the biggest lodges, the prettiest women and the best-looking men. In fact they were the 'aristocratic' families, being the best-dressed and having the most horses." This was confirmed voluntarily by Cora who stated that she belonged to the Same As Assiniboines, but had heard all her life that the Frozens were the most distinguished band along the lines the old women mentioned. The men informants admitted that some bands were considered better in some respects than others, but failed to be more specific, and added that regardless of the reputation of the whole band, an individual man had to make his own way. [565]

It is somewhat difficult to arrive at the exact situation as to band affiliation and exogamy inasmuch as the band ceased to function not long after our oldest male informants were born. Our oldest female informants, whose memory includes the 1860's, stated in regard to this individual or that, whom they mentioned, that they could not remember to which band he had belonged. In fact the old women became quite impatient when questioned on this subject since from their point of view it was not important. To them the question of marriage regulations was a practical one of avoiding as mate any person to whom blood relationship could be traced, no matter how remotely, and any affinal relative not of the same generation. 621 [582]

There was general agreement among all informants, however, that under normal circumstances children were of the same band as their father.[1] Nevertheless, residence was an important factor, and not a few persons claimed affiliation with bands other than those into which they had been born. Coming Daylight, for instance, said she was a Frozen, the band to which her mother had [591] 621 597

[1] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, p. 147.

621 belonged. She was orphaned at an early age and was raised by
597 her maternal grandmother under the protection of her mother's brother, Crow Bull, a prominent member of the Frozen band. Garter Snake claimed to be a Tendon, likewise the band into which her mother had been born, although her father, Bull Lodge, a so-called "Hudson Bay Company breed," was classed as a Frozen. If a child were adopted by, and remained during his childhood days with, a family of another band than that into which his real father had been born, he became a member of the adopting band. For instance, Lame Bull adopted a boy whose father belonged to a different band, but the boy was always known as a member of Lame Bull's band, the Upper Quarters.

[591] One informant stated that when a woman married she became a member of her husband's band, but this statement refers in all
621 probability merely to the fact that patrilocal residence was often practiced. Each of our older women informants stated as her band the one in which she grew up. When speaking of their husbands, these women, each of whom had survived several mates, seldom mentioned their band affiliations, unless asked specifically, nor did they mention to which of the soldier societies their several husbands had belonged. One gathers the very distinct impression
[602] that the kinship bonds were the all-important social relationships so far as Gros Ventres women were concerned, and that the wider political and social groupings did not impinge very directly on their lives.

621 All informants stated that one should not marry into the band in which he claimed membership and in which he was brought up.
582 There was a difference of opinion among them, however, as to whether one might marry into his mother's band providing he had not been raised therein and no blood relationship could be traced.[3] The Boy stated positively that a man who would so much as flirt with a young woman of his mother's band would be disliked. Charles Buckman differed, holding that any marriage would be proper, providing the far-reaching incest taboos based on blood and affinal relationship be observed. The Boy admitted that, because of changes which occurred in band affiliation, occasionally a person would take a wife from some other band than that of either

[3] Kroeber, 1908, p. 147, prohibition of marriage extended to mother's clan.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

his father or mother and still discover later that she was related to him. The Boy's own experience illustrates this. The Boy is an Upper Quarters as was his father, and his mother was a Frozen. It so happened that his mother's father was one of three brothers who were Frozens. The grandson of one of these three brothers married a Bad Plenty and stayed with his wife's band so long a time that he was known as a member of the Bad Plenty and his children took that affiliation. The Boy married one of the daughters of this family, a woman known as a member of the Bad Plenty. Only after several years of married life did they one day discover that The Boy had married his maternal grandfather's brother's great-granddaughter! Charles Buckman, whose father was a white man, and whose mother, a Bad Plenty, later married a Water Horses man, took Charles there to live, and he claimed affiliation with the latter band. He married a Bad Plenty woman, however, and discovered years later that his wife was remotely related to him on his mother's side. It seems certain that in former times, when the bands were functioning, an Upper Quarters would not marry an Upper Quarters, that is, that an individual would not marry into his own band; but beyond this, apparently only known blood and most types of affinal relationship were bars to marriage. 621 582

Within the band, close relatives usually camped in proximity, whether residence was matrilocal or patrilocal. The general consensus of opinion among our informants was that most of the persons within a band were related to each other. Band members would not wager against each other for high stakes in gambling, and sometimes the whole band might become involved as a unit in case of blood revenge. 621 [628]

Chief or Leader

The term "chief" was employed to designate any man who had distinguished himself in war.[4] Each band then might have several or many such "chiefs," but among them would be one recognized as leader, "he who takes us around," that is, the one who directed the band when it moved from place to place.[5] This function seems 622

[4] The Gros Ventre term is *nätcä* (m. s.) *näkyä* (w. s.). For linguistic shift between men's and women's speech, see Flannery, 1946, pp. 133–34.

[5] The Gros Ventre term is *ninä'ninänä:titc* (m. s.). Kroeber, 1908,

622 seemed that the others present agreed with him, the leader would
[623] give in and have the crier announce the revised decision."

On the march, the leader went at the head of his band and
[484] showed the way. When several bands were together, the leader of one would have decided where he intended to go, and, if the other bands had decided to go along with this one, they followed, but were free to break away at any time.

[621 The band to which either the Keeper of the Flat Pipe or the
743] Keeper of the Feathered Pipe belonged had a certain distinction as there was a tendency when the tribe split for each to have a considerable following.

173 According to tradition, as related by The Boy, the Gros Ventres
643 had had in the fairly remote past a formally selected chief or leader of the whole tribe. It was said that he functioned when the whole tribe was together and that his decisions in important matters were made in consultation with the chief men, including the leaders of all the bands. There was no regular council and anyone
[623] present might express his opinion. Often the Keepers of the Sacred Pipes were present at such meetings called by the tribal
[743] chief, but if they were not present they were supposed to be kept advised.

The last regularly selected leader of the whole tribe was said to have been White Eagle, who held this position in the last decades of the eighteenth century. It was said further that White Eagle was preceded by White Shield, of whom there are many stories extant, and that White Shield was preceded by Elk Going Against The Wind. The Boy gave the following information regarding the "election" of White Eagle. The account was given to The Boy by his father, Lame Bull, who had it from Old Man Gopher, a cousin of Lame Bull's paternal grandfather. "The Gros Ventres had been badly decimated by smallpox and only about 30 lodges were left.[8] Old Man Gopher and his sister, both of them very young children at the time, were the only survivors of their family. The old men among the survivors of the tribe got together and proceeded to choose a chief. White Eagle was then a young man

[931] [8] A reasonable chronological estimate would identify this as a tradition referring to the devastating smallpox epidemic of 1780. For historical data, see p. 9.

643 very much increased. White Eagle governed the people very wisely and he governed until he died."

643 It was The Boy's impression that following White Eagle, the chief of the whole tribe was no longer formally selected and simply attained his position through gradual recognition of his merits.[9] Sits Like A Woman succeeded White Eagle and was tribal chief in the first decades of the 19th century. He was followed by his son of the same name who was a signer of the 1855 treaty, and was still recognized as tribal head when he died suddenly about 1870. Coming Daylight claimed that this Sits Like a Woman II was certainly the greatest chief of her time and that, when he died, people were forbidden to light their camp fires as a sign of mourning. During the subsequent period Lame Bull was outstanding among the leading men, but he witnessed the dissolution of the [667] band system and the camp circle. The Fort Belknap Reservation had been set up in 1873, encompassing much more territory than at present, and the first houses were built in 1882.

619 In spite of the fact that a tribal chief was recognized, band autonomy was apparently preserved. The ceremonial organization 621 cut across band organization, however, and band autonomy was 796 relinquished at the times during which the Sacred Dances were held. The movements and activities of the tribe as a whole were then in the hands of the company to which the vower of a particular Dance belonged.[10]

The Companies

561 Kroeber notes that "men of the tribe of age to make any one ceremony were not all in one society or company but in several, the total number of companies being three or four times as great as the number of ceremonies. Each company had a name which it

[9] So far as it goes, this would seem to confirm O. Lewis' interpretation, pp. 42–43, that the earlier Hudson's Bay Company policy on the northern plains reinforced tribal chieftaincy, but that with the development of competition in the fur trade, authority was weakened.

[10] For a discussion of the Sacred Dances, see Kroeber, 1908, pp. 239–68. Other details are given in Cooper, Ms. 1949. The following discussion is concerned only with the composition of the ceremonial organization so far as it can be reconstructed.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

784 517 fund of war exploits would be apt to give out, and the two would begin talking about trifling occurrences in camp, personal reminiscences about their marriages, and so forth. Everybody had a good time at such a three-day session.

Neither the keeper nor others were permitted to tell folk-tales of the vulgar or obscene Ni:hahat type in the former's lodge. If a member of a visiting group inadvertently broke the rule, a three-day session similar to the war-deed one above was prescribed, during which he had to continue telling such tales.

778 696 If a murder of a fellow-tribesman had been committed in camp, and the murdered person's relatives were about to kill the murderer in revenge, the latter could run to and take refuge in the keeper's lodge and was safe so long, but only so long, as he stayed there. The avengers dared not enter it to kill, but immunity ceased so soon as the murderer left the lodge.

621 361 There is general agreement among our informants that the keeper's lodge was pitched in a prominent place, but exactly where in the camp circle is a controverted point we did not succeed in clearing up. According to one tradition, it occupied the place of honor in the circle, toward the northwest—opposite the circle's opening which was toward the southeast or the rising sun,—regardless of where the keeper's band camped in the circle. Three, however, of our oldest informants, Coming Daylight, Takes-the-Bow, and Turn-Toes, held that the keeper remained with his band, the first two of the three stating that his lodge was pitched a little in front of his band toward the center of the circle.

Prerogatives and Restrictions of Keepership

793 The office of keepership carried with it on the one hand a great many special rights, privileges, prerogatives and powers and on the other a great many restrictions, obligations, responsibilities and sacrifices. The following list is undoubtedly incomplete, as new ones were still being revealed when our field work came to an end,[8] but it probably includes most of them. They functionally accord with sacred and high dignity of the keepership, the supernatural power attached to it, the lofty ethical behavior and "as-

[8] Kroeber, 1908, p. 273, has some we did not get.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

keeper's lodge, with two tripod legs close together and the third pointing in the direction of march, as a signal to the people. 484 778

On the march, the Pipe bundle was ordinarily packed on Pipe's own horse. Two stuffed parfleches were placed, one on either side of the saddle; blanket robes were thrown over them and the saddle; the bundle, with its covers, was then put thereon and securely lashed down with specially tied rawhide thongs.

On breaking camp, the two Pipe keepers with their Pipes might decide to stay together, or else to separate. "Most of the people [usually] hung around the Pipes." If the Pipe keepers decided to separate, some of the bands or other groups or families might choose to go with one Pipe, others with the other, others still with neither. "Both Pipes had certain bunches who followed them, and when the Pipes split certain ones went with each. Each band suited itself and followed the Pipe it liked best." This, for example, is what happened on the occasion when the Assiniboine captured the Flat Pipe. 621 484 778

If both Pipes stayed together, then according to The Boy, Turn Toes, and Takes the Bow, the Flat Pipe took the lead, the Feathered Pipe coming second in line. Garter Snake could not recall the order of precedence. We did not obtain further clarification of Al Chandler's statement: "The two keepers moved out first side by side and if the tribe was going to split, it was up to the people which Pipe they would follow." The statement may refer to those occasions when the Pipes were going to separate. On such occasions, all informants were fully agreed that the Flat Pipe and Feathered Pipe each came first in the line of march of its respective followers. The order on the march, for the Feathered as for the Flat Pipe was: the keeper in the lead, next to him the co-keeper leading the Pipe horse behind her, then the Pipe child alongside or just behind the horse. In this connection the original first co-keeper of the Feathered Pipe was called, in Garter Snake's version of the origin story, "Woman-takes-the-lead."

Other Sacred Pipes

In recent years the Gros Ventres have had only the Flat and Feathered Pipes, but earlier there were others. The Boy listed 778

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

For the duration of a Crazy Dance, political as well as ritual authority was vested in the age-group giving the Dance, and the ordinary personnel of government ceased for the time being to function. The Crazy Dancers ran everything; their word was law; they decided what was and was not to be done, even regarding the hunt. 796* [561 621]

The vower himself was for the time being in supreme command. He selected, as his councilors, however, four outstanding men, of middle age, older than the actual participant dancers, but not too old, men of prestige who had won recognition through merit, who had made their mark and were known as "chiefs," "successful and with good homes, good men." These four, according to Turn Toes, were chosen from among the next older age-group of the society, Stars or Wolves, to which the participant dancers age-group belonged, and were "elder brothers" of the dancers. Turn Toes emphasized more the ritual functions of these four "elder brothers." While the dancers themselves were in authority during the dance, and paid the expenses thereof, they would be helpless without knowledge of the proper rites and observances. The four "elder brothers" who had previously gone through the Crazy Dance, would be instructors in procedure to the group of younger dancers and would give the decisions thereon. The Boy emphasized more the political functions of the four "elder brothers." The vower together with these four constituted a sort of council or governing body. The five consulted and advised together on arrangements preparatory to and during the Dance, the "balance of power" resting with the vower in case of a deadlock among the four "elder brothers."

After these five got together they selected as their crier an intelligent old man who was known for his command of language. [203] He sat in on their meetings, but without vote, so to speak. It was his duty to listen carefully and keep abreast of proceedings, and when decisions were made by the council of five he was told: "Go around the whole camp and announce that such-and-such shall be done." The five also chose as attendants or servants two young men, apparently two who had not previously joined the Crazy Dance. These two had no initiative; their task was to do what

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

stakes, but not for really large ones. A gambling game between two brothers-in-law, small though the stakes had to be, was a good show for the onlookers—not, however, nearly so good as one between two prominent enemy friends. Two sisters-in-law were also "just right" for gambling against each other. 606 525

Through all these three relationships run two currents: one of mutual goodwill and helpfulness, the other of familiarity, "teasing" and twitting. Between two brothers-in-law and two sisters-in-law there is relatively more of the first and less of the second; between brother-in-law and sister-in-law relatively more of the second and less of the first.

Two brothers-in-law could not discuss sex or vulgarity and could not go to the toilet together. They would be helpful to each other in giving presents, in a building project, in business matters, and so forth. But on the other hand they could go quite far in "humiliating" each other, in indulging in practical jokes and horse play at the other's expense, and in rivaling each other in war and in war-deed matching contests—but not to the limit, not so far as enemy friends could go. Two sisters-in-law could likewise "tease" each other, but could not go to the same length that brothers-in-law could go. [522]

To her brother-in-law (sister's husband or husband's brother) a woman could go nearly any length in "teasing" and freedom in the way of crude horse play and of vulgar and obscene talk, and vice versa.

The gambling rule that prevailed, and still prevails largely, between these three types of siblings-in-law, namely, gambling for small stakes permitted and encouraged, but not for large stakes, appears to be genetically related to the two currents we have been discussing: the goodwill one prohibiting stakes whose loss would really hurt, the familiarity one permitting and provoking small-stake gambling. 619 525

The Gros Ventre, with a population range of between about 800 and 2,000 in the second half of the last century, were divided into about a dozen bands. These bands were not sibs proper, but each was composed largely of kin related by blood or marriage. Members of a given band, whether related or not, would not gamble against one another. There was a well-marked we-feeling among the members of a band, somewhat distinct from and additional to the kinship feeling proper. Actually this was almost equivalent to "tribal" we-feeling, for each band was for the greater part of the year, particularly in the winter months when the bands scattered to separate quarters within the tribal territory, an almost completely autonomous economico-political unit, and any band was free if it wished to secede from the tribe at any time, temporarily or permanently. 621 [161]

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

621 525 Members of one band could and not infrequently did gamble both for small and for big stakes against members of other bands, just as one kinship group used to gamble against others. Tribal we-feeling certainly existed, but seemingly not as intense as band we-feeling, just as, in turn, the latter was not as intense as kin we-feeling. In inter-band, as in inter-kin, gambling, spectators, if they bet at all, would lay their wagers on the players of their own band, as required by band loyalty, regardless of the relative skill and reputation of the contesting players or teams.

515 [885] 525 For Gros Ventre men who had reached full adulthood and were still in the prime of life, there were two age-societies, called the Stars and the Wolves (or Wolf-men). These two groups, with soldier-police functions, would join forces when necessary in keeping order, in fighting fires, and in defending the whole tribe against enemies, but for the rest rivalry between them was pretty keen. Stars would gamble against Wolves in big games for large stakes, but ordinarily a Star would not gamble against a Star or a Wolf against a Wolf, except for refreshments or a smoke or similar trifling "stakes." Inasmuch as membership in the two societies cut across the lines of kinship and band membership, inter-society gambling suffered an important restriction: if a Star were gambling in a given game, his relatives among the Wolves would not play or bet against him in that particular game. Kinship ties took precedence over society ties.

525 643 Gros Ventre would of course gamble for big stakes against members of other tribes with whom they happened to be at the time on sufficiently good terms, or at least not bitterly and actively hostile, to meet and foregather peacefully, such as the Piegan, Flathead, Nez Percé, and Cree. In such intertribal contests they would often go out to win every possession of their opponents.

512 525 [608] The Gros Ventre distinguished three kinds of friends: ordinary friends, true or pledged friends, and enemy or war friends. As a rule ordinary close friends would not take opposite sides in a big gambling game. This was all the more true of pledged friends. Two boys, for instance, who liked each other and who had perhaps grown up together would, though belonging to different bands, enter into a sort of "sworn brotherhood," give each other presents, exchange intimate confidences, and promise, without religious rite of any kind, to stand by each other always, even to death if necessary. Two girls could also enter into a similar pact. Such "true" or pledged friends never gambled against each other either as players or as backers, at least never for stakes of value.

Of enemy or war friends we have previously spoken when describing the wheel game. Two enemy friends would gamble against each other for small stakes or big, the bigger the better. In fact a hand game for big stakes between

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

his father or mother and still discover later that she was related to him. The Boy's own experience illustrates this. The Boy is an Upper Quarters as was his father, and his mother was a Frozen. It so happened that his mother's father was one of three brothers who were Frozens. The grandson of one of these three brothers married a Bad Plenty and stayed with his wife's band so long a time that he was known as a member of the Bad Plenty and his children took that affiliation. The Boy married one of the daughters of this family, a woman known as a member of the Bad Plenty. Only after several years of married life did they one day discover that The Boy had married his maternal grandfather's brother's great-granddaughter! Charles Buckman, whose father was a white man, and whose mother, a Bad Plenty, later married a Water Horses man, took Charles there to live, and he claimed affiliation with the latter band. He married a Bad Plenty woman, however, and discovered years later that his wife was remotely related to him on his mother's side. It seems certain that in former times, when the bands were functioning, an Upper Quarters would not marry an Upper Quarters, that is, that an individual would not marry into his own band; but beyond this, apparently only known blood and most types of affinal relationship were bars to marriage. 621 582

Within the band, close relatives usually camped in proximity, whether residence was matrilocal or patrilocal. The general consensus of opinion among our informants was that most of the persons within a band were related to each other. Band members would not wager against each other for high stakes in gambling, and sometimes the whole band might become involved as a unit in case of blood revenge. 621 [628]

Chief or Leader

The term "chief" was employed to designate any man who had distinguished himself in war.[4] Each band then might have several or many such "chiefs," but among them would be one recognized as leader, "he who takes us around," that is, the one who directed the band when it moved from place to place.[5] This function seems 622

[4] The Gros Ventre term is *nätcä* (m. s.) *näkyä* (w. s.). For linguistic shift between men's and women's speech, see Flannery, 1946, pp. 133–34.

[5] The Gros Ventre term is *ninä'ninänä:titc* (m. s.). Kroeber, 1908,

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

622 to have been the primary one of the leader. He decided where to go and when, in order to hunt, to seek lodge covers, to gather berries, to cut new tent- and travois-poles, and so on. He invited people, prominent men of his own band and of other bands, and fed [574] people every day. He would have provisions on hand and was prepared to carry out extensive hospitality. He would be one who had plenty of buffalo horses which younger men—his sons and nephews—would use on the hunt, and numerous pack horses which returned from the hunt laden with meat. His wives would invite old women, and especially needy ones, to help slice meat, prepare it for storage, to render grease and extract marrow, all of which these old women were glad to do in return for some fresh meat.

As explained by The Boy, a man had to work up from the ranks, 622 so to speak, to be recognized as chief and as leader. "It paid to 555 be prosperous and a good man. In the course of time people would look up to him as leader and other bands would be told that he is the leader. He does not ask for this distinction but, if he is prosperous and good, people recognize him. The band gets together and tells him: 'You are our leader.' He holds 'office' for life. As he grows old he might tell the people to select someone else, but, even so, they would continue to look up to him and to ask his advice and consult him. There are obstacles in the path of life, and one who would rise must walk around or over them. To be an acknowledged leader a man must have distinguished himself at war, but many who were known for their brave deeds were not necessarily in line for leadership.[6] The kinds of things which would have prevented a man from receiving this type of recognition were the following. First of all, murder of one of his own band. For instance there was a well-known character who had

p. 147, mentions that "Each band seems to have had a recognized chief or leader."

[6] Denig, whose experience with the northern plains tribes extended from 1832 to 1854, expresses, p. 403, the concept as follows: "In fact the rank or standing of each Indian be he chief or warrior is so well known and his character so well judged by the vox populi that he takes his place spontaneously. A higher step than his acts and past conduct confer, imprudently taken, would have the effect of injuring him in their eyes as a leader. Every chief, warrior or brave carves his own way to fame, and if recognized as one by the general voice becomes popular and is supported; if not he mixes with hundreds of others in similar situation and waiting opportunity to rise."

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

an outstanding war record, was known to be courageous and not afraid to die, yet, because he was quick-tempered and murdered a member of his own band, he forfeited what would have been a very good chance of becoming leader of his band. Second, a man who had the reputation of being woman-crazy, of bothering other men's wives, or who was guilty of rape or incest, would not be selected as leader. Furthermore, a man who wished to rise should control his temper, be good to others and avoid lying, back-biting and jealousy in regard to other prominent men. If he had these qualities, and was eminent at war, he would rise high in public esteem and be in the running not only as a leader of a band, or of the whole tribe, but also as Keeper of one of the Sacred Pipes."[1]

622 555 [193]

It was further explained by this same informant, The Boy, that if the leader died, there was a lot of talk both by members and non-members as to who was qualified to succeed. Those outside the band speculated on whom the choice would fall and said: "It ought to be so-and-so," and in this way attempt to influence the opinion as to which of the outstanding men of the band had the best qualifications. Soon a certain man became the leader, and once he was invited to a meeting of other band leaders he was "full-fledged."

622

In carrying out his duties, that is, in deciding when and where to move, the leader consulted with others and proceeded in a democratic fashion. If two or more bands were camped together, for instance, the leaders would consult among themselves and come to a decision as to whether or not the bands should remain together and as to where they should go. Other men would be present and any one of them apparently had the privilege of speaking his mind. "Suppose that the leader had decided that his band should leave the other and go to some particular spot. Someone in his band who disagreed with the decision would speak up and raise the question of, say, danger from the enemy. He would suggest a different place free from such danger and where game would be plentiful, where there was a good camping ground and sufficient water for the horses, etc. He would give his reasons in detail, and, if it

622 623

[1] The role of the Keepers of the Flat and Feathered Pipes is discussed in detail in Cooper, Ms. 1949.

622 seemed that the others present agreed with him, the leader would
[623] give in and have the crier announce the revised decision."

On the march, the leader went at the head of his band and
[484] showed the way. When several bands were together, the leader of one would have decided where he intended to go, and, if the other bands had decided to go along with this one, they followed, but were free to break away at any time.

[621 The band to which either the Keeper of the Flat Pipe or the
743] Keeper of the Feathered Pipe belonged had a certain distinction as there was a tendency when the tribe split for each to have a considerable following.

173 According to tradition, as related by The Boy, the Gros Ventres
643 had had in the fairly remote past a formally selected chief or leader of the whole tribe. It was said that he functioned when the whole tribe was together and that his decisions in important matters were made in consultation with the chief men, including the leaders of all the bands. There was no regular council and anyone
[623] present might express his opinion. Often the Keepers of the Sacred Pipes were present at such meetings called by the tribal
[743] chief, but if they were not present they were supposed to be kept advised.

The last regularly selected leader of the whole tribe was said to have been White Eagle, who held this position in the last decades of the eighteenth century. It was said further that White Eagle was preceded by White Shield, of whom there are many stories extant, and that White Shield was preceded by Elk Going Against The Wind. The Boy gave the following information regarding the "election" of White Eagle. The account was given to The Boy by his father, Lame Bull, who had it from Old Man Gopher, a cousin of Lame Bull's paternal grandfather. "The Gros Ventres had been badly decimated by smallpox and only about 30 lodges were left.[8] Old Man Gopher and his sister, both of them very young children at the time, were the only survivors of their family. The old men among the survivors of the tribe got together and proceeded to choose a chief. White Eagle was then a young man

[931] [8] A reasonable chronological estimate would identify this as a tradition referring to the devastating smallpox epidemic of 1780. For historical data, see p. 9.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

position. In depositing the bundle on its bed, she would lower it gently in three stages, spitting at each one. 778 [788]

When the people were staying for any length of time at a given camp site, the Flat Pipe bundle, which was always kept inside the keeper's lodge during the night time, would regularly in good weather be taken out early in the morning at breakfast time by the co-keeper, with the customary grasping and carrying ritual, and hung up, stem-end pointing east just over the door of the keeper's lodge, not on its tripod. The outside of the keeper's lodge around the door up to full reaching height, about 6 or 7 feet, was painted red. The thong handle of the bundle was looped over, the two projecting ends of a stout pin, skewered horizontally in the tent cover, on the immediate line above the door at the upper edge of the red-painted area.

The bundle would hang over the door all day until about sundown when it would be brought back into the lodge for the night. 482 778 In bringing it back, the co-keeper walked out of the lodge, unhooked and grasped the bundle, turned clockwise, walked all around the lodge clockwise, entered the lodge, proceeded clockwise to the incense hearth, dipped the stem end of the bundle three times in the smudge, and deposited the bundle in the usual ritual manner, as above described, at the far north end of the Pipe bed. 778

The final decision as to when and whether the camp, in which the Flat Pipe chanced to be, was to be moved was made by the head man especially the band chiefs and in the olden days the tribal chief too, the keepers having perhaps taken the initiative in calling them together. They would notify the Pipe keeper. Early the next morning the co-keeper with the usual ritual observances would take the Pipe bundle from its bed and carry it and its tripod outside the lodge a little to the north thereof, set up the tripod and hang the bundle on it. The tripod would be set up with two of its legs closer together, and with the third leg stretched out farther, its upper end projecting a little beyond the junction of the three legs. On this projecting end the bundle was hung by the thong handle looped over the end. On other occasions the bundle was hung on the tripod stem-end pointing east. But on this occasion the rule was superseded by another, namely, the third leg [622 623] 361

796 178 [688] sing a song out of the prescribed order, the "chiefs" would stop them at once, announce the mistake and what fine was to be demanded of the singers. Were the four women singers performing at that time, they too were penalized.

[534] The owners of the drumsticks cooperated with the owner of the drum whose special duty it was to care for this instrument and to have it in repair and ready for use at any time it was needed.

The concepts pertaining to the crow-belts, spoon, fork and whistle remained unchanged. The owners of these regalia treated them with the same respect as of old. Additional ceremonial equipment had been introduced in the form of four feathered war-bonnets, two of which were owned by men and two by women. There was a special little ceremony connected with the two bonnets owned by women. Early in the dance two outstanding warriors were selected to take these bonnets from their owners, dance four times around the rack where they were hung in front of their owners, and then hand them to the first two women sitting at the left of the door. When it was time to dance these women would don them and wear them throughout that dance, then pass them on to the next two, and so on, until everyone had had a chance to wear them.

796 178 624 Finally, there were two announcers, one who called out what he was directed to say by any of the men, and the other who publicized any statement to be made on behalf of the women.

All of these individuals were considered as office-holders in the Grass dance and, as formerly, each was free to transfer the office [622] to anyone he considered suitable to succeed himself. There was no regular term of office even for the "chiefs" and the transfer was described as purely voluntary. Apparently, however, there was a certain amount of consultation among the officers, when one of them decided to transfer his office, in order to agree on a well-qualified successor. Among other things it was necessary to consider the financial status of the individual, especially for those to take over the higher offices. Not only did the recipient heap property upon the donor, but according to the older pattern too, [431] the relatives of the recipient would give away horses and so on

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796
178
624
[431]
[622]

in his honor, and there were certain obligations connected with some of the offices in the newer form of the Grass dance, such as payment for the privilege by the black-dress wearers of being invited to come near the fire in the center and eat dog flesh. Furthermore a new "chief" would almost without exception provide the wherewithal for a whole dance to show that he was worthy of the office.

The procedure of transfer was similar for each office. If, for instance, one of the four "chiefs" had decided he had held this position long enough, at one of the dances he would order the transferring song to be sung. He, together, with the other three, would rise and dance around more or less deliberately and in a dignified manner. When these four reached the man who was to receive the office, each of the other three would make a motion toward the recipient as though helping him to his feet, while the donor himself would actually take his hand and assist him to arise. They then led him around the dancing place and finally installed the new officer in the place of honor vacated by the donor. It was customary, as the donor approached the region where the recipient was sitting, for everyone in the vicinity to bow his head as though making himself inconspicuous. None of them was supposed to know ahead of time on whom the choice would fall and, according to Gros Ventre etiquette, it would be very bad form for anyone to seem eager to receive an office, or any kind of honor for that matter. [576]

796
178

Changes in procedure. In this later period the Grass dance was held sometimes out of doors in a circular space enclosed by wagons, at other times in a large log building, the ground plan of which was as nearly round as it could be made. It was remarked in this connection that the modern rectangular community hall at Hays, on the Reservation, was no good for Gros Ventre ceremonies, including the Grass dance, "because everything we did was in a circle." The present almost circular community hall at Lodge Pole is considered much more satisfactory. The seating arrangements were very similar to those described for

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The addition of the four "chiefs" of the Grass dance gave scope for public recognition of the middle-aged men of substance esteemed for their wisdom and judgment to whom office-holding proportionate for their dignity was otherwise denied. Although there was no longer opportunity for the ranks of warriors to swell, those who had in the past performed brave deeds could still gain status by being called upon to publicly recount them at the ceremonial eating of dog flesh and by being selected to handle the feathered bonnets. 796 178 622 [888] [554]

As the younger men had no chance to show their prowess in warfare and hunting, there was a change of emphasis to recognition of superior singing and dancing ability as one of the roads to public approval. This latter was brought out clearly by our informants when explaining the qualifications of those sought for the various officers of the Grass dance as it was performed around the turn of the century. 796 178 555

They stated that much of the success of the performance of the Grass dance depended particularly on the singers of the dog ritual songs. The four singers who owned the ceremonial drumsticks were chosen for their good voices and from among the "lively men who liked to do things." The candidates did not have to know the songs in advance because they could be trained. Two noted teachers were The Boy and Joe Big Beaver. The Boy said he used to "campaign against himself" when it was time for a drumstick to be transferred because "he didn't want to get tied down. He enjoyed dancing and the singers never got a chance to participate." Our informants told us of two men who are remembered especially as being outstanding singers and drummers, Ed Rider and Breath. The latter was described as a top-ranking singer who, so far as they knew, had never been surpassed. They said: "It was something worth listening to when Breath started those Grass dance songs. He had a voice adapted to that kind of singing and his sense of rhythm was superb. He could hold a big crowd of people spellbound. He was a real genius. Many others tried to copy him and learn from him, but none ever succeeded in equalling him. Regardless of his fine voice no one

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

an outstanding war record, was known to be courageous and not afraid to die, yet, because he was quick-tempered and murdered a member of his own band, he forfeited what would have been a very good chance of becoming leader of his band. Second, a man who had the reputation of being woman-crazy, of bothering other men's wives, or who was guilty of rape or incest, would not be selected as leader. Furthermore, a man who wished to rise should control his temper, be good to others and avoid lying, back-biting and jealousy in regard to other prominent men. If he had these qualities, and was eminent at war, he would rise high in public esteem and be in the running not only as a leader of a band, or of the whole tribe, but also as Keeper of one of the Sacred Pipes."[1]

It was further explained by this same informant, The Boy, that if the leader died, there was a lot of talk both by members and non-members as to who was qualified to succeed. Those outside the band speculated on whom the choice would fall and said: "It ought to be so-and-so," and in this way attempt to influence the opinion as to which of the outstanding men of the band had the best qualifications. Soon a certain man became the leader, and once he was invited to a meeting of other band leaders he was "full-fledged."

In carrying out his duties, that is, in deciding when and where to move, the leader consulted with others and proceeded in a democratic fashion. If two or more bands were camped together, for instance, the leaders would consult among themselves and come to a decision as to whether or not the bands should remain together and as to where they should go. Other men would be present and any one of them apparently had the privilege of speaking his mind. "Suppose that the leader had decided that his band should leave the other and go to some particular spot. Someone in his band who disagreed with the decision would speak up and raise the question of, say, danger from the enemy. He would suggest a different place free from such danger and where game would be plentiful, where there was a good camping ground and sufficient water for the horses, etc. He would give his reasons in detail, and, if it

[1] The role of the Keepers of the Flat and Feathered Pipes is discussed in detail in Cooper, Ms. 1949.

seemed that the others present agreed with him, the leader would give in and have the crier announce the revised decision."

On the march, the leader went at the head of his band and showed the way. When several bands were together, the leader of one would have decided where he intended to go, and, if the other bands had decided to go along with this one, they followed, but were free to break away at any time.

The band to which either the Keeper of the Flat Pipe or the Keeper of the Feathered Pipe belonged had a certain distinction as there was a tendency when the tribe split for each to have a considerable following.

According to tradition, as related by The Boy, the Gros Ventres had had in the fairly remote past a formally selected chief or leader of the whole tribe. It was said that he functioned when the whole tribe was together and that his decisions in important matters were made in consultation with the chief men, including the leaders of all the bands. There was no regular council and anyone present might express his opinion. Often the Keepers of the Sacred Pipes were present at such meetings called by the tribal chief, but if they were not present they were supposed to be kept advised.

The last regularly selected leader of the whole tribe was said to have been White Eagle, who held this position in the last decades of the eighteenth century. It was said further that White Eagle was preceded by White Shield, of whom there are many stories extant, and that White Shield was preceded by Elk Going Against The Wind. The Boy gave the following information regarding the "election" of White Eagle. The account was given to The Boy by his father, Lame Bull, who had it from Old Man Gopher, a cousin of Lame Bull's paternal grandfather. "The Gros Ventres had been badly decimated by smallpox and only about 30 lodges were left.[8] Old Man Gopher and his sister, both of them very young children at the time, were the only survivors of their family. The old men among the survivors of the tribe got together and proceeded to choose a chief. White Eagle was then a young man

[8] A reasonable chronological estimate would identify this as a tradition referring to the devastating smallpox epidemic of 1780. For historical data, see p. 9.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

position. In depositing the bundle on its bed, she would lower it gently in three stages, spitting at each one.

When the people were staying for any length of time at a given camp site, the Flat Pipe bundle, which was always kept inside the keeper's lodge during the night time, would regularly in good weather be taken out early in the morning at breakfast time by the co-keeper, with the customary grasping and carrying ritual, and hung up, stem-end pointing east just over the door of the keeper's lodge, not on its tripod. The outside of the keeper's lodge around the door up to full reaching height, about 6 or 7 feet, was painted red. The thong handle of the bundle was looped over, the two projecting ends of a stout pin, skewered horizontally in the tent cover, on the immediate line above the door at the upper edge of the red-painted area.

The bundle would hang over the door all day until about sundown when it would be brought back into the lodge for the night. In bringing it back, the co-keeper walked out of the lodge, unhooked and grasped the bundle, turned clockwise, walked all around the lodge clockwise, entered the lodge, proceeded clockwise to the incense hearth, dipped the stem end of the bundle three times in the smudge, and deposited the bundle in the usual ritual manner, as above described, at the far north end of the Pipe bed.

The final decision as to when and whether the camp, in which the Flat Pipe chanced to be, was to be moved was made by the head man especially the band chiefs and in the olden days the tribal chief too, the keepers having perhaps taken the initiative in calling them together. They would notify the Pipe keeper. Early the next morning the co-keeper with the usual ritual observances would take the Pipe bundle from its bed and carry it and its tripod outside the lodge a little to the north thereof, set up the tripod and hang the bundle on it. The tripod would be set up with two of its legs closer together, and with the third leg stretched out farther, its upper end projecting a little beyond the junction of the three legs. On this projecting end the bundle was hung by the thong handle looped over the end. On other occasions the bundle was hung on the tripod stem-end pointing east. But on this occasion the rule was superseded by another, namely, the third leg

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

they did not stay in one place, but at times moved about. They shook their rattles constantly. They did not sing, but uttered a pressed-out "Hah." Two atsaan (assistants or servants of the dance) attended near the door. They brought back such of the dancers as became exhausted from lack of sleep and left the ceremony. Two men who had fought and struck a mounted enemy while they themselves were mounted, rode on horseback. When they went to dance, the assistants went to them and helped them dismount. If the dancers were inactive, these two men went about among them to make them arise. If the dancers remained on the ground, they struck them with their whips. The spectators outside lifted up the bottom of the tent and looked underneath; or, as the tent was not very high (the lodge being roofless), those who were on horseback looked over it.

The Gros Ventre star-rattles consist of a tube of rawhide, an inch or less in diameter, bent on itself into a hoop three or four inches across, and attached to a stick handle half a foot or more in length. Apparently one end of the tube projects out from the hoop forming the head of the rattle, sufficiently to allow the stick to be inserted. The rawhide is painted, and ornamented with three or five bunches of feathers. The handle is wrapped with cloth, the upper end of which usually is cut into a small fringe at the base of the head of the rattle, while the lower end hangs free beyond the handle. The general outline of the rattle is similar to the Arapaho star-rattle, this having a round or kite-shaped flat head at the end of the handle. The hoop feature is, however, wanting in the Arapaho rattles, which are without a perforation. The Gros Ventre decorations of their rattles — whether feathers, cloth attachments, or painting — are usually crude and gaudy. It seems that the rattles now in use are a degenerate modern form. In the majority of cases the feathers attached are dyed: some are cut from the quill. This indicates a recent modifying influence. Many of the feathers are cut off transversely. This may or may not be an old feature. The piece shown in Fig. 31 has least of the base qualities of these rattles, and is a probable approximation to the older type.

Of some of the specimens to be seen in the Museum, descriptions are here given.

Fig. 31 (50-1783). Handle covered with red flannel, which hangs below the handle about two feet. Fringe of same at base of head, and same forms periphery of head. Rawhide of head painted blue, red on inside of loop. A string appears to have been wound around the head while the hide was fresh, and removed after the painting, leaving radiating white depressions. Head ornamented at top and sides with three bunches of four black-and-white, squarish, half-downy feathers attached by thongs. At the top there is also an eagle-feather. Handle wound with thong, forming at the end a loop to pass over the wrist. The head of this rattle was said to represent a star.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

534 The large amount of individual variation within the limits of the general type characterizing these rattles occurs apparently also among the Arapaho star-rattles.

746 In the war-dance as it was held when first introduced, there were two men who had wands representing swords, and several wearing the familiar [293] belts of crow-feathers with tails falling behind and projections at the lower part of the back. As among the Arapaho, these belts are referred to the crow. A drum was used, made of a cottonwood board or slab bent into [534] a circle, covered both above and below with horse-skin, and hung on four sticks. Four drumsticks went with it, one of which belonged to the owner of the drum, the three others to three different individuals. The sides of the drum were covered, half with red cloth and half with blue, and the skin was painted half blue and half yellow. When the men who owned the swords, the crow-belts, and the drum, gave these away, which they generally did at [431] the same time, a dance was held. The new owners, in turn, by giving the objects to their successors, would furnish the occasion for another performance of the dance.

The war-dancers dressed quite variously. Some wore skunk-skin strips around the leg below the knee, beaded, and with small bells attached. Some wore similar strips around the head. Others had the well-known upright head-dress of deer-tail hair. Some carried fans of eagle-tails; some, whips; some, painted sticks with attached feathers. The dancing went on in a lodge similar to that of the star-dancers. The owner of the drum had his tent near this lodge in the middle of the camp-circle, and the members of the dance went to him to eat. If the head man of the star-dancers was popular, he was asked by the rival war-company to pitch his tent in the middle of the camp-circle, near the owner of the war-dance drum. There are said to have been no assistants in this ceremony, nor any old men as singers; but four of the wives of the dancers were selected to sing. The two men [624] with swords (kakaat) had functions similar to those of the two mounted men 626 with whips in the star-dance. They urged the laggard dancers to get up, and, if they fell down, struck them with their wands. If the man thus struck bore the blow like a man, as the Indians call it, the sword-bearer made him a present; but if he became angry he received nothing, and appears to have been looked upon with ridicule or contempt.

The war-dance as at present given is different from the form described. It is no longer a young men's dance, nor confined to a certain group. All the people of the tribe take part in it. It is very similar in general character to the present-day Arapaho crow-dance, as well as in the place it occupies in the life of the people. Among the Gros Ventre it is now the only dance held.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

276
793 the pipe stem and blow the smoke first upward and then downward, and after that would smoke like anyone else.

793 In general, religious and political life were closely interwoven in the Gros Ventre theocracy. "The Pipes [both the Flat and The
624 Feathered]," as The Boy expressed it, "seemed to hold the tribe together more or less." They were the most sacred and revered possessions of the tribe. The keepers were men of eminence, by virtue of their personal qualities and achievements as well as of their office. In view of these and other facts, it is to be expected that the keeper of the Flat Pipe played a role in Gros Ventre political life, a role however not shared except in a minimal de-
[562] gree by the co-keeper, a woman in a man-dominated sphere of action. The keeper's role in Gros Ventre political life was fairly clearly defined and delimited. Here we shall summarize the main points.

When camp was to be moved, the decision as to time and destination was mainly in the hands of the head men, although the keeper would participate. In some cases, it seems, he might initiate the move by calling the head men together, usually at night. The whole decision was not ordinarily announced by the crier or criers. He would be sent around to notify the people that all would move camp the next morning. They by looking toward the keeper's lodge in the morning would learn the direction in which the camp would move, for the Flat Pipe bundle would be taken out of the lodge, to the north thereof, and hung on its tripod, with the stem end pointing in the agreed upon direction of the trek. On the trek itself, the co-worker with the bundle led the cavalcade.

When the bands scattered for the winter after the fall hunt and for the late spring after the first spring hunts, usually both the Flat and Feathered Pipes attracted a large following.

The keeper could be invited to sit in important council meetings, and to participate in elections and in decisions involving policy or action and had a certain veto prerogative thereon. He could, on occasions at least, intercede with considerable power, to resolve conflicts and avert bloodshed. He could accompany war-parties and might even have a voice in strategy and tactics, but he was not *ex officio* a fighter or war-leader. He could, as

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

previously mentioned, afford asylum in his lodge to criminals. All in all, he wielded very considerable influence in the political life of his people, but he was in no sense a dictator. 793 624

While a good many of the prerogatives and restrictions attaching to the keeper and co-keeper ceased when their term of office ended, others automatically continued, beyond the period of keepership or, as regards restrictions, could be and often were voluntarily continued by the ex-keepers. Most of such cessations and continuances on which we obtained specific information have been explicitly or inexplicitly noted in the preceding pages.

Flat Pipe and Bundle: Description

The proper name of the Flat Pipe was θe:tsa. It was also called bä'ɔno (turtle), the turtle having played such an important role in the first making of dry land after the flood (for story see No. 3 in Appendix), and a turtle shell ranking next in dignity to the Flat Pipe itself in the Flat Pipe bundle. Bä'ɔno was used in an appealing, pleading or begging way. 778 276

The Flat Pipe bundle containing the Flat Pipe and other sacred objects could not be unwrapped and opened except on solemn ceremonial occasions and with the appropriate elaborate rites. The last such occasion was on February 6, 1946, when it was impossible for us to be present and when photographs taken turned out badly. Our description, therefore, of the Pipe and of the other contents of the bundle has to rest on detailed accounts given us by our various informants who had witnessed one or more openings, upon sketches of the Pipe drawn by The Boy in 1939, by Thomas Main in 1938 or 1939 (after an opening in 1938) and by a young high school student, Frank Cuts The Rope in 1946 (after the above 1946 opening), and upon dimensions given by Thomas Main (See fig. 1).

The Flat Pipe itself is of wood, in a perfect state of preservation, carved in one piece, light brown or almost tan in color, very smooth as if polished from long and frequent wrapping, and about 18½ inches long. The bowl is round, low or squat, and flaring, 3⅛ inches in diameter on top with the hole for the tobacco about ½ inch in diameter, 2½ inches in diameter at its

793 also to the whites, both mounted and dismounted their horses from
784 the right side, just as all other Gros Ventres did.

"You could not lend the Feathered Pipe keeper a horse, because if you loaned it to him this was just the same as giving it to him. You could not take it back once the rope was in his hands. The keeper never borrowed anything. If someone thought the keeper was short of something and without thinking said to him, 'Here is one you can use,' that was just too bad because that was really giving it to him."

[201] Apparently the keeper could not point at a person with his index finger, but would instead use his thumb.

793 The role of the Feathered Pipe keeper in the political life of
● 624 the Gros Ventre was quite similar to that of the Flat Pipe keeper, as regards such things as decision when and whether to move camp, matters of public policy, and veto power thereupon.

Feathered Pipe and Bundle

773 The Feathered Pipe was first given, as noted in the origin
778 stories (see No. 6 in Appendix), from above by Bha'a, the thunder and storm being Garter Snake's father, Bull Lodge, used to tell her that it was really given by Ixtcibani:hohat, the Supreme Being, through Bha'a; that the Supreme Being was the father of the Pipe; and that it was to remain forever with the Gros Ventres and never under any condition to be transferred to any other tribe. According to Gros Ventre tradition, while the Feathered Pipe is very old, it is not as old as the Flat Pipe; when the Feathered Pipe was first given to the Gros Ventres, they were already in the possession of horses. According to The Boy, the Feathered Pipe was first given after the Gros Ventres came to their present territory which had previously been Snake Indian country, but before the coming of the whites thereto. With the Pipe itself were given in the beginning the stone image or face, the whistle, and the staff, to be described presently.

778 The proper name of the Feathered Pipe was ana:θanitč (it has
776 feathers).

We were unable to attend any unwrapping rite and to see the Pipe. It was described to us as being in one piece, of "smooth,"

789 song had also to be sung, apparently to the accompaniment of the drum.

755 Putting sweet pine needles on the sick person's head, blowing wild parsley on him, and smudging him as doctoring practices have been previously described. According to Singer, if some one were so sick that his life was despaired of, the keeper would take the Feathered Pipe [the bundle, probably] and lay it on him and pray over him, and the sick person would recover, and, she added, "it cured a lot of them." Doctoring power was regularly acquired by reason of acquiring the keepership.

793 302 The keeper and co-keeper painted their own faces every morning after breakfast, like the men, in two bands, but broader ones three or four fingers wide, one on the forehead near the hair line and the other from one jaw across the chin to the other jaw.

778 The Pipe bundle was smudged by the keeper every morning and evening with sweet pine needles. During Curly Head's keepership Cora Chandler and her children were kept busy collecting dried cow dung for the daily smudging ceremony. The keeper made it a practice to "talk" or pray often to the Pipe in his lodge. According to The Boy, the keeper was fearful lest otherwise he might make ritual mistakes, at which the Pipe would be angry. According to Al Chandler, the Pipe being jealous, the keeper "had to talk to it to let it know it was not forgotten or put away; he treated it just like a person."

788 778 Customary observances on the occasions of feasts or ordinary meals to guests in the keeper's lodge have been previously described.

When the keeper and the people were camped for any length of time in a given place, the Feathered Pipe bundle was ordinarily taken in the morning from its place of honor opposite the entrance inside the keeper's lodge, hung up outside over the entrance, and brought back inside at eventide.

[361 624] 778 484 When the camp was to be moved, the Feathered Pipe keeper, like the Flat Pipe keeper, had, it seems, a consultative voice in the decision and perhaps even veto power at times, although ordinarily the final decision was made by the head men. The decision once made, early in the morning when camp was to be broken, the Feathered Pipe bundle was hung out on its tripod back of the

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Dance.[3] Women could vow the Old Women's Dance, but no other Dance could be vowed by women of any age. 796*

The vower would call upon his company or age-society to help him fulfill his vow. As elsewhere explained, when the young boy was about 15 to 17 years old he together with others of his age joined in a body one or other of the two Soldier Societies, the Stars of the Wolves. Each such newly joining group of youths would be incorporated in the larger society of Stars or Wolves, but would keep its own identity through life as a subdivision of the Stars or Wolves, would have its own name (such as Potbellies, Calves, Holding-On-to-Dogs-Tail), and would hang together in common loyalty, protection and helpfulness.[4] 575 701 796*

The vower's company, not all the Stars of Wolves, would help him make provision for the Dance, would be in charge of the affair and, during it and only during it, could exercise certain definite authority over other members of the tribe. If the tribe were on the march toward the spot where the dance was about to be held, that company came immediately after the Flat Pipe, according to The Boy, and during the Dance the band chiefs and Pipe keepers stepped aside and yielded to the company the authority to run the camp, compel attendance, give orders, and punish disobedience. If during a Sacred Lodge an individual hunted buffalo out of turn, before the communal hunt began, his lodge would be destroyed, his clothes cut up, and so forth. A like punishment might be meted out to any who might refuse to come into camp, at the time the dance was held.[4] [624] [689]

The two Soldier Societies, the Stars and Wolves, and their respective constituent companies were permanent organizations. The specific individuals who vowed or joined in any given Dance

[3] In 1948, The Boy indicated that probably the Crazy, Dog, Kit-fox and Drum Dances would have been vowed in order, that is, that a man would vow a Dog Dance only if he had been previously a Crazy Dancer, and so on. He was none too sure on this point. He was quite emphatic, however, that any man who belonged to either the Stars or Wolf Men could vow the Sacrifice Dance. [R.F.]

[4] For a description of the whole ceremonial organization, so far as it can be reconstructed, see Flannery, 1953, pp. 36-43.

[4] See Flannery, 1953, pp. 43-44.

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 178 [688] sing a song out of the prescribed order, the "chiefs" would stop them at once, announce the mistake and what fine was to be demanded of the singers. Were the four women singers performing at that time, they too were penalized.

[534] The owners of the drumsticks cooperated with the owner of the drum whose special duty it was to care for this instrument and to have it in repair and ready for use at any time it was needed.

The concepts pertaining to the crow-belts, spoon, fork and whistle remained unchanged. The owners of these regalia treated them with the same respect as of old. Additional ceremonial equipment had been introduced in the form of four feathered war-bonnets, two of which were owned by men and two by women. There was a special little ceremony connected with the two bonnets owned by women. Early in the dance two outstanding warriors were selected to take these bonnets from their owners, dance four times around the rack where they were hung in front of their owners, and then hand them to the first two women sitting at the left of the door. When it was time to dance these women would don them and wear them throughout that dance, then pass them on to the next two, and so on, until everyone had had a chance to wear them.

796 178 ●624 Finally, there were two announcers, one who called out what he was directed to say by any of the men, and the other who publicized any statement to be made on behalf of the women.

All of these individuals were considered as office-holders in the Grass dance and, as formerly, each was free to transfer the office [622] to anyone he considered suitable to succeed himself. There was no regular term of office even for the "chiefs" and the transfer was described as purely voluntary. Apparently, however, there was a certain amount of consultation among the officers, when one of them decided to transfer his office, in order to agree on a well-qualified successor. Among other things it was necessary to consider the financial status of the individual, especially for those to take over the higher offices. Not only did the recipient heap property upon the donor, but according to the older pattern too, [431] the relatives of the recipient would give away horses and so on

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

in his honor, and there were certain obligations connected with some of the offices in the newer form of the Grass dance, such as payment for the privilege by the black-dress wearers of being invited to come near the fire in the center and eat dog flesh. Furthermore a new "chief" would almost without exception provide the wherewithal for a whole dance to show that he was worthy of the office. 796 178 624 [431] [622]

The procedure of transfer was similar for each office. If, for instance, one of the four "chiefs" had decided he had held this position long enough, at one of the dances he would order the transferring song to be sung. He, together, with the other three, would rise and dance around more or less deliberately and in a dignified manner. When these four reached the man who was to receive the office, each of the other three would make a motion toward the recipient as though helping him to his feet, while the donor himself would actually take his hand and assist him to arise. They then led him around the dancing place and finally installed the new officer in the place of honor vacated by the donor. It was customary, as the donor approached the region where the recipient was sitting, for everyone in the vicinity to bow his head as though making himself inconspicuous. None of them was supposed to know ahead of time on whom the choice would fall and, according to Gros Ventre etiquette, it would be very bad form for anyone to seem eager to receive an office, or any kind of honor for that matter. [576]

Changes in procedure. In this later period the Grass dance was held sometimes out of doors in a circular space enclosed by wagons, at other times in a large log building, the ground plan of which was as nearly round as it could be made. It was remarked in this connection that the modern rectangular community hall at Hays, on the Reservation, was no good for Gros Ventre ceremonies, including the Grass dance, "because everything we did was in a circle." The present almost circular community hall at Lodge Pole is considered much more satisfactory. The seating arrangements were very similar to those described for 796 178

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Recently these two bodies of young men performing respectively the star-dance and the war-dance have supplanted entirely the older, more numerous age-companies. In late years they have taken the place of the age-companies in the ceremonies connected with the erection of the sun-dance lodge. There was then considerable rivalry between them, and it is said that a member of either company who should take part with the other would be abused by his companions, and perhaps have his clothes torn. Recently also the two groups have had certain social functions, which among most Plains tribes are in the hands of tribal bodies or societies. They had charge of the moving of the camp-circle and of locating it. If a man disapproved of their selection, or pitched his tent elsewhere than they directed, they overturned it, and perhaps destroyed his property or killed his horses. If buffalo were seen and others than themselves went ahead and killed them, these two companies cut both the meat and the skin of such game into small pieces.

The Fly-Dance.

The fly-dance (nouba^{n}w^{n}), the first of the dances, seems to have been regarded in some ways as preliminary to the series, rather than part of it, somewhat like the Arapaho kit-fox and star dances. The dancers were called noubän ("flies"). They were young men, sometimes described as boys. Apparently they were of an age where many or all of them were still unmarried, for no mention of their wives participating in the ceremony is made. The duration of the dance is not quite sure. It is said, like all the other ceremonies, to have continued four days; but another informant gave one day as the length of the ceremony. It is not clear whether or not a lodge was erected for the ceremony. In any case, however, the dance was performed outside of the camp-circle. A prominent feature seems to have been the food cooked by the relatives of the young dancers, and brought to the dancing-place. In distinction from what occurred in the other dances, "grandfathers" were secured very easily for this ceremony, which goes to show the light regard in which it was held by the elder men. The old men of the tribe are said to have gone out to the dancing-place, and, on being selected by groups of dancers as "grandfathers," to have accepted at once.

The dancing went on during the day. The dancers were practically naked; and their entire body, as customary in Arapaho and Gros Ventre ceremonies, was painted over. A common style of painting, or perhaps the characteristic one of the dance, was red, with a white stripe on the face and another on the belly. The pledger of the dance (yenouhuxtj^{i}; Arapaho, yanahut^{i}) was painted yellow, with corresponding black stripes. After the

561 Turn Toes (b. 1860) was one with 30 or 40 other young men who, in a group known as Calves (of leg) joined the Wolf-men about 1877. Turn Toes was certain that "Having-the-breast-of-a-woman-as-pillow" and "Holding-onto-dog's-tail" were companies which had joined the Stars. According to Turn Toes' account, when his company, the Calves, joined the Wolf-men, four men from the company which had just preceded them in entry were asked by the present company to act as "elder brothers." These four considered themselves honored to instruct the new company before they would appear publicly at the next Wolf-men's dance. Lame Bull had been one of the four so selected from among the Potbellies to initiate the next incoming Star group, but we failed to obtain the name of that company.

It apparently was permissible, either before or after the company was so initiated into the society, that any one of its members could vow the least important and simplest of the Sacred Dances, namely, the Fly Dance. When a member of the company so vowed, all the members of that company, and they alone, went through the ceremony, after which they were eligible as "soldiers," [12] i.e., when one of their number subsequently vowed any of the other Sacred Dances in the regular series, the company not only participated but also was in complete charge for the duration of the ceremony and had the authority to enforce whatever "laws" might be enacted. Inasmuch as the Sacrifice Dance was outside the regular
[625] series, if that Dance were vowed, the members of the vower's company could participate if they wished, but in any case those not actually dancing acted as police.

561 An hypothesis which reconciles Kroeber's and our own data on the companies and age societies is the following. All or most of
575 the young men of the whole tribe, between the ages of 16 and 19, formed a company which met informally for some time before it joined either the Stars or the Wolf-men, and, after having gone through the Fly Dance, acted as police force during the Sacred Dances vowed by any of their number. When not participating in a Sacred Dance, the members joined in the purely social activi-

[12] Kroeber, 1908, p. 229, "The members of the age-societies are called beniinen, commonly translated at the present day as 'soldiers,' etymologically probably 'all-men,' or 'all-(?)-men.'"

688 be held, runners were sent by the company of the vower and all were obliged to attend. If, in preparation for the Dance, the vower and the members of his company made a ruling, for example that a hunt was necessary, this would be announced. It would be stated that no one should go out alone to kill buffalo because they wanted everybody to kill some, and it was added: 'This is the order of the Wolves (or Stars). If anyone disobeys this rule, the Wolves (or Stars) will attend to them!' Should anyone have disobeyed the order, when they all returned from the hunt it would be announced: 'So-and-so disobeyed our rule.' The company of the vower would then go in a body to the delinquent's lodge, singing a special song.[24] The people would know that someone was going to be raided and all would go out to see who the culprit might have been." The delinquent knew that if he showed anger and resisted, he was in danger of being hurt or even killed. The company confiscated the culprit's meat, taking all of it that was there, and in addition would usually tear up his lodge. Should the delinquent have an enemy-friend among the "soldiers," that one took the lead in punishing and might even go so far as to cut the ears off of the delinquent's finest horse—a deep humiliation for its owner.

688 Thus during a Sacred Dance, from the time the vow was publicly
625 announced until the Dance was over, the company of the vower was in complete authority and could apply sanctions of force if the various rulings were not obeyed. They actually constituted a police for the duration of the Dance. As soon as the Dance was over, however, the vower's company had no further power and the police function inherent in the soldier societies apparently remained in abeyance until some other Sacred Dance was performed.

688 There is some little question as to whether or not attendance of
625 all bands was compulsory at the first spring hunt for buffalo and, if so, whether the Star and Wolf societies exercised their authority
224 at this time. On one occasion in 1939, one informant, speaking in general terms, stated that the chief of the tribe had the possibility of calling on either the Stars or the Wolves to punish an offender who hunted alone after it had been announced that the buffalo had been sighted and all were to hunt together; and on another

[24] Song recorded as No. 103.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

occasion he stated that it was the "law" of the spring hunt that no one should hunt buffalo alone or in a small group, violation of which invoked the sanctions applied by the Wolf-men or Stars. However, in 1940, this same informant stated twice, explicitly, that there was no police power except at the Sacred Dances and on a third occasion in that year said: "After the Sacred Dance the company disbanded, and the chief resumed control, but he did not punish anybody for hunting buffalo alone." 224 688 625

In any case, authority was delegated to the companies only temporarily. Otherwise there was no agency beyond that of the family which could apply sanctions of force, and then, on only two counts. A husband had the right to take the life of an unfaithful wife; the family had the right of blood revenge in case of murder. In both, however, less extreme modes of behavior were approved and bloodshed could honorably be avoided. 688 625 684 682

When murder occurred, if the family of the murdered person could be persuaded to accept a payment of goods as restitution, further spilling of blood was prevented. It was said that the lodge of the band chief offered temporary refuge to a murderer and that sanctuary was likewise available in the lodge of the Keeper either of the Flat or of the Feathered Pipe. It was thought that if the murderer and his family, who collectively shared responsibility for the crime, could flee the scene, time would be gained for negotiating the blood-price. If one blood relative killed another, there was no retaliation, but the murderer was shunned. 682 [678] [672]

While there was a considerable amount of fighting and quarreling among the Gros Ventres, especially under the influence of liquor, disputes were usually settled without bloodshed. Outright murder, as distinct from deaths attributed to witchcraft, was seemingly relatively infrequent. The following seven cases, arranged chronologically, illustrate actual behavior. Each of these was referred to independently by several different informants with a high level of agreement among them on details. The total represents all the murders that were known to have occurred in the period from about 1850 to 1885. 689

Case No. 1. These events took place about 1847. Two young men, who were related by blood, went on foot to steal horses from the enemy. One had obtained a fine horse, but the other had been 682

796 Such was the form of the Grass dance as carried out by the Gros Ventres from the time of its adoption from the Assiniboine up to about 1890 when changes began creeping in.

The Form: Later Period

796 178 It should perhaps be emphasized at this point that the changes which characterized the Grass dance after 1890 were mostly in the nature of accretions around the nucleus as originally adopted, so that, although in 1901 the form of the Grass dance differed somewhat from the earlier form, as Kroeber noted,[13] the whole was still distinctly recognizable as an expansion thereof.

Changes in personnel and equipment. At the turn of the century participation in the Grass dance was no longer restricted to members of a particular society. Everybody was free to join in. The Grass dance was, however, in charge of four officials, the "chiefs" who sat in the place of honor opposite the door and presided over the ceremony (Fig. 1). They were consulted on any matters pertaining to the performance, made rules, sometimes arbitrarily, during the dance, and were custodians of any fines collected. They were responsible for seeing to it that provisions were on hand when a dance was to be held. There were, moreover, two women officials, whose rank was said to be equal to that of the "chiefs" and whose insignia were ceremonial dresses of black cloth. These two sat to the right of the four chiefs.

[625] The orders of the "chiefs" were enforced by two men who sat, one on either side of the door, holding whips with ornamental handles. These whips were apparently a simple substitution for the wands representing swords in the original Grass dance. The whip owners each had an assistant who ran errands and attended to getting water, keeping up the fire and so on. An entirely new feature was, however, the addition of two women who owned whips and their two female assistants. They likewise sat on each side of the door but behind the men. When it was time for the women to dance,—another innovation to which we shall refer later,—the women whip owners rose and danced in opposite di-

[13] Kroeber, A. L., Ethnology of the Gros Ventre, AMNH-AP 1, pt. 4, 1908, p. 238.

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 178 533 [625 681] were supposed to come prepared with pipe, tobacco, and matches in anticipation of this song. If, for some reason, one of the four was unable to furnish at least a pipeful of mixture, and could not borrow one, he was immediately arrested by the owners of the whips and punished by the singers who might tear his shirt at the neck so everyone could see it, or, perhaps, pour over him a good cupful of broth made from dog flesh. This broth has a strong and lasting odor. The female officers were likewise expected to give the women singers a smoke. The smoking song marked an intermission. No one danced to this song and all sat around smoking and taking it easy.

796 178 If things got too dull, however, one of the owners of the whips might get up, call the announcer, and say: "Tell my friends that I am going to whip them if they don't dance. I will have the right to whip them because I am going to pay for it," and he would present a bridle, or perhaps five dollars, or something of that order of magnitude, to anyone he wished. It was understood, then, that the next time the singing started this man might hit any person,—even one of the "chiefs,"—who failed to dance.

Another feature reminiscent of the original Grass dance but showing some slight change, was the provision that anyone who wished might have it announced that he was going to "lock the door," which meant that nobody could go home until the dance was over. For doing this however he had to provide all the necessary food for another Grass dance to be held on the night immediately following. It was up to the owners of the whips to enforce the regulation by taking something valuable, say a hat [689] or a blanket, from anyone who left the dance and the article was forfeit if he failed to return.

796 178 626 Based on the same concept, the practice grew up of forcing attendance in the following way. Once in a while the owners of the whips might order their assistants to go from door to door in the whole community and take something belonging to each householder, say a bridle, or a valuable belt, or a gun, and bring it to the dancing-place. If the owner of the object were not at the dance, his property was returned to him only if he promised

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 preliminary to the series of Sacred Dances, namely the Fly Dance.
575 After this ceremony was over he was eligible as a "soldier." That is, should one of the members of his "company" vow to give any one of the Sacred Dances in the series, he and other members of the society to which he belonged—either Wolf or Star—would act as police for the time during which the Dance was being held. Thus it was that Stars might police the hunt
[625] and keep order in the camp circle during one such Sacred Dance while Wolves might perform the same duties at another time, depending on which moiety the vower belonged to.

When not engaged as soldiers in connection with one of the Dances, the two societies exhibited the keenest rivalry, particularly in war-deeds, but also in gambling, in foot-racing, and whenever else opportunity offered. One aspect of this rivalry was apparent when each put on its own dance. The general procedure of both was identical but there were a few distinctive features. When the whole tribe was together and there was no serious threat of war, one society or the other would decide the time was ripe to hold its dance. Let us assume that the Star society had so decided.

The members of the Star society would then don their best clothes and, mounted on their finest horses, go around the camp circle accompanied by two especially prominent members who had counted coup against the enemy while on horseback. They would
[533] sing special begging songs in front of the lodges of several well-to-do members of the opposite society. It was a challenge to the Wolf-men and they usually responded in the accepted fashion by giving large quantities of food, in which their relatives would help them out. This would provide the feast at the dance. The Stars then proceeded to the opening of the camp circle and all dismounting except the two very prominent warriors, formed in a line by twos, the four singers with their hand drums last. To the accompaniment of a marching song the line moved "snake-dance" fashion weaving back and forth, to the dancing lodge which had been erected in the center of the camp circle. At the entrance to the lodge the line divided, some going to the right,

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

534 The large amount of individual variation within the limits of the general type characterizing these rattles occurs apparently also among the Arapaho star-rattles.

796 In the war-dance as it was held when first introduced, there were two men who had wands representing swords, and several wearing the familiar [293] belts of crow-feathers with tails falling behind and projections at the lower part of the back. As among the Arapaho, these belts are referred to the crow. A drum was used, made of a cottonwood board or slab bent into [534] a circle, covered both above and below with horse-skin, and hung on four sticks. Four drumsticks went with it, one of which belonged to the owner of the drum, the three others to three different individuals. The sides of the drum were covered, half with red cloth and half with blue, and the skin was painted half blue and half yellow. When the men who owned the swords, the crow-belts, and the drum, gave these away, which they generally did at [431] the same time, a dance was held. The new owners, in turn, by giving the objects to their successors, would furnish the occasion for another performance of the dance.

The war-dancers dressed quite variously. Some wore skunk-skin strips around the leg below the knee, beaded, and with small bells attached. Some wore similar strips around the head. Others had the well-known upright head-dress of deer-tail hair. Some carried fans of eagle-tails; some, whips; some, painted sticks with attached feathers. The dancing went on in a lodge similar to that of the star-dancers. The owner of the drum had his tent near this lodge in the middle of the camp-circle, and the members of the dance went to him to eat. If the head man of the star-dancers was popular, he was asked by the rival war-company to pitch his tent in the middle of the camp-circle, near the owner of the war-dance drum. There are said to have been no assistants in this ceremony, nor any old men as singers; but four of the wives of the dancers were selected to sing. The two men [624] with swords (kakaat) had functions similar to those of the two mounted men [626] with whips in the star-dance. They urged the laggard dancers to get up, and, if they fell down, struck them with their wands. If the man thus struck bore the blow like a man, as the Indians call it, the sword-bearer made him a present; but if he became angry he received nothing, and appears to have been looked upon with ridicule or contempt.

The war-dance as at present given is different from the form described. It is no longer a young men's dance, nor confined to a certain group. All the people of the tribe take part in it. It is very similar in general character to the present-day Arapaho crow-dance, as well as in the place it occupies in the life of the people. Among the Gros Ventre it is now the only dance held.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

had probably had different names before his father's time but that the division into two big groups of "mature, middle-aged" men was always characteristic of Gros Ventre organization. This same informant was likewise under the impression that a man would have to stay with whichever of the two societies he, with his company, had originally joined. Turn Toes said however that he had known a few cases of men who had originally been Stars later joining with the Wolf-men, and of one Wolf-man who afterwards joined the Stars. These known cases, however, occurred fairly late in Gros Ventre history, and probably after the formation of new companies had ceased. 575

Sanctions of Force

Social sanctions were seemingly the most important means of control. Public opinion was effective in all aspects of conduct. Public disapproval meant loss of prestige and in more severe cases made itself felt by "shunning." It was brought to bear upon the individual in an especially effective way through ridicule, as exercised particularly in the enemy-friendship.[21] 626

A considerable number of misdeeds, like theft or failure to observe the rules in ceremonial life, were believed to result automatically in supernatural punishment ("bad luck"). Fear of retaliation through witchcraft also exerted a restraining influence.[22]

There were only three situations in which sanction through physical force was applicable. These were, first, failure to obey the rules of behavior promulgated by the society in charge while any one of the Sacred Dances was in progress; second, murder; third, adultery on the part of the wife.[23] 681

In regard to the first, it is quite clear that in case one of the Sacred Dances had been vowed, the whole tribe had to come together and remain united until the rite was finished. "If the bands happened to be scattered at the time a Sacred Dance was to 688

[21] For a discussion of the enemy-friendship, see pp. 102–06.

[22] Cf. also pp. 169–70 for a discussion of social and other types of motivation proposed to children. Witchcraft is dealt with in detail in Cooper, Ms., 1949.

[23] A detailed treatment of punishment for adultery is given in pp. 183–90, and will not be discussed in this section.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

what time they should meet the next morning to start off, they dispersed. 721

Before leaving camp the next day, the party again sang in front of the lodges which they had approached the night before. This same tune was also sung while the party was en route, words being composed to suit various occasions. This tune was known as the "men's song" and was said to have been given to the Gros Ventres by Nihiatu, the culture-hero. Other songs were also sung while the party was away from camp as, for example, on the first night out when they lamented their absence from friends and loved ones. 533

Various duties were assigned by the leader, and all, but especially the youngest members of the party, were expected to do their part. If a young fellow were "lazy" on a raiding expedition, the leader would see to it that he was punished. An accepted way of accomplishing this end was on the sly to substitute strips of rawhide for the usual strips of meat in the container used by the young man. When the party started to eat, all would watch this particular young man and, as he pulled out the rawhide, they would laugh at him. It was said that young men in this predicament would be so humiliated that they would actually cry. It was a serious matter at the time, and also offered good material to be used later by potential enemy-friends who might have witnessed this embarrassing situation. 726 [626]

Along this line, it is interesting to note the detailed procedure of one man, which may or may not be typical of the behavior of leaders in disciplining members of their party. "This particular leader, known as Eater, a contemporary of Running Bear, was highly respected and feared because it was known that when he led a war party he expected the other members to live up to the high standard he set by his own actions. If, however, he found that someone in the party was not doing his duty, in the evening he would start singing a song which he had acquired through a dream. All the young men would be apprehensive, wondering which of them was to be humiliated. The others would take up the song while Eater alone would dance, imitating a wolf by placing one hand on the forehead and the other behind him to represent the tail. He would circle around, dancing in this manner, until he came to the victim. Whereupon he would stop in front of the 726 626

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

726 latter and raise his leg in imitation of a urinating dog. All would
626 know then on whom Eater's displeasure had fallen, and the young man in question would break down and sob. That would cure him of laziness."

726 Among the important duties on a war party were those of the water-carrier. If the mission were to be performed under more
312 than ordinarily dangerous circumstances, young men might volunteer for the job, but usually the leader chose someone for it. A water-carrier had to have courage and resourcefulness because in order to fetch water it might be necessary that he be sent long distances without guard, and then have to catch up with the group
[482 in case the rest had to move. When the members of the party
[534] sighted the water-carrier returning successfully bearing the skin
533] water-container attached to a pole, a song was sung by the war party as they marked time by beating two sticks together.[2]

726 Scouting was another important aspect of a war party. The leader selected two well-qualified men for this job. "They had to have courage and endurance for, while scouting, they would run instead of walk and not eat until their mission was completed." Scouts were called "wolves" and wore wolf-skins as insignia and
[714] sometimes, at least, would stick brush on their heads so they could not be so easily spotted against the horizon.[3] They went to high
[533] places to look around. If the enemy were not in sight, they might sing, making up words to the tune mentioned as having been sung before the party left camp.[4]

If the scouts saw indications of the enemy, such as smoke rising from a coulee, but without actually seeing the enemy sufficiently clearly to identify them, on their return to the party they gave a wolf howl as they approached and proceeded in a sharp zigzag path. If, however, they had more definite information, they gave the wolf howl and approached in a circular path; that is, advanced, turned in a circle, advanced again, turned in a circle, advanced again, turned in a circle and halted. They were then met by two older men who had been successful scouts in their day. While the
[533 scouts were approaching—occasionally looking back over their

[2] Recorded as No. 130.
[3] For illustrations, see Curtis, v. 5, p. 176.
[4] Samples of this kind of song were recorded as No. 23 and No. 24.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

A man who was ambitious selected his enemy-friends with care so as to ensure opponents worthy of his efforts. It was said that often an older man whose reputation was already well established chose a spunky youngster. As The Boy phrased it, "This was an honor for the younger man and the older had nothing to lose. If the older continually won out over the younger in a fair 'fight' he ruined the younger man's reputation and thus eliminated a possible rival. On the other hand, if the younger man showed that he could take 'abuse' as well as give it, the older man could go along with him as an enemy-friend of long standing." 572

Everyone watched with interest the contest between well-matched enemy-friends whether they indulged in good-natured razzing of one another or whether they were concerned with more serious matters. When each tried to out-do the other in bragging of conquests both in love and at war, a large audience was attracted. Practical jokes were expected between them and the more vulgar and obscene their nature, the greater the enjoyment. Whenever one enemy-friend thought he "had something" on the other, he hastened to expose him publicly, so that the enemy-friendship often functioned as an effective means of social control. [522] [626]

When a man publicly taunted his enemy-friend, however, it was well for him to have ample grounds for the accusation lest the tables be turned against him as the case of Bull Lodge and Sits Like A Woman. This was told by The Boy.

"Sits Like A Woman was leading a war party out of camp as his enemy-friend, Bull Lodge, was returning from a hunt. Bull Lodge inquired of some members of the party as to who their leader might be. When he was told that Sits Like A Woman was the leader, Bull Lodge remarked: 'I'd hesitate to meet such warriors as yourselves were I the enemy, but Sits Like A Woman has no shame to lead such great men as you are!' Sits Like A Woman heard this and didn't forget it. The party was a very successful one, returning with 'charcoal' (scalps) and none of the Gros Ventres was even hurt. When they got home they sang around the camp circle here and there as usual. Bull Lodge at the time was entertaining many guests including his brothers-in-law who were seated near the entrance of the tipi. After Sits Like A

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

case of necessity pay the indemnity. Other people might say to a man that it was of no use to help that nephew, that he was no good. Yet the uncle did not give up trying to save face for the nephew, and to do his best to shield or rehabilitate him—but at the same time he "talked turkey to him." 604

Even after a man was married, his maternal uncle had the right of disciplining him. If a husband mistreated his wife undeservedly it was said that his maternal uncle could step in and take the wife temporarily away from his nephew, letting him shift for himself, doing his own cooking and so on, "until he came to his senses." A man would have to take such treatment from his uncle, it was said, because public opinion condemned the husband and backed up the uncle, who was considered within his rights. [584] [626]

Furthermore the maternal uncle would feel duty-bound to protect his nephew from danger. An extreme case was cited in illustration. "A Gros Ventre boy was captured by the Crow when fairly young and he remained among them after he grew up although he could have returned. On one occasion the Gros Ventres surrounded a war party of Crow among whom was this young Gros Ventre man. The young man appealed to his mother's brother to save his life, and the uncle responded by using every argument he could think of. The other Gros Ventres in the party refused the plea, however, on the grounds that the boy had previously had the opportunity to return to his own people, and asked: 'Why didn't he think of his uncle then?'"

On the other side of the picture, if a young man were successful and "on the way up," as the saying goes, his maternal uncle had priority over the boy's father or older brother in helping him by giving generously to him in private and by giving away publicly in his honor as lavishly as possible. It was stated, for instance, that if a young man was ready to go to war, his uncle might go to him and give him a horse, encouraging him to face the enemy bravely and to show courage under fire. He would tell his nephew: "I'm going to watch you. Here is your chance to show what you can do." Thus he might "steal the show" from a father or older brother who themselves might have intended to help the boy off to a good start. Because it was the uncle who did this, nothing would be said. All his relatives would be proud of a successful young [431]

793 informed one, feasting them and also, *de regueur,* giving payment
*796 in valuable goods for each bit of instruction received. In these instruction sessions, the last keeper usually played the leading role, but the others would coach and correct when necessary or one of them if better informed on this or that point might teach while the last keeper took a back seat. The retiring co-keeper did most of the instruction of the new co-keeper. The Feathered Pipe keeper co-keeper, ex-keepers, and ex-co-keepers would commonly sit in at these sessions, but only as guests, without taking part in the instruction. Lame Bull, when first made keeper, got a great deal of his instruction from Deer, an earlier exceptionally well informed keeper.

793 A ritual relationship was contracted between the new keeper
608 and co-keeper on the one hand and the ex-keeper and ex-co-keepers on the other. All the ex-keepers become "grandfathers" to the new keeper and co-keeper; all the ex-co-keepers, "grandmothers" to them; and are so addressed by these names respectively. The retiring keeper and co-keeper became, as it were, principal "grandfather" and "grandmother" respectively. This sacred relationship was looked upon as very like that between grandparents and grandchildren by blood. Privileged familiarity in the way of vulgar talk and banter, between these ritual grandparents and grandchildren, obtained, but not quite the large degree of freedom that obtained between grandparents and grandchildren by blood.[8] The ritual "grandfathers" and "grandmothers" also had certain recognized powers of control over their "grandchildren": if, for instance, one
● [626] of these "grandsons" went on a berserk rampage and was about to kill a fellow-tribesman, and his own father and mother could not bring him to reason, one of the ritual grandfathers might be called in to reason with his grandson and the latter would have to abandon his angry murderous design.

Keeper's Lodge

342 The Flat Pipe keeper's lodge was a large one, undecorated on
346 the outside except for a portion painted red around the door.

[8] Cf. Flannery, 1953, pp. 121-22.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Two general aspects of this socio-ceremonial relationship were discussed in detail with The Boy: the obligation not to refuse requests, and the possibility of abuses arising under the system which for the rest had obvious social values in solving conflicts and preventing bloodshed. 608

What lay back of the sense of obligation to grant requests? The offered pipe was the central symbol, whether offered once for all at the time the ceremonial relationship was first contracted or offered on a specific occasion to a "grandfather" or "grandson" not the offerer's own. The ordinary pipe as offered in either case was looked upon as a sacred thing, as symbolic or representative of the sacrosanct Flat Pipe and/or Feathered Pipe which had been given by the Supreme Being as the most powerful media to pray with, as the most assured means of getting a hearing from the Supreme Being. The offered common pipe was a sort of substitute in the case for the sacred Pipes themselves. The "grandfather" or prospective "grandfather" on accepting the offered pipe, would always pray reverently with it to the Supreme Being before smoking it. If he once accepted the office of "grandfather" to another, he realized that he was assuming all the responsibilities that went with it, among them that of never refusing a request made by his "grandson" without a pipe, or by another with a pipe to intercede with his grandson. It was a sort of implicit sacred pledge into which the Supreme Being himself entered, at least indirectly. He knew that if he ever refused such a request, harm would come to him in some form: he would have to pay the price of his refusal, to suffer the consequences. Whether such consequences would follow automatically or by action of the Supreme Being or other beings is not clear from our field data, but in any case they were in some sense "supernaturally" caused. If people heard that a "grandfather" had refused a request made to him by his "grandson," they would say: "He (the 'grandfather') has sealed his fate." They would immediately lose their good opinion of him,—a social sanction added to the supernatural one,—and would look for some misfortune to befall him sooner or later. If soon after the refusal, evil did befall him, death or other grave mishap, they would say: "That's because he refused his grandson." 606

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

608 The problem of possible abuses of the system was explained by The Boy along the following lines. "First of all if an old man had become my 'grandfather' only recently, say just last week and I were a young man, no one would ordinarily ask me to appeal for him to my 'grandfather.' By strict right I could do so, and if no one else were available, I might be asked, but as an 'amateur,' as one lacking in experience, I would not be a good person to ask. An older, more experienced 'grandson' would be asked."

*796 Besides choosing a "grandfather" the vower also selected, as a herald or crier for the Dance, some intelligent old man gifted as an 203 orator. The crier's chief task was to walk or ride around the camp before and during the Dance announcing to the people whether the group would move and other decisions and agreements covering preparations for and procedure during the dance.

If the bands happened to be scattered at the time a sacred Dance was to be held, runners were sent by the vower to bid them foregather for the Dance. All members of the tribe were obliged to attend the Sacrifice and Crazy Dances, and pretty surely the Drum, Kit-fox and Dog Dances. As regards the Fly Dance, this was ordinarily held in connection with one of the other Dances, so everybody would be present anyhow. As regards the Old Men's and Old Women's Dances, they were not so lively or colorful, and were held a little apart and the people did not take much interest in them and "did not go much" to them; attendance was apparently not required.

*796 If any individual or group failed to come when summoned, the vower would request the soldiers of the Stars or Wolves as the ●626 case might be, compel attendance.[9] Even a war party could not start out if some one had vowed a dance and it was about ready 701 to begin. So much for the types or personnel,—vower, associates, age-groups, ceremonial "grandfathers," criers, police, and "congregation,"—more or less common to all the Sacred Lodges. Personnel peculiar to particular Dances will be taken up later when each is described. Before describing the Dances one by one, some ritual observances common to all or many of them may be noted.

*796 After the vower of a Dance had chosen his ritual grandfather

[9] For a detailed illustration of this point, see Flannery, 1953, pp. 49-51.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 593 a mistake [ritual?] and besides it was a hard thing to do. I was too crazy yet, they said. At the time my husband's other wife was about to have a baby, and some wanted me to join so she would have a safe delivery, but the others did not let me do it." Then, too, if a wife were in her menses at the time of the dance, she to her embarrassment would have to say so and she would have to be substituted for. If a Crazy Dancer did not have a wife of his own he could borrow one, a sister-in-law or other woman with whom an avoidance or respect relationship did not obtain. Thus Little Man, Coming Daylight's husband, once gave permission to his unmarried younger brother, Spotted Bird, to join the Crazy Dance with her, but Spotted Bird declined on the ground of his being too young, although actually Spotted Bird took part in that Dance as an attendant, which made Little Man so angry that he would not give anything away during the Dance for Spotted Bird. "A man," said The Boy, "who loaned his wife to another man for the Crazy Dance had to be a strong man. And before he would lend any of his women he was pretty sure he was lending away the right one who had strong character because it was tough."

When a man made a vow or accepted a challenge to perform the Crazy Dance all and only the members of his own company such as Calves, Holding-on-to-dog's-tail, Having-breast-for-a-pillow, or other,—within the Stars or Wolves as the case might be, joined or were expected to join the dance with him. Actually, on at least some later Crazy Dance occasions, not all the members of the given age-group joined. When the crier announced the coming Dance, some of the men of the age-group involved might make remarks such as: "Well, these old men [the ritual grandfathers] are getting hungry for good times again! They want to play around! They are agitating for the Crazy Dance." And some might bypass that particular dance even though at the risk of being looked upon as jealous weaklings. "If," said The Boy "a man belonging to the age-group to which the vower of the Crazy Dance belonged failed to join the dance, without good excuse, he and [626] his wife would catch it; this would be published, because he did not want to have his wife go through this [the ritual grandfather sex-test]."

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

fathers back of them and the wives back of the grandfathers, according to one statement by Coming Daylight; the grandfathers in front, and the dancers and their wives back of them according to another by her. The bows of the "talls" and "shorts" were stuck upright in the ground in two crescents in front of the two respective divisions; the bows of the ritual "elder brothers" (the four councilors?), a little apart near the south or southeast ends of these two crescents.[18] 796*

The chief ritual paraphernalia used in the Crazy Dance were the badger pelt, hoof rattles, whistles, bows, and poisoned arrows. The stuffed badger hide, "trimmed and fixed up," figured prominently in the rites. The bone whistles, hung on the neck of the dancers, were blown by them when dancing. The rattles, θaθanas, sticks about five feet long, with deer hoofs attached in a row along the upper third, were used by the grandfathers who sang, sitting in a row and pounding the ends of the rattles on the ground to beat time. 293 796*

Each Crazy Dancer treated one of his arrows with poisonous wild parsley, and tied the poisoned arrow to his bow. If the dancer "got mad or any serious situation arose" he would unfasten the arrow and shoot to kill. If the arrow penetrated the skin of the victim or even scratched him, he died. This extreme measure was very rarely resorted to. We were told of no actual instance. When the dance was over these poisoned arrows were carried away to a spot where no one could find them and were buried. 796* [626] ●

The ceremonies on each of the four days of the Crazy Dance began with the painting of the bodies of the dancers and their wives, the pattern of the painting differing each day. The painting was done in the respective lodges of the leaders of the groups of two to four dancers. Here they gathered with their respective ceremonial grandfathers and "Little Crazy Dancers." The dancer and his wife, or borrowed surrogate, would sit there naked, the woman with legs close together and stretched out in front. This was a source of serious embarrassment to all concerned. The bodies 796* 302 [834 516]

[18] Kroeber, 1908, p. 242, gives a different arrangement, with which still another statement by Coming Daylight that "the women sat on the west side" insofar agrees.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

At big social or Grass Dances, the people used to be good to these "retired old men" and gave them good seats inside the hall or enclosure where the dance was held. At one such gathering, probably around 1905, a lot of these old men were present sitting in a semi-circle in front of the four chief men. One "retired old man," Fire Steel, Thomas Main's father-in-law and Lame Bull's brother-in-law, a witty old man who liked to talk, came late. Even though Lame Bull was present, Fire Steel said aloud, in a voice that could be heard by everyone: "What is the matter with you old men sitting there? You ought to sing songs of praise. Instead you are sitting there and playing 'it' so women can admire you. But your behinds are all pretty black now!" And everybody laughed. Fire Steel used to get to a dance late and in a tone loud enough for everyone present to hear used to expose these old men's past behavior,—things that they would not want said in public. 888 561 626 522

Fly Dance

This dance was called no:bao'wə "fly lodge." The word no:bä is at present used for "house fly." Our informants were not sure if the word, as used for the dance itself, referred to flies or to mosquitoes. 796*

The dance was last performed about 1907. Our chief sources were The Boy, Thick and Coming Daylight; some stray data were gotten from Turn Toes, Charles Buckman, Thomas Main and Cora Chandler. Our information confirms Kroeber's description, and supplements it in only a few minor details.

No origin story was known to our informants, beyond the item that the dance "belongs to the flies [or mosquitoes]."

The Fly Dance, like other Sacred Dances, was held only in fulfillment of a vow, a vow usually made in less grave emergencies. In dignity the Fly Dance ranked lowest among the seven Sacred Dances carried out by men.

It was held in the summer, usually around the time when one of other Sacred Dances was being performed. Consequently there was no necessity of sending runners to assemble the people, as

828 through the winter what to put in the letter (quoted infra, pp. 380-381) sent in the spring of 1943 to Cooper that would do something big toward restoring the latter to health. "'I think,'" remarked Thomas Main, "is commonly used by the Gros Ventres in speaking. When I am interpreting, a man will often say to me: 'Tell them this is what I *think* of him (or it).' There is an emphasis on thinking and on the power of thought."

We come now to the more specific data on good and bad wishing and thinking.

754 In 1939 while we were chatting about approbrious and insulting terms, such as tsë:k (you ghost), in common use, The Boy dis-
828 tinguished these from malevolent thinking or wishing or cursing proper. "As a curse [proper] a person might say to another: 'You are not going to live long.' If a thing were serious enough, almost anyone might worry another with such cursing." On another occasion, the same summer, while speaking of the kinds of advice given children by their father, The Boy quoted his father, Lame Bull, as having said: "If a man were offended by his son and put a curse on his son, the curse would remain on the child."

828 Between our 1939 and 1940 visits to the Gros Ventres, The Boy had suffered a severe stroke (facial paralysis). At our first talk
[123] with him in 1940, Cooper expressed to him the very sincere wish that he would get well and live long. The Boy was visibly affected by this expression and spoke at some length as follows:

● [626] "If a man does something of which the people disapprove very much, their *thought* is against him. They *think* badly of him. Against this mass thinking his own thinking cannot stand. Two people may have a battle of thinking. The outcome will depend on how each is developed in thinking, on their respective powers of thought. If all the people think badly of a man he becomes a sort of outcast.

"If someone has had some terrible misfortune and is beyond human aid and this becomes known, people will say: 'That is his sentence from above. Someone above thought that out. That is why he is in such desperate straits.' This would be something supernatural, something beyond the human.

"When you said you wished and thought I would live many years

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

I was glad. Now your wish and thought are added to my own. 828
The human being can think and reason because somebody supernatural has endowed him with the right [ability] to think. The wishing itself helps."

A few minutes later, after he had told a recent dream he had had, he voluntarily returned to the wish topic. "When a little while ago you wished that I would get well and live long, I believe that at that moment in which you wished this the Supreme Being was listening to you and saw your thought and knew all about it. In my opinion besides your thinking that way as just a human being, your so thinking calls for some action from above.

"Take another example. Suppose I did something good to an old man, and the old man valued and appreciated it. I would not know he was pleased until he said: 'You have made my heart glad. I appreciate what you have done for me. Stand in front of me. I am going to ask in your behalf from the power above that allowed me to live this long. I am asking with my words, my prayer, my thought, my wish, for all I am worth. And all this wish has to be transferred to you."

In 1945 Thomas Main after a long and serious discussion with 626
The Boy and Thick on this matter of mass thinking and public 754
opinion, summarized the situation as follows: 828

"The Indian people, at least the Gros Ventres, thought the psychological effect of public opinion is so great and intense on the one on whom it was trained that it shortened his life . . and made him a nobody. If he had a long, long life it was certainly a miserable one. It was definitely known by the Gros Ventres that they actually thought people to death. Even today public opinion is difficult to cope with. The Boy says that if public opinion held anyone in high esteem, this would have the opposite effect and would help the person to climb the heights he wanted to attain. One who was not held in high esteem by public opinion never got anywhere in any endeavor." We may comment in passing that while there is question here of the ordinary operation of public opinion, mass thinking also seems to enter in: "They actually thought people to death."

In the following account by Charles Buckman the wish appears

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

828 pretty clearly to be operative on its own although along with the
[754 "natural" morale-building effect of cheering words.
● 626] "There is an old Gros Ventre saying that if a man is ailing and some relative or friend of his comes in and says pleasant things to him or tells him he is going to get well, such a talk helps him. When someone gives the sick person a good talk and sincerely wishes he will get well, then the patient will do his best and get well. If you say unpleasant things to a sick man you will help to kill him. Don't hurt a sick man's feelings. The wish in the case is looked upon as something like a prayer. It has to be really meant. When a person talks that way to you when you are sick, [782] the Supreme Being will look down upon you and help you to get well. If a person is visiting a sick Indian, he will say good things to you, even though he knows you are going to die. A white doctor might say: 'There is not much hope.'

"When 32 years ago I was thought to be dying of appendicitis and had been given up by the doctors, old fellows came in and talked hopefully to me and put new life in me.

"In 1918, when I was ill with the flu, I overheard the doctor say: 'It is only a question of a half-hour. You better get a coffin for him.' Then another fellow, an Indian, came in and said to me: 'Well, what did the doctor tell you?' I said: 'Nothing.' He then said: 'He told that fellow over there that you are going to die. But he is not the governor of death. You are not going to die. You are going to live. You want to live for these children of yours. You are going to get well, and for the sake of these children. And think of the One Above [Supreme Being]. He's going to keep you. That's all I want to say to you. I wish you will be up in a few days.' And he walked out. It took me two years to recover fully."

In one of the songs, No. 67, sung in the Law Enforcers' Dance, the words, "The lead bull, comes in this direction," were explained [782] to us by The Boy as being a "half prayer." The singer was "wishing as hard as he could, so there would be plenty of game, especially buffalo, so the people would not have to go far to hunt."

525 The Gros Ventre, The Boy stated in 1939, "did not pray for
828 success in gambling," but just before a wheel game started, the player would take the wheel in his hand and hold one of the

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 178 533 [625 681] were supposed to come prepared with pipe, tobacco, and matches in anticipation of this song. If, for some reason, one of the four was unable to furnish at least a pipeful of mixture, and could not borrow one, he was immediately arrested by the owners of the whips and punished by the singers who might tear his shirt at the neck so everyone could see it, or, perhaps, pour over him a good cupful of broth made from dog flesh. This broth has a strong and lasting odor. The female officers were likewise expected to give the women singers a smoke. The smoking song marked an intermission. No one danced to this song and all sat around smoking and taking it easy.

796 178 If things got too dull, however, one of the owners of the whips might get up, call the announcer, and say: "Tell my friends that I am going to whip them if they don't dance. I will have the right to whip them because I am going to pay for it," and he would present a bridle, or perhaps five dollars, or something of that order of magnitude, to anyone he wished. It was understood, then, that the next time the singing started this man might hit any person,—even one of the "chiefs,"—who failed to dance.

Another feature reminiscent of the original Grass dance but showing some slight change, was the provision that anyone who wished might have it announced that he was going to "lock the door," which meant that nobody could go home until the dance was over. For doing this however he had to provide all the necessary food for another Grass dance to be held on the night immediately following. It was up to the owners of the whips to enforce the regulation by taking something valuable, say a hat [689] or a blanket, from anyone who left the dance and the article was forfeit if he failed to return.

796 178 626 Based on the same concept, the practice grew up of forcing attendance in the following way. Once in a while the owners of the whips might order their assistants to go from door to door in the whole community and take something belonging to each householder, say a bridle, or a valuable belt, or a gun, and bring it to the dancing-place. If the owner of the object were not at the dance, his property was returned to him only if he promised

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

to provide food for the next dance. If he failed to redeem it by such promise, he had one more chance to do so by appearing at the following dance. If he did not show up on that occasion the announcer was told to call out: "The one who owns this bridle (or belt, or gun, etc.) does not want it." Whereupon the article would be thrown in the fire and destroyed. 796 178 626

Although the custom of "throwing away" wives gradually died out, the giving away of valuable property to honor loved ones continued and was elaborated. The following is only one example from many which might be cited as illustrative of attitudes. The informant is now a man in his early seventies. He stated: "When I was a young man I never went to these social affairs. After I married my wife would go with my older brother every time there was a Grass dance, but I would stay at home. This brother of mine used to get after me for not taking part. He would say: 'It is bad to be the way you are. When there is a dance or anything going on, go and look on. You don't necessarily have to dance, but at least be present.' One time in later years the Cheyenne came to visit and of course the Gros Ventres put on a dance for them. I decided to go and for the first time I joined in. When my brother saw me he got up and said: 'Well, my friends, I have been asking my brother to look on and to take part in these dances, and I have never succeeded. But today I see him at this dance and I am glad he is here. I am glad he is joining with us.' Then my brother went out and brought to the dancing-place a new yellow-wheeled buggy and a set of harness he had just purchased, and announced: 'Now, because my brother has joined the dance I am proud he did, and in his honor I am giving away this buggy and harness to the visitors.' Then my brother's wife announced: 'I am happy that my brother-in-law is joining the dance. I will give a beef to the visitors so they will kill it and have meat to eat.' Of course I felt embarrassed. It was hard on me because I thought everybody was looking at me and I sweated. Afterwards I told my brother: 'I didn't go in there for the purpose of having you give away all that stuff in my honor!' But he replied: 'Well, that is the way of our people 796 178 431 [586]

8:Flannery E-5 (1940-1948)1960 NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the shots and went later to see what happened, and there I saw her lying across the fire; her dress had burned off and her body was all shriveled. They weren't satisfied to kill her, but they burned her too!" She maintained her attitude and all the scolding from her relatives was of no avail.

Before turning to her adult life, we may refer to another instance which illustrates Coming Daylight's sensitivity to the suffering of others. In the Sacrifice Lodge, which is the Gros Ventre version of the well-known Plains Sun Dance, one of the important features was the spectacular self-torture which the active participants underwent. Each one had a sliver of wood embedded in the flesh of his chest. To the wood was tied a line, the other end of which was fastened high on the center-pole of the lodge. The man, leaning back so that the line was taut, went back and forth until finally the sliver was torn from his flesh. Meanwhile the women cheered on their relatives by "rattling their tongues," singing war songs, and the like, by way of encouraging the men to be brave and see the thing through. Coming Daylight was quite a young child when she first witnessed this performance. She remembered vividly her reaction when one of the young men, in his exhaustion, went to the center-pole and, putting his arms around it, wept aloud. She was not able to stand it any longer and rushed home crying. Her grandmother was very angry with her for leaving in the middle of the performance, but all the little girl could say was: "Oh, I just pitied that young man," and she could not be induced to return to the dance lodge. We may add here that actually in later years she did not participate in the Sacrifice Lodge even so far as women were allowed to do so.

The examples we have given are sufficient to show, I believe, that Coming Daylight had developed as a child a very strong set against violence, against painful and dangerous experiences. She refused medicine power from supernatural sources not only because it was dangerous but also because it involved a kind of physical activity which was repugnant to her. She refused to mutilate herself and was extremely sensitive to painful experiences in others. Her actual deviations from the patterns of accepted or approved behavior all tended in this same direction against violence. Her adult behavior likewise was consistent with this trend in her personality.

In consonance with her feeling against physical violence Coming Daylight avoided as far as possible the rough-and-tumble play in which brother-in-law and sister-in-law were free to, and indeed expected to, indulge. Other women told with glee how they enjoyed "getting even" with their brothers-in-law by, for instance, pushing them when fully clothed into the river, or dumping bucketfuls of water over their heads when they least expected it, and so on; but Coming Daylight admitted without hesitation that she didn't like that sort of thing and never attempted to retaliate even when her brothers-in-law succeeded in playing jokes on her. Similarly while it was not unusual for women rivals to actively fight over a man, she refrained from such undignified behavior, although it must be admitted that she had enough provocation on at least one occasion of which she told me. She had just married a man who was described by others as something of a gay Lothario. A woman who had been trying to force her attentions on him was furious when she heard of the marriage. She rushed to the lodge and pulled Coming Daylight out feet first, yelling insults the while. When the latter regained her feet she made no attempt to hit back even though the other slapped her and pulled off an earring, tearing the lobe of the ear. Coming Daylight, however, bided her time and soon was able to make an opportunity for an exchange of words with the woman at a big social dance.

8:Flannery E-5 (1940-1948)1960 NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Her final rejoinder was such a witty and pointed one that everyone laughed heartily at her rival's expense. In this culture, of course, public ridicule was a far more effective retaliation than the biting and scratching that other women said frankly they would have indulged in when attacked.

Expression of emotional excess was institutionalized for the Gros Ventres, as for the rest of the Plains, in the bereavement situation. Upon the death of a husband, son, or father, a woman was expected to start wailing as soon as she heard the news, have her hair cut off, discard good clothes for old ragged ones, gash her arms and legs, go to the hills to mourn and cry, resisting for a time the pleas of her relatives to return, and being watched lest she attempt suicide. Coming Daylight was only a young woman when she was first widowed and the mourning pattern was still in full vogue. It is certain from other evidence than Coming Dayling had a deep affection for this husband to whom she had been given as a child-bride and in whose kindly and indulgent treatment she had found a pleasant escape from the rigorous discipline of her grandmother. Nevertheless the public expression of her grief was minimal—no abandonment for her. Although her sister was sent on the hills with her to keep watch over her in the usual way, Coming Daylight was easily persuaded to return shortly though she herself was proud of the fact that she had stayed out so long that she actually had got a frozen toe! In later years when all that was left of the ritual was the wailing out on the hills, she lost the son whom she herself, and everybody else, acknowledged as her favorite. She had not been on the hills very long when she experienced a significant dream, as follows. She was in a lodge at the rear of which was a big pile of tobacco mixture and a pipe. The owner of the lodge filled the pipe and approached her. She was frightened because she didn't smoke. The owner of the lodge however told her: "Look at these people." She looked and saw many with their hair cut and their bodies bleeding from the gashes inflicted in grief. The man then told her: "That is in the past. Nowadays your only consolation is in smoking." So she accepted the pipe and, after smoking it, she was painted in ceremonial fashion by each of those other mourners. Then the owner of the lodge dismissed her saying: "Now, go home and don't ever go on the hills and mourn again. But always smoke if you want to." She went home right after this dream and when she told her husband of it he accepted it as valid and persuaded her sister to prepare for Coming Daylight her first real smoke. She maintained that the habit subsequently developed was actually a great comfort to her.

The final area with which we shall be concerned here is the war complex—a vital aspect of the old Plains culture. Gros Ventre women were allowed direct but limited participation in these activities in the sense that, while they would not join a party of men who were going on horse-raiding or revenge expeditions, if opportunity offered they might exhibit the same kind of bravery that a man should show and derive considerable status therefrom. For instance, if one of the enemy fell nearby, the women rushed out from camp to count coup, and to grab trophies with which to inaugurate the relationship known as "enemy-friends." Coming Daylight, however, was never one to indulge in this sport. She told of the one—and to her extremely distasteful—occasion on which her hand literally was forced. It seems that during a raid on their camp one of the enemy was shot and her husband scalped him. The victim was lying not far from her lodge and, as her husband dashed off to pursue the rest of the Assiniboine, he shouted for her to come out and see what was going on. Coming Daylight saw the man lying there, face down, covered with blood. He was not dead

8:Flannery E-5 (1940-1948)1960 NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

159 756 787 "My experience was by dreaming. One time before I was married—I must have been about eight years old—I was sleeping in a big lodge and a 'person' came and wakened me. He had a bag of medicines on his back. He came to me on four successive nights and laid out these medicines and told me what each was for. On the third of these nights there was a man lying there—he was just skin and bones. The 'person' who had awakened me told me: 'You could take all these medicines and you could cure people like that one lying there' [i.e., a person in the last extremity]. In my dream I would do everything he told me, manipulate my hands to draw out the sickness, and do everything. But I didn't want that power and would tell him so. Each morning too I would relate to my grandmother exactly what had happened in the night but she would try to hush me up, telling me: 'Don't say anything; don't tell anyone. You will be a great medicine woman.' But I didn't want that power. I didn't like it because [755] when medicine people suck on the weak part of the sick person they have to swallow what they extract. I had decided I would rather be quiet and not do anything like that, or sacrifice my flesh, or things of that kind. Perhaps if it had come later I might have taken that power and become great."

Nevertheless when later in life she had other dreams indicating supernatural power, she likewise refused. She explained in regard to one of these experiences, for instance: "The one who awakened me this time had told me to face the rising sun and was showing me how to make a smudge from the moss that grows close on logs; but I told him. 'No. I would rather not have it.' Those who have power die too soon."

159 757 Incidentally, still in connection with curing, bleeding was an operation which was performed purely as a natural remedy for a person who felt dizzy or sluggish. Anyone could do it—no supernatural validation was needed. Other women described quite casually how it was done and discussed the various times they had actually performed the operation. Coming Daylight, however, insisted that while there was really nothing to such an operation, she could never bring herself to perform it, nor would she allow anyone else to bleed her; she could not stand the sight of blood.

The aversion to the sight of blood and to self-mutilation was evidently deep-seated and showed itself in a marked manner early in her life. On one occasion a close relative was very ill. In such a situation it was expected that every member of the family would rally around and do whatever he could toward the recovery. Among the things that fell within the scope of activity for female relatives was that of vowing to sacrifice something valuable, including perhaps the blood [602] from one's arm or a finger-joint, if the person recovered. At this particular [787] time, Coming Daylight was a young child, and her grandmother decided that it would be appropriate for the little girl to offer that her finger-tip be removed [876] if the relative regained his health. When it was suggested to her, Coming Daylight refused, even though her grandmother took after her with a stick. [309] She actually ran away and wandered alone, until two nights later the relative died and an uncle finally found her.

159 183 765 On another occasion in her early youth, too, she defied a convention connected with kinship by refusing to join in mourning for an uncle who had been killed in revenge for having instigated the murder of his brother's wife. When her grandmother upbraided Coming Daylight for not expressing grief in the tradi- [602] tional manner, the latter defied her by saying: "I am not going to cry for that man. I don't know why you are crying for him. I have worked for that woman [607] and she has fed me, and has even given me meat to bring home to you. I heard

8:Flannery E-5 (1940-1948)1960 NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the shots and went later to see what happened, and there I saw her lying across the fire; her dress had burned off and her body was all shriveled. They weren't satisfied to kill her, but they burned her too!" She maintained her attitude and all the scolding from her relatives was of no avail. 159 183 165 [627]

Before turning to her adult life, we may refer to another instance which illustrates Coming Daylight's sensitivity to the suffering of others. In the Sacrifice Lodge, which is the Gros Ventre version of the well-known Plains Sun Dance, one of the important features was the spectacular self-torture which the active participants underwent. Each one had a sliver of wood embedded in the flesh of his chest. To the wood was tied a line, the other end of which was fastened high on the center-pole of the lodge. The man, leaning back so that the line was taut, went back and forth until finally the sliver was torn from his flesh. Meanwhile the women cheered on their relatives by "rattling their tongues," singing war songs, and the like, by way of encouraging the men to be brave and see the thing through. Coming Daylight was quite a young child when she first witnessed this performance. She remembered vividly her reaction when one of the young men, in his exhaustion, went to the center-pole and, putting his arms around it, wept aloud. She was not able to stand it any longer and rushed home crying. Her grandmother was very angry with her for leaving in the middle of the performance, but all the little girl could say was: "Oh, I just pitied that young man," and she could not be induced to return to the dance lodge. We may add here that actually in later years she did not participate in the Sacrifice Lodge even so far as women were allowed to do so. 304 [602] [533] 159 304

The examples we have given are sufficient to show, I believe, that Coming Daylight had developed as a child a very strong set against violence, against painful and dangerous experiences. She refused medicine power from supernatural sources not only because it was dangerous but also because it involved a kind of physical activity which was repugnant to her. She refused to mutilate herself and was extremely sensitive to painful experiences in others. Her actual deviations from the patterns of accepted or approved behavior all tended in this same direction against violence. Her adult behavior likewise was consistent with this trend in her personality. 159

In consonance with her feeling against physical violence Coming Daylight avoided as far as possible the rough-and-tumble play in which brother-in-law and sister-in-law were free to, and indeed expected to, indulge. Other women told with glee how they enjoyed "getting even" with their brothers-in-law by, for instance, pushing them when fully clothed into the river, or dumping bucketfuls of water over their heads when they least expected it, and so on; but Coming Daylight admitted without hesitation that she didn't like that sort of thing and never attempted to retaliate even when her brothers-in-law succeeded in playing jokes on her. Similarly while it was not unusual for women rivals to actively fight over a man, she refrained from such undignified behavior, although it must be admitted that she had enough provocation on at least one occasion of which she told me. She had just married a man who was described by others as something of a gay Lothario. A woman who had been trying to force her attentions on him was furious when she heard of the marriage. She rushed to the lodge and pulled Coming Daylight out feet first, yelling insults the while. When the latter regained her feet she made no attempt to hit back even though the other slapped her and pulled off an earring, tearing the lobe of the ear. Coming Daylight, however, bided her time and soon was able to make an opportunity for an exchange of words with the woman at a big social dance. 159 607 159 578 [535] [626]

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

his father or mother and still discover later that she was related 621
to him. The Boy's own experience illustrates this. The Boy is 582
an Upper Quarters as was his father, and his mother was a Frozen. It so happened that his mother's father was one of three brothers who were Frozens. The grandson of one of these three brothers married a Bad Plenty and stayed with his wife's band so long a time that he was known as a member of the Bad Plenty and his children took that affiliation. The Boy married one of the daughters of this family, a woman known as a member of the Bad Plenty. Only after several years of married life did they one day discover that The Boy had married his maternal grandfather's brother's great-granddaughter! Charles Buckman, whose father was a white man, and whose mother, a Bad Plenty, later married a Water Horses man, took Charles there to live, and he claimed affiliation with the latter band. He married a Bad Plenty woman, however, and discovered years later that his wife was remotely related to him on his mother's side. It seems certain that in former times, when the bands were functioning, an Upper Quarters would not marry an Upper Quarters, that is, that an individual would not marry into his own band; but beyond this, apparently only known blood and most types of affinal relationship were bars to marriage.

Within the band, close relatives usually camped in proximity, 621
whether residence was matrilocal or patrilocal. The general consensus of opinion among our informants was that most of the persons within a band were related to each other. Band members would not wager against each other for high stakes in gambling, [628]
and sometimes the whole band might become involved as a unit in case of blood revenge.

Chief or Leader

The term "chief" was employed to designate any man who had 622
distinguished himself in war.[4] Each band then might have several or many such "chiefs," but among them would be one recognized as leader, "he who takes us around," that is, the one who directed the band when it moved from place to place.[5] This function seems

[4] The Gros Ventre term is *nätcä* (m. s.) *näkyä* (w. s.). For linguistic shift between men's and women's speech, see Flannery, 1946, pp. 133–34.

[5] The Gros Ventre term is *ninä'ninänä:titc* (m. s.). Kroeber, 1908,

622 seemed that the others present agreed with him, the leader would
[623] give in and have the crier announce the revised decision."

On the march, the leader went at the head of his band and
[484] showed the way. When several bands were together, the leader of one would have decided where he intended to go, and, if the other bands had decided to go along with this one, they followed, but were free to break away at any time.

[621 The band to which either the Keeper of the Flat Pipe or the
793] Keeper of the Feathered Pipe belonged had a certain distinction as there was a tendency when the tribe split for each to have a considerable following.

173 According to tradition, as related by The Boy, the Gros Ventres had had in the fairly remote past a formally selected chief or
● 643 leader of the whole tribe. It was said that he functioned when the whole tribe was together and that his decisions in important matters were made in consultation with the chief men, including the leaders of all the bands. There was no regular council and anyone present might express his opinion. Often the Keepers of the
[623] Sacred Pipes were present at such meetings called by the tribal
[793] chief, but if they were not present they were supposed to be kept advised.

The last regularly selected leader of the whole tribe was said to have been White Eagle, who held this position in the last decades of the eighteenth century. It was said further that White Eagle was preceded by White Shield, of whom there are many stories extant, and that White Shield was preceded by Elk Going Against The Wind. The Boy gave the following information regarding the "election" of White Eagle. The account was given to The Boy by his father, Lame Bull, who had it from Old Man Gopher, a cousin of Lame Bull's paternal grandfather. "The Gros Ventres had been badly decimated by smallpox and only about 30 lodges were left.[8] Old Man Gopher and his sister, both of them very young children at the time, were the only survivors of their family. The old men among the survivors of the tribe got together and proceeded to choose a chief. White Eagle was then a young man

[931] [8] A reasonable chronological estimate would identify this as a tradition referring to the devastating smallpox epidemic of 1780. For historical data, see p. 9.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

and he knew that the old men were meeting. When he was called in he wondered 'Why do they call a man so young as I?' But after White Eagle accepted the pipe and prayed with it,—thus accepting the office,—all said 'Ai-e-e-e-.' Then White Eagle called one of the attendants: 'I am through praying. Come and get this pipe.' The attendant got up and took it to the first band chief to the left of the door as one entered the lodge. The band chief lit the pipe, said prayers to White Man Above, passed it to the next man on his left who likewise smoked, prayed and passed the pipe on until it reached the last man to the right of the door. Then the pipe was passed back, with no smoking except by the two Keepers of the two Sacred Pipes who were present, and then the two attendants and the announcer smoked. After that, they smoked socially and told stories until White Eagle got up to talk and told what he thought should be done, what would be for the good of the people. 173 643

"When White Eagle accepted the pipe he said, addressing the old man who had gathered the others together: 'Old man, I accept the pipe. I accept it with my whole heart. I am a young man, I am rather backward about everything. But since you chose me to be your head chief I take it with good will. Since I've done what you have asked me, in return I'm going to ask you to do everything I request. Don't refuse me. Don't think because I'm a young man what I say may be taken lightly. Now we've had smallpox and there are many dead. Among the living are many single men and single women. This very night I want each man to select a wife or each woman to select a husband—this very night I want *every* man and woman to marry. If this is done in a few years our old numbers will be restored. After the men and women get together we'll move to where there are buffalo. We will kill buffalo and tan the hides for lodges and bedding for these couples and, after this is done, we'll cut poles for the lodges, so each new married couple will have a home of their own. If we do this our population will increase fast.' After this speech White Eagle told the announcer to tell the people what he had just said and to tell the women not to refuse the men who ask them, and the men not to refuse the women who ask them. So the announcer told all this in the name of White Eagle, the head chief from then on. All was carried out as he had ordered and in a few years the population had 168 173 643

very much increased. White Eagle governed the people very wisely and he governed until he died."

It was The Boy's impression that following White Eagle, the chief of the whole tribe was no longer formally selected and simply attained his position through gradual recognition of his merits.[9] Sits Like A Woman succeeded White Eagle and was tribal chief in the first decades of the 19th century. He was followed by his son of the same name who was a signer of the 1855 treaty, and was still recognized as tribal head when he died suddenly about 1870. Coming Daylight claimed that this Sits Like a Woman II was certainly the greatest chief of her time and that, when he died, people were forbidden to light their camp fires as a sign of mourning. During the subsequent period Lame Bull was outstanding among the leading men, but he witnessed the dissolution of the band system and the camp circle. The Fort Belknap Reservation had been set up in 1873, encompassing much more territory than at present, and the first houses were built in 1882.

In spite of the fact that a tribal chief was recognized, band autonomy was apparently preserved. The ceremonial organization cut across band organization, however, and band autonomy was relinquished at the times during which the Sacred Dances were held. The movements and activities of the tribe as a whole were then in the hands of the company to which the vower of a particular Dance belonged.[10]

The Companies

Kroeber notes that "men of the tribe of age to make any one ceremony were not all in one society or company but in several, the total number of companies being three or four times as great as the number of ceremonies. Each company had a name which it

[9] So far as it goes, this would seem to confirm O. Lewis' interpretation, pp. 42–43, that the earlier Hudson's Bay Company policy on the northern plains reinforced tribal chieftaincy, but that with the development of competition in the fur trade, authority was weakened.

[10] For a discussion of the Sacred Dances, see Kroeber, 1908, pp. 239–68. Other details are given in Cooper, Ms. 1949. The following discussion is concerned only with the composition of the ceremonial organization so far as it can be reconstructed.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

INTRODUCTION.

The following information on the Gros Ventre was collected in the winter and early spring of 1901, at the Fort Belknap Reservation in northern Montana, as part of the Mrs. Morris K. Jesup Expedition. Very few of the statements made, unless such is obviously the case, are based on observation. In general, where nothing is said to the contrary, they are founded on statements made by the Indians. The introductory explanations that have been made in regard to the Arapaho[1] apply also to the following material. The alphabet used for rendering Gros Ventre words is the same as that employed for Arapaho. Additional sounds are ö and ü; which are open, and k', a palatal k.

TRIBAL ORGANIZATION.

The Gros Ventre call themselves "Haäninin." The meaning of this term is sometimes given as "lime-men" or "chalk-men," from haä'a"tyi ("lime" or "soft white stone"). This etymology is, however, doubtful. In literature they have often been known as the "Atsina." They declare this to be the Piegan name for themselves, atsöna". Historically the Gros Ventre are known to have formed an independent tribe closely associated with the Blackfeet during the nineteenth century. Their dialect is similar to the Arapaho, and certainly intelligible to the Arapaho for at least the greater part. The two dialects are, however, sufficiently differentiated to make it certain that the tribes have been more or less distinct for a longer period than two centuries. The Arapaho regard the Gros Ventre as the northernmost one of a group of five closely affiliated or related tribes of which they themselves form the largest. Three of these tribes have long been extinct as separate bodies, and only the dialects of one or two survive among a few individuals with the Arapaho. The Gros Ventre, perhaps

[1] A. L. Kroeber, The Arapaho (Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Parts I, II, and IV. New York, 1902, 1904, and 1907). A series of Gros Ventre myths and tales has been published in Anthropological Papers of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. I, Part III. New York, 1907.

[P. 144 Contains no Text]

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

101 because they have among them no such remnants of perishing tribes, appear to know nothing of this fivefold group, but they recognize their close relationship to the Arapaho. There is no very great amount of intercourse between them and the Arapaho at present, nor does there appear to have been any unusual amount of communication during the greater part of the nineteenth century; but on both sides there is a mutual recognition as of separated relatives. The Arapaho are now and apparently have been for a long time considerably the larger tribe, the Gros Ventre having always in historical times been regarded as a small body. Their present number is about 550.

According to Hayden, the Gros Ventre, about 1800, were south of the Saskatchewan; about 1820 they united with the Arapaho for a few years, and then, following a quarrel, journeyed north, had a disastrous encounter with the Crow, and became neighbors and allies of the Blackfeet.[1] In spite of the usually close association of the Gros Ventre with the three Blackfoot tribes since that time, they became hostile to them for a time, about forty years ago, and united against them with their own long-standing enemies the Crow. In the course of this hostility the Gros Ventre sustained their heaviest reverse in war within their memory; the greater part of an unusually large war-party, including many Crow, being killed after an attack on a Piegan camp. This happened in 1867, according to Grinnell. The usual enemies of the Gros Ventre, besides the Crow, were other Siouan tribes, such as the Dakota and especially the Assiniboine. They also fought more or less with the Shoshone, and no doubt in alliance with the Blackfeet against the Salish Flathead. They were on the whole friendly with the tribes of their own stock of speech, the Arapaho, Cheyenne, Blackfeet, and Cree. The habitat of the Gros Ventre in recent times has been the Milk River territory, in which is situated their present reservation, which they occupy jointly with the Assiniboine.

The Gros Ventre have also been called Fall, Rapid, and Paunch Indians. The term "Gros Ventre" has also been applied to the Minitari, a Siouan village tribe on the Missouri; and the two tribes have been distinguished as "Gros Ventre of the Prairie" and "Gros Ventre of the Missouri."

Gros Ventre tradition brings the tribe from the north; but their story of the division of the tribe while crossing the ice on a great river is found also among the Blackfeet and the Cheyenne, and is worthless as historical evidence. While their earliest habitat known is north of their present territory, acquaintance of them goes back little more than a century, and there is

[1] See the excellent article by H. L. Scott on The Early History and the Names of the Arapaho, in the American Anthropologist, N.S., IX, 545, 1907. From this it appears that, at least from the middle of the eighteenth century on, except for about five years' association with the Arapaho (from 1818 to 1825), the habitat of the Gros Ventre was in the Blackfoot country, between the Saskatchewan and the Missouri.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

nothing to show that they had long been in the Saskatchewan region. All that is certain of their previous past is their closer relationship to the Arapaho than to any other tribe; and the origin of the Arapaho is equally obscure, except that it is certain that, if they came from the north and east, it was a long time ago. Of the Gros Ventre it can only be said that, while related to the Arapaho and regarded by them as almost politically a part of themselves, they were far separated from them when first known, with them for a short time later, and again separated, and in confact and alliance with another much more distantly related Algonkin branch. Their habitat in a hundred years has been successively near the Saskatchewan, the Platte, and the Missouri. There is nothing to show that such variability of affiliation and location within the culture region of the Plains has not been characteristic of their previous history. 131 M4 [648]

The Gros Ventre call the tribes near them by the following names: Arapaho, hinan'ăn (in Arapaho, hinanaei-na"); Cheyenne, itisön, "scars" (itisö", "a scar;" Arapaho name of the Cheyenne, hitaciina"); Cree, na"tsa", "rabbits;" Ojibwa, djinhuna"tsa", "Lower Cree;" the three Blackfoot tribes, waotä"nixtääts, "black-feet" (a Blackfoot, waotä"nixtänin, "blackfoot-man;" a Piegan, tsä"t'; the Bloods, ka"winähaä"); Assiniboine, na"djineihin; Sioux, na"wina"djinei, "Below-Assiniboine" (in Arapaho, na"tinei, "a Sioux"); Crow, hounen, "crow-men;" Minitari, wuxnokayan, "—lodges;" Shoshone, sösöuyänin, "snake-men;" Bannock, waotä"nixiinin, "black-men" (in Arapaho the Ute are called wootänähiçi, "black"); Flathead Salish, kaakaäänin, "flathead-man;" Nezpercé, taniibäts, "pierced-nose" (Arapaho taniibäätçi is the Caddo). Two tribes to the southwest or perhaps west, which have not been identified, are the wasöi"hiiyeihits, "grass-dwellers," who live in houses of grass or brush; and the na"wuxaanibiina"ts, "fish-eaters." 101 648

The Gros Ventre were divided into groups similar to those of the Blackfeet and Sioux. The names of these bands were nicknames, and in no way totemic. As there was prohibition of marriage within the band, the name "clan" is, however, applicable to them. Descent was paternal and a man belonged to his father's band; but the prohibition of marriage extended also to his mother's clan, all the members of both the father's and mother's clan being considered relatives. Each band seems to have had a recognized head or chief. During the winter the tribe broke into smaller groups, consisting of one or perhaps more clans, which followed the buffalo, and camped chiefly in the timber. There corrals were made for the horses at night to prevent their being stolen by war-parties. When summer came, the clans joined and camped together in the large camp-circle. In this, the opening of which was toward the east, the different bands had definite 621 614 [617] [582] 221 361 621 614

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

276 755 778

side of the bundle, it is said. Except at such ceremonies as this, only the keeper could touch the pipe.

276 778 [648] [728]

Pipes were sometimes given to other tribes, and were sometimes received from them. Sometimes they were carried by war-parties. One of the three pipes still in existence is said to have been given by the Cheyenne to the Crow, and by the latter to the Gros Ventre, when peace was made between the two tribes. The stem is ornamented with feathers, weasel-skins, and at the end with a bunch of eagle-feathers. The sacred pipes were kept wrapped in many pieces of skin or cloth, and hung up in the tent. In good weather they were hung on a stand of three or four sticks, behind the tent. The keepers of the sacred pipes observed stringent rules. They could not eat of the head or back of any animal, nor of any part of the white-tailed deer, nor any eggs. They were not allowed to bathe, or to paint (except red), or to take the ashes out of the tent. They had to smoke in certain ways. They did not eat dogs, or allow them in the tent; nor did they let dogs touch them, or walk over their legs, or walk before them, while they were smoking. The keepers of the sacred pipes wore their hair uncut and uncombed. They could not cut it until they had given the pipe to another keeper. The hair was worn tied in a bunch just above the forehead. Fig. 42 shows such a bunch of matted hair, said to have been that of the grandfather of the father of the man who was the oldest in the tribe in 1901. This former keeper of the pipe became so old that he lost most of his hair, and the bunch shown was cut off by him before it should drop off. To this hair the later owner of the pipe, his present great-grandson, tied the first of his own teeth to fall out from old age: they are contained in a small cloth sack.

Fig. 42 (50 1902). Matted Hair. Length, 41 cm.

276 778 784

[825]

[302]

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

INTRODUCTION

The Algonquian-speaking Gros Ventres live on the Fort Belknap Reservation in North Central Montana. The Reservation is a small part of the land claimed by this tribe in 1887, when the boundaries were finally fixed. At present, the Gros Ventres number between a thousand and eleven hundred, and they share their territory with almost as many Assiniboine. The latter tribe was included in the settlement of the Reservation although it did not participate with the Gros Ventres and Blackfoot tribes in the Treaty of 1855. In spite of some intermarriage, the two groups have never really blended and the Gros Ventres tend to center at the village of Hays at the southern part of the Reservation while the Assinboine are clustered around Lodge Pole, a settlement some ten miles east of Hays. The Indian Agency is approximately forty miles north of Hays at the northern boundary of the Reservation and close to the town of Harlem on the Great Northern Railroad. Of importance to the Gros Ventres, who are predominantly Roman Catholic, is St. Paul's Mission and School which lie at the foot of the Little Rockies only a mile south of Hays. David Rodnick has given an excellent description of the geographical setting of the Reservation for his study of modern conditions and of acculturation among the Fort Belknap Assiniboine.

131 657 [197] [161] [648] [797] [114]

Of the several tribes in the Northern Plains region, the Gros Ventres are perhaps the least known. Although they maintained intact their tribal identity, and were recognized as fierce warriors, they were often mistakenly identified with the Blackfoot tribes, with whom they were frequently allied. Moreover, little was known of the Gros Ventre language except that it was an exceedingly difficult one; practically every independent observer during the nineteenth century remarks on this fact. Since, however, many Gros Ventre men knew Blackfoot, the linguistic difference was often overlooked and the Gros Ventres tended to be counted as one of the Blackfoot tribes. As part of the so-called "Blackfoot Nation," leaders of the Gros Ventres signed the Treaty of 1855.

101 [648] 197 [648]

[P. viii contains no text]

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

175 before approaching. It is true that peaceful relations of some Assiniboine, with "Archithinue natives (their friends) two days journey beyond Manitow-Sakahegan," are mentioned.[19] From the location of Manitou Lake it is probable that these were Blackfoot, although Cocking does not specify the tribe in this instance. Then, as later, peace on the northern plains was of short duration. Graham, for instance, in 1775 writes regarding the Assiniboine: "War is their delight and the Archithenues the objects of their [648] inveterate enemity, from these poor creatures they take the fine Horses so frequent among them and which serve to convey their baggage about the country."[20]

175 It is significant, too, for intertribal relations that the Indians whom the Cree-Assiniboine dreaded to meet, as they accompanied 648 Cocking out into the plains, were the Snake. On August 24th, 1772, the hunters of his party on the South Saskatchewan River, reported having seen several horses up the branch on the other side, and Cocking remarks: "They are all in general afraid, supposing the horses to belong to the Snake Indians with whom they are always at variance." Again, on September 16th, they saw a strange horse and "supposed it to belong to the Snake, their enemies." Finally, on the last day on which the Water-falls Indians were with Cocking's party, "three Archithinue natives of the same tribe" came from the westward to say that buffalo were scarce and that their countrymen were going to war with the Snake Indians.[21] This bears out the very definite tradition current among the Gros Ventres today that they had to drive the Snake from the territory which they occupied.

Lewis, in his reconstruction of the early history of the Blackfoot, maintains that the Piegan had driven the Kutenai and Snake across the mountains by about 1750.[22] A careful reading of Thompson's account of Piegan history, as given to him in 1786–87 by the old Cree Saukamapee, indicates that while the Piegan had been gaining ground from the Snake since the 1730's, their advance may not have been as rapid as Lewis has suggested. The Piegan

[19] Cocking, p. 106.
[20] Graham's Observations of 1775, in Isham, p. 311.
[21] Cocking, pp. 103, 106, 112.
[22] O. Lewis, pp. 13, 15, and Map B.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

175
648

were said to have reached the Stag (Red Deer) River when both they and the Snake were decimated by a smallpox epidemic,[33] which would seem to have been that of 1780. For the next three years there were no wars, as the remnants of both tribes were occupied in merely sustaining life—parties of young Snake men were left unmolested by the Piegan. It was then decided that in future warfare, instead of looking only for the honor of taking scalps, that the Piegan should capture women and young men and adopt them in order to augment their depleted numbers. Apparently the Piegan gradually advanced to the Bow River as the Snake withdrew. Thompson, then among the Piegan at the Bow River, states: "The country where the Snake now [i.e. 1786] are is far away and little known to the Peeagan." Scouts were out five days but saw no Snake. "Affairs were in this state when we arrived."[34] A few days later a war chief with fifty warriors was sent out to examine the country. This party returned after about twenty days with five horses and fifteen mules which they had captured from the Snake, and old Saukamapee's son gave an account of the expedition. If this chronology is correct, Cocking's companions in 1772 had every reason to fear the Snake and to suspect their presence, as the power of the latter would not have been broken in the northern plains until 1780.

Cocking, as others before him, failed in his mission to persuade the "equestrian Indians" to come to Hudson's Bay.[35] During the last two decades of the 18th century, the Hudson's Bay Company, as well as the rival Northwest Company, established trading

[33] Thompson, p. 336. We know nothing of the wider effects of the smallpox epidemic which affected the Cree in 1736. Cf. Mandelbaum, p. 182.

[34] Thompson, p. 340. The author, pp. 328–47, in giving the account of old Saukamapee, often quotes the latter directly. But inasmuch as he usually omits important diacritical marks, and intersperses comments of his own, care must be exercised in reading these pages which recount events extending in time from about 1730 up to include a few weeks after Thompson's arrival among the Piegan in 1786. Furthermore, he wrote his whole Narrative about 1839, at the age of 70, following his notebooks it is true, but also making generalizations regarding the Piegan which do not necessarily refer to the year 1786–87 he spent among them, but may indicate a later date. See p. 348 where he describes boundaries of the Piegan, Blood and Blackfoot territory.

[114]

[35] Cocking p. 111. Cf. Graham's Observations in Isham, p. 312.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

175 posts accessible to the Blackfoot and to the Gros Ventres. So long as the Cree and the friendly Assiniboine were appreciably 648 better armed than the other tribes on the northern plains, the traders had little to fear. But now, with the acquisition of more guns by the buffalo hunters, and with the increasing appetite of the latter, not only for still more firearms but for other items, especially spiritous liquors, they became more and more troublesome and it was necessary to fortify the trading posts.

Since the demand was mainly for beaver, and the Cree were the real trappers, they were particularly favored by the traders. Umfreville (1784–88) complains that both the Gros Ventres and the Blackfoot tribes bring in by far too many wolf skins, and says specifically of the Gros Ventres that they seem not yet initiated into the manner of hunting and killing beaver, dressing skins and killing small peltry.[36] Mackenzie from his observations in 1789 gives the impression that the buffalo hunters were little interested in trading at the posts, and states that the part of the Gros Ventres, who were with the Assiniboine on the plains near the central portion of the Assiniboine River, prepared fresh and dried buffalo meat and tallow, along with a few buffalo robes and wolf skins, to exchange for "arms and ammunition, rum, tobacco, knives and various baubles," with those who go to traffic with them.[37]

175 Mackenzie gives also the relative position and size of the northern plains groups. Some Cree-Assiniboine are mentioned by him as being at Nepawi and South Branch House, and whose territory extends upward about to the Eagle Hills. Next to them are the Cree about eighty tents and on the other side of the river their number may be 200. Mandelbaum cites this evidence to show that at this time the Cree were along the north Saskatchewan, but had not yet consolidated their position there.[38] Mackenzie goes on to say that at the southern headwaters of the North Saskatchewan dwell the Sarsi, 35 tents, 120 men; opposite to those [161] eastward on the headwaters of the South Branch are the Piegan, 1200–1500 men; next to them on the same water, are the Blood,

[36] Umfreville, p. 198.
[37] Mackenzie, v. 1, pp. cxl, ciii.
[38] Mandelbaum, pp. 181–82.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

50 tents or 250 men; next to them downward extend the Blackfeet, their number may be 800 men; next to them and who extend to the confluence of the South and North branch, are the Fall or Big Bellied Indians, who may amount to about 600 warriors.[29]

175
161

Dislocation and Warfare (1790–1830)

Within a decade of the time of Mackenzie's observations, however, the Gros Ventres were being ousted from between the forks of the Saskatchewan where they had been apparently well established since at least 1772, when Cocking met them.[30] Undoubtedly the Gros Ventres were greatly weakened by the smallpox epidemic of 1780, as Wissler has suggested.[31] In any case they were subsequently pushed south and east by the allied Assiniboine and Cree, who had the great advantage of being relatively well-armed with guns. Thus the Gros Ventres were launched on the most turbulent period of their career, with enmity toward the whites as an important factor.

175
648
[731]

We know from Harmon how bitterly the Gros Ventres resented the more favorable treatment accorded the Cree-Assiniboine by the traders. He was at Alexandria, a Northwest Company post on the Assiniboine River, and records on June 10, 1801, the following: "It is currently reported and believed that the Rapid Indians are forming a war party to come against the Indians of this quarter, whom they consider, and I think with sufficient reason, as their enemies. If they come this way they will fall on us as upon the natives themselves, for they say that we furnish the Cree and Assiniboine with what firearms they want, while they get few."[32] Although this particular attack on the post did not materialize, there was real reason to have feared it. In the summer of 1793 the Gros Ventres attacked old fort Brulé (South Branch House) and killed all but one of the twenty or so inhabitants; in 1794 they pillaged Manchester House. These two

[29] Mackenzie, v. 1, p. cx.

[30] O. Lewis p. 12, places them East of the South Branch prior to about 1750.

[31] Wissler, 1936, p. 18. Cf. interesting tradition of the ravages of the epidemic; pp. 34–36.

[32] Harmon, p. 51.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

175 acts of depredation were long remembered and formed the basis for the bad reputation the Gros Ventres sustained among the 648 traders. Henry, speaking of them in 1808 as an audacious and turbulent race, says that they have repeatedly attempted to massacre the traders.[83]

During the early part of the nineteenth century the Gros Ventres continued losing ground to the Assiniboine and Cree. Harmon, again in 1801, mentions, for instance, that a party of Cree-Assiniboine had left Fort Alexandria in June against the Rapid Indians and were bringing a number of women and children for "slaves."[84] In 1803 he records that 40 lodges of Cree-Assiniboine went out on a war party with 40 lodges of "others," apparently against both the Blackfoot and Rapid Indians.[85] Incidentally, as the Gros Ventres were pushed out of the Saskatchewan basin, they no longer formed a buffer between the Cree-Assiniboine and Blackfoot, and these latter came into more direct and deadly conflict. Having rebuilt South Branch House in 1805, Harmon was there in April 1806 when the Cree-Assiniboine in that region went to war against the Rapid Indians, "their inveterate enemies, with whom they frequently patch up peace which is generally short endurance."[86] In August of that same year some Assiniboine reported to Harmon that about 80 tents of Cree-Assiniboine, with about as many of the Blackfoot, were on their way to war against the Gros Ventres. Nothing came of this expedition, however, inasmuch as the temporary allies began quarreling over a horse which each claimed and ended in an all-day fight between them.[87]

And so it went. By 1808 the Gros Ventres had been replaced in [131] the area between the forks of the Saskatchewan and now roamed the territory between the South Branch and the Missouri, although some of them at least went to the posts to trade. Henry remarks that at this time they were bringing to Fort Vermillion a good trade in dried provisions, beaver skins, and grizzly bear and buffalo

[83] Henry, v. 2, p. 530.
[84] Harmon, p. 55.
[85] *Idem*, p. 78.
[86] *Idem*, p. 119.
[87] *Idem*, p. 120.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

robes,—that the Gros Ventres were industrious and were as good skin-dressers as the Mandan and better than the Blackfoot. He further mentions that they were formerly numerous and dreaded but that since the smallpox, and the depredations by the tribes with whom they have been at variance, they had diminished. Although they formerly had bloody wars with the Blackfoot tribes, in 1808 they were at peace with them. 175 648

Henry's estimate, however, that at this time the Gros Ventres numbered but 80 tents or 240 men, seems very low.[38] He was probably basing his figures on those who came that far north to trade, because in 1805 Laroque, while with the Crow on an island in the Missouri River near the confluence of the Big Horn, met a delegation of the Gros Ventres who were camped on the Big Horn River behind the mountain. He states that they occupied 275–300 "huts" and that it was with friendly sentiments that they came to this region. They brought words of peace and said that they came to procure some horses from the Crow. Laroque referred to them as "Big bellies of the fort de prairie" and mentioned that they and the Crow communicated with each other by means of the sign language, not being able to understand each other in speech.[39] This makes it quite certain that these Indians were not the Hidatsa. 161 175 648

It would seem, then, from the above as well as from the figures obtained in the same year, 1805, by Lewis and Clark, viz. 260 tents or 660 men,[40] that the estimates of both Thompson and Henry, observing as they were from the Canadian area from which the Gros Ventres had been driven, refer to only part of the main group of Gros Ventres. Henry himself remarks in 1811 that the Gros Ventres are increasing very fast and that he had always noticed a greater percentage of young men among them than among the neighboring tribes. He admits further: "I have not been able to obtain their exact number but am fully confident they exceed 100 tents."[41] Richardson, moreover, in his journal of 1818–19, identifies the Gros Ventres and claims that they have about 450 to 500 tents.[42] [114]

[38] Henry, v. 2, pp. 530–31.
[39] Laroque, p. 20.
[40] Cf. Wissler, 1936, p. 4.
[41] Henry, v. 2, p. 733.
[42] Richardson, quoted in Franklin, pp. 99–100.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

175 648 During the second decade of the nineteenth century the American fur companies were beginning to show an active interest in the upper Missouri region. As Lewis has pointed out, there were certain differences between the methods used by the companies in Canada and those in the United States.[43] The Americans sent out trappers to hunt the streams for beaver rather than depending on the Indians to bring the pelts to the posts, as did the Canadian companies. The Gros Ventres as well as the Blackfoot resented the invasion of white trappers. To give but a single instance, in the summer of 1810 the Gros Ventres fell on a party of American freemen from Illinois whom they murdered and plundered of their possessions, including beaver skins which were marked and numbered. The Bloods were at war at the same time on the Missouri and murdered a party of Americans. Henry states: "The Bloods in general bear fully as bad reputation as the Fall Indians. They are fully as vicious, bloodthirsty, and turbulent, but, I believe, not so brave."[44]

Still another element which added appreciably to the difficulties of the Gros Ventres, in these first decades of the 19th century, was their increasing conflict with the numerous and powerful Crow. As they continually lost territory to the Cree-Assiniboine, it was not long before they were encroaching on the Crow, who promptly retaliated. It was largely the threat of the Crow to ally themselves with the Americans, in an offensive against the Gros Ventres, that fed the determination of the latter to again raid the Canadian posts. They were desperate for guns and ammunition and felt themselves unable to obtain them through regular trade. The Piegan, in order to protect their own trading interests, promised aid to the Gros Ventres, in case of attack by the Crow, and succeeded in temporarily pacifying them.[45]

In any case, the Gros Ventres were probably responsible for the abandonment of Chesterfield House, which had been rebuilt, after the amalgamation in 1822 of the Hudson's Bay Company and the Northwest Company, at the mouth of the Red Deer River which empties into the South Branch of the Saskatchewan. It was

[43] O. Lewis, pp. 23–31.
[44] Henry, v. 2, 735–36.
[45] Henry, v. 2, 718–21.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

seemingly after the pillaging of this fort about 1826 that part of the Gros Ventres fled to the headwaters of the Missouri, wintered there, and then proceeded south to join their Arapaho kinsmen. According to Hayden, the Gros Ventres spent about five years hunting with the Arapaho and joined them in trading with the Mexicans.[46] During this sojourn, the Gros Ventres suffered a devastating attack of smallpox which was said to have reduced their number by half.

From sources independent of Hayden we know that a large group of Gros Ventres was actually in the Cimarron area during the late 1820's. Gregg, with a party of independent traders, was traveling in the Cimarron Valley when on June 21, 1831, they met a very large group of Indians,—he estimates about a thousand including men, women and children,—who followed them for a day or two in order to pilfer what they could and to receive presents if possible. They were finally bought off with about sixty dollars worth of trade goods contributed by various members of the party. It was thought at first that these Indians were Comanche and Arapaho. "But," states Gregg, "they were principally if not altogether Blackfoot and Gros Ventres." A few days later Gregg received intelligence that Captain Sublette and his party, on their way from St. Louis to Santa Fe, had met "an immense horde of Blackfeet and Gros Ventres," and that although the Indians had assumed a menacing attitude, the party had passed without serious molestation. That same evening, however, Gregg camped near a place called the "Battle Ground," famous for a skirmish which a caravan of traders in the company of Mexican troops had in 1829 with the Gros Ventres. Gregg was told that on that occasion, the traders and troops, under Col. Vizcarra, were camped on the Cimarron when a party of 120 Gros Ventres approached on foot. The traders did not welcome the Indians, but seeing that they were disposed to remain until morning, Col. Vizcarra promised to disarm them. Nevertheless he failed to do so, and all of a sudden the Indians sprang to their feet, gave a yell and fired on the party. A Taos Indian, by giving his own life, saved that of the Colonel. The Mexican troops pursued the Gros

[46] Hayden, 341. The gist of what Hayden gives for this period is correct, though his dates are inaccurate.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

175 Ventres, killing and wounding a considerable number of them, but
648 losing a captain and two or three privates.[47]

An interesting version of why the Gros Ventres parted with the Arapaho was related to Hayden by an Arapaho, named Friday, at Fort Laramie when the former was there in 1859–60. Friday stated that the Arapaho and Gros Ventres were camped together on the Cimarron where the Mexicans usually came to trade with them. On this particular occasion the chief of the Gros Ventres wanted all of the trade, whereas the chief of the Arapaho suggested that half of the traders should go to the Gros Ventres and the other half should trade with the Arapaho. An altercation between the two chiefs followed during which the chief of the Gros Ventres stabbed the chief of the Arapaho. The brothers and sons of the latter promptly retaliated by killing the Gros Ventre chief. Whereupon a battle ensued, but peace was made before many were killed. So the two tribes decided to separate, the Arapaho ranging along the S. Platte and Arkansas, the Gros Ventres passing through North Park to Bridger's Pass and thence along the west side of the Rockies to the region of the Three Tetons.[48]

Whether or not this was the actual cause for the separation,—and it sounds reasonable enough,—it is certain that the Gros Ventres did go north giving trouble to the whites along the headwaters of the Snake and Greene Rivers, and engaging some trappers who had met at a trading rendezvous at Pierre's Hole in the summer of 1832. Hayden has given an account of the battle and others refer to it, but Chittenden presents the most detailed description, having gathered together contemporary newspaper accounts, and so on. His version, with which Hayden's in general agrees, is that The Rocky Mountain traders under William L. Sublette, and those of the American Fur Company under Fontanelle, met at Pierre's Hole in the Teton Basin in July 1832. There were many hundreds of Indians in the valley, mostly Flathead and Nez Percé. When the business of the rendezvous was almost finished, a group under M. G. Sublette set out toward the main Snake River and camped for the night not far from the place of the rendezvous. The next morning a band of Gros

[47] Gregg, pp. 227–28, 231–32, 239.
[48] Hayden, p. 322.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Ventres approached in two parties, about 150 men, carrying with them a Hudson's Bay Company flag which they had taken from a party of Hudson Bay Company trappers whom they had recently defeated. The Gros Ventres made signs of truce, but the whites did not trust them and, as a Gros Ventre chief approached the party alone, a Flathead, by prearranged signal, shot him. The Gros Ventres withdrew to a copse and entrenched themselves, the women doing the work while the men held the firing line.

175
648

Sublette sent for reinforcements and his brother, William L. Sublette, came with Campbell and others. William Sublette and Campbell led a direct attack on the Gros Ventres entrenchments. The former was wounded and two of the others were killed. Finally Sublette decided, against the wishes of the friendly Indians, to burn the Gros Ventres out. One of the Flathead, who had communicated with the Gros Ventres, informed the whites that the Gros Ventres had 600-800 warriors who would arrive soon. The whites understood the Flathead to say that these warriors were attacking the main rendezvous camp at that moment, and so withdrew. The Gros Ventres fled. This was rated as one of the worst encounters of Indians and traders in the west. Five whites were killed and Sublette wounded; the Gros Ventres casualties are not exactly known, but they were said to have left nine dead warriors and 25 horses together with nearly all of their baggage in the "fort." Later on, when leaving the rendezvous, a party of whites was attacked, two being killed and one wounded. Sublette saw the large body of whom the Gros Ventres had spoken, but they did not attack, and the Gros Ventres finally left the country via the Wind River.[49]

This was not the end of difficulties for the Gros Ventres, however. Chittenden merely states that they then had a serious encounter with the Crow and were scattered over Crow territory. Hayden gives us more details which he apparently had from the Gros Ventres themselves as well as from traders.[50] It seems that the Crow were in the habit of visiting the Flathead to trade for horses and this summer of 1832 they were returning to their country in two groups. The Gros Ventres, without realizing that

[49] Chittenden, v. 2, pp. 657-62.
[50] Hayden, p. 342.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

175 Crow were in the vicinity, camped at a place through which the first contingent of Crow had already passed. Four young men ●648 from the second division of Crow were attempting to catch up with the first when they came across the Gros Ventres camp, thinking they had reached their goal. The Gros Ventres seized and killed three of these young men, but the fourth escaped to warn his people, who laid in ambush at a narrow pass through which the Gros Ventres would go. Taking the Gros Ventres by surprise, they completely demoralized them, killing 67 and capturing twice that many women and children. The remainder fled and reached safety with the Blackfoot, leaving the wounded where they lay.

Readjustment (1830–1870)

174 That the whole Gros Ventres tribe could have gone south to the Arapaho, remained a few years, and suffered such disasters in 1832, is highly improbable. First of all, it is unlikely that if the whole tribe disappeared from their usual habitat they would have been able to regain their territory from encroachments by Assiniboine from the east and northeast, by Crow from the south, and by Piegan and Blackfoot from the west and northwest. Furthermore it is equally unlikely that such absence would have been unnoted by Catlin who in 1832, at the American Fur Company Post [161] at the mouth of the Yellowstone, gives a reasonable estimate of the Gros Ventre population (430 lodges) and notes the common error of traders in counting that tribe indiscriminately with the Blackfoot groups, in spite of the difference between the Blackfoot and Gros Ventre language.[51] Moreover, according to Maximilian, Mitchell of the American Fur Company affirmed in 1833 that he had always done business with the Gros Ventres with pleasure, and had never had any proof of the treachery imputed to them. Had there been no Gros Ventres around for five years, Mitchell would no doubt have mentioned that fact. The entire feeling of Maximilian's account is that the Gros Ventres were well known to American Fur Company traders—as compared to some Blackfoot proper, who arrived at the fort and were unknown.[52]

Finally, native tradition gives some negative evidence. Our

[51] Catlin, v. 1, pp. 59–60.
[52] Maximilian, pp. 73, 154.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

older informants at the present time belong to the bands known as the Frozens, the Tendons, and the Upper Quarters. If the entire tribe had gone on such a visit to the Arapaho, it is almost certain that some tradition of this travel would have been passed on, as it would have occurred in the lifetime of Coming Daylight's grandmother and of The Boy's father, from both of whom these informants had much reliable material. It thus seems more likely that several bands—perhaps in population amounting to as much as half the total tribe—went on the expedition together. It was customary for the Gros Ventres to split into smaller groups and for several bands to winter together. It would seem probable that one or two such smaller groups pillaged the Hudson's Bay Company post in the late 1820's, wintered together on the upper Missouri, and then traveled south to the Arapaho. 174 [361]

While part of the Gros Ventres tribe was with the Arapaho, the remainder,—roaming the strip of plains between the Blackfoot groups on the west, the Assiniboine on the east, and the Crow on the south,—managed to improve their situation somewhat. Although the whole tribe was probably reunited by 1833, when Maximilian gives us an account of his meeting with them, they were fairly prosperous in spite of the losses sustained by those who had fought at Pierre's Hole and had then been ambushed by the Crow. Maximilian states specifically that " these Indians were formerly very poor, had bad tents and could not buy firearms; they have, however, recovered of late and supplied their wants." [68] One of our informants told us that she had heard often, when she was a child, that in her grandmother's young days,—which we estimate as the early years of the 19th century—the Gros Ventres were very badly off and had so few horses that they used dog transport almost exclusively, but that the situation gradually improved, and, by the time our informant was born (ca. 1855), they again had many horses, a sign of prosperity. From Maximilian's description and from Bradley's estimate of the situation in the early 1830's, it would seem that there was no dearth of either horses or firearms among the Gros Ventres at that time. Maximilian states, however, that they showed the effect of their encounters with the Crow by a noticeable disproportion of the sexes, and that 175 648

[68] Maximilian, p. 75.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

175 they had been hard put to it recently to ransom thirty warriors from the Crow—probably the wounded who had been abandoned 648 in the panic following the ambush of 1832.[54]

So far as relations with the American traders go, in 1833 and subsequently the Gros Ventres were on their best behavior. Maximilian notes that the very large group of Gros Ventres, whom he met at the Judith River as he traveled with Mitchell of the American Fur Company on their way to Fort McKenzie, were surprisingly well-behaved. He adds, rightly enough, that it was to their self-interest to be so, in the light of the fact that formerly they had suffered with the traders on account of their bad reputation. He further remarks that the Gros Ventres were now known as dressing buffalo robes better than most of the other tribes. After trading a bit with the Gros Ventres where they met them, Mitchell invited them to meet him at Fort McKenzie. When the Gros Ventres arrived there, their chief men were received at the [439] Fort with the same pomp and ceremony as were accorded the [431] Piegan chiefs in the preliminaries to actual trading. The Gros Ventres, too, upheld their end by bringing the usual presents—a horse and some beaver skins—to present to the trader.[55]

This Fort had been established at the mouth of the Marias, very close to the later site of Ft. Benton, and was known first as Fort Piekann and the next year was renamed Fort McKenzie. It had been established at this point for dealing with the Blackfoot groups, especially the Piegan, and the surrounding tribes. At that time the American Fur Company was particularly interested in obtaining beaver skins, and one beaver skin was worth two buffalo robes. Later, as the market for buffalo robes opened up, the beaver gradually lessened in value so that finally two or three beaver skins became the equivalent of one buffalo robe.[56] Lewis has emphasized what the change in market meant for the Blackfoot groups.[57] Relations of the Gros Ventres with the whites improved, and there was a tendency for the Gros Ventres to become more and

[54] Cf. Ewers, 1943, p. 603; Maximilian, pp. 71, 75, 76.
[55] Maximilian, pp. 75–76, 126, 165.
[56] Bradley, p. 203, note on 204.
[57] O. Lewis, pp. 34–59.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

more dependent on trading as their thirst for liquor became greater and greater. 175

At the time of which we are speaking, 1833, the Gros Ventres and Piegan were at least temporarily at peace. The Assiniboine, however, were strong and, with the Cree, were raiding deep into Gros Ventres territory. They were likewise at enmity with the Piegan. Poorly mounted as they were, they were bold enough to attack Fort McKenzie in 1833, and were driven off by the whites, with very little assistance from the Piegan who were there at the time. The next fall apparently this same band of Cree-Assiniboine cut off sixty lodges of Gros Ventres in the Sweet Grass Hills and the Gros Ventres lost 400, only one escaping to tell the tale.[58] 648

The Crow, too, were being very troublesome and Bradley describes their siege of Fort McKenzie in 1834.[59] The traders on this occasion finally resorted to firing a cannon which frightened the Crow. To wipe out their disgrace in running away, the Crow rallied under their leader Rotten Belly, and resolved to make an expedition against the Blackfoot. They came across a dozen Gros Ventres warriors, however, near the Fort and satisfied their honor by killing them instead of the Blackfoot. Nevertheless the Gros Ventres had fought bravely and inflicted losses upon the Crow, including their chief who, when he was dying from the wounds, told his people never to attack the whites again. Bradley tells us that the Crow kept to this advice. Nevertheless they continued giving trouble to the Gros Ventres. Bradley says in 1835 that war continued to rage as fiercely as ever. For example, the Gros Ventres killed 40 Crow who had tried to steal their horses near the Fort; some months later they again got the best of a raiding expedition of Crow.[60]

In building up to the position they maintained in 1855, the Gros Ventres were undoubtedly able to profit from the effects of the great smallpox epidemic of 1837–38 which wreaked such havoc among all the Blackfoot groups and the Assiniboine, but which left the Gros Ventres and Crow relatively untouched. Bradley gives 175 648 731

[58] Bradley, 219.

[59] Bradley, p. 216.

[60] Bradley, p. 219. For an account of present Gros Ventre tradition of the first of these two battles, see pp. 94–96.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

175 648 731

an account of the terrible number of deaths among the Blackfoot in 1838 and states that the northern Assiniboine lost two-thirds of their number. He says of the Gros Ventres however that they escaped very lightly, their entire loss being less than 200. "This is to be attributed to their being in a measure innoculated by previous experience with the disease communicated by the Arapahoes in a visit to the south."[61] It may be recalled that Hayden mentions the epidemic which struck the Gros Ventres when they were among the Arapaho. Both are probably referring to the severe, but more or less localized, epidemic which hit the Indians of the Kansas Territory in 1829. Hayden, referring to the five year period during which the Gros Ventres hunted and traded along with the Arapahos—says that during this time: "Smallpox passed among them, having been communicated to them through other tribes with whom they were at peace or carried on a traffic. This disease, at that time, destroyed about half their number, but secured the remainder from the next attack which occurred in 1838. At this later period the smallpox only acted on the young, and destroyed a number of them, but the chiefs and elderly men escaped so that the tribe was not reduced to the disorderly and helpless condition of the Blackfoot and other surrounding nations."[62] That the Blackfoot groups were disorganized to a large extent is borne out by a completely independent source. Father Mengarini in 1841 notes the troublesome raids by the Blackfoot, around St. Mary's Mission among the Flatheads on the Bitter Root River, and adds: "Had not pestilence decimated the tribe the year before our arrival, our mission at St. Mary's would have been impossible."[63]

175 648

In the 1840's, then, the Gros Ventres had only one full-strength enemy to contend with, namely, the Crow. Presumably, they took advantage of the opportunity to raid extensively both the Blackfoot groups and the Assiniboine. Nevertheless they evidently continued to keep up their good relations with the whites. Father Point, S.J., who spent the fall and winter of 1846–47 among the Blackfoot and Gros Ventres wrote to Father de Smet regarding

[61] Bradley, p. 226.
[62] Hayden, p. 341.
[63] Mengarini, p. 8.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the latter tribe that they appeared to him "to have the advantage of the others in being more adroit, more docile, and more courageous; but they are more attached to their old superstitions and are terrible *demanders*, as the Canadian employees here call shameless beggars; happily they are not offended when refused." In addition, he stated that if the Gros Ventres were less importunate he would willingly entitle them the Flatheads of the Missouri "as they have something of their simplicity and bravery." He considered that "the Piegans are the most civilized but the most noted thieves; the Blood well made and generally less dirty; while the Blackfeet proper are, it is said, the most hospitable." Among all four tribes Father Point found the disproportion of sexes great, and attributed to warfare the preponderance of women over men.[64]

175 648 [162]

The heart of the area held by the Gros Ventres at that time, and claimed by them subsequently at least until the establishment of the Fort Belknap Reservation in 1873, and probably until 1888, was described by Hayden as follows: "At present [1862] and for many years past, they range along the Milk River, on the east side of the Missouri, extending as far as the Cypress Mountains. From this line to the Marias River stretches a beautiful level country well covered with grass and adapted to pasturage of buffalo. Here the Indians under consideration may be found at all seasons—in the winter along the banks of the Milk River where wood may be obtained and in summer on the plains where fuel is not so necessary."[65] As the Gros Ventres were by no means confined to this area they were in intermittent conflict with surrounding tribes.

131 175 648

With a view to settling the quarrels of the Blackfoot, Piegan and Gros Ventres east of the mountains, and of the Flathead, Kootenais and Nez Percé and others west of the mountains, Governor Stevens held a council with the Gros Ventres on the Milk River in August, 1853, and with the Blackfoot and Piegan at Fort Benton in September.[66] In 1854, he ordered a thousand dollars worth of goods from Culbertson of the American Fur Company, for distribution to the Piegan and Gros Ventres. These goods, consisting mainly of foodstuffs with which they were un-

175 648

[64] Father Point's letter of 1847, in De Smet, pp. 254, 256.
[65] Hayden, p. 340.
[66] Hoopes, p. 101.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

175 familiar, were given to the Gros Ventres at the Milk River. In spite of warnings, the Indians ate the food uncooked, with the
●648 result that many became sick and several died. A creole Frenchman, living among them at the time, persuaded the Gros Ventres that they had been poisoned deliberately, and some of the warriors wanted to go after Culbertson with the intention of killing him. Fortunately, however, Culbertson was so well known to and liked by most of the Gros Ventres that the rasher members of the tribe were restrained from carrying out this project.[67]

Stevens concluded in 1855 a treaty at the Judith River whereby the Blackfoot Nation (including the Gros Ventres) agreed that their territory should be a common hunting territory for all signatories. The United States agreed to spend $20,000 each year for 10 years in provisions for the Gros Ventres, Blackfoot, Piegan and Blood, and $15,000 a year for ten years in instructing them in agriculture and mechanical pursuits, educating their children, and so on. The non-signatory tribes were the Crow, Assiniboine and Sioux.[68]

Although it was reported that the good will among the tribes was remarkable, and that peace was sincerely desired, raiding parties continued very much as before. In addition, more and more whites were encroaching on the territory supposed to have been reserved for the use of the Blackfoot tribes and Gros Ventres. Gold was discovered within the area about 1862, and Lewis has given a cogent summary of events which led up to Piegan enmity toward both Gros Ventres and whites, and which culminated in war, 1866–70.[69]

The End of the Buffalo Days (1870–1890).

136 The end of the buffalo days was now rapidly approaching. The
175 completion of the Union Pacific railroad in 1869 split the northern
648 and southern herds of buffalo. With the presence of increasing numbers of commercial white hunters, armed with long-range repeating rifles, the end of the great north herd was beginning in 1876. It was not, however, until 1880 that slaughter was universal

[67] Bradley, p. 271.
[68] Hoopes, pp. 113–15.
[69] O. Lewis, pp. 62–66.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

over the area. The Gros Ventres had the benefit of buffalo hunting a trifle longer than the other groups. All the buffalo in Montana were in February, 1882, in their territory, between the Milk River and the Bear Paw Mountains. The hunting season, of October 1882 to February 1883, finished the annihilation of the great northern herd and left only stragglers, merely a few thousands.[70] By August, 1883, both the Blackfoot and the Crow Agencies reported that all game was gone from their respective reservations, and a letter from the Fort Belknap Agency stated that game there "was practically exhausted."[71] In 1884 the Blackfoot and Crow agencies reported that the buffalo was extinct.[72] After ceding more land, in 1888 the limits of the Fort Belknap Reservation, which the Gros Ventres share with the Assiniboine, were finally fixed.[73]

136
175
648
[657]

Missionary endeavors, carried on by the Jesuit Fathers, had begun in earnest only in 1885. Prior to that time contact with missionaries had been sporadic. Father Point in 1846–47 had been well received and sent in a good report of this tribe. When Father Giorda attempted to go among them in 1862, however, Bull Lodge took him prisoner and stripped him of his possessions. Since his captivity did not last longer than a few weeks, and his property was restored to him, several months later he made another attempt. This time, while there was some opposition at first, he was permitted to baptize over a hundred children. Subsequently Fathers Rappagliosi and Grassi made several visits respectively, and at considerable intervals. Finally, after some preliminary negotiations, Father Ebershweiler established permanent residence in 1885, and the school at St. Paul's was opened in 1887. The mission and school flourished. In 1891 the founder was replaced by Father Flusi, assisted by Father Sansome.[74]

175
797

The Gros Ventres population—always small, relative to that of surrounding tribes—was steadily declining. Hayden's estimate of 1853 placed the total at 2520.[75] In 1883, at the time of the

175
161

[70] Hornaday, pp. 492, 506, 510–11.
[71] Report of Commissioner of Indian Affairs 1883–1915, pp. lx, 98.
[72] *Ibid.*, pp. 107, 109.
[73] *Ibid.*, p. 295.
[74] Palladino, pp. 187, 195–96, 230, 232, 235.
[75] Hayden, p. 344. Gros Ventres today claim their number was then 10,000.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

CHAPTER II

TRIBAL ORGANIZATION

The greater bulk of our material on the Gros Ventres covers the fifty year span from about 1835 to 1885. During that period, the tribal territory centered about the Milk River. The present Reservation, the boundaries of which were finally fixed in 1888, represents only a small part of the land claimed and held by the Gros Ventres as their own. 131 [648]

Band Names and Affiliation

619 621

The political organization of the Gros Ventres was simple. The division into fairly autonomous bands was basic, and apparently the number of bands was twelve. Our informants, both those who were adult and those who were children, at the time when the whole tribe still encamped as a unit, agreed on that point. The list of band names given by our two oldest informants, Coming Daylight (b. 1854) and Singer (b. ca. 1856), is as follows: Coffees, Same as Assiniboine, Plenty Bad, Greys, Fast Travelers, Water Horses Once a Day, Upper Quarters, Frozens, Buffalo Overloaded, Tendons, Bloods, Night Hawks. These two old women maintained that, in their own experience, the bands camped in this order, and in a circle, when the whole tribe was together. [115]

Quite independently of the above list, another was obtained from The Boy (b. 1870). As a child he witnessed the formation of the camp circle, and he knows many details of previous decades from his father, Lame Bull (b. ca. 1825, d. 1890) and from other old men. The Boy's list agrees with that given by the two women, except in regard to one band. He includes a group called Poor Greys and omits Night Hawks. All of our informants insisted that the Greys and Night Hawks were distinct bands, but there was a difference of opinion as to whether or not the Greys and Poor Greys were in reality the same band. 621 115 114

Seven of the band names can be identified with Kroeber's num- 621

861 and tell them what is right." Coming Daylight gave an account of an occasion on which she was disobedient. "One of my relatives was very ill and my grandmother thought that if I would sacrifice a finger joint, he would get well. But I was a small girl, and I dreaded the idea of having part of my finger cut off, so I ran away. My uncle chased after me and told me never to come back. I yelled at him: 'I won't come back, but I am not going to have my finger cut off!' So I went far off and stayed out in the hills until my uncle came looking for me and brought me home again. Two nights after they had asked me to give up my finger, the relative died, but they didn't punish me."

If a child were really lazy or "pouted too much," he might be [858] "thrown out"—cases were mentioned where this had actually happened. The theory was that the child would then have to work much harder than he would have at home for whoever would take him in.

In the case of temper tantrums on the part of a very young child, he was first simply told to stop. Should he continue, his guardian would say: "Oh well, he doesn't know any better" and then douse him with cold water. It was said that he would get up immediately after that type of treatment, and would soon be cured.

If a child were naughty or made a mistake, his guardian would usually not reprimand him in public. He would wait for an opportunity to get him alone. As an example, in training for proper attitudes and behavior between brother and sister, the boy was told: "Be careful what you say in front of your sister." If the boy then made some remark he should not have made in the presence of his sister, his mother waited until the sister had gone out and then talked to him in a gentle way. Cora expanded on this by stating: "The Gros Ventres never bawl out anybody in front [648] of a third party. This is where the white social workers make their biggest mistake. They get everybody together in a central place and then proceed to reprimand the various ones in front of all the others. That is the worst thing that can happen—it hurts these Gros Ventres so badly."

Nevertheless, those in authority may give a severe "tongue lashing" to the culprit in private. As The Boy said when discussing discipline: "The Indian, when he was living the old life, had a

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

palms outward (about as in the breast stroke for swimming), and while doing so would say: "We don't need you now. Go this way. Go this way." And the thunderclouds would spread and separate, and miss the camp. 789

Once when Thick's brother, Horse Capture, had vowed a Crazy Dance and it was about to start, a big electric storm threatened. So Horse Capture filled a pipe and went to Bull Lodge and said: "Here, old man, is a pipe." "What is it for?" asked Bull Lodge. "I want you to break up this storm," Horse Capture replied. "We don't want a storm when we start on our doings." "Well," said Bull Lodge, as he took the pipe, "That is easy." The storm was then coming pretty close. Bull Lodge did nothing but smoke the pipe, and when through smoking handed it back to Horse Capture, saying: "There is not going to be a drop of rain and you are not going to have any rain for four days." And just at this instant, the thundercloud split in two and went around, by-passing the camp. Whether Bull Lodge averted this storm by reason of his keeper or ex-keeper powers or of special personal ones is not however clear from our informant on the incident, Thick.

Charles Buckman gave us another illustration of Bull Lodge's power over storms, a power associated with the keepership. The story was told Buckman by his present wife's father, old Spotted Bird. There was a very severe and prolonged rain storm, it was cold, and the horses were dying. The Gros Ventres were camped with the Crow. The Crow offered Bull Lodge a pipe to stop the storm and he agreed: "All right, I will see what I can do." So he got his Feathered Pipe drum, fixed a smudge, and started to sing a certain song, saying: "After I sing the third song, go and see how the weather looks." So they began singing and by the time he sang the fourth song, the storm was over and the sun was shining. [648]

When a big thunderstorm came, or too much rain, the people would appeal to the keeper to stop it. He would make a smudge and talk to the Pipe and, without mentioning the Last Child or the sun, ask that the storm or rain cease, and it would stop. The smudging consisted of or included taking a pinch of sweet pine, motioning with it, dropping all but a little of it in the fire, and putting this remaining bit on the top of his head. The weather

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

778 they wiped us out." After this war in which so many of the Gros Ventres were killed, the survivors moved off leaving this pipe, and Cut-Away's pipe (see below), and "the remains of a third one" (Small Drum's apparently, see below), in a lodge all nicely fixed up.

In Coming Daylight's father's big lodge were two other pipes, one owned by Stabber's father, Small Drums, the other by Cut-Away, or All-Cut-Off. The place of Small Drums' pipe was to the west of her father's pipe, that of Cut Away's to the east. No further details on these two pipes were obtainable, apart from their final disposition mentioned above.

The last Gros Ventre Beaver Pipe of which we obtained record was buried with its last keeper, Weasel Bear, the father of Stiffarm.

778 On the two other "great" pipes previously mentioned as known to The Boy, only the most meager information was obtainable.
●648 One of these two was gotten by a Gros Ventre man from Bird Tail Butte in the Bear Paw Mountains. The other, of unknown origin, was in the possession of the Gros Ventres long ago when Lame Bull was a boy and was given, he told The Boy, to the Piegan. The Boy one Fourth of July saw the Piegan "having doings with this pipe."

On the two pipes rated by The Boy as of "less importance," our data are likewise meager. One of these, "a common pipe," was a gift from the Crow. At one time at least it was in the possession of Black Bird. It was procured a few years ago, from one of the sons of the last keeper, by Richard Pohrt, hailing from Flint, Michigan.

The other of the two was a gift from the Hidatsa (called "Lower Gross Ventres" by the present-day Gros Ventres of Montana) or the Mandan. It was called watä:nuta (some kind of black bird) and is generally spoken of as "the pipe of Big Beaver" who was its last [and only?] keeper and with whom it was buried. According to Takes the Bow, the Gros Ventres, not so long ago, had gone east beyond their own territory and encountered these "Lower Gros Ventres." The two parties stopped some distance apart and by use of the sign language discovered who each were. The "Lower Gros Ventres" were glad to meet the Gros Ventres, for

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the two tribes had never been at war. In token of this, the "Lower Gros Ventres" gave the Gros Ventres a pipe to bind the two tribes together, the principal men of each tribe having met together in the middle ground between the parties. In late years some "Lower Gros Ventres" came on a visit to the Fort Belknap agency to inquire about the pipe and to take it back. But the pipe could not be found in the grave of Big Beaver with whom it had been buried.

778
648

According to Singer, her father, Bird Chief, had a pipe given by the Sioux or Assiniboine. On a war expedition against the Piegan on which he had taken it, when the Piegan were pressing the Gros Ventres badly, he gave the pipe to his youngest brother who was captured with it, but let go. The pipe however was kept by the Piegan. This happened when Singer was a very small girl.

Relative Dignity and Popularity of the Sacred Pipes

All our informants were fully agreed that the Flat and Feathered Pipes far outranked in sacredness, dignity, power and popularity any and all of the other Gros Ventre sacred pipes.

778
771

There were, however, some differences of view among our informants as to the relative status of the Flat and Feathered Pipes themselves. These differences of view, traceable in part to informants' respective affiliations and preferences, were comparatively minor, and are largely reconcilable if we distinguish between what we may call "popular devotion" on the one hand and "liturgico-dogmatic" order of dignity on the other,—a distinction commonly discernible in religious life of other peoples of the world.

As regards "popular devotion," the two Pipes appear to have received about the same number of offerings, vowed and unvowed, from the people, and some Gros Ventres made it a practice rarely or never to cover or robe one of the two Pipes without at the same time covering the other. Some Gros Ventres, while holding both Pipes as superlatively sacred, thought the Feathered Pipe to be in certain respects more powerful, since it, unlike the Flat Pipe, had never been captured by the enemy and since, they held, those bands or groups who, when the tribe separated, followed the Flat

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

525 Women (and men?) also gambled at ring-and-pin, the "ring" being made of four bones from deer feet.[4] The contest was mostly just for fun; the losers would have to "cook" for the winners.

Several types of bow and arrow contests, serving as archery practice as well as gambling sports, were indulged in by boys, young men, and sometimes older men, not, however, by girls or women. Both distance and accuracy contests occurred. In the latter, the target was a stick or arrow stuck upright in a small mound, or an arrow shot by one contestant a desired distance, say, 100 or 150 yards. In another kind of contest, a bow was set slanting, string upward; the string was vibrated by an arrow and the arrow on release flew toward the target about 35 or 40 feet away. In these bow and arrow contests, the wagers were small, usually arrows, sometimes a bow. Wagers were made by the players, and at times by onlookers too.

The modern 4-button hand game, distinct from the earlier 2-button one, is played more for fun than for winnings. At most the losers may be expected to [177] "cook" for the winners. This modern non-gambling hand game came to the Gros Ventre through an Arapaho, Dances All Night, in 1897, shortly after the [668] time the Ghost Dance was introduced among them (in 1891). The Ghost Dance itself had little popularity among the Gros Ventre and after a couple of years died out among them, but the non-gambling hand game took root and survived. At first, we were informed, it was played with two buttons, but after 1903 with four.

525 Gambling at playing cards, sometimes for large stakes, occurs today, but 178 usually at the nearby white settlements, between Gros Ventre and white males. Some of the older Gros Ventre are shrewd poker players, and the younger ones play poker among themselves, but we obtained no record of ruinous stakes at cards among the Gros Ventre themselves on the reservation.

Major Gambling Games and Sports

525 The three more important gambling games and sports of half a century or more ago were races, the wheel game, and the 2-button hand game.

1. *Races*

[575] On horse races, usually between the two soldier-police societies, the Stars and Wolves (the latter became later the "Grass Dancers"), or between the [648] Gros Ventre and other tribes, such as the Piegan, at intertribal gatherings, were placed large bets—horses, saddles, and so forth—by the men, not however by

4 Illustration in Culin, *op. cit.*, fig. 706, p. 537.

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

About the only thing that earned him a bit of recognition was the fact that in spite 525
of his loss of property and of status—to have recognition at all you had to have some 572
possessions to hold and to give away in presents—and in spite of the strutting and 578
crowing and twitting by the winner and his followers after the playing was over, 538
Lame Bull did not lose his temper.

When the playing ended, Lame Bull had nothing of his own except his wife. So his father and mother invited them to eat. Downcast, embarrassed, ashamed, "feeling like a small potato," he ate. When he had finished, his father gave him such a tongue lashing that Lame Bull, who was very fond of his father, cried, and Lame Bull was a strong man who did not easily cry. He felt so bad that he went out on the hills and cried and cried, and slept out there, and came back a pretty sorry young man. And for a long time after, his wife, who also was one of his enemy friends, would throw this up to him: "Oh, you are nothing. You were always weak. Look what your enemy friend did to you. You will never amount to anything." And she would say such things to him especially when others were present. So she set about training him. At any rate Lame Bull was cured of gambling by his great loss to White Owl.

As time went on, Lame Bull recovered from the defeat which might have wrecked for good the career of another. His people had given him enough property to make a new start in life. He would invite White Owl to his lodge and give him big feasts and would make valuable presents of horses and such things to him. And White Owl would make a mental note of these things and would say to himself: "All right, my friend, you wait and see what I will do for you", awaiting the proper time to reciprocate, as was Gros Ventre custom. So a long time afterwards White Owl made very valuable presents to Lame Bull. And they were very good friends.

Narrative 3. Long ago, the story runs, a young Gros Ventre warrior went off 525
alone on a war raid. He got to a mountain, and after nightfall went into a cave 648
to camp overnight. On feeling around in the darkness he found some one else 538
there, and said to himself: "An enemy." To make sure he asked by touching the skin of the other's forearm. The other by wiggling his finger on the Gros Ventre's chest signified: "I am a Snake Indian." So the Gros Ventre took the Snake's hand and made the sign of "big belly" to signify: "I am a Gros Ventre."

The Gros Ventre then said to the Snake: "Let's not fight tonight. You go to sleep and I'll go to sleep. Tomorrow morning we'll see what we'll do." But being afraid of each other, neither slept at all during the night.

The next morning the Gros Ventre asked the Snake: "Friend, where were you going?" He replied: "On the war path." "Alone?" "Yes, all alone." The Snake then asked the same questions and got the same answers. Then the Gros Ventre said: "We are both alone. Instead of killing each other, let's gamble with the wheel. The loser loses his scalp to the winner."

So they started to play, with such things as bow and arrows and clothing for stakes, and the Snake won everything from the Gros Ventre. Then the Gros Ventre proposed: "Friend, you stake all you have won, in a lump, against my scalp," and this was agreed upon. At this point the Gros Ventre got afraid he would lose, so

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

525 he prayed to I^{x}tcibiniq'i'à, the Supreme Being: "Have pity on me, so I may beat
●648 this man. I'll make a Medicine Dance when I get back home." And as he prayed,
538 he took his arrow and the wheel, and put the arrow on the winning bead of the wheel, and prayed to the Supreme Being that when the wheel was rolled it would fall just that way on the arrow. So when the Gros Ventre rolled the wheel, it fell as he had prayed it would, and he won back all that he had lost.

Then the two men started all over again, and this time the Gros Ventre won everything from the Snake. So the Snake in turn proposed: "Friend, you stake all you have won, in a lump, against my scalp." They played again and the Gros Ventre won.

The Snake then said: "Now you have won my scalp. Tie my head around [at the level of the forehead], then take your knife and cut, and pull off my scalp. And after my scalp is off, go to that hill yonder and wave it at me and sing. Then you go back home and I'll go back home." All this the Gros Ventre did. But before leaving, he said to the Snake: "My friend, you came from a long way off. So did I. It is bad enough that you have lost your scalp. So I am going to give you back some of your things that you'll need on your way back home." So the Gros Ventre gave him back his robe, moccasins, bow and arrow, and knife, saying: "You'll need these."

3. *The 2-Button Hand Game*

525 The wheel game, as played and gambled on in really big contests by outstanding enemy friends, was in some respects the supreme gambling game of the Gros Ventre. It was supreme at least in the intensity of interest it aroused as a spectacle and supreme in the value of what was won and lost, not merely the great amounts of property wagered, but, still more, such prestige and status or loss thereof as could make or break the contestants' careers. On the other hand, as regards everyday popularity, frequency of use, and range of participation, first rank in the gambling complex was held, it clearly appears, by the old 2-button hand game, the predecessor of the modern non-gambling 4-button hand game. In the following pages we shall use the term "hand game" without qualification to designate this earlier pre-Ghost-Dance hand game proper.

The hand game could be played at nearly any time. There were no set occasions for it, though some were more favorable than others, especially intertribal gatherings. Commonly a game started just with some one proposing: "Let's gamble." So somebody would go to the nearest bush and cut the required twelve sticks, each about a foot in length, for counters. Sometimes the bark would then be peeled off the sticks and the ends thereof squared, but this was not necessary. Then agreement was reached on what would serve to hide as the two required "buttons"—such as a bit of "sun-shell" off an earring for the "short" button, and an end of horn off a bracelet for the "long" button. There

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

525 would switch the button to the other hand without Lame Bull perceiving it, and
789 Lame Bull could not guess him.

So as the two grew up, Lame Bull always bet when Keg was playing and won
539 a lot of stuff that way. Keg started gambling from his boyhood and always had luck. After he grew up, however, he did not have many chances to play, because everybody, knowing his power, shied away from gambling against him. But when he did play, he would win. When he was resorting to his power in a game, he would imitate the hissing, swishing noise made by the prairie chickens when they ruffle their tail feathers. The prairie chicken had also given Keg its windpipe to use (apparently as a button) in the hand game, and for it Keg used a little metal spring resembling the windpipe.

525 *Narrative 3.* During the lifetime of Red Whip (d. 1912), the Gros Ventre on
789 one occasion, about 1873-75, met the Flathead where Lewistown (Montana) now is
539 and camped close together. The latter asked the former to gamble at the hand
648 game. So when night came, they all assembled in a big lodge. The Flathead had a great gambler, nicknamed Crazy Child, who had gambling power and had never been beaten by anyone on the west side of the Rockies. Outside the lodge the young men of both tribes were visiting in a friendly fashion together, and the Flathead young men told the Gros Ventre young men: "Don't get into that game. Our man cannot be beaten," and some of the latter on that account refrained from betting. But the Gros Ventre had a man of their own, Red Whip, who had gambling power from a ghost, greater gambling power than Crazy Child had.

So the hand game started, with big stakes wagered on both sides. Neither champion showed his prowess right away; they just let themselves run along easily for a while. At last Red Whip decided to cut loose: "This Flathead makes me mad. He has hand game power. So I'll have to use mine. Give me a piece of weasel skin and I'll stop his power." They gave him a piece and he rubbed off a small bit of it and put it on the ground and knelt on it with one knee.

Crazy Child, whose hand-game helper was the owl, used every trick his helper had taught him, to hide the button and battle Red Whip, but to no avail, for Red Whip's ghost helper was more powerful than Crazy Child's owl helper. Then Red Whip, when his turn came to hide, said to the Gros Ventre, "I have this Flathead beaten and I know his helper, the owl, has abandoned him; so sing good and loud and beat time fast and lively," and to the Flathead, "Watch closely, and I will let you hunt for the button after I have hidden it." Red Whip then put on a big show, exhibited the button to the Flathead, threw it into the air, and told him to look for it. Crazy Child hooted like an owl and did all sorts of other things like an owl, but finally gave up: "I can't find the button," at which the Gros Ventre cheered uproariously. Then Red Whip got up, showed the Flathead the button, which was embedded in the lodge pole to the left of the door as you go out, and asked him to pull it out. Crazy Child tried to pull it out but failed, but Red Whip pulled it out easily, and said to Crazy Child: "You are nothing. You are just a little fellow. You don't amount to much. I didn't have to try hard to beat you. But I just wanted to show you this."

This great game lasted one whole night; daylight was breaking when the two

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

 525 789 539 648

men called on their helpers. The Gros Ventres won many things of value: many best horses, guns, and clothes; and no Gros Ventre ever gambled against Red Whip after that.

Men, women, and children could participate in a hand game played by men. 525
All, with an exception or two to be noted, could bet thereon, and men and women could bet on both sides. In a game where the men were players, the women would be present and would join in the singing as well as in the betting, but they could not be guessers, hiders, or tally keepers; only men could be such. Women, however, could so function in hand games among themselves.

Actual participation in hand game gambling was high. One of our women informants, Mrs Warrior, never went in for betting, she emphasized; but she seems to have been rather exceptional in this regard. Our other woman informant on gambling, Mrs Sleeping Bear, was much devoted to gambling, for relatively small stakes. Nearly every one, so far as we could make out from our evidence, seems to have gambled, either frequently and habitually or at least from time to time.

Participation, however, followed a well-defined and established pattern as regards who could or should bet with or against whom and for what kind of stakes. For convenience we are calling this the "bettor-wager pattern."

Some persons or classes of persons could not gamble at all or could not gamble against certain others; others could or would gamble against certain others only for refreshments or a meal; others, for small stakes of little value; others still, for big stakes. The Gros Ventre bettor-wager pattern at first glimpse looks complicated, but actually it conforms to a few very simple principles. We shall look first at the pattern itself; afterwards at the principles.

Blood relatives could not gamble against each other either for large or for 602
small stakes. Such blood relatives included parents and children, grandparents 525
and grandchildren, brothers and sisters, uncles and aunts and nephews and nieces, and also all classificatory relatives of the same categories. At most a group of blood relatives might engage in a hand game with the half-serious half-playful agreement that the losing side would "cook" for the winning side. A given gambling team would commonly be composed chiefly of members who were kin to one another, but non-relatives could also be on the team; the opposing team would likewise be commonly composed chiefly of another kinship group. Where blood relatives gambled in the same game for small or large stakes, they always gambled and bet, not against one another, but on the same side, and in wagering they bet on and backed their own kinsman or kinsmen, wagering dyadically against fellow tribesmen or aliens not related to them.

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

621 Members of one band could and not infrequently did gamble both for small
525 and for big stakes against members of other bands, just as one kinship group used to gamble against others. Tribal we-feeling certainly existed, but seemingly not as intense as band we-feeling, just as, in turn, the latter was not as intense as kin we-feeling. In inter-band, as in inter-kin, gambling, spectators, if they bet at all, would lay their wagers on the players of their own band, as required by band loyalty, regardless of the relative skill and reputation of the contesting players or teams.

575 For Gros Ventre men who had reached full adulthood and were still in the
[885] prime of life, there were two age-societies, called the Stars and the Wolves (or
525 Wolf-men). These two groups, with soldier-police functions, would join forces when necessary in keeping order, in fighting fires, and in defending the whole tribe against enemies, but for the rest rivalry between them was pretty keen. Stars would gamble against Wolves in big games for large stakes, but ordinarily a Star would not gamble against a Star or a Wolf against a Wolf, except for refreshments or a smoke or similar trifling "stakes." Inasmuch as membership in the two societies cut across the lines of kinship and band membership, inter-society gambling suffered an important restriction: if a Star were gambling in a given game, his relatives among the Wolves would not play or bet against him in that particular game. Kinship ties took precedence over society ties.

525 Gros Ventre would of course gamble for big stakes against members of other
● 648 tribes with whom they happened to be at the time on sufficiently good terms, or at least not bitterly and actively hostile, to meet and foregather peacefully, such as the Piegan, Flathead, Nez Percé, and Cree. In such intertribal contests they would often go out to win every possession of their opponents.

572 The Gros Ventre distinguished three kinds of friends: ordinary friends,
525 true or pledged friends, and enemy or war friends. As a rule ordinary close friends would not take opposite sides in a big gambling game. This was all the more true of pledged friends. Two boys, for instance, who liked each other
[608] and who had perhaps grown up together would, though belonging to different bands, enter into a sort of "sworn brotherhood," give each other presents, exchange intimate confidences, and promise, without religious rite of any kind, to stand by each other always, even to death if necessary. Two girls could also enter into a similar pact. Such "true" or pledged friends never gambled against each other either as players or as backers, at least never for stakes of value.

Of enemy or war friends we have previously spoken when describing the wheel game. Two enemy friends would gamble against each other for small stakes or big, the bigger the better. In fact a hand game for big stakes between

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

525 we-group altruism, cohesion, and loyalty, the more gambling and the greater the
571 stakes and vice versa.

Two less important, secondary determinants were the rules of avoidance and respect on the one hand and those of familiarity and license on the other. In general, the greater the degree of avoidance and respect demanded between two persons or classes, the less gambling and the smaller the stakes; the greater the degree of familiarity and license permitted, the more gambling and the bigger the stakes.

A fourth determinant was the element of the sacred (and/or ascetic) associated with certain offices and with the persons occupying them, an element which barred gambling by and/or against these persons, namely, pipe keepers and ritual grandfathers.

A fifth determinant was obviously in operation, although the field evidence therefor is not abundant. We got no record, however, of Gros Ventre gambling with their ancient, hereditary and bitter enemies, the Sioux. Gambling, even to
● [648] strip opponents completely, presupposes a minimum of friendliness between the players, or at least the absence of deadly and unqualified hostility.

If we diagram along a horizontal belt the full range of human relationships from unqualified friendliness and altruism on the extreme left through the various gradations to unqualified hostility and malevolence on the extreme right, Gros Ventre gambling may be represented on this belt as absent from the extreme left end, gradually increasing in frequency and in size of stakes as we pass along the central section toward the right, and then suddenly dropping and completely disappearing near the extreme right end.

Besides these five determinants or conditioning factors in Gros Ventre gambling, there were perhaps others, but this is as far as our evidence and our analysis thereof have gone. Of course, one cannot have gambling without some kind of close-range or long-range contact between the gamblers, without some kind of property or other valued thing to wager, and so forth, but working out a list of such requisites would be labor lost.

Before leaving this subject, we should emphasize that, while the preceding pages have referred particularly to the bettor-wager pattern as holding for the hand game, the same pattern held as well for all other Gros Ventre gambling games and contests.[7]

[171
525] 7 In our world sources on gambling we have noted only two explicit references, and these extremely brief, to the bettor-wager pattern: G. Goodwin, *The Social Organization of the Western Apache* (Chicago, 1942), p. 375, "certain types of gambling" are prevented "between members of the same clan," for it would be "like winning it [property] from yourself"; R.

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Iruska.[5] In its diffusion it reached the Assiniboine from the Sioux, 796
—Rodnick places the date at 1872,[6]—and the Assiniboine in turn 177
passed it on to the Gros Ventres, sometime between the years 171
1875 and 1880. We arrive at this approximate dating by reckoning the age of a now venerable old Gros Ventre woman informant [174]
who witnessed the actual transfer when she herself was in her later twenties or possibly early thirties. From all the evidence at our command it is fairly certain that she was born between 1850 and 1855. This informant not only was an eye-witness of the adoption of the ceremony by the Gros Ventres but also participated actively, so far as a woman could, in both the earlier and later phases of the dance. Before giving details of the regalia, personnel, and procedures it might be well to insert at this point her account of the actual transfer.

"The Gros Ventres were camped on the Milk River. They 648
were joined there by the Assiniboine and the two tribes remained 177
together while the Assiniboine taught the Gros Ventres the Grass 796
dance. The Gros Ventres had never had any dancing of that kind before and called it jokingly *inaetenin* (moving-buttocks) referring to the way they danced. The Assiniboine gave crow-belts (feather bustles) to each of two men, and likewise swords to two others. They needed one man as spear (fork) man and two as *atsa'an* (waiters, servants). They also gave the Gros Ventres a big drum and everything that goes with the dance. The visitors showed the different individuals how to use these various things and taught the songs and dances that went with each. But they didn't do all that for nothing! Of all the things they had to give away to the Assiniboine! Even food was included in the exchange. The Gros Ventres had an enormous quantity of food prepared and you should have seen the number of puppies we [262]
cooked. The Assiniboine surely liked those pups. That was the first Grass dance we ever had.

"Then we moved camp from the Milk River over toward the 796

[5] Wissler, loc. cit., cf. table opp. p. 868.

[6] Rodnick, David, The Fort Belknap Assiniboine of Montana, A study in culture change, New Haven, Conn., 1938, pp. 123–24.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

102
131
133
●657

FORT BELKNAP RESERVATION AND SURROUNDING AREA

[p. ii]

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

INTRODUCTION

The Algonquian-speaking Gros Ventres live on the Fort Belknap Reservation in North Central Montana. The Reservation is a small part of the land claimed by this tribe in 1887, when the boundaries were finally fixed. At present, the Gros Ventres number between a thousand and eleven hundred, and they share their territory with almost as many Assiniboine. The latter tribe was included in the settlement of the Reservation although it did not participate with the Gros Ventres and Blackfoot tribes in the Treaty of 1855. In spite of some intermarriage, the two groups have never really blended and the Gros Ventres tend to center at the village of Hays at the southern part of the Reservation while the Assinboine are clustered around Lodge Pole, a settlement some ten miles east of Hays. The Indian Agency is approximately forty miles north of Hays at the northern boundary of the Reservation and close to the town of Harlem on the Great Northern Railroad. Of importance to the Gros Ventres, who are predominantly Roman Catholic, is St. Paul's Mission and School which lie at the foot of the Little Rockies only a mile south of Hays. David Rodnick has given an excellent description of the geographical setting of the Reservation for his study of modern conditions and of acculturation among the Fort Belknap Assiniboine.

131 657 [197] [161] [648] [797] [114]

Of the several tribes in the Northern Plains region, the Gros Ventres are perhaps the least known. Although they maintained intact their tribal identity, and were recognized as fierce warriors, they were often mistakenly identified with the Blackfoot tribes, with whom they were frequently allied. Moreover, little was known of the Gros Ventre language except that it was an exceedingly difficult one; practically every independent observer during the nineteenth century remarks on this fact. Since, however, many Gros Ventre men knew Blackfoot, the linguistic difference was often overlooked and the Gros Ventres tended to be counted as one of the Blackfoot tribes. As part of the so-called "Blackfoot Nation," leaders of the Gros Ventres signed the Treaty of 1855.

101 [648] 197 [648]

[P. viii contains no text]

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

over the area. The Gros Ventres had the benefit of buffalo hunting a trifle longer than the other groups. All the buffalo in Montana were in February, 1882, in their territory, between the Milk River and the Bear Paw Mountains. The hunting season, of October 1882 to February 1883, finished the annihilation of the great northern herd and left only stragglers, merely a few thousands.[70] By August, 1883, both the Blackfoot and the Crow Agencies reported that all game was gone from their respective reservations, and a letter from the Fort Belknap Agency stated that game there "was practically exhausted."[71] In 1884 the Blackfoot and Crow agencies reported that the buffalo was extinct.[72] After ceding more land, in 1888 the limits of the Fort Belknap Reservation, which the Gros Ventres share with the Assiniboine, were finally fixed.[73]

Missionary endeavors, carried on by the Jesuit Fathers, had begun in earnest only in 1885. Prior to that time contact with missionaries had been sporadic. Father Point in 1846–47 had been well received and sent in a good report of this tribe. When Father Giorda attempted to go among them in 1862, however, Bull Lodge took him prisoner and stripped him of his possessions. Since his captivity did not last longer than a few weeks, and his property was restored to him, several months later he made another attempt. This time, while there was some opposition at first, he was permitted to baptize over a hundred children. Subsequently Fathers Rappagliosi and Grassi made several visits respectively, and at considerable intervals. Finally, after some preliminary negotiations, Father Ebershweiler established permanent residence in 1885, and the school at St. Paul's was opened in 1887. The mission and school flourished. In 1891 the founder was replaced by Father Flusi, assisted by Father Sansome.[74]

The Gros Ventres population—always small, relative to that of surrounding tribes—was steadily declining. Hayden's estimate of 1853 placed the total at 2520.[75] In 1883, at the time of the

[70] Hornaday, pp. 492, 506, 510–11.
[71] Report of Commissioner of Indian Affairs 1883–1915, pp. lx, 98.
[72] *Ibid.*, pp. 107, 109.
[73] *Ibid.*, p. 295.
[74] Palladino, pp. 187, 195–96, 230, 232, 235.
[75] Hayden, p. 344. Gros Ventres today claim their number was then 10,000.

173 very much increased. White Eagle governed the people very
643 wisely and he governed until he died."

It was The Boy's impression that following White Eagle, the
643 chief of the whole tribe was no longer formally selected and simply attained his position through gradual recognition of his merits.[9] Sits Like A Woman succeeded White Eagle and was tribal chief in the first decades of the 19th century. He was followed by his son of the same name who was a signer of the 1855 treaty, and was still recognized as tribal head when he died suddenly about 1870. Coming Daylight claimed that this Sits Like a Woman II was certainly the greatest chief of her time and that, when he died, people were forbidden to light their camp fires as a sign of mourning. During the subsequent period Lame Bull was outstanding among the leading men, but he witnessed the dissolution of the
[657] band system and the camp circle. The Fort Belknap Reservation had been set up in 1873, encompassing much more territory than at present, and the first houses were built in 1882.

619 In spite of the fact that a tribal chief was recognized, band
621 autonomy was apparently preserved. The ceremonial organization
796 cut across band organization, however, and band autonomy was relinquished at the times during which the Sacred Dances were held. The movements and activities of the tribe as a whole were then in the hands of the company to which the vower of a particular Dance belonged.[10]

The Companies

561 Kroeber notes that "men of the tribe of age to make any one ceremony were not all in one society or company but in several, the total number of companies being three or four times as great as the number of ceremonies. Each company had a name which it

[9] So far as it goes, this would seem to confirm O. Lewis' interpretation, pp. 42–43, that the earlier Hudson's Bay Company policy on the northern plains reinforced tribal chieftaincy, but that with the development of competition in the fur trade, authority was weakened.

[10] For a discussion of the Sacred Dances, see Kroeber, 1908, pp. 239–68. Other details are given in Cooper, Ms. 1949. The following discussion is concerned only with the composition of the ceremonial organization so far as it can be reconstructed.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 171 The Gros Ventre also introduce into the ceremony a thunder symbolism that the Arapaho lack, or have in a much less developed form. The lightning symbol on the centre pole, from which water can be drawn, and the power of the thunder to strike with lightning any dancer who drinks other water than this, evidence this.

Another element special to the Gros Ventre is the introduction of ceremonies relating to war, such as the dramatic performances and the seeing of the approach of the enemy by the pledger.

Features introducing miraculous and sometimes purely personal supernatural powers are apparently quite lacking from the Arapaho ceremony. Among the Gros Ventre there are the raising of the centre pole, the production of water from the centre pole with the crow, the clairvoyance of the pledger as regards the enemy, and the visions of some of the dancers.

In summary, the exact duration and sequence of all events in the Gros Ventre ceremony are not yet clear; the preliminary prairie-chicken tent does not correspond very closely to the Arapaho rabbit-tent; and the connection of the ceremony with the thunder, the introduction of warlike elements, and that of miraculous or personal features, are peculiar, or nearly so, to the Gros Ventre as compared with the Arapaho.

MODERN CEREMONIAL OBJECTS.

778 171 The recent ceremonial objects of the Gros Ventre are somewhat different from those of the Arapaho. The Arapaho were deeply affected by the ghost-dance movement, more, it is said, than any other tribe; and many of their modern religious regalia have a distinct character of their own. [668 177] The Gros Ventre received the ghost-dance from the Arapaho, but it seems to have taken little hold of them. The only distinctive ghost-dance objects seen or obtained were two small hoops and a few balls, all of which resemble Arapaho types. 177 The chief modern dance-ceremony of the Gros Ventre, the only one performed at present, is the grass or war dance obtained from the Sioux, 778 and evidently a modification of the widespread 796 Omaha dance upon which the Arapaho crow-dance is also based. This dance has in recent years been still further modified, until its character now is very similar to that of the crow-dance. The regalia used in this [178] dance at present are very individual, usually crude, and almost always stylistically degenerate. The delicate character and distinct style of the majority of modern Arapaho dance-objects are lacking.

171 The treatment of feathers in such objects is quite different among the 778 Gros Ventre and Arapaho. The Gros Ventre rarely ornament their feathers 237

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

with dyed plumes or tufts of horsehair, as the Arapaho so frequently do both at the base and top of the feather. Feathers with the vanes cut from the quill, except at the very top, are also scarcely used by the Gros Ventre. Instead, they usually cut the feather squarely off across its end, or split the quill, from the end down, for the greater part of its length. Sometimes the uppermost part of the quill is entirely removed, with its attached portions of the vanes, leaving the top of the feather forked. Plume-feathers are also much less used by the Gros Ventre than by the Arapaho. In dyeing, the Gros Ventre generally used cruder colors; a blue-violet, a pink-red, a light-bluish green, and yellow, all of them aniline colors, being the most common. The Arapaho use true red and green more frequently, and in most cases employ the dyes more lightly, thus obtaining endurable or delicate effects where the Gros Ventre are garish.

The Gros Ventre methods of feather-treatment, both the cutting-off and the splitting of the end of the feather, go back, at least in part, to their older tribal ceremonies. Both these processes are found employed on the dog-dance regalia described.

As regards other differences, the Gros Ventre probably employ more weasel-skin in ornaments than the Arapaho, though far less than their neighbors the Blackfeet. They use cloth (both cotton and woollen goods), red, green, or blue, without reluctance; whereas the Arapaho have clung very tenaciously to skin in all ceremonial objects. Skin thongs and sinew for binding are, however, very rarely replaced by strings and thread, even with the Gros Ventre.

The few objects obtained belonging to the ghost-dance movement are the following.

Fig. 41 shows an imitation of a netted playing-wheel. The piece is about two inches in diameter. The stitch of the meshes seems to be correct, though there are fewer meshes than in the full-sized wheels. The "crow," the centre mesh, is painted red; the rest of the thong, yellow. To the centre mesh are attached four magpie-feathers cut off across. This object was worn tied to the hair on the side of the head, or hanging from the little finger when the people joined hands to dance. Several very similar objects, lacking the feathers, are attached to the girl's painted dress shown in "Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History" (Vol. XVIII, Plate LXXV).

A head-dress consisting of a hoop of about the same size, quill-wound and bisected by two quill-wound strings, and of three long, blue-and-white quill-wound pendant thongs with plume-feathers at the ends, was collected by Dr. Clark Wissler. It is not known whether it belongs to the war-dance or the ghost-dance: its general similarity to certain Arapaho head-dresses

l: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

668
778

makes the latter seem possible. It differs from Arapaho objects chiefly in that the color-ornamentation of the quill-wrapping divides the hoop into three instead of four parts. At the upper end of the hoop is attached a bunch of seven small strips of whitish rabbit-fur, resembling the weasel-skin style of ornamentation characteristic of the Blackfoot.

Two balls (Figs. 24 and 25) are identical in character with Arapaho ghost-dance objects, and the latter was made in connection with the movement. These balls are described above.

778
293
171

[292]

Fig. 41 (50-1922). Wheel Head-dress. Length, 21 cm.

The following objects, many of which were obtained by Dr. Clark Wissler and which were probably not connected with the ghost-dance, are of a character that does not seem to make it worth while to represent them in illustrations; but they resemble Arapaho or other pieces sufficiently for a brief description. They all appear to have been used in the war or grass dance.

Specimen Museum No. 50-1742 is a feathered crook modelled on the familiar type of curved lance that is common on the Plains, and to which the otterskin-wrapped lances of the second degree of the second Arapaho tribal ceremony belong.[1] The Gros Ventre too had such crooked lances in probably two of their tribal ceremonies. The present piece is about four feet long, and made of a stick painted yellow. There is no blade, or representation of it, at the lower end. At the end of the crook hangs a single eagle-feather. The greater portion of the shaft is covered by a casing of green cloth from which hang, attached by thongs and sinew wrapping painted yellow, a row of eighteen eagle-feathers.

A forked stick (specimen Museum No. 50-4328) resembles the Arapaho pieces of this kind described in the "Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History" (Vol. XVIII, p. 358). It is about six feet long, quite slender, and painted red. Some distance in the fork a quill-covered hoop is attached to the two spreading sticks. This hoop is red, with four white, blue-bordered areas on it. The ends of the fork are ornamented with a short green-cloth fringe, tufts of yellow-dyed hair, and feathers notched at the top. From the junction of the two arms downward,

[1] Compare Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part II, Plate XXXII.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

514 country do what I did. When buffalo go to drink, Indians just
522 shoot them. I was just re-enacting this. What I did was proper.'
*796 To this the husband replied: 'My elder brother, that's true.'

"When the people heard the laughing, they came flocking around. The other Blood was still laughing, in fact was in a laughing spell. His relatives carried him out and took him home and there dashed water on him and revived him."

Peyote Cult and Ghost Dance

● 668 What little we were able to gather on the peyote cult and Ghost
795 Dance among the Gros Ventres, is here presented.

Peyotism is entirely lacking among the present-day Gros Ventres and appears never to have gained a foothold among them in the past. Some individuals, we were told by The Boy and Thick, had tried to introduce it, but without success as the Gros Ventres were "a little afraid of it." The fact that the Gros Ventres have been under fairly intensive Catholic missionary influence since the middle 1880's may partly account for the resistance.[43] Some young Gros Ventres, who were on a visit to the Crows, were invited to take part in Peyote observances, but declined.

On the fortunes of the Ghost Dance among the Gros Ventres, our chief informants were Cora Chandler and her husband Al Chandler, Coming Daylight, The Boy, Thick, Charles Buckman and Thomas Main. Singer had joined the movement but though perfectly willing to speak freely about other subjects was somewhat reluctant to talk about this one. Our other informants had not joined the Ghost Dance, but Cora Chandler's people "were strong for it." Coming Daylight was, as will be explained, in close contact with certain phases of it, and The Boy had been present as a spectator at many Ghost Dance gatherings.

The Ghost Dance was called among the Gros Ventres, not "Ghost Dance," but "Little Round Dances." It was first introduced
[172] among them in 1891 by a Gros Ventre from the Hays area who had lived among the Arapaho of Wyoming a number of years, had

[43] Coming Daylight came in contact with the Peyote Cult on a visit some years ago to Oklahoma, but, she remarked, "the Catholic Indians in Oklahoma were against peyote."

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

668
745

attended the Ghost Dance there, and had returned to Hays in that year. As introducer and leader of the cult he preached wa:hatcan (lit. "reunion of all together," cf. wahanichina "unite" [Sifton]), signifying the rising of the dead Indians either in the near future or at the end of the world, and predicted the return of the buffalo, and into his message wove something of both Christ and the Flat Pipe. Big gatherings of Gros Ventres listened to him. Some few became converts, but most remained spectators and hearers only and declined to join. Further, the Gros Ventres did not join at all in the Ghost Dance political uprising. They had previously given their word not to go to war with the whites. The movement lasted just two years and then died out.[44]

[177]

The factors accounting for the resistance to and decline of the Ghost Dance among the Gros Ventres were, according to The Boy and Charles Buckman, the following. The older men and women did not believe Returns-to-war and the other promoters because "they had to be shown, and they felt that it was impossible for the dead, to rise again and for the buffalo to come back." The younger fellows, of the age of The Boy and Charles Buckman at the time, that is, around twenty years, did not believe because "the younger generation was then going to the Catholic missionaries and had learned different." Moreover, in 1893, some Wyoming Arapaho visited Hays and from them the Gros Ventres found that Returns-to-war had "exaggerated the story," so they all quit the Ghost Dance.

[179]

From Cora Chandler, Coming Daylight and Al Chandler we gathered the following information that sheds additional light on the rise of the Gros Ventre Ghost Dance and especially on the causes believed to have led to its rejection and decline.

During the rites, there would be round dances; the dancers would be painted after which they would sing and sing; the songs

[44] Mooney, 1896, p. 817 in his exhaustive study of the situation states that a Gros Ventre had been visiting in 1889 among the Arapaho and "heard the story and brought back the wonderful news to the Gros Ventres and Assiniboine of Fort Belknap, but although his account was received by some with unquestioning faith, the excitement had in it nothing of a dangerous character."

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

668
N95

themselves were very lively ones; preaching of the content of the Ghost Dance message was a prominent feature.

Among those who took over leadership in the movement, along with Returns-to-war, was an outstanding medicine man who died a Catholic many years later, but who at the time of the Ghost Dance movement was bitterly anti-Catholic.

For one Ghost Dance gathering on a certain moonlight night, he had called the people to his place outside and a great many came, among them Coming Daylight and Cora Chandler's father's brother, Black Wolf, who was "one of the strong believers." After some singing and dancing, the leader said: "Wait, I am going out on that little hill over there. You all watch. I will stand there. When you see little sparks you will know the spirit has come." So he went up on the hill alone while the people stayed behind, singing, dancing and watching. Coming Daylight watched him and saw him "take a lot of matches, wet them so that they glowed in the dark, and hold his hands so that those dancing saw this fire glow." The people rushed over to him, glad that the spirit had come. The leader then took them back to the spot where they had been dancing and said to them: "Wait until tomorrow, and I will tell you what the spirit told me."

Each one who joined the Ghost Dance was supposed to have a feather of eagle down. The next morning, the leader told Black Wolf: "Your (deceased) son says you should go to where he is buried and he will bring you a feather." In the course of this day Coming Daylight happened to go over to the leader's house and there she found him sitting with all kinds of feathers around him and fixing one especially. She observed it closely to be sure she would recognize it if she should see it again. When she went back to her lodge, she said to her husband, Little Man, "That crazy thing is still fixing feathers. He is certainly up to something." She told her husband what she had seen and said: "I think he must be up to something crazy."

So when night came, Black Wolf and his wife went up to their son's grave, out on the hills near Old Hays. Sure enough there on the grave was a stick with eagle down on it. They were glad, for they thought their son's spirit had brought it to them,

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

and they went back to their house where a crowd was waiting to see if the feather would really be found as the leader had predicted. The leader, Coming Daylight, and her husband Little Man, were in the crowd. The leader took the feathered stick and handed it to Coming Daylight, who said right out: "Oh, that is the very same one I saw him fixing. . . . How could a ghost hand fix these feathers the way they are fixed?" 668 715

Notwithstanding this public exposure, the leader [no doubt later and privately] told Black Wolf's wife that because she had gotten this feather from the dead she could get anything she wanted, but that he (the leader) would have to have [sexual intercourse with] her first. She told her husband and "when he found out it was a trick, he sure was mad and he went over and was going to murder that man." [83]

Cora Chandler added that a lot of women were gotten through this trick, that there were many such Ghost Dance bosses, or leaders, and that they used to get cattle, horses, and anything they wanted, including the women.

Singer said that although she joined the Ghost Dance, she did not have to pay anything, but that her husband, when they brought him a message from one of his dead relatives, cried and gave what they asked, a buckskin horse, to the old woman boss. "They used to have women bosses as well as men bosses in the Ghost Dance."

Returns-to-war once came to Coming Daylight's husband, Little Man, and told him: "Your young brother, who got killed in the war, wants a horse, bridle and saddle." Little Man, who was a good deal of a skeptic in things religious, declined with the retort: "What is a ghost going to do with a horse and saddle?"

According to Al Chandler, "Jack Wilson got away with all kinds of things. Before he died he brought his son here to Hays and his son eloped with one girl, and that cooked his goose. They found out he was a fraud." According to Coming Daylight, "he [Jack Wilson] had a lot of women through that [the Ghost Dance]. He would choose the prettiest and best looking woman to make his smudge for him. He would have a little hut." At this point in the conversation, Singer broke in and would not let Coming Daylight continue along this line. We have come across no other

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

668 745 record of the original Jack Wilson (Wovoka) visiting the Gros Ventres. Could the Jack Wilson above mentioned be some other Indian who was an impostor or one who in good faith took Wovoka's white-man's name?

In addition, the causes listed by The Boy and Thick for the failure of the Ghost Dance to take real root among the Gros Ventre, the chicanery, racketeering and sexual episodes, attributed by many of the Gros Ventres to the leaders of the movement, must have contributed appreciably to the same result.

At any rate, the movement lasted only two years, 1891-1893, and appears to have left no permanent impression on Gros Ventre life. At or shortly after these dates, however the modern non-gambling hand game was introduced from Ghost Dance sources. [177 524]

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

525 Women (and men?) also gambled at ring-and-pin, the "ring" being made of four bones from deer feet.[4] The contest was mostly just for fun; the losers would have to "cook" for the winners.

Several types of bow and arrow contests, serving as archery practice as well as gambling sports, were indulged in by boys, young men, and sometimes older men, not, however, by girls or women. Both distance and accuracy contests occurred. In the latter, the target was a stick or arrow stuck upright in a small mound, or an arrow shot by one contestant a desired distance, say, 100 or 150 yards. In another kind of contest, a bow was set slanting, string upward; the string was vibrated by an arrow and the arrow on release flew toward the target about 35 or 40 feet away. In these bow and arrow contests, the wagers were small, usually arrows, sometimes a bow. Wagers were made by the players, and at times by onlookers too.

The modern 4-button hand game, distinct from the earlier 2-button one, is played more for fun than for winnings. At most the losers may be expected to [177] "cook" for the winners. This modern non-gambling hand game came to the Gros Ventre through an Arapaho, Dances All Night, in 1897, shortly after the [668] time the Ghost Dance was introduced among them (in 1891). The Ghost Dance itself had little popularity among the Gros Ventre and after a couple of years died out among them, but the non-gambling hand game took root and survived. At first, we were informed, it was played with two buttons, but after 1903 with four.

525 178 Gambling at playing cards, sometimes for large stakes, occurs today, but usually at the nearby white settlements, between Gros Ventre and white males. Some of the older Gros Ventre are shrewd poker players, and the younger ones play poker among themselves, but we obtained no record of ruinous stakes at cards among the Gros Ventre themselves on the reservation.

Major Gambling Games and Sports

525 The three more important gambling games and sports of half a century or more ago were races, the wheel game, and the 2-button hand game.

1. *Races*

[575] On horse races, usually between the two soldier-police societies, the Stars and Wolves (the latter became later the "Grass Dancers"), or between the [648] Gros Ventre and other tribes, such as the Piegan, at intertribal gatherings, were placed large bets—horses, saddles, and so forth—by the men, not however by

4 Illustration in Culin, *op. cit.*, fig. 706, p. 537.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

occasion he stated that it was the "law" of the spring hunt that no one should hunt buffalo alone or in a small group, violation of which invoked the sanctions applied by the Wolf-men or Stars. However, in 1940, this same informant stated twice, explicitly, that there was no police power except at the Sacred Dances and on a third occasion in that year said: "After the Sacred Dance the company disbanded, and the chief resumed control, but he did not punish anybody for hunting buffalo alone." 224 688 625

In any case, authority was delegated to the companies only temporarily. Otherwise there was no agency beyond that of the family which could apply sanctions of force, and then, on only two counts. A husband had the right to take the life of an unfaithful wife; the family had the right of blood revenge in case of murder. In both, however, less extreme modes of behavior were approved and bloodshed could honorably be avoided. 688 625 684 682

When murder occurred, if the family of the murdered person could be persuaded to accept a payment of goods as restitution, further spilling of blood was prevented. It was said that the lodge of the band chief offered temporary refuge to a murderer and that sanctuary was likewise available in the lodge of the Keeper either of the Flat or of the Feathered Pipe. It was thought that if the murderer and his family, who collectively shared responsibility for the crime, could flee the scene, time would be gained for negotiating the blood-price. If one blood relative killed another, there was no retaliation, but the murderer was shunned. 682 778 672

While there was a considerable amount of fighting and quarreling among the Gros Ventres, especially under the influence of liquor, disputes were usually settled without bloodshed. Outright murder, as distinct from deaths attributed to witchcraft, was seemingly relatively infrequent. The following seven cases, arranged chronologically, illustrate actual behavior. Each of these was referred to independently by several different informants with a high level of agreement among them on details. The total represents all the murders that were known to have occurred in the period from about 1850 to 1885. 689

Case No. 1. These events took place about 1847. Two young men, who were related by blood, went on foot to steal horses from the enemy. One had obtained a fine horse, but the other had been 682

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

551 Names were given to children very soon after birth. Names were fre-
553 quently changed and given away. A man would receive his father's name from the latter, or would take it after his death. If a child were sickly, a relative, such as a grandfather, sometimes gave him another name. A sick person sometimes also took a new name in order to recover. Renowned warriors sometimes gave away their names to young men. They might retain the same name for themselves, or take a new one. One very aged man gave away his name to a young man, telling him, "I give you my name in order that you may have as long a life as I." This was done without the occasion or accompaniment of a ceremony.

There seems to have been no prohibition against mentioning the name of the dead, nor even any reluctance on the matter. Some people, however, were ashamed to speak their own names.

551 Twins, called niiçan, were named, if boys, respectively Kaaen and Niiça^{n}.
845 The latter name, however, was not always used, an ordinary name being given instead. Girl twins were not called by these names.

302 The hair was formerly worn in braids, as at present customary among the Plains tribes, but also erect over the forehead. The women wore their
[765] hair either in braids or sometimes loose. In mourning, the hair, especially of the women, was cut about halfway across the cheek.

304 Ear-piercing, which among the Arapaho is performed on ceremonial occasions, and is itself accompanied with ceremony and giving of presents, was said among the Gros Ventre to be unaccompanied by special ceremonial actions. A woman or any one else does the piercing.

857 Boys who were herding horses sometimes took off their clothes and daubed themselves with mud until they were unrecognizable. They painted
673 their horses, and made shields of willow. Then they came to the camp,
868 mounted or on foot, to steal meat. Approaching the camp like a war-party, they would select the best meat hanging outdoors, charge on it, take it, and run. The old men and women and children chased them with clubs, but of course without success. The boys would go back to where they were herding, and have a feast.

576 The Gros Ventre say that both hand-shaking and kissing are aboriginal with them.

GAMES.

524 A common cup-and-ball game called tsöötskuutja^{n} ("throw in") consisted of four hollow deer or antelope leg bones, each about two inches long, attached to a string passing through them, at the end of which there was a needle eight or ten inches long. This game appears to be identical with

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

had probably had different names before his father's time but that the division into two big groups of "mature, middle-aged" men was always characteristic of Gros Ventre organization. This same informant was likewise under the impression that a man would have to stay with whichever of the two societies he, with his company, had originally joined. Turn Toes said however that he had known a few cases of men who had originally been Stars later joining with the Wolf-men, and of one Wolf-man who afterwards joined the Stars. These known cases, however, occurred fairly late in Gros Ventre history, and probably after the formation of new companies had ceased. 575

Sanctions of Force

Social sanctions were seemingly the most important means of control. Public opinion was effective in all aspects of conduct. Public disapproval meant loss of prestige and in more severe cases made itself felt by "shunning." It was brought to bear upon the individual in an especially effective way through ridicule, as exercised particularly in the enemy-friendship.[21] 626

A considerable number of misdeeds, like theft or failure to observe the rules in ceremonial life, were believed to result automatically in supernatural punishment ("bad luck"). Fear of retaliation through witchcraft also exerted a restraining influence.[22]

There were only three situations in which sanction through physical force was applicable. These were, first, failure to obey the rules of behavior promulgated by the society in charge while any one of the Sacred Dances was in progress; second, murder; third, adultery on the part of the wife.[23] 681

In regard to the first, it is quite clear that in case one of the Sacred Dances had been vowed, the whole tribe had to come together and remain united until the rite was finished. "If the bands happened to be scattered at the time a Sacred Dance was to 688

[21] For a discussion of the enemy-friendship, see pp. 102–06.

[22] Cf. also pp. 169–70 for a discussion of social and other types of motivation proposed to children. Witchcraft is dealt with in detail in Cooper, Ms., 1949.

[23] A detailed treatment of punishment for adultery is given in pp. 183–90, and will not be discussed in this section.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

shoulders and barking like wolves—the party sang three songs, one to accompany the scouts as they made each circle.[5] 726 [533]

The two older men who met the scouts were told by them privately what they had seen. The four then went to a mound of buffalo chips which had been piled up, the rest of the party awaiting the scouts standing in a semicircle—the women, if present, behind the men—and all facing the direction from which the scouts had come. They sang while the two warriors and two scouts circled the mound of chips four times.[6] After each of the two [533] older men had recited his war deeds in scouting for and locating the enemy, they called upon the scouts to relate to the whole party the results of their expedition.[7]

It sometimes happened of course that there would be no time to go through the above ceremony if the enemy were approaching. But if time allowed it was done in that fashion.[8] Then the leader laid out plans to steal horses and/or get scalps, according to the news which the scouts had brought in. The leader would instruct the rest of the party where to meet after the raid, how long to wait there before starting for home, what signals he would use to indicate the moment of attack, and what signals of identification were to be used between members of the party should it be dark when they closed in on the enemy. It was stated that the Gros Ventres usually attacked in the evening after dark, whereas the Sioux were more apt to attack in the early dawn. Should the plans of the leader not seem satisfactory, some of the party might offer objections. The leader, feeling himself responsible for the safety of all members of the party, put forth his case, but the others were not bound to follow him and, if no agreement could be reached, the party might split. One consideration which tended to keep the party [681] together was, however, the fact that there was a fine paid to the rest of the party by one returning to camp ahead of the others.

[5] A song without words, recorded as No. 14, accompanied the first circling. Songs at the second and third circling had words, composed by enemy-friends of the scouts, the words usually being both derisive and vulgar.

[6] This was recorded as No. 15.

[7] Kroeber's account, p. 191, differs slightly. Cf. also Curtis, v. 5, pp. 181-82.

[8] The formalities of scouting were carried out in detail during the ceremonies of the Sacrifice Dance. See Cooper Ms. 1949.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

743 no choice but to accept. If he did not accept, there was no legal punishment inflicted such as physical violence, killing or banish-
[681] ment, but rather a supernatural one. It was thought that some grave evil would befall the person chosen if he did not accept the office.

The two following episodes, narrated by The Boy, from his father's and his own life throw some further light on the elective system and prevalent attitudes of reluctance to being elected as keeper. While the keepership carried with it great prestige, the reluctance is quite understandable in view of the severe restrictions and taboos that went with the keepership.

"When Lame Bull was a young man, just having reached maturity, he had a very close good friend, Kitfox Head. The two solemnly agreed that they would never become keepers of either the Flat or the Feathered Pipe, as being a keeper meant having a hard life. They agreed to avoid this office but to work hard in order to become outstanding men, warriors, with a life of freedom. They so grew up and married, remaining fast friends all the time.

"When Lame Bull was in his thirties, before reaching middle age, the Gros Ventres were on one occasion camped at the eastern end of the brush nearest to where St. Paul's Mission now is. Lame Bull, who then had three wives, was sleeping soundly one night when an old woman came to the door of his tent, woke him up and warned him: 'They are perhaps going to make you keeper. A big crowd is on its way, making for your lodge.' Lame Bull said to one of his wives: "Look out and see if the old woman is right.' She did and said: 'Yes. They are here close.'

"The crowd was too close for him to escape through the door, so he pushed his way out through the back of his lodge. Once out he gave one look back, saw the crowd and dashed for liberty. He ran round west and north to the right of the canyon up from where the Mission now is and into the mountains, leaving his wives.

"The first two wives made their way out through the door. The keeper stood at the door but could not prevent their escape as his hands were engaged in holding a pipe. The 'strong man' of the crowd was too busy looking for Lame Bull to think of the wives.

[i.e., the elector as Keeper of the Flat Pipe. -Analyst]

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 178 533 were supposed to come prepared with pipe, tobacco, and matches in anticipation of this song. If, for some reason, one of the four [625 was unable to furnish at least a pipeful of mixture, and could not 681] borrow one, he was immediately arrested by the owners of the whips and punished by the singers who might tear his shirt at the neck so everyone could see it, or, perhaps, pour over him a good cupful of broth made from dog flesh. This broth has a strong and lasting odor. The female officers were likewise expected to give the women singers a smoke. The smoking song marked an intermission. No one danced to this song and all sat around smoking and taking it easy.

796 178 If things got too dull, however, one of the owners of the whips might get up, call the announcer, and say: "Tell my friends that I am going to whip them if they don't dance. I will have the right to whip them because I am going to pay for it," and he would present a bridle, or perhaps five dollars, or something of that order of magnitude, to anyone he wished. It was understood, then, that the next time the singing started this man might hit any person,—even one of the "chiefs,"—who failed to dance.

Another feature reminiscent of the original Grass dance but showing some slight change, was the provision that anyone who wished might have it announced that he was going to "lock the door," which meant that nobody could go home until the dance was over. For doing this however he had to provide all the necessary food for another Grass dance to be held on the night immediately following. It was up to the owners of the whips to enforce the regulation by taking something valuable, say a hat [689] or a blanket, from anyone who left the dance and the article was forfeit if he failed to return.

796 178 626 Based on the same concept, the practice grew up of forcing attendance in the following way. Once in a while the owners of the whips might order their assistants to go from door to door in the whole community and take something belonging to each householder, say a bridle, or a valuable belt, or a gun, and bring it to the dancing-place. If the owner of the object were not at the dance, his property was returned to him only if he promised

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

occasion he stated that it was the "law" of the spring hunt that no one should hunt buffalo alone or in a small group, violation of which invoked the sanctions applied by the Wolf-men or Stars. However, in 1940, this same informant stated twice, explicitly, that there was no police power except at the Sacred Dances and on a third occasion in that year said: "After the Sacred Dance the company disbanded, and the chief resumed control, but he did not punish anybody for hunting buffalo alone." 224 688 625

In any case, authority was delegated to the companies only temporarily. Otherwise there was no agency beyond that of the family which could apply sanctions of force, and then, on only two counts. A husband had the right to take the life of an unfaithful wife; the family had the right of blood revenge in case of murder. In both, however, less extreme modes of behavior were approved and bloodshed could honorably be avoided. 688 625 684 682

When murder occurred, if the family of the murdered person could be persuaded to accept a payment of goods as restitution, further spilling of blood was prevented. It was said that the lodge of the band chief offered temporary refuge to a murderer and that sanctuary was likewise available in the lodge of the Keeper either of the Flat or of the Feathered Pipe. It was thought that if the murderer and his family, who collectively shared responsibility for the crime, could flee the scene, time would be gained for negotiating the blood-price. If one blood relative killed another, there was no retaliation, but the murderer was shunned. 682 [778] [672]

While there was a considerable amount of fighting and quarreling among the Gros Ventres, especially under the influence of liquor, disputes were usually settled without bloodshed. Outright murder, as distinct from deaths attributed to witchcraft, was seemingly relatively infrequent. The following seven cases, arranged chronologically, illustrate actual behavior. Each of these was referred to independently by several different informants with a high level of agreement among them on details. The total represents all the murders that were known to have occurred in the period from about 1850 to 1885. 689

Case No. 1. These events took place about 1847. Two young men, who were related by blood, went on foot to steal horses from the enemy. One had obtained a fine horse, but the other had been 682

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

682 unsuccessful. The latter, who was walking on the return journey, asked the other to lend him his horse. The owner of the horse didn't see why he should do so and the two got in a heated argument. When one reached for his knife, the other beat him to the draw and killed him. When the survivor was asked on his arrival home as to the whereabouts of his partner, he said: "I don't know where he is. I haven't seen him since we separated at such-and-such a place." Not long after that, however, when the group was traveling, they came upon the body of the murdered man. Only then did the survivor confess, but nothing was done to the murderer under the circumstances.

682 688 *Case No. 2.* Although the details leading up to this case are missing, it is known that a few years prior to 1860 a certain man stabbed and killed his son-in-law, shot his horses and burned his possessions, leaving only the lodge standing. The murdered man's brother shot and killed the murderer in retaliation. Unfortunately, however, this was not the end of the matter. The one who had avenged his brother's death was participating in a Kitfox Dance and was in the ceremonial lodge in the center of the camp circle just about to receive the pipe. At that moment, one of the company which was policing the Dance—a relative of the original murderer—shot and killed him on the spot. There was of course great confusion, and one of the chief performers in the Dance protested this act of violence which, regardless of other considerations, should never have been perpetrated during a Sacred Dance. The policing company, however, presented a united front and rode around the Kitfox lodge in the center of the circle singing: "No one say anything to us or we will shoot right now." Nevertheless the wife of the man who had just been killed ran out of her lodge, when she heard them singing, and said: "Oh I am not afraid of them. I am going to give them a tongue-lashing!" People warned her not to do so, but she called out insults at them and added, among other things: "Look at their dirty buttocks!" Several members of the company said: "Let's go over there and beat her to death," to which she boldly replied: "If you want to do it, it is all right." The chief performer in the Dance, who had protested before, spoke up again: "Now you want to do something wrong again. Why kill an old woman who is through with her life any-

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

way? I warned you not to do anything. If you kill her we will 682
not proceed with this Dance. It is a serious thing to interfere 688
with a Sacred Dance, but if you persist we will all scatter." This appeal was effective and the Kitfox Dance was carried out without further mishap.

Case No. 3. On one occasion in about 1862, some men were 682
drinking and two of them got in a tussle. The one who got the worse of the fight went to his brother and said: "Kill your wife. Her son [by another marriage] almost killed me. If you kill your wife, you can have one of mine." The husband took his brother at his word and went to his lodge and killed his wife, put her corpse on the fire, and heaped coals on top of it. The wife's two brothers, hearing of their sister's unjustified murder, went that night to where the men were still drinking. When the man who had originally instigated the murder saw the brothers coming closer and closer, he called out: "I don't want anyone to come any nearer or I might shoot him by mistake." But the brothers were not deterred and, approaching closer, shot and killed the man who had called out. Thus the one who had encouraged his brother in murder paid for the crime with his own life. Nevertheless his relatives mourned for him as they would have had he died under different circumstances, but they made no attempt to retaliate for his loss.

Case No. 4. The following incident occurred about 1865. Practically the whole tribe was camped together and there was a lot of drinking going on. A woman, crying, came in the lodge of her sister's husband. When they asked her the cause of her tears she told them that a certain man had beaten up her son and herself. Her sister's husband immediately took up his gun and went out into the night looking for that man. When he met up with him, without asking any questions except to be sure he had the right one, he shot him dead. When he returned to his lodge, his wife urged him to flee, but he refused to do so, saying: "I don't think his people will take up for him since he was in the wrong." Nevertheless several riders dashed by, shooting at the lodge but not doing any damage. The women were frightened and started running toward the chief's lodge. There was snow on the ground [778]
and they had a hard time locating it, but at last they got there and

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

682
[178]

called out: "Our home is in trouble, we have come for protection." The chief invited them in and assured them that, while they were there, no one could harm them. But they could hear the relatives of the murdered man mourning for him. The man who had killed him continued to remain in his lodge. Evidently the male relatives of the murdered man refused to act further than merely shooting at the lodge, but finally the mother of the dead man and his father's sister, accompanied by his nephew, a boy of about ten who carried a loaded gun, came to the lodge. The women called out: "Come out here, if you are a man." They repeated this several times, but when the man failed to appear, a woman in a neighboring lodge invited them to come with her. She fed them well and eventually persuaded them to let the matter drop.

Case No. 5. These events occurred about a decade later than the preceding and details are fuller. It seems that a young man had captured a very fine horse under dangerous circumstances. He proved the horse's quality while enhancing his own prestige during subsequent encounters with the enemy. An older man, jealous of this young man who was making such a noteworthy reputation, kept pestering the young man to give his horse to him. Had the older man asked in the proper way, the younger might have acceded to his request. But the request had been made in a bullying fashion, and the older man had treated the younger as though he considered him still a child, yet the latter behaved well in simply ignoring the bully rather than answering him back.

One day, however, the older man was drunk and came up to the other, gun in hand, and said: "I am going to kill you." To which the younger man replied: "Well, be sure you do a good job of it. Be sure you don't miss me. Hit me with a bullet, because if you don't kill me, I'm going to kill you!" The older man pushed against the other's chest with his gun saying: "Well, you aren't made of rock, I can kill you," and then moving the gun near the other's head, he shot wide, intending merely to frighten him. The young man, however, did not so much as flinch, and said: "Why don't you kill me? I guess you don't want to—but be sure I'm going to kill you!" The older man said: "Oh, you are just talking!" and went into his lodge. But the young man got his gun and when his companions tried to stop him he said: "I don't want

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

to do like he did and just bluff!" They let him go because they were convinced that he wouldn't go through with it. Nevertheless, he went to the older man's lodge and walked boldly up to that man and put the gun at his head. The other men in the lodge were drunk and neither they nor their host believed the younger man was really serious. The young man said: "You are not made of iron. That is the only thing a bullet will not penetrate. I am going to kill you now!" Whereupon he blew the other man's brains out. 682

Because that older man had been a bully and had threatened the other's life, public opinion was apparently more or less on the side of the younger man, and the relatives of the man who had been killed made no immediate move to avenge the life of their kinsman. One day, however, after a long time had elapsed, a relative of the man who had been killed was wandering around the camp circle, gun in hand and quite drunk. A companion took advantage of the situation by attempting to get rid of the young man, who had killed the older man, and whom he suspected of playing around with one of his wives. The companion reminded the drunken man that he should avenge the death of his relative, and shoot into the young man's lodge. He shot once and missed, so the companion told him to aim lower, which he did. On this second shot he hit and killed, not the young man whom they had hoped to kill, but that young man's father. Whereupon, the young man reached for his gun and was about to pursue the killer, but he was restrained by his sister and a man, who had rushed to the lodge when he heard the shots. His sister was loath to let him risk his life inasmuch as their younger brother had been killed shortly before that in an encounter with the Crow, and on that occasion the young man had had to be held forcibly to prevent his pursuing the Crow single-handed. Meantime the one who had fired into the lodge dropped his gun, and escaped on the already saddled horse of someone who had just come into camp. The companion who had incited the shots stood his ground and would almost certainly have been killed unless the sister and the other relatives of the young man had persuaded him that enough lives had been lost and to let the matter drop.

Case No. 6. On one occasion, sometime between about 1875 and 1880, a number of the bands camped together and there was a

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

682 big drinking party. One man decided to quit and go to bed, so he left the others, taking a little liquor intending to save it for another time. A little later his father-in-law came to the lodge and asked him for a drink. He let him have what he had been saving and went back to bed. Soon his father-in-law returned and asked for more liquor, but the man told him quite truthfully that he had no more. His father-in-law was not satisfied but kept insisting and at last grabbed the man by the hair of the head and dragged him from his bedding. The man, who had been holding in his temper, finally lost control at this manhandling and, grabbing a knife, stabbed his father-in-law in the stomach. His father-in-law belonged to a powerful band and had many relatives who would avenge his death, so the son-in-law fled and escaped punishment.

Some time passed until this man, who had killed his father-in-law, was one evening invited to perform a cure. Before he started, the father of the sick child gave him a drink of liquor. He was just about to begin the curing ceremony when a relative of his late father-in-law entered the lodge asking for a drink. The host invited him in, but the murderer, who was a little drunk by this time, resented the intrusion and gathered up his medicines and went out. As he left, the intruder said: "Who is that leaving as I come in? You cannot budge a slick rock! (meaning that if the other were not afraid of retaliation, he would not have left)." But the murderer was insulted at this taunt. He got his gun and, sticking it in the entrance of the lodge he had just left, shot at the intruder and killed him. There was a great commotion during which the murderer's father was shot but not killed. The older brother of the intruder swore he would kill the murderer in revenge and, gun in hand, sought him out. The murderer, however, heard him coming and hid behind a tree. When the brother of the murdered man came abreast, he shot and killed him too.

The Frozens, the band to which both the recently killed men and the father-in-law had belonged, were furious at this triple loss. The murderer's band were afraid of their wrath and nearly all of them fled with him. So the Frozens killed all of the murderer's horses, tore up his lodge, and burned all of his belongings including the medicines. They were about to pursue the band which had fled and kill all of them, when Lame Bull and Big Beaver, members

2; Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

of the Upper Quarters who were not involved in this fight, stopped them and reminded them that this was a drunken fight and that the members of the two bands concerned were not really enemies. By their bravery in confronting these angry and drunken men who were armed, while they themselves were not, these two peace-makers prevented what might have turned into a "civil war." 682

Although outwardly calm reigned, tension remained high and the bands scattered in the attempt to maintain peace. A few weeks later, however, messengers were sent to all the bands to inform them that a Crazy Dance had been vowed and that all the bands must meet at a given spot and together prepare for the Dance, moving as a unit to the locale selected for the Dance. All did as directed, but the band of the medicine man, feeling the mounting tension, decided to break away from the others and left the main body the night before the tribe reached the place where the Dance was to be performed. When the company which was policing the Dance heard about the defection, they went after the band to force its return. The company caught up with this band and found the murderer sitting in the semicircle and smoking with his fellow band-members. The police called out to these men: "Don't you know it has been announced that we have to move to such-and-such a place for the Dance? That is the law. Hurry and move back!" But the recalcitrant band members paid no attention and sat with heads bowed. It so happened that a son of one of the Frozens who had been murdered was a member of the policing company. He rode up behind the murderer and shot him through the head. The other members of the police company shouted: "Let's kill them all!" and fired above their heads to further frighten them. This forced them to move back to the main body in double quick time, leaving the body of the murderer lying there. The Dance proceeded, and after it had concluded one of the Crazy Men was found with his head bashed in, but no one knew who was guilty of this crime and in any case the company had no more authority once the Dance was finished. The Frozen who had used his position as a member of the policing company to avenge his father's murder was killed in action against the enemy shortly thereafter, and so further feuding was prevented.

Case No. 7. During a drinking spree toward the end of the 682 684

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

682
684

buffalo days, a certain man left his lodge to join other drinkers. When he returned he saw his wife in the arms of another man and heard her say: "I love you more than I love him." Whereupon he picked up his gun and killed the lover who happened to be the chief of his own band. He spared his wife. No attempt at revenge was made, but the murderer was looked down upon for having killed one of his own relatives.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

684 ing indemnity from his wife's lover and allowing her unharmed to go to him. This solution was often resorted to and in fact was the one that was urged upon both parties concerned. It was customary for the paramour to offer compensation, although an occasional individual tried to dispose of an unwanted wife with profit to himself by taking the initiative in demanding indemnity. If there were no real evidence of wrong-doing, or if the man in question wished to brave the consequences, he might refuse. One instance was given by Singer concerning a man who, returning home one night, saw a young man crouched beside the lodge. "Although he took after the young man when he ran away, he could not catch him. The next day he told one of his wives—the sister of the one whom he pretended to suspect—to take her younger sister to the young man and demand in return a gun and a horse. The elder sister took up for the younger one and refused. So the husband told his oldest wife, unrelated to the other two, to carry out his orders. This one did as she was told. When confronted by the demand, however, the young man said: 'There is no truth in it. The old man did see something that made it look bad for me, but it wasn't what he thought.' The husband did not care to force the issue, since real evidence was lacking, and that was an end to the matter." Another example shows that even when the husband had evidence of his wife's infidelity he could not always collect indemnity. The husband in question sent his wife to her lover with a long list of things which he requested in return. The paramour, who did not want the woman as his wife, refused to pay the indemnity. "Perhaps another man would have killed his wife's lover when he refused, but this one took the easier [682] way by cutting off his wife's hair and turning her loose." In case the husband killed the paramour, it was interpreted as murder and he was subject to retaliation.

[554] A man who kept as wife a woman known to be unfaithful to him lost status. He would be considered weak and was subject to 684 humiliating taunts by his enemy-friends. Nevertheless some men 558 braved adverse public opinion out of deep affection for their erring wives. While not all went so far as Sits Like A Woman, his case is an interesting one. It was related by The Boy as follows.

"The famous chief Sits Like A Woman was at the heigh of

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

608 them. Crow Bull's ceremonial grandson, whom he had instructed during the Crazy Dance and who was a relative of Black Raven, heard about this and ran in front of Crow Bull, saying: "Grandfather, don't do anything," and grabbed him just when he was about to fire. So Crow Bull said: "All right, because my grandchild stopped me." Then the relatives of Black Raven collected horses and blankets and other valuables, the young man himself contributing a blanket, and they all marched to Crow Bull's lodge carrying the goods and leading the horses. On arrival at the lodge, the guilty lover went in first with the fine blanket he was giving and did a great thing. He covered White Skunk, Crow Bull's "dearly-loved child"[7] with this blanket. So Crow Bull could hardly do or say anything. He just said, "Well, I will leave it up to my son White Skunk, whatever he says, I will do." White Skunk then said: "Just give her (Iron Woman) to that man (Kitfox). Just let her go," and that is what Crow Bull did. He got all these horses and blankets and other things in payment.[8] Thus even though Crow Bull was so angry, his "grandchild" could stop him.

[586] If a woman left her husband, and her "grandfather" went to her and told her to go back to her husband for she had nothing to get mad about, she would have to do so no matter how much she dreaded it.

608 If one Gros Ventre had murdered another, and the relatives of the murdered person were afraid to approach the victim's father 682 to offer indemnity, they could offer a pipe to any one of the father's ceremonial grandfathers. If the grandfather accepted it, he prayed with it and smoked it. When the murderer's relatives were ready with horses and clothing for payment, the grandfather would lead the relatives to his grandson, the murdered person's father, and say to him: "I have brought these people who ask your forgiveness. They are bringing these horses and blankets to you. I am asking you as my 'grandchild' to accept." The father could not refuse, for if he refused, some evil would overtake him. Actually refusals to such requests by a "grandfather" did not occur, to our informants' knowledge.

---

[7] For details on the dearly-loved child, see Flannery, 1941, pp. 33-37.

[8] For a discussion of indemnity in case of adultery see Flannery, 1953, pp. 185-88; for indemnity in case of murder, idem, p. 45.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

occasion he stated that it was the "law" of the spring hunt that no one should hunt buffalo alone or in a small group, violation of which invoked the sanctions applied by the Wolf-men or Stars. However, in 1940, this same informant stated twice, explicitly, that there was no police power except at the Sacred Dances and on a third occasion in that year said: "After the Sacred Dance the company disbanded, and the chief resumed control, but he did not punish anybody for hunting buffalo alone." 224 688 625

In any case, authority was delegated to the companies only temporarily. Otherwise there was no agency beyond that of the family which could apply sanctions of force, and then, on only two counts. A husband had the right to take the life of an unfaithful wife; the family had the right of blood revenge in case of murder. In both, however, less extreme modes of behavior were approved and bloodshed could honorably be avoided. 688 625 684 683

When murder occurred, if the family of the murdered person could be persuaded to accept a payment of goods as restitution, further spilling of blood was prevented. It was said that the lodge of the band chief offered temporary refuge to a murderer and that sanctuary was likewise available in the lodge of the Keeper either of the Flat or of the Feathered Pipe. It was thought that if the murderer and his family, who collectively shared responsibility for the crime, could flee the scene, time would be gained for negotiating the blood-price. If one blood relative killed another, there was no retaliation, but the murderer was shunned. 682 [678] [672]

While there was a considerable amount of fighting and quarreling among the Gros Ventres, especially under the influence of liquor, disputes were usually settled without bloodshed. Outright murder, as distinct from deaths attributed to witchcraft, was seemingly relatively infrequent. The following seven cases, arranged chronologically, illustrate actual behavior. Each of these was referred to independently by several different informants with a high level of agreement among them on details. The total represents all the murders that were known to have occurred in the period from about 1850 to 1885. 689

Case No. 1. These events took place about 1847. Two young men, who were related by blood, went on foot to steal horses from the enemy. One had obtained a fine horse, but the other had been 682

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

of the Upper Quarters who were not involved in this fight, stopped them and reminded them that this was a drunken fight and that the members of the two bands concerned were not really enemies. By their bravery in confronting these angry and drunken men who were armed, while they themselves were not, these two peacemakers prevented what might have turned into a "civil war." 682

Although outwardly calm reigned, tension remained high and the bands scattered in the attempt to maintain peace. A few weeks later, however, messengers were sent to all the bands to inform them that a Crazy Dance had been vowed and that all the bands must meet at a given spot and together prepare for the Dance, moving as a unit to the locale selected for the Dance. All did as directed, but the band of the medicine man, feeling the mounting tension, decided to break away from the others and left the main body the night before the tribe reached the place where the Dance was to be performed. When the company which was policing the Dance heard about the defection, they went after the band to force its return. The company caught up with this band and found the murderer sitting in the semicircle and smoking with his fellow band-members. The police called out to these men: "Don't you know it has been announced that we have to move to such-and-such a place for the Dance? That is the law. Hurry and move back!" But the recalcitrant band members paid no attention and sat with heads bowed. It so happened that a son of one of the Frozens who had been murdered was a member of the policing company. He rode up behind the murderer and shot him through the head. The other members of the police company shouted: "Let's kill them all!" and fired above their heads to further frighten them. This forced them to move back to the main body in double quick time, leaving the body of the murderer lying there. The Dance proceeded, and after it had concluded one of the Crazy Men was found with his head bashed in, but no one knew who was guilty of this crime and in any case the company had no more authority once the Dance was finished. The Frozen who had used his position as a member of the policing company to avenge his father's murder was killed in action against the enemy shortly thereafter, and so further feuding was prevented.

Case No. 7. During a drinking spree toward the end of the 682 684

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

682
684

buffalo days, a certain man left his lodge to join other drinkers. When he returned he saw his wife in the arms of another man and heard her say: "I love you more than I love him." Whereupon he picked up his gun and killed the lover who happened to be the chief of his own band. He spared his wife. No attempt at revenge was made, but the murderer was looked down upon for having killed one of his own relatives.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

some liver at them and then put on the meanest part of the meat to boil. Her husband didn't like it, and his brother who had brought the visitor didn't like it either. Her husband picked up the manifold and said: 'Some day I will see about this.' Her brother-in-law said to her: 'Some day I might hear something about you (meaning that she had a lover), and you will find out that I am as mean as you are.' So it seems that not long after that someone saw this woman with a lover and told her brother-in-law, who immediately filled his gun and went over to her and said: 'So I find you aren't as mean as you pretend to be. You are generous about some things. I heard things about you. I came to kill you.' The woman replied, very sassily: 'Well, kill me then!' and he shot her. When they told her husband she had been killed, he said: 'Well, it is all right. I would have done the same.'"

574
574
684

Etiquette was not so formal with women visitors as with men. If a woman were hungry she would not hesitate to go to the lodge of a very good friend or relative and ask for food, with the reasonable expectation that the hostess would get busy and prepare something for her. Singer, herself, however, had the following experience, where hospitality was lacking. "One day a little dog came into my lodge carrying a piece of meat. I said: 'I am going to take the meat from that dog. I am hungry.' But my husband said: 'No, let the poor little thing have it, he is hungry.' I took it away from the dog anyway and then I said: 'Wait, I am going to beg some meat,' and I went over to a certain lodge. Two of that man's wives were out gathering wood and one was home. This one didn't even greet me but sat with her head bowed. I told her: 'I have come because I am hungry.' But still this woman didn't say anything at all. I sat there a long time. Finally a neighboring woman, who happened to be the man's daughter-in-law, came home with wood and looked in. She called me over to her lodge and said: 'What were you doing there?' I told her: 'I just went there because I was hungry and she never even talked to me.' So this woman cooked for me, fed me and gave me a piece of meat to carry home. When I was leaving she told me: 'They really have lots of meat, but they give me only the shoulder. As you leave you must hide this meat I am giving you up under

574

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

have someone come back a real hero, and, although such a promise to torture oneself could be made in regard to other relatives, "it was usually a sister who thought so much of her brother who did that." Other forms of sacrifice which a girl might practice on her brother's behalf would be to take a fine robe, or something else of value, and stick it on top of the lodge saying: "I offer this that my brother may come back with good luck, bringing something fine from war." This could be even more specific in that a girl could offer, say, the tip of her finger, if her brother would bring back a particular thing, such as a scalp or a horse or a weapon. Again, should her brother be ill or wounded, a woman would be exceedingly concerned and might go so far, as in one case recorded, of promising that if he should recover she would join the Women's Lodge—"which was considered a great thing to do for your brother." 593 728 721

Usually a man would have some voice in regard to his sister's marriage and, if he were the one who made the arrangements, he received the larger share of the bride-price. It was said, too, that a brother would be especially concerned regarding his younger sister's moral conduct and might take it upon himself to keep her in line. Although parents would feel the disgrace of an erring daughter, a brother was expected to react violently. If her husband failed to punish his wife for adultery, her brother could kill her. Some instances were given, too, in which the man took his own life indirectly, by riding into the midst of the enemy without taking any precautions, because he felt so keenly the dishonor his sister who was unfaithful had imposed on him. 593 [584] [684]

Maternal Uncle and Paternal Aunt

"Because a brother and a sister thought so much of each other, they were expected to be good to each other's children." If a woman had several brothers, it was the eldest who assumed the duties of the maternal uncle and his relationship with his nephews was a direct one. Should the eldest brother be unable to undertake the responsibility another brother or male cousin was expected to do so. 604

The maternal uncle was supposed to watch his sister's children closely even though her husband was on the scene. If he did not 604 861

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

case of necessity pay the indemnity. Other people might say to a man that it was of no use to help that nephew, that he was no good. Yet the uncle did not give up trying to save face for the nephew, and to do his best to shield or rehabilitate him—but at the same time he "talked turkey to him." 604

Even after a man was married, his maternal uncle had the right of disciplining him. If a husband mistreated his wife undeservedly it was said that his maternal uncle could step in and take the wife temporarily away from his nephew, letting him shift for himself, doing his own cooking and so on, "until he came to his senses." A man would have to take such treatment from his uncle, it was said, because public opinion condemned the husband and backed up the uncle, who was considered within his rights. [684] [626]

Furthermore the maternal uncle would feel duty-bound to protect his nephew from danger. An extreme case was cited in illustration. "A Gros Ventre boy was captured by the Crow when fairly young and he remained among them after he grew up although he could have returned. On one occasion the Gros Ventres surrounded a war party of Crow among whom was this young Gros Ventre man. The young man appealed to his mother's brother to save his life, and the uncle responded by using every argument he could think of. The other Gros Ventres in the party refused the plea, however, on the grounds that the boy had previously had the opportunity to return to his own people, and asked: 'Why didn't he think of his uncle then?'"

On the other side of the picture, if a young man were successful and "on the way up," as the saying goes, his maternal uncle had priority over the boy's father or older brother in helping him by giving generously to him in private and by giving away publicly in his honor as lavishly as possible. It was stated, for instance, that if a young man was ready to go to war, his uncle might go to him and give him a horse, encouraging him to face the enemy bravely and to show courage under fire. He would tell his nephew: "I'm going to watch you. Here is your chance to show what you can do." Thus he might "steal the show" from a father or older brother who themselves might have intended to help the boy off to a good start. Because it was the uncle who did this, nothing would be said. All his relatives would be proud of a successful young [431]

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

585 178 was Keeper of the Crow Belt, as he had taken Gertrude and camped at the Mission. The next morning the couple was married by the priest and Gertrude's father brought the buggy full of goods and gave them all that, including the team of horses. Everybody could see that this couple started off with a lot."

585 Instead of making arrangements, a man might simply send his daughter to become the wife of another man without forewarning him. The recipient of such a bride could not well refuse her and was supposed to act as though he were happy to have her, regardless of how many other wives he might have or his real feelings in the matter. He, too, would normally give some kind of present to her father, the amount depending somewhat on the previous reputation of the bride. On the one side, she might have been given merely to get her off her father's hands, on the other, she might have been highly desirable as a wife and her father would have taken this means to show generosity on his own part and to honor the husband he had selected.

583 Sometimes elopements occurred, but this was very rarely if ever the case, so far as the girl was concerned, until she had been given at least once in marriage arranged by her relatives. Should [684] a married woman run off with another man, it was up to her husband to deal with the situation. If, however, she had been widowed or divorced, and eloped before another marriage had been arranged, her relatives would be angry, but the affair could be patched up if the usual presents to them were forthcoming from the man.

591 There was no hard and fast rule in regard to residence. Matrilocal residence in the same lodge was incompatible with the observance of the mother-in-law taboo and it was said that if a man wished his son-in-law to remain with him, he provided the separate lodge and all the equipment.[7] The tendency seems to have been toward patrilocal residence in general, although it was not unusual for a couple to move back and forth. Coming Daylight lived most of her married life with her husband's people. As a child-bride she first lived in the lodge with her husband's parents; later on she and her husband went to her people, living with her

[7] Obligations between kin are discussed pp. 109–10. Kroeber, 1908, p. 180, states that a young married man often lived with his father-in-law.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

 593

have any reason to suspect us [of infidelity] so he shouldn't have been planning to get rid of us." 586

It was said that in case a husband abused his wife without reason his relatives remonstrated with him, reminding him, for instance, that if he acquired a reputation for ill-treating his wife he might have difficulty in obtaining additional wives of good reputation. Some claimed that his maternal uncle could go so far as to remove the wife from her husband's household "until he came to his senses." Such interference was however seemingly rare. A wife was seldom given the benefit of any doubt.

The husband had the right to punish, even with death, any departure from the standard of chastity set for women. [684]

Most of the harsh treatment accorded to wives was believed to have been the result of just suspicion of their infidelity, where sufficient evidence was lacking to prove it. Girls were warned before marriage to so conduct themselves as to avoid their husbands' jealousy at all costs. They were told, for instance, that when visiting other women it was well to be chaperoned since otherwise a jealous husband could magnify an innocent visit into an incipient affair with the woman's husband. While it was considered within the proprieties for women to go out and count coups on the enemy fallen near camp, "they didn't approve of women chasing off on horseback to 'hit the enemy' because their husbands were sure to suspect they were off to meet some man." A girl was instructed by her relatives to yield willingly to her husband when he claimed his marital rights lest he interpret her reluctance as preference for another. 593 [726]

On the other hand, when there was reasonable proof of the wife's infidelity, the husband was more or less forced by public opinion to take some action against her. He was, however, allowed considerable latitude in choosing among several equally honorable alternatives. 593 684

The extreme punishment was that of death, and apparently it was not uncommonly applied. Among the cases described was the following which concerned a contemporary of Singer and Coming Daylight. "On one occasion a man discovered that one of his wives was missing. As usual in such circumstances, he inquired whether any man in the camp was unaccounted for. He soon

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

593 684 learned that his wife had gone off with a certain one and set out in pursuit. He was in a rage as he met the lovers, who had turned back toward the camp. The man fled, leaving the wife to face her husband's fury. He commanded her to dismount and then tore her robe from her. After cutting off her breasts and her arms, he abandoned the body and returned home."

According to our informants, however, not all cases were so clearly defined. Some women lost their lives merely because their husbands were suspicious. A man who acted without sufficient evidence ran some slight risk that his wife's family would avenge her death, but it was usually assumed that the wife must have been guilty. This was the situation in regard to a cousin of Singer's about whom she gave the following account. "This cousin of mine was a very beautiful woman. Her husband's lodge was close to that of Sits Like A Woman, one of the most famous chiefs the Gros Ventres ever had. This woman was fleshing a buffalo hide one day, and the chief saw her there outside her lodge. He said to Coming Daylight, then a very small girl, 'Run over to that woman who is tanning and see what she says to you.' So, childlike, she ran over there and told the woman: 'Sits Like A Woman told me to come over to the woman who is tanning and see what she tells me.' The woman said: 'Sh-h, you mustn't talk like that.' Being young and innocent Coming Daylight didn't realize the situation, and reported to the chief that she had been hushed up. The chief said: 'Well, who would be afraid of him [the husband]. What is she afraid of him for?' Now the husband was inside his lodge at the time, and overhearing this, he imagined his wife was running with this great chief. He bided his time and it so happened that the woman, who was a friend of the chief's wife, went one day to that lodge and asked her friend for something to eat. She was really hungry, and while she was sitting there eating, her husband came to the lodge. The chief said: 'Come in. I will give you a drink.' But the man did not accept the invitation, and merely said to his wife: 'You needn't come back!' This boded no good, so the frightened woman went to her mother's lodge. Her mother was very much upset, and was calling for protection for her daughter, when the husband came with his gun and shot his wife six times. No one retaliated."

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Instead of killing an adulterous wife, or one so suspected, the husband might disfigure her and send her away. Coming Daylight witnessed the following scene when she was a child. "She had been sent on an errand by her grandmother to a lodge at some distance from her own. About half-way to her destination as she approached a clump of trees she heard a woman screaming. She then saw that this woman was standing there with her hair tied to the limb of a tree. The woman's husband cut off her nose, and left her tied there and bleeding. Coming Daylight was so frightened that she ran, and on her way back went around the other way to avoid passing that spot again. She doesn't know who released the woman, but she does recall that the woman was so ashamed that she hardly ever went outside her lodge, and if anyone came in she would hold her hand over her face. Ever after that, whenever Coming Daylight met that man, she would make a gesture toward him [double hand into fist, then force fingers out, spreading them wide apart], which means 'I hate you.' Her grandmother used to tell her not to do that lest that man harm her through supernatural means, but she would answer: 'I don't care if he has power. He is cruel and I hate him. We all have to die sometime.'" 684 [201]

The cutting off of the nose was said to be rather a Piegan than a Gros Ventre practice. Cutting off the ears was perhaps a more common form of punishment inasmuch as there is a word designating a woman known to have been unfaithful, and which refers to having the ears cut off.

The adulterous woman whose hair was cut by her husband was not marked permanently as were the others, but it was a severe punishment nonetheless because long thick hair was one of the chief criteria of beauty in women as well as in men. But whatever the form of disfigurement inflicted by the husband, the woman would be cast aside by him and would have to seek refuge with some of her relatives. The family, especially her brothers, would feel keenly the disgrace, but as Singer put it, "Mothers would feel sorry for their daughters and could not refuse to take them in, and they would take their children, too, should they have any. It was very seldom a man would keep the children of a wife sent away for adultery." [832]

Finally, a wronged husband could satisfy his honor by accept-

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

684 ing indemnity from his wife's lover and allowing her unharmed to go to him. This solution was often resorted to and in fact was the one that was urged upon both parties concerned. It was customary for the paramour to offer compensation, although an occasional individual tried to dispose of an unwanted wife with profit to himself by taking the initiative in demanding indemnity. If there were no real evidence of wrong-doing, or if the man in question wished to brave the consequences, he might refuse. One instance was given by Singer concerning a man who, returning home one night, saw a young man crouched beside the lodge. "Although he took after the young man when he ran away, he could not catch him. The next day he told one of his wives—the sister of the one whom he pretended to suspect—to take her younger sister to the young man and demand in return a gun and a horse. The elder sister took up for the younger one and refused. So the husband told his oldest wife, unrelated to the other two, to carry out his orders. This one did as she was told. When confronted by the demand, however, the young man said: 'There is no truth in it. The old man did see something that made it look bad for me, but it wasn't what he thought.' The husband did not care to force the issue, since real evidence was lacking, and that was an end to the matter." Another example shows that even when the husband had evidence of his wife's infidelity he could not always collect indemnity. The husband in question sent his wife to her lover with a long list of things which he requested in return. The paramour, who did not want the woman as his wife, refused to pay the indemnity. "Perhaps another man would have killed his wife's lover when he refused, but this one took the easier way by cutting off his wife's hair and turning her loose." In case the husband killed the paramour, it was interpreted as murder and he was subject to retaliation.

[682]

[554] A man who kept as wife a woman known to be unfaithful to him lost status. He would be considered weak and was subject to humiliating taunts by his enemy-friends. Nevertheless some men braved adverse public opinion out of deep affection for their erring wives. While not all went so far as Sits Like A Woman, his case is an interesting one. It was related by The Boy as follows.

684
558

"The famous chief Sits Like A Woman was at the height of

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

his popularity and power when he caught *in flagrante delicto* the youngest of his four current wives. He failed to act immediately, so the father of the young man with whom she had been discovered began to think of a way to save his son [fearing that Sits Like A Woman planned to injure him]. He decided to approach one of the ceremonial grandfathers of the chief and ask him to intercede. The ceremonial grandfather accepted the mission. He told Sits Like A Woman that the young man's father had such a high regard for him that he would not like to see his household disturbed any further and that, if he would consider this request, he should name the price. The chief listened very attentively and finally replied: 'Grandfather, I will do as you say. I have been thinking what I should do about this, and I have not punished my unfaithful wife nor even scolded her. Since it is you who came here to make this request of me, I will solve the situation in this way. Go back and tell the old man who sent you that I want his son's racehorse and eight other well-broken horses, and I want that old man to come over here and escort his new daughter-in-law back to his home. She is just as she always was. I have not disfigured her nor punished her, so he can make use of her in his household. When he carries out this demand, I will forget the whole matter.' The ceremonial grandfather was highly pleased and praised the chief for removing the stigma from his home by relinquishing his unfaithful wife. The father of the young man immediately set about getting the required horses and he and his wife loaded some of them with clothing and other articles. Together they led the horses toward the lodge of the chief, ostentatiously singing in his praise as they went. The old man even danced as he approached the lodge. After handing over the goods, the couple, followed by their new daughter-in-law, went back to their own lodge, all three singing as they went.

This should conclude the story of how a great chief received indemnity. There was a sequel, however, which illustrates that even the greatest and bravest warriors may succumb to the weakness of love and affection for their wives. On that very same day, about dusk, the chief's 'heart failed him.' He ordered the nine horses to be turned loose so that they could return to the camp from which they had come, although he kept the clothes and other

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

684
558

articles which had been given him. Then he told two of his wives to go to the camp and call from outside the lodge the name of that youngest wife, and, when she came out, to bring her back to him without offering any explanation. This placed Sits Like a Woman in a difficult position, giving his enemy-friends plenty of ammunition since they could justly taunt him that a woman had gotten the better of him. He was eventually able to live it down, however, so that although it was a temporary set-back to his colorful career, it did not mar it completely as might have been the case for a lesser man."

The above case was exceptional in that no others could be recalled wherein a man who had accepted indemnity actually took back his wife. Nevertheless other instances were given of men who disregarded public opinion to the extent that they ignored flagrant infidelity on the part of their wives. Usually however if the wife in question did not mend her ways, even the most tolerant husband lost patience. By giving her away quite casually and without compensation, he retrieved his reputation since he thus indicated that it was indifference toward her rather than the weakness of love which had caused him to overlook her infidelity.

One instance was given by Coming Daylight. "One of my uncle's wives was continually running away with different men and he allowed her to return each time without punishment. I was still a child and one day, for instance, I went with this woman for water rather far from camp. When we got to the creek, one of her lovers grabbed her and wouldn't let her go. Finally I got tired of waiting and called out that I was going home and would tell on them. Still she didn't come, so I left. My uncle asked me why I had come alone, so I told him what had happened. But when that woman showed up, my uncle said nothing to her. A long time went by. Then on one occasion when we were camped near the Bear Paws, there was a crowd of people, all more or less drunk, in my uncle's lodge. They called me in because I did not drink and, since my uncle was Keeper, they had to have someone to look after the Flat Pipe. So I was there and saw my uncle staggering around. His nose was running and he called a man by name and said: 'Come and clean my nose!' The man obliged him and my uncle said, pointing to that unfaithful wife of his:

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

'It is a good thing you cleaned my nose, because for that I am giving you that woman over there.'" 684 558

A husband who had harbored an unfaithful wife was likewise within his rights in "throwing her away." This was accomplished by his going to a public gathering and simply throwing down a stick to indicate that he was through with her. Whoever wished might pick up the stick and claim her as his wife without giving any compensation. 684 586

It was said, too, that if a man was "big enough" to allow his wife to go unpunished for adultery he usually would not refuse to eventually let her go to some lesser man who demeaned himself by asking for her. Thick related details of several transactions of this kind which occurred when he was a young boy. One of these was as follows:

"There was a man who had several wives, perhaps four. One day another man came to his lodge. He invited him in and said: 'This is the first time you ever came into my lodge, my friend. You must have a reason to come now, after all this time.' Then he said to his wife: 'Woman, get up and cook for my friend.' So the visitor spoke up: 'Well, my friend, the purpose of my coming here is to ask you for that Arapaho woman. I am not married now, I haven't a wife at present and I need a wife.' The host replied: 'All right, my friend, she is yours. After you eat, you could take her home.' When he had finished eating, the visitor said: 'Well, my friend, I have to go a little further. I want that boy of hers too.' The host answered: 'I hate to let my children go, but since he is so small you could take him, but don't ask for any of the others.' So the visitor, happy that he had gotten this woman without much talk and a boy as well, said: 'Well, my friend, since you are so good to me and give me your boy, I will give you a horse, my last horse.' It turned out that he was as good to this boy, whom he had attained in this way, as he would have been to his own son." It should be noted that the horse was given voluntarily and because of the child rather than in compensation for the wife.

It was the opinion of those women who had lived under this system, wherein the authority of the husband was so great, that all in all it worked well. They admitted that an occasional woman 595 562

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The husband would have to be a man of strong heart." The husband would be gravely anxious, and in a sense deeply embarrassed and humiliated, but could not show temper or "get mad"; "he would however have gotten mad," said Coming Daylight, "if his wife actually had had intercourse with the grandfather." 796* 837

The character test of the wife and grandfather was equally severe or even more so, but was, as is obvious, of a different nature. "These women [the wives or substitutes]," The Boy commented, "were usually young women, just enjoying life to the fullest measure. They were of that age, and to make the test more severe their husbands kept away from them before it so that the temptation would be greater, more intense. And the 'grandfathers' were not harmless old men." Apropos of this test, The Boy remarked: "It was known by the Gros Ventres that the female sex is the weaker one, but in such matters it is the stronger one . . . of old the Gros Ventres held this [sex] a great weakness of mankind."

Penalties for failure in the sex-test were either supernatural or social or both. One ritual grandfather, who on one occasion could not stand the test and who had intercourse with his granddaughter, was found dead in his bed before four nights had passed. If the couple succumbed, the fact was very apt to become known. "The woman," said The Boy, "would sometimes tell, or else the couple would give themselves away afterwards by their actions. . . . They would naturally brood over it [their failure]. . . . It would prey on their minds and they would blunder and make mistakes, and it would drive them downward, afraid to join in social life. People would begin to comment: 'What is the matter with these two?' The Gros Ventres were very inquisitive and would want to know what was the matter. The couple would be driven to make a confession and get it over with. Or something would happen anyway to confirm the suspicion that people had of them. . . . Even if the two were lovers, it would have been hard to do this [fail in the ritual] test and yet keep it quiet." [684]

There was, as would under the circumstances be suspected, appreciable differences of attitude toward this feature of the Crazy Dance on the part of husbands, wives and grandfathers. Some husbands, as we have seen, would not, for jealousy or for fear of

183 was not a Christian, used to tell him: "You have eyes to see, a
867 heart to think, and ears to hear. Listen to what I will tell you. You are a poor boy. As such, be faithful. Believe in the One Above the White Man. Pray to Him, ask Him to have pity on you and so make you a good man some day. Try to be good to all, especially when you become a man. Be good to the poor, be good to the old. Never take anything not belonging to you. Never speak evil of other people. Try to be patient. If a man says
[865] anything wrong to you, and hurts your feelings, say nothing because if folks talk back it causes quarreling or fighting, which is not good. If a poor man asks you for anything, if you have it, be ready to hand it over to him. If you see anybody hungry and
[888] you have it, feed him. If an old man or woman is in need and wants anything done, do it for him or her. If you do these things, the One Above will have pity on you."

●685 All informants agreed that in addition to having been told to
867 take care of whatever property they might have, they were in-
183 structed to regard the property rights of others. It was believed that, though the theft remained undiscovered, the thief would be punished by automatic supernatural sanction. "Something terrible would happen to anybody who stole something." Mary's grandmother, for instance, had told her time and again never to take anything that did not belong to her. To illustrate how well this had been instilled into her, she gave the following example. "On one occasion when I was a child, I found a really beautiful string of beads, but I did not take it. After I got to bed that night, however, I told my grandmother about it. When asked why I had failed to bring home the beads, I replied: 'I was afraid you would tell me that I had taken them from someone.' My grandmother merely remarked: 'Well, you should have brought them to me, or better, you should have taken me to where they were lying.' But when I took her to the spot the next day the beads were gone."

This reminded Coming Daylight of an incident in her own
[764] childhood. "I was walking near a grove of trees where several corpses had been placed (in the traditional manner of disposing of the dead). I noticed a considerable amount of bear excrement and mixed in it were a number of elk teeth—the most valuable

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

trimming for women's clothing. I knew that the body of a girl had been among those left in the branches of the trees at this place, so I decided that the bear had disturbed the bodies and must have eaten the cloth along with everything else. I stood there quite a while wondering whether I should take those elk teeth. Finally I took them and having strung them on a piece of sinew laid them in the stream-bed with a rock covering them. When I went home I opened the matter with my grandmother by stating: 'A bear ate that girl who was buried in the elk tooth dress.' When my grandmother asked how I knew this, I told her about the elk teeth in the excrement. Whereupon my grandmother asked: 'Why didn't you take those teeth? They are valuable.' Feeling easier in my mind, I said: 'I was afraid you would accuse me of stealing them—but I did take them anyway!' My grandmother was glad and so I brought them from the creek and I was happy, too, since there were enough teeth to make two rows on my dress." 183 685 867

The usual procedure of careful parents when a child reported he had found some article was to first question him as to whether or not he had taken it from someone. Then the parent would go around and ask people if they had lost this certain article. If a child had stolen it he would thus be found out and it was believed that he would never steal anything again.

The rights of children to their own property were recognized by elders and, while they admonished children to take good care of their things, if a child wished to dispose of what belonged to him no one would reprimand him for having done so. After all, generosity is a trait that was much admired among the Gros Ventres. Informants said that if, for instance, a man had given a horse to his daughter and she gave it away, he would say nothing to her about it. Should she ask him for another he might, however, tell her: "Well, I don't know—you might give it away." But he would never scold her about it. 183 858 867 421

Even if a child were flagrantly disobedient he would ordinarily be punished only by a scolding rather than by whipping or deprivation. Singer and Coming Daylight both were shocked at the idea that a child might be punished by depriving him of something. They said: "Indians love their children and we don't think they would deprive them of anything. They just talk to their children 861

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

So he rushed into his father's lodge, but another of his sisters-in-law went in and saw him sitting down, and said to me: 'You two have lost, and we have won, because your partner sat down first.' Since I didn't have anything to put up as fine, my husband's brother pulled my eyebrows out, as was customary when a person couldn't pay a debt of this kind. My partner, however, gave a feast prepared by his mother as payment, but failed to include me. I got even with him by coming up behind him one day shortly thereafter and emptying a pail of water over his head." 607 522 [686]

Whether he liked it or not, a man had to take without complaint whatever kind of speech or action his own brother directed towards his wife, and likewise a woman had to put up with whatever her sister said or did to her husband. Men who were married to sisters considered each other as "brothers" rather than as brothers-in-law, just as women married to brothers were "sisters" and not sisters-in-law.

Inseparable-friends

As broadly as kinship bonds were conceived among the Gros Ventres in both consanguineal and affinal relationships, kinship behavior and obligations were extended even more widely th[illegible] the institution of "inseparable-friends." Coming Dayl[illegible] plained this as follows: "If two men are *inithlha* thi[illegible] that they have grown up together and are the same as bro[illegible] though they are not really kin to each other. The chil[illegible] these two men would be the same as brothers and sisters to[illegible] other and could not marry. All relatives of 'inseparable-frien[illegible] were considered as own relatives. Crow's Bull's 'inseparable[illegible] friend' was Truth. He knew all the songs that belonged to the Flat Pipe because Crow Bull was Keeper and the two were so much together. Truth always called Crow Bull's son 'son,' and he called me 'niece' because Crow Bull was my mother's brother. A woman could tease the 'inseparable-friend' of her husband in just the same way she could tease her brother-in-law." 572 [illegible]8

Cora illustrated how complicated relationships could become through the inseparable-friendship. "My brother and Arthur Skinner were such friends, which made Arthur my 'brother.' When Arthur married I should normally have taken his wife as 'sister-

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

had probably had different names before his father's time but that 575
the division into two big groups of "mature, middle-aged" men was always characteristic of Gros Ventre organization. This same informant was likewise under the impression that a man would have to stay with whichever of the two societies he, with his company, had originally joined. Turn Toes said however that he had known a few cases of men who had originally been Stars later joining with the Wolf-men, and of one Wolf-man who afterwards joined the Stars. These known cases, however, occurred fairly late in Gros Ventre history, and probably after the formation of new companies had ceased.

Sanctions of Force

Social sanctions were seemingly the most important means of 626
control. Public opinion was effective in all aspects of conduct. Public disapproval meant loss of prestige and in more severe cases made itself felt by "shunning." It was brought to bear upon the individual in an especially effective way through ridicule, as exercised particularly in the enemy-friendship.[21]

A considerable number of misdeeds, like theft or failure to observe the rules in ceremonial life, were believed to result automatically in supernatural punishment ("bad luck"). Fear of retaliation through witchcraft also exerted a restraining influence.[22]

There were only three situations in which sanction through 681
physical force was applicable. These were, first, failure to obey the rules of behavior promulgated by the society in charge while any one of the Sacred Dances was in progress; second, murder; third, adultery on the part of the wife.[23]

In regard to the first, it is quite clear that in case one of the 688
Sacred Dances had been vowed, the whole tribe had to come together and remain united until the rite was finished. "If the bands happened to be scattered at the time a Sacred Dance was to

[21] For a discussion of the enemy-friendship, see pp. 102–06.

[22] Cf. also pp. 169–70 for a discussion of social and other types of motivation proposed to children. Witchcraft is dealt with in detail in Cooper, Ms., 1949.

[23] A detailed treatment of punishment for adultery is given in pp. 183–90, and will not be discussed in this section.

688 be held, runners were sent by the company of the vower and all were obliged to attend. If, in preparation for the Dance, the vower and the members of his company made a ruling, for example that a hunt was necessary, this would be announced. It would be stated that no one should go out alone to kill buffalo because they wanted everybody to kill some, and it was added: 'This is the order of the Wolves (or Stars). If anyone disobeys this rule, the Wolves (or Stars) will attend to them!' Should anyone have disobeyed the order, when they all returned from the hunt it would be announced: 'So-and-so disobeyed our rule.' The company of the vower would then go in a body to the delinquent's lodge, singing a special song.[24] The people would know that someone was going to be raided and all would go out to see who the culprit might have been." The delinquent knew that if he showed anger and resisted, he was in danger of being hurt or even killed. The company confiscated the culprit's meat, taking all of it that was there, and in addition would usually tear up his lodge. Should the delinquent have an enemy-friend among the "soldiers," that one took the lead in punishing and might even go so far as to cut the ears off of the delinquent's finest horse—a deep humiliation for its owner.

688 625 Thus during a Sacred Dance, from the time the vow was publicly announced until the Dance was over, the company of the vower was in complete authority and could apply sanctions of force if the various rulings were not obeyed. They actually constituted a police for the duration of the Dance. As soon as the Dance was over, however, the vower's company had no further power and the police function inherent in the soldier societies apparently remained in abeyance until some other Sacred Dance was performed.

688 625 224 There is some little question as to whether or not attendance of all bands was compulsory at the first spring hunt for buffalo and, if so, whether the Star and Wolf societies exercised their authority at this time. On one occasion in 1939, one informant, speaking in general terms, stated that the chief of the tribe had the possibility of calling on either the Stars or the Wolves to punish an offender who hunted alone after it had been announced that the buffalo had been sighted and all were to hunt together; and on another

[24] Song recorded as No. 103.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

occasion he stated that it was the "law" of the spring hunt that no one should hunt buffalo alone or in a small group, violation of which invoked the sanctions applied by the Wolf-men or Stars. However, in 1940, this same informant stated twice, explicitly, that there was no police power except at the Sacred Dances and on a third occasion in that year said: "After the Sacred Dance the company disbanded, and the chief resumed control, but he did not punish anybody for hunting buffalo alone." 224 688 625

In any case, authority was delegated to the companies only temporarily. Otherwise there was no agency beyond that of the family which could apply sanctions of force, and then, on only two counts. A husband had the right to take the life of an unfaithful wife; the family had the right of blood revenge in case of murder. In both, however, less extreme modes of behavior were approved and bloodshed could honorably be avoided. 688 625 684 682

When murder occurred, if the family of the murdered person could be persuaded to accept a payment of goods as restitution, further spilling of blood was prevented. It was said that the lodge of the band chief offered temporary refuge to a murderer and that sanctuary was likewise available in the lodge of the Keeper either of the Flat or of the Feathered Pipe. It was thought that if the murderer and his family, who collectively shared responsibility for the crime, could flee the scene, time would be gained for negotiating the blood-price. If one blood relative killed another, there was no retaliation, but the murderer was shunned. 682 [678] [672]

While there was a considerable amount of fighting and quarreling among the Gros Ventres, especially under the influence of liquor, disputes were usually settled without bloodshed. Outright murder, as distinct from deaths attributed to witchcraft, was seemingly relatively infrequent. The following seven cases, arranged chronologically, illustrate actual behavior. Each of these was referred to independently by several different informants with a high level of agreement among them on details. The total represents all the murders that were known to have occurred in the period from about 1850 to 1885. 689

Case No. 1. These events took place about 1847. Two young men, who were related by blood, went on foot to steal horses from the enemy. One had obtained a fine horse, but the other had been 682

682 unsuccessful. The latter, who was walking on the return journey, asked the other to lend him his horse. The owner of the horse didn't see why he should do so and the two got in a heated argument. When one reached for his knife, the other beat him to the draw and killed him. When the survivor was asked on his arrival home as to the whereabouts of his partner, he said: "I don't know where he is. I haven't seen him since we separated at such-and-such a place." Not long after that, however, when the group was traveling, they came upon the body of the murdered man. Only then did the survivor confess, but nothing was done to the murderer under the circumstances.

682 688 *Case No. 2.* Although the details leading up to this case are missing, it is known that a few years prior to 1860 a certain man stabbed and killed his son-in-law, shot his horses and burned his possessions, leaving only the lodge standing. The murdered man's brother shot and killed the murderer in retaliation. Unfortunately, however, this was not the end of the matter. The one who had avenged his brother's death was participating in a Kitfox Dance and was in the ceremonial lodge in the center of the camp circle just about to receive the pipe. At that moment, one of the company which was policing the Dance—a relative of the original murderer—shot and killed him on the spot. There was of course great confusion, and one of the chief performers in the Dance protested this act of violence which, regardless of other considerations, should never have been perpetrated during a Sacred Dance. The policing company, however, presented a united front and rode around the Kitfox lodge in the center of the circle singing: "No one say anything to us or we will shoot right now." Nevertheless the wife of the man who had just been killed ran out of her lodge, when she heard them singing, and said: "Oh I am not afraid of them. I am going to give them a tongue-lashing!" People warned her not to do so, but she called out insults at them and added, among other things: "Look at their dirty buttocks!" Several members of the company said: "Let's go over there and beat her to death," to which she boldly replied: "If you want to do it, it is all right." The chief performer in the Dance, who had protested before, spoke up again: "Now you want to do something wrong again. Why kill an old woman who is through with her life any-

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

way? I warned you not to do anything. If you kill her we will 682
not proceed with this Dance. It is a serious thing to interfere 688
with a Sacred Dance, but if you persist we will all scatter." This appeal was effective and the Kitfox Dance was carried out without further mishap.

Case No. 3. On one occasion in about 1862, some men were 682
drinking and two of them got in a tussle. The one who got the worse of the fight went to his brother and said: "Kill your wife. Her son [by another marriage] almost killed me. If you kill your wife, you can have one of mine." The husband took his brother at his word and went to his lodge and killed his wife, put her corpse on the fire, and heaped coals on top of it. The wife's two brothers, hearing of their sister's unjustified murder, went that night to where the men were still drinking. When the man who had originally instigated the murder saw the brothers coming closer and closer, he called out: "I don't want anyone to come any nearer or I might shoot him by mistake." But the brothers were not deterred and, approaching closer, shot and killed the man who had called out. Thus the one who had encouraged his brother in murder paid for the crime with his own life. Nevertheless his relatives mourned for him as they would have had he died under different circumstances, but they made no attempt to retaliate for his loss.

Case No. 4. The following incident occurred about 1865. Practically the whole tribe was camped together and there was a lot of drinking going on. A woman, crying, came in the lodge of her sister's husband. When they asked her the cause of her tears she told them that a certain man had beaten up her son and herself. Her sister's husband immediately took up his gun and went out into the night looking for that man. When he met up with him, without asking any questions except to be sure he had the right one, he shot him dead. When he returned to his lodge, his wife urged him to flee, but he refused to do so, saying: "I don't think his people will take up for him since he was in the wrong." Nevertheless several riders dashed by, shooting at the lodge but not doing any damage. The women were frightened and started running toward the chief's lodge. There was snow on the ground [778]
and they had a hard time locating it, but at last they got there and

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 circuit, when the tempo and vigor of the dance had appreciably increased, he finally speared the dog flesh, leaving his fork in the pot while he stood there resting for a few moments.

When the fork owner had somewhat recovered his breath, he took the dog flesh from the pot and put it in a big dish nearby. He then went to an outstanding warrior and, taking him by the hand, invited him to come up to the dish. In the same way he selected two other prominent warriors. One of these then asked some member of the society to select a fourth warrior, but this one must have been wounded at war. When he had been named, the fork owner invited him and led him to join the other three who were sitting in a semicircle facing the fire.

The owner of the crow-belt removed the feather-bustle from the fork man and tied it around the spoon owner. Then another song was started and the spoon owner went to the space between the fire and entrance to begin his circuit of the fire. He exhibited his graceful body with his best steps as he made three motions with the spoon over the heads of the seated warriors. On the fourth time he touched the meat with the spoon. After a short pause and when he was breathing more normally after his strenuous dancing, he touched the meat with the spoon and, having raised the spoon first upward and then downward, laid it on the tongue of each of the first three warriors. The warrior who had asked for the selection of the wounded warrior took the spoon and laid it on the tongue of that one.

796 688 Had any one of the four warriors indulged a short time previously in sexual intercourse, he was supposed not to allow the spoon to touch his tongue and refused by turning aside his head, thereby making a public confession. It would have done him no good to have refused to come to the center of the dancing-place when first invited because his hanging back would have caused even more attention and he would have been subjected to vulgar jeers. It was said by informants that occasionally one or another warrior would ignore the rule but that this was a dangerous thing to do. As a case in point it was related that one man, known to my informants, tried to get by with it and allowed the

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

spoon to touch his tongue regardless of consequences. Some hours later in the excitement accompanying the end of the dance, this man's horse was jumping around and broke loose, was chased by a dog and ran against a log projecting from the corner of a corral. The horse was killed. The owner then admitted that this bad luck had befallen him because he had falsely allowed himself to be honored at the dance. 796 688

Following upon the performance with the spoon, the dog meat was next distributed to the four warriors, the wounded warrior receiving the head. When the meat was eaten the skull was put down to the west of the fire. The four warriors remained seated while the other members danced for some time. So soon, however, as the singers switched to the appropriate music, the spoon owner dashed to the dog skull and pointed the skull in four directions, and the four warriors danced around, everybody else rising to dance at his place, yelling and calling out, while this song with chorus was sung once. All were then seated except the warriors who pranced around the fire four times. After this each of the four warriors in turn picked up the dog skull, pointed it in the direction in which he had accomplished the particular war deed he was to recount, and related his story. If one of them had been forced to refuse the spoon, the owner of the spoon would have to point the dog skull for him while the warrior talked and gestured. The warrior who had been wounded spoke last, and when he finished he tossed the dog skull outside of the dancing-place. 796

The owner of the whistle had a particular dance. When the accompaniment started, it was stated, "for some reason he did not dance alone. It seemed that all the members were glad and danced with him and kind of helped him. The song was repeated three more times. At the end of each 'stanza' the owner of the whistle would dance at the edge of the circle, apart from and very much faster than the other dancers." It was his privilege, too, to "punish" the dancers. At a signal from the owner of the whistle, the singers would switch to the "punishing songs" of which there were said to have been ten in all. No one could drop out of the dancing while these were being sung. Each of the ten songs could [533]

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

rections around the circle. It was understood that if any woman had not risen to dance by the time those holding whips reached her, she would be lashed. These four women had the additional duty of helping serve when it was time for the general feast.

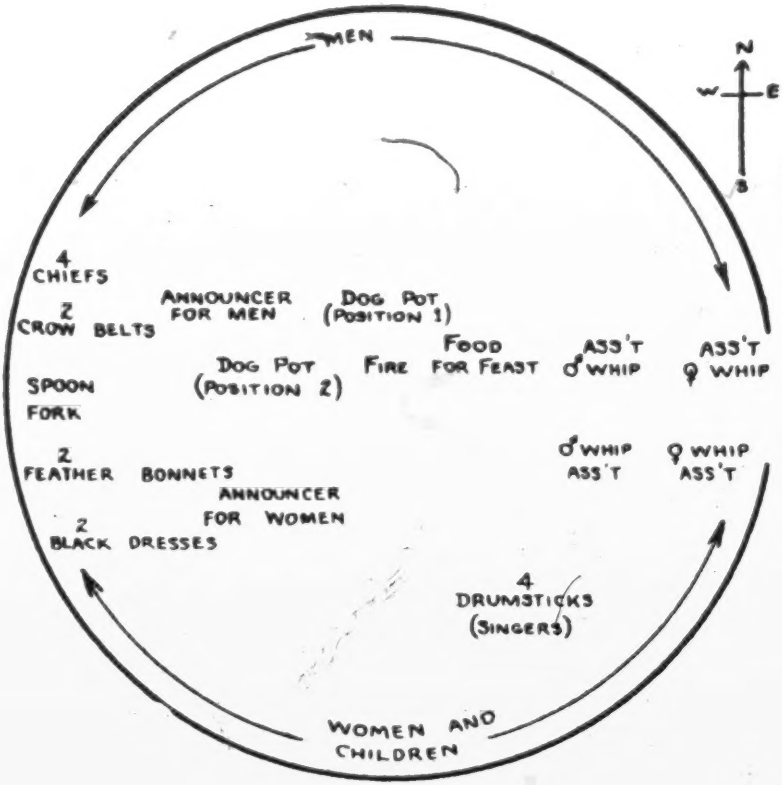


Fig. 1. Diagram of Dance Ground.

Considered as next in rank to the four "chiefs" were the four male singers, who, as in former times, owned the special drumsticks "decorated and official-looking, like emblems." They were expected to know faultlessly all of the many songs connected with the Grass dance as first adopted. If they should, for instance,

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 178 [688] sing a song out of the prescribed order, the "chiefs" would stop them at once, announce the mistake and what fine was to be demanded of the singers. Were the four women singers performing at that time, they too were penalized.

[534] The owners of the drumsticks cooperated with the owner of the drum whose special duty it was to care for this instrument and to have it in repair and ready for use at any time it was needed.

The concepts pertaining to the crow-belts, spoon, fork and whistle remained unchanged. The owners of these regalia treated them with the same respect as of old. Additional ceremonial equipment had been introduced in the form of four feathered war-bonnets, two of which were owned by men and two by women. There was a special little ceremony connected with the two bonnets owned by women. Early in the dance two outstanding warriors were selected to take these bonnets from their owners, dance four times around the rack where they were hung in front of their owners, and then hand them to the first two women sitting at the left of the door. When it was time to dance these women would don them and wear them throughout that dance, then pass them on to the next two, and so on, until everyone had had a chance to wear them.

796 178 624 Finally, there were two announcers, one who called out what he was directed to say by any of the men, and the other who publicized any statement to be made on behalf of the women.

All of these individuals were considered as office-holders in the Grass dance and, as formerly, each was free to transfer the office [622] to anyone he considered suitable to succeed himself. There was no regular term of office even for the "chiefs" and the transfer was described as purely voluntary. Apparently, however, there was a certain amount of consultation among the officers, when one of them decided to transfer his office, in order to agree on a well-qualified successor. Among other things it was necessary to consider the financial status of the individual, especially for those to take over the higher offices. Not only did the recipient heap property upon the donor, but according to the older pattern too, [431] the relatives of the recipient would give away horses and so on

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

occasion he stated that it was the "law" of the spring hunt that no one should hunt buffalo alone or in a small group, violation of which invoked the sanctions applied by the Wolf-men or Stars. However, in 1940, this same informant stated twice, explicitly, that there was no police power except at the Sacred Dances and on a third occasion in that year said: "After the Sacred Dance the company disbanded, and the chief resumed control, but he did not punish anybody for hunting buffalo alone." 224 688 625

In any case, authority was delegated to the companies only temporarily. Otherwise there was no agency beyond that of the family which could apply sanctions of force, and then, on only two counts. A husband had the right to take the life of an unfaithful wife; the family had the right of blood revenge in case of murder. In both, however, less extreme modes of behavior were approved and bloodshed could honorably be avoided. 688 625 684 682

When murder occurred, if the family of the murdered person could be persuaded to accept a payment of goods as restitution, further spilling of blood was prevented. It was said that the lodge of the band chief offered temporary refuge to a murderer and that sanctuary was likewise available in the lodge of the Keeper either of the Flat or of the Feathered Pipe. It was thought that if the murderer and his family, who collectively shared responsibility for the crime, could flee the scene, time would be gained for negotiating the blood-price. If one blood relative killed another, there was no retaliation, but the murderer was shunned. 682 [778] [672]

While there was a considerable amount of fighting and quarreling among the Gros Ventres, especially under the influence of liquor, disputes were usually settled without bloodshed. Outright murder, as distinct from deaths attributed to witchcraft, was seemingly relatively infrequent. The following seven cases, arranged chronologically, illustrate actual behavior. Each of these was referred to independently by several different informants with a high level of agreement among them on details. The total represents all the murders that were known to have occurred in the period from about 1850 to 1885. 689

Case No. 1. These events took place about 1847. Two young men, who were related by blood, went on foot to steal horses from the enemy. One had obtained a fine horse, but the other had been 682

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Dance.[3] Women could vow the Old Women's Dance, but no other Dance could be vowed by women of any age. 796*

The vower would call upon his company or age-society to help him fulfill his vow. As elsewhere explained, when the young boy was about 15 to 17 years old he together with others of his age joined in a body one or other of the two Soldier Societies, the Stars of the Wolves. Each such newly joining group of youths would be incorporated in the larger society of Stars or Wolves, but would keep its own identity through life as a subdivision of the Stars or Wolves, would have its own name (such as Potbellies, Calves, Holding-On-to-Dogs-Tail), and would hang together in common loyalty, protection and helpfulness.[3] 575 701 796*

The vower's company, not all the Stars of Wolves, would help him make provision for the Dance, would be in charge of the affair and, during it and only during it, could exercise certain definite authority over other members of the tribe. If the tribe were on the march toward the spot where the dance was about to be held, that company came immediately after the Flat Pipe, according to The Boy, and during the Dance the band chiefs and Pipe keepers stepped aside and yielded to the company the authority to run the camp, compel attendance, give orders, and punish disobedience. If during a Sacred Lodge an individual hunted buffalo out of turn, before the communal hunt began, his lodge would be destroyed, his clothes cut up, and so forth. A like punishment might be meted out to any who might refuse to come into camp, at the time the dance was held.[4] [624] [689]

The two Soldier Societies, the Stars and Wolves, and their respective constituent companies were permanent organizations. The specific individuals who vowed or joined in any given Dance

---

[3] In 1948, The Boy indicated that probably the Crazy, Dog, Kit-fox and Drum Dances would have been vowed in order, that is, that a man would vow a Dog Dance only if he had been previously a Crazy Dancer, and so on. He was none too sure on this point. He was quite emphatic, however, that any man who belonged to either the Stars or Wolf Men could vow the Sacrifice Dance. [R.F.]

[3] For a description of the whole ceremonial organization, so far as it can be reconstructed, see Flannery, 1953, pp. 36-43.

[4] See Flannery, 1953, pp. 43-44.

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 178 533 [625 681] were supposed to come prepared with pipe, tobacco, and matches in anticipation of this song. If, for some reason, one of the four was unable to furnish at least a pipeful of mixture, and could not borrow one, he was immediately arrested by the owners of the whips and punished by the singers who might tear his shirt at the neck so everyone could see it, or, perhaps, pour over him a good cupful of broth made from dog flesh. This broth has a strong and lasting odor. The female officers were likewise expected to give the women singers a smoke. The smoking song marked an intermission. No one danced to this song and all sat around smoking and taking it easy.

796 178 If things got too dull, however, one of the owners of the whips might get up, call the announcer, and say: "Tell my friends that I am going to whip them if they don't dance. I will have the right to whip them because I am going to pay for it," and he would present a bridle, or perhaps five dollars, or something of that order of magnitude, to anyone he wished. It was understood, then, that the next time the singing started this man might hit any person,—even one of the "chiefs,"—who failed to dance.

Another feature reminiscent of the original Grass dance but showing some slight change, was the provision that anyone who wished might have it announced that he was going to "lock the door," which meant that nobody could go home until the dance was over. For doing this however he had to provide all the necessary food for another Grass dance to be held on the night immediately following. It was up to the owners of the whips to enforce the regulation by taking something valuable, say a hat [689] or a blanket, from anyone who left the dance and the article was forfeit if he failed to return.

796 178 626 Based on the same concept, the practice grew up of forcing attendance in the following way. Once in a while the owners of the whips might order their assistants to go from door to door in the whole community and take something belonging to each householder, say a bridle, or a valuable belt, or a gun, and bring it to the dancing-place. If the owner of the object were not at the dance, his property was returned to him only if he promised

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Child, and made offering of tobacco and food to earth. Al Chandler explained: "The earth is put in because that is where your living is. You get everything from the earth, fruit, animals, everything to live on, and get everything you eat from there," although ultimately it is the Supreme Being who owns and gives everything. We got one passing casual reference to "mother earth" by Mary Ereaux, and another by Tom Main to earth as being a "spirit" and having a "special keeper," but obtained no later confirmation of or detailed information on these points. In general, earth seems to have played a quite subordinate role in Gros Ventre religious thought and ritual. 776 823

The sun was appreciably more prominent, ranking according to some informants next to the Supreme Being, and mentioned as "The One Traveling," or "Passing or Traveling Man" immediately after him in prayers. Another current seems to have assigned a much lower relative rank to the sun, and mentioned sun and moon together, as "Those-who-follow-each-other," and after the Supreme Being and the Four Holy Old Men. In any case the sun was in no sense identified with the Supreme Being, but was his property, work and servant, far below him in dignity, and had not anything like the religious predominance it had in such tribes as the neighboring Blackfoot. The sun did not enter at all into the so-called "Sun Dance" of the Gros Ventres, nor into the Feathered Pipe rite. Prayers and food were offered to the sun, and the sun was invited to sweat in the sweat lodge rite along with but subordinately to the Supreme Being. Individuals would offer a finger joint or bits of their flesh to the sun on such occasions as the grave illness of a relative. While the sun "sees everything, that's why the Supreme Being put it there," the Supreme Being, not the sun, was appealed to as witness in oaths; the widespread American Indian oath formula, "The sun sees me," was not used. 776 821 [755] [695]

The sun and moon were, according to myth, brothers from the same mother, but were never human beings proper, though they married, the one a frog woman and the other a human female. According to one story, the sun regularly appeared in battle as a man riding a white horse who scared and helped either the Gros [773] 776 821 539

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

no crying by children in the lodge; if a child started to cry it was taken out at once. Dogs were not allowed in the lodge, nor could the keeper use a dog robe. Bones could not be broken in the lodge to extract marrow, as in the case of the Flat Pipe lodge and under the same penalty. War-deed contests in the Feathered Pipe lodge were prohibited and penalized, as in the Flat Pipe lodge,—with a four-day penalty. The right of asylum was recognized exactly as in the case of the Flat Pipe keeper's lodge.

The lodge occupied a place of honor in the camp circle, but whether opposite the opening of the circle or just in front of the keeper's band is controverted, as in the case of the Flat Pipe keeper's lodge (see p. 58).

The prerogatives and restrictions attaching to the keepership of the Feathered Pipe appear to have been quite similar in number and kind to those attaching to the keepership of the Flat Pipe, although we did not obtain as full details regarding them as we did for the Flat Pipe. We shall mention only those prerogatives and restrictions for which we obtained specific information. The functional relation of the various prerogatives and restrictions to the sacredness and dignity of the keepership was quite the same for both Pipes.

In accord with the dignity of their office, the keeper and co-keeper were expected to comport themselves respectably on all occasions and to conform to the strict ethical norms to be mentioned presently.

The people were in turn expected to treat them with great respect. Things asked for by the keeper had to be handed to him, not thrown, exactly as with the Flat Pipe keeper, and under the same penalty. If someone absent-mindedly stepped over the outstretched feet or legs of the keeper, the latter would keel over in a faint and the co-keeper would have to smudge him ritually to bring him to, or the offender would fall down with a "cramp." Coming Daylight once saw a woman in a crowded place step over the feet of the Feathered Pipe co-keeper. The woman "fell in a cramp." Her mother got angry and upbraided the co-keeper: "You ought to know better than to leave your feet sticking out." But her sister went over and kissed the co-keeper and begged her in a nice way to doctor the stricken woman. So the co-keeper got up and

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

784 517 fund of war expl[illegible]d be apt to give out, and the two would begin talking about trifling occurrences in camp, personal reminiscences about their marriages, and so forth. Everybody had a good time at such a three-day session.

Neither the keeper nor others were permitted to tell folk-tales of the vulgar or obscene Ni:hahat type in the former's lodge. If a member of a visiting group inadvertently broke the rule, a three-day session similar to the war-deed one above was prescribed, during which he had to continue telling such tales.

778 If a murder of a fellow-tribesman had been committed in camp, and the murdered person's relatives were about to kill the murderer ● 696 in revenge, the latter could run to and take refuge in the keeper's lodge and was safe so long, but only so long, as he stayed there. The avengers dared not enter it to kill, but immunity ceased so soon as the murderer left the lodge.

621 361 There is general agreement among our informants that the keeper's lodge was pitched in a prominent place, but exactly where in the camp circle is a controverted point we did not succeed in clearing up. According to one tradition, it occupied the place of honor in the circle, toward the northwest—opposite the circle's opening which was toward the southeast or the rising sun,—regardless of where the keeper's band camped in the circle. Three, however, of our oldest informants, Coming Daylight, Takes-the-Bow, and Turn-Toes, held that the keeper remained with his band, the first two of the three stating that his lodge was pitched a little in front of his band toward the center of the circle.

Prerogatives and Restrictions of Keepership

793 The office of keepership carried with it on the one hand a great many special rights, privileges, prerogatives and powers and on the other a great many restrictions, obligations, responsibilities and sacrifices. The following list is undoubtedly incomplete, as new ones were still being revealed when our field work came to an end,[8] but it probably includes most of them. They functionally accord with sacred and high dignity of the keepership, the supernatural power attached to it, the lofty ethical behavior and "as-

[8] Kroeber, 1908, p. 273, has some we did not get.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Dance.[2] Women could vow the Old Women's Dance, but no other Dance could be vowed by women of any age. 796*

The vower would call upon his company or age-society to help him fulfill his vow. As elsewhere explained, when the young boy was about 15 to 17 years old he together with others of his age joined in a body one or other of the two Soldier Societies, the Stars of the Wolves. Each such newly joining group of youths would be incorporated in the larger society of Stars or Wolves, but would keep its own identity through life as a subdivision of the Stars or Wolves, would have its own name (such as Potbellies, Calves, Holding-On-to-Dogs-Tail), and would hang together in common loyalty, protection and helpfulness.[3] 575 701 796*

The vower's company, not all the Stars of Wolves, would help him make provision for the Dance, would be in charge of the affair and, during it and only during it, could exercise certain definite authority over other members of the tribe. If the tribe were on the march toward the spot where the dance was about to be held, that company came immediately after the Flat Pipe, according to The Boy, and during the Dance the band chiefs and Pipe keepers stepped aside and yielded to the company the authority to run the camp, compel attendance, give orders, and punish disobedience. If during a Sacred Lodge an individual hunted buffalo out of turn, before the communal hunt began, his lodge would be destroyed, his clothes cut up, and so forth. A like punishment might be meted out to any who might refuse to come into camp, at the time the dance was held.[4] [624] [689]

The two Soldier Societies, the Stars and Wolves, and their respective constituent companies were permanent organizations. The specific individuals who vowed or joined in any given Dance

---

[2] In 1948, The Boy indicated that probably the Crazy, Dog, Kit-fox and Drum Dances would have been vowed in order, that is, that a man would vow a Dog Dance only if he had been previously a Crazy Dancer, and so on. He was none too sure on this point. He was quite emphatic, however, that any man who belonged to either the Stars or Wolf Men could vow the Sacrifice Dance. [R.F.]

[3] For a description of the whole ceremonial organization, so far as it can be reconstructed, see Flannery, 1953, pp. 36-43.

[4] See Flannery, 1953, pp. 43-44.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

575 did not constitute such. Their grouping was a purely temporary
●701 one, lasting only for the duration of the Dance. During, for in-
*796 stance, the Crazy Dance, all who joined in it, both members of the vower's company and others, were called Crazy Dancers, but once the Dance was over, they ceased to be such; there was no permanent organization or society of Crazy Dancers.

608 A first step which a man who had vowed a Sacred Dance had
*796 to take was to fill an ordinary pipe, go to a man who had gone through the rite in fulfillment of a vow and who knew the rite well, and offer him the pipe, saying: "Here is the pipe. You will be my 'grandfather.'" By accepting the pipe,—and he could hardly refuse,—the latter became the vower's ritual "grandfather." At the same time the "grandfather's" wife became the vower's "grandmother," and both the vower and his wife (or wives) became "grandchildren" of the "grandfather" and his wife, and they addressed one another respectively by these names. The vower himself was in charge of the Dance and of the preparations therefor. The "grandfather's" role was that of liturgist, to instruct the vower in the ceremonies and observances proper to the given Lodge, and to see that they were carried out correctly. By way of exception, for the Old Women's Dance there were "grandmothers," but no "grandfathers."

When a given individual vowed one of the Sacred Lodges, other individuals could join with him in the rite, and each of these others would also choose a "grandfather,"—one who had participated in the given Dance,—with whom he (and his wife) would contract the same sacred relationship and who would perform the same offices. No person could be "grandfather" to more than one vower or associate on the occasion of any one dance.[8] The "grandfathers" would usually be older than the participants but not by any means necessarily very old men.

If, however, a younger man offered a pipe to a very feeble old man whose memory of the rites was poor, the old man might accept the pipe and so become the younger man's "grandfather."

---

[8] In 1948, The Boy indicated that for the Crazy Dance at least two younger men might together approach an older man and have him act as their ritual grandfather if he accepted them. [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

608 The problem of possible abuses of the system was explained by The Boy along the following lines. "First of all if an old man had become my 'grandfather' only recently, say just last week and I were a young man, no one would ordinarily ask me to appeal for him to my 'grandfather.' By strict right I could do so, and if no one else were available, I might be asked, but as an 'amateur,' as one lacking in experience, I would not be a good person to ask. An older, more experienced 'grandson' would be asked."

*796 Besides choosing a "grandfather" the vower also selected, as a herald or crier for the Dance, some intelligent old man gifted as an 203 orator. The crier's chief task was to walk or ride around the camp before and during the Dance announcing to the people whether the group would move and other decisions and agreements covering preparations for and procedure during the dance.

If the bands happened to be scattered at the time a sacred Dance was to be held, runners were sent by the vower to bid them foregather for the Dance. All members of the tribe were obliged to attend the Sacrifice and Crazy Dances, and pretty surely the Drum, Kit-fox and Dog Dances. As regards the Fly Dance, this was ordinarily held in connection with one of the other Dances, so everybody would be present anyhow. As regards the Old Men's and Old Women's Dances, they were not so lively or colorful, and were held a little apart and the people did not take much interest in them and "did not go much" to them; attendance was apparently not required.

.796 If any individual or group failed to come when summoned, the vower would request the soldiers of the Stars or Wolves as the 626 case might be, compel attendance. Even a war party could not start out if some one had vowed a dance and it was about ready ●701 to begin. So much for the types or personnel,—vower, associates, age-groups, ceremonial "grandfathers," criers, police, and "congregation,"—more or less common to all the Sacred Lodges. Personnel peculiar to particular Dances will be taken up later when each is described. Before describing the Dances one by one, some ritual observances common to all or many of them may be noted.

*796 After the vower of a Dance had chosen his ritual grandfather

* For a detailed illustration of this point, see Flannery, 1953, pp. 49-51.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

be on the night immediately preceding the beginning of the Dance rite proper.

Usually others besides the principal vower would vow to join the dance and to pierce their breasts with skewers. These associate vowers would also choose each his own grandfather and, with the help of his own crier, have the same formal public announcement made of his vow as in the case of the principal vower.

As proximate preparation for the Dance, if the bands were scattered at the time, the principal vower would send out young men as runners to summon the bands to foregather for the dance. Attendance was obligatory for all.

The principal vower set up his lodge in the center of the camp circle, and here headquarters were established where conferences of the vower and his assistants were held and whence pro tem laws and regulations, decisions when and whether to move camp, and so forth, were issued.

The vower's chief assistants in these matters were his own age-group or company, a component sub-group of either the Wolves or the Stars. Whether all the Wolves or Stars respectively, and not merely the vower's own age-group, were divided into "talls" and "shorts" (see below), and served as soldiers or "police" during the dance, to enforce attendance, order in the buffalo hunt and so forth, is a point we could not clear up, but more probably only the members of his own age-group.

For either the vower's age-group, or perhaps, as just noted, all the Stars or Wolves respectively of which his age-group was a component sub-group, four head officers or "generals" or "lieutenants" were chosen, and also two subordinate officers or "servants" or attendants. The two tallest of the four head officers took the taller men of the age-group (or of the larger society, Stars or Wolves) as their soldiers, and one of the two subordinate officers; the two shortest, the shorter men, and the other subordinate officer. The two divisions, the "talls" and the "shorts," constituted the "soldiers" or "police" for the dance. Each division also had an outstanding old man as herald or crier.

After the people had all been gathered together, the first task was that of gathering food supplies, buffalo meat and particularly

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Between times, during the summer months, that is, when no sacred dance was in progress, the two soldier societies, the Stars and the Grass dancers (Wolves), would compete with each other *in foot races or other sports* or in gambling bouts.[14] The losers would have to "cook" or to do other things for the winners. The losers in formation, with one of them in front carrying the Crazy Dance badger pelt trimmed and fixed up and tied to one end of a stick, might go to where the winners were sitting in a sort of semi-circle. On arrival there, the man carrying the pelt would say: "We are also bringing the badger pelt. It, too, we lost in the bet,"—although actually the pelt itself had not been wagered. This was a dare or challenge to the winners to put up the Crazy Lodge, a challenge which they were "compelled" to accept. Some great man among the winners would then get up, take the badger pelt from the man who brought it, and make an exclamation meaning that he was glad and that he accepted the challenge. He and his fellow-winners of the same age-group would then at once send criers to announce their acceptance of the challenge and, to give notice that they would without fail carry through their acceptance, would get in formation and sing. When the Crazy Dance was so carried out it had the same prestige and it was performed with the same rites and observances, as when carried out to fulfill a vow. 796* [796] 517

Each of those men who joined the Crazy Dance joined with one of his wives or with a substitute for her. The chief although not the only role of these women was participation in the ritual grandfather sex-test to be described later. Some husbands were so jealous of their wives that they would do all possible to avoid joining the dance or having their wives join. This appears to have been the case with the husbands of Coming Daylight, who was a belle in her day. In other cases, as The Boy remarked, "the husband knew his wife's character and disposition, and if she were weak he did not put her to this test as he would be pretty sure that she would fail." Singer had never joined although some wanted her to do so at the time. "My husband," she said, "was advised not to let me do so because I was too young and I might make 796* 593

[14] Cf. Flannery, 1953, p. 42.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

circle facing south with the pile of buffalo chips a little in front of them, they moved single file clockwise in four circles, to signify that their "scouting" had been successful and stopped just before reaching the pile of chips. Then some outstanding warrior who had made his mark in a particular battle in which no Gros Ventre had been killed walked out to meet the four, and they gave him a report of what they had seen on their scouting. Leaving them standing there, he then went back to the crowd. 796*

Meanwhile the crowd had been singing, a first song when they first sighted the returning scouts, a second when they approached nearer, a third when they were about completing their fourth circle. A fourth and last one was sung as the above outstanding warrior was coming back to them.

At the end of this fourth song, this warrior danced and told four of his war exploits, all four performed in battles in which no Gros Ventre blood had been shed. After this he said to the four scouts: "All right, now tell your story." The four then after walking four times around the pile of chips, gave their report to the crowd: "Over there at such-and-such a spot we found a center pole." [203]

This whole ritual "scouting" for and reporting on the pole followed closely the similar procedure in actual war-time scouting. One difference is that in the latter, scouts returning unsuccessfully would approach in a winding snake fashion instead of in the four circles.[11]

Next came the felling rite. The crowd, on being told the location of the tree selected for the center pole, went thither and the principal vower, his ritual grandfather and the four scouts went with them, the grandfather taking along a filled pipe. When they had all reached the spot, the grandfather made a smudge alongside the tree, smudged the pipe in it, and prayed with the pipe to the Supreme Being. Then each of the four scouts in turn stepped up to the tree and told four of his war exploits performed in engagements in which no Gros Ventre blood had been shed. This made 16 exploits in all. At the end of each of the 16 narratives, the respective narrating scout made a motion toward the tree as if going to chop it down. The narratives over, the four scouts went

[11] For procedure in war scouting, see Flannery, 1953, pp. 90-91.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

sometimes put on the bow with glue made from boiled skin from the head of a buffalo. Sometimes the bow was without sinew backing and sometimes ornamented by being covered on the back with snake-skin. Bows are said to have been held either horizontally or vertically, according to individual habit. Arrows for war and hunting are said to have been alike. 411

Shields were made of the thickest part of buffalo-bull skin, which was laid into a hole in the ground and made hard by being scorched with hot rocks placed upon it. It was then provided with a cover of white buckskin fringed with feathers. A man who carried a shield in war sometimes had no other weapon. 714

It is declared that no tobacco was raised, and that none growing wild was gathered, but that it was obtained from other tribes and from the whites. This is contrary to the practice of the equally non-agricultural Blackfoot, who planted tobacco; but it would seem to accord with the lack of any information obtained from the Arapaho as to tobacco-raising. 171 249 [439]

DECORATIVE ART.

The present day decorative art of the Gros Ventre is not nearly as strongly developed as that of the Arapaho. There is much less bead-work made, and this hardly ever equals the better work of the Arapaho either in technical or artistic excellence. Quill-embroidery is also found less frequently than among the Arapaho. How far this greater poverty and inferiority of Gros Ventre decorative art are matters of some standing in time is not certain; but it seems probable that there was a difference between the two tribes in this respect, even when they first came into contact with the whites. 531 171

It is in accord with this difference that inquiry as to the symbolic or conventional significance of the decorative designs used by the Gros Ventre has been practically without result. While the failure of the Gros Ventre to render such interpretations is due perhaps in large measure to change of mode of life under the influence of civilization, yet it seems that in this respect too there must have been a temperamental difference between the Arapaho and Gros Ventre, even in earlier times; for the Arapaho preserve at least distinguished wrecks of their symbolism, ceremonies, and religious life, while among the Gros Ventre, who are in much less intimate contact with the Americans, these things have vanished, leaving often scarcely a trace, and rarely more than a memory.

Partly on account of comparative scarcity of material, and also by reason of greater artistic poverty, the decoration of the Gros Ventre does not present as many typical characteristics as that of the Arapaho, the Blackfeet, the

726 626 latter and raise his leg in imitation of a urinating dog. All would know then on whom Eater's displeasure had fallen, and the young man in question would break down and sob. That would cure him of laziness."

726 318 Among the important duties on a war party were those of the water-carrier. If the mission were to be performed under more than ordinarily dangerous circumstances, young men might volunteer for the job, but usually the leader chose someone for it. A water-carrier had to have courage and resourcefulness because in order to fetch water it might be necessary that he be sent long distances without guard, and then have to catch up with the group [482 in case the rest had to move. When the members of the party [534 sighted the water-carrier returning successfully bearing the skin 533 water-container attached to a pole, a song was sung by the war party as they marked time by beating two sticks together.[3]

726 Scouting was another important aspect of a war party. The leader selected two well-qualified men for this job. "They had to have courage and endurance for, while scouting, they would run instead of walk and not eat until their mission was completed." Scouts were called "wolves" and wore wolf-skins as insignia and [714] sometimes, at least, would stick brush on their heads so they could not be so easily spotted against the horizon.[5] They went to high [533] places to look around. If the enemy were not in sight, they might sing, making up words to the tune mentioned as having been sung before the party left camp.[6]

If the scouts saw indications of the enemy, such as smoke rising from a coulee, but without actually seeing the enemy sufficiently clearly to identify them, on their return to the party they gave a wolf howl as they approached and proceeded in a sharp zigzag path. If, however, they had more definite information, they gave the wolf howl and approached in a circular path; that is, advanced, turned in a circle, advanced again, turned in a circle, advanced again, turned in a circle and halted. They were then met by two older men who had been successful scouts in their day. While the [533 scouts were approaching—occasionally looking back over their

[3] Recorded as No. 130.
[5] For illustrations, see Curtis, v. 5, p. 176.
[6] Samples of this kind of song were recorded as No. 23 and No. 24.

PLATES

The original photograph of Plate 1 was taken in 1887 and belongs to The Boy. Shown in it are Lame Bull, The Boy's father, and Crow Bull, maternal uncle of Coming Daylight. Both of these men were born around 1825 and their personal experiences were often referred to by our informants as we took down the record of the old way of life. Each had been Keeper of the sacred Flat Pipe.

The photographs composing Plate 2, except for the one of The Boy, were taken in 1940 by Dr. Karl F. Herzfeld. The first three show the nature of the country around Hays on the Fort Belknap Reservation; the other three show some of our informants and interpreters whose biographical sketches follow.

In Plate 3, the shield and war medicines of Bull Lodge, father of our informant, Garter Snake, represent only a few of the specimens of Gros Ventre culture collected in 1937 by Mr. Richard Pohrt, of Flint, Michigan.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

293
778
721
714

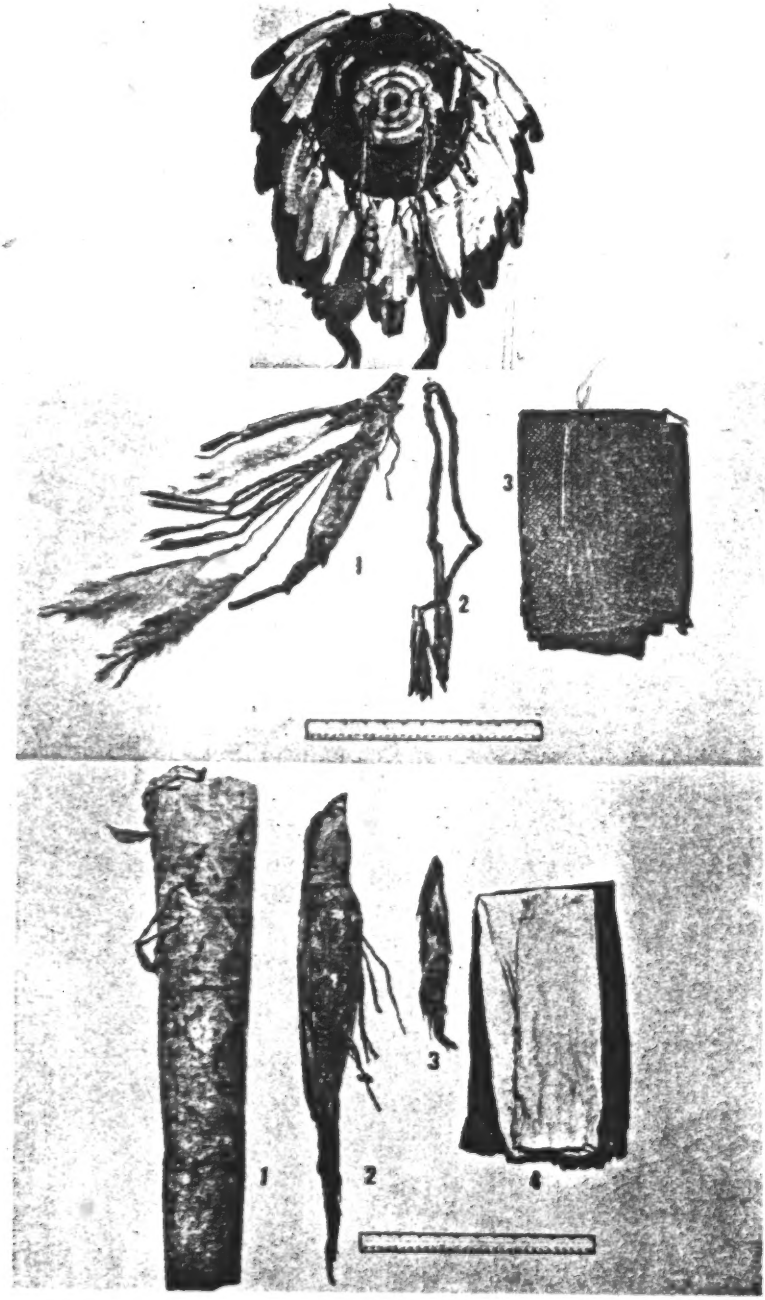


PLATE III

SHIELD AND WAR MEDICINES MADE
AND USED BY BULL LODGE

[p. 212(C)]

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

SOCIAL CUSTOMS.

000 The Gros Ventre system of terms of relationship has been given in a
605 former publication.[1]

601 Cousins, so far as the relationship was known, were called brothers and sisters, and they called each other's children son or daughter if the cousin
[582] was of the same sex as the speaker, or nephew or niece if the cousin was of the opposite sex. Any known relationship was a bar to marriage. The
[587] brother of a dead man sometimes married his widow, but this was not always the case.

583 Large amounts of property, especially horses, were given away for wives for the honor of the act, but there was no rule or definite custom covering the quantity of property so given. The horses might be given not only to the father, but to the brothers, uncles, and other relatives of the girl. Sometimes, without having received any gifts and apparently without any previous understanding, a man would give his daughter to a young man, who thereupon would give him horses, or distribute them among his wife's other relatives. Old men practised this custom in order to obtain the aid and services of a young man in caring for their horses and in other ways, and no doubt
585 sometimes also to insure a more certain food-supply. A young man on
431 marrying received a tent with all the proper furniture, usually from his prospective parents-in-law, but sometimes from his own parents, if they were the wealthier.

606 Although a young married man often lived with his father-in-law, the
[591] well-known taboo custom between mother-in-law and son-in-law — which forbade their speaking, looking at each other, or being in the same tent — existed among the Gros Ventre. There was, however, no father-in-law taboo. The mother-in-law taboo extended to the son-in-law's brother.

584 If a woman did not wish a man for her lover, she might send him to do a
721 certain act of bravery. If he returned successfully from war, having accomplished the deed, he was then accepted. This custom is said to have led to the death of many young men.

428 At a person's death his property was inherited generally by his relatives. His father and mother, brothers, sisters, and children would receive part. His father and mother received the most. A man often disposed of his property before his death. If he died suddenly, as on being killed in war, his parents divided his property. It was not customary for a man on going to war to divide his property among his relatives in the contingency of his
[764] death. Property particularly valued by the dead person was buried with him.

[1] Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part I, pp. 9, 150.

426 231 The lending of horses, especially in an emergency, was not uncommon especially among relatives. The owner however retained full rights and could dictate to the borrower the use to which the horse might be put. "One time, for instance," according to Singer whose husband Iron Bucket was an eye-witness, 231 "there were four lodges or families of Gros Ventres who 426 happened to be traveling along separated from the larger group. 734 Bear Nose's mother was taking care of a young man who was exceedingly ill. She didn't own the horse which was drawing the travois upon which the young man was lying. As the party climbed a steep hill the lines tying the travois to the horse broke and the travois dropped to the ground. The woman who owned the horse was already at the top and called down: 'Just leave him. Just leave him. You are always hauling him around with my horse.' The others told this woman owner: 'Let us pack him once more and wherever we stop we will make a sweatbath house for him and leave him in there and leave food for him.' But the owner didn't want it that way. The others told her again: 'Just pack him once more. You should think of the time when he was a Scout [at Ft. Assiniboine] and he used to get a lot of grub for you [with his pay].' But she said: 'No. I won't be packing him any more.' He was pretty far gone—his body already covered with flies—but the one who had been caring for him finally was forced to abandon him there with his few belongings and without any shelter or anything else. When they left him he had a sheet over his head and he started to cry. But the owner of the horse was adamant. The others of the party could argue with her, but could take no further action. They moved quite a distance and that very night a terrible storm came up and probably finished the young man. The woman who had been caring for him died shortly thereafter, and the others thought this was a consequence of their having abandoned him so callously, but they all said: 'It should have been the owner of the horse who died instead of the one who cared for him."

-231 721 Because the real competition among the northern plains tribes was for horses, it was not uncommon that a relatively well-to-do family might lose their entire pack of horses through a single raid by the enemy. The following experience of Coming Daylight illustrates the point.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

"The Gros Ventres moved camp again to new grounds across the Missouri. They were camped on a bluff overlooking the River, and there was a nice valley full of hay behind them. Her grandmother suggested that their family tie all their horses down in that nice valley. The men in the group had, however, obtained whiskey and a lot of them were drunk—even her uncle—and after they camped they kept on 'celebrating.' That night she was feeling very sick as it was almost time for her first child to be born. She couldn't sleep and would go out and sit leaning back against another lodge. While she was sitting there it was very dark, but she thought she saw two figures on horseback moving along the edge of the bluff, very, very, slowly, as though they were sneaking. So she went to her lodge and awakened her husband and told him she had seen strange men around. Of course it was very dark and she couldn't describe them so her husband didn't get excited and said: 'Oh, it is just some of our people.' She was still uneasy, however, and returned a couple of more times and told her husband what she had seen, but he didn't believe her nor pay any attention. A little later as she was lying fully dressed in her lodge, very uncomfortable—raising up, lying down, raising up again—not sleeping, she heard leaves rattling as someone walked slowly from the brush towards her lodge. Her uncle called her by name. She recognized his voice. He told her: 'All our horses are gone!' He had sobered up and had gone to see where the horses were. She just felt sick over it. They had lost all their beautiful horses.

"She was so mad at her husband, because he had been stubborn and hadn't given chase to the enemy, that she went out and walked and walked. She doesn't know how far she traveled in the dim moonlight when she heard a horse neighing and, since everyone knows his own horses when he hears them, she realized that it was the light buckskin horse, her husband's principal horse for hunting buffalo and for war. It was his best horse. She went in the direction she heard the neighing and the horse came towards her. It was all wet and had a short rope around its neck. She caught the horse and supposed that the enemy must have taken the stolen horses across the river and that this one must have been doing something that made them cut it loose. As she was leading the horse back to camp she saw something white lying there. She

231 721 got scared and ran to the other side of the horse. Finally she took a big stick and threw it at the white thing and still it didn't move so she went closer and found it to be a Hudson's Bay blanket just soaking wet. The enemy must have used it when they crossed the river. So she dragged it home to her lodge. When she got there she called to her grandmother: 'Is he there?' Her grandmother said: 'He is.' She was still furious at her husband and called to him: 'Come out! I am giving you this,' and she said it in the way people speak when they are giving something on return from war. She was giving her husband his own buffalo horse! He however didn't say anything or make any exclamation. This so enraged her that she took the blanket and rolled it up as small as she could and threw it at him, hitting him on the chest saying: 'Here is another thing I brought you!' Then he laughed. But she had at least saved one of the most valuable horses.

[431] "The next morning the rest of the Gros Ventres in the party moved on, leaving this family behind. But fortunately some others came along and seeing their plight gave them horses, for example, Pemmican gave one to Coming Daylight, Little Shields gave her uncle one, and Sleeping Bear gave her husband one."

231 436 The importance of various transactions could be gauged by whether or not a horse were included, other things such as fancy clothing, ornaments, guns, etc. being mentioned as "thrown in."

[554] A person who gave a horse in whatever connection accrued prestige for himself and at the same time showed in what esteem the donor

[583] held the recipient. Horses were generally included in the bride price; in inaugurating the more serious type of enemy-friendship; in payment for services of the medicine man in curing certain types of illness, and in payment to the ceremonial grandfather as well as in payment to the namer or ear-piercer of a child; in settling disputes; in gambling; in gifts to others in honor of relatives, and in meeting certain other kinship obligations.

231 556 Horses could be acquired by a man through raiding the enemy; by gift from relatives and from non-relatives in honor of someone else or in instituting the enemy-friendship; in the bride price of a sister, daughter, or maternal niece; in payment for services rendered; in gambling; through inheritance; in trading with the whites. A woman might share in the bride price of her brother's

CHAPTER V

WAR AND PRESTIGE

Organization and Conduct of the Party

721 554 Recognition was granted for any accomplishment that involved risk of life at the hands of the enemy. The constantly recurring attacks upon the Gros Ventres by one neighboring tribe or another offered many opportunities for the display of bravery, but those who joined in taking the initiative against the enemy had the greatest chances of accumulating impressive war records. Consequently parties set out at frequent intervals with the avowed purpose either of stealing horses or of avenging loss of Gros Ventre life.

721 Although it was not uncommon for two or three men to go off quietly together when raiding for horses, if a larger number was involved, some formalities were observed. The man who decided to lead a war party had his intention publicly announced around the camp circle by a crier and any who wished might volunteer to join him. A young man, untried in war, would hardly set himself up as leader in this way, but would be anxious to follow someone whose reputation for bravery was already well established.[1]

533 721 [782] Ordinarily, when the group was composed of ten or more men, there were some preliminaries the night before the party set off. The members gathered and sang in front of lodges of those they hoped would be able to help them. Each man so selected at least prayed for the success of the party as he gave them a smoke and fed them. In addition, if he had ammunition or clothing or something of the kind that would be useful on the expedition, he donated these to the party. It was said that an occasional man would "be so pleased with what the party was about to do" that he sent his wife out to sing with them. Thus the party sang around the camp circle in front of various lodges and, after agreeing on

[1] Sometimes young men were restless and sang around the camp circle to indicate their willingness to go on a raid if someone would lead them. Such a song was recorded as No. 70.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

what time they should meet the next morning to start off, they dispersed. 721

Before leaving camp the next day, the party again sang in front of the lodges which they had approached the night before. This same tune was also sung while the party was en route, words being composed to suit various occasions. This tune was known as the "men's song" and was said to have been given to the Gros Ventres by Nihiatu, the culture-hero. Other songs were also sung while the party was away from camp as, for example, on the first night out when they lamented their absence from friends and loved ones. 533

Various duties were assigned by the leader, and all, but especially the youngest members of the party, were expected to do their part. If a young fellow were "lazy" on a raiding expedition, the leader would see to it that he was punished. An accepted way of accomplishing this end was on the sly to substitute strips of rawhide for the usual strips of meat in the container used by the young man. When the party started to eat, all would watch this particular young man and, as he pulled out the rawhide, they would laugh at him. It was said that young men in this predicament would be so humiliated that they would actually cry. It was a serious matter at the time, and also offered good material to be used later by potential enemy-friends who might have witnessed this embarrassing situation. 726 [626]

Along this line, it is interesting to note the detailed procedure of one man, which may or may not be typical of the behavior of leaders in disciplining members of their party. "This particular leader, known as Eater, a contemporary of Running Bear, was highly respected and feared because it was known that when he led a war party he expected the other members to live up to the high standard he set by his own actions. If, however, he found that someone in the party was not doing his duty, in the evening he would start singing a song which he had acquired through a dream. All the young men would be apprehensive, wondering which of them was to be humiliated. The others would take up the song while Eater alone would dance, imitating a wolf by placing one hand on the forehead and the other behind him to represent the tail. He would circle around, dancing in this manner, until he came to the victim. Whereupon he would stop in front of the 726 626

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

605 Reservation. She heard the car drive up and, without thinking
593 how it might be interpreted by the other two women, exclaimed: 'Oh, there is my man! I must go!' Since in that neighborhood 'my man' is commonly used to indicate husband or lover, Mary laughed. Almost immediately, however, she caught herself and straightened her face, remarking: 'I shouldn't have even thought that or laughed like I did. That man is my cousin and I should be ashamed of him.' Furthermore when Mary went out with her to get in the car, Charles insisted that Mary sit in the back seat so that everybody could see that they rode in the same car only to accommodate the white woman. Mary remarked later on: 'It is funny, but I just can't bring myself to sit down and have a conversation with my men-relatives, like white brothers and sisters do. I still have a feeling it is an awful thing to talk to my brothers, male cousins, father-in-law and Indian sons-in-law,—although I don't mind in the least talking to my white son-in-law.'"

Brother and sister were expected to grant each other's requests whenever it was in their power to do so and without complaint, regardless of the inconvenience which might be involved. The following incident illustrates how sensitive the Gros Ventres were on this point. "When the present Mrs. Takes-the-Bow was a small girl, she often was sick. One time her father's sister came into the lodge and muttered to herself: 'Oh you are just using up all my medicine in doctoring you—what is wrong with you!' Unfortunately the child's father overheard this impatient comment and was deeply hurt, because very seldom would a woman say anything like that in front of her brother. So he decided: 'My sister considers me a lot of trouble, and if that is the way she feels about it I shall never request her services again.' He meant exactly what he said. He left immediately to go on a war party. Careless of his life, he recklessly rode into the midst of the enemy and was killed."

593 One way of showing how much a woman thought of her brother
782 was for her to make offerings in his behalf. When young men
721 were going off on a war party, the sister of one of them might go outside the lodge and make a promise along the following lines: "I will give my finger as offering if my brother will come back a great warrior." It was considered a great honor, of course, to

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

have someone come back a real hero, and, although such a promise to torture oneself could be made in regard to other relatives, "it was usually a sister who thought so much of her brother who did that." Other forms of sacrifice which a girl might practice on her brother's behalf would be to take a fine robe, or something else of value, and stick it on top of the lodge saying: "I offer this that my brother may come back with good luck, bringing something fine from war." This could be even more specific in that a girl could offer, say, the tip of her finger, if her brother would bring back a particular thing, such as a scalp or a horse or a weapon. Again, should her brother be ill or wounded, a woman would be exceedingly concerned and might go so far, as in one case recorded, of promising that if he should recover she would join the Women's Lodge—"which was considered a great thing to do for your brother." 593 728 721

Usually a man would have some voice in regard to his sister's marriage and, if he were the one who made the arrangements, he received the larger share of the bride-price. It was said, too, that a brother would be especially concerned regarding his younger sister's moral conduct and might take it upon himself to keep her in line. Although parents would feel the disgrace of an erring daughter, a brother was expected to react violently. If her husband failed to punish his wife for adultery, her brother could kill her. Some instances were given, too, in which the man took his own life indirectly, by riding into the midst of the enemy without taking any precautions, because he felt so keenly the dishonor his sister who was unfaithful had imposed on him. 593 [584] [684]

Maternal Uncle and Paternal Aunt

"Because a brother and a sister thought so much of each other, they were expected to be good to each other's children." If a woman had several brothers, it was the eldest who assumed the duties of the maternal uncle and his relationship with his nephews was a direct one. Should the eldest brother be unable to undertake the responsibility another brother or male cousin was expected to do so. 604

The maternal uncle was supposed to watch his sister's children closely even though her husband was on the scene. If he did not 604 861

PLATES

142 The original photograph of Plate 1 was taken in 1887 and
291 belongs to The Boy. Shown in it are Lame Bull, The Boy's
301 father, and Crow Bull, maternal uncle of Coming Daylight. Both
302 of these men were born around 1825 and their personal experiences were often referred to by our informants as we took down the record of the old way of life. Each had been Keeper of the sacred Flat Pipe.

115 The photographs composing Plate 2, except for the one of The
133 Boy, were taken in 1940 by Dr. Karl F. Herzfeld. The first three
142 show the nature of the country around Hays on the Fort Belknap
291 Reservation; the other three show some of our informants and
292 interpreters whose biographical sketches follow.

531 In Plate 3, the shield and war medicines of Bull Lodge, father
797 of our informant, Garter Snake, represent only a few of the specimens of Gros Ventre culture collected in 1937 by Mr.
778 Richard Pohrt, of Flint, Michigan.
293
714
724

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

293
778
721
714

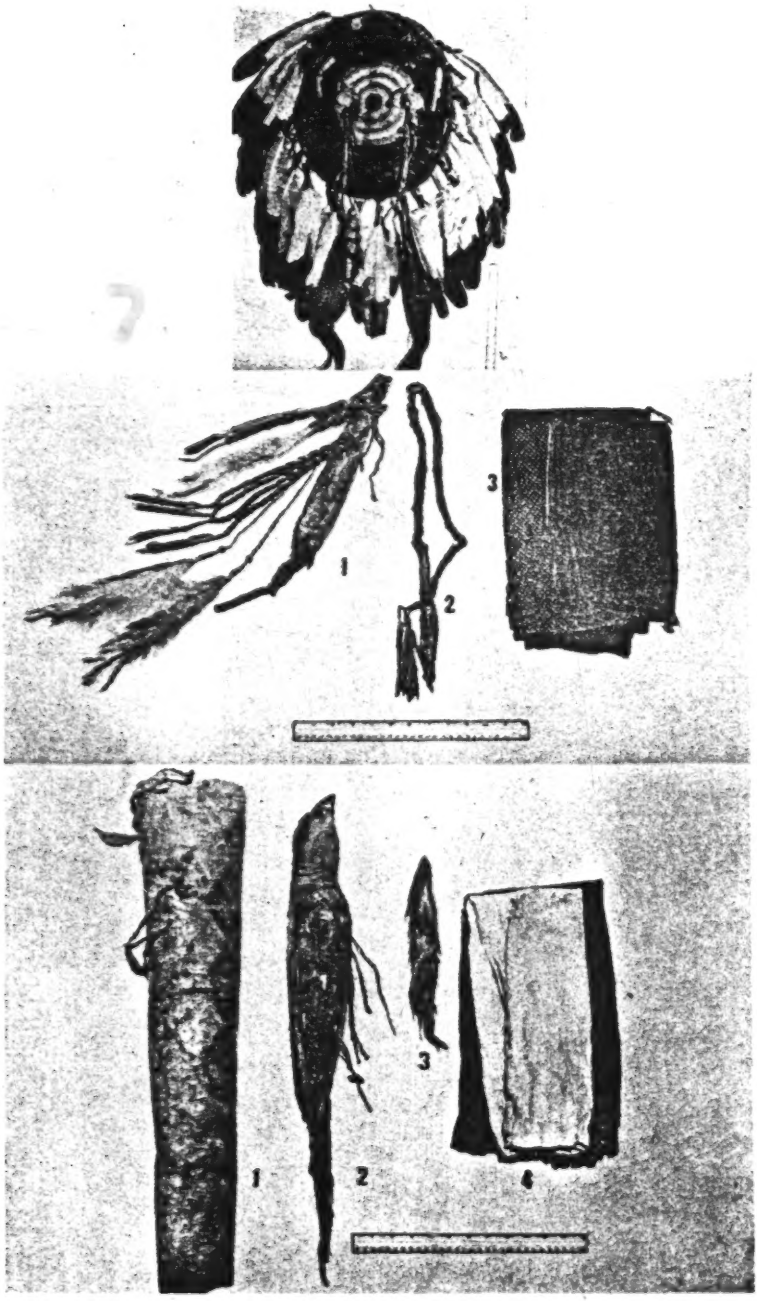


PLATE III

SHIELD AND WAR MEDICINES MADE
AND USED BY BULL LODGE

[p. 212(C)]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

776 He was the "master of life" as previously mentioned. Long life was the result of something more than conformity to "health rules," such as daily morning cold baths to harden the body.[9] "The Supreme Being allows people to live long. If he wanted, he cut off their lives." "When people die, it is the Supreme Being who cuts off their lives." "Very old people lived a long life because they were pitied by the Supreme Being." The Boy's father, Lame Bull, said that "a man lives, not his own life, but according to what is given him and wished by Ixtcibani:hahat. A man has what he has by the wish of the One Above."

776 888 The Gros Ventres understood by that that the aged had survived to old age not by accident, but by the permission and wish of the Supreme Being. It was common for young men to approach in tears a very old man or woman, offer a pipe, and request him or her to ask the Supreme Being to grant him long life, to make him a good warrior who would be immune to arrows or bullets when he was shot at.[10]

776 721 782 [755] In grave illness the Supreme Being would be appealed to to spare the sick person's life. It was a common belief that the Supreme Being would not permit a large attacking force of enemies to slaughter a smaller number at home in its own camp. When a group of young Gros Ventre recruits was leaving for World War II, the Supreme Being was prayed to in an old song that he would watch over them and let them come back home unharmed; although there were some casualties among Gros Ventre soldiers in World War II, not one of the above particular group was even wounded.

776 [171] The Supreme Being as the one who "owns everything" was the provider of food. He was not called "master of food," as was common among the northeastern Algonquians,[11] living closer than the Gros Ventres to a scarcity economy; food, it was felt, was "too little" a thing, and the title undignified. But all good things to eat, including "wild" food such as berries, fruits, roots and tubers, came from the Supreme Being and were given by him.

---

[9] Cf. Flannery, 1953, p. 144.
[10] Cf. Flannery, 1953, pp. 195-96.
[11] Cooper, 1934, p. 71.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

power from the "ghost men" by sleeping near their pictographs, but never with any success. One young man, however, once without quest got power in childbirth cases from a boss of little children who appear to him in a dream, and Singer thought these "little children" were "ghost men," but the identification is doubtful. The only message they ever got from the "ghost men" was a request or demand that the Gros Ventres go away at once as they smelt bad or made the place smell bad. On war parties or other occasions, offerings were made at the pictograph cliff to the "ghost men," who would then during the night make new pictographs on the morrow from which the future in the form of good or bad fortune could be easily foreseen by the members of the party.[20]

Supernatural power was gotten either by quest or otherwise from ghosts or, as more commonly, from non-human beings, such as mountains (or the spirit who inhabited or owned the mountains), rocks, mammals (bear, wolf, weasel, mink, coyote, rat, prairie dog and others), birds (crow, prairie chicken), snakes, spiders and so forth. "These lesser beings, while ranking a little above human beings and possessing certain superhuman powers, were under the leadership and control of the Supreme Being, from whom they had received such powers to be imparted in turn to human beings. Like Bha'a, they were, so to speak, delegated agents and underlings of the Supreme Being, put by him in charge of "the details of the whole situation," as The Boy expressed it. The powers so imparted were of many kinds, to cure, to poison or otherwise harm, to foretell, to become a great warrior, to acquire wealth, to succeed in love and gambling, et cetera, as will be described in detail later.

Non-Cult Beings

So much for the beings to whom cult was rendered in the form of prayer or sacrifice. We shall now describe the supernatural beings,—human, "humanoid" and non-human,—to whom no cult was rendered but who entered in one form or other into ritual

[20] Cf. Flannery, 1953, p. 93.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 afterwards according to the Ni:hohat story or after the great deluge according to the flood story.

Ritual sweating and use of the sweat-lodge, tsë:bätc, were resorted to by the Gros Ventres on many occasions not connected [515 721] with the sacred pipe rites,—skin and finger-joint sacrifices, war expeditions, and dreamed-of impending evils. Sweating in such cases will be dealt with in the proper places, as also sweating at the Feathered Pipe rites and Sacred lodges. The sweat-lodge rite was obligatory at the following Flat Pipe ceremonies: the three seasonal rites, the transfer rite (previously described), rites in fulfillment of a vow to smoke the Pipe or to paint its bowl, or to make a sweat-lodge for the keeper or for the Pipe, and at the disposal of offerings to the Pipe.

726 Before a war party started out, among other ceremonial ob-
*796 servances a sweat-lodge rite was commonly gone through. A Flat Pipe Keeper might on such an occasion take pity on the leader and members of the departing war party, build his own 31-stick sweat-lodge, and go through the sweating rite. If, furthermore, the keeper accompanied the war party, he might do the same from time to time during the course of the expedition.

*796 For the present we shall confine our attention chiefly to the sweat-lodge as used in the three seasonal rites, dealing first with the sweat-lodge itself, and after that with the sweating rite. We merely reiterate in passing that the sweating rite, while obligatory in a seasonal rite, was somewhat distinct from the ceremonial which followed it and which was carried out in the keeper's lodge.

346 The Flat Pipe sweat-lodge was constructed as follows. In ground
*796 plan it was more or less circular about 7 to 9 feet in diameter, with two openings, the main larger entrance at the east and the smaller exit opening at the west. The general form was nearly semi-spherical. On each side, the northern and southern, 15 willows [802] were stuck in the ground. The number 30 may represent a multiple of the sacred number three, and one of our informants conjectured, with particular reference to the 30 poles of lodge where He-who-starved-to-death slept fasting on the 30 successive nights. These 30 willows were arched over and woven fast into a ridge willow that ran the east-west axis of the structure. Thus the sweat-lodge was constructed of 31 willows in all.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

after good in Gros Ventre competitive life. Most types of power,— and not only power to acquire wealth directly,—brought material rewards. War raids had largely the purpose of acquiring horses, the main Gros Ventre wealth in earlier days, from the enemy.* Doctoring brought the practitioner large emoluments; gambling power netted the owner rich winnings. Love power, in addition to securing sex favors for its possessor, could also be a source of good profit through transfer by sale to others. Wealth among the Gros Ventres gave prestige on its own account as well as material ease and security. Further, wealth was inextricably tied up with prestige as goals sought through military, medicinal, gambling and love powers. 554 778 [721]

These were the chief advantages and profit or power which the individual had to weight against the disadvantages and cost thereof.

Many individuals, in view of the cost, neither sought nor accepted power, as we have seen.

Many others, however, men and women and even some young boys and girls, sought or accepted power, and such power was by no means confined to professional medicine men but was widely distributed among the laity. A few, but very few, children had power: the several cases recorded will be given later. But many women as well as men acquired it; what exact proportion of whole adult population is hard to say. The Boy, Thick concurring, stated: "Only a few men and women had ancestral helpers, but it was the usual thing for grownups, men and women, to have some kind of power." On another occasion, they said: "Not everyone tried to get power [by fasting on mountains] but only certain individuals. For instance, of three men only one might try, the other two might not care to try." On still another occasion, The Boy remarked: "Not all who slept on mountains got power. Lots got nothing; they didn't even dream. Only a few got power from such a quest. Some tried over and over again but never got anything. A man might spend five to seven days on the mountains and yet not even dream. If, say 30 or 40 slept on the mountains, only three or four of them might get power. Only a few Gros 778 787

* For discussion of Gros Ventres concept of wealth, see Flannery, 1953, pp. 73-79.

778 'Wife, I transfer this power to you. You go and doctor this time. I don't feel like doctoring today.' But before this she would have
426 always accompanied him in his curing practice and knew exactly what to do and sing." Such a "transfer" was purely an *ad hoc* delegation, not a surrender of his power.

Power could be completely lost by the owner either during his lifetime or at death. During the owner's lifetime it could be lost by persistent disuse, by complete and final transfer through sale or gift, by "using it up," and as a result of breach of the rules. Where, for instance, a man had power to cure only a limited number of people, say four, with the conclusion of his fourth cure, the power was "used up" and so ceased. A certain Gros Ventre who had power to cause rain and storms made much use of it in a battle with the Crow but finally used it up and was killed by them.

If a person with power had not transferred it, on his deathbed the power embodied in or associated with some material object or living thing within him would come out of him, usually out of his mouth, and so his power would die with him. Even though the root or medicine he had used but had not transferred was known to others, they would not be allowed after his death to use it in curing. Thus lots of good medicines were not used, even though they were known to be efficacious.

Use of Powers

778 We now come to rites and procedures followed in the exercise of powers for war, gambling, love and various miscellaneous purposes, including legerdemain. A consideration of the use of the very important doctoring power is reserved for separate treatment in a subsequent chapter.

The great majority of those who went out in quest of power sought power to be great warriors and to become wealthy. The two aims were ordinarily closely related. A major goal of most
[721 war parties was the acquisition of horses,—the chief wealth of
556] the Gros Ventres in the old days. Both success in war and possession of wealth brought prestige, and such prestige in the individualistic competitive culture of the Gros Ventre was eagerly sought after.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

War power usually included both a positive aspect, outstanding success in killing, wounding and capturing enemies and in taking booty, especially horses, and a negative one, luck in escaping injury. Little Man's brother had power to make his horse run so fast in war that no other horse could overtake it. 778 721

Those who sought wealth power asked mostly to have many horses, not to be poor, and "to get things easy without much effort." 778 556

"My grandmother's brother," Coming Daylight related, "the first Crow Bull went to McCann Butte in the Bear Paws to sleep. The people were camped at the bottom near the lake, and from an opening in the mountains on the other side of the lake they saw a lot of white horses come to the lake. Crow Bull was told in his dream: 'These are all your horses.' It is claimed that everybody else saw them too. After that Crow Bull always had white horses. People gave him white horses and he brought white horses home from war." 787

Cora Chandler had heard a similar story about Bear Nose who slept at the same spot. He saw (in a dream, probably) a lot of prairie dogs and was told: "These are your horses." Cora commented: "I knew the day when Bear Nose had only buckskin horses,"—of the color of prairie dogs.

On both the preceding cases, the two men who got power only to own all these horses, although, Cora thought, Bear Nose also had lots of other powers.

As regards war-power ritual we gathered only a few details, mostly from Al Chandler regarding his adoptive father, Little Man, and from Garter Snake regarding her father, Bull Lodge. 778 721

Little Man got from his brother who was killed in battle the latter's war medicine. The brother's power objects were: the dried skin of a sparrow hawk [Flaco Sparverius] with the head, claws and feathers; a shirt, tailored like an ordinary shirt, but kept painted yellow all the time and with "little holes all over it even on the sleeves and with hawk feathers on the shoulders and some on the back." The yellow paint and holes presumably symbolized the predominant rufous and buff coloring and spotted belly and sides of this fast flier. When the brother went to war, he would put this dried hawk skin on his back, and take a "little fuzzy feather" from the wing and tie it on his horse's tail, and the power

778 would make his horse go so fast that no other horse could catch
721 up with it. Little Man himself did not go out war-raiding, but once when he and some of his people while on a journey were waylaid by Piegans, he used the hawk medicine as his brother had done, and in the fight no Gros Ventre casualties occurred but three Piegan were killed. In later days, Little Man put a feather from this hawk on the horse Smokey, an entrant in the two-mile
[525] and mile races at the Fair, and the horse came in first in both races within less than an hour, while Little Man won $75.00.

Al Chandler added that "every man's war medicine was different" but gave no further details.

Garter Snake told the following story of Bull Lodge's power in the war-wealth field. "Otter Robe, his son, once came in, there being a lot of young men in there, and said to his father: 'Father, we are going out on a war party and we want to steal horses from the enemy. Could you help us so the enemy will not be able to see us and we will have luck to get these horses?' Bull Lodge replied: 'All right. I will try to see if I can. If I can I will tell you.' So he told his wife: 'Get that wooden bowl and that colt hide [objects he used in his practice]'. He smudged them four times, then set the bowl down and covered it with the colt hide, and they put out the fire. I was sitting there beside my mother. . . . When my father got through, we heard nicks and neighs of horses in that bowl. We did not see anything [any horses] but only heard them, and Bull Lodge said to his son: 'You are going to be lucky. You will get the horses.' Then he removed the colt hide and there [in the bowl] was horse manure. This he took and gave to Otter Robe and said: 'Take and dry this. And when you go out [on the raid] and get to the enemy's camp, make a smudge of a certain thing, take the manure, pulverize it, and sprinkle the powder all around the smudge. If you do this and go into that camp, the enemy are not going to see you. You can steal all the horses you want. And after you leave with the horses, there will be a big fog in that camp, so that the enemy cannot see you or follow you.' And that is what happened. The raiders got horses and brought them home, and the fog protected them."

778 Gambling power was gotten only for use in the old two-button
525 hand games. So far as our evidence goes, the possessor could use

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

 224 411

ends of the main portion of the sling, and then looped on themselves through a slit near one end. 857

The bull-roarer and buzzer were both well known to the Gros Ventre, but seem to be only children's toys. They were both called nakaa"ta" ("making cold," a name given also to the thermometer), probably from the widespread Indian idea that the bull-roarer breeds wind. The buzzer was made of a foot-bone of a buffalo, with a sinew string on each side, by which it was twirled, and then drawn so as to hum. The Arapaho type of buzzer is the same. The Gros Ventre bull-roarer seems to differ from the Arapaho form. Fig. 26 shows one of two very similar models, both of wood. The small, well-marked head, the long taper and point, and the numerous small notches, mark a distinct form. The sinew string is of about the length of the stick handle. 534 857 524 [821]

WAR.

Men generally went to war on foot, carrying food and moccasins on their backs. While on the trip they did not boil meat, but roasted it. Scouts, called "wolves," were sent out ahead. When these returned, running in a zigzag course, and shouting, it was a sign that they had seen something. If they had seen lodges, they barked like wolves. While they came, the women in the party stood in a row and sang, having made a pile of buffalo-chips. The "wolves" stopped a short distance away, and the leader of the party went to them. They came with him back to the pile of buffalo-chips, where he stopped, and, facing the party, recounted coups. After this, one of the scouts came before them and reported what he had seen. Upon this, all rushed at the pile of buffalo-chips, and kicked them about. If the enemy were near, they would now take off their heavier clothing, such as their robes, and dress and paint for war. 726 [252]

On returning to their camp victorious, the party approached stealthily, and made a charge upon it, often shooting; and sometimes the people in the tents jumped up out of their sleep in the early morning, thinking they had been attacked. The man who had killed an enemy, the one who had struck him first (whether dead or alive), and the one who had taken his gun, were held in about the same esteem. After the return to camp, a dance was made. Drums were beaten; and the women, who were standing in a curved row, danced in a circle toward the men, who stood in a row, and back again. The women carried the new scalps on sticks. If an enemy were killed near the home camp, his feet and hands might be cut off and carried on sticks, like the scalps. During this dance the man who first 727 [554] [554]

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

727 counted coup on the enemy filled a pipe, and held it for the rest of the
[554] party to smoke as they stood in a row. The returning war-party, if
[302] successful, always painted black, but if a member of their own party had been killed, they returned without rejoicing; unless sometimes, when the loss of the enemy had been greater than their own, and a relative of the dead was in the party, he might say, "One of the enemy pays for my relative. On account of the others, let us enjoy ourselves." Then the party would paint black, and celebrate. Wounds received by members of the war-party would not prevent celebration, unless, of course, they resulted fatally; and they were always regarded as an honor.

726 Some war-parties started off publicly in broad daylight, having made
727 it known that they were going; and any one who wished joined. Sometimes, perhaps, two men would agree to go, and invited such others to accompany them as they wished. Women not infrequently went with the war-parties. If a man was killed in war, his relatives, especially his parents,
[765] mourned for him. His father might go to the tent of a renowned warrior, and cry until this man became angry and announced a day for a party to start out to obtain revenge. On the day set, the party left publicly, usually on horseback.

751 A man's supernatural war paraphernalia are shown in Figs. 27, 28, and
237 29. They were obtained from a middle-aged man who had them from his
726 grandfather, who first dreamed of the magpie and the other animals con-
778 nected with the paraphernalia, and made the objects. A cylindrical raw-
293 hide case (Fig. 27), such as is found used for holding feathers and medicine
[787] among most Plains tribes, is painted with a yellow, green, and blue design
[531] resembling parfleche designs. These colors represent the various colors of the birds that were dreamed of by the original owner, and whose feathers are kept in the case. The case is called the "house" of these objects. A wing-bone is attached to the outside of the case to make another whistle from in case of loss of the finished whistle included in the outfit. A small bag containing a necklace is kept in the case. The bag (Fig. 28, *a*) is ornamented with bead-work representing a frog (kaka[a]). This frog was part of the original owner's dream. The necklace (Fig. 28, *b*) has various wasóo ("medicine-roots") on it. These are said to be neither eaten nor otherwise used, except as they are worn on the necklace. The bone whistle (Fig. 28, *c*) alluded to is attached to a necklace of otter-skin. It is blown during the fighting to prevent injury. A magpie's skin (Fig. 28, *d*) and the skin of a smaller bird (Fig. 29, *a*) are also contained in the case. The white magpie-feathers are dyed yellow. The two skins are worn at the back of the head, and prevent the wearer being injured even in a hand-to-hand fight. A head-dress of ten magpie-feathers and of a white plume on red-painted

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

237
726
293
778
751

thongs, tied together at the ends with a medicine-bag, and four brass bells (Fig. 29, *b*), is tied to the hair over the front of the head. When the warriors sing before dressing for battle, this head-dress is also used as a rattle. The medicine attached to it is chewed, and rubbed over the owner's body, as well

[531]

Fig. 27. (50-1952 a) Medicine-case for War Paraphernalia. Length, 40 cm.

as over his horse's, after he has painted himself. Two plumes of eagle-down (Fig. 29, *c*) are tied to the horse. One is tied to its fore-leg, the other to its tail. Then it will not be shot, and, if it falls, will not be hurt. In case of flight and pursuit, a little medicine that is attached to these plumes in a small

[text continues on p. 195]

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

293
726
778
[532]

Fig. 28 (50–1952 b, c, d, e). War Paraphernalia. Lengths, 15 cm., 9 cm., 48 cm., 40 cm.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

bag is given to the horse to prevent its becoming exhausted. A cloth to wrap the various feathers and the whistle completes the outfit.

A warrior's outfit that was obtained for the Museum (specimen Museum No. 50–1862 a–c) consists of a beaded knife-scabbard, carried because the owner has cut loose horses that were tied by a rope leading into a tent; of a man's awl-case, carried presumably for mending moccasins and for

[237]

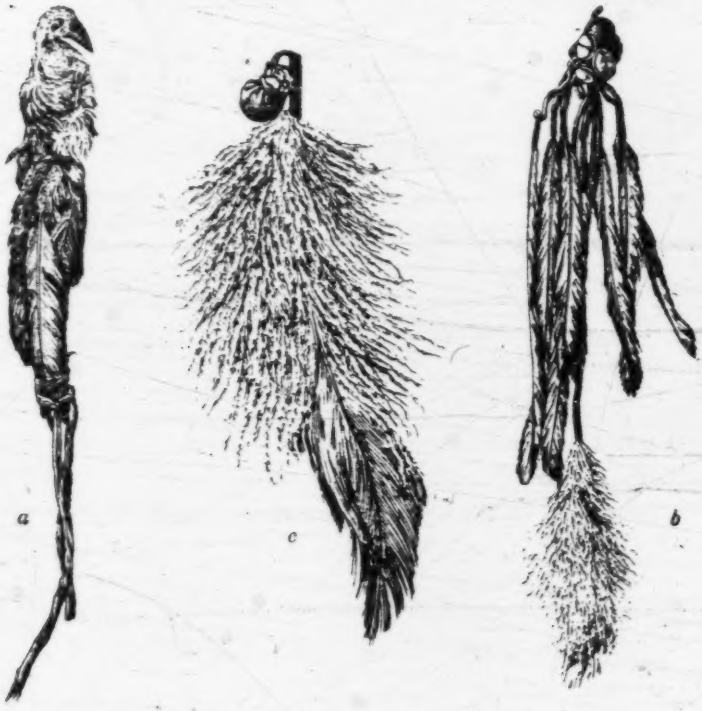


Fig. 29 (50–1952, f, g, h). War Paraphernalia. Lengths, 32 cm., 20 cm., 20 cm.

similar purposes; and of a piece of a scalp ornamented with beads, and worn attached to the shoulder of his shirt. The scabbard is ornamented with rectangular U-shaped bead-work designs similar to those in Fig. 3, and representing horse-tracks.

[787] Sometimes in dreaming, a man saw a person in battle wearing the skin of a certain animal, and fighting very successfully. He would then wear the skin of that animal. Specimen Museum No. 50–1901 is a weasel-skin

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

293 used in this way. The owner twice dreamed of a weasel, which told him to
726 use its skin. Thereupon he first wore a weasel-skin in dances, and later
751 carried it to war. Subsequently he lent it to his son and to other men who
778 went to war, and they always returned successfully.

A man to whom a fisher had appeared in a dream or vision used a fish-
[787] skin medicine-bag, and on going to war carried this with him.

A renowned warrior, dead for some time, received his personal medicine from the bears, and was forbidden to scalp, count coup on the enemy, or take away a gun. He could only kill. He once killed two Sioux with one shot, at a place which received its name from the event.

[492] A simple riding-whip (specimen Museum No. 50-1821) has on its wooden handle four red marks, each of which is said to represent an enemy struck in the face with a whip in battle.

Representations, used in the modern "war-dance," of the weapons of
532 Black-Wolf, a well-known Gros Ventre warrior, part of whose experiences
726 in war are told below, consist of a shield and spear. The shield, which is made of painted white cloth, represents the shield carried by him on an occasion when he rushed to battle with no other weapon. The shield is decorated with a blue crescent along the lower edge, representing the sun, and bordered by a wavy red line denoting lightning. The wooden spear and spear-point
[822] represent a spear with which the owner stabbed a Piegan in battle. The spear-point is painted blue and red; the blue representing iron, the red blood. Red marks on the handle of the spear represent coups.

A pair of beaded and painted moccasins executed by a woman, but
[292] designed by an old man, symbolize his exploits in war. An outside rim of beading represents the enemy's camp-circle. In the middle of the camp-circle is beaded the figure of a tent belonging to a chief. To this tent was tied a horse, which the wearer of the moccasins cut loose. This feat is represented by an outline painting of a horse and halter. Three U-shaped figures, also painted, are horse-tracks, and represent the capture of horses. On the other moccasin there are again three such figures in a row, which here were said to indicate a charge on horseback on the camp; while two other such figures, facing each other, indicate a face-to-face fight.

Curtains hanging behind the bed in front of the tent-wall were sometimes painted to illustrate the owner's achievements in war.

WAR-EXPERIENCES OF INDIVIDUALS.

114 The following narratives give an entirely personal account of the war-
115 experiences of three individuals, two of them men of about sixty years of

1: Kroeber E-8 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

age, and the third a woman probably a little older. They are not in any sense historical, but were obtained for the picture they give of the war-life of the Plains Indians. Both the men were renowned warriors. Bull-Robe, the older, has since died. In the case of neither was a complete account of all their achievements in war obtained; but both narratives probably refer to every war party or engagement in which they took part down to the point at which the narratives are broken off. All three narratives bear the stamp of naïve truthfulness; which, in view of the importance played in the life of the Plains tribes by the telling of war-exploits and the recounting of coups, is not surprising. It must be remembered that the narrators were not asked to describe the engagements and expeditions in which they were involved, but to narrate their personal share in them. This will account for the frequency with which an insignificant personal experience is told in detail and the general result of a war-party slurred over or ignored. The story told by the woman Watches-All has reference to the great disastrous expedition against the Piegans in 1867.

114
115

Black-Wolf's Narrative.

When I was a boy I heard about great deeds in war, and resolved to follow in the tracks of such men. When I was a young man I started out alone. I travelled, and reached the camp of another band of Gros Ventre on the Missouri. I ate there and went on to the Bear Paw Mountains. There I slept at the foot of Eagle Butte. I started again before sunrise and crossed the mountains, following Beaver Creek to the end of the mountains. I saw buffalo, and shot at them. Some one else was hunting these buffalo, and heard the shot. After shooting, I had left my horse tied at the foot of the butte; which I climbed in order to look over the country. Then I saw some one below me coming up the butte. A moment later he saw me. I raised my gun, but he dodged and ran off. Thinking he was one of a party, I ran off also, reached my horse, and rode into the timber. When I could hear and see no one, I rode to where there was a trading-post on Milk River. At night all the horses there ran off into the timber. In the morning an Assiniboine was about to go to get them, when I told him that I would go after them, and started with my gun and a rope. Then I saw what looked like a flock of blackbirds flying over a hill. Soon I saw they were people. At first I had seen only their heads. They were coming over the hill towards me, but on one side, in order to ambush me. Suddenly they were riding at me. At first I was as if dazzled, and it looked like a fog to me. Then I recovered my senses. I was some distance from the post. I did not run, but waited for them. Two of them with long whips were in the lead. I

159
726

l: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

159
726

stood there until they had gone by me. Then I ran. One of them shot at me, and I turned and took a shot at the leaders. Then I ran on again and they pursued me, and soon the entire party was all about me, all of them shooting. Bullets struck the ground all about me, and there was no noise but that of shooting. But I was never even scratched. Suddenly the attacking party split. A white man was running from the store with a gun to help me. I ran to him, and reached him almost exhausted. He took my hand and we ran back to the house. The enemy, however, captured all our horses, including those of the trader.

My father had sent word to the trader to keep me there if I should come, so I staid there some time; but I did not return to the camp. One day I had gone out to hobble my horse. Then the same party that had attacked me before came again. They crept up to the house, charged on it, and looked for me everywhere. An Indian woman who was there ran out on the prairie and motioned to me to go away. I cut the hobbles of my horse, jumped on it, and rode away. Looking back, I saw the party of the enemy at the house. I dismounted and lay down on the ground to hide. The woman came to me and told me that they were a party of Yanktons and other Sioux, looking for me; but by this time I knew it without being told. The Sioux looked for me all through the trader's cellar, but I was in the timber in a sort of breastwork I had dug. This was the second time I escaped from this party. Some of them said that they were trying to get the Assiniboine that was there, and some the Gros Ventre, myself. After their first failure to kill me, they had determined to come back; but I escaped them the second time also.

We were camped north of Milk River. A party of us went to where the agency then was on Milk River, and slept there. We were getting ready to start, and I was sent by the leader to saddle my horse and go ahead while they ate. A little boy was crying to go outdoors, and I opened the door for him, when I saw a Sioux a short distance outside. I shut the door and ran back to my companions in the next room. We went out with our guns, but the Sioux was gone. We watched the way he went, and saw him going over a hill westward. Then a band began to come in sight, more and more of them. They were a large party, mostly on foot. Seven or eight were mounted. There were only eight of us. It was a very windy day. The agent commanded us not to shoot, threatening to shoot us if we began fighting, and ordered us to wait until we were shot at. We went up on top of a house to watch. A man put tobacco into a blanket to take to the Sioux, and he had just got out of the door when a dog barked at the Sioux, and they shot. Then the firing began. Those of us who were on the roof sheltered ourselves behind chimneys. Two women were with us. As they hurried

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

down the ladder below, the wind blew their dresses over their heads. When the man with the tobacco was shot at, he jumped back into the house, spilling his tobacco. We were shooting at them, and the whites also were shooting. The Sioux began to retire. Then I thought I would do a brave deed. I went out into the open space before the house, wearing a conspicuous red robe and black trousers. There I jumped about while they shot at me without hitting me. Then I went back behind the house again. Soon the Gros Ventre mounted their horses and attacked the Sioux, and kept driving them before them until they drove them into the timber at the river. One of our horses was killed, and one man was creased in the leg. There were very many of them, but only eight of us. 159 726

A small Gros Ventre camp of four tents had been living with the Crow. We were on our way back to the Gros Ventre, when at night a party of Sioux stole our horses. A company of soldiers was camped near us. In the morning, when we went out for our horses, we could not find them. One of our men saw the Sioux preparing to shoot a buffalo, but he acted as if he did not see them. When the Sioux saw him, they crouched down and hid. He looked over the country with his telescope in directions other than the one they were in. Then after a while he looked at them and counted seven of them. He had miscounted, for there were eight. Then he mounted his horse and rode slowly in another direction, but when he was behind the hill he hastened back to the camp. Two of us Gros Ventre knew English, and told the soldiers of the presence of the Sioux. The soldiers started after them. A mule followed them, and when he saw the soldiers' horses, which the Sioux were keeping hobbled in a gully, he ran to join them, so that the Sioux got possession of the mule also in broad daylight. I had gone to the hill where the Gros Ventre had first seen the Sioux, and was looking for them. From there I went on to the next hill, still looking for them. Another Gros Ventre came to me and said that the soldiers wanted us to go to the next butte beyond, which was across a flat, deep gully strewn with large bowlders. A third Gros Ventre was below us and started to join us. The Sioux were behind these bowlders, and this man below us was almost among them without knowing it. Seeing them raising their heads, he shot. Then, jumping off his horse, he ran; but the Sioux shot him through both thighs. He fell, but sat up again, whereupon they shot him through the head. He was the brother of my companion and of my wife. His brother began to cry, and started to revenge him on the Sioux. Not knowing where to cross the stream before us, we jumped into it anywhere, on our horses. The stream happened not to be deep, and we crossed it safely. Then the Sioux began to shoot. My brother-in-law jumped off his horse, but I turned mine until I was out of their sight. My brother-in-law remained there fighting the

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

159
726

Sioux, while I rode around behind them towards the butte for which they were heading. There I tied my horse and then went up to watch them. Seeing them coming, I withdrew from sight, thinking they would soon stop to fight my brother-in-law, who was still pursuing them. When I thought it probable that they had stopped, I looked out again, and saw that they had indeed made a halt, and had their backs toward me. I had my two sticks for a gun-rest all ready, and raising my gun I shot. I hit one of them in the back and he fell over. He slid down the hill on his hands until he stopped, while the others shot at me, but missed. Then the soldiers approached, coming at a walk. I thought it ridiculous to go to war in that fashion. The wounded Sioux began to shoot at them. That was what they wanted, for they did not want to open hostilities; and they all dismounted and began to shoot back at him. About the last shot of the company knocked him over. Then three of us Gros Ventre made a rush to him. The two others reached him first. One of them took his gun. Another struck him, and I was the second to strike him. He was a fine-looking Sioux, with black blanket, and leggings of black flannel, with long hair tied with otter-skin, brass beads around his neck, and a beaded bag. His gun was a Sharp's rifle. We now missed one of our own men, not knowing that he had meanwhile followed the seven remaining Sioux, and headed them off. He drove them back to the high-banked gully from which they had come, and from which now they could not well come out. Now this man motioned to us to come. The soldiers said, "Let them be. They killed one of you, and you killed one of them to even matters up." But we Gros Ventre wanted more, and persuaded the soldiers to go with us. I went close up to where the Sioux were. The soldiers began to lie down and shoot into the air. They were afraid. A sergeant came up as near the Sioux as I was, but on the other side of them. Just as he was going to shoot, a Sioux shot struck close by his head. He shook his head, cursed, and took aim again. Another shot knocked off his cap. Then he ran to where I was, and I laughed at him. Now the body of the soldiers came up, shooting as they went along, so that the Sioux could not even venture to raise their heads to look. One of the Sioux was in advance of the rest, protecting them. He had two guns. I stood up to look for this man, and he raised his gun behind a sage-bush. I jumped aside, so that he lost his aim and did not shoot. Then I got behind something else and looked for him again. This time I saw the Sioux aiming at the place where I had been last. I aimed at him; he saw me and pointed his gun at me, but I shot him through the head. Then I started to go to the other side, but, as the soldiers were now coming up in formation, I went back in order to get the two guns of the man I had killed; but another Gros Ventre had already taken them both. Thereupon I went up on the bank

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

overlooking the ravine, and looking down saw a Sioux crawling. The Sioux looked back and saw my head above the bank. He lay on his belly and attempted no resistance. Perhaps he was frightened to death. I shot him, went to him, struck him, and took his gun. Then I came to where two Sioux were lying, one on top of the other. By this time all the Sioux had been killed. I had killed three of them. One Gros Ventre jumped down into the ravine to reach the Sioux, while the soldiers were still shooting, and a ball went through his foot from the root of his little toe to his big toe. Then we scalped and despoiled the Sioux. The soldiers standing by would ask us for scalps, and we would toss them bits. We got much spoil, and all of us rode back home with scalps on our bridles. We came back to our camp, and the dead Gros Ventre was buried with a military funeral by the soldiers. The soldiers cooked a great feast for us, but we, being in mourning, would not eat. The soldiers started to go back to their post, and wanted us to go with them. We set out with them, but the wounded man became so ill that we had to return. Perhaps, if we had gone on with the soldiers, we should have been treated to a good time by them. We had distinguished ourselves on that day, and I had done brave deeds. The wounded man's leg swelled to the hip, and he died.

159
726

We were camped with the Crow. Then a man told me to go with him the next morning to cut up a buffalo that he had killed. In the morning we went out while it was still dark. We passed a Crow who was herding horses, and crying in mourning. We had gone only a little distance beyond him when we heard shots, and the Crow stopped crying. Five Sioux charged on him; but he ran among the horses and escaped, while the Sioux drove off the horses. The Crow had other horses tied about their tents, and now came out. My companion and I came across two Sioux who had been left by the five who had attacked the mourner. All together there had been seven in the party. We heard these two men talking Sioux. They took us for some of their own party, and came up to us. Then they shook hands with us. We could see the flashing of the guns where the Crow were fighting the other five Sioux. Then some Crow came out to us. A Sioux who was living among the Crow also came, one of the two men we had found being his relative. He took his relative's horse by the bridle and brought him to his own tent. The other Sioux, who wore a war-bonnet, was kept by the Crow from following his companion. The Crow pursued the five other Sioux, and killed four; but one of them was mounted on a swift horse, and escaped. The Crow with us held the one Sioux's horse until a large crowd had come up. There was a Crow one of whose relatives had been killed by the Sioux, and who was determined on revenge; and he killed the Sioux who was among us. One of them took away his war-bonnet while

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

159
726

he was still alive, and another his six-shooter. Thus five of the seven had been killed. The Sioux who had been brought into his relative's tent sat with his gun leaning against his breast and a large knife in front of him. They tried to take his gun away from him, but he would not allow it. A great crowd was in the tent and around him. At last a chief came, and cried out, "You have had a long time to kill this man and have not killed him. Now go away from the tent, and let him go." Then the Sioux who lived among the Crow took this man, and accompanied him out of the camp for some distance on his way, after which he returned. Then we rejoiced over our victory. I received credit for having shaken hands with the two Sioux before a crowd had come up and surrounded us.

The Crow, Assiniboine, and Gros Ventre were all camped together. Some men were off from the camp hunting buffalo, when a Piegan war-party attacked them. The hunters fled to the camp, and the Piegan threw up breastworks by digging holes in the ground in a large flat. A large crowd of people was there fighting them, each man trying to outdo the others so as to receive the most honor. Then I determined to be as brave as I could, so that the two other tribes would think highly of me. When I came to the place and saw where the Piegan were, I rode right on without stopping my horse. The Piegan were in their holes, and I rode between two of them, so that I was exposed to the firing of those on both sides, as well as to the shooting of my own people. Then I jumped from my horse. I saw a number of brave young men from our tribe come toward the holes, jumping from side to side so as not to be hit. When they were near, the Piegan opened fire on them, and an Assiniboine was hit, being shot through both hips. I heard another shot, and at the very moment saw a horse fall with its neck broken. I saw another man riding in front of the enemy, and heard a shot; and this man fell, shot through both his forearms. He was a chief. Another man was shot in the belly; the ball went in and came out just under the skin. Then we all made a charge on the holes from all sides. There were three holes altogether. In two of them were two men each; the other contained a great many. I charged against one of the holes, and found two men lying in this with their heads against the breastwork. I stabbed one of them in the neck with my spear. The spear struck bone, and stuck fast. I tried to pull it out, and the man backed away from the spear across the hole to the other side, when the spear came out. Then the other Piegan jumped out of the hole with a long double-edged knife, but without a gun. Every one ran off, except myself. I backed away a little. Then the Piegan called to me to come on, and ran out to me. I advanced, holding my spear out. The Piegan ran straight on to this, piercing his breast about at the base of the sternum. Then he backed off, pulling the lance out of

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

my hand. For a while it stuck in him, the end bobbing up and down; then it dropped on the ground and I picked it up again. The Piegan fled. I did not pursue him, but ran to the hole where he and his companion had been. The Piegan I had stabbed first was lying on his face with a gun in his arms. Dashing over him at a run, I caught the gun-barrel, and, without stopping, ran on, turned, and ran back. This was one of my earliest deeds of distinction in war, and was highly thought of. Such a deed was what I had been wishing to do ever since I had been old enough to go to war, and now I had done it. When a dance was held afterwards, the people could be heard calling out my name. All the Piegan, twenty in number, were killed. Later on, three more were found and also killed; so that the whole party was exterminated, only one of them escaping. At the time we did not know it; but he reached the Piegan, and informed them of the fate of the party, so that they came against us to obtain revenge. Our tribes were moving and had just made camp. An Assiniboine left it to hunt buffalo. The Piegan war-party came across him, killed him, and secured his horses. No one knew that the Assiniboine had been killed, and no pursuit of the attackers was undertaken. The Piegan then went on a high ridge and threw reflections from a mirror on the camp, as a challenge. When this was seen, everybody mounted and dashed off towards the enemy in haste. I took nothing with me but my shield. The Piegan were found on the other side of a ravine. A Piegan was killed; but the others escaped with his body. All that we secured was his rifle, which he dropped when he was shot. For a long distance we pursued the Piegan; but finally they swung us back, and drove us just as hard as the horses could run. At last we stopped running, and fought. One Gros Ventre was killed, and another was shot through the hand, the bullet striking the sternum and being stopped. That was all that happened in this fight. It was considered something of a distinction to carry a shield in battle; a man with a shield being more shot at than others, because he was more conspicuous, and because shields were always desired for capture. I also rode a pinto horse, which made me more conspicuous.

Once we were challenged by the Sioux. The Sioux sent word by the Assiniboine that they would come and exterminate our camp. We were only one band, a small part of the tribe. We made our camp near a black butte, above where Havre now is. The Sioux camped at Three Buttes on this reservation. At this time we already had many rifles. When we received the challenge, we went to the trading-post and bought large quantities of ammunition and new guns, until we were fully prepared. A few nights later the enemy came. It was dark, so that we knew nothing of their approach. A young man was off from the camp crying. It was early in the

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

159
726

morning, and still dark. The Sioux tried to approach him, but he saw them and ran back. The camp was within the semicircle of a high bluff; but the bluff was not very steep. On top of the bluff we had been making intrenchments. It was now about daybreak. My family had already started a fire. I was lying on my side, when I heard a strange noise, like wind but different. It was the enemy coming, and the sound of their approach travelled through the air from above and into the lodges. An old woman came into our tent to get fire. She took coals and went out. She had gone only a few steps when I heard a shot. I jumped up, and there was a war-yell. I started out with my gun, but my father told me to lie down: so I lay until the shooting was over. On all sides I could hear horses falling; some being shot, and some trying to escape and being thrown when they reached the end of their ropes. When the first volley of shooting was over, I jumped up, and ran up the bluff to the edge and looked over. A solid mass of Sioux was there. A solid flame extended all along the edge of the semicircular bluff, so many were shooting. All the horses in the camp were exceedingly wild, but finally we all mounted. Then we charged the enemy and drove them. Most of our horses that had broken loose ran in the direction of the enemy, so that they captured many of them. Some of the Sioux were on foot. On their right, one man was running somewhat behind the rest. I pursued him, shot, and killed him. Then I ran toward him. The enemy turned and fired at me; but without stopping I jumped on my horse, ran to the dead man, struck him with my whip, and took his gun and his powder-horn. The Sioux shot at me in vain. So many shot, that it looked as if they were throwing quantities of fire at me; for it was yet not quite light. Soon it was broad daylight and the fight went on, but the Sioux retreated fighting. Two Gros Ventre were wounded. A girl had been wounded in the camp while lying asleep. The bullet entered her knee and travelled up the thigh. On this occasion, also, I earned distinction. There were more Sioux than Gros Ventre; but they fled. Some in their flight threw away their clothing, and returned home naked. A woman who was with them threw away her dress, and reached her camp naked. Some of the Gros Ventre families did not have a single horse left, as the Sioux had captured the stampeded horses. This was about 1875.

Bull-Robe's Narrative.

I was a young man when I went on my first war-trip. We started out from the Little Rocky Mountains, crossed the Missouri, and went to where the Yellowstone comes out of the mountains. There we came on a Crow camp. We made preparations, and at night stole eighty horses. I myself

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

took five. Going back to where our party had camped last, we found a Blackfoot war-party. We went on by them, and the Blackfeet went against the Crow. After sleeping a little, we went on for the remainder of the night and all next day. We ate at the Mussel-shell, and continued running our horses until we reached the Little Rockies. One of our party took two shields hanging on poles at the back of a tent, and one of us cut loose a horse which was tied by a rope passing into the door of a tent. After I returned I was at the camp for some time. Then I started out again. The same night that we had left we were overtaken by another party from our camp, who told us that a camp of Flatheads were in the vicinity. At that time the Piegan were with the Gros Ventre. A number of Gros Ventre and Piegan had already gone to the Flatheads and established peace with them, and were now among them. Accordingly, when we came to a Flathead who was herding horses, he made no attempt to escape. We did not understand this, but went up to him as if without intention to hurt him, and then one of our party, drawing a revolver, shot him through the breast. Then we immediately stampeded his horses. The Gros Ventre and Piegan who were visiting the Flatheads still had their horses saddled, and, joining the Flatheads, pursued us. We took refuge in the timber, and the pursuers set it on fire. It was very hot in the smoke and fire, with the tied horses bucking and trying to break loose. Then one of the Piegan with the Flatheads called to us who we were. Answering in Gros Ventre, one of us asked them if the people there were Gros Ventre, and they said, "Yes." Then they called us to come out of the timber, and we came and went to the Flathead camp all together. We passed by the man who had been shot, who was lying wounded, not yet dead. I had not yet dismounted, riding a horse that belonged to another man, and was afraid they would try to take my horse. My party soon left, and hardly were we gone when the Flatheads began to attack the friendly party of Gros Ventre, and drove them out of the camp. These people were of another band from ourselves, which was the reason that we did not know of their being with the Piegan. When the Flatheads attacked them, we all ran, and I was the first to return to camp, so that I know nothing that happened further.

After some time a war-party started again. There were four of us. Near the mountains we saw a Crow camp. We stole horses. I took two. We wanted more horses; so, turning those we had captured loose where they would not be seen, we went up into the mountains, and camped there that day. At night we went down to the Crow camp again. This time I stole five horses, and each of the others two. Then we returned with our horses to the camp of our people. But we did not sleep even one night there. We returned the very day we came, with another party starting out against

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

159
726

the Crow. This time I took three horses. One of our party took a shield, and three each cut loose a horse from a tent. When we returned, we found that our people had moved to Teton, where we finally overtook them with our captured horses.

I started on another trip. Following the Missouri down, we saw the buffalo leaving the river on both sides, showing that some one was coming. We sent out four men to scout, and waited until they came back. They said that whites were coming up the river, dragging a boat. We went to their camp at the mouth of a creek, and were treated well, being given ammunition and tobacco. A Gros Ventre woman captured by the Crow was with the whites on her way back to the Gros Ventre. From her we learned where the Crow were. Some of our party went back up the stream with the whites, but the rest of us crossed the river and went on. We came to where there was a small creek and a high rocky cliff. We stopped there and ate, and rested at night. We were smoking, when one of us said, "A herd of buffalo is coming. I will go and kill one." Another of us said, "First see what it is." He looked, and saw that it was a large party of Crow. We withdrew into the shade of the cliff. The Crow came extremely near, and sat down. They had seen our tracks, and said very little, and that in whispers. One of us said, "I think that it is the Piegan;" for we knew that a party of Piegan were in the neighborhood. Two of the horses of the Crow came so near us that we could have picked up their ropes. Then two men came up to their horses, and, feeling around in the little creek with their whip-handles for water, stooped [illegible] drink. One of our men said in Piegan, "Friends." The Crow jump[illegible] and their horses stampeded; we yelled, shot, and pursued, wound[illegible] one man. It was bright moonlight; but in the shadow of the cliff we had been invisible to the Crow. Soon the Crow turned and charged us, driving us before them. Then we turned, and drove them; and so on, back and forth. Whenever we got under the cliff and gave our war-yell, the echo strengthened it, and we frightened the Crow back; but the Crow would not leave us, so that we had to put up breastworks to defend ourselves. We fought all night, and at daybreak the Crow left us. Seeing a rocky butte, we said, "We will go up there. This is a bad place. Day is coming on, and if they charge us again, they might kill us." So we went up on the butte, taking with us a number of articles we had captured when the Crow ran the first time. Then we called to the Crow to come on; but they were leaving and went off. So we took charcoal, and made paint of it to put on our faces, and began to dance as a trial; but one of us said, "This does not satisfy me. I am going on." Then the rest of us all decided to go on too. We left what we had captured, taking only the best pieces. We went on to where we had been

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

159
726

told the Crow were, and found them there. But first we met a party of Gros Ventre and Piegan. They were coming away from the Crow, but now went back with us against them. At night three of us, including myself, tried to get away their horses from two men who were herding, while the rest of the party went into the camp. They captured many horses there; but we three got none, because the herders were watching too closely. Now it was nearly daylight and the rest of our party had gone, and the Crow had discovered the theft. Then we three knew that we could not escape with the rest of the party, for we were unmounted. So we went into the timber not very far from the Crow camp, and hid. During the day a Crow came near us with a large bunch of horses to water them. We said to each other, "When he has watered them, let us each catch a horse, and flee into the mountains." The Crow went back, leaving his horses, and we each took one, — I, a white one; one of the other men, a painted one; and the third, a mouse-colored one. Then we escaped into the mountains without having been seen. We came across another bunch of horses and started to drive them off. Two were hobbled, and I dismounted to cut them loose. A Crow came out of the timber and shouted. He had a gun, but was too frightened to shoot. Thinking there might be others, I jumped on my horse, and we all rode off back on the mountain, leaving the horses we had just found. From the mountain we could see how, when the Crow came to the camp, there was a stir all over it. That night we stole eleven horses. We killed a buffalo, ate, and then went back, with these eleven horses and the three we were riding, to our camp in the mountain. At night we went to get more. Crossing the river, we came to a herd of twenty-three horses, and began to drive them off. Then one of us said, "Something comes up in my mouth that tastes like blood." He had a hemorrhage. Then we ran our horses all night and all the next day, for we were riding good animals. Coming to buffalo, we killed one, and ate. Then we saw the buffalo coming towards us. Watching, we saw that Crow were coming in pursuit of us. They were perhaps a mile away. We fled, and the Crow pursued. Once they would gain, and then we. If we had not had good horses, we should have been killed. Turning suddenly, we went up into a mountain, so that the Crow lost our track. All the next day, however, we fled, and at night came across a camp where a Gros Ventre and a Piegan, on the war-path, were snoring. We waked them, told them that the Crow were pursuing us, and all five of us fled. We fled during the next day. Then we stopped running. These two men had captured a number of horses, so that we had sixty-two in all. I myself had two; my two companions, one each. When we returned, we did not go out for a time. It was now winter.

Then a party started and I went with them. We met five Gros Ventre

1; Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

159
726

who were bringing ninety horses they had taken from the Crow. From them we learned their location. After about ten days, the Chinook blew, so that the snow was all gone. As we were travelling, we heard a shot in the air above, and said that it must have been Above-Nix'a^{n}t. Some of the five men we had met were going with us. When we came near the Crow camp, we saw the Crow coming out for buffalo, so we returned to our last camp. At night we came again, and took one hundred and eighty-seven horses. I took six fast ones. Then some of our party took this herd home; but I and some others staid there, not yet having had enough. We stole thirty horses, and, sending these back by some of the party, staid to get more. The next time we took forty-one, which we also sent back. The next time we got nine. These we sent back too, and then took seven more. Then we took successively eleven and twelve, and nine more,— all from the same camp. After this we went there four times, but could get no more. Then we came the thirteenth time, and stole ninety. All this was in one trip. Then the Crow found us out, and we had to flee.

I went on another trip against the same band of Crow. A horse stood with his rope leading into a tent. I do not know whether it was tied inside, or held by some one. I cut it loose, jumped on it, and rode off. That was all I took on that trip.

I started out again in autumn. We fought with the Crow, and a Gros Ventre was wounded, being shot through both hips. Nothing else came of that fight.

Then I went out again, and this time stole three horses.

I started out again, and while we were travelling we saw an elk. I went to head it off, but as I could not shoot it I went back. Returning, I could not find my party. It was a large flat, and, hearing shots, I thought my party were shooting elk, when a party of Snakes on horses came towards me. I fled, but being on foot they soon caught up with me and surrounded me. They all shot, and I do not know how it is that they did not hit me. I was numb, and did not think of my gun. Coming to my senses, I seized my gun, and raising it drove them all about. Then I ran to the timber, and, jumping into the brush, stopped short. A Snake with a tomahawk and shield was pursuing me. He saw me as I was raising my gun, and held up his shield before him. I lowered my gun, aimed at his belly, shot, and hit him. Then I ran without stopping, and escaped. Thirteen in our party were killed by the Snakes; but I, though I was alone, escaped. Most of those in our party who were not killed were children, young boys who had gone along.

Again I went out. We were all mounted. Crossing the Yellowstone, we came to the Crow, and about noon charged on the horses that were near

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the camp. The Crow began to shoot, and our party turned; but I continued riding straight on between the Crow camp and the herd of horses, paying no attention to the shots, and succeeded in driving off the entire herd. I had thirteen shots in my shirt, and seven of the eagle-feathers on my shield were cut off by bullets, and my horse was shot through the neck. I was wounded, being creased on the hip. When our party saw me riding on, two of them followed me. One of these was shot in the belly so that his intestines hung out; the other was shot in the arm. So three of our party were wounded, but I only slightly.

159
726

I started out again. We were all on horseback. Just north of where the Yellowstone comes into the Missouri, the Crow were about to camp. We killed three, and then went into the timber. The Crow came and made a charge on us, and we fled. So far, I had only led my best horse, but now I rode him. The entire Crow camp pursued us. We also were a large party. As we fled, two of our men on slow horses called to me to come and protect them, for they would be killed. Becoming angry, I turned and rode straight at the Crow. Turning them, I rode among them, scattering them on all sides. The noise of the guns was one continuous roar. I had only a sword with which I slashed and cut. Then I rode back, and the Crow followed me. Two or three times I turned them back. Then a Crow dismounted, aimed, and shot as I swerved my horse. The horse was shot in the ribs. By this time those Gros Ventre who had been the first to flee, had selected a good place to fight, and had thrown up breastworks. Then I went out ahead of the others on foot. The Gros Ventre shot a Crow, and I ran forward and took his gun. I was jumping about constantly, so much did they shoot at me. The Crow charged me, but were not brave enough to drive me back. Two of our men came to me, and we stood below a little ridge. The Crow women shouted, and some of them cried for the dead; but it did them no good. About sunset they stopped fighting, and retreated. Then we got up, put the scalps on a pole, and danced, taunting the Crow. All the Crow women and some of the men cried. At night we started back, and, as we were travelling, two men of the party secretly left us, and went back to steal horses. We waited for them. One of them came back bringing horses, and after a while we saw the other also coming along the edge of the river. He had succeeded in stealing a robe and a shield.

I went out again with a mounted party. Two men went ahead to scout. They went in the wrong direction, and finally saw an Assiniboine camp behind us, not far from where we were camped. Then we turned our attention to it. Two Assiniboine came out from the camp for buffalo, and, looking over the hill, saw us and returned. We now went so near the camp

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

that we could see the children playing. Then I said to the man in the party that had the swiftest horse, "Lend me your horse, and I will charge on the camp and carry off one of the children." So he gave me his horse; but the others in the party said to him, "You ought not to give it to him. He is crazy and will do anything, and will surely be killed." So the man took his horse away from me again. Then we lay in a gully, waiting for an opportunity. Seeing two horses coming from the tents, we made a charge, and captured them. The Assiniboine did not offer to fight. Ours was a large party, and they were afraid. So we captured these two horses in broad daylight. And that was all that happened on that trip.

The Gros Ventre camp moved to the mouth of Milk River, on a point of land. I was sitting in my tent smoking, and decided to look after my horses. When I went out from the camp, some one came running, asking, "Is that you?" When I said, "Yes," he said, "I have seen some one coming." Knowing that he meant strangers, I ran to my tent and got my gun. Going out with my companion, we saw four of the enemy. He shot, but I pursued them without shooting. I separated one from the three others and pursued him, driving him straight towards our camp. He became so frightened that he ran into a tent. Women were inside doctoring. He went behind the doctoring woman and held her around in his arms. I followed him in, and ordered the women to go out, as I wanted to kill the man. Some of them held me; but I said, "He is an enemy, and I will kill him. *He may hurt some of you.*" So they went out, and the man huddled against the wall of the tent. I fired two shots into him. He jumped up and yelled, and I took a double-edged knife and stabbed him. He took a long time to die, lying groaning. I cut off his entire scalp; then the people began to come in. One man cut off the long hair from the knee of the buffalo-skin lying on the bed, thinking it was the man's scalp. The stranger proved to be an Assiniboine. The Crow and Gros Ventre were camped together at the time.

The camp was moving eastward, hunting buffalo. Two companies of soldiers were seen coming, and everybody went to meet them, hoping to get something to eat from them. When the soldiers left, one man with his wife staid with them for the night. In the morning he left the company of soldiers he was with to go to the other one that was camped near by. While going, he was attacked by Piegan, shot and wounded, and only escaped through the nearness of the soldiers. His wife informed the Gros Ventre that her husband had been shot by Piegan. All the Gros Ventre and Crow started out, and soon saw the Piegan going over the hill. They pursued them over a flat. They thought the Piegan a war-party, and did not suspect that they came from a camp near by. They came suddenly on their

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

159
726

camp, from which all the Piegan now issued, whereupon the Gros Ventre and Crow fled. Their horses were already tired and were becoming exhausted. So some half-Piegan who were with the Crow said that they would make peace. Four of them stopped, motioned, and spoke in Piegan. Then they shook hands with the Piegan. The Gros Ventre meanwhile told those of their men whose horses were most exhausted to continue on, and they did so. The Piegan chief asked if Many-Birds were among the Gros Ventre. He said, "I want to see him. He once saved my life." Then they called back among those who were still fleeing for Many-Birds, and he answered that he was there. A Piegan chief rode up to him and asked him whether his horse was tired. Many-Birds said, "Yes." The Piegan told him, "Take mine. It is fresh. You helped me, and I want to save your life, for the Piegan might still attack you. But they are my children, and I do not think they will." So he exchanged horses with Many-Birds, and gave him his gun and powder-horn also. Then they parted, and all returned except the four half-Piegan, who went with the Piegan. In the evening three of these returned to the Crow, but the fourth one staid with the Piegan over night. In the morning, when he started to return, he met one of the other three. This man (who was really a Crow that had been captured by the Piegan, but had gone back and lived again with the Crow) now had stolen a herd of horses, and was fleeing once more to the Piegan. The one who was returning to the Crow suspected what he had done, and thought that he might try to shoot himself. The traitor did suddenly shoot; but the other was prepared, saw him, and ducked behind his horse. After the shot, he pursued the other man, who fled; but, his horse stumbling, he fell, and the pursuer shot him. Thereupon he drove the stolen horses back to the Crow camp and told that he had killed the traitor. Then the man's relatives went out, buried him, and mourned over him; but the rest of the camp celebrated over his death. That night, after the dance was over, all agreed that it would be well to watch for the Piegan. So the men all watched. I sat by my hobbled horse. Suddenly close by me I saw the flame of a gun and heard a shot. I ran toward the place, but three or four were already upon the man and had struck him. When I reached him, he kicked me in the breast. Seizing his foot, I cut it off with my knife. So we killed him. We never knew of what tribe he was. He was dressed very poorly, with ragged leggings.

We were moving down along Milk River, and made the crazy-dance. A party of Gros Ventre went to war together with some Bloods. Very soon after they started, one of each tribe in the party was killed. The others returned, and the parents of the dead men mourned. I still had the paint of the crazy-dance on me. Then an old man called to me, "Why do you sit still? You ought to pity your mourning grandfather. Go in advance

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

159
726

of the camp to scout." So I went ahead of the camp as it moved At the mouth of People's Creek I crossed the river with two companions. Then we saw buffalo. I sent one man to drive them towards myself and my other companion. He drove them, and we ran the buffalo and killed one. We began to cut it up. Then I started to go on with one of my companions while the other finished cutting up the meat. Then he followed us. Looking back as we rode over a ridge, we saw two men on foot approaching him. We motioned and shouted to him, and when he came up asked him, "Did you see nothing?" He said that he had not, and we told him that two men had nearly succeeded in killing him. He had had no cause for suspicion, since the buffalo all about him were still and unalarmed. Then I said, "These are the men that did the killing a few days ago. Now we will take revenge. We have the advantage, for we are three to two. Each of you will take a powder-horn, but I will take both their guns." Then the two men came towards us without offering to fight, and I went to meet them. I shook hands with one and took away his gun, shook hands with the other and took his gun too. Then I said to my companions, "Now is your chance to kill them." But they would not do so. They did not want me to have both guns. So I said, "If you will not kill them, let us take them to the camp and feed them to the dogs." So I took one on my horse, and one of my companions took the other, and we rode double. I made the one with me shoot off his gun. I thought that when he came to be killed, he might hurt some one in the camp. And I told my companion to make the one with him shoot off his gun also, which he did. Now both their guns were empty. We came near the camp, called out, and at once the whole camp became lit up. It was night. The chief came, and asked, "What is it?" I said, "I have your enemies. I bring your food." Then the chief called out, "Bull-Robe has brought your enemies. Do with them as you please." Then the man mourning for the killed Gros Ventre came out, and I told him, "Take your revenge;" but he would not kill them. They took the two men into the camp and set them free. They were Assiniboine.

I started again to go to war. There were Crow and Cree and Assiniboine and Gros Ventre in our party. We saw the Piegan camp. We dressed in our war-ornaments, and I tied up my horse's tail. Then the leader of the party called me a coward, and said I only fought when I was drunk. Taking my whip, I held it to my mouth like a bottle, as if drinking. "Well, now I am drunk," I said. "I will show you what I will do. You will go your way, and I will go mine." Accompanied by a Crow, I went toward the Piegan camp. The remainder of the party approached the camp from all directions. A Piegan came out, and when he was some distance from the camp we two charged on him. I was in the lead, but my horse stepped

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

159
726

into a hole, stumbled, and lost his gait; and the Crow passed me, struck the Piegan, and shot him. The Piegan fell, started to get up again, and I jumped on him astride his body, cut his head and took his scalp. Then we fled. Seeing some of our party, I called to them, "This is the way to do. That chief is nothing." As we fled we saw the Piegan sitting up, holding the skin of his forehead with his hand in order to raise his eyebrows from his eyes so that he could see. The blood was spurting from him the length of this room. So I said, "You had better kill the poor fellow. He is still sitting up." Then some of us went back and killed him. We returned, and celebrated our victory.

I went with another war-party to Sweet-grass Hills, in the Piegan country. In the morning, as we were going, I smelled something like distant fire. "I smell something like fire," I said. They said to me, "You smell something in your nose." So we joked one another until all of them smelled it. Then we sent out a scout. He came back, and reported that a hunting-party was off to the left of our route, and that they were packing up to move. Then I said, "Let us go ahead of them to a place where they will pass, and charge on them." We went down a ravine until we came to where it spread out and was flat. There we lay down, and one of us watched if the Piegan were coming. When we asked him if the Piegan had come, he said, "No." Some of them had already passed by. Either he had not seen them, or he did not want to announce it. Then hearing something like talking, and thinking, "That sounds like talking," I raised my head, looked, and saw part of them already gone by. So saying, "Only dogs stand and watch their food," I charged and the rest followed. The Piegan had their horses loaded with meat. As we came, the women ran, scattering and screaming. Seeing fifteen loaded horses, some of them painted horses, I went to drive them back. The Piegan men who were in advance now came back, charging us, surrounding me, shooting, and trying to drive me away from the horses; but I would not leave them, however much they shot, and kept driving the horses into the ravine. Then Many-Birds came to me, saying, "I am with you to stand by you." Taking the rope of one of the horses I was driving, I gave it to him, telling him not to let it go. This was in the morning, and we fought all day. The Piegan made their camp near by. It was a hot day, and having no water we suffered much from thirst. We unloaded meat from the horses, cooked some of it, and ate. We tied some of the horses fast, but some of them we could not tie; and part of these the Piegan recaptured. We killed three Piegan, but the Piegan secured their bodies. Two Gros Ventre were wounded; one of them low in the leg, the other creased in the back. In the evening we went to a rocky hill, having taken what meat we wanted and left the rest on the ground. Instead of

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

159 726

going on, we stopped behind the hill. When the Piegan rode up to the meat in order to recover it, we gave them a volley, shooting several of them off their horses. They fled; but we rode on, looking for water, until we came to a creek, where we sat drinking a little at a time, quenching our thirst. Then we went home.

I started to go to war again. We found a Piegan camp, and approached it. The others did not want to charge, as the distance to the camp and back again to a place of safety was too great. Then I was going to make the charge alone. Some of our party happened to see five Piegan hunting a buffalo, and called to me what they had seen, telling me to come. So I rode in that direction, but did not see the Piegan. When I came near, I saw them riding toward the timber, and at once rode after them. The Piegan jumped off their horses and abandoned them, making for the timber; but I headed them off just before they reached it. One Piegan was in the brush on the ground, and I tried to ride him over. The brush was in the way, and my horse jumped over him. As I passed, I struck at him with my lance, and he shot up at me; but we missed. Then I went at him again. The Piegan had his gun aimed at me; but I rode straight on and pierced him in the breast, so that he shot to one side. Another one came for me with an arrow on his bow. I pierced him in the breast also, so that he dropped his bow. Then my party reached the place and killed the other three, I having killed the first two. We took the scalps of the five men and everything that they had.

When I went out again we saw smoke of a camp. Then we prepared ourselves and painted. A Crow in the party had his little boy with him, who was old enough to ride his horse well. The man took a large shell gorget from his throat, which he wore as an amulet, and now gave it to his son. Then the boy said, "You want me to do something great. I am only a little boy, but I will do something. You must not mourn for me if I am killed. Tell my mother not to cut her hair except a little, for I do not like it if people cut their hair." Then his father gave him a crooked lance; and the boy ripped and tore off his leggings and his shirt, and they put him on a horse. Suddenly the boy hit his father's hand with the whip, so that he let go the bridle, and then shot ahead. I was leading, but the boy went past me. I did not try to keep ahead of him, but let him go to see what he would do. Then we saw that the people were whites; but the boy kept riding straight on. He charged a shelter and rode right over it; but the men who had been in it had already started, and were on their way. The boy kept on and rode up to them, and, as they stepped aside for him, he struck one of them across the back with his crook. Then we staid with these whites over night. In the morning we went on, and soon saw what looked like a party with wagons.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

159
726

We went to see. They were Indians on horseback, riding so close together that they looked like wagons. They went into a place where we could not well attack them, and we went on. Then we came near Fort Benton. To avoid being seen, we had to ride along a bank near the river, sometimes in the water. A companion and I raised bunches of sage-brush, and lay behind them on the top of a bluff, watching. We saw two mounted men leaving the trading-post. We went back and told the party, and I said, "I will charge on them." All wanted to be with me. I told them, "You do not know your hearts, but you say you want to charge." I went ahead, and, when we came on the ridge, saw the two men riding slowly along. I signed to the party to be quiet; but when they came up on the ridge they gave a war-yell, and the two men fled. I was already near them, and gained on them. Riding up, I struck one across the face with my whip. He had drawn his gun on me, but it was too late to shoot. After I had struck him, I wrenched his gun from him and stuck it through my belt. Seizing him by the hair, I swung my horse against his, and threw him off, then let him fall. Then I pursued the other. Him also I whipped in the face twice. He too was going to shoot, but when I struck him he could not see anything. I could have wrenched his gun away also, but did not do so. I seized his hair, and dragged him off his horse by swerving mine into his. Following up the horse, I caught it and led it back. Then I saw a great fight in the flat below. Giving my captured horse to one of my men, I went straight at the enemy, who were unmounted Bloods. They were in a line, and I went to ride past their front. I galloped down the middle towards them, and they all fired at me. Then, knowing that their guns were empty, I rode straight into them, knocking them in all directions. Perhaps my horse did it. I counted that I struck seven. Then I rode for my life. We were still fighting, when a white man came and told us to stop. He said to us Gros Ventre, "You have already beaten them enough." So we stopped, and all went to the fort. On our way, I alone charged on the Bloods, and struck an elderly man and his wife. We started to go into the enclosure at the fort, when the gates were shut on us while most of our party were still outside. They had the captured Bloods' horses, and among them, unknown to us, some horses belonging to the whites. Then they let me go out to bring back our men with the whites' horses. Two of our party had already gone off with two mules, but we drove the remainder into a corral. There were so many horses that it could hardly be told to whom they belonged. Then we all camped together, Crow and Gros Ventre and Bloods. There was a Crow woman with the party. A young good-looking Blood became enamoured of her, and made advances to her. She told the Crow, who said to her, "Proceed with him, and we will kill him." Then she went out on the

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

159 prairie, and he followed and met her. This she did three or four times, until he was very much in love with her and wanted to marry her. She said 726 that if he would go with her, she would marry him. He was afraid of the Gros Ventre. Then the Crow told us to go in advance, in order that he might go with them. The whites distributed food, guns, ammunition, and blankets among us all. Then we Gros Ventre went off, but lay down behind a ridge. The Crow gave the Blood four horses for himself and his wife, and they started to go to the Missouri. The man whose wife this woman was pretended that she was not his wife. He rode alongside, and, when the Blood's attention was directed elsewhere, killed him. Then we Gros Ventre and those of the Crow with us came out from where we had been hiding behind the hill, and danced, while the remaining Crow brought his scalp. From there we went home. We crossed the Missouri at a place called Magpie Tail, where there are steep hills. We came on a Crow camp, and made a charge on it. One of the Crow charged into it, striking and whipping every one, as if out of his senses. One of the men in camp became angry, pulled him off his horse, hit him, kicked him, and pulled his hair. The man who had charged got up laughing.

Watches-All's Narrative.

Once I gambled with a Crow woman and lost my beads, and my mother made me cry. The next day a war-party started out, and, because my mother had made me cry, I went with them. All of the party were on foot, except two (women?) on horseback. After we had stopped for the night twice, my mother came after me with a horse for me to ride. We went northward against the Piegan. When we came to mountains, all the women in the party went out to pick choke-cherries. The road was impassable from mud, and it was stormy. Some young men climbed the mountain to look for camps. It was snowing hard and they could not see far; but in the afternoon it cleared, and with a telescope they could see a camp in the distance. They measured it with a ramrod. They went back to the party howling like coyotes, and zigzagging in their course. The women in the party stood in line, and sang. When they came near, the scouts rode about in a circle until one of the party went to them and brought them. Then they reported what they had seen. Then the whole party painted and danced and sang, preparing for the fight. In the evening we started, and travelled all night. One man had a ghost-bone (a human femur). While I was asleep, he summoned the ghost. "What is it?" said the ghost. [787] "Are there many people in the Piegan camp?" asked the man. The ghost said, "There are as many as grass. I give you two persons, also some horses

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13
Blackfoot NF6

G 159 726 [787]

to steal. Let those who are on foot go back from here, and let the few who are mounted go on against the camp. They will do well, and kill two people, and capture horses. But if all go, a great many will be killed." The next morning my mother told me this. The party, however, were not influenced at all by what the ghost said, and went on. When we came near, two young men killed a Piegan called Sits-in-the-Middle and his wife. Then our party killed two more Piegan close by their camp, but, as one of the men stooped to strike the fallen Piegan, the Piegan stabbed him in the back over the kidney, making a hole large enough to breathe through. We tied him around with gunny sacks. Thus we killed three men and a woman. Then all the Piegan attacked us. I saw more people than ever before. They came like ants, and the smoke hung as over a smelter. Two of the Gros Ventre drove all of our party, even the women, against the Piegan to make them fight. A Gros Ventre was shot through the thigh-bone, and fell from his horse. He stuck his crooked lance in the ground and sat there; and all his brothers went to help him so that he would not be killed soon. And all the Piegan attacked him. Just as one of them dashed up to strike him, he raised his gun and shot him. Another and another came up, until he had killed six. Then he himself was killed. Then some of the Gros Ventre said, "Let us lead them after us from their camp." The Gros Ventre started to run, and the Piegan pursued. The Gros Ventre who were mounted rane their horses as hard as they could. They never stopped running, and a great many of those who were on foot were killed. I was riding behind another woman. Our horse stepped into a hole, and pitched forward. The woman was thrown off, but I was thrown into the saddle. The horse started up again, but stepped on his bridle, which checked him. A Piegan rode up and struck me with his gun. Then he took my wrist, and I dismounted as he did. Another one came, and, after striking me too, took off my bead necklace. The one who had captured me took me back as far as it is from here to the river (about thirty miles). We saw bodies of Gros Ventre as we went back to camp. We came to the camp about noon. Everybody struck me. All day they came and hit me, and one man hit me on the forehead and nearly killed me. A Piegan woman tied up my head. I wore a fine dress covered with elk-teeth. I took it off, and a Piegan woman took it away. Then the Piegan directed their people to gather all the captives. They asked them if the Gros Ventre had done anything to Sits-in-the-Middle, who had been found in an indecent position with his wife. The captives all said that the Gros Ventre would not do such a thing, and the Piegan were satisfied. Eight Piegan, all prominent men, had been killed.

G 159 726 B 727

When our party returned, my father asked where I was. Some one told him that a Piegan had taken me back to his camp. Then my father said

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13
Blackfoot NF6

G
159
726
B
727

to my mother, who had returned safely, "Go and bring my daughter, or I will kill you." So my mother came alone to the Piegan. When she arrived, there was a big noise. Then a chief came out of his tent with only his knife, and called out, "Do not kill that woman!" Then she went to where the captives were. The man who had captured me, No-Chief, said aloud, "I pity this woman. I will treat her well. Every one all over the world hears it. I will take good care of her." Another Piegan took my mother. Then they brought me to a tent where there were a pipe, a pipe-stem, a knife, and a gun, and two men sitting, who both claimed me. I was told to say which of them had captured me. I held up my hand and told how my horse had stumbled, and how this one, who was No-Chief, had captured me, and how the other one had taken my beads. Then the other one tried to kill me. Some Piegan women hid me. In the morning the Piegan broke camp. I had no moccasins, no robe, and only one dress. No-Chief always rode around me, and protected me from the many people who wanted to kill me. He had taken me for his wife, and would not allow it. When we were camped, he rode over to the tent where my mother was, and told her to come at night to his tent. He would give her and me horses to ride, in order to flee, and would give us clothing and a piece of tobacco, which we were to cut in two, and each of us to give half to her husband. My mother agreed, and he came back; but that night my mother did not come. In the morning a man rode around the camp, crying, "Bring out all the captives. I will put them on my son's grave." Then the women hid me. The other Gros Ventre captives were also hidden. Fourteen of them were saved, but four were killed. Then they brought all the spoils to the middle of the camp, and counted them. They counted how many pieces had been captured, how many horses had been taken, and how many Gros Ventre had been killed. They who had done most became chiefs.

Then No-Chief, my husband, said to me, "If any one wants to buy you from me, I will sell you." Then my mother persuaded a Piegan to buy me. I was angry when No-Chief sold me for two horses. I staid with this other man. Sometimes people still tried to kill me, and he kept them from me. Then we came to Elk River, where there was an encampment of soldiers. The soldiers tried to persuade the Piegan to sell them all their slaves. One Piegan rode around the camp, crying, "Sell all the slaves. They will run off anyway. We cannot keep them." But at night all moved away, and none sold their captives. I always took care of my husband's little boy, and did my work, and got along well. A white man tried to buy me; but my husband did not sell me. I asked the white man not to try to buy me, as I wanted to return home. Another Gros Ventre woman who had been captured persuaded her husband's little boy to ask him to let her go. The

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13
Blackfoot NF6

G 159 726 B 727

boy asked his father, and the man told her that she could go after tanning ten hides. She prepared the skins, made herself moccasins, took pemmican with her, and went. Her husband did not give her a horse, because many Piegans were then scattered through the country, and would more readily see her if mounted. That winter I staid with the Piegan. We went to the Sweet-grass Hills and killed all the buffalo we needed. About the time the snow thawed, we went back to the former place. Once a Piegan came to get men to reinforce his party, who were attacking a Gros Ventre camp; but the same night the Gros Ventre fled, leaving a dead man and one who had been shot through the leg. These were all that the Piegan found next morning. Two Piegan had also been killed.

Then I went with my husband hunting buffalo. A shot was heard from the top of a mountain, and our party went back. It was a rainy day. Then Bear-Head, a Piegan, took two Gros Ventre women to the foot of the mountain and made them call out, "Come down! Here is something to eat." He wanted to find out of what tribe those on the mountain were; but there was no answer. That night the people on the mountain, who were Gros Ventre, came and stole horses from the camp. The Bloods also stole horses. The Piegan followed their tracks, and killed two of them; but they did not follow the Gros Ventre. Then we went to a place called Needle-Nest, then to Large-Rock, then to White-Wolf, where a Gros Ventre had once made the sun-dance lodge. Then two Gros Ventre women ran away and escaped. From there we went to another place. When we made camp I went for wood with my sister, a Piegan co-wife. Then my sister sent me to my mother, whose husband had just killed a buffalo. I went there; and my mother's sister (co-wife) told her, "Cook something for your daughter." Then I brought back meat to my husband; but my mother's husband was stingy with his meat, and scolded her. Then his Piegan wife said to my mother, "You and your daughter are living poorly. You had better run off." So when I brought back the plates (on which the meat had been carried), my mother said she would escape with me that night. She said she would wait for me all night. She told me to leave my moccasins with her, and I left them. Then my husband whipped me because he thought that I would run off. He told me not to sleep all night, but to sit up straight. Toward morning, while my two sisters slept, I ran out. My mother was waiting for me, and we ran to the creek, over the hills and down again. It stopped raining, and soon it became day. We dug a hole and got into it, and hid all day. At night we ran on again. It was cloudy and dark. We were near Cow Creek. An owl called in the woods. My mother said the owl was calling us, so we went there. It became day, but we went on. We were out of the timber when we saw people coming, so we ran back and

G 159

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

what time they should meet the next morning to start off, they dispersed. 721

Before leaving camp the next day, the party again sang in front of the lodges which they had approached the night before. This same tune was also sung while the party was en route, words being composed to suit various occasions. This tune was known as the "men's song" and was said to have been given to the Gros Ventres by Nihiatu, the culture-hero. Other songs were also sung while the party was away from camp as, for example, on the first night out when they lamented their absence from friends and loved ones. 533

Various duties were assigned by the leader, and all, but especially the youngest members of the party, were expected to do their part. If a young fellow were "lazy" on a raiding expedition, the leader would see to it that he was punished. An accepted way of accomplishing this end was on the sly to substitute strips of rawhide for the usual strips of meat in the container used by the young man. When the party started to eat, all would watch this particular young man and, as he pulled out the rawhide, they would laugh at him. It was said that young men in this predicament would be so humiliated that they would actually cry. It was a serious matter at the time, and also offered good material to be used later by potential enemy-friends who might have witnessed this embarrassing situation. 726 [626]

Along this line, it is interesting to note the detailed procedure of one man, which may or may not be typical of the behavior of leaders in disciplining members of their party. "This particular leader, known as Eater, a contemporary of Running Bear, was highly respected and feared because it was known that when he led a war party he expected the other members to live up to the high standard he set by his own actions. If, however, he found that someone in the party was not doing his duty, in the evening he would start singing a song which he had acquired through a dream. All the young men would be apprehensive, wondering which of them was to be humiliated. The others would take up the song while Eater alone would dance, imitating a wolf by placing one hand on the forehead and the other behind him to represent the tail. He would circle around, dancing in this manner, until he came to the victim. Whereupon he would stop in front of the 726 626

726 626 latter and raise his leg in imitation of a urinating dog. All would know then on whom Eater's displeasure had fallen, and the young man in question would break down and sob. That would cure him of laziness."

726 318 Among the important duties on a war party were those of the water-carrier. If the mission were to be performed under more than ordinarily dangerous circumstances, young men might volunteer for the job, but usually the leader chose someone for it. A water-carrier had to have courage and resourcefulness because in order to fetch water it might be necessary that he be sent long distances without guard, and then have to catch up with the group [482] in case the rest had to move. When the members of the party [534] sighted the water-carrier returning successfully bearing the skin 533 water-container attached to a pole, a song was sung by the war party as they marked time by beating two sticks together.[3]

726 Scouting was another important aspect of a war party. The leader selected two well-qualified men for this job. "They had to have courage and endurance for, while scouting, they would run instead of walk and not eat until their mission was completed." Scouts were called "wolves" and wore wolf-skins as insignia and [714] sometimes, at least, would stick brush on their heads so they could not be so easily spotted against the horizon.[3] They went to high [533] places to look around. If the enemy were not in sight, they might sing, making up words to the tune mentioned as having been sung before the party left camp.[4]

If the scouts saw indications of the enemy, such as smoke rising from a coulee, but without actually seeing the enemy sufficiently clearly to identify them, on their return to the party they gave a wolf howl as they approached and proceeded in a sharp zigzag path. If, however, they had more definite information, they gave the wolf howl and approached in a circular path; that is, advanced, turned in a circle, advanced again, turned in a circle, advanced again, turned in a circle and halted. They were then met by two older men who had been successful scouts in their day. While the [533] scouts were approaching—occasionally looking back over their

[3] Recorded as No. 130.
[3] For illustrations, see Curtis, v. 5, p. 176.
[4] Samples of this kind of song were recorded as No. 23 and No. 24.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

shoulders and barking like wolves—the party sang three songs, one to accompany the scouts as they made each circle.[5] 926 [533]

The two older men who met the scouts were told by them privately what they had seen. The four then went to a mound of buffalo chips which had been piled up, the rest of the party awaiting the scouts standing in a semicircle—the women, if present, behind the men—and all facing the direction from which the scouts had come. They sang while the two warriors and two scouts circled the mound of chips four times.[6] After each of the two [533] older men had recited his war deeds in scouting for and locating the enemy, they called upon the scouts to relate to the whole party the results of their expedition.[7]

It sometimes happened of course that there would be no time to go through the above ceremony if the enemy were approaching. But if time allowed it was done in that fashion.[8] Then the leader laid out plans to steal horses and/or get scalps, according to the news which the scouts had brought in. The leader would instruct the rest of the party where to meet after the raid, how long to wait there before starting for home, what signals he would use to indicate the moment of attack, and what signals of identification were to be used between members of the party should it be dark when they closed in on the enemy. It was stated that the Gros Ventres usually attacked in the evening after dark, whereas the Sioux were more apt to attack in the early dawn. Should the plans of the leader not seem satisfactory, some of the party might offer objections. The leader, feeling himself responsible for the safety of all members of the party, put forth his case, but the others were not bound to follow him and, if no agreement could be reached, the party might split. One consideration which tended to keep the party [681] together was, however, the fact that there was a fine paid to the rest of the party by one returning to camp ahead of the others.

[5] A song without words, recorded as No. 14, accompanied the first circling. Songs at the second and third circling had words, composed by enemy-friends of the scouts, the words usually being both derisive and vulgar.

[6] This was recorded as No. 15.

[7] Kroeber's account, p. 191, differs slightly. Cf. also Curtis, v. 5, pp. 181–82.

[8] The formalities of scouting were carried out in detail during the ceremonies of the Sacrifice Dance. See Cooper Ms. 1949.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

726 533 When close to the enemy, each member of the party unwrapped his war medicine in preparation for the real battle. While painting themselves and putting on their charms and other regalia, the warriors sang.[9] Lame Bull, for instance, had a "medicine" war bonnet and there was a special song without words which he sang as he donned it; if there was time, the rest of the party danced while he sang and drummed.[10] Other songs might be sung immediately before going into battle.[11] The words of one such song imply: "If I am killed it doesn't matter; women will bear other children to take my place; I am ready to die." Some individuals, too, had special songs of their own to be sung as they made the charge against the enemy.[12]

726 762 The most daring men in battle were said to have been those who wished to die. Men who were grieving over the loss of loved ones were believed to have been especially prone to this indirect method of suicide. Others took this way of gloriously ending their lives out of a sense of pique, or in order to vindicate their honor. In this latter case it was customary for a man who had something discreditable to account for, either on his own part or on the part of some member of his family, to publicly announce that he was [533] about to die by singing the "brave-song" or "death-song" as he rode around the camp circle. This indicated that he would seek the earliest opportunity of losing his life at the hands of the enemy while accomplishing some particularly outstanding war-deed.[13]

726 It was recognized that even the bravest of men might experience acute fear during battle. "Their souls kind of left them on [774] account of the danger. They looked different from normal and their minds seemed not quite clear. Lame Bull used to say that the effect was quite similar to that of drinking too much whiskey—

---

[9] Kroeber, 1908, pp. 192-93 gives details and illustrations of supernatural paraphernalia for war. War medicines, illustrating those which had belonged to Bull Lodge, are presented here, Plate 3, courtesy of Richard Pohrt.

[10] The song recorded as No. 76 is Lame Bull's and is said to be typical of this class of songs.

[11] Two were recorded as No. 16 and No. 17.

[12] Lame Bull's song was recorded as No. 77.

[13] Two such "brave-songs" were recorded as No. 111 and No. 112. See also p. 191.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the mind was clouded for a while and a man could not remember so well afterwards all that happened in the battle." [14] 726

The leader was constantly on the alert and tended to interpret anything out of the ordinary as having a bearing on the success or ill fate of his party. As a case in point we have the following account of an expedition in the 1860's. "Lame Bull was on a war party of which Big Beaver was the leader. They went to the Crow country hoping to find some hunters in the mountains. At the timber on the river not far from Crow Mountain, the party stopped near a big tree. It was during a thaw in the spring and after they had eaten, they took off their moccasins and hung them on the tree. Then they sat around and smoked and told stories. All of a sudden they heard an owl in the tree above them calling out: 'Where you are sitting under this tree, you are going to be killed.' The owl called again and said the same thing. Big Beaver said to his party: 'I've lived a long time. But never have I heard anything like this owl talking. Let's put on our moccasins and go fast. I think the owl is telling the truth. I think he knows what is going on and people must be near.' All quickly put on their moccasins, and, as they were putting out the fire and preparing to leave, they heard people yelling. Big Beaver gave instructions: 'Scatter. Don't go in file and don't step in the snow, but keep to the bare places so our tracks won't be seen.' So they ran away and soon reached the mountain. When they got to the top of the mountain, daylight had come. They looked down and saw people at the big tree where they had been, searching around for tracks. The Gros Ventres called at the other Indians to invite attack, but the others only stood and looked up, without trying to catch them." 726 787

If the war party happened to be near certain petroglyphs, believed by the Gros Ventres to reveal the future, they went there to read the omens. If they could not then interpret the markings, an offering was left there and the next morning they went again. The markings on the rock were believed to change, and the predictions interpreted therefrom to be accurate. If the omens thus appeared too unfavorable, the whole party might even turn back. 726 787 531

[14] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, pp. 201, 208, for remarks relating to war experiences of individuals.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

726 Greatest reliance, however, seemed to be placed on the information that could be obtained through a "ghost-helper."[18] If a member of the party was known to have the power to command the spirit of a deceased member of his family, he was requested to exercise it. It was said that more often than not the predictions were extremely accurate, as in the following two cases, recounted by The Boy. The first one is estimated to have occurred sometime between 1835 and 1840 and The Boy's grandfather was one of the participants.

"The Gros Ventres were camped near the forks of the Teton and Marias Rivers. Practically all the men had agreed to go on the war path. So they left camp and on the first day arrived at the place where Crow Coulee or Creek empties into the Missouri. When it was dark someone said: 'Let's offer the pipe to that man and ask him to find what our prospects on this venture may be, good or bad.' They filled a pipe and presented it to the man, whose deceased father was proven to be his ghost-helper. He accepted willingly. Soon after they smoked, they made a shelter where he was to call his helper. Then they tied up the man and filled the pipe again and put it in the shelter along with him. He sang a song in which the others joined and on the fourth repetition they heard a voice up in the air. The ghost-helper arrived and the shelter shook. When he hit the ground, the ground shook. The ghost-helper was seemingly excited and kept repeating: 'What do you want, my children?' And he said also: 'If you were in my place and old as I am, and as feeble, you wouldn't like to be disturbed. But here I am. What do you want?' They said: 'We want to know how this trip is going to be—what luck we will have—what are our prospects?'

"They lit a pipe and offered it to the ancestral spirit. They could see from the flaring of the pipe that he was smoking it. Then the spirit said: 'Well, I don't know offhand. I'll have to look around. While I'm gone you smoke, and after a little while sing again. And I'll come back.' So they followed his instructions. When he came back they could hear the spirit catching its breath as an old man does and it said: 'My children, there are

[18] For discussion of ghost-helper concept among the Gros Ventres see Flannery, 1944, also Cooper Ms. 1949.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Crow Indians without number invading the camp you just left. They are so bold, knowing you men are away, that they are peeping in the lodges watching your women as they are playing the hand game. Your women are in happy mood.' Then the spirit said: 'These Crow Indians seem to be preparing to take all the Gros Ventre horses. I'll go back again and watch the Crows to see what they will do.' So they did as before, and when the spirit returned he said: 'The Crows have taken practically all of your horses and will arrive where you now are about sun-up. Don't be afraid of them, provided you do one thing: be sure to kill the Crow with the blue blanket coat. He is the only brave man in the crowd. Kill him first and you'll kill all the others. None of the Gros Ventres will be killed, but two will be wounded. In case you do not kill the Crow with the blue coat, the outcome of the battle will be doubtful.'

726
787
769

"It was nearing dawn by the time the spirit had made his final report, so the men decided to sit up and not sleep the rest of the night. At daylight, the leader sent two good men to the knoll about a half-mile away to look around. The scouts took a look, crawled back out of sight, got to their feet and ran toward the waiting men as fast as they could. The group had gathered buffalo chips in preparation of the usual ceremony of receiving scouts but the scouts yelled: 'Kick the pile of chips apart. There is no time for formality. Get ready to fight as quickly as you can—the Crows are right over that hill!' The Gros Ventres prepared hurriedly for battle and started for the knoll.

"One old man only was mounted, all the rest were a-foot. This old man was the one who threw the Crows into a panic because he had ridden to a high hill to watch the fight, and the Crows believed that they were going to be surrounded by mounted Gros Ventres. The Crows decided to dismount, make a stand, and let go the horses they had captured from the Gros Ventres. They selected high ground, one side sloping away with soft dirt, the other side grassy. The Gros Ventres were on the flat ground and so the fight started.

"While the main group of Gros Ventres engaged the enemy, a few followed a coulee until they got inside the Crow group and were able to kill a good many. The Crows decided to run, when

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

726 the man with a blue coat tried to hold them: 'If you run you'll suffer a big loss. If you make a stand, the loss won't be so bad.' But they ran right toward the thick mass of Gros Ventres, who received them by opening up a lane for them. The Gros Ventres were afraid then to shoot on account of hitting their own men in cross fire. The man in the blue coat saw the situation and started to run shouting: 'I have no doubt I shall save myself, for I am a good runner. Do your best to try to get away now.' So he ran into the midst of the Gros Ventres, and right through them, passing his fellow-tribesmen until he was leading the fleeing Crows.

"Suddenly one Crow got brave and decided to make a stand and stem the pursuit by the Gros Ventres. He dropped back and pointed a gun at Bear Robe, but another Gros Ventre decided to attack him and the Crow was so terrified that he failed to pull the trigger until the Gros Ventre hit the gun. The shot tore Bear Robe's arm from the elbow to wrist and threw him off balance. When he recovered, the Crow was still there with his gun so Bear Robe ran up and snatched the gun and spear from the Crow and threw them away.

"The Gros Ventres were still pursuing the Crow, and another one made a stand. A Gros Ventre, Crow Moccasin, armed only with a tomahawk, struck him. The Crow staggered and dropped his gun, but grabbed Crow Moccasin's arm to which the tomahawk was fastened with a string. In the struggle the Crow reached for his knife and jerked Crow Moccasin toward himself and slashed his wrist, but he had jerked so hard that the string holding the tomahawk gave way and the Crow lost balance, then ran. Another Gros Ventre shot him down. The fight went on until the older men thought they should stop and let the Crows go. The one with the blue coat got away along with nineteen others. Forty Crow were, however, killed, and the only casualties suffered by the Gros Ventres were two wounded. It would seem that from what the ghost helper had told them, if they would have killed the man in the blue coat, they would have killed all of the Crow."

This second illustration refers to events of much later date, about 1875. "A Gros Ventre war party was camped east of Lewiston, across the Missouri River. Morning Star Arises was asked to consult his ghost-helper who reported: 'All right. I am

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

ready to tell you. First, here's the scalp of the Sioux you will kill tomorrow. . [This was one strand of hair wrapped around a piece of sage brush, symbolic of the scalp.] I've found a big Sioux camp on Beaver Creek (east of the Little Rocky Mountains). The Sioux are having a big Grass Dance and the one you are to kill tomorrow is having the most fun. He has a sword. You'll capture that sword when you kill him. Don't be afraid. There will be no Gros Ventres killed, but two of you don't look good to me.' The Gros Ventres asked that he name the two, but he refused, saying: 'Just don't be afraid. Go ahead to the place where the Sioux are and attack them. Choose what kind of weather you want to make your escape after the fight, and I'll see that the weather will be that way.' They failed to make a choice, but the spirit said: 'Take a look at the sun every once in a while tomorrow. There will be all kinds of sundogs tomorrow, changing every little while. If they appear, you'll know that I have told the truth.' 726 787 769

"The next morning they decided that only those with good horses should cross the Missouri and attack the Sioux. They approached the camp where the Sioux had spent the night. The Sioux had failed to extinguish their former camp fires, and the embers were blown into flame and the fire was extending toward their new camp. The Sioux decided to fight the prairie fire, laying down their arms, not realizing the Gros Ventres were watching them. The Gros Ventres then attacked. The Sioux were in utter confusion and ran, all of them except a man with a sword who made a stand. Two Gros Ventres, Comes A-Flying and Owl Old Man, tried to ride over this Sioux who, however, sidestepped them and struck both their horses with his sword; meanwhile the Gros Ventres struck the Sioux with their whips, thus counting coups. A third Gros Ventre, Crazy Bear, however, killed him, took his scalp and claimed his sword. Since they had gotten this one scalp—which was sufficient for them to celebrate with a victory dance,—they returned. They saw the sundogs changing as the spirit had foretold. In order to evade the pursuit by the Sioux, they called on the man, whose ghost-helper had given the information, to change the weather. The man sang a song, using his robe as a cover to enclose himself, and said he [727]

726 wanted a downpour of rain. At once a cloud appeared and in no
787 time it was a big black storm cloud. Then there was a wind and
769 a very heavy storm and thus the Gros Ventres got safely back to camp. The only loss on this occasion was that of two fine horses, one played out and the other foundered from drinking when overheated."

Return of the War Party

727 After a successful encounter with the enemy, the homecoming was a joyful one, provided no Gros Ventre lives had been lost. As they approached the camp, appropriate songs were said to have been sung by the victorious party. If, for instance, they had stolen horses there was one type of song. On the other hand
[302] when scalps had been taken, they sang other kinds of songs and painted themselves with charcoal. Incidentally, the Gros Ventres had a saying that "women and children do not make good charcoal." Women and children should be captured but not killed and scalped.[16]

When the victorious party arrived, they circled the outside of the encampment before entering. "Then the party broke, each member surrounded by his womenfolk who crowded around, kissing him and taking the scalps or other trophies which had been won. After a reasonable interval, the crier called all to come to
[302] the center of the circle and dance. Men and women alike blackened their faces with charcoal, and the women, carrying scalps attached to poles, or weapons captured from the enemy, danced as innumerable victory songs were sung. Only members of the war party were allowed to join with the women in dancing. Many husbands, who had to stand on the sidelines, were jealous of the brave warriors at a time like this."

727 Most of the songs sung during the victory celebration had
539 words which referred to encounters wherein the Gros Ventres had been successful. New words were often made up to commemorate a particular incident. One of these songs had the following words: "Where are you going? I've been here all the

[16] Cocking, p. 112, mentions in 1772 that the Gros Ventres adopted "slaves" of both sexes into families who had lost their children either by war or sickness.
[567]

727 ganize a revenge party. The Boy gave the following account of the circumstances under which one such party was announced and carried out. "The brother of Lame Bull's mother had been killed in war by the Piegan. This woman took it very hard because it 726 was her youngest brother of whom she was particularly fond. 787 None of her relatives had taken any action and she was out on the 727 hills mourning. While she was out there she fell asleep and an 'old man' appeared to her and said: 'If you make an effort, you will forget your grief. I will teach you a song that you will use when they dance at the victory celebration after your people have avenged his death. This song will be used when they bring back the scalps of the enemies who have killed your brother.' So she went home but didn't say anything about her experience for some time. Finally, however, she told her husband. He then decided to organize a war party to get revenge for his brother-in-law's death. He had a big following as he went against the Piegan. On the way, however, they came across some Blood Indians and killed five of them, which was considered as fulfilling his duty to bring backs scalps in retaliation. When the party returned, the woman of course joined in the victory dance and sang that song, which was then used many times after that when the Gros Ventres were successful."

726 If no prominent relative led the revenge party, the parents of a man killed in war could request some noted chief to do so. In 727 that case the one selected prayed for the success of the party himself and made a sweatlodge, inviting many old men who would likewise pray. The large number of offerings requisite for the occasion were supplied, however, by the man who had made the request. Should he not have the wherewithal to formally approach a prominent warrior, there was still the possibility that revenge might be volunteered by someone who pitied parents as they grieved for their son. This would afford an opportunity for some lesser man to legitimately set himself up as leader of a raiding party for the first time.

Status Through War-Deeds

554 Any action that involved risk of life at the hands of the enemy was counted as a war-deed. Raiding for horses, especially for

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

 593

have any reason to suspect us [of infidelity] so he shouldn't have been planning to get rid of us." 586

It was said that in case a husband abused his wife without reason his relatives remonstrated with him, reminding him, for instance, that if he acquired a reputation for ill-treating his wife he might have difficulty in obtaining additional wives of good reputation. Some claimed that his maternal uncle could go so far as to remove the wife from her husband's household "until he came to his senses." Such interference was however seemingly rare. A wife was seldom given the benefit of any doubt.

The husband had the right to punish, even with death, any departure from the standard of chastity set for women. [684]

Most of the harsh treatment accorded to wives was believed to have been the result of just suspicion of their infidelity, where sufficient evidence was lacking to prove it. Girls were warned before marriage to so conduct themselves as to avoid their husbands' jealousy at all costs. They were told, for instance, that when visiting other women it was well to be chaperoned since otherwise a jealous husband could magnify an innocent visit into an incipient affair with the woman's husband. While it was considered within the proprieties for women to go out and count coups on the enemy fallen near camp, "they didn't approve of women chasing off on horseback to 'hit the enemy' because their husbands were sure to suspect they were off to meet some man." A girl was instructed by her relatives to yield willingly to her husband when he claimed his marital rights lest he interpret her reluctance as preference for another. 593 [726]

On the other hand, when there was reasonable proof of the wife's infidelity, the husband was more or less forced by public opinion to take some action against her. He was, however, allowed considerable latitude in choosing among several equally honorable alternatives. 593 684

The extreme punishment was that of death, and apparently it was not uncommonly applied. Among the cases described was the following which concerned a contemporary of Singer and Coming Daylight. "On one occasion a man discovered that one of his wives was missing. As usual in such circumstances, he inquired whether any man in the camp was unaccounted for. He soon

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

and spectacular war deed before she granted her favors to him.[9] If he returned, she was supposed to keep her word, accepting him as her lover. In the other type of situation, it was taken for granted that a woman would succumb to the pleas of a man who had publicly announced his intention of virtually committing suicide. Such a man, by singing the "brave-song" as he circled the camp, indicated that he would seize the first opportunity thereafter to encounter the enemy but make no effort to defend himself.[10]

According to a number of stories that are told, it was not uncommon that a woman committed suicide when her lover failed to return from war. That this actually happened, in some cases at least, is vouched for by the following factual account given by Singer. "White people, on one occasion, invited some Gros Ventres to visit them. All of the people, whose lodges were near to that of my grandmother, went, except one woman. This woman was scraping a skin when word was announced that a certain young man had been killed at war. My grandmother, noticing that the sound of scraping had stopped, thought that this woman was resting, and after a little while started over to visit her. On the way, however, she heard a shot, and when she got to that lodge she found that this woman was dead. She had first dressed herself nicely in her best clothes and had then shot herself, pulling the trigger of the gun by means of a string attached to her toe. My grandmother had suspected an affair between this woman and the young man who had lost his life at war, but she hadn't known for sure until this woman committed suicide. In those days a woman would have kept such an affair secret. (Now since women have the law to protect them from their husbands, wives just don't care and boldly run around with anybody they fancy and talk back to their husbands, and everybody knows all about it.) But anyway, that woman was a good worker,—she was working for her husband when that bad news came about the death of her lover,—and of course her husband mourned for her."

It was said that women who had been cast aside by their hus-

[9] "This custom is said to have led to the death of many young men," Kroeber, 1908, p. 180.

[10] For further details on the "brave-song," see p. 92.

776 executes the direction or will of the Supreme Being. He is the
821 medium or means by which the Supreme Being works. When a big storm is about to break, a pipe is filled and the Supreme Being
[782] is prayed to in the direction from which the storm is coming and is asked to spare the people during this storm, to direct Bha'a not to kill them, to say a word or two to Bha'a himself not to shoot around too close to camp. The people are afraid of Bha'a since he does his job in such a violent way. Even though Bha'a is held in high esteem and is considered an extraordinary being, he is a creature [under control] of the Supreme Being."

776 Bha'a was closely associated with the Feathered Pipe, not at all with the Flat Pipe.

Bha'a too entered into the Sacrifice Lodge ("Sun dance") as the being who could cause rain and so bring a good season for the food quest and bring coolness and shade in hot weather. While supernatural power was not explicitly sought from Bha'a he might occasionally on his own initiative have pity on a man and give him power to be a great warrior and even to make storms.
[726] But on a war expedition the participants would pray to the Supreme Being to be saved from wounds and death; not the slightest thought of Bha'a would enter their minds unless they were overtaken by a bad storm.

[165] It may be added here that, while violent thunderstorms are common in Gros Ventre territory, deaths from lightning are not frequent. The Boy could recall only three such deaths, occurring in Gros Ventre territory during his experience, two on one occasion when he was a young boy and one on a later occasion around 1930.

The word Bha'a is used not only for the Thunderbird but enters into the term also for the water and earth monsters, bha'anbi:'iθän.[18]

The water monster,—or monsters as there appear to be a number of them, for they are reported from various large rivers, and springs where they bathe,—is usually envisioned as a huge,

[18] The Boy explained in 1948: "The word bi:'iθän includes water bugs, crawling bugs, bugs of all kinds; but a snake is never called bi:'iθä, nor will a snake ever be called bha'a. Water monster, no manner how many horns he has, or however much he resemble a snake, is always called bha'anbi:'iθä." [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

around it, but were taught and trained to be quiet around it and to observe reverence toward it. 784

No whistling or crying was permitted in the keeper's lodge. The keeper and co-keeper were forbidden to cry in the presence of the Pipe, if, for instance, they had lost a relative. A crying baby was never allowed in the lodge with the Pipe. As soon as the infant started to cry it was taken out. If, as previously noted, a man who had a young wife with a baby took the Pipe, she and the infant would be sent out of the Pipe lodge to a nearby lodge. [854]

Dogs were never allowed to enter the lodge where the Pipe was. If the keeper or co-keeper owned a dogskin robe, the rules forbade their using it. [231]

The people were not allowed to go to the keeper's lodge to get fire, as they used to go to other lodges in the early morning.

Breaking bones to extract marrow was prohibited in the keeper's lodge. If this were done, some accident, such as the breaking of a leg or arm, would happen to some relative of the keeper [or of the delinquent?]. [264]

The door of the keeper's lodge had to be kept closed, and the back cover of the lodge could not be lifted up in the warm summertime to get air.

A war party before starting off would sing at the door of each clan chief's lodge, but not at the door of the keeper's. [726]

When people went to the keeper's lodge for a social smoke and feast, they had to keep their wits about them and watch their speech carefully lest they should unthinkingly tell lies, vulgar or obscene stories, or start a war-deed contest.

There was a very strict prohibition against telling lies in the keeper's lodge.

If two men, while in the keeper's lodge, forgot themselves and started a war-deed contest, the keeper would remind them: "You are mistaken in talking so in here. Now you will have to continue for three days and nights." During this time all who were present when the slip was first made had to stay day and night in the lodge of the keeper, who would provide them with food and tobacco. These listeners would egg on and laughingly banter the two contestants and decide on the winner. After a while the pair's 784 517

793 powers, intended more for the positive advantage of the keeper or
755 his people, were customarily acquired during or after the transfer rite.

In the transfer rite the new keeper was taught how to doctor, especially in cases of fits, spasms and cramps. The peppermint
[278] beverage, now used by everybody for these maladies, was formerly a monopoly of the Flat Pipe keeper in his curing practice. Other doctoring powers were also conferred on him and he could use the hair rope from the Flat Pipe bundle as a potent medicine to cure with, but we could obtain no details on these points.

The keeper would pray to have good dreams and might sleep
[787] on the Pipe bed for the same purpose. His dreams, when told, were important news for his fellows, as through them the future could be foretold.

789 The keeper was also given power to summon, call or "snare"
793 from a distance, enemies or reluctant friends. The Boy gave two instances of the use of this power, both from the lips of his father, Lame Bull. When Lame Bull, on learning of his election as Flat Pipe keeper fled to the hills, the ex-keeper so summoned him, using the Flat Pipe itself in the rite. The nine Flat Pipe songs were sung and at the end of each, the ex-keeper holding the Pipe at arm's length in both hands with the stem pointed upward and outward, sang the Hair Rope song, then twisted the stem tip in a vertical near-circle first upward and outward and then inward and downward in a sort of beckoning motion as if drawing something toward him, then downward and finally lowered the bowl toward (or to?) the ground.

On a later occasion during Lame Bull's keepership, on a war
[726] expedition against the Piegan he learned in a dream where they were located and was told that five of them would be killed. The night before the attack on the Piegan, using a common pipe and the above calling rite, thrice performed, with the pipe stem pointed toward the distant Piegan camp, invisible at the time to the Gros Ventre party, and singing the Hair Rope song, he "called" five of the Piegan, who, separated from the main Piegan body, were killed by the Gros Ventres.

793 The keeper and co-keeper also were given power to use in hunt-
224 ing buffalo, but we were able to obtain no details on the rite. The

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

one occasion for which we obtained the account of Lame Bull's resort to this power, it failed to work.

The keeper likewise received power to use in case his horse played out during a war raid. In the 1868 battle with the Piegan, Lame Bull's horse stepped into a hole and fell at a moment when he was surrounded by Piegan. Two young Gros Ventre warriors, sons-in-law of Lame Bull, came to him. His horse got up but could not run, and in fact fell again. One of the young warriors said to him: "I thought the Flat Pipe was everything. Why don't you save yourself. The Piegan will kill all three of us." Lame Bull, keeper at the time, took some peppermint from the small bag tied to his whip, put it in his mouth, sang a certain song, spat on his hands, stroked his whip handle three times with his palm, made motions three times as if striking his horse, and the third time actually struck the horse. At this, the horse came to life as if fresh and started running, and Lame Bull got home safely.

Still another power conferred on the keeper was that of getting possession of a horse by obtaining a single hair thereof. Horses entered into the Feathered Pipe complex, not into the Flat Pipe one. But the Flat Pipe keeper could not be refused a request for a horse or horses made by him of anyone. Moreover, even though he did not directly make such a request, if he wanted a certain good horse, he could ask one of his relatives or good friends, surreptitiously and preferably by night, to pluck one hair from the horse's tail and bring it to him. The keeper would then perform some rite (details not obtainable by us) over the hair and put the hair in the Flat Pipe bundle, and pretty soon he would acquire the desired horse. It may be added that when the keeper walked near or around anybody's horse, he was watched suspiciously for fear that unobserved he would pluck a hair from the horse's tail.

In addition to these specific supernatural powers, the keeper and co-keeper were given a great number of ritual powers, the right and duty to carry out certain ceremonies directly or indirectly related to the Pipe and its keepership. These will be described later under "Ritual."

In accordance with their sacred office and eminent dignity, with their role as benevolent intercessors for the people with the super-

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

keeper and co-keeper; a rope made of hair from the head and legs of buffalo, either the actual snare with which He-Who-Starved-To-Death captured the evil Red Bird or a substitute therefor. 778

This rectangular bag with its contents has its own prescribed place in the whole Pipe bundle, namely, to the right of the case containing the Pipe, turtle, grebe and bird skins as you look from the stem and toward the bowl end.

Finally, in the large Pipe bundle, are or were two sticks of about the length of the bundle, covered with two pieces of cloth. These are about the last outermost things set in place when the whole bundle is wrapped. The ends of the cloths in which the sticks are tied project out of the bundle as a decoration. They could be extracted from the bundle and taken along on war expeditions as a substitute for it and the Pipe, and used in a simplified ritual in place of the Pipe. The Pipe bundle itself was not taken on a war raid, as the co-keeper was the only one who was allowed to carry it, as it was rather heavy and bulky, and as there was danger it might be captured by the enemy. [726]

All the articles that have been listed are finally enclosed in the outermost cover of the whole Pipe bundle. This cover is nearly round when laid flat made of a whole elk skin with the legs cut off. The bundle is more or less cylindrical, cigar or blimp-shaped, about 1½ feet in diameter at the center and about 3 feet long. The bundle is secured with three ties of thong, one in the middle and one at either end, and has a thong handle on it, like the handle of a traveling bag. (See Plate 2A.)

Over the whole bundle was laid a robe of albino or "beaver" buffalo skin. When the bundle was to be untied this robe was spread out and the bundle was laid on it. The albino-buffalo tail, used by the keeper in the sweat-lodge rite, was kept outside, not inside, the bundle, so it could be easily gotten.

In modern times, from about 1870 to 1932, a human scalp was

---

person's stomach, and so forth, with a very simple ritual. A retiring keeper had the right to select something out of the Pipe bondle and keep it. Lame Bull, on retiring, selected a thunderstone of animal-like shape. Cf. Kroeber, 1908, pp. 275-76. [755]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

778 attached to the outside of the Flat Pipe bundle. In the late 1860's the Gros Ventres were at war with the Piegan and Blood Indians. During the war, a party of Gros Ventres were massacred on Judith River, including the husband of Lame Bull's sister, and her 778 small son was badly wounded. Lame Bull, then keeper of the 726 Flat Pipe, said: "I'll make the Piegan pay for what they have done to my nephew." So shortly after this, he got together a party of warriors and, taking with him the above-mentioned double-stick substitute for the Flat Pipe, led them to the Piegan country, to the other side of the Cypress Hills on or near Belly River. It was on this expedition that Lame Bull had the three sweat lodges made (to be described later) and used his snaring or summoning power as keeper to call the five enemy victims promised him in a dream. One of the young Gros Ventre warriors, Fur Moccasin, said to the substitute for the Flat Pipe: "Little Turtle, in this fight I want to do something great. If you will see to it that I count coup by getting a scalp I will turn it over to you." This was equivalent to a vow, for he would have to risk his life to get a scalp. Another young warrior said: "Flat Pipe, in this fight I want to do something great. If I get a horse I will turn it over to you."

After the summoning rite, Lame Bull detailed two young warriors to go out as scouts the next morning, before daybreak so they would not be observed on the way by the enemy, to a certain butte, and to watch and wait. Shortly after daybreak the two scouts saw five of the enemy who were out hunting buffalo, and returned to give their report. Near the Gros Ventre camp, to the west, was a small herd of buffalo. So Lame Bull said: "The Piegan will spy the buffalo and make for them. We will wait till they make their kill and are dressing the meat." The Piegan went past the Gros Ventre without observing them and killed the buffalo. The Gros Ventres then sneaked up toward the Piegan as close as the level open country would permit, without their being seen. Lame Bull said: "Don't yell. Take after them as though you are racing." As the Gros Ventres came rushing on they came up first to one of the Piegan who had tied his horse to the leg of a killed buffalo and who, in the excitement forgetting this, jumped on his

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

horse and started off but at the end of the rope was stopped and thrown. Fur Moccasin killed and scalped him then and there. Then the Gros Ventres took after the other four Piegan. The second Piegan was killed and his horse captured by the young warrior who had promised a horse to the Flat Pipe. The other three Piegan were also killed. The Gros Ventre suffered no casualties in the fight. 778 726

When the battle was over, Fur Moccasin turned over the Piegan scalp to Lame Bull: "Here's the scalp which I promised for the Flat Pipe." The other young warrior who had promised the horse likewise turned it over: "Here's the horse which I promised for the Flat Pipe."

Some time after this fight, peace was made between the Gros Ventres and the Piegan, and the Gros Ventres learned the Piegan side of the incident. The Piegan (or Blood) had planned to hold a Sun Dance. So they selected four men to go out and kill a bull buffalo for the dance. One old man of his own volition went along in order to get some of the internal organs for himself. After the five had set out, the Piegan waited in vain all the next day till nightfall for them to return and finally concluded that they must have met with misfortune. The next morning the Piegan set out in the direction in which the five had gone and, judging by the actions of carrion crows and buzzards, discovered the five corpses. The Gros Ventres by this time were a long way off. The Sun Dance was given up. The four younger Piegan killed were noted men.

The Piegan scalp was tied to the outside of the Flat Pipe bundle. The donor, Fur Moccasin, by giving the scalp, became an enemy-friend of the Flat Pipe, which role gave him the right to go pretty far in taunting and saying things about it, as was the wont between enemy-friends.[8] But only he, and no one else could take such liberties. 727. 778

The scalp remained attached to the outside of the bundle. The Boy, who knew this, always felt that this was not right, because the bundle had great religious significance whereas the scalp was something of an entirely different order and did not belong with 778

[8] For details on enemy-friends, see Flannery, 1953, pp. 102-06.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 afterwards according to the Ni:hohat story or after the great deluge according to the flood story.

Ritual sweating and use of the sweat-lodge, tsë:bätc, were resorted to by the Gros Ventres on many occasions not connected with the sacred pipe rites,—skin and finger-joint sacrifices, war expeditions, and dreamed-of impending evils. Sweating in such cases will be dealt with in the proper places, as also sweating at the Feathered Pipe rites and Sacred lodges. The sweat-lodge rite was obligatory at the following Flat Pipe ceremonies: the three seasonal rites, the transfer rite (previously described), rites in fulfillment of a vow to smoke the Pipe or to paint its bowl, or to make a sweat-lodge for the keeper or for the Pipe, and at the disposal of offerings to the Pipe.

[515 721]

726 Before a war party started out, among other ceremonial observances a sweat-lodge rite was commonly gone through. A Flat *796 Pipe Keeper might on such an occasion take pity on the leader and members of the departing war party, build his own 31-stick sweat-lodge, and go through the sweating rite. If, furthermore, the keeper accompanied the war party, he might do the same from time to time during the course of the expedition.

*796 For the present we shall confine our attention chiefly to the sweat-lodge as used in the three seasonal rites, dealing first with the sweat-lodge itself, and after that with the sweating rite. We merely reiterate in passing that the sweating rite, while obligatory in a seasonal rite, was somewhat distinct from the ceremonial which followed it and which was carried out in the keeper's lodge.

346 The Flat Pipe sweat-lodge was constructed as follows. In ground *796 plan it was more or less circular about 7 to 9 feet in diameter, with two openings, the main larger entrance at the east and the smaller exit opening at the west. The general form was nearly semi-spherical. On each side, the northern and southern, 15 willows were stuck in the ground. The number 30 may represent a multiple of the sacred number three, and one of our informants conjectured, with particular reference to the 30 poles of lodge where He-who-starved-to-death slept fasting on the 30 successive nights. These 30 willows were arched over and woven fast into a ridge willow that ran the east-west axis of the structure. Thus the sweat-lodge was constructed of 31 willows in all.

[802]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

so many other people (besides the Drum Dance men) whom I am carrying that I don't care about the rest of them." He recalled in this connection a Gros Ventre children's game in which they split into two groups and one child from one group goes over to the other group and carries the members thereof one by one to his side. At any rate, this was the first song sung by the Drum Dance men at the first stop they made when going to fight the Piegan (in the story to be given presently).

The words of song number 55 refer to the place of the future life where the lodge of the Drum Dance men is all ready to receive them if they die in the battle. They were supposed to be ready to sacrifice their lives, feeling they would go to the Big Sand where they would be better off than here. As these words were sung, the men would point with their thumbs toward where the Big Sand was located, in the north, and would face in that direction. In the sign language pointing is done only with the index finger. Pointing in this special way, with the thumb, was done to signify that the men so pointing were doing a brave thing, were courageous and not chicken-hearted, and were ready for the worst. Some further light upon the meaning and context of this song, as well as upon certain other aspects of the Drum Dance, is shed by the following story narrated by The Boy, and confirmed in part by a less detailed version of it by Coming Daylight who added somewhat cryptically that "these (Drum Dance) men never stood back [retreated?], they always made an attack on the enemy." Singer also stated, likewise rather cryptically, "Iron Bucket [her husband] told me they (the Drum Dancers) would go away off on a war path and stay four days and spy on their own camp and go back to war." The Boy's story was as follows:

"On one occasion during a Drum Dance which had been put on in fulfillment of a vow, a group of Gros Ventre men went out to hunt buffalo. While they were out they were attacked by some Piegan. The Piegan were on foot, while the Gros Ventres were on horseback, so it was easy for the latter to get away. It occurred to the Gros Ventres that they might play a trick on the Piegan and make a lot of sport for the occasion of the Drum Dance. So they detailed one of their number to go back and notify their camp

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

726 that some Piegan were where they (the Gros Ventre hunters) were. This one went and did as directed.

"The Drum Dancers decided to take the matter into their own hands, as during the Drum Dance their word was law. They sent the crier around camp to notify the people that they, the Drum Dancers, were taking over the situation, and that everybody else should step aside and let them handle it.

"All the Gros Ventres then struck out from camp, with the Drum Dancers in the lead. When the crowd reached the place where the Gros Ventre hunters were holding the Piegan at bay, it stopped, and the Drum men said: 'Let us do the fighting. The others will just look on at us.' And so it was agreed.

"The Drum Dance men then all got in formation, just as the underground people (killdeer) had been at the dry lake bed, with two men in front carrying the crooked sticks, the others in line two by two, and two likewise at the rear carrying crooked sticks.

"The Piegan started to make trenches. The Drum Dancers marched in formation toward the Piegan, then halted, and sang a certain song [No. 54] three times and danced. The Piegan came out of their trenches to see this unusual thing that was going on. They thought that perhaps the Gros Ventres wanted to make peace, and stood there watching the show, not knowing it was the killdeer (Drum Dancers). The Drum Dancers next marched toward the Piegan a second time, halted as before, sang a second song four times and danced. All this they did a third time, singing a third song four times.

"After marching forward a fourth time, which brought them very close to the Piegan, they halted and sang a fourth song four times (song No. 55), but did not dance. Instead of dancing, while they sang they faced toward basnable (the place of the dead), stretched their right arms out to the limit[22] to show that they meant unreservedly what they were doing, and held their right hands up with four fingers clenched and with thumbs up (or pointing toward basnabe). The leader of the Drum Dancers had meanwhile told them: 'When you finish the fourth singing of this fourth song, charge!'

[22] If they had not stretched their arms out *to the limit* and *fully*, this would have meant that they were not *fully* meaning to carry through.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

"As soon as they had so finished the fourth singing, one of the two forward crooked-lance carriers threw his lance into the Piegan trench and followed in after it, and the Piegan slashed him to pieces. Next the drummer, who had been carrying the drum slung over his right shoulder, threw the drum into the Piegan trench, followed in after it, and was likewise slashed to pieces. Then all the other Drum Dancers followed the two into the trench. All the Piegan were killed, while the Gros Ventres lost only two men, a lance-carrier and the drummer." 726 796*

Coming Daylight's account of this battle, less detailed and considerably generalized, enables us to date it as somewhere around the early nineteenth century. She was told it by one of her "old, old 'mothers'" whose husband had taken part in it. This "mother's" husband had joined the Drum Dance and she had to go along with him. The dancers would go way off and look for the enemy. If they spied him and were themselves unseen, they would go back to their camp, get their drum and return to where the enemy was. They would creep up on the enemy and when close enough to prevent escape would beat the drum and rush to the attack. The drummers (Coming Daylight used the plural, though mentioning only the one drum) in the battle with the Piegan dismounted from their horses, marched drumming toward the enemy, and jumped down into where they were. Some of the dancers who had guns marched with them and also jumped down among the Piegan enemy. Others attacked on horseback. It seems to have been the code of the Drum Dancers, never to "stand back" [retreat?] but always to attack.

Kit-fox Dance

This dance was called no:hao'wɔ, "Kit-fox lodge" (cf. Sifton, nóuhê, "fox, smaller kind"). 796*

We were able to gather only scattered data on this dance, which partly corroborated, partly added to, Kroeber's description.[24] Our data came from: The Boy,—whose father, Lame Bull, had gone through the dance,—Thick, Turn Toes, Coming Daylight,—whose

[24] Kroeber, 1908, pp. 250-51.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

In two of the battles described by The Boy weather power was used. In one, when seven Gros Ventre warriors were surrounded in a piece of brush by a body of Crows and the latter set fire to the brush to rout the Gros Ventres out, one Gros Ventre, a quiet and unassuming man, "used a bone whistle and did other things," and shortly rain came and put out the fire. This man's war-charm, an otter skin, was captured by the Crows in this battle, and the Gros Ventres learned later from the Crows that whenever the latter mounted this otter skin trophy on a pole, as at a scalp dance, rain came with thunder and lightning. Finally the Crows got scared, carried the otter skin over on the hills and left it there, "and the thunder left them alone." 778 821 726

In another battle, this time with a party of Sioux, the Gros Ventres had taken a scalp, and were retreating, with the Sioux in pursuit. Morning-Star-Appears (Rising Cross), a Gros Ventre warrier who had a ghost helper, "sang a song, used a robe as cover to enclose himself and said, 'We wish rain.' " In no time a heavy cloudburst, with thunder and lightning broke, and the Gros Ventres,—among them Stiffarm, then a very young man,—escaped under cover of the rain and semi-darkness.[10]

Garter Snake, daughter of Bull Lodge, gave us the following story: 778 821

"The Crows were camping on the north bank of the Yellowstone when a May snowstorm came. It snowed four days and four nights, and the snow drifted far up the lodge sides and horse-high, except where blown clear on elevated exposed spots. On the fourth day, at noon, the Crows came to Bull Lodge with a pipe and some things. They offered him the pipe and of course he didn't take it right away, but said: 'What is this for?' They said: 'We know you are a holy man [one with power]. You [can] do almost anything and we are asking you to make this storm quit. If you don't we shall all perish.' He told them: 'All right, that is easy.' And they gave him that stuff: 'Here are the things we give you.'

"So he told his wife: 'Stand up a pole good and solid in the back of the lodge.' She did so. Then he said: 'Take down that shield.' This was the shield he had dreamed about. He then

[10] See Cooper, 1944, p. 72.

757 Thomas Main's grandfather would, from time to time when not feeling well, drink a large quantity of fairly warm water, perhaps two or three quarts, before eating breakfast. He would then go outside, put his finger in his throat, and vomit. This means, instead of a physic, was resorted to as a laxative.

As soon as the first thunder of spring was heard, a person with warts would blow on them and they would come off. This was apparently looked upon as a "rational" treatment, though it was possibly of the magical order.

158 The following cure, related by Coming Daylight and Singer, was of the natural order, but came about without intentional treat-
726 ment. A young unmarried man, inseparable friend of Dressed In
755 White, Coming Daylight's husband, had become mentally deranged. He would tear off his clothes and when they would catch him and put clothes on him he would run till he ran into the water. He would run everywhere, and would climb up the sides of lodges to the top. This condition lasted not very long before his cure in battle. Some Gros Ventres, including Dressed In White, Coming Daylight and the young man, while camped at Black Butte (now Havre, Mont.), were attacked by some Assiniboine. With all the noise and shooting, the Gros Ventre horses stampeded. Dressed In White ran with his gun toward the stampeding horses, and, as he did so, saw one of the enemy fall in their midst, try to get up, and fall again. Dressed In White shot at him three times and then his gun would not go off and in his anger at it he smashed it on the ground. At this juncture, the young man came along, and Dressed In White said to him: "Hurry and grab that enemy. He is trying to get on a horse." The young man ran over, grabbed the enemy by the hair on either side of the head, threw him to the ground, and held him there. The Assiniboine had a knife but no gun and was trying to get up, buttocks first. Another Gros Ventre, Cuts The Rope, now ran over and shot the Assiniboine, and all then hit him, counting coup on him. From that time on, the young man was quite cured of his mental derangement, or at least showed no more symptoms of it, but he was shot to death not long after by another Gros Ventre. "By getting an enemy single-handed this young man had become a big chief and could have lots of lovers."[10]

---

[10] Women admired brave young men. See Flannery, 1953, pp. 190-91.

Her final rejoinder was such a witty and pointed one that everyone laughed heartily at her rival's expense. In this culture, of course, public ridicule was a far more effective retaliation than the biting and scratching that other women said frankly they would have indulged in when attacked.

Expression of emotional excess was institutionalized for the Gros Ventres, as for the rest of the Plains, in the bereavement situation. Upon the death of a husband, son, or father, a woman was expected to start wailing as soon as she heard the news, have her hair cut off, discard good clothes for old ragged ones, gash her arms and legs, go to the hills to mourn and cry, resisting for a time the pleas of her relatives to return, and being watched lest she attempt suicide. Coming Daylight was only a young woman when she was first widowed and the mourning pattern was still in full vogue. It is certain from other evidence than Coming Dayling had a deep affection for this husband to whom she had been given as a child-bride and in whose kindly and indulgent treatment she had found a pleasant escape from the rigorous discipline of her grandmother. Nevertheless the public expression of her grief was minimal—no abandonment for her. Although her sister was sent on the hills with her to keep watch over her in the usual way, Coming Daylight was easily persuaded to return shortly though she herself was proud of the fact that she had stayed out so long that she actually had got a frozen toe! In later years when all that was left of the ritual was the wailing out on the hills, she lost the son whom she herself, and everybody else, acknowledged as her favorite. She had not been on the hills very long when she experienced a significant dream, as follows. She was in a lodge at the rear of which was a big pile of tobacco mixture and a pipe. The owner of the lodge filled the pipe and approached her. She was frightened because she didn't smoke. The owner of the lodge however told her: "Look at these people." She looked and saw many with their hair cut and their bodies bleeding from the gashes inflicted in grief. The man then told her: "That is in the past. Nowadays your only consolation is in smoking." So she accepted the pipe and, after smoking it, she was painted in ceremonial fashion by each of those other mourners. Then the owner of the lodge dismissed her saying: "Now, go home and don't ever go on the hills and mourn again. But always smoke if you want to." She went home right after this dream and when she told her husband of it he accepted it as valid and persuaded her sister to prepare for Coming Daylight her first real smoke. She maintained that the habit subsequently developed was actually a great comfort to her.

The final area with which we shall be concerned here is the war complex—a vital aspect of the old Plains culture. Gros Ventre women were allowed direct but limited participation in these activities in the sense that, while they would not join a party of men who were going on horse-raiding or revenge expeditions, if opportunity offered they might exhibit the same kind of bravery that a man should show and derive considerable status therefrom. For instance, if one of the enemy fell nearby, the women rushed out from camp to count coup, and to grab trophies with which to inaugurate the relationship known as "enemy-friends." Coming Daylight, however, was never one to indulge in this sport. She told of the one—and to her extremely distasteful—occasion on which her hand literally was forced. It seems that during a raid on their camp one of the enemy was shot and her husband scalped him. The victim was lying not far from her lodge and, as her husband dashed off to pursue the rest of the Assiniboine, he shouted for her to come out and see what was going on. Coming Daylight saw the man lying there, face down, covered with blood. He was not dead

8:Flannery E-5 (1940-1948)1960 NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

and, each time he attempted to get to his knees, one of two women who had already reached the scene would strike him on the buttocks with the flat side of a hatchet, making an insulting remark, and both would laugh. Coming Daylight hesitated at some distance from where the other two were gloating over the fallen enemy. When one of them, Woman Chief by name, saw her she ran to her saying: "Why are you standing so far off?" She grabbed her by the arm and pushed a big club into her hand, saying: "He is still alive—you will do a great thing. *Ahe:ya'!*" Woman Chief forced Coming Daylight to strike him.

While both Woman Chief and Coming Daylight closely approximated the ideal for women as faithful wives and efficient workers who gave generously of their material goods to and on behalf of their relatives, they seemingly differed in temperament. Woman Chief was known as a very brave woman, and Coming Daylight was frank in admitting she would never have dreamed of doing the kinds of things for which Woman Chief was renowned. One of the latter's exploits, for example, was as follows. The Gros Ventres and Crow were allies in an encounter with the Piegan. The battle was in full force, but one Crow had withdrawn and was sitting motionless astride his horse at some distance from the melee. Woman Chief, who in contrast to most women was always well mounted, dashed up to the Crow, grabbed his wand from his hand, and rode pellmell into the thick of the battle, counting coups right and left. So brave was she considered in having really risked her life that she was accorded the distinction, most unusual for a woman, of being led around the camp circle with the victorious warriors. Furthermore, so many people came to sing in front of her lodge that she and her relatives, to show their appreciation of the honor, were forced to give away as much property as though she were a man. Judging on the basis of other biographical material, there can be no doubt that she gloried in her reputation and took every opportunity to enhance it. She was one to whom the more violent aspects of Gros Ventre culture were exceedingly congenial.

If we compare and contrast these two women we can say that insofar as the patterns of Dionysian configuration are the basis of the comparison, their behavior exhibits opposite extremes, the one going beyond the average in the direction of the configuration, the other running counter to and participating less than the average therein. Both might be termed deviant personalities in Honigman's sense of the term,[2] one overplaying and the other underplaying modal behavior in these selected patterns. Nevertheless, neither seems to have been a misfit insofar as each represents an extreme of socially accepted or sanctioned behavior within those patterns. If, for instance, Coming Daylight had been completely negative, and refused, say, to carry out at least the culturally defined minimum for mourning, had she, in addition to refusing to mutilate herself for the recovery of her ill relatives, neglected as an adult even the safe and less strenuous means to that end, she would have fallen without the pale, so to speak, and have been a misfit. If, at the opposite end of the scale, Woman Chief had gone further in the direction of masculinity, had she actually gone on raiding expeditions and herself stolen horses from the camp of the enemy, had she learned to shoot the bow and arrow or gun, or had she so much as adopted the vocabulary and/or pronunciation proper for males in the Gros Ventres language, she would have been carrying things too far. She, too, would have been dubbed a misfit.

The Catholic University of America,
Washington, D.C.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

 224 411

ends of the main portion of the sling, and then looped on themselves through a slit near one end. 857

The bull-roarer and buzzer were both well known to the Gros Ventre, but seem to be only children's toys. They were both called nakaa^{n}ta^{n} ("making cold," a name given also to the thermometer), probably from the widespread Indian idea that the bull-roarer breeds wind. The buzzer was made of a foot-bone of a buffalo, with a sinew string on each side, by which it was twirled, and then drawn so as to hum. The Arapaho type of buzzer is the same. The Gros Ventre bull-roarer seems to differ from the Arapaho form. Fig. 26 shows one of two very similar models, both of wood. The small, well-marked head, the long taper and point, and the numerous small notches, mark a distinct form. The sinew string is of about the length of the stick handle. 534 857 524 [821]

WAR.

Men generally went to war on foot, carrying food and moccasins on their backs. While on the trip they did not boil meat, but roasted it. Scouts, called "wolves," were sent out ahead. When these returned, running in a zigzag course, and shouting, it was a sign that they had seen something. If they had seen lodges, they barked like wolves. While they came, the women in the party stood in a row and sang, having made a pile of buffalo-chips. The "wolves" stopped a short distance away, and the leader of the party went to them. They came with him back to the pile of buffalo-chips, where he stopped, and, facing the party, recounted coups. After this, one of the scouts came before them and reported what he had seen. Upon this, all rushed at the pile of buffalo-chips, and kicked them about. If the enemy were near, they would now take off their heavier clothing, such as their robes, and dress and paint for war. 726 [252]

On returning to their camp victorious, the party approached stealthily, and made a charge upon it, often shooting; and sometimes the people in the tents jumped up out of their sleep in the early morning, thinking they had been attacked. The man who had killed an enemy, the one who had struck him first (whether dead or alive), and the one who had taken his gun, were held in about the same esteem. After the return to camp, a dance was made. Drums were beaten; and the women, who were standing in a curved row, danced in a circle toward the men, who stood in a row, and back again. The women carried the new scalps on sticks. If an enemy were killed near the home camp, his feet and hands might be cut off and carried on sticks, like the scalps. During this dance the man who first 727 [554] [554]

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

727 [554] [302] counted coup on the enemy filled a pipe, and held it for the rest of the party to smoke as they stood in a row. The returning war-party, if successful, always painted black, but if a member of their own party had been killed, they returned without rejoicing; unless sometimes, when the loss of the enemy had been greater than their own, and a relative of the dead was in the party, he might say, "One of the enemy pays for my relative. On account of the others, let us enjoy ourselves." Then the party would paint black, and celebrate. Wounds received by members of the war-party would not prevent celebration, unless, of course, they resulted fatally; and they were always regarded as an honor.

726 727 Some war-parties started off publicly in broad daylight, having made it known that they were going; and any one who wished joined. Sometimes, perhaps, two men would agree to go, and invited such others to accompany them as they wished. Women not infrequently went with the war-parties. If a man was killed in war, his relatives, especially his parents, [765] mourned for him. His father might go to the tent of a renowned warrior, and cry until this man became angry and announced a day for a party to start out to obtain revenge. On the day set, the party left publicly, usually on horseback.

751 237 726 778 293 [787] [531] A man's supernatural war paraphernalia are shown in Figs. 27, 28, and 29. They were obtained from a middle-aged man who had them from his grandfather, who first dreamed of the magpie and the other animals connected with the paraphernalia, and made the objects. A cylindrical raw-hide case (Fig. 27), such as is found used for holding feathers and medicine among most Plains tribes, is painted with a yellow, green, and blue design resembling parfleche designs. These colors represent the various colors of the birds that were dreamed of by the original owner, and whose feathers are kept in the case. The case is called the "house" of these objects. A wing-bone is attached to the outside of the case to make another whistle from in case of loss of the finished whistle included in the outfit. A small bag containing a necklace is kept in the case. The bag (Fig. 28, *a*) is ornamented with bead-work representing a frog (kaka"). This frog was part of the original owner's dream. The necklace (Fig. 28, *b*) has various wasóo ("medicine-roots") on it. These are said to be neither eaten nor otherwise used, except as they are worn on the necklace. The bone whistle (Fig. 28, *c*) alluded to is attached to a necklace of otter-skin. It is blown during the fighting to prevent injury. A magpie's skin (Fig. 28, *d*) and the skin of a smaller bird (Fig. 29, *a*) are also contained in the case. The white magpie-feathers are dyed yellow. The two skins are worn at the back of the head, and prevent the wearer being injured even in a hand-to-hand fight. A head-dress of ten magpie-feathers and of a white plume on red-painted

561 582 taboo. This was the case regarding the children of "inseparable friends," but whether or not it was so regarding the children of all members of the company, mutual hospitality was frequently extended among the members—"a man would most often invite the members of his age group." Further, it was not unusual for members of the same company to go hunting and on raiding and revenge parties together. If a young man were killed at war and [727 his body brought home, the members of his company were said to 764] have assembled and danced around his bier, sometimes sobbing and crying as they danced.

561 As members of either one or other of the two larger societies they joined with members of other companies, in the Stars and 575 Wolf-men respectively, to perform their proper social dance and to participate in activities such as gambling, horse-racing, "brag- [616] ging contests," and so on, wherein they could compete with members of the opposite moiety. An individual seemingly tended to choose his serious enemy-friends from among those of the rival organization and thus is explained the spirit of competition which Kroeber notes between the Stars and "other companies."[13]

The Societies

575 The Stars and Wolf-men societies were organized along identical lines and were distinguished from each other only in details of procedure.

Each society included approximately half the total number of able-bodied warriors in the tribe. They each had two renowned men as leaders—two Star leaders of relatively recent times having been Comes A-flying and Crazy Bull; two Wolf-men leaders, Skinner and Strikes On Top. The leaders remained mounted when the others of the society were marching on foot in preparation for their dance, and carried whips at the dance as insignia. These men were supposed to have been outstanding warriors who had while mounted actually counted coup against the enemy. Two members of the last-admitted company served as *atsa'an* (waiters, messengers) at the dances, and each society had an announcer, presumably chosen from among the "old men" who had gone through the Law Enforcer Dance.

[13] Kroeber, 1908, p. 234.

281 successfully hunted than antelope. While the finest clothing was
291 made from deer, elk was preferred for some purposes such as
[825] moccasins and warm shirts and coats—it being more durable but not equally as flexible.

291 For winter wear, caps and mittens of beaver or otter were made for men and boys. Beaver skin served as a breech clout for the men in winter, although antelope was preferred for this purpose the rest of the year, unless cloth were available, since the latter was more comfortable than hide which chafed the skin so badly.

292 Ordinarily unornamented clothing was worn, but for special
301 events, particularly when the whole tribe was together, everyone dressed in his best. Being well-dressed was as important to the
237 Gros Ventres as being well-mounted on ceremonial and social occasions. The effect on both the eye and the ear was taken into account in the ornamentation. Dyed porcupine quill embroidery lent color, and mica—first heated, then powdered and rubbed over a robe—glistened beautifully. Polished deer-hoofs as edging for a robe or dangling from leggings or garters "made such a nice sound when one walked." This feeling both for color and sound was carried over when material from the whites was at hand, beadwork tending to supplant the quill embroidery and scraps of bright colored cloth and of metal serving as "dangles." [18]

Elk teeth, however, were said to be "the greatest decoration of the Gros Ventres." They were used principally for girls' and women's dresses. Not so long ago there was a man at Hays who wore a vest trimmed with elk teeth, and people would say to him: "You crazy thing, only women have that kind of decoration!" But he was unconventional and would retort: "Well, I dance, too, and I want to look nice." Everyone would laugh, but he persisted
[727] in wearing that vest. Human hair as fringe and on moccasins was proudly worn by men who had taken scalps.

292 Mink, otter, weasel, muskrat and kit-fox were all used as trim-
237 mings, and occasionally the whole pelt of mink, otter or muskrat was made into a bag, or tobacco pouch, or other small container. Feathers, especially eagle feathers, were highly prized, and red

[18] For the detailed comparative analysis of Decorative Art of the Gros Ventres and other plains tribes, see Kroeber, 1908, pp. 151–79.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

ready to tell you. First, here's the scalp of the Sioux you will kill tomorrow. . [This was one strand of hair wrapped around a piece of sage brush, symbolic of the scalp.] I've found a big Sioux camp on Beaver Creek (east of the Little Rocky Mountains). The Sioux are having a big Grass Dance and the one you are to kill tomorrow is having the most fun. He has a sword. You'll capture that sword when you kill him. Don't be afraid. There will be no Gros Ventres killed, but two of you don't look good to me.' The Gros Ventres asked that he name the two, but he refused, saying: 'Just don't be afraid. Go ahead to the place where the Sioux are and attack them. Choose what kind of weather you want to make your escape after the fight, and I'll see that the weather will be that way.' They failed to make a choice, but the spirit said: 'Take a look at the sun every once in a while tomorrow. There will be all kinds of sundogs tomorrow, changing every little while. If they appear, you'll know that I have told the truth.'

"The next morning they decided that only those with good horses should cross the Missouri and attack the Sioux. They approached the camp where the Sioux had spent the night. The Sioux had failed to extinguish their former camp fires, and the embers were blown into flame and the fire was extending toward their new camp. The Sioux decided to fight the prairie fire, laying down their arms, not realizing the Gros Ventres were watching them. The Gros Ventres then attacked. The Sioux were in utter confusion and ran, all of them except a man with a sword who made a stand. Two Gros Ventres, Comes A-Flying and Owl Old Man, tried to ride over this Sioux who, however, sidestepped them and struck both their horses with his sword; meanwhile the Gros Ventres struck the Sioux with their whips, thus counting coups. A third Gros Ventre, Crazy Bear, however, killed him, took his scalp and claimed his sword. Since they had gotten this one scalp—which was sufficient for them to celebrate with a victory dance,—they returned. They saw the sundogs changing as the spirit had foretold. In order to evade the pursuit by the Sioux, they called on the man, whose ghost-helper had given the information, to change the weather. The man sang a song, using his robe as a cover to enclose himself, and said he

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

726 wanted a downpour of rain. At once a cloud appeared and in no
787 time it was a big black storm cloud. Then there was a wind and
769 a very heavy storm and thus the Gros Ventres got safely back to camp. The only loss on this occasion was that of two fine horses, one played out and the other foundered from drinking when overheated."

Return of the War Party

●727 After a successful encounter with the enemy, the homecoming was a joyful one, provided no Gros Ventre lives had been lost. As they approached the camp, appropriate songs were said to have been sung by the victorious party. If, for instance, they had stolen horses there was one type of song. On the other hand
[302] when scalps had been taken, they sang other kinds of songs and painted themselves with charcoal. Incidentally, the Gros Ventres had a saying that "women and children do not make good charcoal." Women and children should be captured but not killed and scalped.[18]

When the victorious party arrived, they circled the outside of the encampment before entering. "Then the party broke, each member surrounded by his womenfolk who crowded around, kissing him and taking the scalps or other trophies which had been won. After a reasonable interval, the crier called all to come to
[302] the center of the circle and dance. Men and women alike blackened their faces with charcoal, and the women, carrying scalps attached to poles, or weapons captured from the enemy, danced as innumerable victory songs were sung. Only members of the war party were allowed to join with the women in dancing. Many husbands, who had to stand on the sidelines, were jealous of the brave warriors at a time like this."

727 Most of the songs sung during the victory celebration had
533 words which referred to encounters wherein the Gros Ventres had been successful. New words were often made up to commemorate a particular incident. One of these songs had the following words: "Where are you going? I've been here all the

[567] [18] Cocking, p. 112, mentions in 1772 that the Gros Ventres adopted "slaves" of both sexes into families who had lost their children either by war or sickness.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

time, thou with grey hair."[17] It refers to a particular Crow who had long grey braids. This man had captured some Gros Ventre women who were out picking berries and had returned to the Crow without having killed a man or stolen horses. His fellow-tribesmen taunted him with his "weakness" and in order to vindicate his honor he again sought out the Gros Ventres and was killed by them. The song was composed by the husband of one of the captured Gros Ventre women. 727 533

Another song, classed as a victory song, was composed by an old man whose faith in a younger man was justified. The young man had had a supernatural vision and, although he was as yet untried, he successfully led a war party.[18] Still another song was composed on the occasion on which a Piegan, who had survived a partial scalping, was killed by the Gros Ventres.[19] [787]

Even though the party might have succeeded in taking scalps, if any of their number had been killed, the return was a sad one. Whenever feasible they brought back the bodies of the slain from the field of battle. In any case, there was no circling of the camp nor singing. Nor was there a victory dance unless close relatives of the deceased warriors gave permission. An example to illustrate the procedure may be taken from the description of a serious encounter between the Gros Ventres and Sioux, known as the Battle of Black Butte which occurred in 1871 or 1872, upstream from the present site of Havre.[20] "There were approximately 30 lodges of Gros Ventres who were greatly outnumbered by the Sioux. Nevertheless, about 30 Sioux were killed and only one Gros Ventre lost his life. On the return of the party, the father of this one victim said: 'I give you charcoal. My son is lying on many.' So they were able to celebrate that victory in a big way."[21] 727

More often, however, when Gros Ventres were killed in battle, an outstanding relative of one of the deceased volunteered to or-

[17] Song recorded as No. 19.

[18] This was recorded as No. 22.

[19] Song recorded as No. 106. Other songs used at the victory dances were recorded as No. 117, No. 118, No. 119, No. 123, No. 124.

[20] His own part in this encounter is described by Black Wolf in Kroeber, 1908, pp. 203-04.

[21] A song recorded as No. 91 was said to have been composed to commemorate this occasion.

727 ganize a revenge party. The Boy gave the following account of the circumstances under which one such party was announced and carried out. "The brother of Lame Bull's mother had been killed in war by the Piegan. This woman took it very hard because it
726 was her youngest brother of whom she was particularly fond.
787 None of her relatives had taken any action and she was out on the
727 hills mourning. While she was out there she fell asleep and an 'old man' appeared to her and said: 'If you make an effort, you will forget your grief. I will teach you a song that you will use when they dance at the victory celebration after your people have avenged his death. This song will be used when they bring back the scalps of the enemies who have killed your brother.' So she went home but didn't say anything about her experience for some time. Finally, however, she told her husband. He then decided to organize a war party to get revenge for his brother-in-law's death. He had a big following as he went against the Piegan. On the way, however, they came across some Blood Indians and killed five of them, which was considered as fulfilling his duty to bring backs scalps in retaliation. When the party returned, the woman of course joined in the victory dance and sang that song, which was then used many times after that when the Gros Ventres were successful."

726 If no prominent relative led the revenge party, the parents of a man killed in war could request some noted chief to do so. In
727 that case the one selected prayed for the success of the party himself and made a sweatlodge, inviting many old men who would likewise pray. The large number of offerings requisite for the occasion were supplied, however, by the man who had made the request. Should he not have the wherewithal to formally approach a prominent warrior, there was still the possibility that revenge might be volunteered by someone who pitied parents as they grieved for their son. This would afford an opportunity for some lesser man to legitimately set himself up as leader of a raiding party for the first time.

Status Through War-Deeds

554 Any action that involved risk of life at the hands of the enemy was counted as a war-deed. Raiding for horses, especially for

553 father had given him his own name, "Bear Teeth"; and in that of Ragged Robe's wife who gave her name to a little girl. In this latter case, at least, the woman continued using her own name.

Except in those cases where the name of a relative is given, as is seemingly the rule nowadays, the name must have some specific relation to either the war deeds or the medicine powers of the namer. Singer remarked that one time, when she had been very lucky in locating some weapons abandoned by the enemy, she was looking forward very much to naming a little relative "Finder" in connection with this exploit. Unfortunately, however, the child's father had already had a name for her so Singer was disappointed. A Pipe-Keeper, too, might name a child from something connected with the Pipe. Rufus Warrior, for instance, was named from the rawhide with which the Flat Pipe is wrapped; another child was called "Red Woman" from the fact that the wife of the Flat Pipe Keeper was always painted red,—even her hair. Al Chandler knows of two people his grandfather had named from objects in the Feather Pipe bundle.

The more formal the occasion, the more expensive the naming was for the family involved. If, for instance, advantage was taken of a public ceremony, not only was the one who gave the name recompensed by a valuable gift, such as a horse, but many other gifts would be given to various persons in the audience in order to honor the recipient of the name and to give prestige to his family. The expense was particularly heavy when a name was publicly bestowed upon an adult in recognition of bravery at war.[11]

[431 727 554]

551 Nearly everyone had a nickname. One of the most common was, and is, simply "Girl" or "Boy." Such a nickname often was acquired in early childhood because the name which had been bestowed was not liked,—and those names given through medicine often fell in that category. Coming Daylight said that she had not cared for the name given by a medicine man to her first-born son, so she had called him "Boy." The child died very young, and she now wonders if he would have lived longer had they used his real name. Nicknames may be acquired at any time of life and sometimes they are far from complimentary, especially those bestowed later in life by enemy-friends. If the nickname "takes" there is

[11] Cf. Chapter 5, p. 101.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

woman! You are leaving an old woman!' Finally our mother 888
couldn't stand it any longer and, although she was not responsible for that old woman, she turned back and got the old woman to camp by letting her hang onto the travois. But we didn't have to carry her because she died shortly after that."

Takes The Bow mentioned that in the dim past, rather than to go off and leave an aged relative, the Gros Ventres used to ask some outstanding warrior to kill this old person—a father, or mother, or grandparent. This was done in order to get those who were suffering "out of their misery." The relative who took this responsibility would authorize the killer to count coup on the one whom he killed and thus score another mark of distinction for his record.[8] Other Gros Ventres were of the opinion that this type of "mercy killing" was adopted from the Blackfoot and that it was rarely carried out by the Gros Ventres, although admittedly abandonment of the aged to starvation was sometimes forced upon them.

Death

The Gros Ventres valued life highly and prayed for long lives, 761
but when a person knew he was about to die, it was said that he 763
resigned himself and appreciated the efforts on the part of others to ease his last moments. There was a desire to die surrounded by one's family and friends who would see to it that the proper last steps were taken. In view of this, if a man were wounded in an [727] encounter with the enemy, every effort would be made by his companions—even at great personal risk—to get him back to his family before he would die.

When all hope for life had been abandoned, the dying person 763
was dressed in the best clothes available, his hair combed, and his face painted "as though he were going to a party." Frequently last minute instructions would be given by the dying concerning his preference as to method of final disposal. He might also include advice to his survivors, and make occasional bequests of

[8] It is interesting to note in this connection that Cocking, 1772, p. 112, writes of the Gros Ventres: "They torture all the aged of both sexes in a most shocking and deliberate manner." The context is not clear, however, and he may have been referring to treatment of prisoners of war.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

793 such an official keeper and was merely held by someone for the time being.

From data supplied mostly by The Boy and Coming Daylight, it is possible to trace the fortunes of the Flat Pipe during the last hundred years. Somewhere about 1850 the Flat Pipe keeper was Deer, who was succeeded by "Bear-going-along-side-of-hill," from whom it was ceremonially transferred about 1860-65 to The Boy's father, Lame Bull. One or two of Lame Bull's successors died before completing the customary four-year term, and Lame Bull took the Pipe back. About 1873-75 it was ritually transferred to Crow Bull, Coming Daylight's mother's brother and a good friend of Lame Bull, as a result of a vow made by Crow Bull to take the keepership if the wife, who had been captured by the Piegan, should get back safely to him, which she did.

Coming Daylight gave the story as follows:

793 "In the 1869 battle between the Gros Ventres and the Piegan,
727 a wife of my uncle, Crow Bull, was captured by the Piegan. After some time the man who captured her and who had taken her as wife saw her crying and asked her: 'Why are you crying?' She replied: 'I am lonesome for my children.' She had borne no children during her stay with the Piegan. So he told her: 'All right. I am a man, a real chief. I will let you go back to your children. But it would be dangerous for you to go on horseback. You must walk.'

793 "So on the sly he fixed up a big traveling dog to pack food and she made moccasins for the journey. He told her which way to go, this is, by way of Fort Benton where there were some Piegan
[582] and Gros Ventre women married to whites. He also told her she must travel by night lest the Piegan capture her again, and he accompanied her quite a way on her journey.

"After two days on the road, traveling by night and hiding in the day, she reached Fort Benton safely just at daybreak on the third. When she got there she did not know where to go. She saw someone emptying water, who looked like an Indian woman, so she went up to her. The woman said: 'Oh, where did you come from?' 'I came from the Piegan,' she replied, 'my Piegan husband there let me go.' The woman said: 'After you have eaten I will

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

793 Horse Capture, the brother of Thick and the Assiniboine woman, Coming Day, who was still living—who had married Horse Capture and in her latter days had come to realize her duties toward the Pipe,—were ritually inaugurated as Pipe keeper and Pipe woman by Lame Bull. Then Coming Day died, as did also in 1908 Lame Bull, and Horse Capture was left alone with the Pipe. He married again and The Boy's mother, who had earlier been Pipe woman, instructed Horse Capture's second wife in her ritual duties. Horse Capture was the last ritual keeper of the Pipe. When Horse Capture died, his widow took the Pipe over. Thick wanted to bury the Pipe with Horse Capture, but was dissuaded from doing so, and agreed to keep it. Later Horse Capture's widow, who lived successively with Thick's family, the Birdtail family, and The Boy's family, willed the Pipe to The Boy, to dispose of it as he saw fit. On her death, The Boy wanted to take it over but his wife as a Catholic objected. The Boy finally got [795] her consent on the ground that "we are both Catholics; I want to keep the Pipe as a keepsake, not to pray to as it used to be prayed to," but it was arranged that the Pipe would remain in the keeping of Thick (married to The Boy's sister) until The Boy and his wife were ready to take it.

[755] The last ritual opening of the Pipe bundle occurred in 1937 as a prayer for cure, when Joe Assiniboine's small son was affected with bad sores on his face. The rite was only partially and negligently carried out at the time. The final formal uncovering of the Pipe took place on February 6, 1946, after the return of [727] the Gros Ventre members of the armed forces from World War II. On this occasion the full rite, as far as recalled, was enacted, and the Pipe and Pipe bundle given a thorough cleaning and renovating. The bundle with the Pipe is now (1955) carefully kept at The Boy's ranch at Lodge Pole.

The elective system rather than the voluntary vow was the more common one. Under this system, where the actual keeper decided to give up and transfer the Flat Pipe, he would confidentially summon the surviving ex-keepers and ex-co-keepers (not the other wives) of both the Flat and Feathered Pipes to come secretly without a word to anybody, to meet at his lodge,

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

horse and started off but at the end of the rope was stopped and thrown. Fur Moccasin killed and scalped him then and there. Then the Gros Ventres took after the other four Piegan. The second Piegan was killed and his horse captured by the young warrior who had promised a horse to the Flat Pipe. The other three Piegan were also killed. The Gros Ventre suffered no casualties in the fight. 778 726

When the battle was over, Fur Moccasin turned over the Piegan scalp to Lame Bull: "Here's the scalp which I promised for the Flat Pipe." The other young warrior who had promised the horse likewise turned it over: "Here's the horse which I promised for the Flat Pipe."

Some time after this fight, peace was made between the Gros Ventres and the Piegan, and the Gros Ventres learned the Piegan side of the incident. The Piegan (or Blood) had planned to hold a Sun Dance. So they selected four men to go out and kill a bull buffalo for the dance. One old man of his own volition went along in order to get some of the internal organs for himself. After the five had set out, the Piegan waited in vain all the next day till nightfall for them to return and finally concluded that they must have met with misfortune. The next morning the Piegan set out in the direction in which the five had gone and, judging by the actions of carrion crows and buzzards, discovered the five corpses. The Gros Ventres by this time were a long way off. The Sun Dance was given up. The four younger Piegan killed were noted men.

The Piegan scalp was tied to the outside of the Flat Pipe bundle. The donor, Fur Moccasin, by giving the scalp, became an enemy-friend of the Flat Pipe, which role gave him the right to go pretty far in taunting and saying things about it, as was the wont between enemy-friends.[8] But only he, and no one else could take such liberties. 727 778

The scalp remained attached to the outside of the bundle. The Boy, who knew this, always felt that this was not right, because the bundle had great religious significance whereas the scalp was something of an entirely different order and did not belong with 778

[8] For details on enemy-friends, see Flannery, 1953, pp. 102-06.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

self was practically committing suicide, so in one sense he meant himself. But in another, he meant that the case of the others, or many of them, was hopeless. He was telling them that if they did not run they would not escape home, but that even if they did run he was doubtful if they would make home safely. They saw and heard him, and a few escaped and survived, but many, including Little Weasel himself, were killed. When the survivors got back to camp they told what had happened.

"Little Weasel, himself unmarried, had been engaged at the time in a love affair with a certain young married woman, the most beautiful in the tribe, and her husband knew about it. After the survivors returned, her husband said to her: 'I knew all about your affair with that young man but I did not scold or punish you. Now you should do what I tell you. You can mourn and cry for your lover, but do not do anything else. Think of our little boy (then four years old).' After saying this, he left their lodge to go hear details of the news of the battle.

"After he had left, his wife put on her best clothes, and combed her hair, and fixed herself up. Then taking with her a stout tough rope of sinew she went to the brow of a cliff where two trees stood, one leaning over the brink. She fastened one end of the rope around her neck and tied the other end to the leaning tree. Then she sang the same song her lover had sung around the mound, and with the same words. After finishing the song, she rattled her tongue and yelled as a woman used to do when celebrating the first coup her son had made.

"All the people, including her husband, ran out and he pleaded with her, but she did not listen to him. 'So sang,' she said, 'Little Weasel,' and rattling her tongue she jumped down, her head going one way and her body another."

According to The Boy, "the climax of the last important phase of the Kit-fox Dance came when the dancers paid their ceremonial grandfathers, and they paid them well, with many horses, etc." "On one occasion," he added, "one young Kit-fox Dancer did not have anything to give, and it just so happened that all his relatives were poor and did not come to his rescue. Therefore he did not pay his grandfather anything, and he was terribly embarrassed and

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787 Crow with the blue coat you will kill all the Crows and get your
776 horses back.' The Gros Ventres asked the ghost helper which
539 two of their party would be wounded, but were not told by the ghost helper. If they had been told they would not have let these two go into battle.

"By the time they were through with the spirit it was near daylight. So they decided not to go to sleep but to wait up the rest of the night. [Here followed a long detailed description of the battle with the Crows beginning around daylight.] The Crow with the blue coat escaped. Of the sixty Crows in all, forty were killed. No Gros Ventres were killed, but two were wounded—two members of my own [The Boy's] clan. While the party was still at the war camp, some distance from the main camp, the ghost helper came and said: 'I came to hear the news. Did you kill the man with the blue coat?' They answered: 'No.' The ghost helper said: 'It is your own fault. If you had, you would have killed all the Crows. But anyhow you did well and have done yourselves credit. I am going to teach
[727] you a victory song so you can sing it when you get back to camp.' So he taught them this victory song[2] and they learned it and he said to them: 'Well, my children, I am going home. When I get back to my place of abode I will celebrate that victory too. I will give you charcoal [it was the custom for returning victors to paint themselves black] and I'll bring charcoal to my own land and celebrate.'

"The foregoing incident happened in the time of my [The Boy's] grandfather, Crow Moccasin."

Narrative 2

The story which here follows was also told by The Boy.

"The Gros Ventres were camped east of (the site of) Lewistown (south of the Missouri River). A party of Gros Ventre warriors left the camp to go on the warpath against the Sioux. One of this Gros Ventre party was known to have a ghost helper.

[2] This song as sung by The Boy was recorded in the field in 1940, together with about 120 other Gros Ventre songs, but I have not found it possible, as yet, to get any of the records transcribed for publication.

8:Flannery E-5 (1940-1948)1960 NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

and, each time he attempted to get to his knees, one of two women who had already reached the scene would strike him on the buttocks with the flat side of a hatchet, making an insulting remark, and both would laugh. Coming Daylight hesitated at some distance from where the other two were gloating over the fallen enemy. When one of them, Woman Chief by name, saw her she ran to her saying: "Why are you standing so far off?" She grabbed her by the arm and pushed a big club into her hand, saying: "He is still alive—you will do a great thing. *Ahe:ya'!*" Woman Chief forced Coming Daylight to strike him.

While both Woman Chief and Coming Daylight closely approximated the ideal for women as faithful wives and efficient workers who gave generously of their material goods to and on behalf of their relatives, they seemingly differed in temperament. Woman Chief was known as a very brave woman, and Coming Daylight was frank in admitting she would never have dreamed of doing the kinds of things for which Woman Chief was renowned. One of the latter's exploits, for example, was as follows. The Gros Ventres and Crow were allies in an encounter with the Piegan. The battle was in full force, but one Crow had withdrawn and was sitting motionless astride his horse at some distance from the melee. Woman Chief, who in contrast to most women was always well mounted, dashed up to the Crow, grabbed his wand from his hand, and rode pellmell into the thick of the battle, counting coups right and left. So brave was she considered in having really risked her life that she was accorded the distinction, most unusual for a woman, of being led around the camp circle with the victorious warriors. Furthermore, so many people came to sing in front of her lodge that she and her relatives, to show their appreciation of the honor, were forced to give away as much property as though she were a man. Judging on the basis of other biographical material, there can be no doubt that she gloried in her reputation and took every opportunity to enhance it. She was one to whom the more violent aspects of Gros Ventre culture were exceedingly congenial.

If we compare and contrast these two women we can say that insofar as the patterns of Dionysian configuration are the basis of the comparison, their behavior exhibits opposite extremes, the one going beyond the average in the direction of the configuration, the other running counter to and participating less than the average therein. Both might be termed deviant personalities in Honigman's sense of the term,[2] one overplaying and the other underplaying modal behavior in these selected patterns. Nevertheless, neither seems to have been a misfit insofar as each represents an extreme of socially accepted or sanctioned behavior within those patterns. If, for instance, Coming Daylight had been completely negative, and refused, say, to carry out at least the culturally defined minimum for mourning, had she, in addition to refusing to mutilate herself for the recovery of her ill relatives, neglected as an adult even the safe and less strenuous means to that end, she would have fallen without the pale, so to speak, and have been a misfit. If, at the opposite end of the scale, Woman Chief had gone further in the direction of masculinity, had she actually gone on raiding expeditions and herself stolen horses from the camp of the enemy, had she learned to shoot the bow and arrow or gun, or had she so much as adopted the vocabulary and/or pronunciation proper for males in the Gros Ventres language, she would have been carrying things too far. She, too, would have been dubbed a misfit.

The Catholic University of America,
Washington, D.C.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

276
755
778

side of the bundle, it is said. Except at such ceremonies as this, only the keeper could touch the pipe.

276
778

Pipes were sometimes given to other tribes, and were sometimes received from them. Sometimes they were carried by war-parties. One of the three pipes still in existence is said to have been given by the Cheyenne to the Crow, and by the latter to the Gros Ventre, when peace was made between the two tribes. The stem is ornamented with feathers, weasel-skins, and at the end with a bunch of eagle-feathers. The sacred pipes were kept wrapped in many pieces of skin or cloth, and hung up in the tent. In good weather they were hung on a stand of three or four sticks, behind the tent. The keepers of the sacred pipes observed stringent rules. They could not eat of the head or back of any animal, nor of any part of the white-tailed deer, nor any eggs. They were not allowed to bathe, or to paint (except red), or to take the ashes out of the tent. They had to smoke in certain ways. They did not eat dogs, or allow them in the tent; nor did they let dogs touch them, or walk over their legs, or walk before them, while they were smoking. The keepers of the sacred pipes wore their hair uncut and uncombed. They could not cut it until they had given the pipe to another keeper. The hair was worn tied in a bunch just above the forehead. Fig. 42 shows such a bunch of matted hair, said to have been that of the grandfather of the father of the man who was the oldest in the tribe in 1901. This former keeper of the pipe became so old that he lost most of his hair, and the bunch shown was cut off by him before it should drop off. To this hair the later owner of the pipe, his present great-grandson, tied the first of his own teeth to fall out from old age: they are contained in a small cloth sack.

[648]

[728]

276
778
784

[825]

[302]

Fig. 42 (50 1902). Matted Hair. Length, 41 cm.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

276 778 The sacred flat-pipe was also used in the sun-dance. It was once captured in war. Then the man who took it had bad dreams, until the pipe spoke to him in his dream and said, "Return me, or your tribe will be [728] destroyed." Then this man brought back the pipe, and his tribe made peace with the Gros Ventre.

343 782 The making of a sweat-house was not restricted to certain persons. A man wishing success in war would make a sweat-house for another person, in order that he might accomplish the deed he had in mind. Or, if a person was sick, one of his relatives might pledge to make a sweat-house for him, just as he would a dance. In this case the sick person himself would not necessarily use the sweat-house. On the other hand, a doctor might prescribe sweating for a patient, and in this case the sick person would enter the sweat-house.

[757]

Fig. 43 (50—4255). Sweat-house Tail. Length, 36 cm.

343 515 [237]

About twelve or fourteen willow poles were cut for the sweat-house. The entrance always faced the sunrise, and a small cottonwood-tree was erected in front of it. To this, calico or other property was tied by an old man as a gift to the sun. The cloth was partly blackened, the corners being rubbed with charcoal.

When all the participants were inside, the blankets were pulled down and the house closed tight. Water was poured on hot stones, at first five times. Thereupon the lodge was opened at the entrance and at the opposite west end, and the people cooled. It was then closed again, and this time water was poured on the rocks seven times. After cooling once more, water was poured on the rocks nine times. The fourth time, the man that poured the water could put as much or as little on the stones as he wished. After the fourth time, the participants came out and bathed. [757] If they were suffering from pain, they whipped that part of the body with buffalo or horse tails. This practice made the heat greatest at that point, much as if it were beaten into the body.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

have someone come back a real hero, and, although such a promise to torture oneself could be made in regard to other relatives, "it was usually a sister who thought so much of her brother who did that." Other forms of sacrifice which a girl might practice on her brother's behalf would be to take a fine robe, or something else of value, and stick it on top of the lodge saying: "I offer this that my brother may come back with good luck, bringing something fine from war." This could be even more specific in that a girl could offer, say, the tip of her finger, if her brother would bring back a particular thing, such as a scalp or a horse or a weapon. Again, should her brother be ill or wounded, a woman would be exceedingly concerned and might go so far, as in one case recorded, of promising that if he should recover she would join the Women's Lodge—"which was considered a great thing to do for your brother." 593 728 721

Usually a man would have some voice in regard to his sister's marriage and, if he were the one who made the arrangements, he received the larger share of the bride-price. It was said, too, that a brother would be especially concerned regarding his younger sister's moral conduct and might take it upon himself to keep her in line. Although parents would feel the disgrace of an erring daughter, a brother was expected to react violently. If her husband failed to punish his wife for adultery, her brother could kill her. Some instances were given, too, in which the man took his own life indirectly, by riding into the midst of the enemy without taking any precautions, because he felt so keenly the dishonor his sister who was unfaithful had imposed on him. 593 [584] [684]

Maternal Uncle and Paternal Aunt

"Because a brother and a sister thought so much of each other, they were expected to be good to each other's children." If a woman had several brothers, it was the eldest who assumed the duties of the maternal uncle and his relationship with his nephews was a direct one. Should the eldest brother be unable to undertake the responsibility another brother or male cousin was expected to do so. 604

The maternal uncle was supposed to watch his sister's children closely even though her husband was on the scene. If he did not 604 861

1; Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

lodge. Other men go up into the hills near the camp, where they are fastened to a post, and fast from sunrise to sunset. In the evening their ceremonial "grandfather" comes and cuts them loose. Young men who want to meet with success in war pierce the skin over their shoulder-blade, and, having inserted sticks, hang two guns to these on each side. Sometimes a crooked-hoofed horse is fastened to the sticks. Thereupon they go about outside of the camp-circle, crying constantly, hoping that some supernatural being will pity them. Still others tie four or five buffalo-skulls in a row, which they fasten in the same way to their backs. They also go around the camp-circle. 796 304 785.

If it is thought possible that the enemy may be near at the time of the dance, a man brings a filled pipe to the pledger of the dance and offers it to him, asking about the enemy. The pledger takes out his medicine-bag, which is the skin of the animal he saw in his vision, incenses it, and performs the acts which this guardian animal commanded. Every one is quiet, and the fire is put out so that the lodge is completely dark. The pledger blows his whistle, and the people sing for him as loudly as they can. He makes motions around his head with his medicine, thereby asking his guardian spirit to enable him to see supernaturally. He continues his motions until he is able to see the enemy. Thereupon he sits down. After this, another man offers him a pipe, saying, "We wish you to tell us what you have seen. Therefore take this pipe and smoke it." After he has smoked, the pledger tells the people how many people he has seen, and where they are. He says, "I saw so many buffalo-bulls (men). They are coming from there. Take charcoal for successful battle" (black being the paint of victory). 796 787 [822]

The dancers also have the power to see the enemy. If, as they look at the "nest" day and night, they see legs hanging down, or a headless body in the tree, it is the sign that an enemy will be killed by the tribe. If, on the other hand, they see blood on the poles overhead or running down the central tree, a member of the tribe will be killed. Sometimes they see a man whom they can recognize as a member of the tribe, black as coal and very thin, hanging from the poles above them. Then he will die soon.

Each day certain men, who seem to be young men, are selected, and their names called out. These men dress as if for war. When they enter, it seems that they sit in a row at the left of the entrance. The bravest of them are then selected, and taken to the back of the lodge, where a bed and head-rest have been prepared, on which they sit. One of these men counts a coup, and picking up a stick puts it into the fire. One after another they do this until a large fire is blazing. These men are called tsóótaxwuhuu ("inside dancers"). Thereupon two old men, going to the centre of the lodge and conferring in whispers, select six or eight warriors. As soon as these 796 729

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 men are named, their female relatives return to their tents, and cook. When they have prepared food, they all together bring a large quantity of it to the 729 lodge. The men selected carry weapons, and are dressed for war. They are usually mounted. Where they themselves or their horses were wounded, [302] they paint themselves. If they have ridden over an enemy, a man is painted on the breast of the horse. When the food which has been brought by their female relatives has been eaten, these men, two at a time, go through numerous performances of their achievements in battle. This is done each day of the dance.

796 A group of men and women, called, like those in the preliminary singing-tent, "prairie-chickens," and therefore probably the same persons, seem [534] to be the singers for the dance. They beat a rawhide in place of a drum, and hold branches, which, at the end of each song, they shake, shouting.

[271] The dancers may not drink water, no matter how great the heat. If [821] one of them is unable to endure, and a pitying relative gives him even only a drop, a thunderstorm follows, and the offender may be struck by lightning, or one of his horses may be killed by lightning. In case it seems necessary for the dancers to drink, a pipe is taken to one of the old men. If he accepts it and smokes it, he goes to the central tree. He wears a robe with the hair-side out. He has a whistle in his mouth, feathers in one hand, and a crow-skin in the other. He strikes the bill of the crow four [789] times, with a downward motion, against the lightning symbol on the tree. A vessel is held against the tree at the bottom of the symbol, and, after the fourth blow, water is said to run out until the vessel is filled, when it stops. This water is given to the dancers, each of whom drinks a very small quan- [787] tity. The actions of the man producing this water are said to be determined by his personal supernatural vision.

After the four days of the ceremony are completed, the lodge is left standing. All the cloth and clothing that have been attached to it remain [789] in place, and it appears that other clothes, especially of children, are left at the lodge. This is done in order that the children may live a long life.

796 From drawings made by a Gros Ventre, it appears that the buffalo-skull is painted with spots, and has its nose and eyes stuffed. Behind it is 532 represented a dancer holding the wheel. He is presumably the pledger of the ceremony. The wheel is bisected by two strings, and has eagle-feathers and down-feathers attached to it. The dancer blows a whistle at the end of which is a plume. The whistle hangs from his neck. At the back of the head is a plume. Lines of paint proceed from his breast to his wrists and ankles. On each of these are four diamonds, two on each upper and lower arm, thigh, and calf. If this is a correct representation, the Gros Ventre use at least one style of painting that is like the most typical Arap-

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Another instance was given by The Boy regarding his father. 764
"Lame Bull was on a buffalo-hunting party when his brother-in-law was killed during an encounter with the enemy. They brought the body as it was back to camp, where it lay for quite a while. [729] Lame Bull finally went to his tipi and got leggings and a shirt of his own, although he was Flat Pipe Keeper at the time and it was [784] taboo for one holding this office to give his clothes to the dead. Nevertheless Lame Bull removed the bloody clothes from the body of his brother-in-law, washed the body and dressed it in his own clothes. He paid for this kindness, however, because for nine years thereafter he had such pains in his legs he was not able to walk,—this being the punishment he suffered for breaking the rules by which the Keeper of a sacred pipe should live."

Before finally disposing of the body "something very expensive," like a big silk handkerchief, was placed over the face. The whole body, including the head, was then wrapped securely in a blanket or robe and tied "like a mummy." The body was placed on a stretcher and put in a forked tree, if practicable, the head to the setting sun. Otherwise the corpse might be laid on a knoll and a structure like a sweatlodge built over it to protect it from the wild beasts; or it might be laid in the cleft of a cliff and covered with rocks.[8] For a particularly prominent man, however, his own 766
lodge might serve as his last resting place. In that case holes would be dug in which the lodge-poles were placed, in order that the structure would be more permanent. The body was laid in the lodge amidst rich furnishings. The ears of the lodge were closed, the cover pegged down, and the whole secured as well as possible. This was done, for instance, for The Boy's maternal grandfather and for one of his maternal uncles. Al Chandler remembers that when he himself was a small boy upon the death of his uncle, Rises Again, the body was placed on a bedstead in a big lodge erected about a half-mile from his house.

Even in times of great stress, such as in a smallpox epidemic 764
when so many died that "the trees along the Milk River were just [765 731]
loaded with bodies," as much care as possible was taken to place the bodies properly in their last resting place. When there was no more space on the trees, a large number of bodies were put in a

[8] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, p. 181.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

50 tents or 250 men; next to them downward extend the Blackfeet, their number may be 800 men; next to them and who extend to the confluence of the South and North branch, are the Fall or Big Bellied Indians, who may amount to about 600 warriors.[29] 175 161

Dislocation and Warfare (1790–1830)

Within a decade of the time of Mackenzie's observations, however, the Gros Ventres were being ousted from between the forks of the Saskatchewan where they had been apparently well established since at least 1772, when Cocking met them.[30] Undoubtedly the Gros Ventres were greatly weakened by the smallpox epidemic of 1780, as Wissler has suggested.[31] In any case they were subsequently pushed south and east by the allied Assiniboine and Cree, who had the great advantage of being relatively well-armed with guns. Thus the Gros Ventres were launched on the most turbulent period of their career, with enmity toward the whites as an important factor. 175 648 [731]

We know from Harmon how bitterly the Gros Ventres resented the more favorable treatment accorded the Cree-Assiniboine by the traders. He was at Alexandria, a Northwest Company post on the Assiniboine River, and records on June 10, 1801, the following: "It is currently reported and believed that the Rapid Indians are forming a war party to come against the Indians of this quarter, whom they consider, and I think with sufficient reason, as their enemies. If they come this way they will fall on us as upon the natives themselves, for they say that we furnish the Cree and Assiniboine with what firearms they want, while they get few."[32] Although this particular attack on the post did not materialize, there was real reason to have feared it. In the summer of 1793 the Gros Ventres attacked old fort Brulé (South Branch House) and killed all but one of the twenty or so inhabitants; in 1794 they pillaged Manchester House. These two

[29] Mackenzie, v. 1, p. cx.

[30] O. Lewis p. 12, places them East of the South Branch prior to about 1750.

[31] Wissler, 1936, p. 18. Cf. interesting tradition of the ravages of the epidemic, pp. 34–36.

[32] Harmon, p. 51.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

seemingly after the pillaging of this fort about 1826 that part of the Gros Ventres fled to the headwaters of the Missouri, wintered there, and then proceeded south to join their Arapaho kinsmen. According to Hayden, the Gros Ventres spent about five years hunting with the Arapaho and joined them in trading with the Mexicans.[46] During this sojourn, the Gros Ventres suffered a devastating attack of smallpox which was said to have reduced their number by half. 175 648 [731]

From sources independent of Hayden we know that a large group of Gros Ventres was actually in the Cimarron area during the late 1820's. Gregg, with a party of independent traders, was traveling in the Cimarron Valley when on June 21, 1831, they met a very large group of Indians,—he estimates about a thousand including men, women and children,—who followed them for a day or two in order to pilfer what they could and to receive presents if possible. They were finally bought off with about sixty dollars worth of trade goods contributed by various members of the party. It was thought at first that these Indians were Comanche and Arapaho. "But," states Gregg, "they were principally if not altogether Blackfoot and Gros Ventres." A few days later Gregg received intelligence that Captain Sublette and his party, on their way from St. Louis to Santa Fe, had met "an immense horde of Blackfeet and Gros Ventres," and that although the Indians had assumed a menacing attitude, the party had passed without serious molestation. That same evening, however, Gregg camped near a place called the "Battle Ground," famous for a skirmish which a caravan of traders in the company of Mexican troops had in 1829 with the Gros Ventres. Gregg was told that on that occasion, the traders and troops, under Col. Vizcarra, were camped on the Cimarron when a party of 120 Gros Ventres approached on foot. The traders did not welcome the Indians, but seeing that they were disposed to remain until morning, Col. Vizcarra promised to disarm them. Nevertheless he failed to do so, and all of a sudden the Indians sprang to their feet, gave a yell and fired on the party. A Taos Indian, by giving his own life, saved that of the Colonel. The Mexican troops pursued the Gros

[46] Hayden, 341. The gist of what Hayden gives for this period is correct, though his dates are inaccurate. [114]

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

more dependent on trading as their thirst for liquor became greater and greater. 175

At the time of which we are speaking, 1833, the Gros Ventres and Piegan were at least temporarily at peace. The Assiniboine, however, were strong and, with the Cree, were raiding deep into Gros Ventres territory. They were likewise at enmity with the Piegan. Poorly mounted as they were, they were bold enough to attack Fort McKenzie in 1833, and were driven off by the whites, with very little assistance from the Piegan who were there at the time. The next fall apparently this same band of Cree-Assiniboine cut off sixty lodges of Gros Ventres in the Sweet Grass Hills and the Gros Ventres lost 400, only one escaping to tell the tale.[58] 648

The Crow, too, were being very troublesome and Bradley describes their siege of Fort McKenzie in 1834.[59] The traders on this occasion finally resorted to firing a cannon which frightened the Crow. To wipe out their disgrace in running away, the Crow rallied under their leader Rotten Belly, and resolved to make an expedition against the Blackfoot. They came across a dozen Gros Ventres warriors, however, near the Fort and satisfied their honor by killing them instead of the Blackfoot. Nevertheless the Gros Ventres had fought bravely and inflicted losses upon the Crow, including their chief who, when he was dying from the wounds, told his people never to attack the whites again. Bradley tells us that the Crow kept to this advice. Nevertheless they continued giving trouble to the Gros Ventres. Bradley says in 1835 that war continued to rage as fiercely as ever. For example, the Gros Ventres killed 40 Crow who had tried to steal their horses near the Fort; some months later they again got the best of a raiding expedition of Crow.[60]

In building up to the position they maintained in 1855, the Gros Ventres were undoubtedly able to profit from the effects of the great smallpox epidemic of 1837–38 which wreaked such havoc among all the Blackfoot groups and the Assiniboine, but which left the Gros Ventres and Crow relatively untouched. Bradley gives 175 648 731

[58] Bradley, 219.
[59] Bradley, p. 216.
[60] Bradley, p. 219. For an account of present Gros Ventre tradition of the first of these two battles, see pp. 94–96.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

175 648 731

an account of the terrible number of deaths among the Blackfoot in 1838 and states that the northern Assiniboine lost two-thirds of their number. He says of the Gros Ventres however that they escaped very lightly, their entire loss being less than 200. "This is to be attributed to their being in a measure innoculated by previous experience with the disease communicated by the Arapahoes in a visit to the south."[61] It may be recalled that Hayden mentions the epidemic which struck the Gros Ventres when they were among the Arapaho. Both are probably referring to the severe, but more or less localized, epidemic which hit the Indians of the Kansas Territory in 1829. Hayden, referring to the five year period during which the Gros Ventres hunted and traded along with the Arapahos—says that during this time: "Smallpox passed among them, having been communicated to them through other tribes with whom they were at peace or carried on a traffic. This disease, at that time, destroyed about half their number, but secured the remainder from the next attack which occurred in 1838. At this later period the smallpox only acted on the young, and destroyed a number of them, but the chiefs and elderly men escaped so that the tribe was not reduced to the disorderly and helpless condition of the Blackfoot and other surrounding nations."[62] That the Blackfoot groups were disorganized to a large extent is borne out by a completely independent source. Father Mengarini in 1841 notes the troublesome raids by the Blackfoot, around St. Mary's Mission among the Flatheads on the Bitter Root River, and adds: "Had not pestilence decimated the tribe the year before our arrival, our mission at St. Mary's would have been impossible."[63]

175 648

In the 1840's, then, the Gros Ventres had only one full-strength enemy to contend with, namely, the Crow. Presumably, they took advantage of the opportunity to raid extensively both the Blackfoot groups and the Assiniboine. Nevertheless they evidently continued to keep up their good relations with the whites. Father Point, S.J., who spent the fall and winter of 1846–47 among the Blackfoot and Gros Ventres wrote to Father de Smet regarding

[61] Bradley, p. 226.
[62] Hayden, p. 341.
[63] Mengarini, p. 8.

622 seemed that the others present agreed with him, the leader would
[623] give in and have the crier announce the revised decision."

On the march, the leader went at the head of his band and
[484] showed the way. When several bands were together, the leader of one would have decided where he intended to go, and, if the other bands had decided to go along with this one, they followed, but were free to break away at any time.

[621 The band to which either the Keeper of the Flat Pipe or the
793] Keeper of the Feathered Pipe belonged had a certain distinction as there was a tendency when the tribe split for each to have a considerable following.

173 According to tradition, as related by The Boy, the Gros Ventres
643 had had in the fairly remote past a formally selected chief or leader of the whole tribe. It was said that he functioned when the whole tribe was together and that his decisions in important matters were made in consultation with the chief men, including the leaders of all the bands. There was no regular council and anyone
[623] present might express his opinion. Often the Keepers of the Sacred Pipes were present at such meetings called by the tribal
[143] chief, but if they were not present they were supposed to be kept advised.

The last regularly selected leader of the whole tribe was said to have been White Eagle, who held this position in the last decades of the eighteenth century. It was said further that White Eagle was preceded by White Shield, of whom there are many stories extant, and that White Shield was preceded by Elk Going Against The Wind. The Boy gave the following information regarding the "election" of White Eagle. The account was given to The Boy by his father, Lame Bull, who had it from Old Man Gopher, a cousin of Lame Bull's paternal grandfather. "The Gros Ventres had been badly decimated by smallpox and only about 30 lodges were left.[8] Old Man Gopher and his sister, both of them very young children at the time, were the only survivors of their family. The old men among the survivors of the tribe got together and proceeded to choose a chief. White Eagle was then a young man

[931] [8] A reasonable chronological estimate would identify this as a tradition referring to the devastating smallpox epidemic of 1780. For historical data, see p. 9.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Another instance was given by The Boy regarding his father. 764
"Lame Bull was on a buffalo-hunting party when his brother-in-law was killed during an encounter with the enemy. They brought the body as it was back to camp, where it lay for quite a while. [729] Lame Bull finally went to his tipi and got leggings and a shirt of his own, although he was Flat Pipe Keeper at the time and it was [784] taboo for one holding this office to give his clothes to the dead. Nevertheless Lame Bull removed the bloody clothes from the body of his brother-in-law, washed the body and dressed it in his own clothes. He paid for this kindness, however, because for nine years thereafter he had such pains in his legs he was not able to walk,—this being the punishment he suffered for breaking the rules by which the Keeper of a sacred pipe should live."

Before finally disposing of the body "something very expensive," like a big silk handkerchief, was placed over the face. The whole body, including the head, was then wrapped securely in a blanket or robe and tied "like a mummy." The body was placed on a stretcher and put in a forked tree, if practicable, the head to the setting sun. Otherwise the corpse might be laid on a knoll and a structure like a sweatlodge built over it to protect it from the wild beasts; or it might be laid in the cleft of a cliff and covered with rocks.[8] For a particularly prominent man, however, his own 766
lodge might serve as his last resting place. In that case holes would be dug in which the lodge-poles were placed, in order that the structure would be more permanent. The body was laid in the lodge amidst rich furnishings. The ears of the lodge were closed, the cover pegged down, and the whole secured as well as possible. This was done, for instance, for The Boy's maternal grandfather and for one of his maternal uncles. Al Chandler remembers that when he himself was a small boy upon the death of his uncle, Rises Again, the body was placed on a bedstead in a big lodge erected about a half-mile from his house.

Even in times of great stress, such as in a smallpox epidemic 764
when so many died that "the trees along the Milk River were just [765 731] loaded with bodies," as much care as possible was taken to place the bodies properly in their last resting place. When there was no more space on the trees, a large number of bodies were put in a

[8] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, p. 181.

764 lodge at some little distance from the camp. As exceptions to the rule, however, Coming Daylight told of a couple of instances which came within her experience in the first epidemic which she remembers. One case concerned a man who simply left the body of one of his wives where she had fallen and Coming Daylight [766e 731] came across the bones of that woman stripped of flesh by wild animals during the night. The other case was that of a man who mercilessly covered with stones the body of his infected sister, in spite of the fact that she was still alive.

[178] Only in relatively recent times has burial in the ground been common. This is illustrated by the comments of Coming Daylight in connection with a long story about a visit to a relative who was married to a white trader. "On this occasion my father's father was killed and scalped by the Piegan just outside of the white man's stockade. The white men brought in the body. He had been scalped and was bloody all over. These whites washed him, bound up his head, and dressed his body in their own clothes,—even to putting shoes on his feet. We thought that peculiar and some of our relatives wanted instead to put on him the best pair of beaded moccasins we had. My father said, however, that he wouldn't interfere as long as they were fixing him up in their way. So the whites buried him just like they do their own. The Gros Ventres never did that—they put the corpse up high somewhere, usually in a tree. We thought it was bad enough for our relatives to die, much less covering them up with earth. My maternal grandmother, who was there at the time, said: 'When I leave you, I don't want you to mourn for me because I have lived to be just as old as anyone should be. All I ask is that you see to it that I am fixed up the right way. Don't let them dig any hole for me. I want you to lay me up in a cliff in a nice quiet place, just make a bed for me and lay me there.' When she died, that is just what was done for her."

It was customary, prior to the time that the Gros Ventres settled down, to place some of the personal belongings of the deceased with the body.[6] When a beloved son died, for instance, his favorite horse might be taken along and killed at the place where the body was laid away. Similarly a minor pipe might have been

[6] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, p. 180.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

776 anything. So Coming Daylight took her infant to her aunt who
753 was a kind of "spiritualist" (one having a ghost helper). The aunt took the baby in her arms and told Coming Daylight: "You get me a piece of charcoal." The aunt took the charcoal and rubbed it on the baby's neck at the back, bent over as if she were going to bite the infant, drew out (apparently by sucking) a little sliver from the baby's neck, and said: "This is what caused her to have a stiff neck." They said a spirit had shot her, although they did not have the baby outside when this happened to her. You were not supposed to take an infant outside in the dark without covering its head. Actually Coming Daylight's infant was inside the tent during the night and they heard something hit a lodge pole and it seemed to frighten the baby, who continued to cry until the aunt removed the sliver.

[158] Mental abnormality could also be caused by such bad spirits, ghostly or other, whether by "shooting" the victim or getting into
751 him is not known. To keep the bad spirits at bay, a stick, with its
776 tip blackened with "nicotine," was left near a baby whenever the baby had to be left alone. Whenever adults went out in the dark, they picked up and carried a stick, of any kind; it was believed that the spirits were afraid of the sticks and would not come near. Beyond such protective observances there appears to have been no cult proper of these bad spirits in the way of propitiatory prayers or offerings.

753 Much, though not all sickness was ascribed to a malevolent being called Atsa:. When illness recently took off a mother and
776 child in a family, the people said, "Atsa: has visited so-and-so's family." Atsa: did not himself put sickness-causing objects in his victims' bodies, but he was responsible indirectly for other kinds of illness, that is, he had something to do with them. To him
[731] were attributed particularly epidemics, especially smallpox, chicken pox and measles. He was an ugly, hideous being, unkempt, with scaly skin and bushy hair who never washed his face. He was thin and starved-looking and his nails were long. He was thoroughly disliked. No food or pipe was ever offered to him. When serious
776 sickness visited the camp, the Supreme Being was prayed to: "Take Atsa: away. He is causing a lot of trouble." Atsa: was

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

"nothing compared to the Supreme Being." At an eclipse of the sun the Gros Ventres were much afraid; for they thought that the sun was covering himself and that Atsa: would come around. To ward him off on the occasion of a solar eclipse, the Gros Ventres in recent times would load their guns and shoot up in the air, and so make so much noise that he would be scared away. Then they would all laugh, feeling that they had gotten the best of him. Atsa: also functioned as a bugaboo. When Thomas Main was a boy his parents used to tell him: "If you don't behave, Atsa: will get you." Atsa: was afraid of skunks, as the Gros Ventres of several generations ago learned from the following incident, related by The Boy.[28]

776
776
821
539
731
776

"In the days of Gopher and Prairie Dog Old Man, Atsa: declared war. At that time the Gros Ventres were very numerous. There were only twelve bands but they were so big and there were so many people that when the children played around they would get lost and could not find their way home. When the crier walked around and made his announcements, after only one circle around the camp he was hoarse and was tired from walking. A large part of Gros Ventres went off on a war raid to the east to fight the Shoshoni, Assiniboine and Sioux. They got a little below the confluence of the Milk and Missouri Rivers, and saw two corpses wrapped in good blankets up in a tree. So they cut the bundles loose and dropped the bodies to the ground. The blankets, of white-man make, were a novelty to the Gros Ventres at the time. The men unwrapped the blankets and cut them up for leggings.

"That same night one of the Gros Ventres took ill. As the night wore on he got worse and worse. The men began to suspect: 'These two must have died of smallpox.' The sick man died after sun-up in the morning. They became panic-stricken. 'Sure enough,' they said, 'that's smallpox.' They decided to rush back to the main camp.

"On the way back every night one or more men died. Only a few got back alive. Most of the party died on the way back. When

[28] The incident probably is part of the tradition of the smallpox epidemic of 1780. Cf. Flannery, 1953, p. 34.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539 the survivors reached home and told their story, the people were excited. The old people said: 'That is a bad sickness. It all but kills off the tribe once it starts.' The criers announced to the people: 'Scatter in all directions. That is the only way to combat this sickness.' So the bands scattered in all directions. A lot of the people died, some even before camp was broken.

"One band went up Milk River. One man of this band who had a big family studied what he should do. He decided to go off secretly from his band. He had plenty of meat, as it was in the fall. So he sneaked away unnoticed with his family, went up the Milk River looking for the thickest patch of brush and trees he could find, and there pitched his camp. The next spring, the survivors of this man's band, which had wintered around the Sweet Grass Hills, decided that the sickness was over, and that Atsa: must be in a good humor again and had left them. The survivors went looking for the rest of the Gros Ventres, so they packed up and left their camp, where in many lodges all the inmates were dead. They made their way toward the place where the Marias and Teton Rivers empty into the Missouri. As they went along they found some whole camps wiped out by smallpox, other camps with just a few lodges with some survivors. These survivors would then join them. At last they reached the Marias and decided to camp there and send scouts around to look for the other survivors.

"A group of young men acting as scouts went down the river to its confluence with the Missouri and ran onto a camp where they saw someone walking around in front of a lodge. As soon as this person saw them he disappeared. They approached and looked into the lodge, but could at first see only a bunch of dead bodies in it, though the fire was burning. They then went in to investigate and found a small boy and small girl there, each living with the dead body of his and her mother. The boy and girl fought and bit like animals not to be taken away. The young men saw the places where the boy and girl had been sleeping beside the bodies of the dead mothers. They saw also a bear that lived in this lodge and fed on the corpses. They looked in other lodges and found that the bear must have lived there too on the dead bodies. It had not eaten of the supply of meat which was still untouched.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

"The young men then took the boy and girl back to camp where some families took them and tamed them down. The young men kept scouting for survivors along the Missouri River and on both sides of the Bear Paw Mountains but could find none. All the living then moved to the north end of the Bear Paws and camped. They decided to stay there and wait. Most of the Gros Ventre camps had been entirely wiped out. The survivors felt bad about it, but there was plenty to eat. They had taken along with them the meat supplies of the deceased victims. It was now far along in spring and they thought the danger was over. 539 731 776

"The man who had spent the winter in the thick timber now decided to move around and look for his people. He started toward Marias River and found the other Gros Ventre survivors' camp north of the Bear Paws. The man, his wives and all their children had come through the epidemic without sickness. The people asked the father: 'How did you escape getting sick?' He replied: 'Just by accident. I happened to kill a skunk, to windward of our camp, and just left the carcass at the spot, as I had no use for it. We were forced to smell it. In time we all got used to the stench. In the timber we felt safe from enemies and we dared not go far from camp. So we stayed there in spite of the skunk. But we were all the time worried lest the children or myself should die. As time went on and no one got sick, I laid our good fortune to the skunk carcass. I thought that Atsa: must be afraid of skunks. So I started to kill as many as I could and I hung them around in every direction, so that no matter from what quarter the wind blew we always had skunk smell. I honestly believe skunks are too much for him.' The people agreed with him, for he proved his belief by the fact that he and all his family had come back safe. Since then the Gros Ventres have known that Atsa: is afraid of skunks."[29]

Both giants and dwarfs were believed to exist. The giants were as tall as trees. When one of these got a buffalo he would stick it on his belt just as the Indian did with rabbits. The giants were 776

[29] The Gros Ventres know that the Cree of the Ft. Belknap area use skunk fluid for many medical purposes; the Gros Ventres however do not. In Gros Ventres lore the animal kingdom calls the skunk "Chief Stripe."

31 Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

755
757 sional individuals; supernatural remedies used only by professional medicine men or women with power.

Natural Remedies

751 Both preventive and curative measures of the natural or ra-
515 tional order were numerous.

The most common preventive measure was the daily early morning plunge in the stream or roll in the snow by men, a practice carried out for hardening the body as well as for cleaning
[731] it. In small epidemics scattering and isolation were regularly resorted to in order to check the spread of the disease. The use of skunk fluid as a curative was more a Cree than a Gros Ventre procedure, but there was a Gros Ventre belief that skunk fluid diluted with water and put into the eyes of a person was a preventive and cure of snow-blindness. A mother, on knowing herself
[862] pregnant again, would cease nursing her infant lest it suffer from "bad stomach and diarrhea." Drinking the blood of a freshly butchered buffalo was looked upon as a preventive of tuberculosis.

757 Curative measures of the rational order were of many kinds. We recorded the following, but our list is far from exhaustive. All of them may best be classified as "domestic remedies," measures of common knowledge, resorted to by everybody who wished to use them, and not considered proprietary right of particular individuals.

757 Many herbal curatives came under this category.[3] The roots of
278 "sweetheart briars," so called because the burrs stuck so tightly, were used for colds, and the deeper the root the stronger was the medicine.[4]

An infusion of peppermint is now used as a beverage by everybody for "fits, spasms and stomach disorders," although the medicinal use of peppermint was formerly the monopoly of Flat Pipe keepers. A very strong drink was made by boiling a certain root and just a little of it drunk as a cure for difficulty in urination.

---

[3] Cf. list in Kroeber, 1908, pp. 224-27. We made no attempt in the field to get a full list of such herbal and other curatives.

[171] [4] The Piegan, according to Coming Daylight and Singer, used these as "blood medicine."

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

426 231 The lending of horses, especially in an emergency, was not uncommon especially among relatives. The owner however retained full rights and could dictate to the borrower the use to which the horse might be put. "One time, for instance," according to Singer whose husband Iron Bucket was an eye-witness, 231 "there were four lodges or families of Gros Ventres who 426 happened to be traveling along separated from the larger group. 734 Bear Nose's mother was taking care of a young man who was exceedingly ill. She didn't own the horse which was drawing the travois upon which the young man was lying. As the party climbed a steep hill the lines tying the travois to the horse broke and the travois dropped to the ground. The woman who owned the horse was already at the top and called down: 'Just leave him. Just leave him. You are always hauling him around with my horse.' The others told this woman owner: 'Let us pack him once more and wherever we stop we will make a sweatbath house for him and leave him in there and leave food for him.' But the owner didn't want it that way. The others told her again: 'Just pack him once more. You should think of the time when he was a Scout [at Ft. Assiniboine] and he used to get a lot of grub for you [with his pay].' But she said: 'No. I won't be packing him any more.' He was pretty far gone—his body already covered with flies—but the one who had been caring for him finally was forced to abandon him there with his few belongings and without any shelter or anything else. When they left him he had a sheet over his head and he started to cry. But the owner of the horse was adamant. The others of the party could argue with her, but could take no further action. They moved quite a distance and that very night a terrible storm came up and probably finished the young man. The woman who had been caring for him died shortly thereafter, and the others thought this was a consequence of their having abandoned him so callously, but they all said: 'It should have been the owner of the horse who died instead of the one who cared for him."

231 721 Because the real competition among the northern plains tribes was for horses, it was not uncommon that a relatively well-to-do family might lose their entire pack of horses through a single raid by the enemy. The following experience of Coming Daylight illustrates the point.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Before closing this section on rational treatment of disease certain points on care of the sick may be added which have an indirect bearing on curative measures proper. 758

As a rule, the sick were well looked after by their relatives and friends. Encouraging words and hopeful good wishes were expressed to an ill person and these helped recovery. If the patient voiced a desire for any particular food this would be procured if possible. When on one occasion Singer's very ill husband expressed a wish for roseberries, an old man visiting him at the time rushed out, picked a big bunch of them and brought them back at once. Singer seeded, mashed them up and mixed them with tallow and set before her husband a bowlful of them which "he went after as if he were starved." The next day when some friends were visiting him he remarked: "I can't get enough of that roseberry soup." At this, one of them hastened out at once and brought back a large quantity. A little before this another friend had prayed at his bedside and wished him good luck. "Those prayers and that soup," added Singer, "seemed to bring him out of his illness. They made him strong." When Al Chandler's boy, Jimmy, had typhoid fever, and said he was hungry for plums, Mrs. Stevens went a long distance to procure them for him.

According to Al Chandler, "no matter how sick a person may be, there is always one rallying point, just before the end, when he wants to eat. When a person had no more chance to live, the Gros Ventres would fix him (or her) up, put on his best robes, and paint him up ready to die." [763]

Occasionally, in the old days, a sick person might be abandoned. 734
"The Gros Ventres," Coming Daylight recalled, "were moving southward across the Missouri River. Before crossing it they left behind a Gros Ventre woman and her two- or three-year-old girl baby. The woman was very ill. They left her and the baby in a little shelter. They sort of threw her away.

"Some time after that the Crow happened to travel that way and crossed the Missouri from the south at the same place. There they saw the baby walking around in the bush . . . she would eat roseberries and pick up grasshoppers and eat them after breaking off their legs. The woman in the shelter had died and was beginning to smell.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

734 "The Crow knew the child was a Gros Ventre, so they took her along and caught up with the Gros Ventre camp. After they had eaten, they called all the Gros Ventres to listen. One of the Crow was standing there with the child. I was small then. I went and listened. Using the sign language he said: 'You folks were very mean to this child and her mother. The child was pitiful and somebody took pity on her. We picked her up and are going to keep her. We won't give her to you.'

"So this girl grew up with the Crow . . . she did not like the Gros Ventres and she took her mother's name . . . I do not know to this day why the mother was abandoned. She had no husband at the time they left her. The Gros Ventres," Coming Daylight added, "abandoned old people and babies."[11]

[847 888]

Proprietary Remedies

757 So far we have been dealing with preventive or curative measures of the "rational" order known to and freely used by anybody and everybody. We now come to those exclusively owned and used by particular individuals only. These proprietary remedies fall into two main classes,—although the dividing line was not always sharply drawn,—accordingly as they were owned and used by non-professionals with little or no supernatural power or by professional medicine men and women with well recognized supernatural power. Such proprietary remedies, as owned and used by non-professionals, seemed to have been looked upon as of either the "rational" or supernatural order. Those owned and used by professional doctors as, in the main, of the supernatural order. We shall now take up these two classes, first, proprietary remedies used by non-professionals.

Coming Daylight emphatically insisted that she was not a medicine woman, not a "holy" person. "Some people try to pray through me, they lay their hands on my head and pray for something, as if I were a 'holy' person. But I am not. I do not claim to be a medicine woman. I never go around doctoring others. I just keep

[11] For other cases of abandonment, see Flannery, 1953, pp. 76, 132, 189, 198-99.

556 a great big lodge and all the other things that were required. But
231 some men might have only one horse and therefore only one wife. Such men wouldn't amount to much; they would be by-passed all the time and couldn't get anywhere. Therefore men did really desperate things in order to obtain horses."[10]

556 Horses were thus the most valuable item in Gros Ventre
231 economy. Other informants illustrated this attitude. Garter
735 Snake, for instance, stated: "As a little girl I didn't know poverty. My parents were rich. They had everything they wanted for their lodge, and clothing, and all kinds of horses so I was never in want at any time. Nevertheless, my father, when he was a little fellow, was very poor and had no horse to ride. Possibly somebody would put his mother, who was a widow, on a horse, but he would have to walk. He had hardly any clothes, he was so poor. One time when he was about 12, the camp was moving and they were going to go quite a distance. He was way behind because he would wait until everybody had gone, and then would follow as best he could. This day he went up on a hill to see where the people were camping next, and then he just lay there crying because he pitied himself for being so poor. It was at this time that he was granted his first experience [with the supernatural]. Later on, having made an offering of a black shirt and some feathers, which he had begged from someone at the camp, and having cut
556 off the first joint of the little finger of his left hand, he was told
231 in a vision: 'Son, I invited you here and I am glad you came.
735 Look over that way (the direction in which the camps lay). You
787 are poor now, but see those camps? You are going to be noted there. Everyone there is going to respect you and depend on you. And look this way (the opposite direction). See that big band of horses? Those are your horses. Of course you won't get them right away, but that is what you are going to have.' He was granted many powers later on, among them how to operate with a woodpecker feather; how to check hemorrhage; how to cure stoppage of the male urinary tract; how to cure consumption; how to revive a horse which was 'played out'; how to make raiders invisible so they could successfully steal horses. And he finally attained those horses he had been shown."

[10] Cf. Denig, p. 505, "An Indian with one wife cannot amass property."

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

part and as good sports, but actual behavior not infrequently fell short of 558
the code's demands. Bad feeling was at times engendered and could and did end in blows and violence, as was noted earlier in our account of the wheel game. 525
Quarrels among gambling boys must have been fairly common. One of our 578
informants, Thick, recounted three different bow and arrow contests for arrows, in which contests he had engaged as a boy with other boys. All three ended in violence started by the losers. In one of the three set-tos, Thick, the winner, was shot in the hand with an arrow by the other boy who lost his temper, and Thick still, at the age of 75, carries the scar. That the Gros Ventre were perfectly aware, as of course they must have been, of the discord hazard in gambling, is clear from such counsel as, for example, Thick's mother used to give him when he was a boy: "If you join in those gambling games somebody is going to get mad on account of getting beaten and he may pound you up." Further, that gambling often led to bad feeling was given to us by The Boy as the reason why the Gros Ventre disapproved of gambling between relatives.

So far as we could make out, Gros Ventre attitudes on gambling were 525
determined in only minor measure by economic considerations. In the days 183
before the disappearance of the buffalo in 1883-84, the Gros Ventre lived under a normal economy of abundance. Moreover, generosity in parting with their possessions, through gift and sharing, was focal in code and practice. Criers around the camp would counsel the people in words such as: "Men and women, don't love your property. You will always acquire other property. Only life never comes back, but property you can have back any time." In the long run for most individuals winnings would balance losses, just as gifts tended to balance gifts—a system of exchange which incidentally must have served to prevent unhealthy accumulation of wealth in the hands of any individual or small group. The cases of really ruinous loss of property through gambling, of reduction to "pauperism," appear to have been rare, and even in these cases the losers would ordinarily be looked after temporarily and tided over by their kin or friends. At any rate we got no record of individuals or their dependents suffering grave [735]
privation of the necessities of life as a result of gambling losses.

How far such facts entered into the Gros Ventre attitude toward gambling 525
cannot be determined confidently from such evidence as we have. In our hours of free discussion with informants, there was almost no intimation of economic considerations leading to disapproval. One of the themes in the tongue-lashing Lame Bull got from his father after the disastrous contest with White Owl may have been the economic, but this was not expressly stated by The Boy. Mrs Warrior kept away from gambling because, she said: "I liked what I had and

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

left, although we still have reports of a hand game between the Gros Ventre 525
and the Flathead, staged at Glacier Park, Montana, as late as 1922, in which 182
Joe Assiniboine represented the Gros Ventre. Today neither the wheel game nor the 2-button hand game is played.

Hard times, for a short period near-famine conditions, prevailed for a while after 1884; an economy of abundance gave place to an economy of scarcity. [735] While a world survey of gambling reveals, so far as we can discern, no significant correlation between gambling and abundance or scarcity economies, extreme and sudden economic shock and shift, such as occurred among the Gros Ventre in the years immediately following 1884, may well have slowed up the gambling pace.

Around 1897 the non-gambling hand game was introduced, won favor, and [177] persists down to the present. Today there is little gambling among the Gros Ventre on the reservation. Most of what occurs among them takes place off [178] the reservation, at nearby white villages and towns, in the form of poker or other card games for money, between Gros Ventre and whites.

Catholic University of America
Washington, D. C.

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 gave away in his honor." When first adopted the Grass dance
178 offered only one such opportunity—and a relatively minor one.
431 As times changed, however, the Grass dance provided practically
156 the sole occasion for gaining prestige while at the same time
554 carrying out the old pattern of kinship obligation by enhancing the prestige of relatives.

The possibility in the later form of the Grass dance of paying for privileges, such as locking the door, or whipping those who did not get up to dance, gave further scope for the acquisition of prestige through liberality, as did also, of course, payments at transfer of office.

It was estimated by our informants that around 1900 as much as a thousand dollars in goods and cash changed hands at a single performance of the Grass dance. At that time it was not uncommon for the dance to be held at weekly intervals. So long as the Gros Ventre were relatively prosperous and had property to display and exchange according to the older patterns, the Grass dance continued to function. With increasing poverty, however, along
[735] with other factors such as the changing points of view and interests on the part of the younger generation, and the dying out of
[182] the older warriors, the Grass dance, the core of which was the dog ritual, gradually paled off leaving but the remnants of some of the round dances which had been added to the Grass dance as originally adopted from the Assiniboine.

Summary

796 Between 1875 and 1880 the Gros Ventres received the Grass
177 dance from the Assiniboine. From the date of adoption up to
575 about 1890 the Grass dance was performed only by members of one of the two soldier societies and the custodians of the ceremonial equipment were the officers. Offices were transferred among members according to the old Gros Ventre pattern.

796 The essential core of the Grass dance was the dog ritual, a
[262] ceremonial eating of dog flesh, carried out by the owners of the equipment with the assistance of four warriors selected from among the lay members. Other features of the program at each

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Supernatural power too, while gotten immediately from animals, mountains (mountain spirits), and other creatures, through fasting and sleeping out on the hills, came ultimately from the Supreme Being, as mentioned previously. A person going out on a power quest, would pray first to the Supreme Being to command or compel the lesser being to give the power being sought. Power to doctor and to achieve war success and even to acquire wealth thus in the last analysis came from the Supreme Being. So too did the (supernatural?) power inherent in earnest wishes or thought wishes.

The Supreme Being also imparted knowledge and warnings to human beings through dreams and through his messenger, the crow. The crow on account of his relationship to the Supreme Being was a sort of sacred bird.[12] To illustrate the point the Boy told the following incident in the life of his father, Lame Bull. "Lame Bull on one occasion was sitting out on a hill and no one could get him to come back to camp. So some of his family got one of Lame Bull's wives, The Boy's mother, to go out and tell Lame Bull to come home right away as the camp was moving. As Lame Bull saw her coming, a crow flew over to him and said, 'This person who is coming is going to tell you something that is not true. Don't pay any attention to her.' Then the crow flew away. When The Boy's mother came within hearing distance of Lame Bull, the latter said to her: 'Don't say what you are going to say. Turn back.' But she kept on coming and told him her message, for which she got a scolding from him."

In general the Supreme Being was, as regards his interest in human welfare, the reverse of an otiose deity. His interest was a most active one.

Equally active was his interest in man's moral and social behavior. He was pleased at such moral or social acts as respect and help to the aged and care of the orphans, and was offended by grave breaches of the moral or social order. He bestowed

[12] In 1948 The Boy explained: "The crow is not the kind you see around here now, but a raven,—a bird that is smaller and more streamlined than the crow. The crow here in the fields cry like they are wounded, but this other bird has a shrill but melodious call more like a human being." [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 782 buffalo chips she had brought back, and sat down. They then heard a "terrible groan" from the room where the Pipe was kept. Horse Capture and his wife seemed surprised and did not know what to make of it. The groan sounded to Coming Daylight more as if it said "Yes." After this all sat down to dinner. Afterwards Horse Capture's wife gave Coming Daylight a big buggy-parasol, a very expensive present. "They never say: 'I give you this for that,' but any little thing you do for the Pipe, like picking mint for it, the co-keeper would give you something for it."

When a number of "coverings" would accumulate on the Pipe bundle they would be hung elsewhere in the keeper's lodge, and from time to time the "coverings" would have to be ritually disposed of by the keeper with the full sweat-lodge rite. The keeper would detail a couple of young men to help him prepare the "coverings" and to make the sweat-lodge. The "coverings" might be tied to the sweat-lodge pole, as in the seasonal rite, or might just be brought as such by the co-keeper or an attendant to the sweat-lodge. Here, in the latter case, before the sweating proper began, they were brought in clockwise and given to the keeper. He would dip his right hand in the black charcoal paint, and touch each covering three times in three different places. Then he would gather up all the coverings, lift them up over the ascending smudge, lower them in three stages, move them around in three clockwise circles, and hand the whole bunch to the first man on his left, from whom it was successively passed till it reached the door. Here attendant two took the bunch of coverings and deposited it on the top of the mound in front of the sweat-lodge.

The coverings were finally taken by one of the attendants way out on the hills or elsewhere, as was done with other offerings. [43] Or else the keeper could call together the orphans and other poorer children and distribute the coverings to them, for it was •736 believed that being good to children, especially needy and orphaned ones, was pleasing to the Supreme Being. Coming Daylight's uncle, Crow Bull, when keeper of the Flat Pipe, used to distribute the coverings to the very poor and needy old folks. If among the coverings there was tobacco, this was not deposited out on the hills but was given to the old people. The buffalo

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

171 bags, recalling the typical checker and diagonal step design of Blackfoot
415 beading. This type is, however, unusual among the Gros Ventre.

531 The fine bag shown in Fig. 6, collected by Dr. Clark Wissler, presents unusual quill-embroidery on its front, suggestive perhaps of Sioux influence or origin; but the bead-work on its cover and sides, and the attached tin and horsehair ornaments, are typically Arapaho, except for the fact that this tribe would be very unlikely to make any pattern without at least some proportion of white. The transverse lines of quill-work on this bag might be regarded as nothing but a further five-line development of the three-line grouping illustrated by the last figure, with an alternating bar-pattern for its chief ornamentation instead of the box figure, which in element is identical. The central figure, however, is the typical Sioux spider-web pattern described by Dr. Clark Wissler,[1] and so far without any parallel among either Arapaho or Gros Ventre, or any approach nearer than that shown in an instance of blanket painting.[2] The two parallel bars in the centre of this concave quadrilateral figure, and the diamond-shaped feather symbols at its corners, are also typically Siouan: only the last-named element is occasionally used by the Gros Ventre.

237 Buffalo paunches, the mouth being drawn up by a string, like a sack,
415 were used for carrying and holding water, a paunchful being hung up in
505 the tent. If buffalo had been killed, and it was desired to transport the meat across the Missouri, the paunches were filled with meat, blown up, tied together at the mouth, and floated. The well-known circular skin
[501] boats of the Missouri tribes were also used by the Gros Ventre for transporting clothing and property across streams.

171 Fig. 7 shows an ornamented food-bag of bladder. At the top is a strip
415 of skin covered with red quill-embroidery, with square star designs in blue
531 and white. From this strip of skin hangs a red quill-wound fringe. The thong handle of the bag is partly quilled, and has quilled thong pendants hanging from it. At the bottom of the bag a round piece of skin, covered with green-and-white quartered bead-work, is sewed on.

171 The navel-amulets of the Gros Ventre, which resemble those of the
532 Arapaho in their use, are in form of a somewhat different type, as they
751 approach more nearly to an animal's shape. They usually represent çaniwa", the "horned toad" (southern Arapaho, säniwa", a "lizard"), or sometimes a person. Their general shape is, as everywhere on the Plains, a rhomboid on end. To this the Gros Ventre add at the upper end a small rhomboid, forming the head of the animal represented. This augmented shape has not been found among the Arapaho, with whom the typical form

[1] See Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part III, p. 248.
[2] Ibid., Vol. XIII, p. 85, Fig. 138.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

is a narrow simple rhomboid.[1] The Blackfeet and Sioux make figures resembling those of the Gros Ventre, but carry the realism farther. The Sioux most frequently represent an entire animal with head, legs, and tail, much like Fig. 1 in Plate VIII of Vol. XVIII of the "Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History," but broader, in the shape of a turtle.[2] The Arapaho, Gros Ventre, and Blackfeet use ornamented strings hanging from the corners of the rhomboid to represent limbs and tail. The Blackfeet make realistic snake amulets for their boys, and more conventional turtle or lizard-like figures, resembling those of the Gros Ventre, for their girls. Among the Assiniboine, and west of the Rockies among the Bannock and Ute, a reduced form of navel-amulets occurs, though perhaps it is not the only one used. It is usually small and flat, with the acute angles of the rhomboid cut off transversely, rendering the whole piece hexagonal rather than quadrilateral. Sometimes the entire edges are fringed. The relative distribution of this small form and of the other forms is not yet clear. A Shoshone amulet in the Museum is a pointed rhomboid resembling the Arapaho type, even to being quartered in its bead-ornamentation. A Kiowa specimen in the Anthropological Museum of the University of California is a plain rhombus, of Arapaho type, except in being smaller and more nearly square. The following distribution of types is at least partly correct: realistic, Sioux, Blackfoot, occasionally Arapaho; semi-realistic, Blackfoot, Gros Ventre; conventional rhomboid, Arapaho, Kiowa, Shoshone; reduced hexagonal, Assiniboine, Ute, Bannock, and perhaps Shoshone.

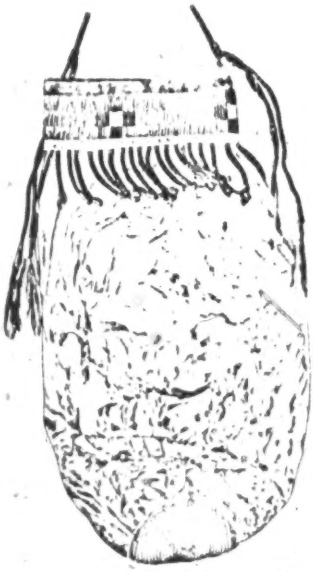


Fig. 7 (50-1801). Ornamented Food-bag of Bladder. Length, 29 cm.

On Plate IX are shown three Gros Ventre navel-amulets. Fig. 3 was said to represent a horned toad, and Fig. 2, a person. It will be seen that the mouth in the former is near the end of the head; in the latter, in the lower part of the face. Both these specimens have quilled or beaded appendages at the two side corners and at the lower end. Fig. 1 has a distinct

[1] See Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part I, Plate VIII.
[2] Ibid., Vol. XVIII, Part III, p. 242, Fig. 76.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

tail as well as head, a cross instead of an attempt at representative ornamentation in the bead-work on the head, and unornamented yellowed thongs as sole attachments. Another specimen (Museum No. 50–4278), not figured, is much smaller than any of the others. It resembles Fig. 3 of Plate IX in that the bead-work on its upper surface is quartered, and that there is a distinct attempt to represent eyes in the head. The attachments are short unpainted thongs with tin cones at their ends.

Of these four pieces, Fig. 1 of Plate IX and Museum No. 50–4278 are unbeaded on the lower side; Fig. 3 of Plate IX has a few curvilinear leaf-ornaments on the lower side; and Fig. 2 of Plate IX is entirely beaded on both sides, showing on the reverse a simple quartering in blue and yellow without attempted representation of animal form. It thus appears that all the pieces are ornamented with bead-work in quartering, a design found also among the Arapaho, although transverse or diagonal parallel lines, or a crossed longitudinal line, are more common among them. The specimen figured

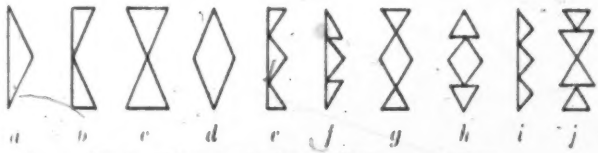


Fig. 8. Triangular Designs on Parfleches and Bags.

in Fig. 1 of Plate IX is quartered asymmetrically. The greater flatness of Fig. 3, same plate, is due to the contents of the amulet-pouch having been removed, no doubt for preservation.

The principal form of Gros Ventre decorative art other than embroidery is painting, mainly on skin and rawhide. As to the symbolism of this painting, as little was learned as of the symbolism of embroidered designs. The style of decoration itself, however, offers some points of interest when compared with the forms of decoration typical of other Plains tribes.

Outside of robe-painting, tent-painting, and semi-realistic painting of a more directly symbolic or religious nature, the principal form of this branch of Plains decorative art is the painting of parfleches and rawhide bags. In these the decorative field is invariably rectangular, usually nearly square. Within this rectangular field, which may be merely outlined or may be heavily bordered, three principal types of design elements and combinations of elements can be distinguished. These can be called respectively the "triangular," the "square-and-triangular," and the "square."

The triangular type of design is by far the most common, taking the Plains as a whole, and among some tribes is used almost exclusively. The

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

counted coup on the enemy filled a pipe, and held it for the rest of the party to smoke as they stood in a row. The returning war-party, if successful, always painted black, but if a member of their own party had been killed, they returned without rejoicing; unless sometimes, when the loss of the enemy had been greater than their own, and a relative of the dead was in the party, he might say, "One of the enemy pays for my relative. On account of the others, let us enjoy ourselves." Then the party would paint black, and celebrate. Wounds received by members of the war-party would not prevent celebration, unless, of course, they resulted fatally; and they were always regarded as an honor.

Some war-parties started off publicly in broad daylight, having made it known that they were going; and any one who wished joined. Sometimes, perhaps, two men would agree to go, and invited such others to accompany them as they wished. Women not infrequently went with the war-parties. If a man was killed in war, his relatives, especially his parents, mourned for him. His father might go to the tent of a renowned warrior, and cry until this man became angry and announced a day for a party to start out to obtain revenge. On the day set, the party left publicly, usually on horseback.

A man's supernatural war paraphernalia are shown in Figs. 27, 28, and 29. They were obtained from a middle-aged man who had them from his grandfather, who first dreamed of the magpie and the other animals connected with the paraphernalia, and made the objects. A cylindrical raw-hide case (Fig. 27), such as is found used for holding feathers and medicine among most Plains tribes, is painted with a yellow, green, and blue design resembling parfleche designs. These colors represent the various colors of the birds that were dreamed of by the original owner, and whose feathers are kept in the case. The case is called the "house" of these objects. A wing-bone is attached to the outside of the case to make another whistle from in case of loss of the finished whistle included in the outfit. A small bag containing a necklace is kept in the case. The bag (Fig. 28, *a*) is ornamented with bead-work representing a frog (kaka[n]). This frog was part of the original owner's dream. The necklace (Fig. 28, *b*) has various wasóo ("medicine-roots") on it. These are said to be neither eaten nor otherwise used, except as they are worn on the necklace. The bone whistle (Fig. 28, *c*) alluded to is attached to a necklace of otter-skin. It is blown during the fighting to prevent injury. A magpie's skin (Fig. 28, *d*) and the skin of a smaller bird (Fig. 29, *a*) are also contained in the case. The white magpie-feathers are dyed yellow. The two skins are worn at the back of the head, and prevent the wearer being injured even in a hand-to-hand fight. A head-dress of ten magpie-feathers and of a white plume on red-painted

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

237
726
293
778
751

thongs, tied together at the ends with a medicine-bag, and four brass bells (Fig. 29, *b*), is tied to the hair over the front of the head. When the warriors sing before dressing for battle, this head-dress is also used as a rattle. The medicine attached to it is chewed, and rubbed over the owner's body, as well

[531]

Fig. 27. (50-1952 a) Medicine-case for War Paraphernalia. Length, 40 cm.

as over his horse's, after he has painted himself. Two plumes of eagle-down (Fig. 29, *c*) are tied to the horse. One is tied to its fore-leg, the other to its tail. Then it will not be shot, and, if it falls, will not be hurt. In case of flight and pursuit, a little medicine that is attached to these plumes in a small

[text continues on p. 195]

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

[237]
273
726
751
778

bag is given to the horse to prevent its becoming exhausted. A cloth to wrap the various feathers and the whistle completes the outfit.

A warrior's outfit that was obtained for the Museum (specimen Museum No. 50–1862 a–c) consists of a beaded knife-scabbard, carried because the owner has cut loose horses that were tied by a rope leading into a tent; of a man's awl-case, carried presumably for mending moccasins and for

[237]

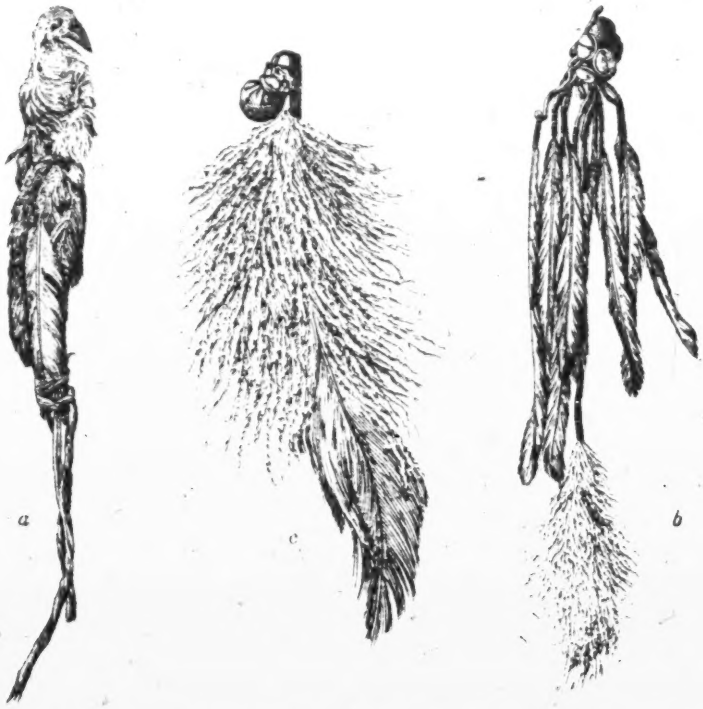


Fig. 29 (50–1952, f. g. h). War Paraphernalia. Lengths, 32 cm., 20 cm., 20 cm.

similar purposes; and of a piece of a scalp ornamented with beads, and worn attached to the shoulder of his shirt. The scabbard is ornamented with rectangular U-shaped bead-work designs similar to those in Fig 3, and representing horse-tracks.

[787]

Sometimes in dreaming, a man saw a person in battle wearing the skin of a certain animal, and fighting very successfully. He would then wear the skin of that animal. Specimen Museum No. 50–1901 is a weasel-skin

lt Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

293 used in this way. The owner twice dreamed of a weasel, which told him to
726 use its skin. Thereupon he first wore a weasel-skin in dances, and later
751 carried it to war. Subsequently he lent it to his son and to other men who
778 went to war, and they always returned successfully.

A man to whom a fisher had appeared in a dream or vision used a fish-
[787] skin medicine-bag, and on going to war carried this with him.

A renowned warrior, dead for some time, received his personal medicine from the bears, and was forbidden to scalp, count coup on the enemy, or take away a gun. He could only kill. He once killed two Sioux with one shot, at a place which received its name from the event.

[492] A simple riding-whip (specimen Museum No. 50-1821) has on its wooden handle four red marks, each of which is said to represent an enemy struck in the face with a whip in battle.

Representations, used in the modern "war-dance," of the weapons of
532 Black-Wolf, a well-known Gros Ventre warrior, part of whose experiences
726 in war are told below, consist of a shield and spear. The shield, which is made of painted white cloth, represents the shield carried by him on an occasion when he rushed to battle with no other weapon. The shield is decorated with a blue crescent along the lower edge, representing the sun, and bordered by a wavy red line denoting lightning. The wooden spear and spear-point
[822] represent a spear with which the owner stabbed a Piegan in battle. The spear-point is painted blue and red; the blue representing iron, the red blood. Red marks on the handle of the spear represent coups.

A pair of beaded and painted moccasins executed by a woman, but
[292] designed by an old man, symbolize his exploits in war. An outside rim of beading represents the enemy's camp-circle. In the middle of the camp-circle is beaded the figure of a tent belonging to a chief. To this tent was tied a horse, which the wearer of the moccasins cut loose. This feat is represented by an outline painting of a horse and halter. Three U-shaped figures, also painted, are horse-tracks, and represent the capture of horses. On the other moccasin there are again three such figures in a row, which here were said to indicate a charge on horseback on the camp; while two other such figures, facing each other, indicate a face-to-face fight.

Curtains hanging behind the bed in front of the tent-wall were sometimes painted to illustrate the owner's achievements in war.

WAR-EXPERIENCES OF INDIVIDUALS.

114 The following narratives give an entirely personal account of the war-
115 experiences of three individuals, two of them men of about sixty years of

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908

NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

343 757

A man who pledges and erects a sweat-house does not participate in the sweating. He makes the fire, heats the rocks and passes them into the house, raises and lowers the blankets, and performs other services.

[237]

In sweating, animal tails were sometimes used to beat the body with. Fig. 43 shows such an implement, made of the tail of a buffalo, on a stick handle cased in the skin of the tail. This object is similar to the Arapaho specimens described in the "Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History" (Vol. XVIII, p. 316), but is noticeable for the shortness of the hair on the tail.

343 757 776

When people were called to come to sweat, hixteib'nix'a"t ("Above-Nix'a"t") was first called to sweat with them. Then the people were called. This personage, whose name also means "Above-white-man," is said to have been prayed to before the whites were known; but the Gros Ventre, like the Arapaho, state that they do not know whether he is identical with the Nix'a"t of their myths. Ordinary prayers were always addressed first to hixteib'nix'a"t or to iicanânin ("our father"), then the sun and moon would be mentioned, next the sacred pipes, and then the earth. After these had been mentioned, anything else could be prayed to.

[301]

778

A charm tied on horses to make them run fast consists of rabbit-feet painted red and tied together. The Arapaho used rabbits' feet for the same purpose.

Specimen Museum No. 50 1801 is a pair of wild-cat-tails worn by young men at the shoulder, or at the heel of a moccasin. They were also tied to children's belts, next to the skin, in order to keep them from wetting the bed.

[751]

Specimen Museum No. 50 1903 is a gorget (commonly called by the Indians in English "moon-shell") said to have been made in the old way from an intervertebral disk of a buffalo. At present these objects are usually slightly concave, and are made of china.

Fig. 44 (50-4280). Thunder-stone Necklace. Length, 21 cm.

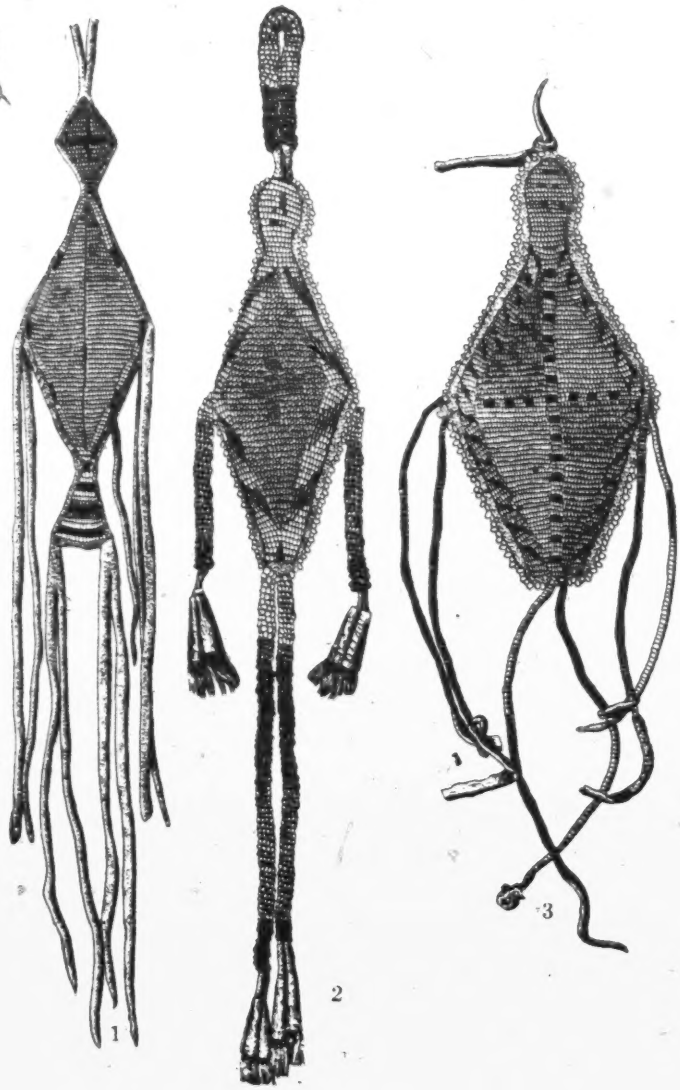
[301 237]

The Gros Ventre, according to Dr. Clark Wissler, call certain corrugated fossil stones "thunder-stones."[1] The Assiniboine seem to use the same name. The Blackfeet, who perhaps have most developed the cult of these objects, call them "buffalo-stones." A specimen from the Northern Arapaho is shown in the "Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural

[1] [These are probably Ammonite septa. - Analyst]

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

778
751
532



Navel-Amulets.

[End plate 2]

Feathers, especially eagle feathers, were highly prized, and red paint, prepared from ochre, as well as other paints obtained through the trader, played their part in bodily decoration. 292 237 386

The younger men thought a great deal of their appearance. One of the things they made for themselves was fancy painted sunshade-hats of rawhide. The designs painted thereon had a yellow background against which various other colors stood out. Coming Daylight remarked: "These sunshades looked so fine that the other tribes copied them, just like the whites get their styles from Paris." Long thick hair was the ideal both for men and for women. The tail of the porcupine made an admirable comb. A number of perfumes were used by the young men. The castor of the beaver, for instance, was put in the paint bag so that the material for daily painting would be sweet smelling. Again, young men crushed "Piegan berries," chewed them, and rubbed them on hair, horses, and bedding, as perfume. 292 751 531 302 [237]

Incidentally, according to Coming Daylight, in order to clean their buckskin clothing, the Gros Ventres would wear it into the water, getting it completely wet, and then rub it thoroughly with a certain kind of white clay.[14] She said that the tribe was spoken of by other tribes as always having such nice white clothes, and to this habit of rubbing them with clay she attributes the name by which the Gros Ventres call themselves, *a'aninin*, "white clay people." 296 [10]

Ear-rings, worn both by men and women, were made from imported abalone shell, which they cut up and shaped; they also used a certain type of imported white shell. Many other kinds of necklaces, armlets, and so on were apparently used, but on these we failed to get details. 301 [439]

Household and Transportation

The lodges of the Gros Ventres were made from buffalo hides, the number used in each depending on the size of the lodge. They 342

[14] This custom is mentioned in the sources of the early 19th century. Cf. Harmon, p. 277; Henry, v. 2, p. 734. The latter adds, as a further distinguishing characteristic, that when the Gros Ventres use red "it is always of a light color, inclining to pale vermillion. The dark red or Spanish brown, so much in vogue among the other Meadow tribes, does not suit their taste." [822]

863 might even 'fuss' a little with him, saying something like: 'Look at you! I thought I told you to urinate. I'm trying to make you do it at the right time, and you want to hold back!' But we were not harsh with infants because we knew they have to learn. Anyway, if you misjudged the time, all you had to do was to throw out the powdered chips and put in fresh ones. The old way was much better. These diaper-babies around here now are much more trouble."

[755] If a child developed enuresis, a tiny bit of the tail of a fox or of a beaver tied to his belt, or a piece of badger skin for him to sit on, was thought to guarantee a cure.

854 To help the child who had trouble teething, it was considered wise to kill a mouse, skin it, take the back thigh and, after cooking [825 it well, rub on the gums. It is said by Coming Daylight that 757] the Crow used fish for this purpose. Some children have such a difficult time that their gums are very sore and their tongues even swell. Coming Daylight's grandmother and others knew how to [757] remedy that condition. The doctor, using a sharp-pointed bone, would lance the gums here and there where the teeth were coming, after allowing the gums to bleed, they would rub some powdered root on the gums. As a preventive, old folks said to catch tiny [751] baby mice and, after roasting them on the coals, feed them to the child. Coming Daylight, for instance, did that for her children, and none of them had any trouble with teething.

856 They would let babies crawl when they showed the inclination to do so, but the old women were sure that they always watched their babies more closely than mothers do today. They used to encourage them to walk by holding them up and helping them. It has been Coming Daylight's experience that boys learn to walk more quickly than girls. It may be, however, that more attention was given to boys.

198 The only expression the old women, or the younger ones for 856 that matter, could think of that could be considered "baby talk" was that babies, when very small and just beginning to talk, say: "I" (prolonged and with strong glottal stop) if they do not like something or do not wish to take what is offered. This, together with *na'a* 'mother' and *ni'a* 'father,'* —which babies say properly

* These are vocative forms rather than descriptive forms.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

right off,—are about the first words a baby says. When a child is [198] backward in learning to talk, the remedy is to feed him meadow- 856 lark eggs, hard-boiled. Cora says this treatment was very effective for one of her sons, and Coming Daylight fed them to one of her daughters. They all agreed, however, that the treatment may sometimes be too effective. If anyone is very talkative even today the favorite saying is: "His mother must have fed him meadowlark eggs."

The care of her baby was the first duty of a mother. Of course, 854 if she were a co-wife, the other wives might help her, and in any case the grandmother might take a hand. But Coming Daylight often had no one upon whom she could depend, so she had to be extremely careful. For example, when she was married to Little Man and had an infant in the toddling stage, she would drape a blanket loosely about her hips and while she sat and did beadwork, the infant could play safely at her left hip inside the blanket. The old-timers, moreover, never left a baby alone. When her first 854 child was born Coming Daylight was told by her grandmother 751 never to leave a baby alone; that if it were absolutely necessary she should leave him even for a minute, she should take a small stick, blacken the tip with nicotine, and leave it in the swing or alongside where the infant lay. This was done to keep the "spirits" away. Even Mary feels strongly about leaving a child alone. She tells her daughter about it, but the daughter is very modern. The result is that frequently Mary stays home from a dance rather than leave a grandchild by itself.

If the mother of a young infant was going on a trip, for in- [774] stance, to pick berries, she invited the baby's *bitd"tao* 'shadow, spirit, soul' saying: "Come on with us or we might leave you. We are going now." If one failed to do this, it would be like leaving part of the baby behind and the baby would be cross all evening.

Sometimes other children in the family would be called upon to 854 look after the infant. They were apt to get tired quickly however 857 and tell their mother: "Hurry up and take your baby or I will 593 drop it." Girls were depended upon more than boys to look after younger siblings, and girls more or less were expected to do so "right from the beginning." The old women felt that formerly

854 857 men were much more interested in children than they seem to be at present.

855 515 857 Just as soon as a child was old enough to look after himself—say from about the age of three or four years—he would be compelled to bathe every morning before eating. An older boy would supervise his younger brothers and see to it that they complied with the regulation—even in winter when it was sometimes necessary to cut a hole in the ice. Al says: "This is what makes one tough." Charles gave as illustration an incident which occurred one morning when there was ice on the edge of the river and snow was floating on the surface. "An older brother said to his three younger brothers: 'Go and take a plunge.' The wind was blowing and the three boys sat on the bank, each one encouraging the other to be the first one in. The older brother came behind them yelling: 'I didn't say to you boys to stay on the edge—I said to take a plunge!' Whereupon he threw each of them in the icy water telling them to wash their faces, hair and hands. He then sent them home to water the horses while he took his plunge." In case the lodge might be too far from a stream in winter, the boys and men rolled in the snow and rubbed their bodies with it. Everyone, young and old alike, bathed every day.

515 751 That the daily dip was looked upon as a health measure is shown by the statement of Cora who remarked that when she was small she used to bathe daily in the creek and she has never been sick up to the present. Coming Daylight, too, said that she had kept up the practice until a few years ago and complains that she has been sickly ever since giving it up.

271 751 It was considered important for health's sake to drink a lot of water too. The relatives who raised Coming Daylight used to tell her to wash her mouth out with water immediately upon arising. Further she was instructed to drink water right after eating, even though she might not feel thirsty, and to walk about after finishing a meal. She claims she followed these rules all her life and that for this reason she is not troubled, as so many of the aged are, with difficulty in controlling urination, and so on.

302 After the morning bath, all would have their faces painted all over with red paint "in order to keep their faces clean and light-skinned." Coming Daylight complained that since this practice

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

776 anything. So Coming Daylight took her infant to her aunt who
753 was a kind of "spiritualist" (one having a ghost helper). The aunt took the baby in her arms and told Coming Daylight: "You get me a piece of charcoal." The aunt took the charcoal and rubbed it on the baby's neck at the back, bent over as if she were going to bite the infant, drew out (apparently by sucking) a little sliver from the baby's neck, and said: "This is what caused her to have a stiff neck." They said a spirit had shot her, although they did not have the baby outside when this happened to her. You were not supposed to take an infant outside in the dark without covering its head. Actually Coming Daylight's infant was inside the tent during the night and they heard something hit a lodge pole and it seemed to frighten the baby, who continued to cry until the aunt removed the sliver.

[158] Mental abnormality could also be caused by such bad spirits, ghostly or other, whether by "shooting" the victim or getting into
751 him is not known. To keep the bad spirits at bay, a stick, with its
776 tip blackened with "nicotine," was left near a baby whenever the baby had to be left alone. Whenever adults went out in the dark, they picked up and carried a stick, of any kind; it was believed that the spirits were afraid of the sticks and would not come near. Beyond such protective observances there appears to have been no cult proper of these bad spirits in the way of propitiatory prayers or offerings.

Much, though not all sickness was ascribed to a malevolent
753 being called Atsa:. When illness recently took off a mother and
776 child in a family, the people said, "Atsa: has visited so-and-so's family." Atsa: did not himself put sickness-causing objects in his victims' bodies, but he was responsible indirectly for other kinds of illness, that is, he had something to do with them. To him
[731] were attributed particularly epidemics, especially smallpox, chicken pox and measles. He was an ugly, hideous being, unkempt, with scaly skin and bushy hair who never washed his face. He was thin and starved-looking and his nails were long. He was thoroughly disliked. No food or pipe was ever offered to him. When serious
776 sickness visited the camp, the Supreme Being was prayed to: "Take Atsa: away. He is causing a lot of trouble." Atsa: was

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

According to Al Chandler, if some one were ill a near relative would vow to be painted and would go to the keeper. The sweat-lodge rite was first gone through. After this, in the keeper's lodge, the keeper would take the paint from the Pipe bundle, make a smudge as usual, sing the songs, dip his finger in the paint, and hold it up while addressing the Supreme Being and add: "This man vowed to you that he wanted to be painted with your paint so that his child might live," or similar words. Then he repeated the same thing to the Pipe. Then he painted first the vower, and afterwards he painted the men and male children present and the co-keeper, the women and female children,—the males with a curved band on the forehead near the hair line, the females with dots, one on the forehead and one on each cheek. This painting could take place any time in the year. 782 302

According to Garter Snake, in case of dangerous or critical illness, the vower would promise to cook up lots of food and have the keeper open up the Pipe bundle and paint the vower. If the vower were a man he was painted with the sacred red paint by the keeper; if a woman, by the co-keeper. The Pipe child would sit with the co-keeper during the rite. All the men, women and children who could attend would come to the keeper's lodge and be painted. Any ex-keepers and ex-co-keepers present would not be painted by the keeper and co-keeper as they would paint themselves. 782 755

According to Charles Buckman, it was customary to unwrap the Pipe bundle at this vowed painting rite.

Apart from this vowed rite, ritual face painting was also, as previously noted, a common feature of the Feathered Pipe dancing ceremony. In addition, according to Jim Shortman, if the Feathered Pipe keeper were told in a dream by the owl that sickness was coming to the camp, he would call all the children and infants together with the grown-ups to his lodge and would paint every individual. 302 751 782

Offerings to cover the Feathered Pipe could be made by anyone, at any time of the year, winter included, more frequently with, but often without, previous vow. They were commonly made for cure in cases of illness. The original first owner of the Pipe had told the people: "If you are sick, you can make a vow to cover the Pipe, and thus get well." But covering occurred also on other 782

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

755
757 sional individuals; supernatural remedies used only by professional medicine men or women with power.

Natural Remedies

751 Both preventive and curative measures of the natural or ra-
515 tional order were numerous.

The most common preventive measure was the daily early morning plunge in the stream or roll in the snow by men, a practice carried out for hardening the body as well as for cleaning
[731] it. In small epidemics scattering and isolation were regularly resorted to in order to check the spread of the disease. The use of skunk fluid as a curative was more a Cree than a Gros Ventre procedure, but there was a Gros Ventre belief that skunk fluid diluted with water and put into the eyes of a person was a preventive and cure of snow-blindness. A mother, on knowing herself
[862] pregnant again, would cease nursing her infant lest it suffer from "bad stomach and diarrhea." Drinking the blood of a freshly butchered buffalo was looked upon as a preventive of tuberculosis.

757 Curative measures of the rational order were of many kinds. We recorded the following, but our list is far from exhaustive. All of them may best be classified as "domestic remedies," measures of common knowledge, resorted to by everybody who wished to use them, and not considered proprietary right of particular individuals.

757 Many herbal curatives came under this category.[8] The roots of
278 "sweetheart briars," so called because the burrs stuck so tightly, were used for colds, and the deeper the root the stronger was the medicine.[9]

An infusion of peppermint is now used as a beverage by everybody for "fits, spasms and stomach disorders," although the medicinal use of peppermint was formerly the monopoly of Flat Pipe keepers. A very strong drink was made by boiling a certain root and just a little of it drunk as a cure for difficulty in urination.

---

[8] Cf. list in Kroeber, 1908, pp. 224-27. We made no attempt in the field to
[171] get a full list of such herbal and other curatives.

[9] The Piegan, according to Coming Daylight and Singer, used these as "blood medicine."

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

A plant called hăyaa"tᵃ is used both as a perfume and as a medicine. Pieces of it tied by a string to the shoulder of the shirt give a pleasant smell. It is also laid in warm water without being boiled, and the water is then used as medicine for sore eyes (specimen Museum No. 50-1883). 278 757

In case of snow-blindness, charcoal is put around the eyes, and believed to be very efficacious.

The green stems of a plant containing a white juice are used for women who have no milk. The Arapaho use the same plant for a similar purpose, and call it "milk liquid."[1]

A root called bactset ("hand," on account of the peculiar conformation of the roots) is laid in very small quantity into cold water, which is drunk by women to insure easy child-birth (specimen Museum No. 50-1946). [844]

The flowers of a composita called niba"ăănou ("yellow-head") or tjitjixta"sibyiisöö are put on coals for a woman who has given birth. She stands above the fire to incense herself (specimen Museum No. 50-1944).

Another plant called niba"nănou ("yellow-head"), which grows close to the water, is boiled, and drunk for pain in the back or in the body (specimen Museum No. 50-1945).

A root called niitason ("sharp") is pulverized, and then applied to sores in the mouth and on the tongue (specimen Museum No. 50-1838).

A rock lichen called bennatsön is chewed for a sore mouth (specimen Museum No. 50-1874).

The root of tyatyanicä is obtained from swampy land far to the north of the Gros Ventre habitat. The roots are soaked in water and the black portions removed. Then they are grated, mixed with water, and applied to the neck for sores (specimen Museum No. 50-1907).

A root called kouh'ya" is chewed until a sticky paste results, which is applied to sores (specimen Museum No. 50-1919).

A fungus called tsäädjina" is set on fire, and when glowing is applied to wounds or sores. It is also pulverized, and put on the gums of children when they are teething. It is said to grow on birch-trees, near the root (specimen Museum No. 50-1837). [752]

The roots of iniitsöö are boiled and the water used to wash the part of the body which has been burned by the application of the glowing fungus tsäädjina" (specimen Museum No. 50-1856). [752]

Ibyaa"tou-leaves, which are also used as incense, are boiled in water. This is then applied to the body to allay pain (specimen Museum No. 50-1790). This medicine is the Arapaho niibaa"tou or ibaa"tou (fir or similar leaves), used both as incense[2] and as medicine.[3]

[1] See Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part IV, p. 438.
[2] Ibid., Vol. XVIII, Part I, p. 32.
[3] Ibid., Part IV, p. 420.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

278 757 Na^{n}kasö ("white medicine") is a fungus growing high on pine-trees. It has a general use for any disease (specimen Museum No. 50–1796).

The leaves of ka^{n}kadyikou, growing in the mountains, are boiled, and the tea used as medicine for various purposes (specimen Museum No. 50–1897).

The bark of iinaa^{n}söönicou is either chewed in the native state, or boiled [752] and drunk, for hemorrhages and pain in the back. The plant is said not to grow in the Gros Ventre country (specimen Museum No. 50–1943).

Tawaa^{n}nasöö-root is used for pleurisy and heart-sickness. It is said to taste sweet. The root is either chewed, or boiled and drunk. This is the Arapaho häçawaanaxu, and is much used in the age-ceremonies of both tribes (specimen Museum No. 50–1855).

Juniper-berries (çää^{n}touwun) are a cure for asthma. They are either eaten entire, or they are pulverized and boiled, and the water drunk. The leaves, called "çää^{n}touwuusöö," are mixed with the root, and then used as a remedy for hemorrhage. The leaves are also used by the doctors to incense themselves before they begin to doctor (specimen Museum No. 50–1854).

The root called niäätä^{n}, used by the Arapaho ceremonially and as an ingredient for incense, is employed by the Gros Ventre as a remedy for tuberculosis and hemorrhages. It is said not to be used as incense. The root is boiled before being used. It is eaten in the solid state, or a decoction of it is drunk (specimen Museum No. 50–1793).

The root of naw'asöö ("fish medicine") is eaten for colds (specimen Museum No. 50–1794).

Niitsiça^{n} ("hollow root") is primarily a horse-medicine. It is given to horses to strengthen and refresh them. People also use a decoction of it as a remedy for colds (specimen Museum No. 50–1795).

Niha^{n}nisö ("yellow medicine") is used for colds. Either the root is eaten, or water in which it has been boiled is drunk (specimen Museum No. 50–1799).

A plant which grows north of the Gros Ventre country, and for which they appear to have no name, is used for colds and sore throat, a small quantity of the root being chewed (specimen Museum No. 50–1848).

A root called taw'haa^{n} is obtained from other tribes. The plant is said not to grow in the Gros Ventre country. It is pounded and used as snuff in order to clear the head in case of cold or headache (specimen Museum No. 50–1797).

The stems and leaves of waasöwahaa^{n}, a sweet peppermint, are used for headache. The plant is also drunk as tea (specimen Museum No. 50–1791).

The root called wanaa^{n}sübyaa^{n} ("smelling loud") is smoked in the pipe against headache (specimen Museum No. 50–1798).

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

in the operator. It was resorted to for various ailments; tuberculosis, dizziness and "logginess" were specifically mentioned by our informants. "If the ailment were located somewhere above the waist the patient was bled at the elbow joint on the upper surface of the arm; if somewhere below the waist, on top of the instep." One arm might be opened in spring, the other in the fall. In the procedure described by the Boy, before the incision was made, the patient would put his hand on the ground and hold his arm rather rigid, while the operator squeezed and at the same time rubbed down the upper arm until the blood vessel at the bend of the arm bulged. In a slightly different procedure described by Singer, the patient's upper arm was tied very tight and "the blood was worked down;" then the large blood vessel on the upper side of the elbow joint was pierced with a very sharp chip off an "onyx stone,"* and the blood would spurt out; when the patient was sufficiently bled, a bit of buffalo fur was scorched, put over the incision, and kept in place without any dressing. By bedtime everything would be "okay." 757 [752]

Certain individuals, such as Thick's wife, and Woman Chief, were more skillful than others at bloodletting. On one occasion Singer's husband said to her: "Come on now. I want you to bleed me." She started to do so but "just had to yell," at which he said: "Why anyone would think that it was you who were going to bleed." Coming Daylight was still more reluctant to perform the operation. "In fact, I could never do it," she said, "because I cannot stand the sight of blood."

A tattoo-like surgical treatment was described by Coming Daylight, although Gros Ventres did not practice decorative tattooing. "For a while," she said, "it seemed like my hand would come unjointed and I could not use it very well. They took a bunch of needles and pierced my hand where it was hurting me. They told me: 'Now if you don't eat anything fried, it won't turn blue.' After piercing my hand they put some root on it, and it never got sore." She added: "They do that to the head, too." [304] [262]

Lancing of the gums of children when teething, elsewhere de-

* Singer showed the stone she owned from which the chip is struck. It was a shiny black one, but we did not identify it.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

757 scribed was, so far as we could gather, done by non-professionals as well as by professional doctors.[9]

752 According to Coming Daylight, one old woman whom she had apparently known in her earlier years and who was suffering severely from "cut-away" gave herself successful surgical treatment. She was in great pain and sometimes could not pass water or food, and besides her grown son had just been killed in battle. In her suffering and bereavement, she went out in the hills, taking with her a big heavy sewing needle, and saying: "Well, my son did not come back. Why should I keep on living." While out in the hills, she pierced herself in the stomach with the big needle, drew out the "bug" that was causing her illness, and pounded it on a rock. After that she got well.

Other surgical or quasi-surgical treatments were resorted to in case of bites by snakes, ticks, lizards, muskrats and wolves.

If you have been bitten by a rattlesnake, the procedure, according to Thick, is to take a horse hair, hold it taut in both hands, run it back and forth to locate the teeth [sic] left by the snake in your flesh, and then pluck out the teeth. If this is done at once after you are bitten, you will suffer no harm.

When Coming Daylight was a little girl, something big, thought by her to be perhaps a large tick, attached itself to her head behind the ear. The other children with whom she was playing held her and just knocked it off with a stick, and then her grandmother put medicine on the spot and the bite gave her no further trouble.

Singer described the case of a woman to whose left arm a little lizard had attached itself and was "sucking the skin." They just cut the lizard off. Coming Daylight was once bitten on a finger by a muskrat which kept its hold and nearly bit her finger off. Finally she poked a stick in the animal's nostril and gave a jab, and it wriggled its legs and let go. She still feels pain in the finger when she holds it in a certain position. According to her, too, people say that a wolf would sometimes "turn crazy" and enter the camp. All the people would then shut themselves up tightly in their lodges, but sometimes a person would be caught and bitten, and would go around as if "drunk or crazy, wild like the

[9] Cf. Flannery, 1953, p. 142.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

wolf." One woman, whom she knew, was so bitten, right on the mouth by such a "crazy wolf." The people held the woman tight, and when the wind was from the north faced her into it. Then they made a smudge of wolf fur and made her smell it, and so cured her. This was the customary treatment for such cases, after it, "the patient is not crazy any more." 752

The enema syringe was not known to The Boy. A smooth stick and/or grease might however be introduced into the rectum, when other curative measures failed. 757

For various ailments massaging was used by non-professionals as well as doctors with power. When Thomas Main was a boy, suffering from growing pains, he would lie down near the old women who were smoking and they would spit on their hands and rub them on his legs. A sick person, into whose lodge a woman in her menses had accidentally entered, would be massaged all over with beaver castor to keep from growing worse.

Two kinds of thermotherapy were recorded, warm wrappings and the sweat bath. When Coming Daylight's sister was recovering from smallpox, she was "one solid scab." To hasten recovery, her grandmother used to heat dry cloths and wrap them all around the girl.

While the sweat-bath was predominantly a magico-religious rite among the Gros Ventre, and often used or prescribed by professional doctors, it was sometimes—how commonly we could not determine—used by the laity as a purely rational curative procedure. Mary Ereaux' mother "always used to go in" to the sweat-lodge, keeping her head out. Other old women would keep head as well as body closed in. Coming Daylight used to go into a sweat-lodge and sweat when she "had rheumatism so bad I [she] couldn't move." Singer had built many sweat-lodges for her ailing husband, but she added: "they did not seem to make him feel any better."

On one occasion four Gros Ventre warriors, on their way up north, got into a swamp, shot down a queer-looking animal, like a buffalo or a "water-animal" [a moose?]. They ate the liver and it made them faint. When they came to, they built a sweat-lodge and sweated four times—perhaps in this case as a magico-religious procedure, our field data are not decisive.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

lieved things. I am going outside to see for myself.' He asked the old woman doctor for the thing she had drawn out of the patient. 755

"So she gave it to him in his palm. It was just a little round thing. He took it, fingering it and smoothing it out. It turned out to be a little piece of white rag. It had been all balled up. On that little piece of white rag were seven marks, like needle-pointed writing, and at the end right in that rag was a piece of blood clot. The man saw this and said: 'Now I have seen something for myself with my own eyes.'

"They handed this around so that everybody could see it. Then they handed it back to the medicine woman. She said to this rag: 'I don't want you to ever come back again. You go out to where you belong.' So she wrinkled it up again and threw it in the flaming hot fire. As soon as she did that it burned up quickly.

"As soon as she had drawn it out of Little Man he felt much better. He got well because he knew that this thing was out of his system, and he quit having hemorrhages.

"In the beginning she had told what this man had put medicine on him for. This man thought that Little Man was going after his woman [the man's wife] or going with her. Little Man's sickness was not a natural one. This man had put medicine on him. Little Man had to go through with his promise [of self torture on the hill] because he got well."

"I was awfully curious when I was a child. Whenever I saw a gathering of people, I always ran to see what was happening. Crow Bull [her uncle] had been wounded in a battle. His scalp had been grazed by a bullet. They sent for a doctor whose name was Drops In The Fire. My mother and grandmother and my uncle with his wives were sitting on the west side in the lodge. The four men singers were on the opposite side. Crow Bull, to be doctored, was at the place opposite the door, with the doctor there too. 752 755

"The doctor started to sing and then he gave two drums there to the singers. He said: 'You all look at me. You all look at me. You all look at me good.' Then he said: 'Give me a gun. This thing [the gun] is the main thing. Look at it. If I don't make this work, he

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

752 [Crow Bull] is going to leave you [to die], and if it works as I want
755 it to work he is going to get well.' There is a wild rhubarb which is called 'gun' and when a person is going to eat it he runs his thumb up the stalk to eat the inside of the rhubarb stalk. The doctor said: 'Now you see this gun [the real gun].' And he ran his thumb up the barrel, and it made a sound like that made when a person opens a wild rhubarb stalk. And it looked as if the real gun was laid apart. They all looked at it. And the doctor said: 'We are going to have good luck.' Then they all cheered like they were thanking him. Then he ran his hand along the gun [barrel] and when they looked again the gun was just as good as ever. Then he laid the gun up. I used to think he was a wonderful man because I saw him do this with a real gun.

"After this, the doctor took the bandage off Crow Bull and started doctoring him. He took a snake-skin which was just flat and wrapped it around the wound. All this time he was talking and praying. All this time he held the tail and head of the snake-skin together at the back of Crow Bull's head. He would kind of move his hand, quivering it at the back of Crow Bull's head where he was holding the two ends of the snake-skin together. The bullet had lodged there. The head of the snake was inside [nearest the scalp] and the tail was laid over it. He just quivered his hand about four times and at the same time told the singers: 'Not yet. Keep singing.' He was trying to work the bullet out. Finally he grasped the snake-skin by the middle and shook it, and the bullet dropped out. That is why I thought he was wonderful. That is one experience I had.

"They had a horse tied outside to give to the doctor, and of course they had a big feed. When they got through eating, all the women folks came and kissed the medicine man. My grandmother said to me: 'What are you sitting there for, not paying any attention?' I said: 'Oh, grandmother, I am scared of him.'

755 "In later years, too, at various gatherings when I was visiting with the women folks I would say to that medicine man's daughter: 'My, I used to be afraid of your father. He was so powerful.' And then that woman would jump at me for a joke."

"There is always," Coming Daylight added, "a way for those

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

782
785 take anything like that very patiently" ["Like our Lord being
304 crucified," Mary Ereaux commented].

Very much the same procedure as regards the sweat-lodge, buffalo skull and so forth was ordinarily followed when a finger joint was amputated. The cut-off joint was offered commonly to the sun, or to the Supreme Being. The operation regularly took place inside a sweat-lodge. "A joint from any finger could be offered up, but usually it was the first joint of the little finger of the left hand. The offerer would put his or her finger on a log or stone; the operator, someone skilled in the matter, would then place a knife on the joint and hit the knife with something heavy. [752] Sage was put on the wound, to stanch the flow of blood and help healing. Children in their play, it may be added, would in make-believe cut off little fingers, apply sage and so forth.

The finger amputation complex may be illustrated by Singer's experience:

"My infant daughter [one of her three children by Iron Bucket] had been ill. I sacrificed [in a delayed fulfillment of her vow] the end joint of the little finger of my left hand. . . . I said: 'I give you this. This is what I sacrifice to save my child's life.' This I said to the sun which is God's work, His property like. . . . I held the baby and my husband prayed: 'Sun, she has given you her finger so our child's life will be saved.' . . .

"The rite was private, not a big ceremony. We went out of the lodge and the sun was about half way up and he [apparently the operator] held up my whole left hand and said: 'Now, Passing or Traveling Man, this is what she is going to give you.' There was just one old man who cut off fingers. They claimed he had [this power from] a dream. . . . He was the father of Dwarf; Dwarf died just recently.

"They had me lie face down and the others held me so I would not move. The old man [Dwarf's father] . . . told me to relax, . . . felt around, found the joint, put my finger over the lodge pole and chopped it [the end joint only] off. I did not see it but I heard when he hit the lodge pole. But there was no pain. Then they let me sit up.

"The old man said: 'Do you want it to bleed, or shall I close

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

it up right away?' My husband said, 'Let it bleed,' because he was afraid it would be sore if it didn't bleed. So when the old man thought it had bled enough, he chewed some big-leaf sage, made a poultice, and put it on my finger (and/or "sprinkled powdered root on my finger," she added later). It healed quickly and never troubled me. . . . We had to give the old man something for doing that. . . . My daughter lived to be a young woman." 782 785 304 [752]

Self-torture out on the hills,—"sacrifice alone on hills," as it was called,—had much in common with self-torture at the Sacrifice Dance. The chief difference was that, unlike the Sacrifice Dance torture rite, it was done in solitude. The self-torturer had to have a ritual grandfather, a man who himself had previously undergone this solitary self-torture—this in contrast to flesh and finger cutting in which there were no ritual grandfathers. The "grandfather-grandson" relationship so contracted persisted after the rite was over. Coming Daylight and The Boy were in agreement that the solitary self-torture was a more severe ordeal than self-torture at the Sacrifice Dance. [608]

Those mentioned by our informants as having gone through "sacrifice alone on the hills" were: Stiffarm; Running Crow (Stiffarm as his "grandfather" for this rite); Coming Daylight's husband Little Man (Running Crow as his "grandfather"); her cousin White Skunk, son of Crow Bull; The Boy's brother; Jim Shortman; and perhaps Sits-in-the-Middle. On Stiffarm's, Running Crow's, and Sits-in-the-Middle's experience we obtained no details; on White Skunk's, no details beyond the fact that he underwent it "because my [Coming Daylight's] son was sick at the mission school: that son died anyway," and that he did "right on this hill here [at Hays]." The detailed accounts of Little Man's experience as narrated by Coming Daylight, of The Boy's brother's as narrated by The Boy, and of Jim Shortman's as narrated by himself, to be given now, will help to fill out the generalized picture of the rite in the preceding paragraph.

Coming Daylight's account of Little Man's "sacrifice alone on the hills," given in separate fragments on four different days, is here presented just as she gave it.

"My husband Little Man [Deafie] went out to the hills. When

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

In general, apart
774 from the ghost helper and gambling power complexes, to be
775 described later, no cult of ghosts existed, and no prayers or food
[769] or other offerings were made to them. Ghosts of those who had committed unjustified murder, as defined by the Gros Ventre code, did not go where the other souls went, but stayed where their bodies lay or wandered around and "bothered" the living.
[753] If a person suffered a stroke, a ghost, apparently of a murderer, was thought to have caused it and to have twisted the victim's face or mouth and pulled the eyelid down.

Ghosts "bothered" the living in less serious ways, appearing
775 in the shadow and disappearing, whistling, playing tricks, in more
539 recent times rapping on windows, and so forth. The two following stories, told by The Boy in light vein and laughingly, illustrate ghostly ways.

"A war party of brave Gros Ventres started out.[24] Toward evening they came to a timbered stream and made a lodge of willows near a good-sized tree, not knowing that a couple had been buried there. After a good meal, they were singing and enjoying themselves, when they heard someone hollering far off. The hollering kept coming closer and closer to their camp until it got very near. One of the men said: 'We had better start up a fire.' Before anyone got up to fetch wood, wood began being thrown into the tepee. This kept up until the tepee was so loaded up with wood that they were crowded out. They then started to carry the wood out of the tepee. One man remarked: 'I never heard of a ghost killing anybody.' Then they heard the ghost laughing a little distance off. One of the men shot toward the spot from which the laughing was coming, but the ghost laughed all the more. All the men then got back inside the tepee, and one of them said: 'I'll get some wood and we'll make some tea.' A good fire was started, and the old fellows prayed with the pipe. The ghost was meanwhile moving the embers away to keep the fire from burning. Before the snow was fetched to be melted, snow fell from the open center top of the tepee and put the fire out. At this they got scared and said: 'Let's move from here.'

[24] In 1948 The Boy remarked that this happened in Lame Bull's life time; and that the ghost referred to in the story is the kind known as tsë:k. [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

sure will do that; they bother people and mock you when you talk or laugh." After that there was no ghost in that piece of brush. 775 [825]

On another occasion, Al was coming back on horseback with a group after a hand game. In a gap through which their route would take them, the others saw a yellow or blue light, like a lamp in the dark, moving this way and that. But Al could see nothing. The others went home by a roundabout way, but Al went alone through the gap, saw nothing, and met the others farther on.

Many, though not all, ghosts had the habit of whistling, and some talked in a whistling language.

Ghosts were apt to appear as owls or to hoot like owls, both in the shaking tent rite, to be described later, and on other occasions as illustrated in the following story which had been told The Boy by his father, Lame Bull.

"Lame Bull went on a war expedition. Seven Sioux were killed. Their bodies were left laying where the killing took place. A few years later Lame Bull and some comrades came near this place. As they reached it, seven owls flew from it. The owls did not fly away but just milled around the spot. They were the seven Sioux turned into owls." [825]

Children used to be told: "If you do not obey, the owls will catch you." If owls alighted on a lodge or house or hooted around very near on bush, tree or hill, this presaged the death of some one. Owls also gave warnings.[26] In these instances however we got no evidence that the owls were conceived of as ghosts. 825 775

Besides the ghosts there were other bad spirits, who "shot" people by projecting some small object into the body of a person and so causing illness.[27] This belief, we were told, was very widespread but we did not obtain many details regarding it. The following incident, narrated by Coming Daylight, may serve as illustration. 776 753

On one occasion when Coming Daylight was living where Fort Belknap now is and when her daughter was still a sack baby, the latter would not quit screaming. She would hold her head to one side and would not nurse, and they could not satisfy her with

[26] An example is given in Flannery, 1953, p. 93.
[27] Very probably connected with practice of witchcraft. [R.F.]

776 anything. So Coming Daylight took her infant to her aunt who
was a kind of "spiritualist" (one having a ghost helper). The
753 aunt took the baby in her arms and told Coming Daylight: "You
get me a piece of charcoal." The aunt took the charcoal and rubbed
it on the baby's neck at the back, bent over as if she were going
to bite the infant, drew out (apparently by sucking) a little sliver
from the baby's neck, and said: "This is what caused her to
have a stiff neck." They said a spirit had shot her, although they
did not have the baby outside when this happened to her. You were
not supposed to take an infant outside in the dark without cover-
ing its head. Actually Coming Daylight's infant was inside the
tent during the night and they heard something hit a lodge pole
and it seemed to frighten the baby, who continued to cry until
the aunt removed the sliver.

[158] Mental abnormality could also be caused by such bad spirits,
ghostly or other, whether by "shooting" the victim or getting into
751 him is not known. To keep the bad spirits at bay, a stick, with its
776 tip blackened with "nicotine," was left near a baby whenever the
baby had to be left alone. Whenever adults went out in the dark,
they picked up and carried a stick, of any kind; it was believed
that the spirits were afraid of the sticks and would not come near.
Beyond such protective observances there appears to have been
no cult proper of these bad spirits in the way of propitiatory
prayers or offerings.

753 Much, though not all sickness was ascribed to a malevolent
being called Atsa:. When illness recently took off a mother and
776 child in a family, the people said, "Atsa: has visited so-and-so's
family." Atsa: did not himself put sickness-causing objects in his
victims' bodies, but he was responsible indirectly for other kinds
of illness, that is, he had something to do with them. To him
[731] were attributed particularly epidemics, especially smallpox, chicken
pox and measles. He was an ugly, hideous being, unkempt, with
scaly skin and bushy hair who never washed his face. He was
thin and starved-looking and his nails were long. He was thoroughly
disliked. No food or pipe was ever offered to him. When serious
776 sickness visited the camp, the Supreme Being was prayed to:
"Take Atsa: away. He is causing a lot of trouble." Atsa: was

793 blew medicine on the woman who then recovered. If you even
784 passed in front of the keeper, you would "drop in a cramp."

Food offered in the keeper's lodge, even on a purely social and informal occasion, had to be eaten there and could not be taken out unless some one told a personal war-deed. This taboo applied even to an ex-keeper guest, although not to the actual keeper's
[576] children. The keeper could break up the gathering by emptying his own pipe—a recognized Gros Ventre convention for hosts.

[821] If anybody threw water at the keeper or hit him with water, this would cause rain.

Where a group of men were seated in a row or crescent having a purely social smoke, the general procedure was as previously described. If the Pipe keeper were one of the group, the man passing the pipe to him on either the clockwise or return circuit would first make a gesture with it "to the rear between himself and the keeper," if you didn't do that the keeper would not accept it.

The powers of the Feathered Pipe keeper and co-keeper specifically recorded by us were similar, apart from control of storm, rain and flood and, as far as they went, to those of the Flat Pipe keeper and co-keeper. The weather control powers will be described later under Feathered Pipe ritual.

[753] Anyone who stepped in the track of the keeper or co-keeper got a fit, for the soles of their moccasins were kept treated with wild parsley.

The keeper and co-keeper acquired by reason of their office certain doctoring powers.

787 The keeper had marked dreaming and forecasting powers, just as the Flat Pipe keeper had, and his dreams when told to the
793 people were "big news." In a dream he would, for instance, see animals fighting the Gros Ventres and this would be a warning to a war-raiding party to act discreetly. He would foretell from his dreams who would win in a prospective battle and how many would be killed. At the time the Flat Pipe was captured by the Assiniboine (see No. 8 in Appendix), the Feathered Pipe owner was fore-warned by the Pipe in a dream and he and his party escaped. If the keeper had a dream that foreboded evil fortune he would on waking talk to the Pipe and ask it not to let the evil

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

was full of 'nicotine,' and showed me how to draw out sickness through the stem. But I told him: 'I don't care to have any power, because people who accept power have only a certain length of time to live and it is always too soon [short].'" 787 778

Those who possessed gambling power in particular always became afflicted with some serious ailment of their legs and/or arms. There would be pain in and swelling of the joints, and the possessors would die before their time. This happened to Lone Bear, The Boy's wife's father, who had gambling power; while still in his prime his legs went bad, and even though he quit gambling to escape the penalty, he died prematurely. Red Whip, too, one of the greatest of those with gambling power, who died in 1912, died, the Gros Ventres believed, before his time. 753 787 778

It was believed that Bull Lodge, a great medicine man, did not live his life out.

A person, however, who had acquired power and later transferred all of it by gift or sale to another person or persons could thereby escape the penalty and live his life out. In this case the penalty would be transferred, along with the power, to the transferee or transferees.

Doctoring power was sometimes avoided or refused for other reasons than fear of or unwillingness to accept the penalty of illness or shortened life. Doctors, somewhat like keepers of the sacred Pipes, had to live restricted lives, abstain from certain foods, and avoid certain actions. Personal liberty was thus curtailed. Coming Daylight, when a young girl, was offered medicine power by a man four successive times in dreams, but she refused: "I did not want to be a medicine woman. I did not like it because medicine people suck on the affected part of the patient and have to swallow what they extract,—even though that man was showing me that I would have to extract with my hands, and not by sucking." Bad Bad Bull had power to cure the powerful "stomach-eating sickness" [cancer?] and used to suck out the small animal that caused it. In his old age he wanted to give this power to his sister, but she would say: "Oh, I am bashful. I would not be able to doctor that sickness. I would like to have the power so I could cure the pains but I would not like the part [or the curing pro- 787 756

CHAPTER VII

CURING PRACTICES

A good many Gros Ventres through quest or otherwise acquired doctoring power. To give a better idea of it we shall need to see it against the larger background of native concepts of the cause and cure of illness.

Causes of Illness

Some illnesses were ascribed to solely or mainly natural agents or agential causes, others to supernatural ones. The line between the two types of causation is not, however, always clear.

Sometimes supernaturally caused ailments followed automatically from the breach of taboos, others were inflicted intentionally by non-human or by human agents.

Marrow bones were not supposed to be broken inside a lodge or house, and a person who transgressed this taboo would suffer from sore legs. The penalty of fits, cramps and paralysis from certain actions to or by keepers of the Flat and Feathered Pipes has been previously noted.

The chief sender of sickness, particularly of epidemics such as smallpox and measles, was the being, Atsa:. This being appears likewise to have had something to do indirectly with other ailments, but exactly what part he had in causing such ailments could not be cleared up by us. The intrusion of pathogenic objects into the body to cause illness was not attributed to Atsa: personally.

Malevolent spirits,—whether ghostly or other is not clear,—would cause illness by "shooting" people, that is, by projecting some small object into the body of the victim. To the maleficent activity of these spirits was also ascribed mental derangement, at least in some cases. One such mentally deranged woman was once seen by Coming Daylight. This woman who was getting along in years became deranged all of a sudden. Coming Daylight, with the consent of the woman's husband, went to her lodge and peered in.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13·

"The woman had everything, like blankets and dishes and so forth, 753 ●
stuffed in between the poles and covering of the lodge. The woman 158
herself was on the ground, crawling around and making motions with her hands as if she were working at something on the ground." Coming Daylight did not know if or how the woman recovered from her derangement because shortly after camp was moved and the people scattered.

Coming Daylight gave details of another mental case, that of a young man who wandered off from camp, tore off his clothing, cut his hair off short, and came running back fast to camp. The people noticed his wild look, grabbed him, and picketed him. He was "raving mad." Later he used to go into the brush, cut sticks until he had a large bundle, and carry the bundle around with him until his death. Some people were afraid of him, but most were not. Coming Daylight did not recall his ever scaring her or her children. He would ask in a kind of pitiful way for something to eat. He would visit a while and then just rush out of the lodge or house.

Thick gave us details of one case of illness of doubtful origin. 753
The illness had started one night when Thick and an inseparable boyhood friend of his were coming back to camp together. They were walking on a flat together, and heard behind them a sound "like somebody dragging a robe or something stiff." They thought it was a ghost and started to run. After a bit they stopped and looked back but could not see anything. They decided it must be a ghost. So they started walking again, and pretty soon they heard the same sound. Of course they then ran. Thick's friend then had a feeling as if somebody were grabbing the hair up on his head, and looked back and said: "Stop! Here is the fellow who is chasing us."

It was a great big owl dragging its wings. From that time on he got worse, and died soon after in 1889. Thick thought that the [754]
scare got that night brought on the illness. The doctors who treated the boy claimed he had been "doped" [bewitched] by someone.

Grave or fatal illness could also be brought on by human beings, 754
usually those with doctor power, through sheer wishing or through other procedures, or even, it seems, by human without supernaturally acquired power through concentrated wishing, as will be explained in detail later.

753 So much for what we have called the agential causes of disease, the impersonal forces and personal agents, external to the victim, which were thought to be responsible for illness. In addition, some illnesses at least were believed to be due to specific proximate instrumental or physiological causes, internal to the victim.

One disease, apparently appendicitis, was thought, in recent days, to be caused by a "gut getting plugged by a seed or by food,"—a theory most probably taken over from the whites. One case of tuberculosis was ascribed to the permanent cessation of menses after the woman had borne her third child.

Various diseases were attributed to some small object, such as a sliver of wood or a finger nail, that had been projected with malicious intent into the victim's body by some human or preterhuman being or that had otherwise found entrance therein. In particular the disease called "cut away," wano:'wa, probably cancer, was caused by the presence in the victim of a kind of "bug" or "animal," roundish in shape, and with a big mouth. This "animal" would move around within a person and "eat his insides." Bad Bull, a medicine man who had power to cure "cut away," used to extract from his patient such an "animal" of green, yellow or black color. "The black ones were not so bad," according to Singer. According to The Boy, Bull Lodge whom he knew well, in his doctoring for "cut away" would take out such an animal from the belly of his patient. The animal on one occasion at least was about four inches long, seagreen on top and whitish on the belly (or green on one side and white on the other, according to Garter Snake) and without legs or eyes. About one half the animal was mouth, with no teeth, however, in the mouth. In one cure, Bull Lodge ripped open the animal after extracting it and showed the onlookers what was inside it. "It was full of blood, with some things floating around in this blood." Bull Lodge claimed that this animal, unless extracted, would "eat up the sick person's liver or some other part of his insides" and so kill him. He used to say that this animal caused all stomach troubles.

Garter Snake described one case of a woman suffering from rectal hemorrhage caused, as was revealed at the time of her cure "by a blue thing inside her that 'looked like a rock and was as big as a man's fist.' When put on the fire it broke open and

was just a shell. It must have been some kind of animal with a thin shell." 753 ●

The concept of soul-loss as resulting from or accompanying sickness in certain cases was present. "It was held by the old people," The Boy said, "that a person's 'soul' was not inside his body or any organ thereof, but was near or around him. As a sick person got worse, his 'soul' kept getting farther and farther away. If it got too far away, he died. When a person was very sick, people would say: 'His soul is leaving (going away from) him farther and farther.'"[1] In brief, soul wandering or "soul-loss" was a preliminary to death rather than a cause of disease. We obtained no evidence that the concept of soul-stealing entered at all into Gros Ventre pathology. 753 774

Treatment of Illness

From the causes of disease we now pass to the treatment thereof. While some ailments and cases of illness were thought to be due to natural causes, and others to supernatural causes, the line of demarcation cannot always be sharply drawn. Likewise as regards the prevention and treatment, in some instances they were clearly looked upon by the Gros Ventres as of the purely natural or "rational" order, in others equally clearly of the supernatural order, in some few seemingly of both orders combined, in a few others of uncertain order. While the Gros Ventres quite explicitly distinguished in general theory and in certain specific cases between natural and supernatural prevention and treatment, in actual practice at times, and in many specific cases, they drew no sharp line between the two orders. In the following pages we shall take up first natural or "rational" prevention and treatment, secondly combined or doubtful types of treatment and lastly supernatural types. In general remedies and preventives fall into three more or less corresponding classes: "domestic" remedies known to and freely used by everybody; certain remedies more or less "rational," exclusively owned and used by particular non-profes- 755 757

[1] The soul was believed to "kind of leave" a person under stress of great fear. Cf. Flannery, 1953, 92.

183 other men so you will avoid your husband's suspicion," and so on.
861 Sometimes the appeal was made by a parent: "If you do such and such a thing well, I will be proud of you." In general it would seem that the positive side rather than the negative, was stressed.

777 It was more often the men informants who mentioned super-
867 natural motives proposed for proper conduct. They remembered
888 that they were told that the Supreme Being would "have pity" on them if they followed the proper code of behavior. Both men and women mentioned, however, that respect for the aged was instilled because "people didn't become old for nothing. They had a blessing from the Supreme Being to live long lives. Whenever you see old people attempting to do something and are having difficulties, you should go right in and do it for them. Help old people out and then ask them to intercede for you that you will have good health, a long life and success in all your undertakings."

867 The example of others was recognized as effective in child-
574 training. Al feels that the Gros Ventres were well brought up in the old days "because children were taught to stick to the rules and they had the good example of adults to follow." In describing the duty of hospitality, Coming Daylight said: "My grandmother was a great one to have a lot of visitors because she was generous, and so I got a good example at home." It was said by others of Coming Daylight: "She feeds everyone who comes along just as she used to see her uncle (mother's brother) do. She takes after her uncle in lots of ways."

In lecturing to the young, examples of actual behavior of persons, both good and bad, were often given. For instance, in warning boys of the evils of gambling, reference would be made to men who would otherwise have had promising careers but who ruined their chances by too heavy stakes which they lost. Fear
[754] of offending those who had supernatural power lest they retaliate by means of black magic was implicit in at least some of the admonitions. This was so, for instance, in instructing young men to stay away from the wives of "powerful" men, as well as in warning girls to decline improper proposals "in a nice way."

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

793 mon pipe in his hands, it was forbidden for anyone to pass in front
784 of him, under penalty of some evil befalling the culprit.

If a person, wanting something in a hurry from the keeper, such as meat or a bit of tobacco, just poked his (or her) head in the door of the keeper's lodge and made his request, no one inside would answer him. He would have to go all the way in, proceeding clockwise, make his request, and go out clockwise, not back out.

When the co-keeper gave a visitor something to eat in the Pipe lodge, the receiver had to eat it there and not take it out, unless someone told war stories. No one was allowed to take or grab anything seen in the Pipe lodge.

The keeper and co-keeper were by virtue of their office "holy"
778 persons, that is, endowed with supernatural powers. Some of these
782 powers were related directly to their main task as custodians of the Pipe, leaders in its ritual, and intercessors with the supernatural world, and will be described under the ritual of the Pipe. Others were conferred on them at or subsequent to the transfer rite, partly to enable them to command the respect due them, partly to give them supernatural efficiency for their own or their people's advantage,—the former being mostly powers to harm, the latter mostly powers to help.

793 If anyone were guilty of disrespect to the keeper or co-keeper,
●754 there were several avenging procedures to which they could resort.

During the transfer rite, the keeper and co-keeper were taught some form of cursing, so they would be properly respected. If they wished evil on anyone, the evil would come to pass. Deer, an ex-keeper who gave Lame Bull much of the latter's coaching for the keepership, told him after his mouth had been consecrated: "Be careful what you say. For if you utter an evil wish on anybody, the wish will come true." This power, it may be added, is more or less of a piece with the commonly possessed efficacy attributed in Gros Ventre idealogy to serious good or evil wish-thought. (See pp. 364-370.)

Deer also taught Lame Bull in his early keepership another harming power, but cautioned him not to use it unless someone failed to show proper respect to him as keeper. This power worked by "sympathetic" magic. Deer asked for a little pup and a piece of sinew. When these were brought he said: "Leave the pup near

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the door." Deer then in both hands held the sinew stretched taut horizontally over a smoldering chip and sang a song special to this rite, ending it with a recitative "Yo!" Then he lowered the sinew and repeated the song and "Yo," then lowered still more and repeated, concluding with "Yo, ho, ho, ho!" and finally put the sinew on the burning chip. As the sinew burned and buckled, the pup doubled up with cramps and died. 793 754

Another power, conferred for use by the keeper in case of disrespect committed against him, worked by "contagious" magic. The keeper watched the offender closely and made sure to locate his tracks, and then took out of the pipe bundle and put on his ritual moccasins the soles of which had been rubbed during the transfer rite with the poisonous wild parsley. Then, wearing the moccasins he stepped in the offender's tracks. As soon as he did so, the offender got a fit and then his legs and feet became weak and wobbly and nobody but the keeper could cure him. [789]

The co-keeper for the same punitive purpose in case of disrespect or molestation carried wild parsley mixed with peppermint leaves in the sack attached to her belt, but we obtained no information on the precise procedure she used.

Two punitive procedures were told The Boy by his father but without full details. These "vulgar" powers were not broadcast but were kept more or less secret within the inner circle of the Flat Pipe.

If a woman disrespected a keeper or caused him great embarrassment, he carried out a special rite over or toward her, obliged her to submit to sex intercourse with him, and afterwards carried out a concluding rite. If some young man went so far as to flirt with her, make advances and touch her, he would get ill, and she alone could doctor him back to health. If he went so far as to have sexual intercourse with her, he would probably die. [833 786]

As regards all the foregoing punitive and harming powers, it was strictly understood that the keeper and co-keeper were given them to use only to enforce respect, and that if used for other and evil purposes the users would pay dearly and would be punished in some way, through the death of their children or through other misfortune. 793

Besides these supernatural powers to command respect, other 755

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

"Stiffarm used to be accused of doing harm to people through his power. He would never defend himself or say anything about this. On one occasion a group were drinking whiskey and some of Stiffarm's brothers-in-law were there. Brothers-in-law joke [banter] each other. They said: 'Let's have a contest of power. The one who has the least power will buy the drinks.' But Stiffarm said: 'No. I'd rather not.' The others thought Stiffarm was a little scared. They insisted. Finally Stiffarm said: 'All right.' So he took a piece of otter skin in his fingers, held it up, sang four times, and blew on it four times. The fourth time, he blew hard and the piece of otter skin disappeared. Then he said: 'Where is that otter skin? Look for it.' They could not find it. Then Stiffarm got up, walked to the iron stove in the middle of the room, and there was the otter skin half buried in the side of the stove. Stiffarm said: 'Here it is. Come and get it.' But no one dared to do so. They were all afraid. Stiffarm then took it without effort, and said: 'Now, the Gros Ventres have blamed me for causing some deaths by using my power. That is not true. But if I really wanted to do so, I would use this otter skin, and the one I used it on would not live long.' "

789
754

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13·

"The woman had everything, like blankets and dishes and so forth, stuffed in between the poles and covering of the lodge. The woman herself was on the ground, crawling around and making motions with her hands as if she were working at something on the ground." Coming Daylight did not know if or how the woman recovered from her derangement because shortly after camp was moved and the people scattered. 753 158

Coming Daylight gave details of another mental case, that of a young man who wandered off from camp, tore off his clothing, cut his hair off short, and came running back fast to camp. The people noticed his wild look, grabbed him, and picketed him. He was "raving mad." Later he used to go into the brush, cut sticks until he had a large bundle, and carry the bundle around with him until his death. Some people were afraid of him, but most were not. Coming Daylight did not recall his ever scaring her or her children. He would ask in a kind of pitiful way for something to eat. He would visit a while and then just rush out of the lodge or house.

Thick gave us details of one case of illness of doubtful origin. The illness had started one night when Thick and an inseparable boyhood friend of his were coming back to camp together. They were walking on a flat together, and heard behind them a sound "like somebody dragging a robe or something stiff." They thought it was a ghost and started to run. After a bit they stopped and looked back but could not see anything. They decided it must be a ghost. So they started walking again, and pretty soon they heard the same sound. Of course they then ran. Thick's friend then had a feeling as if somebody were grabbing the hair up on his head, and looked back and said: "Stop! Here is the fellow who is chasing us." 753

It was a great big owl dragging its wings. From that time on he got worse, and died soon after in 1889. Thick thought that the scare got that night brought on the illness. The doctors who treated the boy claimed he had been "doped" [bewitched] by someone. [754]

Grave or fatal illness could also be brought on by human beings, usually those with doctor power, through sheer wishing or through other procedures, or even, it seems, by human without supernaturally acquired power through concentrated wishing, as will be explained in detail later. 754

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Weasel was given power to cure only a limited number of cases; 756
Goes Back, a medicine woman, was granted power to cure only one case and she used it to cure Coming Daylight's husband, Little Man; Al Chandler's adoptive father, also called Little Man, got power [from a coyote] to cure seven persons at the point of death, but used it in only three cases. There were no limitations ordinarily, it appears, on power to cure minor ailments; a professional doctor, Cora Chandler stated, "could do other little doctoring as often as called."

Doctors, as The Boy expressed it, "had to live restricted lives, 756
to avoid doing certain things or eating certain foods, somewhat 784
like keepers of sacred Pipes." According to Al Chandler, one was forbidden to eat buffalo heart under penalty of death, and "certain medicine men people tell about were vulnerable only in one certain spot,"—in one case the man's big toe, in another, a spot on his shoulder. This latter doctor always wore a little circle of willow wrapped with weasel skin over this spot; he was wounded badly but, until that spot on his shoulder was hit, was not killed. The donor of power might warn the recipient never to let anyone do some specific thing to him. Thus Little Man, Al Chandler's adoptive father, when he got power was warned by the supernatural donor: "Never let anyone pull your hair. Here however, is the remedy. If there is anyone present when your hair is pulled tell him to make a smudge of sweet pine, then put it near your nose, and if you can sniff it you will come through safe, otherwise you are a goner." Actually Little Man's death, as Al Chandler told it in detail, occurred shortly after a quarrel with his wife in the course of which she pulled his hair. Little Man quit fighting and sat quiet. Two or three days later he was down sick. White and Indian doctors were called in but none could do anything for him. Al Chandler went to stay with him but he did not want Al there. He wanted to die and did not want Al to talk him out of it. In a little while he was dead.

Doctors, or at least some of them, got power not only to cure 754●
but also to cause sickness and to kill, poison or otherwise harm people. Some other doctors were believed to have used such lethal power, although such use was definitely looked upon as a crime

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

754 to be avenged and also entailed supernatural punishment. As The Boy put it, if a medicine man were not "a strong man, an ideal man, he might resort to this killing power he had. But he would pay dearly for doing so, because for everyone he killed in this way he would pay by the death of one of his children or relatives, and finally by his own life." According to Singer, "if a person knew who had 'shot' him, he would want to get even with him. If someone put medicine on another, he [the killer] would have to pay for this deed by losing one of his relatives, such as a child or grandchild, through death. It was not good to do that [kill by medicine] because he [the killer] always had so to pay."

Good Singer, when on one occasion she cured Singer's husband, named the person who had caused his illness. Singer herself was once cured of an illness by White Weasel. The latter told her that "it was not a spirit that had shot her but it was a living human being, but he did not mention the person's name." Coming Daylight's husband, Little Man, at one time suffered severely, until cured by a medicine woman, Goes Back, from pain near the heart and from hemorrhages. "He and everybody knew that a certain bad man had caused the illness by putting medicine on him. Goes Back told him that this man had done so because he thought Little Man was going after his [this man's] wife or going with her."

Mary Ereaux recalled and reported one such case involving a cousin of hers whom a medicine man wanted to marry. The girl's great-grandmother would not let the girl go. The girl died, "poisoned," it was believed, by the medicine man, and he himself died soon after.

There was a good deal of fear among the people of such evil supernatural power but so far as we could gather, not the pervading widespread ever-present dread and suspicion of witchcraft that are found, say, among some of the Indian peoples of the southwest. Apparently most doctors who had power to harm seldom or never used it. Various instances of such use were told us, but they all were attributed to only two or three of the many doctors known to our informants. And one of these two or three was specifically described as "a goodhearted man who helped the poor and all that even though he would harm you on the sly but always in some way the truth would leak out."

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

A doctor with power to harm might use it if he were "jealous of someone better at medicine than himself," or if he "didn't like someone," or if "a woman refused to live with him." 754

We got very little information, and this from only two informants, The Boy and Thomas Main, on how and from whom power to do evil was obtained. According to Thomas Main "bad medicine could be acquired sleeping up on the hills, and was used to do evil." The Boy gave a few more details. "Most of the time power to do evil was gotten by fasting and sleeping on the hills and mountains. It was gotten from some animal or other creature. The animal would teach the recipient how to exercise the power and would also tell him: 'If anyone makes you mad and does not respect you, do so and so and harm him.' It was hard to tell who had evil power, until they exercised it." In at least some cases, then, power to harm was given the recipient of other power, as in the case of keepers and co-keepers of sacred Pipes (cf. pp. 52, 60-61), to enforce respect for the recipient. Whether power to harm was always given for this purpose incidentally to the giving of other power, we were not sure. If we assume that this was not the case, and if sheer power to bewitch could be gotten independently, a logical conflict with the fundamental Gros Ventre conception of supernatural power emerges. For all power was conceived as coming ultimately from the benevolent Supreme Being (cf. supra, pp. 5, 7). We do not, however, press the point. While the Gros Ventre magico-religious belief system was a remarkably consistent one, especially as described by The Boy, one hundred per cent consistency is another matter. After all, gifts of power, even though ultimately from the Supreme Being, were gifts with a string, namely, shortened life to the recipients. The Supreme Being preferred prayer to power-quest (supra, pp. 264-266). The problem is here presented and discussed; it has not been solved by us.

Most doctors had to have some mastery of legerdemain. In the everyday exercise of their curing powers an integral feature, for example, was extracting from the patient's body the object that was causing the disease. Some doctors, in addition, quite independently of their medical practice, had special abilities of clair- 789

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

In the preceding pages we have been concerned with the ritual 754 ● procedures used in the exercise of curing power, of "good" doctoring power. We now turn to procedures used for working "bad" power, for doing harm to people putting spells on them, "shooting" them, in a word, for practicing witchcraft. Our information on such procedures is much less detailed than we would desire, for those who resorted to the use of such "bad" power did so secretly as a rule and were very reticent about their procedures. Furthermore, so far as we could judge, "bad" power was less frequently used than "good" power.

Bad medicine could be put on the victim by sheer wishing. Singer referred to one very powerful medicine man as "being able to just wish somebody dead." The victim would be "poisoned" at a distance by the medicine man. As Al Chandler explained the matter:

"There were some bad medicine men who had medicine that could poison you without their touching you or associating with you, no matter how far away they might be from you, even two miles. They wanted to do something to you or to somebody you loved. Then you or your loved one got sick all of a sudden. That was considered a crime. This medicine man may have had it in for you for some reason, jealousy or something like that, and he would poison you. He would just sit in his lodge and perform there and say whom he was doing this to, and this person would get sick or something would happen to him. . . . Some medicine man could poison you without touching you."

The bad medicine man would commonly operate by "shooting" the victim, that is, by projecting some object into the victim's body. Singer was once so "shot" with a finger nail, Coming Daylight's husband, Little Man, with a bit of rag (supra, p. 341). "One man's medicine," according to Thomas Main, "was a sand burr. He could wish it to go a long way off and lodge in a man's throat, and the man would die after a while."

Failures and Skepticism

Failures by doctors to cure were apparently quite common. We 756 were told incidentally of a number of cases. We obtained no in-

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

828 through the winter what to put in the letter (quoted infra, pp. 380-381) sent in the spring of 1943 to Cooper that would do something big toward restoring the latter to health. "'I think,'" remarked Thomas Main, "is commonly used by the Gros Ventres in speaking. When I am interpreting, a man will often say to me: 'Tell them this is what I *think* of him (or it).' There is an emphasis on thinking and on the power of thought."

We come now to the more specific data on good and bad wishing and thinking.

754 828 In 1939 while we were chatting about approbrious and insulting terms, such as tsë:k (you ghost), in common use, The Boy distinguished these from malevolent thinking or wishing or cursing proper. "As a curse [proper] a person might say to another: 'You are not going to live long.' If a thing were serious enough, almost anyone might worry another with such cursing." On another occasion, the same summer, while speaking of the kinds of advice given children by their father, The Boy quoted his father, Lame Bull, as having said: "If a man were offended by his son and put a curse on his son, the curse would remain on the child."

828 Between our 1939 and 1940 visits to the Gros Ventres, The Boy had suffered a severe stroke (facial paralysis). At our first talk [123] with him in 1940, Cooper expressed to him the very sincere wish that he would get well and live long. The Boy was visibly affected by this expression and spoke at some length as follows:

[626] "If a man does something of which the people disapprove very much, their *thought* is against him. They *think* badly of him. Against this mass thinking his own thinking cannot stand. Two people may have a battle of thinking. The outcome will depend on how each is developed in thinking, on their respective powers of thought. If all the people think badly of a man he becomes a sort of outcast.

"If someone has had some terrible misfortune and is beyond human aid and this becomes known, people will say: 'That is his sentence from above. Someone above thought that out. That is why he is in such desperate straits.' This would be something supernatural, something beyond the human.

"When you said you wished and thought I would live many years

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

I was glad. Now your wish and thought are added to my own. 828
The human being can think and reason because somebody supernatural has endowed him with the right [ability] to think. The wishing itself helps."

A few minutes later, after he had told a recent dream he had had, he voluntarily returned to the wish topic. "When a little while ago you wished that I would get well and live long, I believe that at that moment in which you wished this the Supreme Being was listening to you and saw your thought and knew all about it. In my opinion besides your thinking that way as just a human being, your so thinking calls for some action from above.

"Take another example. Suppose I did something good to an old man, and the old man valued and appreciated it. I would not know he was pleased until he said: 'You have made my heart glad. I appreciate what you have done for me. Stand in front of me. I am going to ask in your behalf from the power above that allowed me to live this long. I am asking with my words, my prayer, my thought, my wish, for all I am worth. And all this wish has to be transferred to you."

In 1945 Thomas Main after a long and serious discussion with 626
The Boy and Thick on this matter of mass thinking and public 754
opinion, summarized the situation as follows: 828

"The Indian people, at least the Gros Ventres, thought the psychological effect of public opinion is so great and intense on the one on whom it was trained that it shortened his life . . and made him a nobody. If he had a long, long life it was certainly a miserable one. It was definitely known by the Gros Ventres that they actually thought people to death. Even today public opinion is difficult to cope with. The Boy says that if public opinion held anyone in high esteem, this would have the opposite effect and would help the person to climb the heights he wanted to attain. One who was not held in high esteem by public opinion never got anywhere in any endeavor." We may comment in passing that while there is question here of the ordinary operation of public opinion, mass thinking also seems to enter in: "They actually thought people to death."

In the following account by Charles Buckman the wish appears

828 pretty clearly to be operative on its own although along with the
754 "natural" morale-building effect of cheering words.
626

"There is an old Gros Ventre saying that if a man is ailing and some relative or friend of his comes in and says pleasant things to him or tells him he is going to get well, such a talk helps him. When someone gives the sick person a good talk and sincerely wishes he will get well, then the patient will do his best and get well. If you say unpleasant things to a sick man you will help to kill him. Don't hurt a sick man's feelings. The wish in the case is looked upon as something like a prayer. It has to be really meant. When a person talks that way to you when you are sick, [782] the Supreme Being will look down upon you and help you to get well. If a person is visiting a sick Indian, he will say good things to you, even though he knows you are going to die. A white doctor might say: 'There is not much hope.'

"When 32 years ago I was thought to be dying of appendicitis and had been given up by the doctors, old fellows came in and talked hopefully to me and put new life in me.

"In 1918, when I was ill with the flu, I overheard the doctor say: 'It is only a question of a half-hour. You better get a coffin for him.' Then another fellow, an Indian, came in and said to me: 'Well, what did the doctor tell you?' I said: 'Nothing.' He then said: 'He told that fellow over there that you are going to die. But he is not the governor of death. You are not going to die. You are going to live. You want to live for these children of yours. You are going to get well, and for the sake of these children. And think of the One Above [Supreme Being]. He's going to keep you. That's all I want to say to you. I wish you will be up in a few days.' And he walked out. It took me two years to recover fully."

In one of the songs, No. 67, sung in the Law Enforcers' Dance, the words, "The lead bull, comes in this direction," were explained [782] to us by The Boy as being a "half prayer." The singer was "wishing as hard as he could, so there would be plenty of game, especially buffalo, so the people would not have to go far to hunt."

525 The Gros Ventre, The Boy stated in 1939, "did not pray for
828 success in gambling," but just before a wheel game started, the player would take the wheel in his hand and hold one of the

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787 incessantly. After a time a spirit might appear to him. Perhaps this
would be on the first or second night, perhaps later. Sometimes it was in
776 full daylight, and the man really saw the spirit like a true person; but more
usually he saw him in his sleep. It might be a person that appeared, that
is to say, an untrue person (spirit), or an animal, or the spirit of a rock or
of the brush. Some men went to islands and rivers instead of to mountain-
peaks. These might receive the otter, or the beaver, or the muskrat, or
the water-monster (bax'aa") as their guardian spirit. Sometimes when a
man was crying on a mountain-top in a thunderstorm, the thunder (bax'aa")
appeared to him. The lightning shot straight towards him, as if to hit him,
and the bird was so near above his head that the man sometimes became
afraid and ran away. If he staid, the thunder-bird became his spirit, and
gave him medicine that was unusually powerful. Generally, it seems, the
man cried incessantly, until he was exhausted and fell asleep. Then the
spirit appeared to him, saying, "I pity you. What do you want?" The
man said that he wished to be wealthy, or successful in war or love, or to
786 become a medicine-man. If he was to be a doctor, the spirit showed him
776 roots and plants, telling him to note their appearance, and informing him
of the diseases for which they were a cure. Those plants that he had seen
787 in his dream or vision, the new doctor looked for until he found them. His
spirit told him, "In so many years (naming the number) you will begin to
doctor." After that time had elapsed, he began doctoring. The spirit or
animal told him that the place where he was was its own home. From this
time on, the man never killed the animal that had appeared to him (except,
apparently, for the purpose of obtaining parts of it as a fetish or amulet);
nor did he eat of it under any circumstances. He used a part of the animal,
especially the claws or the fur, in his doctoring. If the spirit of a rock had
appeared to him, he used a stone.

755 Medicine-men cured the sick by sucking the body and by brushing it.
As is customary among Indians, they were believed to suck through the
skin without biting, cutting, or puncturing it. They might suck blood,
pebbles, cloth, human finger-nails, bunches of hair, and many other things.
If they sucked out old pus, it was evidence that the disease was of long
standing. If they brushed or rubbed the patient, they used owl-feathers,
skunk-skin, prairie-dog fur, or similar parts of animals. Some used bells
as rattles, some whistles, and some drums; and all sang, each doctor having
his own songs. After sucking the patient, the doctor chewed up medicine,
which he then applied to the patient's body. He often also gave him medi-
cine boiled in water to drink. The powers of doctors varied. Different men
were able to cure different diseases. It is said, however, that none could do
much for affections of the ear.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Doctors were paid a horse or more for their services. Sometimes several, in turn, doctored a patient, each one blaming those that had failed before. Often they laid the sickness to spirits, or to other doctors. This last occurred especially if in their sucking they extracted human finger-nails or similar objects. In such a case the doctor got his patient to sleep. The patient might then in his dream see the person that had made him sick, and on awaking would denounce him. If the sick man died, his relatives might kill the doctor whom he had named as the cause of his sickness. 756

There were not so many women doctors as men. They appear not to have gone out to the mountains with the intention of acquiring supernatural power, but to have received guardian spirits when they were away from the camp, mourning.

The jugular and femoral arteries and the aorta were called ts'niinotanoudj[1] ("having no ears"), because, when severed, they did not heed any remedies.

In order to save the life of a sick relative, the joint of the little finger was sometimes cut off in sacrifice to the sun.

There were some medicine-men who, having had their fingers tied, then had their knees fastened together and their hands secured behind their back. After this they were wrapped in a robe and the robe was wound about with a rope. Then such a medicine-man called his spirit. When it appeared, he was loosened instantaneously, and the robe and the rope were thrown at the man that tied him.

Fig. 30 (50-1937) Doctor's Charm. Length, 22 cm.

[778] 826 755 304 782 756

A charm used by a doctor is shown in Fig. 30. It consists of a deer-tail with beaded base, and of two black feathers and a bunch of down feathers. All parts of the object are reddened. This piece was used to brush patients. At other times during the doctoring it was worn on the medicine-man's clothing.[2] 756 778

A man unsuccessful in winning a woman's love sometimes fasted on a 787 832

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

171 whitish fur, and dyed horsehair tufts at the ends. At the base of each arm
293 are red, yellow, and violet feathers. These are either cut off across the end,
778 or have the uppermost part of the quill with its attached vanes removed.

CUSTOMS CONNECTED WITH RELIGION.

171 Sacred pipes were important in the religion of the Gros Ventre. The
276 beliefs and practices connected with these differ somewhat from those of
778 the Arapaho. The Arapaho recognize only one sacred pipe, which is pre-eminent over all others. Its worship is entirely tribal, though it is in the keeping of an individual. It occupies much the place in tribal life that the sacred pole did among the Omaha. While there are other sacred objects, such as the wheels and bundles, none of them equal the pipe in the regard in which they are held. Among the Gros Ventre there is an analogue of the Arapaho pipe, but also several others. This multiplicity distinctly differentiates the character of the Gros Ventre pipes from that of the Arapaho. The Gros Ventre pipes are not all primarily connected with the origin of the world; they are in part obtained from other tribes. They thus resemble the inter-tribal peace-pipes of the eastern and northern Plains.

[888] The sacred pipes were kept by old men. Their keepers could retain them as long as they wanted. They transferred their pipe to another keeper or owner whenever they wished, especially if some one prayed on their behalf. At present the Gros Ventre have three pipes. It is said that formerly they had more, some of which have been buried with their last owners. The most sacred of these pipes is called "flat-pipe" (çäčitsa"). This is described as being made of catlinite, with the bowl in the shape of a person (initä"). The Arapaho sacred pipe is also called "flat-pipe," and also is not flat; but it differs from the Gros Ventre pipe in being cylindrical and tubular. About the centre of the stem of this Gros Ventre flat-pipe is tied a string. A person in the tent where the pipe is kept should not tell myths. If through forgetfulness he begins to do so, it is necessary for him to continue all night.

276 A sick man sometimes pledged to smoke one of the sacred pipes for his
● 755 recovery. Then he provided food, and distinguished warriors were invited.
778 Each of these had to recount four coups before the pipe could be lighted. A green cherry-branch was then taken, greased, and put into the fire to light the pipe with. If it burnt well, the man would recover; if it burnt poorly, they were afraid that he would not become well, or that something would happen. Then the pipe was smoked in the greatest silence. Cloth or calico was "given" to it, the wrapping last given being the one on the out-

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

276 755 778

side of the bundle, it is said. Except at such ceremonies as this, only the keeper could touch the pipe.

Pipes were sometimes given to other tribes, and were sometimes received from them. Sometimes they were carried by war-parties. One of the three pipes still in existence is said to have been given by the Cheyenne to the Crow, and by the latter to the Gros Ventre, when peace was made between the two tribes. The stem is ornamented with feathers, weasel-skins, and at the end with a bunch of eagle-feathers. The sacred pipes were kept wrapped in many pieces of skin or cloth, and hung up in the tent. In good weather they were hung on a stand of three or four sticks, behind the tent. The keepers of the sacred pipes observed stringent rules. They could not eat of the head or back of any animal, nor of any part of the white-tailed deer, nor any eggs. They were not allowed to bathe, or to paint (except red), or to take the ashes out of the tent. They had to smoke in certain ways. They did not eat dogs, or allow them in the tent; nor did they let dogs touch them, or walk over their legs, or walk before them, while they were smoking. The keepers of the sacred pipes wore their hair uncut and uncombed. They could not cut it until they had given the pipe to another keeper. The hair was worn tied in a bunch just above the forehead. Fig. 42 shows such a bunch of matted hair, said to have been that of the grandfather of the father of the man who was the oldest in the tribe in 1901. This former keeper of the pipe became so old that he lost most of his hair, and the bunch shown was cut off by him before it should drop off. To this hair the later owner of the pipe, his present great-grandson, tied the first of his own teeth to fall out from old age: they are contained in a small cloth sack.

276 778 [648] [728]

Fig. 42 (50 1902). Matted Hair. Length, 41 cm.

276 778 784 [825] [302]

863 might even 'fuss' a little with him, saying something like: 'Look at you! I thought I told you to urinate. I'm trying to make you do it at the right time, and you want to hold back!' But we were not harsh with infants because we knew they have to learn. Anyway, if you misjudged the time, all you had to do was to throw out the powdered chips and put in fresh ones. The old way was much better. These diaper-babies around here now are much more trouble."

[755] If a child developed enuresis, a tiny bit of the tail of a fox or of a beaver tied to his belt, or a piece of badger skin for him to sit on, was thought to guarantee a cure.

854 To help the child who had trouble teething, it was considered wise to kill a mouse, skin it, take the back thigh and, after cooking [825 it well, rub on the gums. It is said by Coming Daylight that 757] the Crow used fish for this purpose. Some children have such a difficult time that their gums are very sore and their tongues even swell. Coming Daylight's grandmother and others knew how to [757] remedy that condition. The doctor, using a sharp-pointed bone, would lance the gums here and there where the teeth were coming, after allowing the gums to bleed, they would rub some powdered [751] root on the gums. As a preventive, old folks said to catch tiny baby mice and, after roasting them on the coals, feed them to the child. Coming Daylight, for instance, did that for her children, and none of them had any trouble with teething.

856 They would let babies crawl when they showed the inclination to do so, but the old women were sure that they always watched their babies more closely than mothers do today. They used to encourage them to walk by holding them up and helping them. It has been Coming Daylight's experience that boys learn to walk more quickly than girls. It may be, however, that more attention was given to boys.

198 The only expression the old women, or the younger ones for 856 that matter, could think of that could be considered "baby talk" was that babies, when very small and just beginning to talk, say: "I" (prolonged and with strong glottal stop) if they do not like something or do not wish to take what is offered. This, together with *na'a* 'mother' and *ni'a* 'father,'*—which babies say properly

* These are vocative forms rather than descriptive forms.

776 He was the "master of life" as previously mentioned. Long life was the result of something more than conformity to "health rules," such as daily morning cold baths to harden the body.[9] "The Supreme Being allows people to live long. If he wanted, he cut off their lives." "When people die, it is the Supreme Being who cuts off their lives." "Very old people lived a long life because they were pitied by the Supreme Being." The Boy's father, Lame Bull, said that "a man lives, not his own life, but according to what is given him and wished by Ixtcibani:hohat. A man has what he has by the wish of the One Above."

776 888 The Gros Ventres understood by that that the aged had survived to old age not by accident, but by the permission and wish of the Supreme Being. It was common for young men to approach in tears a very old man or woman, offer a pipe, and request him or her to ask the Supreme Being to grant him long life, to make him a good warrior who would be immune to arrows or bullets when he was shot at.[10]

776 721 782 [755] In grave illness the Supreme Being would be appealed to to spare the sick person's life. It was a common belief that the Supreme Being would not permit a large attacking force of enemies to slaughter a smaller number at home in its own camp. When a group of young Gros Ventre recruits was leaving for World War II, the Supreme Being was prayed to in an old song that he would watch over them and let them come back home unharmed; although there were some casualties among Gros Ventre soldiers in World War II, not one of the above particular group was even wounded.

776 [171] The Supreme Being as the one who "owns everything" was the provider of food. He was not called "master of food," as was common among the northeastern Algonquians,[11] living closer than the Gros Ventres to a scarcity economy; food, it was felt, was "too little" a thing, and the title undignified. But all good things to eat, including "wild" food such as berries, fruits, roots and tubers, came from the Supreme Being and were given by him.

---

[9] Cf. Flannery, 1953, p. 144.
[10] Cf. Flannery, 1953, pp. 195-96.
[11] Cooper, 1934, p. 71.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Child, and made offering of tobacco and food to earth. Al Chandler explained: "The earth is put in because that is where your living is. You get everything from the earth, fruit, animals, everything to live on, and get everything you eat from there," although ultimately it is the Supreme Being who owns and gives everything. We got one passing casual reference to "mother earth" by Mary Ereaux, and another by Tom Main to earth as being a "spirit" and having a "special keeper," but obtained no later confirmation of or detailed information on these points. In general, earth seems to have played a quite subordinate role in Gros Ventre religious thought and ritual. 776 823

The sun was appreciably more prominent, ranking according to some informants next to the Supreme Being, and mentioned as "The One Traveling," or "Passing or Traveling Man" immediately after him in prayers. Another current seems to have assigned a much lower relative rank to the sun, and mentioned sun and moon together, as "Those-who-follow-each-other," and after the Supreme Being and the Four Holy Old Men. In any case the sun was in no sense identified with the Supreme Being, but was his property, work and servant, far below him in dignity, and had not anything like the religious predominance it had in such tribes as the neighboring Blackfoot. The sun did not enter at all into the so-called "Sun Dance" of the Gros Ventres, nor into the Feathered Pipe rite. Prayers and food were offered to the sun, and the sun was invited to sweat in the sweat lodge rite along with but subordinately to the Supreme Being. Individuals would offer a finger joint or bits of their flesh to the sun on such occasions as the grave illness of a relative. While the sun "sees everything, that's why the Supreme Being put it there," the Supreme Being, not the sun, was appealed to as witness in oaths; the widespread American Indian oath formula, "The sun sees me," was not used. 776 821 [755] [695]

The sun and moon were, according to myth, brothers from the same mother, but were never human beings proper, though they married, the one a frog woman and the other a human female. According to one story, the sun regularly appeared in battle as a man riding a white horse who scared and helped either the Gros [773] 776 821 539

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

793 Horse Capture, the brother of Thick and the Assiniboine woman, Coming Day, who was still living—who had married Horse Capture and in her latter days had come to realize her duties toward the Pipe,—were ritually inaugurated as Pipe keeper and Pipe woman by Lame Bull. Then Coming Day died, as did also in 1908 Lame Bull, and Horse Capture was left alone with the Pipe. He married again and The Boy's mother, who had earlier been Pipe woman, instructed Horse Capture's second wife in her ritual duties. Horse Capture was the last ritual keeper of the Pipe. When Horse Capture died, his widow took the Pipe over. Thick wanted to bury the Pipe with Horse Capture, but was dissuaded from doing so, and agreed to keep it. Later Horse Capture's widow, who lived successively with Thick's family, the Birdtail family, and The Boy's family, willed the Pipe to The Boy, to dispose of it as he saw fit. On her death, The Boy wanted to take it over but his wife as a Catholic objected. The Boy finally got [795] her consent on the ground that "we are both Catholics; I want to keep the Pipe as a keepsake, not to pray to as it used to be prayed to," but it was arranged that the Pipe would remain in the keeping of Thick (married to The Boy's sister) until The Boy and his wife were ready to take it.

[755] The last ritual opening of the Pipe bundle occurred in 1937 as a prayer for cure, when Joe Assiniboine's small son was affected with bad sores on his face. The rite was only partially and negligently carried out at the time. The final formal uncovering of the Pipe took place on February 6, 1946, after the return of [727] the Gros Ventre members of the armed forces from World War II. On this occasion the full rite, as far as recalled, was enacted, and the Pipe and Pipe bundle given a thorough cleaning and renovating. The bundle with the Pipe is now (1955) carefully kept at The Boy's ranch at Lodge Pole.

The elective system rather than the voluntary vow was the more common one. Under this system, where the actual keeper decided to give up and transfer the Flat Pipe, he would confidentially summon the surviving ex-keepers and ex-co-keepers (not the other wives) of both the Flat and Feathered Pipes to come secretly without a word to anybody, to meet at his lodge,

the door." Deer then in both hands held the sinew stretched taut horizontally over a smoldering chip and sang a song special to this rite, ending it with a recitative "Yo!" Then he lowered the sinew and repeated the song and "Yo," then lowered still more and repeated, concluding with "Yo, ho, ho, ho!" and finally put the sinew on the burning chip. As the sinew burned and buckled, the pup doubled up with cramps and died. 793 754

Another power, conferred for use by the keeper in case of disrespect committed against him, worked by "contagious" magic. The keeper watched the offender closely and made sure to locate his tracks, and then took out of the pipe bundle and put on his ritual moccasins the soles of which had been rubbed during the transfer rite with the poisonous wild parsley. Then, wearing the moccasins he stepped in the offender's tracks. As soon as he did so, the offender got a fit and then his legs and feet became weak and wobbly and nobody but the keeper could cure him. [789]

The co-keeper for the same punitive purpose in case of disrespect or molestation carried wild parsley mixed with peppermint leaves in the sack attached to her belt, but we obtained no information on the precise procedure she used.

Two punitive procedures were told The Boy by his father but without full details. These "vulgar" powers were not broadcast but were kept more or less secret within the inner circle of the Flat Pipe.

If a woman disrespected a keeper or caused him great embarrassment, he carried out a special rite over or toward her, obliged her to submit to sex intercourse with him, and afterwards carried out a concluding rite. If some young man went so far as to flirt with her, make advances and touch her, he would get ill, and she alone could doctor him back to health. If he went so far as to have sexual intercourse with her, he would probably die. [833 786]

As regards all the foregoing punitive and harming powers, it was strictly understood that the keeper and co-keeper were given them to use only to enforce respect, and that if used for other and evil purposes the users would pay dearly and would be punished in some way, through the death of their children or through other misfortune. 793

Besides these supernatural powers to command respect, other 755

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

793 powers, intended more for the positive advantage of the keeper or
755 his people, were customarily acquired during or after the transfer rite.

In the transfer rite the new keeper was taught how to doctor, especially in cases of fits, spasms and cramps. The peppermint
[278] beverage, now used by everybody for these maladies, was formerly a monopoly of the Flat Pipe keeper in his curing practice. Other doctoring powers were also conferred on him and he could use the hair rope from the Flat Pipe bundle as a potent medicine to cure with, but we could obtain no details on these points.

The keeper would pray to have good dreams and might sleep
[787] on the Pipe bed for the same purpose. His dreams, when told, were important news for his fellows, as through them the future could be foretold.

789 The keeper was also given power to summon, call or "snare"
793 from a distance, enemies or reluctant friends. The Boy gave two instances of the use of this power, both from the lips of his father, Lame Bull. When Lame Bull, on learning of his election as Flat Pipe keeper fled to the hills, the ex-keeper so summoned him, using the Flat Pipe itself in the rite. The nine Flat Pipe songs were sung and at the end of each, the ex-keeper holding the Pipe at arm's length in both hands with the stem pointed upward and outward, sang the Hair Rope song, then twisted the stem tip in a vertical near-circle first upward and outward and then inward and downward in a sort of beckoning motion as if drawing something toward him, then downward and finally lowered the bowl toward (or to?) the ground.

On a later occasion during Lame Bull's keepership, on a war
[726] expedition against the Piegan he learned in a dream where they were located and was told that five of them would be killed. The night before the attack on the Piegan, using a common pipe and the above calling rite, thrice performed, with the pipe stem pointed toward the distant Piegan camp, invisible at the time to the Gros Ventre party, and singing the Hair Rope song, he "called" five of the Piegan, who, separated from the main Piegan body, were killed by the Gros Ventres.

793 The keeper and co-keeper also were given power to use in hunt-
224 ing buffalo, but we were able to obtain no details on the rite. The

793 keeper (and probably the co-keeper too) could not cut his hair, but had to wear it tangled and disheveled.

785 The keeper and co-keeper were not permitted to bathe and
784 swim in the creeks,—this in contrast to the Gros Ventre custom of daily early morning bathing and swimming by both sexes the
[515] year round when not prevented by ice, as a cleansing, body-hardening and recreative practice. In fact, the two were not allowed to wash even their hands and face with water, but, according to The Boy, had to use instead fat, grease or oil, and to wipe them with the same muskrat skin they used in face painting.

[904] The keeper could not draw blood on his own person by cutting, as was done by others in the sweat lodge rite, in mourning, and on other occasions.

793 The keeper and co-keeper were not supposed to cry or to cut
784 their hair in case of the death of a relative, nor to go where any one lay dead, nor to have anything at all to do with a corpse. In particular they were not allowed to give clothes, at least their own, to put on a dead person. It was a breach of this last prohibition, in fact, that resulted in Lame Bull's lameness, and his subsequent sobriquet, Lame Bull, his proper name being Under Bull.[4]

The keeper and co-keeper could not gamble or be gambled with. If the keeper nevertheless did so and won, he won not only the wager, but also the life of his opponent. The latter would meet with some fatality unless the keeper agreed to avert the evil by
[755] performing the proper rite over him. The keeper would direct the man to build a sweat-lodge and would enter it with him. The man would fumigate himself and inhale the smudge. The keeper would rub the man all over from head to feet with sage.

The keeper was not allowed just to throw off his saddle or blankets onto the ground but had to take good care of them.

According to Coming Daylight, a keeper during his term of office "could not sing the songs he was supposed to sing," but we secured no clarification of this statement. The reference may be to songs previously gotten in quests for supernatural power.

In addition to the foregoing more or less restrictive or "ascetic" observances that served to set the keeper and co-keeper apart from

[4] Cf. Flannery, 1953, p. 201.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

825 migrating flock. When you hear the cries of the migrating geese, if you listen closely you can hear also the calls of the little birds. The big birds are very willing to carry the little ones, as the former get "holy things" and "are taught holy [powerful] ways" by the latter in payment for the ride, for the grebe is known to be a "big shot" who has extraordinary powers. The grebe in the Flat Pipe bundle is one of these little birds that are carried by the large ones on the fall and spring migration flight. In the 778 bundle too are some feathers of the big birds. "Probably because they treat the grebe to a free ride, they bought their way into the bundle and so have a place of honor."

In the bundle, besides the turtle shell and grebe skin, are the dried pelts (not stuffed) of many other kinds of birds,—some of which The Boy cannot identify. These represent the birds who sang with joy at the first making of dry land after the flood. These bird pelts lie loose, not enclosed in a bag. In the olden times, Lame Bull told The Boy, the tobacco raised by the Pipe keeper was stored in these pelts for safe-keeping.

When the bundle is being wrapped, the Pipe enclosed and tied in its own case, is laid on these bird pelts as on a bed, with the turtle shell to the left of the Pipe "as you face the stem," and the grebe skin to the right. Turtle shell, grebe skin and bird pelts are all placed with the head toward the stem end of the Pipe, and are wrapped together with the Pipe in a special covering within the larger Pipe bundle proper.

The large bundle also contains a good-sized bag, rectangular and closed on three sides, in which are kept all or most of them in their own particular small cases or coverings, the following ritual articles: a muskrat skin representing the muskrat that dived unsuccessfully for earth at the flood, and used in the face-painting rite; paint and a painting stamp; supplies of peppermint and tobacco; rattles; the ritual moccasins of the keeper, co-keeper and Pipe child; a thunderstone;[1] the "official" shell necklace of the

[1] In the bundle there was a thunderstone encased in its own small bundle or sack. If, for instance, a person were suffering from stomach-ache, the co-keeper would reach into the Pipe bundle, without unwrapping it, take out the thunderstone, smudge it, make motions with or bite it, spit on the [755]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

keeper and co-keeper; a rope made of hair from the head and legs of buffalo, either the actual snare with which He-Who-Starved-To-Death captured the evil Red Bird or a substitute therefor. 778

This rectangular bag with its contents has its own prescribed place in the whole Pipe bundle, namely, to the right of the case containing the Pipe, turtle, grebe and bird skins as you look from the stem and toward the bowl end.

Finally, in the large Pipe bundle, are or were two sticks of about the length of the bundle, covered with two pieces of cloth. These are about the last outermost things set in place when the whole bundle is wrapped. The ends of the cloths in which the sticks are tied project out of the bundle as a decoration. They could be extracted from the bundle and taken along on war expeditions as a substitute for it and the Pipe, and used in a simplified ritual in place of the Pipe. The Pipe bundle itself was not taken on a war raid, as the co-keeper was the only one who was allowed to carry it, as it was rather heavy and bulky, and as there was danger it might be captured by the enemy. [726]

All the articles that have been listed are finally enclosed in the outermost cover of the whole Pipe bundle. This cover is nearly round when laid flat made of a whole elk skin with the legs cut off. The bundle is more or less cylindrical, cigar or blimp-shaped, about 1½ feet in diameter at the center and about 3 feet long. The bundle is secured with three ties of thong, one in the middle and one at either end, and has a thong handle on it, like the handle of a traveling bag. (See Plate 2A.)

Over the whole bundle was laid a robe of albino or "beaver" buffalo skin. When the bundle was to be untied this robe was spread out and the bundle was laid on it. The albino-buffalo tail, used by the keeper in the sweat-lodge rite, was kept outside, not inside, the bundle, so it could be easily gotten.

In modern times, from about 1870 to 1932, a human scalp was

---

person's stomach, and so forth, with a very simple ritual. A retiring keeper had the right to select something out of the Pipe bondle and keep it. Lame Bull, on retiring, selected a thunderstone of animal-like shape. Cf. Kroeber, 1908, pp. 275-76. [755]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

in dried pounded meat, I was not allowed to eat the meat. If a coyote or wolf were killed, I was not supposed to touch it. These were the only two prohibitions I was under. 793 784

"If anybody vowed to be painted by the keeper, I would be present at the rite next to my mother and sit there through the ceremony. 793

"Whenever while I was Pipe child I got sick my father would put pine needles on me, and then he would take down the bundle and put it on my parents' bed, and would say to me: 'Put your arms around your brother [the Pipe] and pray to your brother so you may get well.' The Pipe keeper and his wife claim the Feathered Pipe as their son and tell their children that the Pipe is their brother. When I put my arms around the Pipe I was told to say to the Pipe: 'My dear brother, have pity on me, that I may get well of my illness.' [755]

"Of course the Pipe was not human but because I was a baby when my father got it I grew up with it and thought just as much of it as of my own blood relatives. When my father transferred the Pipe to Sitting High I was outside playing. When I was coming home I saw the bundle at Sitting High's door, and when I saw it I started to cry, and when I saw my father I said to him: 'Why did you give my Pipe away?' It was just like a person leaving. I was lonesome for it, and felt just as if I had lost a relative or friend. And all through my life I have felt the same toward it. All through my life I have made it a point to be present at any Feathered Pipe ceremony. And whenever I went to any ceremony, I would bring something for it. Since I joined the Catholic Church I stopped doing this, but even now I feel: 'It's all alone. I pity it.' [795]

"When while I was Pipe child I had been out playing and in the evening would come home and see the Pipe bundle over the door, I would stand and look at it a long time and would say: 'Feathered Pipe, I am going into our lodge now.' Once when I was sitting on the bed in the lodge I got to thinking, and all the folks were there, and I said: 'Feathered Pipe, my dear brother, look down on me and watch over me.' I was not told to say this, and I do not know what made me say this prayer to the Feathered Pipe. [782]

"My father used to tell me: 'This Pipe was given by the Su-

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

According to Al Chandler, if some one were ill a near relative would vow to be painted and would go to the keeper. The sweat-lodge rite was first gone through. After this, in the keeper's lodge, the keeper would take the paint from the Pipe bundle, make a smudge as usual, sing the songs, dip his finger in the paint, and hold it up while addressing the Supreme Being and add: "This man vowed to you that he wanted to be painted with your paint so that his child might live," or similar words. Then he repeated the same thing to the Pipe. Then he painted first the vower, and afterwards he painted the men and male children present and the co-keeper, the women and female children,—the males with a curved band on the forehead near the hair line, the females with dots, one on the forehead and one on each cheek. This painting could take place any time in the year. 782 302

According to Garter Snake, in case of dangerous or critical illness, the vower would promise to cook up lots of food and have the keeper open up the Pipe bundle and paint the vower. If the vower were a man he was painted with the sacred red paint by the keeper; if a woman, by the co-keeper. The Pipe child would sit with the co-keeper during the rite. All the men, women and children who could attend would come to the keeper's lodge and be painted. Any ex-keepers and ex-co-keepers present would not be painted by the keeper and co-keeper as they would paint themselves. 782 755

According to Charles Buckman, it was customary to unwrap the Pipe bundle at this vowed painting rite.

Apart from this vowed rite, ritual face painting was also, as previously noted, a common feature of the Feathered Pipe dancing ceremony. In addition, according to Jim Shortman, if the Feathered Pipe keeper were told in a dream by the owl that sickness was coming to the camp, he would call all the children and infants together with the grown-ups to his lodge and would paint every individual. 302 751 782

Offerings to cover the Feathered Pipe could be made by anyone, at any time of the year, winter included, more frequently with, but often without, previous vow. They were commonly made for cure in cases of illness. The original first owner of the Pipe had told the people: "If you are sick, you can make a vow to cover the Pipe, and thus get well." But covering occurred also on other 782

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

789 song had also to be sung, apparently to the accompaniment of the drum.

755 Putting sweet pine needles on the sick person's head, blowing wild parsley on him, and smudging him as doctoring practices have been previously described. According to Singer, if some one were so sick that his life was despaired of, the keeper would take the Feathered Pipe [the bundle, probably] and lay it on him and pray over him, and the sick person would recover, and, she added, "it cured a lot of them." Doctoring power was regularly acquired by reason of acquiring the keepership.

793 The keeper and co-keeper painted their own faces every morning after breakfast, like the men, in two bands, but broader ones
302 three or four fingers wide, one on the forehead near the hair line and the other from one jaw across the chin to the other jaw.

778 The Pipe bundle was smudged by the keeper every morning and evening with sweet pine needles. During Curly Head's keepership Cora Chandler and her children were kept busy collecting dried cow dung for the daily smudging ceremony. The keeper made it a practice to "talk" or pray often to the Pipe in his lodge. According to The Boy, the keeper was fearful lest otherwise he might make ritual mistakes, at which the Pipe would be angry. According to Al Chandler, the Pipe being jealous, the keeper "had to talk to it to let it know it was not forgotten or put away; he treated it just like a person."

788 Customary observances on the occasions of feasts or ordinary meals to guests in the keeper's lodge have been previously
778 described.

When the keeper and the people were camped for any length of time in a given place, the Feathered Pipe bundle was ordinarily taken in the morning from its place of honor opposite the entrance inside the keeper's lodge, hung up outside over the entrance, and brought back inside at eventide.

[361 When the camp was to be moved, the Feathered Pipe keeper, like the Flat Pipe keeper, had, it seems, a consultative voice in
624] the decision and perhaps even veto power at times, although ordinarily the final decision was made by the head men. The decision
778 once made, early in the morning when camp was to be broken,
484 the Feathered Pipe bundle was hung out on its tripod back of the

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

apart from emergency conditions, ritual variations from the above-described pattern occurred, perhaps in accord with varying ritual instructions received by different individuals from their respective ghost helpers. 769 787

Before leaving the ghost helper complex and taking up the power complex, we may mention here one case, given us by Al Chandler, the only one of its kind we recorded, which shares certain elements peculiar to each. Al Chandler's adoptive father, Little Man, was keeping a rib bone of his deceased uncle, who had been "a kind of medicine man." His uncle's spirit came and asked Little Man: "Why do you do this? What are you going to do with me?" "This is just for myself," Little Man replied. "I don't want to be that kind who have spirits. If I need you I am going to call on you and I want you to help me. I am not going to make you a popular servant (not going to use the rib in general practice). But if I need you, you can come and help me." 755 769 787

Little Man, Al told us, made use of that rib one time when he cured his brother-in-law, old Turn Toes, of facial paralysis (caused by ghosts: cf. supra, p. 23). Brothers-in-law like to tease each other. So when Turn Toes came to Little Man to be treated, the latter took the rib, rubbed it four times, and in fun twisted Turn Toes' mouth way around on the other side. At this, Little Man's wife got angry and said: "You shouldn't do that to him." Little Man said: "I just want to make sure that the next time his mouth won't go crooked on this other side." So then Little Man put his brother-in-law's mouth straight and shoved his eyes up in place. And Al added: "You can see that old man [Turn Toes] today [1940] and he is all right." [Turn Toes has since died, in 1942 or 1943]. 801

Whether in the above case curing power was in the rib itself or whether the ghost of Little Man's uncle came and cured on occasions of use of the rib, is not clear. If the latter, as implied in Little Man's words to his uncle, at the beginning, we have a curing differing materially from the one to be described in the following on supernatural power, and much more akin to the Woodland Algonquian concept of the guardian spirit proper,—the guardian spirit who comes on call to cure and otherwise to help the possessor, 769 787

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

was just a shell. It must have been some kind of animal with a thin shell." 753

The concept of soul-loss as resulting from or accompanying sickness in certain cases was present. "It was held by the old people," The Boy said, "that a person's 'soul' was not inside his body or any organ thereof, but was near or around him. As a sick person got worse, his 'soul' kept getting farther and farther away. If it got too far away, he died. When a person was very sick, people would say: 'His soul is leaving (going away from) him farther and farther."[1] In brief, soul wandering or "soul-loss" was a preliminary to death rather than a cause of disease. We obtained no evidence that the concept of soul-stealing entered at all into Gros Ventre pathology. 753 774

Treatment of Illness

From the causes of disease we now pass to the treatment thereof. While some ailments and cases of illness were thought to be due to natural causes, and others to supernatural causes, the line of demarcation cannot always be sharply drawn. Likewise as regards the prevention and treatment, in some instances they were clearly looked upon by the Gros Ventres as of the purely natural or "rational" order, in others equally clearly of the supernatural order, in some few seemingly of both orders combined, in a few others of uncertain order. While the Gros Ventres quite explicitly distinguished in general theory and in certain specific cases between natural and supernatural prevention and treatment, in actual practice at times, and in many specific cases, they drew no sharp line between the two orders. In the following pages we shall take up first natural or "rational" prevention and treatment, secondly combined or doubtful types of treatment and lastly supernatural types. In general remedies and preventives fall into three more or less corresponding classes: "domestic" remedies known to and freely used by everybody; certain remedies more or less "rational," exclusively owned and used by particular non-profes- 755 757

[1] The soul was believed to "kind of leave" a person under stress of great fear. Cf. Flannery, 1953, 92.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

755
757 sional individuals; supernatural remedies used only by professional medicine men or women with power.

Natural Remedies

751
515 Both preventive and curative measures of the natural or rational order were numerous.

The most common preventive measure was the daily early morning plunge in the stream or roll in the snow by men, a practice carried out for hardening the body as well as for cleaning [731] it. In small epidemics scattering and isolation were regularly resorted to in order to check the spread of the disease. The use of skunk fluid as a curative was more a Cree than a Gros Ventre procedure, but there was a Gros Ventre belief that skunk fluid diluted with water and put into the eyes of a person was a preventive and cure of snow-blindness. A mother, on knowing herself [862] pregnant again, would cease nursing her infant lest it suffer from "bad stomach and diarrhea." Drinking the blood of a freshly butchered buffalo was looked upon as a preventive of tuberculosis.

757 Curative measures of the rational order were of many kinds. We recorded the following, but our list is far from exhaustive. All of them may best be classified as "domestic remedies," measures of common knowledge, resorted to by everybody who wished to use them, and not considered proprietary right of particular individuals.

757
278 Many herbal curatives came under this category.[8] The roots of "sweetheart briars," so called because the burrs stuck so tightly, were used for colds, and the deeper the root the stronger was the medicine.[9]

An infusion of peppermint is now used as a beverage by everybody for "fits, spasms and stomach disorders," although the medicinal use of peppermint was formerly the monopoly of Flat Pipe keepers. A very strong drink was made by boiling a certain root and just a little of it drunk as a cure for difficulty in urination.

---

[8] Cf. list in Kroeber, 1908, pp. 224-27. We made no attempt in the field to get a full list of such herbal and other curatives.

[171] [9] The Piegan, according to Coming Daylight and Singer, used these as "blood medicine."

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

757 Thomas Main's grandfather would, from time to time when not feeling well, drink a large quantity of fairly warm water, perhaps two or three quarts, before eating breakfast. He would then go outside, put his finger in his throat, and vomit. This means, instead of a physic, was resorted to as a laxative.

As soon as the first thunder of spring was heard, a person with warts would blow on them and they would come off. This was apparently looked upon as a "rational" treatment, though it was possibly of the magical order.

158 726 755 The following cure, related by Coming Daylight and Singer, was of the natural order, but came about without intentional treatment. A young unmarried man, inseparable friend of Dressed In White, Coming Daylight's husband, had become mentally deranged. He would tear off his clothes and when they would catch him and put clothes on him he would run till he ran into the water. He would run everywhere, and would climb up the sides of lodges to the top. This condition lasted not very long before his cure in battle. Some Gros Ventres, including Dressed In White, Coming Daylight and the young man, while camped at Black Butte (now Havre, Mont.), were attacked by some Assiniboine. With all the noise and shooting, the Gros Ventre horses stampeded. Dressed In White ran with his gun toward the stampeding horses, and, as he did so, saw one of the enemy fall in their midst, try to get up, and fall again. Dressed In White shot at him three times and then his gun would not go off and in his anger at it he smashed it on the ground. At this juncture, the young man came along, and Dressed In White said to him: "Hurry and grab that enemy. He is trying to get on a horse." The young man ran over, grabbed the enemy by the hair on either side of the head, threw him to the ground, and held him there. The Assiniboine had a knife but no gun and was trying to get up, buttocks first. Another Gros Ventre, Cuts The Rope, now ran over and shot the Assiniboine, and all then hit him, counting coup on him. From that time on, the young man was quite cured of his mental derangement, or at least showed no more symptoms of it, but he was shot to death not long after by another Gros Ventre. "By getting an enemy single-handed this young man had become a big chief and could have lots of lovers."[10]

[10] Women admired brave young men. See Flannery, 1953, pp. 190-91.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

himself and he would say: 'Hand me the pipe stem first,' or 'bowl first,' or 'sideways,' or 'lay it on the ground.' Some doctors did not require a pipe, but only tobacco, when they were asked to treat a case." 756

Lame Bull did not require a pipe, but he had to be called four times. Each time the petitioner would start from the patient's lodge, go to Lame Bull's lodge, open the flap of the door, and, without going inside, say to him: "I am calling you to doctor." This was a procedure peculiar to Lame Bull, who at the time was not a Pipe keeper.

The doctor commonly had a helper or helpers to assist at or in the doctoring,—his wife often, or certain men and women specified by the doctor. Not infrequently these latter were relatives of his.

The rite itself was "sort of private." Only the doctor, the appointed helpers, the patient and the patient's immediate family were allowed to be present. "People would not be allowed just to drop in" during the curing rite. Two guards were (or might be) stationed outside the lodge to keep people away. Intrusion by anyone during a curing rite might render the rite futile, and lead to grave consequences as illustrated in the following cases reported by The Boy. 755 756

"A young man was about to be doctored. Just as the rite started a man came to the lodge and said to the two guards outside: 'I have the right to go inside. I want to see this great doctor.' They let him enter. As he did so, blood rushed out of the doctor's mouth, and the doctor said: 'Carry me back to my lodge as quick as possible.' When he got there he said: 'Fill up a pipe quickly and give it to me.' He then took a few puffs, fumigated his hand and 'rubbed' himself with the smoke, and got all right. The intruder had purposely come in to spoil the doctor's medicine, for he suspected that the young man patient was in love with his wife and he wanted him to die. And the young man did die." 756

In another case while a doctor was treating a patient, a band chief who was drinking heavily at the time and who had recently killed a relative of the doctor came into the lodge without leave and asked the master of the lodge for whiskey. The doctor packed

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

756 up his medicines at once, went home, got his rifle, came back and shot the band chief dead on the spot.[18]

755 Sometimes the doctor, just before actually beginning treatment of his patient, would test out, or make a show of testing out, his power to know beforehand whether his treatment would be successful. One doctor, Sits Holy, for instance, just about to treat a wounded man in whose spine an arrowhead was lodged, said: "I'll test my power first to see if I can extract the arrowhead." The season was late fall. The doctor sang and made incense, and then a young bear stuck its paws out of the doctor's mouth and growled loud enough to be heard over the camp. Then the doctor "got" [made appear] ripe service-berries and choke-berries. Then he took a bear claw, dug in the ground right where he was sitting, and pulled out a fresh wild turnip. Then he said, "I'll be successful." And so he was; he extracted the arrowhead. In another case, a doctor, when just about to start treatment, picked up a piece of wood carved in the shape of an arrowhead, and turned it into an iron arrowhead, and so went forward confidently to begin treatment.

Commonly, perhaps always, the doctor's first [illegible] act in actual curing was praying with and smoking a pipe. The doctor would hold up the pipe and pray, first, as usual, to the Supreme Being, and then to his or her particular power-bestower,—animal, rock, or whatever it was.

While curing rites were apt to be rather noisy, tense and thrilling experiences for all present, the doctor did not go into trance or lose consciousness during them.

The more common elements in the curing ritual and procedure were singing, drumming, rattling, incensing, and searching out the cause of the ailment. "The people," said Coming Daylight, "who are in there [the lodge where rite was performed] always have to sing when the medicine man doctors." The doctor would ordinarily, it seems, start the singing and drumming, and then the others present would join in or take over entirely while the doctor carried through his or her treatment.

According to The Boy, "when a medicine man started off he

[18] Cf. Flannery, 1953, pp. 49-51.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

beat a rapid tattoo on the drum while he prayed, and when he 755
started to sing he beat a much slower, even time." Little Man, Al Chandler's adoptive father, in one case at least, followed a somewhat different procedure. He hit the drum just a little, that is, lightly, while he prayed. Then he sang and beat the drum harder, and sang until those present caught on to the song. Then he gave the drum to one of the men, and the others present sang to the latter's drumming while Little Man doctored the patient. If, according to The Boy, a medicine man used a rattle, he shook it in circles anti-clockwise—in contrast to the clockwise circling of the Flat Pipe keeper and the fanning back and forth of Star dancers.

Disease-causing objects within the patient's body were ordinarily extracted by suction. The object extracted was swallowed by the doctor, burned, or otherwise disposed of or destroyed, as will be given later in describing the curing procedures of individual doctors. A pipe stem might be used, in exceptional instances at least, for sucking out the object, to judge from the offer, with this provision, of power once made to Singer in a dream.

Tobacco smoking was sometimes prescribed for the sick by a Pipe keeper when doctoring and apparently by other doctors. According to The Boy, tobacco in such use was often pure, unmixed with other plant. [276]

In curing rites, sometimes—how commonly, we could not determine—sweating in a sweat-lodge was prescribed for the patient by male doctors, in one instance to be described later, by a female doctor. Singer described an experience of her own as follows. "I was once thrown from a horse and hurt pretty badly. I was afraid I could not stand the sweating, for I could never stand heat. Sure enough, although the medicine man told me to crawl in and lie down so he could work on my back, as soon as they put the water on the stones, I got out in a hurry."

We now pass on, from more general curing practices to those of individual doctors, and may well start with an account from Coming Daylight which illustrates both sickness experience and curing ritual.

"I am going to tell about the time I almost died. We were living

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

755 down about six miles from here [from Hays], where the windmill is now. There is quite a flat there along the creek. Little Man [her husband] plowed up the flat and was ready to sow the grain, and he went over to Hays [many times] to try to borrow a seeder. Finally he said: 'I have made so many trips and they are always using it. I don't think I will get the use of it. So I am going to give up. I will sow this grain by hand.' So I make a sack for him out of canvas and he put it around his neck. I said: 'I will help you.' He said: 'Well, we will hitch the team to the harrow.' He started in ahead of me throwing grain, and said: 'You may get tired, so ride on the harrow.' I said: 'No. The team might get scared and I might get tangled up. They might kill me.' So he said: 'Well, it is up to you. But we have a long way to go.'

"The ground was so soft that it was just like walking in mud. All our children were off at school, so the two of us had no help and did the sowing alone. This was about fifty years ago [about 1890]. My limbs just seem to ache me all the time. I used to crawl down to an old spring to get water for the day. I think this [the strenuous labor during that sowing] is why today my limbs ache me. For seven days I could not eat a thing, and, by this time, the harder I tried to work, the worse I got. I almost killed myself that time.

"On the fifth day I could not feel anything. It was like my flesh was dead and I could hardly move my head. My feet were along the west wall and my husband slept in the other room. When he saw I was so low, he told me: 'When your sister comes over, see if she won't get her man [her husband, Stiffarm] to doctor you. Tell him I will give him a cow for it.' So my sister came and I said to her: 'Your brother-in-law told me to tell you to get Stiffarm to doctor me and he will give him a cow for it.' But my sister said: 'Why should he doctor you when you have no faith in him.' My sister must have heard something that I had said about him. So I said to her: 'All right, you know he is not the only doctor.'

"So my husband came in after my sister left. He said: 'Did you tell her?' I said: 'I told her but she got mad. She said you had no faith in him anyway.' He said: 'Well, that is all right.' He

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

thought a few minutes and then added: 'Well can you think of 755●
someone you would like to doctor you?' I said: 'Yes, I would like to get Nakaminen (looking-for-an-enemy-warrior-in-war).' He said: 'All right,' and he rushed and asked that one: 'Come, as my wife has been sick for some time.' So that man and his wife came.

"Our house was large enough, so I had them move right in. Then they made a bed on the east side just across from my bed. Pretty soon they said: 'Let us move her.' They put me on the north side in the place of honor, and I said to myself: 'I believe I must be going to die, else they would not put me at the back of the lodge.' This man boiled my medicine just as soon as he could. This was the sixth day. Of course they always put your head [823] to the west when you are in the place of honor. The room was a big one and they made my bed toward the center. I could not even use my hands. They had to feed me.

"On the seventh day just about sunset. I asked to be turned over; I had been lying on my side so long. They did this for me and I faced the wall. While I lay so, a man's voice said, in a kind of scolding way: 'How could he [the doctor] have so much medicine to doctor you?' It meant he did not have enough to doctor me in the condition I was in. And all at once I answered the voice, saying: 'Why, of course, they have enough medicines. Look what a big bundle she (or he) has hanging there.' The medicine man thought I was delirious and said: 'Daughter, who are you talking to?' And I said: 'Didn't you hear that voice say he did not think you have enough medicine to doctor me?'

"Of course as soon as the sun went down it got dark. They had no lamp and had to sit in the dark. Just before they went to sleep, I told them: 'Now turn me over again.' They then went to their beds and in no time were snoring, especially my man [husband]. He always got up early and whenever he hit the bed it seemed like he was dead and he would go to snoring. I could not sleep a wink but just lay there and heard them snore. They were sleeping two rooms away from where I was.

"I could not tell what time it was but it was quite late when I saw a hand with something in it and a forearm. Then I saw a foot and at last I could see that a man had come in and was standing

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

●755 by the door. His lips were just white. His mouth was half closed on one side and it looked like he had something in his mouth. He made one step toward me and blew like they do with roots when curing, and this made me kind of flinch. He made another step and kind of worked his mouth like he was getting it [the root] all together in his mouth to blow again. He blew at me again and my feet went up. Then he took another step and all this time he was working this root around in his mouth. He blew again and it seemed like my nerves just shook all over.

"Pretty soon then he spoke and said: 'Now I brought this to you.' It was pemmican with a little tallow on top of it. It looked so good, because I had been without eating all these days. So he said: 'I will lay it here,' and he put it by my pillow. I thought he was ready to turn away and leave me, but he blew hard once more [this the fourth time] by my head, and this time he just made me rise to a sitting position.

"I started looking for this meat he had left for me. I was so hungry that I was whining, and I knew the meat was there because he had put it there and had told me he would leave it. I was just tearing my bed apart, saying: 'I know he left that pemmican.' By this time my husband had not awakened but the other man [the doctor] said: 'Daughter, do you know what you are talking about? You had your bed all torn up.' I said: 'This man came in and gave me something to eat and I cannot find it.' He told his wife: 'You should have a little piece of candle.' They lit matches and tried to help me find the pemmican. I was sure he had left the pemmican for me. So he [the doctor] said: 'I believe she is delirious. She couldn't move a hand and yet now she is up and around.' So they woke my husband and he was just frightened because he thought I was delirious.

"The third time the man had blown on me I kind of knew what he had blown at me, and the fourth time I was sure what it was. It was what they call 'white medicine' (cf. supra, p. 315). That is why that man's lips were white and I could smell when he got close that it was this 'white madicine.'

"In the morning I was just hungry. I told them: 'I am terribly hungry this morning.' My man [husband] said: 'I will go out and get a calf.' Later on he would butcher a bigger one for the

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

old doctor. He went out in the hills to look for the calf but could not find it any place. He was near my cousin's and thought he would go over. My cousin's people had just butchered that same morning and they made signs to my husband: 'You are just in time. Now you can come in and eat.' But he said: 'I am in a hurry. I am looking for a calf to butcher for my wife. She is awfully hungry. She has not eaten since she was taken sick.' My cousin said: 'I will give you some [meat].' So she put liver and tripe and different things in a sack. My husband came back and threw the sack of meat on the floor and said: 'Your sister [cousin] sent this to you. They have just butchered.' 755

"I lost no time and rushed over to this sack of meat: I saw a piece of liver in there and took a knife and went to slice off a piece. The old medicine man said: 'Slow now. You should cook it first.' But I said: 'I just cannot. I am going to eat it this way.' I ate it raw like that with some tallow. It seemed like from then on I was just myself again.

"All I know about this person who appeared to me was that he was a man, but I did not recognize him. He was a bitä:tao (soul, spirit shadow).

"It was the medicine man's wife who did the doctoring for me in the case. She did a kind of quiet doctoring. She boiled roots and rubbed me all over with them. They called that woman Nätsiθä ('Cree woman') and she really was a Cree. They say those Cree medicines are good." 582

Coming Daylight gave two accounts, in 1940 and 1945, of another personal experience in being cured. The two accounts supplement each other. Here follows the 1945 account with some detailed interpolated in parentheses from the 1940 one.

"When my first little boy (by my husband, Dressed In White) died, he died, I think because my breasts were bad. Then I had a girl baby. When this girl baby was getting older and already learning to sit up, I was still nursing her of course, and my breasts went bad again, that is, the milk was bad. (They were tight and full and hard . . . the infant had diarrhea and got very weak.) I was suffering with my breasts and my husband thought he should get a doctor to do something for me. So he got a certain man, a great doctor, but one of whom the women were afraid and whom

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

●755 they avoided when possible, because he always had to include the woman patient's genitals in some way.

"My husband said: 'I am going to try him. I don't want to lose this little girl. I lost that other child.' So I thought to myself, 'Why do you want to call *that man*,' and I was afraid of this man because everybody was. But my husband called him, and butchered and brought in a whole buffalo, and told me: 'You can pay that man's wife with half of this buffalo. I will give that man a whole clothing outfit, down to moccasins.'

"We had the lodge all prepared for him and the place prepared for him at the back of the lodge. He sat there with his wife on his right and my husband on his left. I was opposite him. My husband filled his pipe and offered it to the doctor. The doctor smoked it and said: 'You will be glad you called me and were not afraid of me like the rest of the people are.' Even though I thought to myself, 'I am scared anyhow,' I did not say anything.

("After he smoked he started to get ready to doctor. He took off all his clothes. He was just stark naked. He went and felt the little infant. . . . So he boiled the medicine herbs in water and let them boil on the coals. He came to me and I was just scared of him, the way he looked. He felt my breasts all over. They were hard and he gave them a good going over, squeezing them and massaging them. Then he told me to take down my dress so he could see my breasts. Next he put the pail of medicine beside me and told me to drink a little of the medicine.)

"Then he told me to sit where my husband had been sitting, next to himself. I did not want to sit next to him, but he fixed himself up and knelt down a certain way and told me to kneel the same way and to do whatever he asked me to do. He got ready to doctor me and made me kneel, and then he started to sing a song. He finished the song and then told me, 'Watch close,' and told my husband too, 'Watch close.' Then he prayed to the one from whom he had gotten his doctoring power, and then said: 'I never used this way of doctoring before. This is the first time. People are always afraid of me but you (addressing my husband) must watch close and see all that I do.' After that he sang, and told me. 'Spit twice on each of your hands,' and he did the same to each of his

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

own hands. (He put his hands to the ground, palms down, then put his palms to his own breasts and shook them up and down. He repeated this action three times, making four times in all. After the fourth time, his own breasts were big like a woman's.) 755

"Then just that quick,—and you won't believe it but it is true,—although he was a man and it seemed funny to me then, his own breasts started spurting milk which just poured down, and mine did, too, though he did not lay a hand on me [at this juncture]. He let this go on for a long time, and then told me: 'You want to watch to see all the bad milk is gone. Right now it is pure flour water and when all that bad stuff is gone it is going to be a bluish color.' And sure enough I then watched it and it began to get a bluish color and kept on gradually until it got completely good. Finally the nipples were just dripping a little with blue milk, and he told me: 'Raise your breasts from underneath with your hands.' His breasts now became flat and normal, and I was cured. After that I had all the rest of my children and my milk was never bad. I always nursed my own children.

"He told me: 'You should be thankful that you were not afraid of me because I made your little girl live.' I told him: 'I was afraid.' The reason the women were afraid of him was because he used to lance glands down in the loin and would run his hand down in the vagina. I told him why I was afraid: 'They say that when you lance, your finger will all of a sudden slip down there.'

"After he got through doctoring me, he doctored my baby, every joint of the little girl. He then told me: 'The girl was already full of that stuff, but I have drawn it all out.'

("This old medicine man was a grandfather to Crow Bull, so he was my grandfather too. My husband used to tell me: 'Always treat that man good and feed him, because he cured our little girl.' Long after the cure, when he used to come to visit, I would tell him how wonderful it was that he had been able to effect the cure. He used to tell me: 'If you want that power, you can come crying to me.' And I used to answer: 'Oh, I wouldn't do that because you are one of those who like to have women [for sexual purposes] and you would try to have me.' ")

Four other cures recalled and described by Coming Daylight

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

•755 were those of her husband, her daughter, and her grandfather, and her maternal uncle, Crow Bull, respectively.

"My husband, Little Man, did not believe in Indian doctors. He had never been sick, but once somebody put [bad] medicine on him. There was a bad man among the Indians at that time. . . . My husband knew and everybody knew that this bad man had done this to him. My husband had a pain all the time right near his heart and sometimes he could not move on account of this pain. Occasionally, too, he had a hemorrhage. He used to be in such pain through this thing that he knew it was some work of a medicine man. So he had a dream and in it he was told that he [787] should go out on the hills and swing round and round on a pole, as they do (cf. infra, pp. 393-394), and that he would then get well.

"I called a woman doctor named Goes Back. I got a nice horse and hitched it at this woman's place as payment. This woman doctor said: 'I am just going to doctor you [Little Man] once.' Other doctors had been trying to cure Little Man but they could not succeed because the one who had put the medicine on him was extremely powerful. Goes Back talked to the one who had given her her power and said: 'You told me that I could use this medicine work just once, and that then I would get a particular person well.' This is what had been promised to this woman.

"So she said: 'I will ask for a sweat-lodge, like a man.' Only medicine men used to ask for a sweat-lodge. She said: 'I am going to doctor in this sweat-lodge.' Several people went into the sweat-lodge. I attended to the opening and shutting [of the door thereof]. There were only certain rocks that they used and these were heated until red. Someone else attended to this. The patient was inside the sweat-lodge and the medicine woman invited some others to go in there. Except for the medicine woman, only men went in. I sat beside the door, but on the outside.

"They sang, and I heard the woman praying: 'My nephew has suffered a long time. Please listen to me. You promised that I would get some one person well by doctoring just once, and I want this to be that one time.' When she got through doctoring, that is, sucking, she said: 'Lift up the curtain.' So I lifted it up and opened the sweat-lodge, and one of the men there said: 'I too never be-

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

lieved things. I am going outside to see for myself.' He asked the old woman doctor for the thing she had drawn out of the patient. 755

"So she gave it to him in his palm. It was just a little round thing. He took it, fingering it and smoothing it out. It turned out to be a little piece of white rag. It had been all balled up. On that little piece of white rag were seven marks, like needle-pointed writing, and at the end right in that rag was a piece of blood clot. The man saw this and said: 'Now I have seen something for myself with my own eyes.'

"They handed this around so that everybody could see it. Then they handed it back to the medicine woman. She said to this rag: 'I don't want you to ever come back again. You go out to where you belong.' So she wrinkled it up again and threw it in the flaming hot fire. As soon as she did that it burned up quickly.

"As soon as she had drawn it out of Little Man he felt much better. He got well because he knew that this thing was out of his system, and he quit having hemorrhages.

"In the beginning she had told what this man had put medicine on him for. This man thought that Little Man was going after his woman [the man's wife] or going with her. Little Man's sickness was not a natural one. This man had put medicine on him. Little Man had to go through with his promise [of self torture on the hill] because he got well."

"I was awfully curious when I was a child. Whenever I saw a gathering of people, I always ran to see what was happening. Crow Bull [her uncle] had been wounded in a battle. His scalp had been grazed by a bullet. They sent for a doctor whose name was Drops In The Fire. My mother and grandmother and my uncle with his wives were sitting on the west side in the lodge. The four men singers were on the opposite side. Crow Bull, to be doctored, was at the place opposite the door, with the doctor there too. 752 755

"The doctor started to sing and then he gave two drums there to the singers. He said: 'You all look at me. You all look at me. You all look at me good.' Then he said: 'Give me a gun. This thing [the gun] is the main thing. Look at it. If I don't make this work, he

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

752 [Crow Bull] is going to leave you [to die], and if it works as I want
755 it to work he is going to get well.' There is a wild rhubarb which is called 'gun' and when a person is going to eat it he runs his thumb up the stalk to eat the inside of the rhubarb stalk. The doctor said: 'Now you see this gun [the real gun].' And he ran his thumb up the barrel, and it made a sound like that made when a person opens a wild rhubarb stalk. And it looked as if the real gun was laid apart. They all looked at it. And the doctor said: 'We are going to have good luck.' Then they all cheered like they were thanking him. Then he ran his hand along the gun [barrel] and when they looked again the gun was just as good as ever. Then he laid the gun up. I used to think he was a wonderful man because I saw him do this with a real gun.

"After this, the doctor took the bandage off Crow Bull and started doctoring him. He took a snake-skin which was just flat and wrapped it around the wound. All this time he was talking and praying. All this time he held the tail and head of the snake-skin together at the back of Crow Bull's head. He would kind of move his hand, quivering it at the back of Crow Bull's head where he was holding the two ends of the snake-skin together. The bullet had lodged there. The head of the snake was inside [nearest the scalp] and the tail was laid over it. He just quivered his hand about four times and at the same time told the singers: 'Not yet. Keep singing.' He was trying to work the bullet out. Finally he grasped the snake-skin by the middle and shook it, and the bullet dropped out. That is why I thought he was wonderful. That is one experience I had.

"They had a horse tied outside to give to the doctor, and of course they had a big feed. When they got through eating, all the women folks came and kissed the medicine man. My grandmother said to me: 'What are you sitting there for, not paying any attention?' I said: 'Oh, grandmother, I am scared of him.'

755 "In later years, too, at various gatherings when I was visiting with the women folks I would say to that medicine man's daughter: 'My, I used to be afraid of your father. He was so powerful.' And then that woman would jump at me for a joke."

"There is always," Coming Daylight added, "a way for those

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

powerful men to die. That particular man Drops In The Fire, however, always claimed to be bullet proof." 755

When, on one occasion, one of Coming Daylight's daughters was very ill, the wife of Buffalo Run finally cured the girl. "I called in Stiffarm," Coming Daylight said, "who demanded a large amount of things for payment, because he said the girl had this stomach diseasse [cancer?]. He wanted my husband, Little Man, to make him a lodge and he would doctor the girl. But I said: 'No. My daughter hasn't got that disease. I don't want you to make that lodge.' Then we got another medicine man, whose daughter had died at the Mission. Finally I said: 'I am going to take my daughter to someone who can cure her.'

"So I told my husband to load food and wood. I took my daughter down below Stiffarm's place, to where Buffalo Run (or Chase) used to live with his wife. There was the woman who was the medicine woman. When I got there, she said to me, just teasing: 'Where is this mean woman going?' I handed her the pipe and told her to smoke it, and she took it, which meant she would do what I was asking her to do. I said to her: 'I want you to get my daughter well.' And I gave her the grub to eat and some wood. She said to me, just teasing like: 'So you had to come to me, this mean woman!' Then she said: 'If you do what I tell you to do, I will get your daughter well. You are to leave her here with me and I will give her medicine every day and tend to her (that is, put medicine all over her, make her drink it, and draw the thing out).' So I and my husband left my daughter there and we went home alone. Every now and then I took grub and wood to the medicine woman. Sure enough, not long after that my daughter got well. Soon after that she married, and she is alive and well today." Good Singer, Coming Daylight's mother's sister, had an ancestral helper[14] and was also a practicing doctor. We recorded her doctoring song, as sung by The Boy, song number 28, and by Coming Daylight, song number 122. 757 755

A cure by Good Singer was described by Singer. "Once the man I was living with was very ill, almost dead. One of his wives—he had several besides myself,—called in this medicine woman, 755 [595] Good Singer.

[14] Cf. Flannery, 1944, pp. 55-56.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

755 Good Singer. The one that called her in made a smudge, with fire of buffalo chips on which some kind of medicine—sweet pine, or sweet grass,—was sprinkled. Good Singer then smudged herself, putting the smoke up to her face four times and then rubbing it on her breast. Then she sang her song [Singer here sang it], the burden of which was: 'My pipe is lying here!' Then she was ready to doctor.

"She hit herself on the chest, and a bead came out of her mouth. She put the bead on the top of her foot and extracted it from the sole thereof. She next smudged the head four times by putting it to her mouth, and then laid the bead down.

"Next she went to the patient and worked on him, sucked at the spot where his pain was, and after showing the people what she extracted from him swallowed it, and named the one who had caused his sickness. Then she swallowed her own medicine [the bead] and smudged at her mouth four times. They gave her a lot of things for doing that,—horses and blankets and such things."

Singer also gave details on two other cures, one by White Weasel, the other by Bad Bad Bull.

"Once I hooked up the wagon and went for wood. We were living at the time down the Milk River Valley. While getting the wood, all of a sudden I was struck with a sharp pain in the back of my neck. It was like a sharp pinch. I went back with my load [582] of wood. I was married at the time to an Assiniboine named Axe Handle. I told him: 'The Assiniboines have shot me [with medicine].' He told me: 'No, I guess you haven't had that happen to you.'

"This was a little before the Fourth of July and I went to the celebration suffering with that pain in the neck. After that they began to call all kinds of Indian doctors for me—Stiffarm, Bill Jones, Ragged Robe. Each pulled out something, a piece of skin or something. And they had to give a lot of things away to each doctor. But none of them did me any good.

"We were living close to a friend who told me: 'The only one who can cure you is my brother [White Weasel, a Gros Ventre].' So I called him and they gave him a lot of things,—about seven

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

big things, including horses. He is the one who cured me. He pulled out a little animal from himself. That was his medicine. He showed it to the people present and its tail just shook. Then he doctored me by sucking on my cheek and on the nape of my neck. He extracted from me a fingernail. It was just all green, it had been in there so long. I had not called White Weasel until the fall. . . . 755

"White Weasel said that it was not a spirit that had shot me but that it had been done by somebody living although he did not mention the person's name. I never knew who did it."

"There was a man," Singer said on another occasion, "who had power to cure this stomach-eating sickness. His name was Bad Bad Bull. In his lodge he had little willow back-rests with fringes along each side, and on each piece of fringe he had these little animals that cause this sickness. When anyone was in that lodge and would, for instance, be helping his wife to find something and would come across one of these little animals and would draw away frightened. Bad Bad Bull would say: 'What are you scared of? They won't do anything to you.' [352]

"Bad Bad Bull's nephew's wife had this stomach-eating sickness. It was making her poorly and she was sick all the time. The old fellow said: 'Oh I will pity my nephew. If his wife dies and he has to go out and cry. I guess I will pity him and doctor his wife.'

"So they fixed the lodge in readiness for the doctoring. Iron Bucket, my husband, was present there for the doctoring. They all sat around, and Bad Bad Bull told them to sing and said: 'When you get through singing I will pick away all the stuff that the animal has eaten. And then I am going to suck this thing out. I want you to catch hold of my back locks of hair and hold my head up.'

"He had them heat two rocks and these rocks were still in the fire while he was doctoring. So they watched him when he was throwing that bad stuff out. When he had his mouth ready to suck, they pulled his head up, and he had that animal in his mouth. So, as they always do, they all looked at it. When Iron Bucket saw it, it was round and most of it was mouth. After they had all seen it, Bad Bad Bull had them pull the two red-hot rocks out of the fire, and he put the animal on them and burned it up. The woman

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

1958 got well. She came out of her sickness and lived a long time. Bad Bad Bull's animals used to be of all different colors,—green, yellow and black, the black ones were not quite so bad."

Lame Bull, The Boy's father, who got doctoring power when keeper of the Flat Pipe, used a thunder-rock and peppermint in his curing, and a song, number 29 as sung by The Boy and recorded by us. The words of the song may be freely translated, "there is nothing impossible," or "I wonder if there is anything impossible."[18]

We recorded also the wordless doctoring song number 30 sung by The Boy, but obtained no data on the rest of his ritual, apart from his preliminary test (cf. supra, p. 332), except that he spat out the paint with which he painted his body and that on one occasion he dug out an arrow lodged in the spine of a wounded man.

Stiffarm's doctoring song, number 32, was recorded as sung by The Boy. "Stiffarm had a weasel skin to live by," as The Boy put it, "and to do his doctoring with." As expressed by The Boy on another occasion. "He had as his helper a big weasel, the larger of the two weasels. The weasel would do Stiffarm's doctoring for him. It would take out tapeworms."

Thomas Main was told the following incident about Stiffarm (d. ca. 1934) by Brocky, another Gros Ventre. "Stiffarm was doctoring a sick woman. He had a weasel skin. This he placed on the ground and covered with a black handkerchief. Then he took away the handkerchief and there was a live weasel. The weasel ran to the woman, bored its way half way into the woman's stomach, and came out with half of its body bloody and with something in its mouth. This object was taken by Stiffarm and shown to all present as the cause of the illness, and was then thrown into the fire outside the lodge. Then the weasel was covered with the handkerchief, the handkerchief was next taken away, and there was only the weasel skin."

Coming Daylight, who distrusted a particular medicine man, related the following instance of his curing. "After my husband

[18] On doctoring powers of keepers of the sacred Pipes, cf. p. 62. The Flat Pipe keeper could use the hair rope in the bundle as a powerful doctoring medicine.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

'Little Man,' had been bewitched and cured, he fell sick again. A man was called in to doctor him. He did his medicine work and drew out a small rattlesnake with shining eyes from Little Man's forehead. Meanwhile I had built a fire. I asked the man to let me look at that snake and he told me: 'When you have finished, hand it back to me.' But I threw it in the fire. He did not say anything but gathered up his medicines, jammed them in his bag, and went out. He took the mare given in payment and gave it away at once to another person. . . . Little Man did not know what to make of my action. I told him: 'I burned up his old rotten medicine.' 755

"I know I could not escape death [some time] so I was not afraid of him (the man). Some others would be scared of a medicine man like him, but not I. He did not put medicine on me. He was my neighbor, however, and after that he avoided me like he was ashamed. . . . Little Man really had kidney trouble and that man fooled around his head!"

"Stiffarm," Coming Daylight also said, "had some power concerning children, for he wore a bracelet from which hung little dolls, one on each side thereof. . . . My husband, Little Man, used to make fun of Stiffarm for wearing this bracelet, but he would never tease him outright [in his presence]. After Stiffarm would leave, Little Man would say: 'What is that crazy thing doing with such a bracelet?' " [788]

Bull Lodge, Garter Snake's father, a great medicine man, who died about 1886, had gotten power to cure various ailments. From Garter Snake were obtained some details, many of them confirmed independently by The Boy, of the ritual procedures used by Bull Lodge. His chief operating instrument was a woodpecker feather.

"Now I will tell how my father doctored," Garter Snake volunteered. "On one occasion his granddaughter was ill and called him. His wife and I went along with him. On our arrival this granddaughter said: 'Grandfather, I would make coffee for you but I haven't any sugar.' But he got mad and said: 'Everytime you ask me here you ask me to make sugar. I am tired of this. If you had the power I have, would you like to be making it all the time?' Well, instead of quitting asking, she took a pack (?) and threw it to him and said: 'make that sugar.' So he went through [789]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

● 755 [789]

the performance, and they had sweet coffee. And after we ate and smoked, we went back home.

"Sometime during that night the woman [Bull Lodge's granddaughter] had an attack of some kind of sickness and blood just poured out from underneath. Her sister ran [to our lodge] and said [to Bull Lodge]: 'Grandfather, your granddaughter is having an awful hemorrhage. If you think a lot of your children I pray that you will come, and if you love Garter Snake, your daughter, I pray in her name that you come.' And the old man said: 'All right. I am coming. Run home and get her ready. I will be there. I will do what I can.'

"So I and my mother and father went, and one of the boys, Curly Head, went along too. And of course the sick woman's children were in there [her lodge].

"The old man got there and felt around and said: 'Oh there is a big lump in there that busted your blood. Instead of cutting you open I am going to work it the other way. I will give you the medicine I use to help a woman in labor. I will work it off that way. I don't know what it is but it is a big lump.' So he told his wife: 'Take that frying pan, heat water quick.' So she did. He put three or four kinds of medicine in this water and told her: 'Boil it quick.' Of course it didn't take long, and he said: 'Take two cups [of the infusion] and put it in there and cool it quick, so she can drink it.'

"They did this, and after the medicine was cool enough, the patient's husband raised her up so she could drink this medicine. She took it, and Bull Lodge said: 'All right. Just hold her up like that.' Bull Lodge took the black handkerchief [another ritual object he used in curing] and balled it up, prayed and sang, and put it right on top of the patient's head and shook it back and forth quick, and when he did that, she said: 'Grandfather, something dropped.'

"When she said that, he lifted her to another place, and here [where she had been] was what looked like a rock, as big as a man's fist and it was blue. What it was I do not know, but that it was what this woman had in her and it must have busted that blood. The blood was just running all over. The blood was still coming, and Bull Lodge said: "Well, I will have to heal that

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

wound inside.' So he told Curly Head: 'Run to the creek and take a cup with you, and when you dip it in the water, dip it upstream.' So Curly Head did that and brought the water and said: 'Here is your water.' Bull Lodge put some medicine in it, stirred it up, and said to the patient: 'Drink this. This is going to heal that wound inside and is going to make blood. You lost too much blood.' So she drank that, the whole cupful, and when she got through drinking it the blood quit flowing.

"After Bull Lodge cured her, of course they took that thing that came out of her and built a great fire outside of buffalo chips. He said: 'Make a big fire and put it [the rock-like lump from the patient] in and see what is going to happen.' So they put it in the fire, and it rolled out. They would throw it in again, and it would roll out, the other way. It was a long time before they could stop it [from rolling out], but finally they got it to stay in the fire, and it broke open and was just like a shell. It must have been some kind of an animal with a thin shell. I did not see this fire myself but that is what they told me. This woman whom Bull Lodge doctored lived to be an old, old woman.

"Now I will tell of Bull Lodge's first experience of operating with a feather. The sick woman was named Wind Woman, and she had trouble with her stomach, as if something were traveling around in there, and she was awfully sick. Her man went and gave a pipe to Bull Lodge to come and doctor this woman. She was just skin and bones and ready to give up the ghost. So Bull Lodge said: 'I will operate on her. I will have to cut her open and in that case I have to have seven men singers and six women to sing.' The men sat on one side of the lodge and the women on the other. The sick woman was the niece of old Bull Lodge and therefore he was her father-in-law in the Indian way. They all got in there seated and she said: 'Father-in-law, I am about to die anyway, so don't be ashamed to doctor me. If you doctor me I know you will cure me and I want to live.' Bull Lodge said: 'All right. I will do what I can.'

"So this woman of course was stripped from her waist up and when she was lying on her back they could see this thing beating like in her abdomen. Bull Lodge called: 'Son, Otter Robe, come

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

755 and give me charcoal.' And after Otter Robe had given him just a little piece of charcoal, he said: 'Son, put your hand on where the most pain is.' Otter Robe said: 'I don't know anything about it.' But anyway Otter Robe put his hand there and you could see his hand jumping, and right from there downward Bull Lodge made a mark with the charcoal.

"Then Bull Lodge took his woodpecker feather and prayed and talked and passed it sideways from each corner of his mouth twice, four times in all. I (Garter Snake) was looking to see what he was going to do. I was curious to know all about it. So he smudged the feather, spat on it, and at the upper end of the charcoal mark wiggled it as if working it in, and after he got it half way in he started to cut right along that charcoal line he had made, and at the lower end of the line he took the feather out and the skin opened up. Bull Lodge smudged his hand and he put his hand in that cut, and he pulled something out and put it on the ground. It was as big as a fist and green on one side and white on the other. It was a wano:'wɔ, a kind of bug that grows in a person, or a stone. So Bull Lodge said: 'Well, light that pipe,' and he put the handkerchief over that cut. So Otter Robe took the pipe and brought it around and gave it to his father and the old man lit it. After he lit it he smoked and blew that smoke on the handkerchief, and the fourth time he took away the handkerchief and the cut was gone,—there was nothing but a little scar. And the woman got well and lived to be an old woman."

Charles Buckman who was interpreting for us with Garter Snake added that his uncle had been operated on by Bull Lodge who ran his feather along a y-shaped mark down on the uncle's body and took out the cause of the illness. When the cut healed, it was just like a scar. The Boy, who in boyhood, knew Bull Lodge well, likewise stated that, after such a cut was made by Bull Lodge with his woodpecker feather in curing, the wound would heal up without any sewing and leave only the trace of a scar.

Al Chandler gave us considerable information on the curing powers used by his adopted father, Little Man, who had received curing powers from a bear, an old man, and a coyote respectively

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

755

A good many details on the objects and procedures used by Little Man and on his manner of painting himself when doctoring have already been given (supra, pp. 285-291, passim) in the description of Little Man's several experiences when acquiring doctor power. We here add descriptions of four specific cases of cure as given by Al Chandler from his own memory and personal observation. These were crucial cases of which he had the power to cure seven, but he only used it four times, as follows.

"Little Man said that long ago when he first started out in medicine work there was a woman who was already given up for dead. My aunt, who was a very good friend of this dying woman and was good-hearted and helped people whenever she could, told her husband, Little Man: 'Don't you pity that woman who has been so good to us? She will die if you don't do something. She has little children and you know how little children are pitiful when they have no mother or father. Won't you help?' He said: 'All right. I will do it.'

"So they went over there and he took his medicine bag. He looked at the sick woman and she was still breathing but was pretty close to the edge. He told her folks who were all sitting around ready to see her go any time: 'I pity this woman. I am going to try my medicine the first time. I guess you heard about my story. Now I am going to try it. All get out of the way, sit back. Just four men and three women stay in here. The men sit on the left coming in and the women on the right.' So he fixed up like he was shown (by coyote) and started in. He kind of felt this woman to see how far gone she was and told them: 'Well, I am going to doctor her three times today, and the third time we will know for sure whether I fail or whether I succeed.' He hit the drum just lightly while he prayed. Then he sang and beat the drum harder. He sang the song until the men got on to it. Then he gave one of them the drum and the others sang to his drumming while Little Man was doctoring the woman.

"He had a powdered root and chewed it and blew it on the patient like they do for one who is this far gone, that is, they blow it here and there over the body because being so far gone they couldn't tell where the sickness was. He went through that. He

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

755 was going to doctor at intervals twice more that night. At the third doctoring when it was just coming daylight he would know whether she would live or not. That was a long time to allow until the third doctoring because that woman could have easily died before then. He didn't rush or get excited but did according to what he had been told when out crying and praying. So the third time he doctored her, the woman started to fuss and look around at everybody. Her folks were glad because it looked like she was coming out of it. They started to talk and tell stories. He told them: 'She is going to be all right. In the morning if she wants to eat, feed her, give her anything she wants. She will be hungry.' He had boiled medicine for her and asked: 'Can you sit up and drink this?' She sat up and drank it and he said: 'She is going to be all right. She will be thirsty after this. In the morning give her all she wants to drink.'

"So Little Man and his wife went home, and close to noon, say about ten o'clock, they went back to the patient and he said: 'I am going to doctor her four more times. I have to do it seven times in all. You don't have to do anything else. If these other medicine men want to give her something to drink, it is all right. It will help her that much more to take medicine, whatever they give her.' So he doctored her again and said: 'This afternoon I will come and that will be the fifth time.' He came and did the same thing as before. In the evening just before sundown he did it again and that was the sixth time. He told them he wouldn't be back until midnight for the seventh and last time.

"These folks asked him if they needed him could they call him in the meantime. He said: 'I don't know. I don't think you need worry about that. After I have done it seven times I am through. Just let her do what she pleases. Leave it to her. She is all right. She is cured.' And sure enough, in a few days she was up and around.

"The second case of critical illness he cured was Al Plumage, then a boy. He is the son of Paul Plumage. He had t.b. of the stomach and was just black and had a big bloated belly.

"Paul, the boy's father, had come to get Little Man and didn't like it when the latter said: 'You people don't think of me until

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

somebody is about dead. When the others fail you think about me instead of calling me earlier.' So Paul told him: 'Well, it is your son who sent me over here and I sure appreciate it because he sent me here. I believe you could do something. I cannot get those others any more. They have all given up. I should have come long ago, but I didn't know. Most of those others are supposed to be our relatives.' So Little Man went down there and cured this boy just the same as he had cured the woman, telling them the number of times they should expect to hear news and so on. 755

"Little Man didn't go around and brag and say he could have cured this or that. He had told the story of his power and if any wanted to call on him it was up to them. He was young when he got his power and old when he died. He only used this power four times. The other two cures he made with this medicine were Cora's mother and my son Jimmy, who was Little Man's pet.

"The mother of my wife, Cora, had pneumonia. They had already covered her up but I went to see the old woman and sized up her situation. I saw that she was still breathing and I said I was going to call my father. I told him just how things were. Little Man had just got back from some place and had his wagon still loaded. I didn't have a pipe, but my father would do anything for me, pipe or no pipe. I said to him: "My mother-in-law is just about a goner. Can you do anything for her?' So he told me to get the horses and I went over home and pretty soon he came along. They just stopped by the house and didn't unhook the team but went in to see how the old woman was. He came back out and got his medicine bag and told these folks just how he was going to doctor. The third time he doctored her she wanted to eat. They were kind of scared because no matter how sick a person is he or she always has one time they want to eat before dying. Little Man said, 'Let her eat if she wants to eat. It won't hurt her. She will be well.' So they did. She got well and lived a long time after that.

"Jimmy was the fourth one cured. At first he had summer complaint. Neither the agency doctors nor Indian doctors could do a thing for him. The only thing Jimmy lived on was soda crackers and Little Man was away. I waited and waited for him to get back and as soon as I knew he was back, I went to him

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

755 and told him to come. They hooked up the team and brought bedding with them. Jimmy was just skin and bones and was getting black. He was only about two and Cora had another little baby at that time. They had given him up for sure.

"This is a sample of the way Little Man would do. He doctored Jimmy just a little at first. There was nobody there to sing then. Little Man said: 'Up there where I live there are some plants we call shoestrings in the brush.' I said in excitement: 'Yes.' So he said: 'You go up there and pick a good handful.' I rushed up there like a fool and looked around for what 'shoestring' was. Little Man's brother came along just then in a wagon and asked: 'What are you looking for?' I said: 'Shoestrings, but I don't know what they are!' He laughed and said: 'You big fool. You are stepping all over them.' So I got busy and then rushed back over there. In the meantime Little Man had picked seven purple flowers, —just the flower part.

"So when I got there, he said to put on water in a big dishpan to warm it, not to boil it. When the water got warm he broke the flowers and the shoestrings up in it and stirred and stirred the water. Then he got his wife to hold Jimmy standing in that water and bathed him all over from head to foot, especially his stomach, but didn't give him any to drink. Then he said: 'That is all. Put him in bed and cover him up.' And he told Cora: 'Watch what he passes and let me know.' So she looked every little while. Finally he passed and Cora told me so I told the old man who came and looked himself. They beheld a wonderful sight to see. They saw these shoestrings were whole, just like I had picked them, and they were covered with excrement. Now you might be able to understand it if he had given the child these things to drink. But he didn't and besides they had been all broken up in the water and not whole like that. After that Jimmy wanted to eat. He ate from then on and began to pick up.

"The next time Jimmy got sick he had typhoid. We had all been invited to Lewiston to a Fair. We went over there to make a little money and Little Man wasn't around when Jimmy got sick. Jimmy was pretty sick and said he was hungry for plums. I didn't know where to get any and Jimmy got mad and said: 'Flea (an old man) brought me some.' But I said: 'Flea went to town.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

He borrowed a saddle from us and he isn't here.' Mrs. Stevens had a store at Old Hays and they had come over and she said she had plums canned. So she went right home to get them for him. It didn't take long in an auto and she brought a jar of them. He certainly enjoyed them. 755

"So Little Man got back and I came after him and told him that Jimmy was sick again. He came over and looked at him and doctored a little bit like he does at first. He doctored him twice that same day and the next morning was when he used that bear claw. He told Jimmy: 'Tell me wherever it hurts and I will work on it.' Jimmy said: 'Here on my right side.' The old man said: 'That's a bad place. I don't like to suck there because it might hurt your guts. But I will do something else. I will use this bear claw now.' So he asked the boy, showing him the bear claw, 'Do you think you can stand this?' Jimmy said he could and Little Man said: 'Well make sure you can stand it.' He told the old lady to hold Jimmy's hands down and me to hold his feet down. But first he told me to get hot coals and just put a little of the sweet pine on the coals and smudge the end of the bear claw. He took some paint and painted himself like the bear had showed him that time when he was out crying. So after he did that, I held Jimmy and the old man sang first himself. He sang that song four times and then got busy. He put the claw right where it should be, and you could just see the claw going in. The boy wriggled and made faces. The claw went right in at the side and he jerked it out and you could hear something drop. I saw where it dropped and said: 'Where did it fall?' Little Man told me: 'Pick it up. Let us see it.' I took it and gave it to him. He worked it around in his palm. It was a whole cherry seed and Jimmy's gut, kind of rotten, was stuck on it and that is what was blocking his gut. Right after that he was well.

"The claw was a big one but it didn't even make a scar because I looked to see if there was any blood coming out. As soon as he jerked the claw out, he rubbed his hand just a little bit over the place and that is all there was to it."

Al Chandler also gave a short account of his own treatment as a boy by Black Bird.

"I was four years old when my mother died and I knew in what direction they had taken the corpse. The next morning I went over [D64]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

755 [764] there and saw two fresh graves. They dig a hole about three or four feet deep and put sticks across, cover that with canvas and cover the canvas with dirt. I laid down on one of the graves and that is where they found me. When I did not come back my father started looking for me. I was just like dead and they got an old medicine man to work on me, for at that time my adopted father, Little Man, had not yet gotten doctoring power.

"When I woke up, my father, my stepfather (the man married to my real mother), a woman and the old doctor, Black Bird, were there in this big lodge. I did not know what had happened to me but when I woke up I saw old Black Bird sitting by me. He had a china saucer with medicine in it and with four little brass bells [sic] in the medicine. He told me to drink up the medicine. I took the medicine but tried to balk at the bells. But the old man said: 'No, no drink the bells and all. The bells will be your protection. You will never get sick and ghosts will no longer be able to harm you. You could go to sleep with them and sit up with them [without harm to you from them]."

In a long narrative of a battle between the Gros Ventres and the Crow, The Boy described, very briefly, the manner in which one of the Gros Ventres was cured. After the fighting was over this man was found unconscious, bleeding from a wound in the arm. One of the Gros Ventres knew how to staunch the flow of blood He had an otter-skin with medicine tied on the nose thereof. With this he treated the wounded man's arm. The flow of blood stopped at once and the man regained consciousness. A travois was made and they had the man's relatives haul him back to the main camp on it.

756 A number of other individuals with doctoring power were mentioned by name at various times by our informants—Sleeping Bear, He Steals, Bill Jones, Ragged Robe (d. about 1935), Otter Robe, Joe Assiniboine—but we obtained no information on their curing procedures. We knew Joe Assiniboine, who alone of the [795] surviving Gros Ventres refused to the last to become a Catholic and who died only recently in 1942 or 1943, but unfortunately, though not patently unfriendly to us, was consistently reluctant to give information.

756 formation, however, on the causes to which doctors attributed failure to cure.

Some doctors were believed by some at least of the people to resort to deliberate deceit and trickery. Al Chandler remarked that "so many times doctors fake and try to get everything a person owns." An implication to this effect is also contained in his account of the acquisition of doctoring power by his adoptive father, Little Man, and in his direct statement regarding him: "Little Man was honest. He never faked and everybody like him. If he couldn't cure, he wouldn't want anything. He would wait before he took what a person paid because he wanted to see if the patient was really well." Faking by medicine men to get something from a person, he stated, was looked upon as a crime.

Coming Daylight gave a detailed account of her catching one medicine man, in the act of deception.

● 755 756 "At one time a Gros Ventre man named Strong Man was married to a Piegan woman. She was suffering with something in her stomach. It is something that moves in the stomach and causes great suffering. The English name for it, I think, is cancer, but it might be something else. So Strong Man sent someone to call a particular medicine man who, instead of coming right away, said: 'Wait until tomorrow. In the meantime make a lodge and make it well and clean with nothing dirty in it, and have everything ready you intend to give me.'

"I could see this medicine man's house from where I lived. My corral was some distance away around a bend. During the day I saw this man and his wife walking together straight ahead without looking back. When I saw them do so the third time I began to think they were up to something. So I waited and watched, and when they went the fourth time and had gotten as far as my corral, I ran over to their house.

"Sure enough by their bed was a bowl, covered. I ran over and uncovered it. The bag from the end of the guts was in water in this bowl and I said to myself: 'Sure enough. That is just what I thought. He is up to something. He is preparing this 'cancer' or whatever it is that he is going to pull out of that sick woman.' So I ran back quickly to my own house, and when that man and

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

his wife returned home they did not know I had been at their house. 755

"My husband, Little Man, was out hunting horses. When he came back I told him: 'This crazy thing has already prepared what he is going to pull out.' I told him of my visit to the house and of that thing that was in the bowl. That medicine man had told me and my husband to come with him and his wife when he would go to doctor the woman, so we could get something [as payment]. So I told my husband: 'You are going to see that the thing he pulls out is the same thing that is in the bowl.' 756

"So the next day we all went over the hills to Strong Man's place. The others all went into the nice lodge that had been prepared for the doctoring. But I did not go, I just stayed in Strong Man's house, but I could hear them singing. The people who are in there always had to sing when the medicine man is doctoring.

"Little Man sat by the door of the lodge. The man did his medicine work. He always had a white handkerchief and a black one. This time he used the black one. He would kind of do things under that black handkerchief. Of course he did it so quickly that you could hardly see what he was doing. Sure enough, however, he had that thing I had told my husband about and he pretended that he had taken it out of the woman.

"He showed it first to all the men, and one of them said: 'Oh, that is the way this animal looks that eats on a person!' So Little Man looked at it and it was the very same thing I had seen in the bowl. Little Man clasped his hands in the gesture that indicated you think to yourself something is awful or powerful. Then all the women had to look at it and they especially make all kinds of exclamations about that thing. Then they handed it back to the doctor and he cut it up and ate it, and he drank all the water it was soaked in. Little Man was thinking to himself: 'Of all the dirty things he eats!' "

Attention may be called to Little Man's gesture of admiration or awe made in spite of his inner conviction of trickery. This behavior contrasts with Coming Daylight's open flaunting, on another occasion, of her disbelief in the same medicine man. It may be recalled, too (supra, p. 347), that while Little Man used to make fun of Stiffarm for wearing a special bracelet, he was careful not 756

8:Flannery E-5 (1940-1948)1960 NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

159 956 787 "My experience was by dreaming. One time before I was married—I must have been about eight years old—I was sleeping in a big lodge and a 'person' came and wakened me. He had a bag of medicines on his back. He came to me on four successive nights and laid out these medicines and told me what each was for. On the third of these nights there was a man lying there—he was just skin and bones. The 'person' who had awakened me told me: 'You could take all these medicines and you could cure people like that one lying there' [i.e., a person in the last extremity]. In my dream I would do everything he told me, manipulate my hands to draw out the sickness, and do everything. But I didn't want that power and would tell him so. Each morning too I would relate to my grandmother exactly what had happened in the night but she would try to hush me up, telling me: 'Don't say anything; don't tell anyone. You will be a great medicine woman.' But I didn't want that power. I didn't like it because [755] when medicine people suck on the weak part of the sick person they have to swallow what they extract. I had decided I would rather be quiet and not do anything like that, or sacrifice my flesh, or things of that kind. Perhaps if it had come later I might have taken that power and become great."

Nevertheless when later in life she had other dreams indicating supernatural power, she likewise refused. She explained in regard to one of these experiences, for instance: "The one who awakened me this time had told me to face the rising sun and was showing me how to make a smudge from the moss that grows close on logs; but I told him. 'No. I would rather not have it.' Those who have power die too soon."

159 757 Incidentally, still in connection with curing, bleeding was an operation which was performed purely as a natural remedy for a person who felt dizzy or sluggish. Anyone could do it—no supernatural validation was needed. Other women described quite casually how it was done and discussed the various times they had actually performed the operation. Coming Daylight, however, insisted that while there was really nothing to such an operation, she could never bring herself to perform it, nor would she allow anyone else to bleed her; she could not stand the sight of blood.

The aversion to the sight of blood and to self-mutilation was evidently deep-seated and showed itself in a marked manner early in her life. On one occasion a close relative was very ill. In such a situation it was expected that every member of the family would rally around and do whatever he could toward the recovery. Among the things that fell within the scope of activity for female relatives was that of vowing to sacrifice something valuable, including perhaps the blood [602] from one's arm or a finger-joint, if the person recovered. At this particular [782] time, Coming Daylight was a young child, and her grandmother decided that it would be appropriate for the little girl to offer that her finger-tip be removed [826] if the relative regained his health. When it was suggested to her, Coming [304] Daylight refused, even though her grandmother took after her with a stick. She actually ran away and wandered alone, until two nights later the relative died and an uncle finally found her.

159 183 765 On another occasion in her early youth, too, she defied a convention connected with kinship by refusing to join in mourning for an uncle who had been killed in revenge for having instigated the murder of his brother's wife. When her grandmother upbraided Coming Daylight for not expressing grief in the tradi- [602] tional manner, the latter defied her by saying: "I am not going to cry for that [627] man. I don't know why you are crying for him. I have worked for that woman and she has fed me, and has even given me meat to bring home to you. I heard

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787 incessantly. After a time a spirit might appear to him. Perhaps this
776 would be on the first or second night, perhaps later. Sometimes it was in full daylight, and the man really saw the spirit like a true person; but more usually he saw him in his sleep. It might be a person that appeared, that is to say, an untrue person (spirit), or an animal, or the spirit of a rock or of the brush. Some men went to islands and rivers instead of to mountain-peaks. These might receive the otter, or the beaver, or the muskrat, or the water-monster (bax'aa^{n}) as their guardian spirit. Sometimes when a man was crying on a mountain-top in a thunderstorm, the thunder (bax'aa^{n}) appeared to him. The lightning shot straight towards him, as if to hit him, and the bird was so near above his head that the man sometimes became afraid and ran away. If he staid, the thunder-bird became his spirit, and gave him medicine that was unusually powerful. Generally, it seems, the man cried incessantly, until he was exhausted and fell asleep. Then the spirit appeared to him, saying, "I pity you. What do you want?" The man said that he wished to be wealthy, or successful in war or love, or to
756 become a medicine-man. If he was to be a doctor, the spirit showed him
776 roots and plants, telling him to note their appearance, and informing him
787 of the diseases for which they were a cure. Those plants that he had seen in his dream or vision, the new doctor looked for until he found them. His spirit told him, "In so many years (naming the number) you will begin to doctor." After that time had elapsed, he began doctoring. The spirit or animal told him that the place where he was was its own home. From this time on, the man never killed the animal that had appeared to him (except, apparently, for the purpose of obtaining parts of it as a fetish or amulet); nor did he eat of it under any circumstances. He used a part of the animal, especially the claws or the fur, in his doctoring. If the spirit of a rock had appeared to him, he used a stone.

755 Medicine-men cured the sick by sucking the body and by brushing it. As is customary among Indians, they were believed to suck through the skin without biting, cutting, or puncturing it. They might suck blood, pebbles, cloth, human finger-nails, bunches of hair, and many other things. If they sucked out old pus, it was evidence that the disease was of long standing. If they brushed or rubbed the patient, they used owl-feathers, skunk-skin, prairie-dog fur, or similar parts of animals. Some used bells as rattles, some whistles, and some drums; and all sang, each doctor having his own songs. After sucking the patient, the doctor chewed up medicine, which he then applied to the patient's body. He often also gave him medicine boiled in water to drink. The powers of doctors varied. Different men were able to cure different diseases. It is said, however, that none could do much for affections of the ear.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Doctors were paid a horse or more for their services. Sometimes several, in turn, doctored a patient, each one blaming those that had failed before. Often they laid the sickness to spirits, or to other doctors. This last occurred especially if in their sucking they extracted human finger-nails or similar objects. In such a case the doctor got his patient to sleep. The patient might then in his dream see the person that had made him sick, and on awaking would denounce him. If the sick man died, his relatives might kill the doctor whom he had named as the cause of his sickness. 756

There were not so many women doctors as men. They appear not to have gone out to the mountains with the intention of acquiring supernatural power, but to have received guardian spirits when they were away from the camp, mourning.

The jugular and femoral arteries and the aorta were called ts'niinotanoudj[1] ("having no ears"), because, when severed, they did not heed any remedies.

In order to save the life of a sick relative, the joint of the little finger was sometimes cut off in sacrifice to the sun.

There were some medicine-men who, having had their fingers tied, then had their knees fastened together and their hands secured behind their back. After this they were wrapped in a robe and the robe was wound about with a rope. Then such a medicine-man called his spirit. When it appeared, he was loosened instantaneously, and the robe and the rope were thrown at the man that tied him.

Fig. 30 (50 1937). Doctor's Charm. Length, 22 cm.

[778]

826

755
304
782

756

A charm used by a doctor is shown in Fig. 30. It consists of a deer-tail with beaded base, and of two black feathers and a bunch of down feathers. All parts of the object are reddened. This piece was used to brush patients. At other times during the doctoring it was worn on the medicine-man's clothing.[2] 756 778

A man unsuccessful in winning a woman's love sometimes fasted on a 787 832

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

lodge cover, the hostess provided food and there was no other direct remuneration. If one sought knowledge as to how to use an ordinary medicinal root, something was given in exchange, but in a relatively small amount. On the other hand in compensation for the services of a medicine man, not only was food prepared, but in addition a much greater amount of property was given to the doctor, who in turn would see that those who had accompanied him to help in singing at the cure, would receive some goods as well. The amount offered to the doctor by the one paying for the services was governed by the reputation of the medicine man as well as by the individual's regard for his own reputation for generosity. People would say: "Look how much so-and-so thinks of his relative who was sick—he gave so much to the one who cured him." If the patient were very ill a whole family might really impoverish itself in paying doctors, were it necessary to call in one specialist after another, as sometimes happened. 183 431 476 [956]

Although apparently there was a tendency to call on relatives to perform services—such as naming a child, telling a war story at the erection of a new lodge, and so on—remuneration was forthcoming, although perhaps on not so large a scale as if a non-relative were called on to perform the same offices. [602]

In addition to exchange of goods effected through generous hospitality and the prestige-requirements of ostentatious liberality, including payment for services, the distribution of goods within the tribe was aided by gambling. Wagers were matched by two competing individuals and bet on an all-or-nothing basis. Considerable amounts of property changed hands at a single match.[19] [525]

[19] For a discussion of gambling among the Gros Ventres, see Flannery and Cooper, 1946.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

stance, it was the dark of the moon when a woman ceased menstruation, she kept track of the months by marking with charcoal on a piece of wood, or by notching a stick, each successive time the moon was in that phase and "she would usually estimate it right." 843 805 211

Childbirth usually took place right in the woman's own lodge. Should someone there be sick, he would be moved to another lodge if possible, for while it was considered bad for the sick person to be in the same lodge with a woman in her menses, it was much worse were the woman in labor, for the odor of the blood at delivery would affect the sick person adversely. In fact, a person who had only been near the place where a woman was being delivered was not allowed to come near a person who was ill. If the patient could not be moved, the woman in labor would go to another lodge, preferably to that of her grandmother or of her widowed aunt. She would avoid her own mother's lodge as her father or brothers might be around and she would be "ashamed" to go where they might be. 844 [841]

Although the attitude has somewhat changed now, in former times, according to Coming Daylight and Singer, a pregnant woman was supposed to be reticent regarding her condition right up to the last moment. She might suffer intensely, but "you would never know there was a thing wrong with her." Only when she seemed to be very close to term did they send for a midwife and for some old man or woman who would give her medicine. A male doctor did not touch a woman in labor, but would give her medicine to alleviate the pains. Mary told of her own experience. "There was a well-known doctor of this kind who died about ten years ago. He was blind and, when called on a case, would sit with a pot of medicine beside him. He attended me and when he heard me say I was in pain he would just touch me with the end of the stick and the cramps would go away. Finally I complained that I was tired. The midwife said that it would soon be over, but the old doctor told them: 'No. It hasn't turned yet.' I thought this was strange that he should know this as not only was he blind but he had not touched me. Later on he said: 'It will be about a half hour more.' And he was right." 844 756

Different practitioners have different methods. Singer witnessed the following case. "A man had received power from

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

844 756 'someone' [a supernatural agent] to relieve women in labor. His wife was assisting a woman who was experiencing great difficulty. She went to her husband and said: 'What are you made of that you don't pity and help us?' He paid no attention at first but finally gave in to her pleas. He said: 'All right. I will pity you folks. You blow this powdered medicine root on the nape of that woman's neck. Then boil a bit of this other medicine and give it to her with this horn spoon. Make her drink from this very spoon.' The treatment was successful and the child was born very shortly thereafter."

[842] 844 Sometimes such doctors would predict the sex of the expected child, but a common saying was that a woman herself could tell because "a boy will lie in the womb with his knees up, whereas a girl will lie flat."

It was not necessary to have both a midwife and a doctor if the midwife herself knew medicines. For instance, Coming Daylight's grandmother had medicines for childbirth and always looked after women without calling in anyone else. After Coming Daylight had borne her first child, her grandmother taught her all these medicines so that she in turn could assist her female relatives. They had to pay each one who helped at childbirth. The doctor, or the midwife who administered medicines, would receive as much as a horse, while the others who assisted were paid by gifts of lengths of cloth, blankets, or other articles of that sort.

The woman assumed a kneeling position and grasped a crossbar. "They won't let you lie down unless you are so weak you can't help yourself."[4] If a woman were slow in childbirth, the midwife tried to manipulate the foetus in the right place in order to speed the delivery. She massaged the woman gently and talked to her, telling her: "Take it easy. Don't think that you are going to have a hard time. Think of pleasant things. Make it easier for yourself."

Most women were very quiet even when the pains were bad. They always said that if a woman cries out she drives the child back. Furthermore, they said that it is bad if a woman turns and twists in pain as the cord will get all tangled up around the child.

Anyone assisting at the birth could cut the umbilical cord.

[4] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, p. 181.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

was full of 'nicotine,' and showed me how to draw out sickness through the stem. But I told him: 'I don't care to have any power, because people who accept power have only a certain length of time to live and it is always too soon [short].' " 787 778

Those who possessed gambling power in particular always became afflicted with some serious ailment of their legs and/or arms. There would be pain in and swelling of the joints, and the possessors would die before their time. This happened to Lone Bear, The Boy's wife's father, who had gambling power; while still in his prime his legs went bad, and even though he quit gambling to escape the penalty, he died prematurely. Red Whip, too, one of the greatest of those with gambling power, who died in 1912, died, the Gros Ventres believed, before his time. 753 787 778

It was believed that Bull Lodge, a great medicine man, did not live his life out.

A person, however, who had acquired power and later transferred all of it by gift or sale to another person or persons could thereby escape the penalty and live his life out. In this case the penalty would be transferred, along with the power, to the transferee or transferees.

Doctoring power was sometimes avoided or refused for other reasons than fear of or unwillingness to accept the penalty of illness or shortened life. Doctors, somewhat like keepers of the sacred Pipes, had to live restricted lives, abstain from certain foods, and avoid certain actions. Personal liberty was thus curtailed. Coming Daylight, when a young girl, was offered medicine power by a man four successive times in dreams, but she refused: "I did not want to be a medicine woman. I did not like it because medicine people suck on the affected part of the patient and have to swallow what they extract,—even though that man was showing me that I would have to extract with my hands, and not by sucking." Bad Bad Bull had power to cure the powerful "stomach-eating sickness" [cancer?] and used to suck out the small animal that caused it. In his old age he wanted to give this power to his sister, but she would say: "Oh, I am bashful. I would not be able to doctor that sickness. I would like to have the power so I could cure the pains but I would not like the part [or the curing pro- 787 756

787 cedure] where you pull [suck] it [the animal] out." When she
756 would say that people would tell her: "You should have taken the power and so gotten a lot of things [in payment] for curing that disease."

[831] Some women would refrain from asking power, particularly love power, from men who had it, because payment included allowing sex relations with the man.

787 While, then, the possession of powers brought the possessor
778 some very worthwhile advantages, advantages differing in kind according to the specific power acquired, it had its drawbacks—chiefly illness and shortened life, but also restrictions on freedom and other obligations distasteful to at least some individuals. The advice, therefore, given by parents and councilors to avoid seeking power is understandable. So, too, is the fact that many neither sought power nor accepted it when it was offered by supernatural beings or by fellow-tribesman. Many thus clung more to what appears to The Boy and others to have been the ideal Gros Ventre philosophy of life: For the fulfillment of your wishes rely on yourself and on prayer, rather than on magical power.

We recorded a number of cases of refusal of power, some of them already cited above in passing. In no case of refusal except one did the person refusing suffer any evil consequences therefor, and two of our informants, Coming Daylight and Singer explicitly stated that such refusal curtailed no penalty. A person was quite free to accept or decline an offer of power whether made by a power-giving being or a power-possessing fellow-tribesman. Neither of the latter would take offense if the offer were declined.

756 Coming Daylight in various free chats volunteered many details
778 of her own personal refusals of power. Her earliest experience
787 came when she was a very young girl, only about eight years old, and was living with her grandmother. "I used to sleep in a big lodge [with her grandmother]. While I was sleeping, a man came and wakened me. He had a bag of medicine on his back and told me, 'You can be a medicine woman.' The third time he appeared to me [in dreams], there was a person lying there, just skin and bones. The man [with the medicines] said to me, 'You could cure such persons as this one. You can take all these medicines,'

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787
756●
778

and he spread out, all the medicines and told her what each was for and said, 'Do everything I tell you to do. Lay your hands on the sick and you will have it [medicine? cause of illness?] on your hands.' But I never wanted to take this and I would tell the man so. In the morning I would tell my dream to my grandmother, although I was not supposed to do so until after the fourth dream, and my grandmother would say to me: 'Do not say anything. You will be a great medicine woman.' But I did not want this power. I kept refusing it and for this reason after the man had appeared to me in dreams the fourth time he quit coming. I would have been great if I had accepted the power but I did not want it.—Maybe if this dream had come to me later I might have accepted the power and then I would have been like Good Singer [Coming Daylight's father's sister, a famous medicine woman of Coming Daylight's earlier years]."

On later occasions, too, she was offered power in dreams, but she always refused and does not regret having so refused. "But," she said, "all I wanted was to live a peaceful life and get food easily. I have always been well fixed with things to eat and have gotten things easily, because I prayed for these things instead of taking medicine power . . . besides I had too many children to be a medicine woman. . . . My children were all Catholics. I too joined the Church, and I will be a good Catholic until I die."

Coming Daylight was also offered in a dream the power to "know children," that is, power to doctor women who did not want children and likewise refused it.*

On other occasions, an old medicine man, who had cured her infant daughter would offer to transfer curing power to her, at the implicitly understood common price of granting sex relations with him. "If you want that power," he would say, "you can come crying to me." But she used to answer: "Oh, I wouldn't do that because you are one of those who like to have women and you would try to have me."

One instance of refusal of power by Singer was noted previously. Another was described by her as follows. "Once when we had gone to Rocky Boy Reservation, I went quite a distance to fetch

*Cf. Flannery, 1953, p. 129.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

756 wood. Something in my sleeve kept biting me. I would sort of
787 work my sleeve but it kept biting me. Finally I took off my dress
and found it was a big spider with long legs. I did not kill it but
778 just brushed it off. That night in a dream the spider told me:
'Because you had pity on me, I will have pity on you.' But I told
the spider: 'I do not care for any powers from a bug or spider.'
Afterwards people told me I should have accepted the offered
power so that I could doctor spider bites. If you accept a power
like that you are shown in your dream how to doctor. Nothing
happens if you refuse such power." Every once in a while people
were bitten by spiders. Cora Chandler had heard of one such case:
[165] "One fourth of July at Lodge Pole a woman got bitten while fix-
ing her tent and died the same evening. Had Singer accepted the
power offered her, she could have doctored that woman."

Little Man, Al Chandler's adoptive father, once refused power from a rattlesnake to cure snake bites, but acquired power to cure seven dying persons. He had cured people and wanted to pass on what remained of his power to Al. But the latter in recounting the matter stated: "I did not want this power on account of the Catholic Church. I was afraid I might poison somebody. But the old man [Little Man] said: 'You will know all about it and what to do. All you have to do is to accept it. The rest will come to you. I am getting old and you might need it for your children. You could doctor your own children.' But the Catholics did not want you to do such things." So Al declined the old man's offer.

787 By three different men, who possessed love power, The Boy
was offered this power, but in all cases he refused. His accounts
832 follow.

778 "One old man lived near Bear Paws and when he came to my place, then on the Milk River, I used to accommodate him, although he would eat with my father, Lame Bull. He appreciated this and wanted to do something to repay the favor. So he said to me: 'I am going to give you my woman's medicine in payment for consideration of your service to me. I haven't anything of adequate value to pay you back.' He had a looking glass he used to do his stuff with. But I diplomatically refused. I told him: 'I do not like that kind of thing and never have, although I appreciate the fact

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

757 824 Some evil such as sickness or death would befall an unauthorized gatherer. When the right to gather a particular medicinal plant was transferred, the transferrer would take the transferee out and show him or her the growing plant and tell the name.

When a medicinal root was dug, some offering, such as a bit of tobacco or a necklace of beads, was put in the ground in its place, or in the case of gathering "white medicine" [fungus?], was placed alongside the tree. In making this offering a short prayer was said. The content and wording of the prayer differed from individual to individual. According to The Boy the gatherer would take the bit of tobacco and pray with it, saying, "I am going to use your medicine." "Your" would have reference to the Gros Ventre concept that the medicines while gotten immediately from a bear or rock or other inferior creature came ultimately from the Supreme Being. His name would be mentioned first in the prayer and so acknowledged as the one to whom all things, even these roots, ultimately belonged. The Last Child would be mentioned last and would get some share in the tobacco offered.

According to Singer, "When we take a [medicinal] root, we say: 'I give you this. I am putting something in your place. I didn't take you for nothing!' We talk like we are talking to a person. Most Indians have the same way." Coming Daylight who was present explained: "We are talking to Our Lord and we never leave out the Sun," and apparently the Last Child was included. She further explained on another occasion: "When they dig the [medicinal] root, they have something to put in place of it and they say: 'I am taking this. Have pity on us. Whatever way I may use this [root], may I be successful in my work.' Then they cover over the hole made by extracting the root. It is kind of buying it like." "Then when you have some of this medicine and pass it on, the receiver gives you something for it."

Doctoring Power

● 756 What kinds of power did professional medicine men and women possess? In attempting to answer it, we wish to emphasize that while certain individuals (such as Stiffarm) who effected cures, were definitely recognized as professional doctors with super-

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

natural power, and certain others (such as Coming Daylight) at the other end of the range as non-professional, the one type graded imperceptibly into the other, no sharp dividing lines existed, and many individuals who effected cure could on equally good grounds be classed with either the professionals or the non-professionals. We could discover no recognized criteria by which the two classes could be clearly and in all cases be distinguished.

A professional doctor was called nāta:nhehi, and this word was used only for professional doctors, or be:tānhehi, used for a "very powerful" medicine man or one with a painted lodge. This last term was a generic one for "holy" or "sacred persons," including Pipe keepers, persons with ghost helpers, medicine men, and "everyone who had any kind of supernatural power."

Professional medicine men and women were not organized into any kind of society or guild. Each operated singly and on his or her own.

Some medicine men and women, such as Black Raven (a cousin of Coming Daylight) and his wife, were general practitioners for "any kind of sickness like common colds," without any specialty. But most doctors, however, were specialists, with power to cure only certain diseases or in certain circumstances. There were many different kinds of doctors, each a specialist in only certain specific fields. One, for instance, could cure facial paralysis; another, rattlesnake bites; another, venereal disease. Some got special power to foretell the sex of unborn children or to prevent or promote conception. Thus Bear Nose had gotten to be such a doctor and also to have many horses by sleeping out on the mountains. He was told that he himself would have no offspring. One young man got power to help women who were going to give birth, but was told at the same time that he would never have any children of his own. Coming Daylight herself was offered in a dream the power to "know children," that is, to give medicine to women to prevent conception, but she refused the power. Some had power to help prevent or promote conception at will.[12] Another doctor had

[12] For further details on powers connected with childbirth and contraception, see Flannery, 1953, pp. 128-29.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

●756 power to cure "some kind of gland trouble;" others, to treat "a bursting blood vessel."

A professional doctor was under certain limitations, restrictions and taboos, and liabilities.

756 The being or beings who gave doctoring power would at the same time warn the recipient not to begin practice at once. "If,"
787 The Boy stated, "a person accepted the offer of medicine power, he would be told not to begin doctoring for so many years, but to keep his power a secret for the time being. . . . It would be known that a given man was sleeping around on high buttes. After a number of years he would declare his time was up, would keep his secret no more, and would start to practice. But even then very powerful doctors would usually not reveal who gave them their power." Coming Daylight, it is true, thought the recipient could start practicing at once, but Singer and Al Chandler were quite positive that deferment was required. According to Singer, "the one who gave the power for medicine would tell the receiver when he or she could start curing. It would usually be after at least four years." According to Al Chandler, "they [power-giving beings] give them [recipients] so many years to pass before they can do medicine work."

Lame Bull lost his doctoring power as a result of doctoring before his years of "probation" were up. The wife of the brother of his "best wife" was ill, and this wife threatened to leave Lame Bull unless he doctored that woman. Under such duress, Lame Bull agreed to doctor her, and he cured her. After he did so he was told in a dream that he had lost out and would not be a doctor because he had doctored before his time of probation or deferment was over. A night or two after, a spider came out of his ear and a thunder-rock out of his mouth. Lame Bull was not keeper of the Flat Pipe at this time.

In some instances, at least according to Coming Daylight, "when a man got some doctoring power he would tell his wife. . . . She would be the one to call her husband's power to the attention of others."

756 Supernatural power to cure very grave illness was often bestowed under limitations as to number of cases. Thus White

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Weasel was given power to cure only a limited number of cases; 756
Goes Back, a medicine woman, was granted power to cure only one case and she used it to cure Coming Daylight's husband, Little Man; Al Chandler's adoptive father, also called Little Man, got power [from a coyote] to cure seven persons at the point of death, but used it in only three cases. There were no limitations ordinarily, it appears, on power to cure minor ailments; a professional doctor, Cora Chandler stated, "could do other little doctoring as often as called."

Doctors, as The Boy expressed it, "had to live restricted lives, 756
to avoid doing certain things or eating certain foods, somewhat 784
like keepers of sacred Pipes." According to Al Chandler, one was forbidden to eat buffalo heart under penalty of death, and "certain medicine men people tell about were vulnerable only in one certain spot,"—in one case the man's big toe, in another, a spot on his shoulder. This latter doctor always wore a little circle of willow wrapped with weasel skin over this spot; he was wounded badly but, until that spot on his shoulder was hit, was not killed. The donor of power might warn the recipient never to let anyone do some specific thing to him. Thus Little Man, Al Chandler's adoptive father, when he got power was warned by the supernatural donor: "Never let anyone pull your hair. Here however, is the remedy. If there is anyone present when your hair is pulled tell him to make a smudge of sweet pine, then put it near your nose, and if you can sniff it you will come through safe, otherwise you are a goner." Actually Little Man's death, as Al Chandler told it in detail, occurred shortly after a quarrel with his wife in the course of which she pulled his hair. Little Man quit fighting and sat quiet. Two or three days later he was down sick. White and Indian doctors were called in but none could do anything for him. Al Chandler went to stay with him but he did not want Al there. He wanted to die and did not want Al to talk him out of it. In a little while he was dead.

Doctors, or at least some of them, got power not only to cure 754
but also to cause sickness and to kill, poison or otherwise harm people. Some other doctors were believed to have used such lethal power, although such use was definitely looked upon as a crime

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

789 voyance and prophecy, and particularly of wonder working, such as making sugar from sand, matches from grass, and so forth. Some feats of legerdemain, integral and non-integral to curing procedures, have been described in detail. While skill at legerdemain was possessed, as we have seen, by individuals with ancestral helpers, by at least one famous gambler, and probably by other non-medical men, it was especially common among professional doctors. It was, in most cases and by most of the laity believed to be a supernatural gift and, of course, served to give corroborative evidence to the laity of the genuineness of the curing powers of the practitioner, to enhance his (or her) prestige, and to keep and extend his clientele.

Exercise of Powers

756 Each doctor in curing practice used his or her own distinctive rites. Certain rites and observances however were commonly followed by many or all doctors. These more common rites and observances will be described first, after that, some examples of distinctive ones.

The ordinary procedure to engage the services of a doctor for a given case was to go to him (or her) and offer him a pipe filled with tobacco or tobacco mixture. Acceptance and smoking of the pipe by the doctor,—and in accord with the general Gros Ventre pattern, the request with offer of a pipe could hardly be refused,—meant that he agreed to take the case. Sometimes just tobacco was sent or brought to him. In certain instances, too, where petitioner and doctor were related the pipe offering could be dispensed with. Thus in view of their relationship, Al Chandler related that he asked his adoptive father, Little Man, on a given occasion to accept a case without the pipe offering. "I did not have to have a pipe. My father would do anything for me, pipe or no pipe."

"It was important," The Boy explained, "how you handed the pipe to the doctor before calling him. Before approaching him, you would ask around: 'How do you hand the pipe to so-and-so?' A number of doctors might have the same way, but not all had. If no one knew [for a given doctor], then you would ask the doctor

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

himself and he would say: 'Hand me the pipe stem first,' or 'bowl first,' or 'sideways,' or 'lay it on the ground.' Some doctors did not require a pipe, but only tobacco, when they were asked to treat a case." 756

Lame Bull did not require a pipe, but he had to be called four times. Each time the petitioner would start from the patient's lodge, go to Lame Bull's lodge, open the flap of the door, and, without going inside, say to him: "I am calling you to doctor." This was a procedure peculiar to Lame Bull, who at the time was not a Pipe keeper.

The doctor commonly had a helper or helpers to assist at or in the doctoring,—his wife often, or certain men and women specified by the doctor. Not infrequently these latter were relatives of his.

The rite itself was "sort of private." Only the doctor, the appointed helpers, the patient and the patient's immediate family were allowed to be present. "People would not be allowed just to drop in" during the curing rite. Two guards were (or might be) stationed outside the lodge to keep people away. Intrusion by anyone during a curing rite might render the rite futile, and lead to grave consequences as illustrated in the following cases reported by The Boy. 755 756

"A young man was about to be doctored. Just as the rite started a man came to the lodge and said to the two guards outside: 'I have the right to go inside. I want to see this great doctor.' They let him enter. As he did so, blood rushed out of the doctor's mouth, and the doctor said: 'Carry me back to my lodge as quick as possible.' When he got there he said: 'Fill up a pipe quickly and give it to me.' He then took a few puffs, fumigated his hand and 'rubbed' himself with the smoke, and got all right. The intruder had purposely come in to spoil the doctor's medicine, for he suspected that the young man patient was in love with his wife and he wanted him to die. And the young man did die." 756

In another case while a doctor was treating a patient, a band chief who was drinking heavily at the time and who had recently killed a relative of the doctor came into the lodge without leave and asked the master of the lodge for whiskey. The doctor packed

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

756 up his medicines at once, went home, got his rifle, came back and shot the band chief dead on the spot.[18]

755 Sometimes the doctor, just before actually beginning treatment of his patient, would test out, or make a show of testing out, his power to know beforehand whether his treatment would be successful. One doctor, Sits Holy, for instance, just about to treat a wounded man in whose spine an arrowhead was lodged, said: "I'll test my power first to see if I can extract the arrowhead." The season was late fall. The doctor sang and made incense, and then a young bear stuck its paws out of the doctor's mouth and growled loud enough to be heard over the camp. Then the doctor "got" [made appear] ripe service-berries and choke-berries. Then he took a bear claw, dug in the ground right where he was sitting, and pulled out a fresh wild turnip. Then he said, "I'll be successful." And so he was; he extracted the arrowhead. In another case, a doctor, when just about to start treatment, picked up a piece of wood carved in the shape of an arrowhead, and turned it into an iron arrowhead, and so went forward confidently to begin treatment.

Commonly, perhaps always, the doctor's first ritual act in actual curing was praying with and smoking a pipe. The doctor would hold up the pipe and pray, first, as usual, to the Supreme Being, and then to his or her particular power-bestower,—animal, rock, or whatever it was.

While curing rites were apt to be rather noisy, tense and thrilling experiences for all present, the doctor did not go into trance or lose consciousness during them.

The more common elements in the curing ritual and procedure were singing, drumming, rattling, incensing, and searching out the cause of the ailment. "The people," said Coming Daylight, "who are in there [the lodge where rite was performed] always have to sing when the medicine man doctors." The doctor would ordinarily, it seems, start the singing and drumming, and then the others present would join in or take over entirely while the doctor carried through his or her treatment.

According to The Boy, "when a medicine man started off he

[18] Cf. Flannery, 1953, pp. 49-51.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

755 there and saw two fresh graves. They dig a hole about three or
[764] four feet deep and put sticks across, cover that with canvas and cover the canvas with dirt. I laid down on one of the graves and that is where they found me. When I did not come back my father started looking for me. I was just like dead and they got an old medicine man to work on me, for at that time my adopted father, Little Man, had not yet gotten doctoring power.

"When I woke up, my father, my stepfather (the man married to my real mother), a woman and the old doctor, Black Bird, were there in this big lodge. I did not know what had happened to me but when I woke up I saw old Black Bird sitting by me. He had a china saucer with medicine in it and with four little brass bells [sic] in the medicine. He told me to drink up the medicine. I took the medicine but tried to balk at the bells. But the old man said: 'No, no drink the bells and all. The bells will be your protection. You will never get sick and ghosts will no longer be able to harm you. You could go to sleep with them and sit up with them [without harm to you from them]."

In a long narrative of a battle between the Gros Ventres and the Crow, The Boy described, very briefly, the manner in which one of the Gros Ventres was cured. After the fighting was over this man was found unconscious, bleeding from a wound in the arm. One of the Gros Ventres knew how to staunch the flow of blood He had an otter-skin with medicine tied on the nose thereof. With this he treated the wounded man's arm. The flow of blood stopped at once and the man regained consciousness. A travois was made and they had the man's relatives haul him back to the main camp on it.

●756 A number of other individuals with doctoring power were mentioned by name at various times by our informants—Sleeping Bear, He Steals, Bill Jones, Ragged Robe (d. about 1935), Otter Robe, Joe Assiniboine—but we obtained no information on their
[795] curing procedures. We knew Joe Assiniboine, who alone of the surviving Gros Ventres refused to the last to become a Catholic and who died only recently in 1942 or 1943, but unfortunately, though not patently unfriendly to us, was consistently reluctant to give information.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

In the preceding pages we have been concerned with the ritual procedures used in the exercise of curing power, of "good" doctoring power. We now turn to procedures used for working "bad" power, for doing harm to people putting spells on them, "shooting" them, in a word, for practicing witchcraft. Our information on such procedures is much less detailed than we would desire, for those who resorted to the use of such "bad" power did so secretly as a rule and were very reticent about their procedures. Furthermore, so far as we could judge, "bad" power was less frequently used than "good" power. 754

Bad medicine could be put on the victim by sheer wishing. Singer referred to one very powerful medicine man as "being able to just wish somebody dead." The victim would be "poisoned" at a distance by the medicine man. As Al Chandler explained the matter:

"There were some bad medicine men who had medicine that could poison you without their touching you or associating with you, no matter how far away they might be from you, even two miles. They wanted to do something to you or to somebody you loved. Then you or your loved one got sick all of a sudden. That was considered a crime. This medicine man may have had it in for you for some reason, jealousy or something like that, and he would poison you. He would just sit in his lodge and perform there and say whom he was doing this to, and this person would get sick or something would happen to him. . . . Some medicine man could poison you without touching you."

The bad medicine man would commonly operate by "shooting" the victim, that is, by projecting some object into the victim's body. Singer was once so "shot" with a finger nail, Coming Daylight's husband, Little Man, with a bit of rag (supra, p. 341). "One man's medicine," according to Thomas Main, "was a sand burr. He could wish it to go a long way off and lodge in a man's throat, and the man would die after a while."

Failures and Skepticism

Failures by doctors to cure were apparently quite common. We were told incidentally of a number of cases. We obtained no in- 756

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

756 formation, however, on the causes to which doctors attributed failure to cure.

Some doctors were believed by some at least of the people to resort to deliberate deceit and trickery. Al Chandler remarked that "so many times doctors fake and try to get everything a person owns." An implication to this effect is also contained in his account of the acquisition of doctoring power by his adoptive father, Little Man, and in his direct statement regarding him: "Little Man was honest. He never faked and everybody like him. If he couldn't cure, he wouldn't want anything. He would wait before he took what a person paid because he wanted to see if the patient was really well." Faking by medicine men to get something from a person, he stated, was looked upon as a crime.

Coming Daylight gave a detailed account of her catching one medicine-man, in the act of deception.

755 756 "At one time a Gros Ventre man named Strong Man was married to a Piegan woman. She was suffering with something in her stomach. It is something that moves in the stomach and causes great suffering. The English name for it, I think, is cancer, but it might be something else. So Strong Man sent someone to call a particular medicine man who, instead of coming right away, said: 'Wait until tomorrow. In the meantime make a lodge and make it well and clean with nothing dirty in it, and have everything ready you intend to give me.'

"I could see this medicine man's house from where I lived. My corral was some distance away around a bend. During the day I saw this man and his wife walking together straight ahead without looking back. When I saw them do so the third time I began to think they were up to something. So I waited and watched, and when they went the fourth time and had gotten as far as my corral, I ran over to their house.

"Sure enough by their bed was a bowl, covered. I ran over and uncovered it. The bag from the end of the guts was in water in this bowl and I said to myself: 'Sure enough. That is just what I thought. He is up to something. He is preparing this 'cancer' or whatever it is that he is going to pull out of that sick woman.' So I ran back quickly to my own house, and when that man and

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

his wife returned home they did not know I had been at their house. 755

"My husband, Little Man, was out hunting horses. When he came back I told him: 'This crazy thing has already prepared what he is going to pull out.' I told him of my visit to the house and of that thing that was in the bowl. That medicine man had told me and my husband to come with him and his wife when he would go to doctor the woman, so we could get something [as payment]. So I told my husband: 'You are going to see that the thing he pulls out is the same thing that is in the bowl.' 756

"So the next day we all went over the hills to Strong Man's place. The others all went into the nice lodge that had been prepared for the doctoring. But I did not go, I just stayed in Strong Man's house, but I could hear them singing. The people who are in there always had to sing when the medicine man is doctoring.

"Little Man sat by the door of the lodge. The man did his medicine work. He always had a white handkerchief and a black one. This time he used the black one. He would kind of do things under that black handkerchief. Of course he did it so quickly that you could hardly see what he was doing. Sure enough, however, he had that thing I had told my husband about and he pretended that he had taken it out of the woman.

"He showed it first to all the men, and one of them said: 'Oh, that is the way this animal looks that eats on a person!' So Little Man looked at it and it was the very same thing I had seen in the bowl. Little Man clasped his hands in the gesture that indicated you think to yourself something is awful or powerful. Then all the women had to look at it and they especially make all kinds of exclamations about that thing. Then they handed it back to the doctor and he cut it up and ate it, and he drank all the water it was soaked in. Little Man was thinking to himself: 'Of all the dirty things he eats!' "

Attention may be called to Little Man's gesture of admiration or awe made in spite of his inner conviction of trickery. This behavior contrasts with Coming Daylight's open flaunting, on another occasion, of her disbelief in the same medicine man. It may be recalled, too (supra, p. 347), that while Little Man used to make fun of Stiffarm for wearing a special bracelet, he was careful not 756

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

756 to do so in Stiffarm's presence. Making fun to their face of powerful medicine men or so expressing skepticism of their power was evidently not considered prudent.

Skepticism, or at least profession of skepticism, regarding the powers of medicine men or regarding some powers of some medicine man, was not confined to Coming Daylight and her husband, their own skepticism centered mostly on one doctor. We recorded a number of professions of skepticism, but what weight and interpretation should be put on them is not easy to say. Even though Little Man, Coming Daylight's husband, "did not," she said, "believe in Indian doctors," at one time at least, he submitted to treatmenet by Goes Back and became convinced she had extracted the cause of his illness. Another man present at Little Man's cure said, "I too never believed things," but he likewise was convinced when he saw the rag that Goes Back extracted.

In general, our evidence on doctoring points definitely toward the conclusion that the powers of medicine men, both for curing and for causing illness, were all but universally believed in. Such skepticism as prevailed was confirmed to certain individual skeptics and even in these cases or in most of them as regards not doctors in general but only certain individual doctors, and not all powers and procedures of the doctor but only certain ones. Furthermore profession of skepticism need not in all cases of course have been indicative of actual skepticism, and even actual skepticism would give place to belief when the skeptic witnessed cures, or profession of skepticism to profession of belief when the doctor was present. Some of such skepticism as prevailed may well have been a compensation reaction to the size and kind of payment demanded by some doctors. To this matter of payment we now turn.

Payment for Services

756 465 Some payment or gift was commonly, perhaps always, made to even the non-professional individual who gathered a medicine for you or gave one to you or who treated you, unless he or she was your very close relative. One who wanted "fish medicine" from a person who had brought it back from Minnesota would buy it from him. Singer remarked: "My mother always taught me: 'If

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

you are not feeling well and someone brings you medicine, say, medicine to clear you out after childbirth, and you have nothing else to give the person, just give a dish of food.'" Coming Daylight, who was not a professional doctor, was called about 1928 to attend a childbirth and, when ready to leave after looking after the mother in every way, was given a big sack of flour, a small sack of sugar, and five dollars in cash. Mary Ereaux, in speaking of the two roots given to Coming Daylight by the latter's grandmother to hasten childbirth and to bring the mother's milk quickly, remarked: "They say that if it [either of these roots] is given to an outsider [not a close relative of Coming Daylight], the recipient must pay, else it wouldn't be any good." "Last winter [1939-40]," Mary Ereaux said on another occasion, "I had a cold. An old lady picked some roots for me and I gave her potatoes and eggs in place of this medicine. They believe such medicine does not work if you don't pay for it, no matter how easy it is to gather the particular medicine."

A payment or fee was always expected by the professional doctor for his or her services, unless again the patient was a close relative. The doctor had commonly "paid" well in hardship or goods to acquire his power; he expected to be paid well in turn. And even though he had acquired ownership of it, not the hard way by quest or purchase, but by spontaneous offer from some being or by free gift from some relative, he still "paid" in shortened life and in restrictions on freedom. Doctors did not make their whole living from their practice but the fees received by them, especially by "great" doctors, were substantial additions to income and wealth. This economic goal loomed large in the consciousness of the people and of the professional doctor. When, for instance, Bad Bad Bull's sister refused his offer to her of power to cure stomach sickness, people said to her: "You should have accepted this power and so have gotten a lot of things for curing this disease." Doctoring was an avenue to wealth and to the ease and prestige that came with wealth, but in general was not practiced by the young. It was, however, a form of "old age insurance."

Sometimes professional doctors named their fee before accepting a case. "Give me this or that, and I'll doctor you." At other times

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

756 the person cured, or his relatives, gave what they thought equitable. "Sometimes," Mary Ereaux said, "doctors set a price and other times they say 'just what you want to pay.' Ragged Robe, who doctored me, never set a price, because I used to keep him and his wife during the winter. I would just give them, over and above that, whatever I could afford at the time." Coming Daylight, when asked if the doctors set a price, thought this funny. "People," she said, "pay the doctor they call what they think his services are worth,"—a remark which might suggest that the amount of payment was commonly left to the patient or his relatives. When Singer's husband was cured by Good Singer, the latter was given "the best of what they had."

Usually the objects to be given in payment were gathered together and put in view before treatment began and were turned over to the doctor just before or just after treatment, whether cure was actually effected or not. What Al Chandler reported of his adopted father,—"if Little Man couldn't cure you, he wouldn't want anything; he would wait before he took what a person paid, because he wanted to see if the patient was really well,"—was seemingly an exceptional practice.

The doctor would commonly share some of his fee with the men and women designated by him to be present at the rite and to help him.

Sometimes the payment made to a doctor was a modest one. Coming Daylight "every now and then took grub and wood to the medicine woman" who brought her daughter back to health. Ordinarily, however, at least in cases of serious or critical illness, the fee paid was a substantial one, such as horses, blankets, clothing, and large amounts of food.[18]

In Coming Daylight's earlier days, before money came in, clothing or a horse would be given to the main doctor who assisted at childbirth, and additional fees to helpers. One medicine man was paid a whole outfit of clothing, down to the moccasins, and his wife a half buffalo (or elk), for curing Coming Daylight when her "milk was bad" and she feared she would lose her infant daughter. Goes Back received a "nice horse" for curing Coming Daylight's hus-

[18] Cf. Flannery, 1953, p. 87.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

band, Little Man; Drops In The Fire, a horse for curing Crow Bull; Stiffarm, lots of things, horses and so forth, including "one lovely mare," for treating—unsuccessfully—Little Man. Good Singer received "horses, blankets and such things," for curing Singer herself. Bull Lodge was given "the best horses" for treating Al Chandler's uncle. All the foregoing payments were for cases of serious illness. Mae Main stated that a person who wanted to procure a certain contraceptive root would have to "pay a big price for this, sometimes two or three horses." 756

Sometimes, how commonly or rarely it is hard to say, a medicine man would stipulate sex relations as his payment or part thereof. Cora Chandler had heard "that some medicine men take women afterwards as part of the payment for curing." "This," she explained, "is why Coming Daylight was afraid of that medicine man when he was stark naked," having disrobed before starting to treat her (supra, p. 338). "Occasionally," Thomas Main had heard, "in very serious circumstances a man, to save the life of a brother or of someone dear to him, would pay the fee of giving his wife [allowing the doctor sex relations with her]." 837 756

The relative decline of native doctoring is due in part to the influence of the missionaries and of the civil authorities, in part no doubt to educational and other accultural factors. All the Gros Ventres today are members of the Catholic Church. "Joe Assiniboine," said Coming Daylight, "a good medicine man, still living [in 1940: he died in 1942 or 1943], never joined the Church; joining would take his power away from him." Stiffarm, one of the last of the great doctors, who died in 1932, on becoming a Catholic and later a catechist, is reported by one informant to have renounced his doctoring powers. One reason Coming Daylight gave for not accepting doctoring power herself was, "my children were all Catholics and I joined the Church and I will be a good Catholic till I die." Little Man, Al Chandler's adopted father, wanted to pass on some of his curing power to him, but Al did not want it, because, he said, he was afraid he would "poison someone" but also on account of the Catholic Church. . . . "The Catholics didn't want you to do such things." 177 795 756

8:Flannery E-5 (1940-1948)1960 NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

INDIVIDUAL VARIATION IN CULTURE

Regina Flannery

It is generally accepted that what Benedict called the Dionysian configuration of Plains culture represents a dominant, if not the only trend. By definition a configuration is a generalization lying behind and explaining a number of cultural patterns. A pattern itself is of course an abstraction from the behavior of a number of individuals. The behavior of any one person may vary at different times in respect to a particular type of situation, but it is unlikely that the individual will show the whole range of possible behavior within a pattern; it will cover only a portion thereof. As Linton pointed out, the difference between the individual mode within this segment, and the mode of the behaviors on which the pattern is based, reflects the compromise which every individual has to make between the culture patterns of his society and his own inclinations. It would seem further, then, that if the modes of an individual's behavior-ranges show a consistent displacement with respect to a large series of patterns, it is safe to assume that the direction of this displacement reflects some quality of the individual.[1] The question we wish to raise is this: If the aspect of personality thus revealed runs counter to a dominant trend of his culture, is the individual a misfit in that society? [2]

In attempting an answer, let us examine some individual variations within those patterns of Plains culture in which expression of emotional excess, and dangerous experience were expected of women in one Plains society, that of the Gros Ventres of Montana. We shall outline in some detail the behavior of one Gros Ventre woman in respect of these selected patterns—from which the Dionysian configuration was abstracted—and contrast her behavior with that of others of approximately the same age. All had participated as adults in the old way of life before the disappearance of the buffalo in 1887. [181]

In Gros Ventre culture, as in all the Plains, there was high valuation placed on direct contact of the individual with the supernatural through dreams and visions. Men could actively seek such contact by employing dangerous means, and did so in order to obtain many kinds of power. While women did not go on the actual power quest, they might acquire medicine powers and less frequently, perhaps, powers of clairvoyance. Medicine powers were considered dangerous in that, it was believed, by accepting them a limitation was put upon the life span of the practitioner. But the rewards in terms of prestige for successful performance and of payment for services were high for women as well as for men. Not every individual man was successful in his quest, nor of course was every woman vouchsafed the kinds of dreams which were requisite. Coming Daylight, the woman whose behavior we are examining in particular, was what her contemporaries considered fortunate indeed in having been offered curing powers of several kinds. Nevertheless she rejected the possibility each time, in spite of the fact that she had a living example in the person of her father's sister of what it could mean in prestige to a woman who accepted. As the reasons for her refusal seem significant I shall describe her experience in her own words. 787 183 [562] 756 [554] 159 756

[p.87]

8:Flannery E-5 (1940-1948)1960 NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

"My experience was by dreaming. One time before I was married—I must have been about eight years old—I was sleeping in a big lodge and a 'person' came and wakened me. He had a bag of medicines on his back. He came to me on four successive nights and laid out these medicines and told me what each was for. On the third of these nights there was a man lying there—he was just skin and bones. The 'person' who had awakened me told me: 'You could take all these medicines and you could cure people like that one lying there' [i.e., a person in the last extremity]. In my dream I would do everything he told me, manipulate my hands to draw out the sickness, and do everything. But I didn't want that power and would tell him so. Each morning too I would relate to my grandmother exactly what had happened in the night but she would try to hush me up, telling me: 'Don't say anything; don't tell anyone. You will be a great medicine woman.' But I didn't want that power. I didn't like it because when medicine people suck on the weak part of the sick person they have to swallow what they extract. I had decided I would rather be quiet and not do anything like that, or sacrifice my flesh, or things of that kind. Perhaps if it had come later I might have taken that power and become great."

Nevertheless when later in life she had other dreams indicating supernatural power, she likewise refused. She explained in regard to one of these experiences, for instance: "The one who awakened me this time had told me to face the rising sun and was showing me how to make a smudge from the moss that grows close on logs; but I told him. 'No. I would rather not have it.' Those who have power die too soon."

Incidentally, still in connection with curing, bleeding was an operation which was performed purely as a natural remedy for a person who felt dizzy or sluggish. Anyone could do it—no supernatural validation was needed. Other women described quite casually how it was done and discussed the various times they had actually performed the operation. Coming Daylight, however, insisted that while there was really nothing to such an operation, she could never bring herself to perform it, nor would she allow anyone else to bleed her; she could not stand the sight of blood.

The aversion to the sight of blood and to self-mutilation was evidently deep-seated and showed itself in a marked manner early in her life. On one occasion a close relative was very ill. In such a situation it was expected that every member of the family would rally around and do whatever he could toward the recovery. Among the things that fell within the scope of activity for female relatives was that of vowing to sacrifice something valuable, including perhaps the blood from one's arm or a finger-joint, if the person recovered. At this particular time, Coming Daylight was a young child, and her grandmother decided that it would be appropriate for the little girl to offer that her finger-tip be removed if the relative regained his health. When it was suggested to her, Coming Daylight refused, even though her grandmother took after her with a stick. She actually ran away and wandered alone, until two nights later the relative died and an uncle finally found her.

On another occasion in her early youth, too, she defied a convention connected with kinship by refusing to join in mourning for an uncle who had been killed in revenge for having instigated the murder of his brother's wife. When her grandmother upbraided Coming Daylight for not expressing grief in the traditional manner, the latter defied her by saying: "I am not going to cry for that man. I don't know why you are crying for him. I have worked for that woman and she has fed me, and has even given me meat to bring home to you. I heard

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787 mountain and asked the spirit that appeared to him for a love-medicine
832 which would bring him the woman. Soon after, she would come to him and try to obtain his love, but usually he would reject her, for a time at least, by way of revenge.

A young middle-aged man of the present time is noted for his love-medicine. He tells the following. He was once in love with a woman who only reviled him. For a long time this was on his mind. Constantly thinking of her harsh treatment of him, he fasted in a number of places, and finally received supernatural power. Then the woman came to him. She kissed him on the cheek; but he said, "You have abused me," and he made her go away. Four times she came to him; only the fourth time did he consent to gratify her wishes. Since that time, he has frequently used his medicine. His present wife was living with a white trader, where she had every comfort and great abundance; but by his medicine he made her leave the trader for him. His wife, it would appear, looks upon his powers without jealousy. He sells the use of his medicine to young men for two horses. His young son is crippled, so that he would have difficulty in winning women; but his father is keeping the medicine for him, so that he will be able to possess any woman he desires. The objects used include several medicine-plants. Some of these appear to be used to incense the man who is making the
[824] medicine. When a woman is unusually obdurate, wild parsnip (the root supposed to produce the peculiar state of mind of the crazy-dance) is employed by this man. When he begins to exert his influence on a woman, she becomes restless and sexually excited. She leaves the tent frequently, and will cohabit with any man. When the influence of the medicine is removed, she remains faithful to her lover.

MEDICINES AND PLANTS.

278 The following medicines, consisting chiefly of plants, are almost wholly
757 family remedies, and, while no doubt also used by medicine-men, their supposed effects are generally known, and not connected with any personal supernatural experiences of the person using them. As the specimens were secured in winter, it was impossible to obtain material for botanical identification.

Wanouwasôô ("wart-medicine"), a root, is used for stomach-ache (specimen Museum No. 50-1890).

A root called ahaⁿtjiniçaⁿ ("wood-like") is used for colic. This seems to be the root of a species of Asclepias (specimen Museum No. 50-1836).

A root called baasô ("red medicine," because it is reddish when fresh) is used for diarrhœa (specimen Museum No. 50-1914).

1; Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

A plant called hăyaa"t[a] is used both as a perfume and as a medicine. Pieces of it tied by a string to the shoulder of the shirt give a pleasant smell. It is also laid in warm water without being boiled, and the water is then used as medicine for sore eyes (specimen Museum No. 50-1883). 278 757

In case of snow-blindness, charcoal is put around the eyes, and believed to be very efficacious.

The green stems of a plant containing a white juice are used for women who have no milk. The Arapaho use the same plant for a similar purpose, and call it "milk liquid."[1]

A root called băetset ("hand," on account of the peculiar conformation of the roots) is laid in very small quantity into cold water, which is drunk by women to insure easy child-birth (specimen Museum No. 50-1946). [844]

The flowers of a composita called niha"ăănou ("yellow-head") or tjitjixta"sibyiisöö are put on coals for a woman who has given birth. She stands above the fire to incense herself (specimen Museum No. 50-1944).

Another plant called niha"năănou ("yellow-head"), which grows close to the water, is boiled, and drunk for pain in the back or in the body (specimen Museum No. 50-1945).

A root called niitasou ("sharp") is pulverized, and then applied to sores in the mouth and on the tongue (specimen Museum No. 50-1838).

A rock lichen called bennatsön is chewed for a sore mouth (specimen Museum No. 50-1874).

The root of tyatyanicä is obtained from swampy land far to the north of the Gros Ventre habitat. The roots are soaked in water and the black portions removed. Then they are grated, mixed with water, and applied to the neck for sores (specimen Museum No. 50-1907).

A root called kouh'ya" is chewed until a sticky paste results, which is applied to sores (specimen Museum No. 50-1919).

A fungus called tsäädjina" is set on fire, and when glowing is applied to wounds or sores. It is also pulverized, and put on the gums of children when they are teething. It is said to grow on birch-trees, near the root (specimen Museum No. 50-1837). [752]

The roots of iniitsöö are boiled and the water used to wash the part of the body which has been burned by the application of the glowing fungus tsäädjina" (specimen Museum No. 50-1856). [752]

Ilyaa"tou-leaves, which are also used as incense, are boiled in water. This is then applied to the body to allay pain (specimen Museum No. 50-1790). This medicine is the Arapaho niiba"tou or iba"tou (fir or similar leaves), used both as incense[2] and as medicine.[3]

[1] See Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part IV, p. 438.
[2] Ibid., Vol. XVIII, Part I, p. 32.
[3] Ibid., Part IV, p. 426.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

278 757 Na^{n}kasö ("white medicine") is a fungus growing high on pine-trees. It has a general use for any disease (specimen Museum No. 50–1796).

The leaves of ka^{n}kadyikou, growing in the mountains, are boiled, and the tea used as medicine for various purposes (specimen Museum No. 50–1897).

[752] The bark of iinaa^{n}söönicou is either chewed in the native state, or boiled and drunk, for hemorrhages and pain in the back. The plant is said not to grow in the Gros Ventre country (specimen Museum No. 50–1943).

Tawaa^{n}nasöö-root is used for pleurisy and heart-sickness. It is said to taste sweet. The root is either chewed, or boiled and drunk. This is the Arapaho häçawaanaxu, and is much used in the age-ceremonies of both tribes (specimen Museum No. 50–1855).

Juniper-berries (çää^{n}touwun) are a cure for asthma. They are either eaten entire, or they are pulverized and boiled, and the water drunk. The leaves, called "çää^{n}touwuusöö," are mixed with the root, and then used as a remedy for hemorrhage. The leaves are also used by the doctors to incense themselves before they begin to doctor (specimen Museum No. 50–1854).

The root called niäätä^{n}, used by the Arapaho ceremonially and as an ingredient for incense, is employed by the Gros Ventre as a remedy for tuberculosis and hemorrhages. It is said not to be used as incense. The root is boiled before being used. It is eaten in the solid state, or a decoction of it is drunk (specimen Museum No. 50–1793).

The root of naw'asöö ("fish medicine") is eaten for colds (specimen Museum No. 50–1794).

Niitsiça^{n} ("hollow root") is primarily a horse-medicine. It is given to horses to strengthen and refresh them. People also use a decoction of it as a remedy for colds (specimen Museum No. 50–1795).

Niha^{n}nisö ("yellow medicine") is used for colds. Either the root is eaten, or water in which it has been boiled is drunk (specimen Museum No. 50–1799).

A plant which grows north of the Gros Ventre country, and for which they appear to have no name, is used for colds and sore throat, a small quantity of the root being chewed (specimen Museum No. 50–1848).

A root called taw'haa^{n} is obtained from other tribes. The plant is said not to grow in the Gros Ventre country. It is pounded and used as snuff in order to clear the head in case of cold or headache (specimen Museum No. 50–1797).

The stems and leaves of waasöwahaa^{n}, a sweet peppermint, are used for headache. The plant is also drunk as tea (specimen Museum No. 50–1791).

The root called wanaa^{n}sübyaa^{n} ("smelling loud") is smoked in the pipe against headache (specimen Museum No. 50–1798).

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

A plant called tyäñänou is used as perfume, as a wash for the hair, and as a minor medicine. Bunches of the plant were used as perfume. A tea boiled of it is thought to make the hair grow while perfuming it. Such a tea is also poured into the nostrils as a remedy for headache (specimen Museum No. 50–1920). 278 757 [302]

Niibyouäxtjin is used as perfume. The stems and leaves are chewed, and applied to the body (specimen Museum No. 50–1853). [302]

Tsaa"sübin is used as perfume. It is chewed, and rubbed on the hair (specimen Museum No. 50–1792).

One ingredient of incense is the callosity from the leg of a horse above the knee. This is cut up fine, and burned with sweet-grass. It is also worn on the body on a string.

Pine-nuts or other conifer-seeds are used for pemmican (specimen Museum No. 50–1913). [562] 824

For embroidery, dark fibrous water-plants, at"hin (the Arapaho atahina"), are used (specimen Museum No. 50–1891).

Quills are dyed yellow with a solution from a conifer-lichen, no doubt the widely used *Evernia vulpina*, called otsahaa" (specimen Museum No. 50–1873). [386]

TRIBAL CEREMONIAL ORGANIZATION.

The Gros Ventre ceremonial organization is akin to that of the Arapaho with such differences as would be expected from the differences in language and the period of separation of the two tribes. The fundamental feature of this organization, the grouping of men by ages and the observance of a series of a half-dozen ceremonies in order according to age, is common to the two tribes. The ceremonies vary somewhat, and in a few cases their names or order have been changed; but among both tribes there are about six regular consecutive men's ceremonies, one or two that are preliminary or somewhat outside of this series, a single ceremony for women corresponding to those for men, and the sun-dance, which is included by the Indians in the enumeration of their grouped ceremonies, but differs from the others in not being connected with age, or with any society-like association of individuals. 561 796

Among the Gros Ventre the dancing-lodge for these ceremonies — which is erected in the centre of the camp-circle, and, like this, opens to the east — is constructed of two large tents. The lodge is open above, and appears to be oval or round in shape. The dancers, before beginning the ceremony, secure old men, who are called their "grandfathers," and are their instruct- 346 796

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

276 778 The sacred flat-pipe was also used in the sun-dance. It was once captured in war. Then the man who took it had bad dreams, until the pipe spoke to him in his dream and said, "Return me, or your tribe will be [728] destroyed." Then this man brought back the pipe, and his tribe made peace with the Gros Ventre.

343 782 The making of a sweat-house was not restricted to certain persons. A man wishing success in war would make a sweat-house for another person, in order that he might accomplish the deed he had in mind. Or, if a person was sick, one of his relatives might pledge to make a sweat-house for him, just as he would a dance. In this case the sick person himself would not necessarily use the sweat-house. On the other hand, a doctor might prescribe sweating for a patient, and in this case the sick person would enter the sweat-house.

[757]

Fig. 43 (50–4355). Sweat-house Tail. Length, 36 cm.

343 .515 [237]

About twelve or fourteen willow poles were cut for the sweat-house. The entrance always faced the sunrise, and a small cottonwood-tree was erected in front of it. To this, calico or other property was tied by an old man as a gift to the sun. The cloth was partly blackened, the corners being rubbed with charcoal.

When all the participants were inside, the blankets were pulled down and the house closed tight. Water was poured on hot stones, at first five times. Thereupon the lodge was opened at the entrance and at the opposite west end, and the people cooled. It was then closed again, and this time water was poured on the rocks seven times. After cooling once more, water was poured on the rocks nine times. The fourth time, the man that poured the water could put as much or as little on the stones as he wished. After the fourth time, the participants came out and bathed. [757] If they were suffering from pain, they whipped that part of the body with buffalo or horse tails. This practice made the heat greatest at that point, much as if it were beaten into the body.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

343 757

A man who pledges and erects a sweat-house does not participate in the sweating. He makes the fire, heats the rocks and passes them into the house, raises and lowers the blankets, and performs other services.

[237]

In sweating, animal tails were sometimes used to beat the body with. Fig. 43 shows such an implement, made of the tail of a buffalo, on a stick handle cased in the skin of the tail. This object is similar to the Arapaho specimens described in the "Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History" (Vol. XVIII, p. 316), but is noticeable for the shortness of the hair on the tail.

343 757 776

When people were called to come to sweat, hixteib'nix'a^{n}t ("Above-Nix'a^{n}t") was first called to sweat with them. Then the people were called. This personage, whose name also means "Above-white-man," is said to have been prayed to before the whites were known; but the Gros Ventre, like the Arapaho, state that they do not know whether he is identical with the Nix'a^{n}t of their myths. Ordinary prayers were always addressed first to hixteib'nix'a^{n}t or to iiçanânin ("our father"), then the sun and moon would be mentioned, next the sacred pipes, and then the earth. After these had been mentioned, anything else could be prayed to.

[301]

778

A charm tied on horses to make them run fast consists of rabbit-feet painted red and tied together. The Arapaho used rabbits' feet for the same purpose.

Specimen Museum No. 50 1804 is a pair of wild-cat-tails worn by young men at the shoulder, or at the heel of a moccasin. They were also tied to children's belts, next to the skin, in order to keep them from wetting the bed.

[751]

Specimen Museum No. 50 1903 is a gorget (commonly called by the Indians in English "moon-shell") said to have been made in the old way from an intervertebral disk of a buffalo. At present these objects are usually slightly concave, and are made of china.

Fig. 44 (50-4280). Thunder-stone Necklace. Length, 21 cm.

[301 237]

The Gros Ventre, according to Dr. Clark Wissler, call certain corrugated fossil stones "thunder-stones."[1] The Assiniboine seem to use the same name. The Blackfeet, who perhaps have most developed the cult of these objects, call them "buffalo-stones." A specimen from the Northern Arapaho is shown in the "Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural

1 [These are probably Ammonite septa. - Analyst]

846 self had to get up sooner and help with cooking because she was an only wife, except for the short time during her first marriage when her sister was co-wife. The midwife usually stayed and looked after the infant for a few days, at least until the cord came off.

Coming Daylight always put on a belt of rawhide about a foot wide immediately after delivery and laced it up tighter each day. She said the Gros Ventre women were strict about this practice as it "put the figure back into place."

If a woman were able to rest quietly after childbirth the flow should stop in about two weeks. If she worked, it was longer, perhaps a month. At any rate, after the flow stopped, a woman wrapped a blanket around herself and someone then held under the blanket a pan of live coals on which medicine had been sprinkled. Woman claimed they felt much better after this "fumigation." [757] There was also another medicine which Coming Daylight described as "good to clean you out after childbirth." This was made from a powdered root, a little pinch of which was put in a couple of quarts of water and turned the water about the color of tea. There was no bitter taste and the patient drank it like tea and instead of water.

[834] It was said that Gros Ventre men did not resume marital relations until at least a month after the baby was born,—often they deferred the resumption of relations even longer.

853 There was medicine given to make the mother's milk come. It was made from the same root as that used in the Crazy Dance. [278] The infant was not put to the breast immediately, as someone else drew out the "first milk" (colostrum) and spit it out. "After [825] that, the milk would be the right blue color. Should a woman be all alone when her child was born, she might have puppies draw out that 'first milk.'" Cora believes it is absolutely necessary to follow this rule. When her own daughter, for example, delivered her firstborn, an old woman offered to draw off this "first milk," but the daughter refused—so now she can give milk only from one breast and has to supplement her infant's feeding with milk from a bottle. No water or oil was given the infant before its first nursing. They started the baby to nurse after the colostrum had been drawn off "because there is something in the mother's milk that cleans the baby out."

863 might even 'fuss' a little with him, saying something like: 'Look at you! I thought I told you to urinate. I'm trying to make you do it at the right time, and you want to hold back!' But we were not harsh with infants because we knew they have to learn. Anyway, if you misjudged the time, all you had to do was to throw out the powdered chips and put in fresh ones. The old way was much better. These diaper-babies around here now are much more trouble."

[755] If a child developed enuresis, a tiny bit of the tail of a fox or of a beaver tied to his belt, or a piece of badger skin for him to sit on, was thought to guarantee a cure.

854 To help the child who had trouble teething, it was considered wise to kill a mouse, skin it, take the back thigh and, after cooking [825 it well, rub on the gums. It is said by Coming Daylight that [757] the Crow used fish for this purpose. Some children have such a difficult time that their gums are very sore and their tongues even swell. Coming Daylight's grandmother and others knew how to [757] remedy that condition. The doctor, using a sharp-pointed bone, would lance the gums here and there where the teeth were coming, after allowing the gums to bleed, they would rub some powdered [751] root on the gums. As a preventive, old folks said to catch tiny baby mice and, after roasting them on the coals, feed them to the child. Coming Daylight, for instance, did that for her children, and none of them had any trouble with teething.

856 They would let babies crawl when they showed the inclination to do so, but the old women were sure that they always watched their babies more closely than mothers do today. They used to encourage them to walk by holding them up and helping them. It has been Coming Daylight's experience that boys learn to walk more quickly than girls. It may be, however, that more attention was given to boys.

198 The only expression the old women, or the younger ones for 856 that matter, could think of that could be considered "baby talk" was that babies, when very small and just beginning to talk, say: "I" (prolonged and with strong glottal stop) if they do not like something or do not wish to take what is offered. This, together with *na'a* 'mother' and *ni'a* 'father,'[9]—which babies say properly

[9] These are vocative forms rather than descriptive forms.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Grós Ventre NQ13

was just a shell. It must have been some kind of animal with a thin shell." 753

The concept of soul-loss as resulting from or accompanying sickness in certain cases was present. "It was held by the old people," The Boy said, "that a person's 'soul' was not inside his body or any organ thereof, but was near or around him. As a sick person got worse, his 'soul' kept getting farther and farther away. If it got too far away, he died. When a person was very sick, people would say: 'His soul is leaving (going away from) him farther and farther.'"[1] In brief, soul wandering or "soul-loss" was a preliminary to death rather than a cause of disease. We obtained no evidence that the concept of soul-stealing entered at all into Gros Ventre pathology. 753 774

Treatment of Illness

From the causes of disease we now pass to the treatment thereof. While some ailments and cases of illness were thought to be due to natural causes, and others to supernatural causes, the line of demarcation cannot always be sharply drawn. Likewise as regards the prevention and treatment, in some instances they were clearly looked upon by the Gros Ventres as of the purely natural or "rational" order, in others equally clearly of the supernatural order, in some few seemingly of both orders combined, in a few others of uncertain order. While the Gros Ventres quite explicitly distinguished in general theory and in certain specific cases between natural and supernatural prevention and treatment, in actual practice at times, and in many specific cases, they drew no sharp line between the two orders. In the following pages we shall take up first natural or "rational" prevention and treatment, secondly combined or doubtful types of treatment and lastly supernatural types. In general remedies and preventives fall into three more or less corresponding classes: "domestic" remedies known to and freely used by everybody; certain remedies more or less "rational," exclusively owned and used by particular non-profes- 755 757

[1] The soul was believed to "kind of leave" a person under stress of great fear. Cf. Flannery, 1953, 92.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

755
757 sional individuals; supernatural remedies used only by professional medicine men or women with power.

Natural Remedies

751 Both preventive and curative measures of the natural or ra-
515 tional order were numerous.

The most common preventive measure was the daily early morning plunge in the stream or roll in the snow by men, a practice carried out for hardening the body as well as for cleaning
[731] it. In small epidemics scattering and isolation were regularly resorted to in order to check the spread of the disease. The use of skunk fluid as a curative was more a Cree than a Gros Ventre procedure, but there was a Gros Ventre belief that skunk fluid diluted with water and put into the eyes of a person was a preventive and cure of snow-blindness. A mother, on knowing herself
[862] pregnant again, would cease nursing her infant lest it suffer from "bad stomach and diarrhea." Drinking the blood of a freshly butchered buffalo was looked upon as a preventive of tuberculosis.

757 Curative measures of the rational order were of many kinds. We recorded the following, but our list is far from exhaustive. All of them may best be classified as "domestic remedies," measures of common knowledge, resorted to by everybody who wished to use them, and not considered proprietary right of particular individuals.

757 Many herbal curatives came under this category.[3] The roots of
278 "sweetheart briars," so called because the burrs stuck so tightly, were used for colds, and the deeper the root the stronger was the medicine.[4]

An infusion of peppermint is now used as a beverage by everybody for "fits, spasms and stomach disorders," although the medicinal use of peppermint was formerly the monopoly of Flat Pipe keepers. A very strong drink was made by boiling a certain root and just a little of it drunk as a cure for difficulty in urination.

---

[3] Cf. list in Kroeber, 1908, pp. 224-27. We made no attempt in the field to get a full list of such herbal and other curatives.

[171] [4] The Piegan, according to Coming Daylight and Singer, used these as "blood medicine."

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

757 ●
278

"Many people," The Boy remarked, "had died of this ailment as they were ashamed to tell they had it." According to Mary Ereaux, "a lot of times children were born with poor eyesight. If a fellow [adult] in those days had sore eyes he would be ashamed of it. It would have been a kind of disgrace. They had a kind of tea which they used as an eyewash."

For colds, the root of a briar, a plant with burrs smaller than "sand burrs," perhaps the "sweetheart briar" mentioned above, was chewed and the saliva swallowed. For "colds and sore throat, and teeth and bones," a bit of the root of a plant called "tastes-like-pepper" is broken off and kept in the mouth.

For head colds and headaches a snuff is made of the root of a large plant called "sneezer or pacifier,"[4] which grows up in the Rocky Mountains, and when snuffed up "it clears your head and mucus comes out. Every time you sneeze it kind of brings your cold out in a sweat."

Several plants used as fumigants or infusions for or by the mother before or after childbirth are described elsewhere.[5]

For children's dysentery (usually occurring in summer) and piles, Coming Daylight used a root called "stomach ache medicine," a root "which runs close to the surface of the ground." When one of her grandchildren "had piles from this summer dysentery" she heated a flat rock, saturated a cloth with water, sprinkled the medicine thereon, put the cloth on the hot rock to make steam, and held the child over it with its buttocks close to the steam. She also made a "tea" of the root and gave it to the child to drink. One treatment cured the piles. Coming Daylight remarked that she "wouldn't be without this medicine." This particular herbal curative is perhaps peculiar to her, and not in general use.

A curative called "fish medicine,"[6] "an old, old medicine," is a plant that grows in the water and is brought in from Minnesota.

"White medicine" has many curative uses. It is made from a "sort of sponge" [fungus] growing rarely on pine trees. When people find it, they throw stones at it and, being "kind of soft,"

---

[4] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, 226.
[5] See Flannery, 1953, pp. 136, 138.
[6] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, 226, naw'asoo—for colds.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

757 278 it drops off. It is powdered before use. Mary Ereaux' mother used it, on a warm rag, for chickenpox. It was first gotten by a man who saw it in a dream and it said to him: "I am good for everything, to drink and to use externally too." It was this man who spread the knowledge of this medicine.[1]

For diarrhea a tea was made from the boiled roots of rose bush or cherry bush and drunk. For asthma and hay fever the vapor from juniper berries put in a pot of boiling water was considered helpful. Sage, in the very early days gathered and used only by sacred Pipe keepers, was later used by everybody: being rubbed and smelled for headache; the leaves especially the top ones, boiled and drunk for colds, coughs and tuberculosis.

The little daughter of Singer's husband, Iron Bucket, was "poisoned" [bewitched] on one occasion, when Singer was present, from some meat broth she had taken. After taking some of the broth, the little girl remarked "M-m-m this tastes funny." While Iron Bucket was telling stories, the little girl would interject from time to time the single word "moose." Finally she had a fit. They then gave her a lot of warm water as an emetic, and after she had vomited several times she recovered.

Raw liver and blood from a freshly butchered buffalo were considered as a cure for tuberculosis. Mary Ereaux' grandmother had told her that people would go after a man who had just butchered a buffalo to have him dip bits of the manifold in the warm blood and to have the children eat it as a delicacy.

Beaver oil from the oil sacs was used as medicine but we obtained no details.

[841] When a woman in her menses, or one who had been with a man the night before, entered the lodge of a sick person, the latter grew weaker. To protect the sick person fumigation was resorted to. Powdered beaver castor (always kept on hand if available, for this purpose) was put on live coals in a pan, and the patient without any clothing on, huddled beneath a blanket over the smoke so that it went all over the sick person's body.

757 Blood-letting was a common procedure, purely "rational" with no magic-religious element at all in it and calling for no "power"

[1] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, 226.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

in the operator. It was resorted to for various ailments; tuberculosis, dizziness and "logginess" were specifically mentioned by our informants. "If the ailment were located somewhere above the waist the patient was bled at the elbow joint on the upper surface of the arm; if somewhere below the waist, on top of the instep." One arm might be opened in spring, the other in the fall. In the procedure described by the Boy, before the incision was made, the patient would put his hand on the ground and hold his arm rather rigid, while the operator squeezed and at the same time rubbed down the upper arm until the blood vessel at the bend of the arm bulged. In a slightly different procedure described by Singer, the patient's upper arm was tied very tight and "the blood was worked down;" then the large blood vessel on the upper side of the elbow joint was pierced with a very sharp chip off an "onyx stone,"* and the blood would spurt out; when the patient was sufficiently bled, a bit of buffalo fur was scorched, put over the incision, and kept in place without any dressing. By bedtime everything would be "okay." 757 [752]

Certain individuals, such as Thick's wife, and Woman Chief, were more skillful than others at bloodletting. On one occasion Singer's husband said to her: "Come on now. I want you to bleed me." She started to do so but "just had to yell," at which he said: "Why anyone would think that it was you who were going to bleed." Coming Daylight was still more reluctant to perform the operation. "In fact, I could never do it," she said, "because I cannot stand the sight of blood."

A tattoo-like surgical treatment was described by Coming Daylight, although Gros Ventres did not practice decorative tattooing. "For a while," she said, "it seemed like my hand would come unjointed and I could not use it very well. They took a bunch of needles and pierced my hand where it was hurting me. They told me: 'Now if you don't eat anything fried, it won't turn blue.' After piercing my hand they put some root on it, and it never got sore." She added: "They do that to the head, too." [304] [262]

Lancing of the gums of children when teething, elsewhere de-

* Singer showed the stone she owned from which the chip is struck. It was a shiny black one, but we did not identify it.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

757 scribed was, so far as we could gather, done by non-professionals as well as by professional doctors.*

752 According to Coming Daylight, one old woman whom she had apparently known in her earlier years and who was suffering severely from "cut-away" gave herself successful surgical treatment. She was in great pain and sometimes could not pass water or food, and besides her grown son had just been killed in battle. In her suffering and bereavement, she went out in the hills, taking with her a big heavy sewing needle, and saying: "Well, my son did not come back. Why should I keep on living." While out in the hills, she pierced herself in the stomach with the big needle, drew out the "bug" that was causing her illness, and pounded it on a rock. After that she got well.

Other surgical or quasi-surgical treatments were resorted to in case of bites by snakes, ticks, lizards, muskrats and wolves.

If you have been bitten by a rattlesnake, the procedure, according to Thick, is to take a horse hair, hold it taut in both hands, run it back and forth to locate the teeth [sic] left by the snake in your flesh, and then pluck out the teeth. If this is done at once after you are bitten, you will suffer no harm.

When Coming Daylight was a little girl, something big, thought by her to be perhaps a large tick, attached itself to her head behind the ear. The other children with whom she was playing held her and just knocked it off with a stick, and then her grandmother put medicine on the spot and the bite gave her no further trouble.

Singer described the case of a woman to whose left arm a little lizard had attached itself and was "sucking the skin." They just cut the lizard off. Coming Daylight was once bitten on a finger by a muskrat which kept its hold and nearly bit her finger off. Finally she poked a stick in the animal's nostril and gave a jab, and it wriggled its legs and let go. She still feels pain in the finger when she holds it in a certain position. According to her, too, people say that a wolf would sometimes "turn crazy" and enter the camp. All the people would then shut themselves up tightly in their lodges, but sometimes a person would be caught and bitten, and would go around as if "drunk or crazy, wild like the

* Cf. Flannery, 1953, p. 142.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
• NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

wolf." One woman, whom she knew, was so bitten, right on the mouth by such a "crazy wolf." The people held the woman tight, and when the wind was from the north faced her into it. Then they made a smudge of wolf fur and made her smell it, and so cured her. This was the customary treatment for such cases, after it, "the patient is not crazy any more." 752

The enema syringe was not known to The Boy. A smooth stick and/or grease might however be introduced into the rectum, when other curative measures failed. 757

For various ailments massaging was used by non-professionals as well as doctors with power. When Thomas Main was a boy, suffering from growing pains, he would lie down near the old women who were smoking and they would spit on their hands and rub them on his legs. A sick person, into whose lodge a woman in her menses had accidentally entered, would be massaged all over with beaver castor to keep from growing worse.

Two kinds of thermotherapy were recorded, warm wrappings and the sweat bath. When Coming Daylight's sister was recovering from smallpox, she was "one solid scab." To hasten recovery, her grandmother used to heat dry cloths and wrap them all around the girl.

While the sweat-bath was predominantly a magico-religious rite among the Gros Ventre, and often used or prescribed by professional doctors, it was sometimes—how commonly we could not determine—used by the laity as a purely rational curative procedure. Mary Ereaux' mother "always used to go in" to the sweat-lodge, keeping her head out. Other old women would keep head as well as body closed in. Coming Daylight used to go into a sweat-lodge and sweat when she "had rheumatism so bad I [she] couldn't move." Singer had built many sweat-lodges for her ailing husband, but she added: "they did not seem to make him feel any better."

On one occasion four Gros Ventre warriors, on their way up north, got into a swamp, shot down a queer-looking animal, like a buffalo or a "water-animal" [a moose?]. They ate the liver and it made them faint. When they came to, they built a sweat-lodge and sweated four times—perhaps in this case as a magico-religious procedure, our field data are not decisive.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

757 Thomas Main's grandfather would, from time to time when not feeling well, drink a large quantity of fairly warm water, perhaps two or three quarts, before eating breakfast. He would then go outside, put his finger in his throat, and vomit. This means, instead of a physic, was resorted to as a laxative.

As soon as the first thunder of spring was heard, a person with warts would blow on them and they would come off. This was apparently looked upon as a "rational" treatment, though it was possibly of the magical order.

158 726 755 The following cure, related by Coming Daylight and Singer, was of the natural order, but came about without intentional treatment. A young unmarried man, inseparable friend of Dressed In White, Coming Daylight's husband, had become mentally deranged. He would tear off his clothes and when they would catch him and put clothes on him he would run till he ran into the water. He would run everywhere, and would climb up the sides of lodges to the top. This condition lasted not very long before his cure in battle. Some Gros Ventres, including Dressed In White, Coming Daylight and the young man, while camped at Black Butte (now Havre, Mont.), were attacked by some Assiniboine. With all the noise and shooting, the Gros Ventre horses stampeded. Dressed In White ran with his gun toward the stampeding horses, and, as he did so, saw one of the enemy fall in their midst, try to get up, and fall again. Dressed In White shot at him three times and then his gun would not go off and in his anger at it he smashed it on the ground. At this juncture, the young man came along, and Dressed In White said to him: "Hurry and grab that enemy. He is trying to get on a horse." The young man ran over, grabbed the enemy by the hair on either side of the head, threw him to the ground, and held him there. The Assiniboine had a knife but no gun and was trying to get up, buttocks first. Another Gros Ventre, Cuts The Rope, now ran over and shot the Assiniboine, and all then hit him, counting coup on him. From that time on, the young man was quite cured of his mental derangement, or at least showed no more symptoms of it, but he was shot to death not long after by another Gros Ventre. "By getting an enemy single-handed this young man had become a big chief and could have lots of lovers."[10]

---

[10] Women admired brave young men. See Flannery, 1953, pp. 190-91.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

734 "The Crow knew the child was a Gros Ventre, so they took her along and caught up with the Gros Ventre camp. After they had eaten, they called all the Gros Ventres to listen. One of the Crow was standing there with the child. I was small then. I went and listened. Using the sign language he said: 'You folks were very mean to this child and her mother. The child was pitiful and somebody took pity on her. We picked her up and are going to keep her. We won't give her to you.'

"So this girl grew up with the Crow . . . she did not like the Gros Ventres and she took her mother's name . . . I do not know to this day why the mother was abandoned. She had no husband at the time they left her. The Gros Ventres," Coming Daylight added, "abandoned old people and babies."[11]

[847 888]

Proprietary Remedies

757 So far we have been dealing with preventive or curative measures of the "rational" order known to and freely used by anybody and everybody. We now come to those exclusively owned and used by particular individuals only. These proprietary remedies fall into two main classes,—although the dividing line was not always sharply drawn,—accordingly as they were owned and used by non-professionals with little or no supernatural power or by professional medicine men and women with well recognized supernatural power. Such proprietary remedies, as owned and used by non-professionals, seemed to have been looked upon as of either the "rational" or supernatural order. Those owned and used by professional doctors as, in the main, of the supernatural order. We shall now take up these two classes, first, proprietary remedies used by non-professionals.

Coming Daylight emphatically insisted that she was not a medicine woman, not a "holy" person. "Some people try to pray through me, they lay their hands on my head and pray for something, as if I were a 'holy' person. But I am not. I do not claim to be a medicine woman. I never go around doctoring others. I just keep

[11] For other cases of abandonment, see Flannery, 1953, pp. 76, 132, 189, 198-99.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

them (remedies, as infra) in the family." Her mother's sister, Good Singer, had a ghost helper and was also a "real" doctor or medicine woman. Coming Daylight was given by Good Singer three kinds of medicine, including headache and stomach ache medicine to use for her own children and grandchildren. Coming Daylight also was given by her maternal grandmother who "knew all kinds of medicines," three medicines to hasten childbirth, to bring the mother's milk, and to cure stomach ache. Coming Daylight has used these within the family to doctor her children and grandchildren, still had them, and, in accordance with her grandmother's wish that they be passed on, was going to pass them on to her granddaughter whom she reared. If she should use any of these medicines for patients not of her family they would have to pay her, else the medicine would not be effective. 757

One of The Boy's daughters, without quest, perhaps in a dream, was given curing power which she used only within the family. She would treat her mother and the children for pains and aches by pressing and massaging.

Possession of such proprietary herbal and other remedies gotten by gift or dream, with or without quest, and used by non-professionals within the family or other limited circle may have been much more widespread than the above meager field evidence might imply.

Before we pass on to the consideration of curative powers possessed by professional medicine men and women, it may be well at this point to record the ritual observed in the gathering of plants for medicine, whether or not the gatherer possessed supernatural curing power proper. 757 824

This ritual was observed in the gathering of medicinal plants only, not of berries, wild turnips and other plant foods. The proper time to gather medicinal plants, or least some of them, was the fall. Coming Daylight's grandmother told her: "You don't want to pick anything [any herbal curative] until the seeds drop, because it would be like destroying a body." Not everyone had the right to gather medicinal plants, at least not all kinds. Certain herbal curatives at least could be picked only by those who had been given power, through quest or dream or through transfer.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

757 824 Some evil such as sickness or death would befall an unauthorized gatherer. When the right to gather a particular medicinal plant was transferred, the transferrer would take the transferee out and show him or her the growing plant and tell the name.

When a medicinal root was dug, some offering, such as a bit of tobacco or a necklace of beads, was put in the ground in its place, or in the case of gathering "white medicine" [fungus?], was placed alongside the tree. In making this offering a short prayer was said. The content and wording of the prayer differed from individual to individual. According to The Boy the gatherer would take the bit of tobacco and pray with it, saying, "I am going to use your medicine." "Your" would have reference to the Gros Ventre concept that the medicines while gotten immediately from a bear or rock or other inferior creature came ultimately from the Supreme Being. His name would be mentioned first in the prayer and so acknowledged as the one to whom all things, even these roots, ultimately belonged. The Last Child would be mentioned last and would get some share in the tobacco offered.

According to Singer, "When we take a [medicinal] root, we say: 'I give you this. I am putting something in your place. I didn't take you for nothing!' We talk like we are talking to a person. Most Indians have the same way." Coming Daylight who was present explained: "We are talking to Our Lord and we never leave out the Sun," and apparently the Last Child was included. She further explained on another occasion: "When they dig the [medicinal] root, they have something to put in place of it and they say: 'I am taking this. Have pity on us. Whatever way I may use this [root], may I be successful in my work.' Then they cover over the hole made by extracting the root. It is kind of buying it like." "Then when you have some of this medicine and pass it on, the receiver gives you something for it."

Doctoring Power

756 What kinds of power did professional medicine men and women possess? In attempting to answer it, we wish to emphasize that while certain individuals (such as Stiffarm) who effected cures, were definitely recognized as professional doctors with super-

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

powerful men to die. That particular man Drops In The Fire, however, always claimed to be bullet proof." 755

When, on one occasion, one of Coming Daylight's daughters was very ill, the wife of Buffalo Run finally cured the girl. "I called in Stiffarm," Coming Daylight said, "who demanded a large amount of things for payment, because he said the girl had this stomach diseasse [cancer?]. He wanted my husband, Little Man, to make him a lodge and he would doctor the girl. But I said: 'No. My daughter hasn't got that disease. I don't want you to make that lodge.' Then we got another medicine man, whose daughter had died at the Mission. Finally I said: 'I am going to take my daughter to someone who can cure her.'

"So I told my husband to load food and wood. I took my daughter down below Stiffarm's place, to where Buffalo Run (or Chase) used to live with his wife. There was the woman who was the medicine woman. When I got there, she said to me, just teasing: 'Where is this mean woman going?' I handed her the pipe and told her to smoke it, and she took it, which meant she would do what I was asking her to do. I said to her: 'I want you to get my daughter well.' And I gave her the grub to eat and some wood. She said to me, just teasing like: 'So you had to come to me, this mean woman!' Then she said: 'If you do what I tell you to do, I will get your daughter well. You are to leave her here with me and I will give her medicine every day and tend to her (that is, put medicine all over her, make her drink it, and draw the thing out).' So I and my husband left my daughter there and we went home alone. Every now and then I took grub and wood to the medicine woman. Sure enough, not long after that my daughter got well. Soon after that she married, and she is alive and well today." 757 755

Good Singer, Coming Daylight's mother's sister, had an ancestral helper[14] and was also a practicing doctor. We recorded her doctoring song, as sung by The Boy, song number 28, and by Coming Daylight, song number 122.

A cure by Good Singer was described by Singer. "Once the man I was living with was very ill, almost dead. One of his wives—he had several besides myself,—called in this medicine woman, 755 [595] Good Singer

[14] Cf. Flannery, 1944, pp. 55-56.

8:Flannery E-5 (1940-1948)1960 NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

"My experience was by dreaming. One time before I was married—I must have been about eight years old—I was sleeping in a big lodge and a 'person' came and wakened me. He had a bag of medicines on his back. He came to me on four successive nights and laid out these medicines and told me what each was for. On the third of these nights there was a man lying there—he was just skin and bones. The 'person' who had awakened me told me: 'You could take all these medicines and you could cure people like that one lying there' [i.e., a person in the last extremity]. In my dream I would do everything he told me, manipulate my hands to draw out the sickness, and do everything. But I didn't want that power and would tell him so. Each morning too I would relate to my grandmother exactly what had happened in the night but she would try to hush me up, telling me: 'Don't say anything; don't tell anyone. You will be a great medicine woman.' But I didn't want that power. I didn't like it because when medicine people suck on the weak part of the sick person they have to swallow what they extract. I had decided I would rather be quiet and not do anything like that, or sacrifice my flesh, or things of that kind. Perhaps if it had come later I might have taken that power and become great."

Nevertheless when later in life she had other dreams indicating supernatural power, she likewise refused. She explained in regard to one of these experiences, for instance: "The one who awakened me this time had told me to face the rising sun and was showing me how to make a smudge from the moss that grows close on logs; but I told him. 'No. I would rather not have it.' Those who have power die too soon."

Incidentally, still in connection with curing, bleeding was an operation which was performed purely as a natural remedy for a person who felt dizzy or sluggish. Anyone could do it—no supernatural validation was needed. Other women described quite casually how it was done and discussed the various times they had actually performed the operation. Coming Daylight, however, insisted that while there was really nothing to such an operation, she could never bring herself to perform it, nor would she allow anyone else to bleed her; she could not stand the sight of blood.

The aversion to the sight of blood and to self-mutilation was evidently deep-seated and showed itself in a marked manner early in her life. On one occasion a close relative was very ill. In such a situation it was expected that every member of the family would rally around and do whatever he could toward the recovery. Among the things that fell within the scope of activity for female relatives was that of vowing to sacrifice something valuable, including perhaps the blood from one's arm or a finger-joint, if the person recovered. At this particular time, Coming Daylight was a young child, and her grandmother decided that it would be appropriate for the little girl to offer that her finger-tip be removed if the relative regained his health. When it was suggested to her, Coming Daylight refused, even though her grandmother took after her with a stick. She actually ran away and wandered alone, until two nights later the relative died and an uncle finally found her.

On another occasion in her early youth, too, she defied a convention connected with kinship by refusing to join in mourning for an uncle who had been killed in revenge for having instigated the murder of his brother's wife. When her grandmother upbraided Coming Daylight for not expressing grief in the traditional manner, the latter defied her by saying: "I am not going to cry for that man. I don't know why you are crying for him. I have worked for that woman and she has fed me, and has even given me meat to bring home to you. I heard

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Before closing this section on rational treatment of disease certain points on care of the sick may be added which have an indirect bearing on curative measures proper. 758

As a rule, the sick were well looked after by their relatives and friends. Encouraging words and hopeful good wishes were expressed to an ill person and these helped recovery. If the patient voiced a desire for any particular food this would be procured if possible. When on one occasion Singer's very ill husband expressed a wish for roseberries, an old man visiting him at the time rushed out, picked a big bunch of them and brought them back at once. Singer seeded, mashed them up and mixed them with tallow and set before her husband a bowlful of them which "he went after as if he were starved." The next day when some friends were visiting him he remarked: "I can't get enough of that roseberry soup." At this, one of them hastened out at once and brought back a large quantity. A little before this another friend had prayed at his bedside and wished him good luck. "Those prayers and that soup," added Singer, "seemed to bring him out of his illness. They made him strong." When Al Chandler's boy, Jimmy, had typhoid fever, and said he was hungry for plums, Mrs. Stevens went a long distance to procure them for him.

According to Al Chandler, "no matter how sick a person may be, there is always one rallying point, just before the end, when he wants to eat. When a person had no more chance to live, the Gros Ventres would fix him (or her) up, put on his best robes, and paint him up ready to die." [763]

Occasionally, in the old days, a sick person might be abandoned. 734
"The Gros Ventres," Coming Daylight recalled, "were moving southward across the Missouri River. Before crossing it they left behind a Gros Ventre woman and her two- or three-year-old girl baby. The woman was very ill. They left her and the baby in a little shelter. They sort of threw her away.

"Some time after that the Crow happened to travel that way and crossed the Missouri from the south at the same place. There they saw the baby walking around in the bush . . . she would eat roseberries and pick up grasshoppers and eat them after breaking off their legs. The woman in the shelter had died and was beginning to smell.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

woman! You are leaving an old woman!' Finally our mother couldn't stand it any longer and, although she was not responsible for that old woman, she turned back and got the old woman to camp by letting her hang onto the travois. But we didn't have to carry her because she died shortly after that." 888

Takes The Bow mentioned that in the dim past, rather than to go off and leave an aged relative, the Gros Ventres used to ask some outstanding warrior to kill this old person—a father, or mother, or grandparent. This was done in order to get those who were suffering "out of their misery." The relative who took this responsibility would authorize the killer to count coup on the one whom he killed and thus score another mark of distinction for his record.[8] Other Gros Ventres were of the opinion that this type of "mercy killing" was adopted from the Blackfoot and that it was rarely carried out by the Gros Ventres, although admittedly abandonment of the aged to starvation was sometimes forced upon them.

Death

The Gros Ventres valued life highly and prayed for long lives, but when a person knew he was about to die, it was said that he resigned himself and appreciated the efforts on the part of others to ease his last moments. There was a desire to die surrounded by one's family and friends who would see to it that the proper last steps were taken. In view of this, if a man were wounded in an encounter with the enemy, every effort would be made by his companions—even at great personal risk—to get him back to his family before he would die. 761 763 [727]

When all hope for life had been abandoned, the dying person was dressed in the best clothes available, his hair combed, and his face painted "as though he were going to a party." Frequently last minute instructions would be given by the dying concerning his preference as to method of final disposal. He might also include advice to his survivors, and make occasional bequests of 763

[8] It is interesting to note in this connection that Cocking, 1772, p. 112, writes of the Gros Ventres: "They torture all the aged of both sexes in a most shocking and deliberate manner." The context is not clear, however, and he may have been referring to treatment of prisoners of war.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

782 869 [761]

say: "It is not good to ask that kind of a career [from powers]. It would be a life misspent and would be dearly paid for. Man's dearest possession is life, and this would be cut off."

787 869 761

Charles Buckman had heard old men say that, although they had fasted and prayed over and over again for power, they had never had even a dream, and that this may have been why they had lived to old age.

According to The Boy, his father Lame Bull, when a young man, dreamed that the being who lived on Baldy Butte in the Bear Paw Mountains called him. So on one occasion when the Gros Ventres were camped near this butte, Lame Bull thought this was a good time to accept the invitation and go up on this butte and sleep. He was getting ready to do so, when his father gave him a sound scolding: "I always told you not to try to be a holy man, a man with power of that kind. Those who have such power do not live long. Forget about sleeping on the mountain and attend to the horses and lodge poles. We need you at home. Mind your own business. So Lame Bull did not get to sleep on the mountain. His father was boss."

Coming Daylight came back repeatedly to the same theme. "I am not a medicine woman [with power] and that is why I have lived to be such an old woman." "I am not sorry I refused the medicine power offered me in a dream. Medicine people die soon. It seems like they have a certain time to die and they don't live to be old like myself and Singer. These medicine people are not strong like others." "I never accepted any kind of power. Those who have power die too soon." "They [the beings] used to trick people into taking all these things [powers] because they wanted them to die. The holy dreams are very tricky."

787 778

Singer gave her own experience. "I used to take a blanket or other offering and put it in deep water and pray that they [apparently the water monsters] would have pity on me. One night after I had just done this I dreamed that a person was standing there and that nearby lay the emaciated body of one who was very very sick. This person told me: 'I give you my body.' This is the way a being puts it in a dream when going to bestow power. Then the person showed me how to doctor, he used a pipe-stem which

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

726 533 When close to the enemy, each member of the party unwrapped his war medicine in preparation for the real battle. While painting themselves and putting on their charms and other regalia, the warriors sang.[9] Lame Bull, for instance, had a "medicine" war bonnet and there was a special song without words which he sang as he donned it; if there was time, the rest of the party danced while he sang and drummed.[10] Other songs might be sung immediately before going into battle.[11] The words of one such song imply: "If I am killed it doesn't matter; women will bear other children to take my place; I am ready to die." Some individuals, too, had special songs of their own to be sung as they made the charge against the enemy.[12]

726 762 The most daring men in battle were said to have been those who wished to die. Men who were grieving over the loss of loved ones were believed to have been especially prone to this indirect method of suicide. Others took this way of gloriously ending their lives out of a sense of pique, or in order to vindicate their honor. In this latter case it was customary for a man who had something discreditable to account for, either on his own part or on the part of some member of his family, to publicly announce that he was [533] about to die by singing the "brave-song" or "death-song" as he rode around the camp circle. This indicated that he would seek the earliest opportunity of losing his life at the hands of the enemy while accomplishing some particularly outstanding war-deed.[13]

726 It was recognized that even the bravest of men might experience acute fear during battle. "Their souls kind of left them on [774] account of the danger. They looked different from normal and their minds seemed not quite clear. Lame Bull used to say that the effect was quite similar to that of drinking too much whiskey—

---

[9] Kroeber, 1908, pp. 192–93 gives details and illustrations of supernatural paraphernalia for war. War medicines, illustrating those which had belonged to Bull Lodge, are presented here, Plate 3, courtesy of Richard Pohrt.

[10] The song recorded as No. 76 is Lame Bull's and is said to be typical of this class of songs.

[11] Two were recorded as No. 16 and No. 17.

[12] Lame Bull's song was recorded as No. 77.

[13] Two such "brave-songs" were recorded as No. 111 and No. 112. See also p. 191.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

and spectacular war deed before she granted her favors to him.[9] If he returned, she was supposed to keep her word, accepting him as her lover. In the other type of situation, it was taken for granted that a woman would succumb to the pleas of a man who had publicly announced his intention of virtually committing suicide. Such a man, by singing the "brave-song" as he circled the camp, indicated that he would seize the first opportunity thereafter to encounter the enemy but make no effort to defend himself.[10]

According to a number of stories that are told, it was not uncommon that a woman committed suicide when her lover failed to return from war. That this actually happened, in some cases at least, is vouched for by the following factual account given by Singer. "White people, on one occasion, invited some Gros Ventres to visit them. All of the people, whose lodges were near to that of my grandmother, went, except one woman. This woman was scraping a skin when word was announced that a certain young man had been killed at war. My grandmother, noticing that the sound of scraping had stopped, thought that this woman was resting, and after a little while started over to visit her. On the way, however, she heard a shot, and when she got to that lodge she found that this woman was dead. She had first dressed herself nicely in her best clothes and had then shot herself, pulling the trigger of the gun by means of a string attached to her toe. My grandmother had suspected an affair between this woman and the young man who had lost his life at war, but she hadn't known for sure until this woman committed suicide. In those days a woman would have kept such an affair secret. (Now since women have the law to protect them from their husbands, wives just don't care and boldly run around with anybody they fancy and talk back to their husbands, and everybody knows all about it.) But anyway, that woman was a good worker,—she was working for her husband when that bad news came about the death of her lover,—and of course her husband mourned for her."

It was said that women who had been cast aside by their hus-

[9] "This custom is said to have led to the death of many young men," Kroeber, 1908, p. 180.

[10] For further details on the "brave-song," see p. 92.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

765 152

until someone went after them and talked to them and persuaded them to eat and drink some water.

The most extravagant expressions of grief were expected on the part of close relatives of men killed at war. It was under such circumstances that the mourners tore off their clothes and gashed their arms and legs. The blood was not washed off and the wounds were allowed to fester, often leaving ugly scars. It was maintained that in mourning the Gros Ventres did not cut off fingers,—that was done only in fulfilment of a vow. [304]

If a brave young man were killed by the enemy, his parents went even further in the expression of their grief, and sometimes had to be restrained from committing suicide. The father could show additional sorrow by cutting the manes and tails of his son's horses, which he then led about as he wandered on the hills for four days and nights, crying and mourning. The following case illustrates the behavior of an elder brother in mourning for a younger one, but may be somewhat exceptional in that the former felt responsible for the latter's death. [962] 765 787

"Little Man, also known as Deafie, was on his way home with his younger brother. They had been on a friendly visit to the Crow. There were others in the party and one evening while they were camped, the younger brother had a dream. The next morning he told them: 'I had a bad dream. I dreamed I got killed.' One of the older men said: 'All right. We will stop here awhile so we can make a sweat-lodge and we will smudge.' (That is what they did when they wanted to prevent something bad from happening.) But Little Man told them that, although the rest of them might believe in dreams, he did not, and he insisted that they move on. The old man couldn't say anything more. As they were going along that same day, Little Man was scouting ahead and sighted the enemy. The Gros Ventre party separated, Little Man going with one group, his brother with the other. The brother happened to go right into the midst of the Assiniboine and was killed. The others heard the shots, but when they got there, Little Man found his brother lying dead. He then tore off all his clothes and would have committed suicide by dashing singlehanded after the enemy had not his brother-in-law grabbed him and held him back. When they got home, Little Man felt so badly that he cut off his beautiful

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

self was practically committing suicide, so in one sense he meant himself. But in another, he meant that the case of the others, or many of them, was hopeless. He was telling them that if they did not run they would not escape home, but that even if they did run he was doubtful if they would make home safely. They saw and heard him, and a few escaped and survived, but many, including Little Weasel himself, were killed. When the survivors got back to camp they told what had happened.

"Little Weasel, himself unmarried, had been engaged at the time in a love affair with a certain young married woman, the most beautiful in the tribe, and her husband knew about it. After the survivors returned, her husband said to her: 'I knew all about your affair with that young man but I did not scold or punish you. Now you should do what I tell you. You can mourn and cry for your lover, but do not do anything else. Think of our little boy (then four years old).' After saying this, he left their lodge to go hear details of the news of the battle.

"After he had left, his wife put on her best clothes, and combed her hair, and fixed herself up. Then taking with her a stout tough rope of sinew she went to the brow of a cliff where two trees stood, one leaning over the brink. She fastened one end of the rope around her neck and tied the other end to the leaning tree. Then she sang the same song her lover had sung around the mound, and with the same words. After finishing the song, she rattled her tongue and yelled as a woman used to do when celebrating the first coup her son had made.

"All the people, including her husband, ran out and he pleaded with her, but she did not listen to him. 'So sang,' she said, 'Little Weasel,' and rattling her tongue she jumped down, her head going one way and her body another."

According to The Boy, "the climax of the last important phase of the Kit-fox Dance came when the dancers paid their ceremonial grandfathers, and they paid them well, with many horses, etc." "On one occasion," he added, "one young Kit-fox Dancer did not have anything to give, and it just so happened that all his relatives were poor and did not come to his rescue. Therefore he did not pay his grandfather anything, and he was terribly embarrassed and

8:Flannery E-5 (1940-1948)1960 NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Her final rejoinder was such a witty and pointed one that everyone laughed heartily at her rival's expense. In this culture, of course, public ridicule was a far more effective retaliation than the biting and scratching that other women said frankly they would have indulged in when attacked.

Expression of emotional excess was institutionalized for the Gros Ventres, as for the rest of the Plains, in the bereavement situation. Upon the death of a husband, son, or father, a woman was expected to start wailing as soon as she heard the news, have her hair cut off, discard good clothes for old ragged ones, gash her arms and legs, go to the hills to mourn and cry, resisting for a time the pleas of her relatives to return, and being watched lest she attempt suicide. Coming Daylight was only a young woman when she was first widowed and the mourning pattern was still in full vogue. It is certain from other evidence than Coming Dayling had a deep affection for this husband to whom she had been given as a child-bride and in whose kindly and indulgent treatment she had found a pleasant escape from the rigorous discipline of her grandmother. Nevertheless the public expression of her grief was minimal—no abandonment for her. Although her sister was sent on the hills with her to keep watch over her in the usual way, Coming Daylight was easily persuaded to return shortly though she herself was proud of the fact that she had stayed out so long that she actually had got a frozen toe! In later years when all that was left of the ritual was the wailing out on the hills, she lost the son whom she herself, and everybody else, acknowledged as her favorite. She had not been on the hills very long when she experienced a significant dream, as follows. She was in a lodge at the rear of which was a big pile of tobacco mixture and a pipe. The owner of the lodge filled the pipe and approached her. She was frightened because she didn't smoke. The owner of the lodge however told her: "Look at these people." She looked and saw many with their hair cut and their bodies bleeding from the gashes inflicted in grief. The man then told her: "That is in the past. Nowadays your only consolation is in smoking." So she accepted the pipe and, after smoking it, she was painted in ceremonial fashion by each of those other mourners. Then the owner of the lodge dismissed her saying: "Now, go home and don't ever go on the hills and mourn again. But always smoke if you want to." She went home right after this dream and when she told her husband of it he accepted it as valid and persuaded her sister to prepare for Coming Daylight her first real smoke. She maintained that the habit subsequently developed was actually a great comfort to her.

The final area with which we shall be concerned here is the war complex—a vital aspect of the old Plains culture. Gros Ventre women were allowed direct but limited participation in these activities in the sense that, while they would not join a party of men who were going on horse-raiding or revenge expeditions, if opportunity offered they might exhibit the same kind of bravery that a man should show and derive considerable status therefrom. For instance, if one of the enemy fell nearby, the women rushed out from camp to count coup, and to grab trophies with which to inaugurate the relationship known as "enemy-friends." Coming Daylight, however, was never one to indulge in this sport. She told of the one—and to her extremely distasteful—occasion on which her hand literally was forced. It seems that during a raid on their camp one of the enemy was shot and her husband scalped him. The victim was lying not far from her lodge and, as her husband dashed off to pursue the rest of the Assiniboine, he shouted for her to come out and see what was going on. Coming Daylight saw the man lying there, face down, covered with blood. He was not dead

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The above case illustrates how it was possible for a man, in spite of a poor start in life, to rise. Children were instructed by their elders, as was Thick by his maternal uncle: "Above all things try to have horses. Try to have property and whatever you have, take care of it. By having lots of horses and property, people will respect you and look upon you as somebody." 556 867

Again Coming Daylight stated: "They used to think more of horses than of anything else. They were sure proud of owning a pinto pony. In telling stories when they wanted to describe the best they could think of they would say: 'You should have seen her horse—it was a big pinto pony.'" And in telling of a relative of hers, Woman Chief, Coming Daylight said: "Her husband was not very handsome, but they were well-to-do and she always rode top horses." 554 231

While all horses were as a rule well cared for, special attention was devoted to the buffalo horses. On the hunt, for instance, these horses would be led along unburdened by pack or rider to keep them fresh. They were ridden only for the actual chase and after the kill were turned loose to roll around and graze like young colts. When the butchering was completed the meat was packed on other horses and the swift buffalo horses were then led home again. These horses were ridden on social and ceremonial occasions, when their owners wished to show off, and of course the soldier societies were well mounted, but such use amounted to no more than a good work-out, and these valuable horses were never abused nor wilfully exhausted. 231

Children were exhorted to take care of their property, especially of horses, and the girls were advised that "a mare is worth everything—it increases—treat her well." It was stated that some attention was given to breeding. A man might judge that a colt showed possibilities of becoming a fast horse. If it fulfilled the early promise the colts it sired would be watched. The less likely of these would be castrated. Likewise, a good mare would, if possible, be retained by the owner for breeding. A man who owned a particularly good buffalo horse might, on his deathbed, either order that it be killed at his grave or give it to some relative he knew cared well for horses, with instructions never to abuse it nor give it away. [867] 763 [768] 431

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

woman! You are leaving an old woman!' Finally our mother couldn't stand it any longer and, although she was not responsible for that old woman, she turned back and got the old woman to camp by letting her hang onto the travois. But we didn't have to carry her because she died shortly after that." 888

Takes The Bow mentioned that in the dim past, rather than to go off and leave an aged relative, the Gros Ventres used to ask some outstanding warrior to kill this old person—a father, or mother, or grandparent. This was done in order to get those who were suffering "out of their misery." The relative who took this responsibility would authorize the killer to count coup on the one whom he killed and thus score another mark of distinction for his record.[8] Other Gros Ventres were of the opinion that this type of "mercy killing" was adopted from the Blackfoot and that it was rarely carried out by the Gros Ventres, although admittedly abandonment of the aged to starvation was sometimes forced upon them.

Death

The Gros Ventres valued life highly and prayed for long lives, but when a person knew he was about to die, it was said that he resigned himself and appreciated the efforts on the part of others to ease his last moments. There was a desire to die surrounded by one's family and friends who would see to it that the proper last steps were taken. In view of this, if a man were wounded in an encounter with the enemy, every effort would be made by his companions—even at great personal risk—to get him back to his family before he would die. 761 763 [727]

When all hope for life had been abandoned, the dying person was dressed in the best clothes available, his hair combed, and his face painted "as though he were going to a party." Frequently last minute instructions would be given by the dying concerning his preference as to method of final disposal. He might also include advice to his survivors, and make occasional bequests of 763

[8] It is interesting to note in this connection that Cocking, 1772, p. 112, writes of the Gros Ventres: "They torture all the aged of both sexes in a most shocking and deliberate manner." The context is not clear, however, and he may have been referring to treatment of prisoners of war.

763 property.[4] Although in the following case ideal conditions did not obtain, the account as given by an old woman illustrates something of the attitudes which prevailed even after the Gros Ventres had settled down. "My husband had been ill. We were very badly off, having nothing to eat and no light, but worst of all my husband had no suitable clothes in which to pass his last moments. A friend of his fortunately came to the rescue, bringing new clothes, food, a fancy new lamp and fuel. A short time after this my husband called to me to come to him and said: 'I have lost life long ago. The only thing I have left is my eyesight. I can see, but I will be leaving you soon. Bring me the bundle my friend has given me.' I did so and as he examined the new clothing piece by piece he said: 'Now I am glad I shall have something to wear. I want you to listen carefully. I don't want you to mourn—we have too many children for that, and they must be cared for. Don't go to your relatives nor to mine. We have been very poor since I have been sick and none of them has even come to see us. I want you to go straight to the home of this man who has given me these clothes. Now I am ready to go.' After my husband [587] died, I did just as he had requested. In spite of all the gossip, I married that man. People were talking about me because that man had at one time been married to a wife of my mother's brother."

764 If circumstances did not permit arrangements to be made before death, as soon as possible after death the corpse was washed and dressed. This office was performed preferably by friends of the [572] deceased since it was not expected of near relatives because "they felt too bad." Should the deceased not own a proper outfit, one was usually somehow provided. Coming Daylight remembered that one time when a small boy was drowned, the child's distracted mother came running to her lodge saying: "I am very poor and my little boy has no good clothes to wear. Will you let me have your little boy's clothes?" Coming Daylight felt so sorry for this woman that she let her have her own son's nicely beaded clothes and moccasins, and gave her a blanket as well. After the body was dressed, they laid it on this blanket in the place of honor at the back of the parents' lodge.

[4] Kroeber, 1908, p. 180, notes that "A man often disposed of his property before death."

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Before closing this section on rational treatment of disease certain points on care of the sick may be added which have an indirect bearing on curative measures proper. 758

As a rule, the sick were well looked after by their relatives and friends. Encouraging words and hopeful good wishes were expressed to an ill person and these helped recovery. If the patient voiced a desire for any particular food this would be procured if possible. When on one occasion Singer's very ill husband expressed a wish for roseberries, an old man visiting him at the time rushed out, picked a big bunch of them and brought them back at once. Singer seeded, mashed them up and mixed them with tallow and set before her husband a bowlful of them which "he went after as if he were starved." The next day when some friends were visiting him he remarked: "I can't get enough of that roseberry soup." At this, one of them hastened out at once and brought back a large quantity. A little before this another friend had prayed at his bedside and wished him good luck. "Those prayers and that soup," added Singer, "seemed to bring him out of his illness. They made him strong." When Al Chandler's boy, Jimmy, had typhoid fever, and said he was hungry for plums, Mrs. Stevens went a long distance to procure them for him.

According to Al Chandler, "no matter how sick a person may be, there is always one rallying point, just before the end, when he wants to eat. When a person had no more chance to live, the Gros Ventres would fix him (or her) up, put on his best robes, and paint him up ready to die." [763]

Occasionally, in the old days, a sick person might be abandoned. 734
"The Gros Ventres," Coming Daylight recalled, "were moving southward across the Missouri River. Before crossing it they left behind a Gros Ventre woman and her two- or three-year-old girl baby. The woman was very ill. They left her and the baby in a little shelter. They sort of threw her away.

"Some time after that the Crow happened to travel that way and crossed the Missouri from the south at the same place. There they saw the baby walking around in the bush . . . she would eat roseberries and pick up grasshoppers and eat them after breaking off their legs. The woman in the shelter had died and was beginning to smell.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

SOCIAL CUSTOMS.

000 The Gros Ventre system of terms of relationship has been given in a
605 former publication.[1]

601 Cousins, so far as the relationship was known, were called brothers and sisters, and they called each other's children son or daughter if the cousin
[582] was of the same sex as the speaker, or nephew or niece if the cousin was of the opposite sex. Any known relationship was a bar to marriage. The
[587] brother of a dead man sometimes married his widow, but this was not always the case.

583 Large amounts of property, especially horses, were given away for wives for the honor of the act, but there was no rule or definite custom covering the quantity of property so given. The horses might be given not only to the father, but to the brothers, uncles, and other relatives of the girl. Sometimes, without having received any gifts and apparently without any previous understanding, a man would give his daughter to a young man, who thereupon would give him horses, or distribute them among his wife's other relatives. Old men practised this custom in order to obtain the aid and services of a young man in caring for their horses and in other ways, and no doubt
585 sometimes also to insure a more certain food-supply. A young man on
431 marrying received a tent with all the proper furniture, usually from his prospective parents-in-law, but sometimes from his own parents, if they were the wealthier.

606 Although a young married man often lived with his father-in-law, the
[591] well-known taboo custom between mother-in-law and son-in-law — which forbade their speaking, looking at each other, or being in the same tent — existed among the Gros Ventre. There was, however, no father-in-law taboo. The mother-in-law taboo extended to the son-in-law's brother.

584 If a woman did not wish a man for her lover, she might send him to do a
721 certain act of bravery. If he returned successfully from war, having accomplished the deed, he was then accepted. This custom is said to have led to the death of many young men.

428 At a person's death his property was inherited generally by his relatives. His father and mother, brothers, sisters, and children would receive part. His father and mother received the most. A man often disposed of his property before his death. If he died suddenly, as on being killed in war, his parents divided his property. It was not customary for a man on going to war to divide his property among his relatives in the contingency of his
[764] death. Property particularly valued by the dead person was buried with him.

[1] Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part I, pp. 9, 150.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

A wife inherited practically nothing from her husband. If she had been faithful to him and had been of a good disposition, her parents-in-law might give her a certain number of horses or other property. The tent was considered the woman's possession while she lived with her husband; but on his death, even this was no longer her property. If the tent was worth keeping at all, it generally went to the dead man's sister, if she was newly married. A man, on the contrary, inherited his wife's property, though he generally gave back part of it to her relatives.

A woman, on her husband's death, went back to live with her parents, or, if these were dead, with her brother, uncle, or other relative. An old woman, on the death of her husband, generally went to live with her children, most frequently with a daughter.

On the death of a brother, especially a beloved one, or of his father or his son, a man cut his hair and went out naked (with only a buffalo robe) on the prairie to cry from morning until late at night. Women, besides cutting their hair, and cutting themselves (especially on the leg) until they bled, would also go out to cry, naked from the waist up. A sister cut herself for a brother, but a mother mourning for a child underwent the most pain. Of course the mourning was greatest for an only child. In such a case, parents might give away everything in their tent and nearly all their horses, stripping themselves of property so thoroughly as almost to go naked. Some mourners fasted for a number of days. If, while a person was crying on the prairie, one should in joke attempt to scare him, he might kill the disturber. Mourners were the bravest people in war, caring about no danger whatever.

Burial was in trees, on high rocks, or in caves inaccessible to wolves and coyotes. The corpse was wrapped in a burial robe.

A menstruating woman was called niniitixtj. It is said that she did not retire to a separate lodge, or eat separately from her family; but she did not approach a sick patient, because of the evil effect she would have on his condition by her presence. Some women were said to wear a breech-cloth during their menstruation.

In childbirth, women either lay or knelt. They grasped a stick supported in a horizontal position by two upright forked sticks set in the ground. After the umbilical cord had been severed, the end was left on the child. It was thought to fall off on the fourth day. The woman who had cut the umbilical cord received as a gift the knife she had used. A woman who washed a new-born child was given the vessel in which it was washed. The afterbirth was hung in a tree. If it were left lying to be handled, the child would be afflicted with sores. For three or four days after birth, the child was given suck by other women than its mother. This statement apparently refers chiefly to a woman's first child.

561 582 taboo. This was the case regarding the children of "inseparable friends," but whether or not it was so regarding the children of all members of the company, mutual hospitality was frequently extended among the members—"a man would most often invite the members of his age group." Further, it was not unusual for members of the same company to go hunting and on raiding and revenge parties together. If a young man were killed at war and [727] his body brought home, the members of his company were said to 764 have assembled and danced around his bier, sometimes sobbing and crying as they danced.

As members of either one or other of the two larger societies 561 they joined with members of other companies, in the Stars and 575 Wolf-men respectively, to perform their proper social dance and to participate in activities such as gambling, horse-racing, "brag- [616] ging contests," and so on, wherein they could compete with members of the opposite moiety. An individual seemingly tended to choose his serious enemy-friends from among those of the rival organization and thus is explained the spirit of competition which Kroeber notes between the Stars and "other companies."[13]

The Societies

575 The Stars and Wolf-men societies were organized along identical lines and were distinguished from each other only in details of procedure.

Each society included approximately half the total number of able-bodied warriors in the tribe. They each had two renowned men as leaders—two Star leaders of relatively recent times having been Comes A-flying and Crazy Bull; two Wolf-men leaders, Skinner and Strikes On Top. The leaders remained mounted when the others of the society were marching on foot in preparation for their dance, and carried whips at the dance as insignia. These men were supposed to have been outstanding warriors who had while mounted actually counted coup against the enemy. Two members of the last-admitted company served as *atsa'an* (waiters, messengers) at the dances, and each society had an announcer, presumably chosen from among the "old men" who had gone through the Law Enforcer Dance.

[13] Kroeber, 1908, p. 234.

868 posed to be watched over and kept under close supervision. For
[562] her there was much less freedom than for a boy of like age.

As a rare treat, a girl of eight or nine might have been allowed
857 to stay with a friend of her own age overnight, providing her guardian knew exactly where she was and that there was some responsible party to look after her. Boys of the same age and even younger could come and go more or less as they pleased. In
[564] illustration Al Chandler told of an incident in his childhood. "At the death of my uncle, the corpse was placed in a lodge removed at some distance from where he resided. I was only a little fellow at the time and I wandered over to that lodge. Not realizing my uncle was dead, I crawled under the covers. I was not missed from home and was not discovered until the next morning when my grandfather came to the lodge to mourn. Thereafter for a week or so my grandmother watched me when I set off from home, but when she saw I was steering clear of that particular lodge, she allowed me to go without saying anything. She knew I could take care of myself so she didn't care where I went or when I came home."

857 In spite of strict supervision of girls, sometimes they evaded
868 their guardians. Coming Daylight told of one of the "tricks" that she had used. "One night I heard there was dancing and my sister and I wanted to sneak out to enjoy the fun while my grandmother was sleeping. We rolled up our blankets and put them beside her. Fortunately she didn't awaken even when we came in. If she had known we were out she would have come after us and given us a good lecture when we got home."

So far as training in domestic tasks is concerned, it was consid-
868 ered an important part of a girl's duty to gather berries and to dig roots. Some older woman went with a group of girls to show them what to collect, pointing out at the same time the things that were not edible. Each girl worked and whatever she garnered would be given by her to her mother or grandmother. What was not used immediately would then be stored for winter use.

Learning to slice meat very thin for drying seemed to have been picked up easily by girls at playing "house." Skinning and butchering were much more difficult tasks which had to be learned carefully. These were considered mainly work for men, but it

183 was not a Christian, used to tell him: "You have eyes to see, a
867 heart to think, and ears to hear. Listen to what I will tell you. You are a poor boy. As such, be faithful. Believe in the One Above the White Man. Pray to Him, ask Him to have pity on you and so make you a good man some day. Try to be good to all, especially when you become a man. Be good to the poor, be good to the old. Never take anything not belonging to you. Never speak evil of other people. Try to be patient. If a man says [865] anything wrong to you, and hurts your feelings, say nothing because if folks talk back it causes quarreling or fighting, which is not good. If a poor man asks you for anything, if you have it, be ready to hand it over to him. If you see anybody hungry and [888] you have it, feed him. If an old man or woman is in need and wants anything done, do it for him or her. If you do these things, the One Above will have pity on you."

685 All informants agreed that in addition to having been told to
867 take care of whatever property they might have, they were instructed to regard the property rights of others. It was believed
183 that, though the theft remained undiscovered, the thief would be punished by automatic supernatural sanction. "Something terrible would happen to anybody who stole something." Mary's grandmother, for instance, had told her time and again never to take anything that did not belong to her. To illustrate how well this had been instilled into her, she gave the following example. "On one occasion when I was a child, I found a really beautiful string of beads, but I did not take it. After I got to bed that night, however, I told my grandmother about it. When asked why I had failed to bring home the beads, I replied: 'I was afraid you would tell me that I had taken them from someone.' My grandmother merely remarked: 'Well, you should have brought them to me, or better, you should have taken me to where they were lying.' But when I took her to the spot the next day the beads were gone."

This reminded Coming Daylight of an incident in her own [764] childhood. "I was walking near a grove of trees where several corpses had been placed (in the traditional manner of disposing of the dead). I noticed a considerable amount of bear excrement and mixed in it were a number of elk teeth—the most valuable

763 property.[4] Although in the following case ideal conditions did not obtain, the account as given by an old woman illustrates something of the attitudes which prevailed even after the Gros Ventres had settled down. "My husband had been ill. We were very badly off, having nothing to eat and no light, but worst of all my husband had no suitable clothes in which to pass his last moments. A friend of his fortunately came to the rescue, bringing new clothes, food, a fancy new lamp and fuel. A short time after this my husband called to me to come to him and said: 'I have lost life long ago. The only thing I have left is my eyesight. I can see, but I will be leaving you soon. Bring me the bundle my friend has given me.' I did so and as he examined the new clothing piece by piece he said: 'Now I am glad I shall have something to wear. I want you to listen carefully. I don't want you to mourn—we have too many children for that, and they must be cared for. Don't go to your relatives nor to mine. We have been very poor since I have been sick and none of them has even come to see us. I want you to go straight to the home of this man who has given me these clothes. Now I am ready to go.' After my husband [587] died, I did just as he had requested. In spite of all the gossip, I married that man. People were talking about me because that man had at one time been married to a wife of my mother's brother."

764 If circumstances did not permit arrangements to be made before death, as soon as possible after death the corpse was washed and dressed. This office was performed preferably by friends of the [572] deceased since it was not expected of near relatives because "they felt too bad." Should the deceased not own a proper outfit, one was usually somehow provided. Coming Daylight remembered that one time when a small boy ~~was drowned~~, the child's distracted mother came running to her lodge saying: "I am very poor and my little boy has no good clothes to wear. Will you let me have your little boy's clothes?" Coming Daylight felt so sorry for this woman that she let her have her own son's nicely beaded clothes and moccasins, and gave her a blanket as well. After the body was dressed, they laid it on this blanket in the place of honor at the back of the parents' lodge.

[4] Kroeber, 1908, p. 180, notes that "A man often disposed of his property before death."

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Another instance was given by The Boy regarding his father. 764
"Lame Bull was on a buffalo-hunting party when his brother-in-law was killed during an encounter with the enemy. They brought the body as it was back to camp, where it lay for quite a while. [729] Lame Bull finally went to his tipi and got leggings and a shirt of his own, although he was Flat Pipe Keeper at the time and it was [784] taboo for one holding this office to give his clothes to the dead. Nevertheless Lame Bull removed the bloody clothes from the body of his brother-in-law, washed the body and dressed it in his own clothes. He paid for this kindness, however, because for nine years thereafter he had such pains in his legs he was not able to walk,—this being the punishment he suffered for breaking the rules by which the Keeper of a sacred pipe should live."

Before finally disposing of the body "something very expensive," like a big silk handkerchief, was placed over the face. The whole body, including the head, was then wrapped securely in a blanket or robe and tied "like a mummy." The body was placed on a stretcher and put in a forked tree, if practicable, the head to the setting sun. Otherwise the corpse might be laid on a knoll and a structure like a sweatlodge built over it to protect it from the wild beasts; or it might be laid in the cleft of a cliff and covered with rocks.[8] For a particularly prominent man, however, his own 766
lodge might serve as his last resting place. In that case holes would be dug in which the lodge-poles were placed, in order that the structure would be more permanent. The body was laid in the lodge amidst rich furnishings. The ears of the lodge were closed, the cover pegged down, and the whole secured as well as possible. This was done, for instance, for The Boy's maternal grandfather and for one of his maternal uncles. Al Chandler remembers that when he himself was a small boy upon the death of his uncle, Rises Again, the body was placed on a bedstead in a big lodge erected about a half-mile from his house.

Even in times of great stress, such as in a smallpox epidemic 764
when so many died that "the trees along the Milk River were just [765 731] loaded with bodies," as much care as possible was taken to place the bodies properly in their last resting place. When there was no more space on the trees, a large number of bodies were put in a

[8] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, p. 181.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

764 lodge at some little distance from the camp. As exceptions to the rule, however, Coming Daylight told of a couple of instances which came within her experience in the first epidemic which she remembers. One case concerned a man who simply left the body of one of his wives where she had fallen and Coming Daylight [766 73] came across the bones of that woman stripped of flesh by wild animals during the night. The other case was that of a man who mercilessly covered with stones the body of his infected sister, in spite of the fact that she was still alive.

[178] Only in relatively recent times has burial in the ground been common. This is illustrated by the comments of Coming Daylight in connection with a long story about a visit to a relative who was married to a white trader. "On this occasion my father's father was killed and scalped by the Piegan just outside of the white man's stockade. The white men brought in the body. He had been scalped and was bloody all over. These whites washed him, bound up his head, and dressed his body in their own clothes,—even to putting shoes on his feet. We thought that peculiar and some of our relatives wanted instead to put on him the best pair of beaded moccasins we had. My father said, however, that he wouldn't interfere as long as they were fixing him up in their way. So the whites buried him just like they do their own. The Gros Ventres never did that—they put the corpse up high somewhere, usually in a tree. We thought it was bad enough for our relatives to die, much less covering them up with earth. My maternal grandmother, who was there at the time, said: 'When I leave you, I don't want you to mourn for me because I have lived to be just as old as anyone should be. All I ask is that you see to it that I am fixed up the right way. Don't let them dig any hole for me. I want you to lay me up in a cliff in a nice quiet place, just make a bed for me and lay me there.' When she died, that is just what was done for her."

It was customary, prior to the time that the Gros Ventres settled down, to place some of the personal belongings of the deceased with the body.[6] When a beloved son died, for instance, his favorite horse might be taken along and killed at the place where the body was laid away. Similarly a minor pipe might have been

[6] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, p. 180.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

buried with its owner. For a woman, her clothing, and sometimes even her pots and pans, were put with her body. It was stated explicitly, however, that food was never placed with the body by the Gros Ventres, although it was recognized that the Assiniboine did so. 764

A widow would burn the things of her husband which were not placed with his body nor taken by his relatives. She would then be smudged with sage and, should she have kissed the corpse, her mouth was smudged four times and she was made to spit each time. 768 783

These practices were seemingly tied up with two beliefs,—the first being that if objects were not placed with the body, the deceased would return to look for the things valued in life; the second, that the recently deceased try to lure the living to join them. The first point was explained by Mary, whose mother had told her: "Everyone likes his own things and some hate to leave them when they die. That is why we used to put personal belongings with the corpse. It might be that there is some one thing that a person wants which has been 'left behind,' so he will come back to seek it. Sometimes when you are alone you might hear a rattling of the dishes or a whistling sound, and you would know that it was some loved one who had died and who was looking for something." 764 775

As proof of the second point, the following experience was offered by Singer. "When I was ill during a smallpox epidemic, I had a dream. I dreamed that my sister, who had died in this same epidemic, appeared to me and said: 'Our mother wants you. Come with me.' My father, who was actually nursing me, seemed to be standing to one side. He told my sister: 'You have had no pity on us. You didn't fight for life. What are you coming after her for? You go by yourself.' But pretty soon my sister came again and said: 'Now this time I want you to come because our mother wants you.' So I agreed: 'All right. I will go with you.' My sister took me to a shabby-looking little old lodge and I didn't feel right about going in there but I thought: 'Well, to please them I will look in there anyway.' There was someone there in bed and my sister was toward the back of the lodge and my mother was on the other side. My mother told me: 'Here, sit by your sister.' She 775 787

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

769
787

war, wealth, curing, gambling, and sex. The helper imparted no power of clairvoyance or prophecy; the other lesser beings did impart one or other of the specific powers above listed. The helper had to be summoned to come in person on each occasion when needed; the other beings gave power once for all to the receiver and were not, at least not ordinarily, summoned to come in person when the imparted power was exercised. The helper was always a deceased relative of the helped; the power-giver was a non-ancestral being. The helper was not acquired by quest, he more or less forced his services on the recipient, and was not transferable; personal power was commonly (although not always) acquired by quest, was accepted or refused freely, and was more commonly transferable.

Our chief sources of information upon personal ancestral helpers and personal supernatural powers were: among the men, The Boy, Thick, Al Chandler, Thomas Main, Turn Toes; among the women, Coming Daylight, Singer, Garter Snake, Mary Ereaux, Cora Chandler. Their competence will, we believe, become clear from the circumstances to be noted passim in the present section.

Ancestral Helpers

The ancestral helper complex among the Gros Ventres has been recorded in detail by us in two papers published in 1944,[1] to which the reader is referred. The following account is a summarized version of these two papers.

The ancestral or ghost helper was called tsätsuwa'a,[2] of uncertain etymology. The word was used exclusively for such ancestral helpers, as distinct from other ghosts (see p. 23).

Such a ghost helper was acquired, not by quest through fasting or crying, as power was more commonly acquired. Acquisition usually came about as follows. A man or woman would keep some momento of a deceased close relative, such as some prized possession or else a rib or tooth[3] or lock of hair of the deceased,—either in

[1] Flannery, 1944, pp. 54-59; Cooper, 1944, pp. 80-84.

[2] This same word is used by the Gros Ventres at present for "radio."

[3] After the body had decomposed. Formerly the Gros Ventres did not bury the dead in the ground, cf. Flannery, 1953, p. 211.

[178
764]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

He borrowed a saddle from us and he isn't here.' Mrs. Stevens had a store at Old Hays and they had come over and she said she had plums canned. So she went right home to get them for him. It didn't take long in an auto and she brought a jar of them. He certainly enjoyed them. 755

"So Little Man got back and I came after him and told him that Jimmy was sick again. He came over and looked at him and doctored a little bit like he does at first. He doctored him twice that same day and the next morning was when he used that bear claw. He told Jimmy: 'Tell me wherever it hurts and I will work on it.' Jimmy said: 'Here on my right side.' The old man said: 'That's a bad place. I don't like to suck there because it might hurt your guts. But I will do something else. I will use this bear claw now.' So he asked the boy, showing him the bear claw, 'Do you think you can stand this?' Jimmy said he could and Little Man said: 'Well make sure you can stand it.' He told the old lady to hold Jimmy's hands down and me to hold his feet down. But first he told me to get hot coals and just put a little of the sweet pine on the coals and smudge the end of the bear claw. He took some paint and painted himself like the bear had showed him that time when he was out crying. So after he did that, I held Jimmy and the old man sang first himself. He sang that song four times and then got busy. He put the claw right where it should be, and you could just see the claw going in. The boy wriggled and made faces. The claw went right in at the side and he jerked it out and you could hear something drop. I saw where it dropped and said: 'Where did it fall?' Little Man told me: 'Pick it up. Let us see it.' I took it and gave it to him. He worked it around in his palm. It was a whole cherry seed and Jimmy's gut, kind of rotten, was stuck on it and that is what was blocking his gut. Right after that he was well.

"The claw was a big one but it didn't even make a scar because I looked to see if there was any blood coming out. As soon as he jerked the claw out, he rubbed his hand just a little bit over the place and that is all there was to it."

Al Chandler also gave a short account of his own treatment as a boy by Black Bird.

"I was four years old when my mother died and I knew in what direction they had taken the corpse. The next morning I went over [764]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

755 there and saw two fresh graves. They dig a hole about three or
[764] four feet deep and put sticks across, cover that with canvas and cover the canvas with dirt. I laid down on one of the graves and that is where they found me. When I did not come back my father started looking for me. I was just like dead and they got an old medicine man to work on me, for at that time my adopted father, Little Man, had not yet gotten doctoring power.

"When I woke up, my father, my stepfather (the man married to my real mother), a woman and the old doctor, Black Bird, were there in this big lodge. I did not know what had happened to me but when I woke up I saw old Black Bird sitting by me. He had a china saucer with medicine in it and with four little brass bells [sic] in the medicine. He told me to drink up the medicine. I took the medicine but tried to balk at the bells. But the old man said: 'No, no drink the bells and all. The bells will be your protection. You will never get sick and ghosts will no longer be able to harm you. You could go to sleep with them and sit up with them [without harm to you from them]."

In a long narrative of a battle between the Gros Ventres and the Crow, The Boy described, very briefly, the manner in which one of the Gros Ventres was cured. After the fighting was over this man was found unconscious, bleeding from a wound in the arm. One of the Gros Ventres knew how to staunch the flow of blood He had an otter-skin with medicine tied on the nose thereof. With this he treated the wounded man's arm. The flow of blood stopped at once and the man regained consciousness. A travois was made and they had the man's relatives haul him back to the main camp on it.

756 A number of other individuals with doctoring power were mentioned by name at various times by our informants—Sleeping Bear, He Steals, Bill Jones, Ragged Robe (d. about 1935), Otter Robe, Joe Assiniboine—but we obtained no information on their curing procedures. We knew Joe Assiniboine, who alone of the
[795] surviving Gros Ventres refused to the last to become a Catholic and who died only recently in 1942 or 1943, but unfortunately, though not patently unfriendly to us, was consistently reluctant to give information.

5: Flannery E-5 (1940)1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787 As to the way in which the power was acquired, Al Chandler
791 explained as follows: "It was customary to take some hair or a
764 relic of a deceased relative after the body decays. (The Gros Ventres did not use to bury their dead like they do now.) Some would have a bone, others a whole lock of hair, and so on. Now if a person happens to take something the spirit likes, the spirit appears and asks: 'Why do you want that rib (or whatever part one takes)?' The man or woman might answer: 'I want you real near me and I want you to help me whenever I ask you.' That person gets in a kind of trance while the spirit talks to him that first time, and the spirit gives him a particular song which he must sing when he wants to invite the spirit."

Apparently some leeway was allowed the individual in accepting the power, if the following information from Al Chandler can be taken as an indication.

"My adoptive father had the rib of an uncle of his who had been a medicine man of some kind. The spirit appeared to my father and asked: 'Why did you take that? What are you going to do with me?' My father replied: 'This is just for myself. I don't want to be the kind of person who owns spirits. If I need you myself I am going to call on you and I want you to help me, but I am not going to make you a public servant.' And that spirit did help him, personally, once or twice, but my father never got tied up in the ropes [as in the case reported by Mrs. Warrior]. By the way, the person who wants to find out something is the one that ties the spiritualist. He can tie the ropes as tight as he wants to and make as many knots as he pleases. The funny part of it is that it is just like the showmen with handcuffs,—the knots sometimes are still tied just like the person who wanted the information tied them originally,—although sometimes the spirit bunched the ropes all up in a mess. The whole tent shakes, too, and the skeptics look real hard, but the spirit will mock them by saying: 'Well, you need not look because you can't see anything anyway!'"

787 In conclusion I think we can say that the rite fits into the general ceremonial pattern of the Gros Ventres, but it was the only ceremony in which the shaking tent was involved. The

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

A wife inherited practically nothing from her husband. If she had been faithful to him and had been of a good disposition, her parents-in-law might give her a certain number of horses or other property. The tent was considered the woman's possession while she lived with her husband; but on his death, even this was no longer her property. If the tent was worth keeping at all, it generally went to the dead man's sister, if she was newly married. A man, on the contrary, inherited his wife's property, though he generally gave back part of it to her relatives. 428 562 [422]

A woman, on her husband's death, went back to live with her parents, or, if these were dead, with her brother, uncle, or other relative. An old woman, on the death of her husband, generally went to live with her children, most frequently with a daughter. 768

On the death of a brother, especially a beloved one, or of his father or his son, a man cut his hair and went out naked (with only a buffalo robe) on the prairie to cry from morning until late at night. Women, besides cutting their hair, and cutting themselves (especially on the leg) until they bled, would also go out to cry, naked from the waist up. A sister cut herself for a brother, but a mother mourning for a child underwent the most pain. Of course the mourning was greatest for an only child. In such a case, parents might give away everything in their tent and nearly all their horses, stripping themselves of property so thoroughly as almost to go naked. Some mourners fasted for a number of days. If, while a person was crying on the prairie, one should in joke attempt to scare him, he might kill the disturber. Mourners were the bravest people in war, caring about no danger whatever. 765 [304] [431]

Burial was in trees, on high rocks, or in caves inaccessible to wolves and coyotes. The corpse was wrapped in a burial robe. 764

A menstruating woman was called niniitixtj. It is said that she did not retire to a separate lodge, or eat separately from her family; but she did not approach a sick patient, because of the evil effect she would have on his condition by her presence. Some women were said to wear a breech-cloth during their menstruation. 844 [291]

In childbirth, women either lay or knelt. They grasped a stick supported in a horizontal position by two upright forked sticks set in the ground. After the umbilical cord had been severed, the end was left on the child. It was thought to fall off on the fourth day. The woman who had cut the umbilical cord received as a gift the knife she had used. A woman who washed a new-born child was given the vessel in which it was washed. The afterbirth was hung in a tree. If it were left lying to be handled, the child would be afflicted with sores. For three or four days after birth, the child was given suck by other women than its mother. This statement apparently refers chiefly to a woman's first child. 844 [846]

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

551 Names were given to children very soon after birth. Names were frequently changed and given away. A man would receive his father's name
553 from the latter, or would take it after his death. If a child were sickly, a relative, such as a grandfather, sometimes gave him another name. A sick person sometimes also took a new name in order to recover. Renowned warriors sometimes gave away their names to young men. They might retain the same name for themselves, or take a new one. One very aged man gave away his name to a young man, telling him, "I give you my name in order that you may have as long a life as I." This was done without the occasion or accompaniment of a ceremony.

There seems to have been no prohibition against mentioning the name of the dead, nor even any reluctance on the matter. Some people, however, were ashamed to speak their own names.

551 Twins, called niiçan, were named, if boys, respectively Kaaen and Niiçaⁿ.
845 The latter name, however, was not always used, an ordinary name being given instead. Girl twins were not called by these names.

362 The hair was formerly worn in braids, as at present customary among the Plains tribes, but also erect over the forehead. The women wore their
[765] hair either in braids or sometimes loose. In mourning, the hair, especially of the women, was cut about halfway across the cheek.

304 Ear-piercing, which among the Arapaho is performed on ceremonial occasions, and is itself accompanied with ceremony and giving of presents, was said among the Gros Ventre to be unaccompanied by special ceremonial actions. A woman or any one else does the piercing.

857 Boys who were herding horses sometimes took off their clothes and daubed themselves with mud until they were unrecognizable. They painted
673 their horses, and made shields of willow. Then they came to the camp,
868 mounted or on foot, to steal meat. Approaching the camp like a war-party, they would select the best meat hanging outdoors, charge on it, take it, and run. The old men and women and children chased them with clubs, but of course without success. The boys would go back to where they were herding, and have a feast.

576 The Gros Ventre say that both hand-shaking and kissing are aboriginal with them.

GAMES.

524 A common cup-and-ball game called tsöötskuutjaⁿ ("throw in") consisted of four hollow deer or antelope leg bones, each about two inches long, attached to a string passing through them, at the end of which there was a needle eight or ten inches long. This game appears to be identical with

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

counted coup on the enemy filled a pipe, and held it for the rest of the party to smoke as they stood in a row. The returning war-party, if successful, always painted black, but if a member of their own party had been killed, they returned without rejoicing; unless sometimes, when the loss of the enemy had been greater than their own, and a relative of the dead was in the party, he might say, "One of the enemy pays for my relative. On account of the others, let us enjoy ourselves." Then the party would paint black, and celebrate. Wounds received by members of the war-party would not prevent celebration, unless, of course, they resulted fatally; and they were always regarded as an honor.

Some war-parties started off publicly in broad daylight, having made it known that they were going; and any one who wished joined. Sometimes, perhaps, two men would agree to go, and invited such others to accompany them as they wished. Women not infrequently went with the war-parties. If a man was killed in war, his relatives, especially his parents, mourned for him. His father might go to the tent of a renowned warrior, and cry until this man became angry and announced a day for a party to start out to obtain revenge. On the day set, the party left publicly, usually on horseback.

A man's supernatural war paraphernalia are shown in Figs. 27, 28, and 29. They were obtained from a middle-aged man who had them from his grandfather, who first dreamed of the magpie and the other animals connected with the paraphernalia, and made the objects. A cylindrical raw-hide case (Fig. 27), such as is found used for holding feathers and medicine among most Plains tribes, is painted with a yellow, green, and blue design resembling parfleche designs. These colors represent the various colors of the birds that were dreamed of by the original owner, and whose feathers are kept in the case. The case is called the "house" of these objects. A wing-bone is attached to the outside of the case to make another whistle from in case of loss of the finished whistle included in the outfit. A small bag containing a necklace is kept in the case. The bag (Fig. 28, *a*) is ornamented with bead-work representing a frog (kaka[n]). This frog was part of the original owner's dream. The necklace (Fig. 28, *b*) has various wasoo ("medicine-roots") on it. These are said to be neither eaten nor otherwise used, except as they are worn on the necklace. The bone whistle (Fig. 28, *c*) alluded to is attached to a necklace of otter-skin. It is blown during the fighting to prevent injury. A magpie's skin (Fig. 28, *d*) and the skin of a smaller bird (Fig. 29, *a*) are also contained in the case. The white magpie-feathers are dyed yellow. The two skins are worn at the back of the head, and prevent the wearer being injured even in a hand-to-hand fight. A head-dress of ten magpie-feathers and of a white plume on red-painted

787 began to dig around behind her bedding and brought out a bowl
775 such as that in which buffalo chips are pounded into powder. She said: 'Here. I want you to eat this.' It didn't look good to me and I just kind of felt it with my fingers. Instead of having sat by my sister as my mother had directed, I had remained by the door, because I felt kind of scared in some way. So I told them: 'Wait. I guess I will go out a minute. I will be right back.' But I got out of there and ran home as fast as I could go—back to my own bed, back to myself. If I had eaten what they had given me that would have been the last of me! After this dream I got well."

Mourning

765 As soon as word was circulated that someone had died, all rela-
152 tives of that person, especially the women, were supposed to gather as soon as possible to cry and mourn for the deceased. Very close kin were expected to show their sorrow at the death of a loved one not only by crying and wailing, but also by casting off their good clothes and donning old ones,—robes, for instance, consisting of pieces of old discarded lodge covers, or ordinary robes that were rough and worn,—and by cutting the hair.[7] This latter was truly
[82] a great sacrifice, for to the Gros Ventres one of the chief criteria
[302] of beauty, in men and women alike, was extreme length of hair. The hair of younger children in a family was spared, even at the death of parents, but should, say, a father die, the hair of the older daughters was shorn, though not cut so short as that of the widow.
[887] An elderly woman was usually called upon to do the cutting and the widow, guided by the strength of her emotional reaction, would indicate how short she wished her hair to be. It was said that some widows would leave their hair relatively long, just free of the shoulders, while others "when they felt too badly, had all their hair cut off, almost as men now wear their hair."

Close kin were accustomed to further show grief by going off to the hills and fasting, crying aloud as they wandered about alone, and sleeping out without shelter. A parent would have done so at the loss of a son, one spouse at the death of the other, or a sister for her deceased brother. Such mourners would stay out

[7] For this and other practices in mourning, see Kroeber, 1908, p. 181.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

765 152

until someone went after them and talked to them and persuaded them to eat and drink some water.

The most extravagant expressions of grief were expected on the part of close relatives of men killed at war. It was under such circumstances that the mourners tore off their clothes and gashed their arms and legs. The blood was not washed off and the wounds were allowed to fester, often leaving ugly scars. It was maintained that in mourning the Gros Ventres did not cut off fingers,—that was done only in fulfilment of a vow. [304]

If a brave young man were killed by the enemy, his parents went even further in the expression of their grief, and sometimes had to be restrained from committing suicide. The father could show additional sorrow by cutting the manes and tails of his son's horses, which he then led about as he wandered on the hills for four days and nights, crying and mourning. The following case illustrates the behavior of an elder brother in mourning for a younger one, but may be somewhat exceptional in that the former felt responsible for the latter's death. [962] 765 787

"Little Man, also known as Deafie, was on his way home with his younger brother. They had been on a friendly visit to the Crow. There were others in the party and one evening while they were camped, the younger brother had a dream. The next morning he told them: 'I had a bad dream. I dreamed I got killed.' One of the older men said: 'All right. We will stop here awhile so we can make a sweat-lodge and we will smudge.' (That is what they did when they wanted to prevent something bad from happening.) But Little Man told them that, although the rest of them might believe in dreams, he did not, and he insisted that they move on. The old man couldn't say anything more. As they were going along that same day, Little Man was scouting ahead and sighted the enemy. The Gros Ventre party separated, Little Man going with one group, his brother with the other. The brother happened to go right into the midst of the Assiniboine and was killed. The others heard the shots, but when they got there, Little Man found his brother lying dead. He then tore off all his clothes and would have committed suicide by dashing singlehanded after the enemy had not his brother-in-law grabbed him and held him back. When they got home, Little Man felt so badly that he cut off his beautiful

765
787

long hair. All this happened just a year before he married Coming Daylight."

It was said that not infrequently those out mourning on the hills experienced visions of supernatural significance. It seemed that women were especially favored at times like that since they never went out in quest of power as did men. When Lame Bull's wife was mourning for her younger brother after he was killed at war, "someone" came to her and taught her a special song which she should sing when the party returned from avenging his death. Coming Daylight, when crying out on the hills after one of her sons died, was "shown a cane" which she took to mean that she would live to be an old woman. Another of her visions is given in detail as it involves a substitution for the more violent expressions of grief.

"When I was out in the hills after my favorite son died, I dreamed that I was in a big lodge full of people and I was sitting right by the door. At the back of this lodge was a big pile of tobacco mixture and a pipe lying alongside. The owner of the lodge, after he filled the pipe, got up and walked toward me. I was scared, because I didn't smoke. This one told me: 'Look at these people.' I did so and noticed that many of them had their hair cut and that their bodies were bleeding. Then he said: 'That kind of mourning is in the past. Nowadays your only consolation is in smoking this pipe.' He gave me the pipe and I started to smoke. I smoked until the tobacco was finished, emptied the pipe and put it down. Then the owner of the lodge told the other people there: 'Go ahead.' All the people in there took turns coming up to me, each rubbing red paint on his hands and painting me, starting at the top of my head and proceeding right down to the tip of my moccasins. I was facing the door and when the last one finished, the man told me: 'Now go home. Don't ever go on the hills and mourn again. But always smoke if you want to.'

"That was my dream. When I got home I sat down and started to cry. When my husband asked me what was the matter, I told him that I wanted a smoke, related my dream to him. He said: 'I will take you to your sister.' When we got to her house my husband said to her: 'Your sister is crying for a smoke.' My sister laughed and said: 'Well, I have no pinto ponies to give her!

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

I have always heard her say that she would never smoke, even if someone gave her a pinto pony.' But when my husband told her about my dream, she said: 'Oh. It is great to have a dream like that. Many of us fast and pray and we are never shown anything!' So she fixed a smoke for me and gave it to me. I have been smoking ever since." 765 787

Whenever close relatives happened to be in the vicinity where lay the remains of one of their number, some at least went there to cry. Coming Daylight remarked that she remembers well where each and every one of her relatives had been "left," and feels the country, over which the Gros Ventres had control in the 1860's and 1870's, to be "fenced in" by their remains. 765

At present when a Gros Ventre dies, no "feasting and smoking" is done for four days thereafter. If, however, an important date has been set and it is seriously inconvenient to postpone a big gathering, at least one of the chief mourners would be invited "too soon," and has no choice but to accept. Before eating, the host or someone in his place "talked" to the mourner and commanded him to cease mourning, to paint his face, and henceforth to join in all amusements, dances, and social affairs of the people. 765 778

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

singed off at a fire, and the insides taken out without skinning the animal; then it was quartered up and boiled. 782 252 262

In addition, Charles Buckman stated: "If a party went out to war and met the enemy, before the actual fighting began a man might promise to give grub and a feast to old people, and as part of the feast there had to be a dog,—a pup, of any color. After the party got back home [at the feast, before eating] four pieces of the dog meat were taken and held up and then set on [in] the ground, one each to the north, east, south and west. The pieces were held up as offered to God—in thanksgiving and as a prayer for future favors. Then the young man served the grub to the old people. Before eating they would say, 'O God, this young man has fulfilled the promise he made to you,' and they would pray for him."

What we may call, for want of a better name, sacrifices of person or somatic sacrifices, took three main forms: offerings of flesh, of finger joints, and of self-inflicted suffering and/or privation. Each of the first two is a sacrifice in the strict sense of the term; the third, in the broader sense. The gashing of arms, legs or face as a mourning custom was quite distinct in the Gros Ventre mind from the above flesh offering: it expressed sorrow, it was not in any sense a sacrifice or offering to the deceased. No sacrifices at all were connected with mourning. Nor were finger joints ever cut off as a mourning observance.* 782 785 304 [765]

In most instances recorded by us, these somatic sacrifices were made in fulfillment of vows for the cure or safety of a close relative of the vower,—as, it may be recalled, was the case with self-torturers in the Sacrifice Dance. There were exceptions however: in their respective quests for power, Bull Lodge cut off a finger joint, and Little Man, Al Chandler's adopted father, cut off bits of flesh; the other Little Man, Coming Daylight's husband, when suffering from hemorrhages and pains around the heart was told in dream that he would get well if he underwent solitary self-torture.

Women as well as men would make offerings of their flesh and finger joints. To judge from the records we obtained, the finger joint sacrifice was more frequently made by women than by men,

*Cf. Flannery, 1953, p. 205.

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

of men, including Stiff Arm, a noted Gros Ventre medicine 114
man, who has since died. Only a few details were obtained: the 787
rite within a regular tepee with spectators present; the tying of the performer with ropes, his escape therefrom, and after his escape the ropes in a ball which could not be untied; the summoning of the spirit of the deceased relative by the performer; the shaking of the tent "as in a cyclone" when the spirit came; talking "from above" by the spirit; singing by the performer and by the others in the tepee.

Later in August-September, 1939 and 1940, fuller information on the shaking tent rite was secured in connection with a general study of Gros Ventre society and religion, from The Boy and Thick, two of the older and best informed men among the Gros Ventres. These fuller data here follow.

Spiritual helpers among the Gros Ventres were of two kinds, ghosts of deceased persons and beings who had never been men. [776]
The latter, the ordinary guardian spirits, by far the more common, do not concern us here as they do not enter at all into the Gros Ventre shaking tent rite. Only ghosts so enter.

A ghost helper, tsatsawâ'a (–â– and superior a nasalized), 776
was usually acquired in the following way. It was not sought by 787
fasting and crying out on the hills, the customary procedure for acquiring non-ghostly guardian spirits and power. In fact there was either no quest of any kind or at most a somewhat indirect one. The usual sequence was as follows. A surviving relative would keep in his or her possession some memento or keepsake—
something the deceased had prized greatly, some belonging such [765
as a whip, or a tooth or bit of hair of the departed one. The 768]
keepsake was kept, not worn. It was kept not for the purpose of acquiring the ghost of the deceased relative (a father or other close relative), but solely or at least chiefly, so far as I could gather, out of regard for the departed.

In most cases where such mementos were kept nothing happened. In some few cases, however, the keeping led to the acquisition of a ghost helper by the keeper. The first intimations the keeper had of the intentions of the deceased relative were knockings, or whistlings, or other kinds of disturbance around

8:Flannery E-5 (1940-1948)1960 NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

159 756 787 "My experience was by dreaming. One time before I was married—I must have been about eight years old—I was sleeping in a big lodge and a 'person' came and wakened me. He had a bag of medicines on his back. He came to me on four successive nights and laid out these medicines and told me what each was for. On the third of these nights there was a man lying there—he was just skin and bones. The 'person' who had awakened me told me: 'You could take all these medicines and you could cure people like that one lying there' [i.e., a person in the last extremity]. In my dream I would do everything he told me, manipulate my hands to draw out the sickness, and do everything. But I didn't want that power and would tell him so. Each morning too I would relate to my grandmother exactly what had happened in the night but she would try to hush me up, telling me: 'Don't say anything; don't tell anyone. You will be a great medicine woman.' But I didn't want that power. I didn't like it because [755] when medicine people suck on the weak part of the sick person they have to swallow what they extract. I had decided I would rather be quiet and not do anything like that, or sacrifice my flesh, or things of that kind. Perhaps if it had come later I might have taken that power and become great."

Nevertheless when later in life she had other dreams indicating supernatural power, she likewise refused. She explained in regard to one of these experiences, for instance: "The one who awakened me this time had told me to face the rising sun and was showing me how to make a smudge from the moss that grows close on logs; but I told him. 'No. I would rather not have it.' Those who have power die too soon."

159 757 Incidentally, still in connection with curing, bleeding was an operation which was performed purely as a natural remedy for a person who felt dizzy or sluggish. Anyone could do it—no supernatural validation was needed. Other women described quite casually how it was done and discussed the various times they had actually performed the operation. Coming Daylight, however, insisted that while there was really nothing to such an operation, she could never bring herself to perform it, nor would she allow anyone else to bleed her; she could not stand the sight of blood.

The aversion to the sight of blood and to self-mutilation was evidently deep-seated and showed itself in a marked manner early in her life. On one occasion a close relative was very ill. In such a situation it was expected that every member of the family would rally around and do whatever he could toward the recovery. Among the things that fell within the scope of activity for female relatives was that of vowing to sacrifice something valuable, including perhaps the blood [602] from one's arm or a finger-joint, if the person recovered. At this particular [787] time, Coming Daylight was a young child, and her grandmother decided that it would be appropriate for the little girl to offer that her finger-tip be removed [826] if the relative regained his health. When it was suggested to her, Coming [304] Daylight refused, even though her grandmother took after her with a stick. She actually ran away and wandered alone, until two nights later the relative died and an uncle finally found her.

159 183 765 On another occasion in her early youth, too, she defied a convention connected with kinship by refusing to join in mourning for an uncle who had been killed in revenge for having instigated the murder of his brother's wife. When her grandmother upbraided Coming Daylight for not expressing grief in the traditional manner, the latter defied her by saying: "I am not going to cry for that [602] man. I don't know why you are crying for him. I have worked for that woman [607] and she has fed me, and has even given me meat to bring home to you. I heard

8:Flannery E-5 (1940-1948)1960 NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the shots and went later to see what happened, and there I saw her lying across the fire; her dress had burned off and her body was all shriveled. They weren't satisfied to kill her, but they burned her too!" She maintained her attitude and all the scolding from her relatives was of no avail.

Before turning to her adult life, we may refer to another instance which illustrates Coming Daylight's sensitivity to the suffering of others. In the Sacrifice Lodge, which is the Gros Ventre version of the well-known Plains Sun Dance, one of the important features was the spectacular self-torture which the active participants underwent. Each one had a sliver of wood embedded in the flesh of his chest. To the wood was tied a line, the other end of which was fastened high on the center-pole of the lodge. The man, leaning back so that the line was taut, went back and forth until finally the sliver was torn from his flesh. Meanwhile the women cheered on their relatives by "rattling their tongues," singing war songs, and the like, by way of encouraging the men to be brave and see the thing through. Coming Daylight was quite a young child when she first witnessed this performance. She remembered vividly her reaction when one of the young men, in his exhaustion, went to the center-pole and, putting his arms around it, wept aloud. She was not able to stand it any longer and rushed home crying. Her grandmother was very angry with her for leaving in the middle of the performance, but all the little girl could say was: "Oh, I just pitied that young man," and she could not be induced to return to the dance lodge. We may add here that actually in later years she did not participate in the Sacrifice Lodge even so far as women were allowed to do so.

The examples we have given are sufficient to show, I believe, that Coming Daylight had developed as a child a very strong set against violence, against painful and dangerous experiences. She refused medicine power from supernatural sources not only because it was dangerous but also because it involved a kind of physical activity which was repugnant to her. She refused to mutilate herself and was extremely sensitive to painful experiences in others. Her actual deviations from the patterns of accepted or approved behavior all tended in this same direction against violence. Her adult behavior likewise was consistent with this trend in her personality.

In consonance with her feeling against physical violence Coming Daylight avoided as far as possible the rough-and-tumble play in which brother-in-law and sister-in-law were free to, and indeed expected to, indulge. Other women told with glee how they enjoyed "getting even" with their brothers-in-law by, for instance, pushing them when fully clothed into the river, or dumping bucketfuls of water over their heads when they least expected it, and so on; but Coming Daylight admitted without hesitation that she didn't like that sort of thing and never attempted to retaliate even when her brothers-in-law succeeded in playing jokes on her. Similarly while it was not unusual for women rivals to actively fight over a man, she refrained from such undignified behavior, although it must be admitted that she had enough provocation on at least one occasion of which she told me. She had just married a man who was described by others as something of a gay Lothario. A woman who had been trying to force her attentions on him was furious when she heard of the marriage. She rushed to the lodge and pulled Coming Daylight out feet first, yelling insults the while. When the latter regained her feet she made no attempt to hit back even though the other slapped her and pulled off an earring, tearing the lobe of the ear. Coming Daylight, however, bided her time and soon was able to make an opportunity for an exchange of words with the woman at a big social dance.

8:Flannery E-5 (1940-1948)1960 NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Her final rejoinder was such a witty and pointed one that everyone laughed heartily at her rival's expense. In this culture, of course, public ridicule was a far more effective retaliation than the biting and scratching that other women said frankly they would have indulged in when attacked.

Expression of emotional excess was institutionalized for the Gros Ventres, as for the rest of the Plains, in the bereavement situation. Upon the death of a husband, son, or father, a woman was expected to start wailing as soon as she heard the news, have her hair cut off, discard good clothes for old ragged ones, gash her arms and legs, go to the hills to mourn and cry, resisting for a time the pleas of her relatives to return, and being watched lest she attempt suicide. Coming Daylight was only a young woman when she was first widowed and the mourning pattern was still in full vogue. It is certain from other evidence than Coming Dayling had a deep affection for this husband to whom she had been given as a child-bride and in whose kindly and indulgent treatment she had found a pleasant escape from the rigorous discipline of her grandmother. Nevertheless the public expression of her grief was minimal—no abandonment for her. Although her sister was sent on the hills with her to keep watch over her in the usual way, Coming Daylight was easily persuaded to return shortly though she herself was proud of the fact that she had stayed out so long that she actually had got a frozen toe! In later years when all that was left of the ritual was the wailing out on the hills, she lost the son whom she herself, and everybody else, acknowledged as her favorite. She had not been on the hills very long when she experienced a significant dream, as follows. She was in a lodge at the rear of which was a big pile of tobacco mixture and a pipe. The owner of the lodge filled the pipe and approached her. She was frightened because she didn't smoke. The owner of the lodge however told her: "Look at these people." She looked and saw many with their hair cut and their bodies bleeding from the gashes inflicted in grief. The man then told her: "That is in the past. Nowadays your only consolation is in smoking." So she accepted the pipe and, after smoking it, she was painted in ceremonial fashion by each of those other mourners. Then the owner of the lodge dismissed her saying: "Now, go home and don't ever go on the hills and mourn again. But always smoke if you want to." She went home right after this dream and when she told her husband of it he accepted it as valid and persuaded her sister to prepare for Coming Daylight her first real smoke. She maintained that the habit subsequently developed was actually a great comfort to her.

The final area with which we shall be concerned here is the war complex—a vital aspect of the old Plains culture. Gros Ventre women were allowed direct but limited participation in these activities in the sense that, while they would not join a party of men who were going on horse-raiding or revenge expeditions, if opportunity offered they might exhibit the same kind of bravery that a man should show and derive considerable status therefrom. For instance, if one of the enemy fell nearby, the women rushed out from camp to count coup, and to grab trophies with which to inaugurate the relationship known as "enemy-friends." Coming Daylight, however, was never one to indulge in this sport. She told of the one—and to her extremely distasteful—occasion on which her hand literally was forced. It seems that during a raid on their camp one of the enemy was shot and her husband scalped him. The victim was lying not far from her lodge and, as her husband dashed off to pursue the rest of the Assiniboine, he shouted for her to come out and see what was going on. Coming Daylight saw the man lying there, face down, covered with blood. He was not dead

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Another instance was given by The Boy regarding his father. 764
"Lame Bull was on a buffalo-hunting party when his brother-in-law was killed during an encounter with the enemy. They brought the body as it was back to camp, where it lay for quite a while. [729] Lame Bull finally went to his tipi and got leggings and a shirt of his own, although he was Flat Pipe Keeper at the time and it was [784] taboo for one holding this office to give his clothes to the dead. Nevertheless Lame Bull removed the bloody clothes from the body of his brother-in-law, washed the body and dressed it in his own clothes. He paid for this kindness, however, because for nine years thereafter he had such pains in his legs he was not able to walk,—this being the punishment he suffered for breaking the rules by which the Keeper of a sacred pipe should live."

Before finally disposing of the body "something very expensive," like a big silk handkerchief, was placed over the face. The whole body, including the head, was then wrapped securely in a blanket or robe and tied "like a mummy." The body was placed on a stretcher and put in a forked tree, if practicable, the head to the setting sun. Otherwise the corpse might be laid on a knoll and a structure like a sweatlodge built over it to protect it from the wild beasts; or it might be laid in the cleft of a cliff and covered with rocks.[8] For a particularly prominent man, however, his own 766
lodge might serve as his last resting place. In that case holes would be dug in which the lodge-poles were placed, in order that the structure would be more permanent. The body was laid in the lodge amidst rich furnishings. The ears of the lodge were closed, the cover pegged down, and the whole secured as well as possible. This was done, for instance, for The Boy's maternal grandfather and for one of his maternal uncles. Al Chandler remembers that when he himself was a small boy upon the death of his uncle, Rises Again, the body was placed on a bedstead in a big lodge erected about a half-mile from his house.

Even in times of great stress, such as in a smallpox epidemic 764
when so many died that "the trees along the Milk River were just [765] loaded with bodies," as much care as possible was taken to place [731] the bodies properly in their last resting place. When there was no more space on the trees, a large number of bodies were put in a

[8] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, p. 181.

764 lodge at some little distance from the camp. As exceptions to the rule, however, Coming Daylight told of a couple of instances which came within her experience in the first epidemic which she remembers. One case concerned a man who simply left the body of one of his wives where she had fallen and Coming Daylight [766 731] came across the bones of that woman stripped of flesh by wild animals during the night. The other case was that of a man who mercilessly covered with stones the body of his infected sister, in spite of the fact that she was still alive.

[178] Only in relatively recent times has burial in the ground been common. This is illustrated by the comments of Coming Daylight in connection with a long story about a visit to a relative who was married to a white trader. "On this occasion my father's father was killed and scalped by the Piegan just outside of the white man's stockade. The white men brought in the body. He had been scalped and was bloody all over. These whites washed him, bound up his head, and dressed his body in their own clothes,—even to putting shoes on his feet. We thought that peculiar and some of our relatives wanted instead to put on him the best pair of beaded moccasins we had. My father said, however, that he wouldn't interfere as long as they were fixing him up in their way. So the whites buried him just like they do their own. The Gros Ventres never did that—they put the corpse up high somewhere, usually in a tree. We thought it was bad enough for our relatives to die, much less covering them up with earth. My maternal grandmother, who was there at the time, said: 'When I leave you, I don't want you to mourn for me because I have lived to be just as old as anyone should be. All I ask is that you see to it that I am fixed up the right way. Don't let them dig any hole for me. I want you to lay me up in a cliff in a nice quiet place, just make a bed for me and lay me there.' When she died, that is just what was done for her."

It was customary, prior to the time that the Gros Ventres settled down, to place some of the personal belongings of the deceased with the body.[6] When a beloved son died, for instance, his favorite horse might be taken along and killed at the place where the body was laid away. Similarly a minor pipe might have been

[6] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, p. 180.

l: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

A wife inherited practically nothing from her husband. If she had been faithful to him and had been of a good disposition, her parents-in-law might give her a certain number of horses or other property. The tent was considered the woman's possession while she lived with her husband; but on his death, even this was no longer her property. If the tent was worth keeping at all, it generally went to the dead man's sister, if she was newly married. A man, on the contrary, inherited his wife's property, though he generally gave back part of it to her relatives. 428 562 [422]

A woman, on her husband's death, went back to live with her parents, or, if these were dead, with her brother, uncle, or other relative. An old woman, on the death of her husband, generally went to live with her children, most frequently with a daughter. 768

On the death of a brother, especially a beloved one, or of his father or his son, a man cut his hair and went out naked (with only a buffalo robe) on the prairie to cry from morning until late at night. Women, besides cutting their hair, and cutting themselves (especially on the leg) until they bled, would also go out to cry, naked from the waist up. A sister cut herself for a brother, but a mother mourning for a child underwent the most pain. Of course the mourning was greatest for an only child. In such a case, parents might give away everything in their tent and nearly all their horses, stripping themselves of property so thoroughly as almost to go naked. Some mourners fasted for a number of days. If, while a person was crying on the prairie, one should in joke attempt to scare him, he might kill the disturber. Mourners were the bravest people in war, caring about no danger whatever. 765 [304] [431]

Burial was in trees, on high rocks, or in caves inaccessible to wolves and coyotes. The corpse was wrapped in a burial robe. 764

A menstruating woman was called niniitixtj. It is said that she did not retire to a separate lodge, or eat separately from her family; but she did not approach a sick patient, because of the evil effect she would have on his condition by her presence. Some women were said to wear a breech-cloth during their menstruation. 841 [291]

In childbirth, women either lay or knelt. They grasped a stick supported in a horizontal position by two upright forked sticks set in the ground. After the umbilical cord had been severed, the end was left on the child. It was thought to fall off on the fourth day. The woman who had cut the umbilical cord received as a gift the knife she had used. A woman who washed a new-born child was given the vessel in which it was washed. The afterbirth was hung in a tree. If it were left lying to be handled, the child would be afflicted with sores. For three or four days after birth, the child was given suck by other women than its mother. This statement apparently refers chiefly to a woman's first child. 844 [846]

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The above case illustrates how it was possible for a man, in spite of a poor start in life, to rise. Children were instructed by their elders, as was Thick by his maternal uncle: "Above all things try to have horses. Try to have property and whatever you have, take care of it. By having lots of horses and property, people will respect you and look upon you as somebody." 556 867

Again Coming Daylight stated: "They used to think more of horses than of anything else. They were sure proud of owning a pinto pony. In telling stories when they wanted to describe the best they could think of they would say: 'You should have seen her horse—it was a big pinto pony.'" And in telling of a relative of hers, Woman Chief, Coming Daylight said: "Her husband was not very handsome, but they were well-to-do and she always rode top horses." 554 231

While all horses were as a rule well cared for, special attention was devoted to the buffalo horses. On the hunt, for instance, these horses would be led along unburdened by pack or rider to keep them fresh. They were ridden only for the actual chase and after the kill were turned loose to roll around and graze like young colts. When the butchering was completed the meat was packed on other horses and the swift buffalo horses were then led home again. These horses were ridden on social and ceremonial occasions, when their owners wished to show off, and of course the soldier societies were well mounted, but such use amounted to no more than a good work-out, and these valuable horses were never abused nor wilfully exhausted. 231

Children were exhorted to take care of their property, especially of horses, and the girls were advised that "a mare is worth everything—it increases—treat her well." It was stated that some attention was given to breeding. A man might judge that a colt showed possibilities of becoming a fast horse. If it fulfilled the early promise the colts it sired would be watched. The less likely of these would be castrated. Likewise, a good mare would, if possible, be retained by the owner for breeding. A man who owned a particularly good buffalo horse might, on his deathbed, either order that it be killed at his grave or give it to some relative he knew cared well for horses, with instructions never to abuse it nor give it away. [867] [763 768 431]

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

daughter, and might receive gifts from relatives, but would otherwise have few opportunities of obtaining horses. 231 556

In former times the rules regarding inheritance were fairly simple. If a man died, his relatives took the more valuable livestock, while anyone was free to come into the lodge and take any other personal property of the deceased which was not to be buried with him. The man's relatives would not, however, take the horses which belonged to his wife or wives, or which had been given before his death to his children. When a woman died she usually would have little valuable property in any case, but, again, any other woman might rush in and strip the lodge of whatever personal property might be therein, including food. The close family of the deceased were "so grief-stricken that they wouldn't notice who takes what," and "a husband would never keep anything of his wife's." It was said, too, that "women were braver than men in disposing of their property before death, and often gave gifts of personal property to those they wished to have them." 428 768 [431]

In objects derived from the white man, the value put upon them was mainly utilitarian. For example, in matching wagers on one occasion a man put up a gold watch. There was no one on the other side who had a watch to offer, but a spy-glass was considered the equivalent. It was explained that the value of the watch in dollars--whether it had a fine gold case or not--would not be taken into consideration. The question in matching was to find things of equal value to the Indian in his way of life. To illustrate this The Boy told of a gift to his father, Lame Bull, from a white trader on the Saskatchewan, of a hobble which locked. "Perhaps this didn't have a high value in dollars, but it was considered extremely valuable by Lame Bull because it saved him many a race horse. Even though the enemy might sneak a horse out of camp, being unable to unfasten the hobble, he would have to abandon the valuable horse before getting very far away." 177 435

On the other hand, while utility was certainly an important consideration in the Gros Ventres' evaluation of goods produced by themselves, various other elements were taken into account. A horse procured from the enemy was perhaps the most valuable of all things to the Gros Ventres; aside from other considerations, a man would have risked his life to obtain it and that in itself lent 435 554 231

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

buried with its owner. For a woman, her clothing, and sometimes even her pots and pans, were put with her body. It was stated explicitly, however, that food was never placed with the body by the Gros Ventres, although it was recognized that the Assiniboine did so. 764

A widow would burn the things of her husband which were not placed with his body nor taken by his relatives. She would then be smudged with sage and, should she have kissed the corpse, her mouth was smudged four times and she was made to spit each time. 768 783

These practices were seemingly tied up with two beliefs,—the first being that if objects were not placed with the body, the deceased would return to look for the things valued in life; the second, that the recently deceased try to lure the living to join them. The first point was explained by Mary, whose mother had told her: "Everyone likes his own things and some hate to leave them when they die. That is why we used to put personal belongings with the corpse. It might be that there is some one thing that a person wants which has been 'left behind,' so he will come back to seek it. Sometimes when you are alone you might hear a rattling of the dishes or a whistling sound, and you would know that it was some loved one who had died and who was looking for something." 764 775

As proof of the second point, the following experience was offered by Singer. "When I was ill during a smallpox epidemic, I had a dream. I dreamed that my sister, who had died in this same epidemic, appeared to me and said: 'Our mother wants you. Come with me.' My father, who was actually nursing me, seemed to be standing to one side. He told my sister: 'You have had no pity on us. You didn't fight for life. What are you coming after her for? You go by yourself.' But pretty soon my sister came again and said: 'Now this time I want you to come because our mother wants you.' So I agreed: 'All right. I will go with you.' My sister took me to a shabby-looking little old lodge and I didn't feel right about going in there but I thought: 'Well, to please them I will look in there anyway.' There was someone there in bed and my sister was toward the back of the lodge and my mother was on the other side. My mother told me: 'Here, sit by your sister.' She 775 787

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

of men, including Stiff Arm, a noted Gros Ventre medicine man, who has since died. Only a few details were obtained: the rite within a regular tepee with spectators present; the tying of the performer with ropes, his escape therefrom, and after his escape the ropes in a ball which could not be untied; the summoning of the spirit of the deceased relative by the performer; the shaking of the tent "as in a cyclone" when the spirit came; talking "from above" by the spirit; singing by the performer and by the others in the tepee. 114 787

Later in August-September, 1939 and 1940, fuller information on the shaking tent rite was secured in connection with a general study of Gros Ventre society and religion, from The Boy and Thick, two of the older and best informed men among the Gros Ventres. These fuller data here follow.

Spiritual helpers among the Gros Ventres were of two kinds, ghosts of deceased persons and beings who had never been men. [776] The latter, the ordinary guardian spirits, by far the more common, do not concern us here as they do not enter at all into the Gros Ventre shaking tent rite. Only ghosts so enter.

A ghost helper, tsatsawâ'ᵃ (-â- and superior a nasalized), was usually acquired in the following way. It was not sought by fasting and crying out on the hills, the customary procedure for acquiring non-ghostly guardian spirits and power. In fact there was either no quest of any kind or at most a somewhat indirect one. The usual sequence was as follows. A surviving relative would keep in his or her possession some memento or keepsake—something the deceased had prized greatly, some belonging such as a whip, or a tooth or bit of hair of the departed one. The keepsake was kept, not worn. It was kept not for the purpose of acquiring the ghost of the deceased relative (a father or other close relative), but solely or at least chiefly, so far as I could gather, out of regard for the departed. 776 787 [765 768]

In most cases where such mementos were kept nothing happened. In some few cases, however, the keeping led to the acquisition of a ghost helper by the keeper. The first intimations the keeper had of the intentions of the deceased relative were knockings, or whistlings, or other kinds of disturbance around

726 787 769

Greatest reliance, however, seemed to be placed on the information that could be obtained through a "ghost-helper."[18] If a member of the party was known to have the power to command the spirit of a deceased member of his family, he was requested to exercise it. It was said that more often than not the predictions were extremely accurate, as in the following two cases, recounted by The Boy. The first one is estimated to have occurred sometime between 1835 and 1840 and The Boy's grandfather was one of the participants.

"The Gros Ventres were camped near the forks of the Teton and Marias Rivers. Practically all the men had agreed to go on the war path. So they left camp and on the first day arrived at the place where Crow Coulee or Creek empties into the Missouri. When it was dark someone said: 'Let's offer the pipe to that man and ask him to find what our prospects on this venture may be, good or bad.' They filled a pipe and presented it to the man, whose deceased father was proven to be his ghost-helper. He accepted willingly. Soon after they smoked, they made a shelter where he was to call his helper. Then they tied up the man and filled the pipe again and put it in the shelter along with him. He sang a song in which the others joined and on the fourth repetition they heard a voice up in the air. The ghost-helper arrived and the shelter shook. When he hit the ground, the ground shook. The ghost-helper was seemingly excited and kept repeating: 'What do you want, my children?' And he said also: 'If you were in my place and old as I am, and as feeble, you wouldn't like to be disturbed. But here I am. What do you want?' They said: 'We want to know how this trip is going to be—what luck we will have—what are our prospects?'

"They lit a pipe and offered it to the ancestral spirit. They could see from the flaring of the pipe that he was smoking it. Then the spirit said: 'Well, I don't know offhand. I'll have to look around. While I'm gone you smoke, and after a little while sing again. And I'll come back.' So they followed his instructions. When he came back they could hear the spirit catching its breath as an old man does and it said: 'My children, there are

[18] For discussion of ghost-helper concept among the Gros Ventres see Flannery, 1944, also Cooper Ms. 1949.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Crow Indians without number invading the camp you just left. They are so bold, knowing you men are away, that they are peeping in the lodges watching your women as they are playing the hand game. Your women are in happy mood.' Then the spirit said: 'These Crow Indians seem to be preparing to take all the Gros Ventre horses. I'll go back again and watch the Crows to see what they will do.' So they did as before, and when the spirit returned he said: 'The Crows have taken practically all of your horses and will arrive where you now are about sun-up. Don't be afraid of them, provided you do one thing: be sure to kill the Crow with the blue blanket coat. He is the only brave man in the crowd. Kill him first and you'll kill all the others. None of the Gros Ventres will be killed, but two will be wounded. In case you do not kill the Crow with the blue coat, the outcome of the battle will be doubtful.'

726
787
769

"It was nearing dawn by the time the spirit had made his final report, so the men decided to sit up and not sleep the rest of the night. At daylight, the leader sent two good men to the knoll about a half-mile away to look around. The scouts took a look, crawled back out of sight, got to their feet and ran toward the waiting men as fast as they could. The group had gathered buffalo chips in preparation of the usual ceremony of receiving scouts but the scouts yelled: 'Kick the pile of chips apart. There is no time for formality. Get ready to fight as quickly as you can—the Crows are right over that hill!' The Gros Ventres prepared hurriedly for battle and started for the knoll.

"One old man only was mounted, all the rest were a-foot. This old man was the one who threw the Crows into a panic because he had ridden to a high hill to watch the fight, and the Crows believed that they were going to be surrounded by mounted Gros Ventres. The Crows decided to dismount, make a stand, and let go the horses they had captured from the Gros Ventres. They selected high ground, one side sloping away with soft dirt, the other side grassy. The Gros Ventres were on the flat ground and so the fight started.

"While the main group of Gros Ventres engaged the enemy, a few followed a coulee until they got inside the Crow group and were able to kill a good many. The Crows decided to run, when

726 the man with a blue coat tried to hold them: 'If you run you'll
787 suffer a big loss. If you make a stand, the loss won't be so bad.'
769 But they ran right toward the thick mass of Gros Ventres, who received them by opening up a lane for them. The Gros Ventres were afraid then to shoot on account of hitting their own men in cross fire. The man in the blue coat saw the situation and started to run shouting: 'I have no doubt I shall save myself, for I am a good runner. Do your best to try to get away now.' So he ran into the midst of the Gros Ventres, and right through them, passing his fellow-tribesmen until he was leading the fleeing Crows.

"Suddenly one Crow got brave and decided to make a stand and stem the pursuit by the Gros Ventres. He dropped back and pointed a gun at Bear Robe, but another Gros Ventre decided to attack him and the Crow was so terrified that he failed to pull the trigger until the Gros Ventre hit the gun. The shot tore Bear Robe's arm from the elbow to wrist and threw him off balance. When he recovered, the Crow was still there with his gun so Bear Robe ran up and snatched the gun and spear from the Crow and threw them away.

"The Gros Ventres were still pursuing the Crow, and another one made a stand. A Gros Ventre, Crow Moccasin, armed only with a tomahawk, struck him. The Crow staggered and dropped his gun, but grabbed Crow Moccasin's arm to which the tomahawk was fastened with a string. In the struggle the Crow reached for his knife and jerked Crow Moccasin toward himself and slashed his wrist, but he had jerked so hard that the string holding the tomahawk gave way and the Crow lost balance, then ran. Another Gros Ventre shot him down. The fight went on until the older men thought they should stop and let the Crows go. The one with the blue coat got away along with nineteen others. Forty Crow were, however, killed, and the only casualties suffered by the Gros Ventres were two wounded. It would seem that from what the ghost helper had told them, if they would have killed the man in the blue coat, they would have killed all of the Crow."

This second illustration refers to events of much later date, about 1875. "A Gros Ventre war party was camped east of Lewiston, across the Missouri River. Morning Star Arises was asked to consult his ghost-helper who reported: 'All right. I am

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

ready to tell you. First, here's the scalp of the Sioux you will kill tomorrow. . [This was one strand of hair wrapped around a piece of sage brush, symbolic of the scalp.] I've found a big Sioux camp on Beaver Creek (east of the Little Rocky Mountains). The Sioux are having a big Grass Dance and the one you are to kill tomorrow is having the most fun. He has a sword. You'll capture that sword when you kill him. Don't be afraid. There will be no Gros Ventres killed, but two of you don't look good to me.' The Gros Ventres asked that he name the two, but he refused, saying: 'Just don't be afraid. Go ahead to the place where the Sioux are and attack them. Choose what kind of weather you want to make your escape after the fight, and I'll see that the weather will be that way.' They failed to make a choice, but the spirit said: 'Take a look at the sun every once in a while tomorrow. There will be all kinds of sundogs tomorrow, changing every little while. If they appear, you'll know that I have told the truth.'

"The next morning they decided that only those with good horses should cross the Missouri and attack the Sioux. They approached the camp where the Sioux had spent the night. The Sioux had failed to extinguish their former camp fires, and the embers were blown into flame and the fire was extending toward their new camp. The Sioux decided to fight the prairie fire, laying down their arms, not realizing the Gros Ventres were watching them. The Gros Ventres then attacked. The Sioux were in utter confusion and ran, all of them except a man with a sword who made a stand. Two Gros Ventres, Comes A-Flying and Owl Old Man, tried to ride over this Sioux who, however, sidestepped them and struck both their horses with his sword; meanwhile the Gros Ventres struck the Sioux with their whips, thus counting coups. A third Gros Ventre, Crazy Bear, however, killed him, took his scalp and claimed his sword. Since they had gotten this one scalp—which was sufficient for them to celebrate with a victory dance,—they returned. They saw the sundogs changing as the spirit had foretold. In order to evade the pursuit by the Sioux, they called on the man, whose ghost-helper had given the information, to change the weather. The man sang a song, using his robe as a cover to enclose himself, and said he

726 wanted a downpour of rain. At once a cloud appeared and in no
787 time it was a big black storm cloud. Then there was a wind and
769 a very heavy storm and thus the Gros Ventres got safely back to camp. The only loss on this occasion was that of two fine horses, one played out and the other foundered from drinking when overheated."

Return of the War Party

727 After a successful encounter with the enemy, the homecoming was a joyful one, provided no Gros Ventre lives had been lost. As they approached the camp, appropriate songs were said to have been sung by the victorious party. If, for instance, they had stolen horses there was one type of song. On the other hand
[302] when scalps had been taken, they sang other kinds of songs and painted themselves with charcoal. Incidentally, the Gros Ventres had a saying that "women and children do not make good charcoal." Women and children should be captured but not killed and scalped.[16]

When the victorious party arrived, they circled the outside of the encampment before entering. "Then the party broke, each member surrounded by his womenfolk who crowded around, kissing him and taking the scalps or other trophies which had been
[302] won. After a reasonable interval, the crier called all to come to the center of the circle and dance. Men and women alike blackened their faces with charcoal, and the women, carrying scalps attached to poles, or weapons captured from the enemy, danced as innumerable victory songs were sung. Only members of the war party were allowed to join with the women in dancing. Many husbands, who had to stand on the sidelines, were jealous of the brave warriors at a time like this."

727 Most of the songs sung during the victory celebration had
533 words which referred to encounters wherein the Gros Ventres had been successful. New words were often made up to commemorate a particular incident. One of these songs had the following words: "Where are you going? I've been here all the

[567] [16] Cocking, p. 112, mentions in 1772 that the Gros Ventres adopted "slaves" of both sexes into families who had lost their children either by war or sickness.

In general, apart
774 from the ghost helper and gambling power complexes, to be
775 described later, no cult of ghosts existed, and no prayers or food
[769] or other offerings were made to them. Ghosts of those who had committed unjustified murder, as defined by the Gros Ventre code, did not go where the other souls went, but stayed where their bodies lay or wandered around and "bothered" the living.
[753] If a person suffered a stroke, a ghost, apparently of a murderer, was thought to have caused it and to have twisted the victim's face or mouth and pulled the eyelid down.

Ghosts "bothered" the living in less serious ways, appearing
775 in the shadow and disappearing, whistling, playing tricks, in more
539 recent times rapping on windows, and so forth. The two following stories, told by The Boy in light vein and laughingly, illustrate ghostly ways.

"A war party of brave Gros Ventres started out.[24] Toward evening they came to a timbered stream and made a lodge of willows near a good-sized tree, not knowing that a couple had been buried there. After a good meal, they were singing and enjoying themselves, when they heard someone hollering far off. The hollering kept coming closer and closer to their camp until it got very near. One of the men said: 'We had better start up a fire.' Before anyone got up to fetch wood, wood began being thrown into the tepee. This kept up until the tepee was so loaded up with wood that they were crowded out. They then started to carry the wood out of the tepee. One man remarked: 'I never heard of a ghost killing anybody.' Then they heard the ghost laughing a little distance off. One of the men shot toward the spot from which the laughing was coming, but the ghost laughed all the more. All the men then got back inside the tepee, and one of them said: 'I'll get some wood and we'll make some tea.' A good fire was started, and the old fellows prayed with the pipe. The ghost was meanwhile moving the embers away to keep the fire from burning. Before the snow was fetched to be melted, snow fell from the open center top of the tepee and put the fire out. At this they got scared and said: 'Let's move from here.'

[24] In 1948 The Boy remarked that this happened in Lame Bull's life time; and that the ghost referred to in the story is the kind known as tsë:k. [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

CHAPTER VI

SUPERNATURAL POWERS

Most of the Gros Ventre rites and observances thus far dealt with in the present volume were intended to fulfill the wishes and needs of the whole tribe or of larger segments thereof and were actively participated in by all or many members of the tribe. In this sense these rites and observances constituted collectivistic public cult, and leaned toward cooperative altruism. The chief wishes they sought to satisfy were for continued long life for all, with abundance of food and other material necessities, and with freedom from epidemics, storms and tribal enemies, and for continued concord and solidarity among the tribal members. Ritual reliance was upon the petition, mostly to the major deities, the Supreme Being and Bha'a, through prayer expressed in word and in act. 771

Most of the rites and observances to be dealt with from here on were intended to fulfill the wishes and needs of specific individuals and were participated in by very small groups. In this sense these rites and observances constituted individualistic private cult, and leaned toward egoism, often a competitive egoism. The chief wishes they sought to satisfy were for knowledge of distant or future events, prestige through war prowess and wealth, cure of individual illness, and success in gambling or in sex affairs. Ritual reliance was upon the immediate help given in each case of appeal by an ancestral spirit or upon supernatural power imparted once for all by some non-ancestral superhuman being.

In the present section we shall take up first the personal ancestral helpers, and after that the personal supernatural powers. 787

Separate treatment of personal ancestral helpers and of personal powers seems advisable in view of certain rather fundamental differences between the two cultural patterns involved. The spiritual helper was appealed to for knowledge of distant or future events; other lesser beings for supernatural power in matters of 769

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

769
787

war, wealth, curing, gambling, and sex. The helper imparted no power of clairvoyance or prophecy; the other lesser beings did impart one or other of the specific powers above listed. The helper had to be summoned to come in person on each occasion when needed; the other beings gave power once for all to the receiver and were not, at least not ordinarily, summoned to come in person when the imparted power was exercised. The helper was always a deceased relative of the helped; the power-giver was a non-ancestral being. The helper was not acquired by quest, he more or less forced his services on the recipient, and was not transferable; personal power was commonly (although not always) acquired by quest, was accepted or refused freely, and was more commonly transferable.

Our chief sources of information upon personal ancestral helpers and personal supernatural powers were: among the men, The Boy, Thick, Al Chandler, Thomas Main, Turn Toes; among the women, Coming Daylight, Singer, Garter Snake, Mary Ereaux, Cora Chandler. Their competence will, we believe, become clear from the circumstances to be noted passim in the present section.

Ancestral Helpers

The ancestral helper complex among the Gros Ventres has been recorded in detail by us in two papers published in 1944,[1] to which the reader is referred. The following account is a summarized version of these two papers.

The ancestral or ghost helper was called tsätsuwa'a,[2] of uncertain etymology. The word was used exclusively for such ancestral helpers, as distinct from other ghosts (see p. 23).

Such a ghost helper was acquired, not by quest through fasting or crying, as power was more commonly acquired. Acquisition usually came about as follows. A man or woman would keep some momento of a deceased close relative, such as some prized possession or else a rib or tooth[3] or lock of hair of the deceased,—either in

[1] Flannery, 1944, pp. 54-59; Cooper, 1944, pp. 80-84.

[2] This same word is used by the Gros Ventres at present for "radio."

[3] After the body had decomposed. Formerly the Gros Ventres did not bury the dead in the ground, cf. Flannery, 1953, p. 211.

[178
764]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

order to acquire the ghost of the deceased as a helper, or else solely out of regard for the departed. In most cases nothing happened; in a few, however, the ghost of the deceased became the survivor's supernatural helper. In these exceptional cases, the survivor would be apt to hear knocking, whistling or other disturbances around the spot where the memento was kept. Then the ghost would appear to the survivor, perhaps first putting him in a deep sleep, and would offer to become his helper, or ask him if he would wish this. An offer made by the ghost could not easily be refused.

769 ●
787

The survivor had some leeway—Al Chandler's adoptive father, Little Man, accepted such an offer only on condition that he would call upon the ghost for his personal use and not for public use—but more commonly the ghost not only took the initiative in offering its services but more or less forced its services upon the survivor.

While the survivor was still in deep sleep or trance, he or she —women as well as men could have a ghost helper—would be taught by the ancestral spirit the proper rites, including always and particularly a song, to be used by the survivor in summoning and making use of the spirit. One such ghost-summoning song (number 27), a wordless one, recorded as sung by The Boy, had been given to Woman, nicknamed Bear Old Woman, who died around 1907, by her deceased husband (or brother?), Bad Bad Bull. It had been his doctoring song when he was alive and his ghost gave it to her to use both in summoning him and in curing people.[4] It should be emphasized, however, that a person could have an ancestral helper without having doctoring power, and vice versa. A person who lacked a ghost helper could not conduct the ghost-summoning tent-shaking rite, no matter how great power of other kinds he had acquired by quest or otherwise.

Songs other than those given for use in summoning the ancestral helper and conducting the shaking tent rite were sometimes given and taught by the helper to the person who had the helper, on occasions other than that on which the summoning song itself

[4] Cf. Cooper, 1944, 62, 72-75.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

769
787

was given. Two such songs, victory songs, given during war raids, were recorded by us.

A great many Gros Ventre men and women had power acquired by quest or otherwise from non-ancestral beings, but far fewer had [184] ancestral helpers such as we are describing. Our informants, in fact, whose combined memories carried back to the early 1860's, could recall only five or at most six, seven or eight: Good Singer, Woman (or Bear Old Woman), Morning Star Appears (probably the same as Rising Cross), Bird Child, Bull Head, and perhaps two or three others.[8] Persons with ghost helpers had prestige, not greater however than outstanding doctors had.

[425] Power acquired from non-ancestral beings could be transferred by the possessor to another person through gift or sale. But a ghost helper was not transferable; such power was owned property; a ghost helper was not. A given person never had more than one ghost helper, so far as we could discover. In the shaking tent rite, only this one ghost helper had part,—no other being, neither the Supreme Being, nor Bha'a, nor Little Spirit,[9] nor any power-giving being.

At the time the ghost helper was accepted by its surviving relative, it promised him (or her) to come when summoned with the summoning song, but, in sharp contrast to the practice of non-ancestral power-bestowing beings, it imparted no power to him whatever, whether in war, medicine, gambling or love, except the "power," if it can be called such, to summon the ghost and except by sheer coincidence as in the case of Bad Bad Bull mentioned above. The ghost helper imparted not power, but knowledge; not any power of clairvoyance, prophecy or wisdom, but knowledge itself; not once and for all at the time of being accepted by the person, as did the power-bestowing beings but from time to time if and when summoned. The sole function of the ghost helper as

[8] Cf. Flannery, 1944, pp. 55-58; Cooper, 1944, pp. 62-77 passim. Rising Cross of Flannery, p. 56, was pretty surely the same person as Morning-Star-Appears or Morning-Star-Is-Up, of Cooper, p. 71; probably the same person as mentioned in Watches-All's narrative by Kroeber, 1908, pp. 216-17.

[114] [9] That Little Spirit could function in the shaking tent rite in place of an ancestral spirit, as stated reservedly by Cooper, 1940, p. 112, is an error, corrected by field data gotten by him later.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

such was, in answer to questions asked it on each separate occasion when summoned, to reveal knowledge about past, present, future or distant happenings or to impart counsel and directions on what to do in given cases of illness or danger. The ghost helper rarely if ever came unsummoned and only exceptionally volunteered information. As a rule it gave information in response to specific questions asked. The helper was never questioned about trivial or silly matters, or about such things as the fidelity or infidelity of a wife. Questions would be asked, for example, regarding missing persons, the whereabouts and plans of the enemy, the fortunes of a distant war party,[7] the outcome of an impending battle or of an illness, the location of a stolen article and the identity of the thief, the best place to go for good buffalo-hunting.

769
787

The ghost helper did not hover around the person habitually. When need for its services arose it had to be summoned from afar, from the distant abode of the dead.

When the services of a person with a ghost helper were desired, he (or she) was approached with an offer of a pipe to smoke. He was often reluctant or afraid to accept, but could not easily refuse.

The summoning rite was held at night, with the fire out, in darkness,—ordinarily in the performer's lodge, but, if the party were away from camp, in a small emergency shelter or sweat-lodge. If the rite were held in the performer's lodge in camp, a blanket-curtain was hung up across part of the back of the lodge, and the performer stayed hidden behind this out of sight of the clients or spectators.

Commonly, although not always, the performer was first wrapped in a blanket and then securely bound with thongs, the binding often being done by some skeptic present who was challenged by the performer to do it.

After being tied, the ghost-possessor sang his summoning song, those present joining in. As the ghost helper approached, whistling, humming, and other noises, sometimes an owl call, would be heard. As the ghost entered the lodge, always through the top, the top of the lodge and often the whole lodge would shake violently, and

[7] For an example of use of ancestral helper on a war party, see Flannery, 1953, pp. 94-98.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

769 787 something (presumably the ghost) would sometimes be heard sliding down the side of the tent—behind the curtain where the performance was and landing with a thump. Soon after the thongs with which the performer had been bound would be thrown out, rolled in a tangled ball over the curtain at the spectators.

Next a pipe would be lit and offered to the ghost to smoke, and in the darkness the tobacco would be seen to glow up rhythmically each time the ghost drew on it. The ghost itself, however, at this juncture and throughout the rite remained invisible. The people present would finish smoking this pipe, after which the ghost would ask why he had been summoned. Most ghost helpers talked a whistling talk; some just in a natural voice.

If the ghost could answer offhand the question or questions asked it would do so. Otherwise it would tell the questioners to wait while it went away to get the information requested. As it departed through the top, the tent shook. While the ghost was away the people in the lodge would light the fire, have a smoke, put out the fire and sing the ghost song. On returning through the top with the usual shaking thereof the ghost would give the information asked. Usually such information was dependable, but not always; one such ghost we were told of had been a liar when living—"so you couldn't expect his spirit to tell the truth!"

After the ghost had given the desired information (or perhaps earlier in the rite, after it had had its smoke), food, especially puppy meat was offered it, and in the dark the spectators could hear the ghost eating. Finally the ghost would depart through the top of the lodge, which would shake violently as the ghost left.

After the ghost's departure, the performer would come out from behind the curtain, the fire would be re-lighted, the customary prayer before eating would be offered by the performer to the Supreme Being and other beings, all present would eat the food left over from the ghost's repast, and, after smoking and chatting a while together, all would depart.

In the ghost helper calling-rite carried out under emergency conditions, as on war expeditions, certain supplications and omissions could be and were sometimes made. The several detailed accounts of seances recorded by us indicate moreover that quite

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

apart from emergency conditions, ritual variations from the above- 769
described pattern occurred, perhaps in accord with varying ritual 787
instructions received by different individuals from their respective ghost helpers.

Before leaving the ghost helper complex and taking up the power 755
complex, we may mention here one case, given us by Al Chandler, 769
the only one of its kind we recorded, which shares certain elements 787
peculiar to each. Al Chandler's adoptive father, Little Man, was keeping a rib bone of his deceased uncle, who had been "a kind of medicine man." His uncle's spirit came and asked Little Man: "Why do you do this? What are you going to do with me?" "This is just for myself," Little Man replied. "I don't want to be that kind who have spirits. If I need you I am going to call on you and I want you to help me. I am not going to make you a popular servant (not going to use the rib in general practice). But if I need you, you can come and help me."

Little Man, Al told us, made use of that rib one time when he cured his brother-in-law, old Turn Toes, of facial paralysis (caused by ghosts: cf. supra, p. 23). Brothers-in-law like to tease each other. So when Turn Toes came to Little Man to be treated, the latter took the rib, rubbed it four times, and in fun twisted [801] Turn Toes' mouth way around on the other side. At this, Little Man's wife got angry and said: "You shouldn't do that to him." Little Man said: "I just want to make sure that the next time his mouth won't go crooked on this other side." So then Little Man put his brother-in-law's mouth straight and shoved his eyes up in place. And Al added: "You can see that old man [Turn Toes] today [1940] and he is all right." [Turn Toes has since died, in 1942 or 1943].

Whether in the above case curing power was in the rib itself 769
or whether the ghost of Little Man's uncle came and cured on oc- 787
casions of use of the rib, is not clear. If the latter, as implied in Little Man's words to his uncle, at the beginning, we have a curing differing materially from the one to be described in the following on supernatural power, and much more akin to the Woodland Algonquian concept of the guardian spirit proper,—the guardian spirit who comes on call to cure and otherwise to help the possessor,

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

769 —rather than the power-giving being who bestows upon the
787 recipient power the latter can use at will without having recourse to or summoning the original donor. No historical interpretation is here being suggested. It looks, instead, that Little Man's deviant power in the case was merely an idiosyncratic variant of the ghost helper concept to which, not wishing to assume the normal public offices of persons with ghost helpers, he attached to curing functions not for all ailments but for ailments caused by ghosts.

Personal Supernatural Powers

787 Supernatural power was acquired by an individual mostly for
778 success in war, accumulation of wealth, doctoring, gambling or love. It was obtained more commonly by quest, although often without quest, and could be transferred by sale, gift or bequest. It was bestowed by many different kinds of beings,—mostly quadrupeds, birds, snakes, rocks; in some cases, ghosts, indeterminate "persons" or "spirits." How and from whom power was acquired differed appreciably in accordance with the several above-listed kinds of power. These differences we shall describe later in detail under these several categories: war, wealth, doctoring, gambling and love. Before doing so, we shall deal with certain characteristics more or less common to all the above five categories.

782 In general, the Gros Ventres distinguished between three chief
869 methods of fulfilling their desires and wants: natural ability, prayer and power. A person was supposed to make best use of his native physical and mental endowments to acquire skills, to use his wits, to develop his capacities and personality,—in a word, to rely on himself and to stand on his own feet, whether as food-getter, craftsman, warrior, gambler, or what not. His second recourse, where his inborn and acquired abilities fell short or threatened to fall short of enabling him to fulfill his wishes and needs, was prayer, primarily although by no means exclusively to the Supreme Being. The third choice, in the ideal order, was resort to power.

Turn Toes, for instance, as an orphaned boy used to be advised

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the two tribes had never been at war. In token of this, the "Lower Gros Ventres" gave the Gros Ventres a pipe to bind the two tribes together, the principal men of each tribe having met together in the middle ground between the parties. In late years some "Lower Gros Ventres" came on a visit to the Fort Belknap agency to inquire about the pipe and to take it back. But the pipe could not be found in the grave of Big Beaver with whom it had been buried. 778 648

According to Singer, her father, Bird Chief, had a pipe given by the Sioux or Assiniboine. On a war expedition against the Piegan on which he had taken it, when the Piegan were pressing the Gros Ventres badly, he gave the pipe to his youngest brother who was captured with it, but let go. The pipe however was kept by the Piegan. This happened when Singer was a very small girl.

Relative Dignity and Popularity of the Sacred Pipes

All our informants were fully agreed that the Flat and Feathered Pipes far outranked in sacredness, dignity, power and popularity any and all of the other Gros Ventre sacred pipes. 778 771

There were, however, some differences of view among our informants as to the relative status of the Flat and Feathered Pipes themselves. These differences of view, traceable in part to informants' respective affiliations and preferences, were comparatively minor, and are largely reconcilable if we distinguish between what we may call "popular devotion" on the one hand and "liturgico-dogmatic" order of dignity on the other,—a distinction commonly discernible in religious life of other peoples of the world.

As regards "popular devotion," the two Pipes appear to have received about the same number of offerings, vowed and unvowed, from the people, and some Gros Ventres made it a practice rarely or never to cover or robe one of the two Pipes without at the same time covering the other. Some Gros Ventres, while holding both Pipes as superlatively sacred, thought the Feathered Pipe to be in certain respects more powerful, since it, unlike the Flat Pipe, had never been captured by the enemy and since, they held, those bands or groups who, when the tribe separated, followed the Flat

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Pipe met with more accidents and misfortune than those who followed the Feathered Pipe.[18]

As regards "liturgico-dogmatic" order of dignity, the Flat Pipe appears to have had premier rank. It was the older of the two Pipes, having been given at the very time of "creation." On the march, most informants agreed that the Flat Pipe took the lead. The Flat Pipe alone had solemn seasonal rites proper, and these to obtain from the Supreme Being all things necessary for living long and happily, whereas the Feathered Pipe rites were mostly more particularistic in purpose, namely, to ask for rain and for protection against thunderstorms. Finally the Flat Pipe alone was brought to the sacred Sacrifice Dance ceremony to lend added solemnity thereto.

Regardless however of such differences in popularity and dignity and of certain differences of view among our informants, both Pipes were most deeply venerated by all the people, as gifts given in the last analysis by the Supreme Being himself, for the protection and well-being of all the Gros Ventres forever.

---

[18] In 1948 The Boy while discussing the relative merits of the two, told a long story of a dream given to his paternal grandfather, Crow Moccasin, keeper of the Feathered Pipe, through which he was able to save the people of his band from an attack by the enemy, although the rest of the Gros Ventres suffered great disaster. Impressed with the fact that the Feathered Pipe avoided capture, nevertheless The Boy still feels that the Flat Pipe is the greater, one argument being: "When the Flat Pipe was captured it found its way back to the Gros Ventres under its own power." For details of story on Loss and Recovery of the Flat Pipe, see No. 8 in Appendix. [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

CHAPTER V

THE SACRED DANCES

General Features

In the Gros Ventre public cult, as contrasted with more or less private cult concepts and observances, next after the sacred Pipe ceremonies, in order of rank and importance in the native view, were the Sacred Dances or Lodges,—the terms are used interchangeably, and while etymologically "Lodge" is correct, our informants preferred usually "Dance." 796* 771● 794

There were eight of these Sacred Dances: the Sacrifice Dance (commonly but incorrectly called the Sun Dance), the "Law Enforcers" or Old Man's Dance, the Drum Dance, the Kit-Fox Dance, the Dog Dance, the Crazy Dance, the Fly Dance, and the Old Women's Dance.[1] Of these eight, the Sacrifice Dance was more generally regarded as the "greatest," ranking first in order of importance and dignity, but somewhat outside of the others which have been mentioned in descending order. All eight were regarded as sacred rites, not merely social or good-time occasions, although such elements entered into them or were associated with them.

Ordinarily a person participated in or vowed during his life first the Fly Dance; only after this the Crazy, Kit-fox, Dog, Drum and Sacrifice Dances, and finally the Old Man's Dance. 796*

Our chief informants on the Sacred Dances were The Boy, Turn Toes, Thick, Charles Buckman, Coming Daylight, and Singer. Lame Bull, from whom The Boy got most of his information on the Dances, had gone through all of them except the Drum Dance. He had even been selected as one of the two outstanding [115]

[1] Kroeber, 1908, pp. 227-268, gives an excellent account of these Dances, gotten at a time, nearly half a century ago, when tribal memory was fresher Our data may help to fill out some of the picture.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

773
539 the one who introduced the Sacrifice Dance among the Gros Ventre people."

*796 Although in the origin story, it was the chief buffalo who promised to give aid to those who would perform the Sacrifice
171 Dance, actually the chief buffalo was not prayed to during it, nor was the sun or any other being except the Supreme Being and Bha'a. Our chief informants have considerable knowledge of the Piegan (Blackfoot), Assiniboine and Crow Sun Dances, and emphasized various important differences, as they understood them, between these dances and their own Sacrifice Dance. "These sacrifices [in the Sacrifice Dance]," Al Chandler remarked, "were made to God, not to the Sun. I have always wondered why people call our Sacrifice Dance the Sun Dance. Anything the Blackfeet cannot understand they call the Sun and think he must be something." According to The Boy and Thick, while the Blackfeet pray to the Sun and while the Assiniboine in their Sun Dance pray and sing to the Thunder Bird (corresponding to the Gros Ventre Bha'a), the Gros Ventres in their own Sacrifice Dance prayed chiefly to Ixtcibani:hohat, secondarily, as will be explained later, to Bha'a, and with some incidental mention of or appeal to the Four Holy Beings and Those-who-follow-each-other (Sun and Moon) when praying with a pipe. Vows to carry out the Sacrifice Dance were made by the Gros Ventres only to the Supreme Being; the sacrifices of property, the prayer-"sacrifices" of self-torture and fasting, and the chief verbalized and gesture prayers during the rite were likewise directed to him. Our informants consistently and insistently emphasized that the Gros Ventre Sacrifice Dance was, in this sense, a predominantly theistic ceremony.

*796 While more generally the Sacrifice Dance was regarded as of lower ritual rank than the Flat and Feathered Pipe rites and as
794 of higher rank than any of the other seven sacred Dances, there
● 791 was some difference of view on the point among our informants. The Boy, who himself emphatically ranked Flat Pipe rite as far and away first in dignity of all Gros Ventre ceremonies, with the Feathered Pipe rite, Sacrifice Dance, and other dances following in this order of dignity, summed up the situation as follows:

"While the supreme religion of the Gros Ventres was the Flat

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Pipe, some individuals or whole bands would consider the Sacrifice Dance as greatest, would give first preference to the Sacrifice Dance as a means of worshiping the Supreme Being, or would think of the Sacrifice Dance and other Sacred Dances as supreme. Then there were other individuals and bands who would prefer to worship through the Pipe *and* the Sacrifice Dance, or through the Pipe *and* some other Sacred Lodge." 796* 794 776

Among the reasons he and other informants gave for ranking the Flat Pipe rite above the Sacrifice Dance were the connection of the Pipe with the creation and history of the world and man, the donation of the Pipe by the Supreme Being, the rigidly determined and scrupulously observed ritual, the absence of all vulgar elements from the Pipe celebrations (as contrasted with some at least of the Sacred Dances). Reasons given for ranking the Sacrifice Dance above the other dances were that the Flat Pipe entered into active participation in the Sacrifice Dance and it alone entailed dire hardships in the way of self-torture, hunger and thirst.

The Sacrifice Dance was held only when some man had vowed it. A woman could not vow it, but, to judge from the story of First Singer, could vow to request a man to hold the Dance. A given man could vow to hold the dance as principal actor in it only once in his lifetime, but he could join the dance as an active associate participant a number of times. Once he had gone through it in fulfillment of a vow, he could serve as ceremonial grandfather on a later occasion to another who wanted to go through it. 796* 782

The vow was made to the Supreme Being. In the story of First Singer, however, whether her vow was made to the Supreme Being or to the sun or to both is not clear.

If the vow were made in, say, midwinter, its fulfillment would be deferred until about June or when the spring vegetation was well advanced. In the meantime the vower might choose his grandfather and a crier, the formal public announcement of the vow might be made, and the preliminary four nights of singing might be gone through. Before the dance began this good-time singing, by men and women jointly, took place on four separate nights, not necessarily successive ones, but any nights during the preceding month or year. The fourth of these, however, had to

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

CHAPTER VI

SUPERNATURAL POWERS

Most of the Gros Ventre rites and observances thus far dealt with in the present volume were intended to fulfill the wishes and needs of the whole tribe or of larger segments thereof and were actively participated in by all or many members of the tribe. In this sense these rites and observances constituted collectivistic public cult, and leaned toward cooperative altruism. The chief wishes they sought to satisfy were for continued long life for all, with abundance of food and other material necessities, and with freedom from epidemics, storms and tribal enemies, and for continued concord and solidarity among the tribal members. Ritual reliance was upon the petition, mostly to the major deities, the Supreme Being and Bha'a, through prayer expressed in word and in act. 771

Most of the rites and observances to be dealt with from here on were intended to fulfill the wishes and needs of specific individuals and were participated in by very small groups. In this sense these rites and observances constituted individualistic private cult, and leaned toward egoism, often a competitive egoism. The chief wishes they sought to satisfy were for knowledge of distant or future events, prestige through war prowess and wealth, cure of individual illness, and success in gambling or in sex affairs. Ritual reliance was upon the immediate help given in each case of appeal by an ancestral spirit or upon supernatural power imparted once for all by some non-ancestral superhuman being.

In the present section we shall take up first the personal ancestral helpers, and after that the personal supernatural powers. 787 769

Separate treatment of personal ancestral helpers and of personal powers seems advisable in view of certain rather fundamental differences between the two cultural patterns involved. The spiritual helper was appealed to for knowledge of distant or future events; other lesser beings for supernatural power in matters of

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

775 An old man relates that he once saw something that he thought was a spirit. In full daylight he was hunting horses, and came on a ridge where there were a few pines, while below there was a flat and a stream. Down there he saw a dead cottonwood aflame and a person by the tree who was burning it. Limbs fell down burned off. He thought that it was some one from his own camp who was burning the tree; but he lay down and watched. The person took a fallen limb, carried it to the stream and threw it in, and he could hear it splash and hiss. He saw this a second time and a third time, but, happening to turn his head, when he looked back there was no one there. He waited for some time, but the person did not reappear. Going to the stream, he saw the burned branches and the tree still afire.

[821] The Milky Way is called tsóokanibyaa^{n} ("ghost road"). The dead travel by it.

MYTHOLOGICAL BELIEFS.

776 Bax'aa^{n} is the name of the water-monsters inhabiting rivers, as well as of the thunder. The water-monster is also called byiiça^{n}. It is the enemy of the thunder. This idea is common in the Plains tribes, and it seems probable that the relation into which the thunder and the water-monster were brought through this general idea of the opposition between them, is what has resulted in one name being applied to both of them by this tribe. The description of the water-monster is the usual one. It is long, snake-like, and black, with a long head and turned-up nose and horns. It causes the death of all persons who drown.

That persons drowned are taken by a bax'aa^{n} is believed the more because the monsters are said to have hands like a person. As they have long, sharp teeth, and are known in one recent instance to have eaten a buffalo, it is supposed that they eat the persons whom they drown.

773 776 A hunting-party once saw a water-bax'aa^{n} being carried away through the air by a cloud which extended downward toward the earth. They saw the monster writhing, and turning its tail.

A hunting-party once killed a buffalo at the edge of a river. They were cutting the meat when they saw waves approaching the buffalo. The water rose and was pushed toward the buffalo until it covered it. Then the water receded, and they saw a water-monster lying eating the buffalo. One of the men said he would kill it. The others urged him to desist; but he shot, and struck the animal between the eyes. Then, as it writhed, he declared he would despatch it with his knife. Again they tried to dissuade him; but he said, "I have come to seek death, and am not afraid." Taking his double-edged knife, he killed the monster, and dragged its tail out of the

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

water. He was regarded as having done one of the bravest deeds imaginable. This animal had crooked horns, a body and tail like a snake, long teeth, short legs, and hands like a person. According to another version of this incident, the warrior approached the monster, which thereupon retreated into the water. Then he hid behind the buffalo, and when the monster reappeared, shot it, and then despatched it with his knife.

When one of the present old men of the tribe was a young man, a party, all of whom he knew, went to war. They came to a dry lake to the south of the present reservation, in the centre of which there was a small pool of water. Not having seen any buffalo on the way, they were very hungry. So when they found a bull standing by this pool, they killed him. Thereupon they saw that his legs were quite short and his hair long. One of the party said, "He is something strange. Let us not eat him." But another said, "We are too hungry. We will eat anything." And he stuck his knife into the bull's belly. Water immediately spurted out, and came in enormous quantities. The lake rose rapidly, and the men fled with the water at their heels. The lake-bed was a large one, and when they finally came to the bank enclosing it, and jumped up and crawled above, the water dashed against the bank.

The father of the same narrator was with a war-party when they came to a dry lake. They saw three stones in a row, and from the traces left on the ground saw that the stones were moving and that they were something wonderful. The whole party stripped naked and made sacrifices to them, and began to cry before them. Thereupon the water began to rise in the dry lake, and approach. All became afraid and ran off, except one man, who remained by the stones. When the stones were covered with water, they saw that the offerings that they had made moved toward the centre of the lake, although the water was flowing from the centre toward the edges. The one man who had remained continued to cry without fear, until the water reached his neck, when it stopped.

Some women once saw a bax'an[n] in a spring from which they were getting water. For some time they were unable to move. When they finally succeeded in escaping, no one would any longer approach the spring. The women had seen only the monster's head.

An old man tells that once the camp moved, and at dusk came to the edge of a lake. The tents were not put up, but the people slept in the open air. It was winter and the lake was frozen. At night the narrator was awakened by a terrible roaring and crashing, as if the ice were breaking up. He did not need to wake any one else, for every one had been aroused by the noise. He told every one, "It is the water-monster. Be still." Early in the morning he went to look, and where the noise had been heard there

l: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

773 776 was a clean cut through the ice, about two feet wide, the path of the monster. It had moved about in the lake until it reached the bank above which the people were sleeping. The monster had struck this bank, the impression of its head and two curved horns being visible. Then it had turned and gone back to the centre of the lake, and there disappeared, making another path, on each side of which the ice was piled up. The narrator gave to it several pieces of property.

It is said that it is not known whether thunders have ever been seen; but [821] old men say that they have seen marks on the ground where one is thought to have alighted. The grass about was scorched, and two zigzag lightning-marks, each forking at the end, extended in opposite directions along the ground.

The people were once camped east of the present reservation. A terrific rainstorm came and passed over them. When they thought it had gone by, there was a fierce clap of thunder, and a man and his wife and their boy were struck by lightning. The man and boy were killed, but the woman is still alive. There were two small holes in the tent, and through the bedding into the ground there extended two small holes of the size of a small calibre bullet-hole. On another occasion, a woman was untying a curtain at the back of the tent in order to keep a bed dry, when lightning struck the tent-pole, and she was killed. The other people in the tent were merely stunned.

Not many years ago a strange thing happened to a man and a woman still living. During a thunderstorm the woman, who had been sitting at the door, went to the back of the tent and sat beside her husband. Lightning struck the tent, and shot a hole through every metal plate, cup, or dish on the ground. Where it entered the tent, it left a mark like a sword. The people then painted the tent dark-blue.

A woman out mourning for her mother on the prairie saw a small thunder-stone (bax'aa^{n}ayäa^{n}). It was creeping slowly, leaving a trail or mark. The woman thought she would leave it, and pick it up later. When she came to the place again in the evening, the stone had vanished. Its trail was still visible, but ended where she had seen it last.

821 The rainbow is called bax'aanäyaa^{n}t ("thunder's fishing-line"). Näyaa^{n}t seems to mean any fishing-implement.

The whirlwind is called inääçitä^{n}. This is also the name of a red legless water-worm (not a leech).

The three stars of Orion are called "buffalo-bulls." The two below them, to one side, are hunters who were going to shoot them and suddenly found themselves in the sky.

773 The Gros Ventre once lived far north of where they are now, where there 778 were nothing but forests. There they found a metallic object. The object 823

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

was like the flat rocks on which women pound berries, perfectly round, rough above, and perfectly smooth on the under side. Many men lifting together could not move it; but when offerings were made to it, and it was asked to rise, one man was able to lift it easily. Several people tried to sleep near it in order to dream about it, but none of them ever staid the whole night through. They would dream that it was a large metal kettle coming toward them on legs, and filled with boiling water, whereupon they jumped up and fled. 773 778 823 [787]

West of the present Gros Ventre Reservation there was, until the whites took it away, a stone shaped like a person, except that it lacked the face. This was once a Snake Indian. A war-party saw him sitting on a hill, and pursued him into a flat. They had nearly caught him when he turned to stone and has been there ever since. Once, as a camp went by and the people made offerings of calico and other property, a man said, "Why do you do that?" Taking a club, he knocked off the head of the figure. The man died the same summer.

A complete buffalo of stone, with hump, horns, ribs, and other parts, half of it underground, has been seen by the Gros Ventre, and many offerings and prayers have been made to it. 823 778

To the north of the Gros Ventre Reservation is a lake shaped like a buffalo, with legs and all parts complete. The tail runs out into a river, the hoofs are patches of brush, and the horns are streaks of timber of the shape of horns.

Lizards are thought to bite persons and then to hang fast to the wound, sucking the flesh into themselves. It is said that a certain man was bitten and the lizard could not be pulled off. The man's flesh had to be cut off around the lizard's mouth. 825

There is believed to be a kind of bear with one white fore-leg, which is fiercer than the grizzly. The jack-rabbit is called "white rabbit;" and the cottontail, "left-hand rabbit." The prairie-dog is called "large gopher" (?); and the mink, "prairie-dog weasel." The bat's bite is thought to be exceedingly poisonous.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Child, and made offering of tobacco and food to earth. Al Chandler explained: "The earth is put in because that is where your living is. You get everything from the earth, fruit, animals, everything to live on, and get everything you eat from there," although ultimately it is the Supreme Being who owns and gives everything. We got one passing casual reference to "mother earth" by Mary Ereaux, and another by Tom Main to earth as being a "spirit" and having a "special keeper," but obtained no later confirmation of or detailed information on these points. In general, earth seems to have played a quite subordinate role in Gros Ventre religious thought and ritual. 776 823

The sun was appreciably more prominent, ranking according to some informants next to the Supreme Being, and mentioned as "The One Traveling," or "Passing or Traveling Man" immediately after him in prayers. Another current seems to have assigned a much lower relative rank to the sun, and mentioned sun and moon together, as "Those-who-follow-each-other," and after the Supreme Being and the Four Holy Old Men. In any case the sun was in no sense identified with the Supreme Being, but was his property, work and servant, far below him in dignity, and had not anything like the religious predominance it had in such tribes as the neighboring Blackfoot. The sun did not enter at all into the so-called "Sun Dance" of the Gros Ventres, nor into the Feathered Pipe rite. Prayers and food were offered to the sun, and the sun was invited to sweat in the sweat lodge rite along with but subordinately to the Supreme Being. Individuals would offer a finger joint or bits of their flesh to the sun on such occasions as the grave illness of a relative. While the sun "sees everything, that's why the Supreme Being put it there," the Supreme Being, not the sun, was appealed to as witness in oaths; the widespread American Indian oath formula, "The sun sees me," was not used. 776 821 [755] [695]

The sun and moon were, according to myth, brothers from the same mother, but were never human beings proper, though they married, the one a frog woman and the other a human female. According to one story, the sun regularly appeared in battle as a man riding a white horse who scared and helped either the Gros [773] 776 821 539

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

776 or who were in some manner actively helpful or harmful in modern times to the Gros Ventres. The chief beings of this second category are: Ni:hohat, Earthmaker, ghosts and owls, Atsa:, the Little People.

The name of the trickster and culture hero, Ni:hohat, has already been dealt with in the section on the Supreme Being. Ni:hohat was also referred to sometimes as "our grandfather." He had a human body but no detailed description of his appearance is current. He had a wife and children. No one knows how he came into existence. He lived before the flood and it is to this antediluvian period that his colorful exploits, largely Rabelaisian, are ascribed.

There is considerable uncertainty and speculation regarding the respective roles of Ni:hohat and Earthmaker in the origin of human beings or of the Gros Ventres, and of Gros Ventre religion, especially the Flat Pipe rite. We shall here give the account from the Ni:hohat tradition, and later that from the Earthmaker one, without attempting a complete reconciliation, which does not seem possible from the available evidence.

773 According to the Ni:hohat folktale cycle, human beings lived before the flood, as is clear from the trickster's exploits.[21] Accord-
776 ing to the Ni:hohat origin story, it was he who obtained from a man and woman, of whose origin nothing is known, the magic bladder, and who liberated from the bladder the already existing human beings, the ancestors of the Gros Ventres. Still other human beings existed than the ones who killed the trickster and who in turn were completely exterminated by the liberated people. Ni:hohat taught these ancestors to pray to the Supreme Being. He also instructed them in the sweat lodge ritual, and so in at least this element of the Flat Pipe rite, and also in the rite of sacrificing bits of their flesh. He likewise taught the liberated bladder people the art of war. (See No. 1 in Appendix for full story.)

He was killed and came to life again. After this he disappeared, and no one knows what became of him. The Boy personally wonders whether it was Ni:hohat himself who was Earthmaker

[21] Cf. Kroeber, 1907, pp. 59-75.

and who was floating on the raft with the Flat Pipe, whether he may then have gone to the whites and taught them, too, how to pray; but all this he considers speculation only. 776 [773]

It should be emphasized that as previously noted, no sacrifices or prayers were ever offered by the Gros Ventres to Ni:hohat himself, nor, it may be here added, to Earthmaker. The Boy once said to his father, Lame Bull: "You talk so much about Ni:hohat. He was a superhuman. He should have been prayed to." "No," Lame Bull replied, "he never told the people to pray to him, but told them to pray to the Supreme Being. He was a man and not worthy to be prayed to." [782]

Earthmaker was the human being, apparently a or the primeval keeper of the Flat Pipe, who knowing the earth was to be covered with water made a raft of logs on which he and the Flat Pipe floated during the great flood.[22] (See full story, No. 3 in Appendix.) Where he came from is unknown. Landing on a mountain top he there made dry land (not *the* earth, the terrestrial globe as such which already existed), and also made a man and woman. He gave the Flat Pipe into the keeping of the man he had made, and taught him the Flat Pipe rite, instructed him how to carry out the rite and to plant tobacco, and told the people how to worship the Supreme Being. The Flat Pipe rite has been known ever since that time. Earthmaker is mentioned only in the Flat Pipe rite. After giving the pipe and the above instructions, he disappeared, and what became of him, whether he died or not, is not known. 776 773

Ghosts were called tsë:k. Another name for ghosts was byi'te:' a word that "gives the impression like a hollow-eyed bleached-out skull." An occasional ancestral ghost became the guardian helper of a surviving relative.[23] Gambling power might also be gotten from a ghost. Most ghosts were in their own future abode and did not have any contact at all with the living. In general, apart 774 775

[22] He was not floating in the Pipe bowl; this is the Arapaho version.

[23] In 1948 The Boy explained: "Tciya:towu:nitän (see p. 19) are not tsë:k; tsë:k is the opposite of everything good—you can cuss by calling someone tsë:k. Byi'te:' is even worse. The ancestral ghost is tsätsuwa'a, not tsë:k. Shadow, soul, spirit, echo is batäto:u. [R.F.] [578]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

788
533

Ventres. They *sing!* This subject is one you cannot exhaust. You cannot put in words how they feel about it."

773
533

Singing, according to The Boy, had its origin at the time of the flood when Earthmaker was floating around on the raft with the Flat Pipe. He was being blown around by the wind, at the mercy of the elements. He was tired and utterly lonely. So he started to think: "I must do something about this. It is too hard. I have had enough of it." And thus he planned the making of dry land by sending the animals diving down for earth. He had all the power to make land from the bits of earth brought up by the turtle and bell-diver, but he decided to do the making solemnly and with dignity. So he composed the earthmaking song: "My holiness (or my power) respond to me (pity me)." He did not whisper or talk it, but sang it, and sang it loud, so that he could be heard all over, so that this first act would last forever, so that it would "be elaborate and have dignity" and would be respected and honored for all time. Up to the moment of the singing of this first song, he had been mute, silent; he had only thought, this was the first utterance. This was the origin of Gros Ventre singing. This song, taught them by Earthmaker, was the first their primeval ancestors ever sang. This first song was sung by Earthmaker four times in succession, to the east, south, west and north. But after this he discarded one of the four animals, the beaver, keeping the other three, and ordained that thenceforth, not four as in the very beginning, but three, should be the Flat Pipe sacred number, and its songs should be sung in threes and multiples thereof, and that ritual movements should be to east, south and west, leaving out the north as he had left out the beaver ("let the beaver stay there where it is cold").

[788]

So Earthmaker planned and taught the system of the Flat Pipe ritual, with songs proper to it that could not be sung on other occasions.

788
533

Singing was thus originally religious and sacred only. As time went on, songs were sung for other functions, social and political. Singing degenerated among the Gros Ventres and they fell farther and farther down until they made and sang songs for the most trivial things in their lives, and even unworthy things. On their

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

372 The Flat (and Feathered) Pipe keepers had to keep on hand a good supply of buffalo chips, the proper ritual fuel, as also the common fuel of the people especially when traveling out on the woodless plains. The Boy once asked his father: "Why are buffalo chips used in rites? This does not seem proper." "Buffalo chips," Lame Bull replied, "are plentiful everywhere and burn longest. And they are cleanest: the ashes do not stick to your hands; wood ashes do and are hard to rub off." After the buffalo were exterminated, cattle chips were substituted, but these, as Coming Daylight stated, "have an awful odor when burned, while buffalo chips have none." She used to gather buffalo chips for her uncle when he was Flat Pipe keeper; Cora Chandler used to gather cattle chips when her uncle Curly Head was Feathered Pipe keeper. On one occasion, after the disappearance of the buffalo, Coming Daylight went south with her husband, coming back by way of Yellowstone Park where some buffalo were kept. Here she found some buffalo chips, put them in a sack, and brought them all the way back home to give to Horse Capture, then the Flat Pipe keeper. On arriving home she went to his lodge, "covered the Pipe" with a new robe, and laid the chips at the head of the Pipe.

824 The other plants [besides peppermint] that entered into the Flat Pipe and Feathered Pipe rites were sage, tobacco, larb and wild parsley.

Sage was used for the Pipe bed and for other ritual purposes. For the spring Flat Pipe rite at least, only a certain kind of sage (artemisia sp.) was used. Sage was gathered by the co-keeper or one of her children, and could be gotten all the year round, even if in winter only the sticks. According to tradition, the gathering and use of sage for medicinal purposes were in the old days confined to keepers; but in more recent times the people in general have used it, by rubbing themselves with it and smelling it for headache, and by boiling the leaves, especially the top ones, and drinking the infusion for coughs, colds and tuberculosis.

824 According to the traditional story as told by The Boy, tobacco
773 and tobacco planting came originally to the Gros Ventres from
276 Earthmaker who taught the first man how to plant tobacco, and its cultivation and use have come down in an unbroken line since

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

that time. In the olden days it was only the keeper of the Flat Pipe who planted and harvested it; and for ritual use only.[4] As time went on, the keeper thought to himself: "These older men should have something to pray with when the tribe breaks camp and each band goes its own way." So he said to these older men, each a chief in his own band: "When your bands go their own way you have nothing to use in your prayers. So I am going to distribute some tobacco to each of you for you and your band to use." This he did, and so the use of tobacco began to spread. After this some bands broke away entirely from the Gros Ventres, the original planters and users of tobacco, and became separate tribes and the language changed. The probable order, The Boy thinks, in which they broke away was: first, the Gros Ventres of Dakota,[5] next the Cree, then the Piegan, after this the Crow, and last the Arapaho. He thinks too that the keeper who first distributed tobacco to the bands must have distributed the seed too, for in later years all these people raised their own tobacco. 824 773 276

In the course of time the use of tobacco among the Gros Ventres underwent two important developments, from ritual to recreative and from male to female use. 276

In earliest days only the keeper and a few old men used tobacco, and used it only ritually. When somebody got sick, the keeper

[4] In 1948 The Boy elaborated on the original planting of tobacco which he had heard Lame Bull discuss many times. "It was virgin soil deep in the forest and they made a woven fence around it so nothing could get in. After the planting, they moved off for hunting and every once in a while the keeper made a ceremonial smoke and prayed to the Supreme Being that the tobacco would grow. After the vegetation began to mature they returned to the plot and the keeper went to look and thanked the Supreme Being in a loud voice that the crop had matured. The tobacco was picked ceremoniously and three plants were always left standing in the plot." There was a plot of ground in the forested area of Canada on which nothing grew and which the Gros Ventres called "Broken Grass." In Lame Bull's time they used to leave offerings there whenever they passed nearby. The Boy and other old men and women believe that this was the site on which the original tobacco was planted under instruction from the Supreme Being. [R.F.] [778]

[5] The original Gros Ventres, according to the same tradition, had no corn. Corn originated among the Gros Ventres of Dakota. [For confirmation of tradition regarding raising of tobacco, see Flannery, 1953, p. 61, n. 12.]

793 also to the whites, both mounted and dismounted their horses from
784 the right side, just as all other Gros Ventres did.

"You could not lend the Feathered Pipe keeper a horse, because if you loaned it to him this was just the same as giving it to him. You could not take it back once the rope was in his hands. The keeper never borrowed anything. If someone thought the keeper was short of something and without thinking said to him, 'Here is one you can use,' that was just too bad because that was really giving it to him."

[201] Apparently the keeper could not point at a person with his index finger, but would instead use his thumb.

793 The role of the Feathered Pipe keeper in the political life of
624 the Gros Ventre was quite similar to that of the Flat Pipe keeper, as regards such things as decision when and whether to move camp, matters of public policy, and veto power thereupon.

Feathered Pipe and Bundle

773 The Feathered Pipe was first given, as noted in the origin
778 stories (see No. 6 in Appendix), from above by Bha'a, the thunder and storm being. Garter Snake's father, Bull Lodge, used to tell her that it was really given by Ixtcibani:hohat, the Supreme Being, through Bha'a; that the Supreme Being was the father of the Pipe; and that it was to remain forever with the Gros Ventres and never under any condition to be transferred to any other tribe. According to Gros Ventre tradition, while the Feathered Pipe is very old, it is not as old as the Flat Pipe; when the Feathered Pipe was first given to the Gros Ventres, they were already in the possession of horses. According to The Boy, the Feathered Pipe was first given after the Gros Ventres came to their present territory which had previously been Snake Indian country, but before the coming of the whites thereto. With the Pipe itself were given in the beginning the stone image or face, the whistle, and the staff, to be described presently.

778 The proper name of the Feathered Pipe was ana:θanitč (it has feathers).

276 We were unable to attend any unwrapping rite and to see the Pipe. It was described to us as being in one piece, of "smooth,"

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

773
539

The origin of it (or them) was attributed, somewhat tentatively and speculatively, by The Boy to pique on the part of the beaver for being left out of the Flat Pipe bundle or for other reason and hence the desire to start his own pipe and pipe rite.

The traditional origin story of the first Beaver Pipe was given as follows by Coming Daylight. "A certain man had two wives. He went out hunting and took one of his wives along. The other stayed at camp and about noon as she went to fetch water from the creek, she saw there a young man. 'I am going to marry you,' he told her. 'Where you are is not a good place, with two women to one man.' 'Let me first take this water home,' said she. 'Oh,' he said, 'don't take it all the way home, but only half way.' This she did and then followed him to his house. When he took her into his house, he turned into a beaver and told her to go into his beaver lodge.

"When the husband returned home from his hunt, he saw the filled water bucket half way to the creek, but the woman was missing. 'Somebody must have taken her,' he thought. He looked all over for her and called her, but in vain. So he went back home and told her father and mother the story that she was gone. They searched for her in different tribes but could not find her. They even checked on all the young men to see if any of them were away from home, but all were accounted for.

"After her husband and parents had searched a long time and had not found her, they began to mourn for her. The husband was crying all around on the hills. At last a spirit told him: 'Quit crying. She is not dead. Go back and camp at the same spot where she disappeared.' So he came in from the hills and invited some old men and told them what the spirit said. The old men advised him: 'Go back to the spot. This spirit may be telling the truth.'

"So he and his other wife went back to that same spot and camped. In the evening while supper was cooking they heard a

---

and kind of boisterous compared to the Flat and Feathered Pipe rites of the Gros Ventres, and this appeals to many people."

In 1948 Al Chandler mentioned that Old Man Blackbird was keeper of a Beaver Pipe which had been given him by the Crow. "It was a small bundle, but they used to hang it just like the Flat and Feathered Pipes were hung, and they had a smudge and some kind of dance to go with it." [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

773
539

noise coming into the lodge. The lost woman was looking in the door. Her husband seeing her jumped. 'Go back,' she said, 'and sit down. Don't come near me. Don't eat supper. Clean up and get sage brush and fix it nicely all around the lodge and close up all the holes. I am coming back. I just came first to tell you to clean up and fix the lodge.' So the two did as they were told and sat waiting, he at the back of the lodge and she on the east side, for the lost wife to come back.

"After a while they heard in the distance drumming and singing which kept coming closer. Then they saw the beaver husband's father coming first with the Pipe, after him the beaver husband and the woman, and last four [beaver?] beating the drum. All entered the lodge. The father then gave the Pipe to the man who had lost the one of his wives, saying: 'Here is a Pipe. Smoke it.' So the man took it and smoked it. The beaver husband's father also took this man as a son.

"The father then told two of the drummers: 'Invite the people to come into the lodge.' This they did and soon the lodge was filled with all the different animals, frog and snake and others, that live in the water. The old father then said: 'I invite you to give my son a song.'

"The frog then began to sing and as he [illegible] a storm came with hail and the creek ran full. Next came [illegible]'s turn, but the snake said: 'I don't know how to sing.' A[illegible] the snake crawled out of the lodge, so he does not belong to this Pipe.

"The man was taught how to sing and to make smudge with sweet grass [sweet pine?], and was given back his lost wife with the admonition not to beat her and was told to go back home with her. Then the old father and the beaver husband went away, leaving the lost wife with her human husband.

"When the man got back home with his two wives and with the Pipe he had been given, everybody came to visit him. The re-found woman's brothers gave her husband two horses. They called that Pipe, Beaver Pipe, and when the man died they buried it with him. And this is why they buried owners of such pipes unless the owners when still living had transferred the pipes to someone else. This is the story we have heard from way back."

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

nessed the rite about ten times, Singer who had taken part in it 115
by giving presents, by singing, and by riding double with the men going out to look for the center pole; Mathilda Cuts-the-rope; Al Chandler, and Thomas Main. Thick's father made the last Sacrifice Dance in 1884.[10]

The origin Story of the Sacrifice Dance as told by The Boy is 773 ●
as follows: 539

"In the days when Ni:hohat was still around, a Gros Ventre man went out hunting in the timberland where there was a lot of trees and brush. While he was hunting he heard a noise. He listened to find the direction from which the noise was coming and then went in that direction. He sneaked around and looked from under cover. He saw a dance going on. A bunch of buffalo were dancing in a circle. He looked on a long time unseen by them. He heard the songs they were singing and learned them, and saw how everything was done. He saw a buffalo bring the other buffalo and set them in a semi-circle, and saw them sit down in a semi-circle.

"He made up his mind to approach them. So he walked over to where they were. When the leader of the buffalo, at the back of the lodge opposite the door, saw him, he invited him to come in and sit down beside him: 'Do like we are doing. Look around and see how the lodge is made. Study it and try to remember it and all the things here.' The man saw a buffalo skull alongside the center pole.

"The chief buffalo then said to him: 'I give you this lodge (dance). Use it. If in sickness or in danger the people promise they will make a Sacrifice Dance I will help them. When you implore the help of the Sacrifice Dance, it will be a powerful means to avert sickness or danger.' So the man left and went back home and related what he had seen and experienced. He is

[10] In 1948 The Boy, Charles Buckman and Steve Bradley among them were able to name 15 of the 23 Dancers whose flesh was pierced at this last Dance, as follows: Bull Head, Horse Capture (Thick's brother), Stiffarm, Wolf, Stiff Wings, Grebe Child (The Boy's brother), Arrowhead, Peter Capture, Boy Capture, Strikes On Top, Dan Sleeping Bear, Skinner, Many Capture, Stabber, Fluttering Eagle. Dan Sleeping Bear had told Charles Buckman that there had been 23 altogether. [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

773
539

the one who introduced the Sacrifice Dance among the Gros Ventre people."

*796
171

Although in the origin story, it was the chief buffalo who promised to give aid to those who would perform the Sacrifice Dance, actually the chief buffalo was not prayed to during it, nor was the sun or any other being except the Supreme Being and Bha'a. Our chief informants have considerable knowledge of the Piegan (Blackfoot), Assiniboine and Crow Sun Dances, and emphasized various important differences, as they understood them, between these dances and their own Sacrifice Dance. "These sacrifices [in the Sacrifice Dance]," Al Chandler remarked, "were made to God, not to the Sun. I have always wondered why people call our Sacrifice Dance the Sun Dance. Anything the Blackfeet cannot understand they call the Sun and think he must be something." According to The Boy and Thick, while the Blackfeet pray to the Sun and while the Assiniboine in their Sun Dance pray and sing to the Thunder Bird (corresponding to the Gros Ventre Bha'a), the Gros Ventres in their own Sacrifice Dance prayed chiefly to Ixtcibani:hohat, secondarily, as will be explained later, to Bha'a, and with some incidental mention of or appeal to the Four Holy Beings and Those-who-follow-each-other (Sun and Moon) when praying with a pipe. Vows to carry out the Sacrifice Dance were made by the Gros Ventres only to the Supreme Being; the sacrifices of property, the prayer-"sacrifices" of self-torture and fasting, and the chief verbalized and gesture prayers during the rite were likewise directed to him. Our informants consistently and insistently emphasized that the Gros Ventre Sacrifice Dance was, in this sense, a predominantly theistic ceremony.

*796
794
791

While more generally the Sacrifice Dance was regarded as of lower ritual rank than the Flat and Feathered Pipe rites and as of higher rank than any of the other seven sacred Dances, there was some difference of view on the point among our informants. The Boy, who himself emphatically ranked Flat Pipe rite as far and away first in dignity of all Gros Ventre ceremonies, with the Feathered Pipe rite, Sacrifice Dance, and other dances following in this order of dignity, summed up the situation as follows:

"While the supreme religion of the Gros Ventres was the Flat

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 ordinarily at least, a man would be principal vower of a Sacrifice Dance only once in his life, although he might "join" a number of times.

Crazy Dance

This dance was called haha:tcau'wə "crazy or silly lodge" (cf. Sifton, hahachena, adj. "crazy, silly"). The dance was also called in common parlance the "miller dance," and the dancers, "millers," —the reference being to the origin of the rite and to the fire ceremony of the fourth day, to be described presently. Millers or moths are also called by the Gros Ventres "Crazy Men."

The Crazy Dance was last held immediately or shortly after the last performance, in 1884, of the Sacrifice Dance. Our chief informants on the Crazy Dance were: The Boy and Thick who had witnessed it three times and participated once respectively in the role of "little Crazy Dancers"; Turn Toes who had taken part as a regular "dancer"; Coming Daylight and Singer, both of whom had witnessed the dance, the former several times, although neither had actually joined it. Our information on the Crazy Dance is considerably more extensive than on the Drum, Dog, and Kit-fox dances, but is still far from complete. It confirms many details of Kroeber's account,[15] and adds a number of others.

*796 We did not obtain the full origin story of the Crazy Dance. The Boy stated that this rite had been first given (to the Gros Ventres) ●773 by a miller (moth), that the Crazy Dancers when they jumped in the fire on the fourth day, were imitating the millers who fly around (and go into) the fire at night,—an interpretation confirmed by Coming Daylight,—and that the old cloak donned in the bow rites on the fourth day was "in imitation of millers," but neither he nor Thick knew any origin story of the dance, nor did they know why the badger and owl (see infra) entered into the rite.

*796 The Crazy Dance was, like the other Sacred Dances, held in fulfillment of a vow made by a man in case of his own, or a relative's serious illness or other grave emergency. Unlike any of the other Sacred Dances, it was also held under the following circumstances, without previous vow proper.

[15] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, pp. 241-50.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

773
539

One of these, the origin story of the Drum Dance, was told by him as follows:

"A long time ago the Gros Ventres (or a party of Gros Ventres) made a long journey toward the Black Hills (in South Dakota). One of the Gros Ventre men became separated from his friends, and could not find his way back to them, and so got lost on an endless plain somewhere northwest of the Black Hills. He must have had no weapons with him, for in his wanderings he had nothing to eat and was near starving to death. So he made up his mind to seek a place where he could lie down and die.

"So he came to the bed of an old dry lake and said: 'Here I will die.' He decided to die crying. So he walked around the lake bed crying. He spent four nights there. The morning after the fourth night he was still crying but was very weak. Every once in a while he lay down. On one such rest, he fell into a light slumber, not a deep sleep, and heard a crier under the lake bed announcing: 'W-e-e-e-e. What is the matter with you drum men who belong to the Drum Dance? When are you going to pity that poor man up there? Come here together.'

"Then the sleeping man heard drumming and singing. The drumming and singing seemed to be coming in his direction and when it got to where he was lying a voice said to him: 'Get up and look at the drum men.' Then he sat up. It was broad daylight and as he looked toward the direction whence the voice and drumming and singing had come, he saw two lances (or sticks), curved (crooked) around on the upper end (like a shepherd's crook), come up from the ground of the dry lake bed. Three times they came up and after each time disappeared in the ground. The fourth time they came up, there were two men carrying them. A crowd of men, walking two by two, streamed out after the two lance carriers, and two other lance bearers brought up the rear end of the line. They all marched in this formation round the dry lake bed once, clockwise, and then stopped. The one who seemed to be leader of the group then spoke to the starving man: 'Take a good look at me and us. We have pitied you. You are going to be saved and to get back home. Also we will transfer to you our drum, our lodge (dance), our power.'

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

"The Gros Ventre man looked around and he saw that the two crooked sticks carried at the front of the line were wrapped around with otter skin, around which skin were tied four pieces of white rabbit skin, and at each place two eagle feathers were hanging. The sticks carried by the two rear carriers were wrapped with rabbit skin, with four pieces of otter skin tied around, and with two eagle feathers at each place where the otter skin was tied.

"Then the group started to sing and dance and to go round in a circle. This they did four times, with a rest after each circling. Then said the leader to the Gros Ventre man: 'I have told you that we have pitied you. Now I will show you the rite that belongs to our dance. You will be saved and will get home. This dance of ours can be called upon (that is, vowed) in times of great emergency, especially in times of great fear. We give you the whole thing. When you get home you can make known what you have seen and heard here. Tell the people that when they are in fear, they can call on us, on our dance, and we will help them. Besides giving you our dance, I am giving you my horses so you can get home quickly. Soon after you get home you must put up this lodge.'

"Then they danced and they taught him the rite. The leader then said to him: 'Wait here. I will go back after the horses I promised you.' Then he and the others of his group disappeared under the ground. Pretty soon the leader reappeared coming up at the same spot where he had gone under. This time he was alone, leading a big black stallion. He brought the horse to the Gros Ventre and said: 'Here is your horse. You can ride him, or else sometimes lead him. You will get home quickly and safely. This stallion has many colts. They will follow him. Do not abuse the stallion or any of his colts.[22] Ride them. You can go now.'

"So the Gros Ventre took the horse and mounted it and rode off. As he looked back he saw a big herd of horses following him. It was not long, only a few nights, before he got home, bringing the big herd of horses with him. To each Gros Ventre of the whole tribe he gave a horse. After he had rested up he did what he had

[22] That horses should never be abused or badly treated was part of the general code.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

773 been told to do and put up the Drum Dance. Thus was the Drum
539 Dance introduced among the Gros Ventres into their sacred dance system."

When Lame Bull told The Boy this story, the latter asked him: "Who was it who gave this dance and these horses?" And his
[825] father answered: "The killdeer." So the Drum Dance is owned by the killdeer (*Oxyechus vociferus*).

The Drum Dance ranked high in dignity among the Sacred
*796 dances. Lame Bull ranked it next after the Sacrifice Dance, and first in importance in the Drum-Dog-Kitfox-Crazy group, because, he told The Boy, the Drum Dance was "most difficult and complicated to carry out," and through it "more horses had come to the Gros Ventre tribe."

The Drum Dance was held only in fulfillment of a vow. The
[881] rite lasted the customary four days and nights, with a big feast each day. The Boy was uncertain whether a sweat-lodge ceremony was held during the Drum Dance.

The chief sacred objects used in the Drum Dance were, so far
[778] as we could learn, the very large drum, and the fur-wrapped crooked sticks which were carried by the dancers and which to judge from the origin story were four in number and were decorated as therein described. The dancers themselves were
[302] painted yellow all over their bodies, with black dots, representing hail, from the waist up.

Four of the Drum Dance songs, numbers 52-55, were recorded,
*796 as sung by The Boy, who had learned them from his father, Lame
533 Bull. There were others which The Boy did not remember, nor did he know the ritual order in which they were sung.

Two of these four songs, numbers 52 and 53, are wordless, and were sung at good-time dances during the Drum Dance. Number 53 is the song that was sung by the men marching out of the dry lake-bed when the Drum Dance was first given to the starving Gros Ventre man by the killdeer. These dancing songs were lively ones, sung to fast time.

Song number 54 is difficult to translate as the meaning of two of one of the words was unknown. The Boy ventured the conjecture that the whole wording might possibly mean: "There are

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

uncle, Crow Bull, had joined it,—and Singer. According to Turn Toes the dance was probably last performed when he (born about 1860) was a little boy, too young to take part in it.

The following is the Kit-fox Dance origin story as told by The Boy:

"Long ago a Gros Ventre man was hunting kit-foxes to get their pelts for use as clothing. He sighted a kit-fox but before he could kill it it ran into its hole. The man made up his mind to nevertheless get the kit-fox. So he gathered sage and other brush and made a smudge. When the brush was smoking well, he shoved it into the kit-fox's hole and closed up the hole, in order to smoke out the kit-fox.

"Then waiting around he lay down and dozed, and while he dozed he heard singing under the ground. When the singing stopped, he woke up, and heard the kit-fox grunting. So he opened up the hole. At this the kit-fox came out, sat down at the opening of the hole, facing the Gros Ventre, and said to him: 'I am glad you have spared my children and me. You were just about to kill all of us. I am glad you pitied us. So in turn I will pity you. I will give you my lodge and you can have it ever after this. If you or anyone in the tribe is sick, make a vow to put up my lodge, and you or the other sick person will get well.'

"Then the kit-fox sang a song, one different from the song the man had heard when he was dozing. When the kit-fox had finished singing this second song it said to the Gros Ventre: 'Look at me. See how I am painted. In my lodge (dance) paint yourself the same way. When you put up this lodge, use my body.' Then the kit-fox told the man how to dress and paint in the dance and what songs to sing, and taught him all these songs. Then 'Go back,' said the kit-fox, 'to your tribe and put up this lodge. I give you this right, so you may introduce this dance into your tribe. In order to put up my lodge, a vow must first be made. But I give you the right to put up the first one, and then you can tell the story!'

"Then after the kit-fox had fully instructed the man, he did not kill that particular kit-fox but let it go and he himself went back to camp. When he got back home he told what had happened and started to get ready for the dance, gathering clothes and other

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

things together, and making ready a kit-fox skin stuffed to look like a live kit-fox. This last was used in the dance. The Gros Ventre made a great impression on his tribe and his dance was accepted and recognized as a Sacred Dance, and a vow was made to perform it." 773 539

The Kit-fox Dance was held, like the other dances, in the summer time,—about August, so Charles Buckman thought,—and everyone was obliged to be on hand for it. Preliminaries might however begin far back in the preceding winter, particularly the painting and taking out of the joiner's wives by the ritual grandfathers. This latter preliminary phase of the dance seems, from Coming Daylight's report (infra), to have been very similar to a corresponding phase of the Crazy Dance, but we were able to secure only the following, rather vague, account of it as described by Coming Daylight: 796*

"In the Kit-fox Dance the wives had to go out with their 'grandfathers' just as in the Crazy Dance. My uncle, Crow Bull, once joined it with his Assiniboine wife, Coming Day, and it took a long time. The 'grandfathers' used to take extra long [in preparation for] for this dance and, if the [preparatory] time was winter, they made nice places, brushing the snow away, where they would lie down with their ceremonial grandfathers. The 'granddaughters' would go to their 'grandfathers'' lodges and then the 'grandfathers' would take them out, and the 'grandsons' would be painted. The 'grandsons' would have so to go for a long time, from winter to spring, to their 'grandfathers,' before actually joining the dance. So Crow Bull would go with his wife to his 'grandfather's' lodge to get instructions and each time he would be painted and the 'grandfather' would take Crow Bull's wife out and brush away the snow and lie with her." 796* 837

Besides the stuffed kit-fox skin mentioned in the origin story above, the Kit-fox Dance paraphernalia included two crooked sticks, used when dancing. These were shaped like a shepherd's crook or hockey stick, with strips of little otter skin carefully wrapped around them "all the way down" and with eagle-tail feathers tied to them here and there. The wrapping had to be done in a certain way, and only by a brave warrior. These sticks 796* 778

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 ashamed. When the dance was over, the people moved to old haunts north of the Bear Paws, and then to the west of Three Buttes, and camped. The young man dressed, got on his horse and rode completely around the camp circle, singing the death-song.[26] A little later they moved to right near the Bear Paws. Here they camped and met a large Piegan war party, and had a fight. The pitched battle took place in the open plain. This young fellow fixed up and got on his horse, and was among the last arrivals. He rode headlong into the thick of the battle and all the Piegan shot at him, but they all missed and he came out unharmed to their rear. At this he wheeled his horse around, and charged right back. This time the Piegan got him and knocked him off his horse. A big crowd of them surrounded him and when the Gros Ventres got to him only his torso remained. The Gros Ventres afterwards said that he should not have ridden back the second time, that once would have been enough to satisfy for the death-song he had sung. But he had done it out of disgrace and shame he felt for not having anything to give his grandfather at the Kit-fox Dance. All this was in recent times."

Dog Dance

The name of this dance was hotəbyao'wə, "dog lodge." The dance had disappeared before 1874, the date of The Boy's birth. But his father had joined it and both Coming Daylight and Singer had witnessed it, the latter when still a little girl. The last Gros Ventre celebration of it took place in Canada, according to Coming Daylight,—sometime between about 1865 and 1874. Our information on it, derived mostly from The Boy, who got his knowledge of it from his father, Lame Bull, with a few sparse data from Coming Daylight and Singer, is even more fragmentary than that on the Drum Dance. The origin story of the Dog Dance was given us by The Boy as follows:

*796 "A long time ago the Gros Ventres were camped at a certain
● 793 spot and a young Gros Ventre man fell asleep some distance away
539 from the camp. When he woke up the camp had moved. The young

[26] See Flannery, 1953, p. 92.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796*
773
539

man followed their trail. After a while he saw something ahead of him also following the trail. When he got near it he saw it was a dog, and when he caught up with the dog he saw that it was an old, toothless, lame, sorefooted dog, and it whined as he caught up with it.

"The young man pitied the poor old dog and said to it: 'All right. You follow me. I'll travel with you.' So they went along. But the dog could not walk fast enough to keep up with the young man. He then lifted it up on his back and carried it, and whenever he got tired he unloaded the dog and they both rested. Finally he got to the Gros Ventre camp and there he brought the dog to his lodge and fed and took care of it.

"Then the Gros Ventres moved camp again when the young fellow was away and asleep, and he let them move and then followed carrying the dog, and he rested from time to time as he had done the first time. Then a third time all this happened, and a fourth time.

"This last and fourth time, as the young man was carrying the dog he came to a high ridge and when he got up on top of it he saw the Gros Ventre camp some distance away, and he thought: 'Here is a good place to rest.' So the young man let the dog down, rested and fell asleep. The dog slept near the young man's head, instead of near his feet.

"While the young man was asleep he heard the dog singing. The dog when it had finished singing spoke to him: 'You have done me a great favor. I am very grateful to you for pitying me and taking care of me. So I am going to repay you and pity you by giving you my lodge (dance). Look at me. I am an old dog. I will give you age. You will live long and get to look old, as I look. You will be a renowned outstanding man among your own Gros Ventre people and among all other peoples around them. I give you my coat. You must wear it when you put up my lodge. This will be part of my rite. When my lodge is put up one man shall wear my coat and he must be the most renowned man in the tribe.'

"The dog then sang a song and at the end of it howled, and then said to the young man: 'When in war you get in a tight situation,

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

if you sing this song, you will be saved.' After that the dog taught the young man other songs which ended with a bark instead of a howl. And then the dog after having taught him all about the rite, said to him: 'Put up the lodge, just as I have told you, as soon as possible and introduce it into the Gros Ventre tribe. When anybody gets scared or sick or in any other emergency, make a vow and put up my lodge.'

"And so the Dog Lodge (Dance) was accepted by the Gros Ventre tribe and every once in a while would be put up in fulfillment of a vow."[27]

We could obtain very little information on the Dog Dance rite beyond that contained in or hinted at in the origin story. Our meager data add only few minor items to Kroeber's much fuller account of the Dog Dance.[28]

The coat or shirt referred to therein was "made from curly-haired dogs" and was given to an outstanding warrior—whether as a more or less permanent possession, or only for the duration of the rite, is not clear. The one who wore it during the dance was called tsëtcone:hi, a word having reference to "curly."[29] Coming Daylight readily recognized the shirt figured by Kroeber[30] and stated that its owner was Ice, also called Bill Jones. According to The Boy, Bull Robe[31] too, "the greatest warrior by far of his day," once owned a [or the] Dog Dance shirt, sang the first Dog Dance song (with the howl at the end) wearing the shirt, and on one occasion of extreme emergency had it with him and was the only one of his party who was saved.[32]

Of the various songs proper to the Dog Dance we could record only one, a wordless one, number 58, sung by The Boy. In the Dog Dance the first song sung was the one ending in a howl, and

---

[27] Cf. shorter version in Kroeber, 1907, p. 111; also idem, 1908, p. 252.

[28] Kroeber, 1908, pp. 252-58.

[29] Kroeber, 1908, p. 252, mentions two such dancers referred to as "shaggy dogs."

[30] Kroeber, 1908, p. 255, fig. 38.

[31] Kroeber, 1908, pp. 204-16, Bull Robe's narrative.

[32] In 1948 The Boy stated that the shirt was worn by the principal vower of the Dance and kept by him until the Dance was vowed by another, in which case the shirt would be "transferred" to the new vower. [R.F.].

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

APPENDIX

The following myths, tales, and traditions are given as told us mostly by The Boy, who in turn learned them in large part from his father. Variants from other informants are noted in passing and reference is made to Kroeber's earlier and more complete collection where appropriate. 128

1. Ni:hohat Liberates the Bladder People[1]

White Man started out and wandered around. At last he saw a single lodge and went over to it and entered. A man and woman were sitting there. They welcomed White Man and told him to sit down. Right away White Man thought: "I am tired and hungry. But they have nothing to eat." He wondered what to do next. The man said to the woman: "My friend has caught me unawares. He is hungry and tired and I have no food to give him." So the man called out: "My children, go and hunt so that we may eat and our guest may eat." This was good news to White Man. So he waited. It was now night. During the night something was bringing meat. You could hear something laying down meat outside. White Man thought this queer that meat should be brought at night instead of in the day time, but he just waited. After a while something stopped bringing these things to eat. The man then said to the woman: "Go out and fetch these things to eat so we and our guest can eat." So she went out and brought in all sorts of meat. So they ate liver, kidneys, tripe, and manifolds, eating them raw. There was plenty to eat so they ate and ate until they were full. 539 773

White Man began to wonder how all this was done. He had it on the tip of his tongue to ask but he didn't do so as this would have been impolite. So after a while he was so full that he fell asleep.

White Man woke up the next day and spent the day with the couple. When night came the man gave the same order in a loud voice: "My children, go and hunt and bring things to eat so that our guest may eat." Then this second night the same thing happened as on the night before.

This time White Man, after he had eaten until he was filled, made up his mind to ask the man how it was all done: "How do they get these good things to eat? Who are your children? I haven't seen any of them." The man replied: "Do you really want to know?" White Man answered: "Yes." The man said to him: "All right. Come with me to this rising ground here. I will show you." As they left the man's lodge he said: "Look up and you

[1] For explanation of the term "White Man" as used for the trickster, see p. 2. This story does not appear in Kroeber's collection.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
773

will see the thing I use." White Man looked up and saw a bladder[8] up above the door. The man said: "That is what I use." White Man said: "I see it."

The man took the bag from where it hung and he and White Man went to the rising ground. When they reached there the man said: "What I use to hunt with and make a living with and do all things with is in this bag. You will see. Make your heart strong." So the man untied the bag. As he did so adult people began to come out of the bag. The crowd got bigger and bigger around them. The man then said: "This is enough." So he closed the opening of the bag and tied it up again.

After he had tied it up the man said to White Man: "Here are the people I use when I want to do anything. They are the ones who hunt." The man said to the people: "Go hunt and bring the choicest things to eat to my lodge. Myself and my guest want to eat some more."

So the man and White Man went back to the lodge and stayed there all day. That night the same thing happened that had happened on the first and second night previously. They ate and ate until they had enough and were filled and then they slept.

The next day White Man moved on and went his way. Then White Man began to study and think how he could acquire from the man the man's way of living and of getting a living. So White Man studied how to get the man to let him have this bladder. So he hit upon a plan. He decided to cut himself, as the Indians do in mourning, and to cry. So he cut himself and came crying loud to the man's lodge. When he got to the lodge he walked around it crying and crying. The man and woman heard White Man but they knew that White Man was a tricky fellow and they paid no attention to him. But White Man just kept on crying. They heard White Man crying until they went to sleep.

When they woke up the next morning the man wondered what had become of White Man. He said to the woman: "Go out and see if White Man is around." She went and there was White Man asleep outside. The man woke White Man up and invited him into the lodge. White Man went in and sat down, and in the course of time the man said to him: "What do you want? Why have you cut yourself and made yourself suffer and cried?" White Man said: "I did so for a very serious reason. My enemies have killed my whole family, my wife and children, and have destroyed my home. I am destitute and do not know how I am going to live. So I thought I would come to you and ask you to share the bladder with me and tell me how to use it, so I may make ready to take revenge on the people who destroyed my family and home." The man, knowing White Man to be what he was, refused at once: "No. You will go to extremes. You will abuse it. You are crazy." White Man begged all the more. The man and woman were silent for a long time. But White Man kept talking and talked so

[8] A gall bladder sack, attached to the liver. Such gall bladders were used by the Gros Ventres to store grease prepared and mixed with berries and were kept closed to keep bugs out.

[251
415]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

much and so piteously that the man and woman were moved. The woman said to the man: "You ought to pity him. He has suffered a lot. I think he is serious and not up to his tricks this time." So the man said to her: "All right." Then he said to White Man; "Do not use the bladder and the people in it except on rare occasions, such as taking revenge on the enemies who killed your family, or as hunting when in need of food." White Man said: "I promise." White Man embraced the man and was glad. Now White Man had the bladder with instructions how to use it. The man just loaned the bladder to White Man. The man said to him: "There is one very strict rule to be followed by the person who has the bladder. You must sleep with your head toward the place to which you are going. You must observe this rule strictly to the letter." White Man said: "I shall." The man said to him again: "Remember to use the bladder only when you have to."

539
773

So White Man went off. And when night came he stopped. He was wondering if the whole thing would work. He couldn't stand it any longer so he said: "My children, go, I am hungry and want to eat." So they went and brought all kinds of meat. So he ate and ate, and then slept. When he woke up there was nothing there, no meat but only the bladder. So White Man picked up the bladder and went away again. He did in like manner each night, and each time the plan was successful and there was always something to eat.

White Man told his people what they should do in case he got killed: "Make a sweat house and a mound of earth in front of it. Someone should have a filled pipe and should stand at the mound of earth and should invite the Supreme Being four separate times with a stop after each invitation. Then a second invitation should be given, this time to 'You that follow one another' [Sun and Moon], and this invitation too should be given four separate times. Then you should give an invitation, likewise four separate times, to the 'Four holy old men.' Next you should give an invitation, also four separate times to 'You that starve to death.' Then you should give one invitation only to all of those who are to take part in the sweat, naming each one and saying: 'Come and join the sweat.'" White Man was here telling the people what to do if he should lose his life. They were to do this four days after White Man's death and then quit and wait and White Man would appear and come to join them.

White Man traveled four nights and slept four times after leaving the man's lodge with the bladder. On the morning after the fourth night there appeared signs of a habitation. And White Man said to his followers: "Stay right here." White Man went slyly to a little hill and peeked and peeked and saw a big camp with lots and lots of people. So absorbed was he in the sight that he did not notice some hunters coming in between him and his people. The hunters sneaked up and killed White Man. White Man had with him at the time the bladder. The hunters captured the bladder and brought it to camp and wondered what it was and why White Man carried

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
713

it. It was still tied up. Out of curiosity they untied it and at once people began to come out of the bladder. So they lost control of the bladder, were overrun with these bladder people, were hopelessly outnumbered, and were destroyed and killed by them.

The bladder people were now without a leader but they remembered what White Man had told them to do if he were killed. So they built a sweat house and made a mound of earth in front of it and all who were going to sweat assembled there. One of them then took a pipe and filled it and stood at the mound and did just what White Man had told them to do. In a loud voice he invited the Supreme Being to come and sweat with them and did this four times. At once after the fourth invitation someone appeared in the direction the inviter was facing and walked toward them. The inviter went on to the next invitation as White Man had instructed. Meanwhile this person kept approaching. By the time the inviter had finished all the invitations, this person arrived where the people were. It was White Man. He said to them: "My children, I came back. I am going to sweat with you." Then they all went into the sweat house except the man with the pipe who remained standing where he was. After all, including White Man, were seated inside the sweat-lodge where they were going to sweat, White Man said to the man standing outside at the mound with the pipe: "Come in. Hand me the pipe." He handed the pipe to White Man who received it and said to him, "Go and get that [dry] buffalo chip out of the fire and put it down in front of me." The man did so. White Man took dry peppermint leaves and put them down on the chip and made incense and passed the as yet unlit pipe around and up and down in the smoke three times.

White Man in receiving the pipe grasped it with his left hand around the pipe stem just next to the bowl and his right hand around the pipe stem further toward the mouth. At first he held the pipe, bowl up and level, towards the smoke of the incense, then he raised the stem end of the pipe upwards until the pipe was nearly vertical and held it toward the rising sun, next toward due south, and finally towards the setting sun. Finally he reversed the stem towards his mouth. After this White Man said to the people: "Now you are free. You won't have to go back in the bladder again."

White Man while still holding the pipe prayed to the Supreme Being to bless his liberation of the people. After he had finished praying he told his people to do all the things which he himself had done since he had been with them. He told them to stand at the mound and put a buffalo skull on top of the mound in such wise that the forehead of the skull would rest level. He told them to have the children come around and to get some good old man to cut off a little of the flesh of the children's arms and to offer it to the Supreme Being by putting it on top of the skull. He told the older people to cut bits of flesh in the shape of the new moon from off their arms from between shoulder and elbow, from between elbow and wrist, from off

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

their thighs to the knee and from off their legs between the knee and the ankle and from off their chest (sternum),—to cut off as much as they could stand and not to fail to do this, and to put the cut-off bits on top of the buffalo skull. [Thick showed the writer the crescent-shaped scars on the outer side of his upper arm.] 539 773

Inside the sweat house White Man instructed them too in all the details of how to make the sweat house and the mound and how to heat the rocks and how to place the pipe on the mound.

White Man sat just inside the east entrance of the sweat house on the left as you enter. He had two assistants who remained outside. He told one of them to take two sticks tied together and get a live coal with them. With this coal he lit the pipe. Then all the people sitting in the sweat-lodge smoked. When all were through smoking White Man handed the pipe to one of his assistants who put it on the mound. Then he told the two assistants to close the doors of the sweat-lodge and one of them closed the front eastern opening and the other closed the rear western opening. Then White Man sang a song. Some of the people learned this song right away and sang it with White Man. Some of the people prayed while White Man and the others were singing. Then they heard a woman's voice, a very beautiful voice singing the same song that they were singing. Two songs had words that are translated as follows:[8]

First song: "My holiness have pity on me." (White Man was here really speaking to himself. He had great power to do things.)

Second song: "Something long (string, rope) have pity on me."

By this time the openings of the sweat-lodge had been closed and the water was ready. Each of these first two songs were sung three times. After this the third song was sung, a song without words. Then the water was stirred up and the people imitated the sound of the helldiver. Each time they got through singing the third song water was sprinkled on the rocks. The third song was sung three times and water was sprinkled on the rocks three times.

Ever since that time the Indians have done in just this way.

After White Man had told the people all about the pipe and how to use it, all at once the real Flat Pipe appeared. It was a pipe made all of wood in one piece bowl and all, with no detachable stem. This pipe was the main thing with the people after that.

Its real name is the Flat Pipe. The name Little Turtle is also used for it. The Pipe that is now kept is the same one that was given to the people by White Man.

---

[8] These songs were recorded as No. 35 and No. 43. For the latter see also story No. 5.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
773

The same Flat Pipe survived with the one man who survived the Deluge (see No. 3).

2. Ni:hahat Obtains the Buffalo[4]

At one time a certain man owned all the buffalo. At this time White Man was living and used to wander around. In his wanderings he came upon a camp of Gros Ventres and learned that they were always short of meat, because the man who owned all the buffalo kept them in a cave (or tunnel) in the ground.

White Man started to think up some plan to help the people. When he had decided on his plan, he said to the people: "Leave this camping ground and move away." They did so. But White Man stayed behind and turned himself into a little mangy pup.

Soon a little girl, the daughter of the man who kept the buffalo, came to the deserted camping ground, looked around, and found the pup. She was glad and took it back home. When she got back home she showed the pup to her parents. They said: "That's not a real dog, but White Man. Let him go. Kick him out and let him die." But the little girl insisted on keeping and raising the pup, and had her own way. The pup remained inside the lodge and was well fed and cared for.

The keeper of the buffalo had his camp just outside the cave where he kept them. He used to pass out the buffalo for the Gros Ventres in only limited numbers. That is why the Gros Ventres were always short of meat and hungry. Every day the man would let one buffalo out of the cave to water and graze, and each evening he would call them and they would come back in the cave.

White Man, the pup, studied the situation. When the keeper got back home from caring for the buffalo, he would scratch and howl and act like a real pup. The man would scold him and say to him: "You are not a real pup; you are White Man." But the pup would work on the affections of the little girl and the man would quiet down.

White Man watched how the man let the buffalo out of the cave and got them back, and awaited his chance. One evening as the man was putting the buffalo in the cave for the night, the pup ran out among them and decided to hide on the scrotum of an old bull. He took a good hold of the scrotum. The old bull went by the man who failed to notice the pup hanging on the bull's scrotum. So the pup got inside the cave, and did not let go his hold until the bull was far inside. Then the pup let go his hold and turned himself into a great big ferocious dog and started to bark.

This was strange to the buffalo, and caused commotion among them. They started milling around and finally stampeded toward the opening of the

---

[4] Cf. Kroeber, 1907, pp. 65-67. Kroeber's informant, Flea, was of the same generation as our narrator, The Boy.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

cave. The keeper heard the commotion and suspected that White Man had gotten inside the cave. The keeper tried to hold the buffalo back, but they dashed madly through the cave opening, ran over the man and trampled him to death. 539 773

White Man kept barking till he had driven all the buffalo out of the cave and scattered them in all directions so they would not return to the cave. Then White Man assumed his own body again, went back to the dead keeper's camp, and raped the keeper's wife and daughter. Then he left to go in search of the camp of the main body of the Gros Ventres. When he arrived there he announced to them that he had driven all the buffalo out of the cave and that the keeper was dead and told them all he had done, and foretold that they would never more have trouble in getting buffalo. Since that time the buffalo have remained on top of the ground and the Gros Ventres have had plenty of meat and have been hungry no longer.

3. Earthmaker and the Deluge[8]

The (primeval) keeper of the Flat Pipe, known as Earthmaker, knew in some way that the earth was going to be covered with water. It must have been that he was the only one who knew it for he was the only one who got ready to survive the flood. The Keeper made a big raft of logs and took the Pipe and put it on the raft. In the course of time the whole earth was under water. The Keeper just floated around everywhere on the raft, only himself and the Pipe with no other human beings or animals.[9] After a long time the Keeper saw a mountain top sticking up out of the water. He drifted toward it and landed there. When he landed he saw lots of birds and some animals. Right away he was glad that he had struck land and had some company in the way of animals and birds. He knew that the helldiver (mud hen), turtle, beaver, and muskrat were water beings. So he had them dive to get some earth from the bottom and to bring it back to where he was. First he sent Helldiver who after a while came up drowned. The

[8] Cf. Kroeber, 1907, pp. 59-61 (Nos. 1 and 2). Our version of the deluge story seems to correspond with Kroeber's No. 1 in which the person who sends the animals to dive is not identified directly with the trickster. The incidents in our version correspond, however, somewhat to those in Kroeber's No. 2, including the importance of the pipe and the making of man and woman. The Boy, our narrator, had thought that the latter might show Christian influence but stated that when he questioned older men, like Bushy Head, they emphatically declared that the incident was included in the old Gros Ventre tradition. [R.F.]

[9] Charles Buckman's version of this myth differed in that he claimed that "Earthmaker was floating in a pipe bowl,—the sacred pipe [Flat Pipe] represents this." Floating in the pipe bowl corresponds to the Arapaho version. [171]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
773

Keeper examined him and found some mud in the folds of his feet. He took the mud off and put it away on the raft. Then the Keeper sent Turtle to dive. Turtle also came up drowned, and the Keeper found some mud on the fold of his neck and put it where the other mud was. Next the Keeper sent Beaver to dive. Beaver came up drowned but without any mud. Last he sent Muskrat to dive. Muskrat came up drowned, but like Beaver without any mud. Then the Keeper spread the mud out to dry in the sun. When it was dried out the Keeper took a pinch of the dry dust between thumb and index finger, faced east, held up the pinch of dry dust towards the east then back towards his shoulder and sang Ni:hohat's first song: "My holiness have pity on me" (No. 35). Then he held the pinch of dry dust again towards the east and brought it back to his shoulder and sang the same song again. Again the third time he did the same and at the end of the third singing of this first song released the dry dust from between his thumb and index finger and said: "Go as far as the eyes can reach," and immediately ground appeared on top of the water.

Then he took another pinch of dry dust, turnd to the south and went through the whole procedure that he had gone through when turning towards the east, singing likewise in each case the same song. Then he took the last pinch, the remainder of the dust, and turning to the west went through the same procedure, still singing White Man's first song. And each time more ground appeared. After this last turning to the west all the birds and animals gave their own special calls. They rejoiced for there was ground again.

Then the Keeper with his Pipe was on dry earth, and he went around all alone, the only human survivor. Wherever he wandered from one place to another he always took the Pipe. After a while he became tired of being alone. So he decided to make another man like himself. He took mud and moulded it into the shape of a human being and held it in his hand and breathed on it three times. After the third breathing the man appeared, like himself. And now he had a male partner. So the three, the Keeper, the man and the Pipe went around together. After a while the Keeper said: "We have no way to increase unless we have a female." So when the man was asleep, the Keeper took out the last lowest rib on the man's left side and breathed on it three times and the last time he breathed a woman appeared. The Keeper said to the man and woman: "Get married and live together and multiply mankind."

So the man and woman lived together and the Keeper continued to stay with them. The couple bore children and after a while there were again a lot of people. The Keeper decided to teach the man and woman all about the Pipe, the Keeper's lodge, and so forth. "Whenever the Pipe is transferred from one Keeper to another, all the societies in the tribe,—age societies, soldiers, Stars, Grass Dancers, Crazy Dancers, and so on,—should sit in and sing their songs and imitate the calls which the birds and animals gave when I made the land again. If any of these societies should get mixed

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

up and one should sing the other's song then they must say: 'We have lost track of our song,' and must stop singing. But this must happen three times before they quit singing for good on such an occasion." And so all the societies imitate the calls of animals and birds. 539 773

Then the people multiplied more and more and followed strictly all the teaching about the Flat Pipe. This was the one and only sacred pipe they had until the time when the other sacred pipe, the Feathered Pipe, appeared on the scene. And it was the Ruler of the Storm who gave the Gros Ventre the Feathered Pipe.

What became of Keeper is not known, whether he died a natural death or not, nor is anything known of what became of White Man.

4. Origin of Death

When Earthmaker had made man and woman, and everything was finished, Earthmaker, man, woman and the animals were all sitting around admiring how beautiful everything was and talking together. Earthmaker put the question to humans and animals: "Now, how do you want things to run? You are going to multiply. If you die, shall you stay dead, or shall you come back to life again?" So the man and woman and animals had to decide, with Earthmaker as the judge.

The man took a buffalo chip and threw it in the water, saying: "Here's the way I want our lives to run." The chip sank and then came up to the surface. "I want life to be like that. We shall die but we shall come back to life again."

But the bear said: "No, that way won't do. Soon the earth would be full and there would be no room, and not enough for everyone to eat. There will be more pleasure and happiness in life if all die. Then there will always be new generations to succeed them." So the bear took a rock and threw it in the water, saying: "Here is the way I want life to be." The rock sank and remained down.

So Earthmaker decided: "This is the way it shall be, like this rock."

5. He-who-starved-to-death[1]

A long time ago the Gros Ventre lived in a land that was good, with plenty of game and of other things needed and used in their way of life.

---

[1] This story is not recorded by Kroeber. It contains the incident of a person crossing a body of water on the legs of a bird and shaken off, which was mentioned by Kroeber (1907, p. 58) as one of the motifs widespread in central N. America which to that date had not been recorded for the Gros Ventres or Arapaho. It also contains another common motif, that of the magically replenished food, which does not occur in Kroeber's Gros Ventre collection. [R.F.] [171]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
773

At that time there lived a man who was then the Keeper of the Flat Pipe. When the man's first son was born the child was beloved and was declared to be the Pipe Son according to custom. The boy was very happy as his parents showered all their affections on him. This went on until another son was born to the Keeper and his wife. For some unaccountable reason this second son won the affections of his parents over those of his older brother and so became the Pipe Son and he instead of his older brother got everything in the way of affection, attention and favors from his parents. This caused a break in the harmony and happiness which had prevailed in the family up to that time. The older brother became violently jealous of his younger brother.

One day while the older brother was out hunting buffalo, the enemy attacked the Gros Ventre camp. The younger brother wished to distinguish himself and so prove himself worthy of the esteem which his parents and all the people had for him. And so he decided to join the fight which took place. In the absence of his brother he took a red otter skin belonging to his brother and went out and joined in the fight. This red otter skin was very rare and was used by the older brother as his war medicine and when he wore it on his person he never failed to distinguish himself in battle.

While the fight was still on, the older brother came home from his hunting. On being told by his parents that a fight was going on, he immediately got ready to take part in it. He went to look for his red otter skin but could not find it. So he asked his parents: "What has become of my otter skin?" They told him: "Your brother took it and went to the fight."

The older brother was very angry at his younger brother and vowed that upon the latter's return from the fight he would give him a sound upbraiding. As soon as his brother got back from the fight he upbraided him severely and said to him: "If you wish to own a red otter skin go to the place where they are found and get one for yourself." The younger brother took this violent scolding of his brother very seriously and felt it deeply in his heart. After that he grieved and pined and hardly ever remained around the lodge, but stayed out alone away from the camp and was very sad and cried most of the time. He rarely came home. When he did so his parents would try their best by constantly talking to him to pacify him, but it was of no avail. He said to his parents: "I cannot get out of my mind the matter of the red otter skin. I am resolved to go where they can be acquired." In spite of the warnings and entreaties of his parents and the other people to discourage the young man from this very dangerous undertaking, he struck out towards the rising of the sun and the habitat of the red otter.

After traveling for many days and nights and crying most of the way, he came in sight of a large camp of lodges. He did not hesitate to enter the camp and was not afraid, as he was resolved to acquire a red otter skin even at the risk of his life. The people welcomed him warmly and said to him: "What are you doing so far from home and from your parents?"

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

They knew how his parents loved him most dearly because he was the Pipe Child. He answered them: "I am going to the place where the red otter was gotten." They were horror-struck and said to him: "By all means turn back from going there, as no one who has gone there has ever returned, but has lost his life." The young man however was determined to go on and did not lend an ear to the advice and warnings given him by the people. Disregarding all they said he went on his way toward the rising sun. 539 773

After many days of traveling he came upon another large camp. Here too he was known as the Pipe Child and was given a warm welcome and good treatment. They too warned him but he went on. Finally he arrived at a third camp and was likewise well received and fully warned. When however the people saw that he was determined to go on and was not going to listen to their counsel to go back, they said to him: "All right. But at least listen carefully while we tell you what lies in store for you on this final and fourth leg of your journey and quest. When you leave this camp go toward the rising of the sun. After many days of travel you will come upon a lone lodge on the edge of a large body of water and facing toward the rising of the sun. When you get to the lodge you should do nothing else but start to cry and to walk around the lodge. When night comes lie down and sleep at the foot of the first pole to the left of the lodge door. The next night sleep at the foot of the second pole, and so on each night at the succeeding pole until you reach the last of the thirty poles. When you succeed in doing this then the man to whom the lodge belongs will invite you inside and will ask you what is your reason for inflicting so much punishment on yourself. You will tell him about the red otter. Then the man will grant your request as you will practically have gained the red otter by being able to sleep at each of the thirty lodge poles without having taken anything to eat or drink. But by all means do whatever the man tells you to do, following every instruction exactly. Another danger however awaits you. For besides giving you the red otter the man at the lodge will offer you a gift of one of his many birds that live there with him. Among them is a certain red bird who is very evil and tricky. Those who have picked him as a gift have been exposed to great danger as the red bird flies up into air with anyone that takes hold of his legs and after flying around a long while deposits him on an island in the middle of the large body of water. Every time without fail such men have died from starving or exposure or drowning."

So the young man after listening carefully to all this friendly counsel and warning, struck out toward the rising of the sun. After traveling many days and just when he was weary and tired out, as he came over a high ridge he saw a large body of water and on the shore a lodge pitched. He was glad that he had now reached his goal. On arriving at the lodge he did what he was told to do. He began walking around the lodge crying at the same time. When night came on he lay down at the foot of the

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
773

first pole to the left of the lodge and slept there. The next morning he got up, and all day long he walked around the lodge and cried. When night came he lay down at the next pole and slept there. He did this day after day, always moving to the next pole each night and sleeping there.

When he came to the pole straight back from and opposite the door he was unable any longer to stand up on his feet but had to crawl from one pole to the next one. When he reached the pole half way between the back of the lodge and the door he was unable to crawl any more and so he rolled from one pole to the next one. He was now so weak from lack of food and drink that he could not cry out loud any more but just shed tears. He went on from pole to pole. Mustering up his last energy he rolled to the 30th and last pole and fainted. This was the last he remembered.

When he awoke he heard talking inside the lodge, and soon he heard the man say to his wife: "Go out and bring our son inside our lodge, so we can care for him and ask him why he is punishing himself so much." The woman went out and exclaimed: "He is near death, being a mere skeleton." The young man was unable to walk or even to move. So she dragged him inside and laid him gently on a soft bed of robes. The man said to his wife: "Give the young man a drink of water." She dipped a small shell into the water and handed it to the young man to drink. The young man thought to himself: "This small shellful of water is not enough to quench my great thirst." But the man spoke kindly to him and told him: "Go ahead and drink. You will get enough." So he drank his fill and the shell was still full of water as before he began to drink.

Then the man said to his wife: "Give the young man food to eat." She gave him on the shell four pieces of meat already cut. He thought to himself: "These four small pieces of meat are not enough to satisfy my great hunger." But the man told him: "Do not worry. Go ahead and eat the meat." So he began eating the meat, and, each time after he took a piece, there remained four pieces of meat, and when he had eaten his fill there were still four pieces of meat left.

The young man then slept four nights in the man's lodge. At the end of this time he was fully recovered from his experience. The man then asked him: "Why have you come here and why have you done all these things to yourself?" The young man replied: "My older brother saddened me most grievously by scolding me for using his red otter skin war medicine. I felt so bad that I left my home and came toward the rising of the sun to acquire a red otter skin to have for my own. I have been told this is the place to come." The man said: "Yes I will give you what you ask. It is a request easily complied with. And also besides giving you the otter skin I am giving you one of my many birds that are along the shore of the water. Pick out any bird from the flock and then come back to my lodge to get your red otter skin along with full and final instructions."

So the young man went along the shore and soon came upon a large flock of most beautiful birds in many different colors and plumages. He

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
773

walked among them and they did not run away from him. He was undecided as to which bird he would pick, for it was hard to tell which was the most beautiful. He finally decided on a certain one, and, as he stooped down to pick it up, the red bird that he had been warned not to pick as a gift, got in the way. But knowing the red bird was evil and without pity he would not take it. Every time however he was about to catch the bird of his choice, the red bird got in his way. Then the young man began to study the red bird. He looked him over carefully and saw that he was a very beautiful bird after all, being all pure red in color and with a bunch of red feathers forming a beautiful arch on his head. He decided then to choose the red bird as after all it measured up to all the requirements of beauty.

So disregarding the advice he had gotten from the people he took hold of the bird's legs. As soon as he closed his hands on them, the red bird took wing and soared up in the air with him, and he could not relax his grip on the legs of the bird. After flying around a long time the bird made for the island in the middle of the great body of water and dropped the young man there.

The young man walked around on the island, and found there many skeletons of human beings who had met the same fate, death, which now faced him. There was nothing to eat there except a few berries and some frogs and moss that had washed ashore, and white clay. He ate these the best he could. He fully realized that it was impossible to swim back to the mainland as the distance was too great. He cried all of his spare time in the hope that something would take pity on him and rescue him.

Every once in a while the red bird would fly over the island and would say: "Oh, the one who eats rosebush berries is still alive," and then would fly away. One day as the young man was crying along the shore of the island he came across a little water snake. He picked it up and looked at it. Then he took a small ornament off his person and tied it around the neck of the little water snake and laid down the snake again unharmed.

After having spent more than thirty nights on the island he was getting very weak again and was reduced to skin and bones. This time as he was walking around crying he heard singing behind him. He stopped and listened. Finding that the singing was coming toward him, he stood there and waited. Then as he listened he heard these words: "I am here and I am coming." The singing stopped and then a voice said: "Man, my father sent me here to call you to our lodge." The young man thought it best not to move at once, but to wait until the voice invited him four times. After the fourth invitation he looked all around and saw no one. Then looking down he saw the little water snake on whom he had tied the ornament. The snake said to him: "Follow me to my father's lodge." So saying the snake went into the water and the man followed it under the water.

After a long walk under the water they came to a large lodge with two big water monsters painted on it, their heads meeting at the door. The little water snake said to him: "Go inside. This is my father's lodge." So

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
773

he went in. A big water monster lay at the back of the lodge and welcomed him in. So he sat down near the water monster's head. The water monster said: "You have done something which must be rewarded. You are the man who tied the ornament around the neck of the little water snake. This little water snake is my last child and his name is 'The Last Child.' Now listen to me and you will see your parents and all things which you hold dear. For I have pitied you and I am going to rescue you from your desperate plight and also reward you for what you have done for The Last Child."

The water monster then sang a song with these words in it: "Hair Rope, have pity on me." After the monster sang this song he gave the young man a Hair Rope made of the long hair from the forelegs of the buffalo and from the back of the neck of buffalo bulls. And he told the young man: "Use this Hair Rope to get revenge on the red bird who so ruthlessly carried you away and left you alone on the island to die. Lay the Hair Rope in a circle on the ground as if setting a trap and say: 'I want a fat young buffalo to be here.' And immediately you will turn into a young buffalo. After some time birds of all kinds will come around and eat you and if the red bird even so much as steps inside the ring of Rope you will have him trapped and completely at your mercy. If that plan does not lure him into the trap, wish for a fat elk; if that fails, then for a fat deer; if that fails, then for a fat white-tailed deer; if that fails, finally for a fat young wolf and this will not fail. The red bird is very powerful, above all on top of the ground. I am the ruler under the water. I transfer my power to you and ordain that for all time to come this power shall be used by all generations of men, and shall be used for the purpose of revenge." So saying the monster told the young man: "Get on my neck and I will take you to the mainland. But do not open your eyes until I say to you: 'Now get off.'"

So the young man got on the water monster's neck and they started for the mainland. They went on and on, and after a long time the young man heard a sound as of scraping on rocks. Thinking they had reached the shore of the mainland he opened his eyes and at that instant he was again on the island where he had been before. The monster rebuked him for his disobedience in opening his eyes before it was time and said to him: "That was the one and only power I had to help you. There is nothing further I can do for you."

So the young man was back on the island as far as ever from home and from the fulfillment of his desire to have the red otter skin. So he began crying again, and he did this daily for a long time. One day he was walking along and crying. He went near a big tree and as he went under it he heard a voice saying: "Stop your crying and look up at me. I am the bald eagle and I am very powerful. I am taking pity on you and am going to help you." Looking up the young man saw a bald eagle perched on a limb.

The eagle said to the young man: "I am transferring my lodge to you and you are to have my body as a flag when you put up my lodge. I am going to take you to the mainland. You must do what I say and I will succeed.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
773

But if you do not do as I say, as you did with the water monster, I will not succeed. Take hold of my tail feathers with both hands, and close your eyes and you are not to open them until you touch ground with your feet."

The young man did as he was told and took a firm hold of the eagle's tail feathers and closed his eyes. Then the eagle let out his loud whistle, took wing, and sailed up in the air. The young man could feel that he was being carried through space and he was determined that this time he was not going to open his eyes until he touched ground with his feet, as the eagle had told him. He could feel the eagle sailing as it were in a circle and after a time he felt the ground under his feet. Upon opening his eyes he found that the eagle had deposited him in front of the lodge where he had slept and suffered so much for thirty nights.

He stood there not knowing what to do. Then the man whose lodge it was invited him inside. He went inside and sat down. The man said to him: "I am very sorry for you. The red bird is very evil and without pity. But now that you have gone through all these things required and are still alive, I will give you the red otter skin, and also horses and a bunch of leg hoofs of buffalo to use for a bell [rattle] on the horses' necks." The man took down the hoof bell from its place on one of the poles of the lodge and told the young man to follow him to the shore. On arriving at the shore the man shook the hoof bell violently and a beautiful black stallion with a bob tail came out from the water. The man now told him: "This is your horse and he is the father of all the horses that I am going to give you. And here is what you must do to get back home with these horses. These horses must not be abused or ill-treated and must not be killed. Whoever of your people so maltreats them will not own any horses for in a mysterious way he will lose his ownership. When I transfer this hoof bell from my hand to yours, shake it as you saw me do, turn around, and go back to where you came from toward the setting sun. When night comes you must lay your head forward when you sleep, and for four nights you are not to look back or around, but walk with your head down and your eyes on the ground. If you do not do as I say, the horses will disappear and you will have gone through all this suffering in vain. But if you carry out what I say, you will have wealth, happiness, long-life, and a renown that shall last for all time to come.[8] Finally I impart to you all my power and my whole being, under one other condition, namely, that you are not to give a single thing, a horse or anything else, to your older brother who caused you all the suffering and privation which you have gone through this long time. At each of the Gros Ventre camps which you will pass you will give to each man, woman, and child a horse, and in the following manner. Halt a good distance away from the camp with your horses and call one man from the camp, and tell him to go and announce to the other people to

[8] Cf. Kroeber, 1907, p. 128, incident of water monster giving horses to young man.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
913

bring all of their ropes, that 'He-who-starved-to-death' would give them each a horse. Now go back toward the setting sun and do as I have told you."

So as soon as the man put the hoof bell in the hand of He-who-starved-to-death, the latter turned around shaking the bell and started out toward the setting sun. As he went along it was all he could do not to look back, for he could hear the tramping of the horses behind him, sometimes nearly running over him in their frolicking and play. But he had made up his mind firmly to do as he was told for he had had bitter experiences. Each night he lay down with his head toward the setting sun as he had been told. And at each of the three camps on the way he gave a horse to each person there. He successfully arrived back at the fourth camp, his home, and there gave a horse to each person except to his older brother. To him he would not give a single horse or anything else. His brother wept almost continually and was rarely seen in camp after that. And now the younger son of the Keeper of the Flat Pipe was back home and safe and was known as He-who-starved-to-death.

After he was fully rested and recovered from his experiences and travels he began to lay plans as to how to get revenge on the red bird who had caused him so much suffering. So as he had been instructed to do by the water monster he sweated on four different days and in the sweat lodge told his story to his people. The first of the four sweatings was just for the purpose of getting ready for his revenge on the red bird.

After having gone through the ceremonies four times on four different days, he went away from the camp to a knoll and there laid down his Hair Rope trap. Standing in the middle of the circle of Rope he said: "I want a fat young buffalo to lie here," and immediately he himself turned into a buffalo. Soon a great number of birds flew to the spot from every direction, there to eat of the fat buffalo. After a considerable time the red bird appeared there. He alighted some distance from where the buffalo lay and down windward and asked one of the birds to toss him a piece of fat of the buffalo. He hopped to the fat tossed to him and inspected it carefully. Then he flew up and circled over the buffalo and said: "The one who eats rosebush berries cannot trap or outwit me, he is not powerful or clever enough," and the red bird flew away. So He-who-starved-to-death gave up and went back to camp.

After quite a long time he again went away from camp, but to a different spot, and again set his Hair Rope trap. This time he said: "I want a fat young elk to lie here," and at that instant he turned into a fat elk. As at the first setting of the trap, many birds came there to eat the fat meat. Soon the red bird came again and asked one of the birds to toss him a piece of fat. He inspected it as he had done before and on finding that it was that of his enemy he flew away saying: "You are not smart enough to trap me."

And so in turn He-who-starved-to-death set his Hair Rope trap for the red bird as he had been told to do and in the order prescribed,—the third

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

time by turning into a fat deer, the fourth into a fat white-tailed deer and the fifth into a fat wolf. The last time He-who-starved-to-death put perfume on himself, and the red bird, failing until too late to discern that it was his enemy and not a real wolf, was fooled. Before he found out his mistake he had already stepped inside the circle of the Hair Rope and was trapped. But not knowing that he was trapped he flew away taunting He-who-starved-to-death and calling him names.

539
773

So He-who-starved-to-death proceeded to do the thing he had been told to do by the water monster, by the bald eagle and by the man at the lodge by the water's edge. Since he was a Pipe Child he felt that he had the hereditary right to use some of the rites of the Flat Pipe in order to war against and totally destroy the red bird who had great power and who made life on top of the ground almost unbearable for anyone who wished to advance and get along better.

When the red bird flew away out of sight into the clouds, He-who-starved-to-death collected himself, fixed himself up, brushed down his hair, sat down facing the rising sun, and began to sing the song of the water monster at his home under the water. He moved his hands as if pulling something down from above with a rope, and at the end of each song he uttered the sacred refrain of the Pipe songs: "Yo-ho-ho-ho." He sang the song a number of times and before long the red bird appeared in the sky coming down toward him. When he saw this he was encouraged and sang with renewed fervor, and after he finished singing he jerked his hands down violently with all his might. And the red bird hit the earth in a cloud of dust at his feet, with one leg securely snared in the Hair Rope trap. "Now, red bird," said He-who-starved-to-death, "I have gotten you at last and I am going to mete out to you a far worse and more cruel punishment than you inflicted on me. In the end I am going to destroy you completely and the human race will hear of this for all time. In a short time from now you will be no more." So saying he proceeded to pluck the feathers off the red bird until there remained only a few down feathers around the bird's beak. The proud red bird was now a sorry sight, and realizing it closed his eyes and hung his head in shame. He-who-starved-to-death taunted the bird and twisted his beak around: "Now if you are as powerful as you claim to be, do something for yourself, for you have no feathers on your body and winter will soon be here and you will freeze to death." So he tormented the red bird for some time until finally the bird got angry, raised up his head, opened his eyes and said to He-who-starved-to-death: "Yes, I am the most powerful one on top of the ground, and now I will prove it. You cannot get the best of me. You are less powerful than I am." So saying the bird shook himself violently and after he ceased to shake all his feathers came back on his body again. He became whole and entire and with a few more cutting and final remarks to his enemy he flew up and disappeared in the clouds.

He-who-starved-to-death sat there for a while sort of bewildered. But recovering himself soon, he began to sing the song belonging to the Hair

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
773

Rope trap as he had been taught to do by the water monster under the water and repeated the same pulling-down motions he had made before. He succeeded in pulling down the red bird and plucking him as he had done the first time, but the red bird was able to get his feathers back again.

Four times in all he did all this and each time the bird got his feathers back again. But He-who-starved-to-death did not give up. For the fifth time he began singing, believing that the red bird had exhausted his power the fourth time. Sure enough on this fifth trial after he had sung the song a number of times, the red bird appeared, came toward him and landed at his feet with the Hair Rope trap still attached to one of his legs. He plucked all the bird's feathers off again. Again the red bird shook himself violently as he had done the other four times, but all his efforts failed and his feathers did not come back again.

So He-who-starved-to-death tormented the bird to his heart's content until he tired of doing so. Then he said to the bird: "Now since you did not pity me on that island where you put me against my will, and since you do not even now respect me nor my present true name 'He-who-starved-to-death,' but you alone still call me 'He-who-eats-rosebush-berries,' I will not be moved by any prayer or entreaty you might make. I doubt whether you will even attempt to pray, for you are too proud and think too much of yourself, having the idea that you do not need anyone's help. It took me all summer to trap you and to get revenge on you. But now I have conquered you completely and will leave you to your fate. You will starve and freeze to death after winter sets in."

So He-who-starved-to-death, the Flat Pipe Child and the second son of the Keeper of the Flat Pipe at that time, now became ruler of all the people who lived on top of the ground. He added many rites to the Flat Pipe rite,—the invocation of the Last Child, the Hair Rope, the song of the water monster. He did so much and so well for his people that after he died his name was invoked when the Gros Ventres prayed in earnest and has been so invoked down to this present day.*

6. Origin of the Feathered Pipe[10]

a. *Version of The Boy*

All the people after the flood were living the life of the Flat Pipe as they

---

* The horse does not enter into the Flat Pipe rite although He-who-starved-to-death was the one who brought horses to the Gros Ventres. There are, however, certain associations between the keeper of the Flat Pipe and horses (see p. 63).

[10] Kroeber, 1907, p. 112 (No. 23), gives a short version of origin of the "chief Pipe" which undoubtedly refers to the Feathered Pipe. See also our No. 7, in which young man dies, is placed in Feathered Pipe lodge, and storm comes.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

had been taught to live by White Man. There were many people then who lived happily and multiplied. 539 773

All were camped in a circle in a certain place. Quite a distance away there was high ground with a steep bank on one end of it. A certain childless couple decided to move up to this high ground. The man was very successful in his hunting there in that isolated place and spent most of his time hunting. Towards sundown one day they saw coming a big storm with lightning and rain. It looked as if it would be an unusually severe storm so they got everything ready, tightening the lodge and so forth. The man and woman then sat in the lodge. When the storm was within hearing distance they heard some men singing right in the storm. When the storm reached them it turned out to be a very severe one with high wind, though of short duration. During the storm the Ruler of the Storm spoke to the man and his wife: "You have been selected by the Ruler of the Storm to be Keepers of the Pipe and of that carved rock. Whenever a storm like this comes, use this pipe and rock to pray to the Ruler of the Storm not to be too hard on you." The Ruler of the Storm taught them the four different songs of the Pipe and the ritual of it.

When the storm was over the tent and everything the couple owned had been taken away by the storm. They looked around and saw a pipe and a rock with a human face carved in profile on it.

So now the Gros Ventre people had two pipes and bundles, the Flat Pipe and the Feathered Pipe. And they prospered and lived long and were happy and always had good luck. They had great reverence for both of the pipes, but greater reverence for the Flat Pipe. All the people lived together in one camp. And whenever they moved camping sites, the Flat Pipe as the senior pipe took the lead while the Feathered Pipe came next. If the people separated into two camps, so that one half had the Flat Pipe and the other the Feathered Pipe, the Feathered Pipe took the lead in this other party.

b. *Version by Thick*

A certain couple who lived at a time after the great Flood had a boy and this boy from the time he was a child never went out and played or joined with other children; he stayed by himself. He was a good boy, a very modest boy. This boy was like that up to about the age of 17 or 18. There was another family of another band, a member of which was a girl of the same nature,—a quiet, stay-at-home girl. Since neither went out and played they wouldn't have known one another; they must have been told through a dream. The boy said: "Well, my father and my mother, you go to this family. They have a girl. You go there and ask the parents of that girl if I can have her for my wife." And the father of course was glad to do it.

So he and his old woman went over to this family. When they got over there this man who had the daughter was glad to see these folks visit. "Well, old man, you have never come into my lodge before and I am glad you have come. Sit down." And he told his wife: "Cook for them." So they cooked

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
773

and after they had eaten this man said: "Well, my friend, what I came for today is this. My son sent me over here to ask for your daughter. He wants to marry her." The girl's father said: "Thanks, thanks, I am glad somebody has asked for my daughter. All right. Now, you tell your son not to be in a big hurry because we want to make a lodge and when we are ready we will let you know."

So they went home and told their son and he said: "That is all right." So the girl's parents got busy and got hides and robes and made a big lodge all furnished. So when it was ready they pitched it and put everything in it and horses were tied by the lodge. Then they cooked a lot of food and brought it in there. Then they sent word to this other family: "Now we are ready for your son." So this man took his son over there. When they got there, the girl's father came out and said: "Son-in-law, that is your lodge. Go right in." The girl went in. Then the man said: "Son-in-law, there is a lot of food in there and you have to invite old men." So the father-in-law called out and invited several old men to feast with this young couple. So the young couple stayed with the girl's parents for a long time.

After a while the young man said to his wife: "Well, we have stayed with your parents long enough. We will now stay with my parents." So they camped by his father.

One midsummer day it was very hot and they raised the lodge cover to let air in. In the evening the young fellow told his father: "Father, early in the morning I want you folks to move my lodge. You see that flat out there (away from the camp on the west side)? I want you to set my lodge there early in the morning." So the next morning the old people got busy and moved the lodge to where he wanted it. They did it without asking any questions and he didn't tell them why he asked this. After they moved it he said: "Now, father, you get a couple of old men (criers) to tell the people to fix up their lodges tight, so they won't blow over. There is to be a terrible wind."

So his father went back and got the men to announce what his son had said. And you know how it is, there are always many people who don't believe. "Why should I try to fix my lodge tight when it is a hot day and there is no wind?" But of course a lot of them fixed up their lodges tight. So the young fellow told his father: "You bring all my horses and picket them right here in front of the lodge." And the old man, without asking any questions, did everything his son told him. So he brought up all the horses, quite a lot, because both families had given the young couple horses. And after they did that the young man said: "Well, you go home." And after the young man's father went home they saw a little cloud in the west and it soon spread, and when it was coming there was lightning and thunder, and when it came to the camp, the wind and rain came together. It was like a cloudburst and where the young man's lodge was that thunder was just rolling.

After the storm had passed over very few lodges were left standing. They never did find the lodges of those who disobeyed. The old man went out

3; Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

and saw that his son's lodge, horses and belongings were all gone. He found only the two young persons sitting on the flat where the lodge had been. And then the old man walked out there, his son saw him coming and called to him at a distance: "Stop! Now go right back and tell the people I want all of them, young and old, to come, I want to show them something." So the old man turned and walked back and got the crier to announce that. So the whole tribe came and the young man told them: "Tell all the people to come in single file, coming from the west, my parents first, then my wife's parents, and then all the rest." So they did that. They came in single file. They came slowly and the young man had on only his robe. He put his robe back and held out both his hands touching and his wife did the same. And in his hands he had the Pipe and this woman had the Image. Neither the Pipe nor the Image had been made by the couple, but had been given them from heaven. Everybody went by and looked.

539
773

After everyone was gone, they got up and went home. Then people got busy and they got another lodge and everything that goes with it and set it up for this young couple again—horses and everything. And after he got his lodge and everything back, the young man and his wife went in and he told his father: "You call the old men, the noted men, call all of them." So they called all the old and noted men and they came in and the young man said: "All right. This thing has been done and I am going to tell you about it. From the time I was old enough to know I began to dream. And everything about the Pipe, how it is to be handled and what to do with it, I used to be told in my dreams. And that is why I had to be by myself and never go out and play. When I got to be a young man, I was told that the Pipe was ready. That is why I then asked for this girl. She was the same. And after that you know what happened. Well, here it is. From now on, whenever this Pipe is passed to another hand they will have to do the same. When this Pipe has to be passed on, you will have to make a raid on the one who gets it and take everything he has, the same as they did with me. You see they took my lodge and horses and everything, and they went up in the clouds. But this other, he will lose everything but it will remain among the people. I am going to bundle this Pipe and these other things have to go in (the feather stem, the Pipe, the Image, the owl and the whistle). When I pass this Pipe on there will be six persons that will keep the Pipe in turn and carry on the work, but every seventh keeper is going to become a holy man, and he will get all the power. He will have control of the weather, with power to cause and stop rain and storms." And the Gros Ventres claim that it has worked out just this way. Every seventh keeper became a great man, holy. In recent years old Bull Lodge got the Pipe and he must have been a seventh one in the series, and he became a holy man (bitä:nehi) with weather power.

c. *Version by Singer*

A certain young man was sleeping and in his dream a person came to him and said: "Don't camp in this circle. Camp off by yourself. You are going

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

531
773

to get something." He did so. There was just a huge rain cloud and the thunder was terrible, and that is when Bha'a gave him the Feathered Pipe. He didn't have a horse or anything else left, but only the clothing he had on. He and his wife just sat there like that. When he was given the Pipe, this person said: "When this Pipe is given away the people receiving it want to do just as you did." So when the Pipe is transferred the new owner and his wife give away everything he has to the old owner and just sit there with nothing but the clothes they have on.

d. *Version by Al Chandler*[11]

This Feathered Pipe was gotten from a young fellow who was a very poor man. He didn't have any father or mother. They had died when he was young and he was staying with his grandmother. He used to have dreams that something was going to be given to him, something very important. He figured that people always have to pay something to get anything, so he thought he had better go out and rustle some horses to pay for what he was going to get. He went out two or three times and brought back quite a bunch of horses.

One summer he was sitting around in the daytime and something told him: "Well, you are going to get something now. You better get ready for it. The first thing you want to do is to get a big lodge. If you haven't got one, get it some way, buy it or ask for one." He went around and told people and they helped him out, they just gave him the lodge. After he got the lodge he was told to put it up somewhere by itself. "Now after you do that," he was told, "you rustle good things like beadwork and what Indians have, blankets and things inside the lodge and fix your lodge up good. And you must have a horse tied to every one of the lodge pins. When you have finished with that, you go in there (in the lodge) and be there all alone." So after he got everything ready, he did this, just as he was told. Whoever this was who told him what to do knew that he was ready.

It was toward the middle of the day and he was in there all by himself. All at once it started to get cloudy and an electric storm and a strong wind came. After all the storm had passed, the people wondered what had happened. They looked over where the lodge had been, and nothing was there except a man sitting on the ground. The lodge, the horses, everything was gone. He was sitting there by himself with this Feathered Pipe and some kind of moccasins of animal fur (these are in the Pipe bundle now). Some old fellows came very close and asked him: "What happened?" "Well," he said, "you can all come now, all those who want to hear."

So the old men and old women came. They kept the youngsters and the young women away. This young man's name was Broken Knife. He told

[11] When Al Chandler was a child he lived with Sitting High, who at that time was keeper of the Feathered Pipe.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

what had happened, and of course they were afraid to touch the Pipe. They had never seen anything like it. It was just glittering with different colors. They had never seen a Pipe like that. The stem is porcupine quill work with eagle feathers all along the stem. The young man knew all the songs that belong to the Feathered Pipe. The Pipe was given by Bha'a.

539
773

e. *Version by Garter Snake*[18]

A long time ago there lived a man named First Man, with two wives and two children. He used to have dreams, and in one of them he was told he was to be given something from above (heaven). After he had been told this the third time in dreams he called the old men together and said to them: "Three times I have dreamed that I am to be given something from above. I do not know what to do. I have called you together to tell you my dream and to get your advice." One old man as spokesman advised him: "If you dream this again, accept the gift, for the good of all the people." After this the First Man had the same dream again (the fourth time). He did not see anybody but he said: "All right, I'll accept it." He was then told in his dream to get ready four nights after that.

On the fourth afternoon after, he told his father: "You and some of the old men, criers, go around and tell the people to make their lodges fast so they will not blow down. There is going to be a big storm with great wind and much rain." The criers went around and warned the people. Some obeyed and some made light of the warning. First Man then took his own lodge and set it up some distance from the camp. He then picketed his horses near his lodge and sent his younger wife back to the main camp to stay there that night. But First Man and his older wife, First Woman, with one of his two children, remained in his lodge.

About dusk that evening a heavy black cloud with lightning came from the west. That night a terrific storm, with very sharp lightning and thunder, violent wind and torrents of rain, started and lasted all night until about daybreak. During it, people could hear a whistling from a whistle. The next morning the sun came out warm, and there was water all over the place.

First Man's father was worried about his son and went out to look toward's his son's lodge. The lodge and horses were gone. He saw only First Man, First Woman and the child, sitting out there on the flat. So he called to his people: "Come out and look. Everything my son owned is gone. He

---

[18] In early life Garter Snake had been Pipe Child to the Feathered Pipe. Her version came from her father, Bull Lodge, a former keeper. She emphasized that she was giving us what and only what her father had told and that he had not told her everything. She mentioned that when her father was about to tell her the story of the Pipe he said: "Listen very closely to what I am going to tell you; you can tell it to your grandchildren when you get old."

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539 is sitting out on the flat." So everybody came out and looked. The man
773 and his wife and child were sitting there on sage with their heads and faces covered with some kind of covering sent down from heaven. The people were afraid to go near them. Up above a man and woman singing was heard (by First Man? or by the people?).

At last about noon the young man uncovered his head and his father came closer: "Son, we don't know what to do. What do you want us to do?" He replied: "First, put up a lodge with all its furnishings close to where my lodge was which was taken from me. Then get sage and put it inside the lodge at the back, with the heads of the sage pointing to the center, and put some down on the ground from where we are to the door of the lodge." After all this was done, the three walked over to the lodge and went in.

During the storm First Man had been given four things from above: The Pipe, a feathered thing, an image and a whistle. The Pipe had been given by the Supreme Being through Bha'a. The Supreme Being was father of the Pipe. He was also told what names he and his first wife should thenceforth be known by: Whistling Man and Woman-takes-the-lead because she had to take the lead in all wanderings.

She became the main Pipe Woman who would carry the Pipe when the people were on the march and who would take it in and out of the Keeper's lodge. The man's younger wife became second Pipe Woman whose duty it was to handle the Pipe when the main Pipe Woman was in her menses, for at such times the latter was not allowed to handle the Pipe.

The night after the storm Whistling Man asked to have a drum (or four drums?) brought over to his lodge. He called the old men over and sang four songs (no doubt the four Feathered Pipe songs). He put the four gifts each in a separate covering, placed them all together in a black-bear robe, tied the bundle, and put it in the back of his lodge on the sage that had been spread there. After he had wrapped the Pipe and sung the four songs, he told the story of his dreams and gave instructions about the Pipe and its ritual.

Every night after this he was told in his dreams what other things should be put in the bundle with the Pipe. These were various birds of the air,—for the Pipe came from above,—except one thing from a ground animal, a muskrat skin. He also had somebody make a drum and a wooden bowl, which still hang with, not in, the Pipe bundle. It took him several years to get all these things together. The last thing he got for the bundle was a tanned elk hide.

When all these things were ready, he took a white-buffalo robe, cut it to size, and wrapped the Pipe itself in this. The other things too he wrapped separately, the feathered thing in smoked skin, the image in hair of buffalo fur, but the whistle was just put unwrapped in the bundle.

He was told too (in his dreams) about the ritual of the Pipe. The boughs or needles of sweet pine were to be used as incense. At the time they were camped far from the mountains where sweet pine grows, but in Whistling

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Man's lodge was a whole branch of sweet pine. Where it came from, the people did not know. The people in case of sickness would come to Whistling Man with offerings of tanned deer or antelope skin to "cover" the Pipe. After the offerings had accumulated he had some of the men make a sweat-lodge, with pile of dirt outside (from the excavation inside the lodge), and a buffalo skull on top of it, and with a long pole on which the offerings were hung. When all was ready and the stones were heated, an old man prayed, inviting four times, first the Supreme Being, and afterwards the old men present, to sweat. 539 773

Whistling Man also told the people that the Feathered Pipe had been given them for their well-being and protection, that it should remain with the Gros Ventres as long as the world would last, and that it should never be transferred to any other tribe, no matter what should happen.

So Whistling Man kept the Pipe for forty years. Then he was told in his dream of a coming great flood. Forty years after the flood, when he was so old and feeble that he could hardly dance at all, he was told in a dream to transfer it to some other Keeper. He then made a drum and a gourd rattle. The drum was painted half black and half red, black to represent black (storm) clouds and red to represent the earth. He was told, too, from time to time to add to the Pipe bundle certain specified things: the whole skin of a muskrat, a crane, a big white swan, a duck, helldivers, and an unidentified bird called Big Bird. After all these things were finally gathered together, he wrapped each one separately. He was further told to collect one feather from each of all kinds of birds and tie these feathers on the stick to make the feathered thing. All these objects were then put in the Pipe bundle which had its cover of black-bear robe and an outside cover of tanned elk hide.

When all was ready, he was told in a dream: "You are now ready to turn over this Pipe. But wait until you are told." The man chosen to receive it had to be a good, noted and wealthy man. Finally, after a time, Whistling Man gave it to his uncle who meanwhile had been told in a dream that it was to be given to him. Whistling Man said to the people: "Now, my children, I am going to give you my son (the Pipe)." And he said to his uncle: "After you keep it four years, transfer it to somebody else. If you cannot find a worthy man, keep it four more years. If at the end of your second term (eight years) you cannot find a worthy successor, keep it four more years. But at the end of twelve years you have to transfer it." When Whistling Man actually turned over the Pipe, it was night time. He did what had been done to him in the storm when he first got the Pipe: He took the same black cloth and put it over the heads of his uncle and the latter's wife. Then the people raided his uncle and took his lodge, belongings, horses, everything, as Whistling Man's property had been taken in the storm. The next day the people clubbed together and gave the uncle and his wife a lodge, bedding, horses and everything they needed, and gave them horses to give to the nephew who had given his uncle the Pipe.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539 773

And so as time went on the Pipe passed from Keeper to Keeper at least every twelve years. Later the new Keeper was appointed, not by the previous one acting alone from instructions in a dream, but by consultation and agreement with the old men called together by the Keeper to elect the successor. Since the days of the first Keeper, Whistling Man, up to the time Bull Lodge became keeper, there had been 200 keepers.

7. He-who-dreams-of-Bha'a

The man and woman who were given the Feathered Pipe by the Ruler of the Storm had at the time no children. They were a young couple still in the prime of life. After they got the Feathered Pipe a boy was born to them. This boy grew up like any other boy. For a while he was called Pipe Child. After he got to be a good sized boy (about 14 years old) he used to leave his father's lodge, go away from the camp, and cry. Pipe Child used to do this every once in a while. Sometimes he would come back sooner than usual and would walk around his father's lodge and cry; after a while he would get tired and would go stay to the back of the lodge on the outside on the place of honor and would sit reclining against the lodge just where the Feathered Pipe was kept and would sleep there. At other times he would go inside the lodge to the Feathered Pipe bundle and embrace it and cry; and when he got sleepy he would lie down on the bed right under the tripod where the Feathered Pipe was kept.

Pipe Child did all this over and over again. He would go out away from camp and cry or he would come and cry around his father's lodge. His father and mother would be glad at this, for they knew that the boy was in this way forming his character. They did not tell the boy this in so many words, but silently they approved.

While the boy was doing this the people were camped near a steep coulee with water at the bottom of it. This was where the people went to fetch water. One day the enemy sneaked up to them at a time when a lot of women had gone down together to the stream for water. Here the enemy attacked them. The banks were steep and the Gros Ventre women could not easily make their escape. So a lot of the women were killed and some were scalped alive. The alarm spread rapidly and the Gros Ventre then got their horses ready and put on their war regalia and prepared to pursue the enemy and to give battle. Pipe Child's father said to him: "My boy, you are old enough now. You are nearly grown up (the boy was about 16 or 17 years old at the time, which was about the age at which fathers let their sons go to battle). So you will have to live like the rest of the people. You might as well start now. You go along on this fighting expedition." The father dressed up Pipe Child, tied his own war medicine on the boy (war medicines were tied on the head or elsewhere), gave him a spear but no other weapons, mounted the boy on his own (the father's) horse, the fastest and best horse in the Gros Ventre tribe. The name of the horse was

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Crooked Leg. The father said to Pipe Child: "Give chase to the enemy, and when you overtake them ride right into their midst, get on the right-hand side of one of the enemy and spear him, and after you have done that wheel your horse around and come back to camp. Do not do anything else. Do not spare the horse; he is a good fast horse. Let him run for all he is worth." The man took quite a while to get Pipe Child ready. When Pipe Child was ready he rode off and rode as fast as he could. By the time he reached the battleground, a pitched battle was already under way. Pipe Child used his own judgment since there was only one single thing he had to do, to pick out one of the enemy worth attacking. So he saw one of the enemy mounted on an "aplouse" horse (white with black spots on the rump) with bloody withers. Pipe Child thought to himself: "This is one of the enemy who scalped the women alive." So Pipe Child made for him. He was a great warrior, one of the most prominent men of the enemy tribe. Pipe Child waited until this man was riding away from him. The boy then rode after him, got to the right side of him and when just opposite him speared him, piercing his body through and through. He couldn't pull the spear out, so he just left it in the man's body and wheeled his horse about and rode back to camp. His father was waiting for him and said to him: "Son, what did you do?" The boy replied: "I did just what you told me to do." Then he related all he had done. His father was glad.

By this time all the other Gros Ventre warriors had come back. They had killed many of the enemy and inflicted on them a crushing defeat. There was great rejoicing. They were singing all over the camp. Finally the celebration centered in front of the Feathered Pipe Keeper's lodge, for it was the custom to celebrate the victory in front of the lodge of the person who had done the greatest deed, and in that battle Pipe Child had performed the greatest feat. The people danced and sang and the father gave away all his belongings in honor of Pipe Child, his friends helping him to give the things away. At last he had nothing left but the Feathered Pipe and his own horse, Crooked Leg.

When the dancing was over, one old couple still remained around dancing and singing. They went toward the father's lodge, saying the name of Pipe Child and of his parents. When they got in front of the lodge, they stopped and sang and danced there, still saying the name of the boy and his father. Finally the father and his wife were moved and he said to her: "Invite them in." The old couple came in and the father said to them: "Why are you still celebrating and why do you come to my lodge?" The old man replied: "The reason is that I want your horse, Crooked Leg. I want you to give it to me. I am a poor man. It would do me a lot of service in my hunting and other work." The Keeper of the Feathered Pipe said to him: "That is easy. I thought you would ask something hard. If that is all you want, you shall have the horse." So the Keeper said to his wife: "Go out and unpicket Crooked Leg and give him to this old man." So the woman went out and unpicketed Crooked Leg and gave him to the old man. The

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
773

old man and his wife had the more reason to celebrate, and they shouted louder and louder and attracted the attention of the whole camp. Everybody knew that the old man had gotten this great horse from the Keeper.

The Keeper had planted tobacco for that season. Without waiting for the customary harvesting of the tobacco, all the people took advantage of the occasion and raided the tobacco patch and the man couldn't say anything for his son had performed the greatest deed in battle. Such was the custom. That was the way renown was acquired, doing such things as that.

Pipe Child grew up and went on in his way. Whenever there was a battle or other event, he did like everyone else. Every time there was a battle he distinguished himself among the best of the warriors. He was brave, capable, and intelligent, and in a short time he acquired a place in the inside circle of the leading men. When Pipe Child observed this he said to his father: "You tell the people that when they go out for the buffalo hunt they should get a buffalo skin from around the forehead, and I will use that for my shield. Tell the people to get good elk skin. I am going to use that for my shield case. Then after they have gotten us these two skins, dry and prepare them. Then just the three of us, you, my mother and myself, will go apart secretly and cut ourselves off from the rest of the people. Then I will paint my shield. While I am painting my shield you will sing for me, singing the songs used in the Feathered Pipe rite."

So they got the two skins, prepared them in the ordinary way. The buffalo head skin was prepared stiff as rawhide; the elk skin was tanned soft and pliable. When everything was ready the father and mother and Pipe Child shut themselves in the Feathered Pipe lodge and started in, the father singing the Feathered Pipe songs while Pipe Child painted the shield. The round buffalo-head rawhide was covered with the elk skin, and it was the elk skin that was painted. A smudge was made and the paints used were fumigated in the smudge from time to time. The background of the shield was left in its natural color. Pipe Child, with black charcoal paint, painted on the shield in profile facing each other the two birds representing the Ruler of the Storm, Bha'a. Just above them he painted two zigzag lines nearly horizontal, crossing each other and pointing in opposite directions to represent the lightning. All this was painted in black with charcoal paint. Just above the lightning lines he tied to the shield a dead bird,—a small coal black bird (a little bigger than a swallow, with forked tail, white breast with a little yellow on the breast). Then he trimmed the periphery of the shield with eagle tail feathers attached all around at intervals but not touching one another. Then he put a thong on by which the shield could be suspended from his neck or elsewhere. All this is what came from Pipe Child's crying. He had waited all these years to prove himself worthy before making such a shield. Then Pipe Child said to his father and mother: "Now I am through. I have made my shield. Send for the crier and tell him to come over here."

When the crier got to the lodge Pipe Child said to him: "Go around the

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

camp and tell the people: 'He-who-dreams-of-Bha'a has finished making his shield and is going to put it outside on a tripod. Fasten your lodges down solidly and gather wood and drive your horses to shelter and get ready for a storm." A good many of the people thought this ridiculous for it was about August, the hottest time of the year, the time when the berries and chokecherries were ripe, and the day was a hot sultry one with not a cloud in the sky and with no sign of a storm. A lot of the people had the lower parts of their lodges raised up to let in the breeze and were sitting inside in the shade. A good many of the people however got ready their tents as they were warned to do.

539
773

He-who-dreams-of-Bha'a, for Pipe Child had given himself that name and was henceforth to be known by it, took out his shield and got the tripod on which the Feathered Pipe hung and hung his shield thereon a good distance back of his father's lodge. Almost at once a speck of cloud appeared in the west. In no time it grew bigger and bigger. Very soon after there were signs of an approaching storm. The people hurried to get ready, but before they were ready the storm struck with a violent wind that blew over a number of the lodges. Rain poured in torrents and there was severe lightning as if just over head. So it stormed and stormed day and night for four nights. On the morning after the fourth night there was a deep snow. One of the Gros Ventre got up early that morning, looked toward the Feathered Pipe lodge and saw that there was no snow around the lodge for a good distance. And he said to the people: "Look over there. Not a flake has fallen in a circle a good distance around the Feathered Pipe lodge."

He-who-dreams-of-Bha'a always wore his shield when he went to battle. He also made four round wheels of willow, each wrapped around with buckskin and with little feathers on them. These he used to tie on his head, one on his forehead and the other three in the same row back to his occiput. He also wore as a cuff on his right wrist a tanned badger face with the mouth towards his hand. He said to the people: "Unless I am struck on the head within one of the four wheels I will not be hurt." He wore the badger face on his wrist because he was right-handed and used this right hand for everything and hence everything he did while wearing it would be supernaturally easy for him.

And so He-who-dreams enjoyed great reputation and became a renowned war chief while he was still young. He lived on and was getting to be a grown man. Many offers of marriage were made to him from other prominent families, but he always refused saying: "I am not ready yet to get married."

He-who-dreams had a specially good friend. There was a big battle and for some reason He-who-dreams was among the last to start out for it. When he arrived at the scene of battle the fighting was about over and the two contending parties were at a standstill. The Gros Ventre said to him: "You are late. The fighting is now practically over. Your friend got killed." He-who-dreams felt very bad and said: "Let me go fight

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
773

those who killed my friend." But his relatives would not let him go. They held his horse. They were afraid for him. They felt the odds were too great against him to go alone, great warrior though he was. So he couldn't get away and was angry. Then he jumped off his horse and jerked his shield off himself, bent it out of shape across his knee and threw it to the ground in anger. It rolled away and as it rolled the ground burned, so that a burnt trail was left.

Then He-who-dreams went back home and he felt bad. His friend had been killed. The enemy had departed. All the Gros Ventre came back and went to bed. That night he dreamed that he had done a wrong thing, that he had violated something great in the way he had treated his shield, that his career was threatened with coming to an end and that he was practically done for. When he woke up he felt bad and told his father and mother about his dream. They became worried over their son.

After a while He-who-dreams began to sicken; his skin turned black; he got thinner and thinner and he lost his good looks and appearance. His father got the best medicine men to doctor him paying them big fees. Finally He-who-dreams got so weak that he had to be raised from the bed. Then he said to his father: "It is of no use to doctor me as I cannot be cured. I am going to die unless just one thing can be done." The father was glad and said to him: "What is this thing?" The son replied: "Someone must cut my hair, cutting off a little bunch on my forehead, over each ear and straight back of the head, and then I will recover." So the father was glad and he tried to get someone to do the cutting this way. But one after another refused because the father and mother and boy were special persons and everybody was afraid. So nobody would do it. The boy's father and mother were desperate because it was not permitted by their belief for the father and mother to do it for their own son and they couldn't get anybody else to do it.

After this He-who-dreams was bedridden and finally dying. He said: "I am going to die but not right away. There are four things inside my body. When they have come out I am going to die. Do not worry. Do not mourn for me. Do not shed a tear. For if certain things are done I will come back to life again. The four things inside me are: a small petrified animal with four legs (about as long as a middle finger, a thunder stone), which will come out first; a sucker; a water snake; a bird, the one I have sewed on my shield. After all four are out I shall die." Then all these four things came out: first, the thunder stone; then the fish came out alive, wriggled and died; then the water snake wriggled around a while and died; last the little bird looked out of his mouth and made a squeaking noise and died; and at this moment He-who-dreams breathed his last.

Before he died He-who-dreams had given instructions to his father and mother what to do after he died: "Leave the lodge where it is facing to the south. Lay my body on the Feathered Pipe bed with my head towards the east, the rising sun. Cover me up as if I were asleep. Fill a black pipe (but

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

not the Feathered Pipe) and lay it alongside of the incense hearth with the stem to the east and the bowl to the west. Close the lodge tight, including the top-opening and the ears. You two and everyone else move away out of sight of the Feathered Pipe lodge and when you get to the new camp ground go through the smudging, smoking and singing rite gone through when I made my shield. I have one doubt, because my father, the Ruler of the Storm, will be gone. (It was the fall of the year with the leaves and the birds gone and past the season for thunderstorms.) But do not lose courage. Do what I tell you. For four nights no one shall come to look in where my body is lying. On the morning after the fourth night come. If you do all the things I tell you to do and if you hear a rumble a long ways off, this is a sign that I will come back alive again."

539
773

The father and mother did as their son had told them. They shed no tears, carried out no mourning and kept their heads and followed his other instructions. Everyone moved away from the Feathered Pipe lodge. When they reached the new camp site it was late in the evening. The father started at once to sing, smoke, and make a smudge. Just before sundown he heard thunder rumbling somewhere. He grunted the grunt of gladness: "Now my boy will come back." By nightfall the sky was overcast with clouds all over, rain came, and with it thunder and lightning as if just overhead and especially in the direction where the tent with the body of the dead son lay. The storm kept up as long as they stayed awake. The next day it continued with thunder and lightning the whole day long and into the second night so long as they stayed awake. On the third morning the storm was still on and lasted through the day and the third night. But a little after noon on the third day the sun appeared. The storm had spent itself and there was still some dripping, but it was no longer raging.

He-who-dreams had a married brother. The brother knew the orders that had been left by He-who-dreams but he was jealous of him, even to the point of stealing his wife (paramour?). So the brother got on his horse to go over to where the dead body was lying although he was not supposed to do so. When he came in sight of the Feathered Pipe lodge, from afar he saw a man standing in front of it. After taking a good look and surmising it was his brother he wheeled his horse and rode fast back to his father's camp and told his father what he had seen and done. His father rebuked him: "You should not have done this. You have killed my son, your brother."

Then a lot of people went over to look. When they reached the lodge they found the lodge door open and there lying just over the threshold with his head inside He-who-dreams, stripped except for his breech-cloth, dead. He had come to life again but because his brother had looked before it was time, he had died again. The people looked all around the lodge and they found due east from the head of He-who-dreams a spot where the grass was trampled and where lightning had struck and had run in a crooked line toward where the dead man's head was. Due south they found another like spot with a crooked chain leading toward his side. Due west a like spot and

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
773

a chain leading toward his feet and due north another similar spot and a chain leading toward his side. The Gros Ventre always believed that the Ruler of the Storm had doctored (revived?) him and that if it had not been for what his brother had done, He-who-dreams would have come back to life as he had said. This is the only story the Gros Ventre know in which somebody who was dead came back to life. He-who-dreams was a truly great man.

(All the above happened in recent times since the Gros Ventre came to this part of the country which was previously Snake Indian country, the Snakes using rocks for pickets instead of sticks. Since that time which was, however, before the white people appeared, the Gros Ventre have believed that the Feathered Pipe was given them from above by the Bha'a because everything narrated in the preceding story happened before their very eyes.)

8. Loss and Recovery of the Flat Pipe[18]

The Gros Ventre went on and lived around this country, fighting with all the surrounding tribes, especially the Sioux and the Assiniboine. On one occasion they were camped on the White River (which empties into the Missouri R. from the south), south of the Missouri R. from the end of Bear Paw Mountains. All at once they were attacked by a great body of Sioux, Assiniboine and Cree from the east, who were determined to exterminate the Gros Ventre. The Gros Ventre were hopelessly outnumbered. A great battle was fought. For once the Gros Ventre lost the battle and with it the Flat Pipe. The Flat Pipe was captured by these enemies who took it away with them. It was the Assiniboine who had captured the Pipe. The Assiniboine who had captured the Pipe was an outstanding respectable and very wise man. He did not molest the bundle, but kept it in a prominent place in his lodge and treated it with respect. During the early part of the winter following the capture he had a dream one night. In the dream he heard the Flat Pipe talking to him and telling him it wanted to go back to its father and mother, and telling the man to bring the Pipe back to the Gros Ventre. The man paid no attention to the dream. He told nobody. He thought it was just a dream and nothing more. After a while he had another dream in which the Flat Pipe said to him: "Bring me back to my father and mother. If you do not, some grave evil will happen to your tribe,—famine, suffering, a great calamity." Still the man told nobody. In the dead of winter it kept snowing and snowing. The snow got so deep that no one could travel around in it. The people were without food and were suffering. The man had a dream again in which the Flat Pipe said to him: "If you do not bring me back to my father and mother (the Keepers) I will wipe you off the face of the earth."

Now the Assiniboine man was really alarmed. The next morning he invited all the principal Indians to his lodge to tell them about his dreams.

[18] Cf. passing reference to the incident in Kroeber, 1908, p. 274.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

His wife cooked food for them and after they had eaten and smoked, he told them about his dreams. They discussed the matter and decided that the pipe might be the cause of their suffering. It was still snowing and they could not travel. They decided that it was best to return the Flat Pipe to the Gros Ventre although they were at war with them. They felt that the Flat Pipe must be powerful otherwise it could not cause such hard times. So they told the Flat Pipe: "We are going to bring you back to your father and mother, your Keepers, so soon as the grass grows in the spring." The meeting broke up, and they all went away.

539
773

The following night the same Assiniboine man had a fourth dream in which the Flat Pipe told him: "I am glad I am going back home. The threat I made will be withdrawn for you have granted my request. Go to the top of the hills from where you are camped, and you will find four buffalo there and they will be easy to get. In three nights from the time you get them, I will send you warm winds to melt the snow so that you can get around and will not suffer so much."

The next morning the man told the people about his fourth dream. He told them he thought that the best way to get the four buffalo was to send two good men out to scout for them and to come back and report. The two men went out and came back and reported: "There are four buffalo there, a little way off." But the snow was deep and it was hard to get around, so they decided to send out enough good hunters to surround the buffalo so that whichever way the buffalo ran, they would run into armed hunters. And so they got all four buffalo and had fresh meat to eat. After three days the warm winds came and the snow left the ground. And there were plenty of other buffalo killed. Soon the people were strong again. The grass came up a little later. It was an unusually early season.

So the Assiniboine got ready and started for the Gros Ventre country. The Assinoboine man who had captured the Flat Pipe took the lead, carrying the Flat Pipe on his back. The Assiniboine found the Gros Ventre somewhere around where the latter now are. When the Gros Ventre saw the Assiniboine coming they made ready for battle, but seeing the bundle on the Assiniboine man's back, they just surrounded him without attacking. The Gros Ventre made peace with the Assiniboine on the spot. The most remarkable thing was that this peace was a lasting one, the Gros Ventre and Assiniboine never fought one another again. All this happened a long time ago and peace has lasted down to the present day. The country of the Assiniboine is to the east of the present Gros Ventre country. They have no real right here where the Gros Ventre are, but are allowed to remain here because of their returning the Flat Pipe to the Gros Ventre. The Assiniboine used to be poor, ragged, leading a miserable life with no horses and besides they had no morals and had evil ways. But the Gros Ventre saved them from the condition they were in, gave them horses and other things and made them what they are, bringing them out of their low moral condition. All this was done on account of their bringing back the Flat Pipe.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

9. Man Escapes From a Cannibal Dwarf

539 773 One day a man was out hunting. He spied a dwarf first. So he hid as best he could and hoped to escape the notice of the dwarf. The dwarf came to where the man was hiding and discovered him. The man played dead. The dwarf was undecided what to do. "I wonder," he thought, "what has happened to this man. I wonder if he is dead." So he walked up close to the man, examined him, and concluded he was dead. Said the dwarf to himself: "I'll bring his body home and eat it."

So the dwarf put the body on his back and went off. On the way the man was trying to think up some way of escaping. From time to time the dwarf's trail led through brush. The man knew that the dwarf was not very intelligent, so took a chance and his one arm being free, with his fist he hit the dwarf in the face, hoping the dwarf would think himself hit by the brush. This the man did every time the trail led through the brush, until the dwarf became much annoyed. So the dwarf put the man down saying: "I'll break his arm. It swings and hits me catching in the brush." So the dwarf stopped and pulled on the arm. The man let his arm bend and the dwarf thought he had broken it.

The dwarf then packed the man on his shoulders and went on again. The man kept hitting the dwarf in the face as before, until soon the dwarf's eyes were closed and he could not see. So the dwarf decided to cache his load. He laid the man on top of a stump and made for home. As soon as the dwarf was out of sight, the man jumped off the stump and made his escape.

When the dwarf reached home, he said to his children: "My children, I have very good food. I cached a man back yonder. Go fetch him and we'll eat him." The children were glad and got ready. "Wait," said the father, "I'll go with you and show you the spot. We're so glad to have something to eat, we'll dance all the way over." So they danced all the way to the stump. When they got to it, there was nothing there. The dwarf was puzzled, for he thought the man was dead. They examined the stump and looked all around it. On the stump they saw some fluid (probably sap), and concluded that the man had just rotted away. So they all went back home empty-handed.

10. Found-in-the-Grass[14]

In the long ago the Gros Ventres lived in a land of many mysterious and terrible dangers. They lived in villages separated by great distances, and it

[14] This tale seems to be the most complete of any told by The Boy, probably because it was told at leisure, translated and written out by Tom Main and sent to us by mail. The first part corresponds with Kroeber, 1907, pp. 77-82, No. 19, but in our version The Boy goes on to add a number of incidents which are attributed by Kroeber's informant, Flea, to Blood-Clot (pp. 82-90, No. 20). Both of Kroeber's informants, Flea (for No. 20) and Paul Plummage (for No. 19) were of the same generations as The Boy, though of course they were young men when they gave their versions.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

was dangerous for anyone to venture out of any of the villages to get food or wood, to hunt, and especially to visit from one village to another. 539 773

During this period, there lived a Gros Ventre man and his wife who had no children. This man was a great hunter and good provider. Because he was a hunter, he was absent from his village most of the time. On one of these hunting expeditions, he was camped in a most dangerous part of the country, but game was abundant. At the time of this particular hunt, his wife was pregnant, and he took special care of her for their joy was great that now they were going to have a child. He hunted every day and sometimes was gone several days from his camp while his wife stayed alone. He cautioned and advised his wife very earnestly: "Do not answer any calls, or voices, or knocks on the lodge, even if they are cries for help, nor under any circumstances, while I am absent from home."

One day he told his wife. "I am going away to hunt in the most dangerous part of the land, but where furbearing animals are abundant. Winter is approaching and we need warm clothing for ourselves and our expected child. I shall be gone a long time. There are dangers. Remain inside of the lodge and be absolutely quiet if you hear any voices or calls, whether they be from humans or animals. If only you carry out my instructions, if you close the lodge and make it appear as if no one is at home and stay inside and be perfectly silent when you hear voices of any kind, nothing will harm or molest you."

So he got ready all the things needed for this his greatest hunt and went to the land of the furbearing animals. As soon as he was out of sight his wife immediately proceeded to fix the lodge and camp for a long siege and as she went inside she fixed the door so it would appear that no one was home.

As she sat at work on some handiwork, she heard a moaning cry for help of some one in great distress. It seemed to her that it was from a human being, but she was not sure, and she immediately put away her work and sat perfectly still. As she sat listening, the cry for help was repeated and this time it was closer to the camp. She suddenly felt a great urge to go outside and see who was in such distress and offer her help, but remembering what her husband had said about remaining inside the lodge and being perfectly silent she gave up the idea and sat and listened.

As the cry for help came ever closer to the lodge she was positive now that it was that of a human being hopelessly lost. She sat perfectly still and made up her mind that in the event that this person forced his way into the lodge and tried to harm or molest her she would struggle, fight, and defend herself even if it cost her her life. By this time the person who was lost and crying for help, stumbled onto her lodge and was groping around it as if trying to find the door. The intruder went around the lodge several times, and on each round he made he hesitated at the door and could be heard as if fumbling with it.

Finally the woman, notwithstanding her husband's command and the fact that she was alone and not in a physically fit condition to defend herself,

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
773

out of compassion and pity for the one in great distress, threw all caution aside and spoke to this person, and directed him where the door could be found. She heard the person cry out for joy when invited by her from inside the lodge. The person removed the barriers that she had placed at the door to make it secure from intrusion, and came in the lodge.

She looked at the person as he straightened up, and saw that he was a blind and very old man. She led him to the place of honor to sit, this being the spot straight opposite the door. The blind man spoke to her kindly, and thanked her for having admitted him into her lodge. All her fears were removed as she thought that even in her condition she could handle this blind old man. Besides he seemed very kind and probably would not try to harm or molest her.

According to the custom of the Gros Ventres at that time, she immediately prepared food for him as he was very hungry and on the verge of starvation, having wandered around for a long time.

When the food was ready to be served, she put it on one of her best bowls and placed it in front of him and told him to eat it. She thought it would be wise to treat him as nicely as possible, even if he was a blind old man, because in those times no one could tell who possessed great power. The old man felt for his food and when he found that it was in this bowl, he said: "This is not the kind of bowl that I eat my food out of."

The woman now sensed that the old man was no ordinary person, so did not question his complaint, but proceeded to put the food in another bowl that she rarely used, and again placed it in front of him. He felt the bowl and said: "This is not the kind yet."

The woman then put the food in her most precious bowl made of shell. But still the old man would not eat the food, saying: "Until the food is placed on the right thing, I cannot eat it."

Then the woman in desperation wondered what she should do. So she took off one of her moccasins and put the food on it; and the old man said: "You are nearer the thing to put the food on than ever, but not yet." So being encouraged she took off one of her leggings, and placed the food on it, then gave it to the old man, but he still refused to eat saying: "You are closer than ever to placing the food on the thing that I use for a bowl."

She then took off her dress and laid it in front of the old man and put the food on it. The old man felt for his meal, and found what it was placed on and told the woman: "I am sure you will comply with my custom." He pushed the dress away with the food on it saying: "If you will only try once more to put my food on the thing that I use for a bowl, I am sure you will succeed."

So the woman pondered a long moment reviewing everything she had tried to do to please the old man. She came to the conclusion that there was one more thing she could do to please him and that was for her to place the food on her body. She then laid down on her back and placed the food he was to eat on her stomach and told him to eat. The old man exclaimed in

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

a loud voice: "You have guessed what I use for a bowl, when I eat my food." The old man used his big knife to cut up the meat that was given him and she could see him slashing away.

539
773

When the old man had finished eating he told her: "Lie still a moment while I pronoûnce a prophecy. You are a great, courageous, and wise woman. Your renown will be heard by posterity for all time. Your descendants are destined to be among the greatest of men. Now that you have done all things well I will proceed to carry out my part in the events to come, according to my prophecy."

The woman being nude, the old man took his knife and slashed her abdomen open and felt for her womb. Finding it he found twin boys in it. He took hold of one of them and said to him: "Your name shall be Twin," and threw him to one side of the door. Then taking the other one, he said: "Your name shall be Guyahuóō," and threw him to the other side of the door.

The old man after having done this terrible job, wiped his big knife and went his way, leaving the woman lying dead.

The husband of the woman after a long but successful hunt arrived loaded down with the skins and pelts of furbearing animals. He had some on his back, and a great many on a kind of sleigh which he pulled by hand. He stopped at the door of his lodge, having a premonition that all was not well, as he had seen no sign of his wife when he came in sight, and had heard no noise inside the lodge. Having relieved himself of his great load, he called out to his wife: "Come out and see the great number of fur skins which I have brought for ourselves and our expected child."

Hearing no response, a great fear came over him. However, hoping for the best, he entered the lodge. The sight that met his eyes was not what he had expected. Everything was in utter confusion, and worst of all, his wife lay dead, slashed wide open, and nude.

His sorrow was great, and thoughts raced through his mind reviewing the events which had led up to the death of his wife. He upbraided himself for being so selfish in his desire for hunting, which had caused him to come to the most wild and dangerous regions. And now he was all alone.

Collecting himself, he tenderly lifted the body of his wife and laid it on a bed of robes and furs, the best and most rare of the land. He rearranged everything in the lodge the best he could and sat down to think things out, and try to find a way out of the situation.

After having sat a long time in deep and serious thought, he decided to remain in the same place for an indefinite time in the hope that he might avenge the brutal and shameful killing of his beloved wife. So it was his wont to go out every morning away from the lodge and cry all day long, always on the alert for some human being or animal to come within range so that he could inquire of them who it was that had killed his wife. He came back to the lodge at every sundown, and spent the night there. As time went on, this became a fixed routine which he followed every day.

One evening as he came home after having cried all day some distance

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539 773 from the lodge, he found that some of his arrows and other things were scattered around. Not giving this any serious thought, he put things back into place. This happened several times and he began to wonder who or what was taking his things, and leaving them lying around that way. He then decided to match wits with whatever was bothering his lodge and see if he could catch the one.

One day as he stepped out of his lodge he began to cry, and when he got a little way, he cupped his hands over his mouth to make his crying sound as if he were far away. Then he rushed back inside the lodge in time to see two small boys just starting to play with his arrows and things. The boys taken by surprise stood still a moment, but as he reached to get hold of them, they dashed toward the door, and one disappeared at the bottom of the pole on one side of the door and the other at the pole on the other side of the door.

He stood there very much bewildered, but he at least found out who it was that was taking his things, and he determined to catch the boys in one way or another.

The next day he did as he had done before. He cupped his hands over his mouth when he cried, and remained very close to the lodge. In a little while he heard one boy tell the other: "Our father is far away. Come out of your hiding place so that we may play."

The man made his crying as if he were far away and finally stopped, and tiptoed back to the lodge, and rushed in. This time he succeeded in catching hold of one of the boys, who fought desperately to get away, but he held him fast. The boy finally submitted to his kindness, and agreed to stay and live with him, promising not to disappear under the pole again.

After a while when he saw that the boy was used to him, he got him to promise to trick the other boy out of his hiding place so that he might also catch him. The boy agreed and the next day the man went on with his crying as usual and cupped his hands over his mouth to sound like he was far away. He gradually stopped crying and he could hear the boy he had caught coaxing the other boy out from his hiding place, but the boy in hiding refused to come out saying to his brother: "Since my father has handled you, you smell bad." But he kept on coaxing him until he finally came out, and they had just started to play when their father rushed in and caught him holding him fast till he ceased to struggle and promised to live on top of the ground with his father and twin brother.

The father was glad that now he had company, and that the twin boys were his own, they having told him so. He remained in the same place hoping that in some way the one who killed his wife would show up so that he could get revenge.

He made bows and arrows for each of his boys and told them: "When you shoot at anything do not pick up the arrows again. I will always make you new ones." He allowed them only two arrows each. The boys grew up rapidly, and they were very skillful with the bow and arrow.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

One day the boys told their father: "Make a sweat-lodge. Face it toward the east, and leave a little opening at the top. Dig a little pit directly in front of the sweat lodge, and gather some stones to heat them there. Then dig another small pit inside the lodge exactly in the center of it. After having heated the stones, cover the sweat-lodge and carry the body of your wife and lay it down with the head to the north, on the west side of the lodge." 539 773

The man hastily did all these things and when he had done everything as told, he announced to his boys: "Everything is ready." They came each carrying the bow and arrow that he had made for them. The boys told their father: "Transfer the stones from the pit outside to the one inside the lodge and leave the flap open while we pray." He did as told, and the boys standing one on each side of the door of the lodge facing east, raised up their eyes toward the sky, and in a loud voice invited the Supreme Being to come and join in the sweating ceremony, so that what they wanted to do might be successful.

After having prayed, they told their father: "Pour water on the hot stones and close the lodge."

Then after this one of the boys took one of his arrows, and shot it straight up in the air, at the same time saying: "Look out, my mother, the arrow is coming down and it might fall on and hurt you if you do not move."

The boys then told their father: "Open the sweat-lodge, and pour more water on the stones, and then close it again." After the lodge was closed the boy shot his other arrow up in the air repeating the words he said when he shot his first arrow, and this time, they all saw the lodge moving.

Again the father was told: "Open the lodge and pour more water on the stones then after having done so, close it."

The other boy then shot one of his arrows in the air saying the same words that his brother had said, and this time, the lodge shook violently.

The fourth and last time the lodge was opened by the father, and more water was poured on the stones and the lodge was closed again. The boy shot his second arrow in the air saying the same words as before, and as the arrow hit the ground very near the lodge, their mother rushed out alive from the west side of the lodge and came to her husband and the twin boys greeting them.

Now they were all together and happy, and they continued to stay where they were, while the father went on with his hunting.

One day while their father was out on a hunt, the boys wandered away from the lodge to try their skill with the bow and arrow. They saw a prairie chicken, and they shot at it missing all of their shots. The chicken would not fly away and one of the boys in his eagerness to shoot again, ran to pick up one of the arrows which they had already shot, for the time being forgetting the rule laid down by their father not to pick an arrow up again, and before his brother could stop him he shot at the chicken again. Immediately there arose a mighty wind, and the boys, frightened, rushed back to the lodge for shelter. One boy succeeded in getting inside, but the other boy was blown up in the air with the door of the lodge held fast in his hands.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
773

He blew around in the sky for a long time, and finally came back to earth and landed in a spot thick with tall grass. Not knowing what else to do he settled down in the grass, and covered himself with the door flap of the lodge, which he still had in his hands. He laid there many days not daring to venture around, for he was in a strange land.

One day as he lay in the grass languishing he heard voices coming in his direction. He crouched down motionless and listened. He now heard talking and it was Gros Ventre. These people were from a big village which was nearby, and they were out cutting grass for their horses. An old woman came nearer and nearer to where he was lying, finally finding him. She was very glad to have found a boy and talked most kindly to him, and invited him to live in her lodge saying: "I will adopt you and be your grandmother."

So the boy went along with the old woman to the village and lived there with her.

He eventually grew up to young manhood amidst many hardships and dangers, for the Gros Ventres in this village were poor due to the many dangers which existed and which prevented them from hunting at will and from moving around to follow the game.

It came to pass that a beautiful black fox was frequently seen near and around the village. Since its appearance, the people began to miss their hard-earned meat and other things such as raw hides, ropes, and sinew with which their travois were bound together.

The people tried in every way to catch the black fox, setting out snares and traps, but the fox was too cunning for them.

The fox stole meat and chewed up rawhide and sinew to such an extent, that he was a real menace to them and to everything that was left outside for the night. It even went inside the lodges and stole meat.

Finally the chief of the tribe called one of the criers of the village, and told him: "Announce to the people that I am offering a great reward for the man who will catch the fox. The reward is my oldest daughter." She was the most beautiful girl in the village. "Whoever catches and kills the fox is to bring it to my lodge immediately, and on the spot he will take my daughter and have her for a wife."

Most all the young men began trying to catch the fox, but failed.

After a time, the boy who was found in the grass told his grandmother he wished to try for the reward, telling her: "Make a trap as I shall direct."

The old woman, being much attached to the boy, did not raise any question, but proceeded to make a trap according to his instructions. When she finished it, he told her: "Set it just outside the door of our lodge." She did as told and went to sleep for the night.

The boy, who was now a young man, remained awake most of the night, and went to see the trap a number of times. Toward daylight, he became sleepy and lay down to sleep until his grandmother woke him, saying: "The trap is sprung, but there is no fox in it."

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
773

He went out, and examined the trap closely, and found some black hair stuck onto it in places. He told his grandmother: "I am sure I caught the fox in my trap, but it must have been stolen by someone while we slept." The old woman shared his opinion, and they discussed it for some time.

The young man at length told his grandmother: "Go to the chief's lodge, and inquire whether or not anyone has brought the fox."

His grandmother agreed, and upon inquiry was told: "Crow [a bird] brought the fox at daylight, and he claimed the reward, and was given the chief's oldest daughter."

The old woman returned, and told her grandson all about this. After some thought he sent her back to the chief telling her to insist and demand that rightfully the reward was his, as he was positive now that he had trapped the fox, but that it had been stolen by Crow. Then the old woman went back to the chief's lodge, and told him what her grandson had said.

The chief believed the old woman and her grandson, and said: "Since Crow has already taken my oldest daughter and has her in his lodge, I cannot take her back. But I am willing to let the young man have my second oldest daughter. She is beautiful like her sister and is old enough to be married."

The old woman once more returned to her own lodge, and told her grandson what the chief had said. The young man considered it at some length and asked his grandmother's advice. She advised him to take the second reward and told him that in order to keep peace it would be well to do so.

The young man agreed and they got ready to receive the chief's second daughter and the old woman went after her and brought her to her lodge. So the matter of rewarding the one that killed the fox was settled.

It came to pass that all the members of the tribe were out of meat and other food and were on the verge of starvation on account of the dangers that existed which kept the people from hunting freely. The chief, fearing that his tribe would starve, sent his wife, the mother of the wife of Crow, to tell him to go out and stalk and run buffalo into the buffalo run so that the people could have meat to eat.

The wife of the chief did as told, and Crow sent word back by her for the chief to announce to the people: "I am going out at daybreak to run buffalo." The people hearing this announced by the crier were glad and made ready to help Crow run buffalo, and various ones were detailed by the chief to sit at each mound and scare the game into the buffalo run.

At daylight, those who were detailed sat at the mounds. They sat there all day and when it was evening, they went back home, and heard that Crow had not succeeded in driving the buffalo into the run. The people were very much disappointed, and Crow said: "I will try again next day," but he failed the same as he had done the first day.

All this time the young man, who was married to the second daughter of the chief, was not heard of, and he was very ugly and unkempt. But since Crow had failed to run the buffalo and had given up, the young man sent

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
.773

his grandmother to the chief for him to detail men to sit at the mounds while he would run the buffalo. The old woman did as told, and the chief complied with the order and sent men to the mounds.

The young man struck out at daylight to run the buffalo and when he got away out from the village and in line with the buffalo run and the mounds, he gathered together some buffalo chips and said to them: "You turn into live buffalo and go into the runs so that my people may eat," and immediately the chips became buffalo. Then plucking a certain kind of grass he said to it: "You turn into a live but mangy and poor buffalo and join in the run and when you get to the pitfall you manage so that one of your hind legs gets caught in the corral." And the grass became a live but mangy buffalo and joined in the run.

The young man after having started the buffalo into the run between the mounds, followed behind. When he arrived at the pitfall and corral, he found that the hunt was very successful and that the people were busy skinning the animals and were happy but were inquiring among themselves who it was that had run the buffalo in.

The young man stood listening to them and after a while told them that it was he who had done it, and that henceforth they were to call him Found-in-the-Grass.

After the people were all through, he went after his grandmother to come and get some of the meat. When she arrived at the pitfall, he told her to look for a buffalo caught on the corral. The old woman looking around, saw an old and mangy bull and remarked that it was very poor. Found-in-the-Grass loosened the bull and gave it a good kick on the rump and immediately it became a fat buffalo in its prime. They both skinned the bull and cut up the meat in pieces so that it could be brought to their lodge easily.

Found-in-the-Grass sought out a certain intestine and filled it with the blood of the bull, tying both ends securely so that the blood would not spill. Then he fixed the intestine with thongs ready to pack. He and his grandmother then packed the meat to their lodge, but he forbade his wife to help, telling her: "On the last trip you are to help carry the intestine fillled with blood and the three of us are to walk in single file, my grandmother first, you next, and I last."

While they were packing the meat home the wife waited at the pitfall as she had been told, and as she turned around she saw Crow perched on the corral, and she noticed her sister, the wife of Crow, struggling with many heads of buffalo and putting them in a pile. She asked her sister the meaning of this and was told: "Since Crow is a scavenger and is not particular what he eats and since the people no longer have respect for him as having failed to run the buffalo, I am giving him only the heads as his share."

Found-in-the-Grass and his grandmother came back to the pitfall and were getting ready for the last trip when his wife remarked about Crow's share of the hunt. Crow, hearing this, was very angry and flew around up in the air scolding his tormentors, and his wife was very much ashamed.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Found-in-the-Grass and his grandmother and his wife stood in single file ready to go, and his wife took up the intestine and loaded it on her back as he had told her. Crow and his wife watched in admiration as the party went on the march. They were still watching and saw Found-in-the-Grass punch a hole in the intestine with an arrow and the blood spilled all out and over his wife and she immediately became most beautiful and fully matured. 539 773

The wife of Crow became very jealous over the good fortune of her sister, and also very sad because of the way in which she had become the wife of Crow.

Every family of the entire village had all the meat they wanted, and was happy that now they were saved from starvation, and the women were busy slicing and jerking the meat. This required many days to do, as the run and hunt was the greatest ever known to the Gros Ventres.

During this time the wife of Found-in-the-Grass confided to her mother that sometimes her husband was most handsome and smelled like the rarest of perfumes. She was very much worried about this, as just when she was about to get a hold of her handsome husband, he would turn to the same ugly and unkempt man that he always was. The mother advised her daughter: "Say nothing of this to anyone, but have confidence in your husband. He has just managed the greatest hunt and run ever known. All will be well if only you have perseverance."

The mother of the wife of Crow overheard this conversation and told her daughter about it, and it was soon known by all the people in the village. One day the wife of Found-in-the-Grass was visiting her sister, and the conversation soon turned to Found-in-the-Grass, how he would turn into a most handsome man, but when the sun rose again, he would still be the ugly and unkempt man he always was. The wife of Crow doubted this, saying: "My sister is very young. Maybe she had a nightmare or imagined it." So saying she got up and went to the lodge of her brother-in-law to see for herself.

She arrived there and finding Found-in-the-Grass to be the same ugly and unkempt man, she proceeded to call him all kinds of names and to make fun of him. After having shown all her scorn, she added: "It is most shameful of you to fool my young and innocent sister and for that matter all the rest of the people. It is a shame to acquire cheap notoriety and renown. But you will never succeed as you are not powerful enough to do it." Found-in-the-Grass said nothing, but bore all this tongue lashing from his sister-in-law.

The wife of Crow went back to her lodge and finding her sister still there, advised her: "Leave and separate from your husband, as there is nothing to all this talk about him being a most handsome man at times. In the event he is successful in his attempt to be powerful, in all probability he will be an evil one and will perhaps try to destroy the whole Gros Ventre tribe." But the wife of Found-in-the-Grass went back to her husband and resolved to stay with him, no matter what the cost or how ugly he was and notwithstanding her sister's advice to leave him.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
773

At this time the meat was all being jerked and was partly dry, and Found-in-the-Grass sent his wife to her father, the chief, to tell him to detail men to sit at the mounds and help him run the buffalo again the next day. The chief when told this by his daughter was glad and proceeded to place men at the mounds to run the buffalo. Found-in-the-Grass did as before, going out at daybreak and gathering buffalo chips and commanding them to turn into buffalo and also the certain kind of grass to turn into a mangy and poor buffalo and join in the run. As at the first run he followed the buffalo and arrived at the pitfall finding the people busy skinning the animals. And as before he called his grandmother to come and help him to skin the mangy buffalo caught in the corral by a hind leg. And as before, he sought out the certain intestine and filled it with blood and fixed it up to pack.

Crow and his wife were gathering the heads together as before, and as his wife looked with contempt on her brother-in-law, the latter suddenly turned into the most handsome man she ever saw. Then and there she made up her mind to woo him away from her sister and to have him for her husband.

By this time Found-in-the-Grass and his grandmother and wife were getting ready to make the last trip packing meat to his lodge and were forming in single file. Not being able to stand it any longer, the older sister rushed to his side and implored him to allow her to pack the intestine filled with blood instead of her sister, so that she too would become most beautiful when the blood spilled out over her as he punched it with his arrow. Found-in-the-Grass granted her request and ordered her to get in line, behind her sister, and loaded the intestine on her back. After they had gone a little way, he punched the intestine and the blood spilled out all over his sister-in-law, but instead of her becoming beautiful as she had expected, she became most ugly and loathsome and was horrible to look at.

When she fully recovered from what had happened to her, she was most ashamed and did not know what to do. She appealed to her husband Crow for him to show his power, but all in vain for he had no power, but was instead hopping around picking up scraps of meat and blood and paid no attention to his wife. Found-in-the-Grass then told his sister-in-law: "Go your way and out of sight, and mind your own business hereafter."

So it was that Found-in-the-Grass came to the rescue of the desperate situation that this village of Gros Ventres was in and in fact saved them from extermination as now there was no immediate need to hunt or run the buffalo as they were supplied with a great quantity of meat, sinew, bones, and other things needed, and the people were most happy.

After a time Found-in-the-Grass told his wife and grandmother: "I am going visiting at the next village of Gros Ventres." The grandmother was worried and told him: "It is most dangerous for any one to visit or be out alone, as between the two villages and on the only trail which must be followed, there is a big and powerful wolf that no one can escape once the wolf sees him. The wolf once it sights anyone opens his powerful jaws and draws him into his open mouth with a mysterious power the person is unable

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

to get away from, and swallows him up. Besides, in the event that the person escapes from the big wolf and arrives at the next village, there is there a man, whom every stranger is forced to listen to telling myths and when he falls asleep listening to him, this man puts a flat stone under his head and hits him on the head with a stone hammer, killing him. Therefore you must not leave this village, as you are now married, and besides, you should have no further ambition, as you are now the most renowned one of the entire village. Then too, I am greatly attached to you, having reared you up from childhood since the time I found you in the grass."

539
773

Found-in-the-Grass gently told his wife and grandmother: "Calm down and do not worry about me. I am now a full grown man and am not afraid of anything. I am determined to make this visit in spite of the dangers you tell about."

So, unable to discourage him, the women made much pemmican and fat for him to take along and eat on the way as the village was very far away and it took many days to reach it. So everything being ready for his use, weapons, food, clothing,—Found-in-the-Grass struck out on his visit to the next village.

After he was gone many days from his village, he came to a rise of ground and in a clearing in the trail, he saw a great wolf, and remembering what his grandmother had said about the wolf, he cautiously approached, and when the wolf saw him, he opened his jaws and big mouth and at that instant Found-in-the-Grass felt the power of the wolf and was drawn into his mouth and swallowed up. But he had prepared for this and the moment he found himself in the stomach of the wolf, he slashed away right and left, and soon the wolf fell down dead. Found-in-the-Grass came out unharmed and upon examination found many human bones in the stomach of the wolf. He took all the bones out and put them in a pile, and he said to them: "Get up, you weaklings, and go back to the village from which you came," and immediately several persons appeared whole and alive, and each went his way.

Found-in-the-Grass continued on his way and after a time came in sight of a large village of Gros Ventres. He circled the camp several times and finally decided to enter an old woman's lodge. She welcomed him and invited him to sit in the place of honor, also telling him that she had heard of his fame and she called him by name and seemed to know all about him.

He told her: "I have come a long way and have run out of food. I am very hungry. Give me something to eat."

She told him: "I am glad that you have escaped the big wolf on the trail. But it is not safe for strangers to be in the village as there is a man here who forces them to listen to him tell myths, and when they fall asleep he kills them with his stone hammer. Besides, the people in this village are very poor and do not have much to eat, as it is most dangerous to leave the village and hunt on account of the many dangers which exist here." And she urged him to leave and go his way after she fed him her only piece of meat, which she took out from under her bed and cooked for him.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
773

He told the old woman: "Do not worry about me. I am a man and can take care of myself at all times." He ate only a small portion of the meat given him and told the old woman to eat the rest of it.

Soon the sun went down and night came on, and as was expected, the man who told myths by night invited Found-in-the-Grass: "Come to my lodge. I will tell you myths and put you to sleep. You have come a long way and must be tired out." After the man had the crier make his invitation several times, Found-in-the-Grass went to his lodge, and was invited to sit in the place of honor, and the man began to tell him myths. The man told him myths far into the night and several times asked him: "Are you sleepy?" "I am," he said, "but I am trying to remain awake, as the myths are very interesting."

The man told him: "Go to sleep whenever you wish. I shall tell myths until you go to sleep. Then I will put you to bed and cover you with robes so you will not be cold."

Found-in-the-Grass pretended to be very sleepy, closing his eyes, but watched the man through slits to see what he was going to do. After a time, he pretended to be sleeping and snoring. The man touched him to make sure, and then got his flat stone putting it under his head, and was just taking hold of the stone hammer, when Found-in-the-Grass suddenly jumped up and asked the man: "What are you doing?" The man, taken completely by surprise, lost his balance and before he could regain it, Found-in-the-Grass shot him full of arrows and killed him.

Then he looked around in the lodge and noticed a pile of something covered with robes. Throwing them back he discovered that the pile was a mass of human bones, some of them old and bleached and others not so old but showing that it was of ones recently killed by the man.

Found-in-the-Grass had great compassion on the ones whose bones lay there and thought how unfortunate they had been to be forced to listen to the man who told myths and falling asleep to be killed by him. He then spoke thus: "Get up and come alive, you weaklings and cowards. Go back to your various villages," and immediately they were whole and alive again and went their way.

He then went back to the lodge of the old woman and remained there for the night.

The next day he sent the old woman to the chief of the village, to tell him to place men at the mounds, that he would run the buffalo. The old woman came back, saying: "The chief is glad and will tell the criers to announce to the people about the run." The criers were heard in every direction, announcing about the run and the people were glad.

Found-in-the-Grass left the old woman's lodge at daybreak to run the buffalo. He repeated the procedure in running the buffalo as at his own village, using chips and the certain grass for the mangy one. He ran the buffalo twice as before and the old woman got the mangy one as her share, and the people were saying: "This is the greatest run we have ever known."

After a while he told the old woman: "I am going on to the next village."

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The old woman said: "The trail is dangerous, as on the only crossing at the big river which cannot be avoided, there is a water monster, that is used for a bridge. Travelers get on his head, holding themselves on by his horns, and when the monster gets to midstream, he dives into deep water drowning those who ride on his head. Besides, in the event that one escapes the monster and succeeds in getting to the next village, there is a gambler there, whose name is Crooked Bull who forces strangers and travelers to play with him, shooting arrows at the wheel. Crooked Bull has a bad temper and when anyone beats him at this game too much, he suddenly turns into a buffalo bull and gores his victim to death."

539
773

Found-in-the-Grass told the old woman: "Do not worry about me. I can take care of myself at all times. I am a grown man now and am not afraid of anything."

So, in spite of the entreaties and warnings of the old woman, Found-in-the-Grass struck out on the trail leading to the next village of Gros Ventres.

After traveling many days through the forest he came to a big river and remembering what the old woman said about the monster, approached the shore cautiously, and sure enough a big water monster was there, asleep. He got up on his head and got a hold of the big horns and the monster turned around and began to swim across the river. Before the monster dived to deep water, Found-in-the-Grass stabbed him to death and he sank down, making the water red with his blood, while Found-in-the-Grass swam to the opposite shore safe.

He stood on the shore and in a loud voice said: "All those who were drowned by the monster and who hear my voice shall come alive." As he said this, a great number of persons came out of the water, alive, saying: "We are the ones who have been tricked by the monster and drowned." He told them: "Go back to your villages," and he went on his way. He picked up a knotty limb of a tree on the trail and used it for a cane.

After some time he came in sight of a large village and entering it found and heard the Gros Ventre language spoken there. He sought and found an old woman's lodge and entered it. The old woman invited him to sit in the place of honor and said: "My grandson, Found-in-the-Grass, I am glad to see you, and I have heard many good things about you and you are welcome in my lodge, but how did you escape the water monster on the way? And why did you come here to this village, for we are very poor and are at the point of starvation, and besides, there is a man here whose name is Crooked Bull with whom strangers must shoot at the wheel and gamble. His temper is bad and he kills at the slightest provocation when angered."

He told the old woman how he had stabbed the monster to death and how he brought back all those who had been drowned at the river, and said: "I am not afraid of Crooked Bull, the gambler, nor of anyone else. Give me something to eat, for I am hungry, not having eaten for several days."

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
●773

So, she reached under her bed of robes and got the only piece of meat she had, and cooked it for him to eat. He ate only a small piece of it and gave the rest back to the woman, telling her to eat it.

Soon a crier was heard summoning Found-in-the-Grass to go to the lodge of Crooked Bull the gambler and shoot the wheel and test his skill with arrows. After a while, he went to Crooked Bull's lodge and found that a crowd had gathered there to watch the game of shooting arrows at the wheel, that was to take place between them.

So they started to shoot arrows at the wheel and Crooked Bull was winning all bets put up by Found-in-the-Grass, until the latter was almost naked, having lost nearly everything of his, including the clothes he had on. Crooked Bull taunted him to the merriment of the crowd, until the game seemed to turn in the favor of Found-in-the-Grass, and then Crooked Bull began to get mad and to roar like distant thunder. Found-in-the-Grass was winning steadily now, and in turn Crooked Bull had lost nearly everything, and when they were rolling the wheel for the finals, Crooked Bull suddenly turned into a young and powerful buffalo and was pawing the earth, letting out bellows that sent the onlookers to cover. The bull suddenly rushed at Found-in-the-Grass to gore him to death, but at the same instant the latter disappeared.

A down feather was seen by the people floating in the air, while the bull was raging, bellowing and pawing the ground, having missed its victim. The feather landed close by the bull and it was Found-in-the-Grass who had turned into a feather. He told the bull: "Your end has come. Your taking of human lives is at an end. I am going to wipe you off the face of the earth." So saying he sent many arrows into the bull before he had time to change again, and killed him.

He went into the lodge of Crooked Bull and found a heap of human bones there. He commanded the ones whose bones they were: "Come back to life and go back to the villages from which you came." Immediately many humans came alive and went to their several villages.

Found-in-the-Grass went back to the lodge of the old woman and told her to go tell the chief of the village to send men to the mounds as on the morrow he would run the buffalo. The old woman did as told, and soon criers were heard announcing to the people that Found-in-the-Grass, the man who had killed Crooked Bull, was to run the buffalo next day.

Found-in-the-Grass struck out at daybreak for the mounds to run the buffalo. This he did two times as at the two previous villages, always using chips which turned into buffalo at his bidding and the certain grass for the mangy one which the old woman with whom he stayed got for herself alone.

The people were very glad that he had come to their village as in the nick of time he had saved them from extermination by starvation and had rid the country of the undesirables, the water monster, the Crooked Bull, the gambler. The chief of the village offered him his oldest and very beautiful daughter in marriage, also his office as chief, but he refused all

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

saying: "In the first place, I have a wife in a village far away, and moreover I have no desire to be a chief."

539
773

After a while, he told the old woman: "Now since the people in this village have all the meat they need, and all dangers are gone and they can hunt and run the buffalo in peace, I am going on my way to the next village of Gros Ventres."

The old woman was alarmed at this and told him: "This is a dangerous and fatal thing to do, as on the only trail to the next village and one which can not be avoided, there is a big tree, which falls on and crushes to death anyone who goes under it. Besides if one succeeds in passing this tree unharmed and arrives at the next village, there is a man there with whom travelers and strangers must play football by force. And if the man is beaten at this game by anyone, he kicks him to death with a sharp iron into which one of his legs turns when he is angered."

He told the old woman: "Do not worry over me. I am a grown man and can take care of myself in any situation."

So saying, Found-in-the-Grass made ready for travel and left the village for the trail to the other village, taking with him the knotty tree limb, which he had picked up on the way.

After traveling many days, he came upon a place on the trail that was very narrow and a big tree stood along side, by which one had to pass to go on the trail. He approached the tree cautiously and when he came directly under it, he jumped back to safety, as the tree crashed to the ground and was broken up to pieces, not having anything to fall on. The tree tried to get itself together again, but failed, as it was broken up into too many pieces, and besides Found-in-the-Grass threw the pieces in every direction and they were unable to come back together.

After the big tree died, Found-in-the-Grass called out in a loud voice and commanded: "All you who lie dead under the ground and who were killed by the tree, come back to life." Many dead humans heard him and stood there alive and well again. He told them: "Go back to your villages," and they went their several ways.

He continued on the trail many more days and finally came in sight of a large village. He entered it and looked for an old woman's lodge. Finding one, he entered it, and was welcomed by the old woman and invited by her to sit in the place of honor.

The old woman wondered how he had escaped the big tree on the trail and was worried that although he escaped the tree, there was another evil element to which he was exposed and that was to play football by force with a man in the village who when beaten killed people to death with a large iron, into which one of his legs turned when he was angered.

He told the old woman: "Do not worry as I mean to take care of myself. Give me some food as I am hungry."

The old woman said that the people in this village were at the point of starvation not being able to hunt nor run the buffalo on account of the dan-

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
773

gers which existed in their land, but she reached under her bed and produced a little piece of meat and cooked it and gave it to him to eat. He ate only a little of it and gave the rest back to her and told her to eat it.

Soon a crier was heard calling him to the place where football was played and telling him to go there and play with the man. He went after a while, taking with him the knotty tree limb he had carried.

The game was a lively one and many people were there to watch. After a while Found-in-the-Grass was winning the game and the people began to laugh at the man whose leg turned into a sharp iron when he was angered. Now, the game was approaching its end, and Found-in-the-Grass was winner by far over the man, who suddenly flew into a rage, and made for him to kick him to death with his sharp iron leg. As the man kicked at him, Found-in-the-Grass threw the knotty tree limb in the way and the man's iron leg plunged into it and was securely fastened to it. The man could not remove his iron leg from the limb, and this angered him very much, while the people were having a good laugh at his misfortune. Found-in-the-Grass blew his breath on him and he raised in the air, sailing around and finally lighting on top of a large tree.

The man could not untangle himself and was furious but helpless. Found-in-the-Grass finally shot him to death with many arrows and the man's relatives did not bother about removing him from the tree top but left him there where his body withered away.

Found-in-the-Grass asked the people to direct him to the lodge of the man he just killed. On being shown the lodge, he entered it and to his amazement found it about filled with human bones. He commanded those whose bones lay there: "Come back to life," and as he said that, many humans came to life. He told them: "Go back to your villages," and they went their way.

He went back to the lodge of the old woman and told her to go and tell the chief of the village to send men to the mounds, that he was going to run the buffalo. The old woman went as told and soon criers were heard telling the people that Found-in-the-Grass was running buffalo the next day.

This he did two times and used buffalo chips and the certain kind of grass for the mangy buffalo, which the old woman got as her share each time, the same as before.

The people were now very happy, having plenty of meat and material for their various tools, weapons, and travois. They made new bow strings from the fresh sinew and also mended the feathers on their arrows.

Found-in-the-Grass stayed with the old woman and helped her with some of her work, hanging jerked meat, mashing bone to be boiled for grease and to be used in making pemmican.

When all this was done, he told the old woman: "I am going on to the next village to visit there." She told him: "You had better not, as on the way over there, and on the only trail and crossing at the river, a buffalo head is used for a ferry and most times this head sinks in the middle of the river, drowning those who ride on it, and even if one manages to avoid the

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
773

buffalo head and get to the village, there is a big bear there with one white forearm, who dominates the people there and she has great power. If anyone dares to interfere with the bear, she points her white forearm at them at any distance and they drop dead on the spot." He told her: "Do not worry about me, for I am a grown man and am not afraid of anybody or anything."

So saying he took the trail leading to the next village of Gros Ventres. After many days traveling, he came to a big river, and on the shore and half in the water lay a bleached buffalo head. He said to himself: "This must be the head the old woman mentioned that is used as a ferry." He stepped on the head and it immediately moved into the water. As he felt the head sinking, he leaped off of it as quickly as he could and saw the head sink into deep water and it did not come up. He was satisfied that, as the head reached bottom without any human load on it, the water monster who lived under the water was angry and destroyed the head, for it did not appear on the surface any more.

He then faced toward the sunrise and said in a loud voice: "Come out from the bottom of the water and out of the stomach of the water monster, all you who have been tricked by the buffalo head." As he finished talking this, a great many human beings, young and old, male and female, came up from the bottom of the water and out of the stomach of the water monster, until they were almost enough to make a tribe. He then commanded them: "Go back to the villages from which you came," and continued on his way.

After many more days of traveling, he came in sight of a large village. Circling it, he saw an old lodge pitched on the edge of the circle. He entered and found an old woman sitting there scraping the inside of a buffalo hide. She looked up and greeted him and invited him to sit in the place of honor. Calling him by his name she asked him: "Where are you going and how did you escape from all the dangers on the trail?" He told her: "I have come a long way. I have taken many moons to get here from where I started. I have killed all the evil ones along the way."

He asked her: "Why are you scraping the hide?" She said: "I was so hungry, I was trying to get enough off of the hide to boil and eat." He said to her: "If that is all you have to eat, go on scraping and get enough for two, as I am very hungry myself, not having eaten for a long time."

The old woman scraped enough of the hide for both of them and they ate and drank the soup she made from the scrapings.

After they had eaten, he told her to go and tell the chief of the village to place men at the mounds and help him run the buffalo. The old woman protested, saying: "It will do no good to run the buffalo, as the bear with the white forearm will take all the meat and bones, as is her wont when game and meat are brought in. And if anyone has enough courage to interfere with her, she points the white forearm at him and he dies immediately." Found-in-the-Grass told the old woman to go tell the chief what he said and not mind the bear.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
773

Finally the old woman went to the lodge of the chief to tell him what Found-in-the-Grass had ordered but she had little belief that it would do any good. The chief upon hearing this was glad and directed the criers to announce to the people this matter, and he also detailed men to sit at the mounds and help run the buffalo. The people upon hearing this announcement were very glad but at the same time very fearful that the bear would be angered, as it was the order at this village for the bear to say when game was to be gotten.

The bear upon hearing the criers flew into a rage and she growled, roared and rolled around, saying: "Whoever gave the order to run the buffalo before time will pay for it with his life. Besides, I and my cubs will take all the meat and bones as usual."

This being an exceptionally large village and hence requiring a great number of animals to supply all with meat and bones, Found-in-the-Grass left at midnight, instead of at daylight as he had done at the other villages, for the mounds and run. He gathered a great amount of buffalo chips and commanded them to turn into buffalo and they did as told and went into the run between the mounds and toward the pitfall. Then he took the special kind of grass for the mangy bull and ordered it to join in the run and fall last into the corral and manage so that one hind leg would be caught there and wait till he came.

He followed behind as usual and arriving at the pitfall and corral noticed that some of the people were packing the meat to a large lodge while others were skinning and cutting and putting thongs through the meat to pack. He gave this no serious thought but wondered, and as usual he went after the old woman to come and get her share. She protested, saying: "The bear will surely kill me if I take meat before I am told by the bear." He urged her to come and not be afraid of the bear or anyone else, as he would be with her all the time and would protect her.

So, with great fear, she went with him to the pitfall and corral to skin the mangy bull. Arriving there, he loosened the bull from where its hind leg was caught on the corral and gave it a good kick on the rump, and it became a fat bull in its prime. The old woman, notwithstanding her fear of the bear, was glad and helped him skin and fix up the meat to pack to her lodge. The pitfall and corral were deserted by the people, save for the two of them and the two cubs of the bear who were chewing up and licking up the scraps and blood left there.

They noticed that one of the cubs disappeared for a while, and when it came back, said: "My mother, the big bear, orders that you two bring the meat to her lodge." Found-in-the-Grass sent the old woman to the lodge of the bear to tell the bear that he did not intend to carry out or obey her order. The old woman protested saying: "The bear will surely point her white forearm at me and kill me."

Found-in-the-Grass told her: "Do not worry or be afraid, but go tell the bear what I said. If you refuse to do as I say, I will kill you anyway." So,

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957,
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the old woman went to tell the bear what he said, realizing there was no use to refuse, as it meant instant death from the hands of Found-in-the-Grass and there might be some escape from the bear. 539 773

When the bear heard from the old woman what he had said, she was very angry and told the old woman: "Go back and tell him to do as I wish before I go myself to enforce my rule."

The poor old woman went back and forth between the pitfall and corral four times and the last time the bear came with her to the scene to see for herself who it was that was defying her. As she approached the corral, she saw a pile of meat at the feet of Found-in-the-Grass. She stopped some distance away, and called out to him: "Pack the meat to my lodge. I have come out to see that my rule is carried out."

He paid no heed to her demand and she said: "If you refuse me four times in succession, I will be forced to treat you like all others who interfered with me." But he paid no attention to her. The fourth and last time she ordered him to pack the meat to her lodge and he still paid no attention. She then called out to him and as he straightened up from his work, she raised her white forearm and pointed it at him, but instead of killing him as it had killed all others before him, the arm of the bear broke off from her body.

She howled and growled so loud that she was heard all over the great village. She then raised up her other forearm and pointed it at him but it broke off the same as her other arm had done.

Found-in-the-Grass then took one of the kidneys of the bull and spoke to the bear who was rolling in rage and pain, and he said to her: "Look at me. I will show you how to kill by pointing but you will not live to use it on anything." So saying he pointed the kidney at the bear as she looked, and she rolled over dead.

The cubs ran around whimpering, and he said to them: "Go back to the forest and the animal world. That is where you belong, not among human beings." The cubs ran away and disappeared into the deep forest and were seen no more.

Found-in-the-Grass and the old woman packed the meat of the bull to her lodge amidst great rejoicing. Then the meat that was in the lodge of the bear was divided up among the people, and the slaves who worked for the bear were freed and told to go back to the clans from which they had been drafted. The people were most happy, as they were saved from sure starvation by Found-in-the-Grass; besides he had killed the bear and had run her cubs out to the forest and had freed the slaves.

When the meat was partly dry, he sent the old woman to the chief again, to tell him: "Send men to the mounds and help me run buffalo once more. This time nothing will interfere with or bother the people. They will have all the meat to themselves hereafter." The old woman told the chief and he told the criers to announce that to the people.

Found-in-the-Grass followed the same procedure as before in running the

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
773

buffalo. The chief offered him his oldest and very beautiful daughter and his office as chief, but he refused all, saying: "I have a wife far away. I have been absent from her for a long time. I am going back to live with her."

So Found-in-the-Grass marched back in great triumph, through the villages to the village of his adoption, to his wife and his grandmother. He had destroyed all the things both human and animal which made traveling unsafe. He also taught all the people the art of running the buffalo, and he invented the trap which caught the black fox. (This trap was, according to tradition, a samson-post deadfall.) He ruled his village with great wisdom for many years. Thus, the prophecy pronounced by the blind old man who cut open and killed his mother came to pass.

11. Blood-Clot[18]

A long time ago when the Gros Ventres used still to make earthen dishes, there was an old couple who had three or four daughters. All the daughters were married to one man. Their husband used to leave the rest of the people and go hunting to accumulate meat and would take his father-in-law and mother-in-law along. He was a good hunter. The old father-in-law used to help him skin the game, carry the meat and so forth. But the man would never give his parents-in-law any but one little piece of meat. So the old people lived on the verge of starvation all the time. Their youngest daughter used to steal meat for them from her husband occasionally, she and they concealing the fact, and so things went along.

Once while the old father-in-law was helping his son-in-law to skin, he had his eye on quite a pool of blood and made up his mind to take it home and eat it. By the time they were ready to leave, the pool of blood had so hardened that it could be picked up. The old man let his son-in-law go ahead but the son-in-law saw the old man putting something away and asked him: "What did you pick up?" "Nothing" the old man answered. "I was only fixing up my belt."

So the old man brought the blood clot home and said to his old woman [his wife]: "Fix up the earthen pot and the fire and cook this clot." As the clot came to a boil he heard a baby crying in the pot. "There is a baby," said the man. "Get him out and we will have him for our own." They took him out of the pot of boiling water. He was a little boy and they were very glad.

When the son-in-law heard the baby crying he sent his youngest wife to see if it was a boy or girl. "If it is a girl," he said, "I will take her for my wife." So she went to her parents and asked them: "Is the baby a boy or a girl?" The old couple were not afraid of this daughter, for she treated them well while the other daughters treated them badly. They were not

[18] This version is shorter than Kroeber, 1907, pp. 82-90, No. 20. See our footnote 14.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

afraid to tell her the truth, so they said to her: "It is a boy. But tell your husband it is a girl" This they did so the son-in-law would not kill the boy. The daughter did as she was told and her husband said: "All right. We will treat your parents a little better. Take these scraps of meat over to your mother so she will have milk for the baby." 539 773

After the boy was a few days old and all cleaned up he spoke to the old man: "Swing me four places inside this lodge, going clockwise, once first at the left of the door, then twice straight back from the door, then once at the right of the door." When he was swung the first time he was already getting sense. At the second swing, the boy smiled and laughed. At the third, he acted as if he wanted to jump out of the swing. At the fourth he actually did jump out of it. Then he said to the old man: "My father, make me a bow and four arrows. Make the bow from the last rib of the buffalo and the arrows with tendons from the back of the buffalo."

The old man then made the bows and arrows as he was told. The boy asked him: "What usually happens when your son-in-law goes hunting?" "Sometimes," the old man said, "he comes back to camp and leaves me out there where he made his kill, to skin and cut the meat ready for packing. Then his wives come for the meat." "When the next time comes," said the boy, "I will go along but don't tell your son-in-law that I have gone along or that I am around. Just do as you always do."

When time to hunt came again, the son-in-law said to the old man: "Get ready. I am going hunting." The old man got ready. The boy followed behind them staying in the background and hoping that the son-in-law would go away for his wives and leave the old man to do the skinning. The son-in-law killed the buffalo and the old man went over to him. "Butcher the buffalo," said the son-in-law. "I am going back to camp and send my wives to help carry the meat."

After the son-in law had gotten out of sight the boy came from hiding and went to where the old man was still butchering. By the time the boy got there, practically all the butchering was done except cutting the ribs off the backbone. "Stop butchering," said the boy, "and listen to me carefully. When the son-in-law comes back, take the kidney of the buffalo and hold it in your hand and face him. When he comes near enough to see what you have in your hand and what you are going to do, take a bite out of the kidney." "I dare not do that," said the old man. "He will kill me." "No," said the boy. "You must do as I tell you." While the boy was insisting and the old man was protesting, the son-in-law with his wives got back. The boy then hid behind the buffalo's ribs which were still on the carcass and said to the old man: "Stand at attention and do what I said." In great fear, thinking he would be killed, the old man took the buffalo kidney in his hand and faced his son-in-law. "If you don't do as I say," said the boy, "I will kill you." When the son-in-law was close enough to see clearly, the old man took a bite out of the kidney. "Put down what you are biting" said the son-in-law in a rage. This, he said once, twice, three times and after the third added:

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
773

"I will tell you only once more. That will be the last time. If after that you still bite the kidney, I will manhandle you." After each warning, the son-in-law said, "Drop that," at the same time making a gesture with his right arm from up to his right, down to his left. As he said and did this for the fourth time, his right arm dropped off. So he tried to finish the sign with his left arm and it too dropped off.

Then the boy came out from hiding and took over the situation and said to the son-in-law: "Is that the way you have been treating this old man and his wife? Your hour has arrived. You are going to die." The son-in-law tried to run away but the boy put an arrow through him and also killed two of the man's wives. Then the old man and the boy went back to camp and on the way back the boy said to him: "Which of your four daughters pities you? Are they all on the side of your son-in-law or has any one of them shown affection for you?" "Yes," said the old man, "the youngest one is good to me." When they got back to camp the boy killed the next to youngest wife of the son-in-law. The youngest then started to run away but the boy said to her: "Don't run. I won't kill you." Then the old man, his wife, the boy and the youngest daughter took possession of all the meat in the camp and ate plenty.

Blood-Clot went to four big camps. There was always something dangerous on the road and when he got to camp something else to overcome. As Blood-Clot left the third camp the people said: "Don't go any further. At the next camp is the greatest of all dangers. If you insist and get there, you will be in extreme danger because there is a man there with a number of daughters and when a stranger comes he offers his daughters in marriage to the stranger. You can't get out of it. After you become his son-in-law he will send you after water saying, 'Go to a certain mountain for water,' but that is just to lure you to the place where his pet water monster will eat you. If by any chance you escape the water monster and get back to camp then he will send you after feathers saying, 'Go to a certain mountain top and get feathers off young birds up there and bring the feathers home as I want to use them for my arrows.' That is the supreme test because that is where Bha'a lives. Be very, very careful. We are not telling you this just for fun."

When Blood-Clot left the third camp he went on his way to the fourth. On arrival the man with the several daughters offered them to Blood-Clot as wives and Blood-Clot married all of them. Blood-Clot was well treated there and happy. One day his wives said to him: "Our father wants you to get water at a certain spring at the foot of this mountain." "Yes," said Blood-Clot, "I will fetch it." So he went. Being forewarned he went cautiously. When he got to a bit of rising ground he saw from there a body of water and a water monster half out of the water facing his trail. As soon as the water monster saw Blood-Clot the water monster opened his mouth and Blood-Clot felt that he was being pulled in from the suction. But he jerked out an arrow, mounted it and shot it his hardest into the water

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

monster's mouth. The water monster in its death struggle churned up the water and then lay still, dead. 539 773

Blood-Clot opened up the water monster and found a lot of human bones inside—some of the bones without any flesh on them, some with the flesh on them and the skeleton still together. Blood-Clot pulled all the bones out of the water monster's stomach and said to them: "You are not children. Get up and go back where you belong." All of them got up alive and went off. Blood-Clot then got the water he went after and came back and said to his wives: "Here is the water. I killed a water monster over there." When they told the father this he said: "My son-in-law has killed my pet and my power." (Not a power gotten through sleeping; it was the father who controlled the water monster and made him act the way he did.)

After this the man sent his daughters to tell Blood-Clot: "Go after feathers on the top of a certain high mountain a good way from camp." When his wives gave this message to Blood-Clot he said to them: "Yes, I'll go." He got ready and very early in the morning he went off taking his bow and arrows with him.

When he got to the mountain he climbed and climbed and climbed and finally got to the top of it and here he found a large nest with two big, young birds in it. Blood-Clot said to himself: "These must be the young thunders." He looked them over good. They had many feathers. He lifted up the wing of one of them and he heard a rumbling, so he dropped it and the noise stopped. Blood-Clot asked the birds: "Where are your father and mother?" The birds answered: "They are off way up somewhere in the air." "When," asked Blood-Clot, "do your father and mother come back to your nest?" "Usually," they replied, "in the evening toward sundown." "Is there any particular sign announcing the approach of your father and mother and any different sign for one or the other?" "Yes," said the birds, "there is." "What is the sign," asked Blood-Clot, "if your father is coming back to the nest?" "A dark, heavy cloud toward the sunset [west]." "What," asked Blood-Clot, "is the sign when it is your mother coming back?" "Clouds in the west," said the birds, "but white clouds." So Blood-Clot got this information from the birds.

The birds then said to him: "Our father and mother are both powerful. You better not stay here. You better escape. If they find you here they will kill you as they have always done to anybody they find at this nest." "All right," said Blood-Clot, "but don't tell your father and mother I came here." They promised not to give Blood-Clot away and promised that "by the love of our mother." So Blood-Clot crawled into a nearby cave.

After a bit a white cloud appeared in the distance, got to the spot on the mountain close to the cave, and the mother herself arrived. "Has anyone," she asked the young birds, "come here while I have been away?" "No," said they. "No one has come." "It smells like human here," said the mother. "Some human must have been here." "No," said the young birds. "We saw no human." Blood-Clot heard them talking and while they were still talking

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
773

he came out of the cave. As soon as the mother saw Blood-Clot she took wing and sailed into the air. There was a blinding flash of lightning and this was the last thing that Blood-Clot remembered. When he came to he found himself at the base of the mountain with his hair all singed up. He then collected himself and went back up to the top of the mountain. All this,—the flash of lightning, the becoming unconscious, finding himself at the base of the mountain, climbing it again,—took place four different times. The last time that Blood-Clot climbed the mountain he twisted the beaks of the young birds and taunted them with the words: "Tell your mother about this."

The next time, however, a big, black cloud appeared and came to the mountain. The father of the birds came. So soon as the father saw Blood-Clot there was a flash of lightning but after it Blood-Clot still stood there and said to the father: "You can't do anything with me. You can't kill me. You better leave me alone. It is useless for you to shoot at me. I will show you how powerful I am."

So Blood-Clot took an arrow and mounted it and shot at a big, flat stone on top of the mountain. The arrow pierced the stone and was buried in it, all but a bit of it that stuck out. "Look at that arrow there," said Blood-Clot to the father bird. "If you can pull it out from that rock then you can do something to me that will harm me. If you can't pull it out then it is useless for you, as I told you, to try to harm me." "All right," said the father. "I can do that. That is easy." So the bird sailed up in the air. As he did so, a flash of lightning struck at this rock. Then he tried to get hold of the arrow and pull it out. He took hold and flew up to pull it out and the arrow stretched and as it contracted it pulled the bird back as the father was caught fast by it.[14] Blood-Clot saw that the bills and feet of the father thunderbird and the other thunderbirds were of buffalo neck tendon. Thus Blood-Clot trapped the father. But he released the father saying to him: "Here is how powerful I am." And with that he pulled the arrow out with ease. Then he said to the bird: "Leave me alone. You can't do anything with me."

After that he came down from the mountain, went back home and told his wives what had happened. "No wonder," he said, "your father kills off the young men as he does. Tell your father that those birds up there could not do anything with me. You probably heard the thunder and lightning and disturbance up there while I was away. The birds were trying to kill me but they did not succeed." The girls then went back and told their father

---

[14] Blood-Clot's arrow, The Boy explained, was made of buffalo tendon from the upper neck of the animal—the tendon that holds the neck to the body. This is very tough and stretches like rubber when it is taken out. This tendon had many uses, for instance, for mending the broken handle of a knife. When it was wrapped around anything it was stretched as much as possible and when it dried it held very tightly. The travois basket was tied on with the same tendon.

237
283

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

After a while Blood-Clot took his bow and arrow and went into his father-in-law's lodge and said to him: "What you have been doing you will do no more. I am going to kill you." So Blood-Clot shot his arrows into his father-in-law and killed him. 539 773

Thus it is that Bha'a was known to be a bird. He and Blood-Clot fought but neither killed the other. Blood-Clot destroyed other evil things but Bha'a was a little too much for him to destroy. This Bha'a is the same who was associated with the Feathered Pipe.

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

525 did not want to lose it," and her grandmother used to advise her against gambling lest she lose valued things. All in all it looks as if economic considerations had little to do with such disapproval of gambling as was current among the Gros Ventre; if anything, economic considerations and concepts of property use and disposal would in the main have reinforced approval.

To sum up, Gros Ventre attitudes on gambling appear to have been influenced very much by concern for altruism and accord, very little by economic values.

PAST AND PRESENT

525 To round out the picture we have tried to give of Gros Ventre gambling,
773 we are adding a brief sketch of its history.

Gros Ventre myth, folk lore, and tradition have little to say on gambling. According to one folk story, given by Mrs Sleeping Bear, but unknown to Mrs Warrior, the hand game was first gotten from the thunder by a certain Tsē·ganis (Little Short Horns). There is no reference to gambling in the fairly complete cycle of sacred myths we gathered or in the trickster (Nihāt'a) cycle.[8] This absence, particularly from the trickster cycle, may give some slight ground for suspecting that gambling may not go back very far in Gros Ventre culture history.

525 Apart, however, from such speculative surmise, what is clear is that gambling was in full vigor among the Gros Ventre in the second half of the last century, and had been since at least around the early part of the century. It was in full swing from at least the early boyhood days of Lame Bull who was born in 1825.

525 Gros Ventre gambling, especially with the wheel and hand games, suffered
182 a severe shock after the disappearance of the buffalo in 1884, as did the main structure of Gros Ventre culture and society. With the rapid collapse of the broad framework into which gambling had so trimly fitted, gambling itself, especially with the older games, rapidly toppled down. The last big wheel game remembered by five older informants—The Boy, Thick, Charles Buckman, Steven Bradley, Philip Shortman—occurred in 1893; the last big hand game in 1891.[9] Around the turn of the century not much of the older complex was

8 Gambling does however occur in the Found-in-the-Grass Gros Ventre folk story, according to The Boy. Gambling at the wheel game between Clotted-Blood and the Bull is recorded in the Clotted-Blood tale, by A. L. Kroeber, *Gros Ventre Myths and Tales* (Anthropological Papers, American Museum of Natural History, vol. 1, pt. 3, 1907), p. 86.

[115] 9 When in the field we failed to obtain these exact dates. We are indebted for them to our conscientious, high-minded and exceptionally able interpreter, Thomas Main, who procured them for us from the above five elder informants and forwarded them to us with some other supplementary information by letter of September 25, 1946.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

726 533 When close to the enemy, each member of the party unwrapped his war medicine in preparation for the real battle. While painting themselves and putting on their charms and other regalia, the warriors sang.[9] Lame Bull, for instance, had a "medicine" war bonnet and there was a special song without words which he sang as he donned it; if there was time, the rest of the party danced while he sang and drummed.[10] Other songs might be sung immediately before going into battle.[11] The words of one such song imply: "If I am killed it doesn't matter; women will bear other children to take my place; I am ready to die." Some individuals, too, had special songs of their own to be sung as they made the charge against the enemy.[12]

726 762 The most daring men in battle were said to have been those who wished to die. Men who were grieving over the loss of loved ones were believed to have been especially prone to this indirect method of suicide. Others took this way of gloriously ending their lives out of a sense of pique, or in order to vindicate their honor. In this latter case it was customary for a man who had something discreditable to account for, either on his own part or on the part of some member of his family, to publicly announce that he was [533] about to die by singing the "brave-song" or "death-song" as he rode around the camp circle. This indicated that he would seek the earliest opportunity of losing his life at the hands of the enemy while accomplishing some particularly outstanding war-deed.[13]

726 It was recognized that even the bravest of men might experience acute fear during battle. "Their souls kind of left them on [774] account of the danger. They looked different from normal and their minds seemed not quite clear. Lame Bull used to say that the effect was quite similar to that of drinking too much whiskey—

---

[9] Kroeber, 1908, pp. 192–93 gives details and illustrations of supernatural paraphernalia for war. War medicines, illustrating those which had belonged to Bull Lodge, are presented here, Plate 3, courtesy of Richard Pohrt.

[10] The song recorded as No. 76 is Lame Bull's and is said to be typical of this class of songs.

[11] Two were recorded as No. 16 and No. 17.

[12] Lame Bull's song was recorded as No. 77.

[13] Two such "brave-songs" were recorded as No. 111 and No. 112. See also p. 191.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

right off,—are about the first words a baby says. When a child is backward in learning to talk, the remedy is to feed him meadow-lark eggs, hard-boiled. Cora says this treatment was very effective for one of her sons, and Coming Daylight fed them to one of her daughters. They all agreed, however, that the treatment may sometimes be too effective. If anyone is very talkative even today the favorite saying is: "His mother must have fed him meadow-lark eggs." [198] 856

The care of her baby was the first duty of a mother. Of course, if she were a co-wife, the other wives might help her, and in any case the grandmother might take a hand. But Coming Daylight often had no one upon whom she could depend, so she had to be extremely careful. For example, when she was married to Little Man and had an infant in the toddling stage, she would drape a blanket loosely about her hips and while she sat and did beadwork, the infant could play safely at her left hip inside the blanket. The old-timers, moreover, never left a baby alone. When her first child was born Coming Daylight was told by her grandmother never to leave a baby alone; that if it were absolutely necessary she should leave him even for a minute, she should take a small stick, blacken the tip with nicotine, and leave it in the swing or alongside where the infant lay. This was done to keep the "spirits" away. Even Mary feels strongly about leaving a child alone. She tells her daughter about it, but the daughter is very modern. The result is that frequently Mary stays home from a dance rather than leave a grandchild by itself. 854 854 751

If the mother of a young infant was going on a trip, for instance, to pick berries, she invited the baby's *bttd"tao* 'shadow, spirit, soul' saying: "Come on with us or we might leave you. We are going now." If one failed to do this, it would be like leaving part of the baby behind and the baby would be cross all evening. [774]

Sometimes other children in the family would be called upon to look after the infant. They were apt to get tired quickly however and tell their mother: "Hurry up and take your baby or I will drop it." Girls were depended upon more than boys to look after younger siblings, and girls more or less were expected to do so "right from the beginning." The old women felt that formerly 854 857 593

and who was floating on the raft with the Flat Pipe, whether he may then have gone to the whites and taught them, too, how to pray; but all this he considers speculation only.

It should be emphasized that as previously noted, no sacrifices or prayers were ever offered by the Gros Ventres to Ni:hohat himself, nor, it may be here added, to Earthmaker. The Boy once said to his father, Lame Bull: "You talk so much about Ni:hohat. He was a superhuman. He should have been prayed to." "No," Lame Bull replied, "he never told the people to pray to him, but told them to pray to the Supreme Being. He was a man and not worthy to be prayed to."

Earthmaker was the human being, apparently a or the primeval keeper of the Flat Pipe, who knowing the earth was to be covered with water made a raft of logs on which he and the Flat Pipe floated during the great flood.[22] (See full story, No. 3 in Appendix.) Where he came from is unknown. Landing on a mountain top he there made dry land (not *the* earth, the terrestrial globe as such which already existed), and also made a man and woman. He gave the Flat Pipe into the keeping of the man he had made, and taught him the Flat Pipe rite, instructed him how to carry out the rite and to plant tobacco, and told the people how to worship the Supreme Being. The Flat Pipe rite has been known ever since that time. Earthmaker is mentioned only in the Flat Pipe rite. After giving the pipe and the above instructions, he disappeared, and what became of him, whether he died or not, is not known.

Ghosts were called tsë:k. Another name for ghosts was byi'te:' a word that "gives the impression like a hollow-eyed bleached-out skull." An occasional ancestral ghost became the guardian helper of a surviving relative.[23] Gambling power might also be gotten from a ghost. Most ghosts were in their own future abode and did not have any contact at all with the living. In general, apart

[22] He was not floating in the Pipe bowl; this is the Arapaho version.

[23] In 1948 The Boy explained: "Tciya:tawu:nitän (see p. 19) are not tsë:k; tsë:k is the opposite of everything good—you can cuss by calling someone tsë:k. Byi'te:' is even worse. The ancestral ghost is tsätsuwa'a, not tsë:k. Shadow, soul, spirit, echo is bätäto:u. [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

In general, apart
774 from the ghost helper and gambling power complexes, to be
775 described later, no cult of ghosts existed, and no prayers or food
[769] or other offerings were made to them. Ghosts of those who had committed unjustified murder, as defined by the Gros Ventre code, did not go where the other souls went, but stayed where their bodies lay or wandered around and "bothered" the living.
[753] If a person suffered a stroke, a ghost, apparently of a murderer, was thought to have caused it and to have twisted the victim's face or mouth and pulled the eyelid down.

Ghosts "bothered" the living in less serious ways, appearing
775 in the shadow and disappearing, whistling, playing tricks, in more
539 recent times rapping on windows, and so forth. The two following stories, told by The Boy in light vein and laughingly, illustrate ghostly ways.

"A war party of brave Gros Ventres started out.[24] Toward evening they came to a timbered stream and made a lodge of willows near a good-sized tree, not knowing that a couple had been buried there. After a good meal, they were singing and enjoying themselves, when they heard someone hollering far off. The hollering kept coming closer and closer to their camp until it got very near. One of the men said: 'We had better start up a fire.' Before anyone got up to fetch wood, wood began being thrown into the tepee. This kept up until the tepee was so loaded up with wood that they were crowded out. They then started to carry the wood out of the tepee. One man remarked: 'I never heard of a ghost killing anybody.' Then they heard the ghost laughing a little distance off. One of the men shot toward the spot from which the laughing was coming, but the ghost laughed all the more. All the men then got back inside the tepee, and one of them said: 'I'll get some wood and we'll make some tea.' A good fire was started, and the old fellows prayed with the pipe. The ghost was meanwhile moving the embers away to keep the fire from burning. Before the snow was fetched to be melted, snow fell from the open center top of the tepee and put the fire out. At this they got scared and said: 'Let's move from here.'

[24] In 1948 The Boy remarked that this happened in Lame Bull's life time; and that the ghost referred to in the story is the kind known as tse:k. [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

was just a shell. It must have been some kind of animal with a thin shell." 753

The concept of soul-loss as resulting from or accompanying sickness in certain cases was present. "It was held by the old people," The Boy said, "that a person's 'soul' was not inside his body or any organ thereof, but was near or around him. As a sick person got worse, his 'soul' kept getting farther and farther away. If it got too far away, he died. When a person was very sick, people would say: 'His soul is leaving (going away from) him farther and farther."[1] In brief, soul wandering or "soul-loss" was a preliminary to death rather than a cause of disease. We obtained no evidence that the concept of soul-stealing entered at all into Gros Ventre pathology. 753 774

Treatment of Illness

From the causes of disease we now pass to the treatment thereof. While some ailments and cases of illness were thought to be due to natural causes, and others to supernatural causes, the line of demarcation cannot always be sharply drawn. Likewise as regards the prevention and treatment, in some instances they were clearly looked upon by the Gros Ventres as of the purely natural or "rational" order, in others equally clearly of the supernatural order, in some few seemingly of both orders combined, in a few others of uncertain order. While the Gros Ventres quite explicitly distinguished in general theory and in certain specific cases between natural and supernatural prevention and treatment, in actual practice at times, and in many specific cases, they drew no sharp line between the two orders. In the following pages we shall take up first natural or "rational" prevention and treatment, secondly combined or doubtful types of treatment and lastly supernatural types. In general remedies and preventives fall into three more or less corresponding classes: "domestic" remedies known to and freely used by everybody; certain remedies more or less "rational," exclusively owned and used by particular non-profes- 755 757

[1] The soul was believed to "kind of leave" a person under stress of great fear. Cf. Flannery, 1953, 92.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

778 History" (Vol. XVIII, p. 443, Fig. 176). Fig. 44 shows a small Gros Ventre specimen attached to a thong, for wear around the neck. The entire stone is tightly incased in a piece of skin which preserves the form so closely as to be scarcely noticeable. At the lower end of the stone is a small fringe of skin. Skin and thong are painted over red.

BELIEFS ABOUT THE DEAD.

775 Dead people go to a barren region in the north. People have been there, but the ghosts are invisible. The dead are often heard whistling, speaking, and calling about human habitations; houses and tents may be closed, but still they are heard. They speak as a living person would, and people in return ask them questions. When at war, people often ask the ghosts what luck they will have, or where the enemy are. The dead always tell the truth, and, if they say one of the party will be injured, it always happens. The ghosts are never seen, but only heard. Sometimes, if a medicine-man asks one of his spirits to bring him a dead relative, the door is heard moving, and after a time the spirit returns with the dead person, who, when he is asked questions, answers. Every one who is present can hear him plainly. Sometimes, on the arrival of the person, a noise like the whirring of wings is heard. Then there is a tapping at the top of the tent-poles. Then the tapping moves about the tent. Now it may be at the door, now at the back of the tent. When a ghost or spirit is seen, as occasionally happens, it is only for a glimpse.

If a man keeps a tooth or a bone of a dead person, after a time the spirit of that person appears to him. Some ghosts lie, but some are truthful. A man who controls a ghost, or a medicine-man who has a spirit, can see it; but it is invisible to other people. It is summoned only in the dark. People who have lost horses bring a pipe to a man that has a spirit, and pay him. Then he calls his spirit, and it tells where the horses are. If people try to ascertain by the help of a medicine-man where they have lost a small valued object, the spirit may throw it at them. Stolen property is found in the same way. A ghost or spirit is called "untrue person."

159 An old man who has been several times quoted tells the following: "I once died. I think that Above-Nix'a"t pitied me, and let me live to be an
775 old man. I was very sick with cramps and fits. The camp was moving, and the last I remember was that the tents were being pitched. Then I knew nothing about it; but the people were mourning for me and had put paint and my best clothes on me. I was travelling. I went north until I came to the Cypress Hills. There on the hills I saw two bears going into

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

their holes, in which they had fires. I started to go around where they were, but when I came abreast of their holes one of the bears pursued me and caught me by the leg. I turned and seized it by the ear, and saw that it was a very small bear. Then I continued on my way, the bear clinging to my thigh, and I holding its ear. I went on until I came to a creek where there was an enormous camp, the largest I have ever seen, stretched as far as I could look up the creek. Those in advance were just setting up their tents. I went to the first tent I came to, which was a large one. A number of naked men were sitting there, each of them with some weapon. By the door a woman sat cooking. The men called out to her to catch me, that they would eat me. I ran out, and she after me. She caught me by the robe, but I loosened myself and ran back. Then my relatives, who were kissing me, noticed that I was breathing, and said, 'He is alive.' Then I recovered my speech, but I was still out of my senses. They told me later that I argued with my relatives, insisting that I had brought a bear, and asking them where it was. The next day, when my senses returned, the back of my thigh itched where the bear had been. Still later, when I had more nearly recovered, I saw the tent in which I was, full of people that I could not recognize. Then I lost my senses once more, and became so strong that they could not hold me. It was a long time before I entirely recovered. All this happened to me while I was still a young man, soon after I was married." 159 775

An old man tells that once he was going from one camp to another at night, when suddenly he heard a humming of a stone like a bullet, which struck in front of him. He was frightened, but did not run. Another stone flew over his head so close that he felt the wind it made. Then he ran. 775

On another occasion he was mourning for one of his sons. In the evening he went to one of his friends. It was already dark, and he had to pass through the brush. Then he heard a noise as of canvas being dragged over the brush, and there was loud whistling. He was not frightened, but stopped and said, "You should pity me. I am mourning." Then it shouted "Yes" loudly, and the noise stopped.

At another time he saw a ghost's light. An old man who had died had been buried in a tree. The narrator with six other men was driving horses past that they had captured, when they saw a flame on the dead body.

A man tells how he was once in an isolated tent, far from any camp. He was leaning against a tent-pole listening to those in the tent who were talking and smoking. Suddenly, close by his ear, there was a loud whistle which made him jump to his feet. The others all heard it also, and asked, "Who was that?" Going outside, they could find no one, and knew that it had been a spirit.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

775 An old man relates that he once saw something that he thought was a spirit. In full daylight he was hunting horses, and came on a ridge where there were a few pines, while below there was a flat and a stream. Down there he saw a dead cottonwood aflame and a person by the tree who was burning it. Limbs fell down burned off. He thought that it was some one from his own camp who was burning the tree; but he lay down and watched. The person took a fallen limb, carried it to the stream and threw it in, and he could hear it splash and hiss. He saw this a second time and a third time, but, happening to turn his head, when he looked back there was no one there. He waited for some time, but the person did not reappear. Going to the stream, he saw the burned branches and the tree still afire.

[821] The Milky Way is called tsöökanibyaa^{n} ("ghost road"). The dead travel by it.

MYTHOLOGICAL BELIEFS.

776 Bax'aa^{n} is the name of the water-monsters inhabiting rivers, as well as of the thunder. The water-monster is also called byiiça^{n}. It is the enemy of the thunder. This idea is common in the Plains tribes, and it seems probable that the relation into which the thunder and the water-monster were brought through this general idea of the opposition between them, is what has resulted in one name being applied to both of them by this tribe. The description of the water-monster is the usual one. It is long, snake-like, and black, with a long head and turned-up nose and horns. It causes the death of all persons who drown.

That persons drowned are taken by a bax'aa^{n} is believed the more because the monsters are said to have hands like a person. As they have long, sharp teeth, and are known in one recent instance to have eaten a buffalo, it is supposed that they eat the persons whom they drown.

773 776 A hunting-party once saw a water-bax'aa^{n} being carried away through the air by a cloud which extended downward toward the earth. They saw the monster writhing, and turning its tail.

A hunting-party once killed a buffalo at the edge of a river. They were cutting the meat when they saw waves approaching the buffalo. The water rose and was pushed toward the buffalo until it covered it. Then the water receded, and they saw a water-monster lying eating the buffalo. One of the men said he would kill it. The others urged him to desist; but he shot, and struck the animal between the eyes. Then, as it writhed, he declared he would despatch it with his knife. Again they tried to dissuade him; but he said, "I have come to seek death, and am not afraid." Taking his double-edged knife, he killed the monster, and dragged its tail out of the

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

buried with its owner. For a woman, her clothing, and sometimes even her pots and pans, were put with her body. It was stated explicitly, however, that food was never placed with the body by the Gros Ventres, although it was recognized that the Assiniboine did so. 764

A widow would burn the things of her husband which were not placed with his body nor taken by his relatives. She would then be smudged with sage and, should she have kissed the corpse, her mouth was smudged four times and she was made to spit each time. 768 783

These practices were seemingly tied up with two beliefs,—the first being that if objects were not placed with the body, the deceased would return to look for the things valued in life; the second, that the recently deceased try to lure the living to join them. The first point was explained by Mary, whose mother had told her: "Everyone likes his own things and some hate to leave them when they die. That is why we used to put personal belongings with the corpse. It might be that there is some one thing that a person wants which has been 'left behind,' so he will come back to seek it. Sometimes when you are alone you might hear a rattling of the dishes or a whistling sound, and you would know that it was some loved one who had died and who was looking for something." 764 775

As proof of the second point, the following experience was offered by Singer. "When I was ill during a smallpox epidemic, I had a dream. I dreamed that my sister, who had died in this same epidemic, appeared to me and said: 'Our mother wants you. Come with me.' My father, who was actually nursing me, seemed to be standing to one side. He told my sister: 'You have had no pity on us. You didn't fight for life. What are you coming after her for? You go by yourself.' But pretty soon my sister came again and said: 'Now this time I want you to come because our mother wants you.' So I agreed: 'All right. I will go with you.' My sister took me to a shabby-looking little old lodge and I didn't feel right about going in there but I thought: 'Well, to please them I will look in there anyway.' There was someone there in bed and my sister was toward the back of the lodge and my mother was on the other side. My mother told me: 'Here, sit by your sister.' She 775 787

began to dig around behind her bedding and brought out a bowl such as that in which buffalo chips are pounded into powder. She said: 'Here. I want you to eat this.' It didn't look good to me and I just kind of felt it with my fingers. Instead of having sat by my sister as my mother had directed, I had remained by the door, because I felt kind of scared in some way. So I told them: 'Wait. I guess I will go out a minute. I will be right back.' But I got out of there and ran home as fast as I could go—back to my own bed, back to myself. If I had eaten what they had given me that would have been the last of me! After this dream I got well."

Mourning

As soon as word was circulated that someone had died, all relatives of that person, especially the women, were supposed to gather as soon as possible to cry and mourn for the deceased. Very close kin were expected to show their sorrow at the death of a loved one not only by crying and wailing, but also by casting off their good clothes and donning old ones,—robes, for instance, consisting of pieces of old discarded lodge covers, or ordinary robes that were rough and worn,—and by cutting the hair.[7] This latter was truly a great sacrifice, for to the Gros Ventres one of the chief criteria of beauty, in men and women alike, was extreme length of hair. The hair of younger children in a family was spared, even at the death of parents, but should, say, a father die, the hair of the older daughters was shorn, though not cut so short as that of the widow. An elderly woman was usually called upon to do the cutting and the widow, guided by the strength of her emotional reaction, would indicate how short she wished her hair to be. It was said that some widows would leave their hair relatively long, just free of the shoulders, while others "when they felt too badly, had all their hair cut off, almost as men now wear their hair."

Close kin were accustomed to further show grief by going off to the hills and fasting, crying aloud as they wandered about alone, and sleeping out without shelter. A parent would have done so at the loss of a son, one spouse at the death of the other, or a sister for her deceased brother. Such mourners would stay out

[7] For this and other practices in mourning, see Kroeber, 1908, p. 181.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

776 reward and punishment for such human behavior exclusively or almost exclusively in this life. At death the souls of all except [775] murderers went to the same spirit habitat, not to the Supreme Being.[13]

The extensive cultural and ethico-social activities of man towards the Supreme Being will form the subject of succeeding chapters. We may merely state here that the Supreme Being easily held the first place in cult, as compared with other beings, and that he bulked large in the Gros Ventre ethico-social conscience.

776 That the foregoing concept of the Supreme Being was aboriginal 194 with the Gros Ventres and not the result of borrowing from white sources seems clear beyond reasonable doubt from both the external and internal evidence.

First the external evidence. While the Gros Ventres have been known in our literature since 1751, their contacts with the whites before the middle of the last century were relatively slight. They met traders and trappers and an occasional intermarriage with [797] whites occurred, but active missionary work among the Gros Ventres did not begin until 1884.[14]

Of about twenty different informants from whom we gathered our account of the Gros Ventre Supreme Being concept, most were older people, men and women, between the ages of 60 and 90 (in 1938-40) and all of them were positive, from their own memory of pre-missionary days and/or from what they had always heard from their parents or grandparents or other elders, that the belief was part of ancient native tradition and not one derived from the whites or from missionaries. For instance, Bull Head, about 80 years old in 1940, then the oldest living Gros Ventre man, stated that he had known about the Supreme Being as far back as he could remember. Coming Daylight, then about 85, and of

---

[13] The older name for the abode of the dead was tsɔtci:tãn (etymology unknown to informants) but described as "toward the sunset." The more [821] common name was ba:snabe (big sand) which was described as a place "to the north." The Milky Way was called Ghost Trail according to another tradition. No non-human supernatural being was conceived of as in charge of the future abode or as rewarder or punisher of the dead for earthly deeds.

[14] Cf. Flannery, 1953, p. 23.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

long, more or less serpent-shaped, being with pointed snout and tail, and with a horn or two horns in its forehead. It lives in its lodge under water, is occasionally seen, snatches bathers or swimmers, and carries them down to its underwater dwelling. Drowned persons are supposed to go to or to be captured and held by the water monster in the after-life. The people made offerings to the water monster or to its youngest offspring, the Last Child (see p. 15), when crossing rivers and on other occasions. 776 [775] [782]

There is a close connection between Bha'a the Thunderbird on the one hand, and these water and earth monsters on the other, but they are quite distinct. During storms the Thunderbird may strike a monster and carry it away as game food up into the clouds to its own mountain-top nest. There is no explicit note of hostility toward the monster.

The following story may illustrate ways of the water monster and the Thunderbird's habit of preying on the water or earth monsters.[17]

When The Boy's father, Lame Bull, was a young man in the 1840's, three young Gros Ventre younger than Lame Bull,—two of them relatives of Lame Bull,—had gone on a war party down toward the Yellowstone River. The Boy told the story: "They ran before the oncoming storm to take refuge among the rocks on a knoll. When they got within about 100-150 yards of the knoll, lightning struck. All three lost consciousness for a moment and, when they came to, were facing the opposite way. They turned around to go to the rocks on the knoll. As they did so, they saw a cloud right over the knoll and heard a noise as of a struggle going on in the clouds. The cloud started to rise and as it left the ground they could see something hanging down from the cloud, with its head in the cloud. As the cloud went up higher, they could see that the something was some kind of monster, with colors like a snake and striped. The cloud rose higher and higher, seeming to be taking a great monster out of the knoll. Finally the lower end of the monster came into view, struggling as it were. The struggling monster was immense, snake-like in build 776 539

[17] Cf. also Kroeber, 1908, pp. 278-80.

3. Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

and who was floating on the raft with the Flat Pipe, whether he may then have gone to the whites and taught them, too, how to pray; but all this he considers speculation only. 776 [773]

It should be emphasized that as previously noted, no sacrifices or prayers were ever offered by the Gros Ventres to Ni:hohat himself, nor, it may be here added, to Earthmaker. The Boy once said to his father, Lame Bull: "You talk so much about Ni:hohat. He was a superhuman. He should have been prayed to." "No," Lame Bull replied, "he never told the people to pray to him, but told them to pray to the Supreme Being. He was a man and not worthy to be prayed to." [782]

Earthmaker was the human being, apparently a or the primeval keeper of the Flat Pipe, who knowing the earth was to be covered with water made a raft of logs on which he and the Flat Pipe floated during the great flood.[22] (See full story, No. 3 in Appendix.) Where he came from is unknown. Landing on a mountain top he there made dry land (not *the* earth, the terrestrial globe as such which already existed), and also made a man and woman. He gave the Flat Pipe into the keeping of the man he had made, and taught him the Flat Pipe rite, instructed him how to carry out the rite and to plant tobacco, and told the people how to worship the Supreme Being. The Flat Pipe rite has been known ever since that time. Earthmaker is mentioned only in the Flat Pipe rite. After giving the pipe and the above instructions, he disappeared, and what became of him, whether he died or not, is not known. 776 773

Ghosts were called tsë:k. Another name for ghosts was byi'te:' a word that "gives the impression like a hollow-eyed bleached-out skull." An occasional ancestral ghost became the guardian helper of a surviving relative.[23] Gambling power might also be gotten from a ghost. Most ghosts were in their own future abode and did not have any contact at all with the living. In general, apart 774 775

[22] He was not floating in the Pipe bowl; this is the Arapaho version.

[23] In 1948 The Boy explained: "Tciya:tawu:nitan (see p. 19) are not tsë:k; tsë:k is the opposite of everything good—you can cuss by calling someone tsë:k. Byi'te:' is even worse. The ancestral ghost is tsätsuwa'a, not tsë:k. Shadow, soul, spirit, echo is bätäto:u. [R.F.] [578]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

In general, apart
774 from the ghost helper and gambling power complexes, to be
775 described later, no cult of ghosts existed, and no prayers or food
[769] or other offerings were made to them. Ghosts of those who had committed unjustified murder, as defined by the Gros Ventre code, did not go where the other souls went, but stayed where their bodies lay or wandered around and "bothered" the living.
[753] If a person suffered a stroke, a ghost, apparently of a murderer, was thought to have caused it and to have twisted the victim's face or mouth and pulled the eyelid down.

Ghosts "bothered" the living in less serious ways, appearing
775 in the shadow and disappearing, whistling, playing tricks, in more
539 recent times rapping on windows, and so forth. The two following stories, told by The Boy in light vein and laughingly, illustrate ghostly ways.

"A war party of brave Gros Ventres started out.[24] Toward evening they came to a timbered stream and made a lodge of willows near a good-sized tree, not knowing that a couple had been buried there. After a good meal, they were singing and enjoying themselves, when they heard someone hollering far off. The hollering kept coming closer and closer to their camp until it got very near. One of the men said: 'We had better start up a fire.' Before anyone got up to fetch wood, wood began being thrown into the tepee. This kept up until the tepee was so loaded up with wood that they were crowded out. They then started to carry the wood out of the tepee. One man remarked: 'I never heard of a ghost killing anybody.' Then they heard the ghost laughing a little distance off. One of the men shot toward the spot from which the laughing was coming, but the ghost laughed all the more. All the men then got back inside the tepee, and one of them said: 'I'll get some wood and we'll make some tea.' A good fire was started, and the old fellows prayed with the pipe. The ghost was meanwhile moving the embers away to keep the fire from burning. Before the snow was fetched to be melted, snow fell from the open center top of the tepee and put the fire out. At this they got scared and said: 'Let's move from here.'

[24] In 1948 The Boy remarked that this happened in Lame Bull's life time; and that the ghost referred to in the story is the kind known as tse:k. [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

All of them, bunched close together, ran away, and they could hear the ghost laughing. They shot at it but it laughed all the more. When they got a good distance from their camping spot, they could still hear the ghost laughing behind them, and it only quit bothering them when they got far away. Whenever a war party came close to this spot, it would be bothered by that ghost, whose name was 'Hole-through-his-penis.' So the Gros Ventres quit camping there."

775 539

The second illustration was given as follows: "On one occasion, during the lifetime of Lame Bull (The Boy's father), a number of Gros Ventres went off on a war party and camped at an old abandoned winter camp on the Missouri River. They made a shelter frame of old tent and travois poles. One of the men went out some distance, gathered wood and lit a fire and started to cook meat. The night was very dark. Something started throwing sticks at him every now and then. He thought to himself: 'My friends are trying to test my courage,' and paid no attention. The sticks began coming too frequently. He said to them: 'You better quit throwing at me. You might hurt me. You can't scare me.' They said: 'We're not throwing at you.' The sticks came faster. So he ran back to the shelter where the others were, rushed in and hid behind the leader of the war party. They all got scared then and piled up in a struggling heap close to the leader until he was pinned under them. 'Let me up,' he said, 'I'll see what is scaring you and deal with that thing.' The ghost poked in a cross piece of a travois and scattered their fire. While still piled up in a heap they heard a voice laughing outside and seeming to go away. They at last got straightened out and fixed up the fire, but still could hear the ghost laughing. One of the men, Chief Grass, said: 'I'm going to kill that ghost.' He then rolled some buffalo hair around the head of an arrow, singed it a little and spat on it,—his way, it was believed, of using his power. He then shot the arrow in the direction where the laughing could still be heard. The voice was at once silenced, and they were not bothered any more that night. 'I believe I killed that ghost.' Chief Grass said, 'at daylight, I'll look around.' The next morning they looked around and found a bleached human skull with the arrow of

[778]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

775
[539]

Chief Grass in one of the eye sockets. So it was always thought that he had killed that ghost."

There was a considerable fear of these bad ghosts who "bothered" or even seriously harmed human beings. Certain other ghosts were merely "earthbound," that is, they lingered around or came back because they were fond of their belongings—clothing, footwear, and so forth—which were buried with them. Such earthbound ghosts did no harm to human beings and were not supposed to be feared.[28]

Singer, then married to Crooked Arm, told of an occasion on which she ran away from her home. She wandered around at random and happened to stop at the spot where her sister was buried, and heard a voice [presumably her sister's] saying: "Just lie quiet. They are all looking for you." She did so, apparently without fear.

One informant, Al Chandler, narrated certain experiences of his early childhood and boyhood that suggest a somewhat deviant attitude toward ghosts. When he was about four years old, his mother died, and the morning after her burial he went to the grave and lay there, falling into a profound sleep. Not long after this, when his uncle died, and the body was laid on a bed in a lodge some distance off, he went to the lodge and crept under the blanket covering the body and went to sleep. Another time, while still very young, he got lost and around dark found himself at a place where there were a number of old graves. He lay down and slept the night there. These incidents were early childhood ones, when he hardly realized the meaning of death. At a later age, during his boyhood, everybody was afraid to go along a certain bit of woodland lest the ghosts bother them. Al wanted to find out for himself. So against advice of his father, and feeling a little "spooky," one night just after midnight he went through the stretch of brush and as he did so heard a sound behind him as of someone dragging a robe over gravel. Mustering up his courage he turned around quickly and saw a big old owl dragging its feathers and scarcely able to fly. When he got back home, he told his venture, and the old man [his father] laughed and said: "Owls

[825]

[28] For illustration, see Flannery, 1953, p. 203.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

sure will do that; they bother people and mock you when you talk or laugh." After that there was no ghost in that piece of brush. 775 [825]

On another occasion, Al was coming back on horseback with a group after a hand game. In a gap through which their route would take them, the others saw a yellow or blue light, like a lamp in the dark, moving this way and that. But Al could see nothing. The others went home by a roundabout way, but Al went alone through the gap, saw nothing, and met the others farther on.

Many, though not all, ghosts had the habit of whistling, and some talked in a whistling language.

Ghosts were apt to appear as owls or to hoot like owls, both in the shaking tent rite, to be described later, and on other occasions as illustrated in the following story which had been told The Boy by his father, Lame Bull.

"Lame Bull went on a war expedition. Seven Sioux were killed. Their bodies were left laying where the killing took place. A few years later Lame Bull and some comrades came near this place. As they reached it, seven owls flew from it. The owls did not fly away but just milled around the spot. They were the seven Sioux turned into owls." [825]

Children used to be told: "If you do not obey, the owls will catch you." If owls alighted on a lodge or house or hooted around very near on bush, tree or hill, this presaged the death of some one. Owls also gave warnings.[26] In these instances however we got no evidence that the owls were conceived of as ghosts. 825 775

Besides the ghosts there were other bad spirits, who "shot" people by projecting some small object into the body of a person and so causing illness.[27] This belief, we were told, was very widespread but we did not obtain many details regarding it. The following incident, narrated by Coming Daylight, may serve as illustration. 776 753

On one occasion when Coming Daylight was living where Fort Belknap now is and when her daughter was still a sack baby, the latter would not quit screaming. She would hold her head to one side and would not nurse, and they could not satisfy her with

[26] An example is given in Flannery, 1953, p. 93.
[27] Very probably connected with practice of witchcraft. [R.F.]

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

791 in use to designate those who had a ghost helper: of him or her
787 it was merely said: "He (or she) has a tsatsawâ·'ª."

Persons who had a ghost helper commanded great respect, and were bothered by no one. But capable medicine men on whom the people depended to doctor their sick were also greatly respected. My informants did not feel that either class of practitioners as such had greater prestige than the other.

787 In the shaking tent rite, no other spirits than the given ghost
776 had any part, and only the one ghost ever had part in a given performance. Neither guardian spirits, nor the "Little Spirit," nor Ba'a', nor the Supreme Being (Iˢtcibⁱn''a't'ª; the a before t nasalized) enters into it in any manner. The summoned ghost came not from any of these or their abodes, but from Basna'ªbe'ᵉ, [775] the Big Sand, whither the souls of all Gros Ventres, except murderers of their own tribesmen, went after death and lived.

The function of the ghost helper was to give knowledge about past, present, future, or distant happenings, and counsel and direction in illness or danger. He imparted information. He did not as such grant power. Some of the many things he would be questioned about were: How a war expedition under way or an impending battle, or an illness, would come out? Where were the enemy located and what were their plans? Who had stolen a certain valuable article and where was it? He was not asked questions about trivial or silly matters, or about the fidelity or infidelity of a wife, although he sometimes volunteered information on such things. If some noted or loved person were critically ill, the ghost helper might be summoned and if it said: "His (the sick person's) soul is already over there," this meant he was going to die.

787 Where the services of one who had a ghost helper were desired,
791 the usual procedure was for the client or clients to go to him (or her) and offer him a pipe to smoke—this in accordance with general Gros Ventre practice in enlisting the aid of anyone with any kind of power. Those who had ghost helpers were commonly reluctant or even afraid to summon their helper; after the performance they felt tired and sore. But if given a pipe to call the

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787 incessantly. After a time a spirit might appear to him. Perhaps this
would be on the first or second night, perhaps later. Sometimes it was in
full daylight, and the man really saw the spirit like a true person; but more
776 usually he saw him in his sleep. It might be a person that appeared, that
is to say, an untrue person (spirit), or an animal, or the spirit of a rock or
of the brush. Some men went to islands and rivers instead of to mountain-
peaks. These might receive the otter, or the beaver, or the muskrat, or
the water-monster (bax'aa") as their guardian spirit. Sometimes when a
man was crying on a mountain-top in a thunderstorm, the thunder (bax'aa")
appeared to him. The lightning shot straight towards him, as if to hit him,
and the bird was so near above his head that the man sometimes became
afraid and ran away. If he staid, the thunder-bird became his spirit, and
gave him medicine that was unusually powerful. Generally, it seems, the
man cried incessantly, until he was exhausted and fell asleep. Then the
spirit appeared to him, saying, "I pity you. What do you want?" The
man said that he wished to be wealthy, or successful in war or love, or to
756 become a medicine-man. If he was to be a doctor, the spirit showed him
776 roots and plants, telling him to note their appearance, and informing him
787 of the diseases for which they were a cure. Those plants that he had seen
in his dream or vision, the new doctor looked for until he found them. His
spirit told him, "In so many years (naming the number) you will begin to
doctor." After that time had elapsed, he began doctoring. The spirit or
animal told him that the place where he was was its own home. From this
time on, the man never killed the animal that had appeared to him (except,
apparently, for the purpose of obtaining parts of it as a fetish or amulet);
nor did he eat of it under any circumstances. He used a part of the animal,
especially the claws or the fur, in his doctoring. If the spirit of a rock had
appeared to him, he used a stone.

755 Medicine-men cured the sick by sucking the body and by brushing it.
As is customary among Indians, they were believed to suck through the
skin without biting, cutting, or puncturing it. They might suck blood,
pebbles, cloth, human finger-nails, bunches of hair, and many other things.
If they sucked out old pus, it was evidence that the disease was of long
standing. If they brushed or rubbed the patient, they used owl-feathers,
skunk-skin, prairie-dog fur, or similar parts of animals. Some used bells
as rattles, some whistles, and some drums; and all sang, each doctor having
his own songs. After sucking the patient, the doctor chewed up medicine,
which he then applied to the patient's body. He often also gave him medi-
cine boiled in water to drink. The powers of doctors varied. Different men
were able to cure different diseases. It is said, however, that none could do
much for affections of the ear.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

343 757

A man who pledges and erects a sweat-house does not participate in the sweating. He makes the fire, heats the rocks and passes them into the house, raises and lowers the blankets, and performs other services.

[237]

In sweating, animal tails were sometimes used to beat the body with. Fig. 43 shows such an implement, made of the tail of a buffalo, on a stick-handle cased in the skin of the tail. This object is similar to the Arapaho specimens described in the "Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History" (Vol. XVIII, p. 316), but is noticeable for the shortness of the hair on the tail.

343 757 776

When people were called to come to sweat, hixteib'nix'a"t ("Above-Nix'a"t") was first called to sweat with them. Then the people were called. This personage, whose name also means "Above-white-man," is said to have been prayed to before the whites were known; but the Gros Ventre, like the Arapaho, state that they do not know whether he is identical with the Nix'a"t of their myths. Ordinary prayers were always addressed first to hixteib'nix'a"t or to iiçanänin ("our father"), then the sun and moon would be mentioned, next the sacred pipes, and then the earth. After these had been mentioned, anything else could be prayed to.

[30]

778

A charm tied on horses to make them run fast consists of rabbit-feet painted red and tied together. The Arapaho used rabbits' feet for the same purpose.

Specimen Museum No. 50 1804 is a pair of wild-cat-tails worn by young men at the shoulder, or at the heel of a moccasin. They were also tied to children's belts, next to the skin, in order to keep them from wetting the bed.

[51]

Specimen Museum No. 50 1903 is a gorget (commonly called by the Indians in English "moon-shell") said to have been made in the old way from an intervertebral disk of a buffalo. At present these objects are usually slightly concave, and are made of china.

Fig. 44 (50-4280). Thunder-stone Necklace. Length, 21 cm.

[30] 237

The Gros Ventre, according to Dr. Clark Wissler, call certain corrugated fossil stones "thunder-stones."[1] The Assiniboine seem to use the same name. The Blackfeet, who perhaps have most developed the cult of these objects, call them "buffalo-stones." A specimen from the Northern Arapaho is shown in the "Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural

[1] [These are probably AMMONITE septa. - Analyst]

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

775 An old man relates that he once saw something that he thought was a spirit. In full daylight he was hunting horses, and came on a ridge where there were a few pines, while below there was a flat and a stream. Down there he saw a dead cottonwood aflame and a person by the tree who was burning it. Limbs fell down burned off. He thought that it was some one from his own camp who was burning the tree; but he lay down and watched. The person took a fallen limb, carried it to the stream and threw it in, and he could hear it splash and hiss. He saw this a second time and a third time, but, happening to turn his head, when he looked back there was no one there. He waited for some time, but the person did not reappear. Going to the stream, he saw the burned branches and the tree still afire.

[821] The Milky Way is called tsöökanibyaa^{n} ("ghost road"). The dead travel by it.

MYTHOLOGICAL BELIEFS.

776 Bax'aa^{n} is the name of the water-monsters inhabiting rivers, as well as of the thunder. The water-monster is also called byiiça^{n}. It is the enemy of the thunder. This idea is common in the Plains tribes, and it seems probable that the relation into which the thunder and the water-monster were brought through this general idea of the opposition between them, is what has resulted in one name being applied to both of them by this tribe. The description of the water-monster is the usual one. It is long, snake-like, and black, with a long head and turned-up nose and horns. It causes the death of all persons who drown.

That persons drowned are taken by a bax'aa^{n} is believed the more because the monsters are said to have hands like a person. As they have long, sharp teeth, and are known in one recent instance to have eaten a buffalo, it is supposed that they eat the persons whom they drown.

773 776 A hunting-party once saw a water-bax'aa^{n} being carried away through the air by a cloud which extended downward toward the earth. They saw the monster writhing, and turning its tail.

A hunting-party once killed a buffalo at the edge of a river. They were cutting the meat when they saw waves approaching the buffalo. The water rose and was pushed toward the buffalo until it covered it. Then the water receded, and they saw a water-monster lying eating the buffalo. One of the men said he would kill it. The others urged him to desist; but he shot, and struck the animal between the eyes. Then, as it writhed, he declared he would despatch it with his knife. Again they tried to dissuade him; but he said, "I have come to seek death, and am not afraid." Taking his double-edged knife, he killed the monster, and dragged its tail out of the

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

water. He was regarded as having done one of the bravest deeds imagi- 773
nable. This animal had crooked horns, a body and tail like a snake, long 776
teeth, short legs, and hands like a person. According to another version of this incident, the warrior approached the monster, which thereupon retreated into the water. Then he hid behind the buffalo, and when the monster reappeared, shot it, and then despatched it with his knife.

When one of the present old men of the tribe was a young man, a party, all of whom he knew, went to war. They came to a dry lake to the south of the present reservation, in the centre of which there was a small pool of water. Not having seen any buffalo on the way, they were very hungry. So when they found a bull standing by this pool, they killed him. Thereupon they saw that his legs were quite short and his hair long. One of the party said, "He is something strange. Let us not eat him." But another said, "We are too hungry. We will eat anything." And he stuck his knife into the bull's belly. Water immediately spurted out, and came in enormous quantities. The lake rose rapidly, and the men fled with the water at their heels. The lake-bed was a large one, and when they finally came to the bank enclosing it, and jumped up and crawled above, the water dashed against the bank.

The father of the same narrator was with a war-party when they came to a dry lake. They saw three stones in a row, and from the traces left on the ground saw that the stones were moving and that they were something wonderful. The whole party stripped naked and made sacrifices to them, and began to cry before them. Thereupon the water began to rise in the dry lake, and approach. All became afraid and ran off, except one man, who remained by the stones. When the stones were covered with water, they saw that the offerings that they had made moved toward the centre of the lake, although the water was flowing from the centre toward the edges. The one man who had remained continued to cry without fear, until the water reached his neck, when it stopped.

Some women once saw a bax'aa" in a spring from which they were getting water. For some time they were unable to move. When they finally succeeded in escaping, no one would any longer approach the spring. The women had seen only the monster's head.

An old man tells that once the camp moved, and at dusk came to the edge of a lake. The tents were not put up, but the people slept in the open air. It was winter and the lake was frozen. At night the narrator was awakened by a terrible roaring and crashing, as if the ice were breaking up. He did not need to wake any one else, for every one had been aroused by the noise. He told every one, "It is the water-monster. Be still." Early in the morning he went to look, and where the noise had been heard there

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

773 was a clean cut through the ice, about two feet wide, the path of the monster.
It had moved about in the lake until it reached the bank above which the
776 people were sleeping. The monster had struck this bank, the impression of its head and two curved horns being visible. Then it had turned and gone back to the centre of the lake, and there disappeared, making another path, on each side of which the ice was piled up. The narrator gave to it several pieces of property.

It is said that it is not known whether thunders have ever been seen; but
[821] old men say that they have seen marks on the ground where one is thought to have alighted. The grass about was scorched, and two zigzag lightning-marks, each forking at the end, extended in opposite directions along the ground.

The people were once camped east of the present reservation. A terrific rainstorm came and passed over them. When they thought it had gone by, there was a fierce clap of thunder, and a man and his wife and their boy were struck by lightning. The man and boy were killed, but the woman is still alive. There were two small holes in the tent, and through the bedding into the ground there extended two small holes of the size of a small calibre bullet-hole. On another occasion, a woman was untying a curtain at the back of the tent in order to keep a bed dry, when lightning struck the tent-pole, and she was killed. The other people in the tent were merely stunned.

Not many years ago a strange thing happened to a man and a woman still living. During a thunderstorm the woman, who had been sitting at the door, went to the back of the tent and sat beside her husband. Lightning struck the tent, and shot a hole through every metal plate, cup, or dish on the ground. Where it entered the tent, it left a mark like a sword. The people then painted the tent dark-blue.

A woman out mourning for her mother on the prairie saw a small thunder-stone (bax'aa^{n}ayäa^{n}). It was creeping slowly, leaving a trail or mark. The woman thought she would leave it, and pick it up later. When she came to the place again in the evening, the stone had vanished. Its trail was still visible, but ended where she had seen it last.

821 The rainbow is called bax'aanäyaa^{n}t ("thunder's fishing-line"). Näyaa^{n}t seems to mean any fishing-implement.

The whirlwind is called inäätä^{n}. This is also the name of a red legless water-worm (not a leech).

The three stars of Orion are called "buffalo-bulls." The two below them, to one side, are hunters who were going to shoot them and suddenly found themselves in the sky.

773 The Gros Ventre once lived far north of where they are now, where there
778 were nothing but forests. There they found a metallic object. The object
823

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

system of discipline, but it was not like that of the white man. 861
The Indian used his roaring voice and stinging words. When I was a boy there was one old man who had a crippled hand. On various occasions when we were told to keep quiet and we disregarded that appeal, that old man would sneak up to us and roar at us. Sometimes he would bluff mischievous boys by telling them: 'Come over here. I am going to work you over with this crippled hand,' but nobody would dare go near him. Then he would say: 'Well, give me one arrow apiece. I won't work you over this time—but next time I will surely do so!"

The bugaboo was used to threaten small children when they misbehaved. They were told that "someone" would come and take them away in a big sack. The story told by Singer and Coming Daylight regarding the bugaboo was that of a woman who put her disobedient son outside her lodge and this "someone" came along with a sack, put the child in it and hung the sack in a tree. Aside from this bugaboo Coming Daylight could recall only one instance from her childhood where she was threatened through reference to "spirits." This was after she had swam the whole width of the Missouri River and back. She was, and still is, very proud of this feat, but her grandmother was angry with her for having been too bold in going so far. She scolded her saying: "Why did you do that? Don't you know there are all kinds of 'animals' in the deep water? They always grab what they want!" Sometimes, however, punishment in the form of "something awful will happen" was indicated for the wrong doer.

One point on which Coming Daylight and the other old women 183
were extremely emphatic was that in the old days the Gros Ven- 861
tre never tried to scare children by mentioning the Supreme Being [776]
in connection with punishment. These old women recalled that in the lectures they heard, and in the scoldings they received, the emphasis was much more on social motivation. Children were told: "Nobody will like you if you do so and so." Or: "People don't like anyone who is onery. They like those who are generous and kind." Self-regarding motives were stressed in some situations. "Don't gamble lest you lose something we value," "Do what is right so as to keep your man," "Be industrious so as to show off what a good worker you are," "Don't run around with

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

CHAPTER I

SUPERNATURAL BEINGS

Before beginning our description of Gros Ventre ritual observances, it seems desirable, in the interests of order and clarity, to give some account one by one of the various Gros Ventre supernatural beings. These beings may be divided for our purposes into three categories: first, those to whom cult in the form of prayer or sacrifice was offered; second, those to whom no cult proper is offered but who enter in one form or another into ritual or who are conceived as actually helpful or harmful to the living Gros Ventres of modern times; third, those to whom no cult is rendered, who do not enter into ritual at all, and who, while conceived as helpful or harmful to the Gros Ventres at some time in the remoter or archaic past, are not so and have not been so in more recent or modern times. Beings of our third category belong rather to the realm of folklore or traditional history than to that of religion and will be given only passing attention here. 776 128

The chief beings of our first category are: the Supreme Being, the storm being, the sun, the earth, the Four Holy Men, Broken Knife, He-who-starved-to-death, the Last Child, the water monster(s), Little Spirit, He-who-dreams-of-Bha'a, the ghost helpers, the beings who gave power, the petroglyph beings. We shall now take these up in order, giving for each their names, nature, attributes and functions. The rites connected with them will be described in later chapters. 776

The Supreme Being

The most common name by which the Supreme Being was called or addressed was Ixtcibəni:həhat (Above Ni:həhat).[1] The

[1] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, p. 275. In our transcription, a, e, i, o, u, have continental values: ä is flat as in English "bat"; ë is close to French "feu"; vowels are lengthened by a colon, as a:; ə is the unstressed indeterminate vowel; θ is th as in English "thing"; tc is a single sound as ch in English "church"; tc̄ is the same sound but glottalized and occurs only terminally; apostrophe indicates glottal stop. [104 194]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

second element in the word is the name of the culture hero and trickster, who in the early mythical period taught the Gros Ventres how to pray to the Supreme Being, and how to make a living. The present-day Gros Ventres can give no clue to the etymological meaning of the word ni:hohat, nor can the writer analyze it. The word is also used for spider. The spider is in a certain sense sacred and, if it is killed, rain comes. The spider, the Gros Ventres say, can in spite of its small size do wonderful things with its web, can make it stay anywhere, can climb up and down it, and, in general, is usually master of the situation. The name of the trickster Ni:hohat is ordinarily translated as "white man" by English-speaking Gros Ventres and the translation is derived from a folktale concerning an escapade of Ni:hohat in which he had his hair cut off.[3] Thus it was that when the Gros Ventres first saw the white man with his hair cut short, in contrast to the Gros Ventres' long hair, they called him by the name of the trickster. Consequently, the name for the Supreme Being Ixteibomi:hohat is often rendered in English as "The One Above the White Man" or, in abbreviated form, "The One Above."

The second name for the Supreme Being is Behä:tixtč. The meaning, "the master, boss, head, leader of all" is quite clear (be:-, be:hi, "all"; änä:tixtč, "he is master, boss, head, of group or organization).[4]

The third name Ni:nänä'ätč, is said to be an older form which was still in use in the lifetime of The Boy and Thick, and it was felt that it had the meaning of "study, think, meditate," and that the whole might signify "the being who has control over everything by thought or will,"—a concept which, it may be added, would be quite in keeping with the Gros Ventre idea of the power of sheer thought or thought-wish by human beings. But this

[3] Kroeber, 1907, pp. 72-73, gives a version of this episode which is substantially the same as the one obtained by me.

[4] In 1948 The Boy stated that the Gros Ventres addressed the Supreme Being by this term "when they wanted something big, e.g. when they prayed for a good harvest of all the things the earth produced. Thus we are saying a kind of mass prayer indicating that the Supreme Being owns everything. He made it and he owns it, and it was recognized that they depended on him." [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

analysis was given by our informants with a good deal of hesitation. The form of direct address, Ni:nänä'än, was not used at the sacred pipe rites nor in trivial matters, but in grave emergencies, —in very solemn oaths or vows, extreme danger in battle, critical illness,—which concern the life or welfare of human beings. 776

The fourth form of address used for the Supreme Being was Iθəna'an "our (inclusive) father."[4] This name was in use as far back as our oldest informants, Coming Daylight and Singer, could remember. The Gros Ventres are quite aware that their close linguistic and cultural kin, the Arapaho, use the name "father" for the Supreme Being. The Gros Ventres, however, unlike the Arapaho, never call him "grandfather."

Finally, the Supreme Being is also spoken of as initci:t nihəne:-[171] həixtè (life, he owns) "owner, or master of life," a common expression to or of the Supreme Being among other Algonquian-speaking peoples.[5]

The Supreme Being, unlike the culture-hero, had no wife or children. He does not figure at all in the Gros Ventre folklore, nor even in the origin myths to be given later, except insofar as the culture-hero taught the people to worship him. The Supreme Being's appearance was completely unknown; the culture hero who taught the people to pray to him did not describe how he looked; and in all the folklore and sacred stories of the Gros Ventres there is no record of the Supreme Being having a body or taking material form or appearing in dream or vision in material form. As The Boy put it: "If anyone had ever seen the Supreme Being, he would have described how he looked, and this story would have been handed down as the biggest one in all the Gros Ventre tales."

The nearest to such is a story regarding the first Catholic priest[6] who came to the Gros Ventres when The Boy's father, Lame Bull (born 1824) was a young man old enough to remember the event well. At first the Gros Ventres said: "The Supreme Being has come down from above. He is the priest." The Supreme Being 776 797

[4] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, p. 275.
[5] Cf. Cooper, 1934, p. 71.
[6] Cf. Flannery, 1953, p. 20.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

776 was supposed to have come on earth far up north, and to have made the rounds of all the tribes, finally reaching the Gros Ventres. 797 The Gros Ventres at first so called the priest, but when they discovered that he ate and slept like themselves, they ceased calling him by this name.

776 In the sweatlodge rite, to be described later, the first of those invited to sweat was the Supreme Being.[1] In how far such an invitation was anthropomorphically conceived is hard to say; it need not, of course, necessarily have implied anything beyond symbolic deference.

The Boy and Thick stated: "He is not a 'false person.' He is entirely in a class by himself. We think so much of him that we do not dare to try to learn what he looks like. We class him as a kind of shadow. He is the most wonderful and powerful of all beings who have no bodies."

No statues or images or pictographs of any kind were ever made [778] of the Supreme Being, nor were there any symbolic representations of him.

The Supreme Being was alone and one, and, as compared with other sacred or superhuman beings of religion, myth, and folklore, [782] he ranked first. Where prayers included invocation of more beings than one, the Supreme Being's name always came first; in ritual invitations before sweating or partaking of food, he was always invited first. He was, however, much more than *primus inter pares*. He was in a class by himself as not only the most powerful but as the ultimate source of the power possessed by other beings and as the ultimate ruler and controller of these others. Bha'a, [821] the Storm Being, who ranked next in importance to the Supreme Being, was controller of storms, thunder and lightning, and exercised a certain limited autonomy. He had this power and office, however, not of himself, but by delegation from the Supreme Being, and exercised it as the agent of the Supreme Being, as will be explained more fully later. Then, too, while the Gros Ventres through fasting and crying on the hills or prairie sought supernatural power, not directly from the Supreme Being, but from other beings—animals and others—it was the Supreme Being who

[1] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, p. 275.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

had given to these beings the power which they in turn gave to humans. 776

The Supreme Being resides up above but he is in no sense identified with the sky or firmament or with any heavenly body. He is quite distinct therefrom, and in particular, quite distinct from the sun. "The sun is his work, his property like," according to Singer. Al Chandler stated, "If he did not want the sun to shine or to perform whatever duties it has, it couldn't do these things." While he resided up above, he could be prayed to from anywhere. In this sense he was not localized, whereas many other beings such as power-bestowing ones, were sought out in their particular dwelling places and there prayed to. [782]

Children were taught that the Supreme Being looked down on them from above and saw and heard all that they did, both good deeds such as charity to the needy, and evil ones such as stealing, even when the children thought they were quite alone and unobserved.*

The Supreme Being was emphatically the owner and master of all things, of the universe, the supernatural beings, as above stated, human beings (not merely the Gros Ventres), the animals, the earth, the heavenly bodies. All informants fully agreed on this. As The Boy reasoned it out: "He was master of everything on the earth and above, even of the spirit world, and not merely of the Gros Ventres, but of everybody."

Whether he was conceived of as the maker or creator of all things is not altogether clear. Three or four of our best informants stated categorically that "He made all things." He was "the creator of all things," "the ruler of all and creator of everything." "He made the earth," "He created us." There is some confusion, however, partly at least on account of the role of Earthmaker (see below, p. 23).

The Supreme Being was actively interested in the welfare of human beings, first of all as the giver, protector and master of life, and as the donor of food, but also as the source of supernatural power and of wealth.

---

* For a discussion of difference in point of view between men and women informants, see Flannery, 1953, pp. 169-70.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

776 He was the "master of life" as previously mentioned. Long life was the result of something more than conformity to "health rules," such as daily morning cold baths to harden the body.[9] "The Supreme Being allows people to live long. If he wanted, he cut off their lives." "When people die, it is the Supreme Being who cuts off their lives." "Very old people lived a long life because they were pitied by the Supreme Being." The Boy's father, Lame Bull, said that "a man lives, not his own life, but according to what is given him and wished by Ixtcibani:hohat. A man has what he has by the wish of the One Above."

776 The Gros Ventres understood by that that the aged had survived to old age not by accident, but by the permission and wish 828 of the Supreme Being. It was common for young men to approach in tears a very old man or woman, offer a pipe, and request him or her to ask the Supreme Being to grant him long life, to make him a good warrior who would be immune to arrows or bullets when he was shot at.[10]

776 In grave illness the Supreme Being would be appealed to to spare the sick person's life. It was a common belief that the 721 Supreme Being would not permit a large attacking force of enemies 782 to slaughter a smaller number at home in its own camp. When a [755] group of young Gros Ventre recruits was leaving for World War II, the Supreme Being was prayed to in an old song that he would watch over them and let them come back home unharmed; although there were some casualties among Gros Ventre soldiers in World War II, not one of the above particular group was even wounded.

776 The Supreme Being as the one who "owns everything" was the provider of food. He was not called "master of food," as was [171] common among the northeastern Algonquians,[11] living closer than the Gros Ventres to a scarcity economy; food, it was felt, was "too little" a thing, and the title undignified. But all good things to eat, including "wild" food such as berries, fruits, roots and tubers, came from the Supreme Being and were given by him.

---

[9] Cf. Flannery, 1953, p. 144.
[10] Cf. Flannery, 1953, pp. 195-96.
[11] Cooper, 1934, p. 71.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Supernatural power too, while gotten immediately from animals, mountains (mountain spirits), and other creatures, through fasting and sleeping out on the hills, came ultimately from the Supreme Being, as mentioned previously. A person going out on a power quest, would pray first to the Supreme Being to command or compel the lesser being to give the power being sought. Power to doctor and to achieve war success and even to acquire wealth thus in the last analysis came from the Supreme Being. So too did the (supernatural?) power inherent in earnest wishes or thought wishes.

The Supreme Being also imparted knowledge and warnings to human beings through dreams and through his messenger, the crow. The crow on account of his relationship to the Supreme Being was a sort of sacred bird.[12] To illustrate the point the Boy told the following incident in the life of his father, Lame Bull. "Lame Bull on one occasion was sitting out on a hill and no one could get him to come back to camp. So some of his family got one of Lame Bull's wives, The Boy's mother, to go out and tell Lame Bull to come home right away as the camp was moving. As Lame Bull saw her coming, a crow flew over to him and said, 'This person who is coming is going to tell you something that is not true. Don't pay any attention to her.' Then the crow flew away. When The Boy's mother came within hearing distance of Lame Bull, the latter said to her: 'Don't say what you are going to say. Turn back.' But she kept on coming and told him her message, for which she got a scolding from him."

In general the Supreme Being was, as regards his interest in human welfare, the reverse of an otiose deity. His interest was a most active one.

Equally active was his interest in man's moral and social behavior. He was pleased at such moral or social acts as respect and help to the aged and care of the orphans, and was offended by grave breaches of the moral or social order. He bestowed

[12] In 1948 The Boy explained: "The crow is not the kind you see around here now, but a raven,—a bird that is smaller and more streamlined than the crow. The crow here in the fields cry like they are wounded, but this other bird has a shrill but melodious call more like a human being." [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

reward and punishment for such human behavior exclusively or almost exclusively in this life. At death the souls of all except murderers went to the same spirit habitat, not to the Supreme Being.[13]

The extensive cultural and ethico-social activities of man towards the Supreme Being will form the subject of succeeding chapters. We may merely state here that the Supreme Being easily held the first place in cult, as compared with other beings, and that he bulked large in the Gros Ventre ethico-social conscience.

That the foregoing concept of the Supreme Being was aboriginal with the Gros Ventres and not the result of borrowing from white sources seems clear beyond reasonable doubt from both the external and internal evidence.

First the external evidence. While the Gros Ventres have been known in our literature since 1751, their contacts with the whites before the middle of the last century were relatively slight. They met traders and trappers and an occasional intermarriage with whites occurred, but active missionary work among the Gros Ventres did not begin until 1884.[14]

Of about twenty different informants from whom we gathered our account of the Gros Ventre Supreme Being concept, most were older people, men and women, between the ages of 60 and 90 (in 1938-40) and all of them were positive, from their own memory of pre-missionary days and/or from what they had always heard from their parents or grandparents or other elders, that the belief was part of ancient native tradition and not one derived from the whites or from missionaries. For instance, Bull Head, about 80 years old in 1940, then the oldest living Gros Ventre man, stated that he had known about the Supreme Being as far back as he could remember. Coming Daylight, then about 85, and of

[13] The older name for the abode of the dead was tsɔtci:tän (etymology unknown to informants) but described as "toward the sunset." The more common name was ba:snabe (big sand) which was described as a place "to the north." The Milky Way was called Ghost Trail according to another tradition. No non-human supernatural being was conceived of as in charge of the future abode or as rewarder or punisher of the dead for earthly deeds.

[14] Cf. Flannery, 1953, p. 23.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

keen intelligence and memory, stated the same, adding that her old grandmother was also familiar with the name of Ixteiboni:hohat for him. Furthermore the names for the Supreme Being as believed in by the Gros Ventres are commonly used for him among the Arapaho. Finally, the Gros Ventre concept itself of the Supreme Being tallies well in its main elements with the concept that is of universal or almost universal occurrence among the Algonquian-speaking peoples, to whom the Gros Ventres belong linguistically and, in spite of their dominantly Plains culture, in not a few important respects culturally as well.

The internal evidence corroborates the external. The whole Gros Ventre complex is quite lacking in distinctive Christian elements,—such as prayer to the Supreme Being for forgiveness, reward and punishment by him in the future life, going to the Supreme Being after death, the Trinity, a supreme evil spirit, and so forth,—elements which would be emphasized in most evangelization by Catholic missionaries. On the contrary, the complex has a distinctly aboriginal coloring. Mastery, including mastery of life, is to the fore, with making or creating hazy or in the background. The Supreme Being's names, apart from that of Father, seem clearly native, not white. It is certainly most unlikely that missionaries would have invented a term such as Ixteiboni:hohat by compounding the name of the trickster, whose vulgar and obscene escapades were matters of such common knowledge.

Finally, the Supreme Being concept is tied intimately into the whole ritual of the Gros Ventre, a ritual which itself is obviously aboriginal, with only the faintest traces, if any, of Christian infiltration.

Other Cult Beings

Next to the Supreme Being, the supernatural being most frequently mentioned by our informants was Bha'a,[15] the storm ruler or the thunderbird. He was also called, less commonly: etcitane:

[15] Informants insisted on the aspiration in the name of the thunderbird, bha'a. Without aspiration the term ba'a means "it is red," and the term ba'ats, means "blood."

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

776 bätč, "he (who) has gristle (tendon from back of neck of animal) nose," and "black hawk," a certain very large black-feathered hawk known also locally as "bullet hawk" (*Buteo sp.?*). Another name for Bha'a was "old man four parts of the earth." Bha'a, the thunderbird, as was appropriate, had dark or black feathers, and was a swift flier; his bill and feet were of the same material as back tendon (see Blood-Clot Story, No. 11 in Appendix).

778 In the Gros Ventre Sacrifice Lodge, or "Sun dance," Bha'a
776 was represented near the top of the center pole as a bird, painted
black, with a buffalo tail fastened to his head as a sort of plume,
796 with a zigzag line descending from the bird almost to the ground and ending in a fork, and with a bunch of branches stuck in the
[302] fork of the center pole of the lodge to represent Bha'a's nest. Each of the dancers painted all over in white had a bird representing Bha'a, painted in black with charcoal or paint on his upper center breast, with black zigzag lines ending in a fork from the bird's wings down each arm and forearm and from the bird's feet down each thigh and leg to his ankle, with a black zigzag line forked at each end across the forehead, and with a vertical red zigzag line forked at the lower end extending down from each eye. The
[534] drum-head used in the Feathered Pipe rite had a red background on which the Thunderbird was represented in blue, with a yellow zigzag line on either side from the head to the wings. Bha'a entered prominently into both the Sacrifice Lodge and the Feathered Pipe rite.

776 Any large strange animal might in the olden days be called
785 Bha'a or even be looked upon as an embodiment or theophany of Bha'a.

One supposed theophany over which the present day Gros Ventres laugh heartily, is recorded on the occasion of their seeing their first mule. The story as told with verve and intense amusement by The Boy was as follows:

"The Gros Ventres used to move around a great deal. Once a mule, the first one the Gros Ventres had ever seen, got lost somehow, struck the Gros Ventres' trail, came to their camp and stopped. A Gros Ventre crier spied it and came back to camp

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

announcing 'A something has come to camp. Come and look at it.' 776
Everybody turned out. They sized up the mule and considered 825
that it must be a Bha'a. They said: 'He must have come here for a purpose. Let's offer him things.' So they ran back, got things to offer him, returned bringing the children, and walked up and surrounded him. They prayed to the mule and laid one offering on him. Soon he was loaded down, he just stood there. After a while he brayed, at which all the people scattered and ran away. After they came to a stop, however, they decided: 'He must be pleased. That's why he made that noise. He will grant our request. We'll leave him here and move camp.' So they moved at once. But the mule followed them. Then they became afraid and ran away from him. This happened several times. At last they succeeded in hiding from him and losing him."

Bha'a's residence or nest, as described in the story of Blood- 776
Clot, was on the top of a high mountain, where he dwelt with his 821
mate and their two offspring, the young thunders (bha'a:niθan; -iθan, offspring, children). In the Blood-Clot story the sign of Bha'a's return to the nest was the appearance of a dark heavy cloud toward the sunset (west); of his mate's return, a white cloud in the west, and the arrival of each was marked by a blinding flash of lightning. The Thunderbird sometimes breaks wind and leaves a very bad odor. Two instances of this were recorded,—one when lightning struck Thick's house and left such a smell.

Bha'a had jurisdiction and control over storms, thunder and lightning, but as previously stated under the paramount rule and control of the Supreme Being, for whom he served as a sort of agent or subordinate, although with a considerable degree of freedom of action.

According to The Boy: "Bha'a has control of lightning and thunder, rules it, and releases it at will. He controls it, he is a sort of general manager; some one still higher controls Bha'a. While Bha'a rules the storm, he does so by a sort of delegated power; he has not the power himself.

"Bha'a's particular job is the storm, thunder and lightning. That is all he does. The Supreme Being is the ruler and uses Bha'a to run this part of the situation and manage it. Bha'a

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

776 executes the direction or will of the Supreme Being. He is the
821 medium or means by which the Supreme Being works. When a big storm is about to break, a pipe is filled and the Supreme Being
[782] is prayed to in the direction from which the storm is coming and is asked to spare the people during this storm, to direct Bha'a not to kill them, to say a word or two to Bha'a himself not to shoot around too close to camp. The people are afraid of Bha'a since he does his job in such a violent way. Even though Bha'a is held in high esteem and is considered an extraordinary being, he is a creature [under control] of the Supreme Being."

776 Bha'a was closely associated with the Feathered Pipe, not at all with the Flat Pipe.

Bha'a too entered into the Sacrifice Lodge ("Sun dance") as the being who could cause rain and so bring a good season for the food quest and bring coolness and shade in hot weather. While supernatural power was not explicitly sought from Bha'a he might occasionally on his own initiative have pity on a man and give him power to be a great warrior and even to make storms.
[726] But on a war expedition the participants would pray to the Supreme Being to be saved from wounds and death; not the slightest thought of Bha'a would enter their minds unless they were overtaken by a bad storm.

[165] It may be added here that, while violent thunderstorms are common in Gros Ventre territory, deaths from lightning are not frequent. The Boy could recall only three such deaths, occurring in Gros Ventre territory during his experience, two on one occasion when he was a young boy and one on a later occasion around 1930.

The word Bha'a is used not only for the Thunderbird but enters into the term also for the water and earth monsters, bha'anbi:'iθän.[16]

The water monster,—or monsters as there appear to be a number of them, for they are reported from various large rivers, and springs where they bathe,—is usually envisioned as a huge,

[16] The Boy explained in 1948: "The word bi:'iθän includes water bugs, crawling bugs, bugs of all kinds; but a snake is never called bi:'iθä, nor will a snake ever be called bha'a. Water monster, no manner how many horns he has, or however much he resemble a snake, is always called bha'anbi:'iθä." [R.F.]

L

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

long, more or less serpent-shaped, being with pointed snout and tail, and with a horn or two horns in its forehead. It lives in its lodge under water, is occasionally seen, snatches bathers or swimmers, and carries them down to its underwater dwelling. Drowned persons are supposed to go to or to be captured and held by the water monster in the after-life. The people made offerings to the water monster or to its youngest offspring, the Last Child (see p. 15), when crossing rivers and on other occasions.

There is a close connection between Bha'a the Thunderbird on the one hand, and these water and earth monsters on the other, but they are quite distinct. During storms the Thunderbird may strike a monster and carry it away as game food up into the clouds to its own mountain-top nest. There is no explicit note of hostility toward the monster.

The following story may illustrate ways of the water monster and the Thunderbird's habit of preying on the water or earth monsters.[17]

When The Boy's father, Lame Bull, was a young man, in the 1840's, three young Gros Ventre younger than Lame Bull,—two of them relatives of Lame Bull,—had gone on a war party down toward the Yellowstone River. The Boy told the story: "They ran before the oncoming storm to take refuge among the rocks on a knoll. When they got within about 100-150 yards of the knoll, lightning struck. All three lost consciousness for a moment and, when they came to, were facing the opposite way. They turned around to go to the rocks on the knoll. As they did so, they saw a cloud right over the knoll and heard a noise as of a struggle going on in the clouds. The cloud started to rise and as it left the ground they could see something hanging down from the cloud, with its head in the cloud. As the cloud went up higher, they could see that the something was some kind of monster, with colors like a snake and striped. The cloud rose higher and higher, seeming to be taking a great monster out of the knoll. Finally the lower end of the monster came into view, struggling as it were. The struggling monster was immense, snake-like in build

[17] Cf. also Kroeber, 1908, pp. 278-80.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

776
539

with a tapering tail. The cloud kept going straight up, the three young men waited until it had disappeared from sight up in the sky and wondered where it was taking the monster. Then they looked toward the spot out of which the monster had been pulled and they saw smoke and blue flame there and smelt a bad odor. They tried to coax themselves to walk up close to the spot and get a good look at it. But one of them said: 'Don't go. Something might happen to you. You can go if you wish. I'm going way round this spot.' He left and the others later joined him without going close to the spot."

Singer had heard the following story and knew the principal actor. "Some men on a war party went to a stream and noticed that the water was disturbed by something rolling,—a water monster with a horn in the middle of its head. All were scared except one, who said: 'I am scared of nothing. That is why I came on a war party.' He shot the monster right in the forehead and it whirled like a top. They took it out of the water. It had one horn. They thought it was the being who owned the stream. The others in the party thought this deed would shorten the brave killer's life. But he lived to be a real old man."

Cora mentioned the following incident: "My uncle on one occasion went out hunting for game in the Sweet Grass Hills. A violent storm arose and while he was loading the meat on the horses, lightning struck close by. The people say that the thunder pulls big 'bugs' called thunder bugs out of the earth or water. My uncle saw this bug as it came out and went wriggling up and up, until finally he could not see it any longer. You can see the holes in the earth from which the thunder bugs come."

Coming Daylight told of her own experience: "After a storm, the people used to go out and look for traces and I once saw one of these ditches. The thunder is supposed to be some kind of a big bird and it goes way up on top of the highest peak to eat these bugs it pulls out of the ground. The old-timers saw one place where the thunderbird had eaten one of these 'worms' and there was nothing but the bones of a great big 'bug' lying there [fossil vertebrate remains?]."

"A water monster was once seen in the Milk River by a small

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

boy. He was so scared, he went insane and died in a few days," 776 ●
according to The Boy. 539

One story we gathered is about a very big rattlesnake, "as big as a person," big enough to eat a human being and leave only the skeleton. It had a large shining horn. When it traveled it made a great bare trail like a modern road. It was horned, but was not of the water or earth monster "species." It was shot dead by a young man whom it had molested with murderous design while he was out in the hills crying and sleeping to obtain supernatural power.

In one story, the following, told by Singer, it is not clear whether there is question of a gigantic horned snake or of an earth monster proper.

"Near the head of Snake Butte there is a big cleft which runs all the way to the bottom. The cleft is said to have been made by lightning striking there. My husband Ax Hand [Assiniboine] was there and looked. He thought he saw something and looked again. It was a great big snake with a horn on the top of its head. He was scared and ran away." [823]

A somewhat conspicuous, though very human, role in Gros Ventre ritual and thought was played by the Last Child, idaːsθa, (itasé, "lastly," itasünna, "last;" -tha, "child" [Sifton]; apparently meaning "last child born in a family"). He was the little water snake, offspring of the water monster who figured in the story of He-who-starved-to-death (see No. 5 in Appendix). The Last Child had power in water, sharing to an undefined subordinate degree in the power of his father, the water monster, who was ruler under the water. He, alone or together with his father, was prayed to or given offerings, when the Gros Ventres had to cross rivers or lakes or when they swam or bathed in rivers or pools, lest they drown or be snatched down by the water monster. Early in World War II when a batch of Gros Ventre recruits was about to leave for overseas duty in the Pacific he was prayed to to protect them in crossing the ocean. In praying with a pipe, the Gros Ventres always held it up first to the Supreme Being, but lastly down to the Last Child. In food offerings, the Last Child was invited, last in order, to partake. In the sweat lodge he was mentioned 776 776 782 [484] 776

●776 but not invited to sweat, as he was not considered important enough. In general, while he very frequently enters into ritual, he always enters as the last and least. The water monster was rather feared, but the Last Child was conceived as benevolent and kindly disposed, and both in and outside of ritual observances ran a marked undercurrent of indulgent affectionate amusement, such as the adult male might have toward a liked small child, especially where the Last Child was ritually or otherwise associated with the Supreme Being. The Boy said: "The Gros Ventres all but laugh when the pipe is offered to the Last Child. He suggests something sort of funny to them, while they have only deep reverence for the Supreme Being." As Tom Main put it: "The Last Child [comparatively] does not amount to much. He is [782] always mentioned last [in prayers], but he gets the benefit of tobacco put in the ground [when medicinal herbs are gathered] and food put there [in food offerings]. As far back as I can remember, the people used to laugh when the Last Child was mentioned, but nevertheless he was included in rites." This by no means signifies however that he was laughed *at* or made fun of. The Last Child was, it would seem, a sort of intercessor with his father, to temper the latter's rather maleficent and predatory tendencies.

The Last Child was also associated in some manner with the earth or perhaps with the earth monster(s), as food and offerings [782] were put into the ground for him,[18] but the nature of the relationship is not clear. One statement given earlier, that he had a kind of keepership of the earth, looked after it, saw that the grass and trees grew, that the rivers flowed, and so forth, while not contradicted, was not confirmed, by later evidence.

776 Regarding the earth, that is, the land or ground, rather than
823 the terrestrial globe as such, there appear to have been differences in ritual usage and perhaps in belief. Some of the Gros Ventres did not mention earth in their prayers. Others habitually did so, naming in order the Supreme Being, the sun, earth, and the Last

[18] In 1948 The Boy added: "Nowadays when they smoke, they offer him one too; and also with whiskey, they spill a little on the ground and say: 'Ida :s0a for a drink.'" [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Child, and made offering of tobacco and food to earth. Al Chandler explained: "The earth is put in because that is where your living is. You get everything from the earth, fruit, animals, everything to live on, and get everything you eat from there," although ultimately it is the Supreme Being who owns and gives everything. We got one passing casual reference to "mother earth" by Mary Ereaux, and another by Tom Main to earth as being a "spirit" and having a "special keeper," but obtained no later confirmation of or detailed information on these points. In general, earth seems to have played a quite subordinate role in Gros Ventre religious thought and ritual. 776 823

The sun was appreciably more prominent, ranking according to some informants next to the Supreme Being, and mentioned as "The One Traveling," or "Passing or Traveling Man" immediately after him in prayers. Another current seems to have assigned a much lower relative rank to the sun, and mentioned sun and moon together, as "Those-who-follow-each-other," and after the Supreme Being and the Four Holy Old Men. In any case the sun was in no sense identified with the Supreme Being, but was his property, work and servant, far below him in dignity, and had not anything like the religious predominance it had in such tribes as the neighboring Blackfoot. The sun did not enter at all into the so-called "Sun Dance" of the Gros Ventres, nor into the Feathered Pipe rite. Prayers and food were offered to the sun, and the sun was invited to sweat in the sweat lodge rite along with but subordinately to the Supreme Being. Individuals would offer a finger joint or bits of their flesh to the sun on such occasions as the grave illness of a relative. While the sun "sees everything, that's why the Supreme Being put it there," the Supreme Being, not the sun, was appealed to as witness in oaths; the widespread American Indian oath formula, "The sun sees me," was not used. 776 821 [755] [695]

The sun and moon were, according to myth, brothers from the same mother, but were never human beings proper, though they married, the one a frog woman and the other a human female. According to one story, the sun regularly appeared in battle as a man riding a white horse who scared and helped either the Gros [773] 776 821 539

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

776 Ventres or the enemy. According to another, the sun on one
821 occasion delivered seven Gros Ventre men, to be killed by the
[539] Crow, into the hands of a Gros Ventre woman captured by the Crow, so the woman claimed. Apart from the incidental inclusion of the moon, bracketed with the sun, in prayers and in invitations to sweat as above stated, there was no specific independent moon cult and in no case, according to our informants, were sacrifices ever made to the moon. Nor, so far as we could discover, was there any star cult, though the stars, or some of them such as those constituting the Great Dipper, the Pleiades, the Bear were seemingly looked upon as in some sense "spirits" or personal beings. In the archaic era, before the flood and Ni:hohat, people used to go in the morning to get fire from the morning star, "the cross," just as in modern times the old people
[372] used to go in the morning to get a live coal from a neighbor's hearth instead of using matches. The morning star served also as a "clock." When people were planning to get up unusually
[805] early in the morning they would be guided by its position in the heavens. Someone in the lodge would be told: "Go out and see if the cross is up yet."

776 Among the beings involved in prayers and invited to sweat, after the Supreme Being, were the "Four Old Men," currently referred to by English-speaking Gros Ventres as the "Four Holy Old Men." According to Singer and Coming Daylight there were also, it appears, "Four Old Women," but this statement was not independently confirmed by other informants.

Very little is known about these Four Old Men. The Boy had more than once asked his father about them, but Lame Bull could only say that the Gros Ventres were taught by Ni:hohat to call on them in praying and sweating but that the people did not know who they are. They lived in the very beginning of things, but whether before or after the flood, is not quite clear. They were
776 not human beings. Gros Ventre belief does not associate them with the four winds or cardinal directions, but, vaguely, with the
801 sacred number four, the four "ridges" or stages of full human life, and the four great floods or other great catastrophes or revolutions, of which the first was the primeval flood, that are to occur,

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

according to one tradition, in the career of humanity. Some thought World War II was one of these four. The Gros Ventres do not recognize any beings connected or identified with the four winds or four cardinal directions.

Sometimes another being "Broken Knife" was appealed to in prayers. Little too, is known of him, except that he was, some time in the distant past, a renowned Keeper of the Flat Pipe. According to Al Chandler, Broken Knife was the name of the young man who was first given the Feathered Pipe. (For details, No. 6d in Appendix.) He was asked to pray for the supplicants, just as it was customary for the people to ask living pipe keepers or ex-keepers to pray and intercede for them, "much as Catholics ask the saints to intercede for them."

Much more is known of He-Who-Starved-To-Death who is associated with the Flat Pipe rite. He was a human being, a Pipe child, second son of a certain keeper of the Flat Pipe in the days when the Gros Ventres dwelt in a land of plenty. It was he who in the course of his adventures encountered and befriended the Last Child, offspring of the water monster, and who on his return home taught the people to pray to the Last Child, and introduced three songs into the Flat Pipe rite. He was also the man who first brought horses to the Gros Ventres. His name was given him by the water monster. (For details see No. 5 in Appendix.) In one Flat Pipe rite he was mentioned in prayers, and in the sweat lodge was invited to sweat.

Well known too is He-who-dreams-of-Bha'a, likewise a human being and a Pipe child, the son of the couple who were first given the Feathered Pipe by Bha'a, and who lived when the Gros Ventres had already gotten horses and had reached their historic habitat, but before the advent of the whites. He got power from Bha'a to be a great warrior, and he gave himself his name. (For details see No. 7 in Appendix.) While closely associated with the Feathered Pipe, he was not, so far as we could discover, prayed to.

In general, lesser beings that had no human body were called tciya:təwu:nitä (sing., lit., "false person": tciyattawu, false [Sifton], initä, human being). This category included such minor

776 beings as Little Spirit and ghosts, but not such major ones as the Supreme Being and Bha'a.

The following story, as told by The Boy, gives nearly all that
224 is known about Little Spirit, etcibətä:t (ètc,sä, it is little, bettêtô,
776 spirit [Sifton]).

"Long ago, how far back I do not know, Little Spirit made himself the guardian spirit helper of a certain man, saying: 'Whenever there is going to be a famine, call me.' 'What are you?' the man asked, 'Where do you come from?' 'I am Little Spirit, I am from the western wind.' The man who had Little Spirit never called him except when game was scarce and there was danger of famine among the people. Then he would call Little Spirit who would tell them where game was. When this man was dying, he said to the people: 'Whenever you go out hunting, pray to Little Spirit to show you where game is and when you have killed game and gutted it, take a piece of the liver and some of the fat, put in on the west side of the game killed, and say: "Here, Little Spirit, is liver and fat for you."' It was just that one man of long ago, no other, who had Little Spirit as a personal helper. When Little Spirit came, he came as a little whirlwind."[19]

Little Spirit was, in accordance with this man's instruction, ordinarily appealed to by the Gros Ventres for success in hunting particularly at times when game was hard to get, and the abovementioned first fruits sacrifice of liver and fat made to him after game was killed. He was not appealed to on any other occasion.

776 At a number of places in and around Gros Ventres territory are
[172] cliffs with incised pictographs on them made by a certain class of "false persons" called tciya:tsine:n "ghost men" or "little men." They were never seen but according to Singer were dwarfish, about 3 feet tall. The Gros Ventres distinguish clearly between such pictographs made by these beings on the one hand and on the other those made by Indians or else tracks of animals in flat rocks. The first are temporary, and change from time to time; the other two kinds are permanent. Gros Ventres have tried to get

[114] [19] He did not, however, come into the shaking tent as the ghost helper did. The statement by Cooper, 1940, based on 1939 field notes, was an error corrected 1940 in the field.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

power from the "ghost men" by sleeping near their pictographs, but never with any success. One young man, however, once without quest got power in childbirth cases from a boss of little children who appear to him in a dream, and Singer thought these "little children" were "ghost men," but the identification is doubtful. The only message they ever got from the "ghost men" was a request or demand that the Gros Ventres go away at once as they smelt bad or made the place smell bad. On war parties or other occasions, offerings were made at the pictograph cliff to the "ghost men," who would then during the night make new pictographs on the morrow from which the future in the form of good or bad fortune could be easily foreseen by the members of the party.[20]

Supernatural power was gotten either by quest or otherwise from ghosts or, as more commonly, from non-human beings, such as mountains (or the spirit who inhabited or owned the mountains), rocks, mammals (bear, wolf, weasel, mink, coyote, rat, prairie dog and others), birds (crow, prairie chicken), snakes, spiders and so forth. "These lesser beings, while ranking a little above human beings and possessing certain superhuman powers, were under the leadership and control of the Supreme Being, from whom they had received such powers to be imparted in turn to human beings. Like Bha'a, they were, so to speak, delegated agents and underlings of the Supreme Being, put by him in charge of "the details of the whole situation," as The Boy expressed it. The powers so imparted were of many kinds, to cure, to poison or otherwise harm, to foretell, to become a great warrior, to acquire wealth, to succeed in love and gambling, et cetera, as will be described in detail later.

Non-Cult Beings

So much for the beings to whom cult was rendered in the form of prayer or sacrifice. We shall now describe the supernatural beings,—human, "humanoid" and non-human,—to whom no cult was rendered but who entered in one form or other into ritual

[20] Cf. Flannery, 1953, p. 93.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

776 or who were in some manner actively helpful or harmful in modern times to the Gros Ventres. The chief beings of this second category are: Ni:həhat, Earthmaker, ghosts and owls, Atsa:, the Little People.

The name of the trickster and culture hero, Ni:həhat, has already been dealt with in the section on the Supreme Being. Ni:həhat was also referred to sometimes as "our grandfather." He had a human body but no detailed description of his appearance is current. He had a wife and children. No one knows how he came into existence. He lived before the flood and it is to this antediluvian period that his colorful exploits, largely Rabelaisian, are ascribed.

There is considerable uncertainty and speculation regarding the respective roles of Ni:həhat and Earthmaker in the origin of human beings or of the Gros Ventres, and of Gros Ventre religion, especially the Flat Pipe rite. We shall here give the account from the Ni:həhat tradition, and later that from the Earthmaker one, without attempting a complete reconciliation, which does not seem possible from the available evidence.

773 According to the Ni:həhat folktale cycle, human beings lived before the flood, as is clear from the trickster's exploits.[21] Accord-
776 ing to the Ni:həhat origin story, it was he who obtained from a man and woman, of whose origin nothing is known, the magic bladder, and who liberated from the bladder the already existing human beings, the ancestors of the Gros Ventres. Still other human beings existed than the ones who killed the trickster and who in turn were completely exterminated by the liberated people. Ni:həhat taught these ancestors to pray to the Supreme Being. He also instructed them in the sweat lodge ritual, and so in at least this element of the Flat Pipe rite, and also in the rite of sacrificing bits of their flesh. He likewise taught the liberated bladder people the art of war. (See No. 1 in Appendix for full story.)

He was killed and came to life again. After this he disappeared, and no one knows what became of him. The Boy personally wonders whether it was Ni:həhat himself who was Earthmaker

[21] Cf. Kroeber, 1907, pp. 59-75.

and who was floating on the raft with the Flat Pipe, whether he may then have gone to the whites and taught them, too, how to pray; but all this he considers speculation only. 776 [773]

It should be emphasized that as previously noted, no sacrifices or prayers were ever offered by the Gros Ventres to Ni:hohat himself, nor, it may be here added, to Earthmaker. The Boy once said to his father, Lame Bull: "You talk so much about Ni:hohat. He was a superhuman. He should have been prayed to." "No," Lame Bull replied, "he never told the people to pray to him, but told them to pray to the Supreme Being. He was a man and not worthy to be prayed to." [782]

Earthmaker was the human being, apparently a or the primeval keeper of the Flat Pipe, who knowing the earth was to be covered with water made a raft of logs on which he and the Flat Pipe floated during the great flood.[22] (See full story, No. 3 in Appendix.) Where he came from is unknown. Landing on a mountain top he there made dry land (not *the* earth, the terrestrial globe as such which already existed), and also made a man and woman. He gave the Flat Pipe into the keeping of the man he had made, and taught him the Flat Pipe rite, instructed him how to carry out the rite and to plant tobacco, and told the people how to worship the Supreme Being. The Flat Pipe rite has been known ever since that time. Earthmaker is mentioned only in the Flat Pipe rite. After giving the pipe and the above instructions, he disappeared, and what became of him, whether he died or not, is not known. 776 773

Ghosts were called tsë:k. Another name for ghosts was byi'te:' a word that "gives the impression like a hollow-eyed bleached-out skull." An occasional ancestral ghost became the guardian helper of a surviving relative.[23] Gambling power might also be gotten from a ghost. Most ghosts were in their own future abode and did not have any contact at all with the living. In general, apart 774 775

[22] He was not floating in the Pipe bowl; this is the Arapaho version.

[23] In 1948 The Boy explained: "Tciya:towu:nitän (see p. 19) are not tsë:k; tsë:k is the opposite of everything good—you can cuss by calling someone tsë:k. Byi'te:' is even worse. The ancestral ghost is tsätsuwa'a, not tsë:k. Shadow, soul, spirit, echo is bətäto:u. [R.F.] [578]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

sure will do that; they bother people and mock you when you talk or laugh." After that there was no ghost in that piece of brush. 775

On another occasion, Al was coming back on horseback with a group after a hand game. In a gap through which their route would take them, the others saw a yellow or blue light, like a lamp in the dark, moving this way and that. But Al could see nothing. The others went home by a roundabout way, but Al went alone through the gap, saw nothing, and met the others farther on. [825]

Many, though not all, ghosts had the habit of whistling, and some talked in a whistling language.

Ghosts were apt to appear as owls or to hoot like owls, both in the shaking tent rite, to be described later, and on other occasions as illustrated in the following story which had been told The Boy by his father, Lame Bull.

"Lame Bull went on a war expedition. Seven Sioux were killed. Their bodies were left laying where the killing took place. A few years later Lame Bull and some comrades came near this place. As they reached it, seven owls flew from it. The owls did not fly away but just milled around the spot. They were the seven Sioux turned into owls." [825]

Children used to be told: "If you do not obey, the owls will catch you." If owls alighted on a lodge or house or hooted around very near on bush, tree or hill, this presaged the death of some one. Owls also gave warnings.[26] In these instances however we got no evidence that the owls were conceived of as ghosts. 825 775

Besides the ghosts there were other bad spirits, who "shot" people by projecting some small object into the body of a person and so causing illness.[27] This belief, we were told, was very widespread but we did not obtain many details regarding it. The following incident, narrated by Coming Daylight, may serve as illustration. 776 753

On one occasion when Coming Daylight was living where Fort Belknap now is and when her daughter was still a sack baby, the latter would not quit screaming. She would hold her head to one side and would not nurse, and they could not satisfy her with

[26] An example is given in Flannery, 1953, p. 93.
[27] Very probably connected with practice of witchcraft. [R.F.]

776 anything. So Coming Daylight took her infant to her aunt who
753 was a kind of "spiritualist" (one having a ghost helper). The aunt took the baby in her arms and told Coming Daylight: "You get me a piece of charcoal." The aunt took the charcoal and rubbed it on the baby's neck at the back, bent over as if she were going to bite the infant, drew out (apparently by sucking) a little sliver from the baby's neck, and said: "This is what caused her to have a stiff neck." They said a spirit had shot her, although they did not have the baby outside when this happened to her. You were not supposed to take an infant outside in the dark without covering its head. Actually Coming Daylight's infant was inside the tent during the night and they heard something hit a lodge pole and it seemed to frighten the baby, who continued to cry until the aunt removed the sliver.

[158] Mental abnormality could also be caused by such bad spirits, ghostly or other, whether by "shooting" the victim or getting into
751 him is not known. To keep the bad spirits at bay, a stick, with its
776 tip blackened with "nicotine," was left near a baby whenever the baby had to be left alone. Whenever adults went out in the dark, they picked up and carried a stick, of any kind; it was believed that the spirits were afraid of the sticks and would not come near. Beyond such protective observances there appears to have been no cult proper of these bad spirits in the way of propitiatory prayers or offerings.

753 Much, though not all sickness was ascribed to a malevolent being called Atsa:. When illness recently took off a mother and
776 child in a family, the people said, "Atsa: has visited so-and-so's family." Atsa: did not himself put sickness-causing objects in his victims' bodies, but he was responsible indirectly for other kinds of illness, that is, he had something to do with them. To him
[731] were attributed particularly epidemics, especially smallpox, chicken pox and measles. He was an ugly, hideous being, unkempt, with scaly skin and bushy hair who never washed his face. He was thin and starved-looking and his nails were long. He was thoroughly disliked. No food or pipe was ever offered to him. When serious
776 sickness visited the camp, the Supreme Being was prayed to: "Take Atsa: away. He is causing a lot of trouble." Atsa: was

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

"nothing compared to the Supreme Being." At an eclipse of the sun the Gros Ventres were much afraid; for they thought that the sun was covering himself and that Atsa: would come around. To ward him off on the occasion of a solar eclipse, the Gros Ventres in recent times would load their guns and shoot up in the air, and so make so much noise that he would be scared away. Then they would all laugh, feeling that they had gotten the best of him. Atsa: also functioned as a bugaboo. When Thomas Main was a boy his parents used to tell him: "If you don't behave, Atsa: will get you." Atsa: was afraid of skunks, as the Gros Ventres of several generations ago learned from the following incident, related by The Boy.[28]

776 ●
776
821
539
731
776

"In the days of Gopher and Prairie Dog Old Man, Atsa: declared war. At that time the Gros Ventres were very numerous. There were only twelve bands but they were so big and there were so many people that when the children played around they would get lost and could not find their way home. When the crier walked around and made his announcements, after only one circle around the camp he was hoarse and was tired from walking. A large part of Gros Ventres went off on a war raid to the east to fight the Shoshoni, Assiniboine and Sioux. They got a little below the confluence of the Milk and Missouri Rivers, and saw two corpses wrapped in good blankets up in a tree. So they cut the bundles loose and dropped the bodies to the ground. The blankets, of white-man make, were a novelty to the Gros Ventres at the time. The men unwrapped the blankets and cut them up for leggings.

"That same night one of the Gros Ventres took ill. As the night wore on he got worse and worse. The men began to suspect: 'These two must have died of smallpox.' The sick man died after sun-up in the morning. They became panic-stricken. 'Sure enough,' they said, 'that's smallpox.' They decided to rush back to the main camp.

"On the way back every night one or more men died. Only a few got back alive. Most of the party died on the way back. When

[28] The incident probably is part of the tradition of the smallpox epidemic of 1780. Cf. Flannery, 1953, p. 34.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539 the survivors reached home and told their story, the people were excited. The old people said: 'That is a bad sickness. It all but kills off the tribe once it starts.' The criers announced to the people: 'Scatter in all directions. That is the only way to combat this sickness.' So the bands scattered in all directions. A lot of the people died, some even before camp was broken.

"One band went up Milk River. One man of this band who had a big family studied what he should do. He decided to go off secretly from his band. He had plenty of meat, as it was in the fall. So he sneaked away unnoticed with his family, went up the Milk River looking for the thickest patch of brush and trees he could find, and there pitched his camp. The next spring, the survivors of this man's band, which had wintered around the Sweet Grass Hills, decided that the sickness was over, and that Atsa: must be in a good humor again and had left them. The survivors went looking for the rest of the Gros Ventres, so they packed up and left their camp, where in many lodges all the inmates were dead. They made their way toward the place where the Marias and Teton Rivers empty into the Missouri. As they went along they found some whole camps wiped out by smallpox, other camps with just a few lodges with some survivors. These survivors would then join them. At last they reached the Marias and decided to camp there and send scouts around to look for the other survivors.

"A group of young men acting as scouts went down the river to its confluence with the Missouri and ran onto a camp where they saw someone walking around in front of a lodge. As soon as this person saw them he disappeared. They approached and looked into the lodge, but could at first see only a bunch of dead bodies in it, though the fire was burning. They then went in to investigate and found a small boy and small girl there, each living with the dead body of his and her mother. The boy and girl fought and bit like animals not to be taken away. The young men saw the places where the boy and girl had been sleeping beside the bodies of the dead mothers. They saw also a bear that lived in this lodge and fed on the corpses. They looked in other lodges and found that the bear must have lived there too on the dead bodies. It had not eaten of the supply of meat which was still untouched.

"The young men then took the boy and girl back to camp where some families took them and tamed them down. The young men kept scouting for survivors along the Missouri River and on both sides of the Bear Paw Mountains but could find none. All the living then moved to the north end of the Bear Paws and camped. They decided to stay there and wait. Most of the Gros Ventre camps had been entirely wiped out. The survivors felt bad about it, but there was plenty to eat. They had taken along with them the meat supplies of the deceased victims. It was now far along in spring and they thought the danger was over. 539 731 776●

"The man who had spent the winter in the thick timber now decided to move around and look for his people. He started toward Marias River and found the other Gros Ventre survivors' camp north of the Bear Paws. The man, his wives and all their children had come through the epidemic without sickness. The people asked the father: 'How did you escape getting sick?' He replied: 'Just by accident. I happened to kill a skunk, to windward of our camp, and just left the carcass at the spot, as I had no use for it. We were forced to smell it. In time we all got used to the stench. In the timber we felt safe from enemies and we dared not go far from camp. So we stayed there in spite of the skunk. But we were all the time worried lest the children or myself should die. As time went on and no one got sick, I laid our good fortune to the skunk carcass. I thought that Atsa: must be afraid of skunks. So I started to kill as many as I could and I hung them around in every direction, so that no matter from what quarter the wind blew we always had skunk smell. I honestly believe skunks are too much for him.' The people agreed with him, for he proved his belief by the fact that he and all his family had come back safe. Since then the Gros Ventres have known that Atsa: is afraid of skunks."[29]

Both giants and dwarfs were believed to exist. The giants were as tall as trees. When one of these got a buffalo he would stick it on his belt just as the Indian did with rabbits. The giants were 776

[29] The Gros Ventres know that the Cree of the Ft. Belknap area use skunk fluid for many medical purposes; the Gros Ventres however do not. In Gros Ventres lore the animal kingdom calls the skunk "Chief Stripe."

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

776 not cannibals; the dwarfs or little people were. Of the latter, who were distinct from the dwarfish pictograph beings previously mentioned, the Gros Ventres were afraid, for these dwarfs in spite of their small size were very powerful. They were not "false persons," but had bodies and lived on earth. The Gros Ventres when traveling around or out hunting were always on the watch for them; for the dwarfs, while very stupid, were very strong physically, could not be killed,[30] and were fast runners. Once they sighted a man there was no escaping them. Some of their characteristics are illustrated in a folk tale. (See No. 9 in Appendix.)

Besides the beings to whom some sort of cult was rendered or who at least were in modern times actively helpful or harmful in some manner to the living Gros Ventres, there were a number of others to whom no cult was rendered and who had only in the past been helpful or harmful. These last, such as Blood-Clot and Found-in-the-Grass, belong purely to the realm of folklore. Few myths and tales of this type were volunteered by our informants but two are given in the Appendix (Nos. 10 and 11). We made no attempt, however, to record the folklore as such.

---

[30] In 1948 The Boy explained: "In one way these little fellows were not so stupid after all, because they left their hearts at home in their lodges when they went off and so they were hard to kill. You should add, too, that they were all left-handed." [R.F.]

CHAPTER VII

CURING PRACTICES

A good many Gros Ventres through quest or otherwise acquired doctoring power. To give a better idea of it we shall need to see it against the larger background of native concepts of the cause and cure of illness.

Causes of Illness

Some illnesses were ascribed to solely or mainly natural agents or agential causes, others to supernatural ones. The line between the two types of causation is not, however, always clear.

Sometimes supernaturally caused ailments followed automatically from the breach of taboos, others were inflicted intentionally by non-human or by human agents.

Marrow bones were not supposed to be broken inside a lodge or house, and a person who transgressed this taboo would suffer from sore legs. The penalty of fits, cramps and paralysis from certain actions to or by keepers of the Flat and Feathered Pipes has been previously noted.

The chief sender of sickness, particularly of epidemics such as smallpox and measles, was the being, Atsa:. This being appears likewise to have had something to do indirectly with other ailments, but exactly what part he had in causing such ailments could not be cleared up by us. The intrusion of pathogenic objects into the body to cause illness was not attributed to Atsa: personally.

Malevolent spirits,—whether ghostly or other is not clear,—would cause illness by "shooting" people, that is, by projecting some small object into the body of the victim. To the maleficent activity of these spirits was also ascribed mental derangement, at least in some cases. One such mentally deranged woman was once seen by Coming Daylight. This woman who was getting along in years became deranged all of a sudden. Coming Daylight, with the consent of the woman's husband, went to her lodge and peered in.

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

525 789 time. This latter aspect of the belief accorded with the larger Gros Ventre pattern: any acquisition of special supernatural power sought by quest would be apt to lead to shortening of life.

Nevertheless, against the reiterated advice of parents and elders who would so lecture the growing children and of the chiefs and counsellors who would walk around the camp so warning the people, a good many individuals would seek supernatural power, and a few would go out in quest of supernatural gambling power. In some cases such gambling power was sought by a man who had lost heavily or lost his all at the wheel or hand game, as a desperate measure to recoup his losses and to get a new start in his career.

Gambling power was not sought from the Supreme Being, who apparently did not enter at all into the gambling cycle. The appeal to him in the previously given traditional story of gambling for scalps is more a confirmation of than an exception to the rule. Nor was it sought as other power—to be a great warrior or doctor or to acquire wealth or to live long—was sought, by fasting and dreaming on the hill tops. The seeker for gambling power resorted to the brush and timber along watercourses to obtain it from the prairie chickens, [176] or from a ghost. It was more commonly gotten from prairie chickens; but not infrequently from a ghost, not an ancestor of the candidate, at least not necessarily, but, as The Boy put it laughingly, from "any good-natured ghost." This power was gotten for use only in the hand game, not in any other gambling game or sport.

[824] Usually the seeker looked for a place where wild morning glories formed a sort of bower, "like a little lodge or tipi." It was in there that a ghost was believed to live; the morning glory was called tzek'unθänädzu, "ghost rope" (tzek'ⁿ or tsä·k'ⁿ, "ghost"). The seeker would cry and cry, and when he got sleepy he would crawl into the bower and sleep. Pretty soon a ghost or prairie chicken might ask him: "Why are you punishing yourself so much?" He might answer: "Because I have lost all my belongings." "Is that all? Well, I will help you out," the being or beings would say, and then would give the seeker a song and tell him what rules he must live by and how he must act in the hand game. The person who got such power would not afterwards reveal the details told him by the giver. From the prairie chicken or ghost the person might also get at the same time the power to do marvelous things, such as making an object disappear, swallowing it and then drawing it out of some part of his body, making it go into his skull and come out of his mouth into his hand or go through his veins and come out somewhere else on his person, and so forth (cf. Red Whip story *infra*.)

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13 ●

of men, including Stiff Arm, a noted Gros Ventre medicine 114
man, who has since died. Only a few details were obtained: the 787
rite within a regular tepee with spectators present; the tying of the performer with ropes, his escape therefrom, and after his escape the ropes in a ball which could not be untied; the summoning of the spirit of the deceased relative by the performer; the shaking of the tent "as in a cyclone" when the spirit came; talking "from above" by the spirit; singing by the performer and by the others in the tepee.

Later in August-September, 1939 and 1940, fuller information on the shaking tent rite was secured in connection with a general study of Gros Ventre society and religion, from The Boy and Thick, two of the older and best informed men among the Gros Ventres. These fuller data here follow.

Spiritual helpers among the Gros Ventres were of two kinds, ghosts of deceased persons and beings who had never been men. [776] ●
The latter, the ordinary guardian spirits, by far the more common, do not concern us here as they do not enter at all into the Gros Ventre shaking tent rite. Only ghosts so enter.

A ghost helper, tsatsawâ'ª (-â- and superior a nasalized), 776
was usually acquired in the following way. It was not sought by 787
fasting and crying out on the hills, the customary procedure for acquiring non-ghostly guardian spirits and power. In fact there was either no quest of any kind or at most a somewhat indirect one. The usual sequence was as follows. A surviving relative would keep in his or her possession some memento or keepsake—
something the deceased had prized greatly, some belonging such [765
as a whip, or a tooth or bit of hair of the departed one. The 768]
keepsake was kept, not worn. It was kept not for the purpose of acquiring the ghost of the deceased relative (a father or other close relative), but solely or at least chiefly, so far as I could gather, out of regard for the departed.

In most cases where such mementos were kept nothing happened. In some few cases, however, the keeping led to the acquisition of a ghost helper by the keeper. The first intimations the keeper had of the intentions of the deceased relative were knockings, or whistlings, or other kinds of disturbance around

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787 where the memento was kept. After a while the ghost would
776 come to the keeper, the surviving relative, on successive visits and talk to him (or her), telling him its intention of becoming his ghost helper, and finally putting him in a deep sleep ("killing" him) and saying to him: "I shall be your tsatsawâ·ᵃ." In other words, it was the ghost, not the surviving relative, who regularly took the initiative and broke the ice. In fact, the latter had little or no freedom to accept or refuse.

By the ghost the survivor in trance would be taught the procedure to use for summoning and dealing with the ghost, how to put incense in the smudge place in the person's own lodge, how to lay the pipe, the direction of stem and bowl, what kind of food to put out, and so forth. A key element in such teaching was a special song, given by the ghost to be sung in said rite. One
776 such song, recorded by me in 1940 as sung by The Boy but not
787 yet transcribed, a wordless song sung to the accompaniment of a
791 drum, had belonged to a woman named "Woman." She had
[533] been taught it by the ghost of her deceased husband (or brother), *Wawathana'tea* * (*a*'s nasalized) "Bad-bad Bull." He had been a medicine man when still living, and this had been his "power" song. His ghost gave it to her both as the song to summon his ghost with and as a doctoring song. She had therefore both ghost-summoning and doctoring power. While that old woman had both a ghost helper and doctoring power, the two things did not necessarily go together in the same person. One could have a ghost helper without having doctoring power, and vice versa. No one lacking a ghost helper could conduct the shaking tent rite, no matter how great power he had received by fasting and crying, and no matter what guardian spirit or spirits he had acquired. After her husband's death the above old woman had not married. People were a little afraid of her because she had this ghost helper. She was a capable old woman, with lots of horses; some of her breed of horses are still (1940) around. She died around 1907.

* Owing to delays and difficulties under present war conditions in obtaining symbols not in our printer's stock a and e with a stroke above them are here printed in italic.

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Other songs, distinct from this summoning or shaking tent rite song, were also given and taught at times by ghost helpers. Two of them, both victory songs, were recorded as sung by The Boy in 1940. These two were given on occasions other than that on which the surviving relative initially acquired his ghost helper. 776 787 [533]

After all the above teaching was concluded, the ghost of the deceased relative belonged to the survivor and was supposed to come whenever summoned by the latter in the manner the ghost told him while in trance to do. A great many Gros Ventre men and women had guardian spirits and "power" acquired by fasting and crying or otherwise. But fewer individuals, men and women, had ghost helpers. My informants in 1939 and 1940 could recall only four persons in the last two generations or last 70 years or so who had had ghost helpers.

In one case (see first of the two appended stories by Thick) two spirits tried to come to the shaking tent rite conducted by Woman, one bad and the other good, but whether the bad one was one of her deceased relatives or not, she never knew. The people were under the impression that the bad one was an intruder who used to come first and try to "horn in" on the proceedings. No case of a given person clearly having more than one ghost helper was recalled by my informants.

Ordinary "power" could be and often was transferred by the possessor to another person by donation or bequeathment. But a ghost helper never was so transferred and could not be. [424]

It may be added that neither my informants, The Boy and Thick, nor my interpreter, Thomas Main, all highly intelligent and informed men, were at all sure of the etymology of the word tsatsawâ·'ᵃ. The Boy thought it might connote the meaning of "slave," "some one who is forced to do things." Thomas Main suggested a possible relationship to tsatsa—"coming, flight"; plus—wa, an old Gros Ventre word, meaning unknown. The two words for ordinary ghosts as such are tsa·k'ᵃ (sing.; pl., tsa·k'an: a's as u in English but), and bie'te'ᵉ (sing.; pl. bi'eten). Tsatsawâ·'ᵃ is used exclusively for ghost helpers, not for an ordinary ghost, or ghosts in general. An ordinary medicine man was called nata'nhehi (a's as u in but), but there was no special name 791 787 [115]

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13 ●

791 in use to designate those who had a ghost helper: of him or her
787 it was merely said: "He (or she) has a tsatsawâ·'a."

Persons who had a ghost helper commanded great respect, and were bothered by no one. But capable medicine men on whom the people depended to doctor their sick were also greatly respected. My informants did not feel that either class of practitioners as such had greater prestige than the other.

787 In the shaking tent rite, no other spirits than the given ghost
● 776 had any part, and only the one ghost ever had part in a given performance. Neither guardian spirits, nor the "Little Spirit," nor Ba'a', nor the Supreme Being (I^{x}teib'n'a't'^{a}; the a before t nasalized) enters into it in any manner. The summoned ghost came not from any of these or their abodes, but from Basna'^{a}be'^{c},
[775] the Big Sand, whither the souls of all Gros Ventres, except murderers of their own tribesmen, went after death and lived.

The function of the ghost helper was to give knowledge about past, present, future, or distant happenings, and counsel and direction in illness or danger. He imparted information. He did not as such grant power. Some of the many things he would be questioned about were: How a war expedition under way or an impending battle, or an illness, would come out? Where were the enemy located and what were their plans? Who had stolen a certain valuable article and where was it? He was not asked questions about trivial or silly matters, or about the fidelity or infidelity of a wife, although he sometimes volunteered information on such things. If some noted or loved person were critically ill, the ghost helper might be summoned and if it said: "His (the sick person's) soul is already over there," this meant he was going to die.

787 Where the services of one who had a ghost helper were desired,
791 the usual procedure was for the client or clients to go to him (or her) and offer him a pipe to smoke—this in accordance with general Gros Ventre practice in enlisting the aid of anyone with any kind of power. Those who had ghost helpers were commonly reluctant or even afraid to summon their helper; after the performance they felt tired and sore. But if given a pipe to call the

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

ghost, they could not refuse, at least not easily. And if they accepted the pipe, they committed themselves definitely. 787 791

The summoning rite was performed only at night, with the fire out, regardless of the severity of the weather, and in darkness. In the two narratives by The Boy appended infra the ghost helper spoke in the daytime, but had been summoned the preceding night. The rite was ordinarily performed in the performer's lodge, he being hidden out of sight of the clients or spectators behind a blanket-curtain hung up for this purpose to partition off a segment of the lodge. Away from the camp, the rite was sometimes performed in an emergency shelter or a sweat lodge. Before the rite, the clients got ready a pipe and tobacco, a dish of puppy meat (an earlier Gros Ventre delicacy), and other food, [262] and at the appointed time for the rite brought these to the lodge of the ghost-possessor.

The performer was then bound with thongs. The four fingers (thumb too?) of each hand were tied tightly together by interlacing them (somewhat after the technique of wrapped or twined basketry), the hands were tied behind the back, he was rolled in his blanket and tied around securely with thongs, with only his head protruding, and then was deposited behind the blanket partition out of sight of the spectators.

It appears to have been a common practice for the performer to challenge the most skeptical member of the party, and ask him to do the tying. Various stories of skeptics were narrated to me.

On one occasion when the main body of the Gros Ventres, then 787 at war with the Piegan (or Blackfoot), were camped on the east 776 side of Judas River and a small band of them on the west side, the ghost helper of one of the Gros Ventres in the small band told them: "Tell the people to leave this small camp and go across the river to the big one, for the enemy is going to raid tonight." But many of the Gros Ventres of the small band said: "Ghosts are big liars. We are not cowards to run." Of the skeptics many remained, while about half crossed back to the big camp. About dawn, the enemy came as the ghost had predicted and nearly all who had remained at the small camp were massacred.

On another occasion when the Gros Ventres had (or were

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787 about to have) a big battle with the Crows at Marias (at the
776 junction of the Marias with the Missouri), a young man who was present at a ghost helper rite, with the fires out and pitch-darkness in the lodge, and who doubted that a ghost could come back, decided to experiment. When the ghost helper came and the noise was heard, the young man, who was sitting near the door in the darkness where no one else could see he was exposed, pushed his breechclout aside and exposed his genitals, saying to himself: "If this is really a ghost, he will see me and do something about it." All of a sudden the young man let out a yell as if hit by someone, and ran out of the lodge. "You had better run. What is being done here is the real thing," said the ghost to the young fellow, and added to the crowd: "I hit that young fellow's genitals sharply with a stick; that is why he dashed out of the lodge." They then asked the young man: "Is that what happened?" And he replied: "Yes. He hit me good and hard there," and he became a believer.

This emphasis on skeptics in non-narrative and narrative accounts of the Gros Ventre shaking tent rite would suggest that the rope-escaping feat, which we may call for short the "Houdini trick," had the purpose, overt or covert, of creating or confirming faith in the authenticity of the ghostly visitation.

The Houdini trick ordinarily formed part of the Gros Ventre shaking tent rite, but to judge from a couple of the stories appended to this paper, was not absolutely indispensable and could, in emergency, be omitted.

791 Right after being tied, the ghost-possessor to the accompani-
787 ment of his drum sang his summoning song which the ghost had
776 given him. As the ghost helper approached the lodge, a whistling as of wind could be heard, and sometimes at least an owl call,—owls and ghosts are closely associated in Gros Ventre thought, ghosts appearing or speaking as owls. As the ghost came through the top of the lodge, the top would shake violently, and then the whole lodge would shake.

The ghost would then go to the performer and blow on him, and all the sinews and thongs with which he was tied would become untied, and they would be rolled in a ball so knotted and

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

tangled that it could not itself be easily unravelled and would so be thrown out at the spectators, or at the one who had done the tying, especially if he were a skeptic, with some such challenge to him from the ghost as: "You tied up this person. Now see if you can untangle this ball of thong."

Next the pipe would be lit and held up in the darkness in the direction where the ghost was supposed to be, for the ghost to smoke, and the spectators would see the pipe glow up rhythmically every time the ghost drew on it. The people in the lodge would finish smoking this pipe. After this the ghost would ask: "People, why did you send for me?" They would tell him what they wanted to know. If the ghost knew the answer offhand, he would answer at once. If he did not know, he would say: "I don't know. I'll go and find out. You sing that song again [the one the ghost taught the performer when he first chose the latter; no other song was sung] and I'll come back and tell you."

As soon as the ghost went out, a little fire would be made, and the spectators had a smoke. Then they put out the fire and sang the ghost song. They would not have to wait long, "for a ghost travels just about as fast as a man thinks." On returning it would give the information that had been sought of it.

Most ghosts talked a whistling talk. But some—those possessed by Plenty-dry-meat-old-man and by Morning-star, two old men whose ghost helpers were among the greatest ones remembered and whose prophecies always came true—talked just in a natural voice.

After the ghost helper had given the information desired (or perhaps earlier, after his smoke at the beginning; I could not clear up the point) he was offered the food that had been prepared. And the spectators, still in the dark, would hear the tapping of the ghost's fingernails on the plate or other sound of eating as the ghost partook of some of the food.

When he had finished eating, he would say something like: "If you are done with me, I shall go," and he would depart by way of the top of the tent, which would shake violently as it had done when the ghost first arrived in it. After the ghost helper had taken his final departure, the performer would come out

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

791
787
776 from behind the blanketed enclosure, the fire would be re-lighted, the performer would say the prayer customary among the Gros [782] Ventres before all meals to the Supreme Being and other beings, then he or she and the others present would eat the food that had remained from the ghost's repast. Finally they would all sit around smoking and chatting a while before dispersing. I failed to gather any information on whether the performer receives any payment or not for his or her services in the rite.

Certain simplifications of the above procedure under emergency conditions as on war expeditions are noted or intimated in a couple of the following four narratives, the first two given by The Boy, the last two by Thick.

Narrative 1

787 The following story was told by The Boy.
776 "A certain man had his deceased father as his ghost helper.
539 The ghost helper used to speak Gros Ventre just like living people but in a bass voice. Everybody understood him when they heard him.

"On one occasion the Gros Ventre tribe were camped near the forks of the Teton and Marias Rivers. While there a large group of the men decided to go on the warpath. So they left the main camp, went up the Missouri River and camped that first night at the mouth of Crow Creek where it empties into the Missouri River. When it was dark that night some of the men said: 'Let's offer the pipe to X [the one mentioned above who had the ghost helper: name not given] and ask him to find out whether our prospects on this war party are good or bad.' So they filled up a pipe and went to X, held out the pipe to him and asked him: 'Accept the pipe and call your spirit.'

[791] "X accepted willingly and soon after they had smoked the pipe together they made a shelter where X was to do the spirit-rite. So they tied up X, filled the pipe again, put it there and sang a song four times. When they were singing it the fourth time they heard a voice in the air. The ghost helper arrived and the shelter shook as a lodge would have done in the same rite. When the spirit hit the ground, the ground shook too. The spirit

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13 ●

seemed excited and kept repeating: 'What do you want, my children?' and added: 'If you were in my place and were as old and feeble as I am, you wouldn't like to be disturbed. But here I am. What do you want?' They answered: 'We want to know how this venture of ours is going to turn out,—well or badly.' Then they lit the pipe and offered it to the spirit and they could see from the rhythmic glaring of the pipe that the ghost helper was smoking. After he had smoked he replied: 'Well, I don't know offhand. I'll have to look around and investigate. I am going away to look around. While I am gone you smoke and after a while sing again and I'll come back.' The ghost helper went away with a noise and commotion as always.

787
776 ●
539

"They sat around and smoked and after a while sang again. The ghost helper came back blowing as if catching his breath, as an old man does, and said: 'My children, Crow Indians without number are invading the camp you just left. Knowing you men are away they are so bold that they are peeping into the lodges at your women and watching them playing the hand game. Your women are in happy mood. These Crow Indians seem to be preparing to take all the Gros Ventre horses. I shall go back and watch to see what they will do. Meanwhile you do as you did before: sit around and smoke and then sing. I'll come back and make a final report.' And so they talked and smoked and sang.

"Then the ghost helper came back bringing with him one hair from the head of a Crow. This was not a scalp but was only a hair representing a scalp and was wrapped around a piece of sagebrush. It was brought to convince the Gros Ventres there was no danger. Then the ghost helper reported: 'The Crows have taken practically all your horses and about sun-up will arrive where you now are. You need have no fear of the Crows provided you do just one thing. Be sure to kill the Crow with the blue blanket coat (with hood). He is the one brave man in the crowd. Kill him first and you will kill all the others. None of the Gros Ventres will be actually killed, but two of them will be wounded. In case you do not kill the Crow with the blue coat the outcome of the battle will be doubtful. But if you kill the

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13 ●

787 Crow with the blue coat you will kill all the Crows and get your
● 776 horses back.' The Gros Ventres asked the ghost helper which
539 two of their party would be wounded, but were not told by the ghost helper. If they had been told they would not have let these two go into battle.

"By the time they were through with the spirit it was near daylight. So they decided not to go to sleep, but to wait up the rest of the night. [Here followed a long detailed description of the battle with the Crows beginning around daylight.] The Crow with the blue coat escaped. Of the sixty Crows in all, forty were killed. No Gros Ventres were killed, but two were wounded—two members of my own [The Boy's] clan. While the party was still at the war camp, some distance from the main camp, the ghost helper came and said: 'I came to hear the news. Did you kill the man with the blue coat?' They answered: 'No.'. The ghost helper said: 'It is your own fault. If you had, you would have killed all the Crows. But anyhow you did well and have done yourselves credit. I am going to teach
[727] you a victory song so you can sing it when you get back to camp.' So he taught them this victory song[2] and they learned it and he said to them: 'Well, my children, I am going home. When I get back to my place of abode I will celebrate that victory too. I will give you charcoal [it was the custom for returning victors to paint themselves black] and I'll bring charcoal to my own land and celebrate.'

"The foregoing incident happened in the time of my [The Boy's] grandfather, Crow Moccasin."

Narrative 2

The story which here follows was also told by The Boy.

"The Gros Ventres were camped east of (the site of) Lewistown (south of the Missouri River). A party of Gros Ventre warriors left the camp to go on the warpath against the Sioux. One of this Gros Ventre party was known to have a ghost helper.

[2] This song as sung by The Boy was recorded in the field in 1940, together with about 120 other Gros Ventre songs, but I have not found it possible, as yet, to get any of the records transcribed for publication.

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The party traveled north and when they arrived at the river they camped there. Some of the men said: 'Morning-star-appears (or Morning-star-is-up: the man with the ghost helper) should be approached to find out what our prospects are on this expedition.' It was agreed among themselves that they would make a sweat lodge. 787 776 539

"Among those invited to sweat was Morning-star-appears. While they were sweating they offered the pipe to him to get him to call his helper. He agreed. Then they all smoked and got ready in the sweat lodge. [79]

"The ghost helper came to the sweat lodge for the possessor was right there. Just before the helper alighted he whistled violently and rapidly. Then the sweat lodge shook and they heard the ghost helper say: 'What do you want? Why did you call me?' They said: 'We are going on the warpath after the Sioux. What success will we have? Is there any danger?' So they offered the lighted pipe to the ghost helper and saw it smoked by him. After smoking, the ghost helper said: 'I'll go and see first before I answer. You go ahead and smoke and after a while sing again.' This they did.

"The ghost helper came back in the usual way, and highly elated, and said: 'All right, I am ready to tell you. First here is a strand of hair of a man (a Sioux) whom you will kill tomorrow. This represents his scalp.' It was wrapped around sagebrush. He continued: 'I have found a big Sioux camp on Beaver Creek [east of the Little Rocky Mountains]. The Sioux are having a big Grass Dance. The one who is having the most fun is the one you are to kill tomorrow. He is a handsome man and has a sword. You will capture that sword when you kill him. Don't be afraid. No Gros Ventre will be killed but two of you Gros Ventres don't look good to me.' They said to the ghost helper: 'Name the two.' But he refused to do so, saying: 'Just don't be afraid. Go ahead to the place where the Sioux are and attack them. Choose now what kind of weather you wish after the fight tomorrow, and I will see that the weather will be that way.' They failed, however, to make a choice. The ghost helper also said: 'Every once in a while tomorrow take

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787 a look at the sun. There will be all kinds of sundogs tomorrow,
776 changing every little while. When they appear you will know
539 that I have told you the truth.'

"Then the ghost helper left and the Gros Ventres slept until early morning. [Here followed a long description by The Boy of the battle.] Just one Sioux was killed in the battle, a very handsome man with a sword, as the ghost helper had predicted. Likewise they saw the sundogs changing. The Gros Ventres, however, after this first skirmish realized that the Sioux would soon get reorganized and that their own situation was perilous. So they called on Morning-star-appears to cause such weather that the Sioux could not catch them. He sang his song, using his robe as a cover in which to enclose himself, and said: 'We wish rain.' At once a cloud appeared and in a short time grew into a great black storm cloud: then came a perfect cloudburst, with thunder and lightning, in which you couldn't see any distance. Under this cover the Gros Ventres escaped from the pursuing Sioux and got back to camp safely with no loss of life, although two of their number had had narrow escapes, just as the ghost helper had said: 'Two of you do not look good to me.'

"The above occurred in Stiff Arm's time, when he was a young man. The man who killed the Sioux was Crazy Bull. I do not recall the name of the ghost helper, but this same ghost helper on this occasion taught the Gros Ventres a song to use in their celebration after the victory."[2]

Narrative 3

787 The following two stories were told me by Thick.
539 "A certain old woman (her great-great-grandchild is still living) had a ghost helper. Her name was 'Woman' but for various reasons she was nicknamed 'Bear Old Woman.' When I was about ten years old a party of Gros Ventres was camped at Lodge Pole, about two miles from the Little Rocky Mountains. One night Cree enemies came and stole all the Gros

[2] This song as sung by The Boy was recorded in 1940.

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787 back. He returned to his place to the southeast of the old
539 woman and sat down.
791 "Then Bear Old Woman said: 'All right. Start to sing now.' They sang four times without stopping, the song belonging to the old woman's ghost helper. As they were singing the third time they heard an owl and the old woman said: 'Don't receive *that* spirit. He is bad. Continue singing.' So they continued and just as they finished the fourth time the old woman said: 'That is the one. Receive *that* spirit.' The people around heard these two owls.

787 "When the second owl lighted on top of the lodge, the top
539 shook and the ghost helper spoke: 'What do you want me for?'
776 They said: 'We want you to tell us where our horses are and who has them so we can find them.' The ghost helper answered: 'All right. I'll have to go look for them, but you go ahead and smoke this pipe [the one lying near the incense hearth]. When you have smoked up what is in the pipe, refill it and put it back in the same place and wait.'

"They had barely started smoking when the ghost helper was back again. So they just dumped out what was left in the pipe and refilled it. The helper said: 'Never mind. I am hungry and want to eat.' But they didn't mind him. The spirit then said: 'Your horses are not very far away from here. Your four friends have already recaptured your horses and are bringing them back.' He also said to my father: 'One of your horses has a thick broad rawhide rope around his neck and is dragging it, and that other man's mare's colt will play out on the trip back home.'

"After the helper had said all this, the four men judged that he was through, so they took the pipe and lit it and offered the helper a smoke. The inside of the old woman's lodge was dark as there was no fire. The helper took the pipe from their hands and then they saw it light up rhythmically as a pipe does when it is puffed, and after taking a few puffs the helper said to the men: 'You smoke the rest. I am hungry and want to eat.' They could hear him chewing on the dog meat inside where the woman was. After a while the helper said to the men: 'Here.

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

You can eat the rest of this pup.' The meat had been eaten off 787
of one hind leg of the pup so that just the bones were left. Then 539
the ghost helper said: 'I see this foolish old woman lying here 776
helpless.' Then they heard a noise as if the helper had struck the old woman with the flat of his hand and he was heard blowing. The next instant the ghost helper said: 'Here, try to untie this,' and the knotted sinew and rawhide thong hit the chest of the man who had tied her up.

"Then they heard the old woman give a long sigh. She had [791]
been in a trance all this time and was just coming out of it. Next the ghost helper said: 'Now I am going to leave you.' And they heard the same racket at the top of the lodge they had heard when he first came in and there was a violent shaking of the whole lodge, especially at the top of it.

"After the ghost helper was gone they kindled the fire again
and there was light. Bear Old Woman came out of the enclosure [791]
and sat down on the bed and prayed with the bowls of food in her hand. Then she and the men ate and afterwards sat around and smoked and chatted. Then the men went home and told what the spirit had said.

"Next morning all the people in the camp, including the chil- 787
dren, got up early and went up on the highest nearby ground to 539
look for the four men coming back with the horses. Towards evening of the day the four Gros Ventres who had gone in pursuit of the thieves brought all the horses back, except the one which, as the spirit had said, had played out and could not stand the trip back. And one of my father's horses had a rope around its neck as the ghost helper had said it had. The pursuers had caught up with the Cree and surprised them asleep in a little swamp covered with grass and brush and so took the horses back home. On the return trip they got lost in a bad storm, went in the wrong direction and not until daylight did they discover their mistake and so had to circle their way back. They had neither eaten nor slept during all the two days and night they had been gone.

"The above incident occurred just at about the time when the buffalo disappeared from this part of the country [1880's]."

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

NARRATIVE 4

787 Here is the second story told me by Thick.

539 "There was a man by the name of Bird Child who had a ghost
791 helper. Bird Child's wife had four brothers, one of them my father. One evening they filled a pipe and went to Bird Child's lodge to get him to find out from his ghost helper where there would be lots of buffalo and no danger, so they could go there and hunt. When they arrived at Bird Child's lodge they found him absent and only his wife in the lodge. Without invitation they made themselves at home and asked their sister where Bird Child was. She answered: 'I don't know where he is nor when he will be back.'

787 "Being Bird Child's brothers-in-law they decided to take the
● 776 liberty of using Bird Child's power and ghost helper, and of hav-
539 ing a seance in his absence. They asked their sister where Bird
[607] Child's bundle was. She showed them. One of the four brothers took it down. They then agreed who was to be tied up and to represent Bird Child. The one of the four designated agreed. They had him lie down and two of them tied him up tight and laid him in an enclosure made along the side of the tent [as in preceding story]. They were half-fooling, not quite serious. Their sister couldn't say anything: they imposed on her. They even attached the man's hair to the ropes with which they bound him in the robe until only his mouth was visible.

"Then they started to sing and sang the same song four times without stopping. At the end they heard yelling in the air and said: 'There he is. He has come for us.' As the ghost helper arrived the tent shook and the helper said: 'Who's that lying back there?' and answered himself: 'Some crazy man or someone with no regard for anybody's rights.' Then they heard a commotion behind the enclosure. The bound brother started to hollow for mercy. Next one of the brothers who had done the tying got hit with all the ropes tangled in a knot.

"Then they heard the bound man being thrown towards the door, and saying: 'Hurry up and make a light before this ghost helper kills me.' The spirit had picked him up and was trying

: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13
Blackfoot NF6

G 787 539 776

to wedge him between the poles in the lodge. By this time, however, the other brothers had kindled a fire and of course as soon as the flame flared up the spirit was gone. The ghost helper was good and mad, but anyhow had come."

Blackfoot-Blood Rite

B 787 791

On a casual visit to Browning, Montana, in August, 1931, the writer was given some information by Mrs. Frances (Joseph) Brown of Browning on the Blackfoot shaking tent rite. The rite is performed by a woman who is a sort of "spiritualist" or "medium," as Mrs. Brown put it. She summons the dead spirits [spirit?] and they come and answer questions. Only she can understand the language of the dead spirits and can converse with them. She tells their answers to the other people who are around. During the rite, people are all around in the tipi. A curtain is put over a part of the interior of the tipi, and the "medium" sits behind the curtain. The lights are extinguished. Food is put on a plate. During the rite noises are heard "inside" [apparently behind the curtain], and everything moves, including the tent itself. It was emphasized to me that this rite is an old Indian one, not a modern intrusion of white spiritualistic seances.

B 787 776

While talking with The Boy (Gros Ventre) in August 1940 about the Gros Ventre ghost helper complex, he told me the following story that his friend, Platted Hair, a Blood from Canada, had told him on a visit to him some time before:

A long time ago, before the Gros Ventres came and when the Snakes still occupied this part of the country, a large party of Bloods came over toward the Little Rockies and never returned to their home country. Their people at home did not know what to make of it. One of the Bloods in the home camp had a ghost helper. So they gave this Blood a pipe to summon his ghost helper. When the ghost arrived, he asked: "Why did you send for me?" They said: "Our young men went on a war party and did not return. What has happened to them?" The ghost said: "I'll go and see. You may sing the song. I'll come back and I may be able to tell you what has happened." So the

787 made up my mind that I did not want such power, the immediate reason for my refusal being that I had seen doctors who swallowed what they had sucked from the weak spot in patients whom they cured, and I just couldn't bring myself to have to do likewise."

857 562 Although boys had much more freedom than had girls, they too were assigned tasks at a fairly early age. One of the responsibilities of boys was to water the horses during the day. At about the age of fourteen, however, a boy would be required to take the horses out to graze immediately after taking his morning plunge. He would be gone perhaps three or four hours and would eat only after he returned.

857 868 852 The play of younger boys with bow and arrow was training for later life. The older boys accompanied the men on hunting parties and by the time they were about 18 most were skilled hunters. Some families, it was said, took advantage of the fact that [431] a boy would have killed his first big game,—antelope, deer, buffalo, —by making a feast at which this game was served. On such an occasion the boy stood at the center and gave away property, such as horses and blankets provided by his father or uncle, in [421] order to mark the event. This was considered training for the way he should behave in later life in regard to his own property.

857 868 [533] Boys were trained in trapping as well as hunting. There were certain songs which were sung by grandparents as the boys danced around in the lodge both before and after trapping. These songs were supposed to bring luck in finding game.

[777] Sometimes when older boys were out taking care of horses, they would band together, daub their faces and bodies with mud as "war paint," and make a "raid" on the camp in order to steal meat which was drying on racks. The women who had worked so hard to prepare the meat got angry and sometimes fought the boys with sticks. Usually, the boys were successful, and would then cook the meat and have a wonderful feast,[1] far outside the camp circle.

[554] Men encouraged their sons to be brave, and a boy would be anxious to go along on a real raiding party just as soon as possible because a young man had no standing until he had risked his life. An adolescent boy who accompanied a war party had to be a man

[1] This type of raiding is also described by Kroeber, 1908, p. 182.

183 other men so you will avoid your husband's suspicion," and so on.
861 Sometimes the appeal was made by a parent: "If you do such and such a thing well, I will be proud of you." In general it would seem that the positive side rather than the negative, was stressed.

● 777 It was more often the men informants who mentioned supernatural motives proposed for proper conduct. They remembered
867 that they were told that the Supreme Being would "have pity" on
888 them if they followed the proper code of behavior. Both men and women mentioned, however, that respect for the aged was instilled because "people didn't become old for nothing. They had a blessing from the Supreme Being to live long lives. Whenever you see old people attempting to do something and are having difficulties, you should go right in and do it for them. Help old people out and then ask them to intercede for you that you will have good health, a long life and success in all your undertakings."

867 The example of others was recognized as effective in child-
574 training. Al feels that the Gros Ventres were well brought up in the old days "because children were taught to stick to the rules and they had the good example of adults to follow." In describing the duty of hospitality, Coming Daylight said: "My grandmother was a great one to have a lot of visitors because she was generous, and so I got a good example at home." It was said by others of Coming Daylight: "She feeds everyone who comes along just as she used to see her uncle (mother's brother) do. She takes after her uncle in lots of ways."

In lecturing to the young, examples of actual behavior of persons, both good and bad, were often given. For instance, in warning boys of the evils of gambling, reference would be made to men who would otherwise have had promising careers but who ruined their chances by too heavy stakes which they lost. Fear
[754] of offending those who had supernatural power lest they retaliate by means of black magic was implicit in at least some of the admonitions. This was so, for instance, in instructing young men to stay away from the wives of "powerful" men, as well as in warning girls to decline improper proposals "in a nice way."

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

supernatural power is present would, in so far, be positive "magical" practices, or else negative ones, "taboo" proper. The great number of such observances and avoidances, treated elsewhere—are here omitted or else touched upon only summarily. We shall list first acts done, and after that acts avoided. 784 789

To bring cold or a cold wind in winter time, a bull-roarer was whirled, or a buzzer, made of a dew claw with two holes in it, on a string, was revolved. Children were not allowed to use the buzzer. Plucking a bird to bring a north wind was not known to informants. [539]

As soon as the first thunder of spring is heard, blow on any warts you have and they will come off.

The Gros Ventres, when aware someone was trying to bewitch or poison them or when they were going to visit another tribe, especially the Cree, would rub themselves with sweet pine needles and these would make them proof against witchcraft, poison, or other harm.

The shoulder-blade of an unborn buffalo-calf was hung up "so that buffalo would continue to exist."

Many acts were to be avoided lest undesirable consequences should follow.

If you touch a mole, a rash like poison ivy will result. The widespread belief among northeastern Algonquians that seeing a dead mole brings bad luck is however, lacking. If you touch a toad, you will get warts [European influence?] If a spider is killed, rain comes. [797]

Do not eat the meat of the rare albino buffalo, else your hair will turn white. Children should not eat buffalo testicle, raw or cooked, lest they wet the bed; infants not yet able to talk should not eat puppy meat, lest they be a long time learning to talk. Young women of childbearing age should not eat the two strips of flesh, called the "twins," running along the backbone [tenderloins], lest they have twins, nor the colon of buffalo, for the same reason.

Horses should never be abused: such was the caution given to the founder of the Drum Dance by the drum men leader when the latter presented him with the stallion and other horses.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

784 789 [834] Sex abstinence was generally observed before hunting, and particularly before and all during golden eagle trapping. Eagle trappers "had to have a special religious character, to observe certain food taboos, and a special way of handling [being handed?] a pipe." The leader of a war party, but not other members thereof, also observed sex abstinence.

Do not break leg bones or ribs to extract the marrow or for other purpose, inside the lodge or house; go outside to do it, else you will get sore legs, or your horses may break their legs. Cora Chandler stated in 1940 that she still observed this latter, as her folks had always made her do. If an embryo calf were to be taken out of the belly of a buffalo, the embryo's eyes had to be extracted before it was brought into the lodge to be cooked; if the eyes were taken out inside the lodge, a member of the family would go blind, —"and this has been proven." Likewise it was forbidden to butcher and extract the brains from a buffalo head inside a lodge, and also break off the "soft end" of roast buffalo ribs. "Never use a knife to fuss with ashes or coals because you might cut yourself if you did so."

After blood-letting, the subject abstained from eating anything fried so the cut would not turn blue.

[851] There does not seem to have been any prohibition against mentioning the name of a deceased relative or other person.

777 801 Coming Daylight and Mary Ereaux had never heard of lucky or unlucky numbers. The Boy, however, stated: "According to the old law, the people were forbidden to use seven. For instance, a war party was not to have seven members, but either more or fewer. Cases are known in which young fellows disobeyed this rule and ran into trouble. In one case of this kind six of the party got killed and only one escaped with his life."

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

727 counted coup on the enemy filled a pipe, and held it for the rest of the
[554] party to smoke as they stood in a row. The returning war-party, if
[302] successful, always painted black, but if a member of their own party had been killed, they returned without rejoicing; unless sometimes, when the loss of the enemy had been greater than their own, and a relative of the dead was in the party, he might say, "One of the enemy pays for my relative. On account of the others, let us enjoy ourselves." Then the party would paint black, and celebrate. Wounds received by members of the war-party would not prevent celebration, unless, of course, they resulted fatally; and they were always regarded as an honor.

726 Some war-parties started off publicly in broad daylight, having made
727 it known that they were going; and any one who wished joined. Sometimes, perhaps, two men would agree to go, and invited such others to accompany them as they wished. Women not infrequently went with the war-parties. If a man was killed in war, his relatives, especially his parents,
[765] mourned for him. His father might go to the tent of a renowned warrior, and cry until this man became angry and announced a day for a party to start out to obtain revenge. On the day set, the party left publicly, usually
751 on horseback.

237 A man's supernatural war paraphernalia are shown in Figs. 27, 28, and
726 29. They were obtained from a middle-aged man who had them from his
● 778 grandfather, who first dreamed of the magpie and the other animals con-
293 nected with the paraphernalia, and made the objects. A cylindrical raw-
[787] hide case (Fig. 27), such as is found used for holding feathers and medicine among most Plains tribes, is painted with a yellow, green, and blue design
[531] resembling parfleche designs. These colors represent the various colors of the birds that were dreamed of by the original owner, and whose feathers are kept in the case. The case is called the "house" of these objects. A wing-bone is attached to the outside of the case to make another whistle from in case of loss of the finished whistle included in the outfit. A small bag containing a necklace is kept in the case. The bag (Fig. 28, *a*) is ornamented with bead-work representing a frog (kaka"). This frog was part of the original owner's dream. The necklace (Fig. 28, *b*) has various wasóo ("medicine-roots") on it. These are said to be neither eaten nor otherwise used, except as they are worn on the necklace. The bone whistle (Fig. 28, *c*) alluded to is attached to a necklace of otter-skin. It is blown during the fighting to prevent injury. A magpie's skin (Fig. 28, *d*) and the skin of a smaller bird (Fig. 29, *a*) are also contained in the case. The white magpie-feathers are dyed yellow. The two skins are worn at the back of the head, and prevent the wearer being injured even in a hand-to-hand fight. A head-dress of ten magpie-feathers and of a white plume on red-painted

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

237
726
293
778
751
[531]

thongs, tied together at the ends with a medicine-bag, and four brass bells (Fig. 29, *b*), is tied to the hair over the front of the head. When the warriors sing before dressing for battle, this head-dress is also used as a rattle. The medicine attached to it is chewed, and rubbed over the owner's body, as well

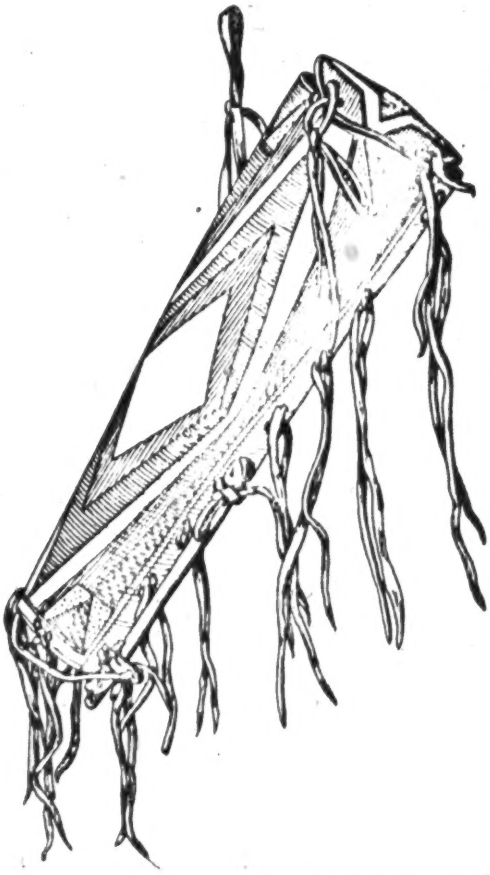


Fig. 27. (50-1952 a) Medicine-case for War Paraphernalia. Length, 40 cm.

as over his horse's, after he has painted himself. Two plumes of eagle-down (Fig. 29, *c*) are tied to the horse. One is tied to its fore-leg, the other to its tail. Then it will not be shot, and, if it falls, will not be hurt. In case of flight and pursuit, a little medicine that is attached to these plumes in a small

[text continues on p. 195]

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

293
726
778
[532]

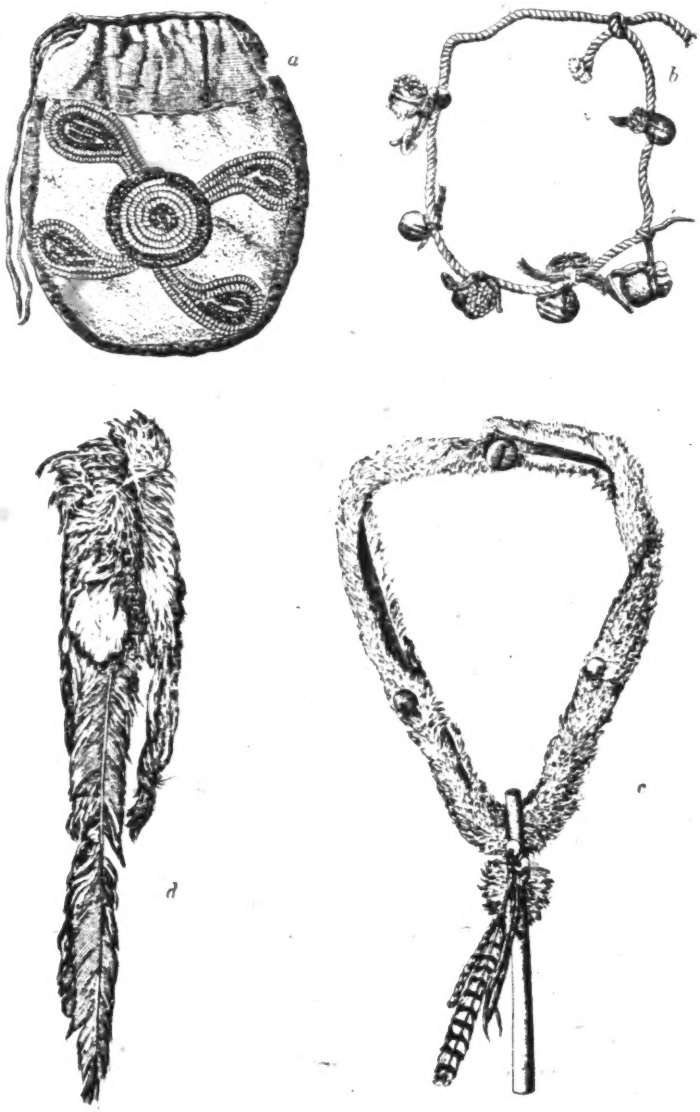


Fig. 28 (50–1952 b, c, d, e). War Paraphernalia. Lengths, 15 cm., 9 cm., 45 cm., 40 cm.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

[237]
273
726
751
778

bag is given to the horse to prevent its becoming exhausted. A cloth to wrap the various feathers and the whistle completes the outfit.

A warrior's outfit that was obtained for the Museum (specimen Museum No. 50–1862 a–c) consists of a beaded knife-scabbard, carried because the owner has cut loose horses that were tied by a rope leading into a tent; of a man's awl-case, carried presumably for mending moccasins and for

[237]

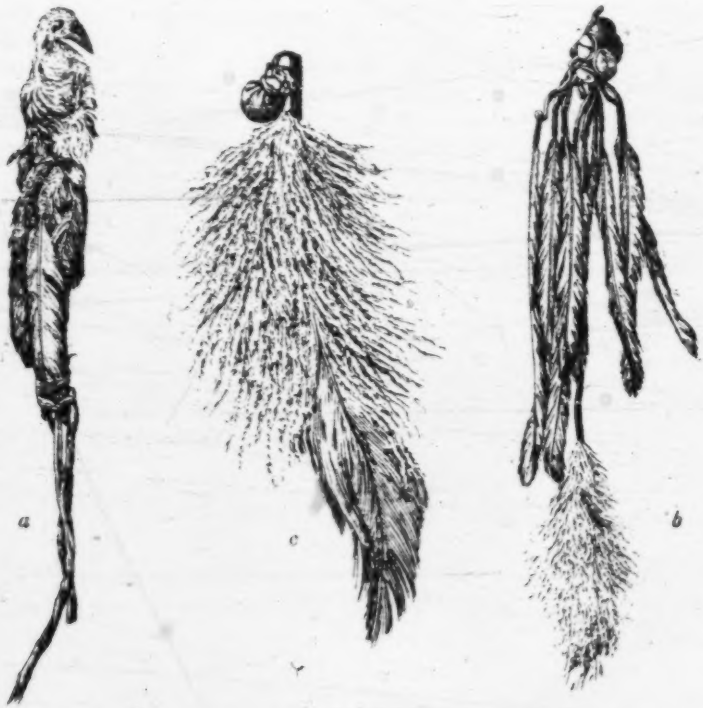


Fig. 29 (50–1952, f, g, h). War Paraphernalia. Lengths, 32 cm., 20 cm., 20 cm.

similar purposes; and of a piece of a scalp ornamented with beads, and worn attached to the shoulder of his shirt. The scabbard is ornamented with rectangular U-shaped bead-work designs similar to those in Fig. 3, and representing horse-tracks.

[787] Sometimes in dreaming, a man saw a person in battle wearing the skin of a certain animal, and fighting very successfully. He would then wear the skin of that animal. Specimen Museum No. 50–1901 is a weasel-skin

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

293 used in this way. The owner twice dreamed of a weasel, which told him to
726 use its skin. Thereupon he first wore a weasel-skin in dances, and later
751 carried it to war. Subsequently he lent it to his son and to other men who
778 went to war, and they always returned successfully.

A man to whom a fisher had appeared in a dream or vision used a fish-
[787] skin medicine-bag, and on going to war carried this with him.

A renowned warrior, dead for some time, received his personal medicine from the bears, and was forbidden to scalp, count coup on the enemy, or take away a gun. He could only kill. He once killed two Sioux with one shot, at a place which received its name from the event.

A simple riding-whip (specimen Museum No. 50–1821) has on its wooden
[492] handle four red marks, each of which is said to represent an enemy struck in the face with a whip in battle.

Representations, used in the modern "war-dance," of the weapons of
532 Black-Wolf, a well-known Gros Ventre warrior, part of whose experiences
726 in war are told below, consist of a shield and spear. The shield, which is made of painted white cloth, represents the shield carried by him on an occasion when he rushed to battle with no other weapon. The shield is decorated with a blue crescent along the lower edge, representing the sun, and bordered by a wavy red line denoting lightning. The wooden spear and spear-point
[822] represent a spear with which the owner stabbed a Piegan in battle. The spear-point is painted blue and red; the blue representing iron, the red blood. Red marks on the handle of the spear represent coups.

A pair of beaded and painted moccasins executed by a woman, but
[292] designed by an old man, symbolize his exploits in war. An outside rim of beading represents the enemy's camp-circle. In the middle of the camp-circle is beaded the figure of a tent belonging to a chief. To this tent was tied a horse, which the wearer of the moccasins cut loose. This feat is represented by an outline painting of a horse and halter. Three U-shaped figures, also painted, are horse-tracks, and represent the capture of horses. On the other moccasin there are again three such figures in a row, which here were said to indicate a charge on horseback on the camp; while two other such figures, facing each other, indicate a face-to-face fight.

Curtains hanging behind the bed in front of the tent-wall were sometimes painted to illustrate the owner's achievements in war.

WAR-EXPERIENCES OF INDIVIDUALS.

114 The following narratives give an entirely personal account of the war-
115 experiences of three individuals, two of them men of about sixty years of

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Doctors were paid a horse or more for their services. Sometimes several, in turn, doctored a patient, each one blaming those that had failed before. Often they laid the sickness to spirits, or to other doctors. This last occurred especially if in their sucking they extracted human finger-nails or similar objects. In such a case the doctor got his patient to sleep. The patient might then in his dream see the person that had made him sick, and on awaking would denounce him. If the sick man died, his relatives might kill the doctor whom he had named as the cause of his sickness. 756

There were not so many women doctors as men. They appear not to have gone out to the mountains with the intention of acquiring supernatural power, but to have received guardian spirits when they were away from the camp, mourning.

The jugular and femoral arteries and the aorta were called ts'niinotanoudj[1] ("having no ears"), because, when severed, they did not heed any remedies.

In order to save the life of a sick relative, the joint of the little finger was sometimes cut off in sacrifice to the sun.

There were some medicine-men who, having had their fingers tied, then had their knees fastened together and their hands secured behind their back. After this they were wrapped in a robe and the robe was wound about with a rope. Then such a medicine-man called his spirit. When it appeared, he was loosened instantaneously, and the robe and the rope were thrown at the man that tied him.

Fig. 30 (50 1937). Doctor's Charm. Length, 22 cm.

[778]

826

755
304
782

756

A charm used by a doctor is shown in Fig. 30. It consists of a deer-tail with beaded base, and of two black feathers and a bunch of down feathers. All parts of the object are reddened. This piece was used to brush patients. At other times during the doctoring it was worn on the medicine-man's clothing.[2] 756 778

A man unsuccessful in winning a woman's love sometimes fasted on a 787 832

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

crushed and mixed with fat. When the painting was completed, food 796
from the young men's parents was brought to the old men. The old men also presented their "grandsons" with food. The food was then eaten. During the day the dancers and their "grandfathers" were in the dancing-lodge. In connection with the beginning of the dancing, a badger-skin was used. This was entirely wrapped, except at the head, in a flat rope of [778] ●
rawhide, half of which (one side?) was painted red, the other half black. [825]
This skin lay on the ground before the pledger of the dance, in or in front of his small enclosure, with the head toward the east. Glowing charcoal was laid before the row of bows, and sweet-grass (niasö; Arapaho, niox") was put on the coals to incense the bows. The pledger, rising, took the badger-skin, and, holding it with the head pointing forward, walked slowly around the inside of the lodge, and then to the smouldering incense, over which he made four passes with the skin; then returning to his enclosure, he laid the badger-skin on the ground. Taking out a stick tied in with the skin, he struck the skin as hard as he could. At this, a singer at the middle of the back or western end of the lodge — who held a stick as high as a man, wrapped with buckskin, and with buffalo or antelope hoofs hanging along its length — struck the end on the ground, thus beginning the rattling that accompanied the singing. The old men began to sing, while the [533]
dancers simultaneously blew their whistles, and cried "Yaa!" The old men stood up and sang, and the dancers went to them, each of them to his "grandfather," usually three or four to one old man. The old men then drilled them, showing them how to dance and how to handle their bows and their robes. It seems that the dancers stood at the opening of the lodge, somewhat on the south. After dancing to four songs, during which they whistled and at the end of each of which they cried "Yaa," they dashed off in a race around a monument that had been erected at some distance to the southeast. If one of the division of tall men returned to the lodge first and thus won the race for his side, the short men filled pipes for the tall men and presented them to them to smoke, and, of course, *vice versâ*.

After the cessation of the dancing, and when it was dark, old men cried out to the people to retire to their tents, the dancers' wives being about to go out with the "grandfathers." As the women went out, the dancers stood in the lodge in a circle, singing loudly and shouting in conclusion. The "grandfathers" went to the north of the camp-circle, where they stood in a row. Their "grand-daughters," that is to say, the dancers' wives, each carrying a pipe, followed them, and stood behind them. They addressed their "grandfathers," praying them to take the pipe and smoke it. After much persuasion, the old man accepted the pipe. Then the woman prayed to him again, asking him to pray in her behalf, that she might be

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 171 The Gros Ventre also introduce into the ceremony a thunder symbolism that the Arapaho lack, or have in a much less developed form. The lightning symbol on the centre pole, from which water can be drawn, and the power of the thunder to strike with lightning any dancer who drinks other water than this, evidence this.

Another element special to the Gros Ventre is the introduction of ceremonies relating to war, such as the dramatic performances and the seeing of the approach of the enemy by the pledger.

Features introducing miraculous and sometimes purely personal supernatural powers are apparently quite lacking from the Arapaho ceremony. Among the Gros Ventre there are the raising of the centre pole, the production of water from the centre pole with the crow, the clairvoyance of the pledger as regards the enemy, and the visions of some of the dancers.

In summary, the exact duration and sequence of all events in the Gros Ventre ceremony are not yet clear; the preliminary prairie-chicken tent does not correspond very closely to the Arapaho rabbit-tent; and the connection of the ceremony with the thunder, the introduction of warlike elements, and that of miraculous or personal features, are peculiar, or nearly so, to the Gros Ventre as compared with the Arapaho.

MODERN CEREMONIAL OBJECTS.

778 171 The recent ceremonial objects of the Gros Ventre are somewhat different from those of the Arapaho. The Arapaho were deeply affected by the ghost-dance movement, more, it is said, than any other tribe; and many of their modern religious regalia have a distinct character of their own. [668 177] The Gros Ventre received the ghost-dance from the Arapaho, but it seems to have taken little hold of them. The only distinctive ghost-dance objects seen or obtained were two small hoops and a few balls, all of which 177 resemble Arapaho types. The chief modern dance-ceremony of the Gros 778 Ventre, the only one performed at present, is the grass or war dance obtained from the Sioux, and evidently a modification of the widespread 796 Omaha dance upon which the Arapaho crow-dance is also based. This dance has in recent years been still further modified, until its character now is very similar to that of the crow-dance. The regalia used in this [178] dance at present are very individual, usually crude, and almost always stylistically degenerate. The delicate character and distinct style of the majority of modern Arapaho dance-objects are lacking.

171 The treatment of feathers in such objects is quite different among the 778 Gros Ventre and Arapaho. The Gros Ventre rarely ornament their feathers 237

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

with dyed plumes or tufts of horsehair, as the Arapaho so frequently do both at the base and top of the feather. Feathers with the vanes cut from the quill, except at the very top, are also scarcely used by the Gros Ventre. Instead, they usually cut the feather squarely off across its end, or split the quill, from the end down, for the greater part of its length. Sometimes the uppermost part of the quill is entirely removed, with its attached portions of the vanes, leaving the top of the feather forked. Plume-feathers are also much less used by the Gros Ventre than by the Arapaho. In dyeing, the Gros Ventre generally used cruder colors; a blue-violet, a pink-red, a light-bluish green, and yellow, all of them aniline colors, being the most common. The Arapaho use true red and green more frequently, and in most cases employ the dyes more lightly, thus obtaining endurable or delicate effects where the Gros Ventre are garish. 778 237 171 [386]

The Gros Ventre methods of feather-treatment, both the cutting-off and the splitting of the end of the feather, go back, at least in part, to their older tribal ceremonies. Both these processes are found employed on the dog-dance regalia described.

As regards other differences, the Gros Ventre probably employ more weasel-skin in ornaments than the Arapaho, though far less than their neighbors the Blackfeet. They use cloth (both cotton and woollen goods), red, green, or blue, without reluctance; whereas the Arapaho have clung very tenaciously to skin in all ceremonial objects. Skin thongs and sinew for binding are, however, very rarely replaced by strings and thread, even with the Gros Ventre.

The few objects obtained belonging to the ghost-dance movement are the following. 668 778

Fig. 41 shows an imitation of a netted playing-wheel. The piece is about two inches in diameter. The stitch of the meshes seems to be correct, though there are fewer meshes than in the full-sized wheels. The "crow," the centre mesh, is painted red; the rest of the thong, yellow. To the centre mesh are attached four magpie-feathers cut off across. This object was wórn tied to the hair on the side of the head, or hanging from the little finger when the people joined hands to dance. Several very similar objects, lacking the feathers, are attached to the girl's painted dress shown in "Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History" (Vol. XVIII, Plate LXXV). [301]

A head-dress consisting of a hoop of about the same size, quill-wound and bisected by two quill-wound strings, and of three long, blue-and-white quill-wound pendant thongs with plume-feathers at the ends, was collected by Dr. Clark Wissler. It is not known whether it belongs to the war-dance or the ghost-dance; its general similarity to certain Arapaho head-dresses [242]

l: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

668
778

makes the latter seem possible. It differs from Arapaho objects chiefly in that the color-ornamentation of the quill-wrapping divides the hoop into three instead of four parts. At the upper end of the hoop is attached a bunch of seven small strips of whitish rabbit-fur, resembling the weasel-skin style of ornamentation characteristic of the Blackfoot.

Two balls (Figs. 24 and 25) are identical in character with Arapaho ghost-dance objects, and the latter was made in connection with the movement. These balls are described above.

778
293
171

[292]

Fig. 41 (50-1922). Wheel head-dress. Length, 21 cm.

The following objects, many of which were obtained by Dr. Clark Wissler and which were probably not connected with the ghost-dance, are of a character that does not seem to make it worth while to represent them in illustrations; but they resemble Arapaho or other pieces sufficiently for a brief description. They all appear to have been used in the war or grass dance.

Specimen Museum No. 50-1742 is a feathered crook modelled on the familiar type of curved lance that is common on the Plains, and to which the otterskin-wrapped lances of the second degree of the second Arapaho tribal ceremony belong.[1] The Gros Ventre too had such crooked lances in probably two of their tribal ceremonies. The present piece is about four feet long, and made of a stick painted yellow. There is no blade, or representation of it, at the lower end. At the end of the crook hangs a single eagle-feather. The greater portion of the shaft is covered by a casing of green cloth from which hang, attached by thongs and sinew wrapping painted yellow, a row of eighteen eagle-feathers.

A forked stick (specimen Museum No. 50-4328) resembles the Arapaho pieces of this kind described in the "Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History" (Vol. XVIII, p. 358). It is about six feet long, quite slender, and painted red. Some distance in the fork a quill-covered hoop is attached to the two spreading sticks. This hoop is red, with four white, blue-bordered areas on it. The ends of the fork are ornamented with a short green-cloth fringe, tufts of yellow-dyed hair, and feathers notched at the top. From the junction of the two arms downward,

[1] Compare Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part II, Plate XXXII.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the stick is first covered with green cloth, then with skin covered with red and blue quill-work, and at the pointed end is bare, except for its red paint. 778 293

A feathered wheel a foot or a foot and a half across (specimen Museum No. 50–4292) is covered with red, blue, green, yellow, white, and black feathers and plumes, many of them dyed, and tied to the hoop without any attempt at color-pattern or other arrangement. Most of the feathers have the quill split. 171

Another hoop (specimen Museum No. 50–1745) is a little smaller, and is covered with brown buffalo-fur instead of feathers. At one point, five split owl-feathers and six black unsplit feathers are attached; at a place opposite, two small yellowed feathers, one with a green plume at the base.

Other specimens secured by Dr. Clark Wissler are a ceremonial spoon with long, thin, decorated handle, and a quirt. The latter (specimen Museum No. 50–4305) is similar to Arapaho ceremonial quirts.[1] A heavy wooden handle consists of two parts, — the handle proper and a longer portion with five deep notches in the lower edge. The upper edge is straight. The part of the handle that is notched is ornamented with brass tacks. From the end of the stick hang two ends of thong, the whip. At the handle is attached a skin of a fox or similar animal, ornamented with eagle-feathers. 171 415 778

A feather shield consists essentially of a circle of radiating feathers, worn on the back. 171 293

A crow-belt, also secured by Dr. Clark Wissler, is quite similar to the Arapaho one described in the "Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History" (Vol. XVIII, p. 345). It is interesting that of the five Arapaho pieces in the Museum, this is at once the crudest in construction, and the most perverted by white influence from aboriginal style. In the present Gros Ventre belt, a rectangular piece of rawhide is bent over a stick as a support for the remainder of the specimen. The two hanging "tail" strips are of yellow cloth, quite narrow, hanging apart. Eagle-feathers, some dyed red, are attached to them. The belt proper is formed by two pieces of woven yarn. In the middle of the piece are attached the head and breast of an eagle. Below this, between the two hanging strips, is an ornament of a row of eagle-feathers pointing downward. These are attached in the folded edge of a squarish piece of rawhide, thus resembling the analogous piece in the Arapaho crow-belt referred to and the Arapaho biitaha"wu head-dresses. The ornament, however, is fastened to the remainder of the piece, so that it cannot have been worn as a head-dress. The two usual projecting arms consist each of a black eagle-wing feather, with a strip of quill-embroidery laid along the quill of the feather, and with several small bells, 778 [237]

[1] Mooney, Ghost-Dance Religion (Fourteenth Annual Report, Bureau of American Ethnology, Vol. XIV, p. 987, Fig. 94), shows a very similar quirt attributed to the dog-dance.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

171 whitish fur, and dyed horsehair tufts at the ends. At the base of each arm
293 are red, yellow, and violet feathers. These are either cut off across the end,
778 or have the uppermost part of the quill with its attached vanes removed.

CUSTOMS CONNECTED WITH RELIGION.

171 Sacred pipes were important in the religion of the Gros Ventre. The
276 beliefs and practices connected with these differ somewhat from those of
778 the Arapaho. The Arapaho recognize only one sacred pipe, which is pre-eminent over all others. Its worship is entirely tribal, though it is in the keeping of an individual. It occupies much the place in tribal life that the sacred pole did among the Omaha. While there are other sacred objects, such as the wheels and bundles, none of them equal the pipe in the regard in which they are held. Among the Gros Ventre there is an analogue of the Arapaho pipe, but also several others. This multiplicity distinctly differentiates the character of the Gros Ventre pipes from that of the Arapaho. The Gros Ventre pipes are not all primarily connected with the origin of the world; they are in part obtained from other tribes. They thus resemble the inter-tribal peace-pipes of the eastern and northern Plains.

[888] The sacred pipes were kept by old men. Their keepers could retain them as long as they wanted. They transferred their pipe to another keeper or owner whenever they wished, especially if some one prayed on their behalf. At present the Gros Ventre have three pipes. It is said that formerly they had more, some of which have been buried with their last owners. The most sacred of these pipes is called "flat-pipe" (çäēitsa"). This is described as being made of catlinite, with the bowl in the shape of a person (initä"). The Arapaho sacred pipe is also called "flat-pipe," and also is not flat; but it differs from the Gros Ventre pipe in being cylindrical and tubular. About the centre of the stem of this Gros Ventre flat-pipe is tied a string. A person in the tent where the pipe is kept should not tell myths. If through forgetfulness he begins to do so, it is necessary for him to continue all night.

276 A sick man sometimes pledged to smoke one of the sacred pipes for his
755 recovery. Then he provided food, and distinguished warriors were invited.
778 Each of these had to recount four coups before the pipe could be lighted. A green cherry-branch was then taken, greased, and put into the fire to light the pipe with. If it burnt well, the man would recover; if it burnt poorly, they were afraid that he would not become well, or that something would happen. Then the pipe was smoked in the greatest silence. Cloth or calico was "given" to it, the wrapping last given being the one on the out-

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

276
755
778

side of the bundle, it is said. Except at such ceremonies as this, only the keeper could touch the pipe.

276
778
[648]
[528]

Pipes were sometimes given to other tribes, and were sometimes received from them. Sometimes they were carried by war-parties. One of the three pipes still in existence is said to have been given by the Cheyenne to the Crow, and by the latter to the Gros Ventre, when peace was made between the two tribes. The stem is ornamented with feathers, weasel-skins, and at the end with a bunch of eagle-feathers. The sacred pipes were kept wrapped in many pieces of skin or cloth, and hung up in the tent. In good weather they were hung on a stand of three or four sticks, behind the tent. The keepers of the sacred pipes observed stringent rules. They could not eat of the head or back of any animal, nor of any part of the white-tailed deer, nor any eggs. They were not allowed to bathe, or to paint (except red), or to take the ashes out of the tent. They had to smoke in certain ways. They did not eat dogs, or allow them in the tent; nor did they let dogs touch them, or walk over their legs, or walk before them, while they were smoking. The keepers of the sacred pipes wore their hair uncut and uncombed. They could not cut it until they had given the pipe to another keeper. The hair was worn tied in a bunch just above the forehead. Fig. 42 shows such a bunch of matted hair, said to have been that of the grandfather of the father of the man who was the oldest in the tribe in 1901. This former keeper of the pipe became so old that he lost most of his hair, and the bunch shown was cut off by him before it should drop off. To this hair the later owner of the pipe, his present great-grandson, tied the first of his own teeth to fall out from old age: they are contained in a small cloth sack.

Fig. 42 (50 1902). Matted Hair. Length, 41 cm.

276
778
784

[825]

[302]

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

276 778 The sacred flat-pipe was also used in the sun-dance. It was once captured in war. Then the man who took it had bad dreams, until the pipe spoke to him in his dream and said, "Return me, or your tribe will be [728] destroyed." Then this man brought back the pipe, and his tribe made peace with the Gros Ventre.

343 782 The making of a sweat-house was not restricted to certain persons. A man wishing success in war would make a sweat-house for another person, in order that he might accomplish the deed he had in mind. Or, if a person was sick, one of his relatives might pledge to make a sweat-house for him, just as he would a dance. In this case the sick person himself would not necessarily use the sweat-house. On the other hand, a doctor might prescribe sweating for a patient, and in this case the sick person would enter the sweat-house.

[757]

Fig. 43 (50-4288). Sweat-house Tail. Length, 36 cm.

343 515 [237]

About twelve or fourteen willow poles were cut for the sweat-house. The entrance always faced the sunrise, and a small cottonwood-tree was erected in front of it. To this, calico or other property was tied by an old man as a gift to the sun. The cloth was partly blackened, the corners being rubbed with charcoal.

When all the participants were inside, the blankets were pulled down and the house closed tight. Water was poured on hot stones, at first five times. Thereupon the lodge was opened at the entrance and at the opposite west end, and the people cooled. It was then closed again, and this time water was poured on the rocks seven times. After cooling once more, water was poured on the rocks nine times. The fourth time, the man that poured the water could put as much or as little on the stones as he wished. After the fourth time, the participants came out and bathed. [757] If they were suffering from pain, they whipped that part of the body with buffalo or horse tails. This practice made the heat greatest at that point, much as if it were beaten into the body.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

343 757

A man who pledges and erects a sweat-house does not participate in the sweating. He makes the fire, heats the rocks and passes them into the house, raises and lowers the blankets, and performs other services.

[237]

In sweating, animal tails were sometimes used to beat the body with. Fig. 43 shows such an implement, made of the tail of a buffalo, on a stick handle cased in the skin of the tail. This object is similar to the Arapaho specimens described in the "Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History" (Vol. XVIII, p. 316), but is noticeable for the shortness of the hair on the tail.

343 757 776

When people were called to come to sweat, hixtcib'nix'a"t ("Above-Nix'a"t") was first called to sweat with them. Then the people were called. This personage, whose name also means "Above-white-man," is said to have been prayed to before the whites were known; but the Gros Ventre, like the Arapaho, state that they do not know whether he is identical with the Nix'a"t of their myths. Ordinary prayers were always addressed first to hixtcib'nix'a"t or to iiçanânin ("our father"), then the sun and moon would be mentioned, next the sacred pipes, and then the earth. After these had been mentioned, anything else could be prayed to.

[301]

778

A charm tied on horses to make them run fast consists of rabbit-feet painted red and tied together. The Arapaho used rabbits' feet for the same purpose.

Specimen Museum No. 50 1804 is a pair of wild-cat-tails worn by young men at the shoulder, or at the heel of a moccasin. They were also tied to children's belts, next to the skin, in order to keep them from wetting the bed.

[751]

Specimen Museum No. 50 1903 is a gorget (commonly called by the Indians in English "moon-shell") said to have been made in the old way from an intervertebral disk of a buffalo. At present these objects are usually slightly concave, and are made of china.

Fig. 44 (50-4280). Thunder-stone Necklace. Length, 21 cm.

[301 237]

The Gros Ventre, according to Dr. Clark Wissler, call certain corrugated fossil stones "thunder-stones."[1] The Assiniboine seem to use the same name. The Blackfeet, who perhaps have most developed the cult of these objects, call them "buffalo-stones." A specimen from the Northern Arapaho is shown in the "Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural

[1] [These are probably Ammonite septa. - Analyst]

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

778 History" (Vol. XVIII, p. 443, Fig. 176). Fig. 44 shows a small Gros Ventre specimen attached to a thong, for wear around the neck. The entire stone is tightly incased in a piece of skin which preserves the form so closely as to be scarcely noticeable. At the lower end of the stone is a small fringe of skin. Skin and thong are painted over red.

BELIEFS ABOUT THE DEAD.

775 Dead people go to a barren region in the north. People have been there, but the ghosts are invisible. The dead are often heard whistling, speaking, and calling about human habitations; houses and tents may be closed, but still they are heard. They speak as a living person would, and people in return ask them questions. When at war, people often ask the ghosts what luck they will have, or where the enemy are. The dead always tell the truth, and, if they say one of the party will be injured, it always happens. The ghosts are never seen, but only heard. Sometimes, if a medicine-man asks one of his spirits to bring him a dead relative, the door is heard moving, and after a time the spirit returns with the dead person, who, when he is asked questions, answers. Every one who is present can hear him plainly. Sometimes, on the arrival of the person, a noise like the whirring of wings is heard. Then there is a tapping at the top of the tent-poles. Then the tapping moves about the tent. Now it may be at the door, now at the back of the tent. When a ghost or spirit is seen, as occasionally happens, it is only for a glimpse.

If a man keeps a tooth or a bone of a dead person, after a time the spirit of that person appears to him. Some ghosts lie, but some are truthful. A man who controls a ghost, or a medicine-man who has a spirit, can see it; but it is invisible to other people. It is summoned only in the dark. People who have lost horses bring a pipe to a man that has a spirit, and pay him. Then he calls his spirit, and it tells where the horses are. If people try to ascertain by the help of a medicine-man where they have lost a small valued object, the spirit may throw it at them. Stolen property is found in the same way. A ghost or spirit is called "untrue person."

159 An old man who has been several times quoted tells the following: "I
775 once died. I think that Above-Nix'a"t pitied me, and let me live to be an old man. I was very sick with cramps and fits. The camp was moving, and the last I remember was that the tents were being pitched. Then I knew nothing about it; but the people were mourning for me and had put paint and my best clothes on me. I was travelling. I went north until I came to the Cypress Hills. There on the hills I saw two bears going into

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

773 was a clean cut through the ice, about two feet wide, the path of the monster.
776 It had moved about in the lake until it reached the bank above which the people were sleeping. The monster had struck this bank, the impression of its head and two curved horns being visible. Then it had turned and gone back to the centre of the lake, and there disappeared, making another path, on each side of which the ice was piled up. The narrator gave to it several pieces of property.

It is said that it is not known whether thunders have ever been seen; but [821] old men say that they have seen marks on the ground where one is thought to have alighted. The grass about was scorched, and two zigzag lightning-marks, each forking at the end, extended in opposite directions along the ground.

The people were once camped east of the present reservation. A terrific rainstorm came and passed over them. When they thought it had gone by, there was a fierce clap of thunder, and a man and his wife and their boy were struck by lightning. The man and boy were killed, but the woman is still alive. There were two small holes in the tent, and through the bedding into the ground there extended two small holes of the size of a small calibre bullet-hole. On another occasion, a woman was untying a curtain at the back of the tent in order to keep a bed dry, when lightning struck the tent-pole, and she was killed. The other people in the tent were merely stunned.

Not many years ago a strange thing happened to a man and a woman still living. During a thunderstorm the woman, who had been sitting at the door, went to the back of the tent and sat beside her husband. Lightning struck the tent, and shot a hole through every metal plate, cup, or dish on the ground. Where it entered the tent, it left a mark like a sword. The people then painted the tent dark-blue.

A woman out mourning for her mother on the prairie saw a small thunder-stone (bax'aa^{n}ayäa^{n}). It was creeping slowly, leaving a trail or mark. The woman thought she would leave it, and pick it up later. When she came to the place again in the evening, the stone had vanished. Its trail was still visible, but ended where she had seen it last.

821 The rainbow is called bax'aanäyaa^{n}t ("thunder's fishing-line"). Näyaa^{n}t seems to mean any fishing-implement.

The whirlwind is called inääçitä^{n}. This is also the name of a red legless water-worm (not a leech).

The three stars of Orion are called "buffalo-bulls." The two below them, to one side, are hunters who were going to shoot them and suddenly found themselves in the sky.

773 The Gros Ventre once lived far north of where they are now, where there
● 778 were nothing but forests. There they found a metallic object. The object
823

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

was like the flat rocks on which women pound berries, perfectly round, rough above, and perfectly smooth on the under side. Many men lifting together could not move it; but when offerings were made to it, and it was asked to rise, one man was able to lift it easily. Several people tried to sleep near it in order to dream about it, but none of them ever staid the whole night through. They would dream that it was a large metal kettle coming toward them on legs, and filled with boiling water, whereupon they jumped up and fled. 773 778 823 [787]

West of the present Gros Ventre Reservation there was, until the whites took it away, a stone shaped like a person, except that it lacked the face. This was once a Snake Indian. A war-party saw him sitting on a hill, and pursued him into a flat. They had nearly caught him when he turned to stone and has been there ever since. Once, as a camp went by and the people made offerings of calico and other property, a man said, "Why do you do that?" Taking a club, he knocked off the head of the figure. The man died the same summer.

A complete buffalo of stone, with hump, horns, ribs, and other parts, half of it underground, has been seen by the Gros Ventre, and many offerings and prayers have been made to it. 823 778

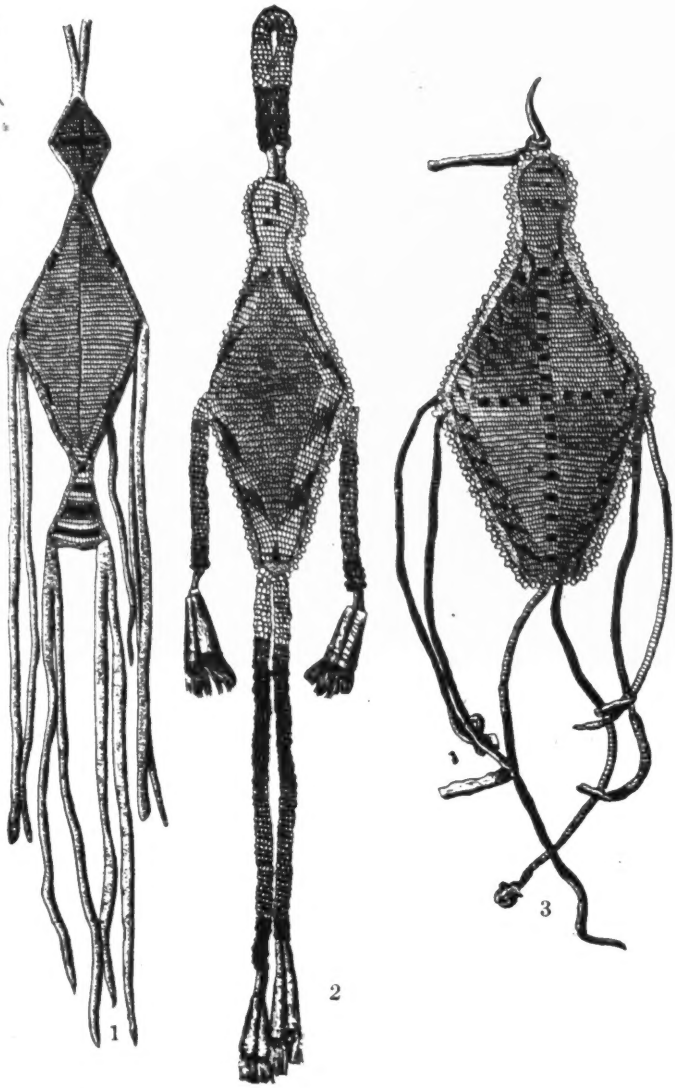
To the north of the Gros Ventre Reservation is a lake shaped like a buffalo, with legs and all parts complete. The tail runs out into a river, the hoofs are patches of brush, and the horns are streaks of timber of the shape of horns.

Lizards are thought to bite persons and then to hang fast to the wound, sucking the flesh into themselves. It is said that a certain man was bitten and the lizard could not be pulled off. The man's flesh had to be cut off around the lizard's mouth. 825

There is believed to be a kind of bear with one white fore-leg, which is fiercer than the grizzly. The jack-rabbit is called "white rabbit;" and the cottontail, "left-hand rabbit." The prairie-dog is called "large gopher" (?); and the mink, "prairie-dog weasel." The bat's bite is thought to be exceedingly poisonous.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

778
751
532



NAVEL-AMULETS.

[End plate 2]

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

occasion he stated that it was the "law" of the spring hunt that no one should hunt buffalo alone or in a small group, violation of which invoked the sanctions applied by the Wolf-men or Stars. However, in 1940, this same informant stated twice, explicitly, that there was no police power except at the Sacred Dances and on a third occasion in that year said: "After the Sacred Dance the company disbanded, and the chief resumed control, but he did not punish anybody for hunting buffalo alone." 224 688 625

In any case, authority was delegated to the companies only temporarily. Otherwise there was no agency beyond that of the family which could apply sanctions of force, and then, on only two counts. A husband had the right to take the life of an unfaithful wife; the family had the right of blood revenge in case of murder. In both, however, less extreme modes of behavior were approved and bloodshed could honorably be avoided. 688 625 684 682

When murder occurred, if the family of the murdered person could be persuaded to accept a payment of goods as restitution, further spilling of blood was prevented. It was said that the lodge of the band chief offered temporary refuge to a murderer and that sanctuary was likewise available in the lodge of the Keeper either of the Flat or of the Feathered Pipe. It was thought that if the murderer and his family, who collectively shared responsibility for the crime, could flee the scene, time would be gained for negotiating the blood-price. If one blood relative killed another, there was no retaliation, but the murderer was shunned. 682 [678] [672]

While there was a considerable amount of fighting and quarreling among the Gros Ventres, especially under the influence of liquor, disputes were usually settled without bloodshed. Outright murder, as distinct from deaths attributed to witchcraft, was seemingly relatively infrequent. The following seven cases, arranged chronologically, illustrate actual behavior. Each of these was referred to independently by several different informants with a high level of agreement among them on details. The total represents all the murders that were known to have occurred in the period from about 1850 to 1885. 689

Case No. 1. These events took place about 1847. Two young men, who were related by blood, went on foot to steal horses from the enemy. One had obtained a fine horse, but the other had been 682

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

way? I warned you not to do anything. If you kill her we will 682
not proceed with this Dance. It is a serious thing to interfere 688
with a Sacred Dance, but if you persist we will all scatter." This appeal was effective and the Kitfox Dance was carried out without further mishap.

Case No. 3. On one occasion in about 1862, some men were 682
drinking and two of them got in a tussle. The one who got the worse of the fight went to his brother and said: "Kill your wife. Her son [by another marriage] almost killed me. If you kill your wife, you can have one of mine." The husband took his brother at his word and went to his lodge and killed his wife, put her corpse on the fire, and heaped coals on top of it. The wife's two brothers, hearing of their sister's unjustified murder, went that night to where the men were still drinking. When the man who had originally instigated the murder saw the brothers coming closer and closer, he called out: "I don't want anyone to come any nearer or I might shoot him by mistake." But the brothers were not deterred and, approaching closer, shot and killed the man who had called out. Thus the one who had encouraged his brother in murder paid for the crime with his own life. Nevertheless his relatives mourned for him as they would have had he died under different circumstances, but they made no attempt to retaliate for his loss.

Case No. 4. The following incident occurred about 1865. Practically the whole tribe was camped together and there was a lot of drinking going on. A woman, crying, came in the lodge of her sister's husband. When they asked her the cause of her tears she told them that a certain man had beaten up her son and herself. Her sister's husband immediately took up his gun and went out into the night looking for that man. When he met up with him, without asking any questions except to be sure he had the right one, he shot him dead. When he returned to his lodge, his wife urged him to flee, but he refused to do so, saying: "I don't think his people will take up for him since he was in the wrong." Nevertheless several riders dashed by, shooting at the lodge but not doing any damage. The women were frightened and started running toward the chief's lodge. There was snow on the ground [778] ●
and they had a hard time locating it, but at last they got there and

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

682
[D78]

called out: "Our home is in trouble, we have come for protection." The chief invited them in and assured them that, while they were there, no one could harm them. But they could hear the relatives of the murdered man mourning for him. The man who had killed him continued to remain in his lodge. Evidently the male relatives of the murdered man refused to act further than merely shooting at the lodge, but finally the mother of the dead man and his father's sister, accompanied by his nephew, a boy of about ten who carried a loaded gun, came to the lodge. The women called out: "Come out here, if you are a man." They repeated this several times, but when the man failed to appear, a woman in a neighboring lodge invited them to come with her. She fed them well and eventually persuaded them to let the matter drop.

Case No. 5. These events occurred about a decade later than the preceding and details are fuller. It seems that a young man had captured a very fine horse under dangerous circumstances. He proved the horse's quality while enhancing his own prestige during subsequent encounters with the enemy. An older man, jealous of this young man who was making such a noteworthy reputation, kept pestering the young man to give his horse to him. Had the older man asked in the proper way, the younger might have acceded to his request. But the request had been made in a bullying fashion, and the older man had treated the younger as though he considered him still a child, yet the latter behaved well in simply ignoring the bully rather than answering him back.

One day, however, the older man was drunk and came up to the other, gun in hand, and said: "I am going to kill you." To which the younger man replied: "Well, be sure you do a good job of it. Be sure you don't miss me. Hit me with a bullet, because if you don't kill me, I'm going to kill you!" The older man pushed against the other's chest with his gun saying: "Well, you aren't made of rock, I can kill you," and then moving the gun near the other's head, he shot wide, intending merely to frighten him. The young man, however, did not so much as flinch, and said: "Why don't you kill me? I guess you don't want to—but be sure I'm going to kill you!" The older man said: "Oh, you are just talking!" and went into his lodge. But the young man got his gun and when his companions tried to stop him he said: "I don't want

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

among men. It was a severe ordeal and the older men had no mercy on these youngsters. 857 868

Occasionally as training in bravery, the heart of a bear was taken raw and cut into small bits. After calling together the older boys and young men and lining them up, each one in turn was given a bit of the heart dipped in fresh blood and asked: "Well, are you going to have a brave heart?" Some were able to swallow it easily, but others could not stomach it. Those who were able to swallow and retain it were said to be the really brave ones.[8] [262]

It was indicated by many informants that in the old days a man would almost have to have had supernatural powers in order to be outstandingly successful in war or to achieve fame as a medicine man. In fact it was thought that supernatural powers could be helpful in many aspects of life including gambling and love. Guardians, however, used to warn the boys and young men under their care that "you can't get something for nothing." By this was meant that a person who accepted supernatural power would not live out his full span of life. Thus, according to The Boy, parents emphasized in training their sons that, rather than going on power quests, they should be ambitious to acquire fame and respect by developing their natural abilities. Nevertheless many sought and obtained supernatural powers, visions apparently often being vouchsafed in youth, although the power might not have been used until later in life. It was believed that those who accepted and used such supernatural powers died prematurely.[9] 787 798

Methods of Instruction

Oral instruction, or "lecturing," stands out in the Gros Ventre mind as the most important method of child training. All of our middle-aged and older informants agreed that some relative, often either the mother or the father, lectured their children almost every day, telling them what was right and what was wrong and "how to live." If boys and girls were present together, there were some subjects which could not be touched upon and would be reserved for fathers to speak about to their sons and for mothers 861

[8] It was said that, in the distant past, the heart of an enemy was so devoured by warriors. For historical confirmation, see Henry, v. 2, p. 734. [266]

[9] Full discussion of supernatural powers is given in Cooper Ms., 1949.

PLATES

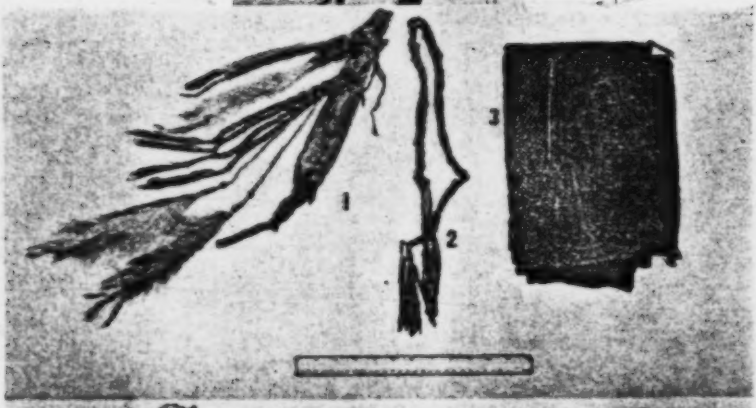
142 The original photograph of Plate 1 was taken in 1887 and
291 belongs to The Boy. Shown in it are Lame Bull, The Boy's
301 father, and Crow Bull, maternal uncle of Coming Daylight. Both
302 of these men were born around 1825 and their personal experiences were often referred to by our informants as we took down the record of the old way of life. Each had been Keeper of the sacred Flat Pipe.

115 The photographs composing Plate 2, except for the one of The
133 Boy, were taken in 1940 by Dr. Karl F. Herzfeld. The first three
143 show the nature of the country around Hays on the Fort Belknap
291 Reservation; the other three show some of our informants and
292 interpreters whose biographical sketches follow.

531 In Plate 3, the shield and war medicines of Bull Lodge, father
797 of our informant, Garter Snake, represent only a few of the specimens of Gros Ventre culture collected in 1937 by Mr.
778 Richard Pohrt, of Flint, Michigan.
293
714
721

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

293
778
721
714



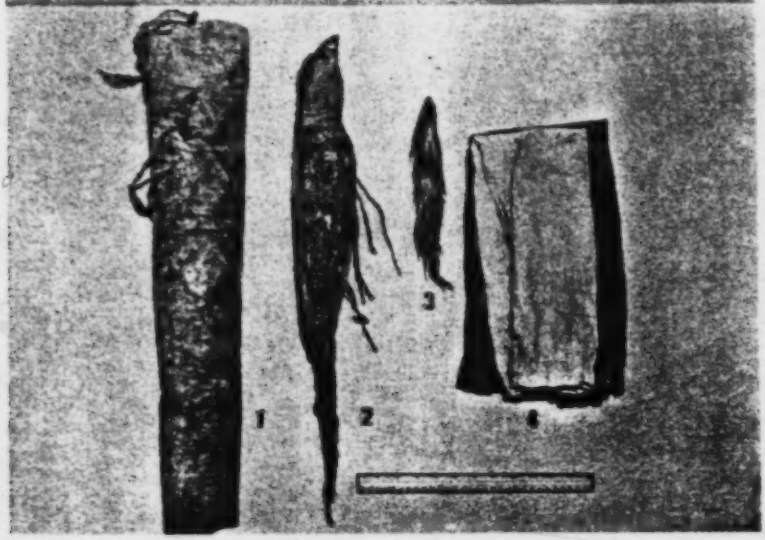


PLATE III

SHIELD AND WAR MEDICINES MADE
AND USED BY BULL LODGE

[p. 212(C)]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

776 second element in the word is the name of the culture hero and trickster, who in the early mythical period taught the Gros Ventres how to pray to the Supreme Being, and how to make a living. The present-day Gros Ventres can give no clue to the etymological meaning of the word ni:hohat, nor can the writer analyze it. The word is also used for spider. The spider is in a certain sense sacred and, if it is killed, rain comes. The spider, the Gros Ventres say, can in spite of its small size do wonderful things with its web, can make it stay anywhere, can climb up and down it, and, in general, is usually master of the situation. The name of the trickster Ni:hohat is ordinarily translated as "white man" by English-speaking Gros Ventres and the translation is derived from a folktale concerning an escapade of Ni:hohat in which he had his hair cut off.[3] Thus it was that when the Gros Ventres first saw the white man with his hair cut short, in contrast to the Gros Ventres' long hair, they called him by the name of the trickster. Consequently, the name for the Supreme Being Ixtciboni:hohat is often rendered in English as "The One Above the White Man" or, in abbreviated form, "The One Above."

778 821 825

The second name for the Supreme Being is Behä:tixtč. The meaning, "the master, boss, head, leader of all" is quite clear (be:-, be:hi, "all"; änä:tixtč, "he is master, boss, head, of group or organization).[4]

The third name Ni:nänä'ätč, is said to be an older form which was still in use in the lifetime of The Boy and Thick, and it was felt that it had the meaning of "study, think, meditate," and that the whole might signify "the being who has control over everything by thought or will,"—a concept which, it may be added, would be quite in keeping with the Gros Ventre idea of the power of sheer thought or thought-wish by human beings. But this

[3] Kroeber, 1907, pp. 72-73, gives a version of this episode which is substantially the same as the one obtained by me.

[782] [4] In 1948 The Boy stated that the Gros Ventres addressed the Supreme Being by this term "when they wanted something big, e.g. when they prayed for a good harvest of all the things the earth produced. Thus we are saying a kind of mass prayer indicating that the Supreme Being owns everything. He made it and he owns it, and it was recognized that they depended on him." [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

776 was supposed to have come on earth far up north, and to have made the rounds of all the tribes, finally reaching the Gros Ventres. 797 The Gros Ventres at first so called the priest, but when they discovered that he ate and slept like themselves, they ceased calling him by this name.

776 In the sweatlodge rite, to be described later, the first of those invited to sweat was the Supreme Being.[1] In how far such an invitation was anthropomorphically conceived is hard to say; it need not, of course, necessarily have implied anything beyond symbolic deference.

The Boy and Thick stated: "He is not a 'false person.' He is entirely in a class by himself. We think so much of him that we do not dare to try to learn what he looks like. We class him as a kind of shadow. He is the most wonderful and powerful of all beings who have no bodies."

[778] No statues or images or pictographs of any kind were ever made of the Supreme Being, nor were there any symbolic representations of him.

The Supreme Being was alone and one, and, as compared with other sacred or superhuman beings of religion, myth, and folklore, [782] he ranked first. Where prayers included invocation of more beings than one, the Supreme Being's name always came first; in ritual invitations before sweating or partaking of food, he was always invited first. He was, however, much more than *primus inter pares.* He was in a class by himself as not only the most powerful but as the ultimate source of the power possessed by other beings and as the ultimate ruler and controller of these others. Bha'a, [821] the Storm Being, who ranked next in importance to the Supreme Being, was controller of storms, thunder and lightning, and exercised a certain limited autonomy. He had this power and office, however, not of himself, but by delegation from the Supreme Being, and exercised it as the agent of the Supreme Being, as will be explained more fully later. Then, too, while the Gros Ventres through fasting and crying on the hills or prairie sought supernatural power, not directly from the Supreme Being, but from other beings—animals and others—it was the Supreme Being who

[1] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, p. 275.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

776 bätĕ, "he (who) has gristle (tendon from back of neck of animal) nose," and "black hawk," a certain very large black-feathered hawk known also locally as "bullet hawk" (*Buteo sp.?*). Another name for Bha'a was "old man four parts of the earth." Bha'a, the thunderbird, as was appropriate, had dark or black feathers, and was a swift flier; his bill and feet were of the same material as back tendon (see Blood-Clot Story, No. 11 in Appendix).

●778 In the Gros Ventre Sacrifice Lodge, or "Sun dance," Bha'a
776 was represented near the top of the center pole as a bird, painted
796 black, with a buffalo tail fastened to his head as a sort of plume, with a zigzag line descending from the bird almost to the ground and ending in a fork, and with a bunch of branches stuck in the
[302] fork of the center pole of the lodge to represent Bha'a's nest. Each of the dancers painted all over in white had a bird representing Bha'a, painted in black with charcoal or paint on his upper center breast, with black zigzag lines ending in a fork from the bird's wings down each arm and forearm and from the bird's feet down each thigh and leg to his ankle, with a black zigzag line forked at each end across the forehead, and with a vertical red zigzag line forked at the lower end extending down from each eye. The
[534] drum-head used in the Feathered Pipe rite had a red background on which the Thunderbird was represented in blue, with a yellow zigzag line on either side from the head to the wings. Bha'a entered prominently into both the Sacrifice Lodge and the Feathered Pipe rite.

776 Any large strange animal might in the olden days be called
825 Bha'a or even be looked upon as an embodiment or theophany of Bha'a.

One supposed theophany over which the present day Gros Ventres laugh heartily, is recorded on the occasion of their seeing their first mule. The story as told with verve and intense amusement by The Boy was as follows:

"The Gros Ventres used to move around a great deal. Once a mule, the first one the Gros Ventres had ever seen, got lost somehow, struck the Gros Ventres' trail, came to their camp and stopped. A Gros Ventre crier spied it and came back to camp

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

power from the "ghost men" by sleeping near their pictographs, but never with any success. One young man, however, once without quest got power in childbirth cases from a boss of little children who appear to him in a dream, and Singer thought these "little children" were "ghost men," but the identification is doubtful. The only message they ever got from the "ghost men" was a request or demand that the Gros Ventres go away at once as they smelt bad or made the place smell bad. On war parties or other occasions, offerings were made at the pictograph cliff to the "ghost men," who would then during the night make new pictographs on the morrow from which the future in the form of good or bad fortune could be easily foreseen by the members of the party.[20]

Supernatural power was gotten either by quest or otherwise from ghosts or, as more commonly, from non-human beings, such as mountains (or the spirit who inhabited or owned the mountains), rocks, mammals (bear, wolf, weasel, mink, coyote, rat, prairie dog and others), birds (crow, prairie chicken), snakes, spiders and so forth. "These lesser beings, while ranking a little above human beings and possessing certain superhuman powers, were under the leadership and control of the Supreme Being, from whom they had received such powers to be imparted in turn to human beings. Like Bha'a, they were, so to speak, delegated agents and underlings of the Supreme Being, put by him in charge of "the details of the whole situation," as The Boy expressed it. The powers so imparted were of many kinds, to cure, to poison or otherwise harm, to foretell, to become a great warrior, to acquire wealth, to succeed in love and gambling, et cetera, as will be described in detail later.

Non-Cult Beings

So much for the beings to whom cult was rendered in the form of prayer or sacrifice. We shall now describe the supernatural beings,—human, "humanoid" and non-human,—to whom no cult was rendered but who entered in one form or other into ritual

[20] Cf. Flannery, 1953, p. 93.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

All of them, bunched close together, ran away, and they could hear the ghost laughing. They shot at it but it laughed all the more. When they got a good distance from their camping spot, they could still hear the ghost laughing behind them, and it only quit bothering them when they got far away. Whenever a war party came close to this spot, it would be bothered by that ghost, whose name was 'Hole-through-his-penis.' So the Gros Ventres quit camping there." 775 539

The second illustration was given as follows: "On one occasion, during the lifetime of Lame Bull (The Boy's father), a number of Gros Ventres went off on a war party and camped at an old abandoned winter camp on the Missouri River. They made a shelter frame of old tent and travois poles. One of the men went out some distance, gathered wood and lit a fire and started to cook meat. The night was very dark. Something started throwing sticks at him every now and then. He thought to himself: 'My friends are trying to test my courage,' and paid no attention. The sticks began coming too frequently. He said to them: 'You better quit throwing at me. You might hurt me. You can't scare me.' They said: 'We're not throwing at you.' The sticks came faster. So he ran back to the shelter where the others were, rushed in and hid behind the leader of the war party. They all got scared then and piled up in a struggling heap close to the leader until he was pinned under them. 'Let me up,' he said, 'I'll see what is scaring you and deal with that thing.' The ghost poked in a cross piece of a travois and scattered their fire. While still piled up in a heap they heard a voice laughing outside and seeming to go away. They at last got straightened out and fixed up the fire, but still could hear the ghost laughing. One of the men, Chief Grass, said: 'I'm going to kill that ghost.' He then rolled some buffalo hair around the head of an arrow, singed it a little and spat on it,—his way, it was believed, of using his power. He then shot the arrow in the direction where the laughing could still be heard. The voice was at once silenced, and they were not bothered any more that night. 'I believe I killed that ghost.' Chief Grass said, 'at daylight, I'll look around.' The next morning they looked around and found a bleached human skull with the arrow of [778]

CHAPTER II

THE FLAT PIPE

Keepership

The Flat Pipe was ordinarily in the custody of an official keeper called nätcä:ta' (nätcä, chief) with his head wife as co-keeper, nä:tciθä (chief woman) and one of their young children as pipe child, nätcəta:niθə'. 793 [578]

In olden times before the coming of the whites according to the tradition as handed down to The Boy and Thick, the Flat Pipe was hereditary in one of the families or bands—which one is unknown. The man and wife chosen, from within the family or band, to be keeper and co-keeper were usually a couple in the prime of life, not an old man married to a young woman or an old woman married to a very young man. A couple in the prime of life were chosen so that, even though they already had children, they could still have more. For it was the tribal law that they should designate out of their children, a boy or girl, born after they had entered upon their keepership to remain with them and to succeed to the keepership should both the keeper and his wife die by accident or sickness. Nearly always they designated a boy, rarely a girl, as the keeper had ordinarily to be a man. The Boy and Thick thought that this system of hereditary keepership came to an end long ago as a result perhaps of the fact that a keeper might have had no children or children died off, or the complete dying out of the family or band in which the Pipe was then hereditary. 793 428

In historic times, that is, as far back as definite tribal memory goes, non-hereditary succession has prevailed. It took two forms, elective and volunteer. In the first case, the initiative was taken by others than the prospective keeper; in the second, by the prospective keeper himself. To become an official keeper a man had to be formally inaugurated with a rite which will be described later. In certain emergencies the Pipe was temporarily without 793

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

on a given night after everybody was asleep lest the matter became known and the prospective electee take flight. When a rumor would spread that a new election was imminent, those who thought they might be elected used commonly to go away and sleep elsewhere than in their own lodges, as almost all were reluctant to become keepers. Those invited to the election meeting had to keep absolute secrecy beforehand, and at the meeting itself no one else than the keeper and co-keeper and the above invitees was present except two attendants, sons of keepers or ex-keepers. 793

The actual keeper might open the discussion by proposing a name. Discussion was free but dignified. Agreement would be finally reached, perhaps well after midnight or towards morning, on the keeper's first choice or on some other man. Knowing how onerous the keepership was, the keeper out of the regard for the ex-keepers would not be apt to nominate one of their sons, and ordinarily did not nominate one of his own.

The proposed keeper had to be a prominent member of the tribe, a man of great ability and renown, with a record of recognized achievement and with very considerable wealth in horses, in the size and furnishings of his lodge, and so forth. He had to be of the cream of the tribe, or "the best among many." And he had "to be good" as the Gros Ventre ethical code conceived goodness. He had to be generous; a stingy man, even though a great warrior, and even though he had vowed to become keeper, would never get the Pipe, for the keeper had to feed people and to be good to them and have pity on them. A murderer of a fellow tribesman could not become keeper, nor could a "professional" gambler, that is, one who is known to have supernatural gambling power. In general one guilty of grave crime such as rape or theft from fellow tribesman, or of habitual marked moral delinquency or defect, such as lying, backbiting, felony, disbelief in or disrespect for holy things, was barred from the keepership as he was barred from rising high in the prestige scale. 793 577 [778] [554]

After the choice was finally decided upon, the whole party with others of their kin proceeded secretively before or toward daybreak to the lodge of the electee to seize him bodily by surprise before he could escape. Once seized or even only elected he had practically 793

793 although without the wild parsley, but we did not obtain details.

After ritual treatment of their wearing apparel, the new keeper
796 and co-keeper had to take off any ring, necklace or other personal adornment made of copper, iron or other metal, as the wearing
[784] of metal adornments was forbidden them, apparently because such were from the whites. The two, but not the Pipe child, were each ritually invested with a necklace consisting of a large single shell on a string of twisted, not plaited, buckskin. The investure was done with three motions as if putting the necklace on, and at the third it was actually put on. Further the keeper, but not the co-
[302] keeper, had to frame his hair over his forehead with a large pompadour, as a sign of distinction.[1]

The new co-keeper also put some dried peppermint leaves mixed
[778] with poisonous wild parsley in a little buckskin sack which she then wore on her belt. This had a double purpose. First, the mixture being poisonous, she commanded respect. She must not be molested or even be bodily touched. Whoever molested or even
[837] touched her would suffer fits or spasms or a paralytic stroke. Second, she must live a virtuous life and not run around with other
[784] men. The co-keeper and keeper, as also the ex-co-keepers and ex-keepers, since they had all been consecrated with peppermint and fumigation could handle the wild parsley without danger, but the common people were not immune to its supposedly highly toxic effects.

On this second day a big feast was given. Most of the food was provided by the new keeper and his relatives. That eaten
262 by the new keeper and co-keeper, who had been fasting from food
784 and water since the time they were first siezed a good thirty or more hours previously, was provided by the ex-keepers.

At sundown the day's instruction ended. That night the new keeper and co-keeper, the ex-keepers and ex-co-keepers and two attendants slept in the double lodge, where the Pipe also remained.

Very early the next morning (or less probably late on the

[1] In 1948 The Boy added: "When a man became keeper, he ceased to comb his hair and it would get in all kinds of shapes and hang down. So he would take a bunch from the center and wind it round and round and tied that knot of hair around with a string. Whenever the keeper took off that string the people would be afraid!" [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The lodges of the other people faced toward the east-southeast, from utilitarian consideration, since the prevailing and strongest winds were from the northwest in winter and west in summer. But the door of the keeper's lodge was toward the south, an orientation determined by the ritual position of the Pipe inside the lodge, namely, in the place of honor opposite the door with the stem pointing toward the rising sun. 342 346 [36]

The interior of the keeper's lodge was arranged as follows. In the center was the family hearth. About midway between this and the north segment was the square incense hearth, with the west half of black sand and the east of red. At the north, close to the wall, was the Pipe bed and place for the Pipe tripod. The bed, oriented east and west, was made of a buffalo robe over sage brush. At each end was a willow back rest, and over each rest a robe of summer-pelage (after winter coat completely shed) buffalo skin. The tripod, of three legs, was a little over five feet high. The Pipe bundle was either laid on the bed close to the wall or else hung on the tripod, always with the stem to the rising sun. The northern part of the lodge, including the incense hearth and Pipe bed and adjacent area, in all about one-third of the interior, constituted a sort of "sanctuary." 342 346 353 778

The keeper's sleeping bed, with its back rest toward the north, was a little removed from the Pipe bed, toward the west; the co-keeper's in a corresponding position toward the east. The Pipe child commonly slept on the Pipe bed, alongside of and to the south of the Pipe bundle, with his head to the east. If however the keeper or co-keeper wanted to sleep on the Pipe bed in order to dream, the Pipe child would then give place and sleep in his father's or mother's bed as the case might be. When any of the three slept on the Pipe bed, the Pipe bundle might hang on the tripod over them or else rest on the northern edge of the bed nearest the wall. In the latter case, the tripod was folded up and leaned between the Pipe bed and the co-keeper's bed. According to Thick the sleepers had to lie flat on their backs all night. According, however, to The Boy they were forbidden to do so and had instead to lie on their sides, because the turtle was closely associated with the Flat Pipe and if a turtle gets on its back it cannot right itself. 342 346 513 [784] [825]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

341 The triangular space between the foot of the Pipe bed and the
346 head of the keeper's bed served the keeper as a place to keep such
353 of his personal and ritual belongings as his peppermint, sage brush, personal smoking pipe, and so forth.

●778 In good weather, the Pipe bundle was taken outside by the co-
788 keeper in the morning (rite to be described later) and hung up, stem to east, on the outside of the keeper's lodge just above the door, the thong handle of the bundle being looped around a pin of the lodge. About sundown the bundle was brought inside again by the co-keeper to its ritual place. At night the opening of the keeper's lodge was securely closed with a piece of rawhide, shaped like the door, covered with a sort of lattice work of rawhide, and fastened from the inside.

778 The keeper's lodge, as the depository of the Flat Pipe and the dwelling of the consecrated custodians thereof, had to be treated with great respect. This respect was formalized in a number of ritual and other observances.

784 No one was permitted to step over the incense hearth, under penalty of being inflicted with fits.

When the keeper, co-keeper and Pipe child took off their moccasins for the night, these had to be deposited, not alongside the beds or under the pillows or anywhere in the "sanctuary," but near the lodge door,—the keeper's to the west of the door, the co-keeper's to the east, the Pipe child's to either the west or the east *ad libitum*. If this were not done, severe headaches would result.

Anyone entering the keeper's lodge or leaving it or passing from one part of it to another, always had to walk clockwise.

784 When anything was going on therein, with men and women both
516 present, the men had to sit on the western side, the women on the eastern. When they sat down, they could not sit with legs stretched out in front; the men squatted on their heels with knees touching the ground and legs parallel, while the women sat on their buttocks with their legs to the right side one leg under the other.

784 No one, adult or child, could throw stones or sticks at the keeper's lodge. Children were not allowed to play or fool or romp

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

784 fund of war exploits would be apt to give out, and the two would
517 begin talking about trifling occurrences in camp, personal reminiscences about their marriages, and so forth. Everybody had a good time at such a three-day session.

Neither the keeper nor others were permitted to tell folk-tales of the vulgar or obscene Ni:hahat type in the former's lodge. If a member of a visiting group inadvertently broke the rule, a three-day session similar to the war-deed one above was prescribed, during which he had to continue telling such tales.

● 778 If a murder of a fellow-tribesman had been committed in camp, and the murdered person's relatives were about to kill the murderer
696 in revenge, the latter could run to and take refuge in the keeper's lodge and was safe so long, but only so long, as he stayed there. The avengers dared not enter it to kill, but immunity ceased so soon as the murderer left the lodge.

621 There is general agreement among our informants that the keeper's lodge was pitched in a prominent place, but exactly where
361 in the camp circle is a controverted point we did not succeed in clearing up. According to one tradition, it occupied the place of honor in the circle, toward the northwest—opposite the circle's opening which was toward the southeast or the rising sun,—regardless of where the keeper's band camped in the circle. Three, however, of our oldest informants, Coming Daylight, Takes-the-Bow, and Turn-Toes, held that the keeper remained with his band, the first two of the three stating that his lodge was pitched a little in front of his band toward the center of the circle.

Prerogatives and Restrictions of Keepership

793 The office of keepership carried with it on the one hand a great many special rights, privileges, prerogatives and powers and on the other a great many restrictions, obligations, responsibilities and sacrifices. The following list is undoubtedly incomplete, as new ones were still being revealed when our field work came to an end,[8] but it probably includes most of them. They functionally accord with sacred and high dignity of the keepership, the supernatural power attached to it, the lofty ethical behavior and "as-

[8] Kroeber, 1908, p. 273, has some we did not get.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13.

ceticism" expected of the keeper, his status as one set apart from his fellows, and his political and civil role in the Gros Ventre theocracy. We shall classify and treat them in this order, although some of them do not fit too neatly into any one of the five or six categories, and some straddle two or more of them. Incidentally, in many cases these refer to the co-keeper as well, although our field notes mention only the keeper. 793

The keeper and co-keeper of the Flat Pipe held a very sacred office of great eminence, and their persons and everything on or about them were considered holy. They themselves were expected always to behave in a dignified manner becoming their exalted and sacred position, and others were obliged to show them due respect. [778]

The keeper and co-keeper were not permitted "to do foolish things like other people." They could not, for instance, take part in gossip or other petty meanness. They were obligated as well to many ethical, "ascetic" and rittal observances to be described presently. [784] [577]

Marked respect was due them from their fellow-tribesmen. As The Boy put it, the Gros Ventres, now all Catholics, "had just the same great respect for the keeper and his wife as they now have for the priests and nuns." [795]

People had to keep their distance from the keeper and co-keeper, and could not sit close to them, or touch, grab or wrestle with them. Apparently, however, they could shake hands with them. If the keeper asked anyone to hand him something, the object had to be passed by hand, not thrown to him; if it were thrown toward the keeper on the ground and he had to pick it up, some accident would befall either the keeper or the thrower. 793 784

If anyone stepped over the outstretched feet or legs of the sitting keeper or co-keeper, the guilty party would at once fall in a fit, or get cramps and could be cured only by the offended keeper or co-keeper. Likewise, if the keeper, intentionally or unintentionally, stepped over the outstretched legs of a sitting person, the person would get fits or cramps and could be cured only by the keeper.

If the keeper or an ex-keeper had the Flat Pipe or even a com-

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

793 mon pipe in his hands, it was forbidden for anyone to pass in front
784 of him, under penalty of some evil befalling the culprit.

If a person, wanting something in a hurry from the keeper, such as meat or a bit of tobacco, just poked his (or her) head in the door of the keeper's lodge and made his request, no one inside would answer him. He would have to go all the way in, proceeding clockwise, make his request, and go out clockwise, not back out.

When the co-keeper gave a visitor something to eat in the Pipe lodge, the receiver had to eat it there and not take it out, unless someone told war stories. No one was allowed to take or grab anything seen in the Pipe lodge.

● 778 The keeper and co-keeper were by virtue of their office "holy"
782 persons, that is, endowed with supernatural powers. Some of these powers were related directly to their main task as custodians of the Pipe, leaders in its ritual, and intercessors with the supernatural world, and will be described under the ritual of the Pipe. Others were conferred on them at or subsequent to the transfer rite, partly to enable them to command the respect due them, partly to give them supernatural efficiency for their own or their people's advantage,—the former being mostly powers to harm, the latter mostly powers to help.

793 If anyone were guilty of disrespect to the keeper or co-keeper,
754 there were several avenging procedures to which they could resort.

During the transfer rite, the keeper and co-keeper were taught some form of cursing, so they would be properly respected. If they wished evil on anyone, the evil would come to pass. Deer, an ex-keeper who gave Lame Bull much of the latter's coaching for the keepership, told him after his mouth had been consecrated: "Be careful what you say. For if you utter an evil wish on anybody, the wish will come true." This power, it may be added, is more or less of a piece with the commonly possessed efficacy attributed in Gros Ventre idealogy to serious good or evil wish-thought. (See pp. 364-370.)

Deer also taught Lame Bull in his early keepership another harming power, but cautioned him not to use it unless someone failed to show proper respect to him as keeper. This power worked by "sympathetic" magic. Deer asked for a little pup and a piece of sinew. When these were brought he said: "Leave the pup near

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

previously mentioned, afford asylum in his lodge to criminals. All in all, he wielded very considerable influence in the political life of his people, but he was in no sense a dictator. 793 624

While a good many of the prerogatives and restrictions attaching to the keeper and co-keeper ceased when their term of office ended, others automatically continued, beyond the period of keepership or, as regards restrictions, could be and often were voluntarily continued by the ex-keepers. Most of such cessations and continuances on which we obtained specific information have been explicitly or inexplicitly noted in the preceding pages.

Flat Pipe and Bundle: Description

The proper name of the Flat Pipe was θe:tsa. It was also called bä'ɔno (turtle), the turtle having played such an important role in the first making of dry land after the flood (for story see No. 3 in Appendix), and a turtle shell ranking next in dignity to the Flat Pipe itself in the Flat Pipe bundle. Bä'ɔno was used in an appealing, pleading or begging way. 778● 276

The Flat Pipe bundle containing the Flat Pipe and other sacred objects could not be unwrapped and opened except on solemn ceremonial occasions and with the appropriate elaborate rites. The last such occasion was on February 6, 1946, when it was impossible for us to be present and when photographs taken turned out badly. Our description, therefore, of the Pipe and of the other contents of the bundle has to rest on detailed accounts given us by our various informants who had witnessed one or more openings, upon sketches of the Pipe drawn by The Boy in 1939, by Thomas Main in 1938 or 1939 (after an opening in 1938) and by a young high school student, Frank Cuts The Rope in 1946 (after the above 1946 opening), and upon dimensions given by Thomas Main (See fig. 1).

The Flat Pipe itself is of wood, in a perfect state of preservation, carved in one piece, light brown or almost tan in color, very smooth as if polished from long and frequent wrapping, and about 18½ inches long. The bowl is round, low or squat, and flaring, 3⅛ inches in diameter on top with the hole for the tobacco about ½ inch in diameter, 2½ inches in diameter at its

778 base, and 2½ inches in depth from top to bottom. The stem is roundish in section, about 1½ inches in diameter at the distal end, 276 tapering slightly to about 1⅛ toward the proximal. The stem is "humped a bit toward the middle," with a ring carved all round to which is attached a small tasseled string ornament believed to represent the hair rope with which He-who-starved-to-death snared the Red Bird. (For story see No. 5 in Appendix.) The [283] Gros Ventre women used to make an adornment from "a growth looking like hair" which they gathered from the water and twisted into a strong thread, and The Boy thinks that this tasseled ornament on the Pipe is of the same material.

There is another ring carved around and the proximal end of the Pipe is carved in the shape of a "duck" head. Into the "duck's" bill is fitted a small stem,—about 1⅛ inches long and ¾ inch in diameter, projecting about ½ inch beyond the tip of the bill, encased in copper,—from which the Pipe was smoked.[6]

[532]

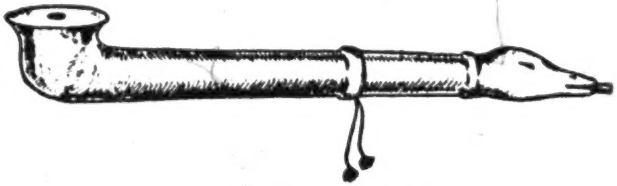


FIGURE 1. THE FLAT PIPE.

The whole Pipe is enclosed in its own numerous wrappings which form a separate case with its own three thong ties within the larger Pipe bundle. No one, it may be added, seems to know how the Flat Pipe got its name; there is nothing markedly "flat" about it, except the somewhat squat bowl.

778 The whole Pipe bundle contains many other sacred objects

[6] Kroeber, 1908, p. 272, gives a description of the Flat Pipe as being made of catlinite with the bowl in the shape of a person. Actually this sounds more like one of the objects in the Feathered Pipe bundle,—the so-called Image or Human Face. See p. 142. Kroeber's mention of a string around the center of the stem of the Flat Pipe, however, matches the description given us. [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

besides the Pipe itself. The most important of these is a turtle shell, next in rank a "duck" pelt, and third a muskrat skin.* These represent the animals sent down by Earthmaker at the time of the great flood to dive for earth. The turtle and "duck" are more important than the muskrat as they were the only two who brought back earth. There is no beaver skin in the bundle; either it was barred or discarded, or, as The Boy put it, "the beaver must have gotten mad and started his own pipe and pipe rite." (Cf. under "Other Pipes," pp. 166-168.) 778

The turtle shell is kept enclosed in its own special case. Neither The Boy nor his father Lame Bull had ever seen this shell, which is said not to have been taken from its case and exposed since the early nineteenth century.

The "duck" is apparently, from the detailed description given us of plumage and habits, a grebe. This bird has a special sacredness in Gross Ventre thought on account of its part not only in the primeval making of dry land but also in present-day bird migration.

According to tradition, when the birds, who in the fall have gone where there is no winter, want in the spring to come back they talk the matter over and plan the flight to the north. On the migration flight the grebes, who are poor flyers, are carried on the backs of the larger birds such as the ducks, geese and cranes. The big bird is careful not to drop the little bird; if he does, he will have bad luck. If the small bird is killed by the fall, the big bird does not live long. When in migration one of the big birds breaks rank and flies around alone, the Gros Ventres know that he has lost his passenger, and it is up to him alone to find the dropped bird. Sometimes you can see a big bird hovering round the spot where he has dropped his small passenger, looking for him in order to pick him up again, and catch up with the 825

* In 1948 The Boy explained: "The muskrat and the beaver tried to bring back earth but failed. Beaver was banished from any connection with the Pipe. The keeper would not let anyone who used the beaver-castor perfume come near him or his lodge. But muskrat was taken back without ceremonial significance for no other purpose than to wipe the keeper's face, as well as faces of others, before the keeper painted them. So muskrat is still in the bundle and shares indirectly in the great Pipe ceremonies." [R.F.] [302]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

825 migrating flock. When you hear the cries of the migrating geese, if you listen closely you can hear also the calls of the little birds. The big birds are very willing to carry the little ones, as the former get "holy things" and "are taught holy [powerful] ways" by the latter in payment for the ride, for the grebe is known to be a "big shot" who has extraordinary powers. The grebe in the Flat Pipe bundle is one of these little birds that are carried by the large ones on the fall and spring migration flight. In the bundle too are some feathers of the big birds. "Probably because they treat the grebe to a free ride, they bought their way into the bundle and so have a place of honor."

778

In the bundle, besides the turtle shell and grebe skin, are the dried pelts (not stuffed) of many other kinds of birds,—some of which The Boy cannot identify. These represent the birds who sang with joy at the first making of dry land after the flood. These bird pelts lie loose, not enclosed in a bag. In the olden times, Lame Bull told The Boy, the tobacco raised by the Pipe keeper was stored in these pelts for safe-keeping.

When the bundle is being wrapped, the Pipe enclosed and tied in its own case, is laid on these bird pelts as on a bed, with the turtle shell to the left of the Pipe "as you face the stem," and the grebe skin to the right. Turtle shell, grebe skin and bird pelts are all placed with the head toward the stem end of the Pipe, and are wrapped together with the Pipe in a special covering within the larger Pipe bundle proper.

The large bundle also contains a good-sized bag, rectangular and closed on three sides, in which are kept all or most of them in their own particular small cases or coverings, the following ritual articles: a muskrat skin representing the muskrat that dived unsuccessfully for earth at the flood, and used in the face-painting rite; paint and a painting stamp; supplies of peppermint and tobacco; rattles; the ritual moccasins of the keeper, co-keeper and Pipe child; a thunderstone;[1] the "official" shell necklace of the

---

[1] In the bundle there was a thunderstone encased in its own small bundle or sack. If, for instance, a person were suffering from stomach-ache, the co-keeper would reach into the Pipe bundle, without unwrapping it, take out the thunderstone, smudge it, make motions with or bite it, spit on the

[755]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

keeper and co-keeper; a rope made of hair from the head and legs of buffalo, either the actual snare with which He-Who-Starved-To-Death captured the evil Red Bird or a substitute therefor. 778●

This rectangular bag with its contents has its own prescribed place in the whole Pipe bundle, namely, to the right of the case containing the Pipe, turtle, grebe and bird skins as you look from the stem and toward the bowl end.

Finally, in the large Pipe bundle, are or were two sticks of about the length of the bundle, covered with two pieces of cloth. These are about the last outermost things set in place when the whole bundle is wrapped. The ends of the cloths in which the sticks are tied project out of the bundle as a decoration. They could be extracted from the bundle and taken along on war expeditions as a substitute for it and the Pipe, and used in a simplified ritual in place of the Pipe. The Pipe bundle itself was not taken on a war raid, as the co-keeper was the only one who was allowed to carry it, as it was rather heavy and bulky, and as there was danger it might be captured by the enemy. [726]

All the articles that have been listed are finally enclosed in the outermost cover of the whole Pipe bundle. This cover is nearly round when laid flat made of a whole elk skin with the legs cut off. The bundle is more or less cylindrical, cigar or blimp-shaped, about 1½ feet in diameter at the center and about 3 feet long. The bundle is secured with three ties of thong, one in the middle and one at either end, and has a thong handle on it, like the handle of a traveling bag. (See Plate 2A.)

Over the whole bundle was laid a robe of albino or "beaver" buffalo skin. When the bundle was to be untied this robe was spread out and the bundle was laid on it. The albino-buffalo tail, used by the keeper in the sweat-lodge rite, was kept outside, not inside, the bundle, so it could be easily gotten.

In modern times, from about 1870 to 1932, a human scalp was

---

person's stomach, and so forth, with a very simple ritual. A retiring keeper had the right to select something out of the Pipe bondle and keep it. Lame Bull, on retiring, selected a thunderstone of animal-like shape. Cf. Kroeber, 1908, pp. 275-76. [755]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

778 attached to the outside of the Flat Pipe bundle. In the late 1860's the Gros Ventres were at war with the Piegan and Blood Indians. During the war, a party of Gros Ventres were massacred on Judith River, including the husband of Lame Bull's sister, and her small son was badly wounded. Lame Bull, then keeper of the Flat Pipe, said: "I'll make the Piegan pay for what they have done to my nephew." So shortly after this, he got together a party of warriors and, taking with him the above-mentioned double-stick substitute for the Flat Pipe, led them to the Piegan country, to the other side of the Cypress Hills on or near Belly River. It was on this expedition that Lame Bull had the three sweat lodges made (to be described later) and used his snaring or summoning power as keeper to call the five enemy victims promised him in a dream. One of the young Gros Ventre warriors, Fur Moccasin, said to the substitute for the Flat Pipe: "Little Turtle, in this fight I want to do something great. If you will see to it that I count coup by getting a scalp I will turn it over to you." This was equivalent to a vow, for he would have to risk his life to get a scalp. Another young warrior said: "Flat Pipe, in this fight I want to do something great. If I get a horse I will turn it over to you."

After the summoning rite, Lame Bull detailed two young warriors to go out as scouts the next morning, before daybreak so they would not be observed on the way by the enemy, to a certain butte, and to watch and wait. Shortly after daybreak the two scouts saw five of the enemy who were out hunting buffalo, and returned to give their report. Near the Gros Ventre camp, to the west, was a small herd of buffalo. So Lame Bull said: "The Piegan will spy the buffalo and make for them. We will wait till they make their kill and are dressing the meat." The Piegan went past the Gros Ventre without observing them and killed the buffalo. The Gros Ventres then sneaked up toward the Piegan as close as the level open country would permit, without their being seen. Lame Bull said: "Don't yell. Take after them as though you are racing." As the Gros Ventres came rushing on they came up first to one of the Piegan who had tied his horse to the leg of a killed buffalo and who, in the excitement forgetting this, jumped on his

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

horse and started off but at the end of the rope was stopped and thrown. Fur Moccasin killed and scalped him then and there. Then the Gros Ventres took after the other four Piegan. The second Piegan was killed and his horse captured by the young warrior who had promised a horse to the Flat Pipe. The other three Piegan were also killed. The Gros Ventre suffered no casualties in the fight. 778 726

When the battle was over, Fur Moccasin turned over the Piegan scalp to Lame Bull: "Here's the scalp which I promised for the Flat Pipe." The other young warrior who had promised the horse likewise turned it over: "Here's the horse which I promised for the Flat Pipe."

Some time after this fight, peace was made between the Gros Ventres and the Piegan, and the Gros Ventres learned the Piegan side of the incident. The Piegan (or Blood) had planned to hold a Sun Dance. So they selected four men to go out and kill a bull buffalo for the dance. One old man of his own volition went along in order to get some of the internal organs for himself. After the five had set out, the Piegan waited in vain all the next day till nightfall for them to return and finally concluded that they must have met with misfortune. The next morning the Piegan set out in the direction in which the five had gone and, judging by the actions of carrion crows and buzzards, discovered the five corpses. The Gros Ventres by this time were a long way off. The Sun Dance was given up. The four younger Piegan killed were noted men.

The Piegan scalp was tied to the outside of the Flat Pipe bundle. The donor, Fur Moccasin, by giving the scalp, became an enemy-friend of the Flat Pipe, which role gave him the right to go pretty far in taunting and saying things about it, as was the wont between enemy-friends.[8] But only he, and no one else could take such liberties. 727. 778

The scalp remained attached to the outside of the bundle. The Boy, who knew this, always felt that this was not right, because the bundle had great religious significance whereas the scalp was something of an entirely different order and did not belong with 778

[8] For details on enemy-friends, see Flannery, 1953, pp. 102-06.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

778 the bundle. He wanted to take the scalp off and throw it away. But Lame Bull held that it should stay where it was, for since it was given by Fur Moccasin to the Flat Pipe in fulfillment of a vow and since Fur Moccasin and the Flat Pipe were enemy-friends, its presence involved no real lack of respect to the Pipe.

When, however, in later years the Flat Pipe came into unofficial possession of The Boy, his prejudice against it had not abated. Since he had authority in the matter, he gave the scalp in about 1932 to John Galen Carter who, The Boy was told, finally turned it over to Columbia University or to the American Museum of Natural History. The Boy laughingly remarked that if he had foreseen that he would be giving us the whole record of Gros Ventre history and culture he would have saved the scalp and given it to Cooper and so Cooper would have become the enemy-friend of Fur Moccasin!

[492] The Flat Pipe always, as in the above case, had its own horse on which it was packed and which was not used for any other purpose or ridden by the keeper or anyone else, except, it appears, once in a while by the co-keeper who would take the bundle on her back and ride the horse. The Flat Pipe's horse was painted red on its forehead and down to the end of its mane, and also on the top of its rump at the base of the tail, as were also all things used to transport the Pipe,—its special saddle, blanket, outfit, tripod and so forth.*

* In 1948 The Boy added that the keeper could use in addition to red paint another kind "of a dirty slate color and no one else in the tribe used it." [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13
Blackfoot NF6

G 533 singers: Tom Bad Road, Charlie Arms, Mrs. Katie Matt Croft, and Mrs. Albert Perry. Apropos of the last two, it may be added that women frequently sang and sing with the men, and the latter "like it when the women join in because this makes the singing colorful and nice."[3]

G 386 The Gros Ventres used many kinds of paint; some of Indian, some of white man origin; some in secular, some only in ritual uses. Powdered paints of different colors were gotten from traders and were used to paint parfleches and, by the men, alone, never G [439] by the women, to paint their bodies. A yellow paint was also gotten from the Cheyenne or from Cheyenne territory. On one occasion Coming Daylight brought a lot of this yellow paint which she had gathered there and gave enough of it to a Gros Ventre man to paint his big lodge with it. These paints were not sacred. A black paint, obtained from the Standing Rock region, was used in making fine lines on parfleches. Only the old women who made and painted the parfleches were the ones that gathered it, but it was not so sacred as the red paint used in face painting.

G 788 This sacred red face paint was in a class by itself, and was used 386 in the Flat and Feathered Pipe rites, by the "grandfathers" in [798] painting the wives during the Sacred Lodge rites, and apparently by the women in everyday painting of their own and the children's faces.[4] This special red paint was called, as also the yellow clay

---

[3] About 1900 The Boy went along with the Gros Ventres on a 4th of July visit to the Piegan at Browning. All four groups, the Piegan, Blood, Blackfeet proper, and northern Piegan, were gathered there. In all the four there B was only one man, a famous singer, who knew all the ceremonial dance [527 songs, although some of the other Indians knew some of them, and he was 533] imported by the Browning Piegan for the reason. The Boy heard him sing. The man did not have a nice clear voice, but he lived up to his reputation, for he knew the songs and their order for all the many rites and was kept busy all the time. And he cashed in handsomely with horses, blankets and money. He was able to make a living from his singing. The Boy learned some of the songs this man sang, and he sang one of them for us, that had the words: "You who are the ruler of all sacred (powerful) things having to do with all life, give me all of that so that I may use it all my life." The Blackfeet, The Boy added, think more of the Sun than do the Gros Ventres: it is their deity.

[4] See Flannery, 1953, pp. 144-45.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

that time. In the olden days it was only the keeper of the Flat Pipe who planted and harvested it; and for ritual use only.[4] As time went on, the keeper thought to himself: "These older men should have something to pray with when the tribe breaks camp and each band goes its own way." So he said to these older men, each a chief in his own band: "When your bands go their own way you have nothing to use in your prayers. So I am going to distribute some tobacco to each of you for you and your band to use." This he did, and so the use of tobacco began to spread. After this some bands broke away entirely from the Gros Ventres, the original planters and users of tobacco, and became separate tribes and the language changed. The probable order, The Boy thinks, in which they broke away was: first, the Gros Ventres of Dakota,[5] next the Cree, then the Piegan, after this the Crow, and last the Arapaho. He thinks too that the keeper who first distributed tobacco to the bands must have distributed the seed too, for in later years all these people raised their own tobacco.

In the course of time the use of tobacco among the Gros Ventres underwent two important developments, from ritual to recreative and from male to female use.

In earliest days only the keeper and a few old men used tobacco, and used it only ritually. When somebody got sick, the keeper

[4] In 1948 The Boy elaborated on the original planting of tobacco which he had heard Lame Bull discuss many times. "It was virgin soil deep in the forest and they made a woven fence around it so nothing could get in. After the planting, they moved off for hunting and every once in a while the keeper made a ceremonial smoke and prayed to the Supreme Being that the tobacco would grow. After the vegetation began to mature they returned to the plot and the keeper went to look and thanked the Supreme Being in a loud voice that the crop had matured. The tobacco was picked ceremoniously and three plants were always left standing in the plot." There was a plot of ground in the forested area of Canada on which nothing grew and which the Gros Ventres called "Broken Grass." In Lame Bull's time they used to leave offerings there whenever they passed nearby. The Boy and other old men and women believe that this was the site on which the original tobacco was planted under instruction from the Supreme Being. [R.F.]

[5] The original Gros Ventres, according to the same tradition, had no corn. Corn originated among the Gros Ventres of Dakota. [For confirmation of tradition regarding raising of tobacco, see Flannery, 1953, p. 61, n. 12.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Before the rite began all things were made ready. Ordinarily the sacred incense-hearth, so important a feature of the rite, was already built. It was customarily made by the keeper immediately after his lodge was erected on arrival at a new camp site and he had to have such a hearth in his lodge at all times. By way of exception, when the seasonal rite took place at once on the arrival of the tribe at a new camp and in the rush the keeper had not gotten around to making the hearth, he would begin the preparation of the offerings by so doing. 796*

This sacred hearth was quite distinct from the keeper's ordinary lodge hearth. The latter was made without ceremony, in the center of his lodge, and without an encompassing circle of rocks. Such rock circles were made only when fires were kindled on the march, to prevent prairie fires, and on hearths built outside the lodge for boiling bones and so forth. 796* 354 778 ●

The sacred incense or smudge hearth was built with a special solemn rite of its own, a rite in no way connected with seasonal or other ones, in the following manner.

The keeper himself made the hearth, assisted by the co-keeper and Pipe child, or in some cases by an attendant or vow-maker. First the grass was cut on an oblong space, about the length of the Flat Pipe bed, between the ordinary family hearth in the center of the lodge and the Flat Pipe bed at the rear (north) side thereof. The keeper, co-keeper and Pipe child, if all three were to participate, chewed peppermint, spat on their hands, and rubbed their hands together as if washing them, but did not rub their arms or head. 796*

The keeper, facing south (as also his wife) and holding an axe in his right hand, lowered the axe three times, spitting at each lowering, and then chopped in the ground the outline of the oblong space, beginning at the southeast corner and proceeding clockwise. Then with a knife he cut off all the grass in this space, smoothing it but not digging out a sunken one. The co-keeper, who had previously placed a choice piece of buffalo robe, about 3' to 4' square from a buffalo that had completely shed its winter coat, to the east of the oblong space, then spat three times on the cut grass and removed dirt and placed it on the robe, carried the blanket of grass and dirt out clockwise, turned to the east, walked a good

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

kidneys and ribs offered as "coverings" after a hunt were left all day on the bundle and late in the evening given to some of the very poor children to eat.

Moving, carrying and handling the Flat Pipe bundle in camp and on the march were the exclusive responsibility and privilege of the Flat Pipe co-keeper. Whenever the bundle was to be transferred from its tripod to its bed or vice versa, to be hung up over the door of the keeper's lodge, to be carried to and from the sweat lodge or Sacrifice Dance, or to be transported from camp site to camp site, she was the one to do it.

Exceptions to the rule, in emergency, were rare. One such exceptional instance was reported by Coming Daylight. On one occasion the Flat Pipe bundle was still outside the keeper's lodge when darkness set in, and both the keeper and co-keeper were away. In such a case an ex-co-keeper would usually substitute for the co-keeper, but there was none around. It was not customary to leave the Pipe out at night, or even to leave it alone. So Coming Daylight's maternal aunt said to her: "We will put this poor thing [the Pipe] in. Your father once owned a pipe [not the Flat Pipe], so you should not be afraid to handle it." So the two went out and gathering sage rubbed themselves all over with it. Then together they unloosed the bundle and started to carry it in, all the time praying: "We are children of an ex-keeper and this is just the same as if our fathers owned this Pipe. We have the right to handle it. We hate to see you stay out over night. It would be bad if you stayed out. We are bringing you in because we pity you. We hope you will have pity on us, and that we will have long life." And Coming Daylight, about 86 years old in 1940, ended her account by remarking that her prayer was heard because she had lived so long, even though in these last years her legs were unsteady and every little while she fell down on her buttocks!

Coming Daylight also mentioned one other old woman, Mouse, who, although not the co-keeper, used to volunteer to carry the Pipe bundle on her back when the people were on the march from camp site to camp site. This was apparently at a period when horses were very scarce, only one or two to several families, and dog travois had to be resorted to.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

482 dog travois had to be resorted to. The old woman thought that she was doing the Pipe a great favor and that her packing it
● 778 would bring her good fortune.

The co-keeper when afoot and carrying the Pipe bundle in her arms held it under her left armpit with her left arm encircling it and her right arm and hand supporting it from beneath, and with the stem-end of the bundle pointing forward.

482 The co-keeper was usually very careful to observe the stem-end-
778 forward rule. But if through forgetfulness or absent-mindedness she had carried the bundle bowl-end forward or had hung it on
783 its tripod with the bowl end to the east, she would be to blame. The keeper, co-keeper or Pipe child would be told by the Pipe in a dream about the error while sleeping [that night] on the Pipe bed, and she would have to be ritually cleansed. The keeper and co-keeper would sit on their haunches on the Pipe bed facing each other, he facing east and she west. Peppermint was put on the incense hearth to make a smudge. The keeper then took a bunch of sage brush, some of which he usually kept ready, held it up in his right hand, and prayed to the Supreme Being to release his wife, to take away her mistake, and not to be angry over it. Then he lowered the large brush by three stages, circled it three times around the incense, and "sort of brushed" her with it three times from her head down her right arm and from her head down her left arm, and three times from her chin up over her face to her occiput. Then he laid down the bunch of sage brush between the incense hearth and south edge of the Pipe bed, and said to his wife: "Take this sage brush out." She took it, walked out with it clockwise, turned to her left, that is, in the east, walked a good way off, and lowering it in the usual three stages deposited reverently on the ground.

778 Grasping and depositing the Flat Pipe bundle were regularly
788 done by the co-keeper in a ritually prescribed manner. Before actually taking hold of it, she would face it, and three times pose at shoulder height her empty right hand, palm down with fingertips joined and pointing away from her, make a motion or pass with her hand toward the bundle while at the same time spitting a bit of chewed peppermint on it, and then bring her hand back to

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

position. In depositing the bundle on its bed, she would lower it gently in three stages, spitting at each one. 778 [788]

When the people were staying for any length of time at a given camp site, the Flat Pipe bundle, which was always kept inside the keeper's lodge during the night time, would regularly in good weather be taken out early in the morning at breakfast time by the co-keeper, with the customary grasping and carrying ritual, and hung up, stem-end pointing east just over the door of the keeper's lodge, not on its tripod. The outside of the keeper's lodge around the door up to full reaching height, about 6 or 7 feet, was painted red. The thong handle of the bundle was looped over, the two projecting ends of a stout pin, skewered horizontally in the tent cover, on the immediate line above the door at the upper edge of the red-painted area.

The bundle would hang over the door all day until about sundown when it would be brought back into the lodge for the night. 482 778 In bringing it back, the co-keeper walked out of the lodge, unhooked and grasped the bundle, turned clockwise, walked all around the lodge clockwise, entered the lodge, proceeded clockwise to the incense hearth, dipped the stem end of the bundle three times in the smudge, and deposited the bundle in the usual ritual manner, as above described, at the far north end of the Pipe bed. 778

The final decision as to when and whether the camp, in which the Flat Pipe chanced to be, was to be moved was made by the head man especially the band chiefs and in the olden days the tribal chief too, the keepers having perhaps taken the initiative in calling them together. They would notify the Pipe keeper. Early the next morning the co-keeper with the usual ritual observances would take the Pipe bundle from its bed and carry it and its tripod outside the lodge a little to the north thereof, set up the tripod and hang the bundle on it. The tripod would be set up with two of its legs closer together, and with the third leg stretched out farther, its upper end projecting a little beyond the junction of the three legs. On this projecting end the bundle was hung by the thong handle looped over the end. On other occasions the bundle was hung on the tripod stem-end pointing east. But on this occasion the rule was superseded by another, namely, the third leg [622 623 361].

778 had to point in the direction in which the camp was to move. This orientation could be discerned from a considerable distance. The people would already know that camp was to be broken that day and early in the morning would go out to see how the bundle hung and which direction the third leg of the tripod was pointing.

778 When the camp families were packed and all ready to start off, 492 the Flat Pipe's own special horse was led up to the tripod where 484 the bundle hung. The co-keeper, before taking hold of the bundle made the customary three passes at it spitting chewed peppermint at the bundle with each pass, lifted it off the tripod, turned around clockwise, made three motions with the bundle, stem-end forward, as if putting it on the saddle (note saddle of Flat Pipe in Plate 2A), and at the third actually put it there where it rested crosswise, held taut with thongs to both sides of the saddle and under the horse's belly. Then she mounted from the right side her own horse, and started off leading the horse that carried the Pipe bundle, the latter horse coming behind her own, not abreast.

482 Sometimes the co-keeper, *ad libertum,* would carry the bundle herself on her own back, putting it on her back before mounting her horse and carrying the bundle with the thong handle resting over her upper arm just below the bend of the shoulder and the bundle itself at her back. To help her mount so burdened they would lead her to a side hill. The Boy's mother, when co-keeper, at times on the march used to say that the bundle so carried felt heavy at the start, but after a while felt light. When the co-keeper so carried the bundle, leading the Pipe's own horse, she followed the keeper. Occasionally the Pipe bundle was carried on a travois, but we obtained no details on this point.

484 On the march, while scouts were not uncommonly sent out ahead 778 to find the best route or watch for enemies, the co-keeper with the Pipe-bundle led the cavalcade itself. No one could go in front of her: if any one did, bad luck would befall him. If both the Flat and Feathered Pipes were with the caravan, the Flat Pipe was in the lead, next the Feathered Pipe, then the chief or chiefs, finally the body of the group. The keepers rode immediately behind the respective co-keepers, never before. If the caravan were on the way to one celebration or a Sacred Dance, the group giv-

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

ing the Dance came right after the Pipe or Pipes. If there were no sacred pipe with the caravan, the chief or head man rode first in the line of march. 484 578

On the march, which was ordinarily at a slow pace, no one stopped to smoke or for other reason unless the co-keeper halted. When they stopped, usually about half-way, she would hang the bundle on the tripod, all by itself away from and well forward of the crowd in the direction of the trek. All stopped behind it; they did not surround it; it was always ahead of them in the direction they were heading. No one moved to re-start ahead until the co-keeper did so.

If the route of march necessitated crossing a big river, such as the Missouri River, the procedure in Coming Daylight's words, was as follows. "They put the Flat Pipe bundle in a bullboat. Of course there was no child in the bullboat. They chose two young men, popular and heroes, to lead that bullboat across. These two would be all painted red. They had robes rolled up and when they got midway across the river they put the robes in the water as offerings. As soon as they started across my grandmother up on the cliff at the river's edge would start cheering and singing the victory song. This song is a strong-heart song. When there was something hard to do they sang this song. They would say the names of the two young men and sing this song to encourage them. They all moved the bullboat into the water and different people would put into it various things to be thrown into the middle of the river. The keeper and co-keeper who owned the Pipe were not supposed to swim or bathe in water. Both could ride in this bullboat with the Pipe, but the woman always did. The two young men [on horseback apparently] held the robes [offering mentioned above] in one hand and pulled the bullboat with the other. The Pipe in the bullboat was the first of the caravan to cross the river. After all the people had gotten across the old women had a victory dance and sang for the crossing." [505] [782]

On arrival at the new camp site the co-keeper would hang the Pipe bundle on the tripod at a spot just to the north of where the keeper's lodge was to be erected. Then the new sage bed and sacred hearth were made, and the bundle brought into the lodge,

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

484 with the rites previously described. On a day's journey it may be
778 noted, the bundle would have been placed on the tripod in the open three times: before starting out, about half-way, and on arrival at the new camp.

782 The killing of a pure white buffalo, a pure albino,—always a cow never a bull, according to Gros Ventre tradition,—was an extremely
[224] rare occurrence. The killer could keep it himself, give it to the Flat Pipe keeper, or offer it as a sacrifice. This sacrificial rite was last held when the Boy's father, Lame Bull was a young man, probably in the 1850's, and served as a calendrical date: "at the time the white buffalo skin was offered as a sacrifice." The Boy, our sole informant on this rite, could give only fragmentary data on it, gotten from his father who had witnessed only that one time in his life.

If the killer chose to offer the albino skin as a sacrifice, he had to vow, and then had formally to notify the keeper of the Flat Pipe. Carrying it he went clockwise round the camp circle on the inside and brought it to the keeper's lodge. The keeper painted
[302] the man's face with charcoal paint (not red), the ritual color for sacrifices, with a circular band around his face, on the forehead, the sides of the cheeks near the ears, and under the jawbones and chin, and with also a star on the bridge of his nose. The circle, Lame Bull told the Boy, represented the sundog; the star, the sun. A procession in which the keeper, co-keeper, Pipe child, ex-keepers, ex-co-keepers, the two attendants, and all the people took part started at the keeper's lodge and marched clockwise all around the camp circle, very slowly, with three stops (probably at the west, east and south) for prayer, till they reached the sweat-lodge near the keeper's lodge. The albino skin was given a touch of charcoal paint, as in other sacrifices, but The Boy did not know other details of the special rite used in preparing the skin, nor did he know who carried it in the procession. On arrival of the procession at the sweat lodge, the main body of the people went away, but the small group who were to sweat remained and went through the whole sweat-lodge rite at which the albino skin was hung up on the sweat-lodge pole and after which, in accord-

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

CHAPTER IV

THE FEATHERED PIPE AND OTHER PIPES

115 Our information is less full and more fragmentary on the Feathered Pipe than on the Flat Pipe, especially regarding ritual details. Our chief informants were Al Chandler, Garter Snake, Jim Shortman, Charles Buckman, The Boy, Thick, Thomas Main and Turn Toes. Additional information was given by Cora Chandler, Singer, and Mary Ereaux. The Boy, our main informant on the Flat Pipe, had never been intimately associated with the Feathered Pipe, as he had been with the Flat Pipe, but he gave us many details, and especially six of the Feathered Pipe songs recorded (Nos. 45-46, 126-129). Al Chandler had been chosen as attendant at one of the more important rites; Garter Snake had been Pipe child, beginning at the age of six or seven, during part of the keepership of her father, Bull Lodge; Jim Shortman recalled much from the time when his father had been keeper. Garter Snake, blind, of keen memory and now a practicing Catholic, before giving her account knelt down, blessed herself and prayed to Ixtciboni:hohat; for, she said, this Pipe was given from heaven. (For her own and other versions of the origin of the Feathered Pipe, see No. 6 in Appendix.) She was particularly concerned to tell truthfully what and only what her father had told her or what she had herself seen and experienced. All of the above informants had witnessed or participated in some of the Feathered Pipe rites. So far as we could discover, however, no one Gros Ventre at the time of our field work was familiar with the whole cycle of rites or with all the details of any of the more important ones. Much is lost for good. Our task has been to salvage what we could and to put together the scattered fragments, leaving many lacunae. In presenting the data we have, we shall follow the same order as has been followed in describing the Flat Pipe.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

no crying by children in the lodge; if a child started to cry it was taken out at once. Dogs were not allowed in the lodge, nor could the keeper use a dog robe. Bones could not be broken in the lodge to extract marrow, as in the case of the Flat Pipe lodge and under the same penalty. War-deed contests in the Feathered Pipe lodge were prohibited and penalized, as in the Flat Pipe lodge,—with a four-day penalty. The right of asylum was recognized exactly as in the case of the Flat Pipe keeper's lodge. 346 784 [778] [696]

The lodge occupied a place of honor in the camp circle, but whether opposite the opening of the circle or just in front of the keeper's band is controverted, as in the case of the Flat Pipe keeper's lodge (see p. 58). 361

The prerogatives and restrictions attaching to the keepership of the Feathered Pipe appear to have been quite similar in number and kind to those attaching to the keepership of the Flat Pipe, although we did not obtain as full details regarding them as we did for the Flat Pipe. We shall mention only those prerogatives and restrictions for which we obtained specific information. The functional relation of the various prerogatives and restrictions to the sacredness and dignity of the keepership was quite the same for both Pipes. 793

In accord with the dignity of their office, the keeper and co-keeper were expected to comport themselves respectably on all occasions and to conform to the strict ethical norms to be mentioned presently.

The people were in turn expected to treat them with great respect. Things asked for by the keeper had to be handed to him, not thrown, exactly as with the Flat Pipe keeper, and under the same penalty. If someone absent-mindedly stepped over the outstretched feet or legs of the keeper, the latter would keel over in a faint and the co-keeper would have to smudge him ritually to bring him to, or the offender would fall down with a "cramp." Coming Daylight once saw a woman in a crowded place step over the feet of the Feathered Pipe co-keeper. The woman "fell in a cramp." Her mother got angry and upbraided the co-keeper: "You ought to know better than to leave your feet sticking out." But her sister went over and kissed the co-keeper and begged her in a nice way to doctor the stricken woman. So the co-keeper got up and 793 784

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

793 also to the whites, both mounted and dismounted their horses from the right side, just as all other Gros Ventres did.

784 "You could not lend the Feathered Pipe keeper a horse, because if you loaned it to him this was just the same as giving it to him. You could not take it back once the rope was in his hands. The keeper never borrowed anything. If someone thought the keeper was short of something and without thinking said to him, 'Here is one you can use,' that was just too bad because that was really giving it to him."

[201] Apparently the keeper could not point at a person with his index finger, but would instead use his thumb.

793 The role of the Feathered Pipe keeper in the political life of the Gros Ventre was quite similar to that of the Flat Pipe keeper,
624 as regards such things as decision when and whether to move camp, matters of public policy, and veto power thereupon.

Feathered Pipe and Bundle

773 The Feathered Pipe was first given, as noted in the origin stories (see No. 6 in Appendix), from above by Bha'a, the thunder
●778 and storm being. Garter Snake's father, Bull Lodge, used to tell her that it was really given by Ixtcibani:hohat, the Supreme Being, through Bha'a; that the Supreme Being was the father of the Pipe; and that it was to remain forever with the Gros Ventres and never under any condition to be transferred to any other tribe. According to Gros Ventre tradition, while the Feathered Pipe is very old, it is not as old as the Flat Pipe; when the Feathered Pipe was first given to the Gros Ventres, they were already in the possession of horses. According to The Boy, the Feathered Pipe was first given after the Gros Ventres came to their present territory which had previously been Snake Indian country, but before the coming of the whites thereto. With the Pipe itself were given in the beginning the stone image or face, the whistle, and the staff, to be described presently.

778 The proper name of the Feathered Pipe was ana:θanitč (it has feathers).

776 We were unable to attend any unwrapping rite and to see the Pipe. It was described to us as being in one piece, of "smooth,"

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

"glistening" [no doubt, highly polished], very dark grey or greyish brown stone, with three or four humps on the upper surface of the stone stem part. Our informants, who had seen the Pipe, disagreed as to whether there are feathers on the Pipe itself, and one of them stated that it had looked different to him on the two occasions he had seen it. 778 276

In the Pipe bundle were many other sacred objects besides the Pipe itself. Most of these had their separate wrappings or cases, the Pipe itself being wrapped in buffalo hair. The first keeper, according to Garter Snake, wrapped the Pipe itself in a bit of white buffalo skin. The outermost wrapping of the Pipe bundle was, originally at least, of tanned elkskin, tied around with four strings. There was also, again originally at least, a bear robe cover for the bundle.[4] 778

The Pipe bundle would shake and quiver when there was going to be an earthquake. The keeper could then predict that the earthquake would occur soon, although he could not predict the exact time. Not so long ago Cora Chandler's old aunt saw the bundle quiver, and sure enough that summer an earthquake occurred. [787 823]

Informants consistently agreed that there were four main things in the bundle, and that two of the four were the Pipe itself and the carved stone face.[5] Most of them included the feathered stick among the four. As to whether the fourth was the whistle, the owl, or the crane, there was considerable conflict of opinion, a conflict we were unable to clear up.

The feathered stick, from which the Pipe itself derived its name,

[4] Dr. Hagener noted at the 1951 opening that the innermost wrapping of the whole bundle was of "old bison leather" and the outer wrapping of modern cloth." [R.F.]

[5] Dr. Hagener stated in letter of Jan. 18, 1954, "The pipe displayed in the pictures [Plate 3, C and D] was not the chief pipe of the bundle (that having mysteriously disappeared). It was however made of the red stone commonly traded from the Minnesota area. Although there were other pipes in the bundle this was the only one we were permitted to see. Iron Man checked on the presence of other pipes by feeling inside the leather casings, but did not bring them out." Under date of Aug. 8, 1954, Dr. Hagener remarked: "Dr. Nitz was of the opinion that there were two somewhat similar pipes in the bundle, one of which had disappeared. The picture . . . is of the remaining one." [R.F.] [439 276]

778 was a wooden staff about three or four feet long, to which were attached feathers from "all kinds of birds," including the eagle, the feathers literally covering the staff. The staff itself was given the first keeper in the beginning from above, but tradition is not consistent as to whether it was already feathered or was later feathered by this keeper. At any rate the feathers still on the staff are believed to be the original ones, are not broken off and are perfectly preserved. According to one report the staff has porcupine quill work on it; according to another, it is undecorated. The first keeper wrapped the stick in smoked skin, for which a wrapping of black and white cotton flannel was later substituted.

The image, called inite:até (it is a person) translated "human [532] face," was described to us as about eight inches long, of stone, "with a trace of faded red in it" and looking like the "brown pottery of a teapot," of human shape, male according to one informant, female according to another. It was wrapped in buffalo hair and until Curly Head's keepership was rarely unwrapped, and even when unwrapped only the face was supposed to be exposed, by raising a bit of the cover, although Curly Head exposed the whole figure.* Formerly, according to Garter Snake, nobody was allowed to look at the face, except the keeper and even he could do so only now and then. Garter Snake, although Pipe child for six or seven years while her father Bull Lodge was keeper, had never seen it. Sitting High, who succeeded Bull Lodge, showed the face of the image very rarely, only once or twice so far as Al Chandler, his grandson, had heard, and even old-timers wondered what it looked like. Sitting High would take the wrapped image out of the large bundle and let you hold it and pray to it, and this oftener than he would the Pipe, but without un-

---

* Although this has not been confirmed, it is highly possible that the pipe shown at the 1951 unwrapping and pictured in Plate 3 C-D may actually be this "human face" or image. The stone and color of the pipe meet the specifications (cf. Dr. Hegener's comment as given in footnote 5), the plat- [123] form of the pipe is of about the right dimension, and one end thereof is carved in the form of a human face as can be seen in Dr. Nitz' photographs. Dr. Hagener noted on the back of the photograph in Plate 3 C that Iron Man allowed the picture to be taken only after long consultation with others and much hesitation. [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

covering it. When they talked to the image, they prayed for whatever they wanted, but did not mention Bha'a. Whom the image represented is not known: probably Bha'a, but this is uncertain. 778

In recent times, the last real keeper, Curly Head, had danced with the image, contrary to all the ritual rules. Curly Head is consistently reported by informants to have been very careless as well as poorly informed about the ritual and other observances connected with the Feathered Pipe keepership.

The face when exposed was apt to look different to different people on any one occasion as well as to the same person on different occasions. To one man the face seemed not to want to look at him; it "kind of turned away and sweated." To another observer, a woman, it appeared as "a rock that had two shining eyes." Al Chandler had seen the face three times. On each occasion it had a different expression: on the first it looked as if it were "smiling, sort of bashful;" on the second, "kind of sad;" on the third, "sad." On the one occasion on which his wife, Cora Chandler, had seen the face, it "seemed like it was looking away, and wouldn't look at her." 778 532

According to Al Chandler, if the face smiled, this was an omen that "everything was going to be good;" if it "looked in the opposite direction, something not good" would happen. According to Garter Snake, if when the keeper saw the face, it had paint on it, there would be plenty of food, no sickness, and so forth; if it had no paint on it, there would be sickness or other misfortune. 778 787

The whistle, of wood ("of an unknown kind of wood," according to Garter Snake), was given the first keeper from above. It was kept without wrapping in the Pipe bundle. 778 [534]

The owl in the bundle was the skin of a big owl, painted up, with few of the feathers still attached. The body was wrapped leaving the head and neck sticking out. This owl skin was apparently of modern introduction. According to Al Chandler, when a new keeper took over the Pipe, he could add to the bundle whatever he was told "by a voice" to add; Sitting High said he was told by God Himself to put that owl in the bundle. Sitting High used to talk a great deal to the owl. The owl's duty, accord-

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

778

ing to Garter Snake and Jim Shortman was to foretell epidemics or sickness of any kind by telling the keeper in his sleep.

In the bundle, put there by the first keeper, were the dried skins of all kinds of birds, "all the birds there are." He was told to collect and place there as many different kinds as he could find. These skins have been preserved to the present, the smaller ones not wrapped separately.[7] The bundle contained the skin of no four-footed land animal "of the earth" except the muskrat (and a gopher-like animal), but only skins of birds "of the air," for the Feathered Pipe came from above. Among the birds specifically mentioned to us as being in the bundle were: the crane, wrapped separately with only the head showing, and included by one informant, Al Chandler, among the four main things in the bundle; "a big white swan, one bird called Big Bird, a duck and grebes," were put in the bundle, according to Garter Snake, by the first keeper in obedience to directions gotten from above in dreams after the Pipe had been given him; what Al Chandler described as a "bird that is like two-in-one . . . a black speckled bird with two heads on it but only two legs . . . a water bird . . . but it does not fly." He had never heard Sitting High talk to this two-headed bird, but had heard others do so when "covering" the Pipe.

In the bundle was a little animal, almost as big as a gopher. Al Chandler had heard his grandfather mention it, but had never seen it, so did not know of what species it was. Curly Head, when keeper, would take this out of the bundle and rub little children with it from head to foot, four times, and would say the child would live to old age.

Other objects mentioned as being in the bundle were: wild parsley, and, originally at least, the black head-covering the first keeper had on after the storm; moccasins of "animal fur," given the first keeper and still preserved; some sticks for notching (purpose of notching not known by informant, Al Chandler). When Sitting

[7] Dr. Hagener wrote under date of Jan. 18, 1954: "We were particularly puzzled by the various preserved birds. One very definitely looked like a parrot and yet they were not native to any of the area and not common as pets or items of trade so far as I have been able to discern. When questioned about it the Indians just said it was of great age." [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

High was keeper, he told Al Chandler that one of the sticks in the bundle was already notched on two edges. 778

Like the Flat Pipe, the Feathered Pipe also had its own horse, saddle, robe and blankets. The saddle, like a woman's saddle of old times, had two horns from which fringes hung, and a beaded crupper, and was painted red. The horse had to be the best available; no one could ride it, and if it died or was stolen, another had to be provided. The horse had to be very gentle. 778 492

Feathered Pipe Ritual

Certain general features characteristically recur throughout the Feathered Pipe rites, some contrasting with those of the Flat Pipe rites, others common to both cycles. 788

The following are distinctive of the Feathered Pipe rites: association with air, sky, cloud, rain and storm; sweet pine for smudge; ritual number four; the drum accompaniment for songs; dancing with the Pipe.

The Feathered Pipe, as previously noted, "belongs up above the earth," having been given by Bha'a the storm being and during a violent thunderstorm. In prayer and other ritual it was particularly associated with the sky and storm clouds, with rain and storms.

For ritual smudge or incense the dried needles of an evergreen, the "sweet pine," nibiya:tə, were exclusively used, in accordance with directions given the original first keeper of the Pipe,—in accordance too with the origin of the Pipe from "up above the earth," for the "sweet pine" tree grows only in high altitudes, up on the hills and mountains. The tree grows in the Rocky Mountains, the Sweet Grass Hills, and Eagle Butte, nearer to the present location of the Gros Ventres. The Boy has seen it growing in only about two places, to about 10 feet high on top of Bird Tail Butte in the Bear Paw Mountains, and to about five feet high with a trunk about four inches in diameter on the top of Mission Peak in the Little Rockies. We were unable to secure specimens for botanical identification. The tree was described as "like a fir," or "special kind of pine." It is presumably *Abies sp.* Ritually the needles were mostly used to make incense, and, only 788 824

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

788 exceptionally chewed in contrast to the Flat Pipe peppermint. A
824 bag, painted red all over, about a foot square, and fringed on three sides but with no beading or other decoration, now hangs with the
[415] bundle and served, Al Chandler thought, as a container for the dried sweet pine needles.

802 The ritual number of the Feathered Pipe, running all through the songs and ceremonies, was four, from the days of the first keeper down to most recent times.

534 The musical instrument used to accompany the songs was, likewise from the time of the first keeper, the drum. According to
778 Garter Snake, the first keeper's drum was painted half black to represent black [storm] clouds and half red to represent the earth. According to Al Chandler, the present drum, about 16 inches in diameter and two inches deep, has a figure of a thunderbird
[532] painted in blue on the drumhead against a red background, to represent Bha'a, with zigzag yellow lines from either side of the head to the wings, to represent lightning. A long string is tied to the drum. The drumstick is painted red, the distal end being covered with buckskin "stuffed with something like cotton." Curly Head, when keeper, never used the drum, or even took it out of its covering in which it hung next to the bundle, but Sitting High used it regularly with the songs.*

788 According to Garter Snake, the first keeper had somebody make him a wooden bowl, which still hangs with, not in, the Pipe bundle,
778 but we obtained no information on its type or use. She also stated that the first keeper had a "gourd rattle" or four rattles, but Al Chandler never saw any rattle kept or used with the Feathered Pipe, and no other informant mentioned such.

The Feathered Pipe, like the Flat Pipe, was smoked, in ful-
[782] fillment of vows, but very rarely. More commonly, in contrast with the Flat Pipe, it was danced with, earlier only by the keeper, in recent decades by others.

788 General ritual features common to the Feathered Pipe and Flat Pipe,—clockwise movement, singing, the use of paint, of buffalo chips, and of sage, tobacco, larb and wild parsley,—have

* The drum used in the 1951 rite was apparently undecorated. See Plate 2 C. [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

278 "No, I might get fits." Little Man said: "I will eat it." This he then did. Al was worried about him and did not go to work, for he thought the old man would have fits, but actually nothing happened to him.

778 782 The Feathered Pipe was given originally by Bha'a or by the Supreme Being through Bha'a, who had control of thunderstorms. While individual petitioners in simpler rites such as covering the Pipe often addressed the Pipe itself in their prayers, and while in even more formal rites Bha'a was addressed, it appears to have been generally understood that the final word lay with the Supreme Being. The Pipe was given to pray through rather than to pray to, and Bha'a while exercising a certain autonomy in his office as ruler of thunderstorms exercised it as agent of and subordinate to the Supreme Being, and in the more formal ritual prayers of the Feathered Pipe, the Supreme Being's name always came first.

782 [821] Feathered Pipe rites were carried out mostly and mainly, although not exclusively, to ask for rain and for protection against threatening thunderstorms or against lightning and destructive high winds during them, and sometimes for cessation of floods and rains. Often however major or minor rites were carried out, with or without previous promise or vow, for ends not connected with weather, to ask for cure in illness, escape from grave danger, safe return from a war expedition, and so forth. In times of drought, Bha'a would be asked for rain. In the more elaborate rites commonly held each spring, petition would be made "To have rain and [in recent decades] good crops and grass, . . . to bless the earth so everybody will be happy and healthy and no bad luck for anybody all summer, so they [all the people] will live 'till next spring,' that is, so when this time of the year comes around again they will be here."

*796 The more solemn Feathered Pipe rites, those at least which involved the sweat-lodge ceremony and the unwrapping of the Pipe bundle, were performed only during the period of the year when thunderstorms could be expected, namely from spring through to fall, and never during the winter months. The Pipe could, however be "covered" at any time of the year. In contrast to the Flat Pipe cycle, seasonal rites proper did not occur, although some rite was

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

789 song had also to be sung, apparently to the accompaniment of the drum.

755 Putting sweet pine needles on the sick person's head, blowing wild parsley on him, and smudging him as doctoring practices have been previously described. According to Singer, if some one were so sick that his life was despaired of, the keeper would take the Feathered Pipe [the bundle, probably] and lay it on him and pray over him, and the sick person would recover, and, she added, "it cured a lot of them." Doctoring power was regularly acquired by reason of acquiring the keepership.

793 302 The keeper and co-keeper painted their own faces every morning after breakfast, like the men, in two bands, but broader ones three or four fingers wide, one on the forehead near the hair line and the other from one jaw across the chin to the other jaw.

778 The Pipe bundle was smudged by the keeper every morning and evening with sweet pine needles. During Curly Head's keepership Cora Chandler and her children were kept busy collecting dried cow dung for the daily smudging ceremony. The keeper made it a practice to "talk" or pray often to the Pipe in his lodge. According to The Boy, the keeper was fearful lest otherwise he might make ritual mistakes, at which the Pipe would be angry. According to Al Chandler, the Pipe being jealous, the keeper "had to talk to it to let it know it was not forgotten or put away; he treated it just like a person."

788 778 Customary observances on the occasions of feasts or ordinary meals to guests in the keeper's lodge have been previously described.

When the keeper and the people were camped for any length of time in a given place, the Feathered Pipe bundle was ordinarily taken in the morning from its place of honor opposite the entrance inside the keeper's lodge, hung up outside over the entrance, and brought back inside at eventide.

[361 624] 778 484 When the camp was to be moved, the Feathered Pipe keeper, like the Flat Pipe keeper, had, it seems, a consultative voice in the decision and perhaps even veto power at times, although ordinarily the final decision was made by the head men. The decision once made, early in the morning when camp was to be broken, the Feathered Pipe bundle was hung out on its tripod back of the

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

keeper's lodge, with two tripod legs close together and the third pointing in the direction of march, as a signal to the people. 484 778

On the march, the Pipe bundle was ordinarily packed on Pipe's own horse. Two stuffed parfleches were placed, one on either side of the saddle; blanket robes were thrown over them and the saddle; the bundle, with its covers, was then put thereon and securely lashed down with specially tied rawhide thongs.

On breaking camp, the two Pipe keepers with their Pipes might decide to stay together, or else to separate. "Most of the people [usually] hung around the Pipes." If the Pipe keepers decided to separate, some of the bands or other groups or families might choose to go with one Pipe, others with the other, others still with neither. "Both Pipes had certain bunches who followed them, and when the Pipes split certain ones went with each. Each band suited itself and followed the Pipe it liked best." This, for example, is what happened on the occasion when the Assiniboine captured the Flat Pipe. 621 484 778

If both Pipes stayed together, then according to The Boy, Turn Toes, and Takes the Bow, the Flat Pipe took the lead, the Feathered Pipe coming second in line. Garter Snake could not recall the order of precedence. We did not obtain further clarification of Al Chandler's statement: "The two keepers moved out first side by side and if the tribe was going to split, it was up to the people which Pipe they would follow." The statement may refer to those occasions when the Pipes were going to separate. On such occasions, all informants were fully agreed that the Flat Pipe and Feathered Pipe each came first in the line of march of its respective followers. The order on the march, for the Feathered as for the Flat Pipe was: the keeper in the lead, next to him the co-keeper leading the Pipe horse behind her, then the Pipe child alongside or just behind the horse. In this connection the original first co-keeper of the Feathered Pipe was called, in Garter Snake's version of the origin story, "Woman-takes-the-lead."

Other Sacred Pipes

In recent years the Gros Ventres have had only the Flat and Feathered Pipes, but earlier there were others. The Boy listed 778

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

778 five others known to him. In Turn Toes' early days—he was about 80 years old in 1940—there were two others besides the Flat and Feathered Pipes, and before his time there were still others. A pipe of which his father had been keeper was buried with his father.

778 Only scattered details, to be given presently, on the origin and ritual of these minor pipes were obtainable. In general the rites
x 796 and observances followed, to some degree, the broad pattern of those of the two major ones. Each pipe had its own songs. Sweet pine was used, as in the Feathered Pipe ceremonies, for making smudge. The pipes had to be kept "quiet and clean," each in its own bundle in the owner's lodge. An important difference was that ordinarily the pipe was buried with its keeper unless he had during his lifetime transferred it to someone else.

Of the five pipes, other than the Flat and Feathered Pipes known to The Boy, three,—the Beaver Pipe, the one gotten from Bird Tail Butte, and the one given to the Piegan,—were classed by him as "great pipes," although not nearly so great as the Flat and Feathered Pipes; two—the ones gotten from the Gros Ventres of the lower Missouri and from the Crow respectively,—were classed as not so important. We shall first give what information we obtained on these five pipes, and later take up some of the other pipes mentioned to us.[11]

Whether "Beaver Pipe" was a specific name for just one particular historic pipe or a general name for several or all these minor pipes is not clear from our field data.[12]

---

[11] Kroeber, 1908, p. 272, mentions that this multiplicity of pipes distinctly differentiates the character of the Gros Ventre pipes from that of the Arapaho.

[12] In 1948 The Boy stated: "The Beaver bundle religion started with the Gros Ventres and was transferred to the Piegan. The difference from the Flat and Feathered Pipes is that when the Beaver Pipe is transferred they give a copy, so that the Beaver Pipe rapidly multiplied while the Flat and Feathered Pipe remained one. The last Gros Ventre to have a Beaver Pipe proper was Weasel Bear,—his two sons, Stiffarm and Mouse, were called Beaver children. The beaver is a showy animal and the Beaver rites as carried out by the Piegan, among whom they were important, were showy

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Other pipes, some at least of them "Beaver" Pipes apparently, were specifically mentioned by our informants. There may be some duplications in the following listing. 178

The pipe owned by Roasted-in-the-coals, or Roasted-under-the-fire was called asti:θibie:tsa (meaning not obtainable). It was buried with him. It had two big rattles with it about 6 to 8 inches in diameter. After he died, these rattles were brought to Crow Bull, Coming Daylight's maternal uncle. He kept them quite a while, but, perhaps because they did not belong to the Flat Pipe which he owned or because he had had a dream about them, he decided to put them away, and had his wife Iron Woman and his niece Coming Daylight dispose of them. They were camping on the Missouri River at the time. The two women dug a kind of tunnel in the bank just big enough to hold them. Coming Daylight pitied these rattles because they were not even wrapped. So she took her robe and wrapped them in it and prayed to them: "Have pity on us. I pity you because you are not even wrapped up. I take my robe to wrap you. You are poor like orphans." And so the two women put them away. [534]

Coming Daylight's father also was keeper of a pipe, but only for a short time as he was killed in war, not long after getting it. When her father first received this pipe, he was not grabbed without warning, as new keepers of the Flat and Feathered Pipes were. The wives of her uncle, Crow Bull, made a big lodge for her father and put this pipe on a tripod in front of it. Then Crow Bull went to his sister, Coming Daylight's mother, and said: "Go in your lodge. This lodge is yours." So her father and his two wives moved in. Her mother had children at the time and so was not co-keeper, and when the babies cried she would take them out of the lodge. Instead her father's other wife, who never had any children to Coming Daylight's knowledge, was co-keeper. The pipe's place in the big lodge was opposite the door. When Coming Daylight's father died, her mother's brother, Crow Bull, took over the pipe. This pipe, with most of the wrappings removed to lessen the weight, and wrapped in a small bundle with rawhide, lashed around near either end and with a thong handle, was taken by Crow Bull to the war called by the Gros Ventres "When [602]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

778 they wiped us out." After this war in which so many of the Gros Ventres were killed, the survivors moved off leaving this pipe, and Cut-Away's pipe (see below), and "the remains of a third one" (Small Drum's apparently, see below), in a lodge all nicely fixed up.

In Coming Daylight's father's big lodge were two other pipes, one owned by Stabber's father, Small Drums, the other by Cut-Away, or All-Cut-Off. The place of Small Drums' pipe was to the west of her father's pipe, that of Cut Away's to the east. No further details on these two pipes were obtainable, apart from their final disposition mentioned above.

The last Gros Ventre Beaver Pipe of which we obtained record was buried with its last keeper, Weasel Bear, the father of Stiffarm.

778 648 On the two other "great" pipes previously mentioned as known to The Boy, only the most meager information was obtainable. One of these two was gotten by a Gros Ventre man from Bird Tail Butte in the Bear Paw Mountains. The other, of unknown origin, was in the possession of the Gros Ventres long ago when Lame Bull was a boy and was given, he told The Boy, to the Piegan. The Boy one Fourth of July saw the Piegan "having doings with this pipe."

On the two pipes rated by The Boy as of "less importance," our data are likewise meager. One of these, "a common pipe," was a gift from the Crow. At one time at least it was in the possession of Black Bird. It was procured a few years ago, from one of the sons of the last keeper, by Richard Pohrt, hailing from Flint, Michigan.

The other of the two was a gift from the Hidatsa (called "Lower Gross Ventres" by the present-day Gros Ventres of Montana) or the Mandan. It was called watä:nuta (some kind of black bird) and is generally spoken of as "the pipe of Big Beaver" who was its last [and only?] keeper and with whom it was buried. According to Takes the Bow, the Gros Ventres, not so long ago, had gone east beyond their own territory and encountered these "Lower Gros Ventres." The two parties stopped some distance apart and by use of the sign language discovered who each were. The "Lower Gros Ventres" were glad to meet the Gros Ventres, for

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the two tribes had never been at war. In token of this, the "Lower Gros Ventres" gave the Gros Ventres a pipe to bind the two tribes together, the principal men of each tribe having met together in the middle ground between the parties. In late years some "Lower Gros Ventres" came on a visit to the Fort Belknap agency to inquire about the pipe and to take it back. But the pipe could not be found in the grave of Big Beaver with whom it had been buried. 778 648

According to Singer, her father, Bird Chief, had a pipe given by the Sioux or Assiniboine. On a war expedition against the Piegan on which he had taken it, when the Piegan were pressing the Gros Ventres badly, he gave the pipe to his youngest brother who was captured with it, but let go. The pipe however was kept by the Piegan. This happened when Singer was a very small girl.

Relative Dignity and Popularity of the Sacred Pipes

All our informants were fully agreed that the Flat and Feathered Pipes far outranked in sacredness, dignity, power and popularity any and all of the other Gros Ventre sacred pipes. 778 771

There were, however, some differences of view among our informants as to the relative status of the Flat and Feathered Pipes themselves. These differences of view, traceable in part to informants' respective affiliations and preferences, were comparatively minor, and are largely reconcilable if we distinguish between what we may call "popular devotion" on the one hand and "liturgico-dogmatic" order of dignity on the other,—a distinction commonly discernible in religious life of other peoples of the world.

As regards "popular devotion," the two Pipes appear to have received about the same number of offerings, vowed and unvowed, from the people, and some Gros Ventres made it a practice rarely or never to cover or robe one of the two Pipes without at the same time covering the other. Some Gros Ventres, while holding both Pipes as superlatively sacred, thought the Feathered Pipe to be in certain respects more powerful, since it, unlike the Flat Pipe, had never been captured by the enemy and since, they held, those bands or groups who, when the tribe separated, followed the Flat

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

798 Pipe met with more accidents and misfortune than those who
771 followed the Feathered Pipe.[18]

As regards "liturgico-dogmatic" order of dignity, the Flat Pipe appears to have had premier rank. It was the older of the two Pipes, having been given at the very time of "creation." On the march, most informants agreed that the Flat Pipe took the lead. The Flat Pipe alone had solemn seasonal rites proper, and these to obtain from the Supreme Being all things necessary for living long and happily, whereas the Feathered Pipe rites were mostly more particularistic in purpose, namely, to ask for rain and for protection against thunderstorms. Finally the Flat Pipe alone was brought to the sacred Sacrifice Dance ceremony to lend added solemnity thereto.

Regardless however of such differences in popularity and dignity and of certain differences of view among our informants, both Pipes were most deeply venerated by all the people, as gifts given in the last analysis by the Supreme Being himself, for the protection and well-being of all the Gros Ventres forever.

---

[18] In 1948 The Boy while discussing the relative merits of the two, told a long story of a dream given to his paternal grandfather, Crow Moccasin, keeper of the Feathered Pipe, through which he was able to save the people of his band from an attack by the enemy, although the rest of the Gros Ventres suffered great disaster. Impressed with the fact that the Feathered Pipe avoided capture, nevertheless The Boy still feels that the Flat Pipe is the greater, one argument being: "When the Flat Pipe was captured it found its way back to the Gros Ventres under its own power." For details of story on Loss and Recovery of the Flat Pipe, see No. 8 in Appendix. [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

782 *796 occupied a continuous four-day (or three-day and four-night) period.

782 *796 ●778 At some time during the preparatory period, prior to the start of the dance proper, the principal vower's ceremonial grandfather taught him how to dance with the sacred wheel which was in one sense the main ritual object used in the Sacrifice Dance. One such wheel, we were told, is still in existence, in the possession of Mrs. Grace Stevens, but we did not have an opportunity to see it. It was vaguely described to us as being not a "woven wheel" but only a "hoop" with some down feathers attached to it. In dancing with the wheel, the dancer sang and with his right arm hanging down held the wheel in his right hand and swung it back and forth. When he tired of swinging it in his right hand he changed it behind his back to his left and swung it. When the Sacrifice Dance proper began, the principal vower was given possession of it for the duration, with the full right to carry and swing it whenever during the rite he danced and to otherwise use it. If one of the other dancers weakened and fainted from hunger, thirst, fatigue or pain, the principal vower would go to him and pass the wheel back and forth in front of the unconscious man's face, and would so revive him. Whether other vowers than the principal one could ever dance with the wheel we did not discover.

*796 [834] Those who "joined" the dance, at least the principal and associate vowers, had to refrain from sexual intercourse for a while, say two or three nights, before the dance proper began.

The morning after the last of the four nights of singing began the ceremonial "scouting" for felling and fetching of the center pole of the dance lodge.

Early that morning, four prominent warriors, men who had been successful as scouts in sighting the enemy and bringing back information, were selected to go look for a center pole. Each had to put on his war accoutrements as if he were setting out on a war expedition. While the four were gone, those who had sent them gathered buffalo chips and put them in a pile. The four scouts on returning announced their approach by giving a special yell, and the people would say: "The scouts are coming." As the four approached closer to the waiting crowd who were ranged in a half-

773 been told to do and put up the Drum Dance. Thus was the Drum
539 Dance introduced among the Gros Ventres into their sacred dance system."

When Lame Bull told The Boy this story, the latter asked him: "Who was it who gave this dance and these horses?" And his
[825] father answered: "The killdeer." So the Drum Dance is owned by the killdeer (*Oxyechus vociferus*).

The Drum Dance ranked high in dignity among the Sacred
*796 dances. Lame Bull ranked it next after the Sacrifice Dance, and first in importance in the Drum-Dog-Kitfox-Crazy group, because, he told The Boy, the Drum Dance was "most difficult and complicated to carry out," and through it "more horses had come to the Gros Ventre tribe."

The Drum Dance was held only in fulfillment of a vow. The
[881] rite lasted the customary four days and nights, with a big feast each day. The Boy was uncertain whether a sweat-lodge ceremony was held during the Drum Dance.

The chief sacred objects used in the Drum Dance were, so far
[778] as we could learn, the very large drum, and the fur-wrapped crooked sticks which were carried by the dancers and which to judge from the origin story were four in number and were decorated as therein described. The dancers themselves were
[302] painted yellow all over their bodies, with black dots, representing hail, from the waist up.

Four of the Drum Dance songs, numbers 52-55, were recorded,
*796 as sung by The Boy, who had learned them from his father, Lame
533 Bull. There were others which The Boy did not remember, nor did he know the ritual order in which they were sung.

Two of these four songs, numbers 52 and 53, are wordless, and were sung at good-time dances during the Drum Dance. Number 53 is the song that was sung by the men marching out of the dry lake-bed when the Drum Dance was first given to the starving Gros Ventre man by the killdeer. These dancing songs were lively ones, sung to fast time.

Song number 54 is difficult to translate as the meaning of two of one of the words was unknown. The Boy ventured the conjecture that the whole wording might possibly mean: "There are

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

things together, and making ready a kit-fox skin stuffed to look like a live kit-fox. This last was used in the dance. The Gros Ventre made a great impression on his tribe and his dance was accepted and recognized as a Sacred Dance, and a vow was made to perform it." 773 539

The Kit-fox Dance was held, like the other dances, in the summer time,—about August, so Charles Buckman thought,—and everyone was obliged to be on hand for it. Preliminaries might however begin far back in the preceding winter, particularly the painting and taking out of the joiner's wives by the ritual grandfathers. This latter preliminary phase of the dance seems, from Coming Daylight's report (infra), to have been very similar to a corresponding phase of the Crazy Dance, but we were able to secure only the following, rather vague, account of it as described by Coming Daylight: 796*

"In the Kit-fox Dance the wives had to go out with their 'grandfathers' just as in the Crazy Dance. My uncle, Crow Bull, once joined it with his Assiniboine wife, Coming Day, and it took a long time. The 'grandfathers' used to take extra long [in preparation for] for this dance and, if the [preparatory] time was winter, they made nice places, brushing the snow away, where they would lie down with their ceremonial grandfathers. The 'granddaughters' would go to their 'grandfathers'' lodges and then the 'grandfathers' would take them out, and the 'grandsons' would be painted. The 'grandsons' would have so to go for a long time, from winter to spring, to their 'grandfathers,' before actually joining the dance. So Crow Bull would go with his wife to his 'grandfather's' lodge to get instructions and each time he would be painted and the 'grandfather' would take Crow Bull's wife out and brush away the snow and lie with her." 796* 837

Besides the stuffed kit-fox skin mentioned in the origin story above, the Kit-fox Dance paraphernalia included two crooked sticks, used when dancing. These were shaped like a shepherd's crook or hockey stick, with strips of little otter skin carefully wrapped around them "all the way down" and with eagle-tail feathers tied to them here and there. The wrapping had to be done in a certain way, and only by a brave warrior. These sticks 796* 778

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

were owned only by fearless great "chiefs." At one time, Bushy Head owned one, and Singer's husband, Iron Bucket, another. A third man would own the Kit-fox Dance rattle. Buffalo Run (or Chase) was one such rattle owner.

In addition to these owners of the two sticks and the rattle, numbers of other men would join the Kit-fox Dance, but according to Singer, "only chiefs." The male joiners chose a little girl "as a little kit-fox" to dance with them. She had to be a biθa:sθa, a "dearly-loved" child,[28] and to be so chosen was looked upon as a great honor. The "little kit-fox" danced a *pas seul* in the rite. Her father would be there with her, in the background, just as a mother would be present for her son in the Fly Dance. As "dearly-loved" children, especially female, were not numerous, it was difficult for Kit-fox Dancers to obtain one for their ceremony. Coming Daylight's father had intended to offer her to dance therein, but he died while she was still a small child. She recalled seeing a girl, whom she knew, dance at one Kit-fox rite, and seeing "the girl's father dance for her in the back of the lodge."

We recorded two of the Kit-fox Dance songs, numbers 56 and 57, as sung by The Boy. The first of these two, a wordless one, was the one the kit-fox sang while the Gros Ventre of the origin story slumbered. The second also was wordless, as originally sung by the kit-fox when giving this man the dance, but the following words, later added to it, have a double reference: to kit-foxes who run into their burrows when they see human beings, and to the following traditional incident:

"Some time after the Kit-fox Dance had become known to the Gros Ventres, a young man, Little Weasel, vowed to hold it. In it he used the stuffed kit-fox. After the dance was over, a war party started out. Little Weasel went along, bringing the stuffed kit-fox with him. The party encountered a big party of Crow (or Sioux). The enemy attacked and made the Gros Ventres run. Then Little Weasel who was packing the stuffed kit-fox set it down, making a sort of mound, and walked around it singing this song (No. 57) and adding the somewhat ironic and poetic words, 'Run your best. You will (not) get into your lodge(s).' He him-

[28] Flannery, 1941, pp. 33-37.

the grandmother died she was buried with it. Coming Daylight and Singer had never heard in their grandmothers' time of the "cows" wearing belts with four buffalo tails attached, or being painted with a pipe symbol on the cheeks, or calling like crows when dancing.[40] The "cows" would don their good buckskin dresses for the dance, and, according to Singer, wore "for their belts a little calf robe tied around."

The "bull" wore as a headdress the shaggy skin of a buffalo head with the horns attached. Coming Daylight emphatically insisted that only one woman, the "bull," had horns on her headdress.[41]

The two attendants danced during the rite, but had no feathered or horned headdresses. Coming Daylight mentioned wearing her elk-tooth dress when functioning as a "calf," but spoke of no specific ritual costume for "calves" or for the "bull calf."

The dance lodge, a big one, was, according to The Boy, set up outside the camp circle. The men used to put it up for them. The center pole, not so big as the Sacrifice Dance one, was erected without ceremony, and was painted red by the "boss." Each dancer had her own [ceremonial?] digging-stick made of a stout cherry or Juneberry branch about 2" to 3" in diameter, with the distal end pointed and curved. These digging sticks were tied to the center pole all around, with the handle end resting on the ground and the curved end pointing outward. Both sticks and ties were painted [red?] by the "boss." Coming Daylight remarked *apropos* of this: "I was small then, but I certainly looked to see how that pole was fixed. It is a good thing I did. Most children would be too crazy to observe how things were." She had never heard of two tent-poles, two pegs and two ropes of the dance lodge being painted respectively one black and one red.[42] A fire burned in or close to the middle of the lodge.

The two (or one) men singers sat in the place of honor in the

[40] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, pp. 260-61.

[41] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, p. 260. Coming Daylight had seen the Blood Indians' Women's Dance, with the women wearing headdresses like those of the Gros Ventre women and with the "bull" sitting over on the west side.

[42] Kroeber, 1908, p. 261.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

769 —rather than the power-giving being who bestows upon the
787 recipient power the latter can use at will without having recourse to or summoning the original donor. No historical interpretation is here being suggested. It looks, instead, that Little Man's deviant power in the case was merely an idiosyncratic variant of the ghost helper concept to which, not wishing to assume the normal public offices of persons with ghost helpers, he attached to curing functions not for all ailments but for ailments caused by ghosts.

Personal Supernatural Powers

787 Supernatural power was acquired by an individual mostly for
778 success in war, accumulation of wealth, doctoring, gambling or love. It was obtained more commonly by quest, although often without quest, and could be transferred by sale, gift or bequest. It was bestowed by many different kinds of beings,—mostly quadrupeds, birds, snakes, rocks; in some cases, ghosts, indeterminate "persons" or "spirits." How and from whom power was acquired differed appreciably in accordance with the several above-listed kinds of power. These differences we shall describe later in detail under these several categories: war, wealth, doctoring, gambling and love. Before doing so, we shall deal with certain characteristics more or less common to all the above five categories.

782 In general, the Gros Ventres distinguished between three chief
869 methods of fulfilling their desires and wants: natural ability, prayer and power. A person was supposed to make best use of his native physical and mental endowments to acquire skills, to use his wits, to develop his capacities and personality,—in a word, to rely on himself and to stand on his own feet, whether as food-getter, craftsman, warrior, gambler, or what not. His second recourse, where his inborn and acquired abilities fell short or threatened to fall short of enabling him to fulfill his wishes and needs, was prayer, primarily although by no means exclusively to the Supreme Being. The third choice, in the ideal order, was resort to power.

Turn Toes, for instance, as an orphaned boy used to be advised

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

782 869 [761] say: "It is not good to ask that kind of a career [from powers]. It would be a life misspent and would be dearly paid for. Man's dearest possession is life, and this would be cut off."

787 869 761 Charles Buckman had heard old men say that, although they had fasted and prayed over and over again for power, they had never had even a dream, and that this may have been why they had lived to old age.

According to The Boy, his father Lame Bull, when a young man, dreamed that the being who lived on Baldy Butte in the Bear Paw Mountains called him. So on one occasion when the Gros Ventres were camped near this butte, Lame Bull thought this was a good time to accept the invitation and go up on this butte and sleep. He was getting ready to do so, when his father gave him a sound scolding: "I always told you not to try to be a holy man, a man with power of that kind. Those who have such power do not live long. Forget about sleeping on the mountain and attend to the horses and lodge poles. We need you at home. Mind your own business. So Lame Bull did not get to sleep on the mountain. His father was boss."

Coming Daylight came back repeatedly to the same theme. "I am not a medicine woman [with power] and that is why I have lived to be such an old woman." "I am not sorry I refused the medicine power offered me in a dream. Medicine people die soon. It seems like they have a certain time to die and they don't live to be old like myself and Singer. These medicine people are not strong like others." "I never accepted any kind of power. Those who have power die too soon." "They [the beings] used to trick people into taking all these things [powers] because they wanted them to die. The holy dreams are very tricky."

787 ●778 Singer gave her own experience. "I used to take a blanket or other offering and put it in deep water and pray that they [apparently the water monsters] would have pity on me. One night after I had just done this I dreamed that a person was standing there and that nearby lay the emaciated body of one who was very very sick. This person told me: 'I give you my body.' This is the way a being puts it in a dream when going to bestow power. Then the person showed me how to doctor, he used a pipe-stem which

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

was full of 'nicotine,' and showed me how to draw out sickness through the stem. But I told him: 'I don't care to have any power, because people who accept power have only a certain length of time to live and it is always too soon [short].'"

Those who possessed gambling power in particular always became afflicted with some serious ailment of their legs and/or arms. There would be pain in and swelling of the joints, and the possessors would die before their time. This happened to Lone Bear, The Boy's wife's father, who had gambling power; while still in his prime his legs went bad, and even though he quit gambling to escape the penalty, he died prematurely. Red Whip, too, one of the greatest of those with gambling power, who died in 1912, died, the Gros Ventres believed, before his time.

It was believed that Bull Lodge, a great medicine man, did not live his life out.

A person, however, who had acquired power and later transferred all of it by gift or sale to another person or persons could thereby escape the penalty and live his life out. In this case the penalty would be transferred, along with the power, to the transferee or transferees.

Doctoring power was sometimes avoided or refused for other reasons than fear of or unwillingness to accept the penalty of illness or shortened life. Doctors, somewhat like keepers of the sacred Pipes, had to live restricted lives, abstain from certain foods, and avoid certain actions. Personal liberty was thus curtailed. Coming Daylight, when a young girl, was offered medicine power by a man four successive times in dreams, but she refused: "I did not want to be a medicine woman. I did not like it because medicine people suck on the affected part of the patient and have to swallow what they extract,—even though that man was showing me that I would have to extract with my hands, and not by sucking." Bad Bad Bull had power to cure the powerful "stomach-eating sickness" [cancer?] and used to suck out the small animal that caused it. In his old age he wanted to give this power to his sister, but she would say: "Oh, I am bashful. I would not be able to doctor that sickness. I would like to have the power so I could cure the pains but I would not like the part [or the curing pro-

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787 cedure] where you pull [suck] it [the animal] out." When she
756 would say that people would tell her: "You should have taken the power and so gotten a lot of things [in payment] for curing that disease."

[831] Some women would refrain from asking power, particularly love power, from men who had it, because payment included allowing sex relations with the man.

787 While, then, the possession of powers brought the possessor
778 some very worthwhile advantages, advantages differing in kind according to the specific power acquired, it had its drawbacks—chiefly illness and shortened life, but also restrictions on freedom and other obligations distasteful to at least some individuals. The advice, therefore, given by parents and councilors to avoid seeking power is understandable. So, too, is the fact that many neither sought power nor accepted it when it was offered by supernatural beings or by fellow-tribesman. Many thus clung more to what appears to The Boy and others to have been the ideal Gros Ventre philosophy of life: For the fulfillment of your wishes rely on yourself and on prayer, rather than on magical power.

We recorded a number of cases of refusal of power, some of them already cited above in passing. In no case of refusal except one did the person refusing suffer any evil consequences therefor, and two of our informants, Coming Daylight and Singer explicitly stated that such refusal curtailed no penalty. A person was quite free to accept or decline an offer of power whether made by a power-giving being or a power-possessing fellow-tribesman. Neither of the latter would take offense if the offer were declined.

756 Coming Daylight in various free chats volunteered many details
778 of her own personal refusals of power. Her earliest experience came when she was a very young girl, only about eight years old,
787 and was living with her grandmother. "I used to sleep in a big lodge [with her grandmother]. While I was sleeping, a man came and wakened me. He had a bag of medicine on his back and told me, 'You can be a medicine woman.' The third time he appeared to me [in dreams], there was a person lying there, just skin and bones. The man [with the medicines] said to me, 'You could cure such persons as this one. You can take all these medicines,'

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

and he spread out, all the medicines and told her what each was for and said, 'Do everything I tell you to do. Lay your hands on the sick and you will have it [medicine? cause of illness?] on your hands.' But I never wanted to take this and I would tell the man so. In the morning I would tell my dream to my grandmother, although I was not supposed to do so until after the fourth dream, and my grandmother would say to me: 'Do not say anything. You will be a great medicine woman.' But I did not want this power. I kept refusing it and for this reason after the man had appeared to me in dreams the fourth time he quit coming. I would have been great if I had accepted the power but I did not want it.—Maybe if this dream had come to me later I might have accepted the power and then I would have been like Good Singer [Coming Daylight's father's sister, a famous medicine woman of Coming Daylight's earlier years]." 787 756 778

On later occasions, too, she was offered power in dreams, but she always refused and does not regret having so refused. "But," she said, "all I wanted was to live a peaceful life and get food easily. I have always been well fixed with things to eat and have gotten things easily, because I prayed for these things instead of taking medicine power . . . besides I had too many children to be a medicine woman. . . . My children were all Catholics. I too joined the Church, and I will be a good Catholic until I die."

Coming Daylight was also offered in a dream the power to "know children," that is, power to doctor women who did not want children and likewise refused it.[8]

On other occasions, an old medicine man, who had cured her infant daughter would offer to transfer curing power to her, at the implicitly understood common price of granting sex relations with him. "If you want that power," he would say, "you can come crying to me." But she used to answer: "Oh, I wouldn't do that because you are one of those who like to have women and you would try to have me."

One instance of refusal of power by Singer was noted previously. Another was described by her as follows. "Once when we had gone to Rocky Boy Reservation, I went quite a distance to fetch

[8] Cf. Flannery, 1953, p. 129.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

756 wood. Something in my sleeve kept biting me. I would sort of
787 work my sleeve but it kept biting me. Finally I took off my dress and found it was a big spider with long legs. I did not kill it but
●778 just brushed it off. That night in a dream the spider told me: 'Because you had pity on me, I will have pity on you.' But I told the spider: 'I do not care for any powers from a bug or spider.' Afterwards people told me I should have accepted the offered power so that I could doctor spider bites. If you accept a power like that you are shown in your dream how to doctor. Nothing happens if you refuse such power." Every once in a while people
[165] were bitten by spiders. Cora Chandler had heard of one such case: "One fourth of July at Lodge Pole a woman got bitten while fixing her tent and died the same evening. Had Singer accepted the power offered her, she could have doctored that woman."

Little Man, Al Chandler's adoptive father, once refused power from a rattlesnake to cure snake bites, but acquired power to cure seven dying persons. He had cured people and wanted to pass on what remained of his power to Al. But the latter in recounting the matter stated: "I did not want this power on account of the Catholic Church. I was afraid I might poison somebody. But the old man [Little Man] said: 'You will know all about it and what to do. All you have to do is to accept it. The rest will come to you. I am getting old and you might need it for your children. You could doctor your own children.' But the Catholics did not want you to do such things." So Al declined the old man's offer.

787 By three different men, who possessed love power, The Boy
832 was offered this power, but in all cases he refused. His accounts follow.

778 "One old man lived near Bear Paws and when he came to my place, then on the Milk River, I used to accommodate him, although he would eat with my father, Lame Bull. He appreciated this and wanted to do something to repay the favor. So he said to me: 'I am going to give you my woman's medicine in payment for consideration of your service to me. I haven't anything of adequate value to pay you back.' He had a looking glass he used to do his stuff with. But I diplomatically refused. I told him: 'I do not like that kind of thing and never have, although I appreciate the fact

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

that you are grateful and what you are offering to do for me.' The old man did not get mad or insulted, and he said to me: 'It is well you refuse this thing anyhow.' He did not tell me all the details (about the power and its manner of use), because I refused it. 778 787 832

"Another old man offered me that kind of medicine [love power] out of my appreciation of my good treatment of him, and did not get mad when I refused it."

One other old man, who liked his liquor, was on one occasion given a treat of it by The Boy and another man. Soon the old man was feeling pretty good and started to get generous and said to The Boy: "Now, my son, I am an old man now and I appreciate your giving me this drink, so much so that I am going to give you something worth something." It was this love medicine. But The Boy "refused him nicely" and did not take it.

One final illustration of refusal,—"just an old time story," Coming Daylight called it who related it,—may be given, the only case we recorded of penalty believed to follow refusal. Perhaps even in this case the refusal was not so much of power as of a request to hold a Sacrifice Lodge. 787 778

"A man was hunting north of the canyon [near the present St. Paul's mission in the Little Rockies] and was shown [by whom?] a nice clean big cave. In this cave were big strings, like a spider puts before he makes a whole web, that is one strand crossing the other at right angles. Right in the middle [at the intersection] was a medicine wheel, of the kind always used at the Sacrifice Lodge. The man just stood and gazed at it. He saw it good and it belonged to the Sacrifice Lodge. He camped in the mountains overnight. That night this wheel told him in his dream: 'You ought to take me so you can make this Sacrifice Lodge.' But the man did not take it. He went back to camp and told his dream and his refusal to take the wheel. After that he began to waste away with a sickness called 'cut away,' in which the flesh starts to disappear in a small place and just sinews show and then it spreads. It was a quick sickness and he died of it. They say this happened to him because he did not take that medicine wheel." [164]

From what has been recorded on the preceding pages it seems quite clear that the individual was under little or no supernatural

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787 or social compulsion to seek power, and was subject to no penalty
778 if he refused it when offered to him by supernatural beings or by fellow-tribesmen. In fact, a certain amount of social pressure was brought to bear upon him to avoid and refuse it. Each individual had to make his own free choice, weighing the advantages against the disadvantages, the profit against the cost. The decision to seek or refrain from seeking, to accept when offered or to refuse, was entirely up to him.

554 We have listed the disadvantages, the cost. What were the ad-
778 vantages, the profit? Chiefly prestige, material gains or wealth, and sex favors, depending on the type of power sought or accepted. The great warrior and the great doctor who attained eminence through power both enjoyed high prestige. Which of the two, warrior or doctor, ranked higher is hard to say. Both had very high standing and both were deeply respected. The Boy and Coming Daylight inclined to rank the great warrior a bit higher than the great doctor. In The Boy's word, "both had high standing, each in his own field. The warrior perhaps rated higher. The medicine man had standing, but only on certain occasions was he thought of. But a renowned warrior had the admiration of the tribe because he had risked his life and was a strategist and by his own efforts." According to Coming Daylight "it was the greatest thing to be a warrior and look for the enemy." Al Chandler leaned more to the view that "if a man was honest about his medicine,—so many times they [medicine men] faked and tried to got everything a person owned,—and was known to be honest, he was respected to the same degree as a warrior." All informants were however fully agreed that both warriors and doctors ranked high. Doctors who had power to kill and who were suspected of using it were more feared than respected. Men who had gambling powers ranked far below warriors and doctors in the prestige scale. Of one the most famous recent Gros Ventre possessors of gambling power The Boy remarked: "He was just a little fellow. He was just a gambler," and a man known to have gambler power could not be selected to the high office of Pipe-keeper. Likewise those who had love power were usually rather chary of advertising widely the fact as well as the source of their power.

Power thus in varying degrees conferred prestige, a much sought

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

after good in Gros Ventre competitive life. Most types of power,— and not only power to acquire wealth directly,—brought material rewards. War raids had largely the purpose of acquiring horses, the main Gros Ventre wealth in earlier days, from the enemy.* Doctoring brought the practitioner large emoluments; gambling power netted the owner rich winnings. Love power, in addition to securing sex favors for its possessor, could also be a source of good profit through transfer by sale to others. Wealth among the Gros Ventres gave prestige on its own account as well as material ease and security. Further, wealth was inextricably tied up with prestige as goals sought through military, medicinal, gambling and love powers. 554 778 [721]

These were the chief advantages and profit or power which the individual had to weight against the disadvantages and cost thereof.

Many individuals, in view of the cost, neither sought nor accepted power, as we have seen.

Many others, however, men and women and even some young boys and girls, sought or accepted power, and such power was by no means confined to professional medicine men but was widely distributed among the laity. A few, but very few, children had power: the several cases recorded will be given later. But many women as well as men acquired it; what exact proportion of whole adult population is hard to say. The Boy, Thick concurring, stated: "Only a few men and women had ancestral helpers, but it was the usual thing for grownups, men and women, to have some kind of power." On another occasion, they said: "Not everyone tried to get power [by fasting on mountains] but only certain individuals. For instance, of three men only one might try, the other two might not care to try." On still another occasion, The Boy remarked: "Not all who slept on mountains got power. Lots got nothing; they didn't even dream. Only a few got power from such a quest. Some tried over and over again but never got anything. A man might spend five to seven days on the mountains and yet not even dream. If, say 30 or 40 slept on the mountains, only three or four of them might get power. Only a few Gros 778 787

*For discussion of Gros Ventres concept of wealth, see Flannery, 1953, pp. 73-79.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

778 Ventres, not many, had power. Males would start questing when
787 young, but older men would also go out to seek power. After a man got to be really old, he no longer tried." Charles Buckman had heard old men say that they had fasted and prayed (on the hills) over and over again but that in spite of the sufferings they thus endured "they never had even a dream," and, in another chat, he remarked that "few fasted and prayed."

[184] It seems, therefore, that many men did not go out on hills to seek power (women never did so), and that relatively few even of those who did go were successful. At least, very few were successful in acquiring really significant or great power. On the other hand, many, the majority perhaps of both men and women, had minor power or powers of one kind or another, gotten initially otherwise than by quest or by transfer. Thus for example, Coming Daylight, who had repeatedly refused curing powers offered her in dreams and who insisted she was in no sense a medicine woman or "holy," this is, power-possessing, woman, had certain herbal curatives, for family use, given her by her maternal grandmother and by her mother's sister, Good Singer, a noted medicine woman of earlier days. Or, to use just one other example, many women and men had bought love medicine from other men or women. These minor powers, of many different kinds not always distinguishable from non-magical knowledge and ability, were apparently very common,—"the usual thing," as The Boy expressed it above, "for grown-ups, men and women."

The Power Quest

787 The favorite time of the year for going out to seek war, wealth
827 and doctor power was spring. In The Boy's words: "It was known to be easier to get doctor power in spring. Everybody used to say that the young bear cubs used to wash their feet with the first rain of the spring. Bears were easy to get power from in spring. They were eager to give their power at this season. All nature is alive in spring. Grass, trees and leaves wake up. Hibernating animals used to sing before coming out of their winter dens. Bears come out of their hibernating dens after the first rain of spring. The body of even a human being is sort of stationary in winter

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787 latter he would be told by the offerer to go to some other designated mountain to get what he was seeking.

The length of time a man would stay out on the mountain varied, the range being apparently from one to seven days, and of course the nights too. Power might be given in full daylight as well as at night. Various informants mentioned one to seven days, five to seven days, seven days, two to four days, four days. Sometimes questers were given power the very first day or night; others, only on a later day or night; others still not on the first quest at all, even though they remained five or seven days, but only on a following quest or after repeated quests; others, finally, never got power, not even a dream, even though they went out over and over again on the hills to seek power. Great medicine-men got their full powers as a rule only after a number of years of repeated sleeping around on high buttes.

The recipient of power ordinarily got three things from the donor: a song, instructions on the rites to be observed in using the power, and some material object which was a symbol, and/or instrument vehicle of the power.

533 Singing, as we noted earlier (supra, p. 79), was originally
778 gotten by the Gros Ventres from Earthmaker at the time of the great flood and was confined to sacred occasions. Later it degenerated and became secular as well. But among the birds and animals it did not degenerate; it kept its pristine sacredness. And these birds and animals and other beings would give their songs to questers for power, to each successful quester a specific song for his own use in exercising the particular power given at the time.

As The Boy explained it: "From time immemorial every Gros Ventre rite or ceremony began with song. . . . And when the Gros Ventres went out on the hills or to the forests to seek power and were granted a hearing and were going to be given power by rock, forest, animal or other creature, the granting always began by a song. . . . It was remarkable how they [the questers] could memorize these songs that were sung [to them] by these several creatures, and the recipients never forgot these songs and always had them foremost in their minds and never altered them in any

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

way. Others of course, learned them from the one to whom they were first given, but always sang them the same unaltered way." 533 778

An individual might have more than one kind of power, and hence more than one song. A doctor might have more than one doctoring song; Stiffarm, for example, had many. At any given time a great number of doctoring songs were in use by the many doctors. The four doctoring songs we recorded are only samplings. Only the person who acquired a power by quest or transfer had the right to sing the song or songs connected therewith except when requested to help sing with the owner at say a curing rite. A person who had acquired power songs could, if he desired, sing them in his lodge as bedtime songs.

The recipient of power was given and taught by the power-donor not only a song but also detailed instructions on other ritual procedures to be followed in exercising the specific power. These procedures will be described presently, in our section on power use and ritual.

At the time when power was bestowed, the recipient also got some power object. Sometimes they were given to him directly by the supernatural donor; sometimes the donor instructed the recipient where to find or how to make the power object, or just told him what kind of object to use. This object was often spoken of as the medicine or power of the possessor. So far as we could discover, the object was conceived of as more or less identical with the power or as the tangible embodiment, vehicle or instrument of it. The power object was consistently brought into play when the possessor made use of his power, as will be described later. A recipient might obtain at any given quest more than one such object from the donor. 787 778

These objects,—such as a weasel skin, otter skin, root, and so forth,—were commonly kept by the possessor in a skin bag as the possessor's medicine bundle. The Boy made a gift to us of the badger-skin medicine bag of his father, Lame Bull, who used to keep peppermint and a thunder-stone in it.

In many cases power objects were swallowed by the power-recipient when first given to him and were so retained within his body until he forfeited his power through breach of code or in-

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

778
787

struction or until just before his death. In the latter case, these objects would come out of his body, usually his mouth, and if they were living things would shortly thereafter die, after which the person himself or herself died.

Thick's sister-in-law, an Assiniboine, whose Gros Ventre husband had been a sacred Pipe keeper, violated the rules by joining the Ghost Dance religion. Thick witnessed her death. "Just before she died, she said to her husband: 'Get me a dish.' She spat into it. We looked and found there a living (?) thunder-stone she had spat out. She spat again, and this time a little round rock. She spat a third time, a stem of fresh green peppermint. 'Now,' she said, 'I'll die. I have violated the rule laid down for me.' And so she died."

A coyote had given Al Chandler's adoptive father, Little Man, yellow paint to swallow. "I saw it," Al stated, "when Little Man was dying because it came out then. . . . It was about 2½ inches long and about 2½ inches around. It was pure white clay on the outside. It was like you make a dough of the white clay and put the yellow inside and roll the white over the yellow."

Stiffarm and Little Man's brother were also present when Little Man was dying and knew this paint would come out when he died. They said: "We will see what made this old fellow so powerful." So they took this roll of white clay and broke it open, and the yellow paint poured out. "The brother was one of those who did not believe in such things," Al added, "and he certainly was surprised."

In the course of the curing procedure as carried out by Sits Holy, a miniature bear would stick its paw out of his mouth and would growl loudly enough to be heard all around; as carried out by White Weasel, he pulled a little animal, his medicine, out of himself; as carried out by Good Singer, she hit herself on the chest and a bead, her medicine, came out of her mouth, and at the end of the rite she swallowed it; as carried out by Little Man, a hail-stone, given him to swallow when he received child-birth power, was later disgorged and given to his patient to swallow.[11]

Lame Bull had been given doctoring power, to be used only

[11] The Crow Indians, The Boy stated, likewise swallow power objects.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

after a certain period of probation. He, however, broke the rule and doctored before his time was up. A night or so after he had doctored a spider came out of his ears and a thunder-rock out of his mouth, and so he lost his doctoring power. 778 787

Occasionally in connection with the power quest the right would be given to the quester to paint his lodge in a particular manner.[12] Among the Gros Ventre such sacred or holy painted lodges were relatively rare and were thought of very highly. We recorded one song (No. 88), a wordless one, which belonged with Bull Lodge's sacred lodge. Bull Lodge had been "invited" to quest for power at Baldy Butte, the highest peak in the Bear Paws. The being who gave him other powers also bestowed upon him his own lodge, with instructions how to paint it and the song to sing while it was being painted. Coming Daylight's father had a sacred lodge around the bottom of which were painted the figures of men, each figure the same and each with a feather in the head. The upper part was painted red. "At the tip of the ears of the lodge were things hanging, and feathers in back. The back part had a cross (morning star) and the sun."[13] 346 787

What has been said in the preceding pages about the circumstances of Gros Ventre quest may be illustrated by the following account given by Al Chandler of that of Little Man, his adoptive father: 787

"When Little Man first went out to seek power, the old medicine man (his tutor in the matter) told him: 'I am going with you.' So when they got out in the hills, maybe a whole day's travel to this place where he wanted to go, this old man asked Little Man where he wanted to go to fast and Little Man chose a place not very far away. So they went together. This old man cut his (Little Man's) flesh, took a pinch,—(some did it 3, 6, or 9 pinches), and prayed each time he cut a bit of flesh off. He told Little Man: 'Nobody is going to come after you until your time is up. If I tell you three days, nobody is coming after you until this time is up. In the meantime use your whole heart and don't get 801 304 782

[12] There was a distinction between the sacred painted lodges and the lodges painted with war deeds. Cf. Flannery, 1953, pp. 68, 102.

[13] For illustrations of sacred painted lodges, see Plate 4.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Other Means of Acquiring Power

787
778

While in the majority of instances power, as initially acquired direct from power-giving beings, was gotten by quest, in a considerable minority of cases, it was so gotten in first instance without quest.

A man might be offered power, without quest on his part, when away hunting, or war raiding as in the following given us by Singer.

"A bunch of young men went afoot on the warpath. One of them had a pain in his leg, and it was so bad he could not travel further with the party. So they fixed him a shelter of wood, like they used to make, so he would be warm, and gathered some water in little paunch bags and hung them there, and piled up a lot of wood and dried meat, and left him there.

"He got so bad he couldn't even move his legs. As he slept he dreamed that a lot of little children came in and they had a boss. So the young man said: 'Where are you going? I am having a hard time with my leg-ache.' 'I had pity on you,' said the boss, 'so I came,' and then the boss added: 'I will give you my body [that is, Singer explained, I will give you some power]. As long as you live you will never have children, but I give you this,' and he gave the young man a little horn spoon and showed him a root, and said: 'When a woman is going to have a child you can always doctor her. Just one drink and the baby will be born.'

"When he woke up he found he was cured, so he hurried and caught up with his friends. They were surprised.

"This young man called his dream visitors 'little children,' but they were really 'ghost men.'" This is the only instance these beings were ever known by either Singer or Coming Daylight to have helped anybody.

Powers of various kinds were acquired without quest by keepers and co-keepers of the Flat Pipe and Feathered Pipe, as previously described. Not the least of these was doctoring power. Bull Lodge, for instance, was a medicine man before he got the Feathered Pipe; "But," Al Chandler added, "even if you were not a medicine man before you got the Pipe, you would be after you got it."

We recorded no instance of women going out in the hills to

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

fast and cry for power. Coming Daylight, when asked about the matter, just laughed, and said: "they [women] never go out like men do." Commonly women were offered doctoring power in dreams at home, as in the several instances already noted. Singer was once offered power after she had made a sacrifice. Sometimes a woman was offered unsought power when wandering around outside camp or on the hills during mourning or in anger at her husband.

787
778

"Sometimes," said The Boy, "a woman would get angry at her husband and would go away and wander around alone, not fasting but eating when she could and drinking. Sometimes such a woman would get power. Something or some animal would take pity on her and give her power. . . . Sometimes too a woman who had been captured by the enemy would make her escape and on her way back home would sleep out alone and would acquire power . . . a woman does not ask [by questing on mountains] for power. Power comes to her. When mourning for relatives and sleeping out [away from camp] and suffering without food, somebody might take pity on her and give her power without her asking." "Women," remarked Singer, "When they lost a loved one, would go up into the mountains and cry themselves to sleep, and that is when a lot of them would get power."[14]

Like women, very young children did not go out on the hills to fast for power. The occasional very young boy or girl who got power got it without formal quest. Coming Daylight's offer and refusal of power at the early age of eight years has been previously recorded. The Boy mentioned one case in which during a smallpox epidemic all the members of a certain family died except two children, a boy and a girl. The two children continued to stay alone at the spot. A bear came. The girl, after the two returned, became a "holy" woman.

Keg, the boyhood friend of Lame Bull, The Boy's father, was given power, without his seeking it, one early morning while he was out looking after the family horses. The boy, then only about ten years old fell asleep and dreamed he saw a big hand game going on for high stakes and one fellow taking all the winnings. On

[14] For examples, see Flannery, 1953, p. 206.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787 778 looking more closely Keg saw that the fellow was he, Keg, himself. The fellow said: "Do as you see me doing here. Use my throat as an object (button) to hide." Then Keg woke up and saw nearby a covey of prairie chickens at their mating dance. Keg was so given gambling power by the prairie chicken(s), and was a very successful gambler, from that time on.[18]

778 424 425 Acquisition of power directly and in first instance from a power-giving being gave the acquirer right of exclusive ownership and use of the power. The power was a gift from the being to the human individual, and became the latter's property to be exclusively held and used by him, as would any gift given him outright by a fellow Gros Ventre. The owner could however transfer it, in most cases, by sale or gift. The Boy and Thick explained the main features of the system as follows: "The individual who acquired the power, and he alone, would use it. He would not part with it unless someone bought it from him. . . . In case of purchase he would teach the buyer the secret of how to use the power. Then too the owner of the power might transfer it without remuneration to one of his children if the owner lived to old age and had [living] children; he might do this rather than have the secret of the power die with him and do no one any good." On other occasions The Boy, speaking particularly of doctoring power, further explained: "While a doctor had many power songs, no other doctor had a right to sing these songs, unless the doctor-owner transferred his power to the other. . . . If someone else knew what plant a given doctor used and tried himself to use it, he could not get results, because he would not know the songs and rites to use with it. . . . Even though he should know the songs and rites as well as the plants, it would have been very wrong to try to use them. . . . Only the one who had [acquired] the power had the right to practice it. If everybody had been free to practice it, there would have been no use for the doctor to have gone through such hardship [fasting, etc.] to acquire it."

Power acquired in first instance as a gift from a power-bestowing being, although exclusively owned by the recipient, could be under

[18] For further details, see Flannery and Cooper, 1946, pp. 407-08.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

certain conditions, to be described as we go along, transferred by gift or sale, loaned, or delegated. 778 424 425

Individuals who had personal ancestral helpers practiced no kind of transfer, loan or delegation. After all, such helpers were in no sense "owned" by or the property of these individuals. The concept of the ancestral helper is fundamentally different from that of power in this as in most other respects.

While we obtained records of many instances of transfer, by sale or gift, of war, doctor, and love power, we obtained none of transfer of gambling power. Whether it was transferable at all is a point we could not fully clear up; more probably it was not, but at any rate actual transfer either did not occur or must have been excessively rare. According to The Boy: "Nobody wanted their [gamblers'] power. It became so that it was non-transferable. . . . There were some [possessors of power], and among these was the gambler, who would not transfer."

A transferee could not, so far as we could discover, retransfer power by sale or gift to a third party, except perhaps power to be lucky, especially invulnerable, in warfare. Our field data on this point are slim.

While women sometimes, as we have seen, got power direct from power-giving beings, very commonly,—"mostly" The Boy stated,—the powers they possessed were acquired by transfer from men, or from women.

Initiative in transfer could be taken either by the owner of a given power or by the party wishing to purchase it.

When power was transferred either by sale or by gift, the transferrer carefully taught the transferee all the songs, rites, objects and taboos that pertained to the power in question.

So much for transfer in general. We now turn to certain aspects, first of transfer by sale, and after that of transfer by gift.

Transfer by sale of doctoring power, at least of major doctoring power, was, according to The Boy and Thick, uncommon; that of love power, rather common.

A man who had by quest acquired doctoring power could transfer it by sale to a maximum of four people. After the fourth transfer, he, according to The Boy, "would have exhausted it so far as he 778 425

31 Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

778 425 himself was concerned, he had transferred it all away," and "had made himself negative again," that is no longer subject to the penalties of power possession. This first possessor was, so long as he kept his power, "a big fellow, but after he had transferred it to the four other people [men and/or women], there were now four big people, and he was such no more, so far as power was concerned and had no right even to sing the songs [proper to this power]. He was right where he had started [before acquiring this power]. The four could then go on and do just what he did when he alone possessed the power and they could [each, apparently] scatter it in four other different directions transfer it to four others." Such multiple diffusion by transfer did not, it seems, proceed far in actuality. "Scholars," as The Boy explained, "may all go through the same school under one great teacher, but seldom if ever do they all equal the teacher,—maybe only one, if any, will. So not all who got power by transfer were successful with the power because maybe they did not do or avoid doing all that the transferrer told them to do and avoid doing. So after a while the transferred power just died out."

832 778 425 Love power, or love medicine serving as the vehicle of power, could, however, in contrast to doctoring power, be transferred by the owner, at least the original one, to any number of people. It could be "transferred without limit and sold. The things," The Boy added by way of comment, "that were better for social life were limited. Love medicine [or power] was limitless, unless the possessor stopped gathering the root or bark or whatever it was he used to do his stuff."

Whether in cases of transfer by sale of doctoring power by a man to a woman the granting of sex intercourse by the woman was always and *de rigueur* the payment or part of the payment, is not quite clear from our field data. But that it was not uncommonly required is beyond question; in cases of man-to-woman sale transfer of love power, it was very common, in fact the usual thing, and seemingly more or less *de rigueur* to validate the transfer. When a woman sought such love power from a man who possessed it, she would watch her chance when his wife was not around and secretly carry out this part of the bargain. If the transferrer were

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

832
778 ●
425

a woman, one of her adult male kin might be chosen by her to have sexual intercourse with the woman transferee.

To judge from the many anecdotes in circulation about this sex element in transfer payment, anecdotes dating mostly from quite recent decades in the memory of informants, it was a very common topic of gossip and of grapevine communication.

431
778

Transfer of power by gift, appears on the whole to have been much more common than transfer by sale. This accords with the general Gros Ventre pattern of transfer of other kinds of property. The Gros Ventre sold little; he gave much. Property changed hands within the tribe much more by donation than by barter.[16]

Gifts of power were made either to relatives or to friends, and while the giver still had his or her health, though perhaps of advanced age, and not ordinarily at least, on his death bed. A number of cases of offer to transfer by gift doctoring and love power during the possessor's lifetime have been previously given. War power, according to The Boy, "was commonly given, without payment, to a son or brother." "War medicine," according to Al Chandler, "was passed down from generation to generation; Bull Lodge gave his sons (Curly Head and Otter Robe) their war powers. Curly Head was a medicine man but Otter Robe was more of a warrior. Little Man, my adopted father, had some kind of war medicine from his brother, when his brother got killed Little Man took this medicine (a sparrow-hawk and a shirt) from him to keep it, and to use it."[17] While war power might pass down in a family, we obtained no clear instance of such transmission by inheritance proper, in the sense of transfer to take effect only upon the death of the transferrer. [428]

778
426

Our data, all from The Boy, on loan and delegation of power, as distinct from outright transfer, are meager. "An owner of power to be lucky in warfare so as not to be shot could lend this to somebody, and if the owner were going to die he could tell the borrower to keep it." "Sometimes, when a man with medicine power was appealed to come and doctor somebody, he could say to his wife:

---

[16] For details, see Flannery, 1953, pp. 80-87.

[17] Some of Bull Lodge's war medicines are illustrated in Flannery, 1953, Plate 3; cf. also p. 92.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

778 'Wife, I transfer this power to you. You go and doctor this time. I don't feel like doctoring today.' But before this she would have
426 always accompanied him in his curing practice and knew exactly what to do and sing." Such a "transfer" was purely an *ad hoc* delegation, not a surrender of his power.

Power could be completely lost by the owner either during his lifetime or at death. During the owner's lifetime it could be lost by persistent disuse, by complete and final transfer through sale or gift, by "using it up," and as a result of breach of the rules. Where, for instance, a man had power to cure only a limited number of people, say four, with the conclusion of his fourth cure, the power was "used up" and so ceased. A certain Gros Ventre who had power to cause rain and storms made much use of it in a battle with the Crow but finally used it up and was killed by them.

If a person with power had not transferred it, on his deathbed the power embodied in or associated with some material object or living thing within him would come out of him, usually out of his mouth, and so his power would die with him. Even though the root or medicine he had used but had not transferred was known to others, they would not be allowed after his death to use it in curing. Thus lots of good medicines were not used, even though they were known to be efficacious.

Use of Powers

778 We now come to rites and procedures followed in the exercise of powers for war, gambling, love and various miscellaneous purposes, including legerdemain. A consideration of the use of the very important doctoring power is reserved for separate treatment in a subsequent chapter.

The great majority of those who went out in quest of power sought power to be great warriors and to become wealthy. The two aims were ordinarily closely related. A major goal of most
[721 war parties was the acquisition of horses,—the chief wealth of
556] the Gros Ventres in the old days. Both success in war and possession of wealth brought prestige, and such prestige in the individualistic competitive culture of the Gros Ventre was eagerly sought after.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

War power usually included both a positive aspect, outstanding success in killing, wounding and capturing enemies and in taking booty, especially horses, and a negative one, luck in escaping injury. Little Man's brother had power to make his horse run so fast in war that no other horse could overtake it. 778 721

Those who sought wealth power asked mostly to have many horses, not to be poor, and "to get things easy without much effort." 778

"My grandmother's brother," Coming Daylight related, "the first Crow Bull went to McCann Butte in the Bear Paws to sleep. The people were camped at the bottom near the lake, and from an opening in the mountains on the other side of the lake they saw a lot of white horses come to the lake. Crow Bull was told in his dream: 'These are all your horses.' It is claimed that everybody else saw them too. After that Crow Bull always had white horses. People gave him white horses and he brought white horses home from war." 556 787

Cora Chandler had heard a similar story about Bear Nose who slept at the same spot. He saw (in a dream, probably) a lot of prairie dogs and was told: "These are your horses." Cora commented: "I knew the day when Bear Nose had only buckskin horses,"—of the color of prairie dogs.

On both the preceding cases, the two men who got power only to own all these horses, although, Cora thought, Bear Nose also had lots of other powers.

As regards war-power ritual we gathered only a few details, mostly from Al Chandler regarding his adoptive father, Little Man, and from Garter Snake regarding her father, Bull Lodge. 778 721

Little Man got from his brother who was killed in battle the latter's war medicine. The brother's power objects were: the dried skin of a sparrow hawk [Flaco Sparverius] with the head, claws and feathers; a shirt, tailored like an ordinary shirt, but kept painted yellow all the time and with "little holes all over it even on the sleeves and with hawk feathers on the shoulders and some on the back." The yellow paint and holes presumably symbolized the predominant rufous and buff coloring and spotted belly and sides of this fast flier. When the brother went to war, he would put this dried hawk skin on his back, and take a "little fuzzy feather" from the wing and tie it on his horse's tail, and the power

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

778 721 would make his horse go so fast that no other horse could catch up with it. Little Man himself did not go out war-raiding, but once when he and some of his people while on a journey were waylaid by Piegans, he used the hawk medicine as his brother had done, and in the fight no Gros Ventre casualties occurred but three Piegan were killed. In later days, Little Man put a feather from this hawk on the horse Smokey, an entrant in the two-mile [525] and mile races at the Fair, and the horse came in first in both races within less than an hour, while Little Man won $75.00.

Al Chandler added that "every man's war medicine was different" but gave no further details.

Garter Snake told the following story of Bull Lodge's power in the war-wealth field. "Otter Robe, his son, once came in, there being a lot of young men in there, and said to his father: 'Father, we are going out on a war party and we want to steal horses from the enemy. Could you help us so the enemy will not be able to see us and we will have luck to get these horses?' Bull Lodge replied: 'All right. I will try to see if I can. If I can I will tell you.' So he told his wife: 'Get that wooden bowl and that colt hide [objects he used in his practice]'. He smudged them four times, then set the bowl down and covered it with the colt hide, and they put out the fire. I was sitting there beside my mother. . . . When my father got through, we heard nicks and neighs of horses in that bowl. We did not see anything [any horses] but only heard them, and Bull Lodge said to his son: 'You are going to be lucky. You will get the horses.' Then he removed the colt hide and there [in the bowl] was horse manure. This he took and gave to Otter Robe and said: 'Take and dry this. And when you go out [on the raid] and get to the enemy's camp, make a smudge of a certain thing, take the manure, pulverize it, and sprinkle the powder all around the smudge. If you do this and go into that camp, the enemy are not going to see you. You can steal all the horses you want. And after you leave with the horses, there will be a big fog in that camp, so that the enemy cannot see you or follow you.' And that is what happened. The raiders got horses and brought them home, and the fog protected them."

778 525 Gambling power was gotten only for use in the old two-button hand games. So far as our evidence goes, the possessor could use

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

his power only when he was an active participant in the game. 778 ●
Keg, who had gotten gambling power from a prairie chicken, 525
would, when using this power in a hand game, imitate the hissing, swishing noise made by the prairie chickens when they ruffle their tail feathers. He had been given by the prairie chicken its windpipe to use in the hand game, and for this he made use of a small metal spring resembling the windpipe. Red Whip, famous for his great gambling power, used a weasel skin in exercising this power. A player with power who was losing in a game might half seriously voice an appeal: "What is the matter with you, prairie chicken (or ghost)? You are failing me."

Only certain songs could be sung in a two-button hand game; [533
others, such as doctors' songs or medicine lodge songs, could not 784]
then be sung. If one of the players had a gambling power song, gotten in a dream from a prairie chicken or ghost, he would start singing it and others would join in. Gambling songs were sung in fast time to the accompaniment usually of small hand drums, the players marked time by striking with sticks the logs that lay stretched in front of each team. After a game was well under way, in the excitement, grunts would often take the place of songs.

We recorded two gambling songs for the old hand game, numbers 107 and 108, as sung by The Boy.

Love power, more common than gambling power, was acquired, 778
by quest or transfer, to attain various ends: by a man to secure sex favors from women who were reluctant to grant them, or 832
who had not only rejected his advances but had privately or publicly met them with insult;[16] by a jilted lover to win back the jilting man or woman; by a man or woman to win over a desired but unwilling prospective marital mate; by a wife to win back the affections and fidelity of a husband who was running around with other women.

We could obtain very little information on the rites carried out when love power was used. Our chief informant on love power, The Boy, had been offered it on various occasions but had never accepted it, so had not been told the ritual procedures to use, procedures about which the possessors of love power were ap-

[16] See Flannery, 1953, pp. 174, 193.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

778 parently rather secretive. A root or bark designated by the being
832 that bestowed the power was commonly used, and in some cases a looking glass. A very little bit, just a pinch, of one root or bark was used at a time, and seemingly might be rubbed on a looking glass that was "all painted up and decorated."

778 Before concluding this section on rituals and procedures followed when the major powers—war, wealth, gambling and love—were used, some scattered data may be given on rituals and procedures used with other powers.

Lame Bull, The Boy's father, had clairaudience power from a crow. To use it he would rub his ears with earth, as the crow had told him to do.

Mary Ereaux related the following incident. "My brother-in-law, White Weasel, a great medicine man, once came with his wife in a wagon to visit me. I was busy in the kitchen and after supper came in to the front room, the bedroom, to visit with my guests. White Weasel would kind of groan and say how tired he was, but I didn't think anything of this. Finally, he said: 'My, I have been just dropping and throwing hints and I find I have a hard-hearted sister-in-law. I pretend like I am so tired and here she has three bottles of whiskey in her bedroom and she never offers me a drink. There is one flask that is half empty, a second with the seal unbroken, another in a black leather case.' I was so surprised that he knew all that. My mother told me he could see it but I knew he had not left that corner of the room. . . . This was really a proof of his medicine power." She added: "When White Weasel had a few drinks he would start singing tea dance songs. My mother could then hear a woman's voice singing with him. She said it was a good sweet voice. It was not his wife singing. She could not hear the voice nor could I. Once in a while you would come across someone who, like my mother, could hear it. It was like a vision which some see but which others present cannot see."

Chief Grass on one occasion, when a war party he was with was bothered by a poltergeist, took an arrow, rolled buffalo hair around the arrowhead, singed it a little and spat on it. Then he shot the arrow and subdued the ghost. "Chief Grass had power and this, it was believed, was his way of using it."

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

In two of the battles described by The Boy weather power was used. In one, when seven Gros Ventre warriors were surrounded in a piece of brush by a body of Crows and the latter set fire to the brush to rout the Gros Ventres out, one Gros Ventre, a quiet and unassuming man, "used a bone whistle and did other things," and shortly rain came and put out the fire. This man's war-charm, an otter skin, was captured by the Crows in this battle, and the Gros Ventres learned later from the Crows that whenever the latter mounted this otter skin trophy on a pole, as at a scalp dance, rain came with thunder and lightning. Finally the Crows got scared, carried the otter skin over on the hills and left it there, "and the thunder left them alone." 778 821 726

In another battle, this time with a party of Sioux, the Gros Ventres had taken a scalp, and were retreating, with the Sioux in pursuit. Morning-Star-Appears (Rising Cross), a Gros Ventre warrior who had a ghost helper, "sang a song, used a robe as cover to enclose himself and said, 'We wish rain.' " In no time a heavy cloudburst, with thunder and lightning broke, and the Gros Ventres,—among them Stiffarm, then a very young man,—escaped under cover of the rain and semi-darkness.[19]

Garter Snake, daughter of Bull Lodge, gave us the following story: 778 821

"The Crows were camping on the north bank of the Yellowstone when a May snowstorm came. It snowed four days and four nights, and the snow drifted far up the lodge sides and horse-high, except where blown clear on elevated exposed spots. On the fourth day, at noon, the Crows came to Bull Lodge with a pipe and some things. They offered him the pipe and of course he didn't take it right away, but said: 'What is this for?' They said: 'We know you are a holy man [one with power]. You [can] do almost anything and we are asking you to make this storm quit. If you don't we shall all perish.' He told them: 'All right, that is easy.' And they gave him that stuff: 'Here are the things we give you.'

"So he told his wife: 'Stand up a pole good and solid in the back of the lodge.' She did so. Then he said: 'Take down that shield.' This was the shield he had dreamed about. He then

[19] See Cooper, 1944, p. 72.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

778 821 smudged the shield and hung it up on the pole, then he got his Feather Pipe drum and started to sing. As he sang the third time, and of course prayed and went through the [ritual] motions, and a sun ray showed right on the shield. The Crows were in the lodge and they all saw this and they prayed. And he said: 'I have one more song.' So he sang the fourth one and after he got through he said to one of the men: 'You go out and see what has happened.' The man went out and it was still snowing but right in the heavens was a little round hole [clear spot] which gradually enlarged and the sun shone. That is how Bull Lodge cleared the weather."

789 We now come to use of powers of legerdemain. Such powers were ordinarily looked upon as "supernatural" in origin and nature. We have already given many illustrations of such legerdemain as integral elements in ritual power-use, we shall now give the illustrations of it as used in purely or predominantly secular contexts.

Such feats are attributed to various individuals. According to Mary Ereaux, Sits-in-the-Midddle on one occasion when the party was out of tea, "made tea for them and they thought that was great." An unnamed medicine man was reputed to be able to swallow a "chunk of coal" [probably hot embers].

The two most outstanding masters of legerdemain known to our informants were Bull Lodge (d. ca. 1886) and Stiffarm (d. ca. 1935). According to Al Chandler, Stiffarm got his legerdemain power from ~~Bull~~ Lodge, and actually his feats and procedures (such as use of a handkerchief) duplicate almost exactly Bull Lodge's so far as they go.

Here follows our fullest account of Bull Lodge's feats, as given us by his daughter, Garter Snake, with some details interpolated in parentheses, from Charles Buckman (CB) and Al Chandler (AC).

"When my father slept at Baldy [Baldy Butte, in the Bear Paws] . . . he was given the power of doctoring, and he was given wealth, and the power then to make tobacco, matches, sugar, tea, and even coffee. These are the articles he made. In winter time his sons would go out and get cherry brush. He would put

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

'Little Man,' had been bewitched and cured, he fell sick again. A man was called in to doctor him. He did his medicine work and drew out a small rattlesnake with shining eyes from Little Man's forehead. Meanwhile I had built a fire. I asked the man to let me look at that snake and he told me: 'When you have finished, hand it back to me.' But I threw it in the fire. He did not say anything but gathered up his medicines, jammed them in his bag, and went out. He took the mare given in payment and gave it away at once to another person. . . . Little Man did not know what to make of my action. I told him: 'I burned up his old rotten medicine.' 755

"I know I could not escape death [some time] so I was not afraid of him (the man). Some others would be scared of a medicine man like him, but not I. He did not put medicine on me. He was my neighbor, however, and after that he avoided me like he was ashamed. . . . Little Man really had kidney trouble and that man fooled around his head!"

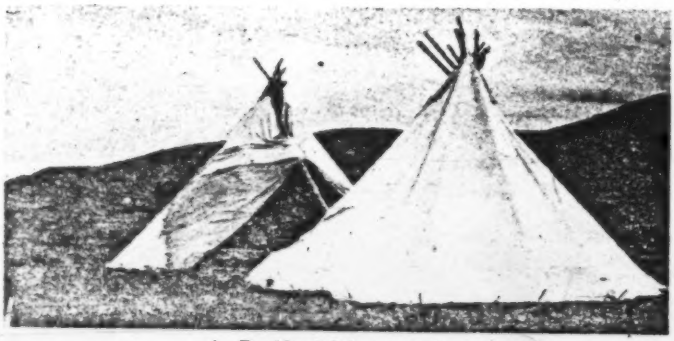
"Stiffarm," Coming Daylight also said, "had some power concerning children, for he wore a bracelet from which hung little dolls, one on each side thereof. . . . My husband, Little Man, used to make fun of Stiffarm for wearing this bracelet, but he would never tease him outright [in his presence]. After Stiffarm would leave, Little Man would say: 'What is that crazy thing doing with such a bracelet?' " [778]

Bull Lodge, Garter Snake's father, a great medicine man, who died about 1886, had gotten power to cure various ailments. From Garter Snake were obtained some details, many of them confirmed independently by The Boy, of the ritual procedures used by Bull Lodge. His chief operating instrument was a woodpecker feather.

"Now I will tell how my father doctored," Garter Snake volunteered. "On one occasion his granddaughter was ill and called him. His wife and I went along with him. On our arrival this granddaughter said: 'Grandfather, I would make coffee for you but I haven't any sugar.' But he got mad and said: 'Everytime you ask me here you ask me to make sugar. I am tired of this. If you had the power I have, would you like to be making it all the time?' Well, instead of quitting asking, she took a pack (?) and threw it to him and said: 'make that sugar.' So he went through [789]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

346
796

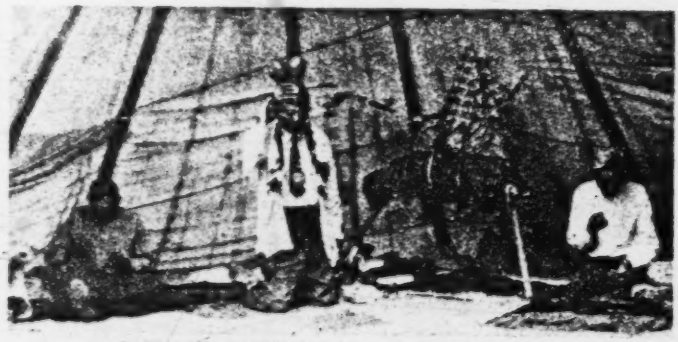


A. *Double tipi for ceremony.*

[301
782]

B. *The Boy prays with ordinary pipe.*

[516
534
778]



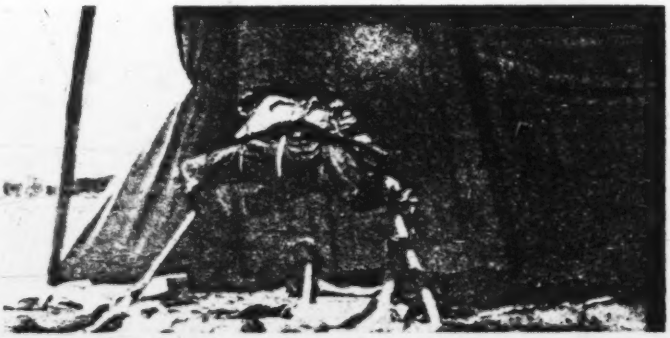
C. *The Boy smudges rattles over Flat Pipe hearth.*

PLATE I

[p.425]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796
778
[401]



A. *Flat Pipe bundle on tripod.*

B. *Setting at opening of Feathered Pipe ceremonial.*

C. *Drum hung on tripod.*

PLATE 2

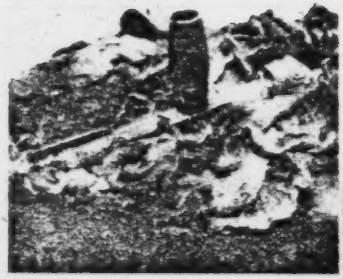
[p.426]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

276
778
796

A. *Unwrapping Feathered Pipe bundle at hearth.*

B. *Contents of bundle.*



C. *One of the pipes in the bundle.*

D. *Iron Man II holding a pipe from bundle.*

PLATE 3

[p.427]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

793 co-keepers with her, but they or one of them would substitute for her in such minor duties as taking the Pipe out of the lodge in the morning and bringing it back in the evening when she was sick abed, or busy, or during her menses. During menses the [84] co-keeper was not allowed to handle the Pipe. After Crow Bull, 784] during his keepership, gave away his head wife and co-keeper, Digger, to Small White Cow in a drunken spree and Digger went away as wife to Small White Cow, Crow Bull's second oldest wife, Coming Day became co-keeper in Digger's place. If a man at the [784] time of becoming keeper had a young wife with an infant, she and the infant were sent away to another lodge as infant-crying was not allowed in the keeper's lodge where the Pipe was.

The Flat Pipe keeper, if he had two or more children, chose one and one only of his children, more commonly a boy, to be Pipe Child. It was a strict rule that he could keep only one of his children with him; all his other children had to live elsewhere than in their father's lodge, because, for one important reason, the Pipe was jealous. Some keepers were such rigorists in the matter that they practically forgot all their other children.

793 The children that were put out of their father's lodge naturally 784 found this hard and rebelled, but they were trained to take it as 543 a matter of course. A special interest was taken by others in such children as they were felt to be unfortunate in being deprived of the care and affection of their own parents. These children were permitted to visit their father and mother but they were under restrictions when they did so. Their grandmothers or foster parents would instruct them how to behave on such visits. They could not stay long, much less sleep there. They had to sit quiet in a special place in their parents' lodge and not roam around in it freely. They had to stay mostly near the door and not go near where the Pipe was. They were strictly forbidden to play in their father's lodge when visiting there. If their mother gave [781] them something to eat they could eat it. They could sit on her lap. But they could not talk loud or shout. When so visiting they were not at ease and felt sort of foreign and awestricken. The Boy 793 thought that these children may have been jealous of their sibling, 543 the Pipe Child, but in such case they would have had to keep

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

severe winter, enjoying the things they had asked for and gotten. 796*
Petition was another, prayer that they would have good health and be spared visitation by Asta: [the epidemic being], and that they would go on living happily till spring.

The seasonal rite lasted three days if the keeper was able and willing to supply the necessary food, but could be concluded all in one day. In either case the sweat-lodge rite preceded the various ceremonies carried out in the keeper's lodge. The Pipe bundle was always opened, but the Pipe itself was not uncovered to view or smoked unless the seasonal rite was combined with the Pipe smoking rite vowed by some individual. In the vowed and transfer rites the Pipe was uncovered and smoked. At the spring and fall rites all the bands and their members were expected to be on hand, but at the winter rite only the band or bands which had elected to stay with the keeper after the scattering of the tribe in the late fall. In nearly all major Gros Ventre rites, both the Pipe (Flat and Feathered) and Sacred Lodge rites, there was an alternation or contrast of "grave and gay," of reverent tension and pleasurable release. The release in the Sacred Lodges was very apt to take the form of boisterous amusement, of ritually countenanced horse-play and at times vulgarity. The release in the Pipe rites was of a less ebullient type, consisting mostly of recesses for friendly smoking and chatting and of a terminal feast. The nearest approach to boisterousness or horse play was the mixed singing contest (previously described) which was common to the transfer rite (but not the seasonal or vowed Pipe rites) and to the Crazy Lodge. [781]

The seasonal rites consisted of two main ceremonial sequences: the preliminary or opening ceremony of the sweat-lodge and the main ceremony in the keeper's lodge. We shall now take up these in turn.

The sweat-lodge ritual, according to the Gros Ventre origin story, was first taught by Ni:hohat to the bladder people shortly before he was killed and was first practiced by them just as he came to life again. (See No. 1 in Appendix.) The ritual as thus originally taught was carried out with an ordinary pipe. It was only afterwards that the Flat Pipe itself appeared, either shortly

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Sincerity and reverence in praying were *de rigueur.* Deep sincerity and reverence were manifest in all the prayers at which we were present. And praying was never talked about jokingly by our informants. The Boy, on one occasion remarked: "If the Indian was praying he put so much reverence, veneration and faith into it that he would make you cry." Levity or irreverence at prayer were distinctly disapproved, as illustrated by the following incident told us by Singer, which occurred during a severe smallpox epidemic when she was a young girl: 782 781

"I was at my grandmother's. She had a big string of beads, and she said to me: 'Now, my grandchild, take this bucket and put these beads in, and you go too,' she said to my (female) cousin. 'Then you must both go to the top of this hill and dig a hole and put the beads in it and bury them. And of course you pray. Tell the Last Born (Last Child), 'I give you this so that I will not get the sickness (smallpox) and so that I will live to a good old age. You both pray!' So I did as I was told. But my cousin got to giggling and laughing, although I was sincere and meant every word I said. I don't know why my cousin thought it was funny, but that is the way she acted. When I got back I told the old woman: 'Grandmother, all the time I was praying and doing what you told me to do, this one here was just giggling as if she were making fun of me.' The old woman said: 'Oh, she should not have done that. I told you both to pray. Now you have spoiled everything. Always be sincere in your prayers. Mean every word you say.' So my cousin got smallpox and died from it. But I am still on earth."

The ritual object most commonly used with prayer was the pipe. A great many examples have been given. No less important than pipe smoking as a medium of prayer was singing. According to Gros Ventre tradition singing was, like smoking, originally sacred. It held a premier place in prayer rites, most of which began with song, each rite having its own song or songs sung only in this rite and in no other. 782

Three questions regarding prayer remain. Who was prayed to? What was asked for or expressed? When were prayers offered?

As has been emphasized, most prayers were directed first of

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

of our ancestors, and that they may gain inspiration from our legends, traditions and heritages and the history of the world that repose in this bundle of the Flat Pipe as the Indian race understands your creation of the world. So that my grandchildren may learn to have that strong character possessed by our ancestors and their utmost sincerity of purpose of [and?] the true philosophy of life on earth. And that they may merge this sterling character into the life of this day and age. 782 539

"As I stand here today, I am fully conscious and fully realize that the White man is here to stay. And that we, the Indians, must live according to his way of life.

"I pray that White Shield [Cooper] may be restored back to good health. And I pray that Chief Woman [Flannery] may live a long, and a healthy, happy life. I pray that the Black-Robed missionaries of St. Paul's Mission [the Jesuit Fathers] may succeed in their efforts to teach us the true way of life. I pray that our leaders of the Indian people may be inspired to do good work for their people.

"My Father, I talk to you today with all of my person, and with all my heart and my mind. I give You thanksgiving for hearing my weak and mortal voice, and from my heart I ask You to again listen to my prayer, which I am making most devoutly and which is my most earnest wish."[8]

The question as to when the Gros Ventres prayed has been partly answered passim in the treatment of the sacred Pipe rituals, the sacred Dances, ghost helpers, and power. We shall here include other occasions and situations calling for or accompanied by prayer: spring time, mealtime, bedtime, hunting, river crossing, storms, the aged. 782

The Gros Ventres prayed, as occasion arose, at all seasons of the year, but spring time was looked upon as a particularly propitious time not only for seeking power, but also for other kinds of praying. The point of view may be illustrated by excerpts from a letter of March 24, 1945, from The Boy to Cooper. The letter was not just dashed off hurriedly or without previous thought. For composing it, The Boy explained orally the following summer to 782 123

[8] School Sisters of St. Francis, 1946, pp. 3-4.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

● 782 123 Flannery: "I tried to be well prepared by a long period of study as to what to tell him [Cooper] so that I could do something big for his health, that his health might be restored. I sort of prepared for this all winter long and then decided I would write this letter to him in the Spring of the year when everyone seems to feel good and [to be] glad that they are still living and that they survived the hardships of the winter and that it is time for rejoicing and that even the animals are glad that spring had come around again. They then woke up from their long sleep of hibernation when they bored underground or under a pile of rocks or whichever way they could get away from . . . winter. I tried to get him [Cooper] the full benefit of it. I am glad to hear he liked it. I tried hard to put into words what I wanted for my friend [Cooper], and so that he would get more I chose that time of the year [spring]. That is when all the animals wake up and talk and sing and move around and let the whole world know: 'I am still around too.' . . . They have made a real effort to live that long. . . . They try to keep themselves in existence as long as they can by growing and singing and running and so forth. . . . If I made my friend feel better and was able to master the great distance between us [Montana to Washington, D. C.] with those few words, I am exceedingly glad and will always feel good when I recall that letter and those words because they made him feel good. Besides my words written down, everything that I had went with them."

The Boy's message in the letter, as translated very carefully [191] [212] from his dictation in Gros Ventre and written down by his nephew, Thomas Main, was in part as follows:

123 539 782 "Dear friend—As winter is over and spring is on in its place, it makes one feel good. And as I listen to the talking song of the meadow larks they bring back pleasant memories of my association with you. So I am writing this letter to bring my thoughts into expression.

"I hope I can infuse and saturate into this paper my feelings for you and my concern for your welfare and doctor you with the tidings and blessings which the season of spring always brings, when all nature arises from a long sleep, so that you too may enjoy the healing winds and sunshine which abound at this time.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
782
123

"I have heard that your health [has not been good] . . . and it is my earnest hope that you may get back your health. I shall never forget nor cease to appreciate the encouragement you gave me when I was losing my health rapidly, and your promise to pray for me so that my health might be restored back to me.[6] I sincerely believe that your prayer was heard, as my health seems to be improving, even in my advancing age.

"So now it is my turn to pray that your life span may be extended, and among other good things to which you apply your mind that you may further contribute to the great study of the races and peoples of the earth.

"I have told you in my story of the Gros Ventres before the days of the white man, which includes the belief of my ancestors, that in the spring of the year is when one's prayers are more readily heard, and that was the time that the Indians in the long ago went to the hills, streams and mountain tops to fast and pray.

"We, the Gros Ventres, pray and implore the Supreme Being to protect our boys fighting on the various fronts in this great war, and so far only one Gros Ventre boy has been killed, out of many who are in the service. And we also pray that this terrible war and this mass killing may soon stop and that a just and lasting peace may be declared, so that the great family of nations may be true brothers again and go on with life in harmony and prosperity. . . .

"I will now close and I am very glad to have spoke to you on this paper and it is my sincere hope that you can feel my words, so that they will do you good and doctor you.[7] With a good and hearty handshake, I am

Your friend
The Boy"

782
511

In the spring, The Boy's father, Lame Bull, would at bedtime after all were lying down, sing certain songs after first praying for himself, his household and all the people. Whether this bedtime

[6] See p. 366, in references to The Boy's illness in 1940. In 1948, The Boy again mentioned gratefully Cooper's prayer for him. [R.F.]

[7] Some of the expressions used in this letter seem to be implicit references to the efficacy of the sincere wish as well as of prayer.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

782 [511] praying and singing were done at other seasons of the year and how far as a more general custom by other fathers of families were points we did not clear up.

[264] Before eating food, at least in any more or less formal gathering, a portion of the food was offered up with prayer.

[224] Prayer rites and observances for good hunting were few and simple—as compared, for example, with the numerous and complicated ones practiced by the Algonquian-speaking tribes of the taiga. Abundance of food, which principally meant game food, was commonly prayed for. Two of the Sacred Dances, the Law Enforcers' and the Woman's, had as a purpose success in buffalo hunting. But beyond this, hunting entered little into ritual, and we may recall hunting was conspicuously absent from the power quest. We recorded no rites or observances whatever in connection with the gathering of berries, roots or other plant food.

[484] It was customary on crossing rivers to pray to the Last Child for protection, and to throw into the water offerings, especially shells and eagle-tail feathers, for the Last Child, or the water monster, or both, with some words such as, "I give you this." Sometimes, too, some prayer and offering would be made by a person going to swim, or on other occasions of water hazard.

During or just before severe thunderstorms, various prayer and other procedures were resorted to, many of them directed to Bha'a, the storm being.

Seeking indirectly or asking directly the prayers of the aged, especially for long life, took several different forms, and played an important role in Gros Ventre life, as we have explained elsewhere.

There were many different ways of seeking the prayers of the aged. We recorded the following, which may or may not exhaust the list: crying before a lodge, offering a pipe, promising a sweat-lodge, "holy boiling," providing a feast, doing favors of various kinds.

782 888 "Holy boiling," to which we have not as yet referred, was an observance distinct both from the preceding ones and from feasting a group of aged people. It was intended primarily for some one person, man or woman, although others partook of the meal, and

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

could be offered by women as well as men. The person doing the "holy boiling" would have in mind the attainment of success in life. To be chosen as the person for whom the "holy boiling" was done was looked upon as a "great compliment" by the old man or old woman—it was always a very old person—so chosen. 782 888

The Boy described one such holy boiling, done by a woman in fulfillment of a vow (men too could make such a vow). The following is a summary:

The vowing woman (the hostess) chose a particular old woman (the guest of honor) to do the praying for her at this holy boiling, and after cooking a lot of food notified the old woman of the choice and invited a number of women friends. No men participated. On arrival, all sat down,—with the chosen old woman in the place of honor and the others in their places, and with food placed before each. The old woman took some cooked dog, held it up, and prayed in four directions. Then she gave four little pieces to the hostess and told her: 'Bury these in four spots, north, east, south, and west, inside the lodge.' The hostess did so, and then prayed, mentioning the Last Child, and buried a bit of food where she was. Then the other women present, on being invited, prayed each a short prayer and buried a bit of food, pushing it under the dirt, and included the Last Child in the prayer. Then all ate.

Very like "holy boiling" was offering a feast to a *group* of old men and old women. (In "holy boiling" some one old man or woman was *the* guest of honor.) The custom is still observed among the Gros Ventres. "A young man," The Boy said, who had witnessed such feasts, "would tell his wife to cook a lot of choice things and then would invite a number of people to the feast, old men and old women. He would send the crier to shout out loud: 'So-and-So [the host] invites you, So-and-So [names of the invited guests]. Come to his lodge.' The people would understand: 'That fellow is inviting old people.' These very old people, some perhaps blind or with canes, would come and sit down, without any religious rite. They would realize what the host was doing, appreciate his inviting them and not looking down on them, and would say: 'This man is pitying us. He is giving us a good meal and smoke and treating us well. Let us pray for him.' . . . Then

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

782 one of the old men would take a plate or cup of some choice food
888 and hold it up (not praying with a pipe) and pray, before the food was distributed to the various guests, to the Supreme Being (but not mentioning the Last Child) for the young man host's entire family or household, . . . that there would be no sorrow or suffering in the family, that they would have long life, that the household would stand firm and tight, and that the children would be healthy and good and successful. Then the old man would set the plate of food down and food would be distributed to all the old people. . . . Some old person would then suggest: 'Let us all pray.' Then each, including the old man who had prayed, would take a little bit of food, hold it up to the Supreme Being . . . and all would pray audibly but in a low voice, so there was a sort of humming there, each using his or her own words . . . and each would wind up by mentioning the Last Child and pushing the bit of food in the earth. . . . All this praying by the old people was done spontaneously [not requested by the host] . . . and voluntarily . . . , but the young man would be disappointed if the old men and old women did not pray for him and his family. . . . If the old people prayed they always did so before they ate. After they ate would have been too late to pray."

Sacrifices

782 Sacrifice, in the more restricted sense of the term, may be defined as the giving or offering of some material possession, usually prized as of intrinsic or of symbolic worth, to a supernatural being or beings, the giving itself being signified by expropriation of the object through destruction, segregation, or other process. In a more inclusive sense, the offering may be of something non-material, such as privation or pain or self-torture voluntarily undergone. In this section on sacrifice we feel that we shall be closer to the Gros Ventre point of view if, under the caption sacrifice we include both offerings that come under either the restricted or the inclusive sense of the term. The Gros Ventres draw no sharp line between, offerings of, for instance, a blanket, a little finger, a minute bit of one's flesh, and some of the types of self-torture to be described. All are things offered to supernatural beings.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The filled pipe offered with prayers comes clearly within our definition of sacrifice; incense and invitations to supernatural beings to sweat in sweat-lodge rites, probably so. On the other hand, wearing apparel and other objects buried with the dead were not sacrifices as they were not intended as offerings. When a person was going off to where he would have good food and drink, a stay-at-home relative or friend might laughingly say to him: "Don't forget me. Give me some food (or whiskey)." The one who went off would at the time of the meal hold up some food or drink in the direction of the stay-at-home and say: "Here's your food (or whiskey)," and would dip his finger tips in the whiskey and sprinkle it with his finger tips in the direction of the stay-at-home. The custom shares part of the pattern of certain first-fruit-sacrifices to be described presently, without of course being a sacrifice. 782●

Expropriation was symbolized or effected in many ways: by holding up the object, burying it, pouring it on the ground, sinking it in water, hanging it on trees or poles or lodges, positing it on the Sacred Pipes ("covering" them), laying it away up on the hills, giving it away to the needy,—never, so far as we recorded, by burning or other type of intentional destruction proper. Things buried or sunk in the water were not in the Gros Ventres concept "destroyed," but thereby given to the Last Child or water monster whose home was beneath the earth surface or under water.

In general, sacrifices were offered to nearly the same beings to whom prayers were addressed. Most frequently mentioned among the beings to whom offerings were made were, first and foremost the Supreme Being, then the Sun, the Earth, Bha'a, the Last Child, the water monster(s), the power-bestowing-beings, ghost helpers, Little Spirit, the Pictograph Beings, and certain sacred rocks and other natural objects, and, last but not least, the Sacred Pipes.

Among the more common objects offered were: food, usually in the form of "first-fruits," puppy meat and delicacies having symbolic value; tobacco; sweat-lodges and sweatbaths; articles of apparel and other daily use, especially robes, blankets, necklaces, earrings, beads, "pearls," eagle tail feathers; scalps; bits of flesh,

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

782 finger joints; self-inflicted privations and sufferings; in one case to be mentioned (p. 388), life itself. All in all, food offerings, though common, seem to have been less prominent in the Gros Ventre sacrificial complex than were offerings of other things. Tobacco was the only offering drawn from the native flora. Bits of meat were offered as first fruit sacrifices, and puppy meat was offered ghost helpers. But there were no blood animal sacrifices proper, that is, no ritual sacrificial killing of animals. Such ritual sacrificial killing is, in other parts of the world, with rare exceptions of domesticated animals, of which the Gros Ventres had only two, dogs and horses, until very recent times. While the Gros Ventres prized puppy meat as a delicacy, they never ate horse meat. The horse entered in no way into the Gros Ventre sacrificial pattern, not even as a food offering. Puppy meat was essentially a food offering; puppies were not as such ritually killed as sacrifices.

Sacrifices were offered for about the same ends for which prayers were offered. They were made mostly to obtain blessings of the material and physical order: long life, abundance of the necessities of life, cure of illness, and so forth; not for gambling success, for moral strength, or for happiness in the future life. Thanksgiving was commonly expressed in sacrifices; likewise, implicitly at least, homage, recognition of dominion, reverence and affection, particularly but not exclusively in first-fruits food offerings. Among the scores of sacrifices we recorded we came across none made to ask forgiveness or offer atonement for moral, or even ritual, transgressions.

So much for generalizations. A great many specific types of sacrifice have been given passim in preceding pages on the Sacred Pipes, Sacred Dance, Ghost Helpers and Power. We are here adding some types of sacrifice not previously dealt with: first, some scattered types; then, in order, sacrifices of food (first fruits and puppy meat), and of person (flesh, finger, self-torture); and finally, the sweat-lodge, as commonly associated with sacrifice.

Offerings,—blankets, "pearls," and so forth,—were commonly thrown in water; regularly when crossing large rivers such as the Missouri, sometimes, ad libitum, when going swimming. These were more commonly made to the Last Child, or to the water

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

monster(s) living under water by whom it may be recalled drowned persons are grabbed or taken. The offerings were made to pacify the water monster, apparently appease his greed and so avoid being captured and dragged down by him. Coming Daylight was always afraid of boats [bull boats] and when crossing a river would do so riding lodge poles or a log. Everybody used to laugh at her for this "because it looked more like the man's place to hang on the log" and her grandmother told her: "Don't ride on a log again, because this water bug [water monster] is certainly choicy about whom he picks on!" ~~Cora~~ Chandler explained: "Everybody says that when they put an offering in the water it disappears right away like somebody grabs it. And they say this water animal,—a bug that is supposed to have a kind of horn,—likes these 'pearls' such as Singer gave. Even nowadays people always want pearls to offer in the springs where they bathe. When anyone bathes in hot springs in Wyoming he always put in an offering just like in the old days."

When a young fellow was going off on a war party a sister or other relative might take a robe or other valuable object and put it on top of the lodge saying: "I offer this that my brother (or other relative) may come back with good luck and bring something."[a]

A young man, asking the prayers of an aged person, might be told by the latter to take eagle tail feathers or some other object out on the hills, hold up the object, to the Supreme Being and then to the sun, and pray for what was desired.

The offering of earrings to "Walking Rock" is mentioned infra. Mary Ereaux' grandmother, before smoking, would "offer tobacco to Mother Earth and the Sun."

Mary Ereaux also related the following experience, involving the offering of human lives: "I had just gotten out of the hospital after an operation and there were ten small lodges there and I stopped to talk to the people. An old man named Magpie jumped up and said: 'Here is Kills All [M. E.] back from the hospital.' I shook hands with him and his wife. He said: 'When we heard you had gone to the hospital for an operation we told Ixtcibni :hohat

[a] Cf. Flannery, 1953, pp. 112-13.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

782 [white man above, Our Father] in our prayer, so you would return safe: 'Oh, White Man Above, Our Father, spare her life. If you are going to take anybody, we are willing that you should take us in her place. She is young and has children and lives happy. But we two are old and starved anyway, so if you want to take anybody, take us.'

"I told him: 'An operation is not dangerous if you have it in time.' Strangely enough both he and his wife died within a month. It was just like he had bought my life. I feel badly even now when I think of it. Their one son married one of my daughters. . . . Old man Magpie was one of the old timers."

782 264 Food offerings, except perhaps the puppy meat given the ancestral spirit helper, were typical "first-fruits" sacrifices, made before eating. These offerings were regularly made, as we have seen, before any more or less formal, festive or ritual meal partaken of by a group, and at least very commonly before even everyday family meals at home. The latter everyday usage is explained in the following statement of informants:

Charles Buckman: "Before eating, a piece of meat is held up and so offered to the Master of All, and then is put on the ground."

Coming Daylight: "Whenever they [the Gros Ventres] eat and in their ceremonies, they never eat right away, but have a prayer, like this [here she held up her right hand]: 'Now here it is, I promised you, Our Father, the One Traveling [sun], and the Last Child.' "

The little chunks of food given in this first-fruits sacrifice rite to the Last Child were "pushed in the dirt or ground and sort of covered up with a little dirt,"—in the indoor modern rite previously described, deposited in cracks in the plank flooring.

782 As appears from the foregoing accounts considerable minor variations occurred in this first-fruits rite at meals.

The only first-fruits sacrifice connected with hunting proper, as distinct from eating, was the piece of liver and bit of fat deposited, as a thank offering to Little Spirit, on the west side of killed game.

[252 262] Puppy meat was looked upon by the Gros Ventres as a delicacy. Cooked puppy meat was commonly offered as food to ghost helpers on their visits. After the puppy was killed, the hair was

L

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

782 252 262

singed off at a fire, and the insides taken out without skinning the animal; then it was quartered up and boiled.

In addition, Charles Buckman stated: "If a party went out to war and met the enemy, before the actual fighting began a man might promise to give grub and a feast to old people, and as part of the feast there had to be a dog,—a pup, of any color. After the party got back home [at the feast, before eating] four pieces of the dog meat were taken and held up and then set on [in] the ground, one each to the north, east, south and west. The pieces were held up as offered to God—in thanksgiving and as a prayer for future favors. Then the young man served the grub to the old people. Before eating they would say, 'O God, this young man has fulfilled the promise he made to you,' and they would pray for him."

What we may call, for want of a better name, sacrifices of person or somatic sacrifices, took three main forms: offerings of flesh, of finger joints, and of self-inflicted suffering and/or privation. Each of the first two is a sacrifice in the strict sense of the term; the third, in the broader sense. The gashing of arms, legs or face as a mourning custom was quite distinct in the Gros Ventre mind from the above flesh offering: it expressed sorrow, it was not in any sense a sacrifice or offering to the deceased. No sacrifices at all were connected with mourning. Nor were finger joints ever cut off as a mourning observance.*

782 785 304 [765]

In most instances recorded by us, these somatic sacrifices were made in fulfillment of vows for the cure or safety of a close relative of the vower,—as, it may be recalled, was the case with self-torturers in the Sacrifice Dance. There were exceptions however: in their respective quests for power, Bull Lodge cut off a finger joint, and Little Man, Al Chandler's adopted father, cut off bits of flesh; the other Little Man, Coming Daylight's husband, when suffering from hemorrhages and pains around the heart was told in dream that he would get well if he underwent solitary self-torture.

Women as well as men would make offerings of their flesh and finger joints. To judge from the records we obtained, the finger joint sacrifice was more frequently made by women than by men,

*Cf. Flannery, 1953, p. 205.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

782 the flesh sacrifice with about equal frequency by the two sexes.
785 Ordinarily only a little of the woman's flesh was cut, small bits,
304 as against the large bits or strips not infrequently cut from the man. Only men underwent solitary self-torture out in the hills.

With these generalizations on somatic sacrifices covered, we shall now take up specific features of the flesh, finger and self-torture sacrifices in order.

In the early archaic times Ni:hohat, as we have seen, gave detailed instructions on cutting off bits of flesh when explaining about the Flat Pipe sweat-lodge.

The rite was described by The Boy (Thick present and concurring) and, with some differences, by Singer, as follows:

The Boy (and Thick). "The cutting off of bits of flesh was a rite all to itself. A round hole was made in the ground for the heated rocks; a common sweat-lodge was erected; a mound was made of the dirt excavated to make the hole; a buffalo skull was put on the mound; and a pole was put up for offerings. . . . The one to be cut would get as an operator someone who had gone through the rite himself. . . . The cut off flesh was offered to the Supreme Being. . . . Usually the rite was undergone so that some sick person who was near and dear to the undergoer would get well. . . . The skin was not pierced but a piece of green branch was split in two, and the two pieces were pressed hard, parallel and not quite touching each other, on the skin making it rise up, and these raised strips were then cut off. . . . One of my grandfathers was all cut up, with two half circles on his chest, one half circle on the outer side of each shoulder, a double row of cuts—not little bits, but strips cut right down—on both his upper arms and forearms and legs from hip to ankle. All these cuts were made on a single occasion. It was thought he would die of this sacrifice but he did not. . . . I myself had four bits of flesh cut from my arm, and others [farther] up my arm. [He here bared his arm and showed the scars: they were not crescent shaped.] The first cutting was done when I was a child. I was told to look away when it was being done. Sometimes children would run away and hide when told it was to be done to them. . . . Only three or four years ago [this would be about 1935-36] an old man so cut off

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

a young man's skin back of Thomas Main's house." (The cut off pieces of skin were, as at the Sacrifice Lodge, placed on the buffalo skull, "as an offering of the [person's] very body.") 782 785 304

Singer. "For cutting offerings of flesh from the arms they usually tried to get the same doctor who cut off my finger joint (see infra). He would take the flesh, put a needle through it and cut the flesh off. . . . He would then put the cut-off flesh in one of the bags from around the buffalo or cow heart which were used to carry water, and would hang it up or bury it. Women could not do the flesh cutting for themselves; they had to have a man doctor to do it. You promise so to torture yourself for some reason such as the wish to save the life of your sister or brother or other relative. For instance, if some young fellows were going off on a war party, the sisters would get out and make some such promise as: 'I will give part of my flesh or my finger if my brother comes back a great warrior.' It was great to have somebody [some relative] come back a hero, a brave man, or, as they called it, a big chief. . . . A wife could do this for her husband but usually it was a sister who thought that much of her brother. . . .

"I have a scar on my left upper arm [which she showed]. I had made this promise for the recovery of one of my daughters who was ill. A sick person is doctored, but such a promise is made as a last resort. Lame Bull told me they were going to make a big cut, like the ones they made on men. The cutting was done in a sweat-lodge where they all sat and prayed. They blackened the spot on my arm with charcoal,[10] then clipped the flesh off and held it up to the sun and said: 'This is what we offered you.' He cut me in four places on each arm. My husband was mad because it was too much. The one place on my left arm where the scar is was cut deeper than the others. After I made that promise I had the cutting done right away. [Mary Ereaux, our interpreter, here interrupted: "Goodness, you might just as well have done like the Sacrifice Dancers. You tortured yourself just as badly."] I held myself in but they certainly hurt me. They did not put anything on the wounds, only the charcoal beforehand. People try to [191]

[10] Blackening sacrifices was a common (perhaps *the* regular) Gros Ventre procedure.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

782
785 take anything like that very patiently" ["Like our Lord being
304 crucified," Mary Ereaux commented].

Very much the same procedure as regards the sweat-lodge, buffalo skull and so forth was ordinarily followed when a finger joint was amputated. The cut-off joint was offered commonly to the sun, or to the Supreme Being. The operation regularly took place inside a sweat-lodge. "A joint from any finger could be offered up, but usually it was the first joint of the little finger of the left hand. The offerer would put his or her finger on a log or stone; the operator, someone skilled in the matter, would then place a knife on the joint and hit the knife with something heavy. [752] Sage was put on the wound, to stanch the flow of blood and help healing. Children in their play, it may be added, would in make-believe cut off little fingers, apply sage and so forth.

The finger amputation complex may be illustrated by Singer's experience:

"My infant daughter [one of her three children by Iron Bucket] had been ill. I sacrificed [in a delayed fulfillment of her vow] the end joint of the little finger of my left hand. . . . I said: 'I give you this. This is what I sacrifice to save my child's life.' This I said to the sun which is God's work, His property like. . . . I held the baby and my husband prayed: 'Sun, she has given you her finger so our child's life will be saved.' . . .

"The rite was private, not a big ceremony. We went out of the lodge and the sun was about half way up and he [apparently the operator] held up my whole left hand and said: 'Now, Passing or Traveling Man, this is what she is going to give you.' There was just one old man who cut off fingers. They claimed he had [this power from] a dream. . . . He was the father of Dwarf; Dwarf died just recently.

"They had me lie face down and the others held me so I would not move. The old man [Dwarf's father] . . . told me to relax, . . . felt around, found the joint, put my finger over the lodge pole and chopped it [the end joint only] off. I did not see it but I heard when he hit the lodge pole. But there was no pain. Then they let me sit up.

"The old man said: 'Do you want it to bleed, or shall I close

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

it up right away?' My husband said, 'Let it bleed,' because he was afraid it would be sore if it didn't bleed. So when the old man thought it had bled enough, he chewed some big-leaf sage, made a poultice, and put it on my finger (and/or "sprinkled powdered root on my finger," she added later). It healed quickly and never troubled me. . . . We had to give the old man something for doing that. . . . My daughter lived to be a young woman." 782 785 304 [752]

Self-torture out on the hills,—"sacrifice alone on hills," as it was called,—had much in common with self-torture at the Sacrifice Dance. The chief difference was that, unlike the Sacrifice Dance torture rite, it was done in solitude. The self-torturer had to have a ritual grandfather, a man who himself had previously undergone this solitary self-torture—this in contrast to flesh and finger cutting in which there were no ritual grandfathers. The "grandfather-grandson" relationship so contracted persisted after the rite was over. Coming Daylight and The Boy were in agreement that the solitary self-torture was a more severe ordeal than self-torture at the Sacrifice Dance. [608]

Those mentioned by our informants as having gone through "sacrifice alone on the hills" were: Stiffarm; Running Crow (Stiffarm as his "grandfather" for this rite); Coming Daylight's husband Little Man (Running Crow as his "grandfather"); her cousin White Skunk, son of Crow Bull; The Boy's brother; Jim Shortman; and perhaps Sits-in-the-Middle. On Stiffarm's, Running Crow's, and Sits-in-the-Middle's experience we obtained no details; on White Skunk's, no details beyond the fact that he underwent it "because my [Coming Daylight's] son was sick at the mission school: that son died anyway," and that he did "right on this hill here [at Hays]." The detailed accounts of Little Man's experience as narrated by Coming Daylight, of The Boy's brother's as narrated by The Boy, and of Jim Shortman's as narrated by himself, to be given now, will help to fill out the generalized picture of the rite in the preceding paragraph.

Coming Daylight's account of Little Man's "sacrifice alone on the hills," given in separate fragments on four different days, is here presented just as she gave it.

"My husband Little Man [Deafie] went out to the hills. When

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

782 anyone so goes to be tortured someone else goes along. It was
785 awful when they so went to pray and cry and sacrifice themselves.
304 Running Crow went with Little Man, as the latter's grandfather, to pierce his breast and insert the skewers whereby he was attached to the pole by a thong. [After that was done] Running Crow gave Little Man a push and Little Man danced round and round the pole. Running Crow and Stiffarm, who went out with him [just as helper, not as grandfather], left Little Man, as was customary, alone. Then sometime during the day the two returned and gave Little Man a smoke, but the latter did not eat or drink anything. He would be hungry and thirsty and would run around without even moccasins on his feet. It is an awful sacrifice. He would dance until the skewer pulled out of his flesh. Then he would be tired and would sleep and dream.

"Little Man went through this rite on account of a dream. He had been sick [heart pains and hemorrhages] and had dreamed he was going through the rite, and in consequence did later actually carry it out. He carried it out at Chinook where we were all living at the time. During the rite his mother sang war songs in her camp.

"Little Man had not tortured himself in any big celebration [Sacrifice Dance]. He did this only alone on the hills. It is hardest this latter way. It takes longer to break off [for the skewer to tear through the flesh] in the heat [sic]. It is awfully hot out in the hills and the self-torturer goes barefoot, without moccasins. He dances west to east, counter clockwise, from sun up to sun down. It is not so hot in the lodge at the big celebrations [Sacrifice Dances]. It is a greater thing to do it alone.

"The time my husband, Little Man, did this I too was away on the hills. I pitied my old man [husband] and did not eat. I came home in the evening to cook for him. We always help a relative when he fasts like that. My husband's mother and sister were at home together with another woman relative, Ed Blackbird's wife."

[787] After Little Man's self-torture was over, he was told in a dream the exact kind of leaf (or root) to use for curing his hemorrhages and just where it was to be found, Coming Daylight was able to find it, and Little Man was cured.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The Boy's narrative of his older brother's experience gives insight into the brother's feelings during the ordeal as well as detailed information on the rite itself. His brother had undergone self-torture once at a Sacrifice Dance and twice alone on a hill. The occasion of one of the two solitary rites was the following. Lame Bull had adopted a young boy who grew up as one of the family and proved himself worthy. The adopted boy and The Boy's older brother, both now dead, were sort of favorite sons of Lame Bull. The adopted son suddenly became mentally unbalanced. It was for his cure that The Boy's older brother vowed solitary self-torture. After the fulfillment of the vow the adopted son recovered.

782
785
304

The older brother, before the solitary rite, gave a pipe to a man to pray with and to announce out loud the coming rite and the name of the "grandfather" selected. At the end of the prayer the announcer released the pipe to the ritual grandfather who then took charge of the rite, piercing the vower and later cutting him loose.

The skewer punctures were made by first plunging a big awl into the skin on the side of the chest, the vower lying on his back. Then with the awl the skin was raised up, and a knife plunged point first right through the skin at right angles to the awl,—making in all three perforations of the skin, one by the awl and two by the knife point. Then the knife was withdrawn, the stick or skewer was pushed through at once while the holes were fresh, and finally the awl was withdrawn. One end, slashed, of a buckskin thong was put over the two projecting ends of the skewer, and the other end attached to the top of the pole anchored on the hill or knoll.

With the thongs so attached to the pole and the skewers [in the vower's chest, right and left side], the vower walked and ran, from sunrise to sunset, clockwise, starting at the south and ending there, then counter-clockwise, all through the day. He would go around so often that he would make a trail there.

The brother's feelings, as described by him to The Boy, are here given in The Boy's words:

"Out on the hill was the most severe [as compared with the Sacrifice Dance] for the reason that he had to do it all alone. From time to time he would rest, exhausted and crying. [When going]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

782
785
304

he would stretch himself good and tight [the thongs taut, his body weight pulling on them]. When he rested and wanted to relax and let the thongs go slack, the pain was worse than when they were taut. The skin over the skewer would dry up (and would work toward the living skin). . . . At sundown my brother's 'grandfather' came to him, and the toughest part of all occurred. My brother had not during the day tried to break loose [by body pull to make the skewer sever the skin], as at the Sacrifice Dance, for his 'grandfather' was to cut his skin loose. My brother all but died when he was cut loose. It was as if his heart was being cut. And at night, after both the Sacrifice Dance and the solitary ordeal, the pain was so intense, as if there were two red hot coals there [where the flesh was cut], that he could not sleep."

Jim Shortman (died 1948), probably the last Gros Ventre living who had gone through the solitary self-torture rite, gave the following account of his experience:

"The sticks [skewers for thongs] were about three inches long. (Here Jim undid his shirt to show the scars which were still visible on his chest.) My helper [ritual grandfather] was Running Crow. He was the man who fixed me up, pierced my flesh and fastened the thongs. My self-torture alone took place on a hill way out.

"My first struggle and ordeal in all that I was to do was to follow a command by Running Crow for me to go to the stream and break off a quaking aspen tree, but not to cut it with knife or axe,—to break it off in some way and bring to where I was going to do the fasting. So I went and twisted and worked and wore the ground just smooth around the tree with my efforts, and finally I got it down and twisted it off. I put a rope around it and dragged it to the scene of the fasting, and I had to accomplish this before sun-up of that day.

"So Running Crow went with me on my way to the scene of the fasting, which was a little west of where I and Paul Shortman now live. Just to the right of it is a little ridge. That is where I did it. The reason I vowed to do this was because my mother was at the point of death. She was very sick and I carried out my vow and she got well.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

"Paddy Skinner came along to help Running Crow dig a hole and fix in it the pole I had twisted off and tamp it in the ground securely. After they put up that pole or tree, Running Crow tied all of my offerings up there on top and also fastened the rope that was to be secured to the sticks in my chest. 782 785 304

"After this tree was made secure in the ground, Running Crow told me to take my clothes off, which I did, and he made a paste of white clay and painted my body with it. So these two men told me to lie down on my back and face my head towards the rising sun. Then they took a knife, and a big needle in the other hand, and lifted the skin on my upper arm and cut off seven pieces of my skin. Then they did that to my other arm. This made fourteen pieces in all. They put these pieces they had cut off at the foot of this tree. Then they cut off seven more pieces on the outside of each of my thighs, and by that time it began to hurt.

"Then last they cut my chest, the right side first. They pierced me there with the blade of a pocket knife and pushed the stick [skewer] in as soon as he released the blade. Then they repeated this on my left side. They told me to stand up so they fastened the thongs onto these sticks. Running Crow did that.

"Then after these things were securely fastened, Running Crow put the palm of his hand on my chest and pushed me four times to make the ropes tight. He stepped to my right side and pushed me four times too, and at the same time he told me: 'Now you begin your fasting and your actual performance of your vow and you must begin by crying.' And I did all that. And Running Crow told me: 'Go around this pole, round and round clockwise, and when you get tired you can lie down or sit down anyway you find restful, but always keep the ropes tight and do not loosen them, much less take them off.'

"Finally I got tired and I thought I would lie down and rest, and I did lie down but I did not rest well. In fact it seemed to be worse. Even the wind making the thongs sway hurt me. I had started out without eating or drinking anything. I was fasting. I had a terrible ordeal, to say the least, but I found that when I pulled tight [pulled the body away from the pole and kept the thongs taut] I suffered less.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

782 785 304

"Just before the sun went down that day, all at once I felt something touching me on my left side. It was Running Crow and the other man who stopped me. This meant that my fasting and chastizing myself were about over.

"They took off those thongs and told me to lie down in the same position that they had told me to lie in at the beginning. That is when I suffered the most. They did not take the sticks out, but just cut those thongs off and it seemed to me as if they were cutting my heart. Those fellows took those pieces that my skin was still clinging to and buried them at the foot of the post. And that is my experience. They told me to put on my clothes and I did so. I did not experience or perceive anything out of the ordinary. I just suffered. That is all.

"After I put on my clothes I found out that the skin of my feet was worn off and blistered and sore, and they sure hurt me. And to add to my aches, on the soles of my feet I was awfully sore the next morning and couldn't walk. And that is the end of my experience."

Sweat-Bath

782 515

In Gros Ventre ritual, sweating and sacrificing were quite closely associated. Invitations to sweat extended to the Supreme Being and other beings in certain sweat-lodge rites,[11] such as those connected with the Flat and Feathered Pipe ceremonies, were of the nature of gifts or offerings, and hence sacrifices in the broader sense of the term. Then, too, the sweat-lodge and sweat-bath were a chosen medium for making offerings or consummating the sacrificial rite: the pole erected in front of the sweat-lodge and the buffalo skull on the adjacent mound were intended particularly for the attachment to and disposition of respectively sacrificial objects,—offerings of robes, bits of flesh, and so forth. Furthermore, the sweat-lodge was a preferred place in which to make sacrifices of flesh and of finger joints.

On other occasions too sweat-lodge and sacrifice went together. For instance, a man whose son had been killed by the enemy might

[11] Kroeber, 1908, pp. 274-75, gives an account of sweating and mentions that "Above-white-man" was called first.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

offer a pipe to a band chief and ask him to avenge the son's death. The chief would accept the pipe and pray to the Supreme Being for success in the revenge expedition. Then the father would erect a sweat-lodge and make offerings in connection therewith, inviting a lot of "holy" old men to sweat and likewise to pray to the Supreme Being for success in the expedition. 782 515

Al Chandler gave the following account: "A young fellow would go and tell some old medicine man that he was going to make a sweat-bath for him so that the old man would pray for him, and would ask him what he [the young man] should do, whether there was a certain special way of performing the ceremony, and how the sweat-lodge should be fixed. The medicine men had all different ways. Some medicine men would have, say, 18 willows at least for the sweat-lodge framework, or others 26, or 30 at the most, with four willows called the 'head frame' oriented toward the sunrise, or the north, or other direction. A hole about six inches deep was dug inside for the heated rocks and the surface cleared about an inch down from the hole to the door. On this cleared space, shaped more or less like a truncated triangle, some design in red paint might be drawn—such as a circle, or figure of a bird or man. A dozen different men might follow one particular set of specifications in case they had all gotten the right to do so from the same [medicine] man. 346 515 782

"The fire for heating the rocks was made about 8 to 10 feet from the door of the sweat-lodge, and the dirt dug to make the hole in the lodge was put in a nice pile about 4 to 5 feet beyond the fireplace on the same axis therewith. The offerings made by the young fellow—such as calico or feathers—were tied on a willow stick about 6 or 7 feet long. He had also to get the rocks, to no specified number. 515

"When all was ready the old fellow would tell the young man to get, say, 7 to 9 old men to come and join them. When they arrived, the rocks were all heated. The young man then gave the old man [the one he had first approached] the willow stick with the offerings tied to it. The old man then went to the dirt pile, faced in the direction in which the lodge faced, and holding the offerings on [over?] the pile prayed as loud as he could: 'God, 782

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

515 come and listen to me. God, come and get in the sweat-bath with me. Here is what X [naming the young man] gives you as an offering!' Then he would go on to pray for the young fellow and would tell who had given him [the old man] power to make the sweat-bath this particular way: 'You gave me this for some purpose, so you must come and help me now. This young man has gone to a lot of trouble to do this for me and you. So listen to me and help this young man, whatever his wish is.' Then he stuck the offering in the dirt pile, to remain there while they were all inside the lodge sweating.

"After he and the invited old men got inside the lodge, he would appoint one of them to pour the water on the heated rocks. The appointee would ask, 'How much for the start,' and would be told, [801] 'Four times' or maybe 'Seven times,' either four or seven. The appointee would then pour, the required number of times, just enough, say about one third of or a whole cupful, to make a little steam. Then the leading old fellow would say: 'Now it is up to you. Pour any amount you want.'

"Then all those old men prayed inside for the young man, who remained outside and had to look after the rocks and the opening up of the sweat-lodge. Every so often he had to open it up in front and back and so kind of cooled the sweaters off. It was so opened maybe four successive times, and then the sweating was over.

"The young fellow might then be told to come in, and the old fellows would kind of clean him by first blowing on their hands and then rubbing him, and when they were through they would twiddle their fingers as one does to get rid of dirt.

"This young man hired all these people and he would think that these old men prayed hard, and that he would get what he asked for, and that he would not be afraid, and that regardless of odds he would come out on top because of this faith."

The ritual cleansing effected by sweating as well as the sacrificial aspect of the rite is definitely referred to in the foregoing account, but here as in most other cases the sacrificial aspect is the more prominent. The cleansing effect was also hinted at in Sitting High's remark quoted by Al Chandler: "You have to clean yourself through this sweating."

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The sweat-bath was resorted ritually on many occasions other than those mentioned in the immediately preceding pages and passim in preceding sections. Coming Daylight spoke of it in a general way as "the thing they [the Gros Ventres] go through with when they don't want something to happen." On some of these many occasions reported by our informants there was no mention of accompanying offerings,—for instance the many sweat-baths Singer made for her sick husband (or were these purely "rational" curative measures, as may have been the sweating Coming Daylight went through for her rheumatism?). The sweat-lodge was commonly used, especially as we have seen, in connection with professional doctoring. 515 782

The sweat-bath was resorted to rather commonly—how commonly we cannot say—for pleasure, as a purely rational hygienic and curative measure, and for cleanliness. In such cases, no ceremony at all was connected with it. The keepers of the Flat and Feathered Pipes, if known to like sweating,—but not otherwise,—could be invited, but without ritual accompaniment. There was no mixed-sex sweating; men sweated with men, women with women. Sweating was a little hard on novices unused to the heat and steam. The white man who asked to learn about the Feathered Pipe was told: "The first night in a sweat-bath is pretty hard and beginners are allowed to lie down close to the ground." Singer, once when being washed by a medicine man, had to leave the lodge as soon as the water was poured on the stones; she could not stand the heat. Mary Ereaux' mother used to keep her head outside the sweat-lodge when sweating. Those, however, habituated to sweating, found the after-effect pleasant and soothing. As Al Chandler expressed it: "After you are all through sweating you sure feel good. You could go right to sleep." 515

The sweaters during the sweating whipped themselves,—"to make them even hotter" (Al Chandler), "to dry themselves" (Coming Daylight)—with formerly a whip made of a buffalo tail attached to a handle, or later of "a horse tail or any old thing." [412]

The sweat-lodge for secular use was always beehived shaped, of bent willows framework, but no special number of willows was required. 343

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Vows

732 Vows—here understood as promises of objects or acts made to supernatural beings—were prominent features of Gros Ventre religious life. They were distinguished in Gros Ventre thinking from promises, however serious, made to human beings. Thus, for example, a promise by a woman to make a decorated robe for her son-in-law, a quite serious promise, was specifically stated to be a promise only, not a vow.

Most of the numerous specific vows we recorded were made directly or indirectly to the Supreme Being; some, to the sacred Pipes; others, especially many of those involving physical pain,—flesh cutting, finger amputation, self-torture alone or in a Sacrifice Dance,—to the sun.

The most common occasion of vows was illness or other danger to life of one of the vower's close relatives or of the vower himself or herself. Other occasions specifically mentioned were success in a revenge expedition, achievement in battle, the return of a captured wife.

The things—object and/or acts—most frequently mentioned as vowed were: covering, opening, smoking, dancing with, making a sweat-lodge for, accepting the keepership of, or rendering other homage to the Flat or Feathered Pipe; holding one of the sacred Dances; cutting one's flesh, amputating one's finger joint, or undergoing self-torture alone or in a Sacrifice Dance; "holy boiling," or feeding a group of the poor, old men and old women; more recently, giving a 4-button handgame (a social affair with food).

Certain vows—those of a more solemn kind, such as one to hold a Sacred Dance or, in some cases at least, to undergo solitary self-torture—were announced publicly. The exact rule—if there was one—in this matter we could not determine. Apparently such announcement was regularly made when the act vowed called for the help of a ritual grandfather.

In general breach of vow brought misfortune. "The Gros Ventres," said Singer, "believe in keeping the vows they make to get a sick person well. They think that [otherwise] they have bad luck." This "bad luck" did not automatically follow breach of vow, but came as a punishment inflicted by the being to whom the vow had been made.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Singer's own guilt feeling at her delay in fulfilling her vow to amputate her finger joint is clear from her dream (infra under "Dreams"). The more recent case of the death by lightning of the young man who put off buying the Feathered Pipe cloth wrapping he had promised, as mentioned earlier (supra, p. 132), was popularly interpreted as perhaps a punishment. Another case told us by The Boy illustrated the same belief in punishment for breach of vow. 782

"Not long ago [in The Boy's lifetime] a certain man's relative was sick, and he vowed to the Supreme Being to undergo solitary self-torture out on the hills all day so the relative would recover. The relative did recover. But time went on, and the vower did not carry out his vow that summer or that year. Next summer he had a dream and in the dream someone asked him: 'When are you going to carry out your vow?' Still the vower let the matter go. He had the same dream four times and each time was asked the same question. 782 821

"After the fourth time, he began to think. He was on the spot. He decided to invite some of the principal men,—the keepers of the sacred Pipes, some ex-keepers, and some others,—among them, my father, Lame Bull. He told the assembled group about his dream. They studied it, and finally Lame Bull took it on himself to interpret it. 'I am afraid,' he said, 'This is not good that you dreamed that four times and that you waited so long to carry out your vow. This means you will not be called [warned] any more. I advise you to put up a sweat-lodge for me [Lame Bull was apparently Flat Pipe keeper at the time] and I will see what I can do for you to appease someone you have made angry. Get busy right away and cut willows and get rocks and wood for a sweat-lodge rite tomorrow. I will pray for you at the sweat-lodge rite so that you may be released and absolved from any punishment that might [otherwise] come to you.'

"The vower was glad and agreed, and glad that the invitees would help. . . . But before the sweat-lodge was put up a violent thunderstorm arose. There were abundant berries around the camp and a lot of women and children out picking them were caught in the storm. I was a little boy at the time and was along

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

782 821 on the berry picking. The storm spoiled the berry picking and as soon as it was over we started back to camp. The berry pickers who were in the lead on the way back stopped on a ridge in view of the camp and at once saw that something was wrong there. When they got to camp they found that the vower and his boy had been killed and his wife stunned by lightning. She was put in rain water and came to. The vower had just come back from getting the things for the sweat-lodge and was eating with his wife and boy when the storm passed over the camp.

"Another man had gone out on horseback . . . and cried all through the storm . . . after the storm had passed and the sun was shining . . . a cloud was seen to come back and stop right over the camp circle and he saw lightning and heard thunder at the same time, and he passed out, but only for a moment. When he came to, his ears were ringing and he was facing in the opposite direction. So he turned around again and looked and saw this cloud going back toward the rest of the storm [clouds]. . . .

"The people all ran to the vower and found him and his wife and boy lying there. . . . The boy's head [hair] was all curly and singed, and there was some little sage brush in his hair and they wondered how it got there. The people there always believed that the man and his boy were killed because the former did not carry out his vow. His wife is still living. This man was not given the chance to make up for his neglect. . . ."

"The man," The Boy added, "had made the vow, not to Bha'a, the storm being, but to someone else, the Supreme Being. In this case the Supreme Being employed or delegated Bha'a to mete out punishment to the man who failed to fulfill his vow."

Oaths

782 By oaths we here understand solemn appeals to the supernatural world in witness to the truth of a statement or to the binding character of a promise,—the first being assertory oaths, the second promissory ones. Whether promissory oaths were taken by the Gros Ventres is not clear. A possible instance was Good Singer's promise, after being captured and made to dance over her husband's body, of a Sacrifice Dance, the promise itself having been

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

preceded by her words: "As the power above and the sun sees what these people [her captors] have made me do." Assertory oaths clearly were taken, but were not common.

The Boy, with Thick concurring, stated: "Oaths were taken only in serious situations and only on rare occasions, chiefly when some one was accused publicly of some grave crime and was compelled to prove himself innocent. He would not use the expression, 'the sun sees me,' but would just point upward and say, Ixtcibni:hohat (the Supreme Being) is listening to me and is witnessing what I say, and I say that what you are saying [about me] is not true."

On another occasion The Boy explained: "The Gros Ventres did not take oaths very often but only in extreme cases. They took explicit oaths, but usually only implicit ones through pipe, or knife, or wetting the skin between the collarbones. This last could be done just in fun. A listener would wet his finger with his tongue and say: 'All right, I'll wet my finger and touch your skin, and if what you say is true and you act before your skin dries, I will believe you.' "

Al Chandler gave the following details: "An Indian is supposed to tell whatever he says like black and white. Especially if he takes an oath that he will tell the truth, he is supposed never to break that. The liars will even take that oath and then lie anyway. A person takes an oath by running the blade of a sharp knife right along next to his lips, wetting the blade and saying: 'If I lie, God will punish me (or something will happen to me),' then stabs the knife in the earth. The oath is taken when somebody does not believe a person and says to him: 'Swear that you are not lying.' Sometimes if a man takes an oath like that but is really lying, something actually happens to him: maybe he might break a leg. The punishment comes right away. This is what makes them afraid, because it [the truth] will come right out."

The women's chastity test, regarding which our informants were not fully agreed, was essentially an oath. We did not succeed in clearing up the problem, in spite of long conferences in the field on it.[12] In any case, however, considerable light is thrown on the nature of Gros Ventre assertory oaths.

[12] Cf. Flannery, 1953, pp. 193-94.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

782 837 Following is The Boy's account gotten from his father, Lame Bull, and given to us in 1939, with slight additions, in parentheses, from his quite similar account given us in 1945:

"This custom disappeared when Lame Bull was a small boy [hence, about 1832-35]. He remembered it distinctly, although he had seen it only once, in his early boyhood. The crier went around saying to everybody: 'Get ready everybody, after sunrise tomorrow morning, to see who is the woman most faithful to her husband.' The custom was carried out only once in a great while. A group of older men, not real old ones but those still active, would get together and agree that the test should be carried out.

"The very first thing the next morning, the crier went around and announced: 'This is meant for *every* married couple, old and young. Put on your best clothes. Start right away.' Then two of the biggest lodges in the camp circle were put together to make a two-lodge tent. After it was put up, the crier announced: 'Everyone come from every direction to the center-lodge.' All came, dressed up, especially the unmarried young men. (The young men before the test witnessed by Lame Bull had made it up among themselves, to get up and say publicly, 'That woman is lying,' should any woman get up and dance whom they knew to be lying about her fidelity.) (They had a brush shed at the front of the double-lodge, and the flaps of the lodge were raised so that more people could fit in and look on. The women had to sit inside. The only men inside were the singers and musicians, some standing and beating drums, others seated with their hands under the elkskin in front of them.) The singers sat in a circle with a big tanned elkskin in the middle, and each singer had two human shin-bones, one in each hand, and both shin-bones were notched saw-like with a series of notches. There were several pairs of these bones. When the singing began and the drum holders beat their drums, the bone holders sawed with the bones under the elkskin. A weird noise was made by the sawing together of these bones invisible to the onlookers.

[534]

"Before the singing began, one man got up and told the women what the affair was about and the procedure in it, so that they would understand: 'The men are going to sing four times. If not a single woman gets up and dances and uncovers the human bones

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

under the elkskin, then there is not a woman in the entire Gros Ventre tribe who is faithful to her husband. And it would even look bad if one does exist but does not get up until the fourth singing.' Then he impressed on the women's minds that getting up and uncovering the human bones under the elkskin was like taking an oath. The older women might know that the things to be uncovered were human bones, but the younger ones might not. 782 837

"After this man was through talking, some of the older women got up and encouraged the younger women: 'Surely there ought to be one in this whole group who has been faithful to her husband. Don't fear. Be proud of the fact. Get up and dance.' When the singers started to sing [the song, number 69, was sung by The Boy and recorded by us], they started off with a bang, shouting and yelling and beating the drums fast. They sang the song once and then the second time, and then began making remarks: 'We have sung twice. There are no dancers yet. Only two more times are left.'

"They sang it the third time and still there were no dancers. A lot of the old women were now walking around and pleading with the young wives: 'Don't let this pass without at least one wife getting up.' Before the last song started, several of the leading men, too, said: 'This is the last time. If no married young woman dances and uncovers the scraping here, then not one Gros Ventre woman in the entire tribe is faithful to her husband.'

"Finally from about the center of the crowd of sitting women, a young woman got up and stepped out, amid much applause, for she was perhaps the comeliest young woman in the tribe. She sort of tucked up her skirts on both sides under her belt and started to dance toward the drumbeating and scraping. She danced fast, vigorously, like a man. She made four rounds, and on each of the first three made a pass with her hand toward the covered scraping. The fourth time she lifted the elkskin. The singing and the scraping with the bones stopped at once.

The young woman had to pause to catch her breath, saying: 'When I catch my breath I will tell you something.' When she had caught her breath, pointing around to all the men with a sweeping gesture she said: 'Plenty of nice young men are here but not one of them knows me [in the sense of sex relations]. The only man

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

who knows me and whom I know is my husband. But many of you have tried to [seduce me] but did not succeed. Ninä:nä'ak is listening to me and he knows I am telling the truth. Sunshine gives the most light, and what I have to say has nothing hidden in it. It is as true as the light of day which sunshine gives. My husband is off on a war party and he will distinguish himself during it, and this will be another mark that I am telling the truth.'

Then the old men and old women drowned out one another singing her praises. All thought her a wonderful woman, being alone at night and so beautiful and yet withstanding all advances. Her name was Speaks Holy, and her husband's, Sun Old Man.

"After the bones had been uncovered a dance was held, including a contest between a man and a woman. A woman and a man [524] got up and danced toward each other, each making faces at the other, pulling noses, and so forth. The one who laughed first lost and was pushed back into his or her seat. The winner remained on the floor and challenged. Another, of the opposite sex, then got up from the side of the loser and contested with the previous winner. And so the contest went on until one, a man or woman, won in four successive bouts. When this happened he or she was the winner. All the people then threw them [each successive loser?] down and covered them up with their robes. Then there was food and feasting and the affair ended.

"There was no prayer or smudging or other rite, except the oath the woman took on the spot to the Supreme Being, Ninänä'äte. The young woman in the case had taken upon herself a serious thing. She took an oath. . . . She was glad of the opportunity to declare her fidelity. . . .

"At the end the double lodge was torn down. Early in the morning, after the third night, the war party returned. . . . Sun Old Man had counted coup, he had struck an enemy and had returned with something. So his wife must have told the truth, for nothing had been prearranged. All this added to the fury of other husbands against their wives. The women denied and said: 'We did not want to do this publicly. What that woman did in uncovering the bones was just a bid for notoriety. We can be faithful without doing that. We are humble.'

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

"Lame Bull said that the old men had told him that the Gros Ventres used to hold this test once in a while, but the only one he witnessed was the one described. He also said that they were going to hold this test again when he was a middle-aged man and were all ready to do so, when a war party came back, some of whose members had been killed in battle. So that spoiled the occasion. And after that, the test was never held." 782 837

Dreams, Visions and Auditions

Gros Ventre for "a dream" is kana:tē; for "a vision," and apparition seen while you are awake or "even while you are sleeping and somebody comes to you," be:tänohatsä:na', "something sacred I saw." In the following pages we are for clarity's sake distinguishing between dreams occurring in sleep and visions and auditions occurring in waking hours. What, if any, importance the Gros Ventres themselves attached to the distinction is not clear, although they of course were fully aware of it, as is obvious from their explicit statements in the cases recorded by us. It is quite clear, however, that such dreams, visions, and auditions played a major role in their magico-religious culture, and entered into it in numerous ways and on numerous occasions. Illustrative cases will be given presently. 787

Especially in the spring time older men, after going to bed at night, would command silence in the lodge and would sing and pray, informally without ritual observances, and would pray among other things for some good dream and for deep sleep[19] so that they would not wake up before the dream was over.

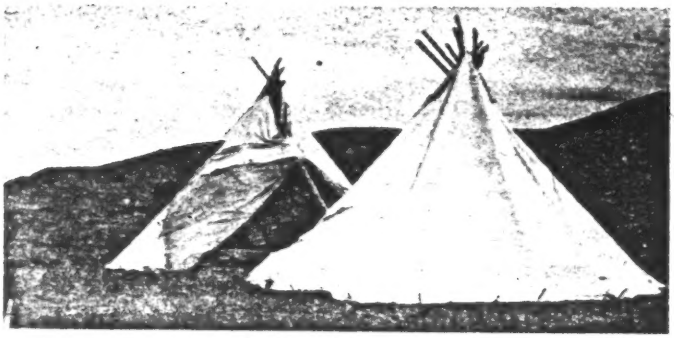
Dreams in which power was offered or imparted were supposed to be kept more or less secret. Such secrecy was not, however, called for, it seems, regarding other dreams.

Dreams as recorded by us fall into two categories, those in which gifts or messages were imparted to the dreamer by some being, and those in which interpretation of the meaning of the dreams

[19] The Arapaho, we were told, call this kind of sleep "thick sleep." In 1948 Tom Main said that the literal translation of the Gros Ventre word for "deep sleep" is actually "thick sleep." [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

346
796

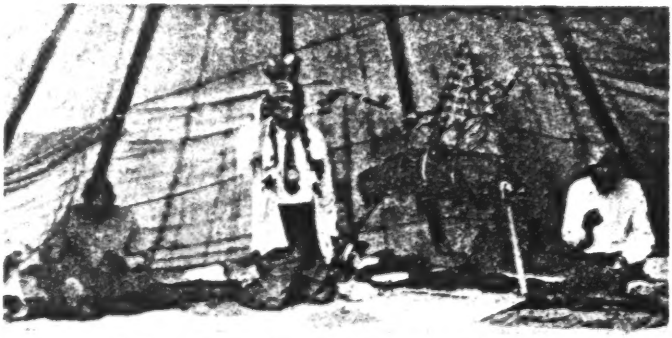


A. *Double tipi for ceremony.*

[301
782]

B. *The Boy prays with ordinary pipe.*

[516
534
778]



C. *The Boy smudges rattles over Flat Pipe hearth.*

PLATE I

[p.425]

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The wheel game, too, in contrast to the 2-button hand game, was accompanied with no legerdemain and no grace or fancy movements. The players might run or trot in a rather awkward or ridiculous fashion, "awfully funny, like a chicken walking backwards," as one informant put it; but they did not care what the crowd might think of their queer or clumsy gait; they were out to win; they would await some other occasion "to show off handsome." 525 [789]

Likewise, in the wheel game, no prayers to any being were said and there was no resort to supernatural power gotten from prairie chickens or ghosts (see *infra* under hand game). Even if a given wheel-game player had such power, it was of no avail in the wheel game and was not called upon. In the gambling-for-scalps story, to be mentioned presently, the Gros Ventre prayed to the Supreme Being to win, but here there was question not so much of winning material goods as of preserving physical wholeness and life itself, things within the peculiar keeping of the Supreme Being in Gros Ventre theology. [782]

Success in the wheel game depended on two things: skill and what may be called thought-wish power. In the play all effort was concentrated by the players on the utmost exercise of skill and adroitness acquired through long practice and of judgment, in following the rolling wheel and in throwing the pole at just the precise moment and in just the right manner. But, in at least some of the big wheel games, a sort of thought power or thought-wish power was used by the players. In how far such power can be considered "supernatural" is hard to say; it seems to have been more "natural" than "supernatural," as judged by most definitions of "supernatural." At any rate, it was not a power gained, as most other Gros Ventre supernatural powers were gained, from some being by crying, fasting, and dreaming on mountain tops or along timbered water courses. 525 789

Its efficacy was derived ultimately from the player's previous war exploits. Its exercise was along the following pattern. There being no set time for wheel games, one might get under way any time, with relatively small stakes, and develop in the course of play into a really big game, or the game could be a big one from the start. In such a big game, between outstanding opponents, for large stakes and for status (see *infra*), before starting to roll the wheel, each player would in turn take the wheel in one hand and with the other touch his pole (arrow or stick) under the wheel on a particular bead. While doing so he would think with intense concentration of one of his past war deeds—e.g., a horse he took from the very door of his enemy's lodge at great risk of life—and would say in his mind, silently and not audibly: "I am not telling a lie [about this deed]. The powers know I am not telling a lie." He would rehearse the event in his mind, and probably (the point was not fully cleared up by us) would think of

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

791 787 776 from behind the blanketed enclosure, the fire would be re-lighted, the performer would say the prayer customary among the Gros [782] Ventres before all meals to the Supreme Being and other beings, then he or she and the others present would eat the food that had remained from the ghost's repast. Finally they would all sit around smoking and chatting a while before dispersing. I failed to gather any information on whether the performer receives any payment or not for his or her services in the rite.

Certain simplifications of the above procedure under emergency conditions as on war expeditions are noted or intimated in a couple of the following four narratives, the first two given by The Boy, the last two by Thick.

Narrative 1

787 The following story was told by The Boy.

776 "A certain man had his deceased father as his ghost helper.
539 The ghost helper used to speak Gros Ventre just like living people but in a bass voice. Everybody understood him when they heard him.

"On one occasion the Gros Ventre tribe were camped near the forks of the Teton and Marias Rivers. While there a large group of the men decided to go on the warpath. So they left the main camp, went up the Missouri River and camped that first night at the mouth of Crow Creek where it empties into the Missouri River. When it was dark that night some of the men said: 'Let's offer the pipe to X [the one mentioned above who had the ghost helper; name not given] and ask him to find out whether our prospects on this war party are good or bad.' So they filled up a pipe and went to X, held out the pipe to him and asked him: 'Accept the pipe and call your spirit.'

[791] "X accepted willingly and soon after they had smoked the pipe together they made a shelter where X was to do the spirit-rite. So they tied up X, filled the pipe again, put it there and sang a song four times. When they were singing it the fourth time they heard a voice in the air. The ghost helper arrived and the shelter shook as a lodge would have done in the same rite. When the spirit hit the ground, the ground shook too. The spirit

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Ventres' horses except those belonging to one man. This man 787
loaned out his horses as far as they would go around to four of 539
the Gros Ventres who went in pursuit of the Cree.

"Then that evening two of the other men, one of them my 787
father, approached Bear Old Woman. They filled up a pipe just 539
as you do when you go to someone to doctor you, offered it to the 791
old woman, and asked her to find out from her ghost helper who stole the horses and where they were. Bear Old Woman, who had quite a temper, got angry right away as usual and pushed the pipe away as a sign of refusal. Finally one of the young fellows there, a relative of hers, said: 'Well, let me smoke it,' to force her to accept. She angrily grabbed the pipe and had to go through with the rite. When she took the pipe she rubbed her [782]
hands on the ground and rubbed dust on the pipe and offered a prayer before smoking. The pipe was then smoked by her and by the two men who had approached her.

"Then they began to get things ready. They killed a puppy, singed its hair off at a fire, took its insides out without skinning, [262
quartered it up and boiled it. They put the boiled meat on a 252]
plate and got ready some other kinds of food to give to the old woman. Then the two men filled up a pipe and they together with two other men and with a 'servant' went to Bear Old Woman's lodge. On arriving there they set down the plate of dog meat near the head of her bed, the pipe between the incense hearth and the lodge fire, and the other dishes between the lodge fire and the door.

"When everything was arranged and Bear Old Woman was still sitting on her bed, she said: 'Whoever is the greatest unbeliever among you, come and tie me up.' One of the four volunteered. Then the old woman got up and went to a place just south of the head of the bed, to a little enclosure made by hanging up a blanket. He hobbled her four fingers (thumb too?) with sinew, interlacing it in and out of the four fingers of each hand. Then he tied her hands together behind her back and also hobbled her feet. She was lying on a robe. He gathered the robe around her and tied her with rawhide thongs until only her head stuck out of the robe. And so he left her lying on her

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

of the society. The officers were free to transfer their ceremonial 575
equipment to other members whom they would select. Following 796
the typical Gros Ventre pattern of transfer of ownership, the
recipient would present as lavish gifts as he could afford to the [431]
donor while the relatives of the recipient showed their appreciation of the favor to their kinsman by giving away expensive gifts in his honor. All of this took place publicly at the dance.

Particular dances and songs were attached to each office and the owners of the ceremonial drumsticks were required to know in correct order all the numerous songs and to provide the musical [533]
accompaniment for the whole ceremony. These four drumstick owners were joined in certain of the songs by four women singers selected from among the wives of the Wolf-men. The owners of the various objects were responsible for the proper care thereof, the crow-belts and the drum receiving most respect. When not in use, the crow-belts were kept wrapped in special bundles in the [841]
lodges of their respective owners, but were hung outside when the [784]
owner's wife was in her menstrual period. Moreover, those who [833]
danced wearing the crow-belts were obliged to refrain from sexual [782]
relations for two or three days previous to the dancing and, before donning the belts, to make a smudge of sweet-grass to incense themselves and the crow-belts. The drum, too, received special attention. One informant speaks of it as having been "nicely [534]
decorated," and we know from Kroeber's description[9] that the trimming was very similar to that of the Assiniboine Grass dance drum.[10]

Procedure. The actual dancing took place in a special circular 346
dancing-place in the center of the camp circle. This "corral," as 796
it was sometimes referred to, was constructed from several lodge covers, but was open at the top and the entrance thereto was at the east. The tipi of the drum-keeper was put up nearby. Opposite the opening of the "corral" was the place of honor where [554]
sat the officials,—with the exception of the sword owners, who with their assistants were at either side of the entrance. The 000

[9] Kroeber, loc. cit., p. 238.
[10] Lowie, R. H., The Assiniboine, AMNH-AP 4, pt. 1, 1909, p. 67.

8:Flannery E-5 (1940-1948)1960 NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

159 756 787 "My experience was by dreaming. One time before I was married—I must have been about eight years old—I was sleeping in a big lodge and a 'person' came and wakened me. He had a bag of medicines on his back. He came to me on four successive nights and laid out these medicines and told me what each was for. On the third of these nights there was a man lying there—he was just skin and bones. The 'person' who had awakened me told me: 'You could take all these medicines and you could cure people like that one lying there' [i.e., a person in the last extremity]. In my dream I would do everything he told me, manipulate my hands to draw out the sickness, and do everything. But I didn't want that power and would tell him so. Each morning too I would relate to my grandmother exactly what had happened in the night but she would try to hush me up, telling me: 'Don't say anything; don't tell anyone. You will be a great medicine woman.' But I didn't want that power. I didn't like it because [755] when medicine people suck on the weak part of the sick person they have to swallow what they extract. I had decided I would rather be quiet and not do anything like that, or sacrifice my flesh, or things of that kind. Perhaps if it had come later I might have taken that power and become great."

Nevertheless when later in life she had other dreams indicating supernatural power, she likewise refused. She explained in regard to one of these experiences, for instance: "The one who awakened me this time had told me to face the rising sun and was showing me how to make a smudge from the moss that grows close on logs; but I told him. 'No. I would rather not have it.' Those who have power die too soon."

159 757 Incidentally, still in connection with curing, bleeding was an operation which was performed purely as a natural remedy for a person who felt dizzy or sluggish. Anyone could do it—no supernatural validation was needed. Other women described quite casually how it was done and discussed the various times they had actually performed the operation. Coming Daylight, however, insisted that while there was really nothing to such an operation, she could never bring herself to perform it, nor would she allow anyone else to bleed her; she could not stand the sight of blood.

The aversion to the sight of blood and to self-mutilation was evidently deep-seated and showed itself in a marked manner early in her life. On one occasion a close relative was very ill. In such a situation it was expected that every member of the family would rally around and do whatever he could toward the recovery. Among the things that fell within the scope of activity for female relatives was that of vowing to sacrifice something valuable, including perhaps the blood [602] from one's arm or a finger-joint, if the person recovered. At this particular [780] time, Coming Daylight was a young child, and her grandmother decided that [826] it would be appropriate for the little girl to offer that her finger-tip be removed if the relative regained his health. When it was suggested to her, Coming [304] Daylight refused, even though her grandmother took after her with a stick. She actually ran away and wandered alone, until two nights later the relative died and an uncle finally found her.

159 183 765 On another occasion in her early youth, too, she defied a convention connected with kinship by refusing to join in mourning for an uncle who had been killed in revenge for having instigated the murder of his brother's wife. When her grandmother upbraided Coming Daylight for not expressing grief in the tradi- [602] tional manner, the latter defied her by saying: "I am not going to cry for that [607] man. I don't know why you are crying for him. I have worked for that woman and she has fed me, and has even given me meat to bring home to you. I heard

l: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Doctors were paid a horse or more for their services. Sometimes several, in turn, doctored a patient, each one blaming those that had failed before. Often they laid the sickness to spirits, or to other doctors. This last occurred especially if in their sucking they extracted human finger-nails or similar objects. In such a case the doctor got his patient to sleep. The patient might then in his dream see the person that had made him sick, and on awaking would denounce him. If the sick man died, his relatives might kill the doctor whom he had named as the cause of his sickness. 756

There were not so many women doctors as men. They appear not to have gone out to the mountains with the intention of acquiring supernatural power, but to have received guardian spirits when they were away from the camp, mourning.

The jugular and femoral arteries and the aorta were called ts'niinotanoudj[1] ("having no ears"), because, when severed, they did not heed any remedies.

In order to save the life of a sick relative, the joint of the little finger was sometimes cut off in sacrifice to the sun.

There were some medicine-men who, having had their fingers tied, then had their knees fastened together and their hands secured behind their back. After this they were wrapped in a robe and the robe was wound about with a rope. Then such a medicine-man called his spirit. When it appeared, he was loosened instantaneously, and the robe and the rope were thrown at the man that tied him.

Fig. 30 (50 1937). Doctor's Charm. Length, 22 cm.

[778]

826

755
304
782
756

A charm used by a doctor is shown in Fig. 30. It consists of a deer-tail with beaded base, and of two black feathers and a bunch of down feathers. All parts of the object are reddened. This piece was used to brush patients. At other times during the doctoring it was worn on the medicine-man's clothing. 756 778

A man unsuccessful in winning a woman's love sometimes fasted on a 787 832

l: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

276 778 The sacred flat-pipe was also used in the sun-dance. It was once captured in war. Then the man who took it had bad dreams, until the pipe spoke to him in his dream and said, "Return me, or your tribe will be [728] destroyed." Then this man brought back the pipe, and his tribe made peace with the Gros Ventre.

343 782 The making of a sweat-house was not restricted to certain persons. A man wishing success in war would make a sweat-house for another person, in order that he might accomplish the deed he had in mind. Or, if a person was sick, one of his relatives might pledge to make a sweat-house for him, just as he would a dance. In this case the sick person himself would not necessarily use the sweat-house. On the other hand, a doctor might prescribe sweating for a patient, and in this case the sick person would enter the sweat-house.

[757]

Fig. 43 (50–4358). Sweat-house Tail. Length, 36 cm.

343 515 [237]

About twelve or fourteen willow poles were cut for the sweat-house. The entrance always faced the sunrise, and a small cottonwood-tree was erected in front of it. To this, calico or other property was tied by an old man as a gift to the sun. The cloth was partly blackened, the corners being rubbed with charcoal.

When all the participants were inside, the blankets were pulled down and the house closed tight. Water was poured on hot stones, at first five times. Thereupon the lodge was opened at the entrance and at the opposite west end, and the people cooled. It was then closed again, and this time water was poured on the rocks seven times. After cooling once more, water was poured on the rocks nine times. The fourth time, the man that poured the water could put as much or as little on the stones as he wished. After the fourth time, the participants came out and bathed. [757] If they were suffering from pain, they whipped that part of the body with buffalo or horse tails. This practice made the heat greatest at that point, much as if it were beaten into the body.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

484 than six poles would be so tied together, a strong line running
through the holes, leaving a loop to go about the horses' neck.
492 Another line was tied around the six, about in the middle, to hold the poles together as the horse dragged them through the water. A mounted horse could draw two sets of six poles across the river at one time, one set on each side, but could not take all the poles for a lodge on a single trip. Meat packed in skin bags was often lashed to the poles and did not suffer in transit. Occasionally older children rode across the river on these poles, and some people paddled across straddling a single log.

782 The same goods which we have described as used by the Gros Ventre to meet their needs for food, clothing, shelter and transportation were likewise used to meet many other needs. Cloth and clothing, feathers, ornaments, and so forth, were used as religious sacrifices and offerings. Food was used as payment or part-pay-
262 ment for services of those who helped in production of economic
436 goods, or of those who cured diseases, acted in ceremonial capacity of one kind or another, as well as in meeting certain specific kin-
342 ship obligations. Lodges might be painted in accordance with a
531 supernatural vision, and, with the associated songs, were transferrable to others as ritual objects. Horses were used as payments of various kinds,—in connection with the bride price, to ceremonial
436 grandfathers, and so on. There was thus no medium of exchange within the group and no strict classification into producer's goods as contrasted with consumer's goods is possible.

CHAPTER V

WAR AND PRESTIGE

Organization and Conduct of the Party

721 554 Recognition was granted for any accomplishment that involved risk of life at the hands of the enemy. The constantly recurring attacks upon the Gros Ventres by one neighboring tribe or another offered many opportunities for the display of bravery, but those who joined in taking the initiative against the enemy had the greatest chances of accumulating impressive war records. Consequently parties set out at frequent intervals with the avowed purpose either of stealing horses or of avenging loss of Gros Ventre life.

721 Although it was not uncommon for two or three men to go off quietly together when raiding for horses, if a larger number was involved, some formalities were observed. The man who decided to lead a war party had his intention publicly announced around the camp circle by a crier and any who wished might volunteer to join him. A young man, untried in war, would hardly set himself up as leader in this way, but would be anxious to follow someone whose reputation for bravery was already well established.[1]

533 721 [782] Ordinarily, when the group was composed of ten or more men, there were some preliminaries the night before the party set off. The members gathered and sang in front of lodges of those they hoped would be able to help them. Each man so selected at least prayed for the success of the party as he gave them a smoke and fed them. In addition, if he had ammunition or clothing or something of the kind that would be useful on the expedition, he donated these to the party. It was said that an occasional man would "be so pleased with what the party was about to do" that he sent his wife out to sing with them. Thus the party sang around the camp circle in front of various lodges and, after agreeing on

[1] Sometimes young men were restless and sang around the camp circle to indicate their willingness to go on a raid if someone would lead them. Such a song was recorded as No. 70.

605 593 Reservation. She heard the car drive up and, without thinking how it might be interpreted by the other two women, exclaimed: 'Oh, there is my man! I must go!' Since in that neighborhood 'my man' is commonly used to indicate husband or lover, Mary laughed. Almost immediately, however, she caught herself and straightened her face, remarking: 'I shouldn't have even thought that or laughed like I did. That man is my cousin and I should be ashamed of him.' Furthermore when Mary went out with her to get in the car, Charles insisted that Mary sit in the back seat so that everybody could see that they rode in the same car only to accommodate the white woman. Mary remarked later on: 'It is funny, but I just can't bring myself to sit down and have a conversation with my men-relatives, like white brothers and sisters do. I still have a feeling it is an awful thing to talk to my brothers, male cousins, father-in-law and Indian sons-in-law,—although I don't mind in the least talking to my white son-in-law.'"

Brother and sister were expected to grant each other's requests whenever it was in their power to do so and without complaint, regardless of the inconvenience which might be involved. The following incident illustrates how sensitive the Gros Ventres were on this point. "When the present Mrs. Takes-the-Bow was a small girl, she often was sick. One time her father's sister came into the lodge and muttered to herself: 'Oh you are just using up all my medicine in doctoring you—what is wrong with you!' Unfortunately the child's father overheard this impatient comment and was deeply hurt, because very seldom would a woman say anything like that in front of her brother. So he decided: 'My sister considers me a lot of trouble, and if that is the way she feels about it I shall never request her services again.' He meant exactly what he said. He left immediately to go on a war party. Careless of his life, he recklessly rode into the midst of the enemy and was killed."

593 782 721 One way of showing how much a woman thought of her brother was for her to make offerings in his behalf. When young men were going off on a war party, the sister of one of them might go outside the lodge and make a promise along the following lines: "I will give my finger as offering if my brother will come back a great warrior." It was considered a great honor, of course, to

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

many girls liked to pretend that they had one of these Pipes at 857
their play-lodge. They used a certain kind of flower to represent
the Pipe and would put it outside the play-lodge in the same posi- 524
tion as the real Pipe was placed. They smudged and sang Pipe
songs just as their elders did. Once in a while they would pretend they were going to transfer the Pipe. Mud was smeared on their foreheads just as the Keeper used paint. The others would seize the new "Keeper," paint him, go through an imitation of the ceremonies, sing songs, and so on. At the end of the game, however, the rest of the children finally took the "Keeper" and dumped him in the water head foremost,—an indignity that would have been out of the question in regard to a real Keeper.

Thus it was evident how much children learned by observation. 857
It was specifically stated in regard to the learning of songs that
no one ever sat down with a child to teach him a special song or 868
dance, that he would pick up songs and dances by hearing and seeing them performed at the various ceremonies. Similarly, according to both Coming Daylight and to Singer, there was no special teaching in regard to a knowledge of the Supreme Being. [869]
Children would know about Him because they would from infancy have heard older people mention Him. In the old days people
never did anything without first saying a prayer. The prayers [782]
always started out by mentioning the name of the "One above the White Man," and then names of other beings followed.*

Training

Formal training, in skills necessary for women's work, was be- 868
gun for little girls at an early age. This was usually in the hands of a female relative,—a grandmother or perhaps a widowed aunt, —to whom the child would be sent at about the age of seven years. The reason for removing a girl from her immediate family circle was said to have been to protect her virginity. Her parents wanted to send her "where no men were living, as they didn't want a girl around home with her father, brother, male cousins." Should there not be a suitable relative, however, the girls' parents would keep her at home and she would receive training in domestic duties from her own mother. In any case, the girl was sup-

* Religion is treated in full in Cooper Ms. 1949.

CHAPTER X

OLD AGE AND DEATH

It is the opinion of the now aged Gros Ventres that the proportion of old persons was much greater in the past than it has been since they have taken up the white man's ways; and further, that the aged then retained their health and vigor to a greater degree.[1] One old woman stated that when she was young, there used to be many old people, but that they died off when there were no more buffalo. She added: "People lived to a good old age on the things that the Supreme Being provided,—roots, wild vegetables and fruits, dried meats and berries. In those days, too, they drank broth instead of tea and coffee. Old folks didn't lose their teeth then, although even young girls do nowadays. Their teeth eventually got worn down, but they seldom pulled them. In fact, if an old person should lose a tooth, he thought it was awful and was sure that he was ready for the grave. Furthermore, people didn't get white hair until they were ready for 'old age sleep'—very old people sleep most of the time—yet now one sees middle-aged and even younger people with gray hair like the whites have."

Status and Treatment of the Aged

It was believed that a person who had lived to a ripe old age had been privileged to do so by the Supreme Being. Therefore, they reasoned, if you are good to old people, these in turn will pray to the Supreme Being for your health, long life, and success. Children were instructed explicitly to be good to the aged,—to feed them, to clothe them, and to help them in difficulties,—as well as to seek out those so blessed and ask for their prayers. It was

[1] Allowance should of course be made for the fact that "old age" is a relative term. When it was said that young men were urged to marry "older experienced women," this referred to a woman of perhaps twenty to twenty-five. See pp. 171–72. A woman on the northern plains was "old" at forty, according to Denig, p. 513.

It was
888 thought well, too, to name a child after someone who had attained
[551] advanced age. Thus it was that youths of 16 or 17 years of age would go out in a storm and stand before the lodge of some old man or woman and cry, begging the prayers of that person. Again, on a hunting party, should there be some old man along,
[431 unable to hunt, one member of the group might give a whole buf-
782] falo carcass to him; whereupon the grateful elder would offer a spontaneous prayer on the donor's behalf. Similarly, it was not at all unusual for successful young hunters to seek out old people to share in some of the spoils,—just as in these later times a bottle of whiskey was occasionally given to old persons by the young. Once in a while, too, some married man would have his wife cook
[782] a quantity of food and publicly invite old people, one of whom, in appreciation of this attention, would offer the expected prayer for the long life, health and success of the host and all the members of his household.

Dignity was, however, not necessarily an attribute of old age. With advancing years the conventions were somewhat relaxed. It was stated by one informant: "When a man had lived long enough to have participated in all the Sacred Dances, he had acquired the right to do almost as he pleased, including not having to observe so strictly the relationship taboos. It seemed to throw the bars down and he could have even more fun than ever at the expense of his enemy-friends and become still more vulgar and obscene." Relations between old women living together were not always harmonious and noisy quarreling was not unusual. Sometimes young boys played pranks on such old women, as in the following case.

888 "Two old women who were sisters shared a lodge. One day they were in there, seated back to back, warming themselves by
522 the fire. They didn't have any clothes on and were feeling good, scratching their skins with sticks. Two young boys peeped in. They took a long willow and quietly heated the end of it in the fire. When the end of the willow was glowing, they touched one of the old women with it. She yelled at the other: 'You burned me,' and of course the other denied it. After a little while, the boys did the same thing to the other old woman. They heard her call out: 'What did you do to me? You burned me!' The boys

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

second element in the word is the name of the culture hero and trickster, who in the early mythical period taught the Gros Ventres how to pray to the Supreme Being, and how to make a living. The present-day Gros Ventres can give no clue to the etymological meaning of the word ni:hohat, nor can the writer analyze it. The word is also used for spider. The spider is in a certain sense sacred and, if it is killed, rain comes. The spider, the Gros Ventres say, can in spite of its small size do wonderful things with its web, can make it stay anywhere, can climb up and down it, and, in general, is usually master of the situation. The name of the trickster Ni:hohat is ordinarily translated as "white man" by English-speaking Gros Ventres and the translation is derived from a folktale concerning an escapade of Ni:hohat in which he had his hair cut off.[2] Thus it was that when the Gros Ventres first saw the white man with his hair cut short, in contrast to the Gros Ventres' long hair, they called him by the name of the trickster. Consequently, the name for the Supreme Being Ixtcibəni:hohat is often rendered in English as "The One Above the White Man" or, in abbreviated form, "The One Above."

The second name for the Supreme Being is Behä:tixtč. The meaning, "the master, boss, head, leader of all" is quite clear (be:-, be:hi, "all"; änä:tixtč, "he is master, boss, head, of group or organization).[3]

The third name Ni:nänä'ätč, is said to be an older form which was still in use in the lifetime of The Boy and Thick, and it was felt that it had the meaning of "study, think, meditate," and that the whole might signify "the being who has control over everything by thought or will,"—a concept which, it may be added, would be quite in keeping with the Gros Ventre idea of the power of sheer thought or thought-wish by human beings. But this

[2] Kroeber, 1907, pp. 72-73, gives a version of this episode which is substantially the same as the one obtained by me.

[3] In 1948 The Boy stated that the Gros Ventres addressed the Supreme Being by this term "when they wanted something big, e.g. when they prayed for a good harvest of all the things the earth produced. Thus we are saying a kind of mass prayer indicating that the Supreme Being owns everything. He made it and he owns it, and it was recognized that they depended on him." [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

776 was supposed to have come on earth far up north, and to have made the rounds of all the tribes, finally reaching the Gros Ventres. 797 The Gros Ventres at first so called the priest, but when they discovered that he ate and slept like themselves, they ceased calling him by this name.

776 In the sweatlodge rite, to be described later, the first of those invited to sweat was the Supreme Being.[1] In how far such an invitation was anthropomorphically conceived is hard to say; it need not, of course, necessarily have implied anything beyond symbolic deference.

The Boy and Thick stated: "He is not a 'false person.' He is entirely in a class by himself. We think so much of him that we do not dare to try to learn what he looks like. We class him as a kind of shadow. He is the most wonderful and powerful of all beings who have no bodies."

[778] No statues or images or pictographs of any kind were ever made of the Supreme Being, nor were there any symbolic representations of him.

The Supreme Being was alone and one, and, as compared with other sacred or superhuman beings of religion, myth, and folklore, [782] he ranked first. Where prayers included invocation of more beings than one, the Supreme Being's name always came first; in ritual invitations before sweating or partaking of food, he was always invited first. He was, however, much more than *primus inter pares.* He was in a class by himself as not only the most powerful but as the ultimate source of the power possessed by other beings and as the ultimate ruler and controller of these others. Bha'a, [821] the Storm Being, who ranked next in importance to the Supreme Being, was controller of storms, thunder and lightning, and exercised a certain limited autonomy. He had this power and office, however, not of himself, but by delegation from the Supreme Being, and exercised it as the agent of the Supreme Being, as will be explained more fully later. Then, too, while the Gros Ventres through fasting and crying on the hills or prairie sought supernatural power, not directly from the Supreme Being, but from other beings—animals and others—it was the Supreme Being who

[1] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, p. 275.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

had given to these beings the power which they in turn gave to humans. 776

The Supreme Being resides up above but he is in no sense identified with the sky or firmament or with any heavenly body. He is quite distinct therefrom, and in particular, quite distinct from the sun. "The sun is his work, his property like," according to Singer. Al Chandler stated, "If he did not want the sun to shine or to perform whatever duties it has, it couldn't do these things." While he resided up above, he could be prayed to from anywhere. In this sense he was not localized, whereas many other beings such as power-bestowing ones, were sought out in their particular dwelling places and there prayed to. [782]

Children were taught that the Supreme Being looked down on them from above and saw and heard all that they did, both good deeds such as charity to the needy, and evil ones such as stealing, even when the children thought they were quite alone and unobserved.[8]

The Supreme Being was emphatically the owner and master of all things, of the universe, the supernatural beings, as above stated, human beings (not merely the Gros Ventres), the animals, the earth, the heavenly bodies. All informants fully agreed on this. As The Boy reasoned it out: "He was master of everything on the earth and above, even of the spirit world, and not merely of the Gros Ventres, but of everybody."

Whether he was conceived of as the maker or creator of all things is not altogether clear. Three or four of our best informants stated categorically that "He made all things." He was "the creator of all things," "the ruler of all and creator of everything." "He made the earth," "He created us." There is some confusion, however, partly at least on account of the role of Earthmaker (see below, p. 23).

The Supreme Being was actively interested in the welfare of human beings, first of all as the giver, protector and master of life, and as the donor of food, but also as the source of supernatural power and of wealth.

---

[8] For a discussion of difference in point of view between men and women informants, see Flannery, 1953, pp. 169-70.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

776 He was the "master of life" as previously mentioned. Long life was the result of something more than conformity to "health rules," such as daily morning cold baths to harden the body.[9] "The Supreme Being allows people to live long. If he wanted, he cut off their lives." "When people die, it is the Supreme Being who cuts off their lives." "Very old people lived a long life because they were pitied by the Supreme Being." The Boy's father, Lame Bull, said that "a man lives, not his own life, but according to what is given him and wished by Ixtcibani:hahat. A man has what he has by the wish of the One Above."

776 888 The Gros Ventres understood by that that the aged had survived to old age not by accident, but by the permission and wish of the Supreme Being. It was common for young men to approach in tears a very old man or woman, offer a pipe, and request him or her to ask the Supreme Being to grant him long life, to make him a good warrior who would be immune to arrows or bullets when he was shot at.[10]

776 721 782 [755] In grave illness the Supreme Being would be appealed to to spare the sick person's life. It was a common belief that the Supreme Being would not permit a large attacking force of enemies to slaughter a smaller number at home in its own camp. When a group of young Gros Ventre recruits was leaving for World War II, the Supreme Being was prayed to in an old song that he would watch over them and let them come back home unharmed; although there were some casualties among Gros Ventre soldiers in World War II, not one of the above particular group was even wounded.

776 [171] The Supreme Being as the one who "owns everything" was the provider of food. He was not called "master of food," as was common among the northeastern Algonquians,[11] living closer than the Gros Ventres to a scarcity economy; food, it was felt, was "too little" a thing, and the title undignified. But all good things to eat, including "wild" food such as berries, fruits, roots and tubers, came from the Supreme Being and were given by him.

---

[9] Cf. Flannery, 1953, p. 144.
[10] Cf. Flannery, 1953, pp. 195-96.
[11] Cooper, 1934, p. 71.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Supernatural power too, while gotten immediately from animals, mountains (mountain spirits), and other creatures, through fasting and sleeping out on the hills, came ultimately from the Supreme Being, as mentioned previously. A person going out on a power quest, would pray first to the Supreme Being to command or compel the lesser being to give the power being sought. Power to doctor and to achieve war success and even to acquire wealth thus in the last analysis came from the Supreme Being. So too did the (supernatural?) power inherent in earnest wishes or thought wishes.

The Supreme Being also imparted knowledge and warnings to human beings through dreams and through his messenger, the crow. The crow on account of his relationship to the Supreme Being was a sort of sacred bird.[12] To illustrate the point the Boy told the following incident in the life of his father, Lame Bull. "Lame Bull on one occasion was sitting out on a hill and no one could get him to come back to camp. So some of his family got one of Lame Bull's wives, The Boy's mother, to go out and tell Lame Bull to come home right away as the camp was moving. As Lame Bull saw her coming, a crow flew over to him and said, 'This person who is coming is going to tell you something that is not true. Don't pay any attention to her.' Then the crow flew away. When The Boy's mother came within hearing distance of Lame Bull, the latter said to her: 'Don't say what you are going to say. Turn back.' But she kept on coming and told him her message, for which she got a scolding from him."

In general the Supreme Being was, as regards his interest in human welfare, the reverse of an otiose deity. His interest was a most active one.

Equally active was his interest in man's moral and social behavior. He was pleased at such moral or social acts as respect and help to the aged and care of the orphans, and was offended by grave breaches of the moral or social order. He bestowed

[12] In 1948 The Boy explained: "The crow is not the kind you see around here now, but a raven,—a bird that is smaller and more streamlined than the crow. The crow here in the fields cry like they are wounded, but this other bird has a shrill but melodious call more like a human being." [R.F.]

776 executes the direction or will of the Supreme Being. He is the
821 medium or means by which the Supreme Being works. When a big storm is about to break, a pipe is filled and the Supreme Being
[782] is prayed to in the direction from which the storm is coming and is asked to spare the people during this storm, to direct Bha'a not to kill them, to say a word or two to Bha'a himself not to shoot around too close to camp. The people are afraid of Bha'a since he does his job in such a violent way. Even though Bha'a is held in high esteem and is considered an extraordinary being, he is a creature [under control] of the Supreme Being."

776 Bha'a was closely associated with the Feathered Pipe, not at all with the Flat Pipe.

Bha'a too entered into the Sacrifice Lodge ("Sun dance") as the being who could cause rain and so bring a good season for the food quest and bring coolness and shade in hot weather. While supernatural power was not explicitly sought from Bha'a he might occasionally on his own initiative have pity on a man and give him power to be a great warrior and even to make storms.
[726] But on a war expedition the participants would pray to the Supreme Being to be saved from wounds and death; not the slightest thought of Bha'a would enter their minds unless they were overtaken by a bad storm.

It may be added here that, while violent thunderstorms are
[165] common in Gros Ventre territory, deaths from lightning are not frequent. The Boy could recall only three such deaths, occurring in Gros Ventre territory during his experience, two on one occasion when he was a young boy and one on a later occasion around 1930.

The word Bha'a is used not only for the Thunderbird but enters into the term also for the water and earth monsters, bha'anbi:'iθän.[16]

The water monster,—or monsters as there appear to be a number of them, for they are reported from various large rivers, and springs where they bathe,—is usually envisioned as a huge,

[16] The Boy explained in 1948: "The word bi:'iθän includes water bugs, crawling bugs, bugs of all kinds; but a snake is never called bi:'iθä, nor will a snake ever be called bha'a. Water monster, no manner how many horns he has, or however much he resemble a snake, is always called bha'anbi:'iθä." [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

long, more or less serpent-shaped, being with pointed snout and tail, and with a horn or two horns in its forehead. It lives in its lodge under water, is occasionally seen, snatches bathers or swimmers, and carries them down to its underwater dwelling. Drowned persons are supposed to go to or to be captured and held by the water monster in the after-life. The people made offerings to the water monster or to its youngest offspring, the Last Child (see p. 15), when crossing rivers and on other occasions. 776 [775] [782]

There is a close connection between Bha'a the Thunderbird on the one hand, and these water and earth monsters on the other, but they are quite distinct. During storms the Thunderbird may strike a monster and carry it away as game food up into the clouds to its own mountain-top nest. There is no explicit note of hostility toward the monster.

The following story may illustrate ways of the water monster and the Thunderbird's habit of preying on the water or earth monsters.[17]

When The Boy's father, Lame Bull, was a young man, in the 1840's, three young Gros Ventre younger than Lame Bull,—two of them relatives of Lame Bull,—had gone on a war party down toward the Yellowstone River. The Boy told the story: "They ran before the oncoming storm to take refuge among the rocks on a knoll. When they got within about 100-150 yards of the knoll, lightning struck. All three lost consciousness for a moment and, when they came to, were facing the opposite way. They turned around to go to the rocks on the knoll. As they did so, they saw a cloud right over the knoll and heard a noise as of a struggle going on in the clouds. The cloud started to rise and as it left the ground they could see something hanging down from the cloud, with its head in the cloud. As the cloud went up higher, they could see that the something was some kind of monster, with colors like a snake and striped. The cloud rose higher and higher, seeming to be taking a great monster out of the knoll. Finally the lower end of the monster came into view, struggling as it were. The struggling monster was immense, snake-like in build 776 539

[17] Cf. also Kroeber, 1908, pp. 278-80.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

boy. He was so scared, he went insane and died in a few days," 776
according to The Boy. 539

One story we gathered is about a very big rattlesnake, "as big as a person," big enough to eat a human being and leave only the skeleton. It had a large shining horn. Where it traveled it made a great bare trail like a modern road. It was horned, but was not of the water or earth monster "species." It was shot dead by a young man whom it had molested with murderous design while he was out in the hills crying and sleeping to obtain supernatural power.

In one story, the following, told by Singer, it is not clear whether there is question of a gigantic horned snake or of an earth monster proper.

"Near the head of Snake Butte there is a big cleft which runs all the way to the bottom. The cleft is said to have been made by lightning striking there. My husband Ax Handle [Assiniboine] was there and looked. He thought he saw something and looked again. It was a great big snake with a horn on the top of its head. He was scared and ran away." [823]

A somewhat conspicuous, though very human, role in Gros Ventre ritual and thought was played by the Last Child, idɑ:sθa, (itasé, "lastly," itasünna, "last;" -tha, "child" [Sifton]; apparently meaning "last child born in a family"). He was the little water snake, offspring of the water monster who figured in the story of He-who-starved-to-death (see No. 5 in Appendix). The Last Child had power in water, sharing to an undefined subordinate degree in the power of his father, the water monster, who was ruler under the water. He, alone or together with his father, was prayed to or given offerings, when the Gros Ventres had to cross rivers or lakes or when they swam or bathed in rivers or pools, lest they drown or be snatched down by the water monster. Early in World War II when a batch of Gros Ventre recruits was about to leave for overseas duty in the Pacific he was prayed to to protect them in crossing the ocean. In praying with a pipe, the Gros Ventres always held it up first to the Supreme Being, but lastly down to the Last Child. In food offerings, the Last Child was invited, last in order, to partake. In the sweat lodge he was mentioned 776 776 782 [484] 776

776 but not invited to sweat, as he was not considered important enough. In general, while he very frequently enters into ritual, he always enters as the last and least. The water monster was rather feared, but the Last Child was conceived as benevolent and kindly disposed, and both in and outside of ritual observances ran a marked undercurrent of indulgent affectionate amusement, such as the adult male might have toward a liked small child, especially where the Last Child was ritually or otherwise associated with the Supreme Being. The Boy said: "The Gros Ventres all but laugh when the pipe is offered to the Last Child. He suggests something sort of funny to them, while they have only deep reverence for the Supreme Being." As Tom Main put it: "The Last Child [comparatively] does not amount to much. He is always mentioned last [in prayers], but he gets the benefit of tobacco put in the ground [when medicinal herbs are gathered] and food put there [in food offerings]. As far back as I can remember, the people used to laugh when the Last Child was mentioned, but nevertheless he was included in rites." This by no means signifies however that he was laughed *at* or made fun of. The Last Child was, it would seem, a sort of intercessor with his father, to temper the latter's rather maleficent and predatory tendencies.

The Last Child was also associated in some manner with the earth or perhaps with the earth monster(s), as food and offerings were put into the ground for him,[18] but the nature of the relationship is not clear. One statement given earlier, that he had a kind of keepership of the earth, looked after it, saw that the grass and trees grew, that the rivers flowed, and so forth, while not contradicted, was not confirmed, by later evidence.

776 823 Regarding the earth, that is, the land or ground, rather than the terrestrial globe as such, there appear to have been differences in ritual usage and perhaps in belief. Some of the Gros Ventres did not mention earth in their prayers. Others habitually did so, naming in order the Supreme Being, the sun, earth, and the Last

[18] In 1948 The Boy added: "Nowadays when they smoke, they offer him one too; and also with whiskey, they spill a little on the ground and say: 'Ida:s0a for a drink.'" [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

according to one tradition, in the career of humanity. Some thought World War II was one of these four. The Gros Ventres do not recognize any beings connected or identified with the four winds or four cardinal directions. 776 801 [823]

Sometimes another being "Broken Knife" was appealed to in prayers. Little too, is known of him, except that he was, some time in the distant past, a renowned Keeper of the Flat Pipe. According to Al Chandler, Broken Knife was the name of the young man who was first given the Feathered Pipe. (For details, No. 6d in Appendix.) He was asked to pray for the supplicants, just as it was customary for the people to ask living pipe keepers or ex-keepers to pray and intercede for them, "much as Catholics ask the saints to intercede for them." 776 782

Much more is known of He-Who-Starved-To-Death who is associated with the Flat Pipe rite. He was a human being, a Pipe child, second son of a certain keeper of the Flat Pipe in the days when the Gros Ventres dwelt in a land of plenty. It was he who in the course of his adventures encountered and befriended the Last Child, offspring of the water monster, and who on his return home taught the people to pray to the Last Child, and introduced three songs into the Flat Pipe rite. He was also the man who first brought horses to the Gros Ventres. His name was given him by the water monster. (For details see No. 5 in Appendix.) In one Flat Pipe rite he was mentioned in prayers, and in the sweat lodge was invited to sweat. 776

Well known too is He-who-dreams-of-Bha'a, likewise a human being and a Pipe child, the son of the couple who were first given the Feathered Pipe by Bha'a, and who lived when the Gros Ventres had already gotten horses and had reached their historic habitat, but before the advent of the whites. He got power from Bha'a to be a great warrior, and he gave himself his name. (For details see No. 7 in Appendix.) While closely associated with the Feathered Pipe, he was not, so far as we could discover, prayed to.

In general, lesser beings that had no human body were called tciya:təwu:nitä (sing., lit., "false person": tciyattawu, false [Sifton], initä, human being). This category included such minor

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

power from the "ghost men" by sleeping near their pictographs, but never with any success. One young man, however, once without quest got power in childbirth cases from a boss of little children who appear to him in a dream, and Singer thought these "little children" were "ghost men," but the identification is doubtful. The only message they ever got from the "ghost men" was a request or demand that the Gros-Ventres go away at once as they smelt bad or made the place smell bad. On war parties or other occasions, offerings were made at the pictograph cliff to the "ghost men," who would then during the night make new pictographs on the morrow from which the future in the form of good or bad fortune could be easily foreseen by the members of the party.[20]

Supernatural power was gotten either by quest or otherwise from ghosts or, as more commonly, from non-human beings, such as mountains (or the spirit who inhabited or owned the mountains), rocks, mammals (bear, wolf, weasel, mink, coyote, rat, prairie dog and others), birds (crow, prairie chicken), snakes, spiders and so forth. "These lesser beings, while ranking a little above human beings and possessing certain superhuman powers, were under the leadership and control of the Supreme Being, from whom they had received such powers to be imparted in turn to human beings. Like Bha'a, they were, so to speak, delegated agents and underlings of the Supreme Being, put by him in charge of "the details of the whole situation," as The Boy expressed it. The powers so imparted were of many kinds, to cure, to poison or otherwise harm, to foretell, to become a great warrior, to acquire wealth, to succeed in love and gambling, et cetera, as will be described in detail later.

Non-Cult Beings

So much for the beings to whom cult was rendered in the form of prayer or sacrifice. We shall now describe the supernatural beings,—human, "humanoid" and non-human,—to whom no cult was rendered but who entered in one form or other into ritual

[20] Cf. Flannery, 1953, p. 93.

and who was floating on the raft with the Flat Pipe, whether he may then have gone to the whites and taught them, too, how to pray; but all this he considers speculation only. 776 [773]

It should be emphasized that as previously noted, no sacrifices or prayers were ever offered by the Gros Ventres to Ni:hohat himself, nor, it may be here added, to Earthmaker. The Boy once said to his father, Lame Bull: "You talk so much about Ni:hohat. He was a superhuman. He should have been prayed to." "No," Lame Bull replied, "he never told the people to pray to him, but told them to pray to the Supreme Being. He was a man and not worthy to be prayed to." [782]

Earthmaker was the human being, apparently a or the primeval keeper of the Flat Pipe, who knowing the earth was to be covered with water made a raft of logs on which he and the Flat Pipe floated during the great flood.[22] (See full story, No. 3 in Appendix.) Where he came from is unknown. Landing on a mountain top he there made dry land (not *the* earth, the terrestrial globe as such which already existed), and also made a man and woman. He gave the Flat Pipe into the keeping of the man he had made, and taught him the Flat Pipe rite, instructed him how to carry out the rite and to plant tobacco, and told the people how to worship the Supreme Being. The Flat Pipe rite has been known ever since that time. Earthmaker is mentioned only in the Flat Pipe rite. After giving the pipe and the above instructions, he disappeared, and what became of him, whether he died or not, is not known. 776 773

Ghosts were called tsë:k. Another name for ghosts was byi'te:' a word that "gives the impression like a hollow-eyed bleached-out skull." An occasional ancestral ghost became the guardian helper of a surviving relative.[23] Gambling power might also be gotten from a ghost. Most ghosts were in their own future abode and did not have any contact at all with the living. In general, apart 774 775

[22] He was not floating in the Pipe bowl; this is the Arapaho version.

[23] In 1948 The Boy explained: "Tciya:towu:nitän (see p. 19) are not tsë:k; tsë:k is the opposite of everything good—you can cuss by calling someone tsë:k. Byi'te:' is even worse. The ancestral ghost is tsätsuwa'a, not tsë:k. Shadow, soul, spirit, echo is bətäto:u. [R.F.] [578]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

793 mon pipe in his hands, it was forbidden for anyone to pass in front
784 of him, under penalty of some evil befalling the culprit.

If a person, wanting something in a hurry from the keeper, such as meat or a bit of tobacco, just poked his (or her) head in the door of the keeper's lodge and made his request, no one inside would answer him. He would have to go all the way in, proceeding clockwise, make his request, and go out clockwise, not back out.

When the co-keeper gave a visitor something to eat in the Pipe lodge, the receiver had to eat it there and not take it out, unless someone told war stories. No one was allowed to take or grab anything seen in the Pipe lodge.

The keeper and co-keeper were by virtue of their office "holy"
778 persons, that is, endowed with supernatural powers. Some of these
782 powers were related directly to their main task as custodians of the Pipe, leaders in its ritual, and intercessors with the supernatural world, and will be described under the ritual of the Pipe. Others were conferred on them at or subsequent to the transfer rite, partly to enable them to command the respect due them, partly to give them supernatural efficiency for their own or their people's advantage,—the former being mostly powers to harm, the latter mostly powers to help.

793 If anyone were guilty of disrespect to the keeper or co-keeper,
754 there were several avenging procedures to which they could resort.

During the transfer rite, the keeper and co-keeper were taught some form of cursing, so they would be properly respected. If they wished evil on anyone, the evil would come to pass. Deer, an ex-keeper who gave Lame Bull much of the latter's coaching for the keepership, told him after his mouth had been consecrated: "Be careful what you say. For if you utter an evil wish on anybody, the wish will come true." This power, it may be added, is more or less of a piece with the commonly possessed efficacy attributed in Gros Ventre idealogy to serious good or evil wish-thought. (See pp. 364-370.)

Deer also taught Lame Bull in his early keepership another harming power, but cautioned him not to use it unless someone failed to show proper respect to him as keeper. This power worked by "sympathetic" magic. Deer asked for a little pup and a piece of sinew. When these were brought he said: "Leave the pup near

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

788 first contact with whites they found that among these latter too
533 singing had in similar fashion degenerated.

Among the birds and animals it was otherwise. They continued to sing as they had done at the earthmaking. They held fast to the privilege given them and did not abuse it or let their singing degenerate. So it was that the Gros Ventres used to go to the tops of buttes, hills and high mountains and to streams and forests, begging these animals and birds to give them songs, and in this measure to restore singing to its former purpose and dignity. But later the Gros Ventres sometimes prevailed even upon the animals and birds to teach them "no-good songs."

Nevertheless in spite of all this badness and degeneration the Gros Ventres never lost sight of the fact that they depended on the Supreme Being for everything. So whenever they had occasion to pray and perform their ceremonies, they sang. And with such sacred singing was so intimately associated the use of the pipe
[276 and tobacco that "one could hardly separate singing and pipe-
782] smoking." In nearly all rites they entered in as a means of imploring the Supreme Being to grant the people's requests. The Gros Ventres learned by experience that if they sang and smoked and followed faithfully the rest of the Flat Pipe ritual, they could at least hope for a hearing by the Supreme Being. Smoking too, it may be added, like singing, later degenerated, a point to which we shall come presently.

533 Practically every Gros Ventre ceremony or social event began or was accompanied with song. And each of the many Gros Ventre songs had to be used on certain and only certain specified occasions. Thus, for example, it would not do at all to sing Pipe songs during social dances or in a hand game or at "good-time" gatherings. Each religious or secular occasion had its own song or set of songs. Very commonly a story teller would in the course of his or her narrative sing the song or songs the characters in the story were supposed to have sung.

Many Gros Ventre songs were wordless. In most of the worded ones, the words consisted of short pregnant phrases or sentences preceded and followed by wordless singing.

Two kinds of singers were recognized and distinguished: those who had good voices, and those who had knowledge of the

from which it was made, inao:, a term not used for white traders' paint. 386 [788]

The Gros Ventres used to get it out in the hills on Stiffarm Creek at Curly Head's place. It occurs as a yellow clay or dirt, as a yellow strip or streak in whitish banks or hillsides, or sometimes it was dug up from the ground. Not everyone could gather it; never men even in the old days, although in recent times Little Man used to do so; but only old women, and only certain ones at that. Coming Daylight's grandmother used to gather it and so did Coming Daylight herself who learned the method and ritual of gathering and preparing it from her grandmother. Singer's grandmother used to gather and prepare it, but she herself did not want to do it, although she had the chance to learn from her grandmother. The art and rite were "kind of handed down."

When about to gather the yellow clay, the woman would sit by the deposit, smoke, and while smoking pray that the clay she was about to gather would be abundant and good. An offering, usually of tobacco, was left at the spot. Both in gathering and in baking the clay the woman had to be alone. [782]

The baking of the clay was done at night by the woman who had gathered it. The children could not be around making a noise, and she herself had to be very quiet. She would make a sort of batter of the clay by mixing it with water, and would knead it into flat round cakes with a round hole in the center. A fire, formerly of buffalo chips, more recently of cow manure, was made, and when it died down to coals, the cakes were put at the bottom, covered up with live coals, and a fire built on top. The woman baking did not blow the fire and she shut everything up. If you blew on the fire the whole paint would disappear. The baking had to be done very skillfully to turn out just right. The baking was fraught with some danger, and some fear went with it. If the cakes baked too brown, this was a bad omen. When the cakes were baked sufficiently all the coals were removed and the cakes, blackened on the surface, were taken out and allowed to cool. The black surface was scraped away, leaving the clay now burnt red. This red clay was then pounded to fine powder on a piece of rawhide. [372] [787]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

dren, grown-ups too who would accompany the children to escort them and to see that they behaved properly would take advantage of the occasion to be painted. 796*

The painting might be done as the result of a suggestion or direction given the keeper in a dream, to paint the faces of the children and, apparently, of the adults too.

A person might also make a vow to have himself painted. The keeper would then call the ex-keepers together, make a smudge, and sing the face painting song (No. 39). In this simple rite, the keeper and/or co-keeper painted the vower and others who came in.

The making of offerings to the Flat Pipe, called "covering" or "wrapping" the Pipe, was a major aspect of the Flat Pipe cult, the most important private or personal aspect of it, as distinct from the more elaborate public Pipe ceremonies participated in by considerable numbers of all of the people. Such "covering" could be done by anybody at any time, with or without previous vow or notification of keeper. Sometimes, as noted earlier (p. 101), such offerings were made just before a seasonal rite and entitled the giver to a seat in the keeper's lodge during the rite. As a rule, however, "covering" the Pipe was a ceremony to itself, a simple one independent of all others.

"Covering" the Pipe was done, commonly in fulfillment of a promise or vow, in case of illness, danger, or other emergency affecting the giver or a relative or friend, or, apart from any emergency, to obtain good health and long life. Covering was a sacrifice of petition or thanksgiving or both. Forgiveness and atonement purposes were quite absent, so far as we could discover. 782● 796*

The offerings more commonly consisted of skin robes, later of textiles. Sometimes tobacco was given, and after a buffalo hunt choice bits of the meat. The textiles offered were such goods as flannel, calico, percale, shawls, blankets. (Some of the offerings can be seen on tripod of Flat Pipe, Plate 1B.) When Singer covered the Pipe she usually offered a robe made of three yards of black flannel, costing about $2.00 a yard. Mary Eraux' mother used also to give three yards of goods as a covering. Black was the preferred color for textile "coverings" because this was the color the Pipe liked best.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

782 *796 [262] [795]

Hunters returning from a successful buffalo chase would select pieces of kidney (a special delicacy) and ribs, and put them on top of the Pipe bundle. In recent times, money offerings occur. Offerings for the Pipe have become increasingly infrequent; offerings are now usually made instead by the Gros Ventres, all of whom are Catholics, to the Mission Church or at the Shrine of Our Lady of the Little Rockies on the Mission grounds.

A promise or vow to cover the Pipe, made silently or aloud, would be worded, "I vow to cover (or wrap) the Flat Pipe," rather than "I vow to give something to the Flat Pipe."

During our field work in 1940, when Coming Daylight was telling among other things what she knew of the Flat Pipe and its ritual, one evening (Aug. 16) she heard that her grandchild was seriously ill. Thereupon she went outside a little distance and holding both arms up, palms out, looking up and facing toward where the Flat Pipe was she spoke and prayed: "I am telling about you. I am telling everything straight. I suppose you hear everything, and must know that I am telling everything straight. I am telling the truth and nothing but the truth. Look at me. Have pity on me and upon all the rest of the people. Take away all bad things that go around here on earth. Have pity so my grandchild may get well. I promise to put a robe on you. I hear you value black more than anything, and that is what I shall get you. I hear my grandchild though still sick is better." In this case, as Coming Daylight explained, she was "talking right to the Pipe."

In a long discussion, a couple of days later (Aug. 20, 1940), with The Boy, he emphasized that while a person covering the Flat Pipe had great reverence for it and would address it by its own two names, Flat Pipe and Little Turtle, the Pipe itself was only a medium by which the Supreme Being was petitioned or thanked. A man, for instance, in sudden imminent danger would perhaps, praying in his heart and mind, mention only the Pipe, but he would know what the Pipe represented, namely, only a powerful means used so that his prayer would be hearkened to by the Supreme Being. We may add incidentally that mention in the course of this discussion of the Sinkaetk custom of praying to the sweat-lodge caused hearty laughter by The Boy and Thomas Main.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

782 796*

The man or woman about to cover the Pipe would bring the offering to the keeper's lodge, enter it and proceeding clockwise put the offering on top of the bundle, draped or wrapped lengthwise if a robe or textile with the ends hanging loose, and saying: "Here's your wrapping, Flat Pipe (or Little Turtle). This is what I promised you. I have carried out my vow." Meanwhile the keeper would have put peppermint on the sacred hearth to make a smudge. The coverer would touch the Pipe bundle, put his or her arms around it, and might pray at length, asking and thanking for favors.

The keeper, too, might pray, and might paint the face of the coverer with red bands across the forehead, and under the jaws and chin, and three dots, one on each cheek bone and one on the bridge of the nose,—the band on the forehead representing the above; that under the jaws and chin, the earth; the dots on the cheeks, sundogs.

It was a common custom for the keeper or his wife to provide a meal for the coverer. When Mary Eraux' mother used to cover the Pipe, the co-keeper would say: "Whenever anybody gives my Pipe a robe, I always feed them." So her mother would come back after a little while and eat. If the coverer had just eaten and when so offered food could not eat it, in order to take it home to eat he would have to pay a small "fine," e.g., a pocketknife or handkerchief, or to tell the required number of personal war-deeds, or else the keeper might volunteer to tell his own.

When some years ago Coming Daylight returned from Yellowstone Park with a sack of real buffalo chips, she went to the house of Horse Capture, the Flat Pipe keeper at the time. He at once made a smudge. She removed the "coverings" from off the Pipe bundle, put a new robe on the outside case of the bundle, put her arms around the bundle, and said to the Pipe: "I want you to have mercy [pity] on me. I am looking for good health, and good health for my children so they will grow up to be strong." Then she went on and made quite a long prayer, and at the end put all the "coverings" back on the bundle. Then she left the house, returned entering the house by the kitchen to observe the clockwise rule, gave Horse Capture and his wife the precious

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 buffalo chips she had brought back, and sat down. They then heard a "terrible groan" from the room where the Pipe was kept. Horse ●782 Capture and his wife seemed surprised and did not know what to make of it. The groan sounded to Coming Daylight more as if it said "Yes." After this all sat down to dinner. Afterwards Horse Capture's wife gave Coming Daylight a big buggy-parasol, a very expensive present. "They never say: 'I give you this for that,' but any little thing you do for the Pipe, like picking mint for it, the co-keeper would give you something for it."

When a number of "coverings" would accumulate on the Pipe bundle they would be hung elsewhere in the keeper's lodge, and from time to time the "coverings" would have to be ritually disposed of by the keeper with the full sweat-lodge rite. The keeper would detail a couple of young men to help him prepare the "coverings" and to make the sweat-lodge. The "coverings" might be tied to the sweat-lodge pole, as in the seasonal rite, or might just be brought as such by the co-keeper or an attendant to the sweat-lodge. Here, in the latter case, before the sweating proper began, they were brought in clockwise and given to the keeper. He would dip his right hand in the black charcoal paint, and touch each covering three times in three different places. Then he would gather up all the coverings, lift them up over the ascending smudge, lower them in three stages, move them around in three clockwise circles, and hand the whole bunch to the first man on his left, from whom it was successively passed till it reached the door. Here attendant two took the bunch of coverings and deposited it on the top of the mound in front of the sweat-lodge.

The coverings were finally taken by one of the attendants way out on the hills or elsewhere, as was done with other offerings. [43] Or else the keeper could call together the orphans and other 736 poorer children and distribute the coverings to them, for it was believed that being good to children, especially needy and orphaned ones, was pleasing to the Supreme Being. Coming Daylight's uncle, Crow Bull, when keeper of the Flat Pipe, used to distribute the coverings to the very poor and needy old folks. If among the coverings there was tobacco, this was not deposited out on the hills but was given to the old people. The buffalo

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

kidneys and ribs offered as "coverings" after a hunt were left all day on the bundle and late in the evening given to some of the very poor children to eat.

Moving, carrying and handling the Flat Pipe bundle in camp and on the march were the exclusive responsibility and privilege of the Flat Pipe co-keeper. Whenever the bundle was to be transferred from its tripod to its bed or vice versa, to be hung up over the door of the keeper's lodge, to be carried to and from the sweat lodge or Sacrifice Dance, or to be transported from camp site to camp site, she was the one to do it.

Exceptions to the rule, in emergency, were rare. One such exceptional instance was reported by Coming Daylight. On one occasion the Flat Pipe bundle was still outside the keeper's lodge when darkness set in, and both the keeper and co-keeper were away. In such a case an ex-co-keeper would usually substitute for the co-keeper, but there was none around. It was not customary to leave the Pipe out at night, or even to leave it alone. So Coming Daylight's maternal aunt said to her: "We will put this poor thing [the Pipe] in. Your father once owned a pipe [not the Flat Pipe], so you should not be afraid to handle it." So the two went out and gathering sage rubbed themselves all over with it. Then together they unloosed the bundle and started to carry it in, all the time praying: "We are children of an ex-keeper and this is just the same as if our fathers owned this Pipe. We have the right to handle it. We hate to see you stay out over night. It would be bad if you stayed out. We are bringing you in because we pity you. We hope you will have pity on us, and that we will have long life." And Coming Daylight, about 86 years old in 1940, ended her account by remarking that her prayer was heard because she had lived so long, even though in these last years her legs were unsteady and every little while she fell down on her buttocks!

Coming Daylight also mentioned one other old woman, Mouse, who, although not the co-keeper, used to volunteer to carry the Pipe bundle on her back when the people were on the march from camp site to camp site. This was apparently at a period when horses were very scarce, only one or two to several families, and dog travois had to be resorted to.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

ing the Dance came right after the Pipe or Pipes. If there were no sacred pipe with the caravan, the chief or head man rode first in the line of march. 484 478

On the march, which was ordinarily at a slow pace, no one stopped to smoke or for other reason unless the co-keeper halted. When they stopped, usually about half-way, she would hang the bundle on the tripod, all by itself away from and well forward of the crowd in the direction of the trek. All stopped behind it; they did not surround it; it was always ahead of them in the direction they were heading. No one moved to re-start ahead until the co-keeper did so.

If the route of march necessitated crossing a big river, such as the Missouri River, the procedure in Coming Daylight's words, was as follows. "They put the Flat Pipe bundle in a bullboat. Of course there was no child in the bullboat. They chose two young men, popular and heroes, to lead that bullboat across. These two would be all painted red. They had robes rolled up and when they got midway across the river they put the robes in the water as offerings. As soon as they started across my grandmother up on the cliff at the river's edge would start cheering and singing the victory song. This song is a strong-heart song. When there was something hard to do they sang this song. They would say the names of the two young men and sing this song to encourage them. They all moved the bullboat into the water and different people would put into it various things to be thrown into the middle of the river. The keeper and co-keeper who owned the Pipe were not supposed to swim or bathe in water. Both could ride in this bullboat with the Pipe, but the woman always did. The two young men [on horseback apparently] held the robes [offering mentioned above] in one hand and pulled the bullboat with the other. The Pipe in the bullboat was the first of the caravan to cross the river. After all the people had gotten across the old women had a victory dance and sang for the crossing." [505] [782]

On arrival at the new camp site the co-keeper would hang the Pipe bundle on the tripod at a spot just to the north of where the keeper's lodge was to be erected. Then the new sage bed and sacred hearth were made, and the bundle brought into the lodge,

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

484
778

with the rites previously described. On a day's journey it may be noted, the bundle would have been placed on the tripod in the open three times: before starting out, about half-way, and on arrival at the new camp.

782
[224]

The killing of a pure white buffalo, a pure albino,—always a cow never a bull, according to Gros Ventre tradition,—was an extremely rare occurrence. The killer could keep it himself, give it to the Flat Pipe keeper, or offer it as a sacrifice. This sacrificial rite was last held when the Boy's father, Lame Bull was a young man, probably in the 1850's, and served as a calendrical date: "at the time the white buffalo skin was offered as a sacrifice." The Boy, our sole informant on this rite, could give only fragmentary data on it, gotten from his father who had witnessed only that one time in his life.

If the killer chose to offer the albino skin as a sacrifice, he had to vow, and then had formally to notify the keeper of the Flat Pipe. Carrying it he went clockwise round the camp circle on the inside and brought it to the keeper's lodge. The keeper painted
[302] the man's face with charcoal paint (not red), the ritual color for sacrifices, with a circular band around his face, on the forehead, the sides of the cheeks near [illegible] and under the jawbones and chin, and with also a star on the bridge of his nose. The circle, Lame Bull told the Boy, represented the sundog; the star, the sun. A procession in which the keeper, co-keeper, Pipe child, ex-keepers, ex-co-keepers, the two attendants, and all the people took part started at the keeper's lodge and marched clockwise all around the camp circle, very slowly, with three stops (probably at the west, east and south) for prayer, till they reached the sweat-lodge near the keeper's lodge. The albino skin was given a touch of charcoal paint, as in other sacrifices, but The Boy did not know other details of the special rite used in preparing the skin, nor did he know who carried it in the procession. On arrival of the procession at the sweat lodge, the main body of the people went away, but the small group who were to sweat remained and went through the whole sweat-lodge rite at which the albino skin was hung up on the sweat-lodge pole and after which, in accord-

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

ance with given practice it must have been carried away on a hill or elsewhere.[1] 782

[1] In 1948 The Boy gave a detailed description of the rite should the killer of an albino or "beaver" buffalo present the skin to the Pipe, rather than offer it as a sacrifice. He said that in this case, the man presented the green hide to the Pipe with a ritual directed by the keeper and included the painting of the donor. The keeper then called in two young women known to be expert tanners, received them ritually, and instructed them in procedures to be followed in tanning this particular hide. He made a crown, bracelets and anklets of twisted sage for each woman while singing a special song (not recorded by Cooper). When the hide was dressed there was a big feast at the keeper's lodge at which the keeper ritually painted the skin red. The keeper gave the donor of the skin the choice of any horse from all except one of his herd; to each of the women tanners he gave three valuable presents. [R.F.] [28] 30] [431]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

793 years before her father's keepership was the one who was asked to "confirm" the appointment of Garter Snake [ritual details not obtainable by us] and was given a good horse for performing the ceremony.

The Pipe was addressed and spoken of as the child of the keeper and co-keeper, and they looked upon themselves as the father and mother of the Pipe. When the Pipe talked to them in their dreams it addressed them as "father" and "mother" respectively. To the Pipe child, the Pipe was brother. The Pipe was very jealous, and wanted to be the lone child and so all the keeper's children except the Pipe child were supposed to be put out of the keeper's lodge. According to Garter Snake, however, her father's other children slept in his lodge, not however with the keeper and co-keeper but in separate beds. Garter Snake herself when very young slept with her parents, but later on a separate bed near the foot of theirs. Al Chandler when he was a little boy used to stay with his grandfather, Sitting High, then keeper. The latter would make a bed for the boy right under the Pipe—"which usually was not allowed, [782] but he did it because I was an orphan, and he would pray that I would be healthy, live to old age, and everything like that. He did that every night as long as I was there."

If a new keeper happened to have a young wife with an infant, they were sent to another lodge.

Some of the activities, duties, and attitudes of a Pipe child can be gathered from the following account by Garter Snake of her own experiences.

"When I was the Pipe child, whenever my mother took the Pipe bundle outside of the lodge, I took the tripod out after her. I was told how to set the tripod when the camp was about to move, with two of the legs close together and the third far out. Whenever my father made smudge with pine needles, he would give me some and I would chew them and would hold my hands over the smudge. Then I would rub my left palm up my right arm, my right palm up my left arm, then both palms from the top of my head down the sides of my neck and down my breast.

"I did not have any duties beyond helping my mother when she brought the Pipe bundle out and brought it in.

[784] "I was forbidden to pick peppermint. If peppermint was mixed

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

in dried pounded meat, I was not allowed to eat the meat. If a coyote or wolf were killed, I was not supposed to touch it. These were the only two prohibitions I was under. 793 784

"If anybody vowed to be painted by the keeper, I would be present at the rite next to my mother and sit there through the ceremony. 793

"Whenever while I was Pipe child I got sick my father would put pine needles on me, and then he would take down the bundle and put it on my parents' bed, and would say to me: 'Put your arms around your brother [the Pipe] and pray to your brother so you may get well.' The Pipe keeper and his wife claim the Feathered Pipe as their son and tell their children that the Pipe is their brother. When I put my arms around the Pipe I was told to say to the Pipe: 'My dear brother, have pity on me, that I may get well of my illness.' [755]

"Of course the Pipe was not human but because I was a baby when my father got it I grew up with it and thought just as much of it as of my own blood relatives. When my father transferred the Pipe to Sitting High I was outside playing. When I was coming home I saw the bundle at Sitting High's door, and when I saw it I started to cry, and when I saw my father I said to him: 'Why did you give my Pipe away?' It was just like a person leaving. I was lonesome for it, and felt just as if I had lost a relative or friend. And all through my life I have felt the same toward it. All through my life I have made it a point to be present at any Feathered Pipe ceremony. And whenever I went to any ceremony, I would bring something for it. Since I joined the Catholic Church I stopped doing this, but even now I feel: 'It's all alone. I pity it.' [795]

"When while I was Pipe child I had been out playing and in the evening would come home and see the Pipe bundle over the door, I would stand and look at it a long time and would say: 'Feathered Pipe, I am going into our lodge now.' Once when I was sitting on the bed in the lodge I got to thinking, and all the folks were there, and I said: 'Feathered Pipe, my dear brother, look down on me and watch over me.' I was not told to say this, and I do not know what made me say this prayer to the Feathered Pipe. [782]

"My father used to tell me: 'This Pipe was given by the Su-

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

788 exceptionally chewed in contrast to the Flat Pipe peppermint. A
824 bag, painted red all over, about a foot square, and fringed on three sides but with no beading or other decoration, now hangs with the
[415] bundle and served, Al Chandler thought, as a container for the dried sweet pine needles.

802 The ritual number of the Feathered Pipe, running all through the songs and ceremonies, was four, from the days of the first keeper down to most recent times.

534 The musical instrument used to accompany the songs was, likewise from the time of the first keeper, the drum. According to
778 Garter Snake, the first keeper's drum was painted half black to represent black [storm] clouds and half red to represent the earth. According to Al Chandler, the present drum, about 16 inches in diameter and two inches deep, has a figure of a thunderbird
[532] painted in blue on the drumhead against a red background, to represent Bha'a, with zigzag yellow lines from either side of the head to the wings, to represent lightning. A long string is tied to the drum. The drumstick is painted red, the distal end being covered with buckskin "stuffed with something like cotton." Curly Head, when keeper, never used the drum, or even took it out of its covering in which it hung next to the bundle, but Sitting High used it regularly with the songs.*

788 According to Garter Snake, the first keeper had somebody make him a wooden bowl, which still hangs with, not in, the Pipe bundle,
778 but we obtained no information on its type or use. She also stated that the first keeper had a "gourd rattle" or four rattles, but Al Chandler never saw any rattle kept or used with the Feathered Pipe, and no other informant mentioned such.

[782] The Feathered Pipe, like the Flat Pipe, was smoked, in fulfillment of vows, but very rarely. More commonly, in contrast with the Flat Pipe, it was danced with, earlier only by the keeper, in recent decades by others.

788 General ritual features common to the Feathered Pipe and Flat Pipe,—clockwise movement, singing, the use of paint, of buffalo chips, and of sage, tobacco, larb and wild parsley,—have

* The drum used in the 1951 rite was apparently undecorated. See Plate 2 C. [R.F.]

278 "No, I might get fits." Little Man said: "I will eat it." This he then did. Al was worried about him and did not go to work, for he thought the old man would have fits, but actually nothing happened to him.

778 The Feathered Pipe was given originally by Bha'a or by the Supreme Being through Bha'a, who had control of thunderstorms.
782 While individual petitioners in simpler rites such as covering the Pipe often addressed the Pipe itself in their prayers, and while in even more formal rites Bha'a was addressed, it appears to have been generally understood that the final word lay with the Supreme Being. The Pipe was given to pray through rather than to pray to, and Bha'a while exercising a certain autonomy in his office as ruler of thunderstorms exercised it as agent of and subordinate to the Supreme Being, and in the more formal ritual prayers of the Feathered Pipe, the Supreme Being's name always came first.

782 Feathered Pipe rites were carried out mostly and mainly, al-
[821] though not exclusively, to ask for rain and for protection against threatening thunderstorms or against lightning and destructive high winds during them, and sometimes for cessation of floods and rains. Often however major or minor rites were carried out, with or without previous promise or vow, for ends not connected with weather, to ask for cure in illness, escape from grave danger, safe return from a war expedition, and so forth. In times of drought, Bha'a would be asked for rain. In the more elaborate rites commonly held each spring, petition would be made "To have rain and [in recent decades] good crops and grass, . . . to bless the earth so everybody will be happy and healthy and no bad luck for anybody all summer, so they [all the people] will live 'till next spring,' that is, so when this time of the year comes around again they will be here."

*796 The more solemn Feathered Pipe rites, those at least which involved the sweat-lodge ceremony and the unwrapping of the Pipe bundle, were performed only during the period of the year when thunderstorms could be expected, namely from spring through to fall, and never during the winter months. The Pipe could, however be "covered" at any time of the year. In contrast to the Flat Pipe cycle, seasonal rites proper did not occur, although some rite was

782 Vows could be made just to see the Pipe. The vower would give money or a blanket or horse in payment. Everybody else who wanted to take a look had likewise to make some payment, putting down the payment after coming into the lodge. The men had to leave their hats outside the lodge. The observers were not painted during the rite. The co-keeper, as usual, handled the bundle itself, and the untying and unwrapping of the bundle and Pipe case were carried out with the usual ceremonies and songs. The sacred objects were spread out and the Pipe itself exposed. None of the observers was permitted to touch or pick up the Pipe or the sacred objects, under penalty of "getting fits" from the protective wild parsley. If requested by one of the observers, the co-keeper would lift the cover of the Human Face sufficiently to allow a glimpse. The rite ended with the usual terminal feast.

Anyone could vow to pray with the Human Face which was in the Feathered Pipe bundle. The payment,—maybe a horse and a little money,—was not so great as the payment for dancing with the Pipe. A double lodge was erected for the rite. The Human Face was not danced with, and, during Sitting High's keepership was not exposed for this rite. The vower was merely allowed to hold the Face in its thick wrappings and to pray to it for anything he wanted. At a later date, Curly Head when keeper exposed the Face often, a practice that ran counter to the older tradition and that was criticized as commercialization. Sitting High had exposed the Face to view only once or twice, so far as Al Chandler had heard, in the course of his three decades or more of keepership. Whether such exposure of the Face as occurred was part of the vowed praying with it or a separate function was not made clear to us.

A vow to make a sweat-lodge for the Feathered Pipe, similar *mutatis mutandis* to the corresponding Flat Pipe one, was carried out in fulfillment of a request made to a man in a dream, or of a vow made, for example, by a young man going off on a war party to ask good luck and a safe return,—the young man in the case providing the requisite offerings.

Our very incomplete information on the Feathered Pipe rite carried out in fulfillment of a vow to be painted comes from Al Chandler, Garter Snake and Charles Buckman.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

According to Al Chandler, if some one were ill a near relative would vow to be painted and would go to the keeper. The sweat-lodge rite was first gone through. After this, in the keeper's lodge, the keeper would take the paint from the Pipe bundle, make a smudge as usual, sing the songs, dip his finger in the paint, and hold it up while addressing the Supreme Being and add: "This man vowed to you that he wanted to be painted with your paint so that his child might live," or similar words. Then he repeated the same thing to the Pipe. Then he painted first the vower, and afterwards he painted the men and male children present and the co-keeper, the women and female children,—the males with a curved band on the forehead near the hair line, the females with dots, one on the forehead and one on each cheek. This painting could take place any time in the year. 782 302

According to Garter Snake, in case of dangerous or critical illness, the vower would promise to cook up lots of food and have the keeper open up the Pipe bundle and paint the vower. If the vower were a man he was painted with the sacred red paint by the keeper; if a woman, by the co-keeper. The Pipe child would sit with the co-keeper during the rite. All the men, women and children who could attend would come to the keeper's lodge and be painted. Any ex-keepers and ex-co-keepers present would not be painted by the keeper and co-keeper as they would paint themselves. 782 755

According to Charles Buckman, it was customary to unwrap the Pipe bundle at this vowed painting rite.

Apart from this vowed rite, ritual face painting was also, as previously noted, a common feature of the Feathered Pipe dancing ceremony. In addition, according to Jim Shortman, if the Feathered Pipe keeper were told in a dream by the owl that sickness was coming to the camp, he would call all the children and infants together with the grown-ups to his lodge and would paint every individual. 302 751 782

Offerings to cover the Feathered Pipe could be made by anyone, at any time of the year, winter included, more frequently with, but often without, previous vow. They were commonly made for cure in cases of illness. The original first owner of the Pipe had told the people: "If you are sick, you can make a vow to cover the Pipe, and thus get well." But covering occurred also on other 782

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

●782 occasions. Whenever, for instance, Garter Snake went to a Feathered Pipe ceremony, she would bring some offering for the Pipe; and if the keeper, as previously noted, dreamed of ill luck about to befall somebody in camp, he would counsel the person to make some offering.

In the olden days dressed skins of deer, antelope or other animal were the most common offerings; in more recent times, flannel or other textiles,[10] preferably black, the Pipe's favorite color. The Feathered and Flat Pipes appear to have received about equal numbers of offerings. Some devotees, such as Singer and Mary Ereaux' mother, would as a rule make it a point to cover both Pipes whenever they made Pipe offerings, with three yards of cloth for each. Mary Ereaux' mother felt that both Pipes were "the same" and she did not want to be "partial."

When the giver laid the offering on the Pipe bundle, he or she would talk first to the Supreme Being, then to the Pipe, and afterwards *ad libitum* to the two-headed bird or any other sacred object or objects in the bundle.

When the offerings accumulated, the keeper would have a sweat-lodge made and they would be hung up on the pole in front of the lodge. After the sweating was over, the offerings would be disposed of in the usual way, by deposition on a high hill with prayers by the selected depositor. Sitting High, at least, used sometimes to distribute them, or some of them, after the sweating rite, to poor and needy children.

* 796 Most of the rites we have been describing were carried out in fulfillment of vows. Two other series of rites and observances, non-vowed ordinarily, may now be dealt with: The one series, distinctly religious rites, performed as occasion demanded or suggested, which we are calling rites of occasion; the other series, in which the religious element was in most cases only marginal, which we are calling observances. The rites of occasion may be classified into rain, flood, storm, and doctoring ceremonies. In passing we may mention that the Feathered Pipe, unlike the Flat Pipe, did not enter in any manner into the sacred Sacrifice Dance.

The more solemn Feathered Pipe rite usually held in the spring

[10] See Plate 2 B. Note cloth offerings behind Feathered Pipe tripod. [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Pipe, some individuals or whole bands would consider the Sacrifice Dance as greatest, would give first preference to the Sacrifice Dance as a means of worshiping the Supreme Being, or would think of the Sacrifice Dance and other Sacred Dances as supreme. Then there were other individuals and bands who would prefer to worship through the Pipe *and* the Sacrifice Dance, or through the Pipe *and* some other Sacred Lodge." 796* 794 771

Among the reasons he and other informants gave for ranking the Flat Pipe rite above the Sacrifice Dance were the connection of the Pipe with the creation and history of the world and man, the donation of the Pipe by the Supreme Being, the rigidly determined and scrupulously observed ritual, the absence of all vulgar elements from the Pipe celebrations (as contrasted with some at least of the Sacred Dances). Reasons given for ranking the Sacrifice Dance above the other dances were that the Flat Pipe entered into active participation in the Sacrifice Dance and it alone entailed dire hardships in the way of self-torture, hunger and thirst.

The Sacrifice Dance was held only when some man had vowed it. A woman could not vow it, but, to judge from the story of First Singer, could vow to request a man to hold the Dance. A given man could vow to hold the dance as principal actor in it only once in his lifetime, but he could join the dance as an active associate participant a number of times. Once he had gone through it in fulfillment of a vow, he could serve as ceremonial grandfather on a later occasion to another who wanted to go through it. 796* 782●

The vow was made to the Supreme Being. In the story of First Singer, however, whether her vow was made to the Supreme Being or to the sun or to both is not clear.

If the vow were made in, say, midwinter, its fulfillment would be deferred until about June or when the spring vegetation was well advanced. In the meantime the vower might choose his grandfather and a crier, the formal public announcement of the vow might be made, and the preliminary four nights of singing might be gone through. Before the dance began this good-time singing, by men and women jointly, took place on four separate nights, not necessarily successive ones, but any nights during the preceding month or year. The fourth of these, however, had to

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 be on the night immediately preceding the beginning of the Dance
●782 rite proper.

[785] Usually others besides the principal vower would vow to join the dance and to pierce their breasts with skewers. These associate vowers would also choose each his own grandfather and, with the help of his own crier, have the same formal public announcement made of his vow as in the case of the principal vower.

As proximate preparation for the Dance, if the bands were scattered at the time, the principal vower would send out young men as runners to summon the bands to foregather for the dance. Attendance was obligatory for all.

The principal vower set up his lodge in the center of the camp circle, and here headquarters were established where conferences of the vower and his assistants were held and whence pro tem laws and regulations, decisions when and whether to move camp, and so forth, were issued.

The vower's chief assistants in these matters were his own age-group or company, a component sub-group of either the Wolves or the Stars. Whether all the Wolves or Stars respectively, and not merely the vower's own age-group, were divided into "talls" and "shorts" (see below), and served as soldiers or "police" during the dance, to enforce attendance, order in the buffalo hunt and so forth, is a point we could not clear up, but more probably only the members of his own age-group.

[561 For either the vower's age-group, or perhaps, as just noted, all the Stars or Wolves respectively of which his age-group was
701] a component sub-group, four head officers or "generals" or "lieutenants" were chosen, and also two subordinate officers or "servants" or attendants. The two tallest of the four head officers took the taller men of the age-group (or of the larger society, Stars or Wolves) as their soldiers, and one of the two subordinate officers; the two shortest, the shorter men, and the other subordinate officer. The two divisions, the "talls" and the "shorts," constituted the "soldiers" or "police" for the dance. Each division also had an outstanding old man as herald or crier.

[224] After the people had all been gathered together, the first task was that of gathering food supplies, buffalo meat and particularly

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

buffalo tongues, for the celebration. The vower and his assistants would through their crier announce to the people whether the camp would move for good hunting. On the march, the vower and his company took their place in line immediately after the sacred Pipes. No one was allowed to hunt or run the buffalo until the signal was given. 796* 782 224

During the hunt there would be foot and horse races, shooting contests and gambling matches between the "talls" and "shorts." The losers in the gambling would have to "cook," that is, to provide a meal for the winners, a feast at which the rest of the people, including the children, would horn in. Each one of the losers had to furnish some food or clothing and a smoke (not the pipe itself) to the winners. If one of the losers failed to bring a filled pipe along with the food or clothing wager, the wager was rejected, but he was given a chance to go get one. The winners kept track of the losers, and if any of the latter failed to pay up, they would not do anything to him at once while they were sitting around eating. But afterwards, the winners, followed by the rest of the people, would go to the lodge of the delinquent loser, who usually did not and dared not run away. Here the enemy-friend of the loser would take the latter out of his lodge, and lay him on a spread robe or blanket. The winners would then carry him to the stream or river, give him a good swing and throw him into the water. All the people would follow to see the fun, and the young boys would pelt him with buffalo chips. The victim had to take it all good naturedly and not lose his temper, and the crowd had a good laugh. If the loser were not in his lodge when the winners arrived, they would fetch water, and his enemy-friend would give the loser's bed a good drenching. 792 796* 525 527 522

The hunt continued, the group moving here and there, until enough tongues and other meat was collected, the tongues having been turned over to the vower to be jerked by his wife or wives. Then came the earlier-mentioned four whole nights of singing, done either on successive nights, or from time to time as the tribe moved toward the spot selected for the Sacrifice Dance. After arrival there the fourth of the four all-night singings took place, marking the first night or beginning of the Dance proper, which 782 796* [224 251]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

782
*796 occupied a continuous four-day (or three-day and four-night) period.

782 At some time during the preparatory period, prior to the start
*796 of the dance proper, the principal vower's ceremonial grandfather
778 taught him how to dance with the sacred wheel which was in one sense the main ritual object used in the Sacrifice Dance. One such wheel, we were told, is still in existence, in the possession of Mrs. Grace Stevens, but we did not have an opportunity to see it. It was vaguely described to us as being not a "woven wheel" but only a "hoop" with some down feathers attached to it. In dancing with the wheel, the dancer sang and with his right arm hanging down held the wheel in his right hand and swung it back and forth. When he tired of swinging it in his right hand he changed it behind his back to his left and swung it. When the Sacrifice Dance proper began, the principal vower was given possession of it for the duration, with the full right to carry and swing it whenever during the rite he danced and to otherwise use it. If one of the other dancers weakened and fainted from hunger, thirst, fatigue or pain, the principal vower would go to him and pass the wheel back and forth in front of the unconscious man's face, and would so revive him. Whether other vowers than the principal one could ever dance with the wheel we did not discover.

*796 Those who "joined" the dance, at least the principal and as-
[834] sociate vowers, had to refrain from sexual intercourse for a while, say two or three nights, before the dance proper began.

The morning after the last of the four nights of singing began the ceremonial "scouting" for felling and fetching of the center pole of the dance lodge.

Early that morning, four prominent warriors, men who had been successful as scouts in sighting the enemy and bringing back information, were selected to go look for a center pole. Each had to put on his war accoutrements as if he were setting out on a war expedition. While the four were gone, those who had sent them gathered buffalo chips and put them in a pile. The four scouts on returning announced their approach by giving a special yell, and the people would say: "The scouts are coming." As the four approached closer to the waiting crowd who were ranged in a half-

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

769 —rather than the power-giving being who bestows upon the
787 recipient power the latter can use at will without having recourse to or summoning the original donor. No historical interpretation is here being suggested. It looks, instead, that Little Man's deviant power in the case was merely an idiosyncratic variant of the ghost helper concept to which, not wishing to assume the normal public offices of persons with ghost helpers, he attached to curing functions not for all ailments but for ailments caused by ghosts.

Personal Supernatural Powers

787 Supernatural power was acquired by an individual mostly for
778 success in war, accumulation of wealth, doctoring, gambling or love. It was obtained more commonly by quest, although often without quest, and could be transferred by sale, gift or bequest. It was bestowed by many different kinds of beings,—mostly quadrupeds, birds, snakes, rocks; in some cases, ghosts, indeterminate "persons" or "spirits." How and from whom power was acquired differed appreciably in accordance with the several above-listed kinds of power. These differences we shall describe later in detail under these several categories: war, wealth, doctoring, gambling and love. Before doing so, we shall deal with certain characteristics more or less common to all the above five categories.

782 In general, the Gros Ventres distinguished between three chief
869 methods of fulfilling their desires and wants: natural ability, prayer and power. A person was supposed to make best use of his native physical and mental endowments to acquire skills, to use his wits, to develop his capacities and personality,—in a word, to rely on himself and to stand on his own feet, whether as food-getter, craftsman, warrior, gambler, or what not. His second recourse, where his inborn and acquired abilities fell short or threatened to fall short of enabling him to fulfill his wishes and needs, was prayer, primarily although by no means exclusively to the Supreme Being. The third choice, in the ideal order, was resort to power.

Turn Toes, for instance, as an orphaned boy used to be advised

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

by his grandfather: "Do not seek doctoring power, but pray to the Supreme Being. This is enough." 782 869

According to The Boy, "Parents in advising their children how to conduct their lives would counsel them: 'Do not have ambition to have power like medicine men, else you will not live long. A medicine man forfeits his prospects of a long life and dies soon [a point to which we shall return presently]. It is far better and safer to just pray, that is, pray to the Supreme Being, and pray all the time. Make prayer the guiding rule in your lives.' Some people acquire power either by sleeping out on the hills or without seeking it. In either case they have to pay the price in shortened, restricted, danger-beset lives. The most important thing of all is to pray, beg, plead. This makes by far for the most happy and good life. This is far above seeking power."

On another occasion, The Boy explained the situation as follows: "However great or renowned these men and women with powers were in the old days, and however much they enjoyed the powers sought by and conferred upon them, they (the powers) were all right only while they lasted. The old-time Gros Ventres knew definitely that people who had these various powers would not live out their full span of life. Parents when raising their children would tell them to avoid that kind of life. They would exert all the influence in instructing their children not to go out on hills and seek power, but to have ambition to acquire fame and respect from exercise of natural ability. They tried to school their children along these lines and [to teach them] that it was considered weak to have the powers from these sources,—from rat, mountain, prairie chicken, and so forth. This my father, Lame Bull, told me all the time, and all the rest of the people told their sons and daughters this same rule of life. And the criers with the chiefs of the tribe, when they walked around on a nice calm day, would surely go into this matter, making it perhaps the main subject of their lecture. But still it [power seeking] was done, against such advice and against better judgment and better experience. All of these fellows who had these powers died prematurely." [203]

Thomas Main had many times heard his grandfather, Lame Bull,

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

782 869 [761]

say: "It is not good to ask that kind of a career [from powers]. It would be a life misspent and would be dearly paid for. Man's dearest possession is life, and this would be cut off."

787 869 761

Charles Buckman had heard old men say that, although they had fasted and prayed over and over again for power, they had never had even a dream, and that this may have been why they had lived to old age.

According to The Boy, his father Lame Bull, when a young man, dreamed that the being who lived on Baldy Butte in the Bear Paw Mountains called him. So on one occasion when the Gros Ventres were camped near this butte, Lame Bull thought this was a good time to accept the invitation and go up on this butte and sleep. He was getting ready to do so, when his father gave him a sound scolding: "I always told you not to try to be a holy man, a man with power of that kind. Those who have such power do not live long. Forget about sleeping on the mountain and attend to the horses and lodge poles. We need you at home. Mind your own business. So Lame Bull did not get to sleep on the mountain. His father was boss."

Coming Daylight came back repeatedly to the same theme. "I am not a medicine woman [with power] and that is why I have lived to be such an old woman." "I am not sorry I refused the medicine power offered me in a dream. Medicine people die soon. It seems like they have a certain time to die and they don't live to be old like myself and Singer. These medicine people are not strong like others." "I never accepted any kind of power. Those who have power die too soon." "They [the beings] used to trick people into taking all these things [powers] because they wanted them to die. The holy dreams are very tricky."

787 778

Singer gave her own experience. "I used to take a blanket or other offering and put it in deep water and pray that they [apparently the water monsters] would have pity on me. One night after I had just done this I dreamed that a person was standing there and that nearby lay the emaciated body of one who was very very sick. This person told me: 'I give you my body.' This is the way a being puts it in a dream when going to bestow power. Then the person showed me how to doctor, he used a pipe-stem which

787 door down, the man shot it. It just writhed and he emptied his
539 whole gun on it.

"He stayed there until the morning. In the morning he started to holler for the people. They saw this big snake and burned it up. They thought this man very brave."

787 Of equal importance with isolation was concentration of thought. "If," said The Boy, "while on the mountain top the quester was thinking about his wife or about other affairs, he would get nothing [no power] for he did not have his mind on it —If a person is playing cards he must keep his mind on playing else he will not win. In like manner, when a man was fasting out on a mountain he had to concentrate his mind on what he was after—He went there to pray, to ask for help for something above the human."

787 The first ritual act after arrival at the mountain top was the
782 prayer with the pipe. This rite was described by The Boy and Thick as follows: "When a Gros Ventre went out in the mountains to seek power he always took along a pipe to use in prayer. He asked from above that the being who owned the mountain or hilltop would be commanded to grant this power. He took the pipe along to pray to the Supreme Being,—it was the idea that the Supreme Being ruled everything but his ruling was systematic or by plans. He seemed to believe that there were lesser beings who sort of managed [ruled] details of the whole situation. He [the quester] would start out, in his very first prayer [by praying] to the Supreme Being asking the granting of his petition, so that the one to whom he went, the one who owned or lived in the hill would be sort of forced or commanded to grant the power that was being requested. The pipe was first offered, with the stem pointing upward to the Supreme Being. Then the quester lit it and blew the smoke upward [toward the Supreme Being] and afterwards downward to the Last Child. But there was no comparison between the up and the down prayer. He held the stem pointing downward to the Last Child to give him a smoke. The Last Child was of the order of the killdeer [vastly inferior to the Supreme Being]. After giving the smoke to the Last Child in a sort of important way, he would offer the pipe to the hill, with the stem pointing not

upward or downward but to the hill, with a ritual gesture and would make his request direct to the one or ones inhabiting the hill or mountain top and tell this one or these ones what [power] he actually wanted." 787 [782]

In all the above the quester was following the general ritual and social Gros Ventre pattern for making requests. Such was the ritual pattern in prayer with a pipe. And whenever a pipe was offered to a fellow-tribesman it was offered with the stem toward him. The offering of a pipe to another when asking something of him was an "emphatic way of pleading." Thomas Main here remarked: "If I wanted to borrow money of another and were afraid my request would not be granted, I might offer him a pipe when asking for the loan and so reinforce my request." 787 576 276

Bull Lodge, when seeking power on a butte, made offerings of material goods and of the first joint of his left little finger. Little Man made offerings of a bit or bits of his flesh. 787 [782 304]

While up on the mountains the quester, alone and praying and concentrating his thoughts on his quest, would fast, neither eating or drinking, and would walk around crying, shedding real tears. He, or the man who had first accompanied him to the spot and then left him, would make a rude sleeping place of rocks and twigs and branches. This sort of "nest" was called his "call-for-power lodge." When the quester got weak or fatigued or sleepy, he would lie down in this "nest" and doze or sleep. Al Chandler stated: "Their [the quester's] sleep is not sound, any little thing wakens them. They are expecting something all the time and they look for it." Usually power was given during such sleep, although in some instances when the quester was wide awake. The power-giving being would speak to the quester and, usually at least, appear to him.

Sometimes a quester would be told by the being whose "house" was the mountain on which the man was questing: "Here is the kind of power I have. This is all I have. That other one [being] has the kind of power you wish. Go over there." And the being would name some other butte or mountain. Thus, for instance, a man going to a given mountain to seek wealth or war power might be offered doctoring power, and if he did not take this

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

after a certain period of probation. He, however, broke the rule and doctored before his time was up. A night or so after he had doctored a spider came out of his ears and a thunder-rock out of his mouth, and so he lost his doctoring power. 778 787

Occasionally in connection with the power quest the right would be given to the quester to paint his lodge in a particular manner.[13] Among the Gros Ventre such sacred or holy painted lodges were relatively rare and were thought of very highly. We recorded one song (No. 88), a wordless one, which belonged with Bull Lodge's sacred lodge. Bull Lodge had been "invited" to quest for power at Baldy Butte, the highest peak in the Bear Paws. The being who gave him other powers also bestowed upon him his own lodge, with instructions how to paint it and the song to sing while it was being painted. Coming Daylight's father had a sacred lodge around the bottom of which were painted the figures of men, each figure the same and each with a feather in the head. The upper part was painted red. "At the tip of the ears of the lodge were things hanging, and feathers in back. The back part had a cross (morning star) and the sun."[14] 346 787

What has been said in the preceding pages about the circumstances of Gros Ventre quest may be illustrated by the following account given by Al Chandler of that of Little Man, his adoptive father: 787

"When Little Man first went out to seek power, the old medicine man (his tutor in the matter) told him: 'I am going with you.' So when they got out in the hills, maybe a whole day's travel to this place where he wanted to go, this old man asked Little Man where he wanted to go to fast and Little Man chose a place not very far away. So they went together. This old man cut his (Little Man's) flesh, took a pinch,—(some did it 3, 6, or 9 pinches), and prayed each time he cut a bit of flesh off. He told Little Man: 'Nobody is going to come after you until your time is up. If I tell you three days, nobody is coming after you until this time is up. In the meantime use your whole heart and don't get 801 304 782

[13] There was a distinction between the sacred painted lodges and the lodges painted with war deeds. Cf. Flannery, 1953, pp. 68, 102.

[14] For illustrations of sacred painted lodges, see Plate 4.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

CHAPTER VIII

MISCELLANEOUS PRIVATE RITES AND OBSERVANCES

782 789 Besides the ancestral-helper and power rites and observances, there were a great many other private ones,—private in the sense that they were mostly carried out by lone individuals or by small and often exclusive groups. Most of these other private rites and observances expressed, by word and/or act, either petition or gratitude or both to supernatural beings, and hence most were, in the sense in which we are using the term, "religious" rather than "magical." A smaller proportion of them were of the "magical" order, being concerned exclusively with purely impersonal forces or phenomena. In some cases both "religious" and "magical" concepts and attitudes appear to be present; in most cases, either the former or the latter are exclusively present or at least clearly predominant; in a few cases, it is hard to say whether, from the Gros Ventre point of view, we are dealing with the "religious" or the "magical."

In our field work among other Algonquian peoples we have often found that phenomena, which at first looked "magical," turned out later, on deeper penetration into meaning, to be clearly "religious." We suspect that some of the phenomena to be described in the present section as seemingly "magical" would likewise, with fuller knowledge, turn out to be "religious."

That certain given rites and observances may have a dominantly or exclusively "religious" or "magical" coloring undoubtedly depends on different meanings attached to them by different individuals. For instance, The Boy has a more philosophic mind; he seeks unity, systematization, synthesis, meaning; Singer was more pragmatic in her attitude to the supernatural, and little concerned with synthesis and meaning. In more cases than one, what was religious to The Boy may well have been "magical" to Singer. So at least we strongly suspect, although conclusive evidence for our inference cannot be adduced. We may merely add that in our own

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Occidental culture, what some individuals conceive and practice as "religious" is not infrequently conceived and practiced by others as "magical." 782 789

Apart however from all such questions and qualifications, by far the greater proportion of the miscellaneous private rites and observances, to the detailed description of which we now turn, are exclusively or predominantly "religious" rather than "magical." We shall take up in order: wish (or wish-thought), prayer, sacrifice, vows, oaths, dreams and visions, omens, divination, taboos. In general, under the first half dozen captions we shall be dealing more with "religious" phenomena, in the remainder more with "magical" ones, but there are certain overlaps and combinations of the two which will be apparent as we go along.

Wish and Thought: Blessing and Curse

That the Gros Ventres believed in the efficacy, more or less "supernatural," of certain wishes and thoughts about others, of benevolent and malevolent thinking, of—in this sense—blessings and curses, is clear. Exactly how the good or evil wish or thought wrought its effects is not too clear from our field data. 828

The Gros Ventres in general attach great significance to thought and wish. This theme recurs over and over again in their culture. Here are some illustrations. One of the names of the Supreme Being apparently meant: He who rules all by the power of thought. Some medicine men had special power to harm and kill by sheer wish. The Boy, in discussing the question, "Who among the beings, apart from the Supreme Being, known to the Gros Ventres was the most powerful?" finally narrowed his choice down to two, a certain boy and his sister as the most powerful of all. "The boy had power to do things with his eyes. He would only look and the thing happened as he wished, but that was only in combination with his sister. She would do the thinking and then he would do the looking," and the thing would happen, especially as a result of the girl's thinking.[1] The Boy thought long and intensively

[1] See Kroeber, 1907, No. 26, The Deserted Children, especially pp. 104-05. This may be the myth to which The Boy referred. Unfortunately we did not get a complete version from him.

828 pretty clearly to be operative on its own although along with the
[754 "natural" morale-building effect of cheering words.
626] "There is an old Gros Ventre saying that if a man is ailing and some relative or friend of his comes in and says pleasant things to him or tells him he is going to get well, such a talk helps him. When someone gives the sick person a good talk and sincerely wishes he will get well, then the patient will do his best and get well. If you say unpleasant things to a sick man you will help to kill him. Don't hurt a sick man's feelings. The wish in the case is looked upon as something like a prayer. It has to be really meant. When a person talks that way to you when you are sick, [782] the Supreme Being will look down upon you and help you to get well. If a person is visiting a sick Indian, he will say good things to you, even though he knows you are going to die. A white doctor might say: 'There is not much hope.'

"When 32 years ago I was thought to be dying of appendicitis and had been given up by the doctors, old fellows came in and talked hopefully to me and put new life in me.

"In 1918, when I was ill with the flu, I overheard the doctor say: 'It is only a question of a half-hour. You better get a coffin for him.' Then another fellow, an Indian, came in and said to me: 'Well, what did the doctor tell you?' I said: 'Nothing.' He then said: 'He told that fellow over there that you are going to die. But he is not the governor of death. You are not going to die. You are going to live. You want to live for these children of yours. You are going to get well, and for the sake of these children. And think of the One Above [Supreme Being]. He's going to keep you. That's all I want to say to you. I wish you will be up in a few days.' And he [illegible]t. It took me two years to recover fully."

In one of the songs, No. 67, sung in the Law Enforcers' Dance, the words, "The lead bull, comes in this direction," were explained [782] to us by The Boy as being a "half prayer." The singer was "wishing as hard as he could, so there would be plenty of game, especially buffalo, so the people would not have to go far to hunt."

525 The Gros Ventre, The Boy stated in 1939, "did not pray for
828 success in gambling," but just before a wheel game started, the player would take the wheel in his hand and hold one of the

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

828 morale-building or morale-destroying remarks, and into public opinion operating on a purely secular or social level, were conceived of as distinct from these, as having a certain efficacy of their own. Quite clearly, too, such wishing and thinking could be either "good" or "bad," beneficent or maleficent, and mass-wishing or mass-thinking by many or all the people had a particularly powerful effect on the beneficiary or victim. Further, it seems reasonably clear that the more sincere and more fervent the wish, the more it came from the heart, the longer and more intensely it had been thought over and pondered and concentrated upon, the more efficacious it was.

Prayer

782 Prayer is here understood as the expression of position, gratitude, homage, or atonement to suprahuman beings. The expression may be made by word of by act or by both together; if by word, it may be vocal or purely mental. Petitions may be direct or indirect, in the latter case being expressed in an indicative rather than in an imperative form. In all cases the response on the part of the superhuman being or beings addressed is conceived as voluntary, not coerced. Prayer, unlike magic in the sense we have used the latter term, does not have automatic efficacy of its own, and does not force the superhuman being to act as the petitioner desires.

Understood in this broad sense, prayer, by word or act, vocal or mental, direct or indirect, enters into and in fact is the core of all the "religious" as distinct from the "magical" (and "social"), rites described in the preceding chapters and to be described in this present one. For instance, the wish, reported in the immediately preceding pages, may be looked upon as an indirect vocal or mental prayer; sacrifice, to be dealt with presently, as prayer by act, in this case by gift.

Praying had none of the drawbacks of power-seeking or power-possessing. It was urged unreservedly on and practiced by everyone. Its efficacy was universally believed in; at least we recorded no instance or hint of skepticism in the hundreds of references to it made by our informants.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Sincerity and reverence in praying were *de rigueur*. Deep sincerity and reverence were manifest in all the prayers at which we were present. And praying was never talked about jokingly by our informants. The Boy, on one occasion remarked: "If the Indian was praying he put so much reverence, veneration and faith into it that he would make you cry." Levity or irreverence at prayer were distinctly disapproved, as illustrated by the following incident told us by Singer, which occurred during a severe smallpox epidemic when she was a young girl: 782 ● 781

"I was at my grandmother's. She had a big string of beads, and she said to me: 'Now, my grandchild, take this bucket and put these beads in, and you go too,' she said to my (female) cousin. 'Then you must both go to the top of this hill and dig a hole and put the beads in it and bury them. And of course you pray. Tell the Last Born (Last Child), 'I give you this so that I will not get the sickness (smallpox) and so that I will live to a good old age. You both pray!' So I did as I was told. But my cousin got to giggling and laughing, although I was sincere and meant every word I said. I don't know why my cousin thought it was funny, but that is the way she acted. When I got back I told the old woman: 'Grandmother, all the time I was praying and doing what you told me to do, this one here was just giggling as if she were making fun of me.' The old woman said: 'Oh, she should not have done that. I told you both to pray. Now you have spoiled everything. Always be sincere in your prayers. Mean every word you say.' So my cousin got smallpox and died from it. But I am still on earth."

The ritual object most commonly used with prayer was the pipe. A great many examples have been given. No less important than pipe smoking as a medium of prayer was singing. According to Gros Ventre tradition singing was, like smoking, originally sacred. It held a premier place in prayer rites, most of which began with song, each rite having its own song or songs sung only in this rite and in no other. 782

Three questions regarding prayer remain. Who was prayed to? What was asked for or expressed? When were prayers offered?

As has been emphasized, most prayers were directed first of

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

782 all to the Supreme Being, in the sense that he was mentioned first in them, and many were directed exclusively to him. Underlying this custom was the belief that all or most of the "good" things humans wished for came immediately or ultimately from him. As Coming Daylight said: "We always start everything with a prayer to Ixtcibni:hohat, then the sun is mentioned and the Last Child. The old timers still pray but the younger ones who have been to school are rather slack about it."

On Sept. 10, 1939, we had a meal and after it general conference with about ten of the oldest men and a couple of the oldest women present, and with The Boy presiding. Three of these older men, in the course of the long conference lasting all afternoon, spoke on the point as follows:

Spotted Bull: "I have always heard the Gros Ventre speak of Ixtcibni:hohat. I have heard the Four Old Men mentioned in prayer, and also Broken Knife, and also the four ridges or periods of the human life span."

Bull Head, about 80 years old in 1939, and though feeble mentally from age, was explicit enough on this matter: "As far back as I can remember, when the Gros Ventres prayed they began their prayer with Ixtcibni:hohat. They mentioned the Four Old Men, too."

Iron Man I: "The Gros Ventres prayed to Ixtcibni:hohat. They did not pray to or worship the sun as did some of the tribes to the north and west of us."

Thomas Main described as follows the way his old grandfather, still a pagan, used to pray, with use of a pipe when a small group of men would gather "to smoke religiously." He had time and again watched his grandfather praying.

782 788 "He would hold the pipe in both hands, with his left hand palm up under the bowl and his right grasping the stem, and with the stem pointing up, nearly vertical. He would look upward first, and then bow his head and close his eyes. Then he would call on the Supreme Being for whatever he was praying for. He would relate what he wanted, with stress on good health, lots of food, no sickness, then [the same] for his immediate relatives, and last for everybody. . . . He would tell his prayer to the Supreme Being,

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

saying, 'I am going to ask for these things,' and then mention them, but he would not dwell very long on them. He would get away as quick as he could and do all his talking farther down [to the beings farther down in the scale] out of awe and reverence. 782 788

"After his prayer to the Supreme Being, he would lower the stem of the pipe a little and would pray to the Four Old Men in a body, and ask them for what was needed. This was the main body of his prayer. He would ask them to obtain these things from the Supreme Being. This was the longest part of the prayer.

"Finally he would reverse the pipe bowl with the stem pointing downward and with the tip of the stem as near to touching the ground as possible, without touching it, and would say just a short prayer to the Last Child, who is the least of all the beings. This prayer was shorter than the one to the Many Sacred Beings.

"Then he would straighten up. And all the others who during the pipe prayer had sat with heads bowed, reverent, without looking around, would straighten up too and would say: 'Ei:' (except the one who prayed), which means, in a general sense, may it be so, may it turn out so, we hope thus."

After this the pipe was lit and passed around. Thomas Main added: "The person [his grandfather] would say in his prayer, 'I am not worthy to pray, but I have been called upon to do it,' and would add, 'My being a poor unfortunate old man is all the more reason why my prayer should be heard.' "

Many other beings besides the Supreme Being were prayed to as is evident from the many examples already given. Certain prayers as recorded by us were directed to sacred objects. When Coming Daylight, for example, was disposing of the two rattles belonging to Roasted In Coals' sacred pipe, she prayed to them: "Have pity on us. I pity you because you are not even wrapped up. I take my robe to wrap you in. You are poor like orphans." 782

Thus we have prayers of petition directed to creatures, in this case material though sacred objects, with no mention of the Supreme Being. Was this merely a sort of verbal short cut? Catholics, for instance, frequently word prayers by such short cuts, to the Saints or even to sacred objects, without mention of God,

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

782 and commonly use the expression "praying to the Saints," although they explicitly believe as a fundamental sense of their faith that God alone can answer prayers and Saints however exalted cannot do so. What is idiomatically expressed as "praying to the Saints" actually means "asking the saints to pray to and intercede with God" for the petitioner. Objects however sacred cannot answer prayers but are only symbols and material media of prayer. Have we something similar here, a sort of mental or verbal corner-cutting, in Gros Ventre practice? The question is more easily asked than answered. On the one hand, there is the basic Gros Ventre concept that ultimately all good things come from the Supreme Being. And we would feel sure that from our numerous free interviews with men like The Boy, these men would look upon the prayers we are talking about as "short cuts" only. On the other hand, in the case of the two old women, Coming Daylight and Singer, with their habitual pragmatic concreteness, for the time being at least the lower-order being or the sacred object may have been thought of as able directly to answer prayer. Perhaps different concepts prevailed among different individuals, with some of the concepts not logically consistent with basic Gros Ventre concept above-mentioned which was seemingly shared by everyone.[8]

What did the Gros Ventres pray for? Mostly, it is clear from the numerous prayers we recorded and from explicit statements by informants, for continued and long life, for abundance of food and for good health—and these for the petitioner, for his children and relatives, and for the whole tribe. These petitions recur again and again, in general terms or else, a little less frequently, in more specific ones.

Some typical petitions under the above rubric occurring as parts of prayers recorded are as given in informants' statements: "That there may be no sorrow or suffering in the entire family [of the young man being prayed for by an elder], that they may have life

[8] In our other ethnological sources for many or most other peoples of the world we have very little detailed and dependable information on the subject of native conceptions of the dependent or independent power in sacred objects for answering prayers proper (as distinct from magical use) addressed to them. The subject is wide open for investigation in the field.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

long, that the household would stand firm and right, that the children would be healthy and good and successful;" "that you won't be sick, that you will be successful in all your undertakings, including hunting and everything;" "good health, lots of food, no sickness," for the petitioner, his immediate relatives, and everybody; "good health [for myself] and good health for my children so they will grow up to be strong;" "long life;" "long life and to get things-food-easy;" "that he [a boy in this case] would be healthy, live to old age, and everything like that."

782

Blessings of the material and physical order, to ensure long life and abundance, seemed to be most frequently sought. Some of the social order, especially those connected with warfare, came next. Thus, to cite some typical petitions: "that he [a boy in the case] will be a big chief, that he will get the best of his enemy, bring big horses;" "getting a gun, success in war, that they may not get shot."

Absent so far as we could discover were two kinds of prayer common in Christian practice: prayer for a happy future life and prayer for moral strength, for help from the Supreme Being to live up to ethical ideals and to overcome temptation. Nor was forgiveness for moral delinquencies asked in prayer. We did, however, record an occasional instance of atonement rite and forgiveness prayer for purely ritual error, neglect or failing in connection with the Flat Pipe. A co-keeper who carried the Pipe bundle forward instead of stem forward or who hung the wrong way on its tripod had to be ritually cleansed, so too a man who gambled with the keeper. Coming Daylight recently prayed the Flat Pipe to forgive the people attending a Pipe-opening rite that was incorrectly carried out.

Before passing on to the question as to when were prayers offered, we may here give some examples of longer prayers said on more important occasions. Such prayers tended to take a certain flexible pattern,[8] beginning always with an invocation of the Supreme

[8] The use of the term "stock prayer" by Cooper, 1940, p. 103, to designate these prayers was not so happy, as it may have given the impression to others, as it did to some of our Gros Ventre informants, that the prayer always conformed to a rigid and inflexible pattern.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

782 Being. The things asked for in the prayer would differ according to the occasion.

782 At the elaborate naming feast at which Flannery was adopted
583 and given her name the following two prayers offered by The Boy
[123] who was in charge of the ceremony may serve as examples of these longer solemn prayers of which we are here speaking. As The Boy makes it a practice to plan carefully whatever he intends to utter in public, we may be reasonably sure that he had given much thought ahead of time to the form and content of these two prayers.

Before partaking of the lunch which was an integral feature of the naming rite, The Boy took a piece of bread and standing held it aloft while he prayed as follows before depositing a bit of the bread in each of the four corners of the stage of the community hall where the rite was held:

553 "Supreme Being, look down upon us as we sit here today. We
are going to eat of the food which you gave to us. We are glad.
782 We are thankful for this gift of food that we are going to eat.
539 Whenever we, your children, displease you and do things contrary to your law, forgive us for these, we pray you. Also look down upon us here today as we sit together and help us to successfully portray our poor life which you have allowed us to live by for so many ages. We have reached the end of that long trail of life that you have allowed us to live by, and bowing to your will we accept the conditions of today, different as they may be from yesterday, because this is your will. And in your mercy and consideration for our conducted [sic] life and assistance, give us food, give us breath, so that we may live out our lives according to your plan. And protect, watch over our loved ones who are participating and fighting in a terrible war,[4] so that they may come back to us safe and unhurt, so that once more they may set their feet upon the soil of their birthplace. This is their heritage."

After lunch and some smoking and chatting The Boy called all to order. Then, seated, he held a pipe stem pointed upward and finally downward and prayed:

"Master of All, of the above and of the below and of the entire

[4] This refers to the many Gros Ventre young men then, 1945, in the armed forces while World War II was still going on.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

universe, and you the Four Old Men, here is a pipe that we are inviting you to place [take? accept?] and look upon our gathering here today. We, your poor creatures, are desperately trying to carry on and preserve, as one of our traditions, this way [with a pipe] of drawing your attention and your ear. Even though we are old and are reaching and going rapidly towards the sunset of our lives, help us to finish our lives so that we may die of old age. We ask you to look down upon White Shield [Cooper]. In your mercy have consideration for his welfare. Restore him to full health, so that he too may live out his life in good health and peace of heart and mind with us and that he may complete the great work of recording the history of the life of the Gros Ventres and that it may be a true record of that former life and that it may be worthy to be taken in as an annal of history. Then we ask you too to look down upon this white woman [Flannery] who is the representative of White Shield. They together have made possible one portion [of the food] so necessary to make this gathering a success. We ask that these two, White Shield and this woman, may live out their lives with us, and that this white woman in particular may successfully record that portion of the history of the old Gros Ventres that she has been assigned to do and that during her stay [here] so far from her home she may enjoy health, happiness and peace and that she may arrive back safe to her home. And you, the Last Child, of whom it is said to be revealed to us that you have control of the water, look upon our sons and grandsons [those in the armed services in World War II] who are far from home today and who are going to the far corners of the earth over water, fighting to maintain this way of life, protect them when they go over the water so that they may come back home safe."

553 782● 539

After this prayer the pipe was passed around ceremonially. Thomas Main, who translated the prayer, which like the preceding one was said by The Boy in Gros Ventre, explained that after mentioning the Four Old Men The Boy had left out He Who Starved To Death who ordinarily was addressed after the Four in Flat Pipe rites. "He, while a great human being, was only a human being and so on a history-making occasion like this one his name was not invoked."

553 782

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

782 This last prayer was said while World War II was still in progress. After it was over and the Gros Ventre young men had returned from service in the armed forces, a very solemn ritual opening of the Flat Pipe was held, on February 6, 1946,—at which unfortunately neither of us could be present. The School Sisters of St. Francis, however, who teach the elementary and secondary grades at the Mission of St. Paul, Hays, were present and took [126] careful notes of the proceedings which they afterwards wrote up and hectographed. Early in the rite, before actually opening the Flat Pipe bundle, The Boy, who had charge of the ceremony, held up a pipe and prayed in Gros Ventre as follows, the prayer being translated for the Sisters by Thomas Main and being preceded by a brief explanatory word by The Boy:

782 539 "I will now speak in the first person and give you a prayer [such as] our Gros Ventre forefathers prayed in times of distress to the Turtle who reposes in this [Flat Pipe] bundle and to the Maker of the earth:

"Supreme Being, look down upon me, a poor mortal person, as I pray to You, and appeal to You, in this time of great distress and disturbance among your children, the peoples of this earth.

"I pray to You, a poor and lowly Indian, in the spirit and way that my ancestors prayed to You. I ask that the fires of hatred subside among all men, and that they may now love one another and understand that they are all brothers and must share the handiwork of Your hand, creation, the universe, and all nature. I ask that You may inspire the representatives of the peoples of the earth who are now engaged in a most difficult task, the framing of the terms of peace, so that it may be just and lasting.

"Supreme Being, I asked You to watch over and take care of my grandchildren, the young men of the Indian people, as they went off to all the corners of the earth to fight in the greatest war and conflict of all time for the cause of freedom and liberty, and now that they are back safe to those near and dear to them I feel that You have listened to and granted my prayer. Now, My Father, I ask you again to give to my grandchildren, the veterans of the great war just ended, peace of mind, happiness, good health, and a long life. And that they enjoy the soil of their birth and the land

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

buried with its owner. For a woman, her clothing, and sometimes even her pots and pans, were put with her body. It was stated explicitly, however, that food was never placed with the body by the Gros Ventres, although it was recognized that the Assiniboine did so. 764

A widow would burn the things of her husband which were not placed with his body nor taken by his relatives. She would then be smudged with sage and, should she have kissed the corpse, her mouth was smudged four times and she was made to spit each time. 768 783

These practices were seemingly tied up with two beliefs,—the first being that if objects were not placed with the body, the deceased would return to look for the things valued in life; the second, that the recently deceased try to lure the living to join them. The first point was explained by Mary, whose mother had told her: "Everyone likes his own things and some hate to leave them when they die. That is why we used to put personal belongings with the corpse. It might be that there is some one thing that a person wants which has been 'left behind,' so he will come back to seek it. Sometimes when you are alone you might hear a rattling of the dishes or a whistling sound, and you would know that it was some loved one who had died and who was looking for something." 764 775

As proof of the second point, the following experience was offered by Singer. "When I was ill during a smallpox epidemic, I had a dream. I dreamed that my sister, who had died in this same epidemic, appeared to me and said: 'Our mother wants you. Come with me.' My father, who was actually nursing me, seemed to be standing to one side. He told my sister: 'You have had no pity on us. You didn't fight for life. What are you coming after her for? You go by yourself.' But pretty soon my sister came again and said: 'Now this time I want you to come because our mother wants you.' So I agreed: 'All right. I will go with you.' My sister took me to a shabby-looking little old lodge and I didn't feel right about going in there but I thought: 'Well, to please them I will look in there anyway.' There was someone there in bed and my sister was toward the back of the lodge and my mother was on the other side. My mother told me: 'Here, sit by your sister.' She 795 787

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

482 778 dog travois had to be resorted to. The old woman thought that she was doing the Pipe a great favor and that her packing it would bring her good fortune.

The co-keeper when afoot and carrying the Pipe bundle in her arms held it under her left armpit with her left arm encircling it and her right arm and hand supporting it from beneath, and with the stem-end of the bundle pointing forward.

482 778 783 The co-keeper was usually very careful to observe the stem-end-forward rule. But if through forgetfulness or absent-mindedness she had carried the bundle bowl-end forward or had hung it on its tripod with the bowl end to the east, she would be to blame. The keeper, co-keeper or Pipe child would be told by the Pipe in a dream about the error while sleeping [that night] on the Pipe bed, and she would have to be ritually cleansed. The keeper and co-keeper would sit on their haunches on the Pipe bed facing each other, he facing east and she west. Peppermint was put on the incense hearth to make a smudge. The keeper then took a bunch of sage brush, some of which he usually kept ready, held it up in his right hand, and prayed to the Supreme Being to release his wife, to take away her mistake, and not to be angry over it. Then he lowered the large brush by three stages, circled it three times around the incense, and "sort of brushed" her with it three times from her head down her right arm and from her head down her left arm, and three times from her chin up over her face to her occiput. Then he laid down the bunch of sage brush between the incense hearth and south edge of the Pipe bed, and said to his wife: "Take this sage brush out." She took it, walked out with it clockwise, turned to her left, that is, in the east, walked a good way off, and lowering it in the usual three stages deposited reverently on the ground.

778 788 Grasping and depositing the Flat Pipe bundle were regularly done by the co-keeper in a ritually prescribed manner. Before actually taking hold of it, she would face it, and three times pose at shoulder height her empty right hand, palm down with fingertips joined and pointing away from her, make a motion or pass with her hand toward the bundle while at the same time spitting a bit of chewed peppermint on it, and then bring her hand back to

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Dance (Sun Dance), for example, was given in that very year 182
and, so far as our data go, but one Crazy Dance was held after 796
that. The seasonal Flat Pipe rite was discontinued. Furthermore there was a breakdown in the socio-political life. The necessity for nomadic life had disappeared and as a consequence there was no longer need of policing the hunt or keeping order in [575]
the camp circle when the whole tribe gathered so that, with the further establishment of peace, the raison d'être for two rival soldier societies was gone.

In the transition period the missionaries were trying valiantly to fill the gap in religious life but did not offer a satisfactory [797]
solution for the social situation; nor did the Agency which had become the center of the new economic life. It was the Grass dance, which as we have seen survived in a somewhat changed form, that seems to have filled the void left in social life.

In its earlier form the Grass dance was purely social in nature, 796
as was the Star dance, but the latter faded away while the [535]
former attained a position of heightened importance. One of the factors accounting for this fact seems to be that the Grass dance "had more to it," as our informants put it. The performance of the dog ritual was certainly far more spectacular than the simpler dance of the Star society and, in addition, it had semi-ceremonial connotations reminiscent of other features of the older Gros Ventre culture which were lacking from the Star dance. For example, the owners of the regalia in the Grass dance were likewise officers of several degrees of importance therein, as was the case in the performance of the Sacred Dances. Again, sex abstinence was required before dancing with the crow-belts as it was [784]
before participating in the Sacrifice Dance (Sun Dance) and before dancing with the Feathered Pipe. Ceremonial incensing of persons and equipment had been a marked characteristic of Gros [783]
Ventre religious life. The formal transfer of office and regalia duplicates the pattern of transfer of office of Pipe Keeper, transfer of painted lodges, and so on. Recounting of war deeds was frequently demanded in connection with many aspects of Gros Ventre life,—to validate the giving of a name, the erection of a

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

side of the bundle, it is said. Except at such ceremonies as this, only the keeper could touch the pipe. 276 755 778

Pipes were sometimes given to other tribes, and were sometimes received from them. Sometimes they were carried by war-parties. One of the three pipes still in existence is said to have been given by the Cheyenne to the Crow, and by the latter to the Gros Ventre, when peace was made between the two tribes. The stem is ornamented with feathers, weasel-skins, and at the end with a bunch of eagle-feathers. The sacred pipes were kept wrapped in many pieces of skin or cloth, and hung up in the tent. In good weather they were hung on a stand of three or four sticks, behind the tent. The keepers of the sacred pipes observed stringent rules. They could not eat of the head or back of any animal, nor of any part of the white-tailed deer, nor any eggs. They were not allowed to bathe, or to paint (except red), or to take the ashes out of the tent. They had to smoke in certain ways. They did not eat dogs, or allow them in the tent; nor did they let dogs touch them, or walk over their legs, or walk before them, while they were smoking. The keepers of the sacred pipes wore their hair uncut and uncombed. They could not cut it until they had given the pipe to another keeper. The hair was worn tied in a bunch just above the forehead. Fig. 42 shows such a bunch of matted hair, said to have been that of the grandfather of the father of the man who was the oldest in the tribe in 1901. This former keeper of the pipe became so old that he lost most of his hair, and the bunch shown was cut off by him before it should drop off. To this hair the later owner of the pipe, his present great-grandson, tied the first of his own teeth to fall out from old age: they are contained in a small cloth sack.

276 778 [648] [728]

276 778 784

[825]

[302]

Fig. 42 (50-1902). Matted Hair. Length, 41 cm.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Another instance was given by The Boy regarding his father. 764
"Lame Bull was on a buffalo-hunting party when his brother-in-law was killed during an encounter with the enemy. They brought the body as it was back to camp, where it lay for quite a while. [729] Lame Bull finally went to his tipi and got leggings and a shirt of his own, although he was Flat Pipe Keeper at the time and it was [784] taboo for one holding this office to give his clothes to the dead. Nevertheless Lame Bull removed the bloody clothes from the body of his brother-in-law, washed the body and dressed it in his own clothes. He paid for this kindness, however, because for nine years thereafter he had such pains in his legs he was not able to walk,—this being the punishment he suffered for breaking the rules by which the Keeper of a sacred pipe should live."

Before finally disposing of the body "something very expensive," like a big silk handkerchief, was placed over the face. The whole body, including the head, was then wrapped securely in a blanket or robe and tied "like a mummy." The body was placed on a stretcher and put in a forked tree, if practicable, the head to the setting sun. Otherwise the corpse might be laid on a knoll and a structure like a sweatlodge built over it to protect it from the wild beasts; or it might be laid in the cleft of a cliff and covered with rocks.[8] For a particularly prominent man, however, his own 766
lodge might serve as his last resting place. In that case holes would be dug in which the lodge-poles were placed, in order that the structure would be more permanent. The body was laid in the lodge amidst rich furnishings. The ears of the lodge were closed, the cover pegged down, and the whole secured as well as possible. This was done, for instance, for The Boy's maternal grandfather and for one of his maternal uncles. Al Chandler remembers that when he himself was a small boy upon the death of his uncle, Rises Again, the body was placed on a bedstead in a big lodge erected about a half-mile from his house.

Even in times of great stress, such as in a smallpox epidemic 764
when so many died that "the trees along the Milk River were just [765 731] loaded with bodies," as much care as possible was taken to place the bodies properly in their last resting place. When there was no more space on the trees, a large number of bodies were put in a

[8] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, p. 181.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

793 co-keepers with her, but they or one of them would substitute for her in such minor duties as taking the Pipe out of the lodge in the morning and bringing it back in the evening when she was sick abed, or busy, or during her menses. During menses the [841] co-keeper was not allowed to handle the Pipe. After Crow Bull, ●784] during his keepership, gave away his head wife and co-keeper, Digger, to Small White Cow in a drunken spree and Digger went away as wife to Small White Cow, Crow Bull's second oldest wife, Coming Day became co-keeper in Digger's place. If a man at the [784] time of becoming keeper had a young wife with an infant, she and the infant were sent away to another lodge as infant-crying was not allowed in the keeper's lodge where the Pipe was.

The Flat Pipe keeper, if he had two or more children, chose one and one only of his children, more commonly a boy, to be Pipe Child. It was a strict rule that he could keep only one of his children with him; all his other children had to live elsewhere than in their father's lodge, because, for one important reason, the Pipe was jealous. Some keepers were such rigorists in the matter that they practically forgot all their other children.

793 The children that were put out of their father's lodge naturally 784 found this hard and rebelled, but they were trained to take it as a matter of course. A special interest was taken by others in such 593 children as they were felt to be unfortunate in being deprived of the care and affection of their own parents. These children were permitted to visit their father and mother but they were under restrictions when they did so. Their grandmothers or foster parents would instruct them how to behave on such visits. They could not stay long, much less sleep there. They had to sit quiet in a special place in their parents' lodge and not roam around in it freely. They had to stay mostly near the door and not go near where the Pipe was. They were strictly forbidden to play in their father's lodge when visiting there. If their mother gave [781] them something to eat they could eat it. They could sit on her lap. But they could not talk loud or shout. When so visiting they were not at ease and felt sort of foreign and awestricken. The Boy 793 thought that these children may have been jealous of their sibling, 593 the Pipe Child, but in such case they would have had to keep

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

although without the wild parsley, but we did not obtain details.

After ritual treatment of their wearing apparel, the new keeper and co-keeper had to take off any ring, necklace or other personal adornment made of copper, iron or other metal, as the wearing of metal adornments was forbidden them, apparently because such were from the whites. The two, but not the Pipe child, were each ritually invested with a necklace consisting of a large single shell on a string of twisted, not plaited, buckskin. The investure was done with three motions as if putting the necklace on, and at the third it was actually put on. Further the keeper, but not the co-keeper, had to frame his hair over his forehead with a large pompadour, as a sign of distinction.[1]

The new co-keeper also put some dried peppermint leaves mixed with poisonous wild parsley in a little buckskin sack which she then wore on her belt. This had a double purpose. First, the mixture being poisonous, she commanded respect. She must not be molested or even be bodily touched. Whoever molested or even touched her would suffer fits or spasms or a paralytic stroke. Second, she must live a virtuous life and not run around with other men. The co-keeper and keeper, as also the ex-co-keepers and ex-keepers, since they had all been consecrated with peppermint and fumigation could handle the wild parsley without danger, but the common people were not immune to its supposedly highly toxic effects.

On this second day a big feast was given. Most of the food was provided by the new keeper and his relatives. That eaten by the new keeper and co-keeper, who had been fasting from food and water since the time they were first siezed a good thirty or more hours previously, was provided by the ex-keepers.

At sundown the day's instruction ended. That night the new keeper and co-keeper, the ex-keepers and ex-co-keepers and two attendants slept in the double lodge, where the Pipe also remained.

Very early the next morning (or less probably late on the

[1] In 1948 The Boy added: "When a man became keeper, he ceased to comb his hair and it would get in all kinds of shapes and hang down. So he would take a bunch from the center and wind it round and round and tied that knot of hair around with a string. Whenever the keeper took off that string the people would be afraid!" [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The lodges of the other people faced toward the east-southeast, from utilitarian consideration, since the prevailing and strongest winds were from the northwest in winter and west in summer. But the door of the keeper's lodge was toward the south, an orientation determined by the ritual position of the Pipe inside the lodge, namely, in the place of honor opposite the door with the stem pointing toward the rising sun. 342 346 [361]

The interior of the keeper's lodge was arranged as follows. In the center was the family hearth. About midway between this and the north segment was the square incense hearth, with the west half of black sand and the east of red. At the north, close to the wall, was the Pipe bed and place for the Pipe tripod. The bed, oriented east and west, was made of a buffalo robe over sage brush. At each end was a willow back rest, and over each rest a robe of summer-pelage (after winter coat completely shed) buffalo skin. The tripod, of three legs, was a little over five feet high. The Pipe bundle was either laid on the bed close to the wall or else hung on the tripod, always with the stem to the rising sun. The northern part of the lodge, including the incense hearth and Pipe bed and adjacent area, in all about one-third of the interior, constituted a sort of "sanctuary." 342 346 353 778

The keeper's sleeping bed, with its back rest toward the north, was a little removed from the Pipe bed, toward the west; the co-keeper's in a corresponding position toward the east. The Pipe child commonly slept on the Pipe bed, alongside of and to the south of the Pipe bundle, with his head to the east. If however the keeper or co-keeper wanted to sleep on the Pipe bed in order to dream, the Pipe child would then give place and sleep in his father's or mother's bed as the case might be. When any of the three slept on the Pipe bed, the Pipe bundle might hang on the tripod over them or else rest on the northern edge of the bed nearest the wall. In the latter case, the tripod was folded up and leaned between the Pipe bed and the co-keeper's bed. According to Thick the sleepers had to lie flat on their backs all night. According, however, to The Boy they were forbidden to do so and had instead to lie on their sides, because the turtle was closely associated with the Flat Pipe and if a turtle gets on its back it cannot right itself. 342 346 513 [784] [825]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

341 The triangular space between the foot of the Pipe bed and the
346 head of the keeper's bed served the keeper as a place to keep such
353 of his personal and ritual belongings as his peppermint, sage brush, personal smoking pipe, and so forth.

In good weather, the Pipe bundle was taken outside by the co-
778 keeper in the morning (rite to be described later) and hung up,
788 stem to east, on the outside of the keeper's lodge just above the door, the thong handle of the bundle being looped around a pin of the lodge. About sundown the bundle was brought inside again by the co-keeper to its ritual place. At night the opening of the keeper's lodge was securely closed with a piece of rawhide, shaped like the door, covered with a sort of lattice work of rawhide, and fastened from the inside.

778 The keeper's lodge, as the depository of the Flat Pipe and the dwelling of the consecrated custodians thereof, had to be treated with great respect. This respect was formalized in a number of ritual and other observances.

● 784 No one was permitted to step over the incense hearth, under penalty of being inflicted with fits.

When the keeper, co-keeper and Pipe child took off their moccasins for the night, these had to be deposited, not alongside the beds or under the pillows or anywhere in the "sanctuary," but near the lodge door,—the keeper's to the west of the door, the co-keeper's to the east, the Pipe child's to either the west or the east *ad libitum*. If this were not done, severe headaches would result.

Anyone entering the keeper's lodge or leaving it or passing from one part of it to another, always had to walk clockwise.

784 When anything was going on therein, with men and women both
present, the men had to sit on the western side, the women on the
516 eastern. When they sat down, they could not sit with legs stretched out in front; the men squatted on their heels with knees touching the ground and legs parallel, while the women sat on their buttocks with their legs to the right side one leg under the other.

No one, adult or child, could throw stones or sticks at the
784 keeper's lodge. Children were not allowed to play or fool or romp

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

around it, but were taught and trained to be quiet around it and to observe reverence toward it. 784 ●

No whistling or crying was permitted in the keeper's lodge. The keeper and co-keeper were forbidden to cry in the presence of the Pipe, if, for instance, they had lost a relative. A crying baby was never allowed in the lodge with the Pipe. As soon as the infant started to cry it was taken out. If, as previously noted, a man who had a young wife with a baby took the Pipe, she and the infant would be sent out of the Pipe lodge to a nearby lodge. [854]

Dogs were never allowed to enter the lodge where the Pipe was. If the keeper or co-keeper owned a dogskin robe, the rules forbade their using it. [231]

The people were not allowed to go to the keeper's lodge to get fire, as they used to go to other lodges in the early morning.

Breaking bones to extract marrow was prohibited in the keeper's lodge. If this were done, some accident, such as the breaking of a leg or arm, would happen to some relative of the keeper [or of the delinquent?]. [264]

The door of the keeper's lodge had to be kept closed, and the back cover of the lodge could not be lifted up in the warm summertime to get air.

A war party before starting off would sing at the door of each clan chief's lodge, but not at the door of the keeper's. [726]

When people went to the keeper's lodge for a social smoke and feast, they had to keep their wits about them and watch their speech carefully lest they should unthinkingly tell lies, vulgar or obscene stories, or start a war-deed contest.

There was a very strict prohibition against telling lies in the keeper's lodge.

If two men, while in the keeper's lodge, forgot themselves and started a war-deed contest, the keeper would remind them: "You are mistaken in talking so in here. Now you will have to continue for three days and nights." During this time all who were present when the slip was first made had to stay day and night in the lodge of the keeper, who would provide them with food and tobacco. These listeners would egg on and laughingly banter the two contestants and decide on the winner. After a while the pair's 784 517

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

784 517 fund of war exploits would be apt to give out, and the two would begin talking about trifling occurrences in camp, personal reminiscences about their marriages, and so forth. Everybody had a good time at such a three-day session.

Neither the keeper nor others were permitted to tell folk-tales of the vulgar or obscene Ni:hohat type in the former's lodge. If a member of a visiting group inadvertently broke the rule, a three-day session similar to the war-deed one above was prescribed, during which he had to continue telling such tales.

978 696 If a murder of a fellow-tribesman had been committed in camp, and the murdered person's relatives were about to kill the murderer in revenge, the latter could run to and take refuge in the keeper's lodge and was safe so long, but only so long, as he stayed there. The avengers dared not enter it to kill, but immunity ceased so soon as the murderer left the lodge.

621 361 There is general agreement among our informants that the keeper's lodge was pitched in a prominent place, but exactly where in the camp circle is a controverted point we did not succeed in clearing up. According to one tradition, it occupied the place of honor in the circle, toward the northwest—opposite the circle's opening which was toward the southeast or the rising sun,—regardless of where the keeper's band camped in the circle. Three, however, of our oldest informants, Coming Daylight, Takes-the-Bow, and Turn-Toes, held that the keeper remained with his band, the first two of the three stating that his lodge was pitched a little in front of his band toward the center of the circle.

Prerogatives and Restrictions of Keepership

793 The office of keepership carried with it on the one hand a great many special rights, privileges, prerogatives and powers and on the other a great many restrictions, obligations, responsibilities and sacrifices. The following list is undoubtedly incomplete, as new ones were still being revealed when our field work came to an end,[8] but it probably includes most of them. They functionally accord with sacred and high dignity of the keepership, the supernatural power attached to it, the lofty ethical behavior and "as-

[8] Kroeber, 1908, p. 273, has some we did not get.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13.

ceticism" expected of the keeper, his status as one set apart from his fellows, and his political and civil role in the Gros Ventre theocracy. We shall classify and treat them in this order, although some of them do not fit too neatly into any one of the five or six categories, and some straddle two or more of them. Incidentally, in many cases these refer to the co-keeper as well, although our field notes mention only the keeper. 793

The keeper and co-keeper of the Flat Pipe held a very sacred office of great eminence, and their persons and everything on or about them were considered holy. They themselves were expected always to behave in a dignified manner becoming their exalted and sacred position, and others were obliged to show them due respect. [778]

The keeper and co-keeper were not permitted "to do foolish things like other people." They could not, for instance, take part in gossip or other petty meanness. They were obligated as well to many ethical, "ascetic" and ritual observances to be described presently. [784] [577]

Marked respect was due them from their fellow-tribesmen. As The Boy put it, the Gros Ventres, now all Catholics, "had just the same great respect for the keeper and his wife as they now have for the priests and nuns." [795]

People had to keep their distance from the keeper and co-keeper, and could not sit close to them, or touch, grab or wrestle with them. Apparently, however, they could shake hands with them. If the keeper asked anyone to hand him something, the object had to be passed by hand, not thrown to him; if it were thrown toward the keeper on the ground and he had to pick it up, some accident would befall either the keeper or the thrower. 793 784

If anyone stepped over the outstretched feet or legs of the sitting keeper or co-keeper, the guilty party would at once fall in a fit, or get cramps and could be cured only by the offended keeper or co-keeper. Likewise, if the keeper, intentionally or unintentionally, stepped over the outstretched legs of a sitting person, the person would get fits or cramps and could be cured only by the keeper.

If the keeper or an ex-keeper had the Flat Pipe or even a com-

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

793 mon pipe in his hands, it was forbidden for anyone to pass in front
784 of him, under penalty of some evil befalling the culprit.

If a person, wanting something in a hurry from the keeper, such as meat or a bit of tobacco, just poked his (or her) head in the door of the keeper's lodge and made his request, no one inside would answer him. He would have to go all the way in, proceeding clockwise, make his request, and go out clockwise, not back out.

When the co-keeper gave a visitor something to eat in the Pipe lodge, the receiver had to eat it there and not take it out, unless someone told war stories. No one was allowed to take or grab anything seen in the Pipe lodge.

The keeper and co-keeper were by virtue of their office "holy"
778 persons, that is, endowed with supernatural powers. Some of these
782 powers were related directly to their main task as custodians of the Pipe, leaders in its ritual, and intercessors with the supernatural world, and will be described under the ritual of the Pipe. Others were conferred on them at or subsequent to the transfer rite, partly to enable them to command the respect due them, partly to give them supernatural efficiency for their own or their people's advantage,—the former being mostly powers to harm, the latter mostly powers to help.

793 If anyone were guilty of disrespect to the keeper or co-keeper,
754 there were several avenging procedures to which they could resort.

During the transfer rite, the keeper and co-keeper were taught some form of cursing, so they would be properly respected. If they wished evil on anyone, the evil would come to pass. Deer, an ex-keeper who gave Lame Bull much of the latter's coaching for the keepership, told him after his mouth had been consecrated: "Be careful what you say. For if you utter an evil wish on anybody, the wish will come true." This power, it may be added, is more or less of a piece with the commonly possessed efficacy attributed in Gros Ventre idealogy to serious good or evil wish-thought. (See pp. 364-370.)

Deer also taught Lame Bull in his early keepership another harming power, but cautioned him not to use it unless someone failed to show proper respect to him as keeper. This power worked by "sympathetic" magic. Deer asked for a little pup and a piece of sinew. When these were brought he said: "Leave the pup near

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

also to enhance their sacredness and intercessory role as well as their prestige in the eyes of the people. Gros Ventre character-ideals have a high rating to "strong-heartedness," ability to bear and forego, readiness to do without, "asceticism" in its looser sense of voluntary self-punishment. Making one's self "pitiful" through hardships and privations in order to excite the sympathy of and to obtain blessings from the supernatural beings was a basic procedure in Gros Ventre religious practice. The keeper and co-keeper were expected to be sacred and powerful intercessors and to be individuals of high character. 793 785

In general the keeper and co-keeper had to lead very restricted lives, largely cut off from free association with their tribesmen, most of the time kept within or close to their lodge where the Pipe hung, and occupied with their official duties.

In particular they were under many specific privations and prohibitions. Perhaps the most severe of these was the obligation of sending away and thus practically giving up all their children, even their favorite one, except the one chosen as Pipe child. And ordinarily Gros Ventre parents were extremely fond of and attached to their children.

The keeper and co-keeper could not eat birds or bird eggs of any kind, nor any part of the head, such as the tongue or brains, of any quadruped. According to one tradition they could eat the body but not the head of dogs; according to another, not even the body. On the occasion however of feasts connected with the Flat Pipe they could eat buffalo tongue. They apparently did not eat fish, but the eating of fish was uncommon anyhow among the Gros Ventres and some Gros Ventres did not eat it at all. There were other minor food taboos, according to The Boy, but he could not recall what they were. 793 262

The co-keeper was obliged to wear a robe or blanket all the time, no small inconvenience during the Montana summer when the temperature not infrequently rises to the 90's Fahrenheit in the shade around midday and the afternoon. The prohibition against the wearing of metal personal adornments by the keeper and co-keeper was previously noted. 793 785 784

The keeper and co-keeper were not allowed to comb their hair, nor to scratch their heads except with a scratching-stick. The

793 keeper (and probably the co-keeper too) could not cut his hair,
785 but had to wear it tangled and disheveled.

The keeper and co-keeper were not permitted to bathe and
● 784 swim in the creeks,—this in contrast to the Gros Ventre custom of daily early morning bathing and swimming by both sexes the
[515] year round when not prevented by ice, as a cleansing, body-hardening and recreative practice. In fact, the two were not allowed to wash even their hands and face with water, but, according to The Boy, had to use instead fat, grease or oil, and to wipe them with the same muskrat skin they used in face painting.

[304] The keeper could not draw blood on his own person by cutting, as was done by others in the sweat lodge rite, in mourning, and on other occasions.

793 The keeper and co-keeper were not supposed to cry or to cut
784 their hair in case of the death of a relative, nor to go where any one lay dead, nor to have anything at all to do with a corpse. In particular they were not allowed to give clothes, at least their own, to put on a dead person. It was a breach of this last prohibition, in fact, that resulted in Lame Bull's lameness, and his subsequent sobriquet, Lame Bull, his proper name being Under Bull.[4]

The keeper and co-keeper could not gamble or be gambled with. If the keeper nevertheless did so and won, he won not only the wager, but also the life of his opponent. The latter would meet with some fatality unless the keeper agreed to avert the evil by performing the proper rite over him. The keeper would direct the
[755] man to build a sweat-lodge and would enter it with him. The man would fumigate himself and inhale the smudge. The keeper would rub the man all over from head to feet with sage.

The keeper was not allowed just to throw off his saddle or blankets onto the ground but had to take good care of them.

According to Coming Daylight, a keeper during his term of office "could not sing the songs he was supposed to sing," but we secured no clarification of this statement. The reference may be to songs previously gotten in quests for supernatural power.

In addition to the foregoing more or less restrictive or "ascetic" observances that served to set the keeper and co-keeper apart from

---

[4] Cf. Flannery, 1953, p. 201.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

their fellows, there were many other ones that fulfilled the same function. Of these latter, some, more distinctively ritual, will be dealt with later passim under "Flat Pipe Ritual"; others, more secular, may be mentioned now. 793 784

The keeper and co-keeper were not supposed to carry a pack on their own backs, except that on the march the Pipe bundle might be packed by the co-keeper. [482]

They could not mount and dismount a horse on the same side, but mounted from the right side and dismounted from the left.

If you handed something to the keeper it became his property, and if he handed something to you it became yours. If you thoughtlessly left anything with the keeper or co-keeper to keep for you, —if, for instance, you said: "Here, hold my horse (or my gun)," —the object became the property of the keeper or co-keeper and could not be gotten back. The keeper and co-keeper never loaned their robes, dresses, moccasins or other belongings, unless asked, and they were not supposed to be asked to loan. If you thoughtlessly broke the code and asked to borrow something from them, they were obliged to give it to you to own. [426]

Neither the keeper nor co-keeper was allowed to handle ashes, nor could the Pipe bundle remain in the keeper's lodge when ashes were taken out. Were this rule violated, the keeper or co-keeper or both would lose eyesight. When ashes were to be removed from the keeper's lodge, the Pipe bundle was taken outside the lodge by the co-keeper, and both the keeper and the co-keeper stayed outside, while another of the keeper's wives removed the ashes.

When a group of men were seated in a crescent or near-circle enjoying a purely social smoke together, each took a puff from the lighted pipe and passed it clockwise to the man on his left until it reached the end of the line. Then the pipe would be passed back anti-clockwise from hand to hand to the other end without anyone puffing from it. But if the keeper were in the group, he could take a puff not only when the pipe was passing him clockwise but also on its anti-clockwise return. The man passing the pipe to the keeper from either left or right had to raise it upward a little toward his own right before doing so. The first time the pipe reached the keeper, he would take a big puff, and point 276 793

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

793 years before her father's keepership was the one who was asked to "confirm" the appointment of Garter Snake [ritual details not obtainable by us] and was given a good horse for performing the ceremony.

The Pipe was addressed and spoken of as the child of the keeper and co-keeper, and they looked upon themselves as the father and mother of the Pipe. When the Pipe talked to them in their dreams it addressed them as "father" and "mother" respectively. To the Pipe child, the Pipe was brother. The Pipe was very jealous, and wanted to be the lone child and so all the keeper's children except the Pipe child were supposed to be put out of the keeper's lodge. According to Garter Snake, however, her father's other children slept in his lodge, not however with the keeper and co-keeper but in separate beds. Garter Snake herself when very young slept with her parents, but later on a separate bed near the foot of theirs. Al Chandler when he was a little boy used to stay with his grandfather, Sitting High, then keeper. The latter would make a bed for the boy right under the Pipe—"which usually was not allowed, [783] but he did it because I was an orphan, and he would pray that I would be healthy, live to old age, and everything like that. He did that every night as long as I was there."

If a new keeper happened to have a young wife with an infant, they were sent to another lodge.

Some of the activities, duties, and attitudes of a Pipe child can be gathered from the following account by Garter Snake of her own experiences.

"When I was the Pipe child, whenever my mother took the Pipe bundle outside of the lodge, I took the tripod out after her. I was told how to set the tripod when the camp was about to move, with two of the legs close together and the third far out. Whenever my father made smudge with pine needles, he would give me some and I would chew them and would hold my hands over the smudge. Then I would rub my left palm up my right arm, my right palm up my left arm, then both palms from the top of my head down the sides of my neck and down my breast.

"I did not have any duties beyond helping my mother when she brought the Pipe bundle out and brought it in.

[784] "I was forbidden to pick peppermint. If peppermint was mixed

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

in dried pounded meat, I was not allowed to eat the meat. If a coyote or wolf were killed, I was not supposed to touch it. These were the only two prohibitions I was under. 793 784

"If anybody vowed to be painted by the keeper, I would be present at the rite next to my mother and sit there through the ceremony. 793

"Whenever while I was Pipe child I got sick my father would put pine needles on me, and then he would take down the bundle and put it on my parents' bed, and would say to me: 'Put your arms around your brother [the Pipe] and pray to your brother so you may get well.' The Pipe keeper and his wife claim the Feathered Pipe as their son and tell their children that the Pipe is their brother. When I put my arms around the Pipe I was told to say to the Pipe: 'My dear brother, have pity on me, that I may get well of my illness.' [755]

"Of course the Pipe was not human but because I was a baby when my father got it I grew up with it and thought just as much of it as of my own blood relatives. When my father transferred the Pipe to Sitting High I was outside playing. When I was coming home I saw the bundle at Sitting High's door, and when I saw it I started to cry, and when I saw my father I said to him: 'Why did you give my Pipe away?' It was just like a person leaving. I was lonesome for it, and felt just as if I had lost a relative or friend. And all through my life I have felt the same toward it. All through my life I have made it a point to be present at any Feathered Pipe ceremony. And whenever I went to any ceremony, I would bring something for it. Since I joined the Catholic Church I stopped doing this, but even now I feel: 'It's all alone. I pity it.' [795]

"When while I was Pipe child I had been out playing and in the evening would come home and see the Pipe bundle over the door, I would stand and look at it a long time and would say: 'Feathered Pipe, I am going into our lodge now.' Once when I was sitting on the bed in the lodge I got to thinking, and all the folks were there, and I said: 'Feathered Pipe, my dear brother, look down on me and watch over me.' I was not told to say this, and I do not know what made me say this prayer to the Feathered Pipe. [782]

"My father used to tell me: 'This Pipe was given by the Su-

793 preme Being through Bha'a, the Supreme Being is the father of the Pipe.' "

In the cases where the new keeper was elected in secret conclave and not told or asked beforehand, at night after the camp was asleep a group sneaked up to the electee's lodge, and one of the group carrying the feathered stick from the Pipe bundle entered the lodge. If the electee tried to escape, the watchers outside would grab and hold him. The electee was raided and lost everything, his lodge and horses and other belongings,—just as the man to whom the Pipe had first been given from above lost everything. Afterwards, however, the relatives and friends of the electee, anybody that could, would give a new lodge, new bedding and other lodge equipment, and horses,—as was done to the first owner and keeper.

After being grabbed, the new keeper and his wife were carried —they did not walk—to the lodge of the retiring keeper who put a cloth over their heads. They were thus in the dark and didn't know what was going on until a special song was sung and the cloth removed. We were unable to secure many details of the transfer rite. The rite included, of course, ritual and other instruction of the new keeper, and co-keeper for which he had to pay handsomely,—for instance, a horse for a ritual song taught him. For [431] these payments he had to count on his relatives and friends who, later in the course of his keepership, would receive equivalent presents in return. A central feature of the transfer rite was the new keeper's dance with the Pipe. In earlier times, in fact up to about 1905, it was only the keeper, we were informed, who could dance with the Pipe and this only at the transfer rite.

Apparently the lodge of the Feathered Pipe keeper was very 346 like that of the Flat Pipe keeper, and under similar respect taboos, 353 but we were able to obtain only fragmentary specific information.

At the back of the lodge, in the place of honor opposite the [784] door, was the Pipe bed of sage brush, laid down with the tip ends pointed toward the lodge center, and covered with a white buffalo robe. When the group was camping at the same site for any length of time, in good weather the Pipe bundle was hung up during the daytime over the lodge door.

346 All movement within the lodge was clockwise. There could be
784

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

no crying by children in the lodge; if a child started to cry it was taken out at once. Dogs were not allowed in the lodge, nor could the keeper use a dog robe. Bones could not be broken in the lodge to extract marrow, as in the case of the Flat Pipe lodge and under the same penalty. War-deed contests in the Feathered Pipe lodge were prohibited and penalized, as in the Flat Pipe lodge,—with a four-day penalty. The right of asylum was recognized exactly as in the case of the Flat Pipe keeper's lodge. 346 784 [778] [696]

The lodge occupied a place of honor in the camp circle, but whether opposite the opening of the circle or just in front of the keeper's band is controverted, as in the case of the Flat Pipe keeper's lodge (see p. 58). 361

The prerogatives and restrictions attaching to the keepership of the Feathered Pipe appear to have been quite similar in number and kind to those attaching to the keepership of the Flat Pipe, although we did not obtain as full details regarding them as we did for the Flat Pipe. We shall mention only those prerogatives and restrictions for which we obtained specific information. The functional relation of the various prerogatives and restrictions to the sacredness and dignity of the keepership was quite the same for both Pipes. 793

In accord with the dignity of their office, the keeper and co-keeper were expected to comport themselves respectably on all occasions and to conform to the strict ethical norms to be mentioned presently.

The people were in turn expected to treat them with great respect. Things asked for by the keeper had to be handed to him, not thrown, exactly as with the Flat Pipe keeper, and under the same penalty. If someone absent-mindedly stepped over the outstretched feet or legs of the keeper, the latter would keel over in a faint and the co-keeper would have to smudge him ritually to bring him to, or the offender would fall down with a "cramp." Coming Daylight once saw a woman in a crowded place step over the feet of the Feathered Pipe co-keeper. The woman "fell in a cramp." Her mother got angry and upbraided the co-keeper: "You ought to know better than to leave your feet sticking out." But her sister went over and kissed the co-keeper and begged her in a nice way to doctor the stricken woman. So the co-keeper got up and 793 784

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

793 blew medicine on the woman who then recovered. If you even
784 passed in front of the keeper, you would "drop in a cramp."

Food offered in the keeper's lodge, even on a purely social and informal occasion, had to be eaten there and could not be taken out unless some one told a personal war-deed. This taboo applied even to an ex-keeper guest, although not to the actual keeper's
[576] children. The keeper could break up the gathering by emptying his own pipe—a recognized Gros Ventre convention for hosts.

[821] If anybody threw water at the keeper or hit him with water, this would cause rain.

Where a group of men were seated in a row or crescent having a purely social smoke, the general procedure was as previously described. If the Pipe keeper were one of the group, the man passing the pipe to him on either the clockwise or return circuit would first make a gesture with it "to the rear between himself and the keeper," if you didn't do that the keeper would not accept it.

The powers of the Feathered Pipe keeper and co-keeper specifically recorded by us were similar, apart from control of storm, rain and flood and, as far as they went, to those of the Flat Pipe keeper and co-keeper. The weather control powers will be described later under Feathered Pipe ritual.

[753] Anyone who stepped in the track of the keeper or co-keeper got a fit, for the soles of their moccasins were kept treated with wild parsley.

The keeper and co-keeper acquired by reason of their office certain doctoring powers.

787 The keeper had marked dreaming and forecasting powers, just as the Flat Pipe keeper had, and his dreams when told to the
793 people were "big news." In a dream he would, for instance, see animals fighting the Gros Ventres and this would be a warning to a war-raiding party to act discreetly. He would foretell from his dreams who would win in a prospective battle and how many would be killed. At the time the Flat Pipe was captured by the Assiniboine (see No. 8 in Appendix), the Feathered Pipe owner was fore-warned by the Pipe in a dream and he and his party escaped. If the keeper had a dream that foreboded evil fortune he would on waking talk to the Pipe and ask it not to let the evil

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

793
787

happen. If told in a dream, perhaps by the owl, of an impending epidemic, he might call all the people to his lodge and ritually paint them. If he dreamed of bad luck about to befall some individual in camp, he would tell him: "I dreamed that something was going to happen to you. You better make an offering. I will pray for you and try to avert the misfortune, but you must help."

793
577

In general the keeper and co-keeper of the Feathered Pipe were expected to live strictly in conformity with Gros Ventre ethical norms. Specifically recorded by us as unbecoming and forbidden to the keeper were: stealing, fighting, quarreling, losing temper, wife-beating, talking evil of fellow-tribesman, "talking dirty," threatening to kill, and, for more recent times, cursing and swearing like the whites.

793
784

The Feathered Pipe keepership seems to have involved for the keeper and co-keeper about the same privations and restrictions as did the Flat Pipe, although we obtained explicit information only regarding the following ones.

"The keeper of the Feathered Pipe was not supposed to comb his hair. It was all matted and made him look different from other men. You see him and you know at once he is a Pipe man. Sitting High's hair was that way. The locks were stuck together in the back. It made him look like a holy man. He never cut his hair and was not supposed to put water on it. His wife [the co-keeper] could comb her hair, but I do not think she could put water on it."[4]

The keeper could not bathe or swim in a stream; if he did, there would be rain. He could not wash his face but wiped it off with a cloth. He could not cut himself as a sacrifice or as a sign of mourning. He could not cry at mourning, not in the presence of the Pipe. Gambling by or with the keeper was forbidden, under the same penalty of life and with the same rite of absolution as described for the Flat Pipe keeper.

According to Al Chandler, the Feathered Pipe keeper and co-keeper, in contrast to the Flat Pipe keeper and co-keeper and

[4] In 1948 Al Chandler added: "The keeper cannot eat eggs, chicken, the head of any animal, nor dogs. In fact nothing about dogs was allowed near the keeper. Wherever they were, no one could walk in front of the keeper or co-keeper." [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

793 also to the whites, both mounted and dismounted their horses from the right side, just as all other Gros Ventres did.

784 "You could not lend the Feathered Pipe keeper a horse, because if you loaned it to him this was just the same as giving it to him. You could not take it back once the rope was in his hands. The keeper never borrowed anything. If someone thought the keeper was short of something and without thinking said to him, 'Here is one you can use,' that was just too bad because that was really giving it to him."

[201] Apparently the keeper could not point at a person with his index finger, but would instead use his thumb.

793 The role of the Feathered Pipe keeper in the political life of the Gros Ventre was quite similar to that of the Flat Pipe keeper,
624 as regards such things as decision when and whether to move camp, matters of public policy, and veto power thereupon.

Feathered Pipe and Bundle

773 The Feathered Pipe was first given, as noted in the origin stories (see No. 6 in Appendix), from above by Bha'a, the thunder
778 and storm being. Garter Snake's father, Bull Lodge, used to tell her that it was really given by Ixtcibani:hohat, the Supreme Being, through Bha'a; that the Supreme Being was the father of the Pipe; and that it was to remain forever with the Gros Ventres and never under any condition to be transferred to any other tribe. According to Gros Ventre tradition, while the Feathered Pipe is very old, it is not as old as the Flat Pipe; when the Feathered Pipe was first given to the Gros Ventres, they were already in the possession of horses. According to The Boy, the Feathered Pipe was first given after the Gros Ventres came to their present territory which had previously been Snake Indian country, but before the coming of the whites thereto. With the Pipe itself were given in the beginning the stone image or face, the whistle, and the staff, to be described presently.

778 The proper name of the Feathered Pipe was ana:θanitč (it has feathers).

776 We were unable to attend any unwrapping rite and to see the Pipe. It was described to us as being in one piece, of "smooth,"

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 The main rites of the Crazy Dance extended over four days and four nights, and were followed by a period of "talking backward" and other "crazy" behavior by the dancers. Dancers did not fast during the dance, as did vowers during the Sacrifice Dance, but [262] ate heartily. Large quantities of food were procured beforehand, and many puppies were killed and cooked to provide the delicacy, [784] dog meat. The dancers, however, were not allowed to swim, bathe, or "touch water" during the Dance. If any dancer did so, Bha'a would get angry and there would be a big storm. On each of the four nights of the dance, the dancers slept in the Crazy Dance lodge, but after each night they went back home in the morning to paint up.

*796 The Crazy Dance lodge was erected in the center of the camp circle, not far from the chief vower's tipi and executive head-346 quarters. The "lodge" was an open roofless circular corral made of upright poles about 6 or 7 feet high stuck in the ground, with a wide opening to the south according to Coming Daylight, to the southeast according to The Boy and Thick. To the top of the poles were lashed tipi poles to make a railing. Over this railing were hung tipi covers, which lapped over on the ground inside the corral as a place on which to rest and sleep. The tipi covers needed—two, or three, or more, depending on the number of the vower's age-group who participated and hence on the size of the corral—were taken, without asking permission, by the dancers from enemy-friends belonging to the next older age-group of the dancers' own society, Stars or Wolves as the case might be.

*796 Inside the corral, at the place of honor immediately to the right of the opening, according to The Boy, or opposite the opening according to Coming Daylight, a little sort of wickiup was put up. Here, as the ceremony started, sat the chief vower and here was kept the ritual badger skin. The crier(s) (and council of four?) also were in the wickiup, according to The Boy and Thick. Very little of what went on inside the wickiup was known to our informants.

The participant dancers sat in the corral on either side, the "talls" on the west, the "shorts" on the east, with their respective ritual grandfathers and wives,—the dancers in front, the grand-

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

his power only when he was an active participant in the game. 778
Keg, who had gotten gambling power from a prairie chicken, 525
would, when using this power in a hand game, imitate the hissing, swishing noise made by the prairie chickens when they ruffle their tail feathers. He had been given by the prairie chicken its windpipe to use in the hand game, and for this he made use of a small metal spring resembling the windpipe. Red Whip, famous for his great gambling power, used a weasel skin in exercising this power. A player with power who was losing in a game might half seriously voice an appeal: "What is the matter with you, prairie chicken (or ghost)? You are failing me."

Only certain songs could be sung in a two-button hand game; [533
others, such as doctors' songs or medicine lodge songs, could not 784]
then be sung. If one of the players had a gambling power song, gotten in a dream from a prairie chicken or ghost, he would start singing it and others would join in. Gambling songs were sung in fast time to the accompaniment usually of small hand drums, the players marked time by striking with sticks the logs that lay stretched in front of each team. After a game was well under way, in the excitement, grunts would often take the place of songs.

We recorded two gambling songs for the old hand game, numbers 107 and 108, as sung by The Boy.

Love power, more common than gambling power, was acquired, 778
by quest or transfer, to attain various ends: by a man to secure sex favors from women who were reluctant to grant them, or 832
who had not only rejected his advances but had privately or publicly met them with insult;[18] by a jilted lover to win back the jilting man or woman; by a man or woman to win over a desired but unwilling prospective marital mate; by a wife to win back the affections and fidelity of a husband who was running around with other women.

We could obtain very little information on the rites carried out when love power was used. Our chief informant on love power, The Boy, had been offered it on various occasions but had never accepted it, so had not been told the ritual procedures to use, procedures about which the possessors of love power were ap-

[18] See Flannery, 1953, pp. 174, 193.

CHAPTER VII

CURING PRACTICES

A good many Gros Ventres through quest or otherwise acquired doctoring power. To give a better idea of it we shall need to see it against the larger background of native concepts of the cause and cure of illness.

Causes of Illness

Some illnesses were ascribed to solely or mainly natural agents or agential causes, others to supernatural ones. The line between the two types of causation is not, however, always clear.

Sometimes supernaturally caused ailments followed automatically from the breach of taboos, others were inflicted intentionally by non-human or by human agents.

Marrow bones were not supposed to be broken inside a lodge or house, and a person who transgressed this taboo would suffer from sore legs. The penalty of fits, cramps and paralysis from certain actions to or by keepers of the Flat and Feathered Pipes has been previously noted.

The chief sender of sickness, particularly of epidemics such as smallpox and measles, was the being, Atsa:. This being appears likewise to have had something to do indirectly with other ailments, but exactly what part he had in causing such ailments could not be cleared up by us. The intrusion of pathogenic objects into the body to cause illness was not attributed to Atsa: personally.

Malevolent spirits,—whether ghostly or other is not clear,—would cause illness by "shooting" people, that is, by projecting some small object into the body of the victim. To the maleficent activity of these spirits was also ascribed mental derangement, at least in some cases. One such mentally deranged woman was once seen by Coming Daylight. This woman who was getting along in years became deranged all of a sudden. Coming Daylight, with the consent of the woman's husband, went to her lodge and peered in

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Weasel was given power to cure only a limited number of cases; 756
Goes Back, a medicine woman, was granted power to cure only one case and she used it to cure Coming Daylight's husband, Little Man; Al Chandler's adoptive father, also called Little Man, got power [from a coyote] to cure seven persons at the point of death, but used it in only three cases. There were no limitations ordinarily, it appears, on power to cure minor ailments; a professional doctor, Cora Chandler stated, "could do other little doctoring as often as called."

Doctors, as The Boy expressed it, "had to live restricted lives, 756
to avoid doing certain things or eating certain foods, somewhat 784
like keepers of sacred Pipes." According to Al Chandler, one was forbidden to eat buffalo heart under penalty of death, and "certain medicine men people tell about were vulnerable only in one certain spot,"—in one case the man's big toe, in another, a spot on his shoulder. This latter doctor always wore a little circle of willow wrapped with weasel skin over this spot; he was wounded badly but, until that spot on his shoulder was hit, was not killed. The donor of power might warn the recipient never to let anyone do some specific thing to him. Thus Little Man, Al Chandler's adoptive father, when he got power was warned by the supernatural donor: "Never let anyone pull your hair. Here however, is the remedy. If there is anyone present when your hair is pulled tell him to make a smudge of sweet pine, then put it near your nose, and if you can sniff it you will come through safe, otherwise you are a goner." Actually Little Man's death, as Al Chandler told it in detail, occurred shortly after a quarrel with his wife in the course of which she pulled his hair. Little Man quit fighting and sat quiet. Two or three days later he was down sick. White and Indian doctors were called in but none could do anything for him. Al Chandler went to stay with him but he did not want Al there. He wanted to die and did not want Al to talk him out of it. In a little while he was dead.

Doctors, or at least some of them, got power not only to cure 754
but also to cause sickness and to kill, poison or otherwise harm people. Some other doctors were believed to have used such lethal power, although such use was definitely looked upon as a crime

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787 to do so they did not do it. They peered one by one. If the scryer, on peering into the surface of the blood, saw himself headless or scalped, this meant he would get killed, and he would not go on the expedition but would turn back and go home. If he saw himself reflected clearly, this meant good luck. "Usually," said Thomas Main, "the scryers did not tell what they saw." "It was claimed," Charles Buckman remarked, "that the skeptic [one who saw himself scalped or headless, but nevertheless continued on the expedition] actually got killed."

Bear heart divination was described by The Boy, Charles Buckman, and Coming Daylight as a well-known practice.[18] Apparently badger blood divination was taken much more gravely and seriously by the Gros Ventres than bear heart divination.

A final type of divination is from Coming Daylight. The grandson of her old grandmother with whom, as a girl, she and her sister were living, killed a female porcupine in which were two embryos. "The old woman said to us two girls: 'Come here both of you.' So she held my dress open at the neck and loosened my belt, and threw the foetus down the neck of my dress. It went through without stopping, and my grandmother said: 'When you have children you will have an easy time. See how quick it went through.' Then she did the same to my sister, but in some way the foetus got caught, and the old woman said: 'Now, you see. You are going to have a hard time. You are going to have slow childbirth.' And sure enough, these are the ways it turned out for us [respectively]."

Things to Do and to Avoid Doing

784 789 Under this somewhat loose caption we are grouping certain acts done in order to bring about desirable effect or avoided lest undesirable ones follow. How far they were in Gross Ventre thought considered "supernatural" it is hard to say. Most of these observances and avoidances were seemingly viewed as of the non-sacred work-a-day order. At least, in most of them there appears to have been no explicit or even implicit appeal to a supernatural being or resort to supernatural power. The few in which a suggestion of

[18] Cf. Flannery, 1953, p. 163.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

supernatural power is present would, in so far, be positive "magical" practices, or else negative ones, "taboo" proper. The great number of such observances and avoidances, treated elsewhere—are here omitted or else touched upon only summarily. We shall list first acts done, and after that acts avoided. 784 789

To bring cold or a cold wind in winter time, a bull-roarer was whirled, or a buzzer, made of a dew claw with two holes in it, on a string, was revolved. Children were not allowed to use the buzzer. Plucking a bird to bring a north wind was not known to informants. [534]

As soon as the first thunder of spring is heard, blow on any warts you have and they will come off.

The Gros Ventres, when aware someone was trying to bewitch or poison them or when they were going to visit another tribe, especially the Cree, would rub themselves with sweet pine needles and these would make them proof against witchcraft, poison, or other harm.

The shoulder-blade of an unborn buffalo-calf was hung up "so that buffalo would continue to exist."

Many acts were to be avoided lest undesirable consequences should follow.

If you touch a mole, a rash like poison ivy will result. The widespread belief among northeastern Algonquians that seeing a dead mole brings bad luck is however, lacking. If you touch a toad, you will get warts [European influence?] If a spider is killed, rain comes. [777]

Do not eat the meat of the rare albino buffalo, else your hair will turn white. Children should not eat buffalo testicle, raw or cooked, lest they wet the bed; infants not yet able to talk should not eat puppy meat, lest they be a long time learning to talk. Young women of childbearing age should not eat the two strips of flesh, called the "twins," running along the backbone [tenderloins], lest they have twins, nor the colon of buffalo, for the same reason.

Horses should never be abused: such was the caution given to the founder of the Drum Dance by the drum men leader when the latter presented him with the stallion and other horses.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

784 789 [834] Sex abstinence was generally observed before hunting, and particularly before and all during golden eagle trapping. Eagle trappers "had to have a special religious character, to observe certain food taboos, and a special way of handling [being handed?] a pipe." The leader of a war party, but not other members thereof, also observed sex abstinence.

Do not break leg bones or ribs to extract the marrow or for other purpose, inside the lodge or house; go outside to do it, else you will get sore legs, or your horses may break their legs. Cora Chandler stated in 1940 that she still observed this latter, as her folks had always made her do. If an embryo calf were to be taken out of the belly of a buffalo, the embryo's eyes had to be extracted before it was brought into the lodge to be cooked; if the eyes were taken out inside the lodge, a member of the family would go blind, —"and this has been proven." Likewise it was forbidden to butcher and extract the brains from a buffalo head inside a lodge, and also break off the "soft end" of roast buffalo ribs. "Never use a knife to fuss with ashes or coals because you might cut yourself if you did so."

After blood-letting, the subject abstained from eating anything fried so the cut would not turn blue.

[835] There does not seem to have been any prohibition against mentioning the name of a deceased relative or other person.

777 801 Coming Daylight and Mary Ereaux had never heard of lucky or unlucky numbers. The Boy, however, stated: "According to the old law, the people were forbidden to use seven. For instance, a war party was not to have seven members, but either more or fewer. Cases are known in which young fellows disobeyed this rule and ran into trouble. In one case of this kind six of the party got killed and only one escaped with his life."

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

two enemy friends to strip the loser bare of everything he owned, down to his 572
very lodge, was, like a wheel game of the same order of magnitude, a crowning 525
event in Gros Ventre gambling, one arousing most intense popular interest. One of our informants was, in view of this fact, of the opinion that gambling among the Gros Ventre may have been first invented by enemy friends.

The keepers of the two most sacred pipes, the Flat Pipe and the Feathered 792
Pipe, were not allowed to gamble with any one, nor were their wives, nor (prob- 525
ably: our chief informant was not sure) ex-keepers. Rare exceptions may have occurred in practice. Should an enemy friend of a keeper taunt him into betting and should the challenger lose, he would lose not only his wager but also in a sense his life. For his life would in consequence be shortened, unless the keeper took pity on him and through submitting him to the appropriate ritual procedure averted the penalty. It was believed too that the keeper could not lose if, against the rules, he really did gamble. Gamblers, at least notorious ones, were not selected as pipe keepers.

Keepers and their wives were subject to a great many other restrictions. They had to maintain a high degree of dignity, to practise many kinds of abstention and "asceticism," and to be benefactors to and intercessors for all [784] the people. It seems probably that the taboo on their gambling was related to one or more of these aspects of the keepership.

Ritual "grandfathers" among the Gros Ventre were of two kinds. A retiring sacred-pipe keeper became automatically "grandfather" to the incoming keeper and instructed him in the ritual, prerogatives and duties of the keepership; a candidate for a sacred lodge chose an older man who had been through the rite as a ritual "grandfather" who would instruct him in the ceremonies and observances of the lodge in question. A person would never gamble against his ritual grandfather. The relationship established between grandfather and grandchild in both cases was predominantly a respectful and sacred one. Against his ritual grandfather a man would not even play in the modern non-gambling 4-button [524] hand game.

The foregoing rather intricate "bettor-wager" gambling pattern appears to 525
be the result of the orderly interplay of five chief determinants or conditioning 571
factors.

The most important and most basic determinant was that of in-group altruism, cohesion, and loyalty, decreasing in intensity from closer and smaller circle to more distant and larger circle, from biological family, to kinship group, to band, to lodge and society, to tribe as such, to more or less friendly alien tribe, and stopping short of hostile alien tribe. In general, the less intense the

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

of the society. The officers were free to transfer their ceremonial 575
equipment to other members whom they would select. Following 796
the typical Gros Ventre pattern of transfer of ownership, the
recipient would present as lavish gifts as he could afford to the [431]
donor while the relatives of the recipient showed their appreciation of the favor to their kinsman by giving away expensive gifts in his honor. All of this took place publicly at the dance.

Particular dances and songs were attached to each office and the owners of the ceremonial drumsticks were required to know in correct order all the numerous songs and to provide the musical [533]
accompaniment for the whole ceremony. These four drumstick owners were joined in certain of the songs by four women singers selected from among the wives of the Wolf-men. The owners of the various objects were responsible for the proper care thereof, the crow-belts and the drum receiving most respect. When not in use, the crow-belts were kept wrapped in special bundles in the [841
lodges of their respective owners, but were hung outside when the 784
owner's wife was in her menstrual period. Moreover, those who 833
danced wearing the crow-belts were obliged to refrain from sexual 782
relations for two or three days previous to the dancing and, before donning the belts, to make a smudge of sweet-grass to incense themselves and the crow-belts. The drum, too, received special attention. One informant speaks of it as having been "nicely [534]
decorated," and we know from Kroeber's description[9] that the trimming was very similar to that of the Assiniboine Grass dance drum.[10]

Procedure. The actual dancing took place in a special circular 346
dancing-place in the center of the camp circle. This "corral," as 796
it was sometimes referred to, was constructed from several lodge covers, but was open at the top and the entrance thereto was at the east. The tipi of the drum-keeper was put up nearby. Opposite the opening of the "corral" was the place of honor where [554]
sat the officials,—with the exception of the sword owners, who with their assistants were at either side of the entrance. The 800

[9] Kroeber, loc. cit., p. 238.
[10] Lowie, R. H., The Assiniboine, AMNH-AP 4, pt. 1, 1909, p. 67.

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Dance (Sun Dance), for example, was given in that very year 182
and, so far as our data go, but one Crazy Dance was held after 796
that. The seasonal Flat Pipe rite was discontinued. Furthermore there was a breakdown in the socio-political life. The necessity for nomadic life had disappeared and as a consequence there was no longer need of policing the hunt or keeping order in [575]
the camp circle when the whole tribe gathered so that, with the further establishment of peace, the raison d'être for two rival soldier societies was gone.

In the transition period the missionaries were trying valiantly to fill the gap in religious life but did not offer a satisfactory [797]
solution for the social situation; nor did the Agency which had become the center of the new economic life. It was the Grass dance, which as we have seen survived in a somewhat changed form, that seems to have filled the void left in social life.

In its earlier form the Grass dance was purely social in nature, 796
as was the Star dance, but the latter faded away while the [535]
former attained a position of heightened importance. One of the factors accounting for this fact seems to be that the Grass dance "had more to it," as our informants put it. The performance of the dog ritual was certainly far more spectacular than the simpler dance of the Star society and, in addition, it had semi-ceremonial connotations reminiscent of other features of the older Gros Ventre culture which were lacking from the Star dance. For example, the owners of the regalia in the Grass dance were likewise officers of several degrees of importance therein, as was the case in the performance of the Sacred Dances. Again, sex abstinence was required before dancing with the crow-belts as it was [784]
before participating in the Sacrifice Dance (Sun Dance) and before dancing with the Feathered Pipe. Ceremonial incensing of persons and equipment had been a marked characteristic of Gros [783]
Ventre religious life. The formal transfer of office and regalia duplicates the pattern of transfer of office of Pipe Keeper, transfer of painted lodges, and so on. Recounting of war deeds was frequently demanded in connection with many aspects of Gros Ventre life,—to validate the giving of a name, the erection of a

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 fork is upright, the young men all compete, trying to raise their rafters into position in the centre fork and in a fork at the periphery, before the others. After the tree has been raised, or possibly before, the young men go out, apparently by age-companies, to cut willows to form the walls of the lodge. More recently the star-dancers and war-dancers have done this, those of each company taking the wives of the men of the other company on their horses behind them. As they go, they shoot up in the air, and when in the timber each man cuts a willow branch. They return holding the branches and singing, ride around the lodge, and then deposit them. After the outside rafter-poles of the lodge have been tied fast in the forks, these branches are leaned in position, forming an enclosure of the lodge.

The centre fork has a buffalo-tail attached to it. A bundle of brush, called a "nest," is also fastened in the fork. A lightning symbol is made on the western side of the tree down to the ground. Inside the lodge a low screen, said to be about waist high, is erected at the western end, opposite the entrance. Behind this is the pledger of the dance. In front of the screen is a painted buffalo-skull. Two sticks of cherry-wood, one red and one black, stand on each side of the skull. A wheel or ceremonial hoop made of a stick bent in a circle, wrapped with skin, and with feathers attached, is hung on one of these sticks. Just as clothing is hung at the ends of the horizontal rafters of the lodge, or possibly on the centre fork itself, as an offering to the sun, objects are said to be hung on this brush screen at the western end of the lodge.

[177] Apparently the general course of the main portion of the dance, which follows the erection of the lodge, is similar to that of the Arapaho sun-dance, though there are certain features entirely without parallel among the Arapaho. The pledger and the other dancers neither eat nor drink during the ceremony. Women join in the fasting, but do not dance. The dancers stand whistling, and looking up at the "nest" in the tree.

796 The self-torture characterizing the sun-dance among most tribes is found
304 with the Gros Ventre in its usual form. Four knotted thongs hang from the
785 centre fork. Two sticks are passed under the skin of the dancers' breasts, one on each side, to which the thongs are fastened. The dancers try to tear the sticks out of their skin. Some whose skin is tough do not succeed. In that case a medicine-man comes to them and makes them unconscious of pain, so that they break loose easily. When they have fallen, he restores them to consciousness. One after the other, the dancers go through this ordeal. While the dancers are thus tied to the tree, they move back and forth, apparently dancing. This is called niinaⁿtsöiaⁿ. Some dancers also fasten shields in a similar way to the skin of their back, and pull these out. Others are attached by the breast to a post located outside of the dancing-

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

lodge. Other men go up into the hills near the camp, where they are fastened to a post, and fast from sunrise to sunset. In the evening their ceremonial "grandfather" comes and cuts them loose. Young men who want to meet with success in war pierce the skin over their shoulder-blade, and, having inserted sticks, hang two guns to these on each side. Sometimes a crooked-hoofed horse is fastened to the sticks. Thereupon they go about outside of the camp-circle, crying constantly, hoping that some supernatural being will pity them. Still others tie four or five buffalo-skulls in a row, which they fasten in the same way to their backs. They also go around the camp-circle. 796 304 785

If it is thought possible that the enemy may be near at the time of the dance, a man brings a filled pipe to the pledger of the dance and offers it to him, asking about the enemy. The pledger takes out his medicine-bag, which is the skin of the animal he saw in his vision, incenses it, and performs the acts which this guardian animal commanded. Every one is quiet, and the fire is put out so that the lodge is completely dark. The pledger blows his whistle, and the people sing for him as loudly as they can. He makes motions around his head with his medicine, thereby asking his guardian spirit to enable him to see supernaturally. He continues his motions until he is able to see the enemy. Thereupon he sits down. After this, another man offers him a pipe, saying, "We wish you to tell us what you have seen. Therefore take this pipe and smoke it." After he has smoked, the pledger tells the people how many people he has seen, and where they are. He says, "I saw so many buffalo-bulls (men). They are coming from there. Take charcoal for successful battle" (black being the paint of victory). 796 787 [822]

The dancers also have the power to see the enemy. If, as they look at the "nest" day and night, they see legs hanging down, or a headless body in the tree, it is the sign that an enemy will be killed by the tribe. If, on the other hand, they see blood on the poles overhead or running down the central tree, a member of the tribe will be killed. Sometimes they see a man whom they can recognize as a member of the tribe, black as coal and very thin, hanging from the poles above them. Then he will die soon.

Each day certain men, who seem to be young men, are selected, and their names called out. These men dress as if for war. When they enter, it seems that they sit in a row at the left of the entrance. The bravest of them are then selected, and taken to the back of the lodge, where a bed and head-rest have been prepared, on which they sit. One of these men counts a coup, and picking up a stick puts it into the fire. One after another they do this until a large fire is blazing. These men are called tsöötaxwuhuu ("inside dancers"). Thereupon two old men, going to the centre of the lodge and conferring in whispers, select six or eight warriors. As soon as these 796 729

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

793 natural world and as beneficent helpers of their people, and the lofty ethical behavior and magnanimity demanded by the Gros Ventres' code in individuals of prominence in secular as well as in sacred activities, the Flat Pipe keeper and co-keeper were expected in general to live lives strictly conformed to the Gros
793 Ventre ethical code and in particular to be generous and to repress
431 aggressive impulses. The people would ordinarily be generous to them. For instance, after a successful buffalo hunt the killer or killers would share the spoils with them. But they themselves were under special obligations of generosity. If, for example, a person came to the keeper's lodge and, observing the rule above mentioned of going all the way inside, asked the keeper for something, the latter had to comply with the request and could not refuse it, and in actuality hardly ever refused. If the keeper lacked what was requested, he had to give the petitioner something else, for the latter would not be sent away empty-handed. This custom did not, it seems, lead to abuse and the keeper was not imposed upon. The keeper and his wife were required to be especially generous in providing feasts from time to time and in giving food to callers. Whenever any one came to the keeper's lodge to make an offering to the Pipe, the donor was fed.

When a man became keeper all grudges held by or toward him
793 and the co-keeper were wiped away. They could no longer make
785 their enemies the target of abuse or revenge, and vice versa.

As mentioned above, to command respect they could use the powers previously described, although at the risk of ensuing penalties. But for the rest, they were strictly forbidden to lose their tempers with, or show anger toward, anyone and particularly to strike anyone. If they wished evil on anyone, the evil would come to pass. If in a fit of anger they forgot themselves and hit or whipped a person, or even a dog or horse, the victim would be paralyzed. Nor could they talk badly about people.

The keepership imposed many major and minor hardships, austerities, privations and inconveniences upon the keeper and co-keeper. These had not, so far as we can judge, an ascetic purpose proper, that is, spiritual or moral self-control and achievement through self-denial. They did however serve, not only to set apart the keeper and co-keeper from the rest of the tribe but

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

also to enhance their sacredness and intercessory role as well as their prestige in the eyes of the people. Gros Ventre character-ideals have a high rating to "strong-heartedness," ability to bear and forego, readiness to do without, "asceticism" in its looser sense of voluntary self-punishment. Making one's self "pitiful" through hardships and privations in order to excite the sympathy of and to obtain blessings from the supernatural beings was a basic procedure in Gros Ventre religious practice. The keeper and co-keeper were expected to be sacred and powerful intercessors and to be individuals of high character. 793 785

In general the keeper and co-keeper had to lead very restricted lives, largely cut off from free association with their tribesmen, most of the time kept within or close to their lodge where the Pipe hung, and occupied with their official duties.

In particular they were under many specific privations and prohibitions. Perhaps the most severe of these was the obligation of sending away and thus practically giving up all their children, even their favorite one, except the one chosen as Pipe child. And ordinarily Gros Ventre parents were extremely fond of and attached to their children.

The keeper and co-keeper could not eat birds or bird eggs of any kind, nor any part of the head, such as the tongue or brains, of any quadruped. According to one tradition they could eat the body but not the head of dogs; according to another, not even the body. On the occasion however of feasts connected with the Flat Pipe they could eat buffalo tongue. They apparently did not eat fish, but the eating of fish was uncommon anyhow among the Gros Ventres and some Gros Ventres did not eat it at all. There were other minor food taboos, according to The Boy, but he could not recall what they were. 793 262

The co-keeper was obliged to wear a robe or blanket all the time, no small inconvenience during the Montana summer when the temperature not infrequently rises to the 90's Fahrenheit in the shade around midday and the afternoon. The prohibition against the wearing of metal personal adornments by the keeper and co-keeper was previously noted. 793 785 784

The keeper and co-keeper were not allowed to comb their hair, nor to scratch their heads except with a scratching-stick. The

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

793 keeper (and probably the co-keeper too) could not cut his hair, but had to wear it tangled and disheveled.

● 785 The keeper and co-keeper were not permitted to bathe and
784 swim in the creeks,—this in contrast to the Gros Ventre custom of daily early morning bathing and swimming by both sexes the
[515] year round when not prevented by ice, as a cleansing, body-hardening and recreative practice. In fact, the two were not allowed to wash even their hands and face with water, but, according to The Boy, had to use instead fat, grease or oil, and to wipe them with the same muskrat skin they used in face painting.

[304] The keeper could not draw blood on his own person by cutting, as was done by others in the sweat lodge rite, in mourning, and on other occasions.

793 The keeper and co-keeper were not supposed to cry or to cut
784 their hair in case of the death of a relative, nor to go where any one lay dead, nor to have anything at all to do with a corpse. In particular they were not allowed to give clothes, at least their own, to put on a dead person. It was a breach of this last prohibition, in fact, that resulted in Lame Bull's lameness, and his subsequent sobriquet, Lame Bull, his proper name being Under Bull.[4]

The keeper and co-keeper could not gamble or be gambled with. If the keeper nevertheless did so and won, he won not only the wager, but also the life of his opponent. The latter would meet with some fatality unless the keeper agreed to avert the evil by
[755] performing the proper rite over him. The keeper would direct the man to build a sweat-lodge and would enter it with him. The man would fumigate himself and inhale the smudge. The keeper would rub the man all over from head to feet with sage.

The keeper was not allowed just to throw off his saddle or blankets onto the ground but had to take good care of them.

According to Coming Daylight, a keeper during his term of office "could not sing the songs he was supposed to sing," but we secured no clarification of this statement. The reference may be to songs previously gotten in quests for supernatural power.

In addition to the foregoing more or less restrictive or "ascetic" observances that served to set the keeper and co-keeper apart from

[4] Cf. Flannery, 1953, p. 201.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

According to Al Chandler, the Pipe bundle was not brought into the sweat-lodge. According, however, to Garter Snake, it was so brought, unwrapped, when a vow to make a sweat-lodge for the Pipe was being fulfilled. 796*

During the sweating the keeper whipped himself with his buffalo-tail whip; the others, with whips of horse or other hair. [785]

At some time during the sweating rite, presumably when the ordinary pipe was smoked, the Supreme Being was prayed to to grant the petitions of the people. Prayers might also be made to Bha'a for rain, change of weather, and so forth. The Feathered Pipe keeper however, according to Garter Snake, "prayed to nothing on earth, and all prayers and offerings were made [ultimately at least] to the Supreme Being. . . . In prayers [where both appealed to] the Supreme Being came first, and Bha'a came after him."

After the sweating rite was over, the offerings were taken down off the pole and disposed of as in the case of the Flat Pipe offerings.

Where a large crowd was expected to attend, the singing and associated ceremonies might take place, not in the keeper's lodge, but in a double lodge, facing east, like that used in the Flat Pipe transfer rite.

Smudging in Feathered Pipe ceremonies* conformed to the ritual number four. The keeper, or if he was busy, the co-keeper, held a bit of dried sweet pine needles, "first straight up for God, then to the left, then to the right, then down to the hearth," and put the needles right on the live buffalo chip, all but a very small pinch of the needles which he then put on the top of his head. To smudge her person, Garter Snake, when she was Pipe child, would be given a bit of pine needles to chew; then she would hold her hands over the smudge ascending from the hearth, rub her left palm up her right arm, then her right palm up her left arm, then both palms from the top of her head down the sides of her

* Plate 3 A shows a round hearth used for smudging in the 1951 rite. Dr. Hagener under date of Aug. 8, 1954, writes: "I do remember that at least two colors were present in it and also that the fire was built on top of it. The fire was strictly a ceremonial one made with just a few sticks. Iron Man and his wife washed their hands in the smoke of it before opening the bundle." [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

be on the night immediately preceding the beginning of the Dance rite proper.

Usually others besides the principal vower would vow to join the dance and to pierce their breasts with skewers. These associate vowers would also choose each his own grandfather and, with the help of his own crier, have the same formal public announcement made of his vow as in the case of the principal vower.

As proximate preparation for the Dance, if the bands were scattered at the time, the principal vower would send out young men as runners to summon the bands to foregather for the dance. Attendance was obligatory for all.

The principal vower set up his lodge in the center of the camp circle, and here headquarters were established where conferences of the vower and his assistants were held and whence pro tem laws and regulations, decisions, when and whether to move camp, and so forth, were issued.

The vower's chief assistants in these matters were his own age-group or company, a component sub-group of either the Wolves or the Stars. Whether all the Wolves or Stars respectively, and not merely the vower's own age-group, were divided into "talls" and "shorts" (see below), and served as soldiers or "police" during the dance, to enforce attendance, order in the buffalo hunt and so forth, is a point we could not clear up, but more probably only the members of his own age-group.

For either the vower's age-group, or perhaps, as just noted, all the Stars or Wolves respectively of which his age-group was a component sub-group, four head officers or "generals" or "lieutenants" were chosen, and also two subordinate officers or "servants" or attendants. The two tallest of the four head officers took the taller men of the age-group (or of the larger society, Stars or Wolves) as their soldiers, and one of the two subordinate officers; the two shortest, the shorter men, and the other subordinate officer. The two divisions, the "talls" and the "shorts," constituted the "soldiers" or "police" for the dance. Each division also had an outstanding old man as herald or crier.

After the people had all been gathered together, the first task was that of gathering food supplies, buffalo meat and particularly

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 them and these offerings "hung thick up there." The offerings were made to the Supreme Being to ask long life and happiness.

After the lodge was up, all who were to "join" the Sacrifice Dance went inside. Dancing continued for the three (or two?) succeeding nights, we were informed, but we obtained no further details on the ritual followed during this preparatory interim period, except as regards fasting. Those at least who were to go [785 through self-torture on the fourth day and apparently some of the 834] other active participants had to observe a strict fast from food and drink during this four-day period as well as to abstain from sexual intercourse. Those so submitting themselves to this regime would be further tested out by singers. Songs might be sung, for instance, about water, with words such as, "all the rivers and creeks have run dry," or about love and women, all just to put the young men to the test. People who were not fasting would conspicuously display and eat food right under the eyes of the faster. One or other of the young men might weaken under these temptations and "sneak out and give up." If he did so the people would banter him: "You are no man. You can't stand it," and his father or uncle would "give him the dickens about it."

785 Back of the fasting and sex abstinence as well as of the self-
*796 torture was a concept that was a basic theme of Gros Ventre religious culture in general, and that one of our informants, Al Chandler, expressed as follows: "The sacrifice [fasting, sex abstinence, self-torture] those men [of the Sacrifice Dance] made was like penance because they thought you could not get anything unless you punished yourself, for God was not going to give you anything if you went out there laughing and full of good food. He won't help you that way." Making one's self "pitiful" when seeking power of or answer to prayer is a part of this concept or closely related to it.

*796 During the whole Sacrifice Dance the vowers were supposed to keep their minds on their praying, to concentrate their thoughts —another basic Gros Ventre religious theme—and the "tempting" behavior of those around them was seemingly a test of the vower's power of concentration, his ability to insulate himself mentally against external distractions.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The rite of self-torture, carried out on the day after the third (or second)[12] night of singing was the dramatic climax of the Sacrifice Dance. Either during the three-day singing and dancing or, more probably, on the morning of the day of torture occurred the painting and decorating of the dancers, those who had vowed to undergo self-torture.[13] By their respective grandfathers or others substituting as sort of "secondary grandfathers," each dancer was first painted over his entire body with white clay. On his upper chest, near the neck, was painted in black with charcoal or paint the figure of a bird (evidently representing Bha'a, the Thunder Bird), and a black zigzag line ending in a fork from each of the bird's wings across the chest and down either arm of the dancer to the forearm, and a similar black zigzag fork-ended line from each of the bird's feet down either leg and thigh to the ankle. Another black zigzag line, forked at both ends, was painted across the dancer's forehead, and under each eye, a vertical zigzag line, ending at the bottom in a fork, but painted in red, not in black. Sprigs of sage-brush were put on as wristlets and anklets, and around the head "so that they met over the eyes." "Common dancers" and other active participants such as the ceremonial grandfathers were painted all over with red paint instead of white clay, and were apparently decorated with over-painted designs similar to those of the self-torturers, the "dancers" proper. 785 796* 302 532

The self-torture rite, on the last day of the Sacrifice Dance, began with the skin-piercing, the insertion of the skewers, and the attachment of the thongs and shield. The skin-piercing was done by the respective grandfathers to whom the respective vowers, their grandchildren, gave generous presents of horses, robes and 785 796*

[12] Our informants agreed that the Sacrifice Dance lasted through four nights, but whether the night of singing just before the "scouting" for the center pole counted as one of these four or not, and hence whether the skin piercing took place on the second or third day after the "scouting" was not made fully clear to us,—more probably the third day.

[13] In 1948 The Boy stated that the dancers were painted with white clay and their faces painted differently each morning. "On the first day each dancer has a red dot on each cheek, the second day two dots, the third day, three,—these are their tears and indicated that the dancers are crying." [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

785 so forth for this service.[14] The one who originally vowed to put on the Dance was not pierced.

*796 A best robe or blanket was spread on the ground and the vower lay down on it. Three skewers in all were inserted, one on either side of the chest, and a third in the back at the left shoulderblade. The skewers were smooth wooden sticks "about as thick as a man's little finger," of flattish oval section, and "about as long as a cigarette" (ca. 3 in.). To insert the skewer, first an awl was plunged into and under the skin (apparently vertically), and with the awl the skin was raised up. Then with a knife the grandfather cut two holes in the raised skin, one on either side of the awl, at right angles thereto. The skewer was at once inserted, and then the awl was taken out. Thus for the insertion of each of the three skewers, three incisions were made, one with the awl and two with the knife. During this piercing and skewer insertion, song No. 48 was sung, a song sung only at this time.

After the skewers had been inserted, the vower stood up. To each of the skewers in his chest was securely attached one end of a stout buckskin thong, the other end of which was tied to the center pole. On the body end of the thong had been sewn a piece of buckskin with a short longitudinal slash in it, and the sides of the slash were looped under the projecting ends of the skewer (between the ends and the skin). To the skewer in the vower's back a shield was firmly fastened.

After this, each vower's grandfather would then put one hand on his grandson's chest and with the other would give the two thongs a hard pull and would jerk the thongs and push his "grandson" around,—this "to deaden his nerves," to kind of deaden the hurt and wound, and "to give him a sample of what was coming." Now the vowers were ready to "dance."

The vowers "danced," only one at a time. As each vower finished his "dance," he did not leave the scene, but waited until all had finished. While the vowers "danced" the old women sat around in

[14] In 1948 The Boy emphasized that while the grandchildren paid the grandfather handsomely for his services during the Sacred Dance, the grandfather on the other hand "nursed his children" by feeding them well during the preliminary steps of instruction. [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

a circle and sang a wordless song, while "other men and women danced up and down in one place behind the old women singers." 785 796*

The vower would start his "dance" by reaching back and tearing off his shield, and in doing so, of course tearing the skin over the skewer in his back. Then with the bone whistle he carried round his neck he blew "a rapid whistle," "a sort of trill," "as if he were blowing on a flute,"—this as a sign he was ready to go through the rest of the ordeal. Then while the singers "sang hard for him," he danced with both feet, pumped up and down, and swung around, pulling and jerking and backing on the taut thongs attached to the center pole in order to tear the skewered flesh of his chest and to free himself. Sometimes the flesh would not break, or the flesh on one side of his chest would while that on the other would not. When the ordeal would go on very long, and the suffering would be extreme, and the dancer might be exhausting himself, some one of the onlookers might have pity on him and say to a bystander: "You go and tear him loose." He would then go and push and throw the "dancer" hard so the skin would break off. The Boy and Thick knew one case where the skin on one side of the "dancer's" chest would not break off even by such pushing and throwing; so they had to cut it with a knife. People thought that the darker a man's skin was the tougher it was and this last man had very dark skin. "Sometimes the dancer's skin was so tough it would stretch way out like a shirt." When a "dancer's" skin would finally break under the pulling and backing he would just fall over to the ground and the thong would spring back round the pole. Then he would be taken back and laid down and the loose skin would be trimmed off. These trimmed off pieces of skin would be gotten together by the ritual grandfathers who would take them to the buffalo skull (at the base of the center pole), hold them up, and then lay them on top of the skull, "as an offering of the very body itself." [534]

"Some 'dancers' did not have much nerve and would wince and flinch. Some didn't bat an eye." At one dance, Coming Daylight told us, one young man after the thongs were attached and pulled "just burst out crying, it was so painful. After that he went to the center pole and put his arms around it and cried there. I [152]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

785 couldn't stand it. I ran home to my grandmother and cried too
*796 because I pitied that young man." On another occasion, Thick
too, then a young boy, "cried from the pitiful scene," as he ex-
[152] pressed it. "Big Thunder," according to Coming Daylight, "had very long thick hair. When he was dancing around the pole in the Sacrifice Dance his hair swept the ground. It looked just awful. I screamed and ran home." From what was told The Boy by his brother who underwent this self-torture once in the Sacrifice Dance and twice alone on a knoll (see details of latter rite, pp. 393-398), "The beginning was hardest; as you went along, you got sort of numbed and the pain was not so bad." His brother had felt very acute pain at the trimming of the lacerated flesh. That night the pain was so intense that he could not sleep: "it was as if two red hot coals were there."

According to Al Chandler the Gros Ventres considered their Sacrifice Dance a much more severe ordeal in the way of self-torture and fasting than were the Sun Dances of neighboring tribes and to this severity they attributed the early abandonment of the rite.

After all the "dancers" had in turn gone through their self-torture, they left the scene together, and were through with their participation in the Sacrifice Dance and could break their fast. But, through the succeeding fourth night, some of the other participants (which ones we could not discover) continued their fast, and the others danced and sang.

*796 Certain important features of the Sacrifice Dance have not been mentioned so far, as we could not learn just where they fitted into the ritual sequence. We shall describe them now.

The Boy was quite positive that a sweat-lodge rite was held in connection with the Sacrifice Dance, on the fourth night of singing and just prior to the beginning of the Dance proper. In all likelihood the rite followed in general pattern that of the Sacred Pipe sweat-lodge. Sweet grass was the proper ritual material smudge throughout the Sacrifice Dance including this preliminary sweating.

787 Some of the participants in the Sacrifice Dance,—"not necessarily
*796 the one or ones who had made vows, but dancers trying their

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

singed off at a fire, and the insides taken out without skinning the animal; then it was quartered up and boiled.

In addition, Charles Buckman stated: "If a party went out to war and met the enemy, before the actual fighting began a man might promise to give grub and a feast to old people, and as part of the feast there had to be a dog,—a pup, of any color. After the party got back home [at the feast, before eating] four pieces of the dog meat were taken and held up and then set on [in] the ground, one each to the north, east, south and west. The pieces were held up as offered to God—in thanksgiving and as a prayer for future favors. Then the young man served the grub to the old people. Before eating they would say, 'O God, this young man has fulfilled the promise he made to you,' and they would pray for him."

What we may call, for want of a better name, sacrifices of person or somatic sacrifices, took three main forms: offerings of flesh, of finger joints, and of self-inflicted suffering and/or privation. Each of the first two is a sacrifice in the strict sense of the term; the third, in the broader sense. The gashing of arms, legs or face as a mourning custom was quite distinct in the Gros Ventre mind from the above flesh offering: it expressed sorrow, it was not in any sense a sacrifice or offering to the deceased. No sacrifices at all were connected with mourning. Nor were finger joints ever cut off as a mourning observance.[9]

In most instances recorded by us, these somatic sacrifices were made in fulfillment of vows for the cure or safety of a close relative of the vower,—as, it may be recalled, was the case with self-torturers in the Sacrifice Dance. There were exceptions however: in their respective quests for power, Bull Lodge cut off a finger joint, and Little Man, Al Chandler's adopted father, cut off bits of flesh; the other Little Man, Coming Daylight's husband, when suffering from hemorrhages and pains around the heart was told in dream that he would get well if he underwent solitary self-torture.

Women as well as men would make offerings of their flesh and finger joints. To judge from the records we obtained, the finger joint sacrifice was more frequently made by women than by men,

[9] Cf. Flannery, 1953, p. 205.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

782 the flesh sacrifice with about equal frequency by the two sexes.
785 Ordinarily only a little of the woman's flesh was cut, small bits,
304 as against the large bits or strips not infrequently cut from the man. Only men underwent solitary self-torture out in the hills.

With these generalizations on somatic sacrifices covered, we shall now take up specific features of the flesh, finger and self-torture sacrifices in order.

In the early archaic times Ni:hohat, as we have seen, gave detailed instructions on cutting off bits of flesh when explaining about the Flat Pipe sweat-lodge.

The rite was described by The Boy (Thick present and concurring) and, with some differences, by Singer, as follows:

The Boy (and Thick). "The cutting off of bits of flesh was a rite all to itself. A round hole was made in the ground for the heated rocks; a common sweat-lodge was erected; a mound was made of the dirt excavated to make the hole; a buffalo skull was put on the mound; and a pole was put up for offerings. . . . The one to be cut would get as an operator someone who had gone through the rite himself. . . . The cut off flesh was offered to the Supreme Being. . . . Usually the rite was undergone so that some sick person who was near and dear to the undergoer would get well. . . . The skin was not pierced but a piece of green branch was split in two, and the two pieces were pressed hard, parallel and not quite touching each other, on the skin making it rise up, and these raised strips were then cut off. . . . One of my grandfathers was all cut up, with two half circles on his chest, one half circle on the outer side of each shoulder, a double row of cuts—not little bits, but strips cut right down—on both his upper arms and forearms and legs from hip to ankle. All these cuts were made on a single occasion. It was thought he would die of this sacrifice but he did not. . . . I myself had four bits of flesh cut from my arm, and others [farther] up my arm. [He here bared his arm and showed the scars: they were not crescent shaped.] The first cutting was done when I was a child. I was told to look away when it was being done. Sometimes children would run away and hide when told it was to be done to them. . . . Only three or four years ago [this would be about 1935-36] an old man so cut off

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

a young man's skin back of Thomas Main's house." (The cut off pieces of skin were, as at the Sacrifice Lodge, placed on the buffalo skull, "as an offering of the [person's] very body.") 782 785 304

Singer. "For cutting offerings of flesh from the arms they usually tried to get the same doctor who cut off my finger joint (see infra). He would take the flesh, put a needle through it and cut the flesh off. . . . He would then put the cut-off flesh in one of the bags from around the buffalo or cow heart which were used to carry water, and would hang it up or bury it. Women could not do the flesh cutting for themselves; they had to have a man doctor to do it. You promise so to torture yourself for some reason such as the wish to save the life of your sister or brother or other relative. For instance, if some young fellows were going off on a war party, the sisters would get out and make some such promise as: 'I will give part of my flesh or my finger if my brother comes back a great warrior.' It was great to have somebody [some relative] come back a hero, a brave man, or, as they called it, a big chief. . . . A wife could do this for her husband but usually it was a sister who thought that much of her brother. . . .

"I have a scar on my left upper arm [which she showed]. I had made this promise for the recovery of one of my daughters who was ill. A sick person is doctored, but such a promise is made as a last resort. Lame Bull told me they were going to make a big cut, like the ones they made on men. The cutting was done in a sweat-lodge where they all sat and prayed. They blackened the spot on my arm with charcoal,[10] then clipped the flesh off and held it up to the sun and said: 'This is what we offered you.' He cut me in four places on each arm. My husband was mad because it was too much. The one place on my left arm where the scar is was cut deeper than the others. After I made that promise I had the cutting done right away. [Mary Ereaux, our interpreter, here interrupted: "Goodness, you might just as well have done like the Sacrifice Dancers. You tortured yourself just as badly."] I held myself in but they certainly hurt me. They did not put anything on the wounds, only the charcoal beforehand. People try to [191]

[10] Blackening sacrifices was a common (perhaps *the* regular) Gros Ventre procedure.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

782
785 take anything like that very patiently" ["Like our Lord being
304 crucified," Mary Ereaux commented].

Very much the same procedure as regards the sweat-lodge, buffalo skull and so forth was ordinarily followed when a finger joint was amputated. The cut-off joint was offered commonly to the sun, or to the Supreme Being. The operation regularly took place inside a sweat-lodge. "A joint from any finger could be offered up, but usually it was the first joint of the little finger of the left hand. The offerer would put his or her finger on a log or stone; the operator, someone skilled in the matter, would then place a knife on the joint and hit the knife with something heavy. [752] Sage was put on the wound, to stanch the flow of blood and help healing. Children in their play, it may be added, would in make-believe cut off little fingers, apply sage and so forth.

The finger amputation complex may be illustrated by Singer's experience:

"My infant daughter [one of her three children by Iron Bucket] had been ill. I sacrificed [in a delayed fulfillment of her vow] the end joint of the little finger of my left hand. . . . I said: 'I give you this. This is what I sacrifice to save my child's life.' This I said to the sun which is God's work, His property like. . . . I held the baby and my husband prayed: 'Sun, she has given you her finger so our child's life will be saved.' . . .

"The rite was private, not a big ceremony. We went out of the lodge and the sun was about half way up and he [apparently the operator] held up my whole left hand and said: 'Now, Passing or Traveling Man, this is what she is going to give you.' There was just one old man who cut off fingers. They claimed he had [this power from] a dream. . . . He was the father of Dwarf; Dwarf died just recently.

"They had me lie face down and the others held me so I would not move: The old man [Dwarf's father] . . . told me to relax, . . . felt around, found the joint, put my finger over the lodge pole and chopped it [the end joint only] off. I did not see it but I heard when he hit the lodge pole. But there was no pain. Then they let me sit up.

"The old man said: 'Do you want it to bleed, or shall I close

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

it up right away?' My husband said, 'Let it bleed,' because he was afraid it would be sore if it didn't bleed. So when the old man thought it had bled enough, he chewed some big-leaf sage, made a poultice, and put it on my finger (and/or "sprinkled powdered root on my finger," she added later). It healed quickly and never troubled me. . . . We had to give the old man something for doing that. . . . My daughter lived to be a young woman." 782 785 304 [752]

Self-torture out on the hills,—"sacrifice alone on hills," as it was called,—had much in common with self-torture at the Sacrifice Dance. The chief difference was that, unlike the Sacrifice Dance torture rite, it was done in solitude. The self-torturer had to have a ritual grandfather, a man who himself had previously undergone this solitary self-torture—this in contrast to flesh and finger cutting in which there were no ritual grandfathers. The "grandfather-grandson" relationship so contracted persisted after the rite was over. Coming Daylight and The Boy were in agreement that the solitary self-torture was a more severe ordeal than self-torture at the Sacrifice Dance. [608]

Those mentioned by our informants as having gone through "sacrifice alone on the hills" were: Stiffarm; Running Crow (Stiffarm as his "grandfather" for this rite); Coming Daylight's husband Little Man (Running Crow as his "grandfather"); her cousin White Skunk, son of Crow Bull; The Boy's brother; Jim Shortman; and perhaps Sits-in-the-Middle. On Stiffarm's, Running Crow's, and Sits-in-the-Middle's experience we obtained no details; on White Skunk's, no details beyond the fact that he underwent it "because my [Coming Daylight's] son was sick at the mission school: that son died anyway," and that he did "right on this hill here [at Hays]." The detailed accounts of Little Man's experience as narrated by Coming Daylight, of The Boy's brother's as narrated by The Boy, and of Jim Shortman's as narrated by himself, to be given now, will help to fill out the generalized picture of the rite in the preceding paragraph.

Coming Daylight's account of Little Man's "sacrifice alone on the hills," given in separate fragments on four different days, is here presented just as she gave it.

"My husband Little Man [Deafie] went out to the hills. When

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

782 anyone so goes to be tortured someone else goes along. It was
●785 awful when they so went to pray and cry and sacrifice themselves.
304 Running Crow went with Little Man, as the latter's grandfather, to pierce his breast and insert the skewers whereby he was attached to the pole by a thong. [After that was done] Running Crow gave Little Man a push and Little Man danced round and round the pole. Running Crow and Stiffarm, who went out with him [just as helper, not as grandfather], left Little Man, as was customary, alone. Then sometime during the day the two returned and gave Little Man a smoke, but the latter did not eat or drink anything. He would be hungry and thirsty and would run around without even moccasins on his feet. It is an awful sacrifice. He would dance until the skewer pulled out of his flesh. Then he would be tired and would sleep and dream.

"Little Man went through this rite on account of a dream. He had been sick [heart pains and hemorrhages] and had dreamed he was going through the rite, and in consequence did later actually carry it out. He carried it out at Chinook where we were all living at the time. During the rite his mother sang war songs in her camp.

"Little Man had not tortured himself in any big celebration [Sacrifice Dance]. He did this only alone on the hills. It is hardest this latter way. It takes longer to break off [for the skewer to tear through the flesh] in the heat [sic]. It is awfully hot out in the hills and the self-torturer goes barefoot, without moccasins. He dances west to east, counter clockwise, from sun up to sun down. It is not so hot in the lodge at the big celebrations [Sacrifice Dances]. It is a greater thing to do it alone.

"The time my husband, Little Man, did this I too was away on the hills. I pitied my old man [husband] and did not eat. I came home in the evening to cook for him. We always help a relative when he fasts like that. My husband's mother and sister were at home together with another woman relative, Ed Blackbird's wife."

[787] After Little Man's self-torture was over, he was told in a dream the exact kind of leaf (or root) to use for curing his hemorrhages and just where it was to be found, Coming Daylight was able to find it, and Little Man was cured.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The Boy's narrative of his older brother's experience gives insight into the brother's feelings during the ordeal as well as detailed information on the rite itself. His brother had undergone self-torture once at a Sacrifice Dance and twice alone on a hill. The occasion of one of the two solitary rites was the following. Lame Bull had adopted a young boy who grew up as one of the family and proved himself worthy. The adopted boy and The Boy's older brother, both now dead, were sort of favorite sons of Lame Bull. The adopted son suddenly became mentally unbalanced. It was for his cure that The Boy's older brother vowed solitary self-torture. After the fulfillment of the vow the adopted son recovered.

782
785
304

The older brother, before the solitary rite, gave a pipe to a man to pray with and to announce out loud the coming rite and the name of the "grandfather" selected. At the end of the prayer the announcer released the pipe to the ritual grandfather who then took charge of the rite, piercing the vower and later cutting him loose.

The skewer punctures were made by first plunging a big awl into the skin on the side of the chest, the vower lying on his back. Then with the awl the skin was raised up, and a knife plunged point first right through the skin at right angles to the awl,—making in all three perforations of the skin, one by the awl and two by the knife point. Then the knife was withdrawn, the stick or skewer was pushed through at once while the holes were fresh, and finally the awl was withdrawn. One end, slashed, of a buckskin thong was put over the two projecting ends of the skewer, and the other end attached to the top of the pole anchored on the hill or knoll.

With the thongs so attached to the pole and the skewers [in the vower's chest, right and left side], the vower walked and ran, from sunrise to sunset, clockwise, starting at the south and ending there, then counter-clockwise, all through the day. He would go around so often that he would make a trail there.

The brother's feelings, as described by him to The Boy, are here given in The Boy's words:

"Out on the hill was the most severe [as compared with the Sacrifice Dance] for the reason that he had to do it all alone. From time to time he would rest, exhausted and crying. [When going]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

782 he would stretch himself good and tight [the thongs taut, his body weight pulling on them]. When he rested and wanted to relax
785 and let the thongs go slack, the pain was worse than when they
304 were taut. The skin over the skewer would dry up (and would work toward the living skin). . . . At sundown my brother's 'grandfather' came to him, and the toughest part of all occurred. My brother had not during the day tried to break loose [by body pull to make the skewer sever the skin], as at the Sacrifice Dance, for his 'grandfather' was to cut his skin loose. My brother all but died when he was cut loose. It was as if his heart was being cut. And at night, after both the Sacrifice Dance and the solitary ordeal, the pain was so intense, as if there were two red hot coals there [where the flesh was cut], that he could not sleep."

Jim Shortman (died 1948), probably the last Gros Ventre living who had gone through the solitary self-torture rite, gave the following account of his experience:

"The sticks [skewers for thongs] were about three inches long. (Here Jim undid his shirt to show the scars which were still visible on his chest.) My helper [ritual grandfather] was Running Crow. He was the man who fixed me up, pierced my flesh and fastened the thongs. My self-torture alone took place on a hill way out.

"My first struggle and ordeal in all that I was to do was to follow a command by Running Crow for me to go to the stream and break off a quaking aspen tree, but not to cut it with knife or axe,—to break it off in some way and bring to where I was going to do the fasting. So I went and twisted and worked and wore the ground just smooth around the tree with my efforts, and finally I got it down and twisted it off. I put a rope around it and dragged it to the scene of the fasting, and I had to accomplish this before sun-up of that day.

"So Running Crow went with me on my way to the scene of the fasting, which was a little west of where I and Paul Shortman now live. Just to the right of it is a little ridge. That is where I did it. The reason I vowed to do this was because my mother was at the point of death. She was very sick and I carried out my vow and she got well

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

"Paddy Skinner came along to help Running Crow dig a hole and fix in it the pole I had twisted off and tamp it in the ground securely. After they put up that pole or tree, Running Crow tied all of my offerings up there on top and also fastened the rope that was to be secured to the sticks in my chest. 782 785 304

"After this tree was made secure in the ground, Running Crow told me to take my clothes off, which I did, and he made a paste of white clay and painted my body with it. So these two men told me to lie down on my back and face my head towards the rising sun. Then they took a knife, and a big needle in the other hand, and lifted the skin on my upper arm and cut off seven pieces of my skin. Then they did that to my other arm. This made fourteen pieces in all. They put these pieces they had cut off at the foot of this tree. Then they cut off seven more pieces on the outside of each of my thighs, and by that time it began to hurt.

"Then last they cut my chest, the right side first. They pierced me there with the blade of a pocket knife and pushed the stick [skewer] in as soon as he released the blade. Then they repeated this on my left side. They told me to stand up so they fastened the thongs onto these sticks. Running Crow did that.

"Then after these things were securely fastened, Running Crow put the palm of his hand on my chest and pushed me four times to make the ropes tight. He stepped to my right side and pushed me four times too, and at the same time he told me: 'Now you begin your fasting and your actual performance of your vow and you must begin by crying.' And I did all that. And Running Crow told me: 'Go around this pole, round and round clockwise, and when you get tired you can lie down or sit down anyway you find restful, but always keep the ropes tight and do not loosen them, much less take them off.'

"Finally I got tired and I thought I would lie down and rest, and I did lie down but I did not rest well. In fact it seemed to be worse. Even the wind making the thongs sway hurt me. I had started out without eating or drinking anything. I was fasting. I had a terrible ordeal, to say the least, but I found that when I pulled tight [pulled the body away from the pole and kept the thongs taut] I suffered less.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

782 785 304

"Just before the sun went down that day, all at once I felt something touching me on my left side. It was Running Crow and the other man who stopped me. This meant that my fasting and chastizing myself were about over.

"They took off those thongs and told me to lie down in the same position that they had told me to lie in at the beginning. That is when I suffered the most. They did not take the sticks out, but just cut those thongs off and it seemed to me as if they were cutting my heart. Those fellows took those pieces that my skin was still clinging to and buried them at the foot of the post. And that is my experience. They told me to put on my clothes and I did so. I did not experience or perceive anything out of the ordinary. I just suffered. That is all.

"After I put on my clothes I found out that the skin of my feet was worn off and blistered and sore, and they sure hurt me. And to add to my aches, on the soles of my feet I was awfully sore the next morning and couldn't walk. And that is the end of my experience."

Sweat-Bath

782 515

In Gros Ventre ritual, sweating and sacrificing were quite closely associated. Invitations to sweat extended to the Supreme Being and other beings in certain sweat-lodge rites,[11] such as those connected with the Flat and Feathered Pipe ceremonies, were of the nature of gifts or offerings, and hence sacrifices in the broader sense of the term. Then, too, the sweat-lodge and sweat-bath were a chosen medium for making offerings or consummating the sacrificial rite: the pole erected in front of the sweat-lodge and the buffalo skull on the adjacent mound were intended particularly for the attachment to and disposition of respectively sacrificial objects,—offerings of robes, bits of flesh, and so forth. Furthermore, the sweat-lodge was a preferred place in which to make sacrifices of flesh and of finger joints.

On other occasions too sweat-lodge and sacrifice went together. For instance, a man whose son had been killed by the enemy might

[11] Kroeber, 1908, pp. 274-75, gives an account of sweating and mentions that "Above-white-man" was called first.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 ors and directors through the dance. By these old men the dancers are painted in the dancing-lodge every morning during the ceremony. The dancers' wives take a more prominent part in the ceremonies among the Gros Ventre than among the Arapaho. They are painted at the same time as their husbands by his "grandfather." Every night during the ceremony there are certain observances between the "grandfathers" and the dancers' wives, who leave the camp-circle together in order that the women may receive medicine from the old men. This practice is much more developed among the Gros Ventre than among the Arapaho.

Whether there is in each dance a preparatory period in which the dancers' regalia are made and they are instructed in the ceremony by their "grandfathers," as among the Arapaho, is not clear in the case of the Gros Ventre. The dancing itself in all of the age-ceremonies goes on for four days,[1] and, in some cases, nights. On the last day the dancers leave the lodge, and [361] dance for gifts before the tents of prominent men at different places in the camp-circle. Immediately upon this the camp breaks. The dancers, with the property they have received in gifts, go in advance, and lay the presents on the ground. The camp comes up in a body and makes a rush; the property is seized and divided. The dancers form in a circle, and at the conclusion of four dances rush off to race. On their return the ceremony is ended. Only in the case of the crazy-dance do these ceremonies of the fourth day appear to take place without the camp-circle having been broken; [786] and for four days thereafter the camp remains in position, giving the participants in the ceremony opportunity for the license which is a part of this dance.

All the ceremonies, including the sun-dance and the women's dance, are made as the result of the pledge of an individual in the hope of deliverance from death or danger, either of himself or of a relative. If a member of a company of men who are of the proper age to make the crazy-dance has a relative whom he loves, and whose death from sickness is feared, he may say, "Such and such an old man (naming him) shall put up the crazy-lodge for me this summer." If the sick person dies, the dance is not held. Sometimes a person who is ill himself pledges to make the dance on his recovery. The pledger of any dance is called ye'nouhuxtj[1] (Arapaho, ya'nahūt[1]). A man in danger in war, or one who has been wounded, may also pledge the dance. The time for the dances is apparently summer. For the sun-dance, spring or early summer, when the trees are full leaved, is [616] specified; and it is added that sometimes, after the pledge is given, the people have to wait all winter to make the ceremony. In the case of the crazy-dance, it is stated that two divisions of the young men of the tribe,

[1] Probably to be interpreted as three nights and three days.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the old man who had directed the ceremony stood by him. Until this time, the dancers' bows, which were to play so prominent a part in the dance of the next four days, had been unstrung. Each of the dancers carried a pair of moccasins in his belt, or perhaps some other property. The pledger now came up to have his bow stretched. The old man in charge of the dance, receiving the bow from him, rested it on the back of the crouching old man. Four times he bent it, and the fourth time slipped the string into its notch. Then he untied the three arrows from the bow and gave them to the young man, who put his moccasins or other gift under the croucher's robe. Another and another dancer came up with his bow, until all their bows had been strung on the back of the old man, and his robe swelled out from the accumulating gifts. 796 431

While the bows were being strung, the people took down the dancing-lodge, which, by the time of the return of the dancers to the centre of the camp-circle, was completely gone. The dancers now stood in a circle while the old man in charge of the dance, or, according to another account, two of the "grandfathers," sang for them. The long stick with rattling hoofs was shaken, and the young men danced for four songs. At the end of each song, they aimed an arrow at the sky, making a motion of shooting, and crying "Yaa!" At the end of the fourth song, all shot as high up as they could. As the arrows fell back they did not try to avoid them, and, it is said, were never hit. By this time the people had watered their horses and done whatever outdoor work was necessary, and retired to their tents, for, immediately after shooting into the air, the dancers rushed in all directions; and from this moment they had full liberty about the camp, except indoors, for four days. Any one seen outside of a tent was shot with the soft blunt arrows. He was pursued amid shots and blowing of whistles. If a man was caught, he was made to sit down, and all the dancers, seeing what was happening, gathered. If he rode, he was pursued on horseback until he was overtaken, whereupon he would say, "Do not wait: I will not give you a dance," meaning "Wait: I will give you a dance." Then they stood about him, and he sang and they danced. At the end of his song, every one shouted "Yaa!" and kicked him until he was knocked over. Perhaps he would say, "Kick me hard." Then they would barely touch him. Sometimes he said, "Now you must kill me." If, however, he said, "Do not hurt me," he would be hurt severely. Scarcely any one went out during these four days, except, of course, the dancers' "grandfathers," who were exempt from annoyance. 796 786

The pointed arrow tied to each bow, and ordinarily not loosened, was prayed over for each young man by his "grandfather;" and a piece of root esteemed as exceedingly powerful, and called tjitjäätsä" (Arapaho, tce- 411 796

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the door." Deer then in both hands held the sinew stretched taut horizontally over a smoldering chip and sang a song special to this rite, ending it with a recitative "Yo!" Then he lowered the sinew and repeated the song and "Yo," then lowered still more and repeated, concluding with "Yo, ho, ho, ho!" and finally put the sinew on the burning chip. As the sinew burned and buckled, the pup doubled up with cramps and died. 793 754

Another power, conferred for use by the keeper in case of disrespect committed against him, worked by "contagious" magic. The keeper watched the offender closely and made sure to locate his tracks, and then took out of the pipe bundle and put on his ritual moccasins the soles of which had been rubbed during the transfer rite with the poisonous wild parsley. Then, wearing the moccasins he stepped in the offender's tracks. As soon as he did so, the offender got a fit and then his legs and feet became weak and wobbly and nobody but the keeper could cure him. [789]

The co-keeper for the same punitive purpose in case of disrespect or molestation carried wild parsley mixed with peppermint leaves in the sack attached to her belt, but we obtained no information on the precise procedure she used.

Two punitive procedures were told The Boy by his father but without full details. These "vulgar" powers were not broadcast but were kept more or less secret within the inner circle of the Flat Pipe.

If a woman disrespected a keeper or caused him great embarrassment, he carried out a special rite over or toward her, obliged her to submit to sex intercourse with him, and afterwards carried out a concluding rite. If some young man went so far as to flirt with her, make advances and touch her, he would get ill, and she alone could doctor him back to health. If he went so far as to have sexual intercourse with her, he would probably die. [833 786]

As regards all the foregoing punitive and harming powers, it was strictly understood that the keeper and co-keeper were given them to use only to enforce respect, and that if used for other and evil purposes the users would pay dearly and would be punished in some way, through the death of their children or through other misfortune. 793

Besides these supernatural powers to command respect, other 755

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 a noted singer well known to Coming Daylight, appears to have declined to submit, after she had gone out, to the body-to-body 837 test, or at least to have resisted advances. On the way out she was heard to say: "Oh, I won't have this old man just for this little root [see infra]. If I wanted to own some medicine I could go and dig it out of the ground."

Each woman, when she had located her particular grandfather in the dark, would say: "Here, my grandfather, is a pipe." The grandfather would act as if hesitating to accept. He would not accept it right away. After he finally had accepted it, he would rub his palms on the ground and rub the pipe itself, "sort of cleansing it." Then he would pray with the pipe to the Supreme Being, for the woman, after which he smoked it alone. Then he rubbed his hands again on the ground and "felt (rubbed?) her all over, and cleansed her body."

After this she would lie down on the ground, supine and naked, and the "grandfather," likewise naked, would lie on her. In this position the ritual grandfather who had been chewing the powdered blackish medicine or sacred root, of a plant (unidentifiable by us) growing in the Rocky Mountains and not found in Gros Ventre territory proper, touched his lips to hers, and passed the chewed root from his mouth to hers. All this, as Coming Daylight put it, was considered "something holy" and "no sin whatever." Either the act or the root or both—we did not clear up this point—was supposed to impart what she called "life everlasting" (she probably meant "long life") to the woman. This root was chewed by the Crazy Dancers.

The ritual code which prescribed this body-to-body ceremony for the wife and her ceremonial grandfather, at the same time rigidly prescribed sexual intercourse between them. By code, the [786] ceremony was not ritual license but on the contrary a test, one set for the husband, the wife, and the ritual grandfather. "The husband," as The Boy put it, "was sending his wife to his ceremonial grandfather and giving her to him. It was figurative. It was giving but it [intercourse] was not supposed to happen but if it did, well it just did." As Mathilda Cuts-the-rope expressed it, "the test was for the husband to allow his wife to go out with the grandfather.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

counted coup on the enemy filled a pipe, and held it for the rest of the party to smoke as they stood in a row. The returning war-party, if successful, always painted black, but if a member of their own party had been killed, they returned without rejoicing; unless sometimes, when the loss of the enemy had been greater than their own, and a relative of the dead was in the party, he might say, "One of the enemy pays for my relative. On account of the others, let us enjoy ourselves." Then the party would paint black, and celebrate. Wounds received by members of the war-party would not prevent celebration, unless, of course, they resulted fatally, and they were always regarded as an honor.

Some war-parties started off publicly in broad daylight, having made it known that they were going; and any one who wished joined. Sometimes, perhaps, two men would agree to go, and invited such others to accompany them as they wished. Women not infrequently went with the war-parties. If a man was killed in war, his relatives, especially his parents, mourned for him. His father might go to the tent of a renowned warrior, and cry until this man became angry and announced a day for a party to start out to obtain revenge. On the day set, the party left publicly, usually on horseback.

A man's supernatural war paraphernalia are shown in Figs. 27, 28, and 29. They were obtained from a middle-aged man who had them from his grandfather, who first dreamed of the magpie and the other animals connected with the paraphernalia, and made the objects. A cylindrical raw-hide case (Fig. 27), such as is found used for holding feathers and medicine among most Plains tribes, is painted with a yellow, green, and blue design resembling parfleche designs. These colors represent the various colors of the birds that were dreamed of by the original owner, and whose feathers are kept in the case. The case is called the "house" of these objects. A wing-bone is attached to the outside of the case to make another whistle from in case of loss of the finished whistle included in the outfit. A small bag containing a necklace is kept in the case. The bag (Fig. 28, *a*) is ornamented with bead-work representing a frog (kaka"). This frog was part of the original owner's dream. The necklace (Fig. 28, *b*) has various wasóo ("medicine-roots") on it. These are said to be neither eaten nor otherwise used, except as they are worn on the necklace. The bone whistle (Fig. 28, *c*) alluded to is attached to a necklace of otter-skin. It is blown during the fighting to prevent injury. A magpie's skin (Fig. 28, *d*) and the skin of a smaller bird (Fig. 29, *a*) are also contained in the case. The white magpie-feathers are dyed yellow. The two skins are worn at the back of the head, and prevent the wearer being injured even in a hand-to-hand fight. A head-dress of ten magpie-feathers and of a white plume on red-painted

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

[237]
273
726
751
778

bag is given to the horse to prevent its becoming exhausted. A cloth to wrap the various feathers and the whistle completes the outfit.

A warrior's outfit that was obtained for the Museum (specimen Museum No. 50–1862 a–c) consists of a beaded knife-scabbard, carried because the owner has cut loose horses that were tied by a rope leading into a tent; of a man's awl-case, carried presumably for mending moccasins and for

[237]

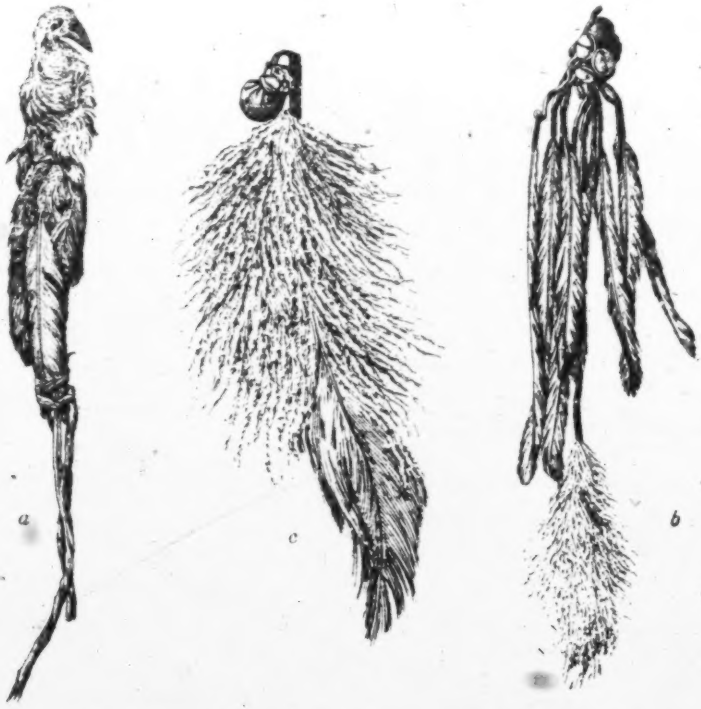


Fig. 29 (50–1952, f, g, h). War Paraphernalia. Lengths, 32 cm., 20 cm., 20 cm.

similar purposes; and of a piece of a scalp ornamented with beads, and worn attached to the shoulder of his shirt. The scabbard is ornamented with rectangular U-shaped bead-work designs similar to those in Fig. 3, and representing horse-tracks.

[787] Sometimes in dreaming, a man saw a person in battle wearing the skin of a certain animal, and fighting very successfully. He would then wear the skin of that animal. Specimen Museum No. 50–1901 is a weasel-skin

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

293 used in this way. The owner twice dreamed of a weasel, which told him to
726 use its skin. Thereupon he first wore a weasel-skin in dances, and later
751 carried it to war. Subsequently he lent it to his son and to other men who
778 went to war, and they always returned successfully.

A man to whom a fisher had appeared in a dream or vision used a fish-
[787] skin medicine-bag, and on going to war carried this with him.

A renowned warrior, dead for some time, received his personal medicine from the bears, and was forbidden to scalp, count coup on the enemy, or take away a gun. He could only kill. He once killed two Sioux with one shot, at a place which received its name from the event.

[492] A simple riding-whip (specimen Museum No. 50-1821) has on its wooden handle four red marks, each of which is said to represent an enemy struck in the face with a whip in battle.

Representations, used in the modern "war-dance," of the weapons of
532 Black-Wolf, a well-known Gros Ventre warrior, part of whose experiences
726 in war are told below, consist of a shield and spear. The shield, which is made of painted white cloth, represents the shield carried by him on an occasion when he rushed to battle with no other weapon. The shield is decorated with a blue crescent along the lower edge, representing the sun, and bordered by a wavy red line denoting lightning. The wooden spear and spear-point
[822] represent a spear with which the owner stabbed a Piegan in battle. The spear-point is painted blue and red; the blue representing iron, the red blood. Red marks on the handle of the spear represent coups.

A pair of beaded and painted moccasins executed by a woman, but
[292] designed by an old man, symbolize his exploits in war. An outside rim of beading represents the enemy's camp-circle. In the middle of the camp-circle is beaded the figure of a tent belonging to a chief. To this tent was tied a horse, which the wearer of the moccasins cut loose. This feat is represented by an outline painting of a horse and halter. Three U-shaped figures, also painted, are horse-tracks, and represent the capture of horses. On the other moccasin there are again three such figures in a row, which here were said to indicate a charge on horseback on the camp; while two other such figures, facing each other, indicate a face-to-face fight.

Curtains hanging behind the bed in front of the tent-wall were sometimes painted to illustrate the owner's achievements in war.

WAR-EXPERIENCES OF INDIVIDUALS.

114 The following narratives give an entirely personal account of the war-
115 experiences of three individuals, two of them men of about sixty years of

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

159 726 prairie, and he followed and met her. This she did three or four times, until he was very much in love with her and wanted to marry her. She said that if he would go with her, she would marry him. He was afraid of the Gros Ventre. Then the Crow told us to go in advance, in order that he might go with them. The whites distributed food, guns, ammunition, and blankets among us all. Then we Gros Ventre went off, but lay down behind a ridge. The Crow gave the Blood four horses for himself and his wife, and they started to go to the Missouri. The man whose wife this woman was pretended that she was not his wife. He rode alongside, and, when the Blood's attention was directed elsewhere, killed him. Then we Gros Ventre and those of the Crow with us came out from where we had been hiding behind the hill, and danced, while the remaining Crow brought his scalp. From there we went home. We crossed the Missouri at a place called Magpie Tail, where there are steep hills. We came on a Crow camp, and made a charge on it. One of the Crow charged into it, striking and whipping every one, as if out of his senses. One of the men in camp became angry, pulled him off his horse, hit him, kicked him, and pulled his hair. The man who had charged got up laughing.

Watches-All's Narrative.

Once I gambled with a Crow woman and lost my beads, and my mother made me cry. The next day a war-party started out, and, because my mother had made me cry, I went with them. All of the party were on foot, except two (women?) on horseback. After we had stopped for the night twice, my mother came after me with a horse for me to ride. We went northward against the Piegan. When we came to mountains, all the women in the party went out to pick choke-cherries. The road was impassable from mud, and it was stormy. Some young men climbed the mountain to look for camps. It was snowing hard and they could not see far; but in the afternoon it cleared, and with a telescope they could see a camp in the distance. They measured it with a ramrod. They went back to the party howling like coyotes, and zigzagging in their course. The women in the party stood in line, and sang. When they came near, the scouts rode about in a circle until one of the party went to them and brought them. Then they reported what they had seen. Then the whole party painted and danced and sang, preparing for the fight. In the evening we started, and travelled all night. One man had a ghost-bone (a human femur). While I was asleep, he summoned the ghost. "What is it?" said the ghost. "Are there many people in the Piegan camp?" asked the man. The ghost said, "There are as many as grass. I give you two persons, also some horses

[787]

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13
Blackfoot NF6

G 159 726 [787]

to steal. Let those who are on foot go back from here, and let the few who are mounted go on against the camp. They will do well, and kill two people, and capture horses. But if all go, a great many will be killed." The next morning my mother told me this. The party, however, were not influenced at all by what the ghost said, and went on. When we came near, two young men killed a Piegan called Sits-in-the-Middle and his wife. Then our party killed two more Piegan close by their camp, but, as one of the men stooped to strike the fallen Piegan, the Piegan stabbed him in the back over the kidney, making a hole large enough to breathe through. We tied him around with gunny sacks. Thus we killed three men and a woman. Then all the Piegan attacked us. I saw more people than ever before. They came like ants, and the smoke hung as over a smelter. Two of the Gros Ventre drove all of our party, even the women, against the Piegan to make them fight. A Gros Ventre was shot through the thigh-bone, and fell from his horse. He stuck his crooked lance in the ground and sat there; and all his brothers went to help him so that he would not be killed soon. And all the Piegan attacked him. Just as one of them dashed up to strike him, he raised his gun and shot him. Another and another came up, until he had killed six. Then he himself was killed. Then some of the Gros Ventre said, "Let us lead them after us from their camp." The Gros Ventre started to run, and the Piegan pursued. The Gros Ventre who were mounted ran their horses as hard as they could. They never stopped running, and a great many of those who were on foot were killed. I was riding behind another woman. Our horse stepped into a hole, and pitched forward. The woman was thrown off, but I was thrown into the saddle. The horse started up again, but stepped on his bridle, which checked him. A Piegan rode up and struck me with his gun. Then he took my wrist, and I dismounted as he did. Another one came, and, after striking me too, took off my bead necklace. The one who had captured me took me back as far as it is from here to the river (about thirty miles). We saw bodies of Gros Ventre as we went back to camp. We came to the camp about noon. Everybody struck me. All day they came and hit me, and one man hit me on the forehead and nearly killed me. A Piegan woman tied up my head. I wore a fine dress covered with elk-teeth. I took it off, and a Piegan woman took it away. Then the Piegan directed their people to gather all the captives. They asked them if the Gros Ventre had done anything to Sits-in-the-Middle, who had been found in an indecent position with his wife. The captives all said that the Gros Ventre would not do such a thing, and the Piegan were satisfied. Eight Piegan, all prominent men, had been killed.

G 159 726 B 727

When our party returned, my father asked where I was. Some one told him that a Piegan had taken me back to his camp. Then my father said

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908.
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

to death. We turned and ran back and picked her up, and ran on until we reached the store. The Sioux and the white man exchanged shots, but they were too far apart. The Sioux went on and killed a white man who was employed in cutting wood for the steamboats, and who had just shot a bear. They laid this man in the fire and burned him up, so that only his legs were found. After this we women were afraid to go even a very short distance from the store. Then the Crow swam their horses to the north side of the river. In the river a white horse stopped, went down, came up again, and went down; a baxaa[11] took it. 159

Then my mother said that she was tired of staying there, and with a Gros Ventre, Bull-Lodge (there being ten of us in all, six men and four women), we went down the river on the boat. Then the boat stuck and had to back. The buffalo crossed the Missouri, and the whites on board caught them by the horns, cut their throats, and dragged them ashore. Then we had a big feast of ribs and paunches and the best parts. We went on, and stopped at the mouth of Milk River. There Bull-Lodge set up his tent, but I and my mother slept on the boat. The next day we all went up Milk River on foot; only Bull-Lodge and his wife were on horses. We kept on the trail, and came to a recent camp-site. The Gros Ventre and Assiniboine were then at war. One of our party, looking back and seeing some persons coming, asked Bull-Lodge for his horse to scout. Riding back, he saw that six buffalo were coming towards us. That evening Bull-Lodge and his wife went on, while the rest of us went to sleep where we were. Bull-Lodge travelled during the night and reached the Gros Ventre camp, where the old men were still awake smoking. He told my brother that my mother and I were behind and that he had better bring us and the others horses. Then the people came and brought us, and all were glad to see us again.

PERSONAL SUPERNATURAL POWERS.

Men went out to fast with the intention of becoming doctors, or receiving miraculous powers. They did not go as boys, but after they had reached manhood. Not all men tried to acquire such powers, and some of those that did failed. They went to hills and high places, usually high up on mountains, among the rocks above the timber. In such a place they would make a shelter in which to sleep. Then they remained fasting and without drinking water for one or two or more often four or five nights. A Crow who staid seven nights and nearly died, being extremely thin when he returned, was regarded as extremely powerful. It was thought that he could accomplish almost any wish by merely expressing it. Besides fasting, a man cried 787

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787 incessantly. After a time a spirit might appear to him. Perhaps this
would be on the first or second night, perhaps later. Sometimes it was in
full daylight, and the man really saw the spirit like a true person; but more
776 usually he saw him in his sleep. It might be a person that appeared, that
is to say, an untrue person (spirit), or an animal, or the spirit of a rock or
of the brush. Some men went to islands and rivers instead of to mountain-
peaks. These might receive the otter, or the beaver, or the muskrat, or
the water-monster (bax'aa[n]) as their guardian spirit. Sometimes when a
man was crying on a mountain-top in a thunderstorm, the thunder (bax'aa[n])
appeared to him. The lightning shot straight towards him, as if to hit him,
and the bird was so near above his head that the man sometimes became
afraid and ran away. If he staid, the thunder-bird became his spirit, and
gave him medicine that was unusually powerful. Generally, it seems, the
man cried incessantly, until he was exhausted and fell asleep. Then the
spirit appeared to him, saying, "I pity you. What do you want?" The
man said that he wished to be wealthy, or successful in war or love, or to
786 become a medicine-man. If he was to be a doctor, the spirit showed him
776 roots and plants, telling him to note their appearance, and informing him
787 of the diseases for which they were a cure. Those plants that he had seen
in his dream or vision, the new doctor looked for until he found them. His
spirit told him, "In so many years (naming the number) you will begin to
doctor." After that time had elapsed, he began doctoring. The spirit or
animal told him that the place where he was was its own home. From this
time on, the man never killed the animal that had appeared to him (except,
apparently, for the purpose of obtaining parts of it as a fetish or amulet);
nor did he eat of it under any circumstances. He used a part of the animal,
especially the claws or the fur, in his doctoring. If the spirit of a rock had
appeared to him, he used a stone.

755 Medicine-men cured the sick by sucking the body and by brushing it.
As is customary among Indians, they were believed to suck through the
skin without biting, cutting, or puncturing it. They might suck blood,
pebbles, cloth, human finger-nails, bunches of hair, and many other things.
If they sucked out old pus, it was evidence that the disease was of long
standing. If they brushed or rubbed the patient, they used owl-feathers,
skunk-skin, prairie-dog fur, or similar parts of animals. Some used bells
as rattles, some whistles, and some drums; and all sang, each doctor having
his own songs. After sucking the patient, the doctor chewed up medicine,
which he then applied to the patient's body. He often also gave him medi-
cine boiled in water to drink. The powers of doctors varied. Different men
were able to cure different diseases. It is said, however, that none could do
much for affections of the ear.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Doctors were paid a horse or more for their services. Sometimes several, in turn, doctored a patient, each one blaming those that had failed before. Often they laid the sickness to spirits, or to other doctors. This last occurred especially if in their sucking they extracted human finger-nails or similar objects. In such a case the doctor got his patient to sleep. The patient might then in his dream see the person that had made him sick, and on awaking would denounce him. If the sick man died, his relatives might kill the doctor whom he had named as the cause of his sickness. 756

There were not so many women doctors as men. They appear not to have gone out to the mountains with the intention of acquiring supernatural power, but to have received guardian spirits when they were away from the camp, mourning.

The jugular and femoral arteries and the aorta were called ts'niinotanoudj[1] ("having no ears"), because, when severed, they did not heed any remedies.

In order to save the life of a sick relative, the joint of the little finger was sometimes cut off in sacrifice to the sun.

There were some medicine-men who, having had their fingers tied, then had their knees fastened together and their hands secured behind their back. After this they were wrapped in a robe and the robe was wound about with a rope. Then such a medicine-man called his spirit. When it appeared, he was loosened instantaneously, and the robe and the rope were thrown at the man that tied him.

Fig. 30 (50-1937). Doctor's Charm. Length, 22 cm.

[778]

826

755
304
782

756

A charm used by a doctor is shown in Fig. 30. It consists of a deer-tail with beaded base, and of two black feathers and a bunch of down feathers. All parts of the object are reddened. This piece was used to brush patients. At other times during the doctoring it was worn on the medicine-man's clothing.[2] 756 778

A man unsuccessful in winning a woman's love sometimes fasted on a 787 832

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787 mountain and asked the spirit that appeared to him for a love-medicine
832 which would bring him the woman. Soon after, she would come to him and try to obtain his love, but usually he would reject her, for a time at least, by way of revenge.

A young middle-aged man of the present time is noted for his love-medicine. He tells the following. He was once in love with a woman who only reviled him. For a long time this was on his mind. Constantly thinking of her harsh treatment of him, he fasted in a number of places, and finally received supernatural power. Then the woman came to him. She kissed him on the cheek; but he said, "You have abused me," and he made her go away. Four times she came to him; only the fourth time did he consent to gratify her wishes. Since that time, he has frequently used his medicine. His present wife was living with a white trader, where she had every comfort and great abundance; but by his medicine he made her leave the trader for him. His wife, it would appear, looks upon his powers without jealousy. He sells the use of his medicine to young men for two horses. His young son is crippled, so that he would have difficulty in winning women; but his father is keeping the medicine for him, so that he will be able to possess any woman he desires. The objects used include several medicine-plants. Some of these appear to be used to incense the man who is making the
[824] medicine. When a woman is unusually obdurate, wild parsnip (the root supposed to produce the peculiar state of mind of the crazy-dance) is employed by this man. When he begins to exert his influence on a woman, she becomes restless and sexually excited. She leaves the tent frequently, and will cohabit with any man. When the influence of the medicine is removed, she remains faithful to her lover.

MEDICINES AND PLANTS.

278 The following medicines, consisting chiefly of plants, are almost wholly
757 family remedies, and, while no doubt also used by medicine-men, their supposed effects are generally known, and not connected with any personal supernatural experiences of the person using them. As the specimens were secured in winter, it was impossible to obtain material for botanical identification.

Wanouwasoö ("wart-medicine"), a root, is used for stomach-ache (specimen Museum No. 50-1800).

A root called ahaa"tjiiniça" ("wood-like") is used for colic. This seems to be the root of a species of Asclepias (specimen Museum No. 50-1836).

A root called bauso ("red medicine," because it is reddish when fresh) is used for diarrhœa (specimen Museum No. 50-1914).

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 painting, an old man took the lead, followed by the pledger, and he by the dancers in file. All the dancers carried small hoops ornamented with quill-embroidery and with small feathers. These hoops were carried on sticks. When the old man stopped, the dancers gathered in a circle about him to dance. They took hold of the corners of their robes, and flapped them like wings, buzzing and humming like mosquitoes. After they had done this four times, they lay on the ground on their faces. Beyond the small hoops there seem to have been no regalia. There were also neither whistles, rattles, nor drums used, except that the "grandfathers" each had a leafy branch (as of willow, cottonwood, or cherry), which they shook, rustling it in time to the singing.

[293] [534]

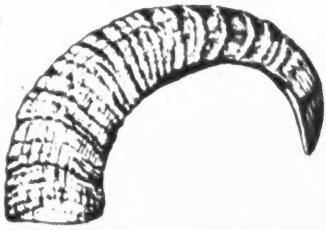


Fig. 32 (50-1839). Fly-dance Horn. Length, 18 cm.

Towards evening the dancers went to one side of the camp-circle, but still outside of it. There they danced. Going west of the camp-circle, they danced there, then to the side opposite to that where they had begun, and finally to the east or opening of the camp. When they had danced four times here, all the people had retired to their tents for the night, and all outdoor work had been done. The dancers immediately started out in all directions, looking for people. If they saw any one, they pursued him until they overtook him. They carried cactus-spines and sharp claws, with which they pricked him. If he succeeded in reaching a tent, they walked around outside, pelting the tent with pebbles. It is said that if the person attacked fanned himself, as he would for flies, the dancers would not sting him. In all their actions in this part of the ceremony, the dancers seem to have imitated flies or mosquitoes. Going about among the tents, they also took meat hanging outside, cooked it, and ate their fill. They also played and ran races until they were tired.

[293]

Fig. 33 (50-1936 a). Fly-dance Hoop. Diameter, 8 cm.

[787] As to the origin of the dance, it is said that once an old man was asleep, when he dreamed this dance. The fly that gave him the ceremony was a mosquito. It directed him to institute the dance, and showed him how it should be conducted.

[293] Fig. 32 shows a small mountain-goat horn, painted over red, used in this dance as one of the implements for pricking or scratching.

1; Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

lodge. Other men go up into the hills near the camp, where they are 796
fastened to a post, and fast from sunrise to sunset. In the evening their 304
ceremonial "grandfather" comes and cuts them loose. Young men who 785
want to meet with success in war pierce the skin over their shoulder-blade, and, having inserted sticks, hang two guns to these on each side. Sometimes a crooked-hoofed horse is fastened to the sticks. Thereupon they go about outside of the camp-circle, crying constantly, hoping that some supernatural being will pity them. Still others tie four or five buffalo-skulls in a row, which they fasten in the same way to their backs. They also go around the camp-circle.

If it is thought possible that the enemy may be near at the time of the 796
dance, a man brings a filled pipe to the pledger of the dance and offers it 787
to him, asking about the enemy. The pledger takes out his medicine-bag, which is the skin of the animal he saw in his vision, incenses it, and performs the acts which this guardian animal commanded. Every one is quiet, and the fire is put out so that the lodge is completely dark. The pledger blows his whistle, and the people sing for him as loudly as they can. He makes motions around his head with his medicine, thereby asking his guardian spirit to enable him to see supernaturally. He continues his motions until he is able to see the enemy. Thereupon he sits down. After this, another man offers him a pipe, saying, "We wish you to tell us what you have seen. Therefore take this pipe and smoke it." After he has smoked, the pledger tells the people how many people he has seen, and where they are. He says, "I saw so many buffalo-bulls (men). They are coming from there. Take [822] charcoal for successful battle" (black being the paint of victory).

The dancers also have the power to see the enemy. If, as they look at the "nest" day and night, they see legs hanging down, or a headless body in the tree, it is the sign that an enemy will be killed by the tribe. If, on the other hand, they see blood on the poles overhead or running down the central tree, a member of the tribe will be killed. Sometimes they see a man whom they can recognize as a member of the tribe, black as coal and very thin, hanging from the poles above them. Then he will die soon.

Each day certain men, who seem to be young men, are selected, and their 796
names called out. These men dress as if for war. When they enter, it 729
seems that they sit in a row at the left of the entrance. The bravest of them are then selected, and taken to the back of the lodge, where a bed and head-rest have been prepared, on which they sit. One of these men counts a coup, and picking up a stick puts it into the fire. One after another they do this until a large fire is blazing. These men are called tsöötaxwuhuu ("inside dancers"). Thereupon two old men, going to the centre of the lodge and conferring in whispers, select six or eight warriors. As soon as these

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

[791] men are named, their female relatives return to their tents, and cook. When
[789] they have prepared food, they all together bring a large quantity of it to the lodge. The men selected carry weapons, and are dressed for war. They are usually mounted. Where they themselves or their horses were wounded,
[302] they paint themselves. If they have ridden over an enemy, a man is painted on the breast of the horse. When the food which has been brought by their female relatives has been eaten, these men, two at a time, go through numerous performances of their achievements in battle. This is done each day of the dance.

[796] A group of men and women, called, like those in the preliminary singing-tent, "prairie-chickens," and therefore probably the same persons, seem
[534] to be the singers for the dance. They beat a rawhide in place of a drum, and hold branches, which, at the end of each song, they shake, shouting.

The dancers may not drink water, no matter how great the heat. If
[271] one of them is unable to endure, and a pitying relative gives him even only
[821] a drop, a thunderstorm follows, and the offender may be struck by lightning, or one of his horses may be killed by lightning. In case it seems necessary for the dancers to drink, a pipe is taken to one of the old men. If he accepts it and smokes it, he goes to the central tree. He wears a robe with the hair-side out. He has a whistle in his mouth, feathers in one hand, and a crow-skin in the other. He strikes the bill of the crow four
[789] times, with a downward motion, against the lightning symbol on the tree. A vessel is held against the tree at the bottom of the symbol, and, after the fourth blow, water is said to run out until the vessel is filled, when it stops. This water is given to the dancers, each of whom drinks a very small quan-
[787] tity. The actions of the man producing this water are said to be determined by his personal supernatural vision.

After the four days of the ceremony are completed, the lodge is left standing. All the cloth and clothing that have been attached to it remain
[789] in place, and it appears that other clothes, especially of children, are left at the lodge. This is done in order that the children may live a long life.

[796] From drawings made by a Gros Ventre, it appears that the buffalo-
[532] skull is painted with spots, and has its nose and eyes stuffed. Behind it is represented a dancer holding the wheel. He is presumably the pledger of the ceremony. The wheel is bisected by two strings, and has eagle-feathers and down-feathers attached to it. The dancer blows a whistle at the end of which is a plume. The whistle hangs from his neck. At the back of the head is a plume. Lines of paint proceed from his breast to his wrists and ankles. On each of these are four diamonds, two on each upper and lower arm, thigh, and calf. If this is a correct representation, the Gros Ventre use at least one style of painting that is like the most typical Arap-

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

was like the flat rocks on which women pound berries, perfectly round, rough above, and perfectly smooth on the under side. Many men lifting together could not move it; but when offerings were made to it, and it was asked to rise, one man was able to lift it easily. Several people tried to sleep near it in order to dream about it, but none of them ever staid the whole night through. They would dream that it was a large metal kettle coming toward them on legs, and filled with boiling water, whereupon they jumped up and fled. 773 778 823 [787]

West of the present Gros Ventre Reservation there was, until the whites took it away, a stone shaped like a person, except that it lacked the face. This was once a Snake Indian. A war-party saw him sitting on a hill, and pursued him into a flat. They had nearly caught him when he turned to stone and has been there ever since. Once, as a camp went by and the people made offerings of calico and other property, a man said, "Why do you do that?" Taking a club, he knocked off the head of the figure. The man died the same summer.

A complete buffalo of stone, with hump, horns, ribs, and other parts, half of it underground, has been seen by the Gros Ventre, and many offerings and prayers have been made to it. 823 778

To the north of the Gros Ventre Reservation is a lake shaped like a buffalo, with legs and all parts complete. The tail runs out into a river, the hoofs are patches of brush, and the horns are streaks of timber of the shape of horns.

Lizards are thought to bite persons and then to hang fast to the wound, sucking the flesh into themselves. It is said that a certain man was bitten and the lizard could not be pulled off. The man's flesh had to be cut off around the lizard's mouth. 825

There is believed to be a kind of bear with one white fore-leg, which is fiercer than the grizzly. The jack-rabbit is called "white rabbit;" and the cottontail, "left-hand rabbit." The prairie-dog is called "large gopher" (?); and the mink, "prairie-dog weasel." The bat's bite is thought to be exceedingly poisonous.

556 a great big lodge and all the other things that were required. But
231 some men might have only one horse and therefore only one wife. Such men wouldn't amount to much; they would be by-passed all the time and couldn't get anywhere. Therefore men did really desperate things in order to obtain horses."[10]

556 Horses were thus the most valuable item in Gros Ventre economy. Other informants illustrated this attitude. Garter
231 Snake, for instance, stated: "As a little girl I didn't know poverty.
735 My parents were rich. They had everything they wanted for their lodge, and clothing, and all kinds of horses so I was never in want at any time. Nevertheless, my father, when he was a little fellow, was very poor and had no horse to ride. Possibly somebody would put his mother, who was a widow, on a horse, but he would have to walk. He had hardly any clothes, he was so poor. One time when he was about 12, the camp was moving and they were going to go quite a distance. He was way behind because he would wait until everybody had gone, and then would follow as best he could. This day he went up on a hill to see where the people were camping next, and then he just lay there crying because he pitied himself for being so poor. It was at this time that he was granted his first experience [with the supernatural]. Later on, having made an offering of a black shirt and some feathers, which he had begged from someone at the camp, and having cut
556 off the first joint of the little finger of his left hand, he was told
231 in a vision: 'Son, I invited you here and I am glad you came.
735 Look over that way (the direction in which the camps lay). You
787 are poor now, but see those camps? You are going to be noted there. Everyone there is going to respect you and depend on you. And look this way (the opposite direction). See that big band of horses? Those are your horses. Of course you won't get them right away, but that is what you are going to have.' He was granted many powers later on, among them how to operate with a woodpecker feather; how to check hemorrhage; how to cure stoppage of the male urinary tract; how to cure consumption; how to revive a horse which was 'played out'; how to make raiders invisible so they could successfully steal horses. And he finally attained those horses he had been shown."

[10] Cf. Denig, p. 505, "An Indian with one wife cannot amass property."

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the mind was clouded for a while and a man could not remember so well afterwards all that happened in the battle." [14] 726

The leader was constantly on the alert and tended to interpret anything out of the ordinary as having a bearing on the success or ill fate of his party. As a case in point we have the following account of an expedition in the 1860's. "Lame Bull was on a war party of which Big Beaver was the leader. They went to the Crow country hoping to find some hunters in the mountains. At the timber on the river not far from Crow Mountain, the party stopped near a big tree. It was during a thaw in the spring and after they had eaten, they took off their moccasins and hung them on the tree. Then they sat around and smoked and told stories. All of a sudden they heard an owl in the tree above them calling out: 'Where you are sitting under this tree, you are going to be killed.' The owl called again and said the same thing. Big Beaver said to his party: 'I've lived a long time. But never have I heard anything like this owl talking. Let's put on our moccasins and go fast. I think the owl is telling the truth. I think he knows what is going on and people must be near.' All quickly put on their moccasins, and, as they were putting out the fire and preparing to leave, they heard people yelling. Big Beaver gave instructions: 'Scatter. Don't go in file and don't step in the snow, but keep to the bare places so our tracks won't be seen.' So they ran away and soon reached the mountain. When they got to the top of the mountain, daylight had come. They looked down and saw people at the big tree where they had been, searching around for tracks. The Gros Ventres called at the other Indians to invite attack, but the others only stood and looked up, without trying to catch them." 726 787

If the war party happened to be near certain petroglyphs, believed by the Gros Ventres to reveal the future, they went there to read the omens. If they could not then interpret the markings, an offering was left there and the next morning they went again. The markings on the rock were believed to change, and the predictions interpreted therefrom to be accurate. If the omens thus appeared too unfavorable, the whole party might even turn back. 726 787 531

[14] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, pp. 201, 208, for remarks relating to war experiences of individuals.

726 Greatest reliance, however, seemed to be placed on the information that could be obtained through a "ghost-helper."[18] If a member of the party was known to have the power to command the spirit of a deceased member of his family, he was requested to exercise it. It was said that more often than not the predictions were extremely accurate, as in the following two cases, recounted by The Boy. The first one is estimated to have occurred sometime between 1835 and 1840 and The Boy's grandfather was one of the participants.

"The Gros Ventres were camped near the forks of the Teton and Marias Rivers. Practically all the men had agreed to go on the war path. So they left camp and on the first day arrived at the place where Crow Coulee or Creek empties into the Missouri. When it was dark someone said: 'Let's offer the pipe to that man and ask him to find what our prospects on this venture may be, good or bad.' They filled a pipe and presented it to the man, whose deceased father was proven to be his ghost-helper. He accepted willingly. Soon after they smoked, they made a shelter where he was to call his helper. Then they tied up the man and filled the pipe again and put it in the shelter along with him. He sang a song in which the others joined and on the fourth repetition they heard a voice up in the air. The ghost-helper arrived and the shelter shook. When he hit the ground, the ground shook. The ghost-helper was seemingly excited and kept repeating: 'What do you want, my children?' And he said also: 'If you were in my place and old as I am, and as feeble, you wouldn't like to be disturbed. But here I am. What do you want?' They said: 'We want to know how this trip is going to be—what luck we will have—what are our prospects?'

"They lit a pipe and offered it to the ancestral spirit. They could see from the flaring of the pipe that he was smoking it. Then the spirit said: 'Well, I don't know offhand. I'll have to look around. While I'm gone you smoke, and after a little while sing again. And I'll come back.' So they followed his instructions. When he came back they could hear the spirit catching its breath as an old man does and it said: 'My children, there are

[18] For discussion of ghost-helper concept among the Gros Ventres see Flannery, 1944, also Cooper Ms. 1949.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Crow Indians without number invading the camp you just left. 726
They are so bold, knowing you men are away, that they are peep- 787
ing in the lodges watching your women as they are playing the 769
hand game. Your women are in happy mood.' Then the spirit said: 'These Crow Indians seem to be preparing to take all the Gros Ventre horses. I'll go back again and watch the Crows to see what they will do.' So they did as before, and when the spirit returned he said: 'The Crows have taken practically all of your horses and will arrive where you now are about sun-up. Don't be afraid of them, provided you do one thing: be sure to kill the Crow with the blue blanket coat. He is the only brave man in the crowd. Kill him first and you'll kill all the others. None of the Gros Ventres will be killed, but two will be wounded. In case you do not kill the Crow with the blue coat, the outcome of the battle will be doubtful.'

"It was nearing dawn by the time the spirit had made his final report, so the men decided to sit up and not sleep the rest of the night. At daylight, the leader sent two good men to the knoll about a half-mile away to look around. The scouts took a look, crawled back out of sight, got to their feet and ran toward the waiting men as fast as they could. The group had gathered buffalo chips in preparation of the usual ceremony of receiving scouts but the scouts yelled: 'Kick the pile of chips apart. There is no time for formality. Get ready to fight as quickly as you can—the Crows are right over that hill!' The Gros Ventres prepared hurriedly for battle and started for the knoll.

"One old man only was mounted, all the rest were a-foot. This old man was the one who threw the Crows into a panic because he had ridden to a high hill to watch the fight, and the Crows believed that they were going to be surrounded by mounted Gros Ventres. The Crows decided to dismount, make a stand, and let go the horses they had captured from the Gros Ventres. They selected high ground, one side sloping away with soft dirt, the other side grassy. The Gros Ventres were on the flat ground and so the fight started.

"While the main group of Gros Ventres engaged the enemy, a few followed a coulee until they got inside the Crow group and were able to kill a good many. The Crows decided to run, when

726 the man with a blue coat tried to hold them: 'If you run you'll
787 suffer a big loss. If you make a stand, the loss won't be so bad.'
769 But they ran right toward the thick mass of Gros Ventres, who received them by opening up a lane for them. The Gros Ventres were afraid then to shoot on account of hitting their own men in cross fire. The man in the blue coat saw the situation and started to run shouting: 'I have no doubt I shall save myself, for I am a good runner. Do your best to try to get away now.' So he ran into the midst of the Gros Ventres, and right through them, passing his fellow-tribesmen until he was leading the fleeing Crows.

"Suddenly one Crow got brave and decided to make a stand and stem the pursuit by the Gros Ventres. He dropped back and pointed a gun at Bear Robe, but another Gros Ventre decided to attack him and the Crow was so terrified that he failed to pull the trigger until the Gros Ventre hit the gun. The shot tore Bear Robe's arm from the elbow to wrist and threw him off balance. When he recovered, the Crow was still there with his gun so Bear Robe ran up and snatched the gun and spear from the Crow and threw them away.

"The Gros Ventres were still pursuing the Crow, and another one made a stand. A Gros Ventre, Crow Moccasin, armed only with a tomahawk, struck him. The Crow staggered and dropped his gun, but grabbed Crow Moccasin's arm to which the tomahawk was fastened with a string. In the struggle the Crow reached for his knife and jerked Crow Moccasin toward himself and slashed his wrist, but he had jerked so hard that the string holding the tomahawk gave way and the Crow lost balance, then ran. Another Gros Ventre shot him down. The fight went on until the older men thought they should stop and let the Crows go. The one with the blue coat got away along with nineteen others. Forty Crow were, however, killed, and the only casualties suffered by the Gros Ventres were two wounded. It would seem that from what the ghost helper had told them, if they would have killed the man in the blue coat, they would have killed all of the Crow."

This second illustration refers to events of much later date, about 1875. "A Gros Ventre war party was camped east of Lewiston, across the Missouri River. Morning Star Arises was asked to consult his ghost-helper who reported: 'All right. I am

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

ready to tell you. First, here's the scalp of the Sioux you will kill tomorrow. . [This was one strand of hair wrapped around a piece of sage brush, symbolic of the scalp.] I've found a big Sioux camp on Beaver Creek (east of the Little Rocky Mountains). The Sioux are having a big Grass Dance and the one you are to kill tomorrow is having the most fun. He has a sword. You'll capture that sword when you kill him. Don't be afraid. There will be no Gros Ventres killed, but two of you don't look good to me.' The Gros Ventres asked that he name the two, but he refused, saying: 'Just don't be afraid. Go ahead to the place where the Sioux are and attack them. Choose what kind of weather you want to make your escape after the fight, and I'll see that the weather will be that way.' They failed to make a choice, but the spirit said: 'Take a look at the sun every once in a while tomorrow. There will be all kinds of sundogs tomorrow, changing every little while. If they appear, you'll know that I have told the truth.'

"The next morning they decided that only those with good horses should cross the Missouri and attack the Sioux. They approached the camp where the Sioux had spent the night. The Sioux had failed to extinguish their former camp fires, and the embers were blown into flame and the fire was extending toward their new camp. The Sioux decided to fight the prairie fire, laying down their arms, not realizing the Gros Ventres were watching them. The Gros Ventres then attacked. The Sioux were in utter confusion and ran, all of them except a man with a sword who made a stand. Two Gros Ventres, Comes A-Flying and Owl Old Man, tried to ride over this Sioux who, however, sidestepped them and struck both their horses with his sword; meanwhile the Gros Ventres struck the Sioux with their whips, thus counting coups. A third Gros Ventre, Crazy Bear, however, killed him, took his scalp and claimed his sword. Since they had gotten this one scalp—which was sufficient for them to celebrate with a victory dance,—they returned. They saw the sundogs changing as the spirit had foretold. In order to evade the pursuit by the Sioux, they called on the man, whose ghost-helper had given the information, to change the weather. The man sang a song, using his robe as a cover to enclose himself, and said he

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

726 wanted a downpour of rain. At once a cloud appeared and in no
787 time it was a big black storm cloud. Then there was a wind and
769 a very heavy storm and thus the Gros Ventres got safely back to camp. The only loss on this occasion was that of two fine horses, one played out and the other foundered from drinking when overheated."

Return of the War Party

727 After a successful encounter with the enemy, the homecoming was a joyful one, provided no Gros Ventre lives had been lost. As they approached the camp, appropriate songs were said to have been sung by the victorious party. If, for instance, they had stolen horses there was one type of song. On the other hand
[302] when scalps had been taken, they sang other kinds of songs and painted themselves with charcoal. Incidentally, the Gros Ventres had a saying that "women and children do not make good charcoal." Women and children should be captured but not killed and scalped.[18]

When the victorious party arrived, they circled the outside of the encampment before entering. "Then the party broke, each member surrounded by his womenfolk who crowded around, kissing him and taking the scalps or other trophies which had been
[302] won. After a reasonable interval, the crier called all to come to the center of the circle and dance. Men and women alike blackened their faces with charcoal, and the women, carrying scalps attached to poles, or weapons captured from the enemy, danced as innumerable victory songs were sung. Only members of the war party were allowed to join with the women in dancing. Many husbands, who had to stand on the sidelines, were jealous of the brave warriors at a time like this."

727 Most of the songs sung during the victory celebration had
533 words which referred to encounters wherein the Gros Ventres had been successful. New words were often made up to commemorate a particular incident. One of these songs had the following words: "Where are you going? I've been here all the

[567] [18] Cocking, p. 112, mentions in 1772 that the Gros Ventres adopted "slaves" of both sexes into families who had lost their children either by war or sickness.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

time, thou with grey hair."[17] It refers to a particular Crow who had long grey braids. This man had captured some Gros Ventre women who were out picking berries and had returned to the Crow without having killed a man or stolen horses. His fellow-tribesmen taunted him with his "weakness" and in order to vindicate his honor he again sought out the Gros Ventres and was killed by them. The song was composed by the husband of one of the captured Gros Ventre women. 727 533

Another song, classed as a victory song, was composed by an old man whose faith in a younger man was justified. The young man had had a supernatural vision and, although he was as yet untried, he successfully led a war party.[18] Still another song was composed on the occasion on which a Piegan, who had survived a partial scalping, was killed by the Gros Ventres.[19] [787]

Even though the party might have succeeded in taking scalps, if any of their number had been killed, the return was a sad one. Whenever feasible they brought back the bodies of the slain from the field of battle. In any case, there was no circling of the camp nor singing. Nor was there a victory dance unless close relatives of the deceased warriors gave permission. An example to illustrate the procedure may be taken from the description of a serious encounter between the Gros Ventres and Sioux, known as the Battle of Black Butte which occurred in 1871 or 1872, upstream from the present site of Havre.[20] "There were approximately 30 lodges of Gros Ventres who were greatly outnumbered by the Sioux. Nevertheless, about 30 Sioux were killed and only one Gros Ventre lost his life. On the return of the party, the father of this one victim said: 'I give you charcoal. My son is lying on many.' So they were able to celebrate that victory in a big way."[21] 727

More often, however, when Gros Ventres were killed in battle, an outstanding relative of one of the deceased volunteered to or-

[17] Song recorded as No. 19.

[18] This was recorded as No. 22.

[19] Song recorded as No. 106. Other songs used at the victory dances were recorded as No. 117, No. 118, No. 119, No. 123, No. 124.

[20] His own part in this encounter is described by Black Wolf in Kroeber, 1908, pp. 203–04.

[21] A song recorded as No. 91 was said to have been composed to commemorate this occasion.

727 ganize a revenge party. The boy gave the following account of the circumstances under which one such party was announced and carried out. "The brother of Lame Bull's mother had been killed in war by the Piegan. This woman took it very hard because it 726 was her youngest brother of whom she was particularly fond. ● 787 None of her relatives had taken any action and she was out on the 727 hills mourning. While she was out there she fell asleep and an 'old man' appeared to her and said: 'If you make an effort, you will forget your grief. I will teach you a song that you will use when they dance at the victory celebration after your people have avenged his death. This song will be used when they bring back the scalps of the enemies who have killed your brother.' So she went home but didn't say anything about her experience for some time. Finally, however, she told her husband. He then decided to organize a war party to get revenge for his brother-in-law's death. He had a big following as he went against the Piegan. On the way, however, they came across some Blood Indians and killed five of them, which was considered as fulfilling his duty to bring backs scalps in retaliation. When the party returned, the woman of course joined in the victory dance and sang that song, which was then used many times after that when the Gros Ventres were successful."

726 If no prominent relative led the revenge party, the parents of a man killed in war could request some noted chief to do so. In 727 that case the one selected prayed for the success of the party himself and made a sweatlodge, inviting many old men who would likewise pray. The large number of offerings requisite for the occasion were supplied, however, by the man who had made the request. Should he not have the wherewithal to formally approach a prominent warrior, there was still the possibility that revenge might be volunteered by someone who pitied parents as they grieved for their son. This would afford an opportunity for some lesser man to legitimately set himself up as leader of a raiding party for the first time.

Status Through War-Deeds

554 Any action that involved risk of life at the hands of the enemy was counted as a war-deed. Raiding for horses, especially for

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

have had good reason to have taken contraceptive medicine, since she had lost several children immediately after birth, but she was afraid to take it because her husband was "such a suspicious man." 842

A case was cited in which a man, who had this medicine, allowed only one of his nine wives to have a child, though he adopted at least one other child. It was believed that it was possible for a man to take contraceptive medicine, in which case it was not necessary for the wife to do so. Coming Daylight gave as an illustration the fact that her grandmother had no children by her first husband. Another example was given concerning a man who was known to have taken contraceptive medicine and none of whose wives had any children, although he adopted the son of one of them by a former marriage. Unfortunately he gave this adoptive son the medicine to drink and made the young man exceedingly unhappy, because he was very fond of children and none of his wives had any.

There were other medicines known which were said to prevent the birth of females and to permit males to be born. "If the wife of a man known to have this type of medicine gave birth to a daughter, the man would know it was not his child."

Contraceptive medicines might be offered to an individual direct by some supernatural being, but they could also be handed down in a family. Either a man or a woman could inherit this kind of medicine, use it personally, and treat others. It was said that many of these contraceptive medicines have been lost since for some time past it has been customary to bury the medicine with the individual owning it. The Boy was offered the knowledge of such medicine by a man, but he refused it.

Coming Daylight was offered this "power to know children" in a dream—that is, the power to avoid having children herself and to be able to administer the medicine to others. "The 'person' who wanted to give me the power told me, in my dream, to face the rising sun and he was just about to show me how to make a smudge from moss that grows on logs, when I told him: 'No: I would rather not have it.' Many a time 'they' tried to show me powers, but I would not be tricked into anything like that." As a matter of fact she loved children and wanted to have them. She ex- 842 787

842 pressed this desire early in life and volunteered the following story
[787] of her experience.

"My first husband, Dressed in White, went out hunting and
[587] brought back a lot of buffalo meat. I had my robe spread out just inside the door and he threw all the meat on it. Being hungry, I sat down there and was just about to eat the raw liver when he said: 'Wait! Don't eat that.' When I asked why not, he countered with the query: 'Do you like children?' To which I replied: 'You know I love children. I go wherever there is a baby—I love to have them on my lap.' So he said: 'Well, it is your fault that this is going to happen.' He took the oval piece of meat from the upper front quarter and roasted it in the coals. He then threw it to me in a careless way, instead of passing it to me as usual, and said: 'Here, you can have that for your son. You eat this plain—don't eat any tallow with it.' although they usually ate tallow with such lean meat. I said in disgust: 'E:ka:kya! I have always liked children,' and flung the meat out of the door. He said: 'Now that you have done this, you are going to have children from now on.' So, as he predicted, not long after that I became pregnant with my firstborn who was a boy. Unfortunately this boy died and I often wondered if it happened because I threw the meat too violently on that occasion when my husband had offered me the opportunity to choose whether or not I wished to bear children." Incidentally she remarked many times that she is happy she chose as she did,—otherwise now she would be all alone and her children have been so good to her.

The telling of the above incident brought to Coming Daylight's mind another, which confirms her belief in the relation between
[595] "medicine" and conception. "Crow Bull, my mother's brother, had four wives. His first wife did not have any children. Then
[582] he married an Assiniboine woman and still later took a third wife. Neither of the latter had children either until one time Crow Bull got mad. His third wife wanted to leave him for another man, but her relatives sent her back to Crow Bull. He, however, slept across from her bed and did not have intercourse with her. Shortly after this the Assiniboine woman did something to dis-
[789] please him and so he made up his mind: 'These two wives of mine are going to have children and settle down!' He had an old-fash-

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Names may be bestowed on account of dreams. Coming Daylight named one of her grandchildren that way. "She dreamed that there was a big gathering and that she was looking for this little grandson. In reality of course he was an infant, but in the dream he was three or four years old. There was an old man, a very old man, dressed all in white, who said to her: 'Why, there goes "White Skunk" up that way.' As she looked she saw her grandson running in the distance and he seemed to be now a tall young man. Upon waking, she told her dream to her daughter. The daughter in turn told her husband: 'My mother had a dream and "White Skunk" is what the old man called him.' The husband said: 'Fine. We will call him that. Now he will reach old age.'" 553 787

If the name is from a dream, the person tells the dream at the time of the naming. This is the way Singer was named by Old Man Sitting High. Occasionally a person might volunteer to name a child on account of a dream, although not always because he had dreamed of a name. "Before one of Cora's children was born, Stiff Arm came to her and told her he had had a bad dream about her. He said: 'In order to prevent my bad dream coming true, I will name the child.' Cora was scared because he was a medicine man. So she had to have a big feast and invite lots of people and give Stiff Arm a horse. There was the formal ceremony. Stiff Arm had given Cora and her husband the choice of three names, derived from his medicine powers: 'White Eagle,' 'Rides Down Hill,' and 'Sailing Eagle.' They chose the last, but the boy was sickly and they had a hard time rearing him. Her relatives thought she should change his name, but she never bothered to do so. He is a young man now."

It was customary that "when a child gets sick through the given name," the name be changed. The Skinners, for instance, hired Stiff Arm to name their boy. He called him "White Eagle" but he was sickly, so his grandmother, Ghost Calf, and Coming Daylight were the ones that changed his name to that of his grandfather, "Big Man." Ghost Calf told the boy's father to give away two dollars at the dance when she announced the new name. It was stated that in any case the namer should be a healthy person. 553 [431]

Old folks sometimes gave away their own names to children, as in the case of a man nicknamed Iron Bucket, whose grand-

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

nothing the person can do about it. One of Singer's friends was called "Matter in the Ear" and another "Ugly or Homely." Another woman harped so much on an event which took place at Turtle River, that "Turtle River" became the name by which she was known, and most people forgot that her actual name was "Spotted Calf." 551

The piercing of the ears may be done at the same time as the naming, as apparently was done in the case of Coming Daylight, or might be done shortly thereafter. Singer, for instance, was named by Sitting High, but her grandmother on a different occasion pierced her ears. The parents might pay someone to do this, or a relative might volunteer. The sooner the ear-piercing is done the better, because the older the child is the more it may hurt. Singer said: "That ear-piercing goes either through a dream or through war deeds." In the former case, the dream is told and then the ears are pierced. In the latter case the person must relate a war story: "This is what I have done. . . ." The story has to be a true one concerning an incident wherein the enemy did not retaliate so the ears will heal up without any trouble.[12] The actual procedure, regardless of whether there is much formality or not, is as follows. An awl is used to pierce the ear and into the hole is inserted either a small splinter of rose-wood sharpened to a pin-point, or a porcupine quill. Whichever is used, it is greased before inserting and is left in until it falls out when the ear is healed. At this time is then inserted a small ring merely to keep the hole open. Fancy earrings are not worn by small children. Formerly boys' ears were pierced as well as girls'. The number of holes in each ear seems more or less arbitrary, but all are made on the same occasion. Coming Daylight has one in each ear; Singer has two; Coming Daylight's eldest son has three. The custom is now dying out as the present generation of mothers does not believe in it. Coming Daylight wanted to pierce the ears of her great-granddaughter but the child's mother said: "No. You will hurt her."

304 [852] [987] [301]

[12] Kroeber, 1908, p. 182 states that ear-piercing was said to be unaccompanied by special ceremonial actions.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

stantly admonished to stay at home after they were married and not to go visiting and gossiping with other women. Mothers told their daughters to be respectful to their husbands. When still very young, a girl was taught to "always make a lot over a man." She started with her father and was responsible, for instance, for seeing to it that in the morning when he awakened there was water beside him so he could wash his face before going for his morning bath, and that his breakfast would be ready for him when he came back therefrom. These are the kinds of things girls would be expected to do later for their husbands. 183 864 867

All during the time they were learning domestic skills, girls were told that they should keep everything that they own nicely and to have on hand everything they may need. It was not good to run around and borrow. "Keep your house clean and keep everything in good order, then your husband will like to stay at home." Again, "Don't let your husband's moccasins wear out before you make another pair. Always have things prepared ahead of time." Girls were told, too, that good wives took their husband's moccasins off for them when they came home tired, and so on. 183 867

Coming Daylight always admonished her daughters: "Never talk back to your husband. Women have fiery tongues when they get mad, and that is bad." It was nearly always taken for granted by others that the wife was to blame if her husband beat her. Since it was customary for very young girls to marry men very much older than they, such husbands took upon themselves the role of disciplinarian. [582]

While marriage was taken for granted, apparently a girl was free to accept or to reject medicine power. Neither girls nor women went on power quests, but some individuals were vouchsafed some kinds of supernatural power in dreams. While the experience of Coming Daylight may be unique, it is illuminating. "Even before I was married, I had a particular kind of dream which indicated power to extract illness from the body of a patient. This dream occurred four nights in succession. Each morning I would tell my grandmother about it. The old woman got angry each time and told me not to talk about it, to keep it to myself so that I would become a great doctor. But I had already 787 [562]

787 made up my mind that I did not want such power, the immediate reason for my refusal being that I had seen doctors who swallowed what they had sucked from the weak spot in patients whom they cured, and I just couldn't bring myself to have to do likewise."

857 Although boys had much more freedom than had girls, they
562 too were assigned tasks at a fairly early age. One of the responsibilities of boys was to water the horses during the day. At about the age of fourteen, however, a boy would be required to take the horses out to graze immediately after taking his morning plunge. He would be gone perhaps three or four hours and would eat only after he returned.

857 The play of younger boys with bow and arrow was training for
868 later life. The older boys accompanied the men on hunting par-
852 ties and by the time they were about 18 most were skilled hunters. Some families, it was said, took advantage of the fact that
[431] a boy would have killed his first big game,—antelope, deer, buffalo, —by making a feast at which this game was served. On such an occasion the boy stood at the center and gave away property, such as horses and blankets provided by his father or uncle, in
[421] order to mark the event. This was considered training for the way he should behave in later life in regard to his own property.

857 Boys were trained in trapping as well as hunting. There were
868 certain songs which were sung by grandparents as the boys danced
[533] around in the lodge both before and after trapping. These songs were supposed to bring luck in finding game.

[777] Sometimes when older boys were out taking care of horses, they would band together, daub their faces and bodies with mud as "war paint," and make a "raid" on the camp in order to steal meat which was drying on racks. The women who had worked so hard to prepare the meat got angry and sometimes fought the boys with sticks. Usually, the boys were successful, and would then cook the meat and have a wonderful feast,[1] far outside the camp circle.

[554] Men encouraged their sons to be brave, and a boy would be anxious to go along on a real raiding party just as soon as possible because a young man had no standing until he had risked his life. An adolescent boy who accompanied a war party had to be a man

[1] This type of raiding is also described by Kroeber, 1908, p. 182.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

among men. It was a severe ordeal and the older men had no mercy on these youngsters. 857 868

Occasionally as training in bravery, the heart of a bear was taken raw and cut into small bits. After calling together the older boys and young men and lining them up, each one in turn was given a bit of the heart dipped in fresh blood and asked: "Well, are you going to have a brave heart?" Some were able to swallow it easily, but others could not stomach it. Those who were able to swallow and retain it were said to be the really brave ones.[8] [262]

It was indicated by many informants that in the old days a man would almost have to have had supernatural powers in order to be outstandingly successful in war or to achieve fame as a medicine man. In fact it was thought that supernatural powers could be helpful in many aspects of life including gambling and love. Guardians, however, used to warn the boys and young men under their care that "you can't get something for nothing." By this was meant that a person who accepted supernatural power would not live out his full span of life. Thus, according to The Boy, parents emphasized in training their sons that, rather than going on power quests, they should be ambitious to acquire fame and respect by developing their natural abilities. Nevertheless many sought and obtained supernatural powers, visions apparently often being vouchsafed in youth, although the power might not have been used until later in life. It was believed that those who accepted and used such supernatural powers died prematurely.[9] 787 778

Methods of Instruction

Oral instruction, or "lecturing," stands out in the Gros Ventre mind as the most important method of child training. All of our middle-aged and older informants agreed that some relative, often either the mother or the father, lectured their children almost every day, telling them what was right and what was wrong and "how to live." If boys and girls were present together, there were some subjects which could not be touched upon and would be reserved for fathers to speak about to their sons and for mothers 861

[8] It was said that, in the distant past, the heart of an enemy was so devoured by warriors. For historical confirmation, see Henry, v. 2, p. 734. [266]

[9] Full discussion of supernatural powers is given in Cooper Ms., 1949.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

buried with its owner. For a woman, her clothing, and sometimes even her pots and pans, were put with her body. It was stated explicitly, however, that food was never placed with the body by the Gros Ventres, although it was recognized that the Assiniboine did so. 764

A widow would burn the things of her husband which were not placed with his body nor taken by his relatives. She would then be smudged with sage and, should she have kissed the corpse, her mouth was smudged four times and she was made to spit each time. 768 783

These practices were seemingly tied up with two beliefs,—the first being that if objects were not placed with the body, the deceased would return to look for the things valued in life; the second, that the recently deceased try to lure the living to join them. The first point was explained by Mary, whose mother had told her: "Everyone likes his own things and some hate to leave them when they die. That is why we used to put personal belongings with the corpse. It might be that there is some one thing that a person wants which has been 'left behind,' so he will come back to seek it. Sometimes when you are alone you might hear a rattling of the dishes or a whistling sound, and you would know that it was some loved one who had died and who was looking for something." 764 775

As proof of the second point, the following experience was offered by Singer. "When I was ill during a smallpox epidemic, I had a dream. I dreamed that my sister, who had died in this same epidemic, appeared to me and said: 'Our mother wants you. Come with me.' My father, who was actually nursing me, seemed to be standing to one side. He told my sister: 'You have had no pity on us. You didn't fight for life. What are you coming after her for? You go by yourself.' But pretty soon my sister came again and said: 'Now this time I want you to come because our mother wants you.'. So I agreed: 'All right. I will go with you.' My sister took me to a shabby-looking little old lodge and I didn't feel right about going in there but I thought: 'Well, to please them I will look in there anyway.' There was someone there in bed and my sister was toward the back of the lodge and my mother was on the other side. My mother told me: 'Here, sit by your sister.' She 775 787

began to dig around behind her bedding and brought out a bowl such as that in which buffalo chips are pounded into powder. She said: 'Here. I want you to eat this.' It didn't look good to me and I just kind of felt it with my fingers. Instead of having sat by my sister as my mother had directed, I had remained by the door, because I felt kind of scared in some way. So I told them: 'Wait. I guess I will go out a minute. I will be right back.' But I got out of there and ran home as fast as I could go—back to my own bed, back to myself. If I had eaten what they had given me that would have been the last of me! After this dream I got well."

Mourning

As soon as word was circulated that someone had died, all relatives of that person, especially the women, were supposed to gather as soon as possible to cry and mourn for the deceased. Very close kin were expected to show their sorrow at the death of a loved one not only by crying and wailing, but also by casting off their good clothes and donning old ones,—robes, for instance, consisting of pieces of old discarded lodge covers, or ordinary robes that were rough and worn,—and by cutting the hair.[7] This latter was truly a great sacrifice, for to the Gros Ventres one of the chief criteria of beauty, in men and women alike, was extreme length of hair. The hair of younger children in a family was spared, even at the death of parents, but should, say, a father die, the hair of the older daughters was shorn, though not cut so short as that of the widow. An elderly woman was usually called upon to do the cutting and the widow, guided by the strength of her emotional reaction, would indicate how short she wished her hair to be. It was said that some widows would leave their hair relatively long, just free of the shoulders, while others "when they felt too badly, had all their hair cut off, almost as men now wear their hair."

Close kin were accustomed to further show grief by going off to the hills and fasting, crying aloud as they wandered about alone, and sleeping out without shelter. A parent would have done so at the loss of a son, one spouse at the death of the other, or a sister for her deceased brother. Such mourners would stay out

[7] For this and other practices in mourning, see Kroeber, 1908, p. 181.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

765 152

until someone went after them and talked to them and persuaded them to eat and drink some water.

The most extravagant expressions of grief were expected on the part of close relatives of men killed at war. It was under such circumstances that the mourners tore off their clothes and gashed their arms and legs. The blood was not washed off and the wounds were allowed to fester, often leaving ugly scars. It was maintained that in mourning the Gros Ventres did not cut off fingers,—that was done only in fulfilment of a vow. [304]

If a brave young man were killed by the enemy, his parents went even further in the expression of their grief, and sometimes had to be restrained from committing suicide. The father could show additional sorrow by cutting the manes and tails of his son's horses, which he then led about as he wandered on the hills for four days and nights, crying and mourning. The following case illustrates the behavior of an elder brother in mourning for a younger one, but may be somewhat exceptional in that the former felt responsible for the latter's death. [962] 765 787

"Little Man, also known as Deafie, was on his way home with his younger brother. They had been on a friendly visit to the Crow. There were others in the party and one evening while they were camped, the younger brother had a dream. The next morning he told them: 'I had a bad dream. I dreamed I got killed.' One of the older men said: 'All right. We will stop here awhile so we can make a sweat-lodge and we will smudge.' (That is what they did when they wanted to prevent something bad from happening.) But Little Man told them that, although the rest of them might believe in dreams, he did not, and he insisted that they move on. The old man couldn't say anything more. As they were going along that same day, Little Man was scouting ahead and sighted the enemy. The Gros Ventre party separated, Little Man going with one group, his brother with the other. The brother happened to go right into the midst of the Assiniboine and was killed. The others heard the shots, but when they got there, Little Man found his brother lying dead. He then tore off all his clothes and would have committed suicide by dashing singlehanded after the enemy had not his brother-in-law grabbed him and held him back. When they got home, Little Man felt so badly that he cut off his beautiful

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

765
787

long hair. All this happened just a year before he married Coming Daylight."

It was said that not infrequently those out mourning on the hills experienced visions of supernatural significance. It seemed that women were especially favored at times like that since they never went out in quest of power as did men. When Lame Bull's wife was mourning for her younger brother after he was killed at war, "someone" came to her and taught her a special song which she should sing when the party returned from avenging his death. Coming Daylight, when crying out on the hills after one of her sons died, was "shown a cane" which she took to mean that she would live to be an old woman. Another of her visions is given in detail as it involves a substitution for the more violent expressions of grief.

"When I was out in the hills after my favorite son died, I dreamed that I was in a big lodge full of people and I was sitting right by the door. At the back of this lodge was a big pile of tobacco mixture and a pipe lying alongside. The owner of the lodge, after he filled the pipe, got up and walked toward me. I was scared, because I didn't smoke. This one told me: 'Look at these people.' I did so and noticed that many of them had their hair cut and that their bodies were bleeding. Then he said: 'That kind of mourning is in the past. Nowadays your only consolation is in smoking this pipe.' He gave me the pipe and I started to smoke. I smoked until the tobacco was finished, emptied the pipe and put it down. Then the owner of the lodge told the other people there: 'Go ahead.' All the people in there took turns coming up to me, each rubbing red paint on his hands and painting me, starting at the top of my head and proceeding right down to the tip of my moccasins. I was facing the door and when the last one finished, the man told me: 'Now go home. Don't ever go on the hills and mourn again. But always smoke if you want to.'

"That was my dream. When I got home I sat down and started to cry. When my husband asked me what was the matter, I told him that I wanted a smoke, related my dream to him. He said: 'I will take you to your sister.' When we got to her house my husband said to her: 'Your sister is crying for a smoke.' My sister laughed and said: 'Well, I have no pinto ponies to give her!

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

I have always heard her say that she would never smoke, even if someone gave her a pinto pony.' But when my husband told her about my dream, she said: 'Oh. It is great to have a dream like that. Many of us fast and pray and we are never shown anything!' So she fixed a smoke for me and gave it to me. I have been smoking ever since." 765 787

Whenever close relatives happened to be in the vicinity where lay the remains of one of their number, some at least went there to cry. Coming Daylight remarked that she remembers well where each and every one of her relatives had been "left," and feels the country, over which the Gros Ventres had control in the 1860's and 1870's, to be "fenced in" by their remains. 765

At present when a Gros Ventre dies, no "feasting and smoking" is done for four days thereafter. If, however, an important date has been set and it is seriously inconvenient to postpone a big gathering, at least one of the chief mourners would be invited "too soon," and has no choice but to accept. Before eating, the host or someone in his place "talked" to the mourner and commanded him to cease mourning, to paint his face, and henceforth to join in all amusements, dances, and social affairs of the people. 765 178

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Supernatural power too, while gotten immediately from animals, mountains (mountain spirits), and other creatures, through fasting and sleeping out on the hills, came ultimately from the Supreme Being, as mentioned previously. A person going out on a power quest, would pray first to the Supreme Being to command or compel the lesser being to give the power being sought. Power to doctor and to achieve war success and even to acquire wealth thus in the last analysis came from the Supreme Being. So too did the (supernatural?) power inherent in earnest wishes or thought wishes. 776 [782 787]

The Supreme Being also imparted knowledge and warnings to human beings through dreams and through his messenger, the crow. The crow on account of his relationship to the Supreme Being was a sort of sacred bird.[12] To illustrate the point the Boy told the following incident in the life of his father, Lame Bull. "Lame Bull on one occasion was sitting out on a hill and no one could get him to come back to camp. So some of his family got one of Lame Bull's wives, The Boy's mother, to go out and tell Lame Bull to come home right away as the camp was moving. As Lame Bull saw her coming, a crow flew over to him and said, 'This person who is coming is going to tell you something that is not true. Don't pay any attention to her.' Then the crow flew away. When The Boy's mother came within hearing distance of Lame Bull, the latter said to her: 'Don't say what you are going to say. Turn back.' But she kept on coming and told him her message, for which she got a scolding from him." 776 787 [825]

In general the Supreme Being was, as regards his interest in human welfare, the reverse of an otiose deity. His interest was a most active one. 776

Equally active was his interest in man's moral and social behavior. He was pleased at such moral or social acts as respect and help to the aged and care of the orphans, and was offended by grave breaches of the moral or social order. He bestowed [888 736]

[12] In 1948 The Boy explained: "The crow is not the kind you see around here now, but a raven,—a bird that is smaller and more streamlined than the crow. The crow here in the fields cry like they are wounded, but this other bird has a shrill but melodious call more like a human being." [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

power from the "ghost men" by sleeping near their pictographs, but never with any success. One young man, however, once without quest got power in childbirth cases from a boss of little children who appear to him in a dream, and Singer thought these "little children" were "ghost men," but the identification is doubtful. The only message they ever got from the "ghost men" was a request or demand that the Gros Ventres go away at once as they smelt bad or made the place smell bad. On war parties or other occasions, offerings were made at the pictograph cliff to the "ghost men," who would then during the night make new pictographs on the morrow from which the future in the form of good or bad fortune could be easily foreseen by the members of the party.[20]

Supernatural power was gotten either by quest or otherwise from ghosts or, as more commonly, from non-human beings, such as mountains (or the spirit who inhabited or owned the mountains), rocks, mammals (bear, wolf, weasel, mink, coyote, rat, prairie dog and others), birds (crow, prairie chicken), snakes, spiders and so forth. "These lesser beings, while ranking a little above human beings and possessing certain superhuman powers, were under the leadership and control of the Supreme Being, from whom they had received such powers to be imparted in turn to human beings. Like Bha'a, they were, so to speak, delegated agents and underlings of the Supreme Being, put by him in charge of "the details of the whole situation," as The Boy expressed it. The powers so imparted were of many kinds, to cure, to poison or otherwise harm, to foretell, to become a great warrior, to acquire wealth, to succeed in love and gambling, et cetera, as will be described in detail later.

Non-Cult Beings

So much for the beings to whom cult was rendered in the form of prayer or sacrifice. We shall now describe the supernatural beings,—human, "humanoid" and non-human,—to whom no cult was rendered but who entered in one form or other into ritual

[20] Cf. Flannery, 1953, p. 93.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

793 powers, intended more for the positive advantage of the keeper or
755 his people, were customarily acquired during or after the transfer rite.

In the transfer rite the new keeper was taught how to doctor, especially in cases of fits, spasms and cramps. The peppermint
[278] beverage, now used by everybody for these maladies, was formerly a monopoly of the Flat Pipe keeper in his curing practice. Other doctoring powers were also conferred on him and he could use the hair rope from the Flat Pipe bundle as a potent medicine to cure with, but we could obtain no details on these points.

The keeper would pray to have good dreams and might sleep
[787] on the Pipe bed for the same purpose. His dreams, when told, were important news for his fellows, as through them the future could be foretold.

The keeper was also given power to summon, call or "snare"
789 from a distance, enemies or reluctant friends. The Boy gave two
793 instances of the use of this power, both from the lips of his father, Lame Bull. When Lame Bull, on learning of his election as Flat Pipe keeper fled to the hills, the ex-keeper so summoned him, using the Flat Pipe itself in the rite. The nine Flat Pipe songs were sung and at the end of each, the ex-keeper holding the Pipe at arm's length in both hands with the stem pointed upward and outward, sang the Hair Rope song, then twisted the stem tip in a vertical near-circle first upward and outward and then inward and downward in a sort of beckoning motion as if drawing something toward him, then downward and finally lowered the bowl toward (or to?) the ground.

On a later occasion during Lame Bull's keepership, on a war
[726] expedition against the Piegan he learned in a dream where they were located and was told that five of them would be killed. The night before the attack on the Piegan, using a common pipe and the above calling rite, thrice performed, with the pipe stem pointed toward the distant Piegan camp, invisible at the time to the Gros Ventre party, and singing the Hair Rope song, he "called" five of the Piegan, who, separated from the main Piegan body, were killed by the Gros Ventres.

793 The keeper and co-keeper also were given power to use in hunt-
224 ing buffalo, but we were able to obtain no details on the rite. The

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

from which it was made, inao:, a term not used for white traders' paint. 386 [788]

The Gros Ventres used to get it out in the hills on Stiffarm Creek at Curly Head's place. It occurs as a yellow clay or dirt, as a yellow strip or streak in whitish banks or hillsides, or sometimes it was dug up from the ground. Not everyone could gather it; never men even in the old days, although in recent times Little Man used to do so; but only old women, and only certain ones at that. Coming Daylight's grandmother used to gather it and so did Coming Daylight herself who learned the method and ritual of gathering and preparing it from her grandmother. Singer's grandmother used to gather and prepare it, but she herself did not want to do it, although she had the chance to learn from her grandmother. The art and rite were "kind of handed down."

When about to gather the yellow clay, the woman would sit by the deposit, smoke, and while smoking pray that the clay she was about to gather would be abundant and good. An offering, usually of tobacco, was left at the spot. Both in gathering and in baking the clay the woman had to be alone. [782]

The baking of the clay was done at night by the woman who had gathered it. The children could not be around making a noise, and she herself had to be very quiet. She would make a sort of batter of the clay by mixing it with water, and would knead it into flat round cakes with a round hole in the center. A fire, formerly of buffalo chips, more recently of cow manure, was made, and when it died down to coals, the cakes were put at the bottom, covered up with live coals, and a fire built on top. The woman baking did not blow the fire and she shut everything up. If you blew on the fire the whole paint would disappear. The baking had to be done very skillfully to turn out just right. The baking was fraught with some danger, and some fear went with it. If the cakes baked too brown, this was a bad omen. When the cakes were baked sufficiently all the coals were removed and the cakes, blackened on the surface, were taken out and allowed to cool. The black surface was scraped away, leaving the clay now burnt red. This red clay was then pounded to fine powder on a piece of rawhide. [372] [787]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 in the ground to the east, south and west." The vower then got up, and facing east and holding up one piece at arm length, prayed, aloud or silently, lowered the bit of food in three stages, and put it in the earth, saying: "Last Child, there's your food." Then he did likewise to the south, and west.

Throughout this vowed rite, as throughout other Flat Pipe rites, the Pipe itself was not prayed to, but served only as a medium or symbol through which prayer was made directly or ultimately to the Supreme Being, "very much," as The Boy explained, "like pictures or Crucifixes used in the Catholic religion."

After the eating got under way, the vower would bring to the keeper the clothing, weapons, skins and other valuables presented in payment. Usually the keeper and co-keeper would distribute these, or most of them, to the ex-keepers, ex-co-keepers and other "holy" people who were present and who had helped him on this or previous occasions.

[787] If a man had had a dream in which a request was made of him to make a sweat-lodge for the Flat Pipe or if he had other grave reason, he might vow: "I will make a sweat-lodge for the Flat Pipe." If the vow were made in the winter time, the keeper would reserve the right to determine when it would be fulfilled, and might defer the fulfillment until some day in spring, perhaps at the time the spring seasonal rite was to be held. The vower besides building the sweat-lodge with the help of some relative or friend was obligated also to bring offerings, as valuable ones as he and his relatives and friends could afford. Not everyone would be well enough off to give offerings suitable in quantity and quality for this solemn occasion, and in such case the keeper might take some of the offerings that had previously been made by others to "cover" the Pipe (see infra) and tie them to the offerings-stick and sweat-lodge offerings pole to make up for the deficiency.

The whole sweat-lodge ritual was carried out, including the tying rite the night before, the offering and tying at the sweat-lodge pole, the praying, smudging and singing, the bringing of the Flat Pipe bundle to the sweat-lodge, and so forth, just as in the seasonal and vowed Flat Pipe smoking rites, with only minor variations. The vower assisted the keeper the night before in preparing the offerings, took the offerings-stick outside, and the next

793 blew medicine on the woman who then recovered. If you even
784 passed in front of the keeper, you would "drop in a cramp."

Food offered in the keeper's lodge, even on a purely social and informal occasion, had to be eaten there and could not be taken out unless some one told a personal war-deed. This taboo applied even to an ex-keeper guest, although not to the actual keeper's
[576] children. The keeper could break up the gathering by emptying his own pipe—a recognized Gros Ventre convention for hosts.

If anybody threw water at the keeper or hit him with water, this
[821] would cause rain.

Where a group of men were seated in a row or crescent having a purely social smoke, the general procedure was as previously described. If the Pipe keeper were one of the group, the man passing the pipe to him on either the clockwise or return circuit would first make a gesture with it "to the rear between himself and the keeper," if you didn't do that the keeper would not accept it.

The powers of the Feathered Pipe keeper and co-keeper specifically recorded by us were similar, apart from control of storm, rain and flood and, as far as they went, to those of the Flat Pipe keeper and co-keeper. The weather control powers will be described later under Feathered Pipe ritual.

[753] Anyone who stepped in the track of the keeper or co-keeper got a fit, for the soles of their moccasins were kept treated with wild parsley.

The keeper and co-keeper acquired by reason of their office certain doctoring powers.

787 The keeper had marked dreaming and forecasting powers, just as the Flat Pipe keeper had, and his dreams when told to the
793 people were "big news." In a dream he would, for instance, see animals fighting the Gros Ventres and this would be a warning to a war-raiding party to act discreetly. He would foretell from his dreams who would win in a prospective battle and how many would be killed. At the time the Flat Pipe was captured by the Assiniboine (see No. 8 in Appendix), the Feathered Pipe owner was fore-warned by the Pipe in a dream and he and his party escaped. If the keeper had a dream that foreboded evil fortune he would on waking talk to the Pipe and ask it not to let the evil

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

793
787

happen. If told in a dream, perhaps by the owl, of an impending epidemic, he might call all the people to his lodge and ritually paint them. If he dreamed of bad luck about to befall some individual in camp, he would tell him: "I dreamed that something was going to happen to you. You better make an offering. I will pray for you and try to avert the misfortune, but you must help."

793
577

In general the keeper and co-keeper of the Feathered Pipe were expected to live strictly in conformity with Gros Ventre ethical norms. Specifically recorded by us as unbecoming and forbidden to the keeper were: stealing, fighting, quarreling, losing temper, wife-beating, talking evil of fellow-tribesman, "talking dirty," threatening to kill, and, for more recent times, cursing and swearing like the whites.

793
784

The Feathered Pipe keepership seems to have involved for the keeper and co-keeper about the same privations and restrictions as did the Flat Pipe, although we obtained explicit information only regarding the following ones.

"The keeper of the Feathered Pipe was not supposed to comb his hair. It was all matted and made him look different from other men. You see him and you know at once he is a Pipe man. Sitting High's hair was that way. The locks were stuck together in the back. It made him look like a holy man. He never cut his hair and was not supposed to put water on it. His wife [the co-keeper] could comb her hair, but I do not think she could put water on it."[3]

The keeper could not bathe or swim in a stream; if he did, there would be rain. He could not wash his face but wiped it off with a cloth. He could not cut himself as a sacrifice or as a sign of mourning. He could not cry at mourning, not in the presence of the Pipe. Gambling by or with the keeper was forbidden, under the same penalty of life and with the same rite of absolution as described for the Flat Pipe keeper.

According to Al Chandler, the Feathered Pipe keeper and co-keeper, in contrast to the Flat Pipe keeper and co-keeper and

[3] In 1948 Al Chandler added: "The keeper cannot eat eggs, chicken, the head of any animal, nor dogs. In fact nothing about dogs was allowed near the keeper. Wherever they were, no one could walk in front of the keeper or co-keeper." [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

"glistening" [no doubt, highly polished], very dark grey or greyish brown stone, with three or four humps on the upper surface of the stone stem part. Our informants, who had seen the Pipe, disagreed as to whether there are feathers on the Pipe itself, and one of them stated that it had looked different to him on the two occasions he had seen it. 778 276

In the Pipe bundle were many other sacred objects besides the Pipe itself. Most of these had their separate wrappings or cases, the Pipe itself being wrapped in buffalo hair. The first keeper, according to Garter Snake, wrapped the Pipe itself in a bit of white buffalo skin. The outermost wrapping of the Pipe bundle was, originally at least, of tanned elkskin, tied around with four strings. There was also, again originally at least, a bear robe cover for the bundle.[4] 778

The Pipe bundle would shake and quiver when there was going to be an earthquake. The keeper could then predict that the earthquake would occur soon, although he could not predict the exact time. Not so long ago Cora Chandler's old aunt saw the bundle quiver, and sure enough that summer an earthquake occurred. [782 823]

Informants consistently agreed that there were four main things in the bundle, and that two of the four were the Pipe itself and the carved stone face.[5] Most of them included the feathered stick among the four. As to whether the fourth was the whistle, the owl, or the crane, there was considerable conflict of opinion, a conflict we were unable to clear up.

The feathered stick, from which the Pipe itself derived its name,

---

[4] Dr. Hagener noted at the 1951 opening that the innermost wrapping of the whole bundle was of "old bison leather" and the outer wrapping of modern cloth." [R.F.]

[5] Dr. Hagener stated in letter of Jan. 18, 1954, "The pipe displayed in the pictures [Plate 3, C and D] was not the chief pipe of the bundle (that having mysteriously disappeared). It was however made of the red stone commonly traded from the Minnesota area. Although there were other pipes in the bundle this was the only one we were permitted to see. Iron Man checked on the presence of other pipes by feeling inside the leather casings, but did not bring them out." Under date of Aug. 8, 1954, Dr. Hagener remarked: "Dr. Nitz was of the opinion that there were two somewhat similar pipes in the bundle, one of which had disappeared. The picture . . . is of the remaining one." [R.F.] [439 276]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

covering it. When they talked to the image, they prayed for whatever they wanted, but did not mention Bha'a. Whom the image represented is not known: probably Bha'a, but this is uncertain. 778

In recent times, the last real keeper, Curly Head, had danced with the image, contrary to all the ritual rules. Curly Head is consistently reported by informants to have been very careless as well as poorly informed about the ritual and other observances connected with the Feathered Pipe keepership.

The face when exposed was apt to look different to different people on any one occasion as well as to the same person on different occasions. To one man the face seemed not to want to look at him; it "kind of turned away and sweated." To another observer, a woman, it appeared as "a rock that had two shining eyes." Al Chandler had seen the face three times. On each occasion it had a different expression: on the first it looked as if it were "smiling, sort of bashful;" on the second, "kind of sad;" on the third, "sad." On the one occasion on which his wife, Cora Chandler, had seen the face, it "seemed like it was looking away, and wouldn't look at her." 778 532

According to Al Chandler, if the face smiled, this was an omen that "everything was going to be good;" if it "looked in the opposite direction, something not good" would happen. According to Garter Snake, if when the keeper saw the face, it had paint on it, there would be plenty of food, no sickness, and so forth; if it had no paint on it, there would be sickness or other misfortune. 778 787

The whistle, of wood ("of an unknown kind of wood," according to Garter Snake), was given the first keeper from above. It was kept without wrapping in the Pipe bundle. 778 [534]

The owl in the bundle was the skin of a big owl, painted up, with few of the feathers still attached. The body was wrapped leaving the head and neck sticking out. This owl skin was apparently of modern introduction. According to Al Chandler, when a new keeper took over the Pipe, he could add to the bundle whatever he was told "by a voice" to add; Sitting High said he was told by God Himself to put that owl in the bundle. Sitting High used to talk a great deal to the owl. The owl's duty, accord-

785 couldn't stand it. I ran home to my grandmother and cried too
*796 because I pitied that young man." On another occasion, Thick
too, then a young boy, "cried from the pitiful scene," as he ex-
[152] pressed it. "Big Thunder," according to Coming Daylight, "had very long thick hair. When he was dancing around the pole in the Sacrifice Dance his hair swept the ground. It looked just awful. I screamed and ran home." From what was told The Boy by his brother who underwent this self-torture once in the Sacrifice Dance and twice alone on a knoll (see details of latter rite, pp. 393-398), "The beginning was hardest; as you went along, you got sort of numbed and the pain was not so bad." His brother had felt very acute pain at the trimming of the lacerated flesh. That night the pain was so intense that he could not sleep: "it was as if two red hot coals were there."

According to Al Chandler the Gros Ventres considered their Sacrifice Dance a much more severe ordeal in the way of self-torture and fasting than were the Sun Dances of neighboring tribes and to this severity they attributed the early abandonment of the rite.

After all the "dancers" had in turn gone through their self-torture, they left the scene together, and were through with their participation in the Sacrifice Dance and could break their fast. But, through the succeeding fourth night, some of the other participants (which ones we could not discover) continued their fast, and the others danced and sang.

*796 Certain important features of the Sacrifice Dance have not been mentioned so far, as we could not learn just where they fitted into the ritual sequence. We shall describe them now.

The Boy was quite positive that a sweat-lodge rite was held in connection with the Sacrifice Dance, on the fourth night of singing and just prior to the beginning of the Dance proper. In all likelihood the rite followed in general pattern that of the Sacred Pipe sweat-lodge. Sweet grass was the proper ritual material smudge throughout the Sacrifice Dance including this preliminary sweating.

787 Some of the participants in the Sacrifice Dance,—"not necessarily
*796 the one or ones who had made vows, but dancers trying their

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

utmost to be fervent and sincere,"—would, at some time or times (not specified by our informants) during the rite, keep staring fixedly for a long time at the "nest" in the fork of the center pole. The purpose was mostly "to see things that related to war." "If the gazer saw the forms of headless human beings, that meant that the Gros Ventres were going to be given an enemy to kill." Sometimes was seen a human form, healthy, all painted up and dressed in good clothes: This meant that the favors being sought through the Sacrifice Dance would be granted. In the Assiniboine and Cree Sun Dances, our Gros Ventre informants said, the staring is done in contrast to the Gros Ventre custom, at the knots in the center pole, but for what purpose our informants did not know.

This divination gazing to foreknow martial fortunes, taken together with the markedly martial symbolism underlying the scouting for and felling of the center pole, lend a definitely, although by no means exclusively or even predominantly, war coloring to the Sacrifice Dance,—a coloring almost entirely absent from the Sacred Pipe rites, which are concerned dominantly though not exclusively, with long life, food and health.

The gazing, at "Bha'a's nest," brought Bha'a, the Thunder Bird and ruler of the storm, prominently into the Sacrifice Dance, as did also the thunder bird and lightning symbols painted on the bodies of the dancers and carved on the center pole as well as certain reliances on and prayers to him during the Dance. "If the dancers had danced a long time," according to Al Chandler, "and were getting weak, Bha'a, it was claimed, could make it cool and shady or even make it rain." Bha'a, too, was mentioned, after the Supreme Being, in some at least of the prayers with the common pipe. In all cases however, where Bha'a entered into prayers, he was either given subordinate second-place mention or was appealed to as a subordinate agent, with limited autonomy of the Supreme Being. The vows, the sacrifices of goods and flesh, the tortures, and predominantly the prayers and rites were to the Supreme Being. As one informant put it, "all the things done in the Sacrifice Dance,—the tortures and so forth,—were one great mass prayer to the Supreme Being."

We recorded five of the Sacrifice Dance songs, but there were

CHAPTER VI

SUPERNATURAL POWERS

Most of the Gros Ventre rites and observances thus far dealt with in the present volume were intended to fulfill the wishes and needs of the whole tribe or of larger segments thereof and were actively participated in by all or many members of the tribe. In this sense these rites and observances constituted collectivistic public cult, and leaned toward cooperative altruism. The chief wishes they sought to satisfy were for continued long life for all, with abundance of food and other material necessities, and with freedom from epidemics, storms and tribal enemies, and for continued concord and solidarity among the tribal members. Ritual reliance was upon the petition, mostly to the major deities, the Supreme Being and Bha'a, through prayer expressed in word and in act. 771

Most of the rites and observances to be dealt with from here on were intended to fulfill the wishes and needs of specific individuals and were participated in by very small groups. In this sense these rites and observances constituted individualistic private cult, and leaned toward egoism, often a competitive egoism. The chief wishes they sought to satisfy were for knowledge of distant or future events, prestige through war prowess and wealth, cure of individual illness, and success in gambling or in sex affairs. Ritual reliance was upon the immediate help given in each case of appeal by an ancestral spirit or upon supernatural power imparted once for all by some non-ancestral superhuman being.

In the present section we shall take up first the personal ancestral helpers, and after that the personal supernatural powers. 787 ● 769

Separate treatment of personal ancestral helpers and of personal powers seems advisable in view of certain rather fundamental differences between the two cultural patterns involved. The spiritual helper was appealed to for knowledge of distant or future events; other lesser beings for supernatural power in matters of

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

769
787

war, wealth, curing, gambling, and sex. The helper imparted no power of clairvoyance or prophecy; the other lesser beings did impart one or other of the specific powers above listed. The helper had to be summoned to come in person on each occasion when needed; the other beings gave power once for all to the receiver and were not, at least not ordinarily, summoned to come in person when the imparted power was exercised. The helper was always a deceased relative of the helped; the power-giver was a non-ancestral being. The helper was not acquired by quest, he more or less forced his services on the recipient, and was not transferable; personal power was commonly (although not always) acquired by quest, was accepted or refused freely, and was more commonly transferable.

Our chief sources of information upon personal ancestral helpers and personal supernatural powers were: among the men, The Boy, Thick, Al Chandler, Thomas Main, Turn Toes; among the women, Coming Daylight, Singer, Garter Snake, Mary Ereaux, Cora Chandler. Their competence will, we believe, become clear from the circumstances to be noted passim in the present section.

Ancestral Helpers

The ancestral helper complex among the Gros Ventres has been recorded in detail by us in two papers published in 1944,[1] to which the reader is referred. The following account is a summarized version of these two papers.

The ancestral or ghost helper was called tsätsuwa'a,[2] of uncertain etymology. The word was used exclusively for such ancestral helpers, as distinct from other ghosts (see p. 23).

Such a ghost helper was acquired, not by quest through fasting or crying, as power was more commonly acquired. Acquisition usually came about as follows. A man or woman would keep some momento of a deceased close relative, such as some prized possession or else a rib or tooth[3] or lock of hair of the deceased,—either in

[1] Flannery, 1944, pp. 54-59; Cooper, 1944, pp. 80-84.

[2] This same word is used by the Gros Ventres at present for "radio."

[3] After the body had decomposed. Formerly the Gros Ventres did not bury the dead in the ground, cf. Flannery, 1953, p. 211.

[178
764]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

order to acquire the ghost of the deceased as a helper, or else solely out of regard for the departed. In most cases nothing happened; in a few, however, the ghost of the deceased became the survivor's supernatural helper. In these exceptional cases, the survivor would be apt to hear knocking, whistling or other disturbances around the spot where the memento was kept. Then the ghost would appear to the survivor, perhaps first putting him in a deep sleep, and would offer to become his helper, or ask him if he would wish this. An offer made by the ghost could not easily be refused.

769
787

The survivor had some leeway—Al Chandler's adoptive father, Little Man, accepted such an offer only on condition that he would call upon the ghost for his personal use and not for public use—but more commonly the ghost not only took the initiative in offering its services but more or less forced its services upon the survivor.

While the survivor was still in deep sleep or trance, he or she —women as well as men could have a ghost helper—would be taught by the ancestral spirit the proper rites, including always and particularly a song, to be used by the survivor in summoning and making use of the spirit. One such ghost-summoning song (number 27), a wordless one, recorded as sung by The Boy, had been given to Woman, nicknamed Bear Old Woman, who died around 1907, by her deceased husband (or brother?), Bad Bad Bull. It had been his doctoring song when he was alive and his ghost gave it to her to use both in summoning him and in curing people.[4] It should be emphasized, however, that a person could have an ancestral helper without having doctoring power, and vice versa. A person who lacked a ghost helper could not conduct the ghost-summoning tent-shaking rite, no matter how great power of other kinds he had acquired by quest or otherwise.

Songs other than those given for use in summoning the ancestral helper and conducting the shaking tent rite were sometimes given and taught by the helper to the person who had the helper, on occasions other than that on which the summoning song itself

[4] Cf. Cooper, 1944, 62, 72-75.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

769
787

was given. Two such songs, victory songs, given during war raids, were recorded by us.

A great many Gros Ventre men and women had power acquired by quest or otherwise from non-ancestral beings, but far fewer had [184] ancestral helpers such as we are describing. Our informants, in fact, whose combined memories carried back to the early 1860's, could recall only five or at most six, seven or eight: Good Singer, Woman (or Bear Old Woman), Morning Star Appears (probably the same as Rising Cross), Bird Child, Bull Head, and perhaps two or three others.[5] Persons with ghost helpers had prestige, not greater however than outstanding doctors had.

[425] Power acquired from non-ancestral beings could be transferred by the possessor to another person through gift or sale. But a ghost helper was not transferable; such power was owned property; a ghost helper was not. A given person never had more than one ghost helper, so far as we could discover. In the shaking tent rite, only this one ghost helper had part,—no other being, neither the Supreme Being, nor Bha'a, nor Little Spirit,[6] nor any power-giving being.

At the time the ghost helper was accepted by its surviving relative, it promised him (or her) to come when summoned with the summoning song, but, in sharp contrast to the practice of non-ancestral power-bestowing beings, it imparted no power to him whatever, whether in war, medicine, gambling or love, except the "power," if it can be called such, to summon the ghost and except by sheer coincidence as in the case of Bad Bad Bull mentioned above. The ghost helper imparted not power, but knowledge; not any power of clairvoyance, prophecy or wisdom, but knowledge itself; not once and for all at the time of being accepted by the person, as did the power-bestowing beings but from time to time if and when summoned. The sole function of the ghost helper as

[5] Cf. Flannery, 1944, pp. 55-58; Cooper, 1944, pp. 62-77 passim. Rising Cross of Flannery, p. 56, was pretty surely the same person as Morning-Star-Appears or Morning-Star-Is-Up, of Cooper, p. 71; probably the same person as mentioned in Watches-All's narrative by Kroeber, 1908, pp. 216-17.

[6] That Little Spirit could function in the shaking tent rite in place of an [114] ancestral spirit, as stated reservedly by Cooper, 1940, p. 112, is an error, corrected by field data gotten by him later.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

such was, in answer to questions asked it on each separate occasion when summoned, to reveal knowledge about past, present, future or distant happenings or to impart counsel and directions on what to do in given cases of illness or danger. The ghost helper rarely if ever came unsummoned and only exceptionally volunteered information. As a rule it gave information in response to specific questions asked. The helper was never questioned about trivial or silly matters, or about such things as the fidelity or infidelity of a wife. Questions would be asked, for example, regarding missing persons, the whereabouts and plans of the enemy, the fortunes of a distant war party,[1] the outcome of an impending battle or of an illness, the location of a stolen article and the identity of the thief, the best place to go for good buffalo-hunting.

769
787

The ghost helper did not hover around the person habitually. When need for its services arose it had to be summoned from afar, from the distant abode of the dead.

When the services of a person with a ghost helper were desired, he (or she) was approached with an offer of a pipe to smoke. He was often reluctant or afraid to accept, but could not easily refuse.

The summoning rite was held at night, with the fire out, in darkness,—ordinarily in the performer's lodge, but, if the party were away from camp, in a small emergency shelter or sweat-lodge. If the rite were held in the performer's lodge in camp, a blanket-curtain was hung up across part of the back of the lodge, and the performer stayed hidden behind this out of sight of the clients or spectators.

Commonly, although not always, the performer was first wrapped in a blanket and then securely bound with thongs, the binding often being done by some skeptic present who was challenged by the performer to do it.

After being tied, the ghost-possessor sang his summoning song, those present joining in. As the ghost helper approached, whistling, humming, and other noises, sometimes an owl call, would be heard. As the ghost entered the lodge, always through the top, the top of the lodge and often the whole lodge would shake violently, and

[1] For an example of use of ancestral helper on a war party, see Flannery, 1953, pp. 94-98.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

769 something (presumably the ghost) would sometimes be heard sliding down the side of the tent—behind the curtain where the
●787 performance was and landing with a thump. Soon after the thongs with which the performer had been bound would be thrown out, rolled in a tangled ball over the curtain at the spectators.

Next a pipe would be lit and offered to the ghost to smoke, and in the darkness the tobacco would be seen to glow up rhythmically each time the ghost drew on it. The ghost itself, however, at this juncture and throughout the rite remained invisible. The people present would finish smoking this pipe, after which the ghost would ask why he had been summoned. Most ghost helpers talked a whistling talk; some just in a natural voice.

If the ghost could answer offhand the question or questions asked it would do so. Otherwise it would tell the questioners to wait while it went away to get the information requested. As it departed through the top, the tent shook. While the ghost was away the people in the lodge would light the fire, have a smoke, put out the fire and sing the ghost song. On returning through the top with the usual shaking thereof the ghost would give the information asked. Usually such information was dependable, but not always; one such ghost we were told of had been a liar when living—"so you couldn't expect his spirit to tell the truth!"

After the ghost had given the desired information (or perhaps earlier in the rite, after it had had its smoke), food, especially puppy meat was offered it, and in the dark the spectators could hear the ghost eating. Finally the ghost would depart through the top of the lodge, which would shake violently as the ghost left.

After the ghost's departure, the performer would come out from behind the curtain, the fire would be re-lighted, the customary prayer before eating would be offered by the performer to the Supreme Being and other beings, all present would eat the food left over from the ghost's repast, and, after smoking and chatting a while together, all would depart.

In the ghost helper calling-rite carried out under emergency conditions, as on war expeditions, certain supplications and omissions could be and were sometimes made. The several detailed accounts of seances recorded by us indicate moreover that quite

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

apart from emergency conditions, ritual variations from the above-described pattern occurred, perhaps in accord with varying ritual instructions received by different individuals from their respective ghost helpers. 769 787

Before leaving the ghost helper complex and taking up the power complex, we may mention here one case, given us by Al Chandler, the only one of its kind we recorded, which shares certain elements peculiar to each. Al Chandler's adoptive father, Little Man, was keeping a rib bone of his deceased uncle, who had been "a kind of medicine man." His uncle's spirit came and asked Little Man: "Why do you do this? What are you going to do with me?" "This is just for myself," Little Man replied. "I don't want to be that kind who have spirits. If I need you I am going to call on you and I want you to help me. I am not going to make you a popular servant (not going to use the rib in general practice). But if I need you, you can come and help me." 755 769 787

Little Man, Al told us, made use of that rib one time when he cured his brother-in-law, old Turn Toes, of facial paralysis (caused by ghosts: cf. supra, p. 23). Brothers-in-law like to tease each other. So when Turn Toes came to Little Man to be treated, the latter took the rib, rubbed it four times, and in fun twisted Turn Toes' mouth way around on the other side. At this, Little Man's wife got angry and said: "You shouldn't do that to him." Little Man said: "I just want to make sure that the next time his mouth won't go crooked on this other side." So then Little Man put his brother-in-law's mouth straight and shoved his eyes up in place. And Al added: "You can see that old man [Turn Toes] today [1940] and he is all right." [Turn Toes has since died, in 1942 or 1943]. 801

Whether in the above case curing power was in the rib itself or whether the ghost of Little Man's uncle came and cured on occasions of use of the rib, is not clear. If the latter, as implied in Little Man's words to his uncle, at the beginning, we have a curing differing materially from the one to be described in the following on supernatural power, and much more akin to the Woodland Alqonquian concept of the guardian spirit proper,—the guardian spirit who comes on call to cure and otherwise to help the possessor, 769 787

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

769 —rather than the power-giving being who bestows upon the
787 recipient power the latter can use at will without having recourse to or summoning the original donor. No historical interpretation is here being suggested. It looks, instead, that Little Man's deviant power in the case was merely an idiosyncratic variant of the ghost helper concept to which, not wishing to assume the normal public offices of persons with ghost helpers, he attached to curing functions not for all ailments but for ailments caused by ghosts.

Personal Supernatural Powers

787 Supernatural power was acquired by an individual mostly for
778 success in war, accumulation of wealth, doctoring, gambling or love. It was obtained more commonly by quest, although often without quest, and could be transferred by sale, gift or bequest. It was bestowed by many different kinds of beings,—mostly quadrupeds, birds, snakes, rocks; in some cases, ghosts, indeterminate "persons" or "spirits." How and from whom power was acquired differed appreciably in accordance with the several above-listed kinds of power. These differences we shall describe later in detail under these several categories: war, wealth, doctoring, gambling and love. Before doing so, we shall deal with certain characteristics more or less common to all the above five categories.

782 In general, the Gros Ventres distinguished between three chief
869 methods of fulfilling their desires and wants: natural ability, prayer and power. A person was supposed to make best use of his native physical and mental endowments to acquire skills, to use his wits, to develop his capacities and personality,—in a word, to rely on himself and to stand on his own feet, whether as food-getter, craftsman, warrior, gambler, or what not. His second recourse, where his inborn and acquired abilities fell short or threatened to fall short of enabling him to fulfill his wishes and needs, was prayer, primarily although by no means exclusively to the Supreme Being. The third choice, in the ideal order, was resort to power.

Turn Toes, for instance, as an orphaned boy used to be advised

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

782
869
[761]

say: "It is not good to ask that kind of a career [from powers]. It would be a life misspent and would be dearly paid for. Man's dearest possession is life, and this would be cut off."

787
869
761

Charles Buckman had heard old men say that, although they had fasted and prayed over and over again for power, they had never had even a dream, and that this may have been why they had lived to old age.

According to The Boy, his father Lame Bull, when a young man, dreamed that the being who lived on Baldy Butte in the Bear Paw Mountains called him. So on one occasion when the Gros Ventres were camped near this butte, Lame Bull thought this was a good time to accept the invitation and go up on this butte and sleep. He was getting ready to do so, when his father gave him a sound scolding: "I always told you not to try to be a holy man, a man with power of that kind. Those who have such power do not live long. Forget about sleeping on the mountain and attend to the horses and lodge poles. We need you at home. Mind your own business. So Lame Bull did not get to sleep on the mountain. His father was boss."

Coming Daylight came back repeatedly to the same theme. "I am not a medicine woman [with power] and that is why I have lived to be such an old woman." "I am not sorry I refused the medicine power offered me in a dream. Medicine people die soon. It seems like they have a certain time to die and they don't live to be old like myself and Singer. These medicine people are not strong like others." "I never accepted any kind of power. Those who have power die too soon." "They [the beings] used to trick people into taking all these things [powers] because they wanted them to die. The holy dreams are very tricky."

787
778

Singer gave her own experience. "I used to take a blanket or other offering and put it in deep water and pray that they [apparently the water monsters] would have pity on me. One night after I had just done this I dreamed that a person was standing there and that nearby lay the emaciated body of one who was very very sick. This person told me: 'I give you my body.' This is the way a being puts it in a dream when going to bestow power. Then the person showed me how to doctor, he used a pipe-stem which

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

was full of 'nicotine,' and showed me how to draw out sickness through the stem. But I told him: 'I don't care to have any power, because people who accept power have only a certain length of time to live and it is always too soon [short].' " 787 778

Those who possessed gambling power in particular always became afflicted with some serious ailment of their legs and/or arms. There would be pain in and swelling of the joints, and the possessors would die before their time. This happened to Lone Bear, The Boy's wife's father, who had gambling power; while still in his prime his legs went bad, and even though he quit gambling to escape the penalty, he died prematurely. Red Whip, too, one of the greatest of those with gambling power, who died in 1912, died, the Gros Ventres believed, before his time. 753 787 778

It was believed that Bull Lodge, a great medicine man, did not live his life out.

A person, however, who had acquired power and later transferred all of it by gift or sale to another person or persons could thereby escape the penalty and live his life out. In this case the penalty would be transferred, along with the power, to the transferee or transferees.

Doctoring power was sometimes avoided or refused for other reasons than fear of or unwillingness to accept the penalty of illness or shortened life. Doctors, somewhat like keepers of the sacred Pipes, had to live restricted lives, abstain from certain foods, and avoid certain actions. Personal liberty was thus curtailed. Coming Daylight, when a young girl, was offered medicine power by a man four successive times in dreams, but she refused: "I did not want to be a medicine woman. I did not like it because medicine people suck on the affected part of the patient and have to swallow what they extract,—even though that man was showing me that I would have to extract with my hands, and not by sucking." Bad Bad Bull had power to cure the powerful "stomach-eating sickness" [cancer?] and used to suck out the small animal that caused it. In his old age he wanted to give this power to his sister, but she would say: "Oh, I am bashful. I would not be able to doctor that sickness. I would like to have the power so I could cure the pains but I would not like the part [or the curing pro- 787 756

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787 756 cedure] where you pull [suck] it [the animal] out." When she would say that people would tell her: "You should have taken the power and so gotten a lot of things [in payment] for curing that disease."

[831] Some women would refrain from asking power, particularly love power, from men who had it, because payment included allowing sex relations with the man.

787 778 While, then, the possession of powers brought the possessor some very worthwhile advantages, advantages differing in kind according to the specific power acquired, it had its drawbacks—chiefly illness and shortened life, but also restrictions on freedom and other obligations distasteful to at least some individuals. The advice, therefore, given by parents and councilors to avoid seeking power is understandable. So, too, is the fact that many neither sought power nor accepted it when it was offered by supernatural beings or by fellow-tribesman. Many thus clung more to what appears to The Boy and others to have been the ideal Gros Ventre philosophy of life: For the fulfillment of your wishes rely on yourself and on prayer, rather than on magical power.

We recorded a number of cases of refusal of power, some of them already cited above in passing. In no case of refusal except one did the person refusing suffer any evil consequences therefor, and two of our informants, Coming Daylight and Singer explicitly stated that such refusal curtailed no penalty. A person was quite free to accept or decline an offer of power whether made by a power-giving being or a power-possessing fellow-tribesman. Neither of the latter would take offense if the offer were declined.

756 778 787 Coming Daylight in various free chats volunteered many details of her own personal refusals of power. Her earliest experience came when she was a very young girl, only about eight years old, and was living with her grandmother. "I used to sleep in a big lodge [with her grandmother]. While I was sleeping, a man came and wakened me. He had a bag of medicine on his back and told me, 'You can be a medicine woman.' The third time he appeared to me [in dreams], there was a person lying there, just skin and bones. The man [with the medicines] said to me, 'You could cure such persons as this one. You can take all these medicines,'

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

and he spread out, all the medicines and told her what each was for and said, 'Do everything I tell you to do. Lay your hands on the sick and you will have it [medicine? cause of illness?] on your hands.' But I never wanted to take this and I would tell the man so. In the morning I would tell my dream to my grandmother, although I was not supposed to do so until after the fourth dream, and my grandmother would say to me: 'Do not say anything. You will be a great medicine woman.' But I did not want this power. I kept refusing it and for this reason after the man had appeared to me in dreams the fourth time he quit coming. I would have been great if I had accepted the power but I did not want it.—Maybe if this dream had come to me later I might have accepted the power and then I would have been like Good Singer [Coming Daylight's father's sister, a famous medicine woman of Coming Daylight's earlier years]." 787 ● 756 778

On later occasions, too, she was offered power in dreams, but she always refused and does not regret having so refused. "But," she said, "all I wanted was to live a peaceful life and get food easily. I have always been well fixed with things to eat and have gotten things easily, because I prayed for these things instead of taking medicine power . . . besides I had too many children to be a medicine woman. . . . My children were all Catholics. I too joined the Church, and I will be a good Catholic until I die."

Coming Daylight was also offered in a dream the power to "know children," that is, power to doctor women who did not want children and likewise refused it.*

On other occasions, an old medicine man, who had cured her infant daughter would offer to transfer curing power to her, at the implicitly understood common price of granting sex relations with him. "If you want that power," he would say, "you can come crying to me." But she used to answer: "Oh, I wouldn't do that because you are one of those who like to have women and you would try to have me."

One instance of refusal of power by Singer was noted previously. Another was described by her as follows. "Once when we had gone to Rocky Boy Reservation, I went quite a distance to fetch

*Cf. Flannery, 1953, p. 129.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

756 wood. Something in my sleeve kept biting me. I would sort of
work my sleeve but it kept biting me. Finally I took off my dress
● 787 and found it was a big spider with long legs. I did not kill it but
778 just brushed it off. That night in a dream the spider told me:
'Because you had pity on me, I will have pity on you.' But I told
the spider: 'I do not care for any powers from a bug or spider.'
Afterwards people told me I should have accepted the offered
power so that I could doctor spider bites. If you accept a power
like that you are shown in your dream how to doctor. Nothing
happens if you refuse such power." Every once in a while people
were bitten by spiders. Cora Chandler had heard of one such case:
[165] "One fourth of July at Lodge Pole a woman got bitten while fix-
ing her tent and died the same evening. Had Singer accepted the
power offered her, she could have doctored that woman."

Little Man, Al Chandler's adoptive father, once refused power from a rattlesnake to cure snake bites, but acquired power to cure seven dying persons. He had cured people and wanted to pass on what remained of his power to Al. But the latter in recounting the matter stated: "I did not want this power on account of the Catholic Church. I was afraid I might poison somebody. But the old man [Little Man] said: 'You will know all about it and what to do. All you have to do is to accept it. The rest will come to you. I am getting old and you might need it for your children. You could doctor your own children.' But the Catholics did not want you to do such things." So Al declined the old man's offer.

787 By three different men, who possessed love power, The Boy
832 was offered this power, but in all cases he refused. His accounts
778 follow.

"One old man lived near Bear Paws and when he came to my place, then on the Milk River, I used to accommodate him, although he would eat with my father, Lame Bull. He appreciated this and wanted to do something to repay the favor. So he said to me: 'I am going to give you my woman's medicine in payment for consideration of your service to me. I haven't anything of adequate value to pay you back.' He had a looking glass he used to do his stuff with. But I diplomatically refused. I told him: 'I do not like that kind of thing and never have, although I appreciate the fact

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

that you are grateful and what you are offering to do for me.' The old man did not get mad or insulted, and he said to me: 'It is well you refuse this thing anyhow.' He did not tell me all the details (about the power and its manner of use), because I refused it. 778 787 832

"Another old man offered me that kind of medicine [love power] out of my appreciation of my good treatment of him, and did not get mad when I refused it."

One other old man, who liked his liquor, was on one occasion given a treat of it by The Boy and another man. Soon the old man was feeling pretty good and started to get generous and said to The Boy: "Now, my son, I am an old man now and I appreciate your giving me this drink, so much so that I am going to give you something worth something." It was this love medicine. But The Boy "refused him nicely" and did not take it.

One final illustration of refusal,—"just an old time story," Coming Daylight called it who related it,—may be given, the only case we recorded of penalty believed to follow refusal. Perhaps even in this case the refusal was not so much of power as of a request to hold a Sacrifice Lodge. 787 778

"A man was hunting north of the canyon [near the present St. Paul's mission in the Little Rockies] and was shown [by whom?] a nice clean big cave. In this cave were big strings, like a spider puts before he makes a whole web, that is one strand crossing the other at right angles. Right in the middle [at the intersection] was a medicine wheel, of the kind always used at the Sacrifice Lodge. The man just stood and gazed at it. He saw it good and it belonged to the Sacrifice Lodge. He camped in the mountains overnight. That night this wheel told him in his dream: 'You ought to take me so you can make this Sacrifice Lodge.' But the man did not take it. He went back to camp and told his dream and his refusal to take the wheel. After that he began to waste away with a sickness called 'cut away,' in which the flesh starts to disappear in a small place and just sinews show and then it spreads. It was a quick sickness and he died of it. They say this happened to him because he did not take that medicine wheel." [164]

From what has been recorded on the preceding pages it seems quite clear that the individual was under little or no supernatural

or social compulsion to seek power, and was subject to no penalty if he refused it when offered to him by supernatural beings or by fellow-tribesmen. In fact, a certain amount of social pressure was brought to bear upon him to avoid and refuse it. Each individual had to make his own free choice, weighing the advantages against the disadvantages, the profit against the cost. The decision to seek or refrain from seeking, to accept when offered or to refuse, was entirely up to him.

We have listed the disadvantages, the cost. What were the advantages, the profit? Chiefly prestige, material gains or wealth, and sex favors, depending on the type of power sought or accepted. The great warrior and the great doctor who attained eminence through power both enjoyed high prestige. Which of the two, warrior or doctor, ranked higher is hard to say. Both had very high standing and both were deeply respected. The Boy and Coming Daylight inclined to rank the great warrior a bit higher than the great doctor. In The Boy's word, "both had high standing, each in his own field. The warrior perhaps rated higher. The medicine man had standing, but only on certain occasions was he thought of. But a renowned warrior had the admiration of the tribe because he had risked his life and was a strategist and by his own efforts." According to Coming Daylight "it was the greatest thing to be a warrior and look for the enemy." Al Chandler leaned more to the view that "if a man was honest about his medicine,—so many times they [medicine men] faked and tried to got everything a person owned,—and was known to be honest, he was respected to the same degree as a warrior." All informants were however fully agreed that both warriors and doctors ranked high. Doctors who had power to kill and who were suspected of using it were more feared than respected. Men who had gambling powers ranked far below warriors and doctors in the prestige scale. Of one the most famous recent Gros Ventre possessors of gambling power The Boy remarked: "He was just a little fellow. He was just a gambler," and a man known to have gambler power could not be selected to the high office of Pipe-keeper. Likewise those who had love power were usually rather chary of advertising widely the fact as well as the source of their power.

Power thus in varying degrees conferred prestige, a much sought

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

after good in Gros Ventre competitive life. Most types of power,— and not only power to acquire wealth directly,—brought material rewards. War raids had largely the purpose of acquiring horses, the main Gros Ventre wealth in earlier days, from the enemy.[9] Doctoring brought the practitioner large emoluments; gambling power netted the owner rich winnings. Love power, in addition to securing sex favors for its possessor, could also be a source of good profit through transfer by sale to others. Wealth among the Gros Ventres gave prestige on its own account as well as material ease and security. Further, wealth was inextricably tied up with prestige as goals sought through military, medicinal, gambling and love powers. 554 778 [721]

These were the chief advantages and profit or power which the individual had to weight against the disadvantages and cost thereof.

Many individuals, in view of the cost, neither sought nor accepted power, as we have seen.

Many others, however, men and women and even some young boys and girls, sought or accepted power, and such power was by no means confined to professional medicine men but was widely distributed among the laity. A few, but very few, children had power: the several cases recorded will be given later. But many women as well as men acquired it; what exact proportion of whole adult population is hard to say. The Boy, Thick concurring, stated: "Only a few men and women had ancestral helpers, but it was the usual thing for grownups, men and women, to have some kind of power." On another occasion, they said: "Not everyone tried to get power [by fasting on mountains] but only certain individuals. For instance, of three men only one might try, the other two might not care to try." On still another occasion, The Boy remarked: "Not all who slept on mountains got power. Lots got nothing; they didn't even dream. Only a few got power from such a quest. Some tried over and over again but never got anything. A man might spend five to seven days on the mountains and yet not even dream. If, say 30 or 40 slept on the mountains, only three or four of them might get power. Only a few Gros 778 787

[9] For discussion of Gros Ventres concept of wealth, see Flannery, 1953, pp. 73-79.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

778 Ventres, not many, had power. Males would start questing when
787 young, but older men would also go out to seek power. After a man got to be really old, he no longer tried." Charles Buckman had heard old men say that they had fasted and prayed (on the hills) over and over again but that in spite of the sufferings they thus endured "they never had even a dream," and, in another chat, he remarked that "few fasted and prayed."

[184] It seems, therefore, that many men did not go out on hills to seek power (women never did so), and that relatively few even of those who did go were successful. At least, very few were successful in acquiring really significant or great power. On the other hand, many, the majority perhaps of both men and women, had minor power or powers of one kind or another, gotten initially otherwise than by quest or by transfer. Thus for example, Coming Daylight, who had repeatedly refused curing powers offered her in dreams and who insisted she was in no sense a medicine woman or "holy," this is, power-possessing, woman, had certain herbal curatives, for family use, given her by her maternal grandmother and by her mother's sister, Good Singer, a noted medicine woman of earlier days. Or, to use just one other example, many women and men had bought love medicine from other men or women. These minor powers, of many different kinds not always distinguishable from non-magical knowledge and ability, were apparently very common,—"the usual thing," as The Boy expressed it above, "for grown-ups, men and women."

The Power Quest

787 The favorite time of the year for going out to seek war, wealth
827 and doctor power was spring. In The Boy's words: "It was known to be easier to get doctor power in spring. Everybody used to say that the young bear cubs used to wash their feet with the first rain of the spring. Bears were easy to get power from in spring. They were eager to give their power at this season. All nature is alive in spring. Grass, trees and leaves wake up. Hibernating animals used to sing before coming out of their winter dens. Bears come out of their hibernating dens after the first rain of spring. The body of even a human being is sort of stationary in winter

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

time. All we can do in winter time is to look after our bodies. But in spring the body feels good, and when we look around we see the grass and leaves and animals appearing. There is a revolutionary change. They get power at that time. They take advantage of the newness of all nature. Everything is in blossom. Most animals then have their young. It is the most 'affectionate' season of the year. Nature smiles on all living creatures. Food and all that man uses in his life are easier to get then. Doctoring power was gotten more easily then than at other time—most who went out in spring did so principally and most frequently to seek war power, so some being or animal or something would give them power to be great warriors; or to acquire wealth in horses and not to be poor, or to get things easily without much effort. Some however went out chiefly to get doctoring power." While however spring was the favorite season for the power quest, it was not the only one. 787 827

Women never went out on the hills to seek power. This was done only by males. The latter would ordinarily begin to do so around the age of seventeen or eighteen years, or before twenty-one, just before reaching full manhood, most of them to get power to be great warriors. Young boys did not go out on the mountains. Only one case of a young boy going out to seek power was recalled by The Boy and Thick. He was about twelve or fourteen years old. He did not go far out, but did his crying a little way from camp and would return every night and sleep outside the tent where he and his people lived. Another such exceptional case was that of Bull Lodge, Garter Snake's father, who started his quest sleeping out in the mountains when he was only about twelve years old. 787

The place for those to go who sought war, wealth, or doctor power was the top of buttes, hills or mountains, some distance from camp. Certain of these elevated spots seem to have been preferred localities. 787 823

McCann Butte, the first butte of the Bear Paws, was specifically mentioned by informants as having been frequented by Stiff-arm, by Bear Nose, and earlier by Coming Daylight's grandmother's brother, the first Crow Bull, in their quest. Bull Lodge, Garter Snake's father, got doctoring power on Baldy Butte, the

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787 highest of the Bear Paws, and it was to Baldy Butte that The Boy's father, Lame Bull, was called in a dream. Another Gros Ventre, still living, sought power on Eagle Child Butte at the west end of the Little Rockies.
823

At three other spots mentioned by our informants quest for power was always a failure. According to Coming Daylight, "There was a rock [location not specified by her] that looked like a buffalo sitting. Many young men tried to fast and sleep there, but they claimed they never could because there was always something to scare them away. It was a spirit that looked like a person. They could hear people talking and there would be a light just like a camp fire. With all that they just could not stand it. No one ever stayed there."

Cora Chandler stated that "not far from Hays there is a steep hill called by the Indians, Electric Butte. Stiffarm used to tell all kinds of stories about that place and used to say that no one could sleep there for power because electricity came out of the rock(s) there." Stiffarm tried many times to sleep there but always had to run away. Coming Daylight's husband, Warrior, used to try to have thunder dreams and thunder power. She and he once went together [not questing] to Electric Butte. "There were," she said, "marks of electricity on the rock like at night when it storms." The rock had rolled down. "We did not touch it, except when Warrior put it back in place—During electric storms flashes come out of it."

The third place,—this one by exception not a mountain top,—was a hot spring somewhere south of the Missouri River. "Across the Missouri River," Singer said, "there was a big spring with no trees or anything [near it]. The stream goes away from this place in a curve. In the old days they [power questers] used to sleep there to get power from that spirit. But no one could ever stay because they were frightened when they would hear someone who had a big pot of boiling water say: 'I am going to have the legs,' or 'I am going to have the arms.' So the one who was trying to sleep there [for power] would run away. Long afterwards I went with some old women to see the place. It looked different than in the old days. The water used to go up and down, and once in a

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

while shells like those I wore for earrings would show. But the place was grown over with weeds and white settlers were there. The old women said: 'It is funny that they [the whites] do not hear the spirit getting [ready] a pot of boiling water for them.' They thought it strange that the white people could stay there." 787 823

Those few men who sought gambling power—it was never sought or possessed by women, we were told—sought it not on hill tops but in the lowlands, in the brush and timber along streams, from prairie chickens or ghosts there. The quester chose by preference a place where wild morning-glories formed a sort of bower or "tipi." The seeker would cry and when he got sleepy would crawl into the bower and sleep. In his sleep a prairie chicken or ghost would give him a song, certain rules to live by, procedures and rites to use in the hand game,—the only game in which gambling power was used,—and perhaps some powers of the legerdemain order. The person who acquired gambling power by quest would be very chary of revealing his quest experiences.[10]

Seemingly still more secretive and tight lipped were persons who acquired love power through quest. According to The Boy, our only informant on this point, "these fellows [who had it] were careful never to tell who gave this power. Sometimes they would say a 'person' gave it, but it was generally known that it came from bird or animal on the ground or in the water." On other occasions he stated: "Usually some animal gave love power," and questers "did not ask for success in gambling or love on the mountains, but on the prairies or in the brush along rivers." The being would give the quester a root to use in exercising love power.

A person before starting out for a chosen mountain top to seek major powers would, The Boy put it, "take a good bath and clean up his body well and put perfume on his body so he would smell good—those who did not use perfume would be told by the being on the mountain: 'Go away. You smell bad.'" He would also unbraid his hair and would wear no clothing except his moccasins and under his blanket his breechcloth. He took no weapons with him. "He took a lot of chances," Al Chandler commented, "because enemies might be close-by. But no enemy ever seemed to [302a 515]

[10] For fuller details, see Flannery and Cooper, 1946, pp. 405-09, 416.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787 [823] disturb such young men. Everybody wonders how it was that none of the enemy ever ran on to a man in that state [that is, on quest]." The quester also took with him a pipe with tobacco mixture.

On the way out to the hill top, the young man was often accompanied to the spot by some older man, but only to help get the quester settled as it were. Once the quester was settled, the helper departed, and the young man had to carry on his quest strictly alone and in isolation. The quester's stay night and day alone on the mountain top was distinctly a test, not only of fasting endurance but of both physical and moral courage and stamina. There was danger of the known,—such as human enemies, snakes, or bears. Still more, there was danger from contact with the unknown, the supernatural. Questers often had fearsome and uncanny experiences while out on the hills. A concrete example, the experience of a Gros Ventre still living, as told by Thomas Main who had heard the story several times from Gambler, may illustrate the point. The incident occurred around 1900.

"The Gros Ventre [whom we shall call X] was with Gambler, an old Arapaho, on the Mission ranch near Hays. X wanted to sleep on a mountain top to acquire power. Gambler told him: 'Don't do it. You don't hold your mouth right. Your heart is small and your mind is narrow. You haven't nerve enough. You are physically courageous, but not morally so.' X replied: 'I'll show you. Sleeping on a mountain is easy. It is easier than riding a bucking horse that can kill me (and I'm not afraid to do the latter).' So Gambler said: 'I'll go with you and bring your horse home and attend to your chores while you are away.' So they went off together to Eagle Child Butte at the western extremity of the Little Rockies, taking with them a pipe, mixture, and blanket. On their arrival, Gambler built a little shelter for X to sleep in, and just before he left him said to him: 'All right, you've gone this far. Now carry it through. But I bet you that you will be back in your bed at the ranch before morning.' Gambler now left him to himself and went back home. X then started to walk around and cry, and after this to rest and smoke. Sometime during this very first night something happened. X would not reveal what it

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

was, but he told Gambler afterwards: 'I could not stand that kind of thing!' X went home as Gambler had predicted and when Gambler went to X's house the next morning for the milk bucket, there was X. X would never tell what really happened that night." The Boy commented, "X was not the only one [quester on mountain top] who ran away; others did;" and added parenthetically, "No one has ever been able to spend the first night on Chief Mountain in Glacier National Park." 787

One legendary narrative we gathered,—"just an old time story" the narrator, Coming Daylight, called it,—was well calculated to put fear into questers. 787 539

"A certain young man slept out on the hills and he cried and cried. He had a shelter and went to sleep in it. While he slept a big snake came from the south to west all around where he slept. The snake ate up the young man and left only the bones. Where the snake had come from it had made a bald path with no grass at all, just like a rock.

"This young man had told his friend: 'Come tomorrow and bring me a pipe.' The next afternoon his friend came and saw the snake track and got scared. From outside the shelter he called to his friend. Getting no answer he went in. There he saw the skeleton. So he called out yelling for the young man's people. Everybody came, and the young man's folks especially were scared when they saw the snake's track. When the young man's folks saw the skeleton they started to mourn. His friend took a quilt, wrapped up the bones in it, and carried them home. The people had a hard time to quiet the parents.

"So the friend said: 'I will go and sleep there tonight and I'll carry a gun.' So he went to the place, and in the evening he started to cry and cry. At night when he was crying and crying, he lay in the bed but did not go to sleep. He had his gun ready.

"After a while he heard a great big noise, like a big rattle. It sounded scary. The snake came in the same track. When it got to the door, it kind of lifted up the rock and threw it aside. It had a big shiny horn and sort of blinded the friend, and its eyes were yellow shiny, and it was a great big snake. It was as big as a human being and its rattler was great big. When it knocked the

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787 door down, the man shot it. It just writhed and he emptied his whole gun on it.

539 "He stayed there until the morning. In the morning he started to holler for the people. They saw this big snake and burned it up. They thought this man very brave."

787 Of equal importance with isolation was concentration of thought. "If," said The Boy, "while on the mountain top the quester was thinking about his wife or about other affairs, he would get nothing [no power] for he did not have his mind on it —If a person is playing cards he must keep his mind on playing else he will not win. In like manner, when a man was fasting out on a mountain he had to concentrate his mind on what he was after—He went there to pray, to ask for help for something above the human."

787 The first ritual act after arrival at the mountain top was the prayer with the pipe. This rite was described by The Boy and
782 Thick as follows: "When a Gros Ventre went out in the mountains to seek power he always took along a pipe to use in prayer. He asked from above that the being who owned the mountain or hilltop would be commanded to grant this power. He took the pipe along to pray to the Supreme Being,—it was the idea that the Supreme Being ruled everything but his ruling was systematic or by plans. He seemed to believe that there were lesser beings who sort of managed [ruled] details of the whole situation. He [the quester] would start out, in his very first prayer [by praying] to the Supreme Being asking the granting of his petition, so that the one to whom he went, the one who owned or lived in the hill would be sort of forced or commanded to grant the power that was being requested. The pipe was first offered, with the stem pointing upward to the Supreme Being. Then the quester lit it and blew the smoke upward [toward the Supreme Being] and afterwards downward to the Last Child. But there was no comparison between the up and the down prayer. He held the stem pointing downward to the Last Child to give him a smoke. The Last Child was of the order of the killdeer [vastly inferior to the Supreme Being]. After giving the smoke to the Last Child in a sort of important way, he would offer the pipe to the hill, with the stem pointing not

upward or downward but to the hill, with a ritual gesture and would make his request direct to the one or ones inhabiting the hill or mountain top and tell this one or these ones what [power] he actually wanted."

In all the above the quester was following the general ritual and social Gros Ventre pattern for making requests. Such was the ritual pattern in prayer with a pipe. And whenever a pipe was offered to a fellow-tribesman it was offered with the stem toward him. The offering of a pipe to another when asking something of him was an "emphatic way of pleading." Thomas Main here remarked: "If I wanted to borrow money of another and were afraid my request would not be granted, I might offer him a pipe when asking for the loan and so reinforce my request."

Bull Lodge, when seeking power on a butte, made offerings of material goods and of the first joint of his left little finger. Little Man made offerings of a bit or bits of his flesh.

While up on the mountains the quester, alone and praying and concentrating his thoughts on his quest, would fast, neither eating or drinking, and would walk around crying, shedding real tears. He, or the man who had first accompanied him to the spot and then left him, would make a rude sleeping place of rocks and twigs and branches. This sort of "nest" was called his "call-for-power lodge." When the quester got weak or fatigued or sleepy, he would lie down in this "nest" and doze or sleep. Al Chandler stated: "Their [the quester's] sleep is not sound, any little thing wakens them. They are expecting something all the time and they look for it." Usually power was given during such sleep, although in some instances when the quester was wide awake. The power-giving being would speak to the quester and, usually at least, appear to him.

Sometimes a quester would be told by the being whose "house" was the mountain on which the man was questing: "Here is the kind of power I have. This is all I have. That other one [being] has the kind of power you wish. Go over there." And the being would name some other butte or mountain. Thus, for instance, a man going to a given mountain to seek wealth or war power might be offered doctoring power, and if he did not take this

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787 latter he would be told by the offerer to go to some other designated mountain to get what he was seeking.

The length of time a man would stay out on the mountain varied, the range being apparently from one to seven days, and of course the nights too. Power might be given in full daylight as well as at night. Various informants mentioned one to seven days, five to seven days, seven days, two to four days, four days. Sometimes questers were given power the very first day or night; others, only on a later day or night; others still not on the first quest at all, even though they remained five or seven days, but only on a following quest or after repeated quests; others, finally, never got power, not even a dream, even though they went out over and over again on the hills to seek power. Great medicine men got their full powers as a rule only after a number of years of repeated sleeping around on high buttes.

The recipient of power ordinarily got three things from the donor: a song, instructions on the rites to be observed in using the power, and some material object which was a symbol, and/or instrument vehicle of the power.

533 Singing, as we noted earlier (supra, [illegible] 79), was originally
778 gotten by the Gros Ventres from Earth [illegible] at the time of the great flood and was confined to sacred [illegible]sions. Later it degenerated and became secular as well. But among the birds and animals it did not degenerate; it kept its pristine sacredness. And these birds and animals and other beings would give their songs to questers for power, to each successful quester a specific song for his own use in exercising the particular power given at the time.

As The Boy explained it: "From time immemorial every Gros Ventre rite or ceremony began with song. . . . And when the Gros Ventres went out on the hills or to the forests to seek power and were granted a hearing and were going to be given power by rock, forest, animal or other creature, the granting always began by a song. . . . It was remarkable how they [the questers] could memorize these songs that were sung [to them] by these several creatures, and the recipients never forgot these songs and always had them foremost in their minds and never altered them in any

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

way. Others of course, learned them from the one to whom they were first given, but always sang them the same unaltered way." 533 778

An individual might have more than one kind of power, and hence more than one song. A doctor might have more than one doctoring song; Stiffarm, for example, had many. At any given time a great number of doctoring songs were in use by the many doctors. The four doctoring songs we recorded are only samplings. Only the person who acquired a power by quest or transfer had the right to sing the song or songs connected therewith except when requested to help sing with the owner at say a curing rite. A person who had acquired power songs could, if he desired, sing them in his lodge as bedtime songs.

The recipient of power was given and taught by the power-donor not only a song but also detailed instructions on other ritual procedures to be followed in exercising the specific power. These procedures will be described presently, in our section on power use and ritual.

At the time when power was bestowed, the recipient also got some power object. Sometimes they were given to him directly by the supernatural donor; sometimes the donor instructed the recipient where to find or how to make the power object, or just told him what kind of object to use. This object was often spoken of as the medicine or power of the possessor. So far as we could discover, the object was conceived of as more or less identical with the power or as the tangible embodiment, vehicle or instrument of it. The power object was consistently brought into play when the possessor made use of his power, as will be described later. A recipient might obtain at any given quest more than one such object from the donor. 787 778

These objects,—such as a weasel skin, otter skin, root, and so forth,—were commonly kept by the possessor in a skin bag as the possessor's medicine bundle. The Boy made a gift to us of the badger-skin medicine bag of his father, Lame Bull, who used to keep peppermint and a thunder-stone in it.

In many cases power objects were swallowed by the power-recipient when first given to him and were so retained within his body until he forfeited his power through breach of code or in-

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

778
787

struction or until just before his death. In the latter case, these objects would come out of his body, usually his mouth, and if they were living things would shortly thereafter die, after which the person himself or herself died.

Thick's sister-in-law, an Assiniboine, whose Gros Ventre husband had been a sacred Pipe keeper, violated the rules by joining the Ghost Dance religion. Thick witnessed her death. "Just before she died, she said to her husband: 'Get me a dish.' She spat into it. We looked and found there a living (?) thunder-stone she had spat out. She spat again, and this time a little round rock. She spat a third time, a stem of fresh green peppermint. 'Now,' she said, 'I'll die. I have violated the rule laid down for me.' And so she died."

A coyote had given Al Chandler's adoptive father, Little Man, yellow paint to swallow. "I saw it," Al stated, "when Little Man was dying because it came out then. . . . It was about 2½ inches long and about 2½ inches around. It was pure white clay on the outside. It was like you make a dough of the white clay and put the yellow inside and roll the white over the yellow."

Stiffarm and Little Man's brother were also present when Little Man was dying and knew this paint would come out when he died. They said: "We will see what made this old fellow so powerful." So they took this roll of white clay and broke it open, and the yellow paint poured out. "The brother was one of those who did not believe in such things," Al added, "and he certainly was surprised."

In the course of the curing procedure as carried out by Sits Holy, a miniature bear would stick its paw out of his mouth and would growl loudly enough to be heard all around; as carried out by White Weasel, he pulled a little animal, his medicine, out of himself; as carried out by Good Singer, she hit herself on the chest and a bead, her medicine, came out of her mouth, and at the end of the rite she swallowed it; as carried out by Little Man, a hail-stone, given him to swallow when he received child-birth power, was later disgorged and given to his patient to swallow.[11]

Lame Bull had been given doctoring power, to be used only

[11] The Crow Indians, The Boy stated, likewise swallow power objects.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

after a certain period of probation. He, however, broke the rule and doctored before his time was up. A night or so after he had doctored a spider came out of his ears and a thunder-rock out of his mouth, and so he lost his doctoring power. 778 787

Occasionally in connection with the power quest the right would be given to the quester to paint his lodge in a particular manner.[13] Among the Gros Ventre such sacred or holy painted lodges were relatively rare and were thought of very highly. We recorded one song (No. 88), a wordless one, which belonged with Bull Lodge's sacred lodge. Bull Lodge had been "invited" to quest for power at Baldy Butte, the highest peak in the Bear Paws. The being who gave him other powers also bestowed upon him his own lodge, with instructions how to paint it and the song to sing while it was being painted. Coming Daylight's father had a sacred lodge around the bottom of which were painted the figures of men, each figure the same and each with a feather in the head. The upper part was painted red. "At the tip of the ears of the lodge were things hanging, and feathers in back. The back part had a cross (morning star) and the sun."[14] 346 787

What has been said in the preceding pages about the circumstances of Gros Ventre quest may be illustrated by the following account given by Al Chandler of that of Little Man, his adoptive father: 787

"When Little Man first went out to seek power, the old medicine man (his tutor in the matter) told him: 'I am going with you.' So when they got out in the hills, maybe a whole day's travel to this place where he wanted to go, this old man asked Little Man where he wanted to go to fast and Little Man chose a place not very far away. So they went together. This old man cut his (Little Man's) flesh, took a pinch,—(some did it 3, 6, or 9 pinches), and prayed each time he cut a bit of flesh off. He told Little Man: 'Nobody is going to come after you until your time is up. If I tell you three days, nobody is coming after you until this time is up. In the meantime use your whole heart and don't get 801 304 782

[13] There was a distinction between the sacred painted lodges and the lodges painted with war deeds. Cf. Flannery, 1953, pp. 68, 102.

[14] For illustrations of sacred painted lodges, see Plate 4.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

●787 scared. Don't let anything scare you away. Don't try to come down before that. Somebody will then come after you.'

"They get pretty weak from fasting and somebody has to come with a horse. They just pray and pray and cry and cry and sleep a little,—but their sleep is not sound, any little thing wakens them. They are expecting something all the time and they look for it.

"So Little Man stayed there for two days and two nights as he was instructed to do for this first time. They had gone up there pretty early in the morning and he stayed all the first day and towards evening he was kind of tired and his voice was kind of hoarse so he laid down and was lying on his back with his eyes shut and praying while he rested. After a while he got rested and got up and walked around and prayed and cried. He kept that up all night and didn't see anything or hear anything.

"Next day the same thing. Towards noon, not quite noon next day, he was lying face down and he heard something, just like something puffing, coming towards him. He said he knew right away what it was because from what he heard old people say, the bear when it travels puffs a whole lot as if it is out of breath. So he knew it was a bear. He didn't pay any attention. He just lay there and kept praying and praying. The bear went in a circle right around him. Pretty soon the bear came over. Little Man had a little oblong nest outlined with rocks piled up about two to three feet high, and open toward his feet. This is called his "call-for-power lodge." After the bear had come around several times it must have sat down because Little Man didn't hear him any more. He wasn't supposed to look up to see what it was that came to him, because if he did he might get cold feet. You just have to take whatever it is and just think hard about the power you want.

"So when the bear came over he put his paw right on Little Man's head. He went away again and soon after he came back again and put his paw on Little Man's back just at the level where his heart was. The bear went off again and Little Man noticed that he went straight back from his head. The third time when he came back he touched the soles of Little Man's feet. He went off again the same way and not so very long after he came back and this time he sat down towards the opening of the nest about 10 or 12 feet

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787

away from it. The bear told him: 'Get up now. Sit up.' So Little Man did and the bear said: 'I heard you. I have been listening to you why you are here. I pity you and I know what you want and it is just me. I will give you this power. This medicine I am going to give you, this root is for the sickness caused by a gut getting plugged with a seed or something you eat.'

"Little Man thought: 'I wonder how I will know what this medicine is, and how I can get it.' The bear knew what he was thinking and told him: 'No. It will be like this. You look around and see all these hills and landmarks and all, but it is not like this. But some day you will be at the place. I don't know when or where, but when you are there you will recognize the place and you will get this root. I will show it to you when you are asleep. I will show you the place where the root is, the lay of the ground, and how the plant of that root looks. I will come to you in a dream.' The bear held his paws out in front and said: 'One of these (pointing to his claws) I will give you.' So he told him just what he could use this claw for: 'If you think this root medicine won't work by making beverages, you can use this claw to kind of operate with." So he got all that from the bear. First when he saw this bear sitting, the bear was painted from his brows over the forehead and head and the bear said: 'That is where you should paint when you doctor anybody, and this claw you must wear on a buckskin string over your shoulder and you should always have the point out.'

"Little Man was honest. He never faked and everybody liked him. If he couldn't cure you he wouldn't want anything. He would wait before he took what a person paid because he wanted to see if the patient was really well.

"A year after this in the summer he got this same old man again and told him what he was going to do, that is that he wanted to go out again and asked him how many days he would advise him to go this time. This old man told him: 'Well, I will tell you. It all depends. You know there are many ways to get this medicine power. You are old enough to know that. Lots of times these young men, when big clouds come before an electric storm, go out in different directions and cry out there and pray. Well that is one

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

●787 way. If you want to try that, do it one day and that is enough.' So the old man told him: 'Let me know this evening what you think of it, or if you have already made up your mind what you want to do.'

787 "The old timers could pretty well tell you what kind of weather
821 you are going to have. Little Man said: 'Well I would like to go our right away today. But I don't think there is any chance of an electric storm. I would like to try that.' So the old man said: 'Well, I will see if I can find any signs of a storm or not.' He looked all around everywhere like he was looking for something. The sky looked clear. He stood there for a long time and looked around. Pretty soon there was a small cloud coming up and he said: 'You are a lucky man. You watch that cloud. I think there is going to be a big electric storm and maybe hail too. Do you think you want to try it?' Little Man said: 'Yes, I will try it.' So the old man told him: 'Now you want to be very brave. Don't let anything bluff you, because there are very few who can go through with it. It is something harder to bear.' Then he said: 'You have to be perfectly naked. You go anywhere on those hills you want. Take off your clothes and go now because the storm is coming now and it won't take long for it to get here.'

787 "So Little Man went home and took off all his clothes except his moccasins and put on a blanket or robe. He then went out, and the electric storm started from the distance with rumblings and lightning. There were a couple of other young fellows out there and he could hear them crying in different directions from him. Just as he got up there, it was just like lightning right over his head and thunder all around. He cried all the harder and didn't think of getting scared. He took off his moccasins and blanket and walked around crying and praying.

"While he was doing that, all at once great big hailstones came and it certainly hurt him. He had bruises all over him. When the hail was just over he laid down, kind of tired, and just a little while after that somebody told him: 'Take that hailstone there right by you and swallow it.' He looked and sure enough there was a big hailstone right by him. He was not to chew it but to swallow it whole. He took it and thought: 'Well, if you tell me

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

to do that I guess it will be all right.' He did it and it went down easily. Then he was told: 'You go to sleep. I will tell you what this is for.' 787

"So he stayed out there and fell asleep. He saw an old fellow, grey-haired, coming who could hardly walk he was so old. This old man told him: 'That which I gave you is going to be all in your line. You are going to be a medicine man. This medicine is for those women or girls who should not have children for some reason; they are afraid or don't like to go through that and they always want help from somebody if anybody can do anything for them to keep them from having children. You will have to use your own judgment on that. If you think that a woman shouldn't want to do anything like that, if she is strong and young and should have children, you should not help her. You just tell her that you haven't got anything. But there are some who really need that kind of help. They are weak and won't make good mothers. Those are the ones you should help. That is what I give it to you for. I give you just one [hailstone] but every time you use it there is always another one. All you have to do is to sing the proper song (this person taught him the song, but I do not know it) and just take that hailstone from your body, that same one you swallowed, and give it to this woman to swallow and she won't have any children after that.'

"Little Man used this medicine twice and he said he didn't know where it came from but each time he used it [the hailstone] there was another one there for use the next time. My mother's sister's first child pretty near killed her and she was one he worked on. Another woman came to him who was in the same situation and he gave it to her and she never had more children. Lots of times women came to him, but he knew it was not because they were too weak to have children, but were just women who liked to run around and he didn't want to help that kind. This person who gave him that power had told him: 'When you are giving that thing to the women whom you help, paint yourself red from half your eyes up your forehead and head; below that paint all yellow.' If he would not have painted, the power would not have worked. If he omitted anything it would have been no good,—like if he didn't sing the song, it would be no good. [302]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

●787 "The following summer when the real hot days, probably July, came, he went out and fasted and prayed and cried. He had gone to the same old man and asked him and the old man gave him three days and three nights this time. So he went out and took one of his friends with him to help fix the rocks and to take his clothes home. They don't have a thing there, even any weapons. They wear the g-string, but no clothes.

"Anyway, Little Man went for this three-day and three-night crying. After they got everything ready, his partner went back home and had been told to return on the fourth day in the morning. So Little Man started in the same thing and all that day nothing happened. Of course he had little short dreams, but he didn't think anything of those.

"The second day in the morning when it started to get hot he was lying on his back resting, with his eyes shut and he was praying. He felt something crawling over him. He felt it ice-cold and rough right across his breast, but he didn't move. He just kept on praying. He knew what it was from the feel of it, it was a snake. So he started to tell that snake: 'Old Man, don't feel bad because I am not going to accept you. It isn't because I don't want any of your power, or I don't like you, or I don't want you to bother me, but there is something else that I am here for.' So this thing went over on the other side and Little Man opened his eyes a bit and sure enough the snake was coiled up about three feet from him. It was a big rattlesnake and he kept on talking to him and pretty soon the snake went away. After a while he got up to see if it really did go away. Of course he was scared of it, but he didn't let on.

"So he started in again crying and crying but nothing happened all day until that night. It was kind of moonlight and he could see that either a coyote or a wolf kept coming around him but it didn't come very close, only just close enough for him to see it. Along toward dawn of the third day this coyote started to howl close by him and it would go around and howl at four different places in the circle. He got up again and started praying and crying and when he got tired he laid down and fell right asleep. He was all in. Way in the afternoon this animal woke him up.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

He was just all in by this time and couldn't talk or cry. When he tried to cry he made only a weak, faint noise. This animal told him: 'My name is Mountain Coyote. That is what my friends call me. Well, I heard you. I have been around here. Maybe you didn't notice me but I have been here. What is it you want? Although you have said what you want, I want to hear you talk. What is it that you want?' 787

"So Little Man said: 'There is one thing I am working for. I want to be an honest medicine man. I don't want to take anything that would fool people. If you want to give me anything I want it to be honest.' The coyote said: 'That is me. I want to be honest. If I give anybody anything I will give it to them in an honest way. I am not going to cheat people or fool them.' Then he told Little Man: 'Stand up.' And the coyote sort of sat on his hind legs and he said: 'Take a good look at me.' Little Man looked at him and the coyote would put his paw to his mouth and blow and he started painting himself all over, first the right paw, then the left, and was painting himself all over a bright yellow, with real yellow paint. When he got through he blew on his paw again and rubbed from side of his eye back towards his ear, first on the right side and then on the left, with white clay. So he said: 'There is lots that I am going to give you. You have been here going on three days now and I will give you all I have. Now first I am not going to tell you what medicines you are going to use because you will see them yourself what to get and where to get them and you will know for what sickness they will be. I will give you seven persons to cure. Even if the sick person is just toward the end of his life, and is taking his last breath, maybe an hour or two before he dies, you are going to bring him back. You can cure him. You have to have a lot of pity for them before you can do that. You cannot say just because that person over there is dying I will go cure him. No. It is not like that. They have to come and ask your help.' So he told Little Man just what to do: 'You have to paint like you see me. I give you this song' (he taught him a song). Then the coyote gave him what he was supposed to keep and Little Man had to swallow that."

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Other Means of Acquiring Power

●787 778 While in the majority of instances power, as initially acquired direct from power-giving beings, was gotten by quest, in a considerable minority of cases, it was so gotten in first instance without quest.

A man might be offered power, without quest on his part, when away hunting, or war raiding as in the following given us by Singer.

"A bunch of young men went afoot on the warpath. One of them had a pain in his leg, and it was so bad he could not travel further with the party. So they fixed him a shelter of wood, like they used to make, so he would be warm, and gathered some water in little paunch bags and hung them there, and piled up a lot of wood and dried meat, and left him there.

"He got so bad he couldn't even move his legs. As he slept he dreamed that a lot of little children came in and they had a boss. So the young man said: 'Where are you going? I am having a hard time with my leg-ache.' 'I had pity on you,' said the boss, 'so I came,' and then the boss added: 'I will give you my body [that is, Singer explained, I will give you some power]. As long as you live you will never have children, but I give you this,' and he gave the young man a little horn spoon and showed him a root, and said: 'When a woman is going to have a child you can always doctor her. Just one drink and the baby will be born.'

"When he woke up he found he was cured, so he hurried and caught up with his friends. They were surprised.

"This young man called his dream visitors 'little children,' but they were really 'ghost men.'" This is the only instance these beings were ever known by either Singer or Coming Daylight to have helped anybody.

Powers of various kinds were acquired without quest by keepers and co-keepers of the Flat Pipe and Feathered Pipe, as previously described. Not the least of these was doctoring power. Bull Lodge, for instance, was a medicine man before he got the Feathered Pipe; "But," Al Chandler added, "even if you were not a medicine man before you got the Pipe, you would be after you got it."

We recorded no instance of women going out in the hills to

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

fast and cry for power. Coming Daylight, when asked about the matter, just laughed, and said: "they [women] never go out like men do." Commonly women were offered doctoring power in dreams at home, as in the several instances already noted. Singer was once offered power after she had made a sacrifice. Sometimes a woman was offered unsought power when wandering around outside camp or on the hills during mourning or in anger at her husband. 787 ● 778

"Sometimes," said The Boy, "a woman would get angry at her husband and would go away and wander around alone, not fasting but eating when she could and drinking. Sometimes such a woman would get power. Something or some animal would take pity on her and give her power. . . . Sometimes too a woman who had been captured by the enemy would make her escape and on her way back home would sleep out alone and would acquire power . . . a woman does not ask [by questing on mountains] for power. Power comes to her. When mourning for relatives and sleeping out [away from camp] and suffering without food, somebody might take pity on her and give her power without her asking." "Women," remarked Singer, "When they lost a loved one, would go up into the mountains and cry themselves to sleep, and that is when a lot of them would get power."[14]

Like women, very young children did not go out on the hills to fast for power. The occasional very young boy or girl who got power got it without formal quest. Coming Daylight's offer and refusal of power at the early age of eight years has been previously recorded. The Boy mentioned one case in which during a smallpox epidemic all the members of a certain family died except two children, a boy and a girl. The two children continued to stay alone at the spot. A bear came. The girl, after the two returned, became a "holy" woman.

Keg, the boyhood friend of Lame Bull, The Boy's father, was given power, without his seeking it, one early morning while he was out looking after the family horses, The boy, then only about ten years old fell asleep and dreamed he saw a big hand game going on for high stakes and one fellow taking all the winnings. On

[14] For examples, see Flannery, 1953, p. 206.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787 778 looking more closely Keg saw that the fellow was he, Keg, himself. The fellow said: "Do as you see me doing here. Use my throat as an object (button) to hide." Then Keg woke up and saw nearby a covey of prairie chickens at their mating dance. Keg was so given gambling power by the prairie chicken(s), and was a very successful gambler, from that time on.[18]

778 424 425 Acquisition of power directly and in first instance from a power-giving being gave the acquirer right of exclusive ownership and use of the power. The power was a gift from the being to the human individual, and became the latter's property to be exclusively held and used by him, as would any gift given him outright by a fellow Gros Ventre. The owner could however transfer it, in most cases, by sale or gift. The Boy and Thick explained the main features of the system as follows: "The individual who acquired the power, and he alone, would use it. He would not part with it unless someone bought it from him. . . . In case of purchase he would teach the buyer the secret of how to use the power. Then too the owner of the power might transfer it without remuneration to one of his children if the owner lived to old age and had [living] children; he might do this rather than have the secret of the power die with him and do no one any good." On other occasions The Boy, speaking particularly of doctoring power, further explained: "While a doctor had many power songs, no other doctor had a right to sing these songs, unless the doctor-owner transferred his power to the other. . . . If someone else knew what plant a given doctor used and tried himself to use it, he could not get results, because he would not know the songs and rites to use with it. . . . Even though he should know the songs and rites as well as the plants, it would have been very wrong to try to use them. . . . Only the one who had [acquired] the power had the right to practice it. If everybody had been free to practice it, there would have been no use for the doctor to have gone through such hardship [fasting, etc.] to acquire it."

Power acquired in first instance as a gift from a power-bestowing being, although exclusively owned by the recipient, could be under

[18] For further details, see Flannery and Cooper, 1946, pp. 407-08.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

War power usually included both a positive aspect, outstanding success in killing, wounding and capturing enemies and in taking booty, especially horses, and a negative one, luck in escaping injury. Little Man's brother had power to make his horse run so fast in war that no other horse could overtake it. 778 721

Those who sought wealth power asked mostly to have many horses, not to be poor, and "to get things easy without much effort." 778 556

"My grandmother's brother," Coming Daylight related, "the first Crow Bull went to McCann Butte in the Bear Paws to sleep. The people were camped at the bottom near the lake, and from an opening in the mountains on the other side of the lake they saw a lot of white horses come to the lake. Crow Bull was told in his dream: 'These are all your horses.' It is claimed that everybody else saw them too. After that Crow Bull always had white horses. People gave him white horses and he brought white horses home from war." 787

Cora Chandler had heard a similar story about Bear Nose who slept at the same spot. He saw (in a dream, probably) a lot of prairie dogs and was told: "These are your horses." Cora commented: "I knew the day when Bear Nose had only buckskin horses,"—of the color of prairie dogs.

On both the preceding cases, the two men who got power only to own all these horses, although, Cora thought, Bear Nose also had lots of other powers.

As regards war-power ritual we gathered only a few details, mostly from Al Chandler regarding his adoptive father, Little Man, and from Garter Snake regarding her father, Bull Lodge. 778 721

Little Man got from his brother who was killed in battle the latter's war medicine. The brother's power objects were: the dried skin of a sparrow hawk [Flaco Sparverius] with the head, claws and feathers; a shirt, tailored like an ordinary shirt, but kept painted yellow all the time and with "little holes all over it even on the sleeves and with hawk feathers on the shoulders and some on the back." The yellow paint and holes presumably symbolized the predominant rufous and buff coloring and spotted belly and sides of this fast flier. When the brother went to war, he would put this dried hawk skin on his back, and take a "little fuzzy feather" from the wing and tie it on his horse's tail, and the power

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

756 power to cure "some kind of gland trouble;" others, to treat "a bursting blood vessel."

A professional doctor was under certain limitations, restrictions and taboos, and liabilities.

756 The being or beings who gave doctoring power would at the same time warn the recipient not to begin practice at once. "If,"
787 The Boy stated, "a person accepted the offer of medicine power, he would be told not to begin doctoring for so many years, but to keep his power a secret for the time being. . . . It would be known that a given man was sleeping around on high buttes. After a number of years he would declare his time was up, would keep his secret no more, and would start to practice. But even then very powerful doctors would usually not reveal who gave them their power." Coming Daylight, it is true, thought the recipient could start practicing at once, but Singer and Al Chandler were quite positive that deferment was required. According to Singer, "the one who gave the power for medicine would tell the receiver when he or she could start curing. It would usually be after at least four years." According to Al Chandler, "they [power-giving beings] give them [recipients] so many years to pass before they can do medicine work."

Lame Bull lost his doctoring power as a result of doctoring before his years of "probation" were up. The wife of the brother of his "best wife" was ill, and this wife threatened to leave Lame Bull unless he doctored that woman. Under such duress, Lame Bull agreed to doctor her, and he cured her. After he did so he was told in a dream that he had lost out and would not be a doctor because he had doctored before his time of probation or deferment was over. A night or two after, a spider came out of his ear and a thunder-rock out of his mouth. Lame Bull was not keeper of the Flat Pipe at this time.

In some instances, at least according to Coming Daylight, "when a man got some doctoring power he would tell his wife. . . . She would be the one to call her husband's power to the attention of others."

756 Supernatural power to cure very grave illness was often bestowed under limitations as to number of cases. Thus White

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

756 were those of her husband, her daughter, and her grandfather, and her maternal uncle, Crow Bull, respectively.

"My husband, Little Man, did not believe in Indian doctors. He had never been sick, but once somebody put [bad] medicine on him. There was a bad man among the Indians at that time. . . . My husband knew and everybody knew that this bad man had done this to him. My husband had a pain all the time right near his heart and sometimes he could not move on account of this pain. Occasionally, too, he had a hemorrhage. He used to be in such pain through this thing that he knew it was some work of a medicine man. So he had a dream and in it he was told that he [787] should go out on the hills and swing round and round on a pole, as they do (cf. infra, pp. 393-394), and that he would then get well.

"I called a woman doctor named Goes Back. I got a nice horse and hitched it at this woman's place as payment. This woman doctor said: 'I am just going to doctor you [Little Man] once.' Other doctors had been trying to cure Little Man but they could not succeed because the one who had put the medicine on him was extremely powerful. Goes Back talked to the one who had given her her power and said: 'You told me that I could use this medicine work just once, and that then I would get a particular person well.' This is what had been promised to this woman.

"So she said: 'I will ask for a sweat-lodge, like a man.' Only medicine men used to ask for a sweat-lodge. She said: 'I am going to doctor in this sweat-lodge.' Several people went into the sweat-lodge. I attended to the opening and shutting [of the door thereof]. There were only certain rocks that they used and these were heated until red. Someone else attended to this. The patient was inside the sweat-lodge and the medicine woman invited some others to go in there. Except for the medicine woman, only men went in. I sat beside the door, but on the outside.

"They sang, and I heard the woman praying: 'My nephew has suffered a long time. Please listen to me. You promised that I would get some one person well by doctoring just once, and I want this to be that one time.' When she got through doctoring, that is, sucking, she said: 'Lift up the curtain.' So I lifted it up and opened the sweat-lodge, and one of the men there said: 'I too never be-

782 anyone so goes to be tortured someone else goes along. It was
785 awful when they so went to pray and cry and sacrifice themselves.
304 Running Crow went with Little Man, as the latter's grandfather, to pierce his breast and insert the skewers whereby he was attached to the pole by a thong. [After that was done] Running Crow gave Little Man a push and Little Man danced round and round the pole. Running Crow and Stiffarm, who went out with him [just as helper, not as grandfather], left Little Man, as was customary, alone. Then sometime during the day the two returned and gave Little Man a smoke, but the latter did not eat or drink anything. He would be hungry and thirsty and would run around without even moccasins on his feet. It is an awful sacrifice. He would dance until the skewer pulled out of his flesh. Then he would be tired and would sleep and dream.

"Little Man went through this rite on account of a dream. He had been sick [heart pains and hemorrhages] and had dreamed he was going through the rite, and in consequence did later actually carry it out. He carried it out at Chinook where we were all living at the time. During the rite his mother sang war songs in her camp.

"Little Man had not tortured himself in any big celebration [Sacrifice Dance]. He did this only alone on the hills. It is hardest this latter way. It takes longer to break off [for the skewer to tear through the flesh] in the heat [sic]. It is awfully hot out in the hills and the self-torturer goes barefoot, without moccasins. He dances west to east, counter clockwise, from sun up to sun down. It is not so hot in the lodge at the big celebrations [Sacrifice Dances]. It is a greater thing to do it alone.

"The time my husband, Little Man, did this I too was away on the hills. I pitied my old man [husband] and did not eat. I came home in the evening to cook for him. We always help a relative when he fasts like that. My husband's mother and sister were at home together with another woman relative, Ed Blackbird's wife."

[787] After Little Man's self-torture was over, he was told in a dream the exact kind of leaf (or root) to use for curing his hemorrhages and just where it was to be found, Coming Daylight was able to find it, and Little Man was cured.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

"Lame Bull said that the old men had told him that the Gros Ventres used to hold this test once in a while, but the only one he witnessed was the one described. He also said that they were going to hold this test again when he was a middle-aged man and were all ready to do so, when a war party came back, some of whose members had been killed in battle. So that spoiled the occasion. And after that, the test was never held." 782 837

Dreams, Visions and Auditions

Gros Ventre for "a dream" is kana:tĕ; for "a vision," and apparition seen while you are awake or "even while you are sleeping and somebody comes to you," be:tänohatsä:na', "something sacred I saw." In the following pages we are for clarity's sake distinguishing between dreams occurring in sleep and visions and auditions occurring in waking hours. What, if any, importance the Gros Ventres themselves attached to the distinction is not clear, although they of course were fully aware of it, as is obvious from their explicit statements in the cases recorded by us. It is quite clear, however, that such dreams, visions, and auditions played a major role in their magico-religious culture, and entered into it in numerous ways and on numerous occasions. Illustrative cases will be given presently. 787

Especially in the spring time older men, after going to bed at night, would command silence in the lodge and would sing and pray, informally without ritual observances, and would pray among other things for some good dream and for deep sleep[13] so that they would not wake up before the dream was over.

Dreams in which power was offered or imparted were supposed to be kept more or less secret. Such secrecy was not, however, called for, it seems, regarding other dreams.

Dreams as recorded by us fall into two categories, those in which gifts or messages were imparted to the dreamer by some being, and those in which interpretation of the meaning of the dreams

[13] The Arapaho, we were told, call this kind of sleep "thick sleep." In 1948 Tom Main said that the literal translation of the Gros Ventre word for "deep sleep" is actually "thick sleep." [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787 had to be made by the dreamer. We shall take up these two categories in turn.

In the first category fall power-bestowing dreams and many of those connected with name-giving and ear-piercing. Power was usually bestowed during a dream, in some cases however while the recipient was awake. In other dreams, songs, information, instructions, warnings, invitations, commands or permissions were given by supernatural beings.

Two wordless songs, numbers 33 and 34, sung without accompaniment of drum or rattle, and gotten by The Boy's father, Lame Bull, in dreams were recorded by us as sung by The Boy. Lame Bull had many songs of this kind, but these were the two he used to sing most frequently. In the records the song is repeated only once; in the full rendering it would be sung four times. These are bedtime songs.

It was in a dream that Lame Bull was told the war party he led would kill five of the enemy and that he saw just where the enemy were located. In another dream he was told that he had forfeited and would lose his doctoring power (supra, pp. 284-285). As the result of a dream the grandmother of Mary Ereaux made a special kind of bag, snake-shaped, in which to keep the navel cord of the latter's son.

Singer on one occasion, when her daughter was ill and she [Singer] had promised to amputate the end joint of her little finger as a sacrifice to save the girl, had a significant dream.

"I had promised," Singer said, "to do this but my husband, Iron Bucket, had kept putting it off. 'Leave it for a while,' he would say. So one night I had a dream. So I woke my husband and told him immediately: 'Now look. I saw this old man coming and he said: "You promised me that finger a long time ago. You are going to look like this," and I saw a person with white hair painted red (a sign of old age, she explained to us). This old man got after me and told me what I would look like, if I didn't keep my promise.' So we got kind of scared. . . . The old man was representing the sun because it was to the sun that I had made the promise."

In quite recent years, shortly before her death, Thick's wife, The

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Boy's sister, could hear the Flat Pipe. "It bothered her to think it was alone [and relatively neglected] and in her sleep it would call her." 787

During our earlier contacts with The Boy, 1938 to 1940, he was considerably concerned as to whether he "was doing right in telling about the Flat Pipe to the white man" and he "thought hard" on the matter. In the summer of 1939, after receiving a letter from one of us, regarding the Flat Pipe, he had a dream.

"I saw," he said, "a big crowd of people gathered. I stood by a lodge where the crowd was. I went into the lodge and saw there my father and old Curly Head. I sat facing them. My father said: 'Are you telling the history of these Pipes to the white man?' I said: 'Yes.' I waited for further questions from my father, but then I woke up."

The above version of this dream was given us in the summer of 1939. A fuller one was given, as follows, in August, 1940.

"I came from about a southerly point to a big crowd out in the open. On arrival I at once pushed people out of the way and elbowed my way into the heart of the crowd. I wanted to know what was going on there. The crowd was not in a circle but in a sort of oval. When I got inside the crowd—I saw my father, Lame Bull [d. 1908], and Curly Head [d. 1937] sitting together in the place of honor [opposite the lodge door]. Lame Bull was sitting to the right of Curly Head. So I walked up to them and sat down facing them. Lame Bull said to me: 'Is it true that you are telling the story of the Pipes to white men?' 'Yes,' I said 'That's true. I am doing so now.' I felt a terrible silence there and got scared. I felt that Lame Bull would scold me. Before any further word was spoken, I woke up, and then tried to interpret the dream. Other dreams did not impress me as much as this one. I thought much, and wondered if it was proper to tell the story of the Pipe, if it was against the dignity of the Pipe and reverence for the Pipes, if it was against Gros Ventre principles."

"In the old days," said Coming Daylight, "we used to paint ourselves every morning [a custom of which now little remains]. . . . I painted myself when I was going to pray to the Flat Pipe for my grandchild, and when I went to sleep that night I dreamed

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787 I saw that paint and a voice told me: 'Why don't you pay any attention to me any more?' So that is why I have started painting again. I used always to paint and would like to do so now, but I am afraid my children might be ashamed of me."

In some dreams, a being communicated to the dreamer commands, summonses, requests, invitations, or permissions. Coming Daylight's husband, Little Man, when someone had put medicine on him and he was having hemorrhages, was told in a dream that if he would torture himself he would get well. He was also told what kind of root or leaf to drink for the hemorrhages at the time he tortured himself, and exactly where it was to be found. Coming Daylight went for it and found it. Then he took it and got well. At this time, too, "he got the name," she said, "for our little boy, Skinner.[14] He used never to believe in such things and here this came to him like that. When he told me about the names for our little boy, I threw this up at him and said: 'I thought you never believed in such things!' But he just laughed, and I told him: 'That is just the way you know things. You ought to start now and practice things for the children's sake.' "

Lame Bull, it may be recalled, was called in dreams by the being who lived on Baldy Butte in the Bear Paws, to go up there and quest for power.

One of The Boy's dreams, experienced in the winter of 1939-40, straddles our two dream categories. It contained an invitation; it also called for interpretation.

"I had a dream," The Boy said. "In it a person came to me wrapped up in a white man's blanket. The blanket covered even his face and extended way up over his head and the top of the blanket was blowing round as if by the wind, and was all covered with snow as if the wearer had come in out of a snowstorm. He came in and stood by my bed, and said: 'Well, I have been sent here to come and get you, because where you are living now everything is bad and out of order. You are not enjoying your life here. Where I came from is a good place.' I recognized this person as John Baptist, my deceased nephew, the son of my sister, Mrs. Thick. John Baptist scolded me, but I said: 'No. I don't

[14] Cf. Flannery, 1953, p. 146.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787

want to go where you want me to go. I still have small children to look after. I still have business here. I have not finished giving [to Flannery and Cooper] the record of Gros Ventre life. There are many other things to tell [them]. What is the matter with you? You are shivering and cold. It is warm in here. It is not proper for a ghost to be cold.' John Baptist said: 'It is very cold. That is why I am covered up and shivering.' At this he uncovered his head. But I knew all along who it was. I recognized his voice. He looked just the same as when he was living. Then I woke up.

"The third night after this I took sick. I woke up at night with pains around my nipples as if there were two sticks there and as if the veins under my lower jaw were big. I got up and rubbed my face and neck and the back of my head. I was in great pain. I did not want to disturb anybody. I lay down and slept. When I woke up my face was twisted [facial paralysis].

"I thought a lot about the dream I have just told you. I nearly concluded that it might mean my time to die would come in the winter season. I am not afraid. I am resigned. If I live through next winter, I feel I will go past the crisis and live longer."

Dreams were often interpreted as having prophetic or other meaning. Singer, on one occasion, dreamed; she said, that "we were all traveling and that my little brother fell off the travois and got killed. I was screaming in my dream: 'Oh, my brother! Oh, my brother!' My mother woke me up and asked me: 'What is the matter?' I said: 'Oh, I was just scared in my dream about my little brother.' My mother was worried for fear this was a bad sign. The next morning when we moved camp that is where someone we knew got killed by the raiding enemy."

Certain other dreams were variously interpreted. On one occasion when Coming Daylight and her young grandson went with Snake Woman to gather bitterroot, a fellow driving a cow waved to them. The next morning Snake Woman said: "I dreamed I was married to that fellow who waved at me." And actually he did try later to live with her.

Singer gave the following account:

"I and Axe Handle, my Assiniboine husband, once went swimming down the Milk River Valley. After we got home and went

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787 to bed I dreamed that a little short man with shaggy hair all pushed back came out of the water where we had been bathing. He made a motion as if to grab me and said: 'I am going to take you.' He was grabbing at me to take me into the water and I was just hollering in my dream and calling my husband by name. He wakened me and asked: 'What is the matter?' I replied: 'This little man is trying to take me.' So in the morning my husband said: 'I am going to put some offerings in the water.' I had a nice silk handkerchief and a pair of 'pearl' earrings. So we sewed the earrings in the handkerchief and then we went and prayed and prayed, and my husband said: 'We give you these so you won't take her.' We held on to the offering until the praying was finished and then put it in the water, and it disappeared quick, as if somebody had grabbed it."

Once when Axe Handle, Singer's husband, was ill and was expecting to die, "he saw someone," she told us, "in his sleep, come down from the sky and walk in, holding in his palm four little red objects. He held his hand before Axe Handle and said, 'Here. Eat this up.' And Axe Handle took them like pills." After this Axe Handle recovered.

Waking visions and auditions were common, not however too common, it seems, as meaningful dreams. Sometimes as we have seen, power was bestowed on the recipient when awake, although more frequently in a dream.

"Once," said Coming Daylight, "we were camped along the Milk River where the woods stops Everybody in those days used to get up early, when the sun was just peeping above the horizon. So one morning my grandmother went for water, very early, just before dawn. She looked up and down the river. She saw something right down in the water. She looked more closely. It was a buffalo fawn, the small yellow-brown kind. It stood in the middle of the water. This was a vision (be:tänəhatsa'). She started to pray to this fawn and while she prayed the fawn looked at her. She prayed and prayed that the fawn would have pity on her. And then the fawn looked at her. She wasn't mourning or anything at that time. She was just going about her ordinary routine. It was good when anyone had a vision like that. My grandmother told this vision to those in her lodge but she did not tell everybody

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

You were not supposed to tell everybody. I think that the vision is what made my grandmother live so long [to the age of 101 years it is claimed]. I think the fawn gave her 'grace' to live that long." 787

We recorded two instances of mass vision. One, of white horses coming down through an opening in the mountains, has been previously described. The other was related by Singer.

"The Gros Ventres were traveling and they got to a place where there is a mountain on both sides. They were going to look for buffalo. The men went out and then heard a man hollering for all the others. They all looked and saw a herd of buffalo coming from the sky. Iron Bucket [Singer's husband] was one of that party. The herd dropped close by. When people see anything like that they say it is a holy thing. The men chased these buffalo and killed one. It was bigger and fatter than the real kind and that is how they knew. They talked about this a whole lot. They had not prayed for this. It just happened. The man who first saw these buffalo gave a war whoop and then yelled: 'Come see!' The others all looked and here the buffalo were. When the buffalo landed, the earth shook and the dust just came up."

Auditions occurred, as well as visions. The woman's voice heard in the sweat-lodge rite and during White Weasel's singing has been mentioned previously (supra, p. 97). In the latter case, Mary Ereaux' mother and an occasional other person could hear the woman's voice, but others, such as Mary herself and White Weasel's wife, could not.

"The Gros Ventres," according to Singer, "used to come across a big lake toward the southwest. It was a holy lake because in its deep waters they used to hear sounds of dogs barking, and horses neighing, and young men giving a whoop, and drums beating, like they were singing. The people used even to see visions in this lake. Since the whites came around the Gros Ventres do not know what has become of this lake." [823]

Omens and Divination

Through both omens and divination, knowledge of the future or of hidden or distant things is believed to be gotten, and both

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787 have at least some touch of the "supernatural" about them. In the senses in which we are here using the terms, omens are more or less conventional interpretations of casual events, of happenings that occur independently of activity, or effective initiative, on the part of the interpreter; divination, an interpretation of means specifically resorted to and set up by the interpreter.

The line between omen and divination cannot always be sharply drawn, nor can it always be sharply drawn from the Gros Ventre point of view between natural and "supernatural" interpretation of casual events or of set up means. We shall deal first with omens, and after that with divination.

Some portents of the future are quite clearly of the purely natural order in Gros Ventre thought. Examples of such natural Gros Ventre portents are weather signs like the following. The aurora borealis is a sign of impending bad weather or storm; if it occurs a given night, on the second night after there will be a change of weather. A lot of rain, in summer, or a lot of service-berries, choke-cherries and so forth, means much snow the following winter. If the blackbirds, crows, and other birds leave early, cold weather may be expected early in the fall. Whether the winter would be severe or mild, could be told from the condition of animals' fur in the fall. Old fellows, in the olden days, are said to have been able to foretell the day when a storm or the Chinook wind would arrive.

Whether the following are conceived as of the natural or supernatural order is doubtful. A big shooting star portends sickness to come; of a little one, nothing is thought. When Singer was a little girl she had one or two grey hairs; her grandmother wanted to pull them out and told her they were a sign she was going to live to old age.

The following seem more suggestive of the supernatural, so far as we would judge the native attitude. If you hear someone saying your name, especially if there be added the call, "Come on!" and you look around and see nobody, this is a sign of your death. "If a dog comes and whines around and kind of cries, or if it raises its hind leg and urinates on a lodge, clothing or a person, this is unlucky." "If a family dog whines around the door and

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

howls at the moon, someone is going to die; the dog will be killed to head off the misfortune." It is also unlucky if a dog and a coyote "kind of quarrel, the one howling frequently and the other answering back." Hoot owls were thought to be ghosts (supra, p. 27). If an owl alighted on the tent or house, or hooted nearby on a bush, this portended the death of someone. If one or more crows flew across one's path and cawed when one was going out hunting, this meant good luck. 787

Of the supernatural order were also many of the intimations imparted in dreams, and many gotten in connection with the sacred Pipes, such as those from the quivering of the pipe bundle, the look of the human face in the Feathered Pipe bundle, and so forth.

An eclipse of the sun was an omen of some coming sickness, some epidemic like smallpox. Coming Daylight stated that her old grandmother "always noticed that an eclipse [of the sun] was followed by smallpox." Coming Daylight described her own personal reaction during an eclipse. 787 821

"I had been sent after water. . . . All of a sudden it got dark. The first thing I did was to grab on to a bunch of willows. I did not know what had happened and just kept hidden there. It was so dark I could not see to go anywhere. I heard people hollering: 'Come this way. Where are you?' But I was so frightened I just hung on to the willows as though someone were going to take me away. Finally it got to be lighter, and I took the water home."

Singer's account of her experience during an eclipse [the same one?] gives some details also on tribal belief and practice. She and another young woman were the only ones at home.

"We noticed it was getting darker and darker, although it was in the afternoon about this time of the year [mid-August]. We began to scream and cry and we did not know what was going to happen. It was really an eclipse of the sun. The men, and everyone left in camp at the time, just lay down on the ground. Finally they got up and said: 'That is a sign we are going to have smallpox.' Everybody who had a gun just shot at the sun. The reason for shooting was that it [the eclipse] was going to bring some kind of disease. They thought it was a warning." Coming Daylight here explained: "When they shoot they are trying to scare it to get rid of the sickness."

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

●787 172 . At a number of spots in and around the territory of the Gros Ventre are cliffs on which the pictograph beings (supra, p. 20) made designs that could be interpreted as omens. The Boy enumerated the following localities where such picture cliffs were or are: one near Clagett on the Missouri River; another around Sun River; another southeast of the Sweet Grass Hills; another far up north in the forested country; another around the mouth of the Musselshell River; another north of the Musselshell; another north of the Yellowstone (north of where the Crow now are). Singer also mentioned one not far from Hays. Unfortunately our time schedule did not permit us to visit any of these spots.

The Gros Ventres explicitly distinguished these drawings from those recognized as made by Indians and from other somewhat similar things. Some such designs made by Indians in caves and on cliffs can be seen today: two, for example, in the Little Rockies, one on the south side and another on the southeast. Tracks of animals, "right in the stone," may also be seen: at one place on top of one end of Snake Butte, some miles east of St. Paul's Mission. The Gros Ventres do not know what these are.

Likewise, at one end of the Larb Hills, there is a big flat rock described as about 5 feet by 10, the upper surface of which is about waist high from the ground. The rock itself is not limestone, sandstone, or granite, but of a rarer mineral seen only once in a great while; of light color, and looking something like cement, and looking to be "artificial." It was discovered by the Gros Ventres only in recent times, apparently from the Assiniboine, who found it on directions given them by some Cree half-breeds. On the surface of this flat rock are seen tracks in the stone of a child, of hoofed animals, wolves and dogs, and of animals the Gros Ventres cannot identify. On one of the vertical sides of the rock is a dent, shaped like a lodge. The lodge is painted in colors, and in front of it, at the door side, is the figure of a man standing with a pipe extended upward. Some young Gros Ventre men have spit on their hands and tried to rub these lodge colors off, but without success. On the opposite vertical side of the flat rock are represented the sun and moon, the Dipper, and some other stars. The present-day Gros Ventres have tried to divine the meaning

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

of this rock with its designs, but to no avail. They just say of it "it is something holy." They do not know what if anything the pictograph beings may have had to do with it. 787 172

Before the death by lightning of a certain young man, a drawing was seen, on a pictograph being cliff, of a lodge, and inside a headless man, and a zigzag line to the top of the lodge. In another case some Gros Ventre hunters, recently, when out hunting, were wondering if the pictograph beings still predicted, and so they went to one of their cliffs and there saw so depicted a train, and in front of it a headless man. On their return after their hunting was over, they went to the Agency and there heard that a certain man had been killed by a train. Just in recent times, too, a Gros Ventre band was traveling (not as a war party) to the Crow reservation and being near the pictograph beings cliff at the mouth of the Musselshell, went and looked, and there saw pictured a water monster with long horns and a human being riding on its neck. (One on its head and another on its snout, according to Singer.) They interpreted this to mean: "Someone is going to be drowned." When they reached the Crow, they learned that a Gros Ventre young man had drowned crossing the Yellowstone somewhere near Billings, and the place where the river comes out of the mountains. Singer once saw on one of these cliffs a picture of their camp, with a gun pointing right at the middle of the camp; afterwards a person in the camp did actually get killed.

In general, if someone died from war or drowning or other cause, and a group were discussing the death, it would be said: "The pictograph beings drew and predicted this long ago."

There was relatively little divination among the Gros Ventres as compared with the many kinds of it among their Algonquian linguistic kin of the taiga. Scapulimancy was absent; none of a half-dozen or more of our informants to whom we broached the subject had ever heard of it. Scrying occurred in the form of peering into badger blood. When a war party had gone out on the trail, they would kill a badger, lay it on its back, slit it from throat to crotch, and leave the blood to gather in a pool around the belly. Those of the party who wished to peer into the pool of blood did so: but there was no obligation to do so; if some did not wish 787

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787 to do so they did not do it. They peered one by one. If the scryer, on peering into the surface of the blood, saw himself headless or scalped, this meant he would get killed, and he would not go on the expedition but would turn back and go home. If he saw himself reflected clearly, this meant good luck. "Usually," said Thomas Main, "the scryers did not tell what they saw." "It was claimed," Charles Buckman remarked, "that the skeptic [one who saw himself scalped or headless, but nevertheless continued on the expedition] actually got killed."

Bear heart divination was described by The Boy, Charles Buckman, and Coming Daylight as a well-known practice.[16] Apparently badger blood divination was taken much more gravely and seriously by the Gros Ventres than bear heart divination.

A final type of divination is from Coming Daylight. The grandson of her old grandmother with whom, as a girl, she and her sister were living, killed a female porcupine in which were two embryos. "The old woman said to us two girls: 'Come here both of you.' So she held my dress open at the neck and loosened my belt, and threw the foetus down the neck of my dress. It went through without stopping, and my grandmother said: 'When you have children you will have an easy time. See how quick it went through.' Then she did the same to my sister, but in some way the foetus got caught, and the old woman said: 'Now, you see. You are going to have a hard time. You are going to have slow childbirth.' And sure enough, these are the ways it turned out for us [respectively]."

Things to Do and to Avoid Doing

788 789 Under this somewhat loose caption we are grouping certain acts done in order to bring about desirable effect or avoided lest undesirable ones follow. How far they were in Gross Ventre thought considered "supernatural" it is hard to say. Most of these observances and avoidances were seemingly viewed as of the non-sacred work-a-day order. At least, in most of them there appears to have been no explicit or even implicit appeal to a supernatural being or resort to supernatural power. The few in which a suggestion of

[16] Cf. Flannery, 1953, p. 163.

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Gambling power was of a lower order of dignity and solemnity than power obtained by fasting on the mountains and hill tops. It was taken less seriously, more lightly, and, if we may judge from attitudes today, with an undercurrent of amused jocoseness. It was not, as was power gotten on mountains, transferrable by the original possessor to another, or at least it was not transferred. For one reason others did not usually want it, on account of the ailments and shortened life its possession entailed. A man who was known to have such power was further handicapped: his fellow tribesmen would not ordinarily gamble against him and so his opportunities for participation were few, being limited mostly to games played by the Gros Ventre with other tribes. In such intertribal games, however, he would become a popular champion, and would derive therefrom a certain prestige as well as material gains. The possession then of gambling power, while to a certain limited extent an asset to its owner, was in more respects than one a decided liability. 525 789

It may be added here that while those who possessed supernatural gambling power are spoken of today by English-speaking Gros Ventre as "professional gamblers," in reality there were no professional gamblers among the Gros Ventre even in the old days, professional, that is, in the sense of making their living or most of their living at gambling.

The following three narratives, related by The Boy, illustrate various aspects of gambling power.

Narrative 1. Lone Bear, The Boy's wife's father, had gambling power. While he was still in his prime, his legs started hurting him. To escape the penalty he quit gambling. But in vain. His legs went bad, and he died before his time. 525 789 539

Narrative 2. When Lame Bull, The Boy's father, was a young boy about ten years of age he had a friend of about the same age, called Keg, to whom he was much attached. Keg, like other boys of his age, had the daily chore of rising long before daylight and driving out the family horses away from camp to graze. One morning he was awakened very early and was told to drive the horses out. He did so, but when he got out to the grazing ground he decided to steal a few winks lying face down. So he fell asleep, and all at once he started to dream. He dreamed that he saw a big hand game going on with high stakes and one fellow winning everything. Keg looked at this fellow closely and saw it was he, Keg, himself. This man spoke to Keg saying: "Do as you see me doing here. Use my throat as an object [button] to hide." [857] [787]

Then Keg woke up and looked around, and there right near where he lay he saw a covey of prairie chickens doing their mating dance and making a whirring noise with their tails. When he got back he said to Lame Bull: "Let's play and see whether what I dreamed is true. I'll put my helper to the test." Lame Bull tried to guess Keg, but Keg would make a noise like a prairie chicken and thereupon

5: Flannery E-5 (1940)1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

THE GROS VENTRE SHAKING TENT

REGINA FLANNERY
The Catholic University of America

121 ALTHOUGH the concept of the shaking tept is now known to be a widespread one, relatively few details are available on this rite as it was practiced in the Plains area. The following [115] data, gathered among the Gros Ventres of Montana in 1940 from old and middle-aged informants who had often witnessed the performance, are offered in an attempt to fill in the picture as regards this one tribe.

787 When speaking English, the Gros Ventres refer to the rite as a "seance" and to the performer as a "spiritualist" inasmuch as it was carried out by a person who had access to the spirit of a deceased relative. The Gros Ventre word for spirit is *tsatsuwaa*, which, incidentally, is the same word they now use for radio. The voice of the spirit can be heard, and, while the spirit cannot be seen, its presence is otherwise manifest by the noise of its activities. Among the latter we note especially the shaking of the tent as the spirit enters and leaves.

[791] When information was desired regarding missing persons, the whereabouts of the enemy, etc., a spiritualist, who might be either a man or a woman, was asked to invoke the spirit over which he or she had control. The pertinent questions were asked and the spirit would supply the answers. There were two general methods of procedure. The so-called seance could be held either in the big dwelling lodge or in a small structure built for the occasion. Furthermore the performance was more or less elaborate, details differing according to circumstances, the individual spiritualist, and even the "personality" of the spirit invoked. But one invariable feature was the shaking of the tent.

The two accounts which follow will illustrate the general pattern as well as the differences in procedure. The first concerns a seance held in the winter at a time when this particular family

5: Flannery E-5 (1940)1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

group was more or less permanently encamped. It was told by Mrs. Warrior, now a very old woman, as one of her childhood memories and was not elicited by questioning. 787 [24]

"Many, many years ago when I was a small girl, my father had gone on the warpath with several other men. When winter came they hadn't returned. So my uncle (mother's brother) went to an old woman, Good Singer, who was known to be a spiritualist, although she was famous for other medicine powers as well. She consented and the seance was held in the lodge. My sister and I and our aunts and relatives were all there. 787 539

"A curtain was hung across the back part of the lodge and Good Singer was bound with ropes tightly knotted, then wrapped in a blanket so that only her head stuck out. She was behind the curtain and began to sing a certain song. She told us all to sing that song four times. I joined in the singing. When we finished we heard a humming sound and scraping and all kinds of noise through the opening at the top of the lodge. The top of the lodge began to shake and all at once we heard something slide from the top down behind the curtain where the old woman was, and land with a thump. That was her spirit, that is, the spirit of her son who had died long, long before.

"As soon as they heard the thump my uncle said: 'Here is the offering,' as he handed behind the curtain the pot containing a pup they had killed and cooked. We could hear the dishes rattling as the spirit ate. Soon all of the bones were picked clean and the spirit tossed them over the curtain so that they landed in our midst. The spirit then complained that they had tied his mother so tightly, and as he untied her we could hear the sound of the ropes as he worked at them. Then the ropes too came sailing over the top of the curtain. They were all knotted up in one bunch, and, try as they would, they couldn't unravel it.

"The spirit then complained again: 'Why did you tie my mother up so tightly?' and then asked: 'What did you call me for?' My uncle said: 'Well, I called you because these men went out on a war party and some, including Holy Weasel, didn't return. I want to know where they are and what became of them.' Then my uncle lighted a pipe and put it under the cur-

5: Flannery E-5 (1940)1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787 tain. When the spirit finished smoking he put the pipe outside
539 the curtain and my uncle said: 'Well, I want you to hunt my brother-in-law to see where he is or what became of him.' Immediately the spirit made a noise and we could hear it going out of the top of the lodge which shook violently again. The people all sat quietly smoking and listening. Then old Good Singer called from behind the curtain: 'Sing again four times.' So they began to sing and I joined in. After the fourth repetition the spirit came back in the same way as it entered the first time, dropping down behind the curtain and landing with a thump. Every time the spirit goes in or out the top of the lodge shakes. Then the spirit made the exclamation which the Gros Ventres use to indicate that something terrible has happened, and continued: 'You should have told him [Holy Weasel] to stay at home. He and his party were killed. They were raiding the enemy and came across some Piegan. The latter made believe they were meeting the Gros Ventre in a friendly way, but when they got close they killed all the party except one who escaped.'

"Just before the spirit made this last speech, two little boys in the lodge had been playing during that ceremony and the spirit told them: 'Be quiet because I am going to tell you what happened.' And before they knew what happened to them these two little boys landed outside the lodge. The spirit must have pushed them out! And everybody was certainly quiet after that."

The second account will illustrate some differences in procedure when a spiritualist was consulted while a party was on
[115] the move and on the look-out for enemies. It was told to me by another old woman informant, Singer Sleeping Bear, incidentally to a long story of one of the journeys made by members of her father's group when she was a small girl.

"The party got as far as Canada and stayed all night. One of the men filled his pipe and took it over to another man, Rising Cross, and said: 'Now here. I am giving you the pipe. I want you to invite your spirit. I want you to ask your spirit if the road is clear (that is, if there is no enemy in sight).' Rising Cross took the pipe and prayed a few moments. The other men

5: Flannery E-5 (1940)1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

made a small rounded lodge of willows, just like a sweat lodge. 787
A few of them went in there with the spiritualist who just sat 539
there with them as one of the group. He did, however, smoke the pipe and sing his song. Finally this little lodge shook so hard it almost fell over. It was like a terrible wind. Then a voice said: 'Yes, yes, what do you want?' Rising Cross said: 'Well, we want to know if the way is clear. We are looking for the enemy. How will the way be near where they are?' So the spirit said: 'Well, if you do as I say you are going to kill the chief (the father of a captive Piegan who had married among the Gros Ventres). Go up over the hill and you will see the plain just covered with lodges. If you don't turn back immediately after you kill that one man, you are going to have bad luck.'

"So the young fellows jumped on their fastest horses and went off. They found the situation as described by the spirit. The man whom the spirit mentioned was riding up the trail along the coulee accompanied only by a woman on horseback. When these two had gotten some distance from the lodges in the plain, the young Gros Ventre took after them and killed the man, but the woman wheeled her horse and sped back to the camp to give the alarm. The Gros Ventres said to one another: 'Now you know what the spirit told us. It told us to run just as soon as we killed him.' And the majority was in favor, but one man was obstinate. While they were arguing the enemies approached and were able to overtake most of them. Only a few escaped. It is always someone who doesn't believe the spirit who ruins the party."

That there might occasionally have been some room for 787
doubting the validity of the information received through a par- [15]
ticular spirit is suggested by a comment made by another informant, Al Chandler, a middle-aged man. He had mentioned an old woman spiritualist, David Man's grandmother, and said that she was honest about it and her spirit could be depended upon for the truth. He added, however: "But a man I knew used to hold seances and had his own brother as his spirit. This spirit always lied. When this brother was living he was a liar, so you couldn't expect his spirit to tell the truth!"

5: Flannery E-5 (1940)1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787 As to the way in which the power was acquired, Al Chandler
791 explained as follows: "It was customary to take some hair or a
[764] relic of a deceased relative after the body decays. (The Gros Ventres did not use to bury their dead like they do now.) Some would have a bone, others a whole lock of hair, and so on. Now if a person happens to take something the spirit likes, the spirit appears and asks: 'Why do you want that rib (or whatever part one takes)?' The man or woman might answer: 'I want you real near me and I want you to help me whenever I ask you.' That person gets in a kind of trance while the spirit talks to him that first time, and the spirit gives him a particular song which he must sing when he wants to invite the spirit."

Apparently some leeway was allowed the individual in accepting the power, if the following information from Al Chandler can be taken as an indication.

"My adoptive father had the rib of an uncle of his who had been a medicine man of some kind. The spirit appeared to my father and asked: 'Why did you take that? What are you going to do with me?' My father replied: 'This is just for myself. I don't want to be the kind of person who owns spirits. If I need you myself I am going to call on you and I want you to help me, but I am not going to make you a public servant.' And that spirit did help him, personally, once or twice, but my father never got tied up in the ropes [as in the case reported by Mrs. Warrior]. By the way, the person who wants to find out something is the one that ties the spiritualist. He can tie the ropes as tight as he wants to and make as many knots as he pleases. The funny part of it is that it is just like the showmen with handcuffs,—the knots sometimes are still tied just like the person who wanted the information tied them originally,—although sometimes the spirit bunched the ropes all up in a mess. The whole tent shakes, too, and the skeptics look real hard, but the spirit will mock them by saying: 'Well, you need not look because you can't see anything anyway!'"

787 In conclusion I think we can say that the rite fits into the general ceremonial pattern of the Gros Ventres, but it was the only ceremony in which the shaking tent was involved. The

5: Flannery E-5 (1940)1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

spiritualist, either man or woman, was approached in the same way as any other " medicine " or " holy " person when it was desired that they exercise their power. For this particular type of clairvoyance the power consisted in control over the spirit of a deceased relative, rather than some other kind of supernatural being. The spirit was invoked by a song learned from the spirit at the time the power was acquired, just as in other cases among the Gros Ventres the being bestowing power gave instructions as to procedure to the recipient. It is characteristic of the seance, however, that there was no set formula beyond the song and the questions could be framed by either the spiritualist or the seeker after information; while the answers were given by the spirit in ordinary language, understood by all, and the spirit made comments appropriate to the particular situation. Whether the regular lodge or a small separate structure were used, whether the Houdini trick was involved, and whether the spirit chose to eat or smoke, seem to be variable features which were employed according to circumstances, and perhaps according to instructions for carrying out the rite received by the individual spiritualist from the spirit along with the song.

787

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

THE SHAKING TENT RITE AMONG PLAINS AND FOREST ALGONQUIANS

JOHN M. COOPER
The Catholic University of America

121 114 THE purpose of the present paper is to bring together and make available some scattered field notes on the conjuring and "shaking tent" complex of northern North America, a subject that has recently evoked a good deal of discussion, particularly in the valuable interpretative monographs of Ray and Hallowell.[1] The data to be presented are from the Algonquian-speaking Montagnais, Cree, Otcipwe, Blood-Blackfoot, and Gros Ventres (of Montana), and the Siouan-speaking Assiniboine. Only certain high-light features of the Montagnais, Cree, and Otcipwe rite will be mentioned; the complete field data gathered by the writer will be given in monographs to be published later. On the Blood-Blackfoot, Gros Ventres, and Assiniboine, my field data will be given here in full. Information obtained on the Blood-Blackfoot and Assiniboine shaking tent rite is very fragmentary. It was gotten under conditions that did not leave time or opportunity for detailed investigation. Leisurely field work on this item among these people would in all probability net a much ampler yield. Information on the Gros Ventre rite is much fuller, but, even so, is probably not exhaustive.

GROS VENTRE RITE

114 ● 787 It was in 1931 during a very brief one-day reconnaissance visit to the Fort Belknap Reservation that the writer first heard of the shaking tent rite among the Gros Ventres, from a group

[1] V. F. Ray, Historic backgrounds of the conjuring complex in the Plateau and the Plains, in L. Spier et al., ed., Language, culture, and personality: Essays in memory of Edward Sapir, Menasha, Wis., 1941, 204–16, bibl. 215–16; A. L. Hallowell, The role of conjuring in Saulteaux society Publ., Philadelphia anthropological society, v. 2, Phila., 1942, incl. bibl. pp. 89–96.

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

of men, including Stiff Arm, a noted Gros Ventre medicine man, who has since died. Only a few details were obtained: the rite within a regular tepee with spectators present; the tying of the performer with ropes, his escape therefrom, and after his escape the ropes in a ball which could not be untied; the summoning of the spirit of the deceased relative by the performer; the shaking of the tent "as in a cyclone" when the spirit came; talking "from above" by the spirit; singing by the performer and by the others in the tepee. 114 787

Later in August-September, 1939 and 1940, fuller information on the shaking tent rite was secured in connection with a general study of Gros Ventre society and religion, from The Boy and Thick, two of the older and best informed men among the Gros Ventres. These fuller data here follow.

Spiritual helpers among the Gros Ventres were of two kinds, ghosts of deceased persons and beings who had never been men. [776] The latter, the ordinary guardian spirits, by far the more common, do not concern us here as they do not enter at all into the Gros Ventre shaking tent rite. Only ghosts so enter.

A ghost helper, tsatsawâ·'ₐ (–â– and superior a nasalized), was usually acquired in the following way. It was not sought by fasting and crying out on the hills, the customary procedure for acquiring non-ghostly guardian spirits and power. In fact there was either no quest of any kind or at most a somewhat indirect one. The usual sequence was as follows. A surviving relative would keep in his or her possession some memento or keepsake—something the deceased had prized greatly, some belonging such as a whip, or a tooth or bit of hair of the departed one. The keepsake was kept, not worn. It was kept not for the purpose of acquiring the ghost of the deceased relative (a father or other close relative), but solely or at least chiefly, so far as I could gather, out of regard for the departed. 776 787 [765 768]

In most cases where such mementos were kept nothing happened. In some few cases, however, the keeping led to the acquisition of a ghost helper by the keeper. The first intimations the keeper had of the intentions of the deceased relative were knockings, or whistlings, or other kinds of disturbance around

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787 where the memento was kept. After a while the ghost would
776 come to the keeper, the surviving relative, on successive visits and talk to him (or her), telling him its intention of becoming his ghost helper, and finally putting him in a deep sleep ("killing" him) and saying to him: "I shall be your tsatsawâ·ˈa." In other words, it was the ghost, not the surviving relative, who regularly took the initiative and broke the ice. In fact, the latter had little or no freedom to accept or refuse.

By the ghost the survivor in trance would be taught the procedure to use for summoning and dealing with the ghost, how to put incense in the smudge place in the person's own lodge, how to lay the pipe, the direction of stem and bowl, what kind of food to put out, and so forth. A key element in such teaching was a special song, given by the ghost to be sung in said rite. One
776 such song, recorded by me in 1940 as sung by The Boy but not
787 yet transcribed, a wordless song sung to the accompaniment of a
791 drum, had belonged to a woman named "Woman." She had
[533] been taught it by the ghost of her deceased husband (or brother), *Wawathana'tca* * (*a*'s nasalized) "Bad-bad Bull." He had been a medicine man when still living, and this had been his "power" song. His ghost gave it to her both as the song to summon his ghost with and as a doctoring song. She had therefore both ghost-summoning and doctoring power. While that old woman had both a ghost helper and doctoring power, the two things did not necessarily go together in the same person. One could have a ghost helper without having doctoring power, and vice versa. No one lacking a ghost helper could conduct the shaking tent rite, no matter how great power he had received by fasting and crying, and no matter what guardian spirit or spirits he had acquired. After her husband's death the above old woman had not married. People were a little afraid of her because she had this ghost helper. She was a capable old woman, with lots of horses; some of her breed of horses are still (1940) around. She died around 1907.

* Owing to delays and difficulties under present war conditions in obtaining symbols not in our printer's stock a and e with a stroke above them are here printed in italic.

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Other songs, distinct from this summoning or shaking tent rite song, were also given and taught at times by ghost helpers. Two of them, both victory songs, were recorded as sung by The Boy in 1940. These two were given on occasions other than that on which the surviving relative initially acquired his ghost helper. 776 787 [533]

After all the above teaching was concluded, the ghost of the deceased relative belonged to the survivor and was supposed to come whenever summoned by the latter in the manner the ghost told him while in trance to do. A great many Gros Ventre men and women had guardian spirits and "power" acquired by fasting and crying or otherwise. But fewer individuals, men and women, had ghost helpers. My informants in 1939 and 1940 could recall only four persons in the last two generations or last 70 years or so who had had ghost helpers.

In one case (see first of the two appended stories by Thick) two spirits tried to come to the shaking tent rite conducted by Woman, one bad and the other good, but whether the bad one was one of her deceased relatives or not, she never knew. The people were under the impression that the bad one was an intruder who used to come first and try to "horn in" on the proceedings. No case of a given person clearly having more than one ghost helper was recalled by my informants.

Ordinary "power" could be and often was transferred by the possessor to another person by donation or bequeathment. But a ghost helper never was so transferred and could not be. [424]

It may be added that neither my informants, The Boy and Thick, nor my interpreter, Thomas Main, all highly intelligent and informed men, were at all sure of the etymology of the word tsatsawâ·'ᵃ. The Boy thought it might connote the meaning of "slave," "some one who is forced to do things." Thomas Main suggested a possible relationship to tsatsa—"coming, flight"; plus—wa, an old Gros Ventre word, meaning unknown. The two words for ordinary ghosts as such are tsa·k'ᵃ (sing.; pl., tsa·k'an: a's as u in English but), and bie'te'ᵉ (sing.; pl. bi'eten). Tsatsawâ·'ᵃ is used exclusively for ghost helpers, not for an ordinary ghost, or ghosts in general. An ordinary medicine man was called nata'nhehi (a's as u in but), but there was no special name 791 787 [115]

791 in use to designate those who had a ghost helper: of him or her
787 it was merely said: "He (or she) has a tsatsawâ·'a."

Persons who had a ghost helper commanded great respect, and were bothered by no one. But capable medicine men on whom the people depended to doctor their sick were also greatly respected. My informants did not feel that either class of practitioners as such had greater prestige than the other.

787 In the shaking tent rite, no other spirits than the given ghost
776 had any part, and only the one ghost ever had part in a given performance. Neither guardian spirits, nor the "Little Spirit," nor Ba'a', nor the Supreme Being (I^{x}tcib^{i}n^{j}'a't'^{a}; the a before t nasalized) enters into it in any manner. The summoned ghost came not from any of these or their abodes, but from Basna'^{a}be'^{e},
[775] the Big Sand, whither the souls of all Gros Ventres, except murderers of their own tribesmen, went after death and lived.

The function of the ghost helper was to give knowledge about past, present, future, or distant happenings, and counsel and direction in illness or danger. He imparted information. He did not as such grant power. Some of the many things he would be questioned about were: How a war expedition under way or an impending battle, or an illness, would come out? Where were the enemy located and what were their plans? Who had stolen a certain valuable article and where was it? He was not asked questions about trivial or silly matters, or about the fidelity or infidelity of a wife, although he sometimes volunteered information on such things. If some noted or loved person were critically ill, the ghost helper might be summoned and if it said: "His (the sick person's) soul is already over there," this meant he was going to die.

787 Where the services of one who had a ghost helper were desired,
791 the usual procedure was for the client or clients to go to him (or her) and offer him a pipe to smoke—this in accordance with general Gros Ventre practice in enlisting the aid of anyone with any kind of power. Those who had ghost helpers were commonly reluctant or even afraid to summon their helper; after the performance they felt tired and sore. But if given a pipe to call the

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

ghost, they could not refuse, at least not easily. And if they accepted the pipe, they committed themselves definitely. 787 791

The summoning rite was performed only at night, with the fire out, regardless of the severity of the weather, and in darkness. In the two narratives by The Boy appended infra the ghost helper spoke in the daytime, but had been summoned the preceding night. The rite was ordinarily performed in the performer's lodge, he being hidden out of sight of the clients or spectators behind a blanket-curtain hung up for this purpose to partition off a segment of the lodge. Away from the camp, the rite was sometimes performed in an emergency shelter or a sweat lodge. Before the rite, the clients got ready a pipe and tobacco, a dish of puppy meat (an earlier Gros Ventre delicacy), and other food, [262] and at the appointed time for the rite brought these to the lodge of the ghost-possessor.

The performer was then bound with thongs. The four fingers (thumb too?) of each hand were tied tightly together by interlacing them (somewhat after the technique of wrapped or twined basketry), the hands were tied behind the back, he was rolled in his blanket and tied around securely with thongs, with only his head protruding, and then was deposited behind the blanket partition out of sight of the spectators.

It appears to have been a common practice for the performer to challenge the most skeptical member of the party, and ask him to do the tying. Various stories of skeptics were narrated to me.

On one occasion when the main body of the Gros Ventres, then 787 at war with the Piegan (or Blackfoot), were camped on the east 776 side of Judas River and a small band of them on the west side, the ghost helper of one of the Gros Ventres in the small band told them: "Tell the people to leave this small camp and go across the river to the big one, for the enemy is going to raid tonight." But many of the Gros Ventres of the small band said: "Ghosts are big liars. We are not cowards to run." Of the skeptics many remained, while about half crossed back to the big camp. About dawn, the enemy came as the ghost had predicted and nearly all who had remained at the small camp were massacred.

On another occasion when the Gros Ventres had (or were

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787 776 about to have) a big battle with the Crows at Marias (at the junction of the Marias with the Missouri), a young man who was present at a ghost helper rite, with the fires out and pitch-darkness in the lodge, and who doubted that a ghost could come back, decided to experiment. When the ghost helper came and the noise was heard, the young man, who was sitting near the door in the darkness where no one else could see he was exposed, pushed his breechclout aside and exposed his genitals, saying to himself: "If this is really a ghost, he will see me and do something about it." All of a sudden the young man let out a yell as if hit by someone, and ran out of the lodge. "You had better run. What is being done here is the real thing," said the ghost to the young fellow, and added to the crowd: "I hit that young fellow's genitals sharply with a stick; that is why he dashed out of the lodge." They then asked the young man: "Is that what happened?" And he replied: "Yes. He hit me good and hard there," and he became a believer.

This emphasis on skeptics in non-narrative and narrative accounts of the Gros Ventre shaking tent rite would suggest that the rope-escaping feat, which we may call for short the "Houdini trick," had the purpose, overt or covert, of creating or confirming faith in the authenticity of the ghostly visitation.

The Houdini trick ordinarily formed part of the Gros Ventre shaking tent rite, but to judge from a couple of the stories appended to this paper, was not absolutely indispensable and could, in emergency, be omitted.

791 787 776 Right after being tied, the ghost-possessor to the accompaniment of his drum sang his summoning song which the ghost had given him. As the ghost helper approached the lodge, a whistling as of wind could be heard, and sometimes at least an owl call,—owls and ghosts are closely associated in Gros Ventre thought, ghosts appearing or speaking as owls. As the ghost came through the top of the lodge, the top would shake violently, and then the whole lodge would shake.

The ghost would then go to the performer and blow on him, and all the sinews and thongs with which he was tied would become untied, and they would be rolled in a ball so knotted and

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

tangled that it could not itself be easily unravelled and would so be thrown out at the spectators, or at the one who had done the tying, especially if he were a skeptic, with some such challenge to him from the ghost as: "You tied up this person. Now see if you can untangle this ball of thong."

Next the pipe would be lit and held up in the darkness in the direction where the ghost was supposed to be, for the ghost to smoke, and the spectators would see the pipe glow up rhythmically every time the ghost drew on it. The people in the lodge would finish smoking this pipe. After this the ghost would ask: "People, why did you send for me?" They would tell him what they wanted to know. If the ghost knew the answer offhand, he would answer at once. If he did not know, he would say: "I don't know. I'll go and find out. You sing that song again [the one the ghost taught the performer when he first chose the latter; no other song was sung] and I'll come back and tell you."

As soon as the ghost went out, a little fire would be made, and the spectators had a smoke. Then they put out the fire and sang the ghost song. They would not have to wait long, "for a ghost travels just about as fast as a man thinks." On returning it would give the information that had been sought of it.

Most ghosts talked a whistling talk. But some—those possessed by Plenty-dry-meat-old-man and by Morning-star, two old men whose ghost helpers were among the greatest ones remembered and whose prophecies always came true—talked just in a natural voice.

After the ghost helper had given the information desired (or perhaps earlier, after his smoke at the beginning; I could not clear up the point) he was offered the food that had been prepared. And the spectators, still in the dark, would hear the tapping of the ghost's fingernails on the plate or other sound of eating as the ghost partook of some of the food.

When he had finished eating, he would say something like: "If you are done with me, I shall go," and he would depart by way of the top of the tent, which would shake violently as it had done when the ghost first arrived in it. After the ghost helper had taken his final departure, the performer would come out

776 from behind the blanketed enclosure, the fire would be re-lighted, the performer would say the prayer customary among the Gros [782] Ventres before all meals to the Supreme Being and other beings, then he or she and the others present would eat the food that had remained from the ghost's repast. Finally they would all sit around smoking and chatting a while before dispersing. I failed to gather any information on whether the performer receives any payment or not for his or her services in the rite.

Certain simplifications of the above procedure under emergency conditions as on war expeditions are noted or intimated in a couple of the following four narratives, the first two given by The Boy, the last two by Thick.

Narrative 1

787 The following story was told by The Boy.

776 "A certain man had his deceased father as his ghost helper.
539 The ghost helper used to speak Gros Ventre just like living people but in a bass voice. Everybody understood him when they heard him.

"On one occasion the Gros Ventre tribe were camped near the forks of the Teton and Marias Rivers. While there a large group of the men decided to go on the warpath. So they left the main camp, went up the Missouri River and camped that first night at the mouth of Crow Creek where it empties into the Missouri River. When it was dark that night some of the men said: 'Let's offer the pipe to X [the one mentioned above who had the ghost helper; name not given] and ask him to find out whether our prospects on this war party are good or bad.' So they filled up a pipe and went to X, held out the pipe to him and asked him: 'Accept the pipe and call your spirit.'

[791] "X accepted willingly and soon after they had smoked the pipe together they made a shelter where X was to do the spirit-rite. So they tied up X, filled the pipe again, put it there and sang a song four times. When they were singing it the fourth time they heard a voice in the air. The ghost helper arrived and the shelter shook as a lodge would have done in the same rite. When the spirit hit the ground, the ground shook too. The spirit

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

seemed excited and kept repeating: 'What do you want, my children?' and added: 'If you were in my place and were as old and feeble as I am, you wouldn't like to be disturbed. But here I am. What do you want?' They answered: 'We want to know how this venture of ours is going to turn out,—well or badly.' Then they lit the pipe and offered it to the spirit and they could see from the rhythmic glaring of the pipe that the ghost helper was smoking. After he had smoked he replied: 'Well, I don't know offhand. I'll have to look around and investigate. I am going away to look around. While I am gone you smoke and after a while sing again and I'll come back.' The ghost helper went away with a noise and commotion as always.

"They sat around and smoked and after a while sang again. The ghost helper came back blowing as if catching his breath, as an old man does, and said: 'My children, Crow Indians without number are invading the camp you just left. Knowing you men are away they are so bold that they are peeping into the lodges at your women and watching them playing the hand game. Your women are in happy mood. These Crow Indians seem to be preparing to take all the Gros Ventre horses. I shall go back and watch to see what they will do. Meanwhile you do as you did before: sit around and smoke and then sing. I'll come back and make a final report.' And so they talked and smoked and sang.

"Then the ghost helper came back bringing with him one hair from the head of a Crow. This was not a scalp but was only a hair representing a scalp and was wrapped around a piece of sagebrush. It was brought to convince the Gros Ventres there was no danger. Then the ghost helper reported: 'The Crows have taken practically all your horses and about sun-up will arrive where you now are. You need have no fear of the Crows provided you do just one thing. Be sure to kill the Crow with the blue blanket coat (with hood). He is the one brave man in the crowd. Kill him first and you will kill all the others. None of the Gros Ventres will be actually killed, but two of them will be wounded. In case you do not kill the Crow with the blue coat the outcome of the battle will be doubtful. But if you kill the

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787 Crow with the blue coat you will kill all the Crows and get your
776 horses back.' The Gros Ventres asked the ghost helper which
539 two of their party would be wounded, but were not told by the ghost helper. If they had been told they would not have let these two go into battle.

"By the time they were through with the spirit it was near daylight. So they decided not to go to sleep but to wait up the rest of the night. [Here followed a long detailed description of the battle with the Crows beginning around daylight.] The Crow with the blue coat escaped. Of the sixty Crows in all, forty were killed. No Gros Ventres were killed, but two were wounded—two members of my own [The Boy's] clan. While the party was still at the war camp, some distance from the main camp, the ghost helper came and said: 'I came to hear the news. Did you kill the man with the blue coat?' They answered: 'No.' The ghost helper said: 'It is your own fault. If you had, you would have killed all the Crows. But anyhow you did well and have done yourselves credit. I am going to teach
[727] you a victory song so you can sing it when you get back to camp.' So he taught them this victory song[2] and they learned it and he said to them: 'Well, my children, I am going home. When I get back to my place of abode I will celebrate that victory too. I will give you charcoal [it was the custom for returning victors to paint themselves black] and I'll bring charcoal to my own land and celebrate.'

"The foregoing incident happened in the time of my [The Boy's] grandfather, Crow Moccasin."

Narrative 2

The story which here follows was also told by The Boy.

"The Gros Ventres were camped east of (the site of) Lewistown (south of the Missouri River). A party of Gros Ventre warriors left the camp to go on the warpath against the Sioux. One of this Gros Ventre party was known to have a ghost helper.

[2] This song as sung by The Boy was recorded in the field in 1940, together with about 120 other Gros Ventre songs, but I have not found it possible, as yet, to get any of the records transcribed for publication.

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The party traveled north and when they arrived at the river they camped there. Some of the men said: 'Morning-star-appears (or Morning-star-is-up: the man with the ghost helper) should be approached to find out what our prospects are on this expedition.' It was agreed among themselves that they would make a sweat lodge. 787 776 539

"Among those invited to sweat was Morning-star-appears. While they were sweating they offered the pipe to him to get him to call his helper. He agreed. Then they all smoked and got ready in the sweat lodge. [79]

"The ghost helper came to the sweat lodge for the possessor was right there. Just before the helper alighted he whistled violently and rapidly. Then the sweat lodge shook and they heard the ghost helper say: 'What do you want? Why did you call me?' They said: 'We are going on the warpath after the Sioux. What success will we have? Is there any danger?' So they offered the lighted pipe to the ghost helper and saw it smoked by him. After smoking, the ghost helper said: 'I'll go and see first before I answer. You go ahead and smoke and after a while sing again.' This they did.

"The ghost helper came back in the usual way, and highly elated, and said: 'All right, I am ready to tell you. First here is a strand of hair of a man (a Sioux) whom you will kill tomorrow. This represents his scalp.' It was wrapped around sagebrush. He continued: 'I have found a big Sioux camp on Beaver Creek [east of the Little Rocky Mountains]. The Sioux are having a big Grass Dance. The one who is having the most fun is the one you are to kill tomorrow. He is a handsome man and has a sword. You will capture that sword when you kill him. Don't be afraid. No Gros Ventre will be killed but two of you Gros Ventres don't look good to me.' They said to the ghost helper: 'Name the two.' But he refused to do so, saying: 'Just don't be afraid. Go ahead to the place where the Sioux are and attack them. Choose now what kind of weather you wish after the fight tomorrow, and I will see that the weather will be that way.' They failed, however, to make a choice. The ghost helper also said: 'Every once in a while tomorrow take

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787 a look at the sun. There will be all kinds of sundogs tomorrow,
776 changing every little while. When they appear you will know
539 that I have told you the truth.'

"Then the ghost helper left and the Gros Ventres slept until early morning. [Here followed a long description by The Boy of the battle.] Just one Sioux was killed in the battle, a very handsome man with a sword, as the ghost helper had predicted. Likewise they saw the sundogs changing. The Gros Ventres, however, after this first skirmish realized that the Sioux would soon get reorganized and that their own situation was perilous. So they called on Morning-star-appears to cause such weather that the Sioux could not catch them. He sang his song, using his robe as a cover in which to enclose himself, and said: 'We wish rain.' At once a cloud appeared and in a short time grew into a great black storm cloud: then came a perfect cloudburst, with thunder and lightning, in which you couldn't see any distance. Under this cover the Gros Ventres escaped from the pursuing Sioux and got back to camp safely with no loss of life, although two of their number had had narrow escapes, just as the ghost helper had said: 'Two of you do not look good to me.'

"The above occurred in Stiff Arm's time, when he was a young man. The man who killed the Sioux was Crazy Bull. I do not recall the name of the ghost helper, but this same ghost helper on this occasion taught the Gros Ventres a song to use in their celebration after the victory."[2]

Narrative 3

787 The following two stories were told me by Thick.
539 "A certain old woman (her great-great-grandchild is still living) had a ghost helper. Her name was 'Woman' but for various reasons she was nicknamed 'Bear Old Woman.' When I was about ten years old a party of Gros Ventres was camped at Lodge Pole, about two miles from the Little Rocky Mountains. One night Cree enemies came and stole all the Gros

[2] This song as sung by The Boy was recorded in 1940.

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940), 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Ventres' horses except those belonging to one man. This man 787
loaned out his horses as far as they would go around to four of 539
the Gros Ventres who went in pursuit of the Cree.

"Then that evening two of the other men, one of them my 787
father, approached Bear Old Woman. They filled up a pipe just 539
as you do when you go to someone to doctor you, offered it to the 791
old woman, and asked her to find out from her ghost helper who stole the horses and where they were. Bear Old Woman, who had quite a temper, got angry right away as usual and pushed the pipe away as a sign of refusal. Finally one of the young fellows there, a relative of hers, said: 'Well, let me smoke it,' to force her to accept. She angrily grabbed the pipe and had to go through with the rite. When she took the pipe she rubbed her [782]
hands on the ground and rubbed dust on the pipe and offered a prayer before smoking. The pipe was then smoked by her and by the two men who had approached her.

"Then they began to get things ready. They killed a puppy, singed its hair off at a fire, took its insides out without skinning, [262
quartered it up and boiled it. They put the boiled meat on a 252]
plate and got ready some other kinds of food to give to the old woman. Then the two men filled up a pipe and they together with two other men and with a 'servant' went to Bear Old Woman's lodge. On arriving there they set down the plate of dog meat near the head of her bed, the pipe between the incense hearth and the lodge fire, and the other dishes between the lodge fire and the door.

"When everything was arranged and Bear Old Woman was still sitting on her bed, she said: 'Whoever is the greatest unbeliever among you, come and tie me up.' One of the four volunteered. Then the old woman got up and went to a place just south of the head of the bed, to a little enclosure made by hanging up a blanket. He hobbled her four fingers (thumb too?) with sinew, interlacing it in and out of the four fingers of each hand. Then he tied her hands together behind her back and also hobbled her feet. She was lying on a robe. He gathered the robe around her and tied her with rawhide thongs until only her head stuck out of the robe. And so he left her lying on her

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787 back. He returned to his place to the southeast of the old
539 woman and sat down.
791 "Then Bear Old Woman said: 'All right. Start to sing now.' They sang four times without stopping, the song belonging to the old woman's ghost helper. As they were singing the third time they heard an owl and the old woman said: 'Don't receive *that* spirit. He is bad. Continue singing.' So they continued and just as they finished the fourth time the old woman said: 'That is the one. Receive *that* spirit.' The people around heard these two owls.

787 "When the second owl lighted on top of the lodge, the top
539 shook and the ghost helper spoke: 'What do you want me for?'
776 They said: 'We want you to tell us where our horses are and who has them so we can find them.' The ghost helper answered: 'All right. I'll have to go look for them, but you go ahead and smoke this pipe [the one lying near the incense hearth]. When you have smoked up what is in the pipe, refill it and put it back in the same place and wait.'

"They had barely started smoking when the ghost helper was back again. So they just dumped out what was left in the pipe and refilled it. The helper said: 'Never mind. I am hungry and want to eat.' But they didn't mind him. The spirit then said: 'Your horses are not very far away from here. Your four friends have already recaptured your horses and are bringing them back.' He also said to my father: 'One of your horses has a thick broad rawhide rope around his neck and is dragging it, and that other man's mare's colt will play out on the trip back home.'

"After the helper had said all this, the four men judged that he was through, so they took the pipe and lit it and offered the helper a smoke. The inside of the old woman's lodge was dark as there was no fire. The helper took the pipe from their hands and then they saw it light up rhythmically as a pipe does when it is puffed, and after taking a few puffs the helper said to the men: 'You smoke the rest. I am hungry and want to eat.' They could hear him chewing on the dog meat inside where the woman was. After a while the helper said to the men: 'Here,

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

You can eat the rest of this pup.' The meat had been eaten off 787
of one hind leg of the pup so that just the bones were left. Then 539
the ghost helper said: 'I see this foolish old woman lying here 776
helpless.' Then they heard a noise as if the helper had struck the old woman with the flat of his hand and he was heard blowing. The next instant the ghost helper said: 'Here, try to untie this.' and the knotted sinew and rawhide thong hit the chest of the man who had tied her up.

"Then they heard the old woman give a long sigh. She had [791]
been in a trance all this time and was just coming out of it. Next the ghost helper said: 'Now I am going to leave you.' And they heard the same racket at the top of the lodge they had heard when he first came in and there was a violent shaking of the whole lodge, especially at the top of it.

"After the ghost helper was gone they kindled the fire again
and there was light. Bear Old Woman came out of the enclosure [791]
and sat down on the bed and prayed with the bowls of food in her hand. Then she and the men ate and afterwards sat around and smoked and chatted. Then the men went home and told what the spirit had said.

"Next morning all the people in the camp, including the chil- 787
dren, got up early and went up on the highest nearby ground to 539
look for the four men coming back with the horses. Towards evening of the day the four Gros Ventres who had gone in pursuit of the thieves brought all the horses back, except the one which, as the spirit had said, had played out and could not stand the trip back. And one of my father's horses had a rope around its neck as the ghost helper had said it had. The pursuers had caught up with the Cree and surprised them asleep in a little swamp covered with grass and brush and so took the horses back home. On the return trip they got lost in a bad storm, went in the wrong direction and not until daylight did they discover their mistake and so had to circle their way back. They had neither eaten nor slept during all the two days and night they had been gone.

"The above incident occurred just at about the time when the buffalo disappeared from this part of the country [1880's]."

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

NARRATIVE 4

787 Here is the second story told me by Thick.

539 791 "There was a man by the name of Bird Child who had a ghost helper. Bird Child's wife had four brothers, one of them my father. One evening they filled a pipe and went to Bird Child's lodge to get him to find out from his ghost helper where there would be lots of buffalo and no danger, so they could go there and hunt. When they arrived at Bird Child's lodge they found him absent and only his wife in the lodge. Without invitation they made themselves at home and asked their sister where Bird Child was. She answered: 'I don't know where he is nor when he will be back.'

787 776 539 [607] "Being Bird Child's brothers-in-law they decided to take the liberty of using Bird Child's power and ghost helper, and of having a seance in his absence. They asked their sister where Bird Child's bundle was. She showed them. One of the four brothers took it down. They then agreed who was to be tied up and to represent Bird Child. The one of the four designated agreed. They had him lie down and two of them tied him up tight and laid him in an enclosure made along the side of the tent [as in preceding story]. They were half-fooling, not quite serious. Their sister couldn't say anything: they imposed on her. They even attached the man's hair to the ropes with which they bound him in the robe until only his mouth was visible.

"Then they started to sing and sang the same song four times without stopping. At the end they heard yelling in the air and said: 'There he is. He has come for us.' As the ghost helper arrived the tent shook and the helper said: 'Who's that lying back there?' and answered himself: 'Some crazy man or someone with no regard for anybody's rights.' Then they heard a commotion behind the enclosure. The bound brother started to hollow for mercy. Next one of the brothers who had done the tying got hit with all the ropes tangled in a knot.

"Then they heard the bound man being thrown towards the door, and saying: 'Hurry up and make a light before this ghost helper kills me.' The spirit had picked him up and was trying

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13
Blackfoot NF6

G 787 539 776

to wedge him between the poles in the lodge. By this time, however, the other brothers had kindled a fire and of course as soon as the flame flared up the spirit was gone. The ghost helper was good and mad, but anyhow had come."

Blackfoot-Blood Rite

B 787 791

On a casual visit to Browning, Montana, in August, 1931, the writer was given some information by Mrs. Frances (Joseph) Brown of Browning on the Blackfoot shaking tent rite. The rite is performed by a woman who is a sort of "spiritualist" or "medium," as Mrs. Brown put it. She summons the dead spirits [spirit?] and they come and answer questions. Only she can understand the language of the dead spirits and can converse with them. She tells their answers to the other people who are around. During the rite, people are all around in the tipi. A curtain is put over a part of the interior of the tipi, and the "medium" sits behind the curtain. The lights are extinguished. Food is put on a plate. During the rite noises are heard "inside" [apparently behind the curtain], and everything moves, including the tent itself. It was emphasized to me that this rite is an old Indian one, not a modern intrusion of white spiritualistic seances.

B 787 776

While talking with The Boy (Gros Ventre) in August 1940 about the Gros Ventre ghost helper complex, he told me the following story that his friend, Platted Hair, a Blood from Canada, had told him on a visit to him some time before:

A long time ago, before the Gros Ventres came and when the Snakes still occupied this part of the country, a large party of Bloods came over toward the Little Rockies and never returned to their home country. Their people at home did not know what to make of it. One of the Bloods in the home camp had a ghost helper. So they gave this Blood a pipe to summon his ghost helper. When the ghost arrived, he asked: "Why did you send for me?" They said: "Our young men went on a war party and did not return. What has happened to them?" The ghost said: "I'll go and see. You may sing the song. I'll come back and I may be able to tell you what has happened." So the

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13
Assiniboine NF4 Montagnais NH6
Blackfoot NF6 Ojibwa NG6
Cree NG4

C M O 787 776

the Têtes-de-Boule and the Abitibi. Mikenak, an Oteipwe (-Algonkin) form, among the above listed Cree groups points to diffusion of the name,—not necessarily of this particular spokesman, as is evidenced by the Ft. Chipewyan Mi'skenak. Mistabeo, as spokesman among the above-listed Montagnais bands, is an independent non-human being or spirit, not a man's "other self" or kind of soul.

C M O 787 171

The "Houdini trick," in which the shaking tent performer escapes from the thongs with which he is tied, was found among the Cree of Ft. Chipewyan, McMurray, and Rocky Boy, the Oteipwe of Lake of the Woods, and the Oteipwe(-Algonkin) of Abitibi. This Abitibi occurrence marks the farthest eastern extension found by me of the trick in connection with the shaking tent.[a] I did not learn of its use among the Oteipwe of the upper Albany River at Ft. Hope and Osnaburgh, though fairly extensive information on the shaking tent rite was obtained at these two localities in 1927. The "Houdini trick" is definitely lacking among the James Bay Cree, the Têtes-de-Boule, and the Montagnais groups studied.[b]

Some further general and specific characteristics of the Montagnais-Cree-Oteipwe shaking tent rite will be given in the next section of the present paper.

C M O [114] G M O C A B 787 171

Generalizations

The following generalizations are based partly on the foregoing data, partly on the writer's still unpublished fuller field notes on the Montagnais, Cree, and Oteipwe(-Algonkin).

Certain characters are common to the rite as practised both among the forest Montagnais-Cree-Oteipwe and Plains Cree and among the Gros Ventres and—so far as our fragmentary infor-

[a] Father R. Délage, O.M.I., Letter of Nov. 1, 1863, in Rapport sur les missions du diocèse de Québec, Mar., 1864, no. 16, pp. 74–75, reported the "Houdini trick" in connection with the shaking tent rite among, apparently, the Grand Lake Victoria Oteipwe(-Algonkin)-speaking Indians.

[b] It was earlier reported among the Cree of York Factory, by Thomas M'Keevor, A voyage to Hudson's Bay during the summer of 1812, London 1819, 58.

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13
Assiniboine NF4 Cree NG4 Montaanais NH6
Blackfoot NF6 Ojibwa NG6

GMOCA B 787 171

mation goes—the Blackfoot-Blood and Ft. Belknap Assiniboine. These common features are: shaking of the top of the tent or lodge at entrance and departure of spirit; entrance and departure of spirit by way of top of lodge; departure, during rite, of spirit after being questioned, to find facts, and subsequent return to tent with desired answer; performer not possessed by spirit, but spirit(s) speak(s) to or in presence of performer; performer concealed from sight of spectators and clients during visitation by spirit(s); no trance or ecstasy by performer, and performers not of psychopathic personality as such; spirits summoned primarily to obtain through them knowledge, chiefly knowledge hidden by barriers of time (future) and space (distance), or counsel on practical problems; a smoke given the spirit(s), and spectators smoke; absence of direct participation of Supreme Being in rite (apart from a minor exception or two); rite as such concerned with personal beings, not with impersonal forces, and thus a religious, not a magical rite (as many define religion and magic).

In certain features, the rite among the forest Montagnais-Cree-Otcipwe and Plains Cree consistently differs from that among the Gros Ventre, Blackfoot-Blood and Ft. Belknap Assiniboine. In the rite as found among the former: while one of the spirits is usually the chief informant or spokesman, other spirits and beings ordinarily come into the tent during the rite; all these spirits and beings are animistic, not manistic—never ghosts; humor, joking, trivial banter by the visiting spirit common; the "Houdini trick" absent from Montagnais and eastern Cree rite; food is not offered to the visiting beings.

On the other hand, in the rite as found among the Gros Ventres and, so far as our limited information goes, the Blackfoot-Blood and Ft. Belknap Assiniboine: one spirit only comes into the tent; the spirit that is summoned is exclusively a ghost, a deceased relative of the performer; humor, joking, trivial banter by the ghost are lacking; the "Houdini trick" is customary, except in emergency; food, especially the delicacy, puppy meat, is offered to and partaken of by visiting ghost.

So far as my information goes, among the above Montagnais-

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13
Assiniboine NF4 Montagnais NH6
Blackfoot NF6 Ojibwa NG6
Cree NG4

BCMOCA 787 171

Cree-Oteipwe, the power to summon the shaking tent spirit(s) is not thrust upon the person by any spirit, as in a great measure it is among the Gros Ventres.

In general, the shaking tent rite appears to have much more relative importance and to play a much more preponderant role in the total magico-religious life of the Montagnais-Cree-Oteipwe than of the Gros Ventres, Blackfoot-Blood and Assiniboine.

BCMOCA [177]

That there is a historical relationship between the two above contrasted shaking tent complexes appears very probable from the many specific and distinctive elements they share in common and from the almost continuous geographical distribution of the complexes, a distribution moreover predominantly among the main body of Algonquian-speaking peoples of the taiga and adjacent open country and the aberrant-Algonquian-speaking groups of the Plains, the Gros Ventres, the Blackfoot, and the Cheyenne.

Addendum on Wider Distribution

G 787 171 [114]

It has not been the purpose of the present paper to deal with the total distribution of the shaking tent rite and with the historical problems connected with such distribution. The following summary notes are added merely to contribute a mite toward filling out the picture of distribution as given in Ray's historical study and Hallowell's socio-psychological one.[8]

In the east, the shaking tent is not reported in our published sources, to my knowledge, south of the St. Lawrence. The record by Maurault for the Abnaki does not mention shaking of the conjurer's tent.[9] Inquiries by the writer in the field in 1931 among the Chipewyan and Dogrib of the Mackenzie-Slave watershed brought consistently negative results; in fact informants who knew well and gave many details of the rite as practised among the Cree of Ft. McMurray (Athabaska R.) and Ft. Chipewyan (L. Athabaska), on the Cree-Chipewyan borderline, and who were equally familiar with both Cree and Chipewyan

[8] Ray, 1941; Hallowell, 1942. See footnote 1.

[9] J. A. Maurault, Histoire des Abenakis depuis 1605 jusqu'à nos jours, Québec, 1866, 30.

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787
171

culture, emphasized that the shaking tent rite was practised by the Cree only, and not by the Chipewyan, even in these border areas when the two peoples were in very close contact and association.

To the far north, however, the "Houdini trick" and the shaking of the conjurer's hut on the arrival of his spiritual helper was earlier reported by Boas among the Central Eskimos.[10] Lowie has also recorded among the Crow a tent-shaking rite very like that of the Gros Ventres and Cheyenne.[11] The first report and discussion, by Donald Collier, of the Kiowa occurrence is published in the present issue of Primitive Man. Regina Flannery has called my attention to the occurrence of the shaking-of-the-tent motif among the early Creek.[12]

Still farther afield, I have come across no reference to a shaking tent element in the many accounts of northern Asiatic and Lapp shamanism, but have made no thorough systematic search. In South America, I know of only one instance of a somewhat similar rite, that earlier reported among the Chiquitoan Manasi of eastern Bolivia. Part of the large public assembly hall was curtained off with mats, which part was reserved for the "high priest" alone and the visiting spirits. As the gods or spirits came down, a sound filled the air and shook the roof of the building and the mats. Chicha and food were offered the spirits. The people sang. The gods were consulted by the "high priest" about future events such as rains, harvests, fishing and hunting, whereabouts of game, outcome of prospective war raids.—the conversation being audible to the crowd outside the curtained compartment. The gods on departing shook the whole building as they ascended.[13]

[10] F. Boas, The central Eskimo, BAE-R 6 for 1884–85, Washington, 1888, 593–94.

[11] R. H. Lowie, The religion of the Crow Indians, AMNH-AP, v. 25, pt. 2 1922, 380–81; same, The Crow Indians, New York, 1935, 70–71.

[12] Captain Bossu, Travels through . . . Louisiana, tr., London, 1771, 1: 264–65, among the Allibamon (Alabama).

[13] A. Métraux, The social organization and religion of the Mojo and Manasi, in Primitive Man, 1943, 16: 22–23.

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787
171

The more distant of the above instances, those from the Eskimo and Creek and from the Manasi of South America are merely set down here as of record. We are not justified—as yet—in assuming historical relationship. The distances seem too great, and the resemblances too vague and generic. What future more complete descriptive and distributional information may suggest remains to be seen.

8:Flannery E-5 (1940-1948)1960 NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

INDIVIDUAL VARIATION IN CULTURE

Regina Flannery

It is generally accepted that what Benedict called the Dionysian configuration of Plains culture represents a dominant, if not the only trend. By definition a configuration is a generalization lying behind and explaining a number of cultural patterns. A pattern itself is of course an abstraction from the behavior of a number of individuals. The behavior of any one person may vary at different times in respect to a particular type of situation, but it is unlikely that the individual will show the whole range of possible behavior within a pattern; it will cover only a portion thereof. As Linton pointed out, the difference between the individual mode within this segment, and the mode of the behaviors on which the pattern is based, reflects the compromise which every individual has to make between the culture patterns of his society and his own inclinations. It would seem further, then, that if the modes of an individual's behavior-ranges show a consistent displacement with respect to a large series of patterns, it is safe to assume that the direction of this displacement reflects some quality of the individual.[1] The question we wish to raise is this: If the aspect of personality thus revealed runs counter to a dominant trend of his culture, is the individual a misfit in that society? [2]

In attempting an answer, let us examine some individual variations within those patterns of Plains culture in which expression of emotional excess, and dangerous experience were expected of women in one Plains society, that of the Gros Ventres of Montana. We shall outline in some detail the behavior of one Gros Ventre woman in respect of these selected patterns—from which the Dionysian configuration was abstracted—and contrast her behavior with that of others of approximately the same age. All had participated as adults in the old way of life before the disappearance of the buffalo in 1887. [181]

In Gros Ventre culture, as in all the Plains, there was high valuation placed on direct contact of the individual with the supernatural through dreams and visions. Men could actively seek such contact by employing dangerous means, and did so in order to obtain many kinds of power. While women did not go on the actual power quest, they might acquire medicine powers and less frequently, perhaps, powers of clairvoyance. Medicine powers were considered dangerous in that, it was believed, by accepting them a limitation was put upon the life span of the practitioner. But the rewards in terms of prestige for successful performance and of payment for services were high for women as well as for men. Not every individual man was successful in his quest, nor of course was every woman vouchsafed the kinds of dreams which were requisite. Coming Daylight, the woman whose behavior we are examining in particular, was what her contemporaries considered fortunate indeed in having been offered curing powers of several kinds. Nevertheless she rejected the possibility each time, in spite of the fact that she had a living example in the person of her father's sister of what it could mean in prestige to a woman who accepted. As the reasons for her refusal seem significant I shall describe her experience in her own words. 787 183 [562] 756 [554] 159 756

[p.87]

8:Flannery E-5 (1940-1948)1960 NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

"My experience was by dreaming. One time before I was married—I must have been about eight years old—I was sleeping in a big lodge and a 'person' came and wakened me. He had a bag of medicines on his back. He came to me on four successive nights and laid out these medicines and told me what each was for. On the third of these nights there was a man lying there—he was just skin and bones. The 'person' who had awakened me told me: 'You could take all these medicines and you could cure people like that one lying there' [i.e., a person in the last extremity]. In my dream I would do everything he told me, manipulate my hands to draw out the sickness, and do everything. But I didn't want that power and would tell him so. Each morning too I would relate to my grandmother exactly what had happened in the night but she would try to hush me up, telling me: 'Don't say anything; don't tell anyone. You will be a great medicine woman.' But I didn't want that power. I didn't like it because when medicine people suck on the weak part of the sick person they have to swallow what they extract. I had decided I would rather be quiet and not do anything like that, or sacrifice my flesh, or things of that kind. Perhaps if it had come later I might have taken that power and become great."

Nevertheless when later in life she had other dreams indicating supernatural power, she likewise refused. She explained in regard to one of these experiences, for instance: "The one who awakened me this time had told me to face the rising sun and was showing me how to make a smudge from the moss that grows close on logs; but I told him. 'No. I would rather not have it.' Those who have power die too soon."

Incidentally, still in connection with curing, bleeding was an operation which was performed purely as a natural remedy for a person who felt dizzy or sluggish. Anyone could do it—no supernatural validation was needed. Other women described quite casually how it was done and discussed the various times they had actually performed the operation. Coming Daylight, however, insisted that while there was really nothing to such an operation, she could never bring herself to perform it, nor would she allow anyone else to bleed her; she could not stand the sight of blood.

The aversion to the sight of blood and to self-mutilation was evidently deep-seated and showed itself in a marked manner early in her life. On one occasion a close relative was very ill. In such a situation it was expected that every member of the family would rally around and do whatever he could toward the recovery. Among the things that fell within the scope of activity for female relatives was that of vowing to sacrifice something valuable, including perhaps the blood from one's arm or a finger-joint, if the person recovered. At this particular time, Coming Daylight was a young child, and her grandmother decided that it would be appropriate for the little girl to offer that her finger-tip be removed if the relative regained his health. When it was suggested to her, Coming Daylight refused, even though her grandmother took after her with a stick. She actually ran away and wandered alone, until two nights later the relative died and an uncle finally found her.

On another occasion in her early youth, too, she defied a convention connected with kinship by refusing to join in mourning for an uncle who had been killed in revenge for having instigated the murder of his brother's wife. When her grandmother upbraided Coming Daylight for not expressing grief in the traditional manner, the latter defied her by saying: "I am not going to cry for that man. I don't know why you are crying for him. I have worked for that woman and she has fed me, and has even given me meat to bring home to you. I heard

.8:Flannery E-5 (1940-1948)1960 NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Her final rejoinder was such a witty and pointed one that everyone laughed heartily at her rival's expense. In this culture, of course, public ridicule was a far more effective retaliation than the biting and scratching that other women said frankly they would have indulged in when attacked.

Expression of emotional excess was institutionalized for the Gros Ventres, as for the rest of the Plains, in the bereavement situation. Upon the death of a husband, son, or father, a woman was expected to start wailing as soon as she heard the news, have her hair cut off, discard good clothes for old ragged ones, gash her arms and legs, go to the hills to mourn and cry, resisting for a time the pleas of her relatives to return, and being watched lest she attempt suicide. Coming Daylight was only a young woman when she was first widowed and the mourning pattern was still in full vogue. It is certain from other evidence than Coming Dayling had a deep affection for this husband to whom she had been given as a child-bride and in whose kindly and indulgent treatment she had found a pleasant escape from the rigorous discipline of her grandmother. Nevertheless the public expression of her grief was minimal—no abandonment for her. Although her sister was sent on the hills with her to keep watch over her in the usual way, Coming Daylight was easily persuaded to return shortly though she herself was proud of the fact that she had stayed out so long that she actually had got a frozen toe! In later years when all that was left of the ritual was the wailing out on the hills, she lost the son whom she herself, and everybody else, acknowledged as her favorite. She had not been on the hills very long when she experienced a significant dream, as follows. She was in a lodge at the rear of which was a big pile of tobacco mixture and a pipe. The owner of the lodge filled the pipe and approached her. She was frightened because she didn't smoke. The owner of the lodge however told her: "Look at these people." She looked and saw many with their hair cut and their bodies bleeding from the gashes inflicted in grief. The man then told her: "That is in the past. Nowadays your only consolation is in smoking." So she accepted the pipe and, after smoking it, she was painted in ceremonial fashion by each of those other mourners. Then the owner of the lodge dismissed her saying: "Now, go home and don't ever go on the hills and mourn again. But always smoke if you want to." She went home right after this dream and when she told her husband of it he accepted it as valid and persuaded her sister to prepare for Coming Daylight her first real smoke. She maintained that the habit subsequently developed was actually a great comfort to her.

The final area with which we shall be concerned here is the war complex—a vital aspect of the old Plains culture. Gros Ventre women were allowed direct but limited participation in these activities in the sense that, while they would not join a party of men who were going on horse-raiding or revenge expeditions, if opportunity offered they might exhibit the same kind of bravery that a man should show and derive considerable status therefrom. For instance, if one of the enemy fell nearby, the women rushed out from camp to count coup, and to grab trophies with which to inaugurate the relationship known as "enemy-friends." Coming Daylight, however, was never one to indulge in this sport. She told of the one—and to her extremely distasteful—occasion on which her hand literally was forced. It seems that during a raid on their camp one of the enemy was shot and her husband scalped him. The victim was lying not far from her lodge and, as her husband dashed off to pursue the rest of the Assiniboine, he shouted for her to come out and see what was going on. Coming Daylight saw the man lying there, face down, covered with blood. He was not dead

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 from this part of the robe. At the end of each of these, a bunch of owl-feathers, or rather a piece of owl-skin, was attached. The dancers carried bows, to each end of which seven crow-feathers were tied. Down was [411] fastened to the bowstring at several places. At the handle of the bow a strip of bear-skin, owl-feathers, and some sage were fastened with a buck-skin thong. Four arrows accompanied each bow. One had a metal point, which subsequently was made more effective by medicine. The three other arrows were blunt, or had wooden points that had been chewed soft so as to be harmless.

The pledger, and three other men called "brothers" (hinähäbyiitou), who sat apart from the other dancers in the lodge and acted somewhat differently on certain occasions, had bows that were unornamented, except for the down on the string. These four men wore their robes turned so that the hair was outside, whereas the other dancers wore the dressed side out.

[302] All the dancers were painted entirely red. Their hair was daubed with white paint. They stopped the left ear with a mushroom, such as was used [824] for tinder, and put paint (apparently white) over the ear and the entire left side of the face.

Four young men who would be good workers were selected to be the assistants or servants (atsaan) of this company. They brought wood and water, and performed other services.

[346] The lodge for this dance is described as having been made of travois or tent poles about which tent-skins were drawn. It was open to the east. There was a fire about in the centre. Facing the opening of the lodge was a small partial enclosure or screen constructed on dog-travois. In this were the pledger and his three companions, the "brothers." The dancers are said to have occupied the northern half of the wall in the dancing-lodge; the "grandfathers," behind whom sat the dancers' wives, the southern half. As among the Arapaho, the dancers were divided into two sections; the tall men toward the rear and the short men toward the front, of the lodge. These two divisions competed against each other in the races to follow. The dancers' bows were stood up in the ground in a row just beyond the fire.

During the four days of the dance, the dancers, every morning before sunrise, went to their "grandfathers" to be painted. Apparently they went to their "grandfathers'" tents, and not to the dancing-lodge, for this [302] purpose. The dancers' wives went with them. They were naked, and [824] were painted too. No one but the "grandfather" looked at them. Before [783] being painted, the dancers made incense of sage-leaves on burning charcoal. They also rubbed their bodies with fragrant fir or balsam leaves

Crushed and mixed with fat.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

down, at shoulder height and sang the incense song while the other members of his party joined in, and at the conclusion of the song said: "Yo!" Then he lowered his hand a little, sang with the others the same song, and ended with the recited "Yo!" Finally he further lowered his hand close to the hearth, sang with the others the same song, and at the end made three circles clockwise with his hand around the burning chip saying at each circle: "Yo'ho ho ho" (Yo followed by glottal stop; ho ho ho, in lower pitch, not emphatic), and after the third circle released the peppermint on the chip. Then he turned toward the south, and the same triple rite was repeated, and finally toward the west, with repetition of the rite.

Immediately after this, the retiring keeper, the new keeper, the retiring co-keeper, and the new co-keeper, in this order, fumigated themselves. Each put his (or her) hands palm down, in the peppermint incense smoke, rubbed his hands together, rubbed the left arm from the tips of fingers up to the shoulder with the right palm and the right arm likewise with the left palm. This was done three times. Then three times in succession he put his right palm over the incense, lifted his palm to his mouth, and inhaled. Then he held both palms over the incense and passed them from his mouth up over his face and hair to his occiput.

The Pipe child also went through both the peppermint laving and the fumigating rite in each case after the other four participants.

The retiring keeper next filled the Flat Pipe with tobacco. He took a little tobacco in the five fingers of his right hand, finger tips down, while holding the Pipe by the bowl in his left hand. Poising his right hand about a foot above the bowl, he spat a little. Then he made a pass with the tobacco down a little nearer to the bowl and spat. Next he repeated the pass still nearer, and spat, and put the tobacco in the bowl. Then he filled the bowl with tobacco. Then laid the Pipe down with stem to the east on sage brush between the hearth and the pipe bed. After this a recess was taken. The party chatted and smoked socially or left the lodge.

After the recess, the retiring keeper would say to all: "Let

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

341 The triangular space between the foot of the Pipe bed and the
346 head of the keeper's bed served the keeper as a place to keep such
353 of his personal and ritual belongings as his peppermint, sage brush, personal smoking pipe, and so forth.

In good weather, the Pipe bundle was taken outside by the co-
778 keeper in the morning (rite to be described later) and hung up,
788 stem to east, on the outside of the keeper's lodge just above the door, the thong handle of the bundle being looped around a pin of the lodge. About sundown the bundle was brought inside again by the co-keeper to its ritual place. At night the opening of the keeper's lodge was securely closed with a piece of rawhide, shaped like the door, covered with a sort of lattice work of rawhide, and fastened from the inside.

778 The keeper's lodge, as the depository of the Flat Pipe and the dwelling of the consecrated custodians thereof, had to be treated with great respect. This respect was formalized in a number of ritual and other observances.

784 No one was permitted to step over the incense hearth, under penalty of being inflicted with fits.

When the keeper, co-keeper and Pipe child took off their moccasins for the night, these had to be deposited, not alongside the beds or under the pillows or anywhere in the "sanctuary," but near the lodge door,—the keeper's to the west of the door, the co-keeper's to the east, the Pipe child's to either the west or the east *ad libitum*. If this were not done, severe headaches would result.

Anyone entering the keeper's lodge or leaving it or passing from one part of it to another, always had to walk clockwise.

784 When anything was going on therein, with men and women both
516 present, the men had to sit on the western side, the women on the eastern. When they sat down, they could not sit with legs stretched out in front; the men squatted on their heels with knees touching the ground and legs parallel, while the women sat on their buttocks with their legs to the right side one leg under the other.

784 No one, adult or child, could throw stones or sticks at the keeper's lodge. Children were not allowed to play or fool or romp

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

CHAPTER III

THE FLAT PIPE RITUAL

General Features

Before describing the Flat Pipe rituals in detail, we shall in the interest of clarity take up certain more general features. Some of these are distinctive of the Flat Pipe ritual; others are shared in common with the Feathered Pipe ritual. 788

Distinctive of the Flat Pipe ritual are earth and water or flood association, peppermint, the number three, and rattles. 788 821

As The Boy put it: "The Flat Pipe belongs on the ground, on the surface of the earth, while the Feathered Pipe belongs up above the earth." Or in Coming Daylight's words: "The Flat Pipe comes from the water." The reference here is to the respective origin stories of the two pipes, the Flat Pipe having been given by Earth-maker at the great flood after dry land was made, the Feathered Pipe by Bha'a, the thunder being, during a storm and from the sky. (For details see Nos. 3 and 6 in Appendix.) When the Flat Pipe ceremony was carried out in 1938, the ritual was badly garbled, and the proper offerings were not made. A very destructive flood which shortly after this occurred at Hays where the ceremony was held was attributed to the ill treatment to which the Flat Pipe had just been submitted. The Feathered Pipe is associated with thunderstorms rather than with floods. 823

In conformity with this ground and water association, the ritual plant used for laving, chewing and incensing in the Flat Pipe ritual was peppermint which "comes from the lowlands down on the ground," "from right along the water," in contrast to the use in the Feathered Pipe and other pipe rituals of sweet-pine needles which "come from up in the hills," "from high altitudes." The peppermint used was not "just every peppermint," not that which grows along streams but that which grows around springs. Coming Daylight used to pick it for her uncle when he was keeper of the 788 824

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Flat Pipe. It was dried before being used for ritual purposes. In the olden days the Flat Pipe keeper and co-keeper had monopolistic control of it in curing. But nowadays a peppermint beverage, good for fits, spasms, and stomach disorder, is used by everybody.

The ritual number of the Flat Pipe is three, whereas that of the Feathered Pipe and the Sacred Lodges is four. Songs are sung three times, ritual gestures are in threes, and so forth. The old people when sitting around smoking socially used often to discuss the reason for this. Some held that Earthmaker sent only three animals down to dive for earth, because, for one reason at least, there were only three animals in the Flat Pipe bundle. Others held he sent four. But regardless of these opposing views on this point in the earthmaking, there was always complete agreement that the Flat Pipe ritual number itself was three, while that in the Feathered Pipe and Sacred Lodge rituals was four.

The musical instrument proper to the Flat Pipe ritual was the rattle (see Plate 1C). The drum, proper to the Feathered Pipe ritual, was not used. In the Flat Pipe ritual, the rattle was shaken clockwise in a sort of circle at breast height, whereas medicine men shook their rattles anti-clockwise and Star Dancers alternately back and forth.[1]

It may be added here that while the Flat Pipe was actually smoked only when it was being ritually transferred to a new keeper and when some individual had vowed to smoke it, and was never danced with, smoking the Feathered Pipe and dancing with it were common.

Among the more significant and more commonly recurring features shared by both the Flat Pipe and Feathered Pipe rituals were clockwise movements, singing, and the use of paint, buffalo chips, and of sage, tobacco, larb, and wild parsley.

Entering and leaving the keeper's lodge, ritual gestures, and so forth were consistently clockwise.

Singing bulked large in the Flat Pipe rite, and, for that matter, in nearly every phase of Gros Ventre religious and social life. As Thomas Main put it speaking for himself and The Boy: "We cannot describe how much singing means in the lives of the Gros

[1] For description of Star Dance, see Flannery, 1953, p. 42.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

788 533

Ventres. They *sing!* This subject is one you cannot exhaust. You cannot put in words how they feel about it."

Singing, according to The Boy, had its origin at the time of the flood when Earthmaker was floating around on the raft with the Flat Pipe. He was being blown around by the wind, at the mercy of the elements. He was tired and utterly lonely. So he started to think: "I must do something about this. It is too hard. I have had enough of it." And thus he planned the making of dry land by sending the animals diving down for earth. He had all the power to make land from the bits of earth brought up by the turtle and hell-diver, but he decided to do the making solemnly and with dignity. So he composed the earthmaking song: "My holiness (or my power) respond to me (pity me)." He did not whisper or talk it, but sang it, and sang it loud, so that he could be heard all over, so that this first act would last forever, so that it would "be elaborate and have dignity" and would be respected and honored for all time. Up to the moment of the singing of this first song, he had been mute, silent; he had only thought, this was the first utterance. This was the origin of Gros Ventre singing. This song, taught them by Earthmaker, was the first their primeval ancestors ever sang. This first song was sung by Earthmaker four times in succession, to the east, south, west and north. But after this he discarded one of the four animals, the beaver, keeping the other three, and ordained that thenceforth, not four as in the very beginning, but three, should be the Flat Pipe sacred number, and its songs should be sung in threes and multiples thereof, and that ritual movements should be to east, south and west, leaving out the north as he had left out the beaver ("let the beaver stay there where it is cold").

773 533

[788]

So Earthmaker planned and taught the system of the Flat Pipe ritual, with songs proper to it that could not be sung on other occasions.

Singing was thus originally religious and sacred only. As time went on, songs were sung for other functions, social and political. Singing degenerated among the Gros Ventres and they fell farther and farther down until they made and sang songs for the most trivial things in their lives, and even unworthy things. On their

788 533

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

788 first contact with whites they found that among these latter too singing had in similar fashion degenerated.
533

Among the birds and animals it was otherwise. They continued to sing as they had done at the earthmaking. They held fast to the privilege given them and did not abuse it or let their singing degenerate. So it was that the Gros Ventres used to go to the tops of buttes, hills and high mountains and to streams and forests, begging these animals and birds to give them songs, and in this measure to restore singing to its former purpose and dignity. But later the Gros Ventres sometimes prevailed even upon the animals and birds to teach them "no-good songs."

Nevertheless in spite of all this badness and degeneration the Gros Ventres never lost sight of the fact that they depended on the Supreme Being for everything. So whenever they had occasion to pray and perform their ceremonies, they sang. And with such sacred singing was so intimately associated the use of the pipe and tobacco that "one could hardly separate singing and pipe-smoking." In nearly all rites they entered in as a means of imploring the Supreme Being to grant the people's requests. The Gros Ventres learned by experience that if they sang and smoked and followed faithfully the rest of the Flat Pipe ritual, they could at least hope for a hearing by the Supreme Being. Smoking too, it may be added, like singing, later degenerated, a point to which we shall come presently.
[276 782]

533 Practically every Gros Ventre ceremony or social event began or was accompanied with song. And each of the many Gros Ventre songs had to be used on certain and only certain specified occasions. Thus, for example, it would not do at all to sing Pipe songs during social dances or in a hand game or at "good-time" gatherings. Each religious or secular occasion had its own song or set of songs. Very commonly a story teller would in the course of his or her narrative sing the song or songs the characters in the story were supposed to have sung.

Many Gros Ventre songs were wordless. In most of the worded ones, the words consisted of short pregnant phrases or sentences preceded and followed by wordless singing.

Two kinds of singers were recognized and distinguished: those who had good voices, and those who had knowledge of the

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13
Blackfoot NF6

G 533 singers: Tom Bad Road, Charlie Arms, Mrs. Katie Matt Croft, and Mrs. Albert Perry. Apropos of the last two, it may be added that women frequently sang and sing with the men, and the latter "like it when the women join in because this makes the singing colorful and nice."[2]

G 386 The Gros Ventres used many kinds of paint; some of Indian, some of white man origin; some in secular, some only in ritual uses. Powdered paints of different colors were gotten from traders G and were used to paint parfleches and, by the men, alone, never [439] by the women, to paint their bodies. A yellow paint was also gotten from the Cheyenne or from Cheyenne territory. On one occasion Coming Daylight brought a lot of this yellow paint which she had gathered there and gave enough of it to a Gros Ventre man to paint his big lodge with it. These paints were not sacred. A black paint, obtained from the Standing Rock region, was used in making fine lines on parfleches. Only the old women who made and painted the parfleches were the ones that gathered it, but it G was not so sacred as the red paint used in face painting.

●788 This sacred red face paint was in a class by itself, and was used 386 in the Flat and Feathered Pipe rites, by the "grandfathers" in [778] painting the wives during the Sacred Lodge rites, and apparently by the women in everyday painting of their own and the children's faces.[3] This special red paint was called, as also the yellow clay

---

[2] About 1900 The Boy went along with the Gros Ventres on a 4th of July visit to the Piegan at Browning. All four groups, the Piegan, Blood, Blackfeet proper, and northern Piegan, were gathered there. In all the four there B was only one man, a famous singer, who knew all the ceremonial dance [527] songs, although some of the other Indians knew some of them, and he was 533 imported by the Browning Piegan for the reason. The Boy heard him sing. The man did not have a nice clear voice, but he lived up to his reputation, for he knew the songs and their order for all the many rites and was kept busy all the time. And he cashed in handsomely with horses, blankets and money. He was able to make a living from his singing. The Boy learned some of the songs this man sang, and he sang one of them for us, that had the words: "You who are the ruler of all sacred (powerful) things having to do with all life, give me all of that so that I may use it all my life." The Blackfeet, The Boy added, think more of the Sun than do the Gros Ventres: it is their deity.

[3] See Flannery, 1953, pp. 144-45.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

from which it was made, inao:, a term not used for white traders' paint. 386 [788]

The Gros Ventres used to get it out in the hills on Stiffarm Creek at Curly Head's place. It occurs as a yellow clay or dirt, as a yellow strip or streak in whitish banks or hillsides, or sometimes it was dug up from the ground. Not everyone could gather it; never men even in the old days, although in recent times Little Man used to do so; but only old women, and only certain ones at that. Coming Daylight's grandmother used to gather it and so did Coming Daylight herself who learned the method and ritual of gathering and preparing it from her grandmother. Singer's grandmother used to gather and prepare it, but she herself did not want to do it, although she had the chance to learn from her grandmother. The art and rite were "kind of handed down."

When about to gather the yellow clay, the woman would sit by the deposit, smoke, and while smoking pray that the clay she was about to gather would be abundant and good. An offering, usually of tobacco, was left at the spot. Both in gathering and in baking the clay the woman had to be alone. [782]

The baking of the clay was done at night by the woman who had gathered it. The children could not be around making a noise, and she herself had to be very quiet. She would make a sort of batter of the clay by mixing it with water, and would knead it into flat round cakes with a round hole in the center. A fire, formerly of buffalo chips, more recently of cow manure, was made, and when it died down to coals, the cakes were put at the bottom, covered up with live coals, and a fire built on top. The woman baking did not blow the fire and she shut everything up. If you blew on the fire the whole paint would disappear. The baking had to be done very skillfully to turn out just right. The baking was fraught with some danger, and some fear went with it. If the cakes baked too brown, this was a bad omen. When the cakes were baked sufficiently all the coals were removed and the cakes, blackened on the surface, were taken out and allowed to cool. The black surface was scraped away, leaving the clay now burnt red. This red clay was then pounded to fine powder on a piece of rawhide. [372] [787]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

482 778 dog travois had to be resorted to. The old woman thought that she was doing the Pipe a great favor and that her packing it would bring her good fortune.

The co-keeper when afoot and carrying the Pipe bundle in her arms held it under her left armpit with her left arm encircling it and her right arm and hand supporting it from beneath, and with the stem-end of the bundle pointing forward.

482 778 783 The co-keeper was usually very careful to observe the stem-end-forward rule. But if through forgetfulness or absent-mindedness she had carried the bundle bowl-end forward or had hung it on its tripod with the bowl end to the east, she would be to blame. The keeper, co-keeper or Pipe child would be told by the Pipe in a dream about the error while sleeping [that night] on the Pipe bed, and she would have to be ritually cleansed. The keeper and co-keeper would sit on their haunches on the Pipe bed facing each other, he facing east and she west. Peppermint was put on the incense hearth to make a smudge. The keeper then took a bunch of sage brush, some of which he usually kept ready, held it up in his right hand, and prayed to the Supreme Being to release his wife, to take away her mistake, and not to be angry over it. Then he lowered the large brush by three stages, circled it three times around the incense, and "sort of brushed" her with it three times from her head down her right arm and from her head down her left arm, and three times from her chin up over her face to her occiput. Then he laid down the bunch of sage brush between the incense hearth and south edge of the Pipe bed, and said to his wife: "Take this sage brush out." She took it, walked out with it clockwise, turned to her left, that is, in the east, walked a good way off, and lowering it in the usual three stages deposited reverently on the ground.

778 788 Grasping and depositing the Flat Pipe bundle were regularly done by the co-keeper in a ritually prescribed manner. Before actually taking hold of it, she would face it, and three times pose at shoulder height her empty right hand, palm down with fingertips joined and pointing away from her, make a motion or pass with her hand toward the bundle while at the same time spitting a bit of chewed peppermint on it, and then bring her hand back to

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

position. In depositing the bundle on its bed, she would lower it gently in three stages, spitting at each one. 778 [788]

When the people were staying for any length of time at a given camp site, the Flat Pipe bundle, which was always kept inside the keeper's lodge during the night time, would regularly in good weather be taken out early in the morning at breakfast time by the co-keeper, with the customary grasping and carrying ritual, and hung up, stem-end pointing east just over the door of the keeper's lodge, not on its tripod. The outside of the keeper's lodge around the door up to full reaching height, about 6 or 7 feet, was painted red. The thong handle of the bundle was looped over, the two projecting ends of a stout pin, skewered horizontally in the tent cover, on the immediate line above the door at the upper edge of the red-painted area.

The bundle would hang over the door all day until about sundown when it would be brought back into the lodge for the night. In bringing it back, the co-keeper walked out of the lodge, unhooked and grasped the bundle, turned clockwise, walked all around the lodge clockwise, entered the lodge, proceeded clockwise to the incense hearth, dipped the stem end of the bundle three times in the smudge, and deposited the bundle in the usual ritual manner, as above described, at the far north end of the Pipe bed. 482 778 778

The final decision as to when and whether the camp, in which the Flat Pipe chanced to be, was to be moved was made by the head man especially the band chiefs and in the olden days the tribal chief too, the keepers having perhaps taken the initiative in calling them together. They would notify the Pipe keeper. Early the next morning the co-keeper with the usual ritual observances would take the Pipe bundle from its bed and carry it and its tripod outside the lodge a little to the north thereof, set up the tripod and hang the bundle on it. The tripod would be set up with two of its legs closer together, and with the third leg stretched out farther, its upper end projecting a little beyond the junction of the three legs. On this projecting end the bundle was hung by the thong handle looped over the end. On other occasions the bundle was hung on the tripod stem-end pointing east. But on this occasion the rule was superseded by another, namely, the third leg [622 623 361]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

High was keeper, he told Al Chandler that one of the sticks in the bundle was already notched on two edges. 778

Like the Flat Pipe, the Feathered Pipe also had its own horse, saddle, robe and blankets. The saddle, like a woman's saddle of old times, had two horns from which fringes hung, and a beaded crupper, and was painted red. The horse had to be the best available; no one could ride it, and if it died or was stolen, another had to be provided. The horse had to be very gentle. 778 492

Feathered Pipe Ritual

Certain general features characteristically recur throughout the Feathered Pipe rites, some contrasting with those of the Flat Pipe rites, others common to both cycles. 788

The following are distinctive of the Feathered Pipe rites: association with air, sky, cloud, rain and storm; sweet pine for smudge; ritual number four; the drum accompaniment for songs; dancing with the Pipe.

The Feathered Pipe, as previously noted, "belongs up above the earth," having been given by Bha'a the storm being and during a violent thunderstorm. In prayer and other ritual it was particularly associated with the sky and storm clouds, with rain and storms.

For ritual smudge or incense the dried needles of an evergreen, the "sweet pine," nibiya:to, were exclusively used, in accordance with directions given the original first keeper of the Pipe,—in accordance too with the origin of the Pipe from "up above the earth," for the "sweet pine" tree grows only in high altitudes, up on the hills and mountains. The tree grows in the Rocky Mountains, the Sweet Grass Hills, and Eagle Butte, nearer to the present location of the Gros Ventres. The Boy has seen it growing in only about two places, to about 10 feet high on top of Bird Tail Butte in the Bear Paw Mountains, and to about five feet high with a trunk about four inches in diameter on the top of Mission Peak in the Little Rockies. We were unable to secure specimens for botanical identification. The tree was described as "like a fir," or "special kind of pine." It is presumably *Abies sp.* Ritually the needles were mostly used to make incense, and, only 788 824

788 exceptionally chewed in contrast to the Flat Pipe peppermint. A
324 bag, painted red all over, about a foot square, and fringed on three sides but with no beading or other decoration, now hangs with the
[415] bundle and served, Al Chandler thought, as a container for the dried sweet pine needles.

802 The ritual number of the Feathered Pipe, running all through the songs and ceremonies, was four, from the days of the first keeper down to most recent times.

534 The musical instrument used to accompany the songs was, likewise from the time of the first keeper, the drum. According to
778 Garter Snake, the first keeper's drum was painted half black to represent black [storm] clouds and half red to represent the earth. According to Al Chandler, the present drum, about 16 inches in diameter and two inches deep, has a figure of a thunderbird
[532] painted in blue on the drumhead against a red background, to represent Bha'a, with zigzag yellow lines from either side of the head to the wings, to represent lightning. A long string is tied to the drum. The drumstick is painted red, the distal end being covered with buckskin "stuffed with something like cotton." Curly Head, when keeper, never used the drum, or even took it out of its covering in which it hung next to the bundle, but Sitting High used it regularly with the songs.*

788 According to Garter Snake, the first keeper had somebody make him a wooden bowl, which still hangs with, not in, the Pipe bundle,
778 but we obtained no information on its type or use. She also stated that the first keeper had a "gourd rattle" or four rattles, but Al Chandler never saw any rattle kept or used with the Feathered Pipe, and no other informant mentioned such.

[782] The Feathered Pipe, like the Flat Pipe, was smoked, in fulfillment of vows, but very rarely. More commonly, in contrast with the Flat Pipe, it was danced with, earlier only by the keeper, in recent decades by others.

788 General ritual features common to the Feathered Pipe and Flat Pipe,—clockwise movement, singing, the use of paint, of buffalo chips, and of sage, tobacco, larb and wild parsley,—have

---

* The drum used in the 1951 rite was apparently undecorated. See Plate 2 C. [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

been previously described. Some additional data on tobacco and wild parsley as associated with the Feathered Pipe help fill out the picture. 788

The keeper of the Feathered Pipe raised tobacco, as did the very first keeper, whose tobacco patch was raided by the people after the great war exploit of his son, He-Who-Dreams-of-Bha'a. 793 249

If anyone but the keeper [or co-keeper] touched the "wild parsley" root the delinquent would get fits, out of which he could be brought only by the keeper working on him and "blowing this same stuff on him." Old Deafie did not believe all this and there were other skeptics, some of whom, even small boys, would touch "wild parsley" to test out the belief and would immediately have fits. Al Chandler had heard of many such cases, although he had never seen any himself. 793 278

Sitting High used always to carry a couple of pinches of wild parsley in a little buckskin pouch in his pocket to use against rattlesnakes. On one occasion when Al Chandler was about 18 years old he and his grandfather (Sitting High) were at Henry Martin's place on the Hays side of the Bear Paws. Al was eating cherries at the creek bank, saw a big rattlesnake, and shouted to his grandfather. The latter imitated the snake's angry rattle, wet the end of a six-foot willow stick and stuck it in a small bit of wild parsley, then touched the snake with this end, and so "knocked the snake stiff." Some time later Al went to the spot to look and there he found the rattler dead, "bloated and stinking." Al Chandler, on another occasion, near Snake Butte, saw his grandfather kill a rattler in the same manner, merely touching it with the wet parsley-treated end of a stick. 278

Among the skeptics was Little Man, son of Sitting High and Al's adoptive father. He would even eat "wild parsley." On one occasion, Little Man took Jimmy, Al's three or four-year-old son, with him to the creek to wash, and while there was about to give Jimmy a bit of the wild parsley to eat, "to give him the power to use," when Al happened to see what was going on and told Jimmy: "Don't, that is poison." Little Man laughed and said: "It won't hurt him. I am giving it to him. I was going to give him this power. What is the matter with you? Why don't you eat it?" But Al said:

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

789 song had also to be sung, apparently to the accompaniment of the drum.

755 Putting sweet pine needles on the sick person's head, blowing wild parsley on him, and smudging him as doctoring practices have been previously described. According to Singer, if some one were so sick that his life was despaired of, the keeper would take the Feathered Pipe [the bundle, probably] and lay it on him and pray over him, and the sick person would recover, and, she added, "it cured a lot of them." Doctoring power was regularly acquired by reason of acquiring the keepership.

793 302 The keeper and co-keeper painted their own faces every morning after breakfast, like the men, in two bands, but broader ones three or four fingers wide, one on the forehead near the hair line and the other from one jaw across the chin to the other jaw.

778 The Pipe bundle was smudged by the keeper every morning and evening with sweet pine needles. During Curly Head's keepership Cora Chandler and her children were kept busy collecting dried cow dung for the daily smudging ceremony. The keeper made it a practice to "talk" or pray often to the Pipe in his lodge. According to The Boy, the keeper was fearful lest otherwise he might make ritual mistakes, at which the Pipe would be angry. According to Al Chandler, the Pipe being jealous, the keeper "had to talk to it to let it know it was not forgotten or put away; he treated it just like a person."

788 778 Customary observances on the occasions of feasts or ordinary meals to guests in the keeper's lodge have been previously described.

When the keeper and the people were camped for any length of time in a given place, the Feathered Pipe bundle was ordinarily taken in the morning from its place of honor opposite the entrance inside the keeper's lodge, hung up outside over the entrance, and brought back inside at eventide.

[361 624] 778 484 When the camp was to be moved, the Feathered Pipe keeper, like the Flat Pipe keeper, had, it seems, a consultative voice in the decision and perhaps even veto power at times, although ordinarily the final decision was made by the head men. The decision once made, early in the morning when camp was to be broken, the Feathered Pipe bundle was hung out on its tripod back of the

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

782 all to the Supreme Being, in the sense that he was mentioned first in them, and many were directed exclusively to him. Underlying this custom was the belief that all or most of the "good" things humans wished for came immediately or ultimately from him. As Coming Daylight said: "We always start everything with a prayer to Ixtcibni:hohat, then the sun is mentioned and the Last Child. The old timers still pray but the younger ones who have been to school are rather slack about it."

On Sept. 10, 1939, we had a meal and after it general conference with about ten of the oldest men and a couple of the oldest women present, and with The Boy presiding. Three of these older men, in the course of the long conference lasting all afternoon, spoke on the point as follows:

Spotted Bull: "I have always heard the Gros Ventre speak of Ixtcibni:hohat. I have heard the Four Old Men mentioned in prayer, and also Broken Knife, and also the four ridges or periods of the human life span."

Bull Head, about 80 years old in 1939, and though feeble mentally from age, was explicit enough on this matter: "As far back as I can remember, when the Gros Ventres prayed they began their prayer with Ixtcibni:hohat. They mentioned the Four Old Men, too."

Iron Man I: "The Gros Ventres prayed to Ixtcibni:hohat. They did not pray to or worship the sun as did some of the tribes to the north and west of us."

Thomas Main described as follows the way his old grandfather, still a pagan, used to pray, with use of a pipe when a small group of men would gather "to smoke religiously." He had time and again watched his grandfather praying.

782 "He would hold the pipe in both hands, with his left hand palm
● 788 up under the bowl and his right grasping the stem, and with the stem pointing up, nearly vertical. He would look upward first, and then bow his head and close his eyes. Then he would call on the Supreme Being for whatever he was praying for. He would relate what he wanted, with stress on good health, lots of food, no sickness, then [the same] for his immediate relatives, and last for everybody. . . . He would tell his prayer to the Supreme Being,

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

saying, 'I am going to ask for these things,' and then mention them, but he would not dwell very long on them. He would get away as quick as he could and do all his talking farther down [to the beings farther down in the scale] out of awe and reverence. 782 788

"After his prayer to the Supreme Being, he would lower the stem of the pipe a little and would pray to the Four Old Men in a body, and ask them for what was needed. This was the main body of his prayer. He would ask them to obtain these things from the Supreme Being. This was the longest part of the prayer.

"Finally he would reverse the pipe bowl with the stem pointing downward and with the tip of the stem as near to touching the ground as possible, without touching it, and would say just a short prayer to the Last Child, who is the least of all the beings. This prayer was shorter than the one to the Many Sacred Beings.

"Then he would straighten up. And all the others who during the pipe prayer had sat with heads bowed, reverent, without looking around, would straighten up too and would say: 'Ei:' (except the one who prayed), which means, in a general sense, may it be so, may it turn out so, we hope thus."

After this the pipe was lit and passed around. Thomas Main added: "The person [his grandfather] would say in his prayer, 'I am not worthy to pray, but I have been called upon to do it,' and would add, 'My being a poor unfortunate old man is all the more reason why my prayer should be heard.'"

Many other beings besides the Supreme Being were prayed to as is evident from the many examples already given. Certain prayers as recorded by us were directed to sacred objects. When Coming Daylight, for example, was disposing of the two rattles belonging to Roasted In Coals' sacred pipe, she prayed to them: "Have pity on us. I pity you because you are not even wrapped up. I take my robe to wrap you in. You are poor like orphans." 782

Thus we have prayers of petition directed to creatures, in this case material though sacred objects, with no mention of the Supreme Being. Was this merely a sort of verbal short cut? Catholics, for instance, frequently word prayers by such short cuts, to the Saints or even to sacred objects, without mention of God,

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

All that has been described took place for four successive days. While it is not clearly so stated, it seems likely that the four nights on which medicine was given to the dancers' wives constituted the four-days' period of painting and dancing. On the fourth day, after the dancing, certain special spectacular ceremonies were gone through, analogous to those which in all the succeeding dances terminated the ceremony. In this dance, however, a second period of four days, in which the dancers acted in their assumed capacity of being crazy or foolish, followed these spectacular ceremonies of the fourth day. 796

On this fourth day, two prominent chiefs, noted for their success in war, were selected. They held bared knives, and two tent-poles were brought to them. Each of them recounted four of his most distinguished coups. They then cut up the tent-poles into small pieces, and piled them up at the fireplace of the lodge and set them on fire. The flames blazed up high, while the dancers stood north and south of the fire with their "grandfathers" and danced. The fire was kept up and tended so that all the wood would be simultaneously consumed. The dancers' relatives held them by the hair or body, wherever they could seize them, while the dancers stood like horses trying to break loose, and blew their whistles. Each tried to be the first to rush into the fire. They seem to have moved toward the fire four times without entering it. The fourth time, at a signal, they were released, and rushed into the fire, dancing and stamping it with their bare feet until they had put it out. Medicine was put on the skin, and no one is said to have been burned; but men have fainted in the fire. One informant, who said that he had been the first to jump into the fire, stated that the soles of his feet became very hot, but that his skin was not burned. [554] [789]

After the fire had been put out, the dancers went to their "grandfathers," who prayed over their bows, put medicine on them, and gave them to the young men. The old men then sang and the dancers marched around in a circle for four songs. At the end of the last song, they ran out of the lodge, racing to a monument, which had been erected by the young men of other companies, at some distance to the southeast, and back again to the lodge. As they returned, each passed between two men standing near the entrance of the lodge, to whom he gave his bow as he ran between them. One of these two men was the tallest man that could be secured; the other was as short as possible. One of them took the bows of the tall division of dancers; the other, of the short division. It is said that these two men received bows until they had a large armful, but that they never made a mistake in taking a bow from a man of the other division. It appears, however, that the racers carried their bows in their right or left 796 526

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 men are named, their female relatives return to their tents, and cook. When they have prepared food, they all together bring a large quantity of it to the
729 lodge. The men selected carry weapons, and are dressed for war. They are usually mounted. Where they themselves or their horses were wounded,
[302] they paint themselves. If they have ridden over an enemy, a man is painted on the breast of the horse. When the food which has been brought by their female relatives has been eaten, these men, two at a time, go through numerous performances of their achievements in battle. This is done each day of the dance.

796 A group of men and women, called, like those in the preliminary singing-tent, "prairie-chickens," and therefore probably the same persons, seem
[534] to be the singers for the dance. They beat a rawhide in place of a drum, and hold branches, which, at the end of each song, they shake, shouting.

[271] The dancers may not drink water, no matter how great the heat. If
[821] one of them is unable to endure, and a pitying relative gives him even only a drop, a thunderstorm follows, and the offender may be struck by lightning, or one of his horses may be killed by lightning. In case it seems necessary for the dancers to drink, a pipe is taken to one of the old men. If he accepts it and smokes it, he goes to the central tree. He wears a robe with the hair-side out. He has a whistle in his mouth, feathers in one hand, and a crow-skin in the other. He strikes the bill of the crow four
[789] times, with a downward motion, against the lightning symbol on the tree. A vessel is held against the tree at the bottom of the symbol, and, after the fourth blow, water is said to run out until the vessel is filled, when it stops. This water is given to the dancers, each of whom drinks a very small quan-
[787] tity. The actions of the man producing this water are said to be determined by his personal supernatural vision.

After the four days of the ceremony are completed, the lodge is left standing. All the cloth and clothing that have been attached to it remain
[789] in place, and it appears that other clothes, especially of children, are left at the lodge. This is done in order that the children may live a long life.

From drawings made by a Gros Ventre, it appears that the buffalo-
796 skull is painted with spots, and has its nose and eyes stuffed. Behind it is
532 represented a dancer holding the wheel. He is presumably the pledger of the ceremony. The wheel is bisected by two strings, and has eagle-feathers and down-feathers attached to it. The dancer blows a whistle at the end of which is a plume. The whistle hangs from his neck. At the back of the head is a plume. Lines of paint proceed from his breast to his wrists and ankles. On each of these are four diamonds, two on each upper and lower arm, thigh, and calf. If this is a correct representation, the Gros Ventre use at least one style of painting that is like the most typical Arap-

842 pressed this desire early in life and volunteered the following story
[787] of her experience.

"My first husband, Dressed in White, went out hunting and
[587] brought back a lot of buffalo meat. I had my robe spread out just inside the door and he threw all the meat on it. Being hungry, I sat down there and was just about to eat the raw liver when he said: 'Wait! Don't eat that.' When I asked why not, he countered with the query: 'Do you like children?' To which I replied: 'You know I love children. I go wherever there is a baby—I love to have them on my lap.' So he said: 'Well, it is your fault that this is going to happen.' He took the oval piece of meat from the upper front quarter and roasted it in the coals. He then threw it to me in a careless way, instead of passing it to me as usual, and said: 'Here, you can have that for your son. You eat this plain—don't eat any tallow with it.' although they usually ate tallow with such lean meat. I said in disgust: 'E:ka:kya! I have always liked children,' and flung the meat out of the door. He said: 'Now that you have done this, you are going to have children from now on.' So, as he predicted, not long after that I became pregnant with my firstborn who was a boy. Unfortunately this boy died and I often wondered if it happened because I threw the meat too violently on that occasion when my husband had offered me the opportunity to choose whether or not I wished to bear children." Incidentally she remarked many times that she is happy she chose as she did,—otherwise now she would be all alone and her children have been so good to her.

The telling of the above incident brought to Coming Daylight's mind another, which confirms her belief in the relation between
[595] "medicine" and conception. "Crow Bull, my mother's brother, had four wives. His first wife did not have any children. Then
[582] he married an Assiniboine woman and still later took a third wife. Neither of the latter had children either until one time Crow Bull got mad. His third wife wanted to leave him for another man, but her relatives sent her back to Crow Bull. He, however, slept across from her bed and did not have intercourse with her. Shortly after this the Assiniboine woman did something to dis-
[789] please him and so he made up his mind: 'These two wives of mine are going to have children and settle down!' He had an old-fash-

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

ioned doll which he wrapped up like a sack-baby and, one night without letting her know what he was doing, he raised up the covers on his third wife's bed and put this doll under her. He did the same with the Assiniboine woman and said: 'She will have a boy, too.' As he had predicted, each bore him a son, and these two are the only children Crow Bull had. He later gave this doll to one of his niece's daughters, having 'sterilized' the doll first, however, so that the girl was not affected and subsequently gave birth to five children." 842 789

Natural sterility was apparently not recognized by the Gros Ventres. If a couple was childless it was assumed that contraceptive medicines were used. While many individuals did not approve of the use of these medicines, each family had the right to do as it pleased in this matter without outside interference. Nevertheless, The Boy, alarmed at the falling birthrate which he attributed to the widespread use of these old-fashioned medicines, on two occasions in 1921 and 1922 spoke out boldly in public about the matter. He feels he was justified in doing so since he thinks there has been an improvement in the situation. 842 [163]

Although the use of these medicines was rated by our informants as the major factor in accounting for the small number of children per family, infant mortality was said to have been high, and infanticide was known. [847]

For premature infants nothing could be done in the days before hospital care was known. Furthermore, where marked physical defects were obvious at birth, the chances that the infant would live were slight. It was stated, for instance, in regard to one woman who gave birth to a "little dog," that "had she been alone she would have done away with it, but her husband prevented her from doing so and everybody thought it was awful." Coming Daylight and Singer knew of two other actual instances of deformity,—one child who "looked like a beaver," and another who had "ears like a rabbit"—and both of these died shortly after birth. Coming Daylight remarked: "It seems as though we are so foolish the way we are ashamed of being deformed. One time when we were in town a white woman, whose face was quite disfigured, came into a restaurant where we were. My daughter told me: 'They [the whites] don't think anything of it. It can't be 845

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

857 buffalo cow, dried and stuffed. This type they would bounce and
526 kick. A popular game played among girls in spring was as follows. The girls holding hands formed a big ring. One girl in the center would have a ball. She would throw it at anyone in the ring. When she hit her chosen victim on the chest with the ball, the girls let go of each other's hands and each ran for a piece of buffalo chip where she would be "safe."[1]

A game played by boys and girls together in the evening was as follows. The children would line up according to size behind the tallest boy who would have in his hand a stick which was smouldering at the end. Each child held on tightly to the one in front of him. The boy holding the stick would try to touch the smallest child at the end of the line. The line would writhe as big sparks would fly and sometimes hair got singed. One old woman, recalling this game, remarked: "I don't know when we would get to bed, we had such a good time!"

Sometimes the children would send one of the group on an er-
857 rand. Those who stayed behind would wet their hands with their
524 tongues and say: "We will watch this to see if it takes you a long time or not." If their hands were still wet when the member of the group returned, they decided that he had done the errand very quickly.

When there were pretty clouds in the sky a little girl might point one out to the other children and tell them to watch it. Then she would stand at the bank of the river, bending over at the waist and violently flinging her arms from side to side while sing-
[82] ing. The others would watch the cloud and tell her that it was dis-
789 appearing and soon it would be gone. "They used to think they could make the cloud disappear by singing that song."

If a group of girls were playing together and some one boy, say
[576] from seven to nine years old, would butt in, the girls would all sit down to show that they resented the intrusion. If the boy did not leave, the girls would then form a circle around him and sing a derisive song. Thus the boy would be shamed and run off. The opportunity for this did not occur very often, since boys from about the age of seven usually went off to be by themselves

[1] For description of ball games and illustration of type of football, see Kroeber, 1908, fig. 23.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the door." Deer then in both hands held the sinew stretched taut horizontally over a smoldering chip and sang a song special to this rite, ending it with a recitative "Yo!" Then he lowered the sinew and repeated the song and "Yo," then lowered still more and repeated, concluding with "Yo, ho, ho, ho!" and finally put the sinew on the burning chip. As the sinew burned and buckled, the pup doubled up with cramps and died. 793 754

Another power, conferred for use by the keeper in case of disrespect committed against him, worked by "contagious" magic. The keeper watched the offender closely and made sure to locate his tracks, and then took out of the pipe bundle and put on his ritual moccasins the soles of which had been rubbed during the transfer rite with the poisonous wild parsley. Then, wearing the moccasins he stepped in the offender's tracks. As soon as he did so, the offender got a fit and then his legs and feet became weak and wobbly and nobody but the keeper could cure him. [789]

The co-keeper for the same punitive purpose in case of disrespect or molestation carried wild parsley mixed with peppermint leaves in the sack attached to her belt, but we obtained no information on the precise procedure she used.

Two punitive procedures were told The Boy by his father but without full details. These "vulgar" powers were not broadcast but were kept more or less secret within the inner circle of the Flat Pipe.

If a woman disrespected a keeper or caused him great embarrassment, he carried out a special rite over or toward her, obliged her to submit to sex intercourse with him, and afterwards carried out a concluding rite. If some young man went so far as to flirt with her, make advances and touch her, he would get ill, and she alone could doctor him back to health. If he went so far as to have sexual intercourse with her, he would probably die. [833 786]

As regards all the foregoing punitive and harming powers, it was strictly understood that the keeper and co-keeper were given them to use only to enforce respect, and that if used for other and evil purposes the users would pay dearly and would be punished in some way, through the death of their children or through other misfortune. 793

Besides these supernatural powers to command respect, other 755

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

793 powers, intended more for the positive advantage of the keeper or
755 his people, were customarily acquired during or after the transfer rite.

In the transfer rite the new keeper was taught how to doctor, especially in cases of fits, spasms and cramps. The peppermint
[278] beverage, now used by everybody for these maladies, was formerly a monopoly of the Flat Pipe keeper in his curing practice. Other doctoring powers were also conferred on him and he could use the hair rope from the Flat Pipe bundle as a potent medicine to cure with, but we could obtain no details on these points.

The keeper would pray to have good dreams and might sleep
[787] on the Pipe bed for the same purpose. His dreams, when told, were important news for his fellows, as through them the future could be foretold.

● 789 The keeper was also given power to summon, call or "snare"
793 from a distance, enemies or reluctant friends. The Boy gave two instances of the use of this power, both from the lips of his father, Lame Bull. When Lame Bull, on learning of his election as Flat Pipe keeper fled to the hills, the ex-keeper so summoned him, using the Flat Pipe itself in the rite. The nine Flat Pipe songs were sung and at the end of each, the ex-keeper holding the Pipe at arm's length in both hands with the stem pointed upward and outward, sang the Hair Rope song, then twisted the stem tip in a vertical near-circle first upward and outward and then inward and downward in a sort of beckoning motion as if drawing something toward him, then downward and finally lowered the bowl toward (or to?) the ground.

On a later occasion during Lame Bull's keepership, on a war
[726] expedition against the Piegan he learned in a dream where they were located and was told that five of them would be killed. The night before the attack on the Piegan, using a common pipe and the above calling rite, thrice performed, with the pipe stem pointed toward the distant Piegan camp, invisible at the time to the Gros Ventre party, and singing the Hair Rope song, he "called" five of the Piegan, who, separated from the main Piegan body, were killed by the Gros Ventres.

793 The keeper and co-keeper also were given power to use in hunt-
224 ing buffalo, but we were able to obtain no details on the rite. The

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

one occasion for which we obtained the account of Lame Bull's resort to this power, it failed to work.

The keeper likewise received power to use in case his horse played out during a war raid. In the 1868 battle with the Piegan, Lame Bull's horse stepped into a hole and fell at a moment when he was surrounded by Piegan. Two young Gros Ventre warriors, sons-in-law of Lame Bull, came to him. His horse got up but could not run, and in fact fell again. One of the young warriors said to him: "I thought the Flat Pipe was everything. Why don't you save yourself. The Piegan will kill all three of us." Lame Bull, keeper at the time, took some peppermint from the small bag tied to his whip, put it in his mouth, sang a certain song, spat on his hands, stroked his whip handle three times with his palm, made motions three times as if striking his horse, and the third time actually struck the horse. At this, the horse came to life as if fresh and started running, and Lame Bull got home safely.

Still another power conferred on the keeper was that of getting possession of a horse by obtaining a single hair thereof. Horses entered into the Feathered Pipe complex, not into the Flat Pipe one. But the Flat Pipe keeper could not be refused a request for a horse or horses made by him of anyone. Moreover, even though he did not directly make such a request, if he wanted a certain good horse, he could ask one of his relatives or good friends, surreptitiously and preferably by night, to pluck one hair from the horse's tail and bring it to him. The keeper would then perform some rite (details not obtainable by us) over the hair and put the hair in the Flat Pipe bundle, and pretty soon he would acquire the desired horse. It may be added that when the keeper walked near or around anybody's horse, he was watched suspiciously for fear that unobserved he would pluck a hair from the horse's tail.

In addition to these specific supernatural powers, the keeper and co-keeper were given a great number of ritual powers, the right and duty to carry out certain ceremonies directly or indirectly related to the Pipe and its keepership. These will be described later under "Ritual."

In accordance with their sacred office and eminent dignity, with their role as benevolent intercessors for the people with the super-

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

was, primarily though not exclusively, a prayer for rain and for protection against storms. Many other simpler rites were, however, carried out for the same purposes.

Rain could be caused by sprinkling the Feathered Pipe keeper with water or by throwing water on him, and if the keeper, contrary to rule, bathed in a stream rain would follow. The keeper could also cause rain by prayer (details not known to our informant, The Boy) and then taking water in his mouth and, facing to the northwest (from which storms usually come) or against the wind, blowing the water out of his mouth in a spray. The keeper could also, according to Al Chandler, bring rain by spurting water out of his mouth or by sprinkling water from a cup, in each case in the four cardinal directions.

The keeper might have power, too, to cause rain by going to a creek, with prayers on the way, and wading in it with his moccasins on. But not all keepers had this power. On one occasion while Curly Head was keeper, a big prairie fire was spreading close to his place and Al Chandler, Al's father-in-law, and Curly Head were fighting the fire. Al's father-in-law saw Curly Head wade in the water and said to Al: "I guess he is trying to make rain. I see him walking in the water with moccasins on." But the old man "thought Curly Head did not have the power and sure enough he could not make it rain."

There were ways of stopping as well as causing rain. Al Chandler gave the following account. "The Feathered Pipe was used mainly to get rain. But it was also used to stop rain when there was danger that it would ruin crops or otherwise harm the people, and they would ask the keeper to stop it. He would not do this alone but would get some of the old men who understood about the Pipe to help him. They all sang and smudged themselves, but did not unwrap the Pipe or do anything else but sing and pray. The ceremony lasted quite long. I remember once, when Logan was agent, we were going down to a Fourth of July celebration and were camped over at Three Mile Coulee. While on our way to the coulee it started to rain and by the time we reached it, it was raining very, very hard. The horses were shaking with cold, lightning was flashing and thunder was sounding. Somebody asked Sitting High, then keeper, to do something, else their fun would

3: Cooper-E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

789 be spoiled. Sitting High told him to summon the other old men. I could not stay in the tent with them although I was living with Sitting High at the time. Sitting High and his wife were there; so were the other old men, but not their wives. They started singing about three or four o'clock in the afternoon and kept it up all night. I woke up very early next morning and could hear them still singing. They were then just about breaking up. They had to see the ceremony through. They would sing four songs and smudge and smoke and talk. Then they would sing four more and rest between each four until they had sung 44 songs. Sure enough it cleared up the next day."

[361] A rite for stopping floods was described as follows by Jim Shortman: "One whole winter the Gros Ventres camped on the Musselshell River until spring. When the ice would go out the water would flood the valley from hill to hill, and all the camps, set up in the timber along the river for shelter, would move. My father, then Feathered Pipe keeper, did not move, and his wife said to him: "We will be flooded. What will you do?" "We will stay here," he said. "It is too much trouble to move." She told him: "We will be drowned." But he said: "No." That night he took down one of his little bags, which contained a hand-made wooden bowl. He took out the bowl, made a smudge, smudged the bowl and sang and talked to him, and after that went outside the lodge. I followed him out to see what he would do. He walked right out to the river which was rising and stopped about 8 or 10 feet from the water. He held the bowl up towards heaven, sang and talked [prayed, evidently], then lowered it first in the three stages, and at the fourth set it on the ground face down. Then he went back to his lodge. And, don't you know, the water was all around everywhere else, but did not come any closer to the spot where he put the bowl. Gosh, I was scared. I thought we would all drown. But when I got up the next morning the water was all around us, but we were all right."

Various ritual procedures were used by the Feathered Pipe keeper to avert or to stop thunderstorms. He would go out and stand, facing the oncoming storm. He would then stretch out his arms straight from the shoulder with his palms together. Then he would move his arms outward at the same time turning his

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

palms outward (about as in the breast stroke for swimming), and while doing so would say: "We don't need you now. Go this way. Go this way." And the thunderclouds would spread and separate, and miss the camp. 789

Once when Thick's brother, Horse Capture, had vowed a Crazy Dance and it was about to start, a big electric storm threatened. So Horse Capture filled a pipe and went to Bull Lodge and said: "Here, old man, is a pipe." "What is it for?" asked Bull Lodge. "I want you to break up this storm," Horse Capture replied. "We don't want a storm when we start on our doings." "Well," said Bull Lodge, as he took the pipe, "That is easy." The storm was then coming pretty close. Bull Lodge did nothing but smoke the pipe, and when through smoking handed it back to Horse Capture, saying: "There is not going to be a drop of rain and you are not going to have any rain for four days." And just at this instant, the thundercloud split in two and went around, by-passing the camp. Whether Bull Lodge averted this storm by reason of his keeper or ex-keeper powers or of special personal ones is not however clear from our informant on the incident, Thick.

Charles Buckman gave us another illustration of Bull Lodge's power over storms, a power associated with the keepership. The story was told Buckman by his present wife's father, old Spotted Bird. There was a very severe and prolonged rain storm, it was cold, and the horses were dying. The Gros Ventres were camped with the Crow. The Crow offered Bull Lodge a pipe to stop the storm and he agreed: "All right, I will see what I can do." So he got his Feathered Pipe drum, fixed a smudge, and started to sing a certain song, saying: "After I sing the third song, go and see how the weather looks." So they began singing and by the time he sang the fourth song, the storm was over and the sun was shining. [648]

When a big thunderstorm came, or too much rain, the people would appeal to the keeper to stop it. He would make a smudge and talk to the Pipe and, without mentioning the Last Child or the sun, ask that the storm or rain cease, and it would stop. The smudging consisted of or included taking a pinch of sweet pine, motioning with it, dropping all but a little of it in the fire, and putting this remaining bit on the top of his head. The weather

●789 song had also to be sung, apparently to the accompaniment of the drum.

755 Putting sweet pine needles on the sick person's head, blowing wild parsley on him, and smudging him as doctoring practices have been previously described. According to Singer, if some one were so sick that his life was despaired of, the keeper would take the Feathered Pipe [the bundle, probably] and lay it on him and pray over him, and the sick person would recover, and, she added, "it cured a lot of them." Doctoring power was regularly acquired by reason of acquiring the keepership.

793 The keeper and co-keeper painted their own faces every morning after breakfast, like the men, in two bands, but broader ones
302 three or four fingers wide, one on the forehead near the hair line and the other from one jaw across the chin to the other jaw.

778 The Pipe bundle was smudged by the keeper every morning and evening with sweet pine needles. During Curly Head's keepership Cora Chandler and her children were kept busy collecting dried cow dung for the daily smudging ceremony. The keeper made it a practice to "talk" or pray often to the Pipe in his lodge. According to The Boy, the keeper was fearful lest otherwise he might make ritual mistakes, at which the Pipe would be angry. According to Al Chandler, the Pipe being jealous, the keeper "had to talk to it to let it know it was not forgotten or put away; he treated it just like a person."

788 Customary observances on the occasions of feasts or ordinary meals to guests in the keeper's lodge have been previously
778 described.

When the keeper and the people were camped for any length of time in a given place, the Feathered Pipe bundle was ordinarily taken in the morning from its place of honor opposite the entrance inside the keeper's lodge, hung up outside over the entrance, and brought back inside at eventide.

[361 When the camp was to be moved, the Feathered Pipe keeper, like the Flat Pipe keeper, had, it seems, a consultative voice in
624] the decision and perhaps even veto power at times, although ordinarily the final decision was made by the head men. The decision
778 once made, early in the morning when camp was to be broken,
484 the Feathered Pipe bundle was hung out on its tripod back of the

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the council told them to do. Before the Dance actually started, the participant age-group split up into two divisions, the "talls" and the "shorts," probably organized as in the Sacrifice Dance but we did not obtain details, except that the "talls" and "shorts" each selected a "tall" and a "short" old man respectively to be older brother to them and assistant to the above-mentioned chief crier. The two groups competed and on one occasion in connection with a Crazy Dance indulged in a contest of supernatural power, according to the following story narrated by The Boy.

"On one occasion, while preparing for a Crazy Dance, the 'talls' and 'shorts' besides engaging in games and sports against one another, played a game of magic, of exhibition of power. They put up a double lodge, like the one used in the Flat Pipe transfer rite, and started in to show their power, the 'talls' were against the 'shorts.' The contest went on and on, and a big crowd of spectators was attracted. The 'shorts' were losing and got mad. One of the 'shorts' made a snake, and it crawled around. At this the 'shorts' all cheered for their side, and said: 'You "talls" can't match that.' But the 'shorts' did not reckon with their opponents. 'All right,' said the 'talls,' 'We'll show you.'

"One of the 'talls' then stepped out in the middle. He used to wear in his hair a piece of rawhide cut out in the figure of an elk. He said to his comrades, 'Sing this song,' and he taught them a song to sing. Then he said: 'I'll lie down. You cover me up with a robe. Continue singing, and after a while uncover me. After everybody has seen what you uncover, cover me up again. Then sing again, and after a while uncover me again.' They proceeded to do as he told them. Meanwhile news of the making of the snake by the 'short' had traveled fast, and some of the principal men of the tribe had come over to the double lodge.

"The 'tall' then lay down and his comrades covered him, sang a while and uncovered him. When they lifted the cover, there sat an elk. The 'talls' cheered loudly. Then they covered him, sang a while, and uncovered him, and he got up smiling.

"But the 'shorts' said: 'That's nothing. We too can do things like that.' So one of the 'shorts' did just as the 'tall' had done. He told his comrade to sing a certain song, cover him, sing, un-

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

cover him and so forth. This they did. When they uncovered him, there lay a human skeleton. They then covered, sang, and uncovered, and there was the 'short' himself. And all the 'shorts' cheered and shouted. 796* 789

"At this point the principal men present stepped in: 'There is danger in this kind of contest. After a while there may be a fight.' So the contest came to an end.

"The Gros Ventres talked for a long time about this contest, and they still talk about it and wonder what would have happened if the principal men had not stepped in and stopped it."

The Crazy Dancers had to be, or by age or custom were, younger men, married or unmarried, fully adult but not yet middle-aged, "mature." They chose their ceremonial grandfathers from among those who had previously been through the Dance. From one to four,—but not more than four,—dancers could choose the same ceremonial grandfather, lest they should run out of grandfathers. Only those could be grandfathers who had never had sex relations with the wives or substitute women joining the dance with the respective grandson or group of two to four grandsons, and an actual shortage of grandfathers meeting this requirement was apt to be more than a theoretic one, at least in the later days when the Dance was given. In one case, in fact, still well remembered, the prospective Crazy Dancer had to hunt all over the tribe to get his ceremonial grandfather. According to Coming Daylight a man who joined the Crazy Dance a second time had to have the same grandfather whom he had had on the first occasion. Where two to four men combined to choose the same grandfather, one of one group served as a sort of leader for it. Apparently if the age-group putting on the dance belonged to the Stars, the grandfathers and grandfathers' helpers were chosen from the Wolves, and vice versa. 608 796*

There was great reluctance on the part of older men to serve as Crazy Dance grandfathers, although, to judge from the previously quoted remarks of some of the younger men, there were probably exceptions to this rule. The reluctance shown was real, not make-believe, as the older men approached to be grandfathers might have to make embarrassing confessions and refuse, or if they accepted had to undergo a severe test of character, failure in which entailed grave penalty, as will be explained infra.

31 Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

778 821 smudged the shield and hung it up on the pole, then he got his Feather Pipe drum and started to sing. As he sang the third time, and of course prayed and went through the [ritual] motions, and a sun ray showed right on the shield. The Crows were in the lodge and they all saw this and they prayed. And he said: 'I have one more song.' So he sang the fourth one and after he got through he said to one of the men: 'You go out and see what has happened.' The man went out and it was still snowing but right in the heavens was a little round hole [clear spot] which gradually enlarged and the sun shone. That is how Bull Lodge cleared the weather."

789 We now come to use of powers of legerdemain. Such powers were ordinarily looked upon as "supernatural" in origin and nature. We have already given many illustrations of such legerdemain as integral elements in ritual power-use, we shall now give the illustrations of it as used in purely or predominantly secular contexts.

Such feats are attributed to various individuals. According to Mary Ereaux, Sits-in-the-Midddle on one occasion when the party was out of tea, "made tea for them and they thought that was great." An unnamed medicine man was reputed to be able to swallow a "chunk of coal" [probably hot embers].

The two most outstanding masters of legerdemain known to our informants were Bull Lodge (d. ca. 1886) and Stiffarm (d. ca. 1935). According to Al Chandler, Stiffarm got his legerdemain power from Bull Lodge, and actually his feats and procedures (such as use of a handkerchief) duplicate almost exactly Bull Lodge's so far as they go.

Here follows our fullest account of Bull Lodge's feats, as given us by his daughter, Garter Snake, with some details interpolated in parentheses, from Charles Buckman (CB) and Al Chandler (AC).

"When my father slept at Baldy [Baldy Butte, in the Bear Paws] . . . he was given the power of doctoring, and he was given wealth, and the power then to make tobacco, matches, sugar, tea, and even coffee. These are the articles he made. In winter time his sons would go out and get cherry brush. He would put

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

that black cloth over it four times and then he would say: 'Take the rag off. There will be ripe cherries.' 789

("I heard stories about Bull Lodge. A storekeeper invited Bull Lodge one day in the dead of winter and said to him: 'I invite you for one purpose, I will give you tobacco, tea, sugar, blanket and so forth, but I want you to do something for me.' Bull Lodge said: 'If I can, I will. If I cannot, I cannot. If you ask me for something impossible, I won't be able to accommodate you.' The storekeeper said: 'All right, I am hungry for fresh cherries.' Bull Lodge laughed and said: 'I guess I can. You go out and bring me a cherry branch.' So he went out and got it and Bull Lodge said: 'All right, my friend, set it right there.' He then took that black handkerchief and covered this branch with it and talked and sang to himself and made motions and said: 'All right.' And he took it off and there were cherries!" CB)

(Little Man, my adopted father, once went with Bull Lodge to a store at Chinook. They were hard up that winter and wanted sugar, lard and so forth. He said to Bull Lodge: 'Let's go over to that storekeeper and get something out of him.' So Bull Lodge said: 'Yes, that is right. Let's go.' So they went and sure enough this fellow knew them well and they sat round a while and pretty soon he said to Bull Lodge: 'I am sure hungry for cherries.' Bull Lodge said: 'I won't make them for nothing.' The man said: 'Help yourself. Anything you want.' So Bull Lodge told Little Man to get the brush, a big bundle of it. So Bull Lodge sat down on the floor and did as I just described. So they were smoking and in the meantime Bull Lodge whistled the tune and said to the storekeeper: 'John, go get your cherries.' The man said: 'What do you want me to do?' He raised the handkerchief and his eyes almost popped out. Bull Lodge told him to take them and the storekeeper acted like he was afraid. He made Bull Lodge and Little Man eat some of them first. Bull Lodge," Al added, "was a goodhearted man who helped the poor and all that." AC)

("Bull Lodge could make fresh chokeberries for you in winter time. You would ask him: 'Could you make me some cherries? I am hungry for cherries.' He would say: 'Yes.' Then you would go get branches that were frozen and with no leaves on them and bring them to where he was. He would take them and rub his

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

789 hand maybe four or several times and put them down about four feet from him. He always wore a black silk handkerchief and he would put this over the branches. He would then tell you: 'All right, make smoke and talk.' He would hum a song under his breath when he wasn't talking. You would smoke three or four times and he would say to you: 'All right. Get your cherries.'

("You know that in those days the whites used to make plug tobacco, either chewing or smoking tobacco. And that is what Bull Lodge used to make. He would go out and get a cutting of thick wood bark and whittle it to the size of a plug of tobacco and then he would make a smudge and smudge it four times and put it on his tobacco board. He would then spread over it the black handkerchief and light his pipe and blew on the handkerchief four times with one smoke. He would then take the handkerchief away and there would be tobacco."

("The same winter that Bull Lodge made the cherries, Little Man said to him: 'This is a poor winter, nobody has any tobacco. I have been all over but nobody has any, not even the store.' So Little Man told Bull Lodge he should make some: 'All right. Go out and get some cottonwood bark, [to make] whatever amount of tobacco you want.' So Little Man got the thickest piece he could find, of pretty good size. So Bull Lodge started to whittle it, cutting it like [a plug of] tobacco. After he had it all trimmed up he sized it up. It was about two fingers thick, three fingers broad, and two feet long. After he had whittled it all in shape, he put it at a distance of four feet from him and placed one handkerchief over it. They did not have any smoke, so they just talked while Bull Lodge hummed a tune on the sly. After a while, Bull Lodge said: 'Get your tobacco.' And there it was, Chinax tobacco, bags and everything. Little Man gave Bull Lodge some of it and divided it with his neighbor and then they all had a big smoke." AC)

"When Bull Lodge made matches, he would send kids to get him fall rye grass in a bunch. They would bring it and break it to the size of matches. Then he would tie these together with sinew. After this would make a smudge and sing and pray to himself and make a pass in the smudge four times. Then he would take these sticks and tap them in ashes four times, and when he

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

was through he had those 'telegraph' matches. Everything was done openly [apparently without use of the handkerchief]." ("Bull Lodge could make candles out of rye grass, and this power and the power to make tobacco too, he gave to Stiffarm." AC) 789

"When Bull Lodge made sugar, sugar was high-priced and scarce. One day he asked his wife to make soup and she told him: 'We haven't any sugar.' He said: 'I will get some.' She asked him: 'Where will you get it?' He said: 'Never mind where I am going to get it. I'll get it.' So he got up and took down that bag that belongs to his Pipe and also a wooden bowl, made smudge twice face up and twice face down (sic), but did not put anything in the bowl. He just set that thing down, put that black handkerchief over it, took the pipe and smoked and blew smoke towards it four times, and the fourth time he blew smoke he took that cloth off and there was white sugar.

"Bull Lodge could take any kind of dish and smudge it and set it on the ground and he would cover it with this black handkerchief, and in this case [when he made green coffee berries] he was talking and making signs and the fourth time he came down and removed the handkerchief, and there were berries. 'In telling all this,' Garter Snake, now a practical Catholic, interpolated, 'I have been telling you what my father told me about himself and in addition what I have seen him do. May the Lord have mercy on my soul!'

"One year in the spring when there were still snowbanks on the hillside, he told one of his sons: 'Go get me a ball of snow.' I did not know what he was going to do with the snow. So the boy rode horseback and brought back a ball of snow and said: 'Here is your snow, whatever you are going to do with it?' My father, after he got the snow, made a smudge and smudged his hands four times, flattened the snow with the palms of his hands, kind of made signs over it and talked. After that he put the black handkerchief over his hand and worked the other hand, rubbing it, and took the handkerchief off, and there was one of those pretty sea-shells, and he gave it to one of the boys.

"This is about hail. Bull Lodge took that wooden bowl and made a smudge and did [sic] with his hands and inhaled the smudge with his mouth four times and smudged his arms four times. He

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

789 then told his wife to put the bowl under his mouth, and he grabbed himself by the waist and shook himself, and out of his mouth came hail and filled the bowl."

Information on Stiffarm's feats was given us by The Boy, a close friend of Stiffarm, and was corroborated in part by Al Chandler.

"Stiffarm," said The Boy, "used to make needles out of blades of grass, tobacco out of bark of trees, and candles out of pigweeds, the stems of which are hollow." "Stiffarm could take a blade of grass, break it in two, and strike it like a match. . . . I saw him turn sand into brown sugar. . . . Once at the old Agency south of Chinook, he visited our home. My mother gave him something to eat but he said: 'Get a half cup full of sand.' She did, and brought it in. Stiffarm said: 'Give it to me.' She did. He had on a black muffler. He untied it, folded it in a narrow strip, and put it on his lap. Then he poured the sand along the muffler and covered the sand with the flaps of the muffler. On his hat he had a yellow painted down feather. He untied the feather and passed it over his mouth horizontally four times, then horizontally over the sand four times. Then he said to my mother: 'Use this to sweeten your tea.' She unfolded the muffler and there in it was brown sugar."

Some who had gambling power were also skillful at legerdemain. According to The Boy, in the course of a hand game, such a one would make an object "go in his hands, through the veins of his arm and come out somewhere else, or go through his skull and come out of his mouth . . . or he swallowed it and drew it out of his body . . . or he blew it to nothing." Red Whip (d. 1912) in a game played about 1873-75 between some Gros Ventres and Flathead, took a button, threw it in the air, and challenged the Flathead champion, Crazy Child, to find it. Crazy Child failed to locate it. Then Red Whip showed him the button embedded in one of the lodge poles and told him to pull it out. Crazy Child tried to do so but without success. Then Red Whip pulled it out easily.[20]

Contests between possessors of legerdemain power sometimes occurred, although it would seem, not often nor at any set times. The Boy told the following story of Stiffarm:

---

[20] See Flannery and Cooper, 1946, 108-09.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

"Stiffarm used to be accused of doing harm to people through his power. He would never defend himself or say anything about this. On one occasion a group were drinking whiskey and some of Stiffarm's brothers-in-law were there. Brothers-in-law joke [banter] each other. They said: 'Let's have a contest of power. The one who has the least power will buy the drinks.' But Stiffarm said: 'No. I'd rather not.' The others thought Stiffarm was a little scared. They insisted. Finally Stiffarm said: 'All right.' So he took a piece of otter skin in his fingers, held it up, sang four times, and blew on it four times. The fourth time, he blew hard and the piece of otter skin disappeared. Then he said: 'Where is that otter skin? Look for it.' They could not find it. Then Stiffarm got up, walked to the iron stove in the middle of the room, and there was the otter skin half buried in the side of the stove. Stiffarm said: 'Here it is. Come and get it.' But no one dared to do so. They were all afraid. Stiffarm then took it without effort, and said: 'Now, the Gros Ventres have blamed me for causing some deaths by using my power. That is not true. But if I really wanted to do so, I would use this otter skin, and the one I used it on would not live long.'" 789 754

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

A doctor with power to harm might use it if he were "jealous of someone better at medicine than himself," or if he "didn't like someone," or if "a woman refused to live with him." 754

We got very little information, and this from only two informants, The Boy and Thomas Main, on how and from whom power to do evil was obtained. According to Thomas Main "bad medicine could be acquired sleeping up on the hills, and was used to do evil." The Boy gave a few more details. "Most of the time power to do evil was gotten by fasting and sleeping on the hills and mountains. It was gotten from some animal or other creature. The animal would teach the recipient how to exercise the power and would also tell him: 'If anyone makes you mad and does not respect you, do so and so and harm him.' It was hard to tell who had evil power, until they exercised it." In at least some cases, then, power to harm was given the recipient of other power, as in the case of keepers and co-keepers of sacred Pipes (cf. pp. 52, 60-61), to enforce respect for the recipient. Whether power to harm was always given for this purpose incidentally to the giving of other power, we were not sure. If we assume that this was not the case, and if sheer power to bewitch could be gotten independently, a logical conflict with the fundamental Gros Ventre conception of supernatural power emerges. For all power was conceived as coming ultimately from the benevolent Supreme Being (cf. supra, pp. 5, 7). We do not, however, press the point. While the Gros Ventre magico-religious belief system was a remarkably consistent one, especially as described by The Boy, one hundred per cent consistency is another matter. After all, gifts of power, even though ultimately from the Supreme Being, were gifts with a string, namely, shortened life to the recipients. The Supreme Being preferred prayer to power-quest (supra, pp. 264-266). The problem is here presented and discussed; it has not been solved by us.

Most doctors had to have some mastery of legerdemain. In the everyday exercise of their curing powers an integral feature, for example, was extracting from the patient's body the object that was causing the disease. Some doctors, in addition, quite independently of their medical practice, had special abilities of clair- 789

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

789 voyance and prophecy, and particularly of wonder working, such as making sugar from sand, matches from grass, and so forth. Some feats of legerdemain, integral and non-integral to curing procedures, have been described in detail. While skill at legerdemain was possessed, as we have seen, by individuals with ancestral helpers, by at least one famous gambler, and probably by other non-medical men, it was especially common among professional doctors. It was, in most cases and by most of the laity believed to be a supernatural gift and, of course, served to give corroborative evidence to the laity of the genuineness of the curing powers of the practitioner, to enhance his (or her) prestige, and to keep and extend his clientele.

Exercise of Powers

756 Each doctor in curing practice used his or her own distinctive rites. Certain rites and observances however were commonly followed by many or all doctors. These more common rites and observances will be described first, after that, some examples of distinctive ones.

The ordinary procedure to engage the services of a doctor for a given case was to go to him (or her) and offer him a pipe filled with tobacco or tobacco mixture. Acceptance and smoking of the pipe by the doctor,—and in accord with the general Gros Ventre pattern, the request with offer of a pipe could hardly be refused,—meant that he agreed to take the case. Sometimes just tobacco was sent or brought to him. In certain instances, too, where petitioner and doctor were related the pipe offering could be dispensed with. Thus in view of their relationship, Al Chandler related that he asked his adoptive father, Little Man, on a given occasion to accept a case without the pipe offering. "I did not have to have a pipe. My father would do anything for me, pipe or no pipe."

"It was important," The Boy explained, "how you handed the pipe to the doctor before calling him. Before approaching him, you would ask around: 'How do you hand the pipe to so-and-so?' A number of doctors might have the same way, but not all had. If no one knew [for a given doctor], then you would ask the doctor

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

'Little Man,' had been bewitched and cured, he fell sick again. A man was called in to doctor him. He did his medicine work and drew out a small rattlesnake with shining eyes from Little Man's forehead. Meanwhile I had built a fire. I asked the man to let me look at that snake and he told me: 'When you have finished, hand it back to me.' But I threw it in the fire. He did not say anything but gathered up his medicines, jammed them in his bag, and went out. He took the mare given in payment and gave it away at once to another person. . . . Little Man did not know what to make of my action. I told him: 'I burned up his old rotten medicine.' 755

"I know I could not escape death [some time] so I was not afraid of him (the man). Some others would be scared of a medicine man like him, but not I. He did not put medicine on me. He was my neighbor, however, and after that he avoided me like he was ashamed. . . . Little Man really had kidney trouble and that man fooled around his head!"

"Stiffarm," Coming Daylight also said, "had some power concerning children, for he wore a bracelet from which hung little dolls, one on each side thereof. . . . My husband, Little Man, used to make fun of Stiffarm for wearing this bracelet, but he would never tease him outright [in his presence]. After Stiffarm would leave, Little Man would say: 'What is that crazy thing doing with such a bracelet?' " [778]

Bull Lodge, Garter Snake's father, a great medicine man, who died about 1886, had gotten power to cure various ailments. From Garter Snake were obtained some details, many of them confirmed independently by The Boy, of the ritual procedures used by Bull Lodge. His chief operating instrument was a woodpecker feather.

"Now I will tell how my father doctored," Garter Snake volunteered. "On one occasion his granddaughter was ill and called him. His wife and I went along with him. On our arrival this granddaughter said: 'Grandfather, I would make coffee for you but I haven't any sugar.' But he got mad and said: 'Everytime you ask me here you ask me to make sugar. I am tired of this. If you had the power I have, would you like to be making it all the time?' Well, instead of quitting asking, she took a pack (?) and threw it to him and said: 'make that sugar.' So he went through [789]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

755 [789]

the performance, and they had sweet coffee. And after we ate and smoked, we went back home.

"Sometime during that night the woman [Bull Lodge's granddaughter] had an attack of some kind of sickness and blood just poured out from underneath. Her sister ran [to our lodge] and said [to Bull Lodge]: 'Grandfather, your granddaughter is having an awful hemorrhage. If you think a lot of your children I pray that you will come, and if you love Garter Snake, your daughter, I pray in her name that you come.' And the old man said: 'All right. I am coming. Run home and get her ready. I will be there. I will do what I can.'

"So I and my mother and father went, and one of the boys, Curly Head, went along too. And of course the sick woman's children were in there [her lodge].

"The old man got there and felt around and said: 'Oh there is a big lump in there that busted your blood. Instead of cutting you open I am going to work it the other way. I will give you the medicine I use to help a woman in labor. I will work it off that way. I don't know what it is but it is a big lump.' So he told his wife: 'Take that frying pan, heat water quick.' So she did. He put three or four kinds of medicine in this water and told her: 'Boil it quick.' Of course it didn't take long, and he said: 'Take two cups [of the infusion] and put it in there and cool it quick, so she can drink it.'

"They did this, and after the medicine was cool enough, the patient's husband raised her up so she could drink this medicine. She took it, and Bull Lodge said: 'All right. Just hold her up like that.' Bull Lodge took the black handkerchief [another ritual object he used in curing] and balled it up, prayed and sang, and put it right on top of the patient's head and shook it back and forth quick, and when he did that, she said: 'Grandfather, something dropped.'

"When she said that, he lifted her to another place, and here [where she had been] was what looked like a rock, as big as a man's fist and it was blue. What it was I do not know, but that it was what this woman had in her and it must have busted that blood. The blood was just running all over. The blood was still coming, and Bull Lodge said: "Well, I will have to heal that

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

CHAPTER VIII

MISCELLANEOUS PRIVATE RITES AND OBSERVANCES

782 789 Besides the ancestral-helper and power rites and observances, there were a great many other private ones,—private in the sense that they were mostly carried out by lone individuals or by small and often exclusive groups. Most of these other private rites and observances expressed, by word and/or act, either petition or gratitude or both to supernatural beings, and hence most were, in the sense in which we are using the term, "religious" rather than "magical." A smaller proportion of them were of the "magical" order, being concerned exclusively with purely impersonal forces or phenomena. In some cases both "religious" and "magical" concepts and attitudes appear to be present; in most cases, either the former or the latter are exclusively present or at least clearly predominant; in a few cases, it is hard to say whether, from the Gros Ventre point of view, we are dealing with the "religious" or the "magical."

In our field work among other Algonquian peoples we have often found that phenomena, which at first looked "magical," turned out later, on deeper penetration into meaning, to be clearly "religious." We suspect that some of the phenomena to be described in the present section as seemingly "magical" would likewise, with fuller knowledge, turn out to be "religious."

That certain given rites and observances may have a dominantly or exclusively "religious" or "magical" coloring undoubtedly depends on different meanings attached to them by different individuals. For instance, The Boy has a more philosophic mind; he seeks unity, systematization, synthesis, meaning; Singer was more pragmatic in her attitude to the supernatural, and little concerned with synthesis and meaning. In more cases than one, what was religious to The Boy may well have been "magical" to Singer. So at least we strongly suspect, although conclusive evidence for our inference cannot be adduced. We may merely add that in our own

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Occidental culture, what some individuals conceive and practice as "religious" is not infrequently conceived and practiced by others as "magical." 782 789

Apart however from all such questions and qualifications, by far the greater proportion of the miscellaneous private rites and observances, to the detailed description of which we now turn, are exclusively or predominantly "religious" rather than "magical." We shall take up in order: wish (or wish-thought), prayer, sacrifice, vows, oaths, dreams and visions, omens, divination, taboos. In general, under the first half dozen captions we shall be dealing more with "religious" phenomena, in the remainder more with "magical" ones, but there are certain overlaps and combinations of the two which will be apparent as we go along.

Wish and Thought: Blessing and Curse

That the Gros Ventres believed in the efficacy, more or less "supernatural," of certain wishes and thoughts about others, of benevolent and malevolent thinking, of—in this sense—blessings and curses, is clear. Exactly how the good or evil wish or thought wrought its effects is not too clear from our field data. 828

The Gros Ventres in general attach great significance to thought and wish. This theme recurs over and over again in their culture. Here are some illustrations. One of the names of the Supreme Being apparently meant: He who rules all by the power of thought. Some medicine men had special power to harm and kill by sheer wish. The Boy, in discussing the question, "Who among the beings, apart from the Supreme Being, known to the Gros Ventres was the most powerful?" finally narrowed his choice down to two, a certain boy and his sister as the most powerful of all. "The boy had power to do things with his eyes. He would only look and the thing happened as he wished, but that was only in combination with his sister. She would do the thinking and then he would do the looking," and the thing would happen, especially as a result of the girl's thinking.[1] The Boy thought long and intensively

[1] See Kroeber, 1907, No. 26, The Deserted Children, especially pp. 104-05. This may be the myth to which The Boy referred. Unfortunately we did not get a complete version from him.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787 to do so they did not do it. They peered one by one. If the scryer, on peering into the surface of the blood, saw himself headless or scalped, this meant he would get killed, and he would not go on the expedition but would turn back and go home. If he saw himself reflected clearly, this meant good luck. "Usually," said Thomas Main, "the scryers did not tell what they saw." "It was claimed," Charles Buckman remarked, "that the skeptic [one who saw himself scalped or headless, but nevertheless continued on the expedition] actually got killed."

Bear heart divination was described by The Boy, Charles Buckman, and Coming Daylight as a well-known practice.[18] Apparently badger blood divination was taken much more gravely and seriously by the Gros Ventres than bear heart divination.

A final type of divination is from Coming Daylight. The grandson of her old grandmother with whom, as a girl, she and her sister were living, killed a female porcupine in which were two embryos. "The old woman said to us two girls: 'Come here both of you.' So she held my dress open at the neck and loosened my belt, and threw the foetus down the neck of my dress. It went through without stopping, and my grandmother said: 'When you have children you will have an easy time. See how quick it went through.' Then she did the same to my sister, but in some way the foetus got caught, and the old woman said: 'Now, you see. You are going to have a hard time. You are going to have slow childbirth.' And sure enough, these are the ways it turned out for us [respectively]."

Things to Do and to Avoid Doing

784 789 Under this somewhat loose caption we are grouping certain acts done in order to bring about desirable effect or avoided lest undesirable ones follow. How far they were in Gross Ventre thought considered "supernatural" it is hard to say. Most of these observances and avoidances were seemingly viewed as of the non-sacred work-a-day order. At least, in most of them there appears to have been no explicit or even implicit appeal to a supernatural being or resort to supernatural power. The few in which a suggestion of

[18] Cf. Flannery, 1953, p. 163.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

supernatural power is present would, in so far, be positive "magical" practices, or else negative ones, "taboo" proper. The great number of such observances and avoidances, treated elsewhere—are here omitted or else touched upon only summarily. We shall list first acts done, and after that acts avoided. 784 789

To bring cold or a cold wind in winter time, a bull-roarer was whirled, or a buzzer, made of a dew claw with two holes in it, on a string, was revolved. Children were not allowed to use the buzzer. Plucking a bird to bring a north wind was not known to informants. [534]

As soon as the first thunder of spring is heard, blow on any warts you have and they will come off.

The Gros Ventres, when aware someone was trying to bewitch or poison them or when they were going to visit another tribe, especially the Cree, would rub themselves with sweet pine needles and these would make them proof against witchcraft, poison, or other harm.

The shoulder-blade of an unborn buffalo-calf was hung up "so that buffalo would continue to exist."

Many acts were to be avoided lest undesirable consequences should follow.

If you touch a mole, a rash like poison ivy will result. The widespread belief among northeastern Algonquians that seeing a dead mole brings bad luck is however, lacking. If you touch a toad, you will get warts [European influence?] If a spider is killed, rain comes. [777]

Do not eat the meat of the rare albino buffalo, else your hair will turn white. Children should not eat buffalo testicle, raw or cooked, lest they wet the bed; infants not yet able to talk should not eat puppy meat, lest they be a long time learning to talk. Young women of childbearing age should not eat the two strips of flesh, called the "twins," running along the backbone [tenderloins], lest they have twins, nor the colon of buffalo, for the same reason.

Horses should never be abused: such was the caution given to the founder of the Drum Dance by the drum men leader when the latter presented him with the stallion and other horses.

784 Sex abstinence was generally observed before hunting, and par-
789 ticularly before and all during golden eagle trapping. Eagle
[834] trappers "had to have a special religious character, to observe certain food taboos, and a special way of handling [being handed?] a pipe." The leader of a war party, but not other members thereof, also observed sex abstinence.

Do not break leg bones or ribs to extract the marrow or for other purpose, inside the lodge or house; go outside to do it, else you will get sore legs, or your horses may break their legs. Cora Chandler stated in 1940 that she still observed this latter, as her folks had always made her do. If an embryo calf were to be taken out of the belly of a buffalo, the embryo's eyes had to be extracted before it was brought into the lodge to be cooked; if the eyes were taken out inside the lodge, a member of the family would go blind, —"and this has been proven." Likewise it was forbidden to butcher and extract the brains from a buffalo head inside a lodge, and also break off the "soft end" of roast buffalo ribs. "Never use a knife to fuss with ashes or coals because you might cut yourself if you did so."

After blood-letting, the subject abstained from eating anything fried so the cut would not turn blue.

There does not seem to have been any prohibition against men-
[551] tioning the name of a deceased relative or other person.

Coming Daylight and Mary Ereaux had never heard of lucky or
777 unlucky numbers. The Boy, however, stated: "According to the
801 old law, the people were forbidden to use seven. For instance, a war party was not to have seven members, but either more or fewer. Cases are known in which young fellows disobeyed this rule and ran into trouble. In one case of this kind six of the party got killed and only one escaped with his life."

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The wheel game, too, in contrast to the 2-button hand game, was accompanied with no legerdemain and no grace or fancy movements. The players might run or trot in a rather awkward or ridiculous fashion, "awfully funny, like a chicken walking backwards," as one informant put it; but they did not care what the crowd might think of their queer or clumsy gait; they were out to win; they would await some other occasion "to show off handsome." 525 [789]

Likewise, in the wheel game, no prayers to any being were said and there was no resort to supernatural power gotten from prairie chickens or ghosts (see *infra* under hand game). Even if a given wheel-game player had such power, it was of no avail in the wheel game and was not called upon. In the gambling-for-scalps story, to be mentioned presently, the Gros Ventre prayed to the Supreme Being to win, but here there was question not so much of winning material goods as of preserving physical wholeness and life itself, things within the peculiar keeping of the Supreme Being in Gros Ventre theology. [782]

Success in the wheel game depended on two things: skill and what may be called thought-wish power. In the play all effort was concentrated by the players on the utmost exercise of skill and adroitness acquired through long practice and of judgment, in following the rolling wheel and in throwing the pole at just the precise moment and in just the right manner.. But, in at least some of the big wheel games, a sort of thought power or thought-wish power was used by the players. In how far such power can be considered "supernatural" is hard to say; it seems to have been more "natural" than "supernatural," as judged by most definitions of "supernatural." At any rate, it was not a power gained, as most other Gros Ventre supernatural powers were gained, from some being by crying, fasting, and dreaming on mountain tops or along timbered water courses. 525 789

Its efficacy was derived ultimately from the player's previous war exploits. Its exercise was along the following pattern. There being no set time for wheel games, one might get under way any time, with relatively small stakes, and develop in the course of play into a really big game, or the game could be a big one from the start. In such a big game, between outstanding opponents, for large stakes and for status (see *infra*), before starting to roll the wheel, each player would in turn take the wheel in one hand and with the other touch his pole (arrow or stick) under the wheel on a particular bead. While doing so he would think with intense concentration of one of his past war deeds—e.g., a horse he took from the very door of his enemy's lodge at great risk of life—and would say in his mind, silently and not audibly: "I am not telling a lie [about this deed]. The powers know I am not telling a lie." He would rehearse the event in his mind, and probably (the point was not fully cleared up by us) would think of

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

525 some object connected with the deed, which was of the same color as the bead
789 he was touching.

This thought-wish was a sort of indirect or implicit oath, not a formal audibly uttered one. If he actually had done no such deed, he could not hope to have good fortune from such intense concentration of thought and wish. But it was not a prayer proper; he was not asking anything directly of any being. The act was called beta´c^{te}et^{te}. It may be added here parenthetically that a highly abstract concept of effective power from deeply sincere wish or intense thought or from both combined plays an important part in many phases of Gros Ventre life even today.

While the player was making this silent wish, the spectators would speculate a lot about which of his great war deeds he was thinking. Later the winner would recite publicly the great deed he had been thinking about. In doing so he had to keep scrupulously to the facts, facts well known to the people, for he was looked upon as a man of character and high standing with a reputation gained by merit, sacrifice, and risk of life.

525 If a player were losing, one of his kinsmen, friends, or backers might volunteer to take his place playing, and also (apparently: our field evidence is not fully clear) to use his own war deeds power.

The main gambling at the wheel game was for stakes wagered by the two players themselves, a given piece of property against an equivalent piece for each game of any agreed number, say 10, of counters won. But the spectators, too, often bet on the game, although not so generally, it appears, as they did at the 2-button hand game. The wagers by players or spectators could be small or large. Two given players might keep at play many hours in succession, playing game after game. In some instances the betting between the two players would result in the loss by one of the last bit of his property—horses, blankets, clothing, household utensils, even his lodge itself. A comparatively wealthy man could thus become a "pauper" in a day. Often, too, the relatives of the players would win or lose almost as heavily in backing their respective kinsmen.

554 In some of the big wheel games the "social" stakes were as important as or
525 more important than the property ones, as illustrated in the case of Lame Bull given below. Two prominent men, enemy friends to each other and at the same time rivals for prestige and status in the tribe, would on a given day play the game *à outrance*. The winner's status and prestige would be greatly exalted; the loser's proportionately lowered. A man's whole career of advancement to prominence in the tribe—a basic ambition among Gros Ventre men—could be brought to ruin in a single day's gaming at the wheel game. He might lose not

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the guessing, tally keeper B would take the one counter remaining in the center 525 and also draw one counter from team A's won counters. And so the game went back and forth, one or two hiding at a time according to rule, until one team won all the twelve counters.

A session of hand games might go on for many hours; starting, say, in the morning it might continue throughout the whole day and through the night until the next morning. When any of the players or supporters got hungry, they would go home and eat and then return to the game. After a game in which the twelve counters and stakes were won, and before the next one, there would usually be a little time out for a rest and smoke, and for the placing of bets on the next game.

The atmosphere of the hand game was a holiday one. Raillery was a little rough at times. But for players and spectators, the game was a major source of enjoyment, relaxation, and pleasurable excitement. What with the singing, the drumming, the twitting, the shouting, the often loud and uproarious cheering, the hand game—in rather sharp contrast to the quiet, grave wheel game—was apt to be decidedly noisy, not to say boisterous. Not the least appreciated feature of the hand game was the showmanship, the grace and virtuosity of the players, who played to an appreciative and discriminating house. The victors gloated conspicuously over the losers and bantered them unmercifully, but the losers were expected to keep their tempers, an expectation, however, not always realized.

For success in hand game gambling, most players, it seems clear from our evidence, relied on chance and skill—an occasional one on sleight-of-hand proper—rather than on supernatural power or aid. So far as we could determine, the drumming and singing that accompanied the playing were not of the magico-religious order, at least ordinarily and apart from the exceptional games in which individuals with supernatural power (see *infra*) participated. Certain individuals were, from native keenness or from practice and experience, particularly adept at hiding and guessing, and these were apt to play the role of hiders and guessers for their teammates and backers.

Some few men, however—never women, we were informed—had supernat- 525 ural gambling power. This power might come unsought, as in the case of Keg 789 to be given presently, or, more commonly, was sought. Not many sought it or possessed it. The young were strongly advised against seeking it by their parents and by the tribal counsellors, for the man who sought and obtained it had to pay a heavy penalty. He would be affected with some serious ailment of the limbs, such as pains in and swelling of the joints, and would die before his

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

525 time. This latter aspect of the belief accorded with the larger Gros Ventre
789 pattern: any acquisition of special supernatural power sought by quest would be apt to lead to shortening of life.

Nevertheless, against the reiterated advice of parents and elders who would so lecture the growing children and of the chiefs and counsellors who would walk around the camp so warning the people, a good many individuals would seek supernatural power, and a few would go out in quest of supernatural gambling power. In some cases such gambling power was sought by a man who had lost heavily or lost his all at the wheel or hand game, as a desperate measure to recoup his losses and to get a new start in his career.

Gambling power was not sought from the Supreme Being, who apparently did not enter at all into the gambling cycle. The appeal to him in the previously given traditional story of gambling for scalps is more a confirmation of than an exception to the rule. Nor was it sought as other power—to be a great warrior or doctor or to acquire wealth or to live long—was sought, by fasting and dreaming on the hill tops. The seeker for gambling power resorted to the brush and timber along watercourses to obtain it from the prairie chickens,
[176] or from a ghost. It was more commonly gotten from prairie chickens; but not infrequently from a ghost, not an ancestor of the candidate, at least not necessarily, but, as The Boy put it laughingly, from "any good-natured ghost." This power was gotten for use only in the hand game, not in any other gambling game or sport.

[824] Usually the seeker looked for a place where wild morning glories formed a sort of bower, "like a little lodge or tipi." It was in there that a ghost was believed to live; the morning glory was called tzek'unθänädzu, "ghost rope" (tzek'^{h} or tsä·k'^{a}, "ghost"). The seeker would cry and cry, and when he got sleepy he would crawl into the bower and sleep. Pretty soon a ghost or prairie chicken might ask him: "Why are you punishing yourself so much?" He might answer: "Because I have lost all my belongings." "Is that all? Well, I will help you out," the being or beings would say, and then would give the seeker a song and tell him what rules he must live by and how he must act in the hand game. The person who got such power would not afterwards reveal the details told him by the giver. From the prairie chicken or ghost the person might also get at the same time the power to do marvelous things, such as making an object disappear, swallowing it and then drawing it out of some part of his body, making it go into his skull and come out of his mouth into his hand or go through his veins and come out somewhere else on his person, and so forth (cf. Red Whip story *infra.*)

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Gambling power was of a lower order of dignity and solemnity than power obtained by fasting on the mountains and hill tops. It was taken less seriously, more lightly, and, if we may judge from attitudes today, with an undercurrent of amused jocoseness. It was not, as was power gotten on mountains, transferrable by the original possessor to another, or at least it was not transferred. For one reason others did not usually want it, on account of the ailments and shortened life its possession entailed. A man who was known to have such power was further handicapped: his fellow tribesmen would not ordinarily gamble against him and so his opportunities for participation were few, being limited mostly to games played by the Gros Ventre with other tribes. In such intertribal games, however, he would become a popular champion, and would derive therefrom a certain prestige as well as material gains. The possession then of gambling power, while to a certain limited extent an asset to its owner, was in more respects than one a decided liability. 525 789

It may be added here that while those who possessed supernatural gambling power are spoken of today by English-speaking Gros Ventre as "professional gamblers," in reality there were no professional gamblers among the Gros Ventre even in the old days, professional, that is, in the sense of making their living or most of their living at gambling.

The following three narratives, related by The Boy, illustrate various aspects of gambling power.

Narrative 1. Lone Bear, The Boy's wife's father, had gambling power. While he was still in his prime, his legs started hurting him. To escape the penalty he quit gambling. But in vain. His legs went bad, and he died before his time. 525 789 539

Narrative 2. When Lame Bull, The Boy's father, was a young boy about ten years of age he had a friend of about the same age, called Keg, to whom he was much attached. Keg, like other boys of his age, had the daily chore of rising long before daylight and driving out the family horses away from camp to graze. One morning he was awakened very early and was told to drive the horses out. He did so, but when he got out to the grazing ground he decided to steal a few winks lying face down. So he fell asleep, and all at once he started to dream. He dreamed that he saw a big hand game going on with high stakes and one fellow winning everything. Keg looked at this fellow closely and saw it was he, Keg, himself. This man spoke to Keg saying: "Do as you see me doing here. Use my throat as an object [button] to hide." [857] [787]

Then Keg woke up and looked around, and there right near where he lay he saw a covey of prairie chickens doing their mating dance and making a whirring noise with their tails. When he got back he said to Lame Bull: "Let's play and see whether what I dreamed is true. I'll put my helper to the test." Lame Bull tried to guess Keg, but Keg would make a noise like a prairie chicken and thereupon

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

525 would switch the button to the other hand without Lame Bull perceiving it, and
●789 Lame Bull could not guess him.

So as the two grew up, Lame Bull always bet when Keg was playing and won
539 a lot of stuff that way. Keg started gambling from his boyhood and always had luck. After he grew up, however, he did not have many chances to play, because everybody, knowing his power, shied away from gambling against him. But when he did play, he would win. When he was resorting to his power in a game, he would imitate the hissing, swishing noise made by the prairie chickens when they ruffle their tail feathers. The prairie chicken had also given Keg its windpipe to use (apparently as a button) in the hand game, and for it Keg used a little metal spring resembling the windpipe.

525 *Narrative 3.* During the lifetime of Red Whip (d. 1912), the Gros Ventre on
789 one occasion, about 1873-75, met the Flathead where Lewistown (Montana) now is
539 and camped close together. The latter asked the former to gamble at the hand
648 game. So when night came, they all assembled in a big lodge. The Flathead had a great gambler, nicknamed Crazy Child, who had gambling power and had never been beaten by anyone on the west side of the Rockies. Outside the lodge the young men of both tribes were visiting in a friendly fashion together, and the Flathead young men told the Gros Ventre young men: "Don't get into that game. Our man cannot be beaten," and some of the latter on that account refrained from betting. But the Gros Ventre had a man of their own, Red Whip, who had gambling power from a ghost, greater gambling power than Crazy Child had.

So the hand game started, with big stakes wagered on both sides. Neither champion showed his prowess right away; they just let themselves run along easily for a while. At last Red Whip decided to cut loose: "This Flathead makes me mad. He has hand game power. So I'll have to use mine. Give me a piece of weasel skin and I'll stop his power." They gave him a piece and he rubbed off a small bit of it and put it on the ground and knelt on it with one knee.

Crazy Child, whose hand-game helper was the owl, used every trick his helper had taught him, to hide the button and battle Red Whip, but to no avail, for Red Whip's ghost helper was more powerful than Crazy Child's owl helper. Then Red Whip, when his turn came to hide, said to the Gros Ventre, "I have this Flathead beaten and I know his helper, the owl, has abandoned him; so sing good and loud and beat time fast and lively," and to the Flathead, "Watch closely, and I will let you hunt for the button after I have hidden it." Red Whip then put on a big show, exhibited the button to the Flathead, threw it into the air, and told him to look for it. Crazy Child hooted like an owl and did all sorts of other things like an owl, but finally gave up: "I can't find the button," at which the Gros Ventre cheered uproariously. Then Red Whip got up, showed the Flathead the button, which was embedded in the lodge pole to the left of the door as you go out, and asked him to pull it out. Crazy Child tried to pull it out but failed, but Red Whip pulled it out easily, and said to Crazy Child: "You are nothing. You are just a little fellow. You don't amount to much. I didn't have to try hard to beat you. But I just wanted to show you this."

This great game lasted one whole night; daylight was breaking when the two

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

men called on their helpers. The Gros Ventres won many things of value: many best horses, guns, and clothes; and no Gros Ventre ever gambled against Red Whip after that.

Men, women, and children could participate in a hand game played by men. All, with an exception or two to be noted, could bet thereon, and men and women could bet on both sides. In a game where the men were players, the women would be present and would join in the singing as well as in the betting, but they could not be guessers, hiders, or tally keepers; only men could be such. Women, however, could so function in hand games among themselves.

Actual participation in hand game gambling was high. One of our women informants, Mrs Warrior, never went in for betting, she emphasized; but she seems to have been rather exceptional in this regard. Our other woman informant on gambling, Mrs Sleeping Bear, was much devoted to gambling, for relatively small stakes. Nearly every one, so far as we could make out from our evidence, seems to have gambled, either frequently and habitually or at least from time to time.

Participation, however, followed a well-defined and established pattern as regards who could or should bet with or against whom and for what kind of stakes. For convenience we are calling this the "bettor-wager pattern."

Some persons or classes of persons could not gamble at all or could not gamble against certain others; others could or would gamble against certain others only for refreshments or a meal; others, for small stakes of little value; others still, for big stakes. The Gros Ventre bettor-wager pattern at first glimpse looks complicated, but actually it conforms to a few very simple principles. We shall look first at the pattern itself; afterwards at the principles.

Blood relatives could not gamble against each other either for large or for small stakes. Such blood relatives included parents and children, grandparents and grandchildren, brothers and sisters, uncles and aunts and nephews and nieces, and also all classificatory relatives of the same categories. At most a group of blood relatives might engage in a hand game with the half-serious half-playful agreement that the losing side would "cook" for the winning side. A given gambling team would commonly be composed chiefly of members who were kin to one another, but non-relatives could also be on the team; the opposing team would likewise be commonly composed chiefly of another kinship group. Where blood relatives gambled in the same game for small or large stakes, they always gambled and bet, not against one another, but on the same side, and in wagering they bet on and backed their own kinsman or kinsmen, wagering dyadically against fellow tribesmen or aliens not related to them.

5: Flannery E-5 (1940)1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

THE GROS VENTRE SHAKING TENT

REGINA FLANNERY
The Catholic University of America

121 ALTHOUGH the concept of the shaking tent is now known to be a widespread one, relatively few details are available on this rite as it was practiced in the Plains area. The following [115] data, gathered among the Gros Ventres of Montana in 1940 from old and middle-aged informants who had often witnessed the performance, are offered in an attempt to fill in the picture as regards this one tribe.

787 When speaking English, the Gros Ventres refer to the rite as a "seance" and to the performer as a "spiritualist" inasmuch as it was carried out by a person who had access to the spirit of a deceased relative. The Gros Ventre word for spirit is *tsatsuwaa*, which, incidentally, is the same word they now use for radio. The voice of the spirit can be heard, and, while the spirit cannot be seen, its presence is otherwise manifest by the noise of its activities. Among the latter we note especially the shaking of the tent as the spirit enters and leaves.

[791] When information was desired regarding missing persons, the whereabouts of the enemy, etc., a spiritualist, who might be either a man or a woman, was asked to invoke the spirit over which he or she had control. The pertinent questions were asked and the spirit would supply the answers. There were two general methods of procedure. The so-called seance could be held either in the big dwelling lodge or in a small structure built for the occasion. Furthermore the performance was more or less elaborate, details differing according to circumstances, the individual spiritualist, and even the "personality" of the spirit invoked. But one invariable feature was the shaking of the tent.

The two accounts which follow will illustrate the general pattern as well as the differences in procedure. The first concerns a seance held in the winter at a time when this particular family

5: Flannery E-5 (1940)1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787 As to the way in which the power was acquired, Al Chandler
791 explained as follows: "It was customary to take some hair or a
[164] relic of a deceased relative after the body decays. (The Gros Ventres did not use to bury their dead like they do now.) Some would have a bone, others a whole lock of hair, and so on. Now if a person happens to take something the spirit likes, the spirit appears and asks: 'Why do you want that rib (or whatever part one takes)?' The man or woman might answer: 'I want you real near me and I want you to help me whenever I ask you.' That person gets in a kind of trance while the spirit talks to him that first time, and the spirit gives him a particular song which he must sing when he wants to invite the spirit."

Apparently some leeway was allowed the individual in accepting the power, if the following information from Al Chandler can be taken as an indication.

"My adoptive father had the rib of an uncle of his who had been a medicine man of some kind. The spirit appeared to my father and asked: 'Why did you take that? What are you going to do with me?' My father replied: 'This is just for myself. I don't want to be the kind of person who owns spirits. If I need you myself I am going to call on you and I want you to help me, but I am not going to make you a public servant.' And that spirit did help him, personally, once or twice, but my father never got tied up in the ropes [as in the case reported by Mrs. Warrior]. By the way, the person who wants to find out something is the one that ties the spiritualist. He can tie the ropes as tight as he wants to and make as many knots as he pleases. The funny part of it is that it is just like the showmen with handcuffs,—the knots sometimes are still tied just like the person who wanted the information tied them originally,—although sometimes the spirit bunched the ropes all up in a mess. The whole tent shakes, too, and the skeptics look real hard, but the spirit will mock them by saying: 'Well, you need not look because you can't see anything anyway!'"

787 In conclusion I think we can say that the rite fits into the general ceremonial pattern of the Gros Ventres, but it was the only ceremony in which the shaking tent was involved. The

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13 ●

787 where the memento was kept. After a while the ghost would
776 come to the keeper, the surviving relative, on successive visits and talk to him (or her), telling him its intention of becoming his ghost helper, and finally putting him in a deep sleep ("killing" him) and saying to him: "I shall be your tsatsawâ'*." In other words, it was the ghost, not the surviving relative, who regularly took the initiative and broke the ice. In fact, the latter had little or no freedom to accept or refuse.

By the ghost the survivor in trance would be taught the procedure to use for summoning and dealing with the ghost, how to put incense in the smudge place in the person's own lodge, how to lay the pipe, the direction of stem and bowl, what kind of food to put out, and so forth. A key element in such teaching was a special song, given by the ghost to be sung in said rite. One
776 such song, recorded by me in 1940 as sung by The Boy but not
787 yet transcribed, a wordless song sung to the accompaniment of a
● 791 drum, had belonged to a woman named "Woman." She had
[533] been taught it by the ghost of her deceased husband (or brother), *Wawathana'tea** (*a*'s nasalized) "Bad-bad Bull." He had been a medicine man when still living, and this had been his "power" song. His ghost gave it to her both as the song to summon his ghost with and as a doctoring song. She had therefore both ghost-summoning and doctoring power. While that old woman had both a ghost helper and doctoring power, the two things did not necessarily go together in the same person. One could have a ghost helper without having doctoring power, and vice versa. No one lacking a ghost helper could conduct the shaking tent rite, no matter how great power he had received by fasting and crying, and no matter what guardian spirit or spirits he had acquired. After her husband's death the above old woman had not married. People were a little afraid of her because she had this ghost helper. She was a capable old woman, with lots of horses; some of her breed of horses are still (1940) around. She died around 1907.

* Owing to delays and difficulties under present war conditions in obtaining symbols not in our printer's stock a and e with a stroke above them are here printed in italic.

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Other songs, distinct from this summoning or shaking tent rite song, were also given and taught at times by ghost helpers. Two of them, both victory songs, were recorded as sung by The Boy in 1940. These two were given on occasions other than that on which the surviving relative initially acquired his ghost helper. 776 787 [533]

After all the above teaching was concluded, the ghost of the deceased relative belonged to the survivor and was supposed to come whenever summoned by the latter in the manner the ghost told him while in trance to do. A great many Gros Ventre men and women had guardian spirits and "power" acquired by fasting and crying or otherwise. But fewer individuals, men and women, had ghost helpers. My informants in 1939 and 1940 could recall only four persons in the last two generations or last 70 years or so who had had ghost helpers.

In one case (see first of the two appended stories by Thick) two spirits tried to come to the shaking tent rite conducted by Woman, one bad and the other good, but whether the bad one was one of her deceased relatives or not, she never knew. The people were under the impression that the bad one was an intruder who used to come first and try to "horn in" on the proceedings. No case of a given person clearly having more than one ghost helper was recalled by my informants.

Ordinary "power" could be and often was transferred by the possessor to another person by donation or bequeathment. But a ghost helper never was so transferred and could not be. [424]

It may be added that neither my informants, The Boy and Thick, nor my interpreter, Thomas Main, all highly intelligent and informed men, were at all sure of the etymology of the word tsatsawâ'ᵃ. The Boy thought it might connote the meaning of "slave," "some one who is forced to do things." Thomas Main suggested a possible relationship to tsatsa—"coming, flight"; plus—wa, an old Gros Ventre word, meaning unknown. The two words for ordinary ghosts as such are tsa·k'ᵃ (sing.; pl.; tsa·k'an; a's as u in English but), and bie'te'ᵉ (sing.; pl. bi'eten). Tsatsawâ'ᵃ is used exclusively for ghost helpers, not for an ordinary ghost, or ghosts in general. An ordinary medicine man was called nata'nhehi (a's as u in but), but there was no special name 791 787 [115]

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

791 in use to designate those who had a ghost helper: of him or her
787 it was merely said: "He (or she) has a tsatsawâ·'ª."

Persons who had a ghost helper commanded great respect, and were bothered by no one. But capable medicine men on whom the people depended to doctor their sick were also greatly respected. My informants did not feel that either class of practitioners as such had greater prestige than the other.

787 In the shaking tent rite, no other spirits than the given ghost
776 had any part, and only the one ghost ever had part in a given performance. Neither guardian spirits, nor the "Little Spirit," nor Ba'a', nor the Supreme Being (I^{x}tcib^{b}n^{t}'a't'^{a}; the a before t nasalized) enters into it in any manner. The summoned ghost came not from any of these or their abodes, but from Basna'^{a}be'^{c},
[775] the Big Sand, whither the souls of all Gros Ventres, except murderers of their own tribesmen, went after death and lived.

The function of the ghost helper was to give knowledge about past, present, future, or distant happenings, and counsel and direction in illness or danger. He imparted information. He did not as such grant power. Some of the many things he would be questioned about were: How a war expedition under way or an impending battle, or an illness, would come out? Where were the enemy located and what were their plans? Who had stolen a certain valuable article and where was it? He was not asked questions about trivial or silly matters, or about the fidelity or infidelity of a wife, although he sometimes volunteered information on such things. If some noted or loved person were critically ill, the ghost helper might be summoned and if it said: "His (the sick person's) soul is already over there," this meant he was going to die.

787 Where the services of one who had a ghost helper were desired,
791 the usual procedure was for the client or clients to go to him (or her) and offer him a pipe to smoke—this in accordance with general Gros Ventre practice in enlisting the aid of anyone with any kind of power. Those who had ghost helpers were commonly reluctant or even afraid to summon their helper; after the performance they felt tired and sore. But if given a pipe to call the

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

ghost, they could not refuse, at least not easily. And if they accepted the pipe, they committed themselves definitely. 787 791

The summoning rite was performed only at night, with the fire out, regardless of the severity of the weather, and in darkness. In the two narratives by The Boy appended infra the ghost helper spoke in the daytime, but had been summoned the preceding night. The rite was ordinarily performed in the performer's lodge, he being hidden out of sight of the clients or spectators behind a blanket-curtain hung up for this purpose to partition off a segment of the lodge. Away from the camp, the rite was sometimes performed in an emergency shelter or a sweat lodge. Before the rite, the clients got ready a pipe and tobacco, a dish of puppy meat (an earlier Gros Ventre delicacy), and other food, [262] and at the appointed time for the rite brought these to the lodge of the ghost-possessor.

The performer was then bound with thongs. The four fingers (thumb too?) of each hand were tied tightly together by interlacing them (somewhat after the technique of wrapped or twined basketry), the hands were tied behind the back, he was rolled in his blanket and tied around securely with thongs, with only his head protruding, and then was deposited behind the blanket partition out of sight of the spectators.

It appears to have been a common practice for the performer to challenge the most skeptical member of the party, and ask him to do the tying. Various stories of skeptics were narrated to me.

On one occasion when the main body of the Gros Ventres, then 787 at war with the Piegan (or Blackfoot), were camped on the east 776 side of Judas River and a small band of them on the west side, the ghost helper of one of the Gros Ventres in the small band told them: "Tell the people to leave this small camp and go across the river to the big one, for the enemy is going to raid tonight." But many of the Gros Ventres of the small band said: "Ghosts are big liars. We are not cowards to run." Of the skeptics many remained, while about half crossed back to the big camp. About dawn, the enemy came as the ghost had predicted and nearly all who had remained at the small camp were massacred.

On another occasion when the Gros Ventres had (or were

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787 776 about to have) a big battle with the Crows at Marias (at the junction of the Marias with the Missouri), a young man who was present at a ghost helper rite, with the fires out and pitch-darkness in the lodge, and who doubted that a ghost could come back, decided to experiment. When the ghost helper came and the noise was heard, the young man, who was sitting near the door in the darkness where no one else could see he was exposed, pushed his breechclout aside and exposed his genitals, saying to himself: "If this is really a ghost, he will see me and do something about it." All of a sudden the young man let out a yell as if hit by someone, and ran out of the lodge. "You had better run. What is being done here is the real thing," said the ghost to the young fellow, and added to the crowd: "I hit that young fellow's genitals sharply with a stick; that is why he dashed out of the lodge." They then asked the young man: "Is that what happened?" And he replied: "Yes. He hit me good and hard there," and he became a believer.

This emphasis on skeptics in non-narrative and narrative accounts of the Gros Ventre shaking tent rite would suggest that the rope-escaping feat, which we may call for short the "Houdini trick," had the purpose, overt or covert, of creating or confirming faith in the authenticity of the ghostly visitation.

The Houdini trick ordinarily formed part of the Gros Ventre shaking tent rite, but to judge from a couple of the stories appended to this paper, was not absolutely indispensable and could, in emergency, be omitted.

791 787 776 Right after being tied, the ghost-possessor to the accompaniment of his drum sang his summoning song which the ghost had given him. As the ghost helper approached the lodge, a whistling as of wind could be heard, and sometimes at least an owl call.—owls and ghosts are closely associated in Gros Ventre thought, ghosts appearing or speaking as owls. As the ghost came through the top of the lodge, the top would shake violently, and then the whole lodge would shake.

The ghost would then go to the performer and blow on him, and all the sinews and thongs with which he was tied would become untied, and they would be rolled in a ball so knotted and

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

tangled that it could not itself be easily unravelled and would so be thrown out at the spectators, or at the one who had done the tying, especially if he were a skeptic, with some such challenge to him from the ghost as: "You tied up this person. Now see if you can untangle this ball of thong."

Next the pipe would be lit and held up in the darkness in the direction where the ghost was supposed to be, for the ghost to smoke, and the spectators would see the pipe glow up rhythmically every time the ghost drew on it. The people in the lodge would finish smoking this pipe. After this the ghost would ask: "People, why did you send for me?" They would tell him what they wanted to know. If the ghost knew the answer offhand, he would answer at once. If he did not know, he would say: "I don't know. I'll go and find out. You sing that song again [the one the ghost taught the performer when he first chose the latter; no other song was sung] and I'll come back and tell you."

As soon as the ghost went out, a little fire would be made, and the spectators had a smoke. Then they put out the fire and sang the ghost song. They would not have to wait long, "for a ghost travels just about as fast as a man thinks." On returning it would give the information that had been sought of it.

Most ghosts talked a whistling talk. But some—those possessed by Plenty-dry-meat-old-man and by Morning-star, two old men whose ghost helpers were among the greatest ones remembered and whose prophecies always came true—talked just in a natural voice.

After the ghost helper had given the information desired (or perhaps earlier, after his smoke at the beginning; I could not clear up the point) he was offered the food that had been prepared. And the spectators, still in the dark, would hear the tapping of the ghost's fingernails on the plate or other sound of eating as the ghost partook of some of the food.

When he had finished eating, he would say something like: "If you are done with me, I shall go," and he would depart by way of the top of the tent, which would shake violently as it had done when the ghost first arrived in it. After the ghost helper had taken his final departure, the performer would come out

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787
776 from behind the blanketed enclosure, the fire would be re-lighted, the performer would say the prayer customary among the Gros
[782] Ventres before all meals to the Supreme Being and other beings, *then he or she and the others present* would eat the food that had remained from the ghost's repast. Finally they would all sit around smoking and chatting a while before dispersing. I failed to gather any information on whether the performer receives any payment or not for his or her services in the rite.

Certain simplifications of the above procedure under emergency conditions as on war expeditions are noted or intimated in a couple of the following four narratives, the first two given by The Boy, the last two by Thick.

Narrative 1

787 The following story was told by The Boy.

776 "A certain man had his deceased father as his ghost helper.
539 The ghost helper used to speak Gros Ventre just like living people but in a bass voice. Everybody understood him when they heard him.

"On one occasion the Gros Ventre tribe were camped near the forks of the Teton and Marias Rivers. While there a large group of the men decided to go on the warpath. So they left the main camp, went up the Missouri River and camped that first night at the mouth of Crow Creek where it empties into the Missouri River. When it was dark that night some of the men said: 'Let's offer the pipe to X [the one mentioned above who had the ghost helper; name not given] and ask him to find out whether our prospects on this war party are good or bad.' So they filled up a pipe and went to X, held out the pipe to him and asked him: 'Accept the pipe and call your spirit.'

[791] "X accepted willingly and soon after they had smoked the pipe together they made a shelter where X was to do the spirit-rite. So they tied up X, filled the pipe again, put it there and sang a song four times. When they were singing it the fourth time they heard a voice in the air. The ghost helper arrived and the shelter shook as a lodge would have done in the same rite. When the spirit hit the ground, the ground shook too. The spirit

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The party traveled north and when they arrived at the river they camped there. Some of the men said: 'Morning-star-appears (or Morning-star-is-up: the man with the ghost helper) should be approached to find out what our prospects are on this expedition.' It was agreed among themselves that they would make a sweat lodge. 797 776 539

"Among those invited to sweat was Morning-star-appears. While they were sweating they offered the pipe to him to get him to call his helper. He agreed. Then they all smoked and got ready in the sweat lodge. [791]

"The ghost helper came to the sweat lodge for the possessor was right there. Just before the helper alighted he whistled violently and rapidly. Then the sweat lodge shook and they heard the ghost helper say: 'What do you want? Why did you call me?' They said: 'We are going on the warpath after the Sioux. What success will we have? Is there any danger?' So they offered the lighted pipe to the ghost helper and saw it smoked by him. After smoking, the ghost helper said: 'I'll go and see first before I answer. You go ahead and smoke and after a while sing again.' This they did.

"The ghost helper came back in the usual way, and highly elated, and said: 'All right. I am ready to tell you. First here is a strand of hair of a man (a Sioux) whom you will kill tomorrow. This represents his scalp.' It was wrapped around sagebrush. He continued: 'I have found a big Sioux camp on Beaver Creek [east of the Little Rocky Mountains]. The Sioux are having a big Grass Dance. The one who is having the most fun is the one you are to kill tomorrow. He is a handsome man and has a sword. You will capture that sword when you kill him. Don't be afraid. No Gros Ventre will be killed but two of you Gros Ventres don't look good to me.' They said to the ghost helper: 'Name the two.' But he refused to do so, saying: 'Just don't be afraid. Go ahead to the place where the Sioux are and attack them. Choose now what kind of weather you wish after the fight tomorrow, and I will see that the weather will be that way.' They failed, however, to make a choice. The ghost helper also said: 'Every once in a while tomorrow take

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Ventres' horses except those belonging to one man. This man 787
loaned out his horses as far as they would go around to four of 539
the Gros Ventres who went in pursuit of the Cree.

"Then that evening two of the other men, one of them my 787
father, approached Bear Old Woman. They filled up a pipe just 539
as you do when you go to someone to doctor you, offered it to the 791
old woman, and asked her to find out from her ghost helper who stole the horses and where they were. Bear Old Woman, who had quite a temper, got angry right away as usual and pushed the pipe away as a sign of refusal. Finally one of the young fellows there, a relative of hers, said: 'Well, let me smoke it,' to force her to accept. She angrily grabbed the pipe and had to go through with the rite. When she took the pipe she rubbed her [782]
hands on the ground and rubbed dust on the pipe and offered a prayer before smoking. The pipe was then smoked by her and by the two men who had approached her.

"Then they began to get things ready. They killed a puppy, singed its hair off at a fire, took its insides out without skinning, [262
quartered it up and boiled it. They put the boiled meat on a 252]
plate and got ready some other kinds of food to give to the old woman. Then the two men filled up a pipe and they together with two other men and with a 'servant' went to Bear Old Woman's lodge. On arriving there they set down the plate of dog meat near the head of her bed, the pipe between the incense hearth and the lodge fire, and the other dishes between the lodge fire and the door.

"When everything was arranged and Bear Old Woman was still sitting on her bed, she said: 'Whoever is the greatest unbeliever among you, come and tie me up.' One of the four volunteered. Then the old woman got up and went to a place just south of the head of the bed, to a little enclosure made by hanging up a blanket. He hobbled her four fingers (thumb too?) with sinew, interlacing it in and out of the four fingers of each hand. Then he tied her hands together behind her back and also hobbled her feet. She was lying on a robe. He gathered the robe around her and tied her with rawhide thongs until only her head stuck out of the robe. And so he left her lying on her

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787 back. He returned to his place to the southeast of the old
539 woman and sat down.
791 "Then Bear Old Woman said: 'All right. Start to sing now.' They sang four times without stopping, the song belonging to the old woman's ghost-helper. As they were singing the third time they heard an owl and the old woman said: 'Don't receive *that* spirit. He is bad. Continue singing.' So they continued and just as they finished the fourth time the old woman said: 'That is the one. Receive *that* spirit.' The people around heard these two owls.

787 "When the second owl lighted on top of the lodge, the top
539 shook and the ghost helper spoke: 'What do you want me for?'
776 They said: 'We want you to tell us where our horses are and who has them so we can find them.' The ghost helper answered: 'All right. I'll have to go look for them, but you go ahead and smoke this pipe [the one lying near the incense hearth]. When you have smoked up what is in the pipe, refill it and put it back in the same place and wait.'

"They had barely started smoking when the ghost helper was back again. So they just dumped out what was left in the pipe and refilled it. The helper said: 'Never mind. I am hungry and want to eat.' But they didn't mind him. The spirit then said: 'Your horses are not very far away from here. Your four friends have already recaptured your horses and are bringing them back.' He also said to my father: 'One of your horses has a thick broad rawhide rope around his neck and is dragging it, and that other man's mare's colt will play out on the trip back home.'

"After the helper had said all this, the four men judged that he was through, so they took the pipe and lit it and offered the helper a smoke. The inside of the old woman's lodge was dark as there was no fire. The helper took the pipe from their hands and then they saw it light up rhythmically as a pipe does when it is puffed, and after taking a few puffs the helper said to the men: 'You smoke the rest. I am hungry and want to eat.' They could hear him chewing on the dog meat inside where the woman was. After a while the helper said to the men: 'Here.

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

You can eat the rest of this pup.' The meat had been eaten off 787
of one hind leg of the pup so that just the bones were left. Then 539
the ghost helper said: 'I see this foolish old woman lying here 776
helpless.' Then they heard a noise as if the helper had struck the old woman with the flat of his hand and he was heard blowing. The next instant the ghost helper said: 'Here, try to untie this,' and the knotted sinew and rawhide thong hit the chest of the man who had tied her up.

"Then they heard the old woman give a long sigh. She had [791]
been in a trance all this time and was just coming out of it. Next the ghost helper said: 'Now I am going to leave you.' And they heard the same racket at the top of the lodge they had heard when he first came in and there was a violent shaking of the whole lodge, especially at the top of it.

"After the ghost helper was gone they kindled the fire again
and there was light. Bear Old Woman came out of the enclosure [791]
and sat down on the bed and prayed with the bowls of food in her hand. Then she and the men ate and afterwards sat around and smoked and chatted. Then the men went home and told what the spirit had said.

"Next morning all the people in the camp, including the chil- 787
dren, got up early and went up on the highest nearby ground to 539
look for the four men coming back with the horses. Towards evening of the day the four Gros Ventres who had gone in pursuit of the thieves brought all the horses back, except the one which, as the spirit had said, had played out and could not stand the trip back. And one of my father's horses had a rope around its neck as the ghost helper had said it had. The pursuers had caught up with the Cree and surprised them asleep in a little swamp covered with grass and brush and so took the horses back home. On the return trip they got lost in a bad storm, went in the wrong direction and not until daylight did they discover their mistake and so had to circle their way back. They had neither eaten nor slept during all the two days and night they had been gone.

"The above incident occurred just at about the time when the buffalo disappeared from this part of the country [1880's]."

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

NARRATIVE 4

787 Here is the second story told me by Thick.

539 "There was a man by the name of Bird Child who had a ghost
791 helper. Bird Child's wife had four brothers, one of them my father. One evening they filled a pipe and went to Bird Child's lodge to get him to find out from his ghost helper where there would be lots of buffalo and no danger, so they could go there and hunt. When they arrived at Bird Child's lodge they found him absent and only his wife in the lodge. Without invitation they made themselves at home and asked their sister where Bird Child was. She answered: 'I don't know where he is nor when he will be back.'

787 "Being Bird Child's brothers-in-law they decided to take the
776 liberty of using Bird Child's power and ghost helper, and of hav-
539 ing a seance in his absence. They asked their sister where Bird
[607] Child's bundle was. She showed them. One of the four brothers took it down. They then agreed who was to be tied up and to represent Bird Child. The one of the four designated agreed. They had him lie down and two of them tied him up tight and laid him in an enclosure made along the side of the tent [as in preceding story]. They were half-fooling, not quite serious. Their sister couldn't say anything: they imposed on her. They even attached the man's hair to the ropes with which they bound him in the robe until only his mouth was visible.

"Then they started to sing and sang the same song four times without stopping. At the end they heard yelling in the air and said: 'There he is. He has come for us.' As the ghost helper arrived the tent shook and the helper said: 'Who's that lying back there?' and answered himself: 'Some crazy man or someone with no regard for anybody's rights.' Then they heard a commotion behind the enclosure. The bound brother started to hollow for mercy. Next one of the brothers who had done the tying got hit with all the ropes tangled in a knot.

"Then they heard the bound man being thrown towards the door, and saying: 'Hurry up and make a light before this ghost helper kills me.' The spirit had picked him up and was trying

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

two enemy friends to strip the loser bare of everything he owned, down to his 572
very lodge, was, like a wheel game of the same order of magnitude, a crowning 525
event in Gros Ventre gambling, one arousing most intense popular interest. One of our informants was, in view of this fact, of the opinion that gambling among the Gros Ventre may have been first invented by enemy friends.

The keepers of the two most sacred pipes, the Flat Pipe and the Feathered 792
Pipe, were not allowed to gamble with any one, nor were their wives, nor (prob- 525
ably: our chief informant was not sure) ex-keepers. Rare exceptions may have occurred in practice. Should an enemy friend of a keeper taunt him into betting and should the challenger lose, he would lose not only his wager but also in a sense his life. For his life would in consequence be shortened, unless the keeper took pity on him and through submitting him to the appropriate ritual procedure averted the penalty. It was believed too that the keeper could not lose if, against the rules, he really did gamble. Gamblers, at least notorious ones, were not selected as pipe keepers.

Keepers and their wives were subject to a great many other restrictions. They had to maintain a high degree of dignity, to practise many kinds of abstention and "asceticism," and to be benefactors to and intercessors for all [784] the people. It seems probably that the taboo on their gambling was related to one or more of these aspects of the keepership.

Ritual "grandfathers" among the Gros Ventre were of two kinds. A retiring sacred-pipe keeper became automatically "grandfather" to the incoming keeper and instructed him in the ritual, prerogatives and duties of the keepership; a candidate for a sacred lodge chose an older man who had been through the rite as a ritual "grandfather" who would instruct him in the ceremonies and observances of the lodge in question. A person would never gamble against his ritual grandfather. The relationship established between grandfather and grandchild in both cases was predominantly a respectful and sacred one. Against his ritual grandfather a man would not even play in the modern non-gambling 4-button [524] hand game.

The foregoing rather intricate "bettor-wager" gambling pattern appears to 525
be the result of the orderly interplay of five chief determinants or conditioning 571
factors.

The most important and most basic determinant was that of in-group altruism, cohesion, and loyalty, decreasing in intensity from closer and smaller circle to more distant and larger circle, from biological family, to kinship group, to band, to lodge and society, to tribe as such, to more or less friendly alien tribe, and stopping short of hostile alien tribe. In general, the less intense the

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

an outstanding war record, was known to be courageous and not afraid to die, yet, because he was quick-tempered and murdered a member of his own band, he forfeited what would have been a very good chance of becoming leader of his band. Second, a man who had the reputation of being woman-crazy, of bothering other men's wives, or who was guilty of rape or incest, would not be selected as leader. Furthermore, a man who wished to rise should control his temper, be good to others and avoid lying, back-biting and jealousy in regard to other prominent men. If he had these qualities, and was eminent at war, he would rise high in public esteem and be in the running not only as a leader of a band, or of the whole tribe, but also as Keeper of one of the Sacred Pipes." [1]

622 555 [D93]

It was further explained by this same informant, The Boy, that if the leader died, there was a lot of talk both by members and non-members as to who was qualified to succeed. Those outside the band speculated on whom the choice would fall and said: "It ought to be so-and-so," and in this way attempt to influence the opinion as to which of the outstanding men of the band had the best qualifications. Soon a certain man became the leader, and once he was invited to a meeting of other band leaders he was "full-fledged."

622

In carrying out his duties, that is, in deciding when and where to move, the leader consulted with others and proceeded in a democratic fashion. If two or more bands were camped together, for instance, the leaders would consult among themselves and come to a decision as to whether or not the bands should remain together and as to where they should go. Other men would be present and any one of them apparently had the privilege of speaking his mind. "Suppose that the leader had decided that his band should leave the other and go to some particular spot. Someone in his band who disagreed with the decision would speak up and raise the question of, say, danger from the enemy. He would suggest a different place free from such danger and where game would be plentiful, where there was a good camping ground and sufficient water for the horses, etc. He would give his reasons in detail, and, if it

622 623

[1] The role of the Keepers of the Flat and Feathered Pipes is discussed in detail in Cooper, Ms. 1949.

622 seemed that the others present agreed with him, the leader would
[623] give in and have the crier announce the revised decision."

On the march, the leader went at the head of his band and
[484] showed the way. When several bands were together, the leader of one would have decided where he intended to go, and, if the other bands had decided to go along with this one, they followed, but were free to break away at any time.

[621 The band to which either the Keeper of the Flat Pipe or the
793] Keeper of the Feathered Pipe belonged had a certain distinction as there was a tendency when the tribe split for each to have a considerable following.

173 According to tradition, as related by The Boy, the Gros Ventres
643 had had in the fairly remote past a formally selected chief or leader of the whole tribe. It was said that he functioned when the whole tribe was together and that his decisions in important matters were made in consultation with the chief men, including the leaders of all the bands. There was no regular council and anyone present might express his opinion. Often the Keepers of the
[623] Sacred Pipes were present at such meetings called by the tribal
[793] chief, but if they were not present they were supposed to be kept advised.

The last regularly selected leader of the whole tribe was said to have been White Eagle, who held this position in the last decades of the eighteenth century. It was said further that White Eagle was preceded by White Shield, of whom there are many stories extant, and that White Shield was preceded by Elk Going Against The Wind. The Boy gave the following information regarding the "election" of White Eagle. The account was given to The Boy by his father, Lame Bull, who had it from Old Man Gopher, a cousin of Lame Bull's paternal grandfather. "The Gros Ventres had been badly decimated by smallpox and only about 30 lodges were left.[a] Old Man Gopher and his sister, both of them very young children at the time, were the only survivors of their family. The old men among the survivors of the tribe got together and proceeded to choose a chief. White Eagle was then a young man

[931] [a] A reasonable chronological estimate would identify this as a tradition referring to the devastating smallpox epidemic of 1780. For historical data, see p. 9.

CHAPTER II

THE FLAT PIPE

Keepership

The Flat Pipe was ordinarily in the custody of an official keeper called nātcā:ta' (nātcā, chief) with his head wife as co-keeper, nā:tciθā (chief woman) and one of their young children as pipe child, nātcɔta:niθɔ'. 793 [578]

In olden times before the coming of the whites according to the tradition as handed down to The Boy and Thick, the Flat Pipe was hereditary in one of the families or bands—which one is unknown. The man and wife chosen, from within the family or band, to be keeper and co-keeper were usually a couple in the prime of life, not an old man married to a young woman or an old woman married to a very young man. A couple in the prime of life were chosen so that, even though they already had children, they could still have more. For it was the tribal law that they should designate out of their children, a boy or girl, born after they had entered upon their keepership to remain with them and to succeed to the keepership should both the keeper and his wife die by accident or sickness. Nearly always they designated a boy, rarely a girl, as the keeper had ordinarily to be a man. The Boy and Thick thought that this system of hereditary keepership came to an end long ago as a result perhaps of the fact that a keeper might have had no children or children died off, or the complete dying out of the family or band in which the Pipe was then hereditary. 793 428

In historic times, that is, as far back as definite tribal memory goes, non-hereditary succession has prevailed. It took two forms, elective and volunteer. In the first case, the initiative was taken by others than the prospective keeper; in the second, by the prospective keeper himself. To become an official keeper a man had to be formally inaugurated with a rite which will be described later. In certain emergencies the Pipe was temporarily without 793

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

793 such an official keeper and was merely held by someone for the time being.

From data supplied mostly by The Boy and Coming Daylight, it is possible to trace the fortunes of the Flat Pipe during the last hundred years. Somewhere about 1850 the Flat Pipe keeper was Deer, who was succeeded by "Bear-going-along-side-of-hill," from whom it was ceremonially transferred about 1860-65 to The Boy's father, Lame Bull. One or two of Lame Bull's successors died before completing the customary four-year term, and Lame Bull took the Pipe back. About 1873-75 it was ritually transferred to Crow Bull, Coming Daylight's mother's brother and a good friend of Lame Bull, as a result of a vow made by Crow Bull to take the keepership if the wife, who had been captured by the Piegan, should get back safely to him, which she did.

Coming Daylight gave the story as follows:

793 "In the 1869 battle between the Gros Ventres and the Piegan,
797 a wife of my uncle, Crow Bull, was captured by the Piegan. After some time the man who captured her and who had taken her as wife saw her crying and asked her: 'Why are you crying?' She replied: 'I am lonesome for my children.' She had borne no children during her stay with the Piegan. So he told her: 'All right. I am a man, a real chief. I will let you go back to your children. But it would be dangerous for you to go on horseback. You must walk.'

793 "So on the sly he fixed up a big traveling dog to pack food and she made moccasins for the journey. He told her which way to go, this is, by way of Fort Benton where there were some Piegan
[582] and Gros Ventre women married to whites. He also told her she must travel by night lest the Piegan capture her again, and he accompanied her quite a way on her journey.

"After two days on the road, traveling by night and hiding in the day, she reached Fort Benton safely just at daybreak on the third. When she got there she did not know where to go. She saw someone emptying water, who looked like an Indian woman, so she went up to her. The woman said: 'Oh, where did you come from?' 'I came from the Piegan,' she replied, 'my Piegan husband there let me go.' The woman said: 'After you have eaten I will

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

take you to a camp of Gros Ventres.' 'Who are they?' she asked, 'What is their name?' The woman told her: 'A little short man called Warrior Man,' who was a brother of the returned woman through marriage. 793

"So the woman took the returned Gros Ventre woman to this camp and said: 'I have brought you a Gros Ventre woman. Come and see who it is.' As soon as they saw who it was, they were glad and took her and kissed her and gave her everything good.

"One evening a few days later Warrior Man and his wife got ready and before sunup started off for the big Gros Ventre camp. He walked while Crow Bull's wife rode horseback. It was springtime with wet snow still on the ground. The big camp was at Big Sandy, on the north side of Milk River at the place where the trees stop. They arrived there early in the morning and did not know where to go. I, Coming Daylight, saw the man and the two women approaching and went out to see who they were. The man asked: 'Where is Crow Bull's lodge?' I then saw them go to Crow Bull's lodge. All at his lodge were glad to see the returned captive and kissed her. 131 221 361

"Later when the ground got dry, the whole tribe moved to their usual place here at what is now Hays. Crow Bull made good his vow to take the Flat Pipe if his wife got back safe to him, and I witnessed the transfer, by the keeper of the time, Lame Bull. The rite took place just about a half mile north of where St. Paul's Mission now is." 131 221 361

Crow Bull kept the Pipe a long time, until his death in 1887, upon which it fell to his widow, an Assiniboine woman named Coming Day. This woman neglected the Pipe. Coming Daylight told her: "Now, this Pipe is just like your father. Why is he always left alone? He was never left alone before. Now I have a mare and this Pipe has a saddle. Put the Pipe on the saddle and take it to White Bird. He will take care of it." So they went to White Bird and talked to him first. He agreed to take it over without rite or vow. On the request of a young man, Bird Sits High, the Pipe was transferred to him. This young man died soon after and his father, Otter Robe, took it upon himself to harbor the Pipe. When Otter Robe died, sometime prior to 1908,

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

793 Horse Capture, the brother of Thick and the Assiniboine woman, Coming Day, who was still living—who had married Horse Capture and in her latter days had come to realize her duties toward the Pipe,—were ritually inaugurated as Pipe keeper and Pipe woman by Lame Bull. Then Coming Day died, as did also in 1908 Lame Bull, and Horse Capture was left alone with the Pipe. He married again and The Boy's mother, who had earlier been Pipe woman, instructed Horse Capture's second wife in her ritual duties. Horse Capture was the last ritual keeper of the Pipe. When Horse Capture died, his widow took the Pipe over. Thick wanted to bury the Pipe with Horse Capture, but was dissuaded from doing so, and agreed to keep it. Later Horse Capture's widow, who lived successively with Thick's family, the Birdtail family, and The Boy's family, willed the Pipe to The Boy, to dispose of it as he saw fit. On her death, The Boy wanted to take it over but his wife as a Catholic objected. The Boy finally got [795] her consent on the ground that "we are both Catholics; I want to keep the Pipe as a keepsake, not to pray to as it used to be prayed to," but it was arranged that the Pipe would remain in the keeping of Thick (married to The Boy's sister) until The Boy and his wife were ready to take it.

[795] The last ritual opening of the Pipe bundle occurred in 1937 as a prayer for cure, when Joe Assiniboine's small son was affected with bad sores on his face. The rite was only partially and negligently carried out at the time. The final formal uncovering of the Pipe took place on February 6, 1946, after the return of [797] the Gros Ventre members of the armed forces from World War II. On this occasion the full rite, as far as recalled, was enacted, and the Pipe and Pipe bundle given a thorough cleaning and renovating. The bundle with the Pipe is now (1955) carefully kept at The Boy's ranch at Lodge Pole.

The elective system rather than the voluntary vow was the more common one. Under this system, where the actual keeper decided to give up and transfer the Flat Pipe, he would confidentially summon the surviving ex-keepers and ex-co-keepers (not the other wives) of both the Flat and Feathered Pipes to come secretly without a word to anybody, to meet at his lodge,

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

on a given night after everybody was asleep lest the matter became known and the prospective electee take flight. When a rumor would spread that a new election was imminent, those who thought they might be elected used commonly to go away and sleep elsewhere than in their own lodges, as almost all were reluctant to become keepers. Those invited to the election meeting had to keep absolute secrecy beforehand, and at the meeting itself no one else than the keeper and co-keeper and the above invitees was present except two attendants, sons of keepers or ex-keepers. 793

The actual keeper might open the discussion by proposing a name. Discussion was free but dignified. Agreement would be finally reached, perhaps well after midnight or towards morning, on the keeper's first choice or on some other man. Knowing how onerous the keepership was, the keeper out of the regard for the ex-keepers would not be apt to nominate one of their sons, and ordinarily did not nominate one of his own.

The proposed keeper had to be a prominent member of the tribe, a man of great ability and renown, with a record of recognized achievement and with very considerable wealth in horses, in the size and furnishings of his lodge, and so forth. He had to be of the cream of the tribe, or "the best among many." And he had "to be good" as the Gros Ventre ethical code conceived goodness. He had to be generous; a stingy man, even though a great warrior, and even though he had vowed to become keeper, would never get the Pipe, for the keeper had to feed people and to be good to them and have pity on them. A murderer of a fellow tribesman could not become keeper, nor could a "professional" gambler, that is, one who is known to have supernatural gambling power. In general one guilty of grave crime such as rape or theft from fellow tribesman, or of habitual marked moral delinquency or defect, such as lying, backbiting, felony, disbelief in or disrespect for holy things, was barred from the keepership as he was barred from rising high in the prestige scale. 793 577 [778] [554]

After the choice was finally decided upon, the whole party with others of their kin proceeded secretively before or toward daybreak to the lodge of the electee to seize him bodily by surprise before he could escape. Once seized or even only elected he had practically 793

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

743 no choice but to accept. If he did not accept, there was no legal punishment inflicted such as physical violence, killing or banish-
[681] ment, but rather a supernatural one. It was thought that some grave evil would befall the person chosen if he did not accept the office.

The two following episodes, narrated by The Boy, from his father's and his own life throw some further light on the elective system and prevalent attitudes of reluctance to being elected as keeper. While the keepership carried with it great prestige, the reluctance is quite understandable in view of the severe restrictions and taboos that went with the keepership.

"When Lame Bull was a young man, just having reached maturity, he had a very close good friend, Kitfox Head. The two solemnly agreed that they would never become keepers of either the Flat or the Feathered Pipe, as being a keeper meant having a hard life. They agreed to avoid this office but to work hard in order to become outstanding men, warriors, with a life of freedom. They so grew up and married, remaining fast friends all the time.

"When Lame Bull was in his thirties, before reaching middle age, the Gros Ventres were on one occasion camped at the eastern end of the brush nearest to where St. Paul's Mission now is. Lame Bull, who then had three wives, was sleeping soundly one night when an old woman came to the door of his tent, woke him up and warned him: 'They are perhaps going to make you keeper. A big crowd is on its way, making for your lodge.' Lame Bull said to one of his wives: "Look out and see if the old woman is right.' She did and said: 'Yes. They are here close.'

"The crowd was too close for him to escape through the door, so he pushed his way out through the back of his lodge. Once out he gave one look back, saw the crowd and dashed for liberty. He ran round west and north to the right of the canyon up from where the Mission now is and into the mountains, leaving his wives.

"The first two wives made their way out through the door. The keeper stood at the door but could not prevent their escape as his hands were engaged in holding a pipe. The 'strong man' of the crowd was too busy looking for Lame Bull to think of the wives.

[i.e., the elector as Keeper of the Flat Pipe. -Analyst]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The keeper knew Lame Bull had only three wives and when he saw that two had gotten away and that the third and last was coming out, he said: 'Be sure to get this one. She is the last.' She was the youngest of the three, the mother of The Boy. Somebody did seize her. 793

"Then the members of the crowd pulled out all the picket pins and grabbed everything they could find. But they did not get everything belonging to Lame Bull and his wives, for the brother of the oldest wife had stolen into the crowd in order to protect his sister's property, and he was a good fighter, a man to be reckoned with. When the crowd started raiding, he threw the people right and left, fighting, hitting and pushing them, and so saved his sister's bed and some of her things.

"The crowd had gotten one of Lame Bull's wives but could not find him, and were undecided what to do. They finally agreed to take Lame Bull's wife back with them. They put a robe down and said to her: 'Sit on this. We are going to carry you back on that robe.' But when they lifted her up and put her on it she jumped off, saying: 'I don't want to be carried. I would rather walk.' One of the men, a cousin of hers, said: 'Get on to it, or else we will whip you.' So she got on it and they carried her over (to the keeper's lodge, apparently). When they arrived there they all sat down and took their places just as if Lame Bull were there, with the wife seated next to the keeper's wife. [482]

"Then the ex-keeper, who had transferred the Pipe to the keeper from whom Lame Bull had just run, said, 'I will try to call my friend (Lame Bull). Maybe he does not want to be keeper.' So the keeper gave his place to this ex-keeper who then started to perform the rite for summoning unwilling persons.

"All this time Lame Bull was hiding up in the mountains, and it so happened that his horses were grazing nearby. As he looked at them he was more than ever determined never to become a keeper, for he did not want to give his horses away as he would have to do as keeper. So while he was listening to the singing and rattling of the rite, he said to himself: 'Sing all you want. I'll never go down there.'

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

●793 "As, however, the singing continued, Lame Bull started to think seriously. He could hear the singing clearly as he was quite close. The rite went on. At last he looked at his horses again and thought to himself: 'I have many horses. I believe I'll surely have some of them left. I think I'll go down and become keeper. Probably they have my wives anyhow, and my children will be hungry and lonesome.'

"So Lame Bull came down off the mountain and half ran all the way back to camp. But he did not go straight to the keeper's lodge. He went instead to the lodge of some of his old women relatives with the idea of getting something to eat first, because he was hungry and he knew the rite of installation would take a long time. On reaching the old women's lodge he was given a good scolding by them, and they told him: 'The party has your youngest wife. She is over there.' 'I'm going over,' he said, 'but first give me something to eat.' They did so, but he could not eat much. Meanwhile the singing started again. As soon as he was through eating he went straight to the keeper's lodge, entered, and walked clockwise to the keeper. The ex-keeper still had the Flat Pipe in his hands. Lame Bull took hold of the Pipe, and the ex-keeper was glad. So Lame Bull went through the whole installation rite and became keeper. The rite cost him, among other things, 20 horses of his own, 3 from Kitfox Head, and others from his relatives, a total of 30. All through his life, Lame Bull thought that his being summoned with the Flat Pipe by the ex-keeper from a distance of a couple of miles was one of his greatest experiences."

The foregoing account of Lame Bull's reluctance to accept, but final acceptance of, the Flat Pipe had been gotten by The Boy from his father. The following account of The Boy's reluctance is from himself.

"At one period in my early life I had a dream that the Flat Pipe wished me to be keeper. A second time I had the dream. I mentioned the dreams to nobody. A third time I had a dream in which the Pipe said to me: 'If you refuse the request I make of you, something will change the prosperity you are now enjoying.' At this time I was in the prime of life, in good health, very

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

successful with plenty of money and with large herds of cattle and horses. 793

"I worried about the dreams, so I told my father who was still alive then. He made no reply at first; he was apparently in deep thought. After a while he said to me: 'I have decided that it is best for you not to be keeper. You are young, entering the prime of life.' My father did not think I should throw my life away, in view of the restrictions imposed on the keeper. I was willing to become keeper but I respected my father's advice and I followed it. My father said: 'Make a sweat lodge and we will make an offering instead of your being made keeper.' And this we did. Someone else then became keeper, namely, Thick's brother, Horse Capture.

"Then Lame Bull died, and not many years after I met adversity in my ranching and all my worldly affairs went wrong. Since then I have never been able to reach the height of prosperity that I had previously enjoyed. But I am not angry over this. I still keep my respect for the Flat Pipe because it is one of the chief things in the life of my ancestors."

A variant of the elective procedure above described occurred where the electee was close kin to the keeper. Thus around 1873, just before Crow Bull fulfilled his vow of taking the Flat Pipe, Big Beaver was keeper of the Feathered Pipe and Lame Bull keeper of the Flat Pipe, and one of Bull Lodge's sisters was the wife of Big Beaver and another the wife of Lame Bull. Both keepers at about the same time planned to make the transfer of their respective Pipes to Bull Lodge, brother-in-law of both. The two sisters came one right after the other to Bull Lodge to notify him of the decisions. Since the two women were his sisters he could not well refuse. He agreed: "All right. I am glad. Only one thing I ask. Tell my brothers-in-law not to make a raid on my lodge. Come after I make my new lodge (in the fall), and I will accept whichever Pipe is brought me first." Actually the Feathered Pipe party came first and Bull Lodge became Feathered Pipe keeper.

The new keeper chose one of his wives, often the chief or oldest one, to be co-keeper with him. The keeper's other wives were not

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

●793 co-keepers with her, but they or one of them would substitute for her in such minor duties as taking the Pipe out of the lodge in the morning and bringing it back in the evening when she was sick abed, or busy, or during her menses. During menses the [84] co-keeper was not allowed to handle the Pipe. After Crow Bull, 784] during his keepership, gave away his head wife and co-keeper, Digger, to Small White Cow in a drunken spree and Digger went away as wife to Small White Cow, Crow Bull's second oldest wife, Coming Day became co-keeper in Digger's place. If a man at the [784] time of becoming keeper had a young wife with an infant, she and the infant were sent away to another lodge as infant-crying was not allowed in the keeper's lodge where the Pipe was.

The Flat Pipe keeper, if he had two or more children, chose one and one only of his children, more commonly a boy, to be Pipe Child. It was a strict rule that he could keep only one of his children with him; all his other children had to live elsewhere than in their father's lodge, because, for one important reason, the Pipe was jealous. Some keepers were such rigorists in the matter that they practically forgot all their other children.

793 The children that were put out of their father's lodge naturally 784 found this hard and rebelled, but they were trained to take it as a matter of course. A special interest was taken by others in such 543 children as they were felt to be unfortunate in being deprived of the care and affection of their own parents. These children were permitted to visit their father and mother but they were under restrictions when they did so. Their grandmothers or foster parents would instruct them how to behave on such visits. They could not stay long, much less sleep there. They had to sit quiet in a special place in their parents' lodge and not roam around in it freely. They had to stay mostly near the door and not go near where the Pipe was. They were strictly forbidden to play in their father's lodge when visiting there. If their mother gave them something to eat they could eat it. They could sit on her lap. [781] But they could not talk loud or shout. When so visiting they were not at ease and felt sort of foreign and awestricken. The Boy 793 thought that these children may have been jealous of their sibling, 543 the Pipe Child, but in such case they would have had to keep

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

their feelings to themselves, for any show of such feelings would be contrary to the deep veneration due to the Pipe and its official personnel. They had to be resigned to have that particular sibling as the Pipe Child. When the keeper gave up his keepership, some of his children might go back to their father's lodge but not necessarily all of them. Some had gotten used to living elsewhere and just remained there. 793● 593

The Boy's own experience may further illustrate the foregoing situation. 793

He was born while his father, Lame Bull, was keeper of the Flat Pipe, and consequently he was born not in his father's lodge but in that of one of his grandmothers. His mother went back to his father's lodge, but she used to come to his grandmother's lodge to nurse and look after him. In his earliest years he had four or five "grandmothers" or great-grandmothers [real and classificatory] living, one of them his mother's mother. He stayed most of the time with his maternal grandmother and with her mother. It was from these grandmothers that he got most of the affectionate attention he craved and most of his early training and instruction. Every night, too, one or other of the grandmothers would tell old-time stories and Ni:hohat tales. After a while he was permitted to go to his father's lodge but only for a little while at a time, but he was not allowed to live or sleep there. He never addressed his parents as "father" or "mother," but only by their given names, although there was no taboo in the matter, and his younger brother Andrew Lame Bull used the former manner of address. The Boy as a child did not feel much inclined to "play baby" and sit alongside his father and mother, as other Gros Ventre children did, to get special attention, but he did act so elsewhere, around his grandmothers and great-grandmothers. He did not go to live in his father's lodge until he was about nine (or eleven?) years old, after his father had ceased being Pipe keeper, and by this time he was able to take pretty good care of himself, to ride horseback, and so forth. 793 603 593

All of The Boy's eight brothers and sisters—he was the ninth—who survived infancy were reared outside their father's lodge, except the one who was Pipe child. After Lame Bull's keepership 793 593

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

793 ended, all of them just invaded their father's lodge. The Pipe
593 child did not measure up to Lame Bull's expectations, so the latter's attention slowly centered on The Boy. Lame Bull, as an ex-keeper, still practiced some of the Pipe ceremonies, and The Boy came to act the part of "Pipe child" in these for his father.

Rite of Transfer

793 When the keeper of the Flat Pipe was about to transfer it to a successor he would invite to his lodge for a secret night meeting
*796 the surviving ex-keepers with their ex-co-keeper wives of both the Flat and the Feathered Pipes. The Feathered Pipe ex-keepers and ex-co-keepers were present purely as invited guests. They did not have any voice in decisions nor did they do any prompting. The first task of the assembled Flat Pipe group was to choose the new keeper, as previously described. The Flat Pipe ex-keepers and ex-co-keepers, further, remained with the transferring keeper and his co-keeper wife throughout the rite of transfer, to prompt and correct them in case they should forget, be in doubt about, or incorrectly perform some part of the rite. Two young men attendants, usually sons of keeper or ex-keepers, were present throughout the election transfer.

After the group had decided who should be next keeper, they quietly scattered and gathered together their relatives and reassembled outside the actual keeper's lodge. The whole party then proceeded quietly, at night before dawn when the camp was asleep, to the selectee's lodge, the keeper in the lead holding the bared Flat Pipe stem forward and slanting upward, with the bowl in his cupped left hand and the stem in his upturned right palm, at about breast height. One of the party, an ex-keeper or one of his sons or other kin, a physically powerful man, had been designated as the person to grab and hold the selectee in case he tried to run away.

The party usually succeeded in reaching the selectee's lodge without arousing anyone. On arrival thereat they all shouted noisily. This was the signal for the strong man to dash into the selectee's lodge and seize him. Any other member of the party could grab the selectee's wife who was to be co-keeper pipe

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

woman. Once grabbed she ceased to struggle, took a blanket or robe, sat down and covered her head so she could not see anything. She so remained with head covered until the transfer ceremony began. After the two were seized and held fast, the members of the party raided the belongings of the selected couple, grabbing everything in sight, and no matter how valuable, keeping it for their own. When the raid was over the selectee was "penniless." All his property was gone. He had nothing left but his wife. 793 ● 796*

The selectee then had a good fire made to give light, and sent his other wives and his children away from the lodge. All the raiding party, too, left except the selectee and co-selectee wife, the keeper and his co-keeper wife, the ex-keepers and their ex-co-keeper wives and the two young men attendants. From then on the rite was secret and no one else was allowed to be present or to peek in.

The elite group then marched into the selectee's lodge, the keeper in the lead still holding the Flat Pipe. The keeper next went to the selectee, holding the stem toward him and handed him the Pipe. The selectee took hold of it with both hands wherever there was room next to the keeper's hands. With both men holding the Pipe, the keeper said: "Here, my grandson, is your Pipe." To this he replied: "My grandfather, I am glad to receive this Pipe."

With both still holding the Pipe, the keeper now touched first the right and then the left shoulder or side of chest of the selectee with the Pipe and released his hold of the Pipe. From this moment the selectee was keeper, and the transferring keeper became an ex-keeper.

Next the new keeper, holding the Pipe, and his co-keeper wife, were both carried, on robes or blankets in procession while the marchers sang, to the transferring ex-keeper's lodge. By this procession and its accompanying singing it became known publicly that a transfer of the Pipe had taken place. On arrival the new keeper deposited the Pipe in its place on its wrappings. Here the first teaching of the new keeper and co-keeper began, and lasted throughout the following day. Here they remained throughout the same day and until the morning of the day after, obliged to

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

793 fast from both food and water until the feast on the second day.
*796 The Pipe remained in the transferring keeper's lodge all the rest of this first night, and throughout the next day and night, not fully wrapped, but loosely covered.

The first day, at the transferring keeper's lodge, was devoted mostly to teaching the new keeper and co-keeper the various rites as well as the obligations, prerogatives, powers, taboos and etiquette observances connected with the keepership. All this was done secretly, with no one present except the new keeper and co-keeper, the co-keepers and ex-co-keepers and the two attendants. The new keeper and co-keeper were coached chiefly by the retiring keeper and co-keeper respectively, who however would where necessary, be assisted, prompted, corrected or even in some matters superseded by some of the other better informed Flat Pipe ex-keepers and ex-co-keepers. Whenever the instructing last keeper was in doubt he would ask the other ex-keepers present. For giving such coaching the instructors had to be paid well by the new keeper, in horses or any other property which he may still have had left after the previous night's raid and which his relatives, coming to his aid, would provide. By the end of the instruction, which continued through to the third day of the transfer rite, the man's relatives might themselves be "penniless." For each segment of instruction a payment had to be made. The payments were generally made to the retiring keeper and co-keeper, who would keep part and distribute the remainder to the other ex-keepers and ex-co-keepers and also to his relatives who had helped him out when he had become keeper.

Instruction continued through this first day until sundown. That night the new keeper and co-keeper slept in the lodge of the retiring keeper where the Pipe was.

The second day of the transfer ceremony was given over chiefly to further instruction and to the double-lodge rite.

This double lodge was made right in the middle of the camp circle by taking down two big lodges and setting them up in figure-8 ground plan to form one large interior without obstruction or "veil" between and with the long double-axis running north and south. The Pipe was carried to the double lodge and de-

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

posited in the north section thereof, which was reserved for the Pipe and for new keeper and co-keeper, who walked there from the retiring keeper's lodge, and for the ex-keepers, ex-co-keepers and two attendants. The cover of this northern section was down, but that of the southern was lifted up to let the people look in and watch. Into the southern section went a group of Sacrifice Lodge men and another of Stars, and each group sat in its own circle on either side of the interior. Other people would also come in till all space was occupied. Children were not allowed to fool around the double lodge and dogs were kept away, but the general public was welcome. During the following song contest the new keeper and co-keeper sat with heads covered and faces hidden.

793 ●
1796 *
793
1796 *
533

When all was ready, at the word from the ex-keeper's party, the Sacrifice Dancers and Stars shouted and beat their drums, then stopped. After that the retiring keeper started singing the Flat Pipe song "My holiness, have pity on me," all the other ex-keepers and ex-co-keepers joining in. At the same time the Sacrifice Dancer and Star groups each started one of its own songs. The singing recalled the gladness that followed upon the first making of dry land, the increase and welfare of the succeeding generations under fidelity to the old beliefs and under good leadership, and the wish that the new keeper would perpetuate all this and that his leadership would be successful.

The simultaneous singing of the three distinct songs was also a sort of contest to see which group was "stronger," which group or individual would amidst this bedlam of conflicting choruses first sing false. Rivalry was keen but good-natured between the three groups of singers. The moment any one member of any of the three groups began to sing false, that is, if a Star sang the Sacrifice Dancer's song or an ex-keeper sang the Star's song, the singing stopped. Everybody knew at once which group had made the mistake, but not which individual. He had to confess. This was made public and everybody including the onlookers, laughed at and bantered the one who sang false and his group. Then a recess was taken and they sat around and chatted and smoked. After the recess, the same procedure was repeated; then came another recess, followed by a third contest and recess.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

At the end of the recess after the third "crazy singing," the boisterous hilarity gave place to sober seriousness, and the solemn secret instruction and consecration of the new keeper and co-keeper were resumed in the northern section of the double lodge. About this time, too, the new Pipe child came into the lodge, and the heads and faces of the new keeper and co-keeper were uncovered. In general when, during their training, the two were learning by hearing, their heads were covered so they could concentrate their attention on what they heard; while, when learning by seeing, their heads were uncovered. The covering of the head at certain times, as on the march to the keeper's lodge immediately after the previous night's notification and raid and as during the "crazy singing," seems also to have had an "ascetic" purpose, just as the abstention from food and smoking throughout most of this first day had.

The instruction after the "crazy singing" concerned primarily the ritual of smoking the Flat Pipe. Right after the uncovering of the heads of the keeper and co-keeper, the retiring keeper took peppermint leaves and gave some to the new keeper, while the retiring co-keeper did the same, giving some to the new co-keeper. Then each of the four chewed the leaves, spat three times on his or her own hands, rubbed the hands together then with the right palm rubbed his or her own left forearm up to the shoulder and with left palm the right forearm up to the shoulder, and finally with right palm from the mouth up over the face and hair to the occiput,—three rubbing or laving motions in all. This was done three times in succession.

After this peppermint laving came the fumigation or smudging rite. At the word of the retiring keeper the first of the two attendants, to the west of the door, with two sticks as tongs took a lighted buffalo chip from the fire in the center of the lodge and placed it on the incense mound (to be described later), and went back to his place, proceeding clockwise throughout. The retiring keeper then took from the supply alongside him a pinch of dried peppermint leaves in the tips of his five right-hand fingers and crawled on his knees to the incense hearth. There, kneeling squatted on his heels, and facing east, he held his hand, finger tips

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

down, at shoulder height and sang the incense song while the other members of his party joined in, and at the conclusion of the song said: "Yo!" Then he lowered his hand a little, sang with the others the same song, and ended with the recited "Yo!" Finally he further lowered his hand close to the hearth, sang with the others the same song, and at the end made three circles clockwise with his hand around the burning chip saying at each circle: "Yo'ho ho ho" (Yo followed by glottal stop; ho ho ho, in lower pitch, not emphatic), and after the third circle released the peppermint on the chip. Then he turned toward the south, and the same triple rite was repeated, and finally toward the west, with repetition of the rite. 793 796* [533]

Immediately after this, the retiring keeper, the new keeper, the retiring co-keeper, and the new co-keeper, in this order, fumigated themselves. Each put his (or her) hands palm down, in the peppermint incense smoke, rubbed his hands together, rubbed the left arm from the tips of fingers up to the shoulder with the right palm and the right arm likewise with the left palm. This was done three times. Then three times in succession he put his right palm over the incense, lifted his palm to his mouth, and inhaled. Then he held both palms over the incense and passed them from his mouth up over his face and hair to his occiput. [788]

The Pipe child also went through both the peppermint laving and the fumigating rite in each case after the other four participants.

The retiring keeper next filled the Flat Pipe with tobacco. He took a little tobacco in the five fingers of his right hand, finger tips down, while holding the Pipe by the bowl in his left hand. Poising his right hand about a foot above the bowl, he spat a little. Then he made a pass with the tobacco down a little nearer to the bowl and spat. Next he repeated the pass still nearer, and spat, and put the tobacco in the bowl. Then he filled the bowl with tobacco. Then laid the Pipe down with stem to the east on sage brush between the hearth and the pipe bed. After this a recess was taken. The party chatted and smoked socially or left the lodge.

After the recess, the retiring keeper would say to all: "Let

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

us begin again. Keep quiet," and to the first attendant: "Bring a live buffalo chip." The attendant did so, put it on the hearth, and returned to his place. The retiring keeper then took a pinch of dried peppermint leaves, and after the triple successive lowering and three clockwise circles above described, but without song or spoken word, released the peppermint, dropping it on the smoldering chip.

Squatting on his knees and heels instead of cross-legged, so that he could move around more easily, he took up the Flat Pipe, grasping it by the stem, palms up, with his left hand nearer the bowl. Then he circled the stem through the incense and upward until it pointed *east* and held it steady a moment at this point. He repeated the circling and pointing at a lower level, again at a still lower one, and finally made three clockwise circles with the bowl around the incense. Next he repeated the same smudging but toward the *south;* finally, toward the *west.*

After the smudging came the solemn prayer (to be described later) said by the retiring keeper, kneeling upright and holding the Pipe with the stem pointing, not to any point of the compass, but vertically upward. At the end of the prayer he let himself down on his heels, still kneeling, and held the Pipe in position to smoke. He ordered the first attendant: "Bring a live buffalo chip." The attendant thereupon took a chip from the lodge hearth with a forked stick and applied it to the tobacco in the Pipe. The keeper puffed the Pipe until the tobacco was lit, and then took three distinct puffs, blowing the smoke upward around and downward around. Then he passed the Pipe to the new keeper, first swinging it upward. The new keeper, after taking three puffs and blowing the smoke up and down in the same manner, took a real full smoke with the Pipe. Then he passed it clockwise to the nearest ex-keeper to the east, who smoked it, but without swinging it upward. Then it was passed in turn clockwise to the other ex-keepers, if there were others, to be smoked but not swung, till it reached the last nearest the door. The ex-co-keepers did not smoke the Pipe in this or in any other Flat Pipe rite. Then the lighted Pipe was passed back anti-clockwise, without smoking, and without swinging upward except by the new keeper (this honor

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

was reserved to the new keeper), and with tamping by the retiring keeper as it passed him, till it reached the last ex-keeper on the west side of the lodge. Then it was passed clockwise back toward the new keeper, each ex-keeper on the west side smoking it in turn, till it reached the retiring keeper. By this time the tobacco would probably be all smoked up, so he would dump it out by lifting up the Pipe, horizontal and bowl up, to head height, then lowering it still horizontal and bowl up, and finally turning the bowl over,—all this being done very slowly. 793 ● 796*

Another important part of the transfer rite was the blessing of the person and clothing of the new keeper and co-keeper, but when it occurred, before or after the Pipe smoking, was not cleared up. According to The Boy, "Every part of the new keeper was blessed, even his mouth, that is, his talk was blessed," but we obtained only the following details. The new keeper and co-keeper (and Pipe child) were painted by the retiring keeper on the forehead and under the jawbone and chin as signifying the world above and the earth respectively. The retiring keeper also chewed peppermint leaves and spat upon the two, to signify that they must "quiet down and be good." [302]

The moccasins and feet of the new keeper, co-keeper and Pipe child were treated as follows. The retiring keeper took peppermint leaves in his mouth, chewed them, spat three times on the sole of one moccasin (moccasined foot) of the new keeper, lowered it down in three stages over the smudge of the sacred hearth, and circled it three times around the hearth. Then he took a pinch of poisonous wild parsley (see infra), spat three times on his palms, rubbed the palms together and rubbed the sole of the moccasin with his palm three times from toe to heel. The same treatment was given to the keeper's other moccasin by the retiring keeper, then to the new co-keeper's moccasins by the retiring co-keeper, and lastly to the new Pipe child's moccasins by the retiring keeper. At the end of the whole transfer these blessed moccasins were taken off and put in the Flat Pipe bundle, and were worn only during rites, not as everyday footwear. Every other piece of clothing of the new keeper, co-keeper and Pipe child was blessed with peppermint and fumigation, apparently with a similar rite [824]

● 793 although without the wild parsley, but we did not obtain details.

After ritual treatment of their wearing apparel, the new keeper
*796 and co-keeper had to take off any ring, necklace or other personal adornment made of copper, iron or other metal, as the wearing
[784] of metal adornments was forbidden them, apparently because such were from the whites. The two, but not the Pipe child, were each ritually invested with a necklace consisting of a large single shell on a string of twisted, not plaited, buckskin. The investure was done with three motions as if putting the necklace on, and at the third it was actually put on. Further the keeper, but not the co-
[302] keeper, had to frame his hair over his forehead with a large pompadour, as a sign of distinction.[1]

The new co-keeper also put some dried peppermint leaves mixed
[778] with poisonous wild parsley in a little buckskin sack which she then wore on her belt. This had a double purpose. First, the mixture being poisonous, she commanded respect. She must not be molested or even be bodily touched. Whoever molested or even
[837] touched her would suffer fits or spasms or a paralytic stroke. Second, she must live a virtuous life and not run around with other men. The co-keeper and keeper, as also the ex-co-keepers and ex-
[784] keepers, since they had all been consecrated with peppermint and fumigation could handle the wild parsley without danger, but the common people were not immune to its supposedly highly toxic effects.

On this second day a big feast was given. Most of the food
[262 was provided by the new keeper and his relatives. That eaten by the new keeper and co-keeper, who had been fasting from food
784] and water since the time they were first siezed a good thirty or more hours previously, was provided by the ex-keepers.

At sundown the day's instruction ended. That night the new keeper and co-keeper, the ex-keepers and ex-co-keepers and two attendants slept in the double lodge, where the Pipe also remained.

Very early the next morning (or less probably late on the

[1] In 1948 The Boy added: "When a man became keeper, he ceased to comb his hair and it would get in all kinds of shapes and hang down. So he would take a bunch from the center and wind it round and round and tied that knot of hair around with a string. Whenever the keeper took off that string the people would be afraid!" [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

second day; our field information is not clear) the Flat Pipe which had been kept only loosely covered most of the time since the first night was ritually wrapped up in its bundle and the new keeper was told to observe carefully so he would know how the re-wrapping was done. 793 ● 796*

Meanwhile a regulation Flat Pipe sweat-lodge was put up, outside the camp circle as always and near the new keeper's lodge, for the new keeper and ex-keepers to sweat. In this sweat the women co-keepers did not join. The first after the Supreme Being (and other supernatural beings?) in the list of invitees to sweat was the new keeper, after him the ex-keepers. After all had taken their places inside the sweat-lodge, the retiring co-keeper carried the Flat Pipe, wrapped in its bundle, walking clockwise if necessary around the sweat-lodge, to the door thereof as the last. She entered by the east door, deposited the bundle in the place of honor at the west, and went out through the small west door. When it was time to take the Pipe out, she, accompanied by the new co-keeper, came to the west door, reached in and grasped the Pipe bundle, at once handed over the bundle to the new co-keeper and escorted her to the latter's lodge.

Then the new keeper and the ex-keepers sweated. When through, they put on their clothes and scattered to their lodges, the new keeper going back to his own, a new one which the retiring keeper and his relatives provided for him if his old one had been lost in the first night's raid. For every pin put in to hold the new lodge down he had to make a gift to the retiring keeper and the latter's relatives. So too even when they tied the door and showed the new keeper and his wife how to start their fire, make their bed, mount a horse, and so forth. [431]

So ended the transfer rite proper. The new keeper and co-keeper were now consecrated, and had to live by the keepership code, no matter how they had previously lived.

So ended, too, the preliminary instruction. But further instruction was given from time to time later. When the new keeper, with the help of his relatives, would gather together sufficient property, he would seek further instruction from the Flat Pipe ex-keepers especially the last keeper or some particularly well-

informed one, feasting them and also, *de regueur*, giving payment in valuable goods for each bit of instruction received. In these instruction sessions, the last keeper usually played the leading role, but the others would coach and correct when necessary or one of them if better informed on this or that point might teach while the last keeper took a back seat. The retiring co-keeper did most of the instruction of the new co-keeper. The Feathered Pipe keeper co-keeper, ex-keepers, and ex-co-keepers would commonly sit in at these sessions, but only as guests, without taking part in the instruction. Lame Bull, when first made keeper, got a great deal of his instruction from Deer, an earlier exceptionally well informed keeper.

A ritual relationship was contracted between the new keeper and co-keeper on the one hand and the ex-keeper and ex-co-keepers on the other. All the ex-keepers become "grandfathers" to the new keeper and co-keeper; all the ex-co-keepers, "grandmothers" to them; and are so addressed by these names respectively. The retiring keeper and co-keeper became, as it were, principal "grandfather" and "grandmother" respectively. This sacred relationship was looked upon as very like that between grandparents and grandchildren by blood. Privileged familiarity in the way of vulgar talk and banter, between these ritual grandparents and grandchildren, obtained, but not quite the large degree of freedom that obtained between grandparents and grandchildren by blood.[3] The ritual "grandfathers" and "grandmothers" also had certain recognized powers of control over their "grandchildren": if, for instance, one of these "grandsons" went on a berserk rampage and was about to kill a fellow-tribesman, and his own father and mother could not bring him to reason, one of the ritual grandfathers might be called in to reason with his grandson and the latter would have to abandon his angry murderous design.

Keeper's Lodge

The Flat Pipe keeper's lodge was a large one, undecorated on the outside except for a portion painted red around the door.

[3] Cf. Flannery, 1953, pp. 121-22.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

784 fund of war exploits would be apt to give out, and the two would
517 begin talking about trifling occurrences in camp, personal reminiscences about their marriages, and so forth. Everybody had a good time at such a three-day session.

Neither the keeper nor others were permitted to tell folk-tales of the vulgar or obscene Ni:hohat type in the former's lodge. If a member of a visiting group inadvertently broke the rule, a three-day session similar to the war-deed one above was prescribed, during which he had to continue telling such tales.

798 If a murder of a fellow-tribesman had been committed in camp, and the murdered person's relatives were about to kill the murderer
696 in revenge, the latter could run to and take refuge in the keeper's lodge and was safe so long, but only so long, as he stayed there. The avengers dared not enter it to kill, but immunity ceased so soon as the murderer left the lodge.

621 There is general agreement among our informants that the keeper's lodge was pitched in a prominent place, but exactly where
361 in the camp circle is a controverted point we did not succeed in clearing up. According to one tradition, it occupied the place of honor in the circle, toward the northwest—opposite the circle's opening which was toward the southeast or the rising sun,—regardless of where the keeper's band camped in the circle. Three, however, of our oldest informants, Coming Daylight, Takes-the-Bow, and Turn-Toes, held that the keeper remained with his band, the first two of the three stating that his lodge was pitched a little in front of his band toward the center of the circle.

Prerogatives and Restrictions of Keepership

793 The office of keepership carried with it on the one hand a great many special rights, privileges, prerogatives and powers and on the other a great many restrictions, obligations, responsibilities and sacrifices. The following list is undoubtedly incomplete, as new ones were still being revealed when our field work came to an end,[3] but it probably includes most of them. They functionally accord with sacred and high dignity of the keepership, the supernatural power attached to it, the lofty ethical behavior and "as-

[3] Kroeber, 1908, p. 273, has some we did not get.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13.

ceticism" expected of the keeper, his status as one set apart from his fellows, and his political and civil role in the Gros Ventre theocracy. We shall classify and treat them in this order, although some of them do not fit too neatly into any one of the five or six categories, and some straddle two or more of them. Incidentally, in many cases these refer to the co-keeper as well, although our field notes mention only the keeper. 793

The keeper and co-keeper of the Flat Pipe held a very sacred office of great eminence, and their persons and everything on or about them were considered holy. They themselves were expected always to behave in a dignified manner becoming their exalted and sacred position, and others were obliged to show them due respect. [778]

The keeper and co-keeper were not permitted "to do foolish things like other people." They could not, for instance, take part in gossip or other petty meanness. They were obligated as well to many ethical, "ascetic" and ritual observances to be described presently. [784] [577]

Marked respect was due them from their fellow-tribesmen. As The Boy put it, the Gros Ventres, now all Catholics, "had just the same great respect for the keeper and his wife as they now have for the priests and nuns." [795]

People had to keep their distance from the keeper and co-keeper, and could not sit close to them, or touch, grab or wrestle with them. Apparently, however, they could shake hands with them. If the keeper asked anyone to hand him something, the object had to be passed by hand, not thrown to him; if it were thrown toward the keeper on the ground and he had to pick it up, some accident would befall either the keeper or the thrower. 793 784

If anyone stepped over the outstretched feet or legs of the sitting keeper or co-keeper, the guilty party would at once fall in a fit, or get cramps and could be cured only by the offended keeper or co-keeper. Likewise, if the keeper, intentionally or unintentionally, stepped over the outstretched legs of a sitting person, the person would get fits or cramps and could be cured only by the keeper.

If the keeper or an ex-keeper had the Flat Pipe or even a com-

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

793 mon pipe in his hands, it was forbidden for anyone to pass in front
784 of him, under penalty of some evil befalling the culprit.

If a person, wanting something in a hurry from the keeper, such as meat or a bit of tobacco, just poked his (or her) head in the door of the keeper's lodge and made his request, no one inside would answer him. He would have to go all the way in, proceeding clockwise, make his request, and go out clockwise, not back out.

When the co-keeper gave a visitor something to eat in the Pipe lodge, the receiver had to eat it there and not take it out, unless someone told war stories. No one was allowed to take or grab anything seen in the Pipe lodge.

The keeper and co-keeper were by virtue of their office "holy"
778 persons, that is, endowed with supernatural powers. Some of these
782 powers were related directly to their main task as custodians of the Pipe, leaders in its ritual, and intercessors with the supernatural world, and will be described under the ritual of the Pipe. Others were conferred on them at or subsequent to the transfer rite, partly to enable them to command the respect due them, partly to give them supernatural efficiency for their own or their people's advantage,—the former being mostly powers to harm, the latter mostly powers to help.

793 If anyone were guilty of disrespect to the keeper or co-keeper,
754 there were several avenging procedures to which they could resort.

During the transfer rite, the keeper and co-keeper were taught some form of cursing, so they would be properly respected. If they wished evil on anyone, the evil would come to pass. Deer, an ex-keeper who gave Lame Bull much of the latter's coaching for the keepership, told him after his mouth had been consecrated: "Be careful what you say. For if you utter an evil wish on anybody, the wish will come true." This power, it may be added, is more or less of a piece with the commonly possessed efficacy attributed in Gros Ventre idealogy to serious good or evil wish-thought. (See pp. 364-370.)

Deer also taught Lame Bull in his early keepership another harming power, but cautioned him not to use it unless someone failed to show proper respect to him as keeper. This power worked by "sympathetic" magic. Deer asked for a little pup and a piece of sinew. When these were brought he said: "Leave the pup near

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the door." Deer then in both hands held the sinew stretched taut horizontally over a smoldering chip and sang a song special to this rite, ending it with a recitative "Yo!" Then he lowered the sinew and repeated the song and "Yo," then lowered still more and repeated, concluding with "Yo, ho, ho, ho!" and finally put the sinew on the burning chip. As the sinew burned and buckled, the pup doubled up with cramps and died. 793 754

Another power, conferred for use by the keeper in case of disrespect committed against him, worked by "contagious" magic. The keeper watched the offender closely and made sure to locate his tracks, and then took out of the pipe bundle and put on his ritual moccasins the soles of which had been rubbed during the transfer rite with the poisonous wild parsley. Then, wearing the moccasins he stepped in the offender's tracks. As soon as he did so, the offender got a fit and then his legs and feet became weak and wobbly and nobody but the keeper could cure him. [789]

The co-keeper for the same punitive purpose in case of disrespect or molestation carried wild parsley mixed with peppermint leaves in the sack attached to her belt, but we obtained no information on the precise procedure she used.

Two punitive procedures were told The Boy by his father but without full details. These "vulgar" powers were not broadcast but were kept more or less secret within the inner circle of the Flat Pipe.

If a woman disrespected a keeper or caused him great embarrassment, he carried out a special rite over or toward her, obliged her to submit to sex intercourse with him, and afterwards carried out a concluding rite. If some young man went so far as to flirt with her, make advances and touch her, he would get ill, and she alone could doctor him back to health. If he went so far as to have sexual intercourse with her, he would probably die. [833 786]

As regards all the foregoing punitive and harming powers, it was strictly understood that the keeper and co-keeper were given them to use only to enforce respect, and that if used for other and evil purposes the users would pay dearly and would be punished in some way, through the death of their children or through other misfortune. 793

Besides these supernatural powers to command respect, other 755

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

793 powers, intended more for the positive advantage of the keeper or
755 his people, were customarily acquired during or after the transfer rite.

In the transfer rite the new keeper was taught how to doctor, especially in cases of fits, spasms and cramps. The peppermint
[278] beverage, now used by everybody for these maladies, was formerly a monopoly of the Flat Pipe keeper in his curing practice. Other doctoring powers were also conferred on him and he could use the hair rope from the Flat Pipe bundle as a potent medicine to cure with, but we could obtain no details on these points.

The keeper would pray to have good dreams and might sleep
[787] on the Pipe bed for the same purpose. His dreams, when told, were important news for his fellows, as through them the future could be foretold.

789 The keeper was also given power to summon, call or "snare"
793 from a distance, enemies or reluctant friends. The Boy gave two instances of the use of this power, both from the lips of his father, Lame Bull. When Lame Bull, on learning of his election as Flat Pipe keeper fled to the hills, the ex-keeper so summoned him, using the Flat Pipe itself in the rite. The nine Flat Pipe songs were sung and at the end of each, the ex-keeper holding the Pipe at arm's length in both hands with the stem pointed upward and outward, sang the Hair Rope song, then twisted the stem tip in a vertical near-circle first upward and outward and then inward and downward in a sort of beckoning motion as if drawing something toward him, then downward and finally lowered the bowl toward (or to?) the ground.

On a later occasion during Lame Bull's keepership, on a war
[726] expedition against the Piegan he learned in a dream where they were located and was told that five of them would be killed. The night before the attack on the Piegan, using a common pipe and the above calling rite, thrice performed, with the pipe stem pointed toward the distant Piegan camp, invisible at the time to the Gros Ventre party, and singing the Hair Rope song, he "called" five of the Piegan, who, separated from the main Piegan body, were killed by the Gros Ventres.

793 The keeper and co-keeper also were given power to use in hunt-
224 ing buffalo, but we were able to obtain no details on the rite. The

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

793 ●
one occasion for which we obtained the account of Lame Bull's 224
resort to this power, it failed to work.

The keeper likewise received power to use in case his horse 793
played out during a war raid. In the 1868 battle with the Piegan, 726
Lame Bull's horse stepped into a hole and fell at a moment when 789
he was surrounded by Piegan. Two young Gros Ventre warriors, sons-in-law of Lame Bull, came to him. His horse got up but could not run, and in fact fell again. One of the young warriors said to him: "I thought the Flat Pipe was everything. Why don't you save yourself. The Piegan will kill all three of us." Lame Bull, keeper at the time, took some peppermint from the small bag tied to his whip, put it in his mouth, sang a certain song, spat on his hands, stroked his whip handle three times with his palm, made motions three times as if striking his horse, and the third time actually struck the horse. At this, the horse came to life as if fresh and started running, and Lame Bull got home safely.

Still another power conferred on the keeper was that of get- 793
ting possession of a horse by obtaining a single hair thereof. 789
Horses entered into the Feathered Pipe complex, not into the Flat Pipe one. But the Flat Pipe keeper could not be refused a request for a horse or horses made by him of anyone. Moreover, even though he did not directly make such a request, if he wanted a certain good horse, he could ask one of his relatives or good friends, surreptitiously and preferably by night, to pluck one hair from the horse's tail and bring it to him. The keeper would then perform some rite (details not obtainable by us) over the hair and put the hair in the Flat Pipe bundle, and pretty soon he would acquire the desired horse. It may be added that when the keeper walked near or around anybody's horse, he was watched suspiciously for fear that unobserved he would pluck a hair from the horse's tail.

In addition to these specific supernatural powers, the keeper and 793
co-keeper were given a great number of ritual powers, the right and duty to carry out certain ceremonies directly or indirectly related to the Pipe and its keepership. These will be described later under "Ritual."

In accordance with their sacred office and eminent dignity, with their role as benevolent intercessors for the people with the super-

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

793 natural world and as beneficent helpers of their people, and the lofty ethical behavior and magnanimity demanded by the Gros Ventres' code in individuals of prominence in secular as well as in sacred activities, the Flat Pipe keeper and co-keeper were expected in general to live lives strictly conformed to the Gros
793 Ventre ethical code and in particular to be generous and to repress
431 aggressive impulses. The people would ordinarily be generous to them. For instance, after a successful buffalo hunt the killer or killers would share the spoils with them. But they themselves were under special obligations of generosity. If, for example, a person came to the keeper's lodge and, observing the rule above mentioned of going all the way inside, asked the keeper for something, the latter had to comply with the request and could not refuse it, and in actuality hardly ever refused. If the keeper lacked what was requested, he had to give the petitioner something else, for the latter would not be sent away empty-handed. This custom did not, it seems, lead to abuse and the keeper was not imposed upon. The keeper and his wife were required to be especially generous in providing feasts from time to time and in giving food to callers. Whenever any one came to the keeper's lodge to make an offering to the Pipe, the donor was fed.

When a man became keeper all grudges held by or toward him
793 and the co-keeper were wiped away. They could no longer make
785 their enemies the target of abuse or revenge, and vice versa.

As mentioned above, to command respect they could use the powers previously described, although at the risk of ensuing penalties. But for the rest, they were strictly forbidden to lose their tempers with, or show anger toward, anyone and particularly to strike anyone. If they wished evil on anyone, the evil would come to pass. If in a fit of anger they forgot themselves and hit or whipped a person, or even a dog or horse, the victim would be paralyzed. Nor could they talk badly about people.

The keepership imposed many major and minor hardships, austerities, privations and inconveniences upon the keeper and co-keeper. These had not, so far as we can judge, an ascetic purpose proper, that is, spiritual or moral self-control and achievement through self-denial. They did however serve, not only to set apart the keeper and co-keeper from the rest of the tribe but

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

also to enhance their sacredness and intercessory role as well as their prestige in the eyes of the people. Gros Ventre character-ideals have a high rating to "strong-heartedness," ability to bear and forego, readiness to do without, "asceticism" in its looser sense of voluntary self-punishment. Making one's self "pitiful" through hardships and privations in order to excite the sympathy of and to obtain blessings from the supernatural beings was a basic procedure in Gros Ventre religious practice. The keeper and co-keeper were expected to be sacred and powerful intercessors and to be individuals of high character. 793 785

In general the keeper and co-keeper had to lead very restricted lives, largely cut off from free association with their tribesmen, most of the time kept within or close to their lodge where the Pipe hung, and occupied with their official duties.

In particular they were under many specific privations and prohibitions. Perhaps the most severe of these was the obligation of sending away and thus practically giving up all their children, even their favorite one, except the one chosen as Pipe child. And ordinarily Gros Ventre parents were extremely fond of and attached to their children.

The keeper and co-keeper could not eat birds or bird eggs of any kind, nor any part of the head, such as the tongue or brains, of any quadruped. According to one tradition they could eat the body but not the head of dogs; according to another, not even the body. On the occasion however of feasts connected with the Flat Pipe they could eat buffalo tongue. They apparently did not eat fish, but the eating of fish was uncommon anyhow among the Gros Ventres and some Gros Ventres did not eat it at all. There were other minor food taboos, according to The Boy, but he could not recall what they were. 793 262

The co-keeper was obliged to wear a robe or blanket all the time, no small inconvenience during the Montana summer when the temperature not infrequently rises to the 90's Fahrenheit in the shade around midday and the afternoon. The prohibition against the wearing of metal personal adornments by the keeper and co-keeper was previously noted. 793 785 784

The keeper and co-keeper were not allowed to comb their hair, nor to scratch their heads except with a scratching-stick. The

793 keeper (and probably the co-keeper too) could not cut his hair, but had to wear it tangled and disheveled.

785 The keeper and co-keeper were not permitted to bathe and
784 swim in the creeks,—this in contrast to the Gros Ventre custom of daily early morning bathing and swimming by both sexes the
[515] year round when not prevented by ice, as a cleansing, body-hardening and recreative practice. In fact, the two were not allowed to wash even their hands and face with water, but, according to The Boy, had to use instead fat, grease or oil, and to wipe them with the same muskrat skin they used in face painting.

[304] The keeper could not draw blood on his own person by cutting, as was done by others in the sweat lodge rite, in mourning, and on other occasions.

793 The keeper and co-keeper were not supposed to cry or to cut
784 their hair in case of the death of a relative, nor to go where any one lay dead, nor to have anything at all to do with a corpse. In particular they were not allowed to give clothes, at least their own, to put on a dead person. It was a breach of this last prohibition, in fact, that resulted in Lame Bull's lameness, and his subsequent sobriquet, Lame Bull, his proper name being Under Bull.[4]

The keeper and co-keeper could not gamble or be gambled with. If the keeper nevertheless did so and won, he won not only the wager, but also the life of his opponent. The latter would meet with some fatality unless the keeper agreed to avert the evil by
[755] performing the proper rite over him. The keeper would direct the man to build a sweat-lodge and would enter it with him. The man would fumigate himself and inhale the smudge. The keeper would rub the man all over from head to feet with sage.

The keeper was not allowed just to throw off his saddle or blankets onto the ground but had to take good care of them.

According to Coming Daylight, a keeper during his term of office "could not sing the songs he was supposed to sing," but we secured no clarification of this statement. The reference may be to songs previously gotten in quests for supernatural power.

In addition to the foregoing more or less restrictive or "ascetic" observances that served to set the keeper and co-keeper apart from

---

[4] Cf. Flannery, 1953, p. 201.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

their fellows, there were many other ones that fulfilled the same function. Of these latter, some, more distinctively ritual, will be dealt with later passim under "Flat Pipe Ritual"; others, more secular, may be mentioned now. 793 784

The keeper and co-keeper were not supposed to carry a pack on their own backs, except that on the march the Pipe bundle might be packed by the co-keeper. [482]

They could not mount and dismount a horse on the same side, but mounted from the right side and dismounted from the left.

If you handed something to the keeper it became his property, and if he handed something to you it became yours. If you thoughtlessly left anything with the keeper or co-keeper to keep for you, —if, for instance, you said: "Here, hold my horse (or my gun)," —the object became the property of the keeper or co-keeper and could not be gotten back. The keeper and co-keeper never loaned their robes, dresses, moccasins or other belongings, unless asked, and they were not supposed to be asked to loan. If you thoughtlessly broke the code and asked to borrow something from them, they were obliged to give it to you to own. [426]

Neither the keeper nor co-keeper was allowed to handle ashes, nor could the Pipe bundle remain in the keeper's lodge when ashes were taken out. Were this rule violated, the keeper or co-keeper or both would lose eyesight. When ashes were to be removed from the keeper's lodge, the Pipe bundle was taken outside the lodge by the co-keeper, and both the keeper and the co-keeper stayed outside, while another of the keeper's wives removed the ashes.

When a group of men were seated in a crescent or near-circle enjoying a purely social smoke together, each took a puff from the lighted pipe and passed it clockwise to the man on his left until it reached the end of the line. Then the pipe would be passed back anti-clockwise from hand to hand to the other end without anyone puffing from it. But if the keeper were in the group, he could take a puff not only when the pipe was passing him clockwise but also on its anti-clockwise return. The man passing the pipe to the keeper from either left or right had to raise it upward a little toward his own right before doing so. The first time the pipe reached the keeper, he would take a big puff, and point 276 793

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

276
793 the pipe stem and blow the smoke first upward and then downward, and after that would smoke like anyone else.

793 In general, religious and political life were closely interwoven
624 in the Gros Ventre theocracy. "The Pipes [both the Flat and The Feathered]," as The Boy expressed it, "seemed to hold the tribe together more or less." They were the most sacred and revered possessions of the tribe. The keepers were men of eminence, by virtue of their personal qualities and achievements as well as of their office. In view of these and other facts, it is to be expected that the keeper of the Flat Pipe played a role in Gros Ventre political life, a role however not shared except in a minimal de-
[562] gree by the co-keeper, a woman in a man-dominated sphere of action. The keeper's role in Gros Ventre political life was fairly clearly defined and delimited. Here we shall summarize the main points.

When camp was to be moved, the decision as to time and destination was mainly in the hands of the head men, although the keeper would participate. In some cases, it seems, he might initiate the move by calling the head men together, usually at night. The whole decision was not ordinarily announced by the crier or criers. He would be sent around to notify the people that all would move camp the next morning. They by looking toward the keeper's lodge in the morning would learn the direction in which the camp would move, for the Flat Pipe bundle would be taken out of the lodge, to the north thereof, and hung on its tripod, with the stem end pointing in the agreed upon direction of the trek. On the trek itself, the co-worker with the bundle led the cavalcade.

When the bands scattered for the winter after the fall hunt and for the late spring after the first spring hunts, usually both the Flat and Feathered Pipes attracted a large following.

The keeper could be invited to sit in important council meetings, and to participate in elections and in decisions involving policy or action and had a certain veto prerogative thereon. He could, on occasions at least, intercede with considerable power, to resolve conflicts and avert bloodshed. He could accompany war-parties and might even have a voice in strategy and tactics, but he was not *ex officio* a fighter or war-leader. He could, as

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

previously mentioned, afford asylum in his lodge to criminals. All in all, he wielded very considerable influence in the political life of his people, but he was in no sense a dictator. 793 624

While a good many of the prerogatives and restrictions attaching to the keeper and co-keeper ceased when their term of office ended, others automatically continued, beyond the period of keepership or, as regards restrictions, could be and often were voluntarily continued by the ex-keepers. Most of such cessations and continuances on which we obtained specific information have been explicitly or inexplicitly noted in the preceding pages.

Flat Pipe and Bundle: Description

The proper name of the Flat Pipe was θe:tsa. It was also called bä'ɔno (turtle), the turtle having played such an important role in the first making of dry land after the flood (for story see No. 3 in Appendix), and a turtle shell ranking next in dignity to the Flat Pipe itself in the Flat Pipe bundle. Bä'ɔno was used in an appealing, pleading or begging way. 778 276

The Flat Pipe bundle containing the Flat Pipe and other sacred objects could not be unwrapped and opened except on solemn ceremonial occasions and with the appropriate elaborate rites. The last such occasion was on February 6, 1946, when it was impossible for us to be present and when photographs taken turned out badly. Our description, therefore, of the Pipe and of the other contents of the bundle has to rest on detailed accounts given us by our various informants who had witnessed one or more openings, upon sketches of the Pipe drawn by The Boy in 1939, by Thomas Main in 1938 or 1939 (after an opening in 1938) and by a young high school student, Frank Cuts The-Rope in 1946 (after the above 1946 opening), and upon dimensions given by Thomas Main (See fig. 1).

The Flat Pipe itself is of wood, in a perfect state of preservation, carved in one piece, light brown or almost tan in color, very smooth as if polished from long and frequent wrapping, and about 18½ inches long. The bowl is round, low or squat, and flaring, 3⅛ inches in diameter on top with the hole for the tobacco about ½ inch in diameter, 2½ inches in diameter at its

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Keeper of the Feathered Pipe

The terms for the keeper, co-keeper and Pipe child of the Feathered Pipe were the same as those for the keeper, co-keeper and Pipe child of the Flat Pipe. 793

Apparently the same high qualifications were required in the keeper of the Feathered as in the keeper of the Flat Pipe. Those specifically recorded by us were: "he had to be some good man and wealthy and noted"; "he had to be a man of intelligence to learn and know the rites and traditions and to maintain the dignity of the ceremonial." In actuality, not all keepers measured up to these lofty standards, as some of our informants emphasized, with ample supporting evidence.

As with the Flat Pipe, succession to the keepership could be either appointive or elective or else volunteer. According to the origin story of the Feathered Pipe, the man to whom the Pipe was first given, appointed, apparently on his sole authority, his uncle as keeper and turned over the Pipe to him. [428]

The recent history of the Feathered Pipe for about the last 100 years can be pieced together from data furnished by Garter Snake, Al Chandler, The Boy, and Thick. 793 174

Iron Necklace was keeper somewhere around 1850.[1] He was succeeded by Big Beaver. Bull Lodge succeeded Big Beaver, his sister's husband as keeper. Garter Snake, daughter of Bull Lodge, became Pipe child at the age of six or seven. Bull Lodge had wanted to keep the Pipe until his son, Otter Robe, came of age and then to transfer it to him. But in 1879 or 1880 Bull Lodge was asked for it, asked four times for the Pipe by Sitting High, so he had to give in and transfer it to the latter. Sitting High held the keepership a long time, in fact until his death in 1905. This break with the traditional rule of a maximum 12 years is probably accounted for by the cultural disintegration which set in after the disappearance of the buffalo. As Garter Snake expressed it: "The new life had come in and there was no one to transfer the Pipe to." Little Man, Al Chandler's adoptive father, was Sitting High's son, and Al lived as a boy with Sitting High in the

[1] The Boy in 1948 told a long story about his grandfather, Crow Moccasin, who was keeper of the Feathered Pipe probably around 1830-1840. [R.F.]

●793 174 latter's lodge where the Feathered Pipe was kept. When Sitting High died in 1908, at the age of 92, his only surviving widow, Kills in the Night, moved over with the Pipe to her uncle, old Sleeping Bear, who took charge of the Pipe. In 1910 Sleeping Bear gave the Pipe to Curly Head, the last keeper of it, who kept it until his death in 1937 (or 1938).

About 1930, during Curly Head's keepership, a certain young Gros Ventre, a cowboy (son of Bradley), had to pass through Curly Head's place at Lodge Pole. Curly Head gave him something to eat. The young man was looking at the Feathered Pipe bundle and noted that the wrapping of Hudson's Bay Company cloth was old. "That wrapping is old," he said, "I'll buy another for you." "All right," said Curly Head, "I am glad. We will discard the old wrapping."

The young fellow forgot all about the matter until the following summer, when in a dream someone said to him: "When are you going to buy that new wrapping for the Feathered Pipe?" This happened far from here. The young man was worried and made a special trip back to Curly Head, told him about his dream, and asked: "What shall I do?" "You better buy the wrapping you promised," said Curly Head. "This Pipe is no ordinary thing. Even though you were perhaps not serious when you made the promise, you better be on the safe side." "Where can I buy this kind of cloth?" he asked. "At Browning," said Curly Head, "You better go there or else send for it." "I will," said the young man. [165] The latter went away, and shortly after, while herding sheep, he was killed by lightning. And the Gros Ventres wonder today (1939) if this young man's death was a punishment for his failure to keep his promise.

Before his death Curly Head, knowing that his health was failing, came to Garter Snake and said: "Sister, you will be surprised some day. I'll keel over and quit. You were raised with the Feathered Pipe. Keep it as a keepsake." "I am blind," she said, "I cannot see. How can I take care of it? You better leave it in care of some one else." "All right," said Curly Head, "I'll leave it with Iron Man. But you see that it is not disposed of in any way. This Pipe has to remain with the Gros Ventres forever. Remember that the Feathered Pipe is the main hope of the Gros Ventres,

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

793 174

and as long as you live see that they do not sell it or part with it."

So at Curly Head's death the Pipe fell to Iron Man II (Tall Jack), a relative of Curly Head, who since 1937 (1938) has looked after it. In 1948 it was still being kept in Curly Head's house.[8]

The normal term of keepership of the Feathered Pipe was four years. The very first keeper held the office 80 years, according to the origin story given by Garter Snake, and some later ones, according to tradition, up to 20 years, but the usual limit was supposed to be at most two or three terms, that is eight or twelve years. 793

There was always a Pipe woman or co-keeper, wife of the keeper. She handled the Pipe bundle and in general had about the same ritual and other duties toward it as had the co-keeper of the Flat Pipe toward the Flat Pipe bundle. The Feathered Pipe keeper had to have at least two wives, for during her menses the co-keeper could not handle the bundle and had to sleep and live outside the keeper's lodge and another wife of the keeper had to substitute for her in the handling and care of the bundle. [841 595]

There was always, too, a Pipe child,—a girl, unless the keeper had no daughters, in which case a son could be selected by him as Pipe child. Thus the oldest son of Sitting High, who had no daughters, became Pipe child. The Pipe child was not necessarily appointed at once by the keeper on assuming the keepership. Garter Snake was not made Pipe child until she was about six years old. Iron Necklace who had been Feathered Pipe keeper some

[8] In the summer of 1951, Iron Man, assisted by The Boy, had a ceremonial opening of the Feathered Pipe bundle. Dr. Louis B. Hagener, Professor of Biology of Northern Montana College, accompanied by his wife, and Dr. Otto Nitz, Professor of Chemistry, now at Stout Institute of Technology, Menominie, Wisconsin, were among the spectators. The pictures in Plates 2 B-C, 3 A-D, were taken by Dr. Nitz at that time. Dr. Hagener has kindly supplied information regarding the 1951 ceremonial. He writes under date of Aug. 8, 1954, as to final disposal of the Feathered Pipe bundle: "Since the young people were so apathetic over the bundle, its significance, and the ceremony, Iron Man and his wife had resolved not to open it again. They were debating as to whether it should be given to a museum or whether the tribe would outfit Iron Man and his wife for a journey and permit them to dispose of it somewhere in the mountains." [R.F.] [114 796 186]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

[793] years before her father's keepership was the one who was asked to "confirm" the appointment of Garter Snake [ritual details not obtainable by us] and was given a good horse for performing the ceremony.

The Pipe was addressed and spoken of as the child of the keeper and co-keeper, and they looked upon themselves as the father and mother of the Pipe. When the Pipe talked to them in their dreams it addressed them as "father" and "mother" respectively. To the Pipe child, the Pipe was brother. The Pipe was very jealous, and wanted to be the lone child and so all the keeper's children except the Pipe child were supposed to be put out of the keeper's lodge. According to Garter Snake, however, her father's other children slept in his lodge, not however with the keeper and co-keeper but in separate beds. Garter Snake herself when very young slept with her parents, but later on a separate bed near the foot of theirs. Al Chandler when he was a little boy used to stay with his grandfather, Sitting High, then keeper. The latter would make a bed for the boy right under the Pipe—"which usually was not allowed, [782] but he did it because I was an orphan, and he would pray that I would be healthy, live to old age, and everything like that. He did that every night as long as I was there."

If a new keeper happened to have a young wife with an infant, they were sent to another lodge.

Some of the activities, duties, and attitudes of a Pipe child can be gathered from the following account by Garter Snake of her own experiences.

"When I was the Pipe child, whenever my mother took the Pipe bundle outside of the lodge, I took the tripod out after her. I was told how to set the tripod when the camp was about to move, with two of the legs close together and the third far out. Whenever my father made smudge with pine needles, he would give me some and I would chew them and would hold my hands over the smudge. Then I would rub my left palm up my right arm, my right palm up my left arm, then both palms from the top of my head down the sides of my neck and down my breast.

"I did not have any duties beyond helping my mother when she brought the Pipe bundle out and brought it in.

[784] "I was forbidden to pick peppermint. If peppermint was mixed

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

in dried pounded meat, I was not allowed to eat the meat. If a coyote or wolf were killed, I was not supposed to touch it. These were the only two prohibitions I was under. 793 784

"If anybody vowed to be painted by the keeper, I would be present at the rite next to my mother and sit there through the ceremony. 793

"Whenever while I was Pipe child I got sick my father would put pine needles on me, and then he would take down the bundle and put it on my parents' bed, and would say to me: 'Put your arms around your brother [the Pipe] and pray to your brother so you may get well.' The Pipe keeper and his wife claim the Feathered Pipe as their son and tell their children that the Pipe is their brother. When I put my arms around the Pipe I was told to say to the Pipe: 'My dear brother, have pity on me, that I may get well of my illness.' [755]

"Of course the Pipe was not human but because I was a baby when my father got it I grew up with it and thought just as much of it as of my own blood relatives. When my father transferred the Pipe to Sitting High I was outside playing. When I was coming home I saw the bundle at Sitting High's door, and when I saw it I started to cry, and when I saw my father I said to him: 'Why did you give my Pipe away?' It was just like a person leaving. I was lonesome for it, and felt just as if I had lost a relative or friend. And all through my life I have felt the same toward it. All through my life I have made it a point to be present at any Feathered Pipe ceremony. And whenever I went to any ceremony, I would bring something for it. Since I joined the Catholic Church I stopped doing this, but even now I feel: 'It's all alone. I pity it.' [795]

"When while I was Pipe child I had been out playing and in the evening would come home and see the Pipe bundle over the door, I would stand and look at it a long time and would say: 'Feathered Pipe, I am going into our lodge now.' Once when I was sitting on the bed in the lodge I got to thinking, and all the folks were there, and I said: 'Feathered Pipe, my dear brother, look down on me and watch over me.' I was not told to say this, and I do not know what made me say this prayer to the Feathered Pipe. [782]

"My father used to tell me: 'This Pipe was given by the Su-

●793 preme Being through Bha'a, the Supreme Being is the father of the Pipe.' "

In the cases where the new keeper was elected in secret conclave and not told or asked beforehand, at night after the camp was asleep a group sneaked up to the electee's lodge, and one of the group carrying the feathered stick from the Pipe bundle entered the lodge. If the electee tried to escape, the watchers outside would grab and hold him. The electee was raided and lost everything, his lodge and horses and other belongings,—just as the man to whom the Pipe had first been given from above lost everything. Afterwards, however, the relatives and friends of the electee, anybody that could, would give a new lodge, new bedding and other lodge equipment, and horses,—as was done to the first owner and keeper.

After being grabbed, the new keeper and his wife were carried —they did not walk—to the lodge of the retiring keeper who put a cloth over their heads. They were thus in the dark and didn't know what was going on until a special song was sung and the cloth removed. We were unable to secure many details of the transfer rite. The rite included, of course, ritual and other instruction of the new keeper, and co-keeper for which he had to pay handsomely,—for instance, a horse for a ritual song taught him. For [431] these payments he had to count on his relatives and friends who, later in the course of his keepership, would receive equivalent presents in return. A central feature of the transfer rite was the new keeper's dance with the Pipe. In earlier times, in fact up to about 1905, it was only the keeper, we were informed, who could dance with the Pipe and this only at the transfer rite.

Apparently the lodge of the Feathered Pipe keeper was very 346 like that of the Flat Pipe keeper, and under similar respect taboos, 353 but we were able to obtain only fragmentary specific information.

At the back of the lodge, in the place of honor opposite the [784] door, was the Pipe bed of sage brush, laid down with the tip ends pointed toward the lodge center, and covered with a white buffalo robe. When the group was camping at the same site for any length of time, in good weather the Pipe bundle was hung up during the 346 daytime over the lodge door.

All movement within the lodge was clockwise. There could be 784

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

no crying by children in the lodge; if a child started to cry it was taken out at once. Dogs were not allowed in the lodge, nor could the keeper use a dog robe. Bones could not be broken in the lodge to extract marrow, as in the case of the Flat Pipe lodge and under the same penalty. War-deed contests in the Feathered Pipe lodge were prohibited and penalized, as in the Flat Pipe lodge,—with a four-day penalty. The right of asylum was recognized exactly as in the case of the Flat Pipe keeper's lodge. 346 784 [778] [696]

The lodge occupied a place of honor in the camp circle, but whether opposite the opening of the circle or just in front of the keeper's band is controverted, as in the case of the Flat Pipe keeper's lodge (see p. 58). 361

The prerogatives and restrictions attaching to the keepership of the Feathered Pipe appear to have been quite similar in number and kind to those attaching to the keepership of the Flat Pipe, although we did not obtain as full details regarding them as we did for the Flat Pipe. We shall mention only those prerogatives and restrictions for which we obtained specific information. The functional relation of the various prerogatives and restrictions to the sacredness and dignity of the keepership was quite the same for both Pipes. 793

In accord with the dignity of their office, the keeper and co-keeper were expected to comport themselves respectably on all occasions and to conform to the strict ethical norms to be mentioned presently.

The people were in turn expected to treat them with great respect. Things asked for by the keeper had to be handed to him, not thrown, exactly as with the Flat Pipe keeper, and under the same penalty. If someone absent-mindedly stepped over the outstretched feet or legs of the keeper, the latter would keel over in a faint and the co-keeper would have to smudge him ritually to bring him to, or the offender would fall down with a "cramp." Coming Daylight once saw a woman in a crowded place step over the feet of the Feathered Pipe co-keeper. The woman "fell in a cramp." Her mother got angry and upbraided the co-keeper: "You ought to know better than to leave your feet sticking out." But her sister went over and kissed the co-keeper and begged her in a nice way to doctor the stricken woman. So the co-keeper got up and 793 784

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

793 blew medicine on the woman who then recovered. If you even
784 passed in front of the keeper, you would "drop in a cramp."

Food offered in the keeper's lodge, even on a purely social and informal occasion, had to be eaten there and could not be taken out unless some one told a personal war-deed. This taboo applied even to an ex-keeper guest, although not to the actual keeper's
[576] children. The keeper could break up the gathering by emptying his own pipe—a recognized Gros Ventre convention for hosts.

[821] If anybody threw water at the keeper or hit him with water, this would cause rain.

Where a group of men were seated in a row or crescent having a purely social smoke, the general procedure was as previously described. If the Pipe keeper were one of the group, the man passing the pipe to him on either the clockwise or return circuit would first make a gesture with it "to the rear between himself and the keeper," if you didn't do that the keeper would not accept it.

The powers of the Feathered Pipe keeper and co-keeper specifically recorded by us were similar, apart from control of storm, rain and flood and, as far as they went, to those of the Flat Pipe keeper and co-keeper. The weather control powers will be described later under Feathered Pipe ritual.

[753] Anyone who stepped in the track of the keeper or co-keeper got a fit, for the soles of their moccasins were kept treated with wild parsley.

The keeper and co-keeper acquired by reason of their office certain doctoring powers.

787 The keeper had marked dreaming and forecasting powers, just as the Flat Pipe keeper had, and his dreams when told to the
793 people were "big news." In a dream he would, for instance, see animals fighting the Gros Ventres and this would be a warning to a war-raiding party to act discreetly. He would foretell from his dreams who would win in a prospective battle and how many would be killed. At the time the Flat Pipe was captured by the Assiniboine (see No. 8 in Appendix), the Feathered Pipe owner was fore-warned by the Pipe in a dream and he and his party escaped. If the keeper had a dream that foreboded evil fortune he would on waking talk to the Pipe and ask it not to let the evil

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

793●
787

happen. If told in a dream, perhaps by the owl, of an impending epidemic, he might call all the people to his lodge and ritually paint them. If he dreamed of bad luck about to befall some individual in camp, he would tell him: "I dreamed that something was going to happen to you. You better make an offering. I will pray for you and try to avert the misfortune, but you must help."

793
577

In general the keeper and co-keeper of the Feathered Pipe were expected to live strictly in conformity with Gros Ventre ethical norms. Specifically recorded by us as unbecoming and forbidden to the keeper were: stealing, fighting, quarreling, losing temper, wife-beating, talking evil of fellow-tribesman, "talking dirty," threatening to kill, and, for more recent times, cursing and swearing like the whites.

793
784

The Feathered Pipe keepership seems to have involved for the keeper and co-keeper about the same privations and restrictions as did the Flat Pipe, although we obtained explicit information only regarding the following ones.

"The keeper of the Feathered Pipe was not supposed to comb his hair. It was all matted and made him look different from other men. You see him and you know at once he is a Pipe man. Sitting High's hair was that way. The locks were stuck together in the back. It made him look like a holy man. He never cut his hair and was not supposed to put water on it. His wife [the co-keeper] could comb her hair, but I do not think she could put water on it."[8]

The keeper could not bathe or swim in a stream; if he did, there would be rain. He could not wash his face but wiped it off with a cloth. He could not cut himself as a sacrifice or as a sign of mourning. He could not cry at mourning, not in the presence of the Pipe. Gambling by or with the keeper was forbidden, under the same penalty of life and with the same rite of absolution as described for the Flat Pipe keeper.

According to Al Chandler, the Feathered Pipe keeper and co-keeper, in contrast to the Flat Pipe keeper and co-keeper and

[8] In 1948 Al Chandler added: "The keeper cannot eat eggs, chicken, the head of any animal, nor dogs. In fact nothing about dogs was allowed near the keeper. Wherever they were, no one could walk in front of the keeper or co-keeper." [R.F.]

793 also to the whites, both mounted and dismounted their horses from the right side, just as all other Gros Ventres did.

784 "You could not lend the Feathered Pipe keeper a horse, because if you loaned it to him this was just the same as giving it to him. You could not take it back once the rope was in his hands. The keeper never borrowed anything. If someone thought the keeper was short of something and without thinking said to him, 'Here is one you can use,' that was just too bad because that was really giving it to him."

[201] Apparently the keeper could not point at a person with his index finger, but would instead use his thumb.

793 The role of the Feathered Pipe keeper in the political life of the Gros Ventre was quite similar to that of the Flat Pipe keeper,
624 as regards such things as decision when and whether to move camp, matters of public policy, and veto power thereupon.

Feathered Pipe and Bundle

773 The Feathered Pipe was first given, as noted in the origin
778 stories (see No. 6 in Appendix), from above by Bha'a, the thunder and storm being. Garter Snake's father, Bull Lodge, used to tell her that it was really given by Ixtcibani:hohat, the Supreme Being, through Bha'a; that the Supreme Being was the father of the Pipe; and that it was to remain forever with the Gros Ventres and never under any condition to be transferred to any other tribe. According to Gros Ventre tradition, while the Feathered Pipe is very old, it is not as old as the Flat Pipe; when the Feathered Pipe was first given to the Gros Ventres, they were already in the possession of horses. According to The Boy, the Feathered Pipe was first given after the Gros Ventres came to their present territory which had previously been Snake Indian country, but before the coming of the whites thereto. With the Pipe itself were given in the beginning the stone image or face, the whistle, and the staff, to be described presently.

778 The proper name of the Feathered Pipe was ana:θanitĕ (it has feathers).

776 We were unable to attend any unwrapping rite and to see the Pipe. It was described to us as being in one piece, of "smooth,"

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

been previously described. Some additional data on tobacco and wild parsley as associated with the Feathered Pipe help fill out the picture. 788

The keeper of the Feathered Pipe raised tobacco, as did the very first keeper, whose tobacco patch was raided by the people after the great war exploit of his son, He-Who-Dreams-of-Bha'a. 793 249

If anyone but the keeper [or co-keeper] touched the "wild parsley" root the delinquent would get fits, out of which he could be brought only by the keeper working on him and "blowing this same stuff on him." Old Deafie did not believe all this and there were other skeptics, some of whom, even small boys, would touch "wild parsley" to test out the belief and would immediately have fits. Al Chandler had heard of many such cases, although he had never seen any himself. 793 278

Sitting High used always to carry a couple of pinches of wild parsley in a little buckskin pouch in his pocket to use against rattlesnakes. On one occasion when Al Chandler was about 18 years old he and his grandfather (Sitting High) were at Henry Martin's place on the Hays side of the Bear Paws. Al was eating cherries at the creek bank, saw a big rattlesnake, and shouted to his grandfather. The latter imitated the snake's angry rattle, wet the end of a six-foot willow stick and stuck it in a small bit of wild parsley, then touched the snake with this end, and so "knocked the snake stiff." Some time later Al went to the spot to look and there he found the rattler dead, "bloated and stinking." Al Chandler, on another occasion, near Snake Butte, saw his grandfather kill a rattler in the same manner, merely touching it with the wet parsley-treated end of a stick. 278

Among the skeptics was Little Man, son of Sitting High and Al's adoptive father. He would even eat "wild parsley." On one occasion, Little Man took Jimmy, Al's three or four-year-old son, with him to the creek to wash, and while there was about to give Jimmy a bit of the wild parsley to eat, "to give him the power to use," when Al happened to see what was going on and told Jimmy: "Don't, that is poison." Little Man laughed and said: "It won't hurt him. I am giving it to him. I was going to give him this power. What is the matter with you? Why don't you eat it?" But Al said:

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

789 song had also to be sung, apparently to the accompaniment of the drum.

755 Putting sweet pine needles on the sick person's head, blowing wild parsley on him, and smudging him as doctoring practices have been previously described. According to Singer, if some one were so sick that his life was despaired of, the keeper would take the Feathered Pipe [the bundle, probably] and lay it on him and pray over him, and the sick person would recover, and, she added, "it cured a lot of them." Doctoring power was regularly acquired by reason of acquiring the keepership.

783 302 The keeper and co-keeper painted their own faces every morning after breakfast, like the men, in two bands, but broader ones three or four fingers wide, one on the forehead near the hair line and the other from one jaw across the chin to the other jaw.

778 The Pipe bundle was smudged by the keeper every morning and evening with sweet pine needles. During Curly Head's keepership Cora Chandler and her children were kept busy collecting dried cow dung for the daily smudging ceremony. The keeper made it a practice to "talk" or pray often to the Pipe in his lodge. According to The Boy, the keeper was fearful lest otherwise he might make ritual mistakes, at which the Pipe would be angry. According to Al Chandler, the Pipe being jealous, the keeper "had to talk to it to let it know it was not forgotten or put away; he treated it just like a person."

788 778 Customary observances on the occasions of feasts or ordinary meals to guests in the keeper's lodge have been previously described.

When the keeper and the people were camped for any length of time in a given place, the Feathered Pipe bundle was ordinarily taken in the morning from its place of honor opposite the entrance inside the keeper's lodge, hung up outside over the entrance, and brought back inside at eventide.

[361 624] 778 484 When the camp was to be moved, the Feathered Pipe keeper, like the Flat Pipe keeper, had, it seems, a consultative voice in the decision and perhaps even veto power at times, although ordinarily the final decision was made by the head men. The decision once made, early in the morning when camp was to be broken, the Feathered Pipe bundle was hung out on its tripod back of the

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

CHAPTER V

THE SACRED DANCES

General Features

In the Gros Ventre public cult, as contrasted with more or less private cult concepts and observances, next after the sacred Pipe ceremonies, in order of rank and importance in the native view, were the Sacred Dances or Lodges,—the terms are used interchangeably, and while etymologically "Lodge" is correct, our informants preferred usually "Dance." 796* 771 794

There were eight of these Sacred Dances: the Sacrifice Dance (commonly but incorrectly called the Sun Dance), the "Law Enforcers" or Old Man's Dance, the Drum Dance, the Kit-Fox Dance, the Dog Dance, the Crazy Dance, the Fly Dance, and the Old Women's Dance.[1] Of these eight, the Sacrifice Dance was more generally regarded as the "greatest," ranking first in order of importance and dignity, but somewhat outside of the others which have been mentioned in descending order. All eight were regarded as sacred rites, not merely social or good-time occasions, although such elements entered into them or were associated with them.

Ordinarily a person participated in or vowed during his life first the Fly Dance; only after this the Crazy, Kit-fox, Dog, Drum and Sacrifice Dances, and finally the Old Man's Dance. 796*

Our chief informants on the Sacred Dances were The Boy, Turn Toes, Thick, Charles Buckman, Coming Daylight, and Singer. Lame Bull, from whom The Boy got most of his information on the Dances, had gone through all of them except the Drum Dance. He had even been selected as one of the two outstanding [115]

[1] Kroeber, 1908, pp. 227-268, gives an excellent account of these Dances, gotten at a time, nearly half a century ago, when tribal memory was fresher Our data may help to fill out some of the picture.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

773 539 the one who introduced the Sacrifice Dance among the Gros Ventre people."

*796 171 Although in the origin story, it was the chief buffalo who promised to give aid to those who would perform the Sacrifice Dance, actually the chief buffalo was not prayed to during it, nor was the sun or any other being except the Supreme Being and Bha'a. Our chief informants have considerable knowledge of the Piegan (Blackfoot), Assiniboine and Crow Sun Dances, and emphasized various important differences, as they understood them, between these dances and their own Sacrifice Dance. "These sacrifices [in the Sacrifice Dance]," Al Chandler remarked, "were made to God, not to the Sun. I have always wondered why people call our Sacrifice Dance the Sun Dance. Anything the Blackfeet cannot understand they call the Sun and think he must be something." According to The Boy and Thick, while the Blackfeet pray to the Sun and while the Assiniboine in their Sun Dance pray and sing to the Thunder Bird (corresponding to the Gros Ventre Bha'a), the Gros Ventres in their own Sacrifice Dance prayed chiefly to Ixtcibani:hohat, secondarily, as will be explained later, to Bha'a, and with some incidental mention of or appeal to the Four Holy Beings and Those-who-follow-each-other (Sun and Moon) when praying with a pipe. Vows to carry out the Sacrifice Dance were made by the Gros Ventres only to the Supreme Being; the sacrifices of property, the prayer-"sacrifices" of self-torture and fasting, and the chief verbalized and gesture prayers during the rite were likewise directed to him. Our informants consistently and insistently emphasized that the Gros Ventre Sacrifice Dance was, in this sense, a predominantly theistic ceremony.

*796 ● 794 791 While [illegible] generally the Sacrifice Dance was regarded as of lower ritual ra[illegible]han the Flat and Feathered Pipe rites and as of higher rank than any of the other seven sacred Dances, there was some difference of view on the point among our informants. The Boy, who himself emphatically ranked Flat Pipe rite as far and away first in dignity of all Gros Ventre ceremonies, with the Feathered Pipe rite, Sacrifice Dance, and other dances following in this order of dignity, summed up the situation as follows:

"While the supreme religion of the Gros Ventres was the Flat

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Pipe, some individuals or whole bands would consider the Sacrifice Dance as greatest, would give first preference to the Sacrifice Dance as a means of worshiping the Supreme Being, or would think of the Sacrifice Dance and other Sacred Dances as supreme. Then there were other individuals and bands who would prefer to worship through the Pipe *and* the Sacrifice Dance, or through the Pipe *and* some other Sacred Lodge." 796* 794 ● 771

Among the reasons he and other informants gave for ranking the Flat Pipe rite above the Sacrifice Dance were the connection of the Pipe with the creation and history of the world and man, the donation of the Pipe by the Supreme Being, the rigidly determined and scrupulously observed ritual, the absence of all vulgar elements from the Pipe celebrations (as contrasted with some at least of the Sacred Dances). Reasons given for ranking the Sacrifice Dance above the other dances were that the Flat Pipe entered into active participation in the Sacrifice Dance and it alone entailed dire hardships in the way of self-torture, hunger and thirst.

The Sacrifice Dance was held only when some man had vowed it. A woman could not vow it, but, to judge from the story of First Singer, could vow to request a man to hold the Dance. A given man could vow to hold the dance as principal acter in it only once in his lifetime, but he could join the dance as an active associate participant a number of times. Once he had gone through it in fulfillment of a vow, he could serve as ceremonial grandfather on a later occasion to another who wanted to go through it. 796* 782

The vow was made to the Supreme Being. In the story of First Singer, however, whether her vow was made to the Supreme Being or to the sun or to both is not clear.

If the vow were made in, say, midwinter, its fulfillment would be deferred until about June or when the spring vegetation was well advanced. In the meantime the vower might choose his grandfather and a crier, the formal public announcement of the vow might be made, and the preliminary four nights of singing might be gone through. Before the dance began this good-time singing, by men and women jointly, took place on four separate nights, not necessarily successive ones, but any nights during the preceding month or year. The fourth of these, however, had to

793 Horse Capture, the brother of Thick and the Assiniboine woman, Coming Day, who was still living—who had married Horse Capture and in her latter days had come to realize her duties toward the Pipe,—were ritually inaugurated as Pipe keeper and Pipe woman by Lame Bull. Then Coming Day died, as did also in 1908 Lame Bull, and Horse Capture was left alone with the Pipe. He married again and The Boy's mother, who had earlier been Pipe woman, instructed Horse Capture's second wife in her ritual duties. Horse Capture was the last ritual keeper of the Pipe. When Horse Capture died, his widow took the Pipe over. Thick wanted to bury the Pipe with Horse Capture, but was dissuaded from doing so, and agreed to keep it. Later Horse Capture's widow, who lived successively with Thick's family, the Birdtail family, and The Boy's family, willed the Pipe to The Boy, to dispose of it as he saw fit. On her death, The Boy wanted to take it over but his wife as a Catholic objected. The Boy finally got [795] her consent on the ground that "we are both Catholics; I want to keep the Pipe as a keepsake, not to pray to as it used to be prayed to," but it was arranged that the Pipe would remain in the keeping of Thick (married to The Boy's sister) until The Boy and his wife were ready to take it.

[755] The last ritual opening of the Pipe bundle occurred in 1937 as a prayer for cure, when Joe Assiniboine's small son was affected with bad sores on his face. The rite was only partially and negligently carried out at the time. The final formal uncovering of the Pipe took place on February 6, 1946, after the return of [727] the Gros Ventre members of the armed forces from World War II. On this occasion the full rite, as far as recalled, was enacted, and the Pipe and Pipe bundle given a thorough cleaning and renovating. The bundle with the Pipe is now (1955) carefully kept at The Boy's ranch at Lodge Pole.

The elective system rather than the voluntary vow was the more common one. Under this system, where the actual keeper decided to give up and transfer the Flat Pipe, he would confidentially summon the surviving ex-keepers and ex-co-keepers (not the other wives) of both the Flat and Feathered Pipes to come secretly without a word to anybody, to meet at his lodge,

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13.

ceticism" expected of the keeper, his status as one set apart from his fellows, and his political and civil role in the Gros Ventre theocracy. We shall classify and treat them in this order, although some of them do not fit too neatly into any one of the five or six categories, and some straddle two or more of them. Incidentally, in many cases these refer to the co-keeper as well, although our field notes mention only the keeper. 793

The keeper and co-keeper of the Flat Pipe held a very sacred office of great eminence, and their persons and everything on or about them were considered holy. They themselves were expected always to behave in a dignified manner becoming their exalted and sacred position, and others were obliged to show them due respect. [778]

The keeper and co-keeper were not permitted "to do foolish things like other people." They could not, for instance, take part in gossip or other petty meanness. They were obligated as well to many ethical, "ascetic" and ritual observances to be described presently. [784] [577]

Marked respect was due them from their fellow-tribesmen. As The Boy put it, the Gros Ventres, now all Catholics, "had just the same great respect for the keeper and his wife as they now have for the priests and nuns." [795]

People had to keep their distance from the keeper and co-keeper, and could not sit close to them, or touch, grab or wrestle with them. Apparently, however, they could shake hands with them. If the keeper asked anyone to hand him something, the object had to be passed by hand, not thrown to him; if it were thrown toward the keeper on the ground and he had to pick it up, some accident would befall either the keeper or the thrower. 793 784

If anyone stepped over the outstretched feet or legs of the sitting keeper or co-keeper, the guilty party would at once fall in a fit, or get cramps and could be cured only by the offended keeper or co-keeper. Likewise, if the keeper, intentionally or unintentionally, stepped over the outstretched legs of a sitting person, the person would get fits or cramps and could be cured only by the keeper.

If the keeper or an ex-keeper had the Flat Pipe or even a com-

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

782 *796 [262] [795]

Hunters returning from a successful buffalo chase would select pieces of kidney (a special delicacy) and ribs, and put them on top of the Pipe bundle. In recent times, money offerings occur. Offerings for the Pipe have become increasingly infrequent; offerings are now usually made instead by the Gros Ventres, all of whom are Catholics, to the Mission Church or at the Shrine of Our Lady of the Little Rockies on the Mission grounds.

A promise or vow to cover the Pipe, made silently or aloud, would be worded, "I vow to cover (or wrap) the Flat Pipe," rather than "I vow to give something to the Flat Pipe."

During our field work in 1940, when Coming Daylight was telling among other things what she knew of the Flat Pipe and its ritual, one evening (Aug. 16) she heard that her grandchild was seriously ill. Thereupon she went outside a little distance and holding both arms up, palms out, looking up and facing toward where the Flat Pipe was she spoke and prayed: "I am telling about you. I am telling everything straight. I suppose you hear everything, and must know that I am telling everything straight. I am telling the truth and nothing but the truth. Look at me. Have pity on me and upon all the rest of the people. Take away all bad things that go around here on earth. Have pity so my grandchild may get well. I promise to put a robe on you. I hear you value black more than anything, and that is what I shall get you. I hear my grandchild though still sick is better." In this case, as Coming Daylight explained, she was "talking right to the Pipe."

In a long discussion, a couple of days later (Aug. 20, 1940), with The Boy, he emphasized that while a person covering the Flat Pipe had great reverence for it and would address it by its own two names, Flat Pipe and Little Turtle, the Pipe itself was only a medium by which the Supreme Being was petitioned or thanked. A man, for instance, in sudden imminent danger would perhaps, praying in his heart and mind, mention only the Pipe, but he would know what the Pipe represented, namely, only a powerful means used so that his prayer would be hearkened to by the Supreme Being. We may add incidentally that mention in the course of this discussion of the Sinkaetk custom of praying to the sweat-lodge caused hearty laughter by The Boy and Thomas Main.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

in dried pounded meat, I was not allowed to eat the meat. If a coyote or wolf were killed, I was not supposed to touch it. These were the only two prohibitions I was under. 793 784

"If anybody vowed to be painted by the keeper, I would be present at the rite next to my mother and sit there through the ceremony. 793

"Whenever while I was Pipe child I got sick my father would put pine needles on me, and then he would take down the bundle and put it on my parents' bed, and would say to me: 'Put your arms around your brother [the Pipe] and pray to your brother so you may get well.' The Pipe keeper and his wife claim the Feathered Pipe as their son and tell their children that the Pipe is their brother. When I put my arms around the Pipe I was told to say to the Pipe: 'My dear brother, have pity on me, that I may get well of my illness.' [055]

"Of course the Pipe was not human but because I was a baby when my father got it I grew up with it and thought just as much of it as of my own blood relatives. When my father transferred the Pipe to Sitting High I was outside playing. When I was coming home I saw the bundle at Sitting High's door, and when I saw it I started to cry, and when I saw my father I said to him: 'Why did you give my Pipe away?' It was just like a person leaving. I was lonesome for it, and felt just as if I had lost a relative or friend. And all through my life I have felt the same toward it. All through my life I have made it a point to be present at any Feathered Pipe ceremony. And whenever I went to any ceremony, I would bring something for it. Since I joined the Catholic Church I stopped doing this, but even now I feel: 'It's all alone. I pity it.' [795]

"When while I was Pipe child I had been out playing and in the evening would come home and see the Pipe bundle over the door, I would stand and look at it a long time and would say: 'Feathered Pipe, I am going into our lodge now.' Once when I was sitting on the bed in the lodge I got to thinking, and all the folks were there, and I said: 'Feathered Pipe, my dear brother, look down on me and watch over me.' I was not told to say this, and I do not know what made me say this prayer to the Feathered Pipe. [782]

"My father used to tell me: 'This Pipe was given by the Su-

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

514 country do what I did. When buffalo go to drink, Indians just
522 shoot them. I was just re-enacting this. What I did was proper.'
*796 To this the husband replied: 'My elder brother, that's true.'

"When the people heard the laughing, they came flocking around. The other Blood was still laughing, in fact was in a laughing spell. His relatives carried him out and took him home and there dashed water on him and revived him."

Peyote Cult and Ghost Dance

668 What little we were able to gather on the peyote cult and Ghost Dance among the Gros Ventres, is here presented.

●795 Peyotism is entirely lacking among the present-day Gros Ventres and appears never to have gained a foothold among them in the past. Some individuals, we were told by The Boy and Thick, had tried to introduce it, but without success as the Gros Ventres were "a little afraid of it." The fact that the Gros Ventres have been under fairly intensive Catholic missionary influence since the middle 1880's may partly account for the resistance.[48] Some young Gros Ventres, who were on a visit to the Crows, were invited to take part in Peyote observances, but declined.

On the fortunes of the Ghost Dance among the Gros Ventres, our chief informants were Cora Chandler and her husband Al Chandler, Coming Daylight, The Boy, Thick, Charles Buckman and Thomas Main. Singer had joined the movement but though perfectly willing to speak freely about other subjects was somewhat reluctant to talk about this one. Our other informants had not joined the Ghost Dance, but Cora Chandler's people "were strong for it." Coming Daylight was, as will be explained, in close contact with certain phases of it, and The Boy had been present as a spectator at many Ghost Dance gatherings.

The Ghost Dance was called among the Gros Ventres, not "Ghost Dance," but "Little Round Dances." It was first introduced
[177] among them in 1891 by a Gros Ventre from the Hays area who had lived among the Arapaho of Wyoming a number of years, had

[48] Coming Daylight came in contact with the Peyote Cult on a visit some years ago to Oklahoma, but, she remarked, "the Catholic Indians in Oklahoma were against peyote."

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

attended the Ghost Dance there, and had returned to Hays in that year. As introducer and leader of the cult he preached wa:hatcan (lit. "reunion of all together," cf. wahanichina "unite" [Sifton]), signifying the rising of the dead Indians either in the near future or at the end of the world, and predicted the return of the buffalo, and into his message wove something of both Christ and the Flat Pipe. Big gatherings of Gros Ventres listened to him. Some few became converts, but most remained spectators and hearers only and declined to join. Further, the Gros Ventres did not join at all in the Ghost Dance political uprising. They had previously given their word not to go to war with the whites. The movement lasted just two years and then died out.[44]

The factors accounting for the resistance to and decline of the Ghost Dance among the Gros Ventres were, according to The Boy and Charles Buckman, the following. The older men and women did not believe Returns-to-war and the other promoters because "they had to be shown, and they felt that it was impossible for the dead, to rise again and for the buffalo to come back." The younger fellows, of the age of The Boy and Charles Buckman at the time, that is, around twenty years, did not believe because "the younger generation was then going to the Catholic missionaries and had learned different." Moreover, in 1893, some Wyoming Arapaho visited Hays and from them the Gros Ventres found that Returns-to-war had "exaggerated the story," so they all quit the Ghost Dance.

From Cora Chandler, Coming Daylight and Al Chandler we gathered the following information that sheds additional light on the rise of the Gros Ventre Ghost Dance and especially on the causes believed to have led to its rejection and decline.

During the rites, there would be round dances; the dancers would be painted after which they would sing and sing; the songs

[44] Mooney, 1896, p. 817 in his exhaustive study of the situation states that a Gros Ventre had been visiting in 1889 among the Arapaho and "heard the story and brought back the wonderful news to the Gros Ventres and Assiniboine of Fort Belknap, but although his account was received by some with unquestioning faith, the excitement had in it nothing of a dangerous character."

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

668
795

themselves were very lively ones; preaching of the content of the Ghost Dance message was a prominent feature.

Among those who took over leadership in the movement, along with Returns-to-war, was an outstanding medicine man who died a Catholic many years later, but who at the time of the Ghost Dance movement was bitterly anti-Catholic.

For one Ghost Dance gathering on a certain moonlight night, he had called the people to his place outside and a great many came, among them Coming Daylight and Cora Chandler's father's brother, Black Wolf, who was "one of the strong believers." After some singing and dancing, the leader said: "Wait, I am going out on that little hill over there. You all watch. I will stand there. When you see little sparks you will know the spirit has come." So he went up on the hill alone while the people stayed behind, singing, dancing and watching. Coming Daylight watched him and saw him "take a lot of matches, wet them so that they glowed in the dark, and hold his hands so that those dancing saw this fire glow." The people rushed over to him, glad that the spirit had come. The leader then took them back to the spot where they had been dancing and said to them: "Wait until tomorrow, and I will tell you what the spirit told me."

Each one who joined the Ghost Dance was supposed to have a feather of eagle down. The next morning, the leader told Black Wolf: "Your (deceased) son says you should go to where he is buried and he will bring you a feather." In the course of this day Coming Daylight happened to go over to the leader's house and there she found him sitting with all kinds of feathers around him and fixing one especially. She observed it closely to be sure she would recognize it if she should see it again. When she went back to her lodge, she said to her husband, Little Man, "That crazy thing is still fixing feathers. He is certainly up to something." She told her husband what she had seen and said: "I think he must be up to something crazy."

So when night came, Black Wolf and his wife went up to their son's grave, out on the hills near Old Hays. Sure enough there on the grave was a stick with eagle down on it. They were glad, for they thought their son's spirit had brought it to them.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

and they went back to their house where a crowd was waiting to see if the feather would really be found as the leader had predicted. The leader, Coming Daylight, and her husband Little Man, were in the crowd. The leader took the feathered stick and handed it to Coming Daylight, who said right out: "Oh, that is the very same one I saw him fixing. . . . How could a ghost hand fix these feathers the way they are fixed?" 668 715

Notwithstanding this public exposure, the leader [no doubt later and privately] told Black Wolf's wife that because she had gotten this feather from the dead she could get anything she wanted, but that he (the leader) would have to have [sexual intercourse with] her first. She told her husband and "when he found out it was a trick, he sure was mad and he went over and was going to murder that man." [83]

Cora Chandler added that a lot of women were gotten through this trick, that there were many such Ghost Dance bosses, or leaders, and that they used to get cattle, horses, and anything they wanted, including the women.

Singer said that although she joined the Ghost Dance, she did not have to pay anything, but that her husband, when they brought him a message from one of his dead relatives, cried and gave what they asked, a buckskin horse, to the old woman boss. "They used to have women bosses as well as men bosses in the Ghost Dance."

Returns-to-war once came to Coming Daylight's husband, Little Man, and told him: "Your young brother, who got killed in the war, wants a horse, bridle and saddle." Little Man, who was a good deal of a skeptic in things religious, declined with the retort: "What is a ghost going to do with a horse and saddle?"

According to Al Chandler, "Jack Wilson got away with all kinds of things. Before he died he brought his son here to Hays and his son eloped with one girl, and that cooked his goose. They found out he was a fraud." According to Coming Daylight, "he [Jack Wilson] had a lot of women through that [the Ghost Dance]. He would choose the prettiest and best looking woman to make his smudge for him. He would have a little hut." At this point in the conversation, Singer broke in and would not let Coming Daylight continue along this line. We have come across no other

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

668
745

record of the original Jack Wilson (Wovoka) visiting the Gros Ventres. Could the Jack Wilson above mentioned be some other Indian who was an impostor or one who in good faith took Wovoka's white-man's name?

In addition, the causes listed by The Boy and Thick for the failure of the Ghost Dance to take real root among the Gros Ventre, the chicanery, racketeering and sexual episodes, attributed by many of the Gros Ventres to the leaders of the movement, must have contributed appreciably to the same result.

At any rate, the movement lasted only two years, 1891-1893, and appears to have left no permanent impression on Gros Ventre life. At or shortly after these dates, however the modern non-gambling hand game was introduced from Ghost Dance sources.

[77
524]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

755 [764] there and saw two fresh graves. They dig a hole about three or four feet deep and put sticks across, cover that with canvas and cover the canvas with dirt. I laid down on one of the graves and that is where they found me. When I did not come back my father started looking for me. I was just like dead and they got an old medicine man to work on me, for at that time my adopted father, Little Man, had not yet gotten doctoring power.

"When I woke up, my father, my stepfather (the man married to my real mother), a woman and the old doctor, Black Bird, were there in this big lodge. I did not know what had happened to me but when I woke up I saw old Black Bird sitting by me. He had a china saucer with medicine in it and with four little brass bells [sic] in the medicine. He told me to drink up the medicine. I took the medicine but tried to balk at the bells. But the old man said: 'No, no drink the bells and all. The bells will be your protection. You will never get sick and ghosts will no longer be able to harm you. You could go to sleep with them and sit up with them [without harm to you from them]."

In a long narrative of a battle between the Gros Ventres and the Crow, The Boy described, very briefly, the manner in which one of the Gros Ventres was cured. After the fighting was over this man was found unconscious, bleeding from a wound in the arm. One of the Gros Ventres knew how to staunch the flow of blood He had an otter-skin with medicine tied on the nose thereof. With this he treated the wounded man's arm. The flow of blood stopped at once and the man regained consciousness. A travois was made and they had the man's relatives haul him back to the main camp on it.

756 A number of other individuals with doctoring power were mentioned by name at various times by our informants—Sleeping Bear, He Steals, Bill Jones, Ragged Robe (d. about 1935), Otter Robe, Joe Assiniboine—but we obtained no information on their curing procedures. We knew Joe Assiniboine, who alone of the [745] surviving Gros Ventres refused to the last to become a Catholic and who died only recently in 1942 or 1943, but unfortunately, though not patently unfriendly to us, was consistently reluctant to give information.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

band, Little Man; Drops In The Fire, a horse for curing Crow Bull; Stiffarm, lots of things, horses and so forth, including "one lovely mare," for treating—unsuccessfully—Little Man. Good Singer received "horses, blankets and such things," for curing Singer herself. Bull Lodge was given "the best horses" for treating Al Chandler's uncle. All the foregoing payments were for cases of serious illness. Mae Main stated that a person who wanted to procure a certain contraceptive root would have to "pay a big price for this, sometimes two or three horses." 756

Sometimes, how commonly or rarely it is hard to say, a medicine man would stipulate sex relations as his payment or part thereof. Cora Chandler had heard "that some medicine men take women afterwards as part of the payment for curing." "This," she explained, "is why Coming Daylight was afraid of that medicine man when he was stark naked," having disrobed before starting to treat her (supra, p. 338). "Occasionally," Thomas Main had heard, "in very serious circumstances a man, to save the life of a brother or of someone dear to him, would pay the fee of giving his wife [allowing the doctor sex relations with her]." 837 756

The relative decline of native doctoring is due in part to the influence of the missionaries and of the civil authorities, in part no doubt to educational and other accultural factors. All the Gros Ventres today are members of the Catholic Church. "Joe Assiniboine," said Coming Daylight, "a good medicine man, still living [in 1940: he died in 1942 or 1943], never joined the Church; joining would take his power away from him." Stiffarm, one of the last of the great doctors, who died in 1932, on becoming a Catholic and later a catechist, is reported by one informant to have renounced his doctoring powers. One reason Coming Daylight gave for not accepting doctoring power herself was, "my children were all Catholics and I joined the Church and I will be a good Catholic till I die." Little Man, Al Chandler's adopted father, wanted to pass on some of his curing power to him, but Al did not want it, because, he said, he was afraid he would "poison someone" but also on account of the Catholic Church. . . . "The Catholics didn't want you to do such things." 177 795 756

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

A plant called tyäänou is used as perfume, as a wash for the hair, and as a minor medicine. Bunches of the plant were used as perfume. A tea boiled of it is thought to make the hair grow while perfuming it. Such a tea is also poured into the nostrils as a remedy for headache (specimen Museum No. 50–1920). 278 757 [302]

Niibyouäxtjin is used as perfume. The stems and leaves are chewed, and applied to the body (specimen Museum No. 50–1853). [302]

Tsaa"sübin is used as perfume. It is chewed, and rubbed on the hair (specimen Museum No. 50-1792).

One ingredient of incense is the callosity from the leg of a horse above the knee. This is cut up fine, and burned with sweet-grass. It is also worn on the body on a string.

Pine-nuts or other conifer-seeds are used for pemmican (specimen Museum No. 50–1913). [562] 824

For embroidery, dark fibrous water-plants, at"hin (the Arapaho atahina"), are used (specimen Museum No. 50-1891).

Quills are dyed yellow with a solution from a conifer-lichen, no doubt the widely used *Evernia vulpina*, called otsahaa" (specimen Museum No. 50-1873). [386]

TRIBAL CEREMONIAL ORGANIZATION.

The Gros Ventre ceremonial organization is akin to that of the Arapaho with such differences as would be expected from the differences in language and the period of separation of the two tribes. The fundamental feature of this organization, the grouping of men by ages and the observance of a series of a half-dozen ceremonies in order according to age, is common to the two tribes. The ceremonies vary somewhat, and in a few cases their names or order have been changed; but among both tribes there are about six regular consecutive men's ceremonies, one or two that are preliminary or somewhat outside of this series, a single ceremony for women corresponding to those for men, and the sun-dance, which is included by the Indians in the enumeration of their grouped ceremonies, but differs from the others in not being connected with age, or with any society-like association of individuals. 561 796

Among the Gros Ventre the dancing-lodge for these ceremonies — which is erected in the centre of the camp-circle, and, like this, opens to the east — is constructed of two large tents. The lodge is open above, and appears to be oval or round in shape. The dancers, before beginning the ceremony, secure old men, who are called their "grandfathers," and are their instruct- 346 796

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

●796 ors and directors through the dance. By these old men the dancers are painted in the dancing-lodge every morning during the ceremony. The dancers' wives take a more prominent part in the ceremonies among the Gros Ventre than among the Arapaho. They are painted at the same time as their husbands by his "grandfather." Every night during the ceremony there are certain observances between the "grandfathers" and the dancers' wives, who leave the camp-circle together in order that the women may receive medicine from the old men. This practice is much more developed among the Gros Ventre than among the Arapaho.

Whether there is in each dance a preparatory period in which the dancers' regalia are made and they are instructed in the ceremony by their "grandfathers," as among the Arapaho, is not clear in the case of the Gros Ventre. The dancing itself in all of the age-ceremonies goes on for four days,[1] and, in some cases, nights. On the last day the dancers leave the lodge, and [361] dance for gifts before the tents of prominent men at different places in the camp-circle. Immediately upon this the camp breaks. The dancers, with the property they have received in gifts, go in advance, and lay the presents on the ground. The camp comes up in a body and makes a rush; the property is seized and divided. The dancers form in a circle, and at the conclusion of four dances rush off to race. On their return the ceremony is ended. Only in the case of the crazy-dance do these ceremonies of the fourth day appear to take place without the camp-circle having been broken; [786] and for four days thereafter the camp remains in position, giving the participants in the ceremony opportunity for the license which is a part of this dance.

All the ceremonies, including the sun-dance and the women's dance, are made as the result of the pledge of an individual in the hope of deliverance from death or danger, either of himself or of a relative. If a member of a company of men who are of the proper age to make the crazy-dance has a relative whom he loves, and whose death from sickness is feared, he may say, "Such and such an old man (naming him) shall put up the crazy-lodge for me this summer." If the sick person dies, the dance is not held. Sometimes a person who is ill himself pledges to make the dance on his recovery. The pledger of any dance is called ye'nouhuxtj[1] (Arapaho, ya'nahūt[1]). A man in danger in war, or one who has been wounded, may also pledge the dance. The time for the dances is apparently summer. For the sun-dance, spring or early summer, when the trees are full leaved, is [616] specified; and it is added that sometimes, after the pledge is given, the people have to wait all winter to make the ceremony. In the case of the crazy-dance, it is stated that two divisions of the young men of the tribe,

[1] Probably to be interpreted as three nights and three days.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

each of which has a ceremony of its own rivalling that of the other (respectively the war-dance and the star-dance), compete in a horse-race, with the agreement that the beaten party is to put up the crazy-lodge. It does not seem that this is a common procedure. 796 616

The Gros Ventre abandoned their dances much earlier than the Arapaho, and almost nothing of the organization remains now, except a memory. It is somewhat difficult to procure precise details of the procedure, especially in the older dances. In great part, the regalia used have also perished, and it has been possible to secure only a very few pieces. These show, as do the descriptions given by the Indians, that the objects and decorations used are quite similar to those of the Arapaho. The distinction of several degrees purely of honor within each ceremony, which is so characteristic of the Arapaho age-dances, is also found in the Gros Ventre, though it seems that the distinctions made and the number of degrees are not quite so elaborate. This is evidenced, not only by the fact that few degrees are described by the Gros Ventre, a fact which might be due to their longer disuse of the ceremonies, but also by circumstances such as the one that certain regalia, which in the Arapaho dog-dance are worn only by the members of the second and third highest degrees, are among the Gros Ventre the common regalia of all participants; only the highest degree of the Arapaho being retained by the Gros Ventre as distinct. 796 178 [171]

The Gros Ventre call their entire ceremonial organizations benaa"wu, a dialectic form of the Arapaho Hayaa"wu, and, like it, probably meaning "all the lodges." The members of the age-societies are called beniinen, commonly translated at the present day as "soldiers," etymologically probably "all-men," or "all-(?)-men." 796 561

The ceremonies of the Gros Ventre benaa"wu, with the age-dances given in order from youth to old age, are the following:—

Açeiha"w"	Sacrifice-lodge,[1] sun-dance
	Star-dance, partial preliminary
Nôuhā"w"	Fly-lodge, first dance
Haha"tyā"w"	Crazy-lodge, second dance
Nôuhā"w"	Kit-fox lodge, third dance
Hotibyā"w"	Dog-lodge, fourth dance
Nanā"uahā"w"	Tomahawk-lodge, fifth dance
Bitahā"wu"	Drum (?) lodge, sixth (?) dance
Benuxteā"w"	Buffalo(?) dance, women's dance.

The members of these successive age-ceremonies are called respectively

[1] Once translated "looked-at-lodge."

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796
561

hotohuūu, nōubān, hahā^{n}tyānen, nōuhunen, hotibyī, nanā^{n}nāhā^{n}ts or perhaps hiityaāa^{n}sūts, biitaxāānen; or "stars," "flies," "crazy-men," "kit-fox men," "dogs," "soldiers" or "having-war-spikes," and "drum (?) men."

171
796

Aside from changes in the order of the ceremonies, of which there are several, the chief known differences between this progressive dance-series of the Gros Ventre and that of the Arapaho are two. One of these differences is, that the first dance of the Gros Ventre is the fly-dance, which the Arapaho lack altogether. The second difference is, that the fifth dance of the Gros Ventre, the nana^{n}naha^{n}w^{u}, seems to combine the characteristics of the corresponding Arapaho dance (the hinanaha^{n}wu or fifth) and of the first dance (the Arapaho hiitceāoxa^{n}wu). In its name, its place in the series, and the age of its dancers, the Gros Ventre fifth ceremony agrees with the similarly named Arapaho fifth ceremony; but in the use of war-club-like implements carried by the dancers, and in the symbolic connection of the dance with the buffalo, there is an agreement with the Arapaho first dance. This first dance of the Arapaho is not represented by a separate ceremony among the Gros Ventre. A third possible difference between the two systems is, that no information was obtained regarding any Gros Ventre lodge corresponding to the oldest men's sweat-house among the Arapaho; but it is not unlikely that something similar formerly existed.

The several changes in order of the dances between the two tribes imply something more than mere change of position in the series. For instance, the displacing of the kit-fox lodge and of the biitaha^{n}wu, both of which are early ceremonies in the Arapaho and late ones among the Gros Ventre, involves a change of the age of the participants, and therefore necessarily, in some degree, of the character of the ceremony itself, since, the greater the age of the participants in the ceremony, the more sacred it is.

The following comparison shows the respective places of each ceremony in the Arapaho and Gros Ventre ceremonial series.

Ceremony.	Arapaho.	Gros Ventre.
Sun-dance	Men of any age	Men of any age
Kit-fox lodge	First preliminary	Third dance
Star-dance	Second preliminary	Outside of regular series
Fly-lodge	Lacking	First dance
Hiitceāoxa^{n}wu	First dance	Lacking (see Hinanaha^{n}wu)
Biitaha^{n}w^{u}	Second dance	Probably sixth dance
Crazy-lodge	Third dance	Second dance
Dog-lodge	Fourth dance	Fourth dance
Hinanaha^{n}wu	Fifth dance	Fifth dance
Seven old men	Sixth ceremony	Lacking?
Bānuxta^{n}wu	Women's dance	Women's dance

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The place of the biitaha^{n}wu is not certain, as no informants were found who would positively express themselves on this matter. It is universally regarded as having been the most sacred and most dangerous of all the ceremonies, these qualities being thought to have led to its abandonment before any of the other dances. It can probably be concluded from this that it was last in the series, and performed by the oldest men. 171 796

As among the Arapaho, but somewhat more clearly, each dance refers symbolically to a certain animal. This symbolism is as follows. 171

The fly-dance takes its name from flies or mosquitoes, and was given or instituted by a mosquito. During part of the ceremony the dancers imitate the actions of mosquitoes. 796 825

The crazy-dance has comparatively little reference to any animal. The participants, however, wear anklets of badger-skin, and an entire badger-skin is used in ceremonies at the time of starting the dancing.

The kit-fox lodge was given by the kit-foxes, and a kit-fox skin is used somewhat analogously to the badger-skin in the crazy-dance.

In the dog-dance the dancers of highest degree represent shaggy dogs. It is also said that the participants in the ceremony largely eat dogs during its course. Among the Arapaho a dog is said to have instituted this lodge, and the Gros Ventre have a similar myth. [262]

In the nana^{n}naha^{n}w^{n} the dancers sing for the buffalo, and it is said that they always succeed in causing them to appear near the camp. Among the Arapaho the dancers represent both buffalo and prairie-chickens. The symbolic reference to prairie-chickens among the Gros Ventre is found in their sun-dance; their equivalent of the Arapaho rabbit-tent in this ceremony being called "prairie-chicken tent," and the singers in it "prairie-chickens" and "prairie-hens."

The biitaha^{n}w^{n}, as among the Arapaho, has connection with thunder. The dancers are painted over the body with dots which represent hail. If one of them violates the regulations of the dance, it is thought that it will begin to rain and that the offender may be struck by lightning. The Gros Ventre have an additional symbolic connection of their sun-dance with thunder, which is not strictly paralleled among the Arapaho. [302] [821]

The women in their dance among both tribes represent buffalo, and the actions gone through in this ceremony are in both tribes probably more directly imitative of the animals symbolized than in any of the men's ceremonies.

What has been said about the Arapaho in regard to the relation of the entire ceremonial organization to the lives of the men of the tribe, and in regard to the relative importance of the religious, military, and social functions of the age-companies constituting the organization, appears to apply 171 796 561

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

171 equally to the Gros Ventre. The Gros Ventre, however, used a method of
●796 organization as regards the performance of the age-ceremonies of which
nothing was heard among the Arapaho. The men of the tribe of age to
561 make any one ceremony were not all in one society or company, but in
several; the total number of the companies being three or four times as
great as the number of ceremonies. Each of these companies had a name,
which it retained throughout its existence, irrespective of the dance it had
last performed; and each held its ceremonies without participating in those
of any other company. It seems that, when one of these companies had
made all the dances, the surviving old men grouped together the available
young men in the tribe, and formed them into a new company of the same
name. With this organization it was possible for each ceremony to be performed in the tribe much more frequently than if all those of an age and previous ceremonial experience entitling them to make a certain dance had performed this together, as appears to have been the case among the Arapaho; or the ceremony could be given at short intervals without involving the repetition of it for a considerable number of times by the same body of men. The Gros Ventre companies could and did repeat the ceremonies, especially the earlier ones, but do not seem to have done so more than once or twice.

561 The names of these companies resembled nicknames, and for the most
796 part had a character not very different from the clan names in use among the Gros Ventre and other Plains tribes, in which a certain humorous or derisive element prevails. The following are the companies whose names were obtained:

Green-grass, wiqoçetyi
Young-sheep, wnotei
Small-horses, tsuñaçiłyi
Rosebushes, ynaniisie
Calves (of leg), itsiitsûn
Sleeping-on-the-breast-of-a-woman, bitenanaakatañaelei
Grass-in-their-pockets, wasoôn tinaityhuts
Big-bellies, tjiitañets
White-horns, nanâetsienitäets
White-backs, nanâetsietäets
Men-across-the-river, hasôitjänen
Different-from-benilnen, kaasôbenilnen
Ugly-dogs, wasaatibyi
Seed-necklaces, hity'iisûtyäe
Having-back-fat, hiinanilihits
White-noses, nanaatsôôbäets
Eat-enough-to-last-over-night, äteinotäets
Holding-dogs'-tails, hotibyi naeninaanäets
White-blankets, nanaetsôubänts
Fur-wrapped-wands, hiibiiçôuts
Bad-horns, wanaasônitäets
(? Stars, hotohuûu)
(? Feathered-sword-wands, iikokôuuts)
(? Having-spikes, hiitjañasûts)

The list is probably not complete, as, with the disuse of the ceremonies, the formation of these companies has been discontinued for some time.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

It seems impossible to tell at present whether these and the additional ones that there may have been, all existed contemporaneously, or whether some grew up as others died out. The last few named are doubtful as true companies. The Indians sometimes include the dances themselves among these companies, calling their members "flies," "dogs," "kit-fox men," and so on. This is, of course, a cross-division, as each of the numerous companies in turn makes, for instance, the fly-dance. During and after the ceremony its members are called "flies," as well as by the name of their company. As there is a star-dance, it is therefore possible that there was no true star company. The sword-wands and war-spikes are also somewhat doubtful. These names refer to objects used as regalia in the Arapaho first dance and in part in the Gros Ventre fifth dance. The participants in the Gros Ventre fifth dance, it seems, were also called by the latter name. It is therefore probable that these two names refer to dances and not to real companies. 561 796

The companies held together, to a certain extent, outside of their dances. They were likely to act together in war, and there was a spirit of rivalry between them. In the sun-dance, and possibly on other ceremonial occasions, the younger men of the tribe took part in certain actions by companies.

The following specific statements of the ceremonial experiences of a few of the old men of the tribe alive in 1901 will make the general scheme of the organization more concrete.

A man known as Bill Jones, reputed to be the oldest man in the tribe, belonged to the "big-belly" company. Of this, only one other member survived at that date. He himself had been keeper of one of the sacred pipes; and he and his "big-belly" companion, together with the five survivors of the next oldest company, were spoken of as the seven oldest men of the tribe. As all the Gros Ventre ceremonies have been discontinued, it is not possible to deduce from this statement with certainty that these seven men would in former times have constituted a definite body with distinct ceremonial powers and observances, like the Arapaho water-sprinkling old men. This man had made the fly-dance, the crazy-dance twice, the kit-fox dance twice, the dog-dance, and the nana"naha"w". He had not made the biitaha"w". Younger men than himself have seen this; but it appears to have been abandoned some time before he became of age to take part in it. He had made the star-dance before the fly-dance. He had also taken the part of the man who shoots a buffalo (in the women's dance?). 159 561 796

Bull-Robe, now dead, a renowned warrior, belonged to the next age-company, "those-who-eat-to-last-all-night." He had made the fly-dance, the crazy-dance, the kit-fox dance, and the dog-dance. The nana"naha"w" seems to have been discontinued before he reached it. In the first three of his dances he was one of the leaders, or recipients of special degrees.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

159
561
796

Subsequently he was a "grandfather" in the crazy-dance, but in none of the other ceremonies. He never participated in the sun-dance, having had no occasion to do so, he said. Nevertheless he once was the man selected during the sun-dance to kill a buffalo with one arrow, the buffalo's skin being cut up into thongs with which the rafters of the lodge are fastened. He succeeded in killing the buffalo with one arrow.

Another man, now middle-aged, belonged to the "holding-to-a-dog's-tail" company. He made successively the fly-dance, the star-dance, and then the crazy-dance.

Star and War Dances.

171
561
796
575
[177]

At present the organization into comparatively small companies is no longer maintained. In its place there is a division of the young men of the tribe into two groups, one of which practises, or did until recently, the star-dance; the other, the grass or war dance. The latter is universally stated to be a recent importation from the Sioux, apparently within the present generation. The star-dance, however, is an old ceremony, it is claimed; and this assertion is borne out by the occurrence among the Arapaho of the analogous star-dance. Among the Arapaho the star-dance, like the kit-fox dance, is a preliminary which appears to be gone through by all the men of the tribe, but has neither the standing, the organization, nor the definite observances and regalia of the subsequent ceremonies. Among the Gros Ventre the star-dance was formerly also outside the regular series of dances. It is generally spoken of as having been a warrior dance, made at any time and on any suitable occasion, and without the rigorously prescribed course of other dances. Some men seem to have made it before the fly-dance, and others afterward. Even in former times, however, before the war-dance had come among the Gros Ventre, the star-dance included only part of the young men of the tribe. The old men surviving from certain companies have never taken part in the star-dance, and explain this by the fact that there was rivalry between their company and the star-dancers. It might thus, perhaps, seem that a star company had a ceremony of its own, the star-dance, from which the members of rival companies naturally held aloof; but it is very improbable that only one age-company parallel to the others, and none of these others, should have had a distinctive ceremony. It is also improbable that this company, being one of many, should have been so large as to include about half of the men of the tribe, for it appears that some such large proportion took part in the star-dance. This makes it almost impossible to believe that there existed a star company exactly

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

analogous to the "green-grass" and "young-sheep" and other companies, but having an additional ceremony confined to itself. On the other hand, if the "stars" were not one of the age-companies, it is hard to see with what groups of men they competed. It is therefore not improbable that there formerly existed among the Gros Ventre a star-society, which had a ceremony of its own, and which, while based partly on age in being constituted of young men, was outside and independent of the scheme of the benan"wu, with which it had no, or only indirect, relation, and with whose working out it must in some measure have conflicted. Such a society, which would be a true society in being based on a membership determined by choice, purchase, initiation, or supernatural experience, — in other words, by selection, would be of a type of organization quite distinct from the ordinary Gros Ventre or Arapaho age-company performing in the course of its existence an entire series of tribal ceremonies, but would have abundant parallels in other ceremonial societies on the Plains and elsewhere. Its presence would therefore be readily explainable as an incipient intrusion due to the cultural influence of some other tribe, the chief objection to such an explanation being the occurrence of the star-dance also among the Arapaho, but without a known association with a special society. This suggested character of the Gros Ventre star-society and star-dance fits the facts, but is after all only hypothetical; and altogether the relation of the ceremony to the remainder of the Gros Ventre ceremonial organizations is not yet clear.

The star-dance as formerly held is said to have lasted four days and nights. There might be further subsequent dancing. At the beginning of the ceremony, the dancers went to four places at the camp-circle facing or representing the four cardinal directions, and at each place danced before the tent of a prominent man. The owner of the tent gave away property and filled a pipe for the dancers, after smoking which they proceeded to the next one. After having danced in the four places, they danced in the middle of the camp-circle. This might be in the open air, or in a lodge made of two large tents combined. The singers were four old men, who accompanied themselves on small hand drums. The dancers' wives sat behind these four old men and sang with them. The dancer's relatives at times went to them and danced with them, taking their rattles and temporarily using them. The dancers' bodies seem to have been variously decorated; but they had no distinctive regalia except rattles. These were alike in general character, being loop-shaped, and decorated with gaudy paint and attachments, but there seems to have been no attempt at making them uniform. The dancing-lodge was elliptical, with the door towards the east and a fire near the western end. The singers were at this end, and the dancers near them, in two lines, along the sides of the lodge, facing each other. In dancing

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

[146] they did not stay in one place, but at times moved about. They shook their rattles constantly. They did not sing, but uttered a pressed-out "Hah." Two atsaan (assistants or servants of the dance) attended near the door. [624] They brought back such of the dancers as became exhausted from lack of sleep and left the ceremony. Two men who had fought and struck a mounted enemy while they themselves were mounted, rode on horseback. When they went to dance, the assistants went to them and helped them dismount. If the dancers were inactive, these two men went about among them to make them arise. If the dancers remained on the ground, they struck them with their whips. The spectators outside lifted up the bottom of the tent and looked underneath; or, as the tent was not very high (the lodge being roofless), those who were on horseback looked over it.

534 293 The Gros Ventre star-rattles consist of a tube of rawhide, an inch or less in diameter, bent on itself into a hoop three or four inches across, and attached to a stick handle half a foot or more in length. Apparently one end of the tube projects out from the hoop forming the head of the rattle, sufficiently to allow the stick to be inserted. The rawhide is painted, and ornamented with three or five bunches of feathers. The handle is wrapped with cloth, the upper end of which usually is cut into a small fringe at the base of the head of the rattle, while the lower end hangs free beyond the handle. The general outline of the rattle is similar to the Arapaho star-rattle, this having a round or kite-shaped flat head at the end of the handle. The hoop feature is, however, wanting in the Arapaho rattles, which [531] are without a perforation. The Gros Ventre decorations of their rattles — whether feathers, cloth attachments, or painting — are usually crude and gaudy. It seems that the rattles now in use are a degenerate modern form. [197] In the majority of cases the feathers attached are dyed: some are cut from the quill. This indicates a recent modifying influence. Many of the feathers are cut off transversely. This may or may not be an old feature. The piece shown in Fig. 31 has least of the base qualities of these rattles, and is a probable approximation to the older type.

Of some of the specimens to be seen in the Museum, descriptions are here given.

Fig. 31 (50-1783). Handle covered with red flannel, which hangs below the handle about two feet. Fringe of same at base of head, and same forms periphery of head. Rawhide of head painted blue, red on inside of loop. A string appears to have been wound around the head while the hide was fresh, and removed after the painting, leaving radiating white depressions. Head ornamented at top and sides with three bunches of four black-and-white, squarish, half-downy feathers attached by thongs. At the top there is also an eagle-feather. Handle wound with thong, forming at the end a loop to pass over the wrist. The head of this rattle was said to represent a star.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

534 The large amount of individual variation within the limits of the general type characterizing these rattles occurs apparently also among the Arapaho star-rattles.

796 In the war-dance as it was held when first introduced, there were two men who had wands representing swords, and several wearing the familiar [293] belts of crow-feathers with tails falling behind and projections at the lower part of the back. As among the Arapaho, these belts are referred to the [534] crow. A drum was used, made of a cottonwood board or slab bent into a circle, covered both above and below with horse-skin, and hung on four sticks. Four drumsticks went with it, one of which belonged to the owner of the drum, the three others to three different individuals. The sides of the drum were covered, half with red cloth and half with blue, and the skin was painted half blue and half yellow. When the men who owned the swords, the crow-belts, and the drum, gave these away, which they generally did at [431] the same time, a dance was held. The new owners, in turn, by giving the objects to their successors, would furnish the occasion for another performance of the dance.

The war-dancers dressed quite variously. Some wore skunk-skin strips around the leg below the knee, beaded, and with small bells attached. Some wore similar strips around the head. Others had the well-known upright head-dress of deer-tail hair. Some carried fans of eagle-tails; some, whips; some, painted sticks with attached feathers. The dancing went on in a lodge similar to that of the star-dancers. The owner of the drum had his tent near this lodge in the middle of the camp-circle, and the members of the dance went to him to eat. If the head man of the star-dancers was popular, he was asked by the rival war-company to pitch his tent in the middle of the camp-circle, near the owner of the war-dance drum. There are said to have been no assistants in this ceremony, nor any old men as singers; but four of the wives of the dancers were selected to sing. The two men [624 with swords (kakaat) had functions similar to those of the two mounted men 626] with whips in the star-dance. They urged the laggard dancers to get up, and, if they fell down, struck them with their wands. If the man thus struck bore the blow like a man, as the Indians call it, the sword-bearer made him a present; but if he became angry he received nothing, and appears to have been looked upon with ridicule or contempt.

The war-dance as at present given is different from the form described. It is no longer a young men's dance, nor confined to a certain group. All the people of the tribe take part in it. It is very similar in general character to the present-day Arapaho crow-dance, as well as in the place it occupies in the life of the people. Among the Gros Ventre it is now the only dance held.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Recently these two bodies of young men performing respectively the star-dance and the war-dance have supplanted entirely the older, more numerous age-companies. In late years they have taken the place of the age-companies in the ceremonies connected with the erection of the sun-dance lodge. There was then considerable rivalry between them, and it is said that a member of either company who should take part with the other would be abused by his companions, and perhaps have his clothes torn. Recently also the two groups have had certain social functions, which among most Plains tribes are in the hands of tribal bodies or societies. They had charge of the moving of the camp-circle and of locating it. If a man disapproved of their selection, or pitched his tent elsewhere than they directed, they overturned it, and perhaps destroyed his property or killed his horses. If buffalo were seen and others than themselves went ahead and killed them, these two companies cut both the meat and the skin of such game into small pieces.

The Fly-Dance.

The fly-dance (nouba^{n}w^{n}), the first of the dances, seems to have been regarded in some ways as preliminary to the series, rather than part of it, somewhat like the Arapaho kit-fox and star dances. The dancers were called noubân ("flies"). They were young men, sometimes described as boys. Apparently they were of an age where many or all of them were still unmarried, for no mention of their wives participating in the ceremony is made. The duration of the dance is not quite sure. It is said, like all the other ceremonies, to have continued four days; but another informant gave one day as the length of the ceremony. It is not clear whether or not a lodge was erected for the ceremony. In any case, however, the dance was performed outside of the camp-circle. A prominent feature seems to have been the food cooked by the relatives of the young dancers, and brought to the dancing-place. In distinction from what occurred in the other dances, "grandfathers" were secured very easily for this ceremony, which goes to show the light regard in which it was held by the elder men. The old men of the tribe are said to have gone out to the dancing-place, and, on being selected by groups of dancers as "grandfathers," to have accepted at once.

The dancing went on during the day. The dancers were practically naked; and their entire body, as customary in Arapaho and Gros Ventre ceremonies, was painted over. A common style of painting, or perhaps the characteristic one of the dance, was red, with a white stripe on the face and another on the belly. The pledger of the dance (yenouhuxtj^{t}; Arapaho, yanahut^{t}) was painted yellow, with corresponding black stripes. After the

l: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 painting, an old man took the lead, followed by the pledger, and he by the dancers in file. All the dancers carried small hoops ornamented with quill-embroidery and with small feathers. These hoops were carried on sticks. When the old man stopped, the dancers gathered in a circle about him to dance. They took hold of the corners of their robes, and flapped them like wings, buzzing and humming like mosquitoes. After they had done this four times, they lay on the ground on their faces. Beyond the small hoops there seem to have been no regalia. There were also neither whistles, rattles, nor drums used, except that the "grandfathers" each had a leafy branch (as of willow, cottonwood, or cherry), which they shook, rustling it in time to the singing.

[293] [534]

Fig. 32 (50-1839). Fly-dance Horn. Length, 18 cm.

Towards evening the dancers went to one side of the camp-circle, but still outside of it. There they danced. Going west of the camp-circle, they danced there, then to the side opposite to that where they had begun, and finally to the east or opening of the camp. When they had danced four times here, all the people had retired to their tents for the night, and all outdoor work had been done. The dancers immediately started out in all directions, looking for people. If they saw any one, they pursued him until they overtook him. They carried cactus-spines and sharp claws, with which they pricked him. If he succeeded in reaching a tent, they walked around outside, pelting the tent with pebbles. It is said that if the person attacked fanned himself, as he would for flies, the dancers would not sting him. In all their actions in this part of the ceremony, the dancers seem to have imitated flies or mosquitoes. Going about among the tents, they also took meat hanging outside, cooked it, and ate their fill. They also played and ran races until they were tired.

[293]

Fig. 33 (50-1936 a). Fly-dance Hoop. Diameter, 8 cm.

[787] As to the origin of the dance, it is said that once an old man was asleep, when he dreamed this dance. The fly that gave him the ceremony was a mosquito. It directed him to institute the dance, and showed him how it should be conducted.

[293] Fig. 32 shows a small mountain-goat horn, painted over red, used in this dance as one of the implements for pricking or scratching.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Fig. 33 shows one of the small quill-wrapped hoops carried on a stick in the fly-dance. It is about three inches across, and lacks the feathers once attached to it. The hoop is not continuous, but consists of four slightly curved sticks. Each of these is wound with yellow quills, and in the middle with black (really dark-brown) fibres. The quill-wrapping encloses a sinew strand, which passes from one stick to the other, holding them together into a flexible, somewhat four-cornered hoop. At each of the four dark marks an eagle-plume was formerly attached, and in addition an eagle-feather (specimen Museum No. 50 1936b) was hung from the hoop. This hoop was made, for the man from whom it was obtained, at the time he took part in the fly-dance. 796 293

The Crazy-Dance.

The second ceremony, the crazy-dance, corresponds pretty closely to the Arapaho crazy-dance. When it was summer, and the time came to make the ceremony in fulfilment of the pledge previously given, the different bands of the tribe gathered in a single camp-circle. Certain men, leaving this camp, then went out to select a suitable site for the dance. When they had found this, the camp started for the place, while they made piles of buffalo-chips in a circle, indicating the place for the camp. The company about to make the ceremony gathered at night, and, taking a pipe of black stone, went stealthily to the tent of an old man whom they had selected to put up the lodge (that is, direct the ceremony) for them. They entered his tent while he was sleeping, woke him, and handed him the pipe. When he signified his acceptance by taking it, they kissed him in thanks, and made him presents. After he had smoked the pipe, he told them to obtain "grandfathers," which they did. 796

When the preparations had begun to be made, crows and owls were killed by the dancers, because they used their feathers. The dancers' regalia consisted of anklets of badger-skin and of quill-embroidered leg-lets, to both of which four crow-feathers and buffalo-fetlocks, or antelope-hoofs, were attached as ornaments and rattles. Around the head they wore a narrow strip of skin embroidered with quill-work, to which an owl's head was tied on one side. Around their necks hung another quill-embroidered thong, at the end of which was a whistle of eagle-wing bone. A buffalo robe painted red was worn. A round hole was cut in this through which the head was put, so that the dancers did not have to hold the garment in place. The piece cut out for the head was not entirely detached, but left hanging down the back. Two long streamers of skin hung down the back [825] [292] [534]

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

●796 from this part of the robe. At the end of each of these, a bunch of owl-feathers, or rather a piece of owl-skin, was attached. The dancers carried bows, to each end of which seven crow-feathers were tied. Down was [411] fastened to the bowstring at several places. At the handle of the bow a strip of bear-skin, owl-feathers, and some sage were fastened with a buck-skin thong. Four arrows accompanied each bow. One had a metal point, which subsequently was made more effective by medicine. The three other arrows were blunt, or had wooden points that had been chewed soft so as to be harmless.

The pledger, and three other men called "brothers" (hinähäbyiitou), who sat apart from the other dancers in the lodge and acted somewhat differently on certain occasions, had bows that were unornamented, except for the down on the string. These four men wore their robes turned so that the hair was outside, whereas the other dancers wore the dressed side out.

[302] All the dancers were painted entirely red. Their hair was daubed with white paint. They stopped the left ear with a mushroom, such as was used [824] for tinder, and put paint (apparently white) over the ear and the entire left side of the face.

Four young men who would be good workers were selected to be the assistants or servants (atsaan) of this company. They brought wood and water, and performed other services.

[346] The lodge for this dance is described as having been made of travois or tent poles about which tent-skins were drawn. It was open to the east. There was a fire about in the centre. Facing the opening of the lodge was a small partial enclosure or screen constructed on dog-travois. In this were the pledger and his three companions, the "brothers." The dancers are said to have occupied the northern half of the wall in the dancing-lodge; the "grandfathers," behind whom sat the dancers' wives, the southern half. As among the Arapaho, the dancers were divided into two sections; the tall men toward the rear and the short men toward the front, of the lodge. These two divisions competed against each other in the races to follow. The dancers' bows were stood up in the ground in a row just beyond the fire.

During the four days of the dance, the dancers, every morning before sunrise, went to their "grandfathers" to be painted. Apparently they went to their "grandfathers'" tents, and not to the dancing-lodge, for this [302] purpose. The dancers' wives went with them. They were naked, and [824] were painted too. No one but the "grandfather" looked at them. Before [783] being painted, the dancers made incense of sage-leaves on burning charcoal. They also rubbed their bodies with fragrant fir or balsam leaves

Crushed and mixed with fat.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

crushed and mixed with fat. When the painting was completed, food from the young men's parents was brought to the old men. The old men also presented their "grandsons" with food. The food was then eaten. During the day the dancers and their "grandfathers" were in the dancing-lodge. In connection with the beginning of the dancing, a badger-skin was used. This was entirely wrapped, except at the head, in a flat rope of rawhide, half of which (one side?) was painted red, the other half black. This skin lay on the ground before the pledger of the dance, in or in front of his small enclosure, with the head toward the east. Glowing charcoal was laid before the row of bows, and sweet-grass (niasō; Arapaho, niox[a]) was put on the coals to incense the bows. The pledger, rising, took the badger-skin, and, holding it with the head pointing forward, walked slowly around the inside of the lodge, and then to the smouldering incense, over which he made four passes with the skin; then returning to his enclosure, he laid the badger-skin on the ground. Taking out a stick tied in with the skin, he struck the skin as hard as he could. At this, a singer at the middle of the back or western end of the lodge — who held a stick as high as a man, wrapped with buckskin, and with buffalo or antelope hoofs hanging along its length — struck the end on the ground, thus beginning the rattling that accompanied the singing. The old men began to sing, while the dancers simultaneously blew their whistles, and cried "Yaa!" The old men stood up and sang, and the dancers went to them, each of them to his "grandfather," usually three or four to one old man. The old men then drilled them, showing them how to dance and how to handle their bows and their robes. It seems that the dancers stood at the opening of the lodge, somewhat on the south. After dancing to four songs, during which they whistled and at the end of each of which they cried "Yaa," they dashed off in a race around a monument that had been erected at some distance to the southeast. If one of the division of tall men returned to the lodge first and thus won the race for his side, the short men filled pipes for the tall men and presented them to them to smoke, and, of course, *vice versâ*.

After the cessation of the dancing, and when it was dark, old men cried out to the people to retire to their tents, the dancers' wives being about to go out with the "grandfathers." As the women went out, the dancers stood in the lodge in a circle, singing loudly and shouting in conclusion. The "grandfathers" went to the north of the camp-circle, where they stood in a row. Their "grand-daughters," that is to say, the dancers' wives, each carrying a pipe, followed them, and stood behind them. They addressed their "grandfathers," praying them to take the pipe and smoke it. After much persuasion, the old man accepted the pipe. Then the woman prayed to him again, asking him to pray in her behalf, that she might be

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 successful and happy in this world, in acquiring wealth and in living a long life. Then the old man pointed the pipe east, south, west, north, and up, lit it, and smoked it. Then wiping it, and dropping the ashes out of it, he held the pipe up toward the sky, and prayed for his "grand-daughter," then laid it on the ground. The woman was naked, except for her robe. She then begged the old man to give her the medicine called tawaanasóó (the Arapaho hácawaanaxu). It is said that sometimes the old man gave her none, but undoubtedly it was customary for him to give it to her. Only a small piece was used.

After this the women returned to the dancing-lodge, where their husbands were waiting for them. They did not go together, but singly. A boy or young man had been selected to stand outside the door, and watch for the women returning. As a woman came near enough to be recognized, he called into the lodge that she was coming, whereupon the dancers
[576] came out. Her husband and all the others kissed her. Her husband kissed the "grandfather" also. One by one the other women came back, and were received in the same way. If the woman had received medicine, she gave half to her husband. He chewed it up, and then rubbed himself over his body with it.

For four nights this appears to have been done. On all but the last night, it is said, that, on the return of the women, they and their husbands left the lodge and returned to their tents to sleep, to be painted again next morning. The last night, after the women and their "grandfathers" had returned, the old men picked out from the row of bows their "grandsons'," and, standing north and south of the fire, danced, holding the bows; their "grandsons" meanwhile dancing with them, but the women sitting in their places.

These observances connected with the giving of medicine by the "grandfathers" to the dancers' wives are found, without essential modification, in the three following dances, as well as in this. It will be seen that they are considerably more developed than the corresponding practices among the Arapaho.[1]

[1] In the Arapaho crazy and dog dances the procedure is not carried quite so far. Dorsey has described almost the same practice as occurring in the Arapaho sun-dance. What takes place on this occasion in the Arapaho crazy and dog dances has been summarized in Vol. XVIII, pp. 193, 200, of the Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History. The following somewhat more precise account is appended for comparison with the Gros Ventre. The "grandfather" and the dancer's wife (who is naked, except, presumably, for a robe) go off. As or before they go it is said aloud, "He gives his wife away." She is given, theoretically, not to her husband's ceremonial "grandfather," but to "the four old men" that play a part in esoteric Arapaho ritual. The woman prays, asking the old man for life. He spits medicine on the ground four times, once for each of the four old men. She lies down before him, stretching her legs and arms, facing him. He asks "the grandfather above" — apparently "our father" — to look, and puts away his desire. Restraining himself, he covers her with a robe, draws her up, and leads her back, pushing her gently before him. When she rejoins her husband, the latter says, "Hahó'u" ("thanks") four times. That this custom of the Arapaho and Gros Ventre is not confined to them, is evident from a well-known passage in Lewis and Clark.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

All that has been described took place for four successive days. While it is not clearly so stated, it seems likely that the four nights on which medicine was given to the dancers' wives constituted the four-days' period of painting and dancing. On the fourth day, after the dancing, certain special spectacular ceremonies were gone through, analogous to those which in all the succeeding dances terminated the ceremony. In this dance, however, a second period of four days, in which the dancers acted in their assumed capacity of being crazy or foolish, followed these spectacular ceremonies of the fourth day. 796

On this fourth day, two prominent chiefs, noted for their success in war, were selected. They held bared knives, and two tent-poles were brought to them. Each of them recounted four of his most distinguished coups. They then cut up the tent-poles into small pieces, and piled them up at the fireplace of the lodge and set them on fire. The flames blazed up high, while the dancers stood north and south of the fire with their "grandfathers" and danced. The fire was kept up and tended so that all the wood would be simultaneously consumed. The dancers' relatives held them by the hair or body, wherever they could seize them, while the dancers stood like horses trying to break loose, and blew their whistles. Each tried to be the first to rush into the fire. They seem to have moved toward the fire four times without entering it. The fourth time, at a signal, they were released, and rushed into the fire, dancing and stamping it with their bare feet until they had put it out. Medicine was put on the skin, and no one is said to have been burned; but men have fainted in the fire. One informant, who said that he had been the first to jump into the fire, stated that the soles of his feet became very hot, but that his skin was not burned. [554] [789]

After the fire had been put out, the dancers went to their "grandfathers," who prayed over their bows, put medicine on them, and gave them to the young men. The old men then sang and the dancers marched around in a circle for four songs. At the end of the last song, they ran out of the lodge, racing to a monument, which had been erected by the young men of other companies, at some distance to the southeast, and back again to the lodge. As they returned, each passed between two men standing near the entrance of the lodge, to whom he gave his bow as he ran between them. One of these two men was the tallest man that could be secured; the other was as short as possible. One of them took the bows of the tall division of dancers; the other, of the short division. It is said that these two men received bows until they had a large armful, but that they never made a mistake in taking a bow from a man of the other division. It appears, however, that the racers carried their bows in their right or left 796 526

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 hand, according as they belonged to one division or the other. Vessels of water were ready to pour on the racers in order to cool them. The four 526 "brothers," the dancers previously separate from the rest at the eastern end of the lodge, did not run with the crowd, but started out slowly together, their faces covered with their robes. They trotted at a slow pace over the same course as the other dancers. As they returned, long after the crowd, 796 the boys, young men, and young women of the camp, had gathered on both sides, and pelted them with buffalo-chips until they reached the dancing-lodge. There is, in this slow following of the pledger and his three companions, a reminiscence of the white-fool, the dancer of highest degree in the Arapaho crazy-lodge, who on all occasions contrasts by his slow [431] movements with the other dancers.[1] After the return of all the dancers, they presented horses loaded with property to their "grandfathers," and these made similar presents to them. These gifts seem to have been payments to the old men for their instruction and painting, and to have been made at the conclusion of the part of the ceremony which was under their control. From this time on, the dancers' wives returned to their tents, and took no further part in the ceremony.

After this followed two observances. It is not certain which of the two came first. A crowd of people were waiting for the dancers in the open. The dancers, wearing their best moccasins put on loosely without being tied, left the lodge; and the waiting people, mostly women and children, ran after them, pulling off their moccasins, and, when they could not succeed in doing so otherwise, seizing their feet, and tripping them as they went. The dancers did not try to escape, or save their moccasins, but [888] allowed them to be taken. Or, again, an old man who was poor was selected, and, having been given a pipe to smoke in order that he might 796 accept, he went to the east of the camp-circle. A buffalo robe was brought, 431 incensed four times with sweet-grass placed on burning charcoal or buffalo-chips, and then placed over the old man, with the hair side out, as, bent over, he knelt on the ground. The dancers gathered about him, and

[1] According to an Arapaho account obtained, somewhat different from those previously utilized, there are two white-fools, not one. It is not clear which information is more correct. [114 The white-fools always follow the dancers. If one of the ordinary dancers should be behind them, he would become unable to move. This is the result of any violation of a rule of the ceremony by a participant. In such cases the white-fools have the power to cure them by 171 taking off their owl-feather head-bands, and rubbing them over the body with them. The white-fools are addressed as heiçâbihin ("sisters-in-law," strictly, "brother or sister-in-law" of opposite sex from the speaker). The dancers, to look at a person, put their head to the ground, and pretend to look with their rump. They throw dung into tents, calling it "food." If people look at them through awl-holes in a tent, they at once shoot the tent in that place. Going out on the prairie, they say, "Let us not shoot into the air," and shoot up. When the arrows fall in plain sight, they cannot find them; if they fall into brush or tall grass, they find them at once. They imitate, often with obscene renderings, anything that they hear, such as a person's speech, or a dog's bark. They paralyze dogs by pointing at them an arrow to which a person's speech, or a dog's bark. They paralyze dogs by pointing at them an arrow to which teetsâtcei is attached. They give the dogs they kill to their "grandfathers" to eat. As soon as they take off their head-bands, they become rational. Mooney's account of the Cheyenne and Arapaho crazy-dance, which seems to refer chiefly to the former, mentions two white-fools; compare Ghost-Dance Religion, op. cit., 1033.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the old man who had directed the ceremony stood by him. Until this time, the dancers' bows, which were to play so prominent a part in the dance of the next four days, had been unstrung. Each of the dancers carried a pair of moccasins in his belt, or perhaps some other property. The pledger now came up to have his bow stretched. The old man in charge of the dance, receiving the bow from him, rested it on the back of the crouching old man. Four times he bent it, and the fourth time slipped the string into its notch. Then he untied the three arrows from the bow and gave them to the young man, who put his moccasins or other gift under the croucher's robe. Another and another dancer came up with his bow, until all their bows had been strung on the back of the old man, and his robe swelled out from the accumulating gifts.

While the bows were being strung, the people took down the dancing-lodge, which, by the time of the return of the dancers to the centre of the camp-circle, was completely gone. The dancers now stood in a circle while the old man in charge of the dance, or, according to another account, two of the "grandfathers," sang for them. The long stick with rattling hoofs was shaken, and the young men danced for four songs. At the end of each song, they aimed an arrow at the sky, making a motion of shooting, and crying "Yaa!" At the end of the fourth song, all shot as high up as they could. As the arrows fell back they did not try to avoid them, and, it is said, were never hit. By this time the people had watered their horses and done whatever outdoor work was necessary, and retired to their tents, for, immediately after shooting into the air, the dancers rushed in all directions; and from this moment they had full liberty about the camp, except indoors, for four days. Any one seen outside of a tent was shot with the soft blunt arrows. He was pursued amid shots and blowing of whistles. If a man was caught, he was made to sit down, and all the dancers, seeing what was happening, gathered. If he rode, he was pursued on horseback until he was overtaken, whereupon he would say, "Do not wait: I will not give you a dance," meaning "Wait: I will give you a dance." Then they stood about him, and he sang and they danced. At the end of his song, every one shouted "Yaa!" and kicked him until he was knocked over. Perhaps he would say, "Kick me hard." Then they would barely touch him. Sometimes he said, "Now you must kill me." If, however, he said, "Do not hurt me," he would be hurt severely. Scarcely any one went out during these four days, except, of course, the dancers' "grandfathers," who were exempt from annoyance.

The pointed arrow tied to each bow, and ordinarily not loosened, was prayed over for each young man by his "grandfather;" and a piece of root esteemed as exceedingly powerful, and called tjitjäätsä" (Arapaho, tee-

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

441 tcäätcei), was attached to the shaft just behind the point. This root is the
796 well-known poisonous wild parsnip. The arrow-point seems to have been painted blue. Even a slight scratch with this arrow was, on account of the power of the medicine, supposed to cause fits and death. The theory was, that if any one became angry under the unbridled annoyances of the crazy-dancers, and attempted to resist, he would be shot with this arrow. It is, of course, extremely unlikely that this ever actually occurred, or, if it did, the offender was, as among the Arapaho, no doubt immediately cured by the dancers from his imaginary convulsions or paralysis. If buffalo were driven among the tents of the camp-

[293]

Fig. 34.

Fig. 35.

Fig. 34 (50-1884 b). Crazy-dance Regalia. Length, 29 cm.
Fig. 35 (50-1884 c). Crazy-dance Regalia. Length, 23 cm.

circle, they were shot with these arrows, and are believed to have been killed, even if only very slightly wounded. Dogs were also killed in this way.

796 After four days of this playing, the ceremony ended. At its conclusion
431 the bows were given away to boys who were relatives of the dancers; but the other regalia were kept, as the dance was not infrequently repeated.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

293
796
171

More regalia of the crazy-dance than of any other ceremony were obtained for the Museum; but not a single set secured is complete. The Arapaho do not keep their crazy-dance bows after the ceremony, so that, under the present much more complete disappearance of Gros Ventre regalia, the preservation of a bow (see Plate XII) is very fortunate, though it lacks string, arrows, the sage for the handle, and the buckskin thong for wrapping the handle. The remaining ornaments of the bow have been re-attached to it. None of the peculiar crazy-dance robes or capes seem to be any longer in existence. Descriptions and drawings by the Indians show

[293]

Fig. 36.

Fig. 37.

Fig. 36 (50 1884 c.). Crazy-dance Regalia. Length, 37 cm.
Fig. 37 (50 1884 b.). Crazy-dance Regalia. Length, 25 cm.

that they must have been very similar to those of the Arapaho. The Gros Ventre, however, declare theirs to have been painted entirely red; those of the Arapaho are part red and part white. Two pieces of feathered owl-skin

293
796

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 293 for the ends of the streamers of this robe have been preserved in a few sets of these regalia. The head-band, leglets, anklets, and feather and fur attachments of the bow, also exist in two or more sets in the Museum. They agree entirely, so that only the set shown in Figs. 34, 35, 36, and 37, need be described. This set lacks only the whistle and whistle necklace, which have been supplied from another set (see Plate XII).

[411] The bow (see Plate XII) is three feet long, an inch wide, nearly rectangular in cross-section, unbacked, and slightly reddened. At each end is tied a piece of skin slit into seven fringes, to the end of each of which is wrapped a crow-wing feather. At the middle of the bow is tied a strip of bear-skin a foot long and an inch or less wide. With this are six owl-feathers, — all to be held to the bow, it will be remembered, together with some sage, by a thong. The pieces of owl-skin for the streamers on the robe (Fig. 34) need no comment. The anklets of badger-skin are (Fig. 35) a foot long, an inch or more wide, tied together by two thongs, and near one end have four small hoofs attached. The head, leg, and neck bands differ from one another only in length and in attachments. They consist of a strip of skin a quarter of an inch wide, completely wrapped with yellow porcupine-quills. In four places are areas extending about half an inch, that are covered with dark-brown fibres. Attached to the head-band (Fig. 36) is part of a small owl-skin, including one of the mandibles. The whistle on the neck-band (Plate XII) is made of the wing-bone of an eagle or similar bird, and appears to be unornamented. It has been broken. At one end of the leg-bands (Fig. 37) are four small crow-feathers, attached by red-painted thongs.

The Kit-Fox Dance.

796 The kit-fox dance, the next in order after the crazy-dance, was called nouha"wu; and the dancers, nouhunen ("kit-fox men"). In its general course this ceremony was exactly analogous to the first part of the crazy-dance. For four nights, the dancers' wives went out with their "grandfathers" to receive medicine, and for four days, the dancers themselves danced in the lodge erected in the centre of the camp-circle. On the fourth day of the ceremony, or "after four days," as the Indians say, the dancers went to the tent of a prominent chief and danced at his door, which was [431] equivalent to asking him for gifts. The chief would give them horses and other property. Three other chiefs were accorded the same distinction. The camp thereupon broke, and the dancers, going ahead, put the property which they had received down on the ground in a row. The camp coming up, the brave men of the tribe made a charge on these things, as if they were

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

an enemy; and each took from among the property as nearly as possible such objects as he had actually captured in war. One who had stolen horses would take a horse; one who had taken a gun from an enemy would pick out a gun. While this was being done, or soon after, the dancers were dancing, concluding with a race similar to that in the crazy-dance. This marked the end of the ceremony. 796

There were several degrees of distinction in this dance. Two men had crooked lances wrapped with otter-skin. In four places these lances were tied about with small strips of white fur from which a pair of eagle-feathers hung. These lances were called nouçä"ts'ta". Two other lances were straight, and wrapped with jack-rabbit skin. These also bore feathers. A single dancer had a rattle of the globular shape common on the Plains. Half of the rattle was painted red, and half blue; and feathers were attached both to the top of the rattle and to the bottom of its handle. These regalia of honor were given to men renowned in war. A pipe was brought such a man, and if he thought himself entitled to the honor, and was ready to accept it, he took the pipe. If a man felt that others were really braver than himself, or had some other reason, he refused to take the pipe. One informant stated that he had declined the proffered honor because his wife's brother had recently died. The rank and file of the kit-fox dancers are said to have worn belts of prairie-dog skin. How far these corresponded with the biitaha"wu belts of the Arapaho is uncertain. The fur-wrapped crooked and straight lances are certainly similar to the crooked and straight lances indicating the second and third degrees in the Arapaho biitaha"wu. 796 554 293 [534]

Two girls took part in this ceremony. They were girls who were much thought of and beloved by their relatives. One of the dancers carried a kit-fox skin, the inside of which was painted blue. His companion had the rattle that has been described. While he rattled, the other, holding the skin by the neck and the tail, pointed it at the other dancers. These ran off, and this seems to have been the signal for the beginning of the dance. The two girls followed these two men everywhere. Their parents and relatives gave away great quantities of property in the dancing-lodge. Something similar is found in one of the Cheyenne society-dances, in which four young women accompanied the dancers from place to place. 796 857 593 [171]

Nothing was learned about the origin of the kit-fox dance, except that it is said to have been given by the kit-foxes, which is like what the Cheyenne tell of their analogous society. 796

A neck-band of badger-skin is the only object secured said to have been used in the kit-fox dance. To the end of it a tip of whitish rabbit-fur is attached. The lower part of the piece, which bears this rabbit-fur, hangs down the dancer's back. The upper portion, which is about four inches wide, is slit for a distance of a foot. Through this slit the head is inserted. [292]

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The Dog-Dance.

796 Next after the kit-fox dance is the dog-dance, hotibya"wu. The dancers were called hotibyi ("dogs"). What has been said about the general course of the kit-fox ceremony applies also to this. On the last day, the dancers danced before the tents of several prominent men of the tribe for gifts. Then, going ahead of the route which the camp would take, they spread out this property and waited. When the camp arrived, a stick with rattles attached, similar to that used for the same purpose in the crazy-dance, was struck on the ground by one of the old men, whereupon the singing commenced, and the dancers danced four times. At the end of the fourth song, they raced, during which time, if not before, the people of the camp, it appears, seized the property.

The dog-dance is said to have been given by a dog. A long-haired dog was left behind when the camp left. An old man going into the hills to acquire supernatural power saw the dog following the trail, and, wondering, went to see, and pitied him. He went to sleep by him; and the dog, knowing the old man's pity for him, pitied him, and, appearing to him in a dream, said he would give him a dance, the dog-dance. He especially described to him the highest degree of the dance, the tsööyanchi, which seems to be a representation of himself.

796 292 The dancers wore a strip of skin or red cloth on which four round figures were embroidered in quills, and which passed over one shoulder and under the other, the lower end dragging on the ground. At this end there was a hole, through which, in time of war, a stick was stuck. The wearers then did not flee, even if to remain resulted in their being killed. These scarfs appear to have resembled closely the scarfs worn by the Arapaho dancers of the second and third degree in the same ceremony. They were called naa"tsöiya". In addition the dancers wore bunchy head-dresses of owl feathers and of two eagle-feathers. They also carried rattles of a stick on which hoofs were hung.

796 554 292 Two men were of higher degree, that is to say, honored on account of bravery. These were the "shaggy dogs," and were called tsööyanchin, the dialectic equivalent of the Arapaho teiiyanchina". Among the Arapaho, however, there is only one dancer of this highest degree. As among the Arapaho, these men did not get up, or take part in the dancing, unless they were struck, or driven to it. They wore a shirt all over which circles were fastened in *appliqué*. To the centre of each circle, feathers were attached. On their heads they had owl-feather bunches like those of the rank and file of the dancers; and around their necks were long strings of bear-claws.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

They also had rattles similar to those of the rank and file of dog-dancers,— a row of small hoofs attached to a stick, — except that the rattles of the tsöǫ̈yanchin were forked instead of single. In addition they each had a long wooden whistle. 796 554 292

Some of the "grandfathers" are said also to have worn scarfs, like the dancers; but as these were made of pieces of old tent-skins, undecorated and ugly, it is probable that this action was intended to be ridiculous.

The "shaggy dog" took his whistle, forked rattle, and head-dress with him when he went to the lodge, but left his crow-feather-covered shirt behind. When he was in the lodge, a woman was sent for the shirt. She put it on, and went to the lodge, wearing it. Standing before the "shaggy dog," she pulled it off, and, holding it open at the bottom, moved four times as if to put it on him. The fourth time, she drew it over and on him. The place of the two "shaggy dogs" in the lodge was at the western end, the middle of the back.

The dog-lodge is described as having been constructed like the crazy-lodge, and to have had the same small screen or partial enclosure at the eastern end, facing the entrance of the lodge. 796 [346]

The beginning of the dancing was as follows. One of the old men who would sing, went in a circle four times. He was followed by the two "shaggy dogs." The old man began to sing and dance, and the two "shaggy dogs" whistled. When they moved to any distance away from him, the old man motioned and clicked to them, as one does to a dog. Then they danced toward him. After this, the rank and file of the dancers stood up and danced. Four servants of the dance, said to have been chiefs, sat in front of the small enclosure at the east. When they thought that the dancers had danced long enough, one of these went among them and said, "Friends, rest." Thereupon they all stopped dancing, standing in their places. Then this man told a war story. When the singers thought that the dancers had rested sufficiently, they began to sing and the members of the company took up their dancing again. Altogether they danced four times, being made to rest each time by the exhortation of an old man who told a war story. This dancing took place four days, during which period the dancers were supposed not to sleep.

When at night the dancers left the lodge and danced before the tents of chiefs, begging for gifts, the two "shaggy dogs" are said to have stood by the door of the tent. It is therefore probable that the body of the dancers formed a circle in front of the tent, as they do among the Arapaho on this occasion. When the owner of the tent had given them property, he pulled at the flaps hanging at the sides of the feather-covered shirts of the "shaggy dogs," whereupon they sat down and the dancing ceased. This dancing for gifts is said to have continued for four entire nights. [431]

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 As in the other ceremonies, the dancers were painted over the entire
302 body. It does not seem that the long-continued painting of the Arapaho
562 dog-dance, in connection with which the relationship between the dancers' wives and "grandfathers" found its chief expression in this tribe, existed among the Gros Ventre. The women, however, took considerable part in the ceremony as in the others, being painted with their husbands, sitting in the lodge and singing, and at times putting on their regalia; whereupon the men took hold of the ends of the regalia, and their wives led them about.

796 The complete disintegration and disuse of the old ceremonial life of
178 the Gros Ventre is shown by the fact that not a single dog-dance object belonging to an ordinary dancer has been collected. It is therefore the more fortunate that the Museum has been able to complete, through Dr. Clark Wissler, a valuable set of the regalia of the highest degree of this dance. This unique group of specimens is shown in Figs. 38, 39, and 40, and Plate XIII.

796 The coat (Fig. 38) is in shape an ordinary deer-skin shirt. At the neck
292 is an edging of red flannel. On the upper arms are two short, transverse bars of white quill-embroidery, the quills laid on in diagonal zigzag stitch. At each of the sides, at the bottom of the shirt, hang two long, pointed strips, as customary on men's shirts, — the legs of the animal decoratively used. Under the armpits are similar shorter flaps. The two sides of the shirt are open from the bottom to under the arms. These open edges, the hanging strips, the lower border, and the ends of the sleeves, are ornamented with a fringe about an inch long. The lower portion of the shirt for a width of about half a foot, and the hanging strips, are painted yellow. All the remainder of the shirt has been stained brown, apparently over yellow paint. On the two sides there are in this brown area a total of 225 yellow circles about an inch and a half in diameter, which have not been painted over with the brown stain. Each of these circles is edged by white quill-work, and from its centre hangs a mutilated crow-feather by a thong. The edging of the circles is produced by using single quills as threads in an in-and-out rotary stitch. The crow-feathers have the quill broken, in from one to four places, without being severed. The vanes are for the most part considerably disarranged, as if intentionally. At the lower end the feathers are cut off square and the quill is flattened by cutting on two sides, as if to get rid of the lowest part of the vane. The quill is cut in this way so far from its natural base that it is entirely solid. The feathers are simply wrapped against a thong with sinew. The end of the thong projects a little beyond the sinew. The thongs on the outside of the skin average half an inch in length, and are painted yellow. Each passes through a hole in the centre of a yellow circle. Behind this, that is, on the inner side of the shirt, it is

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 knotted on itself sufficiently to keep from being pulled out. Of the circles, forty-two are on one sleeve, forty-three on the other; on the two sides of the 292 shirt there are sixty-three and seventy-seven, in seven and eight rows of from six to thirteen.

The owl-feather head-dress of this set of regalia (see Plate XIII) contains

Fig. 38 (50–4277). Dog-dance Shirt, Highest Degree. Length, 70 cm.

several hundred feathers mounted on a skin cap. This cap is of heavy skin, circular, somewhat over a foot in diameter, and surrounded by a short fringe. The inner ends of this fringe are wound with white porcupine-quills. The upper surface of the cap is painted yellow, the under side is unpainted. Two thongs hanging from the edge of the cap serve to tie it.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 292 The feathers on this cap all have the quill split nearly as far down as the vanes extend. They are attached to one or perhaps more thongs painted yellow, which form a continuous, or at least virtually continuous, expanding spiral of six or more turns from the centre of the head-dress to about one-third of the distance to the edge. This thong gathers several feathers, then passes for a short stitch through the skin of the cap, not penetrating to the under side. Thus it continues its spiral course, lying for almost its whole length on the upper surface of the cap. The feathers are all attached to it in one fundamental manner, the thong passing through a loop formed by the turning-back on itself of the cut-down end of the quill. But three variations

[284]

[534]

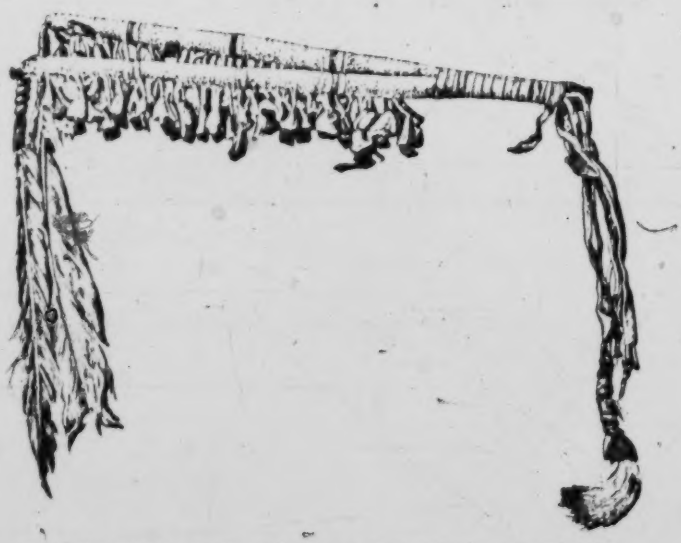


Fig. 39 (50-1789 a). Rattle of Dog-dancer, Highest-Degree. Length, 47 cm.

of this method appear. Sometimes the end of the quill is turned into itself. In other cases the end is bent forward in the same way, but laid over the outside of the quill, and lashed to it with wrapping of sinew. This sinew wrapping, however, is used also with the first method, though it is not absolutely essential. In other cases the end of the quill is bent backward on itself so that its inner side is out, and fastened in the same way. When this is done, a smaller feather has its quill inserted in the sinew wrapping holding the loop of the main feather. Why the quill should be looped backward whenever a small feather is included, and only then, is not clear. The area encircled by the thong with its hundreds of feathers strung on it is only a

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

small part of the surface of the cap. The feathers are long enough to extend beyond the outer edge of the skin as they fall. Two special, slightly longer wing-feathers of the same species of owl are separately attached near the top of the head-dress, on opposite sides, like horns, by thongs passing through the skin where their ends hang loose. These evidently correspond to the two eagle-feathers once mentioned as occurring on the owl-feather caps of the rank and file of the dog-dancers. 796 292

The rattle of the Gros Ventre tsôôyanchin (Fig. 39) is very similar to the Arapaho dog-dance rattles, its most prominent peculiarity being that it is 796 534

Fig. 40 (50-1789 b). Whistle of Dog-dancer, Highest Degree. Length, 60 cm.

bifurcated. Two sticks appear to have been joined at the handle so as to spread slightly. The sticks, where separate, are incased in skin painted yellow; at the handle they are wrapped together with a flat thong. Across each stick pass three stripes of quill-embroidery, each consisting of a red row of quills bordered on each side by white. At the end of each fork hangs an eagle-wing feather, the base of its quill covered with red cloth. Along the lower side of each fork are the small hoofs that rattle. There are on each stick about thirty-three pairs of these hoofs. Each pair is attached to a yellow-painted thong passing through the skin casing of the stick where this is joined in a sinew-sewn seam. The ends of these thongs pass through holes at the upper ends of the irregularly pyramidal-shaped hoofs. Inside the hoof, the end of thong is knotted around the middle of a little strip of red flannel or blanketing. This prevents the thong from being pulled out

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 of the hoof; at the same time the two ends of the red cloth hang out of the hoof, giving a decorative effect. At the end of the handle the skin casing 534 of the sticks emerges from under its thong wrapping, and hangs down free about two-thirds of a foot. Part of this loose strip is cut out, so as to make of the remainder a loop to pass over the wrist. In this cut-out portion are four narrow thongs,— two wound with white quills, two with red. The end of this loop-strip is fringed and quill-wound; a deer-tail, its base covered with red cloth, hangs from it.

The whistle (Fig. 40) is of wood, in which it differs from all Arapaho bäyaa^{n}wu whistles, painted yellow, and two feet long. The end farthest from the mouth is cut off diagonally almost to a point. Here is hung an eagle-feather, its base covered with red cloth. Along the middle portion of the whistle are laid two strips of red cloth, held by two sinew bands and by a long doubly wound thong wrapped with white porcupine-quills. These red strips are not quite wide enough to entirely cover the whistle. The two ends of both pieces hang free. Where the cloth ends on the whistle, toward the mouthpiece, two magpie-feathers are laid along the wood, nearly to the end, their bases being held by the last wrappings of the cloth. One or more small yellowhammer-feathers are also held by these wrappings.

Another dog-dance whistle secured (specimen Museum No. 50-1899) was said also to have been used by a tsööyanchi. Its only essential difference [822] from the piece just described is that it is painted red, whereas the previous one, like all the regalia which it accompanied, was yellow. The present whistle is one-third shorter, has the yellowhammer-feathers displayed more conspicuously, has a plain instead of a quill-wound thong to hold the red cloth, lacks the red cloth at the base of its end eagle-feather, and has this feather painted over red. All these differences, except that of general color, are either insignificant or matters of proportion.

The Nanā^{n}naha^{n}w^{u}.

796 The fifth dance is known, nearly as among the Arapaho, by the name of nanā^{n}naha^{n}w^{u}. The exact meaning of this term is not known. It is generally translated "soldiers' lodge." The dancers are called nanā^{n}nähä^{n}ts, or hiityaäa^{n}süts, which means "those who have war-sticks," the teaäa^{n}sö or Arapaho teeñox. The lodge was made, as for the other dances, of the two largest tents available, in the middle of the camp-circle, with the door towards the east. The dancers obtained medicine from their "grandfathers" through their wives at night, were painted in the morning, and danced during the day, or, according to another account, at night. In the songs of this dance the buffalo were called, and it is said that the ceremony always resulted

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

in the approach of the buffalo, even if previously there had been none in the vicinity of the camp. 796

The dancers carried representations of war-spikes or tomahawks, which apparently resembled the buffalo-shaped sticks of the first dance of the Arapaho. The sticks are described as being about as long as women's digging-sticks, and, like them, sharpened at one end. The other end, however, was bent. The stick was painted red, and a quill-embroidered strip of skin was wound around it as a handle. A buffalo-calf's tail and a bunch of buffalo-fetlocks, and no doubt other objects, were also attached. The stick was used as a rattle. 796 293 [534]

The conclusion of this ceremony presented a feature not found in the two preceding ones. According to one account, the gifts obtained by these dancers were received in payment from the spectators looking in at the lodge. After four days the camp broke, and followed the dancers. On reaching a place where the property had been laid on the ground, the people of the tribe stood in a long row, facing the east. One of the dancers filled a pipe, and selecting one of the poorest men in the camp offered it to him. When the old man took the pipe, the dancer prayed him to allow that all of his company should strike him (count coup on him). A bed of sage was then made for the old man in front of the assembled tribe. Along the edges of this bed, buffalo-chips were laid. The old man crouched on his hands and knees with his head toward the east, and, like the old man undergoing a similar humiliation in the crazy-dance, was covered with a buffalo robe the hair-side of which was turned out. The dancers faced him in a row and danced, rattling. After four songs they ran to the old man, and one after another struck him lightly, each placing beside him a moccasin or some other object, which the old man, on getting up, kept for himself. Then the dancers' "grandfathers" each picked up one of the buffalo-chips from the edges of the sage, and, when they had prepared them, one of the dancers squatted over each. Then his "grandfather," taking him by the shoulders, motioned with him four times, and the fourth time pushed him down. When they had all sat down, each "grandfather" spoke to his "grandson," telling him, "From now on, you need not be afraid to interrupt a sacred performance. You can talk obscenely to a chief, and no one will say anything to you." The people had been watching this performance, which marked the end of the dance. 888 796 [431]

The Bitahanⁿwᵘ.

As stated, this dance has been abandoned a long time, and very little information was obtained regarding it. Men are alive who have seen it, 796

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 but none are living who have taken part in it. The meaning of the term, as among the Arapaho, is unknown. One informant gave the etymology "drum-dance" (from biitaxäänaⁿ, "drum"). The dancers were called biitaxäänen. As in the preceding ceremonies, a man took part in this dance accompanied by his wife, or, if it happened to be held while he was at war, his wife took part as if he were present. Nothing is known as to the conduct of the ceremony nor as to the regalia, except that the dancers, or certain of them, carried crooked sticks wrapped with white fur. The dancers were [302] painted over their body with dots resembling hail. The dance is looked upon as having been very dangerous, as a mistake in painting or in other observances would result in death from the thunder.

It is not impossible, that, if the present Arapaho series of dances represents a more original order of arrangement than the Gros Ventre, in the development of the Gros Ventre series the biitahaⁿwᵘ was displaced by the kit-fox dance, which grew in importance from a dance of the youngest men to one of older men. This would account for the use of crooked fur-wrapped sticks in the Gros Ventre kit-fox dance as well as in their biitahaⁿwᵘ. If this was the course of events, it does not follow that the biitahaⁿwᵘ became the sixth dance of the series. It may simply have been displaced, and fallen into disuse. Lack of knowledge of the proper conduct of the ceremony would be sufficient to make the Indians afraid to undertake it. It has been stated that no informants could be found who professed to know the place of this dance in the series, and it is possible that its dangerous qualities were not due to its greater sacredness through being the dance of the oldest men, but to such lack of knowledge. On the whole it is very difficult to see how such differentiations in the order of dances as exist in the Arapaho and Gros Ventre schemes of ceremonial organization may have taken place.

The Women's Dance.

[171] The women's dance — called benuxteaⁿwᵘ, the dancers being named 796 benuxteiiçäⁿ[1] — resembles the Arapaho women's dance quite closely. The 292 dancers had on their ordinary clothing, but wore belts to which four buffalo-tails were fastened, and head-dresses which fell down the back of their heads and from which horns rose. These head-dresses are said to have been covered with feathers; but it seems possible that this statement refers only to the dancers of certain degrees, as among the Arapaho only the dancer of highest degree wears such a feather-covered head-dress. Four of the dancers wore [171] no horned head-dress, but "war-bonnets." These may have been equivalent

[1] The Gros Ventre declare that they do not know the significance of the word element benux-te-.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

171 796 [292] [887] [554] [302] [431]

to the Arapaho "white-stand" and "red-stand" head-dresses of upright feathers surrounding the head. The dancers are described as all old or elderly women, which among the Arapaho was not the case. The exceptions were two participants called "calves" (nihanou, "yellow calves"), who were middle-aged, or, at any rate, adults. Among the Arapaho the "calves" were children. There is a further difference, that, whereas among the Arapaho the "calves" were of high degree in the dance and for the greater part of the time were not allowed to stir, the Gros Ventre "calves" took the place of the atsaan or servants in the men's dances. They are said to have worn no regalia. The dancers were painted with the symbol of a pipe on each cheek, close under the eye. Old men sang for them, rattling but not using a drum. The women in dancing shifted their weight from one side of the body to the other, and cried like crows. Two tent-poles, two pegs, and two ropes belonging to the dancing-lodge, were painted respectively one black and one red. On the fourth day of the ceremony there were observances outside of the dancing-lodge. A prominent chief was selected to take a burning stick. The dancers, moving and running about like a herd of buffalo, pretended to scent the smoke of his fire from windward, and stampeded. Another distinguished warrior pretended to shoot at the herd as if they were buffalo. Both of these features of the ceremony are found among the Arapaho. A third distinguished man (or perhaps several) was honored by being offered a pipe to smoke, and on his acceptance was given a vessel of water containing berries. He then gave away property.

The Sun-Dance.

796

As stated before, the Gros Ventre sun-dance, haçeiha^{n}w^{u}, is not restricted to men belonging to certain age-companies, but, as among the Arapaho, can be made by any man.[1] Like the other dances, however, it is made as the result of the pledge of an individual for deliverance from sickness or danger. As soon as the pledge has been publicly announced, or as soon thereafter as the buffalo begin to get fat in spring, the pledger and his relatives begin to accumulate buffalo-tongues, which they slice and dry like buffalo-meat. They also save a buffalo-skin, which is packed with the tongues, two sticks being wrapped up in it. When the time comes, a large lodge made of two tent-covers is set up in the middle of the camp-circle. Into this many women enter at night to sing. This marks the beginning of the ceremony. The tent is called tjinaa^{n}w^{u} ("prairie-chicken lodge"); and the participants, "prairie-chickens" and "prairie-chicken women." The pledger brings his buffalo-skin to this lodge. He incenses it four times.

[1] See Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part II, p. 152.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 Entering the tent very slowly while the people are singing, he stops four times at the end of a song, and motions with the skin. The fourth time he throws the skin among the singers, who shout, and seize it, spread it out, and commence to beat it with their sticks and sing the songs of the night. They go through all the sun-dance songs this night. In the morning the entire camp breaks, and moves to another place not far away. That night the entire ritual is gone through again, and this is repeated altogether four times. The pledger provides food for the singers in the prairie-chicken lodge. The singing in this lodge is called "singing-for-it" (niinibyaa^{n}tou).

After the four nights of the prairie-chicken lodge, seven chiefs are selected to go out as scouts looking for trees to be used in the dancing-lodge. The trees should be straight, and the largest one, for the middle, forked. These men scout for the trees as they would for an enemy. They are painted as [302] if for war, and wear what they would in war. When the people in the camp see them returning, they rush to the centre of the camp-circle, carrying hand-drums. The scouts go circling and dancing, and crying like wolves or coyotes, whereupon the people cry out that the scouts are returning successfully. Those who bear drums stand in a line abreast; in front of them is a pile of rocks. The scouts, still circling, and crying each time they face the direction from which they have come, approach nearer and nearer. Then one by one they circle about the heap of stones, and, stepping forward a short distance, stop and stand abreast, facing the drums. A prominent man who has been selected steps out from the people and recounts his most distinguished coups. Thereupon he goes up to one of the seven scouts, and leads his horse forward by the bridle. The scout then recounts four coups. Then the chief leads forward the horse of the next scout, who also tells four stories; and so on until all seven have spoken. Thereupon the first of the seven addresses the people, and reports that they have found good-looking people and a chief, meaning the smaller poles and the central fork of the lodge.

Some time after this the people go to the trees. The young men especially dress and paint themselves as well as they can, and ride their best horses. They go first to what is to be the central pole. One man dismounts, and places coals and fir-needle incense on the ground on four sides of the tree, thus incensing it. Then all dismount, and, standing about and having shouted, begin to sing. After they have sung, two men stand by the tree and swing axes four times, as if to strike it. Then they begin to chop it. When the tree begins to lean, every one shoots at it; and when it falls, all dash up to it and strip it of branches and leaves. Thereupon they scatter in the timber, cutting the smaller forks and poles, and as each one of these falls it is shot. There are many small parties getting these smaller forks,

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

and there is much noise in the timber. Many young men tie ropes to the centre post, and, riding their horses, drag the tree to the camp, while others follow shooting it. The smaller trees are brought back in the same way. 796

While the people are bringing the trees, four distinguished warriors have been selected to go out on the prairie to kill a buffalo-bull, which one of them is to kill with a single shot. Theoretically the four men have only a single bow and arrow, or a gun with only one cartridge. As soon as they see the buffalo, they stop, and each of them recounts coups. Then they attack the bull. It is said that, if the designated man kills the bull with one shot, the coups which he has counted have been told truly; but, if more than one shot is required, he has lied. It is said that they are almost always successful. They skin the bull, and leave the body.

Meanwhile the old people of the tribe have been digging the holes in which the upright forks of the lodge are to be set. When the young people return with the trees, and the four chiefs with the buffalo-skin, these holes are completed. Two prominent men are selected, and, after each has counted four coups, they cut the fresh hide into thongs. These are used to tie the horizontal rafter-poles of the lodge fast to the upright forks in which they rest. The two men who have done the cutting then give away property to old people.

After this the members of the age-companies gather. In more recent times the war-dancers assemble on one side of the lodge, the star-dancers on the other. They carry tent-poles, which are tied in pairs by a short rope near the top. Each man holds one pole of such a pair. The poles are used to lift the centre fork, which will rest on the thongs connecting the tops of the poles. The pledger now goes around the lodge very slowly, painting the poles as they lie on the ground, rubbing each with the palm of his hand in four places. It is probable that, as among the Arapaho, he does not go alone in this painting. The people who are to raise the centre fork are standing where the outer wall of the lodge will later be, singing. At the end of the song they shout. Then they proceed to the centre pole, which is lying with the top toward the east. The pledger and the old men stand in a row at the eastern end. The old man keeping the sacred flat pipe incenses this four times, and sings the songs that relate to the pipe. The hole into which the butt of the tree is to be set is incensed with sweet-grass. Then the keeper of the pipe touches the head of the tree with his pipe, and motions to it four times. The motion of the pipe is supposed to raise the tree. The joined poles have been placed under the tree, and other people support it with their hands. Four times the tree moves under their efforts and the influence of the pipe. The fourth time, the keeper of the pipe says "Now," and the tree is entirely raised up, and set in its hole. As soon as the centre

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Grbs Ventre NQ13

796 fork is upright, the young men all compete, trying to raise their rafters into position in the centre fork and in a fork at the periphery, before the others. After the tree has been raised, or possibly before, the young men go out, apparently by age-companies, to cut willows to form the walls of the lodge. More recently the star-dancers and war-dancers have done this, those of each company taking the wives of the men of the other company on their horses behind them. As they go, they shoot up in the air, and when in the timber each man cuts a willow-branch. They return holding the branches and singing, ride around the lodge, and then deposit them. After the outside rafter-poles of the lodge have been tied fast in the forks, these branches are leaned in position, forming an enclosure of the lodge.

The centre fork has a buffalo-tail attached to it. A bundle of brush, called a "nest," is also fastened in the fork. A lightning symbol is made on the western side of the tree down to the ground. Inside the lodge a low screen, said to be about waist high, is erected at the western end, opposite the entrance. Behind this is the pledger of the dance. In front of the screen is a painted buffalo-skull. Two sticks of cherry-wood, one red and one black, stand on each side of the skull. A wheel or ceremonial hoop made of a stick bent in a circle, wrapped with skin, and with feathers attached, is hung on one of these sticks. Just as clothing is hung at the ends of the horizontal rafters of the lodge, or possibly on the centre fork itself, as an offering to the sun, objects are said to be hung on this brush screen at the western end of the lodge.

[171] Apparently the general course of the main portion of the dance, which follows the erection of the lodge, is similar to that of the Arapaho sun-dance, though there are certain features entirely without parallel among the Arapaho. The pledger and the other dancers neither eat nor drink during the ceremony. Women join in the fasting, but do not dance. The dancers stand whistling, and looking up at the "nest" in the tree.

796 The self-torture characterizing the sun-dance among most tribes is found
304 with the Gros Ventre in its usual form. Four knotted thongs hang from the
785 centre fork. Two sticks are passed under the skin of the dancers' breasts, one on each side, to which the thongs are fastened. The dancers try to tear the sticks out of their skin. Some whose skin is tough do not succeed. In that case a medicine-man comes to them and makes them unconscious of pain, so that they break loose easily. When they have fallen, he restores them to consciousness. One after the other, the dancers go through this ordeal. While the dancers are thus tied to the tree, they move back and forth, apparently dancing. This is called niina^{n}tsôia^{n}. Some dancers also fasten shields in a similar way to the skin of their back, and pull these out. Others are attached by the breast to a post located outside of the dancing-

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

lodge. Other men go up into the hills near the camp, where they are fastened to a post, and fast from sunrise to sunset. In the evening their ceremonial "grandfather" comes and cuts them loose. Young men who want to meet with success in war pierce the skin over their shoulder-blade, and, having inserted sticks, hang two guns to these on each side. Sometimes a crooked-hoofed horse is fastened to the sticks. Thereupon they go about outside of the camp-circle, crying constantly, hoping that some supernatural being will pity them. Still others tie four or five buffalo-skulls in a row, which they fasten in the same way to their backs. They also go around the camp-circle. 796 304 785

If it is thought possible that the enemy may be near at the time of the dance, a man brings a filled pipe to the pledger of the dance and offers it to him, asking about the enemy. The pledger takes out his medicine-bag, which is the skin of the animal he saw in his vision, incenses it, and performs the acts which this guardian animal commanded. Every one is quiet, and the fire is put out so that the lodge is completely dark. The pledger blows his whistle, and the people sing for him as loudly as they can. He makes motions around his head with his medicine, thereby asking his guardian spirit to enable him to see supernaturally. He continues his motions until he is able to see the enemy. Thereupon he sits down. After this, another man offers him a pipe, saying, "We wish you to tell us what you have seen. Therefore take this pipe and smoke it." After he has smoked, the pledger tells the people how many people he has seen, and where they are. He says, "I saw so many buffalo-bulls (men). They are coming from there. Take charcoal for successful battle" (black being the paint of victory). 796 787 [822]

The dancers also have the power to see the enemy. If, as they look at the "nest" day and night, they see legs hanging down, or a headless body in the tree, it is the sign that an enemy will be killed by the tribe. If, on the other hand, they see blood on the poles overhead or running down the central tree, a member of the tribe will be killed. Sometimes they see a man whom they can recognize as a member of the tribe, black as coal and very thin, hanging from the poles above them. Then he will die soon.

Each day certain men, who seem to be young men, are selected, and their names called out. These men dress as if for war. When they enter, it seems that they sit in a row at the left of the entrance. The bravest of them are then selected, and taken to the back of the lodge, where a bed and head-rest have been prepared, on which they sit. One of these men counts a coup, and picking up a stick puts it into the fire. One after another they do this until a large fire is blazing. These men are called tsöötsxwuhuu ("inside dancers"). Thereupon two old men, going to the centre of the lodge and conferring in whispers, select six or eight warriors. As soon as these 796 729

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 men are named, their female relatives return to their tents, and cook. When they have prepared food, they all together bring a large quantity of it to the 729 lodge. The men selected carry weapons, and are dressed for war. They are usually mounted. Where they themselves or their horses were wounded, [302] they paint themselves. If they have ridden over an enemy, a man is painted on the breast of the horse. When the food which has been brought by their female relatives has been eaten, these men, two at a time, go through numerous performances of their achievements in battle. This is done each day of the dance.

796 A group of men and women, called, like those in the preliminary singing-tent, "prairie-chickens," and therefore probably the same persons, seem [534] to be the singers for the dance. They beat a rawhide in place of a drum, and hold branches, which, at the end of each song, they shake, shouting.

[271] The dancers may not drink water, no matter how great the heat. If [821] one of them is unable to endure, and a pitying relative gives him even only a drop, a thunderstorm follows, and the offender may be struck by lightning, or one of his horses may be killed by lightning. In case it seems necessary for the dancers to drink, a pipe is taken to one of the old men. If he accepts it and smokes it, he goes to the central tree. He wears a robe with the hair-side out. He has a whistle in his mouth, feathers in one hand, and a crow-skin in the other. He strikes the bill of the crow four [789] times, with a downward motion, against the lightning symbol on the tree. A vessel is held against the tree at the bottom of the symbol, and, after the fourth blow, water is said to run out until the vessel is filled, when it stops. This water is given to the dancers, each of whom drinks a very small quan- [782] tity. The actions of the man producing this water are said to be determined by his personal supernatural vision.

After the four days of the ceremony are completed, the lodge is left standing. All the cloth and clothing that have been attached to it remain [789] in place, and it appears that other clothes, especially of children, are left at the lodge. This is done in order that the children may live a long life.

796 From drawings made by a Gros Ventre, it appears that the buffalo skull is painted with spots, and has its nose and eyes stuffed. Behind it is 532 represented a dancer holding the wheel. He is presumably the pledger of the ceremony. The wheel is bisected by two strings, and has eagle-feathers and down-feathers attached to it. The dancer blows a whistle at the end of which is a plume. The whistle hangs from his neck. At the back of the head is a plume. Lines of paint proceed from his breast to his wrists and ankles. On each of these are four diamonds, two on each upper and lower arm, thigh, and calf. If this is a correct representation, the Gros Ventre use at least one style of painting that is like the most typical Arap-

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

aho sun-dance paint. Usually the Arapaho paint only two diamonds on each limb; but four have been seen on the northern Arapaho pledger, as in this picture. Another drawing repeats this painting, and adds a head-band, anklets, and wristlets apparently corresponding to the sage ornaments of the Arapaho. In a third drawing a dancer is painted with lightning symbols down his legs and arms. 796 532

The Gros Ventre and Arapaho sun-dances differ about as much as their respective age-company ceremonies. The principal discrepancies seem to be the following. 796 171

The Gros Ventre accumulation of buffalo-tongues by the pledger after the making of the vow and before the ceremony. This feature is found among the Blackfoot, but not among the Arapaho.

The prairie-chicken lodge with its four-nights' singing apparently corresponds somewhat to the Arapaho rabbit-tent; but its daily removal, accompanied by the camp-circle, is not found among the Arapaho. The prairie-chicken singing recalls a feature in the Arapaho hinanaha^{n}wu, the fifth of the age-ceremonies.

According to the account obtained, the public ceremonies relating to the erection of the lodge do not take place until after the four-nights' singing in the prairie-chicken tent. Among the Arapaho, they occur while the rabbit-tent is in use, and are in large part connected with the rites within it. It is also not clear how long a time these public ceremonies — the scouting for the trees, the bringing-in of the centre pole, the killing of the buffalo, and the painting of the lodge-poles and erection of the lodge — occupy. They are described as if they occurred in the space of a day. [114] This would not be impossible; but it is likely that this impression is due to indefiniteness of narration. It is, however, distinctly stated that the buffalo is shot while the people are bringing in the centre pole. Among the Arapaho, the centre pole is brought in two days after the buffalo has been shot. The skin of this buffalo is kept entire and taken into the dancing-lodge; by the Gros Ventre it is cut into thongs for fastening the lodge-beams to the upright forks.

The "altars" of the two ceremonies cannot be definitely compared, owing to the indefiniteness of information from the Gros Ventre. The screen corresponds to the seven small trees of the Arapaho; the skull and the wheel on the stick are common to the two ceremonies; the red and the black upright stick have no Arapaho equivalents. The Arapaho trench, red and black logs, seven red and seven black sticks, seven wickets, and two sods with bushes, have not been mentioned among the Gros Ventre.

The miraculous raising of the centre pole does not seem to exist among the Arapaho.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 171 The Gros Ventre also introduce into the ceremony a thunder symbolism that the Arapaho lack, or have in a much less developed form. The lightning symbol on the centre pole, from which water can be drawn, and the power of the thunder to strike with lightning any dancer who drinks other water than this, evidence this.

Another element special to the Gros Ventre is the introduction of ceremonies relating to war, such as the dramatic performances and the seeing of the approach of the enemy by the pledger.

Features introducing miraculous and sometimes purely personal supernatural powers are apparently quite lacking from the Arapaho ceremony. Among the Gros Ventre there are the raising of the centre pole, the production of water from the centre pole with the crow, the clairvoyance of the pledger as regards the enemy, and the visions of some of the dancers.

In summary, the exact duration and sequence of all events in the Gros Ventre ceremony are not yet clear; the preliminary prairie-chicken tent does not correspond very closely to the Arapaho rabbit-tent; and the connection of the ceremony with the thunder, the introduction of warlike elements, and that of miraculous or personal features, are peculiar, or nearly so, to the Gros Ventre as compared with the Arapaho.

MODERN CEREMONIAL OBJECTS.

778 171 The recent ceremonial objects of the Gros Ventre are somewhat different from those of the Arapaho. The Arapaho were deeply affected by the ghost-dance movement, more, it is said, than any other tribe; and many of their modern religious regalia have a distinct character of their own. [668 177] The Gros Ventre received the ghost-dance from the Arapaho, but it seems to have taken little hold of them. The only distinctive ghost-dance objects seen or obtained were two small hoops and a few balls, all of which 177 resemble Arapaho types. The chief modern dance-ceremony of the Gros 778 Ventre, the only one performed at present, is the grass or war dance obtained from the Sioux, and evidently a modification of the widespread 796 Omaha dance upon which the Arapaho crow-dance is also based. This dance has in recent years been still further modified, until its character now is very similar to that of the crow-dance. [178] The regalia used in this dance at present are very individual, usually crude, and almost always stylistically degenerate. The delicate character and distinct style of the majority of modern Arapaho dance-objects are lacking.

171 The treatment of feathers in such objects is quite different among the 778 Gros Ventre and Arapaho. The Gros Ventre rarely ornament their feathers 237

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

293
411
796

Crazy-Dance Bow and Paraphernalia.

[End Plate 5]

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

237
292
796

Head-Dress for the Dog-Dance.

[End Plate 6]

very much increased. White Eagle governed the people very wisely and he governed until he died."

It was The Boy's impression that following White Eagle, the chief of the whole tribe was no longer formally selected and simply attained his position through gradual recognition of his merits.[9] Sits Like A Woman succeeded White Eagle and was tribal chief in the first decades of the 19th century. He was followed by his son of the same name who was a signer of the 1855 treaty, and was still recognized as tribal head when he died suddenly about 1870. Coming Daylight claimed that this Sits Like a Woman II was certainly the greatest chief of her time and that, when he died, people were forbidden to light their camp fires as a sign of mourning. During the subsequent period Lame Bull was outstanding among the leading men, but he witnessed the dissolution of the band system and the camp circle. The Fort Belknap Reservation had been set up in 1873, encompassing much more territory than at present, and the first houses were built in 1882.

In spite of the fact that a tribal chief was recognized, band autonomy was apparently preserved. The ceremonial organization cut across band organization, however, and band autonomy was relinquished at the times during which the Sacred Dances were held. The movements and activities of the tribe as a whole were then in the hands of the company to which the vower of a particular Dance belonged.[10]

The Companies

Kroeber notes that "men of the tribe of age to make any one ceremony were not all in one society or company but in several, the total number of companies being three or four times as great as the number of ceremonies. Each company had a name which it

[9] So far as it goes, this would seem to confirm O. Lewis' interpretation, pp. 42–43, that the earlier Hudson's Bay Company policy on the northern plains reinforced tribal chieftaincy, but that with the development of competition in the fur trade, authority was weakened.

[10] For a discussion of the Sacred Dances, see Kroeber, 1908, pp. 239–68. Other details are given in Cooper, Ms. 1949. The following discussion is concerned only with the composition of the ceremonial organization so far as it can be reconstructed.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

ties of the larger society which the company had joined. Meanwhile another group was meeting informally before it was admitted into one or other of the Societies. Since the Stars and Wolf-men were approximately even in number, there probably was a regular alternation. According to reasonable estimate, the Potbellies joined the Stars about 1840; the next group of young men would then have joined the Wolves, say in 1843 or 1844; the following company joining the Stars in about 1849–50. 561 575

If the Sacred Dances, except the Sacrifice Dance, were gone through in order, there would thus be several companies each year whose members were eligible to vow any one of the Dances, and our informants were all under the impression that one or more of the Dances was given each summer. It seems quite clear that the Law Enforcer Dance was vowed only by the older levels of the active warriors. After having gone through this rite, these men more or less retired as "old men," and, having "sat on the sage," acquired certain privileges and freedom denied to their fellow tribesmen who had not yet gone through this Dance. These "old men" acted as ceremonial grandfathers, i.e. sponsors and teachers, for others going through the various lodges, but were no longer active as Stars or Wolf-men. They became members of an undifferentiated group of elders, the ranks of their original company having no doubt been drastically thinned out by the time they would have arrived at this status. 796 561 [886] [888]

If the above interpretation be correct, there would be three age divisions: the "young men," those meeting in companies; the "middle-aged, mature men," whose companies had joined either the Stars or the Wolf-men, and, having gone through the Fly Dance, were eligible to vow the other Dances; the "old men" who had gone through the Law Enforcer's Dance and were no longer active in the Star and Wolf-men societies, except two of their number, one of whom served as announcer in each. 561

The young men, who together formed the company, being of approximately the same age, were tied together by bonds of friendship and there were apparently not a few pairs of "inseparable friends" in each company. One of our informants, Cora Chandler, indicated that the bonds holding together the members of a company were so intimate that marriage between their children was [572] 561 582

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Each society had its distinctive songs which would be used by its component companies in carrying out their police duties during the Sacred Dances. Both had their "begging songs," as well as their marching and dance songs. Everyone in camp would know from the songs which of the societies was performing. 575 533

In connection with the distinctive dance of either society was first the preliminary "begging." This meant that the members of the society, dressed in their best and mounted on their finest horses, would select the lodges of prominent men belonging to the opposite society in front of which they would sing.[14] The leaders of the society were supposed to be present on these begging expeditions, otherwise their enemy-friends could take advantage of their absence and twit them by singing a special song.[15] The members of the society might be accompanied by their wives, who helped out in the singing, and usually a member of the society would suggest that they sing in front of the lodge belonging to his enemy-friend of the opposite society. If, while they were singing, the owner of the lodge failed to appear, his enemy-friend would peep into the lodge and at this the owner, assisted by his relatives, would get busy and give food to be used in the feast of the society which was doing the begging. If the owner of the lodge were a prominent man, who wished to take this occasion to enhance further his reputation, he might give something really valuable to the singers and would have the opportunity later of bragging: "On such-and-such an occasion, this is what I gave you Wolf-men (or Star men)." If he were a really good sport, our informants said, he would even send his wife out to sing with the others. After something had been given to the society, the singers sang other special songs,[16] while the rest danced. 533 575 796 572

After obtaining in this fashion the wherewithal for the feast, the society members lined up two-by-two at the entrance of the camp circle. The two noted men carrying whips remained mounted, while the column stepped in time to the music provided by the singers who were carrying the drum at the end of the procession. They wove in and out, snake-dance fashion, while 575 796

[14] A begging song of the Wolf-men was recorded as No. 98; two such songs of the Stars, as No. 96 and 97.

[15] Recorded as No. 101.

[16] Recorded as No. 95 and No. 100.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

575 the marching song was sung.[17] Upon reaching the entrance of
796 the enclosure, which had been constructed in the middle of the camp circle, the double column parted, and filed around the inside of the enclosure and took their places. The noted men bearing whips, having been helped in dismounting, took up their positions at either side of the entrance, and the musicians carried the drum to the center of the enclosure where they provided the music for the dancing.

The dance of each society was distinctive. The Stars carried
[243] rattles, each designed by its owner,[18] which they waved about, as they danced. The Wolf-men did not have rattles or any special paraphernalia of the kind, but symbolized wolves as they stepped about, one hand at the forehead, and the other held behind to represent the tail.

575 These dances with their preliminary "begging" expeditions
535 were not put on regularly, but at the discretion of the societies. A time would be chosen when the whole tribe, or most of the bands thereof, were together, when there were no Sacred Dances in immediate prospect, and when there was no apparent danger from the enemy. If these conditions prevailed, one of the societies might proceed, singing loudly: "Harden your hearts, Wolf-men (or Stars)," meaning, "be prepared to give."[19] Not immediately, but some time later, when auspicious conditions again prevailed, the other society would "retaliate."

These dances were purely social. In between times members belonging to one would compete with members of the other in horse-racing, hand-game gambling, "bragging contests" recounting conquests in love and war—each trying to out-do his opposite number.

[177] Sometime between 1875 and 1880 the Wolf-men adopted the Grass Dance from the Assiniboine. Thereafter this Society was sometimes called the Grass dancers.[20]

575 The Boy was under the impression that the Stars and Wolf-men

[17] Recorded as No. 102.

[18] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, pp. 236–37, with illustration.

[19] These songs were recorded as Nos. 93, 94 for the Stars.

[20] Kroeber, 1908, p. 238 describes this dance as the "war-dance." For the adoption of the Grass Dance and subsequent history of the two societies, see Flannery, 1946, pp. 39–70.

3: Cooper
●796

NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

[For information on organized religious ceremonial, see also category 116, pp. 44-54, 87-123, 148-157, 159-161, 173-177, 180-182, 184-221, and 224-252. -- Analyst]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

776 bätč, "he (who) has gristle (tendon from back of neck of animal) nose," and "black hawk," a certain very large black-feathered hawk known also locally as "bullet hawk" (*Buteo sp.?*). Another name for Bha'a was "old man four parts of the earth." Bha'a, the thunderbird, as was appropriate, had dark or black feathers, and was a swift flier; his bill and feet were of the same material as back tendon (see Blood-Clot Story, No. 11 in Appendix).

778 776 ● 796 In the Gros Ventre Sacrifice Lodge, or "Sun dance," Bha'a was represented near the top of the center pole as a bird, painted black, with a buffalo tail fastened to his head as a sort of plume, with a zigzag line descending from the bird almost to the ground and ending in a fork, and with a bunch of branches stuck in the fork of the center pole of the lodge to represent Bha'a's nest. Each [302] of the dancers painted all over in white had a bird representing Bha'a, painted in black with charcoal or paint on his upper center breast, with black zigzag lines ending in a fork from the bird's wings down each arm and forearm and from the bird's feet down each thigh and leg to his ankle, with a black zigzag line forked at each end across the forehead, and with a vertical red zigzag line forked at the lower end extending down from each eye. The drum-head used in the Feathered Pipe rite had a red background [534] on which the Thunderbird was represented in blue, with a yellow zigzag line on either side from the head to the wings. Bha'a entered prominently into both the Sacrifice Lodge and the Feathered Pipe rite.

776 825 Any large strange animal might in the olden days be called Bha'a or even be looked upon as an embodiment or theophany of Bha'a.*

One supposed theophany over which the present day Gros Ventres laugh heartily, is recorded on the occasion of their seeing their first mule. The story as told with verve and intense amusement by The Boy was as follows:

"The Gros Ventres used to move around a great deal. Once a mule, the first one the Gros Ventres had ever seen, got lost somehow, struck the Gros Ventres' trail, came to their camp and stopped. A Gros Ventre crier spied it and came back to camp

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

and as long as you live see that they do not sell it or part with it." 793 174

So at Curly Head's death the Pipe fell to Iron Man II (Tall Jack), a relative of Curly Head, who since 1937 (1938) has looked after it. In 1948 it was still being kept in Curly Head's house.[8]

The normal term of keepership of the Feathered Pipe was 793 four years. The very first keeper held the office 80 years, according to the origin story given by Garter Snake, and some later ones, according to tradition, up to 20 years, but the usual limit was supposed to be at most two or three terms, that is eight or twelve years.

There was always a Pipe woman or co-keeper, wife of the keeper. She handled the Pipe bundle and in general had about the same ritual and other duties toward it as had the co-keeper of the Flat Pipe toward the Flat Pipe bundle. The Feathered Pipe keeper [841 had to have at least two wives, for during her menses the co-keeper 595] could not handle the bundle and had to sleep and live outside the keeper's lodge and another wife of the keeper had to substitute for her in the handling and care of the bundle.

There was always, too, a Pipe child,—a girl, unless the keeper had no daughters, in which case a son could be selected by him as Pipe child. Thus the oldest son of Sitting High, who had no daughters, became Pipe child. The Pipe child was not necessarily appointed at once by the keeper on assuming the keepership. Garter Snake was not made Pipe child until she was about six years old. Iron Necklace who had been Feathered Pipe keeper some

[8] In the summer of 1951, Iron Man, assisted by The Boy, had a ceremonial opening of the Feathered Pipe bundle. Dr. Louis B. Hagener, Professor of Biology of Northern Montana College, accompanied by his wife, and Dr. Otto Nitz, Professor of Chemistry, now at Stout Institute of Technology, Menominie, Wisconsin, were among the spectators. The pictures in Plates 2 B-C, 3 A-D, were taken by Dr. Nitz at that time. Dr. Hagener has kindly supplied information regarding the 1951 ceremonial. He writes under date of Aug. 8, 1954, as to final disposal of the Feathered Pipe bundle: "Since the young people were so apathetic over the bundle, its significance, and the ceremony, Iron Man and his wife had resolved not to open it again. They were debating as to whether it should be given to a museum or whether the tribe would outfit Iron Man and his wife for a journey and permit them to dispose of it somewhere in the mountains." [R.F.] [114 796 186]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

cover him and so forth. This they did. When they uncovered him, there lay a human skeleton. They then covered, sang, and uncovered, and there was the 'short' himself. And all the 'shorts' cheered and shouted. 796* 789

"At this point the principal men present stepped in: 'There is danger in this kind of contest. After a while there may be a fight.' So the contest came to an end.

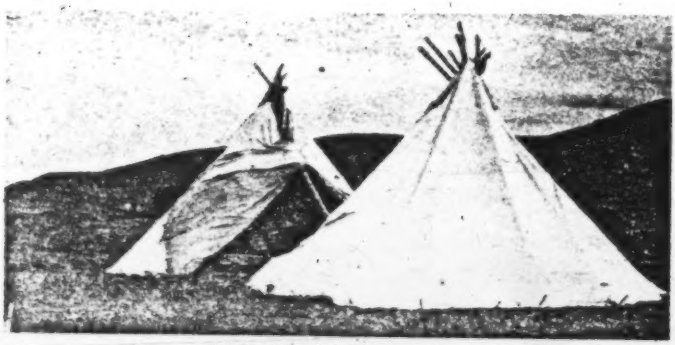
"The Gros Ventres talked for a long time about this contest, and they still talk about it and wonder what would have happened if the principal men had not stepped in and stopped it."

The Crazy Dancers had to be, or by age or custom were, younger men, married or unmarried, fully adult but not yet middle-aged, "mature." They chose their ceremonial grandfathers from among those who had previously been through the Dance. From one to four,—but not more than four,—dancers could choose the same ceremonial grandfather, lest they should run out of grandfathers. Only those could be grandfathers who had never had sex relations with the wives or substitute women joining the dance with the respective grandson or group of two to four grandsons, and an actual shortage of grandfathers meeting this requirement was apt to be more than a theoretic one, at least in the later days when the Dance was given. In one case, in fact, still well remembered, the prospective Crazy Dancer had to hunt all over the tribe to get his ceremonial grandfather. According to Coming Daylight a man who joined the Crazy Dance a second time had to have the same grandfather whom he had had on the first occasion. Where two to four men combined to choose the same grandfather, one of one group served as a sort of leader for it. Apparently if the age-group putting on the dance belonged to the Stars, the grandfathers and grandfathers' helpers were chosen from the Wolves, and vice versa. 608 796*

There was great reluctance on the part of older men to serve as Crazy Dance grandfathers, although, to judge from the previously quoted remarks of some of the younger men, there were probably exceptions to this rule. The reluctance shown was real, not make-believe, as the older men approached to be grandfathers might have to make embarrassing confessions and refuse, or if they accepted had to undergo a severe test of character, failure in which entailed grave penalty, as will be explained infra.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

346
796

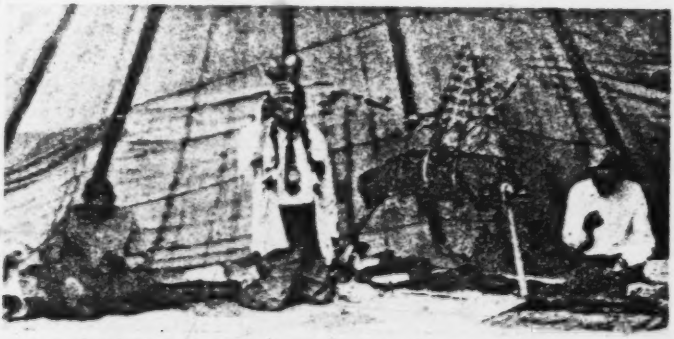


A. *Double tipi for ceremony.*

[301
782]

B. *The Boy prays with ordinary pipe.*

[516
534
778]



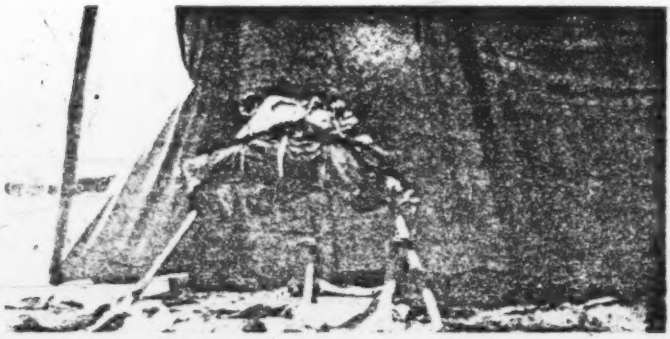
C. *The Boy smudges rattles over Flat Pipe hearth.*

PLATE I

[p.425]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796
778
[401]



A. *Flat Pipe bundle on tripod.*

B. *Setting at opening of Feathered Pipe ceremonial.*

C. *Drum hung on tripod.*

PLATE 2

[p.426]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

276
778
796

A. *Unwrapping Feathered Pipe bundle at hearth.*

B. *Contents of bundle.*

C. *One of the pipes in the bundle.*

D. *Iron Man II holding a pipe from bundle.*

PLATE 3

[p.427]

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

[P.39]

PRIMITIVE MAN

Quarterly Bulletin
of the
Catholic Anthropological Conference

Vol. 20 Washington 17, D. C., July, 1947 No. 3

THE CHANGING FORM AND FUNCTIONS OF THE GROS VENTRE GRASS DANCE

REGINA FLANNERY
Catholic University of America

THE purpose of the present paper is to discuss the changing form, and to show as far as possible the changing functions, of the Grass dance in Gros Ventre culture from the time of its introduction between 1875 and 1880 up to about 1920 when it had paled off to relative insignificance. 121

The Gros Ventre tribe of Montana was one of the many which adopted the Grass dance, sometimes called the Omaha dance, as it spread rapidly over the northern plains in relatively recent times. Wissler studied the distribution and diffusion of the Grass dance as a trait-complex,[1] basing his interpretation upon his own observations, especially among the Blackfeet, and on the descriptions of this dance as published for other tribes. For the Gros Ventres he depended mainly on Kroeber's data,[2] the only source available, but he himself had visited that tribe and collected, among other specimens, regalia used by them in the Grass 796 177 796 114

[1] Wissler, C., General discussion of shamanistic and dancing societies, AMNH-AP 11, pt. 12 1916, pp. 862–71.

[2] Kroeber, A. L., Ethnology of the Gros Ventre, AMNH-AP 1, pt. 4, 1908, pp. 234, 238–39.

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 dance.[3] Wissler was well aware of the importance of the Grass
114 dance in the transition period of Plains culture from the old to the new, and suggested further studies be made. Nevertheless, no one has given us a close-up, so far as I know, of its dynamic aspects in the life of any one of the tribes who shared the phenomenon.

796 In 1901 Kroeber noted that the Grass dance as then performed
114 by the Gros Ventres differed considerably in form from that
177 which was described to him as having been the case when it was first adopted. He gives us a brief description of the earlier procedure, but naturally enough no details regarding the then current method of carrying out the Grass dance, since his concern was with the older tribal culture. He merely states: "It is no longer a young man's dance, nor confined to a certain group. All the people in the tribe take part in it. It is very similar in character to the present-day Arapaho crow-dance, as well as in the place it occupies in the life of the people. Among the Gros Ventre it is now the only dance held."[4] Our data, gathered during two visits to the Fort Belknap Reservation in 1940 and 1945, confirm Kroeber's and supplement them to a considerable extent.

121 In treating of the Grass dance then, we shall distinguish be-
128 tween an earlier period extending from between 1875 to 1880 up to about 1890, and a later period comprising the years from roughly 1890 to 1916. We shall first describe the form of the Grass dance as it was in the earlier period, then the changes which were later introduced, and finally we shall discuss the varying functions during both periods.

The Form: Earlier Period

796 According to Wissler the dance originated with the Dakota
177 about 1860 and is traceable as a development of the older Pawnee
171

[3] These specimens are in the American Museum of Natural History. Some of those used in the Gros Ventre Grass dance have been described by Kroeber, loc. cit.: fork, pp. 270–71; spoon, p. 271; whip, p. 271; crow-belt, pp. 271–72.

[4] Kroeber, loc. cit., p. 238.

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Iruska.[5] In its diffusion it reached the Assiniboine from the Sioux, 796
—Rodnick places the date at 1872,[6]—and the Assiniboine in turn 177
passed it on to the Gros Ventres, sometime between the years 171
1875 and 1880. We arrive at this approximate dating by reckoning the age of a now venerable old Gros Ventre woman informant [174]
who witnessed the actual transfer when she herself was in her later twenties or possibly early thirties. From all the evidence at our command it is fairly certain that she was born between 1850 and 1855. This informant not only was an eye-witness of the adoption of the ceremony by the Gros Ventres but also participated actively, so far as a woman could, in both the earlier and later phases of the dance. Before giving details of the regalia, personnel, and procedures it might be well to insert at this point her account of the actual transfer.

"The Gros Ventres were camped on the Milk River. They 648
were joined there by the Assiniboine and the two tribes remained 177
together while the Assiniboine taught the Gros Ventres the Grass 796
dance. The Gros Ventres had never had any dancing of that kind before and called it jokingly *inaetenin* (moving-buttocks) referring to the way they danced. The Assiniboine gave crow-belts (feather bustles) to each of two men, and likewise swords to two others. They needed one man as spear (fork) man and two as *atsa'an* (waiters, servants). They also gave the Gros Ventres a big drum and everything that goes with the dance. The visitors showed the different individuals how to use these various things and taught the songs and dances that went with each. But they didn't do all that for nothing! Of all the things they had to give away to the Assiniboine! Even food was included in the exchange. The Gros Ventres had an enormous quantity of food prepared and you should have seen the number of puppies we [262]
cooked. The Assiniboine surely liked those pups. That was the first Grass dance we ever had.

"Then we moved camp from the Milk River over toward the 796

[5] Wissler, loc. cit., cf. table opp. p. 868.

[6] Rodnick, David, The Fort Belknap Assiniboine of Montana, A study in culture change, New Haven, Conn., 1938, pp. 123–24.

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 Bear Paw Mountains. It was there that the Gros Ventres had their first Grass dance alone. I don't know why they did things like this, but all those who had been given regalia walked instead of riding horseback. But the drum was packed on a special horse by itself and when they came to a stream, four men who owned the drumsticks carried the drum across, wading in without taking off their moccasins or other clothing. Furthermore those who owned the regalia were not supposed to help feed the crowd. They were not allowed to serve food and if they did, they had to give something away. Nor were these men supposed to borrow. They were supposed to have their own cup or dish and when it [415] was time to eat, if they didn't have any receptacle, they spread out their robes and the servers poured the coffee or soup or whatever was being served right in the robes."

114 The above account is the only explicit record of the actual 174 transfer which was obtainable in the field. From details supplied 796 by this same informant, however, as well as by others not so old as she, but who have accurate traditional knowledge of Gros Ventre culture, we have considerable information on the Grass dance as practiced from the time it was adopted.[7] Let us proceed then to the general description, first as the dance was carried out in the earlier period.

575 *Personnel and equipment.* At the time of adoption the Grass 796 dance came into the possession of a society, the Wolves or Wolf-men. Only members of the society actually danced, wearing the distinctive headdress of deer hair, although the rest of their costume varied with the individual. The special regalia which went with the dance were: 2 crow-belts; a large drum and 4 fancy drumsticks; a spear or fork; a spoon; 2 wands representing swords; a whistle.[8] Each item was owned by an individual member of the society who was, by virtue of this ownership, an officer

[115] [7] I wish to thank all of my Gros Ventre friends for their assistance, especially The Boy, Thick, Thomas Main, Charles Buckman, Al and Cora Chandler, Mary Ereaux, Mathilda Cuts-the-Rope, but above all, my old "grandmothers," Coming Daylight and Singer.

[8] For reference to description of some of these, see footnote 3.

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

of the society. The officers were free to transfer their ceremonial 575
equipment to other members whom they would select. Following 796
the typical Gros Ventre pattern of transfer of ownership, the
recipient would present as lavish gifts as he could afford to the [431]
donor while the relatives of the recipient showed their appreciation of the favor to their kinsman by giving away expensive gifts in his honor. All of this took place publicly at the dance.

Particular dances and songs were attached to each office and the owners of the ceremonial drumsticks were required to know in correct order all the numerous songs and to provide the musical [533]
accompaniment for the whole ceremony. These four drumstick owners were joined in certain of the songs by four women singers selected from among the wives of the Wolf-men. The owners of the various objects were responsible for the proper care thereof, the crow-belts and the drum receiving most respect. When not in use, the crow-belts were kept wrapped in special bundles in the [841
lodges of their respective owners, but were hung outside when the 784
owner's wife was in her menstrual period. Moreover, those who 833
danced wearing the crow-belts were obliged to refrain from sexual 782
relations for two or three days previous to the dancing and, before donning the belts, to make a smudge of sweet-grass to incense themselves and the crow-belts. The drum, too, received special attention. One informant speaks of it as having been "nicely [534]
decorated," and we know from Kroeber's description[9] that the trimming was very similar to that of the Assiniboine Grass dance drum.[10]

Procedure. The actual dancing took place in a special circular 346
dancing-place in the center of the camp circle. This "corral," as 796
it was sometimes referred to, was constructed from several lodge covers, but was open at the top and the entrance thereto was at the east. The tipi of the drum-keeper was put up nearby. Opposite the opening of the "corral" was the place of honor where [554]
sat the officials,—with the exception of the sword owners, who with their assistants were at either side of the entrance. The 000

[9] Kroeber, loc. cit., p. 238.
[10] Lowie, R. H., The Assiniboine, AMNH-AP 4, pt. 1, 1909, p. 67.

7 Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The
796 regalia were placed in front of their owners. Lay members sat around the sides.

[354] The fire was near the center of the dancing-place and beside
252 it the essential pot containing cooked dog flesh. The meat was
262 prepared by first rolling the carcass in very hot ashes to singe off
796 the hair and until the flesh was almost black, after which the entrails were removed and the meat boiled. Incidentally, the Gros Ventres were very fond of the flesh of puppies and used it in large quantities to supplement other types of food for feasts at various gatherings, including the Grass dance. The food for the feast, of which all present at the Grass dance partook, was heaped to the east of the fire.

796 In this setting the ceremonial eating of dog flesh, which involved the preliminary dancing with crow-belts, and so on, was carried out. We shall refer hereafter to this whole performance as the dog ritual because this is the core of the Grass dance proper wherever found and, so far as the Gros Ventres are concerned, remained essentially unchanged from the earlier through the later period. We use the term "ritual" without implying that there was any religious significance attached to the performance in the minds of the Gros Ventres. Connected therewith were a few sex prescriptions the violation of which were believed to be punished by vague misfortune, but that it had any deeper meaning for the Gros Ventres there is no evidence. On the contrary, their indifference toward possible symbolism, for instance, is illustrated by their acceptance at face value of the statement as to origin and meaning by an old Sioux from Fort Peck, Black Prairie Chicken, who claimed that he personally had created the Grass Dance, saying that he had "gotten his instructions" from a rooster; that the headdress of upstanding red-dyed deer hair
796 represented the rooster's comb and that the so-called crow-belt
177 was in reality a rooster's tail. My older informants knew this old man when he visited the Reservation many years ago, and they assured me that although the validity of his story was not questioned, it had had no effect. They maintained that when the dance was transferred to them, the Assiniboine had not mentioned

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

where it had come from or anything about its origin, so the Gros Ventres simply performed it in the way it had been taught. They continued to dance in the same way, and never at any time did they feel that the dance was connected with the white man's rooster, or that they were supposed to be imitating that type of fowl. 796 177

The ceremonial involved the donning of the crow-belts by their respective owners, preceded by the incensing of the owners and of the regalia. The song connected with the crow-belt had four stanzas, each repeated four times while the owners danced. One of the owners then lifted the pot containing the already prepared dog flesh and, walking clockwise, placed it in the proper position to the north of the fire. The two crow-belt owners and the owners of the fork and spoon then knelt to the west of the fire while the owners of the swords and their two *atsa'an* (servants, assistants) knelt opposite them on the other side of the fire. These eight, as they knelt, danced by raising their bodies up and down to the rhythm of a special song which was sung once by the four male singers, repeated "like a chorus" during which the drum was beaten slowly and the four women singers joined in. As the chorus was sung the dancers raised their arms as though in salute. This song, with chorus, was repeated four times. After this the eight rose and, to the accompaniment of another song, danced in single file, the owners of the crow-belts in the lead and second place. They circled the fire four times, at the beginning of each circuit hesitating for a moment at the pot and making a gesture toward it. The dancing became more violent with each round and, on the fourth, the dancers "put on quite a show," stamping harder than before and using great exertion. On this fourth round each one touched the pot and the last one in line, one of the *atsa'an*, grabbed it up and put it to the west of the fire. The eight dancers would be panting and tired by this time. 796

The second crow-belt owner, however, transferred his belt to the fork owner who then danced alone. He followed the same pattern of first dancing slowly, and, at the beginning of each round making merely a gesture toward the pot. On the fourth

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

●796 circuit, when the tempo and vigor of the dance had appreciably increased, he finally speared the dog flesh, leaving his fork in the pot while he stood there resting for a few moments.

When the fork owner had somewhat recovered his breath, he took the dog flesh from the pot and put it in a big dish nearby. He then went to an outstanding warrior and, taking him by the hand, invited him to come up to the dish. In the same way he selected two other prominent warriors. One of these then asked some member of the society to select a fourth warrior, but this one must have been wounded at war. When he had been named, the fork owner invited him and led him to join the other three who were sitting in a semicircle facing the fire.

The owner of the crow-belt removed the feather-bustle from the fork man and tied it around the spoon owner. Then another song was started and the spoon owner went to the space between the fire and entrance to begin his circuit of the fire. He exhibited his graceful body with his best steps as he made three motions with the spoon over the heads of the seated warriors. On the fourth time he touched the meat with the spoon. After a short pause and when he was breathing more normally after his strenuous dancing, he touched the meat with the spoon and, having raised the spoon first upward and then downward, laid it on the tongue of each of the first three warriors. The warrior who had asked for the selection of the wounded warrior took the spoon and laid it on the tongue of that one.

796 688 Had any one of the four warriors indulged a short time previously in sexual intercourse, he was supposed not to allow the spoon to touch his tongue and refused by turning aside his head, thereby making a public confession. It would have done him no good to have refused to come to the center of the dancing-place when first invited because his hanging back would have caused even more attention and he would have been subjected to vulgar jeers. It was said by informants that occasionally one or another warrior would ignore the rule but that this was a dangerous thing to do. As a case in point it was related that one man, known to my informants, tried to get by with it and allowed the

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

spoon to touch his tongue regardless of consequences. Some hours later in the excitement accompanying the end of the dance, this man's horse was jumping around and broke loose, was chased by a dog and ran against a log projecting from the corner of a corral. The horse was killed. The owner then admitted that this bad luck had befallen him because he had falsely allowed himself to be honored at the dance. 796 688

Following upon the performance with the spoon, the dog meat was next distributed to the four warriors, the wounded warrior receiving the head. When the meat was eaten the skull was put down to the west of the fire. The four warriors remained seated while the other members danced for some time. So soon, however, as the singers switched to the appropriate music, the spoon owner dashed to the dog skull and pointed the skull in four directions, and the four warriors danced around, everybody else rising to dance at his place, yelling and calling out, while this song with chorus was sung once. All were then seated except the warriors who pranced around the fire four times. After this each of the four warriors in turn picked up the dog skull, pointed it in the direction in which he had accomplished the particular war deed he was to recount, and related his story. If one of them had been forced to refuse the spoon, the owner of the spoon would have to point the dog skull for him while the warrior talked and gestured. The warrior who had been wounded spoke last, and when he finished he tossed the dog skull outside of the dancing-place. 796

The owner of the whistle had a particular dance. When the accompaniment started, it was stated, " for some reason he did not dance alone. It seemed that all the members were glad and danced with him and kind of helped him. The song was repeated three more times. At the end of each ' stanza ' the owner of the whistle would dance at the edge of the circle, apart from and very much faster than the other dancers." It was his privilege, too, to " punish " the dancers. At a signal from the owner of the whistle, the singers would switch to the " punishing songs " of which there were said to have been ten in all. No one could drop out of the dancing while these were being sung. Each of the ten songs could [533]

796 be repeated so that it was something of an ordeal. The sword owners would see to it that the dancers kept up, prodding the laggards until the series of songs had been completed.

[533 177] The singers themselves had a smoking song, one of the few songs of the Grass dance for which words were adopted along with the tunes [11] from the Assiniboine. This song indicated a period of rest and relaxation for all but it was required that one of the officers provide the pipe and mixture for the singers.

Any member who left the dancing-place was obliged to surrender some piece of personal property as insurance that he would return. If he did not come back, the property was forfeit.

796 [43] 586 Another distinctive feature of the earlier Grass dance was the throwing away of property and especially of wives. The term "throwing away" is appropriate because a stick was held in the hand and after the holder publicly announced what the stick represented he would throw it to the ground. If, for instance, a member of the society had decided to give away his wife he would take a stick and say: "Here is so-and-so (naming the woman)" and throw the stick down. Sometimes another member would pick up the stick, thus indicating that he was taking this woman, but occasionally it happened that no one grabbed her and in such case the wife in question would return to live with her own relatives. The man who so renounced his wife was supposed to be through with her for good. It was said by informants, however, that once in a while, provided the wife had not been claimed by another, the husband would want her back again. An instance in illustration of this point was told to me. A man who stood to my informant in the relation of enemy-friend [12] had so disposed of his wife at a Grass dance. Some time later my informant saw the couple together again. My informant took ad-

522 796 586 572

[533] [177] [572]

[11] Most of the Gros Ventre Grass dance songs have no words proper. This contrasts with the Arapaho Grass dance songs, as my informants are well aware. The difference is perhaps due to the influence on the Atapaho of the Ghost Dance religion (cf. Kroeber, A. L., The Arapaho, AMNH-B 18, pt. 4, 1907, p. 320), which scarcely affected the Gros Ventres.

[12] This was a joking and rivalry relationship entered into by presenting to a fellow tribesman an object captured from the enemy.

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

vantage of the occasion, as she had the right to do, to make fun 522 796 of her enemy-friend without his being able to retaliate. She 586 took a handful of horse manure and rubbed it all over his face 572 saying, "Oh! All of us at the Grass dance saw you throw her away, why are you going with her again?" and in this way called attention to the fact that he was not so "brave" as he had pretended to be.

Another informant stated that she and her sister were just able 796 to escape the embarrassing experience of so being given away. 586 They were both living with a man who was a prominent member of the Wolf society. One of his fellow-members, however, came to the two women and told them that their husband planned on throwing them both away at the forthcoming Grass dance. My informant was very angry to get this news and said to her sister: "We will get ready and get rid of him first!" Whereupon they packed their belongings and taking their own horses went quickly to their mother's brother. My informant said that this man who was going to throw them away tried many times to speak to her thereafter but she always turned away and refused to listen, thinking to herself: "Well, there are plenty of other men."

As a final point in the discussion of the earlier form of the 796 Grass dance, the custom of members giving away presents in 431 honor of their loved ones should be mentioned. This was a purely voluntary procedure and could be done by any member who wished to do so at any performance of the Grass dance. The following is a typical example of how this was carried out. The same informant last mentioned, married another member of the Wolf society not long after the incident she described above, and had been selected as one of the four women singers for the Grass dance. At one performance she was holding her infant daughter, her first child by this marriage, as she sang. Her husband, wishing to honor his little daughter, told a war story, went to his wife and took the child in his arms and, going to the center of the dancing-place, gave away a horse to one of the Assiniboine who happened to be visiting at the time of the dance.

Such was the form of the Grass dance as carried out by the 000

796 Such was the form of the Grass dance as carried out by the Gros Ventres from the time of its adoption from the Assiniboine up to about 1890 when changes began creeping in.

The Form: Later Period

796 178 It should perhaps be emphasized at this point that the changes which characterized the Grass dance after 1890 were mostly in the nature of accretions around the nucleus as originally adopted, so that, although in 1901 the form of the Grass dance differed somewhat from the earlier form, as Kroeber noted,[13] the whole was still distinctly recognizable as an expansion thereof.

Changes in personnel and equipment. At the turn of the century participation in the Grass dance was no longer restricted to members of a particular society. Everybody was free to join in. The Grass dance was, however, in charge of four officials, the "chiefs" who sat in the place of honor opposite the door and presided over the ceremony (Fig. 1). They were consulted on any matters pertaining to the performance, made rules, sometimes arbitrarily, during the dance, and were custodians of any fines collected. They were responsible for seeing to it that provisions were on hand when a dance was to be held. There were, moreover, two women officials, whose rank was said to be equal to that of the "chiefs" and whose insignia were ceremonial dresses of black cloth. These two sat to the right of the four chiefs.

[625] The orders of the "chiefs" were enforced by two men who sat, one on either side of the door, holding whips with ornamental handles. These whips were apparently a simple substitution for the wands representing swords in the original Grass dance. The whip owners each had an assistant who ran errands and attended to getting water, keeping up the fire and so on. An entirely new feature was, however, the addition of two women who owned whips and their two female assistants. They likewise sat on each side of the door but behind the men. When it was time for the women to dance,—another innovation to which we shall refer later,—the women whip owners rose and danced in opposite di-

[13] Kroeber, A. L., Ethnology of the Gros Ventre, AMNH-AP 1, pt. 4, 1908, p. 238.

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

rections around the circle. It was understood that if any woman had not risen to dance by the time those holding whips reached her, she would be lashed. These four women had the additional duty of helping serve when it was time for the general feast.

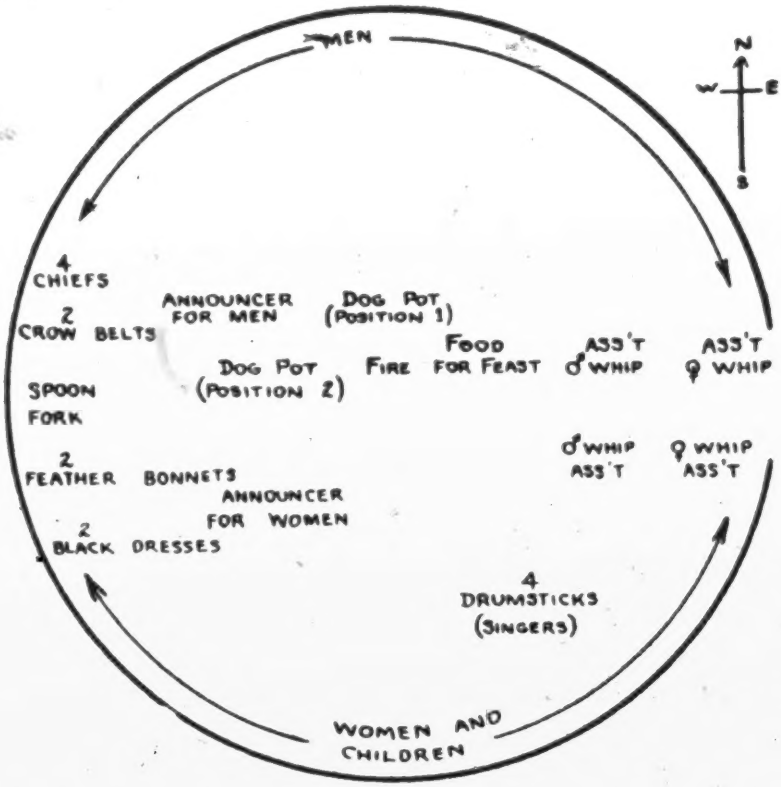


Fig. 1. Diagram of Dance Ground.

Considered as next in rank to the four "chiefs" were the four male singers, who, as in former times, owned the special drumsticks "decorated and official-looking, like emblems." They were expected to know faultlessly all of the many songs connected with the Grass dance as first adopted. If they should, for instance,

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 178 [688] sing a song out of the prescribed order, the "chiefs" would stop them at once, announce the mistake and what fine was to be demanded of the singers. Were the four women singers performing at that time, they too were penalized.

[534] The owners of the drumsticks cooperated with the owner of the drum whose special duty it was to care for this instrument and to have it in repair and ready for use at any time it was needed.

The concepts pertaining to the crow-belts, spoon, fork and whistle remained unchanged. The owners of these regalia treated them with the same respect as of old. Additional ceremonial equipment had been introduced in the form of four feathered war-bonnets, two of which were owned by men and two by women. There was a special little ceremony connected with the two bonnets owned by women. Early in the dance two outstanding warriors were selected to take these bonnets from their owners, dance four times around the rack where they were hung in front of their owners, and then hand them to the first two women sitting at the left of the door. When it was time to dance these women would don them and wear them throughout that dance, then pass them on to the next two, and so on, until everyone had had a chance to wear them.

796 178 624 Finally, there were two announcers, one who called out what he was directed to say by any of the men, and the other who publicized any statement to be made on behalf of the women.

All of these individuals were considered as office-holders in the Grass dance and, as formerly, each was free to transfer the office [622] to anyone he considered suitable to succeed himself. There was no regular term of office even for the "chiefs" and the transfer was described as purely voluntary. Apparently, however, there was a certain amount of consultation among the officers, when one of them decided to transfer his office, in order to agree on a well-qualified successor. Among other things it was necessary to consider the financial status of the individual, especially for those to take over the higher offices. Not only did the recipient heap property upon the donor, but according to the older pattern too, [431] the relatives of the recipient would give away horses and so on

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

in his honor, and there were certain obligations connected with some of the offices in the newer form of the Grass dance, such as payment for the privilege by the black-dress wearers of being invited to come near the fire in the center and eat dog flesh. Furthermore a new "chief" would almost without exception provide the wherewithal for a whole dance to show that he was worthy of the office. 796 178 624 [431] [622]

The procedure of transfer was similar for each office. If, for instance, one of the four "chiefs" had decided he had held this position long enough, at one of the dances he would order the transferring song to be sung. He, together, with the other three, would rise and dance around more or less deliberately and in a dignified manner. When these four reached the man who was to receive the office, each of the other three would make a motion toward the recipient as though helping him to his feet, while the donor himself would actually take his hand and assist him to arise. They then led him around the dancing place and finally installed the new officer in the place of honor vacated by the donor. It was customary, as the donor approached the region where the recipient was sitting, for everyone in the vicinity to bow his head as though making himself inconspicuous. None of them was supposed to know ahead of time on whom the choice would fall and, according to Gros Ventre etiquette, it would be very bad form for anyone to seem eager to receive an office, or any kind of honor for that matter. [576]

Changes in procedure. In this later period the Grass dance was held sometimes out of doors in a circular space enclosed by wagons, at other times in a large log building, the ground plan of which was as nearly round as it could be made. It was remarked in this connection that the modern rectangular community hall at Hays, on the Reservation, was no good for Gros Ventre ceremonies, including the Grass dance, "because everything we did was in a circle." The present almost circular community hall at Lodge Pole is considered much more satisfactory. The seating arrangements were very similar to those described for 796 178

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 the original Grass dance, the number participating, however, both
178 as officers and as general audience, being very much larger.

Although the dog ritual, carried out as described for the earlier period, remained the highlight and climax of the Grass dance, the general program had been enlarged to include other features. Not only were procedures introduced in connection with the newer offices, as indicated above, but other items such as the Owl dance and the Ringtail dance were introduced. The order of events was apparently determined by the "chiefs" at each performance of the Grass dance, but the general program did not vary markedly. The Ringtail dance, for instance, was always included at some time.

When the order for the Ringtail dance was given, any who wished to participate formed a circle facing inward and both men and women were free to choose partners of the opposite sex. The man placed his arm over the shoulders of his partner while she placed her arm around his back. The whole group moved in a circle clockwise in rhythm to the music provided by a group of singers other than those who sang and drummed for the dog ritual and other ceremonies in which officers as such participated.
[887] Any middle-aged or older woman who wished to do so might join the singers for any of the round dances. If none volunteered then they were sometimes drafted simply by being invited and led over to the spot where the male singers were performing.

796 It occasionally happened that during this dance, when the sing-
533 ers had "hit the spot,"—aroused the spirit of the crowd and the
178 floor was full,—the singers would stop all of a sudden, but without giving the usual signal to disperse. Then, without advance notice, they would start singing again, but a different song, a "punishing song." This was a feature obviously based on the "punishing songs" of the original Grass dance, but the tunes were different and it was carried out in the following way.

There were only two of these newer "punishing songs" but as soon as the dancers heard the singers start one of them they knew what it meant: "Now we are in for it. We will have to dance and dance!" The singers could sing the first of these

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

songs as many times as they pleased, and when tired of that one 796 switched to the others. There was no intermission and the 533 dancers got no rest, even the old women would stand up and 178 dance in one place and the old men would be yelling and calling out from where they sat. It was evidently a very lively scene. The dancers would sweat and get tired, but still there would be no let up. Finally the four wearers of the feathered war bonnets, —two men and two women,—would begin voicing appeals to the four "chiefs": "Please do something to stop this dance!" But the "chiefs" did not act right away. At last one of them would get up and walk around until he approached the wearer of a war-bonnet. He would then remove the bonnet and the people were glad and would cheer and yell, but this was not yet the end. They kept on dancing until a second of the "chiefs" got up and removed a war-bonnet from another of the wearers, which finally brought the Ringtail dance to a close.

It was said that while the women who wore black dresses could have answered the appeal to stop the dance, as a rule they would have hesitated to do so because the ones who took upon themselves this privilege would have to pay heavily for it. When the people had quieted down after the strenuous dance, those who had removed the war-bonnets would get up and announce what they were paying for having done so. One might have said, for instance: "All right. I will kill a beef for the next dance," or "I will give money" and name the sum. He could donate whatever [431] he wished, but it was understood that it would be something really substantial. My informants explained that although the Ringtail dance was a regular feature of the Grass dance program, the "punishing songs" were not sung every time because "the reason for singing them was that the people hoped to have a Grass dance again soon and wanted an elaborate affair and so the singers had to use discretion; if the 'chiefs' happened to be in a good financial condition at the time, they made them 'shell out' in that way."

The owners of the ceremonial drumsticks retained the smoking song as described for the earlier period. It was the "chiefs" who

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 178 533 [625 681] were supposed to come prepared with pipe, tobacco, and matches in anticipation of this song. If, for some reason, one of the four was unable to furnish at least a pipeful of mixture, and could not borrow one, he was immediately arrested by the owners of the whips and punished by the singers who might tear his shirt at the neck so everyone could see it, or, perhaps, pour over him a good cupful of broth made from dog flesh. This broth has a strong and lasting odor. The female officers were likewise expected to give the women singers a smoke. The smoking song marked an intermission. No one danced to this song and all sat around smoking and taking it easy.

796 178 If things got too dull, however, one of the owners of the whips might get up, call the announcer, and say: "Tell my friends that I am going to whip them if they don't dance. I will have the right to whip them because I am going to pay for it," and he would present a bridle, or perhaps five dollars, or something of that order of magnitude, to anyone he wished. It was understood, then, that the next time the singing started this man might hit any person,—even one of the "chiefs,"—who failed to dance.

Another feature reminiscent of the original Grass dance but showing some slight change, was the provision that anyone who wished might have it announced that he was going to "lock the door," which meant that nobody could go home until the dance was over. For doing this however he had to provide all the necessary food for another Grass dance to be held on the night immediately following. It was up to the owners of the whips to enforce the regulation by taking something valuable, say a hat [689] or a blanket, from anyone who left the dance and the article was forfeit if he failed to return.

796 178 626 Based on the same concept, the practice grew up of forcing attendance in the following way. Once in a while the owners of the whips might order their assistants to go from door to door in the whole community and take something belonging to each householder, say a bridle, or a valuable belt, or a gun, and bring it to the dancing-place. If the owner of the object were not at the dance, his property was returned to him only if he promised

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

to provide food for the next dance. If he failed to redeem it by 796 such promise, he had one more chance to do so by appearing at 178 the following dance. If he did not show up on that occasion the 626 announcer was told to call out: "The one who owns this bridle (or belt, or gun, etc.) does not want it." Whereupon the article would be thrown in the fire and destroyed.

Although the custom of "throwing away" wives gradually 796 died out, the giving away of valuable property to honor loved 178 ones continued and was elaborated. The following is only one 431 example from many which might be cited as illustrative of at- [586] titudes. The informant is now a man in his early seventies. He stated: "When I was a young man I never went to these social affairs. After I married my wife would go with my older brother every time there was a Grass dance, but I would stay at home. This brother of mine used to get after me for not taking part. He would say: 'It is bad to be the way you are. When there is a dance or anything going on, go and look on. You don't necessarily have to dance, but at least be present.' One time in later years the Cheyenne came to visit and of course the Gros Ventres put on a dance for them. I decided to go and for the first time I joined in. When my brother saw me he got up and said: 'Well, my friends, I have been asking my brother to look on and to take part in these dances, and I have never succeeded. But today I see him at this dance and I am glad he is here. I am glad he is joining with us.' Then my brother went out and brought to the dancing-place a new yellow-wheeled buggy and a set of harness he had just purchased, and announced: 'Now, because my brother has joined the dance I am proud he did, and in his honor I am giving away this buggy and harness to the visitors.' Then my brother's wife announced: 'I am happy that my brother-in-law is joining the dance. I will give a beef to the visitors so they will kill it and have meat to eat.' Of course I felt embarrassed. It was hard on me because I thought everybody was looking at me and I sweated. Afterwards I told my brother: 'I didn't go in there for the purpose of having you give away all that stuff in my honor!' But he replied: 'Well, that is the way of our people

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 178 431 and we follow that. But don't stop going. You went once, so keep going.' And so I did go and when I noticed that at nearly every dance my brother gave away beef or horses—he was certainly a generous man—I started to follow his example. It got so that whenever there was a dance I was the first one there and I used to give away all kinds of things. For my adopted daughter, for instance, I gave beef, horses, and money at different times."

796 178 The final event of the program of the Grass dance during the later period was a dance by one of the owners of the feathered war-bonnets who, to the accompaniment of a special song, stepped toward the door, made three passes towards the latch and on the fourth actually opened the door, took off the bonnet and went out. Everyone by that time would be standing up ready to go with their bundles and babies. It was remarked that since they usually started the Grass dance about one in the afternoon and stopped only well after midnight, they had plenty of time for all these things.

796 178 858 In this section we have dealt only with the main differences between the earlier and later forms of the Grass dance as practised by the Gros Ventres. Other minor changes were introduced from time to time, one being that of allowing children on the dancing floor. This will be briefly described merely to indicate the latitude allowed to the individual in the later period during which the Gros Ventre Grass dance flourished, and to illustrate the mechanism by which some, at least, of the changes could have been actually accomplished. My informant, who had held important offices in the Grass dance and who is a man of prominence, said that, up to the time he acted in this matter, it had been the duty of the owners of the whips to take children bold enough to mingle with the dancers and drag them off the floor by force. It was obvious to my informant that the children were anxious to dance so at one of the performances he tied a bunch of paper money to the amount of $50 on the end of a buggy whip and had the announcer call out that he was going to buy for the children the privilege of joining in the dancing; that he was not only paying for this by giving the money toward the next per-

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

formance of the Grass dance, but that he was also paying for this 796
by cancelling debts owed him at his store by four specific indi- 178
viduals whom he named; that anyone who objected to the chil- 858
dren having the privilege would have to raise the ante; and that finally he would inaugurate this new feature of the Grass dance by having all of his own children dance first. No one disputed the point, and from that day to this children have had the freedom of the floor at any of the social gatherings.

The innovation described above was probably one of the last changes made in the form of the Grass dance before it began to disintegrate about 1916. Once the dog ritual was abandoned,—seemingly just prior to 1920,—the Grass dance as such disappeared, leaving only the round dances, one or two of which survive today and are performed at annual fairs, at celebrations of the Fourth of July, and so on.

Let us now turn to a consideration of the functions of the Grass dance in Gros Ventre culture in each of the two periods.

Functions

Earlier period. When the Grass dance was first adopted by the 796
Gros Ventres its function was a relatively minor one of replacing 575
the dance belonging to one of the two "soldier" societies, the Wolves, or Wolf-men as the members were called. The members of the parallel society were known as Stars. These two societies were approximately equal numerically and included between them the whole Gros Ventres population of able-bodied warriors. At the age of 18 or 19 the individual Gros Ventre young man who, together with say 30-50 of his age-mates, already belonged to one of several "companies"—the Rosebushes, or Calves, or Resting-on-the-breast-of-a-woman, or Holding-dogs'-tails, and so forth,—would enter either the Wolf society or the Star society, whichever one was selected by the "company." The individual would then be either a Wolf-dancer or a Star-dancer, although he retained close personal association with the members of his "company" which would have entered one society or the other as a body. With the mates of his "company" he would then go through the

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 preliminary to the series of Sacred Dances, namely the Fly Dance.
575 After this ceremony was over he was eligible as a "soldier." That is, should one of the members of his "company" vow to give any one of the Sacred Dances in the series, he and other members of the society to which he belonged—either Wolf or Star—would act as police for the time during which the Dance was being held. Thus it was that Stars might police the hunt
[625] and keep order in the camp circle during one such Sacred Dance while Wolves might perform the same duties at another time, depending on which moiety the vower belonged to.

When not engaged as soldiers in connection with one of the Dances, the two societies exhibited the keenest rivalry, particularly in war-deeds, but also in gambling, in foot-racing, and whenever else opportunity offered. One aspect of this rivalry was apparent when each put on its own dance. The general procedure of both was identical but there were a few distinctive features. When the whole tribe was together and there was no serious threat of war, one society or the other would decide the time was ripe to hold its dance. Let us assume that the Star society had so decided.

The members of the Star society would then don their best clothes and, mounted on their finest horses, go around the camp circle accompanied by two especially prominent members who had counted coup against the enemy while on horseback. They would
[533] sing special begging songs in front of the lodges of several well-to-do members of the opposite society. It was a challenge to the Wolf-men and they usually responded in the accepted fashion by giving large quantities of food, in which their relatives would help them out. This would provide the feast at the dance. The Stars then proceeded to the opening of the camp circle and all dismounting except the two very prominent warriors, formed in a line by twos, the four singers with their hand drums last. To the accompaniment of a marching song the line moved "snake-dance" fashion weaving back and forth, to the dancing lodge which had been erected in the center of the camp circle. At the entrance to the lodge the line divided, some going to the right,

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

others to the left forming a circle inside the dancing-place where 796
they sat. The two prominent warriors, having been assisted in 575
dismounting, took up their places, one on each side of the entrance, holding whips in their hands. It was their duty to rouse any lagging dancers, whipping them if necessary. Each member had his own rattle, of peculiar shape but painted with individual designs, which he waved about as he danced. The wives of some of the dancers joined the four singers in singing certain of the dance songs. Two of the youngest members acted as *atsa'an* (waiters) tending to the fire, getting water, and so on. Occasionally during the dance a woman relative of one of the partici- [431]
pants would rush up to him, throw down a blanket or some other gift in his honor, grab his rattle and dance for a short time. Members of the other society did not join in the festivities or partake of the feast, in spite of the fact that most of the provisions for the latter had been donated by some of them.

At some future date, however, the Wolf-men would agree that the time was auspicious for them to have a dance and " get even " with the Stars. They would of course have their own songs, sung in front of the lodges of prominent members of the Star society, but otherwise the procedure was identical, including their accompaniment by two outstanding warriors, the " snake-dance," the arrangement of the lodge in the center of the camp-circle, and so on. The Wolf-men differed from the Stars in their actual dance [534]
in that they did not have rattles and in dancing seemingly intended to portray wolves, placing one hand on the forehead and the other at the back to represent the animal's tail.[14]

The adoption of the Grass dance meant merely that the more 796
elaborate dog ritual, with its regalia and greater degree of organi- 575
zation, replaced the dance of the Wolf-men although the begging 178
preliminary and so on remained the same. So far as we can see, at the time of its adoption, the Grass dance was a case of pure substitution and one that fitted readily into the cultural situation. First of all, according to Lowie's information, the Assini-

[14] I am deeply grateful to my colleague, John M. Cooper, who generously placed at my disposal his field notes on the Wolf society.

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 boine themselves considered the Grass dance as a modern form
575 of one of their own older soldier society dances.[15] Secondly there
178 were certain similarities between the original Star and Wolf dances on the one hand and the Grass dance on the other. In both types there was dancing to exhaustion and the employment of special officers to rouse the laggards,—the whip men in the first instance, the sword men in the other. Again women singers helped out occasionally in both. Still another feature in common was the custom of giving presents away, not to a relative who was a member, but in honor of that relative. Thus, the Grass dance became a part of Gros Ventres culture.

182 So long as Gros Ventre culture continued on its traditional eco-
178 nomic basis, the hunting of buffalo, the Grass dance fulfilled its function as the dance of the Wolf soldier society and was simply parallel to the dance of the rival Star society. The disappearance of the buffalo, however, wrought many changes in Gros Ventre life as it did in that of all of the Plains tribes. The Gros Ventres were fortunate in that the last large herd of buffalo happened to be in their hunting territory and thus they could benefit a little longer than most of their neighbors from this mainstay of their old way of life. This is not to say that prior to the extinction of the buffalo Gros Ventre culture was flourishing in pristine glory. Far from it. For one thing, at the time of the adoption of the
[177] Grass dance between 1875 and 1880, intertribal warfare, with which many aspects of their culture were interrelated, was at a minimum and was itself soon to disappear. Again, certain aspects of their ceremonial life had fallen into disuse, some of the Sacred Dances not having been given for years previously. Nevertheless, although the religious culture was dwindling, much was still left and the social side was relatively intact.

182 *Later period.* The break in economic life with the killing of
796 the last of the buffalo in 1884 was accompanied by the virtual disappearance of the Gros Ventre ceremonial organization. The public rites of a religious nature, which had formerly made for social solidarity as well, were abandoned. The last Sacrifice

[15] Lowie, loc. cit. p. 66.

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Dance (Sun Dance), for example, was given in that very year 182
and, so far as our data go, but one Crazy Dance was held after 796
that. The seasonal Flat Pipe rite was discontinued. Furthermore there was a breakdown in the socio-political life. The necessity for nomadic life had disappeared and as a consequence there was no longer need of policing the hunt or keeping order in [575]
the camp circle when the whole tribe gathered so that, with the further establishment of peace, the raison d'être for two rival soldier societies was gone.

In the transition period the missionaries were trying valiantly to fill the gap in religious life but did not offer a satisfactory [797]
solution for the social situation; nor did the Agency which had become the center of the new economic life. It was the Grass dance, which as we have seen survived in a somewhat changed form, that seems to have filled the void left in social life.

In its earlier form the Grass dance was purely social in nature, 796
as was the Star dance, but the latter faded away while the [535]
former attained a position of heightened importance. One of the factors accounting for this fact seems to be that the Grass dance "had more to it," as our informants put it. The performance of the dog ritual was certainly far more spectacular than the simpler dance of the Star society and, in addition, it had semi-ceremonial connotations reminiscent of other features of the older Gros Ventre culture which were lacking from the Star dance. For example, the owners of the regalia in the Grass dance were likewise officers of several degrees of importance therein, as was the case in the performance of the Sacred Dances. Again, sex abstinence was required before dancing with the crow-belts as it was [784]
before participating in the Sacrifice Dance (Sun Dance) and before dancing with the Feathered Pipe. Ceremonial incensing of persons and equipment had been a marked characteristic of Gros [783]
Ventre religious life. The formal transfer of office and regalia duplicates the pattern of transfer of office of Pipe Keeper, transfer of painted lodges, and so on. Recounting of war deeds was frequently demanded in connection with many aspects of Gros Ventre life,—to validate the giving of a name, the erection of a

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 new lodge, certain practices in connection with the Flat Pipe, as well as in the dog ritual of the Grass dance. All in all the Grass dance was so much more colorful that, with choice left strictly to the individual, as it was after the "companies" were no longer formed, it seems probable that greater and greater numbers elected to join the Grass dancers. In time the Star society consequently lacked sufficient recruits to maintain its identity.

796 178 The addition of the round dances, such as the Ringtail, around the dog ritual nucleus, allowed all to actively participate. In this way the Grass dance provided occasion for group recreational outlets, while at the same time fulfilling another function formerly carried out by the public religious rites, namely, that of enhancing the feeling of social solidarity. One aspect of the public religious rites had been a nice balance in their performance between periods of ritual solemnity and those of secular gaiety and relaxation. The Grass dance now approximated this situation to some degree in the reserve which the audience maintained during the performance of the ceremonial parts of the dog ritual, and the verve with which it entered into the other parts of the program, especially the round dances. If one may judge from the enthusiasm expressed by informants who knew the Grass dance between 1900 and 1916, it was a most stimulating and enjoyable affair. Each performance drew in a large proportion of the tribe, even those from the far corners of the Reservation.

In spite of its ceremonial features, the Grass dance was always looked upon as social rather than religious, and it could be given at any time. It thus became the accepted manner of entertaining the frequent visitors from other tribes and furthermore was eminently adapted to form the central part of Fourth of July celebrations and the like. [574]

We have seen that in its later phase the Grass dance became more highly organized with the addition of new offices and a few new items of equipment. The expansion of offices meant retaining and underlining the recognition of types of ability formerly premiated while allowing for shifting emphases to different types of ability.

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The addition of the four "chiefs" of the Grass dance gave scope for public recognition of the middle-aged men of substance esteemed for their wisdom and judgment to whom office-holding proportionate for their dignity was otherwise denied. Although there was no longer opportunity for the ranks of warriors to swell, those who had in the past performed brave deeds could still gain status by being called upon to publicly recount them at the ceremonial eating of dog flesh and by being selected to handle the feathered bonnets. 796 178 622 [888] [554]

As the younger men had no chance to show their prowess in warfare and hunting, there was a change of emphasis to recognition of superior singing and dancing ability as one of the roads to public approval. This latter was brought out clearly by our informants when explaining the qualifications of those sought for the various officers of the Grass dance as it was performed around the turn of the century. 796 178 555

They stated that much of the success of the performance of the Grass dance depended particularly on the singers of the dog ritual songs. The four singers who owned the ceremonial drumsticks were chosen for their good voices and from among the "lively men who liked to do things." The candidates did not have to know the songs in advance because they could be trained. Two noted teachers were The Boy and Joe Big Beaver. The Boy said he used to "campaign against himself" when it was time for a drumstick to be transferred because "he didn't want to get tied down. He enjoyed dancing and the singers never got a chance to participate." Our informants told us of two men who are remembered especially as being outstanding singers and drummers, Ed Rider and Breath. The latter was described as a top-ranking singer who, so far as they knew, had never been surpassed. They said: "It was something worth listening to when Breath started those Grass dance songs. He had a voice adapted to that kind of singing and his sense of rhythm was superb. He could hold a big crowd of people spellbound. He was a real genius. Many others tried to copy him and learn from him, but none ever succeeded in equalling him. Regardless of his fine voice no one

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 even acquired his technique for beating the drum, that is, of be-
178 ginning lightly and then, in an inimitable manner, of increasing
555 the volume. Sometimes the other three singers would let him begin a song and sing it through once just to listen to him. He was left-handed, but he sure could beat the drum! He was a man of whom you could say he had a real personality as far as the Grass dance was concerned but who was not so noticeable outside this one field. He was always deliberate but as soon as he approached the dancing-place he seemed to come alive. He was good at that office in the Grass dance and he knew it. He would sit up at the drum as straight as a lord and never attempted to be inconspicuous as, for instance, by putting his hat down over his eyes. Many of the young fellows who usually didn't join in the dancing and liked to play around on the outside would nevertheless rush from every direction to get to the floor when they saw him coming."

796 While singing had always held an important place in Gros Ventre religious culture, in the past the emphasis had been on the meaning of the song far more than on the quality of the voice and the manner of performing as it was in the Grass dance. Similarly in times gone by what dancing there was in the various rites was more or less perfunctory, whereas in the Grass dance the ownership of the two crow-belts, the fork, the spoon, and the whistle was transferred to those among the younger men who had
[554] physical vigor and endurance as well as grace. For these offices "it took a good-looking young man in good physical condition to perform properly."

796 A still greater innovation was the inclusion of women as officers
178 of the Grass dance. The two ceremonial black dresses were
562 seemingly symbolic of the black paint used in the Victory dance of former years, especially in view of the fact that this was one of the few dances performed by women in the old culture. It should be mentioned, however, that in connection with the Victory dance there had been no formal office nor had the participants therein been under economic obligations. We might hazard the guess that the ownership by women of two of the war-bonnets in

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the Grass dance may have seemed appropriate to the Gros Ventres as reminiscent of the feather headdress worn by the participants in the Women's Dance belonging to the series of vowed Sacred Dances. But regardless of the possible symbolism, these four offices, plus the four others allotted to women,—two whip owners and their two assistants,—gave the female sex a fair degree of recognition, and probably reflect the newer economic status of women which came about with the changing concept of inheritance. Formerly women, of course, had a right to their own property, but acquisition thereof was mainly through their own manufacture, such as clothing, or through the relatively rare gift of a horse or so. They did not come in for any valuable property through inheritance and a widow in those days was not even entitled to any of her deceased husband's belongings.

The holding of office in the Grass dance thus offered one of the very few means remaining for acquisition of status by the individual. The frequent transfer of offices meant that there was opportunity for many individuals within each category,—mature men, older warriors, young men, women,—to enjoy such public recognition.

Public display of generosity in giving away property to honor a loved one, which became such a marked feature of the Grass dance in its later phase, carried on and accentuated the method most common in older Gros Ventre culture for the gaining of individual prestige. Formerly there were many opportunities for this kind of ostentatious liberality,—when a pipe or a painted lodge was transferred, when a warrior returned from accomplishing brave deeds, when a person was participating in one of the Sacred Dances, when a person was named, when a child's ears were pierced, and so on. At such times the relatives publicly gave away as much of their property as they possibly could,—not to the recipient of the pipe, the brave warrior, the participant in the Sacred Dance, et al.,—but to someone else in his honor. Everybody would know what was given and by whom; people would make such comments as: "So-and-so is a fine man. He surely must think a lot of his relative—look at all the things he

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 gave away in his honor." When first adopted the Grass dance
178 offered only one such opportunity—and a relatively minor one.
431 As times changed, however, the Grass dance provided practically
156 the sole occasion for gaining prestige while at the same time
554 carrying out the old pattern of kinship obligation by enhancing the prestige of relatives.

The possibility in the later form of the Grass dance of paying for privileges, such as locking the door, or whipping those who did not get up to dance, gave further scope for the acquisition of prestige through liberality, as did also, of course, payments at transfer of office.

It was estimated by our informants that around 1900 as much as a thousand dollars in goods and cash changed hands at a single performance of the Grass dance. At that time it was not uncommon for the dance to be held at weekly intervals. So long as the Gros Ventre were relatively prosperous and had property to display and exchange according to the older patterns, the Grass dance continued to function. With increasing poverty, however, along
[735] with other factors such as the changing points of view and interests on the part of the younger generation, and the dying out of
[182] the older warriors, the Grass dance, the core of which was the dog ritual, gradually paled off leaving but the remnants of some of the round dances which had been added to the Grass dance as originally adopted from the Assiniboine.

Summary

796 Between 1875 and 1880 the Gros Ventres received the Grass
177 dance from the Assiniboine. From the date of adoption up to
575 about 1890 the Grass dance was performed only by members of one of the two soldier societies and the custodians of the ceremonial equipment were the officers. Offices were transferred among members according to the old Gros Ventre pattern.

796 The essential core of the Grass dance was the dog ritual, a
[262] ceremonial eating of dog flesh, carried out by the owners of the equipment with the assistance of four warriors selected from among the lay members. Other features of the program at each

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

other features of the program at each performance of the Grass dance included the "punishing" dance, the smoking song, the forfeiture of property, the "throwing away" of property represented by sticks, gift-giving in honor of loved ones. 796 [533 431]

In 1890 changes in the form of the Grass dance began to be noticeable. By 1900 the Grass dance included all in the tribe who wished to participate. The official personnel had been expanded to include four "chiefs," four war-bonnet owners, two owners of ceremonial black dresses, two women whip-owners and two female assistants. Transfer of all offices was, however, carried out as before. 796 178

The dog ritual continued unchanged to be the highlight of the program. Perhaps the most obvious change in procedure was the inclusion of round dances, especially the Ringtail dance, in which both men and women participated and for which "punishing" songs had been devised. The smoking song and the forfeiture of property were retained, but with some elaborations. Although the "throwing away" of property gradually disappeared, the gift-giving in honor of relatives was very much emphasized. Other very minor changes were inaugurated at intervals up until about 1916. [533]

The changing functions of the Grass dance coincide with the changing form and can likewise be considered as of two periods, —the first from 1875–80 to 1890; the second from 1890 to 1916.

In the first period the function of the Grass dance was a relatively minor one. It was adopted, and fitted into place, as a substitute for the simpler and less colorful dance of the Wolf soldier society, and paralleled the dance of the other soldier society, the Star society. In view especially of the preliminary "begging" songs, the Grass dance seemingly was the expression of but one phase of the intense rivalry between the two soldier societies. [575]

With the extinction of the buffalo in 1884 came the breakdown of the older culture. By 1890 not only had most of the public religious rites disappeared, but the social organization was greatly altered. As the economic basis was changed, the nomadic life and the camp circle were abandoned, and the two soldier societies no [182]

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 178 longer existed. The dance of one of them, the Grass dance, however, survived. In its changed form the Grass dance filled the void in social life during the transition from old to new.

With the admission of all to membership and through the addition of round dances in which all could actively participate, the Grass dance met the needs for group recreational outlets and for expression of social solidarity.

796 178 554 As the sole surviving institution which carried the concept of graded offices and their transfer, the Grass dance met the need of the individual for status along traditional lines. The expansion of offices allowed for the recognition of types of ability formerly premiated and opened the way for younger men as well as for women in emphasizing different kinds of ability.

Finally, the Grass dance met the need of the individual for prestige in accordance with the older pattern by offering opportunity for ostentatious liberality. By bestowing gifts publicly [431] at the Grass dance, one could gain the coveted reputation for generosity, while at the same time fulfilling a substantial part of one's obligation to kinsmen.

796 182 The Grass dance continued to function in this way up to about 1916, after which time it began gradually to pale off, and to practically disappear by 1920. The few round dances carried on at present under the name "Grass dance" bear no appreciable relationship to the lively and colorful performances that are remembered by the older Gros Ventres as having been so stimulating and enjoyable.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

INTRODUCTION

The Algonquian-speaking Gros Ventres live on the Fort Belknap Reservation in North Central Montana. The Reservation is a small part of the land claimed by this tribe in 1887, when the boundaries were finally fixed. At present, the Gros Ventres number between a thousand and eleven hundred, and they share their territory with almost as many Assiniboine. The latter tribe was included in the settlement of the Reservation although it did not participate with the Gros Ventres and Blackfoot tribes in the Treaty of 1855. In spite of some intermarriage, the two groups have never really blended and the Gros Ventres tend to center at the village of Hays at the southern part of the Reservation while the Assinboine are clustered around Lodge Pole, a settlement some ten miles east of Hays. The Indian Agency is approximately forty miles north of Hays at the northern boundary of the Reservation and close to the town of Harlem on the Great Northern Railroad. Of importance to the Gros Ventres, who are predominantly Roman Catholic, is St. Paul's Mission and School which lie at the foot of the Little Rockies only a mile south of Hays. David Rodnick has given an excellent description of the geographical setting of the Reservation for his study of modern conditions and of acculturation among the Fort Belknap Assiniboine.

131 657 [197] [161] [648] [797] [114]

Of the several tribes in the Northern Plains region, the Gros Ventres are perhaps the least known. Although they maintained intact their tribal identity, and were recognized as fierce warriors, they were often mistakenly identified with the Blackfoot tribes, with whom they were frequently allied. Moreover, little was known of the Gros Ventre language except that it was an exceedingly difficult one; practically every independent observer during the nineteenth century remarks on this fact. Since, however, many Gros Ventre men knew Blackfoot, the linguistic difference was often overlooked and the Gros Ventres tended to be counted as one of the Blackfoot tribes. As part of the so-called "Blackfoot Nation," leaders of the Gros Ventres signed the Treaty of 1855.

101 [648] 197 [648]

[P. viii contains no text]

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

over the area. The Gros Ventres had the benefit of buffalo hunting a trifle longer than the other groups. All the buffalo in Montana were in February, 1882, in their territory, between the Milk River and the Bear Paw Mountains. The hunting season, of October 1882 to February 1883, finished the annihilation of the great northern herd and left only stragglers, merely a few thousands.[70] By August, 1883, both the Blackfoot and the Crow Agencies reported that all game was gone from their respective reservations, and a letter from the Fort Belknap Agency stated that game there "was practically exhausted."[71] In 1884 the Blackfoot and Crow agencies reported that the buffalo was extinct.[72] After ceding more land, in 1888 the limits of the Fort Belknap Reservation, which the Gros Ventres share with the Assiniboine, were finally fixed.[73]

136 175 648 [657]

Missionary endeavors, carried on by the Jesuit Fathers, had begun in earnest only in 1885. Prior to that time contact with missionaries had been sporadic. Father Point in 1846–47 had been well received and sent in a good report of this tribe. When Father Giorda attempted to go among them in 1862, however, Bull Lodge took him prisoner and stripped him of his possessions. Since his captivity did not last longer than a few weeks, and his property was restored to him, several months later he made another attempt. This time, while there was some opposition at first, he was permitted to baptize over a hundred children. Subsequently Fathers Rappagliosi and Grassi made several visits respectively, and at considerable intervals. Finally, after some preliminary negotiations, Father Ebershweiler established permanent residence in 1885, and the school at St. Paul's was opened in 1887. The mission and school flourished. In 1891 the founder was replaced by Father Flusi, assisted by Father Sansome.[74]

175 797

The Gros Ventres population—always small, relative to that of surrounding tribes—was steadily declining. Hayden's estimate of 1853 placed the total at 2520.[75] In 1883, at the time of the

175 161

[70] Hornaday, pp. 492, 506, 510–11.
[71] Report of Commissioner of Indian Affairs 1883–1915, pp. lx, 98.
[72] *Ibid.*, pp. 107, 109.
[73] *Ibid.*, p. 295.
[74] Palladino, pp. 187, 195–96, 230, 232, 235.
[75] Hayden, p. 344. Gros Ventres today claim their number was then 10,000.

PLATES

142 The original photograph of Plate 1 was taken in 1887 and
291 belongs to The Boy. Shown in it are Lame Bull, The Boy's
301 father, and Crow Bull, maternal uncle of Coming Daylight. Both
302 of these men were born around 1825 and their personal experiences were often referred to by our informants as we took down the record of the old way of life. Each had been Keeper of the sacred Flat Pipe.

115 The photographs composing Plate 2, except for the one of The
133 Boy, were taken in 1940 by Dr. Karl F. Herzfeld. The first three
142 show the nature of the country around Hays on the Fort Belknap
291 Reservation; the other three show some of our informants and
292 interpreters whose biographical sketches follow.

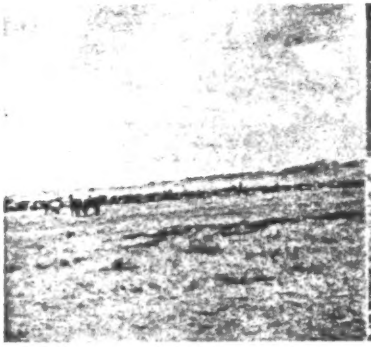
531 In Plate 3, the shield and war medicines of Bull Lodge, father
797 of our informant, Garter Snake, represent only a few of the specimens of Gros Ventre culture collected in 1937 by Mr.
778 Richard Pohrt, of Flint, Michigan.
293
714
721

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

115
133
142
291
292
531

IN THE LITTLE ROCKIES

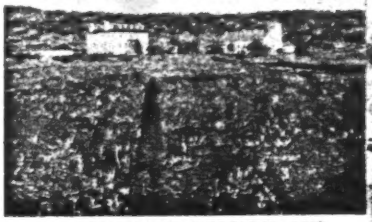
THE BOY



PLAINS NEAR HAYS

MARY, SINGER, AND COMING DAYLIGHT

[342]
[797]



ST. PAUL'S MISSION AND SCHOOL

COMING DAYLIGHT'S TIPI

PLATE II

[p. 212 (B)]

analysis was given by our informants with a good deal of hesitation. The form of direct address, Ni:nänä'än, was not used at the sacred pipe rites nor in trivial matters, but in grave emergencies, —in very solemn oaths or vows, extreme danger in battle, critical illness,—which concern the life or welfare of human beings. 776

The fourth form of address used for the Supreme Being was Iθɔna'an "our (inclusive) father."[4] This name was in use as far back as our oldest informants, Coming Daylight and Singer, could remember. The Gros Ventres are quite aware that their close linguistic and cultural kin, the Arapaho, use the name "father" for the Supreme Being. The Gros Ventres, however, unlike the Arapaho, never call him "grandfather."

Finally, the Supreme Being is also spoken of as initci:t nihɔne:-hɔnixtè (life, he owns) "owner, or master of life," a common expression to or of the Supreme Being among other Algonquian-speaking peoples.[5] [171]

The Supreme Being, unlike the culture-hero, had no wife or children. He does not figure at all in the Gros Ventre folklore, nor even in the origin myths to be given later, except insofar as the culture-hero taught the people to worship him. The Supreme Being's appearance was completely unknown; the culture hero who taught the people to pray to him did not describe how he looked; and in all the folklore and sacred stories of the Gros Ventres there is no record of the Supreme Being having a body or taking material form or appearing in dream or vision in material form. As The Boy put it: "If anyone had ever seen the Supreme Being, he would have described how he looked, and this story would have been handed down as the biggest one in all the Gros Ventre tales."

The nearest to such is a story regarding the first Catholic priest[6] who came to the Gros Ventres when The Boy's father, Lame Bull (born 1824) was a young man old enough to remember the event well. At first the Gros Ventres said: "The Supreme Being has come down from above. He is the priest." The Supreme Being 776 797

[4] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, p. 275.
[5] Cf. Cooper, 1934, p. 71.
[6] Cf. Flannery, 1953, p. 20.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

776 was supposed to have come on earth far up north, and to have made the rounds of all the tribes, finally reaching the Gros Ventres. 797 The Gros Ventres at first so called the priest, but when they discovered that he ate and slept like themselves, they ceased calling him by this name.

776 In the sweatlodge rite, to be described later, the first of those invited to sweat was the Supreme Being.[1] In how far such an invitation was anthropomorphically conceived is hard to say; it need not, of course, necessarily have implied anything beyond symbolic deference.

The Boy and Thick stated: "He is not a 'false person.' He is entirely in a class by himself. We think so much of him that we do not dare to try to learn what he looks like. We class him as a kind of shadow. He is the most wonderful and powerful of all beings who have no bodies."

[778] No statues or images or pictographs of any kind were ever made of the Supreme Being, nor were there any symbolic representations of him.

The Supreme Being was alone and one, and, as compared with other sacred or superhuman beings of religion, myth, and folklore, [782] he ranked first. Where prayers included invocation of more beings than one, the Supreme Being's name always came first; in ritual invitations before sweating or partaking of food, he was always invited first. He was, however, much more than *primus inter pares*. He was in a class by himself as not only the most powerful but as the ultimate source of the power possessed by other beings and as the ultimate ruler and controller of these others. Bha'a, [821] the Storm Being, who ranked next in importance to the Supreme Being, was controller of storms, thunder and lightning, and exercised a certain limited autonomy. He had this power and office, however, not of himself, but by delegation from the Supreme Being, and exercised it as the agent of the Supreme Being, as will be explained more fully later. Then, too, while the Gros Ventres through fasting and crying on the hills or prairie sought supernatural power, not directly from the Supreme Being, but from other beings—animals and others—it was the Supreme Being who

[1] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, p. 275.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

776 reward and punishment for such human behavior exclusively or almost exclusively in this life. At death the souls of all except [775] murderers went to the same spirit habitat, not to the Supreme Being.[13]

The extensive cultural and ethico-social activities of man towards the Supreme Being will form the subject of succeeding chapters. We may merely state here that the Supreme Being easily held the first place in cult, as compared with other beings, and that he bulked large in the Gros Ventre ethico-social conscience.

776 That the foregoing concept of the Supreme Being was aboriginal 194 with the Gros Ventres and not the result of borrowing from white sources seems clear beyond reasonable doubt from both the external and internal evidence.

First the external evidence. While the Gros Ventres have been known in our literature since 1751, their contacts with the whites before the middle of the last century were relatively slight. They met traders and trappers and an occasional intermarriage with [797] whites occurred, but active missionary work among the Gros Ventres did not begin until 1884.[14]

Of about twenty different informants from whom we gathered our account of the Gros Ventre Supreme Being concept, most were older people, men and women, between the ages of 60 and 90 (in 1938-40) and all of them were positive, from their own memory of pre-missionary days and/or from what they had always heard from their parents or grandparents or other elders, that the belief was part of ancient native tradition and not one derived from the whites or from missionaries. For instance, Bull Head, about 80 years old in 1940, then the oldest living Gros Ventre man, stated that he had known about the Supreme Being as far back as he could remember. Coming Daylight, then about 85, and of

---

[13] The older name for the abode of the dead was tsɔtci:tän (etymology unknown to informants) but described as "toward the sunset." The more [821] common name was ba:snabe (big sand) which was described as a place "to the north." The Milky Way was called Ghost Trail according to another tradition. No non-human supernatural being was conceived of as in charge of the future abode or as rewarder or punisher of the dead for earthly deeds.

[14] Cf. Flannery, 1953, p. 23.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

668
745

attended the Ghost Dance there, and had returned to Hays in that year. As introducer and leader of the cult he preached wa:hatcan (lit. "reunion of all together," cf. wahanichina "unite" [Sifton]), signifying the rising of the dead Indians either in the near future or at the end of the world, and predicted the return of the buffalo, and into his message wove something of both Christ and the Flat Pipe. Big gatherings of Gros Ventres listened to him. Some few became converts, but most remained spectators and hearers only and declined to join. Further, the Gros Ventres did not join at all in the Ghost Dance political uprising. They had previously given their word not to go to war with the whites. The movement lasted just two years and then died out.[44]

The factors accounting for the resistance to and decline of the Ghost Dance among the Gros Ventres were, according to The Boy and Charles Buckman, the following. The older men and women did not believe Returns-to-war and the other promoters because "they had to be shown, and they felt that it was impossible for the dead, to rise again and for the buffalo to come back." The younger fellows, of the age of The Boy and Charles Buckman at the time, that is, around twenty years, did not believe because "the younger generation was then going to the Catholic missionaries and had learned different." Moreover, in 1893, some Wyoming Arapaho visited Hays and from them the Gros Ventres found that Returns-to-war had "exaggerated the story," so they all quit the Ghost Dance.

From Cora Chandler, Coming Daylight and Al Chandler we gathered the following information that sheds additional light on the rise of the Gros Ventre Ghost Dance and especially on the causes believed to have led to its rejection and decline.

During the rites, there would be round dances; the dancers would be painted after which they would sing and sing; the songs

[44] Mooney, 1896, p. 817 in his exhaustive study of the situation states that a Gros Ventre had been visiting in 1889 among the Arapaho and "heard the story and brought back the wonderful news to the Gros Ventres and Assiniboine of Fort Belknap, but although his account was received by some with unquestioning faith, the excitement had in it nothing of a dangerous character."

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Dance (Sun Dance), for example, was given in that very year 182
and, so far as our data go, but one Crazy Dance was held after 796
that. The seasonal Flat Pipe rite was discontinued. Furthermore there was a breakdown in the socio-political life. The necessity for nomadic life had disappeared and as a consequence there was no longer need of policing the hunt or keeping order in [575]
the camp circle when the whole tribe gathered so that, with the further establishment of peace, the raison d'être for two rival soldier societies was gone.

In the transition period the missionaries were trying valiantly to fill the gap in religious life but did not offer a satisfactory [797]
solution for the social situation; nor did the Agency which had become the center of the new economic life. It was the Grass dance, which as we have seen survived in a somewhat changed form, that seems to have filled the void left in social life.

In its earlier form the Grass dance was purely social in nature, 796
as was the Star dance, but the latter faded away while the [535]
former attained a position of heightened importance. One of the factors accounting for this fact seems to be that the Grass dance "had more to it," as our informants put it. The performance of the dog ritual was certainly far more spectacular than the simpler dance of the Star society and, in addition, it had semi-ceremonial connotations reminiscent of other features of the older Gros Ventre culture which were lacking from the Star dance. For example, the owners of the regalia in the Grass dance were likewise officers of several degrees of importance therein, as was the case in the performance of the Sacred Dances. Again, sex abstinence was required before dancing with the crow-belts as it was [784]
before participating in the Sacrifice Dance (Sun Dance) and before dancing with the Feathered Pipe. Ceremonial incensing of persons and equipment had been a marked characteristic of Gros [783]
Ventre religious life. The formal transfer of office and regalia duplicates the pattern of transfer of office of Pipe Keeper, transfer of painted lodges, and so on. Recounting of war deeds was frequently demanded in connection with many aspects of Gros Ventre life,—to validate the giving of a name, the erection of a

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

776 Ventres or the enemy. According to another, the sun on one
821 occasion delivered seven Gros Ventre men, to be killed by the
[539] Crow, into the hands of a Gros Ventre woman captured by the Crow, so the woman claimed. Apart from the incidental inclusion of the moon, bracketed with the sun, in prayers and in invitations to sweat as above stated, there was no specific independent moon cult and in no case, according to our informants, were sacrifices ever made to the moon. Nor, so far as we could discover, was there any star cult, though the stars, or some of them such as those constituting the Great Dipper, the Pleiades, the Bear were seemingly looked upon as in some sense "spirits" or personal beings. In the archaic era, before the flood and Ni:hahat, people used to go in the morning to get fire from the morning star, "the cross," just as in modern times the old people
[372] used to go in the morning to get a live coal from a neighbor's hearth instead of using matches. The morning star served also as a "clock." When people were planning to get up unusually early in the morning they would be guided by its position in the
[805] heavens. Someone in the lodge would be told: "Go out and see if the cross is up yet."

776 Among the beings involved in prayers and invited to sweat, after the Supreme Being, were the "Four Old Men," currently referred to by English-speaking Gros Ventres as the "Four Holy Old Men." According to Singer and Coming Daylight there were also, it appears, "Four Old Women," but this statement was not independently confirmed by other informants.

Very little is known about these Four Old Men. The Boy had more than once asked his father about them, but Lame Bull could only say that the Gros Ventres were taught by Ni:hahat to call on them in praying and sweating but that the people did not know who they are. They lived in the very beginning of things, but whether before or after the flood, is not quite clear. They were
776 not human beings. Gros Ventre belief does not associate them with the four winds or cardinal directions, but, vaguely, with the
● 801 sacred number four, the four "ridges" or stages of full human life, and the four great floods or other great catastrophes or revolutions, of which the first was the primeval flood, that are to occur,

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

according to one tradition, in the career of humanity. Some thought World War II was one of these four. The Gros Ventres do not recognize any beings connected or identified with the four winds or four cardinal directions.

Sometimes another being "Broken Knife" was appealed to in prayers. Little too, is known of him, except that he was, some time in the distant past, a renowned Keeper of the Flat Pipe. According to Al Chandler, Broken Knife was the name of the young man who was first given the Feathered Pipe. (For details, No. 6d in Appendix.) He was asked to pray for the supplicants, just as it was customary for the people to ask living pipe keepers or ex-keepers to pray and intercede for them, "much as Catholics ask the saints to intercede for them."

Much more is known of He-Who-Starved-To-Death who is associated with the Flat Pipe rite. He was a human being, a Pipe child, second son of a certain keeper of the Flat Pipe in the days when the Gros Ventres dwelt in a land of plenty. It was he who in the course of his adventures encountered and befriended the Last Child, offspring of the water monster, and who on his return home taught the people to pray to the Last Child, and introduced three songs into the Flat Pipe rite. He was also the man who first brought horses to the Gros Ventres. His name was given him by the water monster. (For details see No. 5 in Appendix.) In one Flat Pipe rite he was mentioned in prayers, and in the sweat lodge was invited to sweat.

Well known too is He-who-dreams-of-Bha'a, likewise a human being and a Pipe child, the son of the couple who were first given the Feathered Pipe by Bha'a, and who lived when the Gros Ventres had already gotten horses and had reached their historic habitat, but before the advent of the whites. He got power from Bha'a to be a great warrior, and he gave himself his name. (For details see No. 7 in Appendix.) While closely associated with the Feathered Pipe, he was not, so far as we could discover, prayed to.

In general, lesser beings that had no human body were called tciya:təwu:nitä (sing., lit., "false person": tciyattawu, false [Sifton], initä, human being). This category included such minor

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Flat Pipe. It was dried before being used for ritual purposes. In the olden days the Flat Pipe keeper and co-keeper had monopolistic control of it in curing. But nowadays a peppermint beverage, good for fits, spasms, and stomach disorder, is used by everybody.

The ritual number of the Flat Pipe is three, whereas that of the Feathered Pipe and the Sacred Lodges is four. Songs are sung three times, ritual gestures are in threes, and so forth. The old people when sitting around smoking socially used often to discuss the reason for this. Some held that Earthmaker sent only three animals down to dive for earth, because, for one reason at least, there were only three animals in the Flat Pipe bundle. Others held he sent four. But regardless of these opposing views on this point in the earthmaking, there was always complete agreement that the Flat Pipe ritual number itself was three, while that in the Feathered Pipe and Sacred Lodge rituals was four.

The musical instrument proper to the Flat Pipe ritual was the rattle (see Plate 1C). The drum, proper to the Feathered Pipe ritual, was not used. In the Flat Pipe ritual, the rattle was shaken clockwise in a sort of circle at breast height, whereas medicine men shook their rattles anti-clockwise and Star Dancers alternately back and forth.[1]

It may be added here that while the Flat Pipe was actually smoked only when it was being ritually trans'erred to a new keeper and when some individual had vowed to smoke it, and was never danced with, smoking the Feathered Pipe and dancing with it were common.

Among the more significant and more commonly recurring features shared by both the Flat Pipe and Feathered Pipe rituals were clockwise movements, singing, and the use of paint, buffalo chips, and of sage, tobacco, larb, and wild parsley.

Entering and leaving the keeper's lodge, ritual gestures, and so forth were consistently clockwise.

Singing bulked large in the Flat Pipe rite, and, for that matter, in nearly every phase of Gros Ventre religious and social life. As Thomas Main put it speaking for himself and The Boy: "We cannot describe how much singing means in the lives of the Gros

[1] For description of Star Dance, see Flannery, 1953, p. 42.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 had been scattered during the winter, would foregather at a designated place for the spring buffalo hunt, and when the trees were
221 in leaf and the grass up and everything growing and in blossom
361 and a certain kind of sage about 10 inches high, long enough to pluck, the spring rite was held. During the summer months the bands kept more or less together, largely engaged in hunting the buffalo and holding the Sacred Lodges. Around October occurred the larger fall hunt to get in supplies of meat, skin, fur, sinew and so forth for the winter, and, before the bands scattered, the fall rite took place. After the fall rite, the bands scattered for the winter months. The winter rite was performed about the middle of the winter season and was participated in only by the members of the band or bands which had elected to stay the winter with the Pipe and its keeper.

*796 The three rites were fundamentally the same, with some differences to be noted, but had each its own purpose. All three were dominantly theistic in the sense of being directed chiefly toward the Supreme Being. Spring time, when all nature was coming again to life, was in general Gros Ventre religious belief, the most propitious time for prayer. The spring Pipe rite was primarily a rite of hope and petition, a prayer that all things would grow well, that there would be plenty of game and of plant food, that the people would have abundance of all things they needed for living well, that they would be successful in all their worthwhile undertakings such as the hunt, that there would be no sickness, and that all would live happily. The fall rite, held after the winter supply had been killed and dried and berries had been gathered, new lodge coverings made, and perhaps new lodge poles, new bedding, clothes cleaned, etc., was primarily a rite of gladness and thanksgiving. To "make a sort of report" to the Supreme Being that they were still living, that their spring prayers to him had been answered in the way they had asked, and to give thanks to him for these good things which ultimately had come from him. The purpose of
● [801] the winter rite was less clear cut. For one thing, the rite was required to round out the cycle of three, the Pipe number. Thanksgiving was one purpose, thanksgiving "and a sort of singing of praises," "a sort of adoration," because the people were at leisure, without hardship, sickness or anxiety, glad to be still alive in the

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 Sacrifice Dance center pole, the sacred Pipes did not enter at all
[276] into the Sacred Lodges.

[801] In all the Sacred Dances, the ritual number was four and movement was clockwise.

A sweat-lodge rite was held in connection with the Sacrifice and Crazy Dances, but we could obtain no details on it; whether also in connection with the others our informants could not say.

The Sacrifice, Drum, Kit-fox, Dog and Crazy Dances regularly lasted four nights and days; the Fly and probably the Old Men's and Old Women's just one day.

The sacred Dances were not held in the winter time when the bands were usually widely scattered, but in the period from about May or June when the bands foregathered to September after which the bands tended to scatter for the fall buffalo hunt.

[361] The lodges for the Old Men's and Old Women's Dances were very simple and were put up outside the camp circle toward the south thereof. The lodges for the other Dances were erected inside the camp circle, near the center.

Feasting daily during the four-day dances was customary, except during the Sacrifice Dance which entailed much fasting on the part of the participants.

The alternation of reverent tension and pleasurable free release that characterized the sacred Pipe rites was even more characteristic of the Sacred Dances.

Sacrifice Dance

*796 The proper name of the Gros Ventre dance commonly referred to by whites and by many English-speaking Gros Ventres as the Sun Dance is aθe:hao'wə (literally, "sacrifice lodge"—aθe:'atc "sacrifice" and -ao'wə "sacred [not common] lodge"; cf. Sifton "sacrifice," athéyach and "Sun Dance," athéihawh'). We are therefore using the term Sacrifice Dance for it. The sun does not enter at all into it. The name apparently has references to the tortures undergone around the center pole by the main participants.

115 Our chief informants on the Sacrifice Dance were The Boy and Thick, who had witnessed the rite as boys and who had learned much about it from their elders: Coming Daylight, who had wit-

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

773 been told to do and put up the Drum Dance. Thus was the Drum
539 Dance introduced among the Gros Ventres into their sacred dance system."

When Lame Bull told The Boy this story, the latter asked him: "Who was it who gave this dance and these horses?" And his [825] father answered: "The killdeer." So the Drum Dance is owned by the killdeer (*Oxyechus vociferus*).

*796 The Drum Dance ranked high in dignity among the Sacred dances. Lame Bull ranked it next after the Sacrifice Dance, and first in importance in the Drum-Dog-Kitfox-Crazy group, because, he told The Boy, the Drum Dance was "most difficult and complicated to carry out," and through it "more horses had come to the Gros Ventre tribe."

[881] The Drum Dance was held only in fulfillment of a vow. The rite lasted the customary four days and nights, with a big feast each day. The Boy was uncertain whether a sweat-lodge ceremony was held during the Drum Dance.

[778] The chief sacred objects used in the Drum Dance were, so far as we could learn, the very large drum, and the fur-wrapped crooked sticks which were carried by the dancers and which to judge from the origin story were four in number and were decorated as therein described. The dancers themselves were [302] painted yellow all over their bodies, with black dots, representing hail, from the waist up.

*796 Four of the Drum Dance songs, numbers 52-55, were recorded,
533 as sung by The Boy, who had learned them from his father, Lame Bull. There were others which The Boy did not remember, nor did he know the ritual order in which they were sung.

Two of these four songs, numbers 52 and 53, are wordless, and were sung at good-time dances during the Drum Dance. Number 53 is the song that was sung by the men marching out of the dry lake-bed when the Drum Dance was first given to the starving Gros Ventre man by the killdeer. These dancing songs were lively ones, sung to fast time.

Song number 54 is difficult to translate as the meaning of two of one of the words was unknown. The Boy ventured the conjecture that the whole wording might possibly mean: "There are

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

apart from emergency conditions, ritual variations from the above-described pattern occurred, perhaps in accord with varying ritual instructions received by different individuals from their respective ghost helpers. 769 787

Before leaving the ghost helper complex and taking up the power complex, we may mention here one case, given us by Al Chandler, the only one of its kind we recorded, which shares certain elements peculiar to each. Al Chandler's adoptive father, Little Man, was keeping a rib bone of his deceased uncle, who had been "a kind of medicine man." His uncle's spirit came and asked Little Man: "Why do you do this? What are you going to do with me?" "This is just for myself," Little Man replied. "I don't want to be that kind who have spirits. If I need you I am going to call on you and I want you to help me. I am not going to make you a popular servant (not going to use the rib in general practice). But if I need you, you can come and help me." 755 769 787

Little Man, Al told us, made use of that rib one time when he cured his brother-in-law, old Turn Toes, of facial paralysis (caused by ghosts: cf. supra, p. 23). Brothers-in-law like to tease each other. So when Turn Toes came to Little Man to be treated, the latter took the rib, rubbed it four times, and in fun twisted Turn Toes' mouth way around on the other side. At this, Little Man's wife got angry and said: "You shouldn't do that to him." Little Man said: "I just want to make sure that the next time his mouth won't go crooked on this other side." So then Little Man put his brother-in-law's mouth straight and shoved his eyes up in place. And Al added: "You can see that old man [Turn Toes] today [1940] and he is all right." [Turn Toes has since died, in 1942 or 1943]. 801

Whether in the above case curing power was in the rib itself or whether the ghost of Little Man's uncle came and cured on occasions of use of the rib, is not clear. If the latter, as implied in Little Man's words to his uncle, at the beginning, we have a curing differing materially from the one to be described in the following on supernatural power, and much more akin to the Woodland Alqonquian concept of the guardian spirit proper,—the guardian spirit who comes on call to cure and otherwise to help the possessor, 769 787

after a certain period of probation. He, however, broke the rule and doctored before his time was up. A night or so after he had doctored a spider came out of his ears and a thunder-rock out of his mouth, and so he lost his doctoring power.

Occasionally in connection with the power quest the right would be given to the quester to paint his lodge in a particular manner.[13] Among the Gros Ventre such sacred or holy painted lodges were relatively rare and were thought of very highly. We recorded one song (No. 88), a wordless one, which belonged with Bull Lodge's sacred lodge. Bull Lodge had been "invited" to quest for power at Baldy Butte, the highest peak in the Bear Paws. The being who gave him other powers also bestowed upon him his own lodge, with instructions how to paint it and the song to sing while it was being painted. Coming Daylight's father had a sacred lodge around the bottom of which were painted the figures of men, each figure the same and each with a feather in the head. The upper part was painted red. "At the tip of the ears of the lodge were things hanging, and feathers in back. The back part had a cross (morning star) and the sun."[14]

What has been said in the preceding pages about the circumstances of Gros Ventre quest may be illustrated by the following account given by Al Chandler of that of Little Man, his adoptive father:

"When Little Man first went out to seek power, the old medicine man (his tutor in the matter) told him: 'I am going with you.' So when they got out in the hills, maybe a whole day's travel to this place where he wanted to go, this old man asked Little Man where he wanted to go to fast and Little Man chose a place not very far away. So they went together. This old man cut his (Little Man's) flesh, took a pinch,—(some did it 3, 6, or 9 pinches), and prayed each time he cut a bit of flesh off. He told Little Man: 'Nobody is going to come after you until your time is up. If I tell you three days, nobody is coming after you until this time is up. In the meantime use your whole heart and don't get

[13] There was a distinction between the sacred painted lodges and the lodges painted with war deeds. Cf. Flannery, 1953, pp. 68, 102.

[14] For illustrations of sacred painted lodges, see Plate 4.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

515
782

come and listen to me. God, come and get in the sweat-bath with me. Here is what X [naming the young man] gives you as an offering!' Then he would go on to pray for the young fellow and would tell who had given him [the old man] power to make the sweat-bath this particular way: 'You gave me this for some purpose, so you must come and help me now. This young man has gone to a lot of trouble to do this for me and you. So listen to me and help this young man, whatever his wish is.' Then he stuck the offering in the dirt pile, to remain there while they were all inside the lodge sweating.

"After he and the invited old men got inside the lodge, he would appoint one of them to pour the water on the heated rocks. The appointee would ask, 'How much for the start,' and would be told, [801] 'Four times' or maybe 'Seven times,' either four or seven. The appointee would then pour, the required number of times, just enough, say about one third of or a whole cupful, to make a little steam. Then the leading old fellow would say: 'Now it is up to you. Pour any amount you want.'

"Then all those old men prayed inside for the young man, who remained outside and had to look after the rocks and the opening up of the sweat-lodge. Every so often he had to open it up in front and back and so kind of cooled the sweaters off. It was so opened maybe four successive times, and then the sweating was over.

"The young fellow might then be told to come in, and the old fellows would kind of clean him by first blowing on their hands and then rubbing him, and when they were through they would twiddle their fingers as one does to get rid of dirt.

"This young man hired all these people and he would think that these old men prayed hard, and that he would get what he asked for, and that he would not be afraid, and that regardless of odds he would come out on top because of this faith."

The ritual cleansing effected by sweating as well as the sacrificial aspect of the rite is definitely referred to in the foregoing account, but here as in most other cases the sacrificial aspect is the more prominent. The cleansing effect was also hinted at in Sitting High's remark quoted by Al Chandler: "You have to clean yourself through this sweating."

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

784 789 [834] Sex abstinence was generally observed before hunting, and particularly before and all during golden eagle trapping. Eagle trappers "had to have a special religious character, to observe certain food taboos, and a special way of handling [being handed?] a pipe." The leader of a war party, but not other members thereof, also observed sex abstinence.

Do not break leg bones or ribs to extract the marrow or for other purpose, inside the lodge or house; go outside to do it, else you will get sore legs, or your horses may break their legs. Cora Chandler stated in 1940 that she still observed this latter, as her folks had always made her do. If an embryo calf were to be taken out of the belly of a buffalo, the embryo's eyes had to be extracted before it was brought into the lodge to be cooked; if the eyes were taken out inside the lodge, a member of the family would go blind, —"and this has been proven." Likewise it was forbidden to butcher and extract the brains from a buffalo head inside a lodge, and also break off the "soft end" of roast buffalo ribs. "Never use a knife to fuss with ashes or coals because you might cut yourself if you did so."

After blood-letting, the subject abstained from eating anything fried so the cut would not turn blue.

[551] There does not seem to have been any prohibition against mentioning the name of a deceased relative or other person.

777 801 Coming Daylight and Mary Ereaux had never heard of lucky or unlucky numbers. The Boy, however, stated: "According to the old law, the people were forbidden to use seven. For instance, a war party was not to have seven members, but either more or fewer. Cases are known in which young fellows disobeyed this rule and ran into trouble. In one case of this kind six of the party got killed and only one escaped with his life."

*796 afterwards according to the Ni:hohat story or after the great deluge according to the flood story.

Ritual sweating and use of the sweat-lodge, tsë:bätc, were resorted to by the Gros Ventres on many occasions not connected [515 721] with the sacred pipe rites,—skin and finger-joint sacrifices, war expeditions, and dreamed-of impending evils. Sweating in such cases will be dealt with in the proper places, as also sweating at the Feathered Pipe rites and Sacred lodges. The sweat-lodge rite was obligatory at the following Flat Pipe ceremonies: the three seasonal rites, the transfer rite (previously described), rites in fulfillment of a vow to smoke the Pipe or to paint its bowl, or to make a sweat-lodge for the keeper or for the Pipe, and at the disposal of offerings to the Pipe.

726 Before a war party started out, among other ceremonial observances a sweat-lodge rite was commonly gone through. A Flat *796 Pipe Keeper might on such an occasion take pity on the leader and members of the departing war party, build his own 31-stick sweat-lodge, and go through the sweating rite. If, furthermore, the keeper accompanied the war party, he might do the same from time to time during the course of the expedition.

*796 For the present we shall confine our attention chiefly to the sweat-lodge as used in the three seasonal rites, dealing first with the sweat-lodge itself, and after that with the sweating rite. We merely reiterate in passing that the sweating rite, while obligatory in a seasonal rite, was somewhat distinct from the ceremonial which followed it and which was carried out in the keeper's lodge.

346 The Flat Pipe sweat-lodge was constructed as follows. In ground *796 plan it was more or less circular about 7 to 9 feet in diameter, with two openings, the main larger entrance at the east and the smaller exit opening at the west. The general form was nearly semi-spherical. On each side, the northern and southern, 15 willows [802] were stuck in the ground. The number 30 may represent a multiple of the sacred number three, and one of our informants conjectured, with particular reference to the 30 poles of lodge where He-who-starved-to-death slept fasting on the 30 successive nights. These 30 willows were arched over and woven fast into a ridge willow that ran the east-west axis of the structure. Thus the sweat-lodge was constructed of 31 willows in all.

exceptionally chewed in contrast to the Flat Pipe peppermint. A bag, painted red all over, about a foot square, and fringed on three sides but with no beading or other decoration, now hangs with the bundle and served, Al Chandler thought, as a container for the dried sweet pine needles.

The ritual number of the Feathered Pipe, running all through the songs and ceremonies, was four, from the days of the first keeper down to most recent times.

The musical instrument used to accompany the songs was, likewise from the time of the first keeper, the drum. According to Garter Snake, the first keeper's drum was painted half black to represent black [storm] clouds and half red to represent the earth. According to Al Chandler, the present drum, about 16 inches in diameter and two inches deep, has a figure of a thunderbird painted in blue on the drumhead against a red background, to represent Bha'a, with zigzag yellow lines from either side of the head to the wings, to represent lightning. A long string is tied to the drum. The drumstick is painted red, the distal end being covered with buckskin "stuffed with something like cotton." Curly Head, when keeper, never used the drum, or even took it out of its covering in which it hung next to the bundle, but Sitting High used it regularly with the songs.*

According to Garter Snake, the first keeper had somebody make him a wooden bowl, which still hangs with, not in, the Pipe bundle, but we obtained no information on its type or use. She also stated that the first keeper had a "gourd rattle" or four rattles, but Al Chandler never saw any rattle kept or used with the Feathered Pipe, and no other informant mentioned such.

The Feathered Pipe, like the Flat Pipe, was smoked, in fulfillment of vows, but very rarely. More commonly, in contrast with the Flat Pipe, it was danced with, earlier only by the keeper, in recent decades by others.

General ritual features common to the Feathered Pipe and Flat Pipe,—clockwise movement, singing, the use of paint, of buffalo chips, and of sage, tobacco, larb and wild parsley,—have

* The drum used in the 1951 rite was apparently undecorated. See Plate 2 C. [R.F.]

843 thing unusual it will affect her child and, further, that a woman in that condition should not look upon a corpse.

[845] Coming Daylight could not remember any cases of stillborn children, but finally Singer recalled that a woman, whom they both had known, had borne triplets which were dead at birth. Incidentally, this was the only case of triplets of which either had ever heard.

Certain prenatal care was taken to ensure easy delivery and healthy offspring. It was often mentioned that in the old days pregnant women were well taken care of. Coming Daylight explained it thus: " In those days a man usually had several wives so that the one who happened to be pregnant was looked after by the others and didn't have to work hard. She was not supposed to do any cooking, and, if it were absolutely necessary that she cook, she must wear something like a heavy apron to protect her lest the afterbirth stick. During hot weather she was supposed to wear a robe on her back, because they claimed that the heat was hard on the breasts. She was not allowed to pack heavy loads. They believed that she should work, but not enough to wear herself out. She was taught to take certain precautions. My grandmother, especially, would tell me, when I was pregnant, such things as: 'If you have to change sides while lying in bed, sit up first and then lie down on the other side. Don't just roll over, or the cord will wrap around the infant's head. If you leave your lodge, you mustn't stand in the door, you must go right through, so the baby will come quickly. Never back into a lodge because that will make the infant come the wrong way.' "

Coming Daylight claimed that she always got along well in childbirth because her infants were small and she followed the advice given her. Her firstborn was the most difficult, as is usual for most women, but her husband was a very fine, mature man who hadn't let her do anything to injure herself during pregnancy. Furthermore he followed the customary Gros Ventre abstention, being " very careful especially during the last month, when Gros Ventre men refrain absolutely from intercourse with their pregnant wives lest, when the infant is born, it be covered with a lot of ' white lard-like stuff.' "

[805] [211] The length of gestation was counted by moons. If, for in-

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

stance, it was the dark of the moon when a woman ceased menstruation, she kept track of the months by marking with charcoal on a piece of wood, or by notching a stick, each successive time the moon was in that phase and "she would usually estimate it right." 843 805 211

Childbirth usually took place right in the woman's own lodge. Should someone there be sick, he would be moved to another lodge if possible, for while it was considered bad for the sick person to be in the same lodge with a woman in her menses, it was much worse were the woman in labor, for the odor of the blood at delivery would affect the sick person adversely. In fact, a person who had only been near the place where a woman was being delivered was not allowed to come near a person who was ill. If the patient could not be moved, the woman in labor would go to another lodge, preferably to that of her grandmother or of her widowed aunt. She would avoid her own mother's lodge as her father or brothers might be around and she would be "ashamed" to go where they might be. 844 [841]

Although the attitude has somewhat changed now, in former times, according to Coming Daylight and Singer, a pregnant woman was supposed to be reticent regarding her condition right up to the last moment. She might suffer intensely, but "you would never know there was a thing wrong with her." Only when she seemed to be very close to term did they send for a midwife and for some old man or woman who would give her medicine. A male doctor did not touch a woman in labor, but would give her medicine to alleviate the pains. Mary told of her own experience. "There was a well-known doctor of this kind who died about ten years ago. He was blind and, when called on a case, would sit with a pot of medicine beside him. He attended me and when he heard me say I was in pain he would just touch me with the end of the stick and the cramps would go away. Finally I complained that I was tired. The midwife said that it would soon be over, but the old doctor told them: 'No. It hasn't turned yet.' I thought this was strange that he should know this as not only was he blind but he had not touched me. Later on he said: 'It will be about a half hour more.' And he was right." 844 756

Different practitioners have different methods. Singer witnessed the following case. "A man had received power from

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

776 Ventres or the enemy. According to another, the sun on one
821 occasion delivered seven Gros Ventre men, to be killed by the
[539] Crow, into the hands of a Gros Ventre woman captured by the Crow, so the woman claimed. Apart from the incidental inclusion of the moon, bracketed with the sun, in prayers and in invitations to sweat as above stated, there was no specific independent moon cult and in no case, according to our informants, were sacrifices ever made to the moon. Nor, so far as we could discover, was there any star cult, though the stars, or some of them such as those constituting the Great Dipper, the Pleiades, the Bear were seemingly looked upon as in some sense "spirits" or personal beings. In the archaic era, before the flood and Ni:hohat, people used to go in the morning to get fire from the morning star, "the cross," just as in modern times the old people
[372] used to go in the morning to get a live coal from a neighbor's hearth instead of using matches. The morning star served also as a "clock." When people were planning to get up unusually early in the morning they would be guided by its position in the
● [805] heavens. Someone in the lodge would be told: "Go out and see if the cross is up yet."

776 Among the beings involved in prayers and invited to sweat, after the Supreme Being, were the "Four Old Men," currently referred to by English-speaking Gros Ventres as the "Four Holy Old Men." According to Singer and Coming Daylight there were also, it appears, "Four Old Women," but this statement was not independently confirmed by other informants.

Very little is known about these Four Old Men. The Boy had more than once asked his father about them, but Lame Bull could only say that the Gros Ventres were taught by Ni:hohat to call on them in praying and sweating but that the people did not know who they are. They lived in the very beginning of things, but whether before or after the flood, is not quite clear. They were
776 not human beings. Gros Ventre belief does not associate them with the four winds or cardinal directions, but, vaguely, with the
801 sacred number four, the four "ridges" or stages of full human life, and the four great floods or other great catastrophes or revolutions, of which the first was the primeval flood, that are to occur,

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

 224 411

ends of the main portion of the sling, and then looped on themselves through a slit near one end. 857

The bull-roarer and buzzer were both well known to the Gros Ventre, but seem to be only children's toys. They were both called nakaa^{n}ta^{n} ("making cold," a name given also to the thermometer), probably from the widespread Indian idea that the bull-roarer breeds wind. The buzzer was made of a foot-bone of a buffalo, with a sinew string on each side, by which it was twirled, and then drawn so as to hum. The Arapaho type of buzzer is the same. The Gros Ventre bull-roarer seems to differ from the Arapaho form. Fig. 26 shows one of two very similar models, both of wood. The small, well-marked head, the long taper and point, and the numerous small notches, mark a distinct form. The sinew string is of about the length of the stick handle. 534 857 524 [821]

WAR.

Men generally went to war on foot, carrying food and moccasins on their backs. While on the trip they did not boil meat, but roasted it. Scouts, called "wolves," were sent out ahead. When these returned, running in a zigzag course, and shouting, it was a sign that they had seen something. If they had seen lodges, they barked like wolves. While they came, the women in the party stood in a row and sang, having made a pile of buffalo-chips. The "wolves" stopped a short distance away, and the leader of the party went to them. They came with him back to the pile of buffalo-chips, where he stopped, and, facing the party, recounted coups. After this, one of the scouts came before them and reported what he had seen. Upon this, all rushed at the pile of buffalo-chips, and kicked them about. If the enemy were near, they would now take off their heavier clothing, such as their robes, and dress and paint for war. 726 [252]

On returning to their camp victorious, the party approached stealthily, and made a charge upon it, often shooting; and sometimes the people in the tents jumped up out of their sleep in the early morning, thinking they had been attacked. The man who had killed an enemy, the one who had struck him first (whether dead or alive), and the one who had taken his gun, were held in about the same esteem. After the return to camp, a dance was made. Drums were beaten; and the women, who were standing in a curved row, danced in a circle toward the men, who stood in a row, and back again. The women carried the new scalps on sticks. If an enemy were killed near the home camp, his feet and hands might be cut off and carried on sticks, like the scalps. During this dance the man who first 727 [554] [554]

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The place of the biitaha^{n}wu is not certain, as no informants were found who would positively express themselves on this matter. It is universally regarded as having been the most sacred and most dangerous of all the ceremonies, these qualities being thought to have led to its abandonment before any of the other dances. It can probably be concluded from this that it was last in the series, and performed by the oldest men. 171 796

As among the Arapaho, but somewhat more clearly, each dance refers symbolically to a certain animal. This symbolism is as follows. 171

The fly-dance takes its name from flies or mosquitoes, and was given or instituted by a mosquito. During part of the ceremony the dancers imitate the actions of mosquitoes. 796 825

The crazy-dance has comparatively little reference to any animal. The participants, however, wear anklets of badger-skin, and an entire badger-skin is used in ceremonies at the time of starting the dancing.

The kit-fox lodge was given by the kit-foxes, and a kit-fox skin is used somewhat analogously to the badger-skin in the crazy-dance.

In the dog-dance the dancers of highest degree represent shaggy dogs. It is also said that the participants in the ceremony largely eat dogs during its course. Among the Arapaho a dog is said to have instituted this lodge, and the Gros Ventre have a similar myth. [262]

In the nana^{n}naha^{n}w^{n} the dancers sing for the buffalo, and it is said that they always succeed in causing them to appear near the camp. Among the Arapaho the dancers represent both buffalo and prairie-chickens. The symbolic reference to prairie-chickens among the Gros Ventre is found in their sun-dance; their equivalent of the Arapaho rabbit-tent in this ceremony being called "prairie-chicken tent," and the singers in it "prairie-chickens" and "prairie-hens."

The biitaha^{n}w^{n}, as among the Arapaho, has connection with thunder. The dancers are painted over the body with dots which represent hail. If one of them violates the regulations of the dance, it is thought that it will begin to rain and that the offender may be struck by lightning. The Gros Ventre have an additional symbolic connection of their sun-dance with thunder, which is not strictly paralleled among the Arapaho. [302] [821]

The women in their dance among both tribes represent buffalo, and the actions gone through in this ceremony are in both tribes probably more directly imitative of the animals symbolized than in any of the men's ceremonies.

What has been said about the Arapaho in regard to the relation of the entire ceremonial organization to the lives of the men of the tribe, and in regard to the relative importance of the religious, military, and social functions of the age-companies constituting the organization, appears to apply 171 796 561

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 men are named, their female relatives return to their tents, and cook. When they have prepared food, they all together bring a large quantity of it to the
729 lodge. The men selected carry weapons, and are dressed for war. They are usually mounted. Where they themselves or their horses were wounded,
[302] they paint themselves. If they have ridden over an enemy, a man is painted on the breast of the horse. When the food which has been brought by their female relatives has been eaten, these men, two at a time, go through numerous performances of their achievements in battle. This is done each day of the dance.

796 A group of men and women, called, like those in the preliminary singing-tent, "prairie-chickens," and therefore probably the same persons, seem
[534] to be the singers for the dance. They beat a rawhide in place of a drum, and hold branches, which, at the end of each song, they shake, shouting.

[271] The dancers may not drink water, no matter how great the heat. If one of them is unable to endure, and a pitying relative gives him even only
[821] a drop, a thunderstorm follows, and the offender may be struck by lightning, or one of his horses may be killed by lightning. In case it seems necessary for the dancers to drink, a pipe is taken to one of the old men. If he accepts it and smokes it, he goes to the central tree. He wears a robe with the hair-side out. He has a whistle in his mouth, feathers in one hand, and a crow-skin in the other. He strikes the bill of the crow four
[789] times, with a downward motion, against the lightning symbol on the tree. A vessel is held against the tree at the bottom of the symbol, and, after the fourth blow, water is said to run out until the vessel is filled, when it stops. This water is given to the dancers, each of whom drinks a very small quan-
[787] tity. The actions of the man producing this water are said to be determined by his personal supernatural vision.

After the four days of the ceremony are completed, the lodge is left standing. All the cloth and clothing that have been attached to it remain
[789] in place, and it appears that other clothes, especially of children, are left at the lodge. This is done in order that the children may live a long life.

From drawings made by a Gros Ventre, it appears that the buffalo-
796 skull is painted with spots, and has its nose and eyes stuffed. Behind it is
532 represented a dancer holding the wheel. He is presumably the pledger of the ceremony. The wheel is bisected by two strings, and has eagle-feathers and down-feathers attached to it. The dancer blows a whistle at the end of which is a plume. The whistle hangs from his neck. At the back of the head is a plume. Lines of paint proceed from his breast to his wrists and ankles. On each of these are four diamonds, two on each upper and lower arm, thigh, and calf. If this is a correct representation, the Gros Ventre use at least one style of painting that is like the most typical Arap-

l: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

775 An old man relates that he once saw something that he thought was a spirit. In full daylight he was hunting horses, and came on a ridge where there were a few pines, while below there was a flat and a stream. Down there he saw a dead cottonwood aflame and a person by the tree who was burning it. Limbs fell down burned off. He thought that it was some one from his own camp who was burning the tree; but he lay down and watched. The person took a fallen limb, carried it to the stream and threw it in, and he could hear it splash and hiss. He saw this a second time and a third time, but, happening to turn his head, when he looked back there was no one there. He waited for some time, but the person did not reappear. Going to the stream, he saw the burned branches and the tree still afire.

[821] The Milky Way is called tsöökanibyaa^{n} ("ghost road"). The dead travel by it.

MYTHOLOGICAL BELIEFS.

776 Bax'aa^{n} is the name of the water-monsters inhabiting rivers, as well as of the thunder. The water-monster is also called byiiça^{n}. It is the enemy of the thunder. This idea is common in the Plains tribes, and it seems probable that the relation into which the thunder and the water-monster were brought through this general idea of the opposition between them, is what has resulted in one name being applied to both of them by this tribe. The description of the water-monster is the usual one. It is long, snake-like, and black, with a long head and turned-up nose and horns. It causes the death of all persons who drown.

That persons drowned are taken by a bax'aa^{n} is believed the more because the monsters are said to have hands like a person. As they have long, sharp teeth, and are known in one recent instance to have eaten a buffalo, it is supposed that they eat the persons whom they drown.

773 776 A hunting-party once saw a water-bax'aa^{n} being carried away through the air by a cloud which extended downward toward the earth. They saw the monster writhing, and turning its tail.

A hunting-party once killed a buffalo at the edge of a river. They were cutting the meat when they saw waves approaching the buffalo. The water rose and was pushed toward the buffalo until it covered it. Then the water receded, and they saw a water-monster lying eating the buffalo. One of the men said he would kill it. The others urged him to desist; but he shot, and struck the animal between the eyes. Then, as it writhed, he declared he would despatch it with his knife. Again they tried to dissuade him; but he said, "I have come to seek death, and am not afraid." Taking his double-edged knife, he killed the monster, and dragged its tail out of the

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

773 was a clean cut through the ice, about two feet wide, the path of the monster.
776 It had moved about in the lake until it reached the bank above which the people were sleeping. The monster had struck this bank, the impression of its head and two curved horns being visible. Then it had turned and gone back to the centre of the lake, and there disappeared, making another path, on each side of which the ice was piled up. The narrator gave to it several pieces of property.

It is said that it is not known whether thunders have ever been seen; but [821] old men say that they have seen marks on the ground where one is thought to have alighted. The grass about was scorched, and two zigzag lightning-marks, each forking at the end, extended in opposite directions along the ground.

The people were once camped east of the present reservation. A terrific rainstorm came and passed over them. When they thought it had gone by, there was a fierce clap of thunder, and a man and his wife and their boy were struck by lightning. The man and boy were killed, but the woman is still alive. There were two small holes in the tent, and through the bedding into the ground there extended two small holes of the size of a small calibre bullet-hole. On another occasion, a woman was untying a curtain at the back of the tent in order to keep a bed dry, when lightning struck the tent-pole, and she was killed. The other people in the tent were merely stunned.

Not many years ago a strange thing happened to a man and a woman still living. During a thunderstorm the woman, who had been sitting at the door, went to the back of the tent and sat beside her husband. Lightning struck the tent, and shot a hole through every metal plate, cup, or dish on the ground. Where it entered the tent, it left a mark like a sword. The people then painted the tent dark-blue.

A woman out mourning for her mother on the prairie saw a small thunder-stone (bax'aa^{n}ayäa^{n}). It was creeping slowly, leaving a trail or mark. The woman thought she would leave it, and pick it up later. When she came to the place again in the evening, the stone had vanished. Its trail was still visible, but ended where she had seen it last.

821 The rainbow is called bax'aanäyaa^{n}t ("thunder's fishing-line"). Näyaa^{n}t seems to mean any fishing-implement.

The whirlwind is called inääçitä^{n}. This is also the name of a red legless water-worm (not a leech).

The three stars of Orion are called "buffalo-bulls." The two below them, to one side, are hunters who were going to shoot them and suddenly found themselves in the sky.

773 The Gros Ventre once lived far north of where they are now, where there
778 were nothing but forests. There they found a metallic object. The object
823

857 buffalo cow, dried and stuffed. This type they would bounce and
526 kick. A popular game played among girls in spring was as follows. The girls holding hands formed a big ring. One girl in the center would have a ball. She would throw it at anyone in the ring. When she hit her chosen victim on the chest with the ball, the girls let go of each other's hands and each ran for a piece of buffalo chip where she would be "safe."[8]

A game played by boys and girls together in the evening was as follows. The children would line up according to size behind the tallest boy who would have in his hand a stick which was smouldering at the end. Each child held on tightly to the one in front of him. The boy holding the stick would try to touch the smallest child at the end of the line. The line would writhe as big sparks would fly and sometimes hair got singed. One old woman, recalling this game, remarked: "I don't know when we would get to bed, we had such a good time!"

Sometimes the children would send one of the group on an er-
857 rand. Those who stayed behind would wet their hands with their
524 tongues and say: "We will watch this to see if it takes you a long time or not." If their hands were still wet when the member of the group returned, they decided that he had done the errand very quickly.

When there were pretty clouds in the sky a little girl might point one out to the other children and tell them to watch it. Then she would stand at the bank of the river, bending over at the waist and violently flinging her arms from side to side while sing-
[821 ing. The others would watch the cloud and tell her that it was dis-
789] appearing and soon it would be gone. "They used to think they could make the cloud disappear by singing that song."

If a group of girls were playing together and some one boy, say
[576] from seven to nine years old, would butt in, the girls would all sit down to show that they resented the intrusion. If the boy did not leave, the girls would then form a circle around him and sing a derisive song. Thus the boy would be shamed and run off. The opportunity for this did not occur very often, since boys from about the age of seven usually went off to be by themselves

[8] For description of ball games and illustration of type of football, see Kroeber, 1908, fig. 23.

776 second element in the word is the name of the culture hero and trickster, who in the early mythical period taught the Gros Ventres how to pray to the Supreme Being, and how to make a living. The present-day Gros Ventres can give no clue to the etymological meaning of the word ni:hohat, nor can the writer analyze it. The word is also used for spider. The spider is in a certain sense sacred and, if it is killed, rain comes. The spider, the Gros Ventres say, can in spite of its small size do wonderful things with its web, can make it stay anywhere, can climb up and down it, and, in general, is usually master of the situation. The name of the trickster Ni:hohat is ordinarily translated as "white man" by English-speaking Gros Ventres and the translation is derived from a folktale concerning an escapade of Ni:hohat in which he had his hair cut off.[3] Thus it was that when the Gros Ventres first saw the white man with his hair cut short, in contrast to the Gros Ventres' long hair, they called him by the name of the trickster. Consequently, the name for the Supreme Being Ixtciboni:hohat is often rendered in English as "The One Above the White Man" or, in abbreviated form, "The One Above."

778 821 825

The second name for the Supreme Being is Behä:tixtč. The meaning, "the master, boss, head, leader of all" is quite clear (be:-, be:hi, "all"; änä:tixtč, "he is master, boss, head, of group or organization).[4]

The third name Ni:nänä'ätč, is said to be an older form which was still in use in the lifetime of The Boy and Thick, and it was felt that it had the meaning of "study, think, meditate," and that the whole might signify "the being who has control over everything by thought or will,"—a concept which, it may be added, would be quite in keeping with the Gros Ventre idea of the power of sheer thought or thought-wish by human beings. But this

[3] Kroeber, 1907, pp. 72-73, gives a version of this episode which is substantially the same as the one obtained by me.

[4] In 1948 The Boy stated that the Gros Ventres addressed the Supreme Being by this term "when they wanted something big, e.g. when they prayed for a good harvest of all the things the earth produced. Thus we are saying a kind of mass prayer indicating that the Supreme Being owns everything. He made it and he owns it, and it was recognized that they depended on him." [R.F.]

782

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

776 was supposed to have come on earth far up north, and to have made the rounds of all the tribes, finally reaching the Gros Ventres. 797 The Gros Ventres at first so called the priest, but when they discovered that he ate and slept like themselves, they ceased calling him by this name.

776 In the sweatlodge rite, to be described later, the first of those invited to sweat was the Supreme Being.[7] In how far such an invitation was anthropomorphically conceived is hard to say; it need not, of course, necessarily have implied anything beyond symbolic deference.

The Boy and Thick stated: "He is not a 'false person.' He is entirely in a class by himself. We think so much of him that we do not dare to try to learn what he looks like. We class him as a kind of shadow. He is the most wonderful and powerful of all beings who have no bodies."

[778] No statues or images or pictographs of any kind were ever made of the Supreme Being, nor were there any symbolic representations of him.

The Supreme Being was alone and one, and, as compared with other sacred or superhuman beings of religion, myth, and folklore, [782a] he ranked first. Where prayers included invocation of more beings than one, the Supreme Being's name always came first; in ritual invitations before sweating or partaking of food, he was always invited first. He was, however, much more than *primus inter pares.* He was in a class by himself as not only the most powerful but as the ultimate source of the power possessed by other beings and as the ultimate ruler and controller of these others. Bha'a, [821] the Storm Being, who ranked next in importance to the Supreme Being, was controller of storms, thunder and lightning, and exercised a certain limited autonomy. He had this power and office, however, not of himself, but by delegation from the Supreme Being, and exercised it as the agent of the Supreme Being, as will be explained more fully later. Then, too, while the Gros Ventres through fasting and crying on the hills or prairie sought supernatural power, not directly from the Supreme Being, but from other beings—animals and others—it was the Supreme Being who

[7] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, p. 275.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

776 reward and punishment for such human behavior exclusively or almost exclusively in this life. At death the souls of all except [775] murderers went to the same spirit habitat, not to the Supreme Being.[13]

The extensive cultural and ethico-social activities of man towards the Supreme Being will form the subject of succeeding chapters. We may merely state here that the Supreme Being easily held the first place in cult, as compared with other beings, and that he bulked large in the Gros Ventre ethico-social conscience.

776 That the foregoing concept of the Supreme Being was aboriginal 194 with the Gros Ventres and not the result of borrowing from white sources seems clear beyond reasonable doubt from both the external and internal evidence.

First the external evidence. While the Gros Ventres have been known in our literature since 1751, their contacts with the whites before the middle of the last century were relatively slight. They met traders and trappers and an occasional intermarriage with [797] whites occurred, but active missionary work among the Gros Ventres did not begin until 1884.[14]

Of about twenty different informants from whom we gathered our account of the Gros Ventre Supreme Being concept, most were older people, men and women, between the ages of 60 and 90 (in 1938-40) and all of them were positive, from their own memory of pre-missionary days and/or from what they had always heard from their parents or grandparents or other elders, that the belief was part of ancient native tradition and not one derived from the whites or from missionaries. For instance, Bull Head, about 80 years old in 1940, then the oldest living Gros Ventre man, stated that he had known about the Supreme Being as far back as he could remember. Coming Daylight, then about 85, and of

---

[13] The older name for the abode of the dead was tsɔtci:tän (etymology unknown to informants) but described as "toward the sunset." The more [821] common name was ba:snabe (big sand) which was described as a place "to the north." The Milky Way was called Ghost Trail according to another tradition. No non-human supernatural being was conceived of as in charge of the future abode or as rewarder or punisher of the dead for earthly deeds.

[14] Cf. Flannery, 1953, p. 23.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

announcing 'A something has come to camp. Come and look at it.' 776
Everybody turned out. They sized up the mule and considered 825
that it must be a Bha'a. They said: 'He must have come here for a purpose. Let's offer him things.' So they ran back, got things to offer him, returned bringing the children, and walked up and surrounded him. They prayed to the mule and laid one offering on him. Soon he was loaded down, he just stood there. After a while he brayed, at which all the people scattered and ran away. After they came to a stop, however, they decided: 'He must be pleased. That's why he made that noise. He will grant our request. We'll leave him here and move camp.' So they moved at once. But the mule followed them. Then they became afraid and ran away from him. This happened several times. At last they succeeded in hiding from him and losing him."

Bha'a's residence or nest, as described in the story of Blood- 776
Clot, was on the top of a high mountain, where he dwelt with his 821
mate and their two offspring, the young thunders (bha'a:niθan; -iθan, offspring, children). In the Blood-Clot story the sign of Bha'a's return to the nest was the appearance of a dark heavy cloud toward the sunset (west); of his mate's return, a white cloud in the west, and the arrival of each was marked by a blinding flash of lightning. The Thunderbird sometimes breaks wind and leaves a very bad odor. Two instances of this were recorded,—one when lightning struck Thick's house and left such a smell.

Bha'a had jurisdiction and control over storms, thunder and lightning, but as previously stated under the paramount rule and control of the Supreme Being, for whom he served as a sort of agent or subordinate, although with a considerable degree of freedom of action.

According to The Boy: "Bha'a has control of lightning and thunder, rules it, and releases it at will. He controls it, he is a sort of general manager; some one still higher controls Bha'a. While Bha'a rules the storm, he does so by a sort of delegated power; he has not the power himself.

"Bha'a's particular job is the storm, thunder and lightning. That is all he does. The Supreme Being is the ruler and uses Bha'a to run this part of the situation and manage it. Bha'a

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

776 executes the direction or will of the Supreme Being. He is the
● 821 medium or means by which the Supreme Being works. When a big storm is about to break, a pipe is filled and the Supreme Being
[782] is prayed to in the direction from which the storm is coming and is asked to spare the people during this storm, to direct Bha'a not to kill them, to say a word or two to Bha'a himself not to shoot around too close to camp. The people are afraid of Bha'a since he does his job in such a violent way. Even though Bha'a is held in high esteem and is considered an extraordinary being, he is a creature [under control] of the Supreme Being."

776 Bha'a was closely associated with the Feathered Pipe, not at all with the Flat Pipe.

Bha'a too entered into the Sacrifice Lodge ("Sun dance") as the being who could cause rain and so bring a good season for the food quest and bring coolness and shade in hot weather. While supernatural power was not explicitly sought from Bha'a he might occasionally on his own initiative have pity on a man and give him power to be a great warrior and even to make storms.
[726] But on a war expedition the participants would pray to the Supreme Being to be saved from wounds and death; not the slightest thought of Bha'a would enter their minds unless they were overtaken by a bad storm.

It may be added here that, [illegible] violent thunderstorms are
[165] common in Gros Ventre territory [illegible] from lightning are not frequent. The Boy could recall on[illegible] three such deaths, occurring in Gros Ventre territory during his experience, two on one occasion when he was a young boy and one on a later occasion around 1930.

The word Bha'a is used not only for the Thunderbird but enters into the term also for the water and earth monsters, bha'anbi:'iθän.[10]

The water monster,—or monsters as there appear to be a number of them, for they are reported from various large rivers, and springs where they bathe,—is usually envisioned as a huge,

[10] The Boy explained in 1948: "The word bi:'iθän includes water bugs, crawling bugs, bugs of all kinds; but a snake is never called bi:'iθä, nor will a snake ever be called bha'a. Water monster, no manner how many horns he has, or however much he resemble a snake, is always called bha'anbi:'iθä." [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Child, and made offering of tobacco and food to earth. Al Chandler explained: "The earth is put in because that is where your living is. You get everything from the earth, fruit, animals, everything to live on, and get everything you eat from there," although ultimately it is the Supreme Being who owns and gives everything. We got one passing casual reference to "mother earth" by Mary Ereaux, and another by Tom Main to earth as being a "spirit" and having a "special keeper," but obtained no later confirmation of or detailed information on these points. In general, earth seems to have played a quite subordinate role in Gros Ventre religious thought and ritual. 776 823

The sun was appreciably more prominent, ranking according to some informants next to the Supreme Being, and mentioned as "The One Traveling," or "Passing or Traveling Man" immediately after him in prayers. Another current seems to have assigned a much lower relative rank to the sun, and mentioned sun and moon together, as "Those-who-follow-each-other," and after the Supreme Being and the Four Holy Old Men. In any case the sun was in no sense identified with the Supreme Being, but was his property, work and servant, far below him in dignity, and had not anything like the religious predominance it had in such tribes as the neighboring Blackfoot. The sun did not enter at all into the so-called "Sun Dance" of the Gros Ventres, nor into the Feathered Pipe rite. Prayers and food were offered to the sun, and the sun was invited to sweat in the sweat lodge rite along with but subordinately to the Supreme Being. Individuals would offer a finger joint or bits of their flesh to the sun on such occasions as the grave illness of a relative. While the sun "sees everything, that's why the Supreme Being put it there," the Supreme Being, not the sun, was appealed to as witness in oaths; the widespread American Indian oath formula, "The sun sees me," was not used. 776 821 [755] [695]

The sun and moon were, according to myth, brothers from the same mother, but were never human beings proper, though they married, the one a frog woman and the other a human female. According to one story, the sun regularly appeared in battle as a man riding a white horse who scared and helped either the Gros [773] 776 821 539

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

776 Ventres or the enemy. According to another, the sun on one
821 occasion delivered seven Gros Ventre men, to be killed by the
539 Crow, into the hands of a Gros Ventre woman captured by the Crow, so the woman claimed. Apart from the incidental inclusion of the moon, bracketed with the sun, in prayers and in invitations to sweat as above stated, there was no specific independent moon cult and in no case, according to our informants, were sacrifices ever made to the moon. Nor, so far as we could discover, was there any star cult, though the stars, or some of them such as those constituting the Great Dipper, the Pleiades, the Bear were seemingly looked upon as in some sense "spirits" or personal beings. In the archaic era, before the flood and Ni:hohat, people used to go in the morning to get fire from the morning star, "the cross," just as in modern times the old people
372 used to go in the morning to get a live coal from a neighbor's hearth instead of using matches. The morning star served also as a "clock." When people were planning to get up unusually early in the morning they would be guided by its position in the
805 heavens. Someone in the lodge would be told: "Go out and see if the cross is up yet."

770 Among the beings involved in prayers and invited to sweat, after the Supreme Being, were the "Four Old Men," currently referred to by English-speaking Gros Ventres as the "Four Holy Old Men." According to Singer and Coming Daylight there were also, it appears, "Four Old Women," but this statement was not independently confirmed by other informants.

Very little is known about these Four Old Men. The Boy had more than once asked his father about them, but Lame Bull could only say that the Gros Ventres were taught by Ni:hohat to call on them in praying and sweating but that the people did not know who they are. They lived in the very beginning of things, but whether before or after the flood, is not quite clear. They were
776 not human beings. Gros Ventre belief does not associate them with the four winds or cardinal directions, but, vaguely, with the
801 sacred number four, the four "ridges" or stages of full human life, and the four great floods or other great catastrophes or revolutions, of which the first was the primeval flood, that are to occur,

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

"nothing compared to the Supreme Being." At an eclipse of the sun the Gros Ventres were much afraid; for they thought that the sun was covering himself and that Atsa: would come around. To ward him off on the occasion of a solar eclipse, the Gros Ventres in recent times would load their guns and shoot up in the air, and so make so much noise that he would be scared away. Then they would all laugh, feeling that they had gotten the best of him. Atsa: also functioned as a bugaboo. When Thomas Main was a boy his parents used to tell him: "If you don't behave, Atsa: will get you." Atsa: was afraid of skunks, as the Gros Ventres of several generations ago learned from the following incident, related by The Boy.[28]

776
776
821
539
731
776

"In the days of Gopher and Prairie Dog Old Man, Atsa: declared war. At that time the Gros Ventres were very numerous. There were only twelve bands but they were so big and there were so many people that when the children played around they would get lost and could not find their way home. When the crier walked around and made his announcements, after only one circle around the camp he was hoarse and was tired from walking. A large part of Gros Ventres went off on a war raid to the east to fight the Shoshoni, Assiniboine and Sioux. They got a little below the confluence of the Milk and Missouri Rivers, and saw two corpses wrapped in good blankets up in a tree. So they cut the bundles loose and dropped the bodies to the ground. The blankets, of white-man make, were a novelty to the Gros Ventres at the time. The men unwrapped the blankets and cut them up for leggings.

"That same night one of the Gros Ventres took ill. As the night wore on he got worse and worse. The men began to suspect: 'These two must have died of smallpox.' The sick man died after sun-up in the morning. They became panic-stricken. 'Sure enough,' they said, 'that's smallpox.' They decided to rush back to the main camp.

"On the way back every night one or more men died. Only a few got back alive. Most of the party died on the way back. When

[28] The incident probably is part of the tradition of the smallpox epidemic of 1780. Cf. Flannery, 1953, p. 34.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

CHAPTER III

THE FLAT PIPE RITUAL

General Features

Before describing the Flat Pipe rituals in detail, we shall in the interest of clarity take up certain more general features. Some of these are distinctive of the Flat Pipe ritual; others are shared in common with the Feathered Pipe ritual. 788

Distinctive of the Flat Pipe ritual are earth and water or flood association, peppermint, the number three, and rattles. 788

As The Boy put it: "The Flat Pipe belongs on the ground, on the surface of the earth, while the Feathered Pipe belongs up above the earth." Or in Coming Daylight's words: "The Flat Pipe comes from the water." The reference here is to the respective origin stories of the two pipes, the Flat Pipe having been given by Earth-maker at the great flood after dry land was made, the Feathered Pipe by Bha'a, the thunder being, during a storm and from the sky. (For details see Nos. 3 and 6 in Appendix.) When the Flat Pipe ceremony was carried out in 1938, the ritual was badly garbled, and the proper offerings were not made. A very destructive flood which shortly after this occurred at Hays where the ceremony was held was attributed to the ill treatment to which the Flat Pipe had just been submitted. The Feathered Pipe is associated with thunderstorms rather than with floods. 821 823

In conformity with this ground and water association, the ritual plant used for laving, chewing and incensing in the Flat Pipe ritual was peppermint which "comes from the lowlands down on the ground," "from right along the water," in contrast to the use in the Feathered Pipe and other pipe rituals of sweet-pine needles which "come from up in the hills," "from high altitudes." The peppermint used was not "just every peppermint," not that which grows along streams but that which grows around springs. Coming Daylight used to pick it for her uncle when he was keeper of the 788 824

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 narrow at one temple, broader in front, and narrow at the other temple, to represent the sky and the region above; another under 302 the jawbones and chin, from ear to ear likewise narrow near the ear, broader under the chin, and narrow at the other ear, to represent the earth or dry land. Then with a stamp, made of a stick having a cross of four equal-length arms carved in relief on its end, and dipped into the paint, crosses in red were imprinted on each cheek bone of the adults, on the bridge of the nose according to The Boy, or on the forehead according to [821 Thick, and on both cheeks. This cross-shaped imprint represented the morning star (called simply "the cross" [not "the 531] cross star"] in Gros Ventre), so The Boy and Thick conjectured on their own, but this they never heard from the old people. This painting meant much, it seems, to the people; as Coming Daylight expressed it: "It was a great thing to get painted at Flat Pipe ceremonies." As the people were painted they filed out clockwise. The rite ordinarily took a long time and only ended when the last of the people quit coming in. During it the strict silence was not observed by the ex-keepers and other privileged persons in the lodge; they chatted and smoked freely.

*796 Two other songs (No. 40 and No. 41), both wordless, were now sung by the keeper and the small groups in the lodge. After the first of these two songs the keeper painted with red paint the sacred objects kept in the Pipe bundle: the Pipe case proper, the bird skins, the rattles, and so forth. After the second, the co-keeper painted the sacred objects connected with the Pipe but not kept in the bundle: the tripod, pipe saddle and so forth. Meanwhile or at the end of the painting, the keeper told further details regarding the history and significance of the Flat Pipe and the sacred objects associated with it. After all this a long recess was taken with free smoking and chatting.

After the recess came the third triad of songs and the re-wrapping and re-tying of the Pipe bundle. The order of the songs, as well as The Boy could remember was: The Last Child Song (No. 42), The Rope Song (No. 43), The Horse Song (No. 44), all three, wordless except for short sentences in the middle, of these were brought back by He-who-starved-to-death

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

793 blew medicine on the woman who then recovered. If you even
784 passed in front of the keeper, you would "drop in a cramp."

Food offered in the keeper's lodge, even on a purely social and informal occasion, had to be eaten there and could not be taken out unless some one told a personal war-deed. This taboo applied even to an ex-keeper guest, although not to the actual keeper's
[576] children. The keeper could break up the gathering by emptying his own pipe—a recognized Gros Ventre convention for hosts.

If anybody threw water at the keeper or hit him with water, this
[821] would cause rain.

Where a group of men were seated in a row or crescent having a purely social smoke, the general procedure was as previously described. If the Pipe keeper were one of the group, the man passing the pipe to him on either the clockwise or return circuit would first make a gesture with it "to the rear between himself and the keeper," if you didn't do that the keeper would not accept it.

The powers of the Feathered Pipe keeper and co-keeper specifically recorded by us were similar, apart from control of storm, rain and flood and, as far as they went, to those of the Flat Pipe keeper and co-keeper. The weather control powers will be described later under Feathered Pipe ritual.

[753] Anyone who stepped in the track of the keeper or co-keeper got a fit, for the soles of their moccasins were kept treated with wild parsley.

The keeper and co-keeper acquired by reason of their office certain doctoring powers.

787 The keeper had marked dreaming and forecasting powers, just as the Flat Pipe keeper had, and his dreams when told to the
793 people were "big news." In a dream he would, for instance, see animals fighting the Gros Ventres and this would be a warning to a war-raiding party to act discreetly. He would foretell from his dreams who would win in a prospective battle and how many would be killed. At the time the Flat Pipe was captured by the Assiniboine (see No. 8 in Appendix), the Feathered Pipe owner was fore-warned by the Pipe in a dream and he and his party escaped. If the keeper had a dream that foreboded evil fortune he would on waking talk to the Pipe and ask it not to let the evil

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

278 "No, I might get fits." Little Man said: "I will eat it." This he then did. Al was worried about him and did not go to work, for he thought the old man would have fits, but actually nothing happened to him.

778 The Feathered Pipe was given originally by Bha'a or by the
782 Supreme Being through Bha'a, who had control of thunderstorms. While individual petitioners in simpler rites such as covering the Pipe often addressed the Pipe itself in their prayers, and while in even more formal rites Bha'a was addressed, it appears to have been generally understood that the final word lay with the Supreme Being. The Pipe was given to pray through rather than to pray to, and Bha'a while exercising a certain autonomy in his office as ruler of thunderstorms exercised it as agent of and subordinate to the Supreme Being, and in the more formal ritual prayers of the Feathered Pipe, the Supreme Being's name always came first.

782 Feathered Pipe rites were carried out mostly and mainly, al-
● [821] though not exclusively, to ask for rain and for protection against threatening thunderstorms or against lightning and destructive high winds during them, and sometimes for cessation of floods and rains. Often however major or minor rites were carried out, with or without previous promise or vow, for ends not connected with weather, to ask for cure in illness, escape from grave danger, safe return from a war expedition, and so forth. In times of drought, Bha'a would be asked for rain. In the more elaborate rites commonly held each spring, petition would be made "To have rain and [in recent decades] good crops and grass, . . . to bless the earth so everybody will be happy and healthy and no bad luck for anybody all summer, so they [all the people] will live 'till next spring,' that is, so when this time of the year comes around again they will be here."

* 796 The more solemn Feathered Pipe rites, those at least which involved the sweat-lodge ceremony and the unwrapping of the Pipe bundle, were performed only during the period of the year when thunderstorms could be expected, namely from spring through to fall, and never during the winter months. The Pipe could, however be "covered" at any time of the year. In contrast to the Flat Pipe cycle, seasonal rites proper did not occur, although some rite was

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787 way. If you want to try that, do it one day and that is enough.' So the old man told him: 'Let me know this evening what you think of it, or if you have already made up your mind what you want to do.'

787 "The old timers could pretty well tell you what kind of weather you are going to have. Little Man said: 'Well I would like to go
● 821 our right away today. But I don't think there is any chance of an electric storm. I would like to try that.' So the old man said: 'Well, I will see if I can find any signs of a storm or not.' He looked all around everywhere like he was looking for something. The sky looked clear. He stood there for a long time and looked around. Pretty soon there was a small cloud coming up and he said: 'You are a lucky man. You watch that cloud. I think there is going to be a big electric storm and maybe hail too. Do you think you want to try it?' Little Man said: 'Yes, I will try it.' So the old man told him: 'Now you want to be very brave. Don't let anything bluff you, because there are very few who can go through with it. It is something harder to bear.' Then he said: 'You have to be perfectly naked. You go anywhere on those hills you want. Take off your clothes and go now because the storm is coming now and it won't take long for it to get here.'

787 "So Little Man went home and took off all his clothes except his moccasins and put on a blanket or robe. He then went out, and the electric storm started from the distance with rumblings and lightning. There were a couple of other young fellows out there and he could hear them crying in different directions from him. Just as he got up there, it was just like lightning right over his head and thunder all around. He cried all the harder and didn't think of getting scared. He took off his moccasins and blanket and walked around crying and praying.

"While he was doing that, all at once great big hailstones came and it certainly hurt him. He had bruises all over him. When the hail was just over he laid down, kind of tired, and just a little while after that somebody told him: 'Take that hailstone there right by you and swallow it.' He looked and sure enough there was a big hailstone right by him. He was not to chew it but to swallow it whole. He took it and thought: 'Well, if you tell me

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

In two of the battles described by The Boy weather power was used. In one, when seven Gros Ventre warriors were surrounded in a piece of brush by a body of Crows and the latter set fire to the brush to rout the Gros Ventres out, one Gros Ventre, a quiet and unassuming man, "used a bone whistle and did other things," and shortly rain came and put out the fire. This man's war-charm, an otter skin, was captured by the Crows in this battle, and the Gros Ventres learned later from the Crows that whenever the latter mounted this otter skin trophy on a pole, as at a scalp dance, rain came with thunder and lightning. Finally the Crows got scared, carried the otter skin over on the hills and left it there, "and the thunder left them alone." 778 821 726

In another battle, this time with a party of Sioux, the Gros Ventres had taken a scalp, and were retreating, with the Sioux in pursuit. Morning-Star-Appears (Rising Cross), a Gros Ventre warrior who had a ghost helper, "sang a song, used a robe as cover to enclose himself and said, 'We wish rain.' " In no time a heavy cloudburst, with thunder and lightning broke, and the Gros Ventres,—among them Stiffarm, then a very young man,—escaped under cover of the rain and semi-darkness.[19]

Garter Snake, daughter of Bull Lodge, gave us the following story: 778

"The Crows were camping on the north bank of the Yellowstone when a May snowstorm came. It snowed four days and four nights, and the snow drifted far up the lodge sides and horse-high, except where blown clear on elevated exposed spots. On the fourth day, at noon, the Crows came to Bull Lodge with a pipe and some things. They offered him the pipe and of course he didn't take it right away, but said: 'What is this for?' They said: 'We know you are a holy man [one with power]. You [can] do almost anything and we are asking you to make this storm quit. If you don't we shall all perish.' He told them: 'All right, that is easy.' And they gave him that stuff: 'Here are the things we give you.' 821

"So he told his wife: 'Stand up a pole good and solid in the back of the lodge.' She did so. Then he said: 'Take down that shield.' This was the shield he had dreamed about. He then

[19] See Cooper, 1944, p. 72.

31 Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

778 smudged the shield and hung it up on the pole, then he got his
821 Feather Pipe drum and started to sing. As he sang the third time, and of course prayed and went through the [ritual] motions, and a sun ray showed right on the shield. The Crows were in the lodge and they all saw this and they prayed. And he said: 'I have one more song.' So he sang the fourth one and after he got through he said to one of the men: 'You go out and see what has happened.' The man went out and it was still snowing but right in the heavens was a little round hole [clear spot] which gradually enlarged and the sun shone. That is how Bull Lodge cleared the weather."

789 We now come to use of powers of legerdemain. Such powers were ordinarily looked upon as "supernatural" in origin and nature. We have already given many illustrations of such legerdemain as integral elements in ritual power-use, we shall now give the illustrations of it as used in purely or predominantly secular contexts.

Such feats are attributed to various individuals. According to Mary Ereaux, Sits-in-the-Midddle on one occasion when the party was out of tea, "made tea for them and they thought that was great." An unnamed medicine man was reputed to be able to swallow a "chunk of coal" [probably hot embers].

The two most outstanding masters of legerdemain known to our informants were Bull Lodge (d. ca. 1886) and Stiffarm (d. ca. 1935). According to Al Chandler, Stiffarm got his legerdemain power from Bull Lodge, and actually his feats and procedures (such as use of a handkerchief) duplicate almost exactly Bull Lodge's so far as they go.

Here follows our fullest account of Bull Lodge's feats, as given us by his daughter, Garter Snake, with some details interpolated in parentheses, from Charles Buckman (CB) and Al Chandler (AC).

"When my father slept at Baldy [Baldy Butte, in the Bear Paws] . . . he was given the power of doctoring, and he was given wealth, and the power then to make tobacco, matches, sugar, tea, and even coffee. These are the articles he made. In winter time his sons would go out and get cherry brush. He would put

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Singer's own guilt feeling at her delay in fulfilling her vow to amputate her finger joint is clear from her dream (infra under "Dreams"). The more recent case of the death by lightning of the young man who put off buying the Feathered Pipe cloth wrapping he had promised, as mentioned earlier (supra, p. 132), was popularly interpreted as perhaps a punishment. Another case told us by The Boy illustrated the same belief in punishment for breach of vow. 782

"Not long ago [in The Boy's lifetime] a certain man's relative was sick, and he vowed to the Supreme Being to undergo solitary self-torture out on the hills all day so the relative would recover. The relative did recover. But time went on, and the vower did not carry out his vow that summer or that year. Next summer he had a dream and in the dream someone asked him: 'When are you going to carry out your vow?' Still the vower let the matter go. He had the same dream four times and each time was asked the same question. 782 821

"After the fourth time, he began to think. He was on the spot. He decided to invite some of the principal men,—the keepers of the sacred Pipes, some ex-keepers, and some others,—among them my father, Lame Bull. He told the assembled group about his dream. They studied it, and finally Lame Bull took it on himself to interpret it. 'I am afraid,' he said, 'This is not good that you dreamed that four times and that you waited so long to carry out your vow. This means you will not be called [warned] any more. I advise you to put up a sweat-lodge for me [Lame Bull was apparently Flat Pipe keeper at the time] and I will see what I can do for you to appease someone you have made angry. Get busy right away and cut willows and get rocks and wood for a sweat-lodge rite tomorrow. I will pray for you at the sweat-lodge rite so that you may be released and absolved from any punishment that might [otherwise] come to you.'

"The vower was glad and agreed, and glad that the invitees would help. . . . But before the sweat-lodge was put up a violent thunderstorm arose. There were abundant berries around the camp and a lot of women and children out picking them were caught in the storm. I was a little boy at the time and was along

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

782 821 on the berry picking. The storm spoiled the berry picking and as soon as it was over we started back to camp. The berry pickers who were in the lead on the way back stopped on a ridge in view of the camp and at once saw that something was wrong there. When they got to camp they found that the vower and his boy had been killed and his wife stunned by lightning. She was put in rain water and came to. The vower had just come back from getting the things for the sweat-lodge and was eating with his wife and boy when the storm passed over the camp.

"Another man had gone out on horseback . . . and cried all through the storm . . . after the storm had passed and the sun was shining . . . a cloud was seen to come back and stop right over the camp circle and he saw lightning and heard thunder at the same time, and he passed out, but only for a moment. When he came to, his ears were ringing and he was facing in the opposite direction. So he turned around again and looked and saw this cloud going back toward the rest of the storm [clouds]. . . .

"The people all ran to the vower and found him and his wife and boy lying there. . . . The boy's head [hair] was all curly and singed, and there was some little sage brush in his hair and they wondered how it got there. The people there always believed that the man and his boy were killed because the former did not carry out his vow. His wife is still living. This man was not given the chance to make up for his neglect. . . ."

"The man," The Boy added, "had made the vow, not to Bha'a, the storm being, but to someone else, the Supreme Being. In this case the Supreme Being employed or delegated Bha'a to mete out punishment to the man who failed to fulfill his vow."

Oaths

782 By oaths we here understand solemn appeals to the supernatural world in witness to the truth of a statement or to the binding character of a promise,—the first being assertory oaths, the second promissory ones. Whether promissory oaths were taken by the Gros Ventres is not clear. A possible instance was Good Singer's promise, after being captured and made to dance over her husband's body, of a Sacrifice Dance, the promise itself having been

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

howls at the moon, someone is going to die; the dog will be killed to head off the misfortune." It is also unlucky if a dog and a coyote "kind of quarrel, the one howling frequently and the other answering back." Hoot owls were thought to be ghosts (supra, p. 27). If an owl alighted on the tent or house, or hooted nearby on a bush, this portended the death of someone. If one or more crows flew across one's path and cawed when one was going out hunting, this meant good luck. 787

Of the supernatural order were also many of the intimations imparted in dreams, and many gotten in connection with the sacred Pipes, such as those from the quivering of the pipe bundle, the look of the human face in the Feathered Pipe bundle, and so forth.

An eclipse of the sun was an omen of some coming sickness, some epidemic like smallpox. Coming Daylight stated that her old grandmother "always noticed that an eclipse [of the sun] was followed by smallpox." Coming Daylight described her own personal reaction during an eclipse. 787 821

"I had been sent after water. . . . All of a sudden it got dark. The first thing I did was to grab on to a bunch of willows. I did not know what had happened and just kept hidden there. It was so dark I could not see to go anywhere. I heard people hollering: 'Come this way. Where are you?' But I was so frightened I just hung on to the willows as though someone were going to take me away. Finally it got to be lighter, and I took the water home."

Singer's account of her experience during an eclipse [the same one?] gives some details also on tribal belief and practice. She and another young woman were the only ones at home.

"We noticed it was getting darker and darker, although it was in the afternoon about this time of the year [mid-August]. We began to scream and cry and we did not know what was going to happen. It was really an eclipse of the sun. The men, and everyone left in camp at the time, just lay down on the ground. Finally they got up and said: 'That is a sign we are going to have smallpox.' Everybody who had a gun just shot at the sun. The reason for shooting was that it [the eclipse] was going to bring some kind of disease. They thought it was a warning." Coming Daylight here explained: "When they shoot they are trying to scare it to get rid of the sickness."

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

narrow white stripes and edgings that characterize their embroidery. Among these subsidiary designs are the feather, the square, the cross, the triangle, and the slanting bar. 531 171

The Blackfeet use especially the three designs mentioned,— the diagonal checker-row, the checker or step triangle, and the stripe. A few others, such as the cross and the feather, occasionally occur: still others, such as the spreading and forked designs, are lacking.

The Ute and Shoshone designs are much alike. The Ute have especially developed and varied the spreading design; but simple forms of this are not rare among the Shoshone. Both tribes frequently use the forked design. The pronged design, the triangle, the slanting bar, and occasionally the diamond, are found among both. The Shoshone sometimes employ the diagonal checker-row Otherwise both tribes lack the typical Blackfoot designs, as well as the characteristically Sioux square, cross, and feather.

The Sioux and Assiniboine perhaps employ the square, cross, and feather no more frequently than the pronged, forked, and triangle designs, but they share the latter with other tribes, such as the Arapaho; whereas the square and feather, and perhaps the wide rectangular cross, are much less frequent among the other tribes. The Sioux, for the most part, lack the characteristic designs of the western tribes,— the diagonal checker and the stripe of the Blackfeet, the crossed line of the Gros Ventre, the spreading design of the Ute.

The Crow resemble both the Sioux and the Blackfeet. Typical designs are the feather, the square, the slanting bar, and the separate stripe.

The Gros Ventre use the forked design, the triangle, the box-square, the feather, the stripe, and the Arapaho pattern-stripe. The spreading design and the cross are not very common. Their form of the stripe has been mentioned as being usually a complex of colored right triangles. The diamond, the slanting bar, and the prongs are rare among them. The crossed line, which is practically absent among other tribes, must not be regarded as the characteristic Gros Ventre figure. It occurs only occasionally, almost always alternating with a step-triangle of the Blackfoot type.

As regards the color of the background of bead-work on which these designs are made, there are certain well-marked tribal habits. White is the most common color, and is at least frequent among every tribe. The Arapaho, however, are alone, among those here considered, in using it almost exclusively. The Cheyenne use much white, but show also a distinct leaning toward yellow. The Ute use various backgrounds, but white is the most frequent. Among the Shoshone a light grayish blue is much used besides white. The Sioux use various colors, but chiefly white, light blue, and yellow. The Crow use colored backgrounds considerably. The Blackfeet 171 531 822

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

171 use much less white than any of the other tribes: their characteristic back-
531 grounds are light red, yellow, and blue. The Kiowa, Comanche, Wichita,
and Apache use white very predominatingly; but they show very few solid
822 backgrounds of embroidery, their bead-work rarely consisting of more than
stripes and borders. The Gros Ventre type is as indeterminate as their
designs. It is only possible to say that besides various colors, such as red
and light blue, white is considerably used.

It appears from this examination that the tribes under consideration
171 form at least four groups as regards their bead-embroidery. The Blackfeet
531 stand alone. The Sioux and Assiniboine form a second unit. The Arapaho, Ute, and Shoshone are a third; the more southerly tribes using outline embroidery, the fourth. Within their group the Arapaho show closer resemblance to the Ute than to the Shoshone. The Arapaho also have a good deal in common with the Sioux. The position of the Cheyenne is not certain: they certainly have partial resemblances to both Arapaho and Sioux, as their historical and ethnographical situation would lead one to infer. The Crow appear to be intermediate between the Blackfeet and the Sioux. The Gros Ventre show distinct approximations to all three of the northern groups, in the third, of course, especially to the Arapaho. Neither their Blackfoot nor their Sioux characteristics seem fundamental. Their present art shows little character of its own.

It is not probable that the groups here distinguished will stand without modification. With fuller knowledge regarding the Bannock, Crow, Cheyenne, Kiowa, Comanche, and the village and eastern and southern tribes, as well as those of the Columbia drainage, new and wider groups are almost certain to be determined. In this event the Arapaho, for instance, may appear more properly to belong with the Sioux than with the Shoshone; but their relations to the latter, and the similarities among the several tribes as they are here indicated, whether they prove finally to be fundamental or only subsidiary, are already quite clear.

The types of designs discussed occur more or less on all classes of objects decorated with embroidery, but are especially characteristic of larger areas of decoration, as on pouches, leggings, and tobacco-bags. Where there are special forms or limited areas, there is usually a more restricted type of ornamentation. Thus the quill-wound, close-set fringe of tobacco-bags lends itself best to heavy rectilinear designs, and squares and crosses are the result. Moccasins also furnish a special decorative field, in which the decoration is in great measure directly dependent on the form of the object; so that the distribution of the designs already discussed applies to moccasins only in part, and their ornamentation needs some separate consideration.

Some of the chief types of moccasin ornamentation are shown in Fig. 2

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

293 used in this way. The owner twice dreamed of a weasel, which told him to
726 use its skin. Thereupon he first wore a weasel-skin in dances, and later
751 carried it to war. Subsequently he lent it to his son and to other men who
778 went to war, and they always returned successfully.

A man to whom a fisher had appeared in a dream or vision used a fish-
[787] skin medicine-bag, and on going to war carried this with him.

A renowned warrior, dead for some time, received his personal medicine from the bears, and was forbidden to scalp, count coup on the enemy, or take away a gun. He could only kill. He once killed two Sioux with one shot, at a place which received its name from the event.

A simple riding-whip (specimen Museum No. 50-1821) has on its wooden
[492] handle four red marks, each of which is said to represent an enemy struck in the face with a whip in battle.

Representations, used in the modern "war-dance," of the weapons of
532 Black-Wolf, a well-known Gros Ventre warrior, part of whose experiences
726 in war are told below, consist of a shield and spear. The shield, which is made of painted white cloth, represents the shield carried by him on an occasion when he rushed to battle with no other weapon. The shield is decorated with a blue crescent along the lower edge, representing the sun, and bordered by a wavy red line denoting lightning. The wooden spear and spear-point represent a spear with which the owner stabbed a Piegan in battle. The
[822] spear-point is painted blue and red; the blue representing iron, the red blood. Red marks on the handle of the spear represent coups.

A pair of beaded and painted moccasins executed by a woman, but
[292] designed by an old man, symbolize his exploits in war. An outside rim of beading represents the enemy's camp-circle. In the middle of the camp-circle is beaded the figure of a tent belonging to a chief. To this tent was tied a horse, which the wearer of the moccasins cut loose. This feat is represented by an outline painting of a horse and halter. Three U-shaped figures, also painted, are horse-tracks, and represent the capture of horses. On the other moccasin there are again three such figures in a row, which here were said to indicate a charge on horseback on the camp; while two other such figures, facing each other, indicate a face-to-face fight.

Curtains hanging behind the bed in front of the tent-wall were sometimes painted to illustrate the owner's achievements in war.

WAR-EXPERIENCES OF INDIVIDUALS.

114 The following narratives give an entirely personal account of the war-
115 experiences of three individuals, two of them men of about sixty years of

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 of the hoof; at the same time the two ends of the red cloth hang out of the hoof, giving a decorative effect. At the end of the handle the skin casing 534 of the sticks emerges from under its thong wrapping, and hangs down free about two-thirds of a foot. Part of this loose strip is cut out, so as to make of the remainder a loop to pass over the wrist. In this cut-out portion are four narrow thongs,— two wound with white quills, two with red. The end of this loop-strip is fringed and quill-wound; a deer-tail, its base covered with red cloth, hangs from it.

The whistle (Fig. 40) is of wood, in which it differs from all Arapaho bäyaa^{n}wu whistles, painted yellow, and two feet long. The end farthest from the mouth is cut off diagonally almost to a point. Here is hung an eagle-feather, its base covered with red cloth. Along the middle portion of the whistle are laid two strips of red cloth, held by two sinew bands and by a long doubly wound thong wrapped with white porcupine-quills. These red strips are not quite wide enough to entirely cover the whistle. The two ends of both pieces hang free. Where the cloth ends on the whistle, toward the mouthpiece, two magpie-feathers are laid along the wood, nearly to the end, their bases being held by the last wrappings of the cloth. One or more small yellowhammer-feathers are also held by these wrappings.

Another dog-dance whistle secured (specimen Museum No. 50-1899) was [822] said also to have been used by a tsööyanchi. Its only essential difference from the piece just described is that it is painted red, whereas the previous one, like all the regalia which it accompanied, was yellow. The present whistle is one-third shorter, has the yellowhammer-feathers displayed more conspicuously, has a plain instead of a quill-wound thong to hold the red cloth, lacks the red cloth at the base of its end eagle-feather, and has this feather painted over red. All these differences, except that of general color, are either insignificant or matters of proportion.

The Nanä^{n}naha^{n}w^{u}.

796 The fifth dance is known, nearly as among the Arapaho, by the name of nanä^{n}naha^{n}w^{u}. The exact meaning of this term is not known. It is generally translated "soldiers' lodge." The dancers are called nanä^{n}nähä^{n}ts, or hiityaäa^{n}süts, which means "those who have war-sticks," the teäa^{n}sö or Arapaho teëox. The lodge was made, as for the other dances, of the two largest tents available, in the middle of the camp-circle, with the door towards the east. The dancers obtained medicine from their "grandfathers" through their wives at night, were painted in the morning, and danced during the day, or, according to another account, at night. In the songs of this dance the buffalo were called, and it is said that the ceremony always resulted

1; Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

lodge. Other men go up into the hills near the camp, where they are fastened to a post, and fast from sunrise to sunset. In the evening their ceremonial "grandfather" comes and cuts them loose. Young men who want to meet with success in war pierce the skin over their shoulder-blade, and, having inserted sticks, hang two guns to these on each side. Sometimes a crooked-hoofed horse is fastened to the sticks. Thereupon they go about outside of the camp-circle, crying constantly, hoping that some supernatural being will pity them. Still others tie four or five buffalo-skulls in a row, which they fasten in the same way to their backs. They also go around the camp-circle. 796 304 785.

If it is thought possible that the enemy may be near at the time of the dance, a man brings a filled pipe to the pledger of the dance and offers it to him, asking about the enemy. The pledger takes out his medicine-bag, which is the skin of the animal he saw in his vision, incenses it, and performs the acts which this guardian animal commanded. Every one is quiet, and the fire is put out so that the lodge is completely dark. The pledger blows his whistle, and the people sing for him as loudly as they can. He makes motions around his head with his medicine, thereby asking his guardian spirit to enable him to see supernaturally. He continues his motions until he is able to see the enemy. Thereupon he sits down. After this, another man offers him a pipe, saying, "We wish you to tell us what you have seen. Therefore take this pipe and smoke it." After he has smoked, the pledger tells the people how many people he has seen, and where they are. He says, "I saw so many buffalo-bulls (men). They are coming from there. Take charcoal for successful battle" (black being the paint of victory). 796 787 [822]

The dancers also have the power to see the enemy. If, as they look at the "nest" day and night, they see legs hanging down, or a headless body in the tree, it is the sign that an enemy will be killed by the tribe. If, on the other hand, they see blood on the poles overhead or running down the central tree, a member of the tribe will be killed. Sometimes they see a man whom they can recognize as a member of the tribe, black as coal and very thin, hanging from the poles above them. Then he will die soon.

Each day certain men, who seem to be young men, are selected, and their names called out. These men dress as if for war. When they enter, it seems that they sit in a row at the left of the entrance. The bravest of them are then selected, and taken to the back of the lodge, where a bed and head-rest have been prepared, on which they sit. One of these men counts a coup, and picking up a stick puts it into the fire. One after another they do this until a large fire is blazing. These men are called tsöötaxwuhuü ("inside dancers"). Thereupon two old men, going to the centre of the lodge and conferring in whispers, select six or eight warriors. As soon as these 796 729

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Feathers, especially eagle feathers, were highly prized, and red 292
paint, prepared from ochre, as well as other paints obtained through 237
the trader, played their part in bodily decoration. 386

The younger men thought a great deal of their appearance. One 282
of the things they made for themselves was fancy painted sunshade- 751
hats of rawhide. The designs painted thereon had a yellow back- 531
ground against which various other colors stood out. Coming Daylight remarked: "These sunshades looked so fine that the other tribes copied them, just like the whites get their styles from Paris." Long thick hair was the ideal both for men and for 302
women. The tail of the porcupine made an admirable comb. A [237]
number of perfumes were used by the young men. The castor of the beaver, for instance, was put in the paint bag so that the material for daily painting would be sweet smelling. Again, young men crushed "Piegan berries," chewed them, and rubbed them on hair, horses, and bedding, as perfume.

Incidentally, according to Coming Daylight, in order to clean 296
their buckskin clothing, the Gros Ventres would wear it into the water, getting it completely wet, and then rub it thoroughly with a certain kind of white clay.[14] She said that the tribe was spoken of by other tribes as always having such nice white clothes, and to this habit of rubbing them with clay she attributes the name by [101]
which the Gros Ventres call themselves, *a'aninin*, "white clay people."

Ear-rings, worn both by men and women, were made from 301
imported abalone shell, which they cut up and shaped; they also [439]
used a certain type of imported white shell. Many other kinds of necklaces, armlets, and so on were apparently used, but on these we failed to get details.

Household and Transportation

The lodges of the Gros Ventres were made from buffalo hides, 342
the number used in each depending on the size of the lodge. They

[14] This custom is mentioned in the sources of the early 19th century. Cf. Harmon, p. 277; Henry, v. 2, p. 734. The latter adds, as a further distinguishing characteristic, that when the Gros Ventres use red "it is always of a light color, inclining to pale vermillion. The dark red or Spanish [822]
brown, so much in vogue among the other Meadow tribes, does not suit their taste."

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

773 was a clean cut through the ice, about two feet wide, the path of the monster.
776 It had moved about in the lake until it reached the bank above which the people were sleeping. The monster had struck this bank, the impression of its head and two curved horns being visible. Then it had turned and gone back to the centre of the lake, and there disappeared, making another path, on each side of which the ice was piled up. The narrator gave to it several pieces of property.

It is said that it is not known whether thunders have ever been seen; but
[821] old men say that they have seen marks on the ground where one is thought to have alighted. The grass about was scorched, and two zigzag lightning-marks, each forking at the end, extended in opposite directions along the ground.

The people were once camped east of the present reservation. A terrific rainstorm came and passed over them. When they thought it had gone by, there was a fierce clap of thunder, and a man and his wife and their boy were struck by lightning. The man and boy were killed, but the woman is still alive. There were two small holes in the tent, and through the bedding into the ground there extended two small holes of the size of a small calibre bullet-hole. On another occasion, a woman was untying a curtain at the back of the tent in order to keep a bed dry, when lightning struck the tent-pole, and she was killed. The other people in the tent were merely stunned.

Not many years ago a strange thing happened to a man and a woman still living. During a thunderstorm the woman, who had been sitting at the door, went to the back of the tent and sat beside her husband. Lightning struck the tent, and shot a hole through every metal plate, cup, or dish on the ground. Where it entered the tent, it left a mark like a sword. The people then painted the tent dark-blue.

A woman out mourning for her mother on the prairie saw a small thunder-stone (bax'aa^{n}ayäa^{n}). It was creeping slowly, leaving a trail or mark. The woman thought she would leave it, and pick it up later. When she came to the place again in the evening, the stone had vanished. Its trail was still visible, but ended where she had seen it last.

821 The rainbow is called bax'aanäyaa^{n}t ("thunder's fishing-line"). Näyaa^{n}t seems to mean any fishing-implement.

The whirlwind is called inäääçitä^{n}. This is also the name of a red legless water-worm (not a leech).

The three stars of Orion are called "buffalo-bulls." The two below them, to one side, are hunters who were going to shoot them and suddenly found themselves in the sky.

773 The Gros Ventre once lived far north of where they are now, where there
778 were nothing but forests. There they found a metallic object. The object
823

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

was like the flat rocks on which women pound berries, perfectly round, rough above, and perfectly smooth on the under side. Many men lifting together could not move it; but when offerings were made to it, and it was asked to rise, one man was able to lift it easily. Several people tried to sleep near it in order to dream about it, but none of them ever staid the whole night through. They would dream that it was a large metal kettle coming toward them on legs, and filled with boiling water, whereupon they jumped up and fled. 773 778 823 [787]

West of the present Gros Ventre Reservation there was, until the whites took it away, a stone shaped like a person, except that it lacked the face. This was once a Snake Indian. A war-party saw him sitting on a hill, and pursued him into a flat. They had nearly caught him when he turned to stone and has been there ever since. Once, as a camp went by and the people made offerings of calico and other property, a man said, "Why do you do that?" Taking a club, he knocked off the head of the figure. The man died the same summer.

A complete buffalo of stone, with hump, horns, ribs, and other parts, half of it underground, has been seen by the Gros Ventre, and many offerings and prayers have been made to it. 823 778

To the north of the Gros Ventre Reservation is a lake shaped like a buffalo, with legs and all parts complete. The tail runs out into a river, the hoofs are patches of brush, and the horns are streaks of timber of the shape of horns.

Lizards are thought to bite persons and then to hang fast to the wound, sucking the flesh into themselves. It is said that a certain man was bitten and the lizard could not be pulled off. The man's flesh had to be cut off around the lizard's mouth. 825

There is believed to be a kind of bear with one white fore-leg, which is fiercer than the grizzly. The jack-rabbit is called "white rabbit;" and the cottontail, "left-hand rabbit." The prairie-dog is called "large gopher" (?); and the mink, "prairie-dog weasel." The bat's bite is thought to be exceedingly poisonous.

boy. He was so scared, he went insane and died in a few days," 776
according to The Boy. 539

One story we gathered is about a very big rattlesnake, "as big as a person," big enough to eat a human being and leave only the skeleton. It had a large shining horn. Where it traveled it made a great bare trail like a modern road. It was horned, but was not of the water or earth monster "species." It was shot dead by a young man whom it had molested with murderous design while he was out in the hills crying and sleeping to obtain supernatural power.

In one story, the following, told by Singer, it is not clear whether there is question of a gigantic horned snake or of an earth monster proper.

"Near the head of Snake Butte there is a big cleft which runs [823] ●
all the way to the bottom. The cleft is said to have been made by lightning striking there. My husband Ax Handle [Assiniboine] was there and looked. He thought he saw something and looked again. It was a great big snake with a horn on the top of its head. He was scared and ran away."

A somewhat conspicuous, though very human, role in Gros 776
Ventre ritual and thought was played by the Last Child, idaːsθa, (itasé, "lastly," itasünna, "last;" -tha, "child" [Sifton]; apparently meaning "last child born in a family"). He was the little water snake, offspring of the water monster who figured in the story of He-who-starved-to-death (see No. 5 in Appendix). The Last Child had power in water, sharing to an undefined subordinate degree in the power of his father, the water monster, who was ruler under the water. He, alone or together with his father, was prayed 776
to or given offerings, when the Gros Ventres had to cross rivers 782
or lakes or when they swam or bathed in rivers or pools, lest they [484]
drown or be snatched down by the water monster. Early in World War II when a batch of Gros Ventre recruits was about to leave for overseas duty in the Pacific he was prayed to to protect them in crossing the ocean. In praying with a pipe, the Gros Ventres always held it up first to the Supreme Being, but lastly down to the Last Child. In food offerings, the Last Child was invited, 776
last in order, to partake. In the sweat lodge he was mentioned

776 but not invited to sweat, as he was not considered important enough. In general, while he very frequently enters into ritual, he always enters as the last and least. The water monster was rather feared, but the Last Child was conceived as benevolent and kindly disposed, and both in and outside of ritual observances ran a marked undercurrent of indulgent affectionate amusement, such as the adult male might have toward a liked small child, especially where the Last Child was ritually or otherwise associated with the Supreme Being. The Boy said: "The Gros Ventres all but laugh when the pipe is offered to the Last Child. He suggests something sort of funny to them, while they have only deep reverence for the Supreme Being." As Tom Main put it: "The Last Child [comparatively] does not amount to much. He is always mentioned last [in prayers], but he gets the benefit of [782] tobacco put in the ground [when medicinal herbs are gathered] and food put there [in food offerings]. As far back as I can remember, the people used to laugh when the Last Child was mentioned, but nevertheless he was included in rites." This by no means signifies however that he was laughed *at* or made fun of. The Last Child was, it would seem, a sort of intercessor with his father, to temper the latter's rather maleficent and predatory tendencies.

The Last Child was also associated in some manner with the earth or perhaps with the earth monster(s), as food and offerings [782] were put into the ground for him,[18] but the nature of the relationship is not clear. One statement given earlier, that he had a kind of keepership of the earth, looked after it, saw that the grass and trees grew, that the rivers flowed, and so forth, while not contradicted, was not confirmed, by later evidence.

776 Regarding the earth, that is, the land or ground, rather than the terrestrial globe as such, there appear to have been differences 823 in ritual usage and perhaps in belief. Some of the Gros Ventres did not mention earth in their prayers. Others habitually did so, naming in order the Supreme Being, the sun, earth, and the Last

[18] In 1948 The Boy added: "Nowadays when they smoke, they offer him one too; and also with whiskey, they spill a little on the ground and say: 'Ida:s0a for a drink.'" [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Child, and made offering of tobacco and food to earth. Al Chandler explained: "The earth is put in because that is where your living is. You get everything from the earth, fruit, animals, everything to live on, and get everything you eat from there," although ultimately it is the Supreme Being who owns and gives everything. We got one passing casual reference to "mother earth" by Mary Ereaux, and another by Tom Main to earth as being a "spirit" and having a "special keeper," but obtained no later confirmation of or detailed information on these points. In general, earth seems to have played a quite subordinate role in Gros Ventre religious thought and ritual. 776 823

The sun was appreciably more prominent, ranking according to some informants next to the Supreme Being, and mentioned as "The One Traveling," or "Passing or Traveling Man" immediately after him in prayers. Another current seems to have assigned a much lower relative rank to the sun, and mentioned sun and moon together, as "Those-who-follow-each-other," and after the Supreme Being and the Four Holy Old Men. In any case the sun was in no sense identified with the Supreme Being, but was his property, work and servant, far below him in dignity, and had not anything like the religious predominance it had in such tribes as the neighboring Blackfoot. The sun did not enter at all into the so-called "Sun Dance" of the Gros Ventres, nor into the Feathered Pipe rite. Prayers and food were offered to the sun, and the sun was invited to sweat in the sweat lodge rite along with but subordinately to the Supreme Being. Individuals would offer a finger joint or bits of their flesh to the sun on such occasions as the grave illness of a relative. While the sun "sees everything, that's why the Supreme Being put it there," the Supreme Being, not the sun, was appealed to as witness in oaths; the widespread American Indian oath formula, "The sun sees me," was not used. 776 821 [755] [695]

The sun and moon were, according to myth, brothers from the same mother, but were never human beings proper, though they married, the one a frog woman and the other a human female. According to one story, the sun regularly appeared in battle as a man riding a white horse who scared and helped either the Gros [773] 776 821 539

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

according to one tradition, in the career of humanity. Some thought World War II was one of these four. The Gros Ventres do not recognize any beings connected or identified with the four winds or four cardinal directions. 776 801 [823]

Sometimes another being "Broken Knife" was appealed to in prayers. Little too, is known of him, except that he was, some time in the distant past, a renowned Keeper of the Flat Pipe. According to Al Chandler, Broken Knife was the name of the young man who was first given the Feathered Pipe. (For details, No. 6d in Appendix.) He was asked to pray for the supplicants, just as it was customary for the people to ask living pipe keepers or ex-keepers to pray and intercede for them, "much as Catholics ask the saints to intercede for them." 776 782

Much more is known of He-Who-Starved-To-Death who is associated with the Flat Pipe rite. He was a human being, a Pipe child, second son of a certain keeper of the Flat Pipe in the days when the Gros Ventres dwelt in a land of plenty. It was he who in the course of his adventures encountered and befriended the Last Child, offspring of the water monster, and who on his return home taught the people to pray to the Last Child, and introduced three songs into the Flat Pipe rite. He was also the man who first brought horses to the Gros Ventres. His name was given him by the water monster. (For details see No. 5 in Appendix.) In one Flat Pipe rite he was mentioned in prayers, and in the sweat lodge was invited to sweat. 776

Well known too is He-who-dreams-of-Bha'a, likewise a human being and a Pipe child, the son of the couple who were first given the Feathered Pipe by Bha'a, and who lived when the Gros Ventres had already gotten horses and had reached their historic habitat, but before the advent of the whites. He got power from Bha'a to be a great warrior, and he gave himself his name. (For details see No. 7 in Appendix.) While closely associated with the Feathered Pipe, he was not, so far as we could discover, prayed to.

In general, lesser beings that had no human body were called tciya:təwu:nitä (sing., lit., "false person": tciyattawu, false [Sifton], initä, human being). This category included such minor

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

CHAPTER III

THE FLAT PIPE RITUAL

General Features

Before describing the Flat Pipe rituals in detail, we shall in the interest of clarity take up certain more general features. Some of these are distinctive of the Flat Pipe ritual; others are shared in common with the Feathered Pipe ritual. 788

Distinctive of the Flat Pipe ritual are earth and water or flood association, peppermint, the number three, and rattles. 788 821

As The Boy put it: "The Flat Pipe belongs on the ground, on the surface of the earth, while the Feathered Pipe belongs up above the earth." Or in Coming Daylight's words: "The Flat Pipe comes from the water." The reference here is to the respective origin stories of the two pipes, the Flat Pipe having been given by Earth-maker at the great flood after dry land was made, the Feathered Pipe by Bha'a, the thunder being, during a storm and from the sky. (For details see Nos. 3 and 6 in Appendix.) When the Flat Pipe ceremony was carried out in 1938, the ritual was badly garbled, and the proper offerings were not made. A very destructive flood which shortly after this occurred at Hays where the ceremony was held was attributed to the ill treatment to which the Flat Pipe had just been submitted. The Feathered Pipe is associated with thunderstorms rather than with floods. 823

In conformity with this ground and water association, the ritual plant used for laving, chewing and incensing in the Flat Pipe ritual was peppermint which "comes from the lowlands down on the ground," "from right along the water," in contrast to the use in the Feathered Pipe and other pipe rituals of sweet-pine needles which "come from up in the hills," "from high altitudes." The peppermint used was not "just every peppermint," not that which grows along streams but that which grows around springs. Coming Daylight used to pick it for her uncle when he was keeper of the 788 824

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

"glistening" [no doubt, highly polished], very dark grey or greyish brown stone, with three or four humps on the upper surface of the stone stem part. Our informants, who had seen the Pipe, disagreed as to whether there are feathers on the Pipe itself, and one of them stated that it had looked different to him on the two occasions he had seen it. 778 276

In the Pipe bundle were many other sacred objects besides the Pipe itself. Most of these had their separate wrappings or cases, the Pipe itself being wrapped in buffalo hair. The first keeper, according to Garter Snake, wrapped the Pipe itself in a bit of white buffalo skin. The outermost wrapping of the Pipe bundle was, originally at least, of tanned elkskin, tied around with four strings. There was also, again originally at least, a bear robe cover for the bundle.[4] 778

The Pipe bundle would shake and quiver when there was going to be an earthquake. The keeper could then predict that the earthquake would occur soon, although he could not predict the exact time. Not so long ago Cora Chandler's old aunt saw the bundle quiver, and sure enough that summer an earthquake occurred. [788 823]

Informants consistently agreed that there were four main things in the bundle, and that two of the four were the Pipe itself and the carved stone face.[5] Most of them included the feathered stick among the four. As to whether the fourth was the whistle, the owl, or the crane, there was considerable conflict of opinion, a conflict we were unable to clear up.

The feathered stick, from which the Pipe itself derived its name,

---

[4] Dr. Hagener noted at the 1951 opening that the innermost wrapping of the whole bundle was of "old bison leather" and the outer wrapping of modern cloth." [R.F.]

[5] Dr. Hagener stated in letter of Jan. 18, 1954, "The pipe displayed in the pictures [Plate 3, C and D] was not the chief pipe of the bundle (that having mysteriously disappeared). It was however made of the red stone commonly traded from the Minnesota area. Although there were other pipes in the bundle this was the only one we were permitted to see. Iron Man checked on the presence of other pipes by feeling inside the leather casings, but did not bring them out." Under date of Aug. 8, 1954, Dr. Hagener remarked: "Dr. Nitz was of the opinion that there were two somewhat similar pipes in the bundle, one of which had disappeared. The picture . . . is of the remaining one." [R.F.] [439 276]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

time. All we can do in winter time is to look after our bodies. But in spring the body feels good, and when we look around we see the grass and leaves and animals appearing. There is a revolutionary change. They get power at that time. They take advantage of the newness of all nature. Everything is in blossom. Most animals then have their young. It is the most 'affectionate' season of the year. Nature smiles on all living creatures. Food and all that man uses in his life are easier to get then. Doctoring power was gotten more easily then than at other time—most who went out in spring did so principally and most frequently to seek war power, so some being or animal or something would give them power to be great warriors; or to acquire wealth in horses and not to be poor, or to get things easily without much effort. Some however went out chiefly to get doctoring power." While however spring was the favorite season for the power quest, it was not the only one. 787 827

Women never went out on the hills to seek power. This was done only by males. The latter would ordinarily begin to do so around the age of seventeen or eighteen years, or before twenty-one, just before reaching full manhood, most of them to get power to be great warriors. Young boys did not go out on the mountains. Only one case of a young boy going out to seek power was recalled by The Boy and Thick. He was about twelve or fourteen years old. He did not go far out, but did his crying a little way from camp and would return every night and sleep outside the tent where he and his people lived. Another such exceptional case was that of Bull Lodge, Garter Snake's father, who started his quest sleeping out in the mountains when he was only about twelve years old. 787?

The place for those to go who sought war, wealth, or doctor power was the top of buttes, hills or mountains, some distance from camp. Certain of these elevated spots seem to have been preferred localities. 787 823

McCann Butte, the first butte of the Bear Paws, was specifically mentioned by informants as having been frequented by Stiff-arm, by Bear Nose, and earlier by Coming Daylight's grandmother's brother, the first Crow Bull, in their quest. Bull Lodge, Garter Snake's father, got doctoring power on Baldy Butte, the

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787 highest of the Bear Paws, and it was to Baldy Butte that The
823 Boy's father, Lame Bull, was called in a dream. Another Gros Ventre, still living, sought power on Eagle Child Butte at the west end of the Little Rockies.

At three other spots mentioned by our informants quest for power was always a failure. According to Coming Daylight, "There was a rock [location not specified by her] that looked like a buffalo sitting. Many young men tried to fast and sleep there, but they claimed they never could because there was always something to scare them away. It was a spirit that looked like a person. They could hear people talking and there would be a light just like a camp fire. With all that they just could not stand it. No one ever stayed there."

Cora Chandler stated that "not far from Hays there is a steep hill called by the Indians, Electric Butte. Stiffarm used to tell all kinds of stories about that place and used to say that no one could sleep there for power because electricity came out of the rock(s) there." Stiffarm tried many times to sleep there but always had to run away. Coming Daylight's husband, Warrior, used to try to have thunder dreams and thunder power. She and he once went together [not questing] to Electric Butte. "There were," she said, "marks of electricity on the rock like at night when it storms." The rock had rolled down. "We did not touch it, except when Warrior put it back in place—During electric storms flashes come out of it."

The third place,—this one by exception not a mountain top,—was a hot spring somewhere south of the Missouri River. "Across the Missouri River," Singer said, "there was a big spring with no trees or anything [near it]. The stream goes away from this place in a curve. In the old days they [power questers] used to sleep there to get power from that spirit. But no one could ever stay because they were frightened when they would hear someone who had a big pot of boiling water say: 'I am going to have the legs,' or 'I am going to have the arms.' So the one who was trying to sleep there [for power] would run away. Long afterwards I went with some old women to see the place. It looked different than in the old days. The water used to go up and down, and once in a

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

while shells like those I wore for earrings would show. But the place was grown over with weeds and white settlers were there. The old women said: 'It is funny that they [the whites] do not hear the spirit getting [ready] a pot of boiling water for them.' They thought it strange that the white people could stay there." 787 823

Those few men who sought gambling power—it was never sought or possessed by women, we were told—sought it not on hill tops but in the lowlands, in the brush and timber along streams, from prairie chickens or ghosts there. The quester chose by preference a place where wild morning-glories formed a sort of bower or "tipi." The seeker would cry and when he got sleepy would crawl into the bower and sleep. In his sleep a prairie chicken or ghost would give him a song, certain rules to live by, procedures and rites to use in the hand game,—the only game in which gambling power was used,—and perhaps some powers of the legerdemain order. The person who acquired gambling power by quest would be very chary of revealing his quest experiences.[10]

Seemingly still more secretive and tight lipped were persons who acquired love power through quest. According to The Boy, our only informant on this point, "these fellows [who had it] were careful never to tell who gave this power. Sometimes they would say a 'person' gave it, but it was generally known that it came from bird or animal on the ground or in the water." On other occasions he stated: "Usually some animal gave love power," and questers "did not ask for success in gambling or love on the mountains, but on the prairies or in the brush along rivers." The being would give the quester a root to use in exercising love power.

A person before starting out for a chosen mountain top to seek major powers would, The Boy put it, "take a good bath and clean up his body well and put perfume on his body so he would smell good—those who did not use perfume would be told by the being on the mountain: 'Go away. You smell bad.'" He would also unbraid his hair and would wear no clothing except his moccasins and under his blanket his breechcloth. He took no weapons with him. "He took a lot of chances," Al Chandler commented, "because enemies might be close-by. But no enemy ever seemed to [302 515]

[10] For fuller details, see Flannery and Cooper, 1946, pp. 405-09, 416.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787 [823] disturb such young men. Everybody wonders how it was that none of the enemy ever ran on to a man in that state [that is, on quest]." The quester also took with him a pipe with tobacco mixture.

On the way out to the hill top, the young man was often accompanied to the spot by some older man, but only to help get the quester settled as it were. Once the quester was settled, the helper departed, and the young man had to carry on his quest strictly alone and in isolation. The quester's stay night and day alone on the mountain top was distinctly a test, not only of fasting endurance but of both physical and moral courage and stamina. There was danger of the known,—such as human enemies, snakes, or bears. Still more, there was danger from contact with the unknown, the supernatural. Questers often had fearsome and uncanny experiences while out on the hills. A concrete example, the experience of a Gros Ventre still living, as told by Thomas Main who had heard the story several times from Gambler, may illustrate the point. The incident occurred around 1900.

"The Gros Ventre [whom we shall call X] was with Gambler, an old Arapaho, on the Mission ranch near Hays. X wanted to sleep on a mountain top to acquire power. Gambler told him: 'Don't do it. You don't hold your mouth right. Your heart is small and your mind is narrow. You haven't nerve enough. You are physically courageous, but not morally so.' X replied: 'I'll show you. Sleeping on a mountain is easy. It is easier than riding a bucking horse that can kill me (and I'm not afraid to do the latter).' So Gambler said: 'I'll go with you and bring your horse home and attend to your chores while you are away.' So they went off together to Eagle Child Butte at the western extremity of the Little Rockies, taking with them a pipe, mixture, and blanket. On their arrival, Gambler built a little shelter for X to sleep in, and just before he left him said to him: 'All right, you've gone this far. Now carry it through. But I bet you that you will be back in your bed at the ranch before morning.' Gambler now left him to himself and went back home. X then started to walk around and cry, and after this to rest and smoke. Sometime during this very first night something happened. X would not reveal what it

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

thought a few minutes and then added: 'Well can you think of 755
someone you would like to doctor you?' I said: 'Yes, I would like to get Naka:ninen (looking-for-an-enemy-warrior-in-war).' He said: 'All right,' and he rushed and asked that one: 'Come, as my wife has been sick for some time.' So that man and his wife came.

"Our house was large enough, so I had them move right in. Then they made a bed on the east side just across from my bed. Pretty soon they said: 'Let us move her.' They put me on the north side in the place of honor, and I said to myself: 'I believe I must be going to die, else they would not put me at the back of the lodge.' This man boiled my medicine just as soon as he could. This was the sixth day. Of course they always put your head [823] to the west when you are in the place of honor. The room was a big one and they made my bed toward the center. I could not even use my hands. They had to feed me.

"On the seventh day just about sunset. I asked to be turned over; I had been lying on my side so long. They did this for me and I faced the wall. While I lay so, a man's voice said, in a kind of scolding way: 'How could he [the doctor] have so much medicine to doctor you?' It meant he did not have enough to doctor me in the condition I was in. And all at once I answered the voice, saying: 'Why, of course, they have enough medicines. Look what a big bundle she (or he) has hanging there.' The medicine man thought I was delirious and said: 'Daughter, who are you talking to?' And I said: 'Didn't you hear that voice say he did not think you have enough medicine to doctor me?'

"Of course as soon as the sun went down it got dark. They had no lamp and had to sit in the dark. Just before they went to sleep, I told them: 'Now turn me over again.' They then went to their beds and in no time were snoring, especially my man [husband]. He always got up early and whenever he hit the bed it seemed like he was dead and he would go to snoring. I could not sleep a wink but just lay there and heard them snore. They were sleeping two rooms away from where I was.

"I could not tell what time it was but it was quite late when I saw a hand with something in it and a forearm. Then I saw a foot and at last I could see that a man had come in and was standing

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

You were not supposed to tell everybody. I think that the vision is what made my grandmother live so long [to the age of 101 years it is claimed]. I think the fawn gave her 'grace' to live that long." 787

We recorded two instances of mass vision. One, of white horses coming down through an opening in the mountains, has been previously described. The other was related by Singer.

"The Gros Ventres were traveling and they got to a place where there is a mountain on both sides. They were going to look for buffalo. The men went out and then heard a man hollering for all the others. They all looked and saw a herd of buffalo coming from the sky. Iron Bucket [Singer's husband] was one of that party. The herd dropped close by. When people see anything like that they say it is a holy thing. The men chased these buffalo and killed one. It was bigger and fatter than the real kind and that is how they knew. They talked about this a whole lot. They had not prayed for this. It just happened. The man who first saw these buffalo gave a war whoop and then yelled: 'Come see!' The others all looked and here the buffalo were. When the buffalo landed, the earth shook and the dust just came up."

Auditions occurred, as well as visions. The woman's voice heard in the sweat-lodge rite and during White Weasel's singing has been mentioned previously (supra, p. 97). In the latter case, Mary Ereaux' mother and an occasional other person could hear the woman's voice, but others, such as Mary herself and White Weasel's wife, could not.

"The Gros Ventres," according to Singer, "used to come across a big lake toward the southwest. It was a holy lake because in its deep waters they used to hear sounds of dogs barking, and horses neighing, and young men giving a whoop, and drums beating, like they were singing. The people used even to see visions in this lake. Since the whites came around the Gros Ventres do not know what has become of this lake." [823]

Omens and Divination

Through both omens and divination, knowledge of the future or of hidden or distant things is believed to be gotten, and both

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787 mountain and asked the spirit that appeared to him for a love-medicine
832 which would bring him the woman. Soon after, she would come to him and try to obtain his love, but usually he would reject her, for a time at least, by way of revenge.

A young middle-aged man of the present time is noted for his love-medicine. He tells the following. He was once in love with a woman who only reviled him. For a long time this was on his mind. Constantly thinking of her harsh treatment of him, he fasted in a number of places, and finally received supernatural power. Then the woman came to him. She kissed him on the cheek; but he said, "You have abused me," and he made her go away. Four times she came to him; only the fourth time did he consent to gratify her wishes. Since that time, he has frequently used his medicine. His present wife was living with a white trader, where she had every comfort and great abundance; but by his medicine he made her leave the trader for him. His wife, it would appear, looks upon his powers without jealousy. He sells the use of his medicine to young men for two horses. His young son is crippled, so that he would have difficulty in winning women; but his father is keeping the medicine for him, so that he will be able to possess any woman he desires. The objects used include several medicine-plants. Some of these appear to be used to incense the man who is making the
[824] medicine. When a woman is unusually obdurate, wild parsnip (the root supposed to produce the peculiar state of mind of the crazy-dance) is employed by this man. When he begins to exert his influence on a woman, she becomes restless and sexually excited. She leaves the tent frequently, and will cohabit with any man. When the influence of the medicine is removed, she remains faithful to her lover.

MEDICINES AND PLANTS.

278 The following medicines, consisting chiefly of plants, are almost wholly
757 family remedies, and, while no doubt also used by medicine-men, their supposed effects are generally known, and not connected with any personal supernatural experiences of the person using them. As the specimens were secured in winter, it was impossible to obtain material for botanical identification.

Wanouwasöö ("wart-medicine"), a root, is used for stomach-ache (specimen Museum No. 50-1800).

A root called ahaa"tjiiniça" ("wood-like") is used for colic. This seems to be the root of a species of Asclepias (specimen Museum No. 50-1836).

A root called banaö ("red medicine," because it is reddish when fresh) is used for diarrhœa (specimen Museum No. 50-1914).

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

A plant called tyäñänou is used as perfume, as a wash for the hair, and as a minor medicine. Bunches of the plant were used as perfume. A tea boiled of it is thought to make the hair grow while perfuming it. Such a tea is also poured into the nostrils as a remedy for headache (specimen Museum No. 50-1920). 278 757 [302]

Niibyouäxtjin is used as perfume. The stems and leaves are chewed and applied to the body (specimen Museum No. 50-1853). [302]

Tsaa"sübin is used as perfume. It is chewed, and rubbed on the hair (specimen Museum No. 50-1792).

One ingredient of incense is the callosity from the leg of a horse above the knee. This is cut up fine, and burned with sweet-grass. It is also worn on the body on a string.

Pine-nuts or other conifer-seeds are used for pemmican (specimen Museum No. 50-1913). [562] 824

For embroidery, dark fibrous water-plants, at"hin (the Arapaho atahina"), are used (specimen Museum No. 50-1891).

Quills are dyed yellow with a solution from a conifer-lichen, no doubt the widely used *Evernia vulpina*, called otsahaa" (specimen Museum No. 50-1873). [386]

TRIBAL CEREMONIAL ORGANIZATION.

The Gros Ventre ceremonial organization is akin to that of the Arapaho with such differences as would be expected from the differences in language and the period of separation of the two tribes. The fundamental feature of this organization, the grouping of men by ages and the observance of a series of a half-dozen ceremonies in order according to age, is common to the two tribes. The ceremonies vary somewhat, and in a few cases their names or order have been changed; but among both tribes there are about six regular consecutive men's ceremonies, one or two that are preliminary or somewhat outside of this series, a single ceremony for women corresponding to those for men, and the sun-dance, which is included by the Indians in the enumeration of their grouped ceremonies, but differs from the others in not being connected with age, or with any society-like association of individuals. 561 796

Among the Gros Ventre the dancing-lodge for these ceremonies — which is erected in the centre of the camp-circle, and, like this, opens to the east — is constructed of two large tents. The lodge is open above, and appears to be oval or round in shape. The dancers, before beginning the ceremony, secure old men, who are called their "grandfathers," and are their instruct- 346 796

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 from this part of the robe. At the end of each of these, a bunch of owl-feathers, or rather a piece of owl-skin, was attached. The dancers carried bows, to each end of which seven crow-feathers were tied. Down was [411] fastened to the bowstring at several places. At the handle of the bow a strip of bear-skin, owl-feathers, and some sage were fastened with a buck-skin thong. Four arrows accompanied each bow. One had a metal point, which subsequently was made more effective by medicine. The three other arrows were blunt, or had wooden points that had been chewed soft so as to be harmless.

The pledger, and three other men called "brothers" (hinähäbyiitou), who sat apart from the other dancers in the lodge and acted somewhat differently on certain occasions, had bows that were unornamented, except for the down on the string. These four men wore their robes turned so that the hair was outside, whereas the other dancers wore the dressed side out.

[302] All the dancers were painted entirely red. Their hair was daubed with white paint. They stopped the left ear with a mushroom, such as was used [824] for tinder, and put paint (apparently white) over the ear and the entire left side of the face.

Four young men who would be good workers were selected to be the assistants or servants (atsaan) of this company. They brought wood and water, and performed other services.

[346] The lodge for this dance is described as having been made of travois or tent poles about which tent-skins were drawn. It was open to the east. There was a fire about in the centre. Facing the opening of the lodge was a small partial enclosure or screen constructed on dog-travois. In this were the pledger and his three companions, the "brothers." The dancers are said to have occupied the northern half of the wall in the dancing-lodge; the "grandfathers," behind whom sat the dancers' wives, the southern half. As among the Arapaho, the dancers were divided into two sections; the tall men toward the rear and the short men toward the front, of the lodge. These two divisions competed against each other in the races to follow. The dancers' bows were stood up in the ground in a row just beyond the fire.

During the four days of the dance, the dancers, every morning before sunrise, went to their "grandfathers" to be painted. Apparently they went to their "grandfathers'" tents, and not to the dancing-lodge, for this [302] purpose. The dancers' wives went with them. They were naked, and [824] were painted too. No one but the "grandfather" looked at them. Before [788] being painted, the dancers made incense of sage-leaves on burning charcoal. They also rubbed their bodies with fragrant fir or balsam leaves

(Rubbed and mixed with fat.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

793 *796 At the end of the recess after the third "crazy singing," the boisterous hilarity gave place to sober seriousness, and the solemn secret instruction and consecration of the new keeper and co-keeper were resumed in the northern section of the double lodge. About this time, too, the new Pipe child came into the lodge, and the heads and faces of the new keeper and co-keeper were uncovered. In general when, during their training, the two were learning by hearing, their heads were covered so they could concentrate their attention on what they heard; while, when learning by seeing, their heads were uncovered. The covering of the head at certain times, as on the march to the keeper's lodge immediately after the previous night's notification and raid and as during the "crazy singing," seems also to have had an "ascetic" purpose, just as the abstention from food and smoking throughout most of this first day had.

The instruction after the "crazy singing" concerned primarily the ritual of smoking the Flat Pipe. Right after the uncovering of [524] the heads of the keeper and co-keeper, the retiring keeper took peppermint leaves and gave some to the new keeper, while the retiring co-keeper did the same, giving some to the new co-keeper. Then each of the four chewed the leaves, spat three times on his or her own hands, rubbed the hands together then with the right palm rubbed his or her own left forearm up to the shoulder and with left palm the right forearm up to the shoulder, and finally with right palm from the mouth up over the face and hair to the occiput,—three rubbing or laving motions in all. This was done three times in succession.

After this peppermint laving came the fumigation or smudging rite. At the word of the retiring keeper the first of the two at- [372] tendants, to the west of the door, with two sticks as tongs took a lighted buffalo chip from the fire in the center of the lodge and placed it on the incense mound (to be described later), and went back to his place, proceeding clockwise throughout. The retiring keeper then took from the supply alongside him a pinch of dried peppermint leaves in the tips of his five right-hand fingers and crawled on his knees to the incense hearth. There, kneeling squatted on his heels, and facing east, he held his hand, finger tips

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

was reserved to the new keeper), and with tamping by the retiring keeper as it passed him, till it reached the last ex-keeper on the west side of the lodge. Then it was passed clockwise back toward the new keeper, each ex-keeper on the west side smoking it in turn, till it reached the retiring keeper. By this time the tobacco would probably be all smoked up, so he would dump it out by lifting up the Pipe, horizontal and bowl up, to head height, then lowering it still horizontal and bowl up, and finally turning the bowl over,—all this being done very slowly. 793 796*

Another important part of the transfer rite was the blessing of the person and clothing of the new keeper and co-keeper, but when it occurred, before or after the Pipe smoking, was not cleared up. According to The Boy, "Every part of the new keeper was blessed, even his mouth, that is, his talk was blessed," but we obtained only the following details. The new keeper and co-keeper (and Pipe child) were painted by the retiring keeper on the forehead and under the jawbone and chin as signifying the world above and the earth respectively. The retiring keeper also chewed peppermint leaves and spat upon the two, to signify that they must "quiet down and be good." [302]

The moccasins and feet of the new keeper, co-keeper and Pipe child were treated as follows. The retiring keeper took peppermint leaves in his mouth, chewed them, spat three times on the sole of one moccasin (moccasined foot) of the new keeper, lowered it down in three stages over the smudge of the sacred hearth, and circled it three times around the hearth. Then he took a pinch of poisonous wild parsley (see infra), spat three times on his palms, rubbed the palms together and rubbed the sole of the moccasin with his palm three times from toe to heel. The same treatment was given to the keeper's other moccasin by the retiring keeper, then to the new co-keeper's moccasins by the retiring co-keeper, and lastly to the new Pipe child's moccasins by the retiring keeper. At the end of the whole transfer these blessed moccasins were taken off and put in the Flat Pipe bundle, and were worn only during rites, not as everyday footwear. Every other piece of clothing of the new keeper, co-keeper and Pipe child was blessed with peppermint and fumigation, apparently with a similar rite [824]

CHAPTER III

THE FLAT PIPE RITUAL

General Features

Before describing the Flat Pipe rituals in detail, we shall in the interest of clarity take up certain more general features. Some of these are distinctive of the Flat Pipe ritual; others are shared in common with the Feathered Pipe ritual. 788

Distinctive of the Flat Pipe ritual are earth and water or flood association, peppermint, the number three, and rattles. 788 821

As The Boy put it: "The Flat Pipe belongs on the ground, on the surface of the earth, while the Feathered Pipe belongs up above the earth." Or in Coming Daylight's words: "The Flat Pipe comes from the water." The reference here is to the respective origin stories of the two pipes, the Flat Pipe having been given by Earth-maker at the great flood after dry land was made, the Feathered Pipe by Bha'a, the thunder being, during a storm and from the sky. (For details see Nos. 3 and 6 in Appendix.) When the Flat Pipe ceremony was carried out in 1938, the ritual was badly garbled, and the proper offerings were not made. A very destructive flood which shortly after this occurred at Hays where the ceremony was held was attributed to the ill treatment to which the Flat Pipe had just been submitted. The Feathered Pipe is associated with thunderstorms rather than with floods. 823

In conformity with this ground and water association, the ritual plant used for laving, chewing and incensing in the Flat Pipe ritual was peppermint which "comes from the lowlands down on the ground," "from right along the water," in contrast to the use in the Feathered Pipe and other pipe rituals of sweet-pine needles which "come from up in the hills," "from high altitudes." The peppermint used was not "just every peppermint," not that which grows along streams but that which grows around springs. Coming Daylight used to pick it for her uncle when he was keeper of the 788 824

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

788 Flat Pipe. It was dried before being used for ritual purposes. In
824 the olden days the Flat Pipe keeper and co-keeper had monopolistic control of it in curing. But nowadays a peppermint beverage, good for fits, spasms, and stomach disorder, is used by everybody.

The ritual number of the Flat Pipe is three, whereas that of
788 the Feathered Pipe and the Sacred Lodges is four. Songs are
801 sung three times, ritual gestures are in threes, and so forth. The old people when sitting around smoking socially used often to discuss the reason for this. Some held that Earthmaker sent only three animals down to dive for earth, because, for one reason at least, there were only three animals in the Flat Pipe bundle. Others held he sent four. But regardless of these opposing views on this point in the earthmaking, there was always complete agreement that the Flat Pipe ritual number itself was three, while that in the Feathered Pipe and Sacred Lodge rituals was four.

The musical instrument proper to the Flat Pipe ritual was the
788 rattle (see Plate 1C). The drum, proper to the Feathered Pipe
534 ritual, was not used. In the Flat Pipe ritual, the rattle was shaken clockwise in a sort of circle at breast height, whereas medicine men shook their rattles anti-clockwise and Star Dancers alternately back and forth.[1]

788 It may be added here that while the Flat Pipe was actually smoked only when it was being ritually transferred to a new
276 keeper and when some individual had vowed to smoke it, and was never danced with, smoking the Feathered Pipe and dancing with it were common.

Among the more significant and more commonly recurring
788 features shared by both the Flat Pipe and Feathered Pipe rituals were clockwise movements, singing, and the use of paint, buffalo chips, and of sage, tobacco, larb, and wild parsley.

Entering and leaving the keeper's lodge, ritual gestures, and so forth were consistently clockwise.

Singing bulked large in the Flat Pipe rite, and, for that matter,
788 in nearly every phase of Gros Ventre religious and social life. As
533 Thomas Main put it speaking for himself and The Boy: "We cannot describe how much singing means in the lives of the Gros

[1] For description of Star Dance, see Flannery, 1953, p. 42.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

372 The Flat (and Feathered) Pipe keepers had to keep on hand a good supply of buffalo chips, the proper ritual fuel, as also the common fuel of the people especially when traveling out on the woodless plains. The Boy once asked his father: "Why are buffalo chips used in rites? This does not seem proper." "Buffalo chips," Lame Bull replied, "are plentiful everywhere and burn longest. And they are cleanest: the ashes do not stick to your hands; wood ashes do and are hard to rub off." After the buffalo were exterminated, cattle chips were substituted, but these, as Coming Daylight stated, "have an awful odor when burned, while buffalo chips have none." She used to gather buffalo chips for her uncle when he was Flat Pipe keeper; Cora Chandler used to gather cattle chips when her uncle Curly Head was Feathered Pipe keeper. On one occasion, after the disappearance of the buffalo, Coming Daylight went south with her husband, coming back by way of Yellowstone Park where some buffalo were kept. Here she found some buffalo chips, put them in a sack, and brought them all the way back home to give to Horse Capture, then the Flat Pipe keeper. On arriving home she went to his lodge, "covered the Pipe" with a new robe, and laid the chips at the head of the Pipe.

824 The other plants [besides peppermint] that entered into the Flat Pipe and Feathered Pipe rites were sage, tobacco, larb and wild parsley.

Sage was used for the Pipe bed and for other ritual purposes. For the spring Flat Pipe rite at least, only a certain kind of sage (artemisia sp.) was used. Sage was gathered by the co-keeper or one of her children, and could be gotten all the year round, even if in winter only the sticks. According to tradition, the gathering and use of sage for medicinal purposes were in the old days confined to keepers; but in more recent times the people in general have used it, by rubbing themselves with it and smelling it for headache, and by boiling the leaves, especially the top ones, and drinking the infusion for coughs, colds and tuberculosis.

824 773 276 According to the traditional story as told by The Boy, tobacco and tobacco planting came originally to the Gros Ventres from Earthmaker who taught the first man how to plant tobacco, and its cultivation and use have come down in an unbroken line since

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

that time. In the olden days it was only the keeper of the Flat Pipe who planted and harvested it; and for ritual use only.[4] As time went on, the keeper thought to himself: "These older men should have something to pray with when the tribe breaks camp and each band goes its own way." So he said to these older men, each a chief in his own band: "When your bands go their own way you have nothing to use in your prayers. So I am going to distribute some tobacco to each of you for you and your band to use." This he did, and so the use of tobacco began to spread. After this some bands broke away entirely from the Gros Ventres, the original planters and users of tobacco, and became separate tribes and the language changed. The probable order, The Boy thinks, in which they broke away was: first, the Gros Ventres of Dakota,[5] next the Cree, then the Piegan, after this the Crow, and last the Arapaho. He thinks too that the keeper who first distributed tobacco to the bands must have distributed the seed too, for in later years all these people raised their own tobacco.

824 773 276

In the course of time the use of tobacco among the Gros Ventres underwent two important developments, from ritual to recreative and from male to female use.

276

In earliest days only the keeper and a few old men used tobacco, and used it only ritually. When somebody got sick, the keeper

[4] In 1948 The Boy elaborated on the original planting of tobacco which he had heard Lame Bull discuss many times. "It was virgin soil deep in the forest and they made a woven fence around it so nothing could get in. After the planting, they moved off for hunting and every once in a while the keeper made a ceremonial smoke and prayed to the Supreme Being that the tobacco would grow. After the vegetation began to mature they returned to the plot and the keeper went to look and thanked the Supreme Being in a loud voice that the crop had matured. The tobacco was picked ceremoniously and three plants were always left standing in the plot." There was a plot of ground in the forested area of Canada on which nothing grew and which the Gros Ventres called "Broken Grass." In Lame Bull's time they used to leave offerings there whenever they passed nearby. The Boy and other old men and women believe that this was the site on which the original tobacco was planted under instruction from the Supreme Being. [R.F.]

[778]

[5] The original Gros Ventres, according to the same tradition, had no corn. Corn originated among the Gros Ventres of Dakota. [For confirmation of tradition regarding raising of tobacco, see Flannery, 1953, p. 61, n. 12.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

276 would use tobacco in his prayers for the patient. If the patient survived but was still weak, the keeper made him smoke to get back his strength. So some of the other tribesmen learned to smoke. Gradually social (and recreative) smoking took its place together with ceremonial smoking.

In earlier times, the women never smoked either ritually or socially. Even in rites where they had an important role, such as [562] the inauguration of a new pipe keeper, they did not smoke, as women were considered secondary, not equal to men. Even as late as The Boy's and Thick's early boyhood in the decade before the last buffalo disappeared (1884), only the old women smoked, never the young girls. The spread of the custom among these old women was probably due to their discovery by experience that the smoking prescribed for maladies, such as, chronic headache, was good for the body. But even today, although women smoke non-ritually when alone or among themselves, they are not allowed to smoke at a Pipe rite, and, if wives are present when a man invites a group of men for a social visit or meal and he fills up his pipe to give his guests a smoke, he does not offer the pipe to the wives.

Tobacco was used only in pipe smoking. It was sometimes smoked straight by old men and old women, and by the sick as [17] a cure. But ordinarily the Gros Ventres smoked it mixed either [824] with red willow, as did the Cree and Assiniboine, or preferably, and in the Flat Pipe rites always, with larb.

Larb is "a ground plant that grows on hills and mountains." We could get no specimen for identification. After the tobacco and larb were mixed, a little more larb than tobacco, fat was worked into the mixture to season it. On taking leave from his Gros Ventre [431] friends in 1940 the present author was given a small bag of this [609] mixture as a token of peace and good will and found the mixture a very pleasant aromatic smoke.

The wild parsley, associated with the Flat and Feathered Pipe 278 and with the Crazy Lodge, was used as a powerful poison. It was greatly feared and was spoken of in undertones. Its preparation is a lost art. The whole plant was and is considered poisonous, but poison was prepared principally from the root, which was first

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

High was keeper, he told Al Chandler that one of the sticks in the bundle was already notched on two edges. 778

Like the Flat Pipe, the Feathered Pipe also had its own horse, saddle, robe and blankets. The saddle, like a woman's saddle of old times, had two horns from which fringes hung, and a beaded crupper, and was painted red. The horse had to be the best available; no one could ride it, and if it died or was stolen, another had to be provided. The horse had to be very gentle. 778 492

Feathered Pipe Ritual

Certain general features characteristically recur throughout the Feathered Pipe rites, some contrasting with those of the Flat Pipe rites, others common to both cycles. 788

The following are distinctive of the Feathered Pipe rites: association with air, sky, cloud, rain and storm; sweet pine for smudge; ritual number four; the drum accompaniment for songs; dancing with the Pipe.

The Feathered Pipe, as previously noted, "belongs up above the earth," having been given by Bha'a the storm being and during a violent thunderstorm. In prayer and other ritual it was particularly associated with the sky and storm clouds, with rain and storms.

For ritual smudge or incense the dried needles of an evergreen, the "sweet pine," nibiya:tə, were exclusively used, in accordance with directions given the original first keeper of the Pipe,—in accordance too with the origin of the Pipe from "up above the earth," for the "sweet pine" tree grows only in high altitudes, up on the hills and mountains. The tree grows in the Rocky Mountains, the Sweet Grass Hills, and Eagle Butte, nearer to the present location of the Gros Ventres. The Boy has seen it growing in only about two places, to about 10 feet high on top of Bird Tail Butte in the Bear Paw Mountains, and to about five feet high with a trunk about four inches in diameter on the top of Mission Peak in the Little Rockies. We were unable to secure specimens for botanical identification. The tree was described as "like a fir," or "special kind of pine." It is presumably *Abies sp.* Ritually the needles were mostly used to make incense, and, only 788 824

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

exceptionally chewed in contrast to the Flat Pipe peppermint. A bag, painted red all over, about a foot square, and fringed on three sides but with no beading or other decoration, now hangs with the bundle and served, Al Chandler thought, as a container for the dried sweet pine needles.

The ritual number of the Feathered Pipe, running all through the songs and ceremonies, was four, from the days of the first keeper down to most recent times.

The musical instrument used to accompany the songs was, likewise from the time of the first keeper, the drum. According to Garter Snake, the first keeper's drum was painted half black to represent black [storm] clouds and half red to represent the earth. According to Al Chandler, the present drum, about 16 inches in diameter and two inches deep, has a figure of a thunderbird painted in blue on the drumhead against a red background, to represent Bha'a, with zigzag yellow lines from either side of the head to the wings, to represent lightning. A long string is tied to the drum. The drumstick is painted red, the distal end being covered with buckskin "stuffed with something like cotton." Curly Head, when keeper, never used the drum, or even took it out of its covering in which it hung next to the bundle, but Sitting High used it regularly with the songs.*

According to Garter Snake, the first keeper had somebody make him a wooden bowl, which still hangs with, not in, the Pipe bundle, but we obtained no information on its type or use. She also stated that the first keeper had a "gourd rattle" or four rattles, but Al Chandler never saw any rattle kept or used with the Feathered Pipe, and no other informant mentioned such.

The Feathered Pipe, like the Flat Pipe, was smoked, in fulfillment of vows, but very rarely. More commonly, in contrast with the Flat Pipe, it was danced with, earlier only by the keeper, in recent decades by others.

General ritual features common to the Feathered Pipe and Flat Pipe,—clockwise movement, singing, the use of paint, of buffalo chips, and of sage, tobacco, larb and wild parsley,—have

* The drum used in the 1951 rite was apparently undecorated. See Plate 2 C. [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 302 of the two, even the soles of their feet, were painted all over,—in red, at least on the first day. Coming Daylight, although she herself had never joined the Crazy Dance, used to hear that the women would say: "Grandfather, I cannot paint my back. Now you paint my back." The grandfather, according to The Boy, commonly recruited a younger man than himself as helper in the painting and would direct him how to paint the various parts of the couple's bodies. At some time in this painting rite, the grandfather prayed in a short quick way with a pipe for those being painted.

*796 After the couples were painted, all proceeded to the Crazy Dance lodge or corral, the dancers whistling on the way with their bone whistles in their mouths. On arrival at the lodge, the chief vower and the 4 councilors took their places inside the smaller wickiup, or enclosure within the corral, and the rite proper began.

A smudge was made,—according to The Boy, of a certain large [824] flat or bulbous semispherical mushroom the "fuzz" of which "flies out when it is stepped on,"—a smudge song was sung (but The Boy did not remember the melody), and a solemn prayer was said.

After the prayer came the "feeding" of the badger. Someone would suggest: "Sing the feeding song, so the badger can eat." Then someone would take the badger skin and walk with it clockwise around the lodge, inside between the bows and the outer wall. He walked very very slowly, barely moving, and while he did so song No. 59 was sung. He made the complete circuit four times, and the song was sung once at each circuit. If at any time he were not holding pelt down low enough to the ground, he would be told in backward talk (see infra): "Raise him up!" When at the end of the fourth round he reached the wickiup, he would lay the pelt down. Then song No. 60 was sung, four times in succession, and at the end of each singing the pelt was given a hard blow with a stick by "the old man" (the chief vower's grandfather?). All this singing and striking was done seriously and reverently, without levity. The Boy had asked his father, Lame Bull, the meaning of the blows, but the latter had answered: "I do not know." The two above songs, both wordless, were sung without accompaniment of rattle or drum. The drum note in song No. 60 was introduced by The Boy in his recording merely to represent

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

them (remedies, as infra) in the family." Her mother's sister, Good Singer, had a ghost helper and was also a "real" doctor or medicine woman. Coming Daylight was given by Good Singer three kinds of medicine, including headache and stomach ache medicine to use for her own children and grandchildren. Coming Daylight also was given by her maternal grandmother who "knew all kinds of medicines," three medicines to hasten childbirth, to bring the mother's milk, and to cure stomach ache. Coming Daylight has used these within the family to doctor her children and grandchildren, still had them, and, in accordance with her grandmother's wish that they be passed on, was going to pass them on to her granddaughter whom she reared. If she should use any of these medicines for patients not of her family they would have to pay her, else the medicine would not be effective. 757

One of The Boy's daughters, without quest, perhaps in a dream, was given curing power which she used only within the family. She would treat her mother and the children for pains and aches by pressing and massaging.

Possession of such proprietary herbal and other remedies gotten by gift or dream, with or without quest, and used by non-professionals within the family or other limited circle may have been much more widespread than the above meager field evidence might imply.

Before we pass on to the consideration of curative powers possessed by professional medicine men and women, it may be well at this point to record the ritual observed in the gathering of plants for medicine, whether or not the gatherer possessed supernatural curing power proper. 757 824

This ritual was observed in the gathering of medicinal plants only, not of berries, wild turnips and other plant foods. The proper time to gather medicinal plants, or least some of them, was the fall. Coming Daylight's grandmother told her: "You don't want to pick anything [any herbal curative] until the seeds drop, because it would be like destroying a body." Not everyone had the right to gather medicinal plants, at least not all kinds. Certain herbal curatives at least could be picked only by those who had been given power, through quest or dream or through transfer.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

757 824 Some evil such as sickness or death would befall an unauthorized gatherer. When the right to gather a particular medicinal plant was transferred, the transferrer would take the transferee out and show him or her the growing plant and tell the name.

When a medicinal roof was dug, some offering, such as a bit of tobacco or a necklace of beads, was put in the ground in its place, or in the case of gathering "white medicine" [fungus?], was placed alongside the tree. In making this offering a short prayer was said. The content and wording of the prayer differed from individual to individual: According to The Boy the gatherer would take the bit of tobacco and pray with it, saying, "I am going to use your medicine." "Your" would have reference to the Gros Ventre concept that the medicines while gotten immediately from a bear or rock or other inferior creature came ultimately from the Supreme Being. His name would be mentioned first in the prayer and so acknowledged as the one to whom all things, even these roots, ultimately belonged. The Last Child would be mentioned last and would get some share in the tobacco offered.

According to Singer, "When we take a [medicinal] root, we say: 'I give you this. I am putting something in your place. I didn't take you for nothing!' We talk like we are talking to a person. Most Indians have the same way." Coming Daylight who was present explained: "We are talking to Our Lord and we never leave out the Sun," and apparently the Last Child was included. She further explained on another occasion: "When they dig the [medicinal] root, they have something to put in place of it and they say: 'I am taking this. Have pity on us. Whatever way I may use this [root], may I be successful in my work.' Then they cover over the hole made by extracting the root. It is kind of buying it like." "Then when you have some of this medicine and pass it on, the receiver gives you something for it."

Doctoring Power

756 What kinds of power did professional medicine men and women possess? In attempting to answer it, we wish to emphasize that while certain individuals (such as Stiffarm) who effected cures, were definitely recognized as professional doctors with super-

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

525 time. This latter aspect of the belief accorded with the larger Gros Ventre
789 pattern: any acquisition of special supernatural power sought by quest would be apt to lead to shortening of life.

Nevertheless, against the reiterated advice of parents and elders who would so lecture the growing children and of the chiefs and counsellors who would walk around the camp so warning the people, a good many individuals would seek supernatural power, and a few would go out in quest of supernatural gambling power. In some cases such gambling power was sought by a man who had lost heavily or lost his all at the wheel or hand game, as a desperate measure to recoup his losses and to get a new start in his career.

Gambling power was not sought from the Supreme Being, who apparently did not enter at all into the gambling cycle. The appeal to him in the previously given traditional story of gambling for scalps is more a confirmation of than an exception to the rule. Nor was it sought as other power—to be a great warrior or doctor or to acquire wealth or to live long—was sought, by fasting and dreaming on the hill tops. The seeker for gambling power resorted to the brush and timber along watercourses to obtain it from the prairie chickens,
[176] or from a ghost. It was more commonly gotten from prairie chickens; but not infrequently from a ghost, not an ancestor of the candidate, at least not necessarily, but, as The Boy put it laughingly, from "any good-natured ghost." This power was gotten for use only in the hand game, not in any other gambling game or sport.

● [824] Usually the seeker looked for a place where wild morning glories formed a sort of bower, "like a little lodge or tipi." It was in there that a ghost was believed to live; the morning glory was called tzek'unθänädzu, "ghost rope" (tzek'ᵇ or tsá·k'ᵃ, "ghost"). The seeker would cry and cry, and when he got sleepy he would crawl into the bower and sleep. Pretty soon a ghost or prairie chicken might ask him: "Why are you punishing yourself so much?" He might answer: "Because I have lost all my belongings." "Is that all? Well, I will help you out," the being or beings would say, and then would give the seeker a song and tell him what rules he must live by and how he must act in the hand game. The person who got such power would not afterwards reveal the details told him by the giver. From the prairie chicken or ghost the person might also get at the same time the power to do marvelous things, such as making an object disappear, swallowing it and then drawing it out of some part of his body, making it go into his skull and come out of his mouth into his hand or go through his veins and come out somewhere else on his person, and so forth (cf. Red Whip story *infra*.)

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The place of the biitaha^{n}wu is not certain, as no informants were found who would positively express themselves on this matter. It is universally regarded as having been the most sacred and most dangerous of all the ceremonies, these qualities being thought to have led to its abandonment before any of the other dances. It can probably be concluded from this that it was last in the series, and performed by the oldest men. 171 796

As among the Arapaho, but somewhat more clearly, each dance refers symbolically to a certain animal. This symbolism is as follows. 171

The fly-dance takes its name from flies or mosquitoes, and was given or instituted by a mosquito. During part of the ceremony the dancers imitate the actions of mosquitoes. 796 825

The crazy-dance has comparatively little reference to any animal. The participants, however, wear anklets of badger-skin, and an entire badger-skin is used in ceremonies at the time of starting the dancing.

The kit-fox lodge was given by the kit-foxes, and a kit-fox skin is used somewhat analogously to the badger-skin in the crazy-dance.

In the dog-dance the dancers of highest degree represent shaggy dogs. It is also said that the participants in the ceremony largely eat dogs during its course. Among the Arapaho a dog is said to have instituted this lodge, and the Gros Ventre have a similar myth. [262]

In the nana^{n}naha^{n}w^{n} the dancers sing for the buffalo, and it is said that they always succeed in causing them to appear near the camp. Among the Arapaho the dancers represent both buffalo and prairie-chickens. The symbolic reference to prairie-chickens among the Gros Ventre is found in their sun-dance; their equivalent of the Arapaho rabbit-tent in this ceremony being called "prairie-chicken tent," and the singers in it "prairie-chickens" and "prairie-hens."

The biitaha^{n}w^{n}, as among the Arapaho, has connection with thunder. The dancers are painted over the body with dots which represent hail. If one of them violates the regulations of the dance, it is thought that it will begin to rain and that the offender may be struck by lightning. The Gros Ventre have an additional symbolic connection of their sun-dance with thunder, which is not strictly paralleled among the Arapaho. [302] [821]

The women in their dance among both tribes represent buffalo, and the actions gone through in this ceremony are in both tribes probably more directly imitative of the animals symbolized than in any of the men's ceremonies.

What has been said about the Arapaho in regard to the relation of the entire ceremonial organization to the lives of the men of the tribe, and in regard to the relative importance of the religious, military, and social functions of the age-companies constituting the organization, appears to apply 171 796 561

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Fig. 33 shows one of the small quill-wrapped hoops carried on a stick in the fly-dance. It is about three inches across, and lacks the feathers once attached to it. The hoop is not continuous, but consists of four slightly curved sticks. Each of these is wound with yellow quills, and in the middle with black (really dark-brown) fibres. The quill-wrapping encloses a sinew strand, which passes from one stick to the other, holding them together into a flexible, somewhat four-cornered hoop. At each of the four dark marks an eagle-plume was formerly attached, and in addition an eagle-feather (specimen Museum No. 50 1936b) was hung from the hoop. This hoop was made, for the man from whom it was obtained, at the time he took part in the fly-dance. 796 293

The Crazy-Dance.

The second ceremony, the crazy-dance, corresponds pretty closely to the Arapaho crazy-dance. When it was summer, and the time came to make the ceremony in fulfilment of the pledge previously given, the different bands of the tribe gathered in a single camp-circle. Certain men, leaving this camp, then went out to select a suitable site for the dance. When they had found this, the camp started for the place, while they made piles of buffalo-chips in a circle, indicating the place for the camp. The company about to make the ceremony gathered at night, and, taking a pipe of black stone, went stealthily to the tent of an old man whom they had selected to put up the lodge (that is, direct the ceremony) for them. They entered his tent while he was sleeping, woke him, and handed him the pipe. When he signified his acceptance by taking it, they kissed him in thanks, and made him presents. After he had smoked the pipe, he told them to obtain "grandfathers," which they did. 796

When the preparations had begun to be made, crows and owls were killed by the dancers, because they used their feathers. The dancers' regalia consisted of anklets of badger-skin and of quill-embroidered leg-lets, to both of which four crow-feathers and buffalo-fetlocks, or antelope-hoofs, were attached as ornaments and rattles. Around the head they wore a narrow strip of skin embroidered with quill-work, to which an owl's head was tied on one side. Around their necks hung another quill-embroidered thong, at the end of which was a whistle of eagle-wing bone. A buffalo robe painted red was worn. A round hole was cut in this through which the head was put, so that the dancers did not have to hold the garment in place. The piece cut out for the head was not entirely detached, but left hanging down the back. Two long streamers of skin hung down the back [825] [292] [534]

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

crushed and mixed with fat. When the painting was completed, food from the young men's parents was brought to the old men. The old men also presented their "grandsons" with food. The food was then eaten. During the day the dancers and their "grandfathers" were in the dancing-lodge. In connection with the beginning of the dancing, a badger-skin was used. This was entirely wrapped, except at the head, in a flat rope of rawhide, half of which (one side?) was painted red, the other half black. This skin lay on the ground before the pledger of the dance, in or in front of his small enclosure, with the head toward the east. Glowing charcoal was laid before the row of bows, and sweet-grass (niasö; Arapaho, niox") was put on the coals to incense the bows. The pledger, rising, took the badger-skin, and, holding it with the head pointing forward, walked slowly around the inside of the lodge, and then to the smouldering incense, over which he made four passes with the skin; then returning to his enclosure, he laid the badger-skin on the ground. Taking out a stick tied in with the skin, he struck the skin as hard as he could. At this, a singer at the middle of the back or western end of the lodge — who held a stick as high as a man, wrapped with buckskin, and with buffalo or antelope hoofs hanging along its length — struck the end on the ground, thus beginning the rattling that accompanied the singing. The old men began to sing, while the dancers simultaneously blew their whistles, and cried "Yaa!" The old men stood up and sang, and the dancers went to them, each of them to his "grandfather," usually three or four to one old man. The old men then drilled them, showing them how to dance and how to handle their bows and their robes. It seems that the dancers stood at the opening of the lodge, somewhat on the south. After dancing to four songs, during which they whistled and at the end of each of which they cried "Yaa," they dashed off in a race around a monument that had been erected at some distance to the southeast. If one of the division of tall men returned to the lodge first and thus won the race for his side, the short men filled pipes for the tall men and presented them to them to smoke, and, of course, *vice versâ*.

After the cessation of the dancing, and when it was dark, old men cried out to the people to retire to their tents, the dancers' wives being about to go out with the "grandfathers." As the women went out, the dancers stood in the lodge in a circle, singing loudly and shouting in conclusion. The "grandfathers" went to the north of the camp-circle, where they stood in a row. Their "grand-daughters," that is to say, the dancers' wives, each carrying a pipe, followed them, and stood behind them. They addressed their "grandfathers," praying them to take the pipe and smoke it. After much persuasion, the old man accepted the pipe. Then the woman prayed to him again, asking him to pray in her behalf, that she might be

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

side of the bundle, it is said. Except at such ceremonies as this, only the keeper could touch the pipe.

Pipes were sometimes given to other tribes, and were sometimes received from them. Sometimes they were carried by war-parties. One of the three pipes still in existence is said to have been given by the Cheyenne to the Crow, and by the latter to the Gros Ventre, when peace was made between the two tribes. The stem is ornamented with feathers, weasel-skins, and at the end with a bunch of eagle-feathers. The sacred pipes were kept wrapped in many pieces of skin or cloth, and hung up in the tent. In good weather they were hung on a stand of three or four sticks, behind the tent. The keepers of the sacred pipes observed stringent rules. They could not eat of the head or back of any animal, nor of any part of the white-tailed deer, nor any eggs. They were not allowed to bathe, or to paint (except red), or to take the ashes out of the tent. They had to smoke in certain ways. They did not eat dogs, or allow them in the tent; nor did they let dogs touch them, or walk over their legs, or walk before them, while they were smoking. The keepers of the sacred pipes wore their hair uncut and uncombed. They could not cut it until they had given the pipe to another keeper. The hair was worn tied in a bunch just above the forehead. Fig. 42 shows such a bunch of matted hair, said to have been that of the grandfather of the father of the man who was the oldest in the tribe in 1901. This former keeper of the pipe became so old that he lost most of his hair, and the bunch shown was cut off by him before it should drop off. To this hair the later owner of the pipe, his present great-grandson, tied the first of his own teeth to fall out from old age: they are contained in a small cloth sack.

Fig. 42 (50 1902). Matted Hair. Length, 41 cm.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

was like the flat rocks on which women pound berries, perfectly round, rough above, and perfectly smooth on the under side. Many men lifting together could not move it; but when offerings were made to it, and it was asked to rise, one man was able to lift it easily. Several people tried to sleep near it in order to dream about it, but none of them ever staid the whole night through. They would dream that it was a large metal kettle coming toward them on legs, and filled with boiling water, whereupon they jumped up and fled. 773 778 823 [787]

West of the present Gros Ventre Reservation there was, until the whites took it away, a stone shaped like a person, except that it lacked the face. This was once a Snake Indian. A war-party saw him sitting on a hill, and pursued him into a flat. They had nearly caught him when he turned to stone and has been there ever since. Once, as a camp went by and the people made offerings of calico and other property, a man said, "Why do you do that?" Taking a club, he knocked off the head of the figure. The man died the same summer.

A complete buffalo of stone, with hump, horns, ribs, and other parts, half of it underground, has been seen by the Gros Ventre, and many offerings and prayers have been made to it. 823 778

To the north of the Gros Ventre Reservation is a lake shaped like a buffalo, with legs and all parts complete. The tail runs out into a river, the hoofs are patches of brush, and the horns are streaks of timber of the shape of horns.

Lizards are thought to bite persons and then to hang fast to the wound, sucking the flesh into themselves. It is said that a certain man was bitten and the lizard could not be pulled off. The man's flesh had to be cut off around the lizard's mouth. 825

There is believed to be a kind of bear with one white fore-leg, which is fiercer than the grizzly. The jack-rabbit is called "white rabbit;" and the cottontail, "left-hand rabbit." The prairie-dog is called "large gopher" (?); and the mink, "prairie-dog weasel." The bat's bite is thought to be exceedingly poisonous.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

281 successfully hunted than antelope. While the finest clothing was
291 made from deer, elk was preferred for some purposes such as
[825] moccasins and warm shirts and coats—it being more durable but not equally as flexible.

For winter wear, caps and mittens of beaver or otter were made
291 for men and boys. Beaver skin served as a breech clout for the men in winter, although antelope was preferred for this purpose the rest of the year, unless cloth were available, since the latter was more comfortable than hide which chafed the skin so badly.

Ordinarily unornamented clothing was worn, but for special
292 events, particularly when the whole tribe was together, everyone
301 dressed in his best. Being well-dressed was as important to the
237 Gros Ventres as being well-mounted on ceremonial and social occasions. The effect on both the eye and the ear was taken into account in the ornamentation. Dyed porcupine quill embroidery lent color, and mica—first heated, then powdered and rubbed over a robe—glistened beautifully. Polished deer-hoofs as edging for a robe or dangling from leggings or garters "made such a nice sound when one walked." This feeling both for color and sound was carried over when material from the whites was at hand, beadwork tending to supplant the quill embroidery and scraps of bright colored cloth and of metal serving as "dangles." [18]

Elk teeth, however, were said to be "the greatest decoration of the Gros Ventres." They were used principally for girls' and women's dresses. Not so long ago there was a man at Hays who wore a vest trimmed with elk teeth, and people would say to him: "You crazy thing, only women have that kind of decoration!" But he was unconventional and would retort: "Well, I dance, too, and I want to look nice." Everyone would laugh, but he persisted
[727] in wearing that vest. Human hair as fringe and on moccasins was proudly worn by men who had taken scalps.

292 Mink, otter, weasel, muskrat and kit-fox were all used as trim-
237 mings, and occasionally the whole pelt of mink, otter or muskrat was made into a bag, or tobacco pouch, or other small container. Feathers, especially eagle feathers, were highly prized, and red

[18] For the detailed comparative analysis of Decorative Art of the Gros Ventres and other plains tribes, see Kroeber, 1908, pp. 151–79.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the contrary, held to be holy and given special care.[8] They mentioned nevertheless that women of child-bearing age refrained from eating the two strips of flesh along the anterior of the backbone of buffalo lest twins result. 845 [262]

Coming Daylight said that she had heard of cases in the old days where twins would be separated,—one kept by the parents and the other adopted by someone else. Personally, however, she did not approve of this policy and when her daughter-in-law gave birth to twins she told her: "Be proud of them. Dress them alike and they will grow up well. Don't think more of one than of the other." She gave the same advice to her granddaughter when she in turn bore twins. The advice was not heeded in this instance and both the granddaughter and her husband adored one and neglected the other so that Coming Daylight herself took the neglected one. These twins were not quite a year old when the one loved by its parents died.

A middle-aged woman said that she had always heard regarding twins that they should be treated just alike and that the mother should always take both wherever she went and never leave one behind. Her own experience was a sad one. When her twins were about seven months old, one of them got sick and she had to take it to the hospital. The people at Hays told her: "You shouldn't leave one twin here." She, however, wanted to stay with the sick one, but the doctors sent her home. The twin left in the hospital died and people told her: "You shouldn't have left one there without the other."

Pregnancy and Childbirth

The only indication from these two oldest women informants of belief in prenatal impression was the remark of Coming Daylight when telling the story of a young man who opened the belly of a deer he had killed and found therein two young, each of which had "human faces." She said: "So they concluded that even animals get afraid and the young are marked." A younger woman mentioned that she had heard that if a pregnant woman looks at some- 843 825 843

[8] Kroeber, 1908, p. 182, gives the special names by which twins were called.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

"They usually cut the cord long, say four to six inches, because they were afraid the infant would bleed to death if they cut it short. You kind of drain it and get it cleaned out and tie it once. Apply a powdered root and then put a band around the body. It usually takes four days before it drops off." Since the cord is part of the body and they wanted to keep it close to its owner, when the cord came off, they placed it in a small fancy bag filled with sweetgrass or tobacco and pinned the bag to the clothing right at the back of the neck. Singer said that she had heard that boys used to wear this little bag tied to the wrist rather than at the back of the neck as girls did. Good care was taken of the bag until adulthood. The bag was usually in the shape of a turtle, with a little head. Although Coming Daylight had made two such bags, she didn't know why they used this shape except that it had been done thus for generations.[5] Mary's grandmother, however, made a little container for Mary's own son and it was in the shape of a snake with a head. Mary added: "And the Gros Ventres don't like snakes either. But my grandmother made that one in the shape of a snake on account of a dream she had."

The afterbirth was disposed of just as soon as possible, preferably by having someone place it good and high in the branches of a tree.[6] The person who disposed of the afterbirth was not supposed to let anyone see him do so, although the informants did not know the reason for the secrecy. It is more customary at present to burn the afterbirth as the whites do, but Coming Daylight remarked that she had done that only once,—on the occasion when she was caught out in the open all alone and had to deliver herself.

A mother rested quite a while after her child was born because it was said that working would make her sweat and that would hurt her milk. The child of a woman who worked a great deal immediately after its birth would not grow up to be so healthy as the child of one who took it easy. In the opinion of Coming Daylight and of Singer a woman should sit up only after four days and get up and be walking around in about ten days. Coming Daylight her-

[5] For discussion of these navel amulets and illustrations thereof, see Kroeber, 1908, pp. 166–67, and plate IX.

[6] "If it were left lying to be handled, the child would be afflicted with sores." Kroeber, 1908, p. 181.

846 self had to get up sooner and help with cooking because she was an only wife, except for the short time during her first marriage when her sister was co-wife. The midwife usually stayed and looked after the infant for a few days, at least until the cord came off.

Coming Daylight always put on a belt of rawhide about a foot wide immediately after delivery and laced it up tighter each day. She said the Gros Ventre women were strict about this practice as it "put the figure back into place."

If a woman were able to rest quietly after childbirth the flow should stop in about two weeks. If she worked, it was longer, perhaps a month. At any rate, after the flow stopped, a woman wrapped a blanket around herself and someone then held under the blanket a pan of live coals on which medicine had been sprinkled. Woman claimed they felt much better after this "fumigation." There was also another medicine which Coming Daylight described as "good to clean you out after childbirth." This was made from a powdered root, a little pinch of which was put in a couple of quarts of water and turned the water about the color of tea. There was no bitter taste and the patient drank it like tea and instead of water.

[757]

[834] It was said that Gros Ventre men did not resume marital relations until at least a month after the baby was born,—often they deferred the resumption of relations even longer.

883 There was medicine given to make the mother's milk come. It was made from the same root as that used in the Crazy Dance. The infant was not put to the breast immediately, as someone else drew out the "first milk" (colostrum) and spit it out. "After that, the milk would be the right blue color. Should a woman be all alone when her child was born, she might have puppies draw out that 'first milk.'" Cora believes it is absolutely necessary to follow this rule. When her own daughter, for example, delivered her firstborn, an old woman offered to draw off this "first milk," but the daughter refused—so now she can give milk only from one breast and has to supplement her infant's feeding with milk from a bottle. No water or oil was given the infant before its first nursing. They started the baby to nurse after the colostrum had been drawn off "because there is something in the mother's milk that cleans the baby out."

[278]

[825]

863 might even 'fuss' a little with him, saying something like: 'Look at you! I thought I told you to urinate. I'm trying to make you do it at the right time, and you want to hold back!' But we were not harsh with infants because we knew they have to learn. Anyway, if you misjudged the time, all you had to do was to throw out the powdered chips and put in fresh ones. The old way was much better. These diaper-babies around here now are much more trouble."

[755] If a child developed enuresis, a tiny bit of the tail of a fox or of a beaver tied to his belt, or a piece of badger skin for him to sit on, was thought to guarantee a cure.

854 To help the child who had trouble teething, it was considered wise to kill a mouse, skin it, take the back thigh and, after cooking [825 it well, rub on the gums. It is said by Coming Daylight that 757] the Crow used fish for this purpose. Some children have such a difficult time that their gums are very sore and their tongues even swell. Coming Daylight's grandmother and others knew how to [757] remedy that condition. The doctor, using a sharp-pointed bone, would lance the gums here and there where the teeth were coming, after allowing the gums to bleed, they would rub some powdered [751] root on the gums. As a preventive, old folks said to catch tiny baby mice and, after roasting them on the coals, feed them to the child. Coming Daylight, for instance, did that for her children, and none of them had any trouble with teething.

856 They would let babies crawl when they showed the inclination to do so, but the old women were sure that they always watched their babies more closely than mothers do today. They used to encourage them to walk by holding them up and helping them. It has been Coming Daylight's experience that boys learn to walk more quickly than girls. It may be, however, that more attention was given to boys.

198 The only expression the old women, or the younger ones for 856 that matter, could think of that could be considered "baby talk" was that babies, when very small and just beginning to talk, say: "I?" (prolonged and with strong glottal stop) if they do not like something or do not wish to take what is offered. This, together with *na'a* 'mother' and *ni'a* 'father,'[9]—which babies say properly

[9] These are vocative forms rather than descriptive forms.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

has been given up, the Gros Ventres are so sunburned that their skin looks almost "black." Singer showed a small bag of red paint which she still had. She kept a piece of beaver castor in the bag so the paint would be sweet-smelling. 302 [237]

In the old days the Gros Ventres were early risers. Everyone got up while it was still dark, perhaps about three o'clock in summer and before seven in winter. It didn't make any difference whether a child might otherwise be favored, the rule was iron-clad that all must rise early and that no one should lie abed. This applied to all—old people as well as to children. 512

One method of making sure that children would be strong was to take a beaver tail and slap the child on the hand and on the back while saying: "You will be good and strong." Mary, for instance, has seen her mother do this to all her grandchildren, hitting them so hard they almost cried. The beaver is considered a very strong animal since he cuts down big trees and drags them about. 856 825

Naming and Ear-piercing

Every individaul received a name shortly after birth. Many Gros Ventres, however, were, and are, known by names other than the original one. Names were changed for particular reasons, and in addition nicknames were frequently employed. Sometimes the first name was bestowed with considerable formality, but naming could be carried out in a variety of ways,[10] as the following examples show. 551 553

"Shortly after Coming Daylight was born, her father sent for his sister's husband and told him: 'Now I invited you to name your niece. I am giving you such-and-such kind of horse' (a bay, or a pinto, or whatnot). There was a big feast on this occasion and the lodge was full of people. The namer sat in the place of honor at the back of the lodge. He held the infant in his arms, told a war deed and said: 'Now I name her 'Taken A Prisoner.' Then he said a long prayer, starting with the usual formula, and wishing the infant a long life. He then handed the infant to the person to his left saying: 'Take Taken A Prisoner'; and so the infant was passed all around the lodge, each repeating the same to 852

[10] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, p. 182.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

776 second element in the word is the name of the culture hero and trickster, who in the early mythical period taught the Gros Ventres how to pray to the Supreme Being, and how to make a living. The present-day Gros Ventres can give no clue to the etymological meaning of the word ni:hohat, nor can the writer analyze it. The word is also used for spider. The spider is in a certain sense sacred and, if it is killed, rain comes. The spider, the Gros Ventres say, can in spite of its small size do wonderful things with its web, can make it stay anywhere, can climb up and down it, and, in general, is usually master of the situation. The name of the trickster Ni:hohat is ordinarily translated as "white man" by English-speaking Gros Ventres and the translation is derived from a folktale concerning an escapade of Ni:hohat in which he had his hair cut off.[2] Thus it was that when the Gros Ventres first saw the white man with his hair cut short, in contrast to the Gros Ventres' long hair, they called him by the name of the trickster. Consequently, the name for the Supreme Being Ixteiboni:hohat is often rendered in English as "The One Above the White Man" or, in abbreviated form, "The One Above."

[778 821 625]

The second name for the Supreme Being is Behä:tixtč. The meaning, "the master, boss, head, leader of all" is quite clear (be:-, be:hi, "all"; änä:tixtč, "he is master, boss, head, of group or organization).[3]

The third name Ni:nänä'ätč, is said to be an older form which was still in use in the lifetime of The Boy and Thick, and it was felt that it had the meaning of "study, think, meditate," and that the whole might signify "the being who has control over everything by thought or will,"—a concept which, it may be added, would be quite in keeping with the Gros Ventre idea of the power of sheer thought or thought-wish by human beings. But this

[2] Kroeber, 1907, pp. 72-73, gives a version of this episode which is substantially the same as the one obtained by me.

[782] [3] In 1948 The Boy stated that the Gros Ventres addressed the Supreme Being by this term "when they wanted something big, e.g. when they prayed for a good harvest of all the things the earth produced. Thus we are saying a kind of mass prayer indicating that the Supreme Being owns everything. He made it and he owns it, and it was recognized that they depended on him." [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Supernatural power too, while gotten immediately from animals, mountains (mountain spirits), and other creatures, through fasting and sleeping out on the hills, came ultimately from the Supreme Being, as mentioned previously. A person going out on a power quest, would pray first to the Supreme Being to command or compel the lesser being to give the power being sought. Power to doctor and to achieve war success and even to acquire wealth thus in the last analysis came from the Supreme Being. So too did the (supernatural?) power inherent in earnest wishes or thought wishes.

The Supreme Being also imparted knowledge and warnings to human beings through dreams and through his messenger, the crow. The crow on account of his relationship to the Supreme Being was a sort of sacred bird.[12] To illustrate the point the Boy told the following incident in the life of his father, Lame Bull. "Lame Bull on one occasion was sitting out on a hill and no one could get him to come back to camp. So some of his family got one of Lame Bull's wives, The Boy's mother, to go out and tell Lame Bull to come home right away as the camp was moving. As Lame Bull saw her coming, a crow flew over to him and said, 'This person who is coming is going to tell you something that is not true. Don't pay any attention to her.' Then the crow flew away. When The Boy's mother came within hearing distance of Lame Bull, the latter said to her: 'Don't say what you are going to say. Turn back.' But she kept on coming and told him her message, for which she got a scolding from him."

In general the Supreme Being was, as regards his interest in human welfare, the reverse of an otiose deity. His interest was a most active one.

Equally active was his interest in man's moral and social behavior. He was pleased at such moral or social acts as respect and help to the aged and care of the orphans, and was offended by grave breaches of the moral or social order. He bestowed

[12] In 1948 The Boy explained: "The crow is not the kind you see around here now, but a raven,—a bird that is smaller and more streamlined than the crow. The crow here in the fields cry like they are wounded, but this other bird has a shrill but melodious call more like a human being." [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

776 bātč, "he (who) has gristle (tendon from back of neck of animal) nose," and "black hawk," a certain very large black-feathered hawk known also locally as "bullet hawk" (*Buteo sp.?*). Another name for Bha'a was "old man four parts of the earth." Bha'a, the thunderbird, as was appropriate, had dark or black feathers, and was a swift flier; his bill and feet were of the same material as back tendon (see Blood-Clot Story, No. 11 in Appendix).

778 776 796 In the Gros Ventre Sacrifice Lodge, or "Sun dance," Bha'a was represented near the top of the center pole as a bird, painted black, with a buffalo tail fastened to his head as a sort of plume, with a zigzag line descending from the bird almost to the ground and ending in a fork, and with a bunch of branches stuck in the fork of the center pole of the lodge to represent Bha'a's nest. Each [302] of the dancers painted all over in white had a bird representing Bha'a, painted in black with charcoal or paint on his upper center breast, with black zigzag lines ending in a fork from the bird's wings down each arm and forearm and from the bird's feet down each thigh and leg to his ankle, with a black zigzag line forked at each end across the forehead, and with a vertical red zigzag line forked at the lower end extending down from each eye. The drum-head used in the Feathered Pipe rite had a red background [534] on which the Thunderbird was represented in blue, with a yellow zigzag line on either side from the head to the wings. Bha'a entered prominently into both the Sacrifice Lodge and the Feathered Pipe rite.

776 Any large strange animal might in the olden days be called Bha'a or even be looked upon as an embodiment or theophany 825 of Bha'a.

One supposed theophany over which the present day Gros Ventres laugh heartily, is recorded on the occasion of their seeing their first mule. The story as told with verve and intense amusement by The Boy was as follows:

"The Gros Ventres used to move around a great deal. Once a mule, the first one the Gros Ventres had ever seen, got lost somehow, struck the Gros Ventres' trail, came to their camp and stopped. A Gros Ventre crier spied it and came back to camp

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

announcing 'A something has come to camp. Come and look at it.' Everybody turned out. They sized up the mule and considered that it must be a Bha'a. They said: 'He must have come here for a purpose. Let's offer him things.' So they ran back, got things to offer him, returned bringing the children, and walked up and surrounded him. They prayed to the mule and laid one offering on him. Soon he was loaded down, he just stood there. After a while he brayed, at which all the people scattered and ran away. After they came to a stop, however, they decided: 'He must be pleased. That's why he made that noise. He will grant our request. We'll leave him here and move camp.' So they moved at once. But the mule followed them. Then they became afraid and ran away from him. This happened several times. At last they succeeded in hiding from him and losing him."

Bha'a's residence or nest, as described in the story of Blood-Clot, was on the top of a high mountain, where he dwelt with his mate and their two offspring, the young thunders (bha'a:niθan; -iθan, offspring, children). In the Blood-Clot story the sign of Bha'a's return to the nest was the appearance of a dark heavy cloud toward the sunset (west); of his mate's return, a white cloud in the west, and the arrival of each was marked by a blinding flash of lightning. The Thunderbird sometimes breaks wind and leaves a very bad odor. Two instances of this were recorded,—one when lightning struck Thick's house and left such a smell.

Bha'a had jurisdiction and control over storms, thunder and lightning, but as previously stated under the paramount rule and control of the Supreme Being, for whom he served as a sort of agent or subordinate, although with a considerable degree of freedom of action.

According to The Boy: "Bha'a has control of lightning and thunder, rules it, and releases it at will. He controls it, he is a sort of general manager; some one still higher controls Bha'a. While Bha'a rules the storm, he does so by a sort of delegated power; he has not the power himself.

"Bha'a's particular job is the storm, thunder and lightning. That is all he does. The Supreme Being is the ruler and uses Bha'a to run this part of the situation and manage it. Bha'a

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

775 [539] Chief Grass in one of the eye sockets. So it was always thought that he had killed that ghost."

There was a considerable fear of these bad ghosts who "bothered" or even seriously harmed human beings. Certain other ghosts were merely "earthbound," that is, they lingered around or came back because they were fond of their belongings—clothing, footwear, and so forth—which were buried with them. Such earthbound ghosts did no harm to human beings and were not supposed to be feared.[28]

Singer, then married to Crooked Arm, told of an occasion on which she ran away from her home. She wandered around at random and happened to stop at the spot where her sister was buried, and heard a voice [presumably her sister's] saying: "Just lie quiet. They are all looking for you." She did so, apparently without fear.

One informant, Al Chandler, narrated certain experiences of his early childhood and boyhood that suggest a somewhat deviant attitude toward ghosts. When he was about four years old, his mother died, and the morning after her burial he went to the grave and lay there, falling into a profound sleep. Not long after this, when his uncle died, and the body was laid on a bed in a lodge some distance off, he went to the lodge and crept under the blanket covering the body and went to sleep. Another time, while still very young, he got lost and around dark found himself at a place where there were a number of old graves. He lay down and slept the night there. These incidents were early childhood ones, when he hardly realized the meaning of death. At a later age, during his boyhood, everybody was afraid to go along a certain bit of woodland lest the ghosts bother them. Al wanted to find out for himself. So against advice of his father, and feeling a little "spooky," one night just after midnight he went through the stretch of brush and as he did so heard a sound behind him as of someone dragging a robe over gravel. Mustering up his courage he turned around quickly and saw a big old owl dragging its feathers and scarcely able to fly. When he got back home, he told his venture, and the old man [his father] laughed and said: "Owls [825]

[28] For illustration, see Flannery, 1953, p. 203.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

sure will do that; they bother people and mock you when you talk or laugh." After that there was no ghost in that piece of brush. 775 [825]

On another occasion, Al was coming back on horseback with a group after a hand game. In a gap through which their route would take them, the others saw a yellow or blue light, like a lamp in the dark, moving this way and that. But Al could see nothing. The others went home by a roundabout way, but Al went alone through the gap, saw nothing, and met the others farther on.

Many, though not all, ghosts had the habit of whistling, and some talked in a whistling language.

Ghosts were apt to appear as owls or to hoot like owls, both in the shaking tent rite, to be described later, and on other occasions as illustrated in the following story which had been told The Boy by his father, Lame Bull.

"Lame Bull went on a war expedition. Seven Sioux were killed. Their bodies were left laying where the killing took place. A few years later Lame Bull and some comrades came near this place. As they reached it, seven owls flew from it. The owls did not fly away but just milled around the spot. They were the seven Sioux turned into owls." [825]

Children used to be told: "If you do not obey, the owls will catch you." If owls alighted on a lodge or house or hooted around very near on bush, tree or hill, this presaged the death of some one. Owls also gave warnings.[26] In these instances however we got no evidence that the owls were conceived of as ghosts. 825 775

Besides the ghosts there were other bad spirits, who "shot" people by projecting some small object into the body of a person and so causing illness.[27] This belief, we were told, was very widespread but we did not obtain many details regarding it. The following incident, narrated by Coming Daylight, may serve as illustration. 776 753

On one occasion when Coming Daylight was living where Fort Belknap now is and when her daughter was still a sack baby, the latter would not quit screaming. She would hold her head to one side and would not nurse, and they could not satisfy her with

[26] An example is given in Flannery, 1953, p. 93.
[27] Very probably connected with practice of witchcraft. [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The lodges of the other people faced toward the east-southeast, from utilitarian consideration, since the prevailing and strongest winds were from the northwest in winter and west in summer. But the door of the keeper's lodge was toward the south, an orientation determined by the ritual position of the Pipe inside the lodge, namely, in the place of honor opposite the door with the stem pointing toward the rising sun. 342 346 [361]

The interior of the keeper's lodge was arranged as follows. In the center was the family hearth. About midway between this and the north segment was the square incense hearth, with the west half of black sand and the east of red. At the north, close to the wall, was the Pipe bed and place for the Pipe tripod. The bed, oriented east and west, was made of a buffalo robe over sage brush. At each end was a willow back rest, and over each rest a robe of summer-pelage (after winter coat completely shed) buffalo skin. The tripod, of three legs, was a little over five feet high. The Pipe bundle was either laid on the bed close to the wall or else hung on the tripod, always with the stem to the rising sun. The northern part of the lodge, including the incense hearth and Pipe bed and adjacent area, in all about one-third of the interior, constituted a sort of "sanctuary." 342 346 353 778

The keeper's sleeping bed, with its back rest toward the north, was a little removed from the Pipe bed, toward the west; the co-keeper's in a corresponding position toward the east. The Pipe child commonly slept on the Pipe bed, alongside of and to the south of the Pipe bundle, with his head to the east. If however the keeper or co-keeper wanted to sleep on the Pipe bed in order to dream, the Pipe child would then give place and sleep in his father's or mother's bed as the case might be. When any of the three slept on the Pipe bed, the Pipe bundle might hang on the tripod over them or else rest on the northern edge of the bed nearest the wall. In the latter case, the tripod was folded up and leaned between the Pipe bed and the co-keeper's bed. According to Thick the sleepers had to lie flat on their backs all night. According, however, to The Boy they were forbidden to do so and had instead to lie on their sides, because the turtle was closely associated with the Flat Pipe and if a turtle gets on its back it cannot right itself. 342 346 513 [784] [825]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

besides the Pipe itself. The most important of these is a turtle shell, next in rank a "duck" pelt, and third a muskrat skin.* These represent the animals sent down by Earthmaker at the time of the great flood to dive for earth. The turtle and "duck" are more important than the muskrat as they were the only two who brought back earth. There is no beaver skin in the bundle; either it was barred or discarded, or, as The Boy put it, "the beaver must have gotten mad and started his own pipe and pipe rite." (Cf. under "Other Pipes," pp. 166-168.) 778

The turtle shell is kept enclosed in its own special case. Neither The Boy nor his father Lame Bull had ever seen this shell, which is said not to have been taken from its case and exposed since the early nineteenth century.

The "duck" is apparently, from the detailed description given us of plumage and habits, a grebe. This bird has a special sacredness in Gross Ventre thought on account of its part not only in the primeval making of dry land but also in present-day bird migration.

According to tradition, when the birds, who in the fall have gone where there is no winter, want in the spring to come back they talk the matter over and plan the flight to the north. On the migration flight the grebes, who are poor flyers, are carried on the backs of the larger birds such as the ducks, geese and cranes. The big bird is careful not to drop the little bird; if he does, he will have bad luck. If the small bird is killed by the fall, the big bird does not live long. When in migration one of the big birds breaks rank and flies around alone, the Gros Ventres know that he has lost his passenger, and it is up to him alone to find the dropped bird. Sometimes you can see a big bird hovering round the spot where he has dropped his small passenger, looking for him in order to pick him up again, and catch up with the 825

* In 1948 The Boy explained: "The muskrat and the beaver tried to bring back earth but failed. Beaver was banished from any connection with the Pipe. The keeper would not let anyone who used the beaver-castor perfume come near him or his lodge. But muskrat was taken back without ceremonial significance for no other purpose than to wipe the keeper's face, as well as faces of others, before the keeper painted them. So muskrat is still in the bundle and shares indirectly in the great Pipe ceremonies." [R.F.] [302]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

825 migrating flock. When you hear the cries of the migrating geese, if you listen closely you can hear also the calls of the little birds. The big birds are very willing to carry the little ones, as the former get "holy things" and "are taught holy [powerful] ways" by the latter in payment for the ride, for the grebe is known to be a "big shot" who has extraordinary powers. The grebe in the Flat Pipe bundle is one of these little birds that are carried by the large ones on the fall and spring migration flight. In the 778 bundle too are some feathers of the big birds. "Probably because they treat the grebe to a free ride, they bought their way into the bundle and so have a place of honor."

In the bundle, besides the turtle shell and grebe skin, are the dried pelts (not stuffed) of many other kinds of birds,—some of which The Boy cannot identify. These represent the birds who sang with joy at the first making of dry land after the flood. These bird pelts lie loose, not enclosed in a bag. In the olden times, Lame Bull told The Boy, the tobacco raised by the Pipe keeper was stored in these pelts for safe-keeping.

When the bundle is being wrapped, the Pipe enclosed and tied in its own case, is laid on these bird pelts as on a bed, with the turtle shell to the left of the Pipe "as you face the stem," and the grebe skin to the right. Turtle shell, grebe skin and bird pelts are all placed with the head toward the stem end of the Pipe, and are wrapped together with the Pipe in a special covering within the larger Pipe bundle proper.

The large bundle also contains a good-sized bag, rectangular and closed on three sides, in which are kept all or most of them in their own particular small cases or coverings, the following ritual articles: a muskrat skin representing the muskrat that dived unsuccessfully for earth at the flood, and used in the face-painting rite; paint and a painting stamp; supplies of peppermint and tobacco; rattles; the ritual moccasins of the keeper, co-keeper and Pipe child; a thunderstone;[1] the "official" shell necklace of the

[1] In the bundle there was a thunderstone encased in its own small bundle or sack. If, for instance, a person were suffering from stomach-ache, the co-keeper would reach into the Pipe bundle, without unwrapping it, take out the thunderstone, smudge it, make motions with or bite it, spit on the

[755]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

773 been told to do and put up the Drum Dance. Thus was the Drum
539 Dance introduced among the Gros Ventres into their sacred dance system."

When Lame Bull told The Boy this story, the latter asked him: "Who was it who gave this dance and these horses?" And his [825] father answered: "The killdeer." So the Drum Dance is owned by the killdeer (*Oxyechus vociferus*).

*796 The Drum Dance ranked high in dignity among the Sacred dances. Lame Bull ranked it next after the Sacrifice Dance, and first in importance in the Drum-Dog-Kitfox-Crazy group, because, he told The Boy, the Drum Dance was "most difficult and complicated to carry out," and through it "more horses had come to the Gros Ventre tribe."

[801] The Drum Dance was held only in fulfillment of a vow. The rite lasted the customary four days and nights, with a big feast each day. The Boy was uncertain whether a sweat-lodge ceremony was held during the Drum Dance.

[778] The chief sacred objects used in the Drum Dance were, so far as we could learn, the very large drum, and the fur-wrapped crooked sticks which were carried by the dancers and which to judge from the origin story were four in number and were decorated as therein described. The dancers themselves were [302] painted yellow all over their bodies, with black dots, representing hail, from the waist up.

*796 Four of the Drum Dance songs, numbers 52-55, were recorded, as sung by The Boy, who had learned them from his father, Lame
533 Bull. There were others which The Boy did not remember, nor did he know the ritual order in which they were sung.

Two of these four songs, numbers 52 and 53, are wordless, and were sung at good-time dances during the Drum Dance. Number 53 is the song that was sung by the men marching out of the dry lake-bed when the Drum Dance was first given to the starving Gros Ventre man by the killdeer. These dancing songs were lively ones, sung to fast time.

Song number 54 is difficult to translate as the meaning of two of one of the words was unknown. The Boy ventured the conjecture that the whole wording might possibly mean: "There are

l: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Doctors were paid a horse or more for their services. Sometimes several, in turn, doctored a patient, each one blaming those that had failed before. Often they laid the sickness to spirits, or to other doctors. This last occurred especially if in their sucking they extracted human finger-nails or similar objects. In such a case the doctor got his patient to sleep. The patient might then in his dream see the person that had made him sick, and on awaking would denounce him. If the sick man died, his relatives might kill the doctor whom he had named as the cause of his sickness. 756

There were not so many women doctors as men. They appear not to have gone out to the mountains with the intention of acquiring supernatural power, but to have received guardian spirits when they were away from the camp, mourning.

The jugular and femoral arteries and the aorta were called ts'niinotanoudj' ("having no ears"), because, when severed, they did not heed any remedies.

In order to save the life of a sick relative, the joint of the little finger was sometimes cut off in sacrifice to the sun.

There were some medicine-men who, having had their fingers tied, then had their knees fastened together and their hands secured behind their back. After this they were wrapped in a robe and the robe was wound about with a rope. Then such a medicine-man called his spirit. When it appeared, he was loosened instantaneously, and the robe and the rope were thrown at the man that tied him.

Fig. 30 (50 1937). Doctor's Charm. Length, 22 cm.

[778] 826 755 304 782 756

A charm used by a doctor is shown in Fig. 30. It consists of a deer-tail with beaded base, and of two black feathers and a bunch of down feathers. All parts of the object are reddened. This piece was used to brush patients. At other times during the doctoring it was worn on the medicine-man's clothing.[8] 756 778

A man unsuccessful in winning a woman's love sometimes fasted on a 787 832

8:Flannery E-5 (1940-1948)1960 NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

"My experience was by dreaming. One time before I was married—I must have been about eight years old—I was sleeping in a big lodge and a 'person' came and wakened me. He had a bag of medicines on his back. He came to me on four successive nights and laid out these medicines and told me what each was for. On the third of these nights there was a man lying there—he was just skin and bones. The 'person' who had awakened me told me: 'You could take all these medicines and you could cure people like that one lying there' [i.e., a person in the last extremity]. In my dream I would do everything he told me, manipulate my hands to draw out the sickness, and do everything. But I didn't want that power and would tell him so. Each morning too I would relate to my grandmother exactly what had happened in the night but she would try to hush me up, telling me: 'Don't say anything; don't tell anyone. You will be a great medicine woman.' But I didn't want that power. I didn't like it because when medicine people suck on the weak part of the sick person they have to swallow what they extract. I had decided I would rather be quiet and not do anything like that, or sacrifice my flesh, or things of that kind. Perhaps if it had come later I might have taken that power and become great."

Nevertheless when later in life she had other dreams indicating supernatural power, she likewise refused. She explained in regard to one of these experiences, for instance: "The one who awakened me this time had told me to face the rising sun and was showing me how to make a smudge from the moss that grows close on logs; but I told him. 'No. I would rather not have it.' Those who have power die too soon."

Incidentally, still in connection with curing, bleeding was an operation which was performed purely as a natural remedy for a person who felt dizzy or sluggish. Anyone could do it—no supernatural validation was needed. Other women described quite casually how it was done and discussed the various times they had actually performed the operation. Coming Daylight, however, insisted that while there was really nothing to such an operation, she could never bring herself to perform it, nor would she allow anyone else to bleed her; she could not stand the sight of blood.

The aversion to the sight of blood and to self-mutilation was evidently deep-seated and showed itself in a marked manner early in her life. On one occasion a close relative was very ill. In such a situation it was expected that every member of the family would rally around and do whatever he could toward the recovery. Among the things that fell within the scope of activity for female relatives was that of vowing to sacrifice something valuable, including perhaps the blood from one's arm or a finger-joint, if the person recovered. At this particular time, Coming Daylight was a young child, and her grandmother decided that it would be appropriate for the little girl to offer that her finger-tip be removed if the relative regained his health. When it was suggested to her, Coming Daylight refused, even though her grandmother took after her with a stick. She actually ran away and wandered alone, until two nights later the relative died and an uncle finally found her.

On another occasion in her early youth, too, she defied a convention connected with kinship by refusing to join in mourning for an uncle who had been killed in revenge for having instigated the murder of his brother's wife. When her grandmother upbraided Coming Daylight for not expressing grief in the traditional manner, the latter defied her by saying: "I am not going to cry for that man. I don't know why you are crying for him. I have worked for that woman and she has fed me, and has even given me meat to bring home to you. I heard

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

778 Ventres, not many, had power. Males would start questing when
787 young, but older men would also go out to seek power. After a man got to be really old, he no longer tried." Charles Buckman had heard old men say that they had fasted and prayed (on the hills) over and over again but that in spite of the sufferings they thus endured "they never had even a dream," and, in another chat, he remarked that "few fasted and prayed."

[184] It seems, therefore, that many men did not go out on hills to seek power (women never did so), and that relatively few even of those who did go were successful. At least, very few were successful in acquiring really significant or great power. On the other hand, many, the majority perhaps of both men and women, had minor power or powers of one kind or another, gotten initially otherwise than by quest or by transfer. Thus for example, Coming Daylight, who had repeatedly refused curing powers offered her in dreams and who insisted she was in no sense a medicine woman or "holy," this is, power-possessing, woman, had certain herbal curatives, for family use, given her by her maternal grandmother and by her mother's sister, Good Singer, a noted medicine woman of earlier days. Or, to use just one other example, many women and men had bought love medicine from other men or women. These minor powers, of many different kinds not always distinguishable from non-magical knowledge and ability, were apparently very common,—"the usual thing," as The Boy expressed it above, "for grown-ups, men and women."

The Power Quest

787 The favorite time of the year for going out to seek war, wealth
● 827 and doctor power was spring. In The Boy's words: "It was known to be easier to get doctor power in spring. Everybody used to say that the young bear cubs used to wash their feet with the first rain of the spring. Bears were easy to get power from in spring. They were eager to give their power at this season. All nature is alive in spring. Grass, trees and leaves wake up. Hibernating animals used to sing before coming out of their winter dens. Bears come out of their hibernating dens after the first rain of spring. The body of even a human being is sort of stationary in winter

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

time. All we can do in winter time is to look after our bodies. But in spring the body feels good, and when we look around we see the grass and leaves and animals appearing. There is a revolutionary change. They get power at that time. They take advantage of the newness of all nature. Everything is in blossom. Most animals then have their young. It is the most 'affectionate' season of the year. Nature smiles on all living creatures. Food and all that man uses in his life are easier to get then. Doctoring power was gotten more easily then than at other time—most who went out in spring did so principally and most frequently to seek war power, so some being or animal or something would give them power to be great warriors; or to acquire wealth in horses and not to be poor, or to get things easily without much effort. Some however went out chiefly to get doctoring power." While however spring was the favorite season for the power quest, it was not the only one. 787 827

Women never went out on the hills to seek power. This was done only by males. The latter would ordinarily begin to do so around the age of seventeen or eighteen years, or before twenty-one, just before reaching full manhood, most of them to get power to be great warriors. Young boys did not go out on the mountains. Only one case of a young boy going out to seek power was recalled by The Boy and Thick. He was about twelve or fourteen years old. He did not go far out, but did his crying a little way from camp and would return every night and sleep outside the tent where he and his people lived. Another such exceptional case was that of Bull Lodge, Carter Snake's father, who started his quest sleeping out in the mountains when he was only about twelve years old. 787

The place for those to go who sought war, wealth, or doctor power was the top of buttes, hills or mountains, some distance from camp. Certain of these elevated spots seem to have been preferred localities. 787 823

McCann Butte, the first butte of the Bear Paws, was specifically mentioned by informants as having been frequented by Stiff-arm, by Bear Nose, and earlier by Coming Daylight's grandmother's brother, the first Crow Bull, in their quest. Bull Lodge, Carter Snake's father, got doctoring power on Baldy Butte, the

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Occidental culture, what some individuals conceive and practice as "religious" is not infrequently conceived and practiced by others as "magical." 782 789

Apart however from all such questions and qualifications, by far the greater proportion of the miscellaneous private rites and observances, to the detailed description of which we now turn, are exclusively or predominantly "religious" rather than "magical." We shall take up in order: wish (or wish-thought), prayer, sacrifice, vows, oaths, dreams and visions, omens, divination, taboos. In general, under the first half dozen captions we shall be dealing more with "religious" phenomena, in the remainder more with "magical" ones, but there are certain overlaps and combinations of the two which will be apparent as we go along.

Wish and Thought: Blessing and Curse

That the Gros Ventres believed in the efficacy, more or less "supernatural," of certain wishes and thoughts about others, of benevolent and malevolent thinking, of—in this sense—blessings and curses, is clear. Exactly how the good or evil wish or thought wrought its effects is not too clear from our field data. 828

The Gros Ventres in general attach great significance to thought and wish. This theme recurs over and over again in their culture. Here are some illustrations. One of the names of the Supreme Being apparently meant: He who rules all by the power of thought. Some medicine men had special power to harm and kill by sheer wish. The Boy, in discussing the question, "Who among the beings, apart from the Supreme Being, known to the Gros Ventres was the most powerful?" finally narrowed his choice down to two, a certain boy and his sister as the most powerful of all. "The boy had power to do things with his eyes. He would only look and the thing happened as he wished, but that was only in combination with his sister. She would do the thinking and then he would do the looking," and the thing would happen, especially as a result of the girl's thinking.[1] The Boy thought long and intensively

[1] See Kroeber, 1907, No. 26, The Deserted Children, especially pp. 104-05. This may be the myth to which The Boy referred. Unfortunately we did not get a complete version from him.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

828 through the winter what to put in the letter (quoted infra, pp. 380-381) sent in the spring of 1943 to Cooper that would do something big toward restoring the latter to health. "'I think,'" remarked Thomas Main, "is commonly used by the Gros Ventres in speaking. When I am interpreting, a man will often say to me: 'Tell them this is what I *think* of him (or it).' There is an emphasis on thinking and on the power of thought."

We come now to the more specific data on good and bad wishing and thinking.

754 In 1939 while we were chatting about approbrious and insulting terms, such as tsë:k (you ghost), in common use, The Boy dis-
828 tinguished these from malevolent thinking or wishing or cursing proper. "As a curse [proper] a person might say to another: 'You are not going to live long.' If a thing were serious enough, almost anyone might worry another with such cursing." On another occasion, the same summer, while speaking of the kinds of advice given children by their father, The Boy quoted his father, Lame Bull, as having said: "If a man were offended by his son and put a curse on his son, the curse would remain on the child."

828 Between our 1939 and 1940 visits to the Gros Ventres, The Boy had suffered a severe stroke (facial paralysis). At our first talk
[123] with him in 1940, Cooper expressed to him the very sincere wish that he would get well and live long. The Boy was visibly affected by this expression and spoke at some length as follows:

[626] "If a man does something of which the people disapprove very much, their *thought* is against him. They *think* badly of him. Against this mass thinking his own thinking cannot stand. Two people may have a battle of thinking. The outcome will depend on how each is developed in thinking, on their respective powers of thought. If all the people think badly of a man he becomes a sort of outcast.

"If someone has had some terrible misfortune and is beyond human aid and this becomes known, people will say: 'That is his sentence from above. Someone above thought that out. That is why he is in such desperate straits.' This would be something supernatural, something beyond the human.

"When you said you wished and thought I would live many years

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

I was glad. Now your wish and thought are added to my own. 828
The human being can think and reason because somebody supernatural has endowed him with the right [ability] to think. The wishing itself helps."

A few minutes later, after he had told a recent dream he had had, he voluntarily returned to the wish topic. "When a little while ago you wished that I would get well and live long, I believe that at that moment in which you wished this the Supreme Being was listening to you and saw your thought and knew all about it. In my opinion besides your thinking that way as just a human being, your so thinking calls for some action from above.

"Take another example. Suppose I did something good to an old man, and the old man valued and appreciated it. I would not know he was pleased until he said: 'You have made my heart glad. I appreciate what you have done for me. Stand in front of me. I am going to ask in your behalf from the power above that allowed me to live this long. I am asking with my words, my prayer, my thought, my wish, for all I am worth. And all this wish has to be transferred to you."

In 1945 Thomas Main after a long and serious discussion with 626
The Boy and Thick on this matter of mass thinking and public 754
opinion, summarized the situation as follows: 828

"The Indian people, at least the Gros Ventres, thought the psychological effect of public opinion is so great and intense on the one on whom it was trained that it shortened his life . . and made him a nobody. If he had a long, long life it was certainly a miserable one. It was definitely known by the Gros Ventres that they actually thought people to death. Even today public opinion is difficult to cope with. The Boy says that if public opinion held anyone in high esteem, this would have the opposite effect and would help the person to climb the heights he wanted to attain. One who was not held in high esteem by public opinion never got anywhere in any endeavor." We may comment in passing that while there is question here of the ordinary operation of public opinion, mass thinking also seems to enter in: "They actually thought people to death."

In the following account by Charles Buckman the wish appears

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

828 pretty clearly to be operative on its own although along with the
[754 "natural" morale-building effect of cheering words.
626]

"There is an old Gros Ventre saying that if a man is ailing and some relative or friend of his comes in and says pleasant things to him or tells him he is going to get well, such a talk helps him. When someone gives the sick person a good talk and sincerely wishes he will get well, then the patient will do his best and get well. If you say unpleasant things to a sick man you will help to kill him. Don't hurt a sick man's feelings. The wish in the case is looked upon as something like a prayer. It has to be really meant. When a person talks that way to you when you are sick, [782] the Supreme Being will look down upon you and help you to get well. If a person is visiting a sick Indian, he will say good things to you, even though he knows you are going to die. A white doctor might say: 'There is not much hope.'

"When 32 years ago I was thought to be dying of appendicitis and had been given up by the doctors, old fellows came in and talked hopefully to me and put new life in me.

"In 1918, when I was ill with the flu, I overheard the doctor say: 'It is only a question of a half-hour. You better get a coffin for him.' Then another fellow, an Indian, came in and said to me: 'Well, what did the doctor tell you?' I said: 'Nothing.' He then said: 'He told that fellow over there that you are going to die. But he is not the governor of death. You are not going to die. You are going to live. You want to live for these children of yours. You are going to get well, and for the sake of these children. And think of the One Above [Supreme Being]. He's going to keep you. That's all I want to say to you. I wish you will be up in a few days.' And he walked out. It took me two years to recover fully."

In one of the songs, No. 67, sung in the Law Enforcers' Dance, the words, "The lead bull, comes in this direction," were explained [782] to us by The Boy as being a "half prayer." The singer was "wishing as hard as he could, so there would be plenty of game, especially buffalo, so the people would not have to go far to hunt."

525 The Gros Ventre, The Boy stated in 1939, "did not pray for
828 success in gambling," but just before a wheel game started, the player would take the wheel in his hand and hold one of the

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

arrows to some part of the wheel and say something silently, "regarding for example, a horse he had captured in a raid: He had to make sure that what he so said was not a lie, all this 'was not a prayer,' but it brought good fortune in the game." 828 525

In a big gambling contest, The Boy told us in 1940, between two opponents in the wheel game, one of them might take up the wheel and his arrow and "think of a war-deed" he had done. "He would use that as a sort of prayer for better luck in the game and would then win. . . . He here used the supernatural. He used words in his mind. He did not talk out loud. . . . He was sort of taking an oath indirectly. In an indirect way he would think: 'I am not telling a lie [about this war-deed]. The powers know I am not telling a lie.' He actually did the deed, otherwise he could not hope to have better luck in the game. It was a sort of indirect prayer. If he were really praying, he would do differently. He was not actually asking any being for anything. He was not appealing to or asking any one particular being, any single being or animal, but was just thinking of everything supernatural."

The Boy further explained in 1945: "The gamblers 'prayed' over the wheel silently. But they were not exactly praying. They were appealing against fate. They were wishing for good fortune and good luck in the game, and they were debating [sic] that thought by thinking of a particular time, when for instance, they brought back a good-looking horse from a war raid. . . . They made that wish silently. . . . They did not swear or take an oath or hold up a pipe. . . . The onlookers would wonder which one of his great deeds the gambler was going to hit his opponent with . . . [later in the game] he could tell what [the war-deed] he had been concentrating on. . . . He had to tell the truth. . . . So practically he had nearly taken an oath."

When a new name was solemnly conferred on a person, the namer while brushing the person with sage would pray for the person after saying to him: "I am going to pray for you. And you yourself at the same time pray and wish for good things." 828 553

So much for the raw field data. What do they mean? Quite clearly, wishing and thinking under such conditions as indicated, while at times associated with and blending into prayer, into mere 828

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

●828 morale-building or morale-destroying remarks, and into public opinion operating on a purely secular or social level, were conceived of as distinct from these, as having a certain efficacy of their own. Quite clearly, too, such wishing and thinking could be either "good" or "bad," beneficent or maleficent, and mass-wishing or mass-thinking by many or all the people had a particularly powerful effect on the beneficiary or victim. Further, it seems reasonably clear that the more sincere and more fervent the wish, the more it came from the heart, the longer and more intensely it had been thought over and pondered and concentrated upon, the more efficacious it was.

Prayer

782 Prayer is here understood as the expression of position, gratitude, homage, or atonement to suprahuman beings. The expression may be made by word of by act or by both together; if by word, it may be vocal or purely mental. Petitions may be direct or indirect, in the latter case being expressed in an indicative rather than in an imperative form. In all cases the response on the part of the superhuman being or beings addressed is conceived as voluntary, not coerced. Prayer, unlike magic in the sense we have used the latter term, does not have automatic efficacy of its own, and does not force the superhuman being to act as the petitioner desires.

Understood in this broad sense, prayer, by word or act, vocal or mental, direct or indirect, enters into and in fact is the core of all the "religious" as distinct from the "magical" (and "social"), rites described in the preceding chapters and to be described in this present one. For instance, the wish, reported in the immediately preceding pages, may be looked upon as an indirect vocal or mental prayer; sacrifice, to be dealt with presently, as prayer by act, in this case by gift.

Praying had none of the drawbacks of power-seeking or power-possessing. It was urged unreservedly on and practiced by everyone. Its efficacy was universally believed in; at least we recorded no instance or hint of skepticism in the hundreds of references to it made by our informants.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

that the wife of a maternal uncle may likewise claim his nephew as "son-in-law."[8]

Brothers-in-law and Sisters-in-law

The mutual regard between brother and sister is said to have been reflected not only through the carrying out of the obligations of the avunculate and amitate in the spirit of "showing how much brothers and sisters thought of each other." It could also be seen in the type of behavior expected between brothers-in-law on the one hand, and sisters-in-law on the other. Brothers-in-law were generous to each other and could joke lightly with each other, but nothing even remotely connected with sex could be so much as mentioned in each other's presence. A man was circumspect in regard to his sister's husband out of respect for his sister, and to his wife's brother because the latter, out of respect for his own sister, had similar obligations toward him. Sisters-in-law behaved toward each other in like fashion. These attitudes were extended to include wife's brother's wife as "sister," rather than "sister-in-law," and husband's sister's husband as "brother."

Unmarried brothers of a man and wife likewise regarded themselves as brothers-in-law. A case which well illustrates the attitudes between them is the following as told by The Boy. "My older brother was married to Thick's older sister and we two young unmarried brothers-in-law experienced a most embarrassing situation. One of us was visiting a woman at night and the other came to the same woman, not realizing in the dark that his brother-in-law was already there. We recognized each other's voices, however, and the one who arrived last beat a hasty retreat. The matter has never, even to this day, been discussed nor so much as indirectly alluded to between us, and the embarrassment over this event led us to avoid each other for a considerable time thereafter. Eventually our relationship was deepened inasmuch as Thick married my sister. Even though my sister should die, Thick and I would continue to be brothers-in-law on the same plane."

[8] Kroeber, 1902, p. 10, calls attention to the identity of terms for "niece" and "daughter-in-law." Apparently a woman used the term "son-in-law" for her niece's husband or for her husband's nephew only if presents were given.

603 versa. Grandparents, for instance, can tell folk-tales and stories, the subject-matter and details of which no parents would mention in the hearing of their children." A woman would think nothing of teasing her grandmother about men. The following is typical of the milder sort of joking which is customary, but which would be considered highly improper toward parents. "Coming Daylight's granddaughter came into her house to borrow a knife. The old woman told her: 'Don't lose that knife. I have had it for a long time and I love that knife.' Whereupon the granddaughter replied: 'Yes, you love that knife just like you love your sweethearts!' and the several women present had a good laugh over this joke." Again, Coming Daylight herself told of an old man who was grandfather to her maternal uncle and thus also her "grandfather." She said: "One day when I was still a young woman, this old man asked me why I didn't come to him to obtain medicine power from him. I replied: 'Oh, I wouldn't come to you [831] because I know that you are one of those medicine men who includes sexual intercourse as payment, and if I came to you, you would try to have me too!' Of course I could never have said that to anyone in my parents' generation."

Grandparents are said to have been indulgent toward their [868] grandchildren. They might occasionally give advice, and indeed it was expected that a grandmother would train her granddaughter not only in skills and techniques, but also prepare her for what to expect on the physical side of marriage, warn her not to arouse her husband's jealousy, etc. When in trouble, however, a grandchild could discuss any matter with his grandparents. They would give counsel, but never scold. A man would usually not count on material aid from his grandparents, but, on the other hand, he was not expected to contribute to their support to any greater degree [431] than he would to that of any old persons were they in need—namely, by giving an occasional present of food or clothing.

Siblings of the Same Sex

593 The relationship between brothers on the one hand and between sisters on the other was a more or less casual one. Family loyalty and ordinary generosity were expected, but formality was lacking. "A girl and her sisters could, of course, laugh and joke and tease

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

about sweethearts or any other topic they wish, always providing that there is no other person present whom they must 'respect,' just as they can laugh and joke with women who are not related to them at all." Women who are on good terms tease and joke with each other a good deal. Coming Daylight and Singer for instance made remarks relating to sex whenever opportunity afforded. As an example, when one of them was telling of her marital experiences she said: "I was willing enough to get married, but I didn't like that particular old man to whom they gave me. I wrapped myself up in a separate blanket and wouldn't let him get near me." Whereupon the other old woman remarked: "I wish I had been there, I would have held you down!"—and this was considered a great joke. Again, while talking about modesty, or rather the lack of it among Crow women, Singer said: "That was in the old days and Gros Ventre women were very careful. These Gros Ventre girls at the present time—I don't think they even wear breech-cloths!" And Coming Daylight retorted: "If you were young now, you wouldn't wear one either!" In this vein then the two old grandmothers teased the present author as their granddaughter, saying to her: "We thought you had a husband. Why didn't you bring him with you to see us? Is it because you are afraid that we would take him away from you?"

Brothers can discuss any matters they choose, love-affairs included, but they usually do not josh and tease each other in public as do brothers-in-law, nor is the spirit of rivalry between them exhibited as it was with their enemy-friends.

Older brothers and sisters assumed a protective attitude toward younger siblings of like sex, and when in a position to do so would sometimes exhibit extreme generosity, although in this regard there was not the same sense of obligation which characterized the relationship with some other relatives. "It was considered unusual, for example, that Horse Capture, who had been urging his younger brother to be more sociable, gave away in his honor a horse and buggy on the occasion when the brother finally decided to join in the Grass Dance. But it was in line with the ordinary way of doing things that Horse Capture, who had been highly favored by his maternal uncle, privately gave to this young brother horses, as a start in life, when the maternal uncle failed to do

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 These were fastened to the center pole "at the top," so that it was "full of goods that they offered." The offerings were made by "those who made the dance." Such an offering was made, for instance, by the woman above-mentioned who joined the dance for the recovery of her wounded brother. As at the Sacrifice Dance, too, when the Women's Dance was over and camp was moved, the lodge, center pole and attached offerings were all left just standing there.

*796 302 The dancers, the two attendants and the "calf" or "calves," were painted, by the "boss" (and perhaps by others),—the dancers at least, "all over the face, then on top of the hair and down the hair hanging to the shoulders." During the painting the one painting would pray for the other being painted, and the latter might pray on her own account for whatever she desired, such as long life, medicine power, or other favors.

*796 533 Of the songs sung during the Women's Dance we recorded only one, number 66, a wordless one, sung by The Boy. The singing was done or at least led by the old man (or two old men) who sat at the back of the lodge, and was apparently (the point was not cleared up by us) joined in by the chief vower and "boss," and also by the "cows." The singing was done to the accompaniment of the deer-claw rattles mentioned previously, and without the drum. Those dancing did not sing while dancing. "The singing in the Women's Dance," The Boy remarked, "sounded 'old,' quite different from the way a young woman sings." To Coming Daylight's ear "it sounded fine."

*796 535 The dancing went on, not continuously, but intermittently, with intervals in between. Dancing was done by the "cows," attendants, and "calves," not by the "bull" who just sat in her place near the door with her horned headdress on and her head bowed down. The participants danced toward the back of the lodge, "kind of bouncing up and down in one place and shaking their heads from side to side." Coming Daylight, as a "calf," danced with the rest, near the door. According to Singer, the dances were done in series of four, as told her by one or two of her grandmothers who had been through the Women's Dance, and, if any of the "cows" did not get up to dance, the "bull" would "get busy" and "start

[522 831]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

535
796*
522
831

to jump on them," simulating copulation, to the amusement apparently of the other "cows." Whether the chief vower and the "boss" took part in the dancing is not clear,—more probably they did not.

796*

Intervals between the dancing were given over to smoking, chatting, feasting, and fun-making. In more modern times at least the women smoked for pleasure. The dancers were each expected to bring food to the dance, and feasting was an important element, the singers at the back of the lodge faring particularly well. During these intervals, too, the women would play all kinds of tricks on one another, such as taking some woman's belongings and hiding them. They would have "lots of fun," "laughing all the time" and "making lots of racket."

[276]

[522]

Apparently it was customary for relatives of dancers in the Women's Dance, as in other sacred Dances, to give away presents to third parties in honor of the dancers.

[431]

The more public and more spectacular episodes of the Women's Dance, as of the Sacrifice and Crazy Dances, occurred on the fourth and last day. To these features we now turn.

The "cows" and the "bull," all wearing their headdresses and accompanied by the "calves," left the dance lodge and went in a bunch to look for water in the creek and to drink. The "bull" followed to the rear, herding the "cows," and if one of the latter started to stray she would be punched back with the herd. Part of the time at least, the "cows" were "bent over, dancing like animals, and going on hands and knees." The "bull" would run after different "cows" and "jump on them," in mimic copulation. Coming Daylight, as a "calf" was told to follow one of the "cows" as her "mother" and try to nurse, but the "bull" chased her away when she approached her mother. In general, the "calves" were supposed to keep to the side, out of the way of the "bull."

796*
535
831

After the drink at the creek, came the pantomime buffalo drive. The two "hunters" (cf. supra, p. 245) would make a fire outside the camp circle up-wind from the women, and as the women got the smell of the smoke, the "hunters" on horseback drove them, as in a real buffalo drive, and shot the "cows" or some of them with blunt arrows that did not hurt. The "cows" who had before-

796*

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

and they went back to their house where a crowd was waiting to see if the feather would really be found as the leader had predicted. The leader, Coming Daylight, and her husband Little Man, were in the crowd. The leader took the feathered stick and handed it to Coming Daylight, who said right out: "Oh, that is the very same one I saw him fixing. . . . How could a ghost hand fix these feathers the way they are fixed?" 668 715

Notwithstanding this public exposure, the leader [no doubt later and privately] told Black Wolf's wife that because she had gotten this feather from the dead she could get anything she wanted, but that he (the leader) would have to have [sexual intercourse with] her first. She told her husband and "when he found out it was a trick, he sure was mad and he went over and was going to murder that man." [83]

Cora Chandler added that a lot of women were gotten through this trick, that there were many such Ghost Dance bosses, or leaders, and that they used to get cattle, horses, and anything they wanted, including the women.

Singer said that although she joined the Ghost Dance, she did not have to pay anything, but that her husband, when they brought him a message from one of his dead relatives, cried and gave what they asked, a buckskin horse, to the old woman boss. "They used to have women bosses as well as men bosses in the Ghost Dance."

Returns-to-war once came to Coming Daylight's husband, Little Man, and told him: "Your young brother, who got killed in the war, wants a horse, bridle and saddle." Little Man, who was a good deal of a skeptic in things religious, declined with the retort: "What is a ghost going to do with a horse and saddle?"

According to Al Chandler, "Jack Wilson got away with all kinds of things. Before he died he brought his son here to Hays and his son eloped with one girl, and that cooked his goose. They found out he was a fraud." According to Coming Daylight, "he [Jack Wilson] had a lot of women through that [the Ghost Dance]. He would choose the prettiest and best looking woman to make his smudge for him. He would have a little hut." At this point in the conversation, Singer broke in and would not let Coming Daylight continue along this line. We have come across no other

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787 cedure] where you pull [suck] it [the animal] out." When she
756 would say that people would tell her: "You should have taken the power and so gotten a lot of things [in payment] for curing that disease."

[831] Some women would refrain from asking power, particularly love power, from men who had it, because payment included allowing sex relations with the man.

787 While, then, the possession of powers brought the possessor
778 some very worthwhile advantages, advantages differing in kind according to the specific power acquired, it had its drawbacks—chiefly illness and shortened life, but also restrictions on freedom and other obligations distasteful to at least some individuals. The advice, therefore, given by parents and councilors to avoid seeking power is understandable. So, too, is the fact that many neither sought power nor accepted it when it was offered by supernatural beings or by fellow-tribesman. Many thus clung more to what appears to The Boy and others to have been the ideal Gros Ventre philosophy of life: For the fulfillment of your wishes rely on yourself and on prayer, rather than on magical power.

We recorded a number of cases of refusal of power, some of them already cited above in passing. In no case of refusal except one did the person refusing suffer any evil consequences therefor, and two of our informants, Coming Daylight and Singer explicitly stated that such refusal curtailed no penalty. A person was quite free to accept or decline an offer of power whether made by a power-giving being or a power-possessing fellow-tribesman. Neither of the latter would take offense if the offer were declined.

756 Coming Daylight in various free chats volunteered many details
778 of her own personal refusals of power. Her earliest experience
787 came when she was a very young girl, only about eight years old, and was living with her grandmother. "I used to sleep in a big lodge [with her grandmother]. While I was sleeping, a man came and wakened me. He had a bag of medicine on his back and told me, 'You can be a medicine woman.' The third time he appeared to me [in dreams], there was a person lying there, just skin and bones. The man [with the medicines] said to me, 'You could cure such persons as this one. You can take all these medicines,'

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Doctors were paid a horse or more for their services. Sometimes several, in turn, doctored a patient, each one blaming those that had failed before. Often they laid the sickness to spirits, or to other doctors. This last occurred especially if in their sucking they extracted human finger-nails or similar objects. In such a case the doctor got his patient to sleep. The patient might then in his dream see the person that had made him sick, and on awaking would denounce him. If the sick man died, his relatives might kill the doctor whom he had named as the cause of his sickness. 756

There were not so many women doctors as men. They appear not to have gone out to the mountains with the intention of acquiring supernatural power, but to have received guardian spirits when they were away from the camp, mourning.

The jugular and femoral arteries and the aorta were called ts'niinotanoudj' ("having no ears"), because, when severed, they did not heed any remedies.

In order to save the life of a sick relative, the joint of the little finger was sometimes cut off in sacrifice to the sun.

There were some medicine-men who, having had their fingers tied, then had their knees fastened together and their hands secured behind their back. After this they were wrapped in a robe and the robe was wound about with a rope. Then such a medicine-man called his spirit. When it appeared, he was loosened instantaneously, and the robe and the rope were thrown at the man that tied him.

Fig. 30 (50 1937). Doctor's Charm. Length, 22 cm.

[778]

826

755
304
782

756

A charm used by a doctor is shown in Fig. 30. It consists of a deer-tail with beaded base, and of two black feathers and a bunch of down feathers. All parts of the object are reddened. This piece was used to brush patients. At other times during the doctoring it was worn on the medicine-man's clothing.[6] 756 778

A man unsuccessful in winning a woman's love sometimes fasted on a 787 832

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787 mountain and asked the spirit that appeared to him for a love-medicine
832 which would bring him the woman. Soon after, she would come to him and try to obtain his love, but usually he would reject her, for a time at least, by way of revenge.

A young middle-aged man of the present time is noted for his love-medicine. He tells the following. He was once in love with a woman who only reviled him. For a long time this was on his mind. Constantly thinking of her harsh treatment of him, he fasted in a number of places, and finally received supernatural power. Then the woman came to him. She kissed him on the cheek; but he said, "You have abused me," and he made her go away. Four times she came to him; only the fourth time did he consent to gratify her wishes. Since that time, he has frequently used his medicine. His present wife was living with a white trader, where she had every comfort and great abundance; but by his medicine he made her leave the trader for him. His wife, it would appear, looks upon his powers without jealousy. He sells the use of his medicine to young men for two horses. His young son is crippled, so that he would have difficulty in winning women; but his father is keeping the medicine for him, so that he will be able to possess any woman he desires. The objects used include several medicine-plants. Some of these appear to be used to incense the man who is making the
[824] medicine. When a woman is unusually obdurate, wild parsnip (the root supposed to produce the peculiar state of mind of the crazy-dance) is employed by this man. When he begins to exert his influence on a woman, she becomes restless and sexually excited. She leaves the tent frequently, and will cohabit with any man. When the influence of the medicine is removed, she remains faithful to her lover.

MEDICINES AND PLANTS.

278 The following medicines, consisting chiefly of plants, are almost wholly
757 family remedies, and, while no doubt also used by medicine-men, their supposed effects are generally known, and not connected with any personal supernatural experiences of the person using them. As the specimens were secured in winter, it was impossible to obtain material for botanical identification.

Wanouwasóó ("wart-medicine"), a root, is used for stomach-ache (specimen Museum No. 50-1800).

A root called ahaa"tjiiniça" ("wood-like") is used for colic. This seems to be the root of a species of Asclepias (specimen Museum No. 50-1836).

A root called baasó ("red medicine," because it is reddish when fresh) is used for diarrhœa (specimen Museum No. 50-1914).

584 trained to do a woman's work. Then when she was ten or eleven
562 she was handed over to some man. They thought that if they gave her to her husband when she was so young she would get attached to him and make him a good wife. The Gros Ventres didn't
[587] want a woman to get in the habit of running around with different men, so a woman's folks worried if she was unmarried too long [after being divorced or widowed] because she might do something bad."

587 There is some evidence that as a woman became older, if she had occasion to remarry, she was somewhat more free to express her choice, although presumably a male relative would still be in the position of making the actual decision. It was said that
584 younger men, especially those seeking to marry "older" women,
832 "were afraid of their tongues" and felt more confident of success in possession of "love medicine." Al Chandler, for instance, was offered a love charm which he refused, but the speech of his uncle on that occasion throws some light on a situation of this kind. His uncle had told him: "Now you are a young man and you will be thinking about women. Maybe you want to get married and have picked out a woman and she doesn't want you. Maybe you are not good enough for her and, when you ask her, she will run you down plenty. Some women are swell-heads and can make a man feel cheap. It hurts a fellow to hear things like that—but that is what this charm is for. You take this and keep it in your pocket safely and do not show it to anyone or let anyone know you have it. Now if this woman hurts your feelings, go at night to where she lives and watch carefully, being sure you have the right one. Then when she goes out of the lodge to relieve herself, watch her so you can locate the exact spot. Then open this little packet and dip in it the tip of a little sliver of wood. Go over to the spot and stick the sliver right in the ground on the spot where she urinated and walk away. That is all you have to do, and in a very short time this woman will come running after you. You tell her: 'What are you doing that for? I don't want you.' She will get so anxious that she will beg you to have her."

585 Regardless of whether the man were the suitor, or whether the woman's relatives offered her in marriage, the marriage was validated through presents given by the groom. Traditionally at

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Instead of killing an adulterous wife, or one so suspected, the husband might disfigure her and send her away. Coming Daylight witnessed the following scene when she was a child. "She had been sent on an errand by her grandmother to a lodge at some distance from her own. About half-way to her destination as she approached a clump of trees she heard a woman screaming. She then saw that this woman was standing there with her hair tied to the limb of a tree. The woman's husband cut off her nose, and left her tied there and bleeding. Coming Daylight was so frightened that she ran, and on her way back went around the other way to avoid passing that spot again. She doesn't know who released the woman, but she does recall that the woman was so ashamed that she hardly ever went outside her lodge, and if anyone came in she would hold her hand over her face. Ever after that, whenever Coming Daylight met that man, she would make a gesture toward him [double hand into fist, then force fingers out, spreading them wide apart], which means 'I hate you.' Her grandmother used to tell her not to do that lest that man harm her through supernatural means, but she would answer: 'I don't care if he has power. He is cruel and I hate him. We all have to die sometime.'"

The cutting off of the nose was said to be rather a Piegan than a Gros Ventre practice. Cutting off the ears was perhaps a more common form of punishment inasmuch as there is a word designating a woman known to have been unfaithful, and which refers to having the ears cut off.

The adulterous woman whose hair was cut by her husband was not marked permanently as were the others, but it was a severe punishment nonetheless because long thick hair was one of the chief criteria of beauty in women as well as in men. But whatever the form of disfigurement inflicted by the husband, the woman would be cast aside by him and would have to seek refuge with some of her relatives. The family, especially her brothers, would feel keenly the disgrace, but as Singer put it, "Mothers would feel sorry for their daughters and could not refuse to take them in, and they would take their children, too, should they have any. It was very seldom a man would keep the children of a wife sent away for adultery."

Finally, a wronged husband could satisfy his honor by accept-

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

It was said that when virtuous women refused improper advances, some men overcame their resistance by threat of using love charms or witchcraft against them. There was one man, for instance, described as having been handsome, but who was said to have gotten his way with many women by intimidating them. Coming Daylight said: "One day that man approached me saying: 'If you don't let me have you, your life will be short.' I told him: 'Well, you better take a gun and finish me right now. Maybe that would make you feel good.' I called his bluff, but nothing ever happened to me." 837 [832]

Other men were said to have resorted to trickery and actually deceived women whom they could not get by approaching them openly. There was one individual, for example, a contemporary of Coming Daylight and Singer, who had a well-deserved reputation for "getting the better of women" whose husbands were away from camp. Singer told the following story as typical of the kind of thing this man did. "One certain night this man went to a lodge and crept in beside a woman whose husband was away on a war party. He whispered to her, pretending to be her husband: 'I came home ahead of the others. They don't know it.' Then he added: 'Put our little girl on the other side of the lodge.' The woman did as he told her and they laid together. After a while he asked her: 'How are the children?' But this time she remarked: 'Your voice sounds different.' He allayed her suspicions, however, by saying that he had caught a bad cold. He then quickly made his escape by claiming that he would have to get back to his comrades before they would awaken in order to avoid paying a fine should they discover he had come into camp ahead of the rest of the war party. So in the morning this woman told her mother and her mother-in-law that the war party was returning that day. She went out singing war songs so that everyone in the camp heard her. But after a while, when the war party failed to come in, the people realized that some man must have deceived her. It was later found out who he was and this man's name is used at the present time to indicate any man who tricks a woman into believing he is someone for whom she had been waiting."

There was a considerable discussion of whether or not it had been a Gros Ventre custom in the past to periodically have a public confession of chastity by women. Coming Daylight, Singer,

787 began to dig around behind her bedding and brought out a bowl
775 such as that in which buffalo chips are pounded into powder. She said: 'Here. I want you to eat this.' It didn't look good to me and I just kind of felt it with my fingers. Instead of having sat by my sister as my mother had directed, I had remained by the door, because I felt kind of scared in some way. So I told them: 'Wait. I guess I will go out a minute. I will be right back.' But I got out of there and ran home as fast as I could go—back to my own bed, back to myself. If I had eaten what they had given me that would have been the last of me! After this dream I got well."

Mourning

765 As soon as word was circulated that someone had died, all rela-
152 tives of that person, especially the women, were supposed to gather as soon as possible to cry and mourn for the deceased. Very close kin were expected to show their sorrow at the death of a loved one not only by crying and wailing, but also by casting off their good clothes and donning old ones,—robes, for instance, consisting of pieces of old discarded lodge covers, or ordinary robes that were rough and worn,—and by cutting the hair.[7] This latter was truly
[832] a great sacrifice, for to the Gros Ventres one of the chief criteria
[302] of beauty, in men and women alike, was extreme length of hair. The hair of younger children in a family was spared, even at the death of parents, but should, say, a father die, the hair of the older daughters was shorn, though not cut so short as that of the widow.
[887] An elderly woman was usually called upon to do the cutting and the widow, guided by the strength of her emotional reaction, would indicate how short she wished her hair to be. It was said that some widows would leave their hair relatively long, just free of the shoulders, while others "when they felt too badly, had all their hair cut off, almost as men now wear their hair."

Close kin were accustomed to further show grief by going off to the hills and fasting, crying aloud as they wandered about alone, and sleeping out without shelter. A parent would have done so at the loss of a son, one spouse at the death of the other, or a sister for her deceased brother. Such mourners would stay out

[7] For this and other practices in mourning, see Kroeber, 1908, p. 181.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

756 wood. Something in my sleeve kept biting me. I would sort of
work my sleeve but it kept biting me. Finally I took off my dress
787 and found it was a big spider with long legs. I did not kill it but
778 just brushed it off. That night in a dream the spider told me:
'Because you had pity on me, I will have pity on you.' But I told
the spider: 'I do not care for any powers from a bug or spider.'
Afterwards people told me I should have accepted the offered
power so that I could doctor spider bites. If you accept a power
like that you are shown in your dream how to doctor. Nothing
happens if you refuse such power." Every once in a while people
were bitten by spiders. Cora Chandler had heard of one such case:
[165] "One fourth of July at Lodge Pole a woman got bitten while fix-
ing her tent and died the same evening. Had Singer accepted the
power offered her, she could have doctored that woman."

Little Man, Al Chandler's adoptive father, once refused power from a rattlesnake to cure snake bites, but acquired power to cure seven dying persons. He had cured people and wanted to pass on what remained of his power to Al. But the latter in recounting the matter stated: "I did not want this power on account of the Catholic Church. I was afraid I might poison somebody. But the old man [Little Man] said: 'You will know all about it and what to do. All you have to do is to accept it. The rest will come to you. I am getting old and you might need it for your children. You could doctor your own children.' But the Catholics did not want you to do such things." So Al declined the old man's offer.

787 By three different men, who possessed love power, The Boy
was offered this power, but in all cases he refused. His accounts
● 832 follow.

778 "One old man lived near Bear Paws and when he came to my place, then on the Milk River, I used to accommodate him, although he would eat with my father, Lame Bull. He appreciated this and wanted to do something to repay the favor. So he said to me: 'I am going to give you my woman's medicine in payment for consideration of your service to me. I haven't anything of adequate value to pay you back.' He had a looking glass he used to do his stuff with. But I diplomatically refused. I told him: 'I do not like that kind of thing and never have, although I appreciate the fact

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

that you are grateful and what you are offering to do for me.' The old man did not get mad or insulted, and he said to me: 'It is well you refuse this thing anyhow.' He did not tell me all the details (about the power and its manner of use), because I refused it. 778 787 832

"Another old man offered me that kind of medicine [love power] out of my appreciation of my good treatment of him, and did not get mad when I refused it."

One other old man, who liked his liquor, was on one occasion given a treat of it by The Boy and another man. Soon the old man was feeling pretty good and started to get generous and said to The Boy: "Now, my son, I am an old man now and I appreciate your giving me this drink, so much so that I am going to give you something worth something." It was this love medicine. But The Boy "refused him nicely" and did not take it.

One final illustration of refusal,—"just an old time story," Coming Daylight called it who related it,—may be given, the only case we recorded of penalty believed to follow refusal. Perhaps even in this case the refusal was not so much of power as of a request to hold a Sacrifice Lodge. 787 778

"A man was hunting north of the canyon [near the present St. Paul's mission in the Little Rockies] and was shown [by whom?] a nice clean big cave. In this cave were big strings, like a spider puts before he makes a whole web, that is one strand crossing the other at right angles. Right in the middle [at the intersection] was a medicine wheel, of the kind always used at the Sacrifice Lodge. The man just stood and gazed at it. He saw it good and it belonged to the Sacrifice Lodge. He camped in the mountains overnight. That night this wheel told him in his dream: 'You ought to take me so you can make this Sacrifice Lodge.' But the man did not take it. He went back to camp and told his dream and his refusal to take the wheel. After that he began to waste away with a sickness called 'cut away,' in which the flesh starts to disappear in a small place and just sinews show and then it spreads. It was a quick sickness and he died of it. They say this happened to him because he did not take that medicine wheel." [164]

From what has been recorded on the preceding pages it seems quite clear that the individual was under little or no supernatural

31 Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

778 himself was concerned, he had transferred it all away," and "had
425 made himself negative again," that is no longer subject to the penalties of power possession. This first possessor was, so long as he kept his power, "a big fellow, but after he had transferred it to the four other people [men and/or women], there were now four big people, and he was such no more, so far as power was concerned and had no right even to sing the songs [proper to this power]. He was right where he had started [before acquiring this power]. The four could then go on and do just what he did when he alone possessed the power and they could [each, apparently] scatter it in four other different directions transfer it to four others." Such multiple diffusion by transfer did not, it seems, proceed far in actuality. "Scholars," as The Boy explained, "may all go through the same school under one great teacher, but seldom if ever do they all equal the teacher,—maybe only one, if any, will. So not all who got power by transfer were successful with the power because maybe they did not do or avoid doing all that the transferrer told them to do and avoid doing. So after a while the transferred power just died out."

832 Love power, or love medicine serving as the vehicle of power,
778 could, however, in contrast to doctoring power, be transferred by the owner, at least the original one, to any number of people. It
425 could be "transferred without limit and sold. The things," The Boy added by way of comment, "that were better for social life were limited. Love medicine [or power] was limitless, unless the possessor stopped gathering the root or bark or whatever it was he used to do his stuff."

Whether in cases of transfer by sale of doctoring power by a man to a woman the granting of sex intercourse by the woman was always and *de rigueur* the payment or part of the payment, is not quite clear from our field data. But that it was not uncommonly required is beyond question; in cases of man-to-woman sale transfer of love power, it was very common, in fact the usual thing, and seemingly more or less *de rigueur* to validate the transfer. When a woman sought such love power from a man who possessed it, she would watch her chance when his wife was not around and secretly carry out this part of the bargain. If the transferrer were

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

832
778
425

a woman, one of her adult male kin might be chosen by her to have sexual intercourse with the woman transferee.

To judge from the many anecdotes in circulation about this sex element in transfer payment, anecdotes dating mostly from quite recent decades in the memory of informants, it was a very common topic of gossip and of grapevine communication.

431
778

Transfer of power by gift, appears on the whole to have been much more common than transfer by sale. This accords with the general Gros Ventre pattern of transfer of other kinds of property. The Gros Ventre sold little; he gave much. Property changed hands within the tribe much more by donation than by barter.[10]

Gifts of power were made either to relatives or to friends, and while the giver still had his or her health, though perhaps of advanced age, and not ordinarily at least, on his death bed. A number of cases of offer to transfer by gift doctoring and love power during the possessor's lifetime have been previously given. War power, according to The Boy, "was commonly given, without payment, to a son or brother." "War medicine," according to Al Chandler, "was passed down from generation to generation; Bull Lodge gave his sons (Curly Head and Otter Robe) their war powers. Curly Head was a medicine man but Otter Robe was more of a warrior. Little Man, my adopted father, had some kind of war medicine from his brother, when his brother got killed Little Man took this medicine (a sparrow-hawk and a shirt) from him to keep it, and to use it."[11] While war power might pass down in a family, we obtained no clear instance of such transmission by inheritance proper, in the sense of transfer to take effect only upon the death of the transferrer. [428]

778
426

Our data, all from The Boy, on loan and delegation of power, as distinct from outright transfer, are meager. "An owner of power to be lucky in warfare so as not to be shot could lend this to somebody, and if the owner were going to die he could tell the borrower to keep it." "Sometimes, when a man with medicine power was appealed to come and doctor somebody, he could say to his wife:

[10] For details, see Flannery, 1953, pp. 80-87.

[11] Some of Bull Lodge's war medicines are illustrated in Flannery, 1953, Plate 3; cf. also p. 92.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

his power only when he was an active participant in the game. 778
Keg, who had gotten gambling power from a prairie chicken, 525
would, when using this power in a hand game, imitate the hissing, swishing noise made by the prairie chickens when they ruffle their tail feathers. He had been given by the prairie chicken its windpipe to use in the hand game, and for this he made use of a small metal spring resembling the windpipe. Red Whip, famous for his great gambling power, used a weasel skin in exercising this power. A player with power who was losing in a game might half seriously voice an appeal: "What is the matter with you, prairie chicken (or ghost)? You are failing me."

Only certain songs could be sung in a two-button hand game; [533
others, such as doctors' songs or medicine lodge songs, could not 784]
then be sung. If one of the players had a gambling power song, gotten in a dream from a prairie chicken or ghost, he would start singing it and others would join in. Gambling songs were sung in fast time to the accompaniment usually of small hand drums, the players marked time by striking with sticks the logs that lay stretched in front of each team. After a game was well under way, in the excitement, grunts would often take the place of songs.

We recorded two gambling songs for the old hand game, numbers 107 and 108, as sung by The Boy.

Love power, more common than gambling power, was acquired, 778
by quest or transfer, to attain various ends: by a man to secure sex favors from women who were reluctant to grant them, or 832
who had not only rejected his advances but had privately or publicly met them with insult;[18] by a jilted lover to win back the jilting man or woman; by a man or woman to win over a desired but unwilling prospective marital mate; by a wife to win back the affections and fidelity of a husband who was running around with other women.

We could obtain very little information on the rites carried out when love power was used. Our chief informant on love power, The Boy, had been offered it on various occasions but had never accepted it, so had not been told the ritual procedures to use, procedures about which the possessors of love power were ap-

[18] See Flannery, 1953, pp. 174, 193.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

778 parently rather secretive. A root or bark designated by the being
832 that bestowed the power was commonly used, and in some cases a looking glass. A very little bit, just a pinch, of one root or bark was used at a time, and seemingly might be rubbed on a looking glass that was "all painted up and decorated."

778 Before concluding this section on rituals and procedures followed when the major powers—war, wealth, gambling and love—were used, some scattered data may be given on rituals and procedures used with other powers.

Lame Bull, The Boy's father, had clairaudience power from a crow. To use it he would rub his ears with earth, as the crow had told him to do.

Mary Ereaux related the following incident. "My brother-in-law, White Weasel, a great medicine man, once came with his wife in a wagon to visit me. I was busy in the kitchen and after supper came in to the front room, the bedroom, to visit with my guests. White Weasel would kind of groan and say how tired he was, but I didn't think anything of this. Finally, he said: 'My, I have been just dropping and throwing hints and I find I have a hard-hearted sister-in-law. I pretend like I am so tired and here she has three bottles of whiskey in her bedroom and she never offers me a drink. There is one flask that is half empty, a second with the seal unbroken, another in a black leather case.' I was so surprised that he knew all that. My mother told me he could see it but I knew he had not left that corner of the room. . . . This was really a proof of his medicine power." She added: "When White Weasel had a few drinks he would start singing tea dance songs. My mother could then hear a woman's voice singing with him. She said it was a good sweet voice. It was not his wife singing. She could not hear the voice nor could I. Once in a while you would come across someone who, like my mother, could hear it. It was like a vision which some see but which others present cannot see."

Chief Grass on one occasion, when a war party he was with was bothered by a poltergeist, took an arrow, rolled buffalo hair around the arrowhead, singed it a little and spat on it. Then he shot the arrow and subdued the ghost. "Chief Grass had power and this, it was believed, was his way of using it."

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the door." Deer then in both hands held the sinew stretched taut horizontally over a smoldering chip and sang a song special to this rite, ending it with a recitative "Yo!" Then he lowered the sinew and repeated the song and "Yo," then lowered still more and repeated, concluding with "Yo, ho, ho, ho!" and finally put the sinew on the burning chip. As the sinew burned and buckled, the pup doubled up with cramps and died. 793 754

Another power, conferred for use by the keeper in case of disrespect committed against him, worked by "contagious" magic. The keeper watched the offender closely and made sure to locate his tracks, and then took out of the pipe bundle and put on his ritual moccasins the soles of which had been rubbed during the transfer rite with the poisonous wild parsley. Then, wearing the moccasins he stepped in the offender's tracks. As soon as he did so, the offender got a fit and then his legs and feet became weak and wobbly and nobody but the keeper could cure him. [789]

The co-keeper for the same punitive purpose in case of disrespect or molestation carried wild parsley mixed with peppermint leaves in the sack attached to her belt, but we obtained no information on the precise procedure she used.

Two punitive procedures were told The Boy by his father but without full details. These "vulgar" powers were not broadcast but were kept more or less secret within the inner circle of the Flat Pipe.

If a woman disrespected a keeper or caused him great embarrassment, he carried out a special rite over or toward her, obliged her to submit to sex intercourse with him, and afterwards carried out a concluding rite. If some young man went so far as to flirt with her, make advances and touch her, he would get ill, and she alone could doctor him back to health. If he went so far as to have sexual intercourse with her, he would probably die. [833 786]

As regards all the foregoing punitive and harming powers, it was strictly understood that the keeper and co-keeper were given them to use only to enforce respect, and that if used for other and evil purposes the users would pay dearly and would be punished in some way, through the death of their children or through other misfortune. 793

Besides these supernatural powers to command respect, other 755

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

of the society. The officers were free to transfer their ceremonial 575
equipment to other members whom they would select. Following 796
the typical Gros Ventre pattern of transfer of ownership, the
recipient would present as lavish gifts as he could afford to the [431]
donor while the relatives of the recipient showed their appreciation of the favor to their kinsman by giving away expensive gifts in his honor. All of this took place publicly at the dance.

Particular dances and songs were attached to each office and the owners of the ceremonial drumsticks were required to know in correct order all the numerous songs and to provide the musical [533]
accompaniment for the whole ceremony. These four drumstick owners were joined in certain of the songs by four women singers selected from among the wives of the Wolf-men. The owners of the various objects were responsible for the proper care thereof, the crow-belts and the drum receiving most respect. When not in use, the crow-belts were kept wrapped in special bundles in the [841
lodges of their respective owners, but were hung outside when the 784]
owner's wife was in her menstrual period. Moreover, those who 833
danced wearing the crow-belts were obliged to refrain from sexual 782]
relations for two or three days previous to the dancing and, before donning the belts, to make a smudge of sweet-grass to incense themselves and the crow-belts. The drum, too, received special attention. One informant speaks of it as having been "nicely [534]
decorated," and we know from Kroeber's description[9] that the trimming was very similar to that of the Assiniboine Grass dance drum.[10]

Procedure. The actual dancing took place in a special circular 346
dancing-place in the center of the camp circle. This "corral," as 796
it was sometimes referred to, was constructed from several lodge covers, but was open at the top and the entrance thereto was at the east. The tipi of the drum-keeper was put up nearby. Opposite the opening of the "corral" was the place of honor where [554]
sat the officials,—with the exception of the sword owners, who with their assistants were at either side of the entrance. The 000

[9] Kroeber, loc. cit., p. 238.
[10] Lowie, R. H., The Assiniboine, AMNH-AP 4, pt. 1, 1909, p. 67.

572 Woman had sung around the circle once, he led his party to Bull Lodge's tipi. The latter was suspicious and thought: 'I'm in for it now!' Sits Like A Woman went up to Bull Lodge, took him by the arm and said: 'Come, my friend.' He led him to the middle of the group of returned warriors. He then faced Bull Lodge and said in a jesting way: 'Stand still or I'll kill you.' Bull Lodge stood there and Sits Like A Woman took his rifle and, drumming with the stock on Bull Lodge's back, sang the following song: 'He who poisons (i.e., a medicine man with power to kill) has no penis.' Bull Lodge and his brothers-in-law realized that Sits Like A Woman was in earnest because not only was the song a great insult, but the victim's brothers-in-law were present,—which they should not have been when any reference to private parts was made.[23] The war party took up the song with enthusiasm as Sits Like A Woman told Bull Lodge again: 'Don't move yet—I'll kill you anyway.' He took Bull Lodge's new Hudson Bay blanket and slit it in two; he slashed Bull Lodge's shirt and took it off him; he slashed his leggings and removed them; and finally he cut the belt so that the breech-cloth fell to the ground. Bull Lodge was standing there naked. By that time the brothers-in-law had stolen away, one by one. Bull Lodge knew better than to run away, and Sits Like A Woman said: 'Perhaps you have power to poison people. If you have a mind to poison me, go ahead and try. I'm not afraid of you. If you choose to pay me back that way, you might just as well try it on the sun. Or, if you choose to pay me back in the way I have treated you, go ahead. But first lead a successful war party. If you then do to me what I have done to you, I won't be mad. But I'll lead still another war party and do far worse to you that second time than I have done this time.'

[602 834]

"After thinking it over, Bull Lodge decided to buy off his enemy-friend and the next morning he got together an armful of valuable things, filled a pipe and went to Sits Like A Woman. 'My friend,' he said, 'here's a pipe I am offering to you. You take this pipe so you will stop doing things like this to me. While I don't mind it, my brothers-in-law were there. And here are some things you can have.' Sits Like A Woman laughed, but ac-

[607] [23] Relationship between brothers-in-law precluded any reference to sex and bodily exposure in each other's presence. See pp. 118–19.

604 man, but his maternal uncle would be given the greatest amount of credit for his nephew's prowess, and he would rejoice more than the others in his nephew's successes.

426 A nephew could, if he wished, use his uncle's property without asking permission. If he damaged the property so borrowed, how-
604 ever, the uncle might reprimand him severely. Sometimes an uncle took the initiative and told one of his nephews: "All that I have is yours." In such a case, not only would the nephew be free to use the property without asking, but even if it were damaged—say a borrowed horse was carelessly injured or lost,—nothing would be said by the uncle nor any punishment inflicted. A nephew was supposed to be very respectful toward his uncle, but was freer with him than he could be with his own father. He could, for instance, joke with his uncle about being a lady's man, but he
[834] could not go too far in referring to sexual matters. He would not
[291] feel quite so embarrassed if his uncle should happen to see him unclothed, as would be the case with his father or his brother-in-law, but he would be far from comfortable in that situation.

604 The relationship between a man and his sister's daughter was not as direct as that between him and his sister's son. If a woman died, leaving orphan girls, it was not unusual that the wife of her brother would say: "I am going to take these girls so that I can have a son-in-law through them." This is what happened to Coming Daylight and her sister, whose maternal uncle took responsibility for them, although they were actually trained by his mother. It was he who arranged their marriages and it was to him they returned when widowed or divorced. His sons took the place of brothers to these two orphans.

While he did not take on the role of disciplinarian to his sister's daughters, whether or not their parents were living, the maternal uncle was expected to be generous to his nieces and to show his regard by giving things away in their honor. If a maternal uncle asked a niece for anything she possessed, she was supposed to give it to him without question, even though at considerable cost to herself. "Coming Daylight was asked by her uncle for the elk teeth she owned, to exchange with a Crow who had offered him an excellent race horse in return. She gave up these valuables without a word, though she hated to part with them since she did not know

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Traditionally, all reference to sex was forbidden between brothers-in-law in private as well as in public. They would be embarrassed at bodily exposure in each other's presence and consequently did not go swimming together, nor relieve their bodily necessities in sight of each other, nor indeed break wind. They were, however, allowed and even expected to joke with one another, or, better, to mildly tease each other in public. This sort of "joking" was of a very different kind from that expected between brother- and sister-in-law or between enemy-friends. As an example, it was stated that a man might say to a prospective employer, when his brother-in-law was present: "I'm the best logger around here. My brother-in-law can't cut logs as well as I can. Why hire him?" The other was supposed to take such ribbing without losing his temper, but try to get even at some later date. 607 834

Among the younger generation of today, brothers-in-law still "josh" at each other's expense and in good nature, but they tend to disregard the respectful attitudes and to discuss tabooed subjects. Deploring this state of affairs, Coming Daylight commented: "These young men around here now are 'tough' just like the Assiniboine men always were. The Assiniboine never were ashamed in front of their sisters' husbands, whereas the Gros Ventres were different and knew better than to behave in such a way." 607

Even at the present time, nevertheless, just as in the past, brothers-in-law are supposed to be generous with each other. They would advise each other in regard to a good business proposition, give each other the benefit in anything along that line, help each other in such ways as in building a house, in giving presents away in public, and so on.

Reticence on matters connected with sex was practiced between sisters-in-law, a woman being careful what she said both to her brother's wife and to her husband's sister. It was stated, for example, that "a woman can tease her sister-in-law, but not in a bad way because she would be her brother's wife." The stock joke between sisters-in-law hinges upon stinginess. A woman could say to her brother's wife: "Oh, you stingy thing. You hid your knife," which would indicate that she is fond of her food and doesn't wish to share it. But sisters-in-law do not josh each other to the same extent as do brothers-in-law.

846 self had to get up sooner and help with cooking because she was an only wife, except for the short time during her first marriage when her sister was co-wife. The midwife usually stayed and looked after the infant for a few days, at least until the cord came off.

Coming Daylight always put on a belt of rawhide about a foot wide immediately after delivery and laced it up tighter each day. She said the Gros Ventre women were strict about this practice as it "put the figure back into place."

If a woman were able to rest quietly after childbirth the flow should stop in about two weeks. If she worked, it was longer, perhaps a month. At any rate, after the flow stopped, a woman wrapped a blanket around herself and someone then held under the blanket a pan of live coals on which medicine had been sprinkled. Woman claimed they felt much better after this "fumigation." [357] There was also another medicine which Coming Daylight described as "good to clean you out after childbirth." This was made from a powdered root, a little pinch of which was put in a couple of quarts of water and turned the water about the color of tea. There was no bitter taste and the patient drank it like tea and instead of water.

[834] It was said that Gros Ventre men did not resume marital relations until at least a month after the baby was born,—often they deferred the resumption of relations even longer.

853 There was medicine given to make the mother's milk come. It was made from the same root as that used in the Crazy Dance. [278] The infant was not put to the breast immediately, as someone else drew out the "first milk" (colostrum) and spit it out. "After that, the milk would be the right blue color. [825] Should a woman be all alone when her child was born, she might have puppies draw out that 'first milk.'" Cora believes it is absolutely necessary to follow this rule. When her own daughter, for example, delivered her firstborn, an old woman offered to draw off this "first milk," but the daughter refused—so now she can give milk only from one breast and has to supplement her infant's feeding with milk from a bottle. No water or oil was given the infant before its first nursing. They started the baby to nurse after the colostrum had been drawn off "because there is something in the mother's milk that cleans the baby out."

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

+796 vower and then for everybody. Next he smudged the drum four times,—the head, the rim twice, and the inside grip, in this order. Beating the drum he started to sing, and, as the others joined in the singing, he passed it to one of them.

Now the dancing began. The keeper himself danced first, at the far west end of the lodge in the place of honor, holding the Pipe stem up. Men and women, mostly relatives of the vower, would range themselves in a sort of half circle and dance with him, he alone holding the Pipe. The keeper continued dancing through the singing of four songs, and then passed the Pipe to the vower to dance with. The latter then danced with it through the singing of four songs. On the occasion of Jim Snow's vow fulfillment, after him danced Spotted Raven, no kin to Jim Snow, who for some reason had "thrown in" for the rite, and after Spotted Raven some of Jim's relatives, "maybe three or four" in turn,—in each case continuously dancing through the singing of four songs. In general, anyone, whether a relative of the vower or not, could dance with the Pipe if he or she paid to do so. Between each separate dancing and singing of four songs the Pipe was placed resting on its sage bed, and during these interim periods the participants and onlookers could chat, joke and have a social smoke, and, if they wished, go outside the lodge and walk around. Smudging [of Pipe? or of dancer?] preceded each dance.

According to Coming Daylight, a woman who took part in
●[834] the Feathered Pipe dance had to abstain from sexual intercourse beforehand, apparently for two or three nights. "If you break that rule, not long after you dance it, something happens to you, some kind of hard luck, and it really never fails." When the Pipe dance was held in 1918, "one woman danced it after she had seen her man and she almost burned up and the same happened to her son and lightning struck his horse." Presumably this taboo held for men too, but we failed to make inquiries on the point.

Not only the vower but also all others who wanted to dance with the Pipe had to make payment for the privilege. As Al Chandler explained: "Jim Snow [after his vow and cure] came to see the keeper first and told him how many horses he would give and then during the dance Jim Snow himself started putting

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

782
*796 occupied a continuous four-day (or three-day and four-night) period.

782 At some time during the preparatory period, prior to the start of the dance proper, the principal vower's ceremonial grandfather
*796 taught him how to dance with the sacred wheel which was in one sense the main ritual object used in the Sacrifice Dance. One such
778 wheel, we were told, is still in existence, in the possession of Mrs. Grace Stevens, but we did not have an opportunity to see it. It was vaguely described to us as being not a "woven wheel" but only a "hoop" with some down feathers attached to it. In dancing with the wheel, the dancer sang and with his right arm hanging down held the wheel in his right hand and swung it back and forth. When he tired of swinging it in his right hand he changed it behind his back to his left and swung it. When the Sacrifice Dance proper began, the principal vower was given possession of it for the duration, with the full right to carry and swing it whenever during the rite he danced and to otherwise use it. If one of the other dancers weakened and fainted from hunger, thirst, fatigue or pain, the principal vower would go to him and pass the wheel back and forth in front of the unconscious man's face, and would so revive him. Whether other vowers than the principal one could ever dance with the wheel we did not discover.

*796 Those who "joined" the dance, at least the principal and as-
[834] sociate vowers, had to refrain from sexual intercourse for a while, say two or three nights, before the dance proper began.

The morning after the last of the four nights of singing began the ceremonial "scouting" for felling and fetching of the center pole of the dance lodge.

Early that morning, four prominent warriors, men who had been successful as scouts in sighting the enemy and bringing back information, were selected to go look for a center pole. Each had to put on his war accoutrements as if he were setting out on a war expedition. While the four were gone, those who had sent them gathered buffalo chips and put them in a pile. The four scouts on returning announced their approach by giving a special yell, and the people would say: "The scouts are coming." As the four approached closer to the waiting crowd who were ranged in a half-

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 them and these offerings "hung thick up there." The offerings were made to the Supreme Being to ask long life and happiness.

After the lodge was up, all who were to "join" the Sacrifice Dance went inside. Dancing continued for the three (or two?) succeeding nights, we were informed, but we obtained no further details on the ritual followed during this preparatory interim period, except as regards fasting. Those at least who were to go through self-torture on the fourth day and apparently some of the other active participants had to observe a strict fast from food and drink during this four-day period as well as to abstain from sexual intercourse. Those so submitting themselves to this regime would be further tested out by singers. Songs might be sung, for instance, about water, with words such as, "all the rivers and creeks have run dry," or about love and women, all just to put the young men to the test. People who were not fasting would conspicuously display and eat food right under the eyes of the faster. One or other of the young men might weaken under these temptations and "sneak out and give up." If he did so the people would banter him: "You are no man. You can't stand it," and his father or uncle would "give him the dickens about it."

785 834

Back of the fasting and sex abstinence as well as of the self-torture was a concept that was a basic theme of Gros Ventre religious culture in general, and that one of our informants, Al Chandler, expressed as follows: "The sacrifice [fasting, sex abstinence, self-torture] those men [of the Sacrifice Dance] made was like penance because they thought you could not get anything unless you punished yourself, for God was not going to give you anything if you went out there laughing and full of good food. He won't help you that way." Making one's self "pitiful" when seeking power of or answer to prayer is a part of this concept or closely related to it.

785 *796

During the whole Sacrifice Dance the vowers were supposed to keep their minds on their praying, to concentrate their thoughts —another basic Gros Ventre religious theme—and the "tempting" behavior of those around them was seemingly a test of the vower's power of concentration, his ability to insulate himself mentally against external distractions.

*796

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

fathers back of them and the wives back of the grandfathers, 796*
according to one statement by Coming Daylight; the grandfathers in front, and the dancers and their wives back of them according to another by her. The bows of the "talls" and "shorts" were stuck upright in the ground in two crescents in front of the two respective divisions; the bows of the ritual "elder brothers" (the four councilors?), a little apart near the south or southeast ends of these two crescents.[18]

The chief ritual paraphernalia used in the Crazy Dance were 293
the badger pelt, hoof rattles, whistles, bows, and poisoned arrows. 796*
The stuffed badger hide, "trimmed and fixed up," figured prominently in the rites. The bone whistles, hung on the neck of the dancers, were blown by them when dancing. The rattles, θaθanas, sticks about five feet long, with deer hoofs attached in a row along the upper third, were used by the grandfathers who sang, sitting in a row and pounding the ends of the rattles on the ground to beat time.

Each Crazy Dancer treated one of his arrows with poisonous 796*
wild parsley, and tied the poisoned arrow to his bow. If the dancer [626]
"got mad or any serious situation arose" he would unfasten the arrow and shoot to kill. If the arrow penetrated the skin of the victim or even scratched him, he died. This extreme measure was very rarely resorted to. We were told of no actual instance. When the dance was over these poisoned arrows were carried away to a spot where no one could find them and were buried.

The ceremonies on each of the four days of the Crazy Dance 796*
began with the painting of the bodies of the dancers and their 302
wives, the pattern of the painting differing each day. The painting was done in the respective lodges of the leaders of the groups of two to four dancers. Here they gathered with their respective ceremonial grandfathers and "Little Crazy Dancers." The dancer and his wife, or borrowed surrogate, would sit there naked, the [834
woman with legs close together and stretched out in front. This 516]
was a source of serious embarrassment to all concerned. The bodies

[18] Kroeber, 1908, p. 242, gives a different arrangement, with which still another statement by Coming Daylight that "the women sat on the west side" insofar agrees.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

784 789 [834] Sex abstinence was generally observed before hunting, and particularly before and all during golden eagle trapping. Eagle trappers "had to have a special religious character, to observe certain food taboos, and a special way of handling [being handed?] a pipe." The leader of a war party, but not other members thereof, also observed sex abstinence.

Do not break leg bones or ribs to extract the marrow or for other purpose, inside the lodge or house; go outside to do it, else you will get sore legs, or your horses may break their legs. Cora Chandler stated in 1940 that she still observed this latter, as her folks had always made her do. If an embryo calf were to be taken out of the belly of a buffalo, the embryo's eyes had to be extracted before it was brought into the lodge to be cooked; if the eyes were taken out inside the lodge, a member of the family would go blind, —"and this has been proven." Likewise it was forbidden to butcher and extract the brains from a buffalo head inside a lodge, and also break off the "soft end" of roast buffalo ribs. "Never use a knife to fuss with ashes or coals because you might cut yourself if you did so."

After blood-letting, the subject abstained from eating anything fried so the cut would not turn blue.

[651] There does not seem to have been any prohibition against mentioning the name of a deceased relative or other person.

777 801 Coming Daylight and Mary Ereaux had never heard of lucky or unlucky numbers. The Boy, however, stated: "According to the old law, the people were forbidden to use seven. For instance, a war party was not to have seven members, but either more or fewer. Cases are known in which young fellows disobeyed this rule and ran into trouble. In one case of this kind six of the party got killed and only one escaped with his life."

*1796 We recorded five of the Sacrifice Dance songs, but there were
533 others, apparently many others. The skin-piercing song has been mentioned above. Another song recorded, a wordless one, number 49, as rendered by The Boy, was sung "when the old man [the grandfather] put the young fellow [his grandson, a 'dancer'] to sleep,"—a reference not clear to us. We also recorded another song, a wordless one, No. 51, as sung by The Boy. Another song, not recorded by us, but known to Singer, contained the words: "I soaked them with water."

The story back of one of the Sacrifice Dance songs, number 109, a wordless one, recorded by us as sung by Charles Buckman, was given us by him as follows:

"On one occasion the Gros Ventres held a Sacrifice Dance. Just then a new Sacrifice Dance song sprang up and was sung often during the four days and nights of the Dance. After the Dance was over, the people broke camp and moved to a site five or six miles down the creek. That evening a woman disappeared and no one knew what had become of her. The next day a searching party was sent out to find her. Some of the young fellows rode back toward where the Dance had been and when they got close they thought they heard someone singing. So they stopped and listened. Someone was singing this new song. 'It's a woman,' they said. 'Let's go and see.' So they rode up to the abandoned Dance lodge and inside it they saw the woman all alone shaking leaves (as was the custom) and singing this song. They took her and carried her back to the camp. There she had to be hobbled in order to be kept from running away. She died soon after."

Another Sacrifice Dance song, number 50, recorded by us as sung by The Boy, has the words: "The Fur Cap (an older Gros Ventre name for The Little Rockies) on the side (side hill or slope) of it. There is frivolity (sexual cutting up or looseness)." [836] This song was composed on the Hays side of the big brush between what are now Hays and St. Paul's Mission. Ritual sex license did not enter into the Sacrifice Dance, but during the Dance when the leading people and their helpers were busy and all the tribe was gathered together some of the younger people might seize the opportunity to "play a little," as The Boy euphemistically put it. Mothers would be anxious about their daughters. At any

that the wife of a maternal uncle may likewise claim his nephew as "son-in-law."[8]

Brothers-in-law and Sisters-in-law

The mutual regard between brother and sister is said to have been reflected not only through the carrying out of the obligations of the avunculate and amitate in the spirit of "showing how much brothers and sisters thought of each other." It could also be seen in the type of behavior expected between brothers-in-law on the one hand, and sisters-in-law on the other. Brothers-in-law were generous to each other and could joke lightly with each other, but nothing even remotely connected with sex could be so much as mentioned in each other's presence. A man was circumspect in regard to his sister's husband out of respect for his sister, and to his wife's brother because the latter, out of respect for his own sister, had similar obligations toward him. Sisters-in-law behaved toward each other in like fashion. These attitudes were extended to include wife's brother's wife as "sister," rather than "sister-in-law," and husband's sister's husband as "brother."

Unmarried brothers of a man-and wife likewise regarded themselves as brothers-in-law. A case which well illustrates the attitudes between them is the following as told by The Boy. "My older brother was married to Thick's older sister and we two young unmarried brothers-in-law experienced a most embarrassing situation. One of us was visiting a woman at night and the other came to the same woman, not realizing in the dark that his brother-in-law was already there. We recognized each other's voices, however, and the one who arrived last beat a hasty retreat. The matter has never, even to this day, been discussed nor so much as indirectly alluded to between us, and the embarrassment over this event led us to avoid each other for a considerable time thereafter. Eventually our relationship was deepened inasmuch as Thick married my sister. Even though my sister should die, Thick and I would continue to be brothers-in-law on the same plane."

[8] Kroeber, 1902, p. 10, calls attention to the identity of terms for "niece" and "daughter-in-law." Apparently a woman used the term "son-in-law" for her niece's husband or for her husband's nephew only if presents were given.

842 thers wash such clothes and wear them again right after delivery—and they have a lot more babies now than they used to have, too."

[163] Coming Daylight said that formerly most women had only two or three children,—at most five,—and that some had none at all. Yet in the "old days" the population was large. Singer mentioned that although a man with several wives might have one as favorite, this would not make any difference. Each wife would have one or two children; no one of them would have a great many.[1]

These two old women, and our older men informants as well, were firmly convinced that "medicinal" contraceptives accounted for the small families. The old woman said: "Lots of women took medicine. There are roots for that [contraception]. Women who do not want children say, as an excuse, that one cannot keep things in order if there are children about. Not everybody had this kind of medicine, and one had to pay a high price for it—sometimes two or three horses. If a man were the owner of this type of medicine, he might demand in payment one of the other wives of the husband who obtained the medicine from him. If you take this kind of medicine you have to abide by certain rules. You must not let anyone who has children wear your robe; never sit on the bare ground; never hold an infant; don't sit on anyone's else bedding; above all, don't have intercourse with anyone other than your husband. If you break any of these rules you will conceive right away."

To illustrate this point, one woman told about her cousin's wife who had taken medicine to prevent her having children. While [837] her husband was away, she "threw in" with another man and became pregnant. Some women hesitated to take this kind of medicine because if a woman then became pregnant her husband would suspect infidelity, even though the wife had remained chaste but had "broken one of the other rules." Singer said that she would

[145] [1] This is confirmed by Denig, who was among the northern plains tribes for 20 years and was himself married to an Assiniboine. He makes the following observations, p. 513: (1) Not more than two out of five children live till youth is passed; (2) two to five children is the average and seven or eight of rare occurrence; (3) a woman is old at 35 and seldom healthy, menopause occurs at 40 or earlier, the usual period of child-bearing is 18 to 35, although a few start bearing at 15.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

595 562 suffered injustice, but they insisted that the disciplinary power of the husband "made good wives of many women." In spite of the fact that many cases were given in illustration of harsh treatment, not a few were mentioned in which husband and wife lived happily together in an atmosphere of mutual esteem and deep affection. Coming Daylight herself, for instance, experienced what could be considered an ideal marriage with her first husband, Dressed in White.

Extra-marital Affairs

337 Girls were instructed before marriage to expect and condone infidelity on the part of the husband. An ambivalent attitude prevailed in that a man's reputation was said to have suffered if he were known as one who was "always fooling around with other men's wives"; yet brave young men were expected to make as many conquests as possible.

There were few women who escaped their husband's suspicion at one time or another. The reasons why the suspicion was often justified were given by Singer to have been the following. "Too often young girls were given in marriage to old men for whom they did not care and to whom they never got attached; so when younger men more to their liking came along, lots of these girls gave in to them and took chances of getting caught by their husbands. But even if a woman liked her husband and he was real good to her, when she saw that he was running around with other women, she might be jealous and want to 'make her life bad' just to get even with him."

While a woman could not count on her mother, or aunt, or sister-in-law to help along her illicit love affair, in some cases a grandmother, or sister, or friend might assist her in making assignations with the lover and would do their best to shield her from her husband. It was said that others were sympathetic especially if the lover were known as a brave man. In fact there were two sets of circumstances in which public opinion was lenient almost to the point of approval, although great discretion was necessary to avoid the husband's suspicion, since he still had the right of punishing his wife if he found her out. One kind of situation concerned the woman who sent a man out to accomplish some specific

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

and spectacular war deed before she granted her favors to him.[9] If he returned, she was supposed to keep her word, accepting him as her lover. In the other type of situation, it was taken for granted that a woman would succumb to the pleas of a man who had publicly announced his intention of virtually committing suicide. Such a man, by singing the "brave-song" as he circled the camp, indicated that he would seize the first opportunity thereafter to encounter the enemy but make no effort to defend himself.[10]

According to a number of stories that are told, it was not uncommon that a woman committed suicide when her lover failed to return from war. That this actually happened, in some cases at least, is vouched for by the following factual account given by Singer. "White people, on one occasion, invited some Gros Ventres to visit them. All of the people, whose lodges were near to that of my grandmother, went, except one woman. This woman was scraping a skin when word was announced that a certain young man had been killed at war. My grandmother, noticing that the sound of scraping had stopped, thought that this woman was resting, and after a little while started over to visit her. On the way, however, she heard a shot, and when she got to that lodge she found that this woman was dead. She had first dressed herself nicely in her best clothes and had then shot herself, pulling the trigger of the gun by means of a string attached to her toe. My grandmother had suspected an affair between this woman and the young man who had lost his life at war, but she hadn't known for sure until this woman committed suicide. In those days a woman would have kept such an affair secret. (Now since women have the law to protect them from their husbands, wives just don't care and boldly run around with anybody they fancy and talk back to their husbands, and everybody knows all about it.) But anyway, that woman was a good worker,—she was working for her husband when that bad news came about the death of her lover,—and of course her husband mourned for her."

It was said that women who had been cast aside by their hus-

[9] "This custom is said to have led to the death of many young men," Kroeber, 1908, p. 180.

[10] For further details on the "brave-song," see p. 92.

837 578 bands, and whose families were indifferent to their conduct, were easy conquests for men, but sometimes caused a great deal of trouble. A woman like that usually had more difficulty in acquiring a good husband, and was jealous if her lover refused to take her as wife, yet married some other woman. Coming Daylight had an experience with one such woman. "My husband and I were living in a lodge with his mother and her husband and his two brothers, really cousins. My husband was a very handsome man and shortly after we were married, a woman whose lover he had been, came to that lodge and tried to get him to marry her too. When I saw that she was running after him I told him: 'You ought to take that woman. I can just make my bed on the other side of the fire [with the two cousins]!' But, knowing that she was the promiscuous kind, he didn't want her and refused her. She made her bed in our lodge anyway though and kept after him, but still he wouldn't have her. His mother told him one day: 'You might just as well marry her because she is a good worker and besides she had friends among the whites, so we could all eat!' My husband got mad then and told his mother what he thought of his former sweetheart. He even threatened to go off to war again if she didn't go away. The woman was right outside the lodge and heard what they said about her. She was so furious that she rushed in and dragged me out feet first so that all my clothes went up over my head. When I got up, she grabbed at my ear and pulled off my ear-ring—you can still see where she tore the flesh. Then she ran in the lodge again and started pounding on my husband. Finally, one of those unmarried relatives, who was not as particular as my husband, told her: 'Well, take your things over to that other lodge and I will move my things over there too.' So they lived as man and wife. I never tried to hit back at that woman and I didn't even talk about her, but I got even with her in a quiet way. One night at a dance, I took my husband by the arm and told him to dance with her. When she said: 'Oh, I have no use for him now—he is old,' I said in a loud voice: 'You would change your mind quick enough if I had asked him to sleep with you!' And everybody laughed and laughed at that woman because they knew how anxious she had been to have him."

837 It was said that when virtuous women refused improper ad-

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

It was said that when virtuous women refused improper advances, some men overcame their resistance by threat of using love charms or witchcraft against them. There was one man, for instance, described as having been handsome, but who was said to have gotten his way with many women by intimidating them. Coming Daylight said: "One day that man approached me saying: 'If you don't let me have you, your life will be short.' I told him: 'Well, you better take a gun and finish me right now. Maybe that would make you feel good.' I called his bluff, but nothing ever happened to me." 837 [832]

Other men were said to have resorted to trickery and actually deceived women whom they could not get by approaching them openly. There was one individual, for example, a contemporary of Coming Daylight and Singer, who had a well-deserved reputation for "getting the better of women" whose husbands were away from camp. Singer told the following story as typical of the kind of thing this man did. "One certain night this man went to a lodge and crept in beside a woman whose husband was away on a war party. He whispered to her, pretending to be her husband: 'I came home ahead of the others. They don't know it.' Then he added: 'Put our little girl on the other side of the lodge.' The woman did as he told her and they laid together. After a while he asked her: 'How are the children?' But this time she remarked: 'Your voice sounds different.' He allayed her suspicions, however, by saying that he had caught a bad cold. He then quickly made his escape by claiming that he would have to get back to his comrades before they would awaken in order to avoid paying a fine should they discover he had come into camp ahead of the rest of the war party. So in the morning this woman told her mother and her mother-in-law that the war party was returning that day. She went out singing war songs so that everyone in the camp heard her. But after a while, when the war party failed to come in, the people realized that some man must have deceived her. It was later found out who he was and this man's name is used at the present time to indicate any man who tricks a woman into believing he is someone for whom she had been waiting."

There was a considerable discussion of whether or not it had been a Gros Ventre custom in the past to periodically have a public confession of chastity by women. Coming Daylight, Singer,

837 and the younger women as well, all emphatically maintained that the practice was a Piegan one and not Gros Ventre. On the other hand, The Boy claimed that it was a Gros Ventre practice in his father's time, which extends further back than the actual experience of Singer and Coming Daylight. Mary's statement throws some light on the attitudes in the very recent past. "I have heard that the Piegans did that. My mother-in-law lived among them a long time and told me what their life was like. Once a man here wanted to try that public type of confession. He told everybody: 'We are going to have a big gathering to show off some of our Gros Ventre women. Now remember that this is a sacred thing and you have to swear to it. You don't dare get up there and lie, because if you do you will have bad luck.' I went to that party, but that part of the proceedings didn't come off. Someone had said to the man who was running it: 'You don't want to start this thing because it will cause a lot of trouble.' I guess that is why the host didn't go through with it, although he had the prize—a big quarter of beef—all ready to be given to the one who could honestly make that claim."

In commenting on what Mary had said, Singer and Coming Daylight gave two reasons why this public confession of chastity could not have been a Gros Ventre custom, and would have not been feasible in their day. First, in a gathering of that kind there would have been too many relatives before whom a woman had to be "ashamed"—brothers, cousins, uncles and father; therefore if a woman could justly claim to be chaste she couldn't have gotten up in public and said so. Secondly, it would have exposed too many women; every husband whose wife could not rise to the occasion would have been embarrassed and there would have been too much suspicion and jealousy engendered.

[171] This of course does not disprove the point made by The Boy that the public confession of chastity was in the more remote past a Gros Ventre as well as a Piegan custom, but it does imply that such a ceremony was in all likelihood not held by the Gros Ventres subsequently to 1855 or thereabouts.[11]

[11] Clark, who visited the Fort Belknap Agency for a few days in 1881 mentions, p. 198, that among other dances they have a Strong Dance for women,—intended as a support to their chastity.

although without the wild parsley, but we did not obtain details.

After ritual treatment of their wearing apparel, the new keeper and co-keeper had to take off any ring, necklace or other personal adornment made of copper, iron or other metal, as the wearing of metal adornments was forbidden them, apparently because such were from the whites. The two, but not the Pipe child, were each ritually invested with a necklace consisting of a large single shell on a string of twisted, not plaited, buckskin. The investure was done with three motions as if putting the necklace on, and at the third it was actually put on. Further the keeper, but not the co-keeper, had to frame his hair over his forehead with a large pompadour, as a sign of distinction.[1]

The new co-keeper also put some dried peppermint leaves mixed with poisonous wild parsley in a little buckskin sack which she then wore on her belt. This had a double purpose. First, the mixture being poisonous, she commanded respect. She must not be molested or even be bodily touched. Whoever molested or even touched her would suffer fits or spasms or a paralytic stroke. Second, she must live a virtuous life and not run around with other men. The co-keeper and keeper, as also the ex-co-keepers and ex-keepers, since they had all been consecrated with peppermint and fumigation could handle the wild parsley without danger, but the common people were not immune to its supposedly highly toxic effects.

On this second day a big feast was given. Most of the food was provided by the new keeper and his relatives. That eaten by the new keeper and co-keeper, who had been fasting from food and water since the time they were first siezed a good thirty or more hours previously, was provided by the ex-keepers.

At sundown the day's instruction ended. That night the new keeper and co-keeper, the ex-keepers and ex-co-keepers and two attendants slept in the double lodge, where the Pipe also remained.

Very early the next morning (or less probably late on the

[1] In 1948 The Boy added: "When a man became keeper, he ceased to comb his hair and it would get in all kinds of shapes and hang down. So he would take a bunch from the center and wind it round and round and tied that knot of hair around with a string. Whenever the keeper took off that string the people would be afraid!" [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 all ate plenty. Both the dancers and the grandfathers, and the latters' helpers, brought food. When the grandfathers brought food each would say to his respective grandson or team of two to four grandsons: "All right, my grandson(s), here is your milk." The grandsons or one of them would then get up, give the exclamation of thanks (according to Coming Daylight), and would kiss the "grandfather" and would "nurse."

In the course of the Crazy Dance, as at most other social and ritual large gatherings, it was customary for relatives of the dancers to give away presents in their honor, not to the dancers themselves, but to third parties.[10]

According to The Boy, a sweat-lodge rite was held in connection with the Crazy Dance, but we obtained no details. Presumably it followed the general pattern of the rite as carried out for the sacred Pipes.

*796 "Talking backward" was characteristic of the dancers' behavior during the day or days immediately following the four day rite, 195 but also, according to our informants, during the four-day rite itself. If the dancer said "Hit me real hard," he would be barely touched; if he said, "Don't hit me hard," he would be hit very hard. "Go away" meant "Come here"; and vice versa. An answer "yes" meant "no." "Raise it up," meant "Lower it down." "All right," a dancer would say "you fellows will not dance"; then he would sing and they would dance.

*796 The sex-test calls for more extensive explanation. It was a major, in a sense the major, feature of the Crazy Dance, the ●837 "sacrifice" about which the dance centered. The dancers were in a sense "throwing away," offering as a quasi-sacrifice, their wives or substitute women. In the sacred Pipe rites, the costly offerings were in material things, sacrifices in the strict sense of the term, in the Sacrifice Dance, the main offerings were the physical sufferings of the participants, "sacrifices" in an extended sense of the term; in the Crazy Dance, the "sacrifice" consisted more in the mental suffering of the dancers who submitted their wives or substitute women to a severe sex-test, a test which at best brought acute anxiety and embarrassment to all concerned. From the

[10] For example, see Flannery, 1953, p. 108.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

content,—the announcement and other prayers,—it seems fairly clear that the "sacrifice" by the Crazy Dance chief vower and his associates was offered to the Supreme Being. 796* 837

Just on what night or nights in the rite the test or tests took place was a point we did not clear up. Information regarding the form of this test was not revealed by elders to children, and actual happenings when given grandfathers and granddaughters were alone were commonly kept more or less secret by the two parties concerned, though the facts might leak out and founded or unfounded rumors were apparently often topics of gossip. The test itself took the following form.

Late at night the crier would go around the camp and bid all the people to go inside and shut their lodges and stay in, and not even stick their heads out because the grandfathers were going to come out. Anybody who disobeyed this order would be chased, caught, made to dance, kicked, and apparently hit with cactus-armed sticks. When all was quiet and all the people were indoors, the ceremonial grandfathers would go out beyond the camp circle, halting four times on the way, and would sit down in the dark scattered here and there, each a distance from the others. The men dancers stayed in camp, in the Crazy Dance lodge, and "sang brave songs" until their wives returned. Their wives or substitute women,—whether one for each individual dancer or successively one for each team of two to four is not clear—then went out to the grandfathers, one woman to each respective grandfather. The women were naked, except for a blanket or robe covering their bodies and leaving only their heads sticking out. Each carried with her a filled common pipe.

If at the last moment a dancer would not allow his wife to go out and meet his and her grandfather, or if she failed to do so, or if after going out she did not submit to the body-to-body test, the fact would be published and tongues would wag, and there might be other consequences. On one occasion, the story runs, among the women going out to the grandfathers was a pretty one who had a lover. The lover intercepted her on her way out, took her home, and eloped with her. He died soon after, his body having just shriveled and wasted away. On another occasion, a certain woman,

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 a noted singer well known to Coming Daylight, appears to have declined to submit, after she had gone out, to the body-to-body ●837 test, or at least to have resisted advances. On the way out she was heard to say: "Oh, I won't have this old man just for this little root [see infra]. If I wanted to own some medicine I could go and dig it out of the ground."

Each woman, when she had located her particular grandfather in the dark, would say: "Here, my grandfather, is a pipe." The grandfather would act as if hesitating to accept. He would not accept it right away. After he finally had accepted it, he would rub his palms on the ground and rub the pipe itself, "sort of cleansing it." Then he would pray with the pipe to the Supreme Being, for the woman, after which he smoked it alone. Then he rubbed his hands again on the ground and "felt (rubbed?) her all over, and cleansed her body."

After this she would lie down on the ground, supine and naked, and the "grandfather," likewise naked, would lie on her. In this position the ritual grandfather who had been chewing the powdered blackish medicine or sacred root, of a plant (unidentifiable by us) growing in the Rocky Mountains and not found in Gros Ventre territory proper, touched his lips to hers, and passed the chewed root from his mouth to hers. All this, as Coming Daylight put it, was considered "something holy" and "no sin whatever." Either the act or the root or both—we did not clear up this point—was supposed to impart what she called "life everlasting" (she probably meant "long life") to the woman. This root was chewed by the Crazy Dancers.

The ritual code which prescribed this body-to-body ceremony for the wife and her ceremonial grandfather, at the same time rigidly prescribed sexual intercourse between them. By code, the [786] ceremony was not ritual license but on the contrary a test, one set for the husband, the wife, and the ritual grandfather. "The husband," as The Boy put it, "was sending his wife to his ceremonial grandfather and giving her to him. It was figurative. It was giving but it [intercourse] was not supposed to happen but if it did, well it just did." As Mathilda Cuts-the-rope expressed it, "the test was for the husband to allow his wife to go out with the grandfather.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The husband would have to be a man of strong heart." The husband would be gravely anxious, and in a sense deeply embarrassed and humiliated, but could not show temper or "get mad"; "he would however have gotten mad," said Coming Daylight, "if his wife actually had had intercourse with the grandfather." 796* 837

The character test of the wife and grandfather was equally severe or even more so, but was, as is obvious, of a different nature. "These women [the wives or substitutes]," The Boy commented, "were usually young women, just enjoying life to the fullest measure. They were of that age, and to make the test more severe their husbands kept away from them before it so that the temptation would be greater, more intense. And the 'grandfathers' were not harmless old men." Apropos of this test, The Boy remarked: "It was known by the Gros Ventres that the female sex is the weaker one, but in such matters it is the stronger one . . . of old the Gros Ventres held this [sex] a great weakness of mankind."

Penalties for failure in the sex-test were either supernatural or social or both. One ritual grandfather, who on one occasion could not stand the test and who had intercourse with his granddaughter, was found dead in his bed before four nights had passed. If the couple succumbed, the fact was very apt to become known. "The woman," said The Boy, "would sometimes tell, or else the couple would give themselves away afterwards by their actions. . . . They would naturally brood over it [their failure]. . . . It would prey on their minds and they would blunder and make mistakes, and it would drive them downward, afraid to join in social life. People would begin to comment: 'What is the matter with these two?' The Gros Ventres were very inquisitive and would want to know what was the matter. The couple would be driven to make a confession and get it over with. Or something would happen anyway to confirm the suspicion that people had of them. . . . Even if the two were lovers, it would have been hard to do this [fail in the ritual] test and yet keep it quiet." [684]

There was, as would under the circumstances be suspected, appreciable differences of attitude toward this feature of the Crazy Dance on the part of husbands, wives and grandfathers. Some husbands, as we have seen, would not, for jealousy or for fear of

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 sexual mishap, join the Dance at all or permit their wives to join, even though such refusal was apt to entail a certain loss of face
837 or status, to subject those who refused to the charge of being over-jealous weaklings, of not having "strong hearts," of not being able to take it. Most at least, perhaps all, who joined, suffered grave anxiety or humiliation or both. Some of the wives and ritual grandfathers, probably the majority, were, it is clear, very reluctant to submit themselves to the test, for fear of the penalties for failure, and, so far at least as these wives were concerned, for dislike of the anxiety, embarrassment and humiliation involved. Some other wives and grandfathers, probably a majority, were, it seems equally clear, quite the reverse of reluctant.

A certain air of secrecy surrounded this whole matter of the sex-test, and actual occurrences connected with it and, when the test and occurrences were talked about, they were commonly discussed in hushed tones. It was consequently very difficult for us to discover what proportion of failures occurred. The Boy seemed to think that failures were somewhat less frequent than did Coming Daylight and Singer, but all agreed that some failures did occur. Many stories and rumors ran the round of gossip. A younger, middle-aged informant, Cora Chandler, used to hear these stories. One of them, heard by Coming Daylight and told us, was that one couple said: "Let's lie here longer. There is nothing to worry about." "Some of the women," she stated, "liked it all right, but some of them didn't. . . . Some returned (from their grandfathers to their husbands) quickly and others would take a long time."

*796 After the test the ceremonial grandfathers and the women would get up and the latter would go back to their husbands in the Crazy
842 Dance lodge. The attendants on watch at the door thereof would announce their arrival. Each husband would go to meet his wife who would give him back the pipe that she had taken with her and would give him the root (or some of it) that she had gotten from her grandfather. Then she went home to her lodge.

The purpose for which the root was used was not known to The Boy. To judge from a short dialogue recorded from Coming Daylight, it may have had something to do with fertility, child-

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

things together, and making ready a kit-fox skin stuffed to look like a live kit-fox. This last was used in the dance. The Gros Ventre made a great impression on his tribe and his dance was accepted and recognized as a Sacred Dance, and a vow was made to perform it." 773 539

The Kit-fox Dance was held, like the other dances, in the summer time,—about August, so Charles Buckman thought,—and everyone was obliged to be on hand for it. Preliminaries might however begin far back in the preceding winter, particularly the painting and taking out of the joiner's wives by the ritual grandfathers. This latter preliminary phase of the dance seems, from Coming Daylight's report (infra), to have been very similar to a corresponding phase of the Crazy Dance, but we were able to secure only the following, rather vague, account of it as described by Coming Daylight: 796*

"In the Kit-fox Dance the wives had to go out with their 'grandfathers' just as in the Crazy Dance. My uncle, Crow Bull, once joined it with his Assiniboine wife, Coming Day, and it took a long time. The 'grandfathers' used to take extra long [in preparation for] for this dance and, if the [preparatory] time was winter, they made nice places, brushing the snow away, where they would lie down with their ceremonial grandfathers. The 'granddaughters' would go to their 'grandfathers' ' lodges and then the 'grandfathers' would take them out, and the 'grandsons' would be painted. The 'grandsons' would have so to go for a long time, from winter to spring, to their 'grandfathers,' before actually joining the dance. So Crow Bull would go with his wife to his 'grandfather's' lodge to get instructions and each time he would be painted and the 'grandfather' would take Crow Bull's wife out and brush away the snow and lie with her." 796* 837

Besides the stuffed kit-fox skin mentioned in the origin story above, the Kit-fox Dance paraphernalia included two crooked sticks, used when dancing. These were shaped like a shepherd's crook or hockey stick, with strips of little otter skin carefully wrapped around them "all the way down" and with eagle-tail feathers tied to them here and there. The wrapping had to be done in a certain way, and only by a brave warrior. These sticks 796* 778

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

band, Little Man; Drops In The Fire, a horse for curing Crow Bull; Stiffarm, lots of things, horses and so forth, including "one lovely mare," for treating—unsuccessfully—Little Man. Good Singer received "horses, blankets and such things," for curing Singer herself. Bull Lodge was given "the best horses" for treating Al Chandler's uncle. All the foregoing payments were for cases of serious illness. Mae Main stated that a person who wanted to procure a certain contraceptive root would have to "pay a big price for this, sometimes two or three horses." 756

Sometimes, how commonly or rarely it is hard to say, a medicine man would stipulate sex relations as his payment or part thereof. Cora Chandler had heard "that some medicine men take women afterwards as part of the payment for curing." "This," she explained, "is why Coming Daylight was afraid of that medicine man when he was stark naked," having disrobed before starting to treat her (supra, p. 338). "Occasionally," Thomas Main had heard, "in very serious circumstances a man, to save the life of a brother or of someone dear to him, would pay the fee of giving his wife [allowing the doctor sex relations with her]." 837 756

The relative decline of native doctoring is due in part to the influence of the missionaries and of the civil authorities, in part no doubt to educational and other accultural factors. All the Gros Ventres today are members of the Catholic Church. "Joe Assiniboine," said Coming Daylight, "a good medicine man, still living [in 1940: he died in 1942 or 1943], never joined the Church; joining would take his power away from him." Stiffarm, one of the last of the great doctors, who died in 1932, on becoming a Catholic and later a catechist, is reported by one informant to have renounced his doctoring powers. One reason Coming Daylight gave for not accepting doctoring power herself was, "my children were all Catholics and I joined the Church and I will be a good Catholic till I die." Little Man, Al Chandler's adopted father, wanted to pass on some of his curing power to him, but Al did not want it, because, he said, he was afraid he would "poison someone" but also on account of the Catholic Church. . . . "The Catholics didn't want you to do such things." 177 795 756

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

782 837 Following is The Boy's account gotten from his father, Lame Bull, and given to us in 1939, with slight additions, in parentheses, from his quite similar account given us in 1945:

"This custom disappeared when Lame Bull was a small boy [hence, about 1832-35]. He remembered it distinctly, although he had seen it only once, in his early boyhood. The crier went around saying to everybody: 'Get ready everybody, after sunrise tomorrow morning, to see who is the woman most faithful to her husband.' The custom was carried out only once in a great while. A group of older men, not real old ones but those still active, would get together and agree that the test should be carried out.

"The very first thing the next morning, the crier went around and announced: 'This is meant for *every* married couple, old and young. Put on your best clothes. Start right away.' Then two of the biggest lodges in the camp circle were put together to make a two-lodge tent. After it was put up, the crier announced: 'Everyone come from every direction to the center-lodge.' All came, dressed up, especially the unmarried young men. (The young men before the test witnessed by Lame Bull had made it up among themselves, to get up and say publicly, 'That woman is lying,' should any woman get up and dance whom they knew to be lying about her fidelity.) (They had a brush shed at the front of the double-lodge, and the flaps of the lodge were raised so that more people could fit in and look on. The women had to sit inside. The only men inside were the singers and musicians, some standing and beating drums, others seated with their hands under the elkskin in front of them.) The singers sat in a circle with a big tanned elkskin in the middle, and each singer had two human shin-bones, one in each hand, and both shin-bones were notched saw-like with a series of notches. There were several pairs of these bones. When the singing began and the drum holders beat their drums, the bone holders sawed with the bones under the elkskin. A weird noise was made by the sawing together of these bones invisible to the onlookers. [534]

"Before the singing began, one man got up and told the women what the affair was about and the procedure in it, so that they would understand: 'The men are going to sing four times. If not a single woman gets up and dances and uncovers the human bones

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

782
837

under the elkskin, then there is not a woman in the entire Gros Ventre tribe who is faithful to her husband. And it would even look bad if one does exist but does not get up until the fourth singing.' Then he impressed on the women's minds that getting up and uncovering the human bones under the elkskin was like taking an oath. The older women might know that the things to be uncovered were human bones, but the younger ones might not.

"After this man was through talking, some of the older women got up and encouraged the younger women: 'Surely there ought to be one in this whole group who has been faithful to her husband. Don't fear. Be proud of the fact. Get up and dance.' When the singers started to sing [the song, number 69, was sung by The Boy and recorded by us], they started off with a bang, shouting and yelling and beating the drums fast. They sang the song once and then the second time, and then began making remarks: 'We have sung twice. There are no dancers yet. Only two more times are left.'

"They sang it the third time and still there were no dancers. A lot of the old women were now walking around and pleading with the young wives: 'Don't let this pass without at least one wife getting up.' Before the last song started, several of the leading men, too, said: 'This is the last time. If no married young woman dances and uncovers the scraping here, then not one Gros Ventre woman in the entire tribe is faithful to her husband.'

"Finally from about the center of the crowd of sitting women, a young woman got up and stepped out, amid much applause, for she was perhaps the comeliest young woman in the tribe. She sort of tucked up her skirts on both sides under her belt and started to dance toward the drumbeating and scraping. She danced fast, vigorously, like a man. She made four rounds, and on each of the first three made a pass with her hand toward the covered scraping. The fourth time she lifted the elkskin. The singing and the scraping with the bones stopped at once.

The young woman had to pause to catch her breath, saying: 'When I catch my breath I will tell you something.' When she had caught her breath, pointing around to all the men with a sweeping gesture she said: 'Plenty of nice young men are here but not one of them knows me [in the sense of sex relations]. The only man

Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

782 who knows me and whom I know is my husband. But many of you have tried to [seduce me] but did not succeed. Ninä:nä'ak is 837 listening to me and he knows I am telling the truth. Sunshine gives the most light, and what I have to say has nothing hidden in it. It is as true as the light of day which sunshine gives. My husband is off on a war party and he will distinguish himself during it, and this will be another mark that I am telling the truth.'

"Then the old men and old women drowned out one another singing her praises. All thought her a wonderful woman, being alone at night and so beautiful and yet withstanding all advances. Her name was Speaks Holy, and her husband's, Sun Old Man.

"After the bones had been uncovered a dance was held, including a contest between a man and a woman. A woman and a man [524] got up and danced toward each other, each making faces at the other, pulling noses, and so forth. The one who laughed first lost and was pushed back into his or her seat. The winner remained on the floor and challenged. Another, of the opposite sex, then got up from the side of the loser and contested with the previous winner. And so the contest went on until one, a man or woman, won in four successive bouts. When this happened he or she was the winner. All the people then threw them [each successive loser?] down and covered them up with their robes. Then there was food and feasting and the affair ended.

"There was no prayer or smudging or other rite, except the oath the woman took on the spot to the Supreme Being, Ninänä'äte. The young woman in the case had taken upon herself a serious thing. She took an oath. . . . She was glad of the opportunity to declare her fidelity. . . .

"At the end the double lodge was torn down. Early in the morning, after the third night, the war party returned. . . . Sun Old Man had counted coup, he had struck an enemy and had returned with something. So his wife must have told the truth, for nothing had been prearranged. All this added to the fury of other husbands against their wives. The women denied and said: 'We did not want to do this publicly. What that woman did in uncovering the bones was just a bid for notoriety. We can be faithful without doing that. We are humble.'

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

"Lame Bull said that the old men had told him that the Gros Ventres used to hold this test once in a while, but the only one he witnessed was the one described. He also said that they were going to hold this test again when he was a middle-aged man and were all ready to do so, when a war party came back, some of whose members had been killed in battle. So that spoiled the occasion. And after that, the test was never held." 782 837

Dreams, Visions and Auditions

Gros Ventre for "a dream" is kana:tĕ; for "a vision," and apparition seen while you are awake or "even while you are sleeping and somebody comes to you," be:tänɔhatsä:na', "something sacred I saw." In the following pages we are for clarity's sake distinguishing between dreams occurring in sleep and visions and auditions occurring in waking hours. What, if any, importance the Gros Ventres themselves attached to the distinction is not clear, although they of course were fully aware of it, as is obvious from their explicit statements in the cases recorded by us. It is quite clear, however, that such dreams, visions, and auditions played a major role in their magico-religious culture, and entered into it in numerous ways and on numerous occasions. Illustrative cases will be given presently. 787

Especially in the spring time older men, after going to bed at night, would command silence in the lodge and would sing and pray, informally without ritual observances, and would pray among other things for some good dream and for deep sleep[10] so that they would not wake up before the dream was over.

Dreams in which power was offered or imparted were supposed to be kept more or less secret. Such secrecy was not, however, called for, it seems, regarding other dreams.

Dreams as recorded by us fall into two categories, those in which gifts or messages were imparted to the dreamer by some being, and those in which interpretation of the meaning of the dreams

[10] The Arapaho, we were told, call this kind of sleep "thick sleep." In 1948 Tom Main said that the literal translation of the Gros Ventre word for "deep sleep" is actually "thick sleep." [R.F.]

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

A wife inherited practically nothing from her husband. If she had been faithful to him and had been of a good disposition, her parents-in-law might give her a certain number of horses or other property. The tent was considered the woman's possession while she lived with her husband; but on his death, even this was no longer her property. If the tent was worth keeping at all, it generally went to the dead man's sister, if she was newly married. A man, on the contrary, inherited his wife's property, though he generally gave back part of it to her relatives. 428 562 [422]

A woman, on her husband's death, went back to live with her parents, or, if these were dead, with her brother, uncle, or other relative. An old woman, on the death of her husband, generally went to live with her children, most frequently with a daughter. 768

On the death of a brother, especially a beloved one, or of his father or his son, a man cut his hair and went out naked (with only a buffalo robe) on the prairie to cry from morning until late at night. Women, besides cutting their hair, and cutting themselves (especially on the leg) until they bled, would also go out to cry, naked from the waist up. A sister cut herself for a brother, but a mother mourning for a child underwent the most pain. Of course the mourning was greatest for an only child. In such a case, parents might give away everything in their tent and nearly all their horses, stripping themselves of property so thoroughly as almost to go naked. Some mourners fasted for a number of days. If, while a person was crying on the prairie, one should in joke attempt to scare him, he might kill the disturber. Mourners were the bravest people in war, caring about no danger whatever. 765 [304] [431]

Burial was in trees, on high rocks, or in caves inaccessible to wolves and coyotes. The corpse was wrapped in a burial robe. 764

A menstruating woman was called niniitixtj. It is said that she did not retire to a separate lodge, or eat separately from her family; but she did not approach a sick patient, because of the evil effect she would have on his condition by her presence. Some women were said to wear a breech-cloth during their menstruation. 841 [291]

In childbirth, women either lay or knelt. They grasped a stick supported in a horizontal position by two upright forked sticks set in the ground. After the umbilical cord had been severed, the end was left on the child. It was thought to fall off on the fourth day. The woman who had cut the umbilical cord received as a gift the knife she had used. A woman who washed a new-born child was given the vessel in which it was washed. The afterbirth was hung in a tree. If it were left lying to be handled, the child would be afflicted with sores. For three or four days after birth, the child was given suck by other women than its mother. This statement apparently refers chiefly to a woman's first child. 844 [846]

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

CHAPTER VII

BIRTH AND INFANCY

Conception and Contraception

It was a common belief among the Gros Ventres that for conception to occur, sex relations must continue over a period of time, conception could not occur as the result of one copulation. The fact that a girl would be given in marriage before she reached physiological maturity tended to confirm this belief, which is also linked with another one, namely, that a girl would not menstruate unless and until she had experienced sex relations. This latter belief is reflected in comments made by old women concerning the young unmarried girls of the present day. Coming Daylight and Singer remarked on several occasions: "Nowadays girls are 'terrible.' They menstruate and have well-developed figures before they are married." These signs of physical maturity the old women take as absolute evidence of loose conduct on the part of the girl, regardless of what the facts in the individual case may be. 842 [582] 841 856

The Gros Ventres apparently recognized some relationship between conception and lactation. Coming Daylight, for instance, said: "The Indian women claim that they didn't become pregnant so soon if they nursed their babies. They always used to carry their infants about with them because, if they went far away and left them, their milk might spoil. The old-timers used to say that if a woman took good care of her children and kept them close to her, her family would not increase so rapidly. It is the young ones nowadays who have the bottle-fed babies!" 842

There were certain precautions, too, that a woman should take to keep her offspring properly spaced. "If you sit in the place from which a pregnant woman has just risen, you will conceive immediately. Dispose of the afterbirth quickly. Destroy all clothing worn during pregnancy, even moccasins, or give them to some woman past child-bearing age. If a woman put these clothes on again she would soon become pregnant. Nowadays though mo-

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

stance, it was the dark of the moon when a woman ceased menstruation, she kept track of the months by marking with charcoal on a piece of wood, or by notching a stick, each successive time the moon was in that phase and "she would usually estimate it right." 843 805 211

Childbirth usually took place right in the woman's own lodge. Should someone there be sick, he would be moved to another lodge if possible, for while it was considered bad for the sick person to be in the same lodge with a woman in her menses, it was much worse were the woman in labor, for the odor of the blood at delivery would affect the sick person adversely. In fact, a person who had only been near the place where a woman was being delivered was not allowed to come near a person who was ill. If the patient could not be moved, the woman in labor would go to another lodge, preferably to that of her grandmother or of her widowed aunt. She would avoid her own mother's lodge as her father or brothers might be around and she would be "ashamed" to go where they might be. 844 [841]

Although the attitude has somewhat changed now, in former times, according to Coming Daylight and Singer, a pregnant woman was supposed to be reticent regarding her condition right up to the last moment. She might suffer intensely, but "you would never know there was a thing wrong with her." Only when she seemed to be very close to term did they send for a midwife and for some old man or woman who would give her medicine. A male doctor did not touch a woman in labor, but would give her medicine to alleviate the pains. Mary told of her own experience. "There was a well-known doctor of this kind who died about ten years ago. He was blind and, when called on a case, would sit with a pot of medicine beside him. He attended me and when he heard me say I was in pain he would just touch me with the end of the stick and the cramps would go away. Finally I complained that I was tired. The midwife said that it would soon be over, but the old doctor told them: 'No. It hasn't turned yet.' I thought this was strange that he should know this as not only was he blind but he had not touched me. Later on he said: 'It will be about a half hour more.' And he was right." 844 756

Different practitioners have different methods. Singer witnessed the following case. "A man had received power from

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

CHAPTER IX

MARRIAGE

Polygyny and the Child-bride

The institution of the child-bride, combined with polygyny, was characteristic of Gros Ventre marriage up to about 1880. How far back it was practiced is difficult to say. Our informants who themselves were married off as children of ten or eleven to their first husbands about the year 1865, took the custom for granted and so far as they knew "it had always been that way."[1] 595 582

All girls were given in marriage before puberty, and usually as wives to older men with independent households. Because of the disparity in age between husband and child-bride, many of these girls were widowed early and remarriage was quickly arranged for them, even if the widow were not claimed by her husband's brother. Moreover, divorce or separation initiated by the husband was relatively easy and frequent. Consequently the majority of Gros Ventre women knew at least three or four different husbands, and often in fairly rapid succession. Upon successive remarriages the wife's age came to approximate more closely that of her husband. [586] [587] 582

Young men were not eligible for marriage until about twenty. By that time a young man would have attained proficiency in hunting and have taken the first steps in ceremonial life, being a member of one or other of the two adult men's societies, either the Wolf-men or the Stars. In addition he should have war-deeds to his credit and some property of his own, especially horses stolen from the enemy, in order to qualify as husband. In view of the fact, however, that very young girls were given more often to older already-married men, most young men marrying for the first time had as wife "an older experienced woman." Actually 582 587

[1] It was believed that a girl could not menstruate until after she had experienced sexual intercourse. If, therefore, a girl had her first menses before she had been given in marriage, her family would be disgraced. [841]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

793 co-keepers with her, but they or one of them would substitute for her in such minor duties as taking the Pipe out of the lodge in the morning and bringing it back in the evening when she was sick abed, or busy, or during her menses. During menses the [84] co-keeper was not allowed to handle the Pipe. After Crow Bull, 784] during his keepership, gave away his head wife and co-keeper, Digger, to Small White Cow in a drunken spree and Digger went away as wife to Small White Cow, Crow Bull's second oldest wife, Coming Day became co-keeper in Digger's place. If a man at the [784] time of becoming keeper had a young wife with an infant, she and the infant were sent away to another lodge as infant-crying was not allowed in the keeper's lodge where the Pipe was.

The Flat Pipe keeper, if he had two or more children, chose one and one only of his children, more commonly a boy, to be Pipe Child. It was a strict rule that he could keep only one of his children with him; all his other children had to live elsewhere than in their father's lodge, because, for one important reason, the Pipe was jealous. Some keepers were such rigorists in the matter that they practically forgot all their other children.

793 The children that were put out of their father's lodge naturally found this hard and rebelled, but they were trained to take it as 784 a matter of course. A special interest was taken by others in such 543 children as they were felt to be unfortunate in being deprived of the care and affection of their own parents. These children were permitted to visit their father and mother but they were under restrictions when they did so. Their grandmothers or foster parents would instruct them how to behave on such visits. They could not stay long, much less sleep there. They had to sit quiet in a special place in their parents' lodge and not roam around in it freely. They had to stay mostly near the door and not go near where the Pipe was. They were strictly forbidden to play in their father's lodge when visiting there. If their mother gave them something to eat they could eat it. They could sit on her lap. [781] But they could not talk loud or shout. When so visiting they were not at ease and felt sort of foreign and awestricken. The Boy 793 thought that these children may have been jealous of their sibling, 543 the Pipe Child, but in such case they would have had to keep

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

and as long as you live see that they do not sell it or part with it." 793
So at Curly Head's death the Pipe fell to Iron Man II (Tall 174
Jack), a relative of Curly Head, ~~who~~ since 1937 (1938) has looked after it. In 1948 it was still being kept in Curly Head's house.[8]

The normal term of keepership of the Feathered Pipe was 793
four years. The very first keeper held the office 80 years, according to the origin story given by Garter Snake, and some later ones, according to tradition, up to 20 years, but the usual limit was supposed to be at most two or three terms, that is eight or twelve years.

There was always a Pipe woman or co-keeper, wife of the keeper. She handled the Pipe bundle and in general had about the same ritual and other duties toward it as had the co-keeper of the Flat Pipe toward the Flat Pipe bundle. The Feathered Pipe keeper [841 ●
had to have at least two wives, for during her menses the co-keeper 595]
could not handle the bundle and had to sleep and live outside the keeper's lodge and another wife of the keeper had to substitute for her in the handling and care of the bundle.

There was always, too, a Pipe child,—a girl, unless the keeper had no daughters, in which case a son could be selected by him as Pipe child. Thus the oldest son of Sitting High, who had no daughters, became Pipe child. The Pipe child was not necessarily appointed at once by the keeper on assuming the keepership. Garter Snake was not made Pipe child until she was about six years old. Iron Necklace who had been Feathered Pipe keeper some

---

[8] In the summer of 1951, Iron Man, assisted by The Boy, had a ceremonial opening of the Feathered Pipe bundle. Dr. Louis B. Hagener, Professor of Biology of Northern Montana College, accompanied by his wife, and Dr. Otto Nitz, Professor of Chemistry, now at Stout Institute of Technology, Menominie, Wisconsin, were among the spectators. The pictures in Plates 2 B-C, 3 A-D, were taken by Dr. Nitz at that time. Dr. Hagener has kindly supplied information regarding the 1951 ceremonial. He writes under date of Aug. 8, 1954, as to final disposal of the Feathered Pipe bundle: "Since the young people were so apathetic over the bundle, its significance, and the ceremony, Iron Man and his wife had resolved not to open it again. They were debating as to whether it should be given to a museum or whether the tribe would outfit Iron Man and his wife for a journey and permit them to dispose of it somewhere in the mountains." [R.F.] [114 796 186]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

757 it drops off. It is powdered before use. Mary Ereaux' mother used
278 it, on a warm rag, for chickenpox. It was first gotten by a man who saw it in a dream and it said to him: "I am good for everything, to drink and to use externally too." It was this man who spread the knowledge of this medicine.[1]

For diarrhea a tea was made from the boiled roots of rose bush or cherry bush and drunk. For asthma and hay fever the vapor from juniper berries put in a pot of boiling water was considered helpful. Sage, in the very early days gathered and used only by sacred Pipe keepers, was later used by everybody: being rubbed and smelled for headache; the leaves especially the top ones, boiled and drunk for colds, coughs and tuberculosis.

The little daughter of Singer's husband, Iron Bucket, was "poisoned" [bewitched] on one occasion, when Singer was present, from some meat broth she had taken. After taking some of the broth, the little girl remarked "M-m-m this tastes funny." While Iron Bucket was telling stories, the little girl would interject from time to time the single word "moose." Finally she had a fit. They then gave her a lot of warm water as an emetic, and after she had vomited several times she recovered.

Raw liver and blood from a freshly butchered buffalo were considered as a cure for tuberculosis. Mary Ereaux' grandmother had told her that people would go after a man who had just butchered a buffalo to have him dip bits of the manifold in the warm blood and to have the children eat it as a delicacy.

Beaver oil from the oil sacs was used as medicine but we obtained no details.

[841] When a woman in her menses, or one who had been with a man the night before, entered the lodge of a sick person, the latter grew weaker. To protect the sick person fumigation was resorted to. Powdered beaver castor (always kept on hand if available, for this purpose) was put on live coals in a pan, and the patient without any clothing on, huddled beneath a blanket over the smoke so that it went all over the sick person's body.

757 Blood-letting was a common procedure, purely "rational" with no magic-religious element at all in it and calling for no "power"

[1] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, 226.

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

of the society. The officers were free to transfer their ceremonial 575
equipment to other members whom they would select. Following 796
the typical Gros Ventre pattern of transfer of ownership, the
recipient would present as lavish gifts as he could afford to the [431]
donor while the relatives of the recipient showed their appreciation of the favor to their kinsman by giving away expensive gifts in his honor. All of this took place publicly at the dance.

Particular dances and songs were attached to each office and the owners of the ceremonial drumsticks were required to know in correct order all the numerous songs and to provide the musical [533]
accompaniment for the whole ceremony. These four drumstick owners were joined in certain of the songs by four women singers selected from among the wives of the Wolf-men. The owners of the various objects were responsible for the proper care thereof, the crow-belts and the drum receiving most respect. When not in use, the crow-belts were kept wrapped in special bundles in the [841]
lodges of their respective owners, but were hung outside when the [784]
owner's wife was in her menstrual period. Moreover, those who [833]
danced wearing the crow-belts were obliged to refrain from sexual [782]
relations for two or three days previous to the dancing and, before donning the belts, to make a smudge of sweet-grass to incense themselves and the crow-belts. The drum, too, received special attention. One informant speaks of it as having been "nicely [534]
decorated," and we know from Kroeber's description[9] that the trimming was very similar to that of the Assiniboine Grass dance drum.[10]

Procedure. The actual dancing took place in a special circular 346
dancing-place in the center of the camp circle. This "corral," as 796
it was sometimes referred to, was constructed from several lodge covers, but was open at the top and the entrance thereto was at the east. The tipi of the drum-keeper was put up nearby. Opposite the opening of the "corral" was the place of honor where [554]
sat the officials,—with the exception of the sword owners, who with their assistants were at either side of the entrance. The 000

[9] Kroeber, loc. cit., p. 238.
[10] Lowie, R. H., The Assiniboine, AMNH-AP 4, pt. 1, 1909, p. 67.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

CHAPTER VII

BIRTH AND INFANCY

Conception and Contraception

It was a common belief among the Gros Ventres that for conception to occur, sex relations must continue over a period of time, conception could not occur as the result of one copulation. The fact that a girl would be given in marriage before she reached physiological maturity tended to confirm this belief, which is also linked with another one, namely, that a girl would not menstruate unless and until she had experienced sex relations. This latter belief is reflected in comments made by old women concerning the young unmarried girls of the present day. Coming Daylight and Singer remarked on several occasions: "Nowadays girls are 'terrible.' They menstruate and have well-developed figures before they are married." These signs of physical maturity the old women take as absolute evidence of loose conduct on the part of the girl, regardless of what the facts in the individual case may be. 842 [582] 841 856

The Gros Ventres apparently recognized some relationship between conception and lactation. Coming Daylight, for instance, said: "The Indian women claim that they didn't become pregnant so soon if they nursed their babies. They always used to carry their infants about with them because, if they went far away and left them, their milk might spoil. The old-timers used to say that if a woman took good care of her children and kept them close to her, her family would not increase so rapidly. It is the young ones nowadays who have the bottle-fed babies!" 842

There were certain precautions, too, that a woman should take to keep her offspring properly spaced. "If you sit in the place from which a pregnant woman has just risen, you will conceive immediately. Dispose of the afterbirth quickly. Destroy all clothing worn during pregnancy, even moccasins, or give them to some woman past child-bearing age. If a woman put these clothes on again she would soon become pregnant. Nowadays though mo-

842 thers wash such clothes and wear them again right after delivery—and they have a lot more babies now than they used to have, too."

Coming Daylight said that formerly most women had only two [163] or three children,—at most five,—and that some had none at all. Yet in the "old days" the population was large. Singer mentioned that although a man with several wives might have one as favorite, this would not make any difference. Each wife would have one or two children; no one of them would have a great many.[1]

These two old women, and our older men informants as well, were firmly convinced that "medicinal" contraceptives accounted for the small families. The old woman said: "Lots of women took medicine. There are roots for that [contraception]. Women who do not want children say, as an excuse, that one cannot keep things in order if there are children about. Not everybody had this kind of medicine, and one had to pay a high price for it—sometimes two or three horses. If a man were the owner of this type of medicine, he might demand in payment one of the other wives of the husband who obtained the medicine from him. If you take this kind of medicine you have to abide by certain rules. You must not let anyone who has children wear your robe; never sit on the bare ground; never hold an infant; don't sit on anyone's else bedding; above all, don't have intercourse with anyone other than your husband. If you break any of these rules you will conceive right away."

To illustrate this point, one woman told about her cousin's wife who had taken medicine to prevent her having children. While [837] her husband was away, she "threw in" with another man and became pregnant. Some women hesitated to take this kind of medicine because if a woman then became pregnant her husband would suspect infidelity, even though the wife had remained chaste but had "broken one of the other rules." Singer said that she would

[145] [1] This is confirmed by Denig, who was among the northern plains tribes for 20 years and was himself married to an Assiniboine. He makes the following observations, p. 513: (1) Not more than two out of five children live till youth is passed; (2) two to five children is the average and seven or eight of rare occurrence; (3) a woman is old at 35 and seldom healthy, menopause occurs at 40 or earlier, the usual period of child-bearing is 18 to 35, although a few start bearing at 15.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

have had good reason to have taken contraceptive medicine, since she had lost several children immediately after birth, but she was afraid to take it because her husband was "such a suspicious man." 842

A case was cited in which a man, who had this medicine, allowed only one of his nine wives to have a child, though he adopted at least one other child. It was believed that it was possible for a man to take contraceptive medicine, in which case it was not necessary for the wife to do so. Coming Daylight gave as an illustration the fact that her grandmother had no children by her first husband. Another example was given concerning a man who was known to have taken contraceptive medicine and none of whose wives had any children, although he adopted the son of one of them by a former marriage. Unfortunately he gave this adoptive son the medicine to drink and made the young man exceedingly unhappy, because he was very fond of children and none of his wives had any.

There were other medicines known which were said to prevent the birth of females and to permit males to be born. "If the wife of a man known to have this type of medicine gave birth to a daughter, the man would know it was not his child."

Contraceptive medicines might be offered to an individual direct by some supernatural being, but they could also be handed down in a family. Either a man or a woman could inherit this kind of medicine, use it personally, and treat others. It was said that many of these contraceptive medicines have been lost since for some time past it has been customary to bury the medicine with the individual owning it. The Boy was offered the knowledge of such medicine by a man, but he refused it.

Coming Daylight was offered this "power to know children" in a dream—that is, the power to avoid having children herself and to be able to administer the medicine to others. "The 'person' who wanted to give me the power told me, in my dream, to face the rising sun and he was just about to show me how to make a smudge from moss that grows on logs, when I told him: 'No: I would rather not have it.' Many a time 'they' tried to show me powers, but I would not be tricked into anything like that." As a matter of fact she loved children and wanted to have them. She ex- 842 787

842 pressed this desire early in life and volunteered the following story
[787] of her experience.

"My first husband, Dressed in White, went out hunting and
[587] brought back a lot of buffalo meat. I had my robe spread out just inside the door and he threw all the meat on it. Being hungry, I sat down there and was just about to eat the raw liver when he said: 'Wait! Don't eat that.' When I asked why not, he countered with the query: 'Do you like children?' To which I replied: 'You know I love children. I go wherever there is a baby—I love to have them on my lap.' So he said: 'Well, it is your fault that this is going to happen.' He took the oval piece of meat from the upper front quarter and roasted it in the coals. He then threw it to me in a careless way, instead of passing it to me as usual, and said: 'Here, you can have that for your son. You eat this plain—don't eat any tallow with it.' although they usually ate tallow with such lean meat. I said in disgust: 'E:ka:kya! I have always liked children,' and flung the meat out of the door. He said: 'Now that you have done this, you are going to have children from now on.' So, as he predicted, not long after that I became pregnant with my firstborn who was a boy. Unfortunately this boy died and I often wondered if it happened because I threw the meat too violently on that occasion when my husband had offered me the opportunity to choose whether or not I wished to bear children." Incidentally she remarked many times that she is happy she chose as she did,—otherwise now she would be all alone and her children have been so good to her.

The telling of the above incident brought to Coming Daylight's mind another, which confirms her belief in the relation between
[595] "medicine" and conception. "Crow Bull, my mother's brother, had four wives. His first wife did not have any children. Then
[582] he married an Assiniboine woman and still later took a third wife. Neither of the latter had children either until one time Crow Bull got mad. His third wife wanted to leave him for another man, but her relatives sent her back to Crow Bull. He, however, slept across from her bed and did not have intercourse with her. Shortly after this the Assiniboine woman did something to displease him and so he made up his mind: 'These two wives of mine
[789] are going to have children and settle down!' He had an old-fash-

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

ioned doll which he wrapped up like a sack-baby and, one night without letting her know what he was doing, he raised up the covers on his third wife's bed and put this doll under her. He did the same with the Assiniboine woman and said: 'She will have a boy, too.' As he had predicted, each bore him a son, and these two are the only children Crow Bull had. He later gave this doll to one of his niece's daughters, having 'sterilized' the doll first, however, so that the girl was not affected and subsequently gave birth to five children." 842 789

Natural sterility was apparently not recognized by the Gros Ventres. If a couple was childless it was assumed that contraceptive medicines were used. While many individuals did not approve of the use of these medicines, each family had the right to do as it pleased in this matter without outside interference. Nevertheless, The Boy, alarmed at the falling birthrate which he attributed to the widespread use of these old-fashioned medicines, on two occasions in 1921 and 1922 spoke out boldly in public about the matter. He feels he was justified in doing so since he thinks there has been an improvement in the situation. 842 [163]

Although the use of these medicines was rated by our informants as the major factor in accounting for the small number of children per family, infant mortality was said to have been high, and infanticide was known. [847]

For premature infants nothing could be done in the days before hospital care was known. Furthermore, where marked physical defects were obvious at birth, the chances that the infant would live were slight. It was stated, for instance, in regard to one woman who gave birth to a "little dog," that "had she been alone she would have done away with it, but her husband prevented her from doing so and everybody thought it was awful." Coming Daylight and Singer knew of two other actual instances of deformity,—one child who "looked like a beaver," and another who had "ears like a rabbit"—and both of these died shortly after birth. Coming Daylight remarked: "It seems as though we are so foolish the way we are ashamed of being deformed. One time when we were in town a white woman, whose face was quite disfigured, came into a restaurant where we were. My daughter told me: 'They [the whites] don't think anything of it. It can't be 845

844 756 'someone' [a supernatural agent] to relieve women in labor. His wife was assisting a woman who was experiencing great difficulty. She went to her husband and said: 'What are you made of that you don't pity and help us?' He paid no attention at first but finally gave in to her pleas. He said: 'All right. I will pity you folks. You blow this powdered medicine root on the nape of that woman's neck. Then boil a bit of this other medicine and give it to her with this horn spoon. Make her drink from this very spoon.' The treatment was successful and the child was born very shortly thereafter."

[842] 844 Sometimes such doctors would predict the sex of the expected child, but a common saying was that a woman herself could tell because "a boy will lie in the womb with his knees up, whereas a girl will lie flat."

It was not necessary to have both a midwife and a doctor if the midwife herself knew medicines. For instance, Coming Daylight's grandmother had medicines for childbirth and always looked after women without calling in anyone else. After Coming Daylight had borne her first child, her grandmother taught her all these medicines so that she in turn could assist her female relatives. They had to pay each one who helped at childbirth. The doctor, or the midwife who administered medicines, would receive as much as a horse, while the others who assisted were paid by gifts of lengths of cloth, blankets, or other articles of that sort.

The woman assumed a kneeling position and grasped a crossbar. "They won't let you lie down unless you are so weak you can't help yourself."[4] If a woman were slow in childbirth, the midwife tried to manipulate the foetus in the right place in order to speed the delivery. She massaged the woman gently and talked to her, telling her: "Take it easy. Don't think that you are going to have a hard time. Think of pleasant things. Make it easier for yourself."

Most women were very quiet even when the pains were bad. They always said that if a woman cries out she drives the child back. Furthermore, they said that it is bad if a woman turns and twists in pain as the cord will get all tangled up around the child.

Anyone assisting at the birth could cut the umbilical cord.

[4] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, p. 181.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 sexual mishap, join the Dance at all or permit their wives to join, even though such refusal was apt to entail a certain loss of face
837 or status, to subject those who refused to the charge of being over-jealous weaklings, of not having "strong hearts," of not being able to take it. Most at least, perhaps all, who joined, suffered grave anxiety or humiliation or both. Some of the wives and ritual grandfathers, probably the majority, were, it is clear, very reluctant to submit themselves to the test, for fear of the penalties for failure, and, so far at least as these wives were concerned, for dislike of the anxiety, embarrassment and humiliation involved. Some other wives and grandfathers, probably a majority, were, it seems equally clear, quite the reverse of reluctant.

A certain air of secrecy surrounded this whole matter of the sex-test, and actual occurrences connected with it and, when the test and occurrences were talked about, they were commonly discussed in hushed tones. It was consequently very difficult for us to discover what proportion of failures occurred. The Boy seemed to think that failures were somewhat less frequent than did Coming Daylight and Singer, but all agreed that some failures did occur. Many stories and rumors ran the round of gossip. A younger, middle-aged informant, Cora Chandler, used to hear these stories. One of them, heard by Coming Daylight and told us, was that one couple said: "Let's lie here longer. There is nothing to worry about." "Some of the women," she stated, "liked it all right, but some of them didn't. . . . Some returned (from their grandfathers to their husbands) quickly and others would take a long time."

*796 After the test the ceremonial grandfathers and the women would get up and the latter would go back to their husbands in the Crazy
842 Dance lodge. The attendants on watch at the door thereof would announce their arrival. Each husband would go to meet his wife who would give him back the pipe that she had taken with her and would give him the root (or some of it) that she had gotten from her grandfather. Then she went home to her lodge.

The purpose for which the root was used was not known to The Boy. To judge from a short dialogue recorded from Coming Daylight, it may have had something to do with fertility, child-

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

bearing, or child begetting. She had said to her husband on one occasion: "If I had joined it [the Crazy Dance] and had been given it [this root], I would use it." To this her husband replied: "You should not talk that way. You already have children. You should pray to the Supreme Being." In this connection it may be recalled that some once wanted Singer to join the Crazy Dance in order that her husband's other wife, pregnant at the time, would have a safe delivery. The root may also have been a medium through or by which long life was imparted to the woman. 796* 842

The chief events of the fourth and last day of the Crazy Dance proper were, after the preliminary body painting, the fire dance and the bow rites. 796*

According to The Boy and Thick, on this last day in their respective lodges the Crazy Dancers were painted up to represent owls,—why, we could not discover. Their bodies were painted yellow all over, to the elbows and knees; the forearms, and the legs from the knees down, solid black. On the chest was painted an owl, with wings spread, the wings represented by black strips extending along the arms. The dancers' left ears were daubed and plugged with white clay (and apparently a mushroom), so that hearing was blocked on that side. From the left side of the headband there hung an owl head (not a skull) over the left ear. 796* 302

In preparation for the fire dance, the ritual grandfathers treated the soles of the dancers' feet, according to The Boy and Thick,—their whole bodies, according to Coming Daylight,—with medicine. The dancers also, Coming Daylight implied, chewed this root during the fire dance. 796*

A prominent warrior "chief," from an age-group other than the one giving the dance, was then asked to make shavings out of a lodge pole for the fire. He would tell four of his outstanding war-deeds, and at each would make a motion as if starting to cut the shavings. After the fourth deed was told, he actually began making the shavings, continuing until he judged he had a pile big enough for the fire. Then he would light them. The fire was made in the middle of the Crazy Dance corral or lodge.

After the fire was started, there were four songs and four dances. One of these four, or else a song sung to the accompaniment

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the contrary, held to be holy and given special care.[8] They mentioned nevertheless that women of child-bearing age refrained from eating the two strips of flesh along the anterior of the backbone of buffalo lest twins result. 845 [262]

Coming Daylight said that she had heard of cases in the old days where twins would be separated,—one kept by the parents and the other adopted by someone else. Personally, however, she did not approve of this policy and when her daughter-in-law gave birth to twins she told her: "Be proud of them. Dress them alike and they will grow up well. Don't think more of one than of the other." She gave the same advice to her granddaughter when she in turn bore twins. The advice was not heeded in this instance and both the granddaughter and her husband adored one and neglected the other so that Coming Daylight herself took the neglected one. These twins were not quite a year old when the one loved by its parents died.

A middle-aged woman said that she had always heard regarding twins that they should be treated just alike and that the mother should always take both wherever she went and never leave one behind. Her own experience was a sad one. When her twins were about seven months old, one of them got sick and she had to take it to the hospital. The people at Hays told her: "You shouldn't leave one twin here." She, however, wanted to stay with the sick one, but the doctors sent her home. The twin left in the hospital died and people told her: "You shouldn't have left one there without the other."

Pregnancy and Childbirth

The only indication from these two oldest women informants of belief in prenatal impression was the remark of Coming Daylight when telling the story of a young man who opened the belly of a deer he had killed and found therein two young, each of which had "human faces." She said: "So they concluded that even animals get afraid and the young are marked." A younger woman mentioned that she had heard that if a pregnant woman looks at some- 843 825 843

[8] Kroeber, 1908, p. 182, gives the special names by which twins were called.

843 thing unusual it will affect her child and, further, that a woman in that condition should not look upon a corpse.

[845] Coming Daylight could not remember any cases of stillborn children, but finally Singer recalled that a woman, whom they both had known, had borne triplets which were dead at birth. Incidentally, this was the only case of triplets of which either had ever heard.

Certain prenatal care was taken to ensure easy delivery and healthy offspring. It was often mentioned that in the old days pregnant women were well taken care of. Coming Daylight explained it thus: " In those days a man usually had several wives so that the one who happened to be pregnant was looked after by the others and didn't have to work hard. She was not supposed to do any cooking, and, if it were absolutely necessary that she cook, she must wear something like a heavy apron to protect her lest the afterbirth stick. During hot weather she was supposed to wear a robe on her back, because they claimed that the heat was hard on the breasts. She was not allowed to pack heavy loads. They believed that she should work, but not enough to wear herself out. She was taught to take certain precautions. My grandmother, especially, would tell me, when I was pregnant, such things as: 'If you have to change sides while lying in bed, sit up first and then lie down on the other side. [illegible]t just roll over, or the cord will wrap around the infant's hea[illegible]ou leave your lodge, you mustn't stand in the door, you mu[illegible] right through, so the baby will come quickly. Never back into a lodge because that will make the infant come the wrong way.' "

Coming Daylight claimed that she always got along well in childbirth because her infants were small and she followed the advice given her. Her firstborn was the most difficult, as is usual for most women, but her husband was a very fine, mature man who hadn't let her do anything to injure herself during pregnancy. Furthermore he followed the customary Gros Ventre abstention, being " very careful especially during the last month, when Gros Ventre men refrain absolutely from intercourse with their pregnant wives lest, when the infant is born, it be covered with a lot of ' white lard-like stuff.' "

[805] [211] The length of gestation was counted by moons. If, for in-

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

stance, it was the dark of the moon when a woman ceased menstruation, she kept track of the months by marking with charcoal on a piece of wood, or by notching a stick, each successive time the moon was in that phase and "she would usually estimate it right." 843 805 211

Childbirth usually took place right in the woman's own lodge. Should someone there be sick, he would be moved to another lodge if possible, for while it was considered bad for the sick person to be in the same lodge with a woman in her menses, it was much worse were the woman in labor, for the odor of the blood at delivery would affect the sick person adversely. In fact, a person who had only been near the place where a woman was being delivered was not allowed to come near a person who was ill. If the patient could not be moved, the woman in labor would go to another lodge, preferably to that of her grandmother or of her widowed aunt. She would avoid her own mother's lodge as her father or brothers might be around and she would be "ashamed" to go where they might be. 844 [841]

Although the attitude has somewhat changed now, in former times, according to Coming Daylight and Singer, a pregnant woman was supposed to be reticent regarding her condition right up to the last moment. She might suffer intensely, but "you would never know there was a thing wrong with her." Only when she seemed to be very close to term did they send for a midwife and for some old man or woman who would give her medicine. A male doctor did not touch a woman in labor, but would give her medicine to alleviate the pains. Mary told of her own experience. "There was a well-known doctor of this kind who died about ten years ago. He was blind and, when called on a case, would sit with a pot of medicine beside him. He attended me and when he heard me say I was in pain he would just touch me with the end of the stick and the cramps would go away. Finally I complained that I was tired. The midwife said that it would soon be over, but the old doctor told them: 'No. It hasn't turned yet.' I thought this was strange that he should know this as not only was he blind but he had not touched me. Later on he said: 'It will be about a half hour more.' And he was right." 844 756

Different practitioners have different methods. Singer witnessed the following case. "A man had received power from

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

A wife inherited practically nothing from her husband. If she had been faithful to him and had been of a good disposition, her parents-in-law might give her a certain number of horses or other property. The tent was considered the woman's possession while she lived with her husband; but on his death, even this was no longer her property. If the tent was worth keeping at all, it generally went to the dead man's sister, if she was newly married. A man, on the contrary, inherited his wife's property, though he generally gave back part of it to her relatives. 428 562 [422]

A woman, on her husband's death, went back to live with her parents, or, if these were dead, with her brother, uncle, or other relative. An old woman, on the death of her husband, generally went to live with her children, most frequently with a daughter. 768

On the death of a brother, especially a beloved one, or of his father or his son, a man cut his hair and went out naked (with only a buffalo robe) on the prairie to cry from morning until late at night. Women, besides cutting their hair, and cutting themselves (especially on the leg) until they bled, would also go out to cry, naked from the waist up. A sister cut herself for a brother, but a mother mourning for a child underwent the most pain. Of course the mourning was greatest for an only child. In such a case, parents might give away everything in their tent and nearly all their horses, stripping themselves of property so thoroughly as almost to go naked. Some mourners fasted for a number of days. If, while a person was crying on the prairie, one should in joke attempt to scare him, he might kill the disturber. Mourners were the bravest people in war, caring about no danger whatever. 765 [304] [431]

Burial was in trees, on high rocks, or in caves inaccessible to wolves and coyotes. The corpse was wrapped in a burial robe. 764

A menstruating woman was called niniitixtj. It is said that she did not retire to a separate lodge, or eat separately from her family; but she did not approach a sick patient, because of the evil effect she would have on his condition by her presence. Some women were said to wear a breech-cloth during their menstruation. 841 [291]

In childbirth, women either lay or knelt. They grasped a stick supported in a horizontal position by two upright forked sticks set in the ground. After the umbilical cord had been severed, the end was left on the child. It was thought to fall off on the fourth day. The woman who had cut the umbilical cord received as a gift the knife she had used. A woman who washed a new-born child was given the vessel in which it was washed. The afterbirth was hung in a tree. If it were left lying to be handled, the child would be afflicted with sores. For three or four days after birth, the child was given suck by other women than its mother. This statement apparently refers chiefly to a woman's first child. 844 [846]

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

A plant called häyaa"t[a] is used both as a perfume and as a medicine. Pieces of it tied by a string to the shoulder of the shirt give a pleasant smell. It is also laid in warm water without being boiled, and the water is then used as medicine for sore eyes (specimen Museum No. 50-1883). 278 757

In case of snow-blindness, charcoal is put around the eyes, and believed to be very efficacious.

The green stems of a plant containing a white juice are used for women who have no milk. The Arapaho use the same plant for a similar purpose, and call it "milk liquid." [1]

A root called bäetset ("hand," on account of the peculiar conformation of the roots) is laid in very small quantity into cold water, which is drunk by women to insure easy child-birth (specimen Museum No. 50-1946). [844]

The flowers of a composita called niha"äñnou ("yellow-head") or tjitjixtä"sibyiisöö are put on coals for a woman who has given birth. She stands above the fire to incense herself (specimen Museum No. 50-1944).

Another plant called niha"näñnou ("yellow-head"), which grows close to the water, is boiled, and drunk for pain in the back or in the body (specimen Museum No. 50-1945).

A root called niitasou ("sharp") is pulverized, and then applied to sores in the mouth and on the tongue (specimen Museum No. 50-1838).

A rock lichen called benaatsön is chewed for a sore mouth (specimen Museum No. 50-1874).

The root of tyätyaniçä is obtained from swampy land far to the north of the Gros Ventre habitat. The roots are soaked in water and the black portions removed. Then they are grated, mixed with water, and applied to the neck for sores (specimen Museum No. 50-1907).

A root called koub'ya" is chewed until a sticky paste results, which is applied to sores (specimen Museum No. 50-1919).

A fungus called tsäadjina" is set on fire, and when glowing is applied to wounds or sores. It is also pulverized, and put on the gums of children when they are teething. It is said to grow on birch-trees, near the root (specimen Museum No. 50-1837). [752]

The roots of iniitsöö are boiled and the water used to wash the part of the body which has been burned by the application of the glowing fungus tsäadjina" (specimen Museum No. 50-1856). [752]

Hyaa"tou-leaves, which are also used as incense, are boiled in water. This is then applied to the body to allay pain (specimen Museum No. 50-1790). This medicine is the Arapaho niiba"tou or iiba"tou (fir or similar leaves), used both as incense [2] and as medicine.[3]

[1] See Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part IV, p. 438.
[2] Ibid., Vol. XVIII, Part I, p. 32.
[3] Ibid., Part IV, p. 420.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

stance, it was the dark of the moon when a woman ceased menstruation, she kept track of the months by marking with charcoal on a piece of wood, or by notching a stick, each successive time the moon was in that phase and "she would usually estimate it right." 843 805 211

Childbirth usually took place right in the woman's own lodge. Should someone there be sick, he would be moved to another lodge if possible, for while it was considered bad for the sick person to be in the same lodge with a woman in her menses, it was much worse were the woman in labor, for the odor of the blood at delivery would affect the sick person adversely. In fact, a person who had only been near the place where a woman was being delivered was not allowed to come near a person who was ill. If the patient could not be moved, the woman in labor would go to another lodge, preferably to that of her grandmother or of her widowed aunt. She would avoid her own mother's lodge as her father or brothers might be around and she would be "ashamed" to go where they might be. 844 [841]

Although the attitude has somewhat changed now, in former times, according to Coming Daylight and Singer, a pregnant woman was supposed to be reticent regarding her condition right up to the last moment. She might suffer intensely, but "you would never know there was a thing wrong with her." Only when she seemed to be very close to term did they send for a midwife and for some old man or woman who would give her medicine. A male doctor did not touch a woman in labor, but would give her medicine to alleviate the pains. Mary told of her own experience. "There was a well-known doctor of this kind who died about ten years ago. He was blind and, when called on a case, would sit with a pot of medicine beside him. He attended me and when he heard me say I was in pain he would just touch me with the end of the stick and the cramps would go away. Finally I complained that I was tired. The midwife said that it would soon be over, but the old doctor told them: 'No. It hasn't turned yet.' I thought this was strange that he should know this as not only was he blind but he had not touched me. Later on he said: 'It will be about a half hour more.' And he was right." 844 756

Different practitioners have different methods. Singer witnessed the following case. "A man had received power from

844 'someone' [a supernatural agent] to relieve women in labor. His
856 wife was assisting a woman who was experiencing great difficulty. She went to her husband and said: 'What are you made of that you don't pity and help us?' He paid no attention at first but finally gave in to her pleas. He said: 'All right. I will pity you folks. You blow this powdered medicine root on the nape of that woman's neck. Then boil a bit of this other medicine and give it to her with this horn spoon. Make her drink from this very spoon.' The treatment was successful and the child was born very shortly thereafter."

[842] Sometimes such doctors would predict the sex of the expected
844 child, but a common saying was that a woman herself could tell because "a boy will lie in the womb with his knees up, whereas a girl will lie flat."

It was not necessary to have both a midwife and a doctor if the midwife herself knew medicines. For instance, Coming Daylight's grandmother had medicines for childbirth and always looked after women without calling in anyone else. After Coming Daylight had borne her first child, her grandmother taught her all these medicines so that she in turn could assist her female relatives. They had to pay each one who helped at childbirth. The doctor, or the midwife who administered medicines, would receive as much as a horse, while the others who assisted were paid by gifts of lengths of cloth, blankets, or other articles of that sort.

The woman assumed a kneeling position and grasped a crossbar. "They won't let you lie down unless you are so weak you can't help yourself."[4] If a woman were slow in childbirth, the midwife tried to manipulate the foetus in the right place in order to speed the delivery. She massaged the woman gently and talked to her, telling her: "Take it easy. Don't think that you are going to have a hard time. Think of pleasant things. Make it easier for yourself."

Most women were very quiet even when the pains were bad. They always said that if a woman cries out she drives the child back. Furthermore, they said that it is bad if a woman turns and twists in pain as the cord will get all tangled up around the child.

Anyone assisting at the birth could cut the umbilical cord.

[4] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, p. 181.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

"They usually cut the cord long, say four to six inches, because they were afraid the infant would bleed to death if they cut it short. You kind of drain it and get it cleaned out and tie it once. Apply a powdered root and then put a band around the body. It usually takes four days before it drops off." Since the cord is part of the body and they wanted to keep it close to its owner, when the cord came off, they placed it in a small fancy bag filled with sweetgrass or tobacco and pinned the bag to the clothing right at the back of the neck. Singer said that she had heard that boys used to wear this little bag tied to the wrist rather than at the back of the neck as girls did. Good care was taken of the bag until adulthood. The bag was usually in the shape of a turtle, with a little head. Although Coming Daylight had made two such bags, she didn't know why they used this shape except that it had been done thus for generations.[6] Mary's grandmother, however, made a little container for Mary's own son and it was in the shape of a snake with a head. Mary added: "And the Gros Ventres don't like snakes either. But my grandmother made that one in the shape of a snake on account of a dream she had." 844 [415 532] [825]

The afterbirth was disposed of just as soon as possible, preferably by having someone place it good and high in the branches of a tree.[6] The person who disposed of the afterbirth was not supposed to let anyone see him do so, although the informants did not know the reason for the secrecy. It is more customary at present to burn the afterbirth as the whites do, but Coming Daylight remarked that she had done that only once,—on the occasion when she was caught out in the open all alone and had to deliver herself.

A mother rested quite a while after her child was born because it was said that working would make her sweat and that would hurt her milk. The child of a woman who worked a great deal immediately after its birth would not grow up to be so healthy as the child of one who took it easy. In the opinion of Coming Daylight and of Singer a woman should sit up only after four days and get up and be walking around in about ten days. Coming Daylight her- 846

[6] For discussion of these navel amulets and illustrations thereof, see Kroeber, 1908, pp. 166–67, and plate IX.

[6] "If it were left lying to be handled, the child would be afflicted with sores." Kroeber, 1908, p. 181.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

551 Names were given to children very soon after birth. Names were fre-
553 quently changed and given away. A man would receive his father's name from the latter, or would take it after his death. If a child were sickly, a relative, such as a grandfather, sometimes gave him another name. A sick person sometimes also took a new name in order to recover. Renowned warriors sometimes gave away their names to young men. They might retain the same name for themselves, or take a new one. One very aged man gave away his name to a young man, telling him, "I give you my name in order that you may have as long a life as I." This was done without the occasion or accompaniment of a ceremony.

There seems to have been no prohibition against mentioning the name of the dead, nor even any reluctance on the matter. Some people, however, were ashamed to speak their own names.

551 Twins, called niiçan, were named, if boys, respectively Kaaen and Niiçan.
845 The latter name, however, was not always used, an ordinary name being given instead. Girl twins were not called by these names.

302 The hair was formerly worn in braids, as at present customary among the Plains tribes, but also erect over the forehead. The women wore their
[765] hair either in braids or sometimes loose. In mourning, the hair, especially of the women, was cut about halfway across the cheek.

304 Ear-piercing, which among the Arapaho is performed on ceremonial occasions, and is itself accompanied with ceremony and giving of presents, was said among the Gros Ventre to be unaccompanied by special ceremonial actions. A woman or any one else does the piercing.

857 Boys who were herding horses sometimes took off their clothes and daubed themselves with mud until they were unrecognizable. They painted
673 their horses, and made shields of willow. Then they came to the camp,
868 mounted or on foot, to steal meat. Approaching the camp like a war-party, they would select the best meat hanging outdoors, charge on it, take it, and run. The old men and women and children chased them with clubs, but of course without success. The boys would go back to where they were herding, and have a feast.

576 The Gros Ventre say that both hand-shaking and kissing are aboriginal with them.

GAMES.

524 A common cup-and-ball game called tsöötskuutjan ("throw in") consisted of four hollow deer or antelope leg bones, each about two inches long, attached to a string passing through them, at the end of which there was a needle eight or ten inches long. This game appears to be identical with

593 alluded to or occur in the presence of either his father or mother. To appear unclothed in each other's presence would be embarass-
[591] ing to father and son alike. A woman refrained from any conversation or action that would call the attention of her father to the fact that she was menstruating or pregnant. An example of the
[845] attitude in this regard came to attention recently. "A woman, who was walking along the road near her house one evening, suffered a miscarriage. Instead of being taken to her own house nearby she insisted on being taken to a neighbor's, her reason being that her father and a few of his friends had been at her home when she had left and she would be 'ashamed' to appear in front of him in her condition."

It would seem that in some ways mothers had closer ties with their daughters and fathers with their sons. If, for example, parents disagreed about something their children did, each took up for the child of like sex. A man said to his wife: "You leave the boy alone, he's *my* boy," and a woman would say the same regarding the daughter. Or had a child done something to disgrace the parents, the wife was likely to upbraid her husband, if a boy were the culprit, by telling him: "Your son did so-and-so!" Should
[597] the daughter have been at fault, her father would speak in similar vein to his wife. In cases of adoption, too, a woman claimed a girl and a man, a boy.

On the other hand, in circumstances where parents could publicly show pride in their children, it often happened that a woman gave presents away in honor of her son and a man in honor of his daughter. It was customary, too, that if a young man had done something especially noteworthy at war, anyone could approach his mother and ask for whatever was wanted, and she would give it. Middle-aged women, whose sons were in World War II, joked with each other along these lines when news of their sons came from the front. Unfortunately, however, adverse economic circumstances precluded the full carrying out of the custom.

604 Attitudes of respect and reserve between parents and children
601 are extended to include all of parents' siblings and their spouses, special emphasis being put on father's sister and mother's brother. Kinship terms reflect this situation. The term "father" includes father's brother, male cousin, mother's sister's husband; "mo-

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

ioned doll which he wrapped up like a sack-baby and, one night without letting her know what he was doing, he raised up the covers on his third wife's bed and put this doll under her. He did the same with the Assiniboine woman and said: 'She will have a boy, too.' As he had predicted, each bore him a son, and these two are the only children Crow Bull had. He later gave this doll to one of his niece's daughters, having 'sterilized' the doll first, however, so that the girl was not affected and subsequently gave birth to five children." 842 789

Natural sterility was apparently not recognized by the Gros Ventres. If a couple was childless it was assumed that contraceptive medicines were used. While many individuals did not approve of the use of these medicines, each family had the right to do as it pleased in this matter without outside interference. Nevertheless, The Boy, alarmed at the falling birthrate which he attributed to the widespread use of these old-fashioned medicines, on two occasions in 1921 and 1922 spoke out boldly in public about the matter. He feels he was justified in doing so since he thinks there has been an improvement in the situation. 842 [163]

Although the use of these medicines was rated by our informants as the major factor in accounting for the small number of children per family, infant mortality was said to have been high, and infanticide was known. [847]

For premature infants nothing could be done in the days before hospital care was known. Furthermore, where marked physical defects were obvious at birth, the chances that the infant would live were slight. It was stated, for instance, in regard to one woman who gave birth to a "little dog," that "had she been alone she would have done away with it, but her husband prevented her from doing so and everybody thought it was awful." Coming Daylight and Singer knew of two other actual instances of deformity,—one child who "looked like a beaver," and another who had "ears like a rabbit"—and both of these died shortly after birth. Coming Daylight remarked: "It seems as though we are so foolish the way we are ashamed of being deformed. One time when we were in town a white woman, whose face was quite disfigured, came into a restaurant where we were. My daughter told me: 'They [the whites] don't think anything of it. It can't be 845

845 helped.' But we Gros Ventres think so much of anything like that and if one of our own is deformed we almost want to die over it."[8]

847 Instances were known in which a normal infant, abandoned by its parents, was picked up and raised by someone else. Cora, for 597 instance, had been told that when the third successive daughter was born to her maternal grandparents, the father was angry because he had badly wanted a son. He ordered that the infant be abandoned to die. She was saved, however, when the father's "inseparable-friend" found and adopted her. Again, Charles Buckman had heard that his great-grandfather one morning very early was attracted by the sound of an infant crying in the bush. He found the newborn baby and took it to his lodge, telling his wife to find a woman to nurse it. He raised this infant as his daughter.

847 The case of infanticide that stands out most clearly in the minds of Singer and Coming Daylight is that of twins born to the latter's 845 sister. Coming Daylight was present at the birth and saw that her sister felt terrible about having borne twins. "My sister said: 'I won't nurse them anyway, so just take them away.' So they were both taken off in the bush; the boy was already dead and the girl froze to death. My sister was a terribly proud woman and was afraid people would think she was over-sexed. Besides she hadn't wanted any more children, since her two other sons were fairly well grown, and she maintained that a woman couldn't keep as neat with infants about. I had been waiting for my sister's husband to speak up, but he didn't say a word. I, however, told my sister: 'It is a bad thing to get rid of those babies, something will happen as a consequence.' As I had predicted, the next baby my sister had took her life. When trying to persuade her not to do away with the infants, I had used as one argument that white people have twins more often than Indians, but she persisted in maintaining that it was a disgrace." Mary remarked while Coming Daylight was telling this story of her sister: "My mother used to think it was so funny that white people are proud of twins!"

845 The attitude towards twins seems to have changed, as younger informants did not indicate that twins were considered a disgrace. For instance both The Boy and Thick insisted that twins were, on

[8] Cf. Denig, p. 403.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the contrary, held to be holy and given special care.[8] They mentioned nevertheless that women of child-bearing age refrained from eating the two strips of flesh along the anterior of the backbone of buffalo lest twins result. 845 [262]

Coming Daylight said that she had heard of cases in the old days where twins would be separated,—one kept by the parents and the other adopted by someone else. Personally, however, she did not approve of this policy and when her daughter-in-law gave birth to twins she told her: "Be proud of them. Dress them alike and they will grow up well. Don't think more of one than of the other." She gave the same advice to her granddaughter when she in turn bore twins. The advice was not heeded in this instance and both the granddaughter and her husband adored one and neglected the other so that Coming Daylight herself took the neglected one. These twins were not quite a year old when the one loved by its parents died.

A middle-aged woman said that she had always heard regarding twins that they should be treated just alike and that the mother should always take both wherever she went and never leave one behind. Her own experience was a sad one. When her twins were about seven months old, one of them got sick and she had to take it to the hospital. The people at Hays told her: "You shouldn't leave one twin here." She, however, wanted to stay with the sick one, but the doctors sent her home. The twin left in the hospital died and people told her: "You shouldn't have left one there without the other."

Pregnancy and Childbirth

The only indication from these two oldest women informants of belief in prenatal impression was the remark of Coming Daylight when telling the story of a young man who opened the belly of a deer he had killed and found therein two young, each of which had "human faces." She said: "So they concluded that even animals get afraid and the young are marked." A younger woman mentioned that she had heard that if a pregnant woman looks at some- 843 825 843

[8] Kroeber, 1908, p. 182, gives the special names by which twins were called.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

843 thing unusual it will affect her child and, further, that a woman in that condition should not look upon a corpse.

[845] Coming Daylight could not remember any cases of stillborn children, but finally Singer recalled that a woman, whom they both had known, had borne triplets which were dead at birth. Incidentally, this was the only case of triplets of which either had ever heard.

Certain prenatal care was taken to ensure easy delivery and healthy offspring. It was often mentioned that in the old days pregnant women were well taken care of. Coming Daylight explained it thus: " In those days a man usually had several wives so that the one who happened to be pregnant was looked after by the others and didn't have to work hard. She was not supposed to do any cooking, and, if it were absolutely necessary that she cook, she must wear something like a heavy apron to protect her lest the afterbirth stick. During hot weather she was supposed to wear a robe on her back, because they claimed that the heat was hard on the breasts. She was not allowed to pack heavy loads. They believed that she should work, but not enough to wear herself out. She was taught to take certain precautions. My grandmother, especially, would tell me, when I was pregnant, such things as: 'If you have to change sides while lying in bed, sit up first and then lie down on the other side. Don't just roll over, or the cord will wrap around the infant's head. If you leave your lodge, you mustn't stand in the door, you must go right through, so the baby will come quickly. Never back into a lodge because that will make the infant come the wrong way.' "

Coming Daylight claimed that she always got along well in childbirth because her infants were small and she followed the advice given her. Her firstborn was the most difficult, as is usual for most women, but her husband was a very fine, mature man who hadn't let her do anything to injure herself during pregnancy. Furthermore he followed the customary Gros Ventre abstention, being " very careful especially during the last month, when Gros Ventre men refrain absolutely from intercourse with their pregnant wives lest, when the infant is born, it be covered with a lot of 'white lard-like stuff.' "

[805] [211] The length of gestation was counted by moons. If, for in-

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 608 The chief vower and her associate dancers had no ceremonial grandfathers but each one had a ceremonial grandmother, an old woman "who had retired and reached end of the road."

The chief vower would take a pipe filled with tobacco, offer it to an old woman, so requesting her to be grandmother and to be the "boss" and "manager" of the dance. This latter woman was in charge of the dance and told the others what to do, and was said to "make the dance for" the chief vower. The dance was held so often that all the dancers knew what was to come next, but nevertheless they would await instructions from the "boss." On one occasion when Coming Daylight was a "calf," the chief vower was a very old woman, Digger, at one time married to Crow Bull, and the "boss" was Matter-in-the-ear. After the latter had "made the dance for" Digger, the latter could "make it for" some other [845] woman. On another occasion, a woman named Hairy Woman (born with lanugo) was "boss." According to Coming Daylight, the "boss" was called "grandmother" by all the women dancers.

*796 The women dancers were considered as buffalo "cows," and as "mothers" to the "calves." One of the old women dancers played the role of buffalo "bull."

The "calves" were very young girls, not necessarily "dearly-loved" children, although there was a certain preference for them. There could be more than one girl "calf" for each dance. In one of the two dances in which Coming Daylight was a "calf," there were four girl "calves," all of them associated with the "shorts," and one boy "bull calf." The "talls" on this occasion could get no "calf" as they were too poor to give things away, as was *de rigeueur,* for the "calves." "Dearly-loved" children were preferred for the reason that their people would usually be in a position to make such presents.

When Coming Daylight was asked to take the part of a "calf" in the Women's Dance, she was a very little girl, then living with her grandmother. Two women, apparently the two waiters or attendants, came into her grandmother's lodge. One of the two at once offered Coming Daylight a big pipe, stem first, filled with tobacco mixture. She did not take it right away as she did not know what the action meant. The woman said to her: "Take it. We

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

A wife inherited practically nothing from her husband. If she had been faithful to him and had been of a good disposition, her parents-in-law might give her a certain number of horses or other property. The tent was considered the woman's possession while she lived with her husband; but on his death, even this was no longer her property. If the tent was worth keeping at all, it generally went to the dead man's sister, if she was newly married. A man, on the contrary, inherited his wife's property, though he generally gave back part of it to her relatives. 428 562 [422]

A woman, on her husband's death, went back to live with her parents, or, if these were dead, with her brother, uncle, or other relative. An old woman, on the death of her husband, generally went to live with her children, most frequently with a daughter. 768

On the death of a brother, especially a beloved one, or of his father or his son, a man cut his hair and went out naked (with only a buffalo robe) on the prairie to cry from morning until late at night. Women, besides cutting their hair, and cutting themselves (especially on the leg) until they bled, would also go out to cry, naked from the waist up. A sister cut herself for a brother, but a mother mourning for a child underwent the most pain. Of course the mourning was greatest for an only child. In such a case, parents might give away everything in their tent and nearly all their horses, stripping themselves of property so thoroughly as almost to go naked. Some mourners fasted for a number of days. If, while a person was crying on the prairie, one should in joke attempt to scare him, he might kill the disturber. Mourners were the bravest people in war, caring about no danger whatever. 765 [304] [431]

Burial was in trees, on high rocks, or in caves inaccessible to wolves and coyotes. The corpse was wrapped in a burial robe. 764

A menstruating woman was called niniftixtj. It is said that she did not retire to a separate lodge, or eat separately from her family; but she did not approach a sick patient, because of the evil effect she would have on his condition by her presence. Some women were said to wear a breech-cloth during their menstruation. 841 [291]

In childbirth, women either lay or knelt. They grasped a stick supported in a horizontal position by two upright forked sticks set in the ground. After the umbilical cord had been severed, the end was left on the child. It was thought to fall off on the fourth day. The woman who had cut the umbilical cord received as a gift the knife she had used. A woman who washed a new-born child was given the vessel in which it was washed. The afterbirth was hung in a tree. If it were left lying to be handled, the child would be afflicted with sores. For three or four days after birth, the child was given suck by other women than its mother. This statement apparently refers chiefly to a woman's first child. 844 [846]

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

"They usually cut the cord long, say four to six inches, because they were afraid the infant would bleed to death if they cut it short. You kind of drain it and get it cleaned out and tie it once. Apply a powdered root and then put a band around the body. It usually takes four days before it drops off." Since the cord is part of the body and they wanted to keep it close to its owner, when the cord came off, they placed it in a small fancy bag filled with sweetgrass or tobacco and pinned the bag to the clothing right at the back of the neck. Singer said that she had heard that boys used to wear this little bag tied to the wrist rather than at the back of the neck as girls did. Good care was taken of the bag until adulthood. The bag was usually in the shape of a turtle, with a little head. Although Coming Daylight had made two such bags, she didn't know why they used this shape except that it had been done thus for generations.[5] Mary's grandmother, however, made a little container for Mary's own son and it was in the shape of a snake with a head. Mary added: "And the Gros Ventres don't like snakes either. But my grandmother made that one in the shape of a snake on account of a dream she had."

The afterbirth was disposed of just as soon as possible, preferably by having someone place it good and high in the branches of a tree.[6] The person who disposed of the afterbirth was not supposed to let anyone see him do so, although the informants did not know the reason for the secrecy. It is more customary at present to burn the afterbirth as the whites do, but Coming Daylight remarked that she had done that only once,—on the occasion when she was caught out in the open all alone and had to deliver herself.

A mother rested quite a while after her child was born because it was said that working would make her sweat and that would hurt her milk. The child of a woman who worked a great deal immediately after its birth would not grow up to be so healthy as the child of one who took it easy. In the opinion of Coming Daylight and of Singer a woman should sit up only after four days and get up and be walking around in about ten days. Coming Daylight her-

[5] For discussion of these navel amulets and illustrations thereof, see Kroeber, 1908, pp. 166–67, and plate IX.

[6] "If it were left lying to be handled, the child would be afflicted with sores." Kroeber, 1908, p. 181.

846 self had to get up sooner and help with cooking because she was an only wife, except for the short time during her first marriage when her sister was co-wife. The midwife usually stayed and looked after the infant for a few days, at least until the cord came off.

Coming Daylight always put on a belt of rawhide about a foot wide immediately after delivery and laced it up tighter each day. She said the Gros Ventre women were strict about this practice as it "put the figure back into place."

If a woman were able to rest quietly after childbirth the flow should stop in about two weeks. If she worked, it was longer, perhaps a month. At any rate, after the flow stopped, a woman wrapped a blanket around herself and someone then held under the blanket a pan of live coals on which medicine had been sprinkled. Woman claimed they felt much better after this "fumigation." [157] There was also another medicine which Coming Daylight described as "good to clean you out after childbirth." This was made from a powdered root, a little pinch of which was put in a couple of quarts of water and turned the water about the color of tea. There was no bitter taste and the patient drank it like tea and instead of water.

[834] It was said that Gros Ventre men did not resume marital relations until at least a month after the baby was born,—often they deferred the resumption of relations even longer.

853 There was medicine given to make the mother's milk come. It was made from the same root as that used in the Crazy Dance. [278] The infant was not put to the breast immediately, as someone else drew out the "first milk" (colostrum) and spit it out. "After that, the milk would be the right blue color. [825] Should a woman be all alone when her child was born, she might have puppies draw out that 'first milk.'" Cora believes it is absolutely necessary to follow this rule. When her own daughter, for example, delivered her firstborn, an old woman offered to draw off this "first milk," but the daughter refused—so now she can give milk only from one breast and has to supplement her infant's feeding with milk from a bottle. No water or oil was given the infant before its first nursing. They started the baby to nurse after the colostrum had been drawn off "because there is something in the mother's milk that cleans the baby out."

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

ioned doll which he wrapped up like a sack-baby and, one night without letting her know what he was doing, he raised up the covers on his third wife's bed and put this doll under her. He did the same with the Assiniboine woman and said: 'She will have a boy, too.' As he had predicted, each bore him a son, and these two are the only children Crow Bull had. He later gave this doll to one of his niece's daughters, having 'sterilized' the doll first, however, so that the girl was not affected and subsequently gave birth to five children." 842 789

Natural sterility was apparently not recognized by the Gros Ventres. If a couple was childless it was assumed that contraceptive medicines were used. While many individuals did not approve of the use of these medicines, each family had the right to do as it pleased in this matter without outside interference. Nevertheless, The Boy, alarmed at the falling birthrate which he attributed to the widespread use of these old-fashioned medicines, on two occasions in 1921 and 1922 spoke out boldly in public about the matter. He feels he was justified in doing so since he thinks there has been an improvement in the situation. 842 [163]

Although the use of these medicines was rated by our informants as the major factor in accounting for the small number of children per family, infant mortality was said to have been high, and infanticide was known. [847]

For premature infants nothing could be done in the days before hospital care was known. Furthermore, where marked physical defects were obvious at birth, the chances that the infant would live were slight. It was stated, for instance, in regard to one woman who gave birth to a "little dog," that "had she been alone she would have done away with it, but her husband prevented her from doing so and everybody thought it was awful." Coming Daylight [illegible]ger knew of two other actual instances of deformity,—one child who "looked like a beaver," and another who had "ears like a rabbit"—and both of these died shortly after birth. Coming Daylight remarked: "It seems as though we are so foolish the way we are ashamed of being deformed. One time when we were in town a white woman, whose face was quite disfigured, came into a restaurant where we were. My daughter told me: 'They [the whites] don't think anything of it. It can't be 845

845 helped.' But we Gros Ventres think so much of anything like that and if one of our own is deformed we almost want to die over it." [8]

847 597 Instances were known in which a normal infant, abandoned by its parents, was picked up and raised by someone else. Cora, for instance, had been told that when the third successive daughter was born to her maternal grandparents, the father was angry because he had badly wanted a son. He ordered that the infant be abandoned to die. She was saved, however, when the father's "inseparable-friend" found and adopted her. Again, Charles Buckman had heard that his great-grandfather one morning very early was attracted by the sound of an infant crying in the bush. He found the newborn baby and took it to his lodge, telling his wife to find a woman to nurse it. He raised this infant as his daughter.

847 845 The case of infanticide that stands out most clearly in the minds of Singer and Coming Daylight is that of twins born to the latter's sister. Coming Daylight was present at the birth and saw that her sister felt terrible about having borne twins. "My sister said: 'I won't nurse them anyway, so just take them away.' So they were both taken off in the bush; the boy was already dead and the girl froze to death. My sister was a terribly proud woman and was afraid people would think she was over-sexed. Besides she hadn't wanted any more children, since her two other sons were fairly well grown, and she maintained that a woman couldn't keep as neat with infants about. I had been waiting for my sister's husband to speak up, but he didn't say a word. I, however, told my sister: 'It is a bad thing to get rid of those babies, something will happen as a consequence.' As I had predicted, the next baby my sister had took her life. When trying to persuade her not to do away with the infants, I had used as one argument that white people have twins more often than Indians, but she persisted in maintaining that it was a disgrace." Mary remarked while Coming Daylight was telling this story of her sister: "My mother used to think it was so funny that white people are proud of twins!"

845 The attitude towards twins seems to have changed, as younger informants did not indicate that twins were considered a disgrace. For instance both The Boy and Thick insisted that twins were, on

[8] Cf. Denig, p. 403.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

734 "The Crow knew the child was a Gros Ventre, so they took her along and caught up with the Gros Ventre camp. After they had eaten, they called all the Gros Ventres to listen. One of the Crow was standing there with the child. I was small then. I went and listened. Using the sign language he said: 'You folks were very mean to this child and her mother. The child was pitiful and somebody took pity on her. We picked her up and are going to keep her. We won't give her to you.'

"So this girl grew up with the Crow . . . she did not like the Gros Ventres and she took her mother's name . . . I do not know to this day why the mother was abandoned. She had no husband at the time they left her. The Gros Ventres," Coming Daylight added, "abandoned old people and babies."[11]

[847 888]

Proprietary Remedies

757 So far we have been dealing with preventive or curative measures of the "rational" order known to and freely used by anybody and everybody. We now come to those exclusively owned and used by particular individuals only. These proprietary remedies fall into two main classes,—although the dividing line was not always sharply drawn,—accordingly as they were owned and used by non-professionals with little or no supernatural power or by professional medicine men and women with well recognized supernatural power. Such proprietary remedies, as owned and used by non-professionals, seemed to have been looked upon as of either the "rational" or supernatural order. Those owned and used by professional doctors as, in the main, of the supernatural order. We shall now take up these two classes, first, proprietary remedies used by non-professionals.

Coming Daylight emphatically insisted that she was not a medicine woman, not a "holy" person. "Some people try to pray through me, they lay their hands on my head and pray for something, as if I were a 'holy' person. But I am not. I do not claim to be a medicine woman. I never go around doctoring others. I just keep

[11] For other cases of abandonment, see Flannery, 1953, pp. 76, 132, 189, 198-99.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

has been given up, the Gros Ventres are so sunburned that their skin looks almost "black." Singer showed a small bag of red paint which she still had. She kept a piece of beaver castor in the bag so the paint would be sweet-smelling. 302 [237]

In the old days the Gros Ventres were early risers. Everyone got up while it was still dark, perhaps about three o'clock in summer and before seven in winter. It didn't make any difference whether a child might otherwise be favored, the rule was iron-clad that all must rise early and that no one should lie abed. This applied to all—old people as well as to children. 512

One method of making sure that children would be strong was to take a beaver tail and slap the child on the hand and on the back while saying: "You will be good and strong." Mary, for instance, has seen her mother do this to all her grandchildren, hitting them so hard they almost cried. The beaver is considered a very strong animal since he cuts down big trees and drags them about. 856 825

Naming and Ear-piercing

Every individaul received a name shortly after birth. Many Gros Ventres, however, were, and are, known by names other than the original one. Names were changed for particular reasons, and in addition nicknames were frequently employed. Sometimes the first name was bestowed with considerable formality, but naming could be carried out in a variety of ways,[10] as the following examples show. 551 553

"Shortly after Coming Daylight was born, her father sent for his sister's husband and told him: 'Now I invited you to name your niece. I am giving you such-and-such kind of horse' (a bay, or a pinto, or whatnot). There was a big feast on this occasion and the lodge was full of people. The namer sat in the place of honor at the back of the lodge. He held the infant in his arms, told a war deed and said: 'Now I name her 'Taken A Prisoner.' Then he said a long prayer, starting with the usual formula, and wishing the infant a long life. He then handed the infant to the person to his left saying: 'Take Taken A Prisoner'; and so the infant was passed all around the lodge, each repeating the same to 852

[10] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, p. 182.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

553 his neighbor. The reason that her father did all this was because she was the first-born and so she was kind of expensive to her
852 family. If a man thought he could afford it, he would make a big feast for his first-born, and then give less at the naming of his other children, although it was not always the case that the first-born got the best. It apparently depended on what the man could afford at the time."

"When Coming Daylight's sister was born, her father's sister told her husband that she wanted him to name this niece. So she came to her brother's lodge and said: 'Well, I have come for my niece, I am going to have her named by the same person who named her older sister.' This woman, then, invited a lot of people to her place and put up the feast. She gave her husband a small keg of whiskey, when he named the infant Kills One. She laid the present down in front of him and said: 'This is what I give you for naming this child—and you seem very pleased with it, too!'"

Coming Daylight's eldest daughter, however, was named "Plumes in the Hair" by her own father. This was just a private naming, that is, no invited guests or big feast. Iron Bucket, husband of Singer, named their first daughter, too. He gave her the name of "Kills Last."

Coming Daylight was offered the choice of two names for one of her little boys, by his father who dreamed of them while he was out on the hills torturing himself by the Sacrifice Dance technique.

Another of Coming Daylight's children was named by an old blind doctor. "Her sister-in-law, wife of her brother-cousin, brought in this doctor. She told him: 'I brought you here to give my sister-in-law something to drink [to hasten delivery].' The old man said: 'This child that is to be born will be a girl and I am going to name her "Earth Woman." She will grow up and live to be an old woman.' Cora, too, mentioned that her sister-in-law (a relative of her husband's) came to her and said: "If I can, I will come and attend you when your child is born, and I will name it too." She was not able to attend the birth, but she did come later and fetch the infant. Standing in the center of the dancing space she named him "Runs on Top," after one of her relatives, and gave away lots of things in his honor.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

nothing the person can do about it. One of Singer's friends was called "Matter in the Ear" and another "Ugly or Homely." Another woman harped so much on an event which took place at Turtle River, that "Turtle River" became the name by which she was known, and most people forgot that her actual name was "Spotted Calf." 551

The piercing of the ears may be done at the same time as the naming, as apparently was done in the case of Coming Daylight, or might be done shortly thereafter. Singer, for instance, was named by Sitting High, but her grandmother on a different occasion pierced her ears. The parents might pay someone to do this, or a relative might volunteer. The sooner the ear-piercing is done the better, because the older the child is the more it may hurt. Singer said: "That ear-piercing goes either through a dream or through war deeds." In the former case, the dream is told and then the ears are pierced. In the latter case the person must relate a war story: "This is what I have done. . . ." The story has to be a true one concerning an incident wherein the enemy did not retaliate so the ears will heal up without any trouble.[13] The actual procedure, regardless of whether there is much formality or not, is as follows. An awl is used to pierce the ear and into the hole is inserted either a small splinter of rose-wood sharpened to a pin-point, or a porcupine quill. Whichever is used, it is greased before inserting and is left in until it falls out when the ear is healed. At this time is then inserted a small ring merely to keep the hole open. Fancy earrings are not worn by small children. Formerly boys' ears were pierced as well as girls'. The number of holes in each ear seems more or less arbitrary, but all are made on the same occasion. Coming Daylight has one in each ear; Singer has two; Coming Daylight's eldest son has three. The custom is now dying out as the present generation of mothers does not believe in it. Coming Daylight wanted to pierce the ears of her great-granddaughter but the child's mother said: "No. You will hurt her." 304 [852] [787] [301]

[13] Kroeber, 1908, p. 182 states that ear-piercing was said to be unaccompanied by special ceremonial actions.

787 made up my mind that I did not want such power, the immediate reason for my refusal being that I had seen doctors who swallowed what they had sucked from the weak spot in patients whom they cured, and I just couldn't bring myself to have to do likewise."

857 Although boys had much more freedom than had girls, they
562 too were assigned tasks at a fairly early age. One of the responsibilities of boys was to water the horses during the day. At about the age of fourteen, however, a boy would be required to take the horses out to graze immediately after taking his morning plunge. He would be gone perhaps three or four hours and would eat only after he returned.

857 The play of younger boys with bow and arrow was training for
868 later life. The older boys accompanied the men on hunting par-
852 ties and by the time they were about 18 most were skilled hunt-
[431] ers. Some families, it was said, took advantage of the fact that a boy would have killed his first big game,—antelope, deer, buffalo, —by making a feast at which this game was served. On such an occasion the boy stood at the center and gave away property, such as horses and blankets provided by his father or uncle, in
[421] order to mark the event. This was considered training for the way he should behave in later life in regard to his own property.

857 Boys were trained in trapping as well as hunting. There were
868 certain songs which were sung by grandparents as the boys danced
[533] around in the lodge both before and after trapping. These songs were supposed to bring luck in finding game.

[777] Sometimes when older boys were out taking care of horses, they would band together, daub their faces and bodies with mud as "war paint," and make a "raid" on the camp in order to steal meat which was drying on racks. The women who had worked so hard to prepare the meat got angry and sometimes fought the boys with sticks. Usually, the boys were successful, and would then cook the meat and have a wonderful feast,[1] far outside the camp circle.

[554] Men encouraged their sons to be brave, and a boy would be anxious to go along on a real raiding party just as soon as possible because a young man had no standing until he had risked his life. An adolescent boy who accompanied a war party had to be a man

[1] This type of raiding is also described by Kroeber, 1908, p. 182.

846 self had to get up sooner and help with cooking because she was an only wife, except for the short time during her first marriage when her sister was co-wife. The midwife usually stayed and looked after the infant for a few days, at least until the cord came off.

Coming Daylight always put on a belt of rawhide about a foot wide immediately after delivery and laced it up tighter each day. She said the Gros Ventre women were strict about this practice as it "put the figure back into place."

If a woman were able to rest quietly after childbirth the flow should stop in about two weeks. If she worked, it was longer, perhaps a month. At any rate, after the flow stopped, a woman wrapped a blanket around herself and someone then held under the blanket a pan of live coals on which medicine had been sprinkled. Woman claimed they felt much better after this "fumigation." [757] There was also another medicine which Coming Daylight described as "good to clean you out after childbirth." This was made from a powdered root, a little pinch of which was put in a couple of quarts of water and turned the water about the color of tea. There was no bitter taste and the patient drank it like tea and instead of water.

[834] It was said that Gros Ventre men did not resume marital relations until at least a month after the baby was born,—often they deferred the resumption of relations even longer.

853 There was medicine given to make the mother's milk come. It was made from the same root as that used in the Crazy Dance. [278] The infant was not put to the breast immediately, as someone else drew out the "first milk" (colostrum) and spit it out. "After that, the milk would be the right blue color. [825] Should a woman be all alone when her child was born, she might have puppies draw out that 'first milk.'" Cora believes it is absolutely necessary to follow this rule. When her own daughter, for example, delivered her firstborn, an old woman offered to draw off this "first milk," but the daughter refused—so now she can give milk only from one breast and has to supplement her infant's feeding with milk from a bottle. No water or oil was given the infant before its first nursing. They started the baby to nurse after the colostrum had been drawn off "because there is something in the mother's milk that cleans the baby out."

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

If a mother could not feed her child well, they used to supplement the mother's milk by broth from meat. Occasionally some woman could be found who would help out.[7] Coming Daylight, for instance, used to allow a son of her mother's brother to nurse, as his own mother was very thin and her milk was insufficient. Another time she nursed the infant son of her cousin whose wife, after he had deserted her, brought their baby to her husband and refused to take it back. Again, Mae's mother nursed several children not her own. When she was an old woman she would complain because she was not invited by these persons. She would fuss along these lines: "They never even invited me once. If it hadn't been for me, they would have starved when they were infants." 853

Early Disciplines

The child was usually not weaned until it was two years old or more. Sometimes a child would be allowed to nurse until six or so, provided his mother did not become pregnant again. There was a boy who had started to school at six, and who would still run up to his mother to nurse when he had the opportunity. Many children would even run in from playing to get at the mother's breast. "It didn't seem to hurt them any!" 862

Definite effort was made to wean the child when the mother became pregnant. "If a woman didn't realize she was in this condition and allowed the child her breast, the child would have a bad stomach and diarrhea." One way of weaning the child was to put nicotine from a pipe on the nipples. The sight of this so frightened the child that he would not try to nurse. If it was dark and he didn't see it and happened to taste it, he would raise an awful cry, but he would be cured. Pepper was also used in the same way. They would give the child as a "pacifier" a piece of meat, pounded soft, sweetened and tied in a soft white rag. The child would suck on this until he fell asleep.

It was when the new baby was born that they would have the most trouble with the child who had just been weaned. Many children were jealous of a new arrival. Coming Daylight said that they had to watch carefully lest an attempt be made to harm the 593

[7] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, p. 181.

593 infant. Some siblings, for example, would try to plug the infant's mouth with a rag or some other object. An occasional child would be unusually jealous and resent all younger siblings. One of Coming Daylight's own boys was like that. He would try persistently to get ahead of his little brother. The mother would be lying down with the infant at her side, and this little boy would try to snuggle in between her and the infant. He stuck close to her and wanted to accompany her everywhere, even when she left the lodge at night to attend to her necessities,— and this was after he was old enough to know he should not follow her at such a time. One of Cora's children was like that at the time the information was being gathered, jealous of the other children in the family and following her everywhere.

853 One of the first solid foods a baby was fed was a ball of cooked rose-berries mixed with grease. This was put on the end of a stick in lollypop fashion. Marrow, guts and rose-berry soup were considered the best food for growing, healthy children.

854 A newborn infant is called a "sack-baby." The sack was made of fine buckskin, or of buffalo calfskin with the fur left on one side, and was laced up the front. It was made just the same way for a girl as for a boy. A piece of rawhide was put inside the sack to stiffen it, and some rags were placed between it and the child's body to stuff it up and prevent chafing. The board was rectangular, rounded at the top, and reached only to the baby's neck. They made a little round cap out of calfskin, with little fur earmuffs that tied under the chin. They used to decorate their baby sacks nicely and sewed little deerhoofs thereon,—"They liked to have something rattle on their clothing."

When placing the infant in the sack they were very careful that its feet and legs should be properly placed. Singer remarked that in the old days everybody's legs were nice and straight and that it is only these "diaper babies" around here now who are bow-legged.

854 Small children, including infants, were washed each morning, —in winter rubbed with snow,—and then powdered. As a powder, 278 buffalo chips were pounded on rawhide and then, "to sort of ster- 237 ilize," hot stones were placed thereon. When the powdered chips were warmed, but not too hot, the stones were removed and the

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

at the time whether she would ever have a chance to acquire more of these highly desirable decorations." On the other hand, a maternal uncle would not refuse his niece or her husband anything it was in his power to give, and would always lend them horses or other kinds of property when requested. 604

Compared with the responsibilities of the maternal uncle, a paternal aunt had relatively few obligations to her nephews and nieces but correspondingly more to their mother, her brother's wife. Nevertheless it was she who took particular interest in her brother's children when they were infants. She showed regard for her brother by providing, if possible, the sack for the newborn baby and the goods to pay the medicine man in case it were necessary to call one to the child-bed of her sister-in-law. If the child became ill she, too, usually paid for the necessary doctoring and it was not unusual for her and her husband to assume the expense of a formal naming feast for the infant. [854] [553]

The paternal aunt had the duty of "bawling out" her brother's daughters if they misbehaved. In regard to property, a niece would have to ask permission before using anything of her aunt, but the request was always granted. The aunt would tell her niece in an offhand way: "Well, why don't you go get it!". Whereas if someone not in that relationship had made the request, she would have gotten the object and handed it to her. A woman was expected to be as reserved with her aunt as she would be with her own mother and with her mother-in-law. A man was even more respectful to his aunt in the sense that he would not speak to her unnecessarily nor look directly at her. [861]

When a girl married, the paternal aunt sometimes participated in the bride-price, and claimed her niece's husband as "son-in-law." According to Garter Snake: "When Otter Robe's oldest sister married, the groom gave three horses, one of which went to the bride's father, one to her brother, and the third to her father's sister. The latter made for her niece's husband a fine fancy robe, treating him with the same consideration she would have accorded her own daughter's husband. Then, when this 'son-in-law' returned successfully from a raiding party, he gave his 'mother-in-law' one of the horses he had captured." It is interesting to note [583]

593 infant. Some siblings, for example, would try to plug the infant's mouth with a rag or some other object. An occasional child would be unusually jealous and resent all younger siblings. One of Coming Daylight's own boys was like that. He would try persistently to get ahead of his little brother. The mother would be lying down with the infant at her side, and this little boy would try to snuggle in between her and the infant. He stuck close to her and wanted to accompany her everywhere, even when she left the lodge at night to attend to her necessities,— and this was after he was old enough to know he should not follow her at such a time. One of Cora's children was like that at the time the information was being gathered, jealous of the other children in the family and following her everywhere.

853 One of the first solid foods a baby was fed was a ball of cooked rose-berries mixed with grease. This was put on the end of a stick in lollypop fashion. Marrow, guts and rose-berry soup were considered the best food for growing, healthy children.

854 A newborn infant is called a "sack-baby." The sack was made of fine buckskin, or of buffalo calfskin with the fur left on one side, and was laced up the front. It was made just the same way for a girl as for a boy. A piece of rawhide was put inside the sack to stiffen it, and some rags were placed between it and the child's body to stuff it up and prevent chafing. The board was rectangular, rounded at the top, and reached only to the baby's neck. They made a little round cap out of calfskin, with little fur earmuffs that tied under the chin. They used to decorate their baby sacks nicely and sewed little deerhoofs thereon,—"They liked to have something rattle on their clothing."

When placing the infant in the sack they were very careful that its feet and legs should be properly placed. Singer remarked that in the old days everybody's legs were nice and straight and that it is only these "diaper babies" around here now who are bow-legged.

854 Small children, including infants, were washed each morning, —in winter rubbed with snow,—and then powdered. As a powder, 278 buffalo chips were pounded on rawhide and then, "to sort of ster- 237 ilize," hot stones were placed thereon. When the powdered chips were warmed, but not too hot, the stones were removed and the

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

baby was laid in the powder and rubbed under its arms, between its legs, under the toes, between the fingers,—wherever the baby might chafe. "The baby feels fine then and goes right to sleep." When no buffalo chips were available horse manure treated the same way was an adequate substitute. Fresh powder was put in the sack each day, and in the winter it was first heated. 854 278 234

Sometimes accidents happened. One time when a man named Fork (of a tree) was a baby, his grandmother was tending to him. She had heated the powdered chips in the sack with a hot stone and forgot to remove it. The baby cried and cried. Finally they unbound him and found that his toe was right against the hot rock. This injured his toe and he always walked with a peculiar gait. Cora has a scar on her buttocks which she thinks came from a similar accident.

If the father's sister failed to provide a sack and none was forthcoming from any other relative, the mother would wrap the infant in a skin and tie it with straps. Coming Daylight said that before her time they used a cradleboard. If they had a travois they would carry the baby on that. "Some, if they didn't have a cradleboard, used a piece of stiffened leather hooked over the saddle horn." 854

When the infant was old enough to move its arms, the arms were left free of wrappings. The infant was kept in the sack day and night. When not being carried about, it was hung either from one of the lodge poles inside the lodge, or swinging from the travois placed upright against the lodge. Lullabies were sometimes sung.[8] At night, the infant was right beside its mother, and the father usually slept in separate bedding so as not to crowd the child. When the powder in the sack was changed, they let the baby play around and stretch "because babies must have gotten tired staying in those sacks." [533]

Toilet training was started when the infant was between six and twelve months old. "The baby is more alert and easier to handle then. You just guessed at the time and opened the sack and held the baby out, supporting it under the knees and thighs. The child would usually respond. If there were a delay, then you talked to him and made a hissing noise to encourage him. You 863

[8] *Unfortunately no lullabies were recorded.*

863 might even 'fuss' a little with him, saying something like: 'Look at you! I thought I told you to urinate. I'm trying to make you do it at the right time, and you want to hold back!' But we were not harsh with infants because we knew they have to learn. Anyway, if you misjudged the time, all you had to do was to throw out the powdered chips and put in fresh ones. The old way was much better. These diaper-babies around here now are much more trouble."

[755] If a child developed enuresis, a tiny bit of the tail of a fox or of a beaver tied to his belt, or a piece of badger skin for him to sit on, was thought to guarantee a cure.

854 To help the child who had trouble teething, it was considered wise to kill a mouse, skin it, take the back thigh and, after cooking it well, rub on the gums. It is said by Coming Daylight that the Crow used fish for this purpose. Some children have such a difficult time that their gums are very sore and their tongues even swell. Coming Daylight's grandmother and others knew how to remedy that condition. The doctor, using a sharp-pointed bone, would lance the gums here and there where the teeth were coming, after allowing the gums to bleed, they would rub some powdered root on the gums. As a preventive, old folks said to catch tiny baby mice and, after roasting them on the coals, feed them to the child. Coming Daylight, for instance, did that for her children, and none of them had any trouble with teething.

[825] [757] [757] [751]

856 They would let babies crawl when they showed the inclination to do so, but the old women were sure that they always watched their babies more closely than mothers do today. They used to encourage them to walk by holding them up and helping them. It has been Coming Daylight's experience that boys learn to walk more quickly than girls. It may be, however, that more attention was given to boys.

198 856 The only expression the old women, or the younger ones for that matter, could think of that could be considered "baby talk" was that babies, when very small and just beginning to talk, say: "I" (prolonged and with strong glottal stop) if they do not like something or do not wish to take what is offered. This, together with *na'a* 'mother' and *ni'a* 'father,'[9]—which babies say properly

[9] These are vocative forms rather than descriptive forms.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

right off,—are about the first words a baby says. When a child is backward in learning to talk, the remedy is to feed him meadowlark eggs, hard-boiled. Cora says this treatment was very effective for one of her sons, and Coming Daylight fed them to one of her daughters. They all agreed, however, that the treatment may sometimes be too effective. If anyone is very talkative even today the favorite saying is: "His mother must have fed him meadowlark eggs." [198] 856

The care of her baby was the first duty of a mother. Of course, if she were a co-wife, the other wives might help her, and in any case the grandmother might take a hand. But Coming Daylight often had no one upon whom she could depend, so she had to be extremely careful. For example, when she was married to Little Man and had an infant in the toddling stage, she would drape a blanket loosely about her hips and while she sat and did beadwork, the infant could play safely at her left hip inside the blanket. The old-timers, moreover, never left a baby alone. When her first child was born Coming Daylight was told by her grandmother never to leave a baby alone; that if it were absolutely necessary she should leave him even for a minute, she should take a small stick, blacken the tip with nicotine, and leave it in the swing or alongside where the infant lay. This was done to keep the "spirits" away. Even Mary feels strongly about leaving a child alone. She tells her daughter about it, but the daughter is very modern. The result is that frequently Mary stays home from a dance rather than leave a grandchild by itself. 854 854 751

If the mother of a young infant was going on a trip, for instance, to pick berries, she invited the baby's *bttá"tao* 'shadow, spirit, soul' saying: "Come on with us or we might leave you. We are going now." If one failed to do this, it would be like leaving part of the baby behind and the baby would be cross all evening. [774]

Sometimes other children in the family would be called upon to look after the infant. They were apt to get tired quickly however and tell their mother: "Hurry up and take your baby or I will drop it." Girls were depended upon more than boys to look after younger siblings, and girls more or less were expected to do so "right from the beginning." The old women felt that formerly 854 857 593

854 857 men were much more interested in children than they seem to be at present.

855 515 857 Just as soon as a child was old enough to look after himself—say from about the age of three or four years—he would be compelled to bathe every morning before eating. An older boy would supervise his younger brothers and see to it that they complied with the regulation—even in winter when it was sometimes necessary to cut a hole in the ice. Al says: "This is what makes one tough." Charles gave as illustration an incident which occurred one morning when there was ice on the edge of the river and snow was floating on the surface. "An older brother said to his three younger brothers: 'Go and take a plunge.' The wind was blowing and the three boys sat on the bank, each one encouraging the other to be the first one in. The older brother came behind them yelling: 'I didn't say to you boys to stay on the edge—I said to take a plunge!' Whereupon he threw each of them in the icy water telling them to wash their faces, hair and hands. He then sent them home to water the horses while he took his plunge." In case the lodge might be too far from a stream in winter, the boys and men rolled in the snow and rubbed their bodies with it. Everyone, young and old alike, bathed every day.

515 751 That the daily dip was looked upon as a health measure is shown by the statement of Cora who remarked that when she was small she used to bathe daily in the creek and she has never been sick up to the present. Coming Daylight, too, said that she had kept up the practice until a few years ago and complains that she has been sickly ever since giving it up.

271 751 It was considered important for health's sake to drink a lot of water too. The relatives who raised Coming Daylight used to tell her to wash her mouth out with water immediately upon arising. Further she was instructed to drink water right after eating, even though she might not feel thirsty, and to walk about after finishing a meal. She claims she followed these rules all her life and that for this reason she is not troubled, as so many of the aged are, with difficulty in controlling urination, and so on.

302 After the morning bath, all would have their faces painted all over with red paint "in order to keep their faces clean and light-skinned." Coming Daylight complained that since this practice

around it, but were taught and trained to be quiet around it and to observe reverence toward it. 784

No whistling or crying was permitted in the keeper's lodge. The keeper and co-keeper were forbidden to cry in the presence of the Pipe, if, for instance, they had lost a relative. A crying baby was never allowed in the lodge with the Pipe. As soon as the infant started to cry it was taken out. If, as previously noted, a man who had a young wife with a baby took the Pipe, she and the infant would be sent out of the Pipe lodge to a nearby lodge. [854]

Dogs were never allowed to enter the lodge where the Pipe was. If the keeper or co-keeper owned a dogskin robe, the rules forbade their using it. [231]

The people were not allowed to go to the keeper's lodge to get fire, as they used to go to other lodges in the early morning.

Breaking bones to extract marrow was prohibited in the keeper's lodge. If this were done, some accident, such as the breaking of a leg or arm, would happen to some relative of the keeper [or of the delinquent?]. [264]

The door of the keeper's lodge had to be kept closed, and the back cover of the lodge could not be lifted up in the warm summertime to get air.

A war party before starting off would sing at the door of each clan chief's lodge, but not at the door of the keeper's. [726]

When people went to the keeper's lodge for a social smoke and feast, they had to keep their wits about them and watch their speech carefully lest they should unthinkingly tell lies, vulgar or obscene stories, or start a war-deed contest.

There was a very strict prohibition against telling lies in the keeper's lodge.

If two men, while in the keeper's lodge, forgot themselves and started a war-deed contest, the keeper would remind them: "You are mistaken in talking so in here. Now you will have to continue for three days and nights." During this time all who were present when the slip was first made had to stay day and night in the lodge of the keeper, who would provide them with food and tobacco. These listeners would egg on and laughingly banter the two contestants and decide on the winner. After a while the pair's 784 517

604 861 approve of the way they were being raised, he could remove a sister's son from the parental home and keep him. The parents would have to let him go. Thick told of his own experience in this regard. One day at the time when he was nine or ten years old, his mother's brother came and told his brother-in-law: "I am taking my nephew. You folks are not training him to be a man." So his uncle took Thick away and raised him very strictly. He was made to work very hard and his uncle did not hesitate to lecture him and to administer severe tongue-lashings. His uncle's wife would occasionally intervene in the attempt to bring about a more lenient attitude toward the boy, especially as Thick got older, but all to no avail. Finally, when Thick had become a young man, he could not stand it any longer and rebelled. He has never forgotten that after all those years of what amounted practically to servitude, his uncle did not give him a single horse nor any other presents, although he showered Thick's elder brother with good things, especially with horses.

604 In case the maternal uncle was well-off, and his sister and her husband in bad straits, the uncle was more or less obliged to take the responsibility for his nephew. If he did not do so, people would say he had neglected his duty. Furthermore, if a boy were [855] lazy and consistently refused to obey his own father, he might be ejected from his home, and it would be up to his maternal uncle to take him in. One case was cited, too, of a boy who was neglected by his parents, and whose uncle not only took him in, but acted as though he thought more of his nephew than he did of his own sons.

Whether or not the maternal uncle insisted on taking full charge, he had the right of disciplining his nephew, reprimanding him when he failed to measure up, but at the same time he had the obligation of protecting and shielding him in public. While a father could, and sometimes did, disown his son, the boy could be sure of a refuge with his mother's brother, although he faced severe punishment in private at his uncle's hands. Thus a young man who was in difficulties, over say a love affair, would seek out his uncle. Should he be threatened by a husband who suspected the young man of fooling around his wife, the uncle could be counted upon to invite the irate husband, smooth over the situation, and in

854 857 men were much more interested in children than they seem to be at present.

855 515 857 Just as soon as a child was old enough to look after himself—say from about the age of three or four years—he would be compelled to bathe every morning before eating. An older boy would supervise his younger brothers and see to it that they complied with the regulation—even in winter when it was sometimes necessary to cut a hole in the ice. Al says: "This is what makes one tough." Charles gave as illustration an incident which occurred one morning when there was ice on the edge of the river and snow was floating on the surface. "An older brother said to his three younger brothers: 'Go and take a plunge.' The wind was blowing and the three boys sat on the bank, each one encouraging the other to be the first one in. The older brother came behind them yelling: 'I didn't say to you boys to stay on the edge—I said to take a plunge!' Whereupon he threw each of them in the icy water telling them to wash their faces, hair and hands. He then sent them home to water the horses while he took his plunge." In case the lodge might be too far from a stream in winter, the boys and men rolled in the snow and rubbed their bodies with it. Everyone, young and old alike, bathed every day.

515 751 That the daily dip was looked upon as a health measure is shown by the statement of Cora who remarked that when she was small she used to bathe daily in the creek and she has never been sick up to the present. Coming Daylight, too, said that she had kept up the practice until a few years ago and complains that she has been sickly ever since giving it up.

271 751 It was considered important for health's sake to drink a lot of water too. The relatives who raised Coming Daylight used to tell her to wash her mouth out with water immediately upon arising. Further she was instructed to drink water right after eating, even though she might not feel thirsty, and to walk about after finishing a meal. She claims she followed these rules all her life and that for this reason she is not troubled, as so many of the aged are, with difficulty in controlling urination, and so on.

302 After the morning bath, all would have their faces painted all over with red paint "in order to keep their faces clean and light-skinned." Coming Daylight complained that since this practice

C

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

CHAPTER VII

BIRTH AND INFANCY

Conception and Contraception

It was a common belief among the Gros Ventres that for conception to occur, sex relations must continue over a period of time, conception could not occur as the result of one copulation. The fact that a girl would be given in marriage before she reached physiological maturity tended to confirm this belief, which is also linked with another one, namely, that a girl would not menstruate unless and until she had experienced sex relations. This latter belief is reflected in comments made by old women concerning the young unmarried girls of the present day. Coming Daylight and Singer remarked on several occasions: "Nowadays girls are 'terrible.' They menstruate and have well-developed figures before they are married." These signs of physical maturity the old women take as absolute evidence of loose conduct on the part of the girl, regardless of what the facts in the individual case may be. 842 [582] 841 856

The Gros Ventres apparently recognized some relationship between conception and lactation. Coming Daylight, for instance, said: "The Indian women claim that they didn't become pregnant so soon if they nursed their babies. They always used to carry their infants about with them because, if they went far away and left them, their milk might spoil. The old-timers used to say that if a woman took good care of her children and kept them close to her, her family would not increase so rapidly. It is the young ones nowadays who have the bottle-fed babies!" 842

There were certain precautions, too, that a woman should take to keep her offspring properly spaced. "If you sit in the place from which a pregnant woman has just risen, you will conceive immediately. Dispose of the afterbirth quickly. Destroy all clothing worn during pregnancy, even moccasins, or give them to some woman past child-bearing age. If a woman put these clothes on again she would soon become pregnant. Nowadays though mo-

863 might even 'fuss' a little with him, saying something like: 'Look at you! I thought I told you to urinate. I'm trying to make you do it at the right time, and you want to hold back!' But we were not harsh with infants because we knew they have to learn. Anyway, if you misjudged the time, all you had to do was to throw out the powdered chips and put in fresh ones. The old way was much better. These diaper-babies around here now are much more trouble."

[755] If a child developed enuresis, a tiny bit of the tail of a fox or of a beaver tied to his belt, or a piece of badger skin for him to sit on, was thought to guarantee a cure.

854 To help the child who had trouble teething, it was considered wise to kill a mouse, skin it, take the back thigh and, after cooking it well, rub on the gums. It is said by Coming Daylight that the Crow used fish for this purpose. Some children have such a difficult time that their gums are very sore and their tongues even swell. Coming Daylight's grandmother and others knew how to remedy that condition. The doctor, using a sharp-pointed bone, would lance the gums here and there where the teeth were coming, after allowing the gums to bleed, they would rub some powdered root on the gums. As a preventive, old folks said to catch tiny baby mice and, after roasting them on the coals, feed them to the child. Coming Daylight, for instance, did that for her children, and none of them had any trouble with teething.

[825] [757] [757] [751]

856 They would let babies crawl when they showed the inclination to do so, but the old women were sure that they always watched their babies more closely than mothers do today. They used to encourage them to walk by holding them up and helping them. It has been Coming Daylight's experience that boys learn to walk more quickly than girls. It may be, however, that more attention was given to boys.

198 856 The only expression the old women, or the younger ones for that matter, could think of that could be considered "baby talk" was that babies, when very small and just beginning to talk, say: "I" (prolonged and with strong glottal stop) if they do not like something or do not wish to take what is offered. This, together with *na'a* 'mother' and *ni'a* 'father,'[9]—which babies say properly

[9] These are vocative forms rather than descriptive forms.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

right off,—are about the first words a baby says. When a child is [198] backward in learning to talk, the remedy is to feed him meadow- 856 lark eggs, hard-boiled. Cora says this treatment was very effective for one of her sons, and Coming Daylight fed them to one of her daughters. They all agreed, however, that the treatment may sometimes be too effective. If anyone is very talkative even today the favorite saying is: "His mother must have fed him meadow-lark eggs."

The care of her baby was the first duty of a mother. Of course, 854 if she were a co-wife, the other wives might help her, and in any case the grandmother might take a hand. But Coming Daylight often had no one upon whom she could depend, so she had to be extremely careful. For example, when she was married to Little Man and had an infant in the toddling stage, she would drape a blanket loosely about her hips and while she sat and did beadwork, the infant could play safely at her left hip inside the blanket. The old-timers, moreover, never left a baby alone. When her first 854 child was born Coming Daylight was told by her grandmother 751 never to leave a baby alone; that if it were absolutely necessary she should leave him even for a minute, she should take a small stick, blacken the tip with nicotine, and leave it in the swing or alongside where the infant lay. This was done to keep the "spirits" away. Even Mary feels strongly about leaving a child alone. She tells her daughter about it, but the daughter is very modern. The result is that frequently Mary stays home from a dance rather than leave a grandchild by itself.

If the mother of a young infant was going on a trip, for in- [774] stance, to pick berries, she invited the baby's *bitd"tav* 'shadow, spirit, soul' saying: "Come on with us or we might leave you. We are going now." If one failed to do this, it would be like leaving part of the baby behind and the baby would be cross all evening.

Sometimes other children in the family would be called upon to 854 look after the infant. They were apt to get tired quickly however 857 and tell their mother: "Hurry up and take your baby or I will 593 drop it." Girls were depended upon more than boys to look after younger siblings, and girls more or less were expected to do so "right from the beginning." The old women felt that formerly

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

has been given up, the Gros Ventres are so sunburned that their 302
skin looks almost "black." Singer showed a small bag of red
paint which she still had. She kept a piece of beaver castor in the [237]
bag so the paint would be sweet-smelling.

In the old days the Gros Ventres were early risers. Everyone 512
got up while it was still dark, perhaps about three o'clock in summer and before seven in winter. It didn't make any difference whether a child might otherwise be favored, the rule was iron-clad that all must rise early and that no one should lie abed. This applied to all—old people as well as to children.

One method of making sure that children would be strong was 856
to take a beaver tail and slap the child on the hand and on the back
while saying: "You will be good and strong." Mary, for instance, 825
has seen her mother do this to all her grandchildren, hitting them so hard they almost cried. The beaver is considered a very strong animal since he cuts down big trees and drags them about.

Naming and Ear-piercing

Every individaul received a name shortly after birth. Many 551
Gros Ventres, however, were, and are, known by names other than the original one. Names were changed for particular reasons, and in addition nicknames were frequently employed. Sometimes the first name was bestowed with considerable formality, but naming could be carried out in a variety of ways,[10] as the following examples show. 553

"Shortly after Coming Daylight was born, her father sent for 852
his sister's husband and told him: 'Now I invited you to name your niece. I am giving you such-and-such kind of horse' (a bay, or a pinto, or whatnot). There was a big feast on this occasion and the lodge was full of people. The namer sat in the place of honor at the back of the lodge. He held the infant in his arms, told a war deed and said: 'Now I name her 'Taken A Prisoner.' Then he said a long prayer, starting with the usual formula, and wishing the infant a long life. He then handed the infant to the person to his left saying: 'Take Taken A Prisoner'; and so the infant was passed all around the lodge, each repeating the same to

[10] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, p. 182.

861 to their daughters.[10] The lecturing of the child started when he was an infant and continued until adulthood had been attained. Those charged with the training of children felt it to be a duty. As Coming Daylight put it: "They talked to their children right from the start, and before the babies themselves were able to talk, they seemed to understand." Singer remarked that, because modern parents do not talk to infants as the old-fashioned ones used to do, present-day infants do not respond by trying to "talk back." Nowadays, the two old women insisted, even infants pay no attention to instruction, and as for older children, some go so far as to tell their elders to shut up!

Under the old regime, however, a child had to listen, whether he wanted to or not, and he had to retain, at least outwardly, a respectful attitude. Cora, for instance, said that she hated this being talked to. Her father was the one who did the lecturing in her family and he used to require that she stand in one spot and not move "while he preached about being good and the ways of doing everything." Singer and Coming Daylight admitted that it was tiresome for the child to be continuously lectured, but they insisted that this is the best way for children to learn. Children [856] are supposed to really grasp what is being said to them from about the age of four.

867 Thick remembers the general content of the lectures he heard from his mother to have run along these lines: "If you get a 183 mare, treat it well because mares will increase. Take good care of her. If you get a saddle, hang on to it. Robes, bridles, whips, are needed useful articles, keep them, don't give them away. If you don't keep these things you will have to go and borrow from someone else. That is bad. If you have to borrow a horse from some other boy, his family might become suspicious of you; yet if they refuse, there are hard feelings over it. Therefore when you get something, take good care of it.

"When you go out to play with your own things, your bow and arrows or hoop, others will want you to play with them and to bet with them. If you join in such games, somebody is likely to get mad because you have won and so he may beat you up. If

[10] For details on kinship behavior, see pp. 107–08.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

551 Names were given to children very soon after birth. Names were fre-
553 quently changed and given away. A man would receive his father's name from the latter, or would take it after his death. If a child were sickly, a relative, such as a grandfather, sometimes gave him another name. A sick person sometimes also took a new name in order to recover. Renowned warriors sometimes gave away their names to young men. They might retain the same name for themselves, or take a new one. One very aged man gave away his name to a young man, telling him, "I give you my name in order that you may have as long a life as I." This was done without the occasion or accompaniment of a ceremony.

There seems to have been no prohibition against mentioning the name of the dead, nor even any reluctance on the matter. Some people, however, were ashamed to speak their own names.

551 Twins, called niiçan, were named, if boys, respectively Kaaen and Niiçan.
845 The latter name, however, was not always used, an ordinary name being given instead. Girl twins were not called by these names.

302 The hair was formerly worn in braids, as at present customary among the Plains tribes, but also erect over the forehead. The women wore their
[765] hair either in braids or sometimes loose. In mourning, the hair, especially of the women, was cut about halfway across the cheek.

304 Ear-piercing, which among the Arapaho is performed on ceremonial occasions, and is itself accompanied with ceremony and giving of presents, was said among the Gros Ventre to be unaccompanied by special ceremonial actions. A woman or any one else does the piercing.

857 Boys who were herding horses sometimes took off their clothes and
673 daubed themselves with mud until they were unrecognizable. They painted their horses, and made shields of willow. Then they came to the camp,
868 mounted or on foot, to steal meat. Approaching the camp like a war-party, they would select the best meat hanging outdoors, charge on it, take it, and run. The old men and women and children chased them with clubs, but of course without success. The boys would go back to where they were herding, and have a feast.

576 The Gros Ventre say that both hand-shaking and kissing are aboriginal with them.

GAMES.

524 A common cup-and-ball game called tsöötskuutjan ("throw in") consisted of four hollow deer or antelope leg bones, each about two inches long, attached to a string passing through them, at the end of which there was a needle eight or ten inches long. This game appears to be identical with

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

524 A form of the widely spread guessing-game occurred among the Gros
531 Ventre. Two buttons, which were enclosed in the hand, were used. At the beginning each player held one button. One of them guessed in which hand the other held the button. If he guessed wrong, his opponent got four counters; but if he guessed right, his opponent must yield the button to him. When he held two, his opponent guessed in which hand each of them was. If his opponent guessed wrong, the player received two counters; but if his opponent was right, the player must hand over both buttons, and himself guess. The game was played for twelve stick counters. These at the beginning were in a pile belonging to neither of the players. This neutral pile was drawn upon until exhausted, before either player gave counters to the other. This method of using counters was customary in Arapaho and Gros Ventre games.

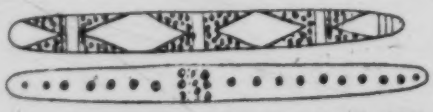


Fig. 18 (50 4325, 50 4325 a). Dice. Lengths, 15 cm., 16 cm.

[171]

The buttons used in this game are different from those the Arapaho have had in recent years. They lack symbolism altogether, and are even without the red-black color-dualism obvious in the Arapaho game. The elaborate counters, food-sticks, pointers, and head-dresses of the Arapaho are also not found among the Gros Ventre. Of one pair of buttons, one was of brass beads, the other of green glass beads. They were called respectively "long" and "short." Another pair, made of bone, are illustrated in Fig. 19. A single button made of bone, apparently from a tooth-brush-handle, is shown in Fig. 20.

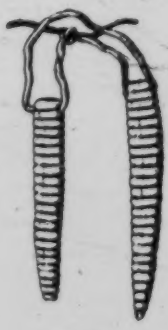


Fig. 19.

Fig. 20.

Fig. 19 (50 1931 a, b). Hiding-buttons. Length, 7 cm.
Fig. 20 (50 1917). Hiding-button. Length, 6 cm.

526 Boys shot arrows or threw sticks at a netted hoop, apparently identical
857 with the Arapaho hoop except for nomenclature. The central mesh, called the "crow" or "crow's heart," won the game for whoever hit it. If the "crow's heart" was not pierced, a point was scored by the arrow nearest to it. An arrow passing through the netting without being held in it counted nothing. If one of the hoops rolled within reach, a player was at liberty to

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

526
857

spear and catch it on his stick, or, if it was flying through the air, he was allowed to do the same. On winning, he put the wheel on top of his head, keeping it there as long as he could. When it fell down, the others all threw their wheels at him while he cowered under his robe. The wheel was usually thrown overhand, as were the sticks.

Another game was played with bow and arrows. The bow was rested in a diagonal position or held in the hand, while an arrow was several times tapped against the string and then suddenly released so that it was thrown several feet. Another player then followed, trying to cause his arrow to be thrown so as to rest on the first. If none of the players succeeded in hitting the others' arrows, all the arrows used were put aside in a pile as stakes, and the game recommenced.

Fig. 21 (50 1859). Grass Target. Length, 23 cm.

Still another game played by boys consisted of five sticks or arrows. The smallest, a white stick, was thrown ahead, and the longer sticks were thrown after it. The stick that came nearest the short piece won as many points as agreed upon, but a stick resting on the short piece won the game. This game, like others of boys, was played for arrows.

Another game played by boys was to throw sticks at a forked stick stood up in the ground. A player whose stick rested in the fork won the other sticks played with. If all the players missed, they laid their sticks into the fork as stakes. They continued to do this after each throw, until a player, by dropping his stick into the fork, won all those that were there. The sticks were thrown from a mark in the ground made at a certain distance from the fork.

Boys played still another game by throwing sticks so as to strike the ground, bounce, and slide; the one throwing farthest winning the sticks of the others. These sticks were held at the very end, and thrown underhand. Like all sticks or arrows used in games, they were called "kanii." Sometimes longer darts were used, which were slid over the instep of the foot.

Boys also played by setting up three sticks or arrows in a row, and shooting at them. The one whose arrow rested nearest the middle upright stick won. In case of doubt, a small stick was used to measure the distance. This game seems to have been played indoors. Outdoors the shooting would be from a greater distance. Whoever came nearest to the mark then threw up and shot at a bunch of grass, exts'ta". If he hit the bunch while

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

526 it was in the air, he won. This game was played customarily for arrows as 857 stakes. Such a bunch of grass which was shot at is shown in Fig. 21. It is curved, and tapers to one end, and it is wound with sinew.

526

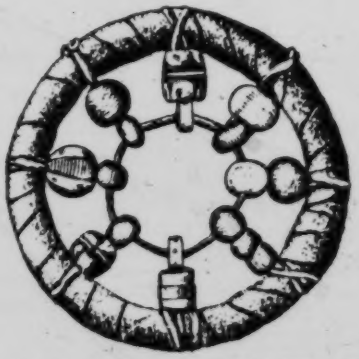


Fig. 22 (50-1954). Gaming-wheel. Diameter, 8 cm.

Adults — instead of throwing sticks, or shooting arrows at a netted hoop — rolled a small hoop in a carefully cleared and smoothed place towards a log or obstruction, while they threw at it with arrows or sticks, trying to have the hoop and the arrow in contact when at rest. The hoops were ornamented with beads or other small objects of different colors or shapes, and certain values in counters were given to each of these ornaments (Fig. 22). Usually there were two small banks or logs, one at each end of the course, a hoop being rolled alternately back and forth. It is said that, in order to score, it was necessary for some part of the hoop to rest on the point of the arrow, the shaft not counting. If several of the sets of beads on the hoop touched the arrowhead, the score was the sum of the points of the several ornaments.

Shinny was played with bent sticks and a ball by young men against girls. In driving the ball towards the goal, each player tried to keep it to himself as long as he could. The balls were stuffed with deer-hair. The goal at each end of the field was marked by a pair of monuments of stone. It is said that the young women often won from the young men.

Fig. 23 (50-1896). Women's Football. Diameter, 14 cm.

Ball was played by women or girls standing in a circle and striking the ball back and forth with the open palm until one missed it, whereupon all rushed for it. Whoever secured the ball started throwing it again. Sometimes it was thrown from one to another around a circle. When one failed to catch it, the others scattered. Picking up the ball, she pursued them with it while they looked for buffalo-chips on which to stand. There they were safe. Some, how-

l: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

526 Fig. 25 shows one side of a small ball painted yellow, on which is a rude embroidery in red, yellow, and green quills, representing a bird. On the 532 opposite side is a red quilled cross. The bird-embroidery recalls the quill-ornamentation of an Arapaho ghost-dance drumstick and hand implement, both of them with stuffed heads of painted skin; also the painting of a crow on an Arapaho ghost-dance ball.[1]

526

Fig. 25 (50-1731). Embroidered and Painted Ball. Diameter, 7 cm.

A game of throwing willow sticks on the ice, to see who could slide them farthest, was played by women. These sticks were sometimes tipped with buffalo-calves' horns. Young men, as well as women, sometimes threw horn-pointed sticks on the ice. It is said that women used long sticks, young men short sticks.

Children slid on the ice at a place they had made smooth. A boy and then a girl would slide alternately. When the whole party had slid one way, they would return, sliding in the opposite direction.

A toy made to slide on the ice consists of a bone to which two feathered sticks are attached at a diverging angle. It is called "tataxtsitcebyaⁿ." The object is to bounce or slide the implement over the ice as far as possible. This type of object is found among a number of Plains tribes.

Fig. 26 (50-1788). Bull-roarer. Length, 56 cm.

493 Boys' sleds for coasting on hillsides were made of several buffalo-ribs held together at each end by a long 526 thong winding in and out around the two halves of a 857 split stick. A buffalo-tail was tied behind. These sleds were called "sö^{n}w^{n}haanaⁿ." When a man presented such a sled to another man's boy, he received presents from the boy's parents. In early summer, when the grass was green, toboggans of rawhide were used on the hillsides. The front was held up and bent over, and the bottom soon became very smooth.

224 Slings were used by boys for killing birds and small animals. The entire 411 sling was made of skin. The thongs were passed through holes near the 857

[1] See Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part IV, p. 395, Fig. 151.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

ends of the main portion of the sling, and then looped on themselves through a slit near one end.

The bull-roarer and buzzer were both well known to the Gros Ventre, but seem to be only children's toys. They were both called nakaa"ta" ("making cold," a name given also to the thermometer), probably from the widespread Indian idea that the bull-roarer breeds wind. The buzzer was made of a foot-bone of a buffalo, with a sinew string on each side, by which it was twirled, and then drawn so as to hum. The Arapaho type of buzzer is the same. The Gros Ventre bull-roarer seems to differ from the Arapaho form. Fig. 20 shows one of two very similar models, both of wood. The small, well-marked head, the long taper and point, and the numerous small notches, mark a distinct form. The sinew string is of about the length of the stick handle.

WAR.

Men generally went to war on foot, carrying food and moccasins on their backs. While on the trip they did not boil meat, but roasted it. Scouts, called "wolves," were sent out ahead. When these returned, running in a zigzag course, and shouting, it was a sign that they had seen something. If they had seen lodges, they barked like wolves. While they came, the women in the party stood in a row and sang, having made a pile of buffalo-chips. The "wolves" stopped a short distance away, and the leader of the party went to them. They came with him back to the pile of buffalo-chips, where he stopped, and, facing the party, recounted coups. After this, one of the scouts came before them and reported what he had seen. Upon this, all rushed at the pile of buffalo-chips, and kicked them about. If the enemy were near, they would now take off their heavier clothing, such as their robes, and dress and paint for war.

On returning to their camp victorious, the party approached stealthily, and made a charge upon it, often shooting; and sometimes the people in the tents jumped up out of their sleep in the early morning, thinking they had been attacked. The man who had killed an enemy, the one who had struck him first (whether dead or alive), and the one who had taken his gun, were held in about the same esteem. After the return to camp, a dance was made. Drums were beaten; and the women, who were standing in a curved row, danced in a circle toward the men, who stood in a row, and back again. The women carried the new scalps on sticks. If an enemy were killed near the home camp, his feet and hands might be cut off and carried on sticks, like the scalps. During this dance the man who first

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

an enemy; and each took from among the property as nearly as possible such objects as he had actually captured in war. One who had stolen horses would take a horse; one who had taken a gun from an enemy would pick out a gun. While this was being done, or soon after, the dancers were dancing, concluding with a race similar to that in the crazy-dance. This marked the end of the ceremony. 796

There were several degrees of distinction in this dance. Two men had crooked lances wrapped with otter-skin. In four places these lances were tied about with small strips of white fur from which a pair of eagle-feathers hung. These lances were called nouçä"ts'ta". Two other lances were straight, and wrapped with jack-rabbit skin. These also bore feathers. A single dancer had a rattle of the globular shape common on the Plains. Half of the rattle was painted red, and half blue; and feathers were attached both to the top of the rattle and to the bottom of its handle. These regalia of honor were given to men renowned in war. A pipe was brought such a man, and if he thought himself entitled to the honor, and was ready to accept it, he took the pipe. If a man felt that others were really braver than himself, or had some other reason, he refused to take the pipe. One informant stated that he had declined the proffered honor because his wife's brother had recently died. The rank and file of the kit-fox dancers are said to have worn belts of prairie-dog skin. How far these corresponded with the biitaha"wu belts of the Arapaho is uncertain. The fur-wrapped crooked and straight lances are certainly similar to the crooked and straight lances indicating the second and third degrees in the Arapaho biitaha"wu. 796 554 293 [534]

Two girls took part in this ceremony. They were girls who were much thought of and beloved by their relatives. One of the dancers carried a kit-fox skin, the inside of which was painted blue. His companion had the rattle that has been described. While he rattled, the other, holding the skin by the neck and the tail, pointed it at the other dancers. These ran off, and this seems to have been the signal for the beginning of the dance. The two girls followed these two men everywhere. Their parents and relatives gave away great quantities of property in the dancing-lodge. Something similar is found in one of the Cheyenne society-dances, in which four young women accompanied the dancers from place to place. 796 857 593 [171]

Nothing was learned about the origin of the kit-fox dance, except that it is said to have been given by the kit-foxes, which is like what the Cheyenne tell of their analogous society. 796

A neck-band of badger-skin is the only object secured said to have been used in the kit-fox dance. To the end of it a tip of whitish rabbit-fur is attached. The lower part of the piece, which bears this rabbit-fur, hangs down the dancer's back. The upper portion, which is about four inches wide, is slit for a distance of a foot. Through this slit the head is inserted. [292]

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

right off,—are about the first words a baby says. When a child is backward in learning to talk, the remedy is to feed him meadowlark eggs, hard-boiled. Cora says this treatment was very effective for one of her sons, and Coming Daylight fed them to one of her daughters. They all agreed, however, that the treatment may sometimes be too effective. If anyone is very talkative even today the favorite saying is: "His mother must have fed him meadowlark eggs." [198] 856

The care of her baby was the first duty of a mother. Of course, if she were a co-wife, the other wives might help her, and in any case the grandmother might take a hand. But Coming Daylight often had no one upon whom she could depend, so she had to be extremely careful. For example, when she was married to Little Man and had an infant in the toddling stage, she would drape a blanket loosely about her hips and while she sat and did beadwork, the infant could play safely at her left hip inside the blanket. The old-timers, moreover, never left a baby alone. When her first child was born Coming Daylight was told by her grandmother never to leave a baby alone; that if it were absolutely necessary she should leave him even for a minute, she should take a small stick, blacken the tip with nicotine, and leave it in the swing or alongside where the infant lay. This was done to keep the "spirits" away. Even Mary feels strongly about leaving a child alone. She tells her daughter about it, but the daughter is very modern. The result is that frequently Mary stays home from a dance rather than leave a grandchild by itself. 854 854 751

If the mother of a young infant was going on a trip, for instance, to pick berries, she invited the baby's *bitd"tao* 'shadow, spirit, soul' saying: "Come on with us or we might leave you. We are going now." If one failed to do this, it would be like leaving part of the baby behind and the baby would be cross all evening. [774]

Sometimes other children in the family would be called upon to look after the infant. They were apt to get tired quickly however and tell their mother: "Hurry up and take your baby or I will drop it." Girls were depended upon more than boys to look after younger siblings, and girls more or less were expected to do so "right from the beginning." The old women felt that formerly 854 857 593

854 857 men were much more interested in children than they seem to be at present.

855 515 857 Just as soon as a child was old enough to look after himself—say from about the age of three or four years—he would be compelled to bathe every morning before eating. An older boy would supervise his younger brothers and see to it that they complied with the regulation—even in winter when it was sometimes necessary to cut a hole in the ice. Al says: "This is what makes one tough." Charles gave as illustration an incident which occurred one morning when there was ice on the edge of the river and snow was floating on the surface. "An older brother said to his three younger brothers: 'Go and take a plunge.' The wind was blowing and the three boys sat on the bank, each one encouraging the other to be the first one in. The older brother came behind them yelling: 'I didn't say to you boys to stay on the edge—I said to take a plunge!' Whereupon he threw each of them in the icy water telling them to wash their faces, hair and hands. He then sent them home to water the horses while he took his plunge." In case the lodge might be too far from a stream in winter, the boys and men rolled in the snow and rubbed their bodies with it. Everyone, young and old alike, bathed every day.

515 751 That the daily dip was looked upon as a health measure is shown by the statement of Cora who remarked that when she was small she used to bathe daily in the creek and she has never been sick up to the present. Coming Daylight, too, said that she had kept up the practice until a few years ago and complains that she has been sickly ever since giving it up.

271 751 It was considered important for health's sake to drink a lot of water too. The relatives who raised Coming Daylight used to tell her to wash her mouth out with water immediately upon arising. Further she was instructed to drink water right after eating, even though she might not feel thirsty, and to walk about after finishing a meal. She claims she followed these rules all her life and that for this reason she is not troubled, as so many of the aged are, with difficulty in controlling urination, and so on.

302 After the morning bath, all would have their faces painted all over with red paint "in order to keep their faces clean and light-skinned." Coming Daylight complained that since this practice

CHAPTER VIII

CHILDHOOD

858 In the days before the buffalo disappeared and before formal schooling was available, childhood, it was said, for girls was shorter and for boys was longer than at present. A girl was ordinarily [582] given in marriage before she was twelve years old—certainly before she attained physiological maturity. A boy on the other hand, though seemingly anxious to participate in hunting and in war as soon as he was able, was not forced to bear the full responsibilities of adulthood until the end of adolescence. While there was considerable variation from family to family in the amount of time required of children in training for practical tasks, all enjoyed a considerable amount of " free time."

Play

●857 Singer and Coming Daylight, the two oldest of our informants, 526 in recalling the amusements and pastimes of their youth, decided that sliding down hills was one of the most pleasurable as it could be done at any time of the year. In winter, when there was snow, [493] the boys used a kind of sled made by lashing buffalo rib-bones together. Girls managed just as well by simply sitting on their robes and holding between their legs the end which usually hung free. In summer a stiff buffalo hide was used for sliding down the grassy slopes.[1] When the water was frozen, boys and girls alike [524] skated with their feet on the ice, thus clearing a slick surface on which to spin their tops made of horn.

857 Swimming, however, was the great sport in summer. Girls left their dresses close to the bank, those of the older girls in a neat 526 row closest to the edge and those of the smaller girls in the next 481 row. Beginners used the dog-paddle, but the boys developed profi-

[1] For this and some other types of amusement, see Kroeber, 1908, pp. 190–91.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

ciency with the overhand stroke and girls with the breast stroke.[1] 857 ●
Sometimes the children amused themselves by rolling down the 526
bank so that their bodies made a loud smack as they hit the water. 481
At other times they held contests to see who could dive and stay under the longest time, or who could make the biggest bubble by exhaling under water. Follow-the-leader was played even in big rivers like the Missouri, but only the more courageous participated in this game. The one who had the reputation as bravest was the leader, and Coming Daylight claimed that she, herself, often led off, one of her accomplishments being the ability to swim quite far under water.

There was no adult supervision of children at play and they 857
spent much time at the water's edge, even when not intending to 524
swim. Modelling in clay was done by boys as well as by girls. The latter liked especially to form wet clay into "parflesches" and incise marks to represent beaded and painted designs.

Walking on stilts, teetering on logs, swinging by standing in a [481]
loop of rawhide, all were considered enjoyable activities for little girls. Nevertheless some of their games were quite rough and-tumble. In one such game, girls formed a circle, each pinching the flesh on the back of her neighbor's left hand; while standing thus they sang a song which was repeated as many times as necessary until someone let go of her neighbor's hand; whereupon this girl was jumped on and mauled by all the others. In another game, one girl, with her eyes closed, would try to find the others who were seated in a row on the ground. Different ones would call out: "This way! This way!" Each was anxious to be the first discovered. As soon as the girl who was "it" touched one of the others, she picked her up and, carrying her upside-down on her back to the spot from which she had originally started, she dumped her burden on the ground. This procedure was repeated until "it" had carried each girl, but the last one to be dumped was tickled unmercifully by all the others.

Girls played with two kinds of balls. One type was of buck- 857
skin stuffed with deer-hair. This they would toss to one another. 526
The other type of ball was large and made from the bladder of a [232]
buffalo cow, dried and stuffed.

[1] The marked ability of the Gros Ventres in swimming was noted in 1833 [147]
by Maximilian, p. 72.

857 buffalo cow, dried and stuffed. This type they would bounce and kick. A popular game played among girls in spring was as follows. The girls holding hands formed a big ring. One girl in the center would have a ball. She would throw it at anyone in the ring. When she hit her chosen victim on the chest with the ball, the girls let go of each other's hands and each ran for a piece of buffalo chip where she would be "safe."[8]
526

A game played by boys and girls together in the evening was as follows. The children would line up according to size behind the tallest boy who would have in his hand a stick which was smouldering at the end. Each child held on tightly to the one in front of him. The boy holding the stick would try to touch the smallest child at the end of the line. The line would writhe as big sparks would fly and sometimes hair got singed. One old woman, recalling this game, remarked: "I don't know when we would get to bed, we had such a good time!"

Sometimes the children would send one of the group on an errand. Those who stayed behind would wet their hands with their tongues and say: "We will watch this to see if it takes you a long time or not." If their hands were still wet when the member of the group returned, they decided that he had done the errand very quickly.
857 524

When there were pretty clouds in the sky a little girl might point one out to the other children and tell them to watch it. Then she would stand at the bank of the river, bending over at the waist and violently flinging her arms from side to side while singing. The others would watch the cloud and tell her that it was disappearing and soon it would be gone. "They used to think they could make the cloud disappear by singing that song."
[821] 789

If a group of girls were playing together and some one boy, say from seven to nine years old, would butt in, the girls would all sit down to show that they resented the intrusion. If the boy did not leave, the girls would then form a circle around him and sing a derisive song. Thus the boy would be shamed and run off. The opportunity for this did not occur very often, since boys from about the age of seven usually went off to be by themselves
[576]

[8] For description of ball games and illustration of type of football, see Kroeber, 1908, fig. 23.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

at play. It was said that a girl, of course, would never think of attempting to break into a group of boys. 857 524

Sometimes a group of boys tried to break up the girls' play. One way they pestered them was to wait until they were about to slide down a hill. Just as a girl would be ready to start, one of the boys would grab one of her legs and spin her around so that she would go down the hill backwards.

A favorite sport among boys involved skill in shooting arrows.[4] One game was to plant a marked arrow as a target. Then two boys would shoot two arrows each, and the one whose arrow came closest to the marker would take the arrows of his opponent. Sometimes they would see who could shoot the greatest distance. An interesting variation was to fasten a bow to upright sticks, one stick shorter than the other, so that the bow slanted with the string up. The player would stand on one side of the bow and tap the arrow against the bowstring to get the string vibrating, and when he judged the vibration sufficient to send the arrow toward the marker about 35-40 feet distant, he would release the arrow. Then another player would try his luck. The one who came closer to the marker would take the arrow of the one who lost. 857 526

Boys played a variant of the hoop and pole game. The hoop was larger than that used in the game as played by adults and a split stick was used as lance. The thrower aimed at the center of the wheel and, if he hit it, the shot was called "the crow." Another wheel game played by boys was rolling hoops made of green willow wrapped with willow bark. There were no cross-pieces in this wheel which was about 16 inches in diameter. Two teams lined up and the hoop was rolled as swiftly as possible by a member of one team while the members of the opposing team by shooting arrows tried to hit the rim of the hoop. If one succeeded and thus stopped the wheel, he retrieved his arrow, placed the hoop against a rock and had a chance to hit the rim while the hoop was at rest.

Occasionally there was trouble between boys who were contesting. Thick told of one occasion when he and his partner were betting against two other boys. Thick himself happened to make the winning point by splitting the upright arrow at which they 857 526 578

[4] Some boys' games are described by Kroeber, 1908, pp. 186–87.

were shooting. "Just as I leaned down to pick up the arrows which had been bet and fairly won, one of the other boys got mad and shot at me. The arrow hit my hand and I bear the scar to this day. On another occasion at the same kind of game, my partner and I won, and one of the boys of the opposing couple hit both of us over the head with his bow. My people always discouraged me from fighting—I was a shy boy in any case—but my partner took the bow away from one of our opponents and in turn hit him over the head. The opponent ran home and reported to his parents. His mother was the kind who took up for her sons and so she came toward my partner and me. My partner was still angry and called out to the woman: 'We are going to shoot you with our arrows if you come any closer!' Whereupon the woman turned around and went back without saying anything. When our parents heard of this, however, both my partner and I were given a good tongue-lashing for having threatened a woman."

In summer, boys of the same band playing together as a group expected a fight if they came in contact with a group from another band. While sometimes they used bows and arrows in this type of fighting, more often they used mud balls propelled from the end of a willow stick about three feet long. Thick gave the following account of one of these battles in which he participated as a boy.

"One summer day I was with my band group, the Frozens. We expected we might be raided, so we had already prepared mud balls and were modeling clay figures—horses, buffalo, men, and so on—when the Upper Quarters gang attacked. We Frozens grabbed our sticks and mud balls and ran into a coulee and then turned on the Upper Quarters. As the latter approached they protected themselves by holding their robes up in front of their faces, since the mud balls were aimed at their heads. Jim Shortman happened to be the member of the Upper Quarters who was 'bravest' and in the lead. I aimed at him and Jim put up his robe and warded off the shot; but Dwarf, who was right beside me, threw a mud ball immediately after I had and hit Jim right in the eye, breaking the skin and knocking him down. When they saw the blood, Jim ran home and the others, especially Dwarf, were scared. When Dwarf saw Jim's father coming toward

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

them, he was afraid to go to his own home, so he ran to a neighbor's. Jim's father found him there half-crying. He took Dwarf by the wrist and said: 'Come my friend.' He led him to his home and Dwarf thought he was going to be killed. On the contrary, however, Jim's father led him into his lodge and said: 'My friend, I am glad you made my boy cry. I have never laid a hand on him nor did I ever make him cry, and I'm glad you have done this.' He then gave Dwarf a big pile of meat and told him to eat as much as he liked and to take the rest home. As Dwarf was leaving Jim's father took a valuable Hudson's Bay blanket and cut it in two and gave him half saying: 'Here is this, use it for your blanket.' Then he took another half-blanket and said: 'Have your mother make leggins for you. Friend, I am glad you made my boy cry. I thank you for it. Now you can go home.' It just so happened, fortunately for Dwarf, that Jim Shortman was a beloved-child."[8] 857 578

Occasionally girls, or sometimes boys and girls together, formed a group in the evening to sing in front of the lodge of a rich family who they knew had such a specially loved child. The group danced and sang and then the woman of the lodge would invite them in. She would feed them and say that she was doing so in the name of that beloved-child. 857 533 [593]

Coming Daylight described how she joined groups who were going around the camp circle singing in front of the lodges of those who had returned successfully from a war party. This was before she was married and so she had to get permission from her grandmother. Mounted on a horse with a girl friend her own age, whose brother was supposed to keep an eye on them, they rode with the others. Singer admitted she had not participated in such singing parties when she was a child because she never had a horse to ride upon.

Much of the leisure time of children was seemingly spent in play which reflected the daily routine of adult life as well as many aspects of the life cycle. A group went quite far outside the camp circle, for instance, to play they were "married folk." If little boys went along with the girls, some would be "husbands," some "sons" and "sons-in-law." The "women" would tell their 857 524

[8] For details on the concept of the beloved-child, see Flannery, 1941.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

857
524

"husbands": "Go out and hunt buffalo." The boys would go off and stay a little while and on their way back made noises like neighing horses. This would be a sign for the girls to come to meet them and make comments such as: "Oh, what a lot of meat you are bringing!" Then they would pretend to slice, cook, and eat this imaginary meat. Once in a while the children actually [224] snared a gopher, the skin of which served very well in their play as a food sack.

In order to lend excitement to this kind of play, they might divide into two groups and one "tribe" would attack the other. When their "husbands" or loved ones were "killed," the girls mourned, crying just as they had observed grown-ups do, even going so far as to make marks on their legs with mud to represent cuts. A "corpse" would be prepared for "burial," as they had seen the dead wrapped, with the exception that in play they failed to wrap the head.

Sometimes girls would take the foreleg of a buffalo, for example, and wrap it up to serve as a "baby." After having gotten from the river a certain kind of reed to serve as their hair, when the baby "died" they cut off their "hair" as a sign of mourning.

Many women described the lodges they, as children, built which [492] were large enough to play in. Garter Snake used a big yellow dog that belonged to her grandmother as a horse, and when her lodge moved she packed everything on a travois which the dog drew. When it was not convenient to have the lodges built large enough to actually accommodate the children inside, the formation of the camp circle was copied by making large leaves into the shape of tipis. Sticks then represented horses and other sticks attached thereto were travois. These little wooden horses might be fitted out like real ones, with miniature beaded horse blankets, and so on. Occasionally, too, a little boy might pretend he was a horse and drag the travois while being led by a girl as he held a line in his mouth. When this type of horse was out grazing, the owner would have a difficult time catching it.

Sometimes the girls pretended that they cut off their little fingers as a sacrifice, even holding sage to the "wound" as in real life. Coming Daylight and Garter Snake, both of whom as children were associated with one of the Sacred Pipes, mentioned that

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

many girls liked to pretend that they had one of these Pipes at their play-lodge. They used a certain kind of flower to represent the Pipe and would put it outside the play-lodge in the same position as the real Pipe was placed. They smudged and sang Pipe songs just as their elders did. Once in a while they would pretend they were going to transfer the Pipe. Mud was smeared on their foreheads just as the Keeper used paint. The others would seize the new "Keeper," paint him, go through an imitation of the ceremonies, sing songs, and so on. At the end of the game, however, the rest of the children finally took the "Keeper" and dumped him in the water head foremost,—an indignity that would have been out of the question in regard to a real Keeper. 857 524

Thus it was evident how much children learned by observation. It was specifically stated in regard to the learning of songs that no one ever sat down with a child to teach him a special song or dance, that he would pick up songs and dances by hearing and seeing them performed at the various ceremonies. Similarly, according to both Coming Daylight and to Singer, there was no special teaching in regard to a knowledge of the Supreme Being. Children would know about Him because they would from infancy have heard older people mention Him. In the old days people never did anything without first saying a prayer. The prayers always started out by mentioning the name of the "One above the White Man," and then names of other beings followed.* 857 868 [869] [782]

Training

Formal training, in skills necessary for women's work, was begun for little girls at an early age. This was usually in the hands of a female relative,—a grandmother or perhaps a widowed aunt, —to whom the child would be sent at about the age of seven years. The reason for removing a girl from her immediate family circle was said to have been to protect her virginity. Her parents wanted to send her "where no men were living, as they didn't want a girl around home with her father, brother, male cousins." Should there not be a suitable relative, however, the girls' parents would keep her at home and she would receive training in domestic duties from her own mother. In any case, the girl was sup- 868

* Religion is treated in full in Cooper Ms. 1949.

868 posed to be watched over and kept under close supervision. For
[562] her there was much less freedom than for a boy of like age.

As a rare treat, a girl of eight or nine might have been allowed
857 to stay with a friend of her own age overnight, providing her guardian knew exactly where she was and that there was some responsible party to look after her. Boys of the same age and even younger could come and go more or less as they pleased. In
[564] illustration Al Chandler told of an incident in his childhood. "At the death of my uncle, the corpse was placed in a lodge removed at some distance from where he resided. I was only a little fellow at the time and I wandered over to that lodge. Not realizing my uncle was dead, I crawled under the covers. I was not missed from home and was not discovered until the next morning when my grandfather came to the lodge to mourn. Thereafter for a week or so my grandmother watched me when I set off from home, but when she saw I was steering clear of that particular lodge, she allowed me to go without saying anything. She knew I could take care of myself so she didn't care where I went or when I came home."

857 In spite of strict supervision of girls, sometimes they evaded
868 their guardians. Coming Daylight told of one of the "tricks" that she had used. "One night I heard there was dancing and my sister and I wanted to sneak out to enjoy the fun while my grandmother was sleeping. We rolled up our blankets and put them beside her. Fortunately she didn't awaken even when we came in. If she had known we were out she would have come after us and given us a good lecture when we got home."

868 So far as training in domestic tasks is concerned, it was considered an important part of a girl's duty to gather berries and to dig roots. Some older woman went with a group of girls to show them what to collect, pointing out at the same time the things that were not edible. Each girl worked and whatever she garnered would be given by her to her mother or grandmother. What was not used immediately would then be stored for winter use.

Learning to slice meat very thin for drying seemed to have been picked up easily by girls at playing "house." Skinning and butchering were much more difficult tasks which had to be learned carefully. These were considered mainly work for men, but it

787 made up my mind that I did not want such power, the immediate reason for my refusal being that I had seen doctors who swallowed what they had sucked from the weak spot in patients whom they cured, and I just couldn't bring myself to have to do likewise."

857 562 Although boys had much more freedom than had girls, they too were assigned tasks at a fairly early age. One of the responsibilities of boys was to water the horses during the day. At about the age of fourteen, however, a boy would be required to take the horses out to graze immediately after taking his morning plunge. He would be gone perhaps three or four hours and would eat only after he returned.

857 868 852 The play of younger boys with bow and arrow was training for later life. The older boys accompanied the men on hunting parties and by the time they were about 18 most were skilled hunters. Some families, it was said, took advantage of the fact that a boy would have killed his first big game,—antelope, deer, buffalo, [431] —by making a feast at which this game was served. On such an occasion the boy stood at the center and gave away property, such as horses and blankets provided by his father or uncle, in [421] order to mark the event. This was considered training for the way he should behave in later life in regard to his own property.

857 868 Boys were trained in trapping as well as hunting. There were certain songs which were sung by grandparents as the boys danced around in the lodge both before and after trapping. These songs [533] were supposed to bring luck in finding game.

[777] Sometimes when older boys were out taking care of horses, they would band together, daub their faces and bodies with mud as "war paint," and make a "raid" on the camp in order to steal meat which was drying on racks. The women who had worked so hard to prepare the meat got angry and sometimes fought the boys with sticks. Usually, the boys were successful, and would then cook the meat and have a wonderful feast,[1] far outside the camp circle.

[554] Men encouraged their sons to be brave, and a boy would be anxious to go along on a real raiding party just as soon as possible because a young man had no standing until he had risked his life. An adolescent boy who accompanied a war party had to be a man

[1] This type of raiding is also described by Kroeber, 1908, p. 182.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

among men. It was a severe ordeal and the older men had no mercy on these youngsters. 857 868

Occasionally as training in bravery, the heart of a bear was taken raw and cut into small bits. After calling together the older boys and young men and lining them up, each one in turn was given a bit of the heart dipped in fresh blood and asked: "Well, are you going to have a brave heart?" Some were able to swallow it easily, but others could not stomach it. Those who were able to swallow and retain it were said to be the really brave ones.[8] [262]

It was indicated by many informants that in the old days a man would almost have to have had supernatural powers in order to be outstandingly successful in war or to achieve fame as a medicine man. In fact it was thought that supernatural powers could be helpful in many aspects of life including gambling and love. Guardians, however, used to warn the boys and young men under their care that "you can't get something for nothing." By this was meant that a person who accepted supernatural power would not live out his full span of life. Thus, according to The Boy, parents emphasized in training their sons that, rather than going on power quests, they should be ambitious to acquire fame and respect by developing their natural abilities. Nevertheless many sought and obtained supernatural powers, visions apparently often being vouchsafed in youth, although the power might not have been used until later in life. It was believed that those who accepted and used such supernatural powers died prematurely.[9] 787 778

Methods of Instruction

Oral instruction, or "lecturing," stands out in the Gros Ventre mind as the most important method of child training. All of our middle-aged and older informants agreed that some relative, often either the mother or the father, lectured their children almost every day, telling them what was right and what was wrong and "how to live." If boys and girls were present together, there were some subjects which could not be touched upon and would be reserved for fathers to speak about to their sons and for mothers 861

[8] It was said that, in the distant past, the heart of an enemy was so devoured by warriors. For historical confirmation, see Henry, v. 2, p. 734. [266]

[9] Full discussion of supernatural powers is given in Cooper Ms., 1949.

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Gambling power was of a lower order of dignity and solemnity than power obtained by fasting on the mountains and hill tops. It was taken less seriously, more lightly, and, if we may judge from attitudes today, with an undercurrent of amused jocoseness. It was not, as was power gotten on mountains, transferrable by the original possessor to another, or at least it was not transferred. For one reason others did not usually want it, on account of the ailments and shortened life its possession entailed. A man who was known to have such power was further handicapped: his fellow tribesmen would not ordinarily gamble against him and so his opportunities for participation were few, being limited mostly to games played by the Gros Ventre with other tribes. In such intertribal games, however, he would become a popular champion, and would derive therefrom a certain prestige as well as material gains. The possession then of gambling power, while to a certain limited extent an asset to its owner, was in more respects than one a decided liability. 525 789

It may be added here that while those who possessed supernatural gambling power are spoken of today by English-speaking Gros Ventre as "professional gamblers," in reality there were no professional gamblers among the Gros Ventre even in the old days, professional, that is, in the sense of making their living or most of their living at gambling.

The following three narratives, related by The Boy, illustrate various aspects of gambling power.

Narrative 1. Lone Bear, The Boy's wife's father, had gambling power. While he was still in his prime, his legs started hurting him. To escape the penalty he quit gambling. But in vain. His legs went bad, and he died before his time. 525 789 539

Narrative 2. When Lame Bull, The Boy's father, was a young boy about ten years of age he had a friend of about the same age, called Keg, to whom he was much attached. Keg, like other boys of his age, had the daily chore of rising long before daylight and driving out the family horses away from camp to graze. One morning he was awakened very early and was told to drive the horses out. He did so, but when he got out to the grazing ground he decided to steal a few winks lying face down. So he fell asleep, and all at once he started to dream. He dreamed that he saw a big hand game going on with high stakes and one fellow winning everything. Keg looked at this fellow closely and saw it was he, Keg, himself. This man spoke to Keg saying: "Do as you see me doing here. Use my throat as an object [button] to hide." [857] [787]

Then Keg woke up and looked around, and there right near where he lay he saw a covey of prairie chickens doing their mating dance and making a whirring noise with their tails. When he got back he said to Lame Bull: "Let's play and see whether what I dreamed is true. I'll put my helper to the test." Lame Bull tried to guess Keg, but Keg would make a noise like a prairie chicken and thereupon

CHAPTER VIII

CHILDHOOD

858 In the days before the buffalo disappeared and before formal schooling was available, childhood, it was said, for girls was shorter and for boys was longer than at present. A girl was ordinarily [582] given in marriage before she was twelve years old—certainly before she attained physiological maturity. A boy on the other hand, though seemingly anxious to participate in hunting and in war as soon as he was able, was not forced to bear the full responsibilities of adulthood until the end of adolescence. While there was considerable variation from family to family in the amount of time required of children in training for practical tasks, all enjoyed a considerable amount of "free time."

Play

857 Singer and Coming Daylight, the two oldest of our informants, in recalling the amusements and pastimes of their youth, decided 526 that sliding down hills was one of the most pleasurable as it could be done at any time of the year. In winter, when there was snow, [493] the boys used a kind of sled made by lashing buffalo rib-bones together. Girls managed just as well by simply sitting on their robes and holding between their legs the end which usually hung free. In summer a stiff buffalo hide was used for sliding down the grassy slopes.[1] When the water was frozen, boys and girls alike [524] skated with their feet on the ice, thus clearing a slick surface on which to spin their tops made of horn.

857 Swimming, however, was the great sport in summer. Girls left their dresses close to the bank, those of the older girls in a neat 526 row closest to the edge and those of the smaller girls in the next 481 row. Beginners used the dog-paddle, but the boys developed profi-

[1] For this and some other types of amusement, see Kroeber, 1908, pp. 190–91.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

trimming for women's clothing. I knew that the body of a girl had been among those left in the branches of the trees at this place, so I decided that the bear had disturbed the bodies and must have eaten the cloth along with everything else. I stood there quite a while wondering whether I should take those elk teeth. Finally I took them and having strung them on a piece of sinew laid them in the stream-bed with a rock covering them. When I went home I opened the matter with my grandmother by stating: 'A bear ate that girl who was buried in the elk tooth dress.' When my grandmother asked how I knew this, I told her about the elk teeth in the excrement. Whereupon my grandmother asked: 'Why didn't you take those teeth? They are valuable.' Feeling easier in my mind, I said: 'I was afraid you would accuse me of stealing them—but I did take them anyway!' My grandmother was glad and so I brought them from the creek and I was happy, too, since there were enough teeth to make two rows on my dress." 183 685 867

The usual procedure of careful parents when a child reported he had found some article was to first question him as to whether or not he had taken it from someone. Then the parent would go around and ask people if they had lost this certain article. If a child had stolen it he would thus be found out and it was believed that he would never steal anything again.

The rights of children to their own property were recognized by elders and, while they admonished children to take good care of their things, if a child wished to dispose of what belonged to him no one would reprimand him for having done so. After all, generosity is a trait that was much admired among the Gros Ventres. Informants said that if, for instance, a man had given a horse to his daughter and she gave it away, he would say nothing to her about it. Should she ask him for another he might, however, tell her: "Well, I don't know—you might give it away." But he would never scold her about it. 183 858 867 421

Even if a child were flagrantly disobedient he would ordinarily be punished only by a scolding rather than by whipping or deprivation. Singer and Coming Daylight both were shocked at the idea that a child might be punished by depriving him of something. They said: "Indians love their children and we don't think they would deprive them of anything. They just talk to their children 861

861 and tell them what is right." Coming Daylight gave an account of an occasion on which she was disobedient. "One of my relatives was very ill and my grandmother thought that if I would sacrifice a finger joint, he would get well. But I was a small girl, and I dreaded the idea of having part of my finger cut off, so I ran away. My uncle chased after me and told me never to come back. I yelled at him: 'I won't come back, but I am not going to have my finger cut off!' So I went far off and stayed out in the hills until my uncle came looking for me and brought me home again. Two nights after they had asked me to give up my finger, the relative died, but they didn't punish me."

If a child were really lazy or "pouted too much," he might be [858] "thrown out"—cases were mentioned where this had actually happened. The theory was that the child would then have to work much harder than he would have at home for whoever would take him in.

In the case of temper tantrums on the part of a very young child, he was first simply told to stop. Should he continue, his guardian would say: "Oh well, he doesn't know any better" and then douse him with cold water. It was said that he would get up immediately after that type of treatment, and would soon be cured.

If a child were naughty or made a mistake, his guardian would usually not reprimand him in public. He would wait for an opportunity to get him alone. As an example, in training for proper attitudes and behavior between brother and sister, the boy was told: "Be careful what you say in front of your sister." If the boy then made some remark he should not have made in the presence of his sister, his mother waited until the sister had gone out and then talked to him in a gentle way. Cora expanded on this by stating: "The Gros Ventres never bawl out anybody in front [648] of a third party. This is where the white social workers make their biggest mistake. They get everybody together in a central place and then proceed to reprimand the various ones in front of all the others. That is the worst thing that can happen—it hurts these Gros Ventres so badly."

Nevertheless, those in authority may give a severe "tongue lashing" to the culprit in private. As The Boy said when discussing discipline: "The Indian, when he was living the old life, had a

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

595 said to have been that the wife who was pregnant, whether senior or subsidiary, could be well cared for and was relieved of the heavier domestic tasks until a considerable time after the child was born. Furthermore, the children of all wives were considered [858] equal in status. "As long as a man claimed the children as his own, he treated them all the same way, whether they were the children of older or younger wives." That differential treatment was sometimes accorded children by their father can be seen from the following case, although it is doubtful whether the father distinguished between his daughters simply on account of the relative position of their mothers. Singer, however, implied that it was so in giving the account of her experience: "When I was married as a younger wife to a certain man, he certainly made a difference between my child and that of his older wife. Both of us had girls, but one time, for instance, when I was out getting wood, they threw my little girl right out of the lodge. A neighbor took her in and when I returned this neighbor said to me: 'I notice they don't seem to care much for this little girl.' So after that I would have to take her with me, carrying a heavy pack on my back and dragging my little one along by the arm. Although my husband never let me use a horse, he would put the child of his other wife on the saddle when he was riding, and often he would hold her in his arms when he was around the camp. One of the worst things I had to endure was that when my husband would return from trading at Fort Benton with goodies like candy and fruit, my little girl was never given any and had to stand by and watch the other child eating. Finally it got so bad that my father took his grandchild and raised her. But I must say that this husband of mine was a really mean man."

587 The general feeling prevailed that sisters got along together more peaceably as co-wives than did "rivals." In any case the 595 sororate was preferred and it was said that parents were better satisfied to send a child-bride into the household of her sister. This attitude was exemplified by Singer's father in the following account which she gave: "I had been given to my sister's husband when I was just a child. It wasn't a real marriage because I didn't stay long enough. I was sent home by him because he thought I would rather play than work, and my sister took up for

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 and we follow that. But don't stop going. You went once, so
178 keep going.' And so I did go and when I noticed that at nearly
431 every dance my brother gave away beef or horses—he was certainly a generous man—I started to follow his example. It got so that whenever there was a dance I was the first one there and I used to give away all kinds of things. For my adopted daughter, for instance, I gave beef, horses, and money at different times."

796 The final event of the program of the Grass dance during the
178 later period was a dance by one of the owners of the feathered war-bonnets who, to the accompaniment of a special song, stepped toward the door, made three passes towards the latch and on the fourth actually opened the door, took off the bonnet and went out. Everyone by that time would be standing up ready to go with their bundles and babies. It was remarked that since they usually started the Grass dance about one in the afternoon and stopped only well after midnight, they had plenty of time for all these things.

796 In this section we have dealt only with the main differences
178 between the earlier and later forms of the Grass dance as prac-
● 858 tised by the Gros Ventres. Other minor changes were introduced from time to time, one being that of allowing children on the dancing floor. This will be briefly described merely to indicate the latitude allowed to the individual in the later period during which the Gros Ventre Grass dance flourished, and to illustrate the mechanism by which some, at least, of the changes could have been actually accomplished. My informant, who had held important offices in the Grass dance and who is a man of prominence, said that, up to the time he acted in this matter, it had been the duty of the owners of the whips to take children bold enough to mingle with the dancers and drag them off the floor by force. It was obvious to my informant that the children were anxious to dance so at one of the performances he tied a bunch of paper money to the amount of $50 on the end of a buggy whip and had the announcer call out that he was going to buy for the children the privilege of joining in the dancing; that he was not only paying for this by giving the money toward the next per-

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

formance of the Grass dance, but that he was also paying for this 796
by cancelling debts owed him at his store by four specific indi- 178
viduals whom he named; that anyone who objected to the chil- 858
dren having the privilege would have to raise the ante; and that finally he would inaugurate this new feature of the Grass dance by having all of his own children dance first. No one disputed the point, and from that day to this children have had the freedom of the floor at any of the social gatherings.

The innovation described above was probably one of the last changes made in the form of the Grass dance before it began to disintegrate about 1916. Once the dog ritual was abandoned,—seemingly just prior to 1920,—the Grass dance as such disappeared, leaving only the round dances, one or two of which survive today and are performed at annual fairs, at celebrations of the Fourth of July, and so on.

Let us now turn to a consideration of the functions of the Grass dance in Gros Ventre culture in each of the two periods.

Functions

Earlier period. When the Grass dance was first adopted by the 796
Gros Ventres its function was a relatively minor one of replacing 575
the dance belonging to one of the two "soldier" societies, the Wolves, or Wolf-men as the members were called. The members of the parallel society were known as Stars. These two societies were approximately equal numerically and included between them the whole Gros Ventres population of able-bodied warriors. At the age of 18 or 19 the individual Gros Ventre young man who, together with say 30-50 of his age-mates, already belonged to one of several "companies"—the Rosebushes, or Calves, or Resting-on-the-breast-of-a-woman, or Holding-dogs'-tails, and so forth,—would enter either the Wolf society or the Star society, whichever one was selected by the "company." The individual would then be either a Wolf-dancer or a Star-dancer, although he retained close personal association with the members of his "company" which would have entered one society or the other as a body. With the mates of his "company" he would then go through the

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

have someone come back a real hero, and, although such a promise to torture oneself could be made in regard to other relatives, "it was usually a sister who thought so much of her brother who did that." Other forms of sacrifice which a girl might practice on her brother's behalf would be to take a fine robe, or something else of value, and stick it on top of the lodge saying: "I offer this that my brother may come back with good luck, bringing something fine from war." This could be even more specific in that a girl could offer, say, the tip of her finger, if her brother would bring back a particular thing, such as a scalp or a horse or a weapon. Again, should her brother be ill or wounded, a woman would be exceedingly concerned and might go so far, as in one case recorded, of promising that if he should recover she would join the Women's Lodge—"which was considered a great thing to do for your brother." 593 728 721

Usually a man would have some voice in regard to his sister's marriage and, if he were the one who made the arrangements, he received the larger share of the bride-price. It was said, too, that a brother would be especially concerned regarding his younger sister's moral conduct and might take it upon himself to keep her in line. Although parents would feel the disgrace of an erring daughter, a brother was expected to react violently. If her husband failed to punish his wife for adultery, her brother could kill her. Some instances were given, too, in which the man took his own life indirectly, by riding into the midst of the enemy without taking any precautions, because he felt so keenly the dishonor his sister who was unfaithful had imposed on him. 593 [584] [684]

Maternal Uncle and Paternal Aunt

"Because a brother and a sister thought so much of each other, they were expected to be good to each other's children." If a woman had several brothers, it was the eldest who assumed the duties of the maternal uncle and his relationship with his nephews was a direct one. Should the eldest brother be unable to undertake the responsibility another brother or male cousin was expected to do so. 604

The maternal uncle was supposed to watch his sister's children closely even though her husband was on the scene. If he did not 604 861

604 861 approve of the way they were being raised, he could remove a sister's son from the parental home and keep him. The parents would have to let him go. Thick told of his own experience in this regard. One day at the time when he was nine or ten years old, his mother's brother came and told his brother-in-law: "I am taking my nephew. You folks are not training him to be a man." So his uncle took Thick away and raised him very strictly. He was made to work very hard and his uncle did not hesitate to lecture him and to administer severe tongue-lashings. His uncle's wife would occasionally intervene in the attempt to bring about a more lenient attitude toward the boy, especially as Thick got older, but all to no avail. Finally, when Thick had become a young man, he could not stand it any longer and rebelled. He has never forgotten that after all those years of what amounted practically to servitude, his uncle did not give him a single horse nor any other presents, although he showered Thick's elder brother with good things, especially with horses.

604 In case the maternal uncle was well-off, and his sister and her husband in bad straits, the uncle was more or less obliged to take the responsibility for his nephew. If he did not do so, people would say he had neglected his duty. Furthermore, if a boy were [855] lazy and consistently refused to obey his own father, he might be ejected from his home, and it would be up to his maternal uncle to take him in. One case was cited, too, of a boy who was neglected by his parents, and whose uncle not only took him in, but acted as though he thought more of his nephew than he did of his own sons.

Whether or not the maternal uncle insisted on taking full charge, he had the right of disciplining his nephew, reprimanding him when he failed to measure up, but at the same time he had the obligation of protecting and shielding him in public. While a father could, and sometimes did, disown his son, the boy could be sure of a refuge with his mother's brother, although he faced severe punishment in private at his uncle's hands. Thus a young man who was in difficulties, over say a love affair, would seek out his uncle. Should he be threatened by a husband who suspected the young man of fooling around his wife, the uncle could be counted upon to invite the irate husband, smooth over the situation, and in

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

at the time whether she would ever have a chance to acquire more of these highly desirable decorations." On the other hand, a maternal uncle would not refuse his niece or her husband anything it was in his power to give, and would always lend them horses or other kinds of property when requested. 604

Compared with the responsibilities of the maternal uncle, a paternal aunt had relatively few obligations to her nephews and nieces but correspondingly more to their mother, her brother's wife. Nevertheless it was she who took particular interest in her brother's children when they were infants. She showed regard for her brother by providing, if possible, the sack for the newborn baby and the goods to pay the medicine man in case it were necessary to call one to the child-bed of her sister-in-law. If the child became ill she, too, usually paid for the necessary doctoring and it was not unusual for her and her husband to assume the expense of a formal naming feast for the infant. [854] [553]

The paternal aunt had the duty of "bawling out" her brother's daughters if they misbehaved. In regard to property, a niece would have to ask permission before using anything of her aunt, but the request was always granted. The aunt would tell her niece in an offhand way: "Well, why don't you go get it!". Whereas if someone not in that relationship had made the request, she would have gotten the object and handed it to her. A woman was expected to be as reserved with her aunt as she would be with her own mother and with her mother-in-law. A man was even more respectful to his aunt in the sense that he would not speak to her unnecessarily nor look directly at her. [861]

When a girl married, the paternal aunt sometimes participated in the bride-price, and claimed her niece's husband as "son-in-law." According to Garter Snake: "When Otter Robe's oldest sister married, the groom gave three horses, one of which went to the bride's father, one to her brother, and the third to her father's sister. The latter made for her niece's husband a fine fancy robe, treating him with the same consideration she would have accorded her own daughter's husband. Then, when this 'son-in-law' returned successfully from a raiding party, he gave his 'mother-in-law' one of the horses he had captured." It is interesting to note [583]

857 were shooting. "Just as I leaned down to pick up the arrows
526 which had been bet and fairly won, one of the other boys got mad
578 and shot at me. The arrow hit my hand and I bear the scar to this day. On another occasion at the same kind of game, my partner and I won, and one of the boys of the opposing couple hit both of us over the head with his bow. My people always discouraged me from fighting—I was a shy boy in any case—but my partner took the bow away from one of our opponents and in turn hit him over the head. The opponent ran home and reported to his parents. His mother was the kind who took up for her sons and so she came toward my partner and me. My partner was still angry and called out to the woman: 'We are going to shoot you with our arrows if you come any closer!' Whereupon the woman turned
[861] around and went back without saying anything. When our parents heard of this, however, both my partner and I were given a good tongue-lashing for having threatened a woman."

857 In summer, boys of the same band playing together as a group
578 expected a fight if they came in contact with a group from another band. While sometimes they used bows and arrows in this type of fighting, more often they used mud balls propelled from the end of a willow stick about three feet long. Thick gave the following account of one of these battles in which he participated as a boy.

"One summer day I was with my band group, the Frozens. We expected we might be raided, so we had already prepared mud balls and were modeling clay figures—horses, buffalo, men, and so on—when the Upper Quarters gang attacked. We Frozens grabbed our sticks and mud balls and ran into a coulee and then turned on the Upper Quarters. As the latter approached they protected themselves by holding their robes up in front of their faces, since the mud balls were aimed at their heads. Jim Shortman happened to be the member of the Upper Quarters who was 'bravest' and in the lead. I aimed at him and Jim put up his robe and warded off the shot; but Dwarf, who was right beside me, threw a mud ball immediately after I had and hit Jim right in the eye, breaking the skin and knocking him down. When they saw the blood, Jim ran home and the others, especially Dwarf, were scared. When Dwarf saw Jim's father coming toward

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

among men. It was a severe ordeal and the older men had no mercy on these youngsters. 857 868

Occasionally as training in bravery, the heart of a bear was taken raw and cut into small bits. After calling together the older boys and young men and lining them up, each one in turn was given a bit of the heart dipped in fresh blood and asked: "Well, are you going to have a brave heart?" Some were able to swallow it easily, but others could not stomach it. Those who were able to swallow and retain it were said to be the really brave ones.[8] [262]

It was indicated by many informants that in the old days a man would almost have to have had supernatural powers in order to be outstandingly successful in war or to achieve fame as a medicine man. In fact it was thought that supernatural powers could be helpful in many aspects of life including gambling and love. Guardians, however, used to warn the boys and young men under their care that "you can't get something for nothing." By this was meant that a person who accepted supernatural power would not live out his full span of life. Thus, according to The Boy, parents emphasized in training their sons that, rather than going on power quests, they should be ambitious to acquire fame and respect by developing their natural abilities. Nevertheless many sought and obtained supernatural powers, visions apparently often being vouchsafed in youth, although the power might not have been used until later in life. It was believed that those who accepted and used such supernatural powers died prematurely.[9] 787 798

Methods of Instruction

Oral instruction, or "lecturing," stands out in the Gros Ventre mind as the most important method of child training. All of our middle-aged and older informants agreed that some relative, often either the mother or the father, lectured their children almost every day, telling them what was right and what was wrong and "how to live." If boys and girls were present together, there were some subjects which could not be touched upon and would be reserved for fathers to speak about to their sons and for mothers 861

[8] It was said that, in the distant past, the heart of an enemy was so devoured by warriors. For historical confirmation, see Henry, v. 2, p. 734. [266]

[9] Full discussion of supernatural powers is given in Cooper Ms., 1949.

861 to their daughters.[10] The lecturing of the child started when he was an infant and continued until adulthood had been attained. Those charged with the training of children felt it to be a duty. As Coming Daylight put it: "They talked to their children right from the start, and before the babies themselves were able to talk, they seemed to understand." Singer remarked that, because modern parents do not talk to infants as the old-fashioned ones used to do, present-day infants do not respond by trying to "talk back." Nowadays, the two old women insisted, even infants pay no attention to instruction, and as for older children, some go so far as to tell their elders to shut up!

Under the old regime, however, a child had to listen, whether he wanted to or not, and he had to retain, at least outwardly, a respectful attitude. Cora, for instance, said that she hated this being talked to. Her father was the one who did the lecturing in her family and he used to require that she stand in one spot and not move "while he preached about being good and the ways of doing everything." Singer and Coming Daylight admitted that it was tiresome for the child to be continuously lectured, but they insisted that this is the best way for children to learn. Children [856] are supposed to really grasp what is being said to them from about the age of four.

867 183 Thick remembers the general content of the lectures he heard from his mother to have run along these lines: "If you get a mare, treat it well because mares will increase. Take good care of her. If you get a saddle, hang on to it. Robes, bridles, whips, are needed useful articles, keep them, don't give them away. If you don't keep these things you will have to go and borrow from someone else. That is bad. If you have to borrow a horse from some other boy, his family might become suspicious of you; yet if they refuse, there are hard feelings over it. Therefore when you get something, take good care of it.

"When you go out to play with your own things, your bow and arrows or hoop, others will want you to play with them and to bet with them. If you join in such games, somebody is likely to get mad because you have won and so he may beat you up. If

[10] For details on kinship behavior, see pp. 107–08.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

trimming for women's clothing. I knew that the body of a girl had been among those left in the branches of the trees at this place, so I decided that the bear had disturbed the bodies and must have eaten the cloth along with everything else. I stood there quite a while wondering whether I should take those elk teeth. Finally I took them and having strung them on a piece of sinew laid them in the stream-bed with a rock covering them. When I went home I opened the matter with my grandmother by stating: 'A bear ate that girl who was buried in the elk tooth dress.' When my grandmother asked how I knew this, I told her about the elk teeth in the excrement. Whereupon my grandmother asked: 'Why didn't you take those teeth? They are valuable.' Feeling easier in my mind, I said: 'I was afraid you would accuse me of stealing them—but I did take them anyway!' My grandmother was glad and so I brought them from the creek and I was happy, too, since there were enough teeth to make two rows on my dress." 183 685 867

The usual procedure of careful parents when a child reported he had found some article was to first question him as to whether or not he had taken it from someone. Then the parent would go around and ask people if they had lost this certain article. If a child had stolen it he would thus be found out and it was believed that he would never steal anything again.

The rights of children to their own property were recognized by elders and, while they admonished children to take good care of their things, if a child wished to dispose of what belonged to him no one would reprimand him for having done so. After all, generosity is a trait that was much admired among the Gros Ventres. Informants said that if, for instance, a man had given a horse to his daughter and she gave it away, he would say nothing to her about it. Should she ask him for another he might, however, tell her: "Well, I don't know—you might give it away." But he would never scold her about it. 183 858 867 421

Even if a child were flagrantly disobedient he would ordinarily be punished only by a scolding rather than by whipping or deprivation. Singer and Coming Daylight both were shocked at the idea that a child might be punished by depriving him of something. They said: "Indians love their children and we don't think they would deprive them of anything. They just talk to their children 861

861 and tell them what is right." Coming Daylight gave an account of an occasion on which she was disobedient. "One of my relatives was very ill and my grandmother thought that if I would sacrifice a finger joint, he would get well. But I was a small girl, and I dreaded the idea of having part of my finger cut off, so I ran away. My uncle chased after me and told me never to come back. I yelled at him: 'I won't come back, but I am not going to have my finger cut off!' So I went far off and stayed out in the hills until my uncle came looking for me and brought me home again. Two nights after they had asked me to give up my finger, the relative died, but they didn't punish me."

If a child were really lazy or "pouted too much," he might be [858] "thrown out"—cases were mentioned where this had actually happened. The theory was that the child would then have to work much harder than he would have at home for whoever would take him in.

In the case of temper tantrums on the part of a very young child, he was first simply told to stop. Should he continue, his guardian would say: "Oh well, he doesn't know any better" and then douse him with cold water. It was said that he would get up immediately after that type of treatment, and would soon be cured.

If a child were naughty or made a mistake, his guardian would usually not reprimand him in public. He would wait for an opportunity to get him alone. As an example, in training for proper attitudes and behavior between brother and sister, the boy was told: "Be careful what you say in front of your sister." If the boy then made some remark he should not have made in the presence of his sister, his mother waited until the sister had gone out and then talked to him in a gentle way. Cora expanded on this by stating: "The Gros Ventres never bawl out anybody in front [648] of a third party. This is where the white social workers make their biggest mistake. They get everybody together in a central place and then proceed to reprimand the various ones in front of all the others. That is the worst thing that can happen—it hurts these Gros Ventres so badly."

Nevertheless, those in authority may give a severe "tongue lashing" to the culprit in private. As The Boy said when discussing discipline: "The Indian, when he was living the old life, had a

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

system of discipline, but it was not like that of the white man. The Indian used his roaring voice and stinging words. When I was a boy there was one old man who had a crippled hand. On various occasions when we were told to keep quiet and we disregarded that appeal, that old man would sneak up to us and roar at us. Sometimes he would bluff mischievous boys by telling them: 'Come over here. I am going to work you over with this crippled hand,' but nobody would dare go near him. Then he would say: 'Well, give me one arrow apiece. I won't work you over this time—but next time I will surely do so!" 86

The bugaboo was used to threaten small children when they misbehaved. They were told that "someone" would come and take them away in a big sack. The story told by Singer and Coming Daylight regarding the bugaboo was that of a woman who put her disobedient son outside her lodge and this "someone" came along with a sack, put the child in it and hung the sack in a tree. Aside from this bugaboo, Coming Daylight could recall only one instance from her childhood where she was threatened through reference to "spirits." This was after she had swam the whole width of the Missouri River and back. She was, and still is, very proud of this feat, but her grandmother was angry with her for having been too bold in going so far. She scolded her saying: "Why did you do that? Don't you know there are all kinds of 'animals' in the deep water? They always grab what they want!" Sometimes, however, punishment in the form of "something awful will happen" was indicated for the wrong doer.

One point on which Coming Daylight and the other old women were extremely emphatic was that in the old days the Gros Ventre never tried to scare children by mentioning the Supreme Being in connection with punishment. These old women recalled that in the lectures they heard, and in the scoldings they received, the emphasis was much more on social motivation. Children were told: "Nobody will like you if you do so and so." Or: "People don't like anyone who is onery. They like those who are generous and kind." Self-regarding motives were stressed in some situations. "Don't gamble lest you lose something we value," "Do what is right so as to keep your man," "Be industrious so as to show off what a good worker you are," "Don't run around with 183 86 [77]

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

other men so you will avoid your husband's suspicion," and so on. Sometimes the appeal was made by a parent: "If you do such and such a thing well, I will be proud of you." In general it would seem that the positive side rather than the negative, was stressed.

It was more often the men informants who mentioned supernatural motives proposed for proper conduct. They remembered that they were told that the Supreme Being would "have pity" on them if they followed the proper code of behavior. Both men and women mentioned, however, that respect for the aged was instilled because "people didn't become old for nothing. They had a blessing from the Supreme Being to live long lives. Whenever you see old people attempting to do something and are having difficulties, you should go right in and do it for them. Help old people out and then ask them to intercede for you that you will have good health, a long life and success in all your undertakings."

The example of others was recognized as effective in child-training. Al feels that the Gros Ventres were well brought up in the old days "because children were taught to stick to the rules and they had the good example of adults to follow." In describing the duty of hospitality, Coming Daylight said: "My grandmother was a great one to have a lot of visitors because she was generous, and so I got a good example at home." It was said by others of Coming Daylight: "She feeds everyone who comes along just as she used to see her uncle (mother's brother) do. She takes after her uncle in lots of ways."

In lecturing to the young, examples of actual behavior of persons, both good and bad, were often given. For instance, in warning boys of the evils of gambling, reference would be made to men who would otherwise have had promising careers but who ruined their chances by too heavy stakes which they lost. Fear of offending those who had supernatural power lest they retaliate by means of black magic was implicit in at least some of the admonitions. This was so, for instance, in instructing young men to stay away from the wives of "powerful" men, as well as in warning girls to decline improper proposals "in a nice way."

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

If a mother could not feed her child well, they used to supplement the mother's milk by broth from meat. Occasionally some woman could be found who would help out.[7] Coming Daylight, for instance, used to allow a son of her mother's brother to nurse, as his own mother was very thin and her milk was insufficient. Another time she nursed the infant son of her cousin whose wife, after he had deserted her, brought their baby to her husband and refused to take it back. Again, Mae's mother nursed several children not her own. When she was an old woman she would complain because she was not invited by these persons. She would fuss along these lines: "They never even invited me once. If it hadn't been for me, they would have starved when they were infants." 853

Early Disciplines

The child was usually not weaned until it was two years old or more. Sometimes a child would be allowed to nurse until six or so, provided his mother did not become pregnant again. There was a boy who had started to school at six, and who would still run up to his mother to nurse when he had the opportunity. Many children would even run in from playing to get at the mother's breast. "It didn't seem to hurt them any!" 862

Definite effort was made to wean the child when the mother became pregnant. "If a woman didn't realize she was in this condition and allowed the child her breast, the child would have a bad stomach and diarrhea." One way of weaning the child was to put nicotine from a pipe on the nipples. The sight of this so frightened the child that he would not try to nurse. If it was dark and he didn't see it and happened to taste it, he would raise an awful cry, but he would be cured. Pepper was also used in the same way. They would give the child as a "pacifier" a piece of meat, pounded soft, sweetened and tied in a soft white rag. The child would suck on this until he fell asleep.

It was when the new baby was born that they would have the most trouble with the child who had just been weaned. Many children were jealous of a new arrival. Coming Daylight said that they had to watch carefully lest an attempt be made to harm the 593

[7] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, p. 181.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

755
757 sional individuals; supernatural remedies used only by professional medicine men or women with power.

Natural Remedies

751 515 Both preventive and curative measures of the natural or rational order were numerous.

The most common preventive measure was the daily early morning plunge in the stream or roll in the snow by men, a practice carried out for hardening the body as well as for cleaning it. [731] In small epidemics scattering and isolation were regularly resorted to in order to check the spread of the disease. The use of skunk fluid as a curative was more a Cree than a Gros Ventre procedure, but there was a Gros Ventre belief that skunk fluid diluted with water and put into the eyes of a person was a preventive and cure of snow-blindness. A mother, on knowing herself pregnant again, would cease nursing her infant lest it suffer from "bad stomach and diarrhea." [862] Drinking the blood of a freshly butchered buffalo was looked upon as a preventive of tuberculosis.

757 Curative measures of the rational order were of many kinds. We recorded the following, but our list is far from exhaustive. All of them may best be classified as "domestic remedies," measures of common knowledge, resorted to by everybody who wished to use them, and not considered proprietary right of particular individuals.

757 278 Many herbal curatives came under this category.[8] The roots of "sweetheart briars," so called because the burrs stuck so tightly, were used for colds, and the deeper the root the stronger was the medicine.[9]

An infusion of peppermint is now used as a beverage by everybody for "fits, spasms and stomach disorders," although the medicinal use of peppermint was formerly the monopoly of Flat Pipe keepers. A very strong drink was made by boiling a certain root and just a little of it drunk as a cure for difficulty in urination.

[8] Cf. list in Kroeber, 1908, pp. 224-27. We made no attempt in the field to get a full list of such herbal and other curatives. [171]

[9] The Piegan, according to Coming Daylight and Singer, used these as "blood medicine."

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

baby was laid in the powder and rubbed under its arms, between its legs, under the toes, between the fingers,—wherever the baby might chafe. "The baby feels fine then and goes right to sleep." When no buffalo chips were available horse manure treated the same way was an adequate substitute. Fresh powder was put in the sack each day, and in the winter it was first heated. 854 278 234

Sometimes accidents happened. One time when a man named Fork (of a tree) was a baby, his grandmother was tending to him. She had heated the powdered chips in the sack with a hot stone and forgot to remove it. The baby cried and cried. Finally they unbound him and found that his toe was right against the hot rock. This injured his toe and he always walked with a peculiar gait. Cora has a scar on her buttocks which she thinks came from a similar accident.

If the father's sister failed to provide a sack and none was forthcoming from any other relative, the mother would wrap the infant in a skin and tie it with straps. Coming Daylight said that before her time they used a cradleboard. If they had a travois they would carry the baby on that. "Some, if they didn't have a cradleboard, used a piece of stiffened leather hooked over the saddle horn." 854

When the infant was old enough to move its arms, the arms were left free of wrappings. The infant was kept in the sack day and night. When not being carried about, it was hung either from one of the lodge poles inside the lodge, or swinging from the travois placed upright against the lodge. Lullabies were sometimes sung.* At night, the infant was right beside its mother, and the father usually slept in separate bedding so as not to crowd the child. When the powder in the sack was changed, they let the baby play around and stretch "because babies must have gotten tired staying in those sacks." [633]

Toilet training was started when the infant was between six and twelve months old. "The baby is more alert and easier to handle then. You just guessed at the time and opened the sack and held the baby out, supporting it under the knees and thighs. The child would usually respond. If there were a delay, then you talked to him and made a hissing noise to encourage him. You 863

* Unfortunately no lullabies were recorded.

863 might even 'fuss' a little with him, saying something like: 'Look at you! I thought I told you to urinate. I'm trying to make you do it at the right time, and you want to hold back!' But we were not harsh with infants because we knew they have to learn. Anyway, if you misjudged the time, all you had to do was to throw out the powdered chips and put in fresh ones. The old way was much better. These diaper-babies around here now are much more trouble."

[755] If a child developed enuresis, a tiny bit of the tail of a fox or of a beaver tied to his belt, or a piece of badger skin for him to sit on, was thought to guarantee a cure.

854 To help the child who had trouble teething, it was considered wise to kill a mouse, skin it, take the back thigh and, after cooking [825 it well, rub on the gums. It is said by Coming Daylight that 757] the Crow used fish for this purpose. Some children have such a difficult time that their gums are very sore and their tongues even swell. Coming Daylight's grandmother and others knew how to [757] remedy that condition. The doctor, using a sharp-pointed bone, would lance the gums here and there where the teeth were coming, after allowing the gums to bleed, they would rub some powdered [751] root on the gums. As a preventive, old folks said to catch tiny baby mice and, after roasting them on the coals, feed them to the child. Coming Daylight, for instance, did that for her children, and none of them had any trouble with teething.

856 They would let babies crawl when they showed the inclination to do so, but the old women were sure that they always watched their babies more closely than mothers do today. They used to encourage them to walk by holding them up and helping them. It has been Coming Daylight's experience that boys learn to walk more quickly than girls. It may be, however, that more attention was given to boys.

198 The only expression the old women, or the younger ones for 856 that matter, could think of that could be considered "baby talk" was that babies, when very small and just beginning to talk, say: "I" (prolonged and with strong glottal stop) if they do not like something or do not wish to take what is offered. This, together with *na'a* 'mother' and *ni'a* 'father,'[9]—which babies say properly

[9] These are vocative forms rather than descriptive forms.

868 ered the most difficult of all tasks allotted to women and not every one was able to do it.

The whole training of the girl was oriented toward marriage. 183 A girl was supposed to have been ignorant in sex matters until 864 informed by an older person, presumably in most cases by a grand- 867 mother. Coming Daylight, for example, remembers very distinctly that when she was about ten years old and the man who became her first husband had asked her uncle for her, her grandmother warned her: "Don't be 'ashamed' of your husband." The old woman then told Coming Daylight what to expect as to the physical side of marriage. Her grandmother also told her many other things, as was usual for a girl about to be married. "Now you are going to be married. You be true to your man. If some young fellow comes to you and wants to 'throw in with you,' you tell him no. But refuse him in a nice way and don't say bad things. Try to get out of it nicely. Then go right to your husband and tell him what happened, because if he sees you talking to another man he might get the wrong impression and think you have consented. Moreover, never become jealous of your husband nor should you ever fight back at any woman who might attack you on account of wanting him. Just pity such a woman. Always remember you are the wife; the other woman is not married to him but you are."

Just before she went with her husband to his home, an uncle of hers came to Coming Daylight and told her to tend to her house well, to make clothes for her husband and to see to it that he was always nice and clean. Then he added that she should not get mad or pout if her husband should go out and stay away longer than she thought he should. He said: "When a woman gets mad from this cause, she wants to make her own life bad. When her husband goes around visiting other women, and his wife finds out, then she wants to run around with men. If she retaliates in this way she only gets herself in bad. What you should do when your husband goes out and stays late is to say nothing when he comes in. He will always come back to you. You just say to yourself that he is your man and that he won't leave you permanently for any other woman."

It would seem that girls, as part of their training, were con-

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

stantly admonished to stay at home after they were married and not to go visiting and gossiping with other women. Mothers told their daughters to be respectful to their husbands. When still very young, a girl was taught to "always make a lot over a man." She started with her father and was responsible, for instance, for seeing to it that in the morning when he awakened there was water beside him so he could wash his face before going for his morning bath, and that his breakfast would be ready for him when he came back therefrom. These are the kinds of things girls would be expected to do later for their husbands. 183 864 867

All during the time they were learning domestic skills, girls were told that they should keep everything that they own nicely and to have on hand everything they may need. It was not good to run around and borrow. "Keep your house clean and keep everything in good order, then your husband will like to stay at home." Again, "Don't let your husband's moccasins wear out before you make another pair. Always have things prepared ahead of time." Girls were told, too, that good wives took their husband's moccasins off for them when they came home tired, and so on. 183 867

Coming Daylight always admonished her daughters: "Never talk back to your husband. Women have fiery tongues when they get mad, and that is bad." It was nearly always taken for granted by others that the wife was to blame if her husband beat her. Since it was customary for very young girls to marry men very much older than they, such husbands took upon themselves the role of disciplinarian. [582]

While marriage was taken for granted, apparently a girl was free to accept or to reject medicine power. Neither girls nor women went on power-quests, but some individuals were vouchsafed some kinds of supernatural power in dreams. While the experience of Coming Daylight may be unique, it is illuminating. "Even before I was married, I had a particular kind of dream which indicated power to extract illness from the body of a patient. This dream occurred four nights in succession. Each morning I would tell my grandmother about it. The old woman got angry each time and told me not to talk about it, to keep it to myself so that I would become a great doctor. But I had already 787 [562]

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

he should, don't fight back. Let him take it out on you and don't fight back. 183 867

"When you are out playing, if you are hungry and you want to eat, come home. Don't go to any other family to eat because people are fond of their food and might resent it. If a boy, some friend of yours, invites you to his home, don't go."

Garter Snake's father was the one who lectured his children,—three sons and three daughters. Since she was Pipe Child, when her father was Keeper of the Feathered Pipe, Garter Snake was talked to by him more often perhaps than were her siblings. Long after she was married, her mother used to remind her of the things her father told her. Some of these admonitions were as follows: "I want you to be an upright, honest and straight woman. If you listen to everything I tell you and do as I tell you, in the future you will thank me for it. Now don't think you are alone in this world because the One above the White Man sees everything that we do. Don't steal, don't lie, don't be tricky. Be honest about everything.

"When you grow up and finally have your own home, pity the old men and pity the old women, pity the poor. If you see an old woman with a ragged dress, give her a blanket. Make moccasins for these old women. The same holds for these old men. If you see an old man whose leggings are torn, make leggings for him. If you see a poor person who needs clothes, give him some if you have any. If you do that the One Above who watches and looks at you doing those things, He is going to reward you. [888]

"When you are married and have your own home, take care of it well. If you have horses, take care of them; try to have good property and take care of it. If you do that you will always have something. If you have horses of your own that will help your husband. He may not have any and you can help him along.

"Be good to everybody. If a man or woman comes to visit, welcome them. Tell them: 'Come in and sit down.' Then feed them well regardless of whether they are poor or rich, young or old, or even children. [574]

"Above all, don't you ever quarrel with anyone. Don't you ever fight. Try to be friendly with everybody." [865]

Charles Buckman's uncle, who, like Garter Snake's father,

183 was not a Christian, used to tell him: "You have eyes to see, a
867 heart to think, and ears to hear. Listen to what I will tell you. You are a poor boy. As such, be faithful. Believe in the One Above the White Man. Pray to Him, ask Him to have pity on you and so make you a good man some day. Try to be good to all, especially when you become a man. Be good to the poor, be good to the old. Never take anything not belonging to you. Never speak evil of other people. Try to be patient. If a man says [865] anything wrong to you, and hurts your feelings, say nothing because if folks talk back it causes quarreling or fighting, which is not good. If a poor man asks you for anything, if you have it, be ready to hand it over to him. If you see anybody hungry and [888] you have it, feed him. If an old man or woman is in need and wants anything done, do it for him or her. If you do these things, the One Above will have pity on you."

685 All informants agreed that in addition to having been told to
867 take care of whatever property they might have, they were in-
183 structed to regard the property rights of others. It was believed that, though the theft remained undiscovered, the thief would be punished by automatic supernatural sanction. "Something terrible would happen to anybody who stole something." Mary's grandmother, for instance, had told her time and again never to take anything that did not belong to her. To illustrate how well this had been instilled into her, she gave the following example. "On one occasion when I was a child, I found a really beautiful string of beads, but I did not take it. After I got to bed that night, however, I told my grandmother about it. When asked why I had failed to bring home the beads, I replied: 'I was afraid you would tell me that I had taken them from someone.' My grandmother merely remarked: 'Well, you should have brought them to me, or better, you should have taken me to where they were lying.' But when I took her to the spot the next day the beads were gone."

This reminded Coming Daylight of an incident in her own [764] childhood. "I was walking near a grove of trees where several corpses had been placed (in the traditional manner of disposing of the dead). I noticed a considerable amount of bear excrement and mixed in it were a number of elk teeth—the most valuable

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The above case illustrates how it was possible for a man, in spite of a poor start in life, to rise. Children were instructed by their elders, as was Thick by his maternal uncle: "Above all things try to have horses. Try to have property and whatever you have, take care of it. By having lots of horses and property, people will respect you and look upon you as somebody." 556 867

Again Coming Daylight stated: "They used to think more of horses than of anything else. They were sure proud of owning a pinto pony. In telling stories when they wanted to describe the best they could think of they would say: 'You should have seen her horse—it was a big pinto pony.'" And in telling of a relative of hers, Woman Chief, Coming Daylight said: "Her husband was not very handsome, but they were well-to-do and she always rode top horses." 554 231

While all horses were as a rule well cared for, special attention was devoted to the buffalo horses. On the hunt, for instance, these horses would be led along unburdened by pack or rider to keep them fresh. They were ridden only for the actual chase and after the kill were turned loose to roll around and graze like young colts. When the butchering was completed the meat was packed on other horses and the swift buffalo horses were then led home again. These horses were ridden on social and ceremonial occasions, when their owners wished to show off, and of course the soldier societies were well mounted, but such use amounted to no more than a good work-out, and these valuable horses were never abused nor wilfully exhausted. 231

Children were exhorted to take care of their property, especially of horses, and the girls were advised that "a mare is worth everything—it increases—treat her well." It was stated that some attention was given to breeding. A man might judge that a colt showed possibilities of becoming a fast horse. If it fulfilled the early promise the colts it sired would be watched. The less likely of these would be castrated. Likewise, a good mare would, if possible, be retained by the owner for breeding. A man who owned a particularly good buffalo horse might, on his deathbed, either order that it be killed at his grave or give it to some relative he knew cared well for horses, with instructions never to abuse it nor give it away. [867] 763 768 431

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

439 wives had vowed to cover a Pipe, undoubtedly he would try to include in his purchases the requisite length of black cloth. Individuals of course differed. In view of their labor, the wives would expect to share in the return therefor which the husband was able to secure from the trader, but this expectation was not always met.[11]

The items thus obtained were consumed by the Gros Ventres in the same ways as those goods of their own manufacture—some being directly consumed, some entering into further production, and some being exchanged on the principle of gifts and of payments for services, and in gambling.

554 A man would accumulate a surplus only to expend it as
431 generously as possible in order to attain prestige. The person with
439 a reputation for generosity rose in public esteem, and was in turn the recipient of many gifts, whereas the man with only one horse and only one wife could not afford to meet the demands for hospitality and for generosity in other transactions, and thus could not profit by the system of indirect and deferred exchange.

262 Sharing of food was an important element in attaining prestige
574 through generosity. A person known to be stingy with food would
554 lack status. The ideal was often preached to children embodied in
867 such statements as the following: "If you have visitors, even though you don't have much food, give the last of it to them."

574 Should a male visitor drop in unexpectedly, the first thing a man did was to tell his wife to cook and she was expected to comply. How seriously this was regarded may be seen from the following case told by Singer: "One time my husband, Iron Bucket, went with a friend to visit the latter's brother. The sister-in-law was naturally a stingy woman and made no move to feed them. Her husband was sitting there fixing arrows and he told her: 'Hurry and cook. If you have nothing, ask for meat at one of the lodges.' This woman had a big shaggy head and sat there with her head bowed and her husband couldn't make her move. After a while, however, some meat was brought in from hunting, and this woman went out, got it and threw it down hard inside her lodge. She was mad. And instead of giving them in a nice way the manifolds and liver that they ordinarily eat first, she slung

[11] For a case in point, see p. 178.

868 ered the most difficult of all tasks allotted to women and not every one was able to do it.

183 The whole training of the girl was oriented toward marriage. A girl was supposed to have been ignorant in sex matters until 864 informed by an older person, presumably in most cases by a grand- 867 mother. Coming Daylight, for example, remembers very distinctly that when she was about ten years old and the man who became her first husband had asked her uncle for her, her grandmother warned her: "Don't be 'ashamed' of your husband." The old woman then told Coming Daylight what to expect as to the physical side of marriage. Her grandmother also told her many other things, as was usual for a girl about to be married. "Now you are going to be married. You be true to your man. If some young fellow comes to you and wants to 'throw in with you,' you tell him no. But refuse him in a nice way and don't say bad things. Try to get out of it nicely. Then go right to your husband and tell him what happened, because if he sees you talking to another man he might get the wrong impression and think you have consented. Moreover, never become jealous of your husband nor should you ever fight back at any woman who might attack you on account of wanting him. Just pity such a woman. Always remember you are the wife; the other woman is not married to him but you are."

Just before she went with her husband to his home, an uncle of hers came to Coming Daylight and told her to tend to her house well, to make clothes for her husband and to see to it that he was always nice and clean. Then he added that she should not get mad or pout if her husband should go out and stay away longer than she thought he should. He said: "When a woman gets mad from this cause, she wants to make her own life bad. When her husband goes around visiting other women, and his wife finds out, then she wants to run around with men. If she retaliates in this way she only gets herself in bad. What you should do when your husband goes out and stays late is to say nothing when he comes in. He will always come back to you. You just say to yourself that he is your man and that he won't leave you permanently for any other woman."

It would seem that girls, as part of their training, were con-

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

stantly admonished to stay at home after they were married and not to go visiting and gossiping with other women. Mothers told their daughters to be respectful to their husbands. When still very young, a girl was taught to "always make a lot over a man." She started with her father and was responsible, for instance, for seeing to it that in the morning when he awakened there was water beside him so he could wash his face before going for his morning bath, and that his breakfast would be ready for him when he came back therefrom. These are the kinds of things girls would be expected to do later for their husbands. 183 864 867

All during the time they were learning domestic skills, girls were told that they should keep everything that they own nicely and to have on hand everything they may need. It was not good to run around and borrow. "Keep your house clean and keep everything in good order, then your husband will like to stay at home." Again, "Don't let your husband's moccasins wear out before you make another pair. Always have things prepared ahead of time." Girls were told, too, that good wives took their husband's moccasins off for them when they came home tired, and so on. 183 867

Coming Daylight always admonished her daughters: "Never talk back to your husband. Women have fiery tongues when they get mad, and that is bad." It was nearly always taken for granted by others that the wife was to blame if her husband beat her. Since it was customary for very young girls to marry men very much older than they, such husbands took upon themselves the role of disciplinarian. [582]

While marriage was taken for granted, apparently a girl was free to accept or to reject medicine power. Neither girls nor women went on power quests, but some individuals were vouchsafed some kinds of supernatural power in dreams. While the experience of Coming Daylight may be unique, it is illuminating. "Even before I was married, I had a particular kind of dream which indicated power to extract illness from the body of a patient. This dream occurred four nights in succession. Each morning I would tell my grandmother about it. The old woman got angry each time and told me not to talk about it, to keep it to myself so that I would become a great doctor. But I had already 787 [562]

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

861 to their daughters.[10] The lecturing of the child started when he was an infant and continued until adulthood had been attained. Those charged with the training of children felt it to be a duty. As Coming Daylight put it: "They talked to their children right from the start, and before the babies themselves were able to talk, they seemed to understand." Singer remarked that, because modern parents do not talk to infants as the old-fashioned ones used to do, present-day infants do not respond by trying to "talk back." Nowadays, the two old women insisted, even infants pay no attention to instruction, and as for older children, some go so far as to tell their elders to shut up!

Under the old regime, however, a child had to listen, whether he wanted to or not, and he had to retain, at least outwardly, a respectful attitude. Cora, for instance, said that she hated this being talked to. Her father was the one who did the lecturing in her family and he used to require that she stand in one spot and not move "while he preached about being good and the ways of doing everything." Singer and Coming Daylight admitted that it was tiresome for the child to be continuously lectured, but they insisted that this is the best way for children to learn. Children [856] are supposed to really grasp what is being said to them from about the age of four.

867 183 Thick remembers the general content of the lectures he heard from his mother to have run along these lines: "If you get a mare, treat it well because mares will increase. Take good care of her. If you get a saddle, hang on to it. Robes, bridles, whips, are needed useful articles, keep them, don't give them away. If you don't keep these things you will have to go and borrow from someone else. That is bad. If you have to borrow a horse from some other boy, his family might become suspicious of you; yet if they refuse, there are hard feelings over it. Therefore when you get something, take good care of it.

"When you go out to play with your own things, your bow and arrows or hoop, others will want you to play with them and to bet with them. If you join in such games, somebody is likely to get mad because you have won and so he may beat you up. If

[10] For details on kinship behavior, see pp. 107–08.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

he should, don't fight back. Let him take it out on you and don't fight back. 183 867

"When you are out playing, if you are hungry and you want to eat, come home. Don't go to any other family to eat because people are fond of their food and might resent it. If a boy, some friend of yours, invites you to his home, don't go."

Garter Snake's father was the one who lectured his children,—three sons and three daughters. Since she was Pipe Child, when her father was Keeper of the Feathered Pipe, Garter Snake was talked to by him more often perhaps than were her siblings. Long after she was married, her mother used to remind her of the things her father told her. Some of these admonitions were as follows: "I want you to be an upright, honest and straight woman. If you listen to everything I tell you and do as I tell you, in the future you will thank me for it. Now don't think you are alone in this world because the One above the White Man sees everything that we do. Don't steal, don't lie, don't be tricky. Be honest about everything.

"When you grow up and finally have your own home, pity the old men and pity the old women, pity the poor. If you see an old woman with a ragged dress, give her a blanket. Make moccasins for these old women. The same holds for these old men. If you see an old man whose leggings are torn, make leggings for him. If you see a poor person who needs clothes, give him some if you have any. If you do that the One Above who watches and looks at you doing those things, He is going to reward you. [888]

"When you are married and have your own home, take care of it well. If you have horses, take care of them; try to have good property and take care of it. If you do that you will always have something. If you have horses of your own that will help your husband. He may not have any and you can help him along.

"Be good to everybody. If a man or woman comes to visit, welcome them. Tell them: 'Come in and sit down.' Then feed them well regardless of whether they are poor or rich, young or old, or even children. [574]

"Above all, don't you ever quarrel with anyone. Don't you ever fight. Try to be friendly with everybody." [865]

Charles Buckman's uncle, who, like Garter Snake's father,

183 was not a Christian, used to tell him: "You have eyes to see, a
867 heart to think, and ears to hear. Listen to what I will tell you. You are a poor boy. As such, be faithful. Believe in the One Above the White Man. Pray to Him, ask Him to have pity on you and so make you a good man some day. Try to be good to all, especially when you become a man. Be good to the poor, be good to the old. Never take anything not belonging to you. Never
[865] speak evil of other people. Try to be patient. If a man says anything wrong to you, and hurts your feelings, say nothing because if folks talk back it causes quarreling or fighting, which is not good. If a poor man asks you for anything, if you have it, be ready to hand it over to him. If you see anybody hungry and
[888] you have it, feed him. If an old man or woman is in need and wants anything done, do it for him or her. If you do these things, the One Above will have pity on you."

685 All informants agreed that in addition to having been told to
867 take care of whatever property they might have, they were in-
183 structed to regard the property rights of others. It was believed that, though the theft remained undiscovered, the thief would be punished by automatic supernatural sanction. "Something terrible would happen to anybody who stole something." Mary's grandmother, for instance, had told her time and again never to take anything that did not belong to her. To illustrate how well this had been instilled into her, she gave the following example. "On one occasion when I was a child, I found a really beautiful string of beads, but I did not take it. After I got to bed that night, however, I told my grandmother about it. When asked why I had failed to bring home the beads, I replied: 'I was afraid you would tell me that I had taken them from someone.' My grandmother merely remarked: 'Well, you should have brought them to me, or better, you should have taken me to where they were lying.' But when I took her to the spot the next day the beads were gone."

This reminded Coming Daylight of an incident in her own
[764] childhood. "I was walking near a grove of trees where several corpses had been placed (in the traditional manner of disposing of the dead). I noticed a considerable amount of bear excrement and mixed in it were a number of elk teeth—the most valuable

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

trimming for women's clothing. I knew that the body of a girl had been among those left in the branches of the trees at this place, so I decided that the bear had disturbed the bodies and must have eaten the cloth along with everything else. I stood there quite a while wondering whether I should take those elk teeth. Finally I took them and having strung them on a piece of sinew laid them in the stream-bed with a rock covering them. When I went home I opened the matter with my grandmother by stating: 'A bear ate that girl who was buried in the elk tooth dress.' When my grandmother asked how I knew this, I told her about the elk teeth in the excrement. Whereupon my grandmother asked: 'Why didn't you take those teeth? They are valuable.' Feeling easier in my mind, I said: 'I was afraid you would accuse me of stealing them—but I did take them anyway!' My grandmother was glad and so I brought them from the creek and I was happy, too, since there were enough teeth to make two rows on my dress." 183 685 867

The usual procedure of careful parents when a child reported he had found some article was to first question him as to whether or not he had taken it from someone. Then the parent would go around and ask people if they had lost this certain article. If a child had stolen it he would thus be found out and it was believed that he would never steal anything again.

The rights of children to their own property were recognized by elders and, while they admonished children to take good care of their things, if a child wished to dispose of what belonged to him no one would reprimand him for having done so. After all, generosity is a trait that was much admired among the Gros Ventres. Informants said that if, for instance, a man had given a horse to his daughter and she gave it away, he would say nothing to her about it. Should she ask him for another he might, however, tell her: "Well, I don't know—you might give it away." But he would never scold her about it. 183 858 867 421

Even if a child were flagrantly disobedient he would ordinarily be punished only by a scolding rather than by whipping or deprivation. Singer and Coming Daylight both were shocked at the idea that a child might be punished by depriving him of something. They said: "Indians love their children and we don't think they would deprive them of anything. They just talk to their children 861

183 other men so you will avoid your husband's suspicion," and so on.
861 Sometimes the appeal was made by a parent: "If you do such and such a thing well, I will be proud of you." In general it would seem that the positive side rather than the negative, was stressed.

777 It was more often the men informants who mentioned super-
867 natural motives proposed for proper conduct. They remembered that they were told that the Supreme Being would "have pity" on
888 them if they followed the proper code of behavior. Both men and women mentioned, however, that respect for the aged was instilled because "people didn't become old for nothing. They had a blessing from the Supreme Being to live long lives. Whenever you see old people attempting to do something and are having difficulties, you should go right in and do it for them. Help old people out and then ask them to intercede for you that you will have good health, a long life and success in all your undertakings."

867 The example of others was recognized as effective in child-
574 training. Al feels that the Gros Ventres were well brought up in the old days "because children were taught to stick to the rules and they had the good example of adults to follow." In describing the duty of hospitality, Coming Daylight said: "My grandmother was a great one to have a lot of visitors because she was generous, and so I got a good example at home." It was said by others of Coming Daylight: "She feeds everyone who comes along just as she used to see her uncle (mother's brother) do. She takes after her uncle in lots of ways."

In lecturing to the young, examples of actual behavior of persons, both good and bad, were often given. For instance, in warning boys of the evils of gambling, reference would be made to men who would otherwise have had promising careers but who ruined their chances by too heavy stakes which they lost. Fear
[754] of offending those who had supernatural power lest they retaliate by means of black magic was implicit in at least some of the admonitions. This was so, for instance, in instructing young men to stay away from the wives of "powerful" men, as well as in warning girls to decline improper proposals "in a nice way."

CHAPTER X

OLD AGE AND DEATH

It is the opinion of the now aged Gros Ventres that the proportion of old persons was much greater in the past than it has been since they have taken up the white man's ways; and further, that the aged then retained their health and vigor to a greater degree.[1] One old woman stated that when she was young, there used to be many old people, but that they died off when there were no more buffalo. She added: "People lived to a good old age on the things that the Supreme Being provided,—roots, wild vegetables and fruits, dried meats and berries. In those days, too, they drank broth instead of tea and coffee. Old folks didn't lose their teeth then, although even young girls do nowadays. Their teeth eventually got worn down, but they seldom pulled them. In fact, if an old person should lose a tooth, he thought it was awful and was sure that he was ready for the grave. Furthermore, people didn't get white hair until they were ready for 'old age sleep'—very old people sleep most of the time—yet now one sees middle-aged and even younger people with gray hair like the whites have."

Status and Treatment of the Aged

It was believed that a person who had lived to a ripe old age had been privileged to do so by the Supreme Being. Therefore, they reasoned, if you are good to old people, these in turn will pray to the Supreme Being for your health, long life, and success. Children were instructed explicitly to be good to the aged,—to feed them, to clothe them, and to help them in difficulties,—as well as to seek out those so blessed and ask for their prayers. It was

[1] Allowance should of course be made for the fact that "old age" is a relative term. When it was said that young men were urged to marry "older experienced women," this referred to a woman of perhaps twenty to twenty-five. See pp. 171–72. A woman on the northern plains was "old" at forty, according to Denig, p. 513.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

551 Names were given to children very soon after birth. Names were frequently changed and given away. A man would receive his father's name
553 from the latter, or would take it after his death. If a child were sickly, a relative, such as a grandfather, sometimes gave him another name. A sick person sometimes also took a new name in order to recover. Renowned warriors sometimes gave away their names to young men. They might retain the same name for themselves, or take a new one. One very aged man gave away his name to a young man, telling him, "I give you my name in order that you may have as long a life as I." This was done without the occasion or accompaniment of a ceremony.

There seems to have been no prohibition against mentioning the name of the dead, nor even any reluctance on the matter. Some people, however, were ashamed to speak their own names.

551 Twins, called niiçan, were named, if boys, respectively Kaaen and Niiça^{n}.
845 The latter name, however, was not always used, an ordinary name being given instead. Girl twins were not called by these names.

The hair was formerly worn in braids, as at present customary among
302 the Plains tribes, but also erect over the forehead. The women wore their
[765] hair either in braids or sometimes loose. In mourning, the hair, especially of the women, was cut about halfway across the cheek.

304 Ear-piercing, which among the Arapaho is performed on ceremonial occasions, and is itself accompanied with ceremony and giving of presents, was said among the Gros Ventre to be unaccompanied by special ceremonial actions. A woman or any one else does the piercing.

857 Boys who were herding horses sometimes took off their clothes and
673 daubed themselves with mud until they were unrecognizable. They painted their horses, and made shields of willow. Then they came to the camp,
● 868 mounted or on foot, to steal meat. Approaching the camp like a war-party, they would select the best meat hanging outdoors, charge on it, take it, and run. The old men and women and children chased them with clubs, but of course without success. The boys would go back to where they were herding, and have a feast.

576 The Gros Ventre say that both hand-shaking and kissing are aboriginal with them.

GAMES.

524 A common cup-and-ball game called tsöötskuutja^{n} ("throw in") consisted of four hollow deer or antelope leg bones, each about two inches long, attached to a string passing through them, at the end of which there was a needle eight or ten inches long. This game appears to be identical with

603 versa. Grandparents, for instance, can tell folk-tales and stories, the subject-matter and details of which no parents would mention in the hearing of their children." A woman would think nothing of teasing her grandmother about men. The following is typical of the milder sort of joking which is customary, but which would be considered highly improper toward parents. "Coming Daylight's granddaughter came into her house to borrow a knife. The old woman told her: 'Don't lose that knife. I have had it for a long time and I love that knife.' Whereupon the granddaughter replied: 'Yes, you love that knife just like you love your sweethearts!' and the several women present had a good laugh over this joke." Again, Coming Daylight herself told of an old man who was grandfather to her maternal uncle and thus also her "grandfather." She said: "One day when I was still a young woman, this old man asked me why I didn't come to him to obtain medicine power from him. I replied: 'Oh, I wouldn't come to you because I know that you are one of those medicine men who includes sexual intercourse as payment, and if I came to you, you would try to have me too!' Of course I could never have said that to anyone in my parents' generation."

[831]

Grandparents are said to have been indulgent toward their grandchildren. They might occasionally give advice, and indeed it was expected that a grandmother would train her granddaughter not only in skills and techniques, but also prepare her for what to expect on the physical side of marriage, warn her not to arouse her husband's jealousy, etc. When in trouble, however, a grandchild could discuss any matter with his grandparents. They would give counsel, but never scold. A man would usually not count on material aid from his grandparents, but, on the other hand, he was not expected to contribute to their support to any greater degree than he would to that of any old persons were they in need—namely, by giving an occasional present of food or clothing.

[868]

[431]

Siblings of the Same Sex

593 The relationship between brothers on the one hand and between sisters on the other was a more or less casual one. Family loyalty and ordinary generosity were expected, but formality was lacking. "A girl and her sisters could, of course, laugh and joke and tease

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

many girls liked to pretend that they had one of these Pipes at their play-lodge. They used a certain kind of flower to represent the Pipe and would put it outside the play-lodge in the same position as the real Pipe was placed. They smudged and sang Pipe songs just as their elders did. Once in a while they would pretend they were going to transfer the Pipe. Mud was smeared on their foreheads just as the Keeper used paint. The others would seize the new "Keeper," paint him, go through an imitation of the ceremonies, sing songs, and so on. At the end of the game, however, the rest of the children finally took the "Keeper" and dumped him in the water head foremost,—an indignity that would have been out of the question in regard to a real Keeper. 857 524

Thus it was evident how much children learned by observation. It was specifically stated in regard to the learning of songs that no one ever sat down with a child to teach him a special song or dance, that he would pick up songs and dances by hearing and seeing them performed at the various ceremonies. Similarly, according to both Coming Daylight and to Singer, there was no special teaching in regard to a knowledge of the Supreme Being. Children would know about Him because they would from infancy have heard older people mention Him. In the old days people never did anything without first saying a prayer. The prayers always started out by mentioning the name of the "One above the White Man," and then names of other beings followed.[8] 857 868 [869] [782]

Training

Formal training, in skills necessary for women's work, was begun for little girls at an early age. This was usually in the hands of a female relative,—a grandmother or perhaps a widowed aunt, —to whom the child would be sent at about the age of seven years. The reason for removing a girl from her immediate family circle was said to have been to protect her virginity. Her parents wanted to send her "where no men were living, as they didn't want a girl around home with her father, brother, male cousins." Should there not be a suitable relative, however, the girls' parents would keep her at home and she would receive training in domestic duties from her own mother. In any case, the girl was sup- 868

[8] Religion is treated in full in Cooper Ms. 1949.

868 posed to be watched over and k[illegible] close supervision. For
[562] her there was much less freedom than for a boy of like age.

As a rare treat, a girl of eight or nine might have been allowed
857 to stay with a friend of her own age overnight, providing her guardian knew exactly where she was and that there was some responsible party to look after her. Boys of the same age and even younger could come and go more or less as they pleased. In
[564] illustration Al Chandler told of an incident in his childhood. "At the death of my uncle, the corpse was placed in a lodge removed at some distance from where he resided. I was only a little fellow at the time and I wandered over to that lodge. Not realizing my uncle was dead, I crawled under the covers. I was not missed from home and was not discovered until the next morning when my grandfather came to the lodge to mourn. Thereafter for a week or so my grandmother watched me when I set off from home, but when she saw I was steering clear of that particular lodge, she allowed me to go without saying anything. She knew I could take care of myself so she didn't care where I went or when I came home."

857 In spite of strict supervision of girls, sometimes they evaded
868 their guardians. Coming Daylight told of one of the "tricks" that she had used. "One night I heard there was dancing and my sister and I wanted to sneak out to enjoy the fun while my grandmother was sleeping. We rolled up our blankets and put them beside her. Fortunately she didn't awaken even when we came in. If she had known we were out she would have come after us and given us a good lecture when we got home."

868 So far as training in domestic tasks is concerned, it was considered an important part of a girl's duty to gather berries and to dig roots. Some older woman went with a group of girls to show them what to collect, pointing out at the same time the things that were not edible. Each girl worked and whatever she garnered would be given by her to her mother or grandmother. What was not used immediately would then be stored for winter use.

Learning to slice meat very thin for drying seemed to have been picked up easily by girls at playing "house." Skinning and butchering were much more difficult tasks which had to be learned carefully. These were considered mainly work for men, but it

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

was useful if a woman knew how to do them, and only those who had mastered these skills were taken on hunting parties. Coming Daylight acquired this type of knowledge only after she was married, at which time she was only about eleven or twelve years old, and before she had borne any children. She gradually learned the names for each cut of meat and the certain ways of butchering each type of animal. 868

There were individual differences in the kinds and amount of work which a girl would learn. Some were more proficient than others, due mainly it would seem to the type of training received. Coming Daylight was an orphan and was raised by an extremely strict maternal grandmother, who made her stay by her side for hours as she worked along with her, correcting her mistakes and demonstrating the proper ways of doing things. Coming Daylight heard the other girls and boys outside playing and would sometimes cry because she had to learn a woman's work instead of joining in the fun. Singer, although raised by a grandmother, was allowed to play out much more than was Coming Daylight, and admittedly never mastered as many techniques as the latter. Garter Snake, who was chosen by her parents as Pipe Child when her father was Keeper of the Feathered Pipe, was well-trained by her mother, but apparently did not begin formal instruction at such an early age as did Coming Daylight.

Regardless of individual differences, however, one of the first acquired and most essential tasks was that of working hides. The first step was learning how to scrape buffalo hides. Apparently all women knew how to do this and, in the times before the buffalo disappeared, were kept constantly busy at it. After becoming proficient at scraping, the next process learned was that of tanning. There were various ways of preparing hides depending on the different uses to which they would be put, whether for lodge covers, clothing, parfleshes, and so on. Then came the important steps of cutting out and of sewing. Usually girls began by cutting out moccasins and finishing them off. Later came dresses and leggings. Knowing how to make parfleshes and to paint them was likewise considered an essential part of this early training for girls. It was only considerably later that the ability to fit together a lodge covering of buffalo skins was acquired. This was consid-

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

868 ered the most difficult of all tasks allotted to women and not every one was able to do it.

183 The whole training of the girl was oriented toward marriage. A girl was supposed to have been ignorant in sex matters until 864 informed by an older person, presumably in most cases by a grand- 867 mother. Coming Daylight, for example, remembers very distinctly that when she was about ten years old and the man who became her first husband had asked her uncle for her, her grandmother warned her: "Don't be 'ashamed' of your husband." The old woman then told Coming Daylight what to expect as to the physical side of marriage. Her grandmother also told her many other things, as was usual for a girl about to be married. "Now you are going to be married. You be true to your man. If some young fellow comes to you and wants to 'throw in with you,' you tell him no. But refuse him in a nice way and don't say bad things. Try to get out of it nicely. Then go right to your husband and tell him what happened, because if he sees you talking to another man he might get the wrong impression and think you have consented. Moreover, never become jealous of your husband nor should you ever fight back at any woman who might attack you on account of wanting him. Just pity such a woman. Always remember you are the wife; the other woman is not married to him but you are."

Just before she went with her husband to his home, an uncle of hers came to Coming Daylight and told her to tend to her house well, to make clothes for her husband and to see to it that he was always nice and clean. Then he added that she should not get mad or pout if her husband should go out and stay away longer than she thought he should. He said: "When a woman gets mad from this cause, she wants to make her own life bad. When her husband goes around visiting other women, and his wife finds out, then she wants to run around with men. If she retaliates in this way she only gets herself in bad. What you should do when your husband goes out and stays late is to say nothing when he comes in. He will always come back to you. You just say to yourself that he is your man and that he won't leave you permanently for any other woman."

It would seem that girls, as part of their training, were con-

787 made up my mind that I did not want such power, the immediate reason for my refusal being that I had seen doctors who swallowed what they had sucked from the weak spot in patients whom they cured, and I just couldn't bring myself to have to do likewise."

857 Although boys had much more freedom than had girls, they
562 too were assigned tasks at a fairly early age. One of the responsibilities of boys was to water the horses during the day. At about the age of fourteen, however, a boy would be required to take the horses out to graze immediately after taking his morning plunge. He would be gone perhaps three or four hours and would eat only after he returned.

857 The play of younger boys with bow and arrow was training for
868 later life. The older boys accompanied the men on hunting par-
852 ties and by the time they were about 18 most were skilled hunters. Some families, it was said, took advantage of the fact that
[431] a boy would have killed his first big game,—antelope, deer, buffalo, —by making a feast at which this game was served. On such an occasion the boy stood at the center and gave away property, such as horses and blankets provided by his father or uncle, in
[421] order to mark the event. This was considered training for the way he should behave in later life in regard to his own property.

857 Boys were trained in trapping as well as hunting. There were
868 certain songs which were sung by grandparents as the boys danced
[533] around in the lodge both before and after trapping. These songs were supposed to bring luck in finding game.

[777] Sometimes when older boys were out taking care of horses, they would band together, daub their faces and bodies with mud as "war paint," and make a "raid" on the camp in order to steal meat which was drying on racks. The women who had worked so hard to prepare the meat got angry and sometimes fought the boys with sticks. Usually, the boys were successful, and would then cook the meat and have a wonderful feast,[1] far outside the camp circle.

[554] Men encouraged their sons to be brave, and a boy would be anxious to go along on a real raiding party just as soon as possible because a young man had no standing until he had risked his life. An adolescent boy who accompanied a war party had to be a man

[1] This type of raiding is also described by Kroeber, 1908, p. 182.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

among men. It was a severe ordeal and the older men had no mercy on these youngsters. 857 868

Occasionally as training in bravery, the heart of a bear was taken raw and cut into small bits. After calling together the older boys and young men and lining them up, each one in turn was given a bit of the heart dipped in fresh blood and asked: "Well, are you going to have a brave heart?" Some were able to swallow it easily, but others could not stomach it. Those who were able to swallow and retain it were said to be the really brave ones.[8] [262]

It was indicated by many informants that in the old days a man would almost have to have had supernatural powers in order to be outstandingly successful in war or to achieve fame as a medicine man. In fact it was thought that supernatural powers could be helpful in many aspects of life including gambling and love. Guardians, however, used to warn the boys and young men under their care that "you can't get something for nothing." By this was meant that a person who accepted supernatural power would not live out his full span of life. Thus, according to The Boy, parents emphasized in training their sons that, rather than going on power quests, they should be ambitious to acquire fame and respect by developing their natural abilities. Nevertheless many sought and obtained supernatural powers, visions apparently often being vouchsafed in youth, although the power might not have been used until later in life. It was believed that those who accepted and used such supernatural powers died prematurely.[9] 787 798

Methods of Instruction

Oral instruction, or "lecturing," stands out in the Gros Ventre mind as the most important method of child training. All of our middle-aged and older informants agreed that some relative, often either the mother or the father, lectured their children almost every day, telling them what was right and what was wrong and "how to live." If boys and girls were present together, there were some subjects which could not be touched upon and would be reserved for fathers to speak about to their sons and for mothers 861

[8] It was said that, in the distant past, the heart of an enemy was so devoured by warriors. For historical confirmation, see Henry, v. 2, p. 734. [266]

[9] Full discussion of supernatural powers is given in Cooper Ms., 1949.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Daylight and her sister, who were married, for a short while after their first husband died, to his classificatory brother. The other concerned an outstanding woman, Woman Chief, who was said to have been so highly valued by her husband's people that "she was kept in his family by marrying her to three brothers [successively]." 587 595

Regulations

Marriage was prohibited for those related by blood, no matter how remote the tie. If, however, a couple were in "good faith," so to speak, and it was discovered later on that they were distant kin, it was not considered necessary for them to separate on that account.[4] Affinal relatives were likewise barred as possible marriage partners, except those who were classified as in-laws of the same generation.[5] In other words, the levirate and sororate were permitted, so that any who addressed each other as brother-in-law and sister-in-law respectively were possible mates, but relatives-by-marriage in any other category were prohibited from contracting marriage. The far-reaching effects of this latter regulation can be seen from the following case. "Not so many years ago, a Gros Ventre woman was the subject of a great deal of gossip because she married late in life a man who, many years previously, had for a time been married to a widow of her maternal uncle. People didn't like it and thought she shouldn't have married that man, even though times had changed and the whites wouldn't count them as being related to each other at all." 582 [587]

Arrangements

As a rule, marriage arrangements were made between the husband-to-be and one or other of the bride's male kinsmen,—father, uncle or brother. Either side could take the initiative, but the bride herself was not consulted. Coming Daylight summed up the prevailing attitude in this way: "When I was young, a girl's life was not her own. When a girl was about seven she was sent away from her home to a grandmother or widowed aunt to be 584 562 [868]

TAUGHT to do a WOMAN'S WORK.

[4] See also the discussion of band affiliation and exogamy, pp. 29–31.

[5] For kinship classification, see pp. 124–25.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

many girls liked to pretend that they had one of these Pipes at 857
their play-lodge. They used a certain kind of flower to represent 524
the Pipe and would put it outside the play-lodge in the same position as the real Pipe was placed. They smudged and sang Pipe songs just as their elders did. Once in a while they would pretend they were going to transfer the Pipe. Mud was smeared on their foreheads just as the Keeper used paint. The others would seize the new "Keeper," paint him, go through an imitation of the ceremonies, sing songs, and so on. At the end of the game, however, the rest of the children finally took the "Keeper" and dumped him in the water head foremost,—an indignity that would have been out of the question in regard to a real Keeper.

Thus it was evident how much children learned by observation. 857
It was specifically stated in regard to the learning of songs that 868
no one ever sat down with a child to teach him a special song or dance, that he would pick up songs and dances by hearing and seeing them performed at the various ceremonies. Similarly, according to both Coming Daylight and to Singer, there was no special teaching in regard to a knowledge of the Supreme Being. [869]
Children would know about Him because they would from infancy have heard older people mention Him. In the old days people never did anything without first saying a prayer. The prayers [782]
always started out by mentioning the name of the "One above the White Man," and then names of other beings followed.*

Training

Formal training, in skills necessary for women's work, was begun for little girls at an early age. This was usually in the hands 868
of a female relative,—a grandmother or perhaps a widowed aunt, —to whom the child would be sent at about the age of seven years. The reason for removing a girl from her immediate family circle was said to have been to protect her virginity. Her parents wanted to send her "where no men were living, as they didn't want a girl around home with her father, brother, male cousins." Should there not be a suitable relative, however, the girls' parents would keep her at home and she would receive training in domestic duties from her own mother. In any case, the girl was sup-

* Religion is treated in full in Cooper Ms. 1949.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

769 —rather than the power-giving being who bestows upon the
787 recipient power the latter can use at will without having recourse to or summoning the original donor. No historical interpretation is here being suggested. It looks, instead, that Little Man's deviant power in the case was merely an idiosyncratic variant of the ghost helper concept to which, not wishing to assume the normal public offices of persons with ghost helpers, he attached to curing functions not for all ailments but for ailments caused by ghosts.

Personal Supernatural Powers

787 Supernatural power was acquired by an individual mostly for
778 success in war, accumulation of wealth, doctoring, gambling or love. It was obtained more commonly by quest, although often without quest, and could be transferred by sale, gift or bequest. It was bestowed by many different kinds of beings,—mostly quadrupeds, birds, snakes, rocks; in some cases, ghosts, indeterminate "persons" or "spirits." How and from whom power was acquired differed appreciably in accordance with the several above-listed kinds of power. These differences we shall describe later in detail under these several categories: war, wealth, doctoring, gambling and love. Before doing so, we shall deal with certain characteristics more or less common to all the above five categories.

782 In general, the Gros Ventres distinguished between three chief
methods of fulfilling their desires and wants: natural ability,
● 869 prayer and power. A person was supposed to make best use of his native physical and mental endowments to acquire skills, to use his wits, to develop his capacities and personality,—in a word, to rely on himself and to stand on his own feet, whether as food-getter, craftsman, warrior, gambler, or what not. His second recourse, where his inborn and acquired abilities fell short or threatened to fall short of enabling him to fulfill his wishes and needs, was prayer, primarily although by no means exclusively to the Supreme Being. The third choice, in the ideal order, was resort to power.

Turn Toes, for instance, as an orphaned boy used to be advised

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

by his grandfather: "Do not seek doctoring power, but pray to the Supreme Being. This is enough." 782 869

According to The Boy, "Parents in advising their children how to conduct their lives would counsel them: 'Do not have ambition to have power like medicine men, else you will not live long. A medicine man forfeits his prospects of a long life and dies soon [a point to which we shall return presently]. It is far better and safer to just pray, that is, pray to the Supreme Being, and pray all the time. Make prayer the guiding rule in your lives.' Some people acquire power either by sleeping out on the hills or without seeking it. In either case they have to pay the price in shortened, restricted, danger-beset lives. The most important thing of all is to pray, beg, plead. This makes by far for the most happy and good life. This is far above seeking power."

On another occasion, The Boy explained the situation as follows: "However great or renowned these men and women with powers were in the old days, and however much they enjoyed the powers sought by and conferred upon them, they (the powers) were all right only while they lasted. The old-time Gros Ventres knew definitely that people who had these various powers would not live out their full span of life. Parents when raising their children would tell them to avoid that kind of life. They would exert all the influence in instructing their children not to go out on hills and seek power, but to have ambition to acquire fame and respect from exercise of natural ability. They tried to school their children along these lines and [to teach them] that it was considered weak to have the powers from these sources,—from rat, mountain, prairie chicken, and so forth. This my father, Lame Bull, told me all the time, and all the rest of the people told their sons and daughters this same rule of life. And the criers with the chiefs of the tribe, when they walked around on a nice calm day, would surely go into this matter, making it perhaps the main subject of their lecture. But still it [power seeking] was done, against such advice and against better judgment and better experience. All of these fellows who had these powers died prematurely." [203]

Thomas Main had many times heard his grandfather, Lame Bull,

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

782
869
[761]

say: "It is not good to ask that kind of a career [from powers]. It would be a life misspent and would be dearly paid for. Man's dearest possession is life, and this would be cut off."

787
869
761

Charles Buckman had heard old men say that, although they had fasted and prayed over and over again for power, they had never had even a dream, and that this may have been why they had lived to old age.

According to The Boy, his father Lame Bull, when a young man, dreamed that the being who lived on Baldy Butte in the Bear Paw Mountains called him. So on one occasion when the Gros Ventres were camped near this butte, Lame Bull thought this was a good time to accept the invitation and go up on this butte and sleep. He was getting ready to do so, when his father gave him a sound scolding: "I always told you not to try to be a holy man, a man with power of that kind. Those who have such power do not live long. Forget about sleeping on the mountain and attend to the horses and lodge poles. We need you at home. Mind your own business. So Lame Bull did not get to sleep on the mountain. His father was boss."

Coming Daylight came back repeatedly to the same theme. "I am not a medicine woman [with power] and that is why I have lived to be such an old woman." "I am not sorry I refused the medicine power offered me in a dream. Medicine people die soon. It seems like they have a certain time to die and they don't live to be old like myself and Singer. These medicine people are not strong like others." "I never accepted any kind of power. Those who have power die too soon." "They [the beings] used to trick people into taking all these things [powers] because they wanted them to die. The holy dreams are very tricky."

787
778

Singer gave her own experience. "I used to take a blanket or other offering and put it in deep water and pray that they [apparently the water monsters] would have pity on me. One night after I had just done this I dreamed that a person was standing there and that nearby lay the emaciated body of one who was very very sick. This person told me: 'I give you my body.' This is the way a being puts it in a dream when going to bestow power. Then the person showed me how to doctor, he used a pipe-stem which

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 they would all be in camp anyhow. Our informants made no mention of criers or police in connection with the Fly Dance.

Ordinarily the Fly Dance was supposed to be gone through first, before any of the other sacred dances, but there were exceptions, as in the case of Turn Toes who joined the Crazy Dance first when he was a young man and the Fly Dance only after he was an old man. Coming Daylight's husband, Little Man, never joined the Fly Dance.[36]

[561] [883] The Fly Dance was usually performed by youths, mostly young unmarried fellows of the age range of about 16 to 20 years as nearly as we could determine. With the chief vower would be associated in the dance all the members of his own age-group or company (e.g., all the "Potbellies"), and apparently no others. They would carry it out in a body.

No women joined the dance. But, according to Coming Daylight, if a woman's son was participating as a dancer "she might go way to be back of the tent [apparently the dance lodge] and dance just like her son was doing, not making fun."

*796 608 The Fly Dancers would choose their ceremonial grandfathers from among the older men. The young fellow wishing to join the dance would fill a pipe, go with it to an old timer, and offer it to him saying: "Here is the pipe. You will be my grandfather." If the old man accepted, he would instruct the candidate in all the rites and observances of the dance and would perform the other functions therein to be noted presently. At the last Fly Dance held [circa 1907] two young fellows, Mark Black Crow and Jerry Bear, came together to Coming Daylight's husband, Warrior, and offered him a pipe, which he accepted, thereby agreeing to act as their grandfather.[37] Cora Chandler's uncle, Sits-in-the-middle, had been "boss" of a Fly Dance which she had witnessed one Fourth of July when she was still of school age, probably this last one held.

*796 According to The Boy, the Fly Dance lasted only one day. As our informants had been eye-witnesses of this dance, it is probable

[178]

[36] These exceptions occurred after the breakdown of the ceremonial cycle. [R.F.]

[37] In 1948 The Boy explained that in this Dance a group of boys—even more than four—could have the same ritual grandfather. [R.F.]

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

only his property and so have to begin accumulating again from scratch, but might at the same time lose as well his standing in the tribe and become a defeated and disgraced nobody, of a low standing from which it was very difficult to rise in the scale.

The wheel game was not played by women or children, nor apparently by the very young men, but only by fully adult or middle-aged men and older ones, and by only two players at a time. The really big games with large stakes were in most cases, it seems—almost all, according to our informants—played by two "enemy friends" or "war friends." Such enemy friends or war friends were very different from ordinary friends or "true" pledged friends. An "enemy friendship" was a war-related compact entered into in the following manner. A member of a returning war party would give some trophy or booty he had taken from the enemy—e.g., a scalp, or horse, or weapon—to one of his own compatriots of the same or opposite sex, who had little choice but to accept. Acceptance made "enemy friends" or "war friends" of the two. War friends, particularly if unrelated and both males, could go the limit in twitting and insulting each other and in playing practical jokes, even rather outrageous ones, on each other, and the victim had to take such behavior in good part, at least externally. However, along with the privilege of taking such liberties ran the accepted obligation to stand by each other in real need or hazard of grave nature.

The two war friends could gamble with each other. In fact, gambling among the Gros Ventre reached at times its climax in contests between two war friends. A wheel game between war friends commonly arose out of a "bragging match" between them; one would challenge the other to play the wheel game. If the one challenged declined to accept the challenge, his war friend who challenged him, and his other war friends, would ever after take occasion to deride him publicly for it at the least provocation. So the challenge could not easily be declined. The game often became one in which each enemy friend would go out to strip the other of practically everything he owned—horses, gun, blankets, lodge—and at which the most eager interest was aroused among the relatives, fellow-clansmen, and friends of the respective players and, for that matter, among the whole camp population. Such enemy-friend contests were commonly protracted sessions, often all-day ones, at the wheel game.

The following three narratives of particular wheel-game gambling contests—the first two of which are matters of well-remembered recent history, the third an older traditional story paralleled elsewhere on the Plains—throw some further light on the social role of the Gros Ventre wheel game.

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

621 Members of one band could and not infrequently did gamble both for small
525 and for big stakes against members of other bands, just as one kinship group used to gamble against others. Tribal we-feeling certainly existed, but seemingly not as intense as band we-feeling, just as, in turn, the latter was not as intense as kin we-feeling. In inter-band, as in inter-kin, gambling, spectators, if they bet at all, would lay their wagers on the players of their own band, as required by band loyalty, regardless of the relative skill and reputation of the contesting players or teams.

575 For Gros Ventre men who had reached full adulthood and were still in the
[885] prime of life, there were two age-societies, called the Stars and the Wolves (or
525 Wolf-men). These two groups, with soldier-police functions, would join forces when necessary in keeping order, in fighting fires, and in defending the whole tribe against enemies, but for the rest rivalry between them was pretty keen. Stars would gamble against Wolves in big games for large stakes, but ordinarily a Star would not gamble against a Star or a Wolf against a Wolf, except for refreshments or a smoke or similar trifling "stakes." Inasmuch as membership in the two societies cut across the lines of kinship and band membership, inter-society gambling suffered an important restriction: if a Star were gambling in a given game, his relatives among the Wolves would not play or bet against him in that particular game. Kinship ties took precedence over society ties.

525 Gros Ventre would of course gamble for big stakes against members of other
648 tribes with whom they happened to be at the time on sufficiently good terms, or at least not bitterly and actively hostile, to meet and foregather peacefully, such as the Piegan, Flathead, Nez Percé, and Cree. In such intertribal contests they would often go out to win every possession of their opponents.

572 The Gros Ventre distinguished three kinds of friends: ordinary friends,
525 true or pledged friends, and enemy or war friends. As a rule ordinary close friends would not take opposite sides in a big gambling game. This was all the more true of pledged friends. Two boys, for instance, who liked each other
[608] and who had perhaps grown up together would, though belonging to different bands, enter into a sort of "sworn brotherhood," give each other presents, exchange intimate confidences, and promise, without religious rite of any kind, to stand by each other always, even to death if necessary. Two girls could also enter into a similar pact. Such "true" or pledged friends never gambled against each other either as players or as backers, at least never for stakes of value.

Of enemy or war friends we have previously spoken when describing the wheel game. Two enemy friends would gamble against each other for small stakes or big, the bigger the better. In fact a hand game for big stakes between

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

ties of the larger society which the company had joined. Meanwhile another group was meeting informally before it was admitted into one or other of the Societies. Since the Stars and Wolf-men were approximately even in number, there probably was a regular alternation. According to reasonable estimate, the Potbellies joined the Stars about 1840; the next group of young men would then have joined the Wolves, say in 1843 or 1844; the following company joining the Stars in about 1849–50. 561 575

If the Sacred Dances, except the Sacrifice Dance, were gone through in order, there would thus be several companies each year whose members were eligible to vow any one of the Dances, and our informants were all under the impression that one or more of the Dances was given each summer. It seems quite clear that the Law Enforcer Dance was vowed only by the older levels of the active warriors. After having gone through this rite, these men more or less retired as "old men," and, having "sat on the sage," acquired certain privileges and freedom denied to their fellow tribesmen who had not yet gone through this Dance. These "old men" acted as ceremonial grandfathers, i.e. sponsors and teachers, for others going through the various lodges, but were no longer active as Stars or Wolf-men. They became members of an undifferentiated group of elders, the ranks of their original company having no doubt been drastically thinned out by the time they would have arrived at this status. 796 561 [886] [888]

If the above interpretation be correct, there would be three age divisions: the "young men," those meeting in companies; the "middle-aged, mature men," whose companies had joined either the Stars or the Wolf-men, and, having gone through the Fly Dance, were eligible to vow the other Dances; the "old men" who had gone through the Law Enforcer's Dance and were no longer active in the Star and Wolf-men societies, except two of their number, one of whom served as announcer in each. 561

The young men, who together formed the company, being of approximately the same age, were tied together by bonds of friendship and there were apparently not a few pairs of "inseparable friends" in each company. One of our informants, Cora Chandler, indicated that the bonds holding together the members of a company were so intimate that marriage between their children was [572] 561 582

CHAPTER X

OLD AGE AND DEATH

It is the opinion of the now aged Gros Ventres that the proportion of old persons was much greater in the past than it has been since they have taken up the white man's ways; and further, that the aged then retained their health and vigor to a greater degree.[1] One old woman stated that when she was young, there used to be many old people, but that they died off when there were no more buffalo. She added: "People lived to a good old age on the things that the Supreme Being provided,—roots, wild vegetables and fruits, dried meats and berries. In those days, too, they drank broth instead of tea and coffee. Old folks didn't lose their teeth then, although even young girls do nowadays. Their teeth eventually got worn down, but they seldom pulled them. In fact, if an old person should lose a tooth, he thought it was awful and was sure that he was ready for the grave. Furthermore, people didn't get white hair until they were ready for 'old age sleep'—very old people sleep most of the time—yet now one sees middle-aged and even younger people with gray hair like the whites have."

Status and Treatment of the Aged

It was believed that a person who had lived to a ripe old age had been privileged to do so by the Supreme Being. Therefore, they reasoned, if you are good to old people, these in turn will pray to the Supreme Being for your health, long life, and success. Children were instructed explicitly to be good to the aged,—to feed them, to clothe them, and to help them in difficulties,—as well as to seek out those so blessed and ask for their prayers. It was

[1] Allowance should of course be made for the fact that "old age" is a relative term. When it was said that young men were urged to marry "older experienced women," this referred to a woman of perhaps twenty to twenty-five. See pp. 171–72. A woman on the northern plains was "old" at forty, according to Denig, p. 513.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

get killed but she was told to go ahead anyway and have the Dance,—which she did. Other women would join the Dance with the chief vower, but under what general conditions and procedures we did not ascertain except that to qualify either as associates or as chief vower, women had to be "old" or "very old," to be "women who had seen all of life" and were "beyond their prime," not "young women." This would probably mean in Gros Ventre age terminology women beyond the age of about forty-five or fifty. On one occasion, while a Women's Dance was in progress a very old woman, whose brother had just been very badly wounded by some Sioux and who was hovering between life and death, came to the dance-lodge where the dancers were gathered and said, "Well, I came in here of my own accord without anyone asking me to join. I promised to join so that my brother may get well." She was told to choose her side, "talls" or "shorts," her face was painted the ritual way, and so she joined. The wounded brother, it may be added, did not recover. The Women's Dance was not put up, as were the men's Sacred Dances, by age-groups proper since women had no such age group organizations corresponding to the men's Star and Wolf societies and companies.

The women dancers had no crier and no police force, but were divided, as in the men's dances, into tall slender ones and short ones. Two young women were chosen to serve during the rite as ātsa'an, attendants or waiters. "Those who were not ashamed to do things," Coming Daylight explained, "and who were quick, were chosen [as waiters]. These were not bashful or backward. They had to do whatever they were told and to wait on people. They had a lot of work to do. When there was going to be a Women's Dance, they would have to call on the members on each side of the camp circle, starting at the center opening. They would go to each lodge where there was a member." They also had to dance hard, but did not wear any caps. Their places in the dance lodge were at the door, one on the side where the "talls" sat, the other on the side of the "shorts." On both occasions when Coming Daylight served as a "calf" the two young women attendants were Woman Chief for the "talls" and Perfume (or Sweet Perfume) for the "shorts."

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

171 796 [292] [887] [554] [302] [431]

to the Arapaho "white-stand" and "red-stand" head-dresses of upright feathers surrounding the head. The dancers are described as all old or elderly women, which among the Arapaho was not the case. The exceptions were two participants called "calves" (nihanou, "yellow calves"), who were middle-aged, or, at any rate, adults. Among the Arapaho the "calves" were children. There is a further difference, that, whereas among the Arapaho the "calves" were of high degree in the dance and for the greater part of the time were not allowed to stir, the Gros Ventre "calves" took the place of the atsaan or servants in the men's dances. They are said to have worn no regalia. The dancers were painted with the symbol of a pipe on each cheek, close under the eye. Old men sang for them, rattling but not using a drum. The women in dancing shifted their weight from one side of the body to the other, and cried like crows. Two tent-poles, two pegs, and two ropes belonging to the dancing-lodge, were painted respectively one black and one red. On the fourth day of the ceremony there were observances outside of the dancing-lodge. A prominent chief was selected to take a burning stick. The dancers, moving and running about like a herd of buffalo, pretended to scent the smoke of his fire from windward, and stampeded. Another distinguished warrior pretended to shoot at the herd as if they were buffalo. Both of these features of the ceremony are found among the Arapaho. A third distinguished man (or perhaps several) was honored by being offered a pipe to smoke, and on his acceptance was given a vessel of water containing berries. He then gave away property.

The Sun-Dance.

796

As stated before, the Gros Ventre sun-dance, haçeiha^{n}w^{u}, is not restricted to men belonging to certain age-companies, but, as among the Arapaho, can be made by any man.[1] Like the other dances, however, it is made as the result of the pledge of an individual for deliverance from sickness or danger. As soon as the pledge has been publicly announced, or as soon thereafter as the buffalo begin to get fat in spring, the pledger and his relatives begin to accumulate buffalo-tongues, which they slice and dry like buffalo-meat. They also save a buffalo-skin, which is packed with the tongues, two sticks being wrapped up in it. When the time comes, a large lodge made of two tent-covers is set up in the middle of the camp-circle. Into this many women enter at night to sing. This marks the beginning of the ceremony. The tent is called tjinaa^{n}w^{u} ("prairie-chicken lodge"); and the participants, "prairie-chickens" and "prairie-chicken women." The pledger brings his buffalo-skin to this lodge. He incenses it four times.

[1] See Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part II, p. 152.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

repeated this stunt twice more, but this was too much for these old women, who then started fighting and shouting recriminations, blaming each other. The boys of course were in high glee as the old women hit each other and grunted. Finally, however, they called the daughter of one of the old women, saying: 'Come and see these old ones fighting. Try and stop them. They will kill each other.' So as the boys ran away, the younger woman restored peace." 888 522

Care of the aged devolved upon close kin. Whereas old men customarily lived directly with the households to which they were attached, old windows usually lived in lodges separate from, but located near, those of relatives who provided most of their food. To old women was often relegated the care of their grandchildren, especially of their granddaughters, whom they were supposed to train from the age of about seven until such time as they were given in marriage. The young girls in turn supplied the water and fuel for their grandmothers. In case the aged person had children of his own, he was reasonably secure. Those whose dependence was on more remote relatives were less assured of good care. The aged who had special skills which could be exercised in spite of debility, especially those who possessed "medicine power," were better off than the others.[8] 888 [542] [887]

In dealing with old people it was said that much patience and forbearance were often necessary. For instance, one old woman, now deceased, was described by a relative in the following terms: "She was a hardboiled old jane, rough and tough, who didn't hesitate to tell you what she thought of things. But she had many friends and when visitors came she would swell up and be proud when they sat beside her rather than beside one of the several other old women who lived in the same place. Usually during the visit, however, she would get mad and threaten all kinds of things, and people would have to humor her. One day she really blew up and said: 'I'm going to save my relatives the job of hauling my carcass out, so I'm going out on the hills right now and lie out there and die!' So one of her relatives had to pretend to take her

[8] Denig, pp. 576–77, states that only such old persons who possess medicine powers are exempt from the petty tricks and other annoyances to which the aged in general are subject among northern plains tribes.

787 began to dig around behind her bedding and brought out a bowl
775 such as that in which buffalo chips are pounded into powder. She said: 'Here. I want you to eat this.' It didn't look good to me and I just kind of felt it with my fingers. Instead of having sat by my sister as my mother had directed, I had remained by the door, because I felt kind of scared in some way. So I told them: 'Wait. I guess I will go out a minute. I will be right back.' But I got out of there and ran home as fast as I could go—back to my own bed, back to myself. If I had eaten what they had given me that would have been the last of me! After this dream I got well."

Mourning

765 As soon as word was circulated that someone had died, all rela-
152 tives of that person, especially the women, were supposed to gather as soon as possible to cry and mourn for the deceased. Very close kin were expected to show their sorrow at the death of a loved one not only by crying and wailing, but also by casting off their good clothes and donning old ones,—robes, for instance, consisting of pieces of old discarded lodge covers, or ordinary robes that were rough and worn,—and by cutting the hair.[7] This latter was truly
[832] a great sacrifice, for to the Gros Ventres one of the chief criteria
[302] of beauty, in men and women alike, was extreme length of hair. The hair of younger children in a family was spared, even at the death of parents, but should, say, a father die, the hair of the older daughters was shorn, though not cut so short as that of the widow.

[887] An elderly woman was usually called upon to do the cutting and the widow, guided by the strength of her emotional reaction, would indicate how short she wished her hair to be. It was said that some widows would leave their hair relatively long, just free of the shoulders, while others "when they felt too badly, had all their hair cut off, almost as men now wear their hair."

Close kin were accustomed to further show grief by going off to the hills and fasting, crying aloud as they wandered about alone, and sleeping out without shelter. A parent would have done so at the loss of a son, one spouse at the death of the other, or a sister for her deceased brother. Such mourners would stay out

[7] For this and other practices in mourning, see Kroeber, 1908, p. 181.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 is far from complete. It does, however, help to fill out some details of the picture given by Kroeber.[33]

According to The Boy the Dance and the following one, the Old Women's Dance, were originally gifts from the buffalo. But the circumstances under which they were given were unknown even to the old men living in The Boy's lifetime. These two Dances were closely associated with the buffalo. In both, the dancers im-
[324] personated buffalo, and the performance of both Dances was efficacious in bringing buffalo for the hunters to kill.

The Old Men's Dance, like the other Sacred Dances, was held only in the summer time, and only in fulfillment of a vow. The Boy was of the opinion that it lasted only one day.[34]

To be eligible to vow or to join the Law Enforcer's Dance, a man had to be well advanced in age, presumably having gone through the other Lodges, at least the Fly, Crazy, Kit-fox and Dog. The Drum Dance was dropped out of the series at the beginning of the nineteenth century, as noted above, and the Sacrifice Dance was regarded as outside of the series. While the participants were older men, somewhat beyond the prime of life, "they were still active and could get around." Since they would
● [88?] still be eligible to vow and carry out the Sacrifice Dance they had not yet completed their society and dance career. So far as we could gather, their age range was seemingly from about the late forties or early fifties to the early or middle sixties.

Those who went through the Dance with the vower thereof were, according to The Boy, the men of about the same age-group who had gone through the other sacred Dances together,—seemingly therefore those who had been members of the same age-group of the Star or Wolves. Such a fellow member, who when invited by the others refused to join, was "punished."

The ritual grandfathers of the chief vower and of his associates were chosen from the ranks of the "retired old men" who had already gone through the Dance. According to The Boy, the chief vower's grandfather had to be a man who had himself previously gone through it as chief vower.

---

[33] Kroeber, 1908, pp. 258-59.

[34] It was a four day rite according to information given to Kroeber, 1908, p. 259.

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 the original Grass dance, the number participating, however, both
178 as officers and as general audience, being very much larger.

Although the dog ritual, carried out as described for the earlier period, remained the highlight and climax of the Grass dance, the general program had been enlarged to include other features. Not only were procedures introduced in connection with the newer offices, as indicated above, but other items such as the Owl dance and the Ringtail dance were introduced. The order of events was apparently determined by the "chiefs" at each performance of the Grass dance, but the general program did not vary markedly. The Ringtail dance, for instance, was always included at some time.

When the order for the Ringtail dance was given, any who wished to participate formed a circle facing inward and both men and women were free to choose partners of the opposite sex. The man placed his arm over the shoulders of his partner while she placed her arm around his back. The whole group moved in a circle clockwise in rhythm to the music provided by a group of singers other than those who sang and drummed for the dog ritual and other ceremonies in which officers as such participated.
[887] Any middle-aged or older woman who wished to do so might join the singers for any of the round dances. If none volunteered then they were sometimes drafted simply by being invited and led over to the spot where the male singers were performing.

796 It occasionally happened that during this dance, when the sing-
533 ers had "hit the spot,"—aroused the spirit of the crowd and the
178 floor was full,—the singers would stop all of a sudden, but without giving the usual signal to disperse. Then, without advance notice, they would start singing again, but a different song, a "punishing song." This was a feature obviously based on the "punishing songs" of the original Grass dance, but the tunes were different and it was carried out in the following way.

There were only two of these newer "punishing songs" but as soon as the dancers heard the singers start one of them they knew what it meant: "Now we are in for it. We will have to dance and dance!" The singers could sing the first of these

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 hand, according as they belonged to one division or the other. Vessels of water were ready to pour on the racers in order to cool them. The four
526 "brothers," the dancers previously separate from the rest at the eastern end of the lodge, did not run with the crowd, but started out slowly together, their faces covered with their robes. They trotted at a slow pace over the same course as the other dancers. As they returned, long after the crowd,
796 the boys, young men, and young women of the camp, had gathered on both sides, and pelted them with buffalo-chips until they reached the dancing-lodge. There is, in this slow following of the pledger and his three companions, a reminiscence of the white-fool, the dancer of highest degree in the Arapaho crazy-lodge, who on all occasions contrasts by his slow
[431] movements with the other dancers.[1] After the return of all the dancers, they presented horses loaded with property to their "grandfathers," and these made similar presents to them. These gifts seem to have been payments to the old men for their instruction and painting, and to have been made at the conclusion of the part of the ceremony which was under their control. From this time on, the dancers' wives returned to their tents, and took no further part in the ceremony.

After this followed two observances. It is not certain which of the two came first. A crowd of people were waiting for the dancers in the open. The dancers, wearing their best moccasins put on loosely without being tied, left the lodge; and the waiting people, mostly women and children, ran after them, pulling off their moccasins, and, when they could not succeed in doing so otherwise, seizing their feet, and tripping them as they
[888] went. The dancers did not try to escape, or save their moccasins, but allowed them to be taken. Or, again, an old man who was poor was selected, and, having been given a pipe to smoke in order that he might
796 accept, he went to the east of the camp-circle. A buffalo robe was brought,
431 incensed four times with sweet-grass placed on burning charcoal or buffalo-chips, and then placed over the old man, with the hair side out, as, bent over, he knelt on the ground. The dancers gathered about him, and

[1] According to an Arapaho account obtained, somewhat different from those previously utilized, there are two white-fools, not one. It is not clear which information is more correct. The white-fools always follow the dancers. If one of the ordinary dancers should be behind them, he would become unable to move. This is the result of any violation of a rule of the ceremony by a participant. In such cases the white-fools have the power to cure them by taking off their owl-feather head-bands, and rubbing them over the body with them. The white-fools are addressed as heiçâbihin ("sisters-in-law," strictly, "brother or sister-in-law" of opposite sex from the speaker). The dancers, to look at a person, put their head to the ground, and pretend to look with their rump. They throw dung into tents, calling it "food." If people look at them through awl-holes in a tent, they at once shoot the tent in that place. Going out on the prairie, they say, "Let us not shoot into the air," and shoot up. When the arrows fall in plain sight, they cannot find them; if they fall into brush or tall grass, they find them at once. They imitate, often with obscene renderings, anything that they hear, such as a person's speech, or a dog's bark. They paralyze dogs by pointing at them an arrow to which teetcâätcel is attached. They give the dogs they kill to their "grandfathers" to eat. As soon as they take off their head-bands, they become rational. Mooney's account of the Cheyenne and Arapaho crazy-dance, which seems to refer chiefly to the former, mentions two white-fools; compare Ghost-Dance Religion, op. cit., 1033.
[114 171]

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

in the approach of the buffalo, even if previously there had been none in the vicinity of the camp. 796

The dancers carried representations of war-spikes or tomahawks, which apparently resembled the buffalo-shaped sticks of the first dance of the Arapaho. The sticks are described as being about as long as women's digging-sticks, and, like them, sharpened at one end. The other end, however, was bent. The stick was painted red, and a quill-embroidered strip of skin was wound around it as a handle. A buffalo-calf's tail and a bunch of buffalo-fetlocks, and no doubt other objects, were also attached. The stick was used as a rattle. 796 293 [534]

The conclusion of this ceremony presented a feature not found in the two preceding ones. According to one account, the gifts obtained by these dancers were received in payment from the spectators looking in at the lodge. After four days the camp broke, and followed the dancers. On reaching a place where the property had been laid on the ground, the people of the tribe stood in a long row, facing the east. One of the dancers filled a pipe, and selecting one of the poorest men in the camp offered it to him. When the old man took the pipe, the dancer prayed him to allow that all of his company should strike him (count coup on him). A bed of sage was then made for the old man in front of the assembled tribe. Along the edges of this bed, buffalo-chips were laid. The old man crouched on his hands and knees with his head toward the east, and, like the old man undergoing a similar humiliation in the crazy-dance, was covered with a buffalo robe the hair-side of which was turned out. The dancers faced him in a row and danced, rattling. After four songs they ran to the old man, and one after another struck him lightly, each placing beside him a moccasin or some other object, which the old man, on getting up, kept for himself. Then the dancers' "grandfathers" each picked up one of the buffalo-chips from the edges of the sage, and, when they had prepared them, one of the dancers squatted over each. Then his "grandfather," taking him by the shoulders, motioned with him four times, and the fourth time pushed him down. When they had all sat down, each "grandfather" spoke to his "grandson," telling him, "From now on, you need not be afraid to interrupt a sacred performance. You can talk obscenely to a chief, and no one will say anything to you." The people had been watching this performance, which marked the end of the dance. 888 796 [431]

The Bitahanwu.

As stated, this dance has been abandoned a long time, and very little information was obtained regarding it. Men are alive who have seen it, 796

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

171 whitish fur, and dyed horsehair tufts at the ends. At the base of each arm
293 are red, yellow, and violet feathers. These are either cut off across the end,
778 or have the uppermost part of the quill with its attached vanes removed.

CUSTOMS CONNECTED WITH RELIGION.

171 Sacred pipes were important in the religion of the Gros Ventre. The
276 beliefs and practices connected with these differ somewhat from those of
778 the Arapaho. The Arapaho recognize only one sacred pipe, which is pre-eminent over all others. Its worship is entirely tribal, though it is in the keeping of an individual. It occupies much the place in tribal life that the sacred pole did among the Omaha. While there are other sacred objects, such as the wheels and bundles, none of them equal the pipe in the regard in which they are held. Among the Gros Ventre there is an analogue of the Arapaho pipe, but also several others. This multiplicity distinctly differentiates the character of the Gros Ventre pipes from that of the Arapaho. The Gros Ventre pipes are not all primarily connected with the origin of the world; they are in part obtained from other tribes. They thus resemble the inter-tribal peace-pipes of the eastern and northern Plains.

[888] The sacred pipes were kept by old men. Their keepers could retain them as long as they wanted. They transferred their pipe to another keeper or owner whenever they wished, especially if some one prayed on their behalf. At present the Gros Ventre have three pipes. It is said that formerly they had more, some of which have been buried with their last owners. The most sacred of these pipes is called "flat-pipe" (çäčitsa"). This is described as being made of catlinite, with the bowl in the shape of a person (initä"). The Arapaho sacred pipe is also called "flat-pipe," and also is not flat; but it differs from the Gros Ventre pipe in being cylindrical and tubular. About the centre of the stem of this Gros Ventre flat-pipe is tied a string. A person in the tent where the pipe is kept should not tell myths. If through forgetfulness he begins to do so, it is necessary for him to continue all night.

276 A sick man sometimes pledged to smoke one of the sacred pipes for his
755 recovery. Then he provided food, and distinguished warriors were invited.
778 Each of these had to recount four coups before the pipe could be lighted. A green cherry-branch was then taken, greased, and put into the fire to light the pipe with. If it burnt well, the man would recover; if it burnt poorly, they were afraid that he would not become well, or that something would happen. Then the pipe was smoked in the greatest silence. Cloth or calico was "given" to it, the wrapping last given being the one on the out-

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

ties of the larger society which the company had joined. Meanwhile another group was meeting informally before it was admitted into one or other of the Societies. Since the Stars and Wolf-men were approximately even in number, there probably was a regular alternation. According to reasonable estimate, the Potbellies joined the Stars about 1840; the next group of young men would then have joined the Wolves, say in 1843 or 1844; the following company joining the Stars in about 1849–50. 561 575

If the Sacred Dances, except the Sacrifice Dance, were gone through in order, there would thus be several companies each year whose members were eligible to vow any one of the Dances, and our informants were all under the impression that one or more of the Dances was given each summer. It seems quite clear that the Law Enforcer Dance was vowed only by the older levels of the active warriors. After having gone through this rite, these men more or less retired as "old men," and, having "sat on the sage," acquired certain privileges and freedom denied to their fellow tribesmen who had not yet gone through this Dance. These "old men" acted as ceremonial grandfathers, i.e. sponsors and teachers, for others going through the various lodges, but were no longer active as Stars or Wolf-men. They became members of an undifferentiated group of elders, the ranks of their original company having no doubt been drastically thinned out by the time they would have arrived at this status. 796 561 [886] [888]

If the above interpretation be correct, there would be three age divisions: the "young men," those meeting in companies; the "middle-aged, mature men," whose companies had joined either the Stars or the Wolf-men, and, having gone through the Fly Dance, were eligible to vow the other Dances; the "old men" who had gone through the Law Enforcer's Dance and were no longer active in the Star and Wolf-men societies, except two of their number, one of whom served as announcer in each. 561

The young men, who together formed the company, being of approximately the same age, were tied together by bonds of friendship and there were apparently not a few pairs of "inseparable friends" in each company. One of our informants, Cora Chandler, indicated that the bonds holding together the members of a company were so intimate that marriage between their children was [572] 561 582

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

he should, don't fight back. Let him take it out on you and don't fight back. 183 867

"When you are out playing, if you are hungry and you want to eat, come home. Don't go to any other family to eat because people are fond of their food and might resent it. If a boy, some friend of yours, invites you to his home, don't go."

Garter Snake's father was the one who lectured his children,—three sons and three daughters. Since she was Pipe Child, when her father was Keeper of the Feathered Pipe, Garter Snake was talked to by him more often perhaps than were her siblings. Long after she was married, her mother used to remind her of the things her father told her. Some of these admonitions were as follows: "I want you to be an upright, honest and straight woman. If you listen to everything I tell you and do as I tell you, in the future you will thank me for it. Now don't think you are alone in this world because the One above the White Man sees everything that we do. Don't steal, don't lie, don't be tricky. Be honest about everything.

"When you grow up and finally have your own home, pity the old men and pity the old women, pity the poor. If you see an old woman with a ragged dress, give her a blanket. Make moccasins for these old women. The same holds for these old men. If you see an old man whose leggings are torn, make leggings for him. If you see a poor person who needs clothes, give him some if you have any. If you do that the One Above who watches and looks at you doing those things, He is going to reward you. [888]

"When you are married and have your own home, take care of it well. If you have horses, take care of them; try to have good property and take care of it. If you do that you will always have something. If you have horses of your own that will help your husband. He may not have any and you can help him along.

"Be good to everybody. If a man or woman comes to visit, welcome them. Tell them: 'Come in and sit down.' Then feed them well regardless of whether they are poor or rich, young or old, or even children. [574]

"Above all, don't you ever quarrel with anyone. Don't you ever fight. Try to be friendly with everybody." [865]

Charles Buckman's uncle, who, like Garter Snake's father,

183 was not a Christian, used to tell him: "You have eyes to see, a
867 heart to think, and ears to hear. Listen to what I will tell you. You are a poor boy. As such, be faithful. Believe in the One Above the White Man. Pray to Him, ask Him to have pity on you and so make you a good man some day. Try to be good to all, especially when you become a man. Be good to the poor, be good to the old. Never take anything not belonging to you. Never
[865] speak evil of other people. Try to be patient. If a man says anything wrong to you, and hurts your feelings, say nothing because if folks talk back it causes quarreling or fighting, which is not good. If a poor man asks you for anything, if you have it, be ready to hand it over to him. If you see anybody hungry and
[888] you have it, feed him. If an old man or woman is in need and wants anything done, do it for him or her. If you do these things, the One Above will have pity on you."

685 All informants agreed that in addition to having been told to
867 take care of whatever property they might have, they were in-
183 structed to regard the property rights of others. It was believed that, though the theft remained undiscovered, the thief would be punished by automatic supernatural sanction. "Something terrible would happen to anybody who stole something." Mary's grandmother, for instance, had told her time and again never to take anything that did not belong to her. To illustrate how well this had been instilled into her, she gave the following example. "On one occasion when I was a child, I found a really beautiful string of beads, but I did not take it. After I got to bed that night, however, I told my grandmother about it. When asked why I had failed to bring home the beads, I replied: 'I was afraid you would tell me that I had taken them from someone.' My grandmother merely remarked: 'Well, you should have brought them to me, or better, you should have taken me to where they were lying.' But when I took her to the spot the next day the beads were gone."

This reminded Coming Daylight of an incident in her own
[764] childhood. "I was walking near a grove of trees where several corpses had been placed (in the traditional manner of disposing of the dead). I noticed a considerable amount of bear excrement and mixed in it were a number of elk teeth—the most valuable

183 other men so you will avoid your husband's suspicion," and so on.
861 Sometimes the appeal was made by a parent: "If you do such and such a thing well, I will be proud of you." In general it would seem that the positive side rather than the negative, was stressed.

777 It was more often the men informants who mentioned super-
867 natural motives proposed for proper conduct. They remembered
888 that they were told that the Supreme Being would "have pity" on them if they followed the proper code of behavior. Both men and women mentioned, however, that respect for the aged was instilled because "people didn't become old for nothing. They had a blessing from the Supreme Being to live long lives. Whenever you see old people attempting to do something and are having difficulties, you should go right in and do it for them. Help old people out and then ask them to intercede for you that you will have good health, a long life and success in all your undertakings."

867 The example of others was recognized as effective in child-
574 training. Al feels that the Gros Ventres were well brought up in the old days "because children were taught to stick to the rules and they had the good example of adults to follow." In describing the duty of hospitality, Coming Daylight said: "My grandmother was a great one to have a lot of visitors because she was generous, and so I got a good example at home." It was said by others of Coming Daylight: "She feeds everyone who comes along just as she used to see her uncle (mother's brother) do. She takes after her uncle in lots of ways."

In lecturing to the young, examples of actual behavior of persons, both good and bad, were often given. For instance, in warning boys of the evils of gambling, reference would be made to men who would otherwise have had promising careers but who ruined their chances by too heavy stakes which they lost. Fear
[754] of offending those who had supernatural power lest they retaliate by means of black magic was implicit in at least some of the admonitions. This was so, for instance, in instructing young men to stay away from the wives of "powerful" men, as well as in warning girls to decline improper proposals "in a nice way."

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

CHAPTER X

OLD AGE AND DEATH

It is the opinion of the now aged Gros Ventres that the proportion of old persons was much greater in the past than it has been since they have taken up the white man's ways; and further, that the aged then retained their health and vigor to a greater degree.[1] One old woman stated that when she was young, there used to be many old people, but that they died off when there were no more buffalo. She added: "People lived to a good old age on the things that the Supreme Being provided,—roots, wild vegetables and fruits, dried meats and berries. In those days, too, they drank broth instead of tea and coffee. Old folks didn't lose their teeth then, although even young girls do nowadays. Their teeth eventually got worn down, but they seldom pulled them. In fact, if an old person should lose a tooth, he thought it was awful and was sure that he was ready for the grave. Furthermore, people didn't get white hair until they were ready for 'old age sleep'—very old people sleep most of the time—yet now one sees middle-aged and even younger people with gray hair like the whites have."

Status and Treatment of the Aged

It was believed that a person who had lived to a ripe old age had been privileged to do so by the Supreme Being. Therefore, they reasoned, if you are good to old people, these in turn will pray to the Supreme Being for your health, long life, and success. Children were instructed explicitly to be good to the aged,—to feed them, to clothe them, and to help them in difficulties,—as well as to seek out those so blessed and ask for their prayers. It was

[1] Allowance should of course be made for the fact that "old age" is a relative term. When it was said that young men were urged to marry "older experienced women," this referred to a woman of perhaps twenty to twenty-five. See pp. 171–72. A woman on the northern plains was "old" at forty, according to Denig, p. 513.

It was thought well, too, to name a child after someone who had attained advanced age. Thus it was that youths of 16 or 17 years of age would go out in a storm and stand before the lodge of some old man or woman and cry, begging the prayers of that person. Again, on a hunting party, should there be some old man along, unable to hunt, one member of the group might give a whole buffalo carcass to him; whereupon the grateful elder would offer a spontaneous prayer on the donor's behalf. Similarly, it was not at all unusual for successful young hunters to seek out old people to share in some of the spoils,—just as in these later times a bottle of whiskey was occasionally given to old persons by the young. Once in a while, too, some married man would have his wife cook a quantity of food and publicly invite old people, one of whom, in appreciation of this attention, would offer the expected prayer for the long life, health and success of the host and all the members of his household.

Dignity was, however, not necessarily an attribute of old age. With advancing years the conventions were somewhat relaxed. It was stated by one informant: "When a man had lived long enough to have participated in all the Sacred Dances, he had acquired the right to do almost as he pleased, including not having to observe so strictly the relationship taboos. It seemed to throw the bars down and he could have even more fun than ever at the expense of his enemy-friends and become still more vulgar and obscene." Relations between old women living together were not always harmonious and noisy quarreling was not unusual. Sometimes young boys played pranks on such old women, as in the following case.

"Two old women who were sisters shared a lodge. One day they were in there, seated back to back, warming themselves by the fire. They didn't have any clothes on and were feeling good, scratching their skins with sticks. Two young boys peeped in. They took a long willow and quietly heated the end of it in the fire. When the end of the willow was glowing, they touched one of the old women with it. She yelled at the other: 'You burned me,' and of course the other denied it. After a little while, the boys did the same thing to the other old woman. They heard her call out: 'What did you do to me? You burned me!' The boys

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

repeated this stunt twice more, but this was too much for these old 888
women, who then started fighting and shouting recriminations, 522
blaming each other. The boys of course were in high glee as the old women hit each other and grunted. Finally, however, they called the daughter of one of the old women, saying: 'Come and see these old ones fighting. Try and stop them. They will kill each other.' So as the boys ran away, the younger woman restored peace."

Care of the aged devolved upon close kin. Whereas old men 888
customarily lived directly with the households to which they were [542]
attached, old windows usually lived in lodges separate from, but located near, those of relatives who provided most of their food. To old women was often relegated the care of their grandchildren, especially of their granddaughters, whom they were supposed to [887]
train from the age of about seven until such time as they were given in marriage. The young girls in turn supplied the water and fuel for their grandmothers. In case the aged person had children of his own, he was reasonably secure. Those whose dependence was on more remote relatives were less assured of good care. The aged who had special skills which could be exercised in spite of debility, especially those who possessed "medicine power," were better off than the others.[8]

In dealing with old people it was said that much patience and forbearance were often necessary. For instance, one old woman, now deceased, was described by a relative in the following terms: "She was a hardboiled old jane, rough and tough, who didn't hesitate to tell you what she thought of things. But she had many friends and when visitors came she would swell up and be proud when they sat beside her rather than beside one of the several other old women who lived in the same place. Usually during the visit, however, she would get mad and threaten all kinds of things, and people would have to humor her. One day she really blew up and said: 'I'm going to save my relatives the job of hauling my carcass out, so I'm going out on the hills right now and lie out there and die!' So one of her relatives had to pretend to take her

[8] Denig, pp. 576–77, states that only such old persons who possess medicine powers are exempt from the petty tricks and other annoyances to which the aged in general are subject among northern plains tribes.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

888 seriously and he grabbed her by the arm and yelled: 'Come back here! What are you going to do?' The old woman was taken by surprise,—her bluff was called,—and she meekly came back."

More than one Gros Ventre used the phrase regarding old women in general that they were "great ones to pout." An example of sulking on the part of one old woman, which resulted in more than ordinarily serious consequences, is the following told by Singer. "One time when I was young, the group was about to move camp. There was an old woman whose granddaughter was looking after her, but she was 'pouting' and refused to get on either the travois or the horse. When the party was leaving, her granddaughter urged her: 'Hurry. Everybody is leaving us and it is dangerous to travel alone!' But the old woman just pouted and pouted, and finally in desperation the girl left. When they camped again, the girl kept worrying about her grandmother, so she asked a man to go back with her. They were mounted. The rest of the party waited a long time, but when they didn't return, the whole group went back to hunt for them. They found that the girl and the man had been killed and scalped, but the old woman lay dead in a sweatlodge.

"Years later they heard the details from the Assiniboine, who had swooped down on the three of them just as the girl and her companion met the old woman who was slowly following the trail on foot. They first killed the man and tried to capture the girl. When she resisted, they killed her and scalped them both. They didn't harm the old woman, but she begged them to build a sweatlodge for her and leave her there. She told them: 'Seal it up tightly. I just as much as killed my grandchild, and I will die with her.'"

In the days when the Gros Ventres were nomadic, abandonment of the ill and aged was not unknown. Sometimes it was done with great regret, when the responsible parties did not have the equipment to enable them to carry the old person along. On other occasions the old person was quite callously left to his fate. Singer recalled the following instance." On one occasion the group was moving camp, and one family went off and left an old helpless woman sitting there without so much as having prepared a shelter for her. My younger brother kept saying: 'You are leaving an old

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

woman! You are leaving an old woman!' Finally our mother couldn't stand it any longer and, although she was not responsible for that old woman, she turned back and got the old woman to camp by letting her hang onto the travois. But we didn't have to carry her because she died shortly after that." 888

Takes The Bow mentioned that in the dim past, rather than to go off and leave an aged relative, the Gros Ventres used to ask some outstanding warrior to kill this old person—a father, or mother, or grandparent. This was done in order to get those who were suffering "out of their misery." The relative who took this responsibility would authorize the killer to count coup on the one whom he killed and thus score another mark of distinction for his record.[8] Other Gros Ventres were of the opinion that this type of "mercy killing" was adopted from the Blackfoot and that it was rarely carried out by the Gros Ventres, although admittedly abandonment of the aged to starvation was sometimes forced upon them.

Death

The Gros Ventres valued life highly and prayed for long lives, but when a person knew he was about to die, it was said that he resigned himself and appreciated the efforts on the part of others to ease his last moments. There was a desire to die surrounded by one's family and friends who would see to it that the proper last steps were taken. In view of this, if a man were wounded in an encounter with the enemy, every effort would be made by his companions—even at great personal risk—to get him back to his family before he would die. 761 763 [727]

When all hope for life had been abandoned, the dying person was dressed in the best clothes available, his hair combed, and his face painted "as though he were going to a party." Frequently last minute instructions would be given by the dying concerning his preference as to method of final disposal. He might also include advice to his survivors, and make occasional bequests of 763

[8] It is interesting to note in this connection that Cocking, 1772, p. 112, writes of the Gros Ventres: "They torture all the aged of both sexes in a most shocking and deliberate manner." The context is not clear, however, and he may have been referring to treatment of prisoners of war.

776 He was the "master of life" as previously mentioned. Long life was the result of something more than conformity to "health rules," such as daily morning cold baths to harden the body.[9] "The Supreme Being allows people to live long. If he wanted, he cut off their lives." "When people die, it is the Supreme Being who cuts off their lives." "Very old people lived a long life because they were pitied by the Supreme Being." The Boy's father, Lame Bull, said that "a man lives, not his own life, but according to what is given him and wished by Ixtcibani:hahat. A man has what he has by the wish of the One Above."

776 The Gros Ventres understood by that that the aged had survived to old age not by accident, but by the permission and wish of the Supreme Being. It was common for young men to approach in tears a very old man or woman, offer a pipe, and request him or her to ask the Supreme Being to grant him long life, to make him a good warrior who would be immune to arrows or bullets when he was shot at.[10]

776 721 782 [755] In grave illness the Supreme Being would be appealed to to spare the sick person's life. It was a common belief that the Supreme Being would not permit a large attacking force of enemies to slaughter a smaller number at home in its own camp. When a group of young Gros Ventre recruits was leaving for World War II, the Supreme Being was prayed to in an old song that he would watch over them and let them come back home unharmed; although there were some casualties among Gros Ventre soldiers in World War II, not one of the above particular group was even wounded.

776 [171] The Supreme Being as the one who "owns everything" was the provider of food. He was not called "master of food," as was common among the northeastern Algonquians,[11] living closer than the Gros Ventres to a scarcity economy; food, it was felt, was "too little" a thing, and the title undignified. But all good things to eat, including "wild" food such as berries, fruits, roots and tubers, came from the Supreme Being and were given by him.

---

[9] Cf. Flannery, 1953, p. 144.
[10] Cf. Flannery, 1953, pp. 195-96.
[11] Cooper, 1934, p. 71.

Supernatural power too, while gotten immediately from animals, 776
mountains (mountain spirits), and other creatures, through fasting and sleeping out on the hills, came ultimately from the Supreme Being, as mentioned previously. A person going out on a power [782 quest, would pray first to the Supreme Being to command or 787] compel the lesser being to give the power being sought. Power to doctor and to achieve war success and even to acquire wealth thus in the last analysis came from the Supreme Being. So too did the (supernatural?) power inherent in earnest wishes or thought wishes.

The Supreme Being also imparted knowledge and warnings to 776
human beings through dreams and through his messenger, the 787
crow. The crow on account of his relationship to the Supreme Being was a sort of sacred bird.[12] To illustrate the point the Boy [825] told the following incident in the life of his father, Lame Bull. "Lame Bull on one occasion was sitting out on a hill and no one could get him to come back to camp. So some of his family got one of Lame Bull's wives, The Boy's mother, to go out and tell Lame Bull to come home right away as the camp was moving. As Lame Bull saw her coming, a crow flew over to him and said, 'This person who is coming is going to tell you something that is not true. Don't pay any attention to her.' Then the crow flew away. When The Boy's mother came within hearing distance of Lame Bull, the latter said to her: 'Don't say what you are going to say. Turn back.' But she kept on coming and told him her message, for which she got a scolding from him."

In general the Supreme Being was, as regards his interest in 776
human welfare, the reverse of an otiose deity. His interest was a most active one.

Equally active was his interest in man's moral and social be- [888 ●
havior. He was pleased at such moral or social acts as respect 736] and help to the aged and care of the orphans, and was offended by grave breaches of the moral or social order. He bestowed

[12] In 1948 The Boy explained: "The crow is not the kind you see around here now, but a raven,—a bird that is smaller and more streamlined than the crow. The crow here in the fields cry like they are wounded, but this other bird has a shrill but melodious call more like a human being." [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Two young men attendants were chosen, but there was no police force, according to The Boy who said none was needed in the case of these "harmless" and "venerable" old men dancers. In general, The Boy had the impression that people had not cared much what these old men did in their Dance and did not go to it much, for it had "no color to it, nothing lively about it." 796* 888

The dance lodge,—a "very simple little hut" according to The Boy and Thick; a "big round camp" according to Coming Daylight, —was put up outside the camp circle, toward the south thereof. The dancers carried out their rites "sort of secretly." They could be heard singing and dancing inside their lodge, but they did not go around much in public view afterwards as the women did in their Dance. The rattles used to accompany the singing were sticks about a foot or foot-and-a-half long with big buffalo calf hoofs on one end, and were very noisy. The leader's stick was larger and its butt end was pounded on the ground to keep time. 796* [534] [533]

Two of the Dance songs, numbers 67 and 68, were recorded as sung by The Boy. Number 68 was sung while the old men were dancing and contains their particular yell.

The other song, number 67, has the words meaning: "You first (or leading) (buffalo) bull, come in this direction (come streaming in)." This song was a "half-prayer." The singers while singing it were wishing as hard as they could, so there would be plenty of buffalo and thus the people would not have to go far to hunt successfully. The very first original buffalo procreated other buffalo and singers wanted him to lead the other buffalo, his progeny, to the Gros Ventres. The wish-thought or "half-prayer" was directed, however, according to The Boy, not to the first buffalo, but to the Supreme Being so that the latter would provide buffalo.

The primary purpose of the Dance was pretty clearly that of bringing success in buffalo hunting. After the dance was over, the camp would move to another site, and then the people "would always run into a lot of buffalo and have good hunting luck." "Even if there were no buffalo nearby when this Dance had been going on, in some mysterious way many buffalo would come and even run around in the camp." Right after the very last time the Dance was performed, the people ran into a great many buffalo. [224]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

*796 ●888 182 The Dance must have helped appreciably to enhance the status of the elderly participants, a little old to take active part in the actual hunting and game-food providing, and to have given them a feeling of still being economically useful members of the tribe. The same *mutatis mutandis* would be true of the old women in connection with their own Dance.

After the more or less secret rites inside the lodge of the Dance were over, the dancers ran a race. After the close of the dance, the camp moved.

888 561 The elderly men who as chief vowers or associates had gone once through the Dance had reached the end of the ritual trail and became members of the unorganized "retired old men," of equal rank in this respect with their ceremonial grandfathers. After the dance the grandfathers could not control their grandsons, as grandfathers could after other Dances. After going through this Dance, the dancer though entering in a sense the "inactive" ranks could still be called on to function as a ceremonial grandfather. He moreover was allowed very considerable freedom and latitude previously denied him. With his Punishers' Dance grandfather he [571] contracted a relationship somewhat similar to the enemy-friend one. In general, while of course he was given no leave to commit grave crimes, he was allowed much freedom in talking or acting vulgarly or obscenely in public and in the presence of consanguineal or actual relatives toward whom respect and avoidance observances had been strictly required of him prior to his graduation into the class of "retired old men."[88]

He could, for instance, talk pretty freely with his own brother-in-law who was also a "retired old man" about matters concerning elimination and reproduction, and could indulge in a large degree of vulgarity and obscenity before a group which included even his own mother-in-law, and no one had the right to criticize him for this or protest against his behavior.

If, for example, he took off his breechcloth in the presence of a group that included such relatives, someone might say to him: "That's going too far." But the old man might answer: "I have sat on the sage brush. I have the right to do this."

[88] Cf. Flannery, 1953, p. 196.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

At big social or Grass Dances, the people used to be good to these "retired old men" and gave them good seats inside the hall or enclosure where the dance was held. At one such gathering, probably around 1905, a lot of these old men were present sitting in a semi-circle in front of the four chief men. One "retired old man," Fire Steel, Thomas Main's father-in-law and Lame Bull's brother-in-law, a witty old man who liked to talk, came late. Even though Lame Bull was present, Fire Steel said aloud, in a voice that could be heard by everyone: "What is the matter with you old men sitting there? You ought to sing songs of praise. Instead you are sitting there and playing 'it' so women can admire you. But your behinds are all pretty black now!" And everybody laughed. Fire Steel used to get to a dance late and in a tone loud enough for everyone present to hear used to expose these old men's past behavior,—things that they would not want said in public. 888 561 626 522

Fly Dance

This dance was called no:bao'wə "fly lodge." The word no:bä is at present used for "house fly." Our informants were not sure if the word, as used for the dance itself, referred to flies or to mosquitoes. 796*

The dance was last performed about 1907. Our chief sources were The Boy, Thick and Coming Daylight; some stray data were gotten from Turn Toes, Charles Buckman, Thomas Main and Cora Chandler. Our information confirms Kroeber's description, and supplements it in only a few minor details.

No origin story was known to our informants, beyond the item that the dance "belongs to the flies [or mosquitoes]."

The Fly Dance, like other Sacred Dances, was held only in fulfillment of a vow, a vow usually made in less grave emergencies. In dignity the Fly Dance ranked lowest among the seven Sacred Dances carried out by men.

It was held in the summer, usually around the time when one of other Sacred Dances was being performed. Consequently there was no necessity of sending runners to assemble the people, as

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

734 "The Crow knew the child was a Gros Ventre, so they took her along and caught up with the Gros Ventre camp. After they had eaten, they called all the Gros Ventres to listen. One of the Crow was standing there with the child. I was small then. I went and listened. Using the sign language he said: 'You folks were very mean to this child and her mother. The child was pitiful and somebody took pity on her. We picked her up and are going to keep her. We won't give her to you.'

"So this girl grew up with the Crow . . . she did not like the Gros Ventres and she took her mother's name . . . I do not know to this day why the mother was abandoned. She had no husband at the time they left her. The Gros Ventres," Coming Daylight added, "abandoned old people and babies."[11]

[847 888]

Proprietary Remedies

757 So far we have been dealing with preventive or curative measures of the "rational" order known to and freely used by anybody and everybody. We now come to those exclusively owned and used by particular individuals only. These proprietary remedies fall into two main classes,—although the dividing line was not always sharply drawn,—accordingly as they were owned and used by non-professionals with little or no supernatural power or by professional medicine men and women with well recognized supernatural power. Such proprietary remedies, as owned and used by non-professionals, seemed to have been looked upon as of either the "rational" or supernatural order. Those owned and used by professional doctors as, in the main, of the supernatural order. We shall now take up these two classes, first, proprietary remedies used by non-professionals.

Coming Daylight emphatically insisted that she was not a medicine woman, not a "holy" person. "Some people try to pray through me, they lay their hands on my head and pray for something, as if I were a 'holy' person. But I am not. I do not claim to be a medicine woman. I never go around doctoring others. I just keep

[11] For other cases of abandonment, see Flannery, 1953, pp. 76, 132, 189, 198-99.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

782
[511] praying and singing were done at other seasons of the year and how far as a more general custom by other fathers of families were points we did not clear up.

[264] Before eating food, at least in any more or less formal gathering, a portion of the food was offered up with prayer.

[224] Prayer rites and observances for good hunting were few and simple—as compared, for example, with the numerous and complicated ones practiced by the Algonquian-speaking tribes of the taiga. Abundance of food, which principally meant game food, was commonly prayed for. Two of the Sacred Dances, the Law Enforcers' and the Woman's, had as a purpose success in buffalo hunting. But beyond this, hunting entered little into ritual, and we may recall hunting was conspicuously absent from the power quest. We recorded no rites or observances whatever in connection with the gathering of berries, roots or other plant food.

[484] It was customary on crossing rivers to pray to the Last Child for protection, and to throw into the water offerings, especially shells and eagle-tail feathers, for the Last Child, or the water monster, or both, with some words such as, "I give you this." Sometimes, too, some prayer and offering would be made by a person going to swim, or on other occasions of water hazard.

During or just before severe thunderstorms, various prayer and other procedures were resorted to, many of them directed to Bha'a, the storm being.

Seeking indirectly or asking directly the prayers of the aged, especially for long life, took several different forms, and played an important role in Gros Ventre life, as we have explained elsewhere.

There were many different ways of seeking the prayers of the aged. We recorded the following, which may or may not exhaust the list: crying before a lodge, offering a pipe, promising a sweat-lodge, "holy boiling," providing a feast, doing favors of various kinds.

782
● 888 "Holy boiling," to which we have not as yet referred, was an observance distinct both from the preceding ones and from feasting a group of aged people. It was intended primarily for some one person, man or woman, although others partook of the meal, and

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

could be offered by women as well as men. The person doing the "holy boiling" would have in mind the attainment of success in life. To be chosen as the person for whom the "holy boiling" was done was looked upon as a "great compliment" by the old man or old woman—it was always a very old person—so chosen.

782
888

The Boy described one such holy boiling, done by a woman in fulfillment of a vow (men too could make such a vow). The following is a summary:

The vowing woman (the hostess) chose a particular old woman (the guest of honor) to do the praying for her at this holy boiling, and after cooking a lot of food notified the old woman of the choice and invited a number of women friends. No men participated. On arrival, all sat down,—with the chosen old woman in the place of honor and the others in their places, and with food placed before each. The old woman took some cooked dog, held it up, and prayed in four directions. Then she gave four little pieces to the hostess and told her: 'Bury these in four spots, north, east, south, and west, inside the lodge.' The hostess did so, and then prayed, mentioning the Last Child, and buried a bit of food where she was. Then the other women present, on being invited, prayed each a short prayer and buried a bit of food, pushing it under the dirt, and included the Last Child in the prayer. Then all ate.

Very like "holy boiling" was offering a feast to a *group* of old men and old women. (In "holy boiling" some one old man or woman was *the* guest of honor.) The custom is still observed among the Gros Ventres. "A young man," The Boy said, who had witnessed such feasts, "would tell his wife to cook a lot of choice things and then would invite a number of people to the feast, old men and old women. He would send the crier to shout out loud: 'So-and-So [the host] invites you, So-and-So [names of the invited guests]. Come to his lodge.' The people would understand: 'That fellow is inviting old people.' These very old people, some perhaps blind or with canes, would come and sit down, without any religious rite. They would realize what the host was doing, appreciate his inviting them and not looking down on them, and would say: 'This man is pitying us. He is giving us a good meal and smoke and treating us well. Let us pray for him.' . . . Then

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

782 one of the old men would take a plate or cup of some choice food
488 and hold it up (not praying with a pipe) and pray, before the food was distributed to the various guests, to the Supreme Being (but not mentioning the Last Child) for the young man host's entire family or household, . . . that there would be no sorrow or suffering in the family, that they would have long life, that the household would stand firm and tight, and that the children would be healthy and good and successful. Then the old man would set the plate of food down and food would be distributed to all the old people. . . . Some old person would then suggest: 'Let us all pray.' Then each, including the old man who had prayed, would take a little bit of food, hold it up to the Supreme Being . . . and all would pray audibly but in a low voice, so there was a sort of humming there, each using his or her own words . . . and each would wind up by mentioning the Last Child and pushing the bit of food in the earth. . . . All this praying by the old people was done spontaneously [not requested by the host] . . . and voluntarily . . . , but the young man would be disappointed if the old men and old women did not pray for him and his family. . . . If the old people prayed they always did so before they ate. After they ate would have been too late to pray."

Sacrifices

782 Sacrifice, in the more restricted sense of the term, may be defined as the giving or offering of some material possession, usually prized as of intrinsic or of symbolic worth, to a supernatural being or beings, the giving itself being signified by expropriation of the object through destruction, segregation, or other process. In a more inclusive sense, the offering may be of something non-material, such as privation or pain or self-torture voluntarily undergone. In this section on sacrifice we feel that we shall be closer to the Gros Ventre point of view if, under the caption sacrifice we include both offerings that come under either the restricted or the inclusive sense of the term. The Gros Ventres draw no sharp line between, offerings of, for instance, a blanket, a little finger, a minute bit of one's flesh, and some of the types of self-torture to be described. All are things offered to supernatural beings.

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The addition of the four "chiefs" of the Grass dance gave scope for public recognition of the middle-aged men of substance esteemed for their wisdom and judgment to whom office-holding proportionate for their dignity was otherwise denied. Although there was no longer opportunity for the ranks of warriors to swell, those who had in the past performed brave deeds could still gain status by being called upon to publicly recount them at the ceremonial eating of dog flesh and by being selected to handle the feathered bonnets. 796 178 622 [888] [554]

As the younger men had no chance to show their prowess in warfare and hunting, there was a change of emphasis to recognition of superior singing and dancing ability as one of the roads to public approval. This latter was brought out clearly by our informants when explaining the qualifications of those sought for the various officers of the Grass dance as it was performed around the turn of the century. 796 178 555

They stated that much of the success of the performance of the Grass dance depended particularly on the singers of the dog ritual songs. The four singers who owned the ceremonial drumsticks were chosen for their good voices and from among the "lively men who liked to do things." The candidates had have to know the songs in advance because they could not be trained. Two noted teachers were The Boy and Joe Big Beaver. The Boy said he used to "campaign against himself" when it was time for a drumstick to be transferred because "he didn't want to get tied down. He enjoyed dancing and the singers never got a chance to participate." Our informants told us of two men who are remembered especially as being outstanding singers and drummers, Ed Rider and Breath. The latter was described as a top-ranking singer who, so far as they knew, had never been surpassed. They said: "It was something worth listening to when Breath started those Grass dance songs. He had a voice adapted to that kind of singing and his sense of rhythm was superb. He could hold a big crowd of people spellbound. He was a real genius. Many others tried to copy him and learn from him, but none ever succeeded in equalling him. Regardless of his fine voice no one